



# Defending Session

**Category:** Tactical: Defensive principles

**Difficulty:** Moderate

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## Description

The aim of this session is for players to recognise when they need to get compact and the speed in which it needs to be done to prevent the other team from playing forward in central areas. When the ball goes wide they must also learn how to move as a unit to firstly keep pressure the ball however secondly prevent gaps forward while moving as a team.

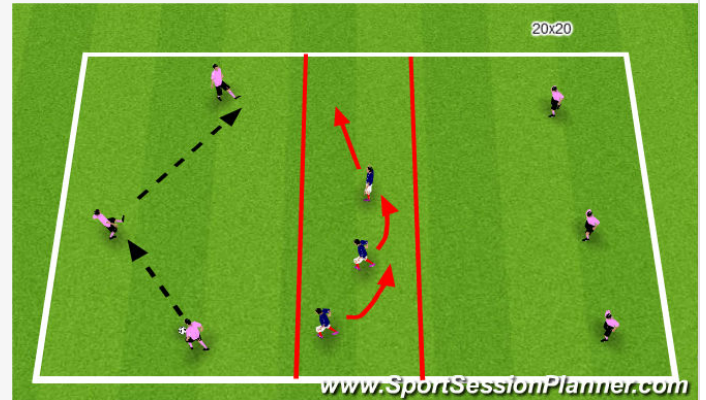
**Coaching Points:** Recover quickly, get compact, communication especially when sliding across, understanding when to slide and how to keep gaps small.

### Stage 1 (20 mins)

In this stage we have a transition game where the blues are looking to switch the play from one end zone to another, whites are looking to keep compact and prevent the attacking team. It's important the whites stay compact and prevent the blues penetrating straight through the middle.

**Progression 1:** Allow a defender in end zone to pressure the ball (remind them of the risk against reward)

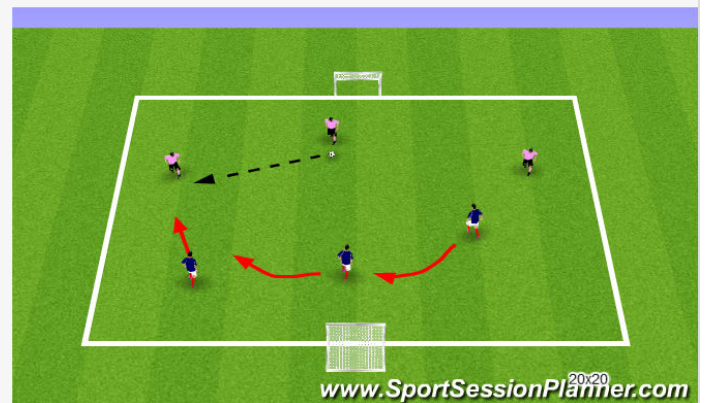
**Progression 2:** Add goals to allow defenders to counter on intercepting the ball



### Stage 2 (20 mins)

In this activity we have a 3v3 towards mini goals on a 20x20 field, the defending team need defend centrally to avoid an easy shot on goal. Its important they pressure the ball yet keep compact to avoid gaps opening up, organisation is key in this game.

**Progression:** Attacking team has 15/20 seconds once ball is in play to score if they want two points, this will increase their speed of play and encourage them to come forward quicker which will test the defenders.

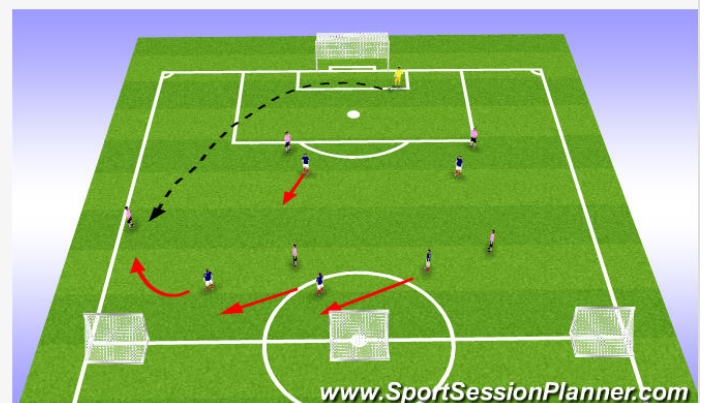


### Stage 3 (20 mins)

In this activity we have whites protecting three mini goals while blues defend a regular goal, see in the diagram how once the ball goes long into the #7 (blue) the #11 pressures but angles their run to prevent them going directly for goal, once in a good position and support from the #6 arrives they can now step and pressure the ball more with the recovery defender.

**Progression 1:** Add an extra blue so whites are outnumbered

**Progression 2:** Remove mini goals play towards two regular goals



## Stage 4 (30 mins)

In this stage I'm looking for quick reactions from the teams losing the ball in the attacking third, here I have the blues winning the ball and looking to counter quickly. Notice how the #6 is pressing quickly (delaying the player advancing forward quickly) while the #7&11 recover back behind the ball and get compact to avoid the space being exploited.

It's important the #6 delays the attacker so recovery runs can be made, diving in will lead to the attacker exploiting the space in behind sooner, once the players have recovered it's equally as important that the players get compact and close the gaps to prevent the forward ball into the #9 player.

if the blue attacking team still play with real wide wingers remind the players they're not a treat as we can cover ground once ball is sent out, the priority is for us to protect central areas of the field and force the attack sideways or backwards. (if ball travels out wide we'll move as a unit across and pin the player in)

