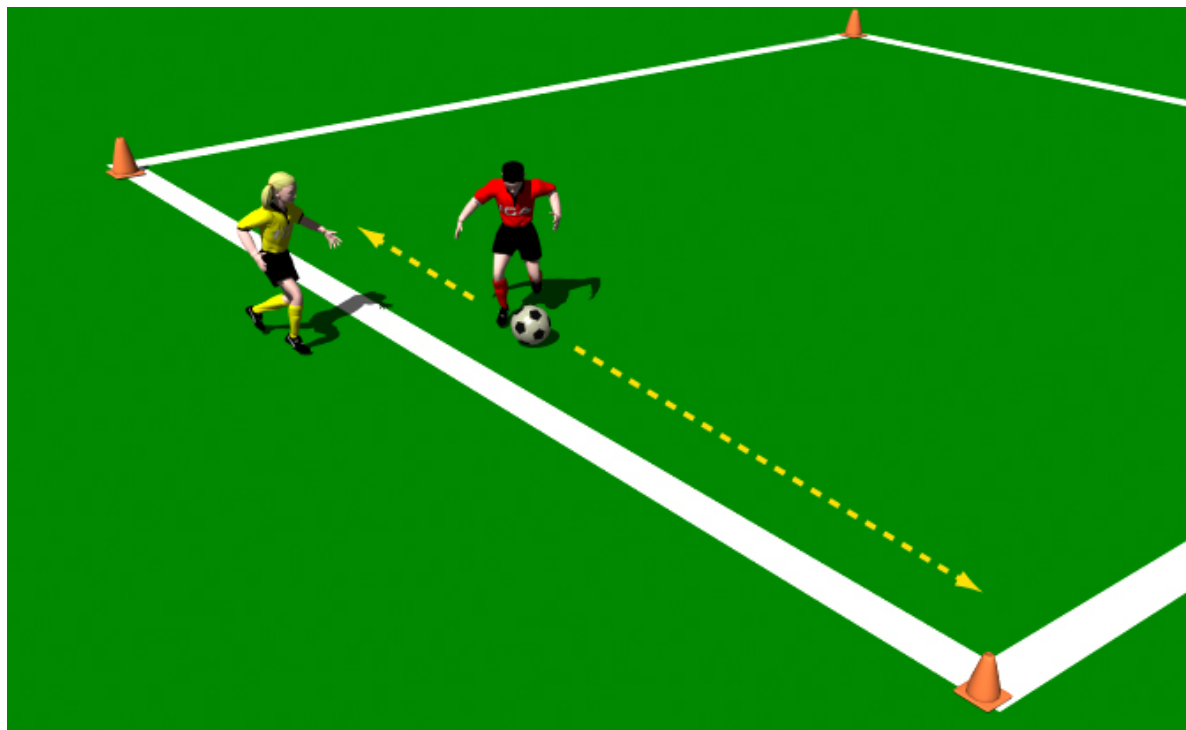


## Defending Dribbling Drill



### **Exercise Objectives:**

This practice can be used to emphasize 1v1 defending skills. The coach should focus on the defender.

### **Field Preparation**

- ☆ 2 Players
- ☆ 2 Cones 10 yards apart
- ☆ 1 Ball

### **Coaching Pointers:**

Two cones should be placed approximately 10 yards apart. Two players are positioned each side of the cones. No player may cross over the imaginary line and the defender may not try to steal the ball.

The player in possession of the ball must use body feints, head fakes and a variety of dribbling moves to upset the balance of the defender. A goal is scored each time the dribbling player can lose the defender and stop the ball dead at either of the cones.

The defensive player can prevent the dribbling player from scoring a goal by placing their foot in front of the cone the player is attacking. The defender may not tackle or cross over the imaginary line.

Players should alternate every 3 minutes. Score should be kept to determine winner.

Knowing "When" and "When" not to tackle is a very important quality for smart defending. Good defenders will pick the right time to win the ball, knowing that the pressure is on the attacker to beat his man. Experienced defenders will look to slow down the attacker and eliminate the momentum the attacker may have. This allows time for teammates to recover back goal side of the ball.

**Tips to Consider:**

Approach the attacker cautiously if he has good possession of the ball. Slow down your approach speed on your last few steps. Don't stop too close to the defender. This is when you are at your most vulnerable, because the exact moment you plant your feet to transfer your weight, good forwards will play the ball past you. You can compensate by stopping approximately 2 yards away from the attacker, then slowly edge in for the tackle. Watch the ball. Cunning forwards will use a variety of body and head feints to throw you off balance. Players lie, but the ball does not.

Timing a tackle is an art in itself. You must assess the flight of the ball quickly. Does your opponent have good control over the ball or are they still trying to get the ball under control? If their eyes are fixed on the ball and still trying to secure it, this is a perfect time to catch your opponent unexpectedly. Should your opponent have the ball under good control, caution is your best option.

Watch your opponent's head. Is their head down and looking at the ball or up and scanning the field of play? If it's down, go for the ball, if it's up, be patient. Wait until the attacker pushes the ball out of their feet to make your tackle. This is the point where the ball is furthest away from the body and harder to control. The longer you delay the attack, the more time it gives your teammate to recover goal-side of the ball. Don't dive into the tackle if you are the last defender. Stay on your feet. Use a slide tackle as a last resort.