



New Berlin Athletic Association
P.O. BOX 51123 New Berlin, WI53151-0123

BASKETBALL DRILLS

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1. INTRODUCTION

This manual was developed as a guide to assist volunteer coaches in the N.B.A.A. recreational basketball program. It contains descriptions of a variety of basketball drills that coaches may use to teach fundamental elements of the game. The target audience for these drills are kids in the 3rd – 6th grade age group. The drills are rated as beginner (👉), intermediate (👌), and advanced (👏).

2. PASSING / CATCHING

2.1 Play Catch

Level: Beginner

Have the kids practice delivering and catching the three basic types of basketball passes: the chest pass, the bounce pass, and the overhead pass.

First have them practice the **chest pass**. Have partners stand about 15 feet apart. They should hold the ball at chest level with elbows out. Take one step toward the partner and “flick” the pass by quickly extending arms and pushing thumbs through the ball and down. Really try to put some “Zip” on it!

Next, practice the **bounce pass**. Identical to the chest pass, except that the ball takes one bounce in route. Often, beginners start this pass from their face and push the ball down into the floor instead out toward the receiver. Players need to be taught that the pass should travel *more* than half way to the receiver before it bounces.

Finally, practice the **overhead pass**. This is similar to the “throw-in” in soccer. The idea is to get the pass over the top of the defender. This type of pass is often used to outlet a rebound. Again, have the kids try to get the ball there in a hurry!

Receivers should practice giving the passer a two-handed target. When catching the ball, they should concentrate on seeing it all the way into the hands. Have them secure the catch and move into the ball into triple-threat position, away from the defender.

Points of emphasis

- get the ball there quickly,
- catch with the hands, not with the arms, belly or chest,
- protect the ball after catching it.

PASSING / CATCHING

2.2 Name Pass

Level: Beginner

This is a good drill for the first couple of practices when everyone is trying to learn each others names.

Have the kids form a big circle at mid-court. Using only one ball to start, the player with the ball calls the name of someone they wish to pass to. The receiver must “show” their hands to the passer, meaning they are ready to catch. Then the passer delivers a bounce pass. The receiver should secure the catch in their hands, and move the ball into triple-threat position. Then, this player calls the name of someone to pass to, and the process is repeated.

After a minute or two, add a second ball into the drill. If they can handle that, add a third ball. It’s a lot of fun and the kids will really enjoy learning the other players’ names.

Another variation of this drill is to break the players into two groups of five or six.

Probably best to stay with bounce passes and avoid the chest passes during this drill. We don’t want to have anyone get hit in the face with a ball.

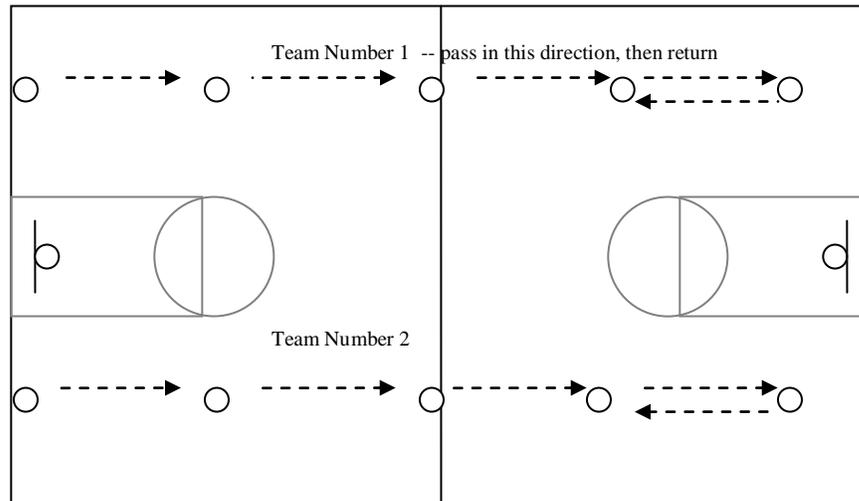
PASSING / CATCHING

2.3 Relay Race Passing

Level: Beginner

Form two teams, each with five or six kids. Have each team set up in a circle with players spaced about 15 feet apart. The idea is to pass the ball all the way around the circle without a drop. When a team successfully passes one ball all the way around the circle without a drop, a second ball is added to the mix. If there is a drop the team has to start over with one ball. When two balls make it all the way around the circle without a drop, a third ball is added. Remember, this is a race. The first team to successfully pass one, then two, then three balls all the way around the circle without a drop is the winner.

Another variation of this drill is to create two teams with players spaced across the length of the court. Again, the players remain stationary, but the two teams have a race moving the ball up and down the length of the court, say, three times – alternating the chest pass, bounce pass, and overhead pass.



PASSING / CATCHING

2.4 One Hand Catch

Level: Intermediate

Have the kids play catch with a partner. The receiver must put one hand behind their back. The passer should stand only about 15 feet away and deliver a soft bounce pass. The receiver should try to control the catch with only one hand. Try to avoid trapping the ball against the arm or body.

For players that can do this try backing up to 20 or 25 feet, and let the passer put a little more speed on the pass. Next, come closer again and have the kids try catching a chest pass (without a bounce) this way. Finally, try it with the weaker hand.

Points of emphasis

- ➔ concentrate on the ball,
- ➔ use the hand, not the body, to catch.

PASSING / CATCHING

2.5 Bad Pass

Level: Intermediate

Space partners about 15 feet apart and have the passer throw a pass that is too high, too low, too far left, or too far right (basically a bad pass). The receiver must react and catch the pass with their hands. They should secure the catch and move the ball into triple threat position.

Next, have the receiver turn their back to the passer. Just before throwing the ball, the passer should say "Turn." The receiver has to locate the ball and make the catch. The passer should be careful not to hurt the receiver with the ball. After securing the catch always move the ball into triple threat position.

Reason for the drill

- ➔ learn to react to the ball where ever it is.

PASSING / CATCHING

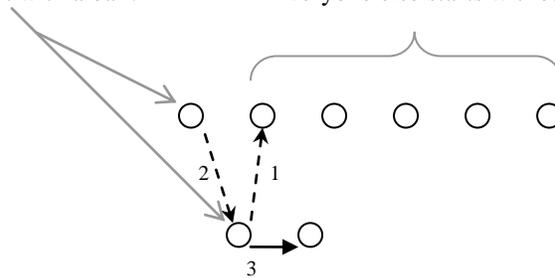
2.6 Rapid Fire Passing

Level: Intermediate

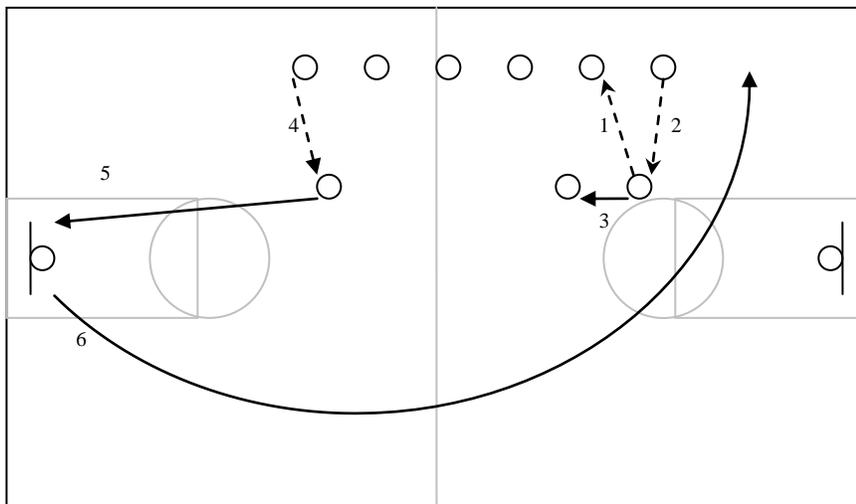
One player starts with a ball and shuffles in this direction (→). The shuffler passes to the first player in line without a ball (1). The girl at the end of the line that started with a ball (2) passes to the shuffler. The shuffler keeps moving (3) to the right and repeats the process all the way down the line passing to the next player in line without a ball.

These two girls start with a ball.

Everyone else starts without a ball.



Then, she does it back in the opposite direction as shown below. On the last catch (4), she does not pass. Instead, she dribbles to the basket and shoots a lay-up (5). She gets her own rebound and dribbles to the end of the line (6)

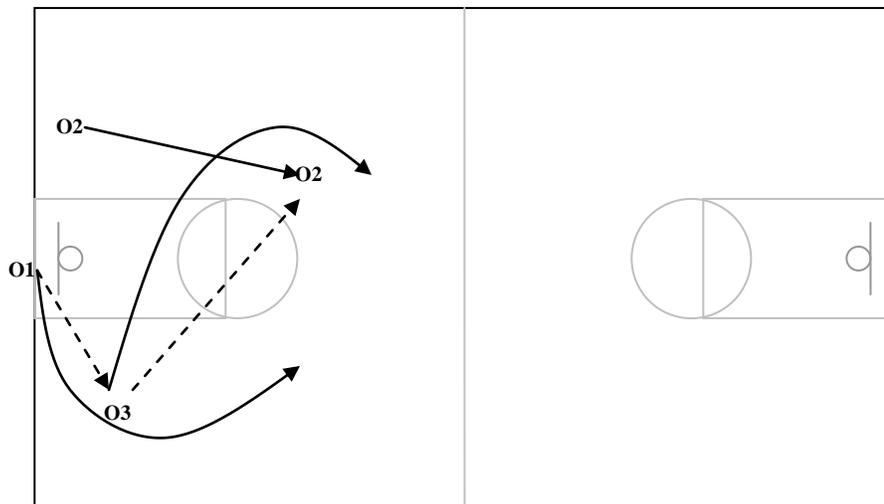


PASSING / CATCHING

2.7 Three Man Weave

Level: Intermediate

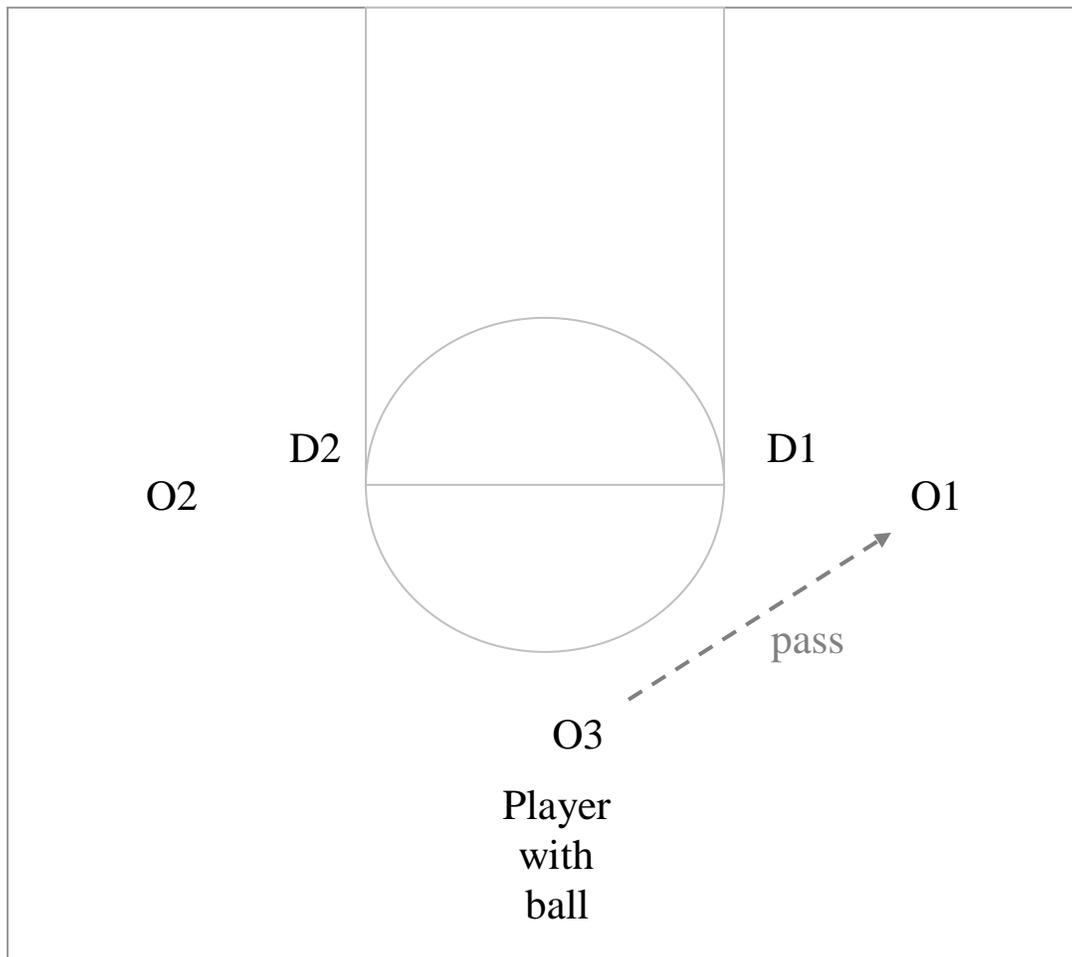
Three lines starting at one end of the gym. Player in the middle starts with the ball and passes to either player (in the example below O1 passes to O3), then runs around behind the player they passed to. All three players continue to weave to the other end of the court, passing, and running behind. As they approach the basket, the closest one shoots a lay-up and the others rebound. This group returns along the side of court while the next group does the drill.



PASSING / CATCHING

2.8 Ball Fake Game

Level: Intermediate



There are three offensive players in this drill and two defensive players. Two offensive players, O1 and O2, go to the wings. The defenders, D1 and D2 cover them in “deny” position. The coach may have to make sure the defenders don’t overplay the pass. The offense scores either by completing a pass from the point to the wing, or by getting the defender to lunge for a fake pass. The defense scores by deflecting or stealing the pass. This drill teaches the kids to give hard, realistic fakes. And they really enjoy trying to trick their teammates.

PASSING / CATCHING

2.9 No Dribble

Level: Intermediate

This is a great team drill for teaching the kids two very important points with regard to passing and catching:

- Work without the ball to get open.
- After catching, use the pivot to keep the ball away from the defender.

Set up five on five and start the ball with one of the players. They have to use the pivot to protect the ball from a defender while the other four try to get open. The defenders try to prevent the pass or steal the ball. The offense can not dribble. If an offensive player can get close enough to the basket they are allowed to shoot. A great drill for both offense and defense.

PASSING / CATCHING

2.10 Step-Through Bounce Pass

Level: Advanced

Have two players play catch with the coach as the defender in the middle. The coach should come up close to the passer, say one arm length away. The passer fakes a pass released from the “high right” in order to get the defender (coach) to raise his arms in that area, then “steps-through” with his right foot by turning his back side to the defender (coach) and makes a back-handed bounce pass released from the low left. It is difficult at first, so take it slow. Then, the coach plays defense on the other player and the process is reversed.

As the players get better at this skill, and they understand what you are trying to accomplish with this drill, have the kids play the role of defender. Have them play the role of defender passively at first, and then gradually more aggressively.

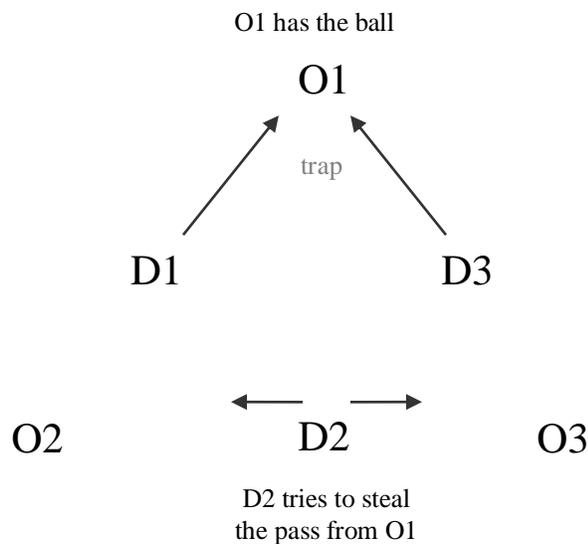
PASSING / CATCHING

2.11 Triangle Trap

Level: Advanced

Six players at a time participate in this drill, three on offense and three on defense. The offensive player must remain relatively stationary (one or two steps either side of a marker), but the defense does a lot of moving. The goal for the offense is to complete as many passes as possible and the goal for the defense is to steal the ball.

Space the offensive players in a triangle about 15 feet apart from each other. The defensive players start at the mid-point of each line between offensive players. The coach starts the drill by passing to any one of the offensive players, say O1. The two nearest defenders, in this case D1 and D3, must trap player O1, and try to steal the ball without fouling. O1 may not dribble. He may use his pivot to protect the ball. O1 tries to complete a pass to either O2 or O3. Player D2 tries to anticipate where the pass is going and attempts to steal it. Let's say the pass is completed to O3. Now players D3 and D2 must trap O3, and O3 tries to pass to either O1 or O2. And so on. A lot of fun.



3. BALL HANDLING

3.1 Stationary Dribbling Drills

Level: Beginner

Each player should have a ball. It is helpful if you encourage some of the players to bring a ball from home.

Look Away

Have each player, from a standing still position, practice dribbling the ball with their stronger hand. Teach them to protect the ball from the defender with the other hand and the body. Teach them to avoid looking at the ball. The coach should hold up fingers so that the dribbler has to see how many and call them out. Repeat with the other hand. Next, do this drill by dribbling the ball in a “V” pattern alternating hands.

V Dribble

Dribble in the “V” pattern with the right hand only (very difficult) in order to practice fingertip control. Then with the left hand only. Repeat the “V” pattern dribble keeping the ball at or below knee level, and increasing the tempo of the dribble.

Low Dribble

Have the players practice dribbling the ball as low to the ground as possible. Have them count how many times they can dribble the ball in a 15 second span. Then try again to see if they can do more. Try it with the other hand.

Wall Dribble

Have the players dribble the ball against the wall at approximately eye level. Have a contest to see who can maintain the dribble this way for the longest period of time. It’s hard. Try the other hand.

Points of emphasis

- fingertip control,
- keep the head up,
- protect the ball.

BALL HANDLING

3.2 Knock Away

Level: Beginner

Each player must have a ball. The players need to be confined to a relatively small area, such as within the three-point arc and the baseline. The players try to knock the other players' ball away while at the same time protecting their own ball and maintaining control of the dribble. If a player loses control of their dribble, goes out of bounds, or has their ball knocked away, they are "out." The game continues until there is only one player remaining and that player is the winner.

Another variation of this game allows players to re-enter the game. In order to get back in the game, the player has to get their ball, dribble to the basket on the opposite end of the court and make a shot.

The purpose of the game is to give players experience at anticipating the attack of the defensive player and protecting their dribble.

BALL HANDLING

3.3 Dribble Tag

Level: Beginner

Each player needs to have a ball. The players should be confined to a medium sized area, such as that bounded by half-court markings. One player is “it” and she tries to tag someone else. Then, that player tries to tag another, etc...

It is important for at least one coach to participate. If a slower player becomes “it” and can not tag a teammate, the coach should step in and allow the slower player to tag them in order to keep the game moving.

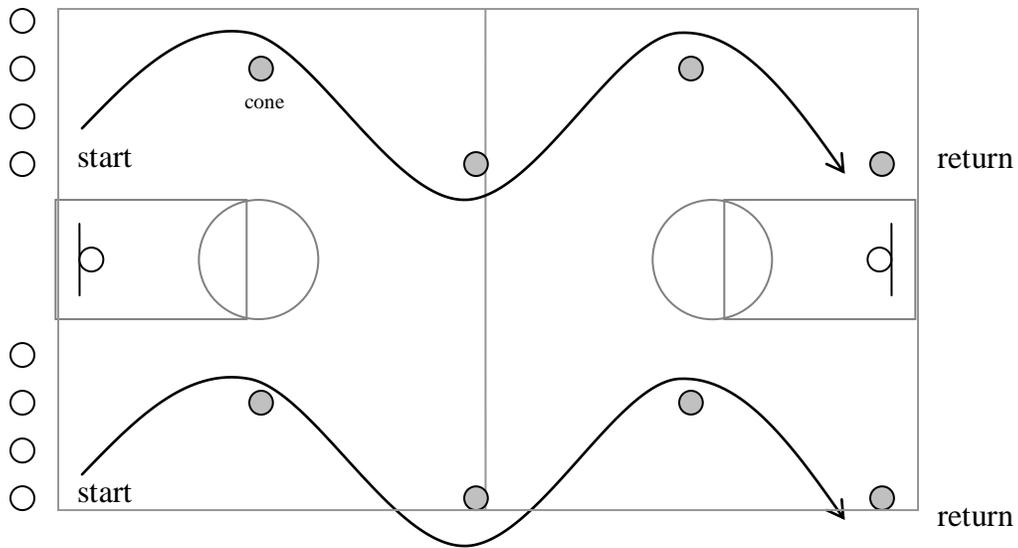
The purpose of this drill is to work on movement dribbling in an unplanned and spontaneous manner. This drill also works well as a fun ending activity.

BALL HANDLING

3.4 Relay Races

Level: Beginner

Split the players into two teams. One ball for each team. Each player dribbles to the opposite baseline, then back and gives the ball to the next player in line. If the player loses the dribble, she needs to come back to the beginning and start over. The idea is to work on moving fast with the dribble while maintaining control of the ball. As players improve, the relay races can be modified to teach dribbling at angles and switching hands. This is done by setting up cones on the court and having the players dribble around them



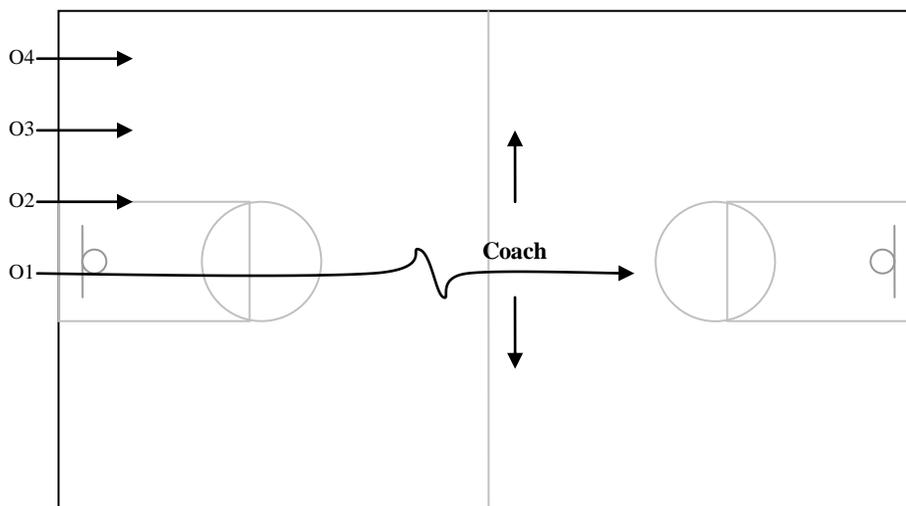
BALL HANDLING

3.5 Helpers Tag

Level: Intermediate

Have each player start at the baseline with a ball. The coach, or coaches, line up at mid-court. The goal for the players is to dribble past the coaches, untagged, and make it to the other baseline. The coaches are allowed to slide horizontally. Any player tagged becomes “it” and needs to help the coaches tag the remaining players as they attempt to go baseline to baseline.

This drill helps teach the players to work on their individual offensive moves (hesitation, cross-over, spin move, etc...) to pass a defender.



BALL HANDLING

3.6 Quick Hands

Level: Intermediate

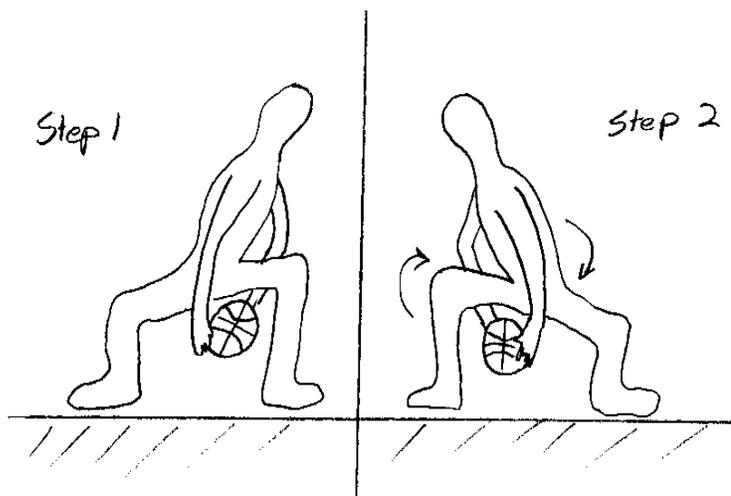
Each player needs a ball. Feet need to be spread wide apart. Have the player hold the ball between their legs with their right hand coming from the front side of their body and the left hand reaching around the back side. When they let go of the ball have them quickly reverse their hand position (bring left hand around the front of the body and right hand around the back side) catching the ball before it hits the ground. After a player can do it once, he should keep reversing the process.

Very difficult!!!

A variation of this drill for beginners is to allow one bounce.

Point of emphasis

→ improve hand speed/agility.



BALL HANDLING

3.7 Pass Through

Level: Intermediate

Each player needs a ball. Feet need to be spread wide apart. Have the player hold the ball with two hands out in front of themselves, and gently toss it down between the legs, aiming for a spot in between the heels. As the ball bounces up make the catch behind the back. Reverse the process. Holding the ball behind the back, bounce it between the legs and make the catch in of the body. Repeat.

Point of emphasis

→ improve hand speed/agility.

BALL HANDLING

3.8 Flag Pole

Level: Intermediate

Each player needs a ball. Have them place their feet together. Start dribbling with the right hand out in front of the body. Make the dribbling pattern circle the body in a clockwise motion. Keep the feet stationary. When the ball gets as far in back of the player as he can reach, he dribbles the ball behind his back crossing the dribble from his right hand to your his hand. Remind him to get his receiving hand in position when pushing the dribble behind his back. Continue circling the dribble around the body a couple of times. Then reverse the dribbling pattern and go in a counter clockwise motion.

Point of emphasis

→ improve hand speed/agility.

BALL HANDLING

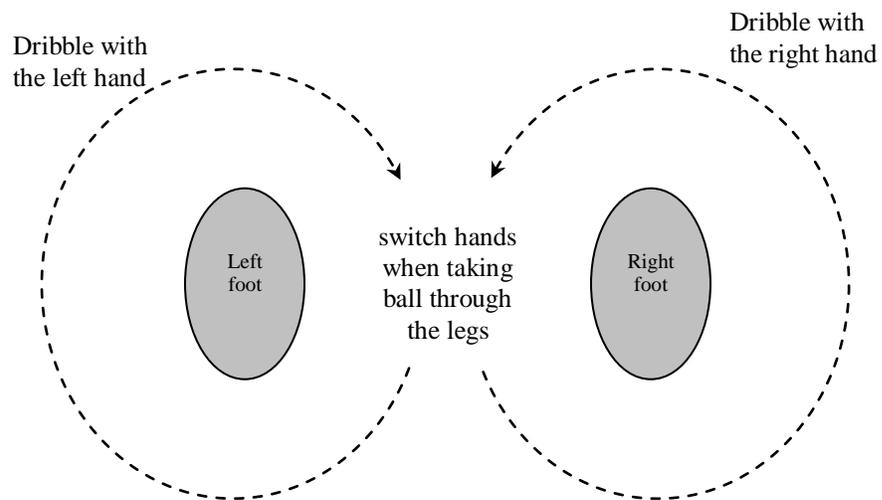
3.9 Figure Eight

Level: Advanced

Have the player spread feet a little more than shoulder width apart and keep them stationary. Maintain a very low-to-the-ground dribble in a figure eight pattern around the feet. Switch hands when passing the ball through the legs. Very difficult!!!

Point of emphasis

→ fingertip control.



BALL HANDLING

3.10 Spider Dribble

Level: Advanced

Each player needs a ball. Have her maintain a dribble with the ball between her feet (directly underneath her torso) by simultaneously alternating her right and left hands, reaching to the ball from the front side and from behind her body. Very difficult! The pattern is ...

right hand front,
left hand behind,
right hand behind,
left hand front,
repeat.

She doesn't have to push the dribble very hard. Just tap it. It bounces right back up. As she improves, encourage her to move her hands faster and faster.

BALL HANDLING

3.11 Double Ball Dribble

Level: Advanced

Each player needs two balls. Have them begin dribbling with each ball hitting the ground at the same time. Keep this going for about 25-30 seconds. Then dribble lower to the ground. See if he can make the balls switch hands (cross) without losing control of the dribble. Do the “V” dribble. Next, make the balls hit the ground in an alternating fashion. See if he can walk around while maintaining control of the dribble. Have him make the balls switch hands by taking one ball between his legs, and switch the other in front of himself.

This is a great drill for developing the weaker hand.

4. DEFENSE

4.1 Mirror Drill

Level: Beginner

Teach the players the defensive stance. Feet shoulder width apart, bent at the knees and hips, with hands out. Have them spread out across the width of the court in two rows, with their backs to the basket they are defending and facing you, the coach.

Take the ball and dribble from side to side. Then forward and backward. Have the players move defensively mirroring your dribble. Teach them to point the toe in the direction they are moving and to slide their feet from side without crossing. Have them continue to “mirror” the ball.

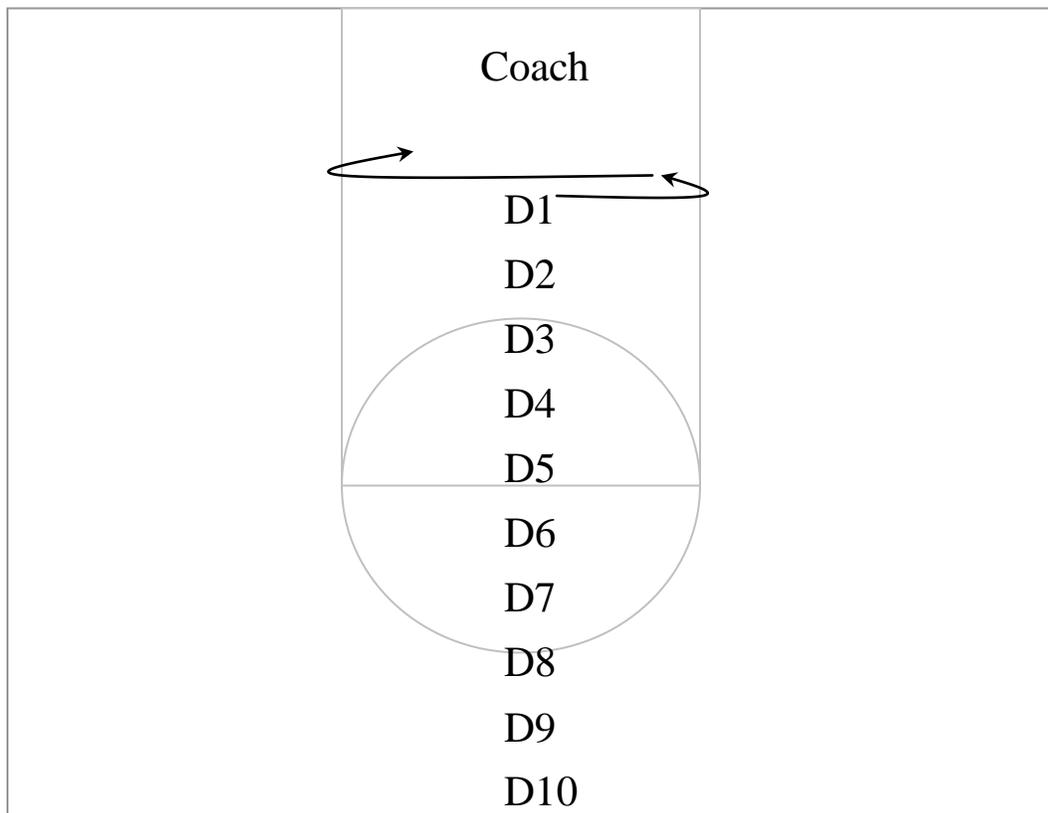
Finish the drill by grabbing the ball with two hands and gathering as if to attempt a shot. Teach the players to “close-out” on the shooter by approaching you and raising one hand in an attempt to block your shot.

DEFENSE

4.2 Shuffle Slide

Level: Beginner

Have the entire team line up down the center of the court facing the coach who is standing under the basket. When the coach says “Defense!” the players drop into their defensive stance. When the coach says “Go!” the players shuffle slide to the side of the lane, then to the other side of the side of the lane, then back to the middle as fast as they can without crossing their feet. Next, do the same drill, but have them shuffle slide a little farther. You may have to set up cones, or use other markings on the court. This drill works on improving the defensive shuffle slide and on improving change of direction speed .



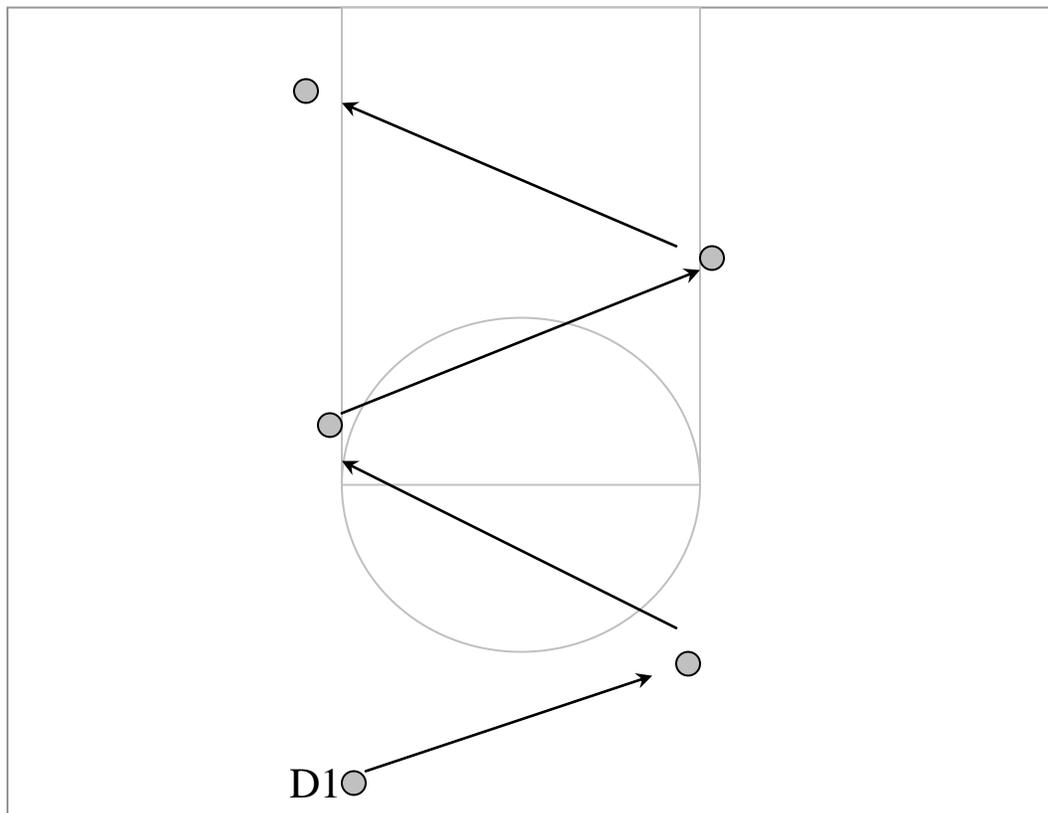
DEFENSE

4.3 Zig-Zag

Level: Beginner

Have the players get in a line at midcourt. Set up cones or markings on the court which they will shuffle slide to and from as shown on the diagram below. The main thing to emphasize is that they need to shuffle slide in a backward (or retreat) direction, keeping their back to the basket they are defending, and facing the ball. Some young players may need the coach to dribble the ball up the court at these angles while they shuffle slide backwards in order to understand. At each cone or marking the player has to slap the floor and change direction of the shuffle slide. This drill teaches them to move their bodies in a retreat technique while sliding and staying low to the ground. It improves their feel for how to move on the court defensively. As the players get better at this drill you can introduce a dribbler.

Defender must face in this direction (⇩), while moving in this direction (⇧).



DEFENSE

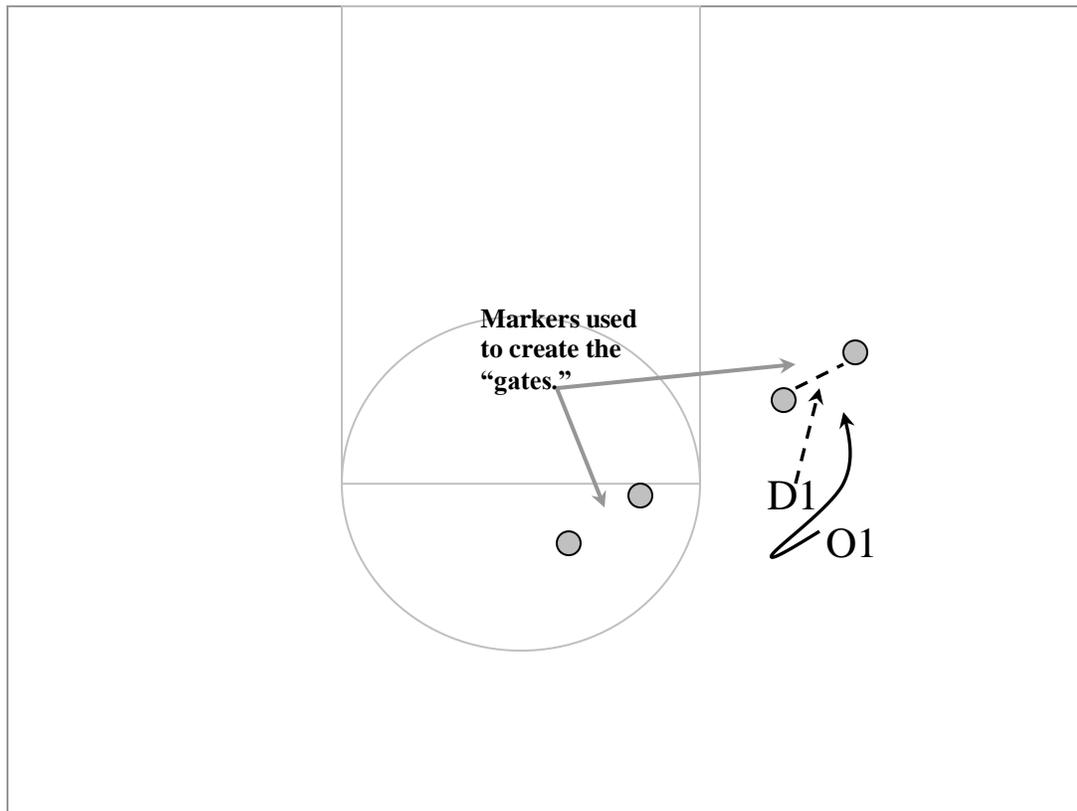
4.4 Close the Gate

Level: Beginner

Set up two “gates” with floor markers. This is a simple one-on-one drill where the offensive player can use a rocker step, crossover, spin move, or a quick burst to get past the defender and to the hoop, and the defender tries to stop him. The drill starts when the defender gives the ball to the offensive player. The defender should start one arm length away from the offensive player. The offensive player tries to go through one of the “gates” in route to the basket. The offensive player is limited to three dribbles.

Points of emphasis for the defensive player are to move their feet, keep on balance, and not foul. The defender should try to beat the offensive player to the “turning point” and close the gate. The defender is to stay low, keep the offensive player in front, and get a hand up when the offensive player shoots. When the ball goes up to the rim, the defender should make contact with the shooter and try to block out to get the rebound.

As the players get more experience, the coach can remove the “gates.”



DEFENSE

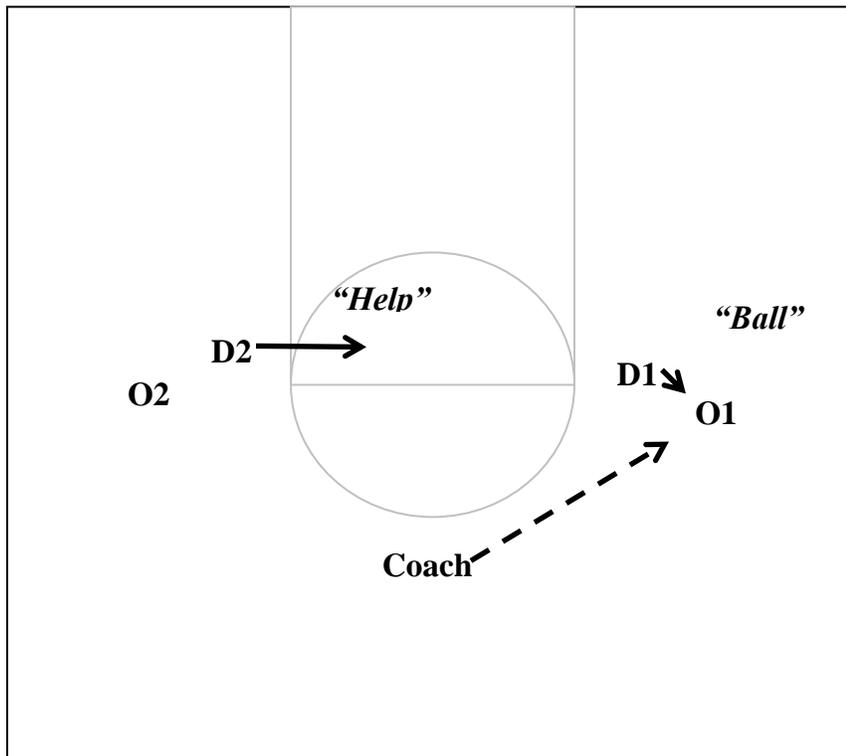
4.5 2 on 2 Help Defense

Level: Beginner

The purpose of this drill is to start to teach the basic concepts of team defense. The idea is that defense is situational. The manner in which we play defense depends on where the ball is located on the court *and* where the player is that we are guarding.

Offensive players O1 and O2 start on the wings. Defensive players D1 and D2 cover them in “Deny” position. Pass goes from coach to O1. Defensive player D1 gets right on top of O1 and yells “Ball!, I’ve got the ball!” Defensive player D2 slides into the lane and yells “Help!”

Ball comes back to coach. Both defenders return to deny position and say “Deny.” Rotate pass from side to side a couple of times to make sure they understand. Finally, coach puts up a missed shot. Defensive players box-out and work for the rebound.



DEFENSE

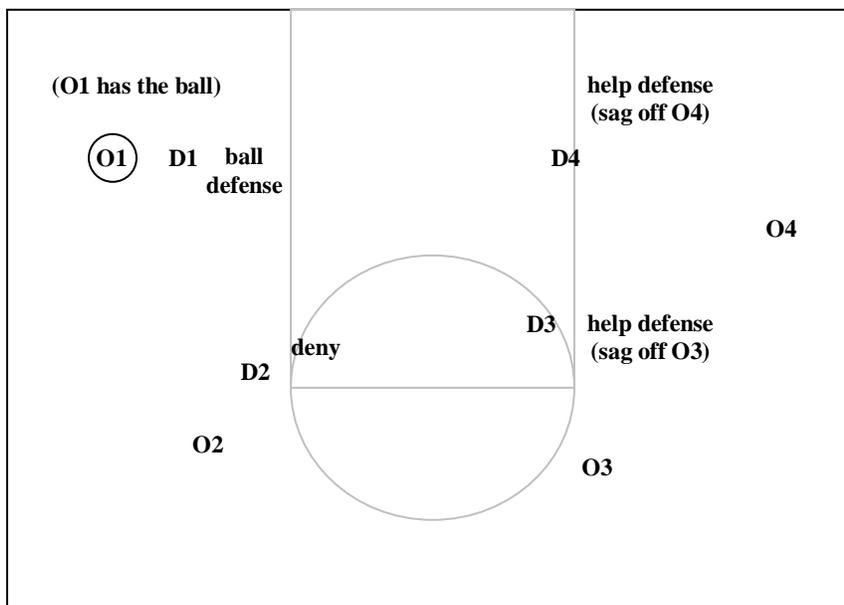
4.6 Shell Drill

Level: Intermediate

The shell drill is designed to teach team defense. The basis of this drill is to have the defense move as the ball moves. The offense remains stationary, and their role is to stay in their positions and pass the ball around the perimeter. As the ball is passed around the perimeter, each defender moves with it. The drill can be done with three, four or five players on each team.

Stress these concepts:

- The player guarding the **ball** should yell, “I’ve got the ball,” and guard that player, pressuring the ball, staying low, and being active. In the example below, O1 has the ball, so D1 has “on ball” defense.
- The players one pass away (D2 in the example below) is in “**deny**” position, with a hand in the passing lane (the lane where if the ball were passed, it would be intercepted), and in a low defensive position.
- Any player more than one pass away (a skip pass from corner to corner, for example) is in “**help**” position. In the example below, defenders D3 and D4 are in help position. The help position defender should have one hand pointed to the player they are guarding, and one hand pointed toward the ball. The help position defender should sag off the person they are guarding, toward where the ball is. If the “on ball” defender were to get beat, the help defenders should stop the player with the ball.



DEFENSE

4.7 Defensive Stop Game

Level: Intermediate

Start your players on a three-on-three offensive/defensive half court game where the only way they can score is by getting a defensive stop – the offense doesn't score. Start the game by passing with a screen away – after that the players can do what they wish. Emphasize to the offensive players that if a person isn't open, the need to back-cut and be aware that the defense is trying to stop them. Don't count baskets – count stops to develop pride in the defense. The team that is on defense stays on defense until someone makes a basket.

This game works perfectly if there are nine players at practice. If there are more or less, you will have to improvise.

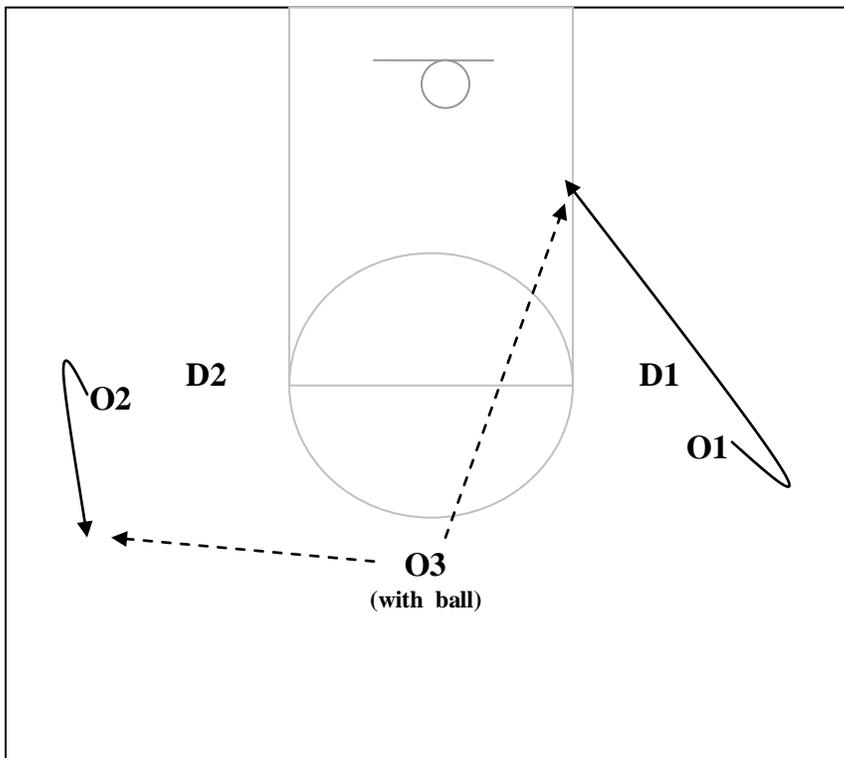
Team A has the ball, Team B is on defense, and Team C is out-of-bounds. If Team B stops Team A, Team B stays on defense, Team A goes out, and Team C now has the ball on offense. If Team A gets a score, it moves to defense, and Team C is the offensive team. After there is a stop and you blow the whistle to change teams, you can go over what the teams are doing right or wrong defensively. Make sure the teams that are making a transition on and off the court are running enthusiastically and with energy. If a team doesn't get off the court quickly, they lose a turn. If a team doesn't come on quickly then they go back off the court and lose their turn. Remind your teams to communicate which player they are guarding and where they are positioned on the court.

DEFENSE

4.8 3 on 2 Drill

Level: Advanced

This drill is a progression of the “Ball Fake Game” covered in section 2.7. In that drill, the offensive players needed to remain stationary. In this drill, we allow the offensive players on the wings to either “pop-out” to accept the pass (player O2), or fake a pop-out and make a back-door cut (player O1). Defenders cover the offensive players on the wings starting in deny position. A third offensive player, O3, starts with the ball at the point and if he can not make a pass to the wings he may dribble-drive down the lane for a shot attempt. Limit him to a maximum of two dribble-drives during the course of the game. This game is played until one team “scores” five points. The offense scores for a completed pass, or for a made basket. The defense scores by stealing the ball, blocking a shot, or securing a rebound. This drill is really good at forcing the defense to address both their player and the ball. It also rewards the offense for being active and working to get open.

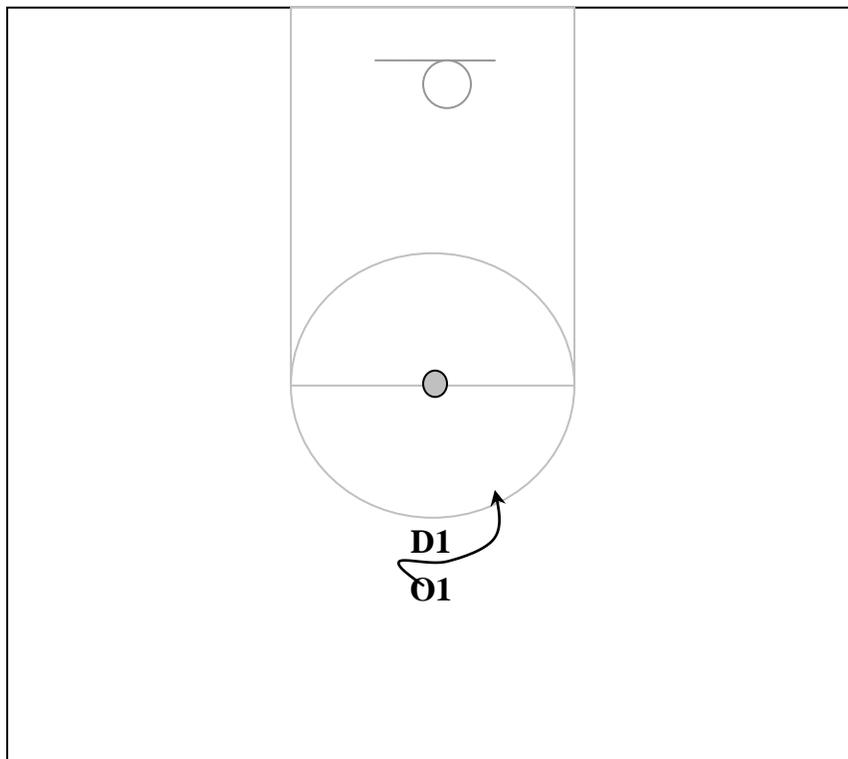


5. REBOUNDING

5.1 Butt-in-the-Gut

Level: Beginner

This drill is to teach defensive box-out positioning for rebounding. Place a ball on the ground at the free throw line. A defensive player D1 starts with his back to the basketball (heels on the arc) and with his face toward the offensive player, O1, who is facing the basketball. When the coach calls “Go” the defensive player turns his back to the offensive player (either front pivot or reverse pivot, whichever is more comfortable) and puts his “butt-in-the-gut” of the offensive player in order to box-out. It is important to emphasize making contact with the defensive player. The offensive player tries to get around the defensive player and make progress toward the basketball. The defensive player must feel where the offensive player is moving and adjust accordingly in order to maintain the box-out. The coach begins counting slowly after calling “Go.” The offensive player “wins” if he touches the ball before the count of five, otherwise the defensive player wins.



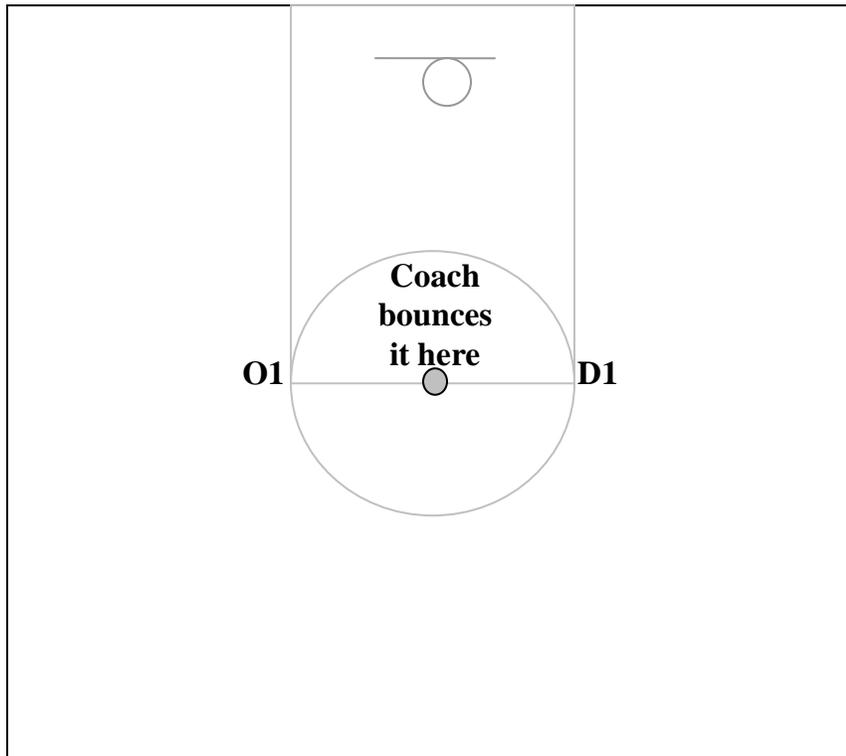
REBOUNDING

5.2 High Bounce

Level: Beginner

Have a single player, O1, start on one side of the circle. The coach stands at the center of free throw line and starts the drill by throwing the ball down hard in order to make it bounce high, straight up. As soon as the ball hits the ground, the player moves into the middle of the circle, and times her leap in order to catch the ball with two hands at its highest point. This drill gives players practice at timing their leap to jump for the rebound and catch the ball while airborne. It is difficult for many young players. Often, they want to let the ball come to them.

A slightly more advanced version of this drill is to have two players compete for the rebound. No boxing out, just jumping high. Start with one player on each side of the circle. They may advance toward the center as soon as the ball is bounced by the coach.



REBOUNDING

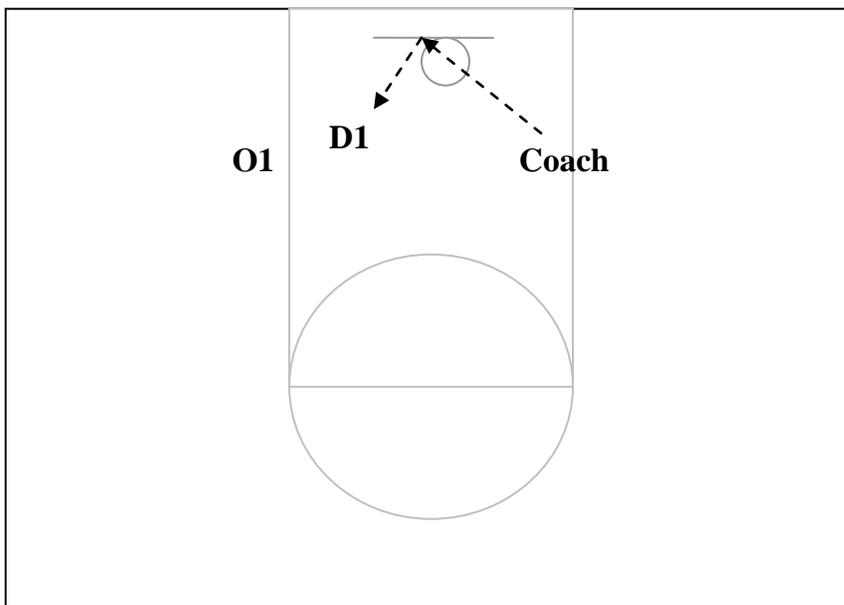
5.3 Rebound off the Board

Level: Beginner

Have the player stand in defensive “help” position about 4-5 feet away from the basket. The defender should see both the player they are guarding and the ball. The coach should put a missed shot that goes over the rim and off the backboard. When the coach goes into the shooting motion, the defensive player should turn to face the basket. The main point of this drill is to get the player to jump for the rebound, and catch the ball while airborne. Timing the leap to get a rebound off the board is more difficult than timing a bounce off the floor (as in drill 5.2). Emphasize jumping to get the ball at its highest point. Make it an easy catch, don't have the ball hit the rim.

Point of emphasis

→ catch the ball while airborne.



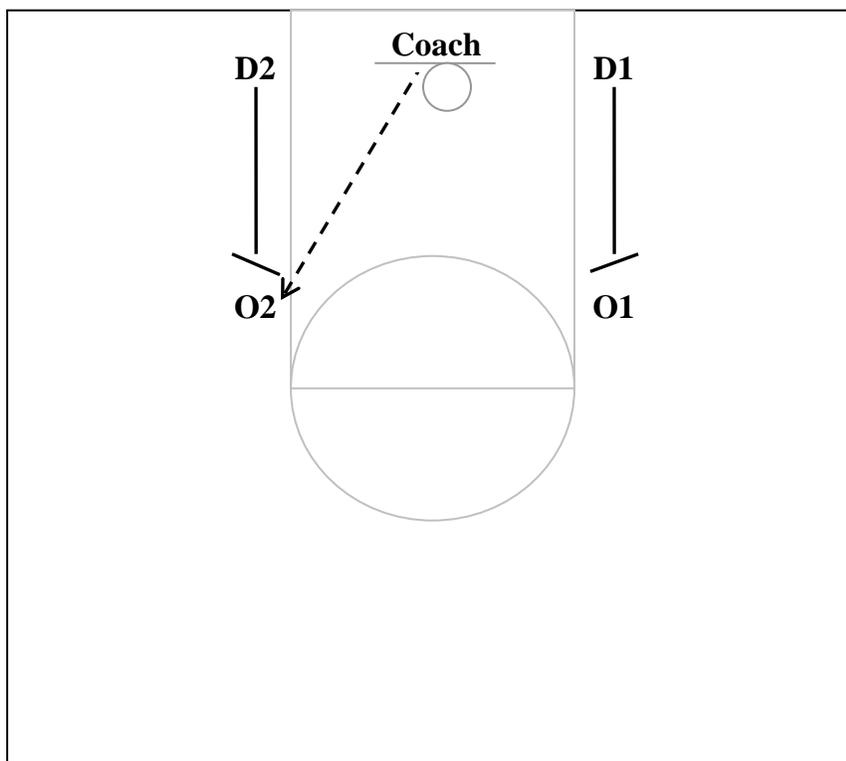
As players improve, it is a good idea to have them get in the habit of making box-out contact with the offensive player when the coach goes into the shooting motion. Then, go airborne for the rebound.

REBOUNDING

5.4 Close-out / Box-out Drill

Level: Intermediate

Have two offensive players stand about 12 feet from the basket in a “catch-and-shoot” ready position. The drill starts when the coach passes the ball to one of the offensive players. When the coach makes the pass the defenders must “close-out” on the offensive players. The offensive player puts up a shot immediately after making the catch. The defender on the shooter tries to get a hand in the face of the shooter, then boxes out. The off-ball defender boxes out on the other offensive player. If the offense gets the rebound they try to score. If the defense gets the rebound the drill ends.

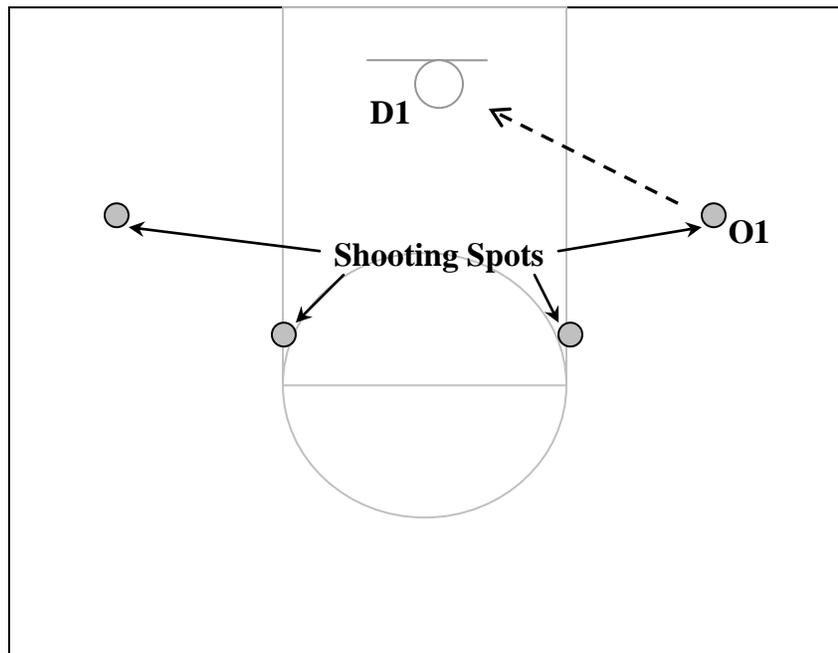


REBOUNDING

5.5 Anticipate the Rebound Angle

Level: Intermediate

Set up four cones or markers from which players will shoot at various spots on the court. One offensive player, O1, takes three shots at each cone or marker. The offensive player scores one point for each made shot. The defensive player is the rebounder. He scores one point for each missed shot rebound he secures without allowing the ball to touch the ground. He scores two points if he can secure the missed shot rebound while airborne (*both* feet off the ground). Each player takes their turn shooting and rebounding. The purpose of this drill is to teach the rebounder that a missed shot taken from the right side of the court is more likely to land on the left (or opposite) side of the basket, and visa versa.

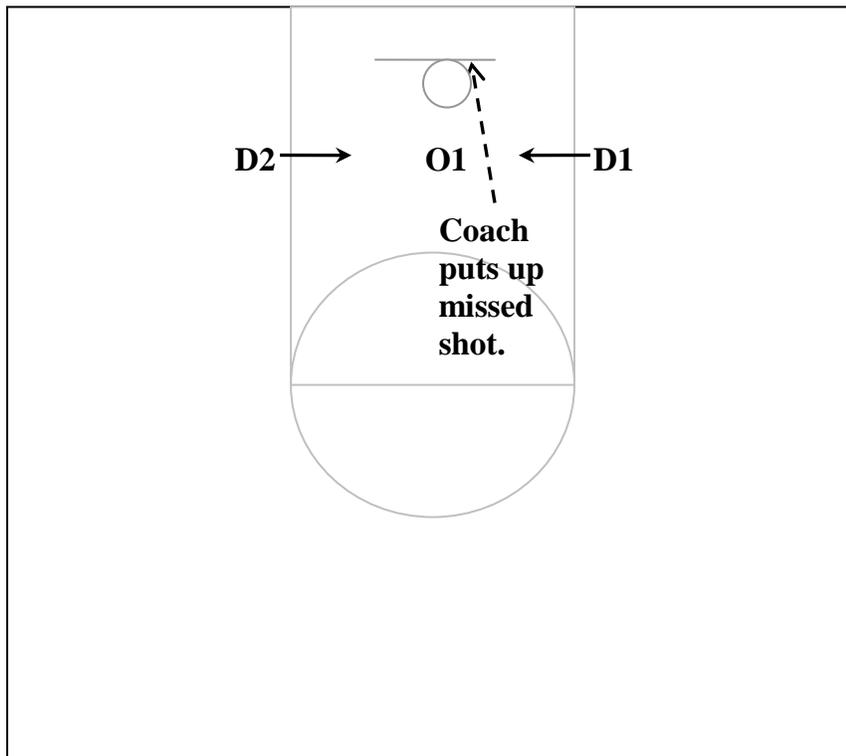


REBOUNDING

5.6 Offensive Put-Back

Level: Intermediate

Have two defensive players stand with both feet outside of the lane. One offensive player stands in the middle of the lane. The coach puts up a missed shot that produces an easy rebound and put-back opportunity for the offensive player. The two defenders try to block the shot or distract the shooter. The defensive players may cross into the lane when offensive player's hands first touch the ball. The point of this drill is to teach the offensive player to get the shot up quickly before the defense reacts. Often young players will bring the ball below their waist, or dribble it after rebounding, which allows the defense to close in and contest the shot. Main point – “Catch it high, keep it high.”



6 SHOOTING

6.1 Lay-up Progression

Level: Beginner

The most important concept in teaching the lay-up is to have the kids master the one-footed take-off. In games, the players who have mastered the one-footed take-off will score many more points than those who have not. The reason is that the one-footed take-off allows a player to maintain their momentum when moving into the shot, and if they get a step advantage on the defender, the defender can never recover. The players who gather to a two-footed take-off need to slow down then come to a stop, and this allows the defender to recover and contest the shot.

Teaching the one-footed take-off is much more difficult than it may appear. For many young players, it is best learned in slow deliberate steps, over the course of four separate practices.

Practice #1

- One-footed hop. Have the kids hop up and down on one foot. Tell the right handed players to hop on their left foot. Tell the left handed players to hop on their right foot. Have them drive the knee of the non-jumping leg up toward their chin with each hop. Then explain that this is the take-off foot for the lay-up.
- Air lay-up. No ball – it only messes them up at this point. We're concentrating on footwork. Have the player stand about eight feet away from the basket on the side of the lane. For right handed players, have them take one step toward the basket with the left foot. Have them drive the right knee high into the air and leap off the left foot toward the basket. Put the right hand behind the imaginary ball and "shoot" it off the backboard while airborne. Land on two feet. Left handed players reverse the process, and work on the opposite side of the basket.

Practice #2

- Air lay-up. Same drill as the first practice. You need to remind them what foot they will take-off from.
- One step lay-up. They get to use a ball but no dribble. Have the kids start about eight feet away from the basket. Have the right handed kids take one step with their left foot, drive their right knee up in the air, jump off of the left foot, shoot the ball while in the air, and then land on two feet. For left handed kids, reverse the process. The main thing is footwork, don't worry if the ball doesn't come close to going in the basket at this point. Some 3rd graders may not be able to do it, but most 4th graders should. Really emphasize the one-footed take-off.

SHOOTING

Lay-up Progression

Level: Beginner

Practice #3

- One step lay-up. Same drill as the second practice.
- Running air lay-up. No ball. Have the kids get in a line about 20 feet away from basket. Have them take turns running toward the basket pretending as if they were dribbling the ball, then take-off of one foot shooting an imaginary lay-up, then landing on two feet. Emphasize height on the take-off. Often, young players jump out rather than up, and shoot the ball too low as a result.

Practice #4

- Running air lay-up. Same drill as the third practice.
- The real thing. Ball, dribbling, everything. By now, they are really ready to show you that they can do it. Have the kids get in a line about 20 feet away from basket. Have them take turns dribbling to the hoop, jumping off of one foot and shooting the lay-up. Don't worry that the shots don't go in. The main thing is to continue to emphasize the one-footed take-off. With regular practice, the shots will start to fall.

Of course, not every kid will have the one-footed take-off mastered by the end of the fourth practice. As the season progresses, it is important to keep working on the lay-up. The kids who are having success at the lay-up should be encouraged to increase the tempo to game speed when practicing, and incorporate some of their individual moves (hesitation, cross-over, etc...) into lay-up practice. For the kids who are in the earlier stages of mastering this skill, it may be helpful to spend a couple of practice sessions with them reviewing some of the earlier drills such as the one-footed hop, the air lay-up, the one step lay-up, and the running air lay-up.

SHOOTING

6.2 Full Court Lay-up

Level: Intermediate

Have a player start at one end of the gym, dribble as fast as they can, and then shoot the lay-up. This drill addresses a number of topics: ball handling, shooting, and offensive transition. It does this by having the kids dribble with speed, but under control, and then gather control into the lay-up. This drill is helpful to improve “finishing” on fast breaks.

A slightly more advanced version of this same drill is to have a second player, on defense, chase the dribbler. Let the offensive player get about a 10 foot lead before you let the defensive player start. It will vary according to the relative speed of the pair in the drill. The idea is to make sure the player with the ball feels some pressure. This creates a more game-like environment and forces the shooter to really concentrate on making the lay-up.

SHOOTING

6.3 Set Shot – Shooting Stroke

Level: Beginner

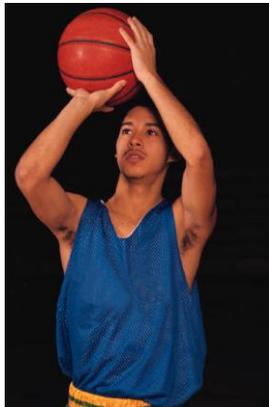
Explain to the players that on the set-shot, unlike the lay-up, they should take-off from two feet. The set-shot is used when we do not have a clear path to the basket, or our momentum has been stopped. The coach will need to clearly differentiate the set-shot from the lay-up techniques, as well as the situations when each should be used.

Each player should have a ball, but we're not shooting at the basket. The idea is to practice set shot form by shooting the ball straight up in the air to a point about 12 feet above the ground. Tell the players to try to get a *perfectly straight backward rotation* along one of the ball's seams.

Points of emphasis:

- bend at the knees and waist,
- power hand is the shooting hand behind and underneath the ball,
- other hand is the guide on the side of the ball,
- shooting arm should start parallel to the ground from the armpit to the elbow,
- when taking the shot extend shooting arm straight out and up to the basket,
- flop the wrist over the top at release,
- feel the ball leave the index (pointer) finger last.

Many young players want to shoot the ball in a manner similar to the chest pass. Often, they will point both elbows out to the side, and flick the ball with two hands rather than developing a shooting stroke with the power hand underneath the ball. One technique to coach them out of this habit is to tell them “no chicken wings.” Instruct them to “make a shelf” by keeping their upper arm parallel to the ground (from the armpit to the elbow) at the start of the shot.



SHOOTING

6.4 Lightning

Level: Beginner

Lightening is a shooting game where the players start by taking a “long” shot (from about the free-throw line), and if they miss, they get their own rebound and continue shooting from anywhere on the court they wish until they make a shot. During each round, two players are paired off in a mini shooting competition. Let’s say Players 1 and 2 are paired off. Player 1 takes her long shot first, and let’s say she misses. Player 2 takes her long shot and she also misses. The two players get their own rebounds and each continues to shoot (from anywhere) until one player makes a shot. If Player 2 is the first to make a shot, then Player 1 is knocked out of the competition. If Player 1 is the first to make a shot, then both players remain in the competition. Only the player shooting first can be knocked out of the competition. Let’s say that in our example that Player 1 was the first to make a shot. She remains in the competition and goes to the end of the line. The next pairing is Player 2 vs. Player 3 with Player 2 shooting first. And so on.

This game seems to work well with a grouping of about five or six players. You can have two games of Lightning going on opposite sides of the court. The kids love this game.

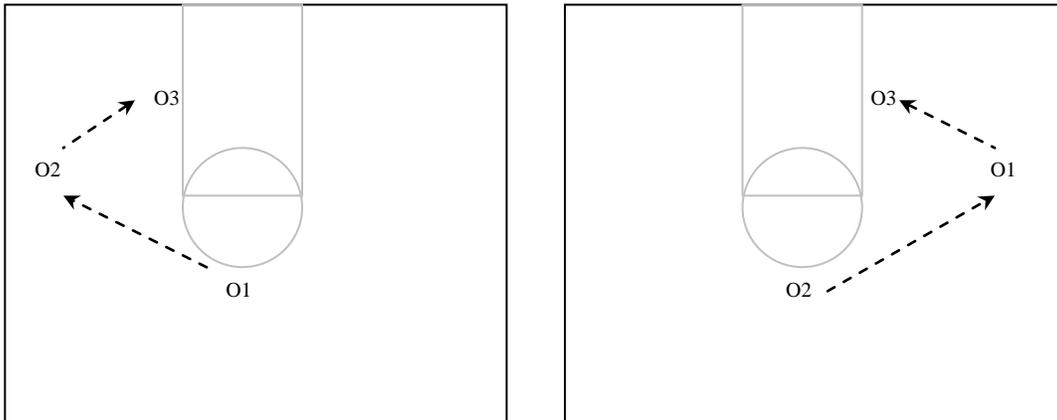
SHOOTING

6.5 Three Player Shooting Drill

Level: Intermediate

Have player O1 start at the point with the ball, player O2 start at the left wing, and player O3 on the left block, or low post. The point O1 passes to the wing, and the wing O2 passes to the post O3 who catches, turns and shoots. Then, player O1 runs to the wing on the right side of the court, and O2 runs to the point. Player O3 gets her own rebound, throws an overhead outlet pass to the point (which is now occupied by O2). Player O2 passes to the wing on the right side (now occupied by O1), who makes the entry pass to the right side low post. The post player catches and shoots, and the process continues. The shooter should take four shots from each side, and then each player takes a turn as the shooter.

This drill can be modified to take the shot at any spot on the court. The main thing is that it keeps three players active, moving, and working on passing, catching and shooting, simultaneously.



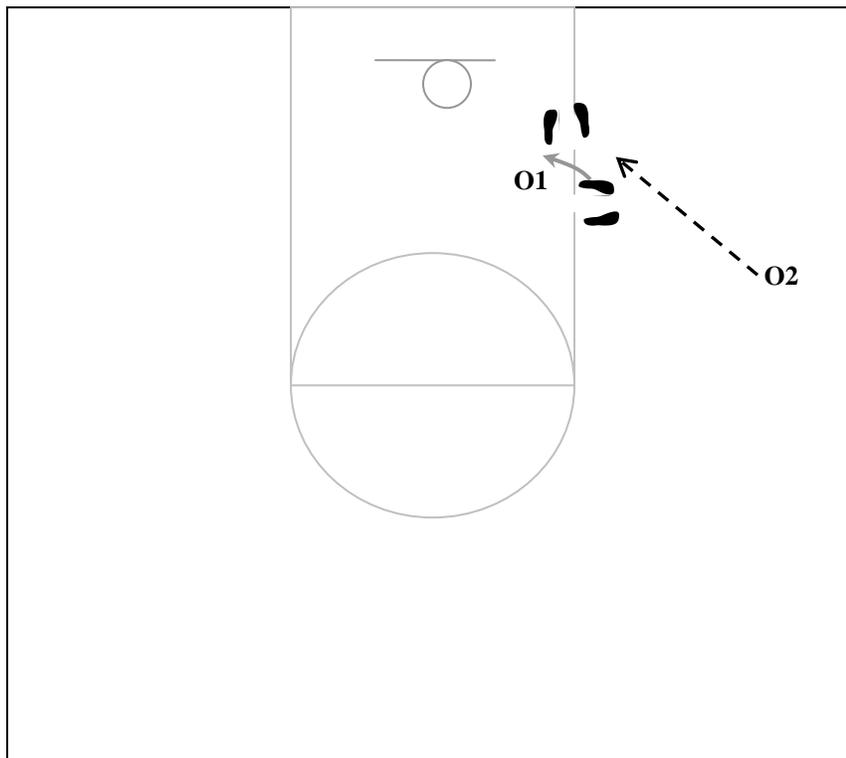
SHOOTING

6.6 Drop Step

Level: Advanced

Have an offensive player, O1, establish post position on the block with their back to the basket. Another offensive player, O2, will make the entry pass to the post. The post player, O1, should get his baseline side foot in the air moving toward the basket *while the pass is in the air*. His baseline side foot should land at about the same time the ball touches his hands. Then, he can square up to the basket by taking a step with the other foot. This creates a seal with the defender on his back and gives him a clean look at the basket. Shoot it off the backboard. Practice it on both sides of the basket.

The drop-step is one of the most effective post moves at all levels of basketball. Players who master it will score a lot of points. 5th and 6th graders can do it.

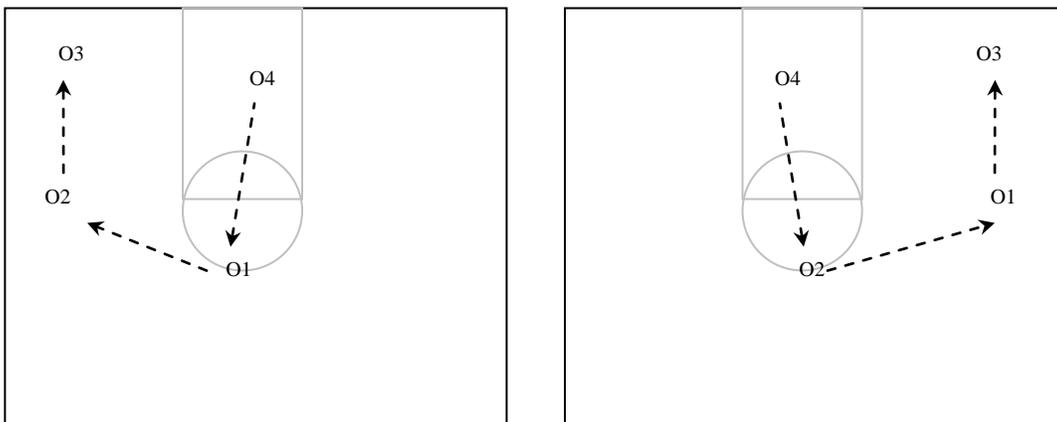


SHOOTING

6.7 Four Player Shooting Drill

Level: Advanced

Have player O4 start by grabbing an imaginary rebound then making an overhead outlet pass to O1 at the point. O1 passes to O2, at the wing, who passes to O3 who shoots. Immediately after shooting O3 runs to the opposite corner and gets ready to shoot again. O1 runs from the point to the vacant wing area, and O2 runs to the point. O4 rebounds, then makes an overhead outlet pass to O2 at the point. O2 passes to O1, at the wing, who passes to O3 who shoots. The shooter should take four shots from each side. Each player should take a turn as the shooter, the rebounder and each perimeter position. This drill provides a good opportunity to really focus on making good crisp passes and catches. Make sure they pass and catch with two hands not one. You may need to remind players to “step into” their passes. It will help the ball get there much more quickly. No one should need to dribble the ball in this drill. Of course, the drill can be modified to shoot from any spot on the court.



7 INDIVIDUAL OFFENSIVE MOVES

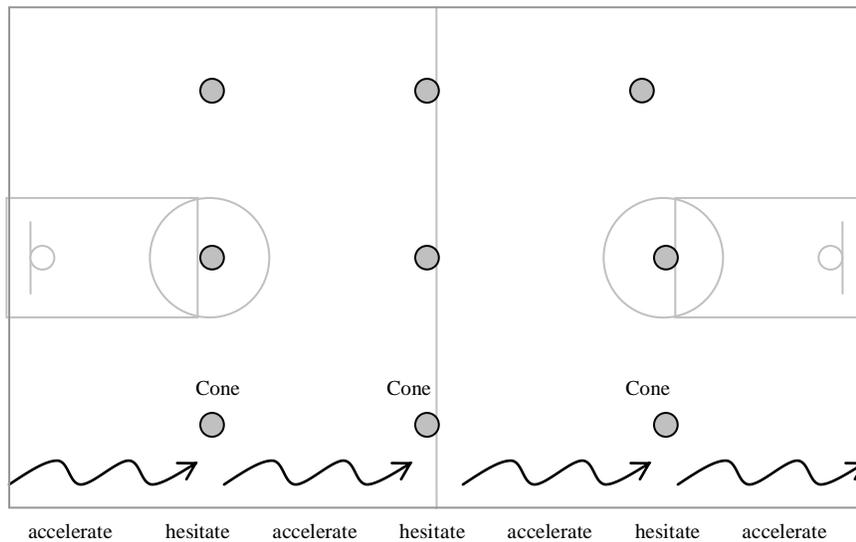
7.1 Hesitation Move

Level: Beginner

The hesitation move, or stop-and-go move, is an offensive skill designed to help the dribbler get past a defender.

Have the players form three lines at the baseline. Each player should have a ball. If you have cones, set them up at the free-throw lines and at the mid-court line. If not, just tell them to imagine that is where the defenders are stationed. On the coaches whistle, the first three players dribble in an accelerated fashion to the first cone, come almost to a stop, but keeping the dribble going, then accelerate to the next cone, and so on to the opposite baseline.

The idea is to practice using a change of speed to pass the defender.



INDIVIDUAL OFFENSIVE MOVES

7.2 Show-n-Go

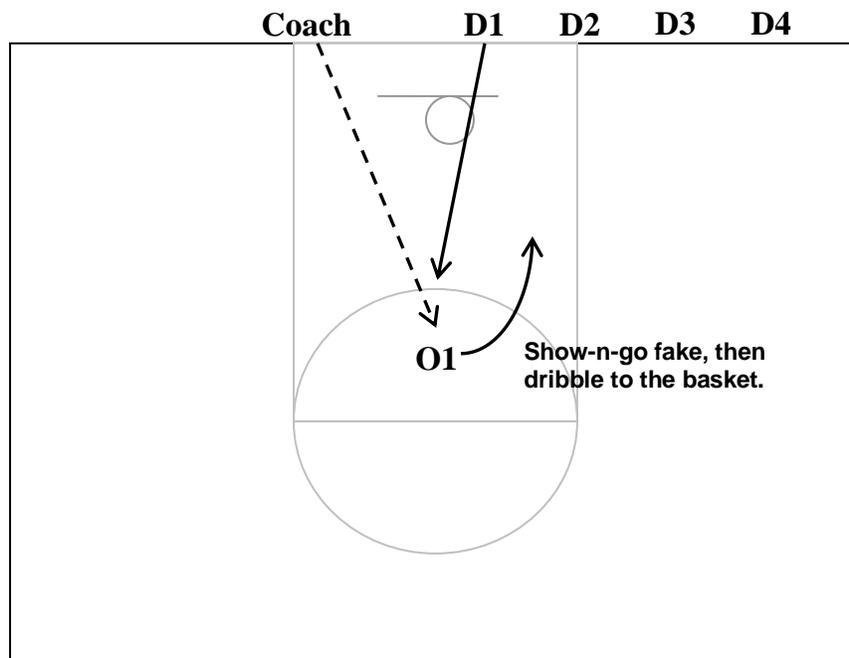
Level: Beginner

This move is to be used starting from a stand still position facing the basket and with the dribble option still in-tact. The idea is to fake a shot by “showing” the ball to the defender. Teach the players to do this by reaching the ball up over their head with both hands and looking at the basket. The objective is to get the defender to jump up trying to block the shot. When the defender jumps, quickly dribble past them for a lay-up.

Points of emphasis

- good hard fake,
- don't drag the pivot foot.

This move can be turned into a game by having one shooter line up at the 12-foot free throw line. Defenders get in a line on the baseline. When the coach passes the ball to the shooter the defender, D1 in the diagram below, can attack. The shooter scores by either making a shot, giving a fake that gets the defender off their feet, or both. The defender scores by blocking the shot. Have each defender (four or five if you are broken into two groups) take their turn against the shooter in succession. Each kid keeps track of their own score. This drill teaches the kids to give realistic ball fakes.



INDIVIDUAL OFFENSIVE MOVES

7.3 Rocker Step

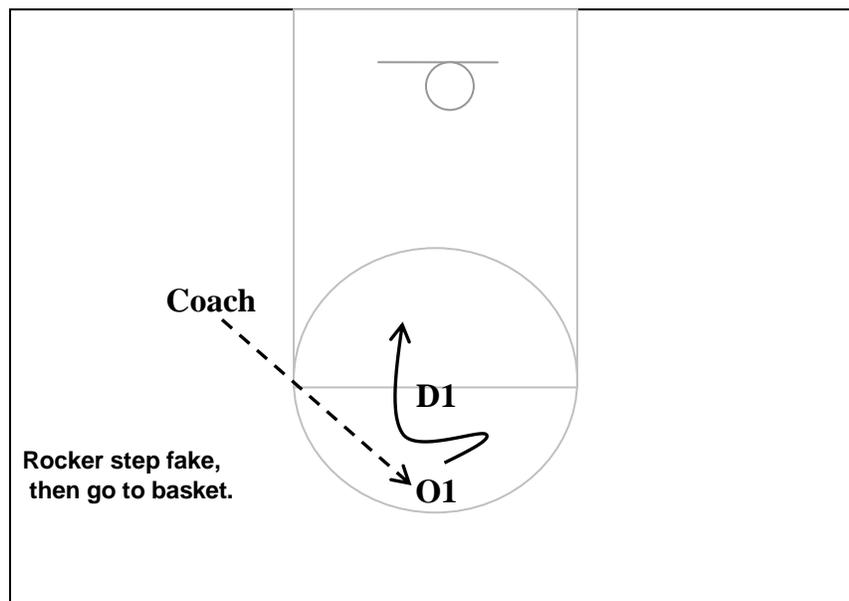
Level: Intermediate

The rocker-step is a ball fake, just like the show-n-go. It also is to be used starting from a stand still position facing the basket and with the dribble option still in-tact. The idea is to fake a move in one direction to get the defender leaning, then go the other way. Teach the players to do this by taking a jab step in one direction, but keeping their pivot foot secure. Give a fake with the head, shoulders, and ball in one direction, then quickly “step over” with that same foot in the other direction and dribble past the defender.

Points of emphasis

- ➔ good hard fake,
- ➔ don't drag the pivot foot.

Start the drill with a pass from the coach. The offensive player scores by getting around the defender or making a shot. The defender scores by stealing the ball without fouling. This drill can be turned into a game just like the show-n-go drill. Have each defender (four or five if you are broken into two groups) take their turn against the ball handler in succession. Each kid keeps track of their own score. This drill teaches the kids to give realistic ball fakes.



INDIVIDUAL OFFENSIVE MOVES

7.4 Cross-Over Dribble

Level: Intermediate

The cross-over dribble is a move in which the dribbler tries to get past their defender, while keeping their shoulders square to the basket. The cross-over is a dangerous move for young players because, as the name implies, they cross the dribble from one hand to the other directly in front of the defender. If not done well, the ball will be stolen.

Have the players dribble forward with the ball in their right hand toward a cone, or a coach. Have them fake a move to their right and then cross the dribble over to their left hand and go past the cone or coach. They need to keep the ball in their left as they proceed to the next defender. Then, have them do a left hand to right hand cross-over in order to go past the next cone or coach.

Point of emphasis

➔ cross the dribble hard and low.

INDIVIDUAL OFFENSIVE MOVES

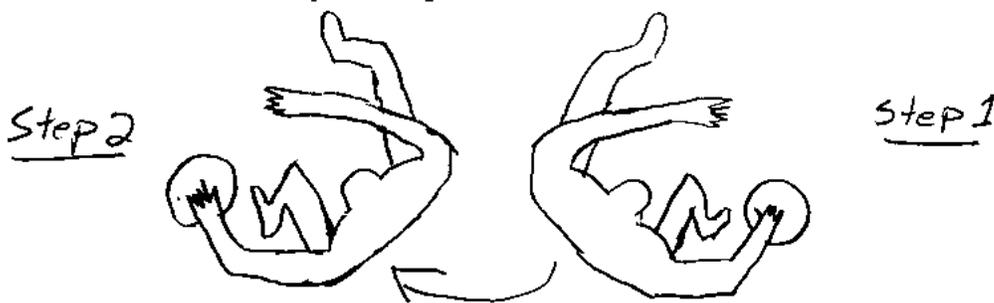
7.5 Spin Move

Level: Intermediate

The spin move, or reverse pivot, is an individual ball handling move designed to help the dribbler advance the ball up-court while at the same time protecting it from their defender.

The dribbler proceeds up-court with the ball in their stronger hand, protecting it from the defender with an “arm bar.” When dribbling with the right hand, the player protects the ball with a left arm bar. The dribbler should set up the spin move with a fake the right, to get the defender leaning in that direction. Then, plant their left foot and pivot on it, turning their back to the defender and spinning around them in a reverse pivot direction as shown below. The dribbler will change hands during the spin and come out of it with the ball in their left hand and the using their right as the arm bar.

Have the players get in a line at the end line, each with a ball. Coaches, or cones, should



be spaced at each free throw line and at mid-court. Have the players dribble to the coach, or cone, and execute the spin move, then proceed to the next coach, or cone. It doesn't matter which hand they start with because on subsequent moves they will need to switch hands.

Most young players' development with this drill will proceed in this level of succession:

1. They will have trouble with the concept of turning their back to their defender. It needs to be demonstrated several times, slowly. The coach might even have to put their hands on the player's hips to help them execute the reverse pivot.
2. After they master the idea of turning their back to the defender, they tend to struggle with keeping the dribble low.
3. Finally, they will need to work on executing the spin move with a convincing fake and more speed.

8 MOVING STRATEGICALLY

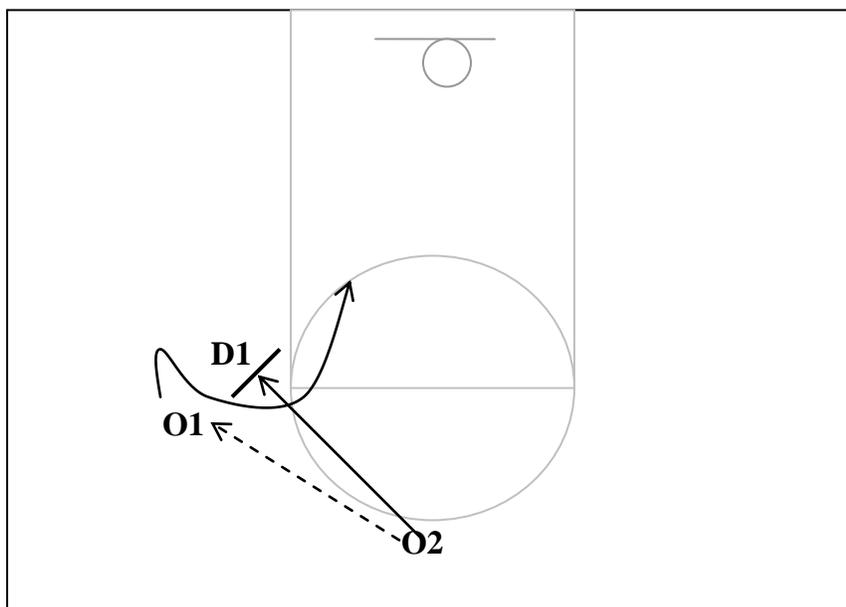
8.1 Screening

Level: Beginner

When teaching the concept of screens, the coach needs to stress the importance of close contact as a player comes off the screen. By passing the screener “shoulder-to-shoulder” the teammates protect themselves from defenders coming to block a pass or steal the ball. Tell the cutter going around the screen that it is their job to make the shoulders “kiss.” The cutter should always set-up the screen by first taking a jab-step away from it, then peeling around the screen.

Teach the screener to set the screen right where the defender is rather than leaving room. The screener should jump into the screen coming to a two-footed stop, keeping feet wide, shoulders square, and hands in their lap. Often, young players will reach their hands out and grab the defender, or continue moving as if blocking in football. The coach must emphasize the importance of the screener staying “set” and not leaning into the defender.

Have player O2 start with the ball, and pass to player O1. Player O2 jumps into a screen on D1, and says “Use me Johnny,” or “Use me Jenny.” Player O1 jab steps away, then peels around the screen shoulder-to-shoulder and proceeds to the basket for a lay-up.

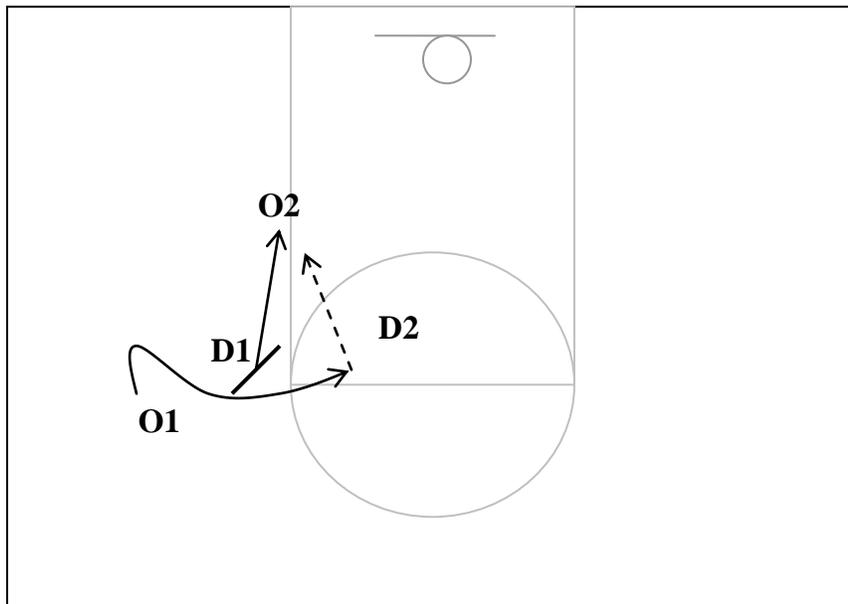


MOVING STRATEGICALLY

8.2 Screen & Roll

Level: Beginner

Same as previous drill, except we introduce another defender D2. The drawing below starts after O2 has passed to O1 and set the screen. After O1 uses the screen, teach Player O2 (the screener) to take a big drop step toward the basket and “belly-up” to the ball. This has the effect of sealing Player D1 on their back. For this drill, have Player D2 “switch” and cover the ball when O1 comes around the screen. Player O1 will no longer have an easy drive to the basket. Player O1 will need to bounce-pass to O2 “rolling” to the basket. The diagram below depicts the situation after O2 rolls to the basket.



MOVING STRATEGICALLY

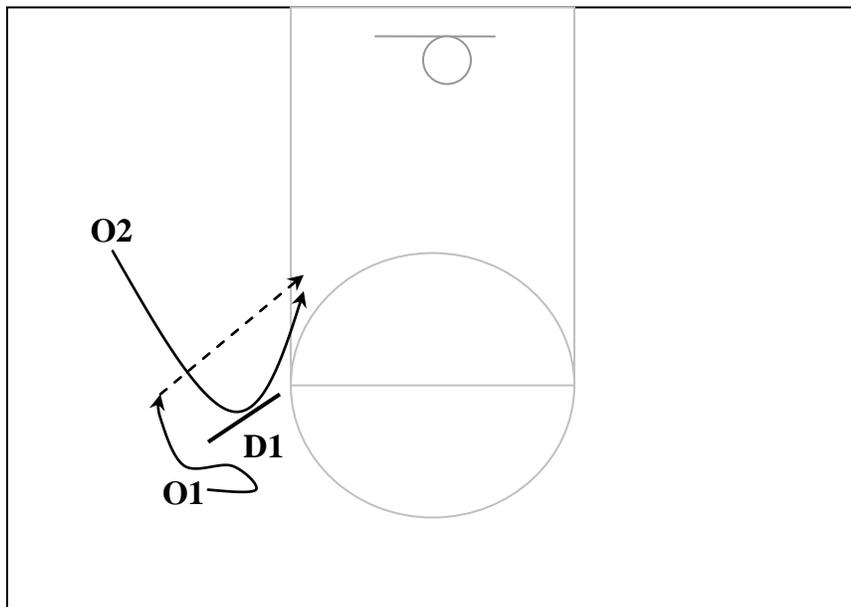
8.3 Slip Screen

Level: Intermediate

The slip screen is really a fake screen. It is a very effective move against teams that “switch” on screens. The idea is to trick the defense into getting caught with two players covering O1 and no one covering O2.

Have O1 start with the ball covered by D1. O2 sets a “slip screen” on D1 by coming right up next to her as if to set a screen, hesitating momentarily, then bursting toward the basket. As O1 begins to go around the “screen” she picks up her dribble and makes either a bounce pass or an overhead pass to O2.

The slip screen will work if O2’s defender is getting ready to switch her defensive responsibility and cover O1.



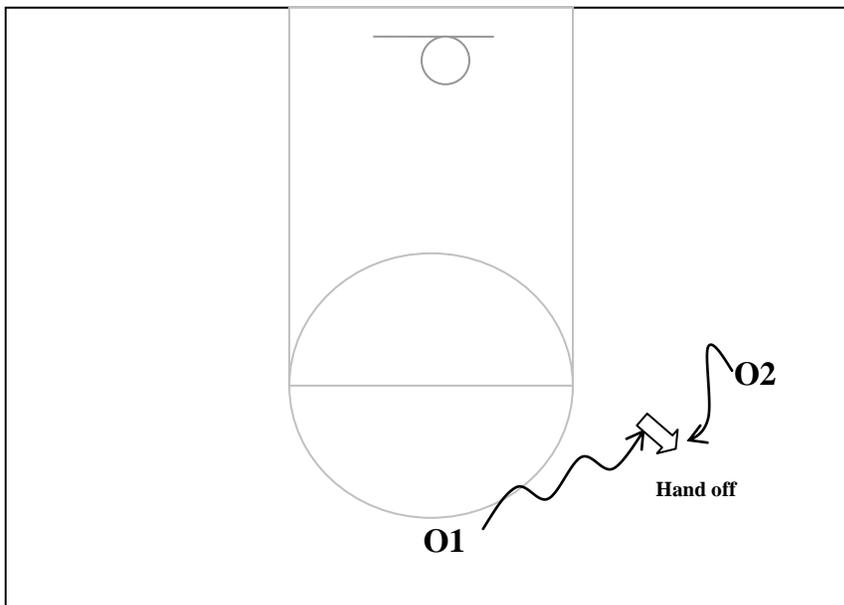
MOVING STRATEGICALLY

8.4 Screen to Handoff

Level: Beginner

The idea of this drill is to teach the players how the *person with the ball can become a screener*.

Divide the players into two lines, with one at the point (O1) and one at the wing (O2). Player O1 dribbles at Player O2. Player O2 comes right up to player O1, shoulder to shoulder, and Player O1 can just hand the ball off. Player O2 continues around O1 to the basket for a lay-up. Player O1 needs to jump in the path of the defender.



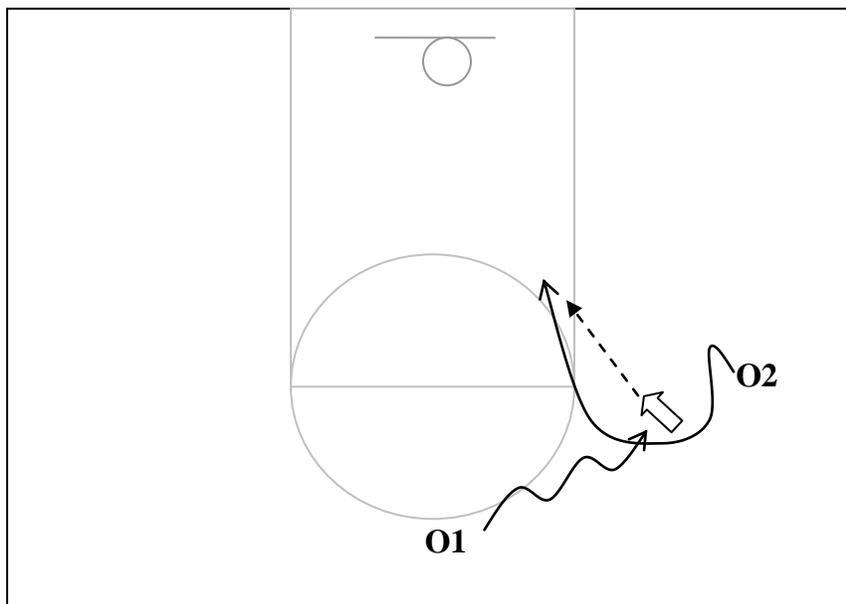
MOVING STRATEGICALLY

8.5 Run Around

Level: Intermediate

This drill is an extension of the “Screen-to-Handoff” drill on the previous page.

Divide the players into two lines, with one at the point (O1) and one at the wing (O2). Player O1 dribbles at Player O2. Player O2 comes right up to player O1, shoulder to shoulder. This time, Player O1 can *not* hand the ball off because a defender has managed to get between the two offensive players preventing the hand-off. Player O2 should go around Player O1 and then cut to the basket to receive either an overhead pass or a bounce pass. Going to the basket this way is called a “runaround.”



MOVING STRATEGICALLY

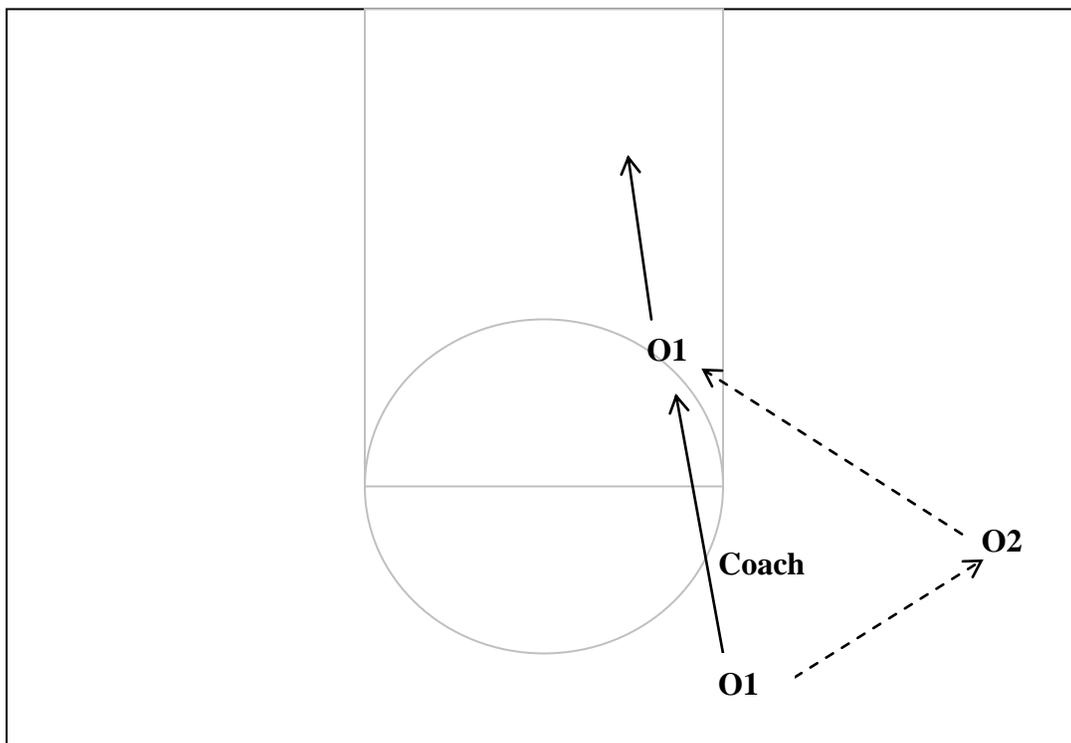
8.6 Give-n-Go

Level: Intermediate

The concept of this drill is really explained by its name. I give you the ball, and you give it back to me as I cut to the basket.

Divide the players into two lines, with one at the point (O1) and one at the wing (O2). Player O1, who is at the top of the circle, passes the ball to Player O2, who is on the right wing. The coach can simulate the defender guarding Player O1. This defensive player (the coach) guarding O1 will typically take a peek at where the ball went on the first pass. Immediately after making the pass to the wing, Player O1 should use this “peeking” moment to cut behind the defender to the basket. Player O2 returns the pass to Player O1 who goes to the basket for a lay-up.

Player O2 rebounds the ball, dribbles all the way out to the top of the circle and goes to the end of the shooting line. Player O1, who shot the lay-up, now goes to the end of the receiving line. The next two players repeat the drill. The drill should be run on both sides of the floor.



MOVING STRATEGICALLY

8.7 Back Door Cut

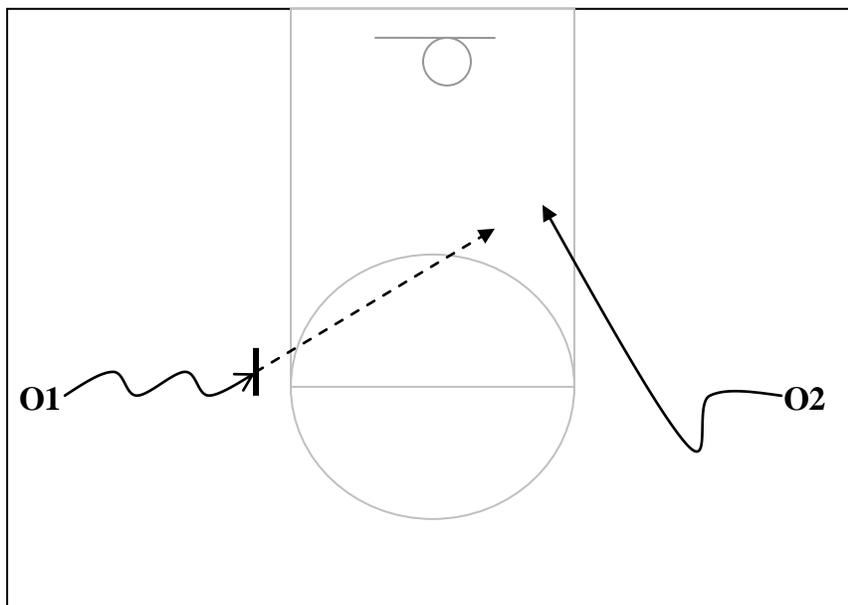
Level: Intermediate

The purpose of this drill is to teach one of most strategic movements in basketball, the V-cut or back-door cut. Have one group of players, each with a basketball, start on the sideline extended from the free-throw line (O1). Have the other group of players, each without a basketball, start on the opposite sideline (O2).

The player without the ball should move toward the middle of the court and then execute a back-door cut. They should do this by making a jab-step toward the middle of the court, faking in that direction with their head and shoulders, then cut in the opposite direction toward the basket.

The player with the ball should dribble toward the player without the ball. This player is to come to a two footed stop securing the ball in both hands. When the cutter fakes away, the passer should also give a pump fake. The ball should then be *bounce-passed* to the cutter moving toward the basket.

The cutter/shooter should get their own rebound and go into the line with the other players with a ball. The passer should also go the opposite line.



MOVING STRATEGICALLY

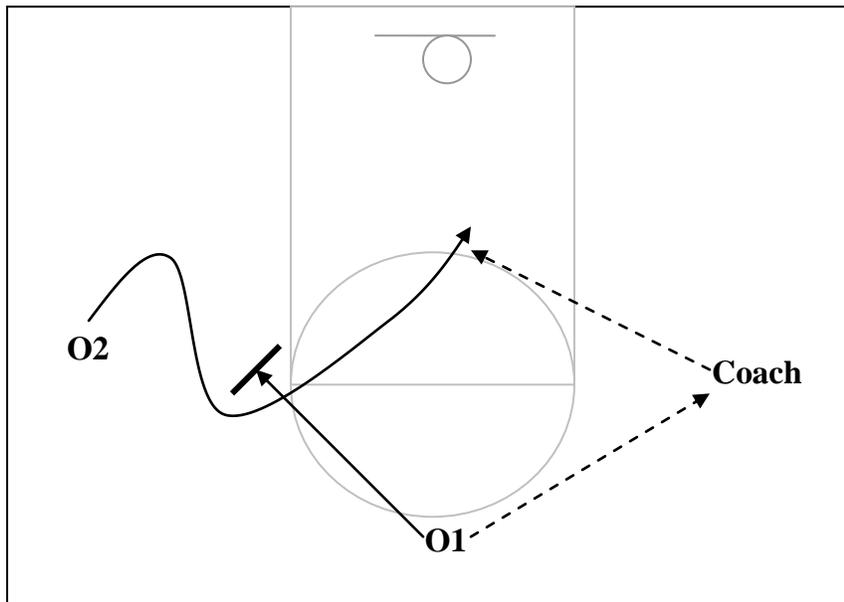
8.8 Pass and Screen Away

Level: Advanced

The Pass and Screen Away drill is designed to free a teammate without the ball so that the player will become open to receive a pass. Divide the players into two lines, with one at the point (O1) and one at the wing (O2). The coach goes to the opposite wing.

1. Player O1, who is at the top of the circle, passes the ball to the coach, who is on the right wing.
2. Player O1 then moves to set a screen against Player O2's (pretend) defender, jumping into the position with both feet so he or she is not moving.
3. Player O2, moving at the same time as Player O1, peels around the screener's shoulder to shoulder and cuts toward the basket looking for a return pass from the coach.

The screener, Player O1, should call the name of Player O2 and say "Use me Jimmy!" or "Use me Sally!" so that Player O2 knows they have the opportunity to use an "off-ball" screen and cut to the basket.



9 TRANSITION

9.1 “Ball Down” Drill

Level: Beginner

This drill is a five-on-five transition drill. It helps if the teams are distinguished by pull-over jerseys, if you have them. Have five players stand on the baseline – they are on “defense.” Have the other group of five players run an offensive play. Let them get most of the way through the play, and then yell “Ball down!” Whoever has the ball at that moment must put it on the ground, and all five offensive players must sprint to the opposite end of the court and transition to defense. When the coach says “ball down” this also serves as the starting point for the five “defenders” on the baseline to go after the ball, pick it up and try to beat the other team to opposite end of the court and score a fast break basket. Have each group of players take at least three turns at transitioning to defense.

After your team gains a basic understanding of this drill (it may take one or two practices) it is a good idea to bring the defense onto the court. Tell the defense that for the purpose of this drill you want them to only “mirror” the offense, moving their feet, but not trying to steal the ball with their hands. Call “ball down” and run the drill the same as described above.

There are two main points from this drill to emphasize:

1. Sprint to the defensive end after a turnover or rebound. This will not be an instinctive response for most kids. It needs to be taught.
2. Stop the ball. Often, young players will run to the defensive end, but then look exclusively for the player they are assigned to guard – forgetting about the ball. They need to be taught that stopping the ball is the most important thing.

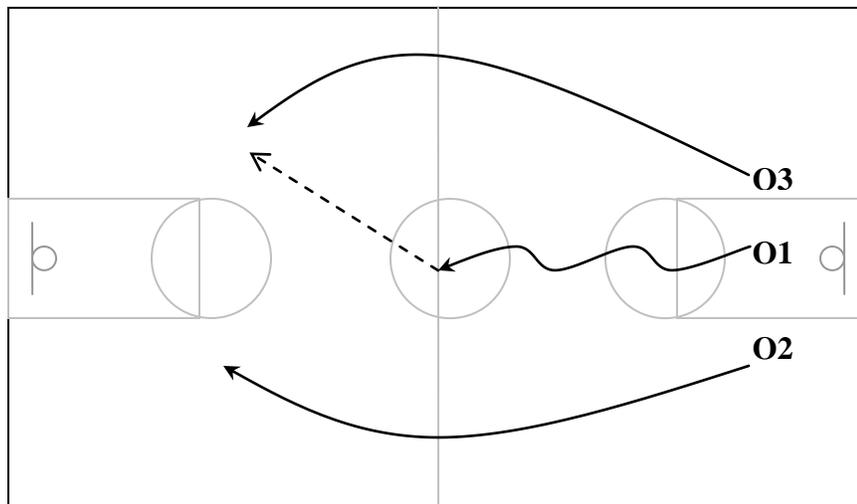
TRANSITION

9.2 Three on None

Level: Beginner

Have three players begin on one end of the court. The coach puts up a missed shot and the player who gets the rebound takes off dribbling up the middle to the other end of the court attempting to fast break. The other two players get out ahead of the dribbler attacking from the edges. When the players without the basketball cross mid-court they look back to the ball for a pass (with one hand raised) but continue running to the basket. When the dribbler reaches mid-court he should make a pass to one of the players approaching the basket, who makes the catch and shoots a lay-up. It is important to emphasize that players should attack the basket from opposite sides, so that passing lanes are filled. Have them return along the outside of the court while the next group does the drill.

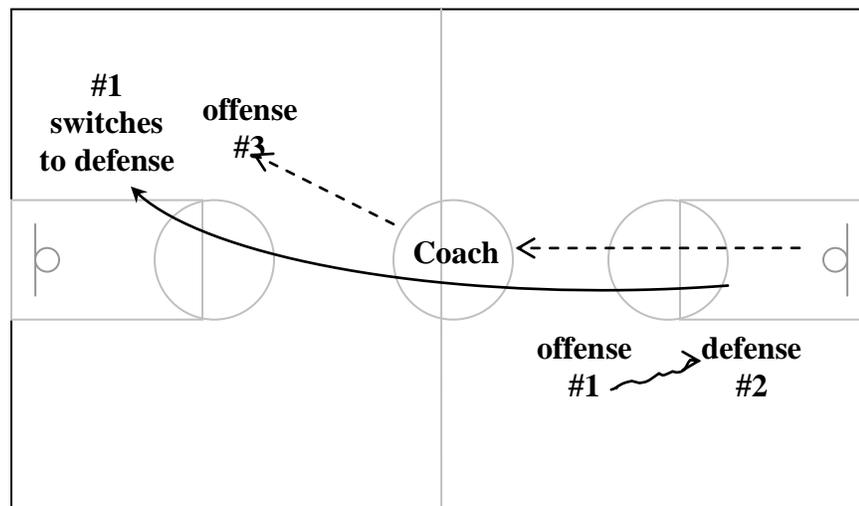
The purpose of this drill is to introduce offensive transition. Learning to look ahead for an open teammate when dribbling in transition is a difficult skill to master.



TRANSITION

9.3 1 on 1 on 1 Transition Game

Level: Intermediate



Three players are on the court during this drill. Player #1 starts on offense working against player #2 on defense. Player #3 starts on other end of the court.

When player #1 scores or player #2 steals the ball or rebounds it, the pass goes immediately to the coach at mid-court. Player #1 must transition to defense by running as fast as she can to the other end of the court and guard against player #3. The coach will try to get the pass to player #3 for fast break before player #1 gets back.

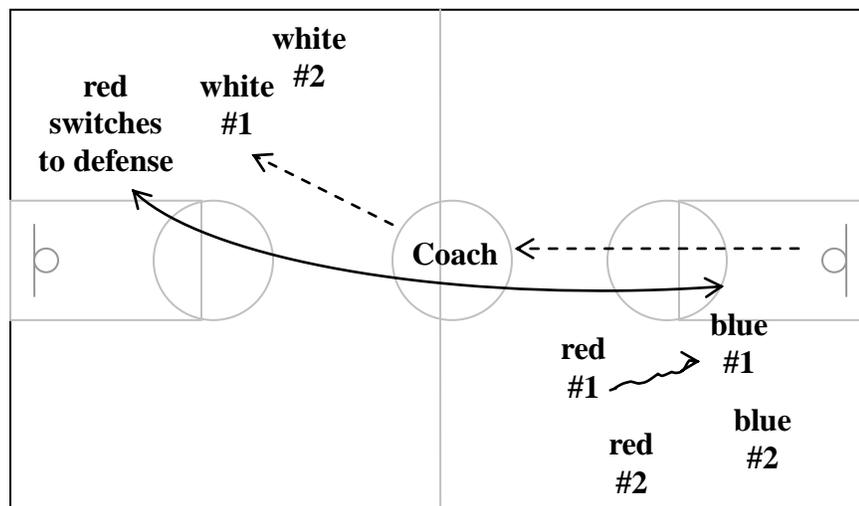
Now reverse the process. Player #3 tries to score against player #1. After scoring, turnover or a rebound, the pass goes immediately to the coach at mid-court. Player #3 must transition to the other end of the court to defend against player #2.

TRANSITION

9.4 2 on 2 on 2 Transition

Level: Intermediate

This is the same drill as the 1-on-1-on-1 transition, except now we are playing 2-on-2-on-2. There will be six players on the court at any one time. This game can be confusing, so it is important to give the kids lots of verbal instruction while it is in progress. It also helps to color code the teams. If you have pull-over jerseys, use them. If you have two kids in white T-shirts, put them on the same team. If there are two kids in blue T-shirts, put them on the same team.



Red starts on offense against blue. If red scores, or if blue rebounds the ball, the pass comes immediately to the coach at mid-court, who passes it to white (on offense). Red must transition to defense to prevent the easy fast break basket.

Then, the process is reversed. After white either scores or turns the ball over, the pass goes immediately to the coach at mid-court who passes it to blue (now on offense). White must transition to defense to prevent the easy fast break basket.

This same drill can be done as 3-on-3-on-3. Great conditioning.

TRANSITION

9.5 2 on 2 Fast Break Game

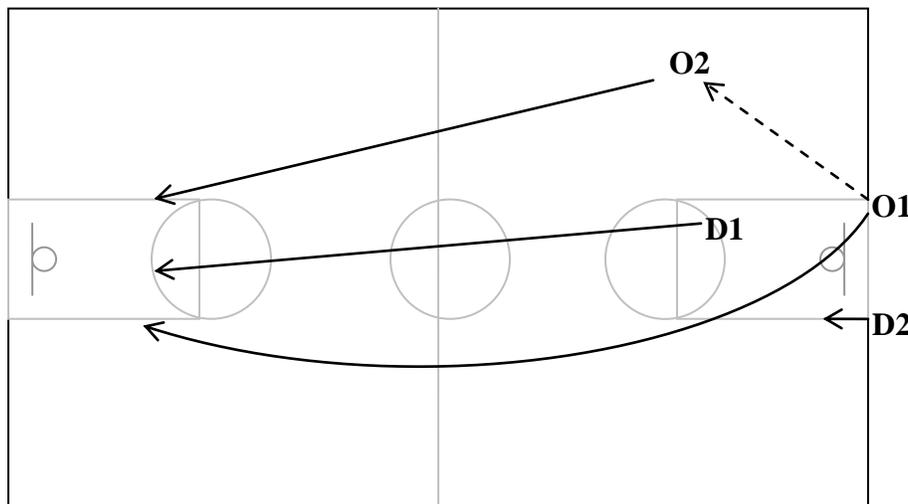
Level: Intermediate

This is another 2-on-2 transition game that is designed to give the offense a slight advantage in trying to execute a fast break. O1 starts at the baseline with the ball and O2 starts at the wing. D1 starts at the bottom of the arc and D2 starts on the baseline.

O1 overhead passes to O2 to start the drill. O1 should dribble the ball toward the basket and either take it in for a lay-up, or if covered pass it to O2. The two offensive players should attack on opposite sides of the basket. The idea is to make it difficult for one defender to guard the two offensive players. The other benefit of attacking from opposite sides is to have more area covered in the event of a rebound.

As the drill starts, D1 should sprint back to the defensive end, to about the bottom of arc and defend the basket. D2 can not start running to the defensive end until the first offensive player crosses mid-court. The intent is to give the offense a 2-on-1 advantage as long as they attack quickly. If they wait too long, the second defender will catch up. Have the players return along the side court while the next group does the drill.

The purpose of this drill is to instill a *sense of urgency* in executing the fast break.



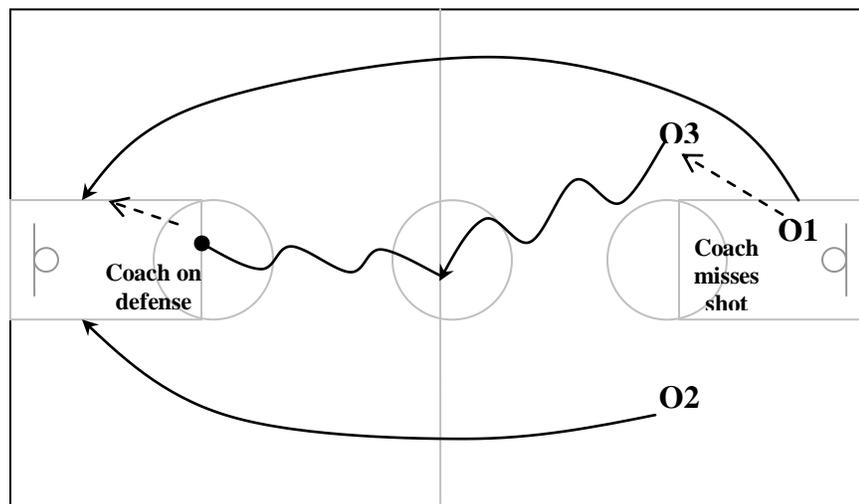
TRANSITION

9.7 Three on One

Level: Advanced

Same as previous drill, except we put a second coach on the opposite end of the court to simulate the one player back on defense. Have three players begin on one end of the court. The coach puts up a missed shot and player O1 boxes out the coach, gets the rebound then makes an overhead outlet to side of the rebound. The rebounder, O1, fills the fast break lane vacated by the dribbler. The player receiving the outlet pass, O2 or O3, dribbles to the middle then to the opposite free throw line. He must read the defender (coach) in order to decide whether to stop and pass right, stop and pass left, or keep the dribble and take it to the basket. Have them return along the outside of the court while the next group does the drill.

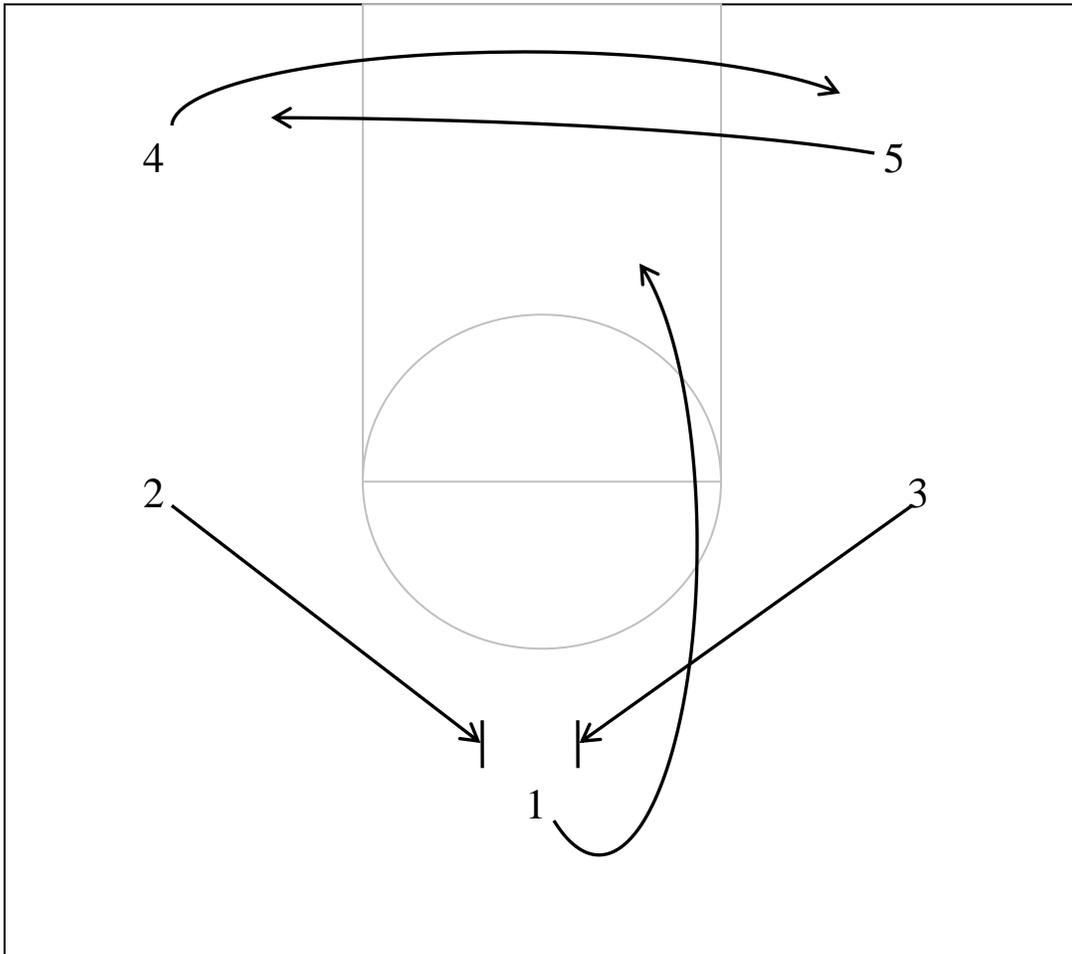
The purpose of this drill is to work on *decision making* in offensive transition.



10 SAMPLE PLAYS

10.1 Screen & Roll

Level: Beginner



Steps

- 1 calls the play.
- 2 and 3 set double high screen.
- 4 and 5 cross. Be ready for a pass.
- 1 dribbles around screen (either direction) *shoulder to shoulder* with screener and goes to the hoop.

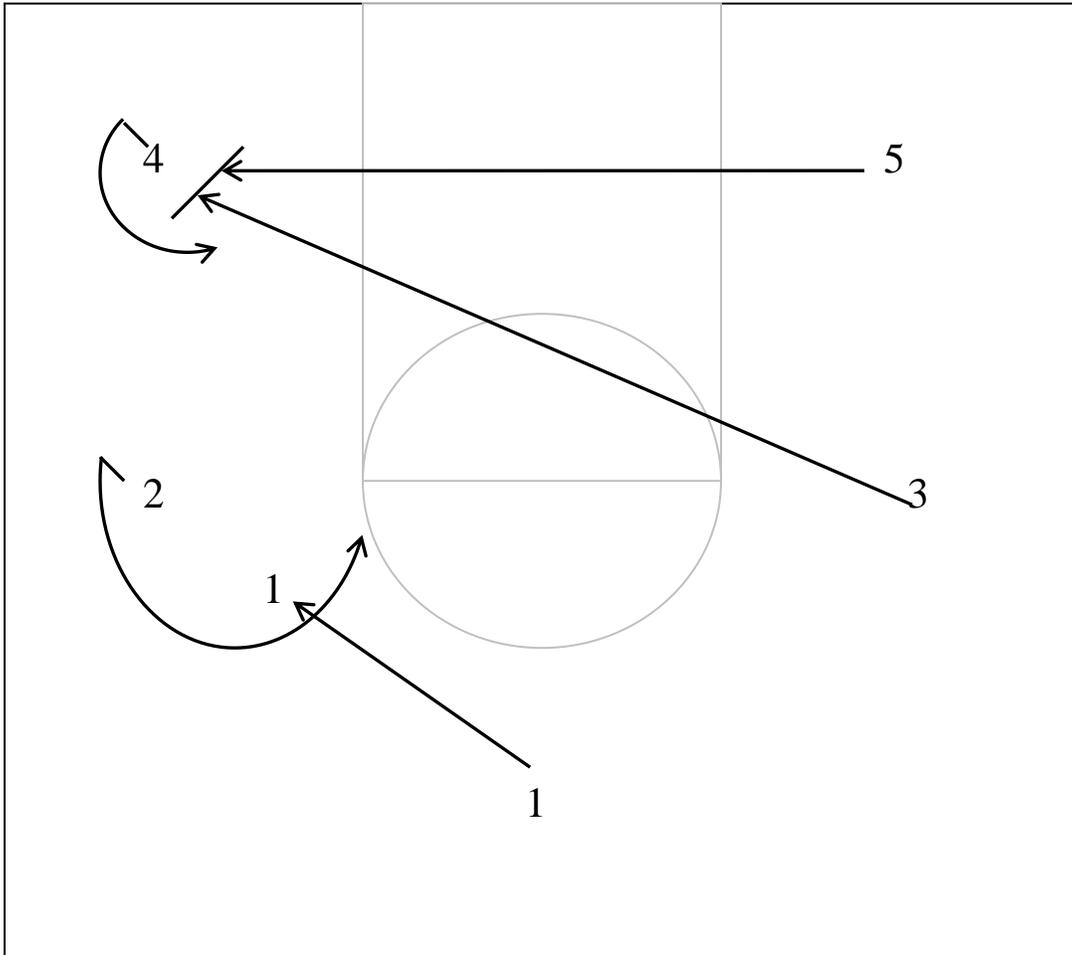
Options:

- If 1 is stopped by the defense in the lane, she looks to pass to open player 4 or 5.
- 2 and 3 “roll” to the hoop and look for pass.

SAMPLE PLAYS

10.2 Screen to Handoff

Level: Beginner



Steps

- 1 calls the play.
- 3 and 5 set double screen away for 4.
- 1 and 2 execute a screen to hand-off.
- 2 takes the ball to the hoop.

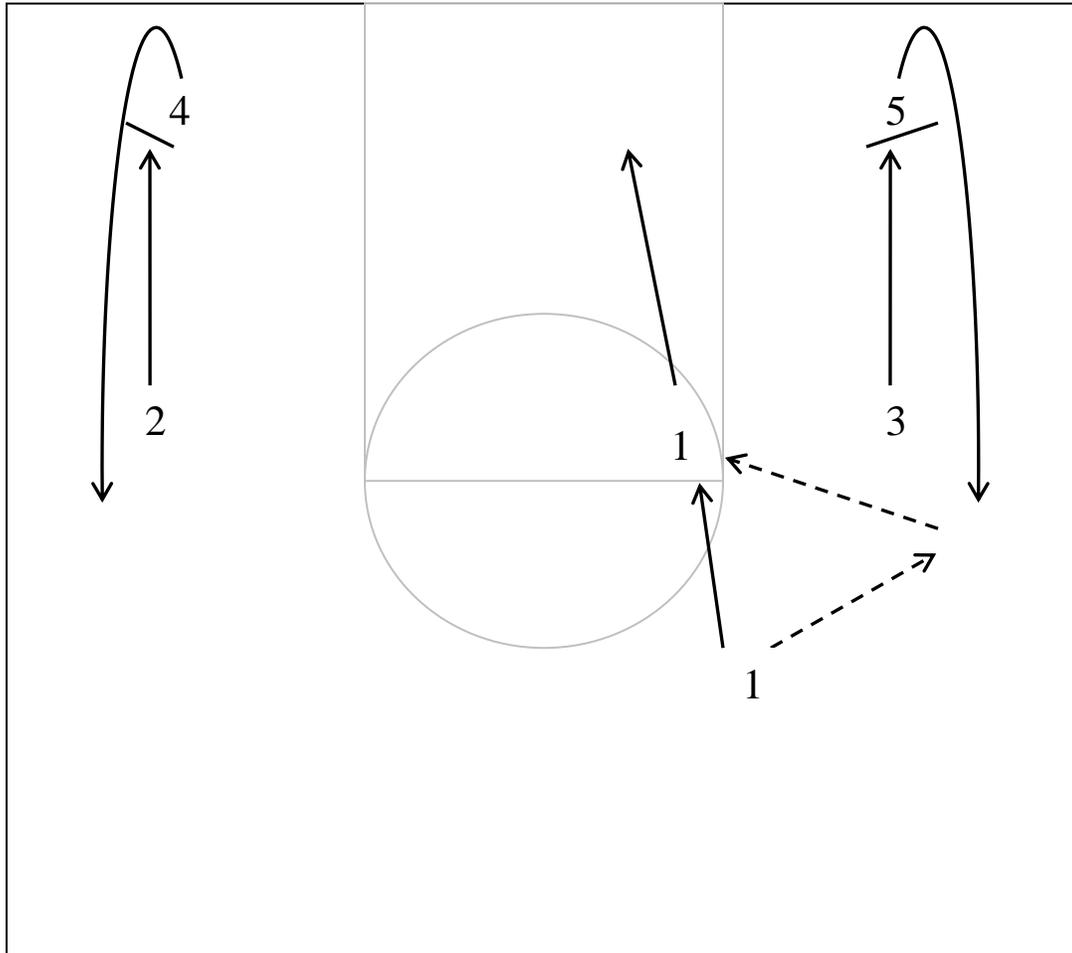
Options:

- 1 does not handoff to 2. She keeps ball, pivots toward the basket and passes to 4 or 2.
- 2 must continue to run-through.

SAMPLE PLAYS

10.3 Give-n-Go

Level: Intermediate



Steps

- 1 calls play and “cheats” to the side she is going to pass to.
- 2 and 3 set screens for 4 and 5 (called “pin down”).
- 4 and 5 peel around screens *shoulder to shoulder* and run to the wing (“pop out”).
- 1 passes to 5 *while she is still on the move*. Lead her.
- 1 breaks down the middle.
- 5 passes right back to 1.
- 1 takes it to the basket for a lay-up.

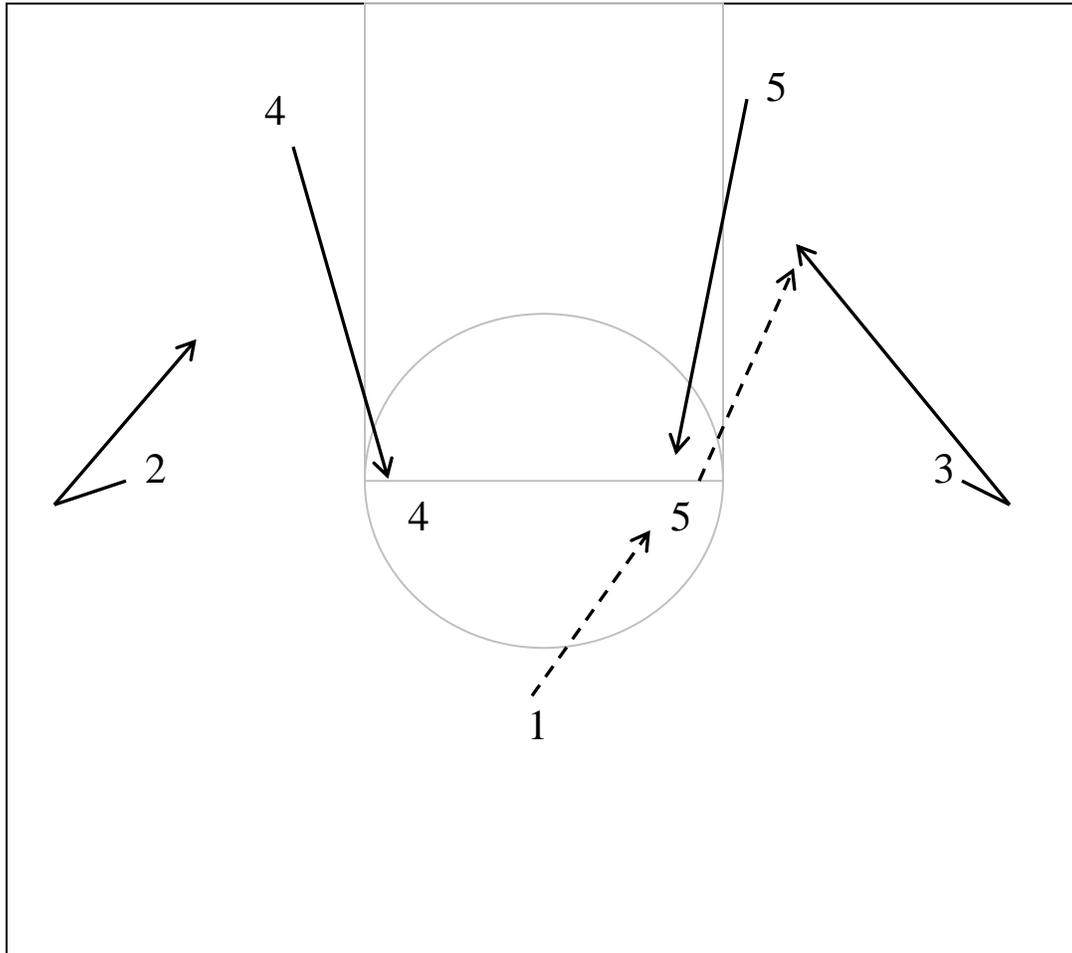
Options

- Can run it to either side.

SAMPLE PLAYS

10.4 Back Door Cut

Level: Advanced



Steps.

- 1 calls the play.
- 4 and 5 break to the high post.
- 1 passes to 5 *while she is still on the move*. Lead her.
- 2 and 3 fake away, then cut to the basket.
- 5 catches, pivots and passes to 3 for the lay-up.

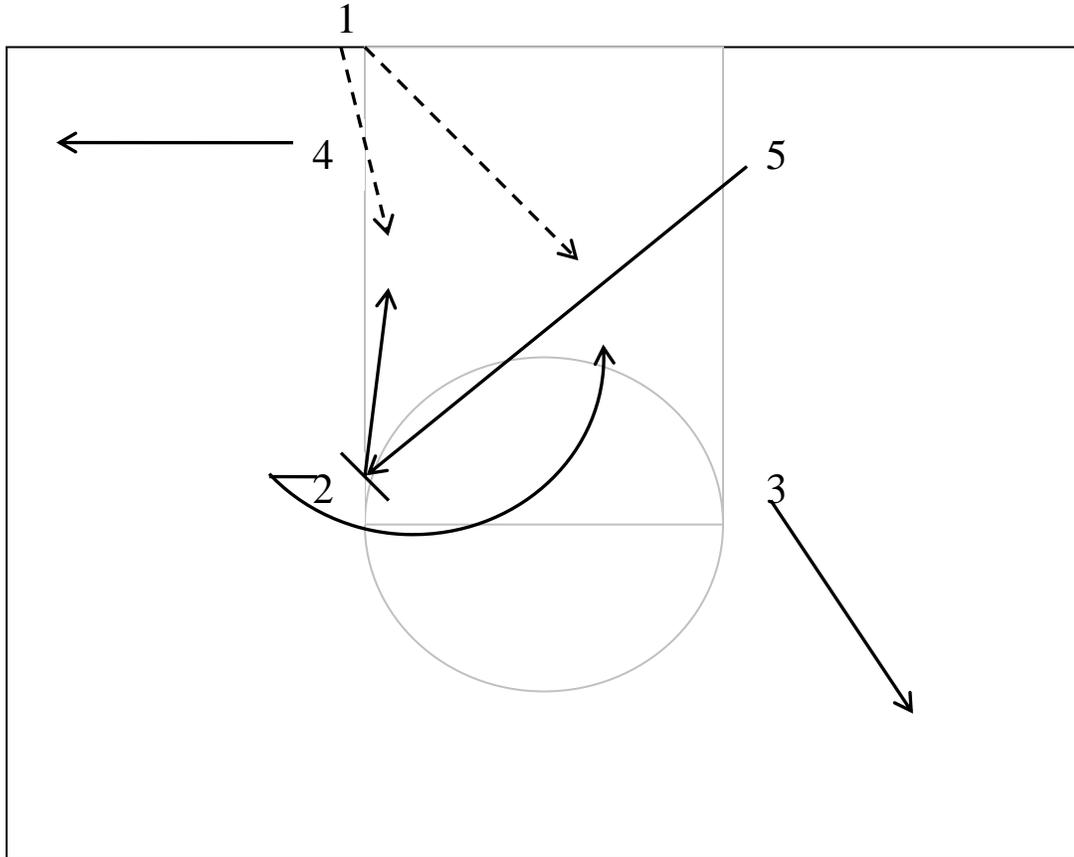
Options

- 1 passes to 4 if 5 is covered.
- 4 passes to 2 cutting to the basket.

SAMPLE PLAYS

10.5 In-Bound Play

Level: Beginner



Steps

- Everyone starts right next to the lane. 1 calls “Break.”
- 4 goes to corner.
- 3 goes to wing.
- 5 screens for 2.
- 2 fakes away then cuts around screen *shoulder to shoulder* down the lane.
- 5 turns and comes down the left side of the lane.
- 1 passes to open player.

Options

- Exact same play even if ball is inbound on the other side of the lane.
- Don't try to “reverse” the play.

11 SAMPLE PRACTICE PLANS

General

It is very important for the coach to be prepared to lead the team during each practice. If the coach leads, the players will follow. If the kids sense that the coach is unprepared or unsure of what to do next, the practice will become an unproductive free-for-all. It is essential that the coach arrive at practice early with a written practice plan. Bring copies of the practice plan for any parent that may show up and wish to serve as an assistant. This helps to establish your role as the person in-charge, and it will help make the practice fun and productive for the kids.

The practice itself will vary in format from week to week, but in general, should be structured something like this:

- Introduction (2-3 minutes). Bring the kids to the center of the court and give a brief explanation of what you will work on in practice. Make sure all balls are held and that they are listening to you. Establish yourself as the person in-charge.
- Warm-up (3-5 minutes) . Start with a light movement drill such as mirror defense or stationary ball handling just to get their muscles warmed up.
- Individual Drills (25-30 minutes). Practice individual skills such as passing, ball handling, shooting, defense, rebounding, etc...
- Team Drills (15-20 minutes). Practice team related skills such as offensive plays, team defense, transition, scrimmaging, etc...
- Fun Ending Activity (5 minutes). Always end the practice on a fun positive note. Relay races, dribble-tag, and shooting competitions (lightning) are examples of good ending activities

The next several pages contain sample practice plans and are intended to serve as an example of how the coach might wish to structure the practice.

SAMPLE PRACTICE PLANS

Practice Plan Number 1

November 5, 2006

- 6:00 – 6:05 Discussion
Rules – Come to the center with energy and enthusiasm.
Listen when coach talks. Mistakes are OK.
Treat everyone else the way you would want to be treated.
Introductions
What we'll do today
- 6:05 – 6:10 Warm-up / Stance
Foot Fire
Quick Jumps
- 6:10 – 6:20 Passing Circles
Call name of girl you will pass to.
Receiver – show hands to passer. Means you are ready to catch.
Passer – Bounce pass. One step. Push hands hard through ball.
Have it hit the ground a little more than half way there.
Receiver – Catch in hands, not belly or chest. (discovery method)
2 balls, 3 balls
- 6:20 – 6:30 Lay-Up Practice
Hop on one foot. Find left handed girls.
Take one step with jumping foot, drive other knee high, and
do a one-footed take off.
Air Lay-Up (No Ball)
Now do it pretending to have the ball and shoot it off the board.
Half the team at each basket and alternate hoops.
- 6:30 – 6:33 Water
- 6:33 – 6:40 Stationary Dribbling Drills
- 6:40 – 6:55 Positions / Screen & Roll Play
- 6:55 – 6:58 Pass / Slide Relay Race
- 6:58 – 7:00 Wrap-Up / Doggy Bags / Folders / Bring a ball if you can next week.

SAMPLE PRACTICE PLANS

Practice Plan Number 2 November 12, 2006

- 6:00 – 6:03 Discussion
Importance of listening.
What we'll do today
- 6:03 – 6:08 Warm-up / Stance
Defensive Slide
Power Jumps
- 6:08 – 6:15 Passing / Catching
One hand catch.
Zip pass: Partner catch of chest passes with some zip.
Overhead pass. Like the throw-in in soccer.
- 6:15 – 6:23 Dribbling
Stationary dribbling drills.
Movement dribbling drills.
- 6:23 – 6:30 Lay-Up Practice
Air lay-up. *Emphasize one-footed take off.*
Use each basket you can put a coach at.
✓ 1-step, no dribble and shoot it off the board.
- 6:30 – 6:37 Jump-Catch Rebound
Demonstrate need to jump for rebound. (Discovery method)
Use each basket you can put a coach at.
Coach tosses ball off of board.
Rebounder jumps off of two feet, catches in the ball in hands.
Emphasize getting airborne. Really tough for most.
- 6:37 – 6:55 Team Session:
Review offensive positions.
Review high screen and roll play.
- 6:55 – 6:58 Dribble Tag
- 6:58 – 7:00 Wrap-Up / Doggy Bags

SAMPLE PRACTICE PLANS

Practice Plan Number 3

November 19, 2006

- 6:00 – 6:03 Discussion
How did the doggy bags go?
What we'll do today
- 6:03 – 6:06 Warm-up / Stance
Foot Fire
Quick Jumps
- 6:06 – 6:15 Defensive Shell Drill
Defense must see their girl and the ball; keep back to basket..
Pass around the perimeter (three point line). Keep secure, pivot.
On ball defense – square to the girl with the ball.
Deny position – one pass away. Show the “V”.
Help position – two or more passes away. Widen the “V” & sag.
- 6:15 – 6:21 Lay-Up Practice
✓ 1-step, no dribble and shoot it off the board.
✓ No-ball, start 20 feet away and emphasize
ONE FOOTED TAKE-OFF & HEIGHT!
- 6:21 – 6:30 Transition Drill “Ball Down”
Two teams. One runs a half-court play against air.
Coach says “ball down” and the offense has to put it on the ground.
Other team gets it as fast as they can and tries to fast break.
Team that lost the ball must **SPRINT** back to the defensive end.
- 6:30 – 6:38 Shooting Form
Explain difference between lay-ups and set shots. 1-foot vs. 2 foot.
When and why each is used. Open path to hoop vs. over defender.
Demonstrate mechanics of set shot (use discovery method)
Backward rotation along the ball's seam. All 11 together.
- 6:38 – 6:55 Team Session:
Scrimmage. Need to emphasize correct starting positions.
- 6:55 – 6:58 Free throw shooting contest. Two teams.
- 6:58 – 7:00 Wrap-Up / Doggy Bags

SAMPLE PRACTICE PLANS

Practice Plan Number 4 November 26, 2006

- 6:00 – 6:03 Discussion
How we will handle water. Remember to try the doggy bags.
What we'll do today.
- 6:03 – 6:06 Warm-up / Stance
Foot Fire, Defensive Slide
Quick Jumps, Power Jumps
- 6:06 – 6:20 Defensive Shell Drill / Rebound Box-out
Explain reaching for the ball defensively. What is OK, what's not.
Why the offense should hold ball in "triple threat" position.
Review the "V". See both your girl and the ball with back to hoop.
Deny position – one pass away.
Help position – two or more passes away. Sag.
- 6:20 – 6:30 Jump-Catch Rebound with Box Out – Speed Dribble
Start in defensive help position, see ball and girl you are guarding.
Box out on the shot,
Jump-catch rebound,
Speed dribble up the court to other coach.
- 6:30 – 6:40 In-bound play (see drawing).
- 6:40 – 6:55 Review plays, including in-bound play. Two groups, no defense.
- 6:55 – 6:58 Fast break game.
- 6:58 – 7:00 Wrap-Up / Doggy Bags

12 ADMINISTRATIVE

Introductory Letter

Coaches are encouraged to send an introductory letter home with the parents at the first practice. Just a few lines explaining your objectives and what the parents should expect over the next few months. Below is sample:

Parents,

Welcome to the NBAA 2006-07 girls minors basketball season! My name is John Doe and I'm looking forward to coaching your daughters. I am writing to tell you a little about my approach to youth athletics and to let you know what to expect from now through the end of February.

Objectives	Equal Participation. Promote Good Sportsmanship. Develop Fundamental Basketball Skills. Make it Fun.
Practice	At Orchard Lane on Wednesdays from 6:00-7:00.
Games	Ten games with the first one on December 6. Games will be at Glen Park School. Schedules are included in the folders. We are team #8.
Weather	Weeknight practices → if school closed, practice is cancelled. Saturday games → I will notify you if there is a cancellation.
Pictures	Will be taken prior to our game on December 13. A flyer is provided in the folder for ordering pictures.
Uniforms	Will be distributed at the end of practice on November 19. Only to be worn for games.

Any parent willing to help coach is welcomed. I will have a schedule prepared for each practice and there will be meaningful work for any parent willing to assist. Whether parents are on the court providing instruction or on the sidelines providing support, the best approach is to offer positive words of encouragement. This will help the girls immensely.

If there is anything you wish to discuss, please do not hesitate to contact me. I'm interested in making this season an enjoyable experience for all of the girls.

Thanks,

John Doe
Phone #
Email address

ADMINISTRATIVE

Snacks / Drinks

In other NBAA sports such as baseball/softball and soccer, many teams like to arrange a post-game snack for the kids. In these outdoor sports the post-game snack serves as a nice way for parents and kids to socialize after the game. However, for basketball, we ask that you ***not*** do this. There are a couple of reasons. First, school custodial rules prohibit bringing food and drink into the gym. Second, it tends to create congestion at the entry/exit points of the gymnasiums at the time when many people are trying to get in and out. The physical layout of the school buildings is just not conducive to setting up a post-game snack.

If you wish to arrange a team social gathering, a good alternative is to set-up a mid-season or post-season team party. Many teams do this at some place like Culver's or a Pizza Place.