



Attack and Defence Strategies in Team Sports

KS3 PE Ages 11-14 ⌚ 3 min read

What Are Attack and Defence in Team Sports?

In team sports like football, netball, hockey, and basketball, every game has two main jobs: **attacking** (trying to score) and **defending** (trying to stop the other team scoring). The best teams are good at both. Let's explore the clever strategies players use to win.

Think of it like a fortress: attackers try to break through the walls to reach the treasure inside, while defenders build stronger walls and guard the gates.

Attacking Strategies

Passing and movement are the foundation of good attacks. Players move into **space** (empty areas on the pitch) and pass the ball quickly to create **scoring chances**. Quick passes are harder for defenders to intercept than slow ones.

Width and depth means spreading across and along the pitch. When attackers spread out, defenders can't protect everyone at once. **Overlapping** is when a player runs past a teammate to receive the ball in a new position, creating confusion.

Pressing means attacking when the other team has the ball, not waiting for them to attack first. This stops them from organizing their attack.

Defending Strategies

Marking means staying close to an opponent so they can't receive the ball easily. **Zoning** is different—defenders guard an area rather than a person, like protecting the goal mouth.

Pressing works for defence too: rushing toward attackers quickly stops them from having time to think. **Blocking** means putting your body between the ball and the goal.

Think of it like a chess game: defenders arrange themselves in patterns (like formation) to control spaces, while attackers find gaps in this pattern to attack through.

Positioning is crucial. Good defenders stand where they can see both the ball and their opponent. The **goalkeeper** (or defence player in sports without a keeper) must communicate with teammates, shouting instructions like "man on!" to warn of danger.

Putting It Together

The best teams practice both attacking and defending constantly. Players learn to **transition** quickly—changing from attack to defence and back again in seconds. This keeps the other team off balance. Understanding **space, timing, and teamwork** separates good teams from great ones.