

Season Plan for 8 to 9-Year-Olds

At this age, kids will begin to explore tactics and skills that help them keep possession of the ball, move downfield and score, and play good defense. The following grid 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 flag football. 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

8- to 9-Year-Olds

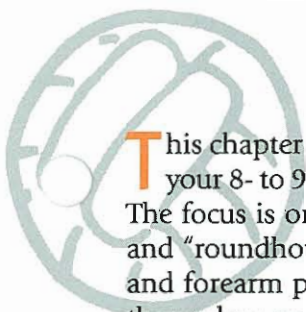
Week	Purpose	Tactics and skills	Rules and traditions	Fitness concepts	Character development concepts
1A	To set up to attack and win the point	Spiking; overhead passing	Boundaries; net rules; serve rotation; free-ball toss serve; line rules	General fitness Physical activity makes you fit, contributing to cardio-respiratory fitness, muscular strength and endurance, and flexibility.	Four core values We'll stress four core values: caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility.
1B	To win the point	Hitting (spikes and tips)	Calling "Serve" before serving; rolling ball under net between points	Safety It's important to notify your coach whenever you hurt yourself, even if you think it's a minor injury.	Honesty You need to play by the rules and be honest if you break one.
2A	To set up to attack	Back-row setting	Net rules; raise your hand if you touch the net	General fitness It's important both to warm up and cool down.	Responsibility Working and playing as a team works better than playing as a bunch of individuals.
2B	To set up to attack	Back-row set-hit combinations	Shake-hand line at end of contest	Flexibility Stretch until you feel a pull but no pain; hold for 10 seconds.	Respect Respect opponents by shaking or slapping hands at the end of a game.
3	To set up to attack	Forearm passing		Healthy habits Drink enough water during practice.	Responsibility Cheer for your teammates when you're on the sideline.
4	To set up to attack	Forearm passing	High-five ritual—celebrate success, dismiss errors	Safety Stay in your own space.	Caring Compliment players—even opponents—on good plays.
5	To set up to attack	Forearm passing		Cardiorespiratory fitness Aerobic endurance is important for health.	Caring Share the ball—don't be a ball hog!
6	To win the point	Forearm passing; under-hand serving; round-house serving		Cardiorespiratory fitness As your heart beats faster, it pumps blood and delivers oxygen to muscles faster.	Respect Celebrate victories in ways that don't embarrass opponents.

8- to 9-Year-Olds (continued)

Week	Purpose	Tactics and skills	Rules and traditions	Fitness concepts	Character development concepts
7	To set up to attack	Forearm passing; hitting		Muscular strength and endurance It's important to strengthen all the muscles in your body.	Respect Respect officials, and thank them at the ends of games.
8	To set up to attack	Setting		Training and conditioning Improve your physical conditioning by practicing/playing longer.	Responsibility Teamwork means helping each other.
9	To set up to attack	Setting; opening up		Muscular endurance The longer you play before your muscles tire, the more muscular endurance you have.	Caring Everyone gets a chance to learn and play.
10	To set up to attack and win the point	Set-hit combinations		Healthy habits Check off your healthy habits as you do them.	Caring Forgive teammates for mistakes.
11	To win the point	Overhand serving		Training and conditioning Your body loses conditioning if you stop exercising. Use it or lose it!	Responsibility Learn from your mistakes and take responsibility for trying to improve.
12	To attack as a team	Two-player serve-receiving		Healthy habits Good eating habits are important for physical activity and for life. Eat healthy and avoid junk foods.	Respect Be caring, honest, respectful, and responsible.

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

Practice Plans for 8- to 9- Year-Olds



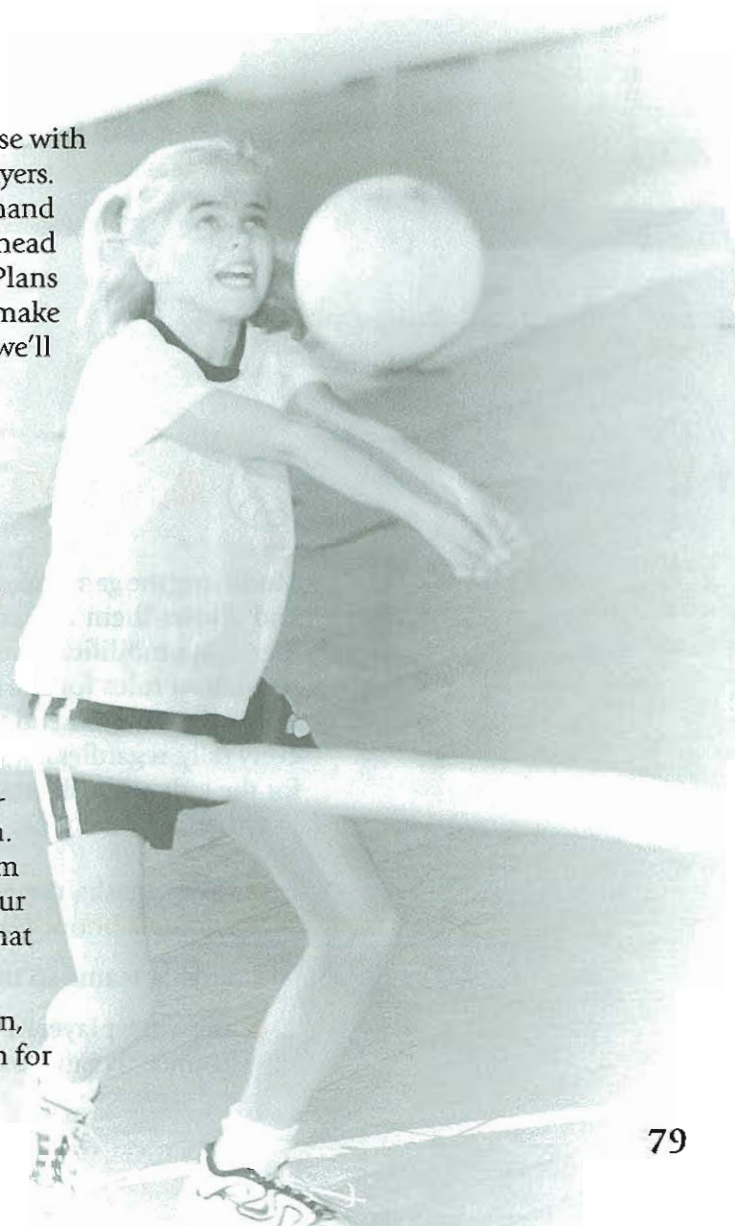
This chapter contains the 14 Practice Plans you'll use with your 8- to 9-year-old YMCA Winners volleyball players. The focus is on learning basic skills—hitting, underhand and “roundhouse” serving, serve-receiving, and overhead and forearm passing. Before we get to the Practice Plans themselves, we'll guide you in modifying the sport to make it more appropriate for 8- and 9-year-olds, and then we'll explain how the Practice Plans are structured.



Organizing Your Team

We recommend your YMCA uses one of three options in assigning coaches and players to teams. Our preferences are listed in order.

1. Eight players will be assigned to a head coach and an assistant coach. These players will form two teams of four players each for competition. In practice, all eight players will practice together as one team. In competition, the head coach will coach one team and the assistant coach will coach the other. The four players assigned to each team should remain on that team throughout the season.
2. Eight players will be assigned to one coach. Again, these players will form two teams of four players each for



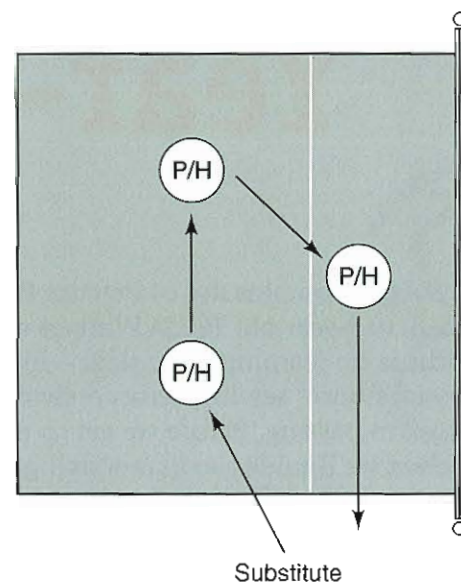
competition and will practice together and remain on their assigned team throughout the season. In competition, the head coach will coach both teams. It would be optimal for a coach's two teams to not play each other during the season and to have their competitions scheduled back-to-back if possible.

3. Six players will be assigned to one coach. The six players will practice and compete together as one team.

The advantage with the first two options is that in 3 v 3 competitions, all players are assured of a great number of touches per game and season—thus increasing their chances for fun and improvement.

On a four-player team, the player on the bench will automatically rotate in. Whenever a team wins the serve, a new player for each team rotates into the game. Figure 10.1 demonstrates how players are rotated in during a 3 v 3 game when four players are on each team.

Figure 10.1 Three-on-three rotation with four players on each team.



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 10.1 for your practices. We show the adult regulation rules for the sake of comparison.

We also recommend you use only rally scoring (when a point is scored on every rally, regardless of which team served). This makes the sport more exciting for the kids and will enable you to complete games and matches on schedule.

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); and

TABLE 10.1

Practice Modifications for 8- to 9-Year Olds

Factors	Regulation	Modifications
Ball size and weight	25.5" to 27" in circumference; 9 to 10 oz.	Beach balls or "gator" balls (larger and lighter than regulation balls)
Court size	30' × 30'	20' × 20'
Net height	Men—7'11-5/8" Women—7'4-1/8"	5' to 6' (Use volleyball nets, ropes, or badminton nets.)
Number of players	6 v 6	3 v 3
Serving area	Anywhere behind the endline; must complete the serve before stepping or landing inside the court	Behind endline or stepping into the court as needed for player success
Serving technique	Must "bat" the ball; can't toss it over the net	Use a free-ball toss serve (tossing the ball over the net) before moving to an underhand serve and roundhouse serve.
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.

- ⊙ encouraging "positive" errors (e.g., hitting long rather than into the net, forcing the opponent to decide whether to play the ball).

Also, you'll note that underhand serving is not taught to 8- and 9-year-olds until Week 6. We recommend the following rule for that age group during Weeks 1 through 5: A player may opt to serve underhand. If a serve fault occurs, the player is allowed a second serve and may opt to use a free-ball toss serve. Players may also opt to use a free-ball toss serve on their first serve.

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 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. As they progress through YMCA Winners, game rules will become more and more like those of 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; it is 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 that 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 athletes 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 in 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, then wait for your players to respond. Don't immediately feed them the answers 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 think and 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

Warm-Up (10 min)

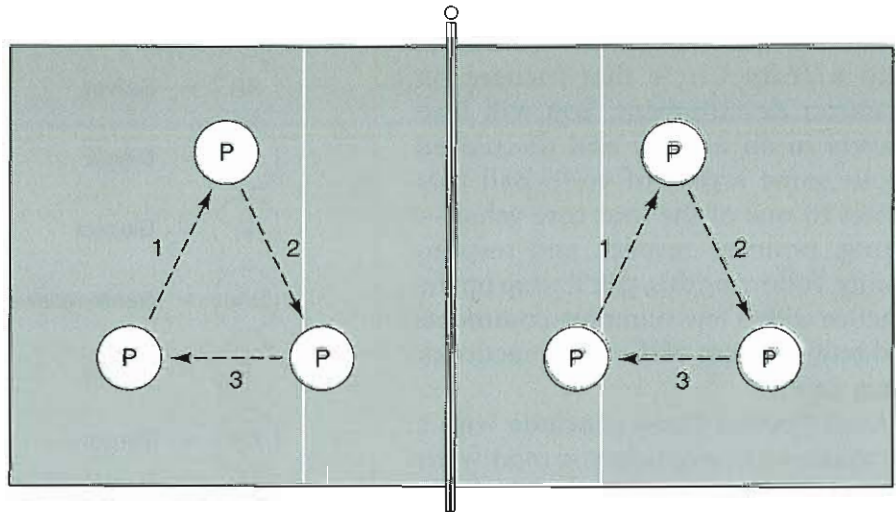
PURPOSE

To set up to attack and win the point through overhead passing and spiking.

Equipment

-  Beach balls or "gator" balls (larger and lighter than regulation balls)—one ball for every two players

- Begin each practice with 10 minutes of warm-up activities to get players loosened up and ready to go.
- Have players practice continuous overhead passing (volleying) in threes.
- Each player should be able to volley a ball so that the ball stays 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.



Week 1, Practice 1

Fitness Circle (5 minutes)

Following 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 subsequent practices. After the team is finished stretching, lead the activity and discussion on the fitness concept for this practice. 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 players into a group. "I want everybody to run in place at a slow pace. . . . Now a bit faster. . . . Now everyone stop." Choose a player to demonstrate a high jump. "That was a great jump. Now I need all of you to hit the ball to each other and practice passing." Have players pass two times each. Next, have them perform a leg stretch. "Those four activities we did are a part of volleyball, but they also are ways to improve your fitness. Each activity helps to improve a different area of fitness.

Running improves your *cardiorespiratory endurance*, jumping helps your *muscular strength*, passing helps your *muscular endurance*, and stretching helps your *flexibility*. Throughout the season we'll be learning more about fitness in our fitness circles."

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

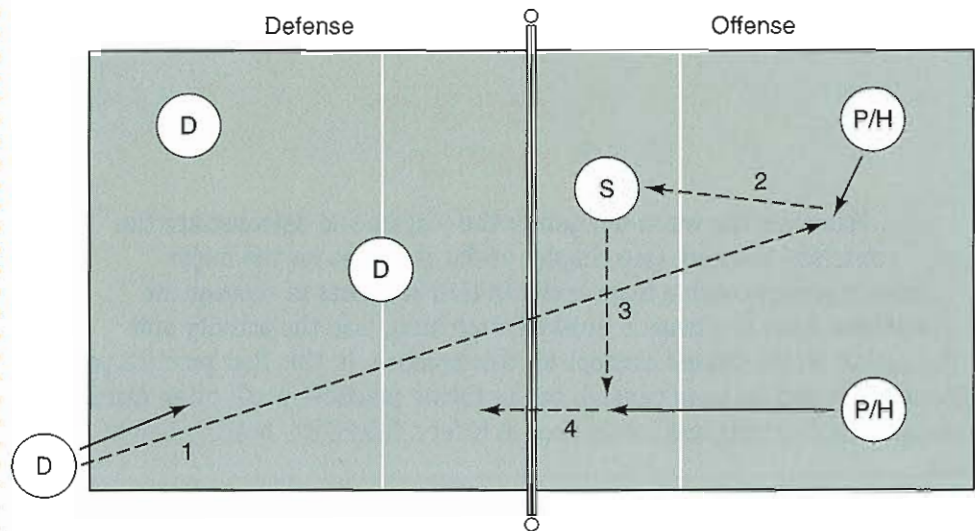
To win points by attacking as a team.

Description

Play 3 v 3. Players start in base position. Players use *free-ball toss serves* (see page 267). Alternate serves and rotate after each point.



👉 Teach three-player positions (see page 280 in chapter 14) and rotation rules (see page 282 in chapter 14) before getting into Game 1 so players know where to start and how to rotate.



Coach: What is the goal of the game?

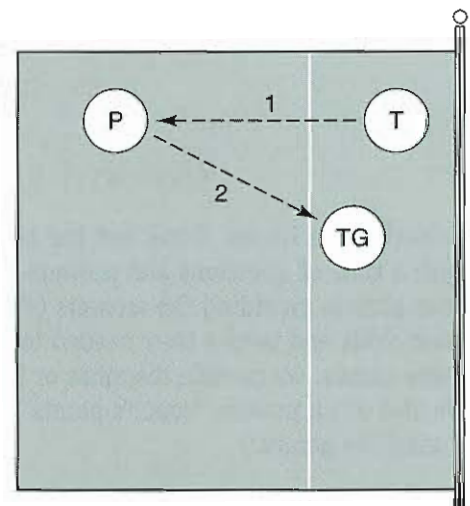
Players: To win points by attacking as a team.

Coach: How did you do that?

Players: By setting teammates up to spike.

Skill Practice 1 (10 minutes)

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.



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

Week 1, Practice 1

Description

In groups of three, a tosser tosses a high toss to a passer, who overhead-passes to a target player. Allow players three trials, then rotate roles. Passers should pass from the right-back and left-back positions on the court.

COACH'S cues



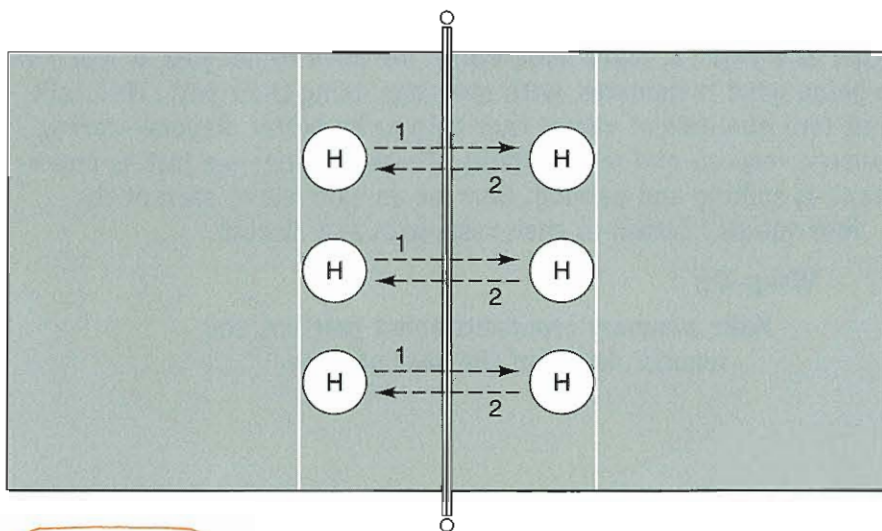
- "Fingerpads to contact!"
- "Volleyball-shaped hands!"
- "Bend your legs!"
- "Extend arms and legs—fly like a superhero!"

Skill Practice 2 (10 minutes)

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

Description

With a partner, each player tosses high tosses to him- or herself and moves to the ball, facing the net, either hitting from the floor or jumping and spiking the ball over the net. The partner catches the ball and repeats the activity.



COACH'S cues



- "Feet to the ball!"
- "Face the net!"
- "Swing!" or "Jump and swing!" (This depends on the developmental level of the player.)

Week 1, Practice 1 (cont'd)



☞ 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 try to help each other.

☞ 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.



Game 2 (10 minutes)

Goal

To play a basic volleyball game, focusing on setting up to spike.

Description

Same as Game 1. Teams get a bonus point when they successfully complete a set-spike.

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 a 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 players into a circle. "We're going to try to keep the ball in our circle. We'll pass slowly." Repeat for 10 passes. "If you were just passing to yourself, it would have been much easier. But when we think of working together as a team, it takes more effort. We need to put just as much effort into being good teammates, with everyone doing their part. We'll talk about four qualities or values that help us be better players—*caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility*. These qualities are just as important as spiking and passing. Give me an example of each of the four values." Listen to their responses and discuss.

Wrap-Up

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

Variations

To simplify

- Game 1—players can play the first ball off a bounce.
- Skill Practice 1—place the tosser on the same side of the net.

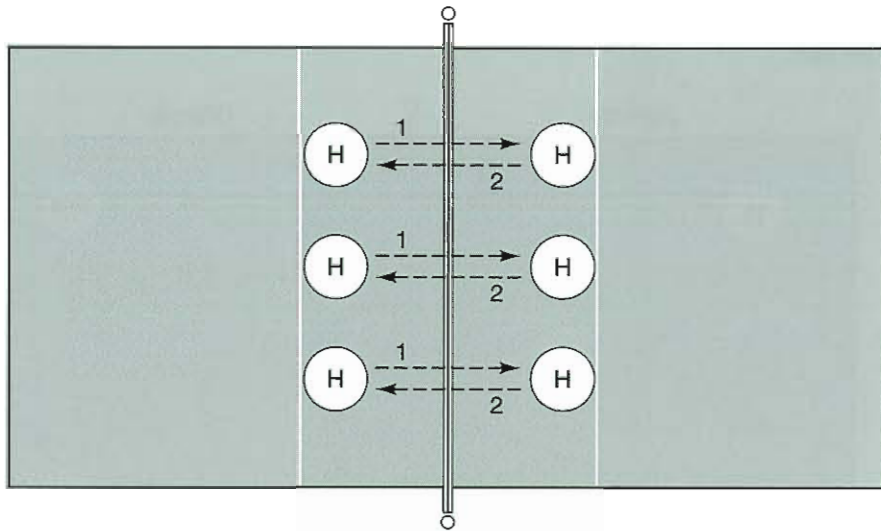
To challenge

- Game 2—keep score during final game.
- Skill Practice 2—have players hit from a toss from another player.

Week 1, Practice 2

Warm-Up (10 minutes)


Spiking—With a partner, each player tosses high tosses to him- or herself and moves to the ball, facing the net, either hitting from the floor or jumping and spiking the ball over the net. The partner catches the ball and repeats the activity. Players should spike about 6 to 10 feet away from the net.



PURPOSE

To win the point through spiking and tipping.

Equipment

-  Beach balls or gator balls—one ball for every two players

Fitness Circle (5 minutes)

Key Idea: Safety

Gather the players into a group. Choose one player to act out being injured (limping) and have a second player get a coach to report the injury. “What did you see happening?” Listen to their responses. “When you get injured, it will probably look like what was acted out. If it hurts, you should stop and let me know right away. Don’t pretend it doesn’t hurt. Most times injuries are not bad, but sometimes they can be serious. If you get hurt even a little, I need to come over and check your injury. If you see a player who looks hurt or in pain or if you saw her get injured, let me know. Telling me if you’re hurt helps me keep you safe during games and practices.”

Week 1, Practice 2 (cont'd)

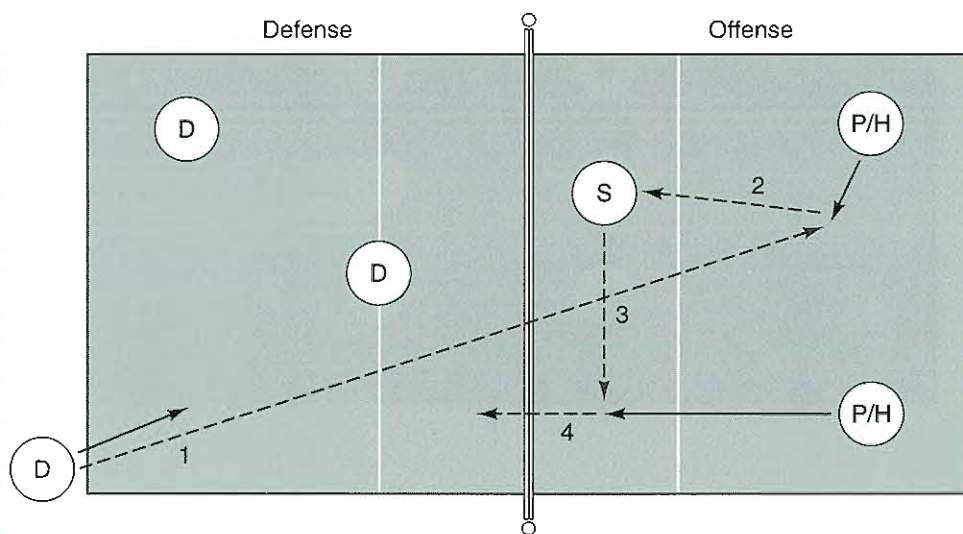
Game 1 (10 minutes)

Goal

To win the point by attacking.

Description

Play 3 v 3. Players start in base position. Players use free-ball tosses for serves. Alternate serves and rotate after each rally. Teams must "attack" to win points; no point can be won when the ball is sent over the net as a free ball.



Coach: What is the goal of the game?

Players: To attack to win points.

Coach: How do you attack?

Players: By spiking or tipping; anything that sends the ball sharply down into the opponents' court.

Coach: Why does a team want to attack?

Players: The ball is harder to return when you attack, so your team can score points.

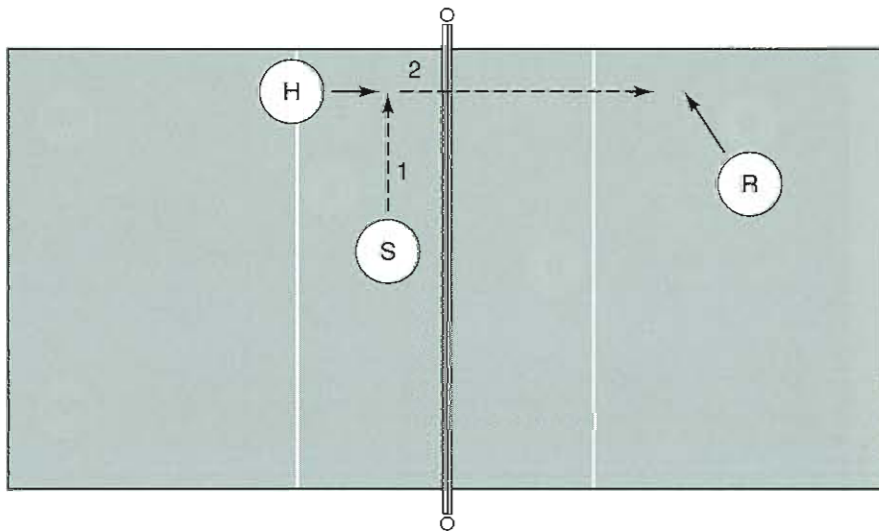
Skill Practice (20 minutes)

1. Introduce, demonstrate, and explain how to attack using a *standing spike*, *spike*, and *open-handed tip* (see page 260).
2. Practice standing spikes, spikes, and tips from a toss.

Description

In teams of three, a setter tosses a high ball to a hitter, who attempts to spike the ball over the net. The third player retrieves the ball. Allow players three or four trials, then switch roles. Run as three separate Skill Practice trials.

Week 1, Practice 2



COACH'S cues



For standing spike

- "Feet to ball!"
- "Face the net!"
- "Throw hands high!"
- "Swing fast!"

For spike

- "Feet to ball!"
- "Accelerate to the jump!"
- "Jump off both feet and throw hands high!"
- "Swing fast!"
- "Hit high and in front!"

For tip

- "Feet to ball!"
- "Jump and throw hands high!"
- "Disguise as a spike!"
- "Contact with fingerpads!"
- "Firm wrist!"

Game 2 (10 minutes)

Goal

To work as a team to set up to hit a standing spike, spike, or tip.

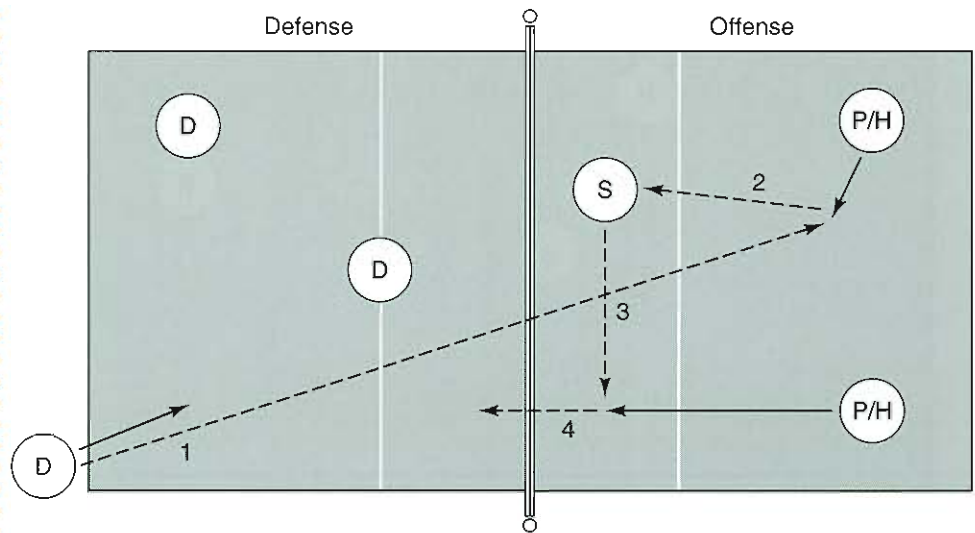
Description

Play 3 v 3. Players start in base position. Players use free-ball tosses for serves. Alternate serves and rotate after each rally. Give a bonus point when a team completes a set-spike or set-tip combination.

Week 1, Practice 2 (cont'd)

COACH'S point

- ☞ Reinforce all attempts—successful or not—to execute a spike or tip.
- ☞ Kids love spiking and will have lots of motivation to learn the skills associated with it.
- ☞ Have players call “Serve” before serving and roll the ball under the net between points.



Team Circle (5 minutes)

Key Idea: Honesty

Gather the players into a group. “Think about the rules in volleyball. I am going to tell you a rule. Raise your hand if you think it’s something you should let the official know happened.” Examples: hand in the net, double hit, missing rotation. “You should let the official know about all of those rules being broken, even if he or she doesn’t see it. Raising a hand or telling officials is an honest thing to do when you break a rule, even if it’s an accident. It’s important to be honest when you break a rule in practice and in games.”

Wrap-Up

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

Variations

To simplify

- Skill Practice—only practice the standing spike and tip.
- Games—play the first ball off the bounce.

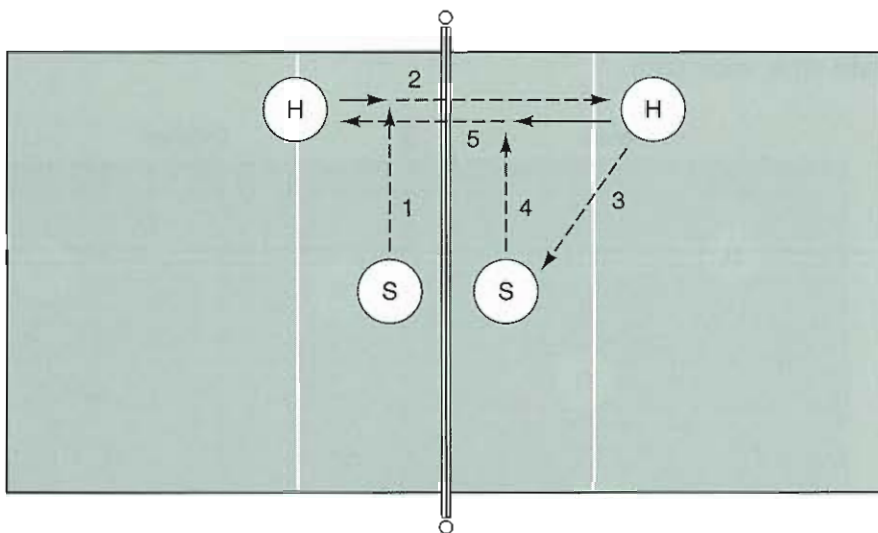
To challenge

Game 2—keep score.

Week 2, Practice 1

Warm-Up (10 minutes)

In two sets of partners, a setter tosses to set the ball to a hitter, who hits a standing spike or a spike or tips the ball over the net. The second set of partners retrieves the balls and repeats the activity. Players take three to five trials each, then switch roles with their partners.



PURPOSE

To set up to attack through back-row setting.

Equipment

Beach balls or gator balls—one ball for every two players

Fitness Circle (5 minutes)

Key Idea: General fitness

Gather the players into a group. "Everyone think of a hill. Get a picture of a hill in your mind. Close your eyes and see it in your mind. You see it? Now pretend we're all bicycling up that hill. We start at the bottom and slowly climb. We have to work harder and harder as we make it to the top. Then we gradually start pedaling back down the hill, which is not as hard as going up. . . . That hill is the way your body will move every practice. We start slow with a warm-up. As you ride up the hill, this is how we move in the middle of practice. Toward the end of our practice, we gradually start to come back down the hill, slowing our bodies down. This is called the *cool-down*. A warm-up and cool-down are important parts of healthy fitness."

Week 2, Practice 1 (cont'd)

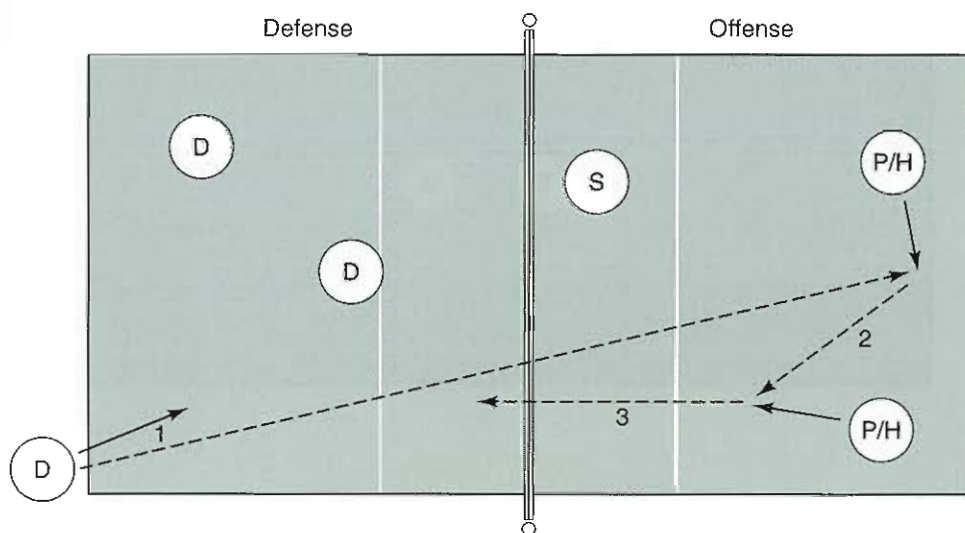
Game 1 (10 minutes)

Goal

To attack from the back of the court.

Description

Play 3 v 3. Players start in base position. Players use deep free-ball tosses for serves. Allow only two hits per side. Alternate serves and rotate after each rally.



Coach: What is the goal of the game?

Players: To set from the back row.

Coach: How do you set that up?

Players: High set, not too close to the net.

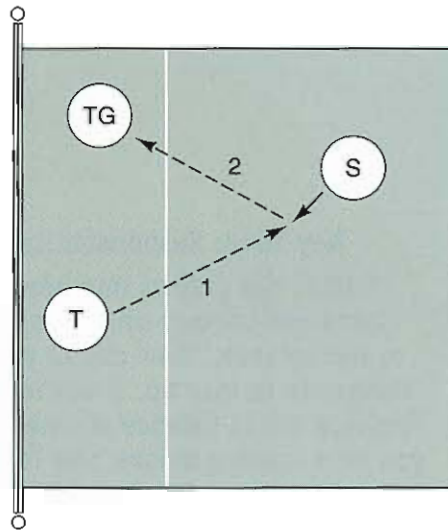
Skill Practice (20 minutes)

1. Introduce, demonstrate, and explain how to *back-row set* (see "Overhead Passing" section on page 263; back-row setting is overhead passing from the back row).
2. Practice back-row setting.

Week 2, Practice 1

Description

In teams of three, one player tosses a high ball to a setter who calls the ball "Mine!" and back-row sets to a target player, who catches the ball and bounce-passes it back to the tosser. Allow players three to five trials, then switch roles.



COACH'S cues



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

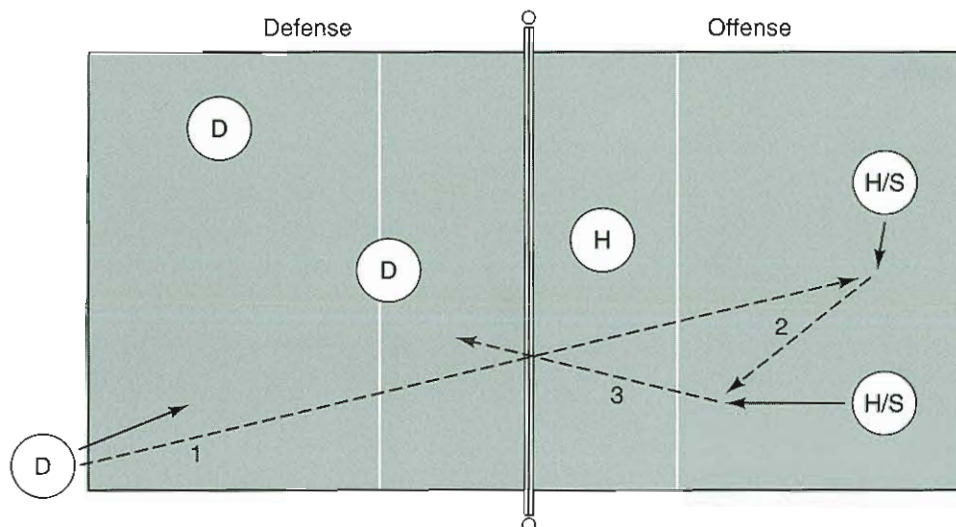
Game 2 (10 minutes)

Goal

To use a back-row set to set up the attack (standing spike, spike, or tip).

Description

Play 3 v 3. Players start in base position. Players use deep free-ball tosses for serves. Alternate serves and rotate after each rally. Teams get a bonus point for a back-row set-attack combination.



COACH'S point



- 👉 Players should back-row set to an attacker who is diagonal to him or her, not straight in front.
- 👉 Players should set off the net (two feet or more). Sets too close to the net are difficult to attack.
- 👉 Teach players net rules (see "Net Play" section on page 285 in chapter 14) and teach them to raise their hand if they touch the net.



Team Circle (5 minutes)

Key Idea: Responsibility

Gather the players into groups of two partners. "Everyone stand and balance on one foot." Wait while everyone gets his or her balance. "Now one of you offer your shoulder for your teammate to lean on. If you're leaning on your partner's shoulder, now try to balance on one foot again. . . . Change places. If you were leaning before, now let your partner lean on your shoulder and stand on one foot." Wait until everyone has balanced with the help of a partner. "Now come back here. Wasn't it easier to balance when you were leaning on your partner? It works that way in volleyball, too. When you help each other during practices and games, we work better as a team; each of you can contribute. Your teammates count on you to contribute to the team. That is being responsible to your team."

Wrap-Up

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

Variations

To simplify

Games—let the ball bounce before contact.

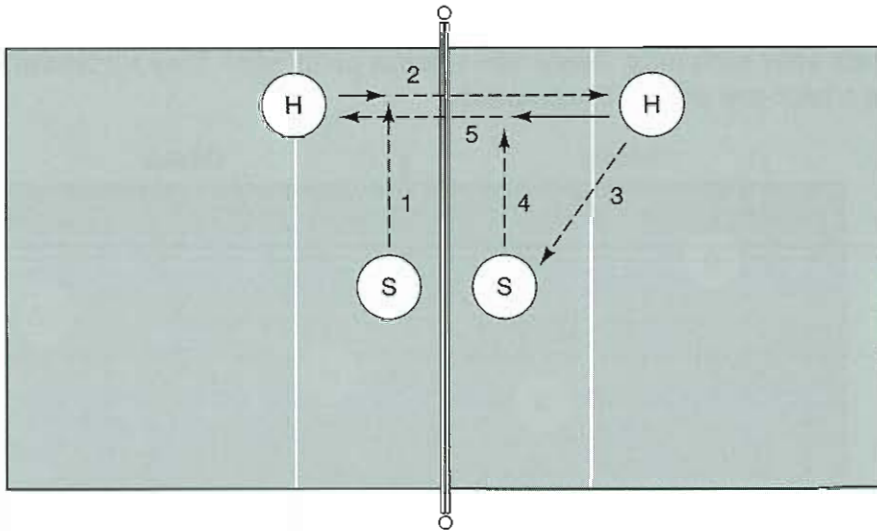
To challenge

Skill Practice—after each player has had a chance to back-row set to a target, have players back-row set with the hitters attempting a standing spike.

Week 2, Practice 2

Warm-Up (10 minutes)


In two sets of partners, a setter tosses to set the ball to a hitter, who hits a standing spike or a spike or tips the ball over the net. The second set of partners retrieves the balls and repeats the activity. Players take three to five trials each, then switch roles with their partners.



PURPOSE

To set up to attack, focusing on back-row set-attack combination.

Equipment

-  Beach balls or gator balls—one ball for every two players

Fitness Circle (5 minutes)

Key Idea: Flexibility

Gather the players into a circle sitting down with their legs stretched in front of them. "Think of stretching a rubber band as far as you can. What happens if you stretch the band too far?" Listen to their responses. "That's right. It breaks. Muscles work in sort of the same way. Stretching your muscles too far can tear and injure them. But it's important to stretch your muscles for them to be flexible. Everyone reach forward and try to touch your toes, but stretch only until you feel a slight pulling in your leg muscle—make sure it doesn't hurt." Tell them to hold the stretch for 10 counts without bouncing. "Stretching your muscles is important to keep them flexible, but you shouldn't feel pain. The main muscles to stretch for volleyball are the front of your thighs (quadriceps), the back of your thighs (hamstrings), and the back of your lower legs (calves)." Demonstrate stretching each muscle group.

Week 2, Practice 2 (cont'd)

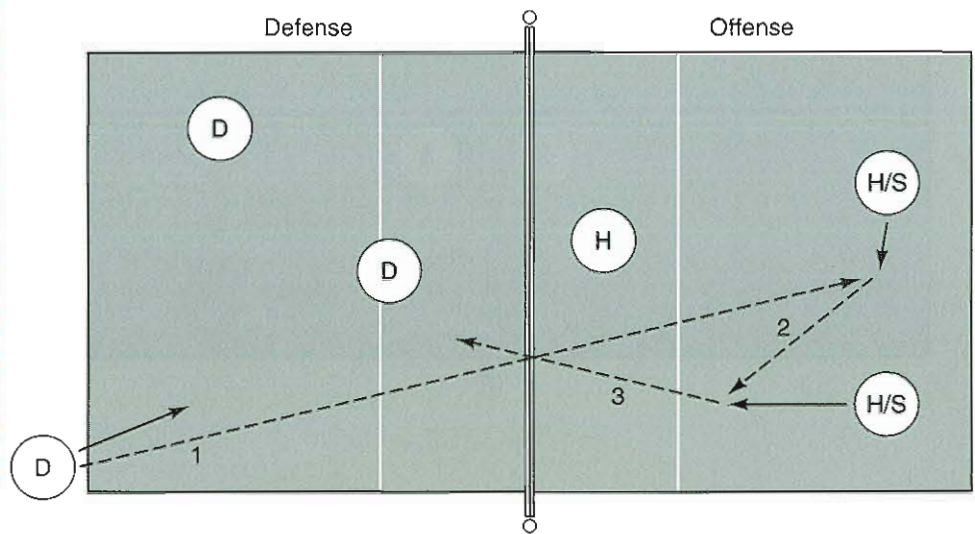
Game 1 (10 minutes)

Goal

To set up to attack using the back-row set.

Description

Play 3 v 3. Players start in base position. Players use deep free-ball tosses for serves. Allow only two hits per side. Alternate serves and rotate after each rally. Teams win a bonus point when they successfully use a back-row set-hit combination.



Coach: What is the goal of the game?

Players: To try to set to a hitter from the back row.

Coach: How should the ball be set?

Players: Diagonally, high and off the net.

Coach: Why?

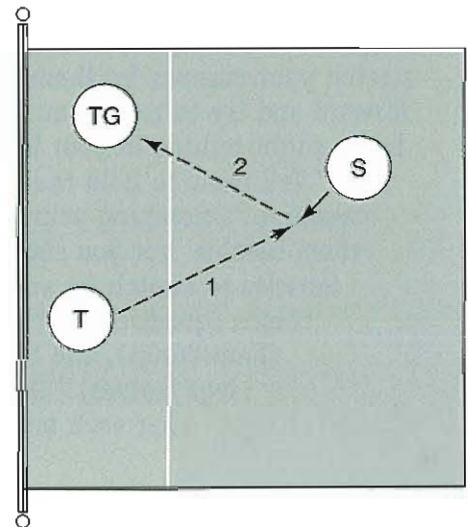
Players: Diagonally is easier to track; a high set gives the hitter time to get to the ball; off the net is easier to hit.

Skill Practice (20 minutes)

Practice back-row setting and attacking.

Description

In teams of three, one player tosses a high ball to a setter who calls the ball "Mine!" and back-row sets to a hitter, who attempts a standing spike, spike, or tip. Allow players three to five trials, then rotate roles.



Week 2, Practice 2

COACH'S CUES



Overhead pass

- “Fingerpads to contact!”
- “Volleyball-shaped hands!”
- “Bend your legs!”
- “Extend arms and legs—fly like a superhero!”
- “Call the ball!”

Standing spike

- “Feet to ball!”
- “Face the net!”
- “Throw hands high!”
- “Swing fast!”

For spike

- “Feet to ball!”
- “Accelerate to the jump!”
- “Jump off both feet and throw hands high!”
- “Swing fast!”
- “Hit high and in front!”

For tip

- “Feet to ball!”
- “Jump and throw hands high!”
- “Disguise as a spike!”
- “Contact with fingerpads!”
- “Firm wrist!”

Game 2 (10 minutes)

Goal

To back-row set to set up the attack (standing spike, spike, or tip).

Description

Play 3 v 3. Players start in base position. Players use free-ball tosses for serves. Alternate serves and rotate after each rally. Teams raise their hands when they make a back-row set-attack combination. Teams score a bonus point when they successfully complete a back-row set-hit combination.

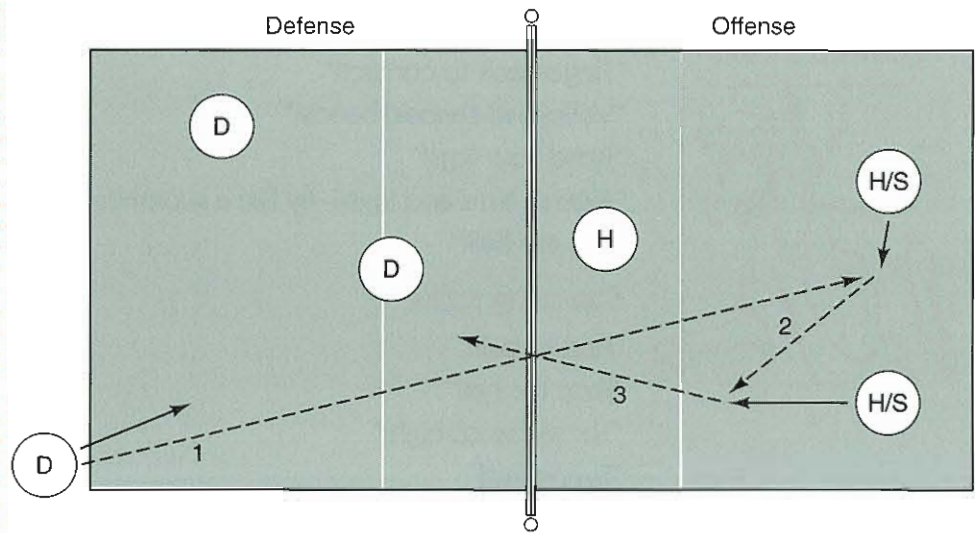
COACH'S POINT



Spiking has one primary function—to put the ball down on the opponent's court. A secondary function is to keep the ball in play. A spiker must be able to distinguish between a situation best suited to an aggressive swing and one that calls for a controlled shot.

Teach players to form a line at the end of contests to shake hands with opponents.

Week 2, Practice 2^(cont'd)



Team Circle (5 minutes)

Key Idea: Respect

Gather the players into two lines standing opposite each other about five feet apart. "I want each line to walk toward each other and give each person in the other line a high-five. Imagine that the other line is your opponent for a game. Show me how you would act toward an opponent and what you would say if it was the end of the game and we lost the game. Start." Assist the players, if necessary. Listen to their responses. "At the end of each game it's important to show respect for your opponent. We do this by slapping hands and saying something like 'good game,' even if we lose the game."

Wrap-Up

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

Variations

To simplify

- Games—play the first game with no scoring.
- Skill Practice—have players attack using either a standing spike or spike.

Week 3

Warm-Up (10 minutes)

In teams of three, a player tosses a high, “settable” ball to a setter, who calls “Mine!” and back-row sets to a hitter, who hits a standing spike (a hit from the floor) or a spike or tips the ball over the net (see figure at bottom of page 98). Players take three to five trials each, then rotate roles.

Fitness Circle (5 minutes)

Key Idea: Healthy habits

Gather the players into a group. “Everyone run in place for 15 seconds. Ready? Go! . . . Now stop! Whenever we run during our practice, our body starts to get warm. When our bodies get really warm, what do you think happens to cool them off?” Wait for their responses. “Our bodies start to sweat. Sweat is the water that comes out of all the pores in your skin. Then the sweat evaporates into the air. Since your body sweats to cool off, what do you think we need to put back into our bodies?” Wait for someone to say “water.” “That’s right.

Drinking enough water every day is an important healthy habit. You’ll need to drink more water if you’re running and playing a lot. I want to challenge all of you to drink one glass of water a day for every year of your age. How many is that? . . . Eight?

Nine? I know you can drink that many glasses a day!”

Game 1 (10 minutes)

Goal

To set up to attack when the ball is waist-high or lower.

Description

Play 3 v 3 (see figure on page 92). Players start in base position. Players use free-ball tosses for serves. No overhead passes are allowed. Alternate serves and rotate after each rally.

PURPOSE

To set up to attack, focusing on forearm passing.

Equipment



Beach balls or gator balls—one ball for every two players



Coach: What is the goal of this game?

Players: To set up attack when ball is waist-high or lower.

Coach: How do you do that?

Players: Use forearms to pass.

Skill Practice (20 minutes)

1. Introduce, demonstrate, and explain how to *forearm-pass* (see page 265).
2. Practice forearm passing.

Description

In teams of three, one player tosses the ball to another player, who forearm-passes to a target player (see figure at bottom of page 86). Allow players three to five trials, then rotate roles.



☞ Forearm passing is one of the six basic volleyball skills (the others are serving, setting, spiking, blocking, digging).

☞ Forearm passes are used in serve reception, passing free or down balls, setting, and floor defense.

☞ Forearm passing is unique to volleyball. Most athletes in other sports are trained to handle balls with their hands and/or feet.



"Feet to the ball!"

"Flat platform!"

"Belly button to target!"

Game 2 (10 minutes)

Goal

To use a forearm pass as the first pass in game play.

Description

Play 3 v 3 (see figure on page 92). Players start in base position. Players use free-ball tosses for serves. Alternate serves and rotate after each rally. Teams earn a bonus point when the first hit is a forearm pass.

Week 3

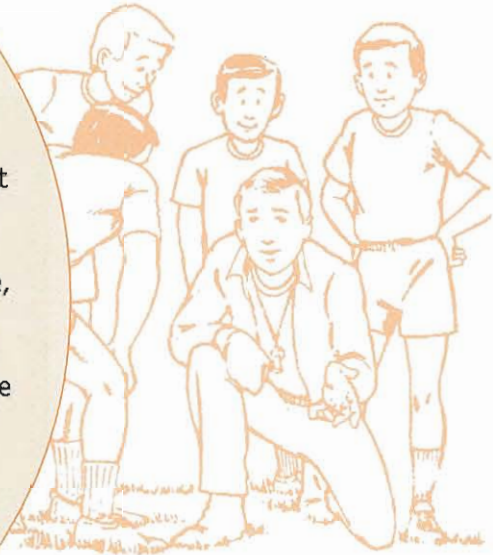
Team Circle (5 minutes)

Key Idea: Responsibility

Gather the players into two groups; one group will spread out and pass to each other. The other group will be to one side, as if on the sidelines during a game; they should be silent for the first 30 seconds of the activity. Then have them cheer and encourage on-court players; continue this activity for 30 more seconds. "When players are on the sidelines during a game, they should be encouraging their teammates, no matter what's happening in the game. This is being responsible to your team. It helps players keep trying hard even if they are losing or have made some mistakes. How did it feel when you were playing and the sideline players didn't encourage you? How about when they did encourage you?" Listen to both responses and have players compare feelings.

Wrap-Up

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



Variations

To simplify

Games—let the ball bounce on the first hit.

To challenge


Skill Practice—have the tosser toss over the net.

Week 4

PURPOSE

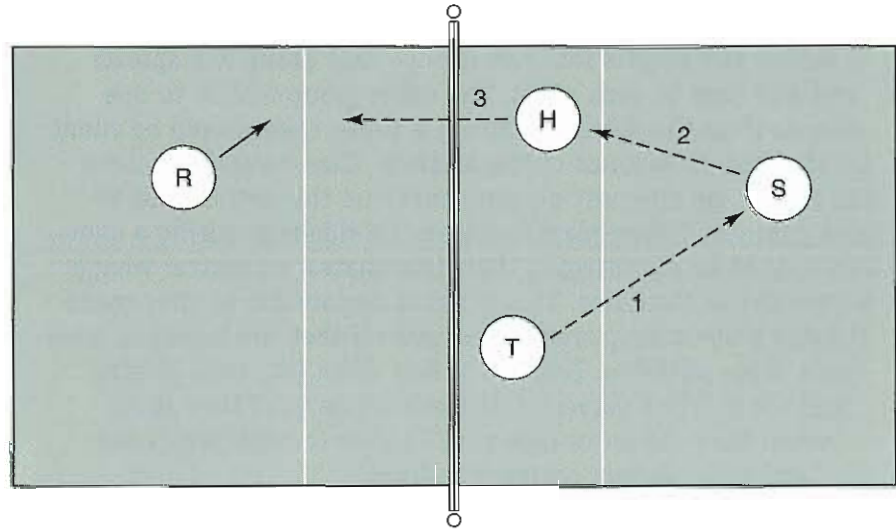
To set up to attack, focusing on forearm passing.

Equipment

-  Beach balls or gator balls—one ball for every two players

Warm-Up (10 minutes)

In teams of four, a player tosses a high, settable ball to a setter, who calls the ball “Mine!” and back-row sets to a hitter, who hits a standing spike, spike, or tip. The fourth player retrieves the balls and returns them to the tosser. Allow players three trials, then have them rotate roles.



Fitness Circle (5 minutes)

Key Idea: Safety

Gather the players into a group. “Pretend you’re a ‘player in a bubble.’ Walk around and work at not bumping into your teammates to make sure their bubbles don’t break.” Keep players in a confined area. Time them for one minute. “Now we’ll do the same thing while jogging.” Time for 30 seconds.

“It’s important not to bump into other players.

It’s important to play as safely as you can.

Thinking about the other players’ bubbles will help you stay in your own space during practices and games.”

Week 4

Game 1 (10 minutes)

Goal

To use a forearm pass as the first pass in game play.

Description

Play 3 v 3 (see figure on page 92). Players start in base position. The game is initiated by a player tossing to him- or herself and overhead-passing the ball over the net. Alternate serves and rotate after each rally. Teams earn a bonus point each time the first hit is a forearm pass.

Coach: What is the goal of the game?

Players: To use forearm passes.

Coach: What is the best way to let your teammates know you are going to play the first hit?

Players: Call the ball; call "Mine!"



Skill Practice (20 minutes)

Practice forearm passing and calling for the ball.

Description

In teams of three, one player tosses the ball to another player, who forearm-passes to a target player (see figure at bottom of page 86). Allow players three to five trials, then rotate roles.



"Medium posture!"

"Feet to the ball!"

"Flat platform!"

"Belly button to target!"

"Call 'Mine!'"



☞ Teach players to use high-fives or some other method to celebrate success and to regroup and encourage each other after an error.

☞ Communication is a team skill that has to be taught, practiced, and reinforced.

☞ The tosser should toss the ball over the net so that the passer has to adjust one or two steps to play the ball.



Game 2 (10 minutes)

Goal

To use the forearm pass and to call for the ball.

Description

Play 3 v 3 (see figure on page 92). Players start in base position. The game is initiated by a player tossing to him- or herself and overhead-passing the ball over the net. Alternate serves and rotate after each rally. Teams earn a bonus point when the first hit is a forearm pass and when they call for the ball.

Team Circle (5 minutes)

Key Idea: Caring

Gather the players into groups of two and give each group one ball. Players should pass the ball to each other. "Each of you should say two good things about your partner's skills. Then come back to me in a group. Begin." Wait for them to regroup. "What were some of the comments your teammates told you?" Listen to their responses. "What kind of value or quality is it when you go out of your way to say something good about a teammate's playing?" Listen to responses and encourage discussion as needed. "Caring is one of our core values. You show you care about your teammates when you encourage them."

Wrap-Up

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

Variations

To simplify

Games—let the ball bounce on the first hit.

Week 5

Warm-Up (10 minutes)

In teams of four, a player tosses a high, settable ball to a setter, who calls the ball “Mine!” and back-row sets to a hitter, who hits a standing spike, spike, or tip. The fourth player retrieves the ball and rolls it back to the tosser (see figure on page 104). Allow players three trials, then have them rotate roles.

Fitness Circle (5 minutes)

Key Idea: Cardiorespiratory fitness

Gather the players into a circle. “Remember the hill we imagine we bicycled up a few practices ago? We start slow going up, then go faster toward the top and come slowly back down. Let’s start up that hill by running in place slowly, getting a little faster, faster, and now really fast. . . . Now start to slow down. A little slower. Slower. And stop.” Run with players to model. “That was a short version of moving during our practice. We run faster to make our heart and lungs stronger; this is called *cardiorespiratory fitness*.

We start slowly and then gradually slow down at the end of the practice to help our hearts pump blood and carry

Game 1 (10 minutes)

Goal

To use a forearm pass as the first pass in game play to get the ball to the setter.


Description

Play 3 v 3 (see figure on page 92). Players start in base position. The game is initiated by a player tossing to him- or herself and overhead-passing the ball over the net. Alternate serves and rotate after each rally. Teams earn a bonus point when the first hit is a forearm pass that goes to the setter.

PURPOSE

To set up to attack, focusing on forearm passing.

Equipment

-  Beach balls or gator balls—one ball for every two players



Coach: What is the goal of the game?

Players: To use a forearm pass to get the ball to the setter.

Coach: How do you do that?

Players: Flat platform, parallel arms, belly button to target.

Coach: What is the best way to get the ball to the setter so he or she can easily set the ball for the hitter?

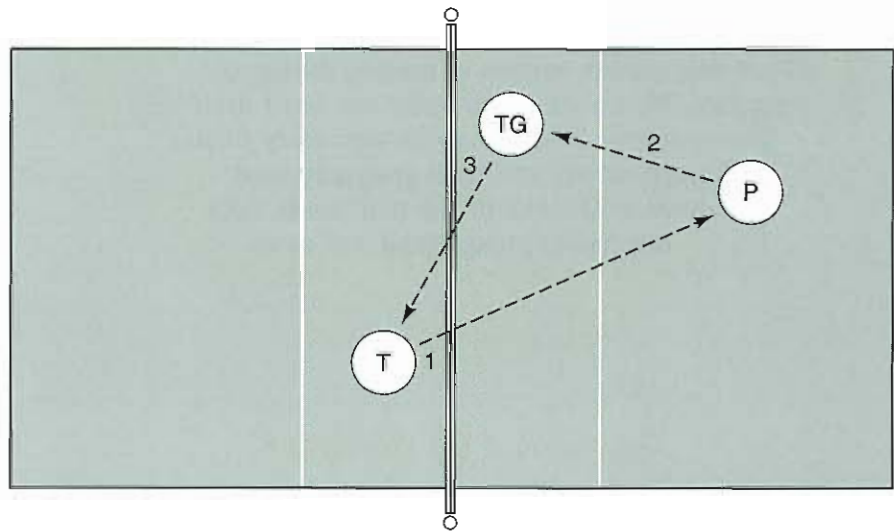
Players: Pass it high enough and within easy reach of the setter so he or she doesn't have to move far.

Skill Practice (20 minutes)

Practice forearm-passing to a target.

Description

In teams of three, one player tosses the ball to another player, who forearm-passes to a target player, who tries to catch the ball over his or her head. Allow players three to five trials, then rotate roles.



COACH'S cues



"Medium posture!"

"Feet to the ball!"

"Flat platform!"

"Belly button to target!"

"Call 'Mine!'"

Week 5

Game 2 (10 minutes)

Goal

To use a forearm pass to the setter.

Description

Play 3 v 3 (see figure on page 92). Players start in base position. The game is initiated by a player tossing the ball to him- or herself and overhead-passing the ball over the net. Alternate serves and rotate after each rally. Teams earn a bonus point when they successfully complete a forearm pass to the setter.

Team Circle (5 minutes)

Key Idea: Caring

Gather the players into a group and choose two to demonstrate with you. You will serve the ball and have the two children work to get in position to receive a pass. Pass three times in a row to the same player. "Was the other player in good position to get a pass? . . . Why didn't he or she get the ball? . . . I didn't pass the ball. Sharing the ball so all players get a chance shows you care about your teammates." Have players get into groups of three and pass the "caring" way. Bring players back together. "Raise your hand if you think that caring is an important quality or value on this team? It is important!"

Wrap-Up

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


Variations


To simplify

Game—let the ball bounce on the first hit.

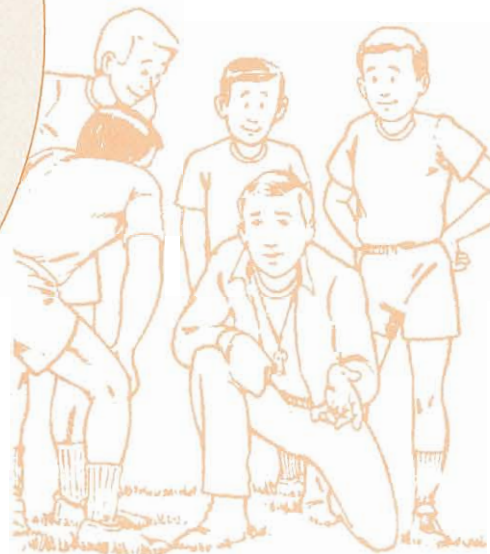


COACH'S
point

 The tosser should toss the ball over the net so that the passer has to adjust one or two steps to play the ball.

 Common errors in forearm passing include the following:

- Weight on heels instead of balls of feet
- Knees locked straight
- Elbows held at sides, arms too close to body
- Hitting ball with wrists
- Bending elbows, moving arms up and down to add power




Week 6

PURPOSE

To win the point, focusing on forearm passing and serving.

Equipment

-  Beach balls or gator balls—one ball for every two players

Warm-Up (10 minutes)

In teams of three, a player tosses the ball to a passer, who forearm-passes to a target player, who catches the ball overhead and bounce-passes it back to the tosser (see figure on page 108). Players take three to five trials each, then rotate roles.

Fitness Circle (5 minutes)

Key Idea: Cardiorespiratory fitness

Gather the players into a circle and give one player a ball to hold. "What does the heart pump to the whole body?" Listen to responses until someone says "blood." "What does the blood carry to the muscles?" Listen until someone says "oxygen." "We're going to pretend that the ball is oxygen and that you're big blood vessels or tubes that carry the blood. Set the ball to the person next to you." Each child should pass the ball to the next person until the ball completes the circle. "The oxygen in your blood starts at your heart and travels to your lungs, legs, arms, and brain." Try assigning a part of the body to each player. Playing volleyball helps your heart and lungs get better at getting oxygen to your muscles—this is called *cardiorespiratory fitness*."

Game 1 (10 minutes)

Goal

To use either an underhand or a roundhouse serve.

Description

Play 3 v 3 (see figure on page 92). Players start in base position. Players use either an underhand or roundhouse serve. Teams earn a bonus point for serves that are within the court boundaries.

Week 6

Coach: What is the goal of the game?

Players: To use a serve to start the game.

Coach: What are the different ways to serve?

Players: Underhand, overhead, roundhouse.

Coach: What are the easier serves to learn?

Players: Underhand and roundhouse.

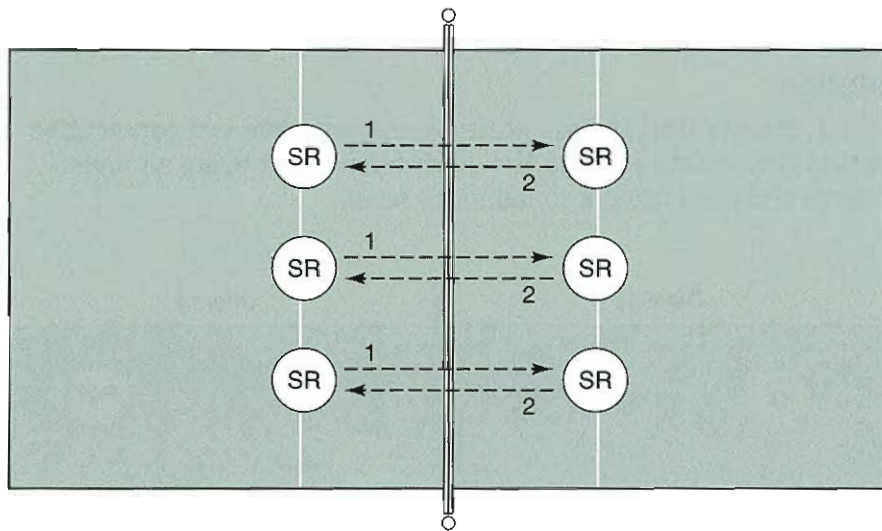


Skill Practice (20 minutes)

1. Introduce, demonstrate, and explain how to perform the *underhand serve* and the *roundhouse serve* (see pages 267 and 268, respectively).
2. Practice underhand and roundhouse serves.

Description

In partners, players start close to the net, attempting the underhand serve. When players are successful, they gradually move back to the endline. Challenge players to get two serves in a row over the net and within court boundaries. Repeat this practice with the roundhouse serve.



COACH'S cues



Underhand serve

"Hold the ball in your nonserving hand—arm extended."

"Step opposite." (Step toward the net with the foot opposite the throwing arm.)

"Palm up—make a fist!"

"Brush shorts!" (Keep arms close to the body.)

"Elbow straight!"

"Hit the ball out of the hand!" (This is like pitching horseshoes.)

Roundhouse serve

"Shoulder and feet angle toward sidelines."

"Eyes on the ball!"

"Lift ball!" (Toss.)

"Hitting arm extended!"

"Firm contact with heel of hand."

COACH'S point



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

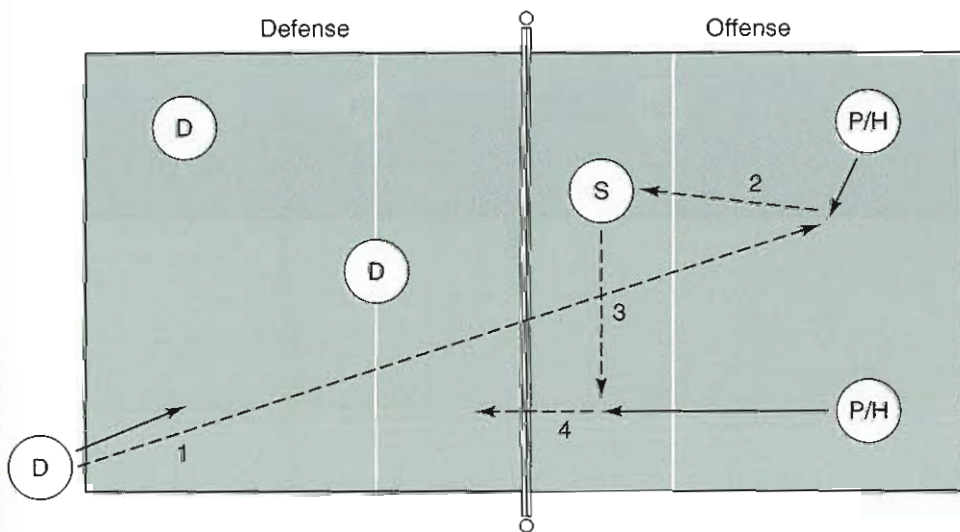
Game 2 (10 minutes)

Goal

To use both the underhand and roundhouse serves.

Description

Play 3 v 3. Players start in base position. Players serve two consecutive points and then rotate serve to the other team—first using an underhand serve and then using a roundhouse serve.



Week 6

Team Circle (5 minutes)

Key Idea: Respect

Gather the players in a group near two cones 10 feet apart. Act out two examples of celebrating for a good play or a win. One should be exaggerated and obviously inappropriate, the other modeling the kind of celebrating you'd like to see from your team. "If you think the first example I showed you is the way to celebrate a good play, stand by this cone. If you think the second is the best way to celebrate, stand by this one." All players should vote. After all players have voted, ask why they voted the way they did. "The second example is the kind of celebrating that shows respect for your opponents."

Wrap-Up

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



Variations

To simplify


Game play—structure games for success by having players either move into the court for one serve or employing a second chance on serves.

Week 7

PURPOSE

To set up to attack, focusing on passing and hitting.

Equipment

 Beach balls or gator balls—one ball for every two players

Warm-Up (10 minutes)

In partners, players start close to the net, attempting the underhand serve (see figure on page 111). When players are successful, they gradually move back to the endline. Challenge players to get two serves in a row over the net and within court boundaries. Encourage servers to move forward into the court following their serves. Repeat this practice with the roundhouse serve. Players should take five to eight trials each.

Fitness Circle (5 minutes)

Key Idea: Muscular strength and endurance

Gather the players into a group in their own space. "We're going to move different directions in our own space. I will point to a direction and the whole group should jog slowly in that direction. When I put my hand up, everyone stop." Point to directions of: forward, one side, the other side, and backward. "When you jog in different directions, you use different muscles. It's important to improve your muscular strength and endurance in all your muscles in your body. We can do that by practicing jogging different directions and passing the ball."

Game 1 (10 minutes)

Goal

To set up the attack through forearm passing.

Description

Play 3 v 3 (see figure on page 92). Players start in base position. Players use either an underhand or a roundhouse serve. Teams earn a bonus point for any forearm pass-set combination.

Week 7

Coach: What is the goal of the game?

Players: Make good forearm passes to setters.

Coach: What do you need to do first to have the best chance for an attack?

Players: Have a good first pass.

Coach: How do you do that?

Players: Medium posture, feet to the ball, flat platform, belly button to target, call "Ball."

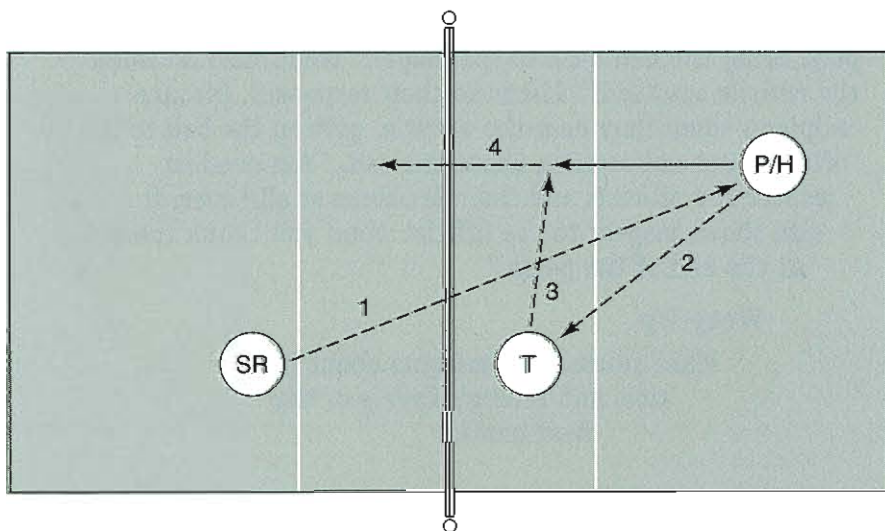


Skill Practice (20 minutes)

Practice forearm passing and attacking.

Description

In teams of three, one player serves a modified underhand serve to a passer/hitter, who forearm-passes to a tosser, who catches the ball and tosses a high outside set to the passer/hitter, who attacks (using a standing spike, spike, or tip). Allow players three trials, then rotate roles.



COACH'S cues



Set

- "Open up and call 'Here!'"
- "Volleyball-shaped hands!"
- "Bend legs!"
- "Extend arms and legs like a superhero!"

Spike

- "Feet to ball!"
- "Face the net!"
- "Jump and throw hands high!"
- "Swing fast!"



☞ Let players make mistakes—this is the way the game is played and learned at all levels.

☞ Teach players how to make an efficient transition (establishing a new position).



Game 2 (10 minutes)

Goal

To set up the attack with a forearm pass.

Description

Same as Game 1.

Team Circle (5 minutes)

Key Idea: Respect

Gather the players into a group and choose one player to help demonstrate. He or she will pretend to be an official; you will be a player. Hit the ball over the net and out of bounds. Direct the player to blow a whistle to stop play. Bring the ball back to the player. "What did I do when the whistle sounded?" Listen to their responses. Discuss stopping when they hear the whistle, getting the ball to the official, and not arguing about the call. "You need to respect the officials and their decisions at all times. It also shows respect to the official when you thank them at the end of the game."

Wrap-Up

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

Variations

To simplify

- Games—move the server into the court if needed or use a second-chance rule on the serve.
- Skill Practice—use a free-ball toss instead of a harder serve.

Week 8

Warm-Up (10 min)

In partners, players start close to the net, attempting the underhand serve (see figure on page 111). When players are successful, they gradually move back to the endline. Challenge players to get two serves in a row over the net and within court boundaries. Encourage servers to move forward into the court following their serves. Repeat this practice with the roundhouse serve. Players should take five to eight trials each.

Fitness Circle (5 minutes)

Key Idea: Training and conditioning

Gather the players into a circle. "Everyone run in place for 10 seconds. . . . Now stop. Now run in place for 20 seconds. . . . Stop. Next we'll run for 30 seconds. . . . Stop. When you run, you're improving your body's physical conditioning in your heart, lungs, and muscles. Every time you play volleyball a little bit harder and longer and let your body get a little more tired, your body improves its physical conditioning. When your body has better conditioning you can make better passes, keep up with opponents, and play longer without getting too tired."

Game 1 (10 minutes)

Goal

To set up the attack by setting to the hitter.

Description

Play 3 v 3 (see figure on page 92). Players start in base position. Players use either an underhand or a roundhouse serve. Teams earn a bonus point for all set-hit combinations.

PURPOSE

To set up to attack, focusing on setting.

Equipment

- Beach balls or gator balls—one ball for every two players
- Two cones



Coach: What is the goal of the game?

Players: To make good sets to the hitter.

Coach: How do you do that?

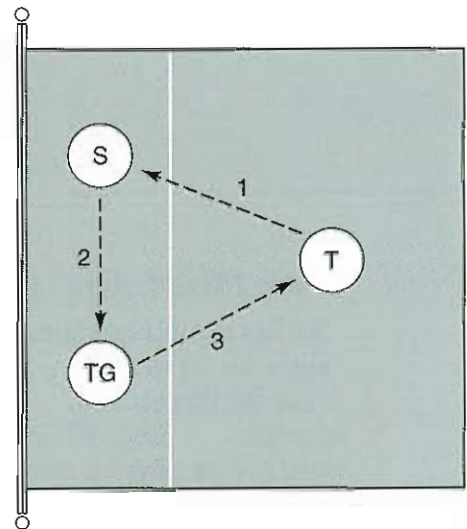
Players: Use fingerpads, volleyball-shaped hands, hands above forehead, deflect ball.

Skill Practice (20 minutes)

1. Introduce, demonstrate, and explain how to set (see page 263 under "Overhead Passing" in chapter 13).
2. Practice setting.

Description

In teams of three, a tosser tosses a high ball (perfect pass) to a setter, who sets the ball high-outside to a target player, who catches it and bounce-passes it back to the tosser. Allow players 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!"



The setter is like the quarterback of the team.

The setter should set the ball two feet off the net.

Game 2 (10 minutes)

Goal

To play a 3 v 3 game, focusing on setting to the hitter.

Description

Same as Game 1.

Week 8

Team Circle (5 minutes)

Key Idea: Responsibility

Gather the players between two cones about 10 feet apart. "What are some different ways you can score in volleyball?" Listen to their responses. As one choice, provide the example of several players working together to score (pass-set-hit combination). As the other choice, give the example of one player working without many other teammates (hitting the ball directly back across the net). "Which of the two is the best example of teamwork? If you vote for the first group, stand at this cone; if you vote for the second group, stand at this one. If everyone makes good teamwork their responsibility, we can all work together to be successful. When you're responsible to your team, you become a better player."

Wrap-Up

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



Variations

To simplify

Games—move the server into the court if needed or use a second-chance rule for serves.

To challenge

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


Week 9

Warm-Up (10 minutes)

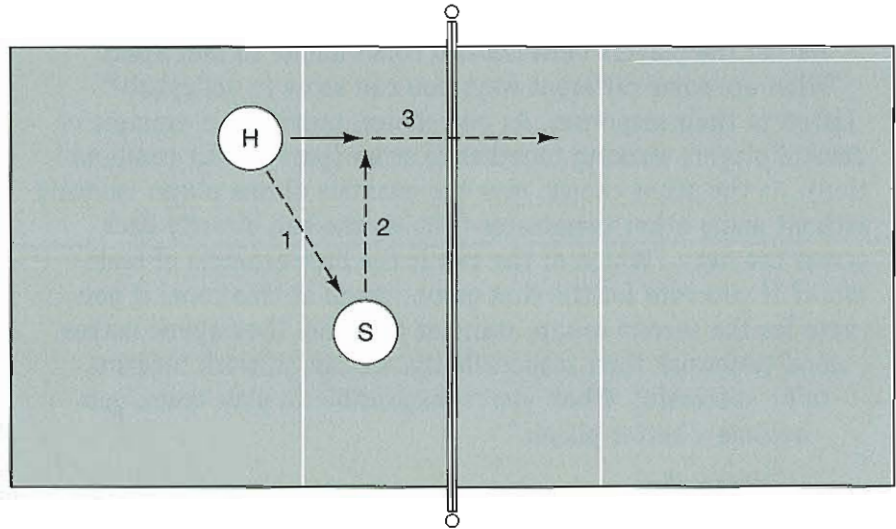
PURPOSE

To set up to attack, focusing on the setter position.

Equipment

 Beach balls or gator balls—one ball for every two players

In partners, players practice setting and hitting. A hitter tosses a high pass to a setter, who sets a high ball for the hitter to attack (either hitting from the floor or spiking or tipping). Players take three trials, then switch roles.



Fitness Circle (5 minutes)

Key Idea: Muscular endurance

Gather the players into a group. "Stand with your arms straight out from your sides. Give enough space so you don't bump your neighbor. Circle your arms like this." Demonstrate. "Keep going until you get very tired, then stop." Wait until the last player stops. "Do your arms feel tired? That is called muscle fatigue. Muscles can keep moving and tightening only for so long before tiring out. The longer you can play before your muscles tire out, the more *muscular endurance* you have. You can improve your muscular endurance by playing volleyball."

Week 9

Game 1 (10 minutes)

Goal

To set to an outside hitter.

Description

Play 3 v 3 (see figure on page 92). Players start in base position. Players use either an underhand or a roundhouse serve. Teams earn a bonus point scored for sets to outside hitters.

Coach: What is the goal of the game?

Players: To make good sets.

Coach: What direction does the setter face when the ball is on the other side of the net?

Players: Toward the net.

Coach: What do setters need to do once the ball is on their side of the net?

Players: Turn to see the ball and face their target (outside hitters).

Coach: How do you do that?

Players: Pivot a quarter-turn and call "Here!"

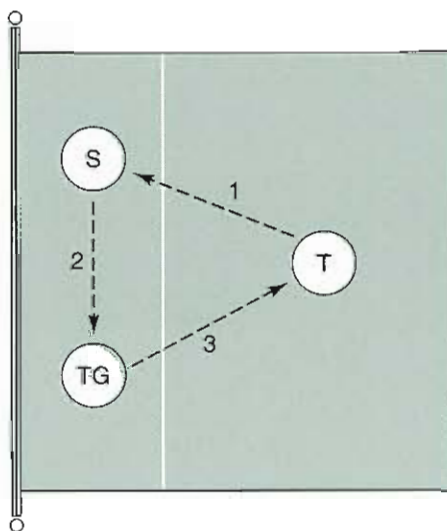



Skill Practice (20 minutes)

Practice setting.

Description

In teams of three, a tosser slaps the side of the ball, prompting a setter to open up a quarter-turn facing the hitter and call "Here!" The tosser then tosses a high ball (perfect pass) to the setter, who sets the ball high-outside to a target player, who catches the ball and bounce-passes it back to the tosser. Allow players three to five trials, then rotate roles.



 Setters should make every effort to play the second ball; if they can't, they should call the "setter's word": *help*.

COACH'S cues



Open up

- "Hands high for block!"
- "Turn to the passer!"
- "Call 'Here!'"
- "See the passer play the ball!"
- "Happy feet!" (Adjust to set the ball.)

Set

- "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 set to outside hitters.

Description

Same as Game 1, except give a bonus point for all successful sets to outside hitter-spike combinations.

Week 9

Team Circle (5 minutes)

Key Idea: Caring

Gather the players into a group and choose three players to demonstrate. These three will pass the ball back and forth and then back to you. Set up another group to do the same activity. Rotate players into the two groups until they all get a turn. Bring team back together to discuss. "What was happening every time a new person came into the passing group?" Listen to their responses. Discuss many players getting playing time. "When we share playing time, it shows that you care about your teammates. Players who care about each other want the whole team to get a chance to play. That way everyone can contribute to the team."

Wrap-Up

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



Variations

To simplify

Games—move the server into the court if needed or use a second-chance rule for serves.

To challenge

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

Week 10

PURPOSE

To set up to attack and win the point, focusing on setting and hitting.

Equipment

- Beach balls or gator balls—one ball for every two players
- Clipboard with a piece of paper on it
- Pen
- Two cones

Warm-Up (10 minutes)

In partners, players practice setting and hitting. A hitter tosses a high pass to a setter, who sets a high ball for the hitter to attack (either hitting from the floor or spiking or tipping; see figure on page 120). Players take three trials, then switch roles.

Fitness Circle (5 minutes)

Key Idea: Healthy habits

Gather the players into a group. “What are healthy habits?” Listen to their responses. “Why do you need to practice healthy habits?” Listen to their responses and encourage discussion of how healthy bodies and minds are important to sports. “Practice healthy habits every day to take care of your bodies—the same way we practice volleyball to improve our skills and get to be better players. Keep the list of healthy habits in your mind.” Have a list of examples written on a piece of paper clipped to a clipboard, including brushing your teeth; no smoking, alcohol, or drugs; eating healthy foods; and getting plenty of sleep. “Check each item off when you have done that habit during the day.” Have a pen to actually check an item off the list. “Every day start your list over again. Doing all the habits daily keeps you healthy.”

Game 1 (10 minutes)

Goal

To set up to attack from both left and right sides and win the point.

Description

Play 3 v 3 (see figure on page 92). Players start in base position. Players use either an underhand or a roundhouse serve. Teams must alternate right and left sides for the attack.

Week 10

Coach: What is the goal of the game?

Players: To set up to attack and win the point from both the left and right sides.

Coach: How do you do that?

Players: Setter faces target (right or left side) when ball comes over the net.

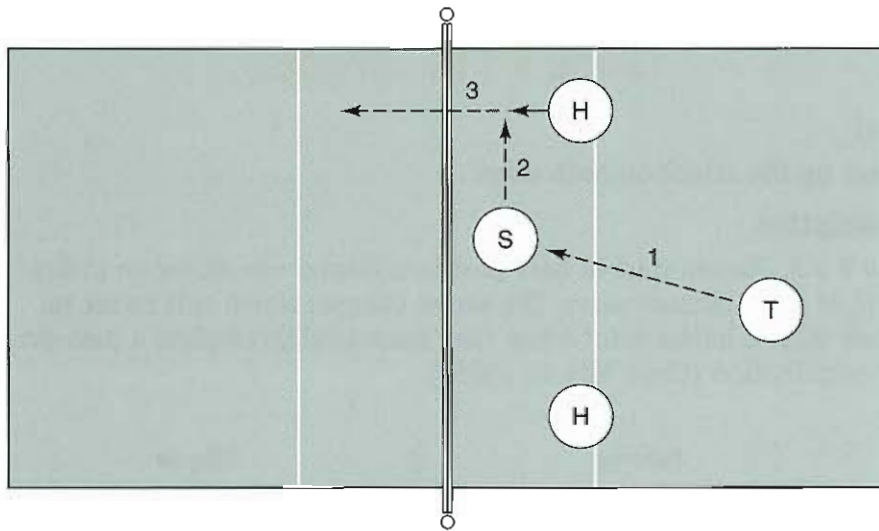


Skill Practice (20 minutes)

Practice setting and attacking to both sides.

Description

In teams of four, a tosser slaps the side of the ball, prompting a setter to open up to the left and call "Here!" The tosser then tosses a high ball (perfect pass) to the setter, who sets the ball high-outside to the right hitter, who hits a spike or tip. Repeat to the left side. Allow players three to five trials, then rotate roles.



COACH'S cues



Open up

- “Hands high for block!”
- “Turn to the passer!”
- “Call ‘Here!’”
- “See the passer play the ball!”
- “Happy feet!” (Adjust to set the ball.)

Set

- “Hands high at your forehead!”
- “Volleyball-shaped hands!”
- “Square to target!”
- “Finish like a superhero—extend arms and legs!”

Spike

- “Feet to ball!”
- “Face the net!”
- “Jump and throw hands high!”
- “Swing fast!”

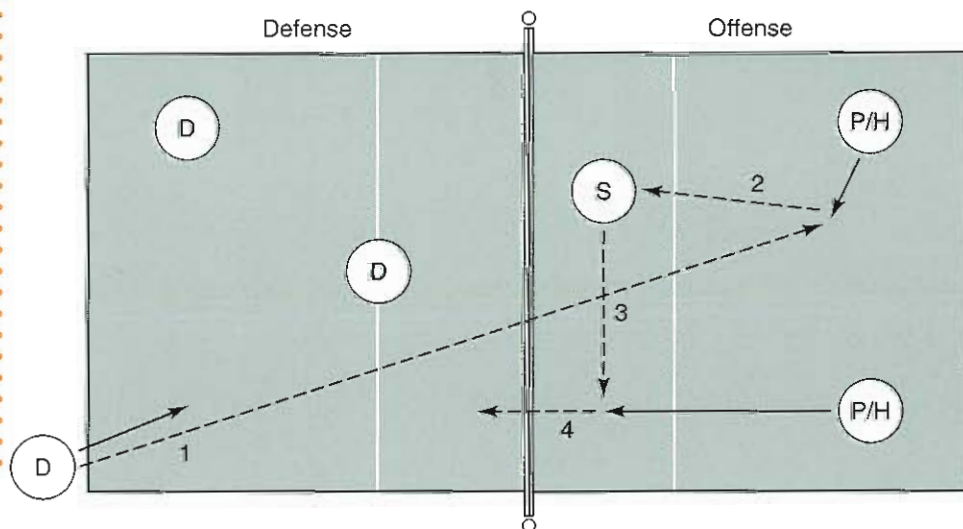
Game 2 (10 minutes)

Goal

To set up the attack on both sides.

Description

Play 3 v 3. Players start in base position. Players use either an underhand or a roundhouse serve. The setter chooses which side to set to. Teams score a bonus point when they successfully complete a pass-set-hit combination (three hits on a side).



Week 10

Team Circle (5 minutes)

Key Idea: Caring

Gather the players into a group near two cones 10 feet apart. "Let's imagine we're playing in a game and one of your teammates passes to you. The pass is hit too far away from you, and you can't get to the ball. Pretend you say, 'What a terrible pass! Get out of here until you learn how to play volleyball!' How would you change your comment to sound more positive and make the person feel better?"

Listen to their responses. "It's important to make positive comments and not get upset when your teammates make mistakes. This shows you care about your teammates."

Wrap-Up

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



Variations

To simplify

- Games—move the server into the court if needed or use a second-chance rule on serves.
- Skill Practice—only attack from the left side of the court.

To challenge


Games—a team can score points only when the players attempt a pass-set-hit (three hits on a side).

Week 11

PURPOSE

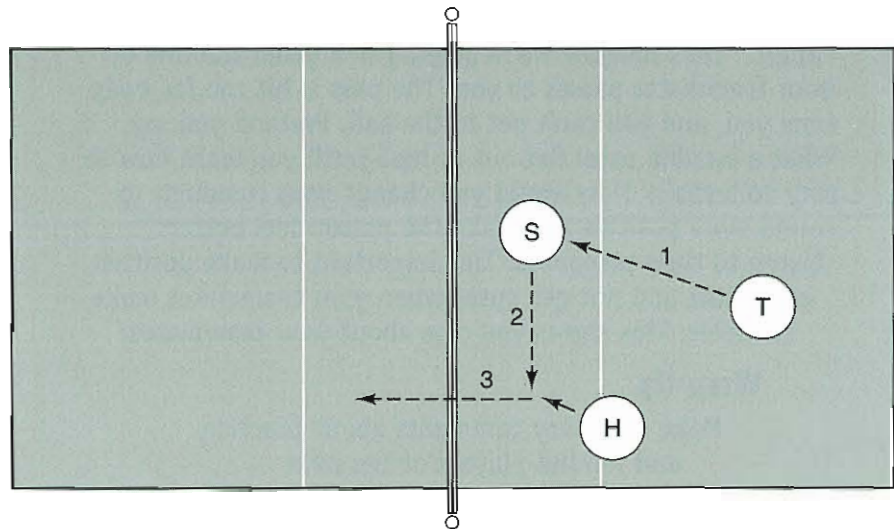
To win the point, focusing on overhand serving.

Equipment

 Beach balls or gator balls—one ball for every two players

Warm-Up (10 minutes)

In teams of three, a tosser slaps the side of the ball, prompting a setter to open up and call “Here!” The tosser then tosses a high ball (perfect pass) to the setter, who sets the ball high outside to a hitter, who hits a spike or tip. Have players attack from both the left and right side of the court. Allow players three to five trials, then rotate roles.



Fitness Circle (5 minutes)

Key Idea: Training and conditioning

Split the players into two or three groups. Give each group a ball. Instruct them to make a pass to another in their group. Continue for one minute, then bring everyone together. “Let’s say that activity finished our practice. Now you’re finished with practice for the week. What could you do tomorrow to stay active and practice skills that are similar to or the same type of thing we do in practice?” Listen to their responses. Discuss running, jumping, serving, and other skills.

“Your body loses its conditioning when you stop using it! It’s important to stay active outside of volleyball practices. This helps keep you fit for volleyball.”

Week 11

Game 1 (10 minutes)

Goal

To put the receiving team on the defense with an overhand serve.

Description

Play 3 v 3 (see figure on page 92). Players start in base position and use an overhand serve. Teams score a bonus point when the receiving team cannot return the serve.

Coach: What is the goal of the game?

Players: To use an overhand serve.

Coach: Why are overhand serves important to learn?

Players: They're harder to receive than underhand or roundhouse serves.



Skill Practice (20 minutes)

1. Introduce, demonstrate, and explain how to perform an *overhand serve* (see page 269).
2. Practice overhand serves.

Description

In partners, players start close to the net, attempting the overhand serve (see figure on page 111). When players are successful, they gradually move back toward the endline. Challenge players to get two serves in a row over the net and within court boundaries.

COACH'S cues



"Tee up the ball!"

"Lift ball!"

"Firm contact!"

"Open heel of hand!"

"Finish toward the top of the net!"



👉 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.



Game 2 (10 minutes)

Goal

To use the overhand serve in game play.

Description

Same as Game 1.

Team Circle (5 minutes)

Key Idea: Responsibility

Gather the players into a group. Choose one player to demonstrate with you. Let the player know you'll be setting the ball and that he or she should pretend to be in position to hit. Make a bad set to the player. Identify that the bad set was your mistake. "Raise your hand if you think it's a part of learning when you make a bad play." Give them time to raise their hands. "Now raise your hand if you think a bad play means you are not a good player." Give them time to raise their hands. "Everyone makes mistakes, and when you make one it does not mean you're not a good player. Taking responsibility for your play, even when you can improve, is an important quality for good players."

Wrap-Up

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

Variations

To simplify

Games—move the server into the court if needed or use a second-chance rule on serves.

Week 12

Warm-Up (10 minutes)

In partners, players start close to the net, working on the overhand serve (see figure on page 111). When players are successful, they gradually move back to the endline. Challenge players to get two serves in a row over the net and within court boundaries. Encourage servers to move forward into the court following their serves.

Fitness Circle (5 minutes)

Key Idea: Healthy habits

Gather the players into a group. "What kinds of food do you think are the best to eat when you play volleyball?" Listen to their responses. Encourage discussion to talk about the difference between healthy foods and unhealthy foods. Healthy choices include fruits, vegetables, grains or cereals, lean meats, plant proteins, and nut butters. Discourage soda, high-sugar foods, fatty meats, chips, and fried foods. "Your body needs all types of food to be healthy. Let's think of three healthy snacks you could eat that would give you energy to practice." Listen to responses and encourage everyone to contribute. Vote on whether the foods they name are the best choice or not. "Eating healthy snacks that give you extra energy to play volleyball is a healthy habit you should be practicing every day."

Game 1 (10 minutes)

Goal

To transition from defense to offense off the serve reception.

Description

Play 3 v 3 (see figure on page 92). Players start in base position and use an overhand serve. Award a bonus point to the receiving team when they successfully complete a forearm pass-set-hit combination.

PURPOSE

To attack as a team, focusing on two-player serve-receiving.

Equipment



Beach balls or gator balls—one ball for every two players



Coach: What is the goal of the game?

Players: To receive serve successfully and transition from defense to offense.

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

Players: Make a forearm pass to the setter.

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

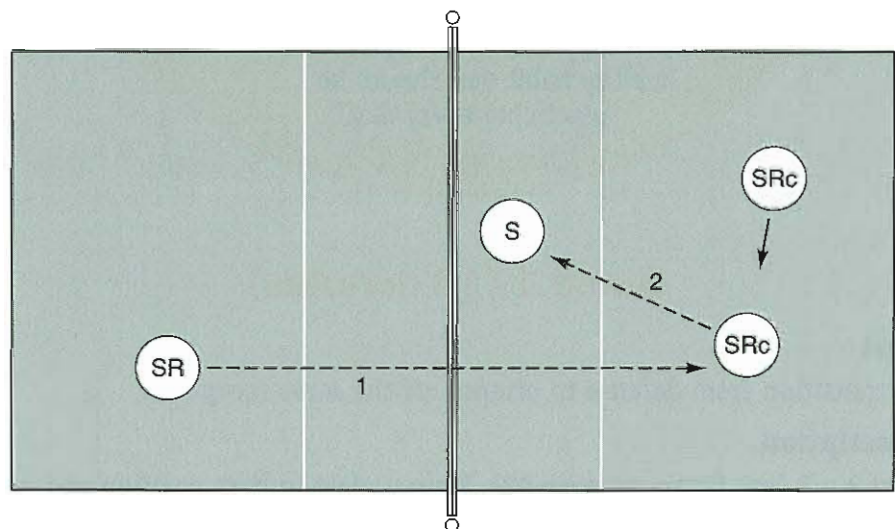
Players: Call the ball, help each other out, communicate.

Skill Practice (20 minutes)

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

Description

In groups of four, a server hits a modified overhand 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!"



Week 12

COACH'S cues



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

Game 2 (10 minutes)

Repeat Game 1, using a two-player serve-receive.

COACH'S point



☞ Reinforce the three-contact concept (pass-set-hit).

☞ Modify serves during the Skill Practice (with servers standing a few steps into the court) because the focus is not on serving but on serve-receiving. Players usually become proficient at the serve before they do at receiving the serve.

Team Circle (5 minutes)

Key Idea: Respect

Gather the players into groups of two. "Each of you tell your partner two or three ways you saw other players show respect this season. I'll give you two minutes." After two minutes, group all players together again. "Tell us what some of the examples were." Listen to examples and discuss. "It's important to notice respect being practiced and to talk about what we saw. All season we have been working on both volleyball skills and being good teammates. Improving both of those areas tells me you have respect for yourselves and your teammates."

Wrap-Up

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



Variations

To simplify

- Game—move the server into the court if needed or use a second-chance rule on serves.
- Skill Practice—start with a free-ball toss or an underhand serve, then move to overhand serves.

To challenge

- Skill Practice—let the setter set the ball and the attacker catch it and then repeat the serve-receive.