

Coaching Tips – The Soft Shot (Dinking)

The soft shot (dink) originates at the Non-Volley Zone (NVZ) and drops over the net into the opponent's NVZ. It is a shot that neutralizes opponents who want to hit hard.

Body Position

- Players should have a continental grip with a wrinkle in their wrist.
- The wrist should be laid back but is not used in the motion of a soft shot. The soft shot is performed with the use of the shoulder and legs.
- Legs are bent, body is square to the net, and paddle is out in front of the body.
- Try not to take the ball behind the body as this will most likely give your opponent a high ball that they can attack.

Drills with a partner (3 progressions):

1. At the NVZ, hit a soft shot over the net to your partner. Arc the ball so that the apex (highest point) is on your side of the net and the ball drops into the kitchen on the other side. Initially, do this co-operatively to get the feel of the soft shot.
2. Move your partner around their half of the court by hitting a soft shot to their right foot, left foot and center. By moving your partner (or opponent) around, you are trying to get them out of position and force a pop-up that can then be attacked.
3. Down the line/cross court: One partner hits a soft shot down the line and the other partner returns a soft shot cross court (again just on half of the court). This allows you to move the partner (opponent) around and forces you to control where you place the ball. After a few minutes, switch; the partner who initially hit a soft shot down the line will now go cross court.