

## How Strikers Can Stretch the Opposition

**If your striker retreats too far back when your team has the ball he is in the wrong position and makes it harder for his team to turn defence into attack and easier for his opponents to mark him, says David Clarke.**

If you look at diagram 1 you can see the striker 9 has retreated too far back. He has killed the space between himself and the defender with the ball 3. This means the opposition markers 4 and 5 are able to mark their opponents tighter because their covering defender 2 is closer. The player 9 is in their line of vision so they can easily watch him. This has made the pitch much smaller for the white team and means it will be harder to move the ball upfield because they have far less space to use. When the passer 3 passes to either of the midfielders the striker 9's position means there is no forward movement of the ball and the move breaks down.



### Much Harder to Defend Against

In diagram 2 the striker 9 has pushed deep into the opponents half. The opposition midfielders have to leave him to the defender 2 and are unsure where the pass will go. Defender 3 can pass to one of his midfielders and create space for the second midfielder. Striker 9 can then move to receive a pass either through the middle or down the line, and with more space to defend only defender 2 can stop him. The distance and angle for striker 9 is better. The white team has more options while the opposition finds it much harder to defend against.