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AFRICA COACH'S GUIDE and Notebook

Presented By: 



A Program Of
 NBA Cares 

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Dear Coach,

From time to time, various people will inquire from us, "Who are the individuals who have had the most influence in your life?" Our response remains consistent – our parents and high school coaches. Each assisted with the molding of our character, the quality of our education, our passion for athletics and our thirst to become a high caliber human being. Under our coach's tutelage, we learned a wealth of life's lessons which served us well as adults.

As a coach, you have an extraordinary opportunity to be a positive contributor in the lives of the young people you mentor. You are a teacher and enabler. Someone who helps others live up to their unique potential and realize their dreams. Never underestimate the enormous impact you have on each individual on your team. The game needs you and all other coaches to play their part. I encourage you to teach your students not only to be a winner on the court, but also to be a winner in the game of life.

Please take full advantage of this tremendous resource provided to you by Nike and the NBA. It is our hope the basketball knowledge contained here will be shared and spread across your continent. Only then will we be able to unleash and inspire the vast basketball potential of Africa. Please join us in this endeavor by sharing your passion, your energy and your expertise with any young people you encounter. And always remember: if you don't give them your best, there is no reason for their best to be given back to you.

Nike & the NBA thanks you for all you do for youth and the game of basketball. We wish you continued success and happiness!

Sincerely,

George Raveling
Director, Nike Global Basketball
Sports Marketing

Glenn "Doc" Rivers
Head Coach
Boston Celtics, NBA



TEACHING LIFE SKILLS THROUGH SPORT

The game of basketball provides a unique outlet to educate young adults about the important issues facing their communities. Providing the necessary information on Health & Wellness, Fitness and Education will allow young adults the opportunity to evaluate their actions and make better lifestyle decisions in the future.

HERE IS A SUGGESTED PLAN OF ACTION:

Identify then select the top three health and education issues facing your community

- Reach out to your health care/education providers to correctly identify the key issues
- Identify community organizations & setup meetings with them to discuss these issues
- Ask young people in the community and listen to their thoughts on the issues they face

Reach out to the key stakeholders in your market to share thoughts on the appropriate training, knowledge or materials of the top 3 issues facing your community. It is important to consistently communicate the messaging to all of your young adults

- Incorporate life skills messaging into each practice and/or game
- Invite representatives from partner organizations to speak at these seminars
- After each seminar, ask the audience for their feedback on the seminar
- Analyze the data and determine which seminars the kids feel more engaged; you may need to tweak some of these lessons to gain more attention from the audience

For more information on health and nutrition, refer to the back pages of this guide.



Through NBA Cares, the league, its teams and players have committed to donating \$100 million to charity, providing one million hours of hands on service to the community and creating 250 places where kids and families can live, learn or play. NBA Cares works with internationally-recognized youth-serving programs that support education, youth and family development, and health and wellness.



EXAMPLES OF LIFE SKILLS SEMINARS

EDUCATE YOUR TEENS

Young people cannot protect themselves if they do not know the facts about HIV/AIDS. Adolescents must learn the facts before they become sexually active, and the information needs to be regularly reinforced through schools, communities and the media.

It is necessary to maintain continued HIV/AIDS education in order to reach each new cohort of adolescents and to build upon the existing knowledge of all young people.

USE THESE 10 EDUCATIONAL STEPS TO PREVENT HIV/AIDS

1. End the silence, stigma and shame.
2. Provide young people with knowledge and information.
3. Equip young people with life skills to put knowledge into practice.
4. Provide youth-friendly health services.
5. Promote voluntary and confidential HIV counseling and testing.
6. Work with young people, promote their participation.
7. Engage young people who are living with HIV/AIDS.
8. Create safe and supportive environments.
9. Reach out to young people most at risk.
10. Strengthen partnerships, monitor progress.



COACH'S CODE OF CONDUCT

▶ RESPECT THE GOLDEN RULE

Treat your players, their parents and the officials with respect. That means no yelling, no sarcasm, and no embarrassing anyone in front of others. To gain respect, you must give respect.

▶ BE EVERYONE'S COACH

As the saying goes, "There is no I in TEAM." Let everyone contribute. That goes for your own kids, too. If you coach your own child, be sure not to shine the light too bright or too low on them. Treat everyone the same.

▶ APPRECIATE YOUR ASSISTANTS

No youth basketball coach can do it all. Find a good assistant or two, give them responsibility and never stop thanking them.

▶ FOCUS ON THE FUNDAMENTALS

Help your players master the basketball basics. Wins and losses come and go, but you only get one chance to develop a player's skills. Don't waste that opportunity. And remind your players that hustle is also a fundamental skill.

▶ TEACH – AND ENFORCE – GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP

Spend time at practice and before games explaining to your team how to behave after a win or a loss. Good sportsmanship means no trash talking or taunting. Teach your players to develop a positive relationship with the officials. Have the courage to enforce sportsmanship if one of your players misbehaves. That's the key.

▶ UNDERSTAND THE RULES OF THE GAME

Read the rule book. Identify any special policies your league has adopted. You can't expect your players to know the rules if you do not.

▶ HAVE A POSITIVE RAPPORT WITH THE OFFICIALS

Officials will not respond positively if you try to bully or intimidate them. Instead, act like an adult. Ask questions if necessary. Seek clarification if it's warranted. Set the right tone for your team by never arguing a call or disparaging an official.

▶ PROMOTE FUN

Avoid getting too serious. Don't get crazy about winning. Make sure you smile. Above all else, make sure the kids are having fun. If they aren't, then you are doing something wrong.

▶ BE PATIENT

Young players are going to miss shots. They're going to make crucial turnovers. They're going to commit needless fouls. They need the freedom to make mistakes. It's your job to help them learn from those mistakes. That takes time and patience.

▶ TALK TO THE PARENTS AND UNDERSTAND THEIR GOALS

From the first practice, talk with the parents. Explain your coaching philosophy. If a parent has a particular concern, give them the opportunity to discuss it with you. Parents come to games to see their kids play. Make sure every player has the opportunity to make a contribution.



SPORTSMANSHIP

What About SPORTSMANSHIP?

Does the Coach Teach That?

Coping with winning and losing is, of course, an essential part of playing sports, and basketball is no exception. Ideally, kids first learn about how to deal with victories and defeats from their parents even before the youngsters lace up their first pair of sneakers. But as the coach, it's up to you to reinforce the appropriate behavior for winning and losing.

WHEN THEY WIN

Every player will tell you that it's more fun to win than it is to lose. But as the coach, you should strongly remind your team that "winning with class" is how you expect them to play. As such, if you spot one of your players taunting or humiliating an opponent when your team is way ahead in the game, simply call "time out" and have the youngster sit next to you on the bench. Explain to him or her that such behavior will not be tolerated by you, and unless they can learn to control themselves, they will not be allowed back into the game.

Don't worry. Because the ultimate fun is in playing, the youngster will quickly modify their ways to get back into the action. If they do happen to repeat the offensive actions again, then once again put them on the bench until they learn their lesson.

WHEN THEY LOSE

Many times, especially with younger kids, a loss will be accompanied by tears of disappointment. As the coach, understand that losing in basketball is, for many youngsters, a new – and painful – experience. Console them, praise them for their efforts, but never embarrass them, as in, "C'mon, what are you crying about? The players on my team don't cry," or "Stop your crying – that's for babies!"



COACHING TIP

Dealing with Officials

As a coach, you have to remember that in any game involving human judgment, there are going to be errors and mistakes. Occasionally officials will be involved in a close, controversial call. If you erupt from the bench and throw a tantrum, understand that you're not only sending a message of poor sportsmanship to the officials, but you're also reinforcing exactly the type of behavior you want your players not to exhibit.

Tears are a normal reaction for young children who have just felt the sting of a defeat. Your job is to just reassure them that "Today just wasn't our day," and that "We played well, but the other team played just a little better." Those are the kinds of thoughts you want your team to hear. Finally, bear in mind that for most youngsters, the bitterness of a loss and the tears that go with it often disappear quickly. In most cases, the kids tend to be very resilient about the defeat. Within a few minutes of their tears drying up, they bounce back quickly by asking what their next activity for the day will be. Once they start asking questions like that, you know that they have moved past the loss – and by the way, Coach, you should too.



TEACHING THE FUNDAMENTALS OF THE GAME



The first fundamental to instill in young players is that basketball is a team game. If there's one lesson you want to leave with them, it is this – no team is going to win unless each player contributes. Everybody has to learn how to dribble, pass, defend, rebound, and hustle if the team is to play well and succeed. Make it clear that unless everybody does their part, the team has very little chance of winning consistently.

This is the first step in building a team mentality. Let your players know the team always comes ahead of the individual. Stress the idea every player is important, and that everyone must contribute to the team's effort. Most importantly, you have to mean those words. Don't fall into the trap of playing the same five players and then pushing the others off to the side. Let every player know that he or she is going to be called upon to play and perform during every game.

And remember, if you show confidence in your team, they will rise to the challenge. Praise not only makes a player feel good, but it also results in bringing their game to a higher level.

RUNNING AN EFFICIENT PRACTICE



All the best coaches, from youth leagues to the NBA, will tell you the best way to run a practice is to make sure it is well organized. Keep it moving so the players are engaged and on the go.

Let's say your typical practice session lasts one hour. Take a few moments to break down the hour into 5 or 10 minutes blocks. You might spend the first 5 minutes with a run around the gym. Then the next 5 minutes might be devoted to calisthenics so players are loosened up properly. The next 10 minutes might be a two-line lay-up drill and so forth.

Start and stop each block of time with a quick whistle. Young players will like it because they'll be constantly moving. If you organize your practice well, you can accomplish a lot more than you could ever imagine. If you do have to stop practice to teach a fundamental or demonstrate a play, that's fine. But again, put yourself on the clock. Make your point, keep it short, and keep the action moving! As a reward, if you want to let the team scrimmage, do that at the end of practice – and be sure everyone gets equal playing time.

PREPARATION FOR COACHING YOUR PRACTICE COACH'S PRACTICE PLAN 1

1. Life Skills Seminar

HEALTH ISSUES (15 MINUTES)

It is important to start off every practice with life skills while you have the attention of your players. Discussing the health issues facing your community will make your players more aware of these issues. Hopefully keeping them on the basketball court and out of trouble.

Waiting till after practice, your players will be fatigued and less attentive.

2. Warm Up

WARM UP (10 MINUTES)

Easy jog, down and back full-court (2 times) as a team

Pick a different player each time to lead the run, run different ways (backwards, side-steps, butt kicks, knees to chest, giant skips, etc.), and have everyone keep pace with the leader

Run fast laps around court (2 times)

Players are breathing hard - while stretching they should be listening

Explain the practice goals of the day

Talk about the last game and what the team needs to work on

WARM UP DRILLS (10 MINUTES)

Full court drills with passing, lay-ups and defensive elements (i.e. 3-man weave down court, shooter plays defense 2 vs. 1 on the way back)

2005 JR. NBA /JR. WNBA COACH OF THE YEAR, COACH KELLY'S SUGGESTION:

Operate the 3-man fast break drill with players in a tight formation and using crisp, sharp chest passes

3. Drills

DRIBBLE/PIVOT/PASS DRILL (5 MINUTES)

Demonstrate the drill emphasizing a big jump stop and a quick, strong pivot (when catching the ball have hands up)

Have kids partner up with one ball between the two of them and do the drill - dribble, pivot, pass

SHOOTING DRILL (5 MINUTES)

On coach's cue of "go," kids must run around gym, make a shot at each basket and sit in the center circle (kids are racing against each other in this drill)

LAY-UP DRILL (5 MINUTES)

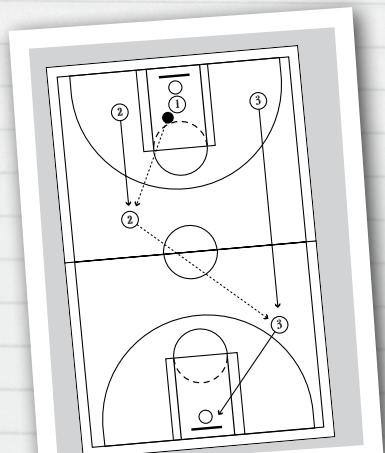
Kids begin beneath the basket, dribble to the foul line, jump stop, pivot and dribble in for a lay-up. Have each player make 8 shots

RELAY RACES (10 MINUTES)

Divide kids into 2 or 3 groups, set up a cone about 15 feet away from the end line, kids must run around the cone each time they take their turn

Have them do the following races:

- Dribble right hand (eyes up)
- Dribble left hand (eyes up)
- Dribble alternating hands
- Dribble, jump stop, pivot at cone, dribble back
- Dribble backwards



2005 JR. NBA /JR. WNBA COACH OF THE YEAR, COACH KELLY'S SUGGESTION:

Practice rhythm shooting, shoot 25 shots from the same spot, emphasize readiness to shoot, keep elbow under the ball, keep follow through arm high, have player imagine sticking their hand in the basket, concentrate on the front edge of the rim

Defensive slides, stay low in defensive stance, stress the step and drag movement of feet

4. OFFENSIVE REVIEW

(5 MINUTES)

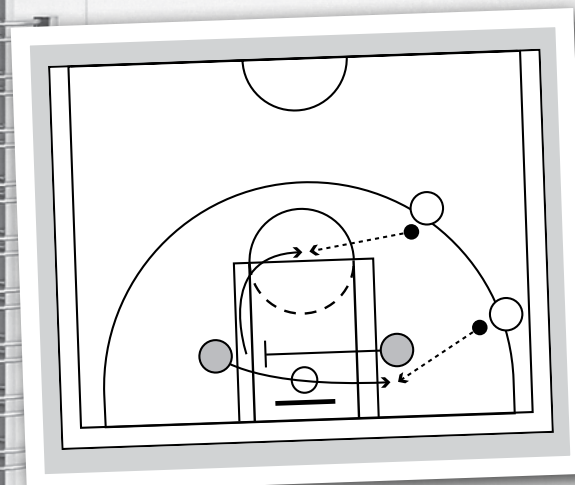
Review a basic part of the game you have already covered or any set plays you may have (i.e. 'shooting' and/or baseline out of bounds)

(10 MINUTES)

Introduce a new part of the game or a new set of plays (i.e. 'dribbling' and/or sideline out of bounds)

2005 JR. NBA /JR. WNBA COACH OF THE YEAR, COACH KELLY'S SUGGESTION:

Motion offense drill - 2 passers on the wing, from the mid-post, the player screens away for teammate, teammate can go high or low, then rolls back and goes opposite of cutter he screened for, low passer hits low cutter, high passer hits high cutter, run offense on both sides of the lane



5. DEFENSIVE REVIEW

(10 MINUTES)

Review man-to-man, zone and full court press

2005 JR. NBA /JR. WNBA COACH OF THE YEAR, COACH KELLY'S SUGGESTION:

Players should focus on denying the post-passer on wing, the post player should deny the cut to the low post, do not let the post player get the ball, deny lob passes into the post

6. SCRIMMAGE

(10 MINUTES)

5 on 5 to review basics and set plays

(10 MINUTES)

Controlled scrimmage with practiced element

2005 JR. NBA /JR. WNBA COACH OF THE YEAR, COACH KELLY'S SUGGESTION:

Play 3 on 3 on a half court, emphasize good screens and make sure cutters are coming off shoulder to shoulder with their screener, start the ball on the wing every other play, stress defensive positioning (off in direction of ball), defenders must call out screens to notify teammates

Play 3 on 3 on a full court, start the drill with the shooter at the free throw line, the ball is live as soon as he/she shoots, if the ball goes in, take it out of bounds and push it up the floor quickly, emphasize boxing out in the lane and be sure to box out the point guard

Play 5 on 5 on a full court, move the ball on offense, use lots of cross-screens and back-screens, DON'T screen the ball, emphasize defensive positioning

7. COOL DOWN DRILLS

SHOOTING DRILLS

(use contests to make it more fun)

2005 JR. NBA /JR. WNBA COACH OF THE YEAR, COACH KELLY'S SUGGESTION:

Have players shoot 10 free-throws each, players are not allowed to talk in order to concentrate on shot, everyone must do one push-up for each shot missed by anyone on the team

PREPARATION FOR COACHING YOUR PRACTICE COACH'S PRACTICE PLAN 2

1. LIFE SKILLS SEMINAR

EDUCATION ISSUES (15 MINUTES)

Basketball practice is one of the best times to remind your players that school and education are the most important parts of their young lives. Make it clear to them, that you need to do well in the classroom to succeed on the court and in life. This is an issue that cannot be stressed enough.

covered or any set plays you may have (ie. 'shooting' and/or baseline out of bounds)

10 MINUTES

Introduce a new part of the game or a new set of plays (ie. 'dribbling' and/or sideline out of bounds)

15 MINUTES

5 on 5 scrimmage to review basics and set plays

2. WARM-UP/CONDITIONING

10 MINUTES

Easy jog, down and back full court (2 times) as a team

Pick a different player each time to lead the run, run different ways (backwards, side-steps, etc.), – everyone must keep pace with the leader who goes at 3/4 pace

Run fast laps around court (2 times)

10 MINUTES

Players are breathing hard – while stretching they should be listening

Tell them practice goals of the day

Talk about the last game and what they need to work on

10 MINUTES

Full court drills with passing, lay-ups and defensive elements (ie. 3 man weave down court, shooter plays defense 2 vs. 1 on way back)

Change drill every 3-5 minutes

3. OFFENSIVE REVIEW

5 MINUTES

Review basic part of the game you have already

3. DEFENSIVE REVIEW

10 Minutes

Review man-to-man, zone and full court press

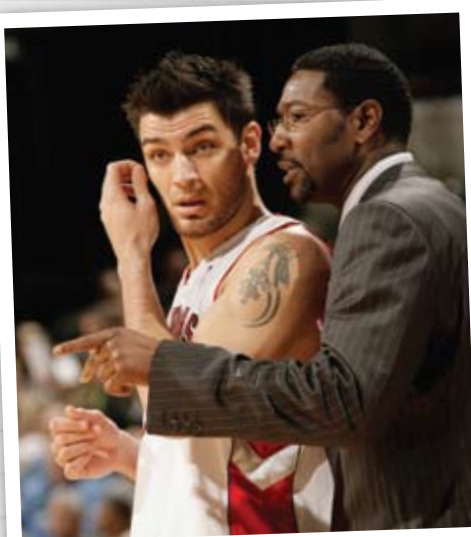
10 MINUTES

Controlled scrimmage with practiced element

4. SHOOTING PRACTICE

10 MINUTES

Shooting drills (use contests to make it more fun)



PREPARATION FOR COACHING YOUR PRACTICE COACH'S PRACTICE PLAN 3

1. LIFE SKILLS SEMINAR

GUEST SPEAKER (15 MINUTES)

Invite a guest speaker from a community partner you work with to speak to your players. A guest speaker from a NGO can be considered an expert to your players. Having someone present new information will reiterate the importance of health and education.

sound of whistle kids take 2 dribbles, jump stop and get into triple threat stance (go up and down the floor two times). Then go up and down, but after they come to a "jump stop" they must then pivot all the way around 360 degrees.

10 MINUTES

Dribble/Pivot/Pass Drill
Demonstrate drill – emphasize a big jump stop and a quick, strong pivot, when catching the ball have hands up.

2. WARM-UP

5 MINUTES

Running Drills – butt kicks, knees to chest, giant skips, backwards jog (have players do these exercises the full length of the court – when they reach the opposite end have them do the same drill coming back – then switch drills)

Have kids partner up with one ball between the two of them and do the drill – dribble, pivot, pass.

5 MINUTES

Shooting Drill
On coach's cue of "Go", kids must run around gym, make a shot at each basket and sit in the center circle (kids are racing against each other in this drill)

Stretching Drills – calves, hamstrings, quadriceps, back, arms

5 MINUTES

Lay-Up Drill
Kids begin beneath basket. They dribble to the foul line, jump stop, pivot and dribble in for a lay-up. Have each player make 8 shots.

3. DRIBBLE KNOCK-OUT

5 MINUTES

A dribbling game where each kid has a ball and attempts to knock the ball away from the other kids while trying to maintain his/her own dribble

10 MINUTES

Relay Races
Divide kids into 2 or 3 groups, set up a cone about 15 feet away from the end line, kids must run around the cone each time they take their turn

5 MINUTES

Ball Handling
Finger tipping, stationary bounce, right hand dribble to mid-court and back, left hand dribble to mid-court and back, slow jog while dribbling, running while dribbling

Have them do the following races:

- Dribble Right Hand (eyes up)
- Dribble Left Hand (eyes up)
- Dribble Alternating Hands
- Dribble, Jump Stop, Pivot at cone, Dribble Back
- Dribble Backwards

4. DRILLS

10 MINUTES

Triple Threat Drill (with Pivoting)
Teach what stance is used for (passing, shooting or dribbling) and demonstrate it. Have kids on end line in triple threat stance, on

4. SCRIMMAGE

5 MINUTES

BUILDING YOUR OWN PRACTICE

PRACTICE PLAN (QUICK TIPS)

The next page was designed to serve as a sample practice plan that you should feel free to use with your own team. If you have set drills that you prefer, substitute them in any way you like. No matter which combination of drills you end up using and no matter how you wish to organize your time, the most important thing to remember is that you need to run an efficient practice. All the best coaches will tell you the best way to run a practice is to make sure it is well organized. Keep your practices moving so the players are always active and remain attentive.

If your practice is designed for an hour, take time before to break down the hour into 5 or 10 minute segments.

- Dedicate the first 5 minutes of practice to **RUNNING** in the gym
- The next 5 minutes are focused on **STRETCHING**
- Follow stretching with 10 minutes of **LAY-UPS**
- Start and stop each segment with your whistle
- Young players will like this because they are doing a lot of different things in a short amount of time

If you have to stop practice to teach or demonstrate a drill or skill – make your point, keep it short and keep the action moving. If you want to let your team scrimmage, perhaps save it as a reward for a job well-done at the end of practice.

A final tip is that the ideal time to reinforce your relationships with your players is during drills. Build their self-confidence with praise for both your great and not-so-great players. Remember that you're the coach for the entire team.

“Working as a team is the most important thing you can do. Teamwork makes you a better player and a winner. Steve Nash, Jason Kidd and Dwyane Wade are some of the best that exemplify the meaning of teamwork.”

Chris Paul, New Orleans Hornets



GETTING READY TO COACH

The first step is to learn the individual rules and policies of your league. While that may sound fairly simple, you have to understand that for many youth leagues, the rules are tailored to the age of the player. There might be specific rules regarding playing time and the kinds of defenses that can be played. As the coach, it is essential that you attend the preseason organizational meetings and that you read and understand league rules. (Be sure that your assistant coaches understand the rules as well!)

Speaking of assistant coaches, understand that they will be invaluable as the season wears on.

In addition to helping you orchestrate practice sessions and plot out game strategies, they can serve as a sounding board for you and the players. Many times kids (and occasionally their parents) will approach an assistant coach first with a problem or a concern. That's fine – just be sure you and your assistants have an open line of communication. As the coach, you never want to be the last one to know about a problem with one of your players.

Your team also might have a parent who volunteers to make phone calls about schedule changes and directions to games, who organizes the drinks for halftime, plans the end of the season party, and so forth. Such a volunteer will save you countless hours of additional work so you can concentrate on coaching.

The most important team meeting of the season should take place before the very first practice.

Make certain you let the parents know that this meeting is mandatory! If a parent cannot attend the meeting, make sure you spend time on the phone together prior to the first practice. Use this session to introduce yourself, the coaching staff and parent volunteers to the rest of the Moms and Dads. Prepare and hand out a sheet with telephone numbers and detail any unique league rules that will effect the team and your coaching philosophy.





"I'm going to keep the team on an even keel throughout the year, win or lose, as long as we come out every night and compete."

Bill Laimbeer Head Coach, Detroit Shock

This could be the only time during the season you address your expectations as well as those of the parents. Create printouts with the schedule, team roster (complete with parents' names and phone numbers), and directions to any away games. Let parents know what time you expect players to arrive for games and practices. If you have uniforms to pass out, use this time to do that as well. **The entire meeting, by the way, should last no more than 20-30 minutes.** Keep it quick, and to the point. One last reminder: check to see if any child has a special medical condition you should know about. From your perspective, get all the important details necessary to handle a crisis during a practice or a game.

What about coaching your own child? That's fine, so long as you follow a few basic suggestions. First, check with your son or daughter to see if it's okay with them. For the most part, children love the idea of playing for their Mom or Dad. But in some cases, the child will say no. If that happens, you can inquire as to why the child feels that way, but ultimately your child should have the final choice. After all, it's his or her team - not yours.

Assuming your child likes the idea of you coaching, remind them that you must treat them just like everybody else on the team. **No special favors or extra playing time just because they happen to be your son or daughter.** Be very clear and make certain you live by that standard as well.



THE CLIPBOARD

Whether you are diagramming drills during practice or instructing positioning during a game, a dry erase clip board is a popular and useful tool.

THE WHISTLE

Use it. Don't abuse it. Your whistle can be a very effective tool for moving practice along, but excessive use might diminish its effect.

MENTAL PREPARATION

1. CONFIDENCE

It's been observed many times: your players will miss 100% of the shots they don't take...encourage them to keep on shooting. Believe in your players and their skills. How? Review with them the better plays they have made. Revisit those plays and pinpoint precisely what they did and show how they did it.

2. PRE-GAME SET-UP

Before the game, suggest to your players that they take a moment to clear their mind, and collect their thoughts. Focus their thoughts on the game at hand...then just go out, play hard and have fun! They can do it!

3. NERVOUS?

They should be! Tell your players it's actually good to be a bit nervous before a game. The best players always get butterflies before they play. So if their palms are a little sweaty, their heart is beating a bit faster, and they are having a hard time sitting still, these are good signs!

4. DON'T CURSE YOUR MISTAKES, LEARN FROM THEM

Basketball, like most skill sports, is a game of adjustments. If a player's free-throws are always hitting off the back rim, help make the adjustment in their shot. If they are having difficulty in boxing out the opponent, make the adjustment. If the player they're guarding always dribbles the ball to the right, help them make the adjustment in their defensive play. The more – and quicker – they learn how to make adjustments, the better and more consistent their game will become.



"Attitude is very, very important in basketball. Coaches love players with good attitudes because they are easy to teach when things are good and when things are bad."

Vince Carter, New Jersey Nets



5. HUSTLE IS FREE... BUT IT ISN'T CHEAP

Coaches: Keep an eye on your players so they never walk off a court and admit that they didn't give it their all. To ensure that they gave their best effort, remind them that they have to hustle. The truth is, anybody can hustle - it doesn't take special talent, it takes effort - and that usually makes all the difference.

6. RUN THE COURT

As you know, your players' success is often achieved by the impression a youngster makes when he or she comes off the bench and gets into the game, simply because of how much effort they give when they are on the court. Remind your team that when they get out on the floor, be rarin' to go!

7. THEY ARE YOUR TEAMMATES

It's very simple. It makes no difference how talented one player is, one player simply cannot defeat the five players on the other team. It just won't happen. Teach your team to learn to trust - and appreciate one another. Chances are if they work together, the experience will be a positive one for the entire team.

8. THE CLOCK IS TICKING

Tell your team it's up to them to make the most of their time on the court. Never put off their skill development. The clock of each basketball experience is constantly ticking away and no one can call any timeouts!

9. LET'S GO TO THE VIDEOTAPE

Do your players want to improve their skills? Get one of your parents to videotape when you're playing a game. Then, sit down and do an analysis of what your players did well... and more importantly, of what they need to work on. Watching themselves on TV will give them a much clearer idea of how they can improve their game. Ask them how many times they've watched the great players on television, and how much they've learned from watching them. Just imagine how much more they could learn about their game if they could see themselves perform on video as well.

HOW TO SET UP A GAME OR TOURNAMENT

The best way to get your season running smoothly, enabling you to focus your energy on coaching, is to be well prepared for the season ahead.

Before you meet any of your players, before a ball is bounced or a shot is taken, you should have a schedule of every game you'll play and every practice you'll conduct for the entire year. Generally, two practices and one game per week is a good working number, both in terms of reserving gym time and in a family's time commitment. Include with the schedule a letter addressed to the parents that outlines your philosophy and the expectations you have for sportsmanship and participation during the season. Parents - and players - will need to both hear and see what you expect from them in terms of competition, good sportsmanship, being on time, and so on.

Once you have the names of the players who are on your team, you should call their parents personally to introduce yourself. Tell them when the first practice is and explain that you'll go over your plans for the whole season at that time. It will also give the parents an opportunity to express privately their views and concerns about the season and the expectations they have for their children. Have parents come to practice on the first day so that you can meet them face-to-face and reiterate what you expect from your team members, their parents, and yourself during the season. It is good for the parents to hear your expectations regarding this, since the parents will have a major impact on your players' timeliness to practice and attitudes to discipline and authority. This is also a good time to assess parental enthusiasm for volunteering, carpooling, working out ways to communicate, and other administrative help.



The ideal number for a youth basketball team is ten (10) players. More than ten can be really unfair for everyone involved. The equipment needs for basketball are simple. Players need a pair of shorts, a pair of sneakers (preferably basketball-friendly), and a ball. There should be a ball for every player or every two players on your team. If you don't have enough balls for practice, strongly encourage your players to bring a ball from home if they have one. Players should be encouraged to bring their own water and to label those bottles.

Administrative and volunteer help for parents:

PHONE TREE – Have a manager or volunteer parent arrange a phone tree, where you call one designated person, who initiates a reliable chain of communication for the rest of your team.

PRACTICE TRANSPORTATION – A designated parent can help arrange carpooling to ensure that every child has a ride to practice and then home afterward.

AWAYGAMES TRANSPORTATION SCHEDULE – It's a great idea to have a central meeting place when your team is going to away games.

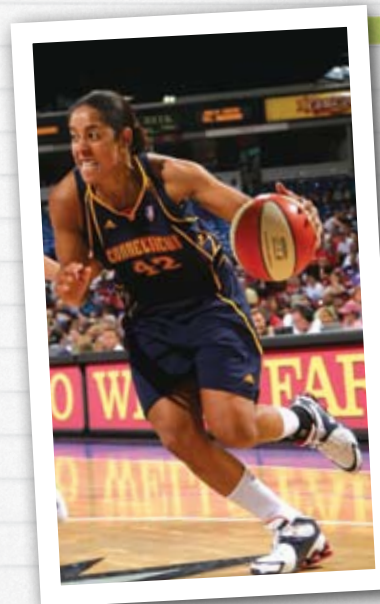
EQUIPMENT AND UNIFORMS – Have a manager or parent arrange a sign-up night at a local sports store so that the kids are signed up for the team and outfitted at the same time.

TEAMS DINNERS, FUND-RAISERS, AND ALL THAT OTHER STUFF – Most youth teams need to raise money for one thing or another, and any team worth its stuff will have at least one dinner during the season. The manager or parent should be in charge of these events and should take advantage of the talents and expertise of the other parents on the team as well.

SNACK DUTIES – Kids can be hungry when practice or a game is immediately after school, and a light snack might give them the energy to plunge right into basketball.



GAME DAY PREPARATION



PRE-GAME

1. Get to the gym early (before any of your players arrive).
2. Bring your team's equipment, your notes and your dry-erase court clipboard.
3. Be prepared and know who is going to start the game for you and how you plan to substitute your bench players so that everyone gets ample playing time.
4. Be ready with how you want your pre-game warm-up to run.
5. Think about what you want to talk about with your team during your pre-game pep-talk.
6. Give thought to how you will use your timeouts throughout the game.
7. Design last second plays for both offensive and defensive situations.
8. Be ready to pump up your team throughout the warm-up, game and post-game talk.

POST-GAME

Regardless of the game's outcome, there are always plenty of things to discuss at the conclusion of the game.

1. Shake hands with the other team.
2. Keep the post-game chat short and to the point.
3. Compliment your team on what they did well and go over the team's successes from the game.
4. Evaluate plays and overall team efforts which were not up to par and recommend what your players need to work on both individually and as a team so they improve for future games.
5. Ask your players for their insights on the game.
6. Emphasize the value of participation and teamwork.

The most important part of the post-game talk is to keep morale high, no matter what is being discussed - win or lose. In wrapping up your post-game talk, get together a team cheer and make sure to remind your players of when and where the next game and/or practice is.



THE COACH'S TROUBLESHOOTING GUIDE

DISCIPLINE It doesn't make sense to have a long list of rules. The best coaches make a few rules stand out. For example, be on time for all games and practices. If a player can't be there, they must call several days prior to the game or practice. Let the team know you expect them to behave in a sportsmanlike manner at all times. And let them know that if they don't hustle, you will assume that they are tired and substitute for them.

If a youngster does misbehave during a practice or a game, simply let him or her watch the others play. Let players know they will not play again until they understand and adhere to your rules.

THE BALLHOG Especially on younger teams, there is occasionally the one player who likes to control the ball and take all the shots. If you sense this happening, have a chat with the youngster. Explain to the player: "You know, John, you're a terrific ballhandler on this team. And you have a real good shot. But as good as you are at dribbling and shooting, if you could master the art of finding – and passing – to an open teammate, we would be a better team. Do you think you could do that?" This approach recognizes and acknowledges the player's talent, but it also suggests the fact that in basketball the team comes first.

RUNNING UP THE SCORE Occasionally, your team may be having such a great day that the other team just can't keep up. Well before the end of the game, it's clear that your team is going to win – and win big. Do you allow your kids to keep running up the score? No, that's not good sportsmanship. Imagine how you would feel if you were coaching the opposing team – or if your son or daughter were on that team. Instead, call a time out, and tell your team to pass the ball at least 5 or 6 times before a shot is taken. You still want them to work hard, but you want them to work hard on their passing skills.

VACATIONS Ask parents for a list of days in which their son or daughter will not be able to make games because of family vacation plans. This will help immensely as you put together a schedule. Even better, you won't get caught short of players before a game because you didn't know who was going to be gone.

TARDINESS You have the right to expect players to be on time for practices and games. If one of your players has a consistent problem with tardiness, ask why he or she is always late. If the player doesn't have a good reason, then call the parents. Explain to the parent that unless they can get their son or daughter to practices and the games on time, then you'll have no choice but to diminish their playing time. After all, it's not fair to the other kids who show up on time. This may sound harsh, but it's a basic lesson of team responsibility.



PUSHY PARENTS What do you do when a parent wants to give you a piece of his or her mind? First, let them have their say. Give them 10 minutes of uninterrupted time to speak. Don't say anything – just let them get it out of their system. But after 10 minutes, look them in the eye, thank them for their feedback, and tell them you will think about their suggestions and comments. Here's another thought: If you have a parent who thinks that he or she could coach better than you, that's easy. Just ask them to become an assistant coach. The invitation will surprise them, and probably get them to back off. Who knows, maybe they will have something to offer as your assistant.

LOSING GAMES What do you do if your team isn't winning games? A losing season is definitely more challenging for a coach. But it's your job to be the team's top cheerleader. You must remain upbeat and positive. Find something the team did well and praise them for the effort. Let them know they are collectively making progress, and that even though they may have lost today, their skills are improving. One other note about losing: Always remember that while young players don't like to lose, they do tend to bounce back a lot quicker from a defeat than parents.

PRE-GAME JITTERS Young players can become so nervous and anxious before a big game that they seem to become frozen in place at the opening tip-off. Before you know it, the other team has raced out to a big lead and your players are just beginning to regain their poise.

Be careful not to become the source of pre-game anxiety. Sometimes it's the coach who gets so nervous before games that he or she influences the behavior of the kids. Do yourself – and your team – a favor. Before the game, wear a smile. Look like you're relaxed. Tell some jokes. And don't worry about players not being pumped up for the game. If anything, they will be more than ready.

SCHEDULE CONFLICTS Some players might participate on different sports teams or take part in other activities during the basketball season creating occasional conflicts. You can remain patient and flexible with these conflicts – so long as the player's parents tell you ahead of time there are going to be scheduling problems. Most of the friction from these conflicts happens when the coach doesn't find out until the day of the practice or the game that there is a conflict. That's not fair to anyone.

HOW TO MAKE A BASKETBALL HOOP



You do not need an NBA arena to play basketball. The beauty of basketball is that it only requires a hoop and a ball to enjoy the game. Basketball hoops can be easily made from household materials. A hoop is made of three key components...a backboard, a hoop and an elevated location in an open space to hang the hoop.

STEPS TO BUILDING A HOMEMADE HOOP

1. FIND A BACKBOARD. You are looking for something sturdy enough to hold a hoop, but not so large it is unmanageable. An average size backboard is 91.44 centimeters by 91.44 centimeters square. Plywood or plastic sheets make good backboards. Look for something that is sturdy and durable so it will not crack or easily break when struck repeatedly by a basketball.

2. MAKE A HOOP. Identify a circular metal or heavy plastic ring – approximately 45.72 centimeters in diameter. Metal trash can lids are excellent sources, as are heavy duty plastic milk crates (square), metal flower pots (saw the bottom of the flower pot away leaving a round hollow ring), child bike tire frames (remove the spokes) and flexible iron rods (molded into a circular shape). For a net, use old shoe laces, fish nets, twine, metal links or other pliable materials that easily attach to a hoop. Make a regulation size basketball that can easily flow through the hoop and net.

3. ATTACH THE HOOP. Securely attach the hoop to the lower portion of the backboard using screws or bolts.

4. ATTACH THE BACKBOARD/HOOP TO A POLE, TREE, BUILDING OR OTHER ELEVATED SURFACE. Select a location where there is sufficient open space for playing and shooting. Secure the backboard unit so the hoop is elevated 3.048 meters from the ground. The hoop should be parallel to the ground. Make sure to use heavy duty nails (wood to wood), screws and bolts or other strong materials that ensure the unit will not be at risk for falling down and/or dislodging.

5. ENJOY – START HOOP'N.

FITNESS & CONDITIONING

HOME TRAINING – Fitness Tips for Your Players

Expert Advice from GREG BRITTENHAM, Asst. Coach/Player Development, New York Knicks

Take some time early on to explain to your players that taking care of their bodies away from the court will help them a great deal when they are on the court. Plyometric exercises are one way that can help. If implemented correctly they are safe, fun to do, and go a long way in helping basketball players develop their quickness, speed, agility and jumping ability.

The primary purpose for implementing plyometric exercises is to increase your player's explosive power. The best part of these drills is that they're easy to do and require very little equipment. When performing the drills concentrate on speed and quickness rather than on how high a player is jumping. Here are a few drills to get your team started. The entire plyometric session should last no more than 15-20 minutes.

JUMP ROPE: Skipping rope is actually a low impact plyometric and a great way to introduce a player's muscles to the quickness required when performing the drills correctly. Have your players jump rope for about 5-7 minutes to get loose. Remember to tell them to stay on their toes.

BOX RUN: Players use a small sturdy wooden box or a stair step, no more than 10 inches high. Start with their right foot on the box/step and their left foot on the floor. Jump and simultaneously switch feet so that the left foot is now on the box and the right is on the floor. Immediately repeat (without stopping). Perform 10-20 switches then rest for 1-2 minutes. Do this drill 3-5 times. This is a good drill to develop sprint speed and jumping ability.

BOX JUMP: Players stand with both feet on the same box/step. Their toes are on the edge of the step (their heels are hanging over the edge). Step off backward and land on the floor simultaneously with both feet. Immediately jump back to the top of the box. Concentrate on how quickly they can jump off the floor and back up onto the box. Rest for a second or two and then repeat 10-15 times to complete the set. Rest for 1-2 minutes between sets. Perform this drill 3-5 times. This drill will help their vertical leaping ability.

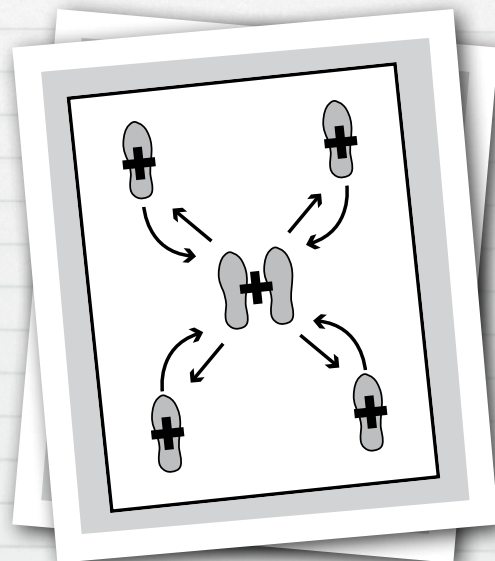


TOWEL HOP: Spread a towel out on the floor. It will form a rectangle. Start at one corner of the towel and perform a double leg jump around the towel's edges touching all four corners of the rectangle. Perform 3-8 complete 'roundtrips' (a roundtrip is one complete revolution touching all four corners) then repeat in the opposite direction for 3-8 roundtrips. Rest 1-2 minutes. Do this drill 3-5 times. This drill will help improve your agility.

LATERAL JUMPS: Now take that same towel and roll it up to form a tube shape. Put a piece of tape around it to hold it in place. Lay the rolled up towel on the floor and stand sideways to the towel. Jump 'laterally' (sideways) over the towel. The instant your feet touch the ground on the other side of the towel immediately jump back to the starting position. Repeat back and forth jumping until you have performed 6-10 'roundtrips' (a roundtrip is over AND back).



DOT DRILL: 1. Four dots (use pieces of tape) are placed on the floor in a rectangle two feet by three feet. A fifth dot is placed in the center of the rectangle. 2. A player stands with his feet on the bottom two dots. 3. Player jumps forward landing on the center dot with both feet and continues jumping on the top two dots. 4. The player immediately jumps backward repeating the pattern. Up and back is one round-trip. Do several sets of eight to ten round-trips per player.



TRAINING WITH INTEGRITY

Being healthy and competitive means avoiding alcohol and drugs - that includes "party" drugs or drugs intended to "enhance" performance. Specific drugs can have serious effects. Steroids, for example, can lead to serious health problems, including ruptured tendons, organ damage, and increased risk of liver cancer, heart attack or stroke.

Drugs and alcohol slow reaction time, cloud judgment and can alter critical body functions and over time they affect brain chemistry, which can reduce the enjoyment you get from things like sports.

Every athlete values being in the moment, staying sharp and enjoying the game. Make smart choices and avoid drugs!



5 EVERYDAY HEALTHY LIFESTYLE TIPS FOR COACHES

1. Drink more water and limit other beverages that may have extra sugar and calories you don't need. You can't expect kids to cut back if you won't.
2. Be positive. Don't talk about your weight or put yourself down in front of kids. You don't want them to think that a healthy lifestyle is only about how much they weigh. And try not to complain about how much you may dislike exercising or eating healthy foods - they listen.
3. Focus on the why as well as the how. Knowing why being healthy is important will lead to meaningful change. When you learn something new or a little tip that works for you, share it with the kids.
4. Start walking. Take the stairs instead of the escalator. Park at the back of the parking lot and walk instead of cruising for the closest spot.
5. Don't reward children with food. Candy and snacks as a reward encourage bad habits. Find other ways to celebrate good behavior or accomplishments.



WARMING-UP

A proper warm-up routine is one way to reduce injuries such as pulled or torn muscles. Warming-up is designed to raise the body temperature and build up a slight sweat. A short jog around the floor, or some of the full-court passing drills can suffice. However, the warm-up should include stretching, particularly stretches that concentrate on the Achilles, groin, hamstring and quadriceps.



Groin Stretch

Sitting down on the floor, players should bring the bottoms of their feet together. To the extent possible, bring the knees down toward to the floor. As with all stretches, players should not force the knees to the floor or use quick movements. The idea is to slowly stretch the inside of the legs near the groin.



Hamstring Stretch

Players should lie on their backs with one knee bent, foot on the floor. While keeping the other leg straight, lift the leg into the air. Reaching up with both hands, grab the back of the knee and slowly pull the leg toward the body as far as possible without straining. Then repeat with the opposite leg.



Quad Stretch

Face down on the floor with the right hand under the right ear, take the left hand and reach back to lift the left leg. The foot of the leg should pull back towards the left buttocks. Repeat with the opposite leg by turning the head to the right and placing the left hand under the left ear. Reach back with the right arm to grab the ankle of the right leg and pull toward the right buttocks.



Calf Stretch

Facing a wall, lean forward placing the palms of both hands on the wall. Put right foot slightly in front of the left, shoulder length apart. Lean into the wall keeping the right foot flat. The heel of the left foot should be slightly raised, which allows the thick band behind the ankle – the Achilles tendon – to stretch. Repeat stretch with the other foot.

BASKETBALL FUNDAMENTALS: DEFENSE

Defense might not be the most glamorous part of basketball, but it is every bit as important as offense. One of the myths of great defense, however, is that players must be fast and quick to be effective defenders. In fact, the best defense is played with anticipation and awareness of what's going on around you, good body balance and basic fundamentals. Great defense also demands great effort.

WANT SOME EVIDENCE?

Former Boston Celtics star Bill Russell is considered one of the greatest defensive players of all time. Russell didn't score much and he was only 6' 9", but he is considered the primary reason the Celtics won 11 championships in 12 years. Russell was so dominating as a defensive player and rebounder that he didn't need to score a great deal of points for the Celtics to dominate as a team.



THE PROPER SET-UP

To keep yourself balanced and ready to move, stay on the balls, or front of your feet. Do not stand flat-footed or get caught on the heels of your feet. You cannot move quick enough to stop anyone if you are not on the balls of your feet. Keep your feet as wide apart as your shoulders and bend your knees slightly with your trunk, or backside low. If your feet are too close together, you will not be able to move quickly in either direction.

USE YOUR HANDS AND FEET

Once you are in position, defense is generally played with your hands and feet. When the offensive player is dribbling, keep one hand low on the ball and the other hand high to guard against a shot or pass. When the offensive player has stopped his or her dribble, you should lift both hands up. The same is true when the offensive player you are guarding doesn't have the ball (two hands up to deny the pass).

Focus on the waist of the offensive player in front of you, particularly if that player has the ball.

Why? The waist doesn't move. The eyes, head, shoulders and arms all can move before the player decides

to pick a direction. But, the waist must remain in place until the player moves. If you watch the other body parts, it's easy to get faked out of position. The offensive player can fake all he or she wants, but that player isn't going anywhere unless the whole body moves. So keep your eyes on the mid-section.

Move with the offensive player by sliding side to side without crossing your legs. Your feet should remain the width of your shoulders and your weight should be on the balls of your feet. Do not allow your feet to touch each other while sliding.

Be aware of everything that's going on around you. If the player you are guarding doesn't have the ball, then drop back a couple of steps and keep one eye on the rest of the action.

Always stay between your player and the basket. Also, study the player you are guarding. Does he or she like to dribble in one direction all the time? What hand does the offensive player favor? Young players almost always prefer to dribble with one hand over the other. Try to force that player to go in the opposite direction, or to use the weaker hand.



DEFENSIVE STRATEGIES

There are two basic defensive strategies in basketball: man-to-man and zone. Each has a different advantage that is easily explained to young players. For example, in the man-to-man defense each player is assigned to guard a player on the other team. This assignment usually occurs spontaneously at the start of the game where each player matches up with the player closest to him or her. If a mismatch is obvious, change up the assignments at your first opportunity.

The best way to teach younger players to keep track of who they are guarding is by memorizing the opposing player's jersey number. When substitutions begin, the player leaving the floor should tell the incoming teammate "I'm guarding number 20" so there is no confusion as to who's guarding whom on the ensuing play.

MAN-TO-MAN

In man-to-man defense, the defensive player simply roams wherever his or her offensive player goes. That means a lot of movement. The real key for the defender is to stay between the offensive player and the basket. Otherwise, the offensive player will have a relatively easy time shooting, rebounding and passing.

Teach your players that man-to-man defense demands maximum effort. In addition to staying with the offensive player, the defender needs to be in the proper defensive position – knees slightly bent, hands in the air, ready to swipe at, or steal the ball. To move properly, the defender must learn how to slide from side to side as well as backward and forward.

For younger players, this slide step maneuver could take a little time to learn. Make working on the slide step a regular part of practice sessions. Players should take the ready defensive position with their hands and arms up, and then move right, left, backward and forward. Take a moment to demonstrate the drill properly, and remind them to stay in the ready position. After a while, it will become a regular habit.

Coaches usually employ a zone defense when they want to force the opposing team to shoot the ball from the outside, or away from the basket. In effect, the coach is saying, "Here, try shooting the ball over our defending players. Because if you miss your shot, we'll be in an excellent position to grab the rebound."

COACHING DRILL

DENYING THE BALL

Form a single line at the top of the key (the circle above the free-throw line). The first player in line is the defensive player. The next player becomes the offensive player. The coach holds the ball as the offensive player tries to break free and get open. The defensive player is practicing proper defensive positioning while keeping one hand up to deny a pass from the coach.

ZONE DEFENSE

In a zone, each defender is assigned to defend a certain portion, or zone as opposed to following an individual player. Against a zone defense, the offensive players are forced to pass the ball around the perimeter of the defense. Teach your players to have their hands up at all times so they can block and intercept passes thrown by the offensive team.

When the ball comes into a defender's particular zone, the defender immediately steps up and tries to make it difficult for the offensive player to shoot or pass the ball. Sometimes depending on the kind of zone being used, two defensive players can actually surround, or trap, the opposing player with the ball. With two sets of arms and hands swirling in the offensive player's face, making a good pass, or taking a shot can become virtually impossible.





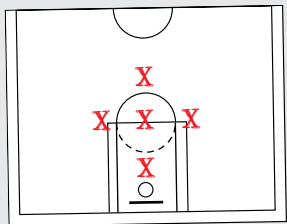
Zones emphasize solid rebounding skills, and force the opposing team to take lower percentage shots from the perimeter.

Keep in mind that in many youth leagues zone defenses are not allowed because so few players have developed an outside shot. They do, however, become very popular by the time kids reach middle school age. (By the way, sometimes coaches will have their team alternate between playing a man-to-man with a zone defense during the course of a game. This is done in an attempt to momentarily confuse and stall the opposing team)

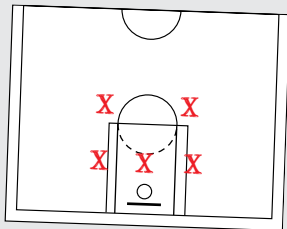
1-3-1 One player, usually the team's quickest player, is at the top of the key. Three others are across the foul line extended with a quick, but taller player in the lane. The player out front tries to force the ball handler to the right or left where another defensive player comes over to create a trap.

2-1-2 Two players, usually guards, are above the free-throw line, one in the middle of the lane, usually the center, and two players are down low on either side of the lane, these players are usually the forwards. The goal, as with all zones, is to double team the player with the ball by driving him into a zone where two defensive players converge.

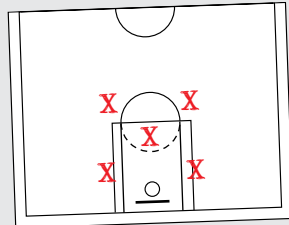
2-3 Two players, usually guards, are out front above the free-throw line with the other three players spread out across the middle of the lane.



1-3-1



2-3

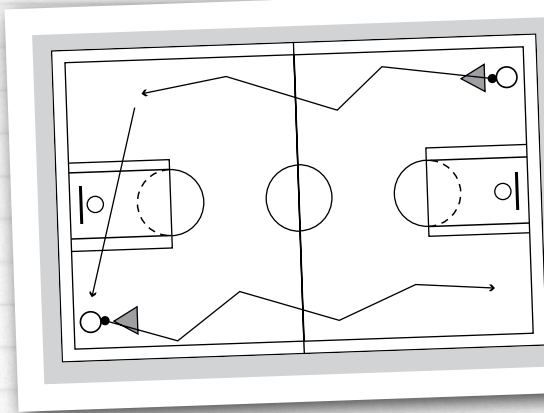


2-1-2

DEFENSE DRILL 1

SIDE-TO-SIDE SLIDE

Set up two single file lines, one to the right of the free-throw line, the other to the left. The first player in line assumes the defensive position. The next player dribbles down the court in a zigzag - three dribbles to the right using the right hand, three dribbles to the left using the crossover to go from the right hand to the left hand and so on down the court. The defensive players slide from side to side staying in front of the dribbler.



DEFENSE DRILL 2

BALL ROLL

Benefit: Develops total leg strength, muscle endurance, defensive technique and basketball touch.

1. Players face the basket on the back side of the free-throw line "extended" in a low defensive stance.
2. For greater strength development, players should try and drop down to three inches lower than their normal defensive stance.
3. The coach rolls three basketballs, one at a time, to the player at different locations.
4. The player slide steps to each basketball, picks it up and flips it back to the coach.
5. Start with fifteen second sets working up to thirty-second sets then eventually to one-minute sets.

TIP: Players must keep their back straight, try not to cross their feet and maintain a proper defensive stance at all times.

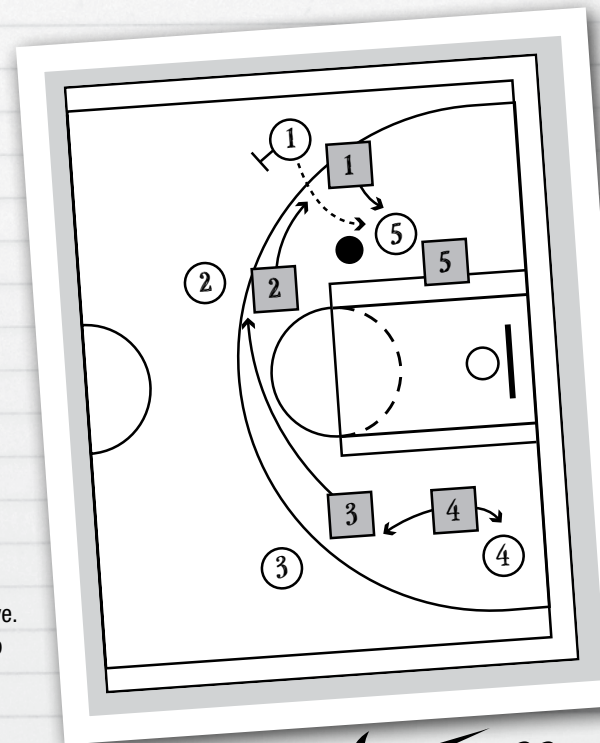
DEFENSE DRILL 3

DOUBLE-TEAMING THE LOW POST

Look at Shaquille O'Neal – it is almost impossible for one player to stop him alone, so many teams decide they will do what they must to not let the one great player beat them. They force the ball out of that player's hands.

HOW IT'S DONE:

The double-team often begins with the defender guarding the passer. An opposing guard passes the ball into his center, who already is being covered – usually from behind. The defender who was on the passer then comes to help out his center while teammates rotate, trying not to leave anyone open for a shot. The double-team can vary – teams might double as soon as the pass is made, or as soon as the player in the pivot catches the pass, or when he or she makes a move. The defense must always be ready for the post-up player to pass out of the double-team to an open teammate.



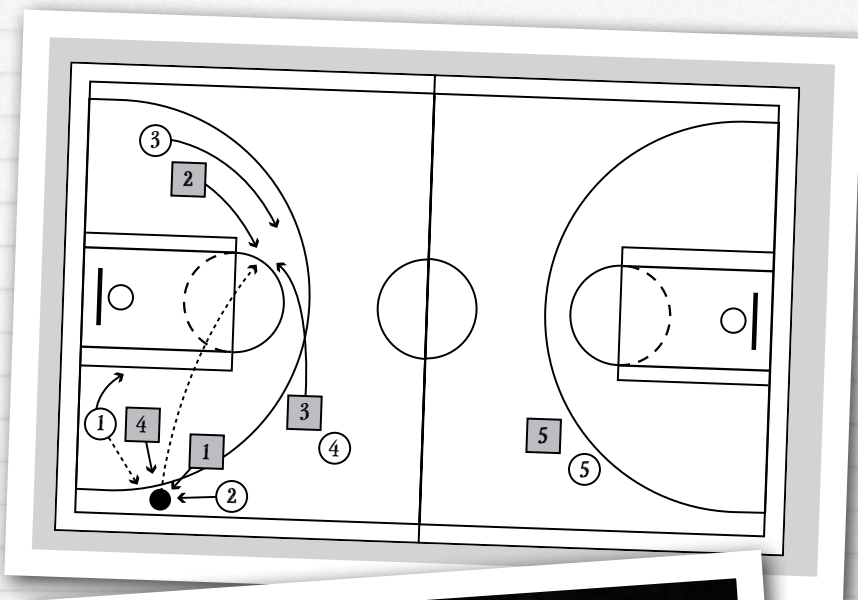
DEFENSE DRILL 4

FULL-COURT PRESS

“Press” is short for pressure, and that is what the defenders do. They pressure the opponent into making mistakes. This is a play where defense can provide offense, as teams hope to score easy baskets following the turnovers they force with pressure.

HOW IT'S DONE:

Teams press when opponents are not good ballhandlers. Usually, the point guard handles the ball, so the pressing team will try to get it out of his or her hands. You want your opponents to do things they don't want to do, such as pass the ball sooner than they had planned, or pass in panic. The press prevents the opposing team from controlling the pace of a game. Defenders will contest the inbound pass, aggressively cover opponents in the backcourt, and double-team the ball. Pressing requires tremendous energy, and only quick, well-conditioned teams use it. Teams will usually change the type of press they use to keep offenses off balance.



BASKETBALL FUNDAMENTALS: PASSING

There are two kinds of passes – the chest pass and the bounce pass – that every player has to master. But before players can advance to that stage, they have to master the basics.

The chest pass should be a practice staple. Teach players to hold the ball in both hands, and to direct the ball towards their teammate by pushing the ball from the chest with both hands. The teammate should catch the ball in the air with both hands.

The bounce pass is fundamentally similar to the chest pass. The ball is still thrown with both hands, and it is directed at a teammate. This time, however, the ball is bounced once before being received. What makes this pass a little tricky is that the bounce pass usually is thrown to a player who is on the move. Hence, the player making the pass has to accurately anticipate how quickly his or her teammate is moving.

PASSING DRILL 1

Have two lines of players set up at one end of the court. On your whistle, they both start running down the court, parallel to each other, while passing the ball back and forth. It's important that they mix up their passes (chest and bounce) and they move quickly. As they get close to the other end of the court, the last one with the ball should put up a lay-up. The key is quick passing.

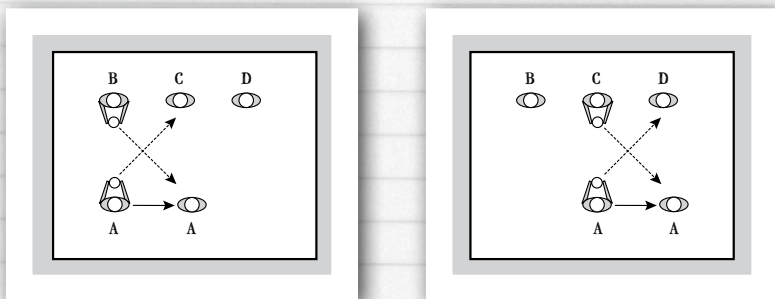


PASSING DRILL 2

TWO-BALL PASS AND SLIDE

Benefit: Hand-eye coordination, reaction, response, quickness, footwork, muscle endurance and basketball conditioning.

1. All players, except for Player (A), line up along the sideline about five feet apart.
2. Player (A) is out on the court about ten to fifteen feet away from, and facing, the first player (B) in the line.
3. Use two basketballs. Player (A) holds one basketball, and Player (B) in the team line holds the other basketball.
4. To begin the drill, Player (A) chest passes the ball to Player (C) and begins to slide step to the right while almost simultaneously receiving a chest pass from Player (B).
5. Player (A) after receiving the pass from Player (B), passes the ball ahead to Player (D) and continues to slide step to the right and receives a pass from Player (C).
6. Player (A) continues sliding and passing ahead to the next player in line while receiving a pass from the previous player.
7. Player (A) continues to the end of the line and immediately repeats the drill in the opposite direction.
8. Down and back is one round-trip. Players should perform two to five round-trips and then rotate into the team line. The next player whose turn it is takes Player (A) position and runs the drill and so on for the remainder of the team.



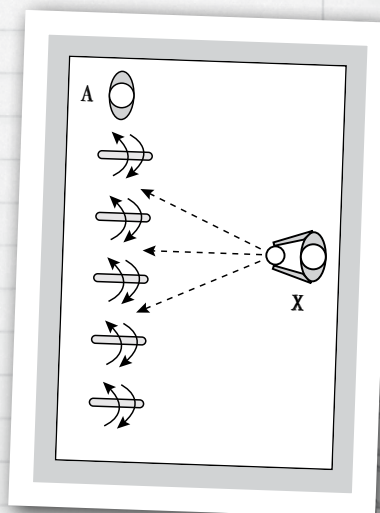
TIP: Try changing things up by having the players execute the drill using the bounce pass exclusively.

PASSING DRILL 3

QUICK-STEP DRILL

Benefit: Develops foot-speed, pass receiving skills, focus and concentration.

1. Place five barriers (rolled up towels) about three feet apart in a straight line.
2. Player (A) stands at the end of the line facing the coach (X).
3. One player at a time starts by taking a lateral step over the first towel. The player moves from left to right taking two quick lateral steps over each towel, keeping the hands up and ready to receive a pass.
4. Coach (X) will pass the basketball to Player (A) at different points during their movement. Player (A) will catch the basketball and return the pass to coach while continuing the quick steps over each towel. Only one foot should cross over the outside towel at each end. Each player should do several sets of three to five round-trips.

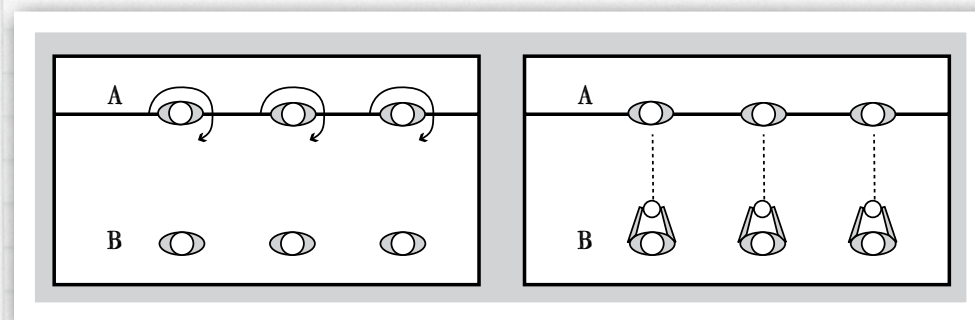


PASSING DRILL 4

RED/BLUE

Benefit: Develops reaction, response, quickness, the "Core", hand-eye coordination and passing skills.

1. Divide the team into two groups (A and B)
2. Group A lines up on the baseline five to ten feet apart from each other.
3. Players in Group B are paired with a teammate in Group A. Group B is lined up about 15 feet behind Group A. (Players in Group A have their backs turned toward players in Group B.)
4. When the coach calls "Red" all players in Group A turn right 180° and face players in Group B. (If the coach calls "Blue" all players in group A turn left.)
5. Directly after the coach calls out "Red" or "Blue," each player in Group B throws a chest pass to their partner in Group A. Players in Group A immediately pass the basketball back and turn their backs again in preparation for the coach's next command. Make sure the passes are not thrown too soon.
6. Do this ten times and have the groups switch roles.



TIP: Group A players should concentrate on turning their entire bodies 180° (not just their heads and hands). Players should start with their feet on the baseline and land with their feet on the baseline after turning.

PASSING DRILL 5

2 PASSERS AND ONE DEFENDER IN THE MIDDLE

Player 1 and Player 2 stand 3-4 meters apart. Player 1 has the ball. Player 3 is the defensive player, and stands between Players 1 and 2. Player 3 guards Player 1 and tries to deflect the pass from Player 1 to Player 2. Player 1 works on ball fakes and steps through the defense to make the pass. When Player 2 receives the ball, Player 3 hustles over to contest Player 2's pass to Player 1. Player 2 must wait until Player 3 is on him before he attempts a pass. Player 3 stays in the middle and defends both passes until he gets three deflections. Players rotate so that all three defend the passes.

PASSING DRILL 6

ANOTHER EXCELLENT PASSING DRILL

Another excellent passing and catching drill, with the added feature of peripheral vision technique. One player stands about twelve feet away and faces a line of five players standing side by side. Use two balls in this drill. The single player has one and a player in line has the other. The single player should always pass to the opposite end of the line from which the other pass comes. This contributes to good peripheral vision practice. Rapid passing is a great developer in strengthening of the muscles in the fingers, wrists, and arms. Once the lone player makes an error, he is replaced by another in the line.

BASKETBALL FUNDAMENTALS: BALL HANDLING



As with all basketball skills, the only way to get better at dribbling is by practicing. Practice dribbling so players become equally adept with either hand. With younger players the earlier you encourage them to use both hands, the better off they'll be.

Let the kids know that practicing dribbling only during practice is not enough. If they really want to become proficient at this basic basketball skill, they will have to practice on their own. They can learn to dribble while standing around with their friends at home, in the backyard, at the playground, or even while watching television.

The more they become accustomed to the feel of the ball the better they will become dribbling without looking down at the ball. Remind players that this takes time, and not to be discouraged with the initial frustrations of dribbling a basketball.

HERE ARE THE TIPS OF BASIC BASKETBALL DRIBBLING

- Use your finger tips to dribble, never the palm.
- Always keep your knees bent while dribbling.
- Keep your free hand up when you are being defended on the dribble.
- Dribble on the side of your body, never bounce the ball in front repeatedly.
- Get used to bouncing the ball hard off the ground.
- Always keep your head up when you dribble.
- Always dribble with a purpose.

BALL HANDLING DRILL 1

Set up four or five chairs or cones down the middle of the court. One player at a time attempts to dribble as fast as possible up court while weaving around the chairs. This drill forces players to use both hands while keeping their head up and eyes off the ball.



BALL HANDLING DRILL 2

ONE-BALL DRILL

Benefit: Improves stamina, quickness and dribbling technique.

- One group of six to eight players lines up across the baseline, each player with their own basketball.
- Players "speed dribble" with their right hand to mid-court, pushing the basketball ahead and not allowing the basketball to bounce higher than their waists, while maintaining control at all times.
- At mid-court, the players "jump stop," continue dribbling and drop their right foot back ("drop step") while keeping their knees bent, back straight and left arm up to protect the basketball.
- With the knees bent, shoulders square to forward and left arm up protecting the basketball, players back dribble ("protect dribble") to the free-throw line "extended."
- At the free-throw line, bring the left foot back and "cross over dribble" to the left hand.
- "Speed dribble" to the opposite baseline left-handed.

TIP: For "speed dribbling" the basketball should bounce no higher than the waist. For the "protect dribble," the basketball should remain below the knees and the players should never cross their feet.

BALL HANDLING DRILL 3

TWO-BALL DRILLS

Benefit: Improves coordination, concentration and basketball control with both hands.

Note: The following drills require a player to use two basketballs.

Speed Dribble: Players line up at the baseline and using two basketballs sprint/dribble to the opposite baseline while keeping each basketball out in front and bouncing no higher than their waist.

Machine Gun: Players line up along the baseline with their backs straight, knees bent and the basketballs simultaneously bouncing below their knees. Players should perform this drill standing in place to begin with, then as skills improve have the players walk, jog and eventually sprint to mid-court and back.

High-Low: Players line up along the baseline, keep their backs straight, knees bent and the basketballs simultaneously dribbling one basketball below the knee, the other basketball at about shoulder level. Feet should be slightly wider than shoulder width apart. Players should switch sides to improve basketball handling skills with both hands.

TIP: Players should always dribble using the finger pads, not the palms of the hands.

BALL HANDLING DRILL 4

BALL HANDLING

Benefit: Develops better basketball control, upper body coordination and timing.

Note: These drills should be executed without the basketball hitting the floor.



Leg Loops: With their feet and legs together, players should bend slightly at the knees and move the basketball around both their legs.

Waist Loops: Players move the basketball around their body at waist level as fast as possible while maintaining control of the basketball.

Figure Eights: Players move their legs apart, drop down with their knees slightly bent and move the basketball around and through their legs in a figure eight pattern while maintaining control. When you do this drill you have to keep your head up!!! If you don't you won't improve yourself! Be patient, you'll lose control of the ball often when you are first starting out but after you practice hard you will find that it helps you a lot! Good luck and always do your best. Push yourself hard or you'll never find out what you can do.

TIP: Players should be encouraged to move the ball as fast as possible while maintaining control. Players should switch ball movement directions periodically. Start with several sets of fifteen seconds per direction and eventually work up to a minute or two.

BALL HANDLING DRILL 5

BEHIND THE BACK DRIBBLE

Dribble, as fast as you can to the first cone. When you approach the cone your body should be forward in front of the ball. Quickly pull the ball with your wrist, fingers, then arm around your back to change direction. The ball should be waist high. As the ball changes direction, use your off hand and body to shield the ball. Keep moving, changing hands, and using the behind the back dribble until the last cone. Finally go for the lay-up shot.

BALL HANDLING DRILL 6

KING OF THE CIRCLE

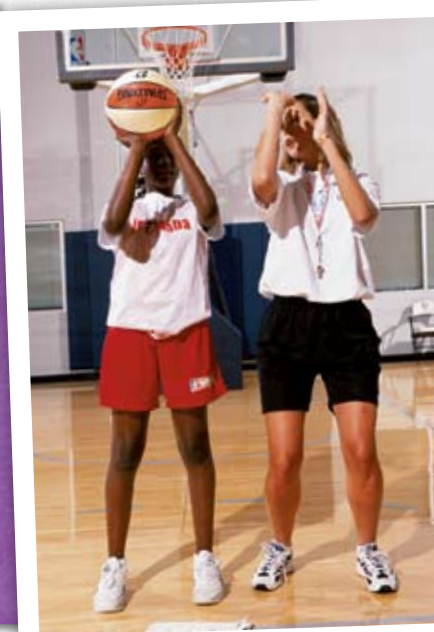
Place two players who are both dribbling basketballs in the center circle at mid court. Both players have to keep dribbling the ball while attempting to steal their opponent's ball. To make it even more interesting, blow a whistle every 10 or 15 seconds and have the players change the hand they are dribbling with.



BASKETBALL FUNDAMENTALS: SHOOTING

Every great shooter starts with the same basic set-up whether they are shooting a free throw, or a jump shot. By getting into the proper position to shoot, your aim is improved and over time you will be able to shoot accurately from longer distances.

At the beginning, however, concentrate on executing the proper shooting techniques from close range. One sure way to develop poor shooting habits is by taking long shots away from the basket. That's not practicing. That's fooling around. Practicing proper shooting might be the most important fundamental in basketball because those techniques must become automatic before any player can become a great offensive threat. That's also why shooting, more than any other skills, demands repetition.



Step-By-Step

THE BASIC SHOOTER'S SET-UP

Get your body square to the basket with equal weight on each foot and bend your knees slightly. If you are a right-handed shooter, then your right foot should be slightly – not more than five inches – in front of the left foot, facing the basket.

1. Bring the ball into the "lock and load" position. That means bringing the ball onto the fingertips of your shooting hand like a waiter holds a tray. Use your "off hand" as a guide and nothing more. Bend your knees with your head out over the ball.
2. Lock in on your target with your eyes. Some players look at the back of the rim, others concentrate on a spot just over the front of the rim. Whatever you choose, lock in on that spot. Use your other hand as a guide. It's only there for the set-up and to help balance the ball in the proper position. Do not try to shoot the ball with both hands. If the off hand is too far in front of the ball, it will be difficult to shoot accurately. Practice each of these steps until they become automatic.





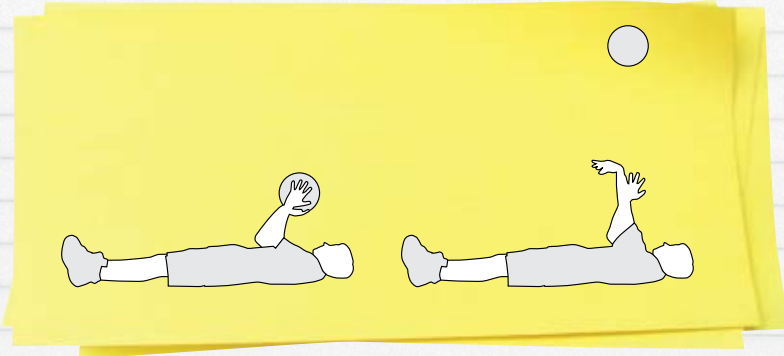
3. With your “guidance system” in order, push the ball straight up toward the basket until your arm extends completely and your elbow locks. Follow through by snapping your wrist in a downward waving motion. Remember to keep your shooting elbow aligned with your body. That way your arm has to go straight up and down which increases your accuracy.

4. As you release the ball it should roll off your fingertips, producing back spin. Your middle finger usually has the last contact with the ball. Remember to shoot the ball with your fingertips, not the palms of your hand. Practice using these techniques close to the basket. You want to keep the follow-through the same every time. That’s why it’s important to practice at close range in the beginning. When these fundamentals become automatic, you’ll be able to bring the ball off the dribble or receive a pass from a teammate and immediately go into the basic set-up without thinking about each movement.

SHOOTING DRILL 1

THE FLAT BACK DRILL

Lie down on your back and practice shooting the ball straight up into the air. If you use proper technique, the ball should come straight down. If it goes to one side or the other, check your guide hand. Make sure you are extending your arm straight up and snapping your wrist in a downward wave.



SHOOTING DRILL 2

THE CHAIR SHOOTING DRILL

Place a chair six to seven feet from the basket. Sit down and practice shooting the ball with one hand. By sitting in the chair you will be forced to fully extend your arm and follow through with a snap of the wrist. If you fail to use the proper technique, the ball won’t make it to the basket much less go through the hoop.

If you watch the best shooters, you’ll notice that they stop, jump and shoot - all in one fluid motion. They don’t have to think about what they are doing, or how they are doing it. That’s because they have practiced the shooting motion for so long that it has become an automatic part of their game. That’s the goal for you, too.

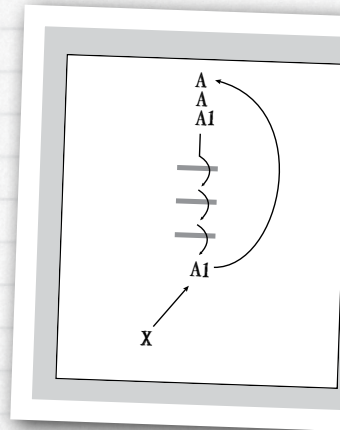


SHOOTING DRILL 3

JUMP, PASS, SHOOT

Benefit: Task complexity experience, while improving concentration, leg explosiveness, hand-eye coordination, and fundamental shooting skills.

1. Place three barriers (rolled up towels) in a line two to three feet apart facing the basket. The distance between the last towel and the basket should be in comfortable jump shot range for the player.
2. To begin the drill, Players (A) line up facing the basket, behind the towels.
3. The first Player (A1) quickly jumps over each of the three towels (players should jump with two feet at the same time). As Player (A1) passes over the third towel, Player (A1) receives a pass from the Coach (X) just as the player clears the third towel. Players should land in the proper jump shot stance (for right-handed shooters: right foot slightly forward, left foot slightly back, knees bent, back straight and head up).
4. Upon landing, Player (A1) immediately shoots a jump shot, then jogs away from the Coach (X) and proceeds to the back of the Players (A) line.
5. Coach (X) should rotate shooting positions by placing the three towels at different angles to the basket.



TIP: Some shooting and conditioning drills may be tougher on players with less refined shooting skills. Also, try having a second coach or helper on hand to rebound basketballs and feed the coach who will be passing to players. Using two basketballs will also help these drills move more quickly.

BEST PRACTICES: The more times a player runs through a drill and the less a player stands around watching others, the better. Try and break down your drill groups to three or four players each (with a coach) if you can. Use as much of the court and as many baskets that are available. Run players through drills as many times as possible. If you must conduct drills with the entire team as a group, keep the players waiting in line engaged by quizzing them on what they see being done right and wrong by the players running the drills ahead of them.

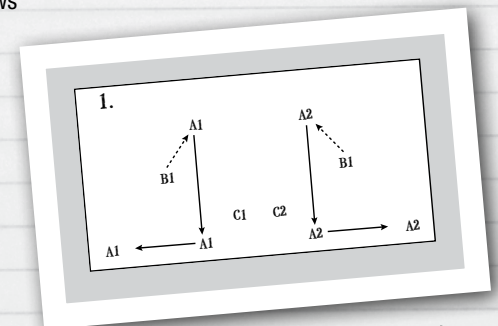
SHOOTING DRILL 4

SHOOT AND SLIDE

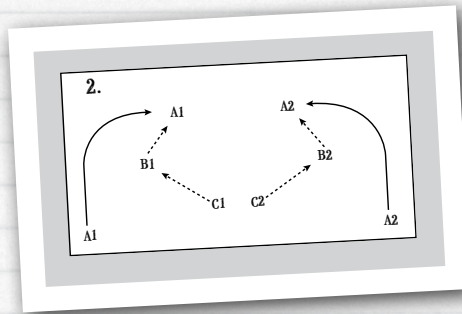
Benefit: Develops fundamental shooting, passing and rebounding skills as well as defensive stance technique and leg strength.

Note: This is a six player (at a time) drill - two shooters (A1)(A2), two passers (B1)(B2) and two rebounders (C1)(C2).

1. The shooters (A1)(A2) begin at the right and left elbows ready to receive passes from the passers (B1)(B2), who are positioned on the outside of the lanes. The rebounders (C1)(C2) are under the basket in the lane.
2. Players (A1)(A2) receive the passes from players (B1)(B2), shoot the basketballs and sprint down the lane to the baseline. Players (A1)(A2), then drop down into a defensive stance facing away from the court and slide steps to the right and left sidelines.



Player (A1) plants the right foot on the sideline and pivots, dropping the left foot back (“drop step”). Player (A2) does the same in the left corner, planting the left foot on the sideline and dropping the right foot back. Players (A1)(A2) then sprint/loop back to the right and left elbows with hands “up and ready” to receive passes from Players (B1)(B2). Players (A1)(A2) catch the passes, square to the basket, shoot and repeat the drill.



3. After five to ten round-trips, the shooters (A1)(A2) become the rebounders (C1)(C2), the rebounders (C1)(C2) become the passers, (B1)(B2) become the shooters (A1)(A2). Have the players run the drill from both sides of the court.

TEAM SHOOTING GAME

Divide the team into two groups, one at either end of the court. Both teams start 10 to 15 feet from the right or left side of the basket. The first player in line takes a shot. If he misses, the next player shoots from the same spot. The entire group moves to the next spot as soon as somebody makes a shot from the first position. The winning team is the group that can hit all 10 shots: corner, between the corner and free-throw line, free-throw, opposite space between the free-throw line and corner, opposite corner – and back before the other team.



BASKETBALL FUNDAMENTALS: REBOUNDING

Many coaches believe that rebounding is the key to winning games.

On offense, grabbing a rebound after a missed shot gives your team a second chance to score. On the other hand, when pulling down a defensive rebound, a player is limiting the opponent to just one chance at a basket. Those “second chances” can be the difference between winning or losing a game.

Good rebounders are not necessarily the tallest players or the best jumpers on the court. Sure, bigger players and those with great jumping ability have an advantage, but just like playing defense, position and fundamentals can make any player an effective rebounder. In fact, if you use proper technique, you can keep any player away from the basket and out of rebounding position.



THINK MISS

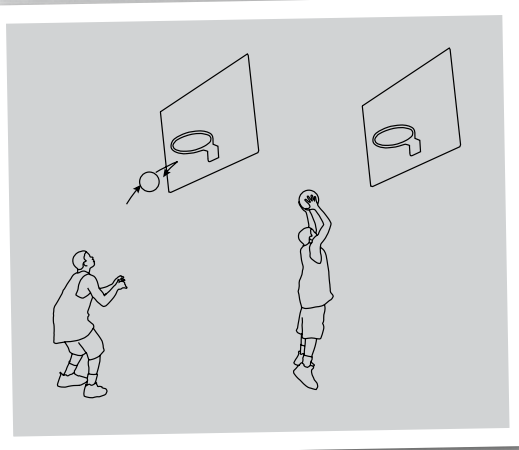
Always assume the shooter is going to miss. No matter who is shooting or where the shot is coming from, be prepared to rebound a missed shot. Remember, even great shooters miss half their shots.

BLOCK OUT

As soon as a shot is headed for the rim, you need to get into position for a rebound. Get in front of the player you are guarding and turn toward the basket staying between your opponent and the hoop. You can use the “reverse pivot” to move in front of your opponent if your back is to the basket when the shot goes up. Spin, or pivot on one foot when the shot goes into the air. For example, plant your right foot on the floor, turn on that foot and bring your left leg across your body so you are facing the basket. This allows you to get into rebounding position while keeping your opponent behind you. Make contact with your opponent so you can move with him or her. Stay balanced by keeping your legs wide apart and your knees slightly bent.

Focus on the trajectory of the ball and try to pay attention to the angles. With your man behind you, it's easier to move toward the ball quickly.

When the ball comes down, go up strong. That means keeping your legs wide so you can stay balanced as you jump into the air. Go up with both hands and as soon as your fingertips touch the ball, lock onto it. Come down with the ball in the same motion you went up with. Protect the ball immediately so opponents can't slap it away and quickly pass the ball or go up for a shot.



STARTING [AND ENDING] THE BREAK

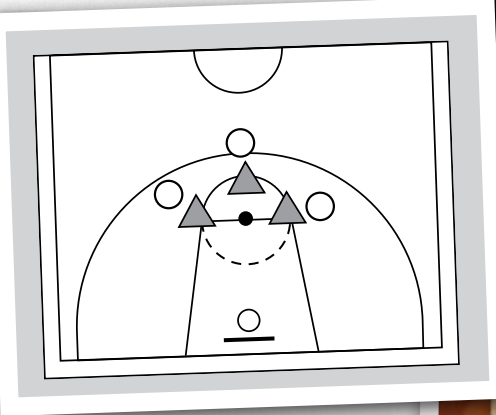
The best way to begin a fast break is by grabbing a defensive rebound and making a quick outlet pass to a teammate. Remember not to hold onto the ball and stand there. Instead, immediately look up and fire the ball to an open teammate running up the court and then start running yourself. Trail the fast break and get yourself into position to grab the offensive rebound on the other end of the court if your team's shot is missed.

PRACTICE THE OFFENSIVE PUT-BACK

Stand two to three feet from the basket and toss the ball off the backboard. Step toward the ball as it comes down and lock on with both hands. Remember to keep the ball up, out and away from your body. Keeping the ball in this position, come down and immediately go back up to put the ball in the basket.

PRACTICE DRILL

Three players - one on the left corner of the free-throw line, one in the middle of the free-throw line and the other at the right corner - assume a defensive position. Three other players take a position opposite the defenders. The coach shoots the ball and the defensive players practice boxing out the offensive players while all six go for the rebound.



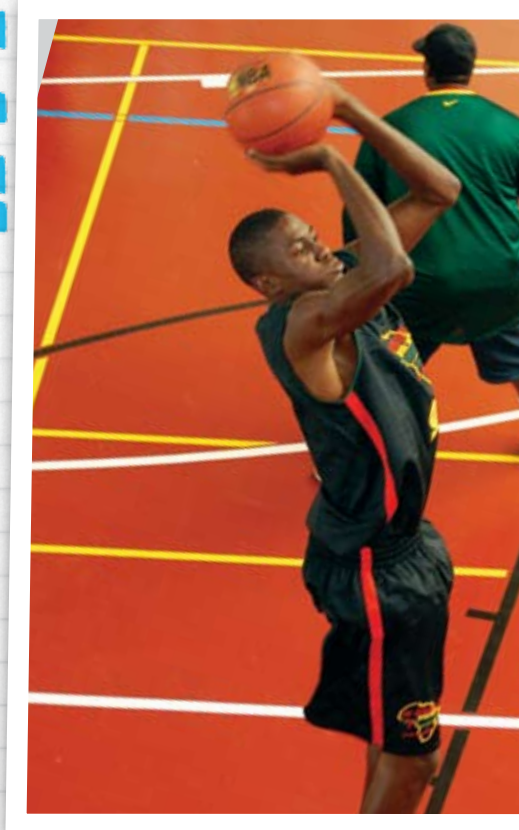
BASKETBALL FUNDAMENTALS: OFFENSE

With younger players, you are better off teaching the two basic approaches: the fast break and the patterned, half-court offense. Each system has its advantages as well as its drawbacks.

CREATING YOUR LINE-UP

If you are going to coach basketball, you must position your players appropriately. Here's a quick overview of the five positions on the court:

- 1. THE POINT GUARD:** This player handles the ball as the team moves up the court and into its offensive plays. The point guard is much like the quarterback of a football team. Point guards must be excellent ball handlers who are able to see the whole court – that means being able to dribble without looking at the ball. A talented point guard who can also make a jump shot and drive to the basket is essential to a team's success.
- 2. THE SHOOTING GUARD:** While this player has solid ball handling skills, he or she is usually the team's best shooter and top scorer. This player is also referred to, at times, as the "off guard." The shooting guard is normally the team's most athletic player on the floor.
- 3. THE SMALL FORWARD:** The small forward is usually the most versatile player on the court. This person plays both an "inside" and "outside" game. He or she must have the skills to shoot and dribble the ball well, while using his or her size and strength to battle near the basket for rebounds. Don't be fooled by the name.
- 4. THE POWER FORWARD:** This player is known as the team's primary rebounder at both ends of the court. On defense, power forwards can start a fast break by grabbing a rebound and making a quick outlet pass to one of the guards. Big and strong, the power forward may not be the most graceful player on the team, but his or her presence is always felt.
- 5. THE CENTER:** To be successful at any level, a team usually needs a talented big man in the middle. Traditionally, the center is the tallest player on the team. The center's job is to anchor the team's defense and rebound the ball at both ends of the court. Additionally, the center is the team's primary low post scorer on offense.





THE FAST BREAK OFFENSE

To put an effective fast break offense in place, you need a team that has great foot speed, is in tremendous shape, and is very good at gathering defensive rebounds and throwing outlet passes to your guards. In this traditional “run-and-gun” offense, the idea is to be so quick off the boards that your team literally out races the opponent down the floor for easy baskets.

Of course, all this is predicated on your team’s ability to run, pass, and get rebounds. In practice, you must work on these fundamentals as well as outlet passing and stamina. Unfortunately, a fast break offense falls apart very quickly if the other team hustles back on defense, and forces your team into a half-court offense. Teams that train exclusively for the fast-break game often have a hard time setting up a patterned, slow down offense, and that can cause problems.

THE PATTERNED HALF-COURT OFFENSE

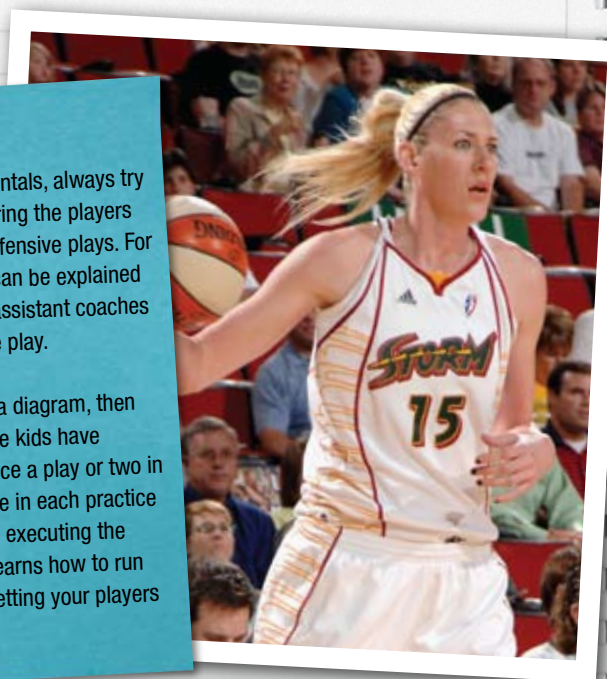
If you decide to work on set plays, then you can devote a good chunk of practice to explaining how each play works. Let them walk through the plays at first, and then practice those plays over and over again until they become automatic. Your point guard controls the offense. He or she should call out a play designed to get one of your players an open shot or keep the ball moving from player to player until a high percentage shot is available.

Of course, smart coaches teach their kids the fast break and the half-court offense. They’ll let their kids run a fast break offense if they get the chance, but they’ll also be schooled in setting up a play if the fast break doesn’t materialize.

OFFENSE TIP

In addition to working on basketball fundamentals, always try to teach a few basic plays during practice. Bring the players around the clipboard and diagram specific offensive plays. For example, the traditional “give-and-go” play can be explained with a diagram and then with you and your assistant coaches demonstrating. Then let the kids practice the play.

Show them how a screen works. First, with a diagram, then with your assistants demonstrating. Once the kids have mastered these basic plays, you can introduce a play or two in succeeding practice sessions. Block out time in each practice so players can walk through the play before executing the play at full speed. Make sure every player learns how to run the plays. You can even have some fun by letting your players decide what they want to call the plays.

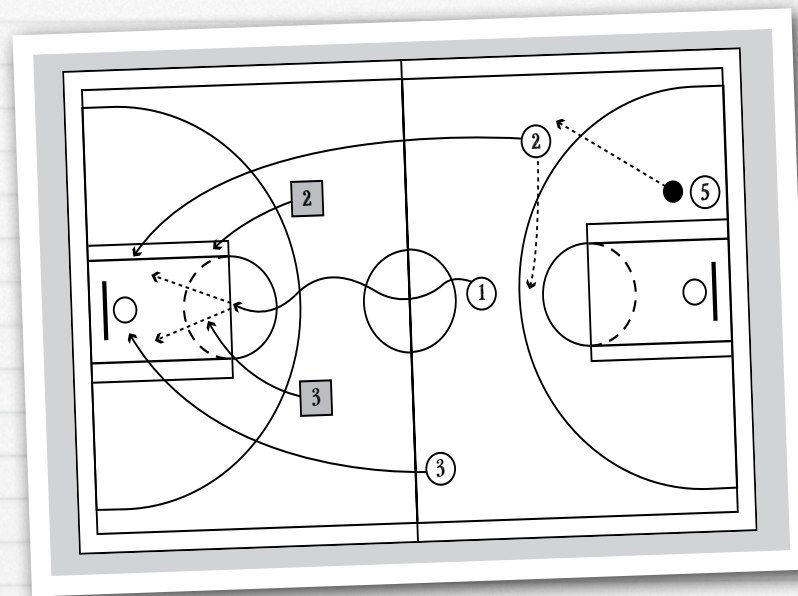


FAST BREAK

An offensive team always looks for good, easy shots. One way to get them is to move the ball quickly down the court before the other team’s defenders can set up in position. Fast breaks almost always occur after a team misses a shot or free-throw. The team gaining possession moves the ball quickly down the court, and looks for an advantage in players, like two going against one defender, or three against two.

HOW IT’S DONE:

The fast break team must get the ball to the center of the court while other offensive players run the lanes to the sides of the person dribbling the ball. The ballhandler should stop near the foul line. If the defenders choose to guard the players running the lanes, there will be an open 15-foot shot. But if a defender comes to contest the ballhandler, one of the players running the lanes will be wide open for a pass and lay-up.

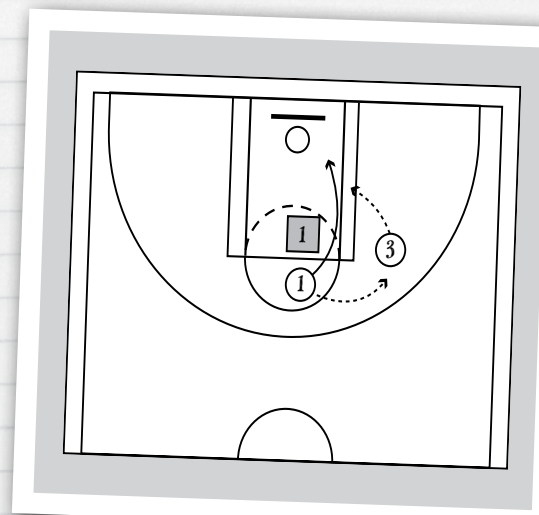


GIVE-AND-GO

Give-and-go can be worked by any two offensive players and is very effective against lazy, non-aggressive defenders. But it can also burn defenders who stay too close to the player they are defending.

HOW IT’S DONE:

This play works just the way it sounds: one player “gives” the ball to a teammate and then he or she “goes” to the basket. The player with the ball passes to a teammate and then cuts quickly to the basket, usually after a fake the other way. This play is effective because the defender might turn to watch the ball, or may relax after his or her opponent has given up the ball.



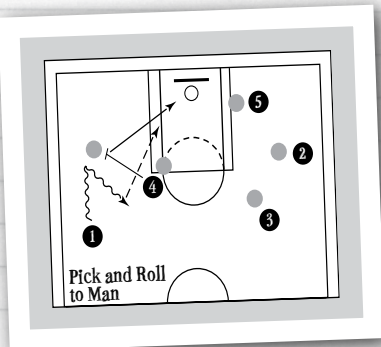
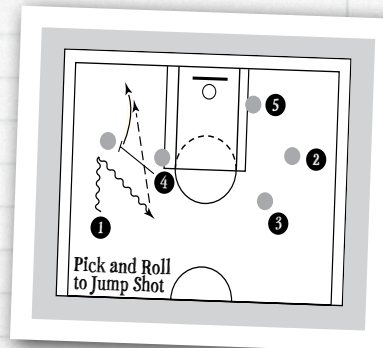
THE PICK-AND-ROLL

John Stockton and Karl Malone, former teammates on the Utah Jazz, are famous for executing the pick-and-roll to near perfection. The play can be so effective that even when defenders know it's coming, the pick-and-roll can still be difficult to stop.

Keep in mind that the pick-and-roll is used almost exclusively against aggressive man-to-man defenses. The play can be executed by any two offensive players. There are three options off the pick-and-roll and each are designed to create a high percentage shot for the offense by "picking" one of the two defensive players.

PICK-AND-ROLL TO JUMP SHOT

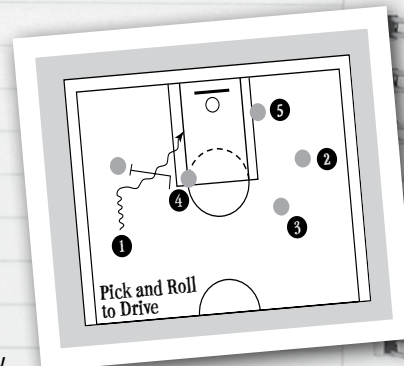
1. The point guard, 1, dribbles the ball to the side of the court where another offensive player, 4, is isolated, or alone with his or her defender. In each of these options the player isolated on the left side of the court is the power forward, 4.
2. The guard, 1, drives his man to the left. As he does so, his teammate, 4, heads in the same direction to set the pick.
3. As the pick is set, the guard, 1, dribbles close to and around his teammate, 4, in an attempt to drive the defensive player into the pick.
4. As soon as the offensive player, 4, feels the guard's defender run into him, the offensive player, 4, rolls to the corner. The guard, 1, who appears headed to have either a clear lane to the basket or an open jump shot, attracts the attention of both defenders and quickly passes to his teammate, 4, for an open jump shot.



PICK-AND-ROLL TO MAN

Steps 1, 2 and 3 (Same as above)

4. Instead of rolling into the corner for a jump shot, the offensive player, 4, setting the pick rolls to the basket. Defenders are usually caught watching the player with the ball, in this case the point guard, 1.
5. The point guard passes through the defenders – usually a bounce pass – to his teammate, 4, for an easy basket.



PICK AND ROLL TO DRIVE

1. The guard, 1, and his teammate, 4, head to the same spot on the floor.
2. The guard, 1, waits for the pick to be set, then drives his defender into the pick. The guard, 1, simply needs his defender slowed down by the pick. Even the briefest hesitation by the defender can open a lane to the basket for the guard, 1.
3. The guard keeps his dribble and moves as close as possible to his teammate, 4, setting the pick. If the guard's defender gets caught by the pick, the guard, 1, heads straight to the basket.

TIP: SETTING A PICK

One of the most successful plays a team can run is the "pick and roll." The key to this play is the "pick," otherwise known as a screen. When a successful "pick" is set, the offensive player who sets it effectively screens a defender from another offensive player. This allows the offensive teammate to get free and run to an open spot on the floor so they can receive a pass and take an uncontested shot, or if they have the ball, get by a defender for an open shot to the basket. To set a pick, you need to anticipate where a defensive player will move to before he or she actually makes their move. Once in position, plant your feet wide apart, keeping your hands and elbows close to your body, and just stand still. If you move, and/or put your hands out to help block the defensive player, you will be called for an offensive foul. Once you are able to set a good pick, your teammates will have a much easier time scoring.

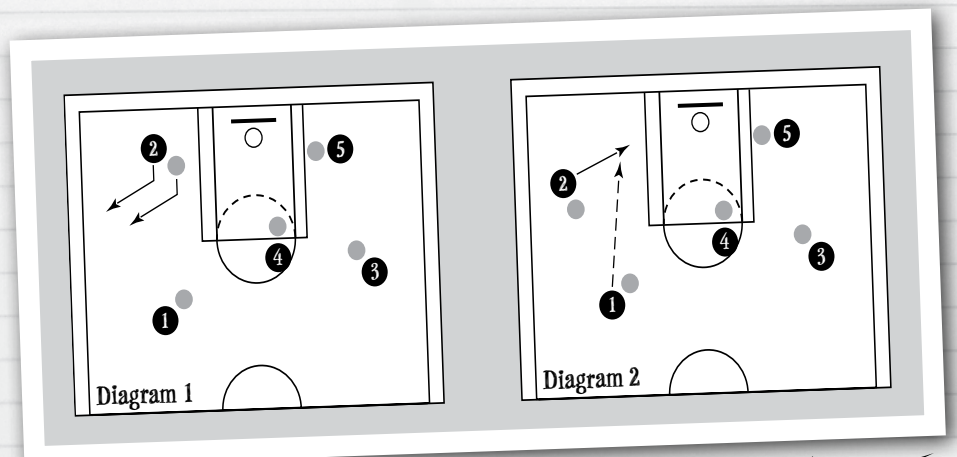


THE BACK DOOR

The Back Door is particularly effective against aggressive man-to-man defenses. It is specifically designed to exploit the aggressive tactics of defenders guarding players without the ball. The Back Door can be executed by any two offensive players just about anywhere on the court and is even effective against a full-court press.

1. As the point guard, 1, crosses the center line and attempts to set up the offense, a teammate, 2, takes two quick steps to the left. (Diagram 1)
2. The teammate, 2, takes these two quick steps knowing the aggressive defender trying to deny the ball will go with him. (Diagram 1)
3. As soon as the defender catches up, the offensive player, 2, breaks for the basket. (Diagram 2)
4. A split second after the offensive player, 2, breaks, the point guard, 1, fires a pass to him.

Since the play can unfold quickly, use a bounce or a chest pass, whichever gets the ball to the breaking man, 2, quicker. (Diagram 2)



FOCUSING ON HEALTH AND SAFETY

One of a coach's major responsibilities is to be prepared for any medical situation. In basketball, the most common injuries are skinned knees, turned or sprained ankles, perhaps even a banged head. To cope with these injuries, always have a fully-stocked first aid kit handy. Such a kit should include ready-to-use ice packs, a couple of Ace bandages, disinfectants, various sizes of band-aids, eye drops, cotton balls, and so on. It's your responsibility to replenish the first-aid kit after each game. There's nothing worse than searching for an ice pack, only to discover you used the last one in the previous game.



In addition, before the season begins, it's also a good idea to check with your assistant coaches or parents to see if they have medical or emergency training. By the way, make it a point to always bring a cell phone in case an emergency call has to be made.

Also, you might have some players with special needs. Check with the player's parents as to how these special needs have to be addressed. For example, if a player suffers from asthma, you want to know where he or she carries their inhalator. Or for a player with diabetes, you'll want to know how the parents want to handle any potential crises. The key here is doing your homework. The more prepared you are, the easier – and safer – your job will be. In terms of preventing injury, remind players and parents about protective equipment. For example, protective eye goggles have become popular as a way to prevent injury from an accidental elbow or errant finger while rebounding. Mouth guards have also become more popular with young players.

Jewelry, such as necklaces or earrings, are often not permitted in youth leagues. Review league rules before the first game, and check out regulations regarding jewelry. If the league has no rule regarding jewelry, it still might be a good idea to suggest to your players they should remove items that can create a hazard to their opponents and themselves.



R.I.C.E.

For most bumps, bruises and scrapes, ice is always the best solution. When an injury occurs, ice it immediately for 15 minutes, and if necessary, keep using the ice occasionally over the next few days.

The R.I.C.E. approach is best. R for Rest; I for Ice, C for Compression - wrap the injury with an ACE bandage to reduce the swelling; and E for Elevation - lift the injured limb higher than your heart.

After a day or two of R.I.C.E., many sprains, strains or other injuries will begin to heal. However, if the pain or swelling does not decrease after 48 hours, make an appointment to see a doctor.

HEALTH & NUTRITION TIPS

Basketball players need to eat at least 3 meals plus one or two snacks every day. Snacks can be healthy and convenient additions to your diet especially when low-fat and high fiber foods and beverages are selected. The team of foods includes plenty of:

- Fluids
- Vegetables
- Milk and Yogurt (choose low-fat varieties)
- Sparingly eat foods high in Saturated Fats and Oils & Sugars and Sweets. These foods are in the small tip of the pyramid. Be aware that foods containing added hidden fats and sugars are in the other food groups in the pyramid.
- Breads and Starchy Vegetables
- Fruits
- Meats (lean) and Meat Alternatives

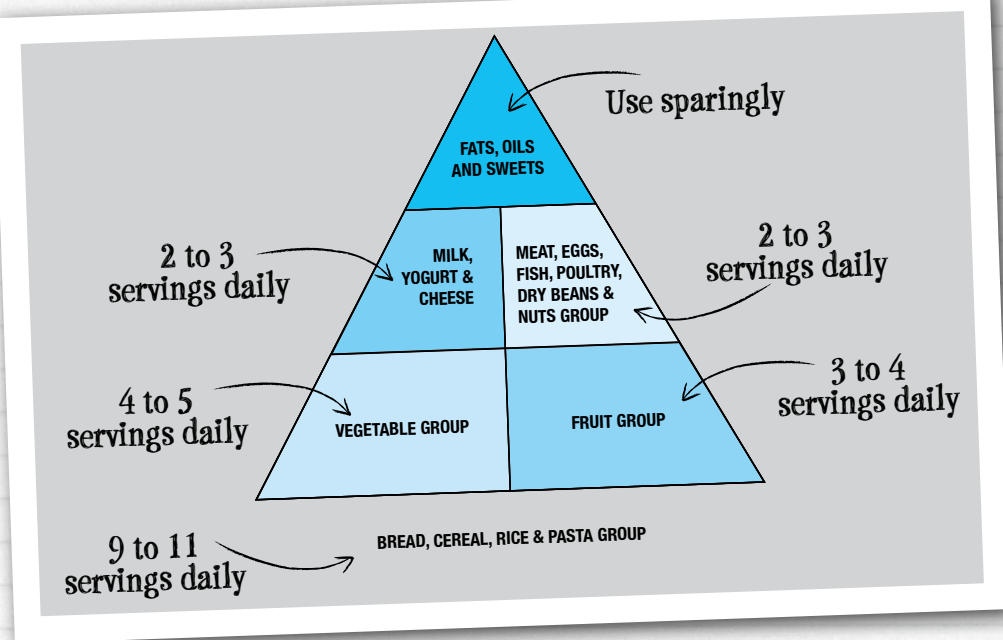
Each of these food group types provides some, but not all of the essential nutrients athletes need. The whole team of foods is needed for maximum energy and top performance.

Try these snacks about 1-2 hours before the practice or game.

- Energy or cereal bars
- Yogurt and Fruit
- Applesauce
- Bowl of cereal and low fat milk
- Peanut butter sandwich
- Gatorade
- String cheese and crackers

“It’s important kids get out and play. Drink fluids, eat vegetables and eat fruit. Those times when you want to snack, grab an apple, orange, or a banana.”

Bruce Bowen, San Antonio Spurs



Athletes get most of their nutrition information from their coaches and parents. Players will listen to a coach sometimes better than a teacher or parent. Helping them make wise food choices will give them the ability to play at their best. One way to increase a player’s performance is to make sure that they show up for practice and games with gas in their tank.

WHAT YOUR PLAYERS EAT WILL DETERMINE HOW THEY PLAY

Muscles are like the engines in cars... feed them the wrong type of fuel and they can’t even back-out of the driveway, let alone drive down the court for an easy lay-up.

Tell your players that their muscles need carbohydrates to run up and down the court. It is the best source of fuel for basketball players and you need to make sure they eat them before, during and after games and workouts.

Foods like whole grain cereals (brands low in sugar), whole wheat breads and rolls and any type of fruits and vegetables give players the fuel they need to play longer and harder as well as the vitamins and minerals they need to grow strong and tall.

Carbohydrates like candy and soda pop can make players feel like they have energy, but because they are so high in sugar they can drop a player like a slam-dunk. Avoid eating candy, cookies and soda pop before practice and games.





MISSION

The mission of the Jr. NBA /Jr. WNBA, presented by Gatorade & Nike, is to encourage participation and support youth basketball through programs for players, parents, coaches and officials.

PROGRAM GOALS

- Support and encourage participation, fundamental skill development and teamwork.
- Educate players, parents, and coaches on the values of the game including, sportsmanship, teamwork, character, leadership and the importance of an active, healthy and safe lifestyle.

All content in the Coach's Guide was provided by the Jr. NBA/Jr. WNBA.



JR. NBA/JR. WNBA OVERVIEW



Clyde Drexler, Hilton Armstrong, Andrea Stinson and Katrina McClain at a Court Dedication and Jr. NBA/Jr. WNBA Summer Camp in Pass Christian, MS.

Special guest coaches, Bill Walton and Jennifer Azzi, with the Jr. NBA/Jr. WNBA National Team at All-Star weekend.

WNBA Cares Ambassador Jennifer Azzi stresses the importance of being healthy at a Jr. NBA/Jr. WNBA basketball clinic.

Jr. NBA/Jr. WNBA Gatorade Championship series teams showing great sportsmanship after a game.

TEAM INFORMATION

Assistant Coach:	Assistant Coach:
Phone: _____	Phone: _____
Player's Name:	Player's Name:
Parent's Name:	Parent's Name:
Phone:	Phone:
Emergency Contact:	Emergency Contact:
Player's Name:	Player's Name:
Parent's Name:	Parent's Name:
Phone:	Phone:
Emergency Contact:	Emergency Contact:
Player's Name:	Player's Name:
Parent's Name:	Parent's Name:
Phone:	Phone:
Emergency Contact:	Emergency Contact:
Player's Name:	Player's Name:
Parent's Name:	Parent's Name:
Phone:	Phone:
Emergency Contact:	Emergency Contact:
Player's Name:	Player's Name:
Parent's Name:	Parent's Name:
Phone:	Phone:
Emergency Contact:	Emergency Contact:

DATA FORM

Please fill out this form, tear along the perforation, and send it back to:
NBA Basketball Operations International
 15th Floor, NBA, Olympic Tower, 645 Fifth Ave.,
 New York NY, 10022 USA
 Fax: +1-212-980-6935

Surname (Last Name) _____

Given Name (First Name) _____

Birthday _____

Nationality _____

Address/Postal Code/City _____

Country _____

Email address _____

Phone Number _____

Mobile Number _____

Work Address _____

Work Number _____

Occupation _____

Are you a teacher, volunteer or professional coach? (please circle one)

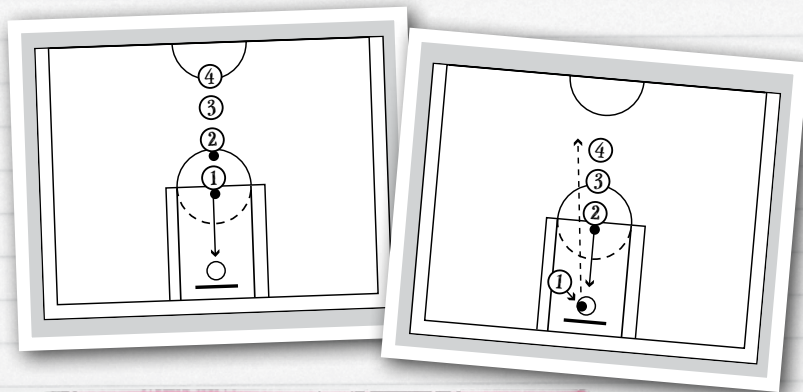
What age group do you coach? (please circle one) **7-12 13-18 18 and up**

PRACTICE FUN GAMES & DRILLS

KNOCKOUT

Objective: To encourage the development of free throw shooting and follow-up of missed shots, particularly under pressure situations.

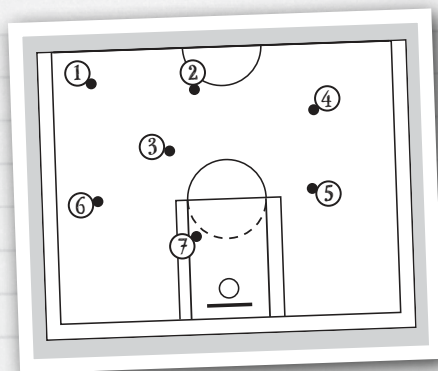
1. Players line up single file, at the free-throw line. The first two players hold a ball.
2. One at a time, players shoot free-throws and either make the shot, retrieve the ball and pass it to the next player or they rebound their shot and follow with a lay-up.
3. The next player with the ball may shoot as soon as his preceding teammate's ball leaves their hand. A pressure situation is created when 2 players are simultaneously trying to shoot their foul shot or their follow-up lay-up.
4. If the "2nd" player makes his shot first, the first player sits out until drill is finished.
5. By this process of elimination only 1 player will be left at the end of the drill.



KING OF THE COURT

Objective: The purpose of this drill is to promote dribbling fundamentals (head-up, finger-tips, and protecting the ball). Additionally, attention is paid to eliminating improper ball handling (traveling, double-dribbling).

1. Using half of the court, instruct players to spread out. Each player has a ball.
2. While dribbling, players attempt to keep control of their ball while obstructing the dribble of the others.
3. Losing control of the ball results in that player's elimination from the drill.
4. Eliminated players practice ball-handling skills on another side of the court.
5. As the game progresses, the parameters of the game become smaller.



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