

# DEFENDING PRINCIPLES

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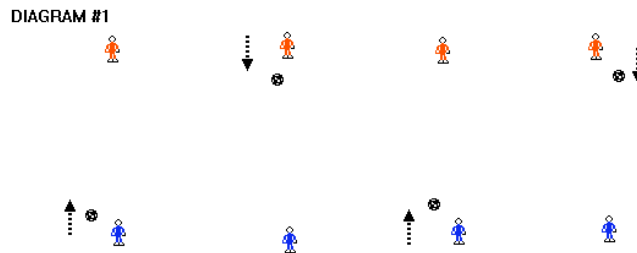
## Warm-Up

### Set-Up / Explanation

- Players passing in pairs
- After a few passes, one player decides to stop the ball with the sole of their foot and their partner sprints to touch the ball with their foot as soon as possible.
- After a few passes, one player decides to allow the ball to go through their legs. Once the ball goes through the player's legs, that same player attempts to turn. That player's partner sprints quickly to close the distance to deny the turn.

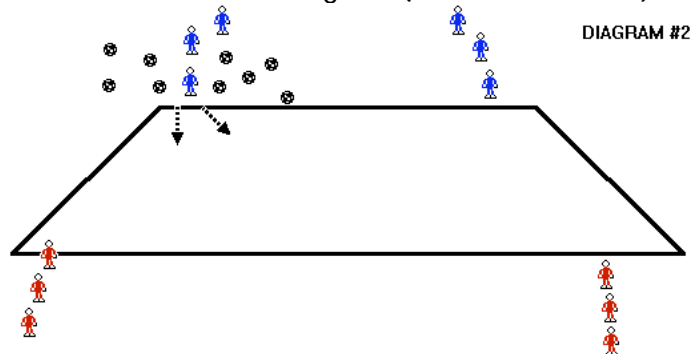
### Coaching Points

- Quick reactions
- Close the space as the 1<sup>st</sup> defender as quick as possible

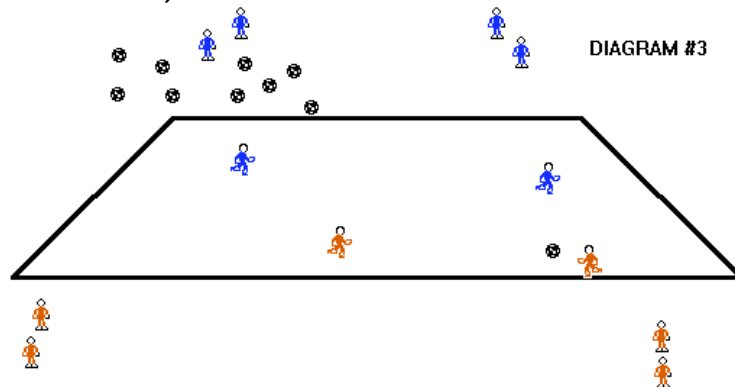


## Match Related Activity #1

Set-up - two groups of 6 in a space 15 yards by 15 yards. Each group divided into 2 groups of 3, in each side of the grid. (see DIAGRAM #2)



**Explanation** - one blue player plays the ball to one of the red players on the opposite side of the grid. When the ball is played, the player who plays it enters the field of play to become one defender and another blue player from the other side also enters the grid to become the second defender. The red player who receives the ball from the blue player becomes the first attacker and another red player enters the field of play from the other side of the field. A goal is scored when one team penetrates the opponent's goal line via a dribble. (see DIAGRAM #3)

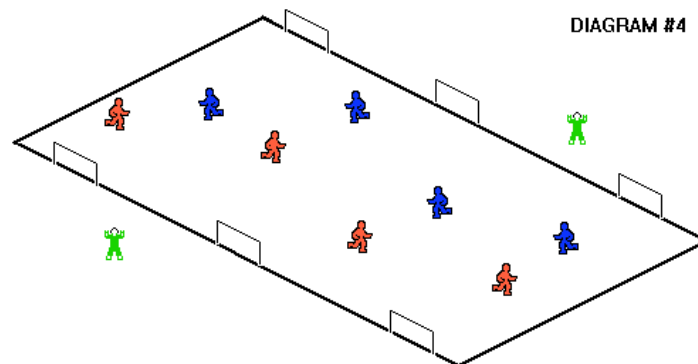


**Coaching Points**

- Pressure on the ball is of utmost importance, with the proper positioning of the 2<sup>nd</sup>, or covering defender being equally important to the integrity of the defensive effort
- Players should not cross in front of one of their teammate's path while defending. This eliminates "ball-chasing" and encourages passing players off to create an affect similar to a "piston" - when one player drops in behind, another steps-up to pressure.

***Match Related Activity #2***

**Set-Up** - in a space approximately 35 yards wide by 20 yards long, players play 4 vs. 4. Each team attacks three goals and defends three goals. (see Diagram #4)



**Explanation** - field players play 4 vs. 4 in the field of play. Points are awarded for a goal scored in one of the opponents three small goals.

**Coaching Points**

- Players must maintain a shape within their teams that allows them constantly have pressure on the ball and defend from left to right
- Players must be aware of their defensive shape in transition so as not to get countered against

***Final Game***

**Set-Up** - players play 8 vs. 8 in a field more wide than long. Several large cones are placed on each team's goal-line.

**Explanation** - goals are scored one of two ways: a team can hit one of its opponent's cones or can dribble over their goal line.

**Coaching Points**

- Players must organize themselves as a team to be sure that all defensive principles are adhered to

