



DRILLS FOR THE APPLICATION OF SCIENTIFIC PRINCIPLES IN SINGLES

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CONCEPT 1 Play Consistent Percentages

- **Forced/Unforced (5-5):** Players start at 5-5. When a player makes an unforced error, it is minus one point. But when a player wins a point off a winner or forced error of the opponent, it is plus one point. The objective is to get to 10 points before zero.
- **Grinders Paradise:** Players start on opposite baselines. Every time a player contacts the ball, the player counts one. The objective is to hit 20 balls in a row without making an unforced error. If the opponent makes an error, the opponent starts again at zero. The game is over when one player reaches 20 balls in a row without an unforced error. You can play a full scoring set.

CONCEPT 2 Know the Zones of the Court

- **Traffic Light Game:** Divide the court into 3 zones as follows –

Back court = Red zone	Groundstrokes, Lobs and Serves
Mid-court = Yellow zone	Approach shots, first volley and drop shots
Forecourt = Green zone	Volley and Overheads

The coach feeds the ball. The player nominates which shot will be hit depending on where (which zone) the feed lands. The point is over if the player transitions from the red to the yellow and then the green zone without making an error. If an error is made, the coach wins the point. Play to 11 points.

CONCEPT 3 Understand the Court Areas and Targets

- **Six Ball Drill:** Divide the court into 4 quadrants:
 - Quadrant 1 – Deuce side service box
 - Quadrant 2 – Ad side service box
 - Quadrant 3 – Deuce side back court
 - Quadrant 4 – Ad side back court

The coach feeds six balls and the player is required to hit the following targets:

- Forehand cross-court to quadrant 3
- Backhand cross-court to quadrant 4
- Forehand approach to quadrant 4
- Forehand volley to quadrant 1
- Backhand volley to quadrant 2
- Overhead anywhere

To add a competitive element to this drill, play a tie-breaker. Every time players are successful with all six shots in a row, they gain a point. Each time they miss, they lose a point.

- **Crocodile River:** Players stand on opposite baselines. One player puts the ball in play. Every ball must land over the service line. If a player hits a ball before the service line, the player loses a point. However, if the opposing player attacks the short ball and wins the point, the player is rewarded with two points. The first player to 11 points wins.
- **Alley Rally:** Players stand on opposite ends of the tram lines. The players rally the ball, which must land in the tram lines to count. Play to 21 points.

CONCEPT 4 **Limit Direction Changes**

- **Crosscourt Express:** Players hit crosscourt and recover back to the centre. When the ball lands short (outside the 4x4 target area between the baseline and the singles sideline), the player attacks the short ball and the point is live. The player cannot change direction or attack the ball up the line until the crosscourt ball lands short – they must keep rallying crosscourt. Play to 21.

CONCEPT 5 **Centre the Ball**

- **Two Bounce Drill:** Extend an imaginary line from each of the singles side lines back to the fence. One player feeds a ball to the other player on the opposite side of the court. The ball must land inside the singles sideline, including the imaginary, extended singles sideline. If a player believes the second bounce will be outside the singles sideline, the player can leave the ball as the player will win the point if it is outside the sideline. Play to 11.

CONCEPT 6 **Attacking the Short Ball**

- **Pyramid Grinder:** The coach feeds the ball to the player, who starts on the baseline. The player will begin playing sets and moving up the pyramid as follows:
 - Set One: one groundstroke, one short ball, one volley
 - Set Two: one groundstroke, one short ball, one volley; one groundstroke, one groundstroke, one short ball, one volley.
 - Set Three: one groundstroke, one short ball, one volley; one groundstroke, one groundstroke, one short ball, one volley; one groundstroke, one groundstroke, one groundstroke, one short ball, one volley.

After each volley, the player jogs back to the baseline. The player may rest in between sets. The exercise is completed after 10 sets.

CONCEPT 7 **Winning Plays and 1-2 sequences**

- **Net Dictator:** Players start on opposite baselines. A pile of balls is placed on each side of the court, under the centre strap. The coach signals “go,” and the first player to pick a ball up and feed it, stays at the net. The goal of the player on the baseline is to pass to the player at the net twice in a row, in order to take his/her turn at the net. A pass only counts if the volleyer has already hit one volley in that point. This encourages the one-two sequence with passing shots.

CONCEPT 8 **D-N-O (Defence - Neutral- Offence)**

- **Cliff Hanger:** Place a flat target or line one meter behind the baseline. Feed the ball and play the point out, but if a player steps outside of the line, the player loses the point. The objective is for the players to step up into the court and remain in a neutral or offensive court position. Play each game to 11 points.

CONCEPT 9 **Hold the Line on Low Volleys**

- **Dip & Rip:** One player stands on the baseline with the other just behind the service line. The service line player feeds the first ball and the baseline player aims to dip the first passing shot at the feet of the net player. The net player hits the first volley up the line. Now both players play the point out. Play to 11 and then switch roles.

CONCEPT 10 **Changing Gears**

- A variety of drills and games can be used here.
 - Play a set with only two second serves per game
 - Play a set where one player is not allowed to change direction off any crosscourt ball
 - Play a set where the player must serve and volley three times per game
 - Play sets starting at 5-5
 - Play a set where the server is down 0-30 every game