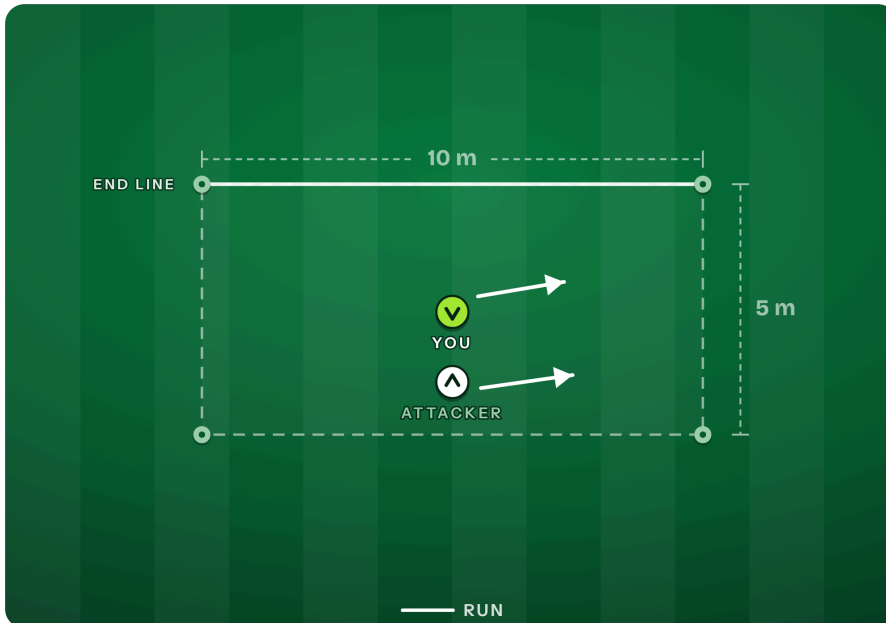




Set up

Warm up first

4 cones, flat grass

10 x 5 m channel

A partner to attack

Dose

8 goes of 8 s, rest 45 s

Swap roles each go

8 goes of 8 s as the defender, swapping roles after every go, about 45 s rest between goes (our target, not an FA rule).

What it trains

Reactive defending footwork, no ball: your partner attacks and you shadow them, staying goal-side, side-on and an arm's length away, never touching. A review found that reacting to an opponent and planned cone turns are separate skills, so this drill trains the reaction.

How it works

- 1 Warm up first, every time: your club warm-up, the FIFA 11+ Kids (up to 13) or the FIFA 11+ (from 14), then a few easy side shuffles.
- 2 On flat grass, mark a channel 10 m wide and 5 m deep with 4 cones. One 10 m side is the end line. No ball.
- 3 Your partner, the attacker, starts near the far line. You start about an arm's length in front of them, between them and the end line.
- 4 For 8 seconds they cut, stop, change direction and fake, trying to reach the end line. You shadow them: side-on, goal-side, an arm's length away, never touching.
- 5 Rest, swap roles and go again: 8 goes each, with about 45 s rest between your goes.

Coaching points

- 1 **Between them and the line**
Stay between your partner and the end line, side-on with your knees bent. When they cut, go with them, so they never get a straight run at the line.
- 2 **Arm's length, move your feet**
Keep about an arm's length away: close enough to stay with them, never close enough to touch. Short, quick steps let you change direction the moment they do.

× **Not this:** Lunging or reaching in. Your weight goes one way, the attacker steps past the other way, and a lunge is how contact happens in a no-contact game.

MY NOTES

➤ HARDER

Your partner dribbles a ball. You still only shadow: stay goal-side and an arm's length away, with no tackle.

➤ EASIER

Your partner walks and you walk with them, until staying side-on and goal-side feels natural. Then jog, then go at full speed.

🛡️ Safety

- No contact at all: no pushing, holding or tackling. If you bump into each other, stop the go. If anyone knocks their head, if in doubt, sit them out: no training for at least 24 hours and no matches for at least 21 days (UK concussion guidelines).
- Flat, dry grass with space all round the channel, never a road or driveway.
- Under 16: if your knees or heels hurt when you run or jump, stop and tell an adult. Knee and heel pain is common while you are growing, and a GP or physio can help. 16 and over: if something hurts, stop and get it checked by a GP or physio.
- Warm up first. Stop if anything hurts and tell an adult.

📅 Track 12 weeks (tick each session)

W1	W2	W3	W4	W5	W6	W7	W8	W9	W10	W11	W12
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐



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