

NYAA Volleyball Curriculum

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Terminology

It is important that we use the same terminology at every level of the program. The players have enough to process without having 3 different names for the same skill or positioning.

In that vein, here are the terms that we will use in teaching/coaching:

- ◆ Pass – the playing of the first ball that comes over the net – the pass is always supposed to go to the setter.
 - Forearm Pass – A pass executed with the forearms. In the past, you may have heard this referred to as a “bump.”
 - Overhead Pass – A pass executed with the hands in a setting motion.
 - Dig – A pass of an opponent’s attack.
- ◆ Set – the act of using either a forearm pass or overhead pass to put the ball in position for an attack.
- ◆ Attack – the act of playing the ball over the net in a manner that is aggressive – e.g. a spike.
- ◆ Spike – the act of attacking the ball from a height at or above the top of the net.
- ◆ Tip – a finger-tip attack.
- ◆ Dump – the setter playing the ball over using a “tip”.
- ◆ Block – the act of “blocking” the opponents attack by jumping above the net with one or both hands extending over the net.
- ◆ Free Ball – A ball that comes to our side but is not attacked.
- ◆ Down Ball – A ball that comes to our side but is attacked from below the net.
- ◆ Underhand Serve – A serve that is executed in an underhand fashion.
- ◆ Overhead Serve – A serve that is executed with contact of the ball above the head
- ◆ Sidearm Serve – A hybrid of the underhand and overhead serves.
- ◆ 4-2 Offense – Offense with 4 hitters and 2 setters where the setter is a front row player
- ◆ 6-2 Offense – Offense with 6 hitters and 2 setters where the setter is a back row player
- ◆ 5-1 Offense – Offense with 5 hitters and 1 setter where the setter remains the same regardless of whether he/she is in the front or back row.
- ◆ Libero – Defensive specialist that can substitute freely into the back row with the exception that they are not allowed to serve. No “official request” is necessary for the Libero player to enter the game. The Libero also needs to wear a jersey of a different color than the rest of the team.

Court Positions

- ◆ 1 – Serving position – right back
- ◆ 2 – right front – next person to serve
- ◆ 3 – middle front
- ◆ 4 – left front
- ◆ 5 – left back
- ◆ 6 – middle back

Player Position Names

- ◆ OH – Outside Hitter – player will always move to position 4 (left front) or 5 (left back)
- ◆ MH – Middle Hitter – player will always transition to position 3 (middle front) or 6 (middle back)
- ◆ S – Setter – player will always transition to position 2 (right front) or 1 (right back)
- ◆ SH – Swing Hitter – player will always transition to position 2 (right front) or 1 (right back) – used when playing a 5-1 offense.
- ◆ Libero – back row specialist – enters game to replace any person in the back row – player cannot serve – player must wear different jersey than rest of team

Playing Skills

Passing

Teaching Points

- 1) Good passing posture
 - 2) Forearm contact
 - 3) Angle platform to target
 - 4) Simple movement to the ball
-
- 1) **Good passing posture** – feet should be set up with the heel toe relationship. This is the heel of the right foot, slightly in front of the toes of the left foot. Knees bent; body bent at the waist with the shoulders in front of the knees. Knees should be just in front of the toes. Arms should be out in front and straight. It is important that the heels of the hands be together. You can use a hand in hand grip.
 - 2) **Forearm contact**, - Contact the ball between 1 and 6 inches above the wrist, the meaty part of the forearm. If you drop the wrists a little, then a small V should show. The ball should sit there (in the V) softest part of the arms. The passer needs to be relaxed. Let the legs do the work. Platform relaxed and the ball should be absorbed into the arms. Soft pass.
 - 3) **Angle platform to the target:**
 - a) Vertical – closer to the target, the more parallel to the floor, the arms need to be. Stay down; the ball will go straight up. If you drop or lower the arms and keep the arms in front, then you can pass the ball farther and on a 45-degree angle.
 - b) Horizontal – pass the ball to the right or left by dropping a shoulder. More you drop the shoulder, the greater the angle. Right shoulder down, and then pass right. Left shoulder down, then pass left.
 - 4) **Movement to the ball** – transfer of weight from left foot to the right foot. Try to step with the right foot if you want to put a little more power on the ball. The platform must stay controlled and stationary. Work from the legs.

Drills

Beginner - Coach toss to kids who pass back- 15 feet. Goal: learn proper passing technique

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Beginner – 3 – 6 – 9 Passing Drill (see drills) - Coach tosses to kids at 3 distances (3M, 6M, 9M). Goal: learn distance control and movement prior to pass

Beginner – “Moving Passes” Passing Drill (see drills) - Coach toss to kids at 3 different positions while coach stays in the center. Goal: learn to move laterally before passing.

Beginner – “3 Station” Passing Drill (see drills) – Same as “Moving Passes” except the players move forward for the middle station. Distance is 25 feet, 15 feet, 25 feet at the 3 stations.

Advanced – “W” drill – Similar to the “3 Station” drill. Players start in right back. Coach stands in setter position. Coach tosses ball to player to pass back to coach. Player moves to right front (~15 feet off net) then middle back then left front then left back passing to the coach at each position. Drill should be fast moving. Goal: move laterally and forwards/backwards while changing trajectory to get passes to the setter position.

Advanced – Table (basket) drill – Players start in one of the 4 (advanced) or 5 (beginner) serve reception positions. Coaches serve to player who has to pass the ball and have it land on the table (or in the basket). Player rotates to all serve receive positions. Goal: Players learn the basic positions and focus on passing the ball to the setter position.

Setting

Teaching Points

- 1) Squat under the ball
 - 2) Basket over the forehead
 - 3) Extend
-
1. **Squat under the ball** – knees bent – sit back into a squat position. The back should be slightly erect. Hips lined up under the ball. Knees are in front of the toes and shoulders behind the knees. Hips under the ball are important.
 2. **Basket over the forehead** – bring up the hands. Note that the fingers should be pointing out (or away), this aids in the “spring” action. Make the shape of a basket. This should be the same shape as the ball. Bring the hands together, and then spread out the fingers. Then take the fingers apart, keep the palms facing each other (thumbs pointing to eyes), cock the wrist back, just above forehead. The ball should rest on the first two fingers and the upper insides of the thumbs and remaining fingertips.
 3. **Note:** The elbow angle never decreases (if so, not using enough legs).
 4. **Extend** – extend into the ball using the arms and legs in unison. Legs and arms extend up in direction of the pass. The wrists should flex forward and the thumbs “through” the ball + out.

Drills

Beginner – Drill #1 – Form hands around the ball. Have players demonstrate the proper “grip” on the ball (see teaching point #2.) If player shows competency, move to drill #2.

Beginner – Drill #2 – Toss and catch. Toss the ball to the player from about 10 feet away. Player should move to position themselves to catch the ball using the “grip” from Drill #1. Goal: Players learn to move themselves into proper position without having to worry about actually making the set. If player shows competency, move to drill #3.

Beginner – Drill #3 – Toss and push. Similar to drill #2 except player should execute the set back to the coach.

Beginner – Drill #4 – Wall Sets. Players set the ball off of the wall. As they increase in ability and distance, have them back off of the wall, set the ball higher off of the wall and allow the ball to bounce before setting again.

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Beginner – “Line” drill – 2 players face each other approximately 10 feet apart straddling a line. Players take turns tossing the ball to each other and having the other person set it back to them. Goal: Getting kids to focus on getting their bodies square to the target. As they get better, have players set to each other.

Beginner – “Set and Follow” (see drills) – player tosses the ball to setter who sets a hitter. Players then follow the ball...tosses becomes the setter, setter becomes the hitter, the hitter becomes the shagger, the shagger gets back in line.

Advanced - Using Your Head – Coach tosses ball varying height and speed to setter position. Setter does NOT set the ball. Instead, the player should let the ball land and bounce off of their forehead. If players are in position, the set should go where it is intended. Goal: Players learn to move and get in perfect position.

Advanced – Distance control. Pair up setters. Have them do repetitions of 20-50 low sets, medium sets and high sets. Goal: Learn to control distance and speed.

Advanced – Back setting. Same fundamentals as forward setting except take step forward and arch back at moment of contact.

Serving

Underhand Serving

Teaching Points

- 1) Fencer stance
 - a) Balance important. Lefty or righty? - opposite foot forward.
 - b) Weight should start on the back foot.
 - c) Where your opposite foot is facing is where the ball will go.
- 2) The ball in opposite hand - waist level.
 - a) Wrist and elbow frozen.
 - b) As serving hand is moving towards the ball, release the ball upwards but only 1-2 inches. Less is better than more.
- 3) The feet:
 - a) The player must shift their weight from back leg to front leg.
 - b) The back leg should end up with the toe down for balance.
- 4) On the hitting arm, the arm should be straight
 - a) The shoulders should rotate to be square to the net.
- 5) Follow through
 - a) Need to have them follow through towards the target. The follow through will insure complete power transfer to the ball.
- 6) This should be one fluid motion
- 7) Contact the ball with the heel or middle of the hand. At the beginner-level, a closed fist is ok.
 - a) You want to make sure that you contact the middle of the ball.
 - b) 1 trick - take the v-ball, find the trademark and use that as a target.

Drills

All – Dead Fish – divide the players into 2 groups. Players for each team alternate taking turns serving. If the serve is successful, the player goes to the end of the line and the other team serves 1 serve. If the serve is an error, the player RUNS to the other side of the net and lays down. If another player from their team hits them with a good serve, that player is allowed to return to team line and resume serving. The game ends when 1 team runs out of servers or (hopefully) the time limit is reached where the team with the most players still serving is declared the winner. Try to limit each game to 3-5 minutes.

Beginner – “10 good serves” – Break players into 2 teams. Have the teams alternate serving. The first team to 10 “good” serves wins.

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Advanced – “Around the world” – Divide the court into 6 sections – 3 beyond 17 feet and the other 3 in front of 17 feet. Have a player from each team kneel in the #1 section (Right Back). The teams alternate serving until the player in section #1 catches a serve. The player who catches goes to the team’s serving line while the successful server goes to the next section (counter-clockwise). Game concludes when team successfully serves into each of the 6 sections.

Overhead Serving

- 1) Fencer stance
 - a) Balance important. Lefty or righty? - opposite foot forward.
 - b) Weight should start on the back foot.
 - c) Where your opposite foot is facing is where the ball will go.
- 2) The ball in opposite hand - waist level.
 - a) Arm outstretched - raise to nose - ball should come up centerline of body
 - b) Wrist and elbow frozen.
 - c) Raise your hand above your shoulder + release the ball.
 - d) The release should be 6 - 12 inches .
 - e) As you release the ball, front knee bends – similar to tennis serve.
- 3) On the hitting arm, the elbow should be high above the shoulder.
 - a) The shoulder should be square.
 - b) The player then must shift their weight from back leg to front leg.
 - c) The back leg should end up with the toe down for balance.
 - d) This should be one fluid motion
- 4) Contact the ball at the highest point of the toss (apex).
 - a) You want to make sure that you contact the middle of the ball.
 - b) One trick I use is – take the v-ball, find the trademark or the middle, then put your hand over it. Go through your routine.
 - c) You want to use the heel or middle of your hand to contact the ball.

One other thing – having trouble with one hand toss, try two. It really comes down to with what you are most comfortable.

Note: On a floater, it is important to keep the wrist frozen.

Types of Serves:

- 1) Floater – no spin serve – for this, little or no follow through – a punching action
- 2) Top spin – follow through and snap wrist – can toss the ball with forward spin
- 3) Windmill – side arm – either with topspin or as a floater – very effective change of pace serve
- 4) Jump serve – let's hope we get to teach this!!!!

Drills

Same as for Underhand serving.

Hitting

Teaching Points

1) **Approach – footwork – 4 step**

- i) **Righty approach** – Right (small), left, right, together explode.
 - ii) **Lefty approach** – Left (small), right, left, together explode.
 - b) Direction – this is what takes you towards the ball. Arms should be in front
 - c) Should be jumping from about 2 – 3 feet from the net – knees bent when jumping - jump straight up – not on an angle (otherwise into net)
 - d) Approach Angle
 - i) outside hitters
 - (1) shoulders should be at a 45 degree angle to the net
 - ii) middle hitters
 - (1) shoulders should be at a 22 degree angle to the net
- 2) **Pendulum arm** - on approach – elbows bent On hop (explosion) – knees bent - arms back

3) **Jump and take off (for right-handers)**

- a) Right foot – heel to toe rock – left foot push off toes
- b) Arm swing to shoulder level
- c) Left arm extends up – this is used to spot the ball
- d) Right arm reaches back; arm extends up, hand open
- e) Shoulder back (like a hammer) – body opens up to setter
- f) Arch the back, knees bent with heels back

Key - stay back and wait for the ball – do not rush!

4) **Ball contact**

- a) Left arm thrusts down
- b) Right elbow leads – right arm reaches high
- c) Fingers spread out – wrist should be relaxed
- d) Contact the ball w/ lower 3rd of hand at close to max.

5) **Reach**

- a) Wrist snap, fingers spread over the ball
- b) Follow through – right arm down – across the body

Reach and SNAP:

Contact location on the ball

General: Contact the back center of the ball

When off the net (or those with low touches): under the center of the ball

Those with high reach – over the ball (top)

Drills

Beginner – Toss and Catch - Coaches stand ~ 10 feet away and give perfect tosses to hitters who only need to worry about taking the right-left-right steps to move to the hitting position and then simply catching the ball. Goal: learn the proper footwork while maintaining the proper angle to the net.

Beginner – Toss and Hit Over – Coaches stand ~ 10 feet away and give perfect tosses to hitters who only worry about hitting the ball over the net – hitters do NOT take the 3-step approach– no jumping yet. Goal: learn the proper contact.

Beginner – Step and Hit - Coaches stand ~ 10 feet away and give perfect tosses to hitters who take the proper right-left-right step approach and then hit the ball over the net. Goal: combine the proper approach with proper contact while maintaining the proper angle to the net.

Beginner – Step and Hit #2 – Same as previous drill except hitters should end up on their toes hitting the ball at their maximum height. Goal: prepare the hitters for the next step which is actually jumping.

Advanced – Jump and Hit Over - Coaches stand ~ 10 feet away and give perfect tosses to hitters who take the proper right-left-right step approach, jump, and then hit the ball over the net. Goal: Incorporate all aspects of the spike.

Blocking

Sequence should be: watch the ball, pass to setter (make sure there is no setter dump), then focus on the hitter (where are shoulders facing)?

Footwork

Outside blocker – step (laterally) – hop – plant – jump (landing should be 2 feet)

Middle blocker – big step – crossover hop (this saves time – balance is key)

Hands

Hands should start at shoulder height and go up then towards the net. Outside blockers should turn their outside hand towards the middle of the court.

Responsibilities

Outside hit – outside sets block and the middle seals (no gap)

Middle hit – middle sets block and the outside seals

Drills

Approach the net, middle, strong side, etc (blockers move and react) Toss ball to setter – setter sets any hitter (or dumps the ball...) Blocking lines – pair up, footwork and simultaneous jump

Digging

Mentality: "Dig the ball first, and then worry about the floor"

Different types of emergency saves are:

1. Run through.
 2. Drop Under.
 3. Barrel roll.
 4. Sprawl – natural continuation of the digging process.
 5. Extension.
 6. High ball dig.
-
1. **Run through** – run, drop inside shoulder – contact the ball and swing arms back into court – continue moving around the ball.
 2. **Drop under** – lunge step to the side – drop the shoulder – swing arms to the target.
 3. **Barrel roll** – drop under contact and continue to hit the floor and roll over shoulder that was dropped.
 4. **Sprawl** – lunge forward and push off front foot, arms extend out.
 5. **Extension** – one or two arm sprawl out to the side at an angle.
 6. **Highball dig** – arms reach out to side and up – drop inside shoulder, lift outside leg.

Drills

Drill – Practice Emergency skills without the ball (though not on a concrete floor!)

Drill – Practice Run throughs, drop unders, and rolls w/ tossed ball.

Drill – Practice Sprawls and extensions from hit balls.

Key - Watch the ball – pass to the setter – when the ball is set – focus on the hitter – pick up the block – are there any gaps? If so, fill the hole.

Note: Where most errors occur – many times people react too late or do not trust their instincts.

Playing Formations

Offensive Formations

4 – 2 Offense

Teaching Points

- 1) 4 hitters – 2 setters
- 2) Setter is always a front row player
- 3) Setter always moves to middle front position at beginning of play

Court position is determined at the time the play begins. The play begins when the server makes contact with the ball – not when the official blows the whistle. Therefore, the players may not switch until the server actually serves the ball.

Once the players switch, they stay in those positions throughout the point. The setters are the quarterbacks of the team and need to know what position they are in and arrange for any switching that needs to be done.

Passes always go to the middle (position 3) with sets made to positions 2 or 4.

When setter goes to the back row, a new setter should be moving to the front row.

This is the simplest offense we will utilize. It has the least amount of movement and switching going on.

At the start of play, there are 3 possible alignments of players. The setter can be in position 4 (left front), position 3 (middle front) or position 2 (right front). The setter starts every play at the net. If the setter is in position 4, then the player in 3 must drop back and pass from position 4 while the setter makes sure that they are aligned closer to the sideline than the player in 3. See diagram #1 for "W" serve receive alignment. See diagram #4 for 4-person serve receive alignment.

If the setter is in position 3, then the alignment is fine and no adjustments need to be made. See diagram #2 for "W" serve receive alignment. See diagram #5 for 4-person server receive alignment.

If the setter is in position 2, then the player in position 3 must drop and pass from position 2 and the setter makes sure that they are aligned closer to the sideline than the player in 3. See diagram #3 for "W" serve receive alignment. See diagram #6 for 4-person serve receive alignment.

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Diagram #1

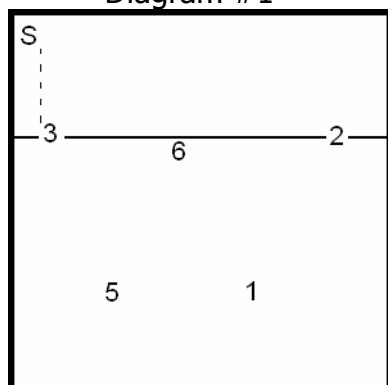


Diagram #2

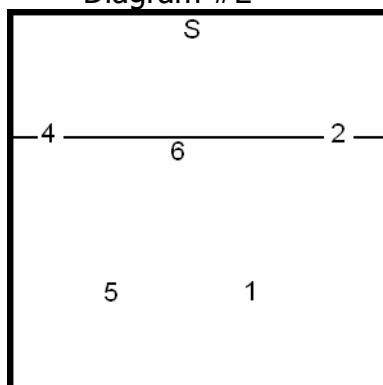


Diagram #3

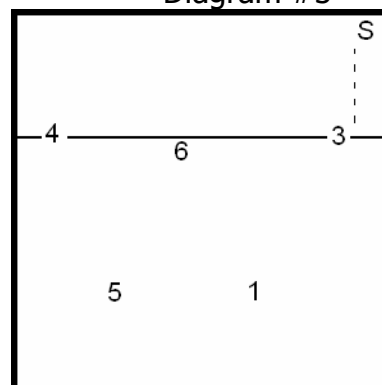


Diagram #4

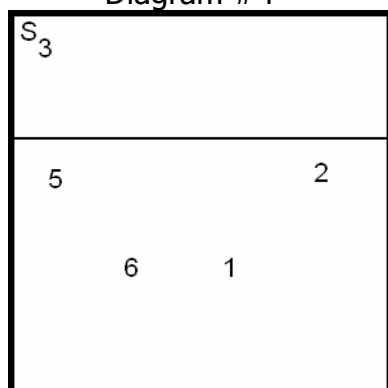


Diagram #5

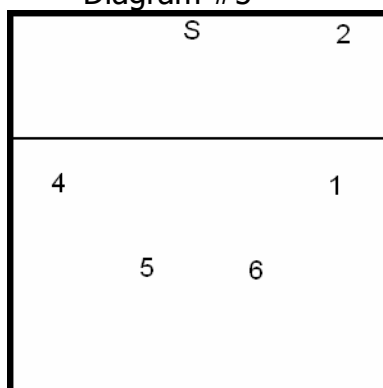
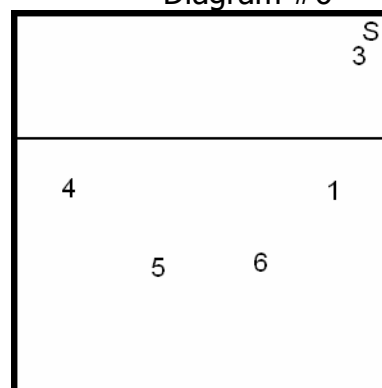


Diagram #6



6 – 2 Offense

Teaching Points

- 1) 6 hitters – 2 setters
- 2) Setter is always a back row player with all 3 front row players eligible to spike
- 3) Setter always moves between positions 2 and 3 when the team is on offense.
- 4) Setter always moves to position 1 when the team is on defense.

Court position is determined at the time the play begins. The play begins when the server makes contact with the ball – not when the official blows the whistle. Therefore, the players may not switch until the server actually serves the ball.

The players may have to switch up to 2 times during the point when the team is receiving serve. Once the ball crosses over the net to the opponent, players will switch to their designated positions.

The setters are the quarterbacks of the team and need to know what position they are in and arrange for any switching that needs to be done.

Passes always go to the middle-right (between positions 2 and 3) with sets made to positions 2, 3, or 4.

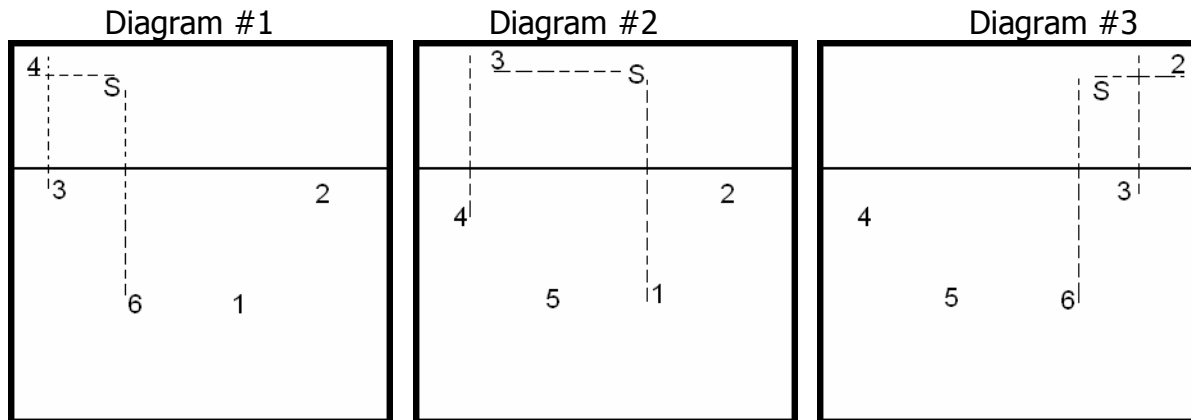
When setter goes to the front row, a new setter should be moving to the back row.

At the start of play, there are 3 possible alignments of players. The setter can be in position 5 (left back), position 6 (middle back) or position 1 (right back). The setter starts every play near the net.

If the setter is in position 5, then the player in 4 must move up to the next and the player in position 3 will drop back and pass from position 4. The setters make sure that they are aligned closer to the sideline than the player in 6 and further from the net than the player in 4. See diagram #1 for 4-person serve receive alignment.

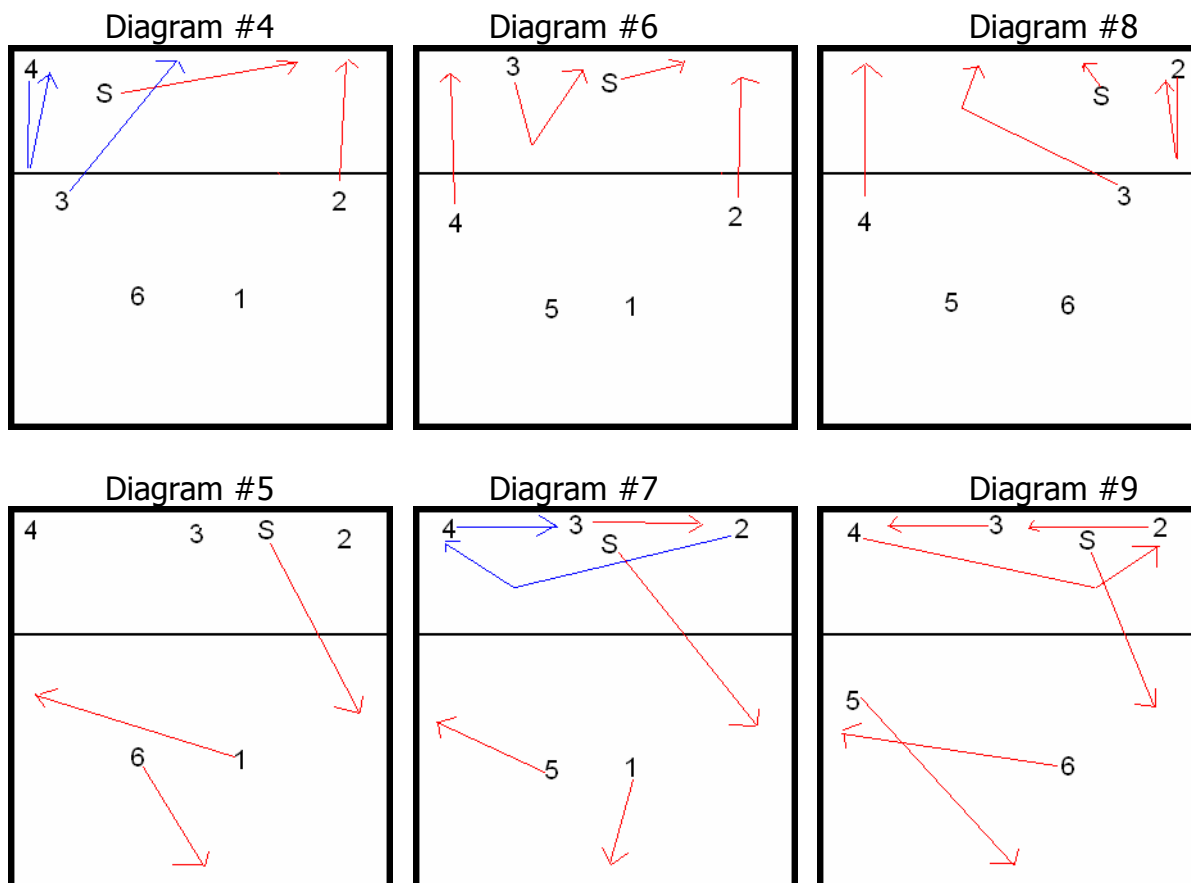
If the setter is in position 6, then the player in position 3 needs to go to the net with the setter no closer to the net. The setter also has to watch for overlaps with the players in positions 1 and 5. See diagram #2 for 4-person server receive alignment.

If the setter is in position 1, then the player in position 2 goes to the net and the player in position 3 must drop and pass from position 2 and the setter makes sure that they are aligned closer to the sideline than the player in 6 and that the player in position 1 is closer to the net. See diagram #3 for 4-person serve receive alignment.



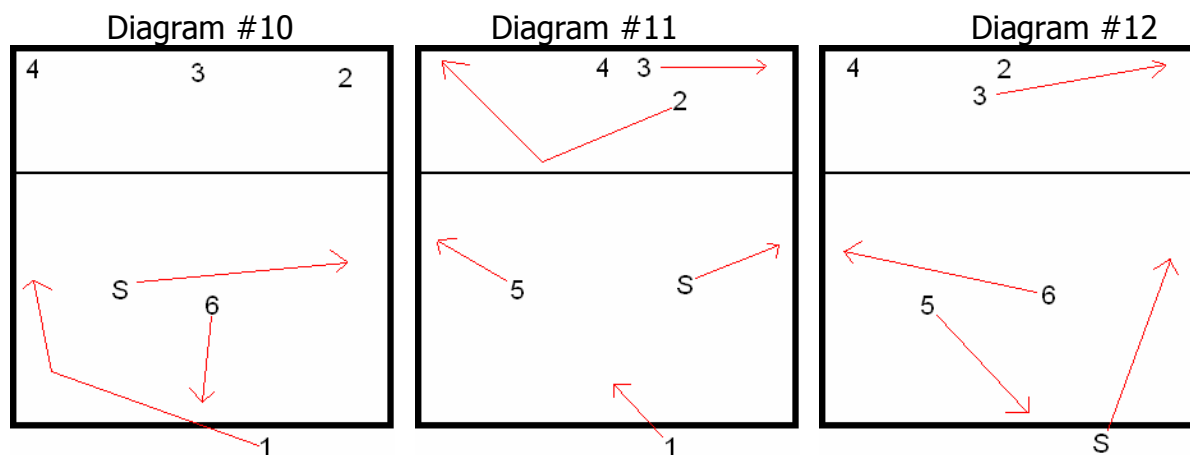
Basic Movement

The following diagrams the basic movement of the 6-2 offense. Diagrams#4 and #5 start with Diagram #1 and flows through to offense (4), then defense(5). Diagrams #6 and #7 match with Diagram #2. Likewise, Diagrams #8 and #9 match Diagram #3.



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Diagrams #10, 11, and 12 show position switching during our serve. The position of the setter corresponds to Diagrams #1, 2, and 3 respectively



5 – 1 Offense

Teaching Points

- 1) 5 hitters – 1 setters
- 2) Setter is always the same player regardless of starting position
- 3) Setter always moves between positions 2 and 3 when the team is on offense.
- 4) Setter always moves to position 1 when the team is on defense and setter is a back row player. Setter always moves to position 2 when team is on defense and setter is a front row player.

Court position is determined at the time the play begins. The play begins when the server makes contact with the ball – not when the official blows the whistle. Therefore, the players may not switch until the server actually serves the ball.

The players may have to switch up to 2 times during the point when the team is receiving serve. Once the ball crosses over the net to the opponent, players will switch to their designated positions.

The setters are the quarterbacks of the team and need to know what position they are in and arrange for any switching that needs to be done.

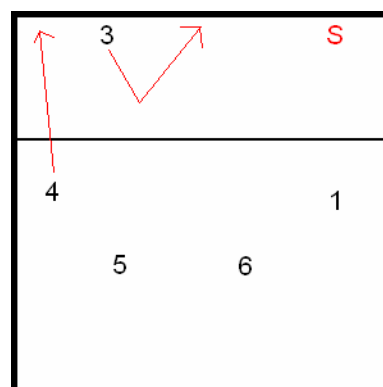
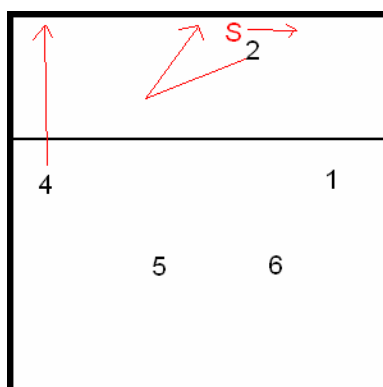
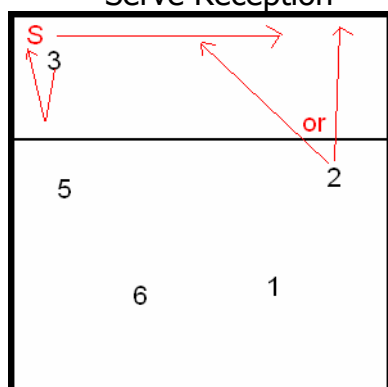
Passes always go to the middle-right (between positions 2 and 3) with sets made to positions 2, 3, or 4.

At the start of play, there are 6 possible alignments of players. When the setter is a back row player, the alignments are exactly like they are when running a 6 – 2 offense. Where this offense differs is when the setter is in the front row. The setter starts every play near the net.

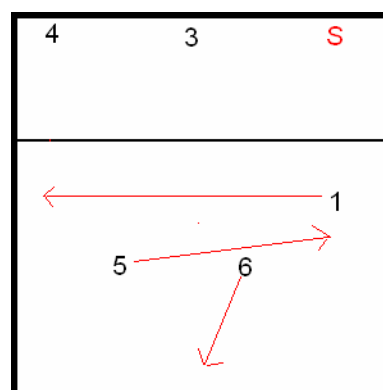
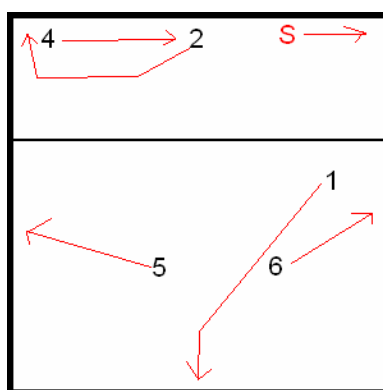
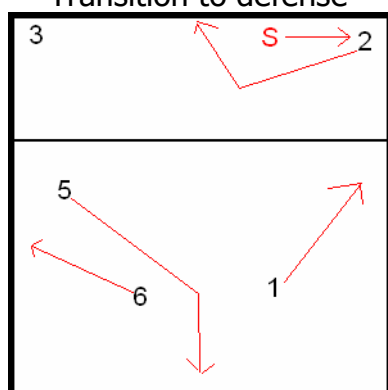
See the Diagrams on the next page to determine alignment and movement.

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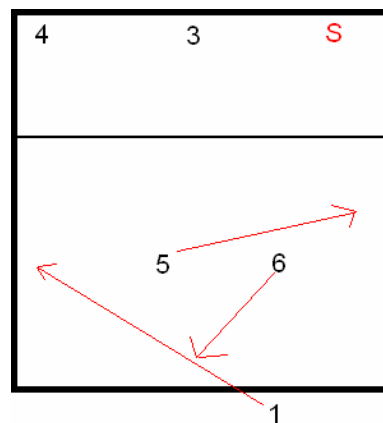
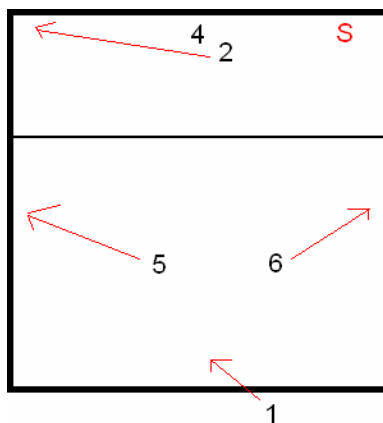
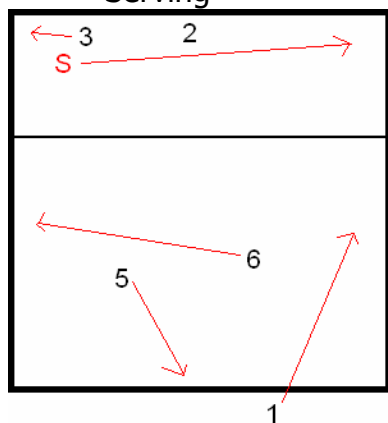
Serve Reception



Transition to defense

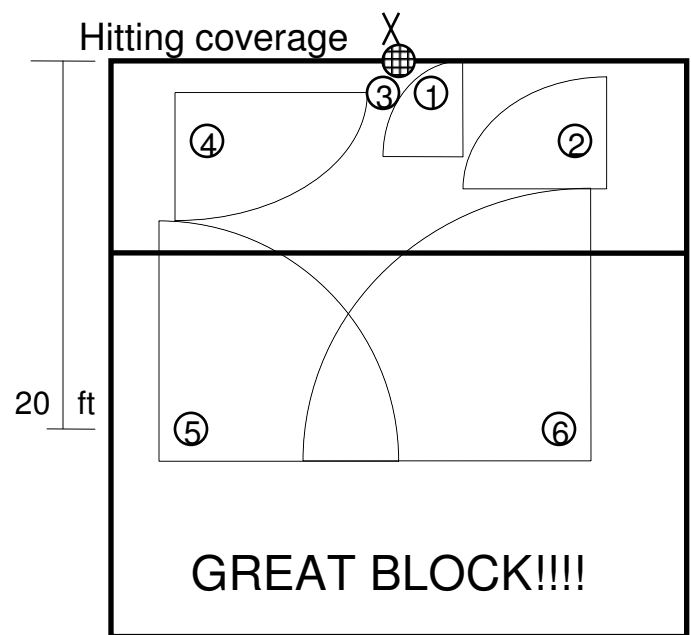
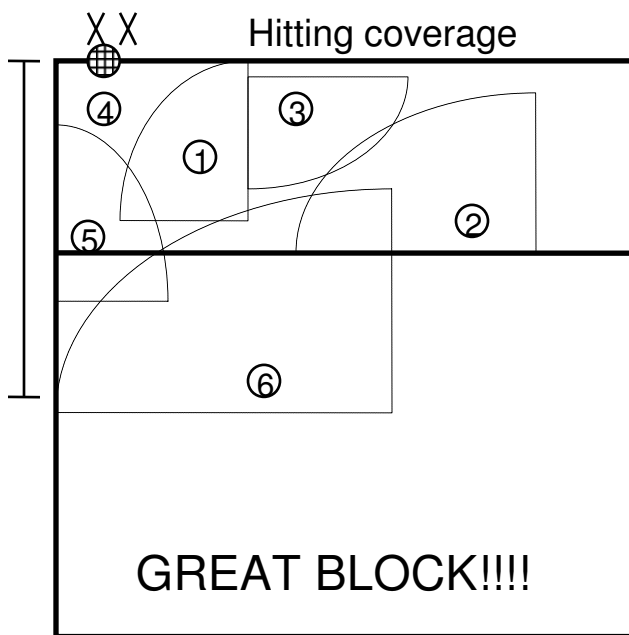


Serving



Hitter Coverage

When we are attacking the ball, we need to “cover” the hitters in case the other team blocks our attack. Based upon where the attack is made, these are the positions the players should move to. Attacks from position 2 require the mirror coverage formation as attacks from position 4. As with most plays, we simply cannot cover everything. In the case of the other teams blocking, we must leave the back of our court exposed and hope we can get there. 95% of blocks will land in the front half of the court and therefore, we will concentrate our coverage on that area.



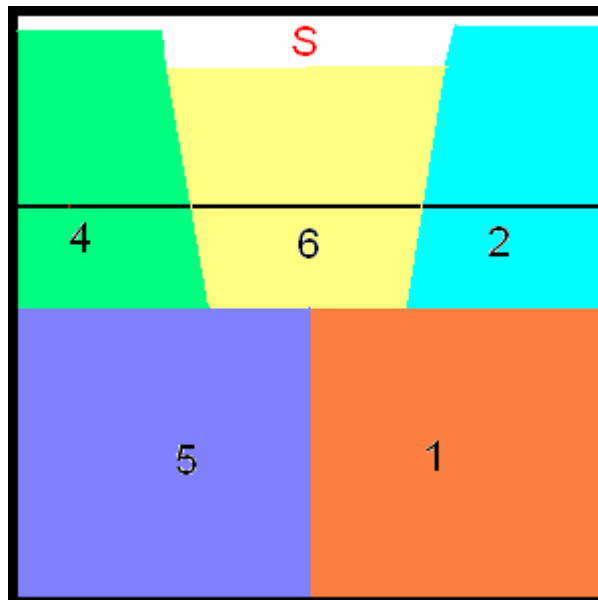
Defensive Formations

"W" Defense

Teaching Points

- 1) Not a blocking defense – no blocking will be attempted
- 2) Strives to take away the short stuff – 15 feet and closer to the net
- 3) Positions 5 and 1 have to split the entire back half of the court
- 4) Setter has no defensive responsibilities other than for playing balls that hit the net and dribble over

The diagram below show the responsibilities for defense and serve reception in this alignment.

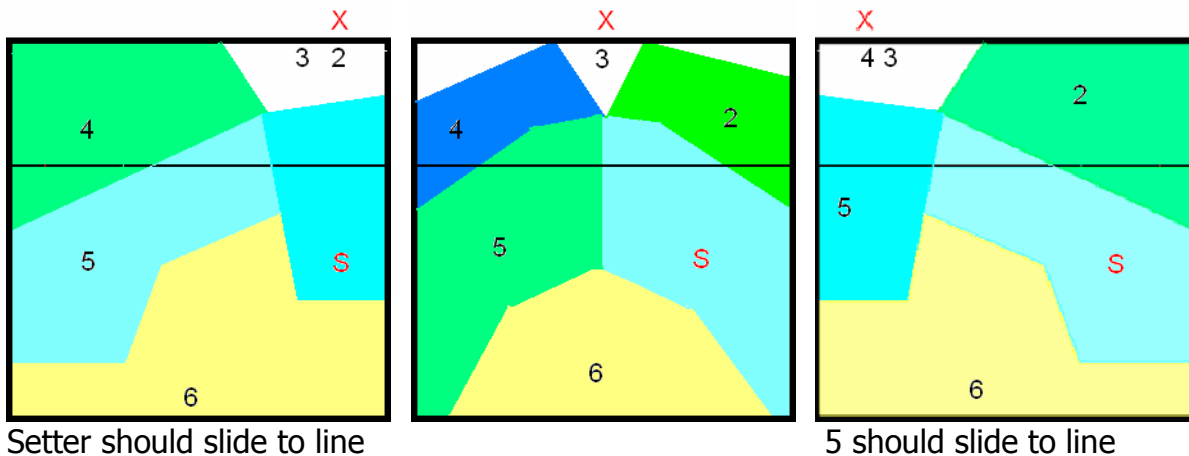


"Straight Up" Defense

Teaching Points

- 1) Front row players will attempt to block with the middle blocker attempting to create a double block on the opponent's outside hitters.
- 2) Outside blockers will not attempt to double block on the opponent's middle hitters.
- 3) Used against teams that do not "tip" often but also do not attack the ball well.
- 4) Position 6 is responsible for balls hit deep into the court
- 5) On outside hits, back row player on side of hit will slide to line and play from outside to inside of the court.

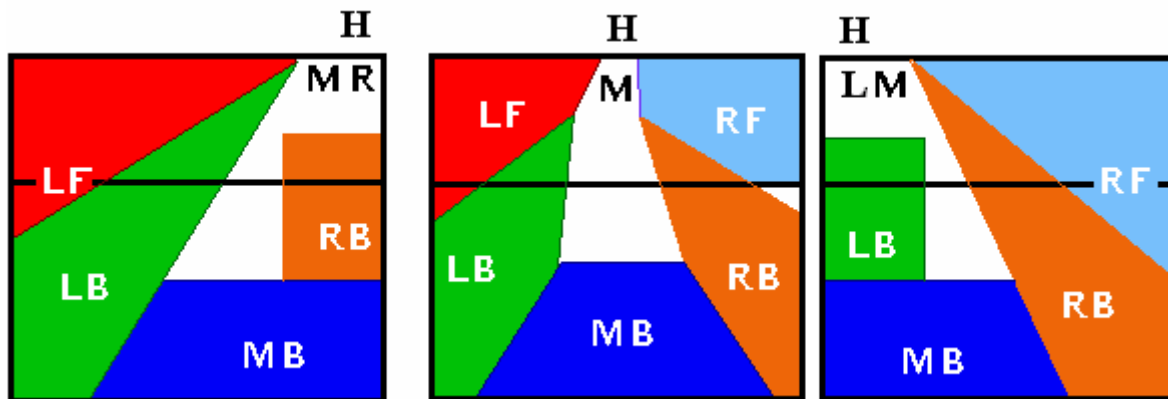
Defense Coverages



"Rotate Up" Defense

Teaching Points

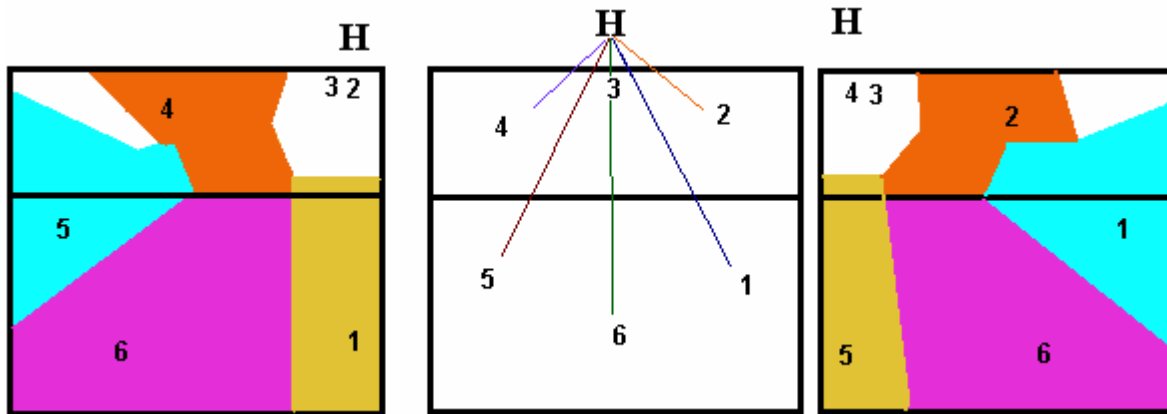
- 1) Front row players will attempt to block with the middle blocker attempting to create a double block on the opponent's outside hitters.
- 2) Outside blockers will not attempt to double block on the opponent's middle hitters.
- 3) Used against teams that do "tip" often but also attack the ball pretty well.
- 4) Position 6 is responsible for balls hit deep into the court.
- 5) This is the defense that we will utilize most often though we should be familiar with all 3 formations.



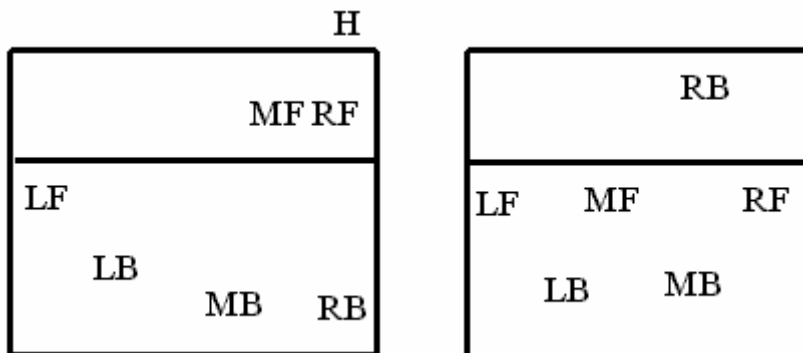
"Rotate Away" Defense

Teaching Points

- 1) Front row players will attempt to block with the middle blocker attempting to create a double block on the opponent's outside hitters.
- 2) Outside blockers will not attempt to double block on the opponent's middle hitters.
- 3) Used against teams that hit the ball well placing it deep into the court.
- 4) Position 6 is responsible for balls hit deep into the court.



"Down / Free Ball" Defense



DOWN Ball – No Power Attack

FREE Ball – No attack at all

NOTES:

- ◆ Blockers' job is to take away the middle of the court
- ◆ Diggers' job is to dig hits – not necessarily to get the "tips"
- ◆ Crosscourt diggers should position themselves so they can see the attack point
- ◆ Middle backs should position themselves so they are directly behind the block or in the gap between blockers
- ◆ RB (setter) first responsibility is defense – only rush up on a "free" ball

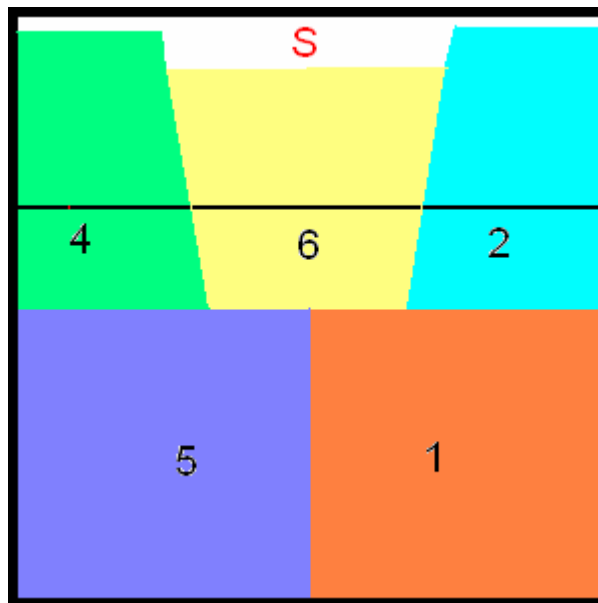
Serve Reception Formations

“W” Serve Reception – 5-person reception

Teaching Points

- 1) 5 players to receive the serve – 1 setter in the front row
- 2) Players always pass the ball to the #3 position (middle front)
- 3) Setter always moves to middle front position at beginning of play

Basically, the court coverage is the same as it is for the “W” defense. See the diagram below.

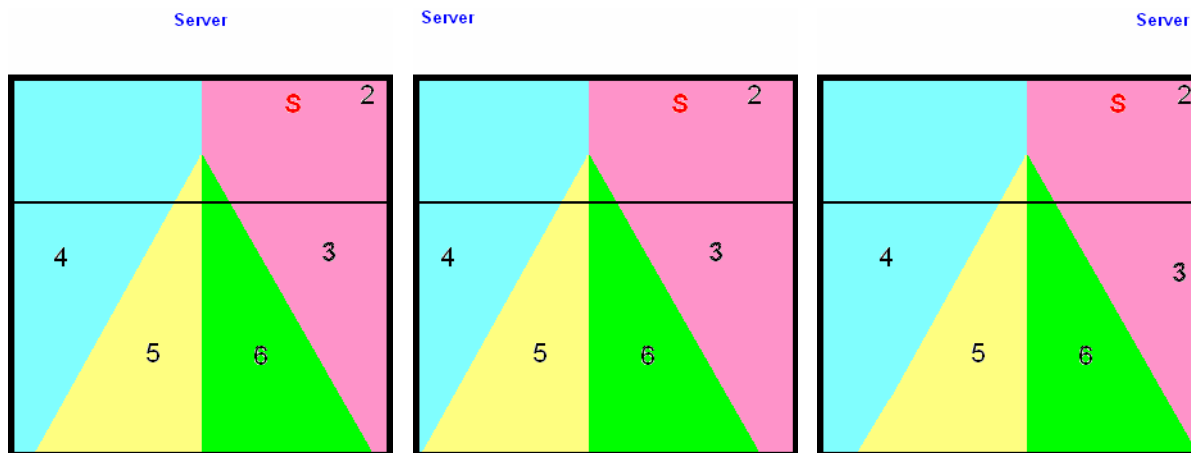


4-Person Reception

Teaching Points

- 1) 4 players to receive the serve – 1 setter – 1 player out of the way.
- 2) Players always pass the ball between the #2 and #3 position.
- 3) Setter always moves to setting position at beginning of play.

Each of the 4 players receiving serve has to cover a large area of court. However, there should be very little confusion with regards to “whose ball is whose.” There is a base position that is used when the server is positioned at the middle of the baseline. As the server moves right or left along the baseline, the 4 players adjust likewise. See the diagrams which illustrate the coverage.



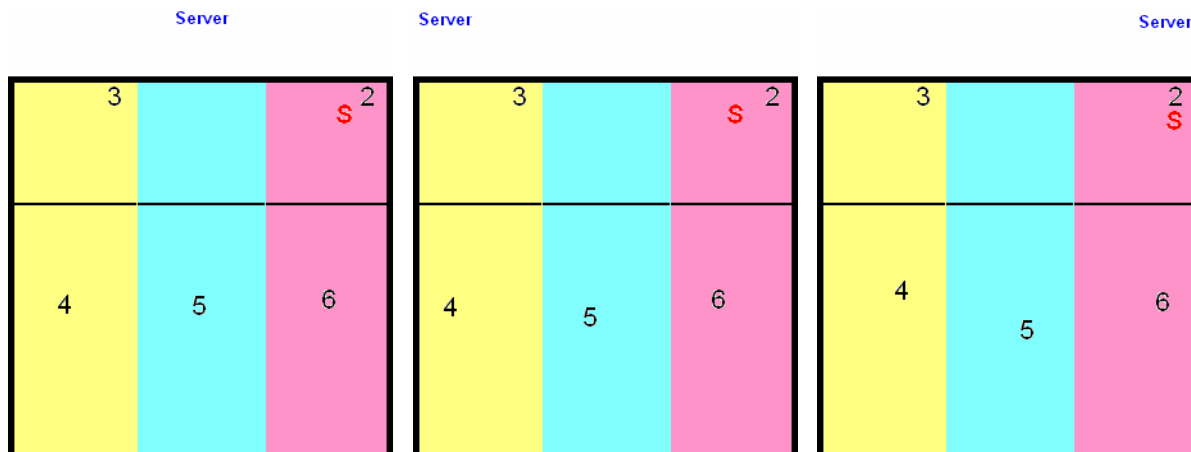
The biggest challenge using the 4-person reception is watching for overlaps. Usually, it is the setter’s responsibility to make sure they are not creating the overlap. However, the most common overlaps are between front row and back row players.

3-Person Reception

Teaching Points

- 1) 3 players to receive the serve – 1 setter – 2 players out of the way.
- 2) Players always pass the ball between the #2 and #3 position.
- 3) Setter always moves to setting position at beginning of play.

Each of the 3 players receiving serve has to cover a large area of court. Each player gets an equal third of the court, a silo of sorts. Any ball in that silo is theirs regardless of its distance from the net. In order to use the 3-person reception, you need to have 3 players with the following abilities. They need to be capable of covering a lot of court quickly. They need to have good depth perception so they can judge the length of the serve quickly. They need to be able to overhead pass comfortably. There is a base position that is used when the server is positioned at the middle of the baseline. As the server moves right or left along the baseline, the 3 players adjust likewise. See the diagrams which illustrate the coverage.



The biggest challenge using the 3-person reception is watching for overlaps. Usually, it is the setter's responsibility to make sure they are not creating the overlap. However, the most common overlaps are between the front row and back row players who are passing. In the diagrams above, 4 must be closer to the net than 5 and the setter (position 1) must be closer to the sideline than 6 and no closer to the net than 2.

Program Fundamentals

Beginner level

- 1) Run 4 – 2 offense.
- 2) Identify setters.
 - a) Each team should have 2 – 4 setters.
 - b) Select 2 setters for each game.
 - c) Setters should wear pinnies.
 - d) Setters do NOT rotate out of games – other players do. If they rotate out, the entire rotation of players gets screwed up.
- 3) Utilize 5-person (“W”) receiving formation.
- 4) Have setters align themselves appropriately (relative to other front row players) and move to the middle upon the serve.
- 5) No rewards for simply utilizing 3 hits.
 - a) We need to get them into the mentality that the 3rd hit is meant to be attacked.
 - b) Alternate scoring: give an extra point for each 3rd hit that is an attack (or attack attempt).
- 6) Defense should stay in basic “W” formation.

Advanced level

- 1) Start with 4 – 2 offense. Graduate to 6 – 2 offense if skills permit.
- 2) Identify setters.
 - a) Each team should have 2 – 4 setters.
 - b) Select 2 setters for each game.
 - c) Setters should wear pinnies.
 - d) Setters do NOT rotate out of games – other players do. If they rotate out, the entire rotation of players gets screwed up.
- 3) Utilize 4-person receiving formation.
- 4) When using 4 - 2 offense, have setters align themselves appropriately (relative to other front row players) and move to the middle upon the serve. When using 6 – 2 offense, have setters align themselves and teammates. Setters are quarterbacks and need to know what everybody is doing.
- 5) No rewards for simply utilizing 3 hits.
 - a) We need to get them into the mentality that the 3rd hit is meant to be attacked.
 - b) Alternate scoring: give an extra point for each 3rd hit that is an attack.
- 6) Defense should utilize “straight up” formation.
- 7) Work on transition from defense to offense and offense to defense.

High School level

- 1) Run 6 – 2 or 5 - 1 offense.
- 2) Identify setters.
 - a) Each team should have 2 or 3 setters.
 - b) Select 2 setters for each game.
 - c) Setters should wear pinnies.
 - d) Setters do NOT rotate out of games – other players do. If they rotate out, the entire rotation of players gets screwed up.
- 3) Utilize 4-person receiving formation.
- 4) Have setters align themselves and teammates. Setters are quarterbacks and need to know what everybody is doing.
- 5) Defense should primarily utilize “rotate up” formation but should be familiar with “straight up” and “rotate away” formations.
- 6) Work on transition from defense to offense and offense to defense.

Practice Planning

Good practices

- 1) Plan ahead – have a schedule and stick to it.
 - a) The more practices we plan, the better we will get at figuring out how much time the kids can handle
- 2) Factor in fluid breaks in the schedule.
- 3) Schedule in short intervals.
 - a) Don't spend more than 15 minutes on any one drill or we will lose the kids – even the drills they like get boring
- 4) Schedule drills so they "build up."
 - a) For beginners, do an easy drill followed by a more challenging drill focusing on the same skill.
 - b) Over the course of a few practices, build from passing to setting to spiking so that the kids see why they need to be good at the first 2 contacts in order to get to the "fun stuff" which is the spiking.
- 5) Don't spend more than 30 minutes on any one skill.
 - a) Same idea at #2 except kids just cannot execute the same skill over and over for too long before you lose them.
 - b) Some kids, especially the younger one, just will not be able to physically do the same skill for an extended period of time.
- 6) Keep things moving.
 - a) We need to keep the kids moving.
 - b) Kids should not be standing around too much. Drills should be fast enough that the kids cycle through the station often with minimal down time between repetitions.
- 7) Break into as many stations as possible.
 - a) Use as many coaches as are comfortable in running the drills.
 - b) More coaches means more stations which mean less kids per station which means more time spent doing the drills and less idle time.
 - c) Stations can all be doing the same drill or focused on different skills.
 - i) For advanced practices, stations can be run for setters and passers simultaneously if you have the coaches.

Sample practice plans

Here is a sample plan for 4 practices that build from passing to passing and setting to setting and spiking and, finally, puts them all together:

Day 1

Time	Drill	Coaching Tips
:00 to :10	Warming up & stretching	
:10 to :17	Dead Fish	Cap game at 3.5 minutes – play twice
:17 to :20	Simple Passes – 2 players See how many they can do!	Not moving – good form (flat arms, straight back, bent knees)
:20 to :23	Simple Sets – 2 players See how many they can do!	Not moving – good form (ball to forehead, elbows out, wrists bent, knees bent)
:23 to :25	Water break	
:25 to :40	Moving Passes	Footwork – maintaining good form!
:40 to :55	3 – 6 – 9 drill	Distance control for passing – 3 Meters, 6M, 9M
:55 to :57	Water break	
:57 to 1:30	Coaching / Scrimmage	Coaching tips - FUN! – keep track of good passes to setter

Day 2

Time	Drill	Coaching Tips
:00 to :10	Warming up & stretching	
:10 to :17	10 serves (first team to 10 good serves wins)	Winning teams play each other
:17 to :20	Simple Passes – 2 players See how many they can do!	Not moving – good form (flat arms, straight back, bent knees)
:20 to :23	Simple Sets – 2 players See how many they can do!	Not moving – good form (ball to forehead, elbows out, wrists bent, knees bent)
:23 to :25	Water break	
:25 to :40	Set and Follow – 3 players	Not moving – good form (ball to forehead, wrists bent,
:40 to :55	3 Station Passing	Right back, middle back, left back – vary the tosses

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:55 to :57	Water break	
:57 to 1:30	Coaching / Scrimmage	Coaching tips - FUN! – keep track of good passes to setter

Day 3

Time	Drill	Coaching Tips
:00 to :10	Warming up & stretching	
:10 to :16	Dead Fish	2 games
:16 to :23	Serving Target Practice - 5 zones	Set up 5 target zones (2 front – 3 back) – step and follow-through!
:23 to :25	Water break	
:25 to :40	Set and Follow – 3 players	Not moving – good form (ball to forehead, wrists bent,
:40 to :55	Set & Spike – team (left 1st then switch)	Coaches toss to setter (have each setter set to everyone on team before switching)
:55 to :57	Water break	
:57 to 1:30	Coaching / Scrimmage	Coaching tips - FUN! – keep track of good passes to setter

Day 4

Time	Drill	Coaching Tips
:00 to :10	Warming up & stretching	
:10 to :15	10 serves (first team to 10 good serves wins)	Winning teams play each other
:15 to :18	Simple Passes – 2 players See how many they can do!	Not moving – good form (flat arms, straight back, bent knees)
:18 to :22	Simple Sets – 2 players See how many they can do!	Not moving – good form (ball to forehead, elbows out, wrists bent, knees bent)
:22 to :25	Water break	
:25 to :40	3 Station Passing	Right back, middle back, left back – vary the tosses
:40 to :55	Set & Spike – team (left 1st then switch)	Coaches toss to setter (have each setter set to everyone on team before switching)
:55 to :57	Water break	
:57 to 1:30	Coaching / Scrimmage	Coaching tips - FUN! – keep track of good passes to setter

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Here is another set of practice plans for an advanced team working on strategy and alignment in addition to skills.

Monday

Time	Drill / Concept	Coaching Tips
:00 to :10	Warming up & stretching	Introduce new players
:10 to :25	Defensive alignment	Responsibilities for defense – positioning – assignments (see diagram – rotate up)
:25 to :40	Right side defense	Digging and transition for setters and RF – use MB, LB & all 3 hitters (see drill)
:40 to :55	Serve Receive	Alignments & getting 4-person receive set up
:55 to :70	Ball control: X to Y	Ball control drill – transition from defense to offense – ball control on 3 rd hit (must be a down ball) (see drill)
:70 to :90	Scrimmage / other drills	

Wednesday

Time	Drill / Concept	Coaching Tips
:00 to :10	Warming up & stretching	
:10 to :25	Serving by Numbers	Learn the 6 court positions and work on serving location
:25 to :35	Down ball defense	How to align for a down ball (see diagram)
:35 to :45	Free ball defense	How to align for a free ball (see diagram)
:45 to :55	Hitting Coverage	How to cover hitters for blocks (see diagram)
:55 to :70	Attack ball defense	Review from Monday's practice
:70 to :90	Scrimmage / other drills	

Setter Training

Setter identification

- 1) In addition to having the physical skills or potential – look for players who are:
 - a) Strong emotionally
 - b) Leaders (or have leadership qualities)
- 2) Setters are the glue that holds a team together.
- 3) Identifying and training setters is paramount to having a successful program.

The following is courtesy of Al Mirable:

(<http://volleyball.about.com/od/almirabile/a/trainingsetters.htm>)

I suggest training new setters using the 4-2 offense, so that you do not overwhelm them with too much at once. The drill you use for this is stand in the back row and toss the ball to the setter. Have them set the hitting lines (left, middle and right), from your toss. You want to teach the setter to square their shoulders always to the hitter. It is also important to stress the positioning of their feet, right foot forward when setting the strong (or left side) and left foot forward for setting the opposite. The reason for this is that the ball tends to drift towards the net. Therefore, when setting the strong side, if the right foot is forward, the ball still stays on your side of the net (and vice versa for the right side). This is the setter protecting the hitter, by keeping them out of situations where they might be blocked because a set is too "tight." You can also begin to teach back setting in this drill, as well.

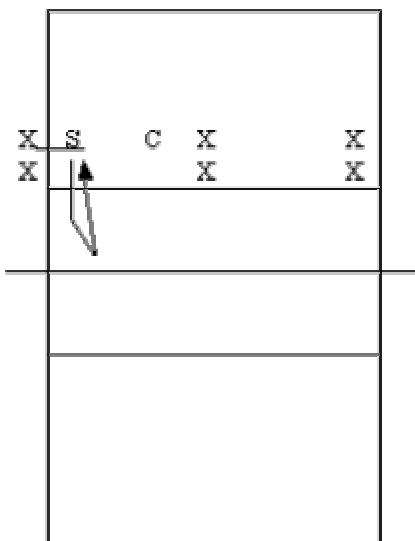
Once they are able to set consistently, then you begin working on their movement. This is the same drill as the toss from the back row, but this toss emulates a bad pass where they have to move and set it, possibly even on the run. Here is where you can even teach your setter to use back row attacks, rather than forcing a bad ball, which usually translates into a lift. Once the setter has mastered this, then you can incorporate the setter coming up from the back row, if you want to run a 5-1 offense. In this drill, the setter starts in the back right position (position 1) and the hitters start on the net. You toss the ball to where the setter should set from (this is to the right of the middle hitter, about a foot off the net). This drill also works transition from defense to offense (and thus timing and chemistry). Once they have transition down, that is when you usually move on to explaining and running plays (quicks, slides, stacks, and x's).

Along the way, you will mix in things like jump setting, the setter dump (left and right hand); having the setter hit the second ball and the set over (which is slightly different from the setter dump, as it involves more touch and placement). All this takes a ton of planning.

Drills with Illustrations

Setter Drills

Kill the Setter



Objectives:

Practice transition from defense to setting and back again.

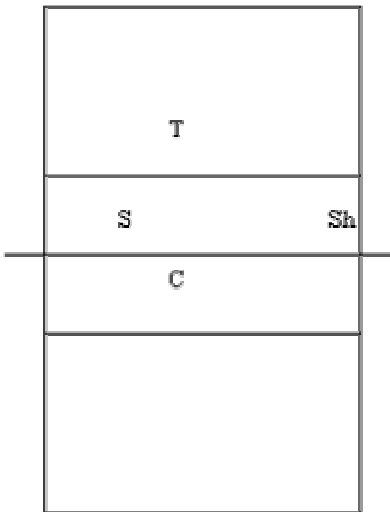
This drill is meant to be fast and the tosses should keep the setter moving.

- 1 Coach tosses a ball to the target.
- 2 Setter transitions from back row and sets the ball to any one of the hitters.
- 3 Hitters hit the ball.
- 4 The setter transitions back to home base.
- 5 Repeat until the hitters hit ten balls down, in and without hitting the tape.

Variations:

- 1 Add blockers, not the hitters can not be blocked either.
- 2 Move home base back.

Read the Block (Eye Checks)



Beginner Eye Checks

Objectives:

Practice getting the setter to see what is going on on the other side of the net.

- 1 Tosser tosses a ball to the setter.
- 2 During the toss the coach holds up either rock, paper or scissors.
- 3 The setter must look at the call and say what the coach is holding before setting the ball.
- 4 Setter sets ball to the shagger.
- 5 Repeat desired number of times.

Variations

Have setter transition from back row during a toss, you should make the tosses higher.

Coach can vary where the hand signal is being made, the closer to the setter the harder it will be.

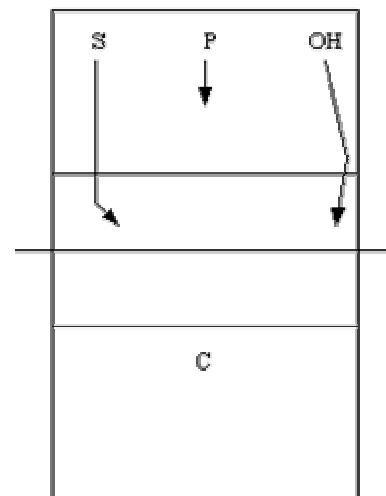
Set - Set - Hit

Objectives: Setters practice transitioning to net as quickly as possible and then set outside.

1. All players start lying face down on the end line.
2. Coach (C) slaps ball and tosses over the net to the middle back player (P).
3. Setter (S) transitions all the way to the net.
4. OH hitter transitions to start of approach.
5. Passer sets ball to target. (not where the setter is, but where they are supposed to be)
6. Setter sets outside.
7. Outside hitter hits.

Variation: Add a blocker.

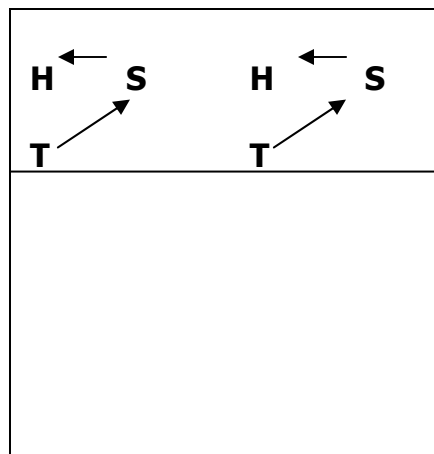
Scoring: Outside hitter must hit a ball in the court without hitting the tape to score a point.



“Set and Follow” Drill

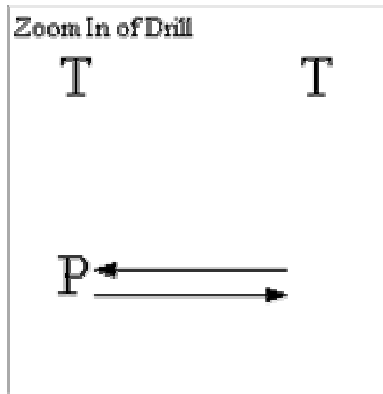
Objectives: Setting techniques. Good, high, arching sets.

(Groups of 3 or 4) – T will toss the ball to the setter who will set the ball to the Hitter. The Tosser will become the Setter, the Setter becomes the Hitter and the Hitter becomes the Tosser. Initially, the Hitter should just catch the ball (the focus is on the set not the hit.) As skills improve, spiking the ball can be incorporated, but only with one group operating on each side of the net.



Passing Drills

Slide Step Passing



Objectives:

Practice moving left to right and passing.

1. Start the drill with two tossers, each with a ball.
2. The passer starts in front of one tosser.
3. The tosser tosses a ball to the passer.
4. After passing the ball back to the tosser the passer slide steps in front of the other tosser.

The second tosser repeats and the passer slides back in front of the first

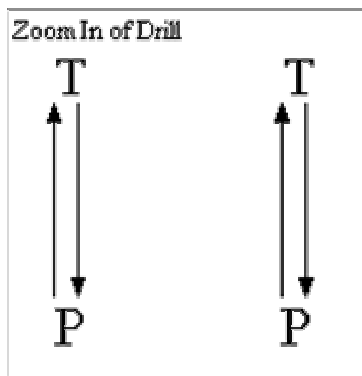
Variations:

- ♦ Have the tosses come diagonally, and the the passer pass forward.
- ♦ Have the tosses come diagonally, and the passer pass diagonally.

Front to Back Passing

Objectives:

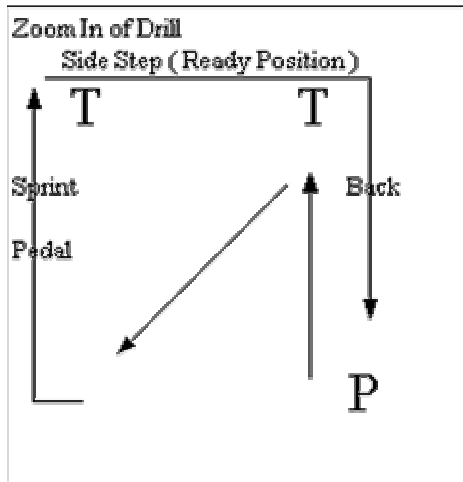
Practice moving forward and backward and passing.



1. Start the drill with a toss to the passer in the base position shown.
2. After passing the passer follows the pass back to the tosser and touches the tosser's foot.
3. The passer retreats back to the starting position.
4. As the passer retreats the tosser tosses another ball.
5. The passer passes the ball and repeats the movements.

Pass and Move

Objectives: Practice moving and passing.



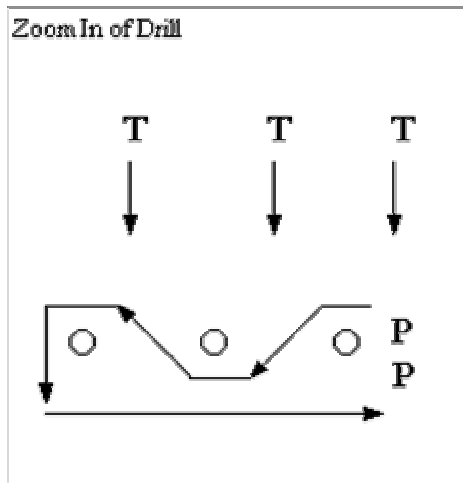
1. Start the drill with a toss to the passer in the base position shown.
2. After the pass the passer sprints up and touches the tosser's foot.
3. The passer retreats diagonally back to the next tosser tosses the next ball.
4. Be sure to have the passer focus on squaring up with the tosser.
5. After the second pass the passer sprints to behind the 2nd tosser.
6. The passer then shuffles in a ready position behind the tossers.

7. After passing the the 1st tosser the passer back pedals back into line.
8. Repeat as desired.

Variation: Go in the reverse direction.

Pass and Weave

Objectives: Practice moving left to right and passing, and staying in a low position while moving.

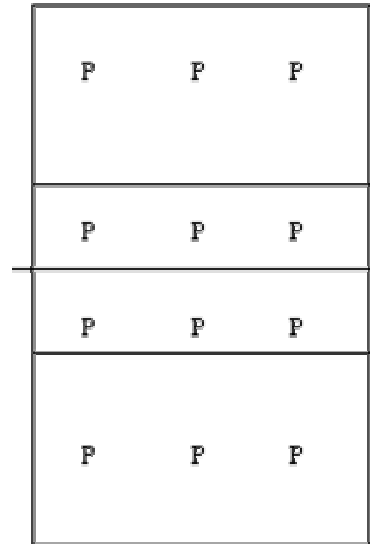


1. Players start in a ready position, receive a ball and pass back to target.
2. Player shuffles and weaves around ball.
3. Player receives another ball and passes back to target.
4. Player shuffles behind ball.
5. Player receives last ball and shuffles in front of ball.
6. Player sprints back to line.
7. The next player steps into the drill immediately after the target receives the pass from the person in front of them.

Variation:
Go in the reverse direction.
Add more balls and tossers.

Overhead Passing Game

Objectives: To get players to be more comfortable with using the overhead pass.



1. Coach initiates the drill with a free ball.
2. Each side receives two free balls then switches sides.
3. The players can use three contacts, but all must be the overhead pass.

Use a scoring system to determine winners.

Diagram Key:

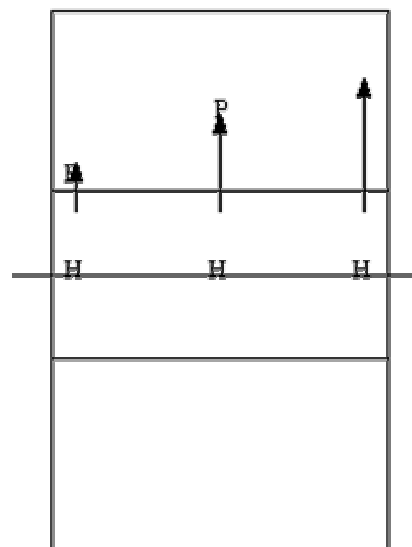
P = Player C = Coach

Warm - Up Scoring Method

Play each game to five points, rally scoring. Play a best three out of five match, with the loser of each game taking a lap after the losing game.

Overhead Passing 10/20/30

Objectives: Practice the overhead pass from different distances off a down ball hit (driven ball).



1. Starting from 10' away the hitter gives down balls directly to the head of the passer.
2. The passer must go from the ready position to an overhead passing receiving position.
3. The passer passes the ball directly back to the hitter.
4. Set a goal for number of good passes.
5. Change to twenty feet away and repeat.

Change to thirty feet away and repeat.

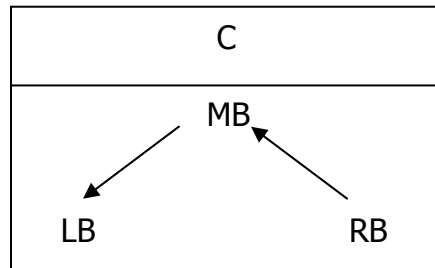
Diagram Key: H = Hitter P = Passer

"3 Station" Passing Drill

Objectives: movement, footwork, adjusting body position towards setter

Passer starts in right back (RB) then moves to CB then LB – Coach should be positioned in setter position. Adjust the height and speed of the balls.

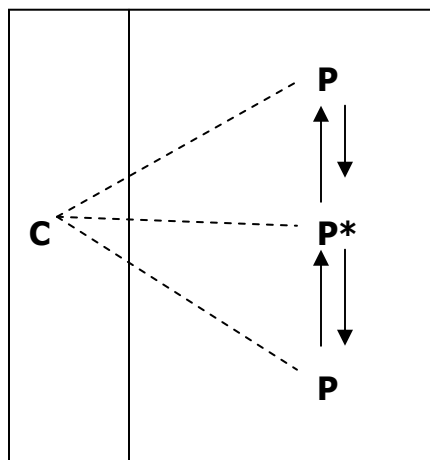
Variations: start in LB



"Moving Passes" Passing Drill

Objectives: movement, footwork, adjusting body position towards setter

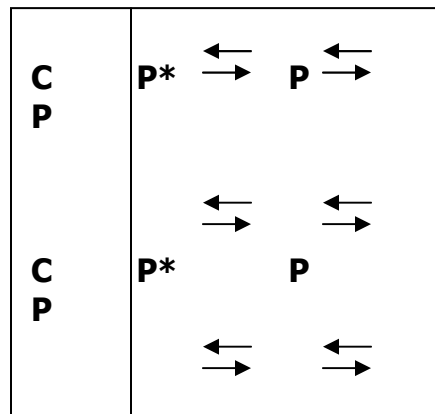
Passer starts in center position, moves right, then left, then left, then right (5 passes). Coach should be in setter position.



3 – 6 – 9 Passing Drill

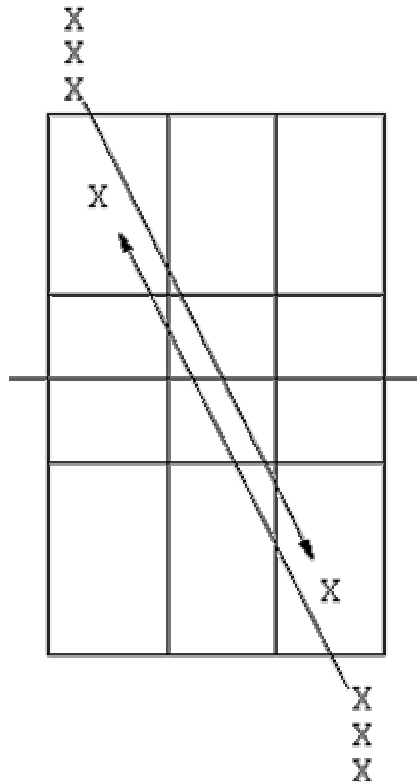
Objective: learn to control distance on passes

Kids start passing at 3 meter line, then 6, then 9 (end line), then 6 then 3. Coach(es) at net. Can be run in multiple groups as coaches allow.



Serving Drills

Around the World



Objectives: Practice serving with some pressure.

1. Each team must serve a ball to each area of the court.
2. The team starts with a player in area one.
3. When the team serves to their player, who is sitting down, and they can catch the serve, the server moves and sits in the next area of the court.
4. The target goes back to the line and serves.

The teams continue until a team serves a ball to a player in each area.

Diagram Key: X = Servers

Dead Fish

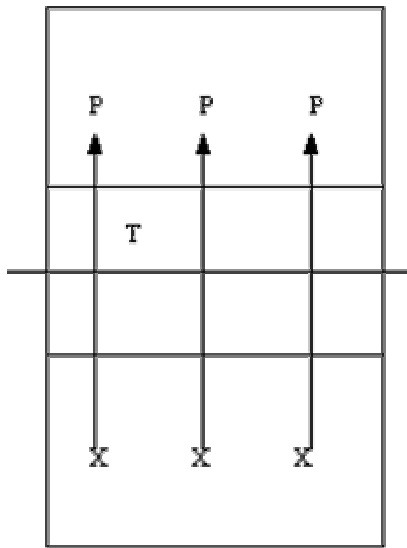
Objective: Practice serving and serving accuracy

1. Split up players into two even teams.
2. Both teams continuously serve. Make sure they concentrate before each serve.
3. If a player misses a serve they must go lay on the other side of the court.
4. The players that are laying down ("dead fish") cannot serve again until one of their teammates strikes them with a served ball.
5. The team with the most players standing after time runs out (2 or 3 minutes) wins.

Serve Reception Drills

Overhead Passing

Objectives: Practice the transition from serve receive to hitting.



1. Starting from left to right the hitters give the passer in line with them down balls.
2. Passer must decide whether to forearm pass or over head pass each ball to the target.
3. Alternate down the line of hitters.

Set a goal for number of good passes.

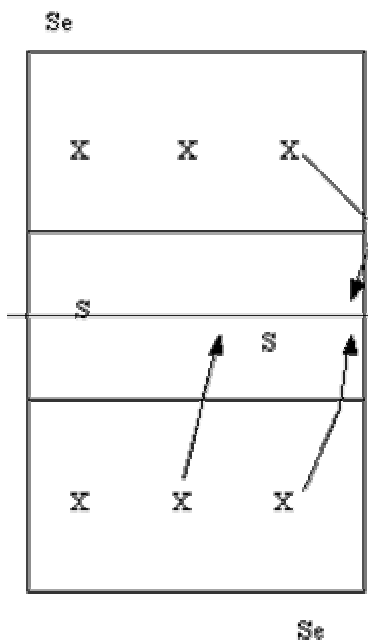
Things to focus on:

- ◆ Call the ball early
- ◆ Follow the ball out
- ◆ Make the appropriate pass

Diagram Key: X = Hitter P = Passer T = Target

Serve Receive Transition

Objectives: Practice the transition from serve receive to hitting.



1. Two groups of five on each side of the net, three passers, one setter, one server.
2. Alternate serves.
3. The passer passes to the setter.
4. The setter sets the person who passed the ball.

The hitter calls an appropriate set call for where they are after the pass.

Variations:

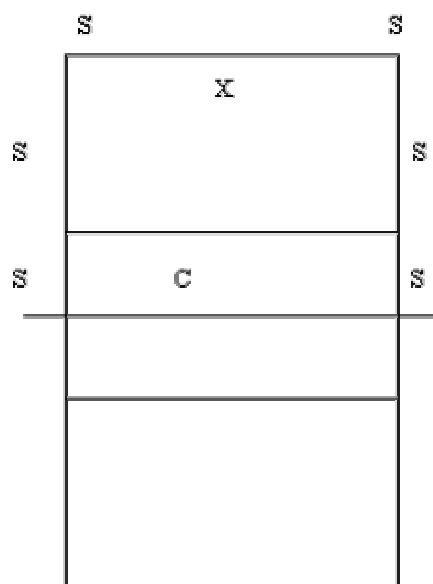
1. Hitters can only hit back row.

Diagram Key:

Se = Server X = Passer S = Setter

Conditioning Drills

Twenty Ball



Objectives:

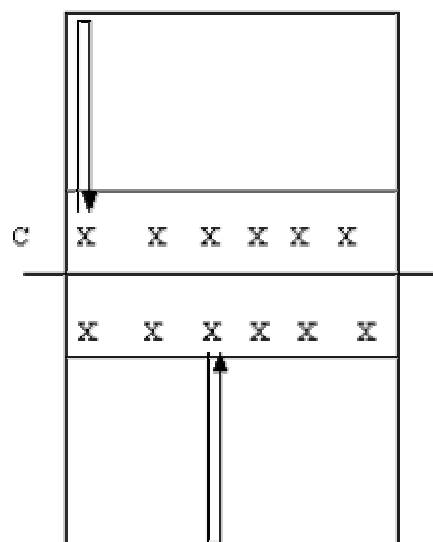
Teach relentless pursuit and conditioning.

- 1 Coach rolls a ball on the court anywhere they want to.
- 2 The player must touch the ball before it leaves the court.
- 3 The player must touch twenty balls before they are done.
- 4 If a player does not touch a ball before it reaches out of bounds they must touch an extra ball before they are done.

Diagram Key:

C = Coach X = Player S = Shagger

10 ' Line Game



Objectives:

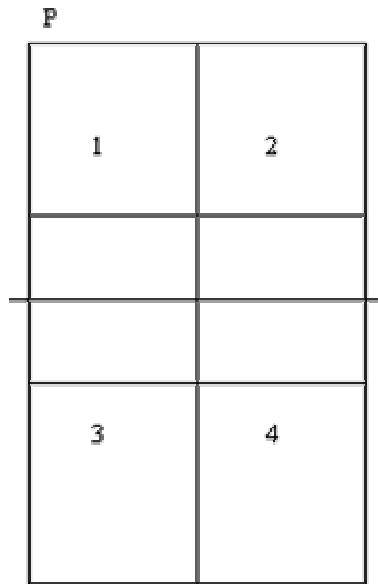
A Good warm-up that teaches players to see movement on the other side of the net.

- 1 Play a game inside the 10' line.
- 2 Coach tosses balls into the court to start play.
- 3 Everytime a player touches a ball they must run and touch the end line before returning to play.

Variations:

- 1 The team that loses a point has to do two pushups, and the coach tosses the next ball in before the entire team is finished.
- 2 Play a best 3 out of 5 match to five points, rally scoring.

Volleyball Four Square



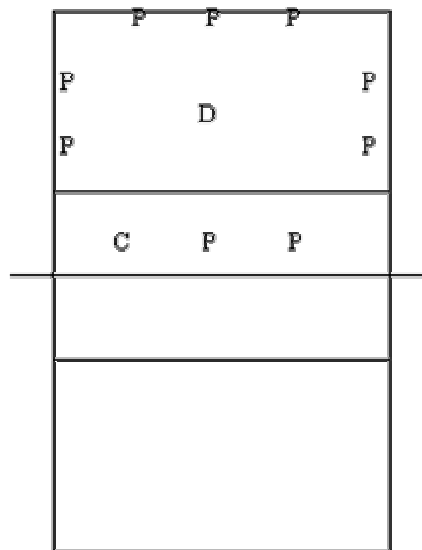
Objectives: To teach coverage of large area, practice anticipation and movement without ball.

1. Start with players randomly assigned to square.
2. Player in square one serves underhand to square three or four.
3. Goal of game is to get to and stay in square one.
4. If a ball lands in a square the player in the square is out of the game. (To end of line or to square 4), or if a player hits an error (into the net or out of bounds).

Players move up to fill in empty squares.

Diagram Key: P = Player # = Square Number

Blue Lip



Objectives: Get in game shape while passing balls.

1. Put players in a circle around edge of court with one player in the middle.
2. Coach hits, tips, and throws balls all over the court.
3. Defender must pass the ball so that a player on the outside of the circle can catch it. (They can dive from thier spot but not move otherwise)

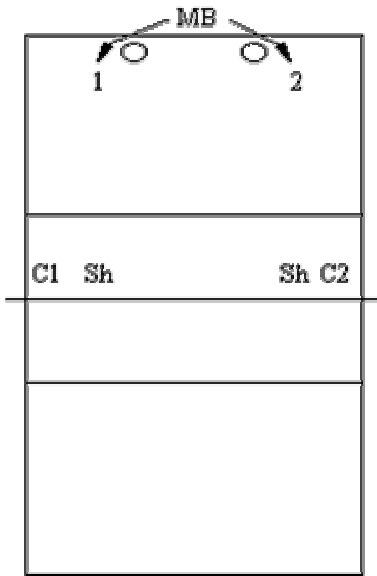
Player is done when 15 balls are caught by teammates.

Diagram Key: C = Coach P = Player D = DefenderDrill

Defense Drills

Stay Back Drill

Objectives: Practice middle back taking semi - circular patterns around and to the defensive position.

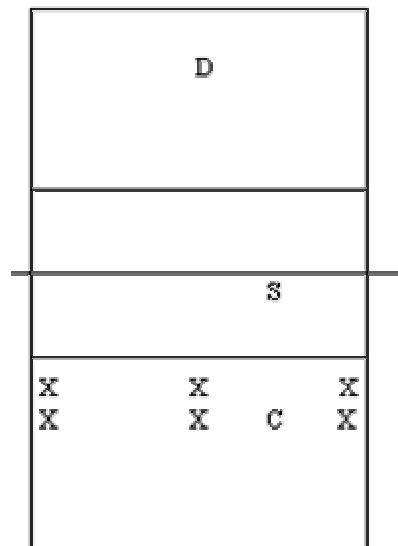


1. C1 slaps a ball and hits to position number 1.
2. MB player moves from middle back around chair squaring up with the target position.
3. MB moves back towards home base.
4. C2 slaps a ball and hits to position number 2.

Middle back player retreats back to home base.

Diagram Key: Sh = Shagger MB = Middle Back C= Coach

Touch Ten



Objectives: Teach aggressiveness on defense.

1. Run hitting lines with all three hitters.
2. Coach tosses balls to the setter.
3. Set can set any hitter, any set.
4. Hitter tries to keep the ball away from the defender.
5. The defender must touch ten balls before rotating out.

Defense can start anywhere they want.

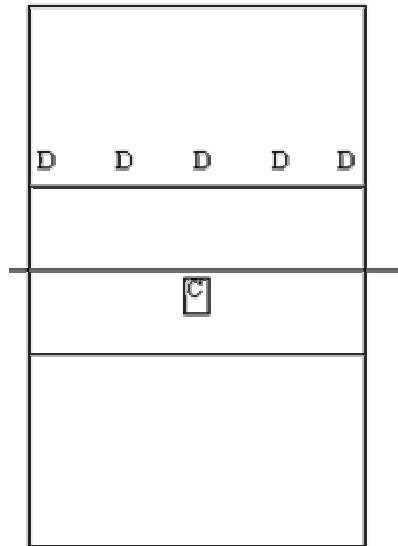
Variations: Add defenders

Have two hitters and allow the setter to dump.

Diagram Key: D = Defender X = Hitter S = Setter C = Coach

No Fear Defense

Objectives: Teach aggressiveness on defense and to get under balls hit down



1. Coach stands on a box in the middle of the net, where they can hit the ball down inside 10' line.
2. Coach continuously hits balls to the defenders.

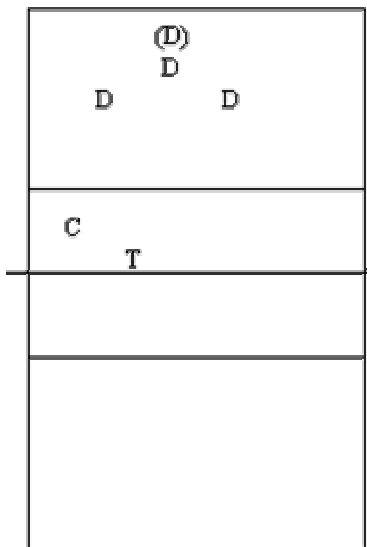
After a set number of hits the defender can only exit the drill when they can pass a ball straight up and catch it.

Diagram Key:

D = Defender X = Hitter S = Setter C = Coach

Defense: Go Stay

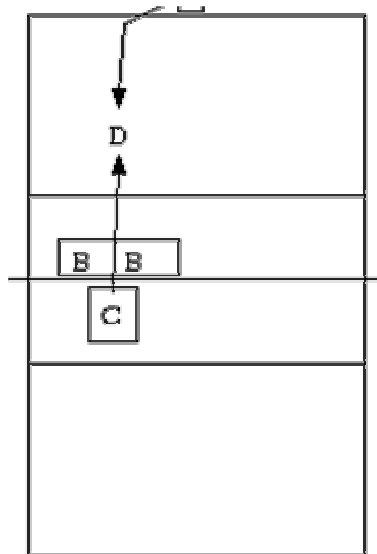
Objectives: Teach digging.



1. Defenders start in a triangle pattern arms length apart. (Drill can be done with three or four players).
2. Coach hits ball to any of the defenders.
3. If coach hits to a wing player, the wing player and the middle player switch.
4. If coach hits to middle player the players remain where they are.
5. With four players the fourth defender fills in the middle when the middle moves to the wing, and the wing players fills in behind the middle player.
6. Drill is over when the group passes ten balls to the target.
7. If a ball hits the ground because a player did not go for a ball, or did not fill when the players rotate they start back at zero.

Charge the Hole

Objectives: Teach aggressiveness to middle back players and fill the hole in the block.



When faced with this tough situation the first goal of the defender should be to make the ball playable, you have two more hits to settle and get a good swing on the ball.

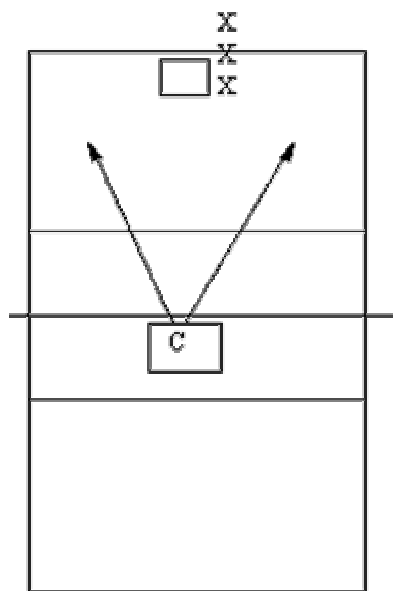
1. Blockers stand on boxes with hands up, spaced wide enough to leave a hole.
2. Middle back player starts at a box or set spot off the court.
3. Coach slaps ball.
4. Middle back player charges the hole.
5. Coach hits a ball down through the hole.
6. Middle back player attempts to dig ball.
7. Middle back player goes back and touches box or set spot.

Repeat until player gets a preset number of balls playable.

Diagram Key: D= Middle Back Player B= Blocker C= Coach

Defensive Drills: Dig and Roll

Objectives: Practice defense and going to the floor after a dig.



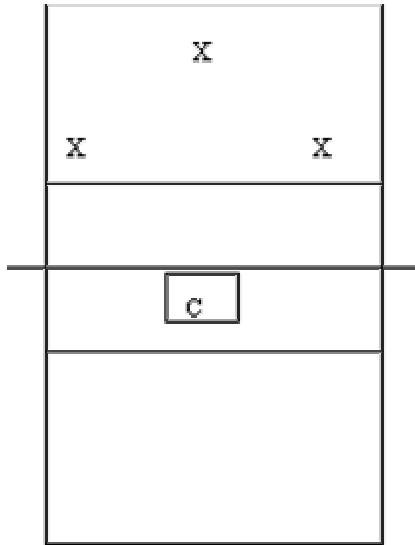
1. Use groups of three or four.
2. Line starts at middle back position.
3. Coach hits a ball to the right.
4. Player must read coach's shoulders and dig ball.
5. After the dig the player must roll.
6. Coach alternates hits right and left.

Continue for a set number of digs for each player.

Diagram Key: X = Defensive Player C = Coach on Box

Touch Ten #2

Objectives: Teach aggressiveness on defense and improve reflex reaction times.



1. From the box coach hits balls repeatedly to any of the three defensive players.
2. Coach should mix the shots power, accuracy (not directly at players) and attempt to use a variety of swings.

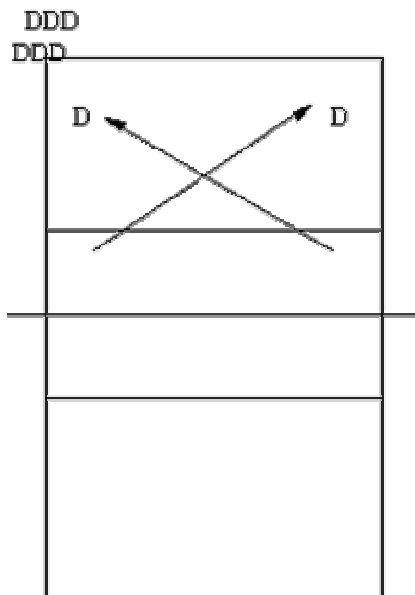
Players are done when they touch ten balls.

Variations: Players must keep ten balls in play. (Playable by own team or other team).

Players must make ten good passes.

Diagram Key: X = Defensive Player C = Coach on Box

Cross Court Digging



Objectives: To practice digging balls a good distance away from the net and from different angles.

1. Hitters alternate hitting balls at the defenders.
2. The defenders dig the balls to the target.
3. After the defender digs the ball they alternate lines.

Repeat until a set number of digs is accomplished

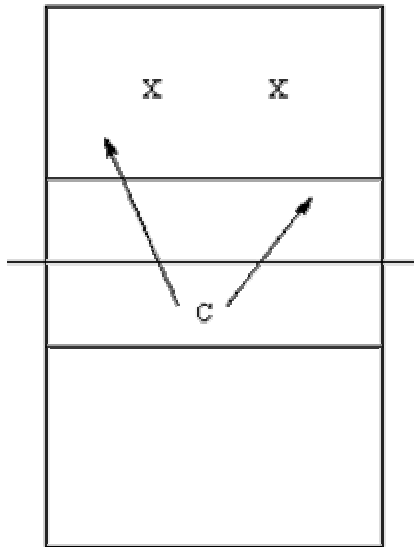
Variations:

- ◆ After each dig the defender must execute a roll.
- ◆ The defender must use an overhead pass to receive the dig.

Diagram Key:

D = Defensive Player T = Target H = Hitter

Two Person Pit



Objectives: To practice digging balls a good distance away from the net and from different angles.

1. Coach initiates drill with a toss, down ball, or tip.
2. Team of two must dig the ball and the team must be able to contact second ball.

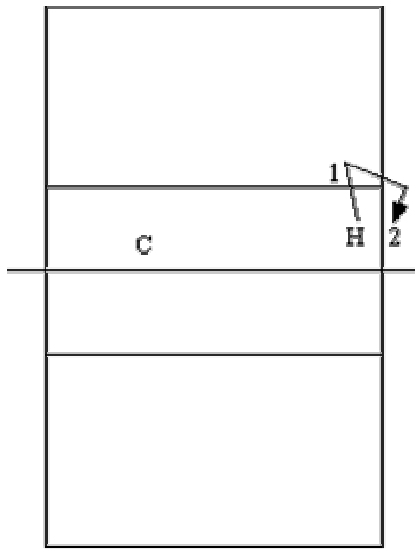
Continue drill for a preset amount of time, or until the team makes the second hit X times.

Diagram Key: C = Coach X = Player

Outside Hitter Drills

Defense to Hitting Transition

Objectives: Use repetition to practice transitioning from defense to offense.



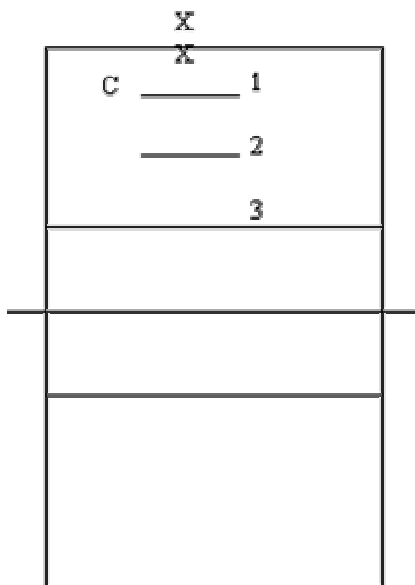
1. Hitter starts at the net.
2. Coach slaps ball and player transitions from blocking to offside defense.
3. Coach hits a ball to the player.
4. Coach tosses (or sets) a ball to the hitter.

Repeat a set number of times.

Variations: Add blocker(s)

Close a part of the court to the hitter (make hitter hit line or cross).

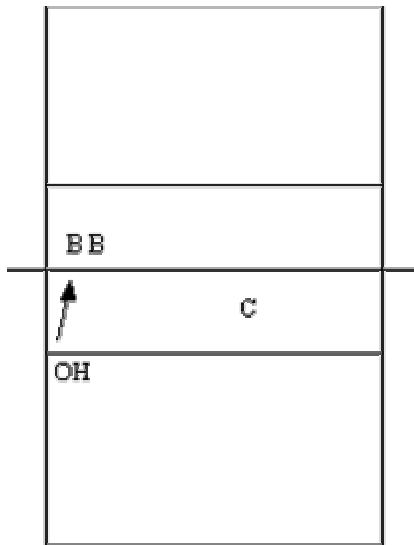
Reach and Snap Drill



Objectives: Teach players to reach high and snap their wrists by tossing the ball off the net the player will have to hit the ball as high as they can and use topspin to keep the ball in the court.

1. Split players into groups of three or four.
2. Start at number one line.
3. Coach tosses balls.
4. Players must approach and hit the ball over the net and in the court.
5. After a set number of tosses for each player (5) move up a line.
6. Continue until the group is hitting at the net.

Swing Hitter's Five Star Drill



Objectives:

Practice hitting in tough situations and get them to use a wide variety of shots effectively.

1. Coach tosses a high outside set
2. Outside hitter hits.
3. Outside hitter transitions off the net.

Hitter continues until they get five stars.

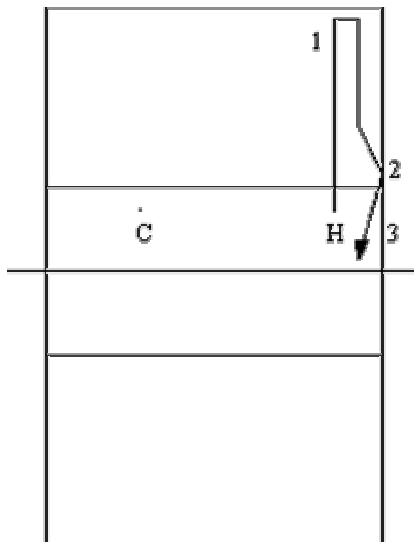
Hitters get stars for: Hitting off of the block, deep corner (either one), Cross court (inside the 10' line)

Variations:

1. Hit from the right side.
2. Have hitter pass a free ball before each hit.

Key: B = Blocker C = Coach OH = Outside Hitter

Running Transition



Objectives: Work on transition between running and approaching.

1. Hitter runs from the net to the back line.
2. Hitter runs back to the net starting approach at appropriate time.
3. Coach tosses a ball to the hitter.

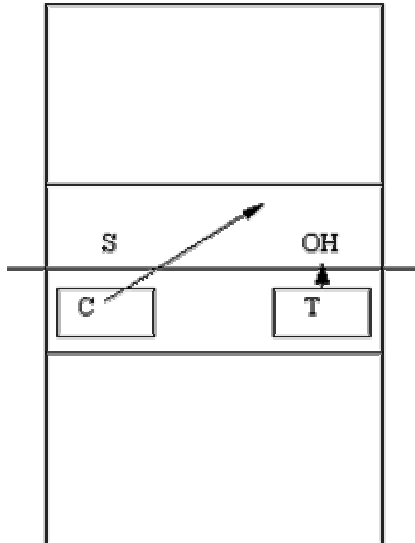
Repeat a set number of times.

Variations:

1. Add blocker(s)
2. Vary tosses (off the net, tight, inside, low, etc)

Outside Hitter: Cover Yourself

Objectives: Use repetition to practice transitioning from defense to offense.

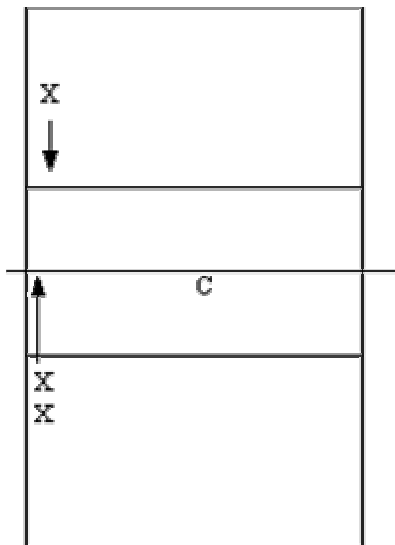


1. Hitter starts at the net.
2. Coach slaps ball and outside hitter transitions to defense.
3. Coach hits a ball to the outside hitter.
4. Outside Hitter digs ball.
5. Setter sets a second tempo set.
6. Outside hitter hits.
7. As soon as hit crosses plane of the net the tosser tosses a ball over the net to simulate a block.
8. Outside hitter passes ball to setter.
9. Setter sets a one tempo set to the outside hitter.

Notes: Outside hitter could hit a second tempo ball for second hit.

Variation: Add a full compliment of coverage players.

Outside Hitters: Burn



Objectives: Practice finding defenders and find an open area to tip to based on where the defender is.

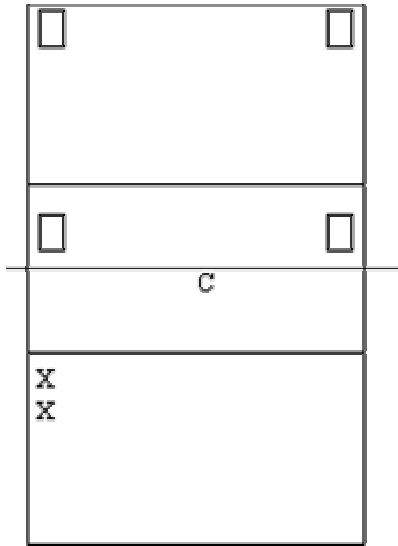
1. Coach tosses a ball high outside.
2. Outside hitter takes an approach to the net.
3. Defender decides whether to charge the tip or stay deep and cover deep tips.
4. Next person in the line helps outside hitter by telling them whether the defender is deep or short.
5. If the defender is short the outside hitter has to tip over the head of the defender. If the defender is deep then the outside hitter must tip short.

After the tip outside hitter becomes the defender. Defender gets back in line.

Variations:

1. Have the outside hitter pass a free or down ball, and use a setter
2. Move the defender to left front.

Four Corner Hitting



Objectives: Practice hitting different shots and tips to different areas on the court

1. Either tape off the corners of the court or place a chair in each corner.
2. Coach tosses a ball high outside.
3. Outside hitter takes an approach to the net.
4. Outside hitter hits or tips to any of the four corners.
5. If the hitter hits a chair or corner they get a + 1.

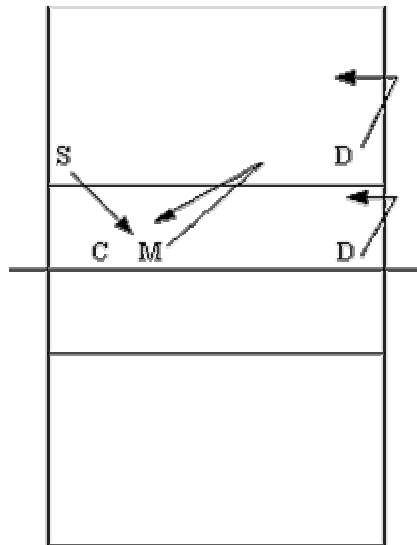
The outside hitter that has the highest score after a set number of reps wins.

Variation: Have the outside hitter pass a free or down

Middle Hitting Drills

Middle Hitter: Transition Drill

Objectives: Develop middle hitting transition through isolation and repetition.



1. Coach slaps ball.
2. Defenders transition from base to defense.
3. Coach hits ball to either defender
4. Middle transitions off the net.
5. Setter transitions to the net.

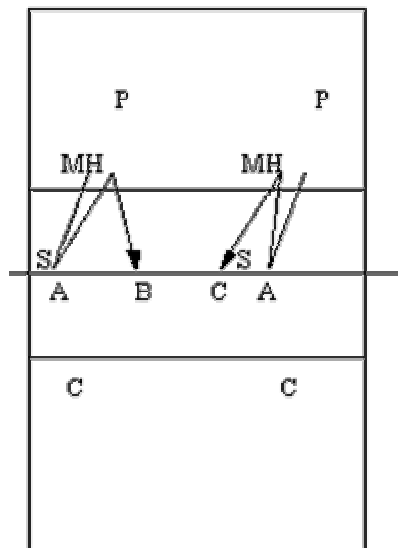
Setter forces the middle (A, B, C, or D set)

Variations:

1. Coach hits line (add a middle back player).

Set Key: A = 51 B = 31 C = 71 D = 52

Middle Hitter: Combo Hitting



Objectives: Practice hitting to hitting transition. Work on hitting recovery and footwork.

1. Coach tosses a free ball to a passer
2. Passer passes to the setter
3. Middle hitter hits the first of two predetermined sets.
4. When ball hits ground coach tosses second ball to passer.
5. Middle hitter transitions off the net

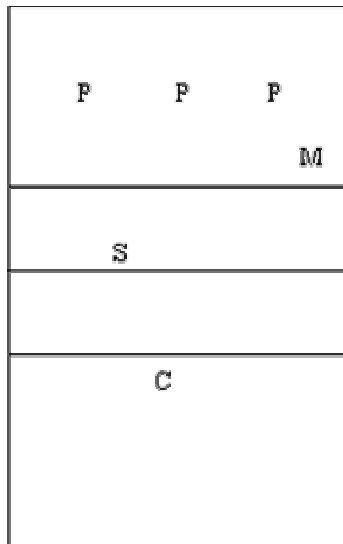
Middle hitter hits second set.

Diagram Key:

P = Passer MH = Middle Hitter C = Coach S = Setter

Set Key: A = 51 B = 31 C = 71

Middle Hitter: Beat the Ball to the Setter



Objectives: Practice tracking ball off pass and beating ball to the setter.

1. Coach gives a free ball or down ball to the three passers.
2. Passer passes a third or second tempo pass to the setter.

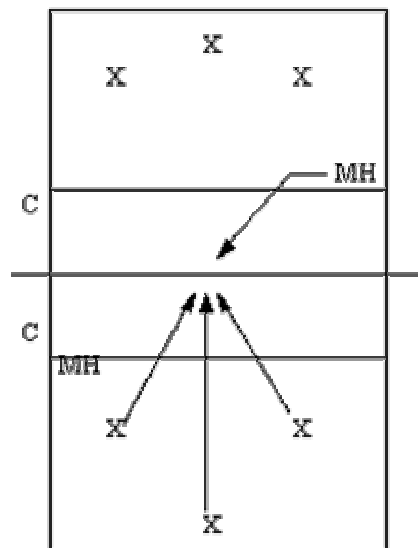
Middle hitter must hit the ball out of the air before the setter gets the ball.

Variations:

1. Start middle hitter at the net blocking and have them transition off before hitting.
2. Put coach on box and have middle hitter hit the dig.

Middle Hitters: Hit the Pass

Objectives: Practice finding the ball off of a pass, and beat the ball to the setter position.



1. Coach gives a free ball to one side to one of the three passers.
2. Passers pass the ball up to the net in a whittle position.
3. Middle hitters find ball approach and hit ball.
4. Give free ball to other side.

Repeat desired number of times.

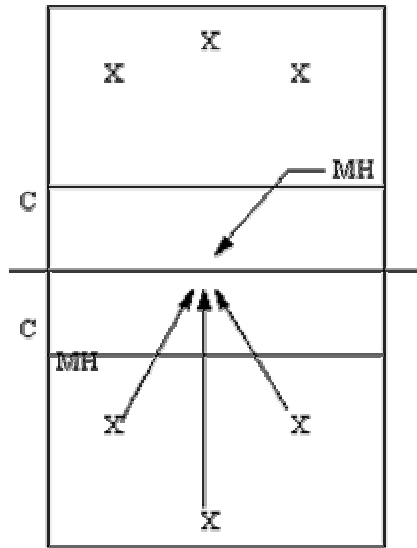
Variations:

1. Put setter on the court to give passers a target.

Key: X = Passers MH = Middle hitters C = Coach

Middle Hitters: Hit the Pass Competition

Objectives: Practice finding the ball off of a pass, beat the ball to the setter position.



1. Coach gives a free ball to one side to one of the three passers.
2. Passers pass the ball to the net in a whittle position.
3. Middle hitters find ball approach and hit ball.
4. Three passers try to dig ball.
5. If diggers dig ball middle hitter hits the dig.
6. Give free ball to other side and repeat

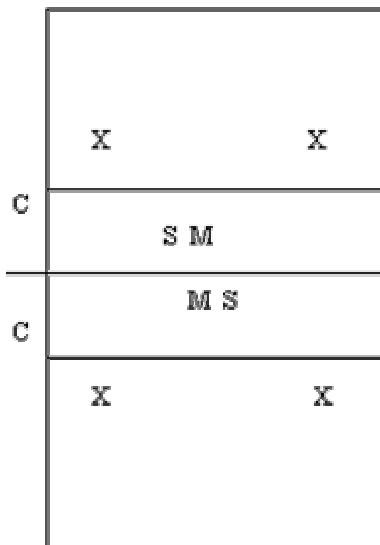
Scoring:

1. The team gets one point for putting a ball away.
2. The team gets two points for putting a ball away off of a dig.
3. No points are awarded for errors or if the middle hitter must pass the ball over.

Key: X = Passers MH = Middle hitters

Middle Hitters: Middle Hitter Ball Control

Objectives: Practice transitioning on and off the net quickly, and tip control.



1. Coach gives a free ball to one side to one of the two passers.
2. Passer passes the ball to the setter.
3. Middle hitter starts on the net when the free ball comes.
4. Middle hitter starts approach for quick set.
5. Setter sets quick middle.
6. Middle hitter tips to either wing defender.
7. Middle blocker jumps but does not try to block ball.
8. Other team tries to do drill off of the tip

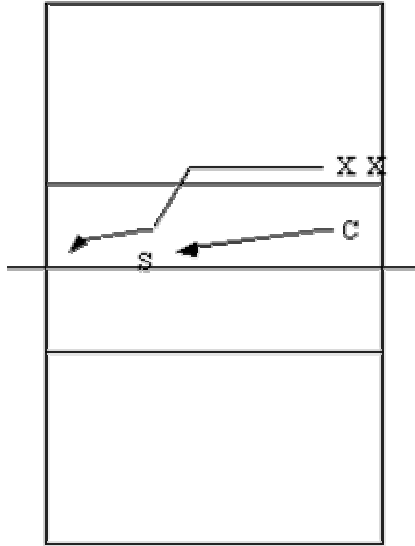
Scoring:

1. Set a number of contacts (Pass, sets and hits) that the entire group must get in a row.
2. Middles must get a set number of tips after a set number of free balls, ex. 10 free balls 50 tips.

Key: X = Passers M = Middle hitters C = Coach

Middle Hitters: Slide Sprints

Objectives: Practice hitting slides and controlling the momentum from a long approach.



1. Coach tosses ball to setter.
2. Middle hitter begins moving toward the setter.
3. Setter sets a slide set, a back set to the antennae.

Middle hitter adjusts speed of approach and hits set off a one foot take off.

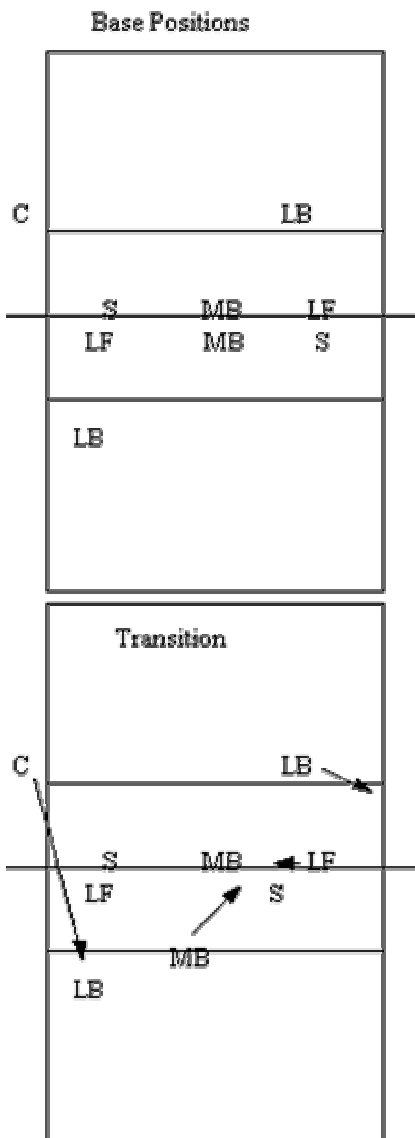
Variations:

1. Put one blocker or two blockers on the other side of the net.
2. Make the middle focus on either hitting line or hard cross.

Key: X = Middle Hitters S = Setter C = Coach

Middle Hitters: If - Then - Tip - Swing

Objectives: Practice getting middles to identifying if there are one or two blockers and then making the appropriate decision.



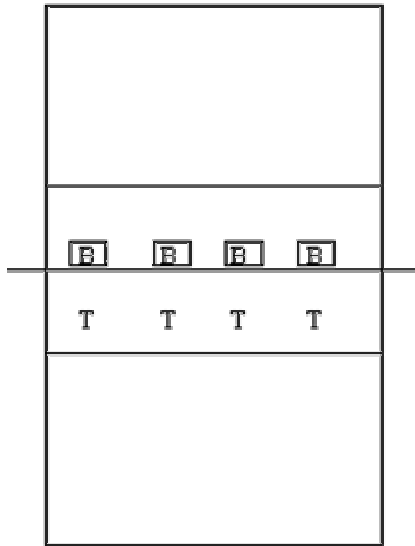
1. Coach initiates drill with a free ball to one side to the left back player in base.
2. Middle hitter transitions off the net.
3. Setter sets the middle.
4. Left front player on the other side may either double block or rotate off to play defense.
5. If the LF player double blocks the middle hitter must tip short right.
6. If the LF player does not block the middle must swing away.
7. Alternate sides with a free ball.

In order to score the team must dig a ball and then put it away.

Key: MB = Middle Hitters S = Setter C = Coach
 LF = Left front player LB = Left back player

Blocking Drills

Blocking: Blocking Progression



Objectives: Teach blockers to surround ball and penetrate the net.

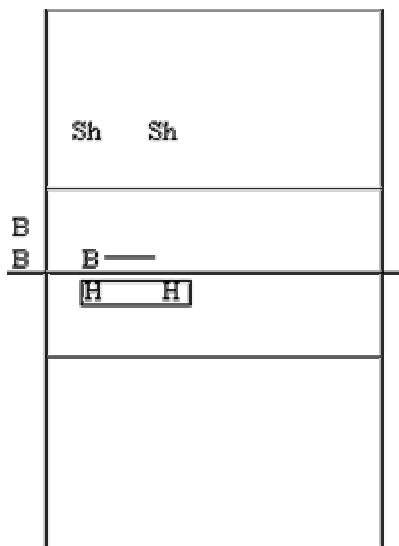
1. Blockers stand on chairs or boxes to eliminate timing errors.
2. Tossers throw ten balls to the blockers.
3. Blockers surround ball with hands and catch the ball and the tosser's side of the net.
4. For the next set of ten balls the blockers surround balls with their hands and block them down, without batting at the ball.

For the next set of ten balls the tosser hits down balls at the blocker's hand.

Diagram Key: T = Tossers B = Blocker

Blocking: Reach and Bounce

Objectives: Teach blockers to surround ball and penetrate the net.

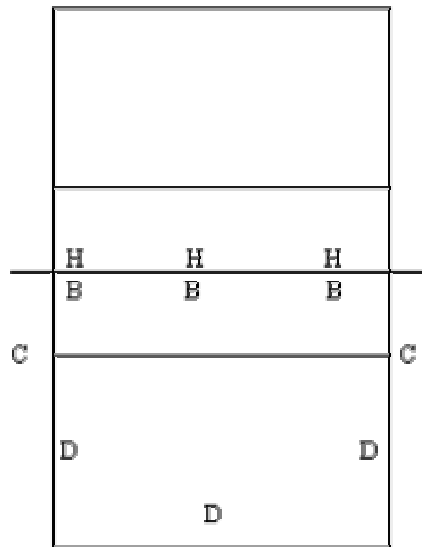


1. Blockers stand on chairs or boxes to eliminate timing errors.
2. Holders stand on chairs and hold balls on their side of the net above the net, but close enough for the blocker to reach over and grab it.
3. Blockers jump up penetrate the net grab the ball with both hands and pull the ball and throw it behind their hand bouncing it on the ground.
4. Blocker step closes to the next holder and repeats step three.

Repeat steps 3 and 4 as many times as desired.

Diagram Key: H = Holder B = Blocker Sh = Shagger

Blocking: Overpass Blocking



Objectives:

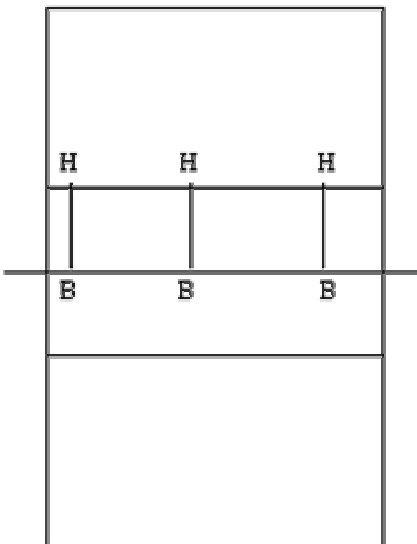
Teach blockers to watch hitter instead of ball.

- 1 Coach tosses ball from behind blocker over the net to one of the hitters.
- 2 Hitter jumps and hits the ball.
- 3 Blocker jumps, reads the hitter's shoulder and tries to stuff the ball.
- 4 If the ball gets past the block the defense tries to dig the ball.
- 5 Repeat by alternating tossers.

Diagram Key:

H = Hitter B = Blocker D = Defender
C = Coach

Blocking: One on One



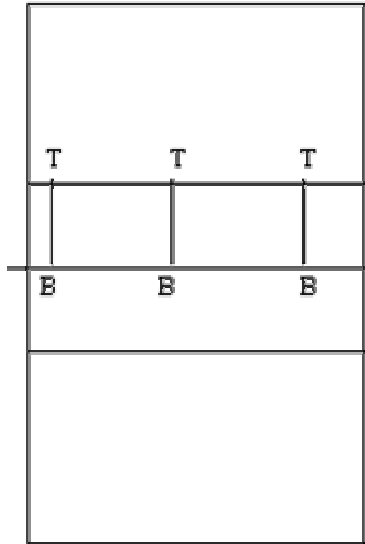
Objectives: Teach blockers to solo block.

1. Hitters start in the ready position for their approach.
2. Blockers start at the net with the ball.
3. Blockers toss balls for hitters, from either over or under the net.
4. Repeat set number of times.

Switch hitters and blockers.

Diagram Key: H = Hitter B = Blocker

Blocking: Net Decision



Objectives: Teach blockers when to block, hit an overpass, or back off and pass.

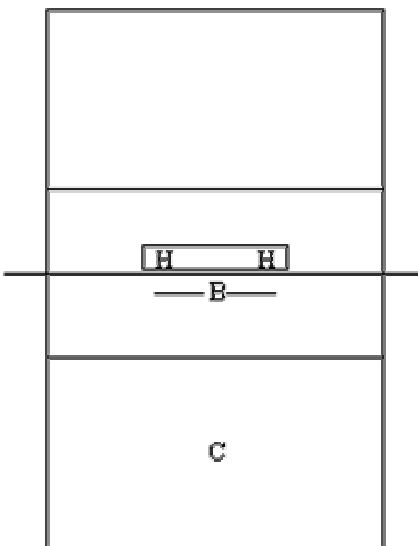
1. Tossers toss ball over the net to the blocker.
2. Blocker must decide whether to block the ball, step off and pass, or to hit the ball.
3. Repeat desired number of times.

Switch tosser and blocker.

Diagram Key: T = Tossers B = Blockers

Blocking: Get out of the Hole

Objectives: Teach Blocker aggressiveness and increase blocking stamina



1. Two hitters stand on boxes on the other side of the net.
2. Blocker starts in the middle of the net.
3. Coach points to a hitter.
4. Hitter slaps ball and hits.
5. Blocker must get over with feet and penetrate at the net.
6. Blocker retreats to middle.

Repeat for a set number of stuff blocks.

Variations: Move hitters farther apart to increase difficulty.

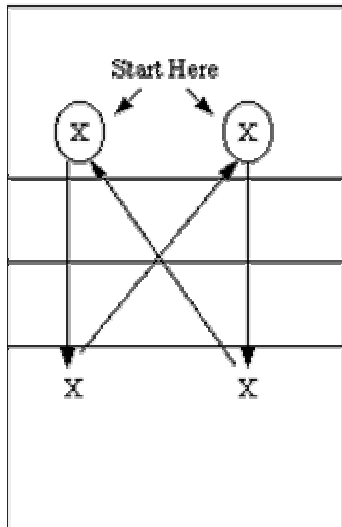
Diagram Key: H = Hitters B = Blockers C = Coach

Blocking/Jumping drill (no illustration):

1. Three people at net (each ~15 feet apart) each with a ball.
2. Line of people on other side of net.
3. People at net hold a ball up. [with chairs if necc.]
4. First person in line runs to net. jumps up and grabs the ball from net person, then gives the ball back under the net.
5. Jumping person moves quickly to next person on net, jumps, grabs ball gives it back under net ... etc.
6. When the jumping person gets to the third person at the net, the next person in line also moves to get the ball from the 1st net person.
7. Once the third jump is done, return to the end of the line.
8. If you don't grab the ball .. too bad, move on.
9. The line repeats three times, then new ball holders are assigned (First 3 in line. Ball holders move to end)

Team / Combo Drills

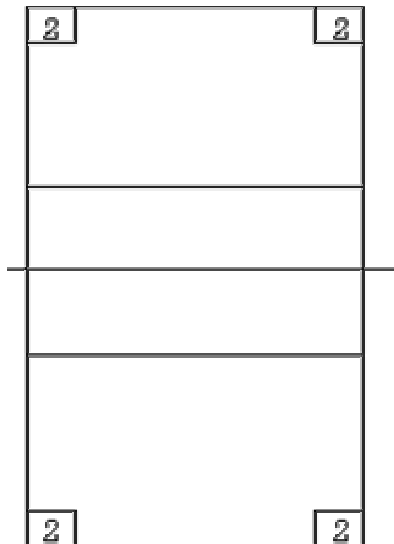
Pepper Drills: 4 X 2 Pepper



Objectives: To practice ball control over the net and have a good warm-up

- 1 – Players on one side of net initiate drill with a down ball
- 2 – Players must pass and set balls to themselves then hit a down ball diagonally
- 3 – Players must pass and set ball to themselves then hit a down ball up the line
- 4 – Repeat steps 2 and 3

Team Concept: Two - Pointer Wash Drill

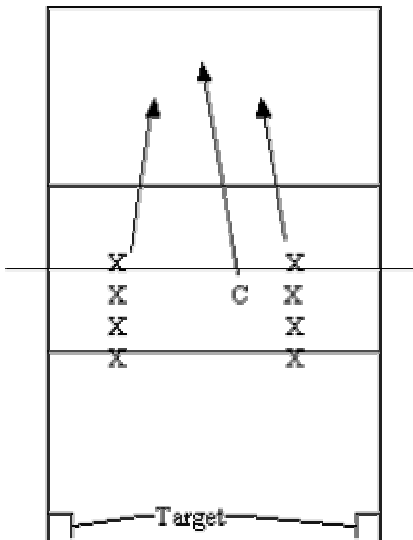


Objectives: Give hitters incentives a bonus for hitting deep corners.

1. Play a rally scoring game with 6 players on a side.

Teams get 2 points for hitting a kill to a corner.

Team Concept: Emergency Save



Objectives:

Practice emergency situations to simulate what to do after a shanked pass.

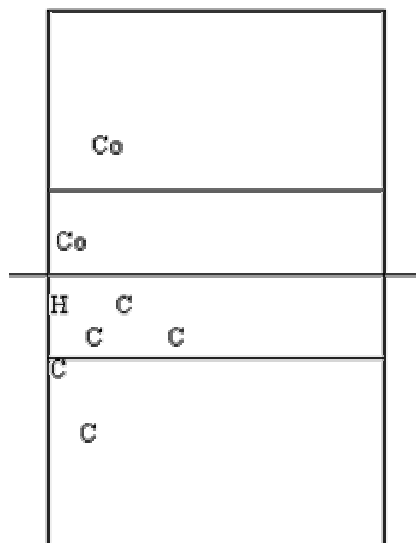
- 1 Two players stand holding the net.
- 2 Coach tosses a ball deep and high over the net simulating the first touch.
- 3 First player calls the ball and passes the ball high.
- 4 Second player hits a free ball or down ball to the corner.

Diagram Key:

X = Player C = Coach

Team Concept: Cover / Reverse

Objectives: Teach setters to move ball to other side of net after coverage.



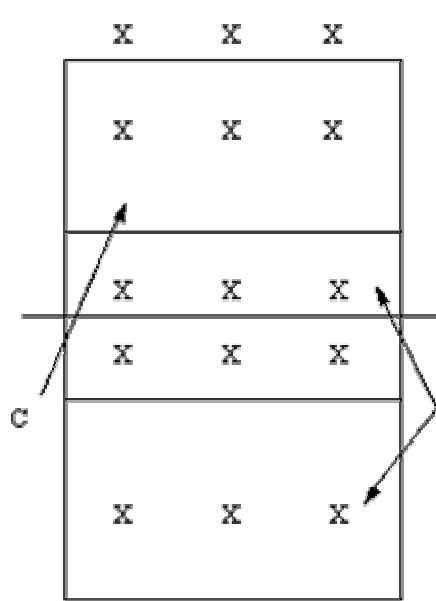
1. Drill is initiated with a serve or a free ball.
2. Setter sets outside (leftside hitter)
3. Team covers hitter.
4. Immediately after the hit crosses the plane of the net coach tosses another ball over to simulate a block.
5. Players cover hitter and pass ball to target.
6. Setter must set the right side attacker, or the right back player.
7. Team covers right side attacker.
8. Coach tosses a ball over to simulate block.

Repeat as many times as necessary.

Figure-1 Hitter Coverage (Left Side)

Team Concept: Octopus Drill

Objectives: To give team repetitions in free ball transition and defense.



1. Coach initiates drill with free ball or a down ball.
2. If the team receiving the free ball wins the drill waves through, and the team at the net scores a point.
3. If the team not receiving the free ball wins the point, they get a point and the front row of the receiving team and the back row of the non-receiving team flip-flop positions.

The team of three that get X points wins.

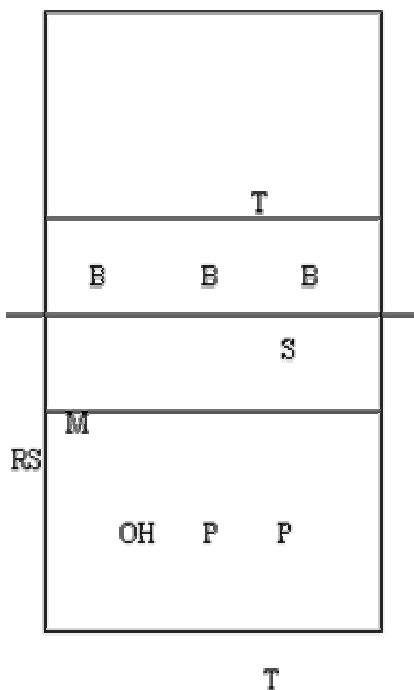
Variations:

Give free or down ball to other side to initiate drill, emphasis changes to stopping free ball plays, you get points for winning plays.

Diagram Key: C = Coach X = Player

Team Concept: Good Pass/Bad Pass

Objectives: Teach players to adjust plays to bad passes.

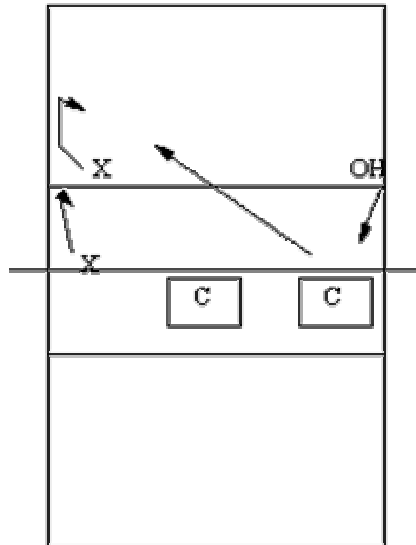


1. Tosser at net tosses a ball to the outside hitter or passers.
2. Team runs a play with first tempo (quick attacks).
3. After the hit, the tosser of the court tosses a bad pass as the first contact to the setter.
4. The team runs a play with second tempo sets or forcing the middle with a first tempo set.
5. Repeat to fill goal of good hits off bad passes.

Diagram Key: T = Tosser B = Blocker M = Middle
S = Setter OH = Outside hitter P = Passer
RS = Right side

Team Concept: Rightside Defense to Offense

Objectives: Work on digging and transtion to set for setter and right side player.



1. Coach slaps ball.
2. Rightside players transition to defense.
3. Coach hits ball to either player.
4. Defender digs ball.
5. Other player must set the ball outside.
6. Outside hitter hits set.

Variations:

1. Have a middle hitter instead of outside.
2. Have both a middle and outside hitter.

Scoring:

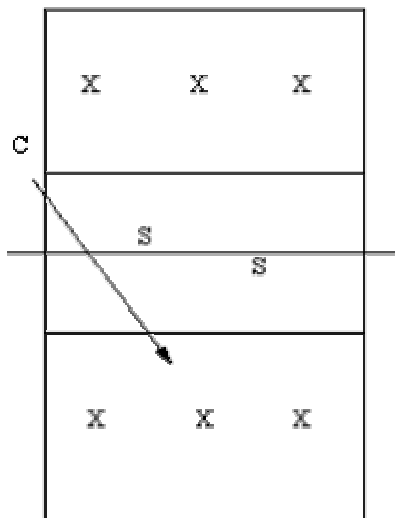
Hitter must hit in without hitting the tape.

Key: X = Right side player or setter C = Coach

OH = Outside hitter

Ball Control Drills

Ball Control: X = Y



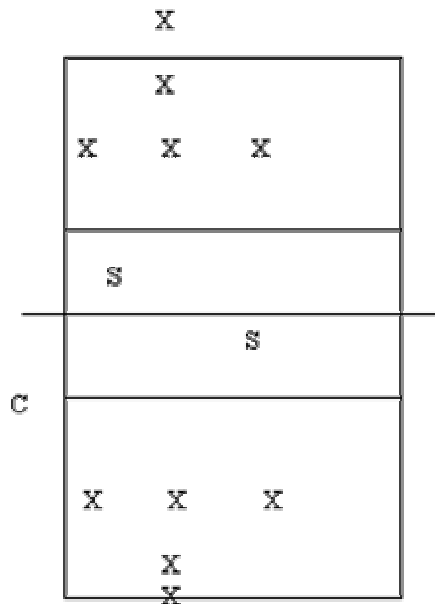
Objectives:

To teach players to be able to control the ball and play the ball where they can play the ball where they want.

- 1 The drill is scored where X = the number of balls the players have to get Y = number of digs.
- 2 The coach initiates the drill with a free ball.
- 3 The player play all three hits and on the third they hit a controlled down ball to a player on the other team, for a dig.
- 4 Players can continue the drill with a free ball to the other team if necessary.

Ball Control: Downball Go - Stay

Objectives: To practice hitting downballs to desired locations as well as increase communication levels.

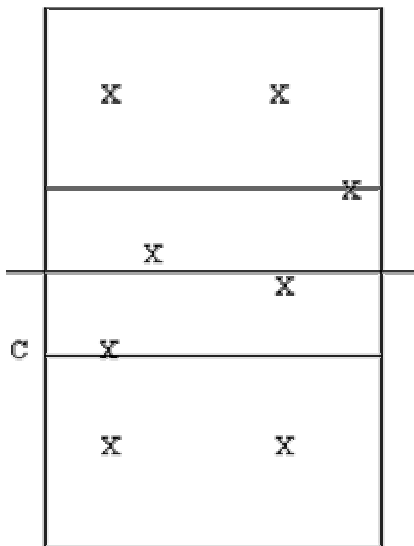


1. Coach initiates drill with a free ball or a down ball.
2. Players pass and set ball.
3. If a wing player hits the down ball, the player moves off the court and the middle player fills.
4. If a middle player hits the down ball everyone stays.
5. The other side plays the ball in the same way.

Drill must be maintained for a specified amount of time or until a score is achieved.

Diagram Key: C = Coach X = Player S = Setter

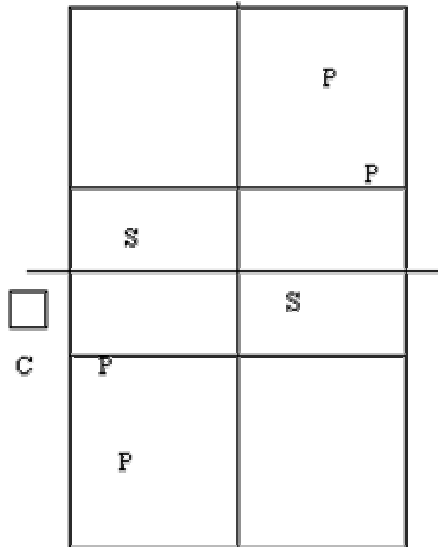
Ball Control: Basic Team BC Drill



Objectives: Practice hitting different shots and tips to different areas on the court

1. Coach initiates drill with free or down ball. (Or toss a ball into the drill and have the first contact pass over the net to the other team).
2. Player passes to the setter.
3. Setter sets outside.
4. Outside hitter hits a ball to the other team.
5. Other team passes, sets and hits back to the team.

Combo: Cross Court Hitting



Objectives: Practice cross court hitting and digging.

1. Coach initiates drill by giving far side a free ball.
2. Plays pass set and hit cross court.
3. Defensive team digs ball and plays it out.

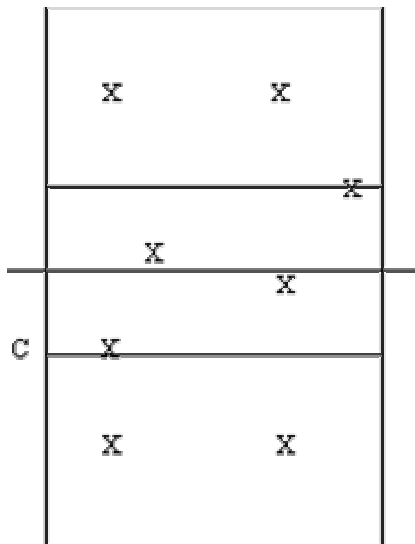
Rotate cross court players from back row to front row to off court. (Setters stay)

Variations:

1. Have setters block.
2. Play King of Court style with winners receiving free balls and teams rotating.
3. Run only back row attacks.

Diagram Key: C = Coach P = Player S = Setter

Ball Control: Basic Team BC Drill



Objectives: Practice hitting different shots and tips to different areas on the court

1. Coach initiates drill with free or down ball. (Or toss a ball into the drill and have the first contact pass over the net to the other team).
2. Player passes to the setter.
3. Setter sets outside.
4. Outside hitter hits a ball to the other team.
5. Other team passes, sets and hits back to the team.

Scoring:

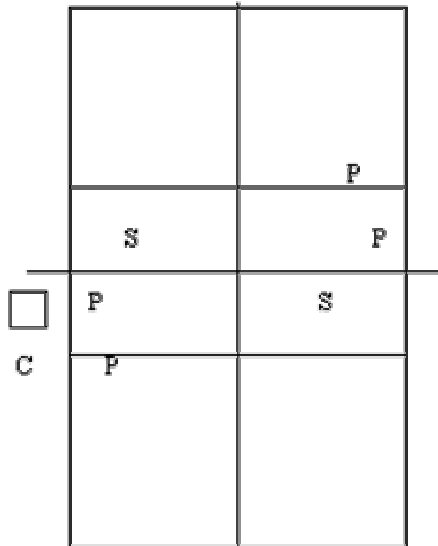
The drill is cooperative, meaning the goal of the drill is for both sides of the net to keep the ball in play for as long as possible.

Scoring system 1:

Set a goal for a number of total contacts, with other desired rules applying. (e.g. free balls do not count as a contact, third hit must at least be a down ball).

Combo: Cross Court Point Scoring

Objectives: Practice cross court hitting and digging. To practice putting the ball away.



1. Coach alternates giving free balls to both sides.
2. Player passes ball to setter.
3. Setter sets outside.
4. Outside hitter hits cross court.
5. In order to score a point a team must dig a ball and then put the ball away hitting cross court.
6. Errors count as nothing, kills off the free ball count as nothing.
7. After outside hitter hits the player passing the ball switches with them.

Play to five points.

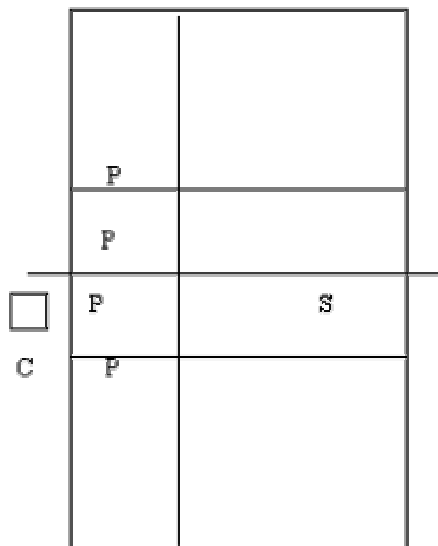
Diagram Key: C = Coach P = Player S = Setter

Combo: Right Side Vs. Left Side

Objectives:

Practice line hitting and digging. To practice putting the ball away line.

- 1 Coach alternates giving free balls to both sides.
- 2 Player passes ball to setter.
- 3 Setter sets hitter.
- 4 Hitter hits.
- 5 Other team's front row player blocks.
- 6 In order to score a point a team must dig a ball and then put the ball away hitting line.
- 7 Errors count as nothing, kills off the free ball count as nothing.
- 8 After front row player hits the back row player passing the ball switches with them.



Variations:

Have the setter set both sides or make the rightside players responsible for their own setting.

Diagram Key:

C = Coach P = Player S = Setter