

# Youth Volleyball Coach's Guides – Skills & Drills

## The Spirit of Coaching Youth

**Catch them Doing it Right:** Punishment is not necessary. Sports fun; the kids want to try hard and learn. So always choose encouragement and praise rather than threat of punishment to inspire and motivate.

**I Hear & I Forget – I See & I Remember – I DO & I Understand:** Kids learn by doing, not listening. When you have a choice between explaining or showing, always show briefly, then get them touching the ball as quickly as possible. Your drill should be games, and intro's should be 30 seconds or less then get the balls in play!

**Reward Performance over Outcome:** Praise an attempt to learn a skill or the attempt to incorporate a strategy more than actual outcome. Kids who feel free to try new things become learners for life and better players.

**Mistakes are Simply Opportunities to Teach:** They are not directed at you, or done on purpose, but inherent in learning new things, and even in doing things one is already good at. Each player must learn his or her own way to do each skill – with your fundamental guidance.

**Teach Positive Errors over Negative Errors:** This way the learning happens faster.

**Be Consistent:** The kids need to be able to rely on you, winning, losing, succeeding or erring.

**FeedForward Works Better than Feedback:** It's human nature for all of us to willingly accept a positive encouraging reminder on what we are about to do. Our job is not to point out their past errors, it is to encourage and inspire future success. Speaking to young learners about what they are about to do also teaches them to be their own coach and control their own destiny. FeedForward coaching is collaborative in nature, the athletes can feel that you are on their side to help them succeed rather than being just another grown-up telling them what they did wrong. So, FeedForward allows your coaching to really make a difference in kids' lives, and it also makes coaching more fun for you!

### **Sample Practice Ideas**

During each practice it is important to spend time working on each specific skill set. Time should be devoted to passing, setting, hitting (depending on age), serving and game play. In the beginning of the season drills should be relatively basic and once those skills have been mastered then you can move on to more advanced skills.

Sample Practice:

**Warm ups** – at the beginning of each practice players should spend 5-15 minutes getting warm. This can include running laps (playing tag or some sort of game for younger kids). Then stretches, and plyometrics (power skips, lunges, toe touches, ect).

**Partner passing** – it is usefully to let players work on passing and setting with a partner before real drills begin. If the players are advanced enough you can have the pepper between each other.

**Passing drills** – passing is the major key to volleyball. Everything starts with a pass; if your team struggles with serving the easiest way to equal that out is with good passes. Working on passing in the beginning of practices helps to get the players moving. Working on footwork and agility is beneficial to every skill level.

**Passing and setting drills** – once a good amount of passing has been done, teams can move into duel drills. This means drills that work on two major skill sets. This would be tossing balls to passers and the setters then setting the balls to the outside. Depending on skill level these drills can be modified in many ways.

**Serving** – serving is also very important in every game. Coaches can use serving games and drills to warm up arms, and this can be the transition into hitting.

**Hitting** – depending on the skill level some form of hitting should be covered in practice. Many times kids smack at balls during practice and games; so working on technique and fundamentals is very important. One key of hitting is to have kids understand to attack to the ball instead of a spot. Many players when hitting in the middle or outside just approach to a spot rather than the ball. Focus on tracking the ball.

**Game play** – full game play should be saved for last. This is the combination of all the skills that were worked on in practice. Starting with coach tosses and working into serve receive it helpful at all levels.

Every drill that is used in practice can be modified depending on the teams needs. Also the amount of time that is spent on each skill can change depending on what the team needs the most.

## **Volleyball Games and Drills**

**The Toss & Pass:** The 'Toss & Pass' is a simple but effective volleyball drill for beginners. This drill requires two players, one of whom tosses the ball to the other to pass. Do this a specific number of times and then switch roles. This drill will help beginner players to learn proper passing technique.

**The Passing Game:** Another good drill to teach new players the skill of passing is 'The Passing Game'. It requires a group to play and involves splitting them up into two groups who will compete against each other. Both of these groups will then form a ring and have their own volleyball. The object of the game is to get the most consecutive touches and keep your teams ball up the longest.

**Serving Drill:** To help beginner players learn to serve, have them do the serving drill. To do this you divide the group into two teams and have them compete against each other for the highest number of successful serves completed.

**Wall Hitting:** Here's a drill that requires just one person. The player chooses a spot on a wall and then tries to hit the same spot. To do this successfully they'll need to focus on using proper arm swing technique. This drill will help with the players arm swing immensely.

**Line Passing:** Put players into two lines facing each other. The players on the first line must pass the ball and then go to the end of the line. This is another effective drill for teaching passing. The

**Dead Fish Drill:** One of the most popular of all of the volleyball drills for beginners and advanced players! Just divide your players into two teams and have one serving whilst the other moves to the other side of the court and lies down inside of the court. The serving team tries to hit one of the players on the floor.

**Wagon Wheel:** 6-8 kids per group – put the kids in a large circle with one kid in the middle. The coach tosses the ball all around the inside of the circle and the player in the middle must pop the ball up in such a way that the perimeter kids catch it. Once 6 balls have been caught, switch out the players with the new player in the middle.

**Aim For the Corners:** – put a bucket or garbage can or cone in the corners (or wherever) – if a ball hits, lands in, or otherwise touches the “target” there’s a reward.

**King/Queen of the Court:** 3 on 3 – winning team stays on court, losing team rotates off.

**Practice Setting Drill:** Sit crossed legged on ground. Tosser tosses the ball to the person sitting down and the person sitting down sets the ball back to the tosser.

**Serve Receive:** This drill will require three lines. One line of players passing with a second line of setters, and a line on the other side of the net that will serve the ball to the passers. The servers will serve over the net to the passers and those players will pass the ball to the setter who will then catch the ball. To advance this deal, have the setters set to a specific position. Eventually you can add a line hitting from a certain position.

**Pipeline Passing:** This drill requires two taped lines on the court (basketball lines would work if they are available). One player will have a ball and the other will be passing from about 10-15 feet away. The passer will shuffle between the two taped lines and touch them before passing. This gets the players moving and touching the lines gets them into a lower defensive stance.

**Dig and Dash Drill:** This drill will mix several skills but can be very effective for working on more advanced skills. A player will start on the net and will have to retreat off of the net into a defensive spot and dig a ball, and then run down a free ball. A coach will have a ball, slap it, and that will be the sign for the player to retreat off of the net. Once the player has moved the coach will hit a ball at the player. Once that is passed then a second ball will be thrown up into the air near the end line for a player to run down and pass back up into the court.

**Net Save:** The coach will stand about the 10-foot line and there will be two lines of players on each side. The coach will slap the ball and throw it into the net. The two players in the front of the lines will try to pass the ball out of the net. This drill works on the tough balls that get stuck in the net.

**Figure-8 Drill:** For this drill you will have two players standing in a set location and a third player who will be the passer. The two standing in set locations will be about 5-7 feet from the end line and about 5 feet apart. The passing player will start in the middle and run around the standing players and pass a ball to the setter once they are on the outside of the standing players. Make sure that players who are passing get around the ball and get their hips facing the setter.

**Circle Passing:** This drill is done by making a large circle and passing the ball around the circle. This drill helps with the player's footwork and awareness of others.

**Kids vs. Parents:** end of year game.

### Outside Resources

Here are some websites with helpful resources for coaches of all levels! Whether you have been coaching for years or this is your first season; each coach will be able to find something new on these sites that can be beneficial to their team.

<http://www.volleyballadvisors.com/volleyball-drills.html>

<http://www.youtube.com/user/vballdrills>