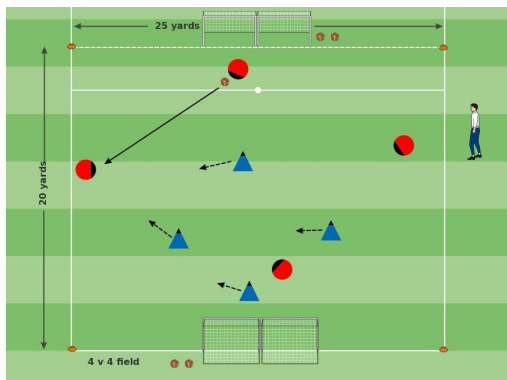


**4v4- Defending-Improve Preventing Scoring Goals (A)**  
**GOAL:** Improve preventing the opponent from scoring  
**PLAYER ACTIONS:** Protect goal, Stay compact  
**KEY QUALITIES:** Read game/make decisions, Initiative, Focus

AGE: U7-U8 / 4v4 / 8 players  
 Defending  
 DURATION: 60 min



**1ST PLAY PHASE: Intentional Free Play**

**OBJECTIVE:** To prevent the opponent from scoring.

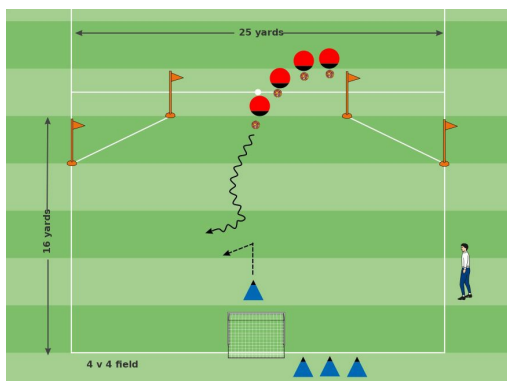
**ORGANIZATION:** Mark out a 20 x 25-yard field. Place two small goals side by side on each endline to create a double-wide goal. If you don't have four small goals, use poles or cones instead. Divide players into two teams of four. Teams play 4 v 4. Play for 20 minutes with two breaks.

**KEY WORDS:** Defend the goal, stay compact

**GUIDED QUESTIONS:** 1) Take a look at the goals. What do you notice? 2) How can you keep the opponent from scoring on them even though they're big?

**ANSWERS:** 1) The goals are big. 2) We have to drop back as a group, block the path to the goal and keep them from shooting.

**NOTES:** First break: Coach asks questions, players continue playing to discover answers. Second break: Players share answers with coach and each other.



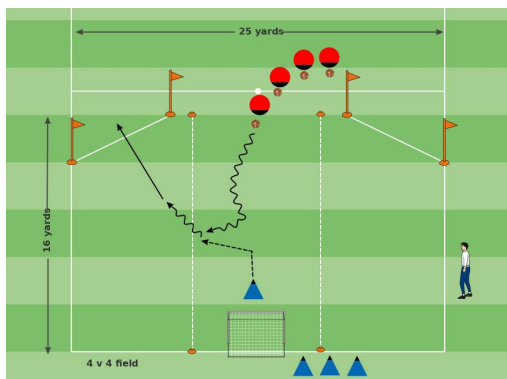
**PRACTICE (Core Activity): 1 v 1 on Small Goal**

**OBJECTIVE:** To prevent the opponent from scoring.

**ORGANIZATION:** Mark out two diagonal goal lines 16 yards from a small goal. Assign attackers (Red) and defenders (Blue) to starting positions as shown. The first attacker runs onto the field for the 1 v 1. The defender anticipates the attacker, blocks the path to the goal and looks for a chance to steal the ball. Play continues until a goal is scored. Afterward,

**KEY WORDS:** Defend the goal  
**GUIDED QUESTIONS:** 1) How can you keep the attacker from scoring? 2) What's a good moment to steal the ball?

**ANSWERS:** 1) Block the path to the goal, force the attacker outside and steal the ball. 2) When the attacker lets it get too far away. **NOTES:** Start here at the Core Activity after the first Play Phase. If the challenge is too difficult, move to the Less Challenging Activity. If it's too easy, move to the More Challenging Activity. Spend a total of 20 minutes in the Practice **NOTES:**



**PRACTICE (Less Challenging): 1 v 1 on Small Goal**

**OBJECTIVE:** To prevent the opponent from scoring.

**ORGANIZATION:** Same as Core Activity, except the attacker has to stay inside a 10-yard-wide lane marked down the middle of the field.

**KEY WORDS:** Defend the goal

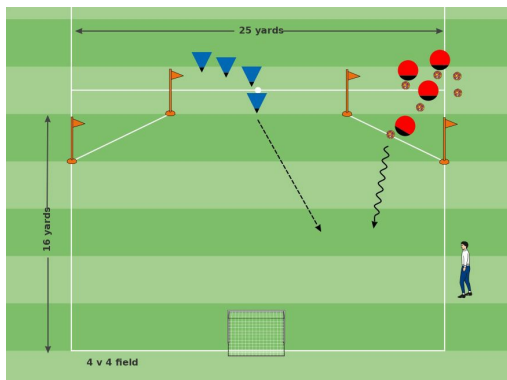
**GUIDED QUESTIONS:** 1) How can you keep the attacker from scoring? 2) What's a good moment to steal the ball?

**ANSWERS:** 1) Block the path to the goal, force the attacker outside and steal the ball. 2) When the attacker lets it get too far away.

**NOTES:** Start with the Core Activity and decide whether the level of challenge is appropriate for the players. Move to this Less Challenging Activity if the Core Activity is too difficult. Spend a total of 20 minutes in the Practice Phase

**4v4- Defending-Improve Preventing Scoring Goals (A)**  
**GOAL:** Improve preventing the opponent from scoring  
**PLAYER ACTIONS:** Protect goal, Stay compact  
**KEY QUALITIES:** Read game/make decisions, Initiative, Focus

AGE: U7-U8 / 4v4 / 8 players  
 Defending  
 DURATION: 60 min



**PRACTICE (More Challenging): 1 v 1 on Small Goal**

**OBJECTIVE:** To prevent the opponent from scoring.

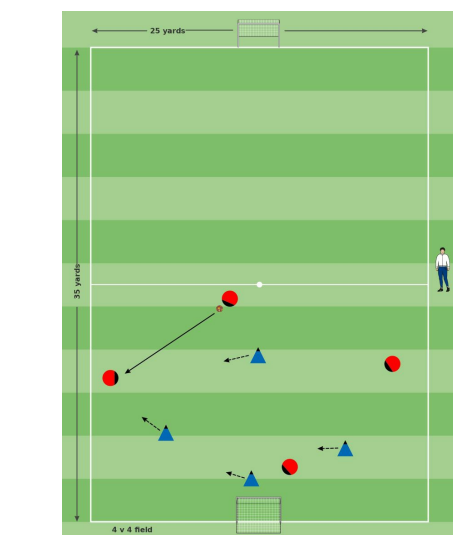
**ORGANIZATION:** Same as Core Activity, except the starting positions are different. The coach gives the signal for the 1 v 1 to begin.

**KEY WORDS:** Defend the goal

**GUIDED QUESTIONS:** 1) How can you keep the attacker from scoring? 2) What's a good moment to steal the ball?

**ANSWERS:** 1) Block the path to the goal, force the attacker outside and steal the ball. 2) When the attacker lets it get too far away.

**NOTES:** Start with the Core Activity and decide whether the level of challenge is appropriate for the players. Move to this More Challenging Activity if the Core Activity is too easy. Spend a total of 20 minutes in the Practice Phase.



**2ND PLAY PHASE: The Game**

**OBJECTIVE:** To prevent the opponent from scoring.

**ORGANIZATION:** Mark out a regular 4 v 4 field (35 x 25 yards) with two mini goals. Divide players into two teams of four. Teams play 4 v 4 using the Laws of the Game (LOTG) and according to the standards of play found in the U.S. Soccer Player Development Initiatives (PDIs). Play for 20 minutes including one "halftime" (5 minutes max).

**KEY WORDS:** Defend the goal, stay compact

**GUIDED QUESTIONS:** 1) How can you keep the attacker from scoring? 2) What's a good moment to steal the ball?

**ANSWERS:** 1) Drop back as a group, block the path to the goal and force the attacker outside. 2) When the attacker lets it get too far away.

**NOTES:**

**Five Elements of a Training Activity**

1. **Organized:** Is the activity organized in the right way?
2. **Game-like:** Is the activity game-like?
3. **Repetition:** Is there repetition, when looking at the overall goal of the session?
4. **Challenging:** Are the players being challenged?(Is there the right balance between being successful and unsuccessful?)
5. **Coaching:** Is there effective coaching, based on the age and level of the player?

**Training Session Self-Reflection Questions**

1. How did you do in achieving the goals of the training session?
2. What did you do well?
3. What could you do better?