

DEFENSIVE RULES

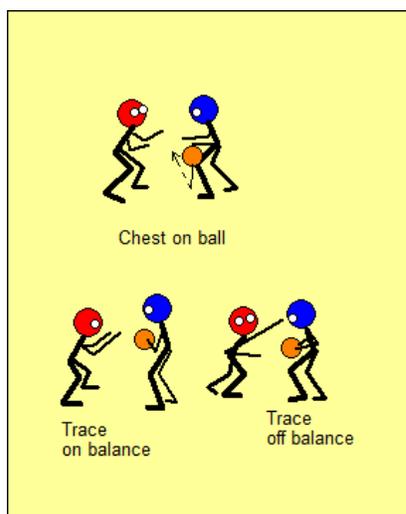
1. Protect the Basket

This concept begins with the base game of one-on-one. Players learn to position their body between the offensive player with the ball and the basket. As the game shifts to two-on-two, the defender guarding the player without the ball must still position themselves in a way where the basket is protected and the defender is closer to the basket than their check. The rule for defence is the same in the full-court or half-court.

2. Pressure on the Ball

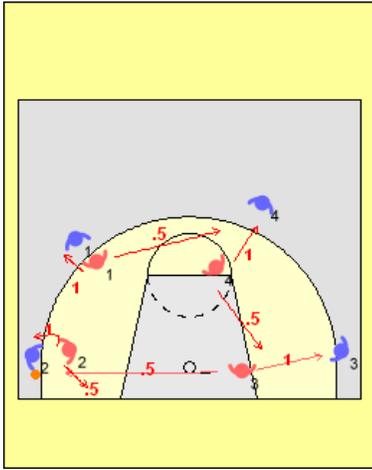
From three-quarter court (pick up at the opponents' foul line) there has to be pressure on the ball-handler. The ball-handler should find it difficult to see their teammates on the floor and force them to change hands (while dribbling) and direction (crossover) as often as possible. In addition, the ball-handler should not be able to determine which side to dribble to (strong-side or weak-side). Once the ball-handler crosses half-court they should be kept on the same side; not allow any crossovers. This will allow the other four defenders to identify which is ball-side and help side while positioned in the passing lane. It is important to deny the entry pass as much as possible as this is the beginning of the offensive set.

Place the chest between the ball and the basket. Trace the ball with only the hand on the side of the ball. If reaching with the opposite hand it will be difficult to stay on balance.



3. Play 1.5 on the Player without the Ball

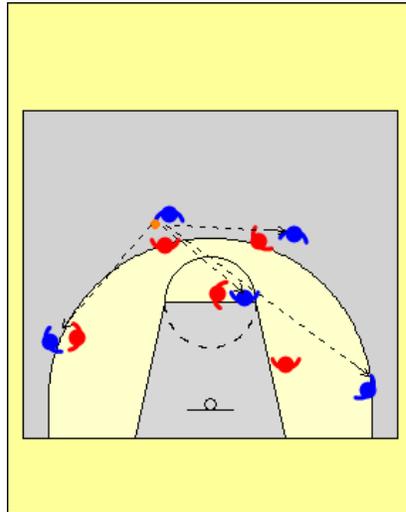
As a strong team principle for team defence, it is important for players to defend their check and be ready to help on the eventual penetration/rotation.



At any given time in a defensive possession players must know who they are guarding (one) and who they are helping (half). The player guarding the ball is the only person that does not have a half-responsibility. The player guarding the ball must know who the next helper is if the ball is put on the floor.

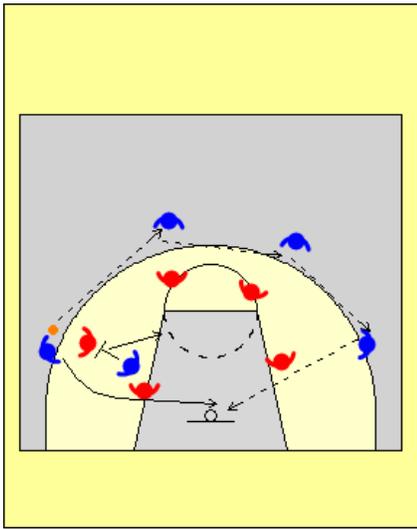
4. Always Stay in the Passing Lane

Players must make sure to always be in the passing lane and ready to deny the pass and to help against penetration. Team defence will be more effective if five players are in good position (like a wall).

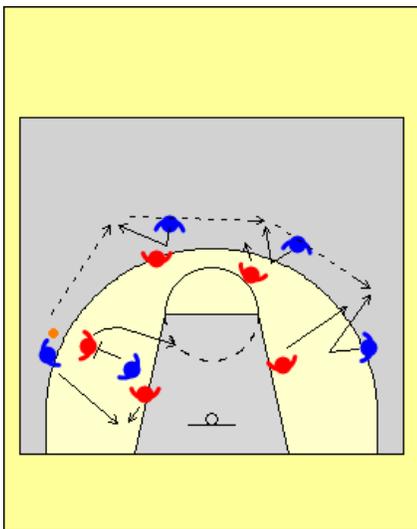


5. Make the Offensive Player Move Before they Catch the Ball

It is important to stop the opposing player from catching the ball near the three-point line. The offensive player should have to move and work hard to receive the ball.



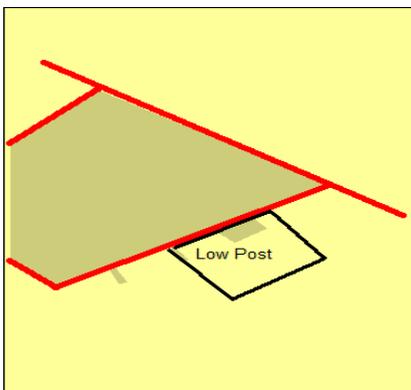
A former Yugoslavian coach once said that the best offence is to take the ball from three players on the strong-side of the floor and reverse it to the side with two players; then quickly bring a third player from the strong-side to the weak-side. In this scenario, it is very difficult to defend the back screen if the ball is allowed to be quickly reversed.



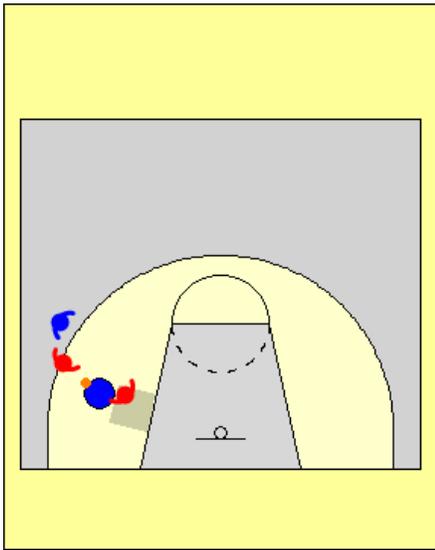
By making the perimeter players move to catch the ball it slows the timing of the ball reversal. The players defending the screen have time to hedge and recover.

6. No Ball on Low Post

It is important to never allow the ball to enter into the low post position. The low-post defender has to fight as hard as possible to deny the pass and position.

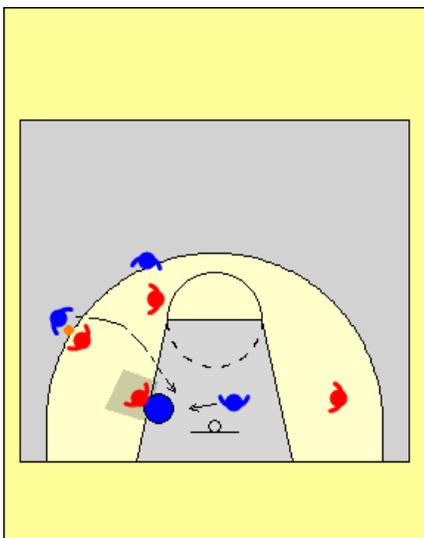
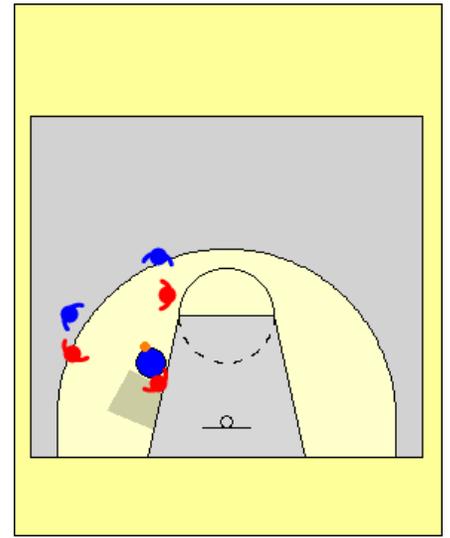


The low post is defined as a one metre square (box) on the floor. This is the spot where the defence wants to inhibit the ball from entering. It is a great idea to use masking tape to mark this on the court when training as it helps players become familiar with the location.



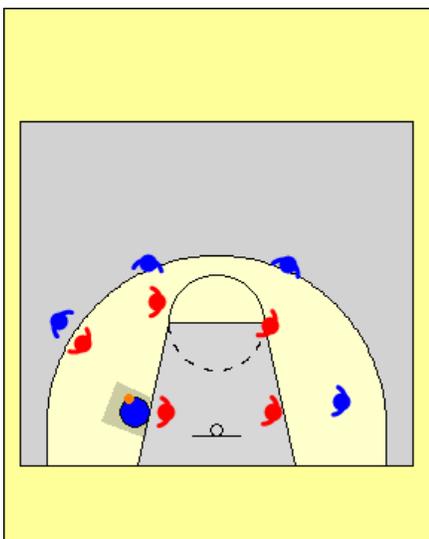
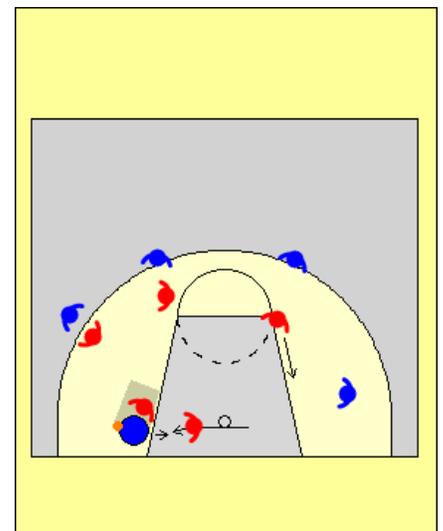
If the offensive player catches the ball in front of the box, it is very easy to have the wing defender guard two players.

If the offensive player catches the ball above the box, two perimeter players have the ability to help and also guard their own checks.



When the offensive player posts inside the key it is very easy for weak-side help to come on the lob pass.

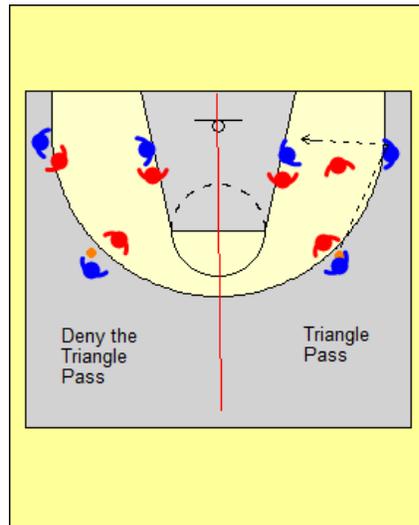
If the post-up is below the box, weak-side help can come on the dribble. The post defender takes away the middle and the vision of the post.



When the ball is caught in the box it is very difficult to get help on the post as the player is forced into rotation and into scramble-mode. In this situation there is no help provided to instill the attitude in the defender's mind that they need to prevent the player from catching the ball in this spot. If the player knows help is coming they will not work hard to keep the ball out of this position.

7. Deny Every Pass Close to the Ball

This concept expands on defensive rules two and three; especially when there is an offensive player in the corner (there should be no triangle pass with the low post if they are being defended three-quarters).



8. Slow Down the Reverse

This concept builds on defensive rules three and six. Any type of offence works if the ball is allowed to be quickly swung from one side to the other (especially through the high post). It is important to attempt to break the rhythm of the offence by denying reversal passes. Additionally, it is important to deny the pass when defending a back screen or weak-side-cut.

9. Play Good One-on-one Defence to Avoid Defensive Rotation

An ideal person-to-person defence starts with tight one-on-one defence on the player with the ball as defensive rotation makes the defence weaker. The defensive rotation puts the team defence in an emergency situation. Very often coaches spend the majority of time in practice working on these emergency situations but it is better to work on developing the skills required to prevent the emergencies from happening in the future or in the first place. Learning the proper defensive skills can last over the course of a player's career, while rotations may only work for one game.

DEFENSIVE TOPICS

One-on-one Defence

Players have to find their balance and react. It is important to remember the simple principle of putting one hand on the ball and having the other in the possible pass location. The player must continually move their feet and always keep their chest in front of the ball and avoid crossing their hands or feet. Effective person-to-person defence is only as strong as the defence on the ball-handler.

Pick-and-roll Defence

At the younger ages it is recommended to play a switch against ball screens. At these stages, the players do not have the skills and concepts to take advantage of a mismatch. When working with athletes at the proper stage for ball screens, the defence must have aggressive traps and inhibit the screener from seeing the ball