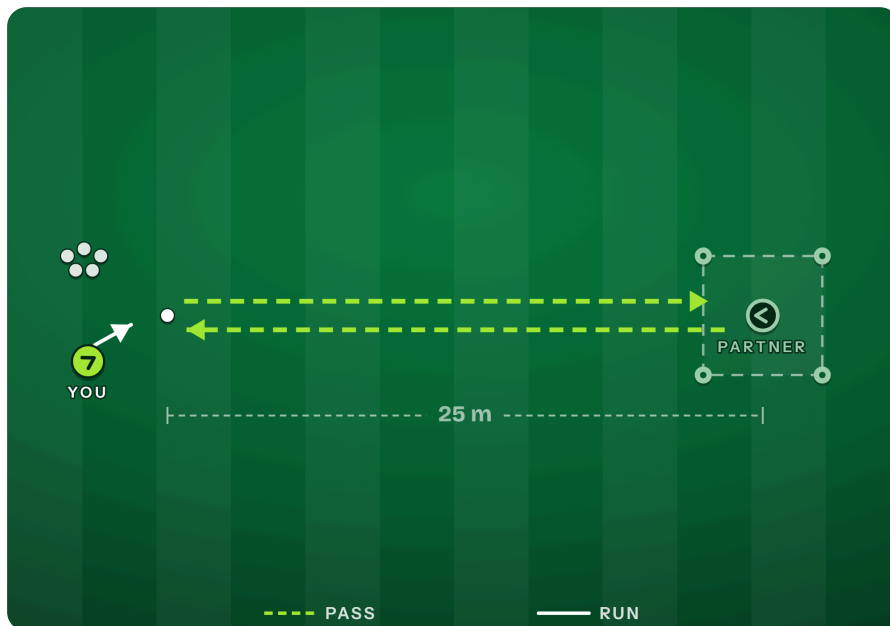




The lofted pass into the zone

TECHNICAL & TACTICAL · PASSING · 2 PLAYERS (YOU, AND A PARTNER IN THE ZONE)
· AGE 15+



Set up

A partner in the zone

6 balls (size 5)

4 cones: a 5 m zone

25 m away

Dose

4 sets of 6, 1 min rest

Half with each foot

4 x 6, half with each foot, 1 min rest: our target, not an FA rule. The 12 weaker-foot passes count toward the plan's 200.

What it trains

Lift a long pass over a defender and land it in a target zone. England Football describes the lofted pass as striking underneath the ball with your instep, to get height over an opponent and into space.

How it works

- 1 Warm up first. On flat grass, mark a 5 x 5 m zone with 4 cones, its middle 25 m from your ball. Your partner stands in the zone. Use 6 balls (size 5).
- 2 Come in at a slight angle, lean back slightly and strike under the ball to lift it into the zone.
- 3 Your partner takes it at chest height or lower with the foot, thigh or chest, or lets it bounce first. Never the head.
- 4 They pass it back along the ground. After 6, swap roles.
- 5 Do 4 sets of 6 lofted passes each, half with each foot, with 1 minute of rest between sets.

Coaching points

- 1 **Land it in the zone**
Pick the zone before you strike and judge every pass by where it comes down, not by how it felt. In one study, experienced players' lofted passes were more accurate with feedback about the ball than about their body.
- 2 **Strike under the ball**
Come in at a slight angle, plant your standing foot beside and a little behind the ball, lean back slightly and strike under the middle of the ball with your instep (the laces). Follow through up, toward the zone.

× **Not this:** Leaning over the ball, as you would for a driven pass. The ball stays low and runs along the grass. Leaning right back is the opposite fault: the pass balloons and drops short.

MY NOTES

➤ HARDER

Your partner must control it inside the zone in one touch (still at chest height or lower, or after one bounce). Then move the zone back to 30 m.

➤ EASIER

Move the zone to 20 m, or make it bigger (10 x 10 m), until most passes come down inside it.

🛡️ Safety

- Warm up first, the passer too: long passes load the hip and groin. Flat grass with space all round, never a road.
- Nobody stands between the passer and the zone, or anywhere a long ball could land on them.
- The receiver uses the foot, thigh or chest only, at chest height or lower: this drill never uses the head. If a ball is coming in higher, step away and let it bounce first.
- If the ball hits anyone's face or head, or anything hurts, stop and tell your coach or a parent.
- 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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