**Training for Volleyball**

I’m not as well trained for volleyball but I’ll give you my best advice. I will break it down into skills, attack, defense, and fitness. Volleyball is all about power, speed, precision, and reaction time so it’s best to train that way. Every point is a new chance, so keep your head in the game and do whatever it takes to get that next point.

**Skills:**

**Passing (bump):**

**Key points:**

* Here are some [graphics that will help demonstrate the pass](../Desktop/Volleyball%20Forearm%20Pass%20Poster%20%28Free%29.pdf).
* Move your feet to get to the ball quickly, then get set
* Hands are clasped together, and arms are straight, I like to say make sure you don’t see your thumb nails, and that’s just to get them to straighten their arms
* Push from the legs, not a swing at the arms
* Allow the ball to hit on both forearms at the same time (forearms should make a fairly flat surface for the ball to hit)
* Angle the flat surface so that it is perpendicular to where you want the ball to go

**Practice:**

* Pass the ball continuously against a high wall, or wall of a gym
* Pass the ball continuously up in the air
* Have someone throw the ball to you and pass it back, progressively get the tosser to make it more challenging
* Pass a ball with a partner and see how many you can get without it hitting the ground
* Pass a ball over a net
* Pass and set with a partner
* Play pepper with a partner – pass, set, spike, pass, set, spike (if the spike is hard, the pass becomes a dig. You could also make it a little easier if the spike was more of a tip to get over a block)
* For extra challenge on all of these try to be as precise as possible, see how many you can get directly to your partner or exactly where you want it

**Setting (volley):**

**Key Points:**

* Here are some [graphics that will help demonstrate the set.](../Desktop/Volleyball%20Overhead%20Pass%20Poster%20%28Free%29.pdf)
* Again move your feet to get to the ball quickly, try to get to the spot where the ball will land so you are directly under the ball when you make contact
* Make a spade with your index fingers and thumb of both hands, the ball will land momentarily in that spade
* All your other fingers are spread out
* As the ball enters your hands, you are going to give it a bit of a cushion with your fingers and your elbows and then spring back out, I like to say “give me 10” like you are giving a double high five.
* Push the ball in the direction you want it to go

**Practice:**

* Same suggestions as the pass, but just substitute for set

**Hitting (spike):**

**Key Points:**

* The approach is the main part here. The last two steps need to be a big step (heel strikes first), then both together, then jump up. This will prevent you from jumping forward into the net or onto the opponent’s side of the court.
* Then you are going to pull your throwing arm back, it looks almost as if you are firing a bow and arrow but with a flat open palm
* Then you are going to whip that flat hand forward with speed and smack that ball hard on the inside of the palm. Wide fingers will give you more control, but closed fingers may allow you to have a harder hit.
* The higher you are able to jump over the net the better because then you can smash it down for what is called a kill

**Practice:**

* Just simply practice the arm movements and hit the ball down so it hits the ground just before it hits the wall and comes back. You can practice this one at a time at first to really get a feel for a good hit and what your body needs to do in order to get that hit. Then you can try to keep it going continuously.
* Practice overhand serves, this will also help the arm movement as it is very similar.
* Practice the steps into a jump, saying “big, together, up, hit”
* Have a partner toss the ball up and try to make good contact with the ball, then direct where the ball is going as best you can, then try to meet the ball at the highest point of your jump
* Have a partner set the ball to you and do the same as above
* Pass the ball to a partner and have them set back and then do the same above
* Do the last 3 over a net
* Play pepper (from above)

**Underhand Serve:**

**Key Points:**

* Place the ball in your non-throwing hand and bring the ball across your body slightly
* Swing your throwing arm through like you would be bowling, or underhand throwing
* Have a clenched fist and hit the ball with the heel of the hand
* Find the right amount of power
* Make sure to swing the throwing arm straight through and not to the side
* Hit the ball in the lower half but on the mid line (not to the left or right)

**Practice:**

* Serve the ball to a partner over a net, gradually move back to where a serving line would be (12m on a full size court)
* Try to aim for specific places (hula hoops placed on the opposite side of the net
* Try to add some speed and less of an arc so it just goes over top of the net

**Overhand serve:**

**Key Points:**

* Very similar to hitting except you are in complete control of the toss
* Put the ball in the non-throwing hand and bring the ball across your body
* Pull the throwing arm back like you are firing a bow and arrow but hand is open, flat, and straight up
* The lower you toss the ball, the easier it will be to make a good connection. So toss low to start.
* Step forward with your opposite foot of your throwing arm and whip that arm through to make good contact with the ball
* Hit slightly under the center of the ball but right on the mid line (not to the left or right)

**Practice:**

* Same as underhand serve
* If you are really advanced you can also try to include a jump

**Blocking:**

**Key Points:**

* Get in front of the attacker, jump high, keep your arms close together and hands strong
* When the ball is hit at you, you can try to redirect the ball downward

**Practice:**

* Have someone toss a ball in between two of you and try to block each other
* Do the same over a net and try to get it to land on the other side
* Block a partner who is hitting
* Block in pairs

**Attack:**

* The key here is to set up a play that is called “in system” meaning you are able to pass to a setter, the setter sets the ball across the net to someone in the front row, and then you are able to get a real hit.
* So we say “to the net, across the net, over the net”
* First pass must be directed towards the setter
* If setter cannot get there they yell help and someone else takes the set and still tries to play the ball to someone who can attack this ball now, it does not have to be the front row as this might be awkward to get there now
* The third contact must go over and its best if it is a hit from anywhere on the court, but if you cannot hit it, at least keep your team in it by sending the ball over the net with a pass or set, which is then called a “free ball” meaning it isn’t really a threat.
* Always read what you think your player is capable of doing by their positioning, the flight of the ball and where they are supposed to be playing it to.
* There is much more to the attack but I don’t want to get too involved.

**Defense:**

* Make sure you are in a good position to cover your area of the court and be ready to react quickly
* Communicate with your teammates before the play has started to make sure you know which seams (area between two players) that you are taking so you don’t both end up going for the same ball, or worse, not going for the ball.
* Continuously read the play and adjust your position to cover their options based on where the ball is currently on their side of the court
* React to the ball once it is hit over and decide if that is yours to dig. If not, get in position and ready to make the second or third contact.
* Keep communicating with your team
* There is also much more to defense but can’t get too involved there either. They both depend on how your coach would like to play.

**Fitness:**

* [Jump Training video](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QRN1Yzo0hjU) – listen to what this guy has to say, lots of good things here ie. Every rep should be as powerful and explosive as possible, take lots of rest in between reps so each jump will be your best jump, and take rest days after jump days. \*\*Don’t do jump training or speed training when you’re tired\*\*
* Also just try broad jumps, and lateral jumps without the jump from the knees first. Those are two great jumps to improve explosiveness
* Also check my website for speed and power exercises
* Endurance stuff like jogging, and mountain biking will not help your ability to jump. You can still do those activities for fun, but don’t include them as your training.
* Do reaction time drills – react to a command or a whistle or a colour etc. There are lots of these on the internet. But you could sprint 5 yards on a command, jump on a command, turn, get down, get up, go sideways, stop, start, open your eyes and react to the flight of a volleyball etc.
* Eat a balanced diet with lots of vegetables with every meal. Try to stay away from sweets and pop on most days, only for a treat.