

TENNIS FOR SCHOOLS

Learn and Play GRADES 1-8



Tennis Canada. Tennis in Schools Program

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INTRODUCTION

Through the cooperation and support of Tennis Canada and Physical and Health Education Canada (PHE Canada), *Tennis for Schools* (grades 1-2, 3-5, and 6-8) has been developed to advance PHE Canada's vision of all children and youth in Canada living healthy, physically active lives. *Tennis for Schools* is a teacher resource for both specialist and non-specialist physical education teachers in Canadian elementary, middle, and junior high schools as they introduce their students to an exciting potential lifelong physical activity. Participation in tennis allows students to maintain and improve health-related and performance-related fitness components (e.g., agility, speed, coordination). *Tennis for Schools* also allows students to participate in meaningful opportunities to develop fundamental movement skills (e.g., overarm throw, catch, run, sidearm strike). The lessons included within this teacher-created resource are meant to serve as a general guide for teachers; unique teaching and learning contexts will rightfully impact how various lessons are taught and experienced. In this respect, teachers are encouraged to consider their own strengths, resources, and students when using this resource.

MODIFYING TENNIS TO MEET ALL STUDENTS' NEEDS AND ABILITIES

Given appropriate planning, adaptations, and support, all students participating in a quality physical education program can be successful in tennis. Please be sure to consult applicable safety guidelines/policies for your province or territory. Just as this resource includes a number of activity variations (i.e., less and more challenging suggestions) to meet the unique needs and abilities of students, teachers should be similarly committed to modifying teaching and learning activities so that all students, regardless of ability, can achieve success.

ENSURING SAFETY

As within any physical education or physical activity program, attention to safety must be ever-present when teaching tennis. As a *minimum* standard, the following safety guidelines should be observed:

- **Clothing/footwear:** Suitable clothing and footwear must be worn; no hanging jewellery should be allowed.
- **Facilities:** Court boundaries must be clearly defined; a safety procedure must be established for side-by-side courts; the playing area must be free of debris and obstructions to ensure safe footing.
- **Special rules/instructions:** The code of etiquette for court play must be *taught* and *enforced* (e.g., not entering a court being used); skills must be taught in a proper progression; games must be based on skills that are taught; activities/skills must be modified to the age and ability level of students; during lessons and games, adequate spacing must be allowed so each student can make a free and uninterrupted swing.
- **Supervision:** On-site supervision is required; setting up of equipment also requires on-site supervision.
- **Equipment:** A first-aid kit must be readily accessible; racquets must be inspected regularly for breakage and to ensure proper grip; the benefits of protective eyewear must be communicated to students, and eyewear must be available for use if requested.

UNDERSTANDING THE UNIT/LESSON PLANS

Overview

Tennis for Schools includes unit/lesson plans for students in grades 1-2, 3-5, and 6-8 (for teachers wishing to introduce tennis to students before grade 1, a list of possible pre-tennis activities is included in appendix A). Each lesson plan has three major lesson components (Getting Ready, Ready to Learn, and Ready to Play) in addition to a lesson outcome and game goal. Sample assessment possibilities (formative and summative) are included in appendix B; these analytic rating scales, checklists, and rubrics are aligned with the unit outcomes and specific tennis skills.

Following are the suggested guidelines for time allocation for the three major lesson components. Please note that these are suggestions only. Teachers are encouraged to move through a lesson at a pace that is appropriate to the needs of their students. Thus, the amount of time dedicated to a lesson component may vary based on various contextual factors (e.g., class size, student ability, student interest, availability of space and equipment).

	Getting Ready	Ready to Learn	Ready to Play
Suggested time guidelines	Approximately 20% of class time	Approximately 40% of class time	Approximately 40% of class time
30-minute lesson	5-7 minutes	10-14 minutes	10-14 minutes
45-minute lesson	8-10 minutes	16-20 minutes	16-20 minutes
60-minute lesson	10-14 minutes	20-28 minutes	20-28 minutes

Although each of the three grade-level units includes six separate lessons, teachers are encouraged to choose lesson components and lessons that best meet their teaching context and the students' learning needs. For example, repeating a lesson with a group of students is encouraged. When repeating a lesson, the teacher could focus on the more challenging variations. Furthermore, recognizing the range of ages, abilities, and readiness of students in the various grade levels, teachers might also wish to focus on specific lessons within a unit. For example, a grade 1 teacher might choose to focus on only the first three lessons of the grades 1-2 lessons.

The units are intended to be progressive; it is assumed that the outcomes in the grades 1-2 unit will be mastered before teachers introduce the grades 3-5 unit. Teachers who are introducing tennis in grades 3-5 for the first time are encouraged to utilize activities found in the grades 1-2 unit before beginning the grades 3-5 unit. Similarly, if teachers are introducing tennis to students in grades 6-8 for the first time, selecting a variety of activities and games from the previous units is recommended. Another suggestion is to use the initial lessons as a tool for pre-assessment.

Lesson Components

- **Lesson outcome:** The outcome for each lesson is written in language recognizable to those who teach physical education. This outcome is the *primary* learning outcome for the lesson; others can also be generated by teachers choosing to focus on particular lesson elements. An example of a lesson outcome is “Students will be able to continuously strike a ball toward a target using a forehand groundstroke.” Affective outcomes are not listed in each lesson plan; rather, they are listed in the unit outcomes.
- **Game goal:** The game goal for each lesson identifies the game that students will ideally be able to play by the end of the lesson; it also briefly describes the skills students will need to be successful at playing the game. An example of a game goal is “Students should be able to play the game Around the Clock. To be successful at Around the Clock, students will need to be able to serve accurately.”
- **Getting ready:** The Getting Ready activities are contextualized, introductory tennis-like activities meant to allow students to become physically and cognitively ready to engage in skill development, knowledge development, and game-play activities. In all three units, beginning with the second lesson, Getting Ready includes opportunities for students to review activities and play the game from the previous lesson.
- **Ready to learn:** The Ready to Learn component consists of tennis-like activities designed to allow students to learn the requisite skills and knowledge required to engage in tennis-like games.
- **Ready to play:** The Ready to Play activities are tennis-like games meant to allow students to apply their developing skills and knowledge in authentic tennis-like game scenarios. This section also includes a Question for Understanding. These questions are samples for teachers to help determine the extent of students’ understanding of game structure, strategy, and skills.

Affective Goals

Within the lesson plans, there are no specific activities that address affective goals. It is assumed that teachers will address these goals when the need arises. For example, early in the unit, teachers are likely to discuss safety (swinging racquets and retrieving balls from other courts). Below are suggested grade levels for introducing important affective goals in tennis:

- In grades 1-2, students should be encouraged to **demonstrate respect for self, others, and equipment**. This might be evidenced in many ways. For example, students should always put forth their best effort; learn and play safely within their designated space; and take great care when learning and playing with the balls, racquets, and nets.
- In grades 3-5, students should be encouraged to **demonstrate a healthy, cooperative spirit and respect for tennis etiquette**. This might be evidenced in many ways. For example, students should eagerly work with, and be especially supportive of, their peers, and they should respect appropriate tennis etiquette (e.g., with respect to shaking hands, recognizing good shots, avoiding others’ courts).
- In grades 6-8, students should be encouraged to **demonstrate a healthy, competitive spirit and respect for tennis rules**. This might be evidenced in many ways. For example, students should learn to compete with peers so that they may self-officiate, respect opponents’ calls, and win and lose graciously while also following learned tennis rules related to playing and scoring.

Maximizing Participation

The limited amount of space available for tennis instruction for some physical education teachers might seem prohibitive. However, with gymnasium space for three (or two) mini tennis courts, a class of 30 students can quite easily engage in a quality tennis experience. Possibilities for maximizing participation include the following suggestions, which are visually represented on the accompanying DVD.




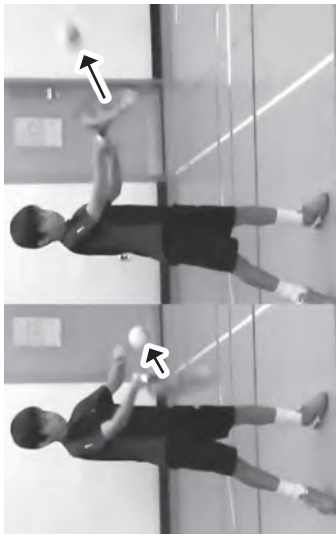

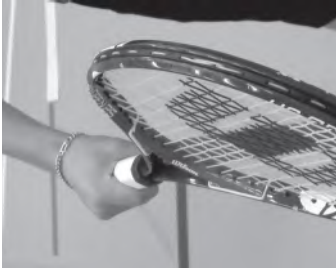









- Allow all students to have their own racquet and ball (where appropriate).
- Allow students to use wall space to practise strokes and skills when court space is limited.
- Allow students to use extra space (e.g., backcourt space, space between walls and courts, adjacent hallway) to practise strokes and skills when court space is limited.
- Allow students to engage in meaningful (and related) fitness development activities when court space is unavailable. For example, teachers can introduce fitness circuits that include activities meant to improve students' health-related fitness components such as cardiovascular endurance, muscular endurance, muscular strength, and flexibility. Additionally, teachers can introduce activities meant to improve students' skill-related fitness components such as agility, speed, coordination, balance, power, and reaction time.
- Allow students playing singles and doubles games to share a court by alternating court time *between every point*.
- In classes with an odd number of students, teachers are encouraged to modify the activity or game by adding a student to a pair or group; students should alternate turns as opposed to requiring one student to sit out.
- Although games generally suggest a 1 versus 1 or 2 versus 2 format, teachers are encouraged to also allow students to utilize a 3 versus 3 or 4 versus 4 format. Teachers may modify the initial instructions so that more students are able to *safely* play or be involved.

TENNIS STROKES: KEY COMPONENTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

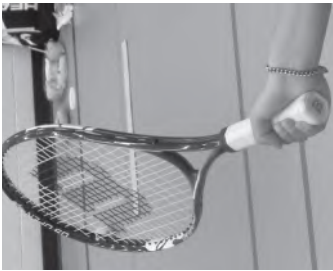
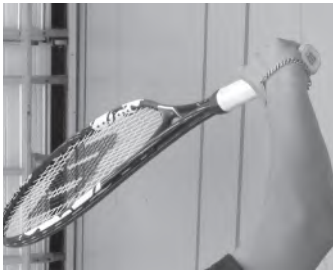
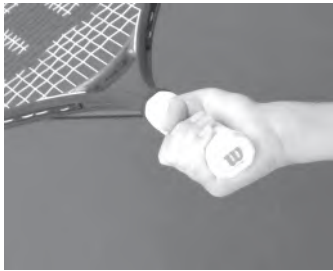












FOREHAND GROUNDSTROKE		BACKHAND GROUNDSTROKE	
Continental (hammer) grip with a firm wrist	GRIP	Continental (hammer) grip with a firm wrist	
Neutral body position (body facing slightly sideways)	BODY POSITION	Neutral body position (body facing slightly sideways)	
Immediately in front of leading foot (left foot for right-handed hitters and right foot for left-handed hitters) (between body and net)	IMPACT POINT	Immediately in front of leading foot (right foot for right-handed players and left foot for left-handed players) (between body and net)	
Strike ball at knee-to-waist level, with strings facing target	STRIKING ZONE	Strike ball at knee-to-waist level, with strings facing target	
Move back to home location in an athletic ready position	RECOVERY	Move back to home location in an athletic ready position	

SERVE		VOLLEY	
Continental (hammer) grip with a firm wrist	GRIP	Continental (hammer) grip with a firm wrist	
Neutral body position (body facing slightly sideways)	BODY POSITION	Neutral body position (body facing slightly sideways)	
Immediately in front of leading foot (left foot for right-handed servers and right foot for left-handed servers) (between body and net)	IMPACT POINT	Immediately in front of leading foot (left foot for right-handed servers and right foot for left-handed servers) (between body and net)	
Strike ball above the head, with strings facing target	STRIKING ZONE	"Catch" ball at waist-to-shoulder level, with strings facing target	
Move back to home location in an athletic ready position	RECOVERY	Move back to home location in an athletic ready position	

TENNIS STROKES: KEY COMPONENTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

	Continental Grip	Body Position	Impact Point	Striking Zone Just before Impact - Just after Impact	Recovery
FOREHAND					
1 BACKHAND					
2 BACKHAND					

TENNIS STROKES: KEY COMPONENTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

	F/H VOLLEY	B/H VOLLEY	SERVE
Continental Grip			
Body Position			
Impact Point			
Striking Zone Just before Impact - Just after Impact			
Recovery			

TENNIS FOR SCHOOLS: UNIT OUTCOMES

GRADES 6-8

Upon completion of the following six-lesson unit, students should be able to:

- demonstrate mastery of *Tennis for Schools* unit outcomes, grades 3-5, and
- demonstrate the ability to begin play with an overhead serve from behind the baseline;
- demonstrate the ability to cooperatively and competitively share a ball at full-court distances using forehand and backhand groundstrokes;
- demonstrate the ability to strike a ball in the air at the net (volley); and
- demonstrate a healthy, competitive spirit and respect for tennis rules.

LESSON ACTIVITIES, GRADES 6-8

Focus/Lessons	Getting Ready	Ready to Learn	Ready to Play	
Grade 6/7 Focus	LESSON 1	Racquet and Ball Control	Striking a Ball (Groundstroke) and Recovery; Beginning Play (Serve)	Around the Clock
	LESSON 2	Rally and Service Warm-Up	Moving the Body and Striking a Ball (Groundstroke and Serve)	Share-a-Racquet
	LESSON 3	Service, Return, and Rally Warm-Up	Striking a Ball in the Air at the Net (Volley)	Half-Court Doubles
Grade 7/8 Focus	LESSON 4	Volley Warm-Up	Ball Carrying and Ball Dropping and Catching	Own the Stroke
	LESSON 5	Tennis Pre-Match Routine	Striking a Ball Upward (Groundstroke)	Alternate-Strike Doubles
	LESSON 6	Tennis Pre-Match Routine	Striking a Ball for Consistency (Groundstroke); Striking a Ball for Accuracy (Groundstroke and Volley)	Doubles Tennis

Throughout the unit, students should be encouraged to **demonstrate a healthy, competitive spirit and respect for tennis rules**. This might be evidenced in many ways. For example, students should learn to compete with peers so that they may self-officiate, respect opponents' calls, and win and lose graciously while also following learned tennis rules related to playing and scoring.

LESSON 1

GRADES 6 – 8

Lesson outcome:

Students will be able strike forehand and backhand groundstrokes and serve a ball over the net.

Game goal:

Students should be able to play the game Around the Clock. To be successful at Around the Clock, students will need to be able to serve accurately.

★ GETTING READY ★

LESSON 1

ACTIVITY: Racquet and Ball Control

- The students self-rally the ball while moving through their home-court activity space and completing a number of tasks:
 - a) Self-toss, bounce, and strike the ball with the racquet, and then do a racquet catch.
 - b) Bounce the ball off the racquet, let the ball drop to the ground, and strike it again.
 - c) Continuously bounce the ball off the racquet.
- In pairs, standing sideways to one another a couple of metres apart, students share a ball by striking it back and forth with a bounce in between strikes.



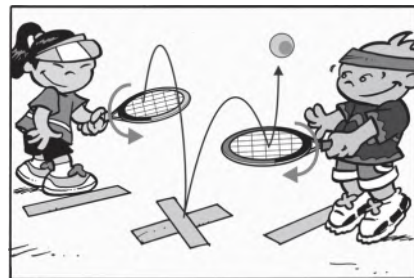
VARIATIONS

Less Challenging

- Allow students to remain stationary.
- Allow students to use only the forehand side of the racquet.
- Allow students to self-toss between each touch of the racquet.
- Allow students multiple touches (self-rallies) before passing to their partners.

More Challenging

- Encourage students to alternate between the forehand and backhand sides of the racquet.
- Encourage students to strike the ball such that it bounces on a shared target placed between them.
- Encourage students to place two targets between them. Students then try to strike the ball so it bounces on the target closest to their partners.

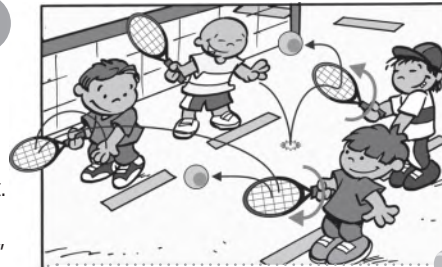


READY TO LEARN

LESSON 1

ACTIVITY: Striking a Ball (Groundstroke) and Recovery

- Working in pairs, one student feeds a ball (with a gentle underhand toss) to his partner, who returns the ball using a forehand groundstroke. Repeat using the backhand groundstroke. Students can try alternating between forehand and backhand groundstrokes.
- Continue the striking activity, requiring students to return to a home location between every shot.
- Working in pairs, students share a ball and practise forehand and backhand groundstrokes. Students must return to a home location between every shot or the ball is considered "dead" (non-playable), and the students must restart.
- Students can first complete these activities without the net. Once comfortable, students can complete the activities over the net.



KEY CUES

- "Keep your wrist firm."
- "Keep your body sideways to your target."
- "Keep the ball in front of your body."
- "Strike the ball at knee-to-waist level."
- "Return to a ready position in your home location after each strike."

ACTIVITY: Beginning Play (Serve)

- Standing behind the baseline, students serve a ball over the net to a partner, who catches the ball and returns it with a serve. Encourage students to serve from both sides of the court, trying to place the ball diagonally into the opposite court.

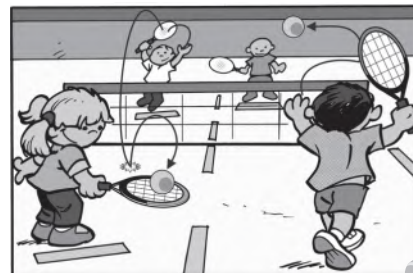
VARIATIONS

Less Challenging

- Allow students to permit multiple bounces before returning the ball.
- Allow students to use only the forehand side of the racquet.
- Allow students to stand closer to the net when serving.
- Allow students to practise the serving action by throwing the tennis ball over the net using a one-hand overhead throwing motion.

More Challenging

- Encourage students to practise returning the serve with a groundstroke.
- Encourage students to serve the ball into specific target areas of the court.



KEY CUES

- "Keep your wrist firm."
- "Keep your body sideways to your target."
- "Contact the ball above your head."
- "Keep the strings facing the target."

READY TO PLAY

LESSON 1

ACTIVITY: Around the Clock

- With a partner, students play a service game in which they cooperate to hit their targets (this can also be played using groundstrokes). With four designated target service areas (back left, back right, front left, front right), pairs of students cooperate and alternate serves, attempting to hit all four targets in as few serves as possible (this can also be a competitive game).

Question for Understanding

- What can you do when serving to increase the accuracy of your serves? (e.g., rotate to face the direction I want the ball to go; contact the ball with a square racquet face)

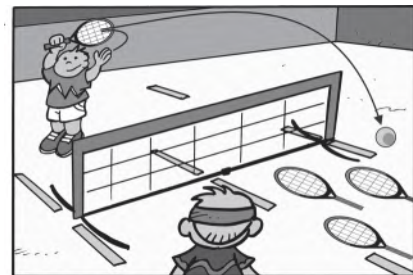
VARIATIONS

Less Challenging

- Allow students to focus on getting the ball over the net and into a larger area of the court as opposed to striking a smaller target area.
- Allow students to drop, bounce, and strike the ball as opposed to beginning the game with a serve.

More Challenging

- Encourage students to return the serve with a groundstroke.



KEY CUES

- "Keep the face of the racquet moving toward the target."
- "Keep the ball in the middle of the strings."

LESSON 2

GRADES 6 – 8

Lesson outcome:

Students will be able to return a serve using a groundstroke and implement tennis scoring rules.

Game goal:

Students should be able to play the game Share-a-Racquet. To be successful at Share-a-Racquet, students will need to be able to return the ball from a serve and a groundstroke.

★ GETTING READY

LESSON 2

ACTIVITY: Rally and Service Warm-Up

- Working in pairs, students share a ball by striking groundstrokes back and forth to one other.
- Standing behind the baseline, students serve to their partners, who racquet catch the ball and return it over the net with a serve.

Review and allow students to play **Around the Clock** from the previous lesson.

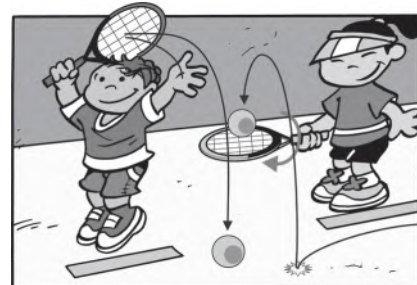
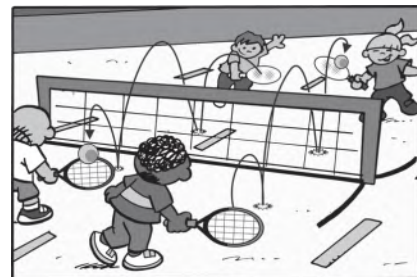
VARIATIONS

Less Challenging

- Allow students to self-rally the ball before returning it to their partners.
- Allow students to use only the forehand side of the racquet.
- Allow students to serve from the midcourt to backcourt.
- Allow students to serve using drop, bounce, and strike as opposed to a full serve.

More Challenging

- Encourage students to use both forehand and backhand groundstrokes.

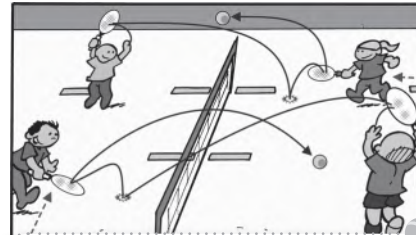
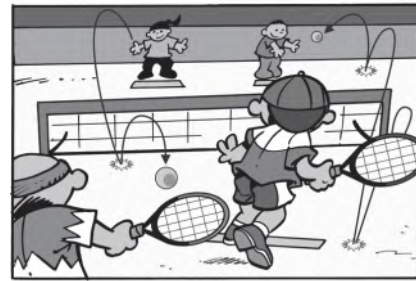


READY TO LEARN

LESSON 2

ACTIVITY: Moving the Body and Striking a Ball (Groundstroke and Serve)

- Working in pairs, one student feeds a ball to her partner (with a gentle underhand toss) so that the partner has to move to reach the ball and return it to an open space with a groundstroke (practise on both the forehand and backhand sides).
- Working in pairs, one student serves the ball over the net, while the partner returns it back over the net with a groundstroke.



VARIATIONS

Less Challenging

- Allow students to work on consistently sharing a ball by striking to each other.
- Allow students to focus only on the forehand side of the racquet.
- Allow students to racquet catch the ball between strikes and to drop, bounce, and strike a groundstroke to their partners.

More Challenging

- Encourage students to move their partners forward and backward as well as side to side when feeding the ball.

KEY CUES

“Keep your wrist firm.”

“Keep your body sideways to your target.”

“Keep the ball in front of your body.”

“Strike the ball at knee-to-waist level.”

“Return to a ready position in your home location after each strike.”

READY TO PLAY

LESSON 2

ACTIVITY: Share-a-Racquet

- Before introducing the game, you must introduce tennis scoring to the students.
- No score: love; first point: 15; second point: 30; third point: 40; fourth point: game. Games must be won by 2 points. If the score is tied at 40-40, it is called *deuce*. The player who wins the first point after *deuce* is said to have the *advantage*. If the server has the advantage, it is known as *ad in*; if the receiver has the advantage, it is known as *ad out*.
- With a doubles set-up (and a single racquet per team), students play doubles tennis using the proper scoring system (handing the racquet to the partner after each stroke). Players should always announce the score before the serve, beginning with the server's score first.

Question for Understanding

- During game play, what can you do to create time to switch racquets or get back into position? (e.g., hit the ball at a high level; hit the ball deep into the court)

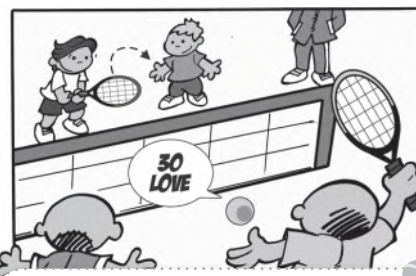
VARIATIONS

Less Challenging

- Allow students to score using “1, 2, 3, 4” rather than “love, 15, 30, 40, game.”
- Allow both students to play with their own racquets.

More Challenging

- Encourage students to play games in which only the forehand can be used or only the backhand can be used.
- Encourage students to play games where teams must strike with a forehand on one stroke and a backhand on the next stroke.



KEY CUES

“Keep the face of the racquet moving toward the target.”

“Keep the ball in the middle of the strings.”

“Use soft, gentle touches.”

LESSON 3

GRADES 6 – 8

Lesson outcome:

Students will be able to strike a ball using a volley.

Game goal:

Students should be able to play the game Half-Court Doubles. To be successful at Half-Court Doubles, students will need to be able to volley the ball to an opponent standing on the opposite side of the net.

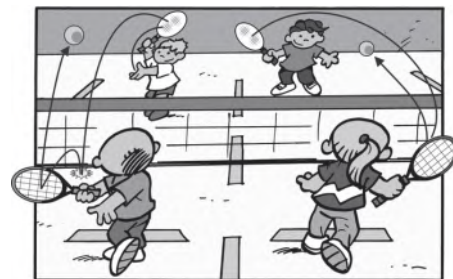
★ GETTING READY ★

LESSON 3

ACTIVITY: Service, Return, and Rally Warm-Up

- Working with a partner, students share a ball by beginning play with a serve and continuing the rally with groundstrokes. This activity can be set up in two different ways. If partners are standing directly across the net from each other, encourage them to use down-the-line groundstrokes. If partners are standing diagonally across the net from each other, encourage them to use cross-court groundstrokes.

Review and allow students to play **Share-a-Racquet** from the previous lesson.



VARIATIONS

Less Challenging

- Allow students to practise the serve and return only (i.e., eliminate the continuous rally).
- Allow students to serve from closer to the net.

More Challenging

- Encourage students to use a specific groundstroke (e.g., only forehands or only backhands).

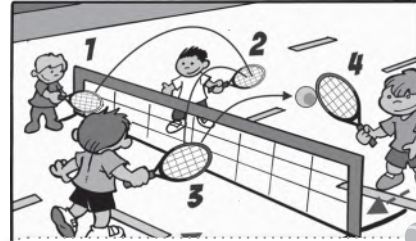
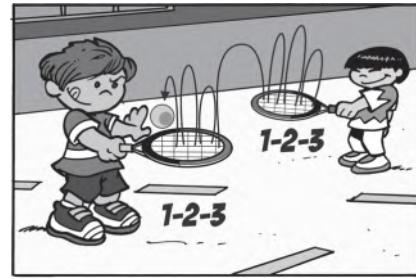


READY TO LEARN

LESSON 3

ACTIVITY: Striking a Ball in the Air at the Net (Volley)

- Working with a partner, students share a ball. The first player bounces the ball off his own racquet three times at approximately head height, and then he bounces it to his partner, who bounces the ball off her racquet three times before returning it. Eventually students should progress to sharing with two bounces and then one bounce. In this activity, the ball should not bounce on the ground but only in the air off the students' racquets. Students should practise on the forehand and backhand sides of the racquet.
- Students share a ball by trying to continuously volley back and forth (with no bounces on the ground between strikes). Repeat, with students volleying over the net.



VARIATIONS

Less Challenging

- Allow students to practise bouncing the ball off their racquets and handing the ball to their partners.
- Allow students to focus on the forehand volley only.

More Challenging

- Encourage partners to stand farther away from each other.
- Encourage students to practise all volley activities with partners on opposite sides of the net.

- Encourage students (in groups of four to six) to volley a ball along a net (Zigzag Volley). With half the students on one side of the net and half on the other, the first student at one end begins with a self-toss and volleys to the person across the net, who then volleys to the next person in line across the net, and so on. Students continue up and down the line, back and forth over the net, seeing how many times in a row they can volley the ball.

KEY CUES

"Keep your wrist firm."

"Keep your body sideways to your target."

"Keep the ball in front of your body."

"Catch the ball at waist-to-shoulder level."

"Volley with the strings aimed toward your target."

READY TO PLAY

LESSON 3

ACTIVITY: Half Court Doubles

- With a doubles set-up (using only the front half of the court), students play doubles tennis using only the volley stroke. Play begins with a drop, bounce, and strike (in place of the serve). The half-court rule requires each player to remain on his side of the court while playing. Students are to use the proper scoring system, always announcing the score before the serve, beginning with the server's score first.
- The game can be cooperative or competitive. To play cooperatively, encourage students to see how long they can keep the ball in play. To play competitively, encourage students to try to win the point. When playing competitively, students must first share the ball three times before attempting winning shots.
- This game can also be played on a full court, incorporating groundstrokes, serves, and volleys.

Question for Understanding

- What are the advantages of being positioned at the net as opposed to being positioned at the baseline?
(e.g., easier to hit sharp diagonal shots; easier to keep hard-hit shots in bounds)

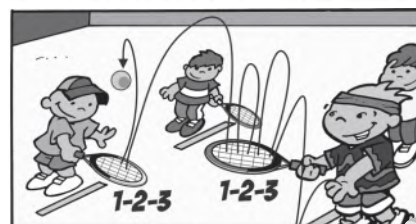
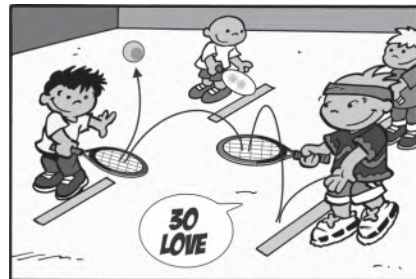
VARIATIONS

Less Challenging

- Allow students to work in pairs (singles) rather than larger groups of four (doubles).

More Challenging

- Encourage students to use only forehand or only backhand strokes.
- Encourage students to alternate between forehand and backhand strokes.



KEY CUES

"Keep the face of the racquet moving toward the target."

"Keep the ball in the middle of the strings."

"Use soft, gentle touches."

LESSON 4

GRADES 6 – 8

Lesson outcome:

Students will be able to return a groundstroke or volley (with a volley) and return to a home location after sending the ball over the net.

Game goal:

Students should be able to play the game Own the Stroke. To be successful at Own the Stroke, students will need to be able to return a ball over the net using a groundstroke and a volley.

★ GETTING READY ★

LESSON 4

ACTIVITY: Racquet and Ball Control

- Working with a partner, students share a ball over the net by striking it in the air without allowing it to bounce (i.e., volley).

Review and allow students to play **Zigzag Volley** and/or **Half-Court Doubles** from the previous lesson.

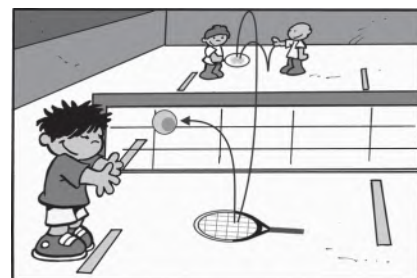
VARIATIONS

Less Challenging

- Allow students to practise volleying on the same side of the net.
- Allow students to self-volley multiple times before sending the ball to their partners.
- Allow students to use only the forehand side of the racquet.
- Allow students to feed (with a toss) the ball to their partners.

More Challenging

- Encourage students to use only forehand or only backhand strokes.
- Encourage students to alternate between forehand and backhand strokes.

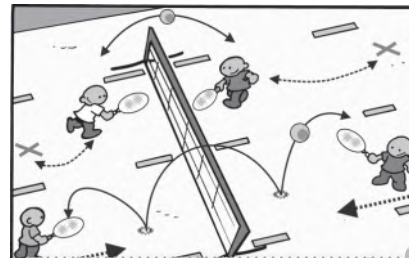


READY TO LEARN

LESSON 4

ACTIVITY: Striking a Ball and Recovery (Groundstroke and Volley)

- Working in pairs, students share a ball by continuously striking forehand and backhand groundstrokes back and forth over the net. Students must return to a home location after every strike.
- Working in pairs, students share a ball by first striking two groundstrokes and then moving to the net to strike volleys until one partner fails to return the ball or it bounces on the ground. Students should practise using both the forehand and backhand strokes. Students must return to a home location in the frontcourt after every strike.
- Working in pairs, students share a ball with a partner such that one partner serves the ball over the net, and the other partner returns the ball with a groundstroke. Continue play with any shot until the ball is rendered "dead." Students must return to a home location after every strike.



VARIATIONS

Less Challenging

- Allow students to decrease the distance they stand from their partners.

More Challenging

- Encourage the serving student to play out the rally using only volleys (i.e., serve and volley).

KEY CUES

"Keep your wrist firm."

"Keep your body sideways to your target."

"Keep the ball in front of your body."

"Return to a ready position in your home location after each strike."

READY TO PLAY

LESSON 4

ACTIVITY: Own the Stroke

- With a doubles set-up, students play doubles tennis using the common tennis scoring system. Each doubles team may use only specific strokes. The serving team can use only volleys (after the initial serve), and the receiving team can use only groundstrokes. The objective of the game is to play until one team does not return the ball. Players should always announce the score before the serve, beginning with the server's score first.

Question for Understanding

- What are the advantages of using a variety of tennis strokes (i.e., varying the use of groundstrokes and volleys)?
(e.g., moves the opponent around the court; moves the opponent out of position; tires out the opponent faster)

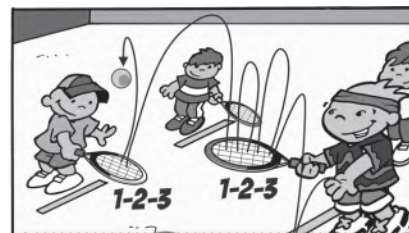
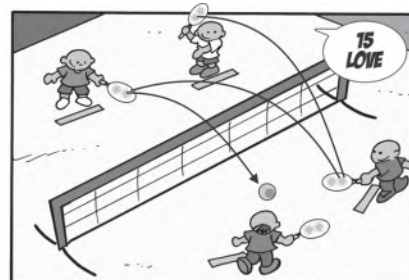
VARIATIONS

Less Challenging

- Allow students to play in partners (singles) instead of groups (doubles).

More Challenging

- Encourage students to play using only forehand or only backhand strokes.
- Encourage students to alternate between forehand and backhand strokes.



KEY CUES

"Keep the face of the racquet moving toward the target."

"Keep the ball in the middle of the strings."

"Use soft, gentle touches."

LESSON 5

GRADES 6 – 8

Lesson outcome:

Students will be able to use a serve, groundstroke, and volley with accuracy.

Game goal:

Students should be able to play the game Alternate-Strike Doubles. To be successful at Alternate-Strike Doubles, students will need to be able to serve and participate in a rally using a variety of tennis strokes.

★ GETTING READY ★

LESSON 5

ACTIVITY: Tennis Pre-Match Routine

- Working with a partner, students share a ball over the net while practising the following activities. Depending on the space available for play, encourage students to practise down-the-line shots and cross-court shots.

Groundstroke practice: Students share a ball by striking groundstrokes from baseline to baseline. Encourage students to practise forehand and backhand groundstrokes.

Volley practice: Students share a ball by striking volleys from the frontcourt. Encourage students to practise forehand and backhand volleys.

Service and return practice: Students share a ball, with one student serving while the other returns the ball with the appropriate stroke (forehand or backhand groundstroke).

- Discuss with students the need to develop a pre-match warm-up routine.

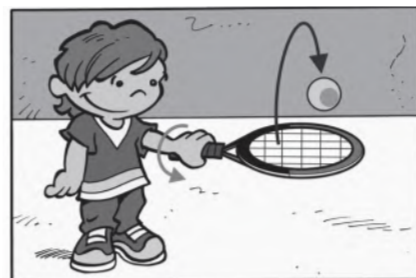
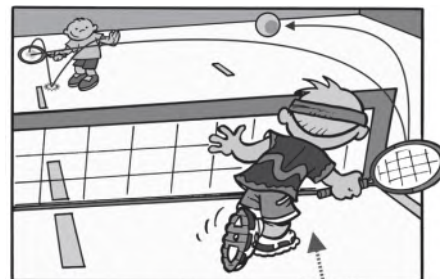
VARIATIONS

Less Challenging

- Allow students to decrease the distance they stand from their partners.
- Allow students to focus on forehand shots only.

More Challenging

- Encourage students to practise their volleys, with one student using a groundstroke while the other returns using only volleys.
- Encourage students to experiment with spinning the ball (heavier topspin and slice).
- Encourage students to develop a warm-up routine that requires a number of backhand groundstrokes.

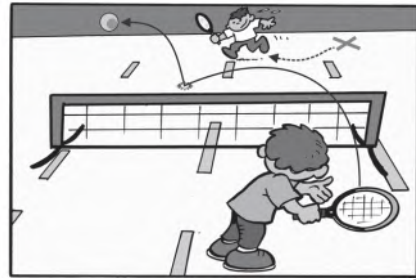


READY TO LEARN

LESSON 5

ACTIVITY: Striking a Ball for Accuracy (Groundstroke and Volley)

- Working in pairs, students share a ball over the net, striking groundstrokes and trying to place the ball so that their partners cannot return it (i.e., by aiming for the empty space). Students must return to a home location after each shot.
- Working in pairs, students share a ball. The first player drops, bounces, and strikes the ball over the net to her partner, who returns the ball with a volley in a manner that prevents her partner from making a return shot. Students should focus on placing the ball out of their partners' reach (e.g., aim for the sidelines and front corners of the court).
- Sharing a ball with a partner, students begin play with a serve, trying to return the ball each time in a way that makes it difficult for their partners to return the ball.
- Whenever serving, students should aim to make the ball travel in a rainbow (arc) trajectory.



KEY CUES

"Keep your wrist firm."

"Keep your body sideways to your target."

"Keep the ball in front of your body."

"Return to a ready position in your home location after each strike."

VARIATIONS

Less Challenging

- Allow students to work toward consistently striking the ball back and forth to their partners.
- Allow students to work on the forehand groundstroke and volley only.
- Allow students to feed the ball (with a gentle underhand toss) as opposed to a drop, bounce, and strike.

More Challenging

- Encourage students to use only forehand or only backhand groundstrokes and volleys.

READY TO PLAY

LESSON 5

ACTIVITY: Alternate Strike Doubles

- With a doubles set-up, students play a set of doubles tennis (i.e., must win two out of three games) using the common tennis scoring system. Each doubles team must alternate shots. The objective of the game is to play until one team does not return the ball. Players should always announce the score before the serve, beginning with the server's score first.

Question for Understanding

- Where are the ideal spaces on the court to aim your shots? (e.g., into the corners; down the line; at the person who just hit the ball)

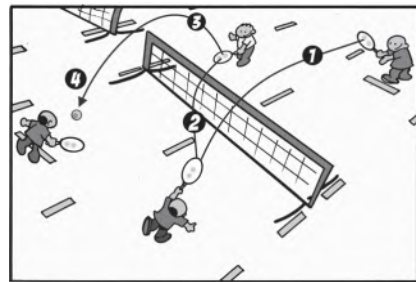
VARIATIONS

Less Challenging

- Allow students to permit multiple bounces before returning the ball.
- Allow students to serve from inside the baseline.

More Challenging

- Encourage students to attempt first serves with more pace or spin.



KEY CUES

"Keep the face of the racquet moving toward the target."

"Keep the ball in the middle of the strings."

"Use soft, gentle touches."

LESSON 6

GRADES 6 – 8

Lesson outcome:

Students will be able to strike the ball with consistency (multiple consecutive strikes) and accuracy (so it is difficult for the opponent to return the ball).

Game goal:

Students will be able to play Doubles Tennis. To play Doubles Tennis, students will need to be able to serve, return service, and strike both forehand and backhand groundstrokes and volleys consistently and accurately.

★ GETTING READY ★

LESSON 6

ACTIVITY: Tennis Pre-Match Routine

- Working with a partner, students share a ball over the net while practising the following activities. Depending on the space available for play, encourage students to practise down-the-line shots and cross-court shots.

Groundstroke practice: Students share a ball by striking groundstrokes from baseline to baseline. Encourage students to practise forehand and backhand groundstrokes.

Volley practice: Students share a ball by striking volleys from the frontcourt. Encourage students to practise forehand and backhand volleys.

Service and return practice: Students share a ball, with one student serving while the other returns the ball with the appropriate stroke (forehand or backhand groundstroke).

- Discuss with students the need to develop a pre-match warm-up routine.

VARIATIONS

Less Challenging

- Allow students to decrease the distance they stand from their partners.
- Allow students to focus on forehand shots only.

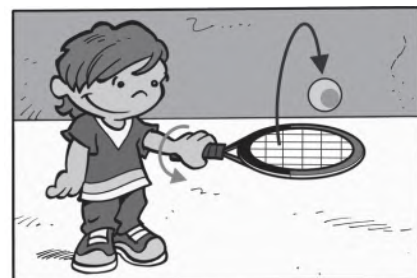
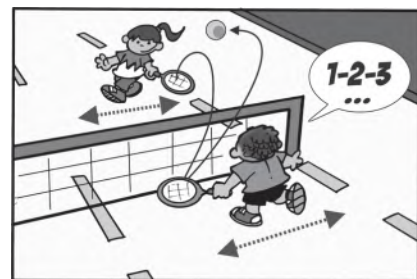
More Challenging

- Encourage students to practise their volleys, with one student using a groundstroke while the other returns using only volleys.

- Encourage students to try placing the ball on specific areas of the court (e.g., down the sideline or cross-court).

- Encourage students to experiment with spinning the ball (heavier topspin and slice).

- Encourage students to develop a warm-up routine that requires a number of backhand groundstrokes.

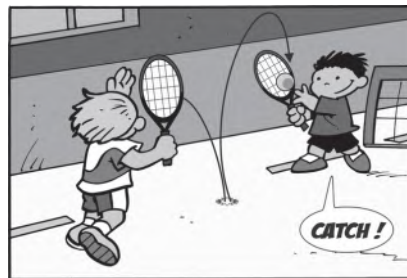


READY TO LEARN

LESSON 6

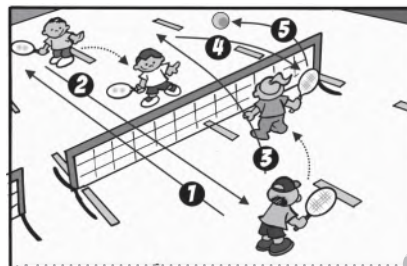
ACTIVITY: Striking a Ball for Consistency (Groundstroke)

- Working in pairs, students share a ball and try to maximize the number of times they can strike it back and forth. Students first attempt to repeatedly strike cross-court shots to the forehand and then backhand sides. Students then work on consistently striking down-the-line shots.



ACTIVITY: Striking a Ball for Accuracy (Groundstroke and Volley)

- Working in pairs, students share a ball to play a pattern (e.g., they may strike cross-court shots three times in a row, then send the ball down the line, or try to strike three groundstrokes and then move to the net to strike a volley). Students practise different patterns, working toward their strengths.



VARIATIONS

Less Challenging

- Allow students to work on consistently striking the ball back and forth down the centre of the court.

More Challenging

- Encourage students to begin each practice rally with a serve.
- Encourage students to experiment with spinning the ball (heavier topspin and slice).

KEY CUES

- "Keep your wrist firm."*
- "Keep your body sideways to your target."*
- "Keep the ball in front of your body."*
- "Return to a ready position in your home location after each strike."*

READY TO PLAY

LESSON 6

ACTIVITY: Doubles Tennis

- With a doubles set-up, students play doubles tennis using the common tennis scoring system. Players should always announce the score before the serve, beginning with the server's score first.

Question for Understanding

- How does the score impact how you play the next point? (e.g., if winning by a lot, I may take a risk; if the game is close, I'm more likely to play a safe shot)

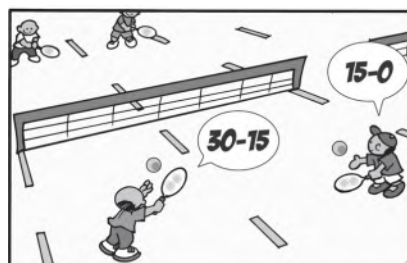
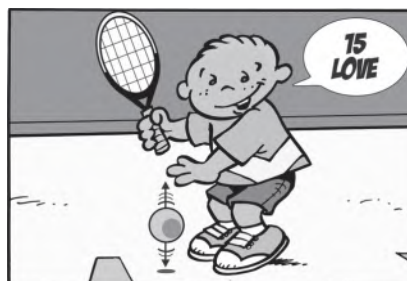
VARIATIONS

Less Challenging

- Allow students to play singles tennis.

More Challenging

- Encourage students to focus on a variety of shots by enforcing various restrictions (e.g., extra points can be scored with a cross-court volley or a down-the-line backhand).



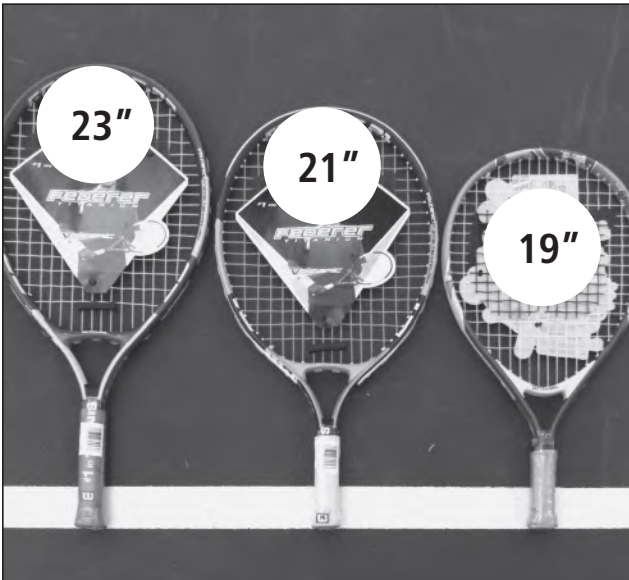
KEY CUES

- "Keep the face of the racquet moving toward the target."*
- "Keep the ball in the middle of the strings."*
- "Use soft, gentle touches."*

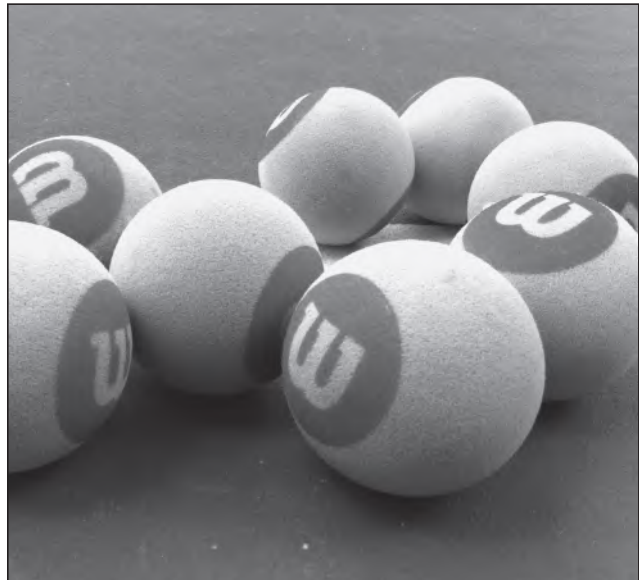
EQUIPMENT, SET-UP, AND MAXIMIZING PARTICIPATION

Equipment

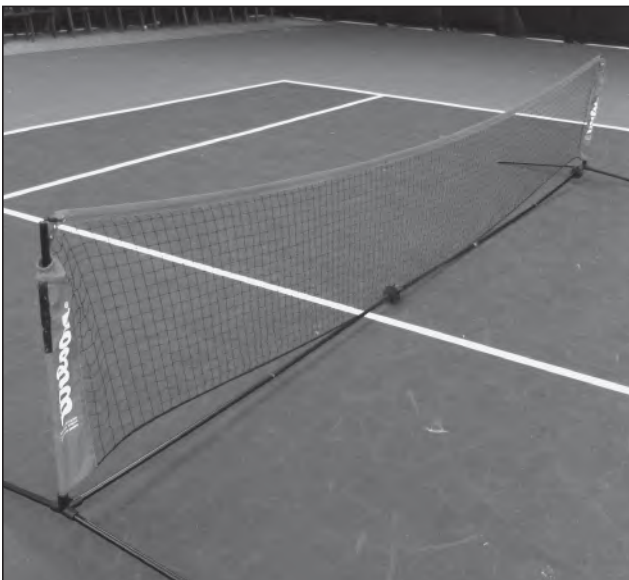
All these lessons require the same equipment: tennis nets, age-appropriate tennis racquets, line markers, and foam tennis balls. **Although foam tennis balls are ideal for indoor use (i.e., have a soft bounce and are safe), special care must be taken when using them because they tear easily.** A teaching kit containing all the required equipment is available from your Provincial Tennis Association. However, the Tennis for Schools program can also be taught with other available equipment. Suitable equipment includes benches, chairs, balloons, soft or slightly deflated balls, paddle bats, and cones.



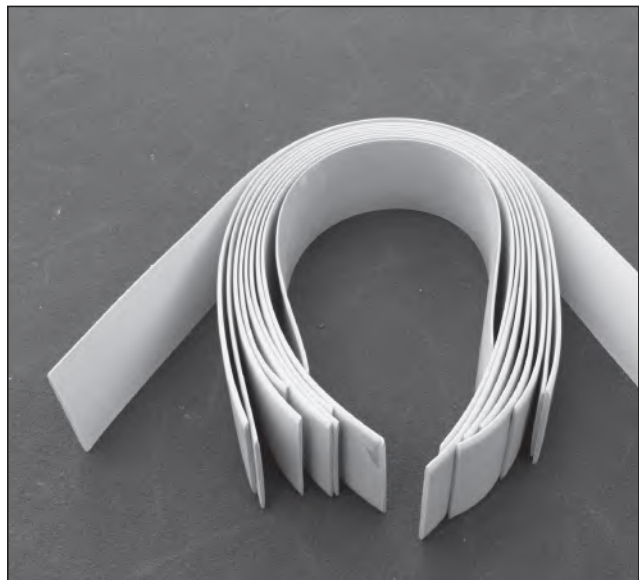
Age Appropriate Tennis Racquets



Foam Tennis Balls



Tennis Net

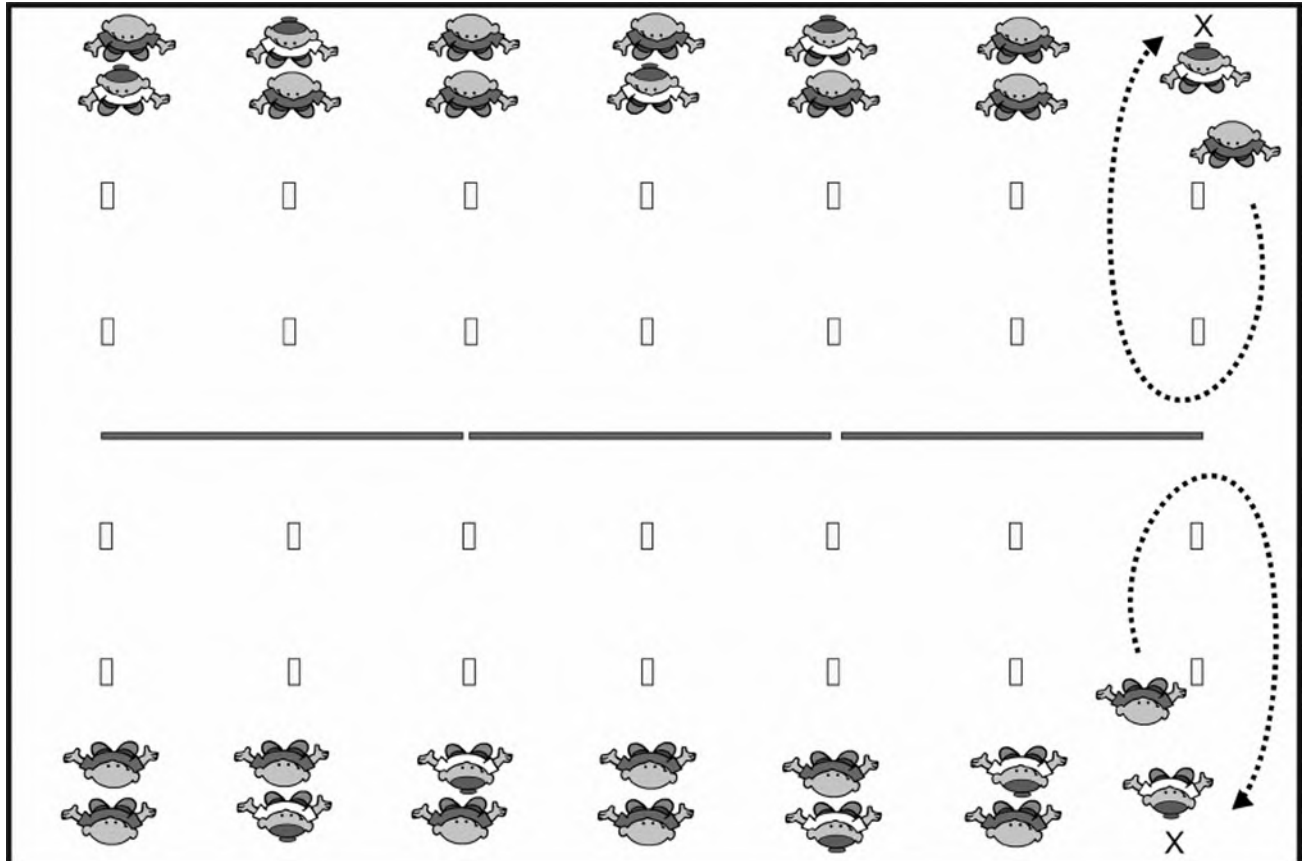


Line Markers

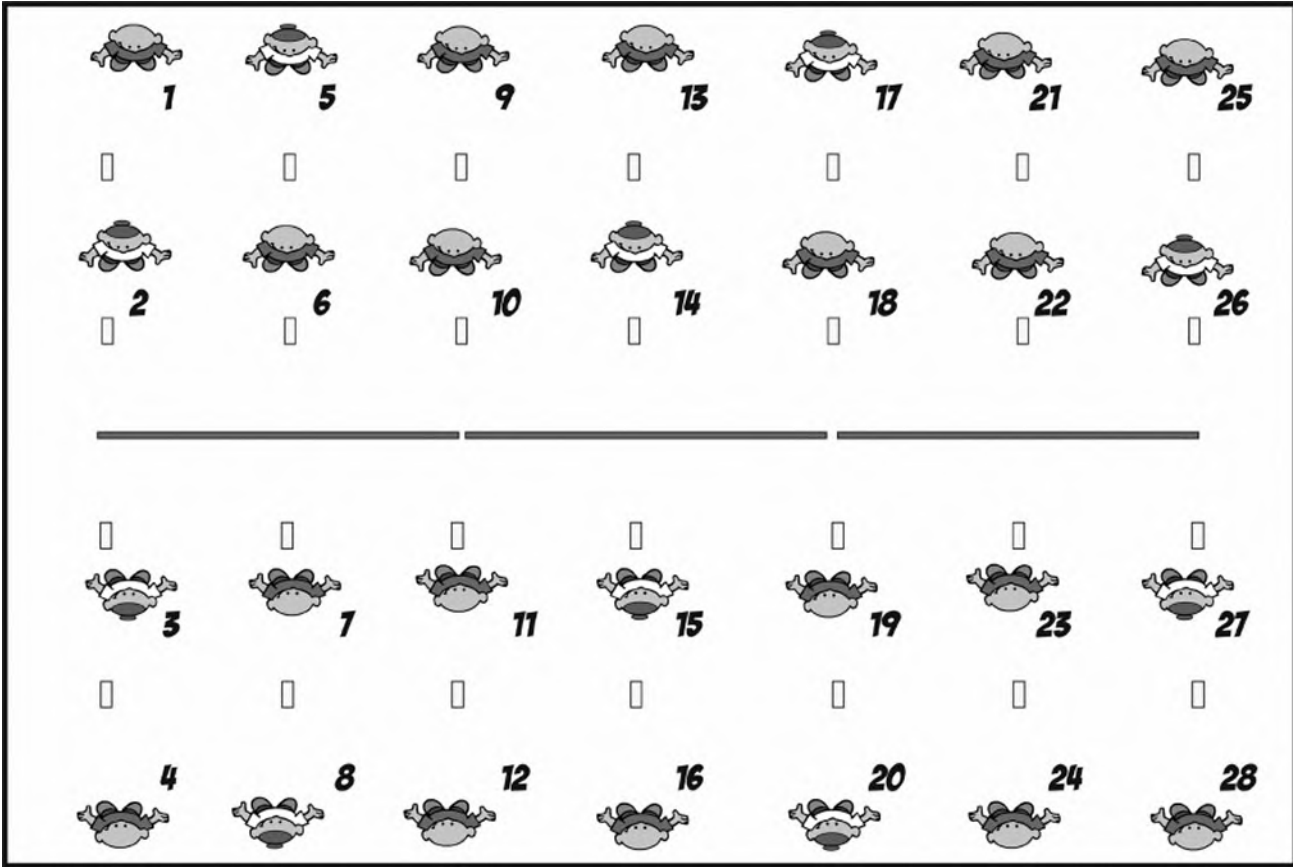
Set-Up

The activity space set-up should be the same for every class. By doing this, students are more easily and quickly able to identify and understand court locations (e.g., their home court) and markers (e.g., frontcourt, backcourt). Possibilities for setting up the activity space are illustrated here.

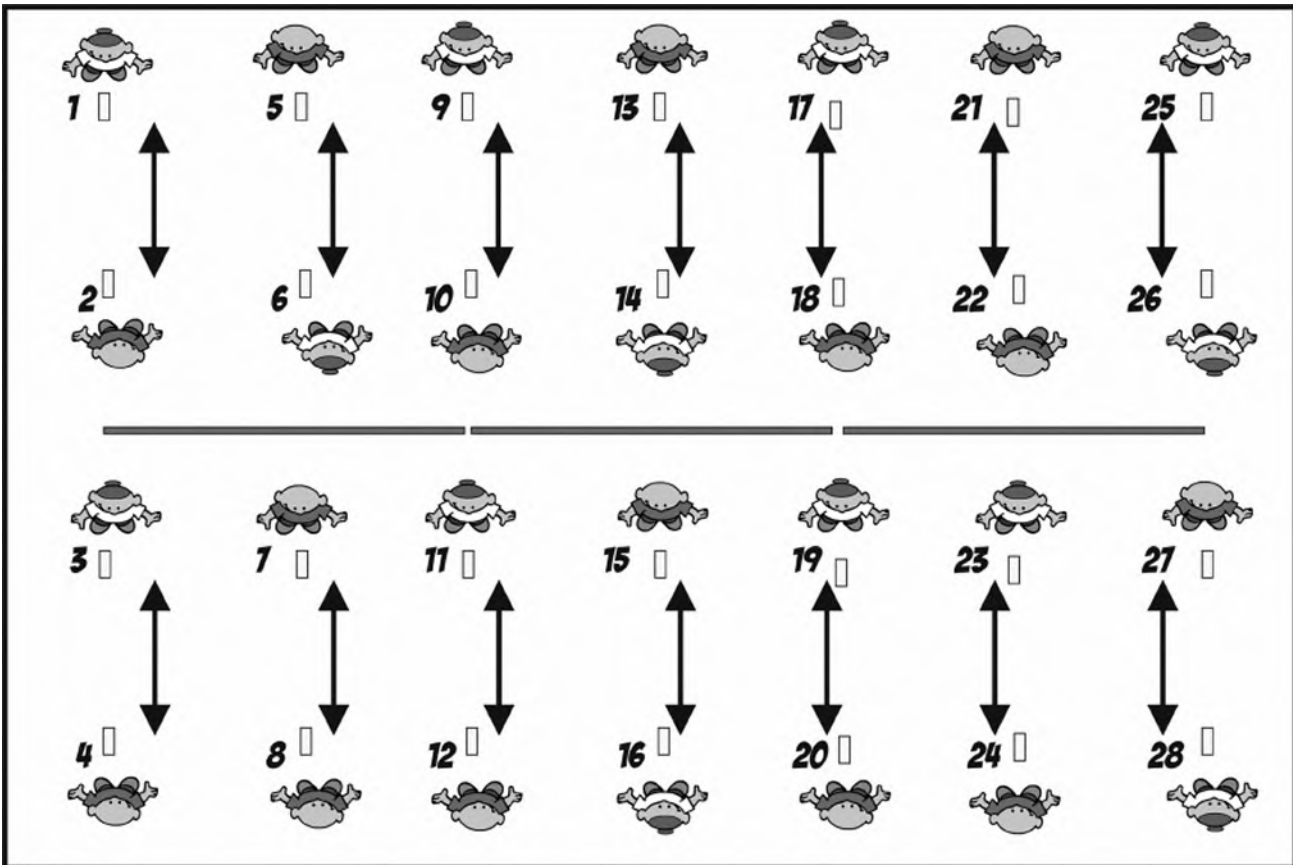
It is recommended that all students be assigned a home court at the beginning of the unit. Students report to, practise, and play on their home court for all lessons.



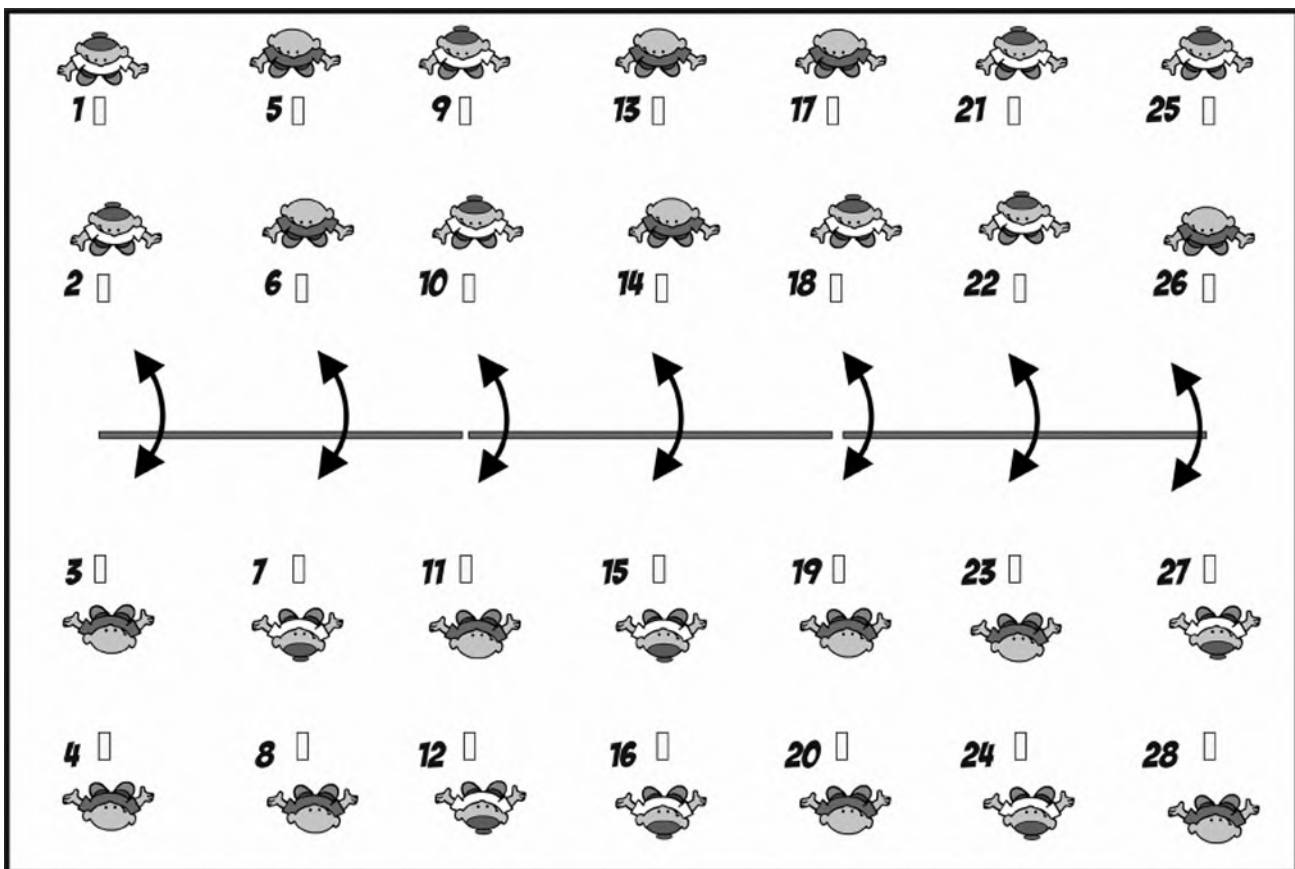
Standard Gym Set Up: 3 Nets, 28 Markers, Warm Up Movement Pattern



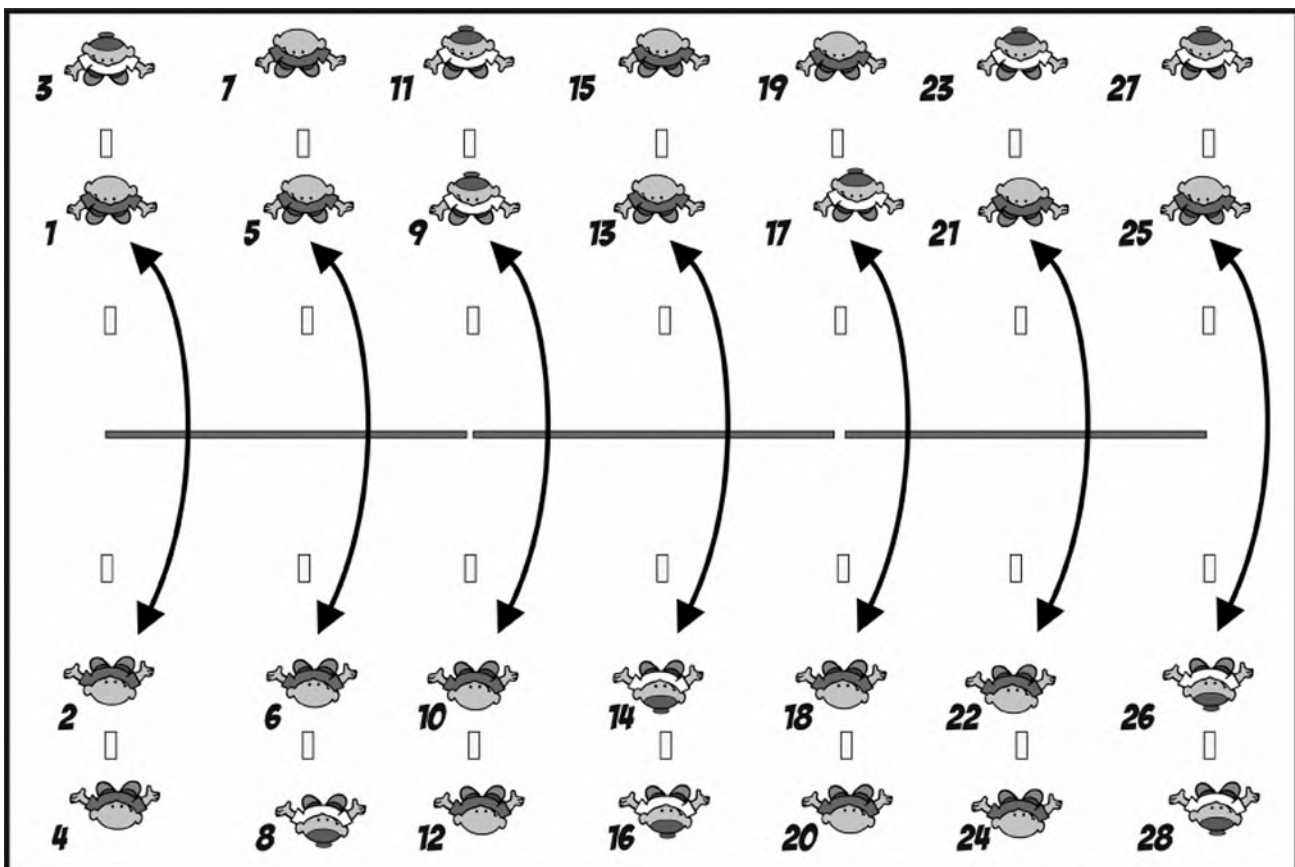
Individual Activity Stations (28 court areas)



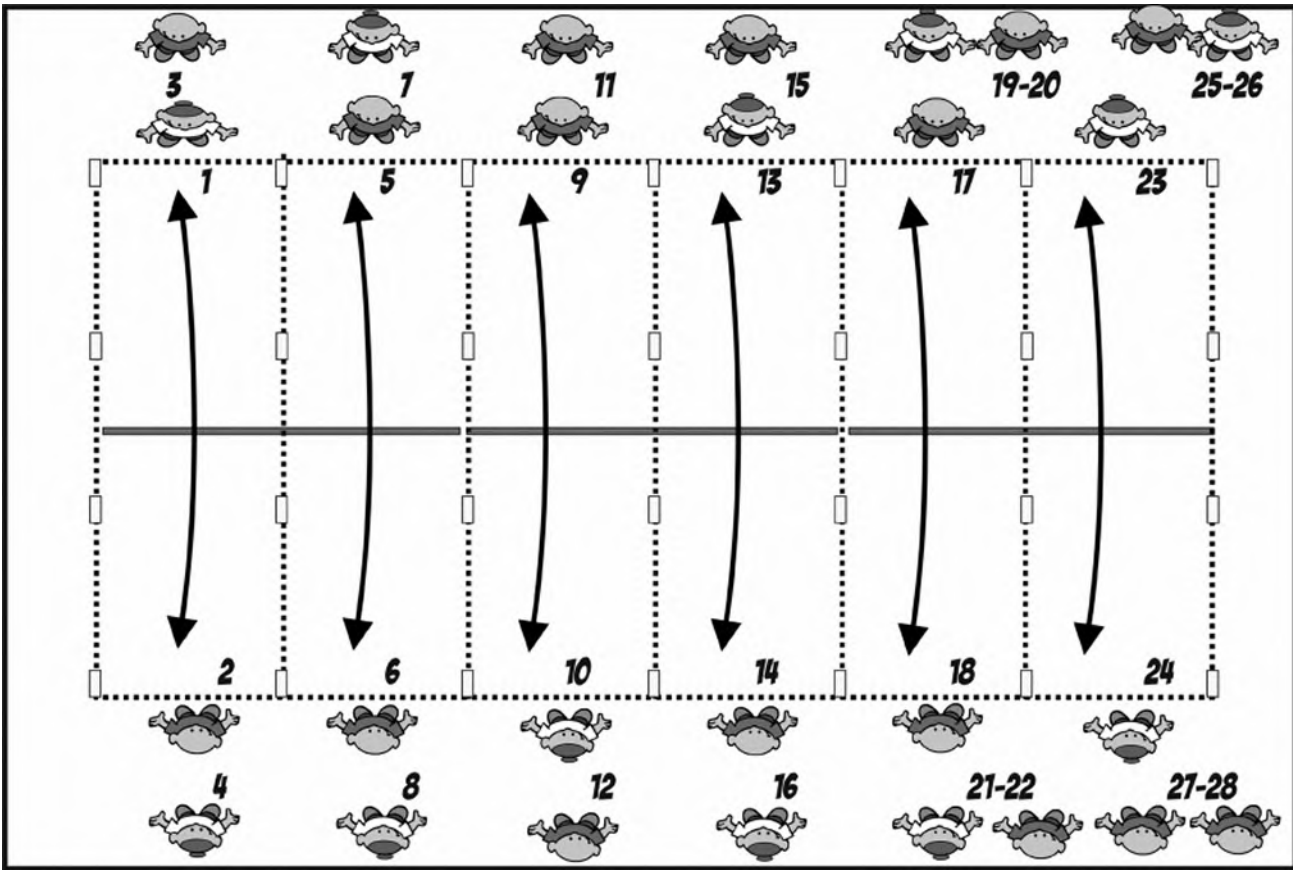
Partner Activity, No Obstacle, Short Distance (14 court areas)



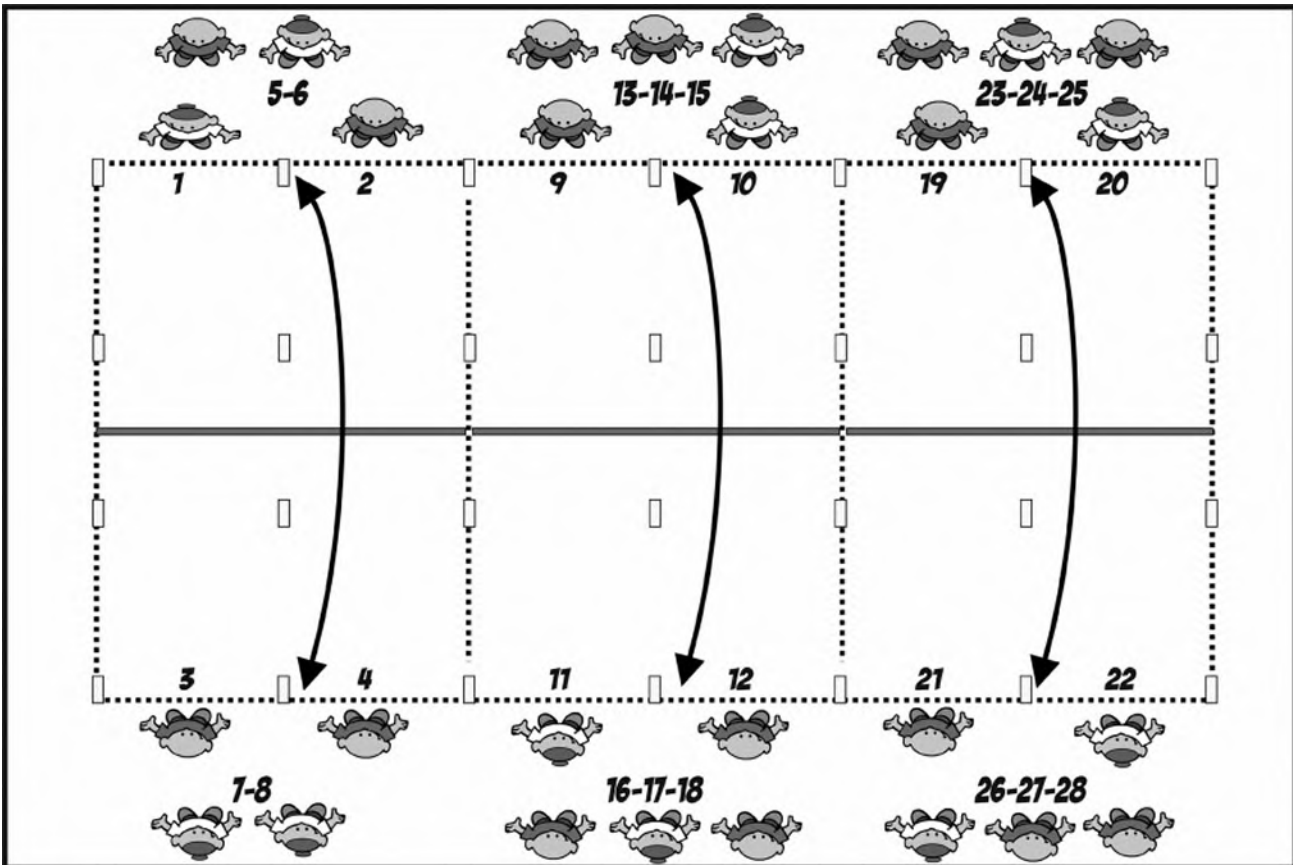
Partner Activity, Over Obstacle, Short Distance (7 court areas)



Partner Activity, Over Net, Mid Distance (7 court areas)



Partner Activity, Over Net, Full Distance, Singles (6 court areas)



Team Activity, Over Net, Full Distance, Doubles (3 court areas)