



## 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.