# My Top 166 Volleyball Drills from Around the World

***- John Kessel, USA Volleyball Director of Membership Development and Disabled Programs***

EVERY coach asks for new drills to make their kids better, searching the web, attending clinics, reading drill books. After decades of coaching, creating and collecting, here is a list of the top 166 drills. The top 20 are animated on the Million Volleyball Participants (MVP) Grow the Game CDs (Youth, Boys, Girls, Disabled, Beach and others) available at no cost from your USA Volleyball Region, along with countless more valuable tips to make programs more successful.

*1. Volleyball; 2. Volleyball; 3. Volleyball; 4. Volleyball; 5. Monarch of the Court; 6. Volleyball; 7.Volleyball; 8.Volleyball; 9.Volleyball; 10. Volleyball; 11.Volleyball; 12.Volleyball; 13.Volleyball; 14. Volleyball; 15.Volleyball; 17. Volleyball; 18. Volleyball 19.Volleyball; 20.Volleyball – scored like football; 21. Volleyball; 22, Volleyball; 23. Volleyball; 24. Volleyball; 25. Volleyball – scored like softball; 26. Volleyball; 27. Volleyball; 28. Volleyball; 29. Volleyball; 30. Volleyball- scored even wash; 31. Volleyball; 32.Volleyball;33. Volleyball; 34. Volleyball; 35.Volleyball; 36.Volleyball; 37.Volleyball; 38.Volleyball; 39.Volleyball; 40.Volleyball; 41.Volleyball – scored 3-2 wash; 42.Volleyball; 43.Volleyball; 44.Volleyball; 45.Volleyball; 46.Volleyball – 6 vs 3 (so the other group can play 1 on 1 plus one; 47.Volleyball; 48.Volleyball; 49.Volleyball; 50.Volleyball; 51.Volleyball; 52.Volleyball; 53.Volleyball; 54.Volleyball; 55.Volleyball; 56.Volleyball; 57.Volleyball; 58.Volleyball – started by scores pulled out of a hat; 59.Volleyball; 60.Volleyball; 61.Sitting Volleyball; 62.Volleyball; 63.Volleyball; 64.Volleyball-Frying Pan scoring; 65.Volleyball; 66.Volleyball; 67.Volleyball; 68.Volleyball; 69.Volleyball; 70.Volleyball – with a golden ball worth double points; 71.Volleyball; 72.Volleyball; 73.Volleyball – played 6 vs. 1; 74.Volleyball; 75.Volleyball; 76.Volleyball; 77.Golf Serving; 78.Volleyball; 79.Volleyball; 80.Volleyball; 81.Volleyball; 82.Volleyball; 83.Volleyball – scored bucket of balls; 84.Volleyball; 85.Volleyball; 86.Volleyball; 87.Volleyball; 88.Volleyball – scored by hoops ; 89.Volleyball; 90.Volleyball; 91.Volleyball; 92.Volleyball ; 93.Volleyball; 94.Volleyball; 95.Volleyball; 96.Volleyball; 97.Volleyball; 98.Volleyball; 99.Four Group passing triplets – scored by passers vs servers; 100.Volleyball; 101.Volleyball; 102.Volleyball; 103.Volleyball; 104.Volleyball; 105.Volleyball; 106.Volleyball; 107.Volleyball; 108.Volleyball; 109.Doubles Volleyball on Sand; 110.Volleyball; 111.Volleyball; 112.Volleyball- M&M Chair Target; 113.Volleyball; 114.Volleyball; 115.Volleyball; 116.Volleyball; 117.Volleyball; 118.One Minute Serving; 119.Volleyball; 120.Volleyball; 121.Volleyball; 122.Volleyball; 123.Volleyball; 124.One minute Serving to hit a flat target – the coach; 125. Volleyball; 126.Reverse Coed Six Person Volleyball; 127.Volleyball; 128.Volleyball; 129.Volleyball; 130.Volleyball; 131.Volleyball; 132.Volleyball; 133.Volleyball; 134.Volleyball; 135.Four vs. Four Deep Court Exchange; 136.Volleyball; 137.Volleyball; 138.Volleyball; 140. Volleyball; 141. Volleyball; 142.Sister/Brother Doubles Volleyball; 143.Volleyball; 144.Volleyball; 145.Volleyball; Mother Daughter Doubles Volleyball; 146.Volleyball; 147.Volleyball; 148.Triples Volleyball on any Surface; 149. Volleyball; 150.Front back spiking off pass at three meter line; 151.Volleyball; 152.Volleyball; 153.Volleyball; 154.Volleyball; Corner to Corner Alternating Four-Person Pepper; 155.Volleyball; 156.Volleyball; 157.Reverse Coed Doubles Volleyball; 158.Volleyball; 159.Volleyball; 160.Volleyball; 161.Father/Daughter Doubles Volleyball; 162, Volleyball; 163.Volleyball; 164.Volleyball; 165. Father Son Doubles Volleyball; 166.VOLLEYBALL*

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Since basically you want to play the game of volleyball, part of the way to provide the fun and variety for practice needed to emphasize an area of the game, focus on improving weaknesses and such, is to simply change the scoring….here then is my list of scoring variations I have come up with over the last 30 years…There are many other variations of wash and X/Y scoring you can come up with, so get creative!

The research is clear that the game teaches the game, few drills teach the game. Gamelike training is the BEST way to get the skills in practice to transfer to the matches you will play. The idea is to increase the opportunities to respond, those chances for the players to TOUCH the ball, not watch someone touch it. Of course the kids want to play, but this does not mean that you will stop teaching proper technique or skill performance as they play. Indeed, too often kids can perform with the technique you seek in a non-gamelike drill, but not in the game. Players must perform the skills in competition, in the games you develop, not in drills. This teaching games for understanding skills is used for kids in their first experiences of the sport, and by the USA National Teams.

I will share a classic example of "always teaching" as they play volleyball games in practice. Most coaches want their right and left back row players to go from a "base" position, waiting for first ball over then the setter dump shot on two, to a deeper/more perimeter position before the third contact/spike. This base to back to base forward and backward movement is expect in EVERY rally as the team goes from offense to defense. Yet in drills, like pepper, this movement is not emphasized. Moreover, in the game of Monarch of the court, where it is the game, this base to back movement, and return, is again NOT emphasized. Get them to move in the games as you want them to, or else stop complaining when they don't in the game, for you get what you teach/emphasize. At the same time, you should be teaching them to read/anticipate by sharing with them "why you knew that would happen" moments, and "where would a better place to put the ball have been" questions. Help them learn what you know, for it is not what you know that matters in the match, it is what your players know.

## SCORING AND GAMES COLLECTION

**X before Y** - One team has to get "X" number of points before the other team gets "Y". This is most common with Four before Two and Seven before Three. You can set this ratio to fit your team, and let the starters have a real challenge to beat the bench players.

**X out of Y** - The team who gets the most points, X, given the number of balls Y introduced by the coach

**X in a row** - The winner has the highest number of points in a row. When the team getting the points in a row errs (including the opponents success in any way) the counter is reset back to 1 (as the one team just got that point) and the other team works to get the highest number of rallies won in a row.

**X in Y minutes** - Playing games by time and not score is one option. Playing to see who can accumulate the largest number of points in each unit of time, with an overall aggregate total at the end is another option.

**Criterion** - In any game, certain point numbers are designated as criterion points. The first team to reach that point gets bonus points. You can also "bet" additional points at these criterion points.

**Team Spelling** - Rotationally, team spells a word out loud before tossed ball hit the floor.

**Bucket of Balls** - There is a stated time limit and a set number of balls in the cart. When a ball goes dead, it is gone. The players have only the balls in the cart to keep going for the set block of time.

**Handicapping and Reinforcing** - This concept is at the discretion of the coach. Commonly the starters might have to perform something three times, while the second group has only to get two successes. In any game, you can give 2 points for the team behind and 1 point for the team leading.

**Start in the Frying Pan** - Start at 12-12, 23-22, 20-20 or 14-13, etc. - not at 0-0

**Bongo** - A team must win "X" number of rallies to get a chance to serve for a point on the scoreboard (A Neville/Beal National Team creation)

**Twofer Serves** - Each player serves two in a row, no more or less, taking momentum out of the game - and at the lower levels, eliminating the 15 serves in a row by one server situations.

**ScoreFlip** - At any time, for learning, competitive and intensity reasons, the coach can reverse the scores. No complaining, each team must then deal with the score as it then stands, using whatever point scoring variation being used. Thus the starters might go from a 14-10 lead to suddenly being down 10-14.

**Final Point Mountain** - You have to score "X" number of consecutive little points to score that final point.

**Spell Supercalifragilisticexpedialdocous or IT** - This is used in the cooperative and transitional scoring phases, where long or short words must be spelled out, getting one letter for each three hit net crossing by the at the moment cooperating teams. Once the word is spelled, the teams can go into competitive mode for that rally and can then score an actual point, or can continue to cooperate to see what the highest number they can reach together.

**Negative Points** - A point does not count if a player performs an undesired action. For example, if Sue hits a spike with a closed fist (and you as coach want an open hand with wrist snap), the rally does not count. Points can also be taken away for pre-discussed attitudes, or lack of hustle.

**Wave Wash** - Winners go under net, losing side backrow moves off court.

**Weighted Scoring** - 0 for free ball, +1 for a down ball, +2 for an attacked ball, - 2 if not put over net, -1 if not put into opponents court.

**First Ball Killed** - The point can only be scored on the first rally, by the team getting the ball while the team defending will get a point for winning the rally at any time. The wash comes when the team getting the ball puts the ball away but not in the first rally.

**Eternal Rally -** Simply keep throwing in balls, monitoring the players fatigue factor, to see how few balls, how many balls, or how long the team can play in a constant rally.

**Scramble** - You give each side "X" minutes to successfully score points in free/down ball situations. Unforced errors can be negative points, while no effort by either side can take the teams back a rotation.

**Peer Pressure Goal** - Play for one continual minute, with everyone going for the ball hard, and/or everyone staying low , or whatever a main goal is. Should someone not do the demand, 1. Stop drill, 2. Announce name, 3. Restart drill at zero again.

**Time Ball in Air** - A set amount of time that no ball can hit the floor, as the whole team must keep their balls off the floor. If coach sees or hears a ball hit the floor, team restarts the clock.

**Hat Scoring** – Put all sorts of scores in a hat, 22-24, 12-14, 12-12, 14-12, 21-21, 10-20,20-10 etc. A player draws out the score and the training session starts with that score.

**M&M Chair** – Remember vertical targets are NOT right for serving, but they ARE good for Passers. So leave an empty chair with a tube of mini-M&Ms on it. First passer to hit the chair gets to sit there and *slowly* eat M&Ms until another passer hits him/her and takes his/her place.

**Wash Games** - Created first by USA National team coaches Doug Beal and Bill Neville, are just one way to enhance how the game teaches the game. This is done by having the coach add one or more balls into the game immediately, while players need to learn how to clear the ball off the court fast and safely to be able to focus on the next ball. An important fact of these kinds of fast added ball drills is that research shows players get up to 50% more touches on the ball in the same amount of time as in a standard scrimmage. Equally importantly, the players learn a key gamelike thing, of competing, with winners and losers in some manner or form. The higher intensity also teaches each player how to handle a pressure level that is higher than most matches.

**Wash scoring** - Is named from the concept - "I paid for lunch and you picked up dinner so it's a wash." Thus, in order to get a point on the scoreboard, a team must win two or more rallies. If one team wins the served ball rally, and the other team wins the coach-introduced-ball rally, it is a wash. Rally scoring is used, not sideout scoring. Keeping track of the scoring in this higher intensity situation can be its own challenge. I use my fingers, raising one or more on the side of the team that has won the little points, before a big point is reached. Other coaches use the balls being carried to be added in, while others use a team manager or player out of the game to keep score. The art of coaching includes letting them argue about the scoring, to see who has the best recall of the team, though the objective it to touch more balls in the same amount of time, not practice arguing. This art also includes determining which team gets the coach-introduced balls, as they can be given to the rally losing side, or the rally winning side, and can be given easily or aggressively attacked by the person putting the additional ball(s) into the court.

**See Ya! Tournament** - This is an instant winner/single point game run on as many courts as you have available. When you lose you move on to the next court then at the last court, return to the first court and start all over again. Scored by whoever has the highest number of one point game wins total.

**Monarch of the Court** - Otherwise known as Queen of the Court and King of the Court in single sex competitive situations. You can designate one side that the winning side defends, so that the challenger runs under the net to that side when they win the one point rally. You can also say that the winning side must change sides each time to add more conditioning to the game.

**Match-ups** - Hitter vs. Blocker, Server vs. Passer, Digger vs. Hitter, Setter vs. Blockers

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**Two vs. Four** - The doubles team can hit from anywhere on the court, the four person team can block with one blocker only and must attack from behind the three meter line.

**One vs. one vs. one** - Over the net short court

**Five vs. Five** - Play without a player in position #5 or #6, or in #1, 2 or 3.

**Six vs. Three or Six vs. Two** - You start three vs. three or two vs. two, the side that puts the ball over after their first three hit rally then goes to four or six players then on the court. Should the other side get the ball back over also with three hits, goes to four vs. four or six vs. six. The side that wins get to split up and stay on both sides, the losing side splits to become the add-ins when the ball crosses the net.

**Prisoner Volleyball** - each rally point scored, the winning side gets one of the other side's players, the player who made the error or who was closest to the ball as it was killed.

**Tip/Hit Scrimmage** - You can spike only if a one person block forms, if two or more blockers form, you must one handed or two handed tip to beyond the three meter line.

**Softball** - This has as many innings as there are players on one side of the court.

- Each half of an inning is over when pitching team (serving) gets three outs.
- An out is achieved when the batting team (team receiving) either errs or the pitching team stuff blocks/ace serves/transition kills.
- An untouched ace serve is a double play.
- A stuff block is a double play
- Home Run - batting team kills ball on first attempt
- Triple - batting team gets point before or at the second net crossing of the ball
- Double - batting team gets point before or at the third net crossing of the ball
- Single - batting team gets point before or at the fourth net crossing of the ball
- Any longer rally is a foul ball
- Serves into net are a ground rule double for the batting team
- Serves out over net are a walk for the batting team

You can give any kind of hit or out for actions desired, letting the team define things as the game develops. (eg, a triple play if no one even moves for a ball, or a stolen base because of the extra hustle or team play by a the batting team.)

**Football** – Creating football levels of wash scoring, you get to keep getting the ball, and after 2 successes in a row, you can opt for a "field goal" getting three points. If the opponents block your attempt however, they "run it back for a touchdown." You can wait and go for 6 in a row, thus a touchdown, and then go for an extra point, or go for two by killing the ball from the back row. Play for 5 or 10 min per "quarter" and switch sides at each quarter, giving them a 2 min break for "halftime."

**You Da Star** - One vs. Six, if the single player can touch it, stays on.

**Got the Whole World** - Five servers vs. one passer on both sides of the net at same time. If you can touch the serve, stay on.

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**Golf** (shoot for hula hoops) - Keeping track of the number of serves to hit into the hoop/target. Lower skilled players get holed out if they hit any part of the target. Higher skilled must hit completely in the target boundaries.

**Hit or be Hit** - Everyone hits the same hit, backrow or high outside most often. If ball is hit out or even touches the net, that player must lay down on other side past the 3 meter line. All players hit until just one is left who then gets to hit 5 in a row from wherever desired.

**Sweets** - Kudo candy bars, tootsie rolls, popsicles as pattern interrupter awards. It is amazing how hard a player will train for a mini-tootsie roll.

**Play Sitting volleyball, Special Olympic volleyball, Sepaw Takraw, Doubles, Triples….just PLAY Volleyball, for that is really the only "drill" that matters….** - I have been lucky to do clinics in all 50 states and about 30 nations…every clinic, we swap ideas as unlike apples, where swapping gets you just one thing, exchanging ideas gives you both more and more. USA Volleyball hopes you find these scoring ideas and "drill" options of value in guiding you to success on and off the court, for we are all "Bridge Builders" as poet Will Allen Dromgoole so wonderfully wrote -----

An old man, going a lone highway,
Came at the evening, cold and gray,
To a chasm, vast and deep and wide,
Through which was flowing a sullen tide.
The old man crossed in the twilight dim;
The sullen stream had no fears for him;
But he turned when safe on the other side
And built a bridge to span the tide.

"Old man," said a fellow pilgrim near,
"You are wasting strength with building here;
Your journey will end with the ending day;
You never again must pass this way;
You have crossed the chasm, deep and wide
Why build you the bridge at the eventide?"
The builder lifted his old gray head:
"Good friend, in the path I have come," he said,
"There followeth after me today
A youth whose feet must pass this way.
This chasm that has been naught to me
To that fair-haired youth may a pitfall be.
He, too, must cross in the twilight dim;
Good friend, I am building the bridge for him."

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