

Volleyball Terms and Definitions

Source: <http://thegameofvolleyball.wordpress.com/volleyball-terms-and-definitions/>

ACE – A serve that your opponent cannot pass; this results immediately in a point.

ANTENNA - The vertical rods (normally white and red) attached at the edges of the net 30 feet apart. The antennas are attached directly above the sidelines and are not-in-play.

APPROACH – The offensive player’s (spiker) quick footwork toward the net before he jumps in the air to spike the ball.

ASSIST – Passing or setting the ball to an offensive teammate who attacks the ball for a kill. This stat is normally only logged for high school, college, and National/Olympic team play.

ATTACK – The offensive action of hitting the ball. A player attempts to hit the ball so that it results in a point for their team.

ATTACK ERROR – An unsuccessful attack which does one of the following: 1) the ball lands out of bounds, 2) the ball goes into the net and ends play or goes into the net on the third hit, 3) the ball is blocked by the opposition for a point or sideout, 4) the attacker is called for a center line violation, or 5) the attacker is called for illegal contact (lift, double hit...) on the attack.

ATTACKER – Also “hitter” or “spiker.” A player who attempts to hit a ball offensively with the purpose of ending play in his or her team’s favor and gaining a point or sideout.

ATTACK LINE – A line 10 ft. from the net that separates the front row players from the back row players. Commonly referred to as the “10-foot line.”

BACKCOURT – The area from the endline to the attack line.

BACK SET – A set delivered behind the setter’s back, which is subsequently hit by an attacker.

BACK ROW ATTACK – When a back row player attacks the ball by jumping from behind the 10 ft. line before hitting the ball. If the back row player steps on or past the 10 ft. line during take-off, the attack is illegal.

BEACH DIG – An open hand receive of the ball, also called a “Deep Dish.”

BLOCK – A defensive play by one or more front row players meant to deflect a spiked ball back to the hitter’s court. It may be a combination of one, two or three

players jumping in front of the opposing hitter and contacting the spiked ball with open hands.

BUMP – a common term for forearm passing.

BALL HANDLING ERROR – Any time the official calls a fault- a double hit, a thrown ball or a lift (except on a serve reception or attack).

BUMP PASS – The use of joined forearms to pass or set a ball in an underhand manner.

CENTER LINE – The boundary that runs directly under the net and divides the court into two equal halves.

DIG – Passing a spiked or rapidly hit ball. Slang for the art of passing an attacked ball close to the floor.

DINK – A legal push of the ball around or over blockers.

DOUBLE BLOCK – Two players working in unison to deflect an attacked ball at the net back to the hitter's side.

DOUBLE HIT - Successive hits or contacts by the same player. (Illegal)

FIVE-ONE – A 6-player offensive system that uses five hitters and one setter.

FLOATER – A serve which does not spin or rotate and therefore moves in an erratic path. This is similar to a “knuckle ball” pitch in baseball.

FOREARM PASS – Join your arms from the elbows to the wrists and strike the ball with the fleshy part of your forearms in an underhand motion.

FOUL/ FAULT – A violation of the rules.

FOUR-TWO – A 6-player offensive system using four hitters and two setters.

FREE BALL – A ball that will be returned by a pass rather than a spike. This is usually called aloud by the defense instructing players to move into serve receive positions.

HELD BALL – A ball that comes to rest during contact resulting in a foul.

HIT – An attack by an offensive player in attempt to make the ball hit the floor on their opponent's side. Also called a spike.

HITTER – Also “spiker” or “attacker”

HITTING PERCENTAGE - kills vs. attempts

JUNGLE BALL - Any volleyball game with people who don't really know how to play volleyball. A common euphemism for this type of game is “Picnic Volleyball.” (p.s. There is nothing wrong with this kind of play, however, it is not regulation!)

JUMP SERVE – A serve that is started by the server tossing the ball into the air and jumping into and hitting the ball in its downward motion.

JOUST – When 2 opposing players are simultaneously attempting to play a ball above the net.

KEY – To predict a team’s next play by observation of patterns or habits.

KILL - An attack that results in an immediate point or side out.

LIBERO – A defensive player who cannot serve, and never plays in the front row. This player has unique rules associated with the position; they can substitute for any player. Also referred to as the Defensive Specialist.

LINE – The marks that serve as boundaries of a court. If a ball hits the line, it is considered playable or “in.”

LINE SHOT - A ball spiked down an opponent’s sideline, closest to the hitter and outside the block.

MIDDLE-BACK – A defensive system that uses the middle back player to cover deep spikes.

MIDDLE-UP – A defensive system that uses the middle back player to cover dinks or short shots.

MINTONETTE – The original name of the game of volleyball, created by William Morgan.

OFFSIDE BLOCK – Player at the net, which is on the side away from the opponent’s attack.

OFF-SPEED HIT – Any ball spiked with less than maximum force but with spin.

OUTSIDE HITTER – a left-front or right-front attacker normally taking an approach which starts from outside the court

OVERHAND PASS – A pass executed with both hands open, controlled by the fingers and thumbs, played just above the forehead.

OVERHAND SERVE – Serving the ball and striking it with the hand above the shoulder.

OVERLAP – refers to the positions of the players in the rotation prior to the contact of the ball when serving.

PANCAKE – A one-handed defensive technique where the hand is extended and the palm is slid along the floor as the player dives or extension rolls, and timed so that the ball bounces off the back of the hand.

PASS – see “Forearm Pass”

POINT OF SERVICE – A serve that results in a point (an ace by NCAA standards) as the serve is not returnable due to a bad pass by the receiver, this number includes aces.

POWER ALLEY – A cross-court hit traveling away from the spiker to the farthest point of the court.

POWER TIP – A ball that is pushed or directed with force by an attacking team.

POWER VOLLEYBALL – A competitive style of volleyball started by the Japanese.

QUICK – a player approaching the setter for a quick inside hit

QUICK SET – a set (usually 2' above the net) in which the hitter is approaching the setter, and may even be in the air, before the setter delivers the ball. This type of set requires precise timing between the setter and hitter.

READY POSITION – The flexed, yet comfortable, posture a player assumes before moving to contact the ball.

RECEPTION ERROR – A serve that a player should have been able to return, but results in an ace (and only in the case of an ace). If it is a “husband/wife” play (where the ball splits the two receivers), the receiving team is given the reception error instead of an individual.

RED CARD – a severe penalty in which an official displays a red card. The result of a red card may be a player is disqualified, the team loses the serve, or the team loses a point. A red card may be given with or without a prior yellow card as a warning; it is up to the official’s discretion.

ROLL - a certain way to pass a ball in which the digger, or passer lays out an arm, passes the ball, and rolls over the shoulder (over the shoulder roll) or back (barrel roll) after passing the ball. This is a quick way to return to action after the play.

ROOF - A ball that when spiked is blocked by a defensive player such that the ball deflects straight to the floor on the attacker’s side.

ROTATION - The clockwise movement of players around the court and through the serving position following a side out.

SERVE – One of the six basic skills; used to put the ball into play. It is the only skill controlled exclusively by one player.

SERVER – The player who puts the ball into play.

SERVICE ERROR - An unsuccessful serve in which one or more of the following occurs: 1) the ball hits the net or fails to clear the net, 2) the ball lands out of bounds, or 3) the server commits a foot fault.

SERVICE WINNER – A point the serving team scores when this player has served the ball. The point can be an immediate (in the case of an ace) or delayed (a kill or opponent attack error after a long rally). Therefore, the sum of the team’s service winners equals their score.

SET – The tactical skill in which a ball is directed to a point where a player can spike it into the opponent’s court.

SETTER – the player who has the 2nd of 3 contacts of the ball who “sets” the ball with an “Overhand Pass” for a teammate to hit. The setter normally runs the offense.

SIDE OUT – Occurs when the receiving team successfully puts the ball away against the serving team, or when the serving team commits an unforced error, and the receiving team thus gains the right to serve.

SIX PACK – Occurs when a blocker gets hit in the head or face by a spiked ball.

SIX-TWO – A 6-player offense using 2 setters opposite one another in the rotation. Setter 1 becomes a hitter upon rotating into the front row as setter 2 rotates into the back row and becomes the setter.

SPIKE – Also hit or attack. A ball contacted with force by a player on the offensive team who intends to terminate the ball on the opponent’s floor or off the opponent’s blocker.

STRONG SIDE - When a right-handed hitter is hitting from the left-front position or when a left-handed hitter is hitting from the right-front position.

STUFF – A ball that is deflected back to the attacking team’s floor by the opponent’s blockers. Another word for block.

TURNING IN – the act of an outside blocker turning his/her body into the court so as to ensure the blocked ball is deflected into the court and lands in-bounds.

UNDERHAND SERVE – a serve in which the ball is given a slight under-hand toss from about waist high and then struck with the opposite closed fist in an “underhand pitching” motion.

WEAK SIDE – When a right-handed player is hitting from right-front position or when a left-handed player is hitting from the left-front position.

WIPE – when a hitter pushes the ball off of the opposing block so it lands out of bounds

YELLOW CARD – a warning from an official indicated by the display of a yellow card. Any player or coach who receives two yellow cards in a match is disqualified. A single yellow card does not result in loss of point or serve.