

FIFA 09 GUIDE

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ATTACKING

TRAPPING

There is a popular saying that is so true in FIFA 09: "First touch will kill you." Control over the ball when receiving is crucial to being successful. Trapping is the skill where you collect the ball instead of it merely hitting you and hoping for the best. How the player first touches the ball when it comes in his direction can make all the difference between handing it over to your opponent and maintaining possession. There are three fundamental concepts used in FIFA 09 for trapping.

Trap

Trapping is the art of receiving the ball and bringing it under control. This is a very basic concept but can be used to gain quick control over the ball and be ready for what you do next. Whether standing in a crowded space or on a full sprint down the wing, a good trap is essential to gaining and maintaining possession. There are several types, all with various parts of your player's body, from the chest to the thigh to the foot and even the head. All of them accomplish the same thing: to get the ball with any momentum it might be travelling in immediately into your possession so that you can be effective with your next move.

First Touch

There is no more effective moment in the game than when your player first touches the ball. If not controlled, it can be a quick turnover leading to disaster, or give your player a huge advantage to move into open space. Use the right stick and bump it away from your opponent and sprint onto the ball. It is a simple quick moment, but can be a key to successful possession. In a crowd of players, use this to avoid having the opponent make a quick steal by giving yourself some room to work.



Cancel Trap

Cancel Trap is a very effective way to take a player off of this default run and redirect him to intercept a pass. A good example of this is if your team mate attempts to hit you on a through ball and an opponent looks like he is going to cut off the pass if the target player stays on the default run. This function allows you to cancel out of the run and cut in front of the opponent and collect the ball before he intercepts it. This is a great function to adjust your player off of the default path and adjust the path a more strategic path. You can also use it to cancel a shot attempt or cross as long as you hit the buttons before the shooting animation starts.



Our midfielder receives the ball and spots a wing player making a run.



If the ball and pass receiver continue on their current track, there is a high likelihood that the Croatian defender will pick off the pass.



We press the Cancel Trap button and swerve into the pass of the ball.



Our player receives the pass in front of the defender and can continue the play down the pitch.

DRIBBLING

Controlling your player's possession of the ball is a key component to success in FIFA 09. Dribbling is basically the set up for everything else you do in the game. If you are on a full sprint down the field, the ball will tend to be pushed out in front of you a little further and you basically run onto it each time. In a jog, it is a little closer and at a walk it is right at your player's feet. Take careful note of the opponent surround you to know which pace you should be at so as not to give the ball away.

A good tip is to remember not to be predictable to your opponent. Change directions, stop the ball and then immediately continue; change your pace from a walk to a sprint instantly, knock the ball upon receiving it away from your opponent, and of course spend time in the arena polishing your tricks!

FIFA 09 has a ton of signature tricks your player can do and each has the ability to leave your opponent wondering where you went. For a complete breakdown of the tricks, see our sections devoted specifically to skill moves. Below is a quick breakdown of the dribbling techniques available to you and some tips on how to use them to your advantage.

Stop the Ball

A great tip is to use this skill in combination with an explosive exit move. It can really give you an advantage to shake loose from an opponent. You can make a hard stop anywhere on the field. If you hold on to the R2/RT as you stop, your player will transition into a shield move.



Stop the Ball – Facing Goal

This is a great little skill that can really shake your opponent and give you a good look at the goal or just give you some space to work in. Not many are aware of the advantage you can gain by simply stopping and squaring your shoulders towards the goal. In the arena, work on this skill before taking a finishing touch and watch your accuracy greatly improve. In the passing section, a graphic shows how you can increase your accuracy when passing in the 10 to 2 o'clock position of the direction you are facing. The shooting accuracy is heavily dependent on your player's motion and direction, so if you are coming in off balance at full pace and more than likely feel you will just launch the ball over the net, use this skill to increase your chances of getting the ball on goal.



Pace Control

Pace control basically does just what it says. It gives you the ability to have a much more managed movement velocity for your player with the ball. This function does slow down your player, but gives them a bit more control over the ball. The dribbling rating of your player does affect his ability to control the ball effectively.



Pace Control – Facing Goal

The same basic concept but turns your player to face the goal. So now not only is your player moving at a good pace to maintain control of the ball, but is also positioned to greatly increase the accuracy of his next movement.



Sprinting

This sounds obvious, but when in possession of the ball you really have to think about how to elude your opponent. Besides always moving in a sprint, be sure to mix it up, from jog to quick burst of speed. Remember that on a sprint you have the ball further away from you, and when shooting, your accuracy is greatly diminished. A good rule of thumb is to let go of the button to break out of a sprint and into a jog to really increase your accuracy for shooting and other skill moves. Do not forget to mix up your movement; the less predictable you are, the tougher it is for your opponent to get possession.



Knock On

The Knock on is very simple but also very effective. It gives you just enough advantage that makes a big difference in your ability to maintain possession. When moving with the ball, instead of just using the default dribble (which can be easily read by your opponent), be creative and knock the ball in a direction and then change your player's pace and move quickly in that direction. It is very tough for a player to get back in front of you once you have moved beyond them. Use this to set yourself up for other things to transition into like that big shot (or fake shot), a skill move, or a great pass.



Tricks

Refer to our Skill Moves section for details on each and every trick in the game. Fundamentally, it is an awesome tool to not only create that highlight reel to send to your friend, but also is designed to really get you by your opponent. The key to successful tricks is to always keep your player unpredictable to the opponent. A little body feint, or even small gestures might just give you enough advantage to get beyond him and through to your next task at hand. Of course it is even more fun to humiliate your opponent and watch it in slow motion on the instant replay screen. With practice, every gamer has the potential to throw down Ronaldinho-type skills on the ball.



Instigate a Forward Run

This is a very effective tool to open up a target man for a pass, or even just to draw an opponent out of some very attractive looking field space to set up for an attack. One trick is to trigger your teammate on a run and then immediately sprint to the space they just left (which usually is wide open since the attention was on the man making the run). You have to get in the habit of using this to make it effective, so experiment with it in your practice games and see how you can best use it to your advantage. Watch how the opponent reacts to the run and use that against him.

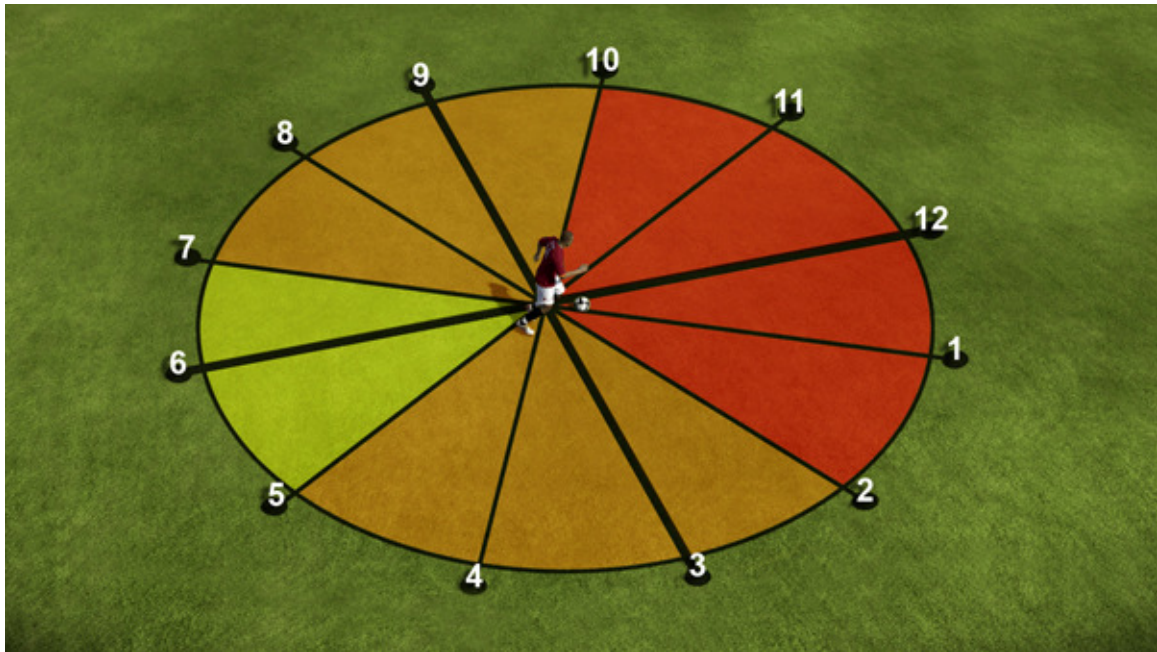


PASSING

"The Beautiful Game" is only as beautiful as your skill mastery of the passing game FIFA 09 offers. The right choice at the right time and there you have it, Joga Bonita! To be successful, the best tip is to keep one eye on the game and another on your radar. Sometimes the best pass is to the player just outside of your vision on the screen, so using the radar will really help you in finding that target player. There are five basic types of passes you can use to successfully create a scoring opportunity, get out of severe pressure in the back, or just plain frustrate your opponent.

Short Pass

The short pass is a successful method that really makes this sport beautiful. Brazil is the first team that comes to mind when discussing the short pass. This is a very effective pass that can be done in very tight traffic to find a way through your opponent. When a teammate is in front of your player it is extremely accurate, and as the player moves around your periphery the accuracy drops. Try to adjust your player's body position to give him the most accurate attempt to be successful. The diagram below clearly shows how the direction your player is facing affects the accuracy of the pas. Assume the direction you are always facing is true 12 o'clock on a typical clock. Everything from 10 – 2 o'clock is pretty accurate, but from 2-5 & from 7-10 accuracy is diminished greatly. From 5-7, you better be Ronaldinho to attempt that pass, and only after you make sure your radar is clear!



Long Pass

The long pass is a favourite weapon of David Beckham, as we all know. It can turn a minor attacking threat into a goal scoring opportunity in the blink of an eye. Having your players make great runs off the ball is the key. Watch the radar for that target player heading to open space, and then judge the power you strike the ball with carefully: too hard and it's an easy ball for the keeper, too light and you might find yourself defending a quick counter attack. Use this when you want to "open up the play." The further away the player gets, the less accurate your pass. The amount of time you hold down the pass button will determine the length of the pass. For best results, make sure you attempt to lead your player and not fire the pass at him. Allowing him to run onto the pass in stride could give him all the distance he needs to get a chance on goal.



Through Pass

This is one of the most deadly weapons in the game, and when done correctly, can rival the beauty of any goal. The key to being successful is your ability to look beyond your player to the space your teammates can hit quickly. You have to think one step ahead. This pass is typically used to get a player threaded through the defence and in on goal. Once again, how long you hold the pass button will determine the strength and distance of your pass. On Manual Through ball Assistance you are in charge of both direction and power. Be sure to play the ball to the space ahead of your player and let him run onto it. Some high level rated players can also perform a swerving through ball that makes it very tough for a defender to judge. Often times he will find himself diving in and leaving the striker with nothing left to do but test his finishing skills.

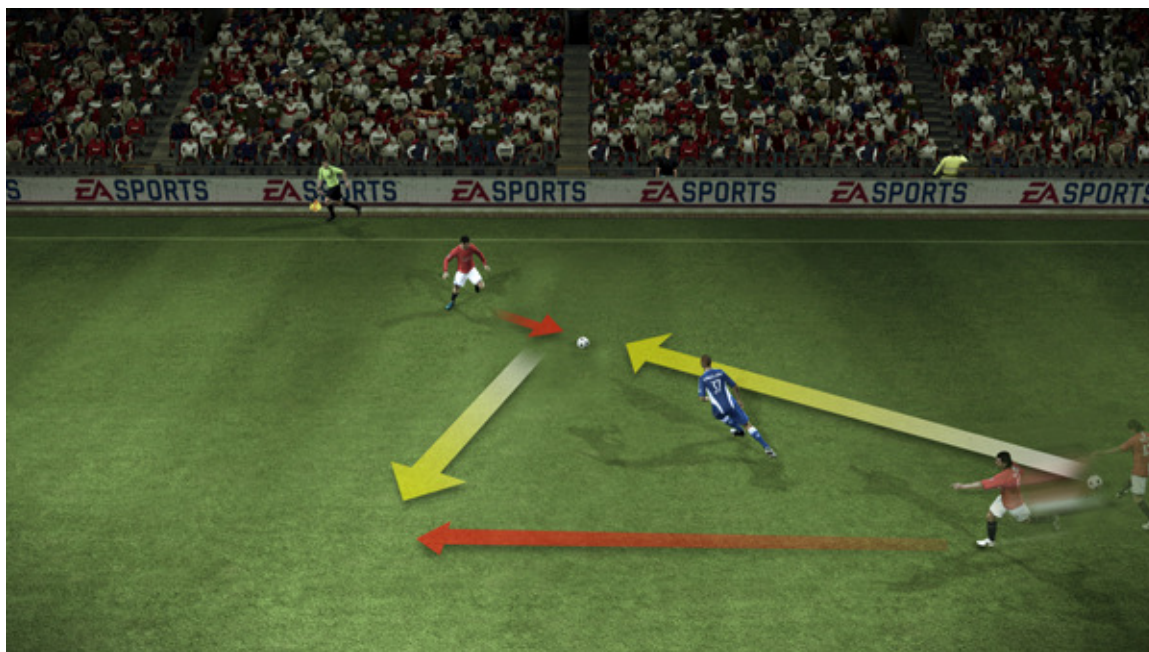
Lobbed Through Pass

The lobbed through pass takes the beauty of the through ball and forces your opponent's defenders to think three dimensionally. The angles are endless to feed a teammate. This is a very effective tool on an attack or counter attack when used to completely switch fields to the opposite side. Use this pass to hit a teammate who is making diagonal run, as it can really get you some great opportunities to get in on your opponent's goal.



One-Two Pass

Also known as the wall pass, this is used to create space to shake a defender with the assistance of another team member. Upon approaching an opponent, time the pass so the defender commits to you, and then pass the ball to a team member while holding the L1/LB button. Your player will immediately sprint beyond your opponent to get a one touch pass back. It can quickly provide some open space in front of you. Be careful of using it too many times in a row as you will create holes in your defence.



CROSSING

Crossing can be used either to switch the field of play into a more open field to start the attack again, or to launch a ball into the middle of the field to create a goal scoring opportunity. Many factors play into how accurate the cross is, such as body position, speed, and player rating. This can be a deadly aerial assault in your opponent's third of the field leading to a goal scoring opportunity. The other use for switching field of play can be to get the ball out of a congested area to an open player that can build an attack much more effectively at that moment. You can also have some control over the curve put on a cross with the right stick. Just lean the stick in the direction you want to curve the ball when the meter is powering up. When they hear the term "cross," most players think of a high arcing ball into the opposing team's box, when in fact that is just the tip of the iceberg. The basics of what type of cross to hit is realizing whether you are in the crossing zone or not (area from the top of the 18 yard box to the end line and from the 18 yard box to the side touchline). If not, then the arsenal of early crosses listed below is your best option. This section covers five other types of crosses in FIFA 09 that can be used to best your opponent.

Low Cross

The low cross is a very effective tool to catch your opponent off guard. The low cross is more of a driven cross that is usually one touched on for a shot or to another player for an attacking opportunity. This cross is usually whipped in with a lot more pace than the typical high arcing cross and can really catch your adversary by surprise. A good tip to remember if you are receiving a low cross end of this is to look around as you see it coming in, and if you do not have a strike at goal, then look to one touch or "flick" the ball onto another play. Use the receiver to change the direction of the ball and set up some interesting opportunities.



Ground Cross

Much like the low cross but is passed in with pace along the ground. This is not to be confused with the through ball. The through ball is designed to lead a teammate on to goal, threading the ball through the defenders; the ground cross is used to deceptively feed a team member outside the expected target area of your opponent. The ground cross is extremely effective in setting up for a one time strike. It also catches your opposition off guard when you hit the crossing zone and they prepare to see a long high ball, but then have to scramble when the target player is running up from the back for a strike.



Early Cross / Early Low Cross / Early Ground Cross

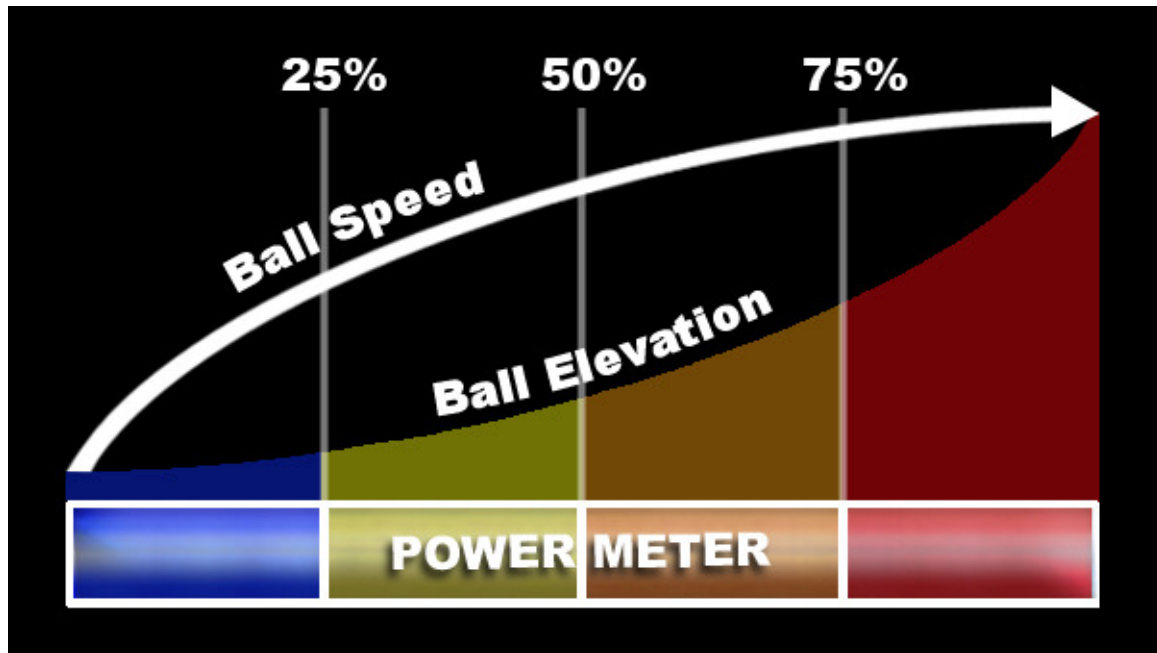
The term "early" refers directly to striking in the cross outside the crossing zone (area from the top of the 18 yard box to the end line and from the 18 yard box to the side touchline). Simply refer to the descriptions of what the cross is used for mentioned above and just know it is hit prior to entering that zone. This is a great tool that can really surprise the teams you are playing since they think they still have time to set up for the big cross, when in fact the threat is coming much sooner for them!





SHOOTING

This is one of the most dynamic aspects of the game, and understanding how it works in FIFA 09 can determine just how much success you will have. Many factors determine the accuracy of the shot such as player momentum, speed, rating, and of course how far you power up the shot meter. In the "Shot Power/Elevation Chart," you can clearly see there is a direct correlation between shot speed and ball elevation based just on the how much you power up the shot meter. Also keep in mind that your player's accuracy is greatly diminished if he is on a full sprint while shooting, as well as his lateral momentum at the time. A really good tip here is to let go of the sprint button, control your pace to gain composure, get the ball on your player's preferred foot, and then let it rip. This is not always possible and sometimes you just have to wing it!



However, this would be a good place to also use the various "Face the Goal" options mentioned in the dribbling section. The shot can be very frustrating if not practiced, so take some time in the arena to get it down from various locations. When you get comfortable with it, you can create some great highlight reels.

One tip that works very well if your player is right footed, is to head directly at the goal about 5 yards off of dead centre and as soon as you see the keeper, start to move left. Flick the left stick and just barely tap the shot button, and sit back and watch the ball rip into the opposite side netting for a goalaso! Obviously, the opposite movement should be done if your player's favoured foot is left.

Shot

This refers to the out and out strike on goal with maximum speed, also known as a "driven shot." This is what puts fans in the stands and makes this game so much fun to play. Refer to the "Shot Power/Elevation Chart" to see what factors come in to play to make the shot go where you want it to. You can greatly control the rise of the ball and speed based on what is shown in the chart.



Finesse Shot

This is a very effective tool to help assist your player in gaining composure while striking the shot. A direct shot is hit with the boot laces, whereas the finesse shot is usually taken with the side of the foot. This is a placement shot versus a driven shot. You get much more accuracy in putting the ball in the net where the keeper least expects it. If you have to approach the goal at pace due to pressure and/or slightly off balance, then just get in the habit of hitting a finesse shot and your chances will be pretty good to get the shot on net.



Chip Shot

The chip is a cheeky little shot that totally fools and humiliates the keeper in one simple lofted scoop shot. Much like the same term in golf, it basically is a shot hit under the ball with the foot stopping upon impact to loft the ball with a high trajectory in the air for a short distance. Usually this is right out of the keeper's full stretch, and is best performed the second you see the keeper start off his line. Practice this in the arena as it is very effective when coming at the keeper one- on-one. And remember, timing is indeed everything with this one.

