

Stop Any Attacker With These 8 1v1 Defending Drills



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1. Basic 1v1 defending Drill

Set up:

- 7 x 10 yard area
- 1 soccer ball per pair
- 3 goals
- 2 teams of 3 (1 defending team, 1 attacking team)

Instructions:

Set up your area with 2 goals on one side and 1 goal on the opposite side. The attacking team will start behind the side with the 2 goals attacking the 1 goal where the defenders will be. The defending team will start with the ball and begin the drill by passing the ball to the attacker and immediately pressure them when the attacker has taken their first touch.

If the attacker scores in the goal they will get 3 points, similarly the defender will get 3 points if they steal the ball and score in either of the 2 goals. If the attacker is forced out of play or if the defender gets the ball out of bounds the defender will get 1 point.

At the end of the phase of play (when a goal is scored or if the ball goes out of play) the next phase of play will begin with the next defender passing the ball to the next attacker. make sure both teams get an equal opportunity to be the attacking and defending team.

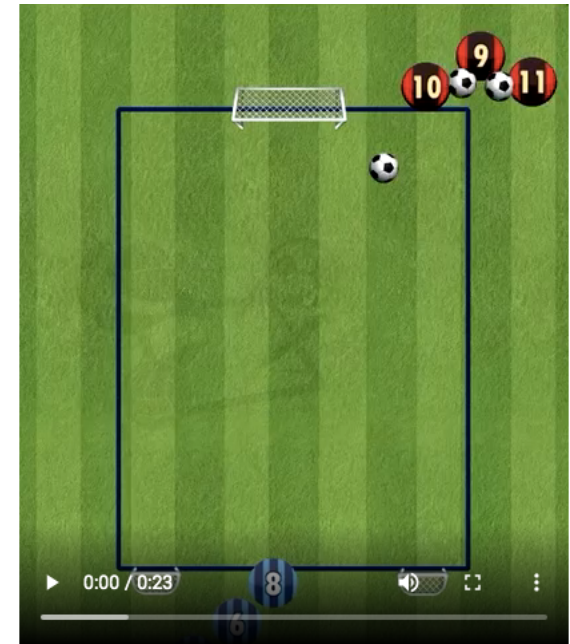
The team with the most points will be the winner.

Coaching points:

- Pressure the attacker quickly to close down their space
- Side body position showing them away from goal/ onto their weak foot
- Be patient wait for the attacker to make a mistake so you can win the ball

Questions that can lead to coaching points:

- What can you do to give the attacker less space?
- What should my body position be like and where should I show the attacker?
- When should I step in to win the ball?



2. 1v1 defending drill with the pitch divided in half

Set up:

- 10 x 15 yard area divided in half (running inline with the 15 yard lines)
- 1 soccer ball per pair
- 2 teams of 3 (1 attacking and 1 defending team)

Instructions:

This is a good 1v1 defending drill that helps players focus on their positioning and forcing attackers into certain areas. After you have set up your area and divide your players into two teams, place the defenders in one corner with a soccer ball and set up the attackers diagonally across opposite corner.

The defenders will start with the ball and pass the ball to the attacker and they can immediately pressure the ball.

The attacker must dribble the ball past the line in the half that the defenders started on.

If they do this they will get 3 points but if they manage to dribble past the other half they will get 1 point. If the defender wins the ball and dribbles past any part of the line the attacker started they will get 3 points and if they are able to force the attacker out of bounds if they get a touch on the ball to take it out of bounds they will get 1 point.

Swap the teams round so they get an equal chance to attack and defender with the team collecting the most points becoming the winner.

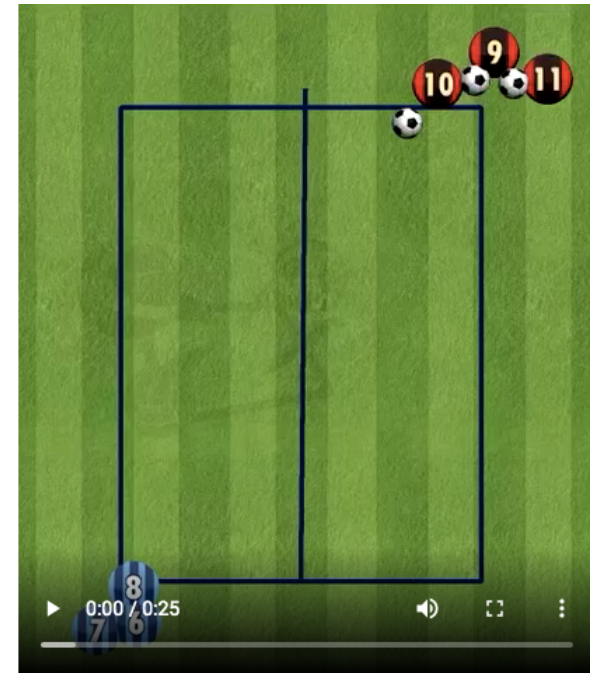
Coaching points:

- Side on body position forcing the defending to stay in the channel where they will get less points

- Don't dive in, be patient and wait for an opportunity to win the ball or force the defender back
- Close down the defenders space quickly

Questions that can lead to coaching points:

- What body position do you want to help control where the attacker goes?
- When should you step to win the ball or force the player back?
- How can you restrict the amount of space attacker has?



3. 1v1 defending against the attacker with their back to goal

Set up:

- 5 x 10 yard area with a halfway line
- 1 goal
- 2 soccer balls per group
- 6 players per group (3 attackers, 3 defenders)

Instructions:

Set up your area with a goal at one and divide your group of players into 2 teams, a defending team and attacking team.

The defending team will start from behind the goal and the attacking team starting with the ball on the opposite side.

the attacking team will have a player start on the halfway line and the phase of play will begin when the ball is played to the attacker. As soon as the pass is played to the attacker on the way line the defender can immediately pressure.

If the attacker scores in the goal they will get 3 points, however the defender wins the ball and dribbles past the line the attacker started on they will get 3 points and if they force the defender or ball out of bounds then they will get 1 point.

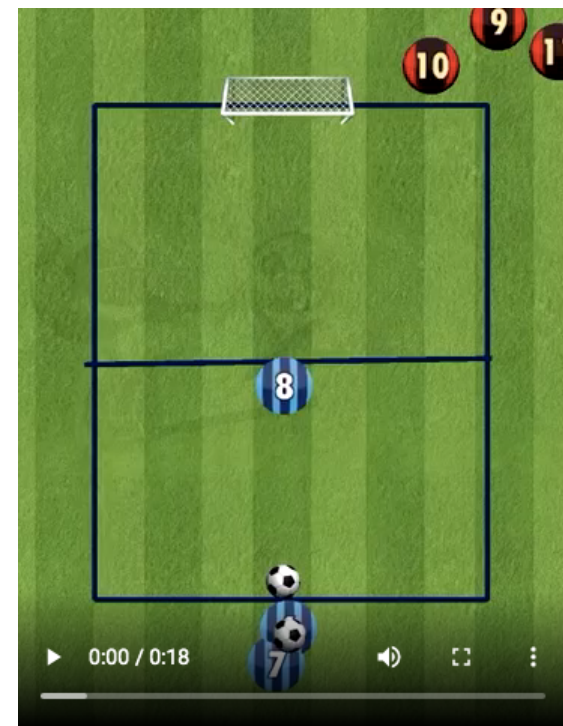
Swap the teams round so they have equal chances to defend and attack. The team with the most points is the winner.

Coaching points:

- Pressure the attacker quickly
- Keep the attacker arms length away in a side on position staying goal side (in between the player and your goal)
- Force the attacker back and try not to let them turn

Questions that can lead to coaching points:

- What should you be doing as soon as the pass is played?
- What position should you be in when defending the attacker? Why?
- Where should you show the attacker?



4. 1v1 defending against the long ball

Set up:

- 10 x 15 yard area
- 1 soccer ball per group
- 3 players per group (1 defender, 1 attacker, 1 feeder)

Instructions:

Set up your area and designate one player to the defender, attacker and feeder. The attacker and defender will be in the middle of the area with the feeder standing on the baseline of the area.

The feeder will take a throw in, throwing the ball towards the attacker and defender for them to compete for the ball.

The goal for both players is to win the ball and pass it back to the feeder player.

If the attacker manages to pass the ball back they will get one point, if the attacker wins the ball passes the ball back they will get 3 points. If the ball goes out of bounds then the defender will get the point.

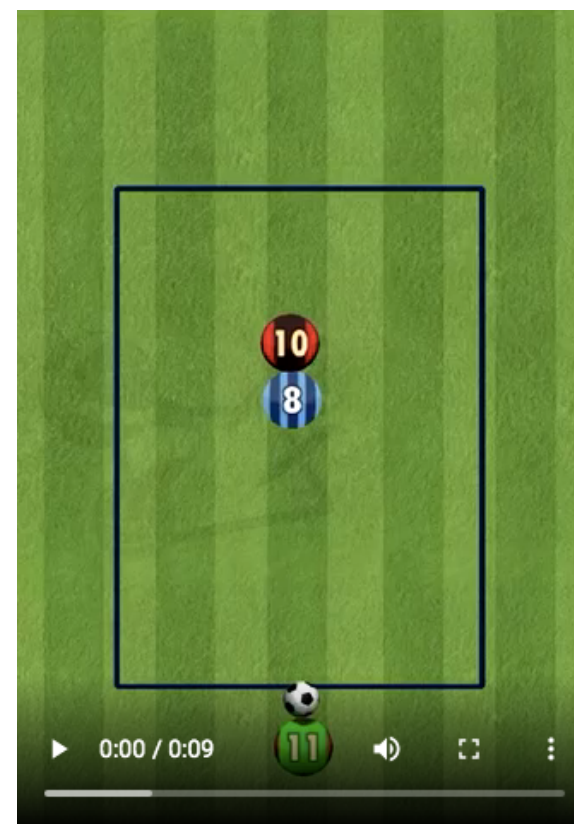
Swap the players round they have an equal turn in each role and the player with the most points will be the winner.

Coaching points:

- Mark the defender in a goal side, side on position.
- Keep your eye on the ball and anticipate the flight of the ball to try and time the interception
- Put pressure on the defender, you may not win the ball but you may force him to take a poor touch.

Questions that can lead to coaching points:

- How should you mark the defender?
- What should you trying to anticipate to win the ball?
- Why do should you put pressure on the defender even if you think you cannot win the ball?



5. 1v1 defending ladder Drill

Set up:

- 5 x 7 yard area
- 1 area per pair
- 1 soccer ball per pair
- One goal per area

Instructions:

Divide your players into pairs and set up an area for each pair that you have and place one goal on the 5 yard line in each area. The defenders will start next to the goal and pass the ball to the attacker as soon as the defender has taken a touch the defender can pressure.

The attacker has to try and score a goal if they do they get 3 points, however if the defender steals the ball and dribbles past the line the attacker started on then they get 3 points. If the defender forces the attacker or the ball outside of the area they will get one point.

the players will alternate being the defender and attacker each round and the winner will be the player that has the most points.

With the winners moving up to the next area and the losing player moving down an area.

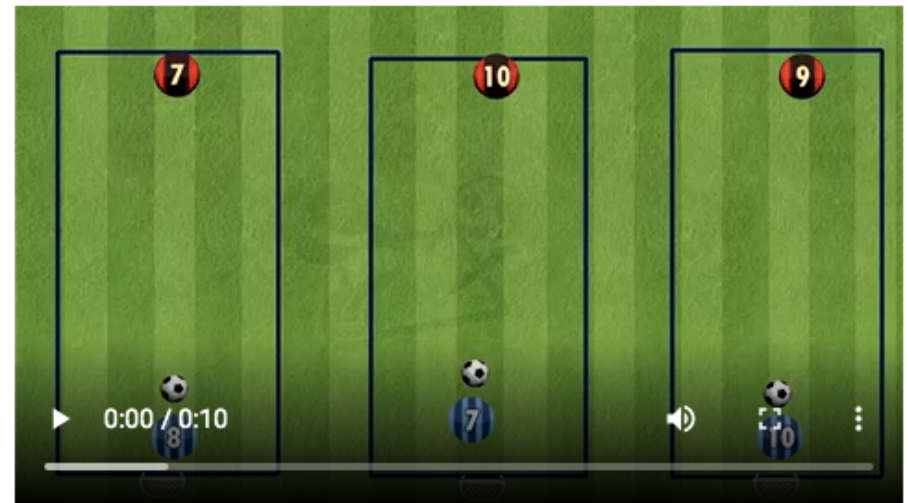
Coaching points:

- Pressure the player quickly in a side on stance limiting their space
- Show the attacker onto their weaker foot
- Wait for the attacker to make a mistake so you can then step in and win the ball

Questions that can lead to coaching points:

- What should you do to limit the amount of space the attacker has?
- Which side should you show the defender?

- When should you step in to win the ball?



6. 1v1 attack to defense transition

Set up:

- 2, 5 x 10 yard areas
- 1 soccer ball per player
- 2 teams of 4
- 2 goals

Instructions:

Set up your areas parallel to each other with goals one side and both teams starting the opposite side. Each player will have soccer ball, it will begin with the player on one team dribbling to score in the goal directly opposite them as soon as they score they will become a defender to stop the player from the opposite team scoring a goal.

The phase will end when a goal is scored or when the ball goes out of bounds.

After a player has defended they will collect a ball and head back to their team to go again.

This will continue until the time limit has been reached with the team scoring the most goals winning.

Coaching points:

- React quickly after you have transitioned from an attacker to defender
- Close the space down on the attacker
- Be patient when trying to block the shot or steal the ball

Questions that can lead to coaching points:

- What should we thinking/ doing as soon as you score a goal or the ball goes out of bounds?
- How can we make it harder for the attacker to score a goal?

- What happens if we rush to win the ball? what must we do instead?



7. 1v1 recovery run transition soccer defending drill

Set up:

- 10 x 15 yard area
- 1 soccer ball per player
- 2 goals
- 2 teams of 4

Instructions:

This is similar drill to the previous transition drill however instead of focusing on getting across and closing the space of the attacker the focus is to track back and make a recovery run to stop the attacker from scoring.

Set the goals up opposite each other with each team behind the goals, the teams are trying to score in the goals opposite them. Once a player has attacked a goal and scored a goal or the ball has gone out of bounds they will become the defender for the attacker on the other team.

After a player has defended they will collect a ball and head back to their team to go again.

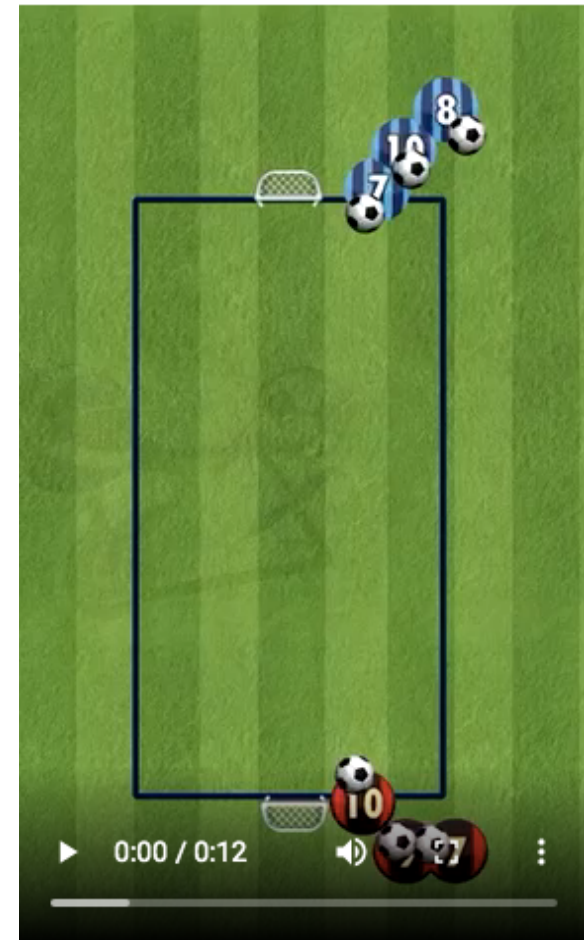
This will continue until the time limit has been reached with the team scoring the most goals winning.

Coaching points:

- React quickly to the change from attacker to defender
- Recover and apply pressure to the attacker
- Make sure you are always on the inside of the attacker when tracking back to ensure you show them to the outside, away from the goal

Questions that can lead to coaching points:

- As soon as you have taken your shot, what should you be thinking/ doing?
- What position should I be in when tracking back and why?



8. 1v1 defending in wide areas soccer drill

Set up:

- 7 x 15 yard Channel
- 2 teams of 3
- 3 soccer balls
- 5 x 5 yard square
- 1 large goal
- 2 pug goals

Instructions:

This set up is going to mimic wide players attempting to cross the ball into the box against a full back in a wide area of the pitch, this will represent your 7 x 15 yard channel.

The large goal is there as a reference to help players understand the concept, in front of the large goal create a 5 x 5 yard area with 2 pugs in the far corners of the square in relation to where the channel is.

The drill will start with the defenders, who will start on the inside corner passing to the attacker who will diagonally opposite the defender on the outside corner facing the goal.

The aim for the attacker is to cross the ball and score in the pug goals if they do this they will get 3 points, if they cross the ball and it goes through the square they will get one point.

The aim for the defender is block the cross or steal the ball, if the defender is able to block the cross or the defender is forced out of bounds then the defender will get 1 point. If the defender is able to steal the ball and dribble past the line the attacker started on they will get 3 points.

swap the defending and attacking teams round so they both have equal turns defending and attacking.

Coaching points:

- Keep your side on body position showing the attacker towards the outside
- Be patient against the attacker wait for them to make a mistake
- If you are able to get the attacker facing their own goal keep them facing that way and force them towards their own goal

Questions that can lead to coaching points:

- What position should you be in?
- Where should you be showing the attacker?
- When should you try and win the ball?
- If the attacker turns and facing their own goal where should you force them?
- What technique should you use when heading the ball?

