

Types of Defenses

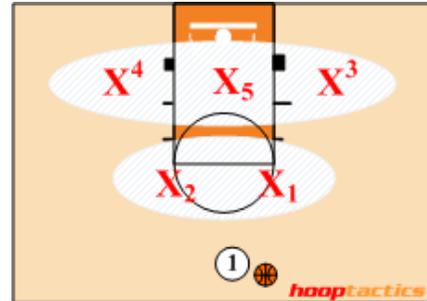
The game of basketball allows a variety of defenses to be deployed in an effort to disrupt and combat offensive plays. Here are examples of the three basic categories of team defenses. In addition, each category is comprised of an assortment of different variations.

Person-To-Person Defenses



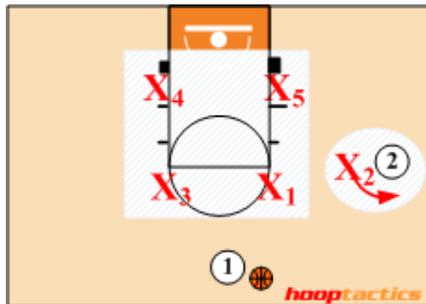
Person-to-Person defenses match up the defenders against specific offensive players. Defenders are usually assigned to be matched up with offensive players by size and ability.

Zone Defenses



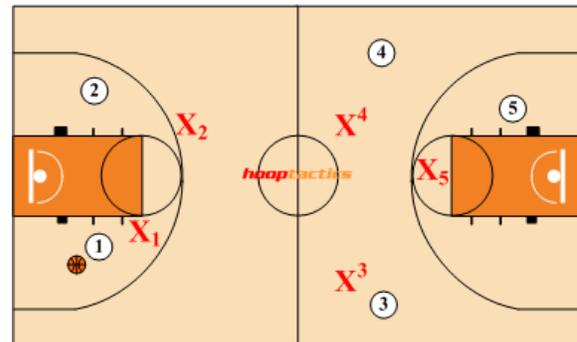
With Zone defenses, defenders are assigned to guard specific areas on the court. Zones are named or designated by their player alignments.

Combination Defenses



A third type of defense that can be deployed is the combination or "Nickel" defense. With combination defenses, some of the players are assigned to play person-to-person while the rest of the defenders play zone. Combination defenses are usually deployed in an effort to stop or neutralize great individual offensive players.

Extended Defenses

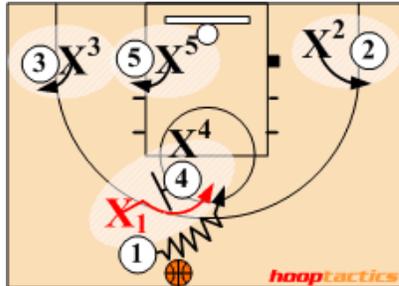


Both person-to-person and zone defenses can also be extended into full, three quarters or half court presses.

Person-to-Person Defenses

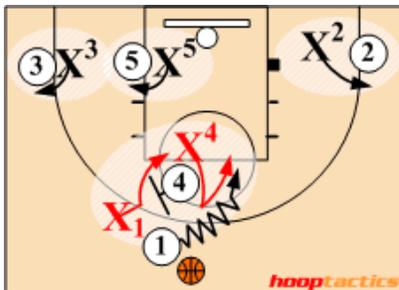
Basically, there are three types of Person-to-Person defenses: Straight, switching and sagging. The specific type used in a game primarily depends on a team's player personnel. There are three types of person-to person defenses:

Straight Person-To-Person



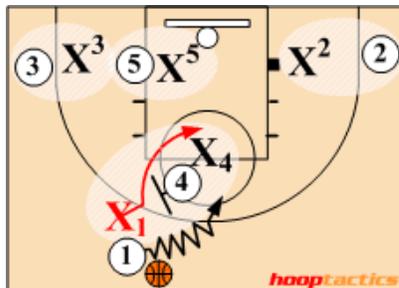
Straight person-to-person is an aggressive defense which causes severe problems to good spot up shooters and poor ball handlers. In this type of defense, defenders will fight over screens. However, it can be susceptible to dribble penetration and on ball screens.

Switching Person-To-Person



The ability to attack passing lanes make switching person-to-person defenses an ideal defense to use against motion type offenses. In this type of defense, defenders will aggressively switch on all contact screens. The disadvantage to switching is that, in some cases, it can cause severe mismatches.

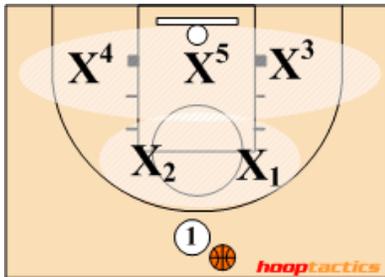
Sagging Person-To-Person



Sagging person-to-person defense can be very successful against poor outside shooting teams and against dribble penetration. In this type of defense, the defenders will go behind or switch most screens. However, it is susceptible to good outside shooting teams.

Zone Defenses

Zone defenses are named for the various player alignments. These defenses vary in strengths and weaknesses.



2-3 Zone

The two-three zone player alignment consists of two players positioned just above the free throw line and three players stationed along the baseline.

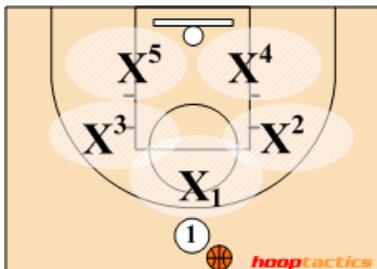
Strength: Baseline & Rebounding
Weakness: Wings & top of the circle



2-1-2 Zone

The Two-One-Two zone has a similar player alignment as the two-three zone, except that the middle baseline player assumes a high position just below the free throw line.

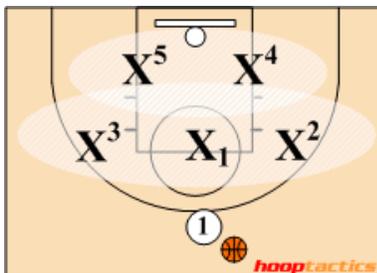
Strength: Middle & Three second area
Weakness: Wings, corners & top of the circle



1-2-2 Zone

The One-Two-Two or "Jug" zone player alignment consists of one player at the top of the circle, two players on the wings, and two players on the baseline.

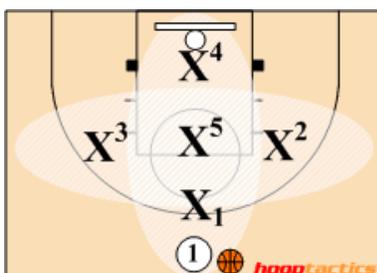
Strength: Outside
Weakness: Middle & corners



3-2 Zone

The Three-Two Zone is similar to the One-Two-Two zone except that the point defender drops back to the free throw line. This allows the wings to exert more pressure.

Strength: Across free throw line
Weakness: Top of Circle & corners



1-3-1 Zone

The One-Three-One Zone consists of a point station at the top of the circle, three players position across the free throw line and one player in front of the basket.

Strength: Across free throw line & Top of Circle
Weakness: Corners



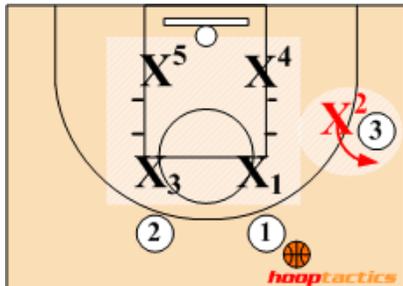
Match-Up Zone

The Match-Up zone can be ran out of either a two-three or one-three-one initial alignment, but assumes whatever form it takes to match the offensive alignment.

Strength: Matching offensive alignments
Weakness: Cutters

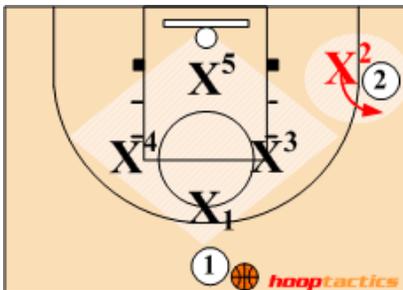
Combination Defenses

Combination defenses are usually deployed in an effort to stop or neutralize great individual offensive players. They can be very effective against any team not prepared to attack them. However, they do have vulnerabilities and, as a result, are not normally deployed as a primary team defense. Here are some examples of combination defenses.



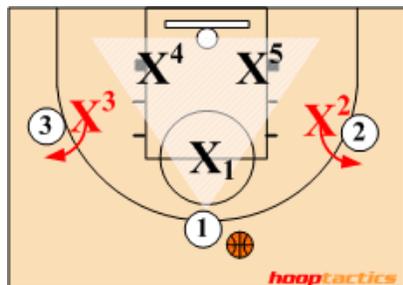
Box & One

Probably the most common combination defense is the "Box & One" defense. Here, four defenders form a box zone and the fifth defender plays a strong pass denial on a designated player.



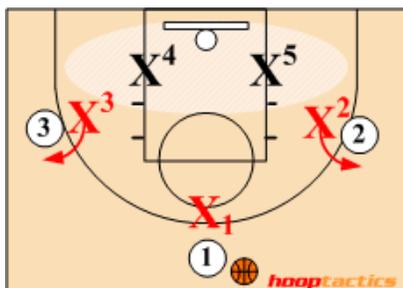
Diamond & One

The Diamond & One defense is a variation of the box and one used when opponents employ a single guard front offensive alignment.



Triangle & Two

In this combination defense, two defenders assume strong pass denial positions against designated offensive players. The other three defenders form a triangle zone.



Combo

The combo defense is a combination zone inside and person-to-person outside. The three outside defenders assume strong pass denial positions. And the two inside players zone on the baseline much like a 1-2-2 zone. The combo defense is usually used against a penetrating, spread offense such as the "North Carolina Four Corners" spread offense.

This overview only scratches the surface of the various types of defenses. Be sure to check out HoopTactics.com for an in-depth study of all defensive strategies.