

Volleyball Practice Drills to Improve Basic Skills

In this segment, you'll see a number of drills you can apply to your next volleyball practice. You'll notice the use of energy checks interspersed throughout the practice session to keep momentum and engagement high. Follow along as our coaches take these beginner players through jam-packed volleyball practice drills.

1. Energy Check Drill

When team energy dips, boost it with a quick energy check! Players place a volleyball between their knees, then clap out a rhythm on their thighs and hands, followed by a jubilant shout of "volleyball!"

2. Down Ball Hitting Drill

Warm up your players' hitting hands with this simple drill. Athletes position the ball in front of their hitting shoulder, then strike the ball against the floor using the entire area of their hitting hand.

3. Toss Up Setting Drill

Train players on proper ball and body position while setting. Athletes place one foot slightly ahead of the other, then toss the ball above their heads and catch it with fingers spread.

4. Fizzles Setting Drill

Help players get a feel for the ball in their hands with "fizzles." Players toss the ball above their heads, then set a low ball to themselves for three reps.

5. Four Sets Drill

Work on low-to-high ball control with this basic setting drill. Players set a low ball to themselves for three reps, then finish with one high set.

6. Low Catch Passing Drill

Get players used to handling the ball in a low body position with this beginner passing drill. Athletes toss the ball high into the air, allow it to bounce once, then catch it just before it hits the floor a second time while in a low base.

7. Volleyball Burpee Passing Drill

This is one of many useful volleyball passing drills for beginners. It is a progression of the low catch passing drill that teaches players to move with the ball. After catching the ball in a low position, players tap it on the floor to the right, middle, and left of their bodies, then pop up to a standing position.

8. Deliver and Pop Serve Drill

Get players comfortable with the overhand serve toss by teaching them to “deliver” the ball at the top of their reach, then drop the ball to the floor. Next, have them add a small toss at the delivery point, then contact the ball with a “pop” from their serving hand.

9. 10 to Kill Ball Control Drill

Practice ball control with this cooperative 6 vs. 6 drill that encourages both teams to work together. Once the ball has crossed the net 10 times, either side can attempt a kill to win a big point. The first team to score five big points wins!

10. Popcorn Ball Control Drill

Get athletes comfortable with ball control using “long and strong” arms. Players bounce a volleyball from arm to arm using a single bounce, then progress to a double bounce.

11. Big Kernel Little Kernel Ball Control Drill

In this variation on the popcorn drill, players practice control by bouncing a ball from arm to arm using a little bounce, big bounce pattern.

12. Five-Second Rule Ball Control Drill

Challenge your players with this variation on the popcorn drill that requires them to touch the floor on alternating high bounces.

13. Muscle Memory Throws Drill

In this partner drill, players practice four muscle memory throws that help them develop proper hitting and serving technique.

14. Serve Receive Wave Drill

Servers send balls across the net and opposing passers return the ball to a target player. After 10 good passes, servers and passers swap positions and the drill repeats for another 10 points.

15. Flip Flop Passing Drill

Two players take turns tossing balls to a passer between them. After passing the ball to the first tosser, the passer rotates 180° to receive and return the ball to the second tosser.