

BFSC U11-U12 Training Session #14: Long Passing.

<u>Exercise</u>	<u>Environment</u>	<u>Description / Coach</u>
Passing warm-up	½ field	<p>This exercise requires soccer balls of several different colors (three is preferable). There should be ½ as many balls as the total number of players. Players are instructed to spread out around the playing area. The team jog around the area, exchanging the soccer balls in the prescribed manner. For example, a white ball calls for a throw-in; a red ball indicates a short pass, and a black ball must be played over distance (long pass – which should be at least 15 yards). Play for three minutes. The coach can use this time to assess the players’ ability to play a variety of passes with particular emphasis upon long passing.</p>
Pairs passing	Touchline	<p>Players work in pairs with a soccer ball for each pair to start (have a second ball nearby).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Two-touch passing. Players pass in pairs using two touches. Emphasize technical speed and proper technique, including locked ankle, utilizing the inside of the foot, pointing the plant foot toes at the target and holding the foot momentarily after the strike to accentuate proper follow-through. Players should alternate the strike foot with each pass. Play for one minute and then change partners.</li><li>2. One-touch passing. Players pass in pairs using one-touch where possible. Here the emphasis is upon measuring the strike so that the ball can be returned with one-touch. Once again, players must lock ankles, point the plant foot at the target, and use the laces surface. Players should also change the passing foot with each strike. Finally, point out to players that they need to be aware of the part of the ball that they strike. To keep the ball on the ground, players should focus on striking just above the mid-point on the back of the ball. Play for one minute and then change partners.</li><li>3. Two-ball passing. Players pass in pairs with two balls using two touches. Here, the players must work to develop a rhythm in both passing and receiving. Players pass the ball simultaneously with their right foot and receive the pass from their partner with their left foot. Their first touch should be made with the inside of their left foot and should push the ball forward and across their bodies so that they may pass the ball with the inside of their right foot as the sequence begins again. The purpose here is to apply light technical pressure while also developing consistency in technique. Play for one minute and then change the passing and receiving foot.</li><li>4. Pairs laces passing. Players work in pairs with one soccer ball. Here the players stand about four yards apart and focus on passing the ball to their partner with their laces surface. As the focus of the session is long passing, the laces surface will be critical to the technical success of the session, so players must focus on getting their toes down, locking their ankles and finding a comfortable placement for their standing foot, pointing the toes toward the target of the pass. Players work to get consistency in their strikes. After each pass, the ball should be stopped so that the technique can be practiced in isolation. Players should alternate the passing foot with each strike.</li></ol>
Driving range	½ field	<p>Introduce long passing. There are three types of long pass: Driven, lofted and chipped. Demonstrate one pass and allow players to practice striking the ball with a partner over a twenty to twenty-five yard space for about four minutes, compelling players to switch to their off foot after two minutes.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Driven pass. This pass is very similar to a driven shot. This pass is used to send the ball over distance as fast as possible. The pass is driven and usually not more than shoulder high, and is often used to cross the ball (near post usually) or to change fields, and to play sharp, long through balls.<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>A. Lock the foot with the toes pointed down.</li><li>B. Use the laces to strike the ball.</li></ol></li></ol>

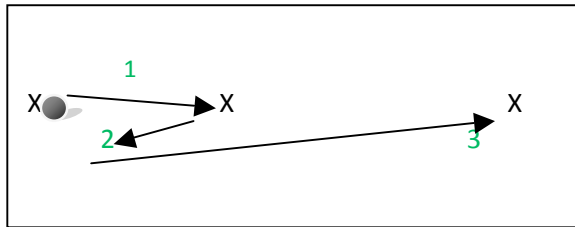
- C. The plant foot is placed comfortably next to the ball and in a more forward position than in the lofted or chipped balls. This placement helps to limit the height of the pass.
  - D. Players should think of their leg below their hip being locked and the hip as the point of rotation, as this will increase consistency and power.
  - E. The strike point on the ball is on the center back, slightly above center. Again, this will aid in keeping the ball down.
  - F. Follow-through should be held to emphasize a clean strike and balance and also the foot should be kept low.
2. Lofted ball. This pass is used to put the ball over defenders to teammates. Typically, the lofted pass is utilized when the ball is crossed to the back post, or cleared from the back line, and also in changing fields and sometimes in playing through-balls.
- A. Lock the foot with the toes pointed down.
  - B. Use the laces to strike the ball.
  - C. The plant foot is placed comfortably next to the ball and in a more withdrawn position than in the driven ball. This placement helps to create the height of the pass.
  - D. Players should think of their leg below their hip being locked and the hip as the point of rotation, as this will increase consistency and power.
  - E. The strike point on the ball is on the center back, below center. Players need to learn to feel their laces cupping beneath and on the back of the ball. This lower striking position helps to raise the ball off of the ground for a lofted pass.
  - F. Follow-through should be held to emphasize a clean strike and balance and also the foot should be raised to accentuate the lift placed on the ball
3. Chipped ball. This pass is used to drop a ball over a defender or group of defenders to the feet of a target. This is the most difficult of the passes to learn well, but it is also important for players to learn to perform this skill in that it teaches a new way to strike the ball in a way that is important for consideration in numerous situations on the field. Chipping the ball is particularly useful in that the strike creates backspin, allowing the ball to settle off of the bounce, meaning that the receiving player should be able to play it more easily and quickly than a driven or lofted service. The ball is often chipped on free kicks to put it behind the defense; on through-balls; to change fields to a particular target; sometimes to find a target on a short cross, etc.
- A. Lock the foot with the toes pointed down.
  - B. Use the laces to strike the ball.
  - C. The plant foot is placed comfortably next to the ball and in a more withdrawn position than in the set for the driven ball. This placement helps to create the height of the pass.
  - D. Players should think of their leg below their hip being locked and the hip as the point of rotation, as this will increase consistency and power.
  - E. The strike point on the ball is on the center back, well below center. Players need to learn to feel their laces cupping beneath and on the back of the ball. This lower striking position helps to raise the ball off of the ground for a chipped pass.
  - F. The follow-through is the major difference between the chipped and lofted passes. With a chipped ball, there is no follow-through. In the strike, the player “digs” beneath the ball and then does not follow-through. Players must practice both of these cues, as part of the learning here is

that with the chip, there is a bit of contact with the ground, which helps create backspin on the pass, and the lack of follow-through will not feel natural at first, but this also increases the backspin effect on the pass.

Short-short-long

½ field

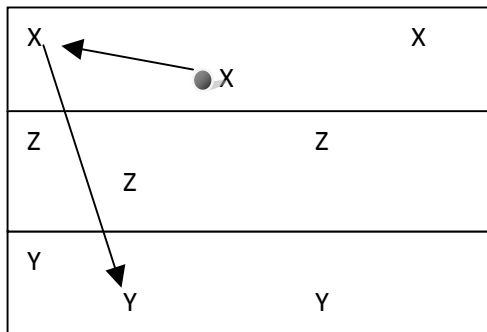
Players work in groups of three with one soccer ball. Demonstrate with one group. Put two players about twenty five yards apart and the third player between them. Give one of the end players the ball. The inside player starts the exercise by checking (running) toward the player with the ball. The ball is passed to the inside player who returns it with a single touch if possible. The endline player then takes a touch to settle the ball before playing a long pass to the endline player on the other side. The inside player then checks to the player with the ball and the sequence continues. This is a commonly used exercise that can be adjusted to train long passing at any level. Here are some additional considerations for the coach in tweaking the exercise:



1. Players learning to chip and loft the ball often benefit from having a target to play over. Therefore, with a warning about playing safely, the endline players can be encouraged to play lofted or chipped balls over the central player to their target on the other side.
2. To make play more realistic, players who can already long pass well can be required to play the long pass one-touch (no settling touch) off of the return pass from the central player.
3. Notice in the diagram that the angle of the return pass from the central player is changed. This is done both to create a better approach angle for the outside player and to force a defender pressing the central player to adjust her run if she were to try to press the long-passing player. The long-passing player should indicate (using a hand signal) to the central player where she wants the ball played to set up the long pass. These considerations are not as important for players just learning the technical aspects of long passing, but are very important details for more advanced players.
4. Another variation that adds some emphasis on skill for more advanced players is to encourage the endline players to receive and play the pass to the central player with one touch. This will force them to play the ball in the air sometimes and to learn to take some pace off of the ball in making the pass.
5. Finally, to add a bit of skill emphasis for the central players, have the endline players receive and control the ball off of the long pass and then pick the ball up and take a throw-in toward the central player who settles the ball before playing the set-up pass back to the endline player.

3-zone passing game

20x42 yard grid



Split the group into three teams and put them into different-colored vests. Each team occupies one of the three zones. Explain that the purpose of the game is to practice long-passing between the two end grids. For teams just learning to long-pass, the players are all confined to their respective zones. The coach serves a ball to either end grid. The team in that grid knocks the ball around to find a useful angle to play through to the far grid. The player in possession then lofts, drives, or chips (the coach can require a particular type of pass) the ball to the far grid. The team in the central grid attempt to knock down (no hands) the pass. For players learning to long pass, keep the central team in their grid even if they win a ball. Instead, the coach plays a ball into the other end grid and the players there attempt to play through or over the central grid to the far grid. Play for two minutes, giving each end team a point for every successful long pass. The central team also earns a point for each pass they knock down. Here are more advanced variations:

1. Every time the middle team knocks down a ball, their team takes the place of the team failing to play a successful pass and that team moves to the middle grid.
2. Teams must receive the ball properly after a long pass or move to the central grid.
3. The central team sends one player into the end grid when the ball arrives there. If that player wins the ball or forces the ball out of the grid, her team exchanges places with the team losing the ball.

- Building upon the last variation, require the endline team to string together 4-5 passes before playing a long pass. This allows the pressuring player from the center grid to apply pressure before a long ball can be played and also compels the teams in the end grids to be more active, making the game more realistic. When introducing this restriction, it is often useful to freeze the pressuring player from the center grid once the team in possession has strung together 4-5 passes. This will usually give enough success to develop some flow in the exercise. Then remove the “freeze” restriction so that the end grid teams are forced to play long passes under some pressure.

5v5 with a dead zone

full field

Play 5 vs. 5 with a neutral dead zone. Each team places three players plus a goalkeeper in their defensive zone and two players in their attacking zone. No player may enter the dead zone. The coach has a supply of balls on the side of the dead zone and he or she restarts play from there any time a ball leaves play. The defenders have a 4 vs. 2 advantage in their respective zones and their purpose is to win the ball and play a long pass over or through the dead zone to a teammate in the attacking zone. Play this way for ten minutes and then remove the dead zone, allowing open play, but encouraging players to look for a long pass to set up scoring opportunities and to clear their own defensive zone.

