

# OFFENSIVE CONCEPTS

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## ATTACKING THE BASKET

Driving or passing the ball to an open player at the basket is one of the most effective ways to score. This is very important as it creates:

- Layups, which are the highest percentage shot.
- Fouls which can lead to free-throws and limit key opponent's effectiveness in the game.
- Two-on-one situations where there is either an open basket or open teammate.

Limiting factors in attacking the basket include:

- Players running a play rather than looking for opportunities to attack. Players often neglect to look at the basket to see if it is open, they only think of the next pass or cut in the pattern of the play. This can occur when coaches do not make use of Phase B and C drills and jumps immediately from Phase A to Phase D. Phase B and C drills are designed for players to learn to read the defence.
- Not having the skills required to attack the basket. Many right-handed players often will not drive to the basket on the left side, when it is open. This happens as they do not have confidence in dribbling with their left hand. Many passes are not made to open cutters since the passer cannot pass against ball pressure.

Perimeter players must learn to attack poor close-outs by the defence. Interior players learn to attack poor positioning by sealing inside.

### Early Clock

Pushing the ball in transition is the best time to find an open basket as the defence is retreating and often out of position.

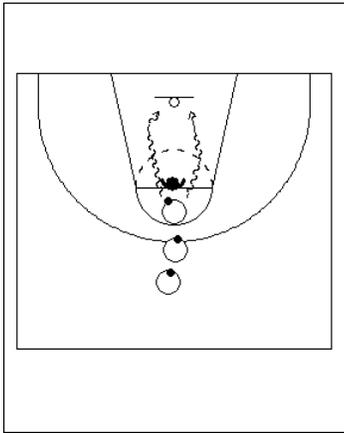
### Mid-Clock

Within the system of play coaches must help players understand when chances to attack the basket will occur. These should take precedent over the pattern of the play. An example is a back-door cut when the wing defender over-denies.

### Late Clock

In order for chances to attack the basket to occur late in the clock, proper spacing and timing has had to be maintained throughout the entire shot clock. If the basket is crowded by offensive and defensive players late in the clock, any type of basket attack will be ineffective.

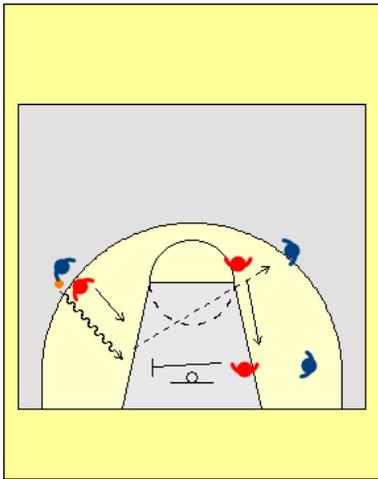
## ATTACKING ONE-ON-ONE WITH THE BALL (DRIBBLING)



### Protect the Ball

The players line up at the three-point line with every player with a ball except the first player in line. The first player faces the basket with their back to the offensive player with the ball. The offensive player can decide to go either way, starting with a crossover move. The defence is live once the player sees the offensive player with their peripheral vision. This is an excellent drill to teach the offensive player a number of key components in creating and maintaining a one-second advantage:

- Be explosive with the first step.
- Go tight to the defender on the dribble, shoulder to hip.
- Cut the defender off and put them on behind.
- Decide whether to use an extended layup (if there is an open basket) or the outside/inside power layup (if the defender is close or may be going for the block).
- This drill can be played from a number of positions on the floor.



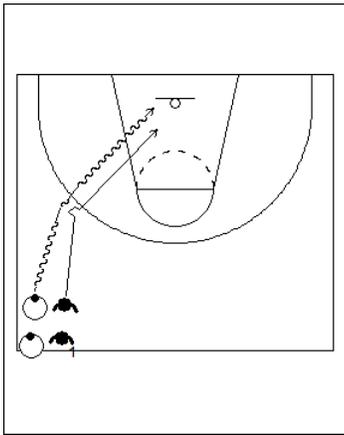
### Phase D – Game-Like Situation

This is an excellent way to start two-on-two, three-on-three, four-on-four and even five-on-five game-like drills. The offensive player with the ball must make the proper decision with the ball;

- Shoot the ball.
- Deliver the one-second advantage to an open teammate.

The players without the ball must work on:

- Keeping proper spacing so one defender cannot guard two.
- Be available for the pass if the defence helps.
- The defence is working on helping and recovering.
- It is a good idea to allow transition. Players need to spend a lot of time learning how to play in transition.

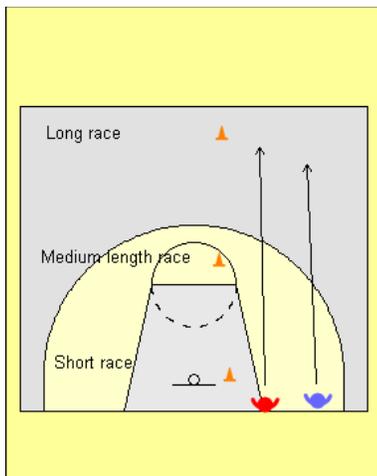


## Change of Speed

This is an excellent drill to teach the players how to use change of speed to create a one-second advantage. It also helps in the decision-making process as to what finishing move to use – the extended layup or the outside/inside power or the pull-up jump shot.

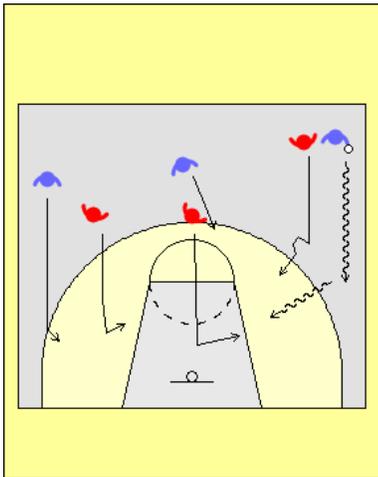
Two lines of players at half-court. The outside line is on offence and has a ball. The inside is the defence and faces the opposite basket in a shoulder-to-shoulder position. The offensive player begins the drill by walking or a slow dribble to the basket. The defence must mirror the speed while staying shoulder-to-shoulder. When the offensive player feels they have the advantage, they shift gears and accelerate to attack the basket. The defence is live. Common errors:

- There is no change of speed. The offensive player stays the same speed the whole time.
- The change of speed occurs too soon.
- Too often the offensive player will drive in a wide arc and allow the defence to recover. Put the defender behind.
- Read the defence on the finish. Sometimes stop and allow the defence to pass-by out of control.



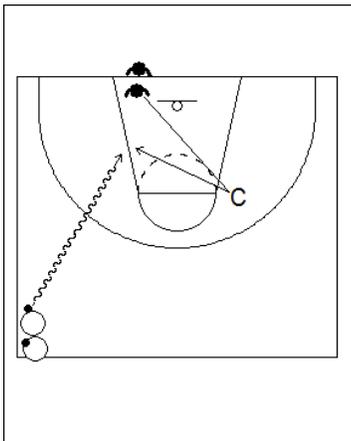
An important concept that players must learn is that in a short race, the person who starts first wins, no matter how fast the other person. In a medium race, it is a 50/50 proposition as to who will win. In a long race, the person who starts first may lose the advantage to someone who is faster. Speed becomes the dominant factor.

Offensive players must learn that by changing speeds effectively they will create short races that they can win, since they know when they are starting the race.



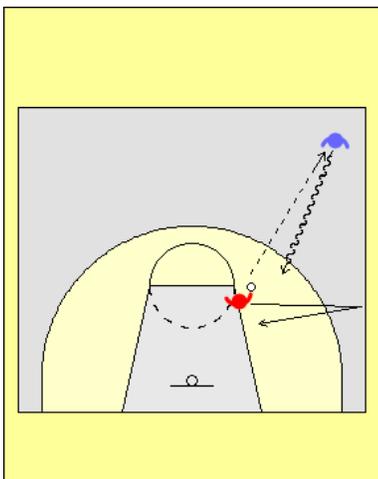
### Phase D

This is another way to start game-like drills as it simulates a wing attack made in transition. The offence is learning how to create and maintain their one-second advantage. The defence is learning how to help and recover.



### Read the Defence

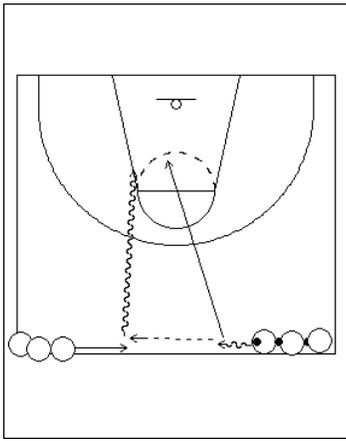
The players start in two lines – one under the basket and the other at half-court with basketballs. The player at half-court starts to attack the basket with the dribble. The player under the basket must run and touch the hand of the coach before returning to play defence on the player with the ball. The coach must adjust the distances based on the ability of the players. If the defence is always waiting for the offensive player, make the defence go a little further. If the offence always has a clear breakaway layup, make the distance shorter.



### Change the Angles

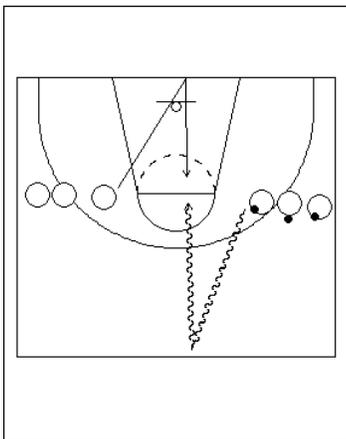
The defence can also touch at different spots. This changes the angle that the defence recovers. This builds different reads in the offence and the defence. Here the defender starts with a pass and then goes and touches the sideline before recovering. Be careful of players who cheat by throwing a high soft pass or running two or three steps before passing.

## 1V1 READ THE DEFENCE



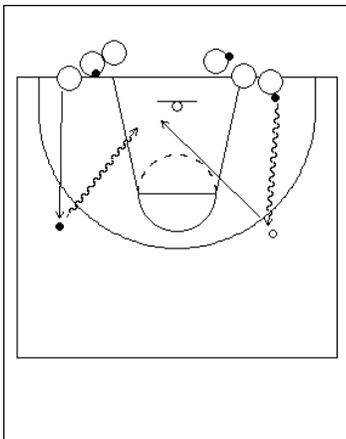
### **1vs1 Check the Distance**

Form two lines of players at opposite sides of half-court. One line of players has balls, the other does not. The player with the ball takes two dribbles to the middle. At the same time the player without the ball is cutting to the middle (showing target hands). A crisp accurate pass is delivered to the player without the ball who immediately turns and attacks the basket. The passer becomes the defender. The offence has a one-second advantage. The player must learn how to maintain it and create a scoring opportunity. Eventually this drill can be done in the full-court where the passer can decide to go to either basket.



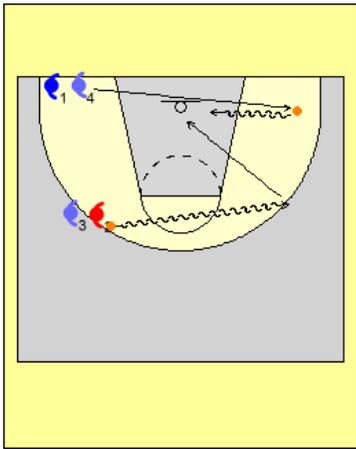
### **Body Fakes**

This is a good drill for learning how to attack a lone defender who is protecting the basket. Two lines are formed at the foul line extended, opposite sides. One line has basketballs, the other does not. The player with the ball starts the drill by dribbling to half-court. At the same time the defender runs to touch the baseline. Next, the two players play one-on-one. Encourage the defender to escape the paint to play defence.

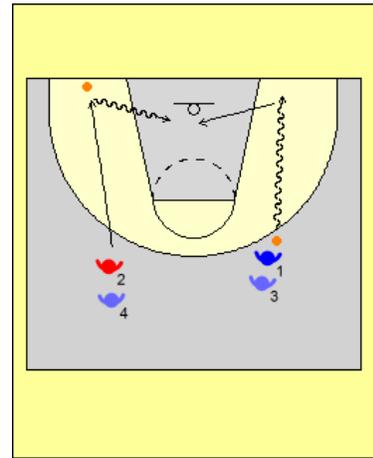


### **Jump Shot or Layup**

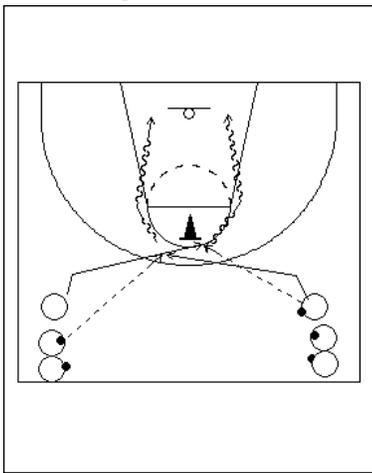
The players form two lines on the baseline. The first player in one line has a ball while the first player in the other does not. The rest of the players alternate with and without a ball. One ball is placed on the floor at the attack spot in front of the player who does not have a ball. The player with the ball dribbles out to the attack spot and sets the ball down on the floor. At the same time the player without the ball sprints to pick up the ball on the floor in front of them. This player is now on offence and the player who set the ball down is on defence. The offensive player must read the defence. If the defence shows a chest, shoot the jump shot. If just an arm, use the outside/inside power layup, if there is no defender use the speed layup.



The drill can be done from various angles on the floor. This creates different reads for both the offensive and defensive players.

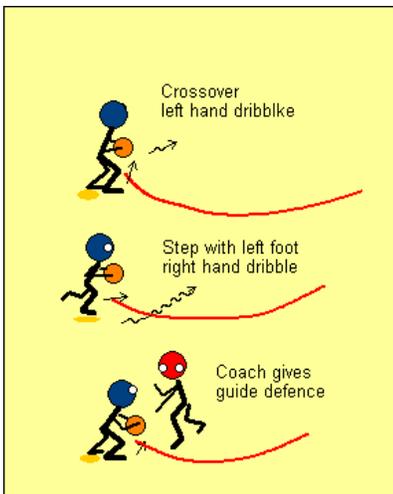


### Attacking Drills – Phase A, B, C and D



#### Cross the Lane

The players line up in two lines outside the three-point line. Every player has a ball except the first player in one line. The first player makes a broken line, change of direction move to cut to the top of the three-point line. The player must be sure to show their hands to indicate they are ready to receive the ball from the passer. The first player in the opposite line times the pass to arrive just as the player is at the top. The player anticipates the defence over-playing and makes an immediate crossover move back in the direction they started. Finish with a jump shot or an outside/inside power layup. The player who made the pass makes a change of direction and cuts to the top to receive the next pass. The cutting player should not cut until the player with the ball has made eye contact.



The next skill is to anticipate the defence trailing. Here the player catches the ball on the outside foot and curls to the basket. The player should attack the paint and be sure not dribble the ball to a spot outside the key. During the drill, do not stop the ball in either move to take advantage of poor defensive positioning and create an immediate one-second advantage.

#### Phase A – Do the Skill on Air

The player is working on catching the ball a) crossover move – on two feet facing the basket; rip the ball low and using a crossover move to attack the basket. b) curl – catch the ball on the outside foot,

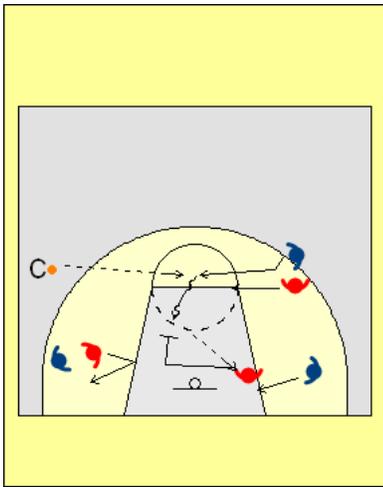
crossover with the inside foot as the ball is dribbled at the basket. Key points: eyes up, show target hand to catch, make use of the proper footwork.

### **Phase B – Coach Guides**

The coach guides the offensive player by giving a defensive read. This helps the player with anticipation and making the proper read as to which move to use. It also helps the player attack the basket and not drift wide. The passer also has to work to make the pass in rhythm – proper timing and speed are integral.

### **Phase C – Live Defence**

Next, the drill is executed by adding a live defender who is trying to stop the offensive player. The key is to anticipate the defensive action so that the offensive player can create the one-second advantage. It is best to give the offensive player a number of repetitions in a row as it helps them to explore the different options.



### **Phase D – Use in a Game-Like Situation**

Use this cut to start a two-on-two or three-on-three situation. Once the offensive player creates the one-second advantage they must read the next defender and decide whether to shoot or pass to an open teammate.

### **Other ways to load the drill:**

It is often a good idea to have a coach available for a pass. If the offensive player does not have a good pass the coach can encourage the player to pass. This will prevent the players from taking bad shots.

**Note:** The same drill and progression can be used to practice cuts from the corner to the wing.