



SOCCER COACH
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U10 Defending (Pressure)

OBJECTIVE: This session is designed to teach players the technical points of pressuring the ball. The 1st defender's speed of approach, body shape and tackling technique.

1.) Defensive Stance Warm-up (5-7 minutes): In pairs passing about 10-15 yds away. When coach signals one player stops ball with the sole of their foot, the other player approaches to defend. Then players back up and passing resumes. *Variation 2:* After a few passes, one of the players lets the ball go through their legs, the other player approaches to defend and 'force' the player in the direction they are facing

Coaching Points:

- Angle of approach – We want to direct the player one way on the field
- Speed of approach – Approach fast arrive slow
- Body Shape- knees bent, on the balls of their feet
- Mobility – able to make a quick change or adjustment

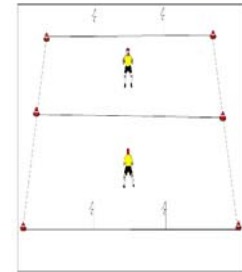
Mistakes to watch for: (these are common mistakes that we want to watch for and correct.)

- Planting their feet once they get to defender
- Sprinting straight at the attacker (diving in)
- Standing straight up

2.) 1v1 to two small goals: (15 minutes): Set up a multiple 15yd x 10yd grids with small goals at each end. Play multiple 1v1 games for 45-60 seconds per game. Rotate players from field to field.

Coaching Points:

- Same as above
- Reading the attackers body language- try to anticipate their next move
- Deciding how to win possession of the ball...block tackle or toe poke (see coaching points below)



Coaching Points: (Block Tackle)

- Attack the player fast, closing the distance between yourself and the ball as fast as possible
- Position your feet in a staggered stance, one foot slightly further than the other.
- Your knees should be slightly bent, allowing you to quickly extend your feet either way, in case the attacker tries to dribble past you.
- Extend your arms sideways, to gain some balance and always stay on the balls of your feet, so you can block the ball with either foot
- When you decide it's time to move in for the block, keep your body low and drag the inside of your tackling foot through the ball. It's important that the ankle of your tackling foot is locked and your non-kicking foot is planted firmly near the ball. Otherwise you risk injuring yourself.

Coaching Points: (Poke Tackle)

- Attack the player fast, closing the distance between yourself and the ball as fast as possible
- Position your feet in a staggered stance, one foot slightly further than the other.
- Your knees should be slightly bent
- If you get close to the attacker and there is an opening to poke the ball away with your toe, do so quickly!

Visual Cues to Tackle: opponent has their head down; just as the ball leaves the foot on the dribble; the ball gets stuck under the opponent; the opponent touches the ball too hard and loses control.



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3) 2v2 to lines (20 minutes):

Create multiple fields that are 20yds x 15yds with 4 cones outlining the field (enough so all players are playing), break all of the players into teams of 2. Each team will defend the end line behind them. Players have to dribble across the end line to score. Play a tournament format where teams will play 2 minute games and then rotate to another field. Scoring goes as follows: 3 pts for the win, 1 pt for the tie, 0 for a loss and, if they have a shut-out, they get 2 bonus pts.

Coaching Points:

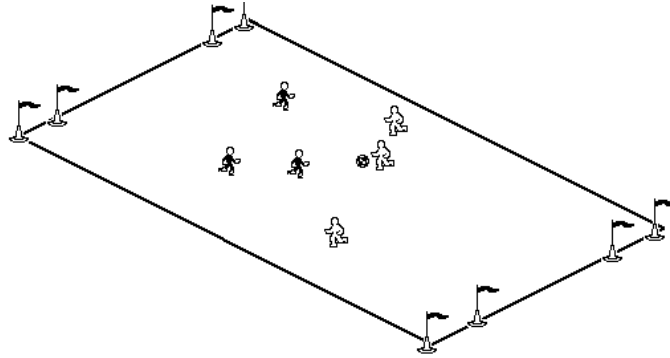
- Same as above
- Reading the game – Do the players recognize when they become the first defender and if, when and how to tackle

Mistakes to watch for:

- **Players hanging back and not pressuring the ball when they become the 1st defender**

4) 3v3 to 4 goals (15 minutes):

Create a few fields that are 30yds x 20yds with two goals at each end. Split all of the players in to teams of 3. Two teams will play on each field with each team defending a goal. Scoring will be normal: 1 point for a goal. Have the players call out when they are the first defender as they close down the ball.



Coaching Points:

- Same as above

5) 6v6 Game (15minutes):

Break the group in to 2 teams and play an unrestricted game. You will receive 1pt for a goal scored normally. While the game is going on, praise successful defending by the pressuring defender.

COOL- DOWN (10 minutes): Juggling in 2's and 3's only using their feet or head. Static stretching of the major muscle groups.