

Week 2: Themes: Building up with different formations, breaking lines, inside and outside connections

This week, a little more about formations and how teams can choose to build up in different ways.

To progress the ball forward from the back, we typically first need to get past the opponent's forward line, then their midfield line, and lastly, their defensive line before we can create a scoring opportunity. This is often known as 'breaking lines.' There are many different approaches to accomplish this.

There are three short clips for you to review.

In the first clip, Australia in gold is outletting, and Germany in black is adopting a zonal defense with connected diamond shapes. Australia has four at the back, as with the German clips last week, but then their midfield appears to be structured with just one player in each of three zones going up the field. The formation could be described as 4-3-3 or even a 4-1-1-1-2-1, and they are choosing not to have players square on the same lines. The idea is to pass through the defensive lines and go forward as quickly as possible. When this happens, the other forwards must work hard to get ahead and be available as a new passing option. In the clip, they use a long aerial to do this, but a direct hit through an open channel caused by the deeper midfield players moving the German press could be an option with the same effect.

In the second and third clips, we see a German club team with a different setup. What formation do you think they have? The combination of defense and midfield creates multiple passing options with connections on the inside and the outside. Pause the video, watch the movement, and see how the black team creates overloads.

In the third clip, the white team is a player down, and the black team uses the spaces out wide and also transfers the ball to stretch the play.

The video clips: <https://youtu.be/C7X1g-E5HtQ>