

## Attacking Principles



- **Penetration** - When a team is in possession of the ball, can they play through the gaps between defenders or can they play the ball into space behind the opposition? This gives attackers the opportunity to exploit space through movement of the ball sideward or forwards and by forcing the opponents to move out of position. The key thing is to exploit space heading towards goal.
- **Support** - By this we mean supporting the player in possession through the movement of players off the ball. Important points to be associated with support are angles, timings and distances of the support provided.
- **Width** - Providing options (laterally) across the pitch. This creates larger gaps between defenders which, in turn, create opportunities to exploit the space and play forwards. The idea is to make the pitch big, look for the gaps and play through or around them.
- **Mobility** - Is movement on and off the ball. This will provide support in the attack and can include rotation of positions, exploiting space, and penetrating the defence at speed.
- **Creativity/Improvisation** - If a team becomes predictable, it becomes easy to defend against. Coaches can encourage creativity from individuals so that they feel confident enough to attempt skills/tricks and so that players can combine, in unconventional ways, to create goal scoring opportunities.

## Defending Principles

1. **Immediate Chase** - the nearest player to the ball applies pressure to attempt to win the ball back.
2. **Delay** - Can we stop the opposition playing forwards? This will also allow for team mates to get in shape and recover.
3. **Depth** - reducing the space behind the pressuring player. The nearest player to the ball presses and the remainder of the defenders provide support around and away from the ball. Defending support is normally tighter than attacking support to provide compactness.
4. **Compactness** - reducing space for the opposition to play in and getting goal side of the ball, forcing the opposition to play around you to keep the ball in front. Along with compactness, defensive balance is also required and as a unit can we maintain a defensive shape? This may mean leaving the area of the pitch away from the ball (weak side) uncovered and shift as a unit if the ball is switched into this area.
5. **Patience** - There is a risk when a defensive player challenges for the ball and does not regain possession that the attacking team will now have an overload. It's about knowing when to challenge for the ball and when to hold off and be patient.
6. **Predictability** - If the team has got defensive shape and compactness can they force the opposition with the ball into certain areas of the field? Preferably into an area where they have an opportunity to win the ball back and preferably away from goal.