

Name/Title: Volleyball 4-Square

Purpose of Event: To have students practice the skill of underhand volleying. To practice contacting a ball with flat body surfaces such as palm, fist or forearm.

Activity cues: Contact the ball with the palm, flat surfaces of the fist or the forearm.

Prerequisites: Students should have had a number of lessons where they practiced appropriate underhand volleying skills. Students need to have been taught the rules to basic 4-Square.

Suggested Grade Level: 4-5

Materials Needed: 4-Square courts (One for each 4 students-therefore no waiting or elimination), 4-18" cones (or larger) for each court, Soft ball to volley (we use a 8.5" Gatorskin ball) for each court.

Description of Idea

This activity can be performed with a similar rotation to a 4-square game, or it can be simplified with no rotation. We strongly recommend that there is a court for each 4 students so that students are not standing in line waiting to get into the game like in the traditional 4-square activity.

One person stands on each outside boundary of the 4-square court. They can choose to be as close or as far away from the line as they choose. If you choose the 4-square rotation idea, designate each side by a number so that students who make miscues can rotate to side number 4. There are cones located in each corner. Similar to soccer goalies, the student between each 2 cones is protecting their "goal line" (the outside boundary line of the court). Each court has 4 goals (and 4 players).

Once the ball is in play, the object is to keep it from bouncing on the ground beyond your "goal line". Any player allowing the ball to cross their goal line and bounce rotates to side number 4. Servers announce "Ready" before a serve is made, and they must start by serving to the person directly across from them. After the serve is made, players can strike the ball in ANY direction they desire. To serve the ball, the server must bounce the ball and contact with the palm of their hand or the flat side of the fist as in handball. Players must rotate to side 4 if they catch the ball or if their shot bounces two times in the 4-square box before crossing a goal line.

On any balls close to the line or on the line where the call is unclear, have the students replay the ball.

Variations:

Although scoring is not necessary, to meet the possible needs of highly skilled students here are two suggestions:

- If students do not choose to rotate then every time the ball crosses and bounces beyond your goal line, you receive a point. Lowest score wins.
- If using the 4-square rotation system, a point is awarded to the server for each time you serve and are able to stay in your serving position (side one). Highest score wins.

Teaching Suggestions:

As the activity goes along use the [PEC Teacher Cue Checklist Sheet](#) to assess whether or not the students are using the proper underhand cues.

For students not comfortable with their volleying skills invite them to partner up and practice volleying back and forth in another section of the playing activity.

Submitted by **Russ Darden** who teaches at Sherrills Ford Elementary in Sherrills Ford, NC. Additional authors for this idea were Charles Forbes (Murray Elementary, Hickory, NC). Thanks for contributing to PE Central!

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