

# Small Group Defending III

## “Technical warm-up” (as players arrive)-1v1 Grids THEN 2v2 Grids

### Set up-

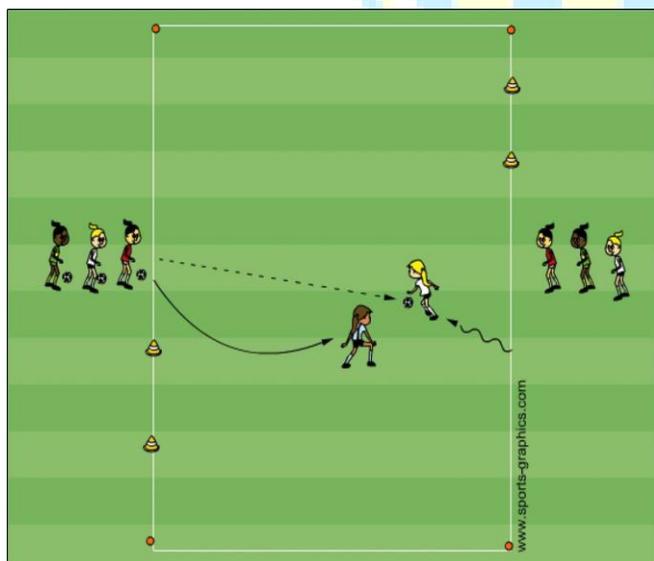
Eight Players to a field. Divide players in half and place them on opposite sides of a 15ydx15yd grid with goals on each side (see diagram). All balls on one side of grid. Note: to keep numbers low and to get lots of reps, use multiple grids).

### Play-

1. First player in line with a ball passes to first player in opposite line and then quickly approaches to play defense. Players play 1v1 to the two cone goals until someone scores or the ball leaves the grid. Players trade lines and play continues with the next players, etc.
2. Move to 2v2 with the same procedures.

### Coaching points-

- “Approach fast, arrive slow” (short choppy steps will help you slow down)
- Approach “sideways” (we say, “surfer dude”) and “steer” the attacker (make predictable)
- Knees bent, arms out for balance
- Watch the ball, NOT the attacker’s legs/feet
- Stay balanced, be prepared to retreat!
- “Don’t dive in!”
- 1<sup>st</sup> Defender should announce, “I’m in!”
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Defender should provide “cover” (behind and to the side of 1<sup>st</sup> defender)



## “Small Sided Activity” Four Zone Defending

### Set up-

Divide a 10yd x 20yd grid into four 5yd deep zones (use three zones if player numbers dictate). Divide players into two teams and put two players in each zone (use three or four players for U12 and older), alternating zones-see diagram. Players in the center two zones are on defense when the other team has the ball. No one may leave their zone\*

### Play-

Object of the activity is for the players with the ball to try to play the ball through the defense to their teammates in the opposite zone. Doing so will earn them a point. If defenders win the ball, they become attackers and try to play the ball through to their teammates. Keep score. Rotate players to give everyone a turn on defense.

### Coaching points-

- Defending player closest to ball should call, “Im in!” and “pressure the ball” quickly-see prior coaching points.
- “Second” defenders should “drop and squeeze” to give “cover” to first defender and not allow the pass to split the defense.
- As the ball moves from side to side, defense should adjust. Defenders should not “chase the ball”, but rather they should switch duties.
- \*Variation: Allow one defender to enter attacking zone to pressure the ball but if the ball is passed sideways, that player must retreat and the next defender may enter and pressure. They should adjust very quickly!



## “Expanded Small Sided Activity” 4v4