

Topic: Transition to Defend

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Activity #1:

Set Up:

Players are positioned at each 12x15 yard grid as shown in Diagram (a) below. Repeat setup to accommodate entire team (4 grids accommodates 16 players)

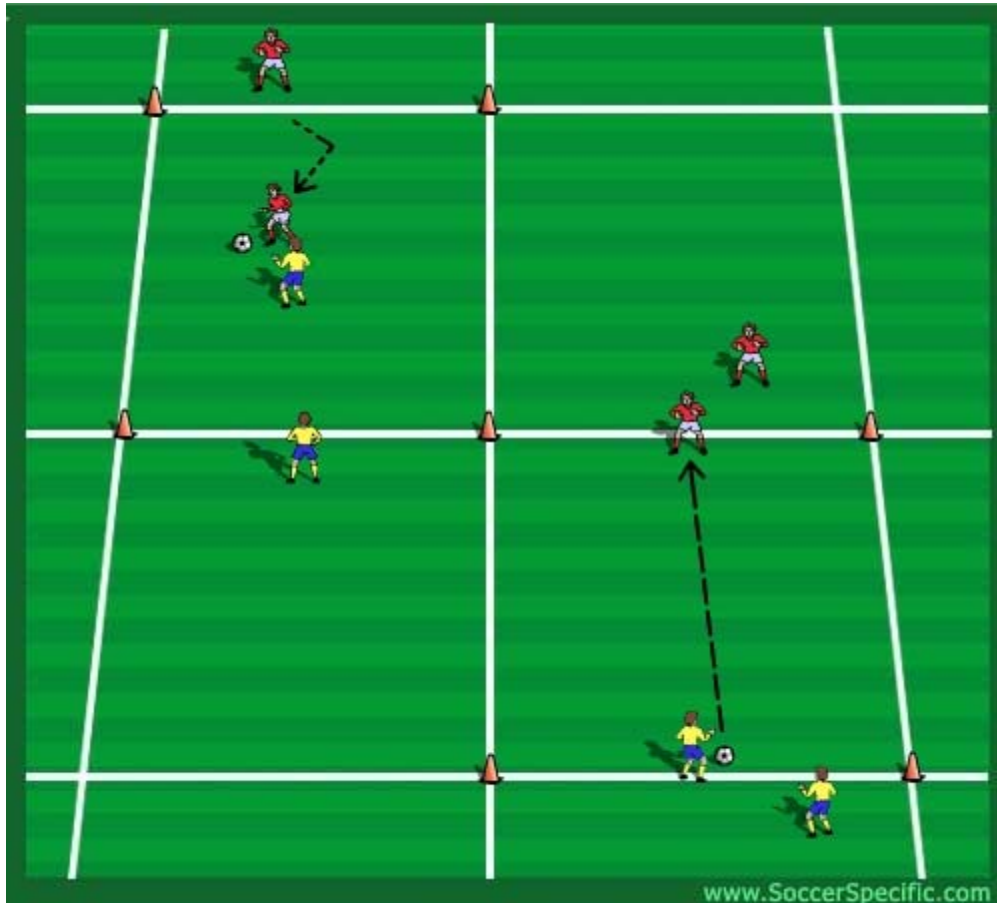


Diagram (a)

Objective:

Players compete 1v1 and attempt to get over their opponents endline. The ball is passed to the opponent at the opposite end of the grid. The player that made the initial pass must go and defend against the player in possession of the ball. Emphasis is on coaching the defensive techniques/tactics. Switch roles after designated time or points.

Coaching Points:

- Close down the space as quickly as possible
- Angle the run to the ball to force the attacker one way
- Defend with patience and predictability
- Hunt for the bad first touch, then win the ball!

Activity #2:

Set Up:

Players are organized in three teams of three in a 20x30 area as shown in Diagram (b) below.

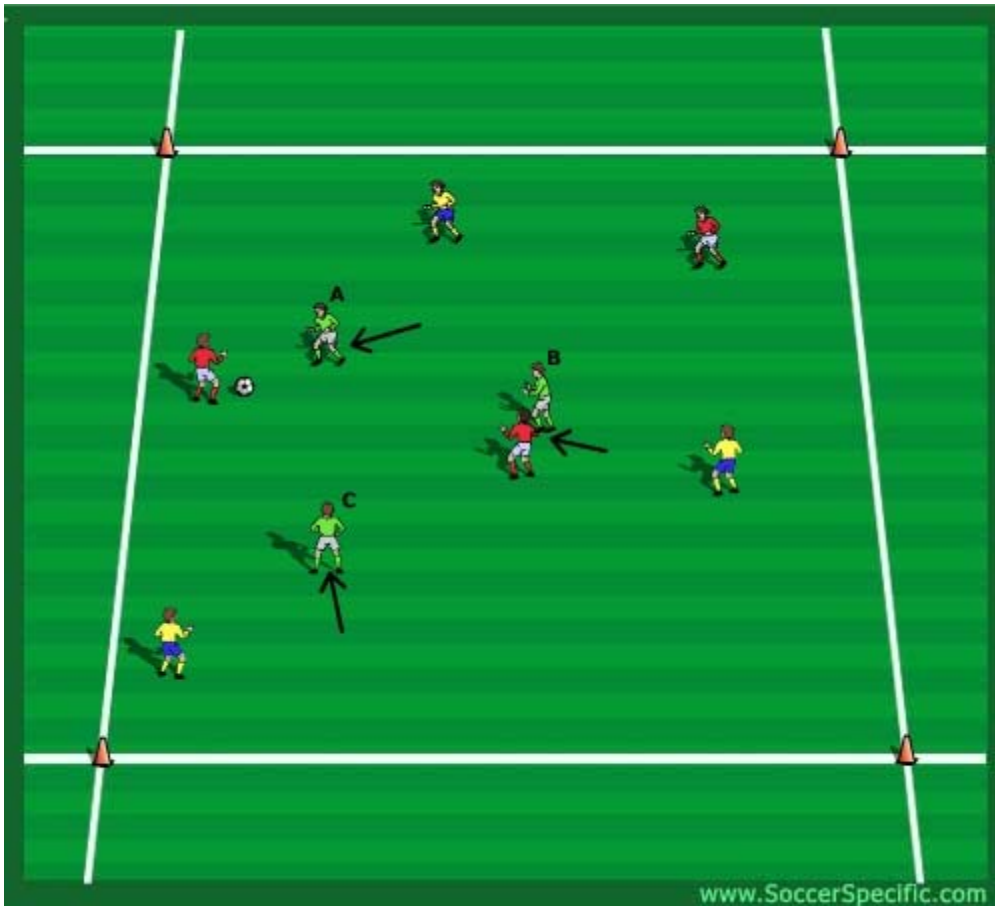


Diagram (b)

Objective:

The three defenders in the middle try to press the ball and force a loss of possession (i.e., hunt for the bad touch or bad pass). The team losing possession of the ball immediately transition to defend.

Coaching Points:

- Proper defending starting positions – deny penetrating channels
- Quick reactions and ability to close attacking space immediately
- Defend collectively and with a purpose to gain possession of the ball
- Regroup defensively if pressure is broken by the attacking team

Activity #3:

Set Up:

Players are organized in an 8v8 in a 40x40 yard grid as shown in Diagram (c) below (4v4 inside grid with two players from each team at opposite ends of the grid as shown).



Diagram (c)

Objective:

Is for the defensive team (i.e., yellow) to gain possession of the ball by closing down the penetrating spaces and working as a group. The attacking team (team in possession) can score points by successfully passing to their teammates on the opposite side of the grid. If yellow wins the ball, they immediately become the attacking team. Points are awarded for penetrating passes along the ground. Game is continuous for the designated period of time or points. Rotate players accordingly.

Coaching Points:

- Immediate pressure to the ball (i.e., nearest defender) – deny penetration
- Defend with patience and predictability
- Try to force negative passes (i.e., backward passes) or long square balls
- Intercept the bad first touch or pass – win the ball!

Activity #4:

Set Up:

7v7 + Goalkeepers organized on 2/3 of a field as shown in Diagram (d) below. Three zones are created as shown – two attacking/defensive zones and one midfield zone. Formations are 2:4:1 with an emphasis placed on midfield defensive shape.



Diagram (d)

Objective:

Both teams compete for possession of the ball and attempt to score in their opponent's goal. Ball must be played through the midfield zone. Emphasis is placed on the midfield maintaining their shape and balance defensively. An attacker may enter the midfield zone to create an overload in favor of the attacking team - this will put a greater demand on the midfield defensive unit. Game is continuous – teams play for the designated period of time or goals.

Progression:

Eliminate zones and restrictions. Free play while continuing to emphasize theme and coaching points.

Coaching Points:

- All of the above