

SOCCER PRACTICE GAMES

"Double Dare Attack / Defend" (Dribbling & Tackling, All ages)

Summary: "Attackers" try to dribble across a square while avoiding "Defenders". If the Attacker's ball is kicked out of bounds or goes out of bounds, he becomes a Defender. The 2 last Attackers are the winners, but Defenders keep score of how many Attackers they have converted to a Defender. This is a simple, fun game that is self-teaching and will give you insight into who has natural dribbling skill, who is a natural defender, who is tough and competitive and who is afraid of contact. This is similar to the "Red Rover" or "Sheep" games kids used to play.

Teaches:

- Dribbling (control dribbling & speed dribbling)
- Shielding
- "Strength On The Ball"
- Soccer moves, such as a change of speed or body feint
- Defenders to "Toe Poke", "Shoulder Tackle", "Block Tackle", and to "Jockey" (how to stay in front of an attacker or turn him to the sideline to watch for the chance to steal the ball instead of rushing the attacker)

Set-up:

- Use cones to make a square 20 yards wide. Put 4 cones along each side. (Make the square larger or smaller as appropriate for the age and number of players)
- Each player has a ball (and is an "Attacker") except for 2 or 3 "Defenders".

The Game:

- Place all "Attackers" (those with a ball) along one side of the square facing inward.
- Place the 2 or 3 "Defenders" (without a ball) in the center of the square, facing the Attackers
- Defenders start the game by yelling "Double Dare" at the Attackers (or the Coach can yell "Go")
- When Defenders yell "Double Dare", the Attackers try to dribble across the square to the opposite side, while Defenders try to kick their ball over the sideline or force the Attacker over the sideline.
- If an Attacker's ball is kicked over the sideline or he goes over the sideline, before he makes it to the

opposite side, he leaves his ball outside the square and becomes a Defender.

- Repeat and keep playing until only 2 Attackers are left. They are the winners, but Defenders get one point for each Attacker they convert to a Defender, so have them keep score (U-8 & up)

Rules:

- No slide tackles, tripping or hard tackles
- No knocking down the Attacker
- No kicking the Attacker (only kick the ball)
- No using hands or holding
- U-8 & up: only one Defender at a time can challenge an Attacker (have the others choose another Attacker or be the "Second Defender" or "Third Defender" - use this as an opportunity to teach "Second Defender")

Teaching Points:

- For U-6, just have fun
- For U-8 & up, teach Attackers to "Shield the ball" and to beat the Defender by changing speed or using a body feint.
- Also teach Attackers "strength on the ball" by using a wider stance and staying low so they can't easily be pushed off the ball. When shoulder to shoulder with a defender, they should remain straight up (or lean in a little), but keep arms at side and don't push with arms.
- Teach Defenders: Don't rush at the Attacker, try to "steer" the Attacker toward the sideline & out of bounds, try to "toe poke" the ball away or use a "block tackle" or a "shoulder charge" (aka "Shoulder Tackle").
- Teach Defenders to "Shoulder Tackle" by placing their shoulder against the opponent's shoulder to push her off the ball; she must be shoulder to shoulder, stand straight up and not raise her arms (she should keep her arms straight down). (See "Shoulder Charge", "Block Tackle" and "Toe Poke" in the Dictionary; See "Jockeying / Shepherding" in Premium; and see "Shoulder Tackle and Strength On The Ball Game").

Comment:

This is a good game to use to evaluate players, as described in "Summary" above.