

# U6/U8 Week 4 Soccer Shielding Guide

Shielding is used commonly in soccer, and is a vital skill to possess. Shielding is basically using your body (legally) to prevent a defender from taking the ball. It may seem one-dimensional, but shielding can be used in many ways. It is a skill every players should master.



Every player will probably use shielding in a match, and if a player doesn't he should. Shielding, like dribbling, allows a single player to keep possession of the ball, a very important part of soccer.

## How to Shield

When players start out with shielding, they usually put there back to their defender, put their elbows out, and triumphantly say "Shielding is easy." Shielding is pretty easy in some ways, but not that easy.

It doesn't work because defenders can easily get to the ball. Defenders can poke at it through the player's legs, poke at it from the side, or push the player off of the ball. It may be "okay" sometimes if the player moves his body to block the player, but it is not as efficient as it could be.

The proper technique is as follows:

### 1. Get in an athletic position.

- Bend your knees, lower your butt, and stand firmly. The key to shielding is good balance, which a good stance helps with greatly.

### 2. Stand Sideways.

- The only time you will turn your back to a defender is if you are performing a quick drop (backwards) pass. Otherwise, stand sideways.

### 3. Arms out for balance.

- As long as you are not pushing the defender, you can put your arm on him for balance. Keep your opposite arm out for balance.

### 4. Body against body.

- When shielding, don't wait for your opponent to push into you, thus making you lose balance. Stand firm and push back against him aggressively. A good upper body helps with this which you can achieve with proper soccer fitness.
- If you feel like you are losing your balance or the defender is overpowering you, dribble away, or in desperate situations take a dive.

### 5. Look to pass, dribble, or shoot.

- Most of the time you will pass from a shielding position, but there are times when you can break free of your man by pushing him off balance or performing soccer moves and dribble or shoot.