



Crossing

Tags: `individual-technical` `standalone` `crossing` `wide-play`

Kicker: Crossing shows up as a byproduct in a handful of weeks — a tool for creating overloads, never a technique in its own right. This session teaches the delivery itself: whipped or driven, and the timing that turns it into a goal.

Session Overview

FIELD	VALUE
Session theme	Crossing — Delivery Technique and Run Timing
Short summary	Four stages building wide delivery from the ground up: unopposed striking technique, the choice and execution of a whipped ball versus a driven ball, syncing an attacking run to the delivery's timing, and a closing live game that rewards a cross-and-finish combination directly. The season's tactical work leans on wide overloads and switches of play constantly — this session makes sure the final ball those patterns are built to create is actually a good one.
Total duration	50 minutes across four practices
Goalkeeper requirements	Both goalkeepers should attend, since this session is also genuine live practice for Goalkeeping Practice 3 (commanding the box on crosses) — the two sessions reinforce each other directly.
Area layout	A wide delivery channel for Practices 1-2, opening into a full box for Practices 3-4.
Equipment	A generous supply of balls, cones marking delivery and run-timing positions.
Contingency — lower attendance	Practices 2-3 work fine with a single crosser and a small rotating group in the box; Practice 4's closing game scales down to a smaller grid rather than losing the wide-delivery emphasis.

PRACTICE 1 — STRIKE IT CLEAN (ARRIVAL)

Duration: 8 minutes · **Training load:** Low

Tactical purpose: Unopposed striking-the-ball repetition — no target runner, no defender, purely the technique of making clean contact and controlling the ball's flight before either is tested against a moving picture.

Organisation: Each player has a ball and works individually or in pairs from a wide position, striking crosses into an open target area with no runners to aim at yet.

Walkthrough: Players strike a series of crosses from a wide position using different parts of the foot — the instep for a driven ball, the outside for natural curl — focusing purely on clean contact and consistent flight, retrieving and repeating.

Rules: No target required yet — focus entirely on the quality and consistency of the strike itself.

Coaching points:

- *Technical:* a firm, locked ankle at the point of contact, whichever part of the foot is used.
- *Technical:* a consistent plant-foot position alongside the ball, giving the strike a repeatable base every time.

No diagram, guided discovery questions, or progressions are attached to the arrival activity — it is deliberately kept simple so the session's teaching time is protected for the three main practices below.

PRACTICE 2 — WHIP OR DRIVE (DELIVERY CHOICE)

Duration: 14 minutes · **Training load:** Moderate

Tactical purpose: Builds both delivery types — a whipped, curling ball that bends away from the goalkeeper, and a firm, driven ball hit with pace along a flatter line — and the judgement to choose between them based on the picture in the box.

Organisation:

- **Pitch dimensions:** wide delivery channel opening into a marked box, roughly 30 x 20 m
- **Players:** crosser plus 2–3 target players in the box
- **Goalkeeper involvement:** in goal, reading each delivery type as it's struck
- **Team sizes:** small group receiving crosses, one crosser working through repetitions
- **Neutrals:** none
- **Equipment:** cones marking two delivery start positions (deeper for a whipped ball, closer to the byline for a driven one)
- **Starting positions:** as shown in the diagram
- **Ball supply:** reset at the delivery position after each cross
- **Restart:** next delivery begins as soon as the box is clear
- **Coach position:** able to see both the crosser's technique and the ball's flight into the box
- **Rotation method:** crosser and target players rotate every 4–5 deliveries
- **Direction of play:** always into the same box

Practice walkthrough: The crosser alternates between a whipped delivery — struck with the outside or inside of the foot to curl the ball away from the goalkeeper toward the back post — and a driven delivery — struck firmly and flatter, arriving quickly across the face of goal. Target players adjust their movement to each delivery type, and the crosser is coached to recognise which picture in the box favours which ball.

Rules: The crosser must call which delivery they intend before striking it — "whip" or "drive" — so target players can react accordingly and the coach can judge technique against intention.

Coaching points:

CORNER	POINT
Technical	A distinctly different technique for each delivery type — genuine curl on the whip, genuine pace and a flatter trajectory on the drive.
Tactical	Reading the box to choose the right delivery — a packed near post favours a whip to the back, a stretched defence favours a fast, driven ball across the face of goal.
Physical	A full, committed strike on both delivery types — a tentative half-strike serves neither picture well.
Psychological	Confidence to call the delivery and commit to it, rather than hedging between the two techniques mid-strike.
Communication & leadership	An early, clear call of "whip" or "drive" that gives target players real information to move on.

Tactical roles: **Crosser** — reads the box and delivers the called technique with full commitment. **Target players** — adjust their movement and timing to the specific delivery type called.

Decision-making triggers: a crowded near post and space at the back favours a whipped ball; a stretched, uncertain defensive line favours a fast, driven ball across the danger area.

Communication language used: *Whip* and *Drive* — the crosser's call before every delivery.

Guided discovery questions:

1. What made a whipped ball the better choice on some deliveries, and a driven ball better on others?
2. What changed about your technique between the two delivery types?
3. As a target player, how did the call change your movement before the ball was even struck?

Progressions:

1. Add a passive defender in the box, giving the crosser a real picture to read rather than an open target.
2. Remove the advance call once both techniques are established, requiring target players to read the delivery in flight instead.

Regressions:

1. Return to Practice 1's unopposed striking if either technique is breaking down under the added decision-making.
2. Reduce to one delivery type at a time until each is technically solid before combining them.

Common problems and corrections:

PROBLEM	WHY IT HAPPENS	COACH RECOGNISES BY	STOP OR FLOW?	INTERVENTION	RESTART
The whipped and driven deliveries look technically identical	The crosser hasn't yet separated the two techniques in their own execution	Both delivery types arrive with similar pace and flight regardless of the call	Stop	Freeze-and-correct: isolate each technique again at walking pace, exaggerating the difference	Resume
The crosser calls one delivery but strikes the other	A gap between the decision and the technical execution	Target players react to the call and are wrong-footed by the actual ball	Stop	Freeze-and-correct: slow down and rehearse committing to the called technique	Resume

Coach interventions used in this practice: freeze-and-correct for technically indistinct deliveries and for a mismatch between the call and the strike.

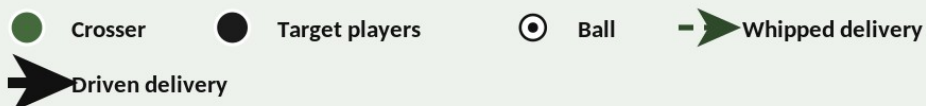
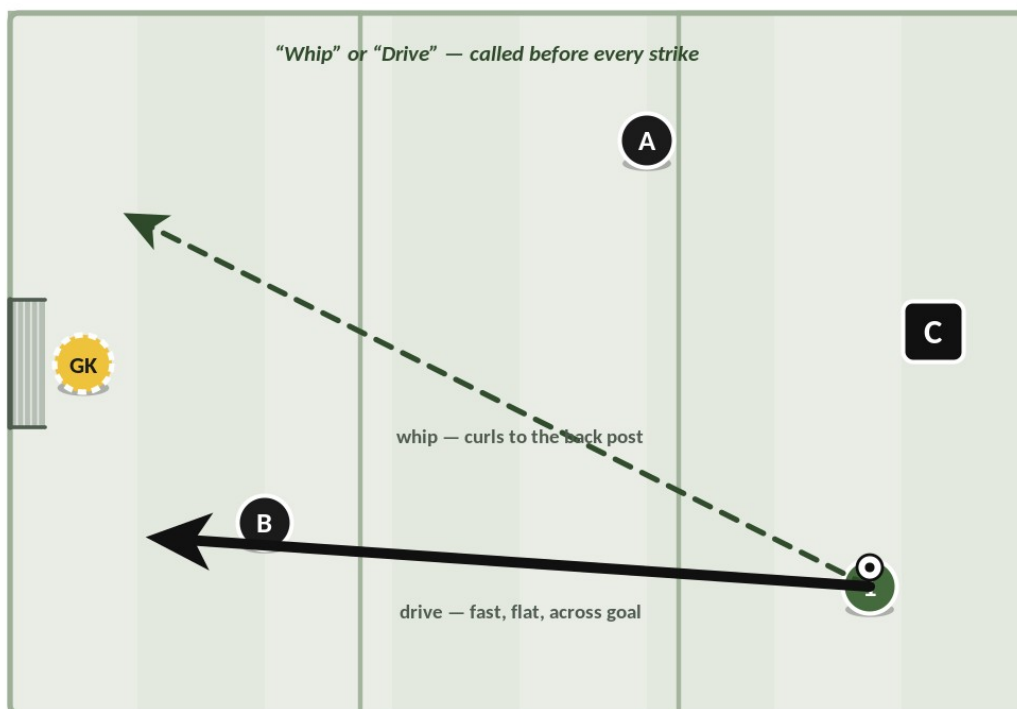
Success indicators:

- The two delivery types are clearly, technically distinct from each other.
- The crosser's choice of delivery reflects the actual picture in the box.
- Target players can read and react to the call before the ball arrives.

Coach's eye: a crosser who can only really produce one type of ball has half a toolkit — protect the time spent building the second technique properly, even if it develops more slowly than the first.

TC3.2 WHIP OR DRIVE — Delivery Choice

Wide channel into the box • two techniques, one judgement call • 14 minutes



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PRACTICE 3 — TIME THE RUN (NEAR AND FAR POST)

Duration: 14 minutes · **Training load:** Moderate

Tactical purpose: Builds the attacking run that actually finishes a cross — timing an arrival at the near post or far post to sync exactly with the ball's flight, rather than arriving too early or too late to convert a good delivery into a chance.

Organisation:

- **Pitch dimensions:** full box with a wide delivery channel
- **Players:** crosser plus 2 target runners (near post and far post) and 1-2 passive or semi-active defenders
- **Goalkeeper involvement:** in goal, reading both the delivery and the timed runs
- **Team sizes:** small group in the box against light or no defensive pressure initially
- **Neutrals:** none
- **Equipment:** cones marking each runner's starting position, out of the box
- **Starting positions:** as shown in the diagram
- **Ball supply:** reset at the delivery position after each cross
- **Restart:** next delivery begins as soon as the box is clear
- **Coach position:** able to see the delivery, both runners' timing, and the point of contact
- **Rotation method:** crosser and runners rotate every 4-5 deliveries
- **Direction of play:** always into the same box

Practice walkthrough: The crosser delivers from a wide position while two runners — one starting deep for a near-post run, one starting wide for a far-post arrival — time their movement so that whichever run matches the delivery arrives to meet the ball at exactly the right moment, not a stride early or late. The crosser and runners are encouraged to develop an understanding of each other's timing across repetitions, exactly as a settled front line would in matches.

Rules: Runners must start outside the box and time their run from a genuine, delayed trigger — no early starts that beat the timing challenge rather than solving it.

Coaching points:

CORNER	POINT
Technical	A clean connection at the point of arrival, whether that's a near-post flick or a far-post finish.
Tactical	Reading which run — near or far — actually matches the delivery being struck, and committing to the right one.
Physical	A genuinely timed sprint, not a jog that happens to arrive — the run itself must be explosive to beat defensive recovery.
Psychological	Trust between crosser and runner — the runner commits to the run before being certain the delivery will match it.
Communication & leadership	A short call between crosser and runner when the timing isn't quite matching, so it can be corrected across repetitions.

Tactical roles: **Crosser** — delivers with enough consistency that runners can learn to time against it. **Near-post runner** — arrives early and sharp for a flicked or driven near-post ball. **Far-post runner** — arrives late and controlled for a whipped or floated ball to the back.

Decision-making triggers: a driven, flatter delivery favours the near-post run arriving first; a whipped, curling delivery toward the back favours the far-post run.

Communication language used: *Near!* and *Far!* — either player can call which run the delivery favours, refining the shared understanding over repetitions.

Guided discovery questions:

1. What told you which run to make before the ball was even delivered?
2. What happened on the repetitions where your timing was off — too early or too late?
3. How did the crosser and runner's understanding of each other change across the repetitions?

Progressions:

1. Add a live, competing defender for each runner, testing whether the timing holds under real pressure.
2. Remove the advance knowledge of delivery type, requiring runners to read the crosser's body shape and technique in real time.

Regressions:

1. Slow the delivery and allow runners extra time to find their timing before adding full pace.
2. Reduce to one runner at a time until each run type is individually solid.

Common problems and corrections:

PROBLEM	WHY IT HAPPENS	COACH RECOGNISES BY	STOP OR FLOW?	INTERVENTION	RESTART
The runner arrives before the ball, forced to slow down or wait in the box	Anticipation outrunning the actual delivery timing	The runner is stationary or backtracking as the cross arrives	Stop	Freeze-and-correct: rehearse the delayed trigger for starting the run	Resume
The runner arrives after the ball has already passed through the danger area	A delayed or hesitant start to the run	The cross arrives and passes through the box before the runner is in position	Stop	Freeze-and-correct: sharpen the trigger and the explosiveness of the first few steps	Resume

Coach interventions used in this practice: freeze-and-correct for runs that arrive too early and for runs that arrive too late.

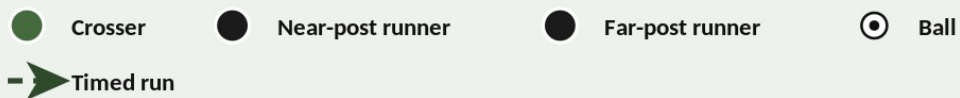
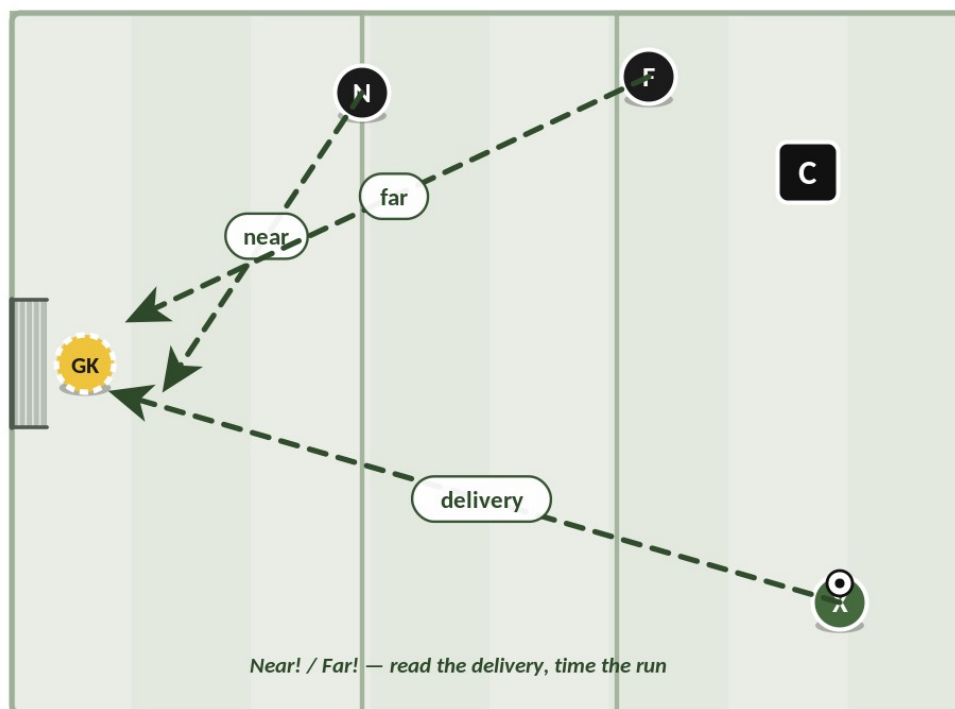
Success indicators:

- Runners consistently arrive to meet the ball at the right moment, not before or after.
- The correct run — near or far — is chosen to match each delivery type.
- Crosser and runners visibly develop a shared understanding of each other's timing across repetitions.

Coach's eye: a technically perfect cross with no one arriving to meet it is wasted — this practice is where the crossing technique from Practice 2 actually becomes a goalscoring threat.

TC3.3 TIME THE RUN — Near and Far Post

Full box • runs timed to meet the delivery, not beat it • 14 minutes



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PRACTICE 4 — CROSS AND FINISH (CLOSING LIVE GAME)

Duration: 14 minutes · **Training load:** Moderate-high

Purpose: Closes the session with a live small-sided game that specifically rewards a cross-and-finish combination, bringing delivery technique and run timing together under real, unscripted pressure with a genuine incentive attached.

Organisation:

- **Pitch dimensions:** 40 x 30 m working area including a full box
- **Players:** two teams of 6–7 with goalkeepers
- **Goalkeeper involvement:** each keeper defends their own goal, live practice for their Goalkeeping session's Claim It work
- **Team sizes:** 6v6 or 7v7 with goalkeepers
- **Neutrals:** none
- **Equipment:** none beyond standard small-sided game markers
- **Starting positions:** open play
- **Ball supply:** a supply near the wide areas to remove delay in restarting
- **Restart:** standard small-sided game rules
- **Coach position:** mobile, observing wide delivery and box movement as they arise
- **Rotation method:** roles rotate naturally through open play
- **Direction of play:** both directions, standard small-sided game rules otherwise

Practice walkthrough: A small conditioned game runs normally, with any goal scored directly from a cross — a delivery from a wide area met first-time or with a controlling touch inside the box — worth double, directly rewarding the specific combination this session has built.

Rules: Standard small-sided game rules, plus goals scored directly from a wide delivery count double.

Coaching points:

CORNER	POINT
Technical	Delivery technique and finishing touch both hold up under live, unscripted conditions.
Tactical	Genuine recognition of when a wide delivery is the right option, rather than forcing a cross when a central option was better.
Physical	Runners sustain explosive, well-timed movement into the box across a longer, more demanding game context.
Psychological	Confidence to commit to a run into the box without certainty the cross is coming.
Communication & leadership	Wide players and box runners communicating in the moment, exactly as built in Practice 3.

Tactical roles: the full set of roles from Practices 2 and 3, now applied inside a live, unpredictable game with a genuine scoring incentive attached.

Decision-making triggers: the same delivery and timing triggers from Practices 2 and 3, now tested under live conditions and the pull of the doubled-goal incentive.

Communication language used: *Whip, Drive, Near!, Far!* — the full shared language from tonight, now used together under match conditions.

Guided discovery questions:

1. Did the bonus for scoring from a cross change decision-making for better or worse tonight?
2. What was the best cross-and-finish combination you saw or were part of — what made it work?
3. What's one thing from tonight you'd want to see more of in a real match?

Progressions:

1. Restrict central shooting for a short period, forcing the team to find width and deliveries.
2. Add a specific bonus for a far-post finish, encouraging the harder of the two delivery-and-run combinations.

Regressions:

1. Remove the doubled-goal incentive temporarily if it's distorting decision-making rather than sharpening it.
2. Widen the pitch further if genuine wide areas aren't being found naturally.

Common problems and corrections:

PROBLEM	WHY IT HAPPENS	COACH RECOGNISES BY	STOP OR FLOW?	INTERVENTION	RESTART
Players force crosses from deep, poor-quality positions to chase the bonus	The incentive outweighing sound decision-making about delivery quality	Crosses struck from positions or angles that were never likely to succeed	Let it flow, then a natural stoppage	Question: "was that really a crossing position?"	Resume
Runners stop making box runs once a cross doesn't arrive a few times in a row	Discouragement after early unrewarded effort	Box runners drifting or standing still as play develops wide	Let it flow, then a natural stoppage	A direct reminder that the run matters regardless of whether this specific cross arrives	Resume

Coach interventions used in this practice: reflective questioning for forced, poor-quality crosses; a direct reminder for runners who stop making the effort.

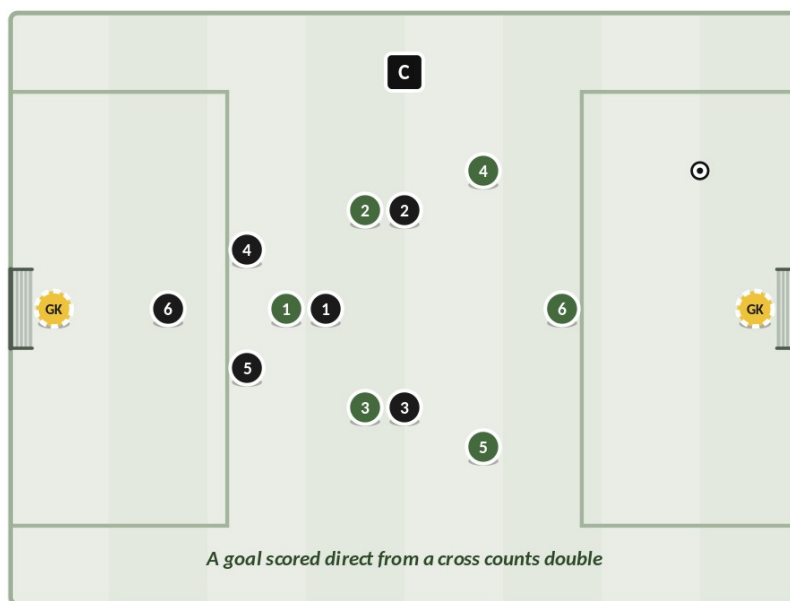
Success indicators:

- Crosses are attempted from positions and angles that genuinely favour them.
- Box runners consistently make the effort to arrive, regardless of whether any individual cross arrives.
- At least some goals in the game come directly from the cross-and-finish combination this session has built.

Coach's eye: the doubled-goal incentive is there to spotlight the combination, not to distort the game — watch for genuine improvement in delivery and timing, not just a chase for the bonus.

TC3.4 CROSS AND FINISH — Closing Live Game

40 x 30 m • 6v6 or 7v7 with keepers • a goal scored direct from a cross counts double • 14 minutes



● Team A ● Team B ● Ball

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