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WELCOME TO CYSA!

We would like to take this opportunity to welcome you to the Chugiak Youth Sports Association. CYSA offers an array of activities in a fun, and safe community environment, providing children with the opportunity to reach their potential. Our mission is to develop healthy, confident kids in our community through recreational team sports. We believe in putting "Kids First!" in all of our activities.

What CYSA is About

CYSA was founded in 1991 to provide recreational team sport opportunities to the youth of Chugiak and Eagle River. Over the years we have grown and now offer five team sports throughout the year. We had over 1500 participants in our programs last year, ranging from 5-18 years old.

CYSA Sports

- indoor soccer
- volleyball
- outdoor soccer
- flag football
- basketball

CYSA Philosophy

Throughout all of our programs, CYSA strives to emphasize participation over competition and education over performance. Our programs are open to participants of all abilities with no try outs and everyone gets to play equally. CYSA instills in our youth a lifelong appreciation for and involvement in sports and a desire for participation that will serve as a future commitment to the community.

Our objective is to make sure that every child, no matter the skill level, has a positive and fulfilling experience in this league. In our league, if you participate...you win!

To learn more about the programs offered by CYSA, please visit our website: www.cysa-ak.org.

We regard our coaches as one of our most valuable resources. Each youth coach enjoys a rare privilege--becoming a surrogate parent to a team of kids who are looking to have fun. CYSA needs all of its coaches to be their BEST-as leaders, teachers, and friends to every player.

The CYSA "Coach's Handbook" is designed to assist you, "the coach", in creating an environment in which each child can reach his/her full potential as a volleyball player and as a child. You are an assistant to the GAME in teaching players and an assistant to players in their understanding of the GAME. This handbook provides the support that you, the coach, need to best accomplish these goals.

Good luck with your team this year! If you need help, do not hesitate to contact us at 694-6559 or by email at admin@cysa-ak.org.



TEAM ORGANIZATION

Parent Orientation Meeting

All coaches are encouraged to establish effective lines of communication with the team parents early in the season by holding a parent orientation meeting. This is often best accomplished just before or immediately following your first practice. Whatever the format, the time you invest will pay dividends for all concerned throughout the season. If a meeting is impossible, then the following information could be put in a letter to parents/players. But, a face-to-face meeting is preferred.

Purpose of a Parent Orientation Meeting

- Enables parents to understand the objectives of the team.
- Allows parents to become acquainted with you, the coach.
- Inform parents about the nature (and inherent risks) of the sport.
- Articulate your expectations of them and of their children.
- Enables you to address any parents' concerns.
- Establishes clear lines of communication between you, parents, and players.
- Allows you to obtain parental support (assistant coaches, team parents, etc.).

Things to Consider When Organizing the Meeting

- Hold it early in the season, preferably before the first team practice.
- Having the players present is optional. However, if they are not present then it is advisable to hold a meeting with your players and clearly explain to them what you explained to the parents.
- Be prepared and be organized to conduct the meeting efficiently.
- Prepare any handouts you would like to distribute, for example:
 - Team roster
 - Schedule of practice and games
 - Team goals
 - Summary or outline of the meeting

Important Points to Cover

Coach introduction

- Introduce yourself and assistant coaches (or ask for volunteers at this time).
- Give background information about yourself.

Coaching philosophy

- Discuss the value of the sport and the health benefits to the children.
- Discuss the philosophy of age appropriate activities.
- State the importance you assign to having fun and developing technique.
- State how you evaluate player development through skills and not winning.
- Discuss any team guidelines (e.g., must be there 15 min. before game time, etc.).
- Let them know that all players will receive equal playing time.

Team guidelines

- Specifics of the program (e.g. players must wear non marking shoes, knee pads are highly recommended).
- Practice schedule
- Game schedule
- Discuss how players must respect opponents, coaches, officials, and the game itself.
- Required equipment (CYSA shirt, knee pads, shorts, water bottle).
- Medical insurance (CYSA insurance provides secondary coverage).
- Briefly discuss rules of the game.

Team Management

- Request volunteers as assistant coaches if needed.
- If a team parent has not been assigned, request volunteer to assist with team duties (snack schedule, phone calls, etc.).
- Set up telephone tree, car-pooling system.
- Rosters will be available on our website – parents must login to their account. They should contact CYSA if they have questions.

Coaches' responsibilities

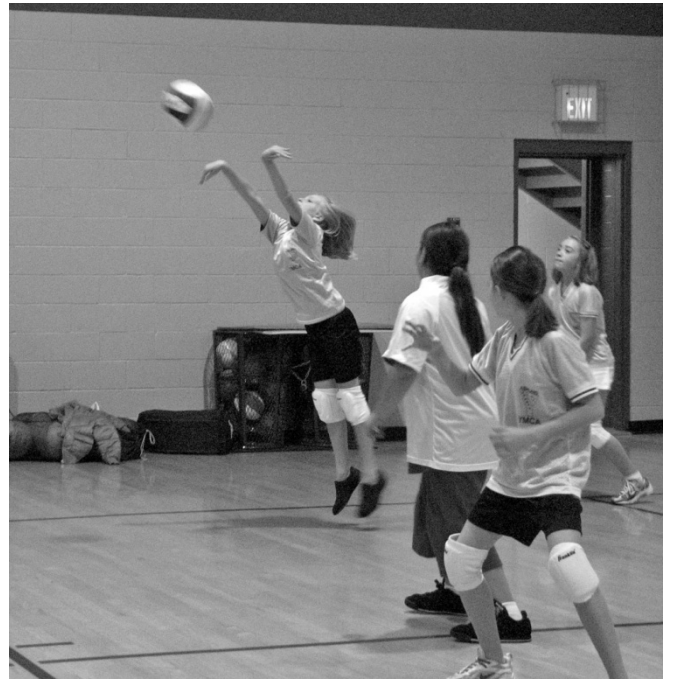
- Demonstrate leadership, good sportsmanship, respect, and coach with humility.
- Treat each player fairly.
- Organize practices and teach the game through age appropriate activities/games.
- Provide a safe environment i.e. Inspect playing surface.
- Arrive at practice on time and remain until a parent picks up every child.
- Contribute positively to the development of each player's self-esteem.
- Give regular feedback to players.
- Allow each player to play equally in every game.
- Respect referees, know the rules, and conduct yourself respectfully on the field.
- Continue to seek coaching education.

Player Responsibilities

- Attend practices/games regularly, and arrive on time.
- Bring proper equipment to each practice and game.
- Inform the coach in advance if it is necessary to miss a practice or game. Try your best at each practice.
- Work toward good sportsmanship and teamwork.
- Respect the referees.
- Be supportive of teammates all of the time.

Parent responsibilities

- Refrain from coaching your child during games.
- Transport your child to and from practices and games on time.
- Be supportive of all the players (criticism does not improve performance).
- Help your child understand that he/she is contributing to a team effort.
- Focus on mastering skills and having fun, not winning.
- Avoid material rewards for your child (The reward is the fun of playing!).
- Attend games and cheer for the team.
- Refrain from criticizing the opponents; be positive with all players.
- Respect the referees (They will make mistakes, but they are doing their best).



CODES OF CONDUCT

COACHES

Chugiak Youth Sports Association is committed to creating positive opportunities and experiences through our sports programs that are fun and will foster the development of positive moral and ethical standards within the youth of our communities and promote good sportsmanship among all participants. The achievement of these goals, in large part, depends on the character and conduct of persons involved in our program as administrators, officials, and coaches.

In order to assure CYSA's commitment to these goals, all coaches hereby agree to abide, and be bound, by the following standards of conduct and further agree to the authority of CYSA to enforce those standards:

The coach shall:

- Be aware that he or she has an influence on the education of the athlete and, thus, shall constantly display and demand good sportsmanship in practice and in games, including, but not limited to, accepting decisions of game officials in a professional manner; refrain from criticizing opposing coaches, players, and fans; congratulate opposing players and coaches following a game; and refrain from teaching unsportsmanlike strategies.
- Master the contest rules and shall teach them to his or her team members. The coach shall not seek an advantage by circumvention of the spirit or letter of the rules.
- Respect and support the contest officials. The coach shall not indulge in conduct that would incite players or spectators against the officials.
- Refrain from using abusive or profane language in or around the playing field or the gym.
- Provide opportunities for all players regardless of race, color, ethnic background, or religion.
- Strive to promote good mental and physical health in all aspects of participation and refrain from any type of verbal or physical abuse of any players.

- Refuse to permit a player to participate in a practice or game when in doubt as to the player's health or physical condition and abide by a doctor's decision in all matters relating to a player's health and physical ability to participate.
- Avoid the use of alcohol and tobacco products when in contact with players, or in view of players at the playing field.
- Provide approximately equal playing time for all team members that are present and physically able to play in each game regardless of ability.
- Provide players with additional challenge (such as playing with the left foot, or non-dominant hand) rather than "running up the score" against another team.

PLAYERS

It is the view of Chugiak Youth Sports Association that hard work, good sportsmanship and respect for others are key aspects of a successful athlete. In this spirit, I recognize that I must conduct myself, both on and off the field, in a way that demonstrates respect for my coach, team, others, and myself. I therefore resolve to:

- Accept accountability for my behavior and its outcomes.
- Honor my obligations to my coach and my team.
- Exercise self-control.
- Take pride in my team, our accomplishments and myself but never at the expense of demeaning another person or group.
- Respect the efforts of others.
- Respect authority.
- Play by the spirit, not just the letter, of the rules of the game and the rules of life.

PARENTS\SPECTATORS

CYSA seeks to instill positive character-building traits in our communities' youth through the demonstration of good sportsmanship, respect for others, responsibility, fairness, caring and good citizenship. We ask that parents and their guests attending CYSA sponsored events help

us by reflecting these character traits at games. When attending CYSA sponsored events, I therefore agree:

- I will be a positive role model for my child and encourage sportsmanship by showing respect, courtesy and by demonstrating positive support for all players, coaches, officials and spectators at every game, practice or other sporting event.
- I will not engage in any kind of unsportsmanlike conduct with any official, coach, player, or parent such as booing, taunting or using profane language or gestures, etc.
- I will not encourage any behaviors or practices that would endanger the health and wellbeing of the athletes.
- I will teach my child to play by the spirit of the rules and to resolve conflicts without resorting to hostility or violence.
- I will demand that my child treat other players, coaches, officials and spectators with respect regardless of race, sex, or ability.
- I will never ridicule or yell at my child or other participant for making a mistake or losing a competition.
- I will respect the officials and their authority during games and will never question, discuss, or confront coaches or referees at the game field, and will take time to speak with coaches at an agreed upon time and place.
- I will refrain from coaching my child or other players during games and practices, unless I am one of the official coaches of the team.
- I will inform the coach of any physical disability or ailment that may affect the safety of my child or the safety of others.

I also agree that if I fail to abide by the aforementioned rules and guidelines, I will be subject to disciplinary action that could include, but is not limited to the following:

- Verbal warning by official, head coach, and/or member of league organization
- Written warning
- Parental game suspension with written documentation of incident
- Parental season suspension

REFEREES

Referees are responsible for the safety of the players and coaches during a match. Referees must know the laws of the game and enforce them fairly. They have the responsibility for upholding the laws and spirit of the game. Referees should show respect for the players, coaches, spectators, and the game itself.

- Referees are expected to always maintain the utmost respect for the game.
- Referees are expected to conduct themselves honorably at all time and maintain the dignity of his/her position.
- Referees are expected to always honor an assignment or any other contractual obligation.
- Referees will not tolerate nor allow abusive behavior or language.
- Referees are expected to attend training meetings and clinics so as to know the rules and regulations of CYSA, their proper interpretation and their application. Referees are expected to know the rules and regulations of the games and divisions to which they are assigned.
- Referees are expected to strive to achieve maximum teamwork with fellow officials.
- Referees are expected to show respect for other referees, coaches and players and never promote criticism of them.
- Referees are expected to control players, coaches and parents/spectators effectively by being courteous and considerate without sacrificing fairness. Referees will handle disputes with coaches, players and parents calmly and respectfully.
- Referees are expected to do their utmost to assist fellow officials to better themselves and their work.
- Referees are expected to not make statements about any game except to clarify an interpretation of rules.
- Referees are expected to not discriminate against nor take any undo advantage of any individual group on the basis of race, color, religion, sex or national origin.

COACH'S EQUIPMENT

CYSA will distribute to each coach a gear bag with the following items:

MEDICAL KITS - A simple kit for games and practices which includes:

- Ice pack
- Band aids
- Sterile Pads
- Adhesive Tape
- Elastic wraps
- Antibiotic ointment

BALLS – if you need more balls for practices, please contact the CYSA office.

PUMP and inflating needle

WATER should be available during practice and at the game. Have the players bring their own water bottles (but keep an extra bottle in your bag or cooler for the occasional forgetful player).

If the team desires snack for game day, the team parent should organize a simple snack schedule. Discourage turning snacks into a financial hardship for some parents. Orange or apple slices or seedless grapes are good choices. Make sure that all trash is picked up and placed in an appropriate receptacle. Please remember the only liquid allowed in the ASD gyms is WATER.



PLAYER'S EQUIPMENT

BALL – Some players will have their own ball, this is not a requirement.

KNEE PADS – These are very highly recommended, especially for the older players.

SHOES – Non-marking athletic shoes are the only shoes allowed in the ASD gyms. Players who do not have on non-marking shoes should not be allowed to practice/play,

WATER BOTTLE (with player's name on it) – each player should bring his/her own water bottle to practices and games. The only liquid allowed in ASD gyms is water.

SHIRTS - CYSA will provide all players with a team shirt. The team shirts should be worn to all games.

SHORTS – Most players find it most comfortable to wear athletic type shorts for practices and games. Sweat pants can easily be worn over the shorts for transport to and from practices and games.



PRACTICE

Planning is the key to having successful practices. Be realistic in selecting your objectives! Consider the age and experience of your players. Decide on your priorities-what are the most important things you want to cover? If you have doubts about whether your team is ready for a new tactic, skill or concept, introduce it after you have seen it used by some of your players.

Identify one or more assistant coaches. Assistant coaches are extremely valuable. They make it possible to divide players into smaller groups so that each player gets individual attention. Parents who would like to help but feel they lack the necessary skills should be encouraged to attend practice to help shag balls and direct traffic. It is hard to have too many helpers, especially with younger players. The preseason Parent Orientation Meeting is an excellent time to solicit help!

Practice Plans

Have a written plan for each practice session. You cannot have a good practice if you do not have an idea of what you want to accomplish during that practice. Writing down your plan will help you think through the equipment and setup you will need for the topics to be covered.

As you plan your practices, remember these tips to keep interest and avoid boredom:

- Give players many touches on the ball
- Get all of the players involved
- Turn "Drills" into games
- Let the kids PLAY!
- Practices should follow a progression: warm-up, individual activities, group activities and "The Game"
- Finally, perform the skill in the way it would be used in a game
- Minimize the amount of talking that you do

After games begin, it is helpful to take a few minutes of practice to discuss the previous game, emphasizing what your team did well, what can be improved upon, and what the goals should be for the coming week. Since you will not have time to teach everything, choose

topics you want to focus on and build your practices around these topics.

Designing a Practice Session

Helpful questions to ask yourself when planning a training session:

- are the activities fun?
- are the activities organized?
- are all of the players involved in all of the activities?
- is creativity and decision making being used?
- are the spaces being used appropriate?
- is the coach's feedback appropriate?
- are there implications for the game?
- are the players having fun?

Warm-up:

Enthusiastically set the tone for fun. The warm-up prepares the mind and body for upcoming activities. Young players need very little stretching, but it is a good habit for them to begin at an early age. Plan warm-ups so that each player uses a ball.

If possible, use or create conditioning exercises that require the players to work with a ball rather than just running. The kids will have more fun and will learn more volleyball skills!

Individual Activities:

Fun filled activities that emphasize technical development. Remember this is the discovery age. Lots of ball contacts.

Activities should be appropriate for the skills you are teaching. Limit the number of activities in a given practice, and don't spend too long on any one activity. Remember that a child's attention span is limited!

Group Activities:

Group games that are an extension of the individual activities should emphasize fun while challenging the players in a non-drill manner. Groups are small to again allow for ball contacts.

Keep it varied and interesting with a minimum of oral instruction (don't lecture!). Demonstrate as much as possible, if you feel uncomfortable demonstrating techniques, don't hesitate to

enlist your more skillful players to help you. Depending on the level you are coaching, junior high or high school players may be useful for this purpose.

MAXIMIZE the number of touches for each player by running activities with several small groups at the same time; no child likes to stand in line waiting!

"The Game":

This portion of the practice session is designed to familiarize the players with the varying aspects of the game. Kids want to play and have fun. After a brief explanation and/or demonstration quickly get the players playing.

Be prepared to change your plans! Many things, such as the number of players who come to practice, can all affect your plans. Be flexible and adjust to conditions.

You may also need to extend the time spent on a particular drill if the players are having difficulty acquiring the skill. If it is especially hot, allow for more frequent water breaks and reduce the physical intensity of practice.

No-No's

- false praise
- prolonged stoppages
- associating fitness with punishment
- lines, laps, and drills
- idle time

Yes's

- Incorporate games that players are already familiar with, into your training session
- Stretching, and selecting certain players to lead stretches are chances to develop leadership in your players
- Do you refer to what you worked on in your last practice before your next game?
- Pause for brief coaching messages
- Coach the positive!
- Encourage decision making and problem solving by allowing groups to "strategize" before beginning and in between activities
- Send them away with "volleyball homework"



SAMPLE PRACTICE PLAN

DATE: March 22, 2010			
Length of Practice: 90 minutes			
TIME	ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	KEY TEACHING POINTS
6:30-6:36	Warm up	Shuffle passing drill	Emphasize posture and "quiet" passing platform
6:36-6:42	Warm up	Dynamic stretching	Emphasize range of motion
6:42-6:49	Ball control	Weave passing drill in teams of 3	Emphasize movement to the ball
6:49-7:00	Ball control	Small court games (pass or set only)	Emphasize ball control
7:00-7:10	Ball control	Partner drills 2 or 3 players w/ 1 ball	Emphasize ball control, reading skills and communication
7:10-7:15	Water break		
7:15-7:18	Ball Control	Line races (sprint, shuffle, back)	Physical training
7:18-7:33	Offensive system	Reach and snap	Emphasize first opportunity to attack
7:33-7:44	Transition	Continuous rally game	Emphasize quick recovery from mental and physical errors to get right back in the play
7:44-7:52	Cool down	Mat serving series	Emphasize serving routine and rhythm
7:52-7:55	Cool down	Main muscle group stretch	Emphasize slow and complete stretch
7:55-8:00	Coach's comments	End of practice comments from the coach	General comments on how the team practiced; recognize any outstanding performances or efforts; point out what needs to improve; announcements
Notes & Reminders:			

GAME PREPARATION

Prepare the lineup and substitution schedule. Remember that over the course of the season, all players should have the chance to: 1) start at all positions; 2) be captain; 3) start and finish games. These things are important to your players (ask them!); they will notice.

Game Day: Remember to bring your equipment bag and substitution schedule. Have your team arrive 15 minutes before your scheduled game time to properly warm-up. It is important to stress this message to parents as well as players.

Rules: It is your responsibility as a coach to know what is expected of you, your players, the officials, and the spectators. You should know the rules and should carefully consider the spirit, which underlies them.

Referee: Meet the referee and make note of his or her name. Ask any questions you may have.

Coaching From the Sideline

Simple, even-keeled, encouragement from the sidelines is preferred. It is important to realize that although we as coaches are permitted to instruct from the sideline, this is not a license to take over the game from the players.

Coaching is best done during practice time, not during the game. Let the players make their own decisions on the field, so they develop a feel for the game.

A Few Things to Avoid:

Don't continually shout instructions - they often reach the players too late and may be distracting.

Don't send a parent or assistant to coach from the opposite sideline. Coaches and spectators do not belong there! The coach can be "cautioned" for allowing this infraction to occur.

A Few Good Ideas:

Your sideline coaching should be limited. Prepare your players to think for themselves as much as possible. Take notes of situations and skills that your team has problems with and

work on them during practice.

Watch how the opposition plays and point out to your substitutes anything that can be to your team's advantage.

The less time spent shouting and the more time observing, the better understanding you will develop of your team, and the more information you will have to help them during your next practice.

Remember that as coaches we are in a supporting role. It is the kids' show!

Parental Behavior

During the game parents should:

- Sit on the bleachers.
- Cheer for all members of the team, not just their own child.
- Allow the coaches to coach – do not shout instructions to the players.
- Do not yell at members of the opposing team.
- Do not yell at the opposing coach.
- Do not yell at the referee.
- Stay off the courts.

Substitutions

When rotating after a side-out, or a maximum number of serves, a new player will enter the back-row middle. The player in the service position (back-row, right) will sub out.

CYSA requires that each all children play equitably in terms of time; please abide by this. Explain to your parents (e.g. at the Parent Meeting) when and where you can legally substitute players during a game.

In Between Games

- Make sure players drink some water.
- Keep the team together, away from the parents, so you are able to focus the group.
- Give positive feedback about the team's performance.
- Do not criticize individual players.
- Make only one or two statements regarding points to concentrate on in the next game.
- Ask the players if they have any questions.
- Have a team huddle and cheer before restarting the next game.

After the Game

- Immediately after the game, applaud both teams.
- Line up with your team to shake hands with the opponent.
- Shake hands with and thank the referee.
- Have the players congratulate the other team with a cheer.
- Forget about the game results and only give praise and encouragement.
- Do not criticize and recap the game.
- Check for injuries.
- Have everyone clean up the area before leaving.
- Remind them the time of the next game or practice.

Referee Relations

The referees in our program have varying degrees of experience and ability. There may be times when your game is in the hands of a novice referee, possibly handling a game for the first time. Go easy on the referee! He or she has a hard job and they are usually teenagers. Just remember, it could be your child out there someday. How would you want them to be treated?

Set the example by treating all referees with respect, and insist that your players and parents do the same. Accept their decisions as part of the game. Don't make calls for them, shout at, or argue with them. Teach your players to focus on improving their own play and that of the team, not on criticizing the officials.

There will inevitably be calls with which you disagree. Don't let it become a distraction for you or your team. Over the course of the game the "bad" calls will probably even out. If the referee does a good job, be sure to let him/her know and thank them after the game, regardless of the result.

Referee evaluations forms are available – we appreciate any feedback (good and bad) so we can better train our referees.



GOALS FOR YOUTH VOLLEYBALL

Teach kids the skills of volleyball. Each player that enters a volleyball program wants to learn the game and improve their skills.

Teach how to have fun. The coach should help kids learn how to have fun playing volleyball. It's important to have fun drills because volleyball should be an enjoyable experience and having a good time is important.

Help kids build confidence and self-control. Volleyball can be a vehicle to a better quality of life. Emphasizing individual development is important regardless of the score. There are many teachable moments and often you can learn more from losing than when you win.

Teach kids to understand "winning". In every match, it's a guarantee that 50% of the participants are going to lose. Players need to understand that it's not all about winning. It's often said, "the most successful people have also failed the most." Don't get too caught up in what the score is during a game. How well you play has the biggest impact on winning and losing, so teach your players to focus on playing their best and not worry about the score.

Teach teamwork. Volleyball is a team sport. To be successful, you must play as a team. Teach players to cooperate with teammates the best they can. With three contacts to a side, volleyball teaches teamwork in a unique way. Support the goal of reaching a common objective. Teach players to respect teammates, officials, fans, and themselves.

Improve players' imagination and anticipation skills. The rebound aspect of volleyball means that the preparation for contact can be more important than actual contact. Players must learn to process information from clues, cues, perceptions, and demands, all before contact is made with the ball.

Improve communication skills. Volleyball is a game of constant communication between teammates. Players must learn how to respond to one another. Players must also learn how to make adjustments often on the fly during the game.

Develop players emotionally. The nature of the game requires players to be somewhat self-reliant with little help from the coach on the sidelines. Players also learn how to take personal responsibility for their actions, with help from both teammates and the coach in establishing personal confidence through success on the court.

Nurture, never destroy. There is a big difference between mental toughness and psychological abuse. Build a frame of realism, but never damage an athlete's self worth or confidence.

Develop friendships. Youth volleyball players should develop friendships among parents and players, as well as among teammates. Friendships can also grow between opponents. A good volleyball motto, "Winning and losing are temporary, but friendships last forever."

Cultivate parent participation. Parents need to be supportive and involved in youth volleyball activities.



TEACHING VOLLEYBALL TECHNIQUES: BASIC SKILLS & DRILLS

SERVING

Serving begins play in volleyball and is the only time a player may actually hold the ball. It is the one skill that is completely within the control of the individual player. Successful serves can force opponents into a difficult attack position, reducing attack options and enabling the serving team to react more effectively in setting up the defense.

Serving is like throwing. A server must use his or her body weight to give momentum to the ball. The transfer of body weight from one foot to the other adds power to the serve. There are numerous serve variations, including the underhand, overhand float serve, the roundhouse float, jump, sky ball, topspin and sidespin serves. We will cover the underhand serve and the overhand serve, which are the two most used in volleyball.

RULES

The server must contact the ball before stepping on or into the court; however in the Rookies and Juniors divisions in CYSA, players may move onto the court to serve. Servers may serve from any place behind the end line. Once the referee has signaled for the server to serve, the server has eight seconds to serve the ball. If the toss is poor the server may catch it and the referee will whistle a dead ball and restart the serving process. A server may do this one time during a rotation.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

1. The same skill mechanics should be duplicated each time.
2. The flight of the ball is determined by how close to the net and how high the ball is contacted.
3. Contact the ball with the entire hand, especially the palm.

Underhand Serve

The underhand serve is the simplest and easiest to learn, so it is good for young players and for those just beginning. It also helps teach other serves because it teaches the concept of comfortable contact and familiarizes the player with how much force is required to get the ball over the net.

TECHNIQUE

The underhand serve begins by standing with the server's hips perpendicular to the end line. The server's weight should be on the back foot. The ball is held in the non-serving hand. The server draws the serving hand back behind his or her body with a straight arm.

The ball is held in front and to the serving arm's side. (Fig. 4-1) As the server steps forward, the serving arm begins to swing forward. (Fig. 4-2) Just as the ball is about to be contacted, the hand holding the ball gives a low toss. The serve is illegal if served directly off of the palm with a sticky contact. The ball is then contacted with the palm side of the serving hand. (Fig. 4-3) Make sure the elbow is straight. The bodyweight, arm and hand should all finish in the direction of the target. Don't swing across the body or face the body away from the target. (Fig. 4-4)



Fig. 4-1 Underhand Serving



Fig. 4-2 Underhand Serving



Fig. 4-3 Contact Point Underhand Serving

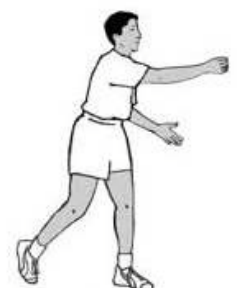


Fig. 4-4 Underhand Serving

PROBLEMS/SOLUTIONS

Tossing too high:

Have the server try to toss and serve the ball while you hold your hand just above the ball. This keeps the toss low and gives the server a target area to toss the ball to.

No power to make the ball go over the net:

1. Have the server try to begin with the feet even and the arm back. As he or she steps with the leg opposite to the serving arm, the arm swings through the ball.
2. Another problem might be the serving hand is not being held firm. To transfer power, the contact must have a firm hand.

Poor aim:

Make sure the server is contacting the ball with the entire serving hand (fingers palm, etc.) The larger the contact area, the more the control. Also make sure he/she finishes with their hand towards their target, not across the body or at the floor.

Overhand Serve

Overhand serving is much more commonly used after the beginner stage of volleyball. It can be used to create a “floater” or a topspin serve. The floater is designed to allow conditions in the gym, as humidity and temperature to change the path the serve travels. A serve with topspin travels much more directly to a spot on the opposition’s side of the court.

TECHNIQUE

The server should start by facing the area of the court he or she is aiming at. The ball is held in the non-serving hand, in front of the body. The serving arm should have the elbow raised above and behind the shoulder, and the hand up and behind the head. The correct position can be likened to the position that William Tell would take prior to shooting an arrow at the apple on his assistant’s head. The bodyweight should be on the same side as the serving hand. (Fig. 4-5)

The server then tosses the ball in front of his or her serving shoulder about 1/2 meter high in front of his or her shoulder, at a height of 1 meter. (The toss should be high enough for the server to contact the ball above his or her head, and in front of his or her body.) (Fig. 4-6) Next, the server steps with the foot opposite of the serving hand and then contacts the ball with a firm hand. (Fig. 4-7)

All parts of the server’s body should move towards the target. The follow-through and finish should be directly at the target. (Fig. 4-8)

Floater – The contact with the ball should be made 2/3 through the serving arm swing. The stopping of the hand quickly after contact with the ball, combined with a flat contact on the ball, will cause the ball to float or fly like a knuckle ball.

Topspin – A topspin serve would require a wrist snap at the contact point, to create a forward spin on the ball. (Fig. 4-9)



Fig. 4-5 Overhand Serving



Fig. 4-6 Overhand Serving



Fig. 4-7 Overhand Serving



Fig. 4-8 Overhand Serving



Fig. 4-9 Overhand Serving
Topspin

KEY POINTS

1. The lead step should be comfortable and directed at the target.
2. The hitting arm should be drawn back with the elbow at shoulder level or higher.
3. The hitting hand should be behind the head when tossing/starting the serve.
4. Players should hit through the ball with the entire hand, fingers included.
5. The toss should be in front of the serving shoulder, high enough for the ball to be contacted above head.
6. Step forward with the foot opposite of the serving arm and contact the ball high, in front of the serving shoulder. The server's weight should move forward to add momentum to the ball.
7. Finish with the serving hand going towards the target.

KEY WORDS FOR THE SERVER

- Elbow Raised (The serving arm's elbow should be raised above and behind the shoulder.)
- Hand Behind the Head (The serving hand is behind the head.)
- Lift/Toss the Ball (Toss the ball in front of the serving shoulder, high enough for the ball to be contacted above head height.)
- Step and Contact (Step forward with the foot opposite of the serving arm and contact the ball high, in front of the serving shoulder. The server's body weight should move forward to add momentum to the ball.)

PROBLEMS/SOLUTIONS

The server cannot get enough power to get the ball over the net:

1. Make sure the serving hand is held firm and not loose like a wet noodle.
2. Check to see if the toss is in front of the serving shoulder.
3. Check to see if he or she is stepping through the ball and using his or her weight.
4. Add an extra step to the serve, having him or her step once, then toss, and then step as he or she hits the ball.
5. Make sure the athlete is accelerating their arm and hand as they swing through the ball.

DRILLS

1. Throwing: Have the servers practice correct body mechanics by throwing a tennis ball back and forth. (Fig. 4-10)
2. Partner Serving: Have each of the servers stand on the 10-meter line. Have them serve to the other player. As they succeed, have them step back one-step, until they are at the back line.
3. Target Serving: The coach puts a target on the court for the servers to try and hit. The team is divided in half with each half on a side aiming at their target. Whichever team hits the target first wins.
4. Spider: This drill is called many things, so you may have heard of it with another name. The players love it, no matter what level they play. The team is divided in half with each half on a side. One member of the team is the target and is lying down on the court. Whoever hits the target joins him or her. The game continues until one team has all of its team members connected and lying on the court.

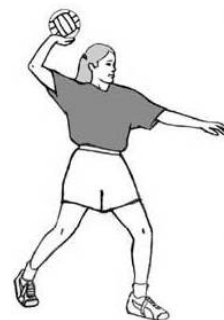


Fig. 4-10 Drill 1
Overhand Serving

BASIC TACTICAL PRINCIPLES

1. The first and foremost application of the serve for the beginning player is to get the ball into the opponent's court.
2. Once a player can consistently serve into the opponent's court, encourage him or her to vary the trajectory, velocity, and target of the serve. Consistent serving means that the player should be able to place the served ball into the opponent's court with confidence and control, 90% of the time.
3. Changing the distance behind the end line from which the server contacts the ball can also vary the trajectory. Such variation, coupled with a change in velocity, can wreak havoc on the opponent's serve-receive.

READY POSITION

While the ready position is not a basic skill, almost all of the basic skills start from it. Blocking has its own variation of the ready position, and serving does not use it. Ready position is used while playing down defense (not at the net blocking) and when waiting for the opponent's serve. (Fig. 4-11)

TECHNIQUE

Proper ready position includes:

1. Body weight is forward on the balls of the feet, with the heels barely touching the ground.
2. Knees are bent so that the athlete can barely see his/her shoes.
3. Shoulders are further forward than the knees.
4. Arms are held out at waist height and are bent slightly with the thumbs up. (Fig. 4-12)
5. The athlete should see his/her hands in his/her peripheral vision!
6. The athlete should intently watch the opponent who is playing the ball, but also pay attention to the entire team as the play develops.

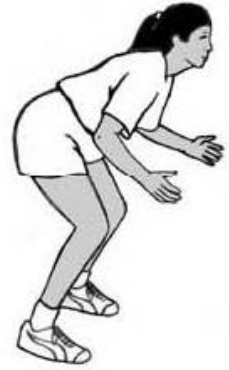


Fig. 4-11 Ready Position

DRILLS

1. Clock: The athlete imagines that he/she is in the middle of a clock. One step in front of them is the 12, one step right is the 3, one step left is the 9 and one step back is the 6. In ready position, keeping the shoulders down and the hands out, the athlete moves in the following sequence: (Note: Each foot that goes towards a number should step down onto the floor.)
 - a) Step with the right foot to the 12, then bring it back to ready position.
 - b) Step with the left foot to the 12, then bring it back to ready position.
 - c) Step with the right foot to the 3, then bring it back.
 - d) Step with the left foot to the 9, then bring it back.
 - e) Step with the right foot back to the 6, turning the hips towards the three, bring it back.
 - f) Step with the left foot back to the 6, turning the hip towards the 9, bring it back.

Repeat two or three times at least; each time through the athlete should try to go faster.

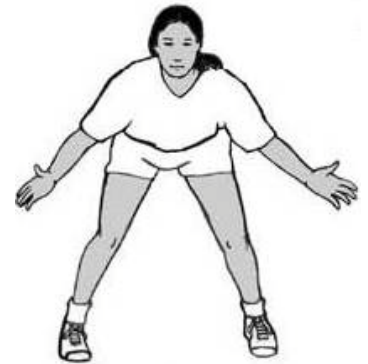


Fig. 4-12 Ready Position

PASSING

Underhand Passing

Underhand passing is sometimes called “bumping” or forearm passing. This technique involves manipulating the ball with the use of the player’s forearms. This skill is primarily used to receive a serve. It is called digging when receiving a hard-driven ball.

RULES

A passer may be called for a “double contact” if the referee sees the ball hit the passer twice (i.e. the ball could hit the arms then the chest.)

TECHNIQUE

From the ready position the passer must step to where the ball may be intercepted before hitting the court. The movement to the ball can be made with shuttle moves or running, depending on the speed of the ball. The passer should move with the arms apart, not already formed for underhand passing. Keeping the hands locked together while moving will hinder the passer from getting to the ball quickly.

As the passer arrives to where the ball is falling, the arms should be put together away from the body, as if the passer had a bunch of pillows (or a huge tummy!) under his/her shirt. (Fig. 4-13) This minimizes how much the arms will be swung. There are a variety of ways to put the forearms together.

All of these variations on technique require the shoulders to be rolled forward to maximize the effort of putting the elbows, forearms and wrists together as a single unit. With straight arms, the hands are linked by either putting one fist in the other hand, or putting the back of one hand’s fingers in the fingers of the second hand and hooking the thumb of the hand below with the middle finger of the hand on top. Years ago coaches taught to inter-lace the fingers, keeping the fingers extended. In all of these positions, the thumbs should be extended (flat) and the wrists pointed down. (Fig. 4-14, 15, 16, 17)

With the arms in position, the passer should contact the ball on the forearms, above the wrist bones and below the elbows. The velocity of the ball will dictate how much the passer must use his or her legs. Should the ball come slowly to the passer, then the legs are used to give the ball momentum. The arms barely swing! The angle of the arms is changed according to where the passer wants to pass the ball. The arms create a platform parallel to the bent legs. Ideally, the shoulders and hips face the target. The legs extend towards the target as well. (Fig. 4-18, 19, 20, 21)

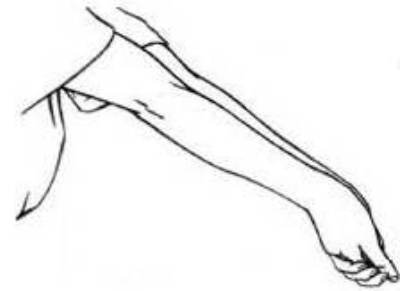


Fig. 4-13 Underhand Passing

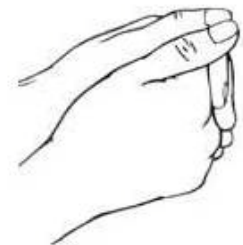


Fig. 4-14 Underhand Passing

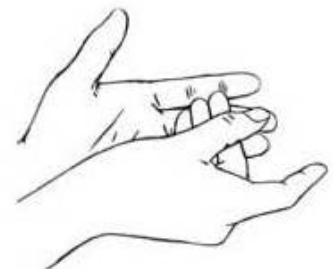


Fig. 4-15 Underhand Passing

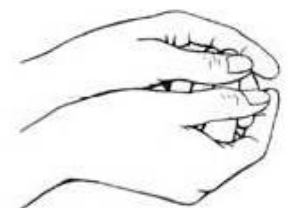


Fig. 4-16 Underhand Passing

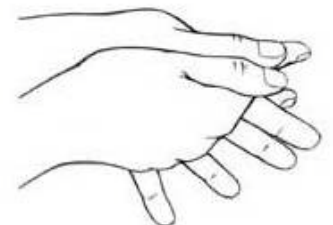


Fig. 4-17 Underhand Passing



Fig. 4-18 Underhand Passing



Fig. 4-19 Underhand Passing



Fig. 4-20 Underhand Passing



Fig. 4-21 Underhand Passing

The contact of the ball on the arms should be above the wrist bones and on the lower half of the forearms. The passer should watch the ball contact the platform simultaneously, keeping the head steady to insure balance and maintain the desired degrees of deflection. Watch the arms by moving the eyes, not the head! (Fig. 4-22)

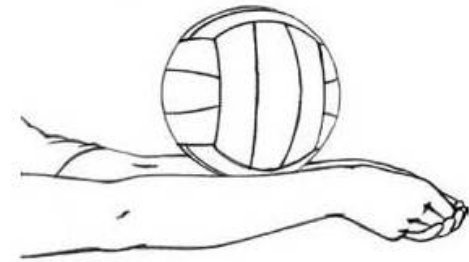


Fig. 4-22 Underhand Passing

Most importantly, the passer should call the ball as early as possible. The passer can say "I go!" or "Mine!" to alert teammates. The players around the passer should also call the ball in or out, deep or short, in reference to the court. This will help the passer know that the ball is his/hers and in or out.

PROBLEMS/SOLUTIONS

Forearms hurt from passing:

1. Have the athlete use long sleeves or cut off the toes of socks to use as forearm pads.
2. Have the athlete use a less inflated ball.
3. If available, have the passer use a "light" volleyball.

Athlete can't control the ball:

1. Make sure that the athlete is forming the arms away from the body with the arms straight.
2. Have the athlete practice by him/herself with a ball, passing to self and to the wall.
3. Make sure the athlete is using the legs.
4. Make sure the athlete's wrists are pointed down to keep the arms straight.

KEY WORDS FOR HELPING THE PASSER

- Feet to Ball (Get to where the ball is falling)
- Platform (Form your platform away from your body)
- Guide (Have your hips facing your target and use your legs to guide the ball)

DRILLS

Partner Drills for Two People and One Ball

1. Toss and Pass: One person tosses ball for the partner to pass back. The toss can be to the partner, to each side, or short and deep to move the partner passing.
2. Once To Self, Then To Partner: Passer receives the ball from his/her partner and first passes to him/herself and then back to the partner.

3. 180s and 360s: Same as "Once to Self, Then To Partner" but the passer does either a half turn (180) or a full turn (360) and then passes the ball back to the partner.
4. Forward, Forward, Back Pass: Both partners start on the sideline. The first partner passes the ball in front of him/herself, making him/her move forward a few steps. Then again the passer passes the ball forward making him/her move forward a few more steps. On the last contact the passer back passes the ball to the partner waiting at the sideline. Once he/she has passed the ball to his/her partner, then he/she runs back to the sideline and waits for the ball to be passed to him/her again. The partner does what the first person did, moving him/herself forward into the court.
5. Forward, Forward, Front Pass: Same as above but the third contact is made with the passer facing his/her partner at the sideline. After the second forward pass, the passer must run around the ball to face the awaiting partner.

6. Look Drill: Like "Once To Self, Then to Partner" but in between passing to him/herself, the passer looks at his/her partner who is holding up his/her fingers to indicate a number (one through 10). The passer says the number out loud while passing the ball back to his/her partner. The partner does the same thing. Note: the most difficult part of this drill is remembering to show the number! Once the passer gets rid of the ball, he/she often forgets that he/she must show a number! (Fig. 4-23)



**Fig. 4-23 Look Drill
Underhand Passing**

7. Under the Net: Each partner is two steps back from the net. One partner tosses the ball low to his/her partner at knee height. The passer passes the ball back, low and under the net.
8. One On One: Just like the name, two players play against each other in a small, short court. Only one contact is allowed, like in tennis.
9. Reaction Drill 1: One partner (thrower) holds the ball overhead with two hands. (Make sure he/she does this! It makes a difference for this drill!) The other partner is in ready position about four steps away from the thrower. The thrower throws the ball to either side of the passer, or in front of him/her, to make him/her take a step to pass the ball. The thrower should just flex the wrists forward to throw the ball, not pull his/her arms down.
10. Reaction Drill 2: Same as above except the passer starts in ready position with his/her eyes closed. The thrower says, "Go!" before throwing the ball. Upon hearing "Go!" the passer opens his/her eyes and reacts to where the ball is going by taking a step to the ball and then passing it.
11. Reaction Drill 3: Same as Reaction Drill 1 except the passer is turned around with his/her back to the thrower. Upon hearing "Go!" the passer turns around and reacts to where the ball is going by stepping to the ball.
12. Reaction Drill 4: Same as Reaction Drill 1 but the two players are much closer. The thrower is only two to three steps from the passer. This shortens the reaction time of the passer.

Drills for Threes

13. Toss/Serve-Pass-Catch: One athlete tosses or serves the ball over the net to the passer. The passer passes to the catcher, who is on the same side of the net as the passer. The catcher catches the ball and then throws it under the net, back to the tosser/server. This can be done with two balls to make it faster. Have the catcher throw one ball to the tosser/server immediately after the tosser/server has released his/her ball.

14. Sideline to Sideline: One athlete starts in the middle of the court. The other two athletes each have a ball and are on opposite sidelines. The athlete in the middle runs to pass a ball tossed by one of the athletes on the sidelines. (The toss should be close enough to the tosser that he/she could catch it without moving.) After passing the first ball, the athlete runs to the other sideline to pass the ball tossed by the other partner.
15. Shuttle Passing: (This can be done with or without the net.) Two athletes with one ball start on one side and the third athlete is on the other side. The drill begins with the first athlete tossing the ball to the athlete on the other side, then running to get behind him/her. The athlete who received the toss passes the ball to the athlete who was waiting behind the tosser, then runs to get behind him/her. The ball does not stop but goes back and forth while the athletes run to get behind the athlete they passed the ball to. (This drill can be done with more athletes, but three is the minimum number needed.)

More Passing Drills

Pipeline Passing

The purpose of this volleyball drill is to improve volleyball player **lateral movement** while forearm passing. This volleyball drill needs two players. Place two dotted lines of the court about 10 feet apart. All passing occurs between these lines. After one player passes the ball to her partner, she must **shuffle sideways** to her right and touch the sideline. Next, she must shuffle back before the pass arrives back from her partner. After 10 passes each, shuffle to the left sideline for 10 more.

Benefits - Players learn how to get into proper passing position when tired. This volleyball passing drill can also be used for volleyball conditioning. The passer can improve lateral movement speed and agility.

Variations - Increase the distance players have to travel to make the drill more difficult. Also, players passing the ball lower can make the volleyball drill more challenging. Use this for conditioning by first starting at 10 repetitions and then add a couple repetitions each workout.

Partner Passing Series

All players need one partner and a ball. The purpose of the drill is for players to learn to effectively **adjust their passing platform** when getting into position to pass. Players should focus on moving their feet to get into good passing position.

First Progression - The first player tosses the ball to the second player who then passes the ball straight up to herself. The player then **adjusts her feet** and passing platform so the ball is in line with the center of her body. The player then passes the ball to her partner. This drill can be done in a continuous manner.

Second Progression - The next progression of these volleyball passing drills starts the same as the first with the player tossing the ball to their partner who then passes the ball straight up to herself. This time, the player turns so her right side is facing her partner and then adjusts her feet position and passes the ball **angling her passing platform behind the ball**. Players can alternate passing from their right and left sides.

Third Progression - The final progression of these volleyball passing drills involves players alternating between **short quick passes** and high passes. The quick passes are for replicating passing technique for passing easy serves or free balls. Passing the volleyball low and straight to your target can often lead to an advantage for running a quicker offense. The high pass may replicate a high bump set out to an outside hitter.

Benefits - Players learn how to adjust their positioning depending on where they want to pass the ball. This drill also trains players to use their legs when passing.

Individual Bounce Pass Pass

This drill begins with a line of players at the endline facing the volleyball net. The coach stands near middle front position on the court. The first player in line starts the drill by **lying on their stomach** on the ground looking at the coach.

The coach slaps the ball and the player gets up off the floor by pushing up with their arms. As the player is getting up, the coach bounce passes the ball in the direction of the player. The player performs a run through technique to successfully get to the ball and pass it to the target.

Variation - You can also have the players perform the drill near their base defensive positions. This will make the volleyball drill more game-like.

Benefits - Players need to be comfortable getting up off the floor quickly to make defensive plays. The drills exploding up off the ground component is **good for training volleyball conditioning**.

Basket Passing Drill

To improve forearm **passing accuracy**, this passing drill needs one server and three passers. The object of the drill is to use forearm passing to pass the volleyball into the basket at the target position.

Line up 3 passers in serve receive. The server serves the ball as controlled and accurate as they can. They want to serve the ball in a way that is easiest for the passers to pass. We want the passers to develop the mindset that they are going to pass accurate every single time.

To make the volleyball drill easier, move the server closer to the passers for more accurate serving.

Count the balls that hit the basket as good passes, not just the ones that go in.

Make the volleyball passing drill into a game of server vs. passers. Volleyball passing drills are often a lot more fun if they are turned into a competition or game.

Benefits -_Players learn to focus really hard on passing accurately. Even when the pass is really close to the basket, if it doesn't hit it, it doesn't count. This makes the players **really focus on passing better** the next time.

SETTING

Most people involved with volleyball use the term “setting” to describe overhead passing. It is certainly easier to say “let’s set a few balls” than “let’s overhead pass a few balls.” Setting is the tactical skill that allows a player to put the ball in a position where another player can jump and attack it.

There are usually one or two primary setters on the court at one time, with only one acting as the setter at any given moment. At the beginner’s level, the setter usually sets the ball forward from the front, right-hand side of the court. He or she pushes the ball high to the left-side hitter or the middle hitter. As a setter gains experience, he or she will increase his or her control over the ball and will be able to vary the location, height and speed of the set.

PRINCIPLES

The most important objective of setting is to provide the attacker with a good swing at the ball. If the ball is set too wide or too tight to the net, the attacker is at a disadvantage. The standard high, outside set should be set between the attacker and the net, about one meter from the net. The ball, at its apex, should be about three meters (9’3”) above the net and look like a ball coming off a waterfall.

When in a game situation, every player should set the ball to the easiest option, which for beginners, is in front of the setter. Once a player gains experience, only then should he or she attempt to vary the height and direction of his or her sets. The setter, along with every other player on the team, should be instructed to set the closest, easiest option in front. If a front option is not available, only then should a player try a backset.

RULES

Hand setting is considered illegal when the two hands contact the ball unevenly. This can happen when one hand touches the ball slightly before the other. It is also illegal to hold onto the ball long enough for it to come to rest, or actually be held in the hands for a moment. Often an illegal overhand set is referred to as a “throw.”

TECHNIQUE

From the ready position, the setter anticipates and moves to where the pass is going. The setter should get to that place before the ball does, as he does not want to be running as he sets. Once the ball has arrived, the player should be stationary with his body weight balanced so that he can use his legs and arms to direct the set. (Fig. 4-24)

The setter should be positioned as follows:

Feet – The setter’s feet should be spread apart almost as far as his or her shoulders, parallel to each other and pointed directly towards the target of the set (where the hitter will contact the ball). The setter’s right foot should be slightly ahead of the left foot. (Fig. 4-25)

Legs – A setter gets his/her power from his/her legs so he/she should have them slightly bent so he/she can push off.

Hands and Arms – A setter needs to contact the ball above his/her forehead. He/she brings his hands above the forehead with both hands open wide. The setter’s elbows should be pointing outward toward the 8 and 4 positions on a clock, and fingers should be spread and flexed, but not stiff. (Fig. 4-26, 27)



Fig. 4-24 Setting



Fig. 4-25 Setting

COMMON ERRORS

1. A beginning player will have a tendency to stab at the ball instead of letting it come to his/her hands. The player should try to contact the ball as close to the forehead as possible, with both elbows bent.
2. The player may point her thumbs at the ball instead of her eyes. It is important to have the thumbs back for the most control over the ball. It is also safer for the player to have her hands open wide to avoid the possibility of a sprained thumb.
3. Contact is sometimes made too far away from the head. The player's hands may absorb the ball, but with the arms extended at contact, there is no power left to deliver it very far.
4. The ball is contacted too low or too far out front, relative to the head. Some players have a tendency to follow the ball with their hands and not with their feet.

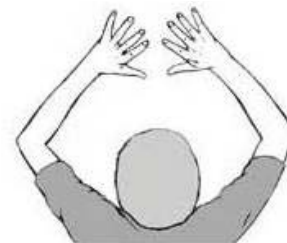


Fig. 4-26 Setting

BASIC TACTICAL PRINCIPLES

1. The tougher the play, the higher the pass.
2. When setting, make the simplest play. The setter should set the attacker nearest him or her and in front. It is imperative that the attacker get a good swing at the ball.
3. Keep the ball off the net slightly.
4. Stop moving prior to setting the ball. A player must be situated so that he /she can move through the ball to the target. A player backing away must compensate with the hands and lose rhythm and control.



Fig. 4-27 Setting

BACK SETTING

To back set the ball, the athlete should take the ball in the same place (above and in front of the forehead) but will follow through with the arms backward. The back setter should push off of his/her front foot and extend the hips forward and up. (Fig. 4-28) Often beginners want to use too much wrist flick. They try to set the ball backwards with just their wrists. Back setting is the result of the body following through the ball with a slight back arch and the arms going up and backwards.

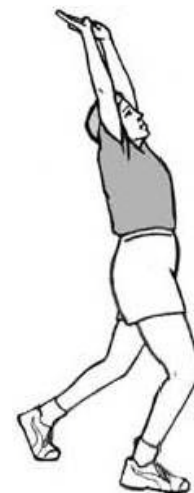


Fig. 4-28 Setting

PROBLEMS/SOLUTIONS

Athlete is taking the ball lower than his/her head or to one side of his/her body:

Have the athlete catch the ball in the correct position. Challenge him/her by moving him/her around. Make sure he/she is facing where the ball is supposed to be set and that the ball is caught above and in front of the forehead.

Athlete's hands are extremely stiff:

Try the "Hot Potato" drill listed below. Also have the athlete do little baby sets to his/herself and then to a partner, or set lying down or against the wall.

Athlete's sets are very flat and don't go far:

Challenge the athlete to set the ball as high or as far as possible, making them use his/her legs. Let him/her toss the ball to him/herself and then set it.

KEY WORDS

Key Words For Helping The Setter

- Feet to Ball (Get to where the pass is falling)
- Face (Position the body to face the target)
- Shape (Shape the hands round like a ball, with the wrists back)
- Extend (Extend the legs, arms, wrists and hands towards the desired target)

DRILLS

Drills For Control

1. Set to self.
2. Set to self, alternating between sitting, kneeling and squatting in a small circle.
3. Set to self and squat between sets.
4. Set to self and jump between sets.
5. Do steps 1-4 in pairs.
6. Set to a single spot on a wall.

Drills to Train Decision and Reactions

1. In pairs, one player tosses to their partner whose back is turned; on the toss, the player calls their partner's name. The partner must turn around, locate the ball, and set.
2. In pairs, there is one attacker and a setter. The attacker tosses the ball to the setter and runs anywhere at any speed, and the setter must set the ball to him for an attack.
3. In pairs, one setter, and a player with the coach - the setter is at the net, partner at midcourt, the coach on opposite side of the net. The partner tosses the ball to the setter, as the ball is descending the coach calls "left" or "right." The setter must follow the command.
4. Do the same as #3, but have the coach call sets according to the team's system.
5. Do the same as #3, but have the partner toss the ball in various positions that make the setter move.
6. Do the same as #3, but the coach is at the net, simulating the opponent's middle blocker. Just prior to the set, the coach moves either left or right, the setter must set the opposite.

Partner Drills for Two People and One Ball

1. Hot Potato: One athlete tosses a high, up and down ball for the other to contact above the forehead. The ball is briefly caught with the hands in the setting position and thrown back to the tosser. Like a hot potato, the ball is briefly held and gotten rid of quickly.
2. Toss and Set: One person tosses ball for the partner to set back to the tosser. The toss can be to the partner, to either side, short or deep to move the partner around.
3. Once To Self, Then To Partner: Setter receives the ball from his/her partner and first sets to him/herself and then back to the partner.
4. 180s and 360s: Same as "Once To Self, Then To Partner" but the setter does either a half turn (180) or a full turn (360) and then sets the ball back to the partner.
5. Forward, Forward, Back Set: Both partners start on the sideline. The first partner sets the ball in front of him/herself, making him/her move forward a few steps. Then again the setter sets the ball forward making him/her move forward a few more steps. On the last contact the setter back sets the ball to the partner waiting at the sideline. Once he/she has set the ball to his/her partner, then

he/she runs back to the sideline and waits for the ball to be set to him/her again. The partner does what the first person did, moving him/herself forward into the court.

6. Forward, Forward, Front Set: Same as above but the third contact is made with the setter facing his/her partner at the sideline. After the second forward set, the setter must run around the ball to face the awaiting partner.
7. Look Drill: Like "Once To Self, Then to Partner" but in between setting to him/herself, the setter looks at his/her partner who is holding up his/her fingers to indicate a number (one - 10). The setter says the number out loud while setting the ball back to his/her partner. The partner does the same thing. Note: the most difficult part of this drill is remembering to show the number! Once the setter gets rid of the ball, he/she forgets that he/she must show a number!
8. Over the Net: Each partner is two steps back from the net. One partner tosses the ball over the net to his/her partner. The partner sets the ball back, high over the net. If the athletes are capable to keep setting back and forth over the net, have the partners count how many contacts they can make in a row without an error.
9. One On One: Just like the name, athletes play against each other in a small, short court. Only one contact is allowed, like in tennis.

Drills for Three Athletes or More

1. Triangle Pass-Set-Catch: Three athletes are on the court with one in the middle back position, one to the right of the center of the net, and the third at the net, in the left front position. The left front athlete tosses the ball to the middle back athlete. He/she passes (underhand or overhand) to the setter at the net. The setter sets the ball high to the left front athlete. The left front athlete then sets the ball to the passer in the middle back.
2. Sideline to Sideline: One athlete starts in the middle of the court. The other two athletes each have a ball and are on opposite sidelines. The athlete in the middle runs to set a ball tossed by one of the athletes on the sidelines. (The toss should be close enough to the tosser that he/she could catch it without moving.) After setting the first ball, the athlete runs to the other sideline to set the ball tossed by the other partner.
3. Shuttle Setting: (This can be done with or without the net.) Two athletes with one ball start on one side and the third athlete is on the other side. The drill begins with the first athlete tossing the ball to the athlete on the other side, and then running to get behind him/her. The athlete who received the toss sets the ball to the athlete who was waiting behind the tosser, then runs to get behind him/her. The ball does not stop but goes back and forth while the athletes run to get behind the athlete they passed the ball to. (This drill can be done with more athletes, but three is the minimum number needed.)

More Setting Drills

Set to Box

The purpose of this drill is to work on the proficiency of setting. This drill involves a player standing on a box or chair in the area the set is suppose to be set to. The player on the box should have their hands held up to the height that an attacker would be attacking.

Variations - The setters can be tossed 10 balls at a time to get into a rhythm setting. Once the setter is more consistent, the sets should be executed off of their teammates passes.

Benefits - The setter can get a better feel for how consistent they are setting if they set to a stationary

visible target. This drill is good for all players for developing consistent sets.

Blocker Movement

Setters need to develop the ability to see their opposing blockers movement before setting. You need a tosser, a setter, and a middle blocker for this drill.

This volleyball setting drill starts with the coach tossing the ball up to the setter from the backcourt. Just before the ball reaches the setters hands, the middle blocker takes a step either to the left or to the right.

The setter then sets the ball in the opposite direction of the blocker's movement. This trains setters to be aware of what their opposition is doing which results in making better decisions setting.

Benefits - This drill is good for training a setter's peripheral vision.

Watching the Coach

This is another drill that trains setters to see the defense before making a decision on where to set. Start with your setter at the net with the coach on the other side of the net along with a tosser for tossing balls to the setter.

As the tosser tosses, the coach points to where they want the setter to set – middle, outside, or back.

Keep the tosses coming quickly so the setter has a harder time turning and looking at the coach. With the tosses coming quickly, the setter is forced to use their peripheral vision.

Benefits - The setter learns how to use their peripheral vision. Being able to see the opponent's defense can be a great advantage to running an effective offense.

Concentration Drill

This drill involves a setter going back and forth under the net setting for both teams.

This volleyball setting drill starts by the coach tossing a team a free ball. The ball is passed up to the setter and the setter runs a play. The hitter places the ball deep by tipping, hitting a high arcing shot or taking the ball overhead with the hands. This gives the setter a little more time to get to the other side of the net to get ready to set.

Benefits - This drill is good for conditioning and training the setter to concentrate on getting in good setting position.

Set with Sideways Walk

Start with 2 players on each side of the net. The players should start by standing at the sideline facing each other. On the coach's signal, the players set a volleyball back and forth over the net. Between each set the players take a couple steps sideways toward the other sideline.

The rest of the team can follow them. Once everyone has reached the sideline, repeat the drill back to the other side.

Benefits - This volleyball setting drill is more for beginning players. The whole team is able to get many repetitions setting the ball in a short amount of time.

HITTING

Hitting is also called spiking or attacking. It is one of the most exciting and challenging parts of the game of volleyball. It requires the hitter timing his/her jump and arm swing with the ball flying through the air. Jump serving is just spiking from the end line but the server tosses the set. Volleyball techniques for executing an attack hit include...

Approaching quick. To jump high, you've got to move fast. Really focus on stepping quickly (especially the last couple) in order to maximize your jump height.

Swing your arms back. By swinging your arms back you will take advantage of elastic energy and your nervous systems stretch reflex which can add inches to your vertical.

Bring both your arms up. By bring both your arms up you will continue with the momentum of going up which will help maximizing your height. Also, you will be in a better body position to hit.

Contact the ball in front of your hitting shoulder. It's best to contact the ball at the same spot every time you hit. This develops a consistent armswing. Volleyball techniques of a hitter's footwork (jumping from the correct spot) have a big influence on you hitting the ball in your sweet spot.

Put top-spin on the ball. Being able to put top-spin on the ball when you hit allows you to have better angles when hitting, thus more court to hit into. This is often called snapping the wrist when contacting the ball.

RULES

The three frontcourt players may attack the ball from anywhere on the court. The back row players must jump from behind the 10-foot/3-meter line. Spikers are not allowed to touch the net during the play and must be careful under the net. Indoors the centerline divides the court and both teams share the space. Neither team may interfere with the other team's ability to play the ball outdoors or indoors.

The hitter must cleanly hit the ball. It is not allowed to come to rest in the hitter's hand, nor may the hitter hit it with two hands unevenly. The hitter may only attack a ball on his/her side of the net. Either team can play a ball directly above the net.

TECHNIQUE

Standing away from the net, the hitter should be standing upright with the weight on the toes ready to move forward. Once the setter has released the ball and the hitter sees that the set is intended for him/her, then the hitter must decide when to begin the approach to the ball. Wherever the ball is going to be hit, the spiker should plant his/her feet behind the ball. The sequence of the last two steps for a right-handed hitter should be right than left. The left foot (the last step) helps transfer the momentum of the approach to vertical lift. (Fig. 4-29)

As the spiker plants the next to last step (right foot for right-hander) he/she should swing the arms back so that the hands are shoulder height behind him/her. He/she should also lower the hips as the next to last step is taken. (Fig. 4-29) When the last foot is planted, the arms swing forward and up, helping to throw the body up into the air. Once the arms have been swung up above the head, the hitting arm swing begins. (Fig. 4-30, 31)

The hitter should draw the hitting arm's elbow back. The hitting hand goes behind the head as the elbow pulls back. The elbow should be higher than ear height. Once the non-hitting arm has swung to the maximum height possible, it naturally falls with gravity. The hitting arm's elbow swings forward towards the ball, and then the hand extends forward to contact the ball. (Fig. 4-32, 33, 34, 35)

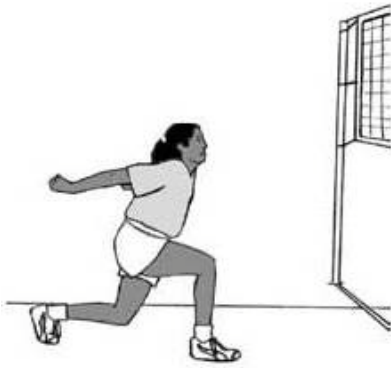


Fig. 4-29 Spiking



Fig. 4-30 Spiking



Fig. 4-31 Spiking



Fig. 4-32 Spiking



Fig. 4-33 Spiking



Fig. 4-34 Spiking



Fig. 4-35 Spiking



Fig. 4-36 Spiking

When the hand contacts the ball the entire hand should be on the ball. The wrist snaps forward to give the ball topspin. (Fig. 4-36)

KEY WORDS FOR THE SPIKER

- Feet to the Ball (The hitter should get his/her feet to where the ball is falling, not jump to that place.)
- Lower the Hips (As the next to last step is planted, the hitter should bend that leg's knee to lower the hips to jump.)
- Swing the Arms (The arms should create a pendulum action beginning from the back swing to them flying up above the hitter's head.)
- Elbow High (The hitter should have the hitting arm's elbow up above the ear and back behind the shoulder.)
- Hand Back (The hitting hand should be behind the head and then swing forward to the ball. The elbow leads the hand to the ball.)
- Snap (The wrist must snap on the ball to make the ball have forward spin.)
- Wait!!! (The hitter must wait to see the set before beginning his/her approach.)

PROBLEMS/SOLUTIONS

The hitter cannot hit over the net:

1. Have the hitter practice standing spikes, working on a high contact point and wrist snap.
2. Give the hitter tosses in front of his/her body that he/she can get to with one step.

The hitter cannot time the approach with the set:

1. Make the hitter wait to see the set reach its apex before moving forward. Have the hitter practice approaching and catching the ball in the air.
2. Try having someone behind the hitter holding on to his/her shirt (lightly holding on!) so that he/she cannot move forward.

The hitter has no power when hitting the ball:

1. Have the hitter practice the arm swing against a wall or standing and hitting the ball into the net.
2. Tell the hitter to accelerate the arm through the ball. (Make sure the hitter is hitting the ball squarely in the center of it.)

TEACHING PROGRESSION

First show the athletes what the spike looks like. Have a coach hit a few balls for the athletes to see a live spiker. As they are watching, point out the footwork. Show them the last two steps, and how the hips lower, and the arms swing back, and then forward.

Line up the group on the 10-foot line. Walk them through the last two steps of the approach. Have them slowly practice drawing the arms back with the next to last step, and then swinging them forward and up with the last step. Ask them to do five to 10 repetitions on their own.

Demonstrate the "Flamingo" described below. Ask them to do it as the coach does it. Make it fun by seeing how long the athletes can balance on one leg. Next show them the arm swing. Have the athletes begin the arm swing with the back swing. Then once the arms are above their heads teach them to draw the hitting elbow back and up.

Next have the arm and hand swing forward, snapping the wrist at the end. Ask who can touch their fingers to their wrist. There is always someone in the group who can! Lastly, have them practice the full approach (starting in the Flamingo) with the arm swing. Watch to make sure their footwork is correct and that they use their arms to jump.

DRILLS

1. Arm Snaps: Two athletes work together with one ball. Facing each other on the sidelines they toss the ball up in the air with two hands and then spike the ball down into the middle of the court. They should work on a high contact point and wrist snap.
2. Arm Swings on the Wall*: Two athletes work together with one ball. One athlete stands facing the wall (about 15 feet back from it) with his/her hitting elbow up and behind his/her shoulder and the non-hitting arm up in the air. The partner is standing in front of the hitter and to the side of the hitter's arm. The partner with the ball tosses it up in front of the hitter for him/her to spike at the wall. The hitter should be aiming at something on the wall that is about net height. *(If a wall is not available, this drill can be done with the hitters hitting into the upper part of the net.)
3. Standing Spikes: Coach tosses balls for the hitters about 10 feet back from the net. The hitter should have the hitting elbow back and up. The hitter steps to where the ball is falling and uses the hitting arm swing to hit it over the net into the court.



Fig. 4-37 Spiking (Flamingo)



Fig. 4-38 Spiking

4. Flamingo: The hitter should stand on one foot. Right-handed athletes stand on their left foot and left-handed athletes stand on their right. The hitter should be balancing on one foot and leaning forward so that the arms are hanging forward. The hitter then steps to a tossed ball, with the foot that is in the air. As the hitter does this, the arms swing back. Then the last step is planted and the hitter jumps up to spike the ball. The Flamingo is a great way to teach correct footwork. (Fig. 4-37, 38)
5. Hitting Lines: Athletes line up in the left front. Coach can toss the ball for the athlete to approach and spike, or the athletes can toss to the setter and hit whatever set they are given.

More Hitting Drills

Drills for the approach and attack hit

Hitting volleyball drills are some of the most fun drills players can do to become better at playing volleyball. When first learning how to play volleyball, it's a good idea to train players the correct way to approach, jump, and hit because it's much harder to change habit once it's developed.

Reach and Snap

The purpose of this volleyball drill is to work on the volleyball skills for the technique in hitting a volleyball. Players partner up. Players warm up shoulders by throwing the ball back and forth to one another.

After the shoulder warm up, players start tossing the ball up to themselves and hit to each other. Players focus on reaching high and snapping their wrist when contacting the ball.

Variations - Players can first start by just reaching high and snapping. Don't use a follow through arm swing at first. Just work on reaching high and snapping the wrist. Once players become more comfortable snapping the wrist, they can add in the arm swing.

Also, players can work on **bringing both arms up** in the air when tossing the ball. So now the player is in more of an attacking position, ready to swing.

Benefits - All hitters need to learn to **reach high** when they hit. If their elbow is bent, they won't hit as high and will be more likely to get blocked. Also, reaching high allows for the hitter to hit more easily around the block. Many players spend hours and hours training to increase their volleyball vertical jump height a couple inches when they could have got those inches by simply changing their arm swing (reaching high).

All hitters should develop a good **wrist snap**. Perfecting the volleyball spike by snapping the wrist, not only does a hitter hit harder but they also have more court to hit into because they can hit at sharper angles into the court.

Team Approach Jumps

The purpose of this volleyball drill is to work on the technique for the volleyball spike approach. No volleyballs are needed for this drill.

Have the team form a line along a sideline. The first player in line takes an approach to the net. After the approach, the player backs off the net and then takes another approach. This time, the approach starts from a little farther inside the court. The player repeats this until they reach the other sideline.

After the first player volleyball approaches to the net, the next player follows. This continues until all the players reach the other sideline.

Variations - Players can emphasize proper footwork. For example, players can work on a 4 step volleyball approach. Players can also work on creativity (experiment with steps, for example 3 steps vs. 4 steps) to discover possible volleyball strategies for hitting. Players can also work on **swinging their arms back** during each approach.

Benefits - This can be done in practice for when coaches want to look at each players footwork while at the same time running a volleyball drill.

Approach Jumps are also good volleyball drills for team warm up for volleyball practices or games.

Game Simulated Hitting

The purpose of this volleyball hitting drill is to help players improve their hitting by simulating hitting in game situations. This drill for volleyball needs six or more players.

The coach tosses the ball over the net to a passer. While the coach is tossing the ball, the players at the net **transition off**, and the **setter penetrates** towards the net. The setter then sets the passed ball to any of the three attackers, who then attack the ball.

Players rotate positions after every rally. The hitters and setter must return to defensive position after every hit.

Benefits - This volleyball hitting drill can be used during pre-practice warm up and even part of pre-game warm up. This drill is great for setters working on footwork when releasing to the net. This hitter drill is also great for attackers to work on their footwork for transitioning off the volleyball net.

BLOCKING

Blocking can be one of the most frustrating skills in volleyball. It is defined as the attempt by a player or players to stop the ball before or as it crosses the net. Many players think that if they don't block the opponent's spike back in their court, then they are not doing a good job as a blocker. A blocker's job is to protect an area of the court. If the spiker cannot or does not hit into the area that the blocker is supposed to protect, then the blocker has made an excellent block!

RULES

Players are never allowed to touch the net. A blocker may not touch the ball before the hitter, if the ball is completely on the opponent's side of the court. If the ball is above the top of the net, then either team may play the ball. In indoor volleyball the centerline under the net is a shared space. Blockers and hitters may land on the centerline. This can be very dangerous!

TECHNIQUE

The ready position for a blocker is similar to the down defense ready position discussed earlier. The blocker has his/her weight on the balls of the feet with the knees slightly bent. He/she holds his/her hands in front of him/her, where they can be seen in his/her peripheral vision. He/she is like a coiled spring ready to jump up at any time. (Fig. 4-39, 40)



Fig. 4-39 Blocking



Fig. 4-40 Blocking

Once the blocker sees the setter release the ball, the blocker should look at the hitter to watch the angle of the approach and body position. The blocker should step in front of the spiker and jump straight up, shooting his/her hands over the net. (Fig. 4-41, 42, 43)



Fig. 4-41 Blocking

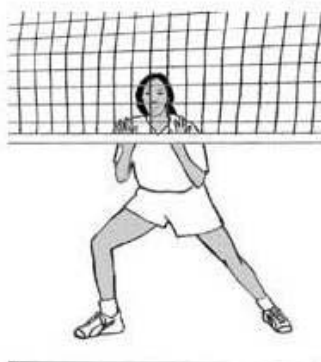


Fig. 4-42 Blocking

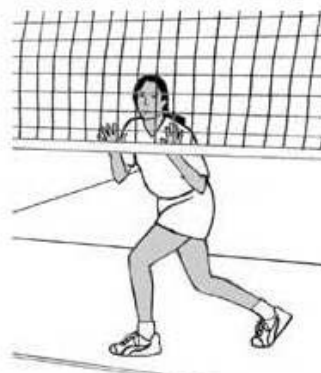


Fig. 4-43 Blocking

The hands are extended by pushing the heels of the hands over, not the fingertips! (Fig. 4-44, 45)



Fig. 4-44 Blocking

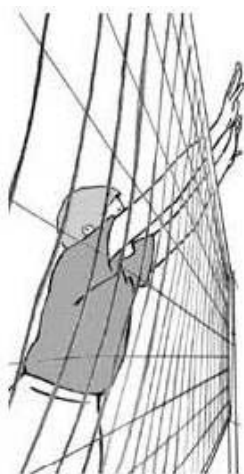


Fig. 4-45 Blocking

It is important for the blocker to jump and land from the same space on the court. The blocker should not be flying from one place to another.

PROBLEMS/SOLUTIONS

The athlete is too small or doesn't jump well enough to get his/her hands over the net:

1. If the athlete can barely get the hands to the net, let him/her feel what blocking is by having him/her control block (wrists are flexed back).
2. Lower the net slightly if possible, to give the athletes the feel of blocking.

The athlete keeps netting:

1. Ask the athlete to block jump while seeing the back of his/her hands the entire time. This will keep the hands in front of the blocker, not allowing him/her to reach up and then over the net.
2. Show the athlete the action of jumping up and shooting the arms from the ready position, over the net. If the coach is able to hold a ball up on top of the net, have the blocker practice jumping and blocking the held ball without netting.

KEY WORDS FOR HELPING THE BLOCKER

- Coiled (Be in ready position with the knees bent and the arms and hands in front of the body)
- Watch (Watch the set and the hitter)
- Front (Get in front of the hitter)
- Extend (Extend the legs and arms with the arms reaching over the net)
- Press (Press the heels of the hands over the net to the ball)
- Seal (As the arms extend over the net, have minimal space between the arms and the net)

DRILLS

1. Partner Blocking: Facing each other across the net, one athlete is the hitter and the other is the blocker. The hitter practices the approach for spiking, and the blocker works to step in front of him/her and blocks. The hitter may attack in different places on the net to move the blocker.
2. Follow: Two blockers face each other at the net. One is the leader and the other follows trying to block wherever the leader blocks.

3. Coach Hitting: One athlete is across from the coach. The coach stands and hits the ball just over the top of the net for the athlete to block. As the athlete gets better, the coach can hit slightly to each side of the blocker to move him/her.
4. Two Person Blocking: Like Coach Hitting but two blockers working together to block the coach. One blocker starts in the middle of the net, and the outside blocker is one arm's length from the sideline.
5. Coach Tossing: Coach tosses for hitters to hit into the block (one or two blockers).

More Blocking Drills

Block Jump to Ball

This drill consists of a player doing a **block jump up to a ball** that another player is holding on the opposite side of the net. The purpose of the drill is to work on good technique with hands in proper position.

It may be easiest to have the person holding the ball be standing on a chair. The person holding the ball can **move the ball to a different spot** before the player jumps.

For example, let's say a blocker is working on correct blocking technique for blocking a left side hitter. To make the blocker block a ball hit down the line, the person holding the ball can move the ball to the blockers right.

The blocker then gets in position and jumps up to block line placing the hands into the correct blocking position (blocking line).

Use the same idea for blocking angle, performing a spread block, blocking a tight set, etc.

Mirror Blocking

This drill needs two blockers, one on each side of the net. One of the players performs a blocking movement and the other player mirrors the movement.

This drill can be used for specific blocking movements. For example, middle blockers could **mirror one another**.

Start from the middle and either perform a block jump or move laterally to block an outside hitter.

The player mirroring is working on reacting to their partner and also mimicking proper blocking technique.

Jousting Drill

Start with a player on each side of the net. The coach tosses a ball up so it will land on top of the net. The players have the choice of blocking or trying to **push the ball through the block**.

The point is to work on winning the "50/50" ball. Players will find that it's often the **second player that pushes that wins the joust**.

Small players commonly win the jousts because they have to push up and forward while taller players try to push forward and down. This gives the smaller player the mechanical advantage.

Players should develop their own strategies for trying to win a joust. A common technique for jousting

is to just hold your ground when you first make contact, wait, and then push through.

Block Hitter on Box, Line, Angle

To work on footwork and timing the block; Coach stands on a box with a player on the other side of the net.

The coach tosses the ball to them self and hits the ball over the net. The player jumps up to block and really concentrates on good blocking form.

This volleyball drill is good for working on **timing, reading the armswing**, and getting used to what it feels like to block balls. When performing volleyball blocking drills, the blocker should remember to work on penetrating the net and getting both hands on the ball.

Variations - The coach can hit consecutively down the line. The blocker works on getting a feel of blocking a ball that's hit down the line. Then do the same with hitting angle.

A middle blocker can be added to the volleyball drill to work on team blocking.

Attack the Hole

The purpose of this drill is to work on **closing the hole between blockers**. You need a setter and hitters in a hitting line with two blockers on the other side of the net.

The coach tosses balls to the setter which the setter sets to an outside hitter. The hitter must try to hit between the blockers every time they hit.

Any balls that are blocked into the other court count as a point. At 5 points rotate.

Variations - At first, the middle and outside blocker can start the drill by standing next to one another, so timing is less of an issue.

After the blockers become comfortable, have the middle blocker come from the middle, like they would in a game. This will make **sealing the hole** much more difficult.

This volleyball drill can also be done with 3 blockers, so the middle has to choose which way to go. First, start with high sets to the outside and high sets back, then gradually have the sets be more game like.

DIGGING

Digging is when a hard driven ball (usually a spike) is played up. It can be done with any part of the body but is best controlled with two arms playing the ball up in an underhand passing fashion.

The basics of volleyball techniques for digging:

- Be up on your toes and on the balls of your feet, not on your heels.
- Be ready to get in a stable position to dig a hard driven ball.
- Be ready to move to run down a shot or tip.
- Arms are bent and in front of you ready to react to dig a ball with your forearms or to play a ball overhead.
- Eyes are focused on the hitter watching for any hint as to what they are going to do.

Cushion hard driven balls. You should try to absorb the hit with your arms to keep the ball on your side of the net. If you can keep the ball on your side, your team has a better chance of winning the rally with your setter setting an attacker.

TECHNIQUE

The digger starts in ready position (Fig. 4-46), low with the feet a comfortable distance apart and be able to touch the floor without bending at the waist. Arms are out and away from the body with the thumbs up.

As the opponent plays the ball, the defender should expect the ball to come over at any moment. If the opponent's spiker is about to attack the ball, the defender should be reading the attack's approach (watching the angle of approach). The defender should also watch the shoulder (which way it is facing) and the arm swing. Should the hitter stop the arm midswing, the hitter may be tipping the ball. (Fig. 47, 48, 49)

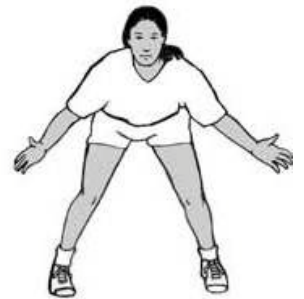


Fig. 4-46 Ready Position



Fig. 4-47 Off Blocker Footwork

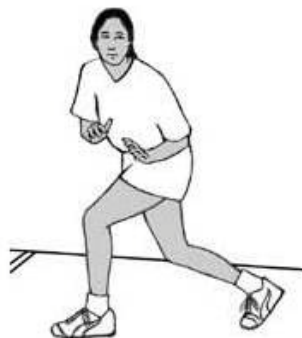


Fig. 4-48 Off Blocker Footwork

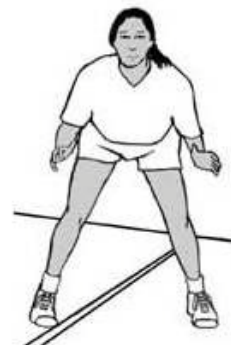


Fig. 4-49 Off Blocker Footwork

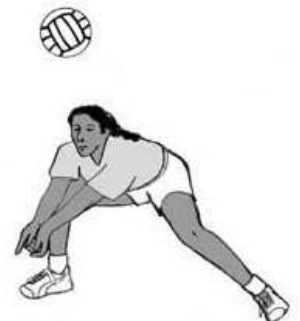


Fig. 4-50 Digging

The digger should line up with the hitter's approach, shoulder and arm swing. Next the digger should stop any lateral motion and have his/her body weight forward on the balls of the feet with the knees in front of the toes. The digger should then form his/her platform by putting the hands together with the arms straight. (Fig. 4-50)

Ideally, the ball is played at the midline of the body with two arms. Often the digger is trying to get any touch possible and may end up playing the ball with one arm. No matter how many arms are used, the digger should stay low to the ground and use the angle of the arms, not arm swing, to control where

the ball will be dug. Should the arms be too close to the body, the dug ball will be directed straightforward and not up.

KEYWORDS

- Read (Watch what the attack is doing with the approach, etc.)
- Stop Lateral Motion (Stop moving sideways and change to forward momentum)
- Weight Forward (Keep the body weight leaning forward, on the balls of the feet)
- Hands In Peripheral Vision (Keep the hands where they are seen in the peripheral vision while watching the hitter. This allows for quicker reactions to play a ball coming high or low at the digger.)
- Two Hands (Try to play the ball with two arms, not just one arm or hand)
- Up, Not Over (Dig the ball up on your side of the court, not over to the opponent's. This may mean adjusting the angle of the arms.)

PROBLEMS/SOLUTIONS

Digger cannot control where the ball is dug:

1. Make sure the digger forms the platform out and away from the body. The arms must be flat with the wrists pointed down.
2. Check to see that the digger is digging the ball on the forearms, not on the hands. It is harder to control the ball with the bones of the hands than the flat forearms.

The digger does not move to where the ball is being hit:

1. All of volleyball is about getting to where the ball is going. Have the digger run down tosses by the coach. Let them catch the tosses at first.
2. Next have them read and dig easy floor spikes by the coach.

The digger has a hard time moving to the ball in front of him/her:

1. Check to make sure the body weight is forward and as the hitter is about to attack, the digger should step forward.
2. The coach can run a controlled digging drill where the hitter can tip or hit. The digger has to learn to see and read the hit versus the tip and needs to move forward to play the tip up.

Overhand Digging

Overhand digging is used for any hard driven ball shoulder height or higher. Indoors an overhand dig can be with one or two hands. If two hands are used, they must be connected in some fashion otherwise; the referee may call the digger for a "double contact." (Fig. 4-51, 52)

Just like the underhand digging described above, the athlete should be in ready position with the hand in the peripheral vision. The arms and hands drop low or rise high depending on the height the ball is traveling. Ideally, the ball is played in the middle of the body. For the overhand dig, it may be chest height or higher. (Fig. 4-53)

To overhand dig, the hands are brought up with the thumbs back and the hands open wide and as big as possible. To overhand dig with the hands interlaced, the hands are joined by crossing the thumbs over the back of the palms and the fingers of one hand behind the fingers of the other. The digger must follow through up towards the desired target.



Fig. 4-51 Overhand Digging



Fig. 4-52 Overhand Digging



Fig. 4-53 Overhand Digging

PROBLEMS/SOLUTIONS

The dig keeps going backwards behind the digger:

Any time the ball goes backwards on an overhead dig, the digger has brought his/her hands up late. The hands must be up and follow through up and forward.

The digger keeps playing the ball on one side of the body and/or with one hand:

1. In all of volleyball the feet must be moved to play the ball. The digger needs to move his/her feet to get the ball in midline of the body.
2. Have the digger practice playing up balls that are thrown at the face at a medium to slow speed. Let the digger feel what it is like to step behind the ball and play it up.

DRILLS FOR OVERHAND AND UNDERHAND DIGGING

1. Reaction Drill 1: One partner (thrower) holds the ball overhead with two hands. (Make sure he/she does this! It makes a difference for this drill!) The other partner is in ready position about four steps away from the thrower. The thrower throws the ball to either side of the passer, or in front of him/her, to make him/her take a step to pass the ball. The thrower should just flex the wrists forward to throw the ball, not pull his/her arms down.
2. Reaction Drill 2: Same as above except the passer starts in ready position with his/her eyes closed. The thrower says, "Go!" before throwing the ball. Upon hearing "Go!" the passer opens his/her eyes and reacts to where the ball is going by taking a step to the ball and then passing it.
3. Reaction Drill 3: Same as Reaction Drill 1 except the passer is turned around with his/her back to the thrower. Upon hearing "Go!" the passer turns around and reacts to where the ball is going by stepping to the ball.
4. Reaction Drill 4: Same as Reaction Drill 1 but the two players are much closer. The thrower is only two to three steps from the passer. This shortens the reaction time of the passer.
5. Pepper: Pepper requires two players and one ball. It is basically pass-set-hit over and over. One player passes the ball to the other. That player sets the ball back. Then the first player hits the ball for the other to dig up. The hitter then sets the ball up and the other player hits it at his/her partner. This continues on and on if the pair is able to keep the ball in play.
6. Russian Pepper: Like Pepper described above but with a third person that sets the ball back to whoever dug it. Basically, two players (hitter/diggers) are facing each other about 15 feet apart. The drill begins with one hitter/digger tossing the ball to the setter who sets it back. The player who gets the set hits it at the player facing him/her. That player digs it up to the setter. The setter sets it back to the digger and then the digger hits it at the other digger.
7. Brazilian Pepper: In Brazilian Pepper the middle person is the digger and the outer players are the setter/hitters. The middle person digs the ball back to who ever hit it at him/her. That player sets the ball across to the other setter/hitter.
8. Figure 8: This drill can be done with as few as three players or as many as seven. The athletes in the drill line-up at the end line off of the court. The first player steps into the court about five feet. The coach is standing at the net in the middle of the court. The coach alternates tossing or hitting balls to the left and right. The players enter the middle back position and shuffle step or use cross over footwork to get to the ball. The athletes should be low as they move, keeping their center of gravity low like in ready position. If the coach is hitting, the digger should read the coach's arm swing and get in line with the ball. (This drill can be modified by having two coaches positioned at the left and right at the net. These coaches toss or hit the ball straight down the line.)

9. Over the Net Russian Pepper: Just like the drill described above but the hitter/diggers are across the net from each other. The setter must go back and forth under the net to play the ball. This can be done in fours with two players as setters for each of the hitter/diggers.
10. Singles/Doubles One Contact: Like tennis this drill involves only one contact per side. This drill encourages the athletes to look for openings in the opponent's court and makes them move to get to the ball. The teams can be changed every play (like with King-of-the-Court or play for points – rally or regular). The serve should be easy or even just a toss over the net to start the play.
11. King-of-the-Court: This drill can be used for all aspects of the game. Most players love this game! The game begins with the "Challengers' side" serving over to the "Kings'/Winners' side". There is only one rally to determine who will stay on the court. Whichever side wins goes to (or stays on) the "Kings'/Winners' side." The loser of the rally should shag the ball. This game can be played with lots of variations: No jumping; jumping from behind the 10-foot line only, with twos, threes or more players, no serving, but coach tosses the ball in, etc.

EMERGENCY TECHNIQUES

Volleyball techniques for going to the floor

Players are encouraged to stay on their feet when making plays on the ball. For making floor plays, there are five common techniques...

Collapse - From a low defensive position, a player might collapse to the ground in order to make a last second move to play the ball. The collapse is used most often when a ball falls shorter than anticipated.

Sprawl - Anticipating the ball falling out in front of them, a defender might use the sprawling technique to take a lunge forward and reach to make a play. Sprawling volleyball techniques are just like the collapse except the defender has time to take a step and reach.

The dive - This is similar to the sprawl except the body is more in an airborne position when making a play.

Pancake - Defensive players can perform a pancake to save a ball from hitting the floor. The pancake is similar to a sprawl except the fingers are spread firmly and placed on the ground to meet the ball. Pancaking can be one of the good volleyball techniques of playing a ball because if you perform a good pancake, you often will get a good bounce that will allow your teammates to keep the ball in play.

Shoulder or barrel roll - Defenders can often use a rolling technique by extending to the right, left, or forward in attempting to get the ball up by playing the ball close to the floor. After playing the ball the players use their momentum to roll over their body and regain their balance in a position ready to move. Rolling is probably the safest of the emergency volleyball techniques because players don't really hit the ground hard.

DEFENSIVE ROLLING

Defensive rolling is a move that causes excitement for both players and spectators. Usually used in conjunction with defensive passing or "digging", rolling is considered a "finish" move. It is important that players understand this.

When on defense, the defenders must be in a defensive position ready to move their bodies in an efficient manner to prevent an attacked ball from hitting the floor within the court. A player may be required to run down or shuttle to the attacked ball.

However, a ball may be hit outside the comfortable reach of a player so he/she will be required to extend their body to attempt to make a touch on the ball to prevent a kill or point for the opponent.

Rolling is a very difficult emergency move for players to make. With much practice, the player will be more comfortable with putting his/her body out of balance and recover into balance.

Technique

Rolling should occur at the end of a defensive move performed by the player. The purpose of this move is to prevent injury while a player may be moving at tremendous rates toward the floor and to allow a defender to play the ball low to the ground. Rolling moves closely resemble recovery moves made in many martial arts.

As a player is extending his/her body to make the very last possible move to prevent the ball from hitting the floor, the player's forward momentum will create an unbalanced state. The inexperienced player will force and manipulate his/her body in such a way to prevent falling to the floor.

Stepping towards the ball, the player will be required to shift weight out of balance and over the feet. This will create the falling motion. As the player is falling toward the floor, arms should be outstretched in attempt to play the ball. As the player's hand nears the floor, the knee of the coordinating hand will also be nearing the floor.

It is important that the knee be rotated in such a way that the outside portion, not the kneecap, of the knee hit the floor to facilitate a sliding motion. At this point, the player's thigh, then hip, should be absorbing the falling weight. The player will then be required to move his/her body as if rolling out of bed. That is, the athlete will roll onto his/her back and then turn over onto the hands and knees. At this point, the player should be bending the legs to ready the body to use the hands and toes to quickly push up onto the feet, ready to make the next play.

Learning Progression

Practice just the first half of the roll; from ready position have the athlete step forward and extend both arms, as if playing a ball underhand. As he/she steps forward the step should be long and cause the athlete's hips to lower towards the ground. As he/she extends forward to play the ball the torso should be over the front leg and the arms still extending out and down. Have the athlete work on the landing and only go onto his/her side of the torso.

After they feel confident in going for the ball and landing on their side, work on the recovery or rolling over and getting up.

Key Points

As the defender goes onto his/her side, the leg on the side that the player rolled to should bend as the athlete rolls onto the front of his/her body. The toe and knee of that leg dig into the floor to help the defender get up quickly.

DIVING

Diving is also a spectacular defensive move. It should be used as an emergency technique. This is when a defender cannot get to the ball with a step or two, but must extend his/her body in the air and make a play for the ball. The dive is actually the finish to the play on the ball. The dive is the landing that the defender makes after contacting the ball.

Technique

From the defensive ready position the defender steps to the direction the ball is falling. The last step to the ball is done with a bent knee, causing the body to be low to the ground. From this last step the defender pushes off of the floor to propel his/her body towards the ball. The body should be almost low to the ground already so there is not a lot of height between the body and the floor. As the athlete extends to the ball his/her body should be horizontal to the ground.

The defender should try to play the ball with two hands if possible. After the contact on the ball has been made, then the defender should extend his/her arms to the floor. It is vital that the diver keeps his/her chin up! The chin can easily split if it hits the floor!

The arms help absorb the momentum as the body is lowered. The chin should be lifted up! The chest should be lifted and the back slightly arched. The first contact point of the torso should be on the upper chest, then the rest of the torso touches down. The knees should be bent. The thighs touch down last as the arms pull through.

LEARNING PROGRESSION

Have the athletes begin on their knees. Toss a ball near them so that they can move one knee towards the ball, then play the ball up, then slowly absorb their landing. Next have the athletes start with both hands on the floor and one leg in the air. A partner holds the leg in the air. The diver pushes off of the foot on the floor and slowly lowers his/her body down. The partner holding the leg helps the diver to

lower slowly. KEEP THE CHIN UP!

After athletes feel comfortable trying to dive with help, let them try it on their own without a ball. Lastly, try tossing a ball one step away from them. Let them try to dive for it. Keep reminding them to keep their chin up.

Problems/Solutions

The diver keeps hitting his/her hips:

1. Make sure that the diver is slightly arching his/her back as he/she lands.
2. Check to see what is the first part of the body to hit the floor. (It should be the chest.)

The diver keeps banging his/her toes:

Check to see that he/she is bending the knees once the feet leave the floor.

The diver is getting stuck on his/her chest:

1. This happens when the diver tries to dive straight down, not forward and down.
2. Remind the diver that he/she should land like an airplane. The last step lowers the hips so that there isn't much distance to the floor.

MORE PRACTICE DRILLS

4 X 2 Pepper Drill

Purpose: Great drill to teach ball control with a wide variety of types of contacts.

Procedure: Put players in pairs. Player one hits the ball down to player two. Player two digs the ball to themselves, tomahawk's to themselves (overhead contact), then left fist only, right fist only, sets to themselves, then player two hits the ball down to player one, who repeats.

10 Ball Wash Drill

Purpose: Great drill to teach back row attacking and defending back row attacks.

Procedure: Drill can be initiated by a free ball (suggested for just starting out) or a serve. Play balls out with only back row hitters allowed to attack. Team must win two points in a row to rotate, usually the free balls or serves are given to alternate sides.

Corner Killer Drill

Purpose: Great drill to work on serves to the corner of the court.

Procedure: Set up the same number of cones in all four corners of the court. Divide team up into sides with each player having a ball. The object of the game is to knock over the others team's cones on the other side of the court. Team who knocks over all of the other teams cones first wins. (Variation) Set up two cones in each corner, teams take turns serving and are awarded a point each time they knock over a corner cone.

Coverage Drill

Purpose: Great drill to teach the team to cover hitters.

Procedure: Line-up 6 players in their normal set on one side of the court (receiving). Line-up two blockers in each of the three blocking zones on the other side. The coach tosses a ball to the receiving side who plays on the ball. With so many blockers, chances are the return will be blocked, forcing the receiving side to cover the hitter.

Eye Check Drill

Purpose: Great drill to teach the setter to see what is happening on the other side of the net.

Procedure: Set-up a tosser in the back-row, a setter and hitter in the front row and the coach on the other side of the net. The tosser tosses the ball to the setter. During the toss the coach holds up either rock, paper or scissors. The setter must look at the call and say what the coach is holding before setting the ball. Setter sets the ball to the hitter.

Greed Drill

Purpose: Great drill to teach team concept and attitude of doing their best to win every point and get every ball.

Procedure: Two teams of six players. Each team starts with 12 balls. Each team serves two balls at a time, alternating sides, then rotating. The team that wins the rally gets to keep the ball. The team that finishes with the most balls wins.

Net Save Drill

Purpose: Great drill to teach the defender to dig the ball out of the net on the return.

Procedure: This can be played on both sides of the net simultaneously, thus allowing for group competition. Line up a group on each side of the net. Have a line of defenders to save the ball off the net, a setter, and a hitter outside. The coach throws a ball into the net and the defender tries to bump the ball to the setter, who sets the ball outside (just catch the ball). A point is awarded if the set ball is actually hittable. This is a difficult drill, but develops an important fundamental tool. Play a game to between 5 and 10.

Overhead Toss Drill

Purpose: Great drill to teach the toss for the overhead serve.

Procedure: Right handed players, stand with left foot slightly forward. Hold the ball in the left hand and extend the arm straight out from the body at a ninety degree angle. (Left-handed players will do the exact opposite). With a firm wrist, arm toss the ball 18 inches high but let it fall to the ground. The ball should fall to the spot on the floor just inside of the lead foot and in line with the hitting shoulder. The toss is crucial to a successful serve because an improperly tossed ball will cause a poor arm angle resulting in a bad serve. Remember when serving-on a bad toss

you should let the ball fall to the ground, and then attempt again.

Rapid Set Drill

Purpose: Great drill to teach setting the ball.

Procedure: Two players (#1 and #2) stand on the opposite side of the net from a third player. Player #2 stands where the setter would line up (front middle preferably) and player #1 stands in a back row position on the same side. Player #3 lines up on opposite side of the net as #1 and #2 and tosses the ball over the net to player #1 who passes it to the setter (player #2). The setter bounce passes the ball under the net back to player #3. Meanwhile player 3 throws the second ball immediately after player 1 passes the first ball. The drill is fast paced and designed to get a lot of passing done in a short period. Note: player #3 should toss the second ball before player #2 has caught the first. That way the drill is executed rapidly.

Serve Receive Transition Drill

Purpose: Great drill to work on the transition from serve to receive to hitting.

Procedure: Two groups of five players set up on each side of the net, three passers, one setter, one server. Alternate serving from each side. The passer passes to the setter, the setter sets the person who passed the ball, the hitter calls on appropriate set call for where they are after the pass.

Serve Reception Drill

Purpose: Great drill to work on the transition from serve receiving to hitting.

Procedure: 3 players on one side (hitters), 4 players on the other side 3 passers and one target. Starting from left to right the hitters give the passer in line with them, a down ball. The passer must decide whether to forearm pass or overhead pass each ball to the target. Alternate down the line of hitters. Set a goal for number of good passes.

Set Set Hit Drill

Purpose: Great drill to work on setters transitioning to the net as quickly as possible and then setting outside.

Procedure: This drill starts with three players lying face down on the end line. A Setter, Middle back player and an outside hitter. The Coach slaps the ball and then tosses it over the net to the middle back player. Setter transitions all the way to

the net. Outside hitter transitions to start of approach, and the Passer sets the ball to the target. (Not where the setter is, but where the setter should be.) Setter sets to the outside. Outside hitter hits.

Target Practice Drill

Purpose: Great drill to work on practicing controlling the serve.

Procedure: On the other side of the net set up 6 main targets at the front right and middle positions, as well as the back left and middle positions. Coach chooses target to aim for and server tries to hit the target on the serve. The team can be divided in half and this can be turned into a competition with points awarded to how many serves strike the chosen target area. Make sure to keep wrist firm throughout the serve. Contact with heel of hand through the middle back of the ball. The contact should sound like a "thud" not a "slap" sound. Hand follows ball to the target. Finish with hand along side or within bodyline.

Two VS Two Drill

Purpose: Great drill for teaching teamwork. Both players must work together to stay on the court.

Procedure: The court is divided up in half and the back line for this game is the 10 foot line. The game is played within the 10 foot line on one half of the court. The whole team partners off and 2 players are on one side and 2 players are on the other. Using only underhand serves, one team serves to the other and play begins. Once a team wins a side out, the losers must leave the court and the new challengers come on to face the winning team. Challengers serve. This game is fast paced and a fun way to get everyone involved.

CARE AND PREVENTION OF INJURIES

Coaching sports can be rewarding and stressful as it is without having to worry about injuries to your players. However, there may be situations when appropriate medical personnel are not available and the care of the athlete is in your hands. Here are some general guidelines regarding injuries that often occur on the court.

Remember R.I.C.E.

Rest, Ice, Compression, Elevation - most common injuries will follow this general principle. DO NOT use heat while swelling is present to the extremity. Apply ice to the injured area for 15-20 minutes. Adding heat will increase the swelling, while ice will help decrease it.

Let common sense prevail. If there is a deformity, DO NOT move the athlete. Call 911 (or the local equivalent) and let trained personnel handle the situation.

Communicate with parents and inform them of the situation if they are not on-site at the time of the injury.

Be conservative. If you have doubts as to an athletes' ability to play, do not let them play.

Ankle Injuries

Most ankle injuries involve ligaments and tendons (i.e. sprains). In instances like this, follow the R.I.C.E. principle. These injuries often turn into recurring injuries if the athlete returns to activity too soon. If the athlete experiences pain during activity, he/she should be removed from competition. If the pain level increases in the following days, the athlete should see a physician.

If a deformity is present, do not attempt to put the limb in place or move the limb. Immediately call 911 or EMS personnel.

Knee Injuries

The knee is the most vulnerable joint in the body and should be dealt with using caution. Injuries can occur to the ligaments, tendons, kneecap, cartilage (meniscus) and bones (growth plates). Here are some indications of significant injury to the knee:

- Hearing or feeling a "pop" or a "snap" in the knee.
- Feeling that the knee "gave out"
- Sharp pain
- Obvious deformity
- Limited movement
- Swelling

Apply ice immediately and immobilize the knee. When immobilizing the knee, be sure to splint the ankle. As a general rule to follow, the joint above and below the injured joint should be splinted.

In all instances involving a knee injury, the athlete must follow-up with a physician.

Head Injuries

There are currently many different theories regarding head injuries and concussions and how to treat them. The following guidelines are essential to insuring safe return to play for your athlete:

When in doubt, keep the athlete out. Any player who appears to have suffered a concussion should be removed from participation and evaluated by a physician as soon as is practical. Players exhibiting prolonged loss of consciousness or marked amnesia should be evaluated immediately in an emergency room.

Players should not be allowed to return to play if they exhibit the symptoms (headache, nausea, blurred vision, dizziness, ringing in the ears, unsteadiness, confusion) of concussions.

If an athlete loses consciousness, call 911 and activate EMS. Before this athlete can return to competition or practice, he must be cleared by a physician.

Athletes, in the eagerness to play, may fudge the truth when telling the coach how they feel. As part of the overall evaluation, have the athlete perform sport-specific movements on the sideline and watch for unsteadiness, lethargy, uncoordinated movements. They may lie, but their bodies won't.

Neck Injuries

Any athlete that sustained a hit and complains of neck pain, or numbness and tingling to extremities **MUST NOT BE MOVED**. Immediately call 911. If the athlete is not breathing, your priority is to get the athlete breathing, which means you – or another trained person on-site must begin CPR. However, neck injuries pose a unique problem when CPR is initiated. We encourage all coaches and staff to contact their local EMS provider and learn how and when to use 'log rolling' when in this situation.

Volleyball, like all sports, contains the risk of injury, but on-court awareness can lessen that risk. In the case of an injury, stay calm and seek medical help. The general guidelines listed above should not be used as a substitute for seeking trained personnel. Remember that a player's health is the first priority in situations where an injury appears to have occurred, and trained medical personnel are best able to deal with such situations.

