

Defense Movement Concepts

No movement on contact

At the moment the opponent is striking the ball, all of our defensive players are set in a “ready” position, balanced, leaning in towards the attacker. Even if you are out of position, set to “ready” when the opponent strikes the ball.

Expect the ball

No matter where the opponent is looking, expect the ball to come to you. Be ready!

Reading the block (as a defender)

Look around and under the blockers’ hands.

As a digger, when reading the attack, you should be able to see the ball around and under your blockers’ hands. You need to be able to see the ball. If you see the back of a **hand**, instead of **ball**, you are in the blockers’ shadow. Do not get caught in the blockers’ shadow (unless you are middle-back, **AND** you know the block is split or there are a lot of “soft-blocks”).

Lead with the head

We advocate forward movement; lead with your head, shoulders over knees, as low as functionally possible, run through.

In our digging “ready” position, we are up on our toes, leaning into the ball (the attack), as low as functionally possible. (You should be able to reach down and touch the floor **UNDER** your heel).

Angles of pursuit

What happens when balls are hit into coverage seams? Player closest to the hitter always pursues "in front", while the player farthest from the hitter always pursues "in back" behind the player pursuing "in front".

Defend the sideline the same as the endline.

Dig Target Zone and Trajectory: Center Circle and High and Hanging.

For digs off of hard hit balls, the higher the trajectory the better, with the target being about the center of the court, near the attack line. We don't expect and don't want passes off digs to be tight to the net.

Move in the same plane

No bobbing; we don't want players to stand up, then get low, then stand up, etc. when moving across the floor. Keep your head at the same vertical distance from the floor when moving. Better passing and digging will result from moving in the same plane. Again, stay as low as functionally possible.