



Beach Volleyball - Peeling off the Net

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In this section we are looking at the role of the blocker in the 2-a-side version of the game, and in particular what to do if you chose not to block.

Before we look at the peeling part of defence (also called "retreating" or "pulling" from the net) lets remind ourselves of some defensive "must do's".

One player must ALWAYS be at the net signalling a block to the defensive player BEFORE your opponent sets the ball for the attacker.

This signal is displayed behind the blocker's back and typical cross-court or line signal. Cross-court (or angle) is signalled using 2 fingers and line s signalled using 1 finger (not the middle finger...unless you're not happy with your partner's performance!)

So, there you are, at the net nice and early with a signal behind your back so your partner can see it. Lets say for example that you have elected to block line. Once your opponents have received the ball, you will follow the receiving player as it is this player who will most probably be attacking the third contact.

Now for the key part of peeling. You need to watch the set being made by your opponent like a hawk! If the set is close to the net you should be attempting to block the ball above the net. However, if the set is significantly off the net, it will be difficult for the attacking player to affect a power spike and is more likely to play a softer, looping shot. This is when you need to retreat, or peel away from the net in the direction that you signalled to block. In this instance you signalled a line block to you partner and therefore you should peel away from the net down the line.

Your goal when peeling is to get at least to the half-way mark on the court (i.e. 4 metres from the net) and stop before the spiker hits the ball so you are balanced when playing the ball. The other advantage to peeling and stopping before the ball is contact is that you are more able to get to a short shot as well.

It is also important that you don't start peeling away from the net until the set has left the setters hands. If you do peel too early, a good setter will see you move away from the net, hence set the ball very close to the net where the spiker will crush the ball straight down for an easy point. If you're lucky the ball might bounce in front of you and into your face on the half-volley. If you are unlucky it will bounce in front of you and then over your head and into the car-park! Very humiliating indeed. Try to peel as late possible and as fast as possible.

Good luck!