

Volleyball Terms

Volleyball Set (Game)

A volleyball set or game is played to a predetermined number of points. Sets must be won by at least 2 points. For example, if a set is being played to 25 points, if a 24-24 tie occurs, the set isn't over until a team leads by 2 points.

Volleyball Match

Matches are made up of sets (games). Match play usually consists of competing until one team wins 2 out of 3 or 3 out of 5 sets (games).

Playing Fault

A fault is a violation of the rules. The result of a fault is a point. Examples of playing faults are: team hits the ball 4 times without returning it back over the net, a player contacts the ball 2 consecutive times, a player touches the net when blocking or attacking, a player catches and throws the ball.

Point

A point is the result of a rally. Points are scored in various ways - by players committing faults, ball landing in , ball landing out , etc.

Volleyball Rally

A rally is the time between the serve and the end of the play. In some volleyball terminology a rally is synonymous with *volley*.

Volley

A volley is keeping the ball in play and returning it to your opponent without committing any playing faults.

Rally Scoring

When a match is played with the rule of sideout scoring, every rally results in a point being scored, either by the team serving or the team receiving.

Side Out

When the receiving team wins the rally it is called a side out. The receiving team then must rotate positions. Now they are the serving team.

Additional useful volleyball terms to know:

ACE - A serve that is not passable and results immediately in a point.

ANTENNA - The vertical rods (normally white and red) mounted near the edges of the net. The antennas are mounted directly above the sidelines and are not-in-play. Antennas are not usually used on outdoor nets.

APPROACH - Fast stride toward the net by a spiker before she jumps in the air.

ASSIST - Passing or setting the ball to a teammate who attacks the ball for a kill. This stat is normally only logged for high school, college, and National/Olympic team play.

ATTACK - The offensive action of hitting the ball. The attempt by one team to terminate the play by hitting the ball to the floor on the opponent's side.

ATTACK BLOCK - Receiving players' aggressive attempt to block a spiked ball before it crosses the net.

ATTACKER - Also "hitter" or "spiker." A player who attempts to hit a ball offensively with the purpose of terminating play in his or her team's favor.

ATTACK LINE - A line 3m from the net that separates the front row players from the back row players. Commonly referred to as the "10-foot line."

BACKCOURT - The area from the end line to the attack line.

BACK ROW ATTACK - When a back row player attacks the ball by jumping from behind the 3m line before hitting the ball. If the back row player steps on or past the 3m line during take-off, the attack is

BLOCK - A defensive play by one or more players meant to deflect a spiked ball back to the hitter's court. It may be a combination of one, two or three players jumping in front of the opposing spiker and contacting the spiked ball with the hands.

BUMP - a common term for forearm passing.

BALL HANDLING ERROR - Any time the official calls a double hit, a thrown ball or a lift (except on a serve reception or attack). For our purposes, this category also includes any blocking errors (when an official calls a blocker for a violation such as going into the net, centerline violation, reaching over the net, etc.).

BUMP PASS - The use of joined forearms to pass or set a ball in an underhand manner.

CENTER LINE - The boundary that runs directly under the net and divides the court into two equal halves.

CROSS COURT SHOT - An individual attack directed at an angle from one end of the offensive team's side of the net to the opposite sideline of the defensive team's court.

DECOY - An offensive play meant to disguise the spiker who will receive the set.

DEEP SET - Set to be hit away from the net to confuse or disrupt the timing of the blockers.

DIG - Passing a spiked or rapidly hit ball. Slang for the art of passing an attacked ball close to the floor.

DINK - A legal push of the ball around or over blockers.

DOUBLE BLOCK - Two players working in unison to deflect an attacked ball at the net back to the hitter's side.

DOUBLE HIT - Successive hits or contacts by the same player. (Illegal)

DOWN BALL - A ball the blockers elect not to attempt to block because it has been set too far from the net or the hitter is not under control. A "Down Ball" is hit overhand and driven over the net with topspin while the player remains standing. "Down Ball," is usually called aloud by the defense when it becomes apparent the attacker has no chance of hitting a powerful spike.

FLOATER - A serve which does not spin or rotate and therefore moves in an erratic path. This is similar to a "knuckle ball" pitch in baseball.

FOREARM PASS - Join your arms from the elbows to the wrists and strike the ball with the fleshy part of your forearms in an underhand motion.

FOUL/FAULT - A violation of the rules.

HELD BALL - A ball that comes to rest during contact resulting in a foul.

HIT - To jump and strike the ball with an overhand, forceful shot.

HITTER - Also "spiker" or "attacker"

JUMP SERVE - A serve that is started by the server tossing the ball into the air and jumping into and hitting the ball in its downward motion.

JOUST – When 2 opposing players are simultaneously attempting to play a ball above the net.

KILL - An attack that results in an immediate point or side out.

LINE - The marks that serve as boundaries of a court.

LINE SHOT - A ball spiked down an opponent's sideline, closest to the hitter and outside the block.

OFFSIDE BLOCK - Player at the net, which is on the side away from the opponent's attack.

OUTSIDE HITTER – a left-front or right-front attacker normally taking an approach which starts from outside the court

OVERHAND PASS - A pass executed with both hands open, controlled by the fingers and thumbs, played just above the forehead.

OVERHAND SERVE - Serving the ball and striking it with the hand above the shoulder.

PANCAKE - A one-handed defensive technique where the hand is extended and the palm is slid along the floor as the player dives or extension rolls, and timed so that the ball bounces off the back of the hand.

PASS – see "Forearm Pass"

PENETRATION – The act of reaching across and breaking the plane of the net during blocking.

POWER ALLEY - A cross-court hit traveling away from the spiker to the farthest point of the court.

QUICK SET – a set (usually 2' above the net) in which the hitter is approaching the setter, and may even be in the air, before the setter delivers the ball. This type of set requires precise timing between the setter and hitter.

READY POSITION - The flexed, yet comfortable, posture a player assumes before moving to contact the ball.

RED CARD – a severe penalty in which an official displays a red card. The result of a red card may be a player is disqualified, the team loses the serve, or the team loses a point. A red card may be given with or without a prior yellow card as a warning; it is up to the official's discretion.

ROTATION - The clockwise movement of players around the court and through the serving position following a side out.

SERVE - One of the six basic skills; used to put the ball into play. It is the only skill controlled exclusively by one player.

SERVER - The player who puts the ball into play.

SERVICE ERROR - An unsuccessful serve in which one or more of the following occurs: 1) the ball hits the net or fails to clear the net, 2) the ball lands out of bounds, or 3) the server commits a foot fault.

SET - The tactical skill in which a ball is directed to a point where a player can spike it into the opponent's court.

SETTER – the player who has the 2nd of 3 contacts of the ball who "sets" the ball with an "Overhand Pass" for a teammate to hit. The setter normally runs the offense.