

# ► Why a Curriculum?

*From “sessions” to a clear player-development pathway.*

If someone watched your training and matches without knowing the club... **would they recognize your identity?**

Can you clearly describe **the player you want to develop** – and **the steps to build that player** over time?



# What Is a Football Curriculum?

A curriculum turns identity into a progressive player-development pathway.

- ❖ A curriculum is a **decision-making system** for player development.
- ❖ It helps us decide **what to train, when, and why** – and how to progress.
- ❖ Its purpose is to consistently develop a clear player profile that reflects the club's identity.
- ❖ Without a **clear player profile**, we don't have a curriculum – we have activities.

**Identity isn't a slogan – it's a consistent way to train and compete.**

# What Is a Football Curriculum?

A curriculum turns identity into a progressive player-development pathway.

Example box:

## Club DNA (Values → visible behaviors)

- **Vertical:** progress forward when advantage exists (space/time/ball).
- **Aggressive:** proactive attack and proactive defending (not reactive).
- **Dynamic:** create advantage through movement, timing, and rhythm changes.
- **Competitive:** win transitions, duels, and second balls.

Values → Game Principles → Training Design → Match Behavior

*We translate these values into Game Principles.*



# From Identity to Training: The Curriculum “Equation”

## Identity (Club DNA)

- **Game Principles** (what we want to see consistently)
- **Curriculum Design** = Interactions × Roles × Contexts (by age stage)
- **Match Behaviors**

**Interactions:** what relationship of the game are we developing?

**Roles:** who are we developing within that interaction?

**Contexts:** under what type of opposition/game environment?

*We translate these values into Game Principles.*

# The 6 Game Interactions

## Our Curriculum Map



The curriculum is simply the progression of these interactions, with the right roles and contexts, by age.

# The Roles in the Game

Who are we developing?



## Attackers:

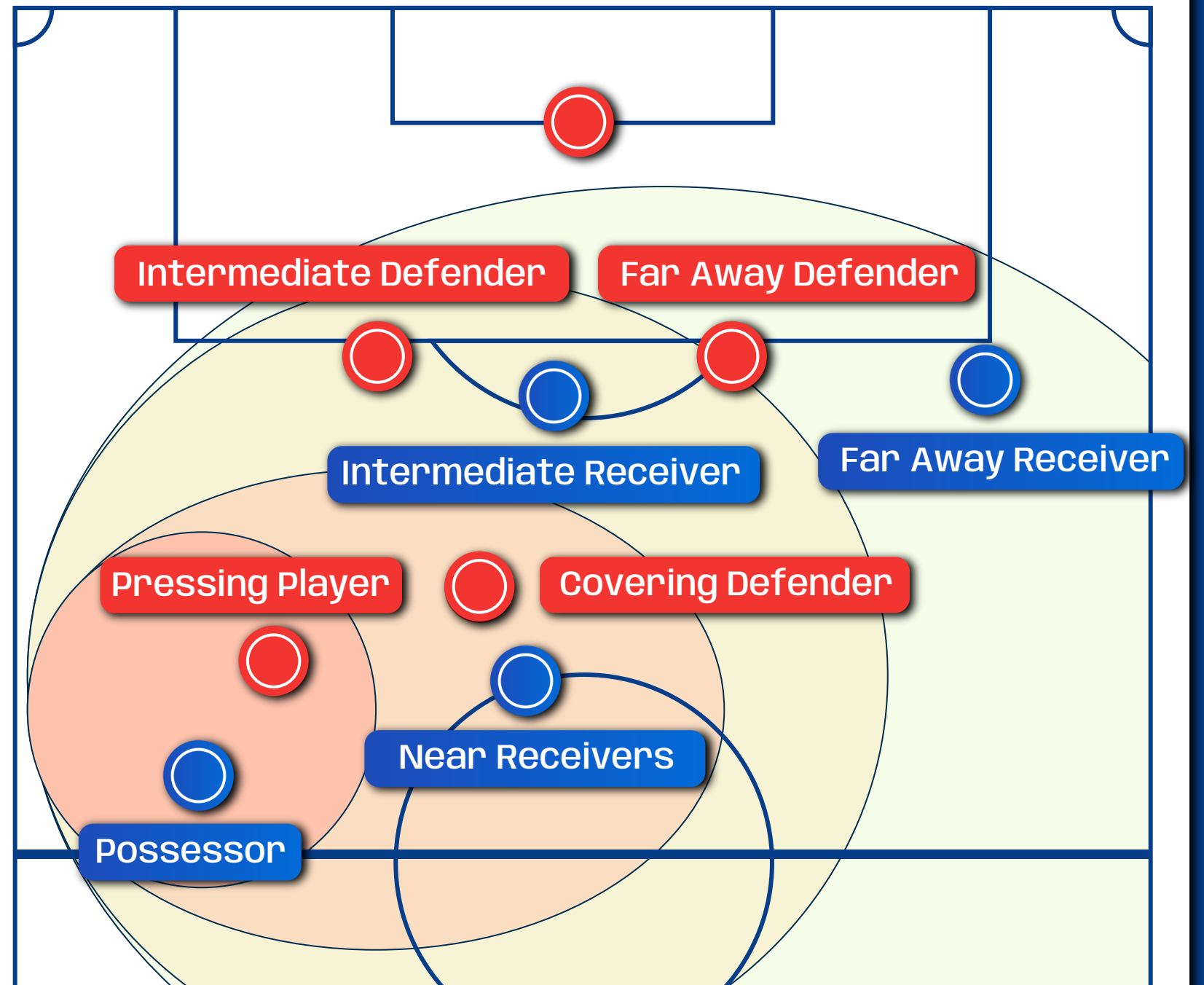
- Possessor
- Near Receiver
- Intermediate Receiver
- Far Away Receiver



## Defenders:

- Pressing Player
- Covering Defender
- Intermediate Defender
- Far Away Defender

*Roles are defined by distance to the ball and availability/responsibility.*



# Game Contexts: Organized vs Dynamic

The game has two realities

- Organized moments (structured, positional)
- Dynamic moments (pressure, man-marking, transitions)

**Identity = which reality we want to dominate most often**

- **More organized identity:** we control games through *structure, control possession, and positioning.*
- **More dynamic identity:** we control games through *pressure, movements, transitions, and rhythm.*

**Train both. Emphasize one.**



# Same Role, Two Contexts

## Practical Example

Example: Possessor

### **Organized moment – Defense Zonal Marking**

- More time → scan, fix opponent, choose the best option
- Use structure: play to the free player, connect, progress

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### **Dynamic moment – High Pressing Man-to-Man Marking**

- Less time → duels, play fast (1-2 touch if possible)
- Exploit chaos: attack space quickly or bounce to escape pressure

**Role stays the same. Context changes the decisions.**



# How Our DNA Shows Up (Role + context)

## Practical Example

Pressing Player (aggressive, dynamic, competitive)

### Organized moment (structured)

- Press to guide play into a predictable area
- Press with cover behind (lock + control)

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### Dynamic moment (pressure/transitions)

- Press to win now (duel / tackle / force mistake)
- React to second balls immediately

**Same role. Same DNA. Different behaviors depending on the context.**

# Curriculum Stages

Same DNA, Increasing Complexity



**6–8**

**Exploration  
+ Ball Mastery**

- **Focus:** Body + Ball + Opponent (1v1)
- **Goal:** love the game + basic coordination + confidence on the ball



**9–12**

**Learn the Game  
(Small Groups)**

- **Focus:** Possessor + Near Receiver + Pressing/Cover
- **Goal:** understand basic game situations (1v1 -> 3v3)



**13–16**

**Identity +  
Competition Context**

- **Focus:** Principles become more detailed + more collective roles
- **Goal:** apply our identity against common league scenarios (constraints)



**+18**

**Exploration  
+ Ball Mastery**

- **Focus:** Principles + model (players/profiles) + match prep
- **Goal:** consistency, specialization, winning within our identity

**We don't change the game; we add layers.**



# Stage 1 (6–8): Exploration + Ball Mastery

Coaching focus: environment > instruction

Coach approach	Technical foundations (with the ball)	Session design rules	Weekly example 3 sessions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❶ Less talking, more playing (show -&gt; play -&gt; repeat)</li><li>❷ Create exploration: players try, fail, try again</li><li>❸ Max reps: small numbers, multiple balls, minimal waiting</li><li>❹ Fun + confidence: every player experiences success</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❶ Dribbling / carrying</li><li>❷ Passing &amp; receiving</li><li>❸ Shooting / finishing + turning, stopping, starting, protecting the ball</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❶ 1 objective per game</li><li>❷ Lots of 1v1 moments + lots of free ball contact</li><li>❸ Simple constraints (space, time, targets) – not complex instructions</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❶ Day 1: ball mastery games</li><li>❷ Day 2: 1v1 + finishing</li><li>❸ Day 3: small-sided play (free play with light constraints)</li></ul>

*At 6–8, the “curriculum” is the environment we create.*





# Stage 2 (9–12): Learn the Game (Small Groups)

Coaching focus: Core Learning formats 1v1 → 3v3

## Coach approach

- Still high reps + high ball contact
- More guided coaching (simple cues, short interventions)
- Teach players to play with teammates (sharing, support, simple cooperation)

## Main focus: Game learning

- 1v1 → 3v3 (core learning formats)
- Basic decisions: when to dribble, when to pass
- Defensively: press + cover as the first unit of team defending

## Key roles

- **Attackers:**  
Possessor  
Near Receiver
- **Defenders:**  
Pressing Player  
Covering Defender

*At 9–12, we teach players to solve basic game situations together.*



# Stage 2 (9–12): Practical Weekly Planning

9–12 Weekly Template (Recommended): Individual → Collective → Final Third

## Day 1 Individual (1 role)

- **Role focus:**  
Possessor (or Near Receiver / Pressing Player / Covering Defender)
- **Goal:** apply the Individual Game Principles for the selected role.
- 1v1 → 3v3

## Day 2 Collective (Role Connection)

- **Role focus:**  
Possessor + Near Receiver (attacking connection)
- **Goal:** apply the subprinciples of both roles.
- 4v4–6v6

## Day 3 Final Third (Day 1 role, closer to goal)

- **Role focus:** same as Day 1
- **Goal:** apply the Day 1 role principles in final-third situations: finishing, final pass, and final movement.

*Progression: role principles → role connection → final-third application.*



# Stage 2 (9–12): Practical Weekly Planning

9–12 Weekly Template Alternative: Individual → Individual → Final Third

## Day 1 Individual (1 role)

- **Role focus:** Role A  
(e.g., Possessor)
- **Goal:** apply the  
Individual Game  
Principles for Role A
- 1V1 → 3V3

## Day 2 Individual (1 role)

- **Role focus:** Role B  
(e.g., Near Receiver)
- **Goal:** apply the  
Individual Game  
Principles for Role B
- 1V1 → 3V3

## Day 3 Final Third (connect both days)

- **Role focus:** Role A/B  
(choose one main  
focus)
- **Goal:** apply the week's  
role principles in  
final-third situations:  
finishing, final pass,  
final movement

*Best when the priority is individual understanding across two roles.*





# Stage 2 (9–12): Practical Weekly Planning

9–12 Weekly Template: Defensive Individual → Opposite Role → Final Third

## Day1 Individual (Defensive role)

- **Role focus:** Pressing Player (or Covering Defender)
- **Goal:** apply the Individual Game Principles for the defensive role
- 1v1 → 3v3

## Day2 Individual (Opposite attacking role)

- **Role focus:** Possessor vs Press (or Near Receiver vs Cover)
- **Goal:** apply the Individual Game Principles for the attacking role against that defensive behavior
- 1v1 → 3v3

## Day 3 Final Third (same relationship, closer to goal)

- **Role focus:** attacking or defending role
- **Goal:** apply those principles in final-third situations: final pass, final movement, finishing

*Day 1 = defensive role principles → Day 2 = opposite role response*