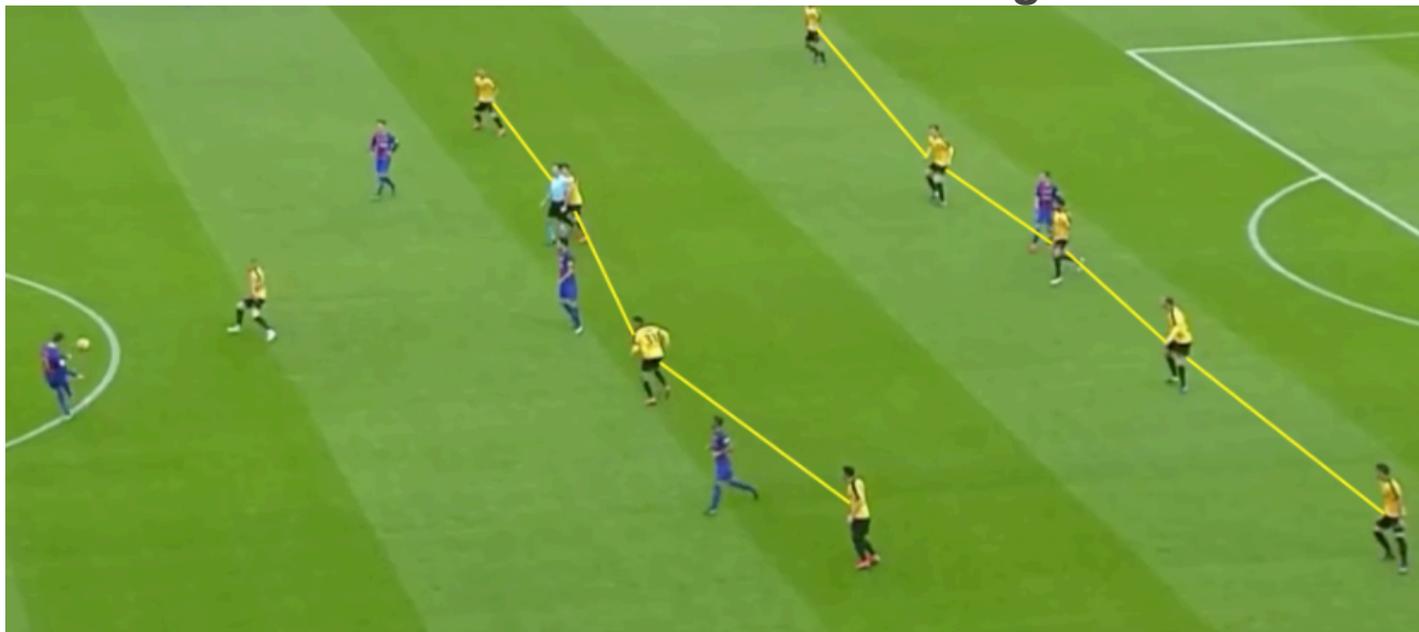




## Phase of the Game: Defending



Defending is possible in many ways. Manchester City, for example, won the Premier League last season thanks to the high pressure, while Chelsea won the national title a season earlier by defending very compactly at home. How do you develop the most suitable defensive way of playing for your team in the run up to next season?

### Game idea

First of all, your game idea as a coach and the situation of your team is important. Do you want to dominate or above all be very stable and solid?

Is it purely about winning or do you think the way in which a result comes about is also important?

What is asked of the team; within the training?

Which players do you have and what are their specific qualities?

From the game idea, the situation of the team and the specific qualities of the players, the defensive play method is achieved.

It can help to answer the questions below.

- How high (on which part of the playing field) do we want to defend?
- With what intention do we defend: do we want to capture the ball or give away no chances?
- What are the most important landmarks (for the players in determining the optimal position)?

By thinking about the above questions and by drawing up game principles from the answers to the questions, the players receive clear guidelines.



## Height

First of all, it is important how high you defend as a team. Are we chasing the opponent down to the last line? Do we put something in, for example, to head circle on half of the opponent? Can the opponent play around freely in their own half, but do we put pressure on our half everywhere? Or do we drop a bit further and park the bus for the sixteen-meter area? This can, of course, vary per match and per situation within a match.

- Possible game principle: we chase the opponent over the entire field
- Possible game principle: on our half the opponent never gets time and space
- Possible game principle: wherever we defend, the distance in length is no more than 35 meters

## Intention

Do you want your team to recapture the ball as quickly as possible so that you can dominate matches? Or is it sufficient to stop especially without a direct attack on the ball? A team that defends to conquer the ball generally takes more risks than a team that is already satisfied if the opponent does not create chances.

- Possible game principle: we defend to recapture the ball as quickly as possible
- Possible game principle: we defend to allow as few opportunities as possible

## Orientation points

In general there are four orientation points for players in position selection: the ball, the space, the opponents and the teammates. Of course, the sideline can also be an orientation point, but it is always in the same place. The ball, the opponents and the fellow players move continuously, causing the spaces to shift on the pitch.

Game principles related to the position of the ball as the most important orientation point:

- When the ball moves, we move along as a team
- We force the ball to the side
- If the ball is on the side, we'll keep it there
- We create an extra player around the ball around the ball ("double teaming")

Game principles that belong to space as the main orientation point:

- We keep the axis of the field closed
- We defend the space behind our defense

Game principles that belong to the opponent as the most important orientation point :

- We cover shortly in the vicinity of the ball
- If the ball is on the other side, we let go of our opponent

Game principles that belong to fellow players as the most important orientation point:

- We keep the mutual distances small
- We help each other by doubling
- We take over each other's position where necessary If one player steps out, the rest squeezes in