

**Skills 1**  
**Putting It Together to PLAY**  
**Class 3 of 4**

**Equipment:**

Ball Caddies, Nametags

**Introductions - 5 Minutes**

1. Share 1 rule or guideline (hints allowed).
2. Answer questions class might have regarding dinking, court placement, footwork, serving, score progression, NVZ, calling in/out balls, etc.
3. Remind participants to drink water when needed.

**Today's Line-up - 5 Minutes**

Dinking with a purpose

On court warmup discussion, demo, practice

Review Groundstrokes, Groundstroke practice

Serve and Serve Return Mini game

Play with partner communication

Cool Down

**Warm-up Stretches (See separate sheet) - 5 Minutes**

## Review 5 minutes:

### *Dinking with a purpose:*

1. Ready position
2. light grip
3. shuffle feet
4. keep eye on the ball all the way to the paddle
5. take a step back if needed to allow room to hit the ball after a bounce but return immediately to NVZ and ready position.
6. shoulder movement - low/high
7. weight on pads of feet
8. control
9. patience
10. move the ball around – don't keep hitting to the same spot

### *Serving: Volley and Drop*

1. Closed or semi-open stance.
2. Use your whole body. Weight transfers from back foot to front foot.
3. Grip about 8 out of 10
4. Smooth swing with follow through to opposite shoulder.
5. Compact backswing starting at back hip.
6. **Drop serve** – Ball must be dropped, not bounced.
7. The full score must be announced, 0-0-2 prior to the serve. Say loudly so the opposing team can hear

## On Court Warmup discussion, demo and practice: 20 minutes

Before starting to play, players usually warmup by dinking across the court with each other and then hitting a few serves and ground strokes.

With 4 people on the court:

1. Dink across to a player, trying to alternate hitting to forehand and backhand 6-8 times total.
2. Dink cross court to a player 6-8 times total.
3. Step back to the service line and serve 6-8 times. Then switch sides and serve 6-8 times from that position.

### **Review Groundstrokes - Forehand & Backhand**

Generally strongest shot. Objective is to hit it deep with some arc – gives more time to get to NVZ.

1. Foot work first – Move the feet BEFORE swinging paddle. Move to where you see the ball coming to.
2. Weight – Weight on balls of feet, with transfer weight from back foot to front foot. Back foot heel comes off the ground.
3. Grip – A harder grip for a farther return of the ball.
4. Shoulder /Hips – Rotate to be open face to the net as a swinging paddle to return the ball. Rotate hips on contact and follow-through
5. Contact the ball in front of you.
6. Follow Through – Swing continues to opposite shoulder as follow through before resetting to paddle ready position.

### **Groundstrokes Practice - 10 Minutes**

1. Instructors/trainers feed each player 5 forehands and 5 backhands.
2. Next player rotates in and repeat as above.
3. If time allows repeat above so each player gets 2 opportunities to return forehands and backhands.

## **During Water Break - Discuss Court Etiquette - 5 Minutes**

1. In/Out Balls - No questioning line calls. Only the players on the receiving side should call the ball “in” or “out”. If players can’t agree then the ball is considered “in”
2. Distractions - Avoid talking to players from sidelines during the game.
3. Language - No offensive language.

## **Play - 30 Minutes (Coach Players to)**

1. Partnering – Who has the middle, call for balls (“mine”, “yours”, “watch”). After the serve is returned, both players move towards the NVZ line.
2. Paddle ready – Knees bent, weight over pads of feet, paddles up (no frying pans!).
3. Ball – Watch the ball (trace) at all times- not the net or other players.
4. Footwork – Footwork first; you can tell where a ball is going to start moving your feet in that direction to meet it; don’t wait, you should always be shuffling your feet as the ball is moving around the court (ALL PLAYERS).

## **Review/Questions:**

Continue to practice and get more consistency with serves, returning serves, and dinking.

## **Cool Down Stretches (See separate sheet) - 5 Minutes**