



BEYOND THE NET:
YOUR JOURNEY TO
VOLLEYBALL EXCELLENCE



THE FOUNDATION THAT CHANGES EVERYTHING

I see it at every tryout. Shaky hands. Panicked eyes. That pass sailing way off target. The serve crashing into the net.

After 30+ years in volleyball – playing and coaching hundreds of athletes – I've learned one simple fact: The difference between good and great isn't talent. It's the right fundamentals that build a strong foundation for years to come.

Those amazing players you admire? They weren't born that way. They were built, rep by rep, drill by drill. They turned temporary skills into permanent habits.

That's why this program exists. Not fancy drills. Not complicated systems. Just what actually works. The stuff I've seen create the fastest results while building foundations that last.

One idea drives everything at **CVDA: Practice Makes Permanent**. We're not chasing perfect—because perfect doesn't exist. We're building fundamentals that stick with you forever.

Six weeks. That's it. I've watched this exact timeframe turn hesitant beginners into confident players. I've seen it build intermediate athletes into dynamic competitors.

“Let's build something permanent together.”

—Kent Littlejohn

Founder, Cincinnati Volleyball Developmental Academy



MORE THAN JUST VOLLEYBALL

I know what you're facing. School pressure. Social media. Trying to figure out where you fit in. It's a lot.

CVDA gives you more than volleyball skills. You'll get our **"Building Confidence from Within" guide**—tools for building rock-solid confidence that goes beyond sports. Because volleyball seasons end. Confidence is forever.

Here, you'll find:

- Coaches who see your potential before you do
- Teammates who celebrate your wins and pick you up after losses
- A place where mistakes aren't failures—they're stepping stones

I recently worked with an athlete who was struggling with test anxiety at school. The mental skills she learned on our court helped her calm her mind before exams. Her grades jumped from C's to A's in one semester.

This program builds the whole athlete—body, mind, and heart.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This guide contains the exact system I've refined over thousands of hours watching what creates real results.

1. **Read your weekly skill focus.** Know exactly what we're targeting and why it matters.
2. **Complete your daily 17-minute workout.** ⌚ These aren't random drills—they're the fastest path to improvement.
3. **Track your progress.** 📊 Celebrate your improvements and spot what needs work.
4. **Bring this guide to every practice.** 📋 We'll refer to it constantly.

Will you get frustrated sometimes? Heck yes. Will you doubt yourself? Count on it.

But I've watched hundreds of CVDA athletes prove this: Stick with the system, truly commit to it, and in six weeks, you won't recognize your game.

VOLLEYBALL HOMEWORK SURVIVAL KIT

Nothing kills your training momentum faster than getting fired up to practice, then realizing you don't have what you need.

Grab these items now. Keep them in a dedicated bag. No more excuses.

THE MUST-HAVES

1. VOLLEYBALL Obvious, right? But I can't tell you how many kids show up without one. Get a decent ball for indoor AND outdoor use. Doesn't need to be fancy – just consistent.

2. WALL & TARGET KIT

- Small towel (for platform drills and arm swings)
- Blue painter's tape (for wall targets and marking approach spots)

3. STRESS BALL OR TENNIS BALL I've seen setting accuracy jump 30% in players who actually do these finger exercises. Either one works.



4. CHAIR OR TARGET For serving drills. Any sturdy chair works. No chair? A laundry basket or cardboard box does the job.

5. SMARTPHONE For two things: watching defensive clips and checking your form. The camera doesn't lie—and that honest feedback will transform your game.

6. NOTEBOOK Players who track their numbers improve twice as fast. Write down everything—wall passes, serving streaks, approach ratings. This isn't optional.

7. PRACTICE SPACE Find your spot now. You need 10-15 feet with a flat wall at least 8 feet high. Basement? Garage? School gym during lunch? Lock it in.

EXTRA GAME-CHANGERS

8. RESISTANCE BANDS Not required, but game-changers for jump strength in hitting and blocking weeks.

9. MINI CONES OR WATER BOTTLES Perfect for marking defensive patterns. Empty water bottles work great.

10. YOGA MAT For the lying-down setting drills. Makes floor work more comfortable.

I've seen players with fancy equipment quit after three days. I've seen players with nothing but a ball and determination transform completely.

The gear helps. But what really matters? The voice in your head saying "just one more rep."

**Your volleyball journey starts now. Not tomorrow.
Not when things are perfect.**

Right. Now.

WEEK 1: PASSING – THE FOUNDATION OF EVERYTHING

Every championship team has one thing in common: great passing. Monster hitters fill highlight reels. Rock-solid passers fill starting lineups.

Hard truth: Passing separates players who get playing time from those who watch from the bench.

Passing is the foundation because it starts every play. The secret most coaches never tell you: passing power comes from your legs, not your arms.

What You'll Master:

- Using leg drive (not arms) to direct the ball
- Building a consistent platform angle
- Moving quickly to get behind the ball
- Calling the ball with confidence

Why This Changes Everything: I once coached a girl who couldn't make her middle school team. After six weeks doing these exact drills, she earned the starting libero position. Not because of natural talent. Because of perfect fundamentals, repeated daily.

Your 17-Minute Daily Workout:

Wall Power Pass Series (0-9 min)

- Target: 100 quality passes
- Stand 6 feet from wall with a taped 2×2 foot target
- Drive through your legs to pass
- Mix in directional tosses to yourself (left, right, front of body)
- Focus on moving feet first, then creating your platform

Active Platform Training (9-17 min)

- Leg-driven passing: Start in a squat, drive upward while passing (30 reps)
- Platform hold: Keep perfect platform position for 2 minutes, rest 1 minute, repeat
- Focus on thumb alignment, locked elbows, relaxed shoulders



Track Your Progress:

- Day 1 Wall Target Hits: _____
- Day 6 Wall Target Hits: _____
- Goal: 25% improvement by week's end

Mental Trigger: Before each rep, say "Move feet first."

WEEK 2: SERVING – YOUR FIRST WEAPON

I've seen it happen a hundred times. The kid who steps behind the line terrified transforms into the server opponents fear most.

Serving is the only skill in volleyball you control completely. No defenders. No teammates. Just you, the ball, and your target.

This week, we're turning your serve from a "just get it over" prayer into a weapon that creates chaos for the other team.

What You'll Master:

- Creating a consistent, low-spin toss
- Hitting float serves that drop unexpectedly
- Targeting specific court zones
- Building your own pre-serve routine

Why This Changes Everything: Last season, I coached an athlete whose serve was so bad she'd close her eyes at contact. Six weeks later, her float serve became her go-to weapon against the conference champions. Not through talent. Through breaking down the skill and rebuilding it piece by piece.

Your 17-Minute Daily Workout:

Wall-Strike Serve (0-8 min)

- Target: 60 quality contacts
- Stand 3-5 feet from wall
- Practice toss and contact, focusing on hitting the middle-back of the ball
- Ball should rebound into your hands from a 1×1 ft target zone
- Work on creating a flat, firm hand and consistent toss



Chair Target Serves (8-14 min)

- Target: 15 consecutive hits
- Place chair 15 feet away
- Serve to hit it, focusing on form over power
- Track your longest streak each day
- Progress to 20 feet as your accuracy improves

Reset & Mental Training (14-17 min)

- 1 min shadow serving (toss→load→swing)
- 1 min breathing reset: deep breaths, wipe away mistakes, say "Next ball"
- 1 min visualizing 5 perfect serves

Track Your Progress:

- Chair target hits Day 1: ____
- Chair target hits Day 6: ____
- Goal: 15 consecutive successful serves by week's end

Mental Trigger: Use your reset phrase after every miss.

WEEK 3: SETTING – THE QUARTERBACK SKILL

Most people think great setters are born, not made. Wrong. **Setting excellence comes from body position and timing, not just hands.**

Even if you're never the primary setter, you need this skill for those chaotic "out of system" moments that decide tight matches.

This week rebuilds your setting technique from scratch, focusing on what actually creates great sets.

What You'll Master:

- Getting your body under the ball first
- Creating the right hand shape for control
- Using your legs to generate height
- Making quick decisions under pressure

Why This Changes Everything: One of my athletes struggled so badly with setting that her coaches would position her to avoid this responsibility. After learning that setting



starts with footwork and body position, she became a reliable offensive option from anywhere on the court.

Your 17-Minute Daily Workout:

Power Wall Sets (0-5 min)

- Target: 60 controlled sets
- Stand 5 feet from wall with a taped target
- Focus on consistent height and hand position
- Count your successful contacts

Finger Power & Control (5-13 min)

- Active finger presses: Push fingertips against wall for 30 seconds, 15 sec rest, repeat 3× (builds strength and touch)
- Lying-down freeze sets: On your back, set ball straight up, freeze at release for 3 seconds, repeat 30×
- Focus on finger contact and full extension

Set & Hold (13-17 min)

- Set ball upward, freeze your body position at release
- Hold for 3 seconds, checking your form
- Arms extended, balanced posture, complete follow-through
- Repeat 20 times

Track Your Progress:

- Consecutive controlled wall sets Day 1: ____
- Consecutive controlled wall sets Day 6: ____
- Goal: 20 consecutive sets without error by week's end

Mental Trigger: Before each set think, "Hands ready."

WEEK 4: HITTING/ATTACKING – TURNING SETS INTO POINTS

That moment when an athlete connects with their first real kill – nothing beats it. The excitement in their eyes. The shock when technique finally clicks.



This transformation isn't about talent. It's about breaking down the hitting approach into a rhythm anyone can master.

What You'll Master:

- The perfect 3-step approach rhythm (slow-to-fast)
- Creating the "bow and arrow" arm position
- Timing your approach with the set
- Contacting the ball at your highest reach

Why This Changes Everything: I watched an athlete who couldn't time her approach and consistently swung under the ball. By breaking down each movement and building muscle memory, she became our most powerful outside hitter in just six weeks. Not because she got stronger. Because she mastered the mechanics.

Your 17-Minute Daily Workout:

Full Approach & Armswing Series (0-14 min)

- Target: 40 quality approaches
- Mark your starting position with tape
- Practice 3-step approach: left-right-LEFT (right-handers) or right-left-RIGHT (left-handers)
- Focus on rhythm—slow start, explosive finish
- Add armswing mechanics: "bow-and-arrow" position to full extension
- Work on high elbow and complete follow-through
- Mix in 3 sets of 10 explosive squat jumps with 30-sec rest

Rhythm Reset (14-17 min)

- 2 min shadow approach + swing, focusing on perfect timing
- 1 min saying "Attack Now" and shaking off mistakes

Track Your Progress:

- Approach smoothness rating (1-10) Day 1: ____
- Approach smoothness rating (1-10) Day 6: ____
- Goal: Consistent approach without hesitation by week's end

Mental Trigger: Cue "Explode up!" as you jump.

WEEK 5: DEFENSE – THE HEART OF VOLLEYBALL

Most kids think defense is about diving dramatically across the court. The truth? Great defenders rarely dive. They read so well they're already in position before the hit.

This week builds your defensive IQ—the ability to see attacks before they happen and position yourself perfectly.

What You'll Master:

- Reading hitter cues that telegraph attack direction
- Moving before the ball is hit
- Creating controlled contacts on hard-driven balls
- Mastering progressive floor defense techniques

Why This Changes Everything: Last season, one of my players thought defense was all about reaction speed. After learning to read attack patterns, she transformed from hesitant to anticipatory. Her dig count doubled not because she got faster, but because she got smarter.

Your 17-Minute Daily Workout:

Reaction & Movement Series (0-14 min)

- Target: 80 quality defensive touches
- Wall reaction drill: Toss ball against wall at different angles, dig before second bounce
- Mirror-read burst: Have partner point directions (or self-direct), shuffle and hold defensive stance for 2 seconds
- Shuffle-drop sequences: Shuffle 3 steps right, drop into defensive stance, recover, repeat left
- Complete 40 total sequences

Defensive Position Training (14-17 min)

- Hold perfect ready position for 45 seconds, rest 15 seconds
- Repeat 5 times
- Focus on weight forward, knees bent, platform ready

Track Your Progress:

- Correct read predictions Day 1: ____ /20
- Correct read predictions Day 6: ____ /20
- Goal: 75% accurate reads by week's end

Mental Trigger: Whisper "Eyes on hitter" before each rep.

WEEK 6: BLOCKING – THE FINAL PIECE

The transformation happens every season. The player whose blocks consistently stop the opposing hitters from scoring becomes a crucial part of the team's winning success.

This week builds blocking from the ground up, focusing on timing and hand position – not just height.

What You'll Master:

- Reading the hitter's approach to time your jump
- Pressing your hands over the net
- Moving efficiently along the net
- Transitioning quickly from block to attack

Why This Changes Everything: I once coached a kid with average height who became our most effective blocker. Not because she jumped higher than teammates, but because she mastered timing and hand position. Height helps in blocking, but technique and timing win matches.

Your 17-Minute Daily Workout:

Block-Attack Flow Series (0-17 min)

- Target: 50 quality block jumps + transitions
- Footwork flow: Shuffle 3 right, jump and reach, land, shuffle 3 left, jump
- Continue without pausing until you hit 20 reps
- Block-transition drill: Press hands over imaginary net for 3 seconds, land, immediately execute 3-step attack approach
- Repeat 30 times
- Mix in hand strength holds: Perfect blocking position for 45 seconds, rest 15 seconds, repeat 4x



Track Your Progress:

- Block jump timing accuracy Day 1: ____ /10
- Block jump timing accuracy Day 6: ____ /10
- Goal: 8/10 correctly timed block jumps by week's end

Mental Trigger: Before each jump say, "See the swing."

YOUR MENTAL EDGE: BUILDING CONFIDENCE FROM WITHIN

The **"Building Confidence from Within"** guide gives you the full mental game. Here are five tools that transform athletes:

1. POWER POSES 🦵 Your body affects your mind more than you think, it's scientifically proven. Standing with hands on hips or arms raised in a 'V' for 2 minutes before practices (or that big test) actually changes your hormone levels – boosting confidence and cutting stress.

I watched an incoming freshman server go from trembling to dominating after adding power poses to her pre-game routine. Two minutes of standing tall literally changed her performance.

2. THE 3-SECOND RESET ↺ Every champion has one quality – they don't dwell on mistakes. After an error:

- Take one deep breath
- Make a "wiping away" gesture
- Say your reset phrase: "Next ball" or "Now"

3. VISUALIZATION 👁️ Your brain can't tell the difference between vividly imagined practice and physical reps. Before bed:

- Spend 3 minutes seeing yourself execute perfect skills
- Include all senses—sight, sound, feeling
- Picture yourself handling challenges confidently

4. BODY LANGUAGE 🧑 Your body doesn't just show confidence—it creates it:

- Stand tall with shoulders back
- Make eye contact with coaches and teammates
- Move with purpose, even when tired

5. GROWTH MINDSET 📈 See every mistake as a stepping stone. After errors, ask:

- "What can I learn from this?"
- "How can I improve next time?"
- "What one adjustment would help me succeed?"



MY VOLLEYBALL COMMITMENT

I, _____, commit to giving my absolute best to this 6-week program. I understand that:

- My improvement depends on my dedication to daily practice
- Small, consistent efforts create remarkable results
- I will face challenges but will see them as growth opportunities
- I represent CVDA with a positive attitude and good sportsmanship

Player Signature: _____ Date: _____



YOUR JOURNEY STARTS NOW

The volleyball court is just like life. The pressure points. The teamwork. The recovery after mistakes. The rush when everything clicks.

This system works. Not because it's fancy, but because it's been proven through thousands of hours seeing what creates results.

Some athletes go through the motions and improve a little.

Others commit fully and transform completely.

The choice is yours. The roadmap is in your hands.

Remember:

Practice Makes Permanent.

We're not chasing perfect.

We're building fundamentals that last forever.

Six weeks from now, what will your volleyball story be?

Let's find out together.

- COACH KENT