Week 5: Baseline Assessment

60 minutes | 16 players | 4 courts | Current level: 4.0+

Hi everyone! The plan for this week is a little different than the earlier weeks in that we are going to do some assessment to help you create a baseline for tracking your progress/improvement. You can use the table on the last page to keep track your results, which can also help you identify patterns and choose something useful to practice.

Goals for this week

- Move around opponents and construct points in crosscourt and up-the-line dink games.
- Establish success baselines for drops, serves, returns, deep volleys and groundstrokes.
- Separate hitting targets from 'good shots' that develop your plan.

Drilling Plan

#	Time	Drill	Style	Minutes
1	00–15	One-on-one kitchen ladder	Competitive rallies	15
2	15–30	Drops: six starting-side/target combinations	Friendly feeds	15
3	30–50	Serve and return targets	Staged attempts	20
4	50–60	Deep volleys and groundstrokes	Friendly feeds	10
	60–150	Rec play: apply your chosen cue	Point play	90

Getting started

- **Groups.** Four players per court. After the ladder, we'll assign assessment groups and numbers 1–4. Stay with that group for drills 2–4. No need for fixed doubles partnerships since the drill tracking and feeding will be individual.
- **Roles and records.** For assessments use two active balls, with one side of the court feeding and the other trying the specific shot. Cycle through the positions counterclockwise every five shots so that everyone tries each position.
- **Friendly feeds.** Feeding can be surprisingly difficult if you aren't used to it. Try to keep your feeds comfortably playable and similar in depth and pace. Replay unusable feeds rather than counting them as misses for the player attempting the assessment.
- **Keep the ball moving.** Each attempt ends at its first landing (or miss), don't keep playing out the ball.
- **Targets and records.** Use flat yellow tape/lines, with yellow boundaries counting in. "Left/right" means the hitter's half while facing the net. Record five consecutive attempts per player, not five successes.

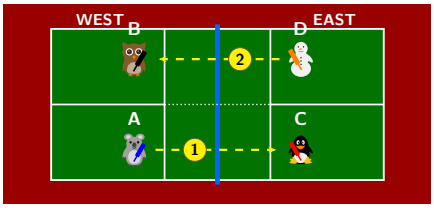
In rec play

Focus on one shot type where your performance wasn't as strong as you expected and try to keep track of what happens when you try similar shots in real games.

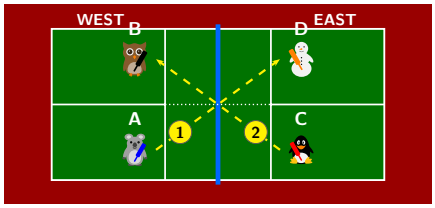


1. One-on-one kitchen ladder 00–15 min

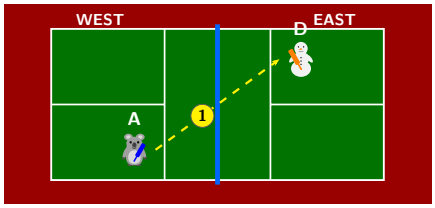
Key idea. Win competitive kitchen points!



1. Up the line: two games.



2. Crosscourt: two dink games.



3. ATP option: one active pair.

Set up. Four players at the kitchen with two balls and separate scores. Crosscourt pairs are A/D and B/C and line pairs are A/C and B/D. Each pair uses the receiving player's kitchen half. Ordinary shots must bounce there if left alone but legal dink volleys are allowed. Balls that land outside the kitchen are out.

Scorekeeping. Simplified-start rally scoring with soft feeds into the opponent's kitchen. Let it bounce, then the ball is live. Replay bad feeds. Each rally winner earns 1 and feeds next, so losing the feed is an immediate side out. No second server or score-driven position switches.

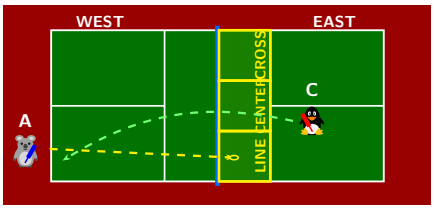
What wins a rally? We may adjust this list before a round:

- **Regular Scoring:** Your legal dink is unreturned, or your opponent hits the net, misses the assigned kitchen half, or commits another fault.
- **Up the line:** a legal Erne landing anywhere in your opponent's same half-court wins automatically. .
- **Crosscourt ATP option:** a legal ATP landing anywhere in the opponent's court wins automatically.
- **Bailouts:** Successful bailouts don't lose points, just refeed and start again.

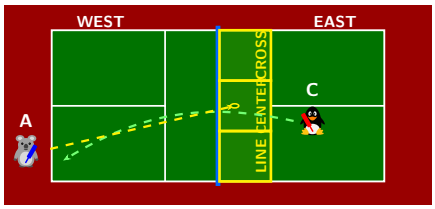
Timing and switches. One minute gentle dinking warmup then several 3-minute slots. We'll rotate between crosscourt, line, crosscourt, line each time. At the whistle, finish the rally, with one deciding rally breaks a tie. Winners move up a court, while losers move down. Top winners and bottom losers stay. Swap opponents between rounds so that you are always dinking with someone new.

2. Third Shot Drop Targets 15–30 min

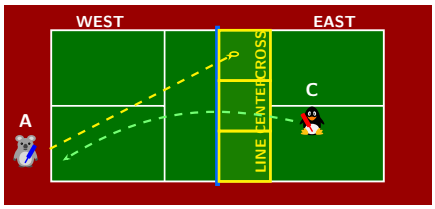
Key idea. Land the drop in the kitchen and make the next attack difficult.



1. Line: five attempts.



2. Center: five attempts.



3. Crosscourt: five. Mirror all three.

Set up. Hitter starts just behind the baseline with their partner at the opposite kitchen line feeding friendly deep balls. Let it bounce, hit a drop, then let the drop land. Mark the opposite kitchen in three equal width bands with yellow lines using the full kitchen depth.

Drill notes. From the right half, hit five up the line, five center, and five crosscourt. Then repeat from the left half (30 per player). Count each set separately. Note whether the drop is unattackable as well, since high bounces or dead dinks aren't really the goal.

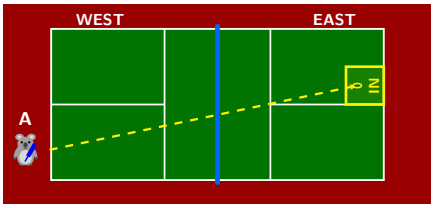
Timing and switches. Each hitter completes right line/center/crosscourt (three sets of five) before changing rotating. After each pair has completed their set, rotate everyone one position around the court.



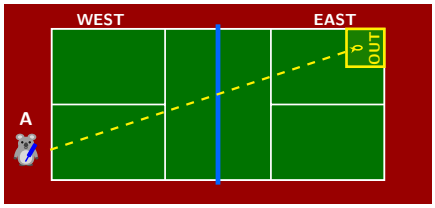
3. Serves and Rturn Targets

30–50 min

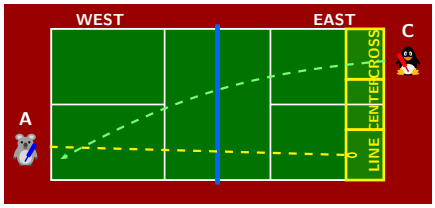
Key idea. Hit repeatable deep shots to a specific target.



1. Serve: inside / T, five.



2. Serve: outside, five. Mirror both.



3. Return: line / center / cross. Mirror.

Set up. Mark a yellow depth line 5 feet inside the opposite baseline. All the targets are in that final 5-foot strip. Serve targets split the legal diagonal service box into two halves (inside/T and outside/sideline), each 5 feet wide. For returns, divide the full court width into three equal bands, as for drops but now at the baseline.

Drill notes.

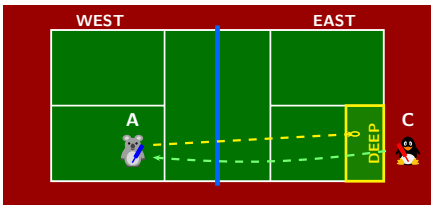
- **Serves:** five inside and five outside from the right serving position. Then repeat from the left (20 total). Use your normal legal serve. Record the number of target hits and whether you kept useful pace and depth.
- **Returns:** partner serves a reasonably friendly legal ball diagonally to the hitter, who starts behind the baseline. Return five line, five center and five crosscourt from each receiving half (30 total). Feeder lets the return land to see if it is in but doesn't hit a third shot. Note whether the return would give you time to advance.

Timing and switches. Rotate after each server completes their sides inside/outside (10 balls), then change roles. Same for returns. Keep the tests separate (i.e. don't count returns off of the targeted serves) so feeds stay comparable.

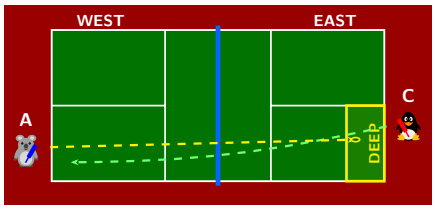
4. Deep volleys and groundstrokes

50–60 min

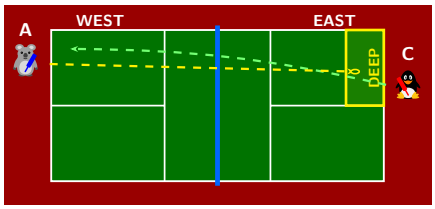
Key idea. Hit controlled balls deep up the line.



1. Volley: five deep up the line.



2. Groundstroke: bounce, then five.



3. Repeat both shots from the other half.

Set up. Keep the yellow line 5 feet inside the far baseline so that you have 10 feet wide by 5 feet deep. One active hitter and one friendly feeder on both sides. The feeder starts near the opposite baseline, sends the feed, then lets the ball bounce (hopefully in ☺).

Drill notes.

- **Volleys:** hitter starts just behind the kitchen line. Feed a comfortable volley-height ball. Hit five deep up the line from the right half, then five from the left (10 total). Keep the volley and its momentum out of the kitchen.
- **Groundstrokes:** hitter starts just behind the baseline. Feed a friendly ball that bounces comfortably in front. Hit five deep up the line from each half (10 total). Use a controlled drive rather than a lob, both forehands and backhands are fine.

Timing and switches. After each hitter completes five right and five left volleys, have everyone change roles. Once all four finish, repeat for groundstrokes.

Week 5 baseline

Keep this page

Name: _____ Date: _____

Five attempts per row. Enter **H** = hit or **X** = miss. Add a star (*) if the shot was also good. Use notes for forehand/backhand, misses,or cues or your own analysis.

Start / target	1	2	3	4	5	Kitchen /5	Target /5	Quality / miss / cue
Drops: 30 attempts								
Right / line								
Right / center								
Right / crosscourt								
Left / line								
Left / center								
Left / crosscourt								
Serves: 20 attempts								
Right / inside (T)								
Right / outside								
Left / inside (T)								
Left / outside								
Returns: 30 attempts								
Right / line								
Right / center								
Right / crosscourt								
Left / line								
Left / center								
Left / crosscourt								
Deep volleys: 10 attempts								
Right / line								
Left / line								
Deep groundstrokes: 10 attempts								
Right / line								
Left / line								

What stands out? Best performance / common miss / useful feedback:

Goal for next time: _____