

BLOCK AND POKE TACKLING TECHNIQUES

WHY USE IT

Teaching young players the correct tackling techniques is crucial. Knowing how and when to employ the block tackle, poke tackle and slide tackle takes repetition and reinforcement and rarely receives sufficient time the techniques require.

SET UP

25x15 yards. 2 teams of 3-5 players in training vests. 2 small goals at both ends and a large supply of balls to ensure maximum 'on-task' time.

HOW TO PLAY

In the first sequence, 2 players stand facing each other in the center of the playing area with a ball between their feet. The players place the same non-kicking foot on opposite sides of the ball and their hands on each other's shoulders (this prevents players taking a run-up before learning block tackling technique). The other players stand on the sideline waiting to come onto the field - one team responsible for bringing on a ball. The block tackle technique is typically used when the attacker is attempting to go past a defender. Timing is critical - the defender using the inside of the foot to 'block' the ball and force the ball to 'squirt out' in favor of the defender. On the command of 'GO', both players forcefully block the ball. Insist on no kicking through the ball to avoid injury. As soon as the ball clears the legs, players break free and play 1v1. To practice the poke tackle, the coach passes a 2nd ball to either player. The poke tackle is used to disrupt an attacker's dribble when the attacker is in front of the defender. The defender reaches forward and pokes the ball with the toe, keeping a low center of gravity whilst maintaining balanced.

COACHING NOTES

- + Coaching objectives - Provide players with repetition and reinforcement of the techniques in an opposed environment.
- + Coaching tips - Break down the technique into 'parts'. Demonstrate the position of the non-kicking foot, the body position and the use of the inside of the foot or toe.

HOW TO MODIFY THE ACTIVITY

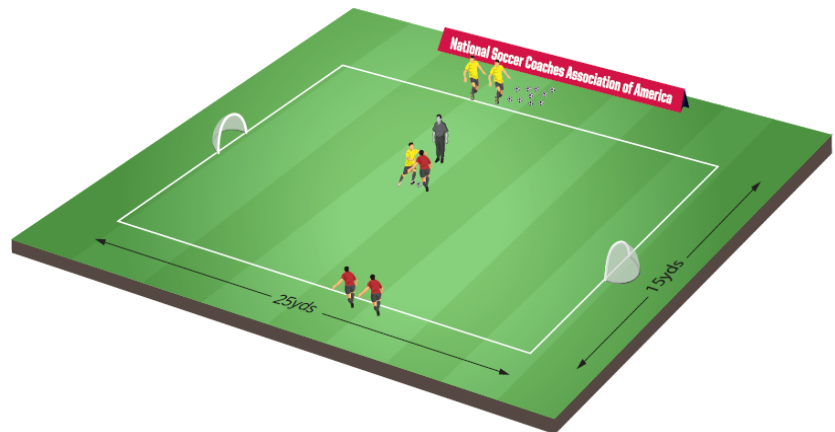
- + Less challenging: Start the activity with players joined with hands on each other's shoulders.
- + More challenging: Allow defenders to step into the block tackle, play multiple games at once, and add a points system to create competition.

STAGES COVERED BY ACTIVITY

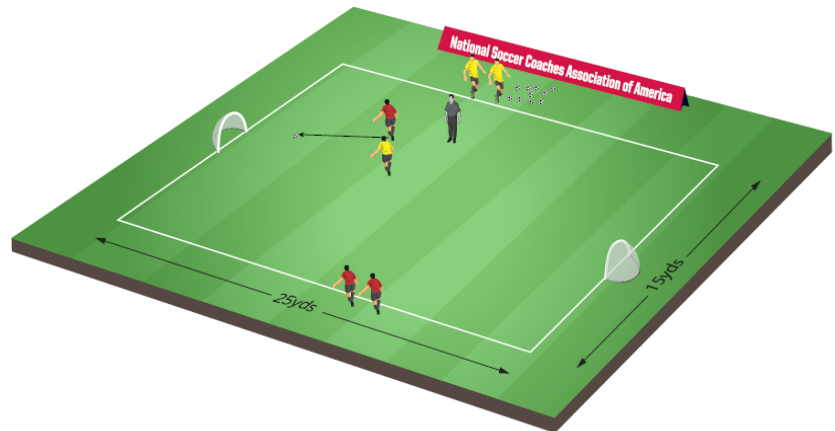
Stages 2, 3 - 6-11 year old players

THEMES & COMPETENCIES

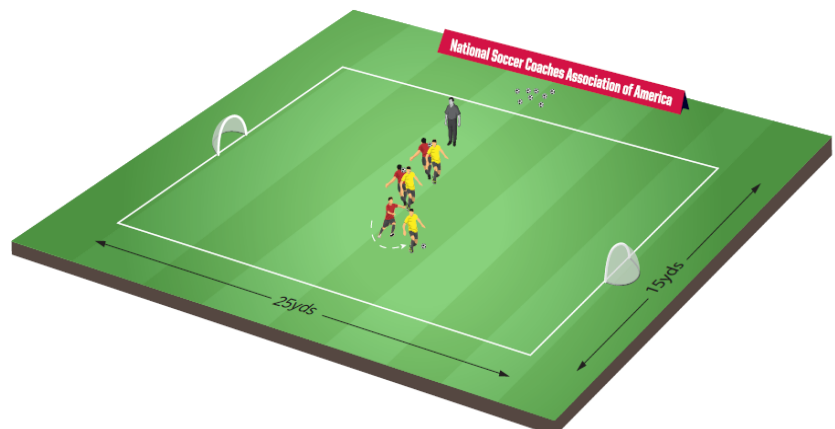
Top 3 themes: 1v1 Defending, defensive pressure and tackling technique.
Top 3 competencies: Poke Tackle, Block Tackle and defensive stance.



- + 1v1 in the center with a ball between the 2 players.
- + The coach is close by to ensure the correct technique and to minimize the chance of injury.
- + Players start with their hands on each other's shoulders.



- + On the command of 'GO' play commences.
- + Players make a block tackle and release each other as the ball squirts out.
- + Invariably the best block tackling technique leads to winning the ball.



- + As players become more competent, set up 3 pairs across the grid - back to back.
- + A ball is placed between the player's shoulder blades and on the shout of 'GO', players spin around.
- + As the ball drops, the players use a block or poke tackle to win possession.