

Principles of Passing

Passing is the ability to strike the ball over a distance and successfully find a teammate or enough space to maintain possession. Some passes are as short as five yards; others can be as long as a 60-yards served in the air. Regardless of distance or purpose, a pass is successful only if it reaches your teammate.

When it comes to passing, the coach needs to work with the players to understand the techniques of passing and how the priorities of passing are interrelated. They are 1) penetration, to feet or to space, 2) changing the point of attack, and 3) a back or possession pass.

Principles of Passing:

Accuracy: The passer must decide when to play to feet or into space in front of a teammate. Often this is dictated by the open player asking for the ball and not by the passer. The passer needs to be able to read and anticipate teammate runs in order to make the right decision.

Weight: Playing a pass too strongly can cause the ball to be missed or uncontrollable; a pass without enough pace can result in an interception.

Timing: The passer must release the ball at the appropriate time. This can be helped by working with your players on three simple concepts: "head up," where the head of the player in possession comes up, indicating she is ready to pass the ball, and "show," where the player inviting the pass shows she is ready for a possible pass, and "pass," where the pass is made and completed.

Disguise: The passer must try to conceal her intention from the opponent. Avoid being obvious when passing the ball.

Common Faults:

- Choosing the wrong part of foot to pass the ball
- Incorrect approach angle
- Failure to keep eyes on ball
- Non-kicking foot too far from ball
- Incorrect follow-through
- Ankle unlocked
- Head comes up too early