

TYPES OF SETS

The Perfect Set

No spin – it should be a floater. In other words, if the name of the ball were on the top at contact, it should remain on the top the whole time until it is hit. The sets should be at least an arm's length from the net and the timing should allow the hitter to complete a full swing. The ball should drop close to the spot where the hitter is supposed to approach (except any shoot sets). There should be very little sound when the set is hit.

Jump Set

Jump-setting speeds up the attack and can be used to confuse the middle blocker. When setters are in the front row, the jump set can be part of their attack strategy. It forces the blocker to remain in position longer, because it is not clear whether the setter will attack or set. The jump set is also an excellent technique to use to save passes that are too tight on the net or are going over the net. Quick sets are more successful and faster if hit off of a jump set.

Back Set

The back set is a blind set because it travels behind the setter so many teams do not use it as much as they should. Because most teams do not use the back set very much, they do not usually defend a hit from that position very well either. Using the back set will give you more attackers, which will divide your opponent's block even more. Because of that, and the inferior defense, you should incorporate the right-side attack into your team's offensive strategies.

- You should set directly behind yourself. This will improve accuracy. Your shoulders should be squared to your target. This will also decrease the "floating" tendency.
- The ball should be contacted the way a front set is contacted. Catching balls farther back on your head is an early giveaway to the defense the set is going back.
- Your hips should be thrown forward in order to get the ball all the way to the antenna. That type of set makes the middle blocker travel farther and creates holes in the block for the attacker to hit through. It also gives the hitter more court space to hit the ball into.
- A quick release will also push the ball farther. The faster the hands and arms extend, the more speed and power the set has.
- Your hands should be up and back; how far up and back depends on the distance the ball needs to travel. Usually the hands will follow through above the middle of the top of your head.

Quick Set

The bread and butter or a team's attack should be the high outside set. Quick sets are used to add variety and a surprise element to a team's offense. They can also set up the outside (left) hitter's success.



One of the offense's goals is to decrease the number of blockers a hitter has to face. Only one blocker will usually be on hand to defend a quick a set. If a team is very proficient at this technique, players coming in quickly in a fake hit (as if going to attempt a quick hit) can delay the release of the opposing blocker long enough that the blocker will not be on time to put an effective block up outside.

Another advantage to quick sets is the surprise element for the defense. Many teams are not able to defend against it, especially if they do not practice it. The timing of the block has to be right, and the back row has to be ready sooner (move in closer).

A word of caution here – do not sacrifice your high outside attack in order to develop a quick attack. The majority of sets and the main brunt of your attack should still be high and outside. The quick is used to enhance that attack, not replace it. In other words, it opens the door for the most important hitter, the left. Once a defense understands the principles of defending the quick, it can do so easier than the high outside attack. Also, the quick is riskier and fails more often than the outside.

A few keys to help you be accurate on quick sets:

- **Keep hands high.** This speeds the set up and leaves less room for error. Contact the ball 9 to 12 inches above the forehead.
- **Jump-Set.** This draws the blocker with the setter, so the blocker is on her way down when the hitter attacks. The set has less distance to travel to the attacker's hand and is more accurate. The jump set also draws attackers into jumping on time, which increases accuracy.
- **"See" the hitter approaching and put the ball into the hitter's hand.** Each hitter has a different arm swing, jump, and so on, and the setter needs to adjust the speed and position of the ball to improve hitting success.
- **Place the ball.** Ideally, the ball should be placed directly in front of the setter's body and be contacted by the attacker on her way up.
- **Pass Correctly.** If the ball is passed too tight on the net, set the ball back to the middle hitter to give her a swing. If the ball is too close to the net, the hitter cannot swing full or hard for fear of hitting the net.
- **Do not set any quicks close to the net.** Quicks that are set close to the net are the easiest to block, even by one blocker, because there is little time or room to change direction of the ball. Setting quicks too close will also draw your hitter into the net. The hitter is coming in quickly to hit the ball and does not have as much time to change the direction of her approach to vertical.

Two-Set

This is between a quick and a regular set. The height is anywhere from 2 to 4 feet above the net. The setter should tilt their heads back farther, extend their arms straight up, and set the ball right in front of them.



Backcourt Attack Set

This set should be a high set to allow the attacker time to approach and jump. Where it is depends on the leaping ability of the attacker. The rules state the back-row player must leave the court from behind the 10-foot or 3-meter line to attack legally. If the approach is fast and the jumper has a great vertical, the set can be placed three-quarters to halfway between the line and the net. Most players prefer the ball to be set slightly in front of the 10-foot (3-meter) line.

Lob Set

Also called a *three set*, is a soft halfway between a high and a short set. The contact is a little lower on the forehead, and the follow-through is out and forward. It is usually set between the blockers on the net.

Shoot Set

This set is just above the net. It is a fast outside set, designed to divide the blockers and create a one-on-one situation with the blocker and attacker. Do not set this tight on the net, because that makes it easier to block and gives the hitter few options as to direction.

Slide Set

Very similar to a lob or three-set, depending on the speed, quickness, and height of the attacker. It can be placed anywhere from a few feet behind the setter to the right sideline. The setter's hands should be extended high, as for the quick-set. The further back the setter wants to go, the quicker the flick of the hands must be and the bigger the step and hip thrust required.

Tandem

This is a play where two attackers are hitting a combination of a one- and two-set. The one attacker approaches first, and the two attacker jumps just after the first one and slightly behind and off of the left shoulder of that attacker. The setter chooses which hitter to set to. It is best to use this play after the one quick has been successfully established. Ideally, the number-one attacker draws the middle blocker to jump with her and also screens the approach and hit of the number-two attacker from the defense.