

# Defense 1 v 1

The principle of this drill is to teach defenders the proper way to defend 1 v 1. Once this skill is mastered they can advance to 2 v 1.

One of the greatest challenges I've come across is breaking bad habits. Those habits could be

1. Charging the attacker at an uncontrolled speed
2. Diving into tackles without support defenders
3. Swiping at the ball verses tackles
4. Kicking the ball verses taking control

As coach it's a huge undertaking to break these habits. For one you will have to educate the parents. If you listen during a game you can hear them encouraging their child to charge the attacker or kick the ball. In a team meeting I give my parents rules, on those rules are words they are not allowed to use. I'll explain to them why and what we want teach the team. See example.

In Figure one we see the classic approach and bad habit 1. Here the defender charges the attack head on, splitting the field. Splitting the field is giving the attacker a chance to go left or right of the defender. Our defender would most likely listen to the chants from the sideline and take a wild swipe at the ball putting themself in a bad position... Goal!

## Example of Rules

Do not say "Big Kick"  
Do say "trap and pass"

Do not say "attack attack"  
Do say "1st Defender"

Do not say "Cover 11"  
Do say "Ball side, goal side 11"

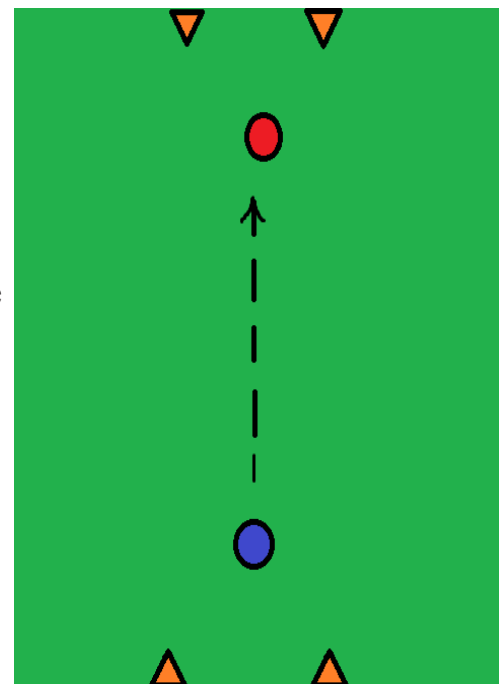


Fig 1

In fig. 2 we see the defender has come in at an angle taking away half the field. The defender has dictated to the attacker where they are allowed to go. A smart defender will use the side line as a teammate and dictate the attacker go to the closest sideline. At a practice I will make off a sideline and introduce my players to their teammate. I will let them know this teammate is always there to support them.

Our defender has the correct approach, they have a supporting teammate (sideline) now they need correct speed. They should close the distance as quick as possible. Getting close enough to force the attacker to look at the ball. Resisting the urge to “dive in”

Patience is our friend at this point. The defender should control the situation. Waiting for the attacker to lead themselves to much and then tackle with purpose or toe poke the ball away.

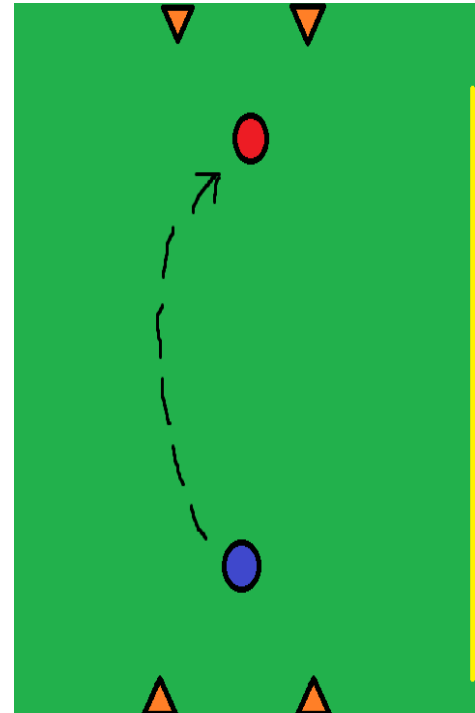


Fig 2

### The drill

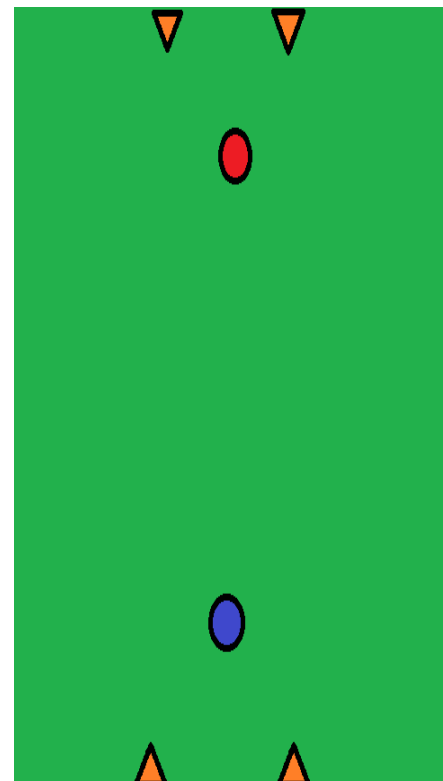
Playing area: 20 x 30 with two small goals

Player 1 (defender) plays a pass to player 2 (attacker). It has to be solid pass.

First run through do not let the defender take the ball. They must use foot work to retreat be patient and dictate the attacker to one side.

Progression: Defender is allowed to take the ball but only with tackles and toe-pokes.

Progression: If defender wins the ball the attacker becomes the defender play continues for 1 minute.



## Advance Drill

Play area: Increase grid to 30 x 40 with regulation goals. You can use cones or poles to make goals.

Players: 4 (2 goalies) 1 attacker and 1 defender

Play starts with a solid pass from defender or next defender in line. Players try and win the ball and shoot on goal. This is great opportunity to keep your goalies involved in play.

Progression: Goalie makes a save and plays ball out to teammate initiating an attack.

