

Computerized training improves selective attention of soccer players

January 7 2020



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Researchers of the Faculty of Psychology of the University of Malaga (UMA) have demonstrated how computerized training—through a specific software—can improve the attentional capacity of athletes, particularly, soccer players.

Based on a study carried out in nine weeks, through 27 [training sessions](#),

the UMA research team has verified the efficiency of this type of computerized training in the development of the selective attention of soccer players.

"Athletes, especially of open skill sports like soccer, which are very variable, learn game patterns that they activate almost automatically in response to a stimulus. However, many times during the game, [unexpected events](#) occur to these learnt patterns that require them to make creative decisions," explains Professor of Social Psychology of the UMA Antonio Hernández Mendo, main author of this study published in the scientific journal *Frontiers in Psychology*.

This expert asserts that it is precisely when facing these unforeseen events that the perceptive and attentional capacity is essential to process information rapidly and effectively. "The development of selective attention enables them to focus on specific and unexpected stimuli and ignore others at any time of the game," adds Hernández Mendo.

The results of this study, which is part of a wider line of research that started three years ago, prove that [soccer players](#) with a better cognitive functioning show greater performance on the pitch.

Thus the researchers of the group "Psychosocial Assessment in Natural Contexts: Sports and Consumption" have designed a computerized tool to train attention, and their future steps include the evaluation of the most appropriate [training](#) based on the type of sport and the position of the player on the pitch.

More information: Rafael E. Reigal et al, Effects of a Computerized Training on Attentional Capacity of Young Soccer Players, *Frontiers in Psychology* (2019). [DOI: 10.3389/fpsyg.2019.02279](https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2019.02279)

Provided by University of Malaga

Citation: Computerized training improves selective attention of soccer players (2020, January 7) retrieved 20 May 2023 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2020-01-computerized-attention-soccer-players.html>

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