

# *Learn to Compete - Skill Acquisition*

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## **Individual Defense**

### **1. Technical Points to Remember**

#### **BEFORE ball is attacked**

- **Feet Stopped**, wider than shoulder width
- **Palms Up**, wider than knees, elbows in front of sides
- **Shoulders Forward** in front of feet, **Knees Bent**
- Completely **Stationary** before ball is attacked (balanced weight distribution)

#### **AFTER ball is attacked**

- **Large Step** (push with opposite leg) in reaction to the ball, no guessing
  - Toe forward, not sideways
  - Chest/Hips point toward attacker
  - Push-off leg stays straight – no knee bend
- **Arms/Hands** meet at point where ball will arrive (well before ball arrives, no swinging)

### **2. Advanced Combinations**

- **Single Step, Stride Slide, or Run-Through** digs
  - Ability to execute, Decision-making
- **Shoulders/Platform**
  - Ability to manipulate the angle of platform to direct the attacked balls

# Individual Blocking

## *1. Technical Points to Remember*

### **BEFORE ball is Set**

- **High Hands**, above head for fast tempo sets
- **Hips Loaded**
- **Weight Balanced** on toes
- **No Movement** before ball is set (adjustment steps finished early)

### **AFTER ball is Set**

#### **LEGS:**

- **React**, don't guess
- **Turn, Big Step** off of net
- **Hop Step, Heel Plant**
- **Turn** back to net
- **Jump**

#### **HANDS:**

- **Drop to Shoulders** when moving
- **Forward** toward net **immediately** when beginning to jump
- Hands cross **Over Tape** immediately (as soon as fingertips rise above tape)
- Hands **Remain Over** tape until hands drop below height of tape
- **Wrist Angle** depends on height of block relative to attack height

Note: Less Is More: A simple controlled block is always much better than a bigger less controlled block. Proper hand position and a stable lower body is crucial!

## **Offensive Variation**

### **1. Technical Points to Remember**

**Move Feet** to get to ball

Aim: always in front of attacking shoulder and full arm's reach

**High Elbow, Higher Hand**

### **2. Variation**

#### **Swing Away from body**

Contact left side of ball, ring finger centered on ball

Snap wrist for top spin, not just sidespin

Swing Away from body, not just turning the wrist

#### **Swing Across body**

Contact right side of ball, index finger centered on ball

Snap wrist for top spin, not just sidespin

Swing across body OR turn torso in air and swing down side of body

#### **Roll**

**Contact** more **underneath** ball than attack

**Elbow** swings **forward** earlier than an attack (drops low in front of shoulder)

**Solid/Strong** hand contact, arm decelerates for softer contact (no floppy hand or wrist)

**Sell It / Deception:** high elbow to start, last second elbow drop

#### **Tip**

**Contact point** is similar to attack – keep ball **in front** of body

**Sell It:** high elbow fully drawn back before arm extends forward