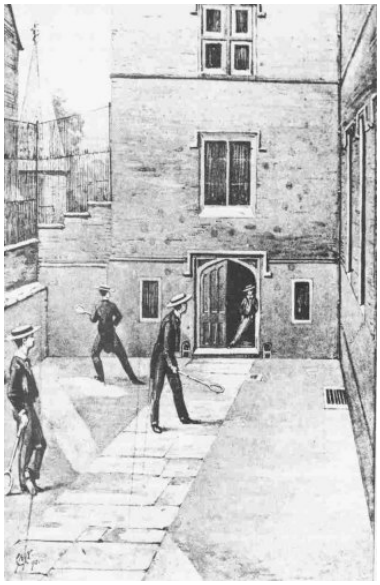
SQUASH

(A) History



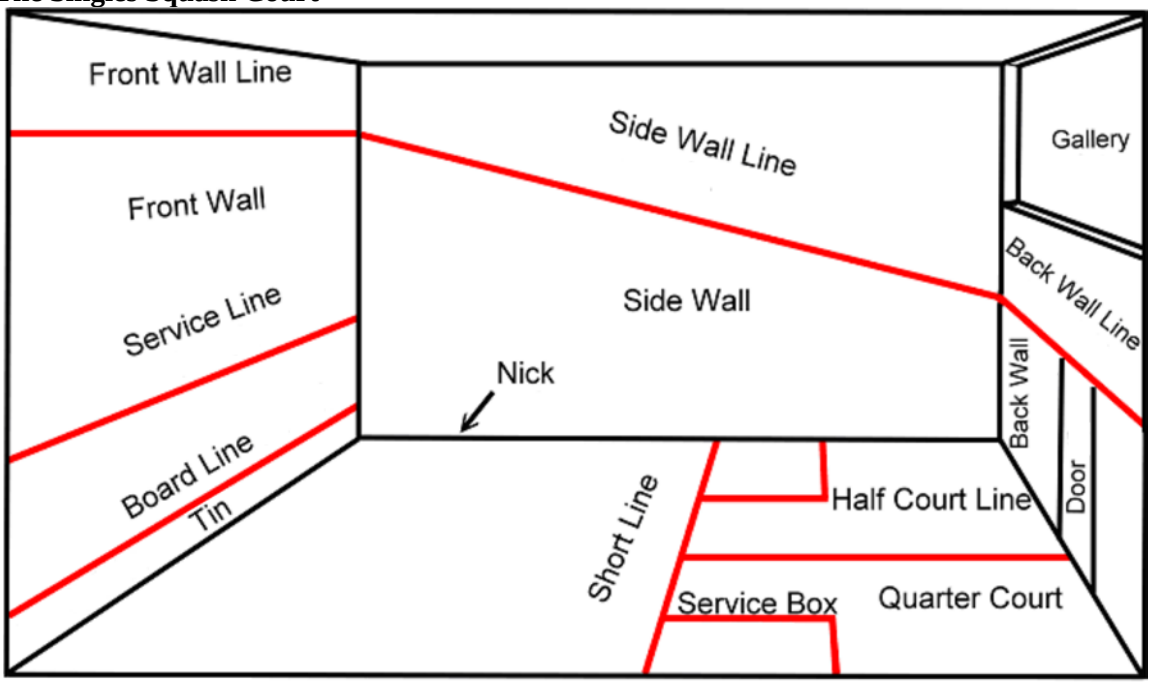
The sport of Squash was originally developed as a variant of Rackets. Rackets were first created at the beginning of the 19th century in Fleet prison London where prisoners played with a ball inside their cell with the four walls. Squash is believed to have started at Harrow School around 1830 in England when some boys became tired of waiting for their chance to use the rackets court and played impromptu games with a small rubber ball on the court outside the wall. The sound of the ball's impact on the wall was different from that of Rackets, and they discovered that a punctured rubber ball "squashed" on impact with the wall. In 1864 the first four Squash courts were constructed at the Harrow School.

In its early days, international squash was controlled by the Squash Rackets Association of England and the United States Squash Rackets Association, while in 1968, the International Squash Rackets Federation (ISRF) was formed. The ISRF continued to thrive and was amalgamated with the Women's International Squash Federation in 1985. In 1992, the name of the Federation was changed to the World Squash Federation (WSF). The World Squash Federation now had 135 National Squash Associations in its membership. It is recognised by the International Olympic Committee (IOC), and maintains responsibility for the rules of the Game, Court and Equipment Specifications, Refereeing and Coaching, maintains a World Calendar of events and organises and promotes World Championships for Men, Women, Junior Men, Junior women and Master age groups in both singles and doubles Squash.

(B) History of Squash in Hong Kong

Hong Kong was introduced to squash by army services (British) in the early 20th Century. The first squash court was built on the present Hong Kong Squash Centre site in the Army grounds of Victoria Barracks as it was then, but Hong Kong Park as it is now. It is also where Hong Kong Squash is located. Hong Kong Squash Rackets Association (HKSRA) was founded in 1961. Squash over the years in Hong Kong has grown enormously in popularity and has proven a most suitable sport for her limited space not only in competition but also as a recreation. To place direct emphasis on 'squash', the Association officially in the year 1996 became Hong Kong Squash (HK Squash).

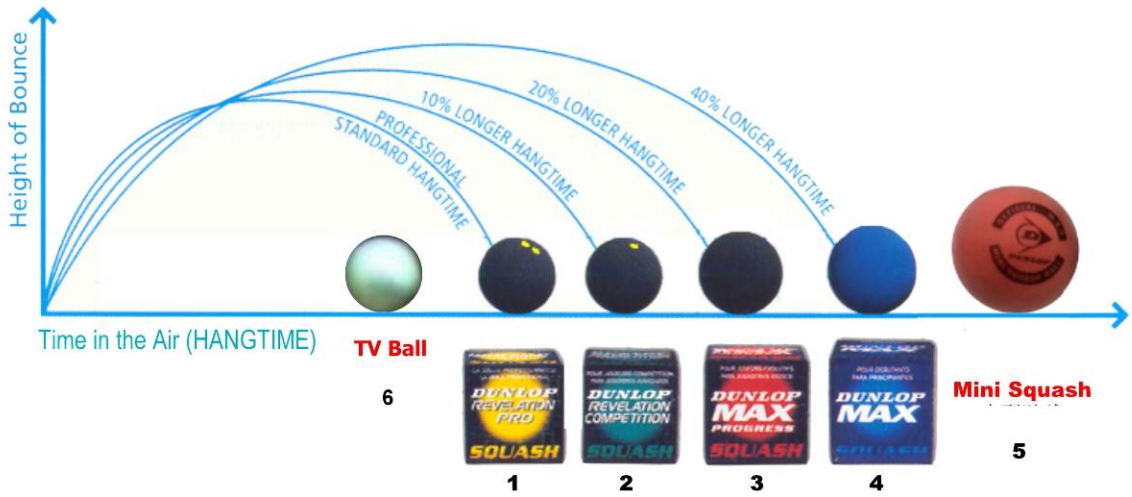
(C) The Singles Squash Court



(D) Rackets

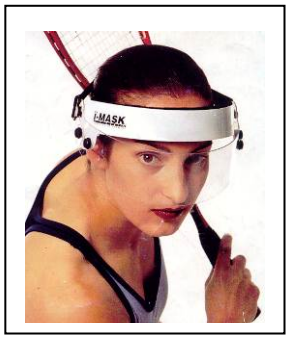
Frames are made of graphite.
Strings are synthetic fibers or gut.
"Fan" stringing is an alternative to traditional stringing pattern.
Maximum length : 686mm.
Maximum width : 215mm.
Maximum weight : 255gm.
The most suitable racket is usually chosen by "feel".

(E) Balls



1. **Revelation Pro XX** Traditional size black ball with double yellow dot, official match ball for professional / advanced player
2. **Revelation Competition XT** Traditional size black ball with a single yellow dot, 10% increase in hangtime, suitable for club player
3. **Max Progress** 6% bigger black ball, 20% increase in hangtime, suitable for recreation / improver player
4. **Max** 12% bigger blue ball, 40% increase in hangtime, suitable for learners & occasional players
5. **Mini Squash Ball** Spongy pink ball for kids' squash
6. **TV Ball** Traditional size white ball for professional / advanced player & better television capture

(F) Eye Protection



The World Squash Federation recommends that all Squash players should wear protective eye guards over the eyes at all times during play. From 1st January 1999 onwards, all junior competitors (age 19 or below) have to wear protective eye guards at competitions organized by Hong Kong Squash. Eye guards for players wearing or not wearing glasses are available.

(F) Clothing

Players should put on a pale colours polo shirt with a collar and a short/skirt to avoid affecting their opponent seeing the ball. Squash calls for lots of sudden acceleration and rapid changes in direction, so well-fitting cotton socks are important. Another essential is that players should wear white or non-remarkable soled indoor shoes with good arch support to prevent sore feet.

(G) The Single Games

Serve

- To start the match, the right to serve is decided by the spin of the racket.
- The server can choose the service box on either side of the court.
- The server must stand with one foot in the service box.
- He/She drops the ball or throws it in the air and hits it before it touches the floor/walls directly to the front wall between the service line and the out-of-court line, so that it lands in the back half of the opposite court on its return from the front wall.
- Only one serve is allowed.
- The server must alternate the serve from each side of the court if he/she continues to score a point. He/She continues to serve until he/she loses the rally. Then the opponent becomes the server and he/she has the right to serve from either side of the court.

Rally

After a correct serve, players alternate hitting the ball until the rally ends when one of the players makes a mistake:

- Not up: the ball is not struck correctly by the server or striker; OR when the ball bounces more than once upon the floor before being struck by the striker; OR the ball hits the floor before it reaches the front wall; OR when the ball touches the striker or anything he wears or carries other than his racket.
- Down: the ball hits the board line or the tin.
- Out: the ball hit the out of court line or the wall above the line.

The ball can strike the back or side walls in any combination in its flight towards or away from the front wall.

Scoring (Point-a-rally to 11, PAR11)

A standard match is played as the best of five games. Each game is played to 11 points. Either player may score a point in a rally. The player who scores 11 points wins the game except that if the score reaches 10-all, the game continues until one player leads by two points. The server, on winning a rally, scores a point and retains the service; the receiver, on winning a rally, scores a point and becomes the server. The winner of the previous game serves first in the next game.

Terms

- Boast: A shot played so that the ball hits the side wall before hitting the front wall.
- Lob: A shot played so that the ball hangs high in the air and falls almost vertically to die in the back corners.
- Drop Shot: The drop shot is a delicately placed stroke that lands close to the front wall.
- Volley: A ball hit before it bounces, either on the forehand or backhand side.
- Tight, length & width: In squash, the players will try to hit the ball close to either walls (tight) or to the back of the court (length). They will also hit the ball away from their opponent (width) to avoid them volleying.
- Nick: It is the junction between two walls or between the wall and the floor where the ball dies immediately.
- T-position: It is the area at the junction of the short line and the half-court line.

Warm up

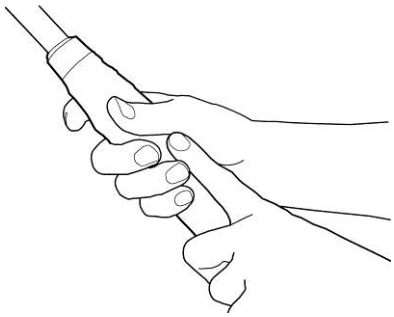
At the start of a match, the players go on the court together to warm up the ball for a maximum of 4 minutes. After 2 minutes, the players must change sides unless they have already done so. The players must have equal opportunities to strike the ball (2-3 times).

(H) Technique

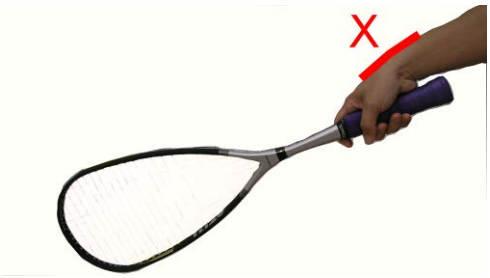
Grip

Racket face perpendicular to the floor:

1. The 'V' formed by the thumb and index finger is placed over the shaft inside the edge.
2. Thumb touches the middle finger.
3. End of the palm rests on the top of the handle.
4. Keep the wrist up for good ball control.
5. Middle finger, 4th finger and last finger spread out.
6. Index finger and middle finger are separated a finger width.
7. To reduce arm muscle fatigue, hold the racket tight just when you hit the ball.

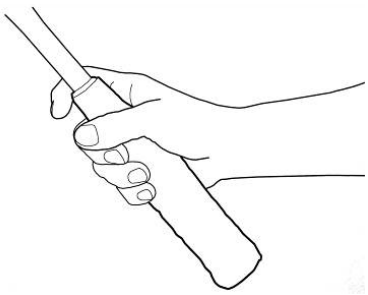


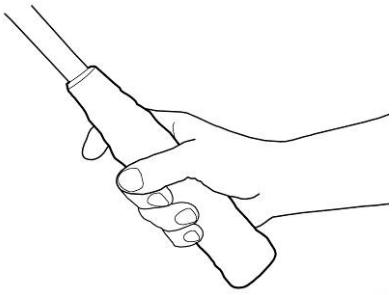
Correct grip size

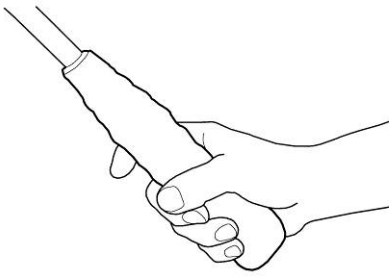


Wrong：dropped wrist

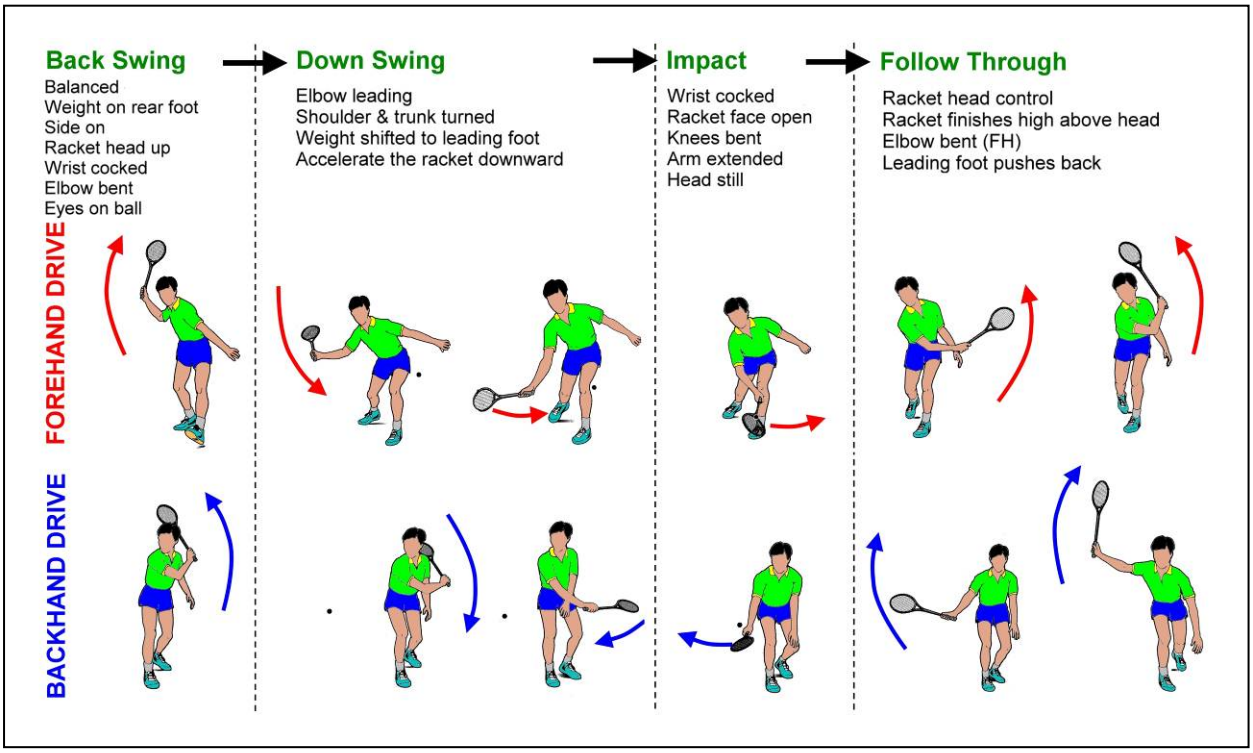
Short Grip:	**Mid Grip:**	**Long Grip:**
More control but less power.	Good control and power	Less control but more power





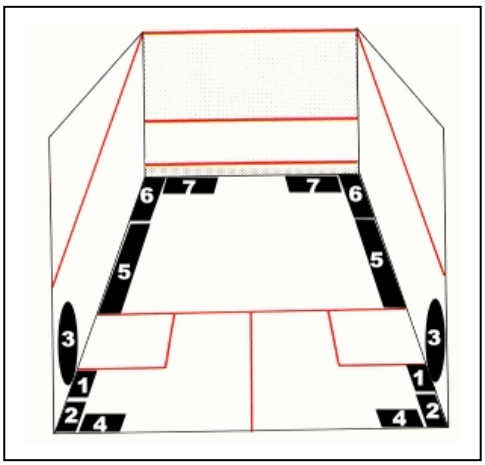


Forehand and Backhand Drives



Target Areas

Targets for different shots are shown below:



Area 1 - Straight/Crosscourt Dying Length Drives

Area 2 - Straight Full Length Drives

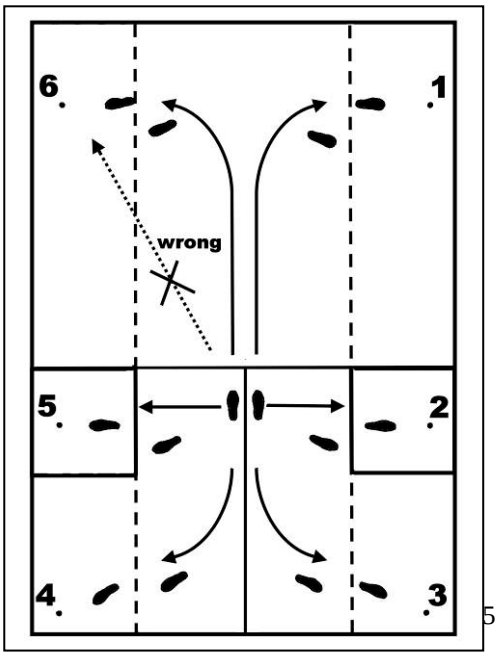
Area 3 - Crosscourt Full Length Drives, Services and Lobs rebound area and landing in Area 4

Area 5 - Straight/Crosscourt Kills

Area6 - Straight/Crosscourt Drops

Area 7 - Fading Boasts

Footwork



- Ready at the "T" and watch the ball all the time.
- Don't run to the ball. Walk in an arc.
- Move up and down the middle of the court to a place at the side of the ball.
- Try to keep outside the "sidelines"(dotted straight lines).
- Keep the ball between yourself and the wall.
- Keep the leading foot one racket length away from the ball.
- Return to the "T" after hitting.

(I) Tactics

Basics

1. Avoid unforced errors which will benefit your opponent.
2. Recover to the “T” (the area around the centre of the court) as quickly as possible after striking the ball to shorten the distance to cover for the next shot.
3. Keep your opponent running by hitting the ball away from them and making them tired.
4. Hit the ball mainly to the back of the court to force your opponent to make a short and weak return for your attack.
5. Pressurize your opponent by volleying their loose shots which will give them less time to react to the next shot.
6. Vary your returns, timing, height and hardness of your hitting (pace control) to limit your opponent’s anticipation.
7. Hit the ball tight for good length and wide for crosscourt to avoid opponent volleying
8. Hit the ball high and soft when under pressure to gain recovery time.

Shots Selection (Note: Aiming at hitting the ball away from the opponent. Refer to attached illustrations.)

The most appropriate way to return your opponent's shots:

:

a. Boast ---------- Drop

b. Loose Straight Drive ---------- Volley Boast

c. Loose Crosscourt Drive ---------- Volley Drop

d. Short Straight Drive ---------- Boast

e. Serve & slow to reach “T” ---------- Volley Straight Drive

f. Loose Drop ---------- Crosscourt Drive

g. Loose Angle (front court boast)---------- Straight Drive

h. Anticipated Drop ---------- Crosscourt Lob

(J) Interference

The player whose turn it is to play the ball is entitled to freedom from interference by the opponent. To avoid interference, the opponent must make every effort to provide the player with:

1. Unobstructed direct access to the ball;
2. A fair view of the ball on its rebound from the front wall;
3. Freedom to hit the ball with a reasonable swing;
4. Freedom to play the ball directly to any part of the front wall.

Interference occurs if the opponent fails to fulfil any of the above requirements. When one player is obstructed by his/her opponent, he/she can call out loud 'let please'. The appeal for interference will be decided by the Referee with either “Yes Let”, “No Let”, or “Stroke”. The Referee, when making his decision, shall go through the following line of reasoning:

Question	Decision
1. *Did interference occur？*	
Yes	No➔ No Let
➓	
2. *Could obstructed player have reached the ball and made a good return, and was that player making every effort to do so？*	
Yes	No➔ No Let
➓	
3. *Did obstructing player make every effort to move clear？*	
Yes	No➔ Stroke to obstructed player
➓	
4. *Was the obstructed player in a position to play a winner？*	
Yes	➔ Stroke to obstructed player
No (The player could only make a good return)	➔ Yes Let

(K) Video Review (May be used where the technology is available)

1. A player may request a review of an Interference decision of Let, Stroke, or No Let **only**. Each player has one review per game; if the original decision is overruled, the player retains the review.

2. When the score reaches 10-all, each player will reset to have 1 review available.

3. The Referee could ask the Video Referee for help with a decision whenever necessary.

(L) Further attempts to hit the ball

If the striker strikes at the ball and misses, further attempts may be made to strike it.

(M) Turning

1. If the striker could have struck the ball without turning, but turned in order to create an opportunity to request a let, no let is allowed.

2. If the striker had turned and the ball hit the non-striker, a stroke is awarded to the non-striker.

(N) Injury

1. *Self-inflicted Injury*

The Referee allows a time interval of 3 minutes. If the injured player requests additional recovery time after this, the Referee will require the player to concede 1 game and accept 90-second intervals, and then resume play or concede the match.

2. *Contributed Injury*

The Referee allows 1 hour for the injured player to recover. The injured player must, by the end of this period, resume play or concede the match.

3. *Opponent-inflicted injury*

(a) Accidental: The Referee shall apply a conduct penalty to the opponent. The injured player is permitted 15 minutes to recover. If the player cannot resume play, the match is awarded to the injured player.

(b) Deliberate or Dangerous Play: If the injured player requires any time for recovery, the match is awarded to the injured player. If the injured player can continue without delay, the Referee shall apply a conduct penalty to the opponent.

(O) Illness

1. A player who suffers an illness that involves neither an injury nor bleeding must either continue to play immediately or concede the game in progress and take the 90-second interval between games to recover. This includes conditions such as a cramp, nausea, breathlessness, and asthma. Only 1 game may be conceded. The player must then resume play, or concede the match.

2. If a player's vomiting or other action causes the court to become unplayable, the match is awarded to the opponent.

(P) Bleeding

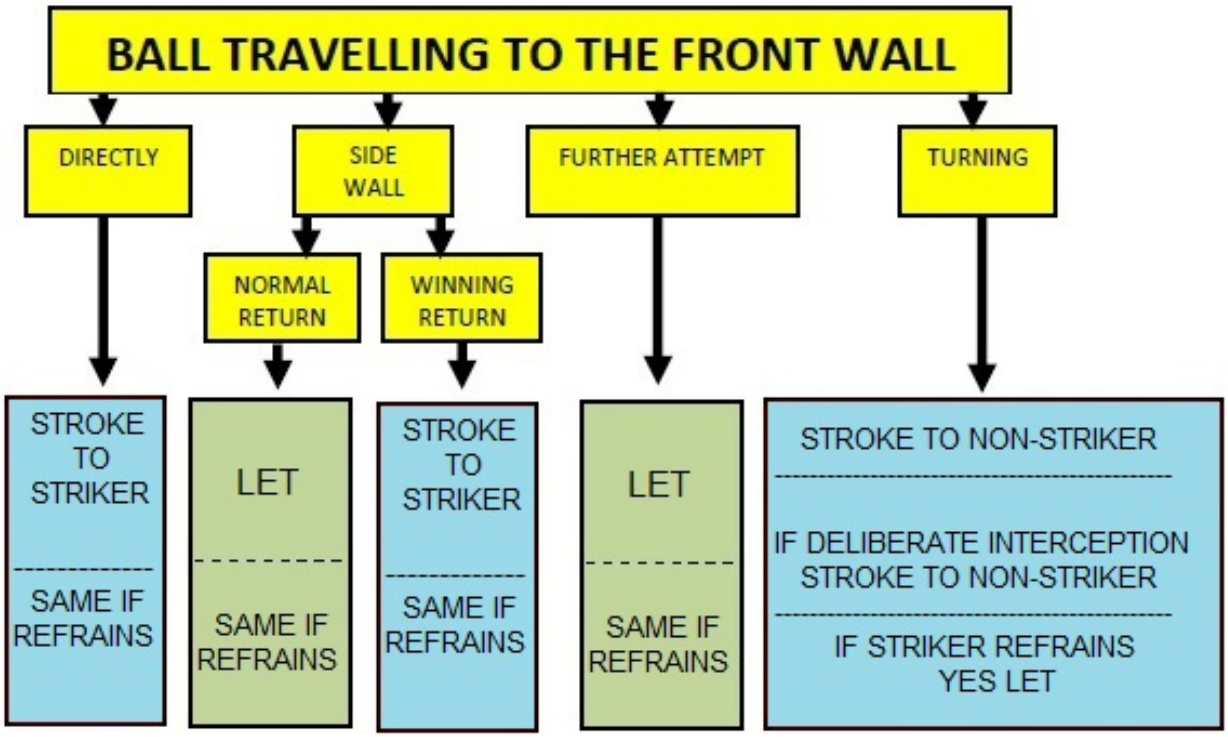
1. Whenever bleeding occurs, play must stop and the player must leave the court and attend to the bleeding promptly. Reasonable time for treatment is allowed. Play may resume only after the bleeding has stopped and, where possible, the wound has been covered.

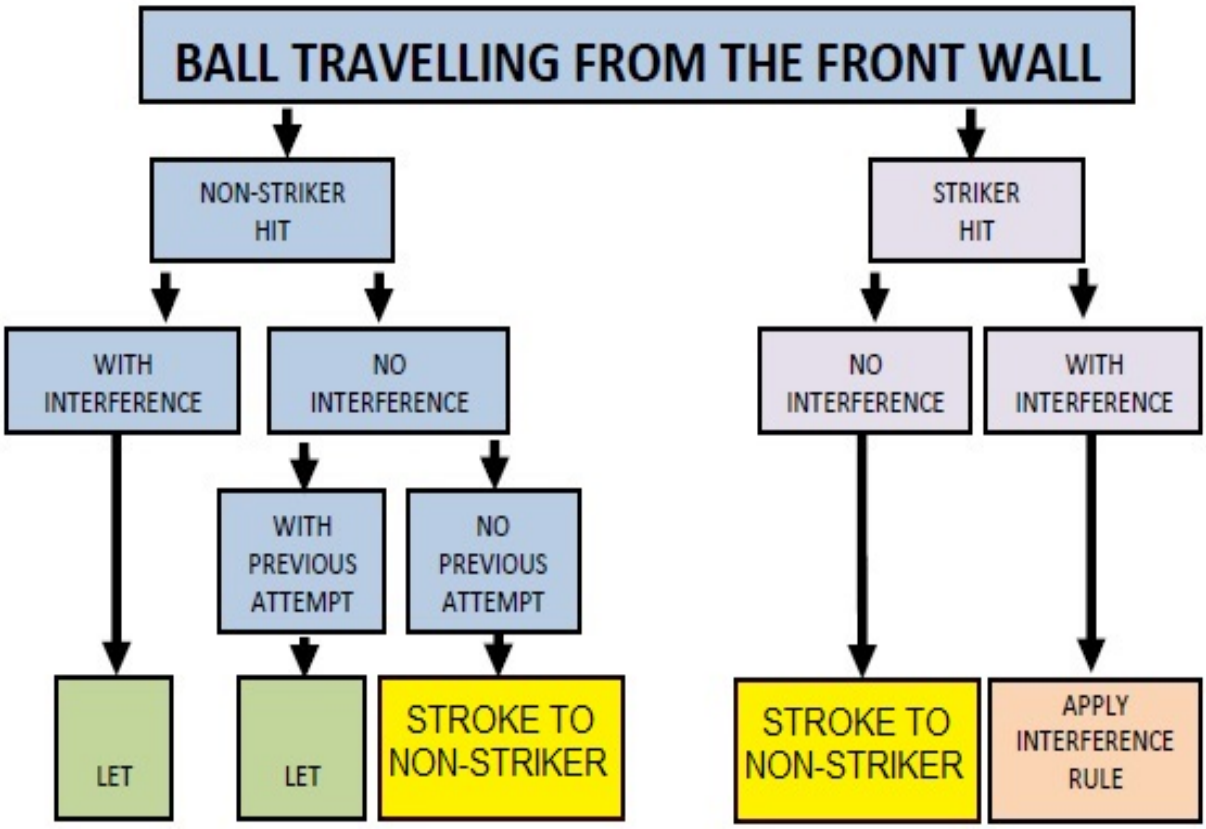
2. A player who is unable to stop the bleeding within the time permitted must either concede 1 game and take the 90-second interval and then continue play, or concede the match.

3. If the bleeding is the result of the opponent's deliberate or dangerous play or action, the match is awarded to the injured player.

(Q) Ball Hitting A Player

Players shall avoid hitting their opponent with the ball at all times during a match.
On the condition that the return would have been good:

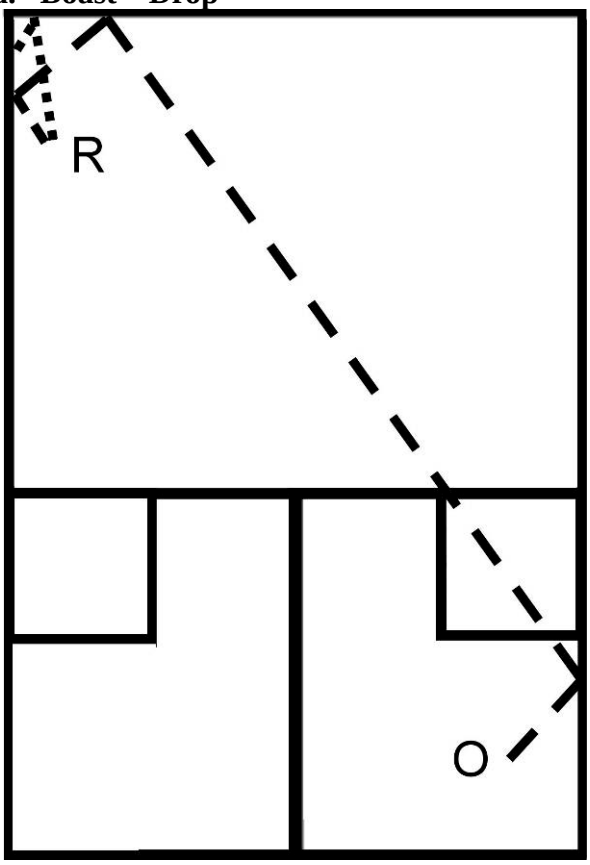




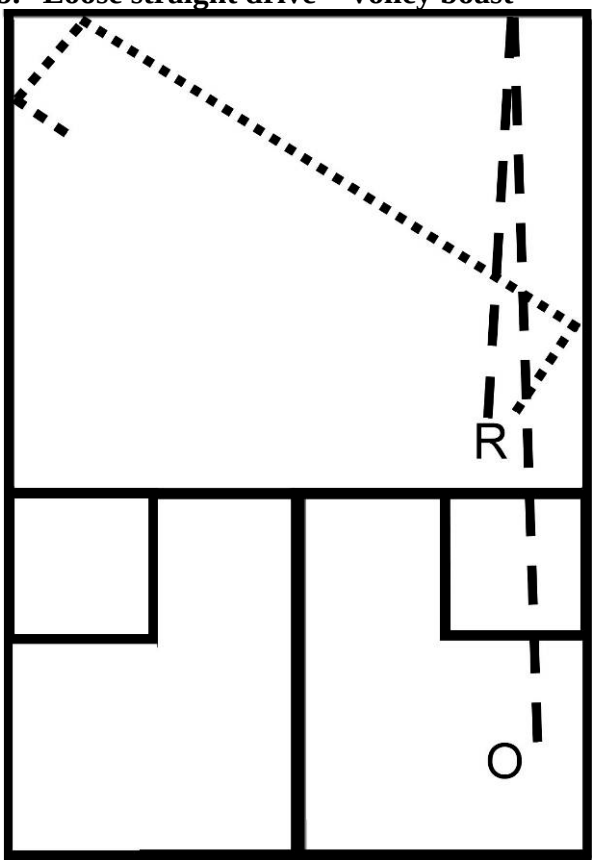
Shots Selection Illustrations:

"O" opponent shot — — — "R" your return ·····

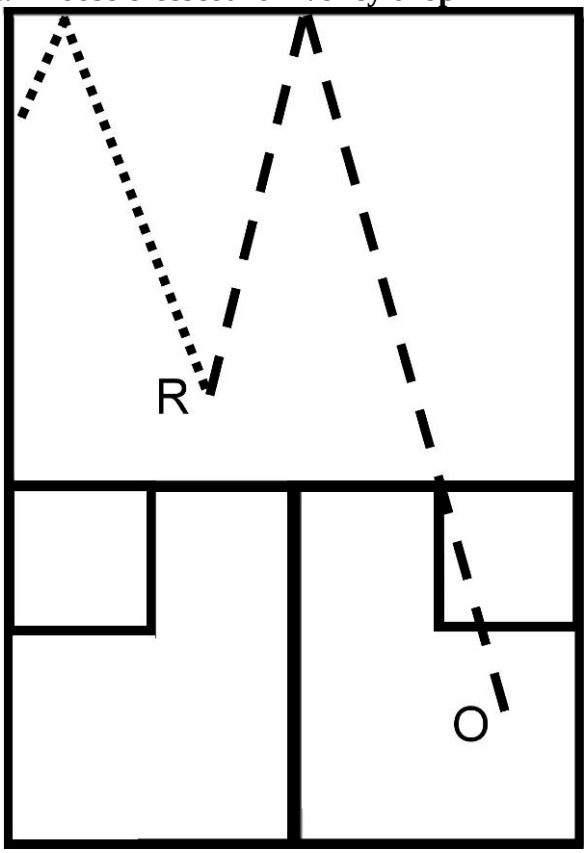
a. Boast – Drop



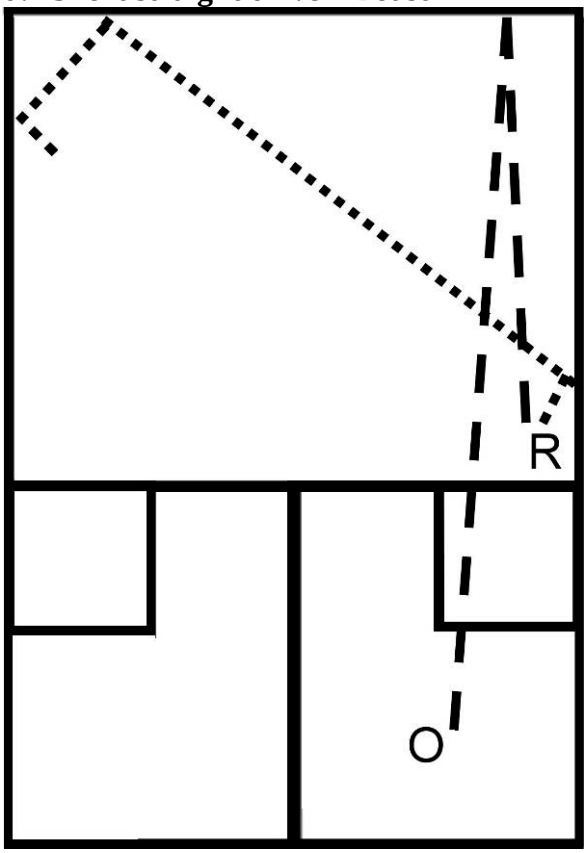
b. Loose straight drive – Volley boast



c. Loose crosscourt – Volley drop

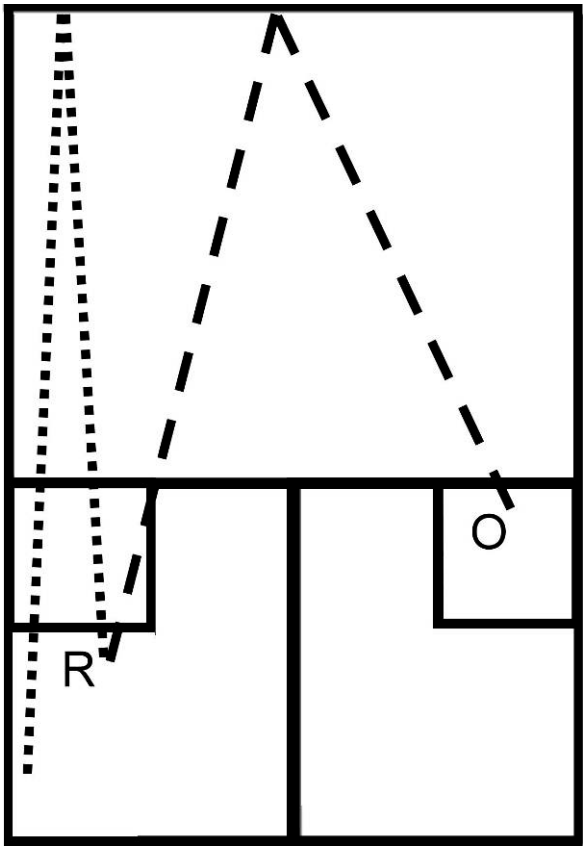


d. Short straight drive – Boast

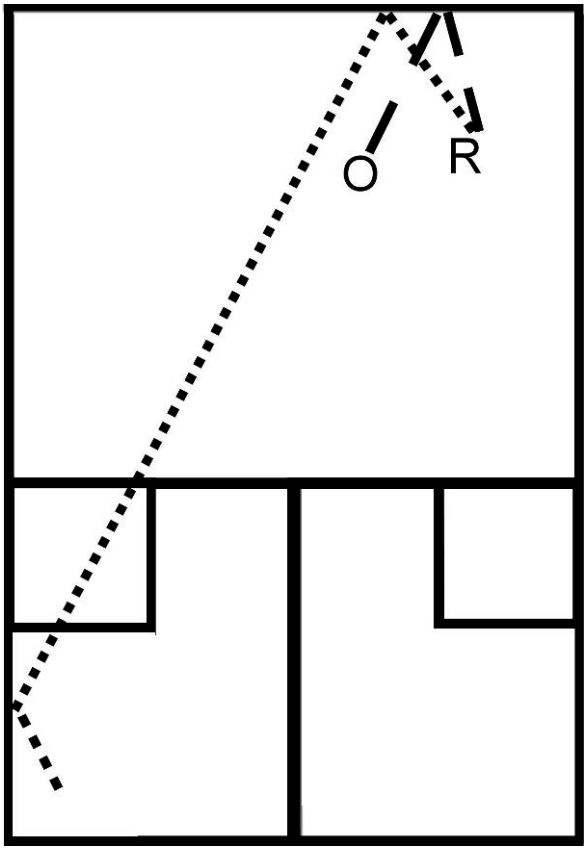


Shots Selection Illustrations (cont'd):

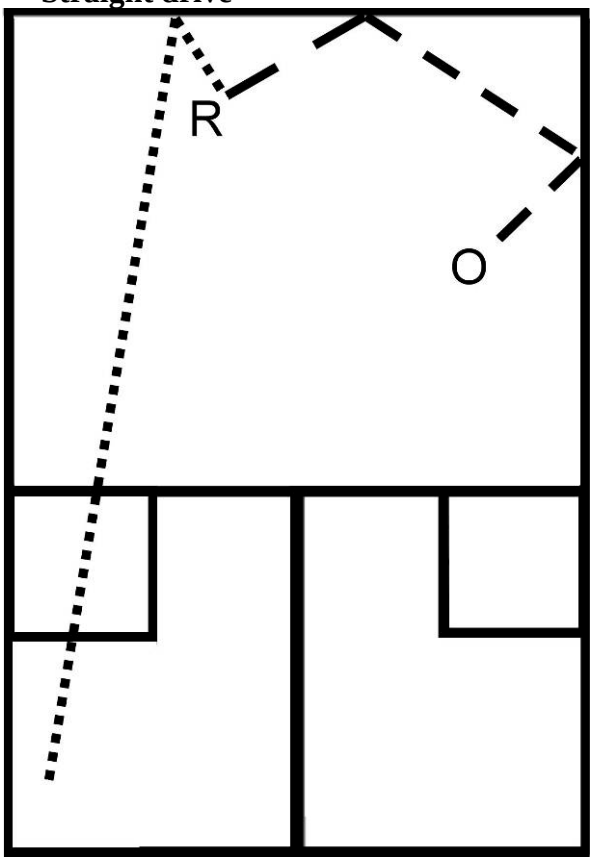
e. Serve & slow to reach T – Volley straight drive



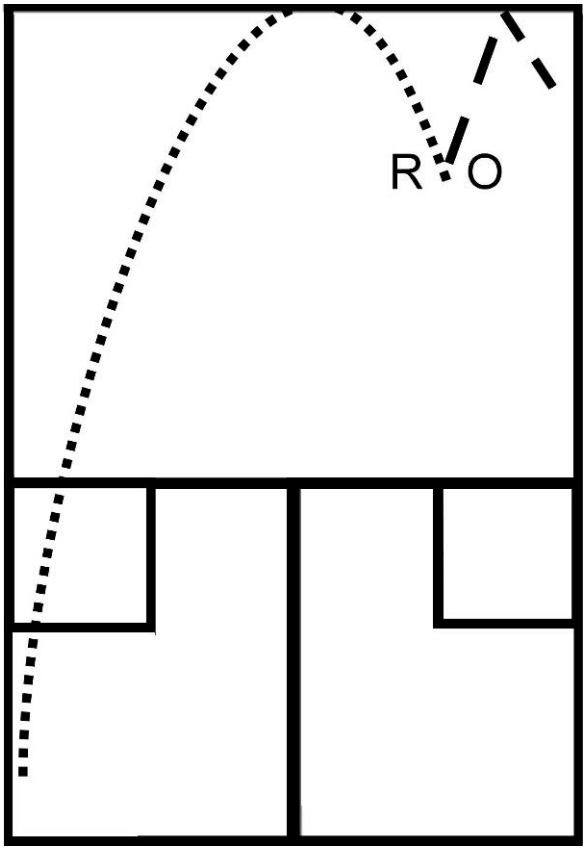
f. Loose drop – Crosscourt drive



g. Loose angle (front court boast) – Straight drive



h. Anticipated drop – Crosscourt lob



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