

IMPRINTING ZONAL DEFENDING 4V4

STAGES COVERED BY ACTIVITY

Stages 4 & 5 - 12-18 year old players

THEMES & COMPETENCIES

Theme:

- + Group and team defending.

Competencies:

- + Defending as a unit - applying pressure, covering and support.
- + Transition from defense to attack and attack to defense.
- + Passing a short and medium distance.
- + Receiving a pass.
- + Attacking in small groups.

WHY USE IT

This is a terrific environment for training shape, communication, recognition and collective movement to teach zonal defending on the back and/or midfield lines.

SET UP

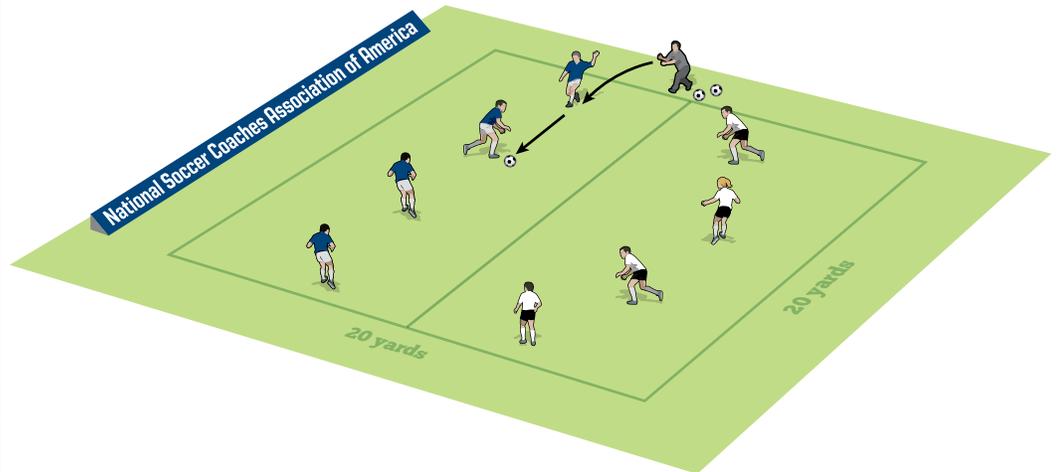
Use a 20x20 yard grid to start. Expand as needed. Note the cone line down the center.

HOW TO PLAY

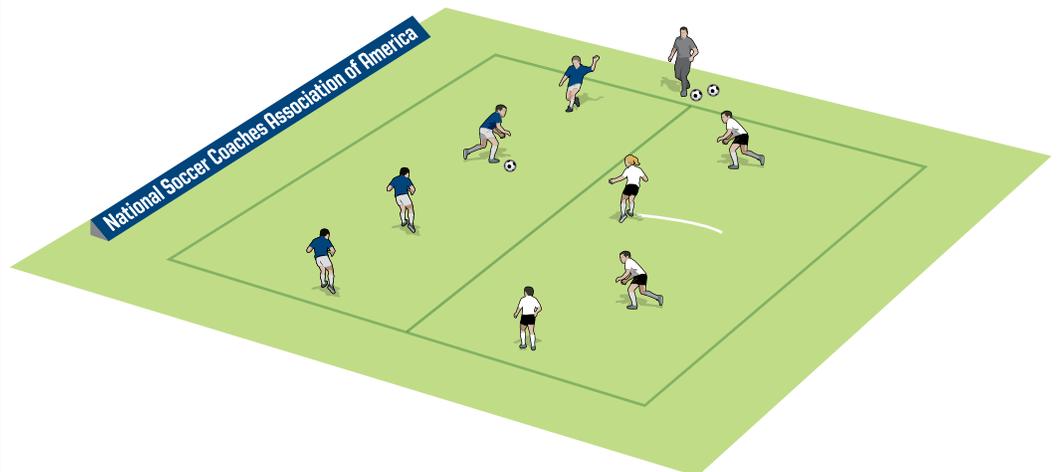
The coach initiates the action by passing to either team. The receiving team slowly work the ball back and forth (square) across the grid, pausing after each pass to allow the defending team to set their zonal shape. In this phase, the defenders are not allowed to challenge for the ball. After each team has mastered the interchanges, allow the 2 teams to challenge each other for possession while keeping their shapes. The coach needs to spend considerable time with the group emphasizing the key components of zonal defending.

COACHING NOTES

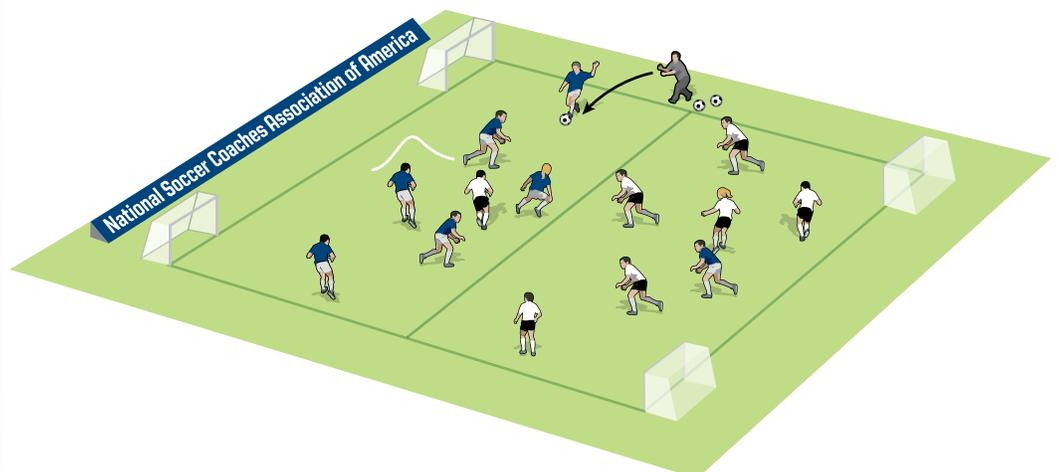
- + Main coaching objectives - Note the overall shape (hook or J), the first, second and third defender roles and how they interchange, and also the variables (i.e. do you want your team to force the ball inside or outside?)
- + Coaching Tip - Players in a zone must dress their positions off of one-another to assure the zone shape is correct. Therefore, they must look to their left and right with every movement.
- + Adaptations - The cone line is a nice added touch in that it serves as a restraining line, or point at which the team will try to win back the ball. Add corner goals (2 for each team to play to), a pair of defenders and a single striker.



- + The coach plays the ball in to the blue team.
- + Players make passes back and forth across the field.
- + The defending team attempt to set their zone with each pass.



- + The zone is set when the ball is in the opponents' possession and in a central position.
- + Defenders attempt to force the ball centrally.



- + Each team now fields a pair of defenders and a forward in addition to the midfield group.
- + Add corner goals.

