



The Pointing Shot

This bocce shot is played more as a gentle smooth shot. It is generally rolled, as opposed to being thrown/tossed, and is used to either gain a point or increase the number of points already held. This is in contrast to trying to displace other balls through a forceful delivery.

Learn the difference between delivering a pointing shot from a standing position and that played with a running motion.

Athlete Readiness

- Athlete is able to use smooth arm action throughout delivery of the bocce ball.
- Athlete understands concept and strategy of playing a slower, more smoothly released shot.

Teaching the Event

Standing position

Stance

- ◆ The athlete spreads the feet slightly apart, the width of the shoulders.
- ◆ Take one step forward on the opposite leg to the arm with which the athlete rolls, i.e. a right-handed athlete steps with the left foot forward.
- ◆ Ensure the feet are pointing toward the target. And remind athletes that they should always focus their eyes on the target or target area.

Delivery

- ◆ Push the ball forward to approximately eye level followed by a downward swing.
- ◆ Have athlete bring his/her arm straight back, close to the body.
- ◆ Remind him/her to keep the elbow straight and take the weight mainly on the back foot.
- ◆ As he/she smoothly brings the arm straight forward, he/she should transfer the weight to the front foot.
- ◆ As the arm passes close to the leg, the weight should be balanced between both feet.



Release

- ◆ Have athlete release the ball onto the court surface just in front of him/herself.
- ◆ Continue moving the hand forward and upward in a natural follow-through motion.
- ◆ Remind him/her to keep the front foot behind the foul line and shoulders square to the target at all times.

This shot can also be played with a tossing motion, although it is not as commonly used with this action.

Stand behind the athlete

- While the ball is waist high, put the athlete's hands underneath the ball and push it up and out to eye level.
- With athlete's right hand underneath the ball, take the athlete's right hand, with the ball in it, and make a downward swing.
- At the same time, extend the athlete's left arm outward for balance.
- The athlete is standing in the back swing position with the arm extended.
- With the right hand, the athlete supports the ball from underneath and starts a forward motion of the ball.
- Remind the athlete throughout the entire movement that this is a slow gentle release as opposed to a strong fast release.

Stand beside the athlete

- Have the athlete swing the ball forward and ensure the ball is being released in a smooth motion. If not, with your right hand, force the ball loose from the grip so that it goes forward.
- Remind the athlete that the speed of the follow-through should not be fast.

Stand behind the athlete

- After release of the ball, place right hand on the athlete's right hand and wrist.
- Move his/her arm upward so that his/her arm is parallel to the ground.
- At the same time, with your leg, slide the athlete's left leg forward so that it stops before the foul line. Adjust athlete's shoulders square to the target.

Coaching Tips

- Here the emphasis is to deliver the bocce ball with a smooth gentle release so as to gain a point or improve on the current lie of the play. It is not a quick, fast and forceful movement like the "Hitting Shot". For the athlete to establish good smooth speed throughout the whole movement, he/she may benefit from counting at stages throughout the delivery.
- You may have to help the athlete not only with the initial forward swing, but with the back swing and slow, smooth forward action with follow-through to target.



The Pointing Shot – Faults & Fixes Chart

Error	Correction	Drill/Test Reference
Ball is traveling too fast along the court.	Have athlete count from start to finish through whole movement.	Have athlete practice slow gentle releases to short distance targets.
Ball is not traveling as far as it needs to along the court.	Hold athlete's arm at top of back swing and have him/her pull against your force and also count.	Have athlete practice slow gentle releases to long distance targets, varying distances.
Arm is not passing close to the body.	Place a towel under athlete's armpit throughout movement.	Arm Wall Swings will assist muscle memory and let the athlete feel how the arm should flow and the path it should take.
Wrist is turning at release.	Have athlete practice with a piece of paper in hand and try and obtain Wrist Flicks.	Have athlete practice Wrist Flicks drill and also pitch a softball underhand back and forth to a friend.



Coaches' Tips: The Pointing Shot – At-A-Glance

Tips for Practice

1. When holding the ball at side, have athlete count throughout the entire delivery movement. This will help prepare the athlete for learning the flow and speed of the delivery.
 - ♦ If the athlete has too much back swing, a handkerchief/towel placed under the armpit of the rolling arm may help correct the problem. On a proper back swing, the handkerchief remains in place and does not fall out.
 - ♦ “One” - ball swings forward
 - ♦ “Two” - ball swings back
 - ♦ “Three ” - smooth forward swing of arm
 - ♦ “Four” - and released ball up the court
2. Tell the athlete, “Do not apply too much muscle power to the swing; just let the weight of the ball carry it back and then come straight forward.”
3. Talk the athlete through the delivery. Count together until he/she learns the speed of the count and its relationship to the speed of the body movement.
4. Once the athlete begins to use the proper movement from a standing position and wants to progress to a running pointing shot, have the athlete get into an approach rhythm and count steps. Count “1” for 1st step and ball moves forward, “2” for 2nd step and ball moves back, “3” for 3rd step and ball comes forward, “4” for 4th step and “release the ball.” Do this without a ball a few times, increasing the speed of action each time. Repeat after a few times using a ball.
5. Stand behind the athlete, counting the steps while the athlete performs the steps. After a few times, let the athlete practice on his/her own. Remember to have him/her count the steps out loud.
6. To get the athlete to release the ball before stepping over the foul line, place a towel or small piece of rope from one side of the court to the other over the foul line and tell the athlete to throw the ball out over the towel/rope.
7. Position of arm and hand on the follow-through can be demonstrated by taking a towel and putting a knot in it. Give the towel to the athlete and then back away. Have the athlete do a one-step delivery, throwing the towel to you and using your stomach as the target. Watch the follow-through: The athlete should have his/her right arm extended with the right hand pointing at your stomach and the wrist pointing up. Explain that this is the same motion to use when rolling a bocce ball.
8. A home training method is to have athlete and a friend practice pitching a softball underhanded back and forth to each other. The same motion is used to deliver the bocce ball. After the pitch, look at the position of the arm, hand, and thumb.
9. Correct athlete if rolling hand finishes across and in front of the body.
10. Hand, arm and shoulder follow through in a straight line with target. After the ball has left the athlete’s hand, have him/her follow through so that the elbow passes to the position directly above the head.