

## VOLLEYBALL DRILLS

*Notes: These drills were acquired from multiple sources included previous coaching experience, friends, online websites, etc. We hope you find them helpful. If you have any ideas, please send a message to the CMVL Board and we will include in our future updates.*

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### Setting

#### Three-Man Weave Drill (✓✓✓)

Here's a fast-moving drill, designed to help setting accuracy, and also helping get players in shape.

Have 3 players set up in a triangle, with 2 players (A and B) fairly close to each other. The 3rd player (C) stands about 10 feet away. Player A tosses the ball high in the air to Player C, and then runs to take C's place once C has set back to Player B.

Player B then sets to Player A, who is now standing where C had originally stood. A then sets back to C, who has taken A's original place.

The drill continues, with players striving for accuracy and quickness.

It's a great drill for early in the season, because it also keeps players moving.

#### Over the Net Walk

This drill takes two partners, one on each side of the net, at one sideline, about 3' back. At the signal, the players begin setting the ball back and forth over the net to each other, moving a couple steps toward the other sideline, until they reach the other side.

Have the entire team follow them, duplicating the process, until everyone has reached the other side. Then turn around and repeat, going back to the original sideline.

This is especially good for beginners, teaching them to be accurate in their sets.

#### Kill The Setter Passing Drill

One setter, shared by both teams, going back and forth as ball crosses the net.

Toss one team a free ball, setter runs a play, but instead of hitting away, the 3rd player tips the ball deep, allowing a free ball for the other team.

The setter then ducks under the net and runs a play going the other way.

Keep the drill going until the ball goes out of play. This emphasizes the importance of good passes, especially in free ball situations.

#### Close Order Setting Drill

Have two players sit cross-legged, facing each other close enough for their knees to touch. Then have them set a ball between them, staying under control.

This drill helps develop good hand position, develops quickness and accuracy, and gives many touches in a short amount of time.

It's especially effective at the beginning of the season, or in a camp situation, so you can isolate just the hand motion and offer feedback for improvement.

#### Half-court Setting Game

Here's a good setting game, especially if you're breaking in new setters.

Have your setters set back and forth to each other, and keep score. Only overhand sets count. If they have to bump to get a ball up, they have to bump it straight up, to themselves. The bump doesn't count as a hit.

So it's basically like tennis. Use rally score, and in the beginning, you can even shorten the court, as well as cut it in 1/2, so they can experience some success.

### Setter Dig Drill

Here's a drill designed to remind setters that they must be a defensive player first, a setter 2nd.

Six players on each side. Coach tosses the ball to the side opposite your setter, free ball style. They run a play, setting the ball to either outside hitter. If the set goes to LF, they should hit or tip line. If it's set to RF, they should hit angle.

The idea is to hit or tip at the setter, in RB. The setter needs to be in proper position in order to pick up the ball. Then, the rest of the team must adjust, since the setter has taken the first ball.

It's a good drill to get your setter to play defense, instead of cheating up. It's also good for the rest of the team, which needs to be able to react when the setter is out of the play. It's even good for the hitting team, because they need to be thinking about where they want to place the ball.

### Hitting the Setter

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### Eyeing The Coach Drill

Setters need to have good peripheral vision and be able to assess what's happening on the defensive side of the net to be successful, so here's a drill to get them to look through the net before deciding which way to set.

Have your setter at the net, coach on the other side, close to the net, 3 hitters.

As 2nd coach tosses a ball to the setter, the coach on the other side points which way they want the ball set. Pointing to left or right, or straight ahead for a middle hit.

Keep the balls coming at a fairly rapid pace, make the setter work at seeing the whole scenario as it unfolds.

### Blocker Movement Setting Drill

To help your setter develop their peripheral vision, and to take advantage of the clues they pick up from watching the movements of opposing blockers, here's a good drill:

Have one coach toss a ball from CB to the setter, at the net. On the other side, a middle blocker is set up directly opposite the setter. Just before the setter makes contact with the ball, the blocker takes a step left or right. The setter must then set the ball in the opposite direction of the blocker's movement.

This conditions setters to be aware of what's going on on the other side of the net, and make more intelligent decisions based on that information.

### Close Order Setting Drill

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This drill helps develop good hand position, develops quickness and accuracy, and gives many touches in a short amount of time.

It's especially effective at the beginning of the season, or in a camp situation, so you can isolate just the hand motion and offer feedback for improvement.

### Half-court Setting Game

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Have your setters set back and forth to each other, and keep score. Only overhand sets count. If they have to bump to get a ball up, they have to bump it straight up, to themselves. The bump doesn't count as a hit.

So it's basically like tennis. Use rally score, and in the beginning, you can even shorten the court, as well as cut it in 1/2, so they can experience some success.

### Setting Columns

Have your players line up on the 10-foot line. The first person will toss a ball to herself and set straight up. After she sets, she will run to the end of the line while the entire line shifts over and the next person sets straight up above her head. This drill involves movement and forces the set to be accurate. You want to get your players to maintain focus and really work on setting straight up in front of them so that the next person can come in and do the same thing. This is a very controlled drill.

## Passing / Bumping

### Perfecting the zipper pass (✓)

Here's a drill to help perfect the "zipper pass." First, the reason for the name: ideally, every forearm pass should be made with the legs slightly wider than the shoulders, knees bent, one leg slightly in front of the other, hands together, arms locked at the elbows. The ball should be contacted at a spot directly in front of the zipper.

Thinking about it in that way helps beginners to gauge if they're contacting the ball in the proper place.

To teach the skill, we have a row of passers on one side of the net, coaches tossing on the other. As the coach tosses the ball across the net, the passer moves her feet to where she'll need to be in order to get into the exact position described above. Then, she reaches down, and instead of passing, catches the ball at exactly zipper level.

This helps train body and mind to get into proper position and pass from the correct spot in front of the body.

### Run Throughs (✓✓)

Run throughs are bumps that occur when a player has to move quickly from one position, usually in the back row, to another. They usually are necessary in the midst of a scramble, and it's worth having players learn to do them, because the run through happens often in long rallies, especially.

Run throughs can also be excellent for conditioning drills, if you keep the ball moving quickly. Have players in a line at the back line, toss a ball fairly short in front of them, and have them run quickly through the ball, putting it over the net.

### Run Throughs, Part 2

Oftentimes, a run through isn't the 3rd hit, and doesn't need to be put over the net. If it's the first or second hit, the idea is to pop the ball up so a teammate can circle underneath for a set or a hit.

Have players run through the ball, but pop it up as well as they can. Remember the adage: the more trouble you're in, the higher the ball needs to go into the air.

### The Pit (✓✓✓)

One player is positioned in half court with the other players spread out around the court to shag the balls -> The Pit.. The coaches take a cart of balls and start throwing them one at a time to the players in rapid succession – anywhere in the court. The object is that no ball touch the floor without being passed. (You may want to have the last 1-2 as "tip" balls just over the net. The other players shag the balls. After 2 min or so many balls, the players switch off until all have had a chance in the pit. Don't let players throw the balls as that can get out of hand. This can be modified by adding a target for them to pass to. Teaches movement and communication.

### Three Pile (✓✓✓)

Here's a drill that incorporates many skills, can be played as a game, and players really seem to enjoy: three pile.

Start with 3 players, laying on top of each other. At the signal, the coach tosses a ball high onto their court. The players must quickly unpile, call out who has the first hit, get into position to set, and run the best play they can.

It's great for quickness, team unity and communication, and all the inter dependent skills, yet it's usually accompanied by quite a bit of laughter, too, which is good to break up practice every now and then.

### Rolling Bump Drill (✓)

Here's a drill to help players get comfortable with being on the floor, which is crucial to defensive success. But it also works on quickness, bumping skills and is great for conditioning, as well.

Have a player start on the floor, roll 3 complete revolutions (the rest of the team can count them loudly, which adds to the excitement and fun). As soon as they've completed their revolutions, toss a ball in a position difficult enough to make them work hard to pop it up. (For beginners, just toss the ball relatively high, so they can get underneath and make a play on the ball. You want to encourage success from the beginning.)

The drill can be run as if the bump was a 1st or 2nd hit, or as an emergency 3rd hit that needs to go over the net. Keep it moving, and the conditioning will improve, as well as quickness and skill level.

### Over the Net Bump/Set

The over the net bump/set drill helps beginners and intermediate players work on bumping and setting. Have players partner up, on on each side of the net. One player will toss the ball over, the 2nd player bumps it back, putting the ball relatively high so their partner can get underneath and set it back over again.

Do for a certain time period, then switch roles.

### Two Line Bump, Part 1

A simple drill that can be adapted for all skill levels is the "2 line bump."

One variation has players in two lines, facing each other, with a space of about 10' between the players at the front of each line.

Bump the ball back and forth between the lines, staying under control. After bumping, the front player moves to the end of the line.

Go for either a certain time period or a certain number of successful passes.

### Two Line Bump, Part 2

A second variation of the "2 Line Bump" has players passing the ball over the net to each other, rather than in a straight line on one side of the net.

This helps them learn to get the ball up higher, so their setter can circle underneath.

It can also be a conditioning drill, if done quickly. Play to a time limit or successful number of completions.

### Passing Frenzy (✓✓)

The Passing Frenzy gives passers many touches in a short amount of time. It also helps them learn to refocus quickly after an unsuccessful pass. Have a coach at one endline, serving to a passer, who is to pass to the target player at the net. It can be run on both sides of the court at the same time. Run the drill for a specific amount of time, serving balls at the rate of one every 1 1/2 seconds or so, just long enough for the passer to get reset.

### Passing Frenzy, Variation 2

A variation of the passing frenzy will have passers have to continue passing until they get 5 perfect passes. This helps simulate a pressure situation in which the pass absolutely must be right on the money.

It may not work with lower skill levels, however, and actually may cause more frustration than help. So know your player's level before using this variation.

### Passing Frenzy, With A Full Team

The passing frenzy will also work well with a full team. The principle is the same, but everyone is involved. They need to pass 5 perfect before they can rotate. As a coach, serve to all your serve receive formations and try to mix it up, just like a game situation.

### Circle Pass

The team joins together in a giant circle, spread evenly. The coach stands in the middle and throws the ball to a player, who must pass it to the person next to them. That player then passes to the player next to them, and the drill continues.

This drill is particularly difficult because players must aim for a very short distance. They must place the ball appropriately so their teammate next to them can receive the ball and pass it on. The team must work together to pass properly without letting the ball fall and without breaking the original circle.

This drill has a variation as well. Instead of passing around the circle in one direction, the passes can be like popcorn, going to whichever player the passer chooses. The difficulty in this drill is that players cannot move from the circle to retrieve the ball or keep it from hitting the ground.

### Bounce Circles

A bounce circle - all the players make a circle and start passing the ball around the circle with bump passes. Can also be done with sets. It is more of a fun game than a practice drill. Good for warmups. It can be random passes or you can call a player to get the ball, or to be a target for the passer. Once they get good enough to get 20 passes without dropping the ball, I have added a 2nd and 3rd ball.

### Extreme Accuracy Drill

There is no time when an accurate pass is more important than on the free ball. Your opponent has just given your team a golden opportunity to run whatever type of play they want, but it won't happen without an accurate pass.

So we set up two teams, and have one of them begin at the net, in defensive position. Then, at the signal, everyone rotates into a free ball situation. The coach then tosses a ball high, simulating a free ball.

The passing team must make an extremely accurate pass to score a point, meaning the ball must be in Center Front, high enough for our setter to run a combination play.

We keep rally score, but alternate tossing to the teams, so each side gets an even number of opportunities. At the beginning of the drill we usually have the setter hold the ball and then toss it back to the coach. Later, we play the ball out, although no points are given for the outcome. The focus is on Extreme Accuracy in the free ball pass.

## Serving

### The Importance of Developing A Routine. (✓✓✓✓)

Since serving is the only time an individual player has total control of a game, just like shooting free throws in a basketball game, it's very important to develop a routine to ensure success.

This routine should be developed from the very earliest days of a server's career. Teach your players to create a routine and stick with it, regardless of the game situation.

Although we leave room for individuality, we teach bouncing the ball a couple times, taking a deep breath, then looking up and going immediately into the serving motion. The first two steps help the player concentrate and put down any anxiety. The next step makes it impossible for that anxiety to creep back in, since the motion is instantaneous after the "gathering" portion of the routine.

Whatever a player develops, encourage her to use it every time. The familiarity will help take the pressure off in intense situations, and help gain greater success for her and the team.

### The Serving Web - A Fun Game (✓✓)

Here's a drill we use in many of our camps that seems to be enjoyed by everyone who tries it, but teaches serving technique, accuracy, and teamwork.

Divide your team into 2 squads, half on each serving line. Send one player from each team to the other side, and have them lay on their stomach. One by one, servers must try to hit their teammate on the floor. She can touch the [ball](#) with hands or feet, or the serve can hit her anywhere on the body to score. Each time she can reach a serve, her teammate runs to join her on the floor, linking hand-to-hand or hand-to-foot. Players then serve to the two of them, trying to hit them so they can join them on the floor. Players must stay in contact on the floor at all times. It makes for some hilarious action, and everyone has a good time. Yet servers must get the ball over the net and serve accurately enough to touch a teammate in order to win.

### Serving Race: (✓✓)

Separate players into teams of 3 ea. across the back line. Each player has a ball one at a time they have to make a good serve then retrieve their own ball from the other side of the court. The next player cannot serve until the one in front has made a good serve. Each "Good Serve" is one point – the team with the most "good" serves in 5 min wins. The limit of 3 forces the players to run to retrieve their ball and get back in line to make the next serve before the previous player is done. You can also add a basket (or 2) on the receiving side for "2 points" for increased accuracy.

Teaches serving accuracy and movement.

### 1-on-1 Serving-Passing Game (✓)

Here's a game that directly pits servers against passers and although it's a 1-1 game, it can involve as many as 6 players at the same time. Have one player stand at endline with a ball (the server) and one player directly opposite on the other side of the net (the passer). A third player stands at center front, by the net (as a [target](#) for the passer).

The server must serve the ball within one step of the passer. If the serve is good, the passer must pass the ball within one step of the target.

A point is given the server for a good serve. A point is awarded the passer for a perfect pass. The first player to 3 moves to the target position. (The loser stays where they are.) The target then changes position with the person who won.

It's a fun and competitive drill, improving serving and passing accuracy.

### Serving Golf

Here's a fun game that also helps develop accuracy in serving. We call it "golf."

All you have to do is ask each server to serve to all six areas (Area 1 being RB, or the opponent's serving area, Area 2 RF, Area 3 CF, Area 4 LF, Area 5 LB, and Area 6 CB.) and keep track of how many serves (strokes) it took them to get all the way around.

The perfect score would be 6, of course. You can play it like a golf tourney, and play several rounds. You can also add a little more gamelike pressure by having each player serve while the whole team watches.

It's a [good game](#) for developing a serving routine and accuracy.

### Ping Pong Serving

Here's a drill to emphasize serving. We call it Ping Pong, because it allows the serving team to serve 5 times before rotating.

We use rally scoring, to emphasize the importance of each serve. Then each ball is played to the end, and the team putting the ball away is awarded a point.

We keep going until we've gone through all rotations, which means each team will serve the ball 30 times. If we're tied 30-30 at the end of the game, we play one more point, announcing it with great fanfare, to try to recreate the pressure of serving for game point in the 5th game of a rally-scored match.

### Black Sheep Serving/Receiving Drill

Designate one player as the "black sheep" (can be a coach) and have every serve go to them. Keep one server for several rotations. Rotate the black sheep after every couple serves. This drill gets players used to finding a player on the other team who isn't a particularly good passer and serving that player as often and accurately as possible.

Points can also be added to make it more competitive while just practicing serves.

### A fun precision-serving drill (✓✓)

Serving, like free throw shooting in basketball, can be a drudgery, something that coaches leave till the end of practice, almost as an afterthought. However, just like free throws, serving well is key to winning ball games. After all, serving is the only time a player has 100% control of the ball game.

But serving over isn't always enough. Most of the time, a serve must also be directed to a particular area. This drill helps players focus on pinpoint serving, offers a competitive setting, and is a lot of fun.

Place a chair on each side of the net, in Area 1. Divide your team into 2 squads, one on each side of the net. Have one player from each squad sit in the chair on the opposite side of the net from her team mates.

Players must then serve close enough to the person in the chair that she can catch the ball in the air. Once that happens, the person serving the ball runs under the net and takes that person's place. The person in the chair takes the ball and runs to join the servers.

The new person then moves the chair to Area 2, and the game continues.

On our team, we generally add a couple elements to make missing more undesirable. Whenever a player serves a ball out of bounds or into the net, all her team mates must run lines, touching the 10' line, the end line, and center line. This is to emphasize that whenever a serve is missed, it hurts the entire team.

We also go around the court twice, hitting every area twice, and ending with Area 1.

## Hitting

### Hit Through the Block - Whole Team Drill

In order to get your hitters to take a look before they hit, here's a good drill: we call it the "Whole Team Block."

We set up a 6-player team, have a coach toss a free ball across the net for them to pass. They run a play and go up to hit.

The twist is, we've got 6 or 7 blockers at the net, trying to shut down the hit. The hitters aren't allowed to tip over the top of the block, so they must try to find a way around or through.

This drill is also good for your hit coverage, since a lot of balls come back off the block. We've used this to help our hitters get smarter, instead of just blasting away.

### Over the Shoulder Drill

One of the hardest balls for front row players to hit is the one coming over their shoulder. They need to judge if it's hittable, and then make the necessary adjustments to either hit or block, depending on what they've decided, based on the flight of the ball, their own position at the time, etc.

Have your front row players at the net, but back about 3 feet. Have blockers on the other side, ready to hit or block, as well. Toss a ball from the back row, high enough that it will be a toss-up as to whether it should be hit or blocked.

Have everyone play the ball on both sides, being aggressive at all times.

## Blocking

### Ball Exchanges

Similar to hand touches, the ball exchange has players partner up on either side of the net, jump together, but instead of just touching hands, they exchange a ball back and forth.

This incorporates all the good effects of the hand touch drill, but also brings a ball into play.

## Wall Blocks

It's important to get your arms back down after a block without touching the net, so we've worked out a drill to help reinforce that idea: wall blocks.

The idea is to have players stand facing the wall, jump as high as they can, touch a particular spot on the wall, and come back down into the blocking position without touching the wall. A few skinned elbows will generally be incentive to begin developing proper execution of the blocking motion.

## Jump Balls

Jump Balls, as we call them, teach players how to control the net, where most games are won and lost. Have front row players on each side of the net, one on one. Toss a ball right on top of the net, and have both players go for it.

The drill teaches players when to try hitting, or blocking, thinking about body position, quickness and aggression.

Run several in a row, and keep score for an added dimension.

## Eyeball-to-Eyeball Middle Blocking

We tell our middle blockers to block eyeball-to-eyeball, which means simply that they must meet their eyes every time their opponent goes up to block.

That means each time the center front on the other side goes up, our middle block must go up, too.

It helps to have them think about being a mirror-image of the opponent. Whatever they do, you have to mirror that movement, but with a blocking motion.

# Diving

## Off the Floor 3rd Hit

Here's a drill to get players used to hitting the floor, rebounding quickly, reacting and getting the ball over on an emergency 3rd hit situation.

Have a player quickly hit their belly, then jump up as the coach tosses a random ball, play it any way they can, putting the ball over the net as if it was the 3rd hit.

This is a great drill for conditioning, quickness, thinking quickly, reaction and a way to lose fear of the floor.

Move the drill very quickly, every couple seconds a new ball should be tossed, so players are on the ground as short a time as possible.

## Rolling B4 Digs

Here's a drill to help players get comfortable with being on the floor, which is crucial to defensive success. But it also works on quickness, bumping skills and is great for conditioning, as well.

Have a player start on the floor, roll 3 complete revolutions (the rest of the team can count them loudly, which adds to the excitement and fun). As soon as they've completed their revolutions, toss a ball in a position difficult enough to make them work hard to pop it up.

The drill can be run as if the bump was a 1st or 2nd hit, or as an emergency 3rd hit that needs to go over the net. Keep it moving, and the conditioning will improve, as well as quickness and skill level.

# Offense / Defense

## 6-0 Game

Having your team play a game employing the 6-0 system can be fun, but it also allows players who don't see the opportunity to see, first-hand, how difficult it is to try to run an offense when the passes aren't good. (And maybe begin to concentrate on passing better when they get back into a passing situation!)

The 6-0 involves having whoever is in Right Back set. Our players love it, because some of our big kids who never get to play back row, much less SET, get to find out what it's like to scramble for a badly-bumped pass.

It's helped our teams focus much better, since they can now identify with what their setter is going through.

## Belly Doubles (✓✓✓)

Belly doubles starts with two doubles teams, both about midway back, on their bellies. On the signal, everyone jumps up and plays a ball tossed randomly onto the court by the coach.

Play the point out till the ball hits the floor. This is a great drill for a wide variety of skills. You can play it like "Queen of the Court," where the winners stay, or run the teams on and off the floor quickly to get more players involved.

### Black Sheep Tipping Drill

Here's a good drill for getting your players to look up and "hit 'em where they ain't." Designate one player as the "black sheep." Have a coach toss the ball to the other side, and have a 6-person team run a play. But instead of just blasting away, have the hitters push the ball to wherever the black sheep may be. Have the black sheep slowly wander around the court, to make the other side have to keep looking. It's a great drill for getting your team to think before the wail away.

### 4-on-4 for Kamakaze Defense

We use the 4-on-4 drill nearly every day in practice, because it's a good workout and helps the back row people play smarter.

We use a "diamond" configuration, with one designated setter in CF, one back row player, and two outside hitters.

When the opponent is hitting on the outside, the opposite outside player rotates back to the ten-foot line, just as they do in a 6-person game. We double block as much as possible.

The back row person must read the opposing hitters, so they can be ready to make a move quickly to get to the ball.

If you really want to help your team develop kamakaze defense, put the emphasis on hitting the floor and diving for every ball that's hit, since a single back row player has a tendency to sometimes be a little lazy, thinking, "that wouldn't have been my ball in a 6-person game." It's a great drill, allowing you to work on every phase of the game.

### 4-on-4 for Back Row Quickness

We use the 4-on-4 drill nearly every day in practice, because it's a good workout and helps the back row people play smarter.

We use a "diamond" configuration, with one designated setter in CF, one back row player, and two outside hitters.

When the opponent is hitting on the outside, the opposite outside player rotates back to the ten-foot line, just as they do in a 6-person game. We double block as much as possible.

The back row person must read the opposing hitters, so they can be ready to make a move quickly to get to the ball. This drill really works, if you constantly reemphasize keeping an eye of hitter approaches, eye movement, body language, and speed of the ball.

It's a great drill, working on every phase of the game, but it's especially helpful to back row players.

## Conditioning

### Birds and Bees

Regardless of the skill level of your players, conditioning is always a part of the training process. Here's a drill that's fun and gets the players moving.

Have the players partner up, then have them lie head-to-head at the center line, feet facing the endlines. Tell all the players on one side they are "Birds," and the ones on the other are "Bees."

At the signal, the team called will chase the other team to the end of the gym, trying to catch them. Tell the "Birds" they are going to "peck" their teammate, while the "Bees" are going to "sting."

When they've reached the end of the gym, bring them back quickly and start over. Players usually enjoy this game, and hardly realize they've been running full-blast for any length of time once it's over.

### Net-Run Conditioning Drills (✓)

Here's another drill for all skill levels, involving a relay race, so it gets the players moving and having fun at the same time.

Divide your team into relay groups of 3 or 4, so they'll have to repeat the conditioning part of the race without a long rest period. (You can use both sides of the net for this, and run as many as 3 or 4 lines on each side.)

One by one, each player will run from the endline to the net, carrying a ball. Once at the net, the player must toss the ball into the net and then catch it on the rebound.

Once they've caught the ball, they run back and hand it to the next player in line. Repeat at least 3 times for each player.

It gets the players moving, helps with the concept of getting the ball back out of the net (especially important for beginners) and is a lot of fun, too.

### 4-on-4 for Conditioning

We use the 4-on-4 drill nearly every day in practice, because it's a good workout and helps the back row people play smarter.

We use a "diamond" configuration, with one designated setter in CF, one back row player, and two outside hitters.

When the opponent is hitting on the outside, the opposite outside player rotates back to the ten-foot line, just as they do in a 6-person game. We double block as much as possible.

The back row person must read the opposing hitters, so they can be ready to make a move quickly to get to the ball.

It's a great drill, working on every phase of the game.

Have your players move from one side of the court to the other after each point, so everyone gets involved. Do it quickly, and it can be used for conditioning, as well.

### Over the Net Touches

Have front row players pair up, and touch each other's hand over the top of the net. Do at least 25 to begin, and work your way up to sets of 50. It can also be done on a timed basis.

This is a great conditioning drill, but also helps players develop a "net sense," so they can come down after each touch without touching the net. It also helps develop timing, especially important for middle blockers, learning to go up with the opposing middle on quick sets.

### Bounce Back, Variation 1

A variation of Bounce Back involves having 2 players run from the endline to the net together, one carrying the ball. At the net, the ball is tossed into the net, and the 2nd player must catch it.

Once that is accomplished, they run back to the end line and 2 other players continue the relay. Have the entire team repeat the drill at least 3 times.

This variation moves even faster than the original, and requires teamwork. It also can make for more silly situations, making it more fun.

## Other

### Queen of the Court (✓✓✓✓)

One of the best games for improving the overall skill level of players is the well-named "Queen of the Court."

It can be played with any number of players, but we prefer 2, 3 or 4 at most. It's played by having one team on each side of the court and then having the two teams play till a point is attained.

If the team receiving serve gets the point, they get to stay on the court and play a new set of players. They stay until someone scores a point against them.

This is a fast moving game, full of lots of touches, and helps develop a sense of pride in playing hard, teamwork, and accomplishment.

We add a further incentive for working hard. If a player gives up on a ball, the entire team runs lines, letting every player know that not making a supreme effort hurts the entire team.

### Hit the Deck! Drill (✓✓)

Teaching aggressive defense is always desirable, and nearly always difficult. Folks are nearly always afraid to hit the floor, and a coach must overcome that fear before the team will hit the floor automatically.

We borrowed one helpful drill from our football team. It's simple, the girls seem to like doing a football drill, and it has helped take the fear out of hitting the floor.

All we do is have the girls run in place, like the footballers. When I point in one direction, they turn and face that direction, still running in place. Whenever I yell "Hit the Deck!" the girls are to hit the floor instantly. It's amazing to see them hitting the floor without the slightest fear once they get caught up in the spirit and quickness of the drill.

From then on, it's easier to get them to hit the floor, since they've learned it isn't as scary as they thought.

### Net Recovery (✓✓)

Make part of your setter's practice (and that of the whole team) the recovery of balls from the net. Have someone throw the ball into the net at different speeds and from different angles. Knowing how to save balls from the net can save your team many side outs during a match.

### Six-on-six wave (✓✓✓)

Set up with six people on the court on each side. Lefts should line up on the left side, rights and setters on the right, with middle blockers and liberos (and DSs) lining up in middle back. Any extra players should be lined up on the baseline (off the court) ready to come in when you say "wave." The coach tosses a free ball over the net from the sideline, the ball gets played out and after three to four times through the court the coach yells "Wave!" At this time, each row of players will shift in one direction. So the front row players on one side will become the front row players across the net. Those front row players who were there will become back row players on the same side. The back row players that were there will step off and go to the lines at the baseline. Those on the baseline will enter the court and become the back row players on the same side. Finally, the back row players who were there will become front row players on the same side. This is a good way to get everybody involved in play.

### Over the Net Bump/Set (✓)

The over the net bump/set drill helps beginners and intermediate players work on bumping and setting. Have players partner up, on each side of the net. One player will toss the ball over, the 2nd player bumps it back, putting the ball relatively high so their partner can get underneath and set it back over again.

Do for a certain time period, then switch roles.

### Over the Net Pepper

Pepper is a great game for improving all skills, endurance and as a warm up, but here's a variation for beginners, to help them learn accuracy.

Have partners set up on each side of the net. The first partner tosses the ball over the net, where the second partner bumps it back over, where it is set back again.

This drill encourages beginners to pop the ball up high, rather than delivering a "rocket pass" to the setter. It also encourages setters to put the ball high enough into the air for a hitter to circle underneath.

There are no spikes included in this drill. It's designed to isolate bumping and setting skills.

### Off-The-Net Recovery (✓)

Make part of your standard practice the recovery of balls from the net. Have someone throw the ball into the net at different speeds and from different angles. Knowing how to save balls from the net can save your team many side outs during a match.

### Black Sheep Serve Receive Drill

It's one thing to serve the ball to the "black sheep," that player who can't pass well. It's quite another to BE the black sheep. Players need to know what it's like to have the other team zero in on you, and begin sending the majority of serves your way.

Designate one player as the black sheep, and have all serves throughout a rotation (several serves in each position) directed at that player. It helps put the player in a pressure situation, and helps them develop the mental toughness to step up when they've become the "black sheep" in a game situation.

### Black Sheep Toss

Here's a good drill for getting your players to look up and "hit 'em where they ain't." Designate one player as the "black sheep." Have a coach toss the ball to the other side, and have a 6-person team run a play. But instead of just blasting away, have the hitters push the ball to wherever the black sheep may be. Have the black sheep slowly wander around the court, to make the other side have to keep looking. It's a great drill for getting your team to think before the ball away.

### Talk Loud Drill

Although it's not emphasized in many of the manuals, talking is one of the most important skills in volleyball. Here's a drill to encourage talking:

Have your coach toss a ball into play. From the very moment the ball crosses the net, someone needs to call out what's going on. It shouldn't be one particular person. Everyone needs to learn to talk. What should they say? There's something that could be said on every hit on every play. "Out," "In," "Mine," "2 Up," "I'm here," the list is endless.

If no one talks, the team runs sprints, laps or whatever has been decided upon before the drill begins.

### Texas Drill

6 players on each side of the net. The coach tosses balls from the side. The players can only tip the ball. This is fast paced. The team must play it out with 3 hits with the last being a tip. Each time the team tips it to the other side they rotate one position and the other side plays it and then they rotate. It really keeps the players moving, so they are moving and talking all the time. Great drill for a warm up before the game.

### Partner drills.

At least two or three practices a week should involve partner work. Have one partner line up on the 10-foot line and the other on the base line. The person on the 10-foot line is the tosser. Simply have her toss 10 to 15 balls to the passer and 10 to 15 good passes back to her partner. Then switch and repeat the drill. You can do this setting, and then you can do this with an overhead throw and an overhead pass to work on overhead passing. This can be done with any age group.

### Don't Overlook Doubles (✓✓)

What if you have players who tend to be lazy? That trait will show up even more blatantly in doubles! That presents you with a challenge: what should you do when you see laziness?

We run.

Every time a player gives up on a playable ball, our entire team stops what they're doing and runs lines. The lesson here is that every time a player gives up on a ball, it hurts the entire team.

We've noticed a huge difference in our aggression level since implementing this technique, setting new defensive records every year since we began putting consequences on lack of effort.

### Shuttle passing

Split up into two groups and line up on each 10-foot line across the net from each other. One ball is needed. Have the first person toss the first ball over the net and then begin passing back and forth over the net. Make the goal to keep the ball in control and below the antennae of the net (trying to maintain accuracy of the height of the pass). After the passer passes, she should go to the end of the line on her side of the net. To make the drill more difficult, have the passer run underneath the net to the other side after she passes. This maintains constant movement throughout the drill.

You also can do this setting. Break up into groups of three or four and have a tosser, passer and a setter in each group. If you have a fourth person, she will be shagging for your group. You can do this with a left front and back on one side and the setter about five feet from the passer at the net. The tosser should be at the 10-foot line on the other side of the net. Then set up with a right front, right back and setter on the other side of the court. This way you can have two groups going at the same time. If this is not possible for you, have the drill going on both sides of the net with a middle back, left front (hitter) and setter on each side, and have everyone else shag. Whichever group gets 10 good pass-set-hit contacts first gets to stay on (or off) while the loser has to shag.

### 2-on-6

Don't overlook 2-on-6 as a skill-teaching game. Although it seems grossly unfair at first, the game teaches huge amounts about reading setters and hitters, making plays on defense, communication with teammates, accurate passing, and nearly every other phase of the game.

Have the 6-player team serve, trying to get the ball within a step or two of one of the 2-player teammates. Don't have the 2-player team try to block. Rather, get down and play defense.

It's a great drill, fun and enormously helpful in developing defensive toughness.

### The Weird Sequence Game

"Weird Sequence" Game

Here's an interesting idea to help players develop a sense of their entire bodies, which will help them react much quicker to emergency situations:

Besides regular "pepper," practice hitting the ball with your forearms, back of the hand and fist. It's a great game for two people. The first player makes up a sequence such as "pass, set, fist, pass" and the other tries to copy it. If they do, it's their turn to make up a sequence.

It's a great game to help develop body-ball awareness.

### Bonus Ball

"Bonus Ball" helps teams concentrate and focus. Here's how it works. The coach will randomly toss balls into play, and the 2 teams will play until the ball is dead. The team putting the ball away wins one rally.

But a team must win 3 rallies to earn a chance at the "bonus ball," and only the bonus ball can score a point.

Teams rotate ONLY after scoring a bonus ball point. The drill continues until one team has rotated all the way around.

It's a great game for endurance, concentration and creating an intensely competitive atmosphere.

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