How to Defend in Netball

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Netball is a non-contact intermittent sport played by a side of 7 athletes. The aim is to score the highest number of goals while limiting the goals against you. Each player on the team has a part to play when it comes to defending. Players need to work collectively in order to slow down the speed of the attack, by limiting the passing options and forcing errors in order to gain possession of the ball. It's your job as the defender to be aware of the ball and anticipate where your attacking player will run.[1]

Steps
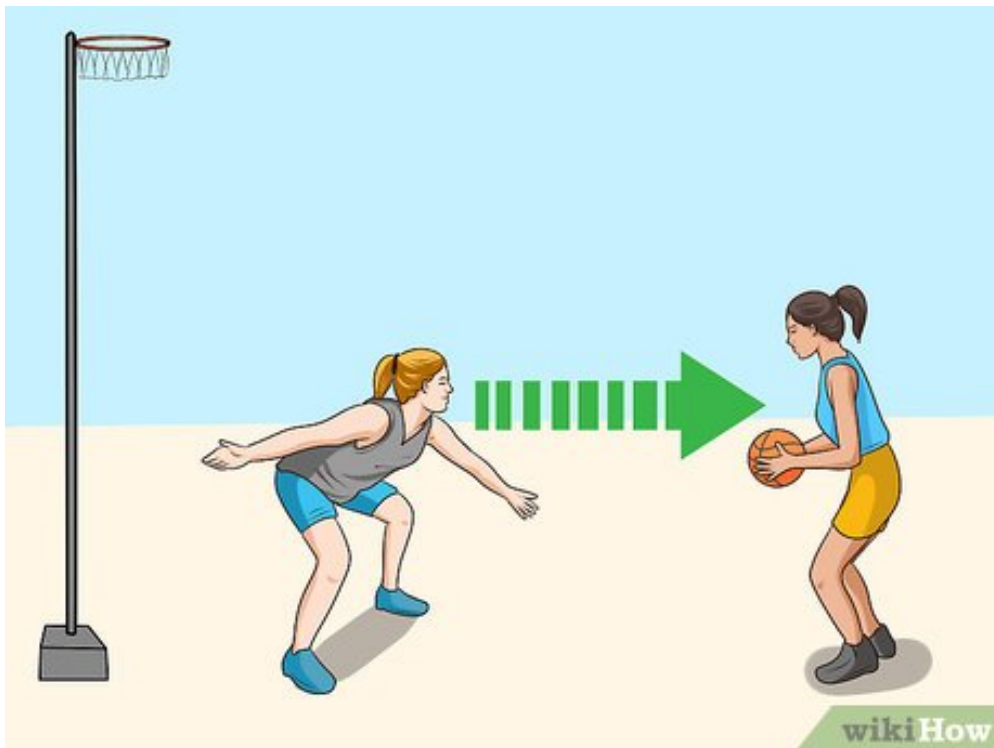
1 **Stand side on to the attacking player, which allows you to see both the attacker and ball simultaneously.**
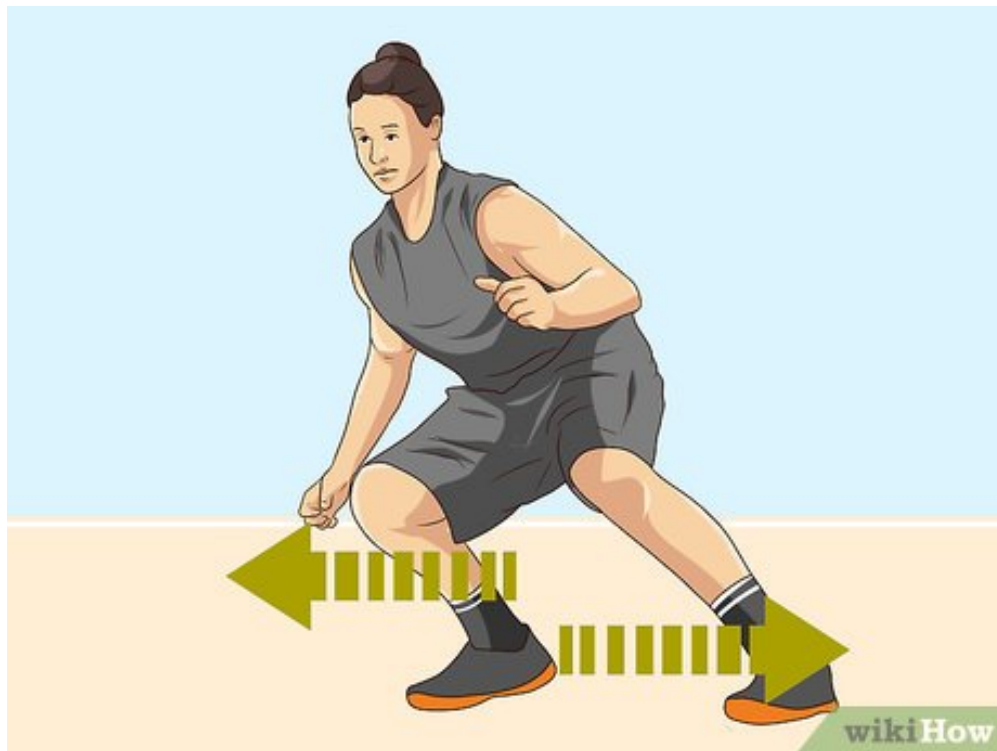
2 When intercepting the ball side on, make sure it's always your outer arm (arm furthest from the attacker) to avoid contact.
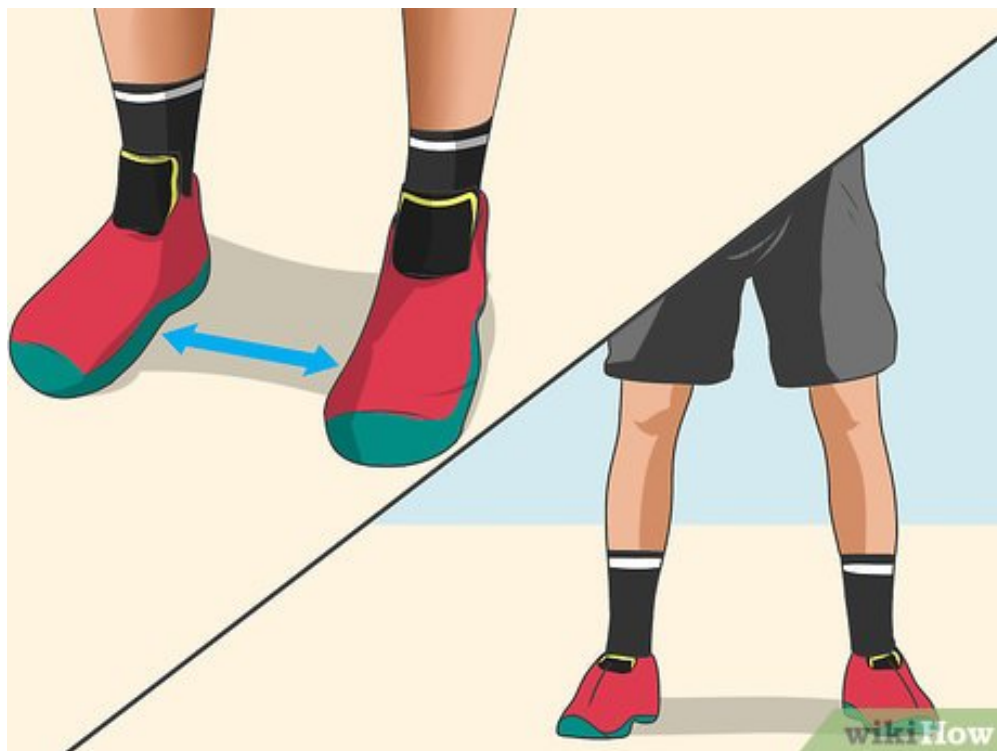

3 Make sure you 'push' your attacker wide by stopping your attacker from getting close to the net by:

- Using your body to block them from moving

- Stand behind them (straight)

4 **As a defender you are very important so you need to be alert.** Move on your tiptoes and be in a position that will allow you to react and adjust quickly.[2]

5 **Feet should be shoulder-width apart and your body mass is equally balanced on the balls of your feet.**

6 When the attacker/opposing player is passing the ball, as a defender you must make sure to stand one meter / 100 centimeters (39.4 in) with both arms up and on your tiptoes to block the attacker[3] .

7 As a GD or GK, when the shooter is in position to shoot, make sure you are one meter / 100 centimeters (39.4 in) away with both or one arm marking the shot, depending on your height.

- If you are short, lean side on with one arm up leaning and stretching.

- Count to three seconds and then jump to block the shot.

- If you are tall, stretch both legs and arms while positioning your feet towards the attacker; make sure you do not touch the ball. As this will result in obstruction of play.

- While the other circle defender it marking the shot, the other should be prepared to retrieve the rebounds.
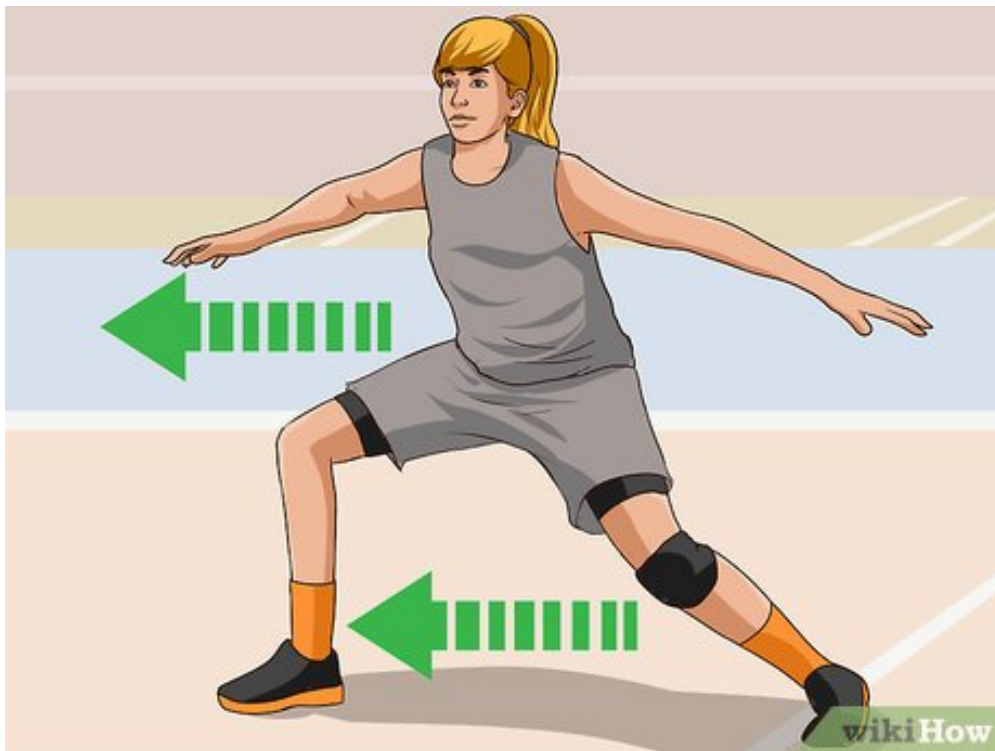
8 **Remain on your toes and aware of the game situation and be prepared for the turnovers as your team will need you.** [4]

9 **Stand in a position that allows you to quickly adjust to the motion of play, using quick agile steps to react to changes in the opposing players movement.** This will be achieved by continually changing your speed and direction when you want to withdraw from the player you are marking. This is so that you can help the rest of your team by being available to pass to. Subsequently, by following this rule, you can tire out your opponent quite easily![5]

Community Q&A

How do I make sure that I see my partner all the time?

Community Answer

Stand next to your partner, but move your body to face them side-on. Make sure you leave your outer side open to allow you to see the game. Try to stick with your partner all the time to avoid losing them. Keep your partner in the corner of your eye.

Helpful 22   Not Helpful 6

Should I stand face-to-face with the other player?

Ehster
Community Answer

Not necessarily. By doing so, you become distracted and are unable to view the play. This puts you, the defender, in a vulnerable position as you cannot see the ball. Therefore, you're not able to react as quickly. By standing sideways, you are able to see both the attacker and ball.

Helpful 40   Not Helpful 5

What skill can I use when defending in Netball?

Community Answer

Side on marking is good, because you can see the player and the ball at all times. When defending, you don't always have to catch the ball for an interception. If you can't catch, don't just let the attacker get it, you can smack it away before they catch it.

Helpful 12   Not Helpful 5

As a tall person, which position should I play?

Ehster
Community Answer

As a tall player, you are best suited as an attacker or a defender. Your height gives you an advantage.

Helpful 32   Not Helpful 19

If I am a tall person, which position suits me more, attack or defense?

Community Answer

It really depends on how good you are at shooting. If you're good, go for an attack position. If you're fast and good and intercepting, then I would advise defense.

Helpful 14   Not Helpful 3

How do I defend a tall girl if I'm short?

Community Answer

You can just make sure that you're fast enough to take the balls when someone is throwing to her. You just have to stretch very high.

Helpful 24   Not Helpful 9

Am I allowed to jump up and down while defending?

Ehster
Community Answer

Of course, as long as you stay a meter away from the defender, and make sure your hands remain in the air or on the ball. If your hands are in the attacker's face, this becomes a violation and is classified as obstruction.

Helpful 24   Not Helpful 6

How do I learn to run faster and be more aware?

Community Answer

Being fit is always the best. Work on fitness as much as possible so that you can always be fast on the court. Make sure that your focus is always on your opponent and the ball. If possible, you can also try to scan for the player that is most likely to have the ball thrown at them so that you can intercept it.

Helpful 10   Not Helpful 1

I am GS but I am tall. Is this the right position for me (bearing in mind I'm a good scorer and defender)?

Ehster
Community Answer

Good question, it's important to maintain a balance when it comes to attacking and defending, as it is required from all positions on court. Based on the information you have given me, I suggest you remain a shooter and continue to progress. Talk to your coach for guidance. Remember, a shooter still needs to defend, especially on a rebound or intercepting a ball from circle defense.

Helpful 18   Not Helpful 2

Can you play Netball if you are short?

Community Answer

Yes you can. You might have to pay midfield, but there's no rules saying otherwise. The most important this is to practice to improve your playing and have fun.

Helpful 15   Not Helpful 11

See more answers

Tips

- Keep your body in an upright position, with your head up focused on the play. Avoid slouching or leaning against the attacker as this is a violation of play

- Do not get complacent with the umpires, as they will draw you out effecting your team. Remember the umpires decision is final.

- Always be patient with the attackers even if they are aggressive. Being the defender, you're more likely to get pulled up for the nudge than the attacker.

- When blocked by the two shooters on a back-line pass, never attempt to move or push them out the way. leave the WD and C to get the ball.

- Keep your weight on the balls of your feet, with your knees flexed ready to jump.

- Remain close to your attacker, ready to use your defensive skills such as an interception or a tip.

- Practice marking 3 feet (1 meter), this will improve your perception of the marking rule, making it easier to defend your player in match play situations

References

1. ↑ https://netballamerica.com/about/what-is-netball/
2. ↑ https://www.myactivesg.com/Sports/Netball/Training-Method/Tactics/How-to-be-a-good-netball-defender
3. ↑ https://us.humankinetics.com/blogs/excerpt/defending-in-netball-is-a-challenge
4. ↑ https://netball.teambath.com/top-tip-zone/top-tip-zone-defence/
5. ↑ https://www.myactivesg.com/Sports/Netball/Training-Method/Tactics/How-to-be-a-good-netball-defender

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