

LESSON 4: STRATEGIES

Grade-Level Outcomes

Primary Outcome

Using tactics & shots: Reduces offensive options for opponents by returning to mid-court position. (S2.M8.6)

Embedded Outcome

Accepting feedback: Provides corrective feedback to a peer, using teacher-generated guidelines, and incorporating appropriate tone and other communication skills. (S4.M3.7)

Lesson Objectives

The learner will:

- apply the footwork learned by moving to a mid-court position after returning a serve.
- demonstrate the dink shot correctly.

Equipment and Materials

- 1 paddle for each student
- 1 ball for every 3 students
- Recording device for each group
- Grid space with a net for each group

Introduction

When playing any game, strategies are involved. In pickleball, body position on the court is important to strategy. Today, we will discuss and practice our footwork to keep ourselves in the optimal position after each hit for returning the ball.

Instructional Task: Returning to Home Base—Forehand

■ PRACTICE TASK

In groups of three, two students volley the ball using a forehand shot. After each return, students return to the center location.

The partner not volleying conducts a peer assessment using a video camera.

Refinement

Place a piece of tape to mark the home position to give students a visual of where to be.

Extension

Start the activity with a serve.

Guiding questions for students:

- Why is it important to move back into a central position on the court?
- How does reaching for a shot (not moving back to home position) affect the outcome of shots?

EMBEDDED OUTCOME: S4.M3.7. For the peer assessment, use teacher-generated guidelines. Discuss with students the proper way to offer feedback (when to do so, what tone of voice, etc.) to their peers using these guidelines. The assessment can address the critical elements of the footwork or a tally of times that students move back to home position.

Student Choices/Differentiation

- Students may use a different-sized ball if the speed or size of the ball is keeping them from having success.
- If students are not accurate with their forehand returns, have them toss the ball to their partners' forehand side instead of hitting.
- Students can challenge themselves to move partners to the corners of the court, forcing a longer recovery to home base.

What to Look For

- Students are stepping with the correct foot.
- Students are stepping back to the center after the swing.
- Students are performing the forehand correctly in order to step back to mid-court correctly and efficiently.

Instructional Task: Returning to Home Base—Backhand

■ PRACTICE TASK

Same task as before but now use backhand.

Extension

In groups of four, two players volley and return home for 30 seconds while partners count the number of times they hit the home spot. Switch.

Guiding questions for students:

- How is moving back into position similar and different between the backhand and forehand?
- Is it harder to get back using the backhand?

EMBEDDED OUTCOME: S4.M3.7. For the peer assessment, use teacher-generated guidelines. Discuss with students the proper way to offer feedback (when to do so, what tone of voice, etc.) to their peers using these guidelines. The assessment can address the critical elements of the footwork or a tally of times that students move back to home position.

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Instructional Task: Dinking

■ PRACTICE TASK

In grids, students work on the dink shot (soft shot hit within the no-volley zone to the opponents' no-volley zone), attempting to keep the ball from hitting the ground.

Extensions

- Repeat, but attempt to hit to a specific target. Lay a piece of paper on the court in the shallow (close to the net) part of the no-volley zone.
- Repeat from the back half of the court (drop shot).

Refinement

If the ball is going into the net, focus on lifting with the legs. If it's going too deep, try to use backspin.

Guiding questions for students:

- How does the footwork you learned in the previous practice task help in this activity?
- When would you use this shot?
- What other sports have a similar shot?

Student Choices/Differentiation

- Students may use a lighter ball that stays in the air to help keep it from hitting the ground.
- Students may choose to volley (no bounce) or let the ball bounce once.

What to Look For

- Students are using proper technique to return the ball.
- Students are using correct footwork, placing them in the correct area in order to be successful.

Formal and Informal Assessments

Peer assessment: Moving back to home position

Closure

- Ask students to explain why their footwork is important for defensive and offensive strategy.
- Review the correct form for the backhand and forehand, demonstrating how this relates to proper footwork.

Reflection

- Are students demonstrating an understanding of stepping with the correct foot after hitting shots?
- Which students are not successful with making contact with the forehand or backhand hits consistently enough to focus on proper footwork? What will I do next class to give them more support?

Homework

Using the handouts or website, review the rules of pickleball in order to officiate the games tomorrow.

Resources

Curtis, J. (1998). *Pickle-ball for player & teacher*. Boston: Brooks/Cole Cengage Learning.
 Dougherty, N.J. (Ed.) (2010). *Physical activity & sport for the secondary school student*. 6th ed.
 Reston, VA: National Association for Sport and Physical Education.
 Pickleball Channel: www.pickleballchannel.com
 USA Pickleball Association: www.usapa.org