



USA Volleyball®

High Performance

**USA Volleyball Indoor High Performance
Boys' Training Manual**

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What is USA Volleyball High Performance?

USA Volleyball is the National Governing Body for the sport of volleyball in the United States. USA Volleyball runs and manages the U.S. National Men's and Women's Volleyball Teams, the USA Olympic Teams, and also U.S. Youth and Junior National Teams for each gender. The Youth and Junior National Teams, along with a number of tiered training programs, fall under the High Performance Department, or HP.

The High Performance Department works to advance volleyball talent and build a broader and stronger pipeline of athletes and coaches for our USA Olympic Teams. The High Performance Program bridges the gap between our USA National Teams and youth volleyball programs across the country. This is done through a system of national tryouts, which then qualify athletes for training programs and our Youth and Junior National Teams. The HP Program at USA Volleyball is the "Pipeline" for volleyball athletes who aspire to reach the elite level of their sport and is intended to grow the pool of talented young players who may someday compete for a spot on the USA National and Olympic Teams.

As part of the HP Pipeline, the training we provide athletes is reflective of the top USAV Program. USAV HP hires coaches based on their expertise in establishing a training environment that allows athletes to learn, while providing critical input for their development. However, the reality of hiring coaches, from numerous programs, is there are inherent differences in their approach to the various technical aspects of the game. Differences in nomenclature, technique training, and system application. These differences are part of the depth-of-experience that coaches bring to the education of our country's top athletes. But, they can sometimes undermine the efficiency of learning for athletes. This manual is a resource to insure the athletes, in all programs, learn a consistent foundation based on the techniques and methodologies from USA Volleyball's Men's National Team. I trust you will research these materials while constructing the training plan of the programs of your responsibility.

The HP Program and Athlete Pipeline include players of each gender in five age groups that are based on the birth year of the athlete. Those age groups are referred to as Senior (oldest), Junior, Youth, Select, and Future Select (youngest). These age groups are determined by an athlete's year of birth using mandatory international criteria beginning approximately when they are 11 or 12 years old as Future Select athletes and continues for eight seasons through the Junior age group, often into their collegiate years. Many athletes also continue through their college years in the Senior age group in the Senior A2 Program, U.S. National Training Team, U.S. National Team, and ultimately, the USA Olympic Team.

Age Group and Definitions

Attending a National HP Tryout is a prerequisite for entry into any USAV HP Program. Each year, athletes attend tryouts held across the country and are evaluated by USA Volleyball HP Pipeline Coaches. HP Coaches and staff then combine all tryout evaluations from each age group and rank players based on overall skill, positional skill, athleticism, and potential. Based on this ranking system, athletes are then invited to attend the program levels best suited for their current ability and future potential. As athletes participate in our programs each year, HP keeps track of their progression, working to help each athlete reach their potential and to help develop the next USA Volleyball Olympian.

Athletes who move up the Pipeline who are Junior age or older are eligible to attend the Men's National Team Tryout, held at the United States Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs each February. From that tryout, the Collegiate National Team Programs are chosen and athletes may be selected directly from the tryout for the Men's National Team. Often, athletes will play in the CNT Program and are then selected to move up to train with the National Team to compete for a position. Athletes from the Men's National Team are then eligible to be chosen for the squad that attends the Olympic Games.

USA Volleyball High Performance Pipeline Goals:

- To bring young volleyball athletes together in challenging and rewarding training environments;
- To provide athletes the opportunity to learn and develop with the best coaches in the USA Coaches' Pipeline and to compete at international levels;
- To grow the number of opportunities available to volleyball athletes, the number of high-level matches that they are able to play, and the amount of time they are able to train;
- To enter High Performance teams in all FIVB or related international events possible, and;
- To consistently prepare a broad pool of qualified and experienced athletes available to compete for spots on the USA Men's and Women's National Teams.

USAV High Performance Program Objective:

- Elite Training for Improvement
- Impactful Experience for the Athlete
- A Lasting Connection with USAV-HP

Each athlete in HP Programs is part of an elite population of top athletes. The determining factors that separate the top 15% from the top 1% are so subtle each athlete should be regarded as a future Olympian.

PROGRAM ACRONYMS

1. Gender – The first letter of the acronym refers to the gender of the athlete - male or female. Men's programs start with a **"B"** (boys') or **"M"** (men's), while women's programs start with a **"G"** (girls') or **"W"** (women's).

2. FIVB Age Group – The second letter of the acronym refers to the age group of the program:

"J" for Junior

"Y" for Youth

"S" for Select

"FSL" for Future Select

3. USAV HP Program – The final 2-3 letters refer to the program, listed below in order of program level:

"NT" or **"NTT"** – Top level of programming offered in the country, "National Team" or "National Training Team"

"A1" – Top level of programming for the Select age group, National Training Team Level. Athletes in this level are in top consideration for a spot in the Youth or Junior National Team Programs the following year.

"A2" – A2 National Invitational Team Program

"CT" – Continental Team Program, level equivalent to Region HP Programs for athletes who come from USA Volleyball Regions that do not sponsor a Region High Performance Team that attends HP Championships .

"A3" – National A3 Training Program (Youth and Select age groups only)

"SP" – National Skills Program (Select and Future Select age groups only)

USA Men's National Team Techniques and Pillars

The key technique points and cues used by the U.S. Men's National Team are based upon a solid philosophical foundation which includes:

1. **Repeatability** – Consistency of actions
2. **Make it your own** – Work on fundamentals until it is natural movement for you
3. **Perform** – Ability to trust the techniques when it counts most

Consistency, of actions and results, is best achieved through mechanically sound and efficient technique. All unnecessary movements should be eliminated. "Less is more, simple is best." Learning to make good decisions should be incorporated into the teaching process.

The Pillars:

Learn

We're not good enough. None of us, athletes and coaches alike. Yet. YET! We must dedicate ourselves to learning, to improving, to honing and polishing every detail of our game; every day, every drill, every contact. If we are willing to operate at the edge of our abilities, and willing to risk the status we have today, we can attain improvement tomorrow.

Prepare

Inevitably we face challenges in competition – we must prepare ourselves relentlessly for those hurdles. It means paying attention and discipline to all of the things, both small and large, that will make us a better team tomorrow and make us far better years from now. It means we can play confident and free, because we've done the work and earned that right.

Adversity

Embracing Adversity, inexorable Resilience – those are the hallmarks of great accomplishment. No great victory, no Gold Medals, happen without fighting gnarly adversity – situations in which weaker teams think, "Why us, and why today?" There is so much we can't control, but there's one thing we can ALWAYS control: our reaction to what happens around us. We can revel in it and say, "Bring us more!"

Compete

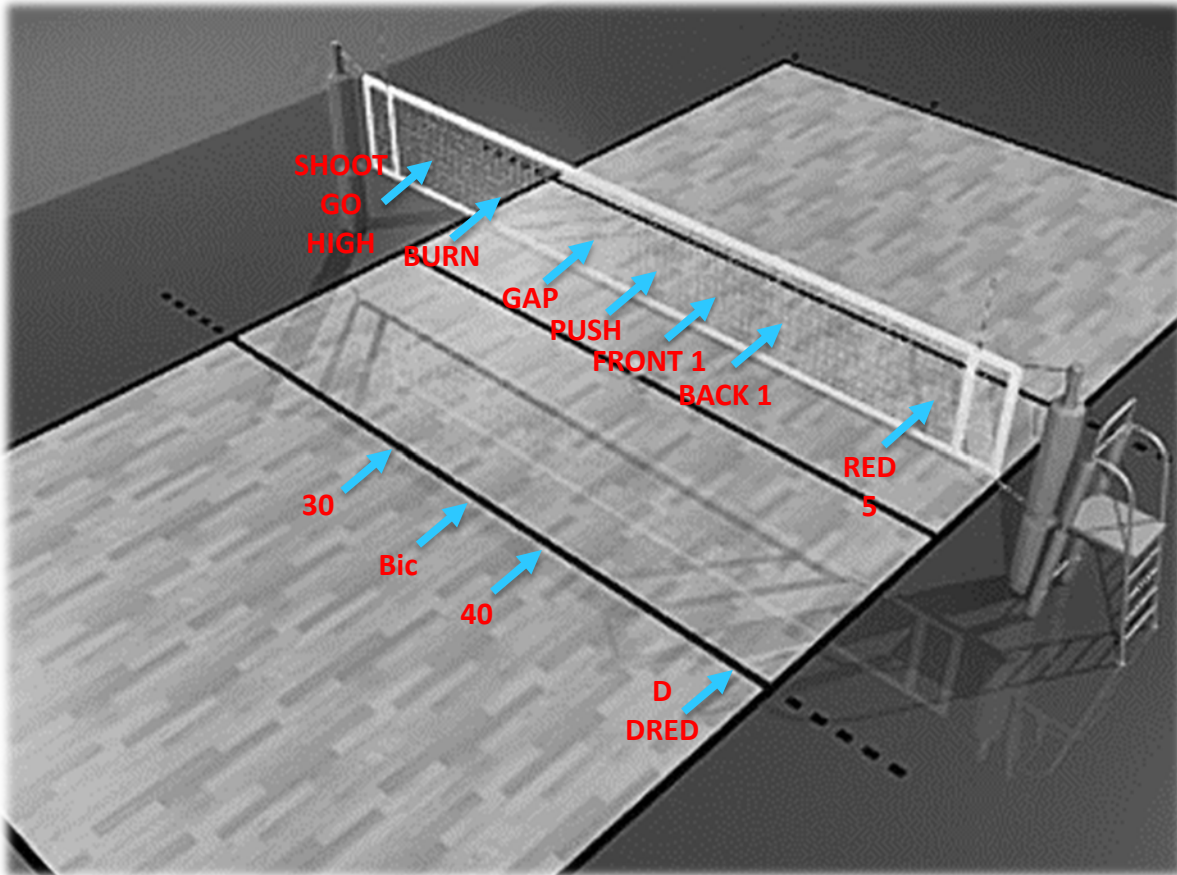
Here's a scary thought: We can do everything right and still lose, still fall short. So what can we control, if not the outcome of even a single play? We can control the odds – we can maximize our chances of winning the next play. If we do that over and over, we are competing, and lots of good things will happen. The tougher we battle in our own gym, the harder we compete with our USA teammates across the net, the tougher we will battle against opponents.

Unite

Our power comes not from talent, but from playing FOR each other, in being responsible for one another, in trusting one another – in good times and especially in tough ones. We can't be tough alone, we're only tough together. Players who elevate the play of those around them, who make the team perform better when they step on the court, make themselves more valuable to the USA Program.

USA Men's National Team Set Terminology

All sets should be committed to memory.



Left side sets:

- Shoot – In between 2nd and 3rd step very fast tempo to the pin
- Go – 2nd step tempo, allow more choices to attacker
- High – very high out of system set, slightly inside the court and on the net
- Burn – Same tempo as a Go but about 3 feet inside, approach looks the same

Middle sets:

- Gap – last step tempo, in the gap b/w middle and right side block bases; fixed
- Push – last step tempo, in between the gap and front 1; fixed
- Front 1 – last step tempo, in front of the setter; floating
- Back 1 – last step tempo, just off the setter's back; floating

Right side sets:

- Red – In between 2nd and 3rd step tempo; fixed
- 5 – 2nd step tempo; fixed
- High – 1st step tempo, High set, tighter to the net
- Burn – Same tempo as Red but 3 feet inside, approach looks the same

Back row sets:

- Bic – 3rd step tempo; floating
- 30 – 3rd step tempo; floating
- 40 – 3rd step tempo; floating
- D – 2nd step tempo to right sideline; fixed
- Dred— In between 2nd and 3rd step very fast set; fixed

Note: Fixed means the same point on the court; floating means based on position of the setter. Please note the difference between a 2nd tempo set and a 2nd STEP tempo set. The latter means the attacker is on the 2nd step of her approach when the setter is contacting the ball. As a result, a 2nd step tempo set is faster than a 1st step tempo set.

USAV HP Technique Cues Summary

Serve Receive Forearm Pass

Main Cues:

- **Ready position – pre-serve**
 - *Arms down, elbows straight
 - *Face the server – See the line
- **Serve Receive**
 - *Shuffle to the ball, balanced on contact
 - *Arms work independently and faster than body
 - *Arms straight before, during, and after
 - *Face the ball, track the ball, angle the platform
 - *Keep platform in front and hips back with space to adjust
 - *One push through the ball and hold your angle (freeze)
 - *On deeper balls: get out of the way, turn and face it

Overhead Serve Receive

Main Cues:

- **Ready position – pre-serve**
 - *Arms down, elbows straight
- **Serve Receive**
 - *Face the server – See the line
 - *Decide early
 - *Midline to target
 - *Strong shaped hands, steel fingers
 - *Shuffle to the ball, knees bent, balanced on contact
 - *Keep chest forward over knees
 - *Extend to target

Attacking

Main Cues:

- *4 steps - Small, bigger, biggest and slow, faster, fastest
- *Arms relaxed, loose levers - down, back, and up
- *See daylight, hit it. No daylight, attack edges and high hands
- *Load and unload
- *Shoulder to shoulder
- *Let the arm go
- *Stay tall

Middle Attacking Quick

Main Cues:

- *See the serve, see the pass, see the setter
- *Available always
- *Communicate early and at least three (gap, gap, gap)
- *Load to the setter
- *4th step – leaving the ground

Setting

Main Cues:

- **Before the pass**
 - *Communicate and demand that hitters communicate
 - *If they don't call it, they don't get it
 - *Read the pass, transition fast
 - *Beat it, don't time it
- **After the pass**
 - *Left – Right footwork
 - *Consistent hand work
 - *Use the ground for power
 - *Contact on midline
 - *Be in neutral as long as possible
 - *Extend levers – Let it go
 - *Let the arm go & stay long

Serving

Main Cues:

- **Before the serve – Routine**
 - *Breath
 - *Shoulder shrug
 - *“I Got This, I’m Coming After You”
- **Standing Float**
 - *Start loaded
 - *Step, place, and swing
 - *Hand is straight, flat, and tight
 - *Contact flat through your midline
 - *Swing to target
- **1 Hand Jump Float**
 - *Start loaded, stay loaded
 - *1-2, lift, 3-4, swing
 - *Turn and toss forward on your line
 - *Hand is straight, flat, and tight
 - *Contact flat through your midline
 - *Swing to target
- **2 Hand Jump Float**
 - *1-2, lift, 3-4, swing
 - *Toss forward on your line
 - *One move to load – hands go up, stay up
 - *Hand is straight, flat, and tight
 - *Contact flat through your midline
 - *Swing to target
- **Jump Spin**
 - *Right arm, right foot
 - *Step, toss
 - *Toss with long lever
 - See cues for Attacking:
 - *4 steps - Small, bigger, biggest and slow, faster, fastest
 - *Arms relaxed, loose levers - down, back, & up
 - *Load and unload
 - *Shoulder to shoulder
 - *Finish and freeze

OH and Opp Transition

Footwork

Main Cues:

- *See the pass, know your distance
- *Transition fast and efficient
- *Get available
- *Communicate early and at least three (go, go, go)
- *4 x 4 footwork (Left) 5 x 4 footwork (Right)

Blocking

Main Cues:

- *Compressed on setter contact, balanced and loaded
- *Feet: Push, Cross-over, Close
- *Face the hitter, face the hitter
- *Hands: down, back, PUSH OVER
- *Strong Shoulders – hands inside body
- *Across the net at hitter contact

Floor Defense

Main Cues:

- *Balanced and quiet
- *Face the action: setter then hitter
- *Surfaces up
- *2 arms, 2 legs – stay on feet and off knees
- *10 by 20
- *Bellies not butts
- *Play extended, finish move

USAV High Performance Techniques

Forearm Pass and Serve Receive

Main Cues:

Ready position – pre-serve

*Arms down, elbows straight
Face the server – See the line*

Serve Receive

*Shuffle to the ball, balanced on contact
Arms work independently and faster than body
Arms straight before, during, and after
Face the ball, track the ball, angle the platform
Keep platform in front and hips back with space to adjust
One push through the ball and hold your angle (freeze)
On deeper balls: get out of the way, turn and face it*

Additional key points/discussion:

The emphasis for passing is being stopped and balanced on contact. The ready position is arms straight with hands resting on thighs. Just prior to contact, release hands and begin tracking the ball. Tracking should be done with straight arms, a shuffling movement, and always facing where the ball is coming from. Create an angle to target with platform and use arms not the legs to guide the ball to target. Midline is great, but most serves will make us work – angles may be made in lots of places around the body. Serve receive balls require relaxed shoulders and no platform movement to get to target in most cases. Legs and torso should not move and should remain frozen throughout the pass.

* “See the line” means to visualize the flight line (path) of the ball

* “Tracking” the ball with your arms means keeping your platform in that image of the flight path

Overhead Serve Receive

Main Cues:

Ready position – pre-serve

Hands on knees – Arms down, elbows straight

Serve Receive

*Face the server – See the line
Decide early
Midline to target
Strong shaped hands, steel fingers
Shuffle to the ball, knees bent, balanced on contact
Extend to target*

Serve Receive Principles

- Pass off, set off – hit in. “Take the net out of the equation.”
- Passers should have a routine to use before every serve (like servers)

- Target is 3 feet off the net. An overpass is an ace, a lost point, or at minimum a lost opportunity for a quality swing.
- Serves from z1 and z6, passer to the right has the middle of the seam; serves from z5, passer to the left has the middle of the seam
- “Don’t go until you know; see the line first.”
- “Your speed comes from the quality of the read.”

Setting

Main Cues:

Before the pass

Communicate and demand that hitters communicate

If they don’t call it, they don’t get it

Read the pass, transition fast

Beat it, don’t time it

After the pass

Left – Right footwork

Use the ground for power

Contact on midline

Get in neutral and hold neutral position as long as possible

Extend levers – Let it go

Finish and freeze

Additional key points/discussion:

There are purposefully no cues related to wrists, nor should there be any conscious action or wrist training. Wrist action is another layer of movement and reduces repeatability. We want our setters to generate power to set the ball from the ground, meaning jumping balanced and strong, and transfer that power to their sets, not from their wrists. We want our setters to take an efficient, athletic approach to the ball, turn and set, NOT set and turn or set as you turn. If setting off one foot, the opposite knee should be brought straight up, keeping as balanced as possible.

* “Read the pass” means that as soon as the ball has been served, watch the passer movement and platform.

Attacking

Main Cues:

4 steps - Small, bigger, biggest and slow, faster, fastest

*Arms relaxed, loose levers - down, back, and up
See daylight, hit it. No daylight, attack edges and high hands
Load and unload
Shoulder to shoulder
Let the arm go
Stay long*

Additional key points/discussion:

Hitters should hit high, hard, and with maximum power. See the pass, see the set, see the daylight, and hit on the way up. Ball should be contacted at the same place in relation to the body every time. Hit with range – have the ability to change speed, trajectory, and direction as necessary and desired. There are no cues related to wrists. “Wrist snap” will occur naturally and should not be addressed. Focus should remain on speed of approach and generating torque.

* “4 steps” refers to the approach. For right-handed attacker:

Ready position is with right foot forward

Step 1: Transfer weight

Step 2: On or around the 3 meter line (on setter contact for “2nd step” tempo set); slight pause on this step to be able to adjust to the set

Step 3: Dynamic and to the ball

Step 3/4 (plant):

Feet turned to jump (45 – 60 degrees to net)

* “Small, bigger, biggest” refers to the length of stride. Each step gets longer.

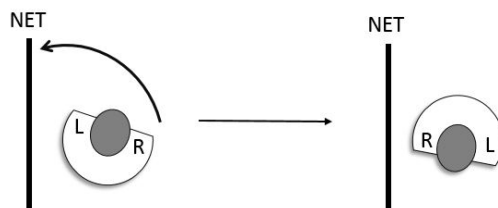
* “Slow, faster, fastest” – refers to the tempo or speed of the approach. The goal is to create momentum and load for the jump and to help the attacker get their feet to the ball; same contact point (relative to body) every time.

* “Load/Unload” refers to creating torque (not pike) with the body to generate power.

Load: As the hips twist from parallel to perpendicular to the net, the non-hitting arm reaches for the ball with the hitting elbow up and shoulder back. Hitter should feel a stretch/tension from hitting shoulder to the opposite hip.

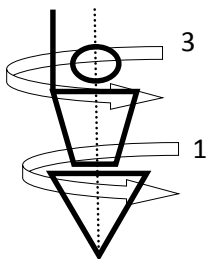
Unload: Rotate hips and then shoulders through the ball from a tall extended position. Non-hitting arm pulled down close to the body (break at the elbow) and the hitting shoulder is brought through to contact.

* “Shoulder to shoulder” refers to what the shoulders do in the air in preparation for the swing, then where they should end up after the swing. In load position the shoulders will be almost perpendicular to the net. The hitting shoulder will be brought through to approximately where the non-hitting shoulder was. Diagram - shown from above:



Rotation is around a vertical (long) axis with a sequential pattern of:

- 1 – HIP TURN
- 2 – OPP. ARM PULLED DOWN (NOT SHOWN)
- 3 – HITTING SHOULDER THROUGH TO BALL CONTACT



* “Let the arm go” refers to allow the arm to finish naturally after contact. There should be no effort to stop the arm or bring it to a certain point.

OH and Opp Transition Footwork

Main Cues:

See the pass, know your distance
Transition fast and efficient
Get available
Communicate early and at least three (go, go, go)
4 x 4 footwork (Left) 5 x 4 footwork (Right)

* “Know your distance” means determining the hitter’s distance from the setter at point of contact and adjusting transition accordingly.

* “4 x 4 footwork” refers to four steps off, four steps in for a right-handed outside hitter. Turn into the court and run outside the court for the first 2 steps (right, left), then step and pivot back in towards the court with the third step (right), then step back and balanced for the final left step. Shoulders remain open into the court. Weight is now on the left leg for the 4-step approach.

* “5 x 4 footwork” refers to right-handers transitioning on the right side. Turn into the court and run outside the court for the first 3 steps (left, right, left) and then pivot while planting the left step, and back pedal for the last 2 step (right, left). Weight is again on the left leg for the 4-step approach. Footwork patterns reverse for left-handed hitters. Lefties utilize 5 x 4 footwork on the left side and the 4 x 4 on the right side.

Middle Attacking

Quick

Main Cues:

See the serve, see the pass, see the setter
Available always
Communicate early and at least three (gap, gap, gap)
Load to the setter
4th step – leaving the ground

Middle Transition

- Middles should turn in direction of ball after blocking. Number of transition steps will depend on location and direction of ball, distance from setter, and set selected, however number of steps should be minimized for efficiency.
- Top priority is working to get past 3 meter line. Second priority is to get to mid-court.
- Work to get OFF – the setter should work around the middle.

Offensive Principles

- Sideout Volleyball: We need to be great at receiving serve and scoring (siding out), especially at Pass – Set – Kill FBSO (First Ball Side Out). Siding out well keeps us in every match and stresses the opposition.
- Create offense to create space and exploit mismatches:
 - Isolation – offense designed to expose one opposing blocker to defend one of our hitters (ex: run Gap, set Red).
 - Overload – offense designed to force an opposing blocker to defend two of our attackers in their zone (ex: run Gap, set Go into/over it).
- Speed is our weapon from pin to pin.
- Timing is critical for speed and is a function of vision and efficient (slow to fast) feet.
- The power of hitting IN: Competitive advantage gained by hitting in the court a lot, with range and power.
 - A good play forces opponents to beat us and often gives us another chance at a good swing later in the rally.

- Feedback Loop: Setters and hitters with great feedback loops get better faster at running fast and hitting high and hard with range. It's not about explaining mistakes or deflecting blame, it's about praising success and studying errors with a commitment to improve next time.

Out-of-System Offensive Principles

- The more we communicate before the next contact, the less our teammate has to think. Setter must know and hitters must go.
- One of two things must happen – NO FREE POINTS!
 - Get a good swing and make them work
 - Find the setter on defense and take them out of system
- Go as fast as possible but with control.
- If unlikely to receive ball, call a route and run it to hold the blocker.
- Better chance of a good block. Smart shot selection – Aim high and in deep third of the court or use edges, high hands, and roll shots.
- Come down covering.

Offensive Transition Principles

- HUGE OPPORTUNITY. We must be willing to turn and run, get quality approaches, and maintain our tempo.
- Get distance from the net - As blockers land, they should be turning and moving away from the net WHILE locating the ball with their eyes (NOT landing...looking...then running).
- Call it, hit it. The setter must know what you're ready to run, he is prepared to push the tempo only if you are. Fast off, Slow to Fast back.
- Transition offense relies on will and effort – tturn and run, relentless in long rally, even when tired.

Serving

Main Cues:

Before the serve - Routine

Breath

Shoulder shrug

"I Got This, I'm Coming After You"

Important to repeat "your" routine every time you serve (game or practice)

Standing Float

Start loaded

Step, place, and swing

Hand is straight, flat, and tight

Contact flat through your midline

Swing to target

1 Hand Jump Float

*Start loaded, stay loaded
1-2, lift, 3-4, swing
Turn and toss forward on your line
Hand is straight, flat, and tight
Contact flat through your midline
Swing to target*

2 Hand Jump Float

*1-2, lift, 3-4, swing
Toss forward on your line
One move to load – hands go up, stay up
Hand is straight, flat, and tight
Contact flat through your midline
Swing to target*

Jump Spin

*Right arm, right foot
Step, toss
Toss with long lever
See cues for Attacking:
4 steps - Small, bigger, biggest and slow, faster, fastest
Arms relaxed, loose levers - down, back, and up
Load and unload
Shoulder to shoulder
Let the arm go
Stay long*

Additional key points/discussion:

All serves should start with a routine that includes a breath in and out, shrugging shoulders, and the inner monologue or mantra i.e. "I Got This, I'm Coming After You." Jump Float – 4 step approach, tossing ball on 2nd step. Hitting elbow is up and drawn, ready to serve. The toss is in front of hitting shoulder and should lead enough to land in the court after contact. Hand drives through the center of the ball to the target zone. Jump Spin – 4 step approach, tossing ball after 1st step. Toss is high, in front of hitting shoulder, and should lead you enough so you land in the court after contact. Serving motion has the same cues as attacking.

* "Start loaded" means hitting hand, arm, and shoulder are back and high before and throughout the toss and approach.

* *“Hand is flat, straight, and tight”* means hand should be a straight extension of the arm and should remain stiff throughout the approach and swing. Contact should be like a “high five” through the ball.

* *“Right hand, right foot”* for the jump spin means starting with the ball in the right hand out in front of the shoulder with right foot forward. Weight should be on the left foot so the first step of the four step approach occurs with the shift to the right foot as or just before the ball is tossed.

Serving Principles

- The Goal: Push opponents Out of System (OoS) taking their quick attack away...not to ace them.
- Routine – every server must have one and it must be practiced every time a player serves. Routines calm the nerves, form an island of stability in a sea of competitive uncertainty, because they are completely under the server’s control. Include breath and shoulder shrug.
- Positive Thoughts – Players are responsible for their thoughts. When you are thinking about one thing, you cannot think of another.
- Know the Situation – If we’ve scored a point or more, it’s imperative to keep applying the pressure, making the opponent earn their way out of trouble. Serve in. This naturally applies after we’ve forced our opponent into a time-out. One run/string/streak of points like this can break a game open, break an opponent’s will, and we have this opportunity every game.
- Develop “Your Serve” and use at all times during a match, from 0-0 in the 1st to 14-14 in the 5th.
- All servers need the ability to serve to a SPACE, not a passer.
- Everyone should be able to hit all target zones with pace, hit down both sidelines, and hit a short serve that gets over the net fast, to pull opposing OH’s short.
- All jump spin servers need to have a short or “cut” serve that can be used to pull opposing OH short.

Defense

Reading

Main Cues:

Assess and act – don’t guess

Eyes on next ball action

Eyes are active and moving, head is as still as possible

Want to have a soft focus with our eyes, not a locked in focus, so we can see more cues

Blocking

Main Cues:

Compressed on setter contact, balanced and loaded

Feet: Push, Cross-over, Close

Face the hitter, face the hitter

Hands: down, back, PUSH OVER
Strong Shoulders – hands inside body
Across the net at hitter contact (most blockers are late over the net)

Main Principles:

Eyework

Eye control – either we control our eyes or the ball will.
Sequence – See the pass (ball), the setter, the set (ball), and the hitter
Pass – ascertain if the pass is coming back over the net
Over = play the ball
Not Over = eyes to the setter
Setter – Eyes go to the setter's hands for dump or set
Set – Look at set long enough to determine location in 3 dimensions and the speed
Hitter – Finally, wrench eyes away from ball and lock them onto the hitter.
See the relationship between ball and hitter, take away the power shot

Footwork

Time dependent
Middles balanced and hips back as the setter is touching the ball. Wings start coiled or loaded
Enough time = moving towards an opposing pin hitter, use a turn-and-run crossover. 2 or 3 step crossover for end blockers, 3 step for middles
Too little time = use a Quick 3 or Quick 2
Bic = wing blockers jab step shuffle in to help

Handwork

Hands across net – lead with hands. Once they are above the net, they should be across the net, on the opponent's side as long as possible
Quick hitter in your zone = the faster/earlier the quick, the higher the hands
No quick hitter in your zone = hands drop to waist, prepare to run and block
Target – point hands where you want the ball to go
Straight up, straight over – even end blockers and late middles to avoid getting tooled.

Blocking Principles

- The Goal: To stuff the ball for points; not to funnel, soft-block, or deflect.
- Swing or approach block as necessary. If only one step or shuffle away, may not be necessary. Otherwise, the system relies on all blockers approach blocking together as much as possible.
- Hands across the net for as long as possible.
- More blockers are better – we prefer two blockers to one and three blockers to two.
- Bunch – Read – we use a Bunch-Read system, with end (wing) blockers pinched in to help with quick attacks, bics, and playsets.
 - Commitment – we must commit to this, variations will lead to weaker systems

- Starting positions – Middle dead center, MB and RSB can touch hands, LSB and MB can touch elbows.
- Power shot – take it, based on where the ball is, the approach angle of the hitter, and the ball's relationship to the hitter.
- Wings set the block on “their hitter,” RSB on the Go, LSB on the Red/Slide.
- Wings setting the block is more important than middles “closing” the block.
- Balance is paramount, leaning and mis-steps break the system down.
- Stay in the play – if you don't block, (e.g. wing blocker on front 1), move towards the action. Be ready to play the tip/slop or deflection.
- Resist the flow – we hold our ground and resist the temptation to follow the flow of the play (like errant pass towards z4 or z2).
- One Step – under normal conditions, the middle takes at most one step towards the opposing quick attacker's route. We call this a Dedicate Step.

Floor Defense

Main Cues:

Balanced and quiet

Face the action: setter then hitter

Surfaces up

2 arms, 2 legs – stay on feet and off knees

10 by 20

Bellies not butts

Play extended, finish move

Additional key points/discussion:

Reading is the premier skill in the game. Floor defense utilizes the same eyework as blockers – pass – setter – set – hitter. Defenders stay away from block shadow: get in position where the hitter can hit their way, e.g. z1 inside middle blocker on opposing Red sets and NOT behind blockers. Wing defender transition is simple drop – step – step towards the sideline, based on the read and hitter tendencies (1st step is a big drop step back, second two steps balance. Stay facing ball). Chase the hitter, not the ball and make sure the hitter can hit to you. Don't go until you know. Focus on defense is to dig the ball off the net – dig off, set off, hit in. As with passing, ball does not require movement from legs or platform. Defenders angle platform up and towards middle of the court. Sprawl is the preferred emergency technique, as it keeps defender moving forward.

- * *“Balanced and quiet”* means defenders should be relaxed, stopped with feet on ground at hitter contact, weight over the big toes, primed to pounce. Low, strong posture with knees bent.
- * *“Face the action, setter then hitter”* refers to defenders adjusting feet to first face the setter, then deliberately face the attacker as early as possible.
- * *“Surfaces up”* refers to starting with palms and forearms out front, pointed up, relaxed.
- * *“2 arms, 2 legs”* means stay on feet and off knees and play ball with both arms always.
- * *“10 by 20”* means a great dig is 10 feet off, 20 feet high. Height and depth more important than exact placement on the court. Setter should be able to get to a 10 by 20 ball anywhere on the court.
- * *“Bellies not butts”* means fall towards the ball.

USAV POSITION JOB DESCRIPTIONS

Libero Job Description

Fundamental Skills:

- **Passing**
- **Defense**
- **Setting**
 - Forearm, overhead, jump set (when near 3m line) with tempo
 - OoS, high priority on Hut, 5; when needed able to set D and Bic
 - Can we run InSys?

Important Skills:

- **Lead** – I am responsible for organizing this team's serve reception; I am responsible for the defense, I am the captain of the back court. I do this work in cooperation with the captain of the front court: the Middle.
- **Elevate** – I find ways in everything I do to elevate the play of those around me.
- **Next Play** – I infect my teammates with my calm, poised exterior, with my words, with my actions, and with my belief in our ability to win the next play, no matter what the circumstances.
- **Coverage** – I have to be the most vigilant, the most relentless in helping my hitters attack with confidence
- **Communicate** – I let my back court OH know that I'm on the court and remind him of his responsibilities when our middle serves
 - I call commands to organize hitter coverage
 - I call "Inside!" "Tight!"

Checklist: Serve Receive:

- Before:
 - Know server tendencies
 - Clarify seam responsibilities
 - Pinch, shift, pass with 2, 3, or 4?
 - Know back row route and keep it clear before covering
- See the Server, See the Line (visualize the flight line/path of the ball)
- Whose is it? Call a name to confirm who is passing.
- Is it in? Call it either way.
- After:
 - Cover like crazy.

Checklist: Defense:

- Before:
 - Know hitter tendencies
 - Plan with blockers, confirm their calls
 - Clarify setting responsibilities
- See the Pass – If it is over, play. Close – Dump? If not over?
- See the Setter – Direction
- See the Hitter – Shoulder

- Be prepared to play left back or middle back

Middle Job Description

Fundamental Skills:

- **Attacking**
- **Blocking**
- **Serving**
- **Setting**
- **Defense**

Important Skills:

- **Lead** – I am responsible for the block, I am the captain of the front court. I do this work in cooperation with the captain of the back court: the Libero.
- **Elevate** – I find ways in everything I do to elevate the play of those around me.
- **Next Play** – I infect my teammates with my calm, poised exterior with my words, with my actions, and with my belief in our ability to win the next play, no matter what the circumstances.

Offensive Timing:

- 1, Push, B1 = beyond 4th step, leaving or off ground
- Gap = 4th step

Offensive Checklist, during the play:

- See the serve – shuffle or open up
- See the Pass – timing
- See the Setter – load to him
- Daylight?
 - Yes: Swing for it.
 - No: High, stop, tip

Blocking Checklist, during the play:

- See the Pass – If it is over, play. Close – Dump? If not over?
- Be aware of quick route – Peripheral vision
- See the Setter – Direction
- See the Hitter - Shoulder

Setter Job Description

Fundamentals:

- **Setting**
- **Serving**
- **Defense**
- **Blocking**

Important Skills:

- **Communicate** – Setters need to be strong communicators with their teammates and be able to establish a rapport with each hitter they work for. Setters also have to be able to demand that hitters communicate – they don't call it, they don't get it, in training or a match.
- **Elevate** – Elevate the play of passers: make bad passes into good ones, good ones into great. Elevate hitters, make their job easier with good tactics, decisions, location, and tempo.
- **Next Play** – Infect my teammates with my calm, poised exterior and with my belief in our ability to win the next point, no matter what the circumstances.

Setting:

- Read the Pass
- Contact Point + Release = Where am I taking it? Top of my jump?
- Location
- Tempo = Speed + Trajectory
- Deceptiveness – I should look the same, no matter what I run, or where I set
- Tactics – Our system and our hitters vs their block system and their blockers

Tactics:

- Our hitter, their system, their blockers
- How fast can we play?
 - I must be committed to running our tempo = 2nd and 3rd step.
 - Our hitters must be just as committed to running our tempo. Hitters don't call it, they don't get it.
- Within the speed of our offense, we have latitude to adjust to hitters' needs.
- Isolate, Overload, and Dump
- Bunch, Spread, Trap
 - All systems have inherent weaknesses – our offense should be able to exploit them.

Offensive Checklist:

- Before the match
 - Know the game plan, know their system, know their blockers
- Before the play: We work on it in practice so it's second nature in the game
 - What point of the game are we at? Early, Middle, Red Zone
 - Who are my hitters?
 - Who are their blockers? What do they do, what are their tactics, tendencies, weaknesses?
 - What's our best matchup? What's our 2nd best matchup?
 - Perfect pass – what tactic do we choose?
 - Medium pass – is the quick still smart? If no, then where?
- During the play
 - See the serve – dribbler off tape, may have to step in
 - Target with intent – 4 steps with back to the net, eyes on the platform BEFORE he passes the ball
 - See the angle/hands
 - Perfect or medium? Make the decision
 - Fast draw
 - Good Contact Point = lots of options, more deception. “Where am I taking it?”

Outside and Opposite Job Description

Outside Hitter Fundamental Skills

- **Passing**
- **Attacking**
- **Blocking**
- **Serving**
- **Defense**
- **Setting**

Opposite Hitter Fundamental Skills

- **Attacking**
- **Blocking**
- **Serving**
- **Defense**
- **Setting**

Important Skills:

- **Elevate** – I find ways in everything I do to elevate the play of those around me.
- **Next Play** – I infect my teammates with my calm, poised exterior with my words, with my actions, and with my belief in our ability to win the next play, no matter what the circumstances.

Offensive Timing:

- InSys = Between 2nd and 3rd step for shoot and Red
- On 3rd Step for bic
- On 2nd step for Go, 5, and Dredd
- Pass into z2 or z4 = soft 2, or 2 ½

Checklist: Offense:

Tools our Opposites need to develop to play at a world-class level

- *SEE* things, not charge to spots. This means:
 - *SEE* the pass and run the right tempo. Pass/Dig = Timing
 - In-system?
 - Call it, Run it
 - *SEE* the set, and get your feet there – go get it (no hoping, reality). This means:
 - Slow-to-fast, CONTROL YOUR SPEED!
 - 3rd step of approach in line with the ball
 - *SEE* daylight and hit it. This means:
 - Hit high, extended, and slightly in front
 - A by-product of good feet and vision
 - No daylight = Attack edges and high hands
 - Hit with range
 - Line corner, line seam, deep corner, sharp angle
 - Hit all these shots into the deep 1/3 of the court. NOT straight down.
 - Develop an effective roll shot
 - Looks like a hit (elbow back and loaded)
 - Contacted at top of your jump
- Hit high, hard and with maximum power. This means:
 - We run, jump and prepare to hit with efficient loose arms/levers
 - We get “loaded” early to the ball
 - We rotate our shoulders through the ball from a tall extended position.
- Make great instantaneous decisions with each set. This intuition is developed through hours of intense, mindful, game-like reps in the USA gym
 - Know when to bring it, know when to make them play it, know how to give it to them tougher than you’ll get it back.

Transition:

- Are you available? Can you get well off the net, back on your 2nd step, and hit with range for as long as the rally requires?
 - Always turning and running, for front row
 - From Blocking (even for a 3 person block, work like crazy)
 - From Defense, off-blocker
 - Able to approach from anywhere on the court
- Always on the Bic route (Outside) or D or C (Opposite), for back row
- Based on dig and setter, call it, and run what you call
- Often tougher than InSys – be aware, block will be better-formed; no daylight, hit high hands

Checklist: Blocking:

- See the Pass – if it is over, play. Close – Dump? If not over?
- See the Setter – Direction
- See the Hitter – Shoulder

USA Warm-Up

Videos

Start all activities at the endline and move towards the net

WARM-UP #1

1. Walking Lunge with Torso Rotation: **½ COURT**
2. Reverse Lunge with Reach Back: **½ COURT**
3. Alternating Side Lunge with and w/o Stretch: **FULL COURT**
4. Sumo Squat with Jog: **½ COURT**
5. Reverse Sumo Squat with Back Pedal: **½ COURT**
6. Inchworm Handwalk: **½ COURT**
7. Triangle Reach (Lunge Instep with Rotation): **½ COURT**
8. Plank with Arm and Leg Variations: **1 MIN.**
9. Split Stance 4-way Scap M-T-W-Y: **10 AT EACH LETTER**
10. 2 Drop Squats into Accelerated Run: **FULL COURT**
11. Fast Skip and Power Skip: **FULL COURT**
12. Side Shuffle with Varied Speed: **FULL COURT**
13. Zig Zag Run: **½ COURT EACH DIRECTION**

WARM-UP #2

1. Walking Superman (Single Leg Balance with arm reach): **½ COURT**
2. Reverse Toe Grab Hamstring Stretch: **½ COURT**
3. Alternating Side Lunge with and w/o Stretch: **FULL COURT**
4. Sumo Squat with Jog: **½ COURT**
5. 3 Single Leg Squats on Right – Jog - Backpedal: **½ COURT**
6. 3 Single Leg Squats on Left – Jog - Backpedal: **½ COURT**
7. Handwalk with Cobra Move: **½ COURT**
8. Inchworm Handwalk: **½ COURT**
9. 4-way Scap M-T-W-Y: **10 AT EACH LETTER**
10. Lateral Bounding: **FULL COURT**
11. Split Squat Jumps (Vary Depth): **10 TOUCHES**
12. Shuffle with Change of Direction 3, then 1: **½ COURT EA. DIRECTION**
13. Zig Zag Run: **½ COURT EACH DIRECTION**

USA Warm-Down

Videos

Start all activities at the endline and move towards the net

WARM-DOWN #1

1. Hand Walk with Cobra Move: $\frac{1}{2}$ COURT
2. Reverse Lunge with Reach Back: $\frac{1}{2}$ COURT
3. Alternating Side Lunge with and w/o Stretch: FULL COURT
4. Single Leg Kicks: $\frac{1}{2}$ COURT
5. Reverse Toe Grab Hamstring Stretch: $\frac{1}{2}$ COURT
6. Walking Quad Stretch: $\frac{1}{2}$ COURT
7. Walking Figure 4 Stretch: $\frac{1}{2}$ COURT
8. Single Leg Prone Scorpions (Face Down): 5 EA. WAY
9. Single Leg Supine Scorpions (Face Up): EA. WAY

WARM-DOWN #2

1. Single Leg Kicks: $\frac{1}{2}$ COURT
2. Reverse Lunge with Reach Back: $\frac{1}{2}$ COURT
3. Alternating Side Lunge with and w/o Stretch: FULL COURT
4. Monster Crawl / Spiderman Crawl: $\frac{1}{2}$ COURT
5. Triangle Reach (Lunge Instep with Rotation): $\frac{1}{2}$ COURT
6. Single Leg Glute Stretch with Lat Reach: 30 SEC. EACH SIDE
7. Cat - Camels: 10 TOTAL
8. Sleeper Stretch: 10 TOTAL

USING THE BALL AS A FOAM ROLL

Spend 15-30 sec. on the following areas – Complete all on one limb in sequence then move to the bilateral side

1. Glute
2. Hamstring
3. Calf
4. IT Band
5. Quad
6. Hip Flexor
7. Lumbar Spine
8. Thoracic Spine
9. Posterior Scap/Shoulder
10. Pec and Bicep

USA Shoulder Prehab

Videos

SHOULDER PREHAB # 1

THERABAND ON POLE

1. External Rotation at Side
2. Internal Rotation at Side
3. Mid Row
4. Dynamic Bear Hug

THERABAND OFF POLE

1. Lateral Handwalk or Reach
2. Thoracic Spine Rotation
3. 4 – Way Scap M – T – W – Y
4. Push-Up Plus

SHOULDER PREHAB # 2

THERABAND ON POLE

1. Retract and Rotate
2. Internal Rotation at 90 Degrees
3. Spiking Acceleration
4. High – Low

THERABAND OFF POLE

1. Pull Aparts – Elbows Bent, then Elbows Straight
2. Full Can
3. Diagonal Low to High Pull

SHOULDER PREHAB # 3

THERABAND ON POLE

1. Hitting Pull-Backs
2. Reverse Fly W
3. Point of Contact ABC's
4. Tall Kneeling Lat Swing

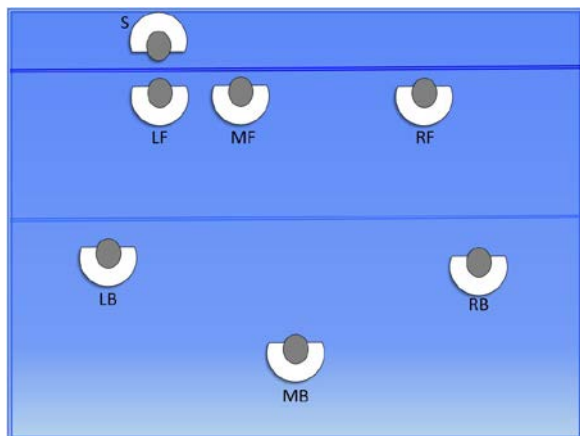
THERABAND OFF POLE

1. Split Stance 4 – Way Scap M – T – W – Y
2. Triangle Reach
3. Inchworm with Push-Up
4. Face Down Reaches

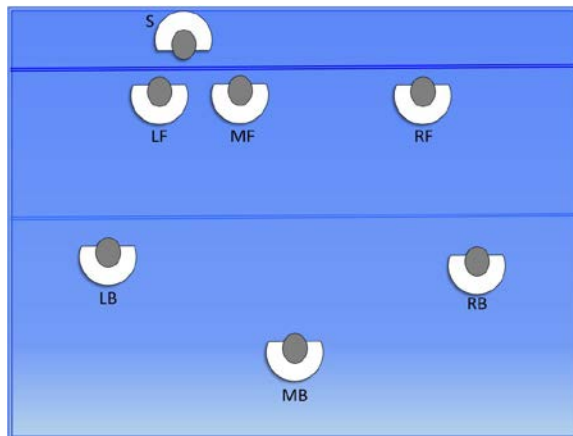
Court Positions

Base Positions

3 Hitters

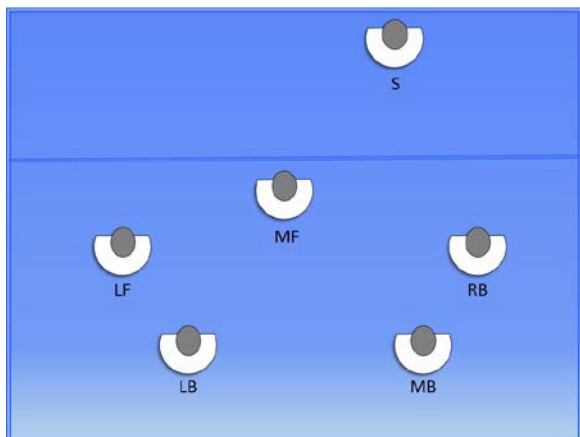


2 Hitters

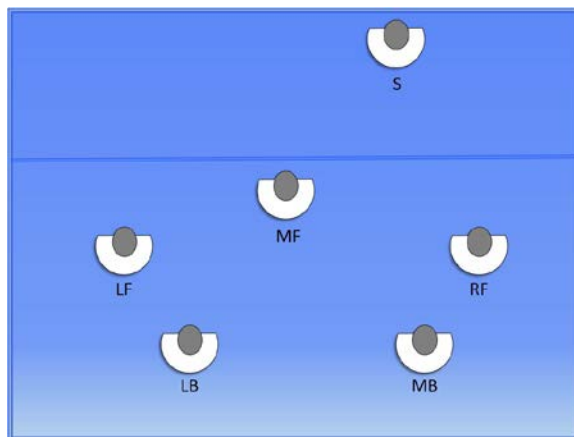


vs Free Ball (Do Not Block)

Front Row Setter

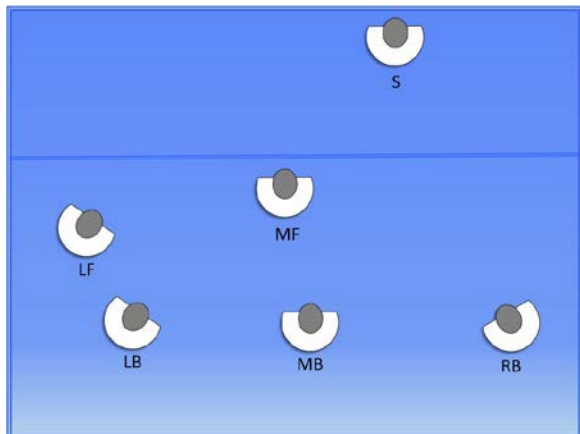


Back Row Setter

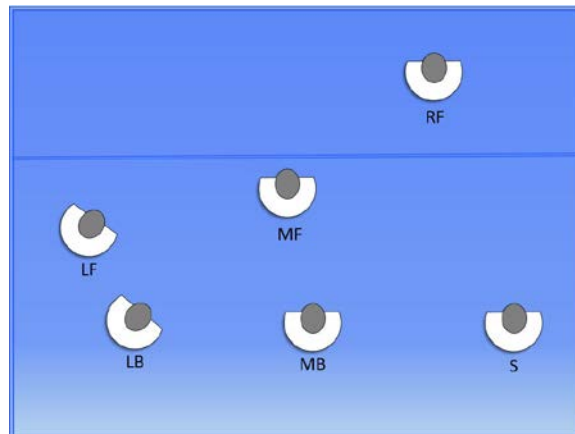


vs Down Balls (blocking is situational)

Front Row Setter

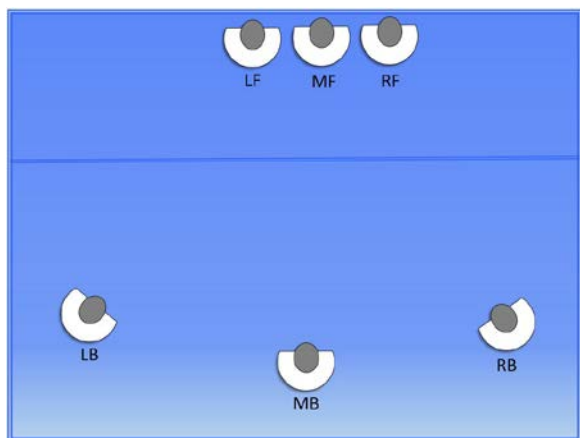


Back Row Setter

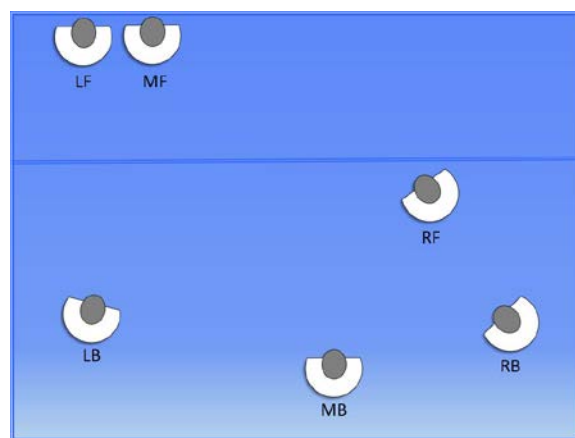


vs Back Row Attack

vs Bic

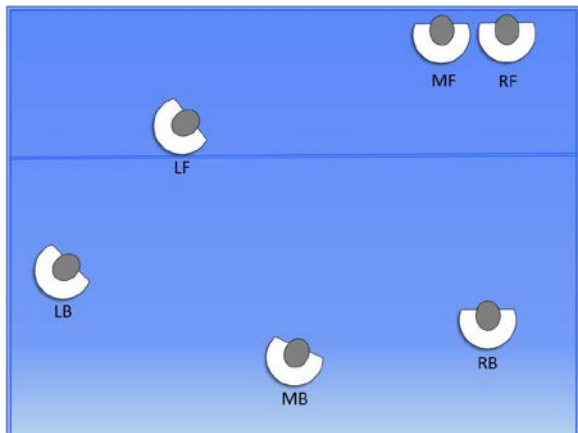


vs D

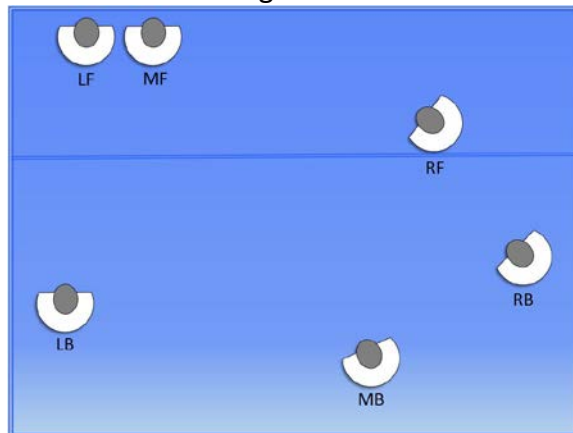


Perimeter Defense

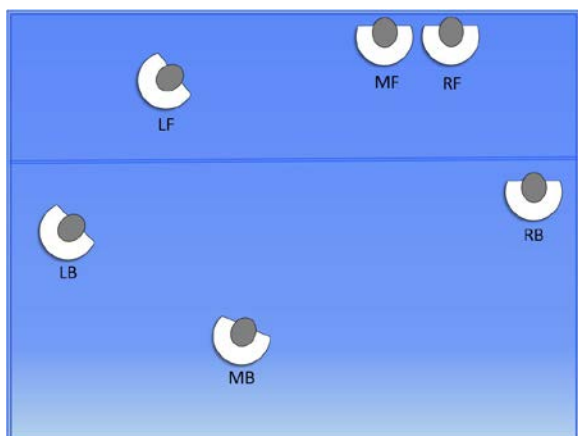
vs Outside Attack



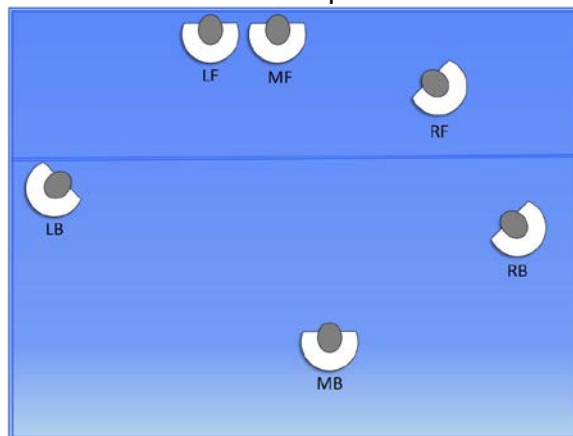
vs Rightside Attack



vs Front 1

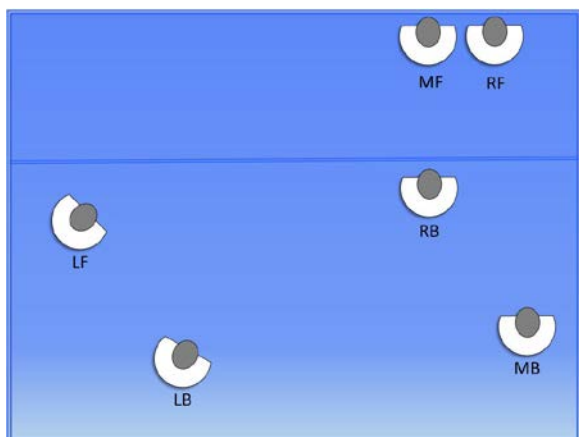


vs Gap

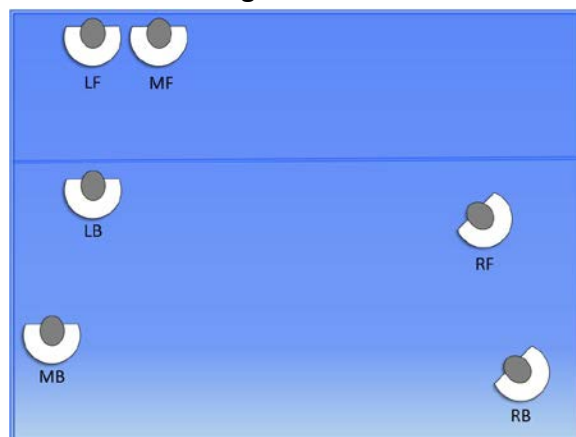


Rotation Defense

vs Outside Attack



vs Rightside Attack



Attacker Coverage

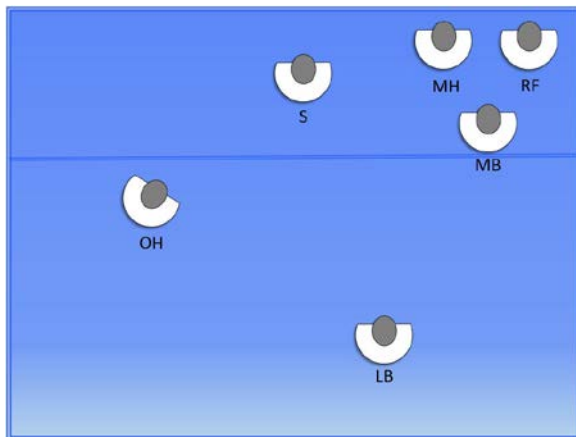
The goal for coverage is to get all five non hitters to cover.

The 3 players closest to the hitter form an inner cup.

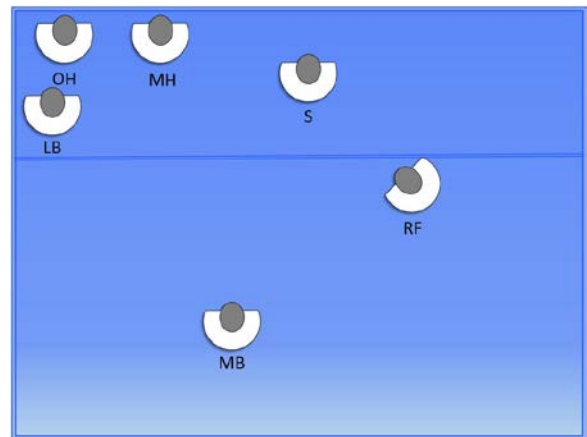
The 2 players farthest from the hitter fill in the 2 seams deeper in the court.

- All five have responsibility to help:
 - Setters set and cover
 - Middles land and cover
 - Back row hitter breaks route and cover
 - Far pin step away from the net and back into the court, stay ready to cover deep
 - Libero wait for back row route, then direct traffic and fill gaps
- Stay diligent, opportunities to save your team will happen.
- Face the action – see hitter, turn to face blockers, see the blockers hands ready for the rebound angle. Expect the ball.
- Feet off the net, and inside the sideline.

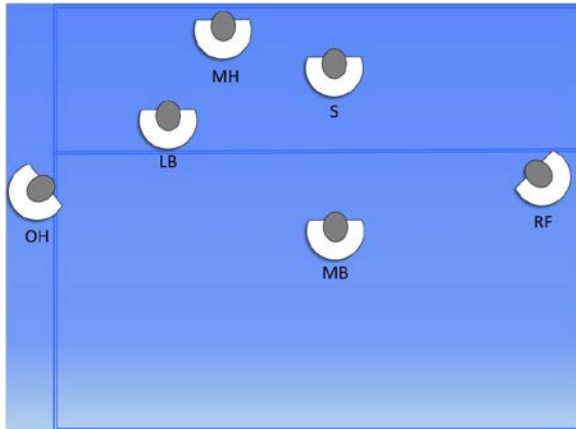
vs Outside Attack



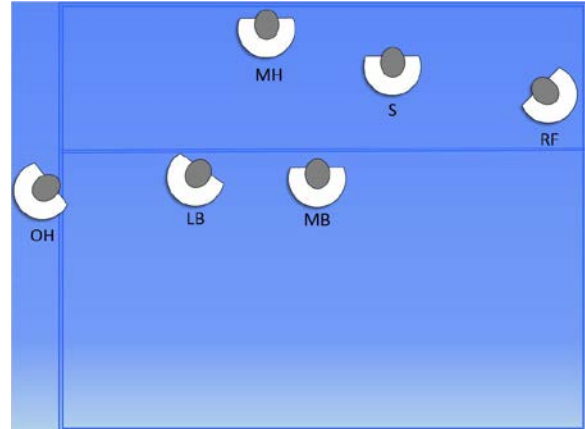
vs Rightside Attack



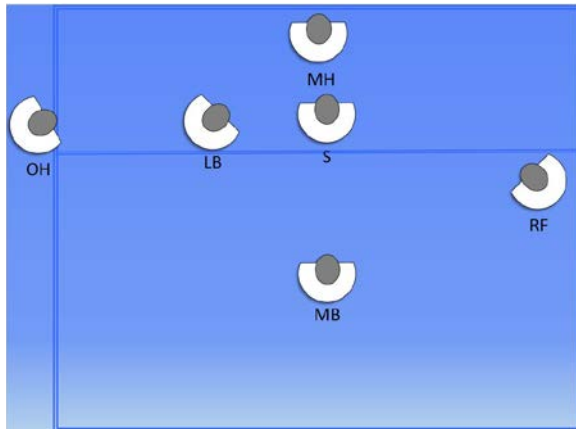
vs Gap



vs Bic



vs Front 1



vs Red or 5

