

How To Shoot A Volleyball Skills Video

The purpose of a skills video is to show college coaches your consistency and fundamentals. Therefore, the skills video is conducted in a controlled environment where you can focus on form and technique. The skills video session is something you should set up with your high school or club coach. It is, very simply, you and your coach running through specific drills pertaining to your position.

I. Preparation:

A. Schedule the session

Schedule a time with your club or high school coach to do the skills video session. An hour should be sufficient. Sometimes skills video sessions are offered as an a la carte service by club programs. If so, I would highly recommend taking advantage of this service. Coaches should be the ones running the drills (not mom and dad), and ideally you should be working with a coach you are familiar with. Every coach has their own style when running drills (slap ball / bounce ball when initiating the drill), so you just want to be comfortable with their timing. Usually parents / players are responsible for bringing their own video camera to film the session. Just ask first before arriving at the session so you don't get there and realize nobody has a video camera!

B. Find some helpers!

This is very important. Each drill for your skills video **MUST** run quickly and it should be as game-like as possible. The best way to frustrate a college coach and risk them turning your skills video off is by having too much lag time in-between attempts. Hustle through the drill just like if you were in practice.

To keep the drill moving quickly, you need:

- A ball handler
- A target
- A passer, setter, or hitter (depending on your position) to assist you in making the drill game-like. Ideally you will bring the following helpers with you:

- OMs /RSs need a setter and a hitter
- MBs need a setter and a hitter
- Setters need a passer
- Liberos / DSs need a target

C. Camera Angles

You should always film from behind the player. It's important for coaches to see where the ball is being initiated from, and also the result of the ball, so keep your camera angle wide enough to see both. You may also consider showing a few attempts where the camera is placed in front/to the side of the player on a 45 degree angle to show passing platform, arm-swing, blocking penetration, setting hands etc.

II. Introduction

Some coaches like to be able to place "a face with a name", so it's a good idea to show an introductory message at the beginning of the video. Just speak naturally into the camera about why you are looking to play at the next level and thank the coaches in advance for their time. This should be very short – 30 seconds max. You want coaches to get on with watching your awesome skills video!

III. Skills:

Think big picture when you are filming the skills video. Once you have your skills video footage, you are going to pick your best attempts at each skill, and edit out the rest (see IV. *Editing Your Skills Video* for more details). Therefore, when you are shooting your footage keep this in mind and work on each drill in a 5 ball series. If you are serve-receiving, pass 5 balls in a row, and then stop to rest. The same goes for hitting, serving, blocking, setting and defense. Ask yourself "was that a good set of 5 balls in a row?" If, so GREAT! Move on to the next drill (or the next camera angle) and work on getting another quality 5-ball series.

A. Hitting

As a hitter, it's important to show your hitting abilities, but it is equally important to show your transition off the net and how high you are attacking above the net. Block jump to start each 5 ball series, then transition, hit, transition, hit, transition, etc. for 5 balls in a row. Rest.

Continue until you feel like you made 5 good attempts *in a row*. You can hit some off your coach's toss, but you also want to show hitting off a live setter.

Camera angle 1: Video from the side, preferably from behind the setter, with the camera facing the hitter on a 45 degree angle. This is to show your footwork and arm swing.

Camera angle 2: Video from behind the hitter so you can see the setter and where the ball is landing on the other side of the net. Mix up your shots to show your ability to hit line, seam, and cross.

Camera angle 3: Video from the opposite side of the net. This angle is very important for coaches to see how high you are attacking above the net. Make sure to include this angle!

Depending on your position, you will want to film the follows sets. Set calls vary, so check with your club coach if you need help translating.

Outsides:

5 or 4 (high outside set)

- Hut (shoot set)
- 2 (high ball in the middle)
- Back row attack
- Pass to attack

Middle Blockers:

- 1 (quick set)
- 2 (high ball in the middle)
- 31 (quick set to zone 3)
- 6 (quick behind)
- Slide

Right Sides:

- 9 (high ball behind)
- Back 1
- Back 2
- Middle 2 from RS position (come around for a tandem or stack)
- Back row attack
- Pass to attack

Liberos / Defensive Specialists:

- Over the net down ball. Aim for deep corners.

B. Serve Receive

The server should be serving (not tossing) at you from *behind* the end line on the other side of the net. Pass in the zone you are most comfortable. Be sure you have a target catching each pass, and have a ball-handler so the drill moves fast. As soon as you pass the ball, the next ball should be served. Your coach should be serving challenging balls where you have to move but where you can still control the ball with some consistency. In other words, lollipops are no good. Stay low and watch the ball into your platform. You can do it!

Camera angle 1: Video from the side of the player but keep the target zone in the camera's view so coaches can see where you are passing the ball. This is to show coaches your passing platform, ready position, and movement to and through the ball.

Camera angle 2: Video from behind the player and make sure you can see the server in the camera's view and the target who should be catching each pass.

C. Setting

Coaches want to see how athletic and quick you are getting to the ball. Very rarely in a game do you stand in one spot and the ball is passed right to you. Therefore, standing in the target zone while a coach tosses the ball right to you does not show coaches your abilities as a setter.

Therefore, be sure you are always setting from a live passer. Have your coach toss the ball (over the net) to a passer. Show moving from base position in the front row AND the back row. The drill should move very quickly so be sure you have a hander. Always have a catcher at the pins catching your set to give coaches a perspective if you are hitting the correct zone and this helps them evaluate your tempo as well. When you are setting the pins you can get away with just having a helper catch your sets, however, when setting the middle, you want to be setting to a live hitter, if possible. If you can jump set, include it.

Camera Angle: Video from the back of the court and be sure you can see the antennas, the passer, and the coach.

Zones to set:

- 4 or 5 (high outside set)
- Shoot set
- 31
- Middle 1
- Middle 2
- Back 1
- Back 2
- Slide
- 9 (High behind)
- Back row attack
- Setter dump/attack

D. Blocking

Blocking is a very technical skill. Coaches want to see your blocking form, but more importantly your blocking movement along the net. They are looking for penetration, vertical jump, reaction time, and quickness. Blocking is all about reading the set and timing the hit. Blocking against your coach who is standing on a box is not realistic and never happens in a game situation. Therefore, you need to read a live set and block a live hitter, if possible.

Camera angle 1: From the side to show penetration.

Camera angle 2: From behind where the camera can see the blocker, the setter, and the hitter

Blocking drills:

- Take 3 block jumps from the center of the court, straight up, video from the back
- Take 3 block jumps from the center of the court, straight up, video from the side to show penetration.
- Take 3 block jumps moving from base position without a hitter. Show your one-step footwork, and your three-step/swing-block footwork.
- Take 5-10 block jumps moving from base position and block against an opposing hitter. Your coach should toss to a setter who sets to the opposing hitter. If you are an OH, block a RS. If you are a MB block a MB. If you are a RS, block an OH. Don't cheat. In a game you can't leave base until you see where the set is going, so the same should be true in your skills video.

E. Defense

If you are a defensive specialist, or play defense in the back row, you should show coaches this skill. Play the position you are most comfortable with, and only defend your 1/3 of the court since this is all you will every cover in a game. You need a ball hander so the drill moves quickly and a target to catch each dig. Be sure you are always starting in base position and then moving to your defensive position for each attempt. YES... you have to move (as quick as possible) back to base after each dig! This shows coaches that you are disciplined on defense. Your coach should not be hitting the ball right to you. College coaches need to see how you read and move to the ball. Therefore, your coach should be hitting the hardest driven ball at you that you can still control with some consistency.

Camera angle: Video from behind. You should be able to see the coach who is hitting at you, the end line, and your closest side line (if you play left back or right back defense), and the target zone.

You want to show a variety of defensive skills including:

- Cross court dig
- Line dig (for OH's and RS's)
- Run thoughts / tips
- Floor moves
- Hands

F. Serving

At the collegiate level, all coaches assume you can serve the ball over the net. They are less concerned with IF you can serve, and more concerned about if you can serve the *zone* they call for you. Therefore, have your coach standing in the camera's view and signal (by number) the zone you are to serve in random order. The server should have a ball handler so the drill moves quickly.

Coaches understand that every player has a serving routine – consistency is good! However, bouncing the ball 10 times in-between each serve is unnecessary and frustrating for a coach to watch. Therefore, get back to the service line as fast as you can (so run), do your routine, and serve the next ball with limited down time in between attempts.

Camera angle 1: Video 3 serves from the side, to show form.

Camera angle 2: Video 6 serves (one to each zone) from behind showing where the serve goes on the opposing side. Be sure to capture the coach's zone signal on the camera.