

VOLLEYBALL: THE 5-1 ROTATION

A team's success in volleyball is directly linked to each player's ability to understand his or her position on the court. The 5-1 rotation—1 setter and 5 hitters—provides the greatest flexibility and consistency for a team's offense and defense. *The diagrams are only a starting point. In both serve-receive and defense, players should be able to adapt to the opposing team.*

Some basic principles to keep in mind:

1. **Communicate.** There is no greater tool on the court than your mouth. Call every ball. Talk to your team before, during and after each play. Stay positive. Focus on what the team needs to do; resist the urge to spend energy on what the team should not be doing.
2. **Know your position.** Each player should have an identified position—2 middles, 2 outside or left-side hitters, a setter, and an opposite (i.e. opposite the setter) or right-side hitter. After the serve-receive or after the ball is sent to the other side, players should transition to their designated positions—the front-row middle to the middle; the back-row middle to middle-back, deep; the front-row outside to the left; the back-row outside to left-wing; the setter and opposite, always to the right-side
3. **Know your opposite.** Players line up opposite each other and remain so throughout the rotation. In Diagram I-1, S is the setter, lined up diagonally across from the opposite (3). 2 and 5 are middles; 1 and 4 are outsides. If you get confused during the match, look for your opposite.
4. **Don't overlap.** At the moment of the serve, players must be in the correct position. Those out of rotation are considered to be "overlapping." This applies among front-row players and among back-row players. In the rotation shown in Diagram I-1, for example, 3 can never be to the right of 2; 5 can never be to the left of 4. (It is possible for 2 to be to the left of 4, as long as 4 remains to the left of 5 and 2 remains to the right of 3.)
5. **Transition.** Once the server makes contact with the ball, the receiving team should transition quickly. Before the ball passes the plain of the net, the setter should be in position, right-of-center, ready to receive the pass. Hitters should move to their position and be ready to take an approach.
6. **Always pass right.** It does not matter where the setter is coming from, passes should always be right-of-center about 2 feet off the net. It is the setter's responsibility to be in position each and every time. The passers need a visual and auditory target to direct the ball. Even when passing falters, it is critical that the setter be in position; all 'emergency sets' should begin from right-of center.
7. **Listen to your setter.** The Setter is the quarterback of the team. When setting up the serve receive, each player should look to the setter for hitting instructions. Setters, therefore, should be familiar with the set-up of each rotation.

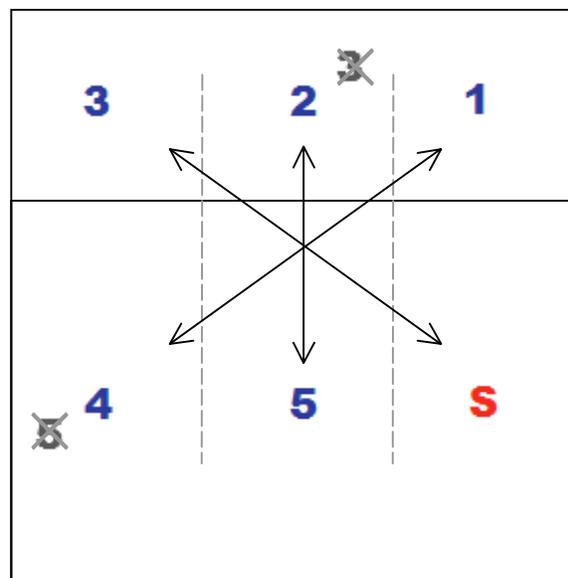
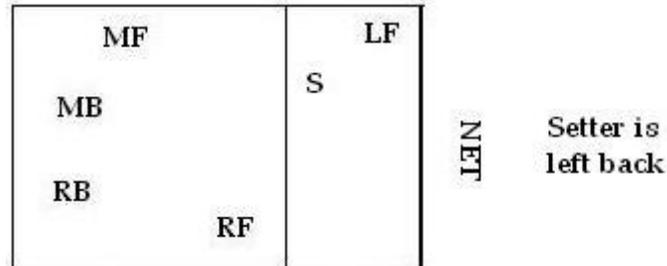


Diagram I-1

VOLLEYBALL: THE 5-1 ROTATION WITH SERVE RECEIVE

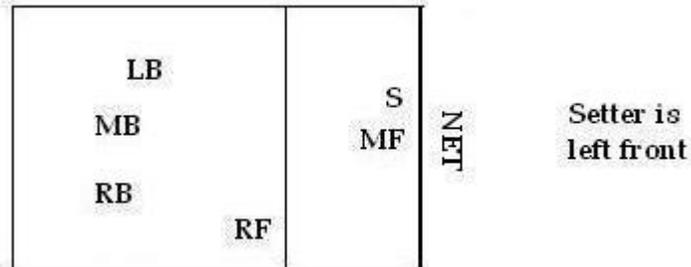
Volleyball Rotations - Setter in Position 5

When the Setter is in Left Back, it is only illegal for them to overlap Left Front or Middle Back players.



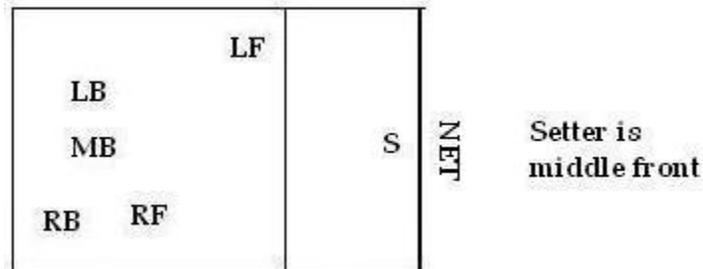
Volleyball Rotations - Setter in Position 4

Setter in Left Front only has to worry about overlapping Left Back or Middle Front.



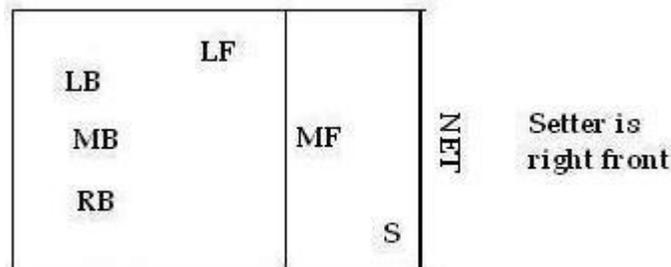
Volleyball Rotations - Setter in Position 3

Setter in Middle Front only has to worry about overlapping Left Front or Right Front or Middle Back.



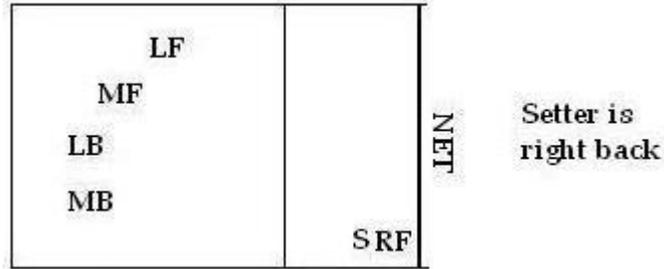
Volleyball Rotations - Setter in Position 2

Setter in Right Front only has to worry about overlapping Middle Front or Left Back.



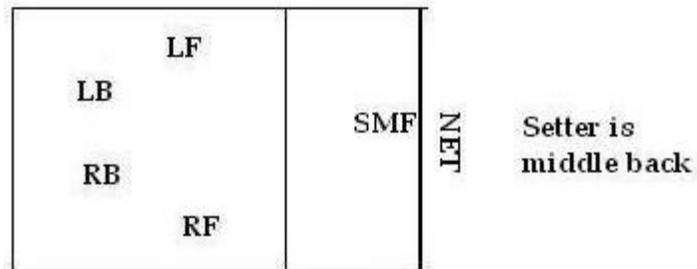
Volleyball Rotations - Setter in Position 1

Setter in Right Back only has to worry about overlapping Right Front or Middle Back.



Volleyball Rotations - Setter in Position 6

Setter in Middle Back only has to worry about overlapping Left Back or Right Back or Middle Front.

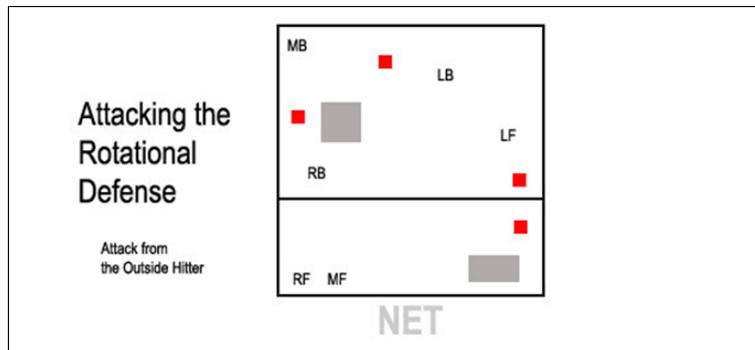


ROTATIONAL DEFENSE FOR VOLLEYBALL

The gray and red markings on the following graphics show where to attack the ball when attacking against the rotational defense.

The **gray** spots are where to tip or hit a shot.

The **red** spots are where to hit the ball hard.



Tips for Defending the Outside Hitter

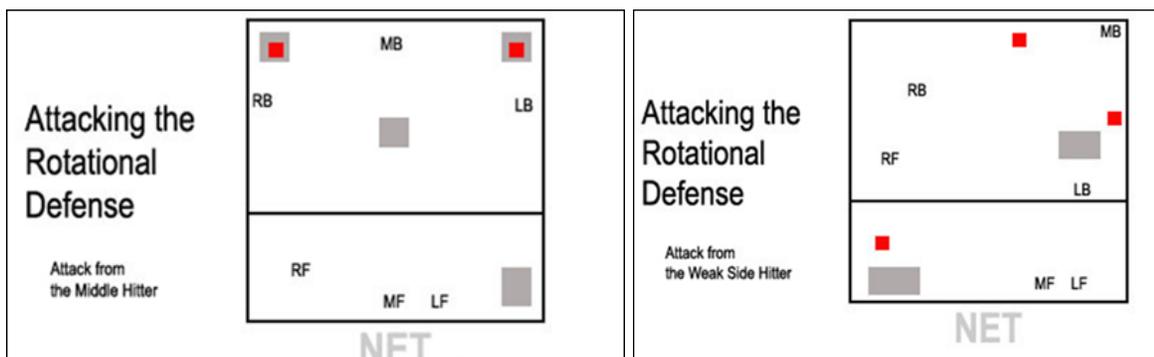
The above graphic shows the rotational defense for defending a set to the outside hitter (the attack coming from the attacker on the left side of the court).

When a ball is set high to the outside, the left-front blocker needs to rotate back off the net, about one step behind the 3-meter line and one step inside the sideline. It's okay to give up the radical sharp angle shot that lands inside the 3-meter line. Any sharper angle than that is unlikely. Your focus should be to get in the flight path of the shot that is most likely to be hit.

If the left-front can effectively get off the net, this allows the left-back player to drop back and cover the deeper cross-court angle shot. This cross court attack is a shot many attackers like to hit. In this defense, the left-back usually concedes the corner shot. However, if the opposing attackers are continually hitting balls to the corner, the left-back should shift over to cut off the deep corner shot.

If you're a younger player and you're in the left-front position, it might be hard for you to get behind the 3-meter line, especially on a quick set to the outside. That's okay. Take large steps and get back as far as you can. You should attempt to straddle the 3-meter line.

For Defending the Middle and RS Hitter - see below:



Tips for Hitters

Aim to try to tip your ball into the grey spaces highlighted in these diagrams, or hit to the red areas. Of course, like anything else, adjust to your opponent's play (i.e.: "find the hole").