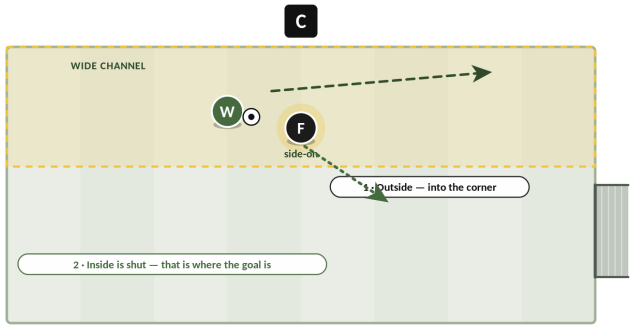
Defending the Wide Areas — Where We Send Them

Session 27 · Defending as a team · 14–16 players · 60 minutes

0:00 – 0:10 · 10 MIN	0:10 – 0:25 · 15 MIN	0:25 – 0:40 · 15 MIN	0:40 – 0:55 · 15 MIN	0:55 – 1:00 · 5 MIN
Show Him the Line	The Wide Trap	Four Jobs in the Box	Out Wide	Questions and homework

27.1 SHOW HIM THE LINE

Warm-up · 10 min



THE TOUCHLINE IS A DEFENDER · USE IT

SET UP

· 32 × 15 m channel along one side, with a full goal at the far end positioned centrally — so the inside route leads to goal and the outside route leads to the corner.

RULES

· The winger scores 1 for getting inside the defender, 1 for reaching the byline.
· The defender scores 1 for forcing him outside, 2 for winning the ball or forcing it out near the …

COACH IT

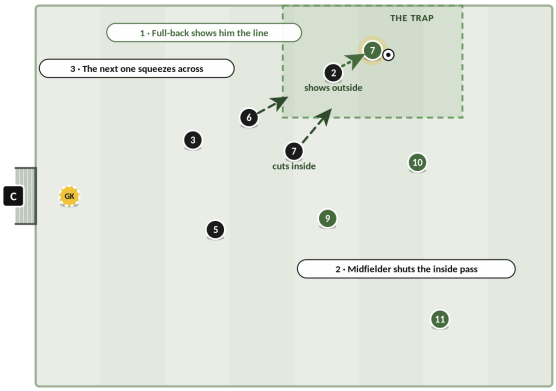
· Technical: Body shape is the whole skill: side-on, inside shoulder forward, low, and close enough to influence but far enough not to be knocked past.

SAY

· The root of everything. Turn your body. Which way are you sending him?

27.2 THE WIDE TRAP

Technical practice · 15 min



SHOW HIM THE LINE · SHUT THE INSIDE · WIN IT IN THE CORNER

SET UP

· 46 × 34 m with a full goal and goalkeeper at one end.
· Five attackers against five defenders in a block, ball starting wide and high.

RULES

· Attackers score 1 in the goal, 1 for reaching the byline in control.
· Defenders score 1 for winning the ball, 2 inside the trap.

COACH IT

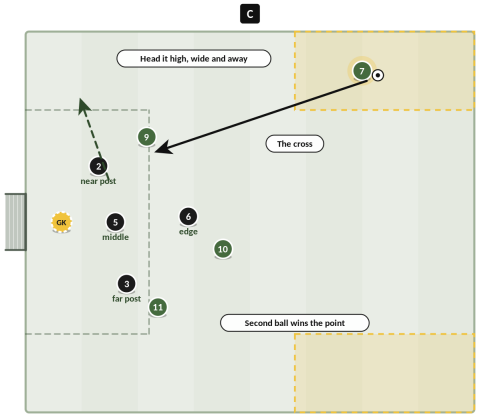
· Technical: Approach angle. The full-back arrives on a curve so his body already points the winger outside before contact.

SAY

· The whole practice fails here. Watch the hips, not the feet.

27.3 FOUR JOBS IN THE BOX

Skill game · 15 min



NEAR POST · MIDDLE · FAR POST · EDGE — ALL FOUR, EVERY TIME

SET UP

· 40 × 34 m with a full goal and goalkeeper at one end and marked crossing channels on both flanks.
· Four attackers against four defenders in the box, plus two crossers who alternate sides and are …

RULES

· Attackers score 1 from a cross. Defenders score 1 for clearing beyond the edge of the box, 2 for also winning the second ball.
· All four jobs must be filled before the cross comes …

COACH IT

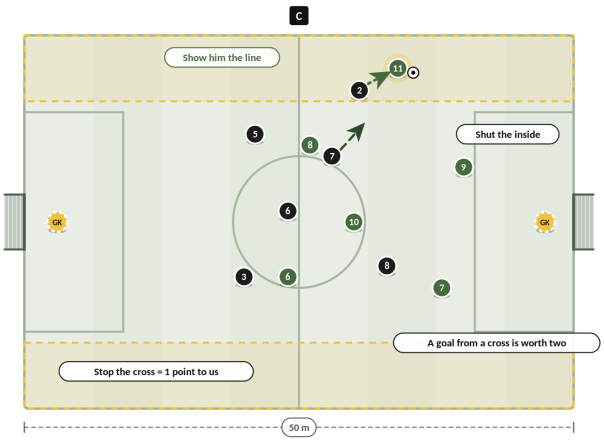
· Technical: Heading and clearing technique: attack the ball, meet it, and send it back where it came from — high, wide, and away from the middle. Also …

SAY

· The most common gap and the most expensive one.
· Defenders staring at the crosser and losing the …

27.4 OUT WIDE (7 v 7)

Conditioned match · 15 min



SET UP

· 50 × 34 m with full-size goals and marked boxes.
· Wide channels marked 6 m in from each touchline along the full length.
· 7 v 7 including goalkeepers (14). With 15–16, play …

RULES

· A goal from a cross = 2 points. Any other goal = 1 point.
· Stopping a cross — blocking it, forcing it out, or winning it in the wide channel — = 1 point.

COACH IT

· Technical: Match-speed body shape from the full-backs, and clearing technique under real pressure.

SAY

· The habit is only two practices old. One reminder, then let the scoreline teach.

Quick reference — the full plan (coach's eye, questions, progressions, homework) is in the session document.

Alan Cunningham with Claude AI · independent club resource, built around the Irish FA Youth Football Framework