

# Heads You Win

If you want your players to intercept those high attacking balls in the box and direct them to safety, this exercise will improve their defensive heading

## WHY USE IT

Heading makes all the difference in defending situations but it's a skill that has to be worked at. This activity will help players improve the timing and direction of their headed clearances by giving them plenty of chances to practice.

## SET UP

Use a 40x20 yard area with goals at either end. Play 3v3 plus two keepers, with four servers (two for each team) standing to the side of the playing area.

## HOW TO PLAY

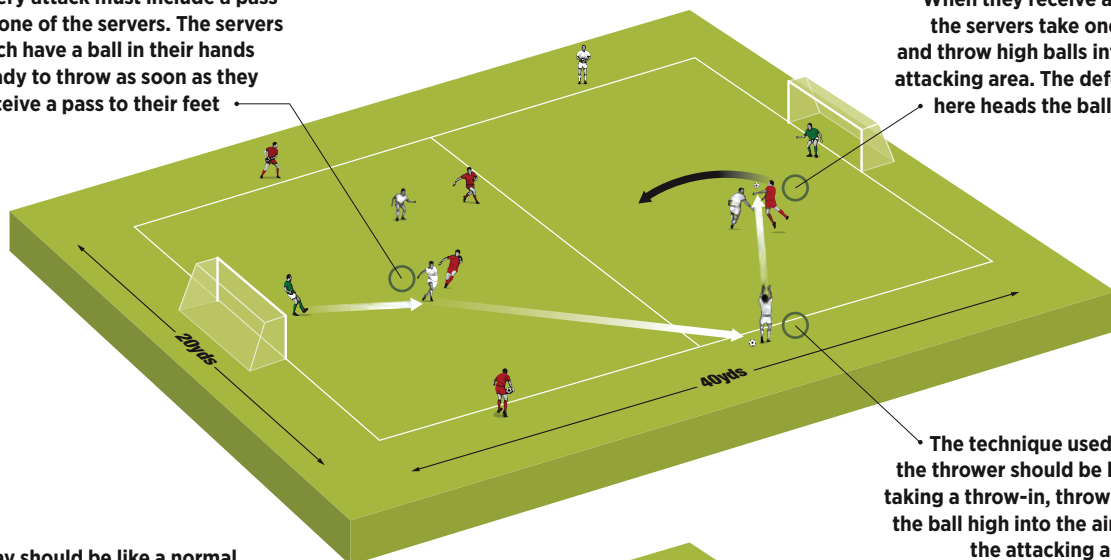
Play a normal game but the ball must go to a server on each attack. Servers throw the ball into the attacking area and defenders try to repel the ball with their heads. The serves need to be accurate to help the success of the game. Add throwing points so the ball comes to the players from different angles.

## TECHNIQUE

Timing a jump is important for heading the ball, as is using the forehead rather than the top of the head. Work on direction too. If players are finding it hard, nominate only defenders to head it for a few minutes (and then only attackers if you want to work on their attacking heading too).

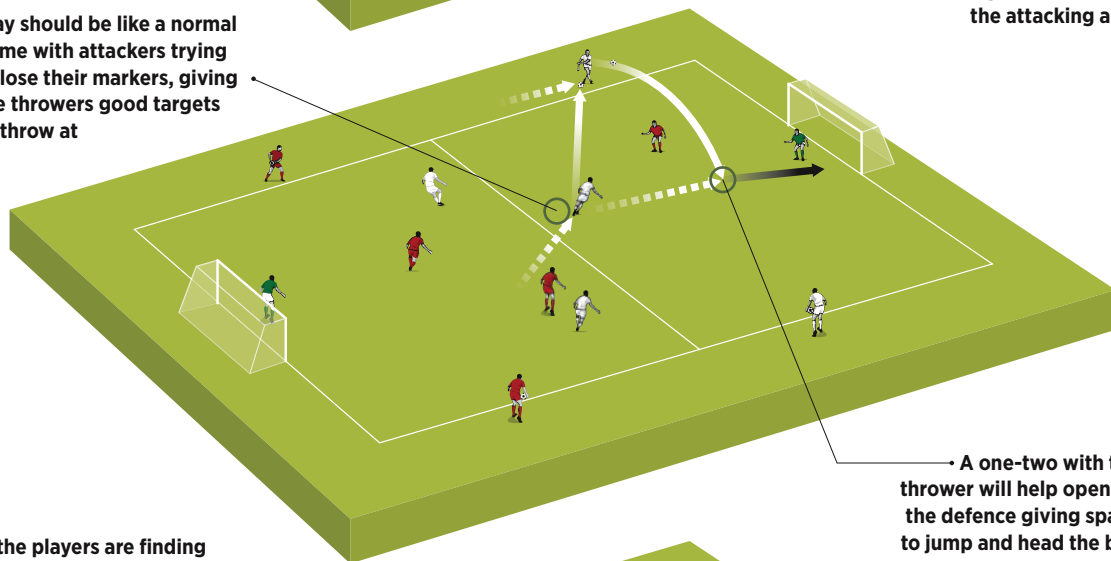
Every attack must include a pass to one of the servers. The servers each have a ball in their hands ready to throw as soon as they receive a pass to their feet

When they receive a pass, the servers take one step and throw high balls into the attacking area. The defender here heads the ball away



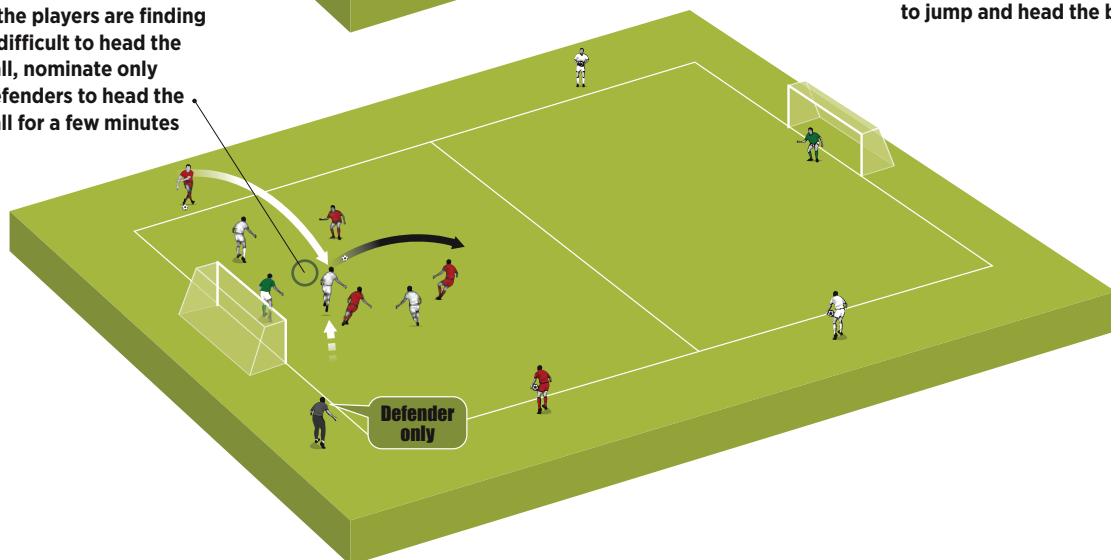
Play should be like a normal game with attackers trying to lose their markers, giving the throwers good targets to throw at

The technique used by the thrower should be like taking a throw-in, throwing the ball high into the air of the attacking area



A one-two with the thrower will help open up the defence giving space to jump and head the ball

If the players are finding it difficult to head the ball, nominate only defenders to head the ball for a few minutes



Player movement

Ball movement

Run with ball

Header