## 1ST PLAY PHASE: Intentional Free Play



OBJ ECTIVE:To prevent the opponent from scoring.
ORGANIZATION: Mark out a $20 \times 25$-yard field. Place two youth goals side by side on each endline to create a double-wide goal. If you don't have four small goals, use poles 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): 1v 1on Small Goal

OBJ ECTIVE: 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 1v 1 The defender anticipates the attacker, blocks the path to the goal and looks for a chance to win the ball. Play continues until a goal is scored. Afterward, the next attacker starts. Play for 20 minutes with two breaks.

## 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 Phase.


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

OBJ ECTIVE: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.

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

OBJ ECTIVE:To prevent the opponent from scoring.
ORGANIZATION: Same as core activity, except the starting positions are different. The coach gives the signal for the 1v 1to 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 MoreChallenging Activity if the Core Activity is too easy. Spend a total of 20 minutes in the Practice Phase.


## 2ND PLAY PHASE:The Game

OBJ ECTIVE:To prevent the opponent from scoring.
ORGANIZATION: Mark out a regular 4 v 4 field ( $35 \times 25$ yards) with two mini goals. Divide players into two teams of four. Teams play 4 v 4 . Play 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) Where is the goal? 2) So which path do you need to block if you want to keep the opponent from shooting? 3) And what if they manage to get in front of the goal anyway?

ANSWERS: 1) In the middle. 2) The path to the middle. 3) Then we have to attack them and make sure they can't shoot.

## 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 players?

## 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?

