



Passing & Receiving

Passing and receiving are core technical skills that every player needs to develop.

Passing is a core technical skill that includes many variations, such as inside of the foot, outside of the foot, back heel, chip, lofted pass, flick, driven pass, short pass, long pass and scoop etc.

Receiving (control) is another core technical element and can involve many surfaces of the body, for instance inside of the foot, outside of the foot, top of the foot, thigh, chest and head.

It could be argued that as much as 90% of all player touches when in possession during a football match relate to either passing or receiving. Given that in most instances the passing technique will occur either as part of or immediately after the receiving technique, it makes sense to develop both simultaneously.

STEPS FOR EFFECTIVE PASSING AND RECEIVING

- Stay balanced at all times with high-quality footwork.
- Ensure you are constantly developing your first touch (your ability to cushion the ball on all surfaces).
- Constantly improve your ability to combine a good first touch with a quality pass or appropriate action (eg dribble, shot etc) and focus on your footwork immediately after your first touch.
- Develop your ability to strike the ball clearly (accuracy and speed).
- You must watch the ball.
- Develop your full range of passing techniques.

COMMON MISTAKES WHEN PASSING THE BALL

A player is unbalanced before and after a pass, often clearly witnessed after a player strikes the ball in the following ways:

- The striking foot lands on the ground as part of the follow-through.
- The striking foot wraps around the front of the player's standing foot.
- The player falls away or stumbles after the pass has been completed.
- The standing leg is not bent and is placed too far away from or too close to the ball.
- The toes on the striking foot are pointing down or too far up at the point of contact with the ball – try to get your foot parallel with the ground.
- The ball is not connecting sweetly with the preferred passing surface (timing), eg the inside of the foot.
- The player is not striking the ball in the correct target area – eg the player should aim below the centre of the ball for a lofted pass or central for a short pass.

COMMON MISTAKES WHEN RECEIVING THE BALL

- Poor preparation footwork will tend to leave the player unbalanced and stretching for the ball.
- The foot or other body surface is too tense at the point of contact with the ball.
- First touch leaves the ball too close, bouncing or too far away in preparation for the next touch.
- Flat feet or poor footwork in the time between the first touch and when the next action is undertaken (eg pass, dribble, shot etc).

KEY STEPS IN ADVANCING PASSING AND RECEIVING ABILITY

- Challenge yourself to consistently place the correct weight or speed on the pass.
- The accuracy of the pass is also vital, so aim for the area that will assist the receiving player.
- When receiving, try to get your body into a position that will suit your next touch. For instance, if you are in the space between the lines of opposition players, you may wish to get side-on and look to take your first touch forward.
- Develop your first touch. Focus on both your front foot and back foot. You need to be able to use both sides of your body in the modern game.
- Develop your footwork to ensure the time between your first touch and your pass is reduced.
- Gradually increase the amount of pressure you are facing when undertaking both passing and receiving. Being involved in lots of small-sided games is the key.