One of the most important concepts to teach your team within a man-to-man defensive system is defending screens. At Saint Patrick High School, we dedicate quite a lot of time to practicing screen defense. There are many ways of defending the various types of screens. What works for one program may not work for another. You need to look at your personnel and your program philosophy when deciding on how to defend each screen. At Saint Patrick, we are always looking at new ideas or modifying our existing strategies. Below are just a few of the methods that we have toyed with when defending screens:

### Defending Down Screens

When defending down screens that come from the guard slot to the wing slot, we make sure that at all times our defense is built on the helpline and ready to help against any penetration action that may occur. When we are on the help line and a down screen occurs, we are already in the best position to properly defend it. In fact, the majority of our screen defense is predicated on being on the help line.

The terminology we use for defending down screens is called the “open and through” method. It works as follows:

- #2 sets a screen for #3
- B, who is guarding the screener, jumps to the ball (open technique) and creates space for C to navigate through.
- C jumps to the ball and navigates through the screen.
- B recovers to the helpline, never losing sight of his man.

### Defending Back Screens

One way to defend back screens is similar to our “open and through” method.

- #3 sets a screen for #2
- C stays home and protects the lane
- B jumps to the ball and goes ball side versus the screen
- Once B has recovered, C closes out on his man

### Defending Flare Screens

- #3 sets flare screen for #2
- C builds on the helpline and creates space
- B fights over the screen
- Once B gets over the screen, C closes out slightly on his man
Defending Post to Post Cross Screen

When defending post to post cross screens, we use a method called “face and fight.”
- #4 sets for #5
- E turns his body towards and faces his man. His goal is to fight over the screen, whether he goes over the top or underneath it.
- D stays home on the ball side block until E is able to recover. Once he recovers, D gets to the helpline, ready to defend his man.

Defending Double Staggered Screens

There are several different methods to use when defending double staggered screens on the perimeter. We teach our players to combine two different types of screen defense: open and through and going over the top of a screen.
- #2 and #3 set a double staggered screen for #4
- D, who is guarding #4, dodges the first screen and tries to cut his man off of his path.
- D then fights over the top of the second screen, the one being set by #2.
- While all this is transpiring, D and B try to bump the cutter to take him off of his path. After they bump him off, the build on the helpline.

As stated before, there are many ways in which you can choose to defend screens. During the course of a season, we may go through several methods to defend particular screens based off of match-ups, our personnel, or our success rate with other screen defense options. There is no “right way” to do it. What works for one program may not work for another. However, it is important to study and discuss the many ways of defending screens so that you are aware of all of the options on the table.