

# The midfielder enforcer

The enforcer's role in the team is to stop opponent's attacks by applying pressure and making tackles. He plays just in front of the defence and is often the first resistance an opposition attack faces.



### What you tell your players the session is about

1. Playing with a holding midfielder.
2. Pressing the opponents in order to regain possession.
3. Tackling to regain possession.

### Session planner

Warm up 5 mins	Session 15 mins	Developments 15 mins	Game 20 mins	Warm down 5 mins
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Activity	Kit	Outcome
Warm up	Balls	Players learn how to pressure attackers, from <i>The Ultimate Football Warm-Ups Manual</i> , exercise 14
The session	Cones, balls	The enforcer is pressing the dribbling opponents and making tackles to stop the attack
Development	One goal, balls, bibs cones	Attack v defence game where the enforcer plays in front of the defence
Game	Two goals, balls, bibs, cones	The enforcer plays one half for each team
Warm down	n/a	Gentle jogging and stretching exercises



### Where it fits

Individual skills: Defending skills (pressing and tackling), movement and positioning

Team skills: Communication, movements to defend, team defending

#### Related Smart Sessions

- 4 [Pressing the ball](#)
- 6 [Teaching tackling](#)
- 15 [Individual defending](#)



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### What to think about

- In modern day football, midfielders are making fewer tackles and are applying pressure in order to intercept passes or force mistakes.
- Playing with a holding midfielder (enforcer) gives your other midfielders more freedom to attack because the enforcer will stay in position.
- It is important that when the team is in possession, the enforcer takes part in the team's attack by receiving the ball and making passes to help in the build-up process.





## Set-up

- Use a 30-yard square area for the session and development.
- Use an area 40 yards long by 30 yards wide for the game.



## What you get your players to do

Two enforcers (E) are placed inside 10-yard square areas as in the top picture. This way, two exercises can take place in a single area. Dribblers (D) are placed on the ends of the area.

A server (S) passes to a dribbler who tries to dribble the ball through the enforcer's zone. The enforcer attempts to stop the dribbler reaching the other side by applying pressure and tackling.

After each attempt the dribbler becomes the server on the opposite side and server follows his pass to become the dribbler. Rotate so everyone is the enforcer. The enforcer who makes the most tackles wins.



## What to call out

- "Apply pressure"
- "Be physical"
- "Make a tackle"
- "Win the ball"



## Development

One team, comprising a goalkeeper, three defenders and a midfield enforcer, defends the goal. The other team, which has two forwards, a midfielder and a resting player, attacks the goal.

The aim for the attacking team is to build up pressure and score a goal. The defending team tries to regain the ball and make a forward pass to the resting attacker in order to "score a goal".

Having an extra defender allows the enforcer to put pressure on opponents at all times.



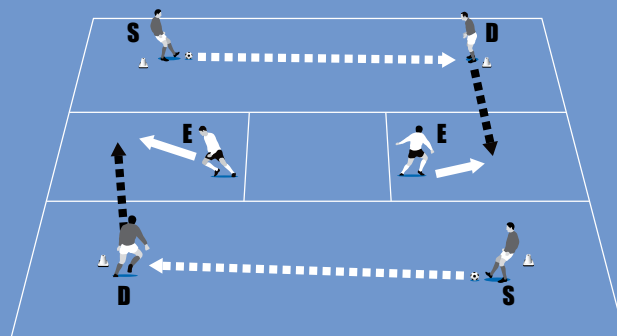
## Game situation

Play a small-sided game with even teams but add a midfield enforcer. The enforcer plays for one team for half of the game and for the other team in the second half.

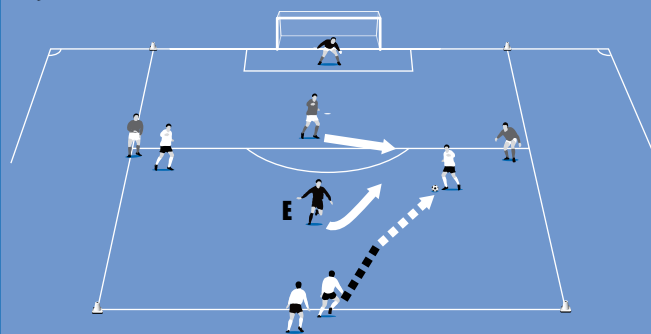
Goals which are scored as a result of a tackle by the enforcer count as double. The team with most goals at the end is the winner.

# The midfield enforcer

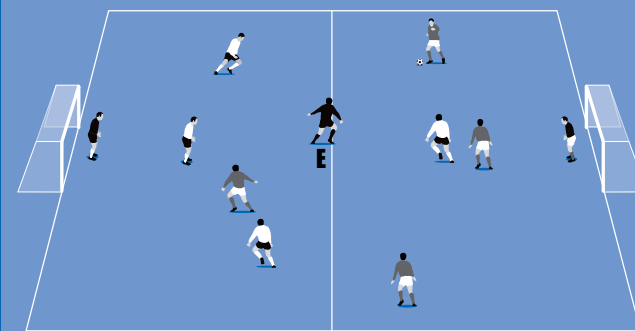
player movement  $\Rightarrow$  pass  $\square\square\square\Rightarrow$   
run with ball  $\blacksquare\blacksquare\blacksquare\blacksquare\Rightarrow$



Enforcers try to stop the dribbling player from getting across his area.



The enforcer (E) plays in front of the defence and attempts to break up the opponent's attack.



The midfield enforcer (E) plays for a different team in each half. Goals scored as a result from an enforcer's tackle count as double.

