

**Terminology:**

**Rotation 1:** The rotation in which your setter is in the right back position.

**Rotation 2:** The following rotation, in which your setter is in the middle back position.

**Rotations 6:** The rotation in which your setter is in the right front position.

**M1/O1:** The middle and outside who surround the first setter.

**M2/O2:** The middle and outside who have a person between them and the setter.

\*\*It is worth it to discuss these terms with your team early in the season. Once they know the terms, when you are setting up scrimmages you can just say, "we're going to start in rotation three, with Suzy as the O1 and Sally as the O2" and the setup becomes much quicker.

**Strategy In Designing a Lineup:**

**Which rotation to start in:** It depends on your team and their skill level. If you are at a younger age where serving and passing are most critical, line up so that your strongest servers go to the line first, or so that your strongest passers go across the back row first.

Older teams, consider your matchups. How can you align your strongest blockers or defenders against their strongest attackers? Can you match up your strongest attacker with their weakest blockers?

**M1 v M2 and O1 v O2?** Your M1 and O1 will probably be your stronger hitters, because they spend the most time in the front row when there are only two offensive options. Because your M1 is with the setter twice, if you have one middle who is better at slides than the other, make her your M1.

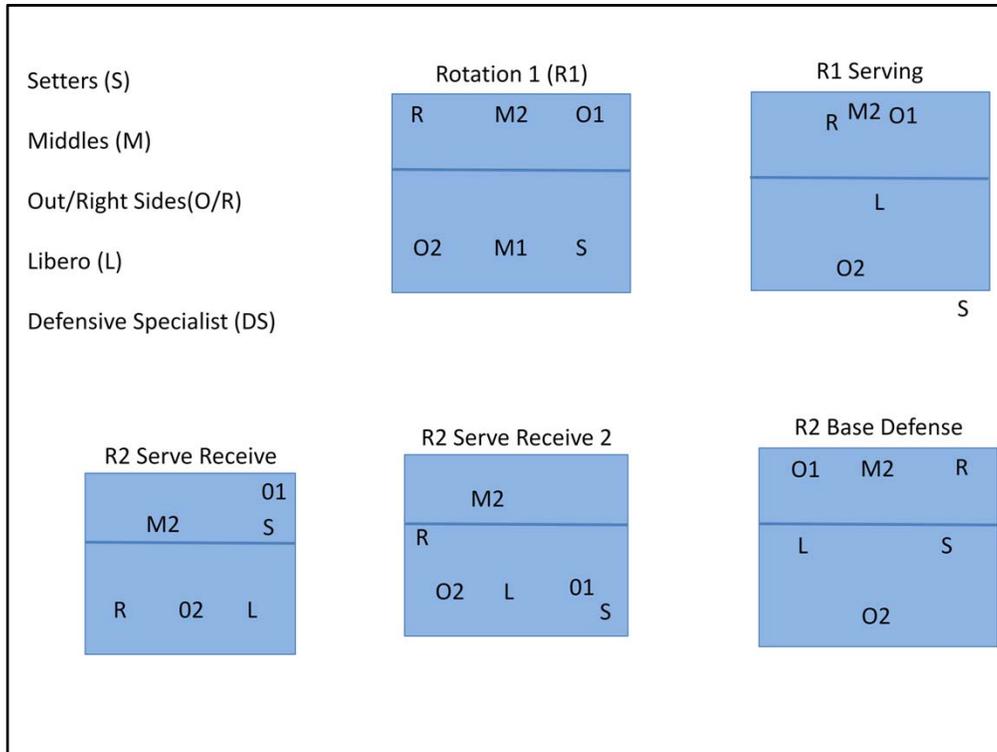
**Middles or Outsides Lead the Setter?** In the guide below, the middles lead (serve right before) the setters on the court. While the decision is up to you, having your middles lead makes it easier for you to drop your front row outsides back into the serve receive pattern. If your outsides lead your setters, it becomes easier to drop your middles into the pattern but harder to include the outsides in some rotations. **\*\*Be mindful about which one you are doing when you create your lineup. It is not enough to put middles, outsides, and setters opposite one another. Changing what position leads what position will change your serve receive patterns and confuse your kids.\*\***

**Teaching Rotations:**

The kids actually catch on to rotations fairly quickly if you sit down with them and tell them why they are doing what they are doing. The first day you want to go over rotations have them meet 30 minutes early and do this in the hallway:

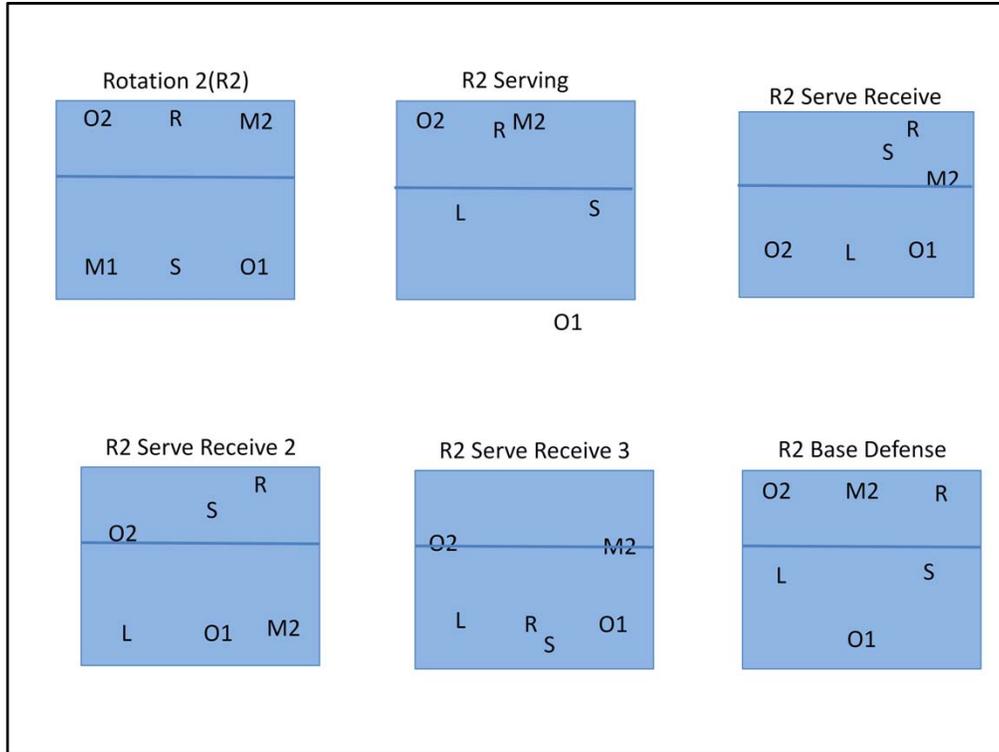
- Discuss the overlap rule with them before you try to do any rotations. If you are not 100% positive what the rule is, find out.
- Discuss serve receive strategy with them (we want to be in a legal pattern, setter as close to zero with the easiest route possible, best passers are in the pattern, hitters as close to their final positions as possible, minimize the distance of switches, etc.).
- Have them design a few serve receive patterns given the parameters you just described. If they're way off, see which parameter they missed on (Is it legal? Can you get your setter closer to zero? Do we really want our middle hitter passing middle back? How can we get out outside involved in the pass and close to her spot to hit? ... )
- Give them scenarios. E.G., okay, out outside hitter Sally has been aced 3 times so we want to change the pattern. How would you bring Suzie back to pass?

If they can do that, figuring it out on the court will be easy.



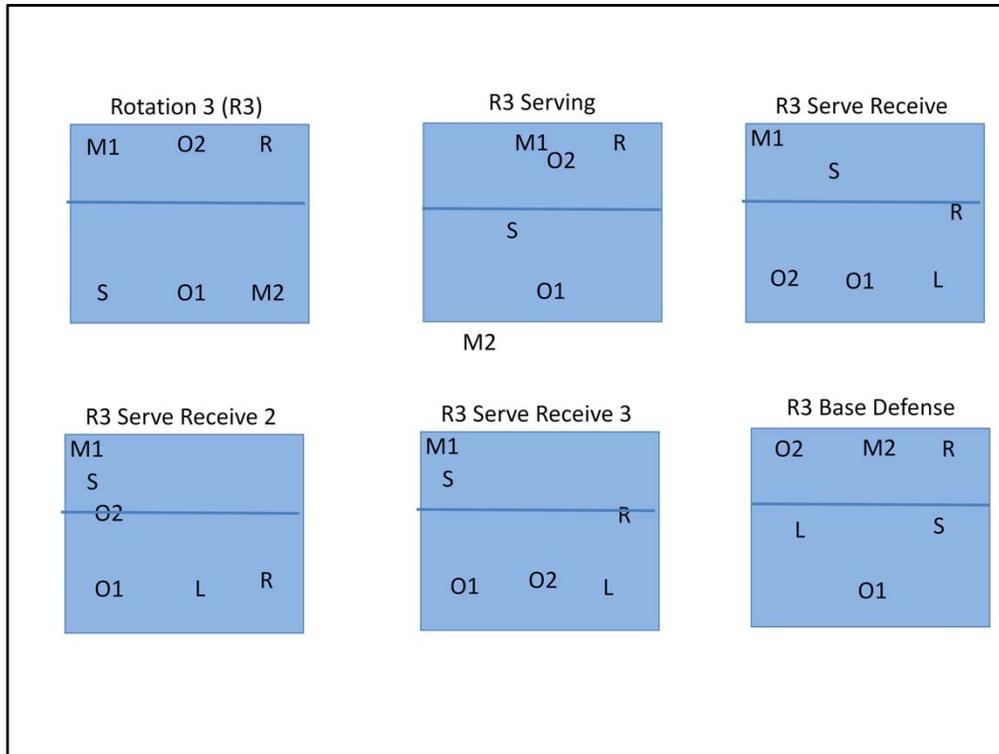
Things to keep in mind:

1. It is up to you to decide whether to put your libero in middle or left back. Typically, left back sees more action on defense. However, if your outsides are better at crashing and reading tips, you may want to leave them in the left back position.
2. When your team is serving, always start your middle in their base position (middle front), and make the other blockers move around her. She is responsible for the quick set, and doesn't have time to be thinking about switches as the serve is being put into play.



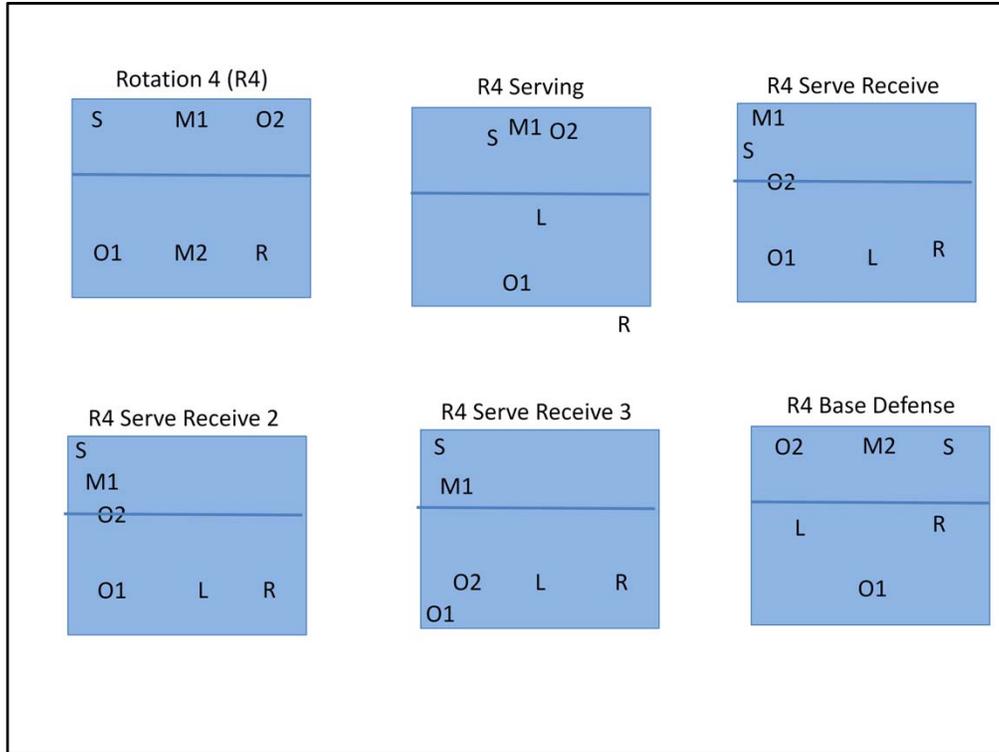
Things to keep in mind:

1. When O1 is serving, she is off the court, so the setter does not have to worry about overlapping and can start in her base position.
2. On serve receive, the setter has to start farther from the net than the right side. However, that does not mean they need to be right next to each other. Start your right side closer to the right sideline than your setter to give your setter the quickest move to zero.
3. Only drop your right side back (a) if she is a stellar passer or (b) if you're really stuck. Otherwise your setter is running through a shooting gallery.



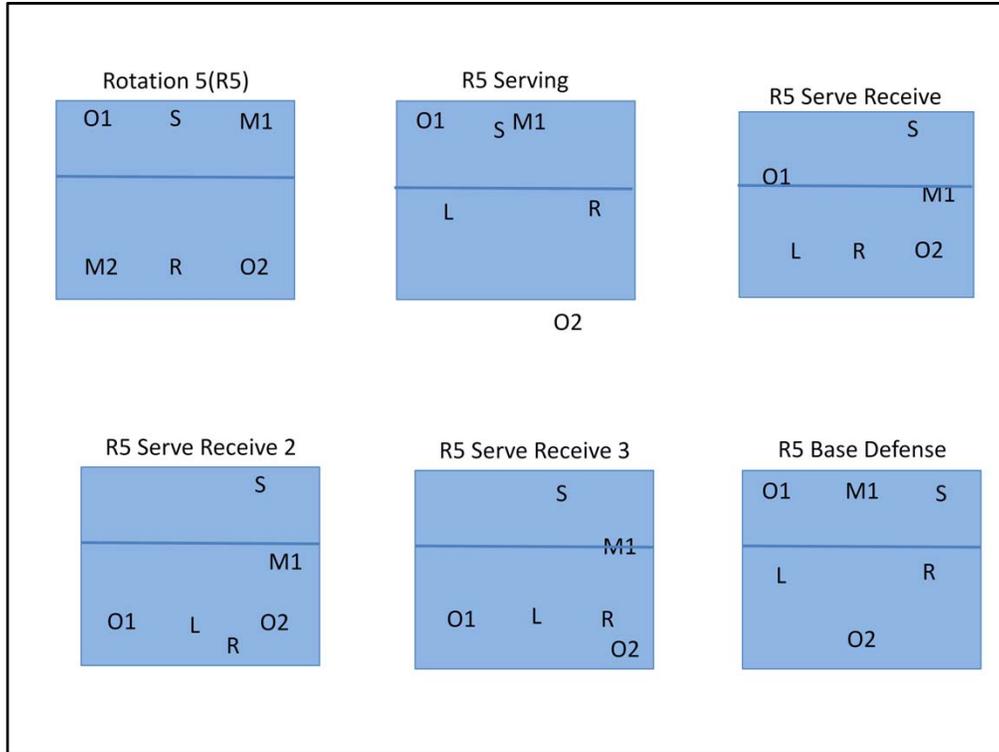
Things to keep in mind:

1. Your setter only needs to worry about the M1 and the O1 in this rotation. If you drop your O2 back to pass, have your setter move as close to the O1 as possible to make her sprint to zero as short as possible. If you drop your right side back to pass, put your setter between your M1 and O2 so the O2 can be responsible for short serves.
2. You have several options in this rotation. Your pattern should be based on who your best passers are and where your kids can hit from (e.g., if your middle and O2 can both hit in middle and outside, then pattern 3 is an option. If they can't, then you probably want to stick with 1 and 2.



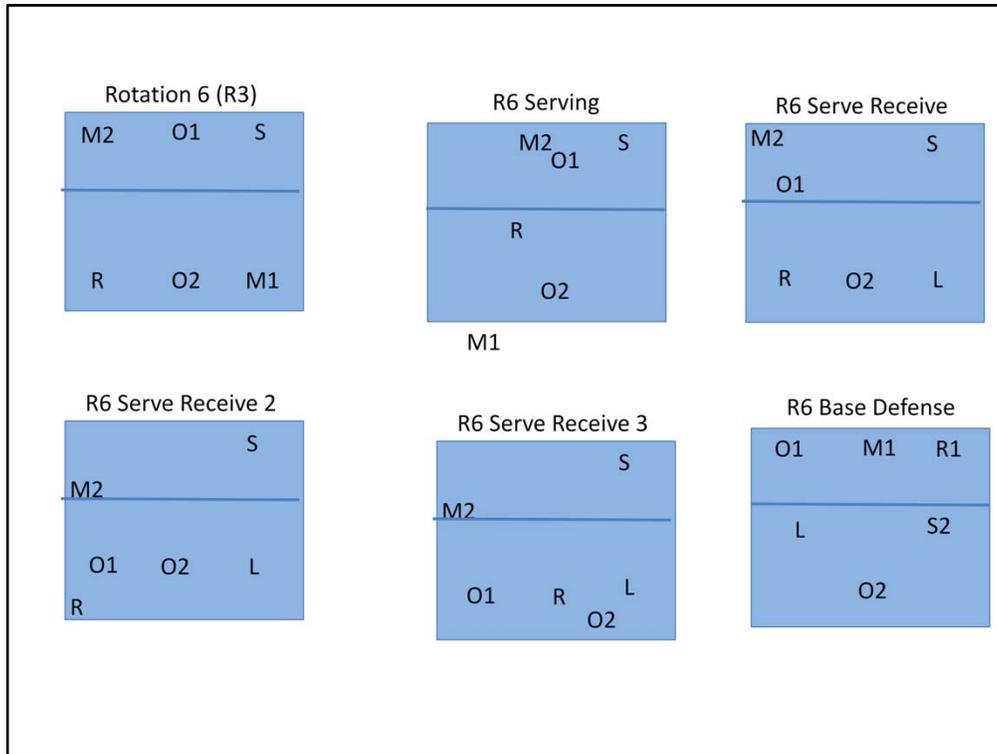
Things to keep in mind:

1. If you want to make it look like your setter might still be back row, line up in the first pattern. It takes some teams a while to catch on to this, while others get it right away.
2. This is one of the rotations that often gets done in confusing ways. Coaches want to start their setters close to zero, so they stack the kids in the middle of the court on serve receive. Stacking them in the middle forces your outside hitter to run 20 feet as the serve is in the air to be in position to hit, and the savvy server is going to try to hit her in the head with the ball. Stack them on the left side. Your setter will have plenty of time to get to zero, and your middle is running in the direction she wants to go to transition (the outside, on the other hand, has to get where she wants to go, get stopped, and change direction).
3. Pattern 2 is the more standard pattern. You might want to use this one early on, just in case you risk making your own players forget where they are on the court with the other one.
4. With pattern 3, you can drop any player out of the serve receive pattern (it doesn't have to be the O1). If you're getting burned short, have your M1 come off to the 10' line and your R slide up around the 10' line.



Things to keep in mind:

1. When O2 is serving, she is off the court, so the setter does not have to worry about overlapping and can start in her base position.
2. You have a ton of options for this pattern. Try to work it so your best passer is in middle back.



Things to keep in mind:

1. If you drop back your O1, she needs to stay in front of your O2.
2. This is another rotation where coaches often like to stack their hitters in the middle of the court on serve receive. Again, doing this makes the switch for the outside way too long and in the wrong direction. Keep them stacked on the left. The middle will have plenty of time.
3. If you drop your middles back to the 10' line, be sure they are clear on whether they should take the short ball or the back row should.