

To shoot or not to shoot...

Shooting is a common defensive tactic employed to limit the attacking team progressing up the field. It is also used to apply pressure to attacking players and force them to make mistakes; as well as pinning attackers into a corner of the field isolating them from their sub box and preventing fresh players taking the field.

Risks: This tactic requires a high level of fitness from the defending team and can go wrong if movements are not properly executed and coordinated. Players need to ensure they time their shooting to avoid being called offside. Shooting also fragments the defensive line which could result in individual shooters being beaten by a step or a pass to create an opportunity for the attacking team.

Where and when to shoot: Shooting is best used on the attacking team when they are coming off their own score line up to around the half way line. The Shoot defence is best used at the start of a set of 6 touches when the roll ball is close to the sideline, specifically focusing on the first two touches. It can be used effectively over subsequent touches but requires a lot of effort from the defending team and will tire defenders. Also if a defensive shooter is beaten it is much easier to recover the further away you are from your own score line.

How: There are several different strategies which can be used. At the most basic level defending teams will send one defending player up to close down the opposition and limit the ground they make. This is a simple strategy and individual players will be beaten by a step or a pass by competent sides. More advanced shooting strategies include the following:

- Send up 2nd and 4th defending players together and then send a second wave of 1st, 3rd & 5th players
- Send up 2nd & 3rd defending players together
- Send up 2nd, 3rd & 4th defending players

Hot Tips:

- If you are shooting make sure you are onside first or you will concede a penalty, look to the referee for confirmation you can shoot. You are not allowed to shoot until the dummy half has touched the ball or the referee has indicated their is no half in position.
- Help coordinate shoot defence by calling out defenders names who are going to shoot, ideally performed from the wing.
- When shooting, don't sprint otherwise you risk being stepped. You should aim to approach at a reasonable speed with the ability to change direction if need be.
- Concentrate your defensive line on the side of the pitch where the ball is by squeezing tight together and reducing gaps between defenders.
- Consider changing your shooting policy at half time to keep the opposition on their toes.

Defensive Strategy



- Discuss within your team what will happen if a shooter is beaten by a step or a pass and ensure you have a strategy to deal with this
 - Ensure that you make touches in front of the attacking player (as opposed to on the side) and retreat as quickly as possible. Overshooting past an attacker during the touch will leave the defending team exposed and create an attacking opportunity.
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