



WHAT MAKES A GREAT SETTER?

Well Conditioned: The setter touches almost every second ball and during half the match must transition from the back row to the front. This player moves more than any other player on the team and, in order to perform consistently throughout the match, needs to be in the best physical condition of any team member.

Right Attitude: The setter must be emotionally stable. This player must be able to handle pressure, be consistent, and learn from mistakes without becoming overwhelmed. The setter also must be able to handle playing the role of a behind-the-scenes player. Very few kudos go to setters, just like the front-line blocker in football who create the holes and protect the quarterback don't get a lot of attention. And yet, what they do is critical for the success of the play.

Coachable: Because the setter runs the team, she needs to work closely with the coach. The setter must be able to absorb and use what is taught.

Problem Solver: The setter needs to quickly discern whether an attacker is struggling or being shut down by the defense and how to circumvent that; which of the hitters is hitting best; and what type of sets each attacker can hit best. Setters have to make split-second decisions about which sets they can use, depending on the type of pass they receive, and they have to set to an ever-changing cast of hitters.

Observant: Setters need to know who the opponent's best blockers and defensive players are and what offense is best to bypass them. They want to contrive an attack that will put their hitter one-on-one with a blocker.

Team Leader: The setter runs a team's offense. This player controls not only who gets the set but the type and speed also. If the setter is confident in her role, the rest of the team tends to be confident, too, and everything will run more efficiently.

Physically Strong: The majority of sets should go outside, to the left of the court. The setter must be able to push the ball repetitively to the sideline with accuracy.

Good Blocker: the setter's front-row, right-hand position pits her directly against the opponent's best outside hitter, so ideally the setter is also a strong blocker.

Quick Reactions: Setters typically play defense on the right side of the court. The majority of opponent's attacks come from this side of the court also. The line shot is the quickest hit to defend. Also, the line tip is one the most difficult to dig. These both are the setter's responsibilities to get. The setter must also transition to the net from defense quickly whenever the ball does not come to her to dig.



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Good Server: If setters are not good servers, they are much more difficult to substitute, because you must put another setter in to serve (if you are running a multiple offense with the setter coming from the back row to set).

Good Communication: Setters need to call the balls they take (to minimize crashes), talk to their hitter, call free balls and down balls, and direct the opposite or other players to step in when the setter has to take the first defensive hit. Quiet setters allow chaos to reign on the court. The other players don't know who is getting which balls or what is expected of them. A good communicator can remind the team to cup for hitter coverage and can tell her hitters how many blockers are up or give them a key to help them hit better. Setters can help their hitters be more productive.

Hustler: Setters are expected to take every second hit they can get to, because they are the best on the team at what they do. Also, being team leaders, their example will have an infectious effect on the rest of the team.

Team Player: It really helps if the setter is congenial. If the players have confidence in the setter's abilities and respect her decisions, the team will be more successful. The setter is choosing who gets to attack the ball and what kind of attack is implemented. THE SETTER'S JOB IS NOT TO MAKE EVERYONE HAPPY BUT TO RUN AN EFFECTIVE ATTACK.