

Season Plan for 12 and Up

The players build on the tactics and skills they learned in the previous two years. (New tactics, skills, and rules are bolded.) The following outline provides an overview of each component of practice from Week 1 through Week 12. We based the plans on two practices per week for the first two weeks, and then one practice per week once the regular season starts.

Overview of the Season Plan

The Season Plan on the next page provides a weekly guide and addresses tactical and skill components, and other activities fully detailed in the Practice Plans document. The Season Plan has five components:

- **Purpose:** The purpose of the practice is your main focus.
- **Tactics and Skills:** Tactics are knowing what to do during the game (and when to do it), and they require an understanding of the problems faced by each team during the game and how those problems can be solved. Ways to maintain possession of the ball would be tactics. Skills are the physical skills traditionally taught, such as controlling the ball during play.
- **Rules and Traditions:** You will teach the rules of the sport to young children gradually, as part of playing games and learning skills. Traditions are those unwritten rules that players follow to be courteous and safe, such as raising your hand when you foul someone or playing cooperatively with the others on your team.
- **Fitness Concepts:** Even young children can understand some simple concepts about health and fitness, such as the idea that exercise strengthens your heart, so some of these are suggested as the focus for brief discussions during practice.
- **Character Development Concepts:** The four core values—caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility—can all be related to many situations arising while playing team sports. For example, playing cooperatively with teammates shows that you care about them. Again, we'll suggest some specific ideas for briefly discussing character development values.

Note that the YMCA does not teach or use roundhouse serving.

YMCA Winners Volleyball Season Plan

12- to 13-Year-Olds

Week	Purpose	Tactics and skills	Rules and traditions	Fitness concepts	Character development concepts
1A	To set up to attack and win the point	Spiking; overhead passing	Serving: boundaries; line calls; net rules; calling "Serve" before your serve; rolling the ball under the net between points	General fitness We'll work to improve our cardiorespiratory fitness, flexibility, and muscular strength and endurance.	Four core values We'll stress caring, honesty, respect, responsibility.
1B	To set up	Forearm passing; serve-receiving	Can't touch net; raise your hand if you touch the net	General fitness Work on improving overall fitness by doing a variety of exercises.	Respect Play with respect no matter how your opponents are playing.
2A	To win the point	Hitting down-the-line and cross-court	Call "Ball!" if a ball is rolling in path of game play	Overload principle FIT stands for Frequency, Intensity, and Time.	Respect Show respect for your opponents after the game no matter what happened during the game.
2B	To set up	Setting (high-outside sets)	Call your own illegal hits	Overload principle Do other physical activities away from practice to improve and maintain your fitness level.	Responsibility Remember to bring and use proper equipment.
3	To win the point	Overhand serving to targets		Overload principle Overload the work your body does by increasing intensity.	Honesty Be honest even when others don't see what happens.
4	To defend space against an attack	Digging		Flexibility It's important to stretch and get limber before physical activity.	Respect Show opponents respect at the end of the game.
5	To defend space on your own court	Free-ball defense	Call score out loud—your score and opponents' score	Flexibility Stretch your muscles every day and always before any activity—this will help reduce the chance of injury.	Responsibility Always pay attention at practice and don't distract others.

12- to 13-Year-Olds (continued)

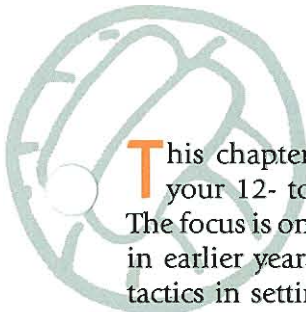
Week	Purpose	Tactics and skills	Rules and traditions	Fitness concepts	Character development concepts
6	To defend space against an attack	Pursuing and saving	Whole gym in play until ball lands out of bounds	Muscular strength and endurance Work on improving each of the three areas of fitness.	Caring Encouraging each other with positive comments show you care about your teammates.
7	To defend space against an attack	Digging	Call score out loud—your score and opponents' score	Cardiorespiratory fitness You need to feel a little tired when exercising to improve cardio-respiratory fitness.	Respect Show respect for others by controlling yourself at all times.
8	To attack as a team	Serve-receiving	Unwritten rule—players support teammates by calling balls "out" and "good"	Cardiorespiratory fitness Use the "talk test" during aerobic exercise to determine how hard you're working.	Caring Encourage your teammates rather than getting angry or impatient with them.
9	To attack as a team	Jump serving; serve-receiving; transitioning to attack		Healthy habits Drink water often; drink before you get thirsty.	Respect Respect your body by practicing healthy habits.
10	To defend space against an attack	Blocking		Healthy habits Choose healthy foods rather than junk foods.	Responsibility Each player has responsibility to play together and put the team first.
11	To defend as a team	Defending against a free ball and then counter-attacking		Healthy habits Brush your teeth, get enough sleep, and stay away from drugs.	Caring Support your teammates.
12	To defend as a team	Defending against a free ball and then counter-attacking		Reversibility principle If you stop being active, you lose your strength and endurance.	Respect Celebrate in a way that doesn't make your opponents feel bad.

Note: The plan is for the 12 and Up age group as referenced in the YMCA's "Coaching Volleyball" online course.

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Practice Plans for 12- to 13- Year-Olds



This chapter contains the 14 Practice Plans you'll use with your 12- to 13-year-old YMCA Winners volleyball players. The focus is on continuing to refine the individual skills learned in earlier years as well as employing more advanced team tactics in setting up the attack and defending against the attack. Individual skill focus includes blocking, digging, setting, and spiking. Before we get to the Practice Plans themselves, we'll guide you in modifying the sport to make it more appropriate for 12- and 13-year-olds, and then we'll explain how the Practice Plans are structured.



Game Modifications

Modifying the game takes into account the developmental levels of your players and allows them to better learn the tactics and skills necessary. We recommend the modifications in table 12.1 for your practices; we show the adult regulation rules for the sake of comparison.

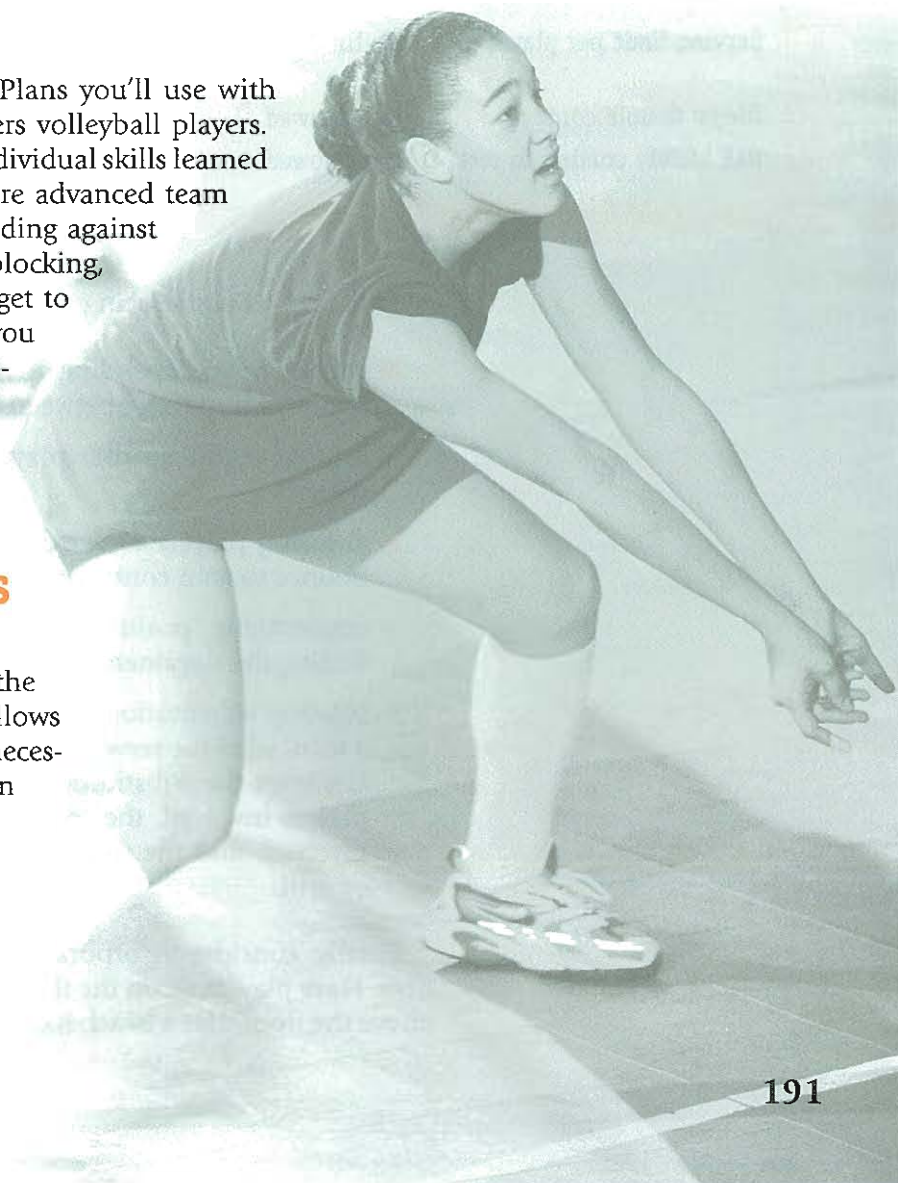


TABLE 12.1

Practice Modifications for 12- to 13-Year Olds

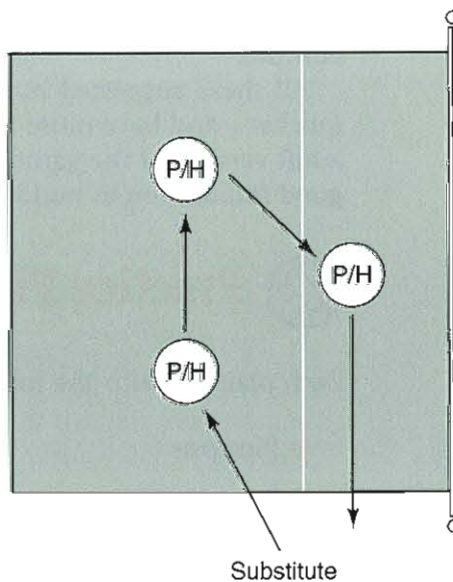
Factors	Regulation	Modifications
Ball size and weight	25.5" to 27" in circumference; 9 to 10 oz.	Oversized (#6) or light (#5)
Court size	30' × 30'	No modification
Net height	Men—7'11-5/8" Women—7'4-1/8"	7' to 7'4-1/8" (Use volleyball nets, ropes, or badminton nets.)
Number of players	6 v 6	3 v 3, 4 v 4, 6 v 6
Serving area	Anywhere behind the endline; must complete the serve before stepping or landing inside the court	No modification
Serving technique	Must "bat" the ball; can't toss it over the net	Use free-ball toss serves and underhand serves, as well as overhand serves.
Serving limit per player	No limit	If a server scores five points in a row, the serving team continues to serve but rotates one position to the next server.
Illegal double contacts	Not allowed	Allow some.
Ball visibly coming to rest	Not allowed	Allow some.

Other considerations in conducting your practices include

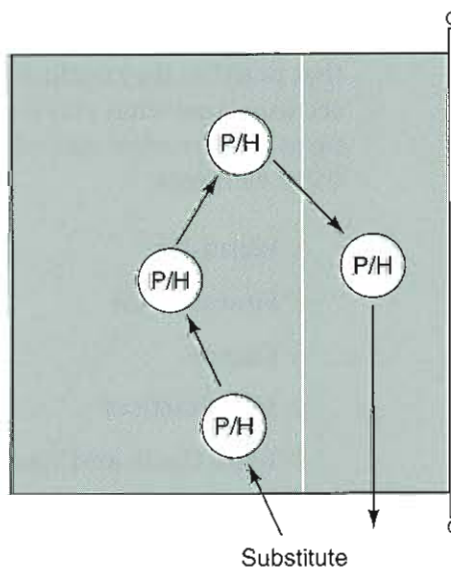
- ⊙ varying tasks, depending on the developmental needs of the player (e.g., adding a bounce in between hits);
- ⊙ mixing teams so that players play with and against various teammates;
- ⊙ allowing players to decide on some parameters (e.g., letting the ball bounce to gain control);
- ⊙ encouraging "positive" errors (e.g., hitting long rather than into the net, forcing the opponent to decide whether to play the ball); and
- ⊙ rotating substitutions automatically into games and drills. Whenever a team wins the serve, new players are rotated in. Figure 12.1, a through c, shows the substitution rotation for a three-player game with four players involved, the rotation for a four-player game with five players involved, and the rotation of two substitutes into a four-player game or drill.

Finally, consider incorporating "sitting volleyball" in one or more practices. Have players sit on the floor and play over a net that is two to three feet above the floor. Use a beach ball or another type of light ball. This helps kids

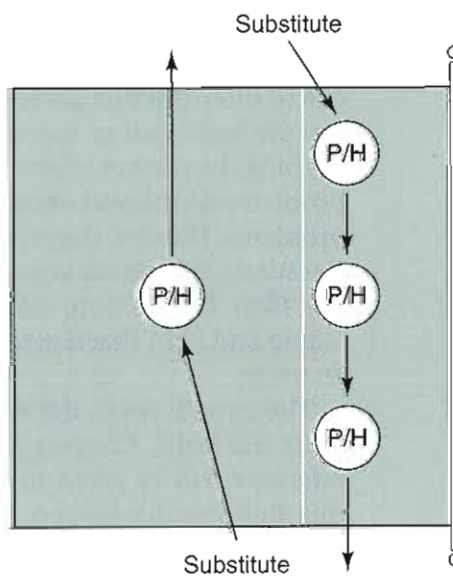
Figure 12.1 Substitution rotation for (a) three-player game with four players involved,



(b) four-player game with five players involved,



(c) four-player game or drill with two substitutes involved.



develop an appreciation for the difficulties experienced by athletes with disabilities.

All these suggested modifications will help your players develop skills quicker—and have more fun doing so—than if they were forced to play the adult version of the game. YMCA Winners practices will give your players a good foundation to build on as they grow.



Practice Plan Organization

Each plan contains the following sections:

- ⊙ Purpose
- ⊙ Equipment
- ⊙ Practice Plan

“Purpose” sections focus on what you want to teach your players during that practice; they outline your main “theme” for each practice. “Equipment” sections note what you’ll need on hand for that practice. “Practice Plan” sections outline what you will do during each practice session. Each consists of these elements:

- ⊙ Warm-Up
- ⊙ Fitness Circle
- ⊙ Games
- ⊙ Skill Practices
- ⊙ Team Circle and Wrap-Up
- ⊙ Variations

You’ll begin each session with about 10 minutes of warm-up activities. This will be followed by 5 minutes of a Fitness Circle, during which you’ll lead players through an activity and discussion that relate to their fitness. Then you’ll have your players play a modified volleyball game. You’ll look for your cue to interrupt that game—when players are having problems with carrying out the basic goal or aim of the game. At this point you’ll “freeze” the action, keeping the players where they are, and ask brief questions about the tactical problems the players encountered and what skills they need to “solve” those problems. (Review chapter 8 for more on interrupting a game and holding a question-and-answer session.) We provide discussion questions in each Practice Plan. In addition, we provide coaching points, when appropriate, with Game and Skill Practice sections to help you conduct each practice most effectively.

Then you’ll teach the skill the players need to acquire to successfully execute the tactic. Chapter 13 contains descriptions of all the skills, so a page reference will be given to guide you to the appropriate description. During this Skill Practice session, you’ll use the IDEA approach:

- I** Introduce the skill.
- D** Demonstrate the skill.
- E** Explain the skill.
- A** Attend to players practicing the skill.

Your introduction, demonstration, and explanation of a skill should take no more than 2 to 3 minutes; then you'll attend to players and provide teaching cues or further demonstration as necessary as they practice the skill according to the Practice Plan.

After the Skill Practices, you will usually have the players play another game or two to let them use the skills they just learned and to understand them in the context of a game.

The Practice Plan section continues with a Team Circle that focuses on character development. You will lead players through an activity and discussion about some aspect of volleyball that relates to one of the four core values—caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility. Following this, you'll wrap up the practice with a few summary comments and remind them of the next practice or game day.

















Most Practice Plans conclude with a Variations section to help you modify the Game and Skill Practice sections. These suggestions will help you keep practices fun and provide for players with varying skill levels.

A note about Fitness and Team Circles: These times are meant to be true discussions—not lectures where you're doing all the talking and your players are doing all the listening. Ask the questions provided, and wait for your players to respond. Don't immediately feed them the answers that we provide. These answers are meant simply to help you guide the discussion. Your role in Team Circles is as much to ask questions and get players to respond as it is to dole out information.







Following are Practice Plans for the 2 weeks of your preseason and then for the 10 weeks of your competitive season.


Key to Diagrams

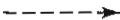
Player roles

	=	Passer
	=	Setter
	=	Hitter
	=	Server
	=	Digger
	=	Blocker
	=	Serve-receiver
	=	Tosser
	=	Target
	=	Retriever
	=	Attacker
	=	Hitter/setter
	=	Passer/tosser
	=	Passer/hitter
	=	Tosser/setter
	=	Digger/hitter

Player positions

	=	Right back
	=	Middle back
	=	Left back
	=	Right front
	=	Middle front
	=	Left front

 = Path of player

 = Path of ball

Note: We'll number the arrows for player and ball movement to show the play sequence.

Week 1, Practice 1

PURPOSE

To set up to attack and win the point, focusing on spiking and overhead passing.

Equipment

- Oversized (#6) or light (#5) balls—one ball for every two players

Warm-Up (10 minutes)

Begin each practice with 10 minutes of warm-up activities to get players loosened up and ready to go.

In threes, practice continuous overhead passing (volleying; see figure on page 84)). Each player should be able to volley a ball so that the ball stays within a particular space within reach of his or her partners. Work toward control so players don't have to run after the ball to retrieve it after each volley. Have players count how many good volleys they hit in a row.

Fitness Circle (5 minutes)

After the warm-up, gather the players and demonstrate the stretching protocol (see chapter 15 for stretches for the major muscle groups). Ask a team leader to lead stretches in later practices. After the team is finished stretching, lead the activity and discussion on the fitness concept. In this first practice your fitness topic will be more general, but in future practices you'll often discuss more specific concepts and issues such as safety, flexibility, healthy habits, and more.

Key Idea: General fitness

Gather the team into a group. "Do we play volleyball to get in shape or do we get in shape to play volleyball? Let's talk about both sides. What do you think?" Discuss for two or three minutes. "We should improve our fitness—cardiorespiratory, flexibility, and muscular strength and endurance—in order to play better volleyball.

By playing volleyball, we get lots of opportunities to improve our fitness. All season we'll be talking more about the different areas of fitness and ways to improve those abilities."

Week 1, Practice 1

Game 1 (10 minutes)

Following the Fitness Circle, get the kids to play a game. Follow most games with a time of questions and answers—with you asking the questions and your players providing the answers (about what the goal of the game was and what skills and tactics they needed to perform to succeed in the game). For many games, we provide diagrams or figures showing how the game is begun. We also often provide “coach’s points” for you to pass along to your players during the games.

Goal

To win the point using a spike.

Description

Play 4 v 4 (see figure on page 147). Players start in base position. Players use the *free-ball toss serve* (see page 267). Points won with a spike are worth two points.

Coach: What is the goal of this game?

Players: To win the point with a spike.

Coach: What has to happen on your side of the net before you can spike?

Players: The ball has to be set to the spiker.

Follow Game 1 with a Skill Practice. Use the IDEA approach: introduce, demonstrate, and explain a skill or tactic, then attend to your players as they practice that tactic. The question-and-answer session, in which your *players* tell you what skills and tactics they needed to be successful in the game, leads directly to the Skill Practice. We often provide coaching points with the Skill Practices; pass these points along to your players. We also provide “coach’s cues”—phrases to help your players focus on the task at hand—during many Skill Practices and Games.

Skill Practice 1 (10 minutes)

1. Introduce, demonstrate, and explain how to *spike* (see page 260).
2. Practice spiking from partner tosses.

Description

In partners, a tosser tosses a high ball for a hitter to spike the ball over the net (see figure on page 142). Allow players three trials, then switch roles.



COACH'S point

☞ Teach spiking 6 to 10 feet off the net, so the players can focus on the ball and their technique without worrying about the net.

COACH'S point

☞ Teach players rules regarding boundaries, net play, and serve rotation; see chapter 14.

☞ A free ball is any ball that the opponent is in position to return easily.

☞ Encourage players to set up and use more than one hit on a side.

☞ When teaching spiking, introduce the *standing spike*, which is a spike with no jump (see page 262). If players are ready they can jump and swing. It is important at this stage to encourage them to swing at the ball and not settle for sending over a free ball.

☞ Kids love to spike!

☞ Have your players call "Serve" before serving and roll the ball under the net between points.

COACH'S cues



Spike

- "Feet to ball!"
- "Face the net!"
- "Jump off both feet!" (if performing jumping spike)
- "Throw hands high!"
- "Swing fast!"

Skill Practice 2 (10 minutes)

1. Introduce, demonstrate, and explain how to *overhead-pass* (see page 263).
2. Practice overhead passing from tosses.

Description

In groups of three, a tosser tosses a high toss to a passer, who overhead-passes the ball to a target player (see figure on page 108). The passer should pass from both sides of the court. Allow players three trials, then rotate roles.

COACH'S cues



- "Fingerpads to contact!"
- "Volleyball-shaped hands!"
- "Bend legs!"
- "Extend arms and legs—fly like a superhero!"

Game 2 (10 minutes)

Goal

To win the point with a spike.

Description

Same as Game 1.

Week 1, Practice 1

Team Circle (5 minutes)

Conclude practice by gathering your players and leading them through the same stretches you led them through in the Fitness Circle. After stretching, form a Team Circle, and lead an activity and discussion that involves character development. These should not be lectures—you want your players' active participation in these discussions. Following the discussion, wrap up the practice with a few comments (see Wrap-Up next).

Key Idea: The four core values: caring, honesty, respect, responsibility

Gather the team into a single-file line. "Everyone turn to your right so the person to the side of you is now in front of you. Put your arms on their shoulders. We are going to walk forward, as a group, using first the right foot and then the left. We will walk slowly so take your time so we all move together. Get ready with your right foot, now step; get ready with your left foot, now step." Repeat for four steps. "Let go of your teammates. Did we have to work together to walk as a group? We did. All season we will need to work together, with everyone doing their part. We will talk about four values that all players should have—caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility. We need to understand and use these values or qualities every practice and game."

Wrap-Up

Make summary comments about practice, and remind players of the next practice.

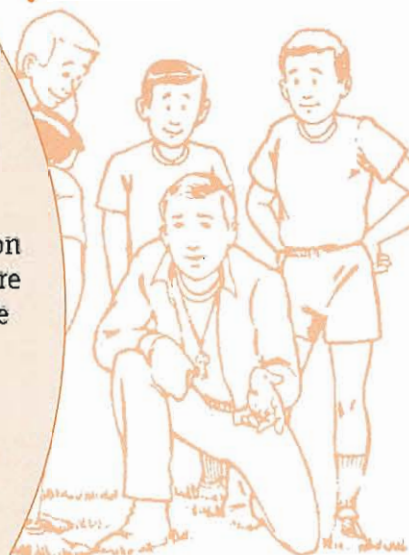
Variations

To simplify

Skill Practice—place the tosser on the same side of the net.

To challenge

Game—use an underhand serve.



Week 1, Practice 2

PURPOSE

To set up, focusing on forearm passing and serve-receiving.

Equipment

- Oversized (#6) or light (#5) balls—one ball for every two players
- Two cones

Warm-Up (10 minutes)

Spiking—In partners, players toss to themselves, then move to the ball, facing the net, and either swing or jump and swing, spiking the ball over the net (see figure on page 89). Partners retrieve balls and perform the same drill.

Fitness Circle (5 minutes)

Key Idea: General fitness

Gather the team into a group. “Last practice we talked about different kinds of fitness. Can you tell me what they were?” Listen to responses until they say *cardiorespiratory*, *flexibility*, and *muscular strength and endurance*. “What are some examples of physical activities to improve cardiorespiratory fitness?” Discuss examples (walking, running, swimming, and so on). “Muscular strength and endurance?” Discuss examples (jumping, passing, etc.). “Flexibility?” Discuss examples (leg and arm stretches). “By working hard at all the practices and outside of practice you can help attain the overall fitness you need for volleyball.”

Game 1 (10 minutes)

Goal

To pass waist-high or lower balls to setters.

Description

Play 4 v 4 (see figure on page 147). Players start in base position and use free-ball toss serves; alternate serves and rotate after each rally. No overhead passes are allowed on first hits.

Coach: What is the goal of the game?

Players: To pass low balls up to the setter.

Coach: How do you do that?

Players: With a forearm pass.



Week 1, Practice 2

Skill Practice 1 (10 minutes)

1. Introduce, demonstrate, and explain how to do a *forearm pass* (see page 265).
2. Practice forearm passing from partner tosses.

Description

In teams of three, a tosser tosses the ball to a passer, who forearm-passes to a target player. The target player returns balls to the tosser (see figure at bottom of page 146). Allow players three to five trials, then rotate roles.



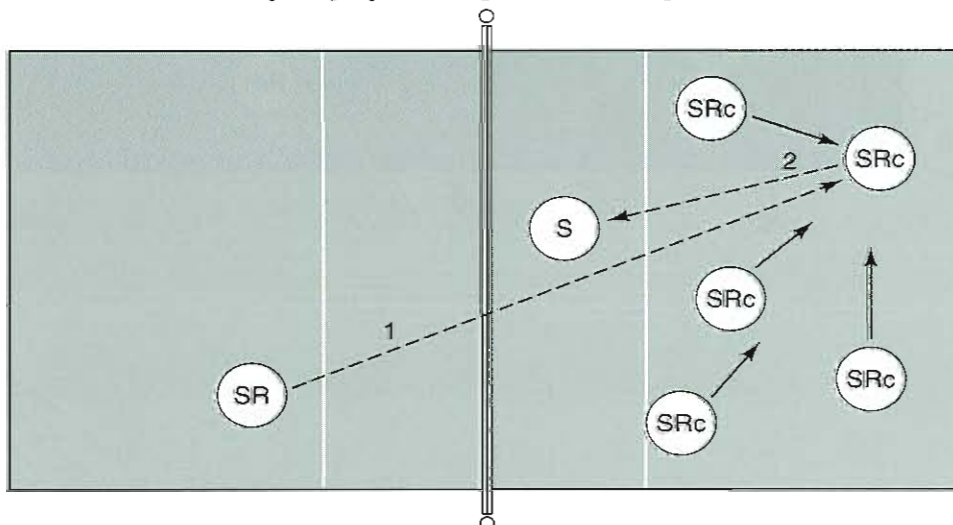
- "Medium posture!"
- "Feet to the ball!"
- "Flat platform!"
- "Belly button to the target!"

Skill Practice 2 (10 minutes)

1. Introduce, demonstrate, and explain how to use a *five-player serve-receive* (see page 250).
2. Practice five-player serve-receives.

Description

In a group of seven, a server hits a modified underhand serve to any of the five serve-receivers. One of the serve-receivers receives the serve by forearm-passing to the setter at the net, who opens up and calls "Here!" Allow four to six trials, then rotate roles. The serve-receivers that do not play the ball should make a two-step movement toward the ball and be ready to call the ball out if necessary. Have servers serve out of bounds occasionally so players can practice calling "Out!"



Week 1, Practice 2 (cont'd)



☞ Use extra players as additional servers.

☞ When receiving serve, players should keep the ball in front of them and between them and the target.

☞ Players need to "beat the ball," getting quickly into position to receive.

☞ Without good serve-receives, no offensive system can be put into action.

☞ Players can't touch the net; instruct them to raise their hand if they do.

COACH'S cues



Forearm pass

"Medium posture!"

"Feet to the ball!"

"Flat platform!"

"Belly button to the target!"

"Call 'Mine!'"

Off-the-ball

"Call ball 'good' or 'out.'"

"Open up!"

"Support!"

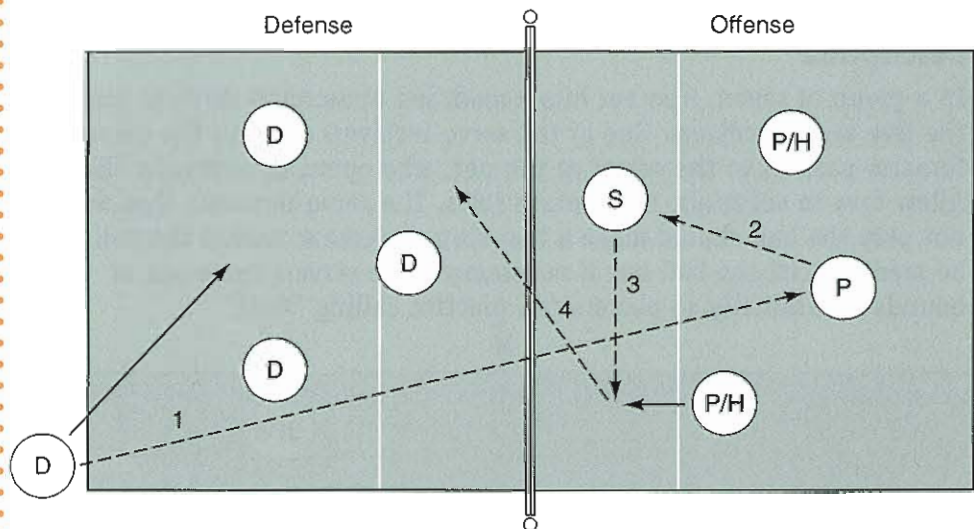
Game 2 (10 minutes)

Goal

To use a three-player serve-serve in game play.

Description

Play 4 v 4. Use a three-player serve-serve. Use overhand serves. Award a bonus point for the receiving team for successful pass-set-hit combinations off the serve. Rotate players so that every player has a chance to be on the four-person team and be a part of the three-player serve-serve.



Week 1, Practice 2

Team Circle (5 minutes)

Key Idea: Respect

Gather the team into a circle near two cones about 10 feet apart. "What should you do if your opponents are talking trash, complaining to the officials, and doing things that are not fair?" Listen to their responses. "Stand at this cone if you should continue to play your game and be polite. Stand at this cone if you should get back at the other team by playing the same way and complain to the officials." All players should vote. Ask players why they voted the way they did. Have players at the "complaining" cone think of other options instead of complaining. "You should not change the way you play your game or stop showing respect to your opponents or the officials. It's important to show respect even if the other team is not."

Wrap-Up

Make summary comments about practice, and remind players of the next practice.



Variations

To simplify

Skill Practice—start with a free-ball toss.

To challenge


- Skill Practice—serve to open spaces to force player movement.
- Game—use an underhand serve.

Week 2, Practice 1

PURPOSE

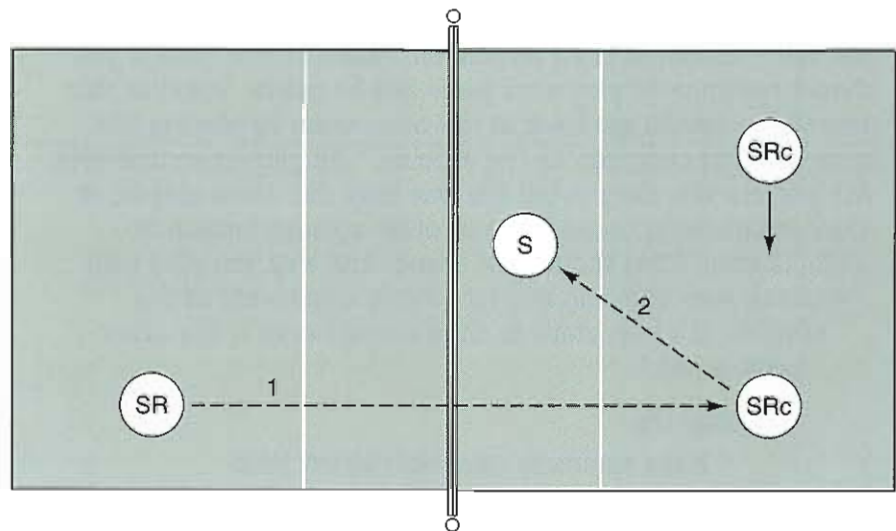
To win the point, focusing on hitting down-the-line and cross-court.

Equipment

 Oversized (#6) or light (#5) balls—one ball for every two players

Warm-Up (10 minutes)

In groups of four, a server hits a modified underhand serve to either of the two serve-receivers. One of the serve-receivers receives the serve by forearm-passing to the setter, who opens up and calls “Here!” Allow four to six trials, then rotate roles. The serve-receiver that does not play the ball should make a two-step movement toward the ball and be ready to call the ball out if necessary. Have servers serve out of bounds occasionally so players can practice calling “Out!”



Fitness Circle (5 minutes)

Key Idea: Overload principle

Gather the team into a group. “Who can tell me what *overload* means?” Listen to their responses. “If your bodies do a little bit more work than they have done before, they will adapt and be able to do even more. We’re talking about small amounts of work or activity—too much harms your body and causes injuries. Your fitness will improve, and you’ll be able to do more activity in practice before getting too tired. Let’s use the acronym F-I-T—what do you think it stands for?” Listen to their responses. “*F* stands for *frequency* or how often you practice the activity; *I* stands for *intensity* or how hard you practice or play; and *T* stands for *time* or how long you practice the activity. FIT is a good way to remember how to use the overload principle to improve our fitness.”

Week 2, Practice 1

Game 1 (10 minutes)

Goal

To hit to the open court with a spike.

Description

Play 4 v 4 (see figure on page 147). Players start in base position and use free-ball toss serves. Award a bonus point for spikes that hit the floor before being touched by the defending team.

Coach: What is the goal of the game?

Players: To hit spikes to the open court.

Coach: What different angles must you be able to hit to reach open court?

Players: Cross-court and down-the-line.

Coach: What do you need to do to hit good down-the-line or cross-court spikes?

Players: Good technique, quick decision making.

Skill Practice (20 minutes)

Practice spiking down-the-line and cross-court.

Description

In teams of three, a tosser slaps the ball, prompting a hitter to transition off the net as the tosser tosses a high-outside ball for the hitter to spike cross-court. Another player retrieves the balls and returns them to the tosser (see figure on page 150). Allow players three trials, then rotate roles. Repeat the practice, hitting down-the-line. Allow players three to five trials, then rotate roles.

COACH'S cues



"Transition off the net!"

"Turn to see your court!"

"Feet to the ball!"


"Accelerate to the jump!"


"Jump off both feet!"


"Throw your hands high!"


"Swing fast!" (Contact ball at a point high and in front.)





 A cross-court shot is directed at an angle from one end of the offensive team's side of the net to the opposite sideline of the defensive team's court.

 A line shot is a ball hit down the opponent's line on the side of the court from which the spiker is attacking.

 Transition is establishing a new position.

 Be sure the toss is off the net, because hitters will be much more successful.

 Shot selection (standing spike, spike, or tip) and shot placement (cross-court or line shot) are important strategies for hitters to understand and practice.

 Call "Ball!" if a ball is rolling in the path of game play.

Week 2, Practice 1 (cont'd)

Game 2 (10 minutes)

Goal

To use all cross-court spikes and then all down-the-line spikes during game play.

Description

Play 4 v 4 (see figure on page 202). Players start in base position and use underhand serves. One team must hit all cross-court spikes and the other team all down-the-line spikes in order to win the point. Rotate serves after each point. Switch after five minutes.



Team Circle (5 minutes)

Key Idea: Respect

Gather the team into a group. "Remember the scenario I talked about in the last practice? The opponent who wasn't playing fair? If you play against a team that does those types of things, how should you handle the end of the game? Stand at this cone if you think you should still go to every player and the coach to shake hands. Stand at this cone if you think you should just walk away." Ask players why they voted as they did. Then separate the team into two groups. Practice an end of the game line-up for both pleasant and fair opponents and for rude opponents. "You should always show your opponents respect by shaking hands at the end of the game, no matter what happens during the game."

Wrap-Up

Make summary comments about practice, and remind players of the next practice.

Variations

To simplify

- Skill Practice—focus only on cross-court hits.
- Game—serve roundhouse.

To challenge

Skill Practice—practice from both the left and right sides of the court.

Week 2, Practice 2

Warm-Up (10 minutes)

In teams of three, a tosser slaps the ball, prompting a hitter to transition off the net as the tosser tosses a high-outside ball for the hitter to spike cross-court. Another player retrieves the balls and returns them to the tosser (see figure on page 150). Allow players three trials, then rotate roles. Repeat the practice, hitting down-the-line. Allow players three to five trials, then rotate roles.

Fitness Circle (5 minutes)

Key Idea: Overload principle

Gather the team into a group. "What does FIT stand for and when do we use it?" Listen to their responses. Discuss frequency, intensity, and time. "I want you to choose a letter of FIT and demonstrate it." If frequency is chosen, increase repetitions. If intensity, they should try harder or faster. If time, lengthen amount. Encourage volleyball-related activities, such as spiking and digging. "You need to practice skills and running outside of practice and participate in other physical activities and exercise. This will give your body enough workload to overload and improve your fitness levels or abilities."

Game 1 (10 minutes)

Goal

To focus on transitioning to attack, using three contacts per team.

Description

Play 4 v 4 (see figure on page 147). Players start in base position and use an underhand serve. Each team must have three contacts to be eligible to win a point. Award a bonus point to teams when they successfully execute a pass-set-hit combination.

PURPOSE

To set up, focusing on high-outside sets.

Equipment



Oversized (#6) or light (#5) balls—one ball for every two players



Coach: What is the goal of the game?

Players: To transition to attack.

Coach: What's the next hit after the forearm pass?

Players: Set.


Coach: What is the role of the setter in the game?


Players: To set the ball to the hitter.


Coach: How do you do that?

Players: Use fingerpads, volleyball-shaped hands, hands above forehead, deflect ball.



 The setter is the quarterback of the team. The second ball is always the setter's ball. If the setter cannot play that ball, he or she should call "Help!"

 The ball should be set between the attacker and the net, but the ball should be off the net.

 The tougher the play, the higher the pass. It's better to set too high than too low.

 Common setting errors include the following:

- Stabbing at the ball instead of letting the ball come to the hands
- Pointing thumbs at the ball instead of at the eyes
- Making contact too far from the head to allow the elbow "levers" to work
- Making contact too low or too far out front, relative to the head

 Have players call their own illegal hits.

Skill Practice (20 minutes)

1. Introduce, demonstrate, and explain how to *set* (see page 263).
2. Practice setting high-outside sets.

Description

In teams of three, a tosser tosses a high ball for a setter to set the ball high and outside to a target player, who catches the ball and bounce-passes it back to the tosser (see figure on page 121). Allow each player three to five trials, then rotate roles.

COACH'S cues



"Hands high at your forehead!"

"Volleyball-shaped hands!"

"Square to target!"

"Finish like a superhero—extend arms and legs!"

Game 2 (10 minutes)

Goal

To focus on setting high-outside set-hit combinations.

Description

Play 4 v 4 (see figure on page 202). Players start in base position and use an underhand or overhand serve. Award a bonus point for high-outside set-hit combinations.

Week 2, Practice 2

Team Circle (5 minutes)

Key Idea: Responsibility

Gather the team into a group. "What should be on your 'mental list' before you come to every practice?" Listen to responses and then discuss bringing proper equipment (a water bottle, uniform); being mentally prepared to work hard and learn new ideas; being well rested; and having eaten well and drunk water during the day. "Each player is responsible for preparing for each practice before practice starts. It's your responsibility to the team to come to practice prepared. Good players are prepared for all practices and games."

Wrap-Up

Make summary comments about practice, and remind players of the next practice.



Variations

To simplify

Game—use an underhand serve.

To challenge

Skill Practice—vary the toss so that the setter has to move one or two steps.

Week 3

PURPOSE

To win the point, focusing on overhand serving to targets.

Equipment

- Oversized (#6) or light (#5) balls—one ball for every two players
- Two cones

Warm-Up (10 minutes)

In teams of three, a tosser tosses a high ball for a setter to set the ball high and outside to a target player, who catches the ball and bounce-passes it back to the tosser (see figure on page 121). Allow each player three to five trials, then rotate roles.

Fitness Circle (5 minutes)

Key Idea: Overload principle

Gather the team into a group. “What does FIT stand for, and when do we use it?” Listen to their responses. Have a review discussion. “When we think about the second area of FIT, what is it? *Intensity* or how hard you practice the activity. Raise your hand if you think that the only way to increase the intensity of an activity or make it harder is to go faster.” Encourage all players to vote. “You can overload the work your body is doing by going faster. Every time you run a greater distance or faster, your body will adapt and you’ll be able to do more next time.”

Game 1 (10 minutes)

Goal

To focus on serving overhand to targets.

Description

Play 4 v 4 (see figure on page 147). Players start in base position and initiate plays with an overhand serve. Teams earn a bonus point for serves to the back two corners of the court.

Coach: What is the goal of the game?

Players: To get in a good overhand serve to begin a point.

Coach: Why should you learn an overhand serve?

Players: It’s harder to receive than an underhand or a roundhouse serve.



Week 3

Skill Practice (20 minutes)

1. Introduce, demonstrate, and explain the *overhand serve* (see page 269).
2. Practice serving overhand.

Description

In partners, practice overhand serves from the endline. Players work at serving cross-court and down-the-line (see figure at bottom of page 171). Challenge players to get two serves in a row cross-court or down-the-line. Players should attempt to serve to areas 1 and 5 and move forward into a playing position.

COACH'S cues



Overhand serve

- “Tee up the ball!”
- “Lift the ball!”
- “Firm contact!”
- “Finish toward the top of the net!”

Serve placement

- “Feet position!” (staggered, nondominant foot forward)
- “Follow through!”
- “Stand closer to the sideline!” (serving cross-court)
- “Stand away from the sideline!” (serving down-the-line)

Game 2 (10 minutes)

Goal

To focus on serving overhand to targets.

Description

Play 4 v 4 (see figure on page 202). Players start in base position and use overhand serves. The server must call out a target prior to serving (cross-court or down-the-line). Award a bonus point for serves that hit their target area.

COACH'S point



☞ Encourage players to move forward following their serves and assume a defensive position.

☞ “Freeze” play and review players’ positions and actions when this is helpful in teaching certain points.



Team Circle (5 minutes)

Key Idea: Honesty

Gather the team into a group near two cones about 10 feet apart. Identify three honesty situations that are important for your team to practice. These could be an illegal hit, touching the net, or another rule infraction. First, ask players how they would respond, and then discuss how you would prefer them to respond. "Being honest about a play during the game and in practice is an important part of the game. Good players are honest even when an official, coach, or opponent didn't see it happen."

Wrap-Up

Make summary comments about practice, and remind players of the first game.

Variations

To simplify

Game—give a second chance on serves.

To challenge

Skill Practice—place chairs or some visual target (pizza boxes, you as the coach, or the like) as targets for players to aim for—it makes a great incentive!

Week 4

Warm-Up (10 minutes)

In partners, practice overhand serves from the endline. Players work at serving cross-court and down-the-line (see figure at bottom of page 171). Challenge players to get two serves in a row cross-court or down-the-line. Players should attempt to serve to areas 1 and 5 and move into the court following their serves.

Fitness Circle (5 minutes)

Key Idea: Flexibility

Gather the team into a group. "It's important to stretch our muscles. What area of fitness does that improve? Right: flexibility. It's also important to stretch muscles that have been used the most in a sport or activity. In volleyball, what do we use the most? Our legs and arms. I am going to show you the proper way to stretch the different muscles in your legs and arms." Choose stretches that include quadriceps (front of thigh), hamstrings (back of thigh), calves/Achilles tendon (back of the lower leg and ankle), arms, and deltoids (shoulders). Remind players to get in position and hold their stretch, not to bounce, and they shouldn't feel pain.

Game 1 (10 minutes)

Goal

To save the ball from hitting the floor.

Description

Play 4 v 4 (see figure on page 181). Players start in base position and begin plays with a standing spike to a back-row player. Award a bonus point when back-row players successfully pass the ball to a teammate.

Coach: What is the goal of the game?

Players: To save the ball from hitting the floor.

Coach: What do we call it when you prevent a ball that was hit to the floor from coming in contact with the floor?

Players: A dig.

Coach: What is the role of back-row players?

Players: Dig the ball, keep the ball in play, save the ball, pass to setter if possible.

PURPOSE

To defend space against an attack, focusing on digging.

Equipment

- Oversized (#6) or light (#5) balls—one ball for every two players



Skill Practice (20 minutes)

1. Introduce, demonstrate, and explain how to *dig* (see page 273).
2. Practice digging.

Description

In teams of three, a hitter hits a standing, off-speed spike cross-court across the net to a digger who digs the ball to a target player (see figure on page 178). Allow players three or four trials, then rotate roles. Repeat digging down-the-line.

COACH'S cues



"Low posture!"

"Dig to the center of the court!"

Game 2 (10 minutes)

Goal

To use effective digs in defending against attacks.

Description

Same as Game 1.



☞ The goal for the defense is to keep the ball from touching the floor.

☞ Good defenders are intense and determined.

☞ Diggers should stay on their feet as long as possible and use both hands and arms if possible.

☞ Diggers should keep the ball between themselves and the center of the court.

Week 4

Team Circle (5 minutes)

Key Idea: Respect

Gather the team into two groups. "Think about Olympic teams. What ways do they show respect for their opponents?" Discuss with players. Lead discussion to talking about saying positive comments such as "good game" and "nice play today" along with a hand shake. "Let's say this is the end of a game. Your two groups are Olympic teams that played against each other. Show me what you do at the end of the game." Have players form a hand-shake line and congratulate each other. "When you say positive comments to your opponents at the end of a game in addition to shaking or slapping hands, it shows you respect your opponents. Good professional players show they respect opponents."

Wrap-Up

Make summary comments about practice, and remind players of the next game.




Week 5

PURPOSE

To defend space, focusing on free-ball defense.

Equipment

-  Oversized (#6) or light (#5) balls—one ball for every two players

Warm-Up (10 minutes)

In partners, practice overhand serves from the endline. Players work at serving cross-court and down-the-line (see figure at bottom of page 171). Challenge players to get two serves in a row cross-court or down-the-line. Players should attempt to serve to areas 1 and 5 and move into the court following their serves.

Fitness Circle (5 minutes)

Key Idea: Flexibility

“Your muscles need to be stretched every day to prevent injuries. Lie down on your back with one leg up in the air. Stretch your knee toward your face and hold it there for 10 counts. Now let’s try the stretch again. . . . Repeat the stretch again, holding the stretch now to 15 counts and stretching your leg a bit further. You should not stretch so far that you hurt yourself, lock your knee, or feel pain. Just stretch until you feel a gentle pull. Stretching helps to prevent injuries and improves your flexibility, an important part of fitness.”

Game 1 (10 minutes)

Goal

To play good free-ball defense.

Description

Play 4 v 4 (see figure on page 147). Players start in base position and initiate plays with a high underhand toss. Award a bonus point when the receiving team attacks off a free ball.

Week 5

Coach: What is the goal of the game?

Players: To play good free-ball defense and transition to attack.

Coach: What do you do when a free ball comes over the net?

Players: Move to play the ball in my area, go to base position.

Coach: What do setters do when the ball is on their side of the court?

Players: Open up.

Coach: What do setters do if they can't get to the ball?

Players: Call "Help!"



Skill Practice (20 minutes)

1. Introduce, demonstrate, and explain how to use a *free-ball alignment* to defend against a free ball (see page 255).
2. Practice free-ball alignment.

Description

Play a 4 v 4 game (see figure on page 175). Team A's passer/tosser slaps the ball, prompting teams to be ready, and tosses a high ball to team B. Team B's setter, hitter, and passers call "Free!" and make appropriate off-the-ball movements. The setter opens up and calls "Here!" The hitter prepares to receive a set. The two passers balance the court. Team B attempts a pass-set-hit and plays the rally out. Teams alternate free-ball tosses.



"Call 'Free!'"
"Transition!"
"Go to base position!"
"Open up!"

Game 2 (10 minutes)

Goal

To play good free-ball defense.

Description

Play 4 v 4. Same as Game 1.



- ☞ Communication is critical to good free-ball defense. "Base," "free ball," "open up," and "transition" are part of the universal language of the game.
- ☞ Instruct players to call the score out loud—their score and the opponent's score.
- ☞ Consistent serving means that players are able to place serves into opponent's court with confidence and control 80 percent of the time.

Team Circle (5 minutes)

Key Idea: Responsibility

Gather the team into two groups. Give one group a ball and have them pass the ball around the group. Ask one player to try to distract the rest of the group. Continue this for one minute. Bring the team together as a group. "How should you respond to someone who is trying to distract you?" Discuss their responses. "If you're at practice and talk to your teammates or distract other players, you're interrupting the practice. It's your responsibility to the team to pay attention at practices and games so you and your teammates can learn and play your best."

Wrap-Up

Make summary comments about practice, and remind players of the next game.



Variations

To simplify

Skill Practice—start with a free-ball toss right to the players.

To challenge

Skill Practice—toss the free ball to open spaces to force players to move.

Week 6

Warm-Up (10 minutes)

In teams of three, a hitter hits a standing, off-speed spike cross-court across the net to a digger who digs the ball to a target player (see figure on page 178). Allow players three or four trials, then rotate roles. Repeat, digging down-the-line.

Fitness Circle (5 minutes)

Key Idea: Muscular strength and endurance

Gather the team into a group. Have the players do a series of push-ups or bent-leg situps, completing as many as they reasonably can. When they are finished, ask them what area or component of fitness they were working on.

Listen to their responses. "Muscular endurance. When you work your muscles, you're improving your endurance."

Game 1 (10 minutes)

Goal

To pursue and save balls from errant passes.


Description

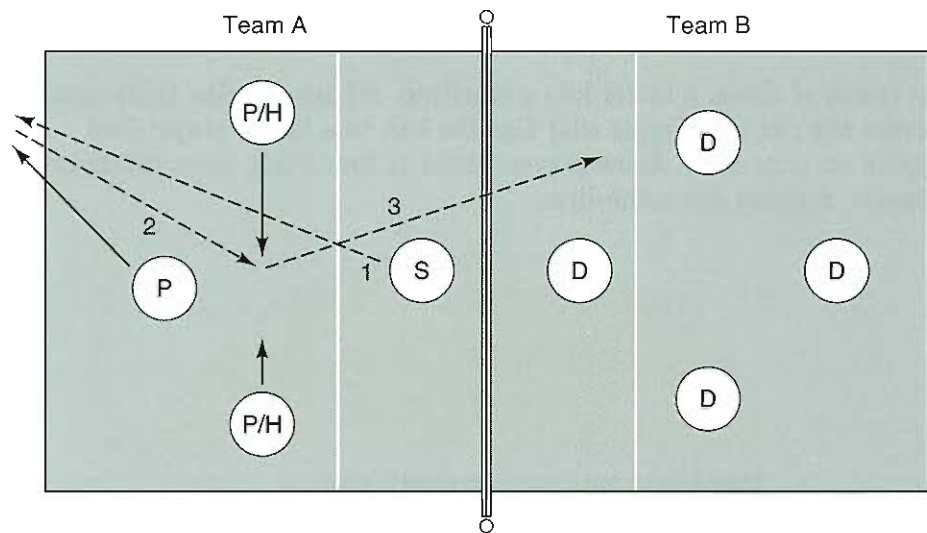
Play 4 v 4. Players start in base position. The setter for team A begins play by hitting an errant underhand serve off the back end of team A's court. Team A's passers pursue the ball and attempt to save it. Play continues after the save.

PURPOSE

To defend space against an attack, focusing on pursuing and saving.

Equipment

-  Oversized (#6) or light (#5) balls—one ball for every two players



Coach: What is the goal of the game?

Players: To pursue and save errant balls.

Coach: Can you play a ball that is not in the court but in the air?

Players: Yes.

Coach: What do you do when your teammate passes the ball in "playable" territory but off the court?

Players: Chase it.

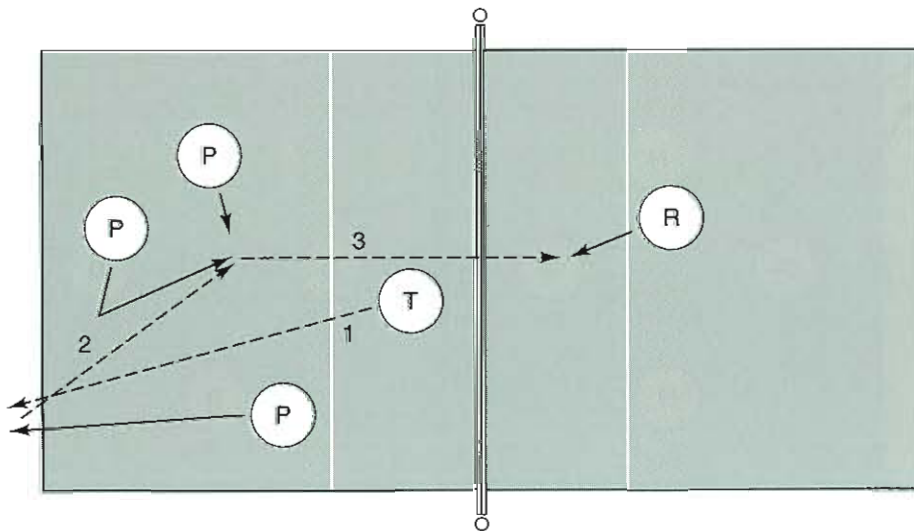
Skill Practice (20 minutes)

1. Introduce, demonstrate, and explain how to *pursue and save* (see page 276).
2. Practice pursuing and saving.

Description

In teams of four, a tosser prompts the action by slapping the ball, then tosses a high, playable ball out of bounds for passers to pursue and save. Use two hits to send ball over the net, and place a player or two to retrieve balls on the other side of the net. Conduct three trials to pursue and save the ball in each position, then rotate roles.

Week 6



COACH'S cues



Individual

- "Medium posture!"
- "Run toward the ball!"
- "Run with your hands apart!"
- "Reverse forearm-pass!"
- "Keep your back to the court!"
- "Platform parallel to ground!"
- "High, playable ball!"

Team

- "Move as a system!"
- "The contact player is the point!"
- "All players shift and support!"

Game 2 (10 minutes)

Goal

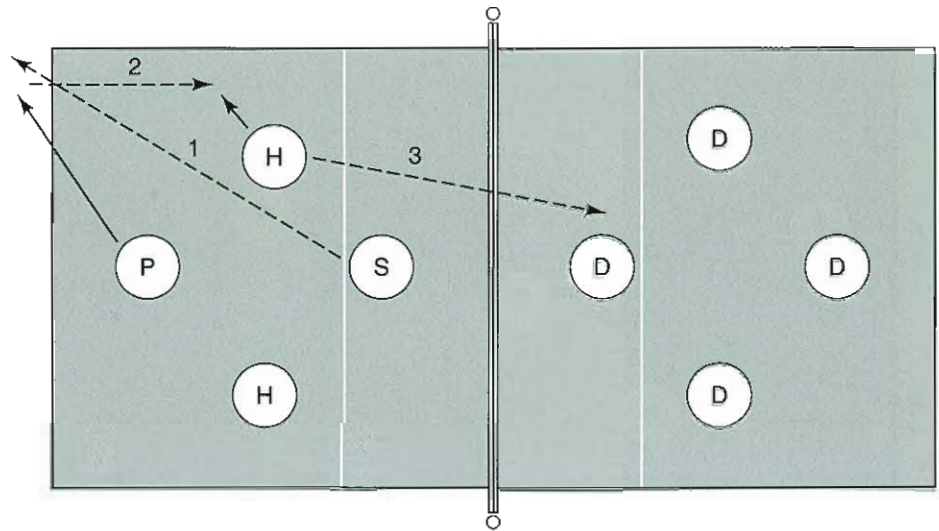
To pursue and save balls in a game.

Description

Play 4 v 4. Players start in base position with the setter initiating play with a high, playable underhand serve out of bounds for passers to pursue. The team uses two remaining hits to send the ball over the net and continue the rally. Teams alternate tossing to their own teammates to start play. Teams earn a point when they win the rally.



- ☞ Encourage players that they can pursue and save any ball.
- ☞ "Base," "free ball," "open up," and "transition" are part of the universal language of the game.
- ☞ The whole gym is in play until the ball lands out of bounds.



Team Circle (5 minutes)

Key Idea: Caring

Gather the team and separate them into two groups, each with a ball. "The players in each group should pass the ball to each other. As you pass the ball, I want everybody to be saying something good about the pass and the people passing. I should be hearing constant talk." Encourage excitement about the activity by clapping and providing players with your positive comments. "We will keep the passing going until everyone has had two or three turns passing. Let me know when you're done." Wait for players to signal that they are finished. "What are some of the positive comments that you heard? Saying positive comments shows you care."

Wrap-Up

Make summary comments about practice, and remind players of the next game.

Variations

To simplify

- Skill Practice—start with easy tosses out of bounds, then increase the challenge.
- Game—in the 4 v 4 games simply play one-point games.

Week 7

Warm-Up (10 minutes)

In partners, practice overhand serves from the endline. Players work at serving cross-court and down-the-line. Challenge players to get two serves in a row cross-court or down-the-line (see figure at bottom of page 171). Players should attempt to serve to areas 1 and 5 and move into the court following their serves.

Fitness Circle (5 minutes)

Key Idea: Cardiorespiratory fitness

Gather the team into a circle. "I want everyone to run across the court and back. Before you go, describe how your lungs feel and how fast your breathing rate is. How tired is your body?" Listen to their responses. "When you're done running, I'll ask you the same question and see if the answers are faster or slower or more tired than before. Ready? Go!" Repeat the question. Discuss their responses. "To strengthen your heart and lungs, you need to run and make your heart beat faster and breathe faster. You need to feel a little tired while running to improve your cardiorespiratory fitness. Checking how you feel lets you know if you are running fast enough to improve the strength of your lungs and heart."

Game 1 (10 minutes)

Goal

To use effective digs in defending against attacks.


Description

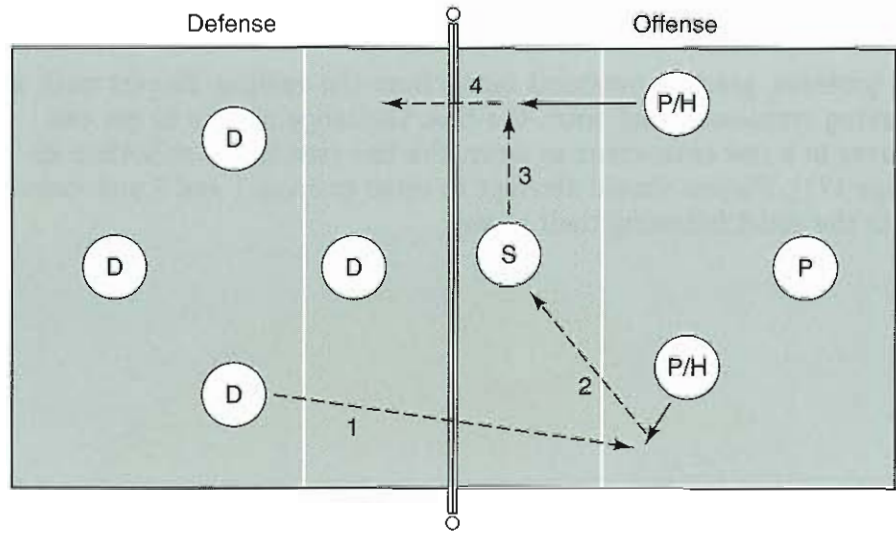
Play 4 v 4. Players start in base position and begin plays with a setter on one team hitting a standing spike to one of the other team's passers. Award a bonus point for dig-set-spike combinations.

PURPOSE

To defend space against an attack, focusing on digging.

Equipment

-  Oversized (#6) or light (#5) balls—one ball for every two players



Coach: What is the goal of the game?

Players: To make good digs.

Coach: What is the role of back-row players?

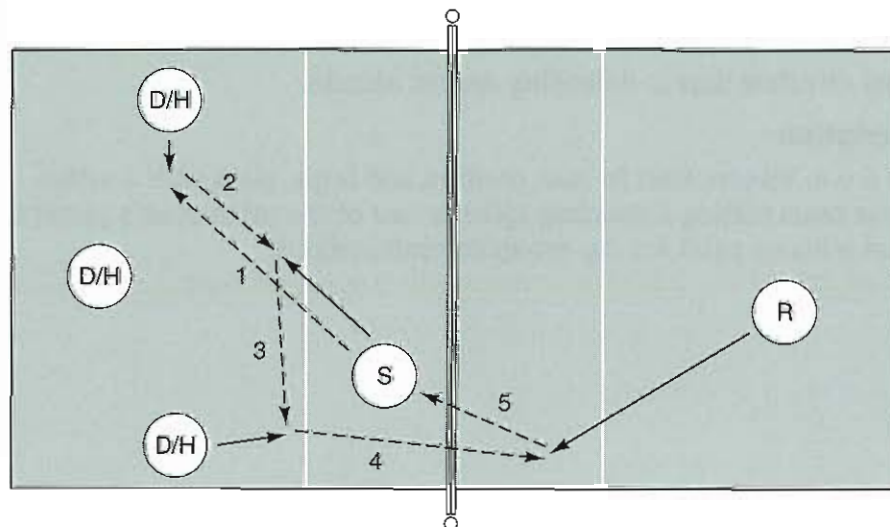
Players: Dig the ball, keep the ball in play, save the ball, pass to setter if possible, then get ready to become a hitter.

Skill Practice (20 minutes)

Practice digging.

Description

In teams of four, a setter hits a standing, off-speed spike cross-court to one of three digger/hitters, one of whom digs the ball to the center of the court, where the setter sets the ball for one of the other players to attack. Another player retrieves the ball. After three or four trials, players rotate roles.



Week 7

COACH'S cues



"Low posture!"
"Dig to the center of the court!"

Game 2 (10 minutes)

Goal

To use effective digs and transition to attack.

Description

Same as Game 1.

COACH'S point



☞ Good defense begins with a "nothin' gets by me" attitude.

☞ Have servers call the score out loud—their team's score and the opponent's score.

Team Circle (5 minutes)

Key Idea: Respect

Gather the team into groups of three. Have one player set the ball close to the net for a hitter who might have to touch the net while playing the ball; the third player is the official. Play for one minute and rotate players so everyone gets a chance to be the official. "How did it feel to be the official?" Discuss responses and the importance of showing respect. "It can be difficult to be an official. It involves quite a few skills. Remember that it's a tough job, and always show respect for officials."

Wrap-Up

Make summary comments about practice, and remind players of the next game.




Week 8

PURPOSE

To attack as a team, transitioning from serve-receiving.

Equipment

-  Oversized (#6) or light (#5) balls—one ball for every two players

Warm-Up (10 minutes)

In teams of four, a setter hits a standing, off-speed spike cross-court to one of three digger/hitters, one of whom digs the ball to the center of the court, where the setter sets the ball for one of the other players to attack. Another player retrieves the balls (see figure at bottom of page 224). After three or four trials, players rotate roles.

Fitness Circle (5 minutes)

Key Idea: Cardiorespiratory fitness

Gather the team into a group. Have the players run for two minutes with a partner without stopping. “During our run I want you to be able to run for the whole two minutes. Who remembers what a talk test is?” Listen to their responses. “You can use a talk test to pace yourself so you don’t run too fast and get too tired before the two minutes are up. Say the words ‘over the net’ to your partner. If you can say them without being out of breath, keep the same pace; if you’re out of breath, slow down a little. Start running.” Time for two minutes and gather team as a group. “Using a talk test helps you pace yourself. Pacing yourself when you run helps to improve your cardiorespiratory fitness.”

Game 1 (10 minutes)

Goal

To use a five-player serve-receive in game play and transitions to attack.

Description

Play 4 v 4 (see figure on page 202). Use a three-player serve-receive. Use overhand serves. Award a bonus point for the receiving team for successful pass-set-hit combinations off the serve. Rotate players so that every player has a chance to be on the four-person team and be a part of the three-player serve-receive.

Week 8

Coach: What is the goal of the game?

Players: To use a five-player serve-receive and transition to attack.

Coach: What do you do when a serve comes over the net?

Players: Forearm-pass to the setter.

Coach: What do you do when two players go for the same serve?

Players: Call ball, help each other out, communicate.

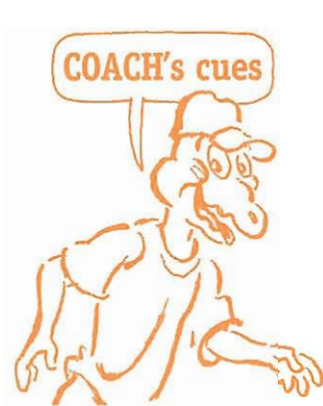


Skill Practice (20 minutes)

Practice three-player serve-receives, focusing on transitioning to attack.

Description

A server hits an overhand serve to any of the three serve-receivers. One of the serve-receivers receives the serve by forearm-passing to the setter, and then the front-row serve-receivers prepare to become hitters. The setter, who has opened up and called "Here!" sets the ball to one of the hitters, who spikes or tips the ball over the net (see figure on page 202). Allow two trials at each receiving position, then switch roles.



Forearm pass

- "Medium posture!"
- "Feet to the ball!"
- "Flat platform!"
- "Belly button to the target!"
- "Call 'Mine!'"

Off-the-ball

- "Call ball 'good' or 'out.'"
- "Open up!"
- "Support!"

Game 2 (10 minutes)

Goal

To use a five-player serve-receive and transition to attack in game play.

Description

Same as Game 1.



- Find the small successes with difficult Skill Practices. Serve-receive practice is hard work.
- Have players call balls "out" or "good" for teammates.

Team Circle (5 minutes)

Key Idea: Caring

Choose two players to demonstrate. Tell them they will role play a situation in which one player is setting a ball for the other. The ball goes over the hitter's head; the hitter gets upset and yells at the teammate. Have them act out the situation with your assistance. "How would you feel if someone yelled at you for a bad set?" Listen to their responses. "How about if you made a bad set but heard some encouraging words like 'It's okay. Maybe next time?'" Listen to their responses and discuss. "You show that you respect your teammates by not yelling at them for a mistake and encouraging them to make a better play the next time they have a chance."

Wrap-Up

Make summary comments about practice, and remind players of the next game.



Variations

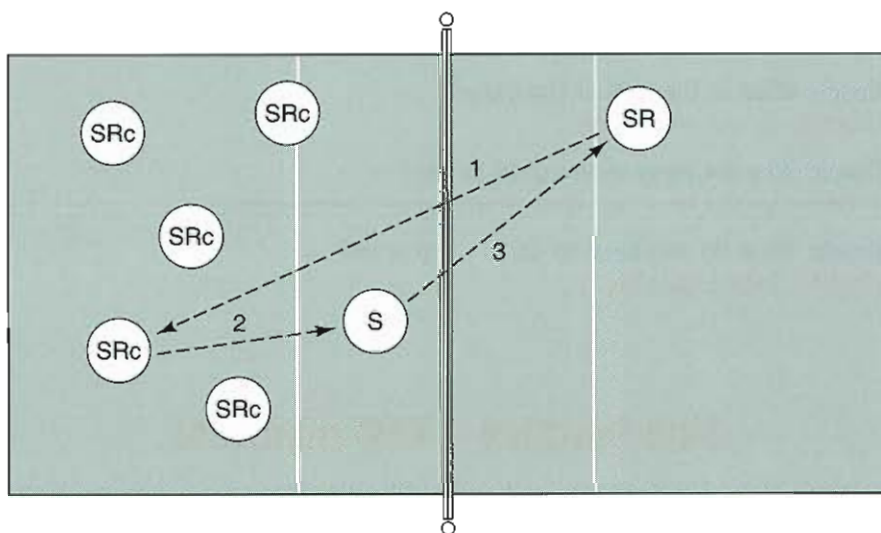
To simplify

Skill Practice—start with a free-ball toss or an underhand serve, then move to an overhand serve.

Week 9

Warm-Up (10 minutes)

A server hits a modified overhand serve to any of the five serve-receivers. One of the serve-receivers receives the serve by forearm-passing to the setter, who opens up and calls "Here!" and catches the ball and bounce-passes it back to the server. Allow two trials at each receiving position, then switch roles. Extra players can serve as additional servers.



PURPOSE

To attack as a team, focusing on jump serving.

Equipment

- Oversized (#6) or light (#5) balls—one ball for every two players
- Three cones

Fitness Circle (5 minutes)

Key Idea: Healthy habits

Gather players into two equal groups. "I want the first group to take one ball and pass back and forth, making sure everyone gets one chance with the ball, then the last with the ball, hit it over the net." After players finish, ask them to come over to the side and sit down. Have the second group go out and repeat the activity. "Following play like that, and after every time you come out of the game or during practice, what is one of the most important things you should do?" Listen to their responses. "Drink a little water during every break and especially when you need it. Drinking regularly prevents dehydration.

It's important to drink water *before* you feel thirsty, especially when it's hot and humid. Drinking plenty of water is a healthy habit to do every day."

Game 1 (10 minutes)

Goal

To use a jump serve.

Description

Play 4 v 4 (see figure on page 147). Players start in base position and attempt jump serves.



Coach: What is the goal of the game?

Players: To use jump serves.

Coach: Why are jump serves good to use?

Players: Harder to return than standing overhand serves.

Coach: What do you need to do to jump serve?

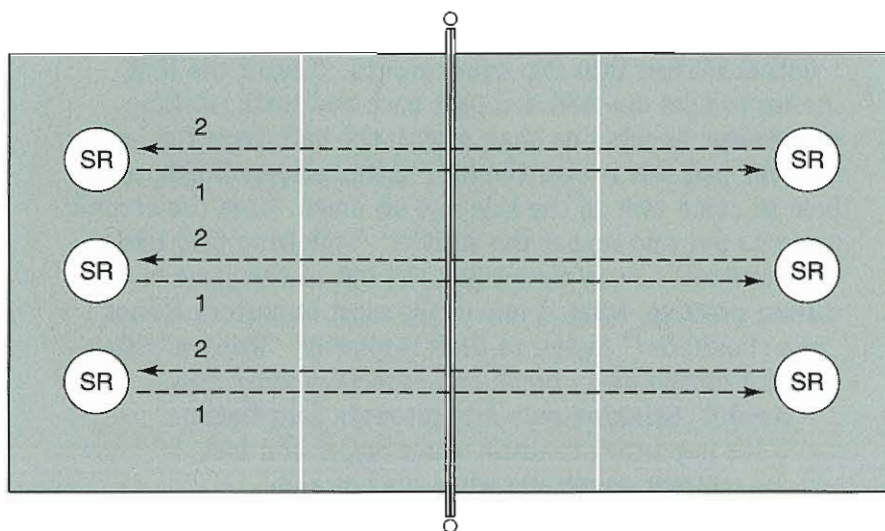
Players: Toss, jump, hit.

Skill Practice 1 (10 minutes)

1. Introduce, demonstrate, and explain how to *jump serve* (see page 271).
2. Practice jump serves.

Description

In partners, players practice jump serves near the end line. When players are successful, they gradually move back behind the endline. Challenge players to get two serves in a row over the net and within court boundaries before backing up.



Week 9

COACH'S cues



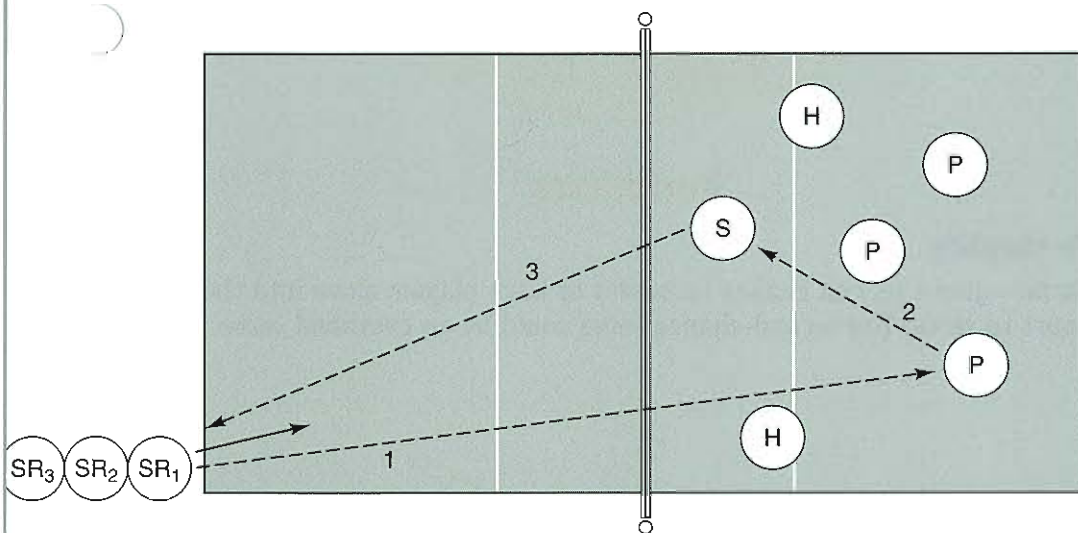
- “Tee up the ball!”
- “High toss!” (This is similar to a high-outside set.)
- “Feet to the ball!”
- “Jump off both feet!”
- “Throw your hands high!”
- “Hit the ball high and in front!”

Skill Practice 2 (10 minutes)

Practice five-player serve-receives off jump serves.

Description

Three players alternate as servers. A server hits a jump serve to one of the five serve-receivers. One of the serve-receivers receives the serve by forearm-passing to the setter, who opens up and calls “Here!” and catches the ball and bounce-passes it back to the server. Allow two serves, then rotate.



Game 2 (10 minutes)

Goal

To use jump serves.

Description

Same as Game 1.

COACH'S point



☞ Encourage players to move forward following their serves and assume a defensive position.

☞ In contests, players cannot have any part of their foot on the endline or within the court before serving, though they can land in the court after having jumped and hit the ball. *Don't* use this rule, however, when players are first learning to jump serve.

COACH'S point



☞ The essential element in executing the serve is the toss.

☞ Players need to develop a serve routine (focus time) similar to a free-throw shooter in basketball.

☞ If players are going to err, it's best to err on the side of getting the ball over the net but headed out of bounds. This way the opponent has to make a decision whether to play it or not.

☞ On a serve, if the toss is bad, let it bounce—catching it means loss of serve.



Team Circle (5 minutes)

Key Idea: Respect

Gather the team into a group near three cones about 10 feet apart. "What are three things you can do or not do that show you respect your body?" Listen to their responses. Main ideas might be not taking drugs, keeping emotional outbursts under control (swearing, pushing an opponent), and not doing dangerous plays in practices and games. As players give responses, have them and others with the same idea stand next to a cone. "Those are all great ideas. When you practice those ideas, you show yourself and others that you respect your body."

Wrap-Up

Make summary comments about practice, and remind players of the next game.

Variations

To simplify

Game—give a second chance on serves or have players move into the court to serve. The second-chance serve could be an overhand serve.

Week 10

Warm-Up (10 minutes)

In partners, players practice jump serves near the endline (see figure on page 230). When players are successful, they gradually move back behind the endline. Challenge players to get two serves in a row over the net and within court boundaries before moving back. Encourage players to move forward following their serves and assume a defensive position.

Fitness Circle (5 minutes)

Key Idea: Healthy habits

Gather the team into a group. "It's important to eat foods that give the most energy for volleyball. What are the four main nutrients or parts of food that help you grow and stay healthy?" Listen to responses. Discuss how carbohydrates (breads, cereals, and some fruits) give energy. Discuss how proteins (meats, nuts, and tofu) build muscle and bone. Mention that fats (fat and oils in meat, milk, and nuts) provide stored energy. Remind them that water (from the tap or in juice or milk) makes up 60% of their bodies. "One healthy habit you should be practicing every day is eating foods that keep your body healthy—that includes snacks. What are examples of each nutrient? Carbohydrates? Proteins? Fats? Water?"
Discuss food choices.

Game 1 (10 minutes)

Goal

To use blocks in defending against spikes.


Description

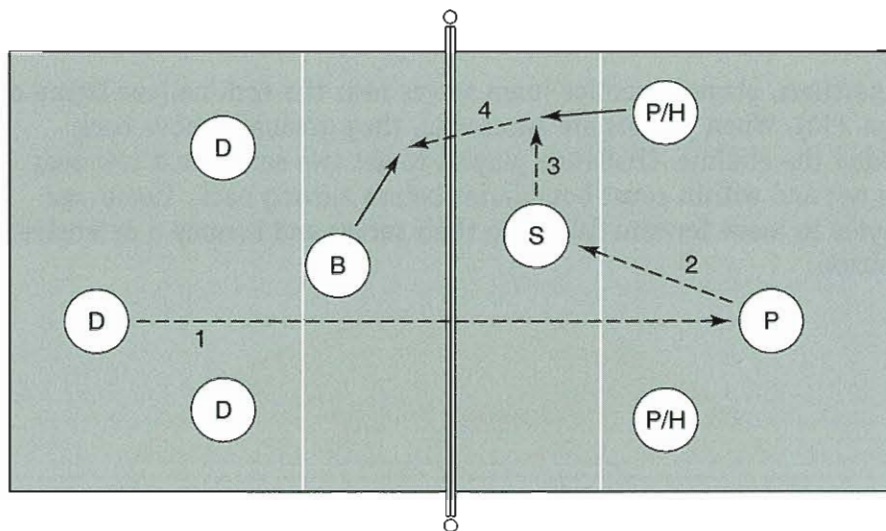
Play 4 v 4. Players start in base position. Play starts with a high underhand toss over the net. After a pass-set-spike, the defending team attempts to block the spike. Award a bonus point for a point won off a block.

PURPOSE

To defend space against an attack, focusing on blocking.

Equipment

-  Oversized (#6) or light (#5) balls—one ball for every two players



Coach: What is the goal of the game?

Players: To block spikes.

Coach: How do you do that?

Players: Arms up before the spike, time the jump.

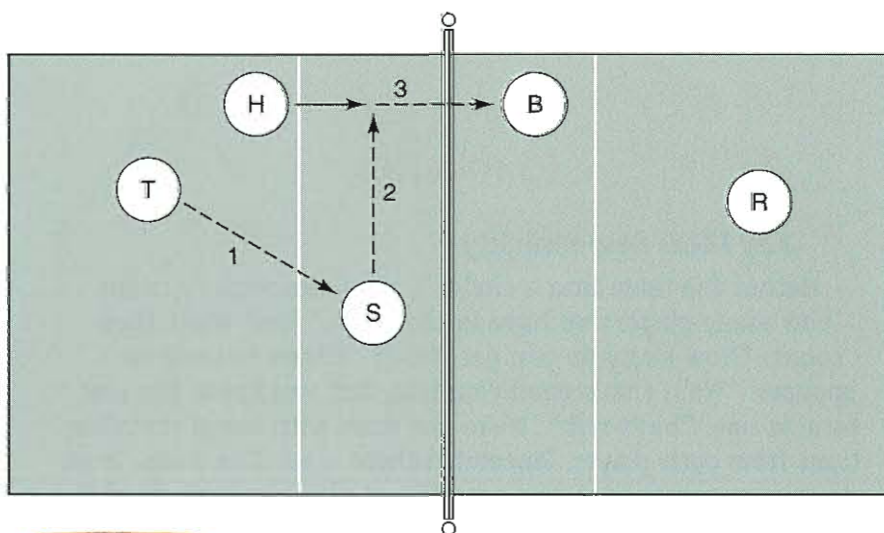
Skill Practice (20 minutes)

1. Introduce, demonstrate, and explain how to *block* (see page 274).
2. Practice solo blocking.

Description

Practice solo blocks against spikes. Lower the net to increase the chances for a block. In teams of five, a tosser tosses a high ball to the setter, who sets to a hitter, who spikes. The blocker attempts to block the spike. Another player retrieves balls and feeds them to the tosser. After four trials, rotate roles.

Week 10



COACH'S cues



- "Hands high!"
- "Front the hitter!"
- "Jump on the arm swing of the hitter!"
- "Press to center court!"

Game 2 (10 minutes)


Goal

To use solo blocks in game play.

Description

Same as Game 1.



 Blocking is the most difficult skill to teach and for the players to learn.

Team Circle (5 minutes)

Key Idea: Responsibility

Gather the team into a circle. "I want everyone to count how many players we have in the circle." Wait while they count. "How many do you get, total?" Listen to their responses. "Well, that's good counting, but you know, the real total is one. That's right. We're one team with many contributions from each player. Remember there is no 'I' in team. If we don't play together as one, we will not play our best. To play together, we all have individual responsibilities to the team like working hard on defense and offense, following rules, and getting good at ball-handling skills. Making sure each one of you takes that responsibility seriously is an important attitude to practice."

Wrap-Up

Make summary comments about practice, and remind players of the next game.



Variations

To simplify

- Skill Practice—a coach or player stands on a chair to hit balls into the blocker's hands.
- Game—give a second chance on serves or have players move into the court to serve. The second-chance serve could be an overhand serve.

Week 11

Warm-Up (10 minutes)

Practice solo blocks against spikes. Lower the net to increase the chances for a block. In teams of five, a tosser tosses a high ball to the setter, who sets to a hitter, who spikes. The blocker attempts to block the spike. Another player retrieves balls and feeds them to the tosser (see figure on page 235). After four trials, rotate roles.

Fitness Circle (5 minutes)

Key Idea: Healthy habits

Gather the team into a group. "Tell me some healthy habits you practice every day." Responses may be brushing teeth, eating foods that help you grow, getting enough sleep. Lead the discussion to drugs and alcohol. "You have been hearing 'say no to drugs' probably since you have been very young. Let's talk about what it really means and when you might have to use that phrase. What are some situations where you think you might have to say no to drugs?" Discuss their responses (in school, from other kids you don't know very well, at parties, etc.). "It's an important healthy habit to stay away from drugs, alcohol, and tobacco. Successful volleyball players never use this stuff."

Game 1 (10 minutes)

Goal

To defend against free balls.

Description

Play 4 v 4 (see figure on page 147). Players start in base position. Players use the serve of their choice. Call "Free ball!" several times during the game. When players hear you call this, the offense has to hit a free ball to the defense and then prepare to defend against the free ball.

PURPOSE

To defend as a team, defending against free balls and counterattacks.

Equipment

- Oversized (#6) or light (#5) balls—one ball for every two players



Coach: What is the goal of the game?

Players: To defend against free balls.

Coach: What do you do as a team to defend against a free ball?

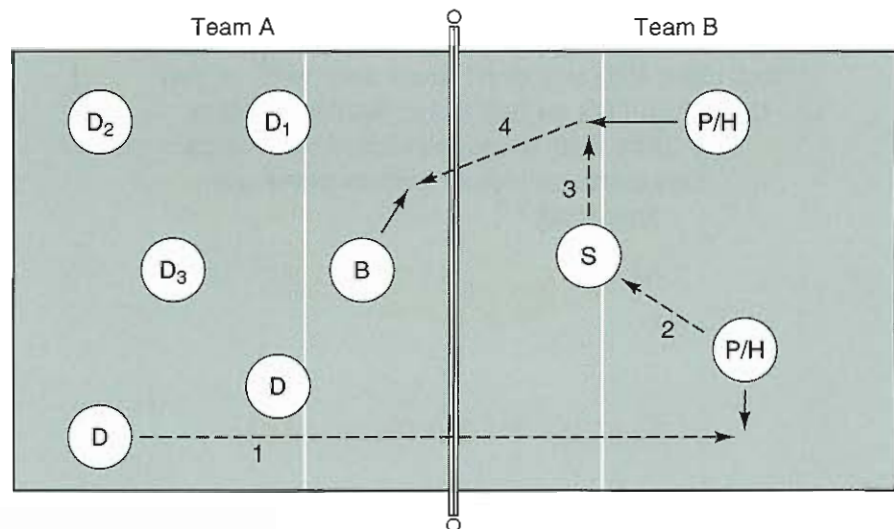
Players: Call "Free!" and prepare to block or dig the spike.

Skill Practice (20 minutes)

1. Introduce, demonstrate, and explain how to *defend against free balls* (see "Free-Ball Alignment" on page 255).
2. Practice defending as a team against free balls.

Description

Team A, with six players, tosses a free ball over the net. Team B's three players transition to free-ball defense and get ready to set up to attack (pass-set-hit). Team A's front-row players move to prepare to block the spike. Team A's back-row players spread out to prepare to dig the spike with digger 1 playing the line shot and short tips in front of him or her, digger 2 playing the endline and all deep shots, and digger 3 playing cross-court shot and short tips to the center. Run two trials at each position and then rotate positions.



COACH'S cues



"All players call 'Free!'"

"Hitters transition off the net ready to attack!"

"Setter opens up and calls 'Here!'"

"Passers adjust to serve-receive position and play the ball!"

Week 11

Game 2 (10 minutes)

Goal

To play good free-ball defense.

Description

Same as Game 1.

Team Circle (5 minutes)

Key Idea: Caring

Gather the team into a group and choose three players to demonstrate. Have the three stand in a line. The two outside players should carefully lift the middle player. Have them problem-solve to find a way to hold the player up. Continue for about 30 seconds and then have them set the player down. "Did you see how Jared was supported by his teammates? Ben and Tyrone showed you how to give physical support, but it's also important to support your teammates emotionally. What are some examples?" Listen to responses (positive comments, identifying good plays, encouraging comments during losses) and discuss them. "When you support your teammates throughout the season, you show you care about them. You'll play better as a team when you show you care about each other."

Wrap-Up

Make summary comments about practice, and remind players of the next game.

Variations

To simplify

Game—give a second chance on serves or have players move into the court to serve. The second-chance serve could be an overhand serve.



COACH'S
point

☞ Communication is essential to good free-ball defense.

☞ The goal on free-ball defense is to set up to attack and win the point.



Week 12

PURPOSE

To defend as a team, focusing on defending against free balls and counterattacks.

Equipment

- Oversized (#6) or light (#5) balls—one ball for every two players
- Two cones

Warm-Up (10 minutes)

Play 4 v 4 (see figure on page 147). Players start in base position and choose their own serves.

Fitness Circle (5 minutes)

Key Idea: Reversibility principle

Gather the team into a group. “What happens to your body if you do not stay active and keep training and conditioning your body?” Listen to their responses. Discuss losing conditioning when you stop being active. “What is that called? Right—the ‘reversibility principle.’ What should you do to prevent losing your conditioning? Participating in physical activity or another sport after the season will prevent you from reversing your conditioning. How will you stay active after the volleyball season is over?” Listen to their responses. “Remember the ‘reversibility principle’—you use it or lose it! You worked hard all season to improve your fitness, so keep it up for next year!”

Game 1 (10 minutes)

Goal

To defend against free balls.

Description

Play 4 v 4 (see figure on page 147). Players start in base position. Players use the serve of their choice. Call “Free ball!” several times during the game. When players hear you call this, the offense has to hit a free ball to the defense and then prepare to defend against the free ball.

Week 12

Coach: What is the goal of the game?

Players: To defend against free balls.

Coach: What do you do as a team to defend against a free ball?

Players: Call "Free!" and transition to set up in serve-receive position.

Coach: What should the other team do?

Players: Move to prepare to block the spike or to dig the spike.

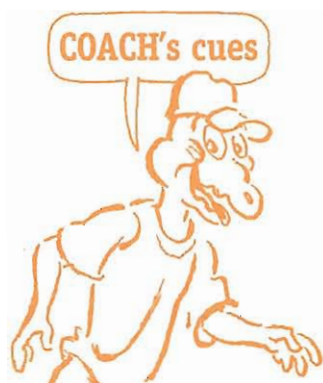


Skill Practice (20 minutes)

Practice defending against attacks.

Description

Team A, with six players, tosses a free ball over the net. Team B's three players transition to free-ball defense and get ready to set up to attack (pass-set-hit). Team A's front-row players move to prepare to block the spike. Team A's back-row players spread out to prepare to dig the spike with digger 1 playing the line shot and short tips in front of him or her, digger 2 playing the endline and all deep shots, and digger 3 playing cross-court shot and short tips to the center (see figure on page 238). Run two trials at each position and then rotate positions.



"All players call 'Spike!'"

"Digger 1 plays the line shot and short tips in front of him or her."

"Digger 2 plays the endline and all deep shots."

"Digger 3 plays cross-court shot and short tips to the center."

"Play the angles!"

"Setter turns and plays the ball that drops."

Game 2 (10 minutes)

Goal

To play good attack defense.

Description

Same as Game 1.



☞ Attack defense is built on a simple principle: put players in position where the opponent will most likely attack.

☞ Establish positions that allow defenders to play the ball in front of them, toward teammates.

☞ The goal on attack defense is to contain the ball on your side of the court and to set up to attack.

Team Circle (5 minutes)

Key Idea: Respect

Gather the team into a group near two cones about 10 feet apart. Choose two players to demonstrate. "Let's say you just served an ace serve, Jack. Show everyone a way to celebrate or congratulate your teammates that won't make the other team upset. Now, Kyle, show the team how you would celebrate if you wanted everyone to know how happy you were and that you thought you played much better than your opponents. If you think the best way to celebrate is like Jack, stand at this cone. If you think Kyle's is the better way, stand at this cone. . . . It's important to respect your opponents during games. You can do that by saying 'good play' or slapping hands calmly with your team. Now think about respected athletes—what do they do before, during, and after games?" Discuss.

Wrap-Up

Make summary comments about practice, and remind players of the final game.



Variations

To simplify

- Skill Practice—place players in chairs in the left-front and right-front positions and have them toss down balls. This will make the tempo more predictable. The flow becomes base—adjust to spiker—dig—and set up to attack.
- Game—give a second chance on serves or have players move into the court to serve. The second-chance serve could be an overhand serve.