



JUNIOR CAMP · GRADES 4 TO 8

The *eight-week* training plan.

A working outline of what your child trains, when, and why. The arc, the session shape, and the weekly focus are drawn from Volleyball Canada's Long-Term Development model and standard youth-beach coaching frameworks. Specifics on the day come down to the group, the weather, and what the players need next.

How I coach.

Three priorities sit on top of every drill we run. Athleticism. Fundamentals. The mental game. Equal in weight, drilled together, never in isolation.

Athleticism first

Sand is the best surface there is for building a young athlete. It punishes lazy footwork, demands real explosiveness on every jump, and conditions players without a separate fitness block. With two players on a court there are no specialists, so every junior serves, passes, sets, hits, and defends every single point. A summer in the sand changes how a player moves.

It's easier to take your outdoor skills into the gym than to bring your indoor skills outside.

KARCH KIRALY, USA VOLLEYBALL WOMEN'S NATIONAL TEAM HEAD COACH

Fundamentals, in progressions

Passing, setting, hitting, serving, defense, blocking. Every player drills every skill, every week. Drills run in progressions so a player who has never touched a ball and a player with a year of club experience can do the same drill at different intensities and both get a real workout. Up to twenty players per group, two coaches on the court, one-on-one pull-aside time built into every session. No one slips through.

The mental game

Volleyball is a reading sport. Where is the setter going? What is the hitter's shoulder telling you? Where is the wind? Anticipation is trainable, and the research is clear that it matters: a 2020 meta-analysis found decision-training programs produced significantly better decision-making improvements than standard training, with a large effect size (Conejero Suárez et al., 2020). Smart play is the edge that beats a bigger opponent.

More on this at lanarkcountybv.vercel.app/about. Simon.

What 90 minutes looks like.

Tue and Thu evenings, 6:00 to 7:30 pm. The focus of the day shifts week to week. The shape stays the same so players know what to expect.

12 min

WARM-UP

Dynamic mobility, sand-specific footwork, partner ball-handling. Heart rate up, joints awake, ball in hand inside three minutes.

25 min

TECHNICAL BLOCK

The week's focus skill, broken down. Slow reps with feedback, then live tempo. Two coaches working different ability groups in parallel.

25 min

DRILL BLOCK

Cooperative drills first to lock the technique in, then competitive variations. Pull-aside time with a coach built in.

18 min

SMALL-SIDED GAMES + COOL-DOWN

Short-court and mini-game formats that put the day's skill under pressure. Brief cool-down and a takeaway for next session.

Why this shape

The proportions follow FIVB and JVA youth-beach session guidance: roughly 15% warm-up, 30% technical, 30% drills, 20% small-sided games, 5% cool-down. The reasoning is that young beach players need volume of touch and decision-making reps, not lectures. Game-like play is when the day's skill actually gets stress-tested.

Week by week.

Junior Camp runs Tuesdays and Thursdays from June 30 through August 20, 2026. Sixteen sessions. The arc moves from individual skills (weeks 1 to 4) to combination play and competition (weeks 5 to 8).

WEEK 1 · JUN 30, JUL 2

Welcome to the sand

FOCUS	Moving on the surface. The sport before the skills.
OUTCOME	Comfortable with falls, recoveries, and basic contact in sand. Knows the rules and rhythm of the program.
FOUNDATION	<i>Volleyball Canada LTD, Learn-to-Train stage — broad athletic exposure before technical specialization.</i>

WEEK 2 · JUL 7, 9

Reception + footwork

FOCUS	The forearm pass and the footwork to get under the ball.
OUTCOME	Can pass to a target a few meters away with a stable platform. Reads basic server cues.
FOUNDATION	<i>Beach starts with the pass. FIVB Drill-Book technical progression, phase one.</i>

WEEK 3 · JUL 14, 16

Setting + short shots

FOCUS	Hands setting and bump setting, plus the short-shot family (cuts, pokes, dinks).
OUTCOME	Can deliver a ball to a teammate at a usable height. Has a soft attack option when a hard swing isn't on.
FOUNDATION	<i>JVA youth-beach topical arc, setting-and-shot-variety week. Sand setting is held to a more forgiving standard than indoor — see FIVB sand officiating notes.</i>

WEEK 4 · JUL 21, 23

Attack: approach and swing

FOCUS	The sand-specific three-step approach. First swings with intent at a target.
OUTCOME	Can approach and contact at intended height. Distinguishes line from angle.
FOUNDATION	<i>FIVB Drill-Book attack progression. Sand approach mechanics are different from indoor — broader jump, flatter trajectory, more push-through.</i>

WEEK 5 · JUL 28, 30

Serve and serve receive together

FOCUS	The serve-receive exchange, trained as a pair. Players serve, players receive, players read each other.
OUTCOME	Has a reliable underhand or float serve. Reads the server's body before contact.
FOUNDATION	<i>Serve and pass coached together accelerates both. LTD Learn-to-Train decision phase. JVA topical arc, week 5.</i>

WEEK 6 · AUG 4, 6

Defense

FOCUS	Defensive ready position. Reading the hitter's approach. Digging mechanics on the line and the angle.
OUTCOME	Tracks a hitter through their approach. Gets in position before the swing, not after it.
FOUNDATION	<i>Defense comes after offense in the arc — players have to be hitting at intent before they can train defending the hit. FIVB Drill-Book defensive progression.</i>

WEEK 7 · AUG 11, 13

Reading the game

FOCUS	Anticipation. Partner communication. Environmental play — wind, sun, side switching.
OUTCOME	Recognizes a play developing before the ball arrives. Calls with their partner.
FOUNDATION	<i>Conejero Suárez et al. 2020 meta-analysis on decision training (Hedges' $g = 0.94$). Wang et al. 2024 on early kinematic cues — expert volleyball players read shoulder, hip, and arm before the ball is contacted.</i>

WEEK 8 · AUG 18, 20

Compete

FOCUS	Apply everything. Internal round-robin tournament on the Thursday.
OUTCOME	Played in a real tournament environment. Closing one-on-one with a coach on what to keep working on after the summer.
FOUNDATION	<i>LTD Learn-to-Train competition phase — apply what's been built. Pizza after.</i>

Where this comes from.

The arc is not improvised. The session shape, the eight-week progression, and the priority on the mental game all draw on published coaching frameworks. The short list below is where the methodology comes from, in case you want to read further.

Selected sources

Volleyball Canada · Long-Term Development model (LTD 3.0, 2024). The national framework for athlete development. Junior players (roughly ages 9 to 13) sit at the Learn-to-Train stage, where skill acquisition and broad athletic development take priority over specialization. volleyball.ca/en/about/ltad

Ontario Volleyball Association · Athlete Development Pathway. The OVA pathway lays out the four dimensions every program develops together: technical, physical, psychological, and life skills. teamontariovolleyball.org/athlete-pathway

FIVB Beach Volleyball Drill-Book (2024). The international federation drill library and session structure. The shape we use — warm-up to technical to drill to game-play to cool-down — follows the FIVB structure. fivb.com

JVA · Growing Your Beach Program (Jamie Walsh). A topical eight-practice arc widely used at the youth level in North America. Our weekly themes follow a similar arc. jvavolleyball.org

Conejero Suárez et al., 2020 · meta-analysis on decision training in volleyball. Published in *Frontiers in Psychology*. Decision-training programs produced significantly better decision-making improvements than standard training (Hedges' $g = 0.94$, 95% CI 0.63 to 1.25). Smart play can be coached directly. [PMC7277643](https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2020.01277)

Wang et al., 2024 · anticipation in expert volleyball. Experts use early kinematic cues (shoulder, arm, hip) to anticipate the play. Novices wait for the ball trajectory. The gap closes with training. [PMC11274628](https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2024.1127462)

It is not where you are, it is who you are; it is not how big you are, it is how good or how great you are.

MARV DUNPHY, PEPPERDINE HEAD COACH, 1988 USA OLYMPIC GOLD-MEDAL COACH

Questions about any of this? Text Simon at 613-207-9303 or DM @lanarkcountybv.