

Season Plan for 6 to 7-Year-Olds

These slightly older players will not only revisit the tactics and skills they learned earlier, they will also add new tactics and skills—such as new pass routes—along the way. The overview on the next page provides a weekly guide as described previously. The tactics and skills, rules and traditions, and fitness and character development concepts all will be detailed in the practice plans.

Overview of the Season Plan

The Season Plan on the next page provides a weekly guide and addresses tactical and skill components, and other activities fully detailed in the Practice Plans document. The Season Plan has five components:

- **Purpose:** The purpose of the practice is your main focus.
- **Tactics and Skills:** Tactics are knowing what to do during the game (and when to do it), and they require an understanding of the problems faced by each team during the game and how those problems can be solved. Ways to maintain possession of the ball would be tactics. Skills are the physical skills traditionally taught, such as controlling the ball during play.
- **Rules and Traditions:** You will teach the rules of the sport to young children gradually, as part of playing games and learning skills. Traditions are those unwritten rules that players follow to be courteous and safe, such as raising your hand when you foul someone or playing cooperatively with the others on your team.
- **Fitness Concepts:** Even young children can understand some simple concepts about health and fitness, such as the idea that exercise strengthens your heart, so some of these are suggested as the focus for brief discussions during practice.
- **Character Development Concepts:** The four core values—caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility—can all be related to many situations arising while playing team sports. For example, playing cooperatively with teammates shows that you care about them. Again, we'll suggest some specific ideas for briefly discussing character development values.

Note that the YMCA does not teach or use roundhouse serving.


YMCA Rookies Volleyball Season Plan

6- to 7-Year-Olds

Week	Purpose	Tactics and skills	Rules and traditions	Fitness concepts	Character development concepts
1	To introduce basic concepts	Volleying, spiking, overhead passing	Boundaries, alternate serves between teams, free-ball toss serve, hands cannot touch net, rotation, base position, definition of rally	General fitness Being active leads to fitness.	Four core values The four core values are introduced.
2	To introduce basic concept of setting up to attack	Spiking, overhead passing	No consecutive hits, three hits per side	Flexibility Your muscles need to stretch.	Responsibility Learn the team motto: Play hard, play fair, and have fun.
3	To set up to attack	Overhead passing to a target	Net rules	Cardiorespiratory fitness The heart is a special muscle that pumps blood.	Respect for others It's important to be a good sport.
4	To set up to attack	Bump setting, spiking		Cardiorespiratory fitness Our heartbeat increases with exercise.	Honesty Raise your hand when you break a rule.
5	To set up to attack	Forearm passing, setter		Cardiorespiratory fitness Your heart gets stronger when you exercise and play.	Responsibility Mistakes are OK. Don't make excuses for your play.
6	To set up to attack	Forearm passing, setter opening up	High-five ritual to celebrate success	Flexibility Stretch muscles to make them flexible.	Caring Take turns with teammates.
7	To win the point	Underhand serving, roundhouse serving	Serving area, two serve trials as needed	Muscular strength and endurance Physical activity gives you strong muscles.	Responsibility Keeping control of yourself during practice and games.
8	To set up to attack	Underhand serving, roundhouse serving, serve receiving		General fitness We need to keep active every day, even days we have no practice.	Responsibility to team It's important to value teamwork.
9	To set up to attack and win the point	Setting, hitting		General fitness Healthy eating habits give you more energy.	Caring Forgive mistakes; they are part of the game.
10	To set up to attack and win the point	Setting, hitting		General fitness Eat good foods rather than junk foods.	Respect for game Realize it takes years to master some skills.

Note that the YMCA does not teach or use roundhouse serving.

Practice Plans for 6- to 7- Year-Olds



This chapter contains 10 practice plans to use with your 6- to 7-year-old YMCA Rookies volleyball players. Before we get to those, though, we'll explain the modifications to the game that are used in Rookie play and give you a quick review of what's in the practice plans and how you are to use them.

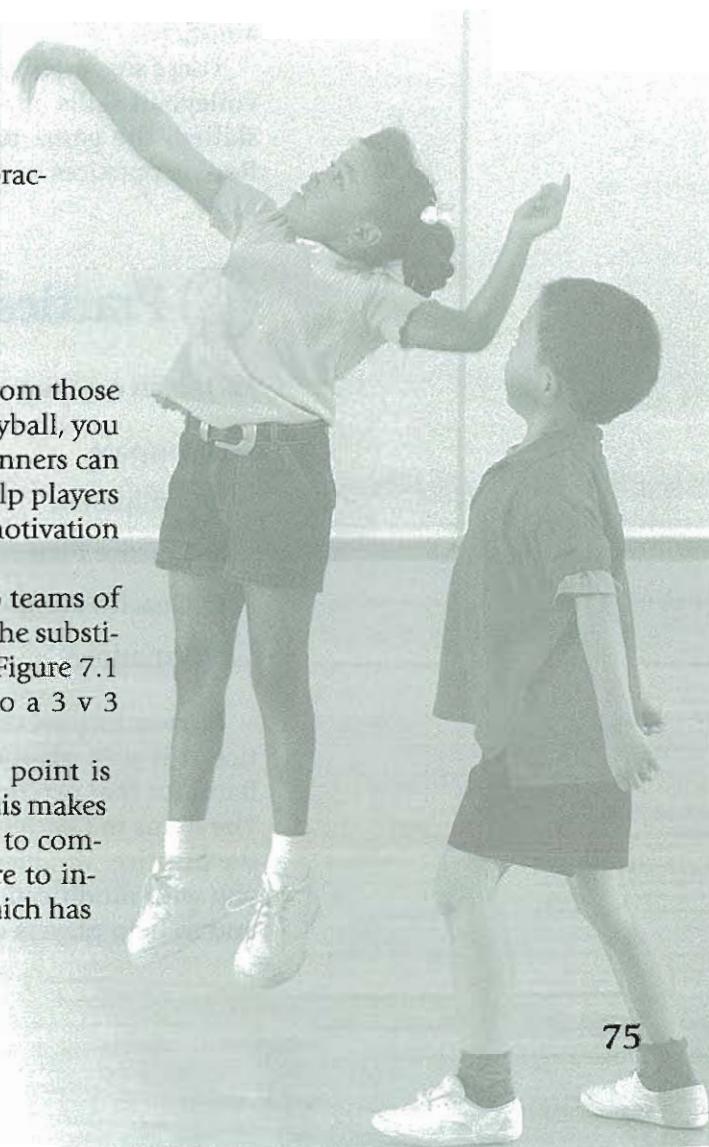


Game Modifications

The rules and procedures of Rookies volleyball differ from those for the standard six-on-six game. In YMCA Rookies volleyball, you break down the game into its basic components so beginners can learn while having fun. The modified rules and court help players develop quickly, and the modifications enhance their motivation to improve skills.

Eight players are assigned to each coach, to form two teams of four players. Games will be played three-on-three, with the substitution of a new player each time a team wins the serve. Figure 7.1 shows how the substitute player should be rotated into a 3 v 3 game.

We recommend you use only rally scoring (when a point is scored on every rally, regardless of which team served). This makes the sport more exciting for the kids and will enable you to complete games and matches on schedule. However, be sure to inform your players about side-out scoring (page 137), which has been used in volleyball for many years.



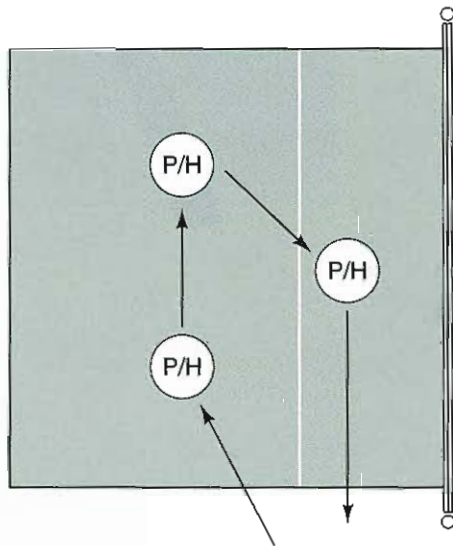


Figure 7.1 Substitution rotation for four players in a 3 v 3 game.

All games for 6- to 7-year-olds will be played on 12-foot-by-12-foot courts, with nets set at 5 feet, 6 inches (or lower if necessary). Games are played three-on-three. The ball is a beach ball or playground ball, rather than a standard volleyball. Serves are free-ball tosses at the beginning of the season (see page 125); later players learn to use the standard overhead or roundhouse serves. The practice plans describe other rules modifications.

Two ways you can work with players to help them learn are these:

- Teaching by invitation, in which you adjust for individual differences in players by inviting the players to decide some of the parameters of the practice situation themselves, such as letting the ball bounce to gain control
- Varying the parameters of the practice yourself to make play easier or more challenging for individuals or small groups

Using either strategy allows players to succeed while being challenged, with play being neither too hard nor too easy.

Finally, consider incorporating “sitting volleyball” in one or more practices. Have players sit on the floor and play over a net that is two to three feet above the floor. Use a beach ball or another type of light ball. This helps kids develop an appreciation for the difficulties experienced by athletes with disabilities.

These suggested modifications will help your Rookie players develop their volleyball skills at a level at which they can succeed. As they become more skilled, the game rules will become more like those of the official game. Rookie practices will give your players a good foundation to build on as they grow.



Practice Plan Organization

Each plan contains the following sections:

- Purpose
- Equipment
- Practice Plan
- Coach’s Point
- Variations

Purpose focuses on what you want to teach your players during that practice; it is your main theme for that day. *Equipment* notes what you’ll need on hand for that practice. We’ll address *Practice Plan* in depth in just a moment. The items in *Coach’s Point* will remind you what to emphasize in conducting the practice. *Variations* to games are noted at the end of each plan to provide you with modifications to keep skill practices and games fun and interesting and to help players of varying skill levels.

The practice plan section outlines what you will do during each practice session. It consists of these elements:

- ⊙ Warm-Up
- ⊙ Fitness Circle
- ⊙ Game 1
- ⊙ Skill Practices or Games
- ⊙ Team Circle and Wrap-Up

You'll begin each session with 5- to 10-minute warm-up activities. This will be followed by 5 minutes of the Fitness Circle, during which you briefly discuss and lead an activity that relates to health or fitness. Then, in game 1, you'll be working on the first two steps of the four-step process for teaching volleyball: playing a modified volleyball game and helping players discover what they need to do. The game will be designed to focus players' attention on a particular aspect of volleyball. Start the game but, when it's clear that the players are having trouble achieving the goal of the game, stop the game and ask questions and get answers similar to those shown in the plans. The questions and answers will help the players see what skills they need to solve tactical problems in the game.

The third part of the four-step process is teaching the skills identified in game 1 through the skill practices. In each skill practice you'll use the IDEA approach to

- ⊙ introduce the skill,
- ⊙ demonstrate the skill,
- ⊙ explain the skill, and
- ⊙ attend to players practicing the skill.

Chapter 8 contains descriptions of all the skills, so a page reference will guide you to the appropriate description. The introduction, demonstration, and explanation should be brief, to fit young children's short attention spans. Then, as the players practice, you will attend to individual children and guide them with Coach's Cues or further demonstration.

After the skill practices, you will finish the four-step process by having the children play another game. This lets them use the skills they just learned and see how to use those skills in the context of a game.

The practice plan section concludes with a Team Circle, which focuses on character development. You will take about five minutes to talk *with* your players about some aspect of volleyball that relates to one of the four core values—caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility. Following this, you'll wrap up the practice with a reminder of the next practice day and time and a preview of what you will teach in the next practice session.

Fitness and Team Circles are meant to be true discussions—not lectures in which you do all the talking and the players do all the listening. Ask the questions provided and wait for your players to respond. Don't feed them the

Key to Diagrams

PI = Player

P = Passer

S = Setter

H = Hitter

SR = Server

SRc = Serve receiver

P/H = Passer-hitter

T/H = Tosser-hitter

TG = Target

T = Tosser

C = Collector

—————→ = Path of player

-----→ = Path of ball

answers that we provide; these answers are meant only to help you guide the discussion. The children's wording of answers doesn't have to match what we give here. Your role is as much to ask questions and get players to respond as it is to dole out information.

The plans in this chapter, combined with the information in the rest of this book, should give you everything you need to lead practices. Remember to be patient and caring as you work on skills. Children will progress at different rates, and it's more important that they learn the sport in a positive way than it is that they learn quickly.

Practice 1

Warm-Up (10 minutes)

Begin each practice with 5 to 10 minutes of warm-up activities to get players loosened up and ready to go.

Groups of three—Players practice continuous overhead passing (volleying). Each player should be able to volley a ball with the hands so that the ball stays within a particular space. Work toward control so players don't run after the ball to retrieve it after each volley. Time the players for 20 or 30 seconds, or have players count the number of volleys in a row.

Fitness Circle (5 minutes)

Following the warm-up, gather the players and briefly discuss the fitness concept for that practice.

Key Idea: General fitness

"In volleyball, jumping makes our hearts beat faster and our leg muscles stronger. Spread out into your own space. Everyone jump in place, and I'll pass the ball to some of you. If you get the ball, pass it back to me and keep jumping!" Continue for 30 seconds. "Playing volleyball improves our physical conditioning or fitness. We get better at jumping, moving, and serving the ball, and we can keep going longer before we get too tired. How can you keep from getting too tired when you're jumping?" Pause for answers. "That's right—by pacing yourselves. It's also important to take a rest when you need one and to drink water during practice and at home. We'll talk more about the different areas of fitness in our Fitness Circles throughout the season."



Game 1 (10 minutes)

Following the Fitness Circle, get the kids playing a game. Interrupt the games with a time of questions and answers—with you asking the questions and your players providing the answers (about what the goal of the game was and what skills and tactics they needed to perform to succeed in the game). For many games, we provide diagrams or figures showing how the game is played. We also often provide coaching points for you to pass along to your players during the games.

PURPOSE

To introduce the basic concepts of volleying, spiking, and overhead passing.

Equipment

-  One beach ball or balloon for every two players
-  A volleyball net and court for every eight players



Teach players the rules (boundaries, cannot touch the net, alternate serve, rotate) and terms (*rally*) of the game. (A *rally* is the continuous play of the ball over the net between opponents, ending when one of the teams is unable to legally return the ball. The team that successfully kept the rally going is awarded a point and the right to serve the next ball.) Encourage players to set up and try to help each other.

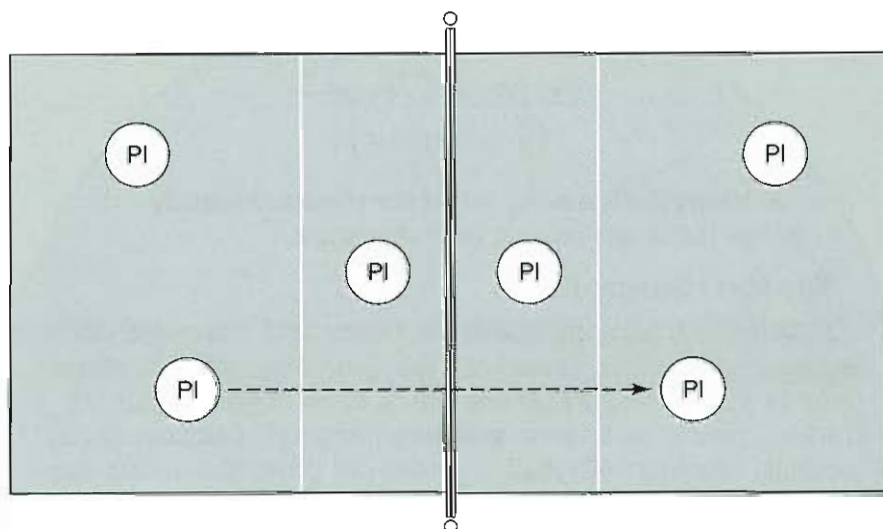


Goal

Introduce a basic volleyball game with a focus on rallying the ball over the net.

Description

3 v 3—Explain the base position (triad) and rotation before play begins (see pages 76, 122, 123, and 137). Players start in the base position and begin the game with a player performing a two-handed free-ball toss (performed like a two-handed soccer throw-in, also known as a rainbow toss) over the net. Alternate which side makes the initial toss and rotate after each rally.



Coach: What is the goal of the game?

Players: The goal is to volley the ball over the net in the court.

Coach: How did you do that?

Players: We did it by moving the feet toward the ball and striking the ball with hands upward or with a flat body surface.

You'll follow game 1 with a skill practice, during which you'll introduce, demonstrate, and explain a skill or tactic, and then attend to your players as they practice it. The question-and-answer session, in which your players tell you what skills and tactics they needed to be successful in the game, leads directly to the skill practice. We often provide coaching points with the skill practices; pass these points along to your players. We also provide *Coach's cues*—phrases to help your players focus on the task at hand—during many skill practices and games.

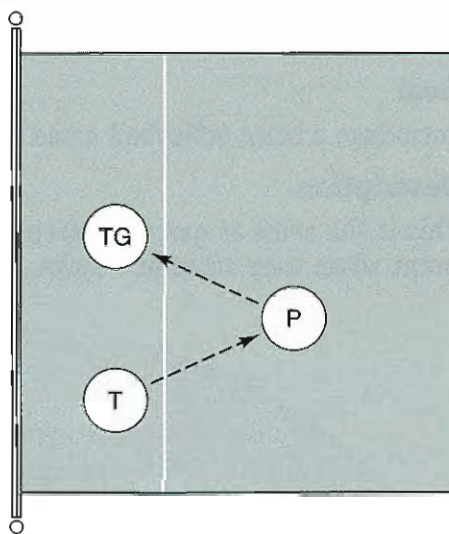
Practice 1

Skill Practice 1 (10 minutes)

1. Introduce, demonstrate, and explain how to overhead pass (see pages 126–127).
2. Have your players practice overhead passing from a toss.

Description

Groups of three—Player T tosses (high toss) to player P, who overhead passes the ball to player TG (target). Player TG bounce passes the ball back to player T. Allow players three trials, then have them rotate through positions from tosser to passer to target.



COACH's cues



for overhead passing

- "Use your fingerpads."
- "Bend your legs."
- "Extend your arms and legs." (Fly like a superhero.)
- "Give the ball a quick tap, not a catch-throw."

Skill Practice 2 (10 minutes)

1. Introduce, demonstrate, and explain how to spike (see pages 128–130).
2. Have your players practice spiking from a self-toss.

Description

Individual—Each player begins with a high self-toss, then moves to the ball, facing the net, and either swings or jumps and swings, spiking the ball over the net. He or she then retrieves the ball.

COACH's cues



for spiking

- "Move the feet to the ball."
- "Face the net."
- "Swing" or "Jump and swing" (depending on the developmental level of the player).

COACH's point




When teaching spiking, introduce the swing first, then the jump and swing. Not all players will be ready for jumping.

Practice 1

(cont'd)



 A free ball is any ball that the opponent returns easily.



Game 2 (10 minutes)

Goal

Introduce a basic volleyball game with a focus on setting up to spike.

Description

This is the same as game 1, except that teams are awarded an extra point when they attempt a spike.

Team Circle (5 minutes)

Conclude practice by gathering your players and discussing a character development concept. These aren't lectures; you want your players' active participation in these discussions. Following the discussions, wrap up the practice with a few comments.

Key Idea: Four core values

Gather children into a circle with one ball. "Everyone hand the ball to the one next to you until it makes it around the whole circle." After the ball has gone around the circle one time, have it passed to you. "We play volleyball for exercise and to have fun, but it also teaches us to become good teammates and good people. This season we will talk about four qualities of a good person and teammate: *caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility*. Our team needs to have all of these qualities in our practices and games. Remember—we can't be a team without each of you doing your part. Let's bump the ball to each other and say one of the core values with each bump. This will help you remember to use all four of the qualities so we can work together."

Wrap-Up

Make summary comments about practice. Remind players of the next practice day and time and give them a sneak preview of that practice—setting and spiking.

Variations

- To simplify games and skill practices, have players use balloons instead of balls.

Practice 2

Warm-Up (10 minutes)

Individual—Each player begins practice with a high self-toss, then moves to the ball, facing the net, and either swings or jumps and swings, spiking the ball over the net.

Fitness Circle (5 minutes)

Key Idea: Flexibility

Bring a rubber band to show to children. "This rubber band is like our muscles. Can you tell me how?" Listen for children's responses (stretches when pulled, goes back to original shape, etc.). Demonstrate band movement. "Your muscles work the same way. When you reach and stretch, your muscles stretch just like this rubber band. When your body comes back, your muscles return to their original shape. Everyone slowly reach down to the floor with your arms and then bring your arms back up."

Have them repeat three times. "Your leg muscles need to stretch because we use them a lot in volleyball. Stretching makes them more flexible. When muscles are flexible, they feel good and won't get hurt as easily."

Game 1 (10 minutes)

Goal

Players will set up to spike using the overhead pass.




Description

3 v 3—Players start in the base position and begin the game with a player performing a two-handed free-ball toss over the net. Alternate which side makes the initial toss and rotate after each rally. Teams are awarded an extra point when they have a set-spike combination.


PURPOSE

To introduce the basic concept of setting up to attack, focusing on overhead passing and spiking.

Equipment

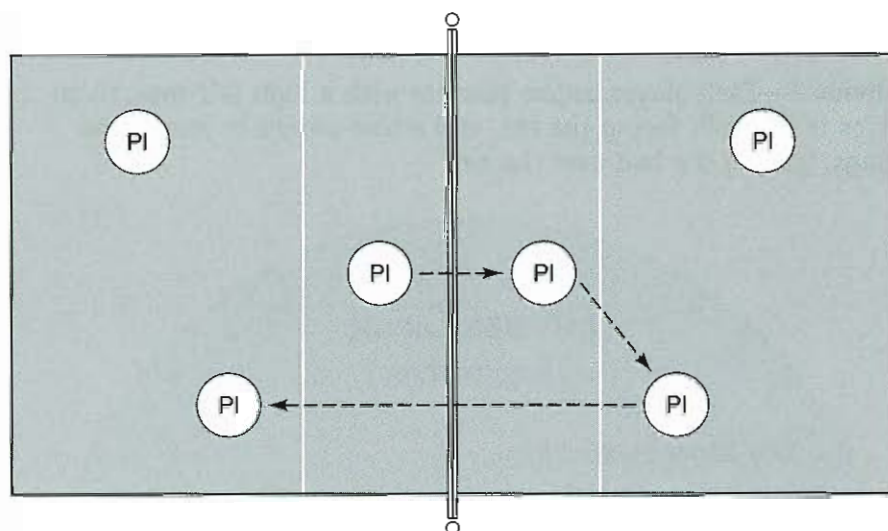
-  One beach ball or balloon for every player
-  A volleyball net and court for every eight players
-  A rubber band



-  Teach players that they cannot hit the ball twice in a row (consecutive hits) during a game.

Practice 2

(cont'd)



Coach: What is the goal of the game?

Players: The goal is to set up to spike.

Coach: How did you do that?

Players: We did it by using a high overhead pass to a teammate to spike.

Coach: What do you have to do as a team to be successful?

Players: We have to use teamwork, take turns, cooperate, and talk to each other.

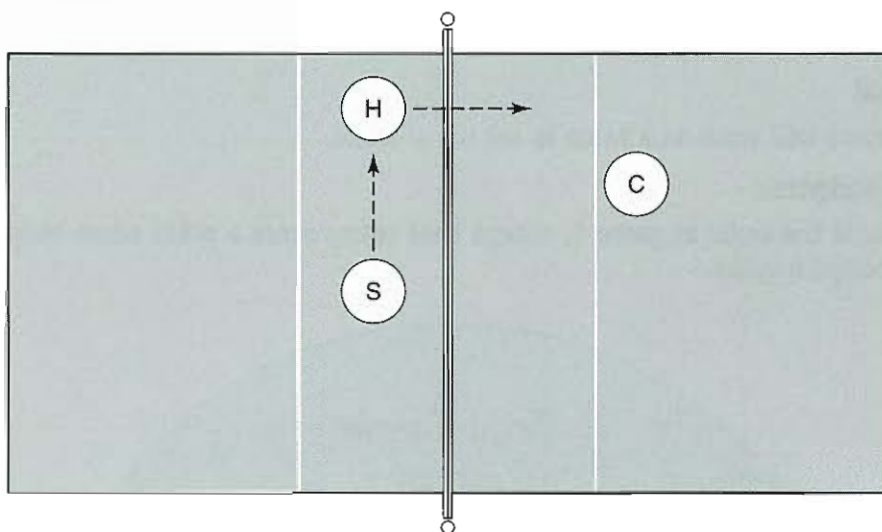
Skill Practice 1 (10 minutes)

1. Introduce, demonstrate, and explain how to work as a team to set up to spike (see pages 122–124).
2. Have your players practice spiking from a toss.

Description

Groups of three—Player S (setter) tosses a high ball to player H (hitter), who attempts to spike the ball over the net. Player C (collector) retrieves the ball. Allow players three to four trials, then have them rotate through positions from setter to collector to hitter.

Practice 2



COACH's cues



for overhead passing

- "Use your fingerpads."
- "Bend your legs."
- "Extend your arms and legs." (Fly like a superhero.)
- "Give the ball a quick tap, not a catch-throw."

for spiking

- "Move the feet to the ball."
- "Face the net."
- "Jump and throw your hands high."
- "Swing fast."

Skill Practice 2 (10 minutes)

1. Introduce, demonstrate, and explain how to toss and set to a teammate, who spikes the ball (see page 126).
2. Have your players practice tossing and setting to a spiker.

Description

Groups of three—Player S self-tosses to overhead pass (set) the ball to player H, who attempts to spike the ball over the net. Player C retrieves the ball. Allow players three to four trials, then have them rotate through positions from setter to collector to hitter. Use the coaching cues for overhead passing and spiking. (See figure above).

COACH's point



☞ Reinforce *all* attempts to execute a set-spike combination, not just successful ones.

☞ Start referring to the overhead pass as the *set*.

Practice 2

(cont'd)

Game 2 (10 minutes)

Goal

Players will work as a team to set up to spike.

Description

This is the same as game 1, except that teams score a point when they attempt a spike.



Keep players motivated to work on performing a three-hit progression. The three-hit progression is the essence of the game.



Team Circle (5 minutes)

Key Idea: Responsibility

Gather children into a group. "When you come to practice, you should do three things: (1) Be ready to play. (2) Learn and improve your skills and work with others. (3) Have fun. I'm going to give you a way to remember these three things. It's called a 'team motto.' Our team motto is *Play hard, play fair, and have fun!* Let's say it together loud. That's great. Be sure to remember our team motto and put it into practice."

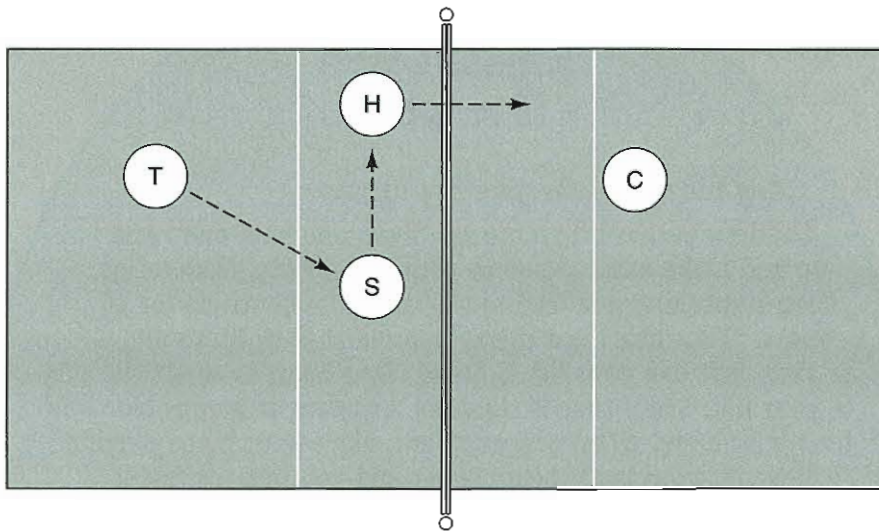
Wrap-Up

Make summary comments about practice. Remind players of the next practice day and time and give them a sneak preview of that practice—overhead passing to a target.

Practice 2

Variations

- To simplify games and skill practice, use balloons instead of beach balls.
- To simplify skill practice, do only the first practice.
- To simplify game play, play the ball off a bounce.
- To challenge players during skill practice, add a tosser position (see figure below).



Practice 3

PURPOSE

To set up to attack, focusing on overhead passing to a target.

Equipment

- ☒ One beach ball for every two players
- ☒ A volleyball net and court for every eight players
- ☒ Two cones

Warm-Up (10 minutes)

Pairs—A player self-tosses to set the ball to his or her partner, who attempts to spike the ball over the net. Allow players three to five trials, then have them switch positions. The player who spikes the ball retrieves the ball.

Fitness Circle (5 minutes)

Key Idea: Cardiorespiratory fitness

Children gather into a group. "Everyone hold one hand up and make a fist. Squeeze your fist tightly, then let go. Keep tightening and letting go." Children continue for 10 counts. "Your heart is a special muscle that tightens and relaxes, just like your fist is doing. Your heart is about the size of your fist. Every time it tightens, or beats, it pumps blood all over your body. When you jump and move a lot while playing volleyball, your heart beats faster and you breathe faster. Let's try running in place with our knees high." Demonstrate. "Feel your heart beating by placing your hands over your chest. Count how many times your heart beats." Time for 15 seconds. Ask players the number they counted. "Running helps you improve your cardiorespiratory fitness—the heart and lungs working together to get blood to your whole body."

Game 1 (10 minutes)

Goal

Players will work as a team to set up to spike.

Description

3 v 3—Players start in the base position and begin the game with a player performing a two-handed free-ball toss over the net. Alternate which side makes the initial toss and rotate after each rally. Teams are awarded an extra point when they have a set-spike combination. (See figure on page 84.)

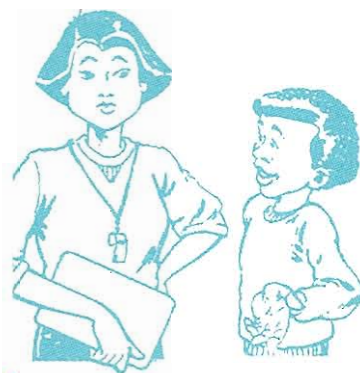
Practice 3

Coach: What is the goal of the game?

Players: The goal is to work as a team to set up to spike.

Coach: How did you do that?

Players: We did it by using teamwork and talking to each other and by making high sets and good first passes (overhead passes).

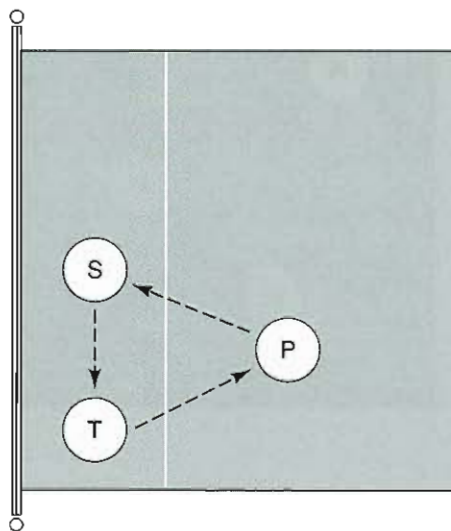


Skill Practice (20 minutes)

1. Introduce, demonstrate, and explain how to overhead pass to the target (see pages 126–127).
2. Have your players practice overhead passing-setting to the target.

Description

Groups of three—Player T tosses a high ball to player P, who calls for the ball (“Mine”) and overhead passes it to player S (setter), who sets it back to player T. Allow players three to five trials, then have them rotate through positions from tosser-target to passer to setter.



COACH's cues



for overhead passing

- “Use your fingerpads.”
- “Bend your legs.”
- “Extend your arms and legs.” (Fly like a superhero.)
- “Give the ball a quick tap, not a catch-throw.”
- “Call for the ball—say ‘Mine.’”



It may be helpful to have the target person call “Here” as a way to build communication skills.

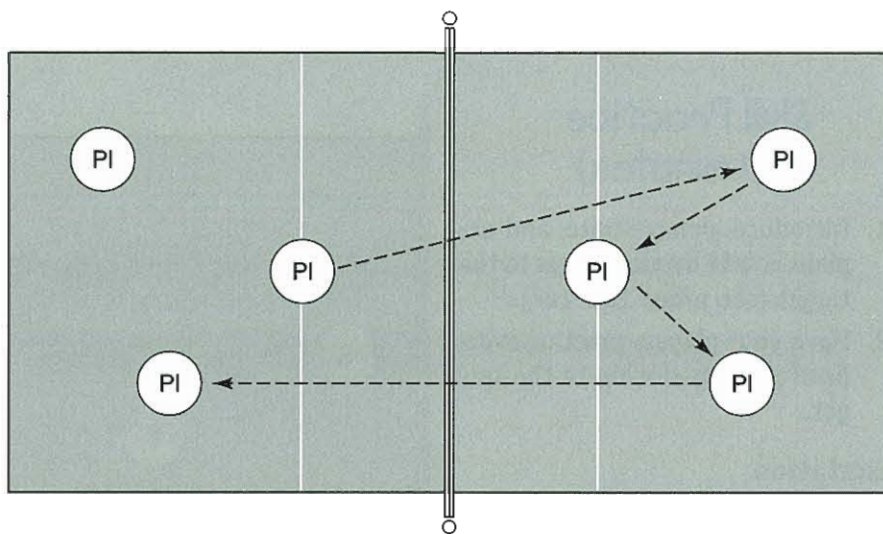
Game 2 (10 minutes)

Goal

Players will overhead pass to the target.

Description

This is the same as game 1, except that teams are awarded an extra point when they overhead pass the ball to the player designated as the setter.



Practice 3

Team Circle (5 minutes)

Key Idea: Respect

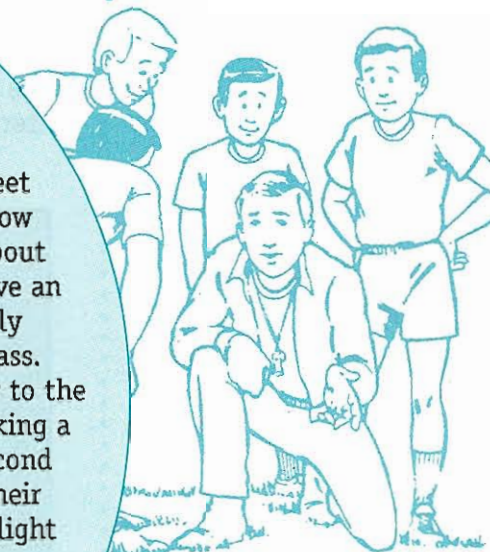
Gather children into a group between two cones about 10 feet apart. Get a ball and stand near the group. "I am going to show you two different ways to handle the same situation. Think about which is the best way to handle this." Choose a player to receive an overhead pass from you. Make a bad pass and then stomp angrily away from the group. Retrieve the ball and make another bad pass. This time, run to get the ball and make a pass that goes directly to the player. "If you think the first response is the way to handle making a bad overhead pass, stand next to this cone. If you think the second way is better, stand next to this one." Ask players to explain their choices. "It's important to be a good sport in volleyball." Highlight how and why. "That's showing respect for your teammates."


Wrap-Up

Make summary comments about practice. Remind players of the next practice day and time and give them a sneak preview of that practice—bump setting and hitting.

Variations

- To simplify the games, let the ball bounce before contact.



 Remind players of the following rules regarding the net:




- Players cannot touch the net during play.
- A served ball cannot touch the net.
- It is legal for the ball to touch the net during a rally.

Practice 4

PURPOSE

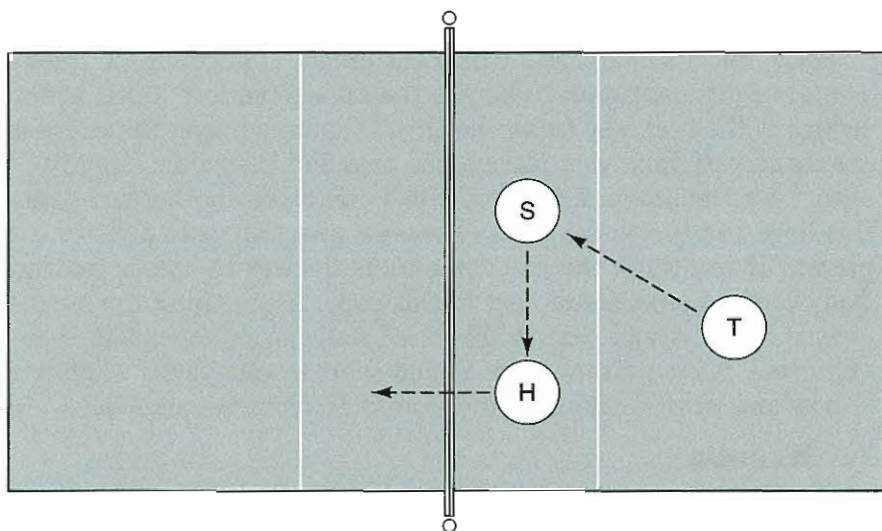
To set up to attack, focusing on the bump set and hitting.

Equipment

-  One beach ball for every two players
-  A volleyball net and court for every eight players
-  Two cones

Warm-Up (10 minutes)

Groups of three—Player T tosses the ball to player S (setter), who sets to player H (hitter), who then attempts to spike the ball over the net. Player H then retrieves the ball and returns it to player T. Allow players three trials, then have them rotate through positions from tosser to setter to hitter.



Fitness Circle (5 minutes)

Key Idea: Cardiorespiratory fitness

Gather children into a group. "Everyone put your hand up in front of you and make a fist. What did we pretend our fist was at the last practice?" Wait for someone to say the heart. "What does our heart do?" Wait for someone to say it pumps blood. "Everybody open and close your fist. Put your hand over your chest and feel what is happening. Now, let's run around the court. Will your heart beat faster or slower?" Wait for answers. "Now put your hands over your chest. Is your heart beating faster? When we move and jump during volleyball, our hearts beat faster, just like our fists opening and closing.

Your heart slows down when you slow down.

Making your heart beat faster improves your cardiorespiratory fitness."

Practice 4

Game 1 (10 minutes)

Goal

Players will overhead pass to the target.

Description

3 v 3—Players start in the base position and begin the game with a player performing a two-handed free-ball toss over the net. Alternate which side makes the initial toss and rotate after each rally. Teams raise their hands when they overhead pass to the player designated as setter. (See figure on page 90.)

Coach: What is the goal of the game?

Players: The goal is to try to get the first pass to the setter so the setter can set the ball for the spiker.

Coach: How can a setter still set if you pass the ball to the setter waist high or lower?

Players: The setter can bump set the ball.

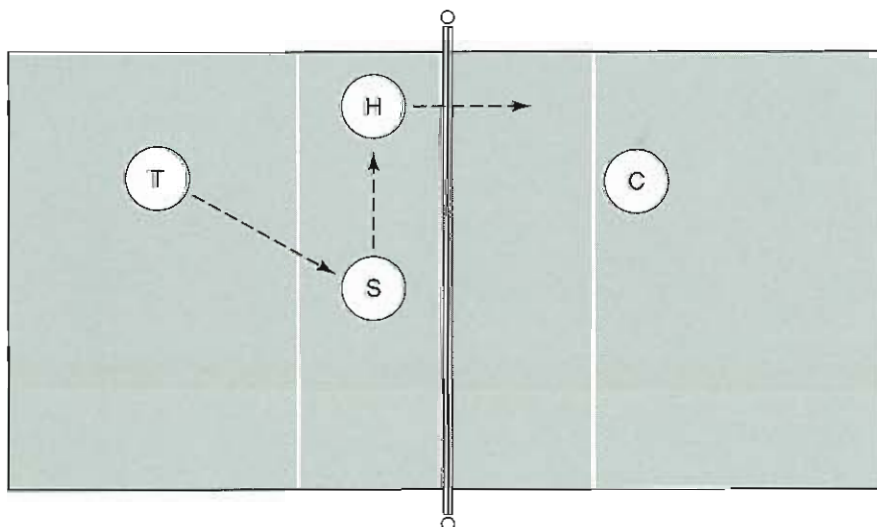


Skill Practice (20 minutes)

1. Introduce, demonstrate, and explain how to bump set (see pages 133–134).
2. Have your players practice bump setting and hitting.

Description

Groups of four—Player T tosses the ball to player S, who calls for the ball (“Mine”) and bump sets to player H (hitter), who spikes the ball. Player C collects the ball and returns it to player T. Allow players three to five trials, then have them rotate through positions from tosser to setter to hitter to collector.



COACH's cues



for bump setting

"Keep your side to the net." (Keep the belly button facing the target.)

"Bend your legs."

"Keep a flat platform." (Arms are straight, elbows locked, with the heels of the hands pressed together. Players make contact with the ball on the forearms above the wrists.)

"Keep the platform parallel to the floor."

"Extend your legs."

"Call for the ball—say 'Mine.'"

Game 2 (10 minutes)

Goal

Players will use the bump set in game play.

Description

3 v 3—Players start in the base position and begin the game with a player self-tossing and overhead passing the ball over the net. Alternate which side makes the initial toss-overhead pass and rotate after each rally. Teams are awarded an extra point when they use a bump set.

Practice 4

Team Circle (5 minutes)

Key Idea: Honesty

Gather children into a group near two cones about 10 feet apart. "What is against the rules in volleyball?" Listen to their responses. "Should you admit to breaking a rule if no one sees it? Those who think yes, stand at this cone. Those who think no, stand at this one." Wait for children to choose. "When you know you've broken a rule, you should raise your hand. You should never take unfair advantage. Can you think of other ways honesty is practiced on the court?" Listen to responses and discuss. "All of those show honesty."

Wrap-Up


Make summary comments about practice. Remind players of the next practice day and time and give them a sneak preview of that practice—forearm passing.



Variations

- To simplify games, play the first ball over the net off a bounce.
- To simplify skill practice, have players bump set to themselves before bump setting to others.






 Remember that volleyball is a rebounding type of game. In most games players can hold on to the ball, allowing them to make adjustments and giving them time to think.

Practice 5

PURPOSE

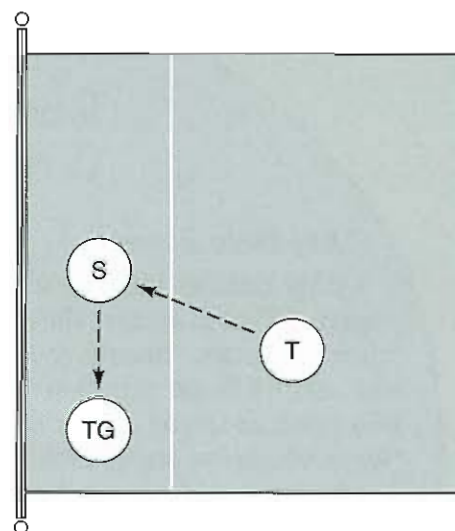
To set up to attack, focusing on the forearm pass.

Equipment

-  One beach ball for every two players
-  A volleyball net and court for every eight players
-  Two cones

Warm-Up (10 minutes)

Groups of three—Player T tosses the ball to player S, who calls for the ball (“Mine”) and bump sets to player TG (target). Player TG returns the ball to player T. Allow players three to five trials, then have them rotate through positions from tosser to setter to target.



Fitness Circle (5 minutes)

Key Idea: Cardiorespiratory fitness

Gather children into a group. “Everyone find your own space. Put your fist up in front of you. We pretend our fist is our . . .” (wait for someone to say heart). “The heart does what things?” Wait for responses—pumps blood and beats faster when we run or move faster. “When I say ‘go!’ everyone run in your own space and make your fist open and close faster at the same time. When I say ‘stop!’ stop as fast as you can.” Begin activity. “When you run, your heart beats faster. Every time your heart beats faster, it gets stronger because it’s a muscle. Muscles get stronger when you use them. Volleyball is a great way to keep your heart healthy and strong and improve your cardiorespiratory fitness.”

Practice 5

Game 1 (10 minutes)

Goal

Players will use the bump set in game play.

Description

3 v 3—Players start in the base position and begin the game with a player self-tossing and overhead passing the ball over the net. Alternate which side makes the initial toss-overhead pass and rotate after each rally. Teams are awarded an extra point when they use a bump set. (See figure on page 90).

Coach: What is the goal of the game?

Players: The goal is to use the bump set.

Coach: How do you do that?

Players: We make a flat platform with parallel arms and have the belly button facing the target.

Coach: Where else can you use a bump-type pass?

Players: We can use it on the first contact.

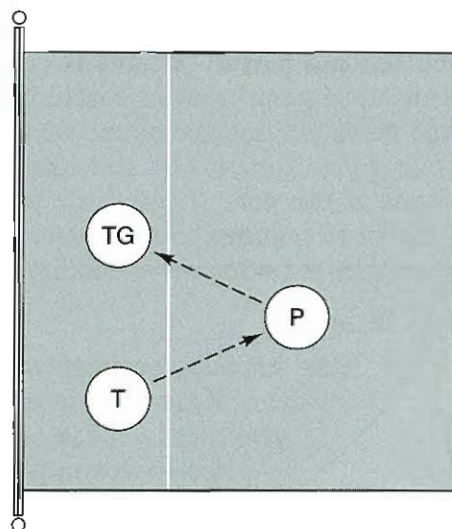


Skill Practice (20 minutes)

1. Introduce, demonstrate, and explain how to forearm pass (see pages 133–134).
2. Have your players practice the forearm pass.

Description

Groups of three—Player T toss passes the ball to player P, who forearm passes it to player TG (target). Allow players three to five trials, then have them rotate through positions from toss passer to forearm passer to target.



COACH's cues



for forearm passing

"Keep a medium posture." (Player bends from the knees and waist, feet staggered and body squared to the target.)

"Move your feet to the ball."

"Keep a flat platform." (Arms are straight, elbows locked, with the heels of the hands pressed together. Players make contact with the ball on the forearm above the wrists.)

"Keep your belly button facing the target."



☞ The forearm pass is one of the six basic volleyball skills; the others are serve, set, spike, block, and dig.

☞ The forearm pass is used for serve reception (serve receive), passing free or down balls (see page 130), setting, and floor defense.

☞ The forearm pass is unique to volleyball. Most athletes are trained to handle balls with their hands and feet.

Practice 5

(cont'd)

Game 2 (10 minutes)

Goal

Players will use the forearm pass as the first pass in game play.

Description

This is the same as game 1, except that teams earn a point when the first hit is an attempt at the forearm pass.

Team Circle (5 minutes)

Key Idea: Responsibility

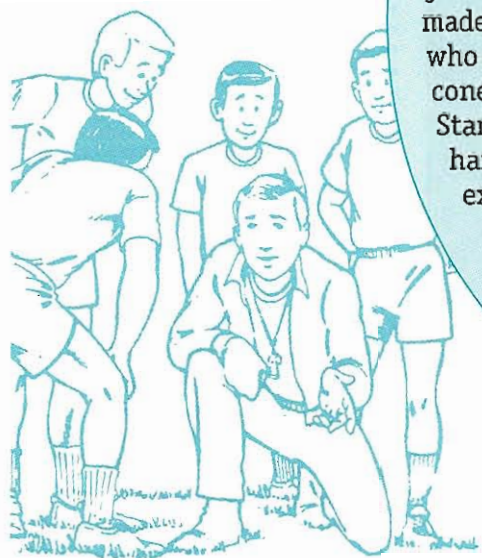
Gather children into a group near two cones about 10 feet apart. Choose two players to help role play. Set up a triangle of you and the two players. Let the children know you're role-playing with them. All three take turns overhead passing the ball to each other. When it's your turn, miss the pass and role-play yourself as a player: "I couldn't get that pass! It was your fault—you made a bad pass!" Now as coach: "I want you to think about players who make excuses and blame others for their mistakes. Stand at this cone if you think it's OK to make excuses when you make mistakes. Stand at this cone if you think you should try to learn and work harder to improve." Ask players about their choices. "Not making excuses is taking responsibility for yourself."

Wrap-Up

Make summary comments about practice. Remind players of the next practice day and time and give them a sneak preview of that practice—forearm passing and having the setter open up.

Variations

- To simplify the game, let the ball bounce on the first hit.
- To challenge players during skill practice, move player T so he or she is tossing over the net.



Practice 6

Warm-Up (10 minutes)

Groups of three—Player T toss passes the ball to player S, who forearm passes it to player TG (target). Player TG returns the ball to player T. Allow players three to five trials, then have them rotate through positions from toss passer to forearm passer to target. (See figure on page 96).

Fitness Circle (5 minutes)

Key Idea: Flexibility

Gather children into a group. Show them a rubber band. Demonstrate band movement. "Let's pretend this rubber band is one of your muscles. See how it moves back and forth, stretching and moving. Let's move our bodies just like the rubber band. Reach and stretch up and down. It's important to stretch slowly without bouncing or jerking." Have them continue for one minute. "Our muscles help us move and stretch. We need to stretch muscles to keep them flexible and able to move easily. When muscles can move easily, they don't get injured."

Game 1 (10 minutes)

Goal

Players will use the forearm pass as the first pass in game play.

Description

3 v 3—Players start in the base position and begin the game with a player self-tossing and overhead passing the ball over the net. Alternate which side makes the initial toss-overhead pass and rotate after each rally. Teams earn a point when the first hit is an attempt at the forearm pass. (See figure on page 90).


PURPOSE

To set up to attack, focusing on the forearm pass and the setter opening up.

Equipment

- ☒ One beach ball or playground ball for every two players
- ☒ A volleyball net and court for every eight players
- ☒ A rubber band



-  Teach players to celebrate success, such as giving each other a high five after a successful play.



Coach: What does the setter do when the ball is on the opponent's side of the net?

Players: The setter faces the net.

Coach: What does the setter do when the ball comes over to his or her side of the net?

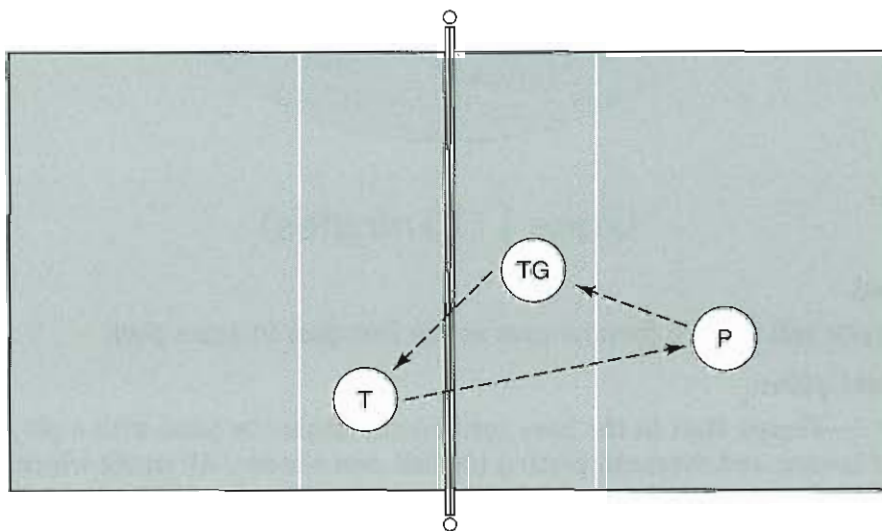
Players: The setter opens up by pivoting to face play.

Skill Practice (20 minutes)

1. Introduce, demonstrate, and explain how the setter opens up (see page 123).
2. Have your players practice making the forearm pass and having the setter open up.

Description

Groups of three—Player T free-ball tosses the ball over the net to player P, who forearm passes it to player TG. Player TG opens up, says "Here," catches the ball, and bounce passes it back to player T. Be sure that player TG starts by facing the net. Allow players three to five trials, then have them rotate through positions from toss passer to forearm passer to target.



Practice 6

COACH's cues



for forearm passing

"Keep a medium posture." (Player bends from the knees and waist, feet staggered and body squared to the target.)

"Move your feet to the ball."

"Keep a flat platform." (Arms are straight, elbows locked, with the heels of the hands pressed together. Players make contact with the ball on the forearms above the wrists.)

"Keep your belly button facing the target."

for the setter to open up

"Keep a high posture."

"Pivot (turn) toward the passers."

"Call 'Here.'"

Game 2 (10 minutes)

Goal

Players will use the forearm pass and open up in game play.

Description

This is the same as game 1, except that teams earn a point when the first hit is a forearm pass and the setter opens up.

COACH's point



It's just as important to teach off-the-ball movements as on-the-ball skills. Just think of the small percentage of time a player touches the ball in a game. This is why players must know how to maximize their position for successful game play.



Team Circle (5 minutes)

Key Idea: Caring

Gather children into a circle. Stand in the middle of the circle with a ball. Choose two children to pass the ball with you. "We're going to work on our passing skills." Pass repeatedly to them and not the others. "Tell me how you felt to have only two players get the passes?" Listen to their responses. "Sharing the ball and not distracting your teammates shows you care about them. What other things can you do to show you care about your teammates?" Their responses should include encouragement, positive comments for good play, forgiving players that make mistakes, and so on. "Good. Those are all ways you can show you care."

Wrap-Up

Make summary comments about practice. Remind players of the next practice day and time and give them a sneak preview of that practice—serving.

Variations

- To simplify the games, let the ball bounce on the first hit.
- To simplify skill practice, have player T toss from the same side of the net.
- To challenge players during skill practice, have the tosser toss the ball so the passer must move one or two steps to play the ball.

Practice 7

Warm-Up (10 minutes)

Groups of three—Player T free-ball tosses the ball over the net to player P, who forearm passes it to player TG. Player TG opens up, says “Here,” catches the ball, and bounce passes it back to player T. Be sure that player TG starts by facing the net. Allow players three to five trials, then have players rotate through positions from toss passer to forearm passer to target. (See figure on page 100).

Fitness Circle (5 minutes)

Key Idea: Muscular strength and endurance

Gather children into a group. “OK, everyone get down on the ground and do the crab walk.” Continue for 30 seconds to one minute. “Are your arms and legs getting tired? You used many of your arm and leg muscles to do the crab walk. What parts of the body do you use the most for volleyball? That’s right—your arms and legs. The more you practice volleyball, the stronger your muscles will get.

Then you can keep going much longer before you get too tired. What things can we do to get our muscles stronger for volleyball?” Listen to answers and discuss.

Game 1 (10 minutes)

Goal

Players will use a forearm pass and open up in game play.



Description

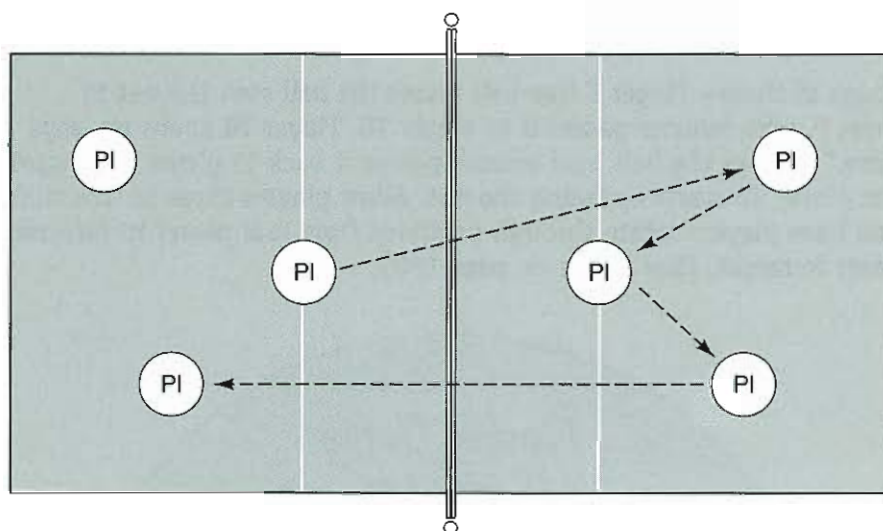
3 v 3—Players start in the base position and begin the game with a player self-tossing and overhead passing the ball over the net. Alternate which side makes the initial toss-overhead pass and rotate after each rally. Teams earn a point when the first hit is a forearm pass and the setter opens up.

PURPOSE

To win the point, focusing on the underhand and roundhouse serves.

Equipment

-  One beach ball or playground ball for every two players
-  A volleyball net and court for every eight players



Coach: What is the official way to start a volleyball game?

Players: The game starts with a serve.

Coach: What are the different ways to serve?

Players: Serves can be done underhand, overhand, or roundhouse.

Skill Practice (20 minutes)

1. Introduce, demonstrate, and explain how to serve underhand and roundhouse (see pages 130–132).
2. Have your players practice the underhand and roundhouse serves.

Description

Pairs—Players start close to the net on opposite sides of the net, attempting the underhand serve. One player serves, and the other player retrieves the ball. When most players are successful, gradually move players back to the end line (but if players have trouble getting the ball over the net, allow them to serve from inside the court). Challenge players to get two serves in a row over the net and within court boundaries. Repeat this practice with the roundhouse serve. Be sure that players move forward after serving.

Practice 7

COACH's cues



for underhand serving

"Hold the ball in the nonserving hand with the arm extended."

"Step with the foot opposite the throwing arm." (Step toward the net.)

"With palm up, make a fist."

"Your arm should brush your shorts." (Arms should be close to the body.)

"Keep your elbow straight."

"Hit the ball out of your hand" (like pitching horseshoes).

"After hitting the ball, move forward into a playing position."

for roundhouse serving

"Keep your shoulder and feet pointing toward the sideline."

"Keep your eyes on the ball."

"Lift the ball." (Toss it.)

"Keep your hitting arm extended."

"Hit the ball firmly with the heel of your hand."

"After hitting the ball, move forward into a playing position."

Game 2 (10 minutes)

Goal

Players will use either an underhand or a roundhouse serve in game play.


Description

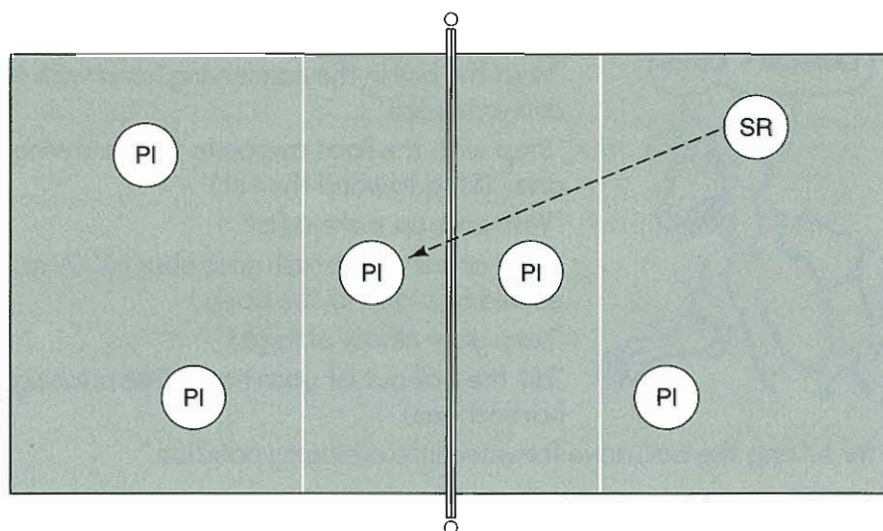
3 v 3—Players start in the base position and begin the game with a player performing an underhand or roundhouse serve. Alternate which side serves and rotate after each rally. Players may serve from behind the end line or on court, depending on their abilities.

Practice 7

(cont'd)



 Tell players to call "Serve" when they are serving so both teams are ready for action.



Team Circle (5 minutes)

Key Idea: Responsibility

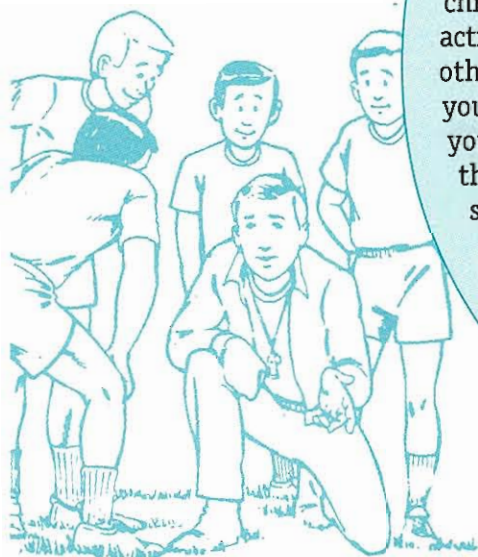
Gather children into a circle. "I want everyone to run in a circle, following the person in front of you, without bumping into each other. Keep a space about as long as a bicycle between you, and don't go ahead of the person in front of you." Encourage children to run slow enough to do all the directions. Continue the activity for one minute. "Everyone stop. Did you bump into each other? Did anyone get upset with the person in front of you? You kept your body under control by not going ahead of the person in front of you. You kept your emotions under control by not getting upset with the person ahead of you—that person couldn't move any faster since you were all running in a circle as a group. We all can stay safe and learn when we all are responsible for ourselves."

Wrap-Up

Make summary comments about practice. Remind players of the next practice day and time and give them a sneak preview of that practice—serving and serve receiving.

Variations

- To simplify games, either have players move into the court to serve or allow them two chances to serve.
- To simplify skill practice, focus on only one type of serve.



Practice 8

Warm-Up (10 minutes)

Pairs—Players start close to the net, attempting the underhand serve. When most players are successful, gradually move the players back to the end line. Challenge players to get two serves in a row over the net and within court boundaries. Repeat this practice with the roundhouse serve. Players should serve each type of serve five to eight times. Be sure that players move forward after serving.

Fitness Circle (5 minutes)

Key Idea: General fitness

Gather children into a circle. "What do our bodies need to do every day to keep going?" Wait for their responses. Discuss sleeping and resting, eating, and doing regular activities. "There's one more thing that's really important—being active and exercising. Let's pretend it's a day that you do not have volleyball practice. Your body needs to move every day. With no volleyball today, what should we do to move our bodies?" Wait for their responses. If a child suggests biking or swimming, have everyone act out that activity. Act out three activities. "It's important to be active when you don't have volleyball practice. Your body needs to move every day."

Game 1 (10 minutes)

Goal

Players will use a forearm pass as the first pass in game play.



Description

3 v 3—Players start in the base position and begin the game with a player performing either an underhand or a roundhouse serve. Alternate which side serves and rotate after each rally. Teams earn a point when the first hit is an attempt at the forearm pass.

PURPOSE

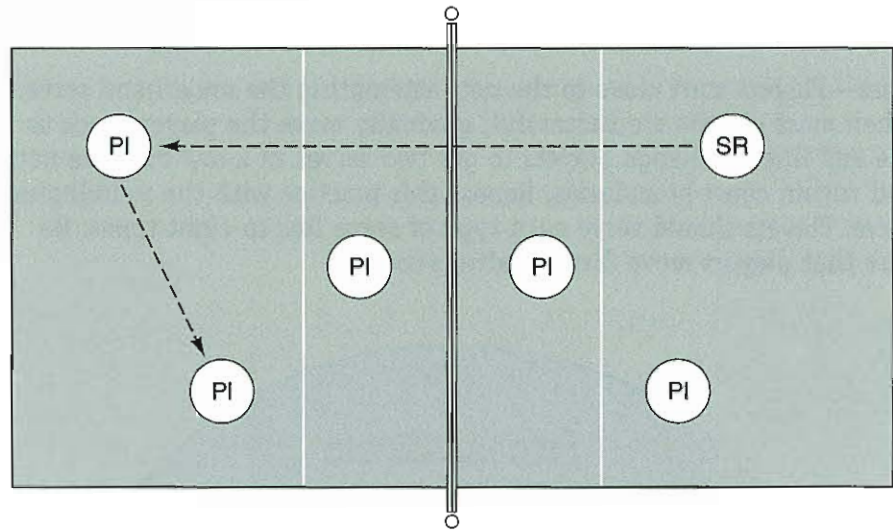
To set up to attack, focusing on serving and serve receiving.

Equipment

-  One beach ball or playground ball for every two players
-  A volleyball net and court for every eight players

Practice 8

(cont'd)



Coach: What is the goal of the game?

Players: The goal is to make the first pass a forearm pass.

Coach: How do you do that?

Players: You use medium posture, move your feet to the ball, keep a flat platform, and face your belly button to the target.

Skill Practice (20 minutes)

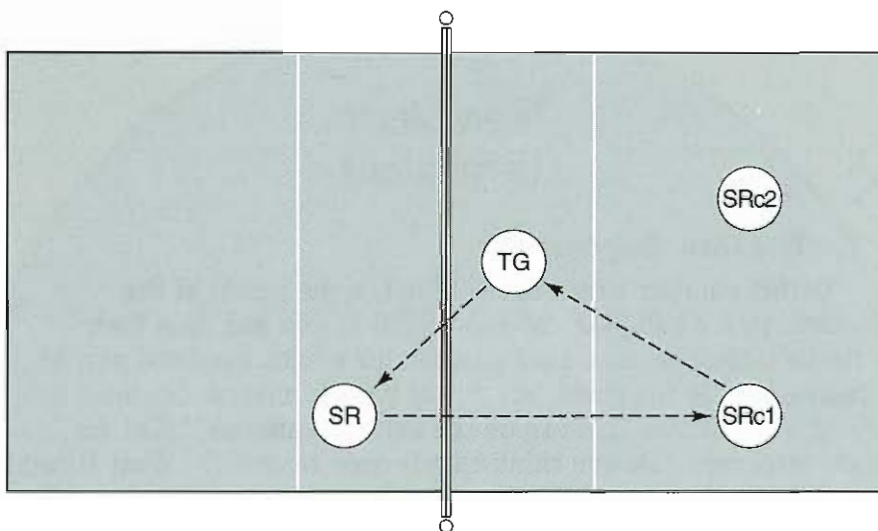
1. Introduce, demonstrate, and explain how to serve and receive a serve (see pages 122–124, 130–132).
2. Have your players practice serving and receiving serves.

Description

Groups of three—Player SR underhand serves from the court (closer to the net, not from the end line) over the net to player SRc, who receives the serve with a forearm pass to player TG (target). Player TG then bounce passes the ball back to player SR. Allow players three trials, then have them rotate through positions from server to serve receiver to target.

Note. You can have a player receive the serve in either the SRc1 or SRc2 spot.

Practice 8



COACH's cues



for underhand serving

"Hold the ball in the nonserving hand with the arm extended."

"Step with the foot opposite the throwing arm." (Step toward the net.)

"With palm up, make a fist."

"Your arm should brush your shorts." (Arms should be close to the body.)

"Keep your elbow straight."

"Hit the ball out of your hand" (like pitching horseshoes).

"After hitting the ball, move forward into a playing position."

for forearm passing

"Keep a medium posture." (Player bends from the knees and waist, feet staggered and body squared to the target.)

"Move your feet to the ball."

"Keep a flat platform." (Arms are straight, elbows locked, with the heels of the hands pressed together. Players make contact with the ball on the forearms above the wrists.)

"Keep your belly button facing the target."

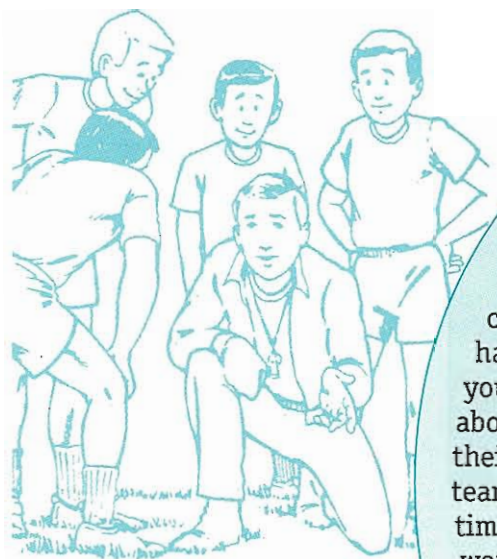
Game 2 (10 minutes)

Goal

Players will play a 3 v 3 game, using the forearm pass to receive serve.

Description

This is the same as game 1, except that teams earn a point when they successfully receive serve with a forearm pass.



Team Circle (5 minutes)

Key Idea: Responsibility

Gather children into a circle. Stand in the center of the circle with a ball. Ask children to call to you and raise their hands if they are in a good position for a pass. Overhead pass to yourself inside the circle, but do not pass to anyone. Continue for about one minute. "Did I share the ball with anyone?" Wait for their responses. "Do you think that is good teamwork? What is good teamwork?" Listen to their responses. Repeat the activity, but this time pass the ball to players who call and raise their hands. "Teamwork is when all players are working together, not just keeping the ball to themselves. Responsible team members get in position to receive a good pass. They don't always pass to the same person. And they always work hard."

Wrap-Up

Make summary comments about practice. Remind players of the next practice day and time and give them a sneak preview of that practice—setting and hitting.



Let players make mistakes. This is the way the game is played at all levels.

Variations

- To simplify games, either have players move into the court to serve or allow them two chances to serve.
- To simplify skill practice, use a free-ball toss instead of a serve.
- To challenge players during skill practice, have two receivers (SRc1 and SRc2) so that players have to communicate and call for the ball.

Practice 9

Warm-Up (10 minutes)

Pairs—Players start close to the net, attempting the underhand serve. When most players are successful, gradually move the players back to the end line. Challenge players to get two serves in a row over the net and within court boundaries. Repeat this practice with the roundhouse serve. Players should serve each type of serve five to eight times. Be sure that players move forward after serving.

Fitness Circle (5 minutes)

Key Idea: General fitness

Gather children into a circle. "Everyone is going to run in place. Let's start. Pretend that your body is going to run out of energy because you ate too many chips and drank a soda before practice. Start running slower and slower, and now stop! Now let's pretend that you ate a peanut butter sandwich and drank a glass of milk and a glass of water before practice. Let's run in place." Continue for 30 seconds. "See how you're able to run much longer and keep your energy? Eating healthy foods and drinking plenty of water are healthy habits for every day. You should drink water several times a day and drink even more when you're exercising. Also make sure to get enough sleep, exercise, brush your teeth, and say no to alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs. Keep your body healthy!"

Game 1 (10 minutes)

Goal

Players will play a 3 v 3 game, using all the skills taught.



Description

3 v 3—Players start in the base position and begin the game with a player performing either an underhand or a roundhouse serve. Alternate which side serves and rotate after each rally. Teams earn a point when they win the rally. (See figure on page 106).

PURPOSE

To set up to attack and win a point, focusing on setting and hitting.

Equipment

-  One beach ball or playground ball for every two players
-  A volleyball net and court for every eight players



Coach: What is the goal of the game?

Players: The goal is to win the rally.

Coach: How do you do that?

Players: We win when the opposing team does not return the ball over the net.

Coach: What is the hardest shot to return over the net?

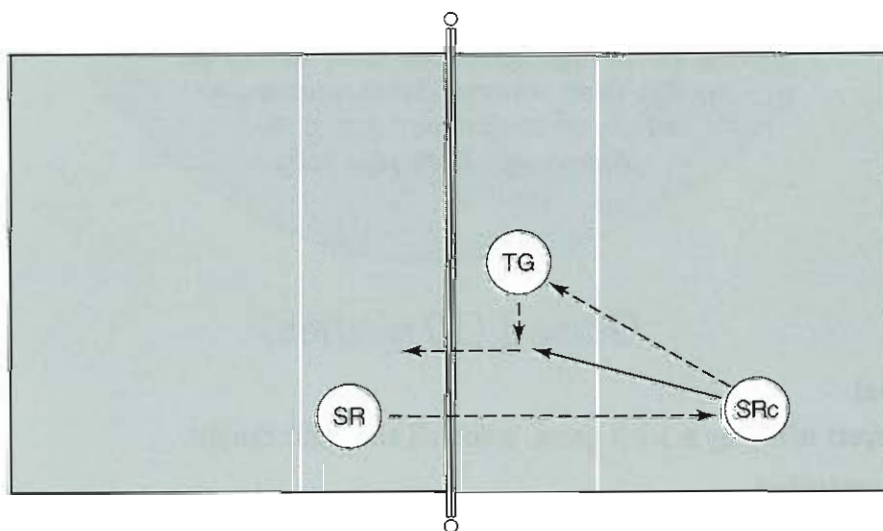
Players: A spike (hit) is the hardest to return.

Skill Practice (20 minutes)

1. Introduce, demonstrate, and explain how to set and hit (see pages 126–130).
2. Have your players practice setting and hitting.

Description

Groups of three—Player SR underhand serves from the court (closer to the net, not from the end line) over the net to player SRc, who receives the serve with a forearm pass to player TG (target), who catches the ball. Player TG tosses a high ball (set) for player SRc to transition to hit. Player SR then retrieves the ball. Allow players three trials, then have them rotate through positions from server to receiver-hitter to target.



Practice 9



for underhand serving

"Hold the ball in the nonserving hand with the arm extended."

"Step with the foot opposite the throwing arm." (Step toward the net.)

"With palm up, make a fist."

"Your arm should brush your shorts." (Arms should be close to the body.)

"Keep your elbow straight."

"Hit the ball out of your hand" (like pitching horseshoes).

"After hitting the ball, move forward into a playing position."

for forearm passing

"Keep a medium posture." (Player bends from the knees and waist; feet staggered and body squared to the target.)

"Move your feet to the ball."

"Keep a flat platform." (Arms are straight, elbows locked, with the heels of the hands pressed together. Players make contact with the ball on the forearms above the wrists.)

"Keep your belly button facing the target."

for spiking

"Move the feet to the ball."

"Face the net."

"Jump and throw your hands high."

"Swing fast."

Game 2 (10 minutes)


Goal


Players will play a 3 v 3 game, focusing on setting up to attack.

Description

This is the same as game 1, except that you have each team count the number of spikes they attempt.



 You must teach players how to transition (establish a new position) efficiently by demonstrating it for them (see page 125). Appendix A lists resources that can show you how this is done.

 Let players make mistakes. This is the way the game is played at all levels.



Team Circle (5 minutes)

Key Idea: Caring

Gather children into a group near the net. Have a ball ready. Ask a child in the group to pass the ball to you. Act as if you're going to set up a player at the net, but hit the ball into the net instead. Retrieve the ball and make a bad pass. "That set-up pass wasn't very good, was it? How about that pass? . . . Those were mistakes. What should you say to your teammates when they make mistakes?" Listen to their responses. "What could you say to make your teammate feel better? What could you say to make her feel worse?" Listen to their responses. Have players change the unsupportive, negative comments to positive ones. "It's very important to forgive mistakes and be understanding of others, just as you would want them to be of you. Making mistakes is part of learning. Saying something that makes your teammates feel better shows you care about them."

Wrap-Up

Make summary comments about practice. Remind players of the next practice day and time and give them a sneak preview of that practice—setting and hitting.

Variations

- To simplify games, either have players move into the court to serve or allow them two chances to serve.
- To simplify skill practice, use a free-ball toss instead of a serve.
- To challenge players during skill practice, move the server back more toward the end line.

Practice 10

Warm-Up (10 minutes)

Groups of three—Player SR underhand serves from the court (closer to the net, not from the end line) over the net to player SRc, who receives the serve with a forearm pass to player TG (target), who catches the ball. Player TG tosses a high ball (set) for player SRc to transition to hit. Allow players three trials, then have them rotate through positions from server to receiver-hitter to target. (See figure on page 112).

Fitness Circle (5 minutes)

Key Idea: General fitness

Gather children into a group near two cones about 10 feet apart. Tell them that each cone represents a different food group. "This cone is healthy foods, such as fruits, vegetables, meats, milk, and breads. This other cone is special treat foods, like chips, soda, candy, and sweet snacks. What foods can you eat to keep your body healthy, with enough energy for volleyball?" As they respond, have them stand near the cone that represents their choice. "It is important to eat more healthy foods. They give you more energy for volleyball and help you grow. Special treat foods should be eaten in small amounts. Can you tell me other examples of healthy foods and special treat foods?"

Game 1 (10 minutes)

Goal

Players will play a 3 v 3 game, focusing on setting up to attack.

Description

3 v 3—Players start in the base position and begin the game with a player performing either an underhand or a roundhouse serve. Alternate which side serves and rotate after each rally. Teams earn a point when they win the rally. Have each team count the number of spikes they attempt. (See figure on page 106).

PURPOSE

To set up to attack and win a point, focusing on setting and hitting.

Equipment

- ☒ One beach ball or playground ball for every two players
- ☒ A volleyball net and court for every eight players
- ☒ Two cones



Coach: What helps you have a good spike (hit)?

Players: A good set helps.

Coach: How do you do that?


Players: We set a high, outside (rainbow) set. We shape our hands like a volleyball in front of our foreheads and hit the ball with our fingerpads.

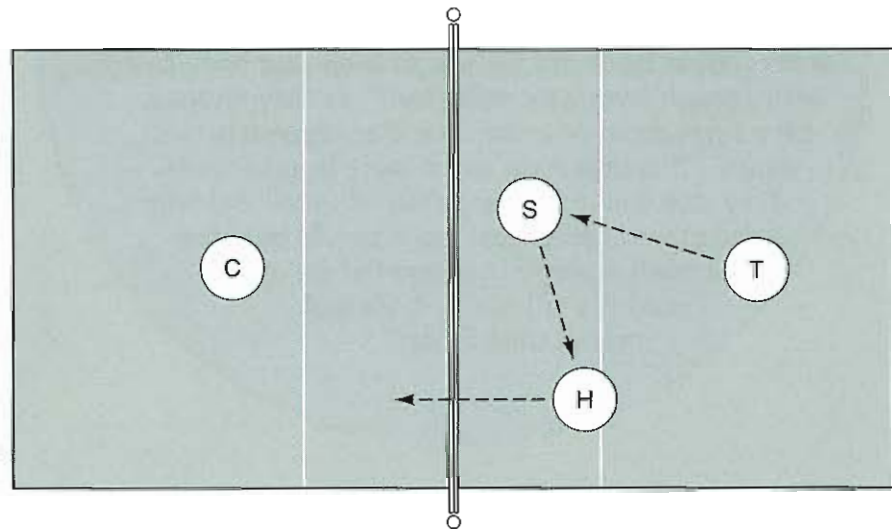
Skill Practice (20 minutes)

Description

Groups of four—Player T tosses a high, settable ball to player S, who then sets a high outside (rainbow) set for player H to attack (spike or hit). Player C then retrieves the ball and returns it to player T. Allow players three trials, then have them rotate through positions from tosser to hitter to setter to collector.



 Keep in mind the importance of reinforcing the three-contact concept (the tactical concept of passing-setting-hitting) of a volleyball game. The process of the game is a critical part of understanding the game.



Practice 10

COACH's cues



for setting

"Open up and call 'Here.'"

"Shape your hands like a volleyball" (in front of the forehead).

"Bend your legs."

"Extend your arms and legs." (Fly like a superhero.)

for spiking

"Move the feet to the ball."

"Face the net."

"Jump and throw your hands high."

"Swing fast."

Game 2 (10 minutes)

Goal

Players play a 3 v 3 game, focusing on setting up to attack.

Description

This is the same as game 1, except that each team counts the number of set-spike combinations they attempt.