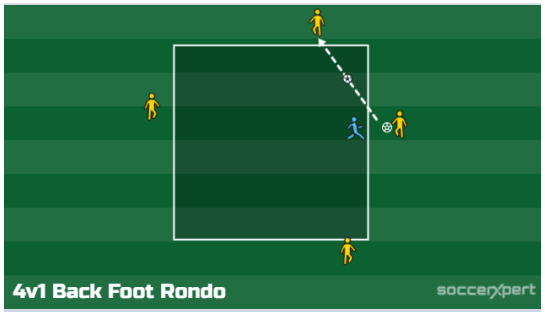

4v1 Back Foot Rondo: No Pass Across

Objective:
This 4v1 rondo has one simple rule that changes everything. Players cannot pass to the teammate straight across from them. The ball must go to the player on their left or their right. That one rule forces every player to open up their body and receive with the back foot, so the ball keeps moving around the grid. I have used this rondo for years because the game does the teaching. Players who receive closed get stuck and lose the ball. Players who open up and take the first touch across their body find the next pass with ease. You will see sharper passing, cleaner first touches, and better support angles in a tight space. It only takes five players and a few cones, so you can set up several grids and keep the whole team busy.

Drill Quick Glance

Age: 10+	**Field:** 8x8
Players: 5	**Time:** 15 min.
Difficulty: Medium	**Focus:** Passing
Keeper: No	**Type:** Small Group
Author: Chris Johnson	

Equipment

Disc Cones/Markers | Scrimmage Vests | Soccer Balls

Setup

- Mark out a 8x8 yard rectangle with four cones.
- Place one attacker on each of the four sides of the grid. Attackers play on the outside of the lines.
- Place one defender inside the grid.
- Use one ball per grid and keep a few spare balls close by for quick restarts.
- Give the defender a bib to hold so the swap is quick.
- No goals or goalkeepers are needed.
- For bigger squads, build one grid for every five players.

Instructions

1. Start the ball with any attacker on the outside of the grid.
2. The four attackers pass the ball around the grid and try to keep it away from the defender.
3. Attackers can only pass to the teammate on their left or their right. Passes to the player straight across are not allowed.
4. Attackers can slide along their own line to give the passer a clear angle, but they stay on the outside of the grid.
5. Ask each player to receive with the back foot, the foot furthest from the ball, so the first touch moves toward the next pass.
6. The defender works to win the ball or force a bad pass out of the grid.
7. When the defender wins the ball, or a pass leaves the area, the attacker who made the mistake swaps with the defender.
8. Attackers score one point for every 8 passes in a row. If one defender stays in for 60 seconds, swap in a fresh one.

Coaching Points

- Open the body before the ball arrives. Hips should face the middle of the grid, not the passer.
- Receive with the back foot so the first touch sets up the next pass.
- Move along the line to give the passer a clear lane. Standing still makes the defender look good.
- Pass firm and on the ground to the back foot of the teammate.
- Check the defender before the ball arrives so the next pass is already decided.
- Watch for players who receive square and stop the ball dead. Freeze play, show the open body shape, and restart.
- Watch for players who drift into the corners and hide behind the defender. Get them back into the passing lane.
- Push the defender to press with speed and cut the grid in half to force play one way.

Variations

- Limit attackers to two touches. One touch to receive and one touch to pass.
- Go one touch for strong groups that keep the ball with ease.
- Make the grid bigger, such as 10x10 yards, to help younger or newer players.
- Make the grid smaller to raise the pressure on first touch and speed of play.
- Have players receive with the left foot only when the ball moves one way, then the right foot only when it moves the other way.
- Reward the defender with a point for every ball won, and keep a running score for the session.
- Add a second defender and two more attackers in a larger grid for a 6v2 version with the same no-pass-across rule.