

Vocabulary for Volleyball

Volleyball is a team sport in which two teams of six players are separated by a net. Each team tries to score points by grounding a ball on the other team's court under organized rules.^[1] It has been a part of the official program of the [Summer Olympic Games](#) since 1964.

The complete [rules](#) are extensive. But simply, play proceeds as follows: a player on one of the teams begins a 'rally' by serving the ball (tossing or releasing it and then hitting it with a hand or arm), from behind the back boundary line of the court, over the net, and into the receiving team's court. The receiving team must not let the ball be grounded within their court. The team may touch the ball up to 3 times but individual players may not touch the ball twice consecutively. Typically, the first two touches are used to set up for an attack, an attempt to direct the ball back over the net in such a way that the serving team is unable to prevent it from being grounded in their court.

The rally continues, with each team allowed as many as three consecutive touches, until either (1): a team makes a *kill*, grounding the ball on the opponent's court and winning the rally; or (2): a team commits a *fault* and loses the rally. The team that wins the rally is awarded a point, and serves the ball to start the next rally. A few of the most common faults include:

- causing the ball to touch the ground or floor outside the opponents' court or without first passing over the net;
- *catching and throwing* the ball;
- *double hit*: two consecutive contacts with the ball made by the same player;
- four consecutive contacts with the ball made by the same team;
- net foul: touching the net during play;
- foot fault: the foot crosses over the boundary line when serving.

The ball is usually played with the hands or arms, but players can legally strike or push (short contact) the ball with any part of the body.

UNDERHAND SERVE – a serve in which the ball is given a slight under-hand toss from about waist high and then struck with the opposite closed fist in an "underhand pitching" motion.

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

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.

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

SPIKE - Also hit or attack. A ball contacted with force by a player on the offensive team who intends to terminate the ball on the opponent's floor or off the opponent's blocker.

POWER TIP – A ball that is pushed or directed with force by an attacking team.

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.

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

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

FOUL - A violation of the rules.

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

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

SERVER - The player who puts the ball into play.

SIDE OUT - Occurs when the receiving team successfully puts the ball away against the serving team, or when the serving team commits an unforced error, and the receiving team thus gains the right to serve.

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