

# Wolf Defense

*Winning is not a sometime thing; it's an all the time thing. You don't win once in a while, you don't do things right once in a while, you do them right all the time. Winning is habit. Unfortunately, so is losing.*

– Vince Lombardi



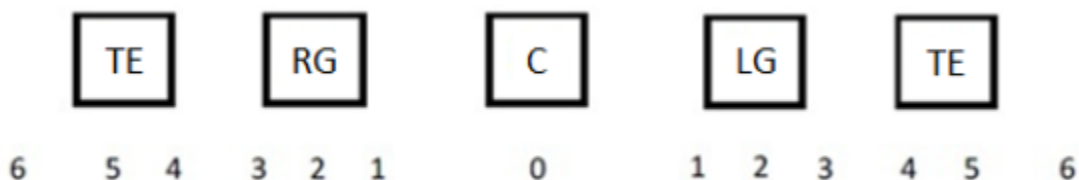
## Basics of Defense

### Basic Concept of the Defense

This defense is referred to as a 'spill defense' and is different from what you are probably used to from Middle School football. We have been running a spill defense for a while now to great success. The basic idea behind the defense is to clog up the middle and force north/south runs to bounce outside where our LBs and Safeties make the tackle for a loss or short gain.

This defense also gives us a lot of flexibility when it comes to coverage. A QB will actually have to read our defense instead of just knowing that we will be in cover 0. Opposing offenses will have to prepare for much more because we will be doing different things.

### Alignment



These are the Dline techniques that we will use. There are some differences between teams, but this is the numbering system a lot of football teams use to quickly communicate alignment.

The Linebackers base their alignment off the Dlinemen to keep gap integrity.

## Positions

### Defensive Line

DEs – Against a 3-man line the DEs will align in 3 techniques. If there is a TE or Wing attached to the formation, they will play in a 4 technique and are responsible for B gap.

NT/DT – The defense is predicated on this player being a pain in the behind of the Center and Offensive Coordinator. He will play in a 0 technique and be tasked with defeating the Center. If the NT can't command a double team or penetrate into the backfield on the regular, the defense will not be as effective as it could be.

## Linebacker

Mike – Is stacked on the NT/DT and 5 yards off the line of scrimmage.

## Defensive Backs

Strong Safety (\$) – Do it all player. Run stopping and coverage responsibilities, will align roughly 7-9 yards from the line of scrimmage.

Free Safety (S) – Same as the Strong Safety but on the opposite side of the field.

Cornerbacks – Coverage players primarily, align 8 yards off the line of scrimmage, don't get beat deep.

## **Huddle**

When the offense is huddling, we will also be huddling. **Everyone** must be in the huddle to communicate the situation and the call.

The defensive line sets the huddle about 3 yards from the LOS with their backs to the ball. The CBs are next to the DEs. The LBs and \$ get the call from the sideline and make sure they get the call right. While that is happening, the S is looking at the score board to get the down and distance and then telling the rest of the huddle. After the down and distance discussion the LB will give the defensive call to the huddle. Any questions will be answered to make sure everyone is on the same page then the huddle will break.

If the offense is running a no huddle offense, we will cover what basic concepts we want to run in practice so we can just play when it comes to the game.

## **Communication**

Communication is extremely important, and **it is up to the Linebacker and Safeties to make sure everyone is on the same page. There is no excuse for not communicating on defense.** Linemen get a limited view of the field, and Cornerbacks can only see half of the field well because of distance.

Offensive formations and strength calls need to be given immediately; the Linebackers and Safeties need to be yelling these out. The coaches should be able to hear the calls from the sideline.

Adjustments must be made as the offense is lining up in their formation. Is a player out of place? Is there an automatic adjustment that is triggered? Make sure it is communicated, and things get adjusted.

## **TRAKS**

Technique, Responsibility, Alignment, Key, Stance

These are the most important things to know in our defense. If you are unable to consistently do these things, it is unlikely that you will get a lot of playing time.

## How to get playing time on Defense

### **Be a player that your coaches trust**

Get your academics straight:

Grades, classroom behavior, and attendance come first. If you don't take care of those three simple things, you won't play.

Put in the work during the Offseason:

If your coaches can't trust you to work out in the off season, how can they trust you in a game? Players who do other sports and do a lifting program will get first dibs at playing time on defense.

Be Coachable:

Listen to your coach and take the coaching. They want you to be a better player. Everyone makes mistakes in technique or reads. Coachable players don't keep making the same mistakes.

Have situational awareness - Understand what we are trying to do:

Football is all about situations and a big part of understanding the game is understanding what is going on. Why are we in Base Red Hawk on 3<sup>rd</sup> and 2? Why would we play Base Blue in a Hail Mary situation?

Hustle every play:

Going full speed every play shows MENTAL toughness. Your body is resilient and can be pushed far beyond what you think.

### **On the field (Practice and Game)**

Communicate:

Defending requires lots of communication. We have a lot of automatic adjustments that our Safeties and Linebackers control. Listen up, look for hand signals and make sure everyone around you understands what is happening.

Build up your teammates:

Like stated previously, everyone makes mistakes. Building a player up after a mistake is the difference between being a good teammate and a bad one. Be a leader and help your team.

Alignment:

Know where you belong against different formations. Every play starts with alignment, and it is a big key to playing defense well.

Do your 1/8<sup>th</sup> on the field:

Do your job. If we have guys going rogue our defense will suck. If all 8 guys do their part, we will have a strong defense.

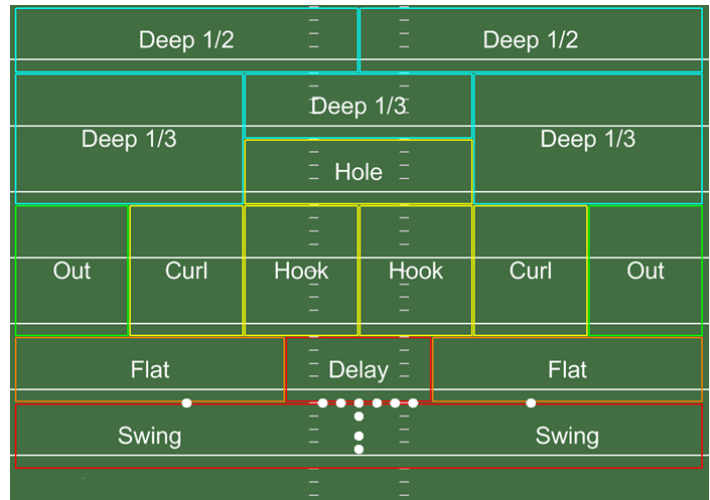
## Basic Coverages

### Types of Underneath Zone Concepts

Curl-to-Flat concept – The player takes care of his Curl zone first. If nobody is in his Curl zone and an offensive player enters the Flat, he must come up to stop it.

Hook-to-Curl concept – Hook first, Curl second.

Hook-to-Flat concept – This is a bit of ground to cover. Hook first and flat second.



### Yellow – Cover 3

Zone coverage with the CBs and Free Safety each taking a deep third of the field; linebackers and Strong Safety have underneath coverage.

### Yellow Hawk – Cover 3 Hawk

Dictated by formation or position on the field. Cloud coverage on one side. The field (wide) side CB **stays** in the flats to play up, jam, or better support run defense. The remaining DBs each have a deep third. This also allows for a CB blitz (Cat) out of zone coverage, something we could not do before. Rip and Liz calls determine which CB stays in the flats. The call is based on the Field (wide side).

### Red – Cover 2 Read

Safeties each take a deep half with Corners staying with #1 unless #2 goes out. If #2 goes vertical past LB depth CB and S lock onto their man.

### Red Hawk – Cover 2 Hawk

Cloud coverage. Safeties each take a deep half with Corners **staying** in the flats. Hawk Corners must go with an inside wheel route (the only rule breaker).

### Blue – Cover 4

Corners and Safeties each take a deep quarter of the field with LB playing underneath.

### White – Cover 1

Man to man coverage with the deep Safety playing center field. The LB may have pass coverage responsibility, depending on the formation.

### White Bracket – Cover 1

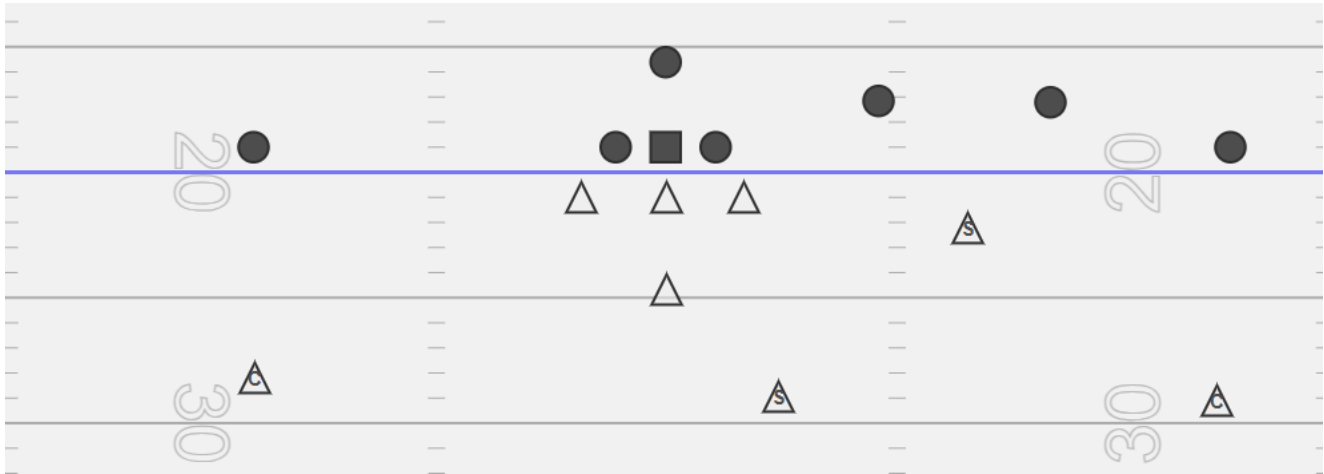
Man to man coverage with the deep Safety doubling the designated player.

### Black – Cover 0

Man to man coverage across the board. We are probably bringing a lot of pressure so expect a quick throw.

## Coverage Adjustments to Trips and Trio

Purple – Split field coverage. The single side WR is locked up man to man and the Trips side has a Safety playing in the flat with a Cornerback and Safety playing quarters behind it. See below.



## Blitzes

Hammer – Mike communicates with the DL (depending on the defense we are running) and blitzes so they don't go through the same gap

Hammer X – Used in Over and Under Fronts, NT slants to the opposite A gap that they align in, and the Mike replaces them

Missile – Strong side Safety blitz, dline slants weak and the S blitzes the outside gap

Rocket – Weak side Safety blitz, dline slants strong and S blitzes the outside gap

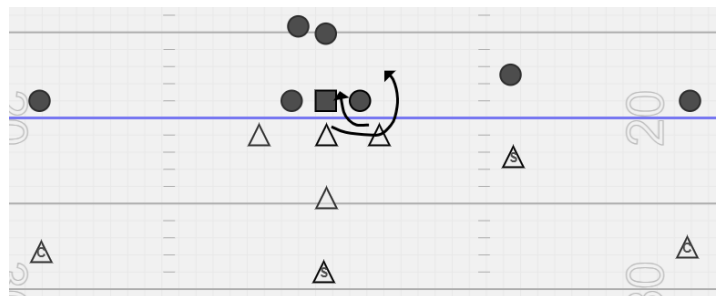
## Defensive Line Twists

We will probably only use these in passing situations against teams that like to only have a 3-man offensive line.

Strong or Weak EaT (End at Tackle)

The Defensive End slants inside to A gap and is looking to bring the Offensive Guard to the Center so he can make them double. The Nose Tackle will take one step forward then loop around, taking over the Defensive End's normal responsibilities.

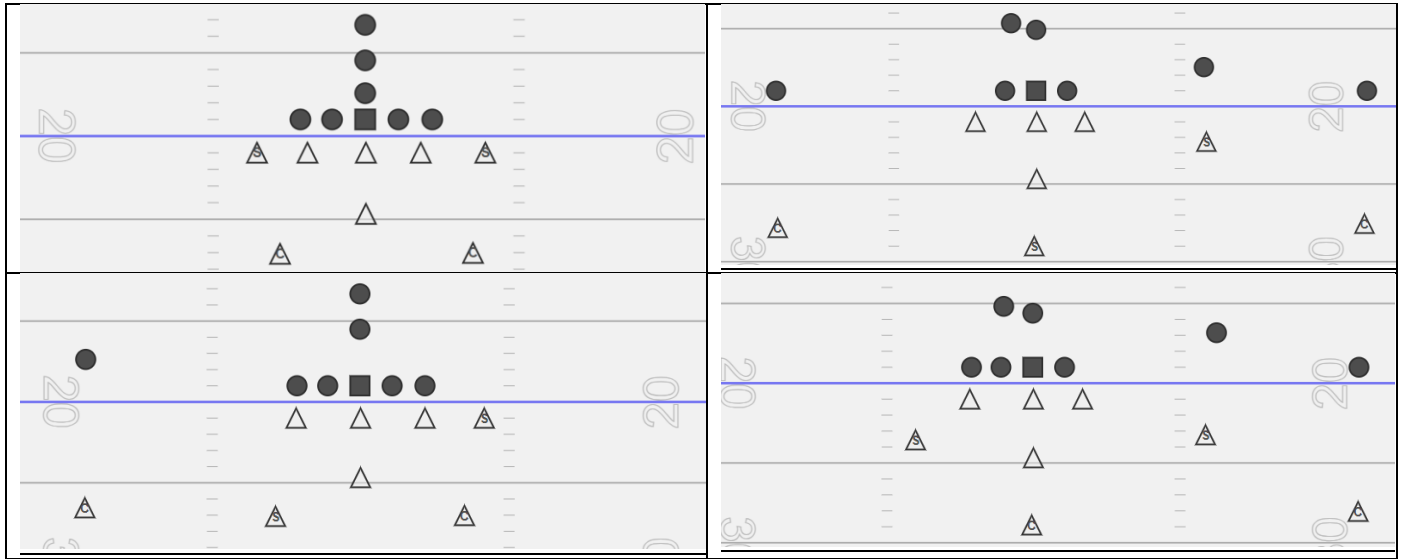
Example: Base Yellow Weak EaT vs Gun Twins



## Base Defenses

We run a 3-1 Defense most of the time. We can also run a defensive structure called Viking. There will be games where we use both defenses so be familiar with both. Remember, understanding what your job is on defense is a good way to get playing time. If you are clueless, you will not see the field.

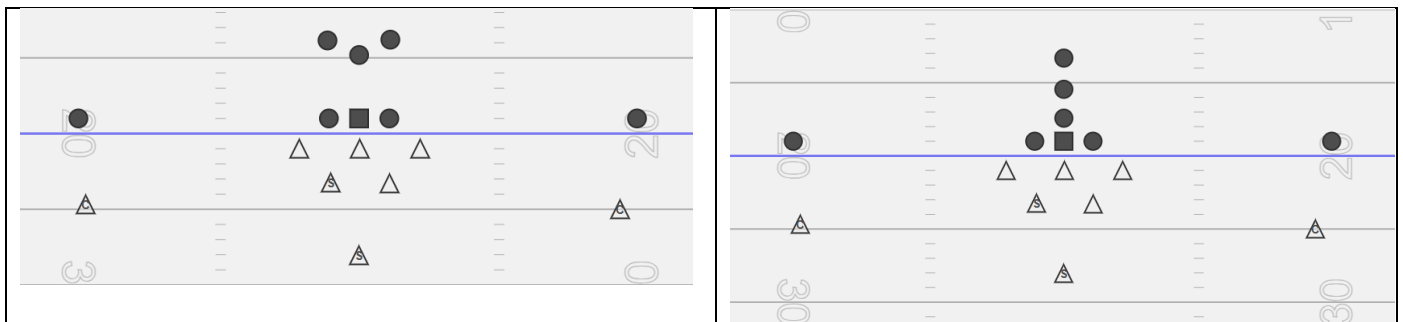
### 3-1 Defense

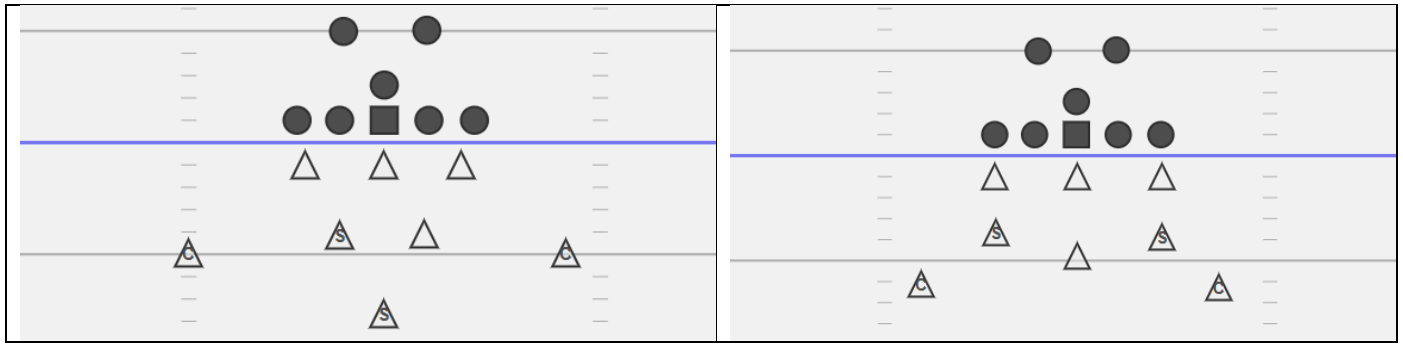


Our looks based on common formations we will go against.

Variations to Base include Over and Under. Everything is the same except we shift the Nose Tackle to strong A gap (Over) or weak A gap (Under).

### 3-2 Defense





Our looks based on common formations we will go against.

We employ this defensive structure when facing formations with three players in the offensive backfield. This Defense gets us into a 3-2 look, with one of our Safeties playing a second LB position. We can play Yellow or Black coverages out of this structure.

The last image in the table shows Viking Black, where our DEs are playing 5 techniques and Safeties are stacked. DEs and Safeties communicate which gap they will attack at the snap, so we don't have multiple players going to the same place.