# Principles of Play

## How to Attack

*"You can be sure in succeeding in your attacks if you only attack places that are undefended"***Sun Tzu, The Art of War**

**1. Penetrate**

Always try to score: "Can I score?” If the Answer is YES, shoot; if NO, penetrate the defense with a pass or a run.

**2. Support**

Help the player who has the ball.

**3. Create width**

When attacking, use the full width of the pitch.

**4. Create depth**

When in possession, you should attempt to stretch the opposition vertically as well as horizontally.

**5. Surprise/creativity**

The ball should be moved towards the goal as quickly as possible and player movement should be immediate and hard to predict. Players should be creative in the way they move the ball.

**6. Mobility**

Attackers should make runs into different areas of the field in order to draw defenders out of their positions, trying to unbalance the defense.

## How to Defend

**1. Pressure/delay**

To prevent attackers from penetrating the defense, the first defender (the player nearest to the ball) should apply immediate pressure to the ball carrier.

Her objective is not to win the ball; it is to slow the attack, get the attacker's head down and to try to force the attacker into a place where she cannot shoot.

# 2. Cover/support

# The defender who is second closest to the ball takes up a position between the first defender and the goal and provides cover. Her role is to take over the job of first defender if the attacker gets past her team mate.

# 3. Balance

While the first and second defenders are working on the attacker with the ball, the rest of the defense provides balance.

Their job is to cut off passing options, watch for other attackers making runs and to take on the role of either the first or second defender if the need arises.

# 4. Compact (also known as concentration)

To avoid leaving gaps in the defense that can be dribbled or passed through, defenders should concentrate their numbers in the area of the pitch between the ball and the goal.

# 5. Counter attack

The final – and most important – principle of defense is to always take an opportunity to launch a counter attack.