

# JOYSTICK DRILL

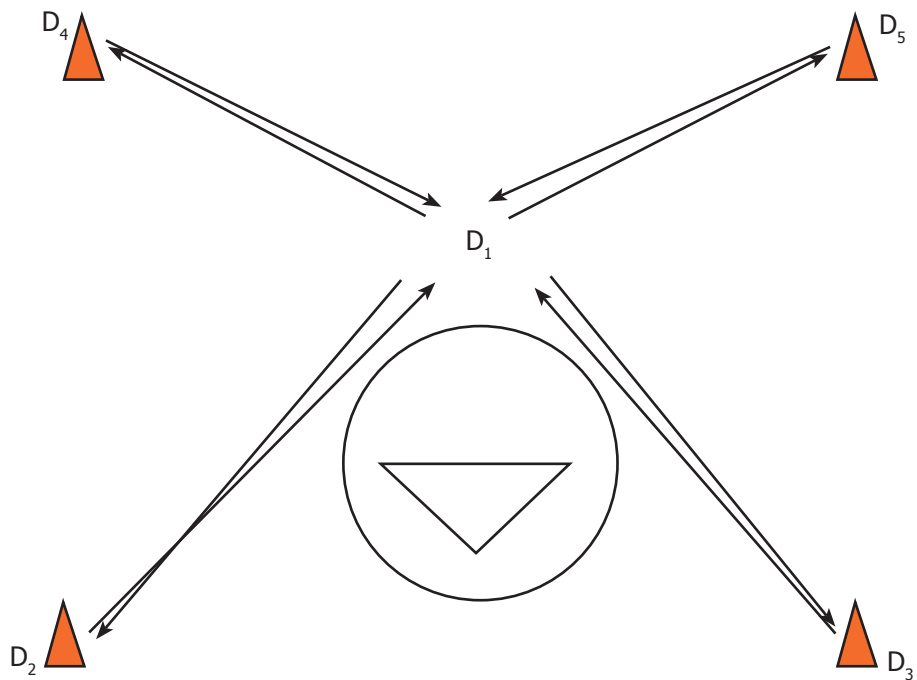
**OBJECTIVE** \_\_\_\_\_ To practice defensive communication, alertness, and positioning when approaching and retreating from the ball.

**SPACE/EQUIPMENT** \_\_\_\_\_ • Half-field

**PLAYERS NEEDED** \_\_\_\_\_ All players can participate in this drill at one time, but it is best to have groups of five.

**DRILL-EXECUTION** \_\_\_\_\_ Set four players in a box shape approximately 12 yards from one another, and set one defender in the middle of the square. The defender starts in a solid defensive position and stance. A coach then calls out top-right, top-left, back-left, or back-right. As he does, the defender sprints to the player representing that position, poke checks his stick, and recovers to the starting point. This pattern continues until a player has touched all four corners of the box, and then players rotate positions.

**Drill diagram:**



- Defensive stance and positioning
- Alertness to defensive communication
- Approaching and retreating from ballcarriers

To increase the difficulty of the drill, give defenders short sticks to ensure that they focus on proper positioning and footwork rather than relying on their stick. To increase the difficulty of the drill further, the coach could not call positions but instead just pass a ball to one of the four perimeter players, forcing the defender to be aware of and react to the ball instead of vocal commands.

## SKILLS PRACTICED

## VARIATIONS/PROGRESSION

## GOALIE INVOLVEMENT

None (goalie could call out the different positions)

## RELATED DRILLS

Breakdown Drill  
Lob N' Dodge