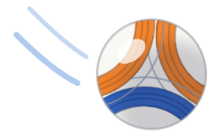


The Court and the Six Positions

Start here: the numbers every rotation, overlap and serve is built on



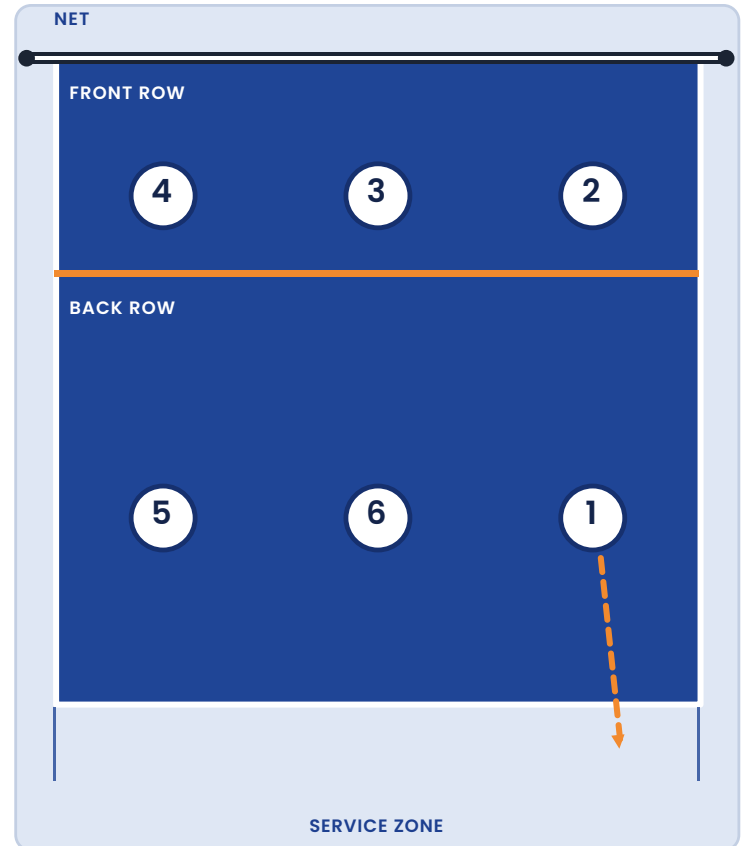
A volleyball team has six players on the court. Each one stands in a numbered position. The numbers stay put: the players move through them. Learn the six numbers once and every rotation, overlap and serve in this workbook makes sense.

THE SIX POSITIONS

- FRONT ROW** Positions 4, 3 and 2: left front, middle front, right front.
- BACK ROW** Positions 5, 6 and 1: left back, middle back, right back.
- SERVER** The player in position 1 (right back) serves, from behind the end line.
- LEFT, RIGHT** Your left and right as you face the net.

GOOD TO KNOW

- The numbers run counterclockwise: 1 at right back, up to 2, across the front to 3 and 4, back to 5, then 6 in the middle.
- Players rotate the other way, clockwise, so each player's number goes down by one: 2 to 1, 1 to 6.
- Front row and back row depend on your position number, not on where you happen to stand.



Seen from above. Your team faces the net at the top; position 1 steps back behind the end line to serve.

WARM-UP

Number the court

Cover the court above and write the six position numbers in the circles. Then check the answer key.

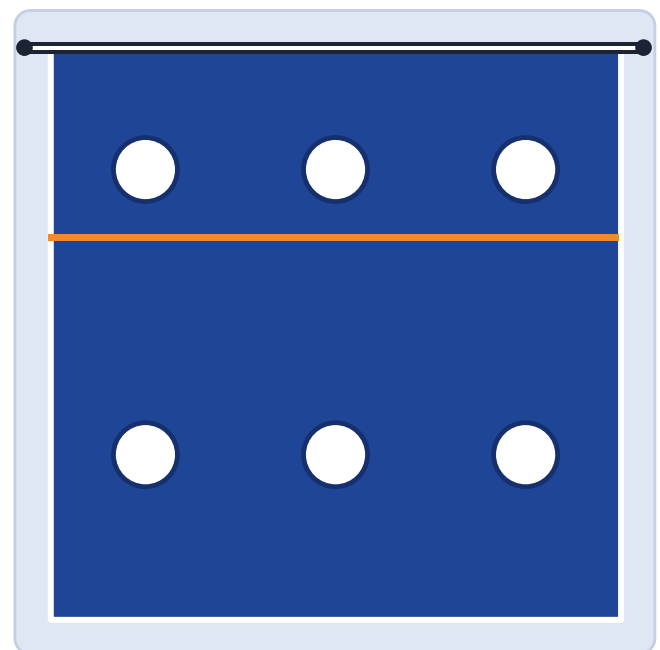
COURT SIZE

Court: 18 × 9 m (about 59 × 29.5 ft). Each team's half is 9 × 9 m. The attack line is 3 m (about 10 ft) from the center line under the net.

HOW TO USE THIS STARTER

This starter helps you understand and remember the rules. It supports, and does not replace, practice on a court with your team and coach.

The main text follows USA Volleyball's domestic indoor rules (2025–2027 rules book). Boxes marked "Rule variation" show where FIVB 2025–2028 rules or your league may differ.



Rotation and Serving Order

Who moves where on a side-out, and who serves next



When the other team is serving and your team wins the rally, your team wins the serve back. That is a side-out. Your team then rotates: every player moves one position clockwise, and the player who moves into position 1 serves.

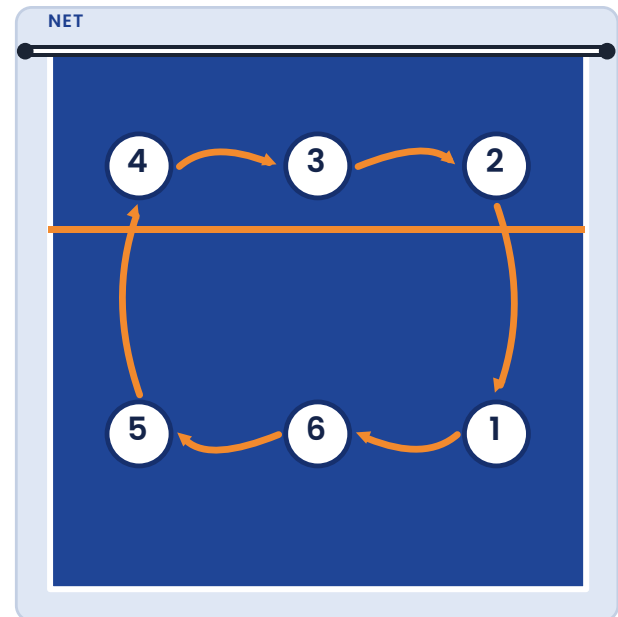
2 → 1 | 1 → 6 | 6 → 5 | 5 → 4 | 4 → 3 | 3 → 2

NO ROTATION ON YOUR OWN SERVE

Win a rally on your own serve and you do not rotate: you score, and the same player serves again.

SERVING ORDER

Write your starting lineup in position order, 1 to 6. That is your serving order: the starter in 1 serves first, then the starter in 2, then 3, 4, 5 and 6, and back to 1.



Clockwise on a side-out: 2 goes back to serve, and everyone else follows.

WORKED EXAMPLE: AVERY'S TEAM SERVES FIRST

Starting lineup: Avery 1, Blake 2, Casey 3, Drew 4, Emery 5, Finley 6. Each row is the lineup after one more side-out. The shaded column is position 1: the server.

	POS 1	POS 2	POS 3	POS 4	POS 5	POS 6	SERVES
Start	Avery	Blake	Casey	Drew	Emery	Finley	Avery
After 1 side-out	Blake	Casey	Drew	Emery	Finley	Avery	Blake
After 2 side-outs	Casey	Drew	Emery	Finley	Avery	Blake	Casey
After 3 side-outs	Drew	Emery	Finley	Avery	Blake	Casey	Drew
After 4 side-outs	Emery	Finley	Avery	Blake	Casey	Drew	Emery
After 5 side-outs	Finley	Avery	Blake	Casey	Drew	Emery	Finley

After 6 side-outs, everyone is back where they started: the lineup repeats every six rotations.

WATCH OUT: RECEIVING FIRST

Receiving first? Your team rotates before its first serve, so your first server is the starter in position 2, not position 1.

Overlap at the Serve

Two rules, checked at the moment the ball is served

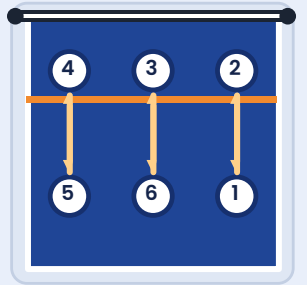


Overlap is about where players stand at the moment the ball is served. If a team is out of order, it is a fault and the other team wins the rally.

RULE 1

Front-back pairs

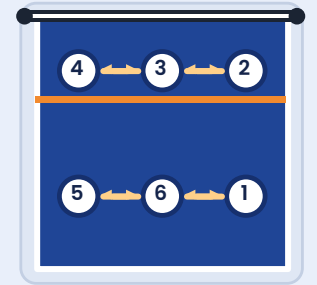
Each back-row player must be further from the net than the front-row player in front of them: 5 behind 4, 6 behind 3, 1 behind 2.



RULE 2

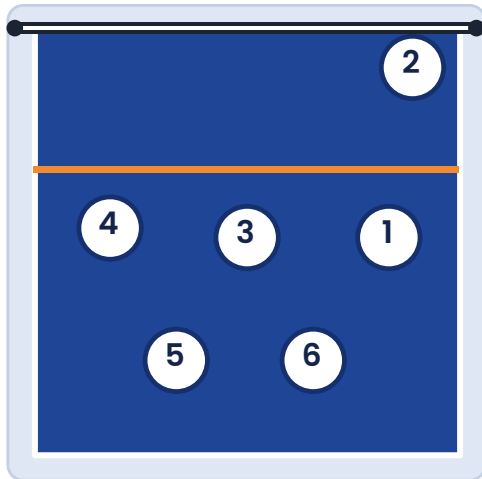
Left-right order

In each row, keep the order: 4 left of 3, 3 left of 2 in the front; 5 left of 6, 6 left of 1 in the back.



- Feet decide: the referee looks at the feet on the floor. A front player needs at least part of one foot closer to the net than the back player's feet; a side player needs at least part of one foot closer to their own sideline than the middle player's feet.
- Once the ball is served, everyone may move anywhere. Overlap only matters at the serve.
- The server stands behind the end line to serve, so the server is not part of the overlap check.
- Under FIVB 2025–2028 rules, only the receiving team is checked: see Rule variations, page 6.

WORKED EXAMPLES: TWO RECEIVE ALIGNMENTS



Legal

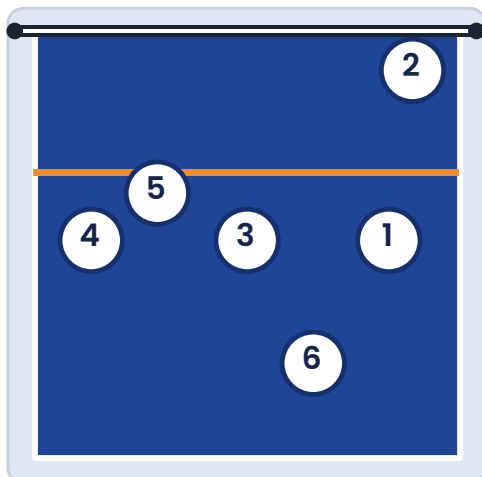
A five-passer W. Position 1 stands level with 3 and well in front of 6, and that is fine: 1 is compared only with 2 and with 6.

FRONT-BACK PAIRS

- ✓ 5 is behind 4
- ✓ 6 is behind 3
- ✓ 1 is behind 2

LEFT-RIGHT ORDER

- ✓ 4 is left of 3
- ✓ 3 is left of 2
- ✓ 5 is left of 6
- ✓ 6 is left of 1



Illegal

The same W, but 5 has crept forward to pass a short serve and is now closer to the net than 4. One broken pair is enough for a fault.

FRONT-BACK PAIRS

- ✗ 5 is closer to the net than 4, but 5 must be behind 4.
- ✓ 6 is behind 3
- ✓ 1 is behind 2

LEFT-RIGHT ORDER

- ✓ 4 is left of 3
- ✓ 3 is left of 2
- ✓ 5 is left of 6
- ✓ 6 is left of 1

Practice: Track the Rotation

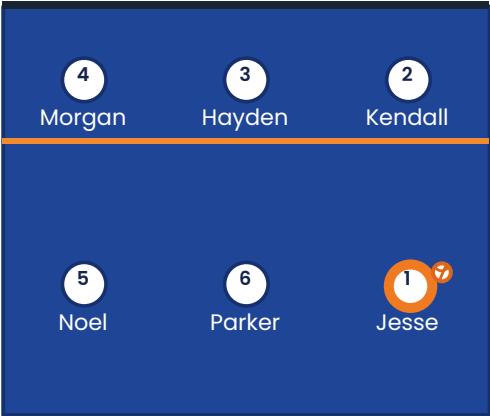


Follow one lineup around the court, side-out by side-out

EXERCISE 1 Track the rotation

Starting lineup: Jesse 1, Kendall 2, Hayden 3, Morgan 4, Noel 5, Parker 6. Write each player’s name in the position they are in after each side-out, and who serves.

STARTING LINEUP



WRITE THE NAMES

POSITION	AFTER 1 SIDE-OUT	AFTER 2 SIDE-OUTS	AFTER 3 SIDE-OUTS
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
Server			

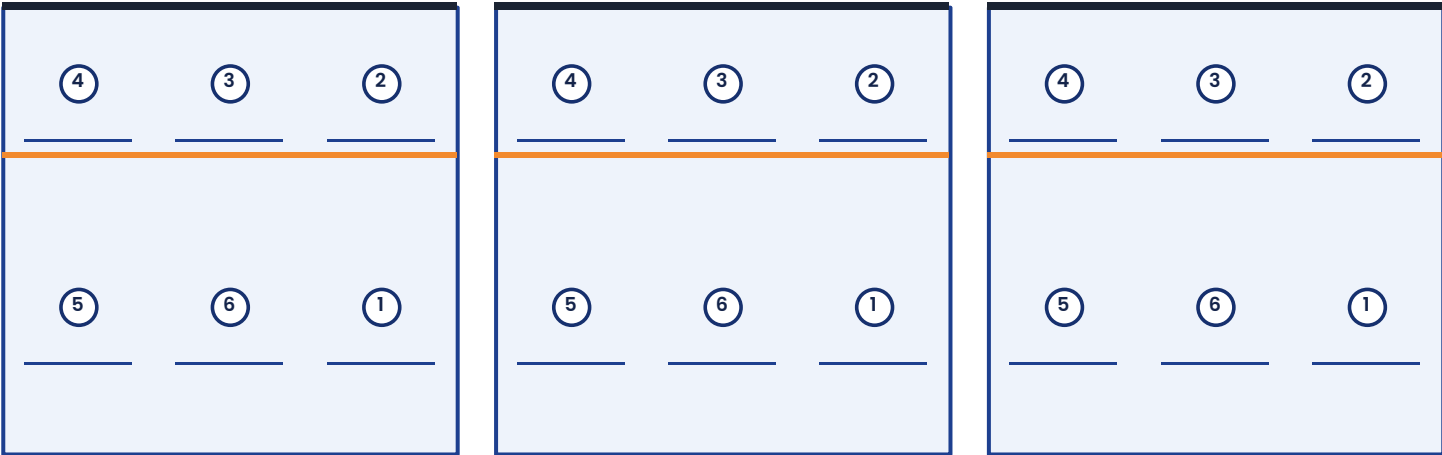
Tip: on every side-out, the player at 2 moves to 1 and serves. Move each name one step clockwise.

EXERCISE 2 Who serves?

Same starting lineup: Jesse 1, Kendall 2, Hayden 3, Morgan 4, Noel 5, Parker 6.

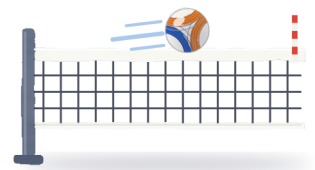
- a) Your team serves first. Who serves first?
- b) Who serves after your team’s 1st side-out?
- c) Who serves after 4 side-outs?
- d) Who serves after 8 side-outs?
- e) If your team received first instead, who would be its first server?

WORKING SPACE



Practice: Legal or Illegal?

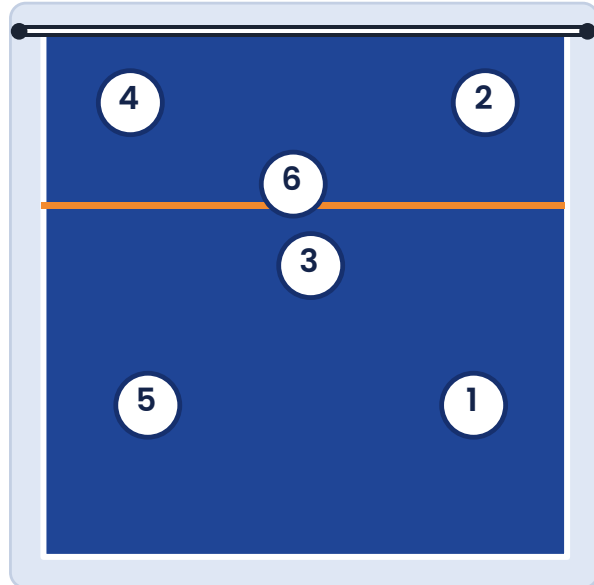
Read each receive alignment and find any overlap



EXERCISE 3 Legal or illegal?

This team is receiving. Is the alignment legal or illegal? If it is illegal, write the two positions that overlap.

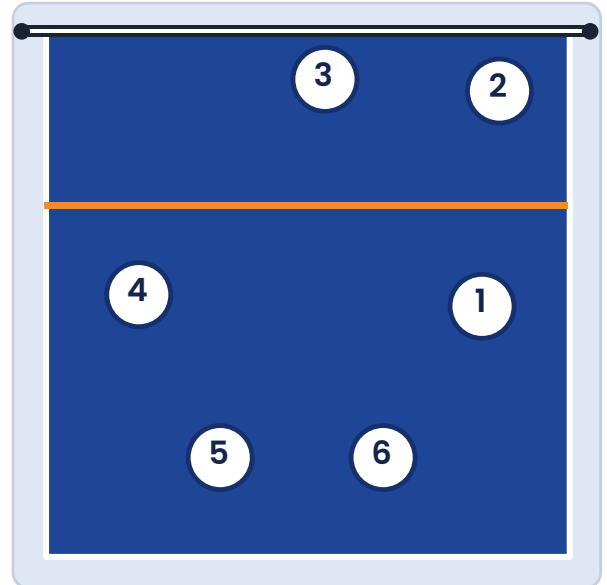
A



☐ Legal ☐ Illegal

Overlap between _____ and _____

B



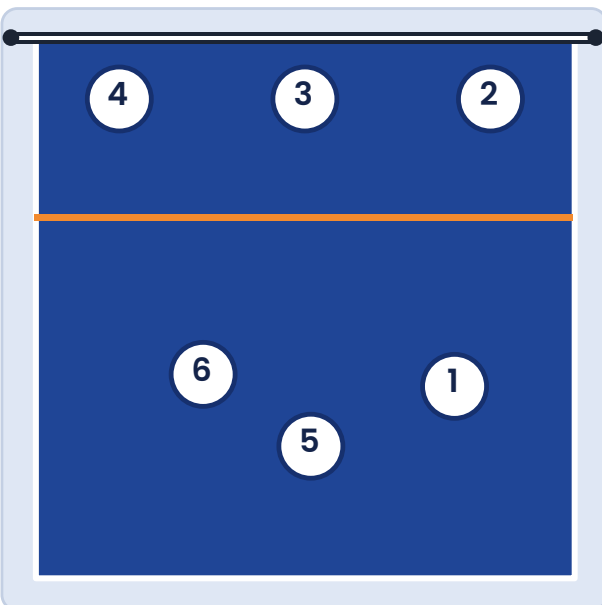
☐ Legal ☐ Illegal

Overlap between _____ and _____

EXERCISE 4 Which rule is broken?

This team is receiving. Which rule is broken: a front-back pair, the left-right order, or none? If one is broken, write the two positions.

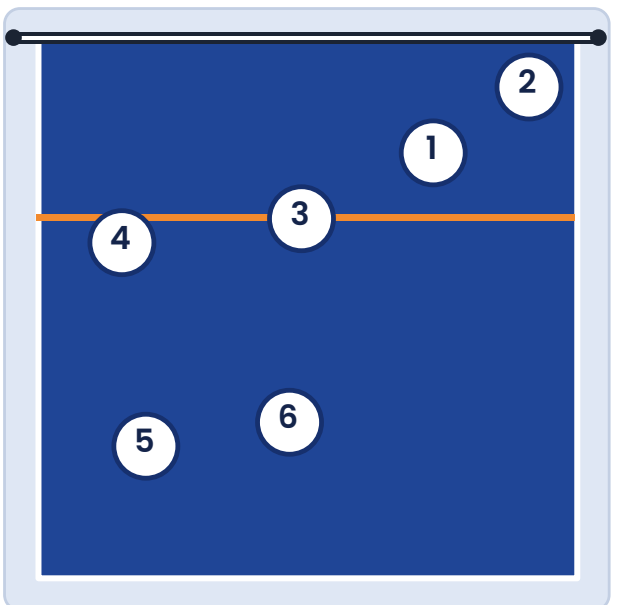
C



☐ Front-back ☐ Left-right ☐ None

Positions _____ and _____

D



☐ Front-back ☐ Left-right ☐ None

Positions _____ and _____

Rule Variations and Your League

Where rulebooks differ, and the rules your league uses



The main text follows USA Volleyball's domestic indoor rules (2025–2027 rules book). Boxes marked "Rule variation" show where FIVB 2025–2028 rules or your league may differ.

RULE VARIATION

Serving team: USA Volleyball vs FIVB

- USA Volleyball domestic rules (7.4): at the moment of the serve, both teams must be in rotational order. The server is the exception.
- FIVB 2025–2028 rules: only the receiving team must be in rotational order. The serving team may stand anywhere on its court.
- This workbook teaches the USA Volleyball version.

RULE VARIATION

Libero serving

- USA Volleyball domestic rules (19.3.1.3b): the libero may serve, in one rotation position only.
- FIVB rules: the libero may not serve.

RULE VARIATION

Check your league and age group

- School, club and recreation leagues and age groups can use other rulebooks or local changes, for example whether a libero is used and what the libero may do.
- Your league's rulebook and your coach have the final word.

OUR TEAM'S RULES (FILL IN WITH YOUR COACH)

Rulebook we play under _____

Serving team must be in rotational order? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Libero used? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Libero may serve? ☐ Yes ☐ No

In which position of the serving order? _____

Other local rules (set length, substitutions, anything else)

Checked with _____

My Rotation Card

Your lineup in all six rotations, ready for the bench



Write your team's starting lineup, then fill in all six rotations. Keep it in your bag or on the bench.

STARTING LINEUP

1 RIGHT BACK	2 RIGHT FRONT	3 MIDDLE FRONT
4 LEFT FRONT	5 LEFT BACK	6 MIDDLE BACK

We ☐ serve first ☐ receive first First server _____

ALL SIX ROTATIONS

ROTATION 1

4	3	2

5	6	1

Server _____

ROTATION 2

4	3	2

5	6	1

Server _____

ROTATION 3

4	3	2

5	6	1

Server _____

ROTATION 4

4	3	2

5	6	1

Server _____

ROTATION 5

4	3	2

5	6	1

Server _____

ROTATION 6

4	3	2

5	6	1

Server _____

Answer Key

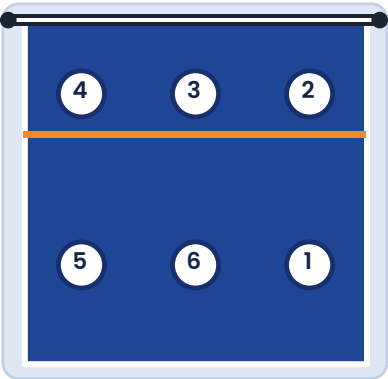
Answers for every exercise: try each one first



Try every exercise before you look. Wrong answer? Go back to the page and find the rule that decides it.

Warm-up · Number the court

page 1



Front row, left to right: 4, 3, 2.
Back row, left to right: 5, 6, 1.

Exercise 1 · Track the rotation

page 4

POSITION	AFTER 1 SIDE-OUT	AFTER 2 SIDE-OUTS	AFTER 3 SIDE-OUTS
1	Kendall	Hayden	Morgan
2	Hayden	Morgan	Noel
3	Morgan	Noel	Parker
4	Noel	Parker	Jesse
5	Parker	Jesse	Kendall
6	Jesse	Kendall	Hayden
Server	Kendall	Hayden	Morgan

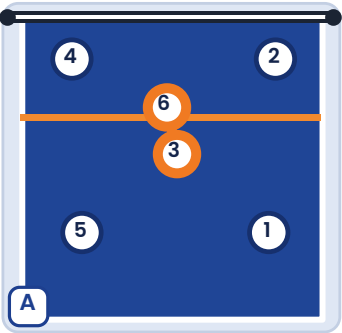
Exercise 2 · Who serves?

page 4

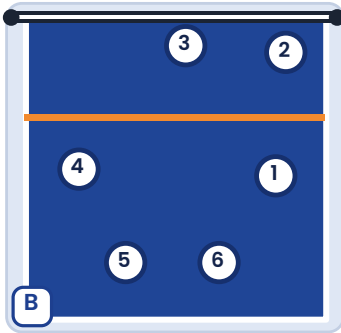
a: Jesse b: Kendall c: Noel d: Hayden e: Kendall

Exercise 3 · Legal or illegal?

page 5



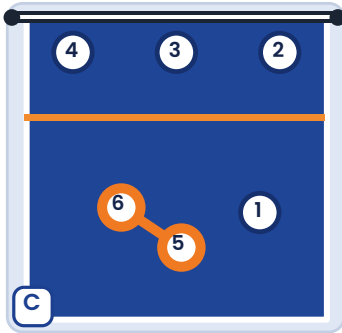
A: Illegal. Front-back pair 3 and 6: 6 is closer to the net than 3, but 6 must be behind 3.



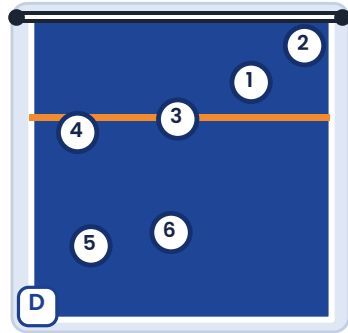
B: Legal.

Exercise 4 · Which rule is broken?

page 5



C: Illegal. Left-right order 5 and 6: 5 is to the right of 6, but 5 must stay to the left of 6.



D: Legal.

READING THE ANSWER COURTS

Orange rings and a line mark the two players who overlap. Every other pair in that alignment is in order.