

Example Practice Structure & Basic Footwork / Movement Patterns

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Always start with a Dynamic Warm Up, important to do every practice to get the body warm and help prevent injuries. Younger ages, could add a game after as well “cat and mouse” etc. Then – Ball Control, Small Group Drill or Positional Work and then Finish with a Team Drill / Game. The basic footwork and ball control drills... there is no such thing as too much or “too basic” (: Please reach out with any questions.

1. Dynamic Warm Up (8-10 min)

- Run 2 Laps
- Shuffle with Arm Swings down & back
- Inverted Toe Touch (down to the net)
- Figure 4 Stretch (back)
- Lateral Shifting Lunge (down to the net)
- Single Leg March (back)
- Single Leg Hops // front to back (20 each way, 40 total)
- Side to Side (20 each way, 40 total)

Partner and a ball, warm up arms, pepper when done.

2. Ball Control (15-20 min)

- Passing reps (platform control, movement to ball)
- Pass back and forth to partner get “x” amount in a row
- Set back and forth to partner get “x” amount in a row
- Advanced: Ball control sequence - Pass to self, pass to partner // Pass to self, set to partner // pass to self, set to self, down ball to partner

BALL CONTROL DRILLS:

**Always have the person tossing the ball, toss away from the net so the other is passing towards the net.*

PASSING: Short, Deep, Side to Side - Serve & Pass with Partner on same side of net

- 1) Short: Have one person start on the end line. Toss short to 10ft line, run up and pass the ball. Example: Do 10 and switch.
- 2) Deep: Partner starts on 10 ft line, toss deep, shuffle back to pass. Then run back up to 10 ft line.
- 3) Side to Side: Start on one side, toss the ball 10 ft roughly to other side, shuffle movements, create angle, pass and run back. 10 and switch each side

SETTING:

- **Wall Setting**
 - Continuous sets against wall, both hands and one-hand variations. Go 10 ft, 20 ft, 30 ft up.
- **Moving Setting Drill**
 - Players set back and forth while shuffling laterally across the court.
- **Triangle Setting**
 - 3 players in a triangle, keep ball moving with clean sets.

Passing / Serving over the net small groups of 3-4

Start with tossing: One tosser, passer and target on the other side of net, extra person to help shag balls to keep drill moving. Toss over the net to passer, pass to target, target gets ball to tosser. Do 10 and rotate etc. Once executed - advance to serving over the net. Could do this with passing and setting, tossing the ball higher at partners forehead to force to take with hands. It is OK to "pass" the ball with hands!

3. Positional & Small-Group Drills (20 min) Google/Youtube drill ideas.. Here are some basic movements/footworks and terms to know!

FOOTWORK: With early ages, it is important to have everyone go through the footwork transition on and off the net. Always opening up towards the setter, wherever the ball is. Have players do the footwork on the net without a ball, to focus on getting feet and arm swing right.

4 Step Approach

- **First Step – Rhythm Step**
 - Small, controlled step with **right foot**.
 - Arms swing back naturally, stay relaxed.
- **Second Step – Direction & Momentum**
 - Bigger step with **left foot**.
 - Starts accelerating toward the ball, builds momentum.
- **Third Step – Power Step**
 - Explosive step with **right foot**.
 - Major momentum driver, loads the body for the jump. Arms drop behind the hips, prepping for a big swing forward. Keep them long.
- **Fourth Step – Plant Step**
 - Quick, strong step with **left foot**, slightly in front of right.
 - Stops forward motion and transfers energy upward into the jump.
 - Arms swing forward and up to maximize vertical lift.

SETTING: Ready position, hand and finger position, footwork, ball contact and follow through/release. Ball should contact fingertips & pads. Move feet first to go under ball, square up hips and shoulders to target. Right foot should slightly be in front. Absorb the ball with fingers, then extend arms and legs together.

SETS: **Few sets to work on Outside** - 5, 4, Go, **Middle** - 2, 1 (quick) **Right** - C, 2, 1 (quick)

Backrow: White / Blue / Red . Pipe is a quicker set clearing the front row.

PASSING: Always be in an athletic posture. Move feet towards the ball, “attack the ball”, CREATE THE ANGLE, hold platform. Don’t swing, manipulate the ball. Let legs do the work. Get the kids familiar with the **terms:** platform, angles, shuffle step, and absorbing the ball. They do not need to pass the ball “midline”, it is more about the angle vs where they take the pass in their body line.

Common Passing Mistakes: Swinging arms too much, bending elbows - inconsistent platform. Letting the ball hit wrists or hands.

SERVING: There should really be no jump serving here. Focus on a consistent, tough, float serve. Consistency, accuracy- hitting zones, is more important than the “look” of a serve (:

Ready Position - Stand behind the end line, feet shoulder-width apart. Non-dominant foot slightly forward. Weight on balls of feet. Hold ball in non-dominant hand at waist or chest height. Overhand Serve: Ball tossed slightly in front, swing dominant arm over shoulder. Contact with heel/palm of hand, fully extended arm. A float serve “floats,” making it unpredictable in flight. Requires consistent toss and firm contact.

UNDERSTANDING POSITIONS & ROTATIONS

ROTATION ORDER

The serving order sets the rotation order.

- Position 1 → Right Back (server's spot)
- Position 2 → Right Front
- Position 3 → Middle Front
- Position 4 → Left Front
- Position 5 → Left Back
- Position 6 → Middle Back

OFFENSIVE SYSTEMS

5-1 System

- 1 setter runs offense all 6 rotations
- Setter sets from back row (positions 1, 6, 5) and front row (positions 2, 3, 4).
- Setter must block when in front row

6-2 System

- 2 setters; only set from the back row.
- When setter rotates to the front row, they become a hitter, and the other setter takes over or sub the setter for a hitter.
- Always keeps 3 front-row hitters, maximizing offense.

4-2 System (fundamental)

- 2 setters, but they always set from front row.
- Simpler but limits offense to 2 hitters in front row.

“FUNDAMENTAL” ROTATION: “Spot to Spot” Whatever spot you are in, that is your position.

_____ **NET** _____

Outside Hitter - Middle Hitter - Setter / Front Right

Left Back - Middle Back - Right Back

“ADVANCED” ROTATION:

_____NET_____

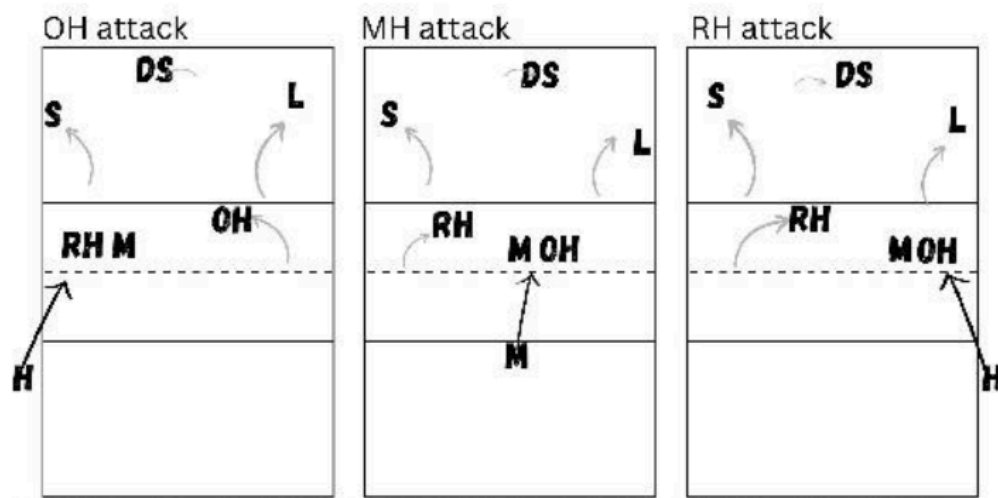
OPP/Setter - MB (middle) - OH (outside)

OH/DS - MB / L (Libero) - OPP/Setter

Players should be on opposite sides of the same position. For example, once ball has been served, the player would move to their “base”.

DEFENSE:

I run two different types of defenses.. ROTATIONAL AND PERIMETER DEFENSE. **Master the perimeter defense.** Could do a single block, therefore both off-blockers would be near the 10ft line to cover shorts/tips.



4. Finish with Game or Scrimmage (15 min)

GAME IDEAS:

- Serving
 - ◆ Ducks on a pond
 - ◆ Ace replace
 - ◆ Dead fish
 - ◆ Black hole/hoops
- Passing/Setting
 - ◆ Individual ball control competitions

- ◆ Partner ball control competitions
- ◆ 1v1 Tennis
- Hitting
 - ◆ Ducks on a pond
 - ◆ Hitter vs defense
- Playing
 - ◆ Short court
 - ◆ In n out
 - ◆ Rotating 4s or 5s
 - ◆ Queens
 - ◆ Tug of war
 - ◆ Bingo, bango, bongo/USA
 - ◆ Steal the coconuts

Always break it down with a team huddle before leaving a practice/game or water break! "1-2 Water, 1-2 Team".