



# Beach Volleyball Drill-book



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# PREFACE

The FIVB Technical & Development Department through the guidance of its Development Commission is launching this Beach Volleyball e-book as a part of the mission to grow Beach Volleyball. This book contains over 100 special drills from the beginner level to the advanced level and as such it will endorse and support the growth of Beach Volleyball from the grass roots to the qualified athlete's status.

Although Beach Volleyball is growing in popularity it is still a sport in the embryonic stage of its development there is a need to introduce quality material that supports development of players and coaches through practical literature.

With the collaboration of Mr. Hayden Jones FIVB instructor who is teaching fundamental Beach Volleyball techniques in several countries where the sport is emerging, and with the contribution of Mr. Daniel Dalanhese this e-book has been realized to create a resource material for coaches and players worldwide.

The e-book goes directly to the heart of Beach Volleyball and takes the reader step by step through various drills and skills in a clear and understandable form.

We trust that this e-book is a useful tool for coaching Beach Volleyball players and assists those who are really in need for a simple and comprehensive material.

Enjoy Beach Volleyball!



**HAYDEN JONES** is a FIVB International Beach Volleyball Instructor and is USAV BCAP certified. He was born in Christchurch New Zealand and is a former New Zealand National Champion, (2002) New Zealand King of the Beach Champion, (2000) and Asian Beach Volleyball Champion (2002) Hayden's passion for development of all forms of Beach Volleyball has seen him involved in the establishment of a number of Beach Volleyball clubs and programs in New Zealand along with involvement on Beach Volleyball commissions for Volleyball New Zealand and local associations. He currently coaches for Beach Volleyball California – Huntington, and resides in Huntington Beach, CA. He also teaches middle school along with his wife who plays professionally.



**DANIEL DALANHESE** was born in Brazil and grew up in Sandy Utah. He plays professional Beach Volleyball and qualified for his first main draw in a US national event (formally the AVP) in 2009. The following year he took a 9th place in the Huntington Beach AVP event. He currently coaches for Beach Volleyball California – Huntington, and resides in Westminster California.

# KEYS



Dashed line = Movement of athlete with target



Movement of ball with target



Hard attack



Free ball or soft attack



Athlete involved in play



Athlete or coach running drill

# THE WARM UP

The function of the warm up is to prepare the body for high-level performance, reduce the chance of injury and also to allow the athletes to get a feel for the current conditions.

The warm up does not necessarily need to be Beach Volleyball related. Sometimes a random fun but safe movement activity is a great way to start a training session.

Activities with a ball will be better however as they allow the participant to get a feel for the current wind conditions.

Most importantly – get moving – have fun!

## Beginners

Improving beginning athletes' ability to maintain a rally and enjoy the game will be largely related to the athletes (young or old) ability to move through the sand and correctly anticipate where the ball will need to be played considering the wind conditions.

Obviously teaching them the basic skills of the serve, pass, set, and spike is important but this should not be at the detriment of the athletes learning about general game concepts and how the environment affects the ball.

With this in mind, drills or games where the ball is tossed and caught or passed over certain distances / heights are great for developing body awareness in the sand and will enable the development of the skill of anticipating ball movement in the wind.

The feedback from a bad throw or pass to a partner is not as clear and fast as the feedback that you receive from not being able to catch your own pass, so invent some fun ball related challenges that provide the athlete instant feedback on their success.

Games using a larger and lighter ball which exaggerates the effects of the wind may help to promote quicker learning and are a fun way for very young athletes to be introduced to the game. The more opportunities beginning athletes get to become students of the environment the better. Remember: One training in the wind is worth three in the calm!

## Intermediate

Assuming that intermediate athletes have the basic skills of the game and have developed an ability to adjust to the wind, warm-ups could move towards focusing on the development of specific skills.

## Advanced

Preventing Injury is important at all levels of the game but perhaps it takes on even more significance at the professional level where staying healthy is vital to the livelihood of the athlete. Some aspect of the warm up should be dedicated to paying special attention to those areas of the body that are tight and have a potential to flare up.



# WARM UP DRILLS

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## 1.1 WARM-UP

### VOLESTE

(beginner)

#### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: 4+ balls

Minimum: 1 or 2

#### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 4 athletes + coach observing

Maximum: 12 athletes + coach observing

Minimum: 3 athletes + coach participating

#### DRILL OBJECTIVE

This objective of this drill is to raise body temperature in preparation for more strenuous activity and increase awareness of how current conditions affect the ball. Additionally this drill reinforces correct defense techniques.

#### DRILL DESCRIPTION

Drill starts with two athletes on either side of the net with one athlete serving underhand before moving into the court.

Athletes are attempting to win a point by playing the ball over the net using the forearm pass. The ball can only be contacted once on each side of the net.

Initially however you could allow 2 touches, as this makes the game slightly easier.

For athletes under 9 or 10 (or for beginners) voleste should be played on a smaller court.

Any ball played overhead must be played with both hands together and a one armed play is only allowed below the waist.

If you have more than two teams you can play with a 'challenger' and 'points' side.

If the team on the challenger side wins they go to the 'points' side to receive the next serve and chance to win a point.

To speed the game up a coach can initiate a free-ball onto the 'points' side.

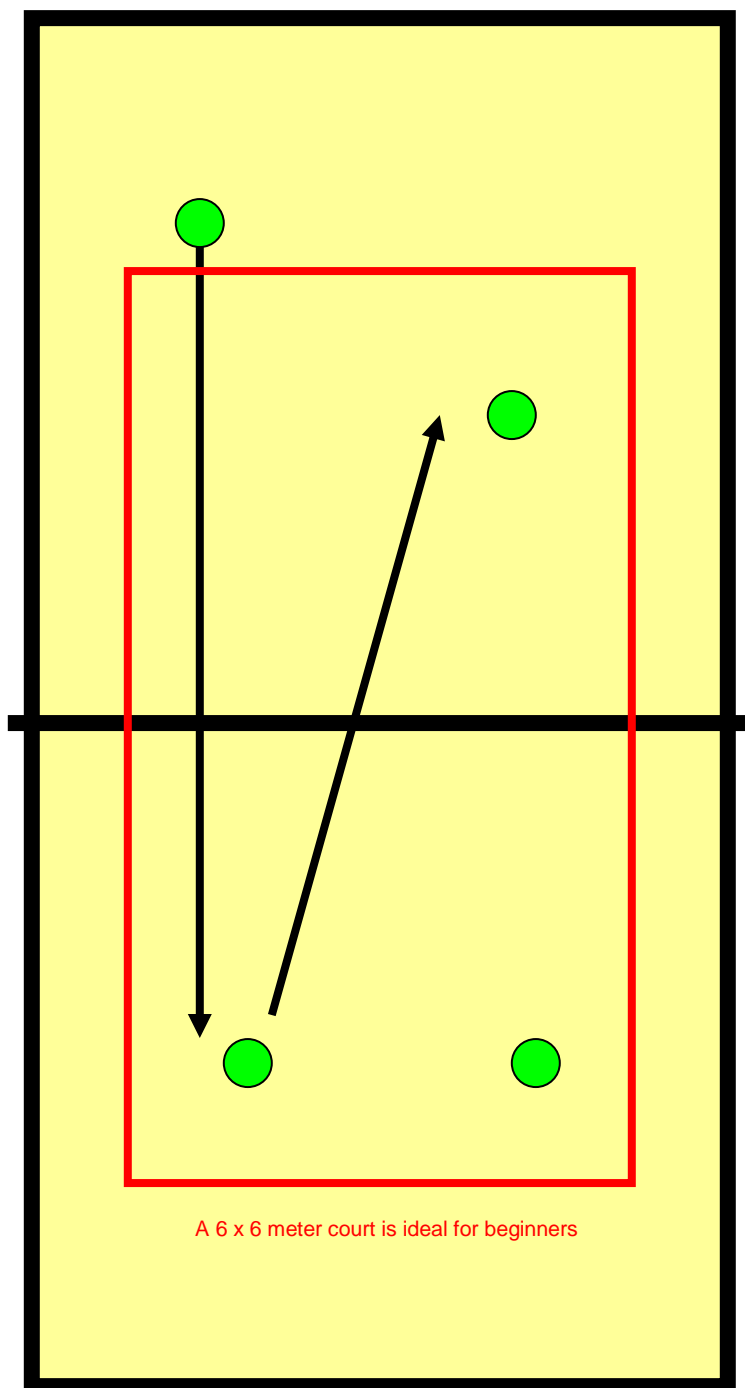
For additional Voleste ideas go to page 127.

#### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- Athletes need to drop to the ground between each contact they make with the ball.
- Athletes can run around the net after each play.

#### TEACHING POINTS

- 1 Athletes need to stay very low and be activated and ready to move as the opposition is about to contact the ball.
- 2 Athletes should be encouraged to watch the athlete not the ball.
- 3 Athletes should be reminded that they should think strategically about where they are placing the ball, looking to play the ball away from the opposition.



A 6 x 6 meter court is ideal for beginners

## 1.2 WARM-UP

### SINGLE TWO BALL JUGGLE

(beginner)

#### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: 2 balls per individual  
Minimum: 2 balls per person

#### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 3 or 4 athletes + coach observing  
Maximum: As many as space allows  
Minimum: 1 athlete + coach observing

#### DRILL OBJECTIVE

This objective of this drill is to raise body temperature in preparation for more strenuous activity and increase the athletes awareness of how current conditions affect the ball.

Additionally this drill develops hand eye coordination and encourages good athletic body position.

#### DRILL DESCRIPTION

Athletes start with two balls.

The challenge is to juggle both balls by throwing each ball up on either side of the body.

Athletes start with one ball in both hands and the other ball either between the legs or under an arm.

While one ball is up in the air the athlete reaches to the other ball in order to throw it up before the initial ball has come down. Ideally athletes should be catching and throwing one ball up to the left side of the body and the other to the right.

A two handed contact should be made on each ball.

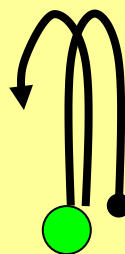
In order to make this drill even more beneficial the athletes should try to keep the arms straight as they catch and throw the volleyballs.

#### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- Have athletes focus on something while completing the drill.
- Have athletes moving from sideline to sideline during drill.

#### TEACHING POINTS

1. Arms should move from below the ball straight up after catching, that way the ball goes straight up and down, and not away from the body.
2. Athletes need to be reminded that an athletic position enables them move more effectively and reach for balls that are away from the body.



### 1.3 WARM-UP

#### TWO BALL JUGGLE IN PAIRS

(beginner)

#### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: 1 ball per person

Minimum: 1 ball per person

#### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 1 or 2 pairs for every coach

Maximum: As many as space allows

Minimum: 1 athlete + coach assisting

#### DRILL OBJECTIVE

This objective of this drill is to raise body temperature in preparation for more strenuous activity and increase awareness of how current conditions affect the ball.

Additionally this drill develops hand eye coordination and encourages good athletic body position.

#### DRILL DESCRIPTION

Each athlete starts with one ball.

The drill begins with one athlete throwing their ball to their partner in this drill. (athlete 1 throws the ball to athlete 2)

Before the thrown ball reaches athlete 2 they must throw their own ball up in the air, catch the ball thrown to them, throw the caught ball back to their partner and then proceed to catch their own ball.

Once each pair has managed this successfully several times then they should try to throw their own ball up every time the ball comes to them.

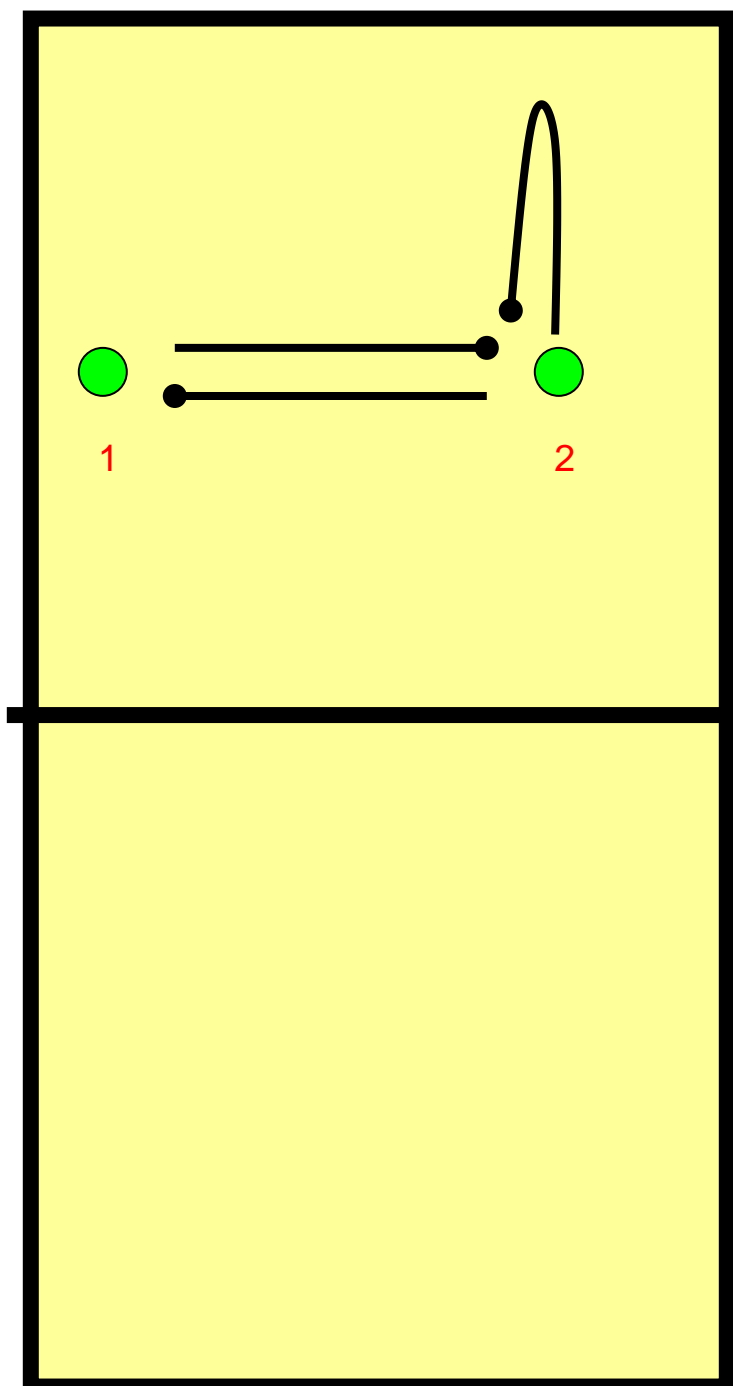
Athletes should be encouraged to do this drill facing all directions in the wind.

#### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- Try to speed it up so it eventually looks like the two athletes a juggling.
- Then add an additional ball so there are 3.

#### TEACHING POINTS

- 1 Athletes should focus on throwing their own ball straight up in the air, this way it is easier to catch when it comes down.
- 2 The ball that is thrown across should be thrown fast and flat otherwise it may bump into the other ball.
- 3 Athletes need be in the athletic position to enable them to catch balls away from them.



## 1.4 WARM-UP THROW PASS AND CATCH

(beginner)

### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: 1 ball per athlete

Minimum: 1 ball per athlete

### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 3 or 4 athletes per coach

Maximum: 8 to 10 athletes + coach observing

Minimum: 1 athlete + coach observing

### TEACHING POINTS

- 1 Athletes should make sure that they get to the ball early and set themselves for the pass in a stable position. (one leg in front and one behind with a wide base)
- 2 Be aware of where the ball will move in the wind and adjust accordingly when moving to the ball and also with respect to the direction you pass the ball.

### DRILL OBJECTIVE

This objective of this drill is to raise body temperature in preparation for more strenuous activity and increase awareness of how current conditions affect the ball.

Additionally this drill develops hand eye coordination, encourages good athletic body position and also helps athletes practice the run through pass.

### DRILL DESCRIPTION

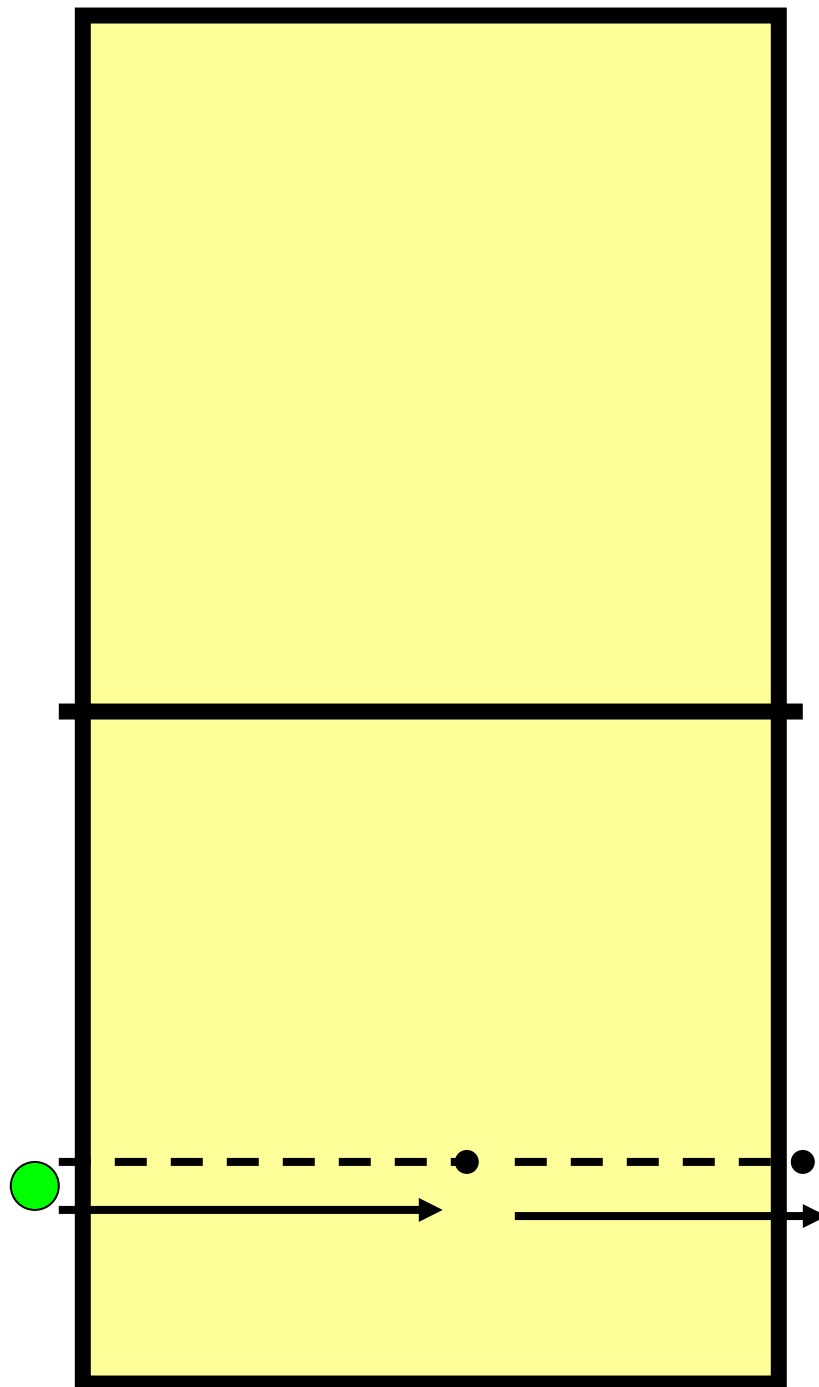
Athlete start behind the sideline of the court with a single ball in their hands.

The athletes begin the drill by throwing the ball to the middle of the court (with two hands) and following it into the court where they forearm pass the ball across towards the other sideline.

Directly after forearm passing the ball from the middle of the court they chase it and attempt to catch it before it hits the ground over the sideline.

### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- Get the athlete to throw the ball with one hand to simulate the throw for a topspin jump serve.
- Athlete can throw then run; turn around and pass the ball behind them then turn again to catch over the sideline.
- The athlete can focus on turning left after throwing and right after passing or vice versa.



## 1.5 WARM-UP SKY-BALL AND CATCH

(beginner)

### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: as many balls as you have athletes

Minimum: 1 ball per athlete

### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 4 or 5 athletes + coach serving

Maximum: 8 to 10 athletes + coach observing

(if athletes can sky-ball consistently)

Minimum: 1 athlete + coach assisting

### DRILL OBJECTIVE

This objective of this drill is to raise body temperature in preparation for more strenuous activity and increase awareness of how current conditions affect the ball. Additionally this drill gives athletes an opportunity to get some sky-ball practice.

### DRILL DESCRIPTION

Athlete starts behind the service line of the court (middle of the court for younger or beginner athletes) while another athlete or coach prepares to serve a sky-ball over the net.

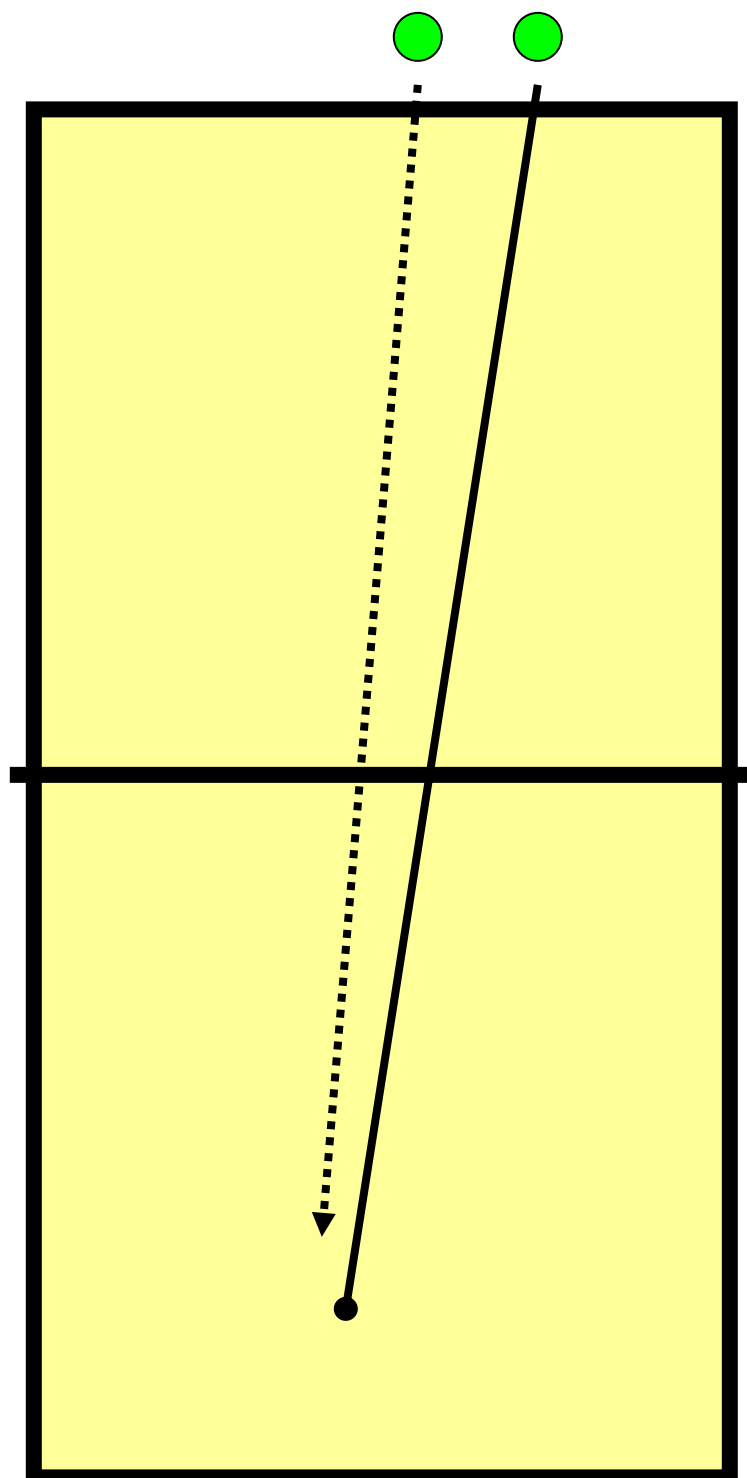
As soon as the ball is struck the athlete runs through under the net to catch the ball.

### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- Get the athletes to sky-ball to each other.
- Athlete can start on the ground in the middle of the court facing the server.

### TEACHING POINTS

- 1 Athletes should try to get to the other side of the court as soon as possible then look for the ball.
- 2 Athletes should try to make a very quick initial judgment on where the ball is going off the server's hand.
- 3 **MAKE SURE ATHLETES WATCH OUT FOR THE NET AS THEY RUN THROUGH!**



## 1.6 WARM-UP SERVE AND JOG

(beginner)

### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: As many balls as possible

Minimum: 1 ball per athlete

### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 3 or 4 athletes + coach observing

Maximum: 8 people + coach observing

Minimum: 1 person + coach observing

### DRILL OBJECTIVE

This objective of this drill is to loosen up the body and raise body temperature in preparation for more strenuous activity. It will also increase the athlete's awareness of how current environmental conditions affect the ball.

As well as serving you can add any particular skill or movement pattern depending on your focus

### DRILL DESCRIPTION

Athlete serves and then jogs to the other side of the net to serve again.

You can get the athlete to do any sort of movement pattern you would like after each serve.

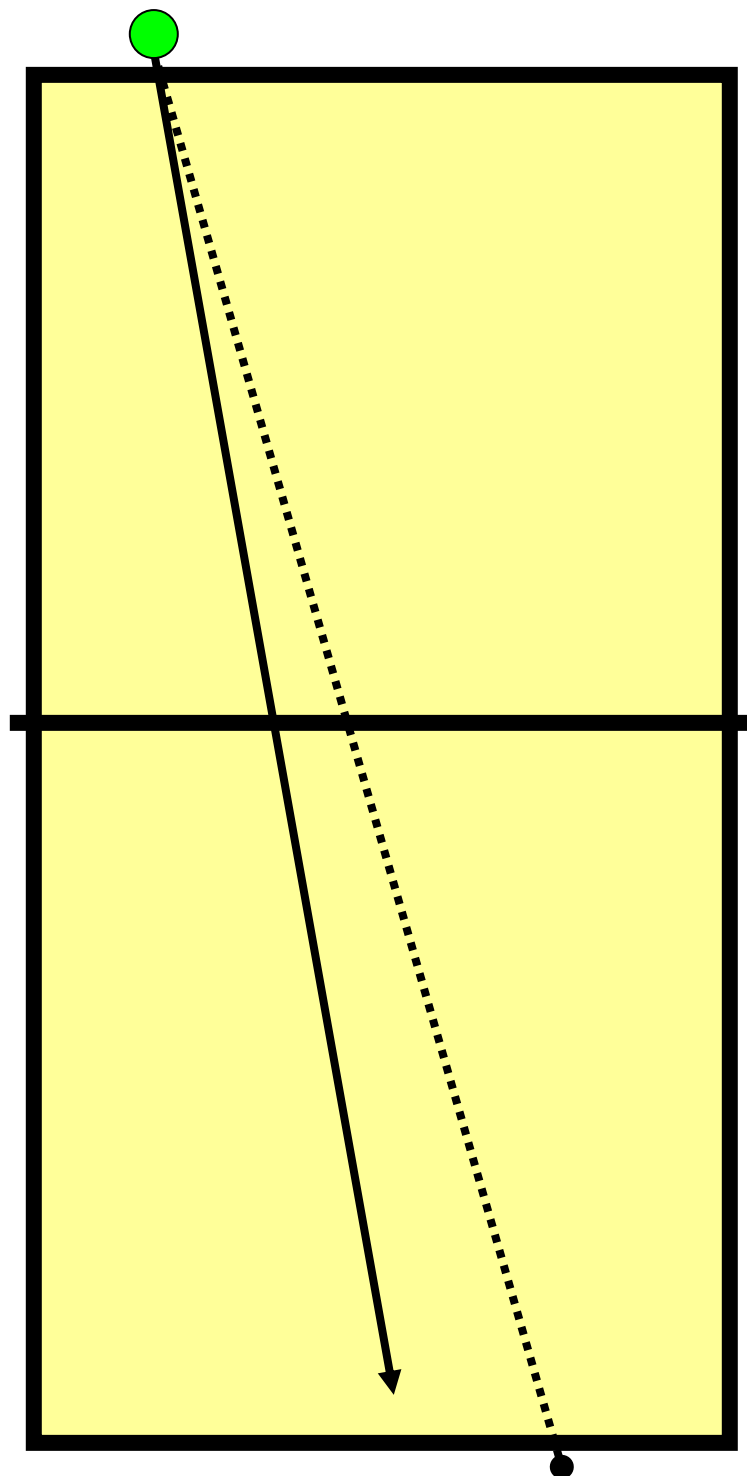
If an athlete does not like to dive you could force the athlete to serve and then run to a certain corner of the court and dive on the sand or if they block they could run to the net to perform a certain block after each serve.

### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- Jump serve rather than standing serve.
- Mark out spots on the court that need to be served into.
- Have the athlete serve 3 in a row before they jog to the other side.

### TEACHING POINTS

- 1 Athletes need to be reminded to take their time during serving as after jogging to the serving spot they will often rush their serve.
- 2 Encourage athletes to develop a routine, as this will encourage consistency of serve.
- 3 The focus will change depending on the level of the athlete. Beginners should focus on contact rather than where the serve goes. More advanced athletes should be focusing on a particular service area.



## 1.7 WARM-UP

### CATCH BEHIND IN LUNGE POSITION

(beginner / intermediate)

#### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: 1 ball per athlete

Minimum: 1 ball between 2 athletes

#### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 2 or 3 per coach

Maximum: As many as space allows

Minimum: 1 athlete + coach observing

#### TEACHING POINTS:

- 1 Athletes should focus on keeping their back straight when catching the ball.
- 2 Athletes should be aware of the wind and how it will effect the balls trajectory.
- 3 Athletes should be thinking about the ball and where it is heading even if they cannot see it.

#### DRILL OBJECTIVE

This drill gets athletes moving while getting a feel for current wind conditions.

It also helps athletes develop an awareness of where the ball is even when it is out of direct sight and reinforces the correct lunge position that athletes should adopt when playing a short ball.

#### DRILL DESCRIPTION

**Step 1:** Athlete throws the ball up in the air (low at first) and proceeds to catch it behind their back in lunge position.

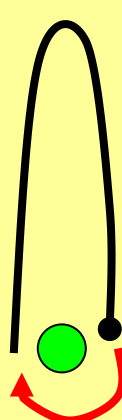
The athlete should focus on keeping their back straight when in lunge position.

This drill should be done in varying directions on the court in order for the athletes to develop an understanding of current wind conditions.

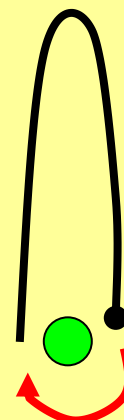
**Step 2:** Once the ball is being caught behind the back consistently the athlete should then bring the ball around to the front of the body (while remaining in lunge position) toss the ball a few feet in the air before passing the ball up and catching it again behind the back. The level of difficulty of the drill will increase as the ball is passed or thrown higher.

#### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

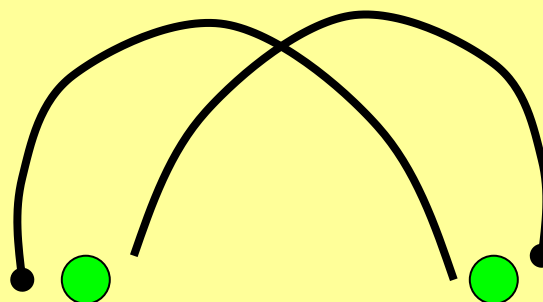
- After catching the ball they bring it around to the front of the body, give it a low throw then forearm pass it up for their partner to catch behind their back.
- For an advanced variation two pairs can attempt to accomplish this drill at the same time.



Step 1 has the athlete throw and catch behind their back



Step 2 has the athlete pass up the ball and catch behind their back.



Advanced variation of the drill has athletes passing to each other.



## 1.8 WARM-UP

### PASS, TOMAHAWK, TURN AND DIG

(beginner / intermediate)

#### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: 2-3 balls

Minimum: 1 ball for a group or 3 or 4

#### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 2 or 3 athletes per coach

Maximum: Up to 8 athletes + coach observing

Minimum: 1 athlete + coach assisting

#### DRILL OBJECTIVE

This objective of this drill is to loosen up the body and raise body temperature in preparation for more strenuous activity.

It will also increase the athlete's awareness of how current environmental conditions affect the ball.

Additionally this drill allows athletes to practice three beach techniques: passing the short ball, tomahawk and turning to pass the ball behind.

#### DRILL DESCRIPTION

##### Movement 1

Athlete (or coach) at the net throws up the ball for the partner to come forward and pass.

##### Movement 2

Person then moves back to tomahawk a ball that is either thrown or attacked at the head.

##### Movement 3

The previous ball is caught and thrown behind the athlete for them to turn and dig.

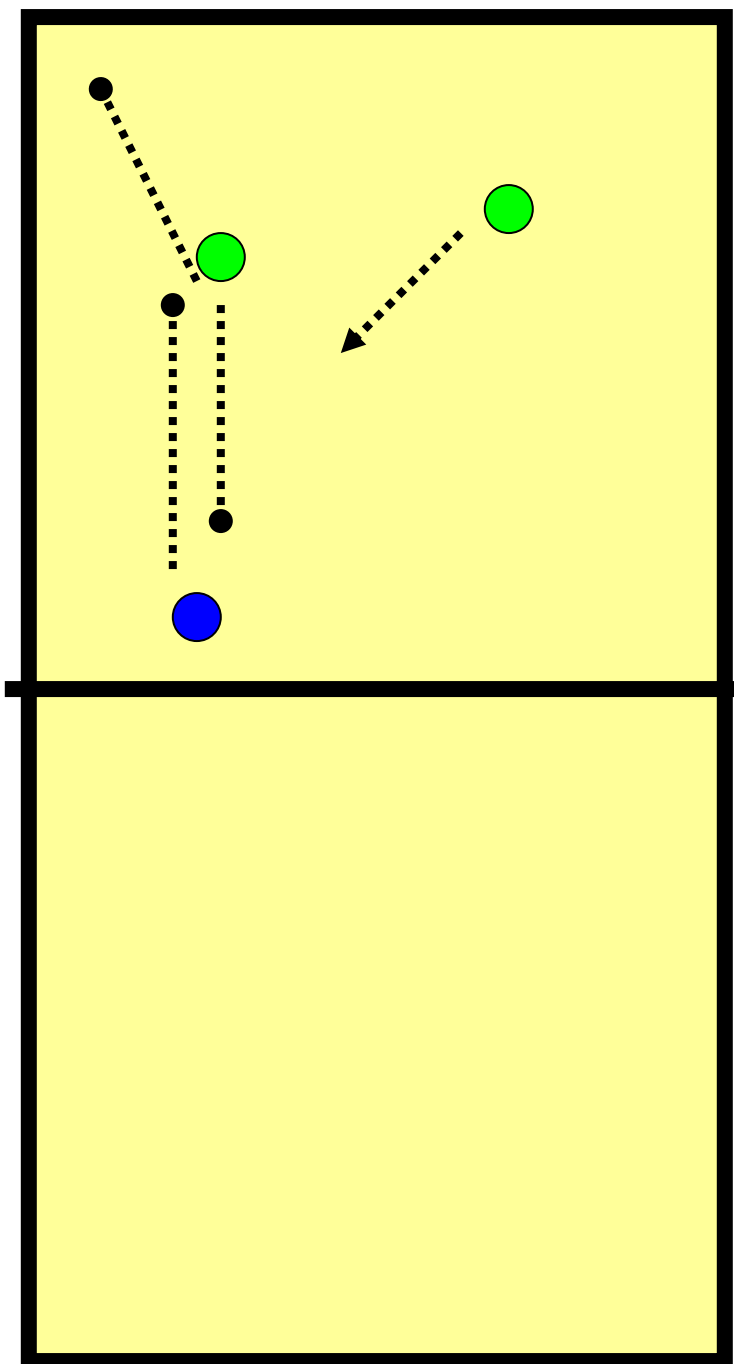
Spare athletes can come in from the opposite passing position and either catch the ball or set the ball to the coach/athlete at the net.

#### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- Ball could be attacked at the retreating athlete.
- This drill can be done from the centre of the court and the athlete turns to either corner to get the ball thrown behind.
- The athlete could play out the final ball.

#### TEACHING POINTS

- 1 During **movement 1** make sure that when the ball is being passed the outside leg is forward and the athlete is keeping their arms as close to perpendicular to the net as possible.
- 2 While moving back (**movement 2**) for the tomahawk make sure that the athlete keeps their eyes on the net.
- 3 In **movement 3** when the athlete turns to play the ball behind them, the line made by their arms should be in line with the target behind them and arms should move from sand to sky when contacting the ball.



## 1.9 WARM-UP

### PASS MEANS SET / SET MEANS PASS

(beginner / intermediate)

#### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: 1 ball per pair

Minimum: 1 ball per pair

#### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 2 or 3 athletes per coach

Maximum: Up to 8 athletes + coach observing

Minimum: 1 athlete + coach assisting

#### DRILL OBJECTIVE

This objective of this drill is to loosen up the body and raise body temperature in preparation for more strenuous activity. Additionally this drill forces the athletes to communicate, jump starts mental focus and trains the athlete to think at the same time as performing the physical skills of setting and passing.

#### DRILL DESCRIPTION

In this drill the athletes are facing each other and passing and setting the ball across the net except..... after playing the ball each athlete must either call pass or set and the athlete receiving the ball must do the opposite.

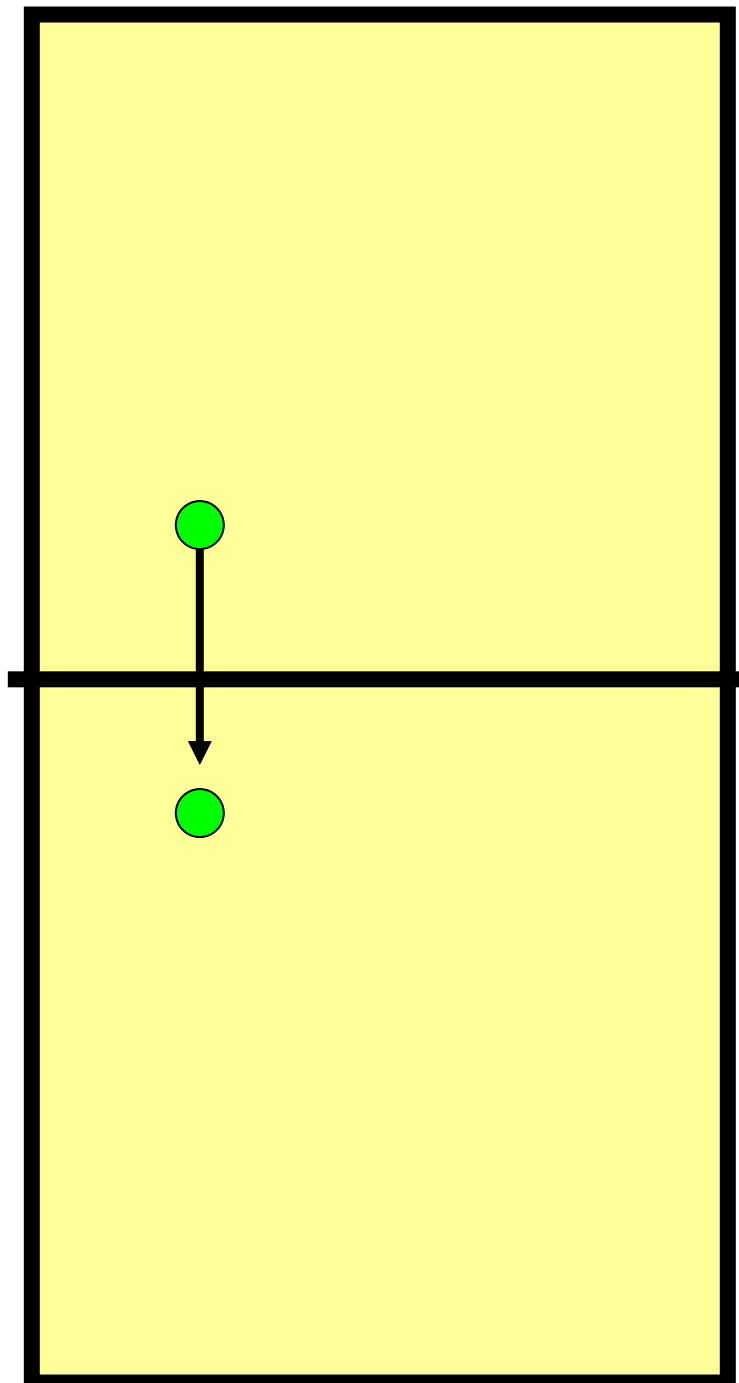
If one partner says 'pass' the other must 'set'.

#### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- Athletes can attempt the drill with three skills. 'spike' means 'pass', 'pass' means 'set', 'set' means 'spike'.

#### TEACHING POINTS

- Maintaining an athletic position throughout the drill will allow the athletes more time to play the correct shot.
- Staying relaxed will also benefit the athletes as tension will only slow down reaction time.



## 1.10 WARM-UP

### VOLESTE

(intermediate)

#### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: 4+ balls

Minimum: 1 or 2 balls

#### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 2 or 3 athletes + coach observing

Maximum: 4 athletes + coach observing

Minimum: 1 athletes + coach assisting

#### DRILL OBJECTIVE

This objective of this drill is to loosen up the body and raise body temperature in preparation for more strenuous activity.

It will also increase the athlete's awareness of how current environmental conditions affect the ball.

Additionally this drill reinforces correct defense techniques and overall hustle.

#### DRILL DESCRIPTION

This drill starts with one athlete on either side of the net.

One side is the 'points' side and the other is the 'challenger' side.

The athlete on the 'challenger' side underhand serves across the net and athletes play out the rally with only one touch each.

For a slightly easier option you can make the drill '2 touch'.

The ball must be played with both hands together.

If the athlete on the 'points' side wins the rally they get a point and if the player on the 'challenger' side wins they move to the 'points' side to receive the next serve.

If there are two athletes they can stay on their own side and play to a certain score.

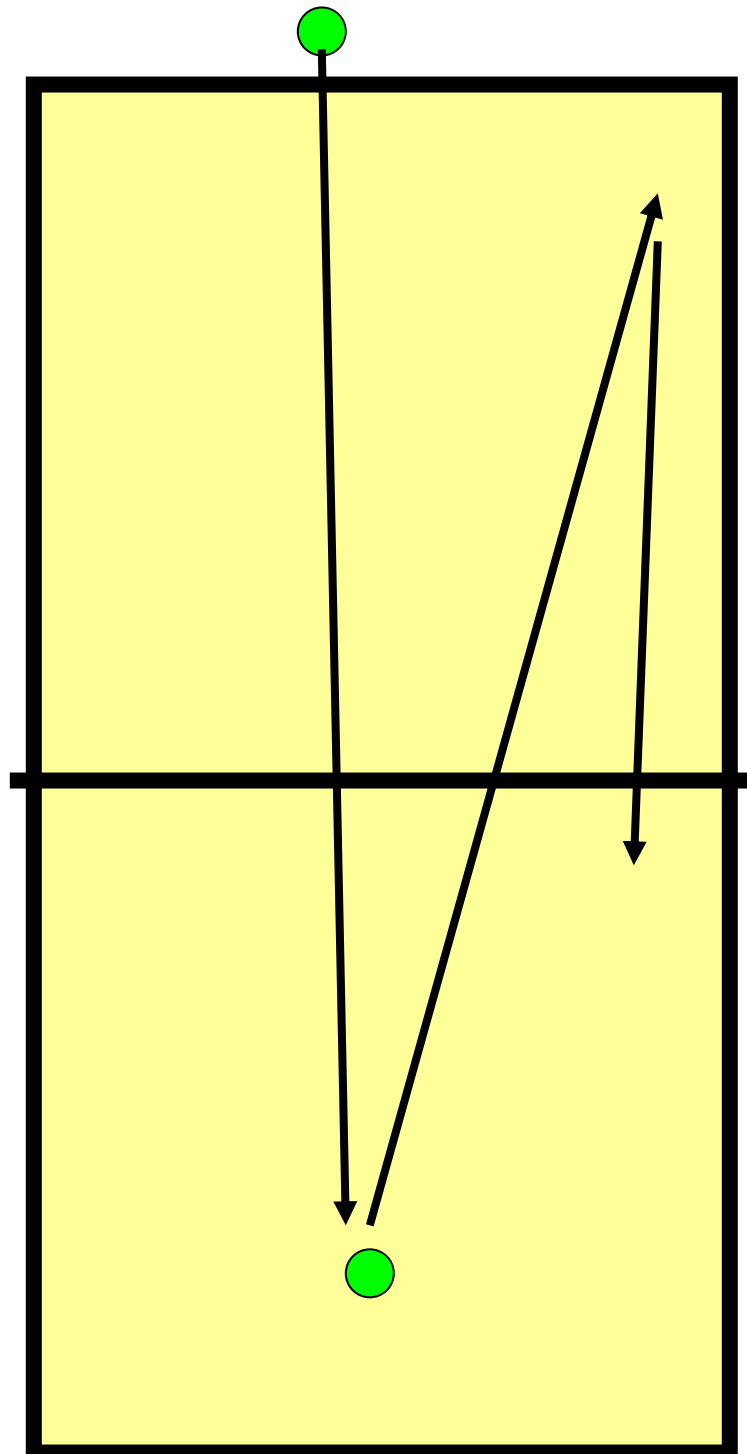
If there is only one athlete, the coach can mark out a smaller court for her/himself and have the athlete working harder for a point.

#### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- Athletes need to drop to the ground between each contact they make with the ball.
- Individuals or teams must play the ball and run round the court to enter from the other side

#### TEACHING POINTS:

- 1 Athletes need to stay very low and be activated and ready to move as the opposition is about to contact the ball.
- 2 If there is only one athlete on each side the athlete needs to attempt to return to the middle (and slightly back) of the court after each contact, as this is the best 'base' position from which to dig any ball coming over.



## 1.11 WARM-UP MOVEMENT DRILL

(Intermediate)

### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: 3+ balls

Minimum: 2 balls

### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 2 athletes + coach

Maximum: 3 athletes on each side + coach observing

Minimum: 2 athletes + coach assisting

### TEACHING POINTS:

- 1 Athletes need to keep in mind what is a good pass on every throw.
- 2 Beginner athletes must focus on passing forward and slightly inside, NOT to their partner.

### DRILL OBJECTIVE

This objective of this drill is to loosen up the body and raise body temperature in preparation for more strenuous activity. It will also increase the athlete's awareness of how current environmental conditions affect the ball.

### DRILL DESCRIPTION

From close to the net the coach throws the ball first **short** and then **deep** and then **short** again to the athlete opposite them on the other side of the net.

An additional athlete on the same side as the athlete playing the ball catches the first two balls and sets up the third ball to be played out by the passer.

Additionally this drill can be done with the ball thrown:

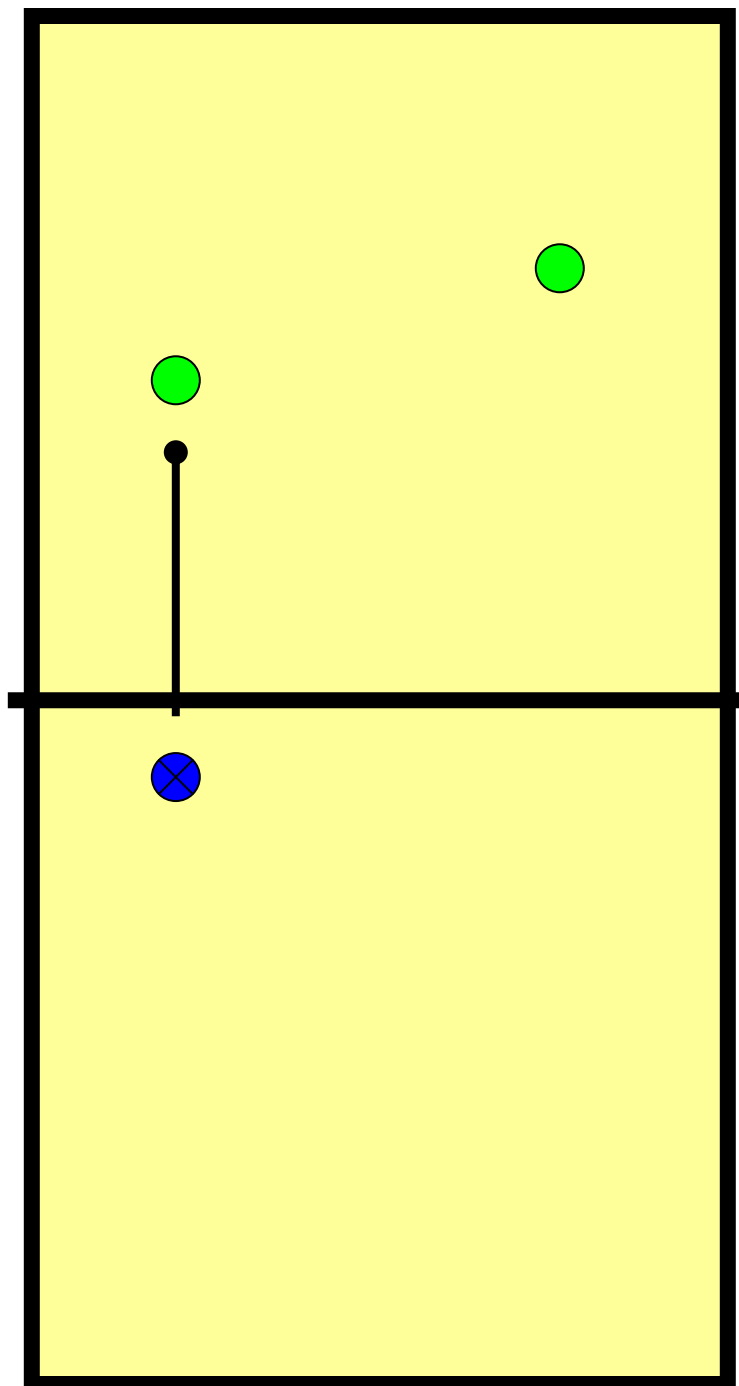
**deep / short / deep.**

**4 deep balls,**

**4 short balls or**

**4 corners.**

This is a fast passed drill with a lot of hustling.



### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- The athlete can play out all 3 balls thrown to them.
- The athlete can play out 5 balls rather than 3.

## 1.12 WARM-UP

### ONE BALL UNDER ONE BALL OVER

(intermediate)

#### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: 2 balls for each pair.

Minimum: 2 balls for each pair.

#### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: any number of pairs + coach observing.

Maximum: As many as space allows.

Minimum: 2 athletes.

#### DRILL OBJECTIVE

This objective of this drill is to loosen up the body and raise body temperature in preparation for more strenuous activity.

It will also increase the athlete's awareness of how current environmental conditions affect the ball.

Additionally this drill helps to develop basic hand eye coordination and the ability to attend to other things while passing the volleyball.

#### DRILL DESCRIPTION

Each athlete begins with a ball.

One ball is thrown (parallel to the ground) while the other ball is passed with the forearms in an arc over the top.

Athletes need to communicate with each other before the drill begins so that they understand which ball is going to be passed and which ball is going to be thrown.

Athletes need to focus on maintaining the pattern to keep both balls alive.

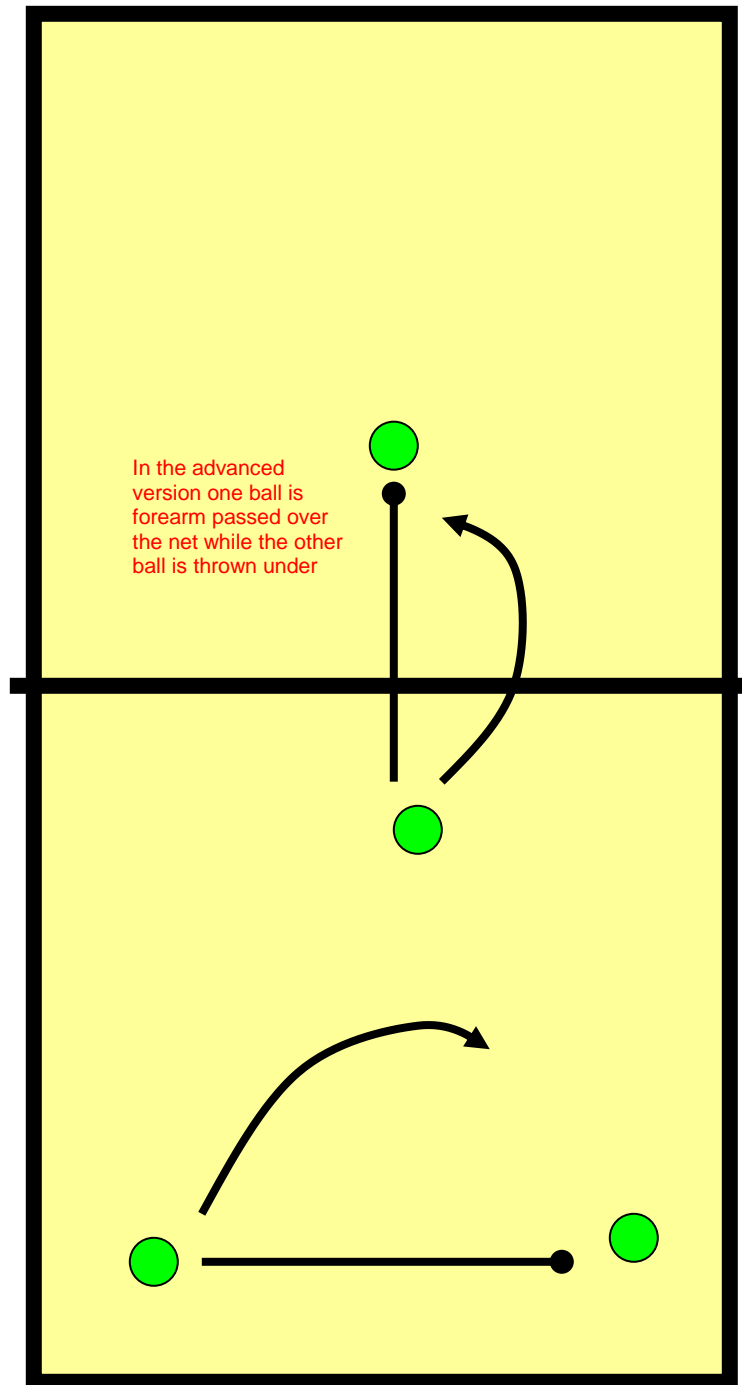
The drill can be made slightly easier by using two different colored volleyballs.

#### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- This drill can be done with athletes across the net from each other. The ball being thrown passes under the net while the other ball is forearm passed over the net.

#### TEACHING POINTS

- Athletes need to stay low, in the 'athletic position', so they can play the ball while maintaining balance. This is done by having athletes assume a position, whereby feet are approximately shoulder width apart with one foot forward and the other foot back.



### 1.13 WARM-UP BLOCK/DROP/PASS

(intermediate)

#### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: As many balls as possible

Minimum: 2 balls per athlete

#### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 5 athletes + coach observing

Maximum: Up to 10 athletes + coach observing

Minimum: 1 athlete + coach assisting

#### DRILL OBJECTIVE

This objective of this drill is to loosen up the body and raise body temperature in preparation for more strenuous activity.

It will also increase the athlete's awareness of how current environmental conditions affect the ball.

Additionally this drill helps to reinforce footwork on retreating.

#### DRILL DESCRIPTION

Athlete serves ball and jogs to net to block. After block athlete goes under the net to other side and retreats off the net.

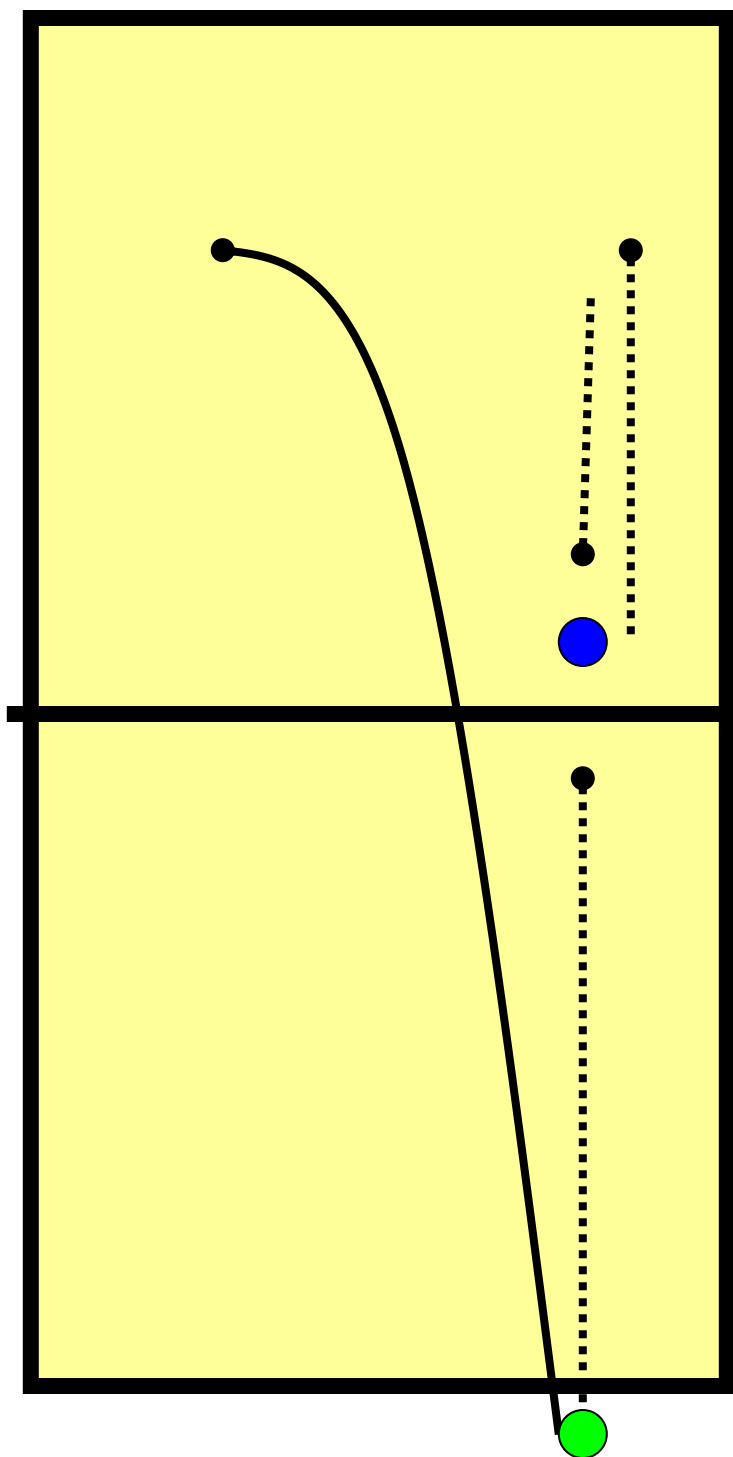
After dropping off the net the coach throws ball to athlete who comes forward and passes ball straight up then catches it. After catching their own ball the athlete then goes back to the opposite service line and repeats the drill.

#### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- Rather than sub-maximal effort as a warm up, this drill can be done at maximal effort and the coach can make tasks after the serve more difficult.

#### TEACHING POINTS:

- 1 Correct technique in all skills despite sub-maximal intensity as it is a warm up.
- 2 Serve and run to net.
- 3 Outside leg forward when retreating off the net.
- 4 Athletes need to be facing the net while dropping.



## 1.14 WARM-UP IN THREES - BUMP SET BEHIND (intermediate)

### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: 2-3 balls

Minimum: 1 ball for every 3 athletes

### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 1 set of 3 athletes + coach observing

Maximum: As many as space allows

Minimum: 2 athletes + coach participating

### TEACHING POINTS

- 1 Athlete 2 needs to keep in mind that they are passing the ball with backspin. (refer drill 3.11 for additional details)
- 2 Athlete 2 needs to be in the athletic position so that they can move quickly to pass a ball that is not ideal.
- 3 The arms of athlete 2 need to be parallel with the target on contact with the ball and move 'sand to sky'.

### DRILL OBJECTIVE

This objective of this drill is to loosen up the body and raise body temperature in preparation for more strenuous activity.

It will also increase the athlete's awareness of how current environmental conditions affect the ball.

Additionally this drill works on passing with particular focus on a pass that travels behind the body.

### DRILL DESCRIPTION

Athlete 1 either passes or sets the ball to athlete 2 who forearm passes the ball behind themselves to athletes 3.

Athletes 3 then either sets or passes the ball over the head of athlete 2 for the drill to continue.

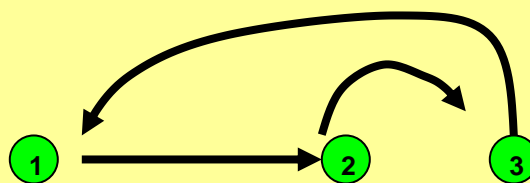
As athlete 2 plays they ball they should practice moving forward through the ball giving the ball spin.

It is important that athlete 2 focuses on making sure that their arms are parallel with the target behind them – this way they only have to pass their arms 'through the ball' and their pass is likely to be more accurate.

After 5-10 good passes behind them (or a set of 5-6 continuous) athlete 2 should switch positions within the drill.

### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- Athlete 1 can intentionally pass the ball to either side of athlete 2 making an accurate pass behind more difficult.



## 1.15 WARM-UP OFF THE GROUND GAME

(intermediate)

### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: 2-3 balls  
Minimum: 1 ball

### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: Sets of 3 athletes + coach observing  
Maximum: 8 athletes + coach observing  
Minimum: 3 athletes + coach participating

### DRILL OBJECTIVE

This objective of this drill is to loosen up the body and raise body temperature in preparation for more strenuous activity. It will also increase the athlete's awareness of how current environmental conditions affect the ball. It is difficult to do this drill without laughter ensuing so it is a great drill for relaxing stressed athletes.

### DRILL DESCRIPTION

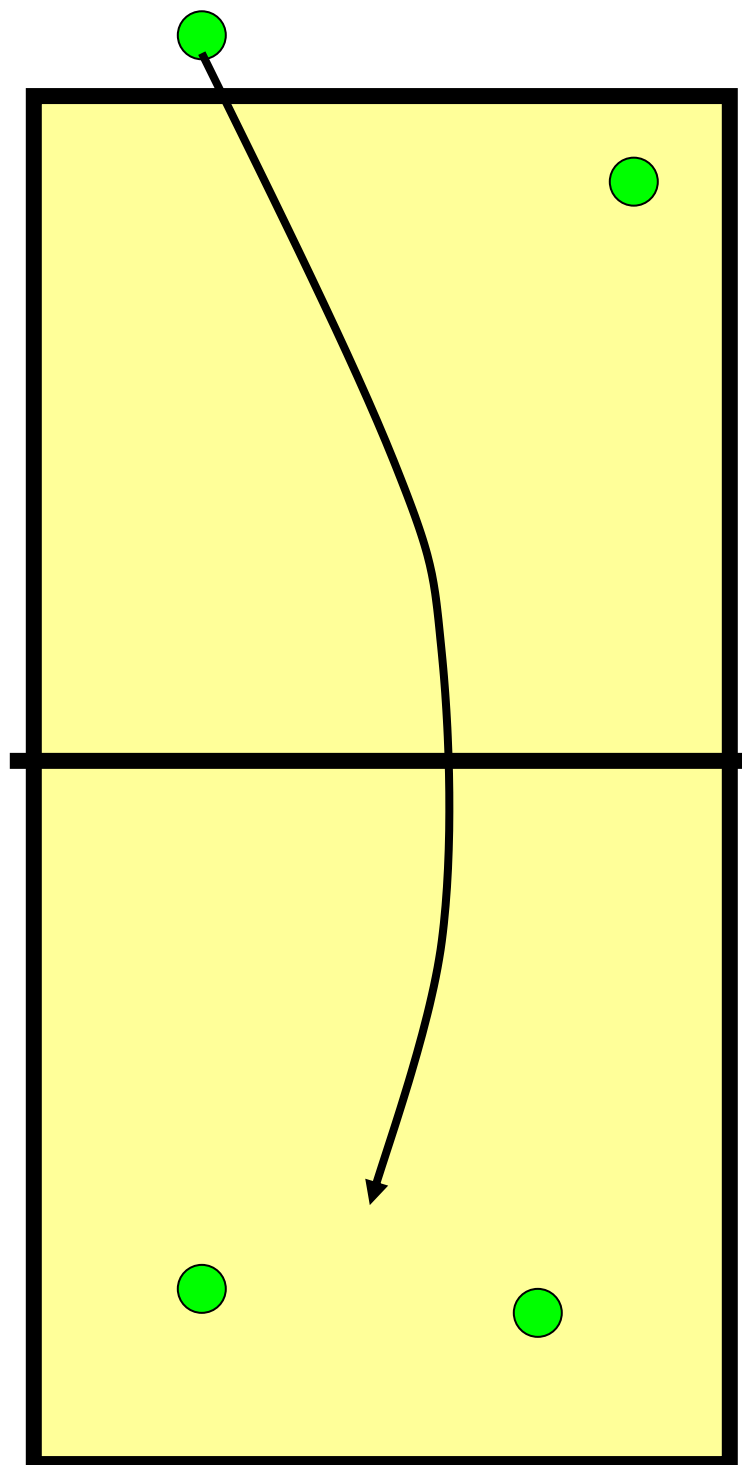
Normal scoring and format except each athlete must contact the ball off the ground on every contact. What makes this warm-up game fun is that the ball can be carried or 2 hit or tipped. This warm-up is best suited for a group of 4 but would work for more if you used a 'team off - team on' format or weakest link format if the numbers were uneven.

### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- Stipulate that there should be only 2 contacts on the ball on each side.

### TEACHING POINTS

- Timing of the jump – encourage athletes to make contact on the ball on the way up and not jump too early.
- This is a less serious drill and as a result has less focus on technique development.





## 1.16 WARM-UP

### BUTTERFLY

(intermediate)

#### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: 6+ balls

Minimum: 2 balls

#### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 9 athletes + coach observing

Maximum: Up to 18 athletes + coach observing

Minimum: 5 athletes + coach observing

#### TEACHING POINTS:

- 1 Passers need to be conscious of wind direction and how it affects ball trajectory.
- 2 Make sure passer stays in correct receiving position.
- 3 Setter needs to release when they see the ball going to the passer.

#### DRILL OBJECTIVE

This objective of this drill is to loosen up the body and raise body temperature in preparation for more strenuous activity.

It will also increase the athlete's awareness of how current environmental conditions affect the ball.

Additionally this drill focuses on serving and passing.

#### DRILL DESCRIPTION

An athlete on the baseline serves directly to a passer in front of them on the other side of the net.

The athlete that just served then quickly runs to the net and completes a practice block.

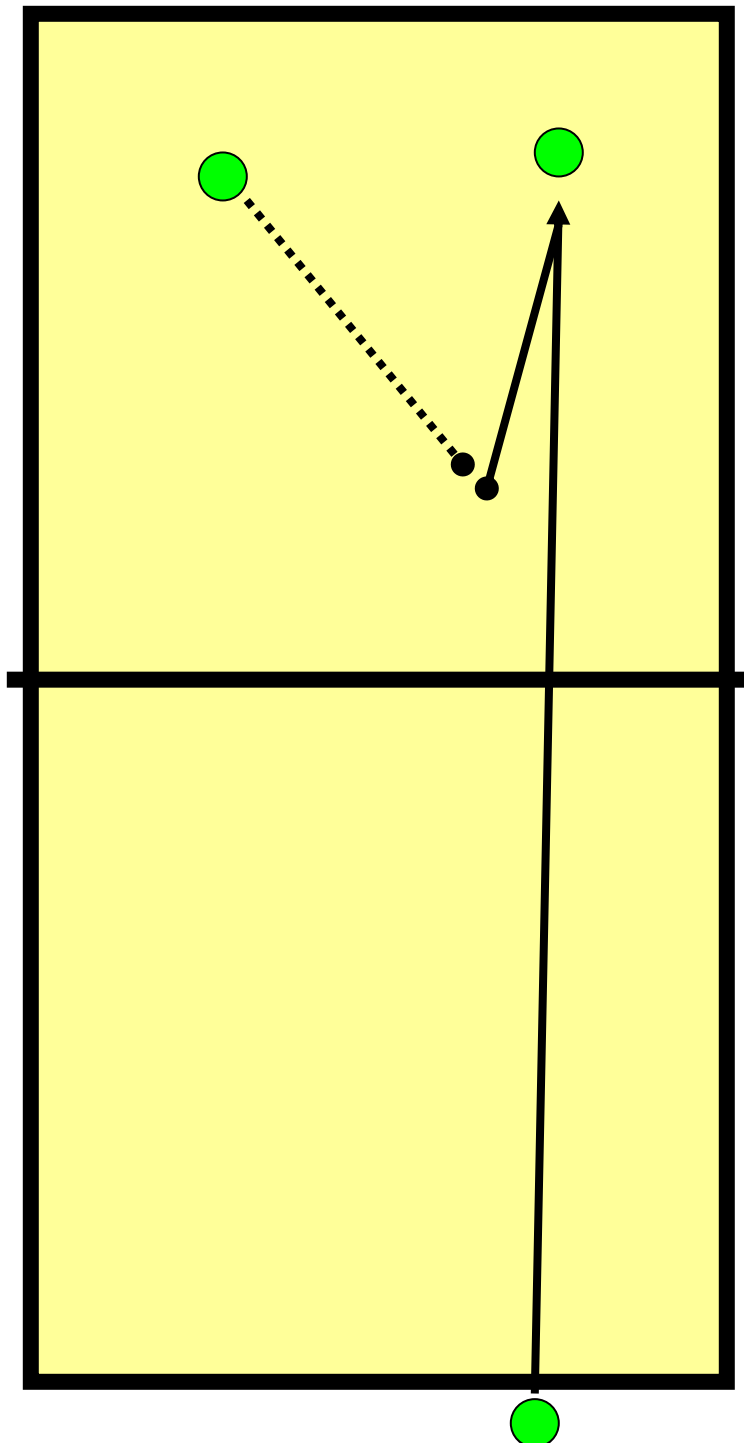
The served ball is set and caught by the non-receiving passer.

Server moves to passing position, Passer moves to setting position and setter goes to baseline to serve.

Athletes in the drill cycle round serving from both sides of the net.

#### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- Servers could get a point if the pass is poor.
- Every good pass could constitute a point and the group may need to get a certain number of points in a certain time.
- Keep stronger athletes on the difficult side with regard to wind conditions in order to challenge them more.



## 1.17 WARM-UP

### NO JUMP - SHOOTING GAME

(intermediate)

#### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: 2 or 3 balls  
Minimum: 1 ball

#### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 4 athletes + coach observing  
Maximum: 6 athletes + coach observing  
Minimum: 3 athletes + coach participating

#### DRILL OBJECTIVE

This objective of this drill is to loosen up the body and raise body temperature in preparation for more strenuous activity. It will also increase the athlete's awareness of how current environmental conditions affect the ball. Additionally this drill develops accuracy in soft shots and 'taking a look' before shooting in order to play the ball away from the defenders.

#### DRILL DESCRIPTION

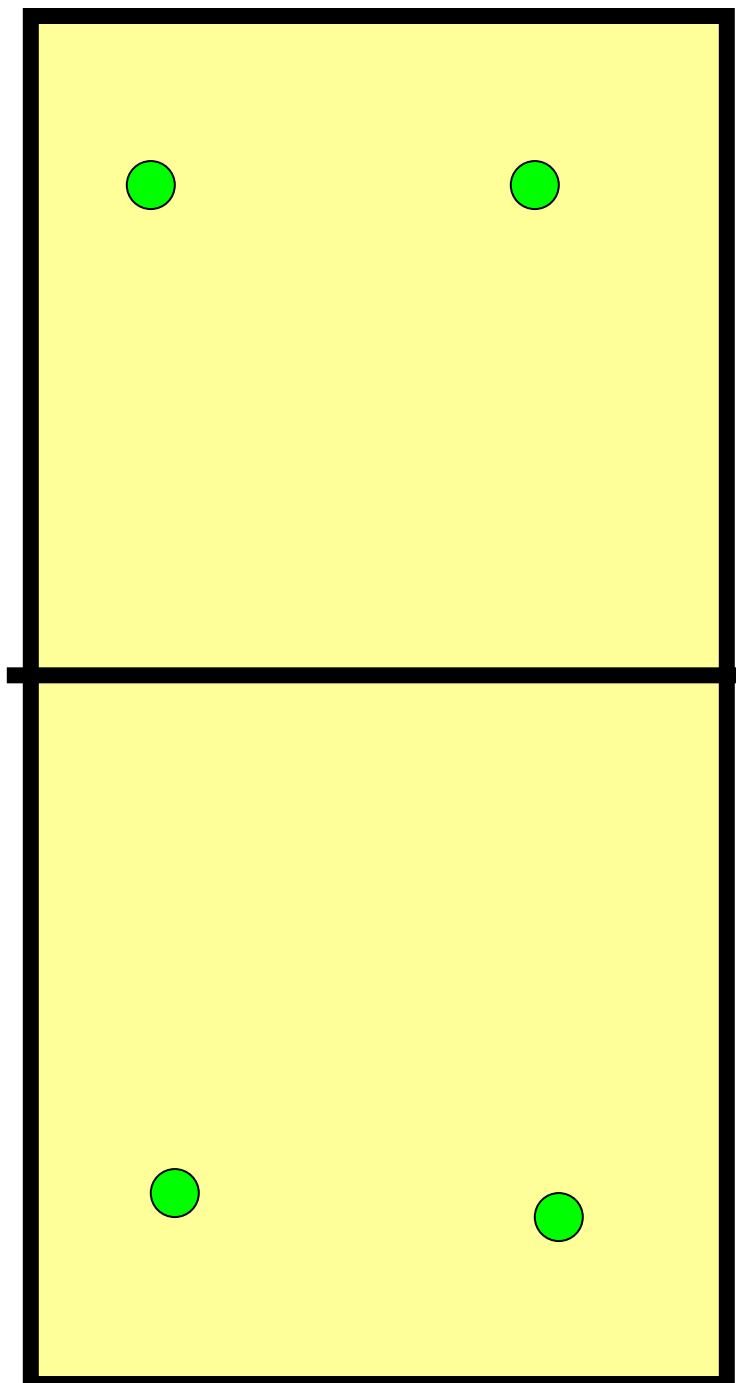
Normal scoring and format except no jumping is allowed. This warm-up is best suited for a group of 4 but would work for more if you used a 'team off - team on' format or 'weakest link' format (refer drill 8.2) if the numbers were uneven. With athletes with good ball control this drill tends to have long rallies and is a good warm-up.

#### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- One team can hit only line the other only angle – this way it makes it even harder to score.

#### TEACHING POINTS

- Athletes should be made aware of the fact that a ball played close to the net gives you a better opportunity to score.
- On the 3<sup>rd</sup> attack athletes should play the ball with a high arm and be facing a direction that allows them to play a shot to any area of the court.
- Remind athletes to follow their pass so that the setter can set the ball 'up and down' and allow the athlete shooting better vision of the defenders.



## 1.18 WARM-UP SQUARE DRILL

(intermediate / advanced)

### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: 2 or 3 balls

Minimum: 1 ball

### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 4 athletes on each side + coach observing

Maximum: 12 athletes (6 on each side) + coach observing

Minimum: 3 athletes + coach participating

### TEACHING POINTS

- 1 Athletes should be still and in balance when the ball is hit.
- 2 Communication between athletes will help with this drill.
- 3 A low body position will allow athletes to recover from any balls that are not played well.

### DRILL OBJECTIVE

This objective of this drill is to loosen up the body and raise body temperature in preparation for more strenuous activity.

It will also increase the athlete's awareness of how current environmental conditions affect the ball.

Additionally athletes get to practice the pass set and spike in this warm up drill.

### DRILL DESCRIPTION

Athlete 1 starts with the ball at the net and drives the ball towards athlete 2.

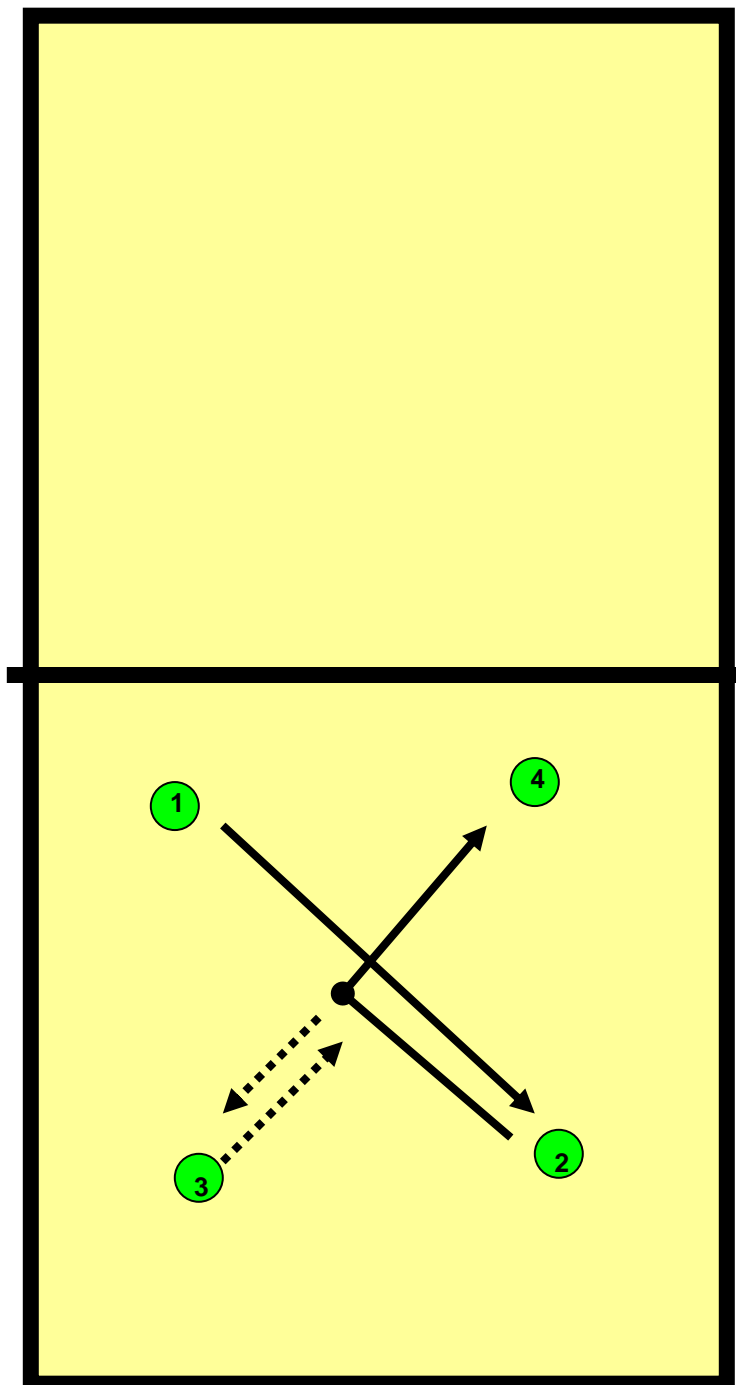
Athlete 2 digs the ball up to the middle of the square made by all 4 athletes.

Athlete 3 then comes in and sets the ball to the athlete directly in front of them (athlete 4) and proceeds to quickly retreat (move back) to get into a position to dig the ball up to the middle of the court for the drill to continue.

Another way to describe this drill is that the athletes at the net drive the ball at the players in front of them and the athletes away from the net alternate in setting, retreating and digging.

### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- With additional athletes you can challenge them to move around the square after each play while keeping the drill alive.



## 1.19 WARM-UP 1 ON 1 VOLLEY CROSS COURT

(intermediate / advanced)

### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: 2 or 3 balls

Minimum: 1 ball

### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 4 athletes + coach observing

Maximum: 8 athletes + coach observing

Minimum: 1 athlete + coach participating

### DRILL OBJECTIVE

This objective of this drill is to loosen up the body and raise body temperature in preparation for more strenuous activity. It will also increase the athlete's awareness of how current environmental conditions affect the ball.

Additionally this drill allows athletes a chance to practice passing, setting and soft drives in a non-competitive environment.

### DRILL DESCRIPTION

In this warm-up drill athletes are not trying to beat each other but actually work together to continue a rally.

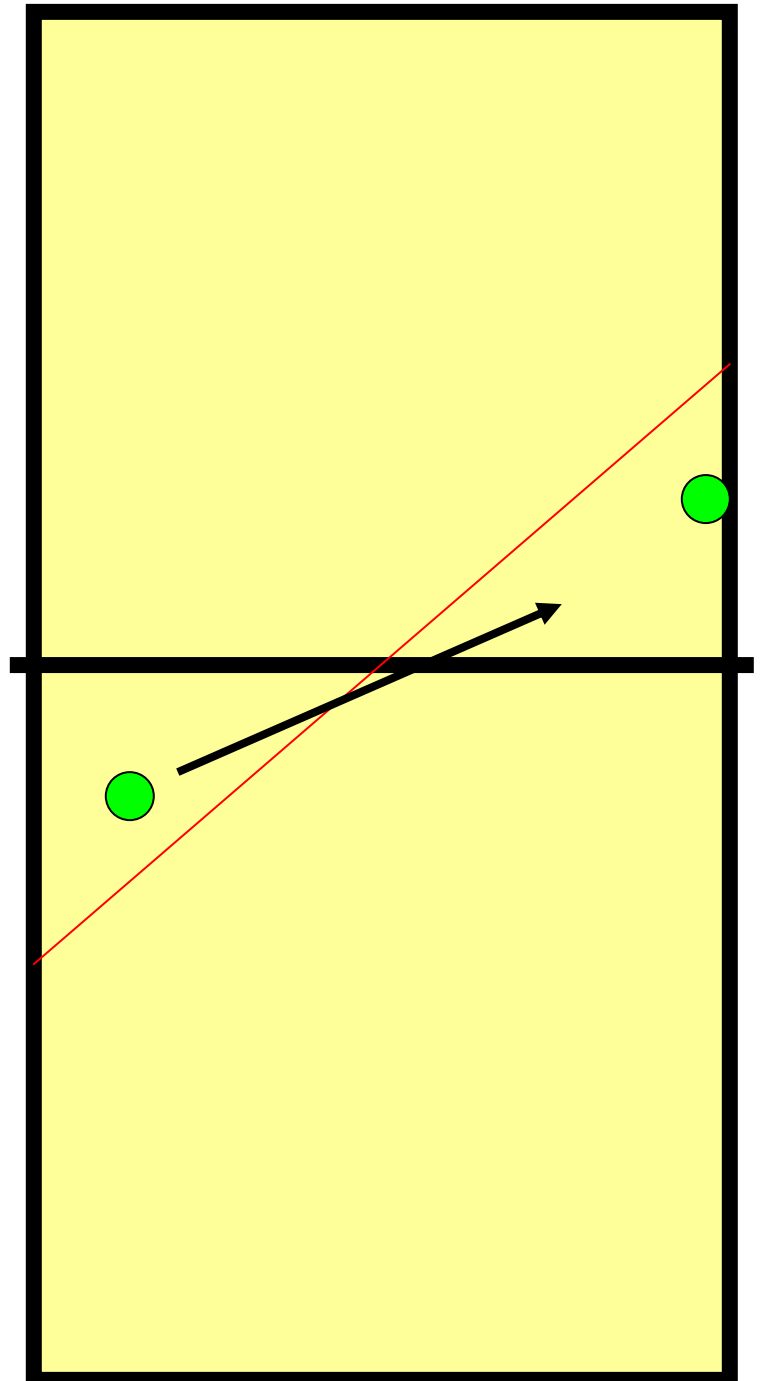
Using a spare court rope (or simply marking out the sand) the athletes should create two small courts on either side of the net - in this case the red line creates two small triangular shaped courts. (but they could also be squares)

The athletes then attempt to keep a rally going where each athlete is allowed to touch the ball 3 times.

Athletes should switch sides so they are practicing shots from both left and right sides of the court.

### TEACHING POINTS

- 1 Athletes should be in the athletic position at the time of the 3<sup>rd</sup> contact made by the athlete on the other side of the net.
- 2 Athletes should try not to face directly at the target but face the direction of attack they will adopt during a game and use the wrist to turn the ball.
- 3 Athletes should be reminded that in preparation to dig the shot the best position to be in is at the sideline so they are moving forward towards the ball.



### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- Allow only 2 touches on the ball.

## 1.20 WARM-UP ONE ARM GAME

(intermediate / advanced)

### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: 2 or 3 balls

Minimum: 1 ball

### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 4 athletes + coach observing

Maximum: 6 athletes + coach observing

Minimum: 1 athlete + coach participating

### TEACHING POINTS

- 1 Athletes should be reminded that despite hustling to the ball but they need to keep their upper body relaxed.
- 2 For athletes just learning to knuckle, they need to be reminded to tense the wrist and fingers in order to transfer the force of the ball down into the arm – otherwise they can find the knuckle painful.

### DRILL OBJECTIVE

This objective of this drill is to loosen up the body and raise body temperature in preparation for more strenuous activity. It will also increase the athlete's awareness of how current environmental conditions affect the ball.

Additionally this drill gives the athletes practice in using the knuckle technique and playing the ball with one arm.

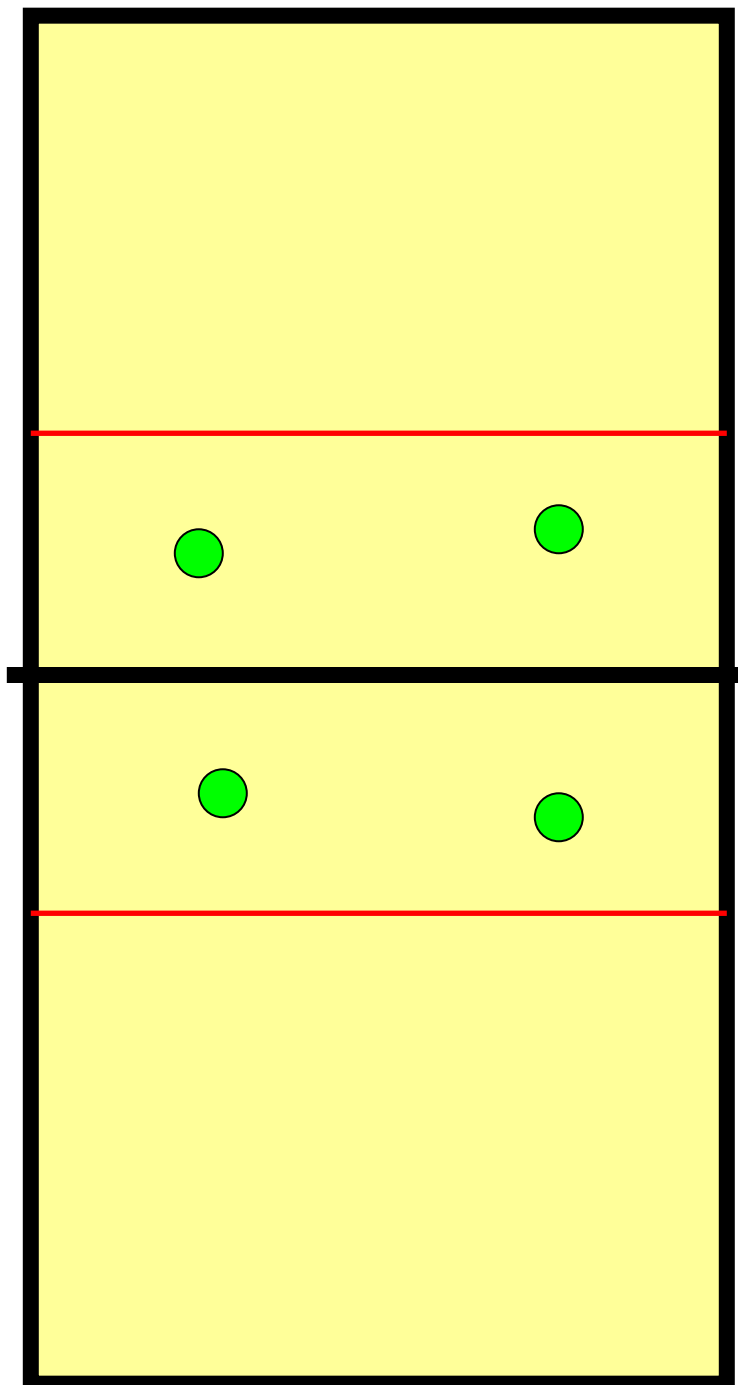
### DRILL DESCRIPTION

Athletes or coach should mark out a smaller court, which would normally be short/wide.

Athletes play out a game beginning with a underhand serve but in this drill the athletes are only allowed to contact the ball with one hand / arm.

### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- Have the athletes only use their non-dominant arm.



## 1.21 WARM-UP

### VOLESTE

(advanced)

#### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: 2 or 3 balls

Minimum: 1 ball

#### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 2 athletes + coach observing

Maximum: 6 athletes + coach observing

Minimum: 1 athlete + coach participating

#### DRILL OBJECTIVE

This objective of this drill is to loosen up the body and raise body temperature in preparation for more strenuous activity.

It will also increase the athlete's awareness of how current environmental conditions affect the ball.

Additionally this drill is a good way to get the competitive juices flowing at the start of training.

#### DRILL DESCRIPTION

This drill could be done cooperatively with 2 or more athletes where they attempt to play the ball (with only 1 touch) from square 1 through to square 8.

A competitive version would be to have athletes playing 'deep' voleste in squares 1 and 2 or 3 and 4.

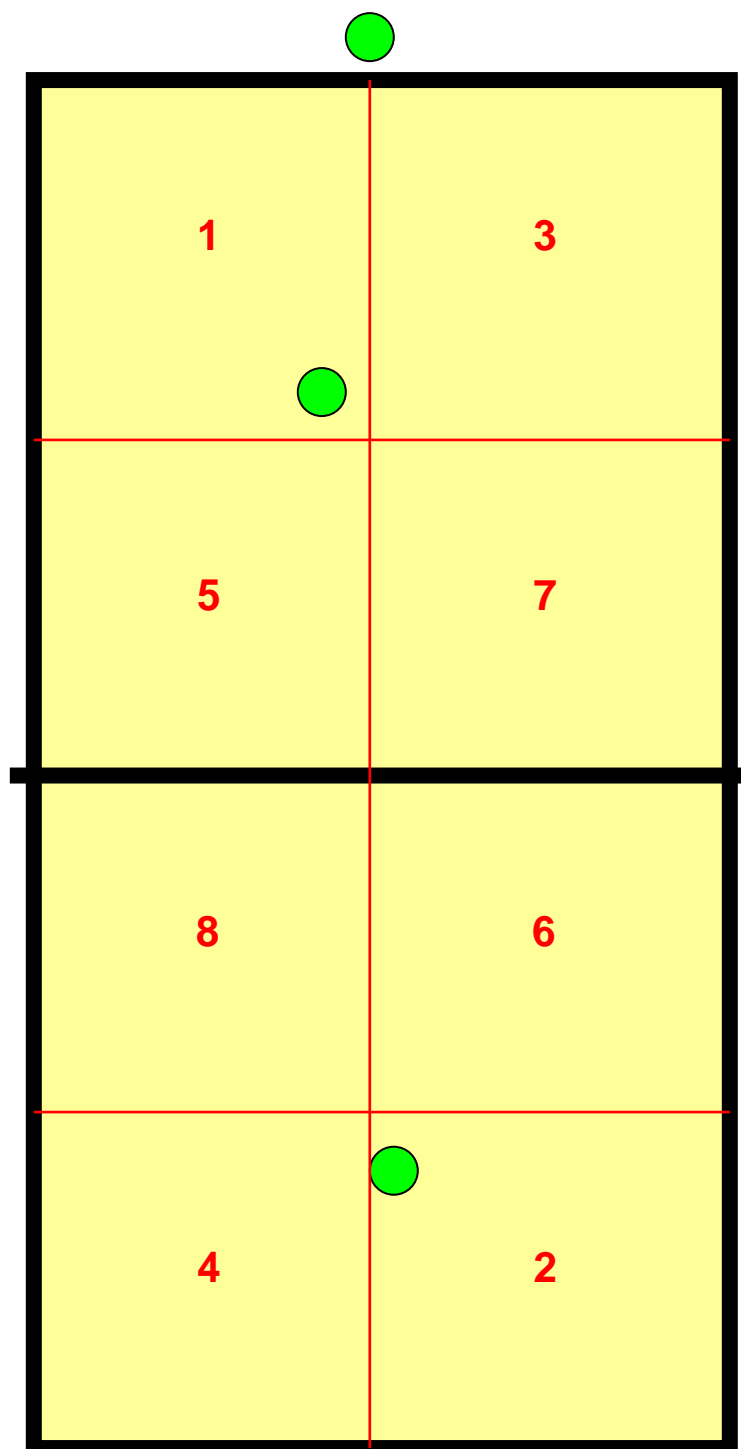
You could also mix it up so some athletes playing deep and others are playing shallow.

#### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- Have athletes switching from defending 'short' and 'deep' by calling out one or the other as the ball crosses the net.

#### TEACHING POINTS

- 1 Athletes need to stay very low and be activated and ready to move as the opposition is about to contact the ball.
- 2 Athletes should be encouraged to watch the athlete playing the ball and not the ball itself.
- 3 Athletes should be reminded that they should think strategically about where they are placing the ball, looking to play the ball away from the opposition.



## 1.22 WARM-UP

### STANDING SHOT WITH RETREATING

(advanced)

#### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: 2 or 3 balls

Minimum: 1 ball

#### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 4 athletes + coach observing

Maximum: 8 athletes + coach observing

Minimum: 3 athletes + coach participating

#### TEACHING POINTS:

- 1 Athletes should be still and in balance when the ball is hit.
- 2 Athletes need to keep eyes on the net when dropping off.
- 3 Make sure athlete has foot closest to sideline forward when dropping off.

#### DRILL OBJECTIVE

This objective of this drill is to loosen up the body and raise body temperature in preparation for more strenuous activity.

It will also increase the athlete's awareness of how current environmental conditions affect the ball.

Additionally athletes get to practice dropping off the net, digging balls and playing soft shots.

#### DRILL DESCRIPTION

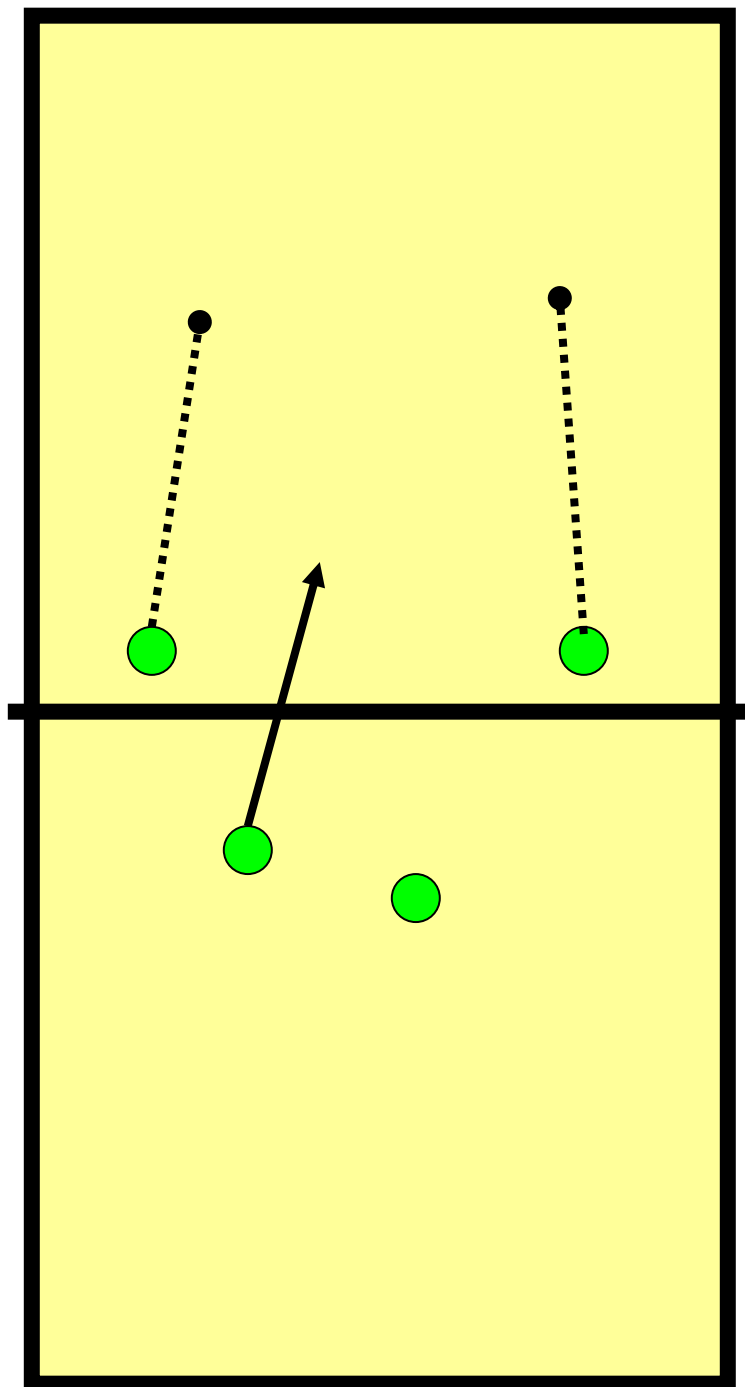
Athletes play a standing shot game with no jumping (as per drill 1.17) however as soon as the ball crosses the net the team attacked must run up to the net and get into position to drop off, with one athlete on the left and one on the right.

Both athletes then drop off the net as soon as the opposing team sets the ball.

You could make this drill cooperative initially then competitive after the ball crosses the net 3 times.

#### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- Have all ball set balls off the net to better simulate a situation whereby a player would retreat.
- Set balls close to the net to make it more difficult for the defenders and force them to retreat quicker.



# THE SERVE

The serve is the only time when you have complete control over the point with respect to the fact that the ball begins in your hand.

Teams that put strong serving pressure on their opponents generate more scoring opportunities than teams with easy serves and as a result have more success and for this reason considerable time should be spent developing the serve.

Make sure you get practice serving in different wind conditions and when the wind is traveling in different directions across the court.

## Beginner

For beginners an important concept to reinforce is the act of transferring weight from the back foot to the front foot. Initially to encourage this you can get a server to lift up their front foot prior to serving to ensure that all their weight is on the back foot. Reinforcing the correct motor pattern regularly by completing a significant number of serves. Just be aware that repeated serving with poor technique can exacerbate a rotator cuff injury caused by a weak or imbalanced shoulder.

## Intermediate

Because the game does not consist of repeated serves (unless you get on a sizable roll) practicing small numbers of serves regularly will be more beneficial and more 'game like' Try to break up serves with a run to the net to block or a defensive play of an attack before returning to the baseline to serve again.

At this level you may want to discuss the idea of strategic serves and work on specific serves that in particular wind conditions will be most effective. Using the wind becomes an important factor in creating opportunities to win points off serve.

## Advanced

At the advanced level serving is all about creating opportunities to score. Because the receiving team has the first attack and a statistically higher chance of putting the ball down onto the sand, winning points off the serve is extremely valuable. Aces are nice but even the best servers only average about 1 per game. Serving strategy and 'creating opportunities' often revolves around creating a less than perfect pass and set, or influencing the likelihood of the opposition playing a particular shot. For example, if you serve deep are they more likely to hit or shoot? ... What about if you serve short? ...



# SERVING DRILLS

|                         |   |   |
|-------------------------|---|---|
| <b><u>DRILL 2.1</u></b> | <b><u>SERVE AND GET INTO POSITION</u></b> | <b><u>(beginner)</u></b>                |
| <b><u>DRILL 2.2</u></b> | <b><u>SERVING OUTSIDE THE HEART</u></b>   | <b><u>(beginner / intermediate)</u></b> |
| <b><u>DRILL 2.3</u></b> | <b><u>DEEP SERVE PRACTICE</u></b>         | <b><u>(beginner / intermediate)</u></b> |
| <b><u>DRILL 2.4</u></b> | <b><u>FORCE THEM BACK</u></b>             | <b><u>(intermediate)</u></b>            |
| <b><u>DRILL 2.5</u></b> | <b><u>SERVING VARIETY DRILL</u></b>       | <b><u>(intermediate / advanced)</u></b> |
| <b><u>DRILL 2.6</u></b> | <b><u>FIRST TO 10 SERVING DRILL</u></b>   | <b><u>(intermediate / advanced)</u></b> |
| <b><u>DRILL 2.7</u></b> | <b><u>SPLIT THE PASSERS</u></b>           | <b><u>(intermediate / advanced)</u></b> |



## 2.1 SERVING

### SERVE AND GET INTO POSITION

(beginner)

#### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: As many balls as possible

Minimum: 4 balls

#### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 2 athletes per side + coach observing

Maximum: 8 athletes per side + coach observing

Minimum: 1 athlete + coach assisting

#### DRILL OBJECTIVE

Rarely do we serve and stay at the baseline so this drill works on serving and moving into the court to get additional practice on any specified play determined by the coach.

#### DRILL DESCRIPTION

In this drill the athlete serves and then moves quickly into defense or blocking position to make a play.

Depending on a player's level of skill, position and area requiring improvement, the coach should decide on the movement that is to be practiced after the serve.

The possibilities are almost endless as to what the player could do in this drill.

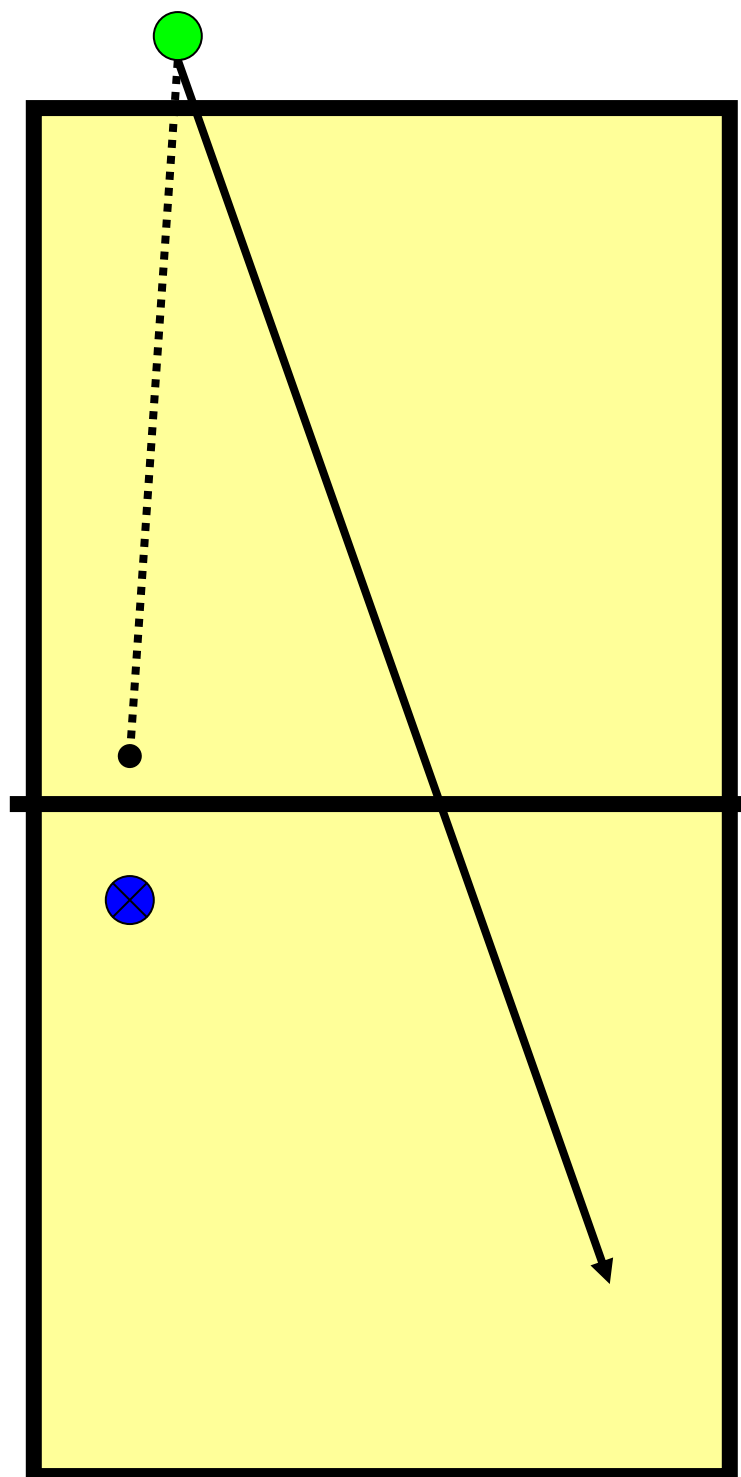
- Running to the net to block a ball hit by the coach.
- Running to the net then retreating to defend a high ball.
- Running into defensive position to dig a ball that it hit short.
- Running into the court to defend a ball that is played over on two,

#### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- Coach can hit at the defender or blocker after they serve and move into position.

#### TEACHING POINTS

- 1 Athletes should have a particular serve in mind when they contact the ball.
- 2 Ensure that the athletes are thinking about how they might use the wind to their advantage on the serve.
- 3 Athletes should move quickly to the spot to make the specified play.



## 2.2 SERVING

### SERVING OUTSIDE THE HEART

(beginner/intermediate)

#### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: As many balls as possible.

Minimum: 5-6 balls.

#### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 6 athletes + coach observing.

Maximum: 4 athletes per side + coach observing.

Minimum: 1 athlete + coach observing.

#### DRILL OBJECTIVE

This drill focuses on the development of serves that make the opposition move away from their starting positions with the objective of creating a passing error.

The heart shape is a good teaching tool for beginners.

#### DRILL DESCRIPTION

A heart shape should be drawn on the sand. Athletes should be made aware that the inside of the heart represents the area of the court that is close to the passers and consequently the area that servers should avoid serving into.

With 2 or more athletes this drill could be made competitive by awarding points to the servers placing serves outside of the heart.

**Missed serve: -1 point.**

**Inside heart: 0 points.**

**Outside heart: 1 point.**

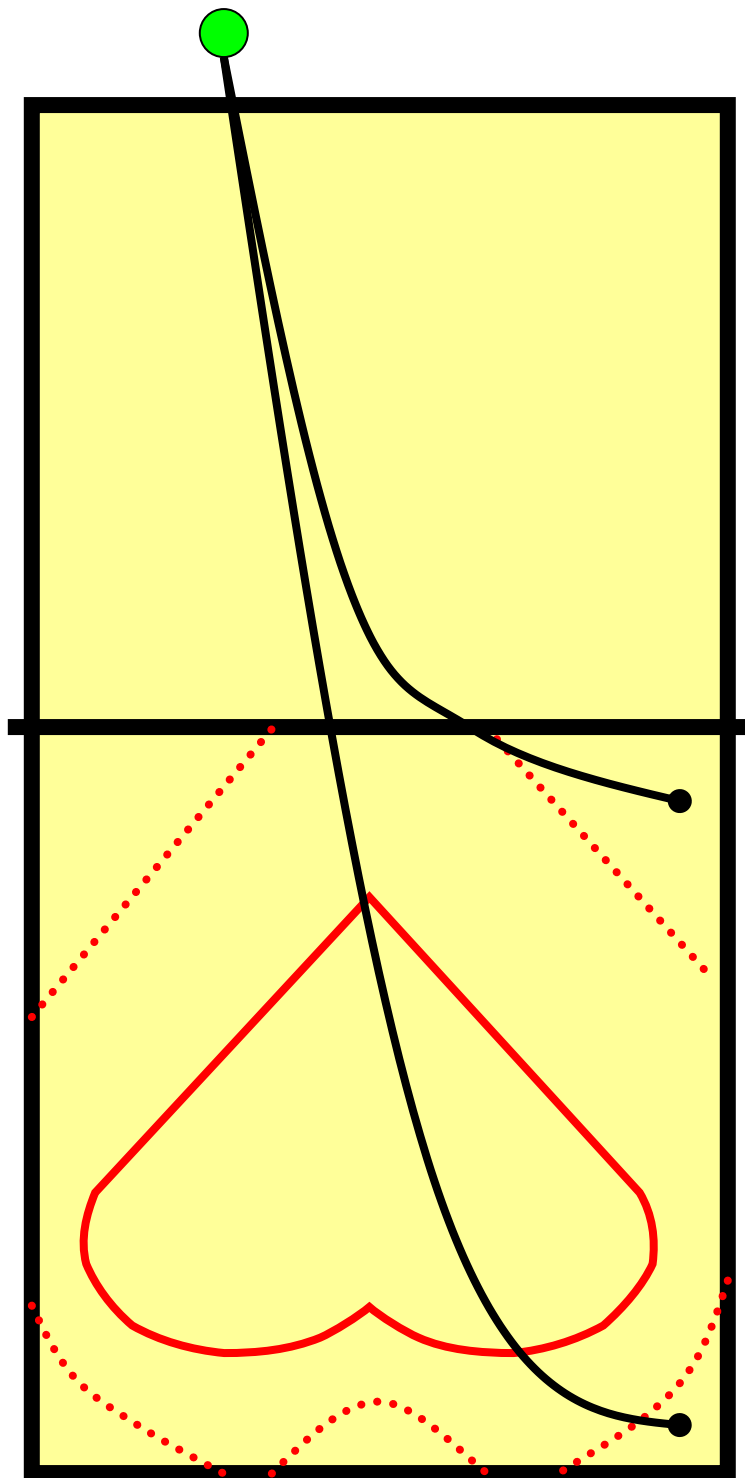
**Corner triangles: 2 points.**

#### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- Add additional lines (indicated in red in the diagram to the right) that are worth extra points if served into.
- Athletes have to serve into the designated area outside the heart off a jump serve.

#### TEACHING POINTS

- 1 Be aware of how the wind affects the ball once the ball is in the air and adjust accordingly.
- 2 Try to always serve into the wind and not with the wind - *the trajectory of the ball will be more predictable with the wind.*
- 3 Make adjustments in your ball toss relative to the wind – *for example if it is very windy then the ball should be tossed lower.*



## 2.3 SERVING

### DEEP SERVE PRACTICE

(beginner / intermediate)

#### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: As many balls as possible

Minimum: 5 balls

#### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 4 athletes + coach observing

Maximum: 6 athletes + coach observing

Minimum: 1 athlete + coach observing

#### DRILL OBJECTIVE

Athletes learn to develop a good consistent deep serve that lands in the last 3 feet of the court and pushes the passer back.

Great serve when the server is playing with the wind in their back as the ball has to travel a significant distance up into the wind after the pass making it difficult for the opposition setter.

#### DRILL DESCRIPTION

After drawing a line 3 feet from the baseline (cones can also be used for better visibility) athletes practice serving deep.

Athletes should serve a number of serves deep in a row to get a feel for the correct angle and distance before breaking up each serve with a run into the court.

In order to disguise the serve, have the athlete move under the ball just prior to contact to create a higher angle of trajectory. In order for the deep serve to be effective it must travel high over the passers to force them back as low flat serves can be passed without the opposition having to retreat.

Initially the server should focus on the distance and trajectory of the serve before thinking about the line of the serve.

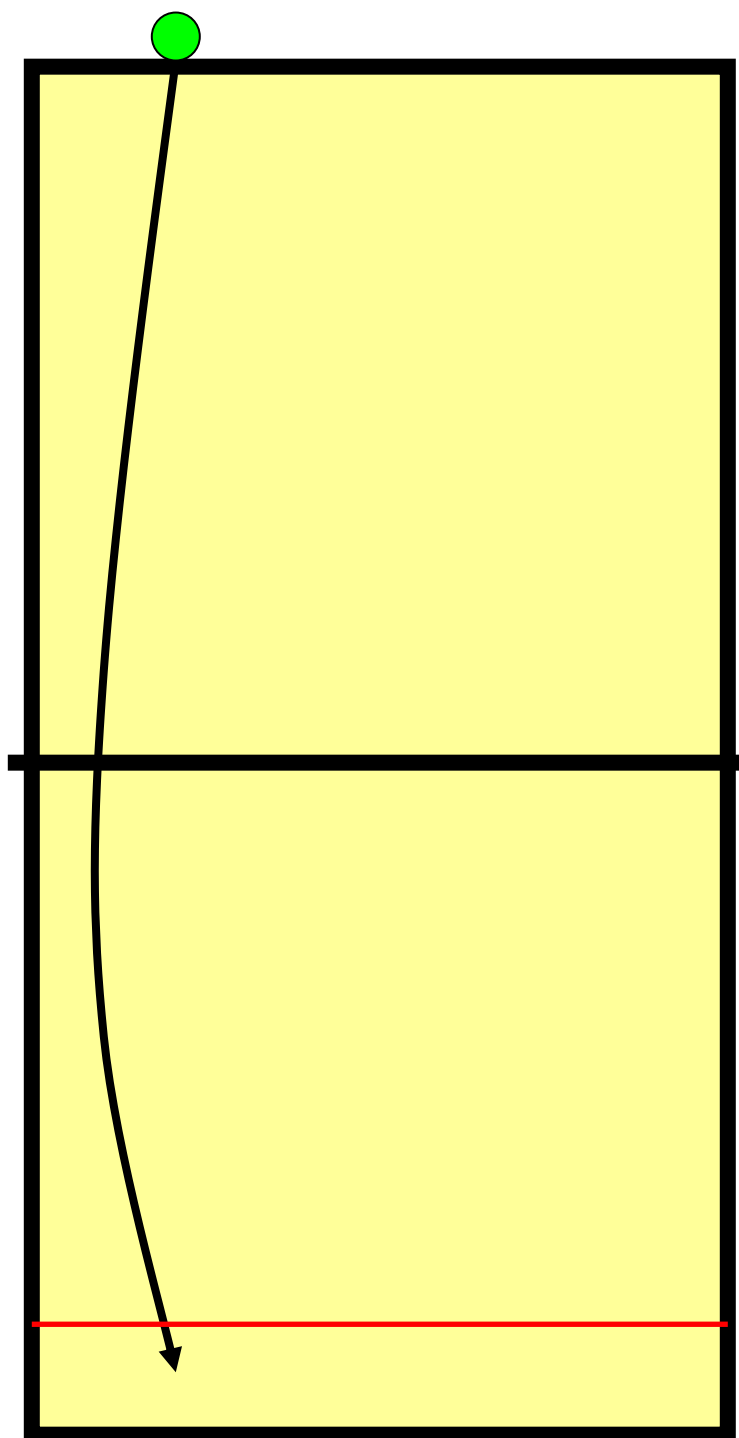
Once the athlete has mastered the distance and trajectory of the deep serve athletes could consider serving the deep middle ball wind to create confusion between the passers.

#### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- Any break between serves will have an effect on consistency and make serving accurate more difficult.
- Additionally for fun the coach could heckle the server to try to put them off their serve. Server has to try to stay focused.

#### TEACHING POINTS

- 1 Athletes should be aware of the arc of the ball and attempt to serve high in order to push the passer back rather than low and flat which will allow the passer to play the ball without having to retreat.
- 2 Athletes should focus on developing a consistent contact on the ball in order to better judge the distance the serve is likely to go.



## 2.4 SERVING FORCE THEM BACK

(intermediate)

### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: As many balls as possible

Minimum: 2 or 3 balls

### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 4 athletes + coach observing

Maximum: 8 athletes + coach observing

Minimum: 2 athletes + coach assisting

### DRILL OBJECTIVE

For servers the objective is to create a passes that are off the net.

For passers the objective is to pass consistently forward to an ideal position off the net.

### DRILL DESCRIPTION

Draw 2 lines across the court that indicates a position where an ideal pass should be set.

(this should be approximately 2 and 10 feet back from the net)

Passers get a point if the pass is set between the 2 'setting' lines.

Servers get a point if they manage to create a pass that is set behind the 10ft line.

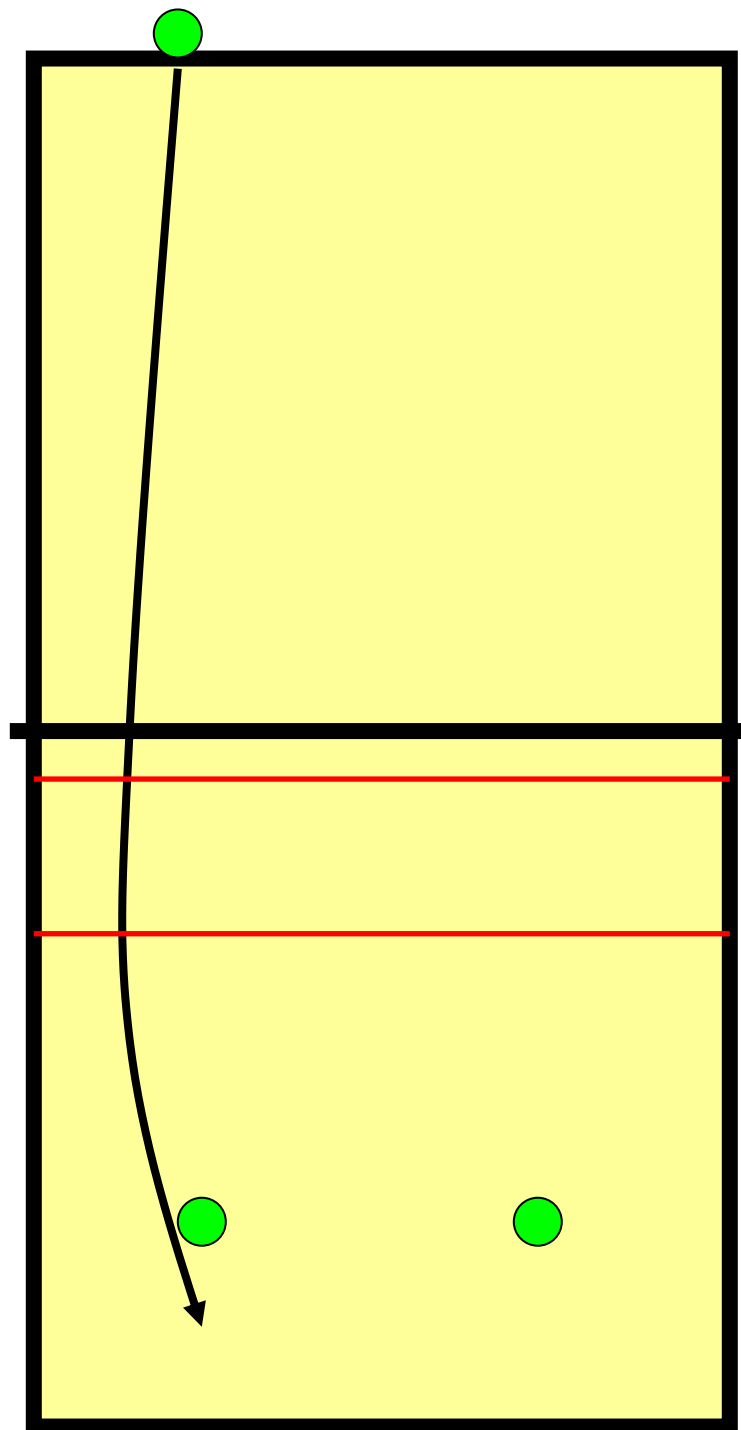
A pass off the net can be created several ways but a couple of strategies are to serve deep, serve hard or to serve the ball with as much topspin as possible so that it is more likely to move back and up off the passers arms.

### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- Coach could serve from mid court in order to create tougher serves.

### TEACHING POINTS:

- 1 If the receivers are passing into the wind then getting them to pass higher will increase the likelihood of a pass off the net.



## 2.5 SERVING

### SERVING VARIETY DRILL

(intermediate / advanced)

#### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: As many balls as possible

Minimum: 3-4 balls

#### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 4 athletes + coach observing

Maximum: 10 athletes per side + coach observing

Minimum: 1 athlete + coach observing

#### DRILL OBJECTIVE

This drill develops the ability of an athlete to place a variety of serves accurately.

#### DRILL DESCRIPTION

Areas of the court are marked out in the sand. (this can be done with cones for extra visibility)

The areas are then numbered and the server tries to serve into these areas at the coaches' discretion or in order from 1 – 5.

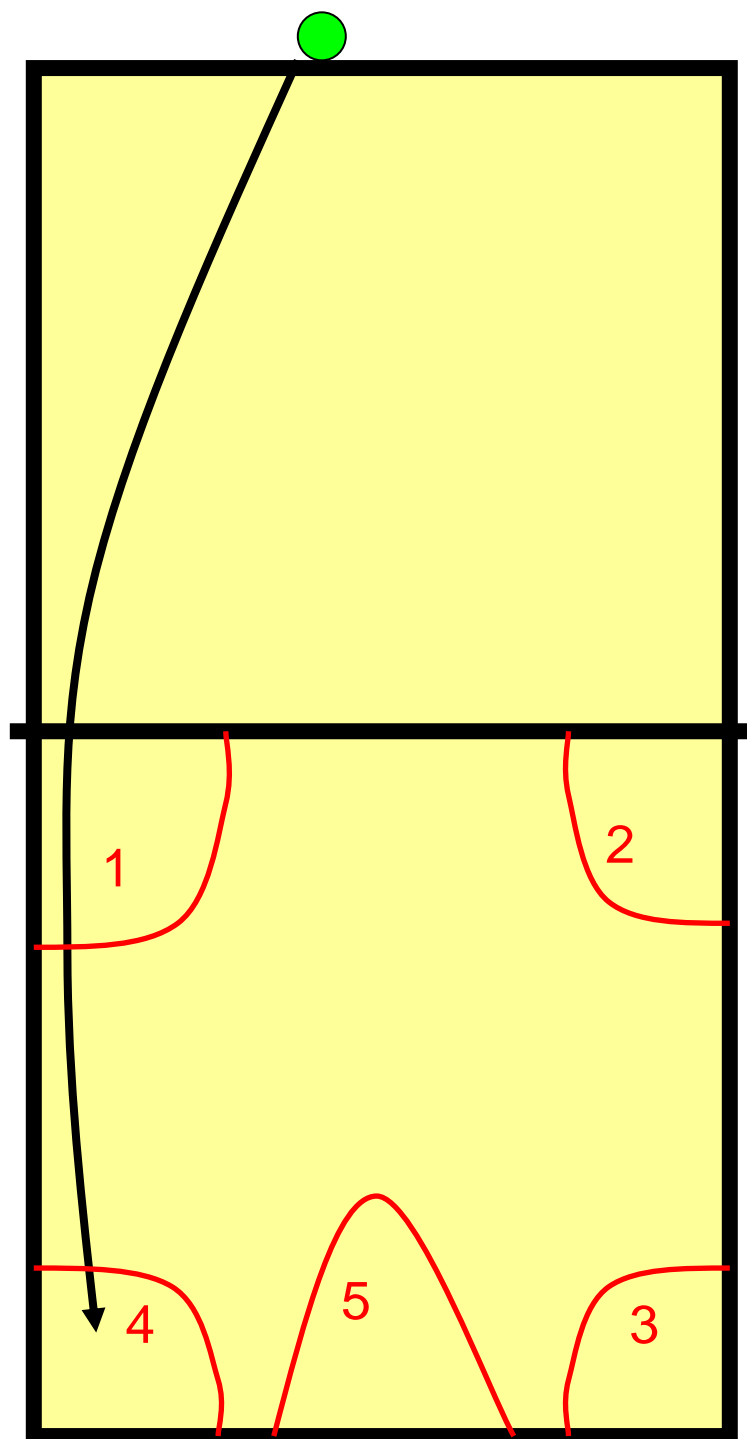
With more than one athlete this can be turned into a competition where the first athlete to get all round once or twice wins.

#### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- Athlete has to stay in the same spot on the baseline when serving all serves.
- Coach can call serving area.
- To make it more difficult the server could be made to do some sort of physical movement between serves.

#### TEACHING POINTS

- 1 To develop consistency the server should try to develop a serving routine.
- 2 Developing a consistent contact in the hand will improve accuracy of distance and direction.
- 3 Accuracy of line can be enhanced by the server focusing on something in the distance that is in line with the direction of their target.



## 2.6 SERVING

### FIRST TO 10 SERVING DRILL

(intermediate / advanced)

#### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: As many balls as possible

Minimum: 6 balls

#### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 2 athletes + coach observing

Maximum: 6 athletes + coach observing

Minimum: 1 athlete + coach observing

#### DRILL OBJECTIVE

This drill develops consistency of serving and a understanding of the area of the court that are best to serve into.

#### DRILL DESCRIPTION

Servers try to get 10 points by serving into areas that give them certain points.

Any balls that are served out constitute a loss of a point for the server.

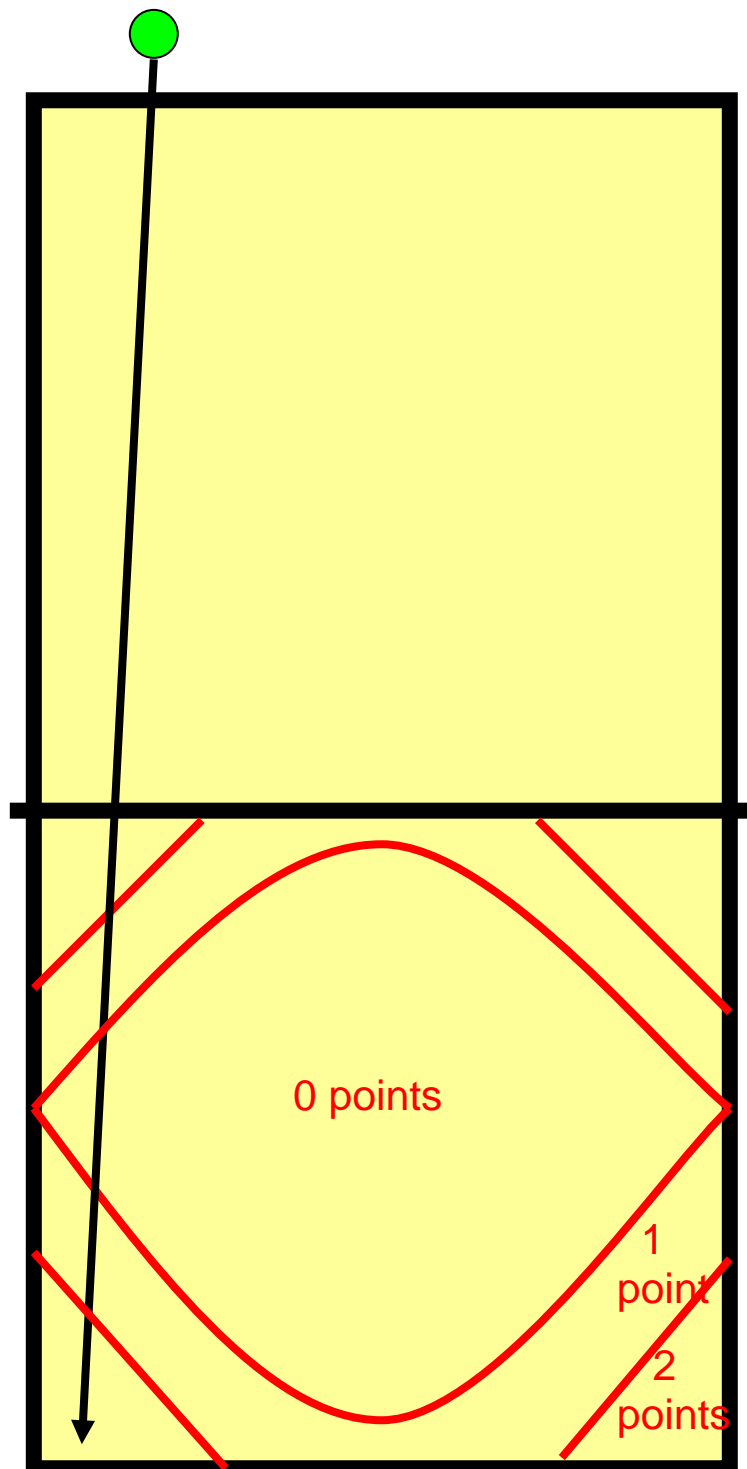
The value of each area can change depending on skill / age and objective.

#### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- Athletes have to jump serve to spots rather than standing and serving.

#### TEACHING POINTS

- 1 Be aware of how the wind will move the ball and adjust accordingly.
- 2 Athletes should look to develop a consistent contact on the hand when serving in order to improve accuracy.



## 2.7 SERVING

### SPLIT THE PASSERS

(intermediate / advanced)

#### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: As many balls as possible

Minimum: 3- 4 balls

Cones could be used as markers

#### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 3 athletes + coach observing

Maximum: 6 athletes + coach observing

Minimum: 1 athlete + coach observing

#### DRILL OBJECTIVE

This drill works on developing a serve that splits the passers down the middle (often referred to as the 'husband and wife' serve)

#### DRILL DESCRIPTION

Using the wind the server attempts to serve at the inside shoulder of a passer with the intention of using the wind to draw the ball back to the other passer and cause confusion.

If the score is tight and the passers are hesitant this serve can often result in a valuable point.

This could be turned into a game where the server plays against the passers – just make sure the passers do not both move into the middle of the court to make a ace down the middle near impossible.

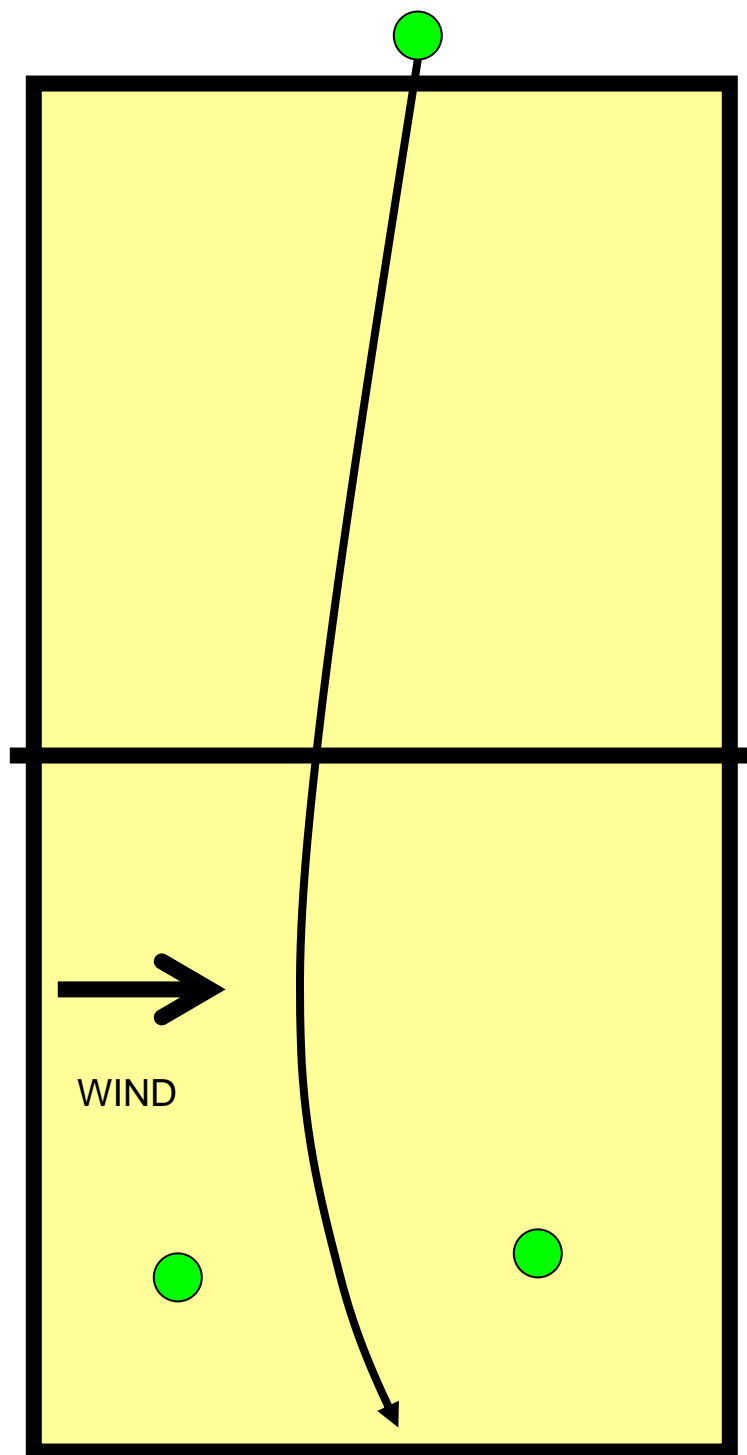
Athletes are likely to be most effective when using this strategy with the float serve (as it moves more in the wind) but a topspin serve can also be utilized to create confusion down the middle of the court.

#### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- Athletes could possibly try to serve balls with slight sidespin to enhance movement.

#### TEACHING POINTS

- 1 Be aware of the wind and how much movement the ball will make as this will effect the line of the serve.
- 2 Athletes can often gain accuracy by focusing on something in the distance that is in the same exact line as the intended serve.
- 3 A deeper serve (or starting a little further back from the service line) will move more in the wind.
- 4 Let athletes know that this is a good serve to use at the beginning and end of games.





# THE PASS

Passing is arguably the most important skill in Beach Volleyball, as it sets up the play for the team receiving the ball. If your pass is bad you start at a deficit from which it is hard to recover. The key to passing is to be able to pass a ball so that it can be set easily by your playing partner.

For those athletes transitioning from indoors to the beach the major difference is that in beach the ball not passed to position 2 ½. On the beach the ball should be passed to a position that is relative to where the pass was made. (Often referred to as the moving triangle theory of passing) The general rule is that the ball should be passed to a position forward and slightly towards the middle of the court. If however the ball is passed from the middle of the court the ball should be directed in a straight line towards the net.

Be aware that the wind is likely to create more movement than you are used to indoors. As the wind gets stronger you want to pass the ball lower – in fact in some cases when there is a very strong wind you should try to keep the ball as low as possible off the serve - your partner may not be able to hand set the ball but a bump set is a better option in these conditions. If there is no wind you can push the ball further up towards the net which will help create a better set by making it easier for the setter as they can see the net in their peripheral vision.

Always keep in mind that a lower stance allows you a greater ability to adjust at the last second. Where you stand to receive serve depends on a number of factors and will vary slightly every serve but a basic rule of thumb is to stand slightly towards the back of the court with each athlete covering roughly half the court. Normally each athlete is responsible for approximately half the court and the athlete that is diagonal from the server calls the serve and is responsible for the middle area.

Position yourself deeper rather than closer to the net when receiving the serve to avoid being forced to make an overhead pass from the opponents serve. Standing further up is ok indoors but dangerous on the sand. If for some reason you find the ball high it will be necessary to adopt a tomahawk technique to play the ball as you cannot play the ball with the fingers.

Remember to talk to your playing partner!!! Keeping the pass between you and your partner. As the wind picks up, keep the ball low and always move to the ball with your arms apart!

## Beginner

One important concept to get through to beginners is that they should treat each serve like it is theirs to pass and always make a movement to the ball. Take 2 steps towards the ball even if not passing! Also passing forward is a very important concept to reinforce. Many beginning athletes pass the ball towards their partners and the ball ends up going backwards or across the court. Passers should also focus on keeping the ball 'lower' 'closer' and 'smaller' than indoors.

## Intermediate

For intermediate athletes who have the basics of passing down but are not consistent passing forward and slightly in towards the middle of the court, up and down is a good idea. Imagine two lines perpendicular to the net made from the two passers - the first two plays the ball should always be contacted between these two lines. A ball that goes outside of these two lines is out of control or 'out of system' – balls kept inside these two lines are 'in system'

## Advanced

As you become a more proficient athlete you will come up against athletes with better serves. These serves will come at you faster and will move you around the court more. As a result of this any weaknesses in your passing will be exploited. Being able to maintain a good platform when passing the ball outside of your body becomes vital as the serves become tougher.



# PASSING DRILLS

|                   |                                     |                           |
|-------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>DRILL 3.1</b>  | <b>PASS AROUND THE LINES</b>        | (beginner)                |
| <b>DRILL 3.2</b>  | <b>ONE ON ONE</b>                   | (beginner)                |
| <b>DRILL 3.3</b>  | <b>PASS AND SLAP HANDS</b>          | (beginner)                |
| <b>DRILL 3.4</b>  | <b>PASS AND BEAT BALL TO POLE</b>   | (beginner)                |
| <b>DRILL 3.5</b>  | <b>DIAMOND PASSING</b>              | (beginner)                |
| <b>DRILL 3.6</b>  | <b>THE U PASSING DRILL</b>          | (beginner / intermediate) |
| <b>DRILL 3.7</b>  | <b>PASSING IN SYSTEM</b>            | (beginner / intermediate) |
| <b>DRILL 3.8</b>  | <b>W PASSING DRILL</b>              | (intermediate)            |
| <b>DRILL 3.9</b>  | <b>PASS AND SPIKE</b>               | (intermediate)            |
| <b>DRILL 3.10</b> | <b>ALTERNATING PASSING DRILL</b>    | (intermediate)            |
| <b>DRILL 3.11</b> | <b>BACKSPIN AND TOPSPIN PASSING</b> | (intermediate)            |
| <b>DRILL 3.12</b> | <b>ONE ARM PASSING</b>              | (intermediate)            |
| <b>DRILL 3.13</b> | <b>SHORT/DEEP</b>                   | (intermediate)            |
| <b>DRILL 3.14</b> | <b>PASS AND SWITCH</b>              | (intermediate)            |
| <b>DRILL 3.15</b> | <b>PASS AND LOOK</b>                | (intermediate / advanced) |
| <b>DRILL 3.16</b> | <b>TOPSPIN SERVE OFF BOX DRILL</b>  | (advanced)                |



### 3.1 PASSING

#### PASSING AROUND THE LINES

(beginner)

#### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: 1 ball per pair

Minimum: 1 ball per pair

#### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 2 or 4 athletes + coach observing

Maximum: 8 athletes + coach observing

Minimum: 1 athlete + coach participating

#### DRILL OBJECTIVE

This drill is a good warm up drill to reinforce the shuffle and sideways movement when passing a ball.

This drill could also double as a warm-up drill for beginners.

#### DRILL DESCRIPTION

Athletes start at the net with one inside the court and one outside.

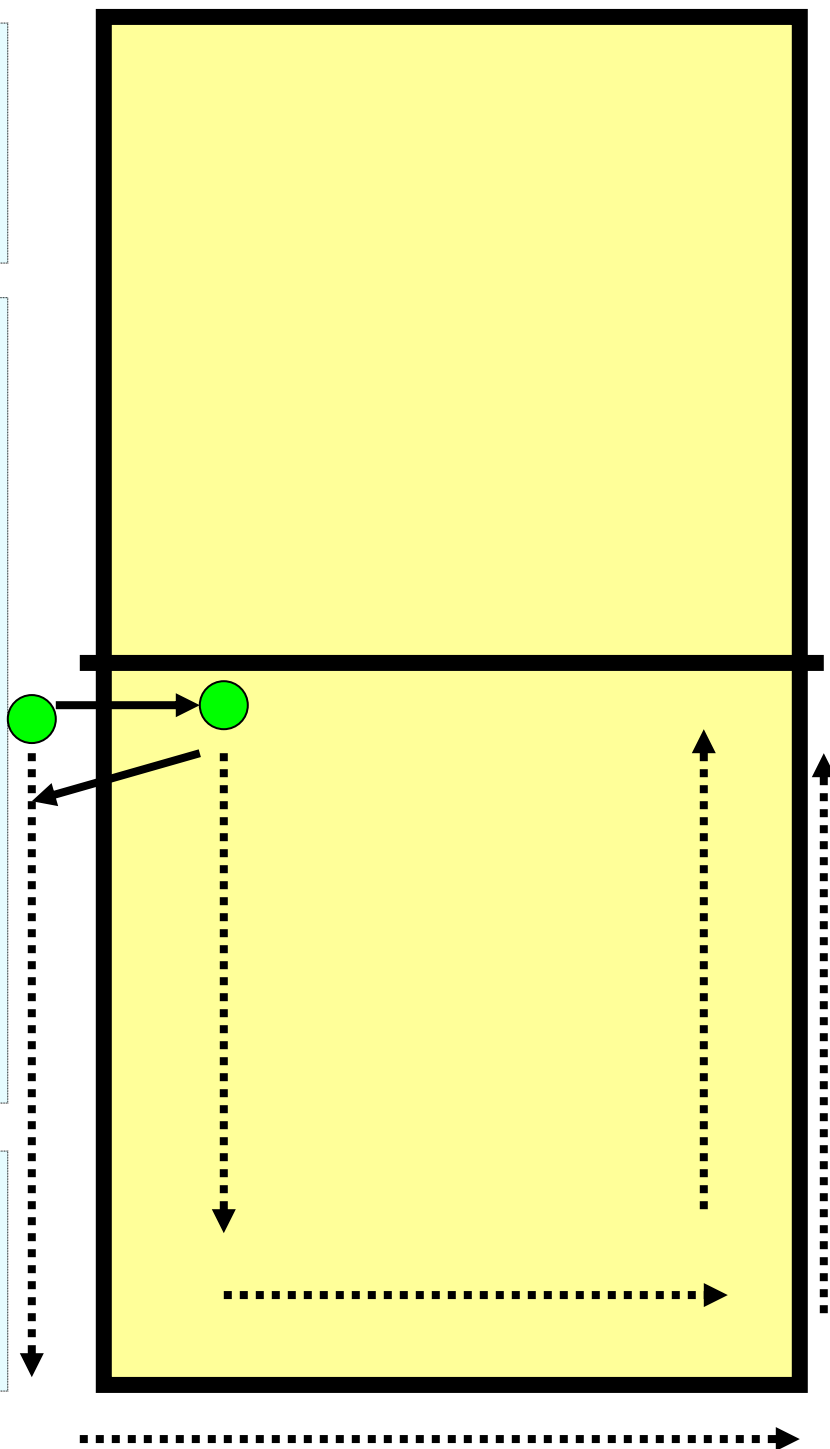
They then pass the balls back and forth to each other while shuffling down the sideline to the service line then along the service line and back down the sideline to the net.

#### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- Beginner athletes may want to hand set the ball if it is passed to high – more advanced athletes should only be forearm passing.

#### TEACHING POINTS

- Athletes need to keep a wide base (one leg slightly forward of the other) and communicate to each other especially when going around the corners of the court.
- Athletes should focus on keeping a wide base and not crossing the legs when shuffling from side to side.



### 3.2 PASSING ONE ON ONE

(beginner)

#### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: 3-10 balls

Minimum: 3 balls

#### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 2 athletes + coach assisting

Maximum: 5 athletes per side + coach observing

Minimum: 1 athlete + coach assisting

#### TEACHING POINTS:

- 1 Play the ball with straight arms and bend the knees to get down low if necessary.
- 2 If possible the athlete should move to pass ball in the centerline of their body.
- 3 The target of the pass is forward and slightly in towards the court.

#### DRILL OBJECTIVE

This is a good passing drill for beginners as it reinforces the idea that in beach volleyball it is beneficial to keep the pass 'smaller' and 'closer' than you would in the indoor game. The athletes also get high repetitions on the ball.

#### DRILL DESCRIPTION

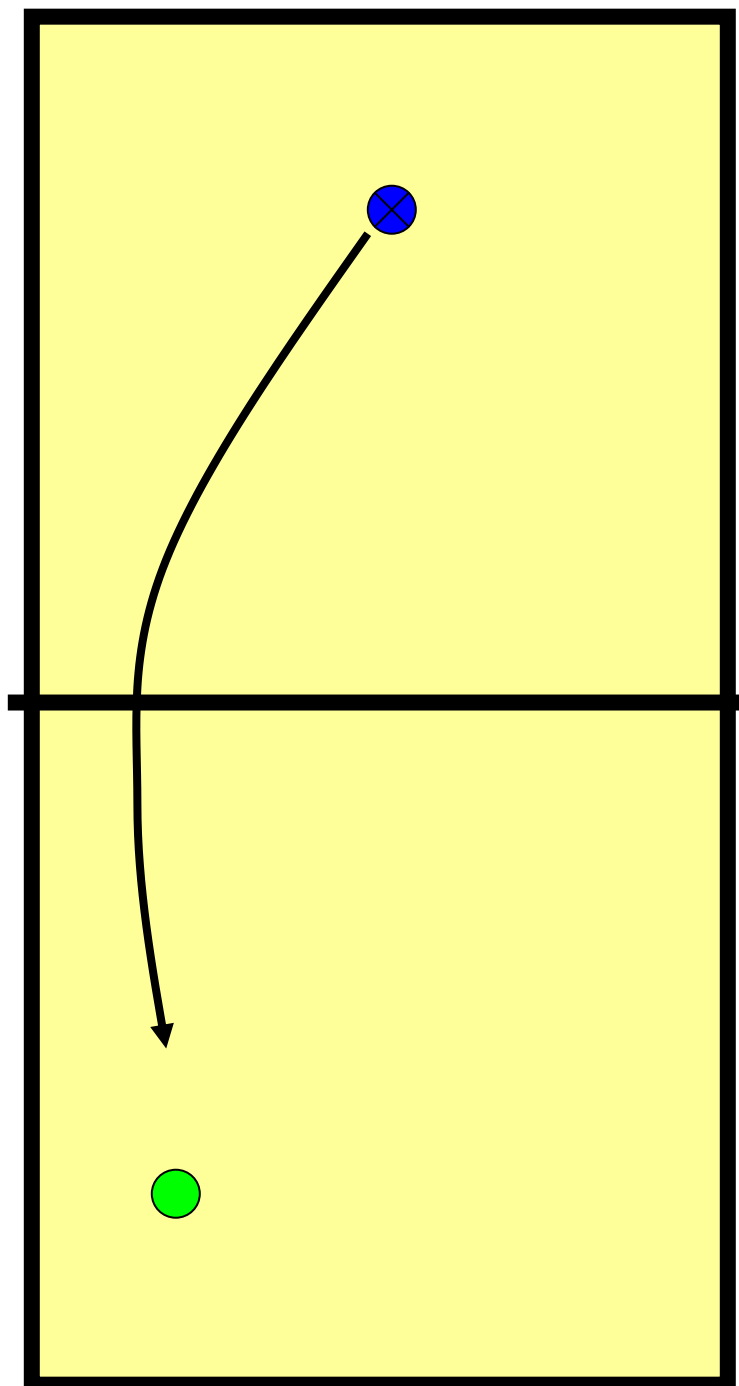
Coach or athlete serves (or throws) the ball at a passer on the other side of the net.

The athlete who is passing the ball aims to catch their own ball.

If there are 2 athletes they should start in normal passing position and the non-passer can catch the ball passed by their partner.

#### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- Serve or toss to left or right of passer or short and deep.
- Server serves tougher or from further back.



### 3.3 PASSING

#### PASS AND SLAP HANDS

(beginner)

#### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: 3-10 balls

Minimum: 3 balls

#### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 2 athletes + coach assisting

Maximum: 5 athletes per side + coach observing

Minimum: 1 athlete + coach observing

#### TEACHING POINTS:

- 1 Athletes should learn that if they adopt the athletic position they will pass more effectively.
- 2 Athletes should be reminded that they should contact the ball out in front of them between the wrist and elbow and that there should be a space between them and the ball.
- 3 By bending the legs and keeping the arms relatively parallel to the ground they will develop more accuracy.

#### DRILL OBJECTIVE

The objective of this drill is to discourage beginner players from moving around with their hands together in passing position.

They also get plenty of practice of the forearm passing technique.

#### DRILL DESCRIPTION

Athletes begin the drill by throwing the ball up in the air with two hands. When the ball comes down they begin to pass the ball up and down with the forearms.

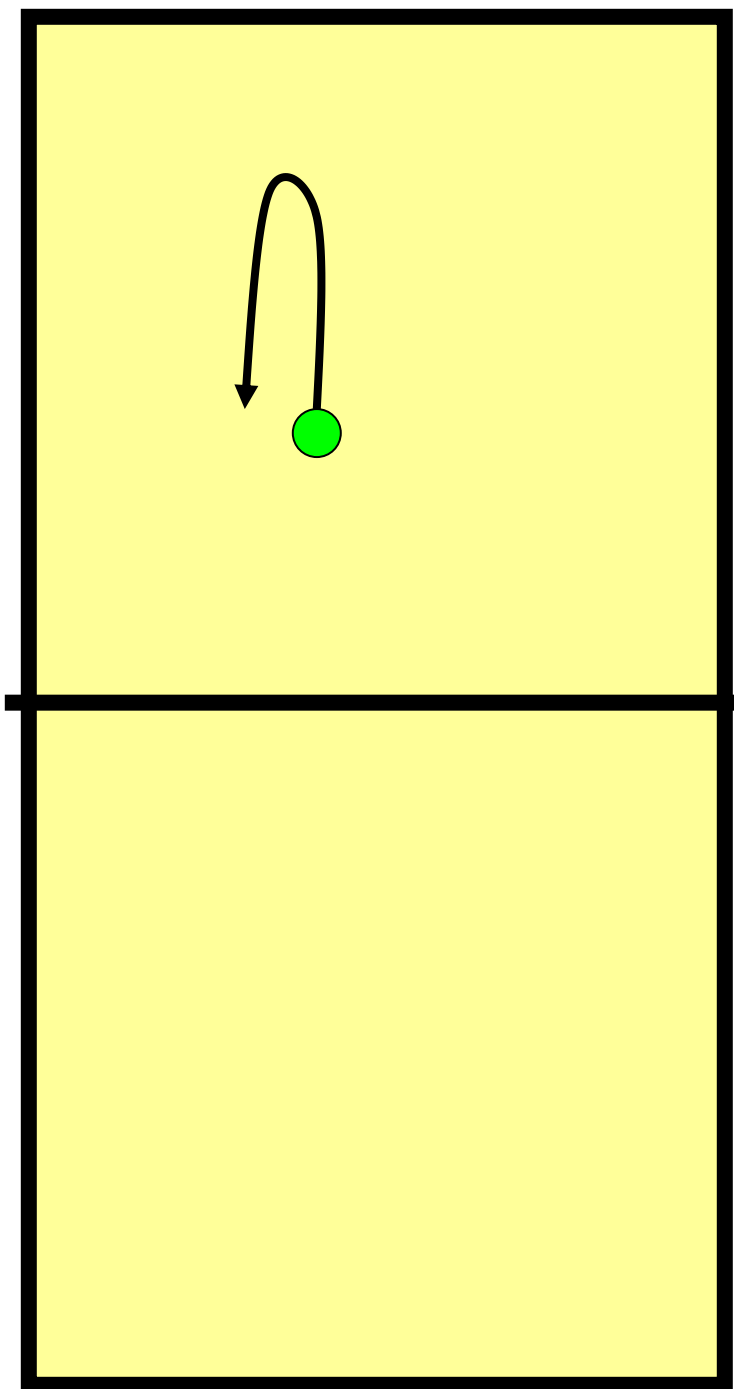
Between each contact the athlete separates the hands and slaps them behind their back before bringing them back together in front of the body to pass the ball again.

Once the beginner athlete has mastered this they can then begin to pass the ball up in the air:

- low (3 feet above the arms)
- medium (6-8 feet above the arms)
- high (10-12 feet)

#### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- Have the coach call out low, medium and high.



### 3.4 PASSING NON PASSER MOVE

(beginner)

#### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: 2-3 balls

Minimum: 1 ball between 3

#### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 3 or 4 athletes + coach assisting

Maximum: 6 athletes + coach assisting

Minimum: 2 athletes + coach assisting

#### DRILL OBJECTIVE

Encourages beginner passers to pass forward and non-passers to quickly initiate the movement towards the setting position. Additionally it reinforces the direction that the ball should travel off the pass. (despite going over the net)

#### DRILL DESCRIPTION

This drill is a very beginner drill that encourages the passer to pass forward (which is an important concept for beginners) and the non-passer to respond quickly to the fact that they are not passing and move towards their partner.

The passers goal is to pass the ball over the net and on to the sand (in the direction of the person tossing the ball who is standing centre middle) before the non-passer runs through and touches the opposite pole. (which is in the direction of the ideal setting position)

It is important that the passers are unaware of who will receive the serve and serves should be deep in order to avoid the two players banging into each other.

This is not a drill that should be used for athletes that are beyond beginner status as passing directly over the net should not be encouraged.

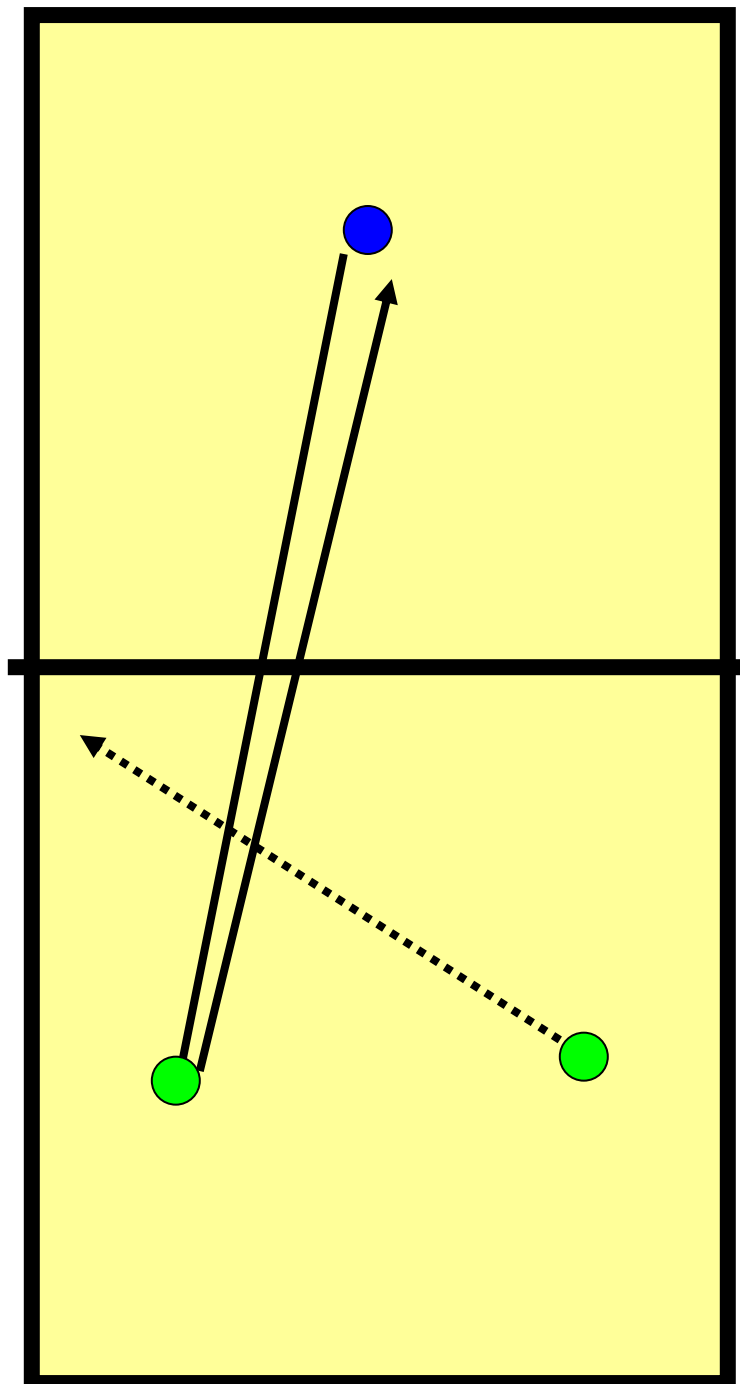
This drill is most effective with younger players that are still learning to anticipate plays and don't yet move through the sand quickly.

#### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS:

- Serve the middle of the court to create additional confusion between the two passers.
- Serve a faster and lower serve to give the non-passer less time to read the play.

#### TEACHING POINTS

- 1 The athletes should make sure that they are moving forward towards the ball to ensure it goes forward which means that if the serve is deep the passer must move back early.
- 2 Athletes should try to anticipate early if the ball is in their passing zone and make the move towards their partner.





### 3.5 PASSING DIAMOND PASSING

(beginner)

#### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: 8 + balls

Minimum: 4 balls

#### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 2 athletes + coach assisting

Maximum: 6 athletes + coach observing

Minimum: 1 athlete + coach assisting

#### DRILL OBJECTIVE

Passer learns footwork and technique for passing balls served short and deep, left and right.

#### DRILL DESCRIPTION

Coach stands on ground or bench and serves balls in order from 1-4.

It is recommended that the receiver plays 2 sets of 4 serves. Any more than that and technique is likely to suffer due to fatigue.

The non-receiving athlete can either be in position to catch the pass or run into position from the passing spot.

The ball that is caught can then be thrown back to the coach for the next serve.

\*Don't let passers cheat – which means that the passers move early towards where they know the serve is going.

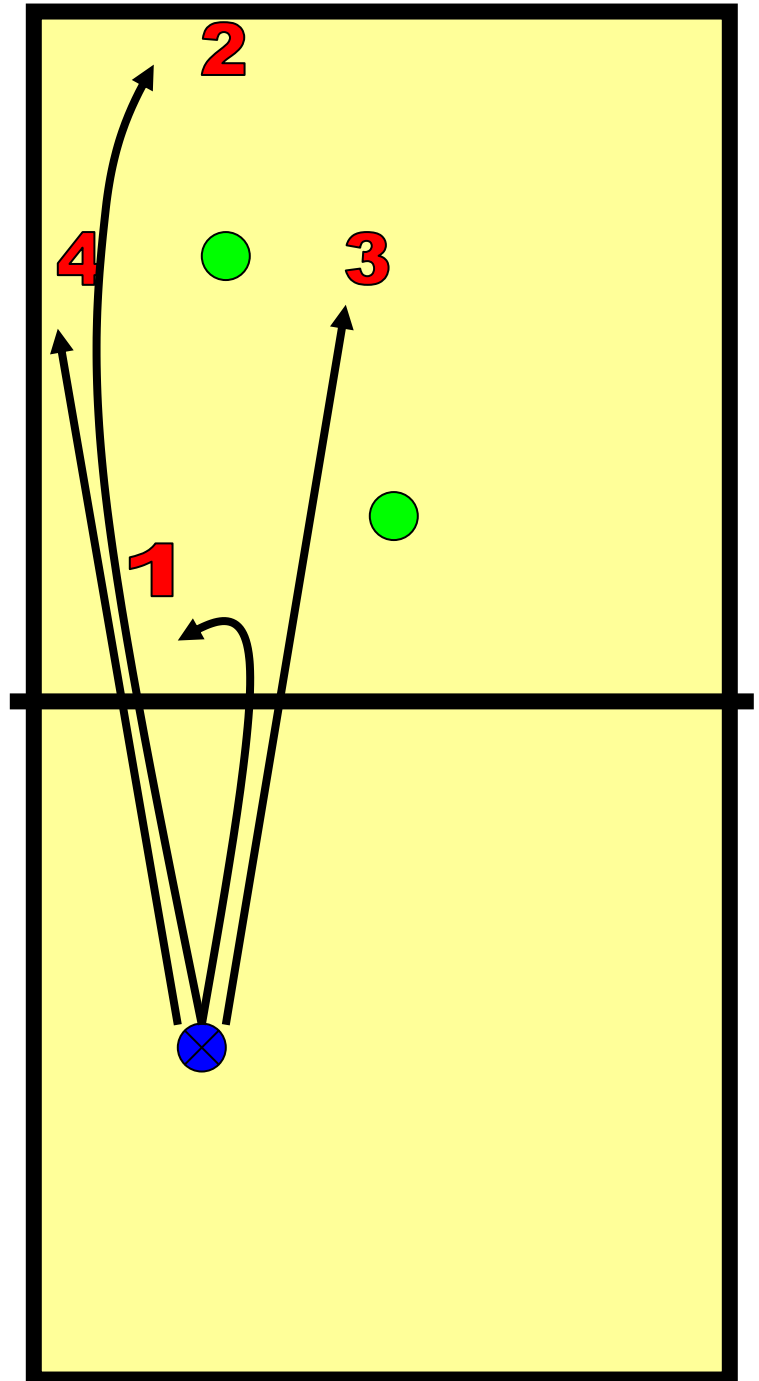
After serving all for serves short and deep, left and right the server could focus on one particular serve that is causing the passer problems.

#### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- Mix up serves to all positions to make the drill more difficult.
- Coach can move further back or serve tougher balls.

#### TEACHING POINTS:

- 1 On balls passed to the side, passer should bring arms together behind the ball and get shoulder up on ball side.
- 2 On short serves leg closest to sideline should be forward.
- 3 Make sure passers are aware of change in target at each passing position.
- 4 On the deep ball passers need to get back quickly so they are moving forward after the pass.





### 3.6 PASSING

#### U PASSING DRILL

(beginner / intermediate)

#### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: 2-3 balls.

Minimum: 1 ball.

#### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 4 athletes + coach observing.

Maximum: 8 athletes + coach observing.

Minimum: 1 athlete + coach assisting.

#### DRILL OBJECTIVE

A great drill that reinforces the correct passing technique on a free ball and emphasizes retreating back to prepare for the spike approach.

#### DRILL DESCRIPTION

One athlete starts behind a cone that is 8 feet back from the centre of the net and another athlete starts at the net, directly in front.

The athlete at the net throws the ball up about 10 feet in the air as the athlete behind the cone moves in towards the net and passes the ball straight up and down.

The passer then moves back and around the cone to the other side and in again to pass another ball up and down again.

Passers goal is to pass the ball as close to straight up and down as possible with recommended repetitions of about 6-12.

(with each contact counted as a rep)

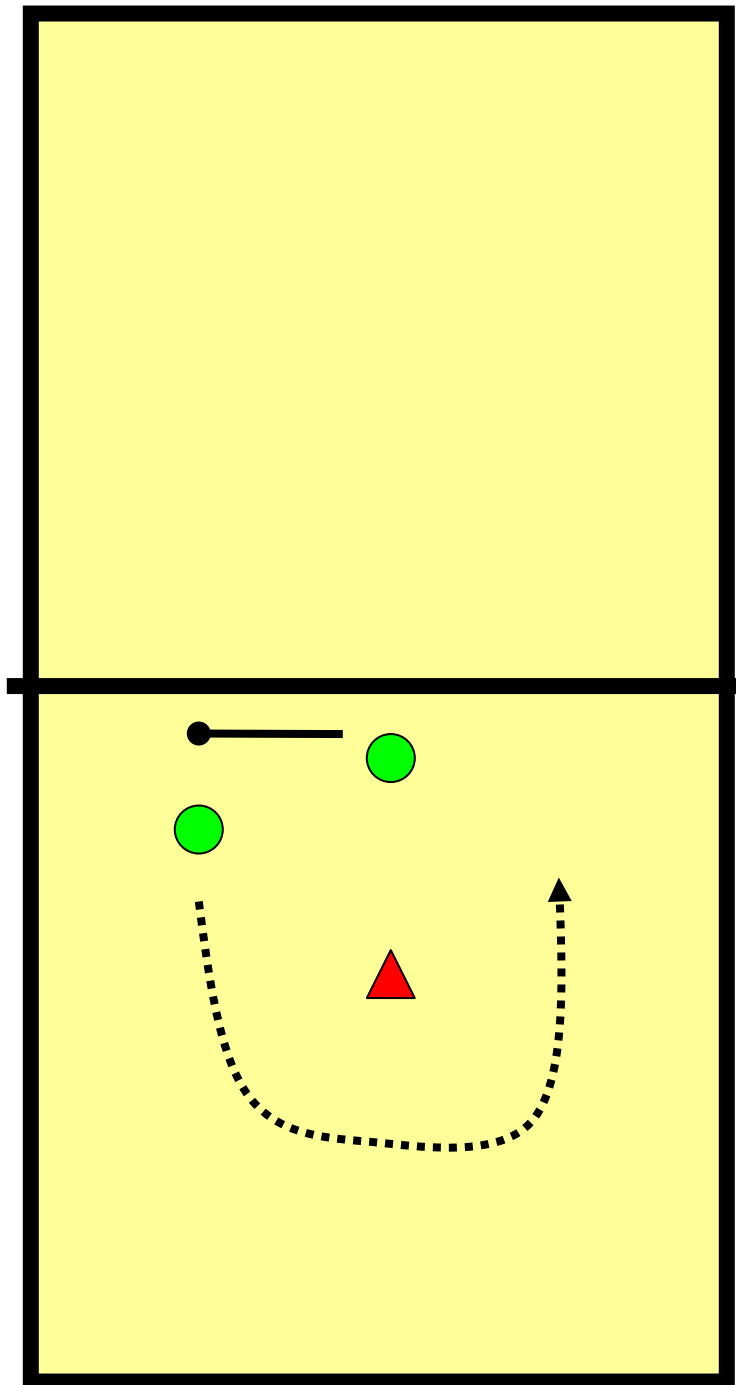
Athletes can choose to pass and retreat back to attack the final ball of the set.

#### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- Thrower can throw the ball close or far away from the middle of the court.
- The ball can be tossed either close to the center of the net or out wider out towards the antenna.
- The athlete, after passing the ball can move quickly back then approach to attack every odd / even or possibly just the final ball.

#### TEACHING POINTS:

1. Make sure the outside leg is forward (leg closest to your partner back) during the pass - *this way the ball is more likely to be directed towards your partner.*
2. Keep your arms as close as perpendicular to the net as possible when playing the ball – *this way you are in a better position to retreat quickly in preparation for the spike. If you want to pass towards your partner then tilt the arms slightly.*
3. Facing the net while moving around the cone – *this way you never lose sight of the opposition.*



### 3.7 PASSING

#### PASSING IN SYSTEM

(beginner / intermediate)

#### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: 2-3 balls

Minimum: 1 ball

#### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 4 athletes + coach observing

Maximum: 8 athletes + coach observing

Minimum: 2 athletes + coach assisting

#### DRILL OBJECTIVE

Before starting this drill players must first understand the concept of 'in system' and 'out of system' play.

If you visualize two lines running perpendicular to the net from each player – any ball played within these two lines (and forward) is considered 'in system' while any ball played outside of these two lines is considered 'out of system'

'In system' is good and out of system' is bad. The objective of this drill is to keep the ball 'in system' as it allows for more control and is a great concept for beginner players.

#### DRILL DESCRIPTION

The athlete or coach serves balls at a receiving pair on the opposite side of the net. The athletes attempt to play out the ball with a conventional pass, set and spike but the coach pays close attention to whether the ball stayed 'in system' or not.

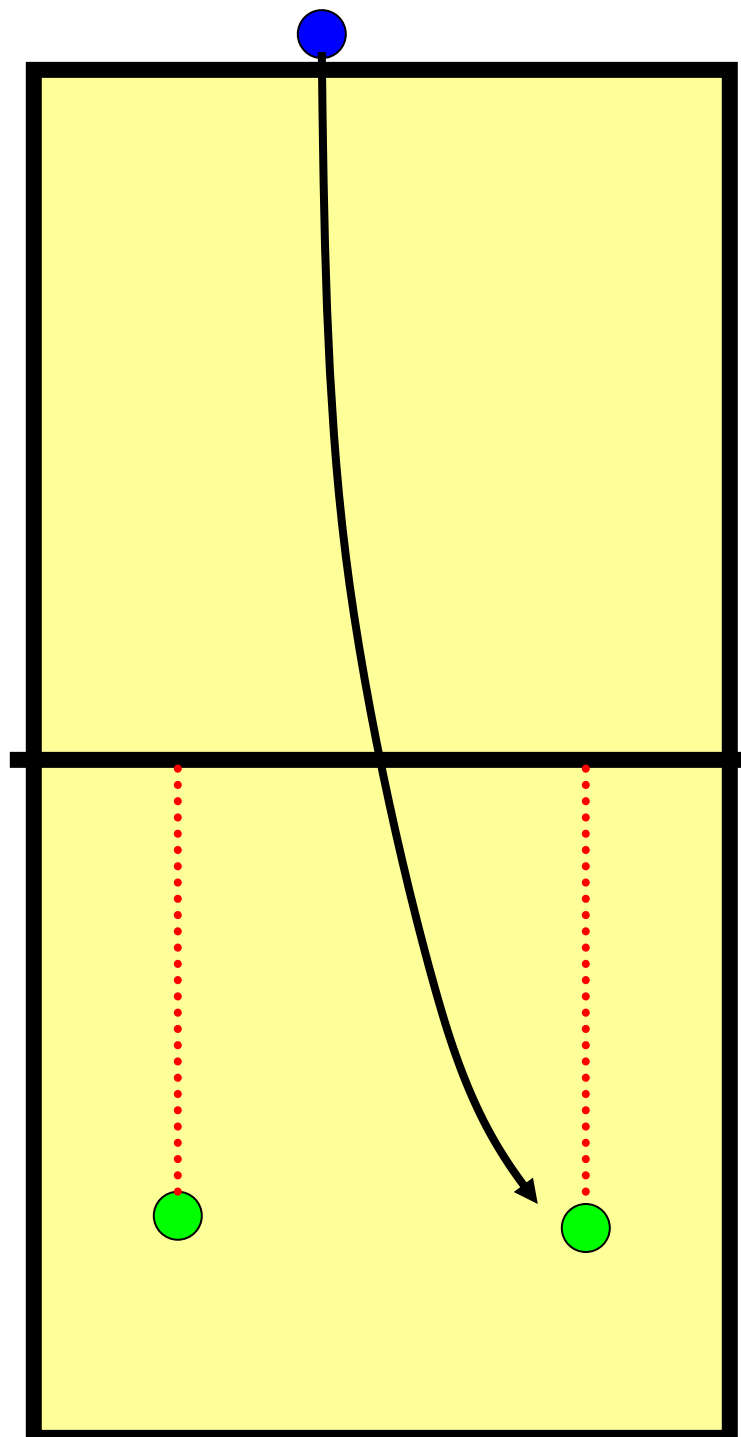
Athletes can get 1 point for every play 'in system' and perhaps an additional point for spiking the ball inside the opposition court.

#### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- Serve tougher and in particular to the sidelines.

#### TEACHING POINTS

- 1 Don't pass the ball to your partner – pass the ball forward and slightly inside.
- 2 When the ball is passed out of system off the serve, athletes need to focus on bringing the ball back 'in system' rather than over playing the ball and losing even more control.
- 3 If the pass is poor the athlete needs to 'follow the pass' in order to make the job of setting up the attack easier for their partner.



### 3.8 PASSING

#### THE W PASSING DRILL

(intermediate)

#### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: 2 or 3 balls

Minimum: 1 ball per pair

#### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 2 athletes per side + coach observing

Maximum: 8 athletes + coach observing

Minimum: 1 athlete + coach assisting

#### DRILL OBJECTIVE

This is a great drill for reinforcing the correct passing technique on a free ball and emphasizes retreating back to prepare for the spike approach.

#### DRILL DESCRIPTION

Athletes start close to the sideline behind the cone with his/her partner in this drill at the net.

To start the drill the athlete at the net throws the ball up about 10 feet in the air (aiming to land it on the diamond) as the athlete behind the cone moves in towards the net and passes the ball straight up and down.

The passer then moves back and around the first cone and in again to once again pass the ball up and down. (the passers goal is to pass the ball as close to straight up and down as possible)

The passer carries on down the net moving in and out of the cones.

On the 4<sup>th</sup> and final pass the athlete passes and retreats back to attack the final ball.

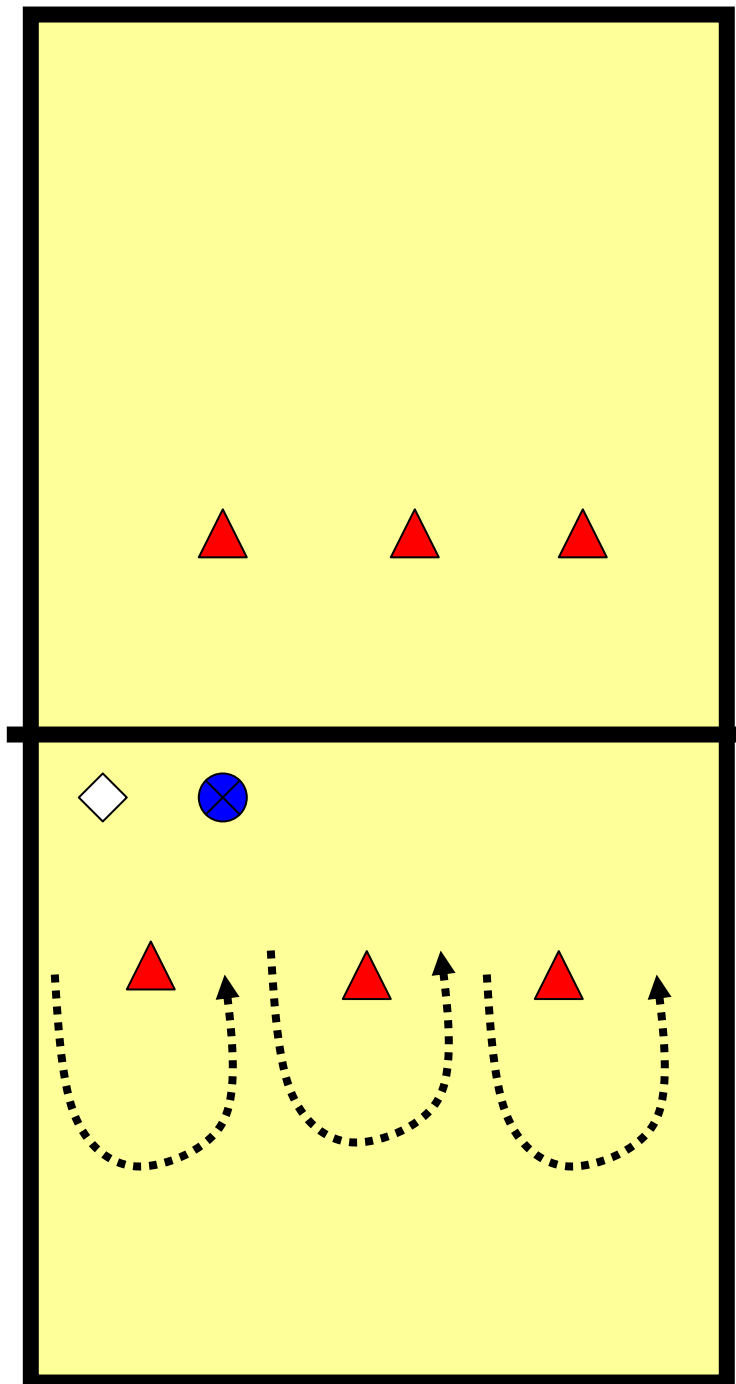
After the attack the pair would switch to the other side where the thrower becomes the passer and the passer becomes the thrower.

#### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- After setting the ball to be hit on the 4<sup>th</sup> pass, the setter could call the shot to be played.

#### TEACHING POINTS:

1. Make sure the outside leg is forward (leg closest to your partner back) during the pass.
2. Keep your arms as close as perpendicular to the net as possible when playing the ball – *this way you are in a better position to retreat quickly in preparation for your spike. If you want to pass the ball towards your partner then tilt the arms slightly.*
3. Athletes should always face the net while moving around the cone – *this way you never lose sight of the opposition.*



### 3.9 PASSING PASS AND SPIKE

(intermediate)

#### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: 4+ balls.

Minimum: 1 ball.

#### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 3 athletes + coach observing.

Maximum: 8 athletes + coach observing.

Minimum 1 athlete + coach assisting.

#### DRILL OBJECTIVE

The objective of this drill is to encourage a pass that is 'up and down' and close to the individual who passed the ball which aids in the development a pass that is easier to set. Be aware that in the reality of a game situation (perhaps on a windy day) you would not want to pass as high as this drill encourages.

#### DRILL DESCRIPTION

Athlete or coach drives a down ball or easy float serve to passer on the other side of the net.

This could be done from either the middle of the court or the service line depending on the level of the athletes.

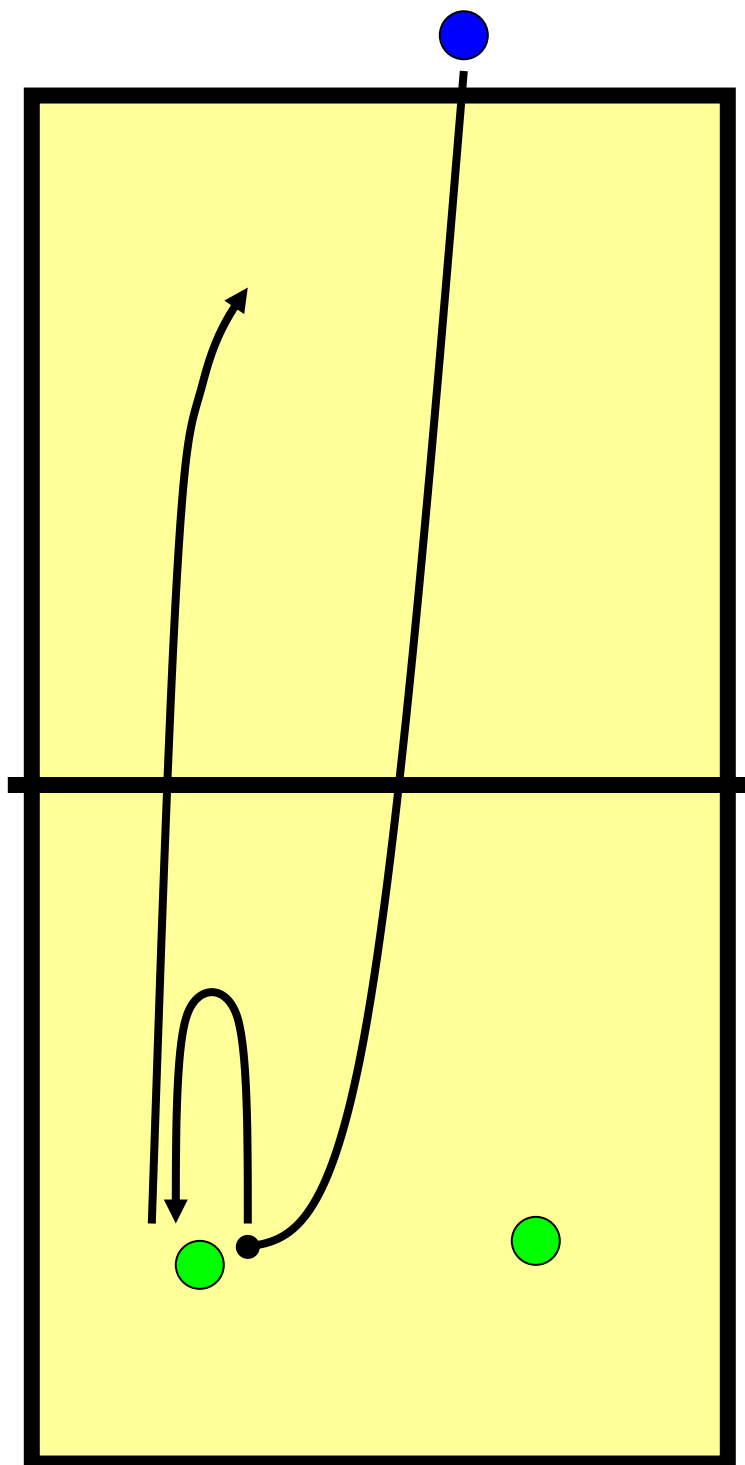
The passer attempts to play the ball up in the air a couple feet in front of them and spike their own ball over the net.

#### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- Serve more aggressively.
- Mark out certain spots on the court that the athlete has to spike into.

#### TEACHING POINTS:

- 1 Remind the athlete to move to the ball so that they are always passing the ball within the centerline of their body.
- 2 Encourage the athletes to pass the ball high enough that they have time initiate a spike approach.
- 3 Encourage athletes to focus on the pass first, attack second and to pass low so that if they can get to stray balls quickly.



### 3.10 PASSING

#### ALTERNATING PASSING DRILL

(intermediate)

#### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: 5 + balls

Minimum: 2 balls

#### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 3 athletes + coach observing

Maximum: 6 athletes + coach observing

Minimum: 3 athletes + coach participating

#### DRILL OBJECTIVE

This drill is one of the most popular in beach volleyball.

It allows athletes to get repetitions in serving, passing, setting and spiking.

The objective within this drill could be focused around any one of the 4 skills used.

#### DRILL DESCRIPTION

A coach or athlete serves the ball from the baseline or inside the court to receivers alternately.

The choice on where to serve from will be dependent on the skill level of the athletes and the objectives of the drill.

After passing the ball the athlete attacks and then leaves the court to be replaced by another athlete.

The athlete that just set up the attack drops back to their original position to prepare to pass and attack.

Additional athletes can be added to either the serving or receiving lines.

With an uneven number of athletes on the receiving side athletes will get practice passing from both sides of the court.

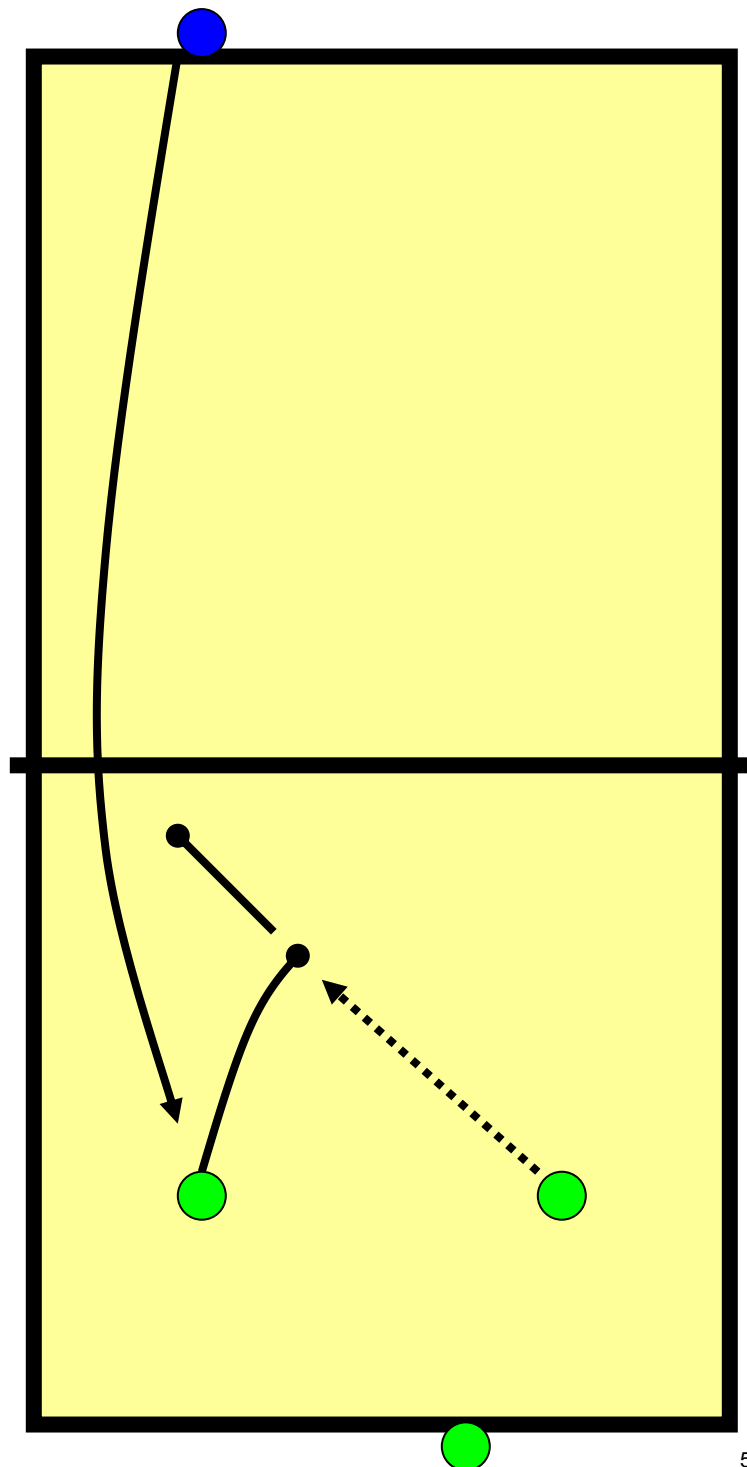
With an even number of athletes they will end up receiving on the same side.

#### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- The coach (or athletes) could serve tougher serves.
- The setter could call the shots that they would like the attacker to make.
- Servers can move in to defensive position and give the hitter a defender to hit away from.

#### TEACHING POINTS:

1. Beginners should focus on passing with the moving triangle concept in mind. *The ideal pass will vary depending on the wind and the area that the ball is passed from but it should go forward and inside and have an up and down trajectory that is easy for the setter to set.*
2. Beginners will benefit from being reminded to pass the ball **'forward'** and set the ball **'forward'**
3. Try to read and anticipate where the serve is likely to go as early as possible – don't leave position before the ball is served but be 'ready' to move.



### 3.11 PASSING TOPSPIN AND BACKSPIN PASSING

(intermediate)

#### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: 1 ball per pair

Minimum: 1 ball per pair

#### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 4-6 athletes + coach observing

Maximum: Only limited by space

Minimum: 1 athlete + coach assisting

#### DRILL OBJECTIVE

The objective of this drill is for the athlete to gain better ball control with the forearm pass and in particular gain experience and confidence in playing the ball with either topspin or backspin.

Although forearm passing the ball with either backspin or topspin is not recommended in normal play there are situations where this is beneficial and necessary.

Practicing this skill will give an athlete confidence when a situation arises that necessitates the use of this technique.

#### DRILL DESCRIPTION

In this drill athletes practice passing the ball back and forth to each other with either backspin or topspin.

Initially this drill could be done with one pair throwing the ball to the other for a set of 5-10 repetitions before passing the ball back and forth to each other continuously.

Athletes will tend to move forward through the ball when practicing backspin and backwards through the ball when practicing topspin so after each contact they will need to move back to their original starting position.

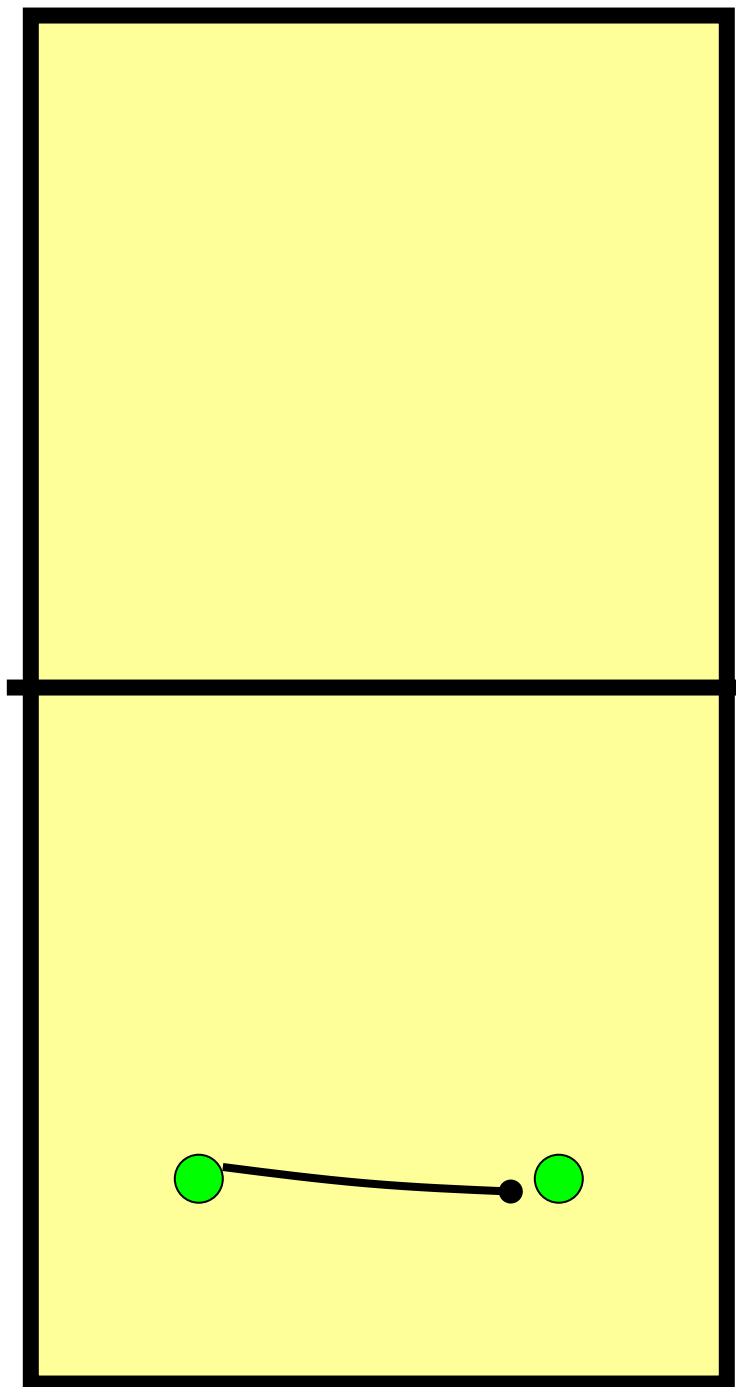
Irrespective of which spin the athlete is putting on the ball they will benefit from an athletic stance with one leg forward and one back which will allow stable movement back and forth.

#### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- Have athletes call the type of spin they want from their partner directly after they play the ball themselves.

#### TEACHING POINTS:

- 1 When forearm passing the ball with backspin athletes should be given permission to bend the elbows slightly which will enhance their capacity to impart spin on the ball and may even create a better platform with the forearms.
- 2 When forearm passing the ball with topspin the arms should stay rigid and straight.
- 3 When imparting backspin on the ball athletes will want to 'move their arms forward under the ball'.
- 4 When imparting backspin on the ball athletes will want to 'shrug their shoulders back as they contact the ball'.



### 3.12 PASSING

#### ONE ARM PASSING DRILL

(intermediate)

#### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: 5 or more balls

Minimum: 1 ball

#### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 1 or 2 athletes + coach assisting

Maximum: 6, 9 or 12 athletes + coach observing

Minimum: 1 athlete + coach assisting

#### TEACHING POINTS:

- 1 When passing with the arm closest to the ball the thumb should be up allowing the ball to be played on the wide aspect of the forearm.
- 2 When passing the ball with the opposite arm the thumb (and shoulder) should be down.
- 3 During both movements the athlete should focus on getting the arm 'behind the ball' and moving 'through the ball'.

#### DRILL OBJECTIVE

The objective of this drill is to reinforce correct technique and body positioning when playing the ball outside the body. Although forearm passing the ball outside of the body is not recommended, there are situations where it cannot be avoided and therefore training this movement pattern is vital to becoming a complete player. It is always recommend, that if possible, an athlete move to play the ball within the centre of their body.

#### DRILL DESCRIPTION

In this drill the athlete practices passing the ball with one arm.

The athlete or coach throws the ball to the side of the athlete who shuffles across and plays the ball back to the thrower initially with the arm closest to the ball.

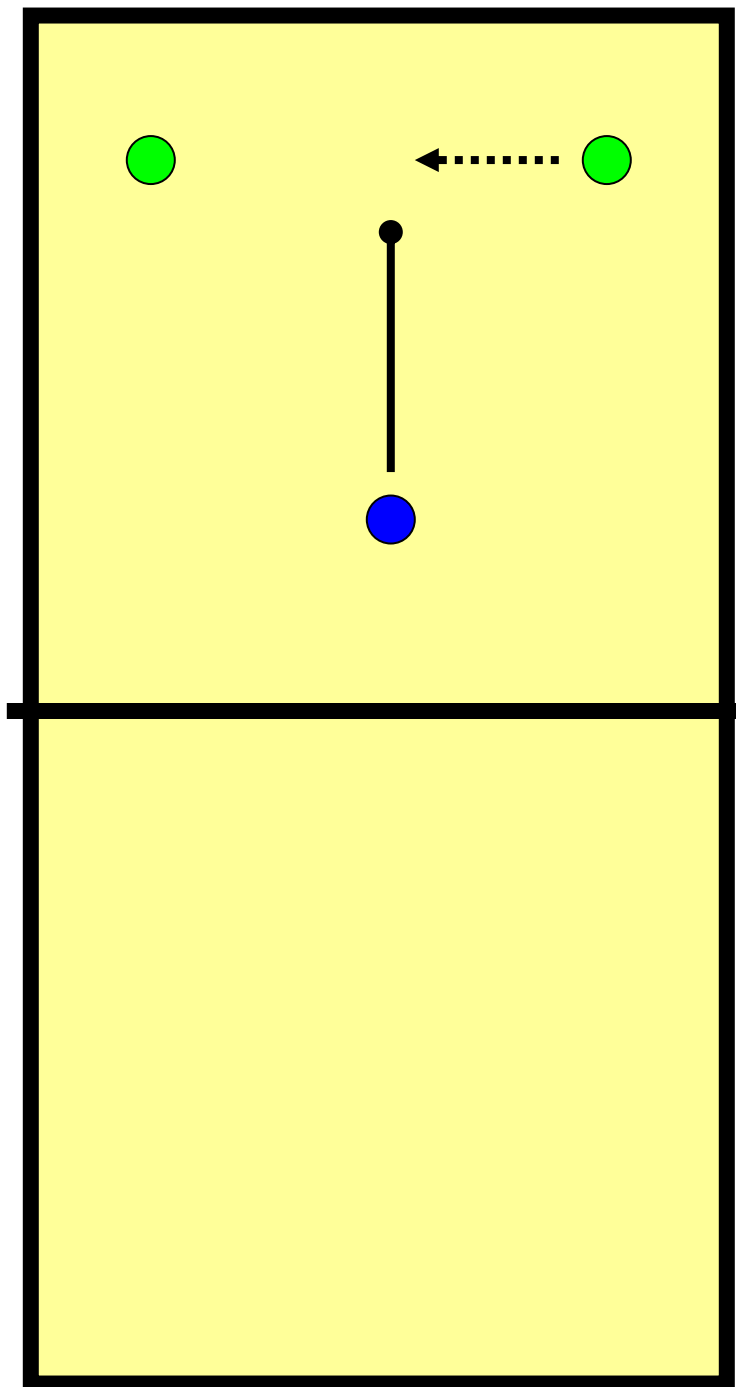
The ball should not travel flat but go up and down to the thrower about 8-10 feet in the air.

The athlete or coach then throws the ball to the same spot but this time the athlete shuffles across and plays the ball with the arm on the opposite side from the ball.

Once the athlete has complete 8-10 successful repetitions of each the athlete can shuffle across and play the ball with both arms.

#### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- Coach or athlete throws the ball at a distance that necessitates the athlete falls onto the sand after contacting the ball.



### 3.13 PASSING SHORT/DEEP

(intermediate)

#### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: As many balls as available

Minimum: 3 balls

#### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 4 athletes + coach observing

Maximum: 6 athletes + coach observing

Minimum: 1 athlete + coach assisting

#### DRILL OBJECTIVE

Athletes learn to react early to short and deep serves and get practice in the movement patterns associated with receiving serves that are placed short and deep.

#### DRILL DESCRIPTION

The coach or athletes on the service line give short or deep serves to the passers.

Drill could be made game like by having passers get a point if the ball is caught in ideal setting position.

In order for this drill to be effective servers need to be able to serve a ball short and deep consistently.

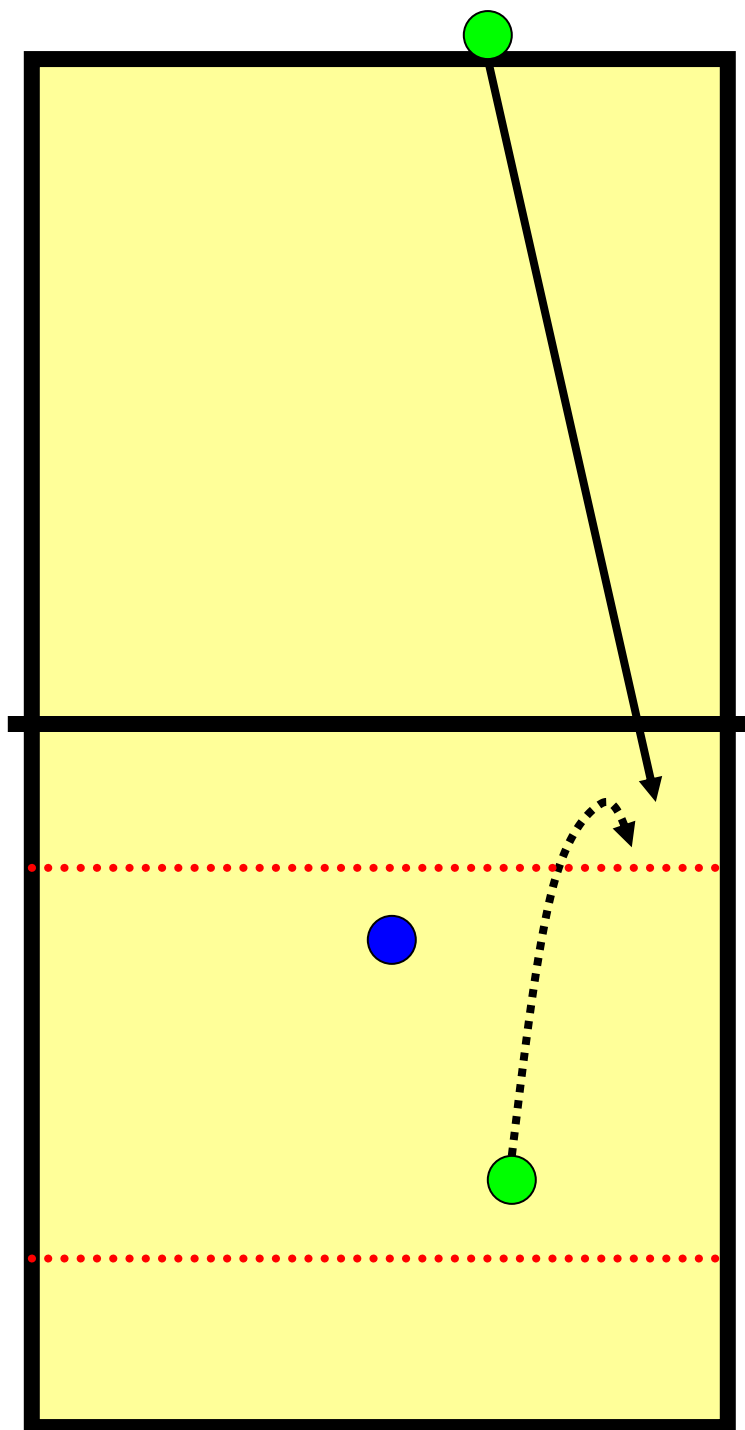
If this is not the case the coach may have to step in and serve or throw, either from the baseline or mid court.

#### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- Catcher can be removed and balls can be played out.

#### TEACHING POINTS

- 1 The athletes ready position on service receive needs to be with center of gravity in the middle (allowing quick forward and backward movement) and with one foot slightly in front of the other.
- 2 The athletes should be encouraged to read the ball as early as possible off the servers hand.
- 3 If this is done with beginner athletes, they may need to be reminded to move with the hands apart.
- 4 When moving forward to pass the short serve the passer should be aware of foot positioning. (refer to drill 3.5 for details)





### 3.14 PASSING PASS AND SWITCH

(intermediate)

#### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: 2-3 balls

Minimum: 1 ball between 3

#### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: Sets of 3 athletes + coach observing

Maximum: Only limited by space

Minimum: 2 athletes + coach assisting

#### DRILL OBJECTIVE

This is a good passing drill that is suitable when you have an uneven number of athletes.

It gives the athletes high repetitions in passing but additionally athletes get a chance to reinforce the skill of the sideways and backward movement in the sand.

#### DRILL DESCRIPTION

One coach or athlete passes the ball to 2 athletes who switch back and forth with each other to forearm pass the ball.

Athletes could initially move to their right to switch for a set of about 12-20 repetitions then switch to moving to their left for the same number of repetitions.

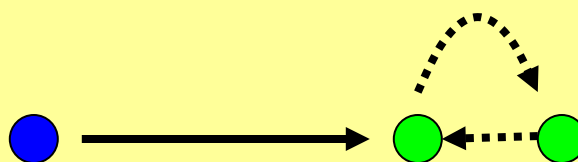
You could add an additional athlete to the passing line or even have two lines doing the same drill back and forth to each other.

#### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- This drill can also be done across the net.
- Have the athletes move to their left on one pass then to their right on the next.
- You could have two lines with each athlete moving the opposite direction of the athlete before them.

#### TEACHING POINTS

1. Make sure athletes play the ball in front of the body and there is a space between the body and the ball. To help this happen encourage athletes to have a wide base.
2. When shuffling sideways athletes should try to avoid crossing the legs but keep them wide.
3. When moving backwards athletes' legs can pass each other – they do not need to be kept wide.



### 3.15 PASSING PASS AND LOOK

(intermediate / advanced)

#### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: 2-3 balls

Minimum: 1 ball

#### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 4 athletes + coach observing

Maximum: 7 athletes + coach observing

Minimum: 2 athletes + coach assisting

#### DRILL OBJECTIVE

Athletes get practice at developing the skill of taking a quick look at the opposition after passing before initiating their spike approach.

#### DRILL DESCRIPTION

A coach or athlete serves the ball to either receiver on the other side of the net then proceeds to run to the center of the court and using their fingers displays a 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5 on their chest.

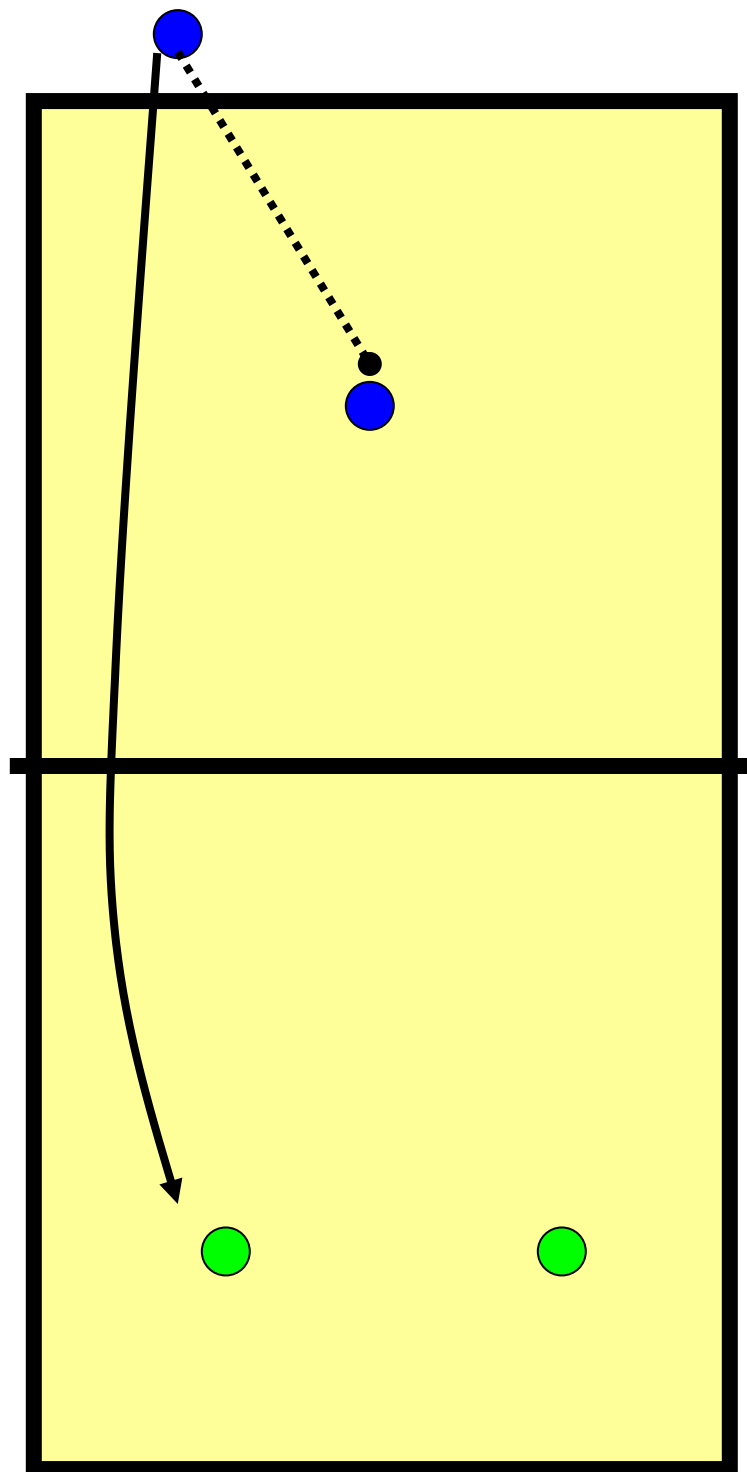
After athlete passes ball they must look at the person in the middle of the court and call out the number of fingers held up before playing out the ball.

#### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- The athlete looks again right before attacking and either calls the number again or hits away from the defender.
- The signals given by the coach or athlete could represent areas of the court that the attacker has to hit into.

#### TEACHING POINTS

- 1 The athlete should focus on being stable during the pass in order to give them time to look before attacking.
- 2 Passing forward is also critical to allowing the passer time to view the opposition. (or in this case the signal displayed by the opposing athlete or coach)



### 3.16 PASSING TOPSPIN SERVE OFF BOX

(advanced)

#### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: As many balls as available

Minimum: 1-2 balls between 3

#### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: Sets of 3 athletes + coach observing

Maximum: 6 athletes + coach observing

Minimum: 2 athletes + coach assisting

#### DRILL OBJECTIVE

The objective of this drill is for passers to get high repetitions of difficult serves.

Because the balls are coming from inside the service line balls come at the passer faster than normal which helps to improve reaction time.

#### DRILL DESCRIPTION

Standing on a box a small distance in from the baseline the athlete or coach drives topspin serves (or float serves) to the passers who then either play the ball out.

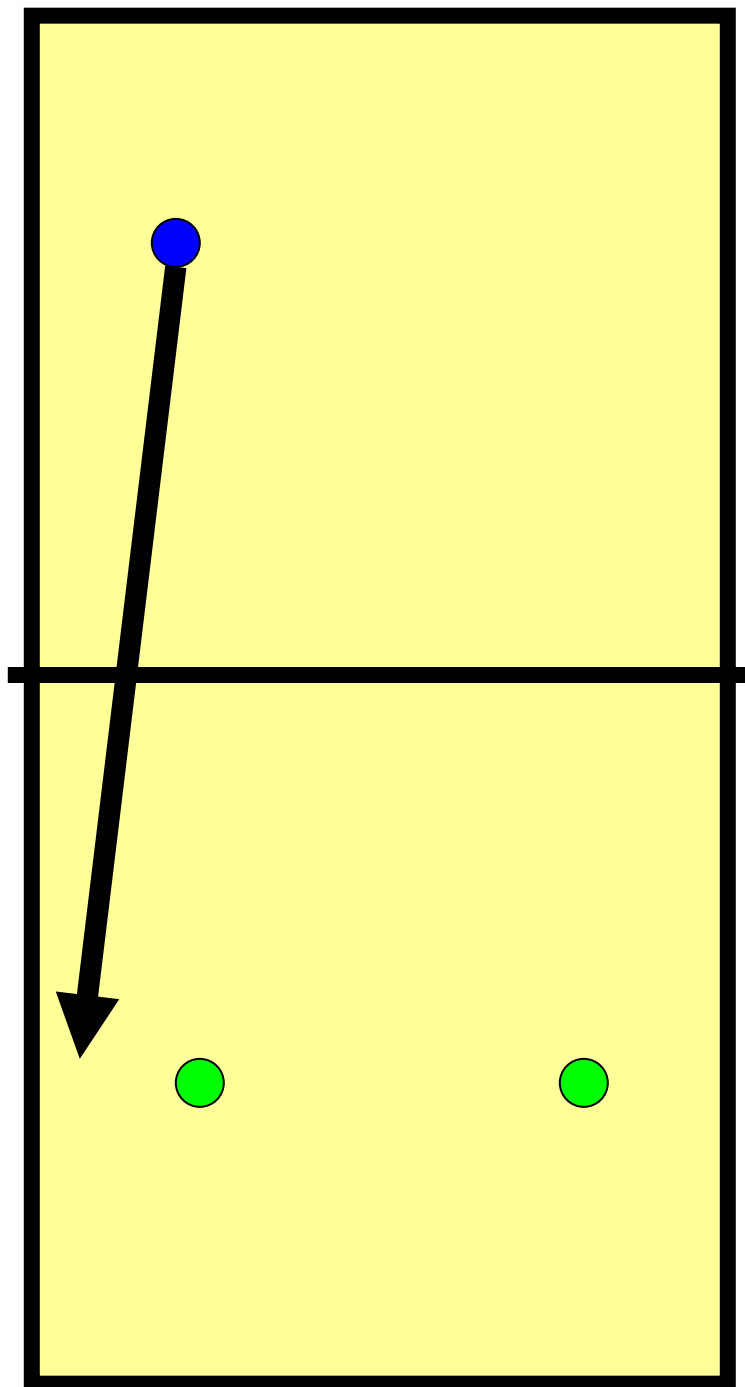
If the objective of the drill is solely passing then having the balls caught will allow for better focus on the pass.

#### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- The server should move to different positions on the court to simulate varying serves.

#### TEACHING POINTS

- 1 The athletes should commit to the pass. It is often better for athletes to end up on the ground after a good pass than make a bad pass and stay on their feet.
- 2 Athletes should communicate early and confidently with their partner as to who has the ball.
- 3 Athletes should watch the ball out of the servers hand and watch the server to attempt to anticipate where the ball is likely to go.



# THE SET

On the beach we do not need to be deceptive. If you pass the ball – you get to spike (unless of course your partner decides to attack on 2 but that is the topic of another discussion) therefore a great set is one that your partner is comfortable hitting. If the set has a predictable and consistent trajectory with a similar height /arc it will be easier to hit.

An obligation of the setter on the beach is to also to help out his/her partner on the attack by calling the area of the court that is open. It is very important that as you approach the ball you take into account the direction the ball is likely to move in the wind and the same after it leaves your hands.

The more time you spend training in the wind the faster you will develop this skill. A low body position during setting is beneficial on the beach for the same reason as described for the pass in that a lower body position allows you more room for last second adjustments. Rotation on a ball set by the hands is legal indoors but beach volleyball players often bump set because the rules regarding rotation on the ball are significantly stricter on the sand.

Deciding when to bump set and when to handset is a learned skill but generally you will see more bump setting as the wind gets stronger. If bump setting in the wind you may want to add a little spin to the ball as a ball that has spin on it will generally travel in a more predictable manner and be easier to hit.

Where and how the ball is set is determined by the attackers' personal preference and the opponents' defense. Things to keep in mind are that right handed athletes will hit better when a set is delivered to the right side of their bodies and left handed athletes when the ball is set to their left. How close you set to the net will depend on the defense. If the opponents are not blocking or are incapable of penetrating on a block, you should take full advantage of this and set the ball close to the net. If on the other hand the blocker jumps high and penetrates well then it is better to set the ball slightly away from the net.

## **Beginner**

Moving the feet to face the target is the most important concept to get through to beginners on the sand. Made them aware of the wind – if you ask them to throw a ball into a hoop from half court where will they face? ... Most will face directly at the hoop as that will give them the most accuracy. Translate this understanding to setting.

Setting up and down – discuss why a set that goes up and down is so much easier to hit than one that goes across.

## **Intermediate**

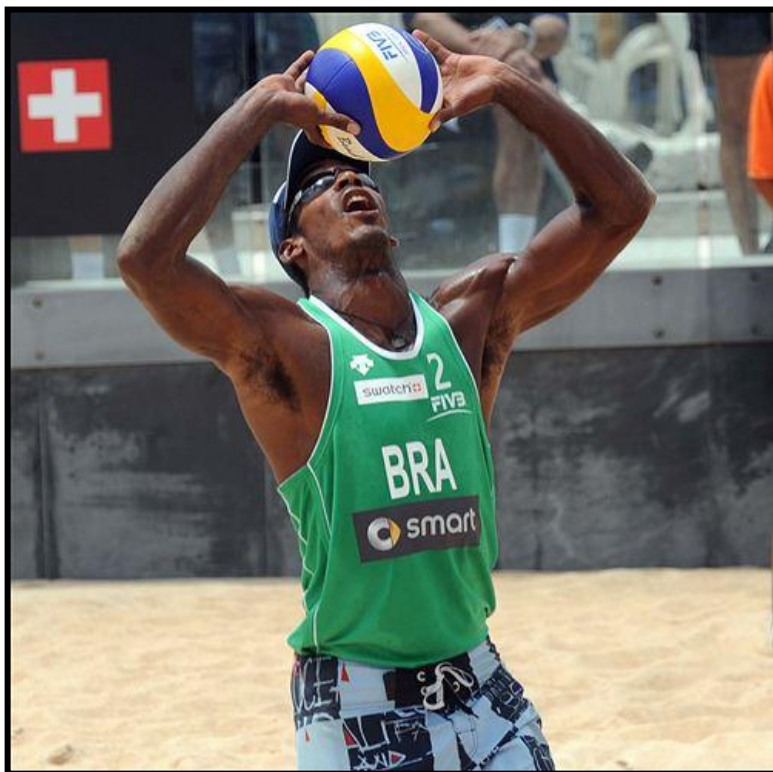
Once an athlete has grasped the basics of bump or hand setting the next step is to challenge the athletes by putting them in positions where they need to work harder to get in position to set the ball. In windy conditions training athletes to learn to put a little spin on the bump set will give them another asset to draw upon on windy days.

## **Advanced**

Often off a tough jump serve the ball will come off the passers arms with a lot of spin. An advanced skill is being able to set these spinning balls with the hands. Training athletes to set a spinning ball will be beneficial when they come up against the best topspin jump servers.

# SETTING DRILLS

|                  |                                      |                                  |
|------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <b>DRILL 4.1</b> | <b>SET AND MOVE</b>                  | <b>(Beginner)</b>                |
| <b>DRILL 4.2</b> | <b>HIGH REP SETTING - TRIANGLE</b>   | <b>(Beginner / intermediate)</b> |
| <b>DRILL 4.3</b> | <b>HIGH REP SETTING</b>              | <b>(Beginner / intermediate)</b> |
| <b>DRILL 4.4</b> | <b>HIGH REP SETTING - TRIANGLE</b>   | <b>(intermediate / advanced)</b> |
| <b>DRILL 4.5</b> | <b>RETREAT AND TRANSITION TO SET</b> | <b>(intermediate / advanced)</b> |
| <b>DRILL 4.6</b> | <b>SETTING BALL OUT OF THE NET</b>   | <b>(intermediate / advanced)</b> |
| <b>DRILL 4.7</b> | <b>4 GREAT SETS</b>                  | <b>(Intermediate / advanced)</b> |
| <b>DRILL 4.8</b> | <b>BLOCK AND TRANSITION SET</b>      | <b>(Advanced)</b>                |
| <b>DRILL 4.9</b> | <b>SET AND LOOK</b>                  | <b>(Advanced)</b>                |



## 4.1 SETTING SET AND MOVE

(beginner)

### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: 2-3 balls

Minimum: 1 ball

### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 4 athletes + coach observing

Maximum: 8 athletes + coach observing

Minimum: 3 athletes + coach assisting

### DRILL OBJECTIVE

This is a basic drill working on developing hand setting and additionally giving athletes practice on moving back and sideways in the sand.

### DRILL DESCRIPTION

Two pairs of athletes start facing each other across the net close to the antenna.

Athlete 1 proceeds to set the ball across the net to athlete 2. After setting the ball the athletes move around behind their partner who is beside them and down the net.

The same happens on the other side of the court and the pairs move down the net towards the other antenna.

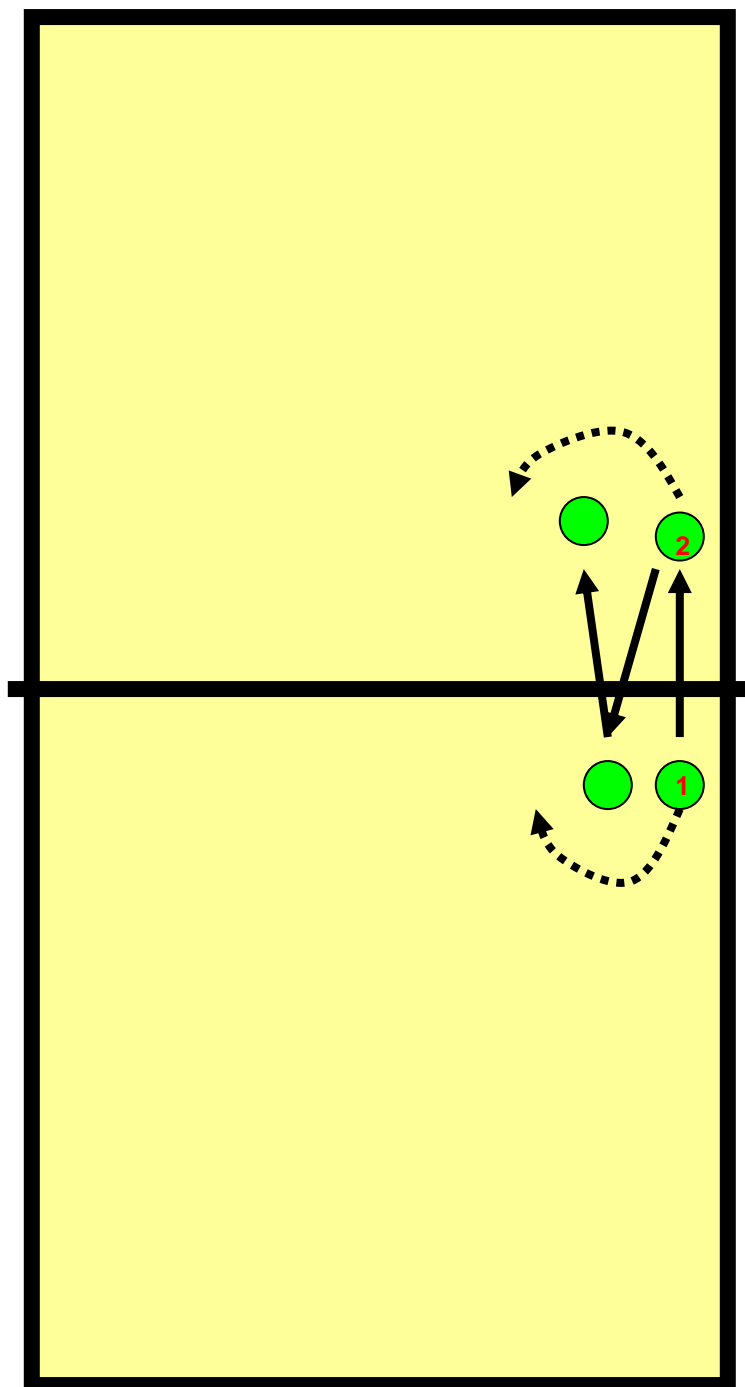
Once the athletes get to the other side of the net they should attempt to turn the drill around and head back down the net without the ball hitting the ground.

### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- Athletes have to get from one side of the court to the other and back a certain number of times.
- This drill could be done with one side passing and the other setting or one athlete from each pair passing and the other setting.

### TEACHING POINTS

- 1 Athletes need to be aware of the wind moving the ball.
- 2 Athletes need to communicate in order for this drill to run smoothly.
- 3 Athletes should try to have a nice wide balanced stance when setting.



## 4.2 SETTING

### HIGH REP SETTING -TRIANGLE DRILL

(beginner / intermediate)

#### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: 3 balls

Minimum: 3 balls

#### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 4 athletes + coach observing

Maximum: 6 athletes + coach assisting

Minimum: 2 athletes + coach assisting

#### DRILL OBJECTIVE

This drill works on giving athletes a large number of repetitions setting.

#### DRILL DESCRIPTION

Passers start in ready position on the left or right side of the court.

The coach or athlete then tosses the ball to simulate a pass and the setter comes in and sets the ball towards the catcher who in this drill is the target.

If there is only one athlete setting then they will not have time to get all the way back to the original passing position.

If you have more than one athlete setting then they can cycle through from the ready position.

Athletes should always practice setting on both sides of the court and both sides of the net.

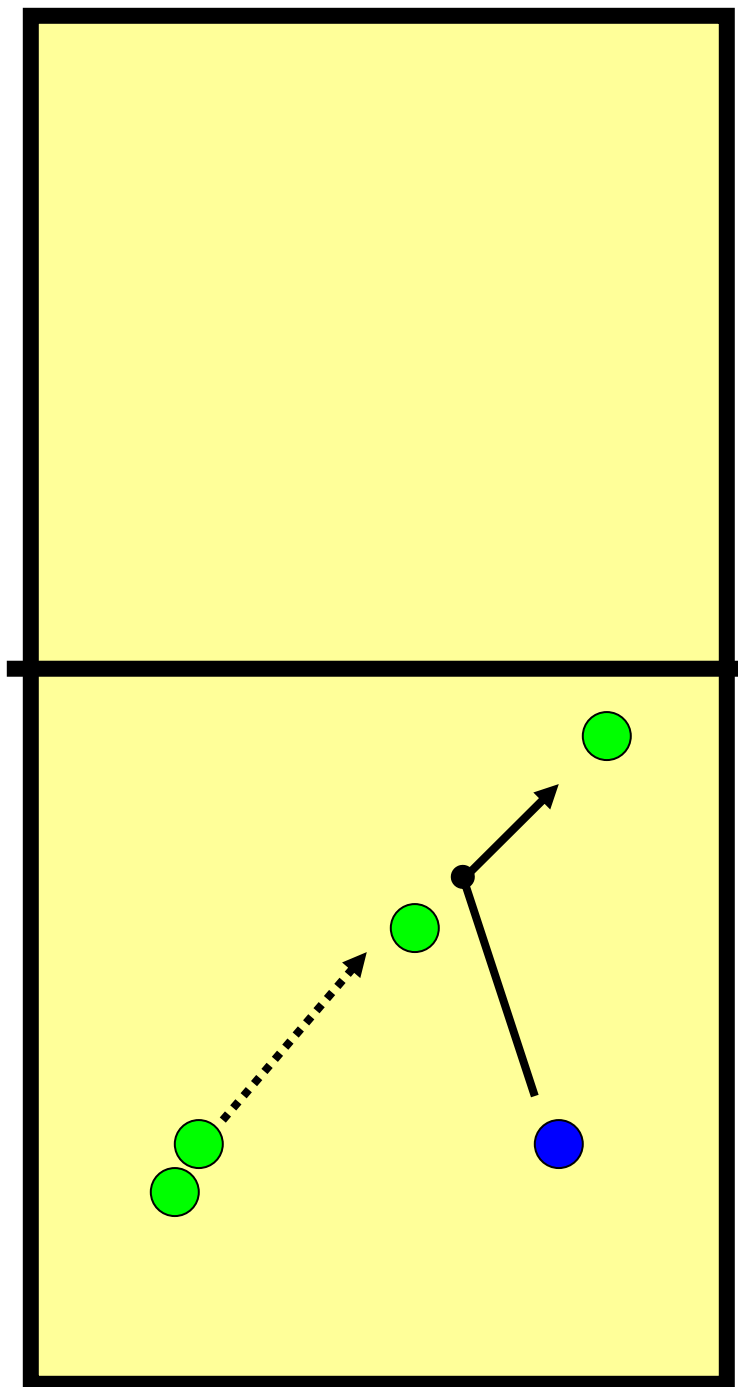
Depending on what the athlete is working on the thrower could simulate either a perfect or not so perfect pass.

#### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- Change around the toss location to ensure the setter gets practice setting all types of passes.
- The coach or athlete can toss the ball up with spin to make it more difficult for the setter.
- This drill can be done with 1 ball or 2 balls or even 3 balls for a challenge.

#### TEACHING POINTS

- 1 Feet and shoulders should be facing (squaring up) to the target.
- 2 Athletes need to be aware of the wind and how it affects the ball both before they contact it and after they contact it.



### 4.3 SETTING

#### HIGH REP SETTING FOR LARGE GROUPS

(beginner / intermediate)

#### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: 4 or 5 balls  
Minimum: 3 balls

#### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 5 athletes + coach observing  
Maximum: 9 athletes + coach observing  
Minimum: 4 athletes + coach assisting

#### TEACHING POINTS

- 1 Feet and shoulders should be squaring up to the target. ('squaring up' to the target means the same as facing the target)
- 2 Athletes need to be aware of the wind and how it affects the ball.

#### DRILL OBJECTIVE

This drill works on giving athletes a high number of repetitions in either hand setting or bump setting.

#### DRILL DESCRIPTION

A line of passers start in ready position on the left and right side of the court with extra passers starting off the court behind the baseline.

The coach or an athlete tosses the ball to simulate a pass from close to one of the passers.

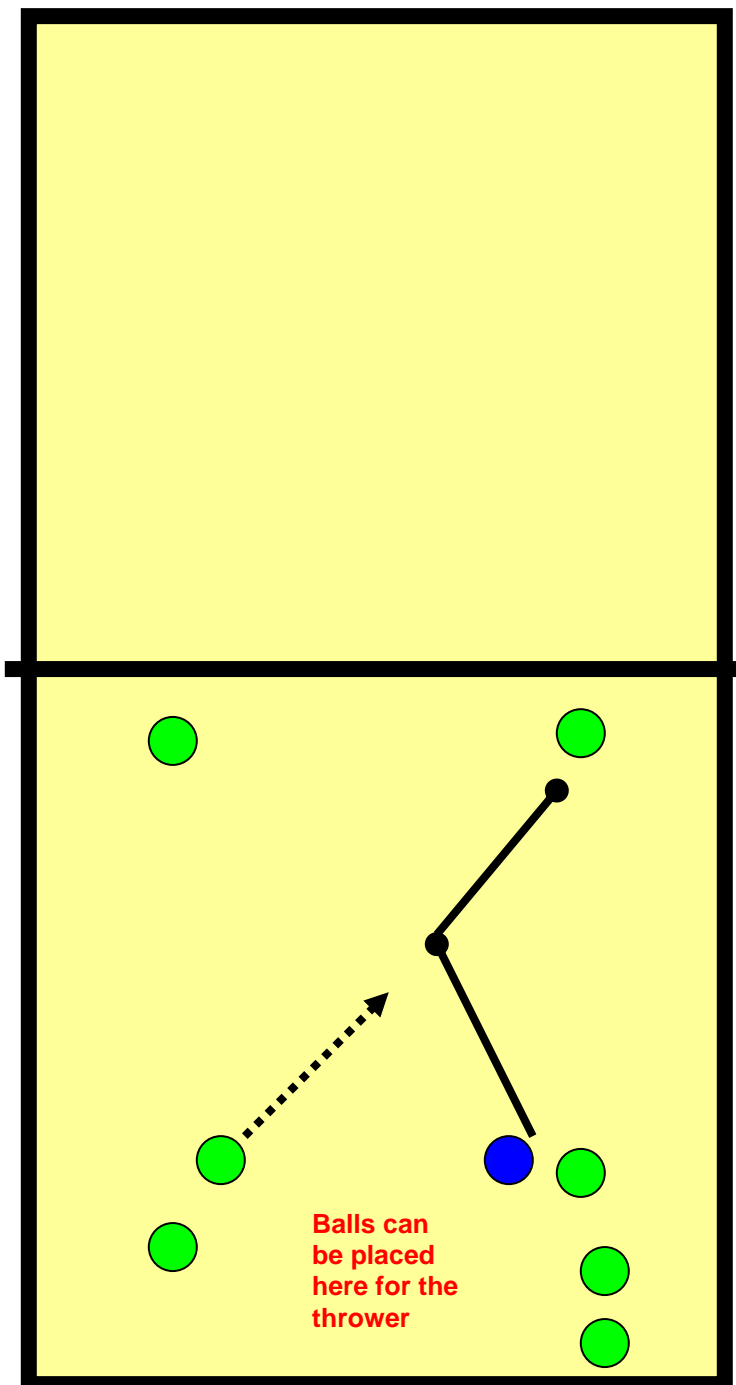
The non-passer on the opposite side to the thrown ball moves in to set.

Initially you can have setters catch their own ball as this encourages a set that is straight up and down but you could also have catchers at the net who hand the ball back to the setters.

Setters not active need to shag balls to keep a constant supply available for the thrower.

#### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- Keep the positions the same except have coach on the other side of the net tossing balls to the passers and catchers roll balls under the net to the coach.
- Have athletes toss balls up themselves, which will free up the coach to focus on athletes.





## 4.4 SETTING

### HIGH REP SETTING -TRIANGLE DRILL

(intermediate / advanced)

#### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: 2 + balls

Minimum: 1 ball

#### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 3 athletes + coach observing

Maximum: Up to 6 athletes + coach observing

Minimum: 2 athletes + coach assisting

#### TEACHING POINTS

- 1 The feet and shoulders of the athlete setting the ball should be facing (squaring up) to the target
- 2 The athletes should be made aware of the wind and how it affects the ball before and after it is contacted.

#### DRILL OBJECTIVE

This drill works on giving athletes a high number of repetitions in setting and it additionally gives athletes practice passing soft driven balls.

#### DRILL DESCRIPTION

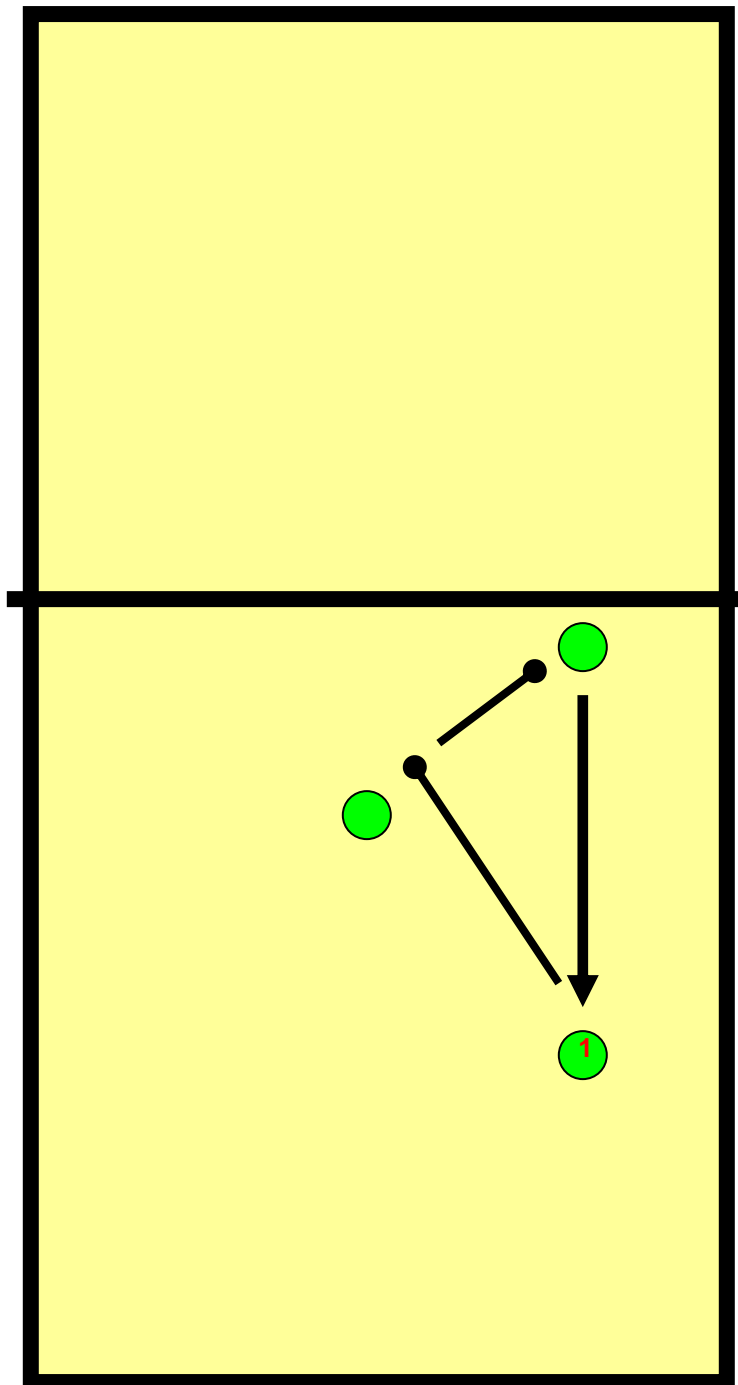
Athlete 1 starts in passing position on the left (or right) side of the court.

The coach or an athlete who is at the net softly drives the ball to the athlete in passing position.

The athlete not passing comes in and either bump sets or hand sets the ball to the athlete at the net who soft drives the ball again to the passer to continue the drill.

#### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- This drill can be attempted with 2 balls simultaneously.



#### 4.5 SETTING RETREAT AND TRANSITION TO SET

(intermediate / advanced)

**EQUIPMENT:**

Ideal: 10 balls

Minimum: 3-4 balls

### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 3 athletes + coach observing

Maximum: Up to 6 athletes + coach observing

Minimum: 2 athletes + coach assisting

## DRILL OBJECTIVE

Drill works on blocker retreating and then moving to the dug ball to set up the attack.

## DRILL DESCRIPTION

The coach or athlete initiates a spike as the blocker drops off the net.

The coach or an athlete then drives the ball to the athlete in the defensive position.

The blocker that has just retreated then sets up their partner for the attack.

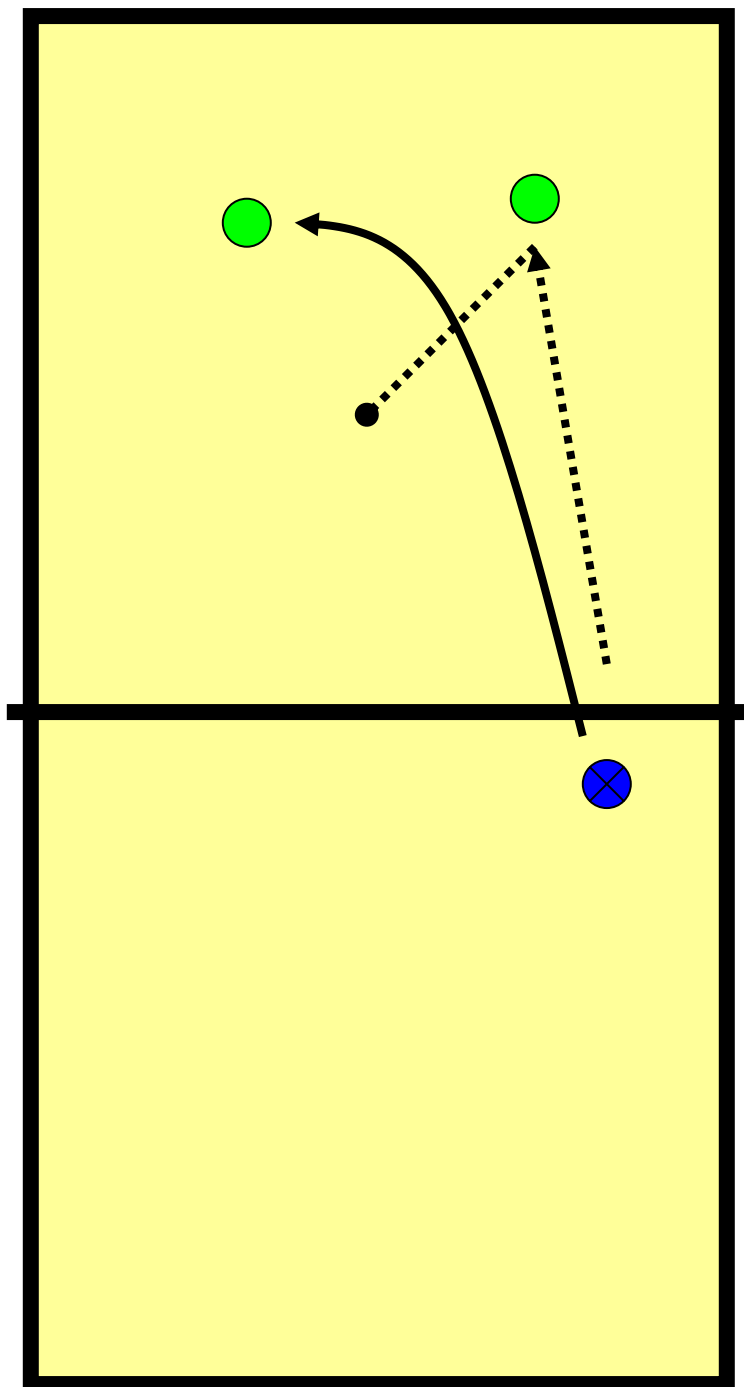
Alternatively the ball can be hit at the retreating blocker with the athlete on defense coming in to set up the attack.

## DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- The coach or athlete can drive the ball harder at the defender or retreating athlete.
- The coach or athlete can play soft and hard shots to the defender and retreating blocker.
- The setter can indicate to their partner where they would like the ball to be played on attack.

## TEACHING POINTS

- 1 Athlete should focus on using the correct footwork when retreating and make sure that they are stationary and balanced when the ball is hit.
- 2 The retreating blocker should also maintain visual contact on the attacker to better anticipate where the ball may go.
- 3 When moving to set the ball, the athlete should focus on getting around the ball to face the target.



## 4.6 SETTING

### SETTING BALL OUT OF THE NET

(intermediate to advanced)

#### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: 10 balls

Minimum: 3- 4 balls

#### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 3-4 athletes + coach observing

Maximum: 6 athletes + coach observing

Minimum: 1 athlete + coach assisting

#### TEACHING POINTS:

- 1 Athletes need to understand the behavior of the net and how it acts to pop the ball out.
- 2 Athletes need to stay a good distance away from the net in order not to be cramped, which makes bump-setting the ball up more difficult.
- 3 The athletes need to realize that by playing the ball closer to the ground they are giving themselves more time to react and get into a good position.

#### DRILL OBJECTIVE

Sometimes during a game a situation occurs where the ball needs to be played out of the net and this drill gives athletes practice for this situation.

In this drill athletes get practice bump setting the ball up for their partner out of the net.

#### DRILL DESCRIPTION

An athlete either throws or spikes the ball into the bottom of the net.

An athlete that did not throw the ball into the net then gets as low as possible to the ground to bump set the ball that comes out of the net up into the air so it can be attacked.

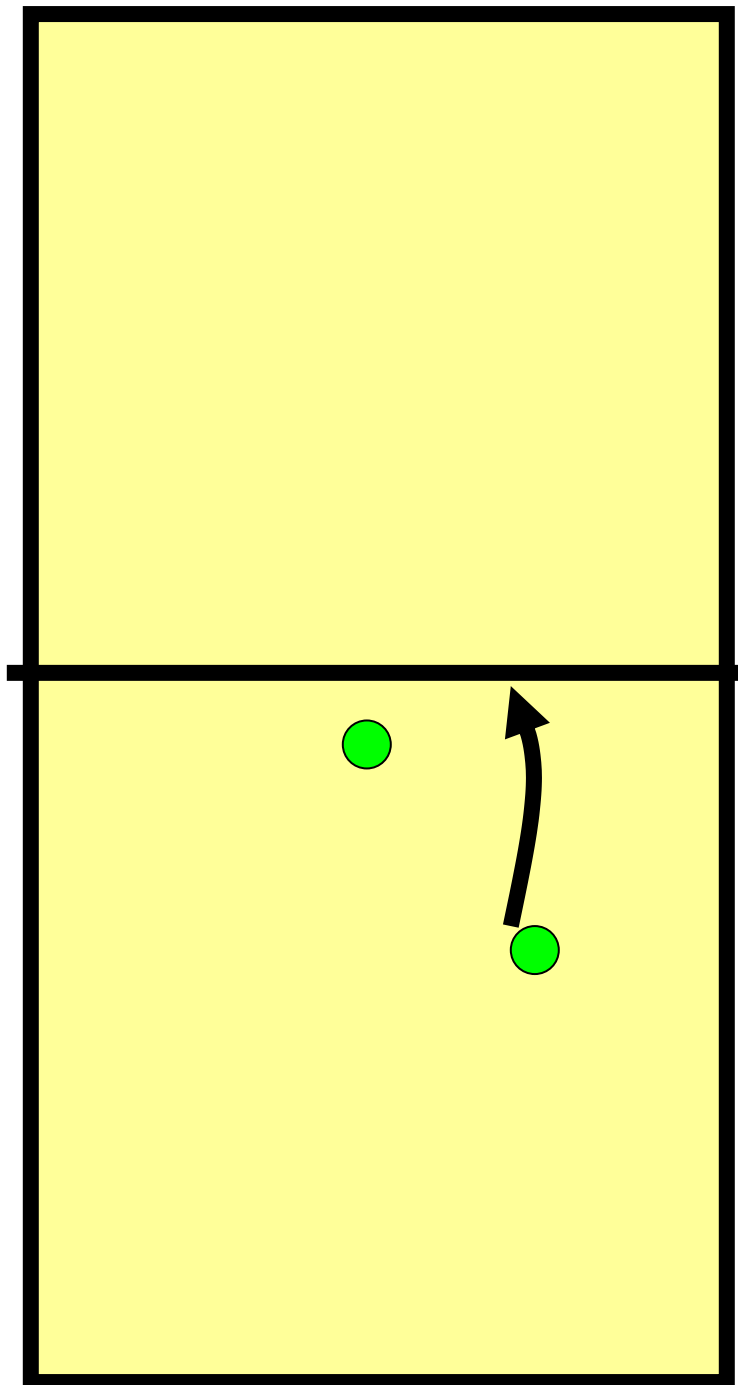
The athlete that threw (or spiked) the ball into the net then tries to attack.

If the athletes are struggling with the playing of the ball into then net then the coach can initiate the drill then move away for an athlete to spike the ball.

Be aware that for this drill to work best the net should have a tight cord running through the bottom so that the ball bounces out rather than falling straight down and the ball should be driven into the very bottom of the net rather than the top.

#### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- Coach can throw (or spike) ball into the net and the other two athletes can do a series of reps.
- Setters can make a call after bump setting as to where they would like the attack to go.
- Athlete could come from a blocking position to bump set the ball out of the net.



## 4.7 SETTING

### 4 GREAT SETS

(intermediate to advanced)

#### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: 10 balls

Minimum: 4 balls

#### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 2 athletes + coach observing

Maximum: 10 athletes per side + coach observing

Minimum: 1 athlete + coach assisting

#### DRILL OBJECTIVE

This drill develops the ability of an athlete ability to set both good and bad passes and to make judgments on whether to bump or hand set the ball.

#### DRILL DESCRIPTION

Coach (blue) throws balls to positions 1, 2 3 and 4 to simulate a pass.

The athletes (in green) then moves from passing position to attempt to set up the pass either with a hand or bump set.

1 = bad pass (to close to the net and too far across)

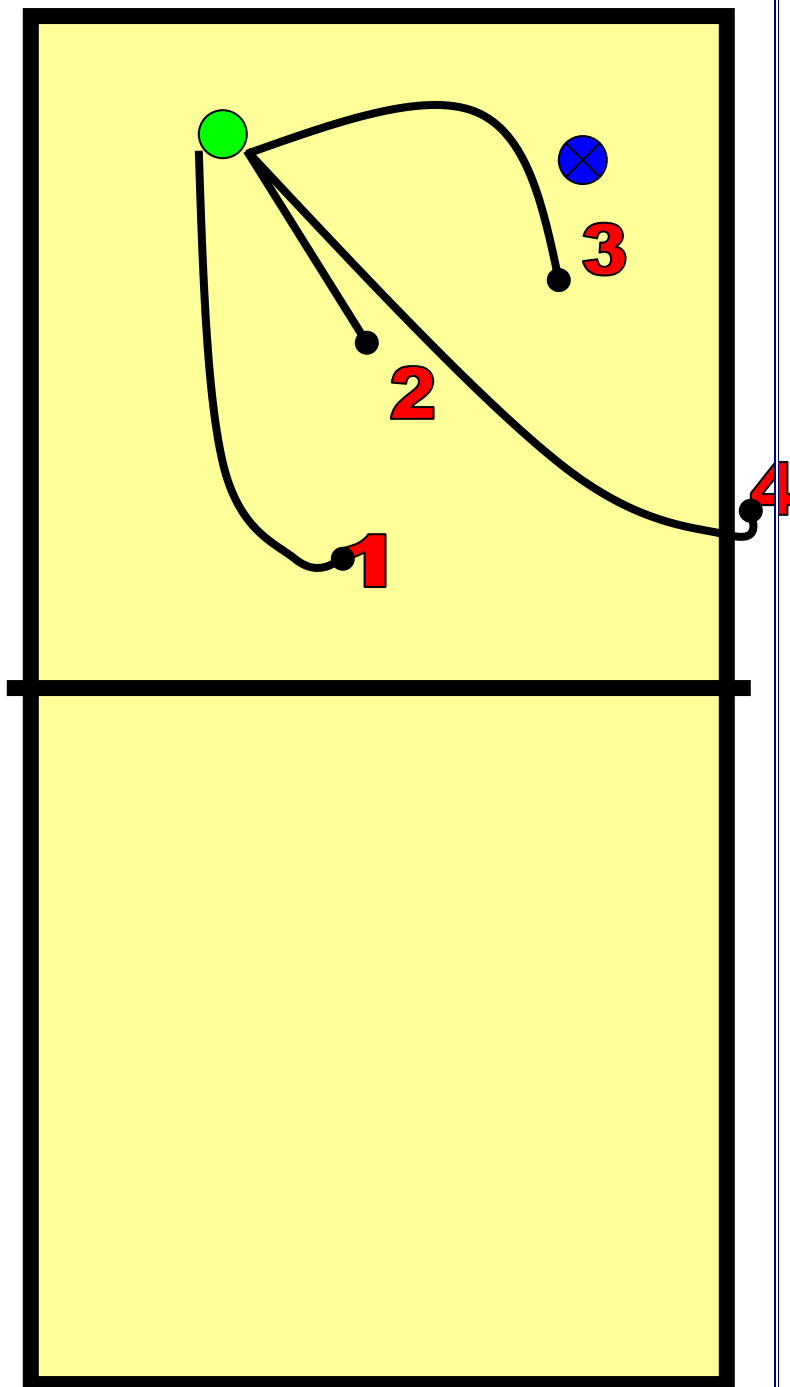
2 = perfect pass

3 = bad pass (to far off the net)

4 = bad pass (off the side of the court)

#### TEACHING POINTS

- 1 Make sure that the setter faces (squares up) to the target.
- 2 Athletes should make sure they move through the ball after setting and get down low in preparation to dig a blocked ball.



#### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- An additional athlete could spike or drive the ball over the net off the set.
- After setting the athlete should get down low and get in position to dig a possible blocked ball.

## 4.8 SETTING BLOCK AND TRANSITION SET

(advanced)

### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: 10 + balls  
Minimum: 4 balls

### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 3 athletes + coach observing  
Maximum: 6 athletes + coach observing  
Minimum: 2 athletes + coach assisting

### DRILL OBJECTIVE

This drill focuses on developing the skill of the blocker to turn after landing and hustling to get to the ball to make a good transition set.

The drill also gives the defender practice digging the hard driven ball, chasing down the soft shot and converting with a spike.

### DRILL DESCRIPTION

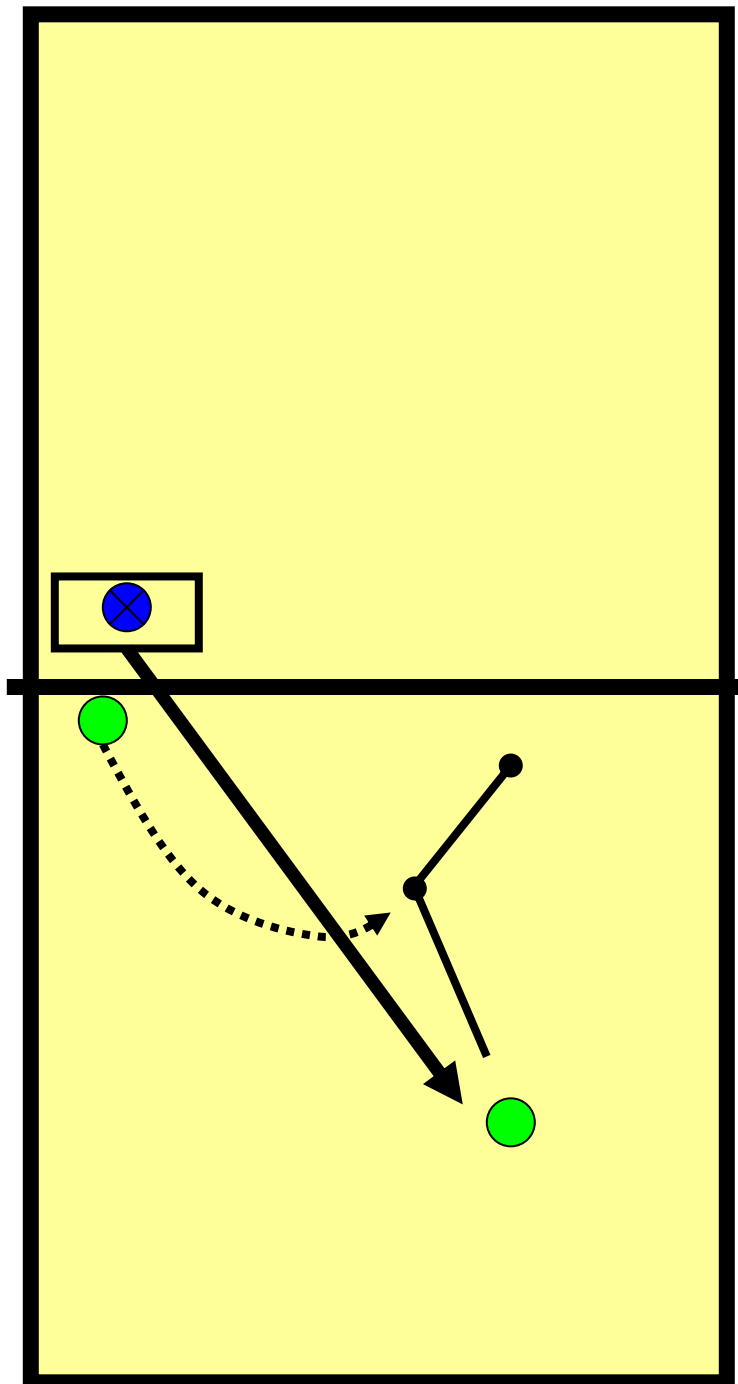
In this drill the coach or athlete drives a ball past the block towards the defender.

After the blocker comes down from their block they turn and hustle to the dug ball to set up their partner up for the spike.

With a team on each side this drill can be turned into a continuous drill with angle attacks. (or cut shots, or soft line shots)

### TEACHING POINTS

- 1 The blocker can turn in the air on the way down to enable them to get off the net faster however they must make sure they don't turn too early and lose form on the block.
- 2 Blocker must get 'around' the ball and face the net to set. *Going in a straight line to the ball will often result in shoulders that are not facing the target when setting.*
- 3 The defender should focus on playing the ball up with some height - this will allow the blocker time to get to the ball.



### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- Ball could be hit over the line or cross court and played out.
- The ball could also occasionally be driven into the block.

## 4.9 SETTING SET AND LOOK

(advanced)

### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: 8-16 balls.

Minimum: 4 balls.

### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 3 athletes + coach observing.

Maximum: 6 athletes per side + coach observing.

Minimum: 2 athletes + coach assisting.

### DRILL OBJECTIVE

This drill focuses on developing the skill of the setter to turn, look and call the open court after setting up their partner.

It also is a valuable motor pattern to make automatic as it will prepare the setter for picking up a ball that may come back over off the block.

### DRILL DESCRIPTION

In this drill the coach or athlete throws a ball to the pair on the other side of the net.

The thrown ball can make easy or hard depending on the level of the athletes.

Just after the ball is set up for the attack, the individual who threw the ball moves to one side or the other. (left or right)

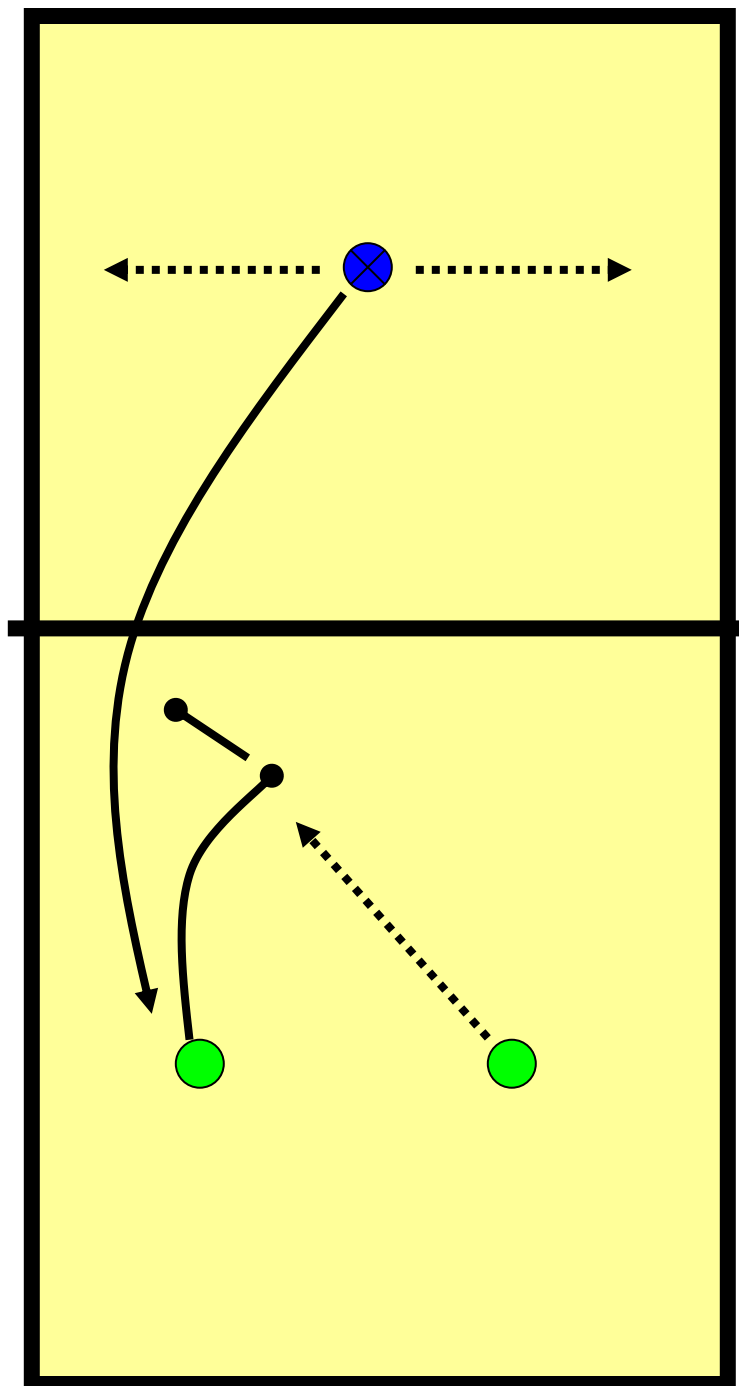
After the setter sets the ball, they get low and turn and look at the defender and make a call of line or angle depending on where the open space is.

### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- Additionally the athlete or coach could throw a ball over to simulate a blocked ball.
- You could make the setter bump set some and handset others.
- Add a blocker so that the setter has a third option to call 'nobody' if the blocker drops off.

### TEACHING POINTS

- 1 Make sure the setter moves through the ball when setting as it is difficult to get low and turn if the setter is moving backwards.
- 2 After setting the ball the athlete should get down low with arms open and forward, just in case the ball is blocked.
- 3 If the ball is close to the net (and the block) don't turn and make the call - focus on saving the play if the ball is blocked.



# THE ATTACK

Spiking in the sand is quite different from that of the indoor game. The sand absorbs a greater amount of the force that you direct towards it to propel yourself upwards and as a result you will not jump as high as indoors.

Your timing will change. Try to get from the sand to the ball as quickly as possible. Jump later and try not to hang in the air. Unlike basketball you don't want to 'hang' before making the shot – because while you are hanging in the air the ball is likely to have floated out of position in the wind.

Attacking indoors is largely about power. Attacking on the beach however is more about finesse. You still need to be able to hit the ball with power as it keeps the defense locked down inside the block but great beach volleyball players have a large variety of shots - many of which are never seen in the indoor game such as the knuckle, the 'pokie', the jumbo shrimp, the baby angle, etc.

Taking a quick look at the defender on the other side of the net between the time the pass is made and the spike is hit is a skill that is not used indoors.

Beach athletes are known to shoot which means to place the ball with a soft shot. In indoor Volleyball these shots would not work – with 4 defenders playing behind a 2 person block, a soft shot would be easily dug. On the beach however these shots can earn valuable points. Playing the ball over on the second shot is also a tactic that is used on the beach but not as much indoors except when the setter dumps.

Remember ... tipping is illegal on the beach. Beach Volleyball is all about strategy. You look at the positions and capabilities of the different athletes and decide what the best options are – sometimes several actions ahead of time. The better athlete will begin to recognize certain patterns and will almost instinctively know how to respond as a point unfolds.

## **Beginner**

The correct spike approach and arm swing which results in a consistent hand contact and wrist snap on the ball and control in spiking are the first skills that should be worked on. If a athlete can develop a correct spike approach to the point that it is automatic (which means that they do not need to think about it) their success in spiking will dramatically increase. It seems obvious but it is vital that the athlete is moving towards the net while attacking the ball – this way they are in a better position to see what is happening on the other side of the net and play the ball away from the opposition.

## **Intermediate**

Assuming that the footwork is automatic, athletes at the intermediate level should focus on developing the ability to change the direction of the ball at the last second with the wrist.

## **Advanced**

For advanced athletes, spiking against different defensive arrangements will be beneficial.

# ATTACKING DRILLS

|                  |                                   |                           |
|------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>DRILL 5.1</b> | <b>STAND AND SPIKE</b>            | (beginner)                |
| <b>DRILL 5.2</b> | <b>SHOT PRACTICE</b>              | (beginner)                |
| <b>DRILL 5.3</b> | <b>OVER ON TWO</b>                | (intermediate)            |
| <b>DRILL 5.4</b> | <b>SHORT DEEP</b>                 | (intermediate)            |
| <b>DRILL 5.5</b> | <b>SHOOTING AWAY FROM DEFENSE</b> | (intermediate)            |
| <b>DRILL 5.6</b> | <b>AROUND THE WORLD</b>           | (intermediate)            |
| <b>DRILL 5.7</b> | <b>SPIKE EXHAUSTION DRILL</b>     | (intermediate / advanced) |
| <b>DRILL 5.8</b> | <b>CONTINUOUS SPIKING</b>         | (advanced)                |





## 5.1 ATTACKING STAND AND SPIKE

(beginner)

### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: As many balls as possible

Minimum: 4 balls

### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 1 athlete + coach observing

Maximum: 8 athletes + coach observing

Minimum: 1 athlete + coach participating

### TEACHING POINTS

- 1 Make sure that the athletes are placing the correct foot forward when they contact the ball.
- 2 Encourage athletes to keep ball in front of them.
- 3 Encourage athletes to find ball with their non-hitting arm as this will aid them in judging the distance the ball is from them and timing of the arm-swing.
- 4 Encourage the athletes to reach high and snap the wrist over top of the ball.

### DRILL OBJECTIVE

This drill works on reinforcing the correct angle of approach to the attack and additionally this drill helps to develop good arm and hand positioning for the spike.

This is a good drill for development of the spike action in athletes that have not yet mastered the spike approach.

### DRILL DESCRIPTION

The coach or another athlete tosses a ball in the air for the athlete to hit.

Athlete moves towards the ball and uses the non-hitting arm to find the ball before bringing the hitting arm through to spike.

If the athlete brings their non-hitting arm down to early it may be beneficial to have them keep their non-hitting arm up and get them to knuckle every second ball over the net with their non-hitting arm. (hitting arm should be 'cocked' back with elbow high)

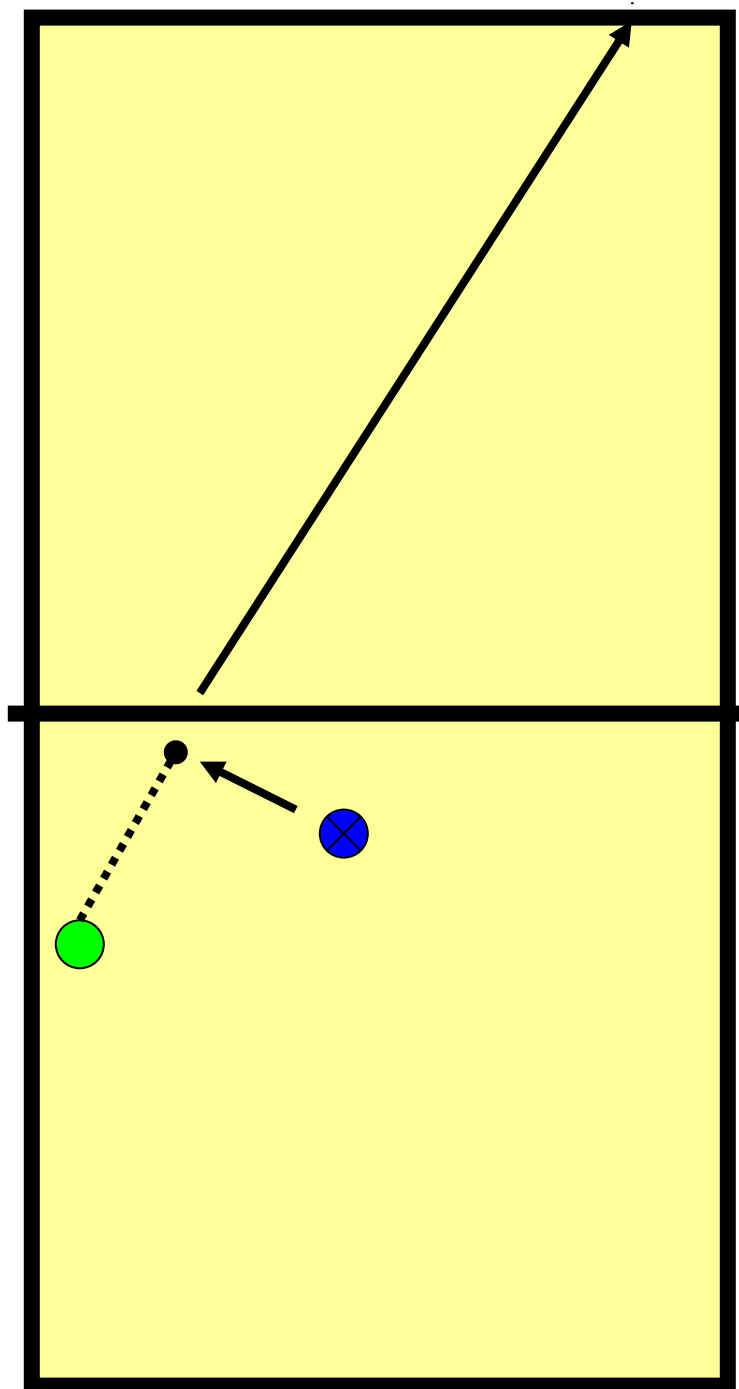
If the athlete spikes with the wrong leg forward (left foot forward for right handed athletes and right foot forward for left handed) then you can have them shuffling in to the spike with the correct footwork.

Athletes should be aiming to spike the ball into the deep corner in this drill.

For shorter players you may have to lower the net or set the ball further off the net.

### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- Toss balls in a number of different locations so that the athletes have to move in order to contact the ball in the correct place above the shoulder.



## 5.2 ATTACKING SHOT PRACTICE

(beginner)

### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: As many balls as possible

Minimum: 4 balls

### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 2 athletes + coach observing

Maximum: 4 athletes per side + coach observing

Minimum: 1 athlete + coach observing

### DRILL OBJECTIVE

This drill works on reinforcing the correct angle of approach to the attack and additionally this drill helps to develop good arm and hand positioning for the spike.

### DRILL DESCRIPTION

The athlete faces the direction of a regular spike approach.

This is on a slight angle (facing the cross court corner) for a right-hander on the left side and closer to straight on for a right-hander on the right side.

The opposite applies for a left-handed attacker.

The athlete then tosses the ball up in front of them and with a high arm swing and staying on the ground plays either a soft shot to any one of the areas outlined by the coach.

The number of repetitions that the athlete completes along with the positions will be dependent on the objectives of the training and what shots the athlete needs to refine.

Despite some advanced players specializing in playing one particular side of the court an athlete should make sure they practice soft shots from both sides of the court.

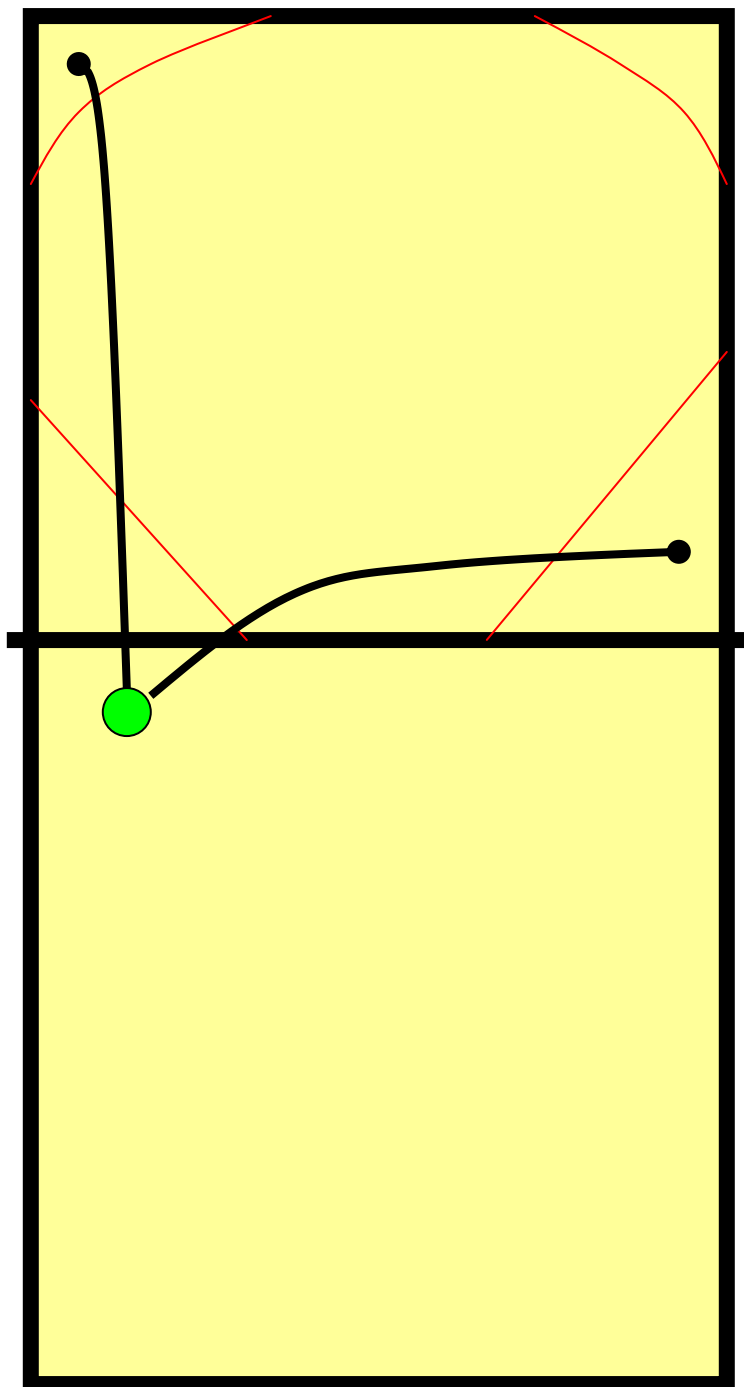
It may be beneficial for the athlete to play one hard attack in between each soft shot to reinforce the maintenance of a high arm.

### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- Instead of tossing to themselves, athletes can have a partner or coach set them up.
- If the athletes have mastered the spike approach they could then move towards attacking the ball off a spike jump.

### TEACHING POINTS:

- 1 Athletes need to be reminded to contact the ball high and to snap with the wrist to change the direction of the ball rather than changing the direction of the ball by dropping the elbow.
- 2 When a right-handed athlete is attacking from the right side they will want to think 'thumb up' on the cut and 'thumb down' for the line.
- 3 When a right-handed athlete is attacking from the left side they must think 'thumb down' for the cut and 'thumb up' for the line.
- 4 The opposite will apply for left handed athletes.



## 5.4 ATTACKING OVER ON TWO

(intermediate)

### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: As many balls as available

Minimum: 3 balls

### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 2 athletes + coach observing

Maximum: Up to 10 athletes + coach observing

Minimum: 2 athletes + coach participating

### DRILL OBJECTIVE

This drill works on developing the 'over on two' option whereby the non-receiver attacks the ball over on the second contact.

### DRILL DESCRIPTION

A coach or athlete serves the ball to two passers either from the baseline or from the middle of the court depending on the level of the players and the focus of the drill.

Depending on where the pass goes the non-passer will either set up the ball for a normal attack or they will take the opportunity to attack the ball 'over on two'.

Easy short serves are the best for introducing this tactic to athletes as it is easier to attack 'on two' if the pass travels up and down rather than forward.

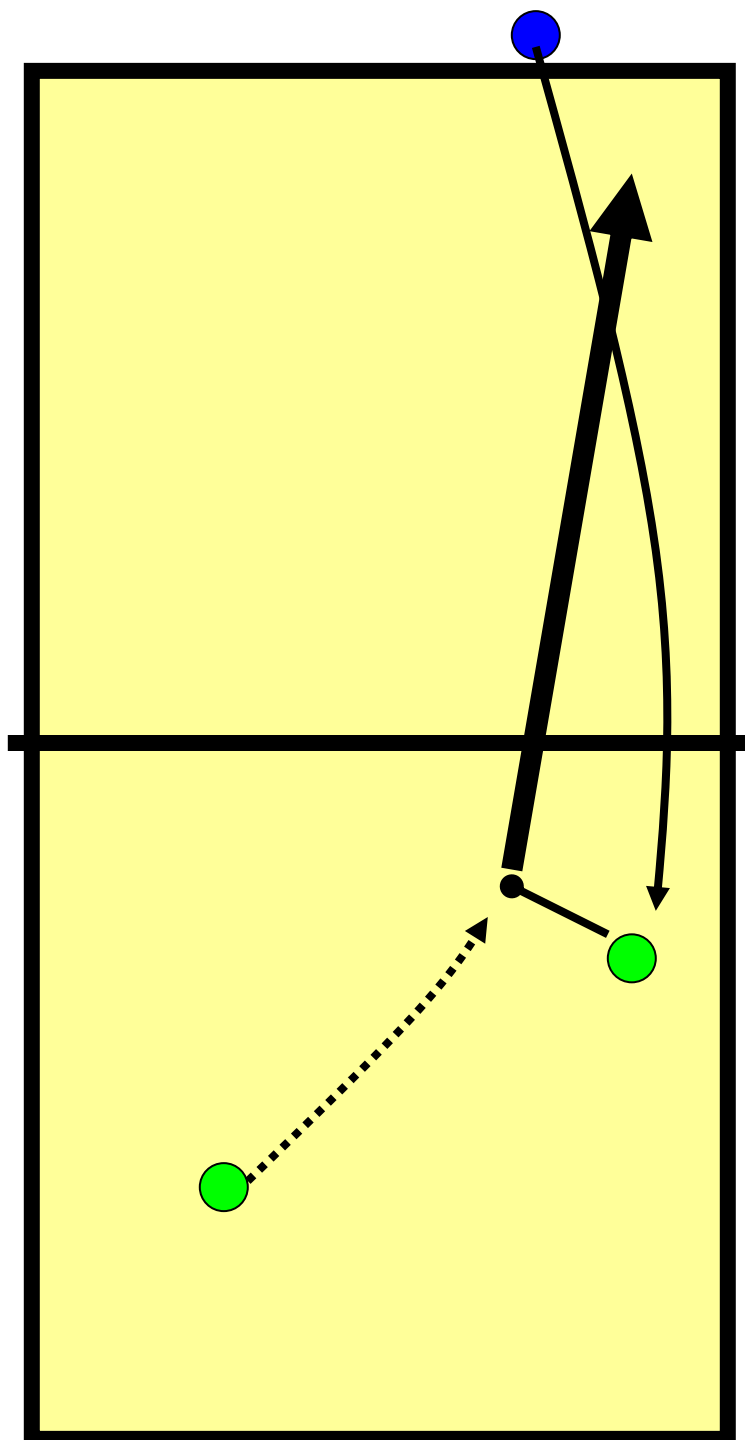
Once the athletes start feeling comfortable playing the ball over on two you can introduce areas of the court to hit into.

### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- Additionally you could position a blocker at the net and the athlete playing the over on two could either shoot over them or attempt a hard spike past them.
- Additionally you could position a defender across the net and the athlete playing the over on two could shoot away from them.

### TEACHING POINTS

- 1 Playing the ball over on two is a good option on short serves as the ball is close to the net and traveling up and down rather than up and forward.
- 2 The best areas to attack towards when playing the ball over on two are to the back corners or short away from the block.
- 3 Athletes will be more effective if they reach high and snap on the attack rather than playing a soft shot.



## 5.4 ATTACKING SHORT DEEP

(Intermediate)

### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: As many balls as available

Minimum: 2 balls

### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 4 athletes + coach observing

Maximum: Up to 8 athletes per side + coach observing

Minimum: 3 athletes + coach participating

### DRILL OBJECTIVE

The objective of this drill is for athletes to develop the ability to play the ball either short or deep away from the opposition. This drill also helps develop communication between teammates.

### DRILL DESCRIPTION

Two lines are drawn across the court (as per the red lines in the diagram) one about 4 feet in front of the players in defensive position and one about 4 feet behind.

The ball then gets thrown over the net to initiate the drill (either by a coach or one of the athletes) and the athletes receiving the ball play out a pass set and spike.

Immediately after the ball is set the athletes on defensive either drop back together or move forward together. (this should be decided on before the drill is initiated to avoid confusion)

The attacking team attempt to play a soft shot either deep or short away from the defenders.

The setter should look after setting and communicate to the attacker as to what shot they should play.

The attacking team would get a point if they managed to play the ball into the area that the defenders moved away from.

There are several options on how this drill could run.

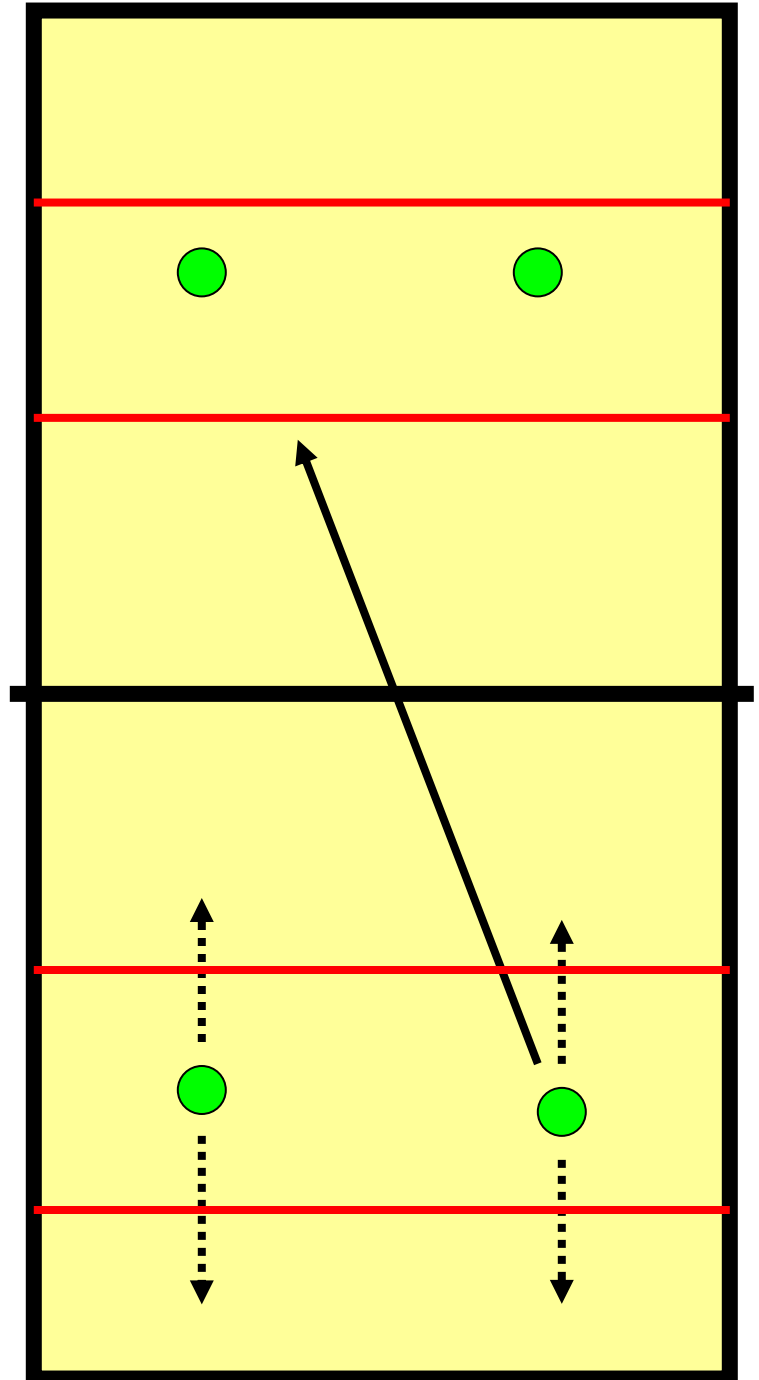
Teams could gain points after alternating on each attack or a rally could be played out after each ball is introduced.

### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- To make it much more difficult to earn a point defenders could move back and forth independently of each other.

### TEACHING POINTS

- 1 Attackers may need to be reminded that they should attempt to take a quick look at defenders before spiking.
- 2 Setters should be encouraged to call to their partners where they should play the shot.
- 3 Despite the fact that the athletes are required to play a soft shot they should still maintain strong approach on their spike.



## 5.5 ATTACKING SHOOTING AWAY FROM DEFENSE

(Intermediate)

### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: 5-10 balls

Minimum: 3 balls

### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 3 athletes + coach observing

Maximum: 8 athletes (3 per side) + coach observing

Minimum: 2 athletes + coach assisting

### DRILL OBJECTIVE

This drill works on developing the attackers' ability to either hit or shoot the ball away from defenders.

### DRILL DESCRIPTION

This drill is similar to drill 4.9 except in this drill the focus is on the attacker sensing where the defender is moving to in back court with the objective of playing the ball away from them.

The drill is initiated by either a coach or athlete throwing (or serving) the ball into the court to two receiving players.

The defender who is initially positioned in the centre of the court moves left or right directly after ball is set.

The athlete attacking the ball focuses on trying to take a quick look at the defender before jumping and attempts to play the ball away from them.

If the player does not have time to take a look at the defender then they should try to sense where the defender is in order to play the ball away from them.

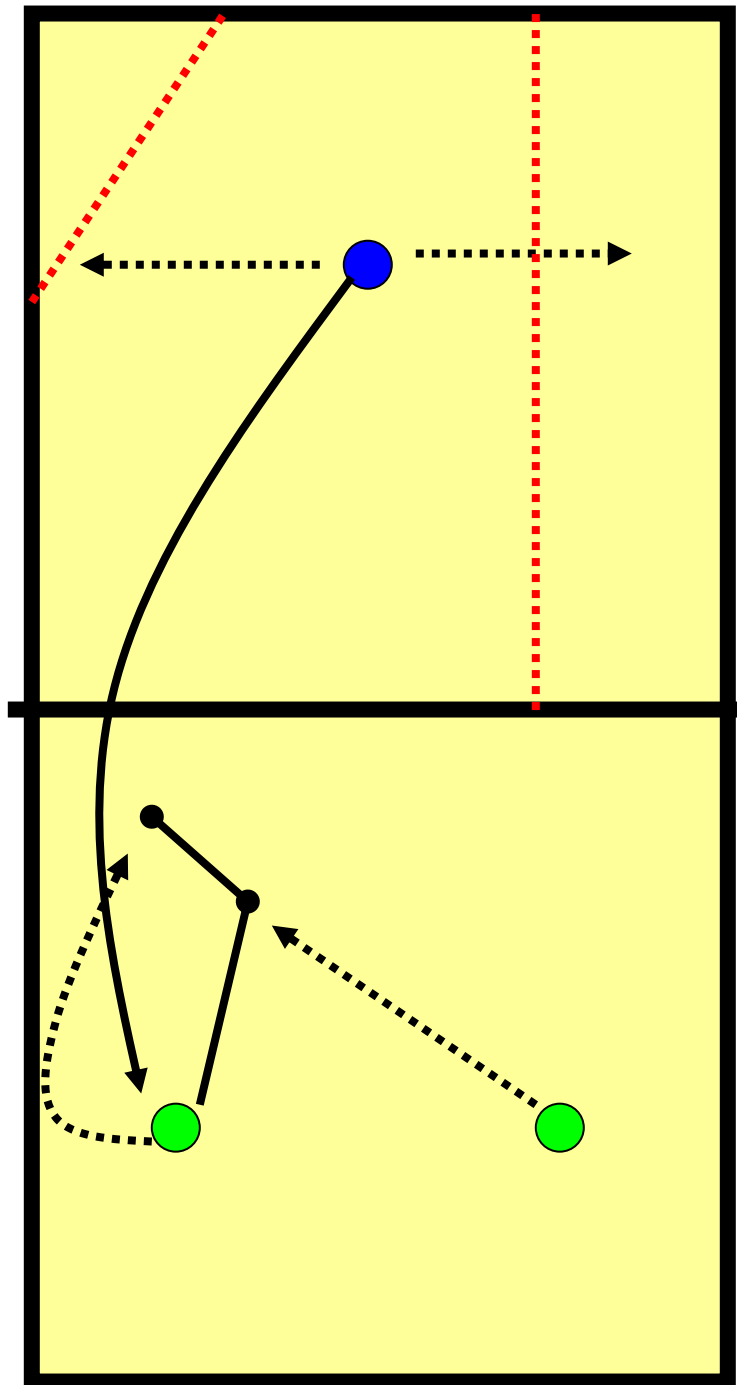
Lines can be drawn in the sand (examples in red) designating areas that the ball should be played into and points can be given out for successful shots.

### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- The defensive player can wait a little longer before moving to make it more difficult for the attacker.

### TEACHING POINTS

- Although this is an attacking drill, athletes need to be aware that making a good pass is vital to creating a situation in which it is easy to observe the defensive players movement.
- If the pass is not perfect beginner athletes may need to be reminded to 'follow the ball' in order to get a straighter approach on the spike, allow them in turn to see the defender better.



## 5.6 ATTACKING AROUND THE WORLD

(intermediate)

### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: As many balls as available

Minimum: 5 balls

### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 2 athletes + coach observing

Maximum: 6 athletes + coach observing

Minimum: 1 athlete + coach assisting

### TEACHING POINTS:

- 1 Athletes need to be reminded that they need to have a strong approach on every attack.
- 2 The athletes arm swing should be the same for every attack with the wrist being the only part that changes the direction of the ball.
- 3 For right-handed athletes, the approach should be on a slight angle on the left side and almost straight onto the net on the right. The opposite applies for left-handed athletes.

### DRILL OBJECTIVE

The objective of this drill is for the athletes to develop a wide range of attacking shots. Additionally it helps to reinforce correct spike approach allowing the athletes to effectively attack into all areas of the court.

### DRILL DESCRIPTION

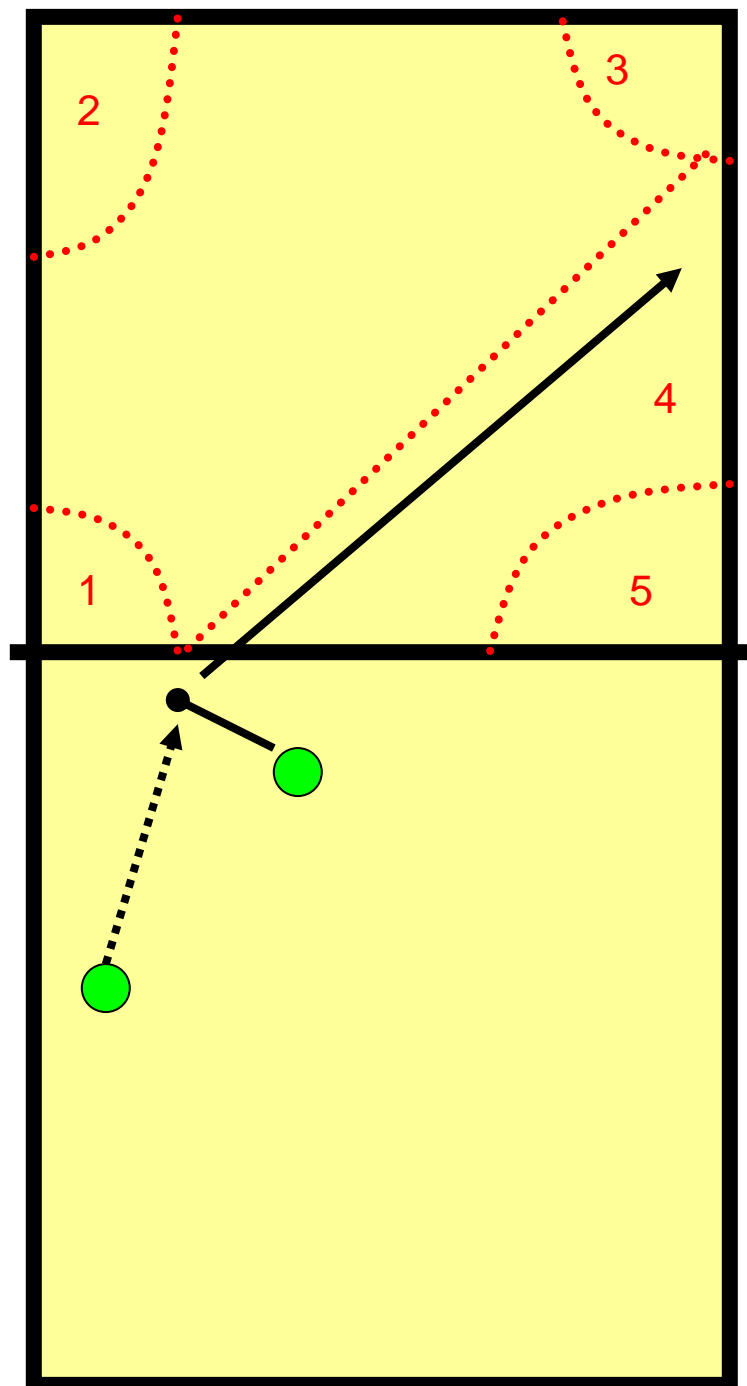
There are a few different ways to initiate this drill but the simplest is for the attacker to throw the ball to their partner who sets them up.

The attacker then spikes the ball into a number of different spots on the court.

It is important for beginners to experience attacking into all areas of the court but as a player gains experience they may decide to focus on certain shots that they need work on.

Athletes can go around attacking into positions 1-5 (if they hit a spot they can skip that spot next time around), or an athlete can work their way around from 1-5 moving on to the next number only when they successfully attack the ball into the designated spot.

Athletes should always practice attacking from both sides of the net.



### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- Make the size of the spots smaller will make the drill more difficult.
- The setter can call the area of the court that they would like the ball attacked into.

## 5.7 ATTACKING SPIKE EXHAUSTION DRILL

(intermediate / advanced)

### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: 10 balls + cone if available

Minimum: 6 balls

### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 2 athletes + coach observing

Maximum: 6 athletes (3 per side) + coach observing

Minimum: 1 athlete + coach assisting

### TEACHING POINTS:

- 1 Athletes should aim for the corners of the court when they start to fatigue, as this is the longest line.
- 2 Athletes should try for maximal jump on every spike and keep a high elbow even when tired.
- 3 Athletes should focus on making a good dig off the spiked ball, as this will directly affect the quality of the set they receive.

### DRILL OBJECTIVE

This drill focuses on developing spike endurance and maintaining a high elbow on the spike even when tired.

### DRILL DESCRIPTION

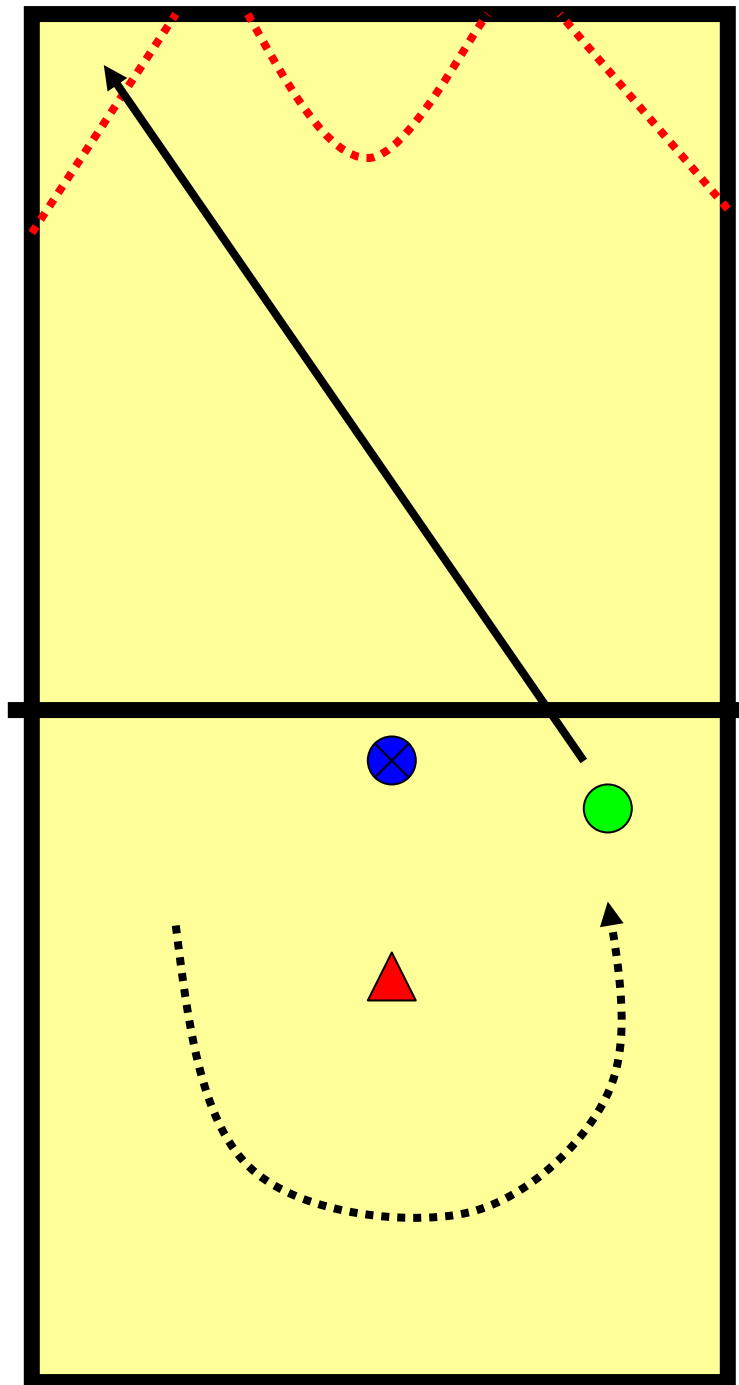
In this drill the athlete who is attacking moves around a cone (placed about 10ft back from the centre of the net) and spikes balls that are set from a partner (or coach) at the net.

After each spike the athlete running the drill picks up another ball and proceeds to either throw or depending on the level of the players, drive it at their partner who has moved to the other side of the cone.

Athlete must get a certain number of balls (which can vary from approximately 6 – 12) over the net without the ball touching the net.

### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- To increase the level of difficulty athletes could attack the ball over the net into spots on the court for a point. (areas marked by red lines)
- Additionally you could increase the number of spikes required to complete the drill.
- Athletes could also have to dig two spiked balls from their partner at the net before getting set.



## 5.8 ATTACKING CONTINUOUS SPIKING

(advanced)

### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: 2 or 3 balls

Minimum: 1 ball

### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 4 athletes + coach observing

Maximum: 8 athletes + coach observing

Minimum: 3 athletes + coach participating

### DRILL OBJECTIVE

This drill can work effectively as a warm up for advanced athletes as well as a more intense drill to develop ball control, particularly on the spike and dig.

### DRILL DESCRIPTION

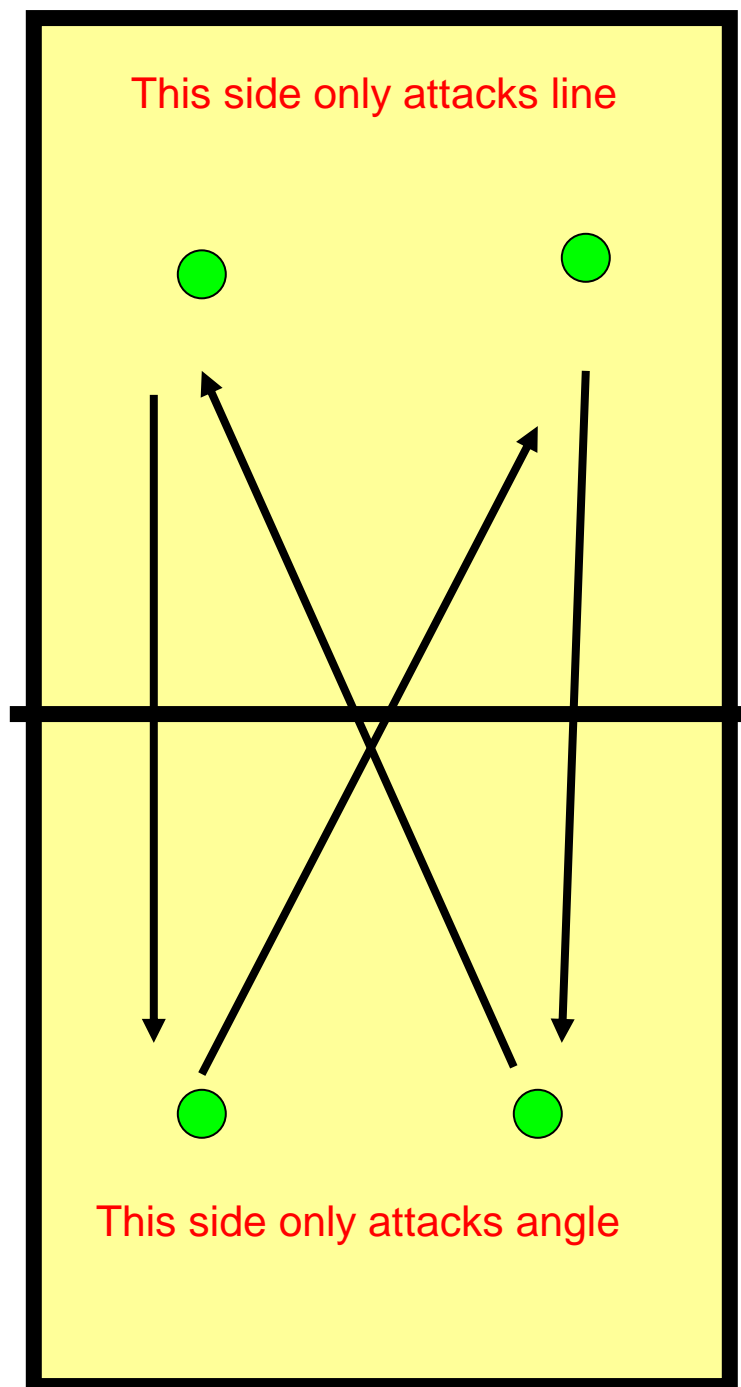
The drill can be initiated with a serve or simply by having a ball thrown into the court. Once the drill has been initiated one side hits only line, while the other side hits only angle. After a certain period of time (or number of spikes) the athletes on each side of the net can switch the direction of their spikes. This drill can be made competitive by initiating free play after the ball crosses the net a certain number of times.

### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- If one team is slightly stronger than the other one team can be forced to hit in a predetermined direction while the weaker team can hit wherever they want.

### TEACHING POINTS:

- 1 Athletes should be aware of where the target is and where they are by looking at court frequently.
- 2 Athletes should maintain a normal spike approach despite having a predetermined spike direction.





# THE BLOCK AND DEFENSE BEHIND

Defense on the beach is significantly different to that of indoors. The main reason of course is that there are only 2 individuals covering the court as opposed to 6 indoor. Generally what is found in adult and older youth teams is that one athlete will specialize in blocking and the other in defense. The way in which the blocker and defender work together to cover the court is somewhat complicated and a detailed explanation will not be given in this document.

However ... the basic conventions for signaling blocking intentions involve holding the hands behind the back with the left hand representing what the blocker is going to block on the left side attacker and the right hand represents what the blocker is going to take away for the attacker on the right. It is vital that the blocker and defender communicate with each other regarding which area is going to be 'taken out' at the net.

Normally the blocker will either choose to take out the line (most frequently indicated by the display of 1 finger) or angle (indicated by the display of 2 fingers). It is then the responsibility of the defender to position oneself in the undefended area to dig the hard driven spike or chase down the soft shot. When serving as a defender it is important to see your partners blocking call, as this determines what area of the court are you responsible for. One thing to think about is which shots are more likely than others given the blocking formation. What transpired in the past that gives you information about what is likely to happen next.

## **Beginner**

At a beginner level it is not necessary to do a lot of block training with a defender behind because athletes will simply not be at a level of skill (or height) for it to be effective. However, introducing the basic hand positioning and technique along with the theory of blocking and defense may be useful in the development of beginners' understanding of the game. The technique for retreating should be taught because even though a lot of young athletes who are not yet tall enough to be effective will often start up slightly further in front of their normal defensive positions just in case the ball is bump set or hand set over the net on the second contact.

## **Intermediate**

Athletes at an intermediate level will begin specializing in either blocking or defense. From this point on their training will shift from a broad focus to one that involves a higher percentage of time working on their area of expertise.

## **Advanced**

Athletes at an advanced level will develop synchronicity between the blocker and defender including advanced tactics such as double faking on defense and transitioning after making the dig. Faking involves trying to 'show' a false defensive arrangement to the hitter and this can be done just by the block or defender or together.

# BLOCKING DRILLS

|                   |                                       |                                  |
|-------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <u>DRILL 6.1</u>  | <u>BASIC BLOCKING DRILL</u>           | <u>(beginner)</u>                |
| <u>DRILL 6.2</u>  | <u>BLOCK OPTION TRAINING</u>          | <u>(beginner / intermediate)</u> |
| <u>DRILL 6.3</u>  | <u>READ THE POWER SHOT</u>            | <u>(beginner / intermediate)</u> |
| <u>DRILL 6.4</u>  | <u>PULLING OFF THE NET (FOOTWORK)</u> | <u>(beginner / intermediate)</u> |
| <u>DRILL 6.5</u>  | <u>BLOCKER TRANSITION</u>             | <u>(Intermediate)</u>            |
| <u>DRILL 6.6</u>  | <u>PULLING AND PLAYING THE BALL</u>   | <u>(intermediate / advanced)</u> |
| <u>DRILL 6.7</u>  | <u>BLOCK AND TRANSITION TO SET</u>    | <u>(intermediate / advanced)</u> |
| <u>DRILL 6.8</u>  | <u>RETREAT DECISION DRILL</u>         | <u>(intermediate / advanced)</u> |
| <u>DRILL 6.9</u>  | <u>JOUSTING DRILL</u>                 | <u>(advanced)</u>                |
| <u>DRILL 6.10</u> | <u>TURN AND GET THE SHOT</u>          | <u>(advanced)</u>                |



## 6.1 BLOCKING

### BASIC BLOCKING DRILL

(beginner)

#### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: 8-10 balls to push or hit against the block

Minimum: 1 ball

#### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 4 athletes + coach observing

Maximum: 6 athletes + coach observing

Minimum: 1 athlete + coach assisting

#### DRILL OBJECTIVE

In this drill athletes get a high volume of basic blocking repetitions with focus on basic hand, arm and body position.

#### DRILL DESCRIPTION

For this drill it may be beneficial for the net to be lowered so that the athletes can focus on technique and do not get exhausted from too much jumping.

In this drill an athlete (or coach) drives a ball into the block on the other side of the net while the blocker focuses on completing the block with correct hand arm and body positioning.

- The athlete's hands should be wide open, taking up as much space as possible.
- Thumbs should be pointing upward and stay close to each other during the blocking movement. (as if held together by an elastic band)
- Hands should be strong and rigid.
- Arms should push forward and lock at the shoulder as the ball contacts the arms.

Initially blockers should begin by blocking a line shot then move onto moving across into the angle and blocking straight up.

Blockers could start parallel to the net or in a 'ready to retreat position' before blocking.

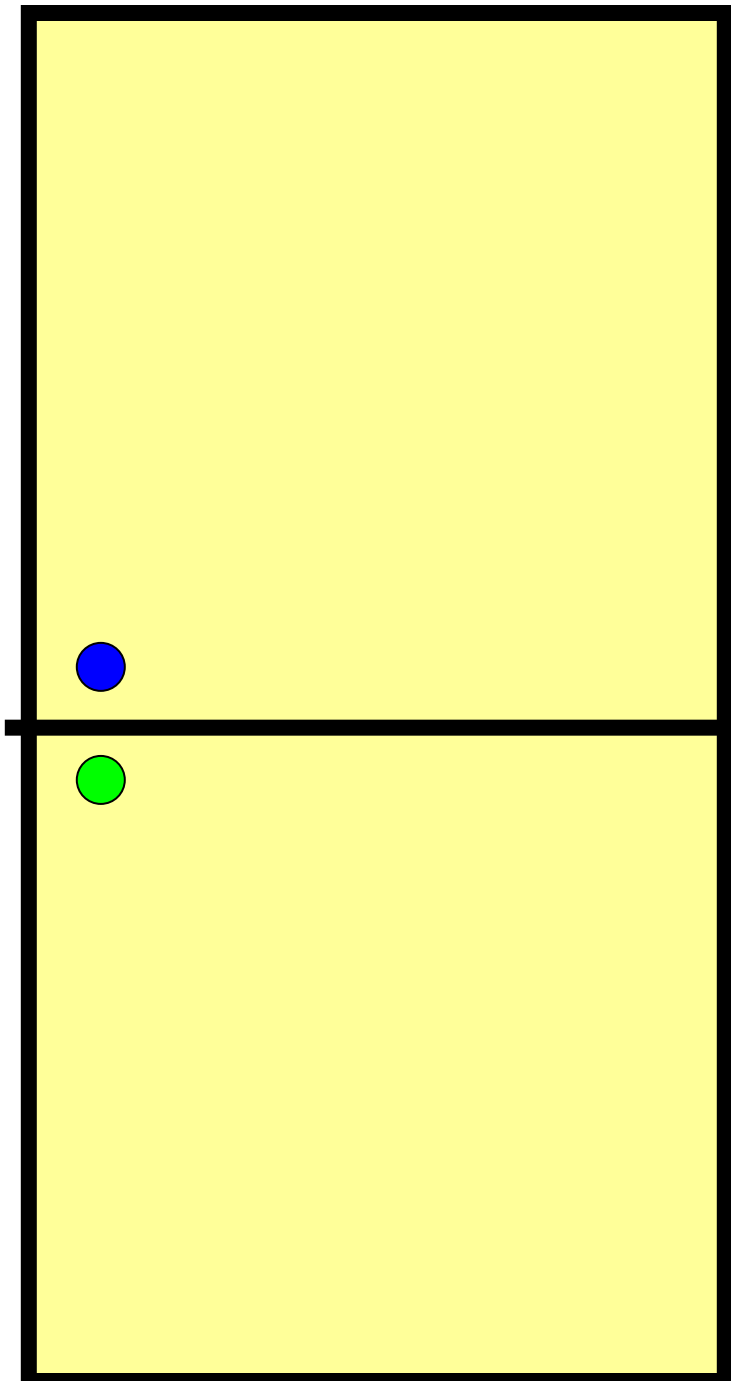
Additionally they can move from side to side across the net before blocking.

#### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- Add retreating into the drill.
- Have the blocker jump across to the angle.
- Have the blocker move across to the angle then jump back to the line.
- Have the athlete serve a ball in then come to the net to block.

#### TEACHING POINTS:

- 1 Athletes should focus on correct arm and hand positioning during the block and maintaining balance when moving across to block angle.
- 2 The athlete should keep hands in front of the body (with elbows either in front or to the side of the body) when setting up to block and also when moving laterally.
- 3 Athletes should attempt to make one fast movement to the final blocking position and not 'hanging out the washing'



## 6.2 BLOCKING

### ANGLE BLOCK OPTION DRILL

(beginner / intermediate)

#### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: As many balls as possible

Minimum: 6 balls

#### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 1 athlete + coach assisting

Maximum: As many as space allows + coach observing

Minimum: 1 athlete + coach assisting

#### DRILL OBJECTIVE

In this drill athletes get a high volume of basic blocking reps and can work on developing balanced movement and control in the air when attempting an angle block.

#### DRILL DESCRIPTION

An athlete or coach (who ideally is standing on a box) tosses the ball up into the air and hits it into off or around the blocker.

This drill is normally done with the blocker knowing what the attacker is hitting and working on specific arm and hand positioning for each particular block.

This drill gives the blocker a great opportunity to practice the two types of angle block.

##### Angle Block 1:

The athlete makes a quick, low sideways movement into the angle before jumping up for the angle block.

##### Angle block 2:

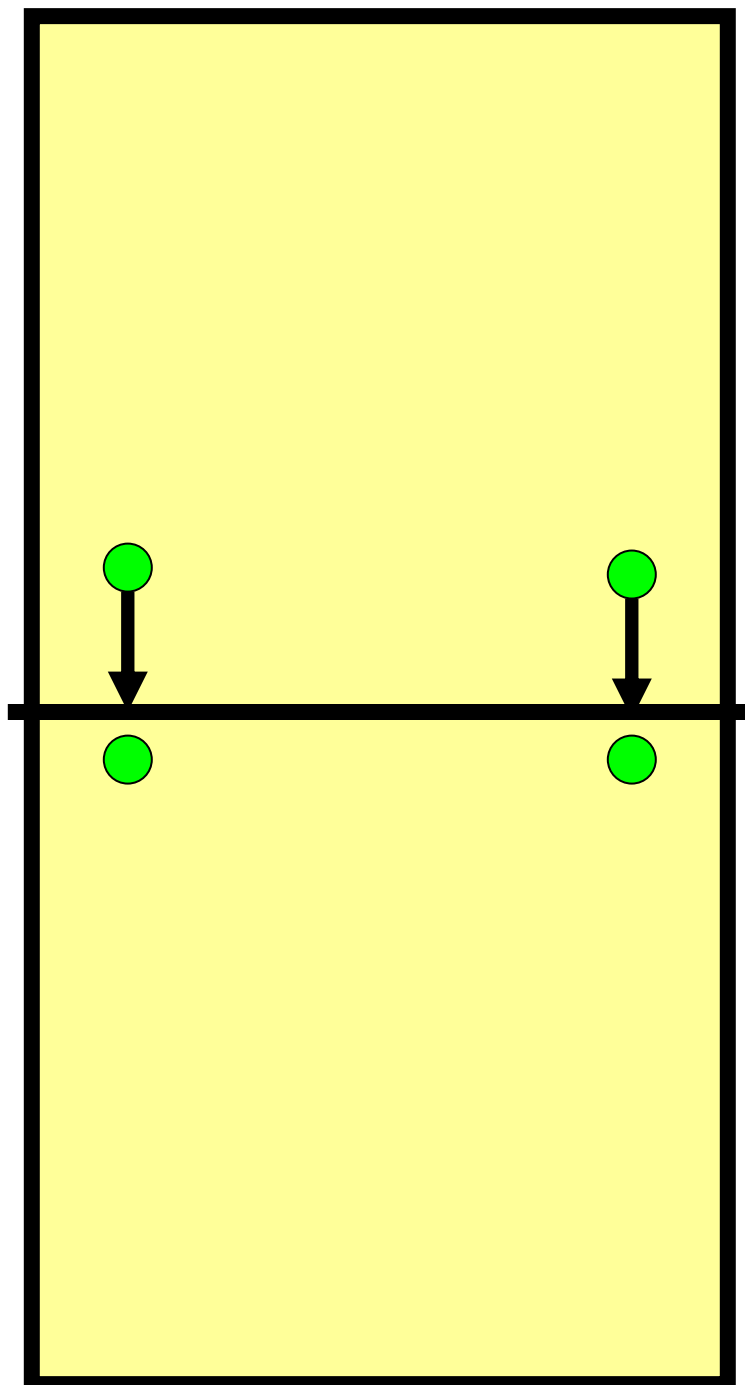
The athlete stays on the attackers' line and jumps across into the angle.

With angle block 1 the hand positioning will be similar to that of a line block as discussed in drill 6.1.

The technique for angle block 2 is different in that the inside arm will penetrate across the net towards the middle of the court as the outside arm bends slightly to close up the gap between both hands.

#### TEACHING POINTS

- 1 Athletes need to make sure that when they jump into the angle that their outside arm is strong and they close up the gap between their hands.
- 2 Athletes need to maintain strong hands throughout both blocking movements.
- 3 Athletes need to stay low and balanced when moving across for block 1 so they do not waste time by having to 'reload' the legs prior to jumping up.



#### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- Coach can turn his / her body and the blocker can block either line or angle.
- Additionally the block can practice moving across to the angle before jumping back towards the line.

## 6.3 BLOCKING

### READ THE POWER SHOT

(beginner / intermediate)

#### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: 6 balls.

Minimum: 2-3 balls.

#### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 3 athletes + coach observing

Maximum: Up to 12 athletes + coach observing

Minimum: 2 athletes + coach assisting

#### TEACHING POINTS

- 1 The blocker should adopt a wide low stance so that they can move laterally and maintain balance.
- 2 The blocker should focus first on the attackers' body before switching to the ball.
- 3 The blocker needs to focus on maintaining strong well formed hands and the moment of contact.
- 4 The blocker should ensure that they penetrate (or push across) the net as they block to prevent the ball from getting between them and the net.

#### DRILL OBJECTIVE

This drill works on developing a blockers ability to determine the angle of a power shot based on the approach and body language of the attacker.

#### DRILL DESCRIPTION

To begin this drill an athlete (or coach) throws a ball up and over the back of a blocker who is at the net in front of them on their side.

The attacker, who is on the other side of the net then proceeds to attack the ball that has just been thrown over the net.

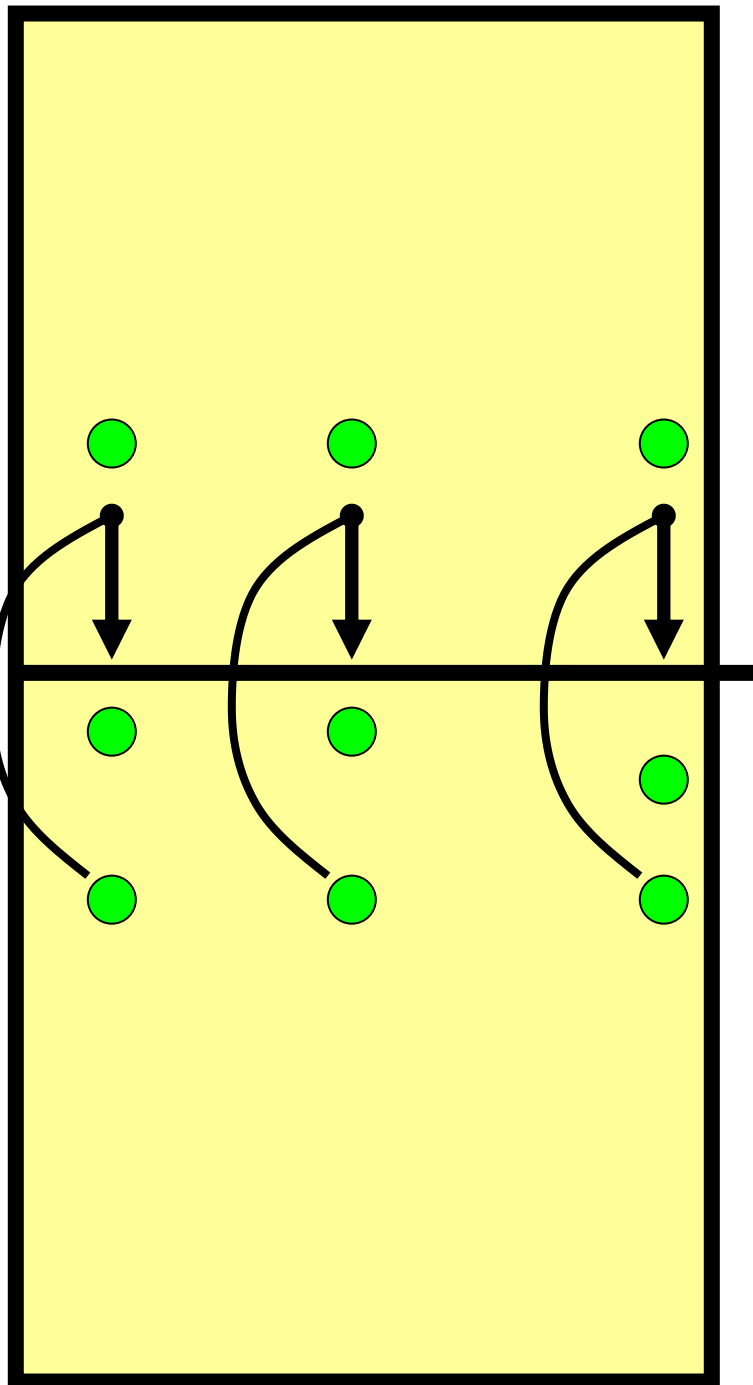
The blocker must read the body language and approach of the attacker and attempt to block the spike.

In this drill the attacker is required to attack with power directly through their body. (rather than hitting away from the block)

The most common signal for this type of block is the closed fist, whereby the blocker is attempting to put their hands directly in front of the attackers' line of power.

#### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- Attacker could also make a soft over the block and the blocker can turn to attempt to dig the ball.



## 6.4 BLOCKING

### PULLING OFF THE NET (FOOTWORK)

(beginner / intermediate)

#### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: No balls required

Minimum: No balls

#### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 1 athlete + coach observing

Maximum: Up to 12 athletes + coach observing

Minimum 1 athlete + coach observing

#### TEACHING POINTS

- 1 Athletes need to be down, 'loaded' and ready to move prior to the retreat.
- 2 Athletes should be reminded to never take their eyes off the net when retreating.
- 3 Make sure the correct foot is forward.
- 4 The athlete should be stopped and balanced when the ball is hit.
- 5 Athletes should keep their arms up at shoulder height throughout the movement to enable them to play a low or high ball on retreating.

#### DRILL OBJECTIVE

This drill focuses on developing the technique for dropping off the net quickly (also referred to as retreating)

If an athlete has plenty of time you may observe them jogging back to their defensive position (with shoulders staying parallel to the net) however this is not ideal for situations requiring speed.

The technique described in this drill allows for fast movement backwards and is the chosen technique of players competing at a high level.

#### DRILL DESCRIPTION

Athletes line up across the net with one leg forward. The athletes then turn their body (but not eyes) towards the baseline and 'push off' to move back off the net.

They should keep their arms up at shoulder height during this movement.

They then turn the body back to face the net ready to make a play at the ball.

The first movement is similar to that of the 'karaoke' footwork in that the knee comes up and across the body.

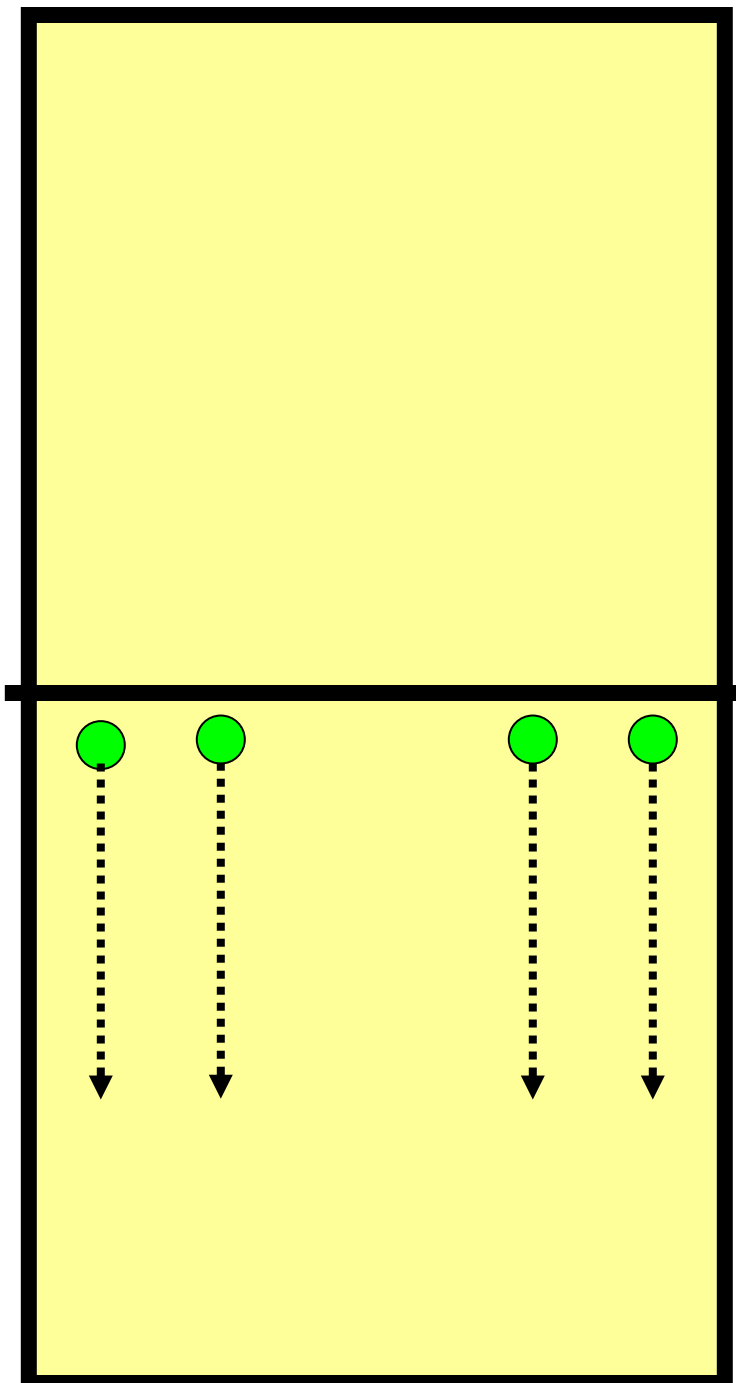
One good way to teach this movement pattern is to get athletes to do the karaoke from net to baseline a few times making sure they keep their eyes on the net.

Depending on which side of the net the athlete is retreating on the foot that is closest to your partner should be back.

Make sure that athletes practice this footwork on both sides of the net.

#### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS:

- Athletes can practice retreating a small or large distance back.
- Athlete could be timed for how many retreats they can do in 30 seconds.
- Athletes could make a play at a ball after retreating back.



## 6.5 BLOCKING

## BLOCKER TRANSITION TO SET

(intermediate)

**EQUIPMENT:**

Ideal: As many balls as possible

Minimum: 2 or 3 balls

## PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 4 athletes + coach observing

Maximum: Up to 6 athletes per side + coach observing

Minimum: 1 athlete + coach assisting

## DRILL OBJECTIVE

This drill focuses on developing the ability of an athlete to set his/her partner after blocking. (often referred to as a transition set)

## DRILL DESCRIPTION

The defender slaps the ball and throws it up (somewhere inside the red circle) to simulate a dig.

When the ball is slapped the blocker does a maximum jump and turns to locate the ball and set it up.

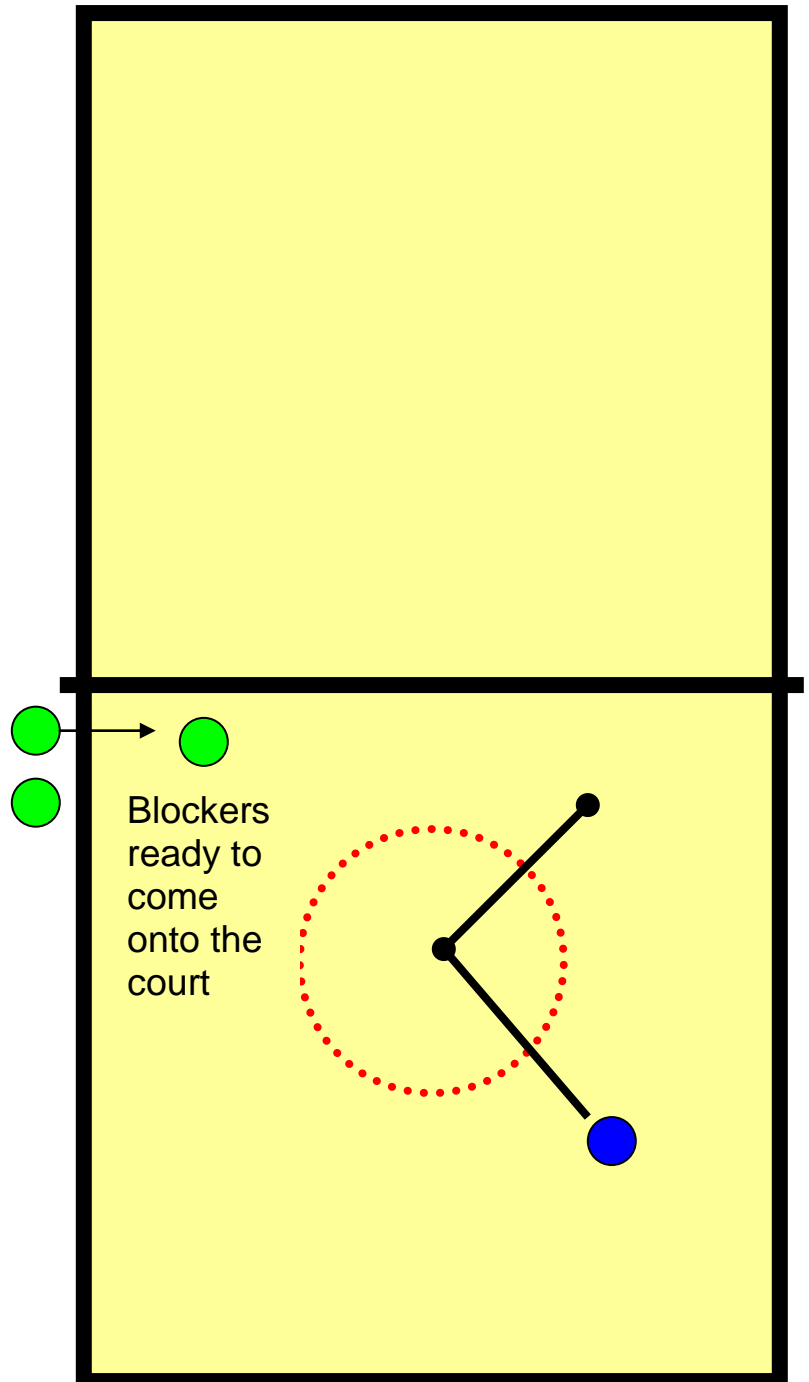
The thrower then moves to play out the ball or simply catches it.

## DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- The defender can throw up the ball to a position that would simulate a good defensive dig (indicated by the perforated circle) or a dig that is not so great. (any area outside the circle).
- The ball could also be driven over the net to the defender by a coach or another athlete.
- The ball can be thrown up with minimal spin or thrown up with a lot of spin, which will make it more difficult to achieve a good transition set.

## TEACHING POINTS

- 1 The blocker should land with bent knees so that they can move quickly to the ball to set.
- 2 If the blocker can turn towards the ball on the way down from the block they will be in a better position to move quickly to the ball.
- 3 The blocker must make sure that they hustle to the ball and get around to face the target when they set.





## 6.6 BLOCKING

### RETREATING AND PLAYING THE BALL

(intermediate / advanced)

#### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: 6 balls and a stand

Minimum: 1 ball

#### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 3 athletes + coach observing

Maximum: Up to 6 athletes + coach observing

Minimum: 1 athlete + coach assisting

#### TEACHING POINTS

- 1 Refer to drill 6.4 for details on retreating technique.
- 2 On the hard driven ball athletes need to maintain strong hands in order to force the ball back into the court for their partner to play.
- 3 Retreating athlete should ensure that they keep facing the net at all times.
- 4 Retreating athlete should try to be stationary and balanced when the ball is hit.

#### DRILL OBJECTIVE

In this drill the athlete gets practice dropping off the net (retreating) and playing a ball that is hit towards them.

It is recommended that athletes are familiar with the technique of 'high ball' defense (as covered in drill 7.14) before the ball is driven high and hard at the retreating athlete.

#### DRILL DESCRIPTION

An athlete or coach slaps the ball then tosses it and attacks it over the net towards the retreating athlete.

At the slap the athlete retreats off the net and plays the ball hit at them.

Depending on which plays the athlete is working on improving the attacked ball could be hit to a variety of spots including.

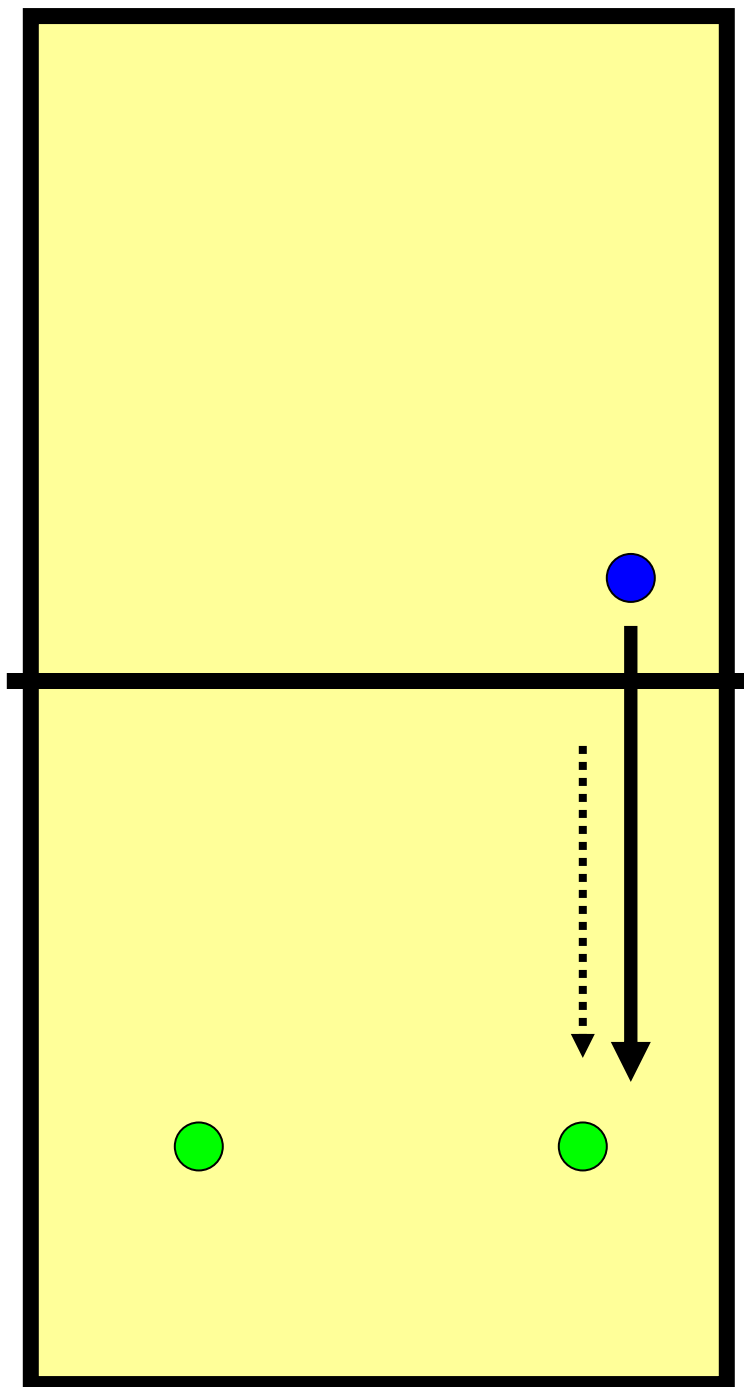
- Short.
- Deep over the head of the retreating athlete.
- Hard at the face.
- Hard to the body.
- Either side of the body.

Blocker could also practice dropping off line or angle.

The resulting dig could either be caught or set up by the other defensive player.

#### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- Increase the number of reps that the athlete has to complete before rest.
- The athlete could complete a block before dropping off.
- Coach could alter the height of the toss to make it more difficult for the retreating athlete to judge how far they need to get back.





## 6.7 BLOCKING

### BLOCK AND TRANSITION SET

(intermediate / advanced)

#### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: 10 + balls

Minimum: 4 balls

#### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 3 athletes + coach observing

Maximum: Up to 6 athletes + coach observing

Minimum: 2 athletes + coach assisting

#### DRILL OBJECTIVE

This drill focuses on developing the skill of the blocker to turn after landing and hustling to get to the ball to make a good transition set.

The drill also gives the defender practice digging the hard driven ball, chasing down the soft shot and converting with a spike.

#### DRILL DESCRIPTION

In this drill an athlete or coach drives a ball past the block towards the defender.

After the blocker comes down from their block they turn and hustle to the dug ball to set up their partner up for the spike.

With a team on each side this drill can be turned into a continuous drill with angle attacks.

The drill described to the right show the defender positioned in the angle with the blocker covering the line.

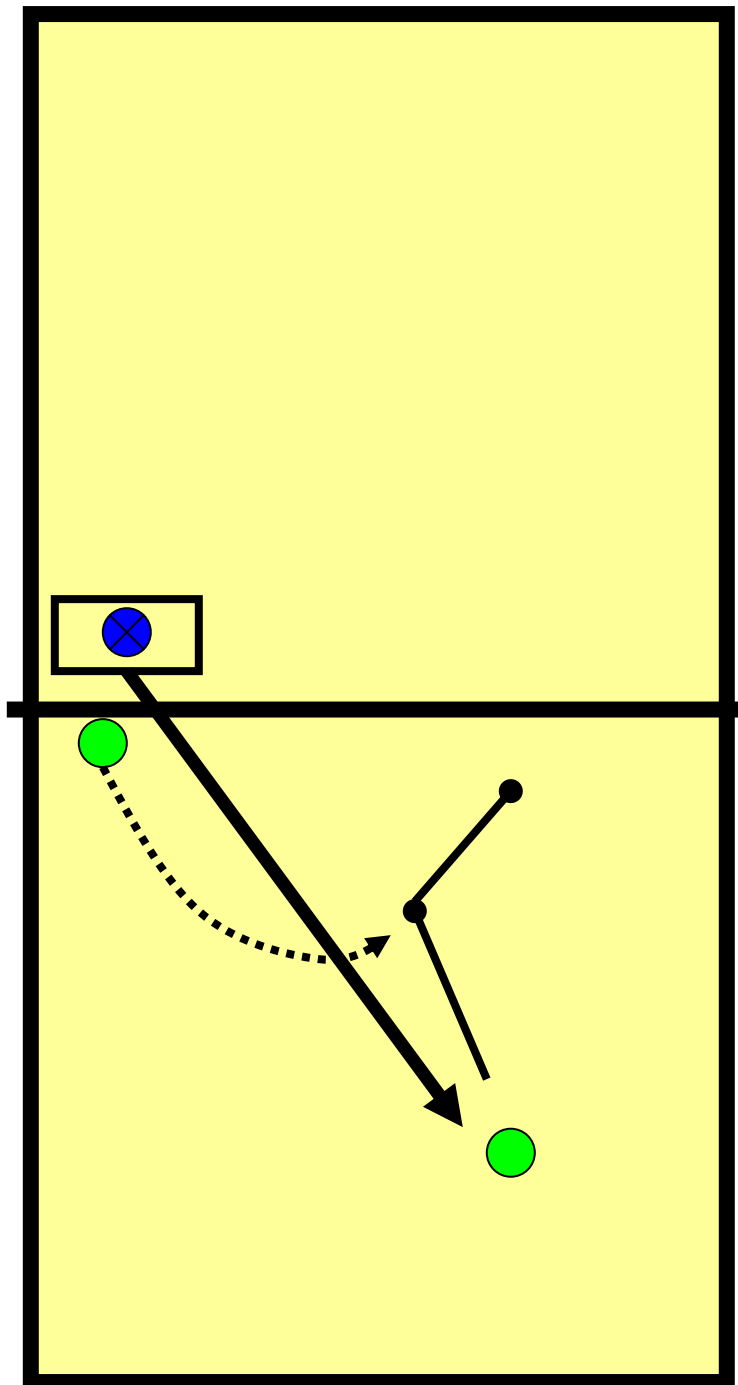
This drill can also be performed with the blocker covering angle and the defender moving to line to dig the driven ball.

#### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- The blocker could make a move to the angle before jumping back to the line. In this case the defender should move in synchrony with the blocker in order to reinforce the fake by making a move to the line.
- Ball could additionally be hit over the line or into the tight angle cross court or high at the defenders face.
- The ball should occasionally be driven into the block to ensure that the blocker maintaining good blocking form.

#### TEACHING POINTS

- 1 The blocker can turn in the air on the way down to enable them to get off the net faster however they must make sure they don't turn too early and lose form on the block.
- 2 Blocker must get 'around' the ball and face the net to set. *Going in a straight line to the ball will often result in shoulders that are not facing the target when setting.*
- 3 The defender should focus on playing the ball up with high enough to allow the blocker time to get to the ball.



## 6.8 BLOCKING

### RETREAT DECISION DRILL

(intermediate / advanced)

#### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: 6 or more balls

Minimum: 3 - 4 balls

#### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 3 athletes + coach observing

Maximum: 6 athletes + coach observing

Minimum: 2 athlete + coach assisting

#### DRILL OBJECTIVE

This drill gives the blocker practice at making a decision on whether to retreat off the net or stay up to block.

Additionally this drill can be modified to help develop the attackers' ability to sense where the defender is dropping.

#### DRILL DESCRIPTION

The blocker lines themselves up with the attacker on the opposite side of the net.

An athlete (or coach) at the net sets a thrown ball either close to the net or off the net for an incoming attacker.

The blockers task in this drill is to read the set and make a decision to either block or drop off.

The attacker then hits into the block or down the line to the athlete that has just retreated.

You could add an additional defender into the backcourt and play out any digs made by the retreating blocker.

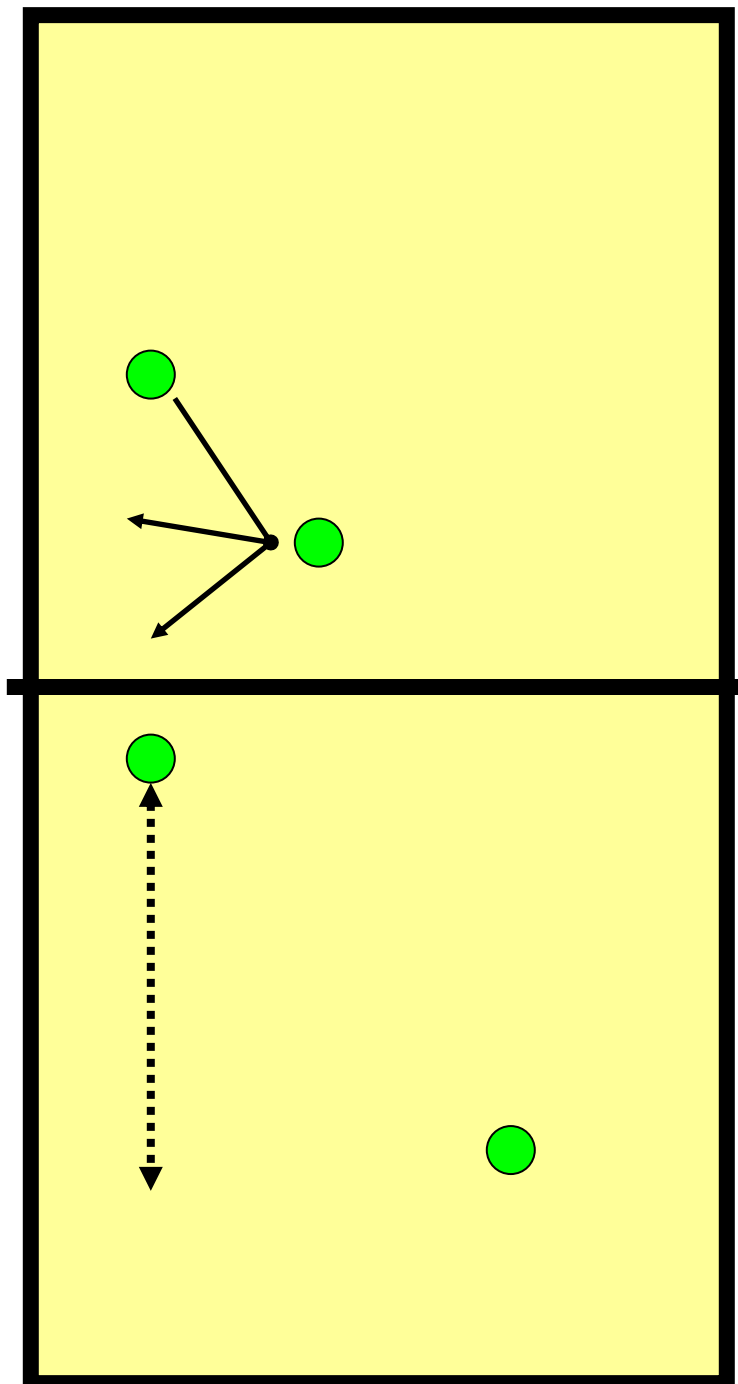
In order to develop the attackers' ability to sense where the blocker is dropping the blocker should randomly choose to drop line or angle. An angle drop will require the additional defender to shift across to defend the line.

#### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- Attacker can hit the ball either line or angle if the ball is set close and the blocker can take out the power.

#### TEACHING POINTS

- 1 Athletes need to understand what influences the decision to drop off. Factors such as the wind, the abilities of the attacker the trajectory of the set need to be taken into consideration.
- 2 Blocker needs to have correct footwork when retreating.
- 3 When retreating arms should be kept just below shoulder height so balls can be taken high.
- 4 Blocker should focus on pushing over the net to penetrate and take away the hitters angle.



## 6.9 BLOCKING JOUSTING DRILL

(advanced)

### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: 6 balls

Minimum: 1 balls

### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 4 athletes + coach observing

Maximum: Up to 6 athletes + coach observing

Minimum 2 athletes + coach assisting

### DRILL OBJECTIVE

This drill focuses on developing the skill of jousting at the net.

### DRILL DESCRIPTION

The simplest version of this drill has the ball is thrown up onto the top of the net by an athlete or coach and the two athletes at the net joust to win the point.

If you have 3 athletes one could be a setter who comes in from the passing position and over-sets the ball to create the joust opportunity.

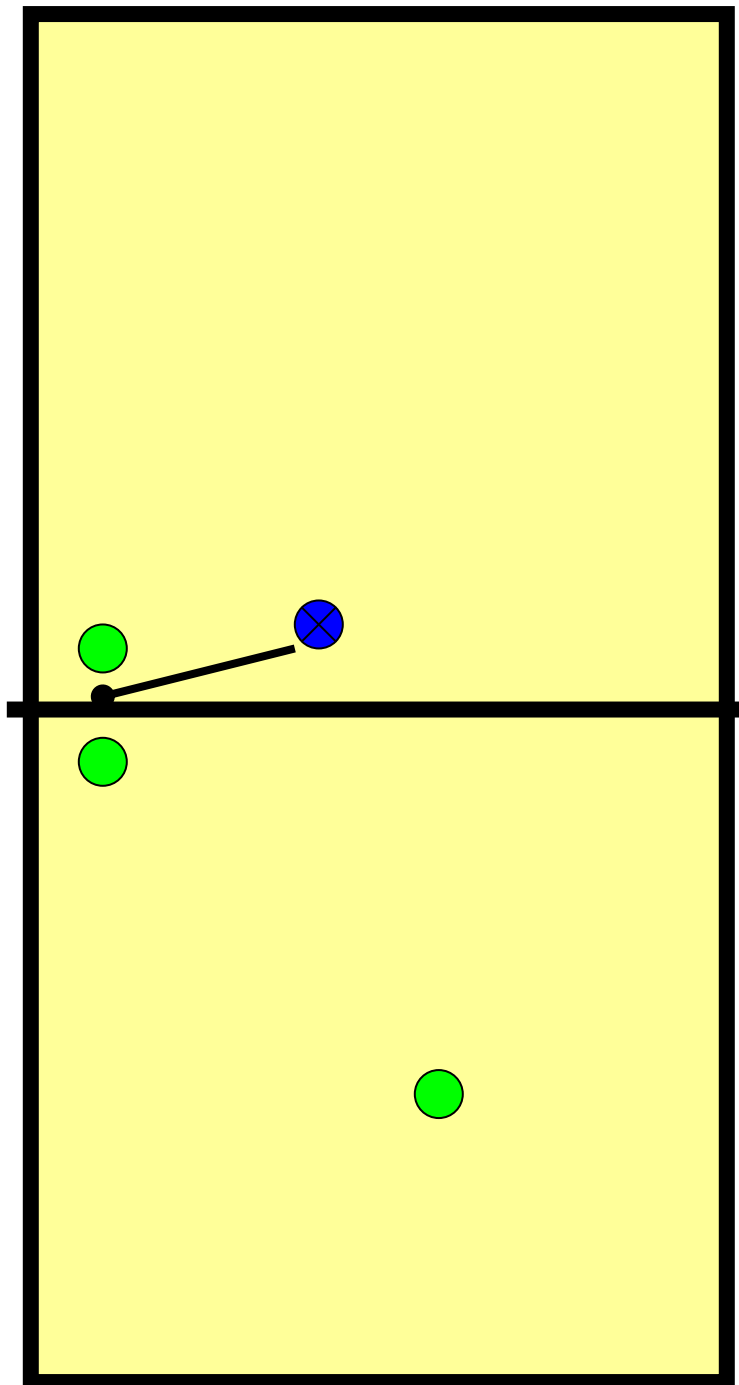
Make sure you practice from all areas of the court.

### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- Each blocker could have a partner in back court and this drill could be used to initiate a game.
- One blocker could use both hands in the block and compete against the other blocker who only uses 1 hand.
- In order to make it more difficult for one blocker the ball could be thrown from behind that athlete.

### TEACHING POINTS

- 1 Athletes jousting should focus on locking the arm from shoulder to wrist, as it will force the opposition to act against the weight of the whole body as opposed to the force required just to bend the elbow.
- 2 Athletes must find a balance between being aggressive and pushing across the net but not so much that they net fault.
- 3 If you can time your jump so you have the last push you will have a better chance of winning the joust.
- 4 Remember one arm will give you a longer reach than two.



## 6.10 BLOCKING TURN AND GET THE SHOT

(advanced)

### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: 6 balls

Minimum: 1-3 balls

### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 4 athletes + coach observing

Maximum: Up to 6 athletes + coach observing

Minimum 1 athlete + coach assisting

### TEACHING POINTS:

- 1 The blocker should try to turn in the air on the way down to enable them to get off the net faster however they must make sure they don't turn too early and lose form on the block.
- 2 Landing with knees bent will give the blocker a better ability to cover more of the court and get to more balls.
- 3 Rather than swinging the arms sideways the blocker should attempt to get their arms under the ball and play it up.

### DRILL OBJECTIVE

This drill focuses on developing the skill of the blocker turning while coming down from the block and playing a ball that has been played just over their hands.

### DRILL DESCRIPTION

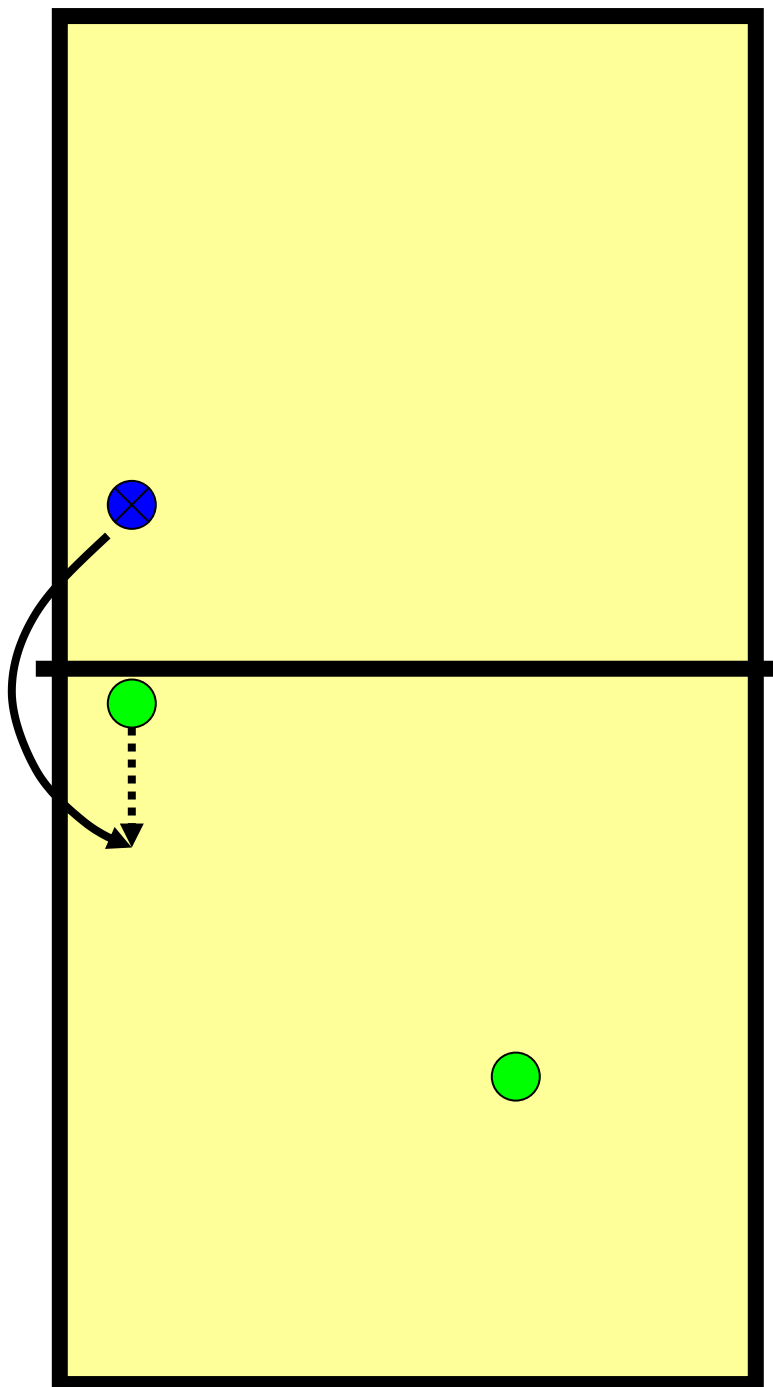
In this drill the blocker goes up with the attacker who plays a 'baby line' shot over the block.

The blocker then turns on the way down and attempts to play the ball up before it hits the ground.

A defensive player can then try to set up the dug ball or they can attempt to play it over on 2.

### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- Each blocker could have a partner in back court and this drill could be used to initiate a game.
- If the ball is able to be played over on two the blocker could call the shot to be played.
- The ball can be hit over the block from different areas on the net making the blocker turn different ways.



# DEFENSE DRILLS

|                   |   |                           |
|-------------------|---|---------------------------|
| <b>DRILL 7.1</b>  | <b>KNEELING ONE ARM DIG TRAINING</b>    | (beginner)                |
| <b>DRILL 7.2</b>  | <b>SOFT HIGH BALL OPTION TRAINING</b>   | (beginner)                |
| <b>DRILL 7.3</b>  | <b>SHIFTING OVER DEFENSE</b>            | (beginner)                |
| <b>DRILL 7.4</b>  | <b>TOWEL DEFENSE</b>                    | (beginner / intermediate) |
| <b>DRILL 7.5</b>  | <b>DIGGING HARD DRIVEN SPIKES</b>       | (Intermediate)            |
| <b>DRILL 7.6</b>  | <b>DEFENSE COMMITMENT DRILL</b>         | (intermediate)            |
| <b>DRILL 7.7</b>  | <b>MOVING TOGETHER DRILL</b>            | (intermediate)            |
| <b>DRILL 7.8</b>  | <b>CHASING DOWN LINE BEHIND A BLOCK</b> | (intermediate)            |
| <b>DRILL 7.9</b>  | <b>HARD LINE DEFENSE</b>                | (intermediate)            |
| <b>DRILL 7.10</b> | <b>2 PERSON DRILL</b>                   | (intermediate)            |
| <b>DRILL 7.11</b> | <b>RAINBOW CHASE DRILL</b>              | (intermediate)            |
| <b>DRILL 7.12</b> | <b>BULK DEFENSE DRILL</b>               | (intermediate)            |
| <b>DRILL 7.13</b> | <b>CHASING DOWN THE SHOT</b>            | (intermediate)            |
| <b>DRILL 7.14</b> | <b>HARD DRIVEN HIGH BALLS</b>           | (intermediate)            |
| <b>DRILL 7.15</b> | <b>PASSING ON THE MOVE</b>              | (intermediate)            |
| <b>DRILL 7.16</b> | <b>ONE ARM DIG</b>                      | (intermediate / advanced) |
| <b>DRILL 7.17</b> | <b>ZIG-ZAG ONE ARM DIG</b>              | (intermediate / advanced) |



## 7.1 DEFENSE

### KNEELING ONE ARM DIG TRAINING

(beginner)

#### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: 1 ball for every two athletes  
Minimum: 1 ball

#### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 2 athletes + coach observing  
Maximum: Up to 20 athletes + coach observing  
Minimum: 1 athlete + coach assisting

#### DRILL OBJECTIVE

This drill introduces athletes to the basic technique for diving and digging a ball with one arm.

#### DRILL DESCRIPTION

In this drill the athlete starts on their knees with ball in either their left or right hand.

As the athlete stretches out with the hand holding the ball, the other arm is placed on the sand for stability.

When the hand with the ball is fully extended the athlete raises the arm by flexing at the shoulder, throwing the ball up.

Each athlete repeats this 5-10 times then swaps with their partner.

The athlete is trying to throw the ball as high as possible straight up. Any ball that travels to the top of the net (or higher) would be considered successful.

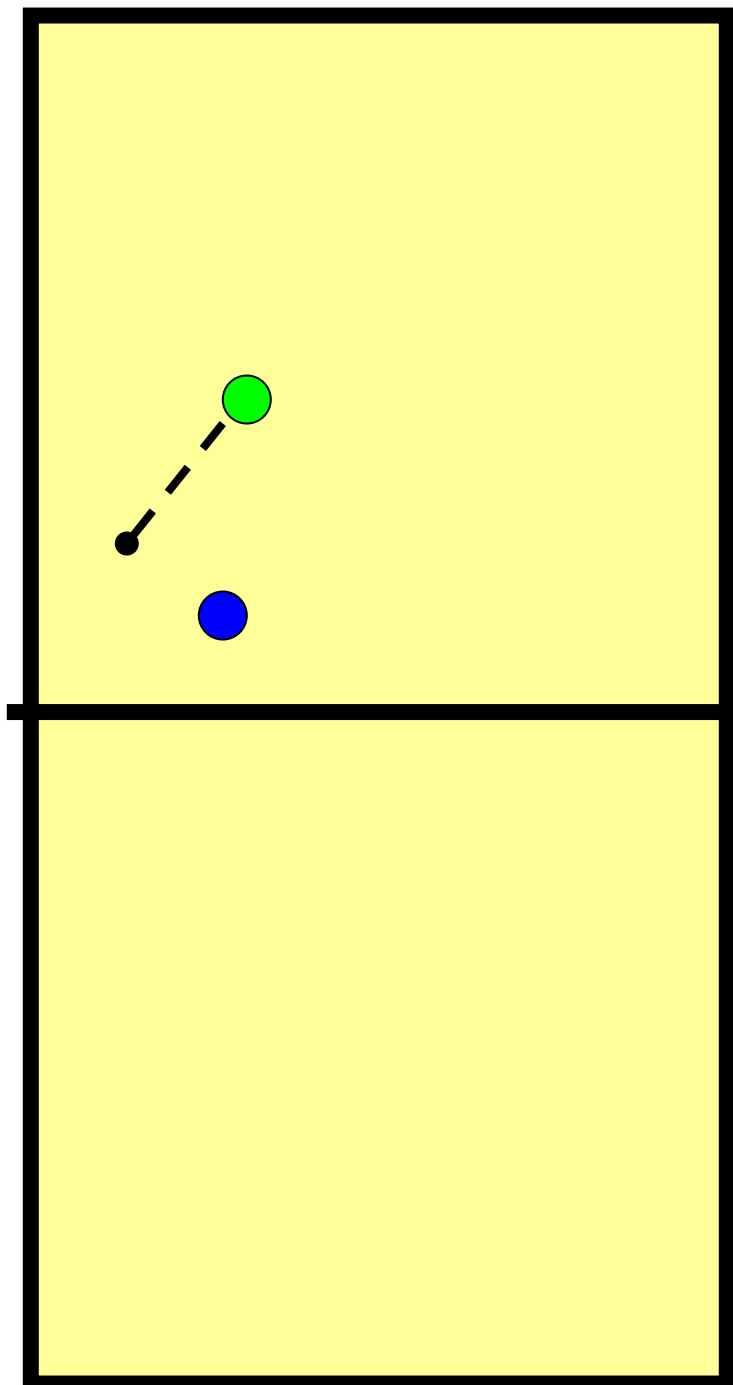
It is important that the athlete uses their core throughout the movement to maintain stability.

#### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- The ball thrown up can be bump set by partner.
- Athlete must get up to catch the ball after it has been bump-set.

#### TEACHING POINTS:

- 1 Make sure arm with ball extends straight out and doesn't swing across sand.
- 2 Ensure that the athlete is using their opposite hand for stability.
- 3 The athlete should endeavor to play the ball straight up into the air.
- 4 It is important that the athlete uses their core throughout the movement to maintain stability.



## 7.2 DEFENSE

### SOFT HIGH BALL OPTIONS TRAINING

(beginner)

#### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: 1 ball for every pair of athletes

Minimum: 1 ball for every pair of athletes

#### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 1 athlete + coach assisting

Maximum: 20 athletes + coach observing

Minimum: 1 athlete + coach participating

#### DRILL OBJECTIVE

This drill gives athletes a number of repetitions of the basic techniques for playing the soft shot above the head.

#### DRILL DESCRIPTION

In this drill athletes pair up and practice playing the ball above the head using a number of different techniques.

- One hand over fist (ball is played on the base of the hand)
- Prayer shot (palms placed together in a prayer fashion – ball is played on the base of the hand)
- Knuckle (ball is played on the 2<sup>nd</sup> to last knuckles of the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> fingers)

Initially one athlete in the pair should throw 8-10 balls to their partner above the head before switching.

Beginner athletes attempting the first two methods should start on their knees as it forces them to get the elbows forward and assists them in playing the ball up rather than forward.

Once the technique has been mastered then the athletes can stand up and play the ball back and forth to each other on their feet.

Athletes can then move onto playing the ball back and forth to each other over the net.

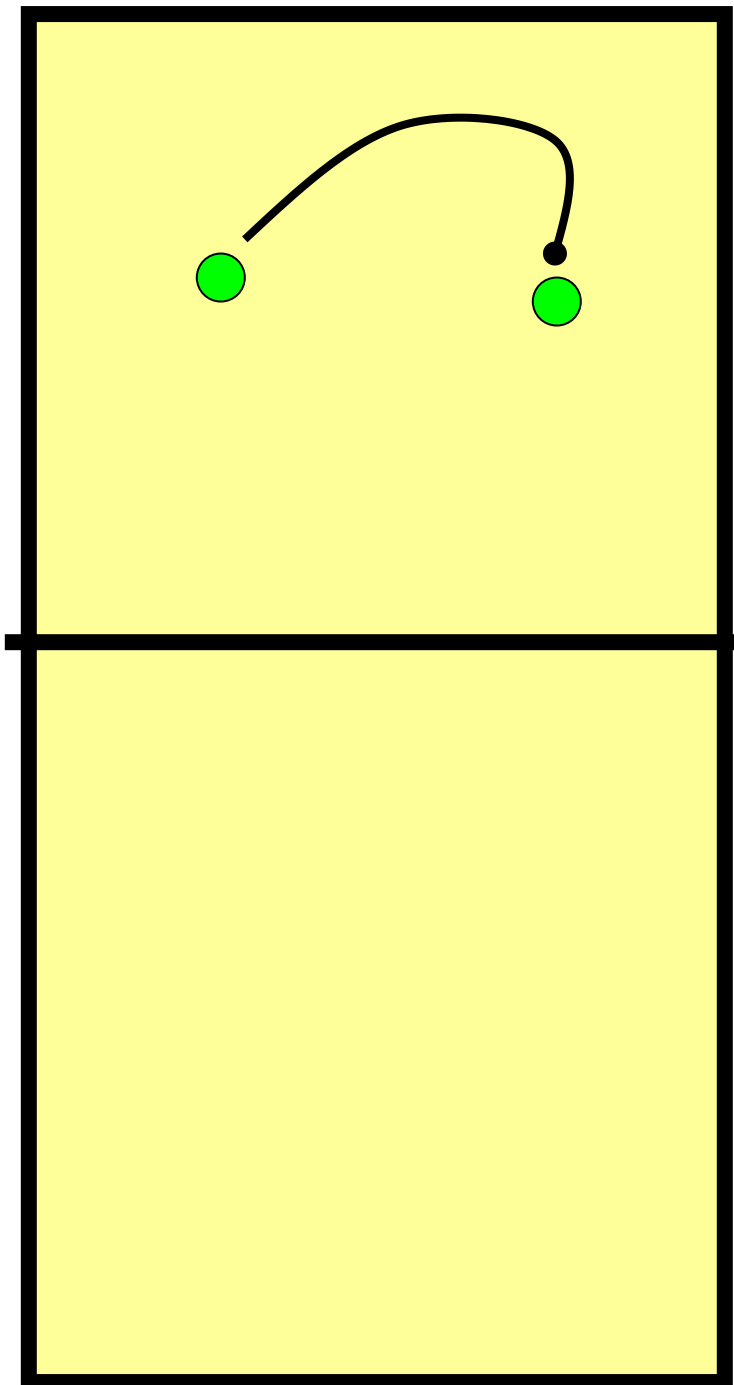
Athletes should be encouraged to try all of the techniques before deciding on which one they prefer and will use in a game situation.

#### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS:

- Have athletes retreating back from each other before playing the ball.
- After each play of the ball the athlete can call out which technique they would like their partner to use on the next play.

#### TEACHING POINTS

- 1 When using the 'hand over fist method' athletes must take care not to over play the ball as the hands can create a significant amount of force in this position.
- 2 Athletes should focus on keeping the elbows forward when using the first two methods to ensure the ball travels up rather than forward.
- 3 The knuckle is most effective when playing balls to the side of the body or when playing balls that are too high to be played with both hands.



## 7.3 DEFENSE

### SHIFTING OVER DEFENSE

(beginner)

#### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: 5-10 balls

Minimum: 1 ball

#### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 4 athletes + coach participating

Maximum: 9 athletes + coach observing

Minimum: 2 athletes + coach assisting

#### DRILL OBJECTIVE

This drill assists in the development of court awareness in beginner athletes.

In particular it focuses on how the position of the set affects where the ball can attack and therefore where the defensive players position themselves.

#### DRILL DESCRIPTION

In this drill the coach randomly sets ball to either side of the court to positions (1) or (2) for hitters to hit.

Initially, with beginner athletes, it may be that the attackers hit the ball while still on the ground.

On setting the ball defenders are then required to shift either left or right in relation to the position of the set.

To check correct positioning on defense the coach could initially have the athletes freeze when the hitter makes contact with the ball.

Athletes could then move to catching the attacked ball before it hits the ground and finally play out the ball.

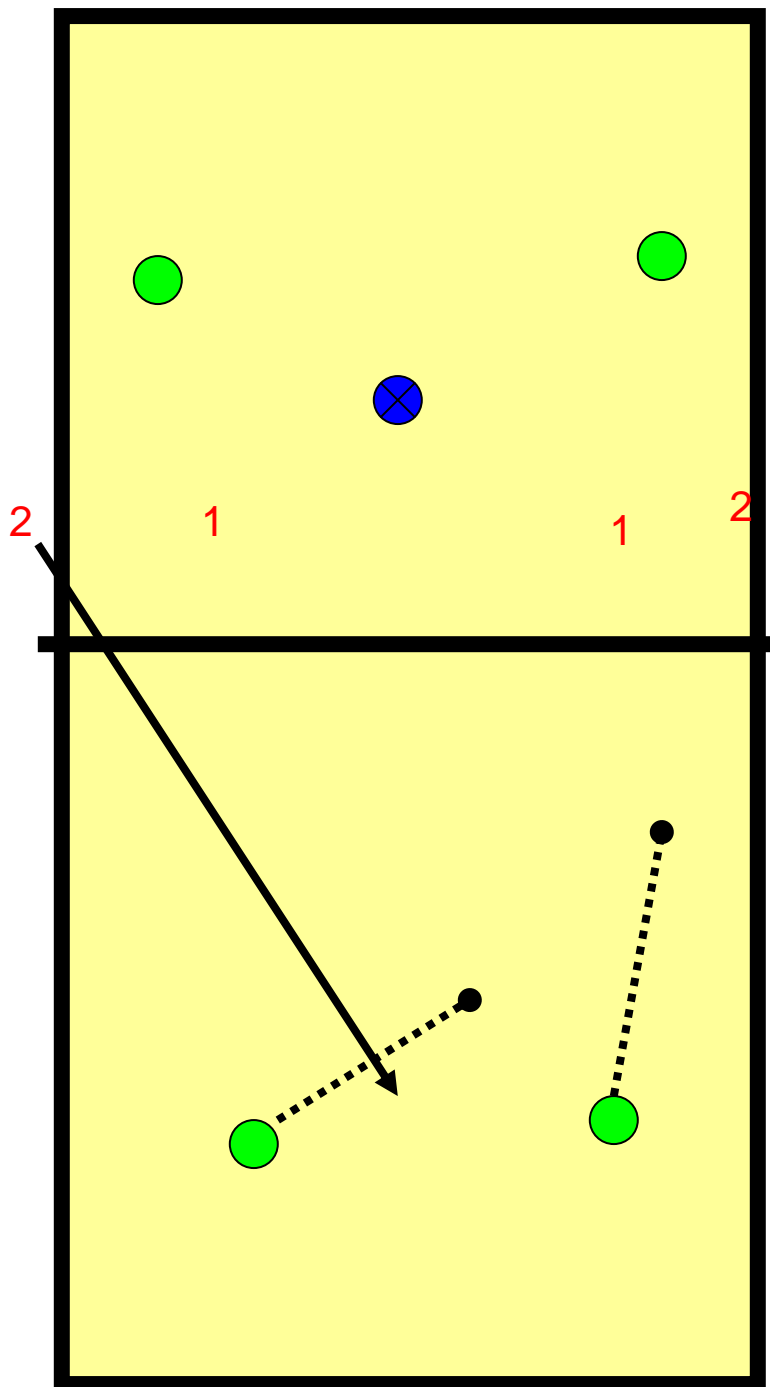
The coach could set 4-6 balls for one side then switch to the other.

#### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- This drill could be used to initiate a rally with each player getting a chance in sequence to win a point.

#### TEACHING POINTS:

- 1 The athletes need to be aware of each other in order to move together to cover the court.
- 2 Athletes need to be in 'loaded position' when the ball is set so they can move quickly and in balance.
- 3 Players digging the ball in the centre of the court after shifting across will need to consider their attacking options and communicate them with their partner.





## 7.4 DEFENSE

### TOWEL DEFENSE

(beginner / intermediate)

#### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: 3-8 balls.

Minimum: 2 -3 balls.

#### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 2 athletes + coach observing.

Maximum: 8 athletes + coach observing.

Minimum: 1 athlete + coach assisting.

#### TEACHING POINTS

- 1 It is very important that the defender is in a low and 'loaded' position in order to be able to move quickly to the hit ball.
- 2 The defenders arms should be apart and ready to assist in a balanced move either sideways or forward /back.
- 3 Athletes need to remain relaxed but ready, and only move when they see where the ball is going.

#### DRILL OBJECTIVE

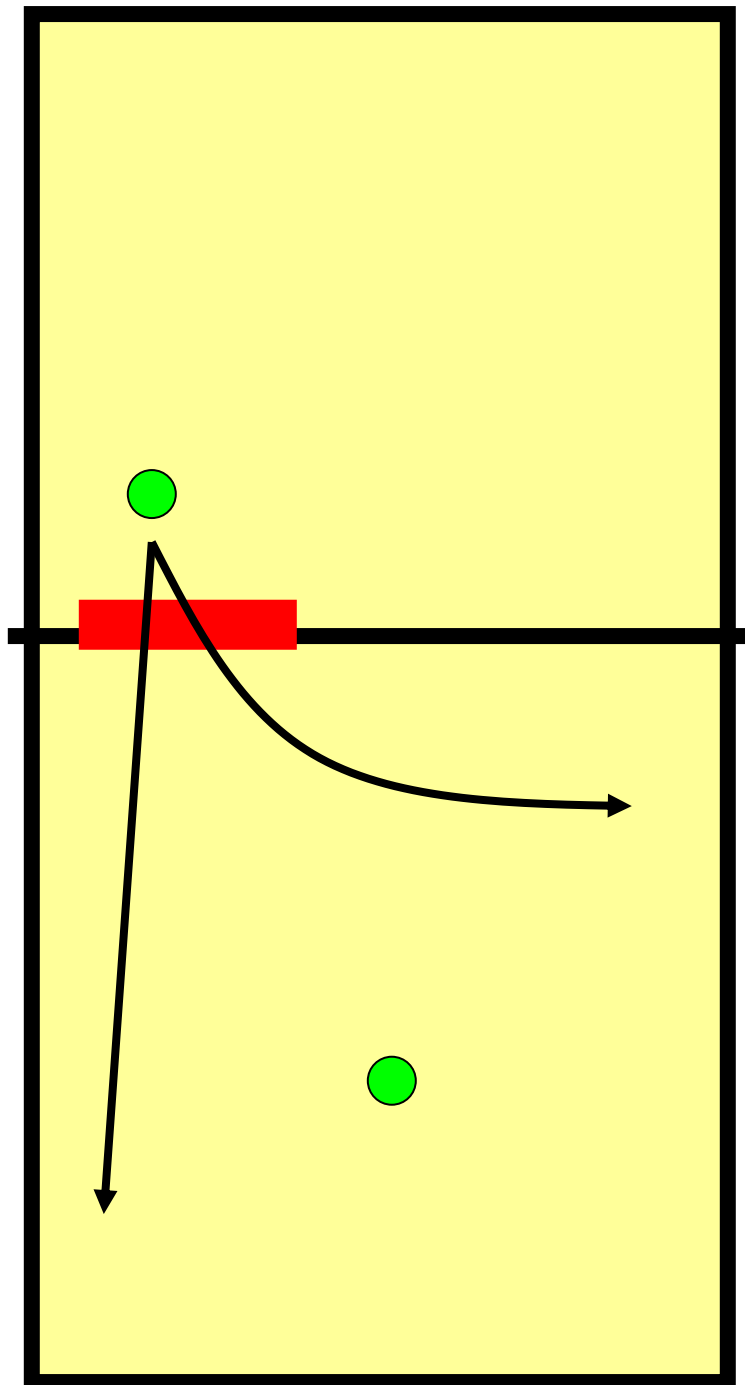
This drill develops a defenders ability to react to a soft shot after it is hit and chase it down. Often defenders are lured into anticipating, and moving before the shot is played only to be caught going in the wrong direction. A better tactic against players with less than perfect shots (or on a windy day) is to employ the tactic reinforced by this drill, which is to wait for the shot to be played then chase it down.

#### DRILL DESCRIPTION

A towel or blanket is placed over net so defender cannot see the attacker. A ball is then tossed and hit over the towel. Initially the ball could be only hit line and angle but the drill could progress towards the ball being hit anywhere on the court. Keep in mind that there would be a blocker present, so you'll have to hit the ball high enough to simulate a normal play. In the case of this play the defender would normally stay middle of the court so that they are in a equally good position to get to a ball hit into any area of the court. In order for a coach to see what is happening on defense it will be necessary for them to have a athlete throw (or hit) the ball over the net and position themselves behind the defender.

#### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- You could have an additional athlete on the defenders side of the court (beside the blanket) who sets up any balls dug by the defender.



## 7.5 DEFENSE

### DIGGING HARD DRIVEN SPIKE

(intermediate)

#### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: 6-12 balls + a stand

Minimum: 6 balls

#### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 2 athletes + coach observing

Maximum: 4 athletes + coach observing

Minimum: 1 athlete + coach assisting

#### DRILL OBJECTIVE

This drill gives athletes practice at digging hard driven spikes that are directed at and around the defenders body.

#### DRILL DESCRIPTION

The coach or an athlete drives hard balls at the defender who is positioned in the angle. Initially spikes should be aimed directly at the defender but once the athlete has begun digging these successfully, they can move on to having balls driven to positions 2 and 3.

At positions 2 and 3 the defender will need to pass the ball outside their body, which increases difficulty.

Balls should be hit at the defenders from all areas of the court.

The objective of the defender is to get the ball to travel straight up in front of them approx 10-12 feet in the air.

When digging the balls outside the body at positions 2 and 3 the defender must focus on turning the shoulders (and platform) so that the ball travels forward, and not off the arm and out the back of the court.

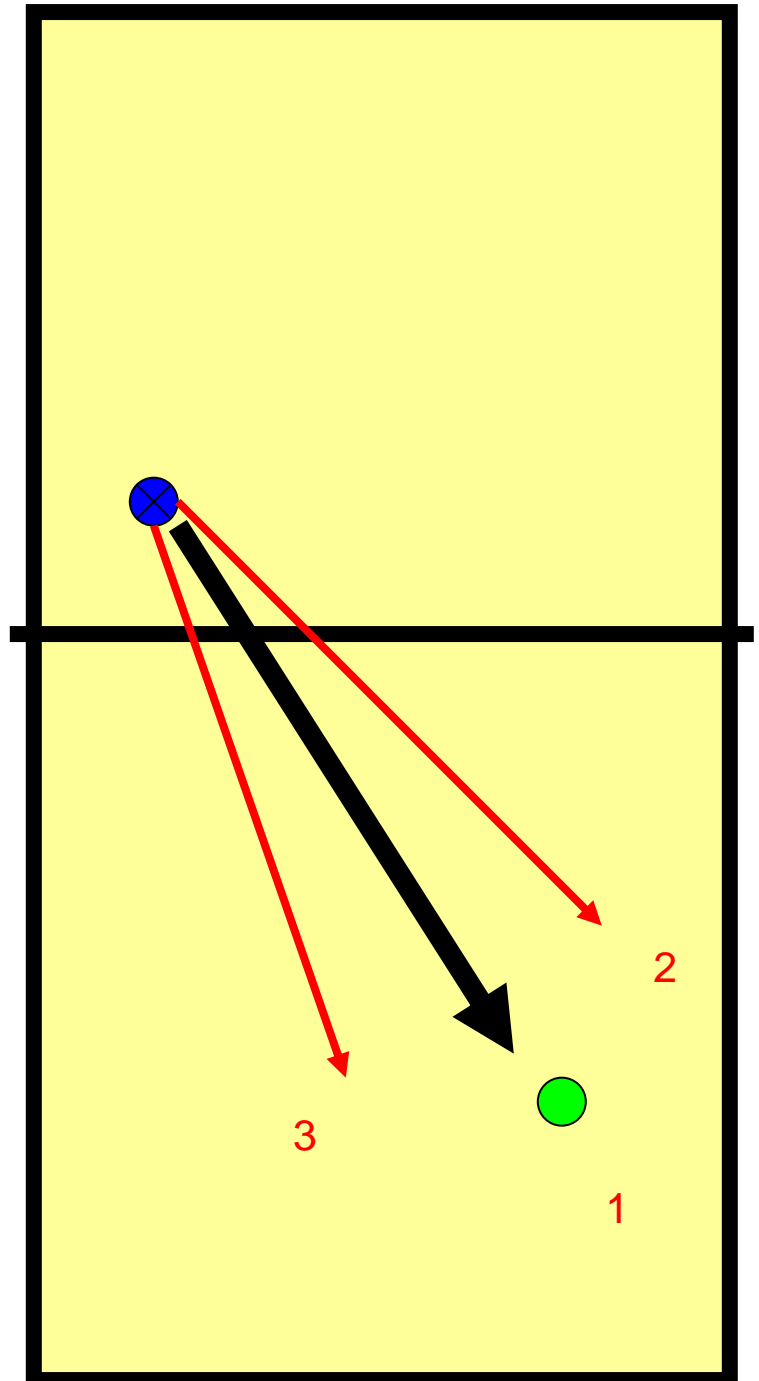
The number of repetitions each defender receives will be determined by the number of athletes in the drill, and the fitness level of the athletes.

#### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- A good adaptation to test if the dig is good or not is to get the defenders to catch their own ball.
- The athlete can juke prior to ball being hit.
- The defender can move up or back depending on where the throw is made by the hitter.
- You could add another defender in to play out the ball.

#### TEACHING POINTS

- 1 Athletes need to stay low and keep their head still – especially while 'jucking'.
- 2 The arms should be kept apart and high enough to be able to play defense on a ball that comes to the face.
- 3 It is important that when digging a ball outside the body that the athlete does not bring the arms together too early and swing their arms to the ball – they must reach out with the arm closest to the ball and bring the other arm across to join it.



## 7.6 DEFENSE

### DEFENSE COMMITMENT DRILL

(intermediate)

#### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: 10 balls

Minimum: 3 balls

#### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 2 athletes + coach observing

Maximum: 8 athletes / 4 per side + coach observing

Minimum: 1 athlete + coach assisting

#### DRILL OBJECTIVE

Although technique is important this is a drill that tests more of an athlete's attitude and commitment to the ball than anything else. This objective of this drill is for athletes to maintain a never say die attitude and never give up on a ball.

#### DRILL DESCRIPTION

With a stack of balls the individual running the drill throws balls just of the defenders reach so that they need to dive to keep the ball off the ground.

With a minimum number of balls you may need other athletes chasing down stray balls and feeding the thrower.

The defenders job is to stop a certain number of balls (somewhere from 4-6 balls is normal) from hitting the ground.

Out of the 6 balls there should be at least 1 that the defender cannot get.

\*There is quite an art in being able to throw the ball to a spot the perfect distance from the defender – one good tip is to move alongside the defender and drop the ball low in front of them.

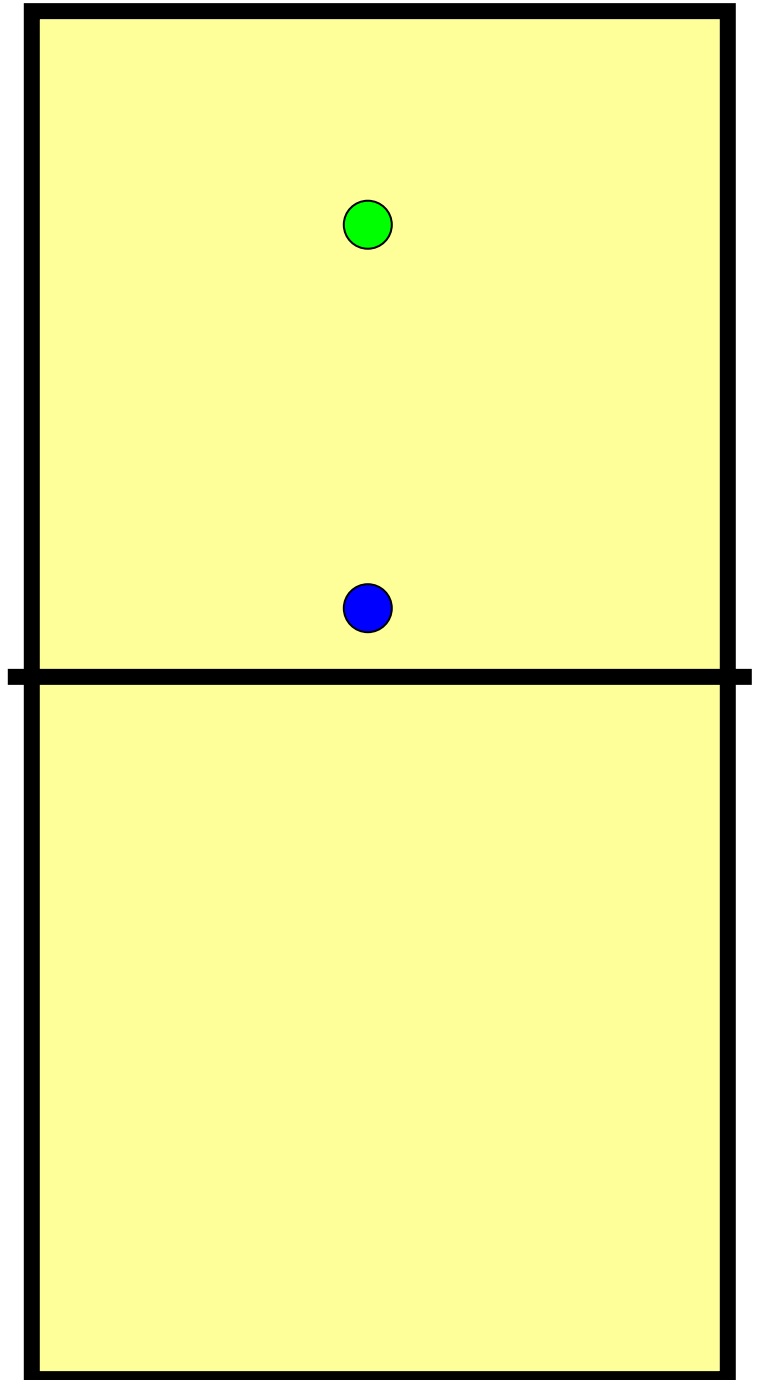
A great way to end this drill is for the defender to play out an easy ball after the required number of digs.

#### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- Have the defender chase down 3 balls then play out one then once again chase down 3 balls and play out one.
- Increase the level of difficulty of each dig until the objective is just to touch the ball before it hits the sand.

#### TEACHING POINTS

- 1 Encourage the defender to stay low throughout the whole drill.
- 2 Discuss and practice correct technique prior to the drill in order to prevent injury while diving.
- 3 Remind the defender to get up off the ground as soon as possible after diving for the ball.
- 4 Remind athletes to NEVER give up on a ball – the wind will often bring balls that the mind thinks are to far away back within arms reach.
- 5 Let athletes know that two arms are better than one but if going with one arm try to use the arm closest to the ball.



## 7.7 DEFENSE MOVING TOGETHER DRILL

(intermediate)

### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: 3 balls

Minimum: 1 ball

### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 4 athletes + coach observing

Maximum: Up to 8 athletes (4 per side) + coach observing

Minimum: 2 athletes + coach assisting

### TEACHING POINTS

- 1 When moving backwards it is vital that the athletes maintain eye contact with the 'trainer' (refer retreating technique from drill 6.4)
- 2 Athletes need to maintain a distance of about 8 feet from each other during movements.
- 3 Movements need to be performed with 100% intensity and speed.

### DRILL OBJECTIVE

The objective of this drill is for athletes to develop an understanding of the idea that partners move together to cover the court, and that it is important that you are aware of where your partner is at all times.

Sometimes it is beneficial initially to place elastic around the waists of the athletes to highlight this concept of 'moving together'

### DRILL DESCRIPTION

The athlete or coach stands in the middle of the court at the net on the same side as the athletes who are in passing position.

The 'trainer' who is running the drill then points to any one of the 4 corners of the court or middle back or middle front.

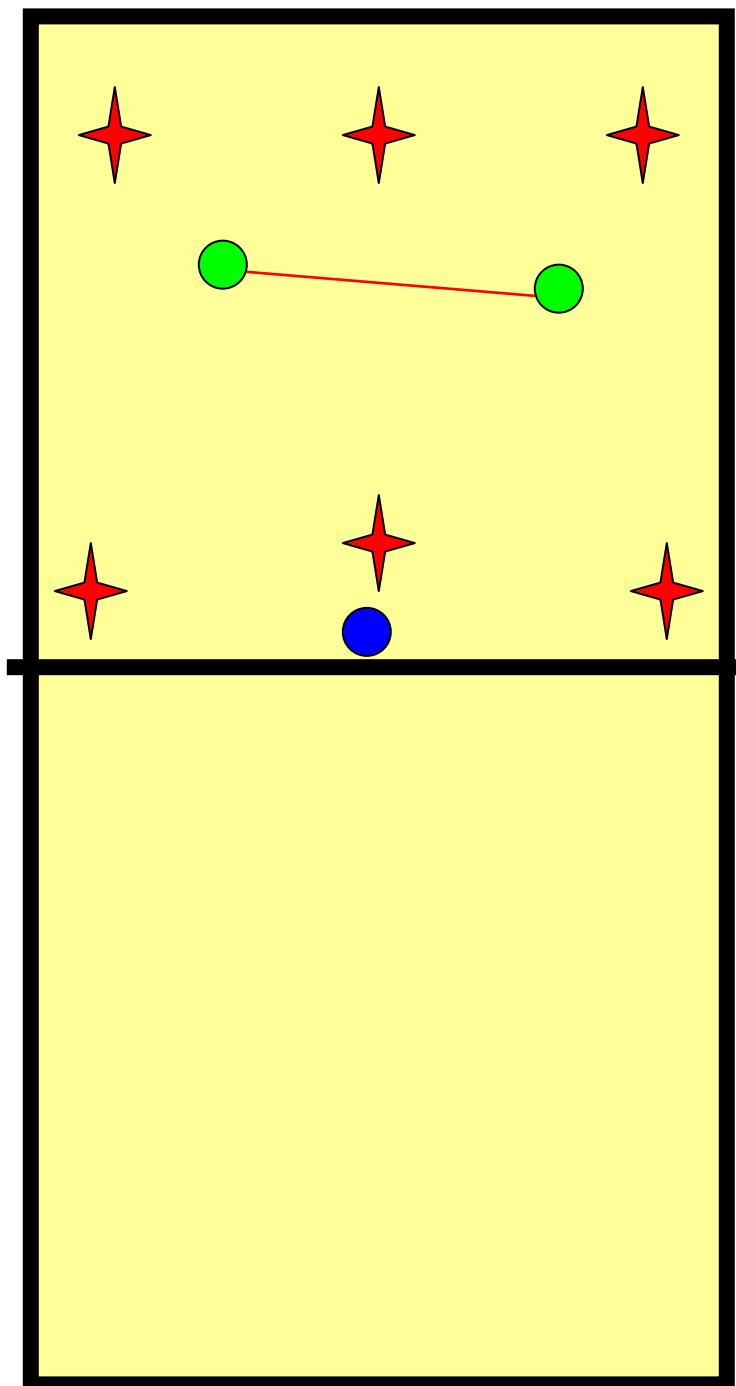
The pair move together to towards the spots indicated by the 'trainer' a certain number of times (perhaps 4 or 5) before a free ball is introduced for them to play out.

Some athletes will be tired after 4-5 movements and will require a easy free ball, for fitter or more experienced athletes the ball introduced could be more difficult.

It is recommended that this drill is run 3 times - each athlete receiving one free ball with the third ball being thrown between the two athletes forcing them to communicate as to who has the ball.

### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- Run the drill from the opposite side of the net and change the 'free ball' from a tossed ball to a down ball or spike.
- Increase the number of moves required before introducing the free ball.



## 7.8 DEFENSE

### CHASE LINE SHOT BEHIND A BLOCK

(intermediate)

#### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: As many balls as available  
Minimum: 3 balls

#### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 4 athletes + coach observing  
Maximum: Up to 8 athletes + coach observing  
Minimum: 3 athletes + coach assisting

#### TEACHING POINTS

- 1 The defender should attempt to cultivate a relaxed but alert state as tense body will be slow to react.
- 2 Refer to drill 7.5 for details on the technique for digging hard driven balls, drill 7.15 for digging the balls requiring a run through technique and drill 7.1 for balls that can only be dug with one arm.
- 3 The defender should watch the body language of the attacker to gain clues as to where the ball will be hit.

#### DRILL OBJECTIVE

This drill develops the ability of an athlete to defend the hard driven ball and chase down the soft line shot.

#### DRILL DESCRIPTION

In this drill an athlete attacks either a hard angle spike or a soft line shot after being set up by an athlete or coach at the net.

The defender prepares to dig the hard angle spike or chase down the line.

The dug ball could either be caught or played out by the blocker.

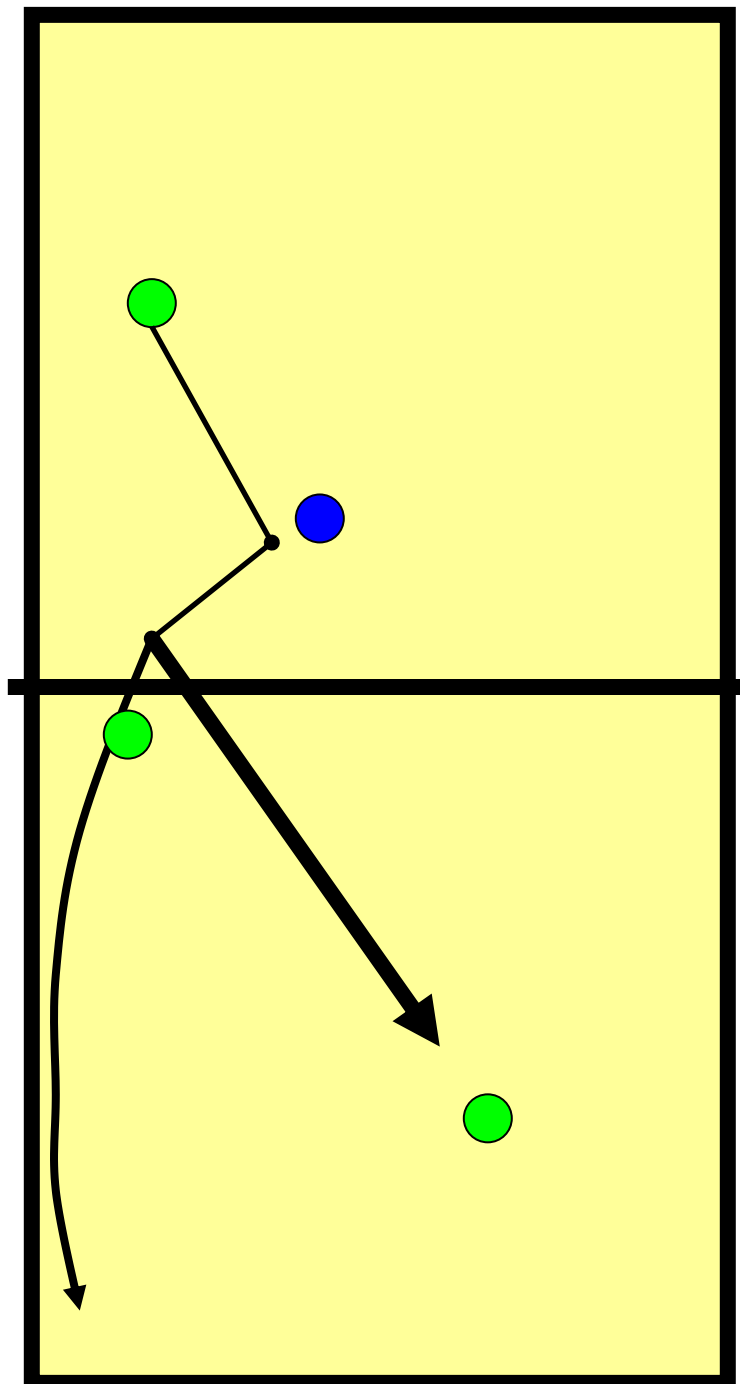
After catching the ball analysis of the quality of the dig can be made as well as the positioning of the blocker in preparation for the set.

If you have 4 athletes they could play out a rally after the ball has been dug.

\*The blocker can use this drill as an opportunity to learn when the attacker is playing the soft shot and try to reach up with one arm to get a touch.

#### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- Ball can be played out after the dig is made.
- Increasing the number of reps in a row that the defender needs to play out will introduce a fitness element to the drill.
- Having the defender serve a ball before coming in to defend will create a more game like situation.
- The defender could practice making a juke to the line before the ball is hit.



## 7.9 DEFENSE

### HARD LINE DEFENSE BEHIND BLOCK

(intermediate)

#### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: As many balls as available + a bench  
Minimum: 3 balls

#### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 4 athletes + coach observing  
Maximum: 6 athletes + coach observing  
Minimum: 3 athletes + coach assisting

#### DRILL OBJECTIVE

The objective of this drill is for the defense to become comfortable moving from their initial defensive position to the line to make a play.

#### DRILL DESCRIPTION

An athlete or coach attacks the ball past the angle blocker down the line.

The defender starts in the middle of the court (or behind the block, depending on what they prefer) and as the block makes a move to cover the angle the defender moves to the line.

The defender then makes a defensive dig and plays out.

Initially the attacker should play a consistent shot down the line until the defender is comfortable moving across to get the dig.

Once the defender has mastered this movement pattern the attacker can switch up short and deep line shots.

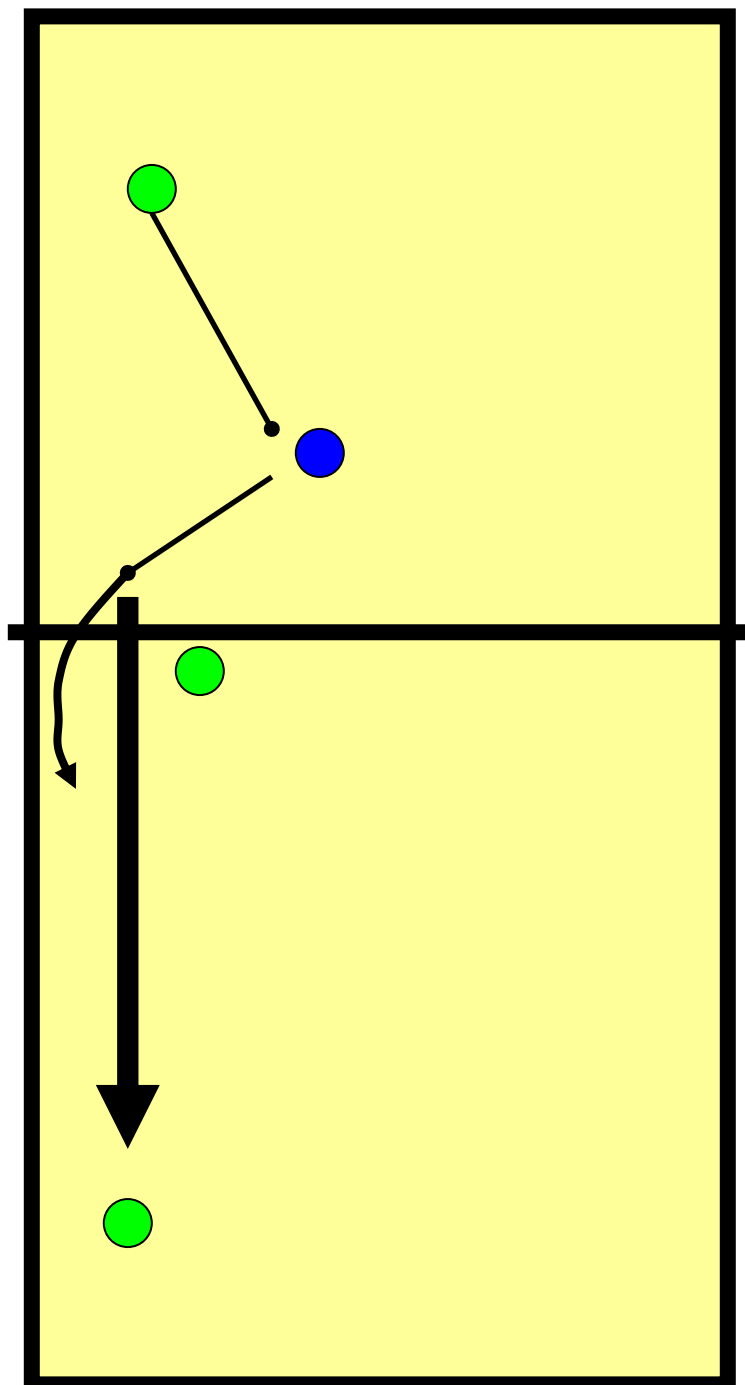
As per drill 7.8 the dug ball could either be caught or played out and if there are 4 athletes they could play out a rally after the ball has been dug.

#### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- The defender could practice making a juke to the angle before the ball is hit.
- Ball can be played out after the dig is made.
- Increasing the number of reps in a row that the defender needs to play out will introduce a fitness element to the drill.
- Having the defender serve a ball before coming in to defend will create a more game like situation.

#### TEACHING POINTS

- 1 The defender should attempt to cultivate a relaxed but alert state as tense body will be slow to react.
- 2 The defender should attempt to reduce head movement while moving into the line as additional head movement will make it more difficult to judge the distance and speed of the incoming ball.
- 3 Timing of the move to the line is important. Moving too early will give the strategy away and moving too late will decrease the defenders chance of digging a hard driven ball.



## 7.10 DEFENSE 2 PERSON DRILL

(intermediate)

### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: As many balls as available + a bench

Minimum: 3 balls

### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 3 athletes + coach observing

Maximum: 6 athletes + coach observing

Minimum: 1 athlete + coach participating

### DRILL OBJECTIVE

The objective of this drill is to allow 2 athletes who have no other individuals to train with the opportunity to get defense and transition play practice.

### DRILL DESCRIPTION

In this drill an athlete attacks the ball over the net off their own throw towards their training partner who is positioned in defense on the other side of the net.

After spiking the ball at their training partner the attacking player sprints under the net and sets up the transition play off their training partners dig.

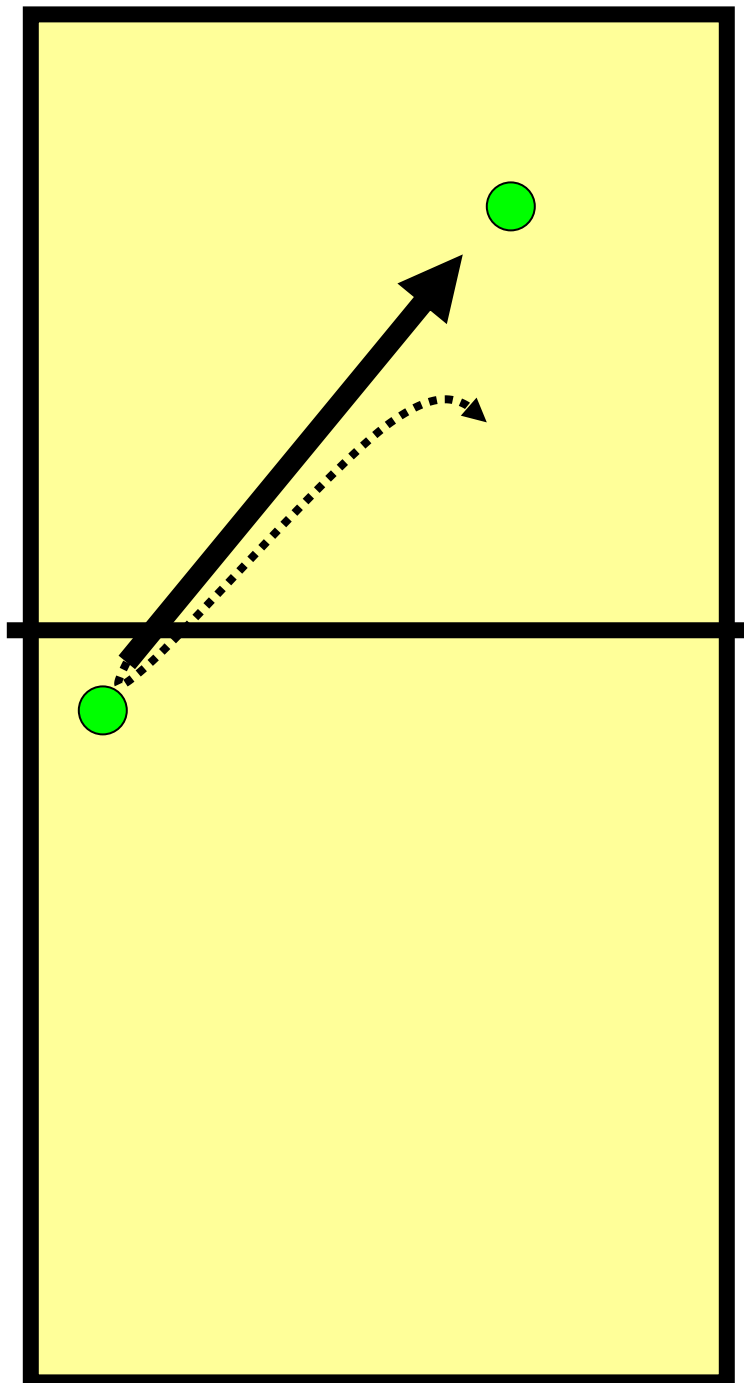
For intermediate players a spike directly at their training partner may be appropriate. More advanced athletes may want to attempt this drill with attacks to all area of the court.

### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- The attacker / transition setter in this drill may want to make a call to their partner as to where they would like the ball to be hit.
- The defender could dig the ball with excessive topspin to make the job of a good transition set more difficult.

### TEACHING POINTS

- 1 The attacker must get under the net quickly so they can set themselves up for the transition set.
- 2 When setting the ball the shoulders must face the target – this is difficult in this drill especially if the dig is off the net.
- 3 The defender must focus on digging the ball up in front of them at such a height that it gives their partner time to get to the ball.



## 7.11 DEFENSE

### RAINBOW CHASE DOWN DRILL

(intermediate)

#### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: As many balls as available + a bench  
Minimum: 3 balls

#### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 3 athletes + coach observing  
Maximum: 6 athletes + coach observing  
Minimum: 1 athlete + coach assisting

#### DRILL OBJECTIVE

The objective of this drill is to give a defender practice turning and digging a ball that has been hit behind them.

#### DRILL DESCRIPTION

In this drill the athlete starts in the centre of the court with the 'trainer' who has a ball between them and the net.

The 'trainer' throws the ball over the head of the defender into the corner of the court.

As the ball is in the air the defender turns, in the direction that allows the defender to see the ball crossing their shoulder and proceeds to dig the ball back over their head to the middle of the court.

The trainer either catches the ball to discuss the quality of the dig or sets up the ball for the defender to attack.

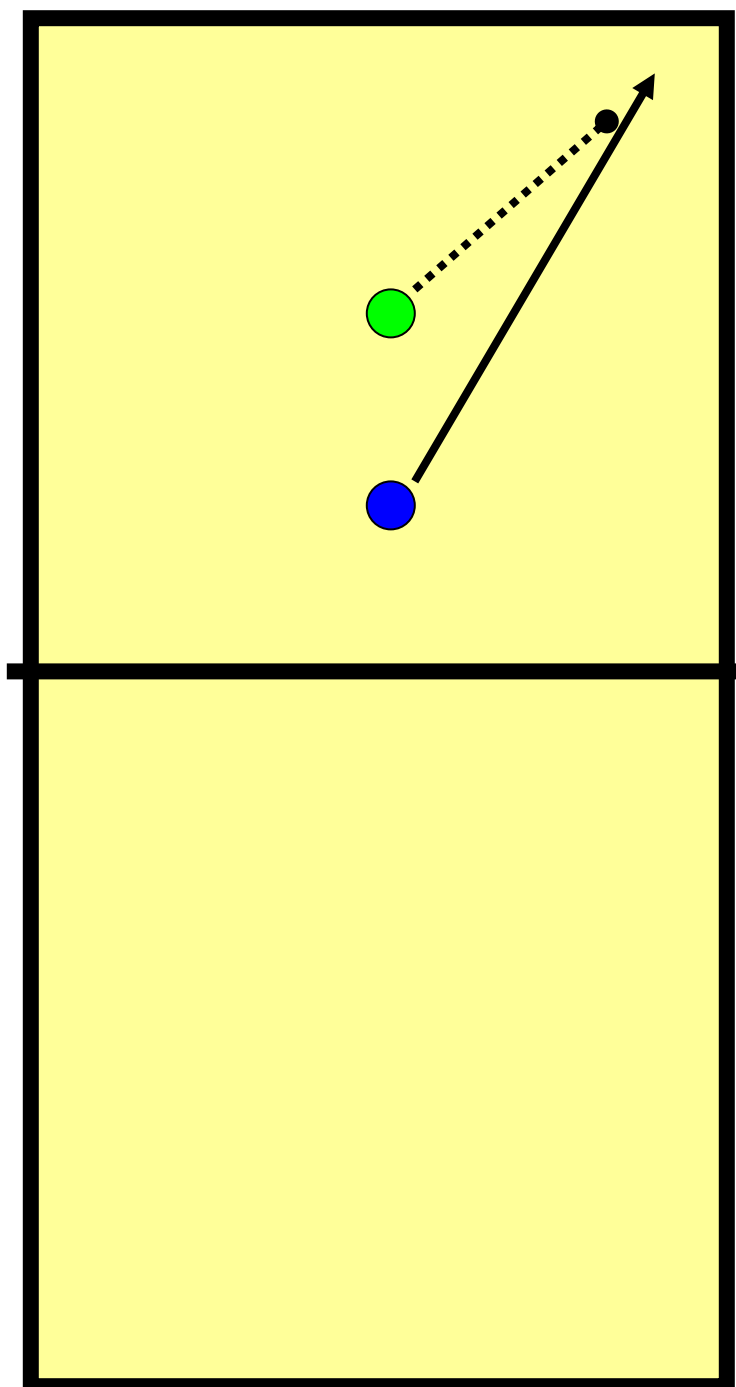
Initially the defender should know what corner the ball is to be thrown to but the drill can progress to the point where the trainer throws to either one of the deep corners.

#### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- The ball can be driven over the net to either deep corner.
- The defender can come up towards the net to make the dig more difficult.
- With 2 athletes on each side of the court this drill could be used to initiate a game.

#### TEACHING POINTS

- 1 Ensure that athletes focus on turning with a low centre of gravity, as this will allow them to cover more ground.
- 2 When athletes contact the ball their arms should travel from 'sand to sky' and direct the ball back over their shoulders to the middle of the court.
- 3 The athletes should have permission to bend the elbows slightly during this movement to assist in getting the ball back into the court.





## 7.12 DEFENSE

### BULK DEFENSE DRILL

(intermediate)

#### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: As many balls as available + a bench

Minimum: 3 balls

#### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 3 athletes + coach observing

Maximum: 6 athletes + coach observing

Minimum: 2 athletes + coach assisting

#### DRILL OBJECTIVE

The objective of this drill is to give the defensive team a multitude of defensive and transition plays in a minimum amount of time.

#### DRILL DESCRIPTION

In this drill an athlete or coach drives balls at the defensive team from a box placed in a number of different positions along the net. Initially the ball should be driven at the defensive players but should progress towards short and deep balls and also balls hit to either side of the athletes.

Depending on the skill and fitness level of the players you may want to stipulate a minimum number of successful transitions plays that need to be completed before attacking from a different position.

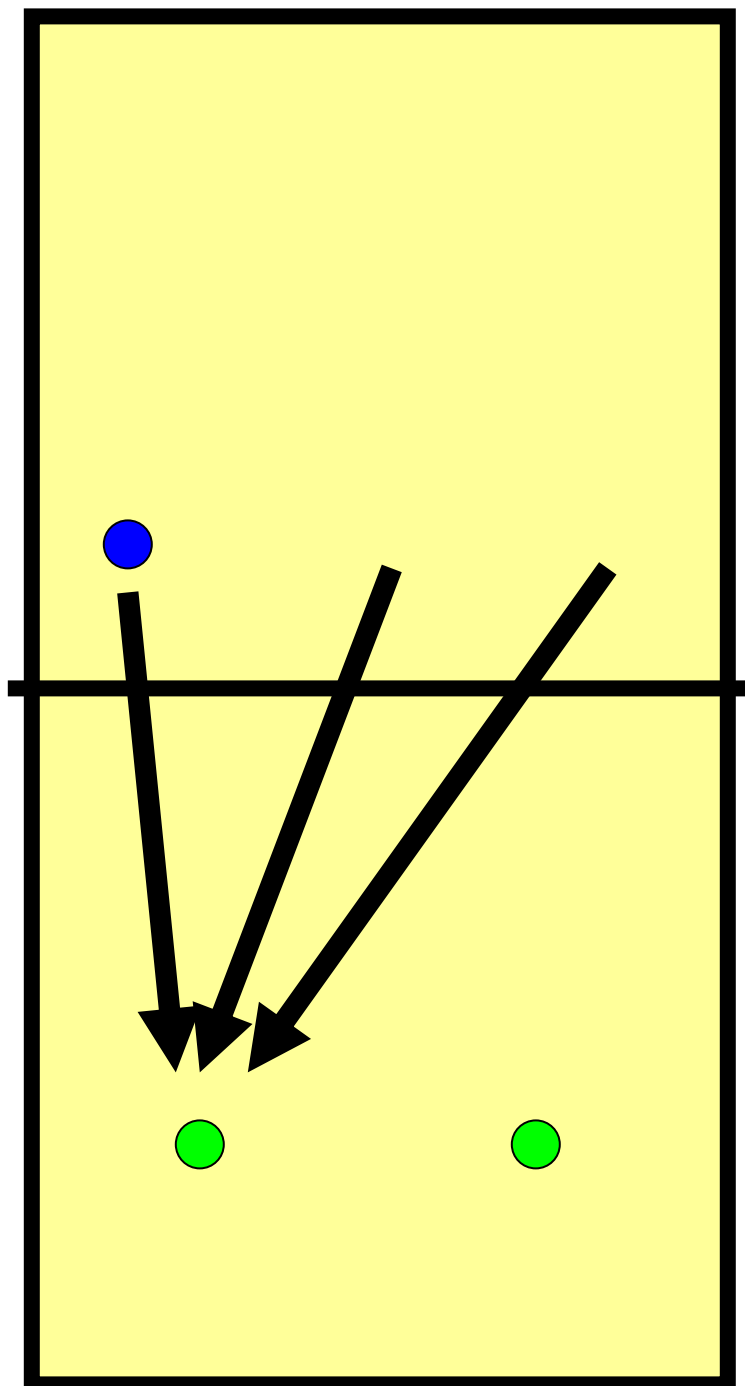
If you have multiple athletes you could have them hitting from a separate boxes (if you have enough boxes) and you can also have additional players on the service line waiting to come in to replace a defensive player.

#### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- Place markers on the opposite side of the court that the attackers need to hit towards.
- For more experienced athletes make the areas attacked towards random.
- Have the attackers back from the net and put a blocker in for the defenders to hit against.

#### TEACHING POINTS

- 1 Athletes need to adopt a relaxed but alert state of mind.
- 2 Athletes need to be reminded to commit to the ball, which means hitting the sand if necessary to stop a ball from touching the ground.
- 3 Remind the athletes to watch the arm of the hitter as this will give them information regarding where the ball is likely to go.



## 7.13 DEFENSE SHOT DEFENSE DRILL

(intermediate)

### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: 6-12 balls + a bench

Minimum: 3 balls

### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 3 athletes + coach observing

Maximum: Up to 4 athletes + coach observing

Minimum: 1 athlete + coach assisting

### DRILL OBJECTIVE

The objective of this drill is to reinforce defensive movement to line and across court angle cut shot and the plays that result.

### DRILL DESCRIPTION

In this drill an athlete or coach shoots line or angle randomly for a defensive player who is positioned in the angle.

The individual hitting should keep in mind that there would normally be a blocker present and they may need to direct their shots upward.

This drill is particularly exhausting so it is recommended that an athlete only does 3 – 5 in a row before getting a rest.

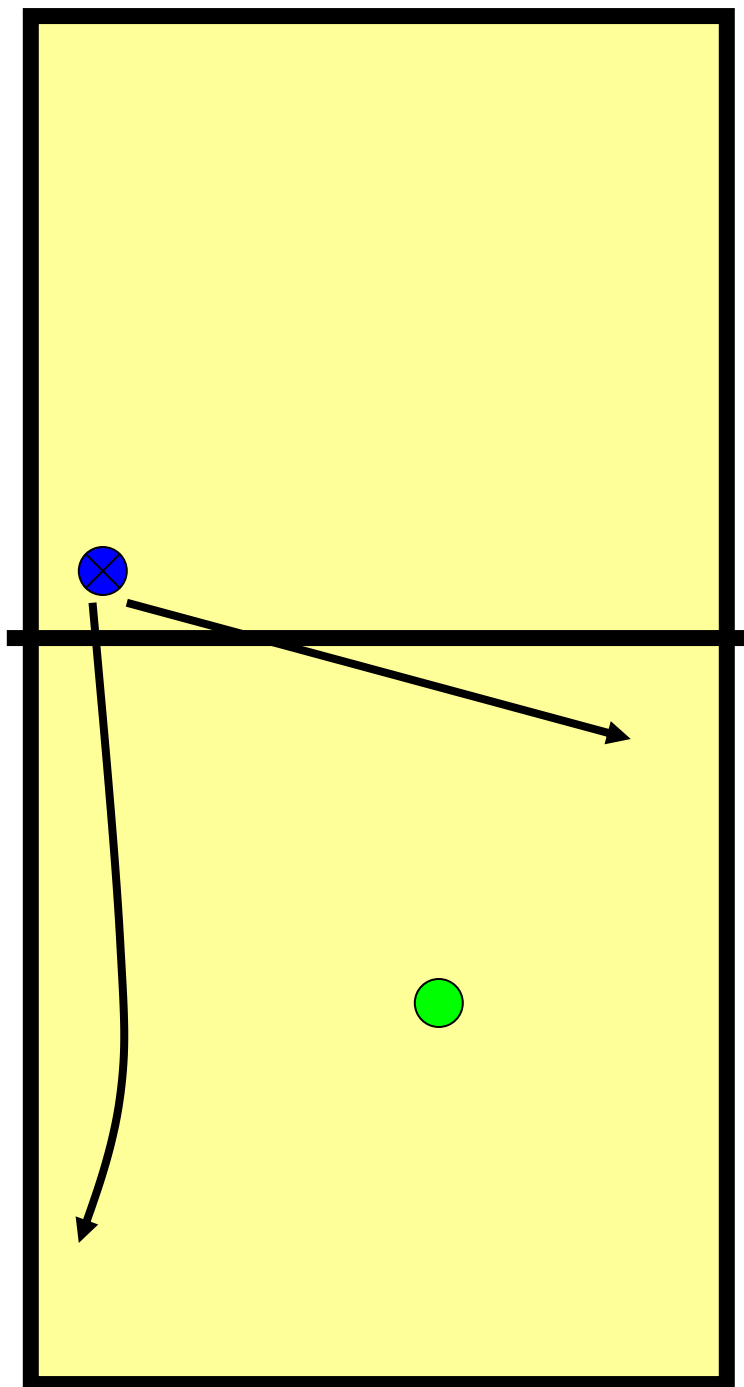
If the athlete can get to the ball with two arms they should however if it is necessary to use only one arm refer drill 7.1 for technique.

### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- The athlete or coach attacking the ball should hit it directly at the defender on random occasions to remind the defender that their first priority is to the hard angle shot.
- Add an additional athlete into the court to set up the ball dug by the defender.

### TEACHING POINTS

- 1 Get low before the ball is hit to allow you to cover more distance quickly.
- 2 Don't 'cheat' which means athletes should not move till they know where the ball is going.
- 3 Discuss how many steps the athletes should be taking to reach each ball. The number of steps will be more for the line than the angle as the distance is greater.
- 4 If the dig is difficult the athlete should not make it any harder by trying to be perfect – just get the ball straight up in the air.



## 7.14 DEFENSE

### HIGH BALL DEFENSE

(intermediate)

#### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: 2-5 balls

Minimum: 1 ball for each pair

#### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 1 athlete + coach observing

Maximum: 4 athletes + coach observing

Minimum: 1 athlete + coach assisting

#### TEACHING POINTS

- 1 Athletes should be reminded to have strong wide hands.
- 2 Fingers should point toward each other rather than forward to avoid injury and grab the ball from the side rather than the front.
- 3 Hands should be relaxed and in front of the body. For more information on technique refer to drill 6.4
- 4 Athletes should watch the hitters arm to get information about where the ball is heading.

#### DRILL OBJECTIVE

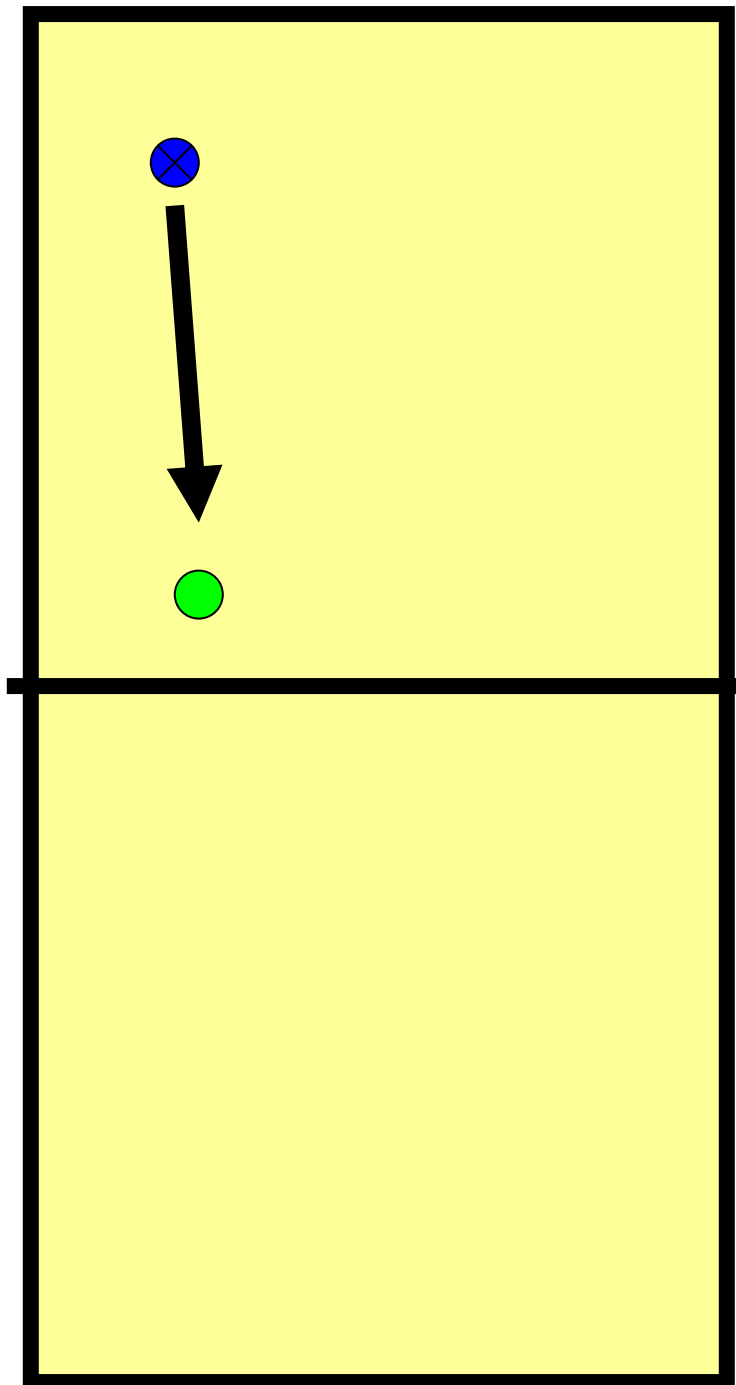
The objective of this drill is for the athlete to get high repetitions of hard hit high balls. Additionally the defender gets practice in the technique of retreating.

#### DRILL DESCRIPTION

The athlete starts with their back to the net. A Coach or athlete hits the ball at the athlete within one to two feet of their face and the athlete attempts to catch the ball. One way to describe this technique is to get the athlete to imagine that they are a soccer goalie preventing the ball going past them. After catching the ball they can give it back to the attacker for another repetition. The drill is done at the net so that any balls that are missed land directly in the net. The athlete then advances to catching and throwing the ball up in one movement. For the final advancement the athlete starts directly in front of the hitter and as the hitter slaps the ball the defender moves back towards the net and digs a ball that is hit at their face. One indicator of a good play is if the defender can catch their own dig as this probably means the ball is high and in front.

#### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- Make the drill more random by attacking the ball over the net at the retreating defender.



## 7.15 DEFENSE PASSING ON THE MOVE

(intermediate)

### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: 6-12 balls

Minimum: 1 ball

### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 2 athletes + coach observing

Maximum: Up to 4 athletes + coach observing

Minimum: 1 athlete + coach assisting

### DRILL OBJECTIVE

The objective of this drill is for the athlete to get practice timing the run through pass, which is essentially passing the ball while on the move.

In most cases it is recommended that athletes move early to the ball and get into a stable and relatively stationary position when passing the ball but there are instances in a game when a run through pass is appropriate.

### DRILL DESCRIPTION

With one athlete at the net blocking angle and one defender positioned in the middle of the court a soft shot is played over the block down the line.

The defender then runs to the line and plays the ball while on the move forward and up to their blocker.

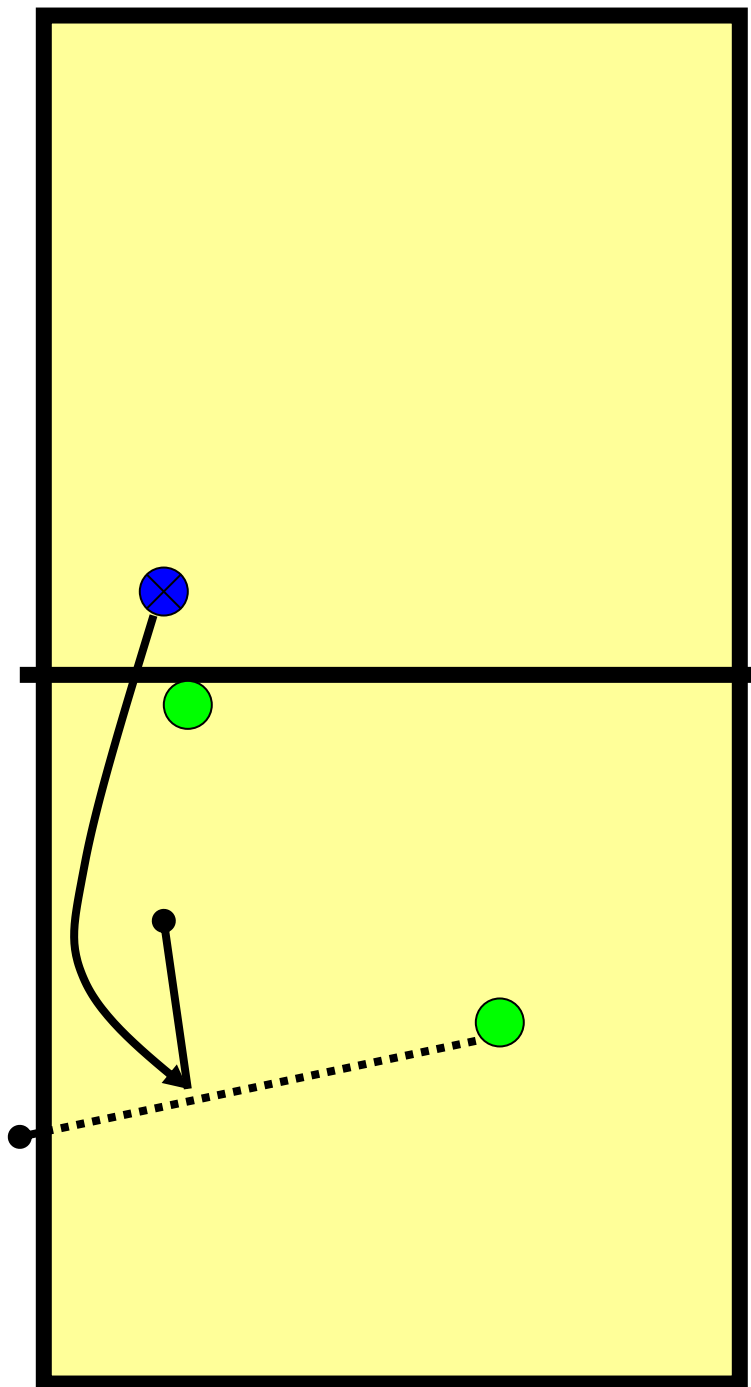
Once the athlete has mastered the timing of this play the digs are accurate the defender can then play out the ball off the blockers set.

### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- For a beginner version of this drill coaches can throw the ball down the line approximately 6 feet from the sideline and have the athlete run from the other sideline to play the ball.
- The coach can vary the speed and angle of the shot to make the timing more difficult for the defender.

### TEACHING POINTS

- 1 Focus on timing to ensure that when you play the ball you have a balanced stance and the ball is not too close or far away from the body.
- 2 In this drill the ball is played outside of the body so athletes need to be reminded to tilt the platform (inside shoulder down) to get the ideal angle on the ball.
- 3 The key is not to slow down or stop when playing the ball but run through the pass.



## 7.16 DEFENSE

### ARM DIGS

(intermediate / advanced)

#### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: 6-12 balls + a bench

Minimum: 4 balls

#### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 2 or 3 athletes + coach observing

Maximum: 4 athletes + coach observing

Minimum: 1 athlete + coach assisting

#### TEACHING POINTS

1. Remind the defender to stay low so that they can cover more ground.
2. Arms need to be wide apart and relaxed with palms facing up. (or at least forward but not down)
3. Athletes must be reminded to move forward toward the ball.

#### DRILL OBJECTIVE

The objective of this drill is for athletes to get practice at controlling digs using only one arm.

#### DRILL DESCRIPTION

In this drill the defender gets low and dives for balls that are hit just outside of area that can be covered by a two-handed dig.

The area that the athlete or coach should be aiming for is indicated by the thin red lines.

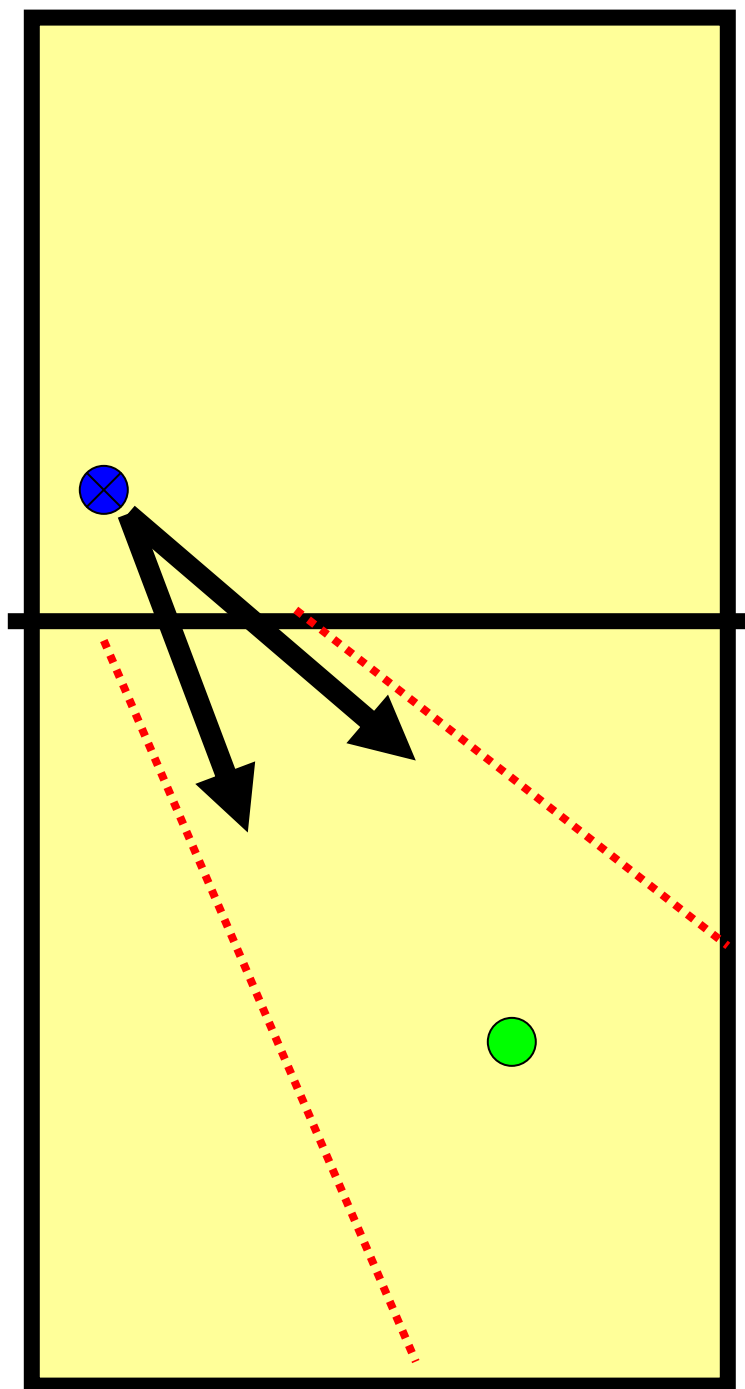
Start with slower attacks and work up towards faster.

Initially it may be beneficial to get the defender to try to dig the ball directly over the net as if playing the ball like they have a tennis racket in their hand.

Once they have this mastered they can work on directing the ball up and keeping it on their own side of the net.

#### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- To advance this drill the defender could perform a juke before the attack is made.



## 7.17 DEFENSE

### ZIG ZAG DEFENSE ON GROUND

(intermediate / advanced)

#### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: 3-5 balls

Minimum: 1 ball

#### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 2 athletes + coach observing

Maximum: As many as space allows

Minimum: 1 athlete + coach assisting

#### DRILL OBJECTIVE

The objective of this drill is for athletes get to practice performing one arm digs.

#### DRILL DESCRIPTION

An athlete or coach tosses a ball to the side and in front of an athlete who is either on their knees or on their feet.

Performing this drill from the feet is more difficult technically as well as being more exhausting.

After tossing the ball in front of the athlete the 'trainer' then moves backwards and this time tosses a ball to the other side of the athletes' body.

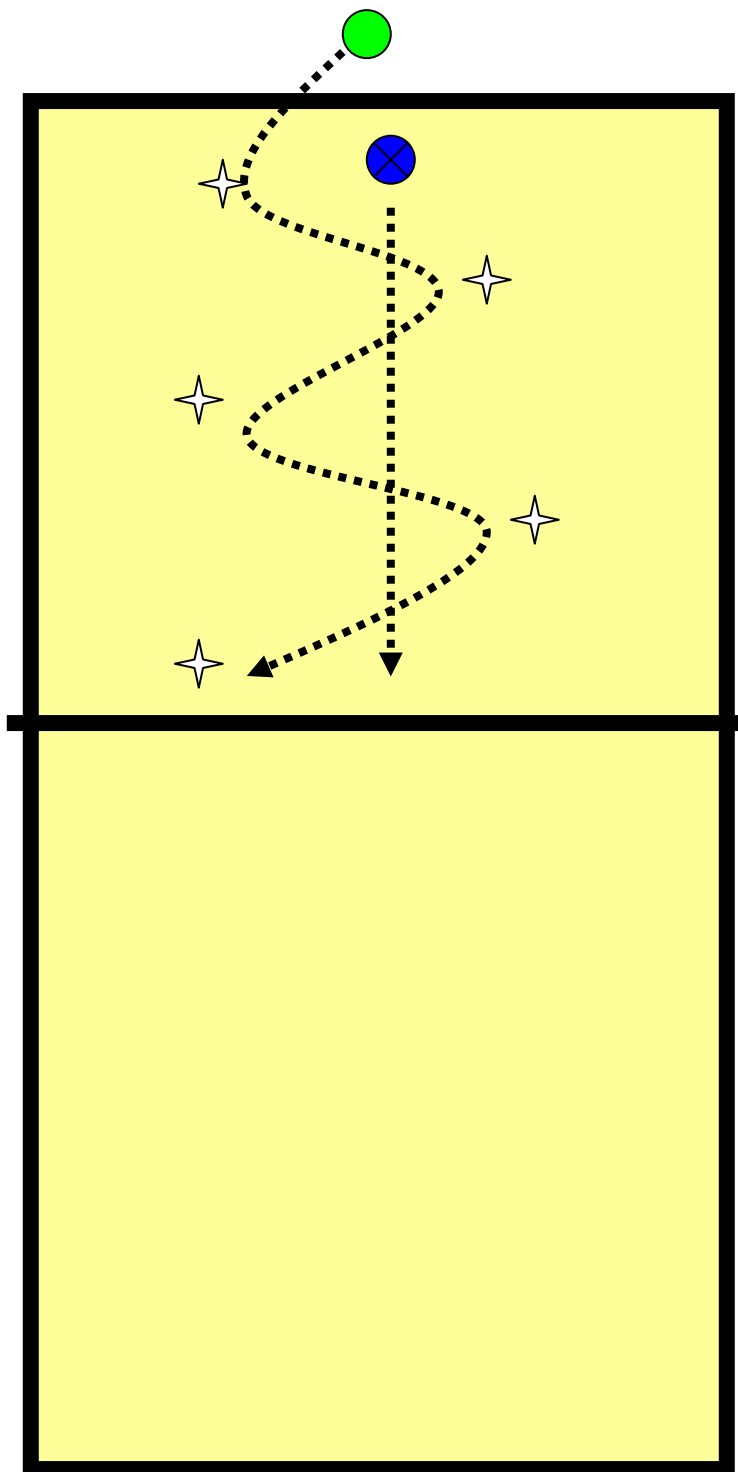
With only one athlete and coach the balls can be placed on the ground prior to the drill starting otherwise another athlete can hand balls to the 'trainer'.

#### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- Standing is more advanced than kneeling.
- Ball can be tossed randomly to either side.
- The athlete could be required to get up and play out the last ball that is dug.

#### TEACHING POINTS

- 1 Refer to drill 7.1 for details on technique for the one arm dig.
- 2 Learn to use the hand closest to the ball.
- 3 If digging each ball from a standing position make sure you get up off the ground as quick as possible between each play.



# GAME LIKE SITUATIONS

Modified games teach tactics and strategy that are lacking in a closed 'skill-centered' or 'drill-centered' approach. In the skill centered environment, techniques are often taught in isolation as 'drills' do not require athletes to think about the relevance of the skill to a game situation.

Adopting a game centered approach to training may be the best way to develop 'game smarts' especially in beach volleyball where the environmental conditions can change from minute to minute and the ability to adjust will have a significant effect on success.

## Beginner

Games for beginners (especially youth beginners) should be modified to promote success, extend rallies, and for maximal enjoyment!

It is often more valuable to teach athletes a tactical understanding of the game before dealing with the performance of skills. The athletes then experience the excitement of actual play and then when they understand why each skill is important, they learn the individual skills faster and can apply them more effectively during a game.

Rules can be adapted in a number of ways and below are some suggestions of modifications that could be made for junior athletes:

- Any shot that goes over the net must be a hit. The ball can't be thrown over the net.
- An athlete can catch and throw the ball to a teammate on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> contact.
- The 3<sup>rd</sup> contact cannot be caught at all.
- Athletes should be encouraged to throw the ball up into the air rather than flat to their teammates to give the athletes more time to move and simulate a volleyball game.
- If a catch is dropped you lose the point.
- If an athlete catches and throws they must remain stationary during the action.
- Maximum of 5 serves in a row from 1 individual.
- Only 1 Adult on the side of the court (keeping score), the rest to sit away from the court
- The score is not as important as the enjoyment of the kids

## Intermediate

Games can begin to become more 'regulation' as the developing skills of the athletes naturally lead towards longer rallies. The effectiveness of wash drills however cannot be understated as they increase the number of touches on the ball in a specific period of time and are great for learning.

## Advanced

Modifications on the rules of the game are not just for athletes still 'developing'. Many advanced athletes use modified wash drills to enhance game endurance or to focus on specific skills that they feel they need to work on.

# MODIFIED GAMES

In Beach Volleyball where the environmental conditions can change from minute to minute and significantly affect the way you play, a game centered approach to training may be the best way to develop your 'sand smarts'.

Modified games give athletes the opportunity to learn tactics and strategy that do not exist when teaching skills in isolation.

|                  |                          |                           |
|------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>DRILL 8.1</b> | <b>MOVEMENT DRILL</b>    | (beginner / Intermediate) |
| <b>DRILL 8.2</b> | <b>THE WEAKEST LINK</b>  | (beginner / intermediate) |
| <b>DRILL 8.3</b> | <b>DOUBLE OR NOTHING</b> | (beginner / intermediate) |

|                  |                                     |                |
|------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------|
| <b>DRILL 8.4</b> | <b>ADD UP THE SCORE</b>             | (intermediate) |
| <b>DRILL 8.5</b> | <b>SHORT SERVES / RAINBOW SHOTS</b> | (intermediate) |

|                   |                                     |                           |
|-------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>DRILL 8.6</b>  | <b>OLD SCHOOL NO BLOCKING</b>       | (intermediate / advanced) |
| <b>DRILL 8.7</b>  | <b>SERVE / DIG / JOUST</b>          | (intermediate / advanced) |
| <b>DRILL 8.8</b>  | <b>MONARCH OF THE COURT</b>         | (intermediate / advanced) |
| <b>DRILL 8.9</b>  | <b>SERVE / FREE BALL /DOWN BALL</b> | (intermediate / advanced) |
| <b>DRILL 8.10</b> | <b>BASEBALL</b>                     | (intermediate / advanced) |
| <b>DRILL 8.11</b> | <b>MODIFIED COURT 1 ON 1</b>        | (intermediate / advanced) |

|                   |                           |            |
|-------------------|---------------------------|------------|
| <b>DRILL 8.12</b> | <b>STANDING SHOT GAME</b> | (advanced) |
| <b>DRILL 8.13</b> | <b>OVER ON 1</b>          | (advanced) |
| <b>DRILL 8.14</b> | <b>CONTINUOUS SPIKING</b> | (advanced) |

## **DRILL 8.15      ADDITIONAL NOTES ON VOLESTE**





## 8.1 MODIFIED GAMES

### MOVEMENT DRILL

(beginner / intermediate)

#### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: 6 - 12 balls

Minimum: 1 ball

#### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 6 athletes + coach assisting

Maximum: 10 athletes + coach assisting

Minimum: 4 athletes + coach assisting

#### TEACHING POINTS

- 1 Refer to drill 7.7 for teaching points when moving in this drill.
- 2 Athletes must be reminded to breathe when moving and breathe out when pushing off the sand.
- 3 Athletes must focus on maintaining correct technique when tired otherwise errors will creep in.

#### DRILL OBJECTIVE

The objective of this game, like drill 7.7 is to reinforce the concept of teams moving together to cover the court.

Additionally this is a very strenuous drill and provides an excellent workout.

#### DRILL DESCRIPTION

If this game is played with more than 2 teams, one side of the court will be designated the winners side and the other the contenders side.

In the case of only two teams, the 'trainer' will alternate directing movements from one team to the other.

In the case of a game involving 3 or more teams the team on the winners side will receive a free ball after moving 3 times as instructed by the 'trainer' and play out the rally.

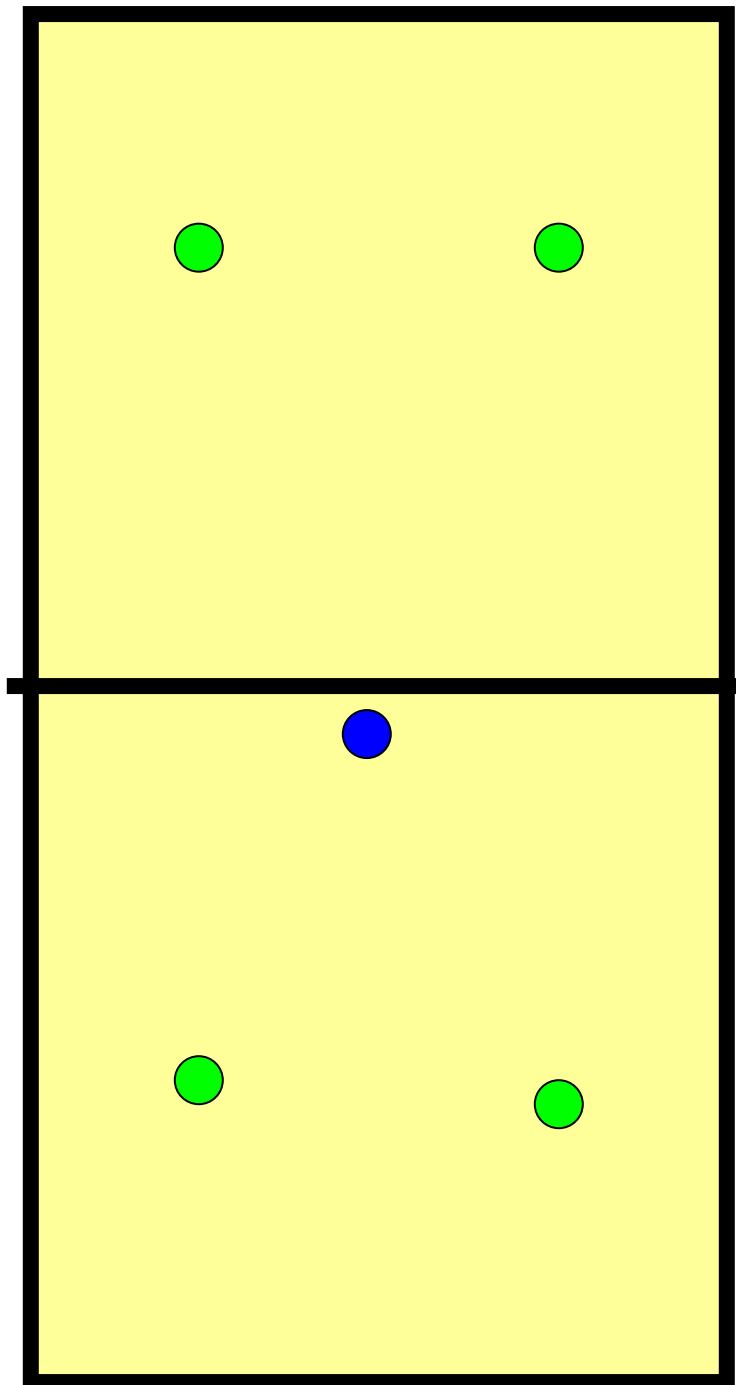
If they win the rally they get a point, and stay on the winner's side. If they lose the rally they move back to the challenger's side as the team winning the rally moves through to replace them.

As soon as a team gets more than 3 points they then move as many times as they have points.

Games would normally be to 7 points.

#### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- Introduction of a ball between the athletes will increase the level of difficulty, as they will need to communicate as to who has the ball.
- Rather than introducing a free ball a down ball could be played over the net.



## 8.2 MODIFIED GAMES

### THE WEAKEST LINK

(beginner / intermediate)

#### EQUIPMENT:

Minimum: 1 ball

Ideal: 2 or 3 balls

#### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 5 athletes + coach observing

Maximum: 4 athletes per side + coach observing

Minimum: 5 athletes + coach observing

#### TEACHING POINTS

- 1 Coach can begin by evaluating who is the 'weakest link' and responsible for the error but then hand this job over to the athletes- *this way the athletes learn to assess for themselves.*
- 2 Encourage the athletes to better the ball because if you 'better the ball' there is less chance you will be responsible for the error.

#### DRILL OBJECTIVE

This 'game like drill' gives athletes game practice with varying partners and also teaches athletes to evaluate the major cause of lost points.

Athletes learn to be responsible and accountable for their mistakes.

#### DRILL DESCRIPTION

Athletes play as they would in a normal game with the additional athlete/s on the sideline.

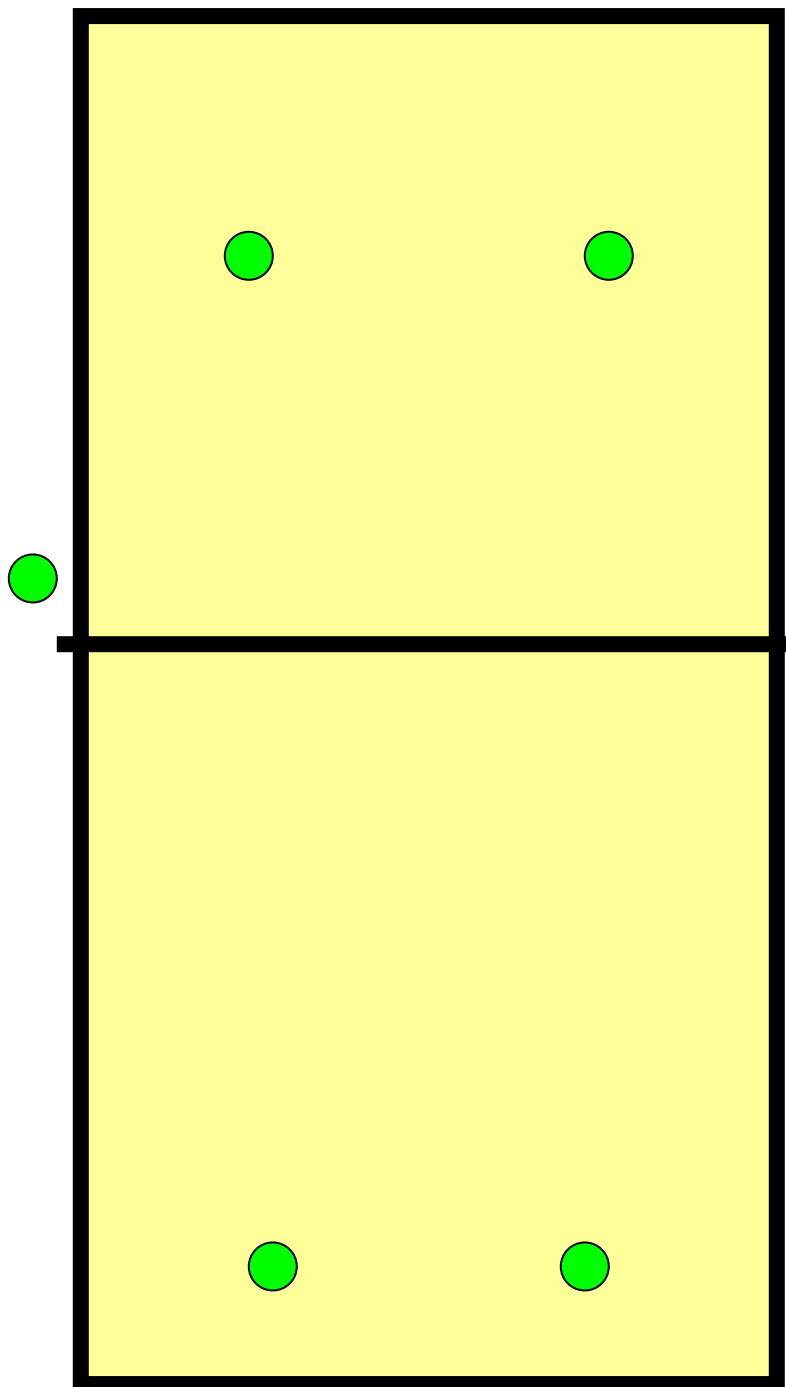
At the end of each rally the athlete who is responsible for losing the point is off and is replaced by the athlete waiting on the sideline.

For beginners, to encourage the use of 3 contacts you may want to award a point for every contact on the ball.

Often lost points are due to cumulative errors by both partners but for the sake of this drill athletes need to evaluate who made the most significant error to determine who leaves the court.

#### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- Athletes can start with 10 points and lose a point every time they make the error - it is the last athlete that has points that wins.



### 8.3 MODIFIED GAMES

#### 'DOUBLE OR NOTHING'

(beginner / intermediate)

#### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: 4 + balls

Minimum: 3 balls

#### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 4 athletes + coach observing

Maximum: 6 athletes + coach observing

Minimum: 4 athletes + coach assisting

#### TEACHING POINTS

- 1 Athletes must focus on maintaining correct technique when tired otherwise errors will creep in.
- 2 Encourage athletes to evaluate how they are feeling and also evaluate how the other team may be feeling to guide their decisions.
- 3 Get athletes to evaluate how their strategy on offense may change when the opposition is tired verses fresh.

#### DRILL OBJECTIVE

This game allows athletes to take risks regarding earning points. Additionally this game favors athletes that have better fitness.

#### DRILL DESCRIPTION

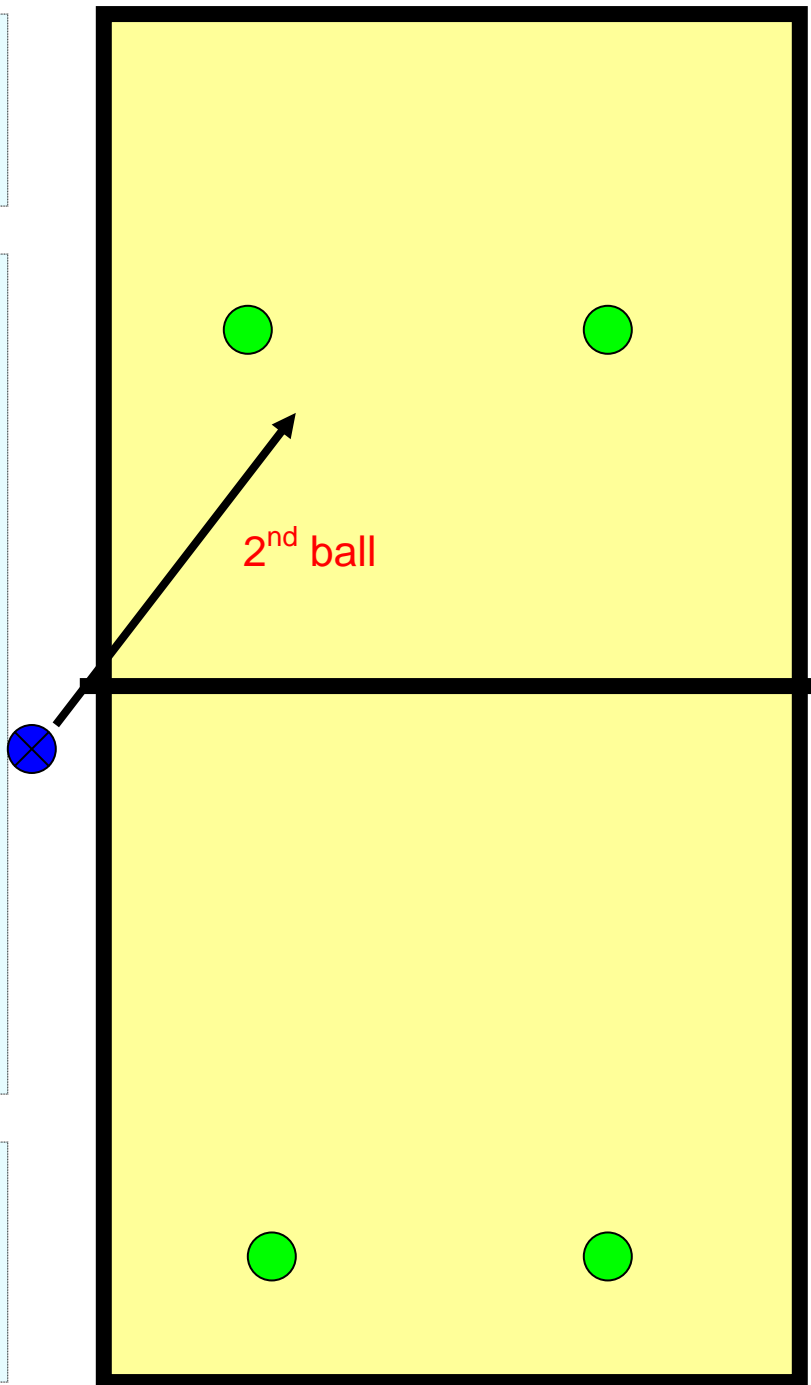
Athletes play out a rally as per a normal game.

The team that wins the rally gets the chance to 'double up' on points by receiving a down ball.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> rally results in points that are double or nothing for the team that won the initial rally and chose to double up.

You could also have a 'triple or nothing' play in which the team receives a 3<sup>rd</sup> ball.

This game allows teams to quickly catch leads.



#### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- Athletes need to start on the ground, or roll once or do a sprint to the net then baseline before receiving the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> ball.

## 8.4 MODIFIED GAMES

### ADD UP THE SCORE

(intermediate)

#### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: 4 balls

Minimum: 1 or 2 balls

#### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 4 athletes + coach observing

Maximum: Up to 6 athletes + coach observing

Minimum: 4 athletes + coach observing

#### TEACHING POINTS

- 1 Athletes must focus on one play at a time.
- 2 Athletes who have received several serves in a row must focus on maintaining correct technique when they start to get tired otherwise errors will creep in.
- 3 Athletes must learn to deal with a different element of pressure that comes with knowing that you are receiving repeated serves.

#### DRILL OBJECTIVE

This drill allows individual athletes to compete against each other in a normal game setting.

Additionally, each athlete knows that they will be receiving consecutive serves until they lose the rally so this drill contains a different element of challenge and pressure than a normal game.

#### DRILL DESCRIPTION

In this drill normal game rule apply except each athlete gets served continuously until their team loses the rally.

The serve then goes to athlete number 2 until they lose the rally etc.

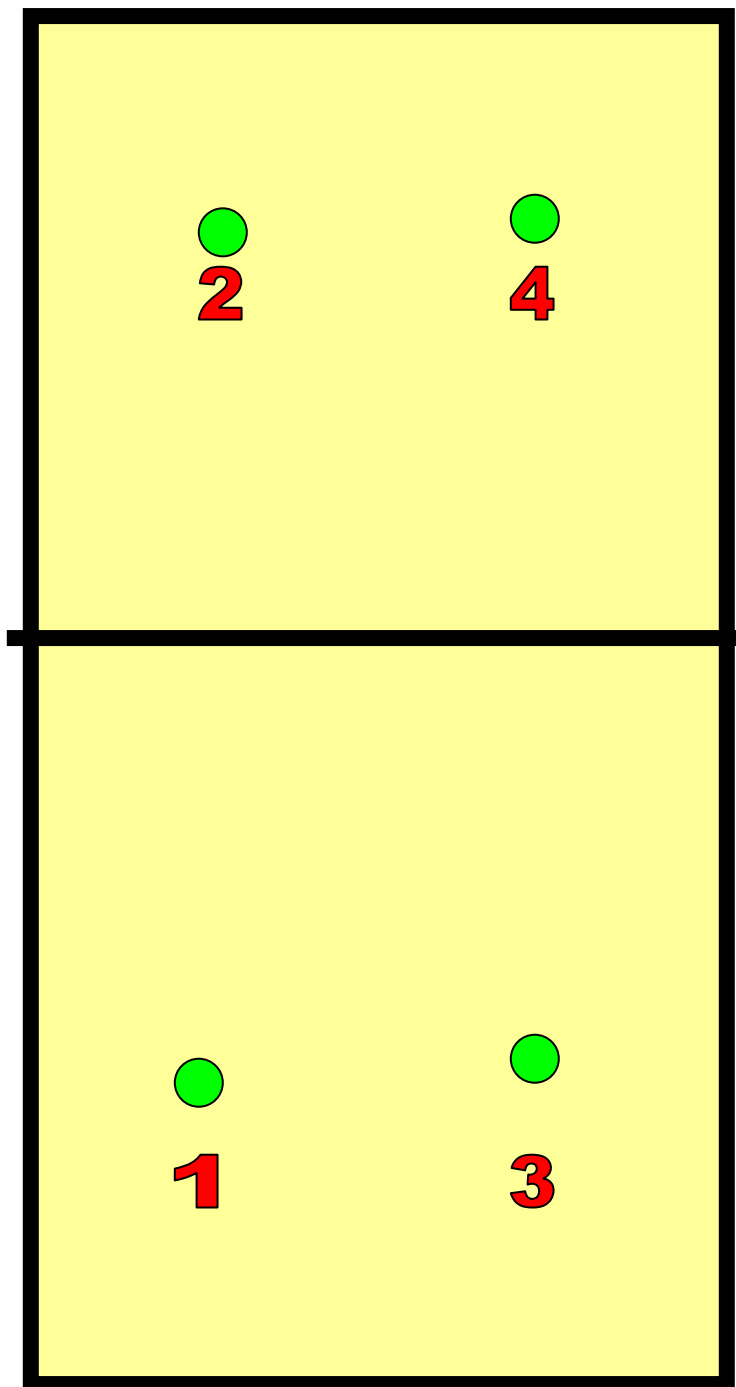
Athletes add to their score each time the opportunity to score off the serve comes round to them.

Missed serves count as points for receivers.

First athlete to 15 wins the game – make sure each athlete gets an equal number of opportunities to score.

#### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- You could specify that athletes get 2 points if they score with a particular type of shot.
- If missed serves do not count as a point for the receiver the game will be harder and will take longer to finish.



## 8.5 MODIFIED GAMES

### SHORT SERVES / RAINBOW SHOTS

(intermediate)

#### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: 6-8 balls

Minimum: 4 balls

#### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 8 athletes + coach observing

Maximum: Up to 12 athletes + coach observing

Minimum: 6 athletes + coach observing

#### DRILL OBJECTIVE

This drill focuses on serving short serves and hitting rainbow shots.

#### DRILL DESCRIPTION

Athletes at the baseline serve short to the receiving team.

The receiving team plays out the ball with a rainbow shot over the heads of the team on the opposite side of the net.

Pairs on each side of the net are independent of each other – they DO NOT play out each others attack.

Teams get a point each time their attack lands in the last 3 feet of the court.

This could be run as a drill or turned into a team competition.

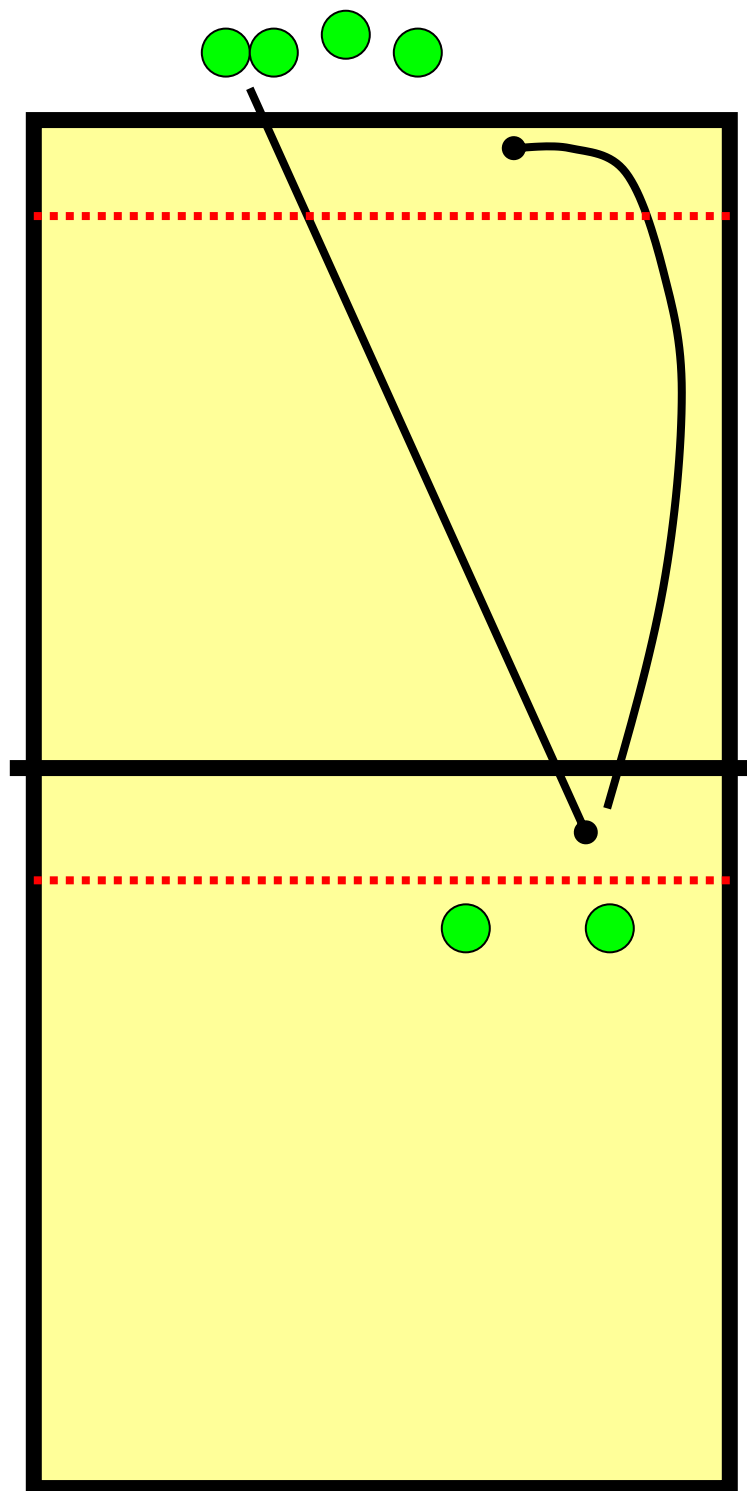
You could have teams working together and competing to be the first group to 10 points.

Alternately you could have teams compete for points individually – if you gain a point you can stay on to continue to score.

The diagram only shows one side of the drill – the same would be happening from the other side.

#### TEACHING POINTS

- 1 Serving a tough short serve will make it more difficult for the opposition to score.
- 2 Get under the ball on attack to produce a better rainbow shot.
- 3 Make sure you get back for your attack after passing the short serve.



#### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS:

- Add targets in each deep corner.

## 8.6 MODIFIED GAMES

### OLD SCHOOL – NO BLOCKING

(beginner to advanced)

#### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: 2-3 balls

Minimum: 1 ball

#### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 4 athletes + coach observing

Maximum: 6-8 athletes (with King and Queen format)

Minimum: 4 athletes + coach observing

#### TEACHING POINTS

- 1 Athletes should be down low in a defensive position before the ball is contacted to enhance their ability to move to any balls attacked away from them.
- 2 Athletes should focus on trying to read where the attacker is going to put the ball. Ways they can do this is to observe the position of the ball on the attackers shoulder, evaluate the hitters tendencies, watch the approach of the hitter to determine if the ball will be hit hard or soft, evaluate the wind conditions to determine high and low risk shots.

#### DRILL OBJECTIVE

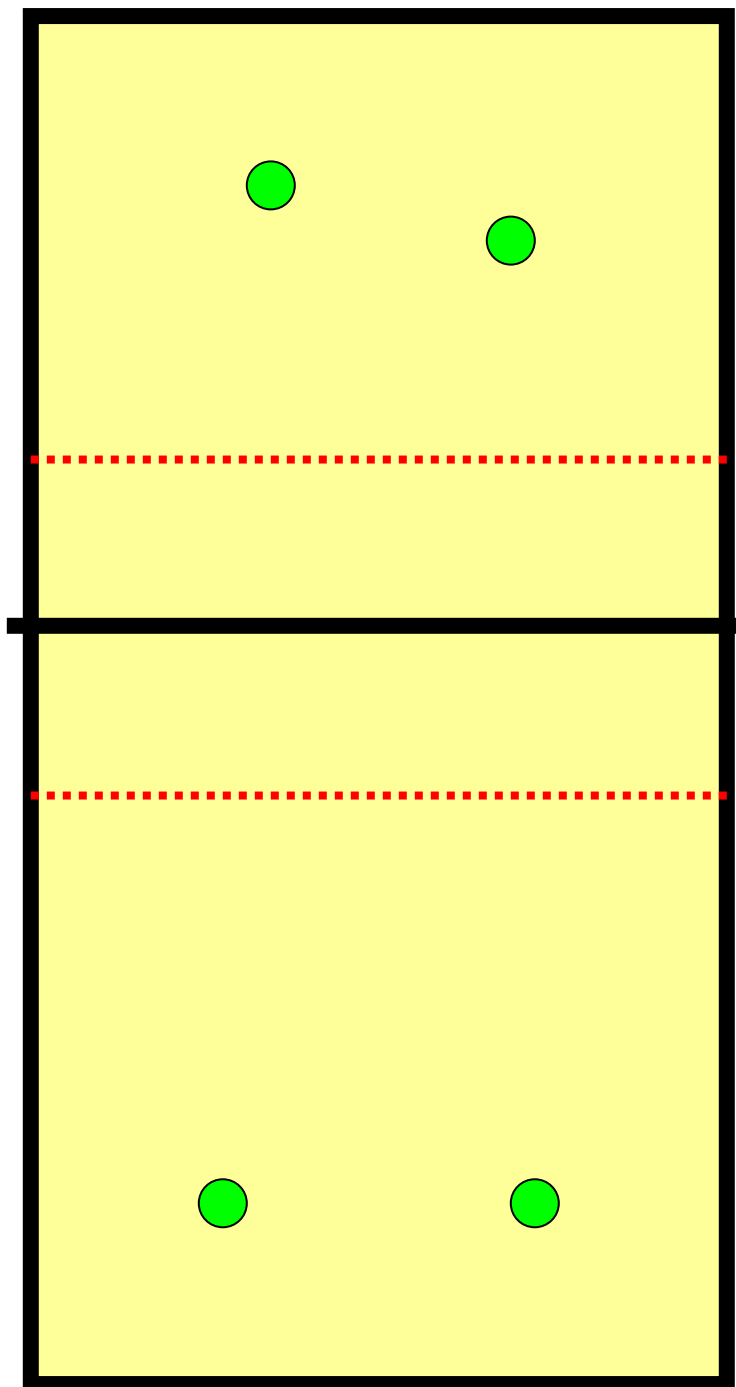
This game focuses on defense with both defenders back and is a great way to improve overall anticipation skills.

#### DRILL DESCRIPTION

Game is played as per normal except the attacker must leave the ground behind an 8 ft line that has been drawn in the sand.

#### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- Move the line to 6 feet.
- Make the game 2 touches.
- Make athletes drop to the ground every time the ball crosses the net.



## 8.7 MODIFIED GAMES

### SERVE, DIG, JOUST

(intermediate to advanced)

#### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: 10 + balls

Minimum: 3 balls

#### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 4 athletes + coach observing

Maximum: 8 athletes + coach assisting

Minimum: 4 athletes + coach assisting

#### DRILL OBJECTIVE

This drill focuses on side-out followed by specific skills performed by the defender and blocker.

Additionally this drill is physically demanding and is a good drill for developing endurance.

#### DRILL DESCRIPTION

This drill is initiated by a serve and playing out of a normal rally.

After the rally ends the coach then attacks a ball at the defender of the receiving team and this ball is also played out.

The coach then tosses a ball up between the blockers for them to joust and the ball is played out.

The game is then repeated with the other team serving.

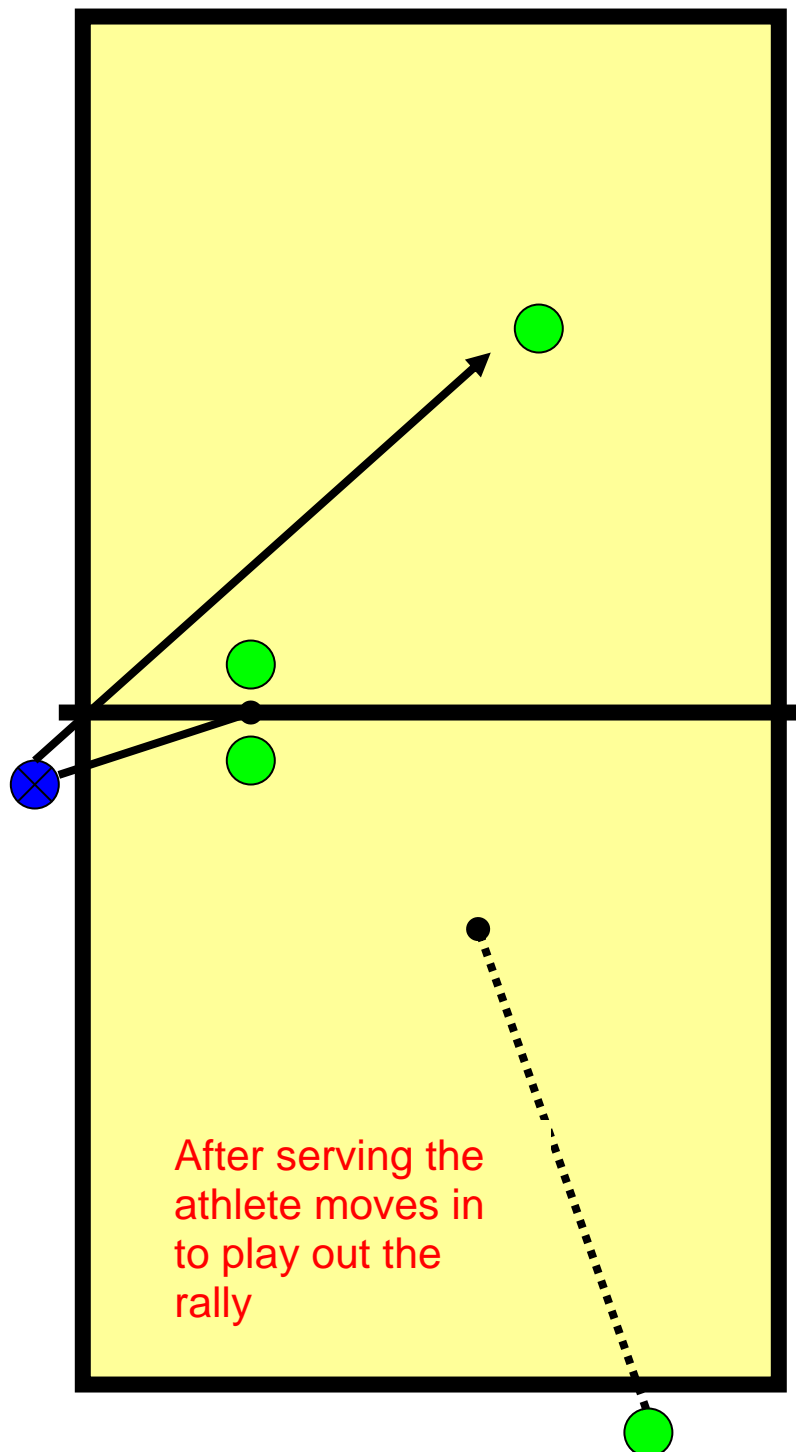
A number of different scoring options exist for this game, one being that teams get a point for every time they win 3 out of 3.

#### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- The coach can make the defender and blocker make a play in a situation they would like the athletes to practice.
- Increase the balls to 5 with defender and blocker getting 2 each.

#### TEACHING POINTS

- 1 Athletes need to focus on staying disciplined when tired.
- 2 Athletes need to focus on one rally at a time and not think ahead to the upcoming plays.



## 8.8 MODIFIED GAMES

### MONARCH OF THE COURT

(beginner to advanced)

#### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: 10 + balls

Minimum: 4 balls

#### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 6 athletes + coach observing

Maximum: Up to 8 athletes + coach observing

Minimum: 5 athletes + coach observing

#### DRILL OBJECTIVE

This drill is a good variation on the normal game but is designed for situations where there are more than 2 teams.

#### DRILL DESCRIPTION

This drill involves designating one side of the court the 'points' side and the other the 'challenger' side.

Athletes partner up and serve to start the rally from the 'challenger' side.

If the serving team wins the rally they move across the net to the 'points' side where they get the opportunity to earn a point.

If the team on the 'points' side wins the rally they receive a point and stay on the 'points' side.

Depending on the focus of the drill rules could stipulate that the receiving do or do not get points for missed serves.

If missed serves do not count for points it will make the job of any team on the 'points' side more difficult.

Also rules could stipulate that teams either do or do not gain points for moving through to the 'points' side.

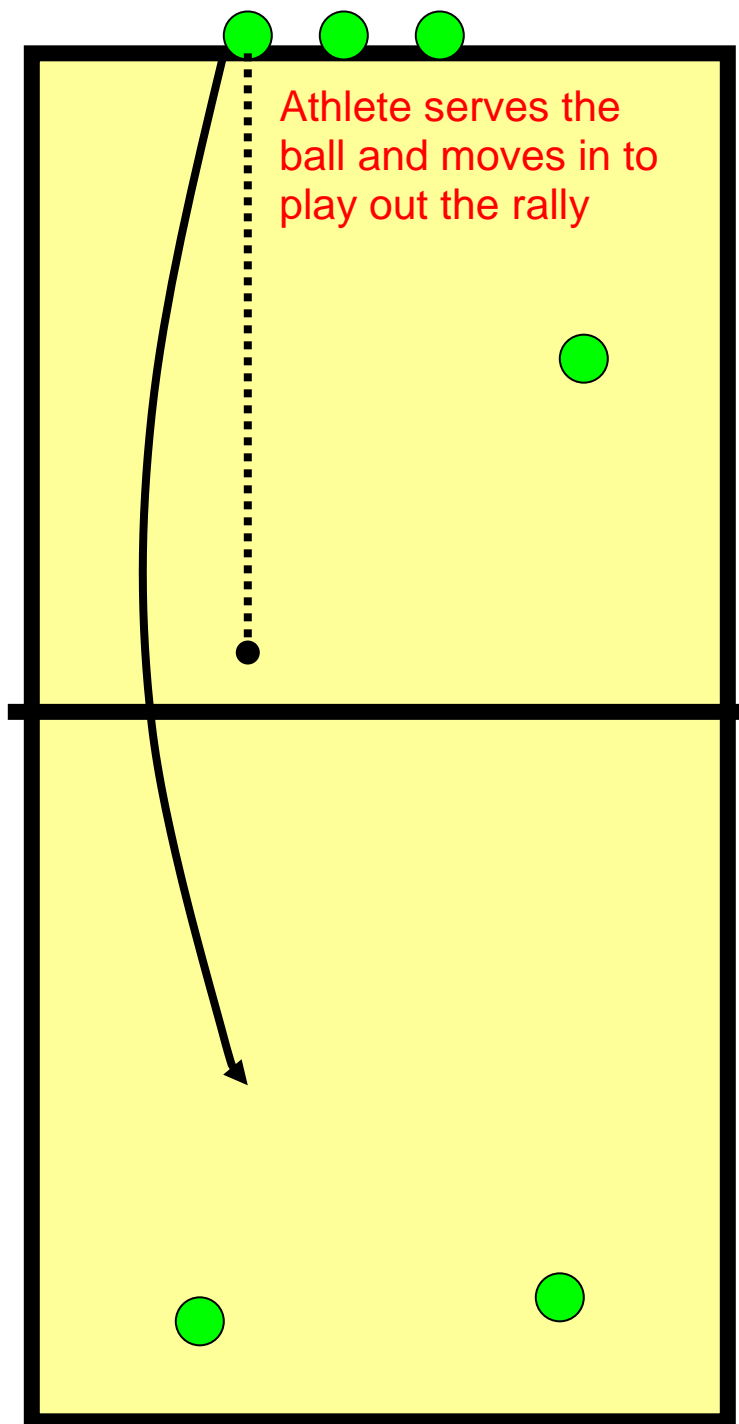
An additional option is to stipulate that the team on the 'points' side is permitted 2 errors before they are out.

#### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- Coach can drive a ball across to the team on the 'points side' if they win and they have to win the 2<sup>nd</sup> rally to get a point.

#### TEACHING POINTS

- 1 Athletes need to consider the serving rules and alter their strategy around it. If there is no penalty for service errors then it is beneficial to take more risks.





## 8.9 MODIFIED GAMES

### SERVE / FREE BALL / DOWN BALL

(beginner to advanced)

#### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: 6-12 balls

Minimum: 3 balls

#### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 4 athletes + coach observing

Maximum: Up to 8 athletes + coach observing

Minimum: 4 athletes + coach assisting

#### DRILL OBJECTIVE

This game helps to develop endurance, as it is physically demanding.

#### DRILL DESCRIPTION

There are a number of different ways this game can be run depending on the objectives of the coach and the balance of skills between the teams.

This 'game like drill' starts with a serve and normal rally.

Then one option is to have the team that just won the rally receive a free ball to play out then receive a down ball to play out.

If the team wins 3 from 3 they get a big point. If teams split the score 2:1 or 1:2 then it is a wash.

After one set of 3 balls, service could either go to the opposite team or you could choose to have the team winning 2 out of 3 choosing to serve or receive.

If there is a strong side with regard to the wind then teams should switch sides regularly.

If a team does not manage to win any of the 3 rallies the opposition should also get a big point.

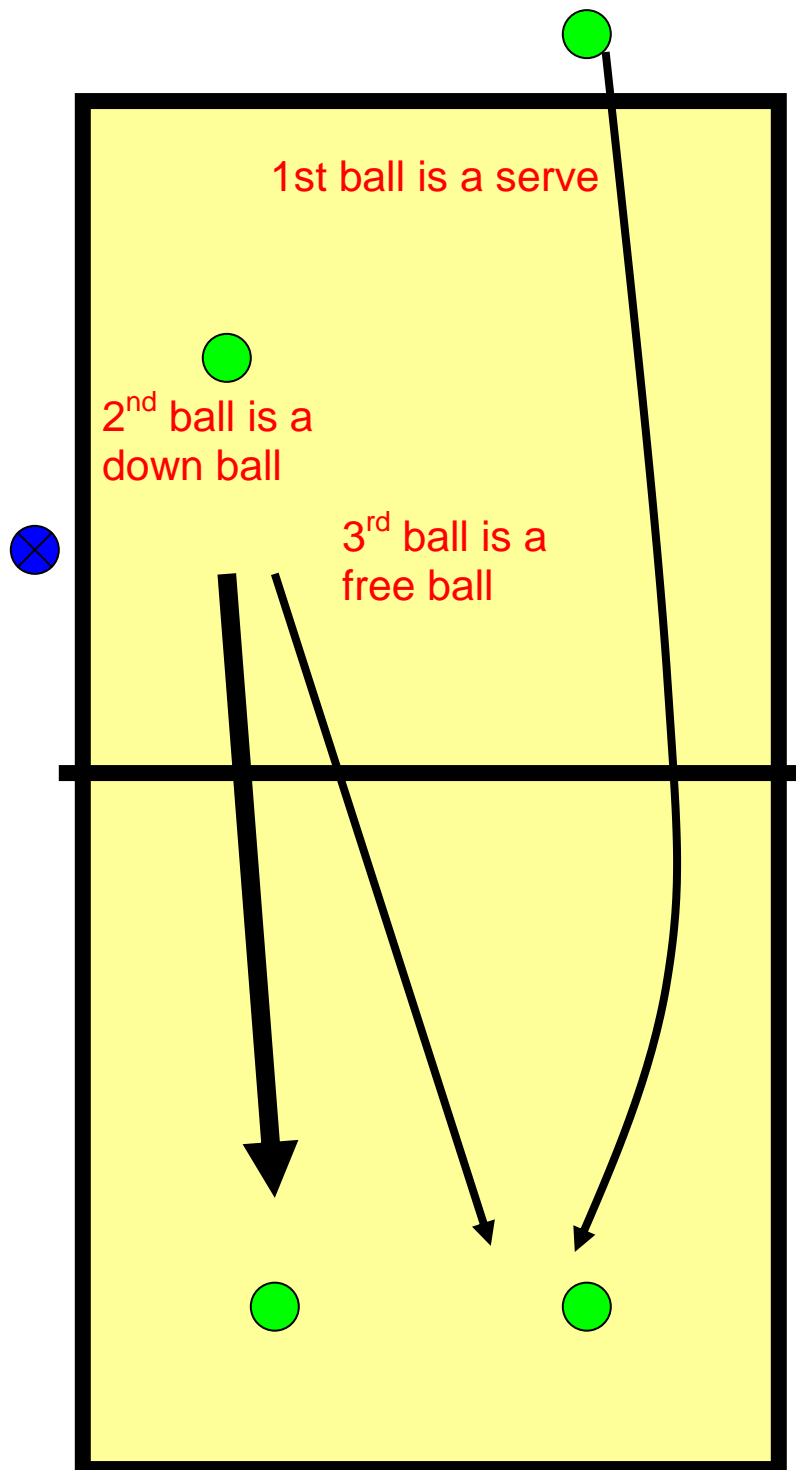
The coach can initiate the free ball and down ball themselves or they can throw up a ball for the players to either down ball or free ball over.

#### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- You could play a set of 5 balls.
- Missed serves not counting will make it more difficult to win a big point.

#### TEACHING POINTS

- 1 Athletes must focus on one play at a time.
- 2 When you are tired you must really focus on your technique otherwise errors will creep in.
- 3 Get athletes to evaluate how their strategy on offense may change when the opposition is tired verses fresh.



## 8.10 MODIFIED GAMES

### BASEBALL

(beginner to advanced)

#### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: 3-4 balls

Minimum: 1 ball

#### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 4 athletes + coach observing

Maximum: 6 athletes + coach assisting

Minimum: 4 athletes + coach observing

#### DRILL OBJECTIVE

This drill is a variation on the game with a fun scoring system.

#### DRILL DESCRIPTION

Receiving team = Batting team

Serving team = Pitching team

Ace = strikeout and switch.

Missed serve is a walk (one base)

If receiving team loses a rally it is a strikeout.

If a team wins the rally they get one base.

Receiving team must win 4 rallies to get a home run and a point

After 3 strikeouts teams switch from serving to receiving.

When the team comes in to bat again (receive) they start again with empty bases.

The game can be played a certain amount of innings and the team with the most runs wins.

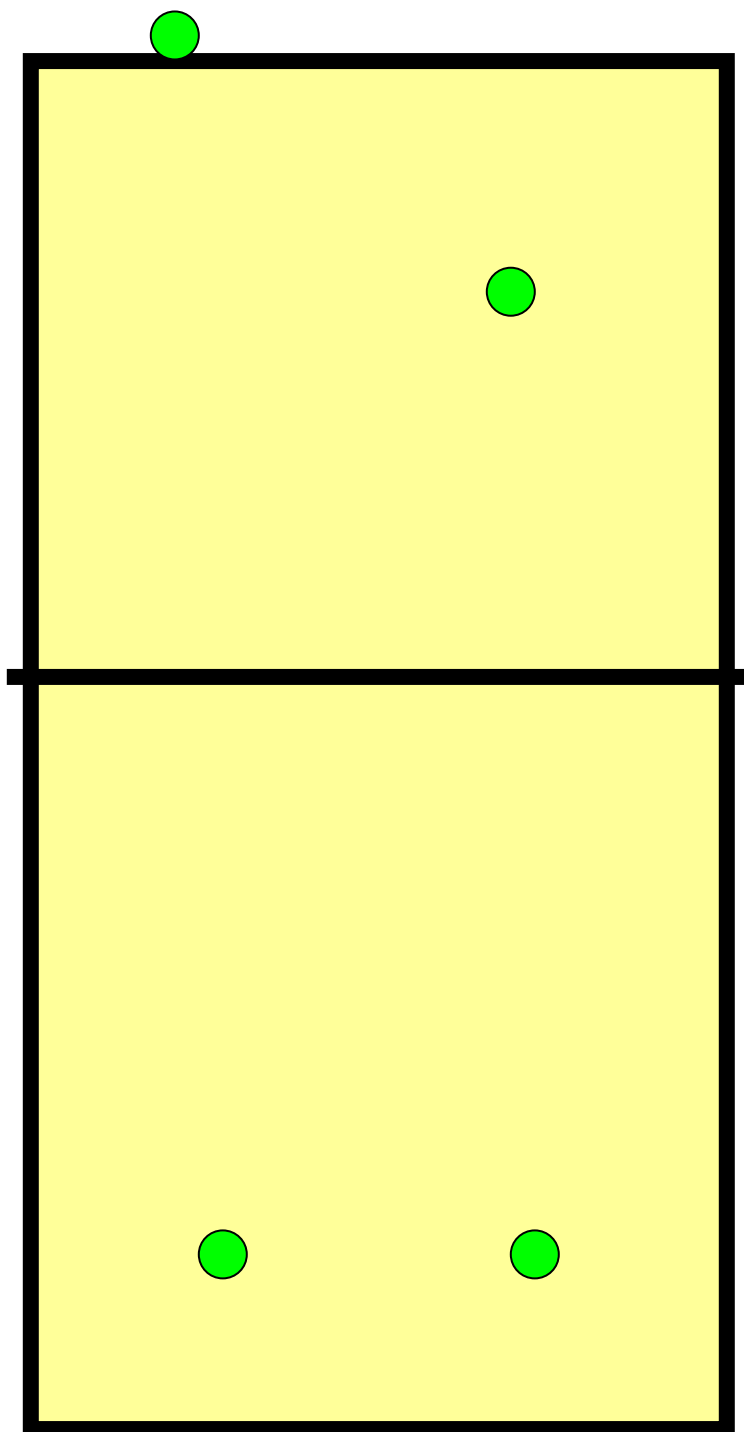
A whiteboard may be useful initially to help young athletes visualize what is happening on the pitch.

#### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- Missed serves not counting as a walk will make it more difficult for the receiving (batting) team.

#### TEACHING POINTS

- 1 Encourage athletes to visualize what is happening on the pitch after each rally and evaluate their strategy accordingly.



## 8.11 MODIFIED GAMES

### MODIFIED 1 ON 1 (2 & 3 TOUCH VOLESTE)

(intermediate / advanced)

#### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: As many balls as available

Minimum: 1 ball

#### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 2 athletes + coach observing

Maximum: Up to 4 athletes per court + coach observing

Minimum: 1 athletes + coach participating

#### TEACHING POINTS

- 1 Take a look at the opponents before you hit the ball to see where they are so you can play the ball away from them.
- 2 Focus on playing the pass and set forward towards the net if playing '3 touch'.
- 3 After each play quickly get back to base position to give yourself the best opportunity to make a good play on the next ball.

#### DRILL OBJECTIVE

Drill gives athletes maximal repetitions at forearm passing, digging, setting and spiking.

#### DRILL DESCRIPTION

In these game athletes play either a 2 touch or 3 touch game of 1 on 1.

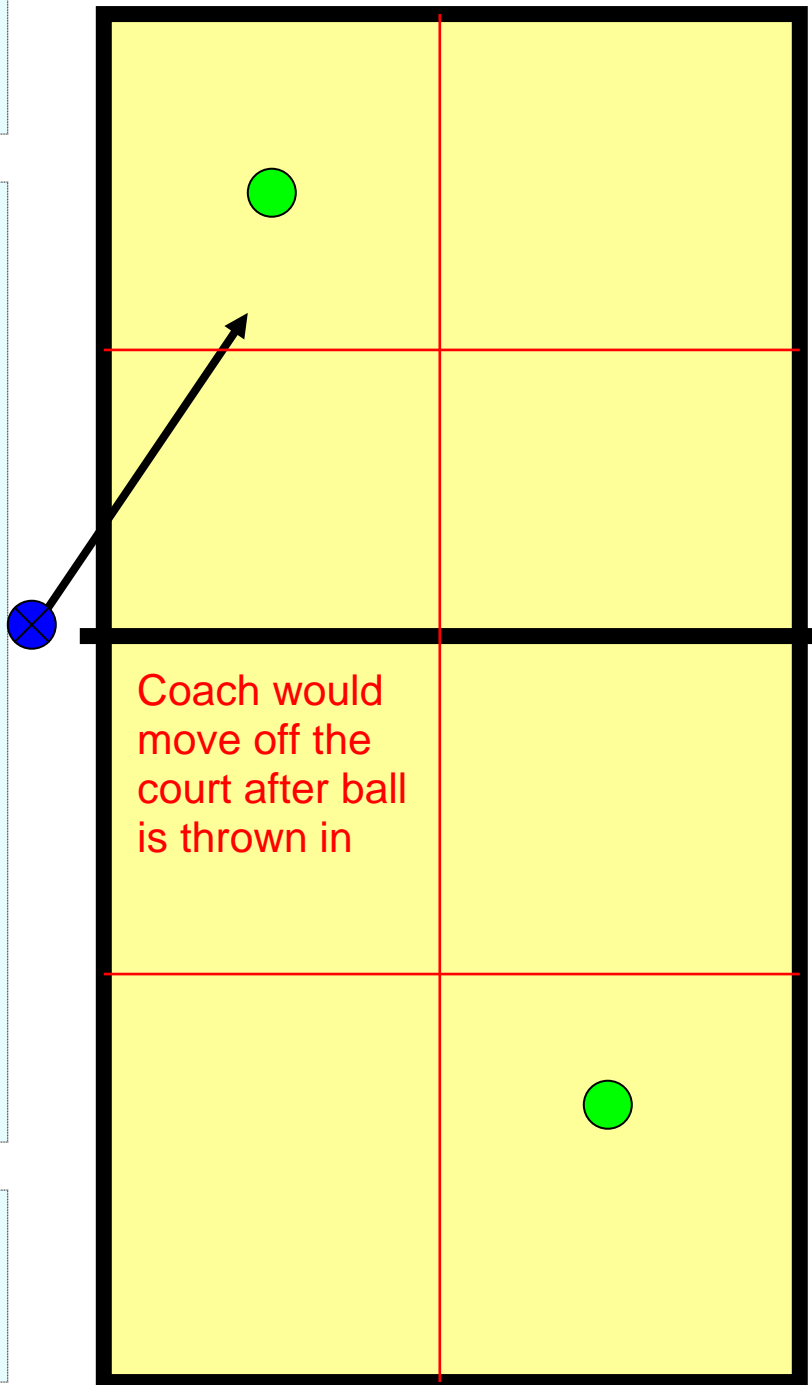
This would need to be played on a modified court (either long and thin or short and fat)

Coach tosses ball in and the rally is played out.

Athletes can either make two or three touches on the ball.

Winner of the rally gets the point.

Teams play to a set score then switch sides.



#### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- Athletes can serve the ball.
- Coach can toss a ball to the winner of the rally to play out for an extra point.

## 8.12 MODIFIED GAMES

### CONTINUOUS SPIKING GAME

(advanced)

#### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: 2-3 balls

Minimum: 1 ball

#### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 4 athletes + coach observing

Maximum: 8 athletes + coach observing

Minimum: 3 athletes + coach participating

#### DRILL OBJECTIVE

This game focuses on defense with two defenders back.

Additionally this drill reinforces ball control and can be a physically demanding drill.

#### DRILL DESCRIPTION

This modified game is similar to attacking drill 5.9 except this is competitive rather than cooperative.

In this game one side hits only line while the other side hits only angle.

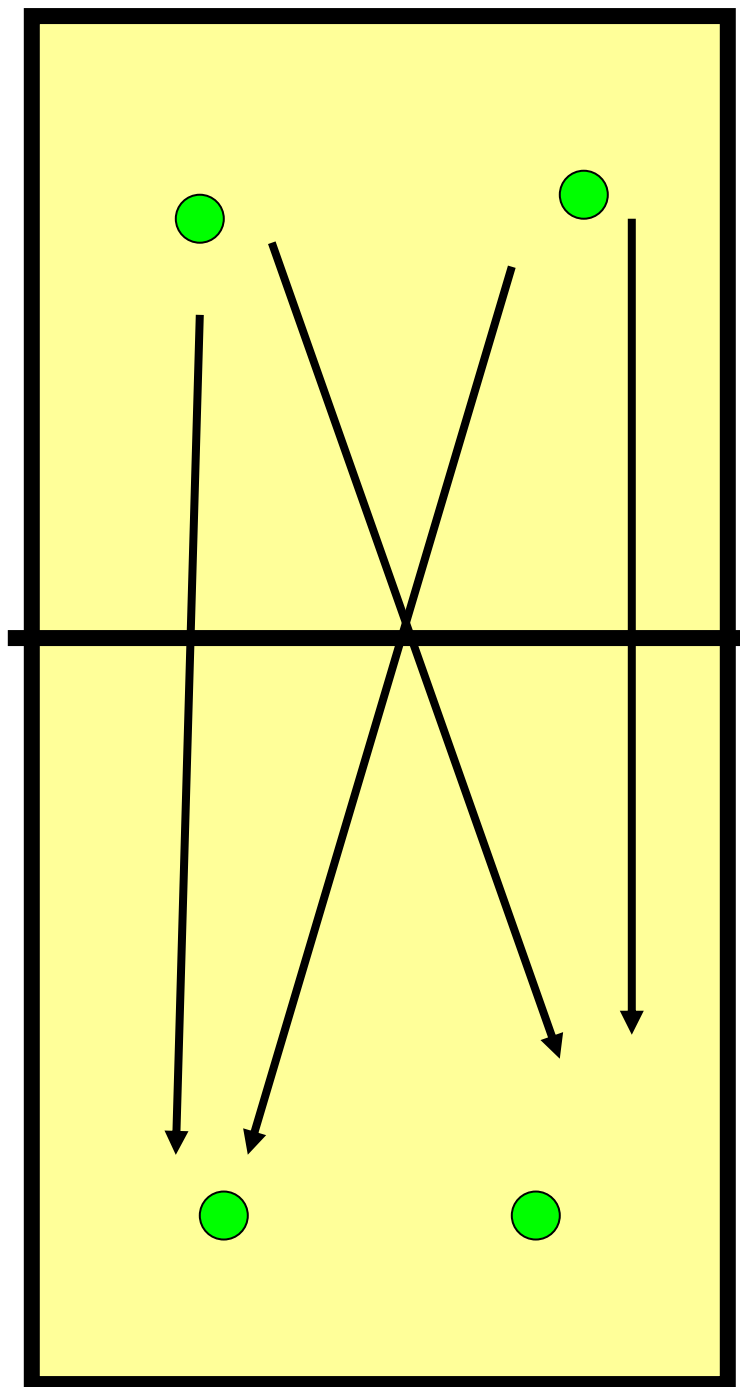
A good rule to implement is that after the ball crosses the net 3 times teams can score off their attack.

#### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- If one team is significantly stronger then you can adopt a rule that the stronger team receives random balls from their opposition but is forced to attack the ball back to their opponents with the opposite of what came to them.
- Alternatively you could have one team allowed to hit the ball hard the other must only play soft shots.

#### TEACHING POINTS

- 1 Be aware of where the target is by looking at the opposing court frequently.
- 2 Get down low on defense to give you a better chance of digging balls not hit directly at you.



## 8.13 MODIFIED GAMES

### OVER ON 1

(advanced)

#### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: 3 + balls

Minimum: 1 ball

#### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 3 athletes + coach observing

Maximum: 6 athletes + coach observing

Minimum: 2 athletes + coach assisting

#### DRILL OBJECTIVE

This is a good drill for improving fitness and accuracy on attack.

#### DRILL DESCRIPTION

The coach or an athlete picks a spot that attackers need to hit into (example shows deep corner) and then serves the ball.

The athletes receive the serve and attack the ball into the chosen spot.

After serving the ball the coach moves to the designated spot and gets ready to defend the forthcoming attack.

The coach or an athlete digs the hit ball directly back over the net to the opposition where they try to play out the rally again.

With advanced players the ball may need to be a soft shot otherwise the rally may end quickly.

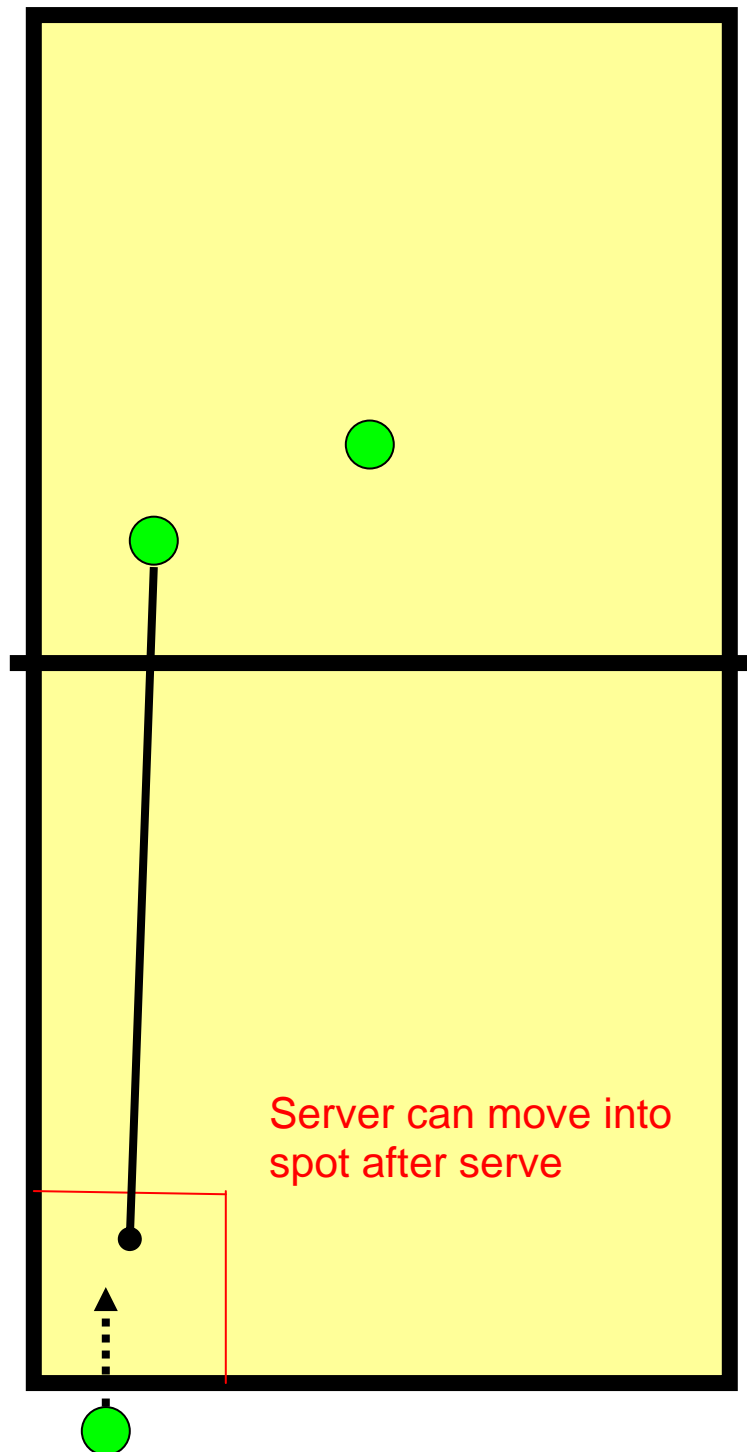
If the spike misses the spot the server gets the point.

#### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- Spots closer to the net are more difficult for the attackers.
- The target area can be made bigger to give the attackers a bigger advantage.

#### TEACHING POINTS

- 1 Beginners should focus on the pass as this will allow for a better attack.
- 2 Athletes need to be reminded that they should maintain a normal spike approach (not directly at the target) and use the wrist to turn the ball if necessary.



## 8.14 MODIFIED GAMES

### STANDING SHOT GAME

(advanced)

#### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: 3 - 4 balls

Minimum: 1 ball

#### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: 4 athletes + coach observing

Maximum: 8 athletes + coach observing

Minimum: 3 athletes + coach participating

#### TEACHING POINTS

- 1 The key is to take constant looks at the opposition so you know where they are and then get your feet under the ball so you are in a good position to play any shot.
- 2 Athletes need to make sure that they keep a high elbow when attacking the ball.
- 3 Athletes need to be reminded to be down and ready to move prior to the shot being made as in this drill athletes are unlikely to hit the ball directly at their opposition.

#### DRILL OBJECTIVE

This game looks to develop shot play by forcing athletes to play the ball on the ground.

Additional to developing ball control it also reinforces the strategy of taking a look at the opposition prior to hitting.

#### DRILL DESCRIPTION

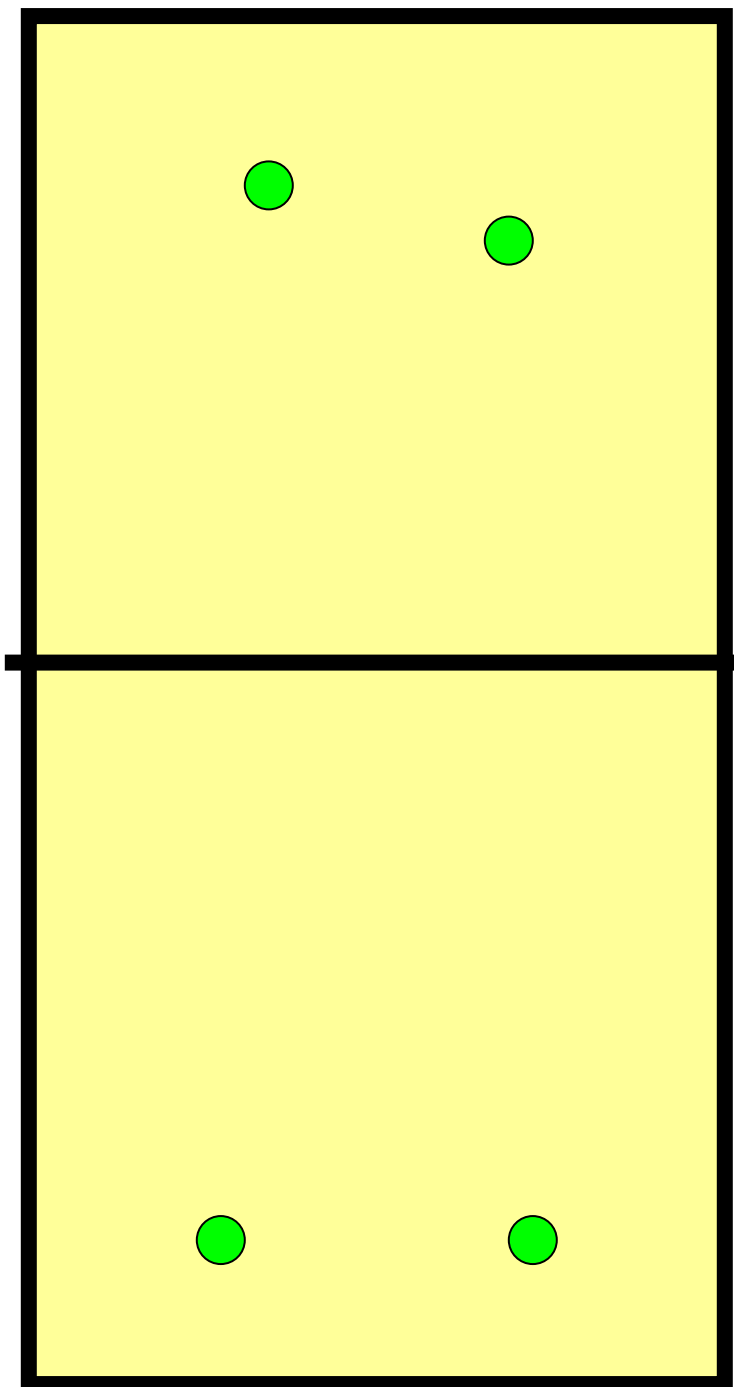
Normal game rules apply except athletes are not allowed to jump.

You could make up additional rules such as double points for any ball that touches the ground without being touched by a player to encourage commitment to the ball.

Getting setting partners to call a specific shot is an additional rule you can implement to increase communication between partners.

#### DRILL VARIATIONS / MODIFICATIONS

- You can make the athletes move up to each side of the net after the ball has crossed the net.
- You could make the athletes drop down to the ground every time the ball crosses the net.



## 8.15 MODIFIED GAMES

### ADDITIONAL NOTES ON VOLESTE

#### EQUIPMENT:

Ideal: 6 - 12 balls

Minimum: 1 ball

#### PARTICIPANTS:

Ideal: Any number, only dependent on space

Maximum: 12 athletes + coach observing

Minimum: 1 athlete + coach participating

#### DRILL OBJECTIVE

The main objective on any 'voleste' game is to enhance defensive skills.

#### TEACHING POINTS

- 1 Athletes need to be reminded of the value of getting into the athletic position and activating prior to the opposition making their play – this means not just getting down low but being ready to move quickly to the ball.
- 2 Athletes must also learn that in a 1 on 1 situation getting back to the middle of the court after making a play will give them a better chance of getting to the next ball as they are not leaving any part of the court undefended.
- 3 Play the ball away from the opposition – make them move – the more they move the more likely that they are to make mistakes.

#### DRILL DESCRIPTION

- One on one – one pass (a good format for beginners on a smaller court or advanced athletes on a normal sized court)
- One on one – two passes (two bumps or a bump and a spike)
- One on one – three touches.
- Two on two – one pass only on each side
- Short / wide 'voleste' using a short / wide court.
- Narrow / long 'voleste' using a narrow / long court
- Cross court 'voleste' where the athletes play from one side of the court to the other.

#### SCORING OPTIONS

- Groups on each side of the net play against each other in pairs or as individuals to a certain number of points. eg tall players on one side verses short players on the other.
- First individual or team to a certain amount of points.
- Individuals or team start on a certain number of points and loose points as they make errors.
- A player who makes a mistake is off the court and gets replaced as per weakest link drill 8.2.
- Return to old fashioned side out scoring for a change.
- Have a number of items on both sides of the court and when one team wins a point they get to take an item – when all items are gone from one side the game is over.
- If one team is stronger then give them a point advantage.
- First team to spell out a certain word wins.

For a great resource (written by John Kessel of USAV) which outlines numerous scoring options and drills (pg 58-60) focused on developing useful ball skills in click on the link below:

[http://assets.usoc.org/assets/documents/attached\\_file/filename/20021/USA\\_Minivolley\\_English\\_12259.pdf](http://assets.usoc.org/assets/documents/attached_file/filename/20021/USA_Minivolley_English_12259.pdf)

#### COOL VOLLEY

Play it cool! Develop Beach Volleyball in your National Federation. Give the opportunity to children and young people to enjoy this great sport. Have a look on the link below to know more about the Cool Volley:

[http://www.fivb.org/en/Development/cool\\_volley.asp](http://www.fivb.org/en/Development/cool_volley.asp)

### Notes about the Warm-Up Drills:

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### Notes about the Serving Drills:

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### Notes about the Passing Drills:

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### Notes about the Setting Drills:

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Notes about the Attacking Drills:

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Notes about the Blocking Drills:

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Notes about the Defense Drills:

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Notes about the Modified Game Drills:

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**Keep on playing Beach Volleyball!**

