



SKILL CARD

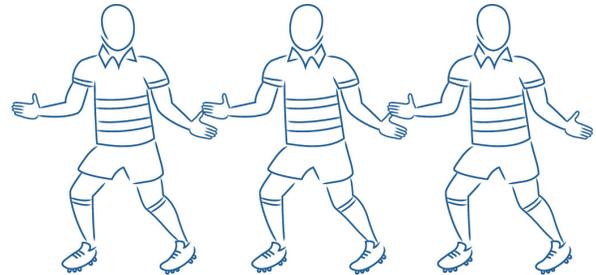
DEFENSIVE SHAPE

LEVEL: INTERMEDIATE



OBJECTIVE

To have players work as a team to prevent the offensive team from scoring.



COACHING CUES

The best defensive shape in rugby is a flat line. Flat line defense is when players are lined up across the width of the field in a straight line. Players should work together to keep this line when moving forward and backwards on the field.

Step 1: Demonstrate and instruct a flat line defense.

Step 2: Have players line up in a flat line defense and have them jog in every direction as a team in a flat line. Begin with them close enough to hold hands.

Step 3: A great teaching tip is to have players “cross the street” on defense. Be sure players are looking both ways (right and left) before advancing or retreating to make sure their entire team is together.

Step 4: Encourage players to constantly communicate to keep the flat line together.

Some common terms are:

- Use “Up” to instruct the line to move forward
- Use “Back” to instruct the line to move backwards
- Use “Slide Left” or “Slide Right” for side movements.

CHECK AND CORRECT

1. Make sure players are communicating to stay together.
2. Make sure players are checking their position at all times.

FOOTWORK/MOVEMENTS

- Keep pace with your teammates and utilize communication to move up, back, left, and right together.
- Mirror the movement of the defense by matching and tracking the offensive player directly across.

CONNECTED GAMES

Sharks and Minnows • Flag Rugby
Stars and Stripes • 2v1
Mirrored Lines • 3v2
Just Score

USA PE STANDARDS

S1.M11: Defensive Skills, 6-8
S2.M4: Reducing Space, 6-8