



## **Attacking/ Hitting**

### **Standing Attack**

The athlete should stand facing the direction the ball is intended to travel (most often at an angle from the set), with the feet slightly staggered shoulder width apart. The foot opposite the dominant hand should be slightly forward (left foot forward for a right-handed athlete) with the body weight primarily on the back foot. The athlete's dominant arm should be held above the shoulder with the elbow pointing backward and held at the same height as the ear, and the hand pointing forward ("thumb in the ear"). The off arm should point in the direction the ball is intended to travel.



Once the athlete is ready to swing, the off arm will begin to drop as the dominant arm reaches high toward the ball. The athlete's weight will shift from the back foot to the front foot, and the arm will swing into and through the ball, snapping the wrist to give the ball topspin.





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### Jumping Attack

The mechanics are the same as a standing attack with the addition of a jump. The athlete will need to be a short distance behind where the set will land. He/she will take a 3- or 4step approach to the ball, with the last two steps as the jump. The second to last step is the longest. The last step just closes the feet together (step-close). A strong upward arm swing helps generate extra vertical height. The athlete should take the last step on the foot opposite the dominant arm (left foot for right handed athletes).



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### Skill Progression – Attacking/ Hitting

Your Athlete Can	Never	Sometimes	Often
Demonstrate proper arm position	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Demonstrate fully extended arm swing with follow-through	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Standing, spike the ball over the net from a toss or set	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Standing, spike the ball over the net using a short approach from a toss or set	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Accurately hit the ball to a designated place on the court from a toss or set	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Accurately hit a variety of tosses or sets from a variety of heights from a standing position	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Time their jump to spike the ball over the net using a short approach from a toss or set	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Time their jump to accurately hit the ball to a designated place on the court from a toss or set	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Time their jump to accurately hit a toss or set from a variety of heights	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Totals</b>			



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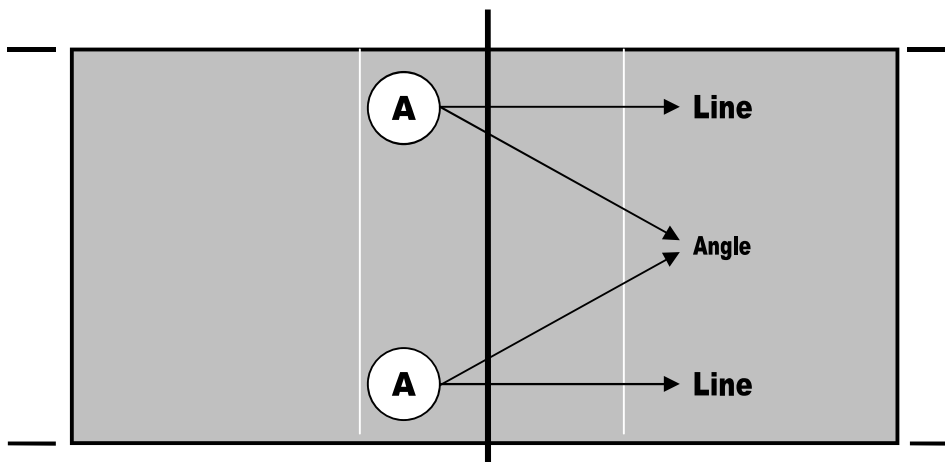
### Teaching Points

The mechanics for an overhead attack are very similar to throwing any ball overhead – softball, tennis ball, etc. Using physical analogies to teach the volleyball hitting mechanics may help some athletes to understand better.

At the lowest level of ability, athletes often do not have the arm strength or coordination to attack the ball with one arm while jumping in the air. These athletes can be successful by locking their hands together and striking the ball on the bottom of their fists with both arms locked overhead while standing on the ground.

Most Special Olympics athletes (at all levels of ability) cannot jump to reach above the height of the net to spike the ball downward. Drills that focus on having these athletes hit upward, rather than downward, are more appropriate for them. Reaching high, snapping the wrist, and practicing the accurate placement of their shots into the opposing court will allow them to be successful attackers regardless of their height or jumping ability.

The two primary hitting directions are “line” and “angle.” In the diagram below, the attackers (A) can choose to send the ball over the net in one of two primary directions. The easiest direction for beginning hitters to learn is angle, since it provides the most amount of court for the athlete to hit into. As the athletes gain confidence with their hitting mechanics, they can be encouraged to attack the ball into different areas of the opposing court with verbal prompts from the coach or setter.





**Faults & Fixes – Attacking/ Hitting**

<b>Error</b>	<b>Correction</b>	<b>Drill Reference</b>
Consistently mistiming the approach (running past the ball or not coming in quickly enough)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Practice waiting until the coach/setter gives a verbal command to start the approach (after the ball has been set or tossed).</li> <li>• Adjust the distance from the net at which the athlete waits before the approach (farther for an athlete who overruns, closer if the athlete is too slow).</li> </ul>	Target Practice Drill
Consistently hitting the ball into the net	<p>The athlete may be hitting the ball harder than the level at which he/she is capable of being accurate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If hitting from the ground, aim at a spot slightly above the net.</li> <li>• If hitting while jumping, stop trying to hit straight down and instead focus on hitting the ball at 50% strength while snapping the wrist to send the ball up and over the net with topspin.</li> </ul>	Target Practice Drill
Consistently hitting the ball out of bounds (too deep)	<p>The athlete is hitting the ball too hard and needs to swing at 50% strength while snapping the wrist to send the ball up and over the net with topspin.</p>	Target Practice Drill
The athlete’s hand/wrist isn’t strong enough to snap the ball over the net	<p>The athlete can swing at the ball with both hands locked together (reverse underhand passing – [called a tomahawk] hit that ball on the bottoms of the hands).</p>	Target Practice Drill

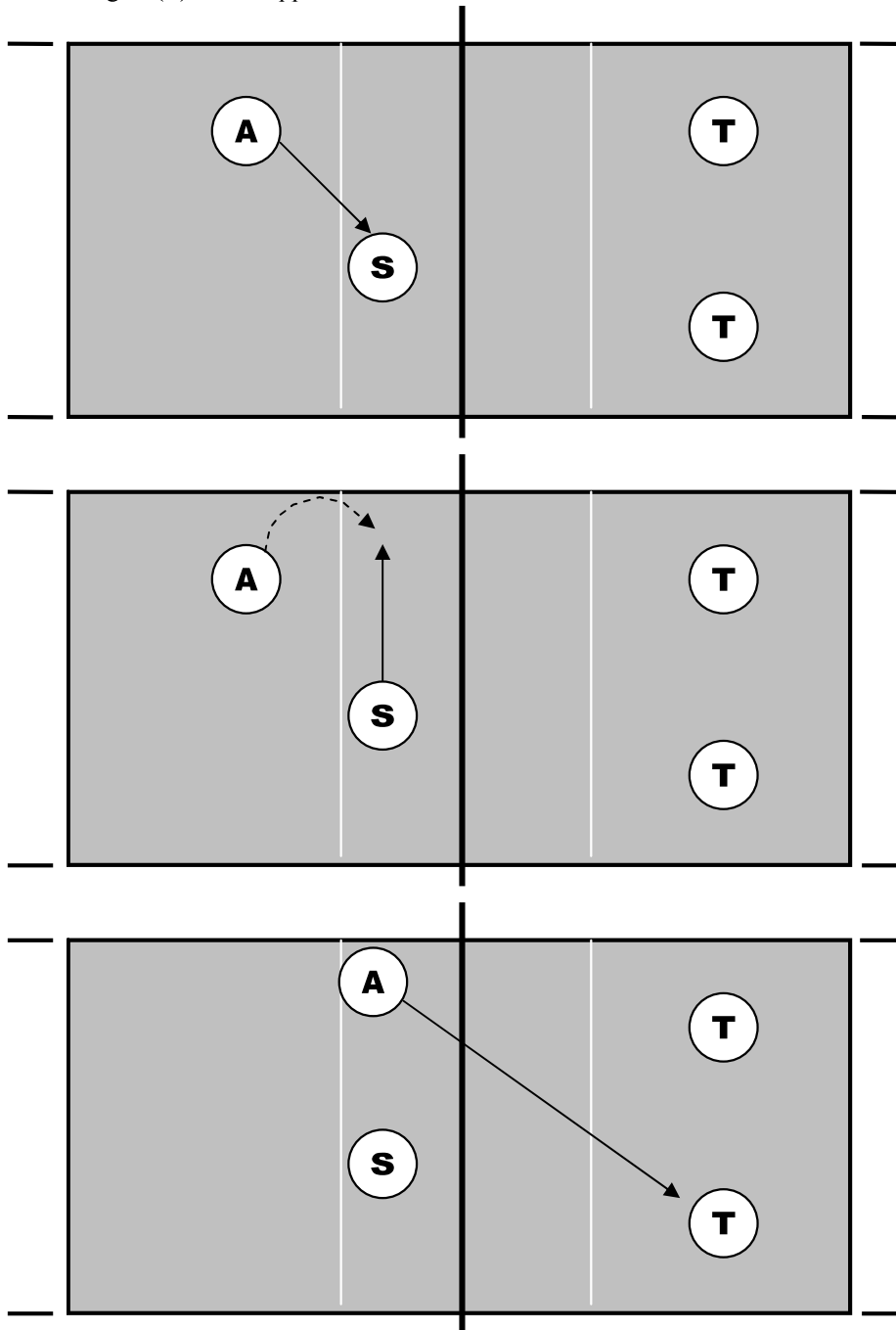


## Attacking/ Hitting Drills

### Target Practice Drill

#### Description

A coach or setter (S) will stand on the same side of the net as the attacker (A). The attacker initiates the drill by tossing the ball to the setter, who will set the ball to the outside for the attacker to approach and hit. The attacker will aim for one of the targets (T) on the opposite side of the net.





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### Variations

This drill can be run with the athlete attacking the ball from the ground or in the air, close to the net or 3-4 meters (10-13 feet) off the net, or with a high or low set. At a lower level of ability the attacker can be verbally told what set to expect before the drill begins (“this will be off the net”); at higher levels the attacker will have to adjust the approach without any verbal prompts.

The drill should also be run from the right side by reversing the angles.





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