



Attacking – The Tool

During the hitting phase, the attackers can choose to hit around the block or hit at the block. The tool is a type of attack used to score by hitting the ball off the block to an area where the defenders cannot reach.

The Tool

The tool consists in hitting a weaker part of the block so the ball is deflected and impossible to defend. Generally, the tool is used down the line or towards the outside of the court, as the weakest part of the block is usually the outside hand. The tool can also be used towards the inside of the court (the inside blocker), however this attack must be much more powerful to deflect past the cross-court defender.



Pre-contact phase

- The approach is the same as a normal attack. The critical element is for the attacker to keep the ball in front of them as to see the ball and the blockers at the moment of contact.

Contact phase

- For the outside tool, contact made on the inside of the ball with the thumb pointing up (when hitting from position 4). The attacker is aiming at the outside hand of the outside blocker.
- For the inside tool, contact is made on the outside of the ball with the thumb down (when hitting from position 4). The attacker is aiming high at the hands of the inside blocker, who may often be drifting and unstable.

Post-contact phase

- The hand, wrist and arm follow through in the direction of the hit. Generally, the shoulders will rotate in the direction of the tool after the contact.
- The attacker lands on both feet and gets ready for the next action in case the ball is dug.

Tips for attackers on tooling the block

- **Hit high** into the block. If the ball is brought down, it is likely to be blocked.
- Identify the weakest blocker. Hitting off the biggest blocker often results in a block.
- Use the tip. You can tool the block on a tight set by pushing the ball into the block and then towards the outside of the court.
- Adjust the timing of your attack. By waiting a fraction of a second before hitting the ball, the blockers will be on their way down. The blockers arms will be pulling back and the tool becomes more successful.
- Have fun. Experiment by hitting different areas of the block and you discover which methods work best for you. You will greatly annoy the blockers while doing so.