

Key Volleyball Skills

Passing

Arms down - Elbows back/straight.

Palms basically facing each other.

Hands together - Thumbs pointed down to form a straight, flat platform.

Knees bent - Establish a lead leg (one foot to step toward the ball).

Make one fluid motion, with arms coming up to the ball at an appropriate angle to get it to the target (we talk about "pushing" the ball). Obviously, not swinging to the ceiling.

So, this is a little different than what is typically taught; shoulders are up, the bend is in the legs and not so much the waist, and arms swing (but not drastically more than how we were taught) to control the trajectory of the ball to target. I stress that the "one fluid motion" and being in control; guiding the ball to target, not "swinging."

Serving

Arm back (essentially straight back and perpendicular to where you're serving-it may feel weird at first), elbow and hand high, but not straight up. Strong hand and wrist.

Weight is on the back foot (right foot for right handers; left foot for left handers). Front foot is comfortably on the ground, toe facing where you're serving.

Tossing arm is in front of hitting shoulder, with bend in the elbow so the ball can be lifted straight up.

Lift, step (with front foot and keep arm back until ready to swing), swing and follow through as if you're throwing a ball, so your shoulders actually flip and your swinging arm ends up in a natural position across your body. We no longer teach to follow through straight down...this is much easier on our shoulders because it's a natural movement.

Contact the ball at 11 o'clock, if you figure 12 is straight above your head, and drag back toe, keeping it on the ground.

Setting

Hands high and in the shape of the ball. Thumbs pointed back toward the eyes.

Once the ball enters the hands, push it up and out in one fluid motion.

Step with right foot in a fluid motion, just like in the forearm pass.

Follow through to your target so elbows are straight and hands/fingers push through the ball.

When setting and passing, BEAT the ball to where it's going; hands/arms out when feet stop.

Hitting - 3 or 4 step approach

Arms go out when you take the 1st or 2nd step (depending on if you're doing a 3 or 4 step), drive straight back on the 2nd or 3rd step, and then up

If right handed - left arm goes up, right arm goes back, swing through the ball and follow through just like the serve; as if you're throwing a ball. Opposite for left-handed players

******The most important steps of the approach are the last 2, so that's what I stress using the following steps:

1. start with having them stand on their left foot (or right if left handed), arms down at their side
2. then swing their arms straight back as the "drive" their right foot ahead and
3. then basically put their left foot down almost next to the right foot, so they can jump up-

We are now teaching you keep your right foot pointed straight toward your route, and use your left to help stop you, by turning it in just a little bit.

Passing Drills

Knee passing:

one partner tosses while the other is on one knee (like it's their lead leg). Shoulders are up. Arms are down with elbows straight. Hands go straight together, and make one smooth movement to the ball, guiding it back to their partner. Check their hands and thumbs to make sure their surface is even and straight, with thumbs even and pointing down. Do 10 and switch. Call the ball, and partner's name; "Mine, Lynda," etc.

Partner passing:

Toss from the 10' line to partner about 10' in front of them (around the free throw line). Focus on passing keys. 10 and switch. Then you can add tosses to the right and left, and forward and back; stress simple shuffling (so high enough tosses), keeping arms straight and down. Calling the ball and partner's name. You can then move into passing back and forth with reminders to continue to focus on the passing keys.

-Move into free ball passing with you tossing from the other side of the net. 3 passers, with a line off the court in middle back, ready to step on after someone passes. Pass, go to target, target shags the ball, gives it to the coach, then runs to get in line again. Talk about them all moving to help call the out of bounds lines, back each other up in case they shank a pass, and talking to give teammates confidence that it is their ball and they should pass it.

Butterfly drill

Passer in left or right back with a line of passers off the court, a target at the net, and a tosser on the other side of the net at about 15 feet. Passers start in ready position with arms down, elbows straight, knees bent. Tosser tosses, passer passes, then goes to target, target goes to tossing line, tosser goes to passing line. Go through 5 times, then have tossers toss to the right 5 times, to the left 5 times, short 5 times and deep 5 times (they may need to move up to get their toss deep). If you have an assistant coach, you two could do the tossing if it doesn't work for them to do it. *If you do two lines (one in right back and one in left back), make sure the targets are essentially standing next to each other, so they are used to passing to the target area).

Serving Drills

Wall traps

Stand maybe a foot away from the wall, with ball in tossing hand in front of hitting shoulder. Arm back, up, and ready. Lift, step, swing and drag toe. "Trap" the ball between hand and the wall. 25 reps

Partner catch

Partners have a tennis ball (or mini volleyballs, if you have them) and play catch across the net; about 3/4 of the way back on the court. They should pretend they have a ball in their tossing hand (in front of their hitting shoulder), and hold the tennis ball in their serving hand. Pretend to lift the ball, then step and throw the tennis ball to their partner, dragging their back toe. Follow through as discussed above.

-Partner serving 10' line to 10' line. Take a step or two back as they are able to consistently get the ball over the net to their partner with good form.

Setting Drills

Partner drills

Toss back and forth to each other, practicing having hands up high, in the shape of the ball, thumbs pointed toward the eyes. Catch the toss, then step with right foot and "set" it back. Do about 15 reps, then have only one tosser at the 10' line and partner about the free throw line. Setter starts with hands at their sides, legs bent, ready to move. When the tosser tosses the ball, setter gets to the ball quickly, and gets their hands up at the same time as their feet stop. Use legs and fully extend arms to set. Shuffle back to starting spot and repeat for 15 reps, then switch. Call the ball and partner's name.

-You can add on to this by having partners set to themselves, set to their partner, then pass to their partner. Then, pass to themselves, and set to their partner, etc.

Circle drill

Coach stands at about the free throw line. Setting line at the net. One person in the setting position with line behind them, near the side line. Target in left front. Coach tosses, setter sets (using the above form) to the target, then follows their set to be target. Target shags the ball and brings it to the coach, then gets in the setting line. 5-10 reps. You can move the target to middle front and repeat, and could also do it with right front, if you want to introduce back setting.

Hitting Drills

Rapid Fire:

coach and player stand about 3-5' off the net. Player is in "loaded" position with hitting arm up and back; opposite arm up to find the ball. Coach tosses ball in front of hitting arm and player swings; hitting the ball UNDER the net, then "re-loads" right away and coach tosses another ball. Follow through should look like a pitcher throwing a pitch with shoulders flipping 180 degrees and arm following it's natural movement across the body; not straight down as we used to teach.

Down balls:

hitters stand in loaded position and coach tosses a ball; player hits it over the net from standing position.

Hitting lines with coaches tosses and/or players setting.

Please also go over "base defense" (where everyone should start when the ball is on the opponent's side of the net (not serve receive)), and also transitioning off the net when the ball comes back over.