



Volleyball Practice Drills

Game Day Tips

Praise kids during the warm-up: During your team's warm-up giving the kids a quick word of praise will help build their confidence and help them focus on performing well in the game. For example, saying "That's the way to bend your knees on those low shots, great job" will stick in the player's mind. Plus, hearing words of encouragement is helpful in settling some of those pre-game nerves all kids experience.

Cover all the areas: Make sure each youngster gets warmed up in all areas of the game during the pre-game warm-up. You don't want kids stepping on the court to play the game without having received a serve, for example, because they'll be less likely to perform that skill as well.

Mix up your hits: During the team's pre-game warm-up make sure your players are hitting the ball to all areas of the court when they're practicing their serves or spikes. Even if they're not comfortable hitting to a specific area, the pre-game warm-up is good practice for learning how to execute these types of shots. Plus, if the opposing team is watching your warm-up your players won't reveal any tendencies that the opponent can pick up on to help them defend where the ball is going during the game.

Adjust your strategy as the game unfolds: Some days your team may simply be far superior than the opposition, so be prepared to make some adjustments to account for the difference in skill level. Don't use this as an opportunity to pile on and embarrass the opponent, because that's not good sportsmanship. Plus, when the situation is reversed you don't want a team treating you that way either. Instead, use the opportunity to work on areas of the game that the team has struggled in, or shift kids around to different positions to give others the chance at setting or spiking.

<http://volleyball.lifetips.com> (great source!!!)

Practice Tips

Change warm-up leaders: At each of your practices rotate who leads the warm-ups. This is a great way to give every child a leadership position throughout the season. If you go this route just be sure that everyone gets the chance to be the warm-up leader.

Make it a game: Players have more fun with drills, and are likely to concentrate better, when there is some sort of game aspect to it. This is especially true when coaching older players, who often enjoy a competitive element that helps bring out the best in them.

Avoid routine: Don't get into a routine with your practices. Switch up your drills and activities to help keep the kids on their toes and the excitement levels high. When players

know what to expect, they're more likely to get bored and have their attention wander. Continually changing things up can keep players focused on the task at hand.

Making a good introduction: Introducing new skills can be challenging at times, but that's all a part of coaching. Keep in mind that your players' ability to perform new skills will be dependant on your ability to present them. First, perform the skill for the rest of the group. Then break up the skill into key components so that the players have specific points to remember. While emphasizing the key points have the team emulate you modeling the skill. While the team is doing this try to evaluate each player individually by giving them personal instruction.

Setting Drills

Set and Sprint

In this drill, setters start on the endline. Several volunteers should be in front of the endline in a horizontal line, spaced evenly. The first volunteer will throw the ball up and the setter must run to it, setting it for a direction determined by the coach. The setter must then run to the next volunteer, who has already thrown the ball up. After setting this ball, the setter continues down the line. Coaches can determine the length of this drill in several ways. The athletes can either finish a pre-determined number of sets or complete the drill based on time. If the coach is keeping time, the athlete should have 60 seconds to complete as many sets as possible, meaning that when they finish going down the line they will have to sprint to the beginning and start over. This drill is meant to improve accuracy in setting as well as push the athlete to set properly even with little time. It also works on the cardiovascular health of the athlete by forcing them to keep their heart rate accelerated during the drill.

Overhead Set

This is a simple, single-player drill that athletes can do anywhere, anytime. The setter simply throws the ball up and begins setting it, working on setting directly over their head. As the ball comes back down, the setter sets it again. This drill, though very simple, should be done regularly, with athletes understanding the importance of good technique and consistency. This drill practices several things: vertical setting, proper setting technique, and consistency. Coaches should inform athletes of the objectives of this drill and encourage them to complete it as often as possible.

Passing Drills

Players need to be able to pass the ball accurately in order to execute plays with one another. These drills will help players learn to work as a team while passing. Set up a 2-on-6 scrimmage. Although this may seem like an unfair game, it's an extremely efficient way of teaching accurate passing skills. Players will be forced to anticipate the movement of the ball and read each others' nonverbal cues very quickly during this drill. Instruct players to form 2 lines facing one another. Space the lines about 10 feet apart and then have players bump the ball back and forth to each other. After a player hits the ball, she should then move to the end of the line, so that the lines are moving constantly throughout the drill.

Tip Top Passing

This passing drill teaches athletes to pass from their fingertips, avoiding the tendency to “palm” the ball. Athletes should work with a partner, passing back and forth in a controlled manner. Athletes should focus on receiving and returning the ball entirely with the fingertips, not allowing their palms to make contact with the ball. If an athlete does “palm” the ball, they must complete another activity, such as 20 sit-ups.

Bump in Place

This bumping drill teaches athletes where to place the ball on their forearms. This is a single person drill but can be turned into a competition if the coach wants to see who can bump the longest. Athletes should work on always hitting the ball with the same place on their forearms; this will keep the ball from flying in one direction or another. The ball should be bumped as many times as possible without letting it fall (be sure to check out our other volleyball setting drills). The person who keeps it in the air the longest wins!

General Drills

Best Beginner Volleyball Drills

The best beginner volleyball drills are usually quite simple and short. These drills pull out one major feature of a skill at a time and work it until an athlete is entirely comfortable before moving on. For example, a hitting drill will work on either speed or accuracy but not both until the athlete is more advanced.

Bleacher Jump

This vertical jumping drill lets athletes build muscle as well as discipline. Athletes stand on the floor at the edge of the bleacher stairs. They jump from the floor to the first step on the bleachers, staying there for as little time as possible. Athletes then jump back to the floor and repeat, focusing on clean, controlled jumps and overall height.

Name It, Get It

In this drill, the focus is communication. Athletes should be scattered on one side of the court in a random pattern. The coach should start in the middle and throw the volleyball up, aiming it at no one. The person the ball comes to must yell “Mine!” and pass it to another player, saying their name while aiming the ball.

The person to whom the ball is going must yell “Mine!” and then set it to another player, saying their name as they aim it. Athletes must switch between setting and passing and must always say the name of the player to whom they are sending the ball.

This drill continues as long as the ball is in the air. If an athlete aims the ball wrong or the designated player is unable to reach it, they must yell “Not mine!” and another, closer player, must claim the ball. This way, the ball does not drop and athletes get practice adjusting their plans, as happens frequently in competition.

Pepper

What you need: Players split into pairs.

How it works: Pair up players and have them volley the ball back and forth to each other, making sure the ball does not touch the ground. As the players get more successful with this have them move further away from each other to increase the difficulty level.

Coaching pointers: While this exercise may seem fairly basic, it's also extremely useful because it focuses on the fundamentals of the game. This is a great way to introduce basic skills to first-time players, and even experienced players benefit by being able to further hone their skills. For more advanced level players turn this drill into a fun competition by seeing which pair can keep the ball going the longest amount of time.

Serve It Up

What you need: A ball and seven players.

How it works: Position six players on one side of the net as the returning team and have the remaining player handle the role of server on the opposite side of the net. Have the server deliver serves to the group on the other side, which must play the ball as if it's a game situation. Have the individual player deliver five serves and then rotate to the other side.

Coaching pointers: The point here is to have each player practice their serve, while also having your team practice returning serves. To increase the competitiveness of the drill, see which server can win the most points by either serving an ace or a ball that the group is unable to return. You can also take away points for serves that are hit long, wide or into the net.

Two on Two

What you need: One ball for every two players.

How it works: Have the players pair up, with one team on each side of the net. Have one team serve to the other and begin a simulated game. As soon as a team wins the point, or a side out if they happened to be receiving serve, the other pair leaves the court and is replaced by a different two-player team. A team stays on as long as they keep winning.

Coaching pointers: This drill is meant to practice basic in-game returns and hits, and also challenges kids to cover a lot of the court. This is a fun way to wrap up a practice to see which pair wins the mini tournament and has bragging rights until the next practice. Set up an area for those not in the game to work on their serves and service return so that there isn't any standing around time.

Net Save

What you need: Two balls. Four players. Two coaches.

How it works: This drill works best with two coaches. Position two players in front of the net with 10 feet between them, and position a player about 10 feet behind each of them. Coaches with balls stand off to the side of the two players nearest the net. One coach tosses the ball against the net and the player reacts to the ball and tries to save it by

keeping it in the air so one of the other players behind her can make a play on the ball and knock it over the net. As soon as the point concludes the players return to their positions and the other coach or helper tosses that ball into the net for the other player to attempt to save.

Coaching pointers: Because balls often get hit into the net during games, it is important to practice saves since teams can salvage valuable points based on their ability to react to these balls.

Target Practice

What you need: Five cones. Balls. Any number of players.

How it works: Randomly place cones throughout the court on one side of the net. Have the team take turns serving to that side attempting to knock down the cones. Players have to call out which cone they are aiming for before they toss the ball. If they knock down the correct cone they receive a point, and if they knock down an incorrect cone they lose a point. After everyone has gone several times, the person with the most points wins.

Coaching pointers: This drill will help with players' serving accuracy. Keep a close eye on the kids' technique to make sure that they are making contact with the ball along the heel of their hand as opposed to slapping it with their palm.