

# Cover Your Back

Use this training session to get your players used to dealing with the threat posed by aerial balls pumped into the box. It also encourages them to defend as a unit

## WHY USE IT

In every match there will be moments when the team is under a lot of aerial pressure. Defenders must be organised and put up a united front. Successful teams are often the most organised defensively.

## SET UP

Use half your usual pitch and you will need 10 players. You also need bibs, ball, cones and a goal.

## HOW TO PLAY

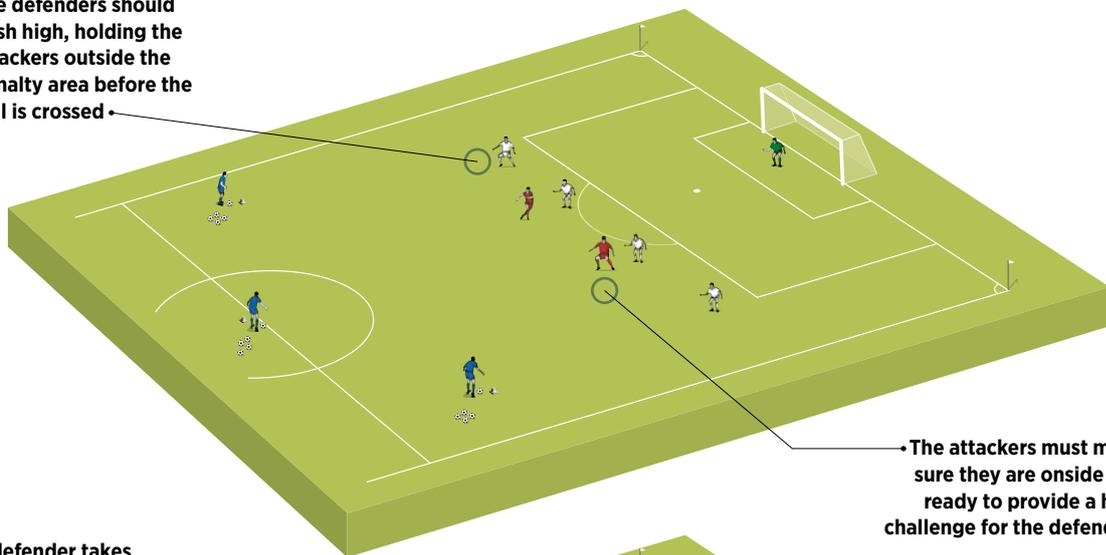
Split your players into a goalkeeper, four defenders, two attackers and three servers. The job of the servers is to play a long ball into the attacking area of the pitch – they take turns to cross in from both sides of the pitch and from central with balls down the pitch. Defenders must clear the danger and squeeze up to try to get the attackers offside.

## TECHNIQUE

Tactically this is a great work-out for your defence. The aim is to get your defenders to drop back into a tight unit and for one defender to then go forward and challenge the attacker by jumping to head the ball away. The other defenders are in the perfect position to cover any balls the attacker heads on if he beats the first defender.

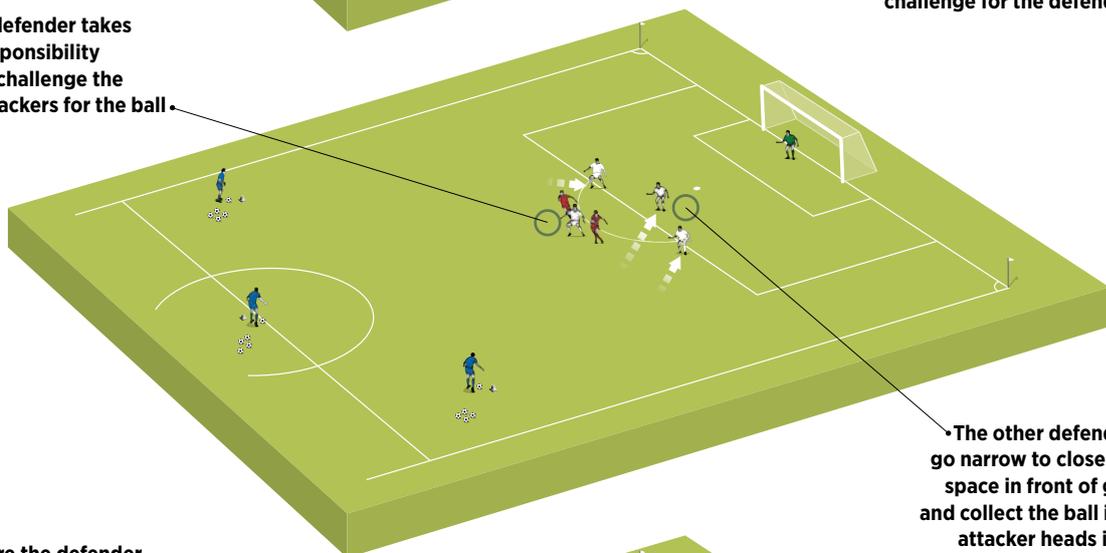
**Activity by:** Michael Beale, U15 & U16 head coach at Liverpool FC Academy

The defenders should push high, holding the attackers outside the penalty area before the ball is crossed



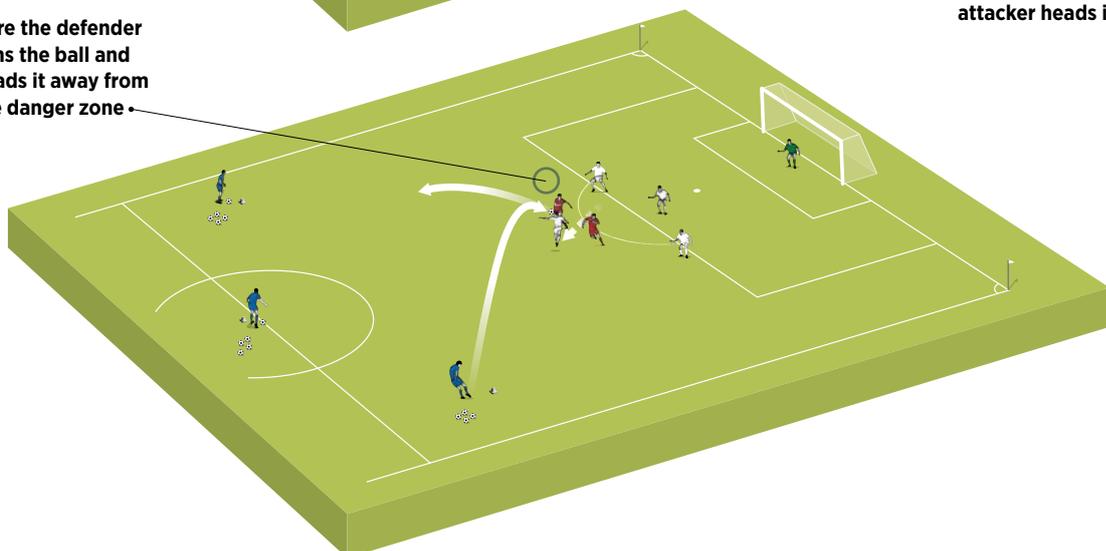
The attackers must make sure they are onside and ready to provide a hard challenge for the defenders

A defender takes responsibility to challenge the attackers for the ball



The other defenders go narrow to close any space in front of goal and collect the ball if an attacker heads it on

Here the defender wins the ball and heads it away from the danger zone



Player movement

Ball movement

Run with ball

Shot