

Crossing at pace sets up your attackers

One of the situations defenders find hard to deal with are low crosses at pace into the penalty area. It means defenders have to make fast decisions and often the pace of the ball means they just try to get in the way of them and end up deflecting them into dangerous areas.

Attackers on the other hand love a fast cross because all they have to do is direct it towards the goal and the pace on the ball will do the rest. It takes a good save to stop anything that is directed at the goal.

There will also be the chance of rebounds coming either close in on goal or often out to the edge of the penalty area so it is worth spending some time working on your attacking supporting players and their positions.



What players should do

When your winger is going to cross the ball at pace they must think about how best to exploit the space available.

- Aim for the space between the goalkeeper and defenders (shaded area).
- Keep the ball below head height.
- Cross with pace.

The technique

- Non-kicking foot should be slightly behind, and to the side of the ball.
- Use the inside of the foot to kick across the ball.
- Keep head steady, eyes on the ball at the moment of contact.
- Body should be slightly forward to keep the ball low.

How to practise it

- Using a third of a full-size pitch or half a seven-a-side pitch.
- Use a goalkeeper and three attackers.
- The attacker with the ball dribbles down the wing and crosses from the corner of the penalty area.
- The two attackers attempt to connect with the cross and score.
- Once your players have done this a few times, add three defenders who can challenge for the ball to make it more like a match situation.