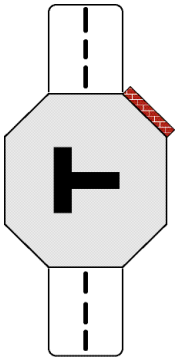
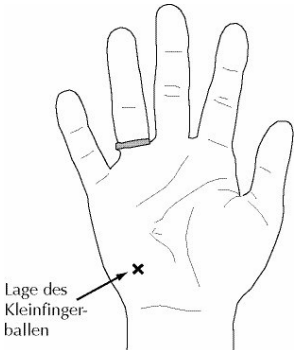
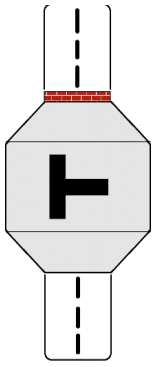
Checklist Volley

Description of motion: Volley in rally play	
Preliminary Notes	There are a few general differences between the volley game and the baseline game: • A shorter distance to the point that the ball is played from (Player's position close to the net and opponent's position on the baseline) leads to time pressure when playing a volley. • The arriving ball carries a higher speed than a baseline shot because it does not bounce before impact. • The ball hits the racket with different kinds of spin. Contrary to a baseline shot, the ball can also hit the racket with backspin (law of ball mechanics, no change of spin behavior due to the missing ground contact of the ball).
Ready Position	• The position can be very different. (Single, doubles, close to the net, left, right or further away from the net). • Athletic height (compared to the baseline shots: lower, arms more in front and higher) • Split-Step as a crucial preperation element for any stroke in Tennis, except serve.
Grip plus reasons for adjusting the grip between forehand and backhand volley in the learning phase	 **Forehand Volley**  **Positon of the ball of the pinky**  **Backhand Volley** Varying grip positions (see: graphic) lead to favorable points of contact for the different volleys. Therefore, various kinds of grips should be taught during the learning phase, particularily when the coach is feeding balls. The different grip positions lead to a good energy transmission. Later, those grip positions will develop individually and varying situations can be solved with different grip positions.
Preparation Phase	The fast rotation of the upper body towards the side of the shot is a deciding factor for a successful volley. The upper body movement varies between the backhand and forehand volley, because of the different positions of the hitting shoulder. When playing a **forehand volley,** the upper body rotates about 45° towards the side of the shot (for the forehand baseline shot it is 90°). For the **backhand volley** the shoulder axis should rotate immediately 90°. For both shots, the upper body rotation is inicitated by a step and a turn of the distance-determining leg. The racket face is being set just above the later point of contact. We always specifically talk about a "Setting" of the racket rather than "Swinging back" like we do for baseline shots. During the **backhand volley** the non-hitting hand holds the racket on the heart at the same height as the rear hitting shoulder. During the **forehand volley,** the left hands turns towards the side and stabilizes a compact preparation of the arriving ball.

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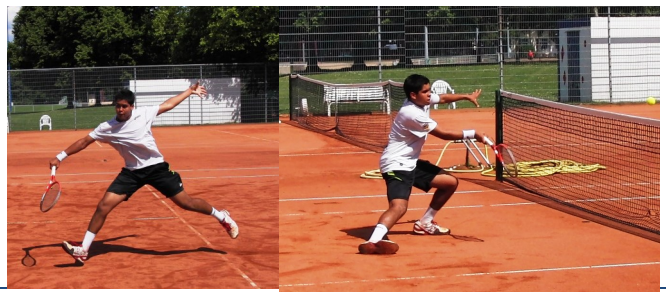
Preparation Phase — Setting of the racket	 • 45° upper body rotation forehand, 90° upper body rotation backhand • Setting of the racket just above the anticipated point of contact • Racket on the same height as the rear back shoulder • Non-hitting hand stabilizes in front of the body (forehand), non-hitting hand pulls the racket back on the racket heart when turning • Impulse out of the stem leg (here: left leg forehand, right leg backhand because both players are left-handed)
Hitting Phase with point of contact	• The previously distance-determining leg now becomes the stem leg and initiates the hitting phase. The pressure of the leg against the ground toward the direction of the shot initiates the hitting arm extension forward-downwards. • During the **backhand volley** the shoulder axis stays sideways, while the upper body rotates back during the **forehand volley.** • The point of contact is in front of the body towards the direction of the shot, ideally in between hip and shoulder height. • The point of contact of the **backhand volley** ideally sits even further in front of the body, because the hitting shoulder points into the direction of the shot. • The forearm extension of the hitting arm forwards-downwards is also the main action of the shot. • Ideally, the ball is hit **just before** the extension of the hitting arm. • Higher points of contact call for a steeper plane, lower points of contact require a more shallow plane. • The face of the racket during impact ranges from slightly open (low volley) to perpendicular (high volley).
Footwork	• The right leg during the **backhand volley** and the left legt during the **forehand volley** are being brought forward during the extension of the hitting arm. • The foot touches the ground **just after** the point of contact! • For very low points of contact the weight can be transferred to the front foot a little earlier to maintain balance. 

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End of the motion	When talking about volleys, we never speak about a full finish. In an ideal volley motion, the racket does not complete any further conscious movement after impact, because the movement is deliberately held short in its main action. The energy evaporates shortly after impact of the ball, however, the racket is quickly brought back into the ready position. The racket face, not the racket tip, points and moves as short as possible foward-downwards to the target. At the end of the movement the racket face should face the net and end about 20 cm below the edge of the net. During the **backhand volley,** the non-hitting hand moves against the direction of the shot backwards and upwards.
Summary	**Three different impact heights:** • Low = below the hip • Medium height = between hip and shoulder height • High volleys = above shoulder height **Five different solutions:** • Controlled volley long back to the playing partner or away from the opponent • Controlled volley playing an angle to prepare or directly win the point • Drop volley to prepare or directly win the point • Volley Lob (Opponent must run to the back away from the net) to prepare or directly win the point. • "Drive Volley" as a reaction to a high and slow ball. The point should be prepared to be won or be directly won through high speed of the volley. **Crucial competencies for a good volley game:** • Anticipation and perceptual abilities to early analyze the arriving ball • Split-Step as an absolutely necessary initial movement • Forearm extension and forearm rotation movements nitiate the hitting phase and set the incline of the racket. • Weight shift towards the direction of the shot supports the arm movement.
Discursion: The volley in youth tennis	Due to a lack of power, the **backhand volley** is often played with two-handed in youth tennis. Nevertheless, one should switch to a single-handed volley at some point during the course of a tennis-specific learning process. At the same time, it is also necessary to not only master the two-handed backhand baseline shot but also know how to hit a single-handed backhand slice. Boys usually reach those goals a little faster than girls. Following points are important when learning a **single-handed backhand volley:** • Eastern backhand grip • "Split –step" as a necessary shot preparation • Immediate upper body rotation towards the side of the shot • Active and fast-acting extension of the hitting arm into the shot direction • Weight shift towards the shot direction Have fun and success practicing your volley game!