

Volleyball WA Beginner Coaches Volleyball Program



Volleyball is one of the highest participation sports in the world and it is easy to see why. Volleyball, in all its forms, is a dynamic, entertaining game, requiring high levels of skill, strategy and most importantly, teamwork.

There is a lot to learn about volleyball, and conducting volleyball practises that build players' skills is a challenge for any coach.

That's why we created this guide – to take the guesswork out of lessons and make practises more effective, helping your players to learn skills quickly and correctly.

This eight lesson Volleyball Program is an introductory program of instruction and practice plans that will enable inexperienced coaches to conduct training sessions with beginning and lower-intermediate players. It is suitable for players of all ages.

The program is designed to build the skill-base of players throughout the course, and provides opportunities to consolidate skills learned in previous lessons.

KEEP IT FUN! Everyone learns well and is motivated to continue learning when they are enjoying their time. As a coach, do your utmost to provide a fun, rewarding, learning environment. If it's not fun for your players, you probably aren't enjoying it either, so – change it or stop it!

Suggested activities are just that – suggested! Whilst the activities contained within are all based on principles of best practice from leading authorities, including the FIVB, United States Volleyball Association and the Australian Volleyball Federation, there are many variations on these, so please do explore and find others which you and your players may enjoy.



VWA
VOLLEYBALL
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

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LESSON 1. FOREARM PASS / DIGGING

Forearm Pass Definition: Ball played off the forearms, with the arms together to form a platform off of which the ball can rebound and ideally be directed to the designated setter.

Dig Definition: A form of forearm pass, but is played as a defensive action used to prevent an opposition attack (spike). The term 'dig' refers to the concept of 'digging' the ball from the ground just before it contacts the floor.

Key Teaching Points: Forearm Pass / Dig

- Balanced and low with hips and shoulders behind the ball.
- Wide feet to create stable base of support.
- **Hand Position:**
 - Put one hand out, palm facing the ceiling and then lay the other hand palm up on top of that hand so that your hands are slightly cupped.
 - Bring your two thumbs together and place them side by side. While keeping your hands in the position, extend your forearms to create a digging platform.
- Straight arms held firmly together.
- Ball contact onto platform of forearms, contact ideally at waist level, with elbows locked straight.
- Direct ball to setter – NO Arm Swing. Light directional push if necessary.

Warm Up Activity

Ball Dribble: Dribble a ball with one hand / both hands whilst moving forward / backwards.

Throw and Catch: Throw and catch a ball, whilst moving back and forth.

Skill Introduction

Dig: The objective is to control the serve or attack play from the opposition; bump the ball high into own court space near the centre of the net for the setter.

Model and explain the skills with focus on key teaching points. The ball should be tossed over the net to simulate a game situation.

Players shadow the demonstration to rehearse the technique.

Skill Development and Main Activity

Dig and single hand ball handling

- Contact the ball on the forearms after one bounce. The ball is tossed from the other side of net, with the receiver trying to move into correct position (using shuffle steps), so as to contact the ball on forearms after one bounce.
- Successive digging after one bounce. As above, but the ball is dug into the air in order to make a second, controlled dig.
- Successive digging with forearms, bending knees. As above, without the bounce and maintaining low posture with low hips.
- Successive volley with each arm. Focus is on having a good contact point. Continuously dig the ball with only one forearm, alternating each time. Use low posture and leg extension, but minimal arm swing, to elevate the ball.

Digging Game

- One bounce tennis played by two players per team. Players use forearm passing to play the ball.

Warm Down Activity

Here, There, Where: Players must move in the direction or to the place given, using shuffle steps only. Always keep correct body position. The coach can also toss a ball for players to return with a forearm pass.

LESSON 2. OVERHAND PASS / SETTING, UNDERHAND SERVE AND SERVE RECEIVE

Set Definition: Used to 'set' up an attack hit, the set is typically the second contact and is generally played above the head and off all fingers of both hands.

Serve Definition: used to commence the rally, the server occurs from behind the baseline and can be performed underarm or overarm with the players at the elite level typically using an overarm jump serve to gain extra height and be able to use the serve as an attacking option.

Key Teaching Points: Overhand Pass (set)

- Diamond shape with thumb and forefingers.
- Elbows high to create a triangle between hands and elbows.
- Spread other fingers so pads are contacting the ball, not tips or palm of hand.
- Tilt hands back and position the ball just above forehead.
- Push the ball away by extending elbows quickly, keeping wrists firm.

Key Teaching Points: Underhand Serve

- Stand facing the net with the foot opposite the hitting hand forward.
- The ball is held at waist level.
- The player leans forward as they swing their arm forward.
- The hand holding the ball is dropped just before the contact.
- The player hits underneath the ball with the fist or heel of the hand.
- The hitting arm follows through in the direction of the target.

Key Teaching Points: Serve Receive

- Balanced and low with hips and shoulders behind the ball.
- Straight arms held firmly together.
- Ball contact onto platform of forearms, contact ideally at waist level.

Direct ball to setter – Little or No Arm Swing. Light directional push if necessary.

Warm Up Activity

Clap Tag: Keep one hand behind your back and, using the free hand, try to tag others on their 'backhand' whilst avoiding having own hand tagged.

1 Bounce: Standing side by side, one player throws the ball up and forward for the other to run and catch above their forehead after one bounce. Alternate.

Skill Introduction

Overhand Pass: The objective is to push (set) the ball high into the air for a teammate to make an attack play or to return the ball over the net.

Underhand Serve: The objective is to a) commence the rally and b) direct the ball to make reception difficult.

Serve Receive: The objective is to control and direct the ball high and towards the setter.

Model and explain each of the skills with focus on key teaching points, allowing players to practice each before moving on.

Players shadow the demonstration to rehearse the technique.

Skill Development and Main Activity

- Sitting Set: Sitting on the ground, place the ball in the ready position above forehead and push the ball away, over the net, to partner sitting opposite. Practise back sets also – same technique, but change the angle of arm extension.
- Toss to Set: Standing, small underarm toss of the ball to self, hands go to ready position, then volley the ball over the net to partner. Repeat, with back sets.

- ½ Court Serve: Practise correct technique from mid-way into court. Progress towards own baseline as the serve becomes consistent.
- Serve to Targets: Use Hula Hoops or similar to give targets for serving, or serve into court, AWAY from a catcher. The key is to follow through towards the target.

Warm Down Activity

- Piggy In The Middle: Toss to self and volley away, over the middle player (“piggy”), for the 3rd person to catch. Player must catch the ball, whilst piggy tries to block, intercept or catch it, without contacting other players.

LESSON 3. OVERHAND PASSING / SETTING AND DIGGING CONSOLIDATION

Key Teaching Points: Overhand Pass

- Diamond shape with thumb and forefingers.
- Spread other fingers so pads are contacting the ball, not tips or palm of hand.
- Tilt hands back and position the ball just above forehead.
- Push the ball away by extending elbows quickly, keeping wrists firm.

Key Teaching Points: Forearm Pass / Dig

- Balanced and low with hips and shoulders behind the ball.
- Straight arms held firmly together.
- Ball contact onto platform of forearms, contact ideally at waist level.
- Direct ball high to centre of the court or to the setter – NO Arm Swing.

Warm Up Activity

Ball Dribble: Dribble a ball with one hand / both hands whilst moving forward / backwards.

Throw and Catch: Using a 2-handed, underarm throw, toss the ball and catch it above the head, whilst moving back and forth.

Skill Introduction

Dig: The objective is to control the attack play from the opposition and bump the ball high into own court space near the centre of the net.

Set: The objective is to push (set) the ball high into the air for a teammate to make an attack play, or to return the ball over the net.

Model and explain the skills with focus on key teaching points.

Players shadow the demonstration to rehearse the technique.

Skill Development and Main Activity

- Toss the ball over the net for passer to dig to self and catch above their head.
- From a tossed ball to the side or in front of the receiver, dig or set the ball using shuffle steps to move into position.
- Set to self, then set to partner, who catches the ball above his/her head. Progress to continuous setting.
- Set to self, then set to partner for him/her to dig return.
- Continuous setting over the net to a partner. Progress to moving sideways across the court whilst setting over the net to partner. Set slightly to the side of partner, who moves into position under the ball and sets the same way.

Throw-volley activities from previous lesson:

- Toss to Set: Using a small underarm toss of the ball to self, hands go to ready position, then volley the ball over the net to partner. Repeat, with back sets.
- Sitting Set: Sitting on the ground, place the ball in the ready position above forehead and push the ball away, over the net, to partner sitting opposite. Practise back sets also – same technique, but change angle of arm extension.

Warm Down Activity

- Keep It Up: A circle of players (4 or more) uses the dig or set to keep the ball off the ground for as many touches as possible. One player can be positioned in the centre of the circle, to whom each pass is aimed. That player returns the ball to any player in the circle.

LESSON 4. UNDERHAND SERVE, SPIKE TECHNIQUE – APPROACH AND JUMP, RULES AND REFEREEING

Spike Definition: is the most common form of attack hit, involving a player hitting the ball at a contact point above the top of the net, downwards into the opposition's court.

Key Teaching Points: Underhand Serve

- Stand facing the net with the foot opposite the hitting hand forward.
- The ball is held at waist level.
- The player leans forward as they swing their arm forward.
- The hand holding the ball is dropped just before the contact.
- The player hits underneath the ball with the fist or heel of the hand.
- The hitting arm follows through in the direction of the target.

Key Teaching Points: Spike Approach and Jump

- 4 step approach: A right-handed player takes a small step with their right foot (1st step), then another, bigger, FAST step (without over-striding) with their left foot (2nd step) and finally “the plant” (3rd and 4th steps), close together, with left foot slightly forward) to perform a jump.
- Crucial that first two steps develop speed. ‘Push’ the second step to generate speed. The ‘plant’ turns forward movement into vertical so that hitters do not contact the net. Encourage a maximum jump every time.
- Batman – Superman for jump. Players swing both arms backwards as they commence ‘plant’ steps (Batman), then forwards and upwards to aid maximum jump (Superman).

Key Teaching Points: Rules and Refereeing

- Introduce players to the basic rules that will enable them to play a simple game, e.g. maximum of three contacts, scoring, rotation and any variations you may introduce as modifications to suit the specific player group.

Warm Up Activity

Over and Under: Teams of about 5 players line up in single file, arm’s length apart. The player at the front holds the ball using setter’s ‘diamond shape’ and reaches with the ball between his/her legs to the player behind. The next player takes the ball and with similar grip, reaches up and over their own head for the next player to receive. Repeat as per player one and continue alternating along the line of players. The final player in line moves to the front with the ball and continues until all players have been at the front of the line.

Throw and Catch: (2-handed, underarm) Throw and catch a ball (as high above the head as possible), whilst jumping vertically.

Skill Introduction

Underhand Serve: The purpose is to put the ball into play to commence a rally, or aim for a position that makes it difficult for the opposition to receive.

Spike Approach and Jump: The purpose is to maximise the height at which the ball is contacted for a spike, whilst being a controlled jump. Always start slowly (walk-throughs) and get the footwork correct before adding speed or arm action/ball contact.

Rules and Refereeing: Introduce the essential rules in a game-like situation, whilst players are practising skills and drills. Stop the ‘game’ at appropriate moments to draw

attention to rules. Ask players to also become referees to identify when these rules are breached. If age appropriate, also introduce hand signals.

Model and explain the skills with focus on key teaching points.
Players shadow the demonstration to rehearse the technique.

Skill Development and Main Activity

Serving

- ½ Court Serve: Practise correct technique from mid-way into court. Progress towards own baseline as serve becomes consistent.
- Serve to Targets: Use Hula Hoops or similar to give targets for serving, or serve into court, AWAY from a catcher. Key is to follow through towards target.

Spike Approach

- Walk-throughs of spiking footwork.
- Practise 'plant step' into jump, gradually increasing speed; then add the step prior, gradually increasing speed (3-step approach); then progress to full 4-step approach, gradually increasing speed.

Warm Down Activity

Here, There, Where: Players must move in the direction or to the place given, using shuffle steps only. Always keep correct body position. The coach can also toss a ball for players to return with a forearm pass.

LESSON 5. BASIC SPIKE ARM SWING AND SET UP NEAR NET

Key Teaching Points: Basic Spike Arm Swing (Bow and Arrow)

- As you leave the floor to jump, pull the hitting arm back with the elbow and hand at shoulder height.
- The other arm should be extended in the direction of the ball (Bow and Arrow / Robin Hood position).
- The hitting hand should be open and relaxed, with the palm facing away from the ear.
- The elbow should swing forward and rise above the head.
- Follow the sequence of shoulder > elbow > hand.
- Hit the ball at the maximum height that the athlete can reach. If you do your elbow will lock and then it will encourage your wrist to snap down on top of the ball.
- Then the arm and hand swing over the top as the heel of the hand contacts the ball.

- This is followed by the palm and fingers, which then snap through the ball.
- Contact point is slightly in front of and as high as possible above the hitting shoulder.

Key Teaching Points: Set Up Near / Along The Net

- Move early to position under the flight of the ball.
- Hands up early, shaped like the ball, 10-15cm above forehead.
- Thumbs and index fingers form a diamond or triangle through which you can see the ball (triangular window).
- Face the target: With your right foot forward, square off to the target with shoulders and feet before you deliver the set.
- Face your hitting zone for all of your sets.
- The correct contact point is just above the forehead (hairline).
- When contacting the ball, the hands move in one direction only.
- Freeze with arms fully extended in the direction you want the ball to go. (Hands are the same distance apart upon completion as they were during contact.)
- Hands follow the ball.

Warm Up Activity

Set to self: Continuously. Vary height of sets 1/2m, 1m, 2m. Add turns between sets – ¼, ½ and full turn whilst ball is in air.

High Ball Sets: Set the ball as high as possible and let it bounce once, then set again. Repeat until unable to establish good setting position.

Skill Introduction

Spike Arm Swing: Objective is to contact the ball with an open hand at maximal height, hitting the ball downwards into opposition court.

Set Up Near Net: Objective is to pass the ball, with first or, most usually, second contact, close to the net so that an attack play can be made. This can be done using an overhand- or forearm pass.

- Model and explain the skills with focus on key teaching points.
- Model the spike arm swing without jumping. Add jump component after players have practised the standing swing correctly.
- Players shadow the demonstration to rehearse the technique.

Skill Development and Main Activity

Spike Arm Swing: Standing arm swing; Two-footed jump (plant step) with arm swing; then add tennis ball throw from arm swing (throw over the net into court); add

defenders, (about four), who attempt to catch the thrown ball. Progress to two-footed jump and hit a tossed ball over the net. Focus is on arm swing and high contact point slightly in front of the hitting shoulder.

Set Up Near Net: Underarm toss the ball to a designated setter, positioned close to the centre of the net. Setter moves under the ball, faces target (hitting zone, NOT player) and volleys the ball high into a 'hittable' position for the attacker, ideally about 60cm off the net. Attacker is to catch / jump and catch / hit the ball using correct arm swing.

Warm Down Activity

Keep It Up: A circle of players (4 or more) use dig or set to keep the ball off the ground for as many touches as possible. One player can be positioned in the centre of the circle to whom each pass is aimed. That player returns the ball to any player in the circle.

LESSON 6. OVERHAND AND FOREARM PASS MINI GAMES

Key Teaching Points:

- Early movement to get behind the ball's flight and face the target.
- Be stationary and stable when playing the ball.
- Early hand/arm position.
- Follow-through slightly with legs, hips and shoulders for forearm pass.
- Follow-through by extending arms for overhand pass.

Warm Up Activity

Ball Dribble: Dribble a ball with one hand / both hands whilst moving forward / backwards.

Throw and Catch: (2-handed, underarm) Throw and catch a ball (above the head), whilst moving back and forth.

Continuous setting: Overhead setting-to-self; setting against a wall or setting to a basketball ring.

Skill Introduction

Dig: The objective is to control the attack play from the opposition and bump the ball high into own court space near the centre of the net.

Set: The objective is to push (set) the ball high into the air for a teammate to make an attack play; or to return the ball over the net.

Model and explain the skills with focus on key teaching points. Refer to Lesson 3 for specifics on skill execution.

Skill Development and Main Activity

High Set: Challenge players to volley (set) the ball as high as possible, using correct action. Most success will come from using fast arms and extending from the legs.

Volley-Only Mini Game: (minimum 2 players per side). NOTE: demonstrate the game clearly, before commencing games. A visual picture of the game is essential.

- Each team must use 3 contacts to get the ball over the net.
 - Players should also practise refereeing skills
1. Commence with underarm tossed ball to opposition, from anywhere along baseline.
 2. Receive 'serve' by catching the ball. Catcher tosses to self, then sets to team mate ("setter"), who also catches the ball. The setter also tosses and sets away to a teammate ("spiker"). Spiker tosses and sets over the net, attempting to ground the ball in opposition court, whilst they attempt to catch the ball.
 3. Continue until the ball is grounded in opposition court, which scores a point.
 4. Team that wins the point also 'serves' the next ball. If the receiving team wins the point, they rotate positions within their court space and change server.

Forearm Pass (Digging)-Only Mini Game: (minimum 3 players per side)

As above with the following changes-

1. No limit to number of contacts made to get ball over the net
2. The only time the ball may be caught is when the ball is played over the net by the opposition. The catcher continues the point by tossing the ball gently to a teammate who then digs, either over the net, or for another teammate.

Warm Down Activity

Which Pass? Toss a ball over the net for a receiver to pass to a catcher on the same side of the net. Vary the height, width, depth and speed of the toss so that the receiver must decide on overhand (set) or dig to pass.

LESSON 7. OVERHAND SERVING AND SERVE RECEIVE (FOREARMS)

Key Teaching Points: Overhand Serving

- Stance is with feet shoulder width apart and non-dominant foot slightly ahead. Shoulders and hips should be aligned with the net.
- Place your non-dominant hand directly in front of you, almost completely straight (but with a flexible elbow) and with the ball in your palm.
- Position your serving arm back next to your head, with elbow pointing upwards and hand at or slightly above your ear. Ball toss is 30 to 45 cm in the air, in front of the hitting shoulder.

- Keeping your wrist rigid, hit the ball with the heel or firm palm of your dominant hand. Transfer weight from back foot to front foot.
- Straight, short follow through of hitting arm.

Key Teaching Points: Serve Receive

- Balanced and low with hips and shoulders behind the ball.
- Straight arms held firmly together.
- Ball contact onto platform of forearms, contact ideally at waist level.
- Direct ball to setter – Little or No Arm Swing. Light directional push if necessary.

Warm Up Activity

Clap Tag: Keep one hand behind your back and, using the free hand, try to tag others on their 'backhand' whilst avoiding having own hand tagged.

Skill Introduction

Overhand Serve: The objective is to serve the ball without spin so that it 'floats' and creates a difficult ball to pass.

Serve Receive: The objective is to control and direct the ball high and towards the setter.

Model and explain the skills with focus on key teaching points.

Players shadow the demonstration to rehearse the technique.

Skill Development and Main Activity

Tennis ball throw: Using correct serving action, modify the 'hit' of the serve to be a throw of a tennis ball to a partner, over the net.

½ Court Serve and Receive: Practise the correct serving technique from mid-way into court with receiver(s) to forearm pass high to mid-court or closer to the net. If there are 2+ receivers, attempt to dig so that the partner can catch the ball. Progress serving position further towards own baseline to increase distance of serve

Beat the Passer: Serve into court so that neither of a pair of receivers is able to play the ball effectively, i.e. serve an ace. Rotate servers and receivers.

Warm Down Activity

Piggy In The Middle: Toss to self and volley away, over the middle player ("piggy"), for the 3rd person to catch. Player must catch the ball, whilst piggy tries to block, intercept or catch it, without contacting other players.

Over and Under: Teams of about 5 players line up in single file, arm's length apart. The player at the front holds the ball using setter's 'diamond shape' and reaches with the ball between his/her legs to the player behind. The next player takes the ball and with

similar grip, reaches up and over their own head for the next player to receive. Repeat as per player one and continue alternating along the line of players. The final player in line moves to the front with the ball and continues until all players have been at the front of the line.

LESSON 8. BASICS OF BLOCKING - MINI GAMES 4 V 4 OR LARGER

Blocking Definition: is a means of defending against opposition attack hits, involving a player or players jumping at the net to 'block' the hit and ideally win the rally by having it rebound into the opposition's court.

Key Teaching Points: Blocking

- Face the net with hands in front of shoulders and palms facing the net.
- Bend knees and drive up with both legs.
- Extend arms straight up and press hands over the net as close to the ball as possible.
- Pike body with hands and feet forward of the torso.
- Make your hands as big as possible and direct the ball back into the court.
- Jump and land in the same place. Do not travel along or under the net

Warm Up Activity

Throw and Catch: a) Throw and catch moving under the net individually and in pairs.
b) Facing back to back throw the ball backwards and partner catches the ball over their shoulder.
c) Lying on chest facing a partner, throw and catch the ball.

Skill Introduction

Block: The objective is to prevent the opponent's attacking shot from passing over the net, and to direct the ball back into their court. At a more advanced level, it also includes funnelling an attack towards own team's defenders.

Model and explain the skills with focus on key teaching points.
Players shadow the demonstration to rehearse the technique.

Skill Development and Main Activity

Blocking

- Blocking practise at the net without a ball: Face a partner on the opposite side of the net. Jump simultaneously, reaching above and across the net. Push both of your hands against your partner's hands, but do not touch the net! Vary with one partner jumping up with a ball for the other to push against; and blocking with a

ball thrown over the net with flat trajectory. Add footwork with shuffle-steps L or R then jump to block.

4 v 4 Mini Games: Play simple games, including basic rules and refereeing practise. Modify the serve position or number of attempts, if required to allow the game to develop. All games can be adapted for teams with fewer or more players.

Modifications: a) One bounce is permitted when receiving the ball from the opposition, and on second team contact, but NOT on 3rd play of the ball.

i.e. bounce-dig/volley-bounce-dig/volley-dig/volley/spike over the net

b) As above, but using only one arm if forearm passing first two contacts.

c) As per a), but only allow the bounce prior to the first touch each time over the net.

d) Allow the setter to catch the ball and then volley away to a spiker.

e) Scoring incentive – successful spike earns two points. Ace serve earns two points.

Warm Down Activity

Obstacle Course: Line players up in pairs on the baseline. Create physical activities for them to complete at various positions on the court. E.g. sit ups, push ups, spike jumps, dives/rolls, shuffle steps etc.