

Defence

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Defence is the term used mainly for players who retreat from the table and use variations in backspin to force errors from their opponents. In reality in modern day table tennis it is also necessary for defenders to be able to attack when the opportunity arises. One of the main weapons of the defender is the use of deception in varying the amount of spin on the ball to cause their opponent to misread it. This is done by varying the amount of use of the wrist and point of contact on the ball. Many modern day defenders also use combination bats with long pimples primarily on the backhand side. This allows the defender to play with heavy backspin returns when their opponent plays with strong topspin attacks. However if the attacker gives a topspin with little spin into the pimples the defender can produce only slight backspin or float (no spin) allowing the attacker to play strongly. Good examples of defensive players at top level include Yoo SeHyuk and Chen Weixing in the mens' game. Defensive play is even more common in elite womens' Table Tennis and several of the worlds' top ranked players choose this style of play

Both Backhand and Forehand defence strokes (known as chop) can be broken down in to four stages.

Backhand Backspin-

The ready position is usually square to the table but this may vary depending on individual preference. As the ball approaches the player moves into position with the left foot moving backwards

The hips and waist rotate to the left with the weight moving onto the back foot and the elbow bent at 90% moves the bat to shoulder height.

As the waist and hips rotate back to the right the forearm and wrist move downwards and slightly forwards contacting the back/bottom of the ball with a brushing action. Contact should be made at about waist height and slightly to the left of the body. Weight is transferred back onto the front foot.

The bat continues its forward path with the shoulders finishing square to the line of play. Recovery is to the ready position.

Forehand Backspin-

The ready position is usually square to the line of play but may vary depending on individual preference. As the ball approaches the player moves into position with the right foot moving backwards.

The hips and waist rotate to the right with the weight transferring to the back foot and the elbow bent at 90% moves the bat to shoulder height.

As the waist and hips rotate back to the left the forearm and wrist move downward and slightly forwards contacting the back/bottom of the ball with a brushing action. Contact should be made at about waist height to the right of the body with the head slightly behind the ball. Weight is transferred back onto the front foot.

The bat continues in its forward path with the shoulders finishing square to the line of play. Recovery is to the Ready Position

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