

TEACHING VOLLEYBALL

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About the Sport

Volleyball is a complex game of simple skills. The ball is hit from up to 60cm above the height of a basketball ring- that is 3.65m- and takes 0.3 sec to get from the attacker to the baseline. That means that the receiver must assess the incoming angle, decide where to pass the ball and then control the pass in the blink of an eye. A purely rebound sport- you cannot hold the ball-, volleyball is a game of constant motion.

A team can touch the ball three times on its side of the net. The usual pattern is a dig (an underarm pass made with the forearms), a set (an overhead pass with the hands) and a smash (the overhead attacking shot). The ball is served into play. Teams can also try to block the opponent's smash as it crosses the net. A block into your own court counts as one of your three touches in beach volleyball but not in the indoor game.

Power and height have become vital components of international teams, but the ability of teams and coaches to devise new strategies, tactics and skills has been crucial for success at the Games.

- Volleyball was invented in 1895 by William Morgan as a game for over weight business men at a YMCA in Holyoake Massachusetts.
- There are six players on court, who must each rotate in a clockwise direction every time their team wins back service from the opposition. Only the three players at the net positions can jump and smash or block near the net. The backcourt players can only hit the ball over the net if they jump from behind the attack line, also known as the three metre line, which separates the front court from the back court.
- Volleyball has developed into a very specialised sport. Most teams will include in their starting line up a setter, two centre blockers, two receiver-hitters and a universal smasher. Only certain players will be involved with service reception. Players will also have specialised positions for attack and defence. Six substitutions are allowed in a game.
- Teams score a point on every rally, regardless of which team served. The team that won the last rally makes the next serve.
- Matches are played to the best of 3 or 5 sets. The first two or four sets are played to 25 points and the final to 15 points. There is no ceiling so each set continues until one team has a two point advantage.
- After Sydney in 200 the specialist position of libero was introduced. This player wears a different uniform to the other players and can be substituted for any player in the back court. The libero cannot serve or smash the ball over the net or rotate into the front court positions. There must be at least one point between a libero leaving and re-entering the court. The libero added a new dimension to the back court defence, improving reception of service, lengthening rallies and giving a vital role to shorter players.

SERVICE

A serve begins each rally. A player must hit the ball with his or her hand over the net to land inside the lines of the court. Players may serve underarm or overarm. At top level most player use a jump service akin to a running smash from behind the service line.

Each player gets only one chance to serve. If the ball hits the net and goes over that is allowed.

When the serving team loses a rally, it loses the right to serve. The receiving team then rotates one position clockwise to bring up the next server. Every player in the team will have the chance to serve.

DIG or Underarm pass

The dig is a forearm pass that is used to control the ball and pass it to the setter at the net. It is usually the first contact by the team and an effective shot to use in defence, such as when receiving a smash.

SET

The "set" is an overhead pass used to change the direction of the dig and put the ball into a good position for the smasher.

It is usually the team's second contact. Setting is the tactical centre of volleyball. A setter must be good enough to keep the big blockers from dominating the net. The setter must feed his or her best hitters while also looking for opponent's blocking weaknesses (such as a short player on the front line or a slow centre blocker)

SMASH

The "smash" is when the ball is hit across the net. It is the most powerful shot in volleyball; and the most effective way to win a rally.

BLOCK

This is the first line of defence in volleyball. The objective of the "block" is to stop the smashed ball from crossing the net or to channel the smash to defenders. The three front court players share blocking. Teams usually opt for a "read and react" block (whereby they try to react to the ball leaving a setter's hands) or for a "commit" block (whereby they decide before the point whether to jump on the quick middle balls). The key to good blocking is penetration- the best blockers reach well over the net and into the opponent's court rather than reaching straight up, where they can easily be beaten by quality hitters.

ROTATE

Each of the six players on an indoor team rotates a position after winning back service from the opponent. This is the key to the tactics of indoor volleyball- you cannot simply keep your best smashers and blockers in the front court and your best servers and passers in the back.

After serving from position one, players rotate to position six (middle back) then position five (left back) position 4 (left front), position three (middle front) and position two (right front) before returning to serve.

A team must be in the correct rotation order before they serve. Once the ball is served, the players can move positions but the back court players cannot move to the three metre zone and smash or block. They must make all their attacking actions from behind the three metre or attack line (hence the advent of the backcourt attack to have good smashers hitting in all six rotations). The rotation rule explains why a setter appears to be "hiding" behind his or her players before a point. The setter must be in proper position before sprinting to the net or a point is given to the opposition.

OTHER FORMS OF VOLLEYBALL

1. Beach 2 v 2 court size 16m x 8m
2. VolleySport 2 v 2 for age U/11 on singles badminton court; Net 2.15m high
3. Mini Volley 3 v 3 age U/14 on doubles badminton court; Net 2.15m high
4. Super Mini 4 v 4 age U/15 on 14m x 7m court: Net 2.15m high
5. Park Volleyball grass courts 4 v 4 7m x 7m adult height
6. Universal Volley women under 175cm or men under 185cm ;normal court/height
7. Sitting volleyball. Para Olympic sport 6 v 6 court 10m v 6 :net 1.15m men and 1.05 women.

SAFETY ISSUES IN VOLLEYBALL

Volleyball lessons and coaching sessions require a large number of volleyballs. The nature of the game is such that players will misplay, or miss a ball frequently with the result that a ball enters the field of play/training of other players.

If this is not controlled then there is a great risk of a player inadvertently tripping over or getting a ball under their feet resulting in an ankle or leg injury.

The golden rule in volleyball is that when players lose control of the ball they retrieve it immediately or shout BALL to alert other players.

Prevention is better than cure

- Store all balls in a ball trolley, upturned box top, or between two upturned benches.
- Keep them in more than one container and keep them apart so that when students go to get balls they are not "fighting" to get them
- When balls are not required for a drill ensure that spare balls are securely stored before starting the drill.

"Red ready?"

A useful way of ensuring that all balls are safe and still in between drills or when you are giving instructions is to appoint one player in each group as RED.

That player is responsible for getting the ball for the drill, storing spare balls and putting the ball on the floor at their feet whenever you stop the activity. This way there will be no arguing over balls or knocking other people's balls away and you will be able to get on with teaching.

Prior to starting a drill make sure players are in the right position and ask RED are you READY before starting.

SAFE EQUIPMENT

- NEVER attempt to teach or play with posts supported by weights or ropes/wires attached back to the floor or wall. Players in their eagerness to play the ball may not see the ropes/wires or run into posts and pull them down.
- Do not attempt to teach or play with netballs/footballs etc. They are too heavy and will cause finger arm injuries.
- Don't use rubber balls even though they may say they are volleyballs. They will sting and bruise.
- Use the lighter weight balls now available from MIKASA. They are currently only £11inc VAT each retail.
KS1/2 Balls of 180grams
KS 3 Balls of 200 or 230 grams
KS 4 Balls of 260 or full size 280grams

MAKING COURTS

In the class situation a single volleyball court is impractical. Stretch a rope lengthways down the centre of the gym/hall or it is possible to get full length lightweight nets.

Sub divide the rope or nets by attaching coloured bands or tape on the rope. Use a colour coding so that when you move from 1v1 to 2v2, 3 v 3, the students can identify the appropriate widths.

The height should always be more than they can reach standing. A high net helps encourage students to play the ball "up and over" rather than "flat and at".

KEY CONCEPTS IN VOLLEYBALL

VOLLEYBALL IS A PERIMETER GAME

A volleyball court appears to be small for the number of players on it but it will get too crowded if players do not play their positions.

Volleyball is played from the perimeter inwards. This system increases the amount of time the player has to see the ball and prepare to move, it prevents players from "intercepting" balls that would be better played elsewhere and it enables a greater area of the court to be covered in defence.

This fundamental concept should be incorporated in the teaching strategy from the outset.

VOLLEYBALL IS A MOVEMENT GAME

A player should never be still during a game. They have to adjust to wherever the ball is and whoever is playing it.

By playing a perimeter game players will have to move in to play a ball and adjust their positioning so that they face the new direction in which the ball is to be passed. It is important that practices incorporate movement to play the ball and to change the direction of the pass.

VOLLEYBALL IS A MID LINE GAME

All ball sports have a spatial relationship with the ball either directly for example with the foot in football, or indirectly with a racket as in tennis. In volleyball successful performance in the passing techniques depends on playing the ball in the mid line of the body. Playing it outside this line very often results in an "illegal" handling of the ball in the case of the volley pass or a misdirected pass in the case of the underarm or dig pass.

This spatial relationship needs to be clearly identified with students from the outset to enable them to develop their techniques and enjoyment of the game.

The game sequence

There is a natural flow to the game that influences both the tactics of the game and the relative importance of the individual techniques.

Clearly the first action is the serve that puts the ball in play. Fail to get the ball over the net and in court and a point is lost. In a reasonable standard of competition an easy serve almost inevitably gives the point to the opposition.

The reason for this is that the receiving side is the attacking side and has all the advantages. It has the ball, it can determine the point of the attack, the timing of the attack, the quality and strength of the attacker and the time the smashed ball takes to cross the net and into the opposing back court is less than the movement time of the fastest player. To stand a chance of winning the rally the serving side are relying on a mistake in serve reception, a poor set to an attacker which gives the block a good chance to intercept the smash or a backcourt player who anticipates the direction and angle of the attack really well. The attacking team has a 70% chance of winning the rally. So at international level servers have to take a risk and go for an ace.

At novice level the inability to get the ball across the net prevents games from getting started. So don't insist on a standard serve- allow a throw or a volley over, let the serve be made from inside the court if necessary.

The second action is the dig or underarm pass. This is probably the most important technique to learn. It passes the ball forward to the setter both from the serve and smash. It can be used to play the ball to the smasher or across the net to keep the rally going.

The third action is the volley pass used to set the ball to the smasher. This pass needs to have height to be of any use. It must be played up in the air and drop down in front of the next player. If it is played flat and low then it can't be smashed and is also difficult to play on with another volley.

The next two actions the smash and the block, are advanced actions played with the player off the ground. This increases the difficulty level. When teaching novices it is not necessary to introduce these techniques. The volley pass can be used to make the final attacking pass across the net until players have mastered the two fundamental passes.

Introducing the game through small size courts with fewer players relates the skill level to the limits of the playing space available. The greater the distance the ball has to be played the greater the chances of it being played out of the range of the next player. Long distances require the coordination of physical strength to technical ability which is very difficult in a sport like volleyball that has few similarities with the techniques of other sports.

When players are capable of playing in a competitive game their natural instinct is to concentrate on training their attacking skills particularly the smash. However, the nature of the game as has been explained requires the players to master the serve and also the dig pass more than the smash. If the served ball does not put the opposition under pressure the point will be lost; if the serve reception is inaccurate in direction, length or height then the setter will not be able to deliver a good ball for the smasher to hit.

At club and international level a higher proportion of training time should be spent on the techniques of serving and passing than smashing.

Model for developing volleyball through small sided games

Game Format	Fundamentals	Skills	Tactics
Lead up games Ball over the net	Ball flight judgement Control of space	Moving Catch and throw 2 handed catch and throw	Defensive base Attack into space
1 v 1	Ready posture Beat the ball	Volley pass	Attack from close to the net
2 v 2	Linking with team -mate Playing off the ball	Volley pass through an angle	Three touches to build an attack Covering court(receiving service and defending attack)
3 v 3	Movement forwards sideways and backwards	Forearm pass Underarm serve Attack with jump-volley or smash	Service Reception formation(designated setter) Defence with or without a block Cover of attacker Front and back court players
4 v 4		Reverse volley/set Two person block Over arm serve Emergency defensive skills (Advance players only)	Width in attack Deception in attack Cover against tip attack
6 v 6		Development and refinement of skills	Service reception e.g. W + 1 Attack system e.g. setter at 3 Attack cover e.g. 1-3-2 Defence system e.g. 2-1-3

Model for Developing Volleyball through Small-sided Games.

Although the most common form of volleyball is six-a-side, it is considered best to introduce the skills and tactics using small-sided games. The games of mini volleyball (three-a-side) and super minivolley (four-a-side) have been developed specifically for children between nine/ten and thirteen/fourteen years of age. This section shows how fundamentals, skills and tactics can be introduced within an evolving game related-related programme. Table 1 summarises this model.

The format used in this section links the skills and tactics to the rules of the game, and it is advocated that this method should be used in that it provides a gradual "drip feed" of skills, tactics and rules which are seen in a relevant context.

Game Format – Ball over the Net

Object of the game: to throw the ball over the net to land on your opponent's court.

Conditions for Game Play

Court size: 4m x 2m approximately

Net height: 1m higher than reach height of the tallest players

Balls: Any available: tennis balls = quick movement,
basketballs = "strength" development

Contacts: Use a progression, for example:

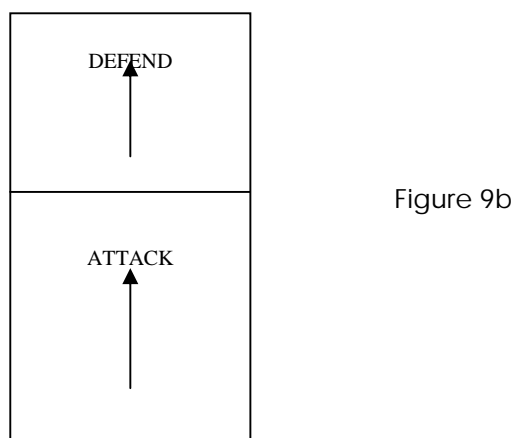
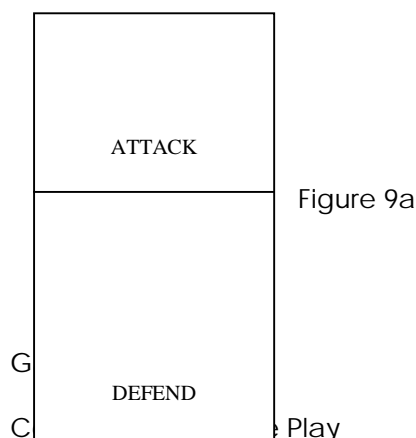
- Catch and throw; can move with the ball
- Catch and throw; cannot move with the ball
- Catch and throw; must pass to self in order to move. For example: two passes to get the ball to the net; third pass; attack shot over the net.
- As iii. all catches, throws and passes to self must be with two hands.
- As iv. With two hands above head height.

Official Volleyball Rules Introduced

Players are not allowed to cross the centre line of the court.

Tactics

- Attack from near the net.
- Throw ball into space, not to your opponent.
- Defend from base position.



Court size: From 4m x 2m up to 6m x 3m depending on age and ability of players.

Net height: Between 0.5m and 1m higher than reach height of tallest players.

Contacts: Use progression, for example:

- i. Any number of volleys permitted
- ii. Maximum three volleys permitted
- iii. Maximum two volleys permitted

Scoring: One point every rally. Winner of rally serves (with a volley from the back of the court). Play to time e.g. three minutes, or points e.g. first to eleven points.

Official Rules Introduced

Ball "in", ball "out", serve touching the net is fault.

Tactics

As for Ball over the Net.

Game Format 2 v 2

Conditions for Game Play

Court size: From 6m x 3m to 8m x 4m, depending on age and ability of players.

Net height: Between 0.5m and 1m higher than the reach height of tallest players.

Ball: Light plastic or mini volleyball.

Contacts: Use catch and throw to teach tactics; then progress to volleys only. Use a progression for example:

- i. Unlimited number of contacts.
- ii. Minimum of two, maximum of three, contacts.

Gradually increase strictness of handling to eliminate all obvious throws and catches.

Scoring: Use progression, for example:

- i. One point every rally
- ii. Win point only when own team has served.

Official Rules Introduced

1. Scoring system – a team wins points only when it serves (similar to badminton).
2. Rotation – the team rotates when it wins the right to serve.
3. Players not allowed to touch the net or cross the centre line.

Tactics

Base position and serve reception positions are shown in Fig 10a.

Figure 10b shows the three touch ball pathway used to build an attack.

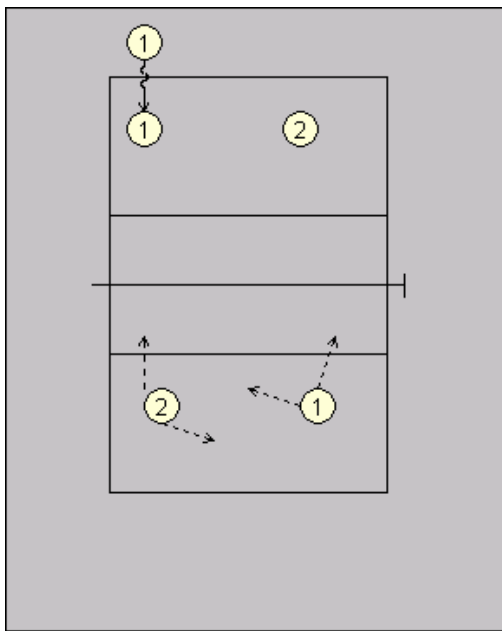


Figure 10a Base Positions and service reception attack

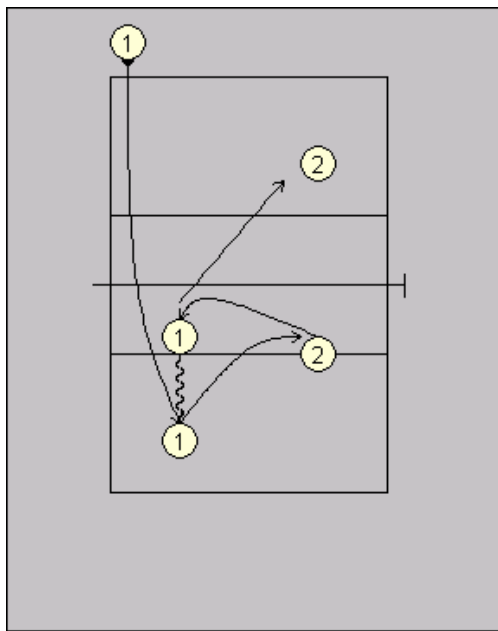


Figure 10b Use 3 touches to attack

Players should:

- a) be aware of their partners. Be ready to chase a bad pass.
- b) be aware of their opponents. Play the ball into a space or between the two players.
- c) call for the ball every time "mine" not "yours".
- d) help team mates by moving into the target zone early and calling for the pass "to me".
- e) help team mates by calling the ball "out".
- f) volley high when passing to team mates.
- g) volley low when playing the ball over the net.

Game Format 3 v 3 – Mini Volleyball

Conditions for Game Play

Court size: From 8m x 4m to 12m x 6m, depending on ability of players and court marking available. (Inside lines of a badminton court are satisfactory)

Net height: As 1 v 1 when volleying only is being used. Reduce to fingertip height of tallest player when smash is introduced.

Ball: Mini volleyball

Contacts: Forearm pass, underarm serve and smash and block are all introduced in this phase.

Sensitive calling of handling faults is needed to:

- a) ensure game can flow, but
 - b) to give an incentive to improve handling skills.
- Minimum two touches, maximum three touches. (This ensures that players pass to team mates and stops 'volley tennis' being played)

Scoring: See rules below.

Official Rules Introduced

1. The server is designated as a back court player and is not allowed to block or smash.
2. The block does not count as one of the team's three contacts.
3. Server must serve from behind the baseline.
4. Net contact and centre line faults are strictly enforced (to prevent blocking and smashers landing on top of each other at the net).
5. Only the serving team can score a point. A team wins a set when it reaches fifteen points with a lead of 2 points, e.g. 15-13. If the score reaches 14-14, then 16-14, 17-15 wins. If the score is tied at 16-16, then 17-16 wins. Matches are normally the best of three sets.

Tactics

- a) There are three court zones. Players rotate clockwise when they win the right to serve. (See Figure 11)

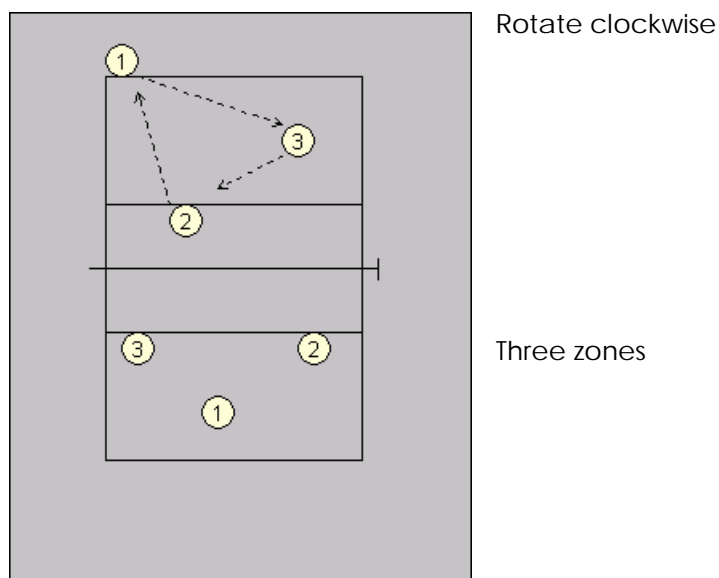


Figure 11

- b) Service reception formation: designated setter is player 2 who stands at the net; players 1 and 3 receive service (See Figure 12)

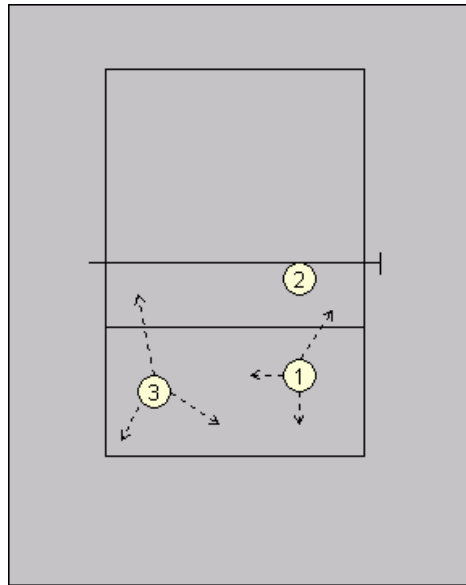


Figure 12

- c) Three touch volleyball = pass, set, attack (See Figure 13)

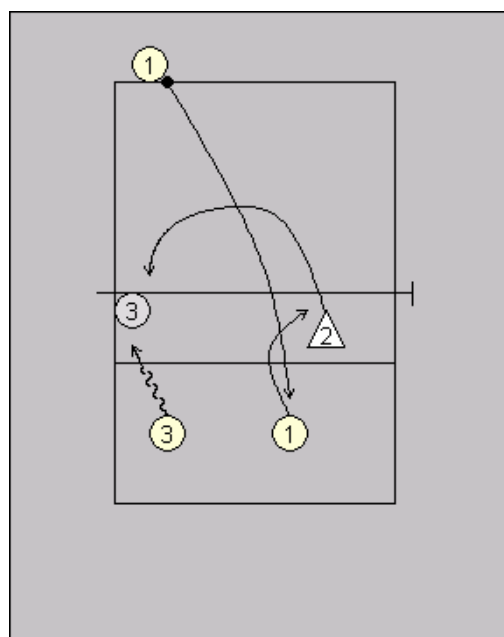


Figure 13

- d) Cover the smasher to pick up the ball if it rebounds back into court off the block (See Figure 14)

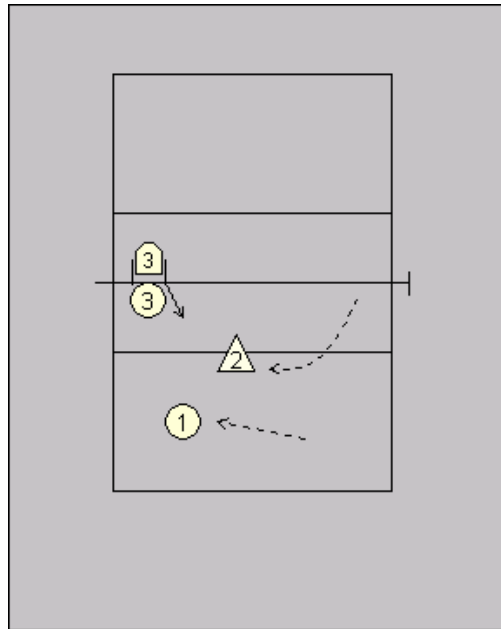


Figure 14

- e) Defence win no block. Player 2 covers against the short attack; players 1 and 3 cover deep. (See Figure 15)

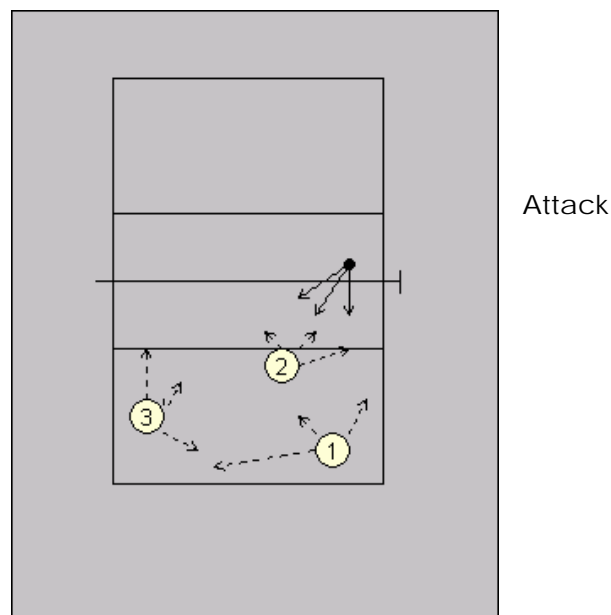


Figure 15

- f) Defence with one blocker. Use only against a strong smasher. Full lines indicate area of court that should be covered by the block. Player 2 may move behind the block cover against a tip attack (See Figure 16)

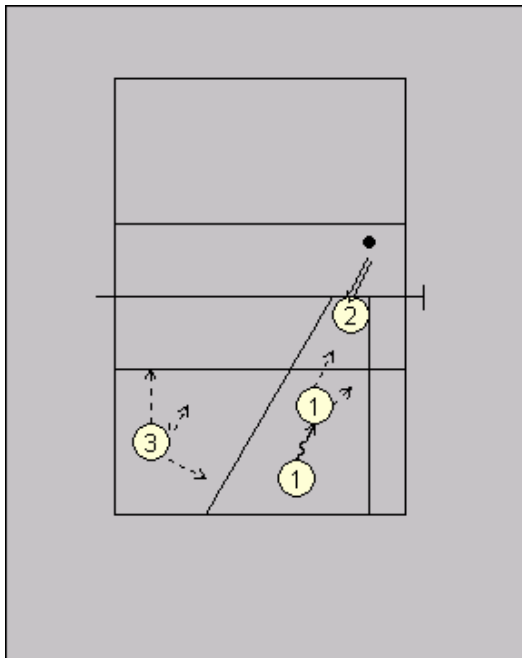


Figure 16

Game Format 4 v 4 – Super minivolley

Conditions for Game Play

Court size: 14m x 7m (outside lines of badminton court).

Net height: 2.10 meters.

Ball: Volleyball.

Contacts: As per official rules.

Scoring: As per official rules.

Official Rules Introduced

There is an attack line two meters from the net. The back court player 1 cannot smash the ball from in front of the attack line.

Tactics

- a) There are four court zones. Player 1 is a back court player. Players 2, 3 and 4 are front players. (See Figure 17).

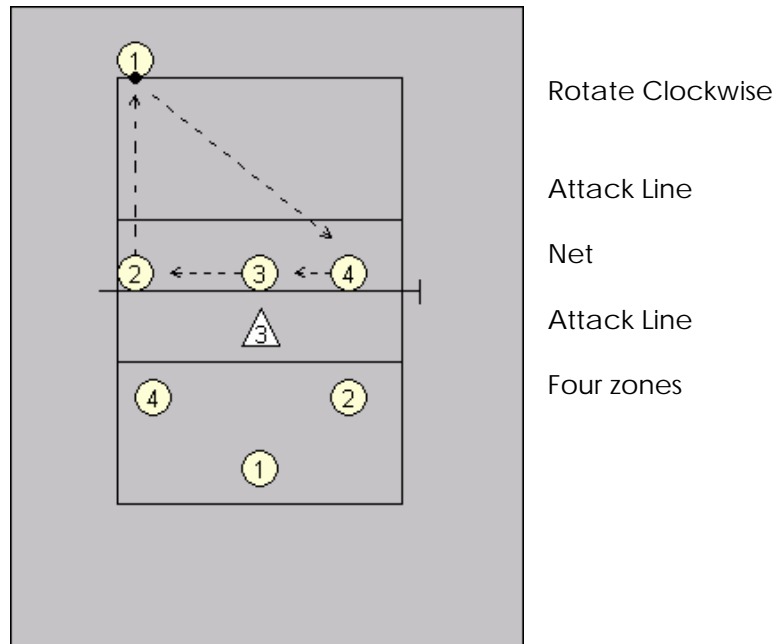


Figure 17

- b) Service reception formation: designated setter is player 3. Players 4, 1 and 2 are ready to receive the serve (See Figure 18).

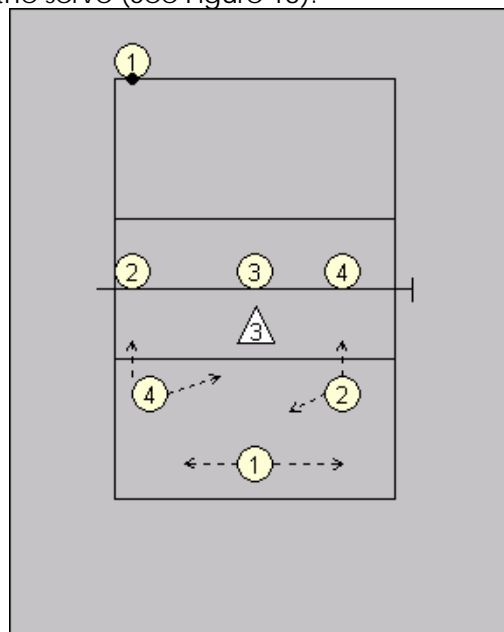


Figure 18

- c) After ball has been served and received the setter has two attack options: to set either to player 2 or to player 4. (See Figure 19).

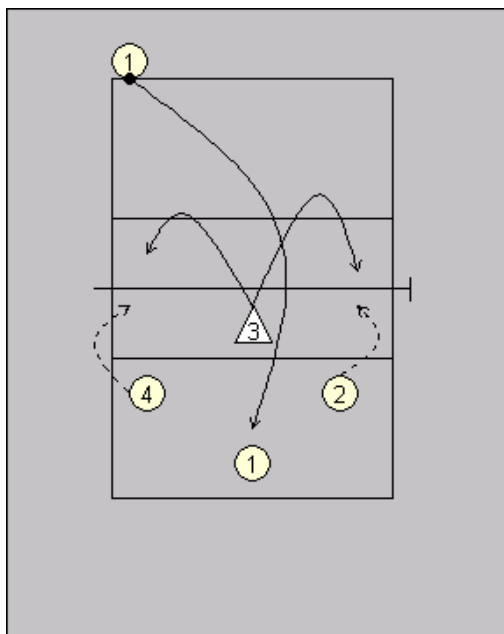


Figure 19

- d) Attack cover formation for attack by player 4: 1 - 2 - 1 system. (See Figure 20). No 4 attacks against opposition Blockers 4 & 3. Setter 3 comes back off net for close cover. Players 2 & 1 swing around for deep cover of the blocked ball.

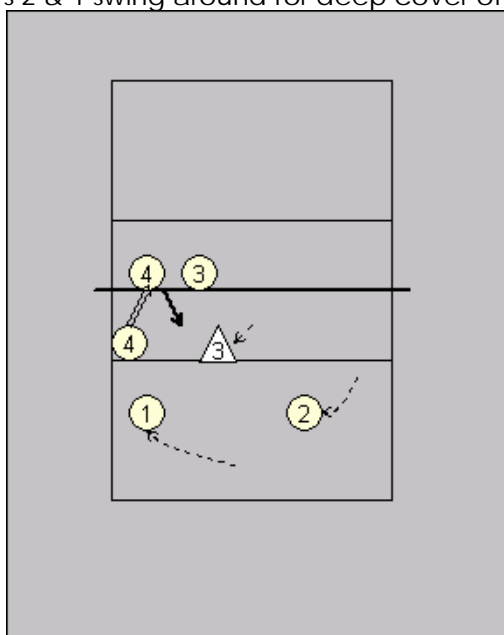


Figure 20

- e) Defence with no blockers. Player 3 covers short, player 4, 1 and 2 cover deep. (See Figure 21).

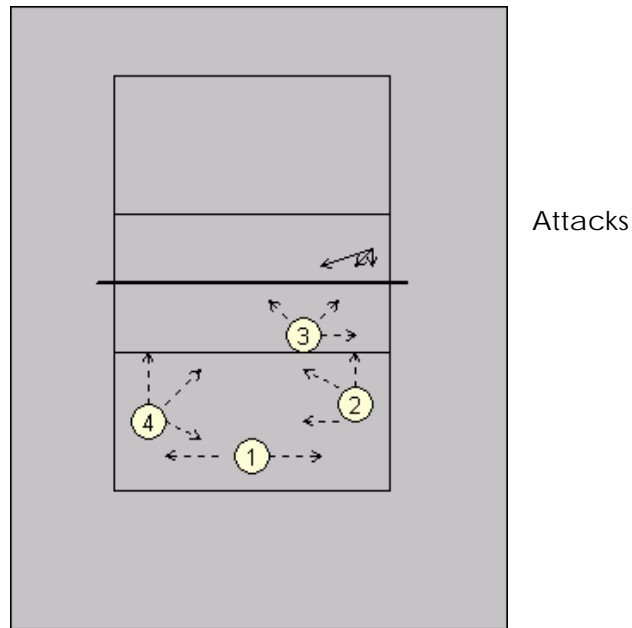


Figure 21

- f) Defence with 1 blocker, Player 2 covers the tip. Players 4 and 1 cover deep outside the area covered by the block. (See Figure 22).

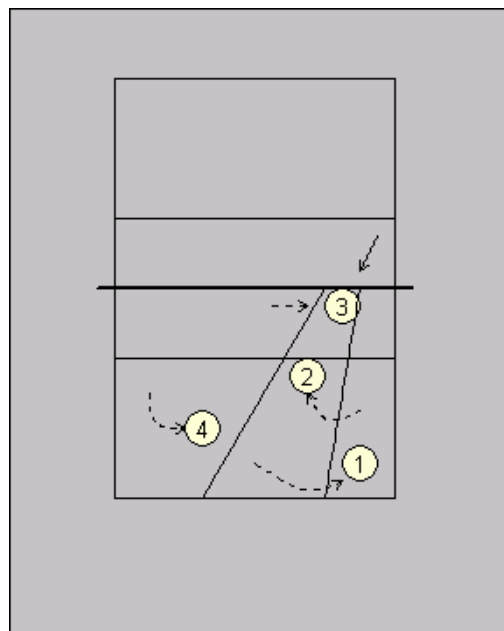


Figure 22

- g) Defence with one blocker against an attack through zone 4. (See Figure 23).

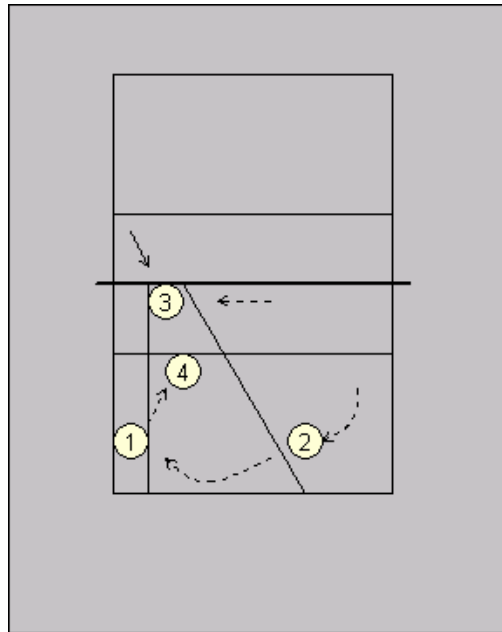


Figure 23

Game Format – 6 v 6

Conditions for Game Play

Court Size: 18m x 9m. Around the court, 3m. or free space.

Net height: 2.24m for women; 2.43m for men; under 14, 2.17m; under 15, 2.17m for girls, 2.24m for boys; under 16, 2.24m for girls, 2.35m for boys; under 17, 2.24m for girls, 2.43m for boys.

Ball: Leather volleyball.

Contacts: As per official rules.

Scoring: As per official rules.

Official Rules Introduced

1. Two time-outs per team per set allowed
2. Six substitutions per team per set allowed.
3. Rotation: All the players are “paired “horizontally and “vertically” at the moment the serve is struck, the players must be in a particular order:

In the front line, player 3 must be between 2 and 4 and in front of 6. In the back line, player 6 must be between 1 and 5 and behind 3. Player 2 must be in front of 1, and 4 must be in front of 5, (See Figure 24).

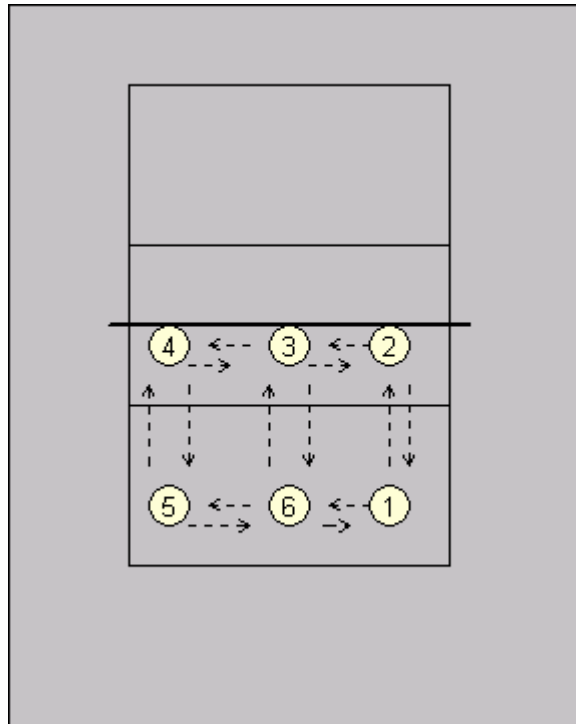


Figure 24

Once the ball has been served, the players may move about and occupy any position in their own court.

Tactics

A basic tactical system which would be suitable for introducing the six-a-side game is described here.

- a) There are six zones. Players 4, 3 and 2 are in front court and 1, 6 and 5 are in back court. (Back court players not allowed to block or smash from in front of the attack line).

Players rotate one place clockwise when their team wins the right to serve. (See Figure 25).

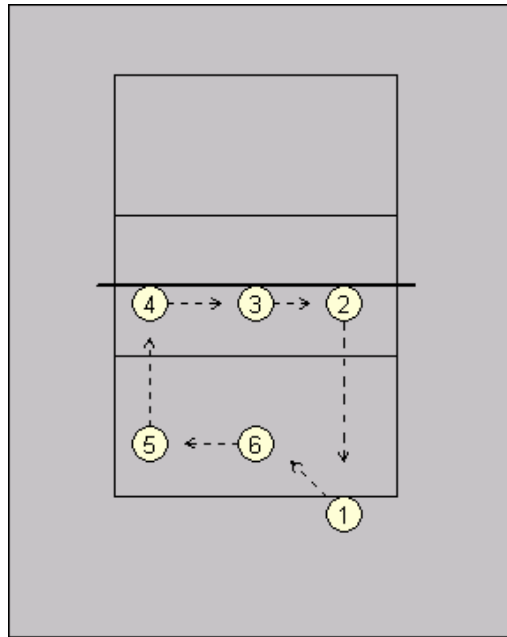


Figure 25

b) The service reception formation shown is known as a W + 1. (See Figure 26).

Player 3, middle front is designated as the setter. The other five players form a W shape to cover the court in order to receive the serve and pass it to the setter. Then players 4 & 2 may make an attack within the 3 metre zone between the net back and the attack line. Players in the back three positions 1, 6 & 5 may only make an attack where they contact the ball above the height of the net, provided they take off from behind the attack line.

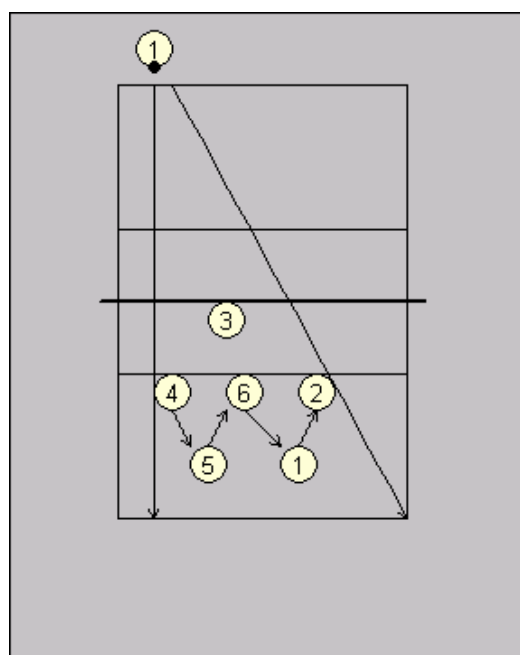


Figure 26

A typical movement pattern showing how the players move in relation to each other in order to cover the court is shown in Figure 27.

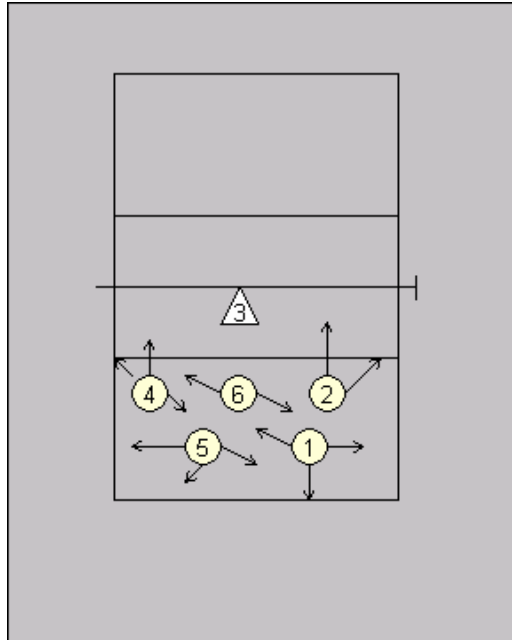
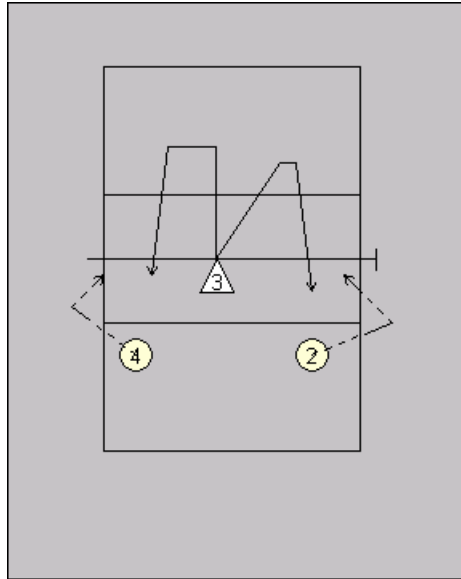


Figure 27

c) There are two attack options for the setter 3. He/she can set to either of the other two front court players 2 or 4, for them to jump and smash the ball. (See Figure 28).

Figure 28



- d) All the players must move to cover the attacker in case the ball rebounds off the block and back into their court. This particular cover formation is known as 1-3-2 (1 = smasher 4; 3 = three close cover players 3, 6 and 5; 2 = two deep cover players, 1 and 2). (See Figure 29).

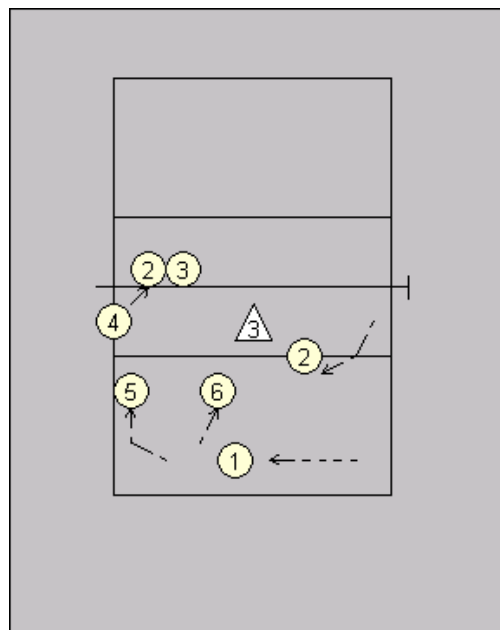


Figure 29

- e) After a team has serve, they will be required to defend against the opposition's attack. In preparation they take up their defensive base positions. The three front court players prepare to block, starting at the net as shown. The three back court players prepare to defend any ball that might go past or over the block. The system shown is known as "6 - back". (see Figure 30).

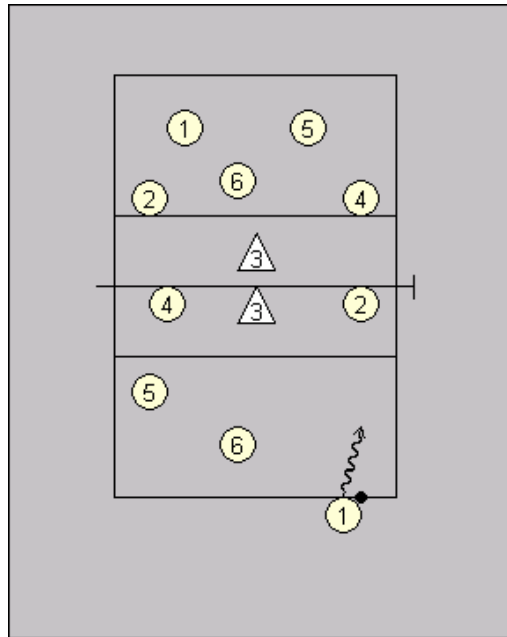


Figure 30

- f) In the six-a-side game, it is normal to use two blockers to try to stop the smash. The other players move to cover the rest of the court. Figure 31 shows a typical defensive formation against an attack through zone 2.

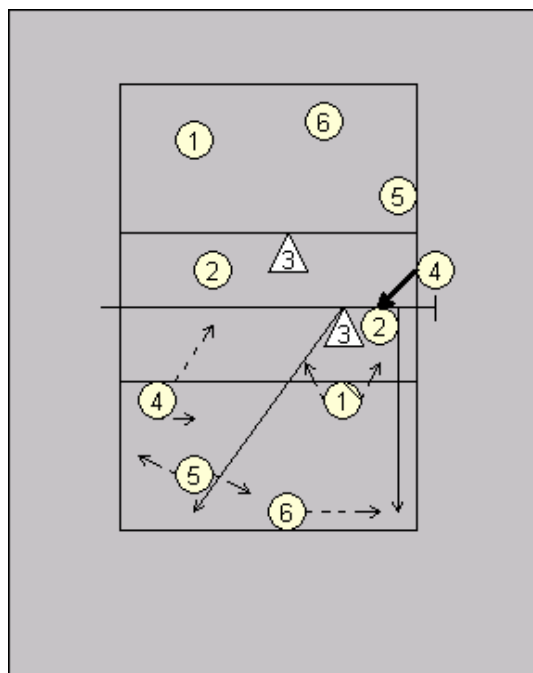


Figure 31

Players 2 and 3 form a two person block. Player 1 moves up behind the block to cover any ball tipped over the block. Player 6 stays deep behind the block to cover an attack which comes over the top of the block. Players 4 and 5 defend against the cross-court smash. This can be described as a 2-1-3 defensive system. 2 = blockers, 1 = close cover, 3 = deep cover players. It is also known as a wing cover or a rotate defence. (See Figure 31).

There are other defensive formations that are played in competitive volleyball. This formation starts players off in a system that will make the transition to the more advanced systems relatively easy.

Summary

This unit has given a broad outline of how volleyball can be introduced through a small-sided game model, and outlines simple tactics which might be used in curriculum volleyball.

CONTROLLING SPACE

The control of space, both as an individual and as a member of a team, is vital in the game of volleyball. For this reason, players need to have an understanding of controlling their own space, either in defence or attack before they can operate effectively in a team context.

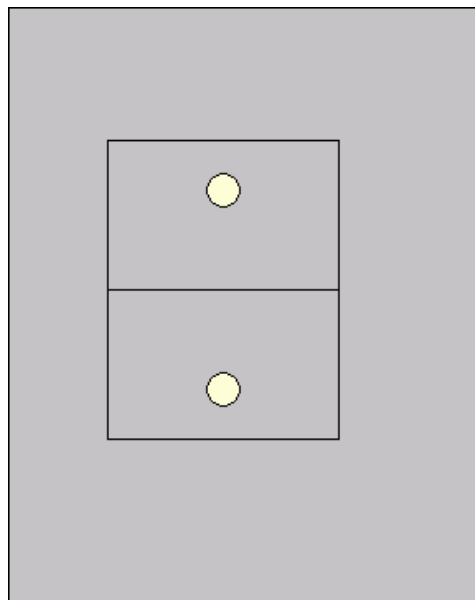
The idea of controlling space can be introduced in the initial lead up volleyball games of ball over the net and 1 v 1. The concepts introduced here can also be very useful when teaching other team sports such as basketball or football.

The basic principles of controlling space are:

1. Base position

The best place for a player to start from to defend his/her court is towards the back and in the middle because;

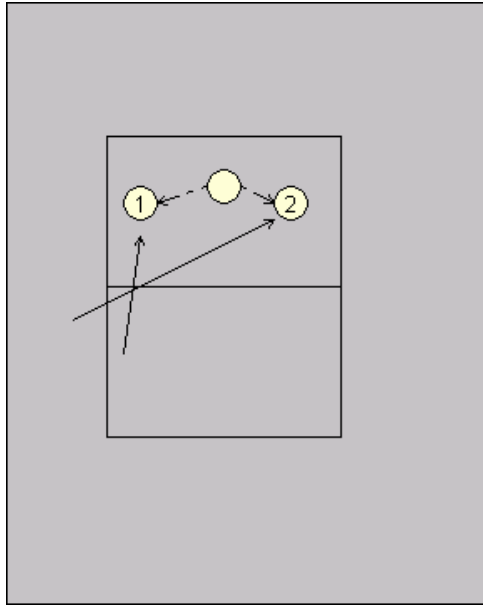
1. it is easier to move forwards than backwards to play the ball.
2. and taking a balanced middle position gives an equal chance to defend to the left or to the right. The idea of a defensive base is thus established.



Base position
Mid court in the rear third

2. Read the attack

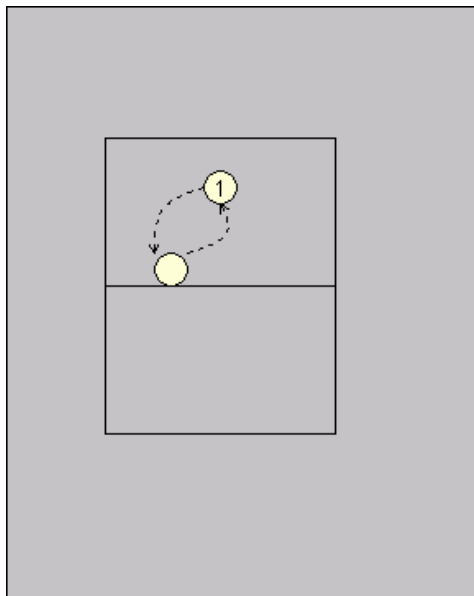
It is important to watch the attacker and move to get in line with the direction he/she is facing as this is the direction they are most likely to attack.



- The defender will move from the Base position into direct line with the attack e.g. position 1 for a line shot and 2 for a diagonal

3. Return to base

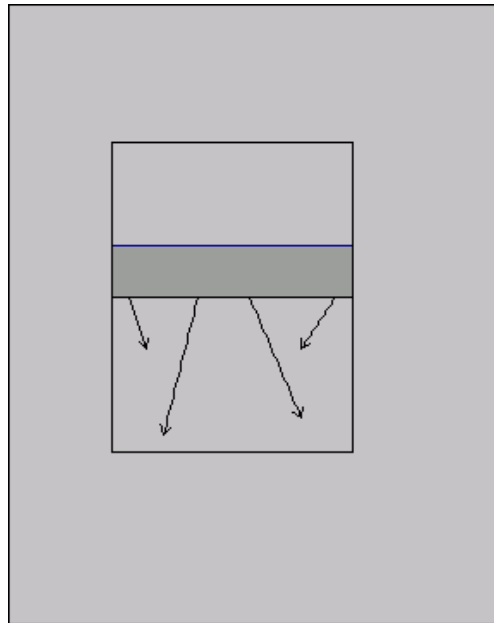
After moving forward from the Base position to play the ball over the net, finish the movement cycle by going back to the defensive position.



Draw the comparison with the ebb and flow of the tide or throwing something in the air, what goes up must come down; so a player moves to the ball and back to the base position.

4. Attack from the Net

It is better to attack the opponent's court from a position close to the net because this gives less time to anticipate where the ball is going and hence defend their court.



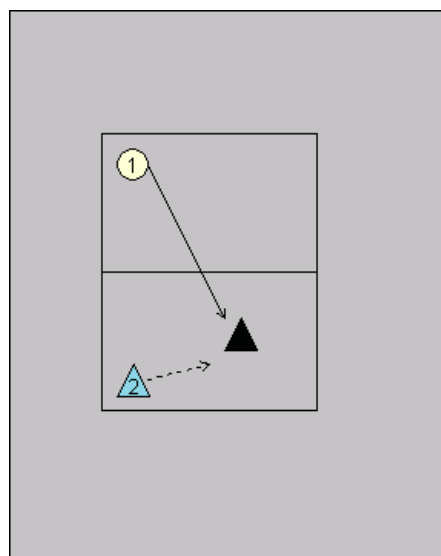
Attack from unshaded area is weak.

Attack from here is strong

Practices for controlling space

1. "Roll off Court"

- Aim:** To teach players to observe and react to the direction of play.
- Numbers:** In two's. 1 v 2 in a court 2-3 metres square.
- Purpose:** Try to roll ball out of area.
- Rules:** The player must roll the ball the way he/she is facing with two hands
- Teaching:** Watch the opponent, see where they are facing and anticipate the direction of the attack. Move early. Make your partner move.



2. "Ball over the net"

Aim: To introduce the concepts of attack and defence in a simple volleyball-like game.

Numbers: in two's A v B

Purpose: A catch and throw game trying to bounce the ball on the opponents' court.

Rules: Net height 2.5 metres. Overall court dimensions 4-6m x 4-6metres

Teaching Points Move to the attack.
Defend from towards the back of the court.

Progressions: Make the game more volleyball-like.
For example, two handed catch and throw above the head.
No running with the ball. The player must pass to self in order to get closer to the net to attack

Teaching Points: Back to base
Attack into space
Read the attack

Advanced Practices

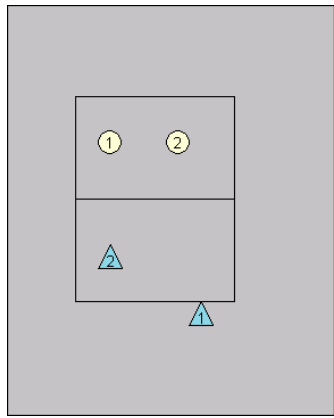
1. 2 v 2 Catch and throw

Aim: To develop concepts of attack and defence in a team. A catch and throw, game, one defender has responsibility to defend main attack direction (the direction the main attacker is facing), the second covers (balances) the rest of the court.

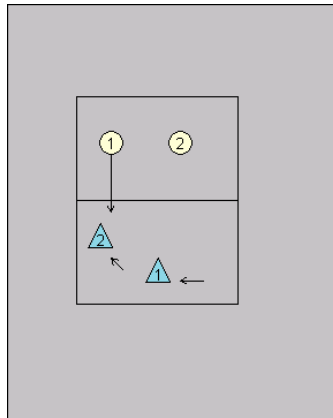
Rules: Must pass to partner, no moving with the ball.

Teaching: To cover the space between the players one player takes responsibility for a short ball, while the other covers the long ball.

Talk to your partner. Call the ball.
Vary the attack.

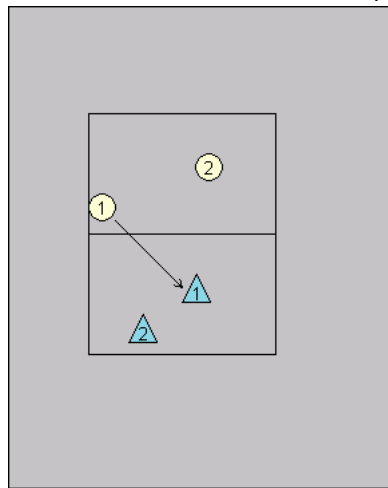


Starting positions



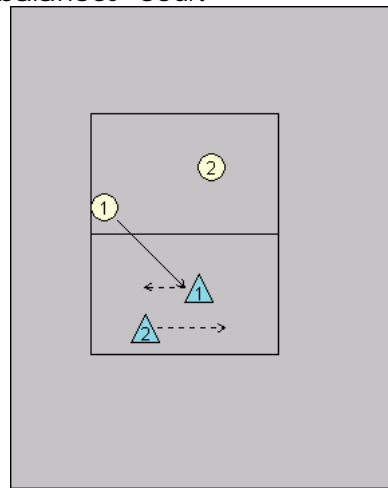
2 covers main attack direction

1 "balances" court



1 covers main attack

2 Balances court



1 covers short balls

2 covers long balls

Techniques of Volleyball

Volleyball requires all players to master to some degree all the techniques. Some players will have a specialist role in the game e.g. setter which will mean they will have to develop at least one of the skills to a higher level.

The variety of techniques poses problems for novices and it is better to concentrate on the main “movers” of the ball around the court; the Volley or overhead pass, the Dig or underarm pass and the underarm serve.

With these three techniques a game can be played both in KS3 and KS4. The other techniques of the smash for attack, the block and backcourt defence and other forms of serve can be introduced as overall competence in the game develops.

With beginners it is important to establish a few fundamental elements of the technique that they can concentrate on and build up.

Volley pass Play the ball in the midline of the body
Hands above head
Fingers spread wide around ball
Extend from the elbows
Play the ball high and not at the next player

Underarm pass Play the ball in the midline of the body
Keep arms straight
Reach away from the body
Hands above waist height
Let the ball rebound off you – don't hit it

Underarm serve Keep both the ball holding arm and the hitting arm straight

Swing the arm like a pendulum

Hit the ball with the closed hand

Follow through with the arm towards the target

The Volley Pass

Ten keys to success

1. Arrive early

Get to the point where you will contact the ball as early as possible to give yourself as much time as possible to adjust to the flight and the direction you wish to play

2. Play ball above and in front of forehead

Bend the legs to get below the ball and extend up and forward as you play it

3. Keep the ball in the midline

Play the ball in the centre of the body for maximum control and accuracy.

4. Body balanced

Adopt a firm base with the legs shoulder width apart, right foot just ahead of the left.

5. Keep balanced

Adopt a firm base with feet shoulder width apart and right foot just ahead of left.

6. Shape of hands

Make a cup shape with the fingers to get maximum control of the ball

7. Elbows out

Form a 90-degree angle at the forefingers with the elbows

8. Stretch from elbows

When the ball enters the hands stretch the arms from the elbows upwards and forwards

9. Smooth release of ball and hand touch

Keep the fingers relaxed, make the contact, and release movement smooth.

10. Point thumbs after ball

Play through the ball by pointing the thumbs after the flight of the ball

Ten keys to successful Underarm passing

1. Focus on the server

As soon as the rally ends focus on the server, his court and body position

2. Be ready early

Adopt the ready position, arms in front, legs flexed, shoulder width apart eyes on the server

3. Move with shuffle steps

Focus on the served ball as you move using short shuffle steps that help you keep a strong balanced position at all times.

4. Keep arms out in front

Stretch the arms in front of the body at waist height and use them to line you up with the serve.

5. Stop before you play the ball

Try to make a firm plant of the feet with the arms in position before you play the ball. This gives you a strong platform on which to play the ball

6. Keep the ball in the midline of the body

Play the ball in the centre of the body for more control and accuracy. If you have to play it to one side drop the inside shoulder to angle the arms behind the ball.

7. Rigid platform

Keep the arms straight from the wrists through the elbows to the shoulders.

8. Get the angle

Before you contact the ball line your feet and shoulders with the target point so that you will not have swing at the ball.

9. Feel the ball

Each serve has a different angle and speed. You must try and develop a feel for the ball so you can add or take away speed as necessary.

10. Steer it

Control the ball don't let it control you. Steer it with your legs, hips, shoulders and arms to the setter.

Underarm Serve – Tips

- *Face direction of serve.*
- *Point feet, hips, shoulders toward target.*
- *Hold ball in path of striking arm.*
- *Swing hitting arm like a pendulum to contact ball.*
- *Hit ball with heel of hand or closed fist.*
- *Transfer your body weight after the ball.*

TEN KEYS TO SUCCESSFUL SERVING

1. Focus and prepare well

As you walk back to serve compose yourself, identify your target, and assume the correct body and court position before making eye contact with the referee

2. Be consistent

Establish a routine and keep to it.

3. Establish the lines – ball & arm, ball and target

Check the position of the ball before the toss with the hitting arm; line up the ball and body with the target.

4. Check the feet

The feet should be in line with the target

5. Build up the momentum

Give yourself room to move into ball and transfer your body weight through it

6. Control the toss

Everything depends on an accurately placed toss bringing the ball directly into line with the arm and hand

7. Aim high

Reach up to the ball to ensure that you contact it as near or above net height as possible

8. Hit in front

Keep the ball in front of you in line with your shoulder for maximum power and accuracy.

9. Make that contact

Ensure that you either make a firm contact with the ball using the closed fist or open hand depending on the type of serve.

10. Hit through the ball

Always follow through with the hand and bodyweight so that the serve is at maximum power

Equipment

The best brand for volleyballs in terms of quality, longevity against price is MIKASA. Available from most catalogues. Rucanor/Tachikara is a reasonable brand.

Most other brands either have poor touch characteristics and the quality is such that they lose shape very quickly.

Sources of information

Federation International Volleyball (FIVB)

(Free download of rules)

<http://www.fivb.ch/>

English Volleyball Association

Currently does not offer a great deal of teaching resources but more are planned

<http://www.volleyballengland.org/>

Eire Volleyball Association

Very good J4 programme/publications on small side volleyball teaching adapted from the Canadian VBA Successful programme. Worth getting.

<http://www.clubi.ie/volleyball/home.htm>

Canadian Volleyball Association

Has produced some good publications including ones on Mini Volleyball

<http://www.volleyball.ca/index.asp?page=157>

USA Volleyball Association

Free download guide to volleyball. Has the essentials but some terminology is "American" rather than international

<http://www.usavolleyball.org/Media/Education/guidetovbbasics.pdf>