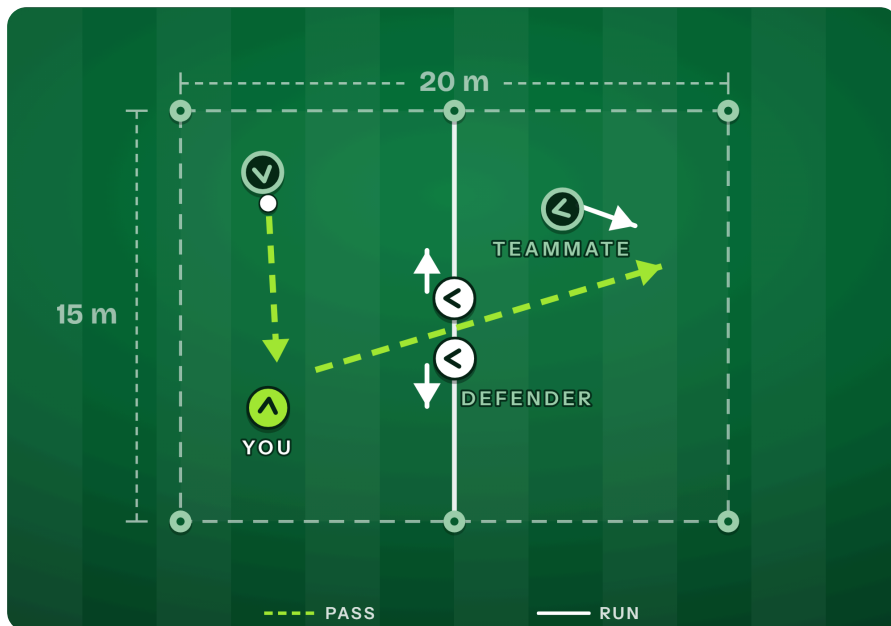




Split the line

TECHNICAL & TACTICAL · PASSING ·

5 PLAYERS (3 v 2: YOU AND A TEAMMATE IN ONE HALF, A THIRD TEAMMATE IN THE OTHER, TWO DEFENDERS ON THE HALF LINE) · AGE 13+



Set up

5 players, 3 v 2

A ball

20 x 15 m pitch

2 defenders on halfway

Dose

4 blocks of 2 minutes

1 min rest between

4 blocks of 2 minutes with 1 minute of rest between, swapping roles each block (the Football Reach target, not an FA rule).

What it trains

Split the line: pass between two defenders to a teammate beyond them, with the timing and weight to arrive in front of them. England Football coaches breaking lines through the accuracy, weight, timing and disguise of the pass.

How it works

- 1 Warm up first. Mark a 20 x 15 m pitch with 6 flat cones: the 4 corners and both ends of the halfway line. Size 5 ball.
- 2 Two defenders stand on the halfway line and may only shuffle along it to block passes, on their feet. You and a teammate start in one half, a third teammate in the other.
- 3 Pass in your half, moving the ball away from the defenders, until the gap between them opens.
- 4 Then pass through the gap, along the ground, in front of your teammate so they run onto it. Score 1 point for every pass that splits the line.
- 5 Play 4 blocks of 2 minutes with 1 minute of rest between, and swap roles every block.

Coaching points

- 1 **Play it when it opens**
Move the ball away from the defenders (England Football: keep the ball away from the fire). As they shift, one is often a step slower: pass the moment the gap between them opens, before it closes again.
- 2 **Pass in front of them**
Pass firmly along the ground through the middle of the gap and into the space in front of your teammate, so they run onto it without stopping.

× **Not this:** Forcing the pass while the gap is shut. The defenders block it or win it; move the ball again and wait for the gap to open.

➤ HARDER

Let the defenders leave the line and intercept: one presses the ball while the other screens the line (England Football's breaking-lines practice). Or pass first time when the gap opens.

➤ EASIER

Use 2 cones 4 m apart on the halfway line as the defenders until the timing and weight feel natural, then move them to 3 m apart.

🛡️ Safety

- If in doubt, sit them out: anyone with a suspected concussion stops straight away, does no training for at least 24 hours and plays no matches for at least 21 days (UK concussion guidelines).
- Defenders stay on their feet: no slide tackles. Every pass stays on the ground: no lofted balls.
- Warm up first. Flat grass with space around the pitch, never a road or driveway, and flat cones.
- Under 16: if your knees or heels hurt when you run, stop and tell an adult; a GP or physio can help.
- Warm up first. Stop if anything hurts and tell an adult.

📅 Track 12 weeks (tick each session)

W1	W2	W3	W4	W5	W6	W7	W8	W9	W10	W11	W12
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐



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