

Volleyball Terms

Ace

A serve that hits the floor in bounds, is shanked or cannot be handled by the receiving team, immediately resulting in a point for the serving team.

Antenna

Fiberglass rod secured to the net on both sides as an extension of the sideline. The ball must cross the net inside the two antennas.

Approach

Footwork used to run and jump to attack the ball.

Assist

A set or bump set that leads to a successful attack.

Attack

A ball hit by a jumping hitter in the front or back row which directs the ball across the net and into the opponent's court.

Attack Line

The line on the volleyball court that separates the front court from the back court, located three meters from the net on either side. Also called the 10 foot line.

Backcourt

The area of the court behind the 3 meter/10 foot line

Back Set

A set to the right side hitter positioned behind the setter

Back Row Attack

An attack from behind the 10' line. Also the name of a rule violation in which a back row hitter attacks from in front of the 10' line.

Block

An attempt to stop an opponent's attack at the net.

Block Assist

A stat that goes to the blocker who jumped next to the blocker who blocks a ball for a point.

Bump Set

Using a forearm pass to set an attacker up.

Center Line

The line in the middle of the volleyball court directly under the net.

Chip Shot (Roll Shot)

An off-speed shot made by making contact closer to the bottom of the ball with the palm of the hand.

Closing the Block

When a blocker travels to get directly next to another blocker, leaving no space in between the two.

Collapse

A defensive maneuver made by going directly to the floor without taking a step.

Cross-Court Shot

Hitting the ball to the opposite side of the court.

Dig

Preventing an attack from hitting the floor by passing it so that it is retrievable by a teammate.

Dive

When a player leaves his/her feet to contact or dig a ball.

Double Block

When two blockers attempt to stop an attack.

Double Hit

An illegal contact in which the ball touches a player twice in succession. Can only be called on the 2nd or 3rd contact.

Down Ball

When an attacker hits the ball overhead while standing on the ground.

Dump

When the setter sends the 2nd ball over the net intentionally instead of setting it to a hitter. The purpose is to score by surprise.

Error

When a contact is unretrievable by a teammate or results in a point for the other team. A shank is a passing error, a hit into the net is an attack error.

First Referee (R1)

The referee on the stand responsible for starting and ending plays and ultimately has the last word on points and sideouts.

Five-One (5-1)

An offense in which there are five hitters and one setter. The setter sets all the time, whether in the front row or the back row.

Flags

Used by line judges to perform the signals.

Floater

A type of serve that does not spin and moves unpredictably in a floating fashion.

Foot Fault

When a server steps on or over the line prior to contact on the serve.

Forearm Pass

A skill in volleyball in which the ball is propelled by the forearms.

Four-Two (4-2)

An offense in which there are two setters and four hitters. The player in the front row acts as setter giving the team two hitters in the front row in any given rotation.

Free Ball

When a team cannot get an attack and instead sends the ball over the net with a forearm or overhead pass.

Held Ball (Lift)

A violation in which the ball stops moving during the contact. May be called on a forearm or overhead pass.

Hitting Percentage

A stat determined by calculating the number kills minus errors divided by attempts.

Jump Serve

An overhand serve where the ball is first tossed high in the air, then the player makes a timed approach and jumps to make contact with the ball creating topspin.

Jump Float

This is a serve like the jump serve and the floater. The ball is tossed lower than a topspin jump serve, but contact is still made while in the air.

Jump Set

When a setter jumps in the air to set a ball.

Loust

When two blockers reach a ball on the net at the same time, trapping it between them and each try to make the ball fall on the opponent's side.

Kill

An attack that is put on the floor on your opponent's court or is not able to be retrieved, resulting in a point

Libero

A defensive specialist position. This player wears a different shirt than his/her teammates and plays only in the back row.

Lift

A violation in which the ball is pushed in such a way that it stops its motion during a forearm or overhead pass.

Line Shot

When a hitter on the left or right side hits the ball along the nearest sideline instead of across the court toward the opposite sideline.

Line Judge

An official responsible for calling the ball in or out and block touches.

Let Serve

When a serve hits the top of the net but still makes it over to the opponent's side.

Middle Blocker

A front row player's position also known as the middle hitter. She hits and blocks in the middle of the court, position three.

Mintonette

The original game of volleyball when it was invented in 1895 based on badminton, basketball and tennis.

Net

The item at center court that separates the two teams. The women's net is set to a height of 7'4 1/8" and the men's net is set to a height of 7'11 5/8".

Off-speed Shot

A change up in which the attacker does not hit the ball full strength but instead sends a slow spinning ball usually to an open position on the court.

One Set (Quick)

A low, quick set to the middle just in front of the setter.

Opposite Hitter

A front row player's position also known as the right side hitter in position three.

Outside Hitter

A front row player's position also known as the left side hitter in position four.

Over

A violation in which a blocker reaches over the net and interferes with the path of the ball when it is completely on the opponent's side of the court and they still have a contact left.

Overhead Pass

When a receiver passes the ball with her hands over her head. Setting is a tactical application of overhead passing

Overhand Serve

A serve in which the player tosses the ball with one hand and strikes in the air above her head.

Overlap

A violation in positioning of the players on the court prior to the serve.

Penetration

When a blocker reaches over the net in order to block the opponent's attack.

Pepper

A warm up activity with two or more players.

Perimeter Defense

A defense which entails having the players play from the outside in, protecting the perimeter of the court.

Quick Set

A low or fast set to a middle blocker in which the approach begins as the ball is passed to the setter and the hitter is already in the air close to when the ball is in the setter's hands.

Rally

The act of keeping the ball in the air and in play as it travels back and forth across the net between two teams.

Rally Scoring

Scoring system implemented in 1999 in which a point is scored on every rally, no matter which team is serving.

Ready Position

Body position in which the knees are bent, hands are out in front and just outside the knees and weight is forward.

Red Card

A second warning to a player or coach for misconduct that results in a point for the other team or a loss of a time out.

Roof

A block that sends the ball straight down to the floor quickly.

Rotation

The act of changing position in volleyball in a clockwise motion. With each new serve won, each player moves one position clockwise.

Screen

When front row players on the serving team obscure the receiving team's view of the servers with their bodies.

Seam

The hole in the block between the middle and outside blockers.

Second Referee (R2)

The assistant to the head referee who is in charge of keeping track of a team's rotation, calling overlaps and helping out the head official.

Set

A skill which the ball is handled with the fingertips and sent to a waiting hitter.

Setter

A player who is responsible for getting the second ball to the hitter by setting it with the hands or bump setting with the forearms.

Shank

A pass that is unrecoverable by the passer's team.

Shoot Set

A low, quick set to an outside attacker.

Shoulder Roll

A maneuver in which a player dives for the ball and then rolls their body over one shoulder in a tumbling move to quickly facilitate returning to the feet.

Side Out

When the receiving team wins the rally to get the serve.

Six-Two (6-2)

A type of offense in which there are two setters who set from the back row, giving the team three hitters in the front row at all times.

Skills

There are six in the game of volleyball. Serve, Forearm Pass, Overhead Pass, Attack, Block, Defense.

Slide

An attack in which a player uses a one foot take off similar to a basketball layup. The most common slide involves a middle hitter who travels behind the setter to attack on the right side of the net.

Spike

An attack, also known as a hit.

Sprawl

A defensive maneuver made by taking one step toward the ball and then going to the floor.

Stuff Block

When the attacker is blocked and the ball is unrecoverable by his/her team.

Squaring Up

What the setters need to do to insure that the ball is not set too far off the net.

Ten Foot Line

The line on both sides of the court where back row players have to jump behind for attacks and liberos have to stay behind in order to set with their hands. Also known as the three meter line.

Tip

An attack that is not hard-driven in which the hitter uses the fingertips to softly place the ball in the opponent's court.

Tooling

When a hitter strikes the ball off the blockers hands in such a way that makes it unrecoverable for the defensive team.

Transition

This refers to the physical movement from one discipline to another. Coming down from a block she “transitions” off the net to attack.

Underhand Serve

A type of serve in which the player holds the ball in one hand, swings the other in an arc motion below the waist and strikes the ball from the bottom with a fist to put it in play.

Volley

The period of play between the serve and the end of the rally.

Wipe

When an setter or hitter pushes the ball into the blockers hands and forces it out of bounds.

X Play

A play in which two hitters cross paths on their approaches intended to confuse the blockers. Usually a middle hitter going for a quick "1" set and a right side hitter going for a higher "2" set in the middle just off the left shoulder of the middle hitter.

Yellow Card

A warning given by an official for inappropriate conduct.