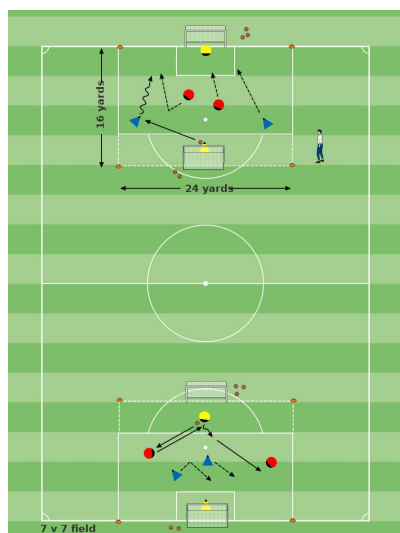


## 7v7 Defending- Improve Preventing the Opponent from Scoring (A)

GOAL: Improve preventing the opponent from scoring  
PLAYER ACTIONS: Protect goal, Get compact, Stay compact  
KEY QUALITIES: Read game/make decisions, Initiative, Focus

AGE: U9-U10 / 7v7 / 12 players  
MOMENT:  
DURATION: 90 min



### 1ST PLAY PHASE: Intentional Free Play

OBJECTIVE: To prevent the opponent from scoring.

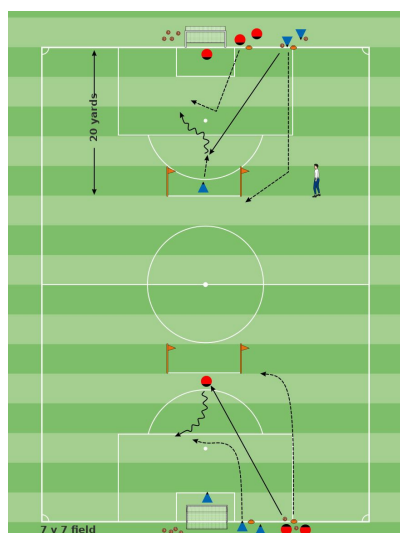
ORGANIZATION: Mark out two 16 x 24-yards fields with goals and goalkeepers. Teams play 3 v 3. The attacking team's keeper can help build the attack and even score goals. Free play, kick-ins. Play for 30 minutes with two breaks.

KEY WORDS: Stay compact, move with the ball, defend the goal

GUIDED QUESTIONS: 1) When the attackers' keeper helps build the attack, what kind of situation does that create? 2) Defenders, what's your top priority when you're outnumbered? 3) How do you do that?

ANSWERS: 1) The defenders are outnumbered. 2) To protect the goal. 3) Quickly get behind the ball, block the direct path to the goal, force attackers outside and block shots.

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 in Middle - Defender Facing Attacker

OBJECTIVE: To prevent the opponent from scoring.

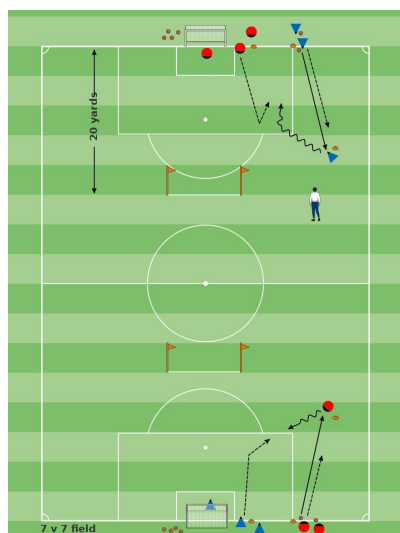
ORGANIZATION: Mark out two fields as shown. Assign attackers and defenders to starting positions as shown. Play begins when the first attacker receives the ball. The first defender runs out from the endline, following the ball, and tries to stop the attacker from scoring. Play continues until a goal is scored by either player. Players (including Red's goalkeeper) rotate after each round. Play for 30

KEY WORDS: Defend the goal, step to the ball

GUIDED QUESTIONS: 1) Defenders, what's your top priority in this situation? 2) How do you do that? 3) Why is it dangerous to get too close to the attacker too soon? 4) How do you keep that from happening?

ANSWERS: 1) To protect the goal. 2) Run out to the ball, stop the attacker as soon as possible and try to force them away from the goal. 3) They could play the ball past us. 4) Take long steps to get there and short steps as you get closer.

NOTES:



### PRACTICE (Less Challenging): 1 v 1 on Wing - Defender Facing Attacker

OBJECTIVE: Same as Core Activity, except players line up on the wing.

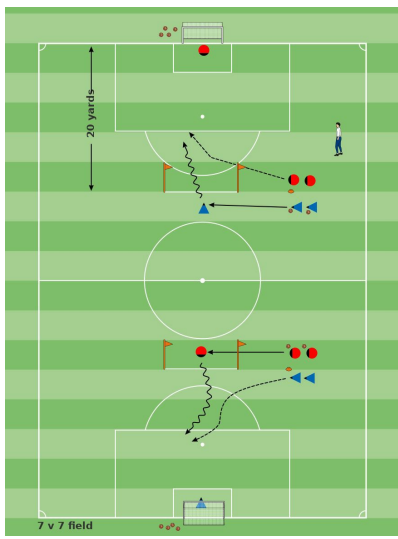
ORGANIZATION: Same as Core Activity, except players line up on the wing.

KEY WORDS: Defend the goal, step to the ball

GUIDED QUESTIONS: 1) Defenders, what's your top priority in this exercise? 2) How do you do that? 3) Why is it dangerous to get too close to the attacker too soon? 4) How do you keep that from happening?

ANSWERS: 1) To defend the goal. 2) Run out after the ball, stop the attacker as soon as possible and try to force them away from the goal. 3) They could play the ball past us. 4) Take long steps to get there and short steps as you get closer.

NOTES: Start with the Core Activity and decide whether the level of challenge is appropriate for the players. Switch to this Less Challenging Activity if the Core Activity is too difficult. Spend a total of 30 minutes in the Practice Phase.



**PRACTICE (More Challenging): 1 v 1 in Middle - Defender Beside Attacker**

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

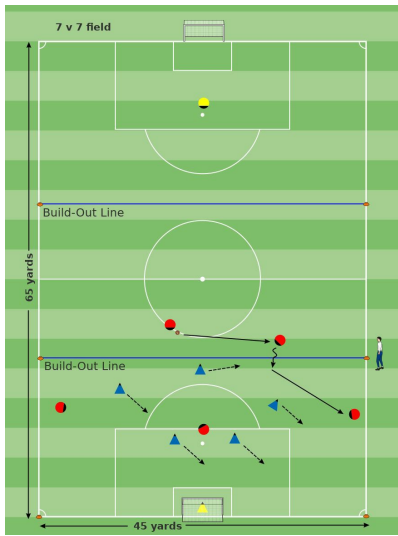
**ORGANIZATION:** Same as Core Activity, except the first defender runs in from the wing.

**KEY WORDS:** Defend the goal, step to the ball

**GUIDED QUESTIONS:** 1) Defenders, what's your top priority in this exercise? 2) How do you do that?

**ANSWERS:** 1) To defend the goal. 2) Run out after the ball, block the path to the goal and try to force the attacker away from the goal.

**NOTES:** Start with the Core Activity and decide whether the level of challenge is appropriate for the players. Switch to this More Challenging Activity if the Core Activity is too easy. Spend a total of 30 minutes in the Practice Phase.



**2ND PLAY PHASE: The Game**

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

**ORGANIZATION:** Mark out a regular 7 v 7 field with build-out lines. Divide players into two teams of six. Each team plays a 1-2-3 formation. Play for 30 minutes including one "halftime" (5 min.) using the Laws of the Game (LOTG) and according to the standards of play found in the U.S. Soccer Player Development Initiatives (PDIs).

**KEY WORDS:** Stay compact, move with the ball, defend the goal

**GUIDED QUESTIONS:** 1) How many goals did the other team score? 2) How did they score them? 3) How could you have stopped them?

**ANSWERS:** 1. & 2.) General questions asked to focus players' attention on the principles they have learned. 3) Get compact and stay compact, block the direct path to the goal, force attackers outside, move to follow the ball and block shots.

**NOTES:** Play according to the Laws of the Game and the standards of play found in the U.S. Soccer Player Development Initiatives.

**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?