



Defender Movement Components
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By Brian Farber

The Defender – Part 1

The definition of the modern soccer defender is constantly evolving. The quicker the game becomes, the more demanding the position becomes, not only physically but also technically. Defenders are reactionary players; they have to adapt and react to the opposition, all whilst helping their team keep possession. The primary role of a defender is to defend, however, players who limit themselves to simply defending and nothing else are also limiting their influence on the game. Modern defenders do much more than defend. Contrary to a forward, whose objective can be completed in a moment of genius, a defender must be a focused 90-minute player. A physical, technical or mental mistake usually results in a goal for the opposition, so defenders must be focused, technically proficient and disciplined. Ultimately, defenders are the backbone of your team, and as such they must comply with the rigorous physical and technical demands of the game. In order to improve and become a better defender, players must practice on their own and invest their own time and effort.

Agility

Defenders must be agile. Whether it's tearing down the sideline to cross in a ball, sliding in for a last-ditch tackle or standing up a dribbler, defenders need quick feet. A good defender is one step ahead of who they are playing against. In order to do so, they have to be more agile and adaptable than any and all the players on the field. Lateral movement, quick turns, balance and good footwork are key components to being an agile defender.

A set of Agility Poles is a great tool for improving those components and becoming a more agile player.

Speed

Speed in modern soccer is essential. Defenders must be able to physically keep up with opposing players. Awareness and positioning are hallmarks of an experienced defender, but without speed and quickness, defenders can find themselves physically outmatched. Often, defenders will have to track back and chase opposing attackers who have broken their line, and without the speed necessary to keep up, defending becomes very difficult. Faster defenders will be able to track their players and keep up with the speed of play more efficiently. Improving overall speed requires training and speed training is

made easy with a Speedsac or Quick Ladder. The Speedsac is a weighted sled that creates resistance and improves explosive bursts and overall speed. The Quick Ladder is a portable ladder that demands quick and precise movements that will ultimately improve quickness and acceleration.