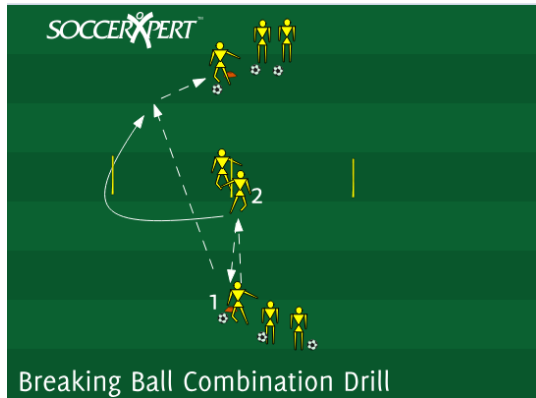




Drill Quick Glance

Age: 9+	Field: 20X20
Players: 6+	Time: 20 mins.
Difficulty: MEDIUM	Focus: BREAKING BALLS
Keeper: NO	Type: TEAM
Author: Chris Johnson	

Equipment

Disc Cones/Markers | Soccer Balls | Training Sticks

Breaking Ball Combination Drill

Objective:

This drill teaches players how to play accurate breaking balls into space and make well-timed runs to receive them. Players will work on combination play through quick 1-2 passes, then focus on the weight and timing of through balls. The receiving player learns when to make their run and how to time it with the pass. This drill builds the connection between passer and runner that's crucial in breaking down defenses during games.

Setup

- Set up three sticks or mannequins in a straight line, spacing them 4-5 yards apart
- Place a cone 7-10 yards away from the center mannequin on each side
- Position one player on each side of the center mannequin (these are your combination players)
- Split the remaining players evenly between the two cones
- Give a ball to each player at the cones
- For groups larger than 12 players, create a second identical setup to maximize touches

Instructions

1. Player 1 at the cone passes to Player 2 standing near the center mannequin
2. Player 2 plays a quick one-touch return pass back to Player 1
3. As soon as Player 2 makes the return pass, they sprint around the outside of the left mannequin
4. Player 1 plays a breaking ball between the left and center mannequins into the space where Player 2 is running
5. Player 2 receives the ball on their run and passes it across to the player at the opposite cone
6. Players rotate positions: Player 1 moves to the center, Player 2 goes to the back of the opposite cone line
7. Run both sides at the same time, with all runs going to the left side initially
8. After several repetitions, switch the pattern so runs go around the right mannequin instead
9. If players struggle with both sides going simultaneously, run one side at a time until they understand the pattern

Coaching Points

- Watch the timing of the run - Player 2 should start moving the moment they return the pass, not before
- The breaking ball needs the right weight - not too hard, not too soft - so Player 2 can collect it in stride
- Player 1 should aim the pass into the space between mannequins, not directly at Player 2
- Player 2 needs to accelerate into the space, not jog - game speed runs create game speed habits
- Check that Player 2 opens their body to receive the ball on the correct foot based on which direction they're running
- Make sure players communicate - a simple call for the ball helps timing
- The first pass in the 1-2 should be firm and accurate to the feet
- Player 2's return pass should be one-touch when possible to speed up the combination

Variations

- Add a passive defender between the mannequins to make Player 1 disguise the breaking ball
- Require Player 2 to finish on a small goal after receiving the breaking ball
- Make the final pass to the opposite cone a specific type - driven, chipped, or outside of the foot
- Have Player 2 make a fake run to one side before cutting around the other mannequin
- Increase the distance between mannequins as players improve to work on longer breaking balls
- Add a time limit - see how many successful combinations each group can complete in 60 seconds
- Require two touches max for Player 2 when they receive the breaking ball before passing to the opposite cone