

Shooting

Shooting is one of the most important skills in basketball, and is one that must be introduced correctly at a young age. Habits form early in players so it is essential that proper technique is ingrained in athletes at an early age.

This is a skill that all players can and should master by repeating the same movement. The technical aspect of shooting is important, but equally important is the number of times this movement is repeated, as shooting is a fine motor skill. The more times a player practices this movement, the more natural it will become and the more confident that shooter will be. Good shooters typically practice the shooting motion everyday. It is recommended that you schedule time for shooting every practice of the season.

It is important to emphasize the following when teaching shooting. These points are for a left handed player. When teaching a right handed player to shoot, use the opposite footwork.

Lower Body

- always tell players to square up to basket
- have toes pointed to hoop
- feet shoulder width apart
- left foot 2-3 inches ahead of right
- knees flexed- tell them to bounce up and down on balls of their feet



Shooting foot forward(left handed shooter)

Upper Body

- left arm is at a 90 degree angle with bicep parallel to floor
- elbow should be in, not sticking or wandering out to the side of the body
- left toe, knee, elbow and wrist should all be in a straight line (“if a meter stick was placed on your toe it would come up to hit the bottom of your elbow”)
- wrist is cocked back, so that there is a wrinkle behind the wrist
- ball rests on finger tips or pads, not on palm of hand-should have a “*shooting window*” or small space between the index finger and the thumb of shooting hand
- Make sure the index finger and middle finger, split the air valve on the
- as player shoots, right hand takes ball away, while the left hand stays put
- the whole body shoots the basketball, all joints working together-legs are an extremely important part of shooting



Hand position front view

The Follow Through

- use the analogy of shooting out of the “telephone booth”-shoot up and then out
- at the end of shot, the *elbow must finish above the eyes* to ensure proper arc
- use analogy of “taking a cookie off the top of the fridge”
- have players hold their follow through, or flick
- ball should have backspin and should be in the air for 2 seconds before hitting the basket, regardless of where it is shot from
- “eye’s on target”
- stress the importance of being confident before the shot leaves the shooter’s hand
- the entire body is involved in shooting the basketball

Drills

1) Wall Shooting

Have players line their fore arms on wall so biceps are parallel with floor. Make sure toes are pointed straight at wall and all technical points are followed very closely. Player then steps back from wall, keeping arm at 90 degrees angle. Player then places ball on shooting hand, and using entire body, shoots ball up against wall, finishing on toes and holding follow through. Important that players do not shoot the ball too high on the wall as this will lead to incorrect form.

Emphasis the following

- going slowly-we want them to be perfect
- line up fore arm for each shot
- key words “**legs, fingers, flick, elbow over eyes**”

(Elbow over eyes means that, on the follow through, a player’s elbow must finish above the level of their eyes.)

2) Imaginary Shooting

Have players partner up with one basketball between them. Players stand 10-15 feet apart. Player works on perfect shooting form as they shoot the ball back and forth to each other. After each shot it is important that the player holds their follow through.

3) Form Shooting **Quick review**

Players stand 2 to 5 feet away from basket and shoot perfect shots into hoop. Try to get them to use perfect form, and stress to them to take their time, there is no rush. After each shot, players must finish on their toes and hold their follow through. Try to get them to make a perfect swish, no rim or back-board, just straight through the basket.



Holding the follow through

First have them use one hand, then add the balance hand to the side of the ball.

This is a very effective drill for a number of reasons. Firstly, it is important for players to understand correct shooting form, and secondly it is important for the athlete to actually see the ball go through the basket as this will improve their confidence.

Emphasize the following:

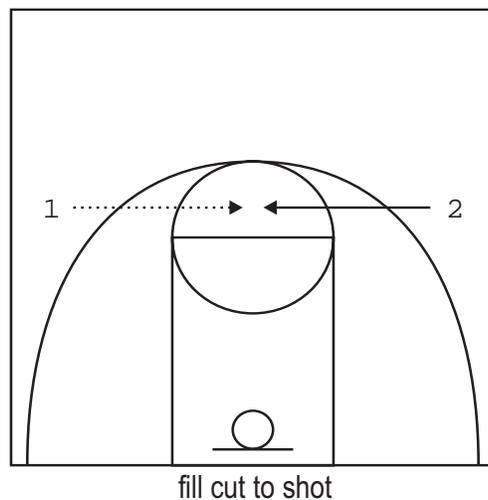
- go slowly and be perfect
- don't get too far away from the basket
- key words "**flegs, extend, flick, swish**"

4) Range Finder

Player stands two feet away from hoop and makes three baskets in a row. After three consecutive makes, player moves back three more feet. After three more makes player moves back again until the player can no longer move back any further. Practice perfect form.

5) Fill Cut to Shot

Players are divided into 2 lines. Each line is foul line extended, with one line having balls and the other without. The line without the balls cuts towards the middle and receives a pass from the passing lines. Upon catching the pass, the shooter must square to the basket and shoot the ball. The passer and the shooter then switch lines.



Most importantly, to become a good shooter, players need to shoot shots. Players need to practice the correct shooting motion everyday if they are to become good shooters. If kids are given the chance to practice correct shooting technique at a young age, there is a good chance that their good shooting form will stay with them as they grow older.