

---

**Canada Basketball**  
**Centre for Performance**

---

**Technical Manual**

---



## **Introduction**

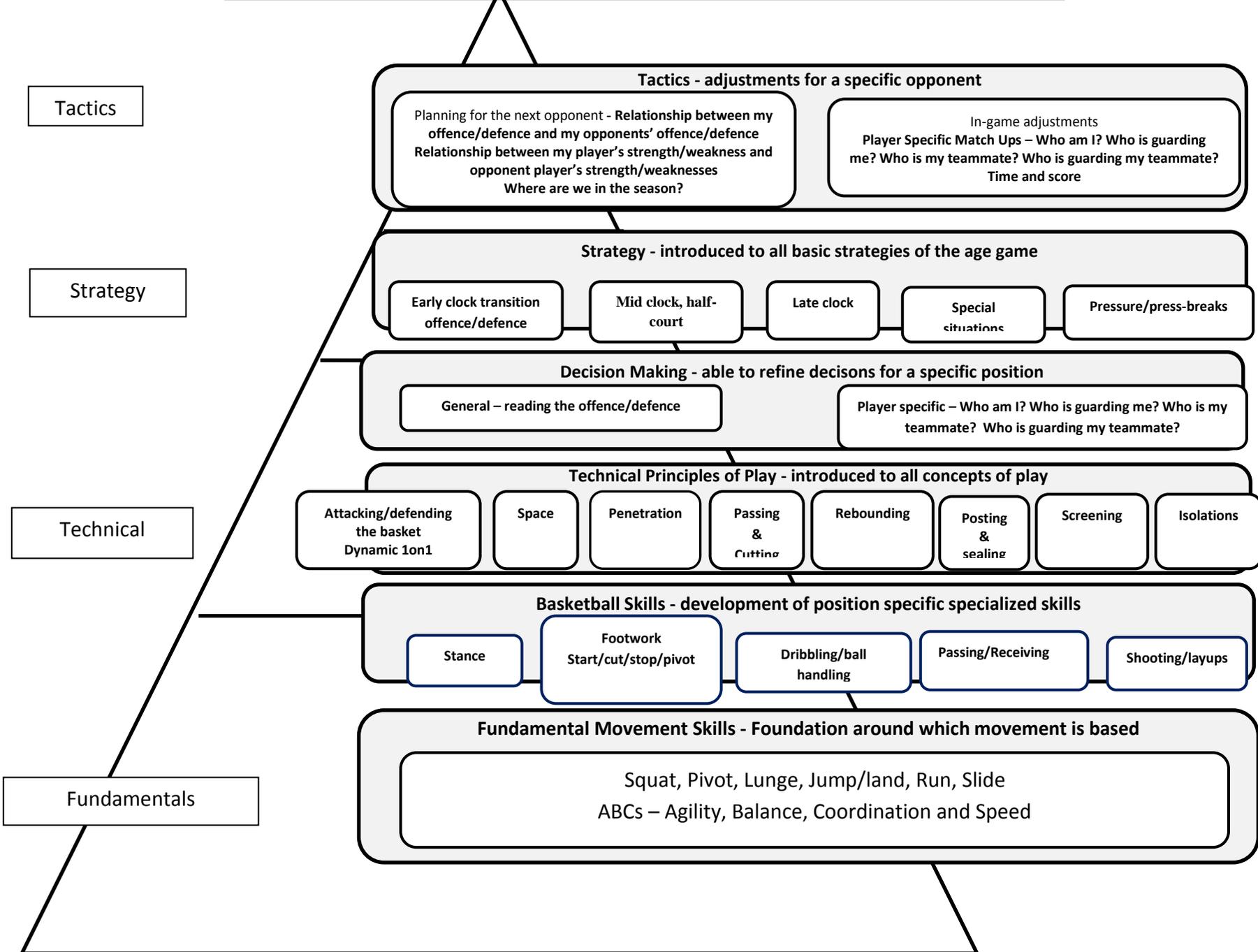
In 2010 Canada Basketball hired Renato Pasquali as its technical director. Many of the concepts and ideas discussed and outlined in this book come from his vast experience in basketball. As stated before, the game has changed and there is a need to change the way the game is taught to stay current with the rest of the world. What is presented is cutting edge. This is not what was being done 20 years ago; this is what should be done now to be a world leader in basketball. Through this document, the hope is to share valuable learning principles and best practices with all of the coaches in Canada.

Canada Basketball would like to thank Kelly Woloshyn and Kathy Brook for their guidance in producing and editing this material; Mike McNeill, Dave Constantine, Andre Desjardins and Daniel Grimard for their help with the technical development. And finally thanks to Renato. His willingness to give of his time and knowledge to Canada Basketball speaks volumes of his commitment to improving coaching and player development in this country.

Mike MacKay  
Manager Coach Education and Development  
Canada Basketball



Train to Compete Stage - 15-18+/- Females, 16-18+/- Males



## Canada Basketball's LTAD Overview

LTAD Stages	Learn to Train	Train to Train	Training to Compete
<b>Age</b>	10-11 years old	11-15 (girls)	15-19 (girls)
		12-16 (boys)	16- 20 (boys)
<b>Aim</b>	To learn the basic basketball skills while still emphasizing fundamental movement skills in a fun and all-inclusive environment.	To introduce the basic technical and strategic parts of "global" basketball with a more structured approach to training.	To introduce athletes to all aspects of the game, and begin to refine all technical aspect and most strategic components.
<p><b>Fundamental Movements Skills (FMS)</b>                      The most important FMS is the ability to squat. A balanced stable stance, which can be maintained for long periods of time, moved into and out of in multiple directions, is the foundation for all movement on the basketball court. All players must master the ABCs – Agility, Balance, Coordination and Speed. The ABCs need to be taught. The greatest limitation in skill development is often problems with a fundamental movement skill. The intent is to make players athlete's first and basketball players second.</p>			
<b>FMS</b>	<p>Since this is still an entry stage for many children, it is imperative that the instructor ensures that each child has these fundamental movement skills. 20 percent of time is used on movement skills. After the skills have been acquired, coaches can use more basketball specific methods to consolidate and refine the FMS.</p> <p>The coach can make use of fun games that hide the skills within the rules of play. For example; hop scotch makes use of single legged squats and jumping and landing.</p>	<p>25 percent of the time in instruction should be used to warm up using the fundamental movement and basketball skills. A games approach can still be used, but error detection and corrections still need to be done at this stage since the players are going through their growth spurt.</p> <p>Close attention needs to be paid to flexibility at this stage. In general, boys may lack flexibility while females may be too slack in some joints.</p>	<p>20 percent of instructional time is spent here. Work is done on refining the skills and in warming up. It can become more individualized.</p>
<b>Squat</b>	<p>Emphasis should be placed on proper squat form. Using the hips to initiate the movement. The player can begin to build</p>	<p>As athletes are going through growth spurts during this stage, proper form must be maintained. Flexibility will be an issue,</p>	<p>Athletes are now working on increasing their power while maintaining balance. More complex sequencing of movement</p>

	endurance and stabilization. The elbows remain over the knees for good balance.	especially with male athletes. Building strength and endurance using body weight, resistance bands or medicine ball can be done at this time. Players will also benefit from stabilizing activities and simple movements into and out of squats. Balance is still a priority.	into and out of the squats can occur. <b>Note:</b> Loading an athlete with poor form can lead to injury or reduced performance. The players need specific training to meet their individual needs.
<b>Pivot</b>	Emphasis should be placed on proper pivoting form, using the hips to initiate the movement. The players can begin to build endurance and stabilization. Elbows over knees for good balance.	As athletes are going through growth spurts during this stage, proper form must be maintained. Flexibility will be an issue, especially with male athletes. Building strength and endurance using body weight, resistance bands or medicine ball can be done at this time. Players will also benefit from stabilizing activities and simple movements into and out of pivots. Balance is still a priority.	As athletes maintain balance, they are also now working on increasing their power. More complex sequencing of movement into and out of the pivots can occur. The players need specific training to meet their individual needs.
<b>Lunge</b>	Emphasis should be placed on proper lunge form. It is best to start with a backward lunge. The player can begin to build endurance and stabilization. Also lunges to balance are important.	As athletes are going through growth spurts during this stage proper form must be maintained. Flexibility will be an issue, especially with male athletes. Building strength and endurance using body weight, resistance bands or medicine ball can be done at this time. Players will also benefit from stabilizing activities and simple movements into and out of lunges. Balance is still a priority.	Athletes must maintain proper form and balance, but are now working on increasing their power. More complex sequencing of movement into and out of the lunges can occur The players need specific training to meet their individual needs.
<b>Jumping /landing</b>	Emphasis should be placed on proper jumping and landing form. Start with two feet to two feet, but progress through from one foot to one foot. Jumping and landing in different directions is important. Players need to maintain balance when landing. Get low to be safe (bend to absorb the force).	As athletes are going through growth spurts during this stage proper form must be maintained. Flexibility will be an issue, especially with male athletes. Building strength and endurance using body weight, resistance bands or medicine ball can be done at this time. Players will also benefit from stabilizing activities and simple movements into and out of jumps and landings. Balance is still a priority.	Plyometric training can be done if proper form and core strength are present in the athlete. More complex sequencing of movement into and out of the jumping and landing can occur. The players need specific training to meet their individual needs.

<b>Running</b>	Emphasis should be placed on proper running form. Running forward, backward and forward looking over the inside shoulder. The use of the arms is important.	As athletes are going through growth spurts during this stage proper form must be maintained. Flexibility will be an issue, especially with male athletes. Building strength and endurance using body weight, resistance bands or medicine ball can be done at this time. Players will also benefit from stabilizing activities and simple movements into and out of running form.	Athletes are working on increasing their power while maintaining balance. More complex sequencing of movement into and out of running form can occur. The players need specific training to meet their individual needs.
<b>Lateral Movement (sliding)</b>	Emphasis should be placed on proper sliding form. Staying in a squat position is important.	As athletes are going through growth spurts during this stage, proper form must be maintained. Flexibility will be an issue, especially with male athletes. Building strength and endurance using body weight, resistance bands or medicine ball can be done at this time. Players will also benefit from stabilizing activities and simple movements into and out of sliding.	Athletes must maintain proper form and balance, but are now working on increasing their power. More complex sequencing of movement into and out of sliding can occur. The players need specific training to meet their individual needs.
<b>Agility</b>	Make use of fun games that emphasis agility.	Growth must be taken into account. Players going through their growth spurt will appear clumsy and uncoordinated. The coach must take into account the social/emotion impact this can have on these players. Be careful of peer pressure punishment activities.  Training aids such as pylons, hurdles and ladders can be introduced but they should not change the running form of the athletes. Proper running form is essential, not tippy toe running with the eyes down to master the hurdles.	Athletes must maintain proper form and balance, but are now working on increasing their power. More complex sequencing of movement can occur. The players need specific training to meet their individual needs.
<b>Balance</b>	Make use of fun games that emphasize balance. Begin with static balance before progressing to dynamic.	Growth must be taken into account. Players going through their growth spurt will appear clumsy and uncoordinated. Balanced activities are best done without the use of a wall. It is the act of going off balance that aids the player in learning how to balance. Both static and	Athletes must maintain proper form when balancing. More complex sequencing of movement can occur. The players need specific training to meet their individual needs.

		dynamic balance is essential. Transitional balance (which is freezing a movement pattern) can be introduced.	
<b>Coordination</b>	Make use of fun games that emphasize coordination	Growth must be taken into account. Players going through their growth spurt will appear clumsy and uncoordinated. Activities that require the players to make use of both sides of their body and away from the middle of the body are important.	More complex sequencing of movement can occur. The players need specific training to meet their individual needs.
<b>Speed</b>	Make use of fun games that emphasis speed. Speed needs to be involved in every training session. Athletes need to learn how to purposefully change speeds.	Speed needs to be done every day. Short bursts of maximum effort are important.	Speed needs to be done every day. More complex sequencing of movement can occur. The players need specific training to meet their individual needs.
<b>Fundamental Basketball Skills (FBS)</b>			
The FBS are the basic building blocks of the game. These include; a balanced stance, the ability to start, stop and pivot (footwork), shot form (which includes layups), dribble form, passing form and the ability to play one-on-one.			
<b>FBS</b>	<p>Introduce the basic skills. Initiation and acquisition of the main fundamental skills of basketball: starts, stops and pivots, shot form (layups), pass form, dribble form and dynamic one-on-one.</p> <p>Bilateral development global approach, everyone learns all skills and positions. 20 percent of teaching time is basketball fundamentals.</p>	<p>Players should be taking the basic skills of basketball (starts, stops and pivots, shot form (layups), pass form, dribble form and dynamic one-on-one) through consolidation and refinement. They will also be introduced to more complex variations of the skill.</p> <p><b>Note:</b> that some players may still be introduced to the sport at this stage. Players may be at different stages of their own personal skill development of the main fundamental skills of basketball.</p> <p>Bilateral development global approach, everyone learns all skills and positions.</p>	<p>The players should be able to perform the basic skills in a competitive environment. Begin to develop a more individualized skill package. Players may take certain skills to the creative stage.</p> <p>Players are introduced to positional play, but are not restricted in their global skill development because of a position. The position they play should not be a reason to restrict the use of the basic skills of the game. For example: a player playing the post position should not be told to never dribble the ball.</p>
<b>Start/stop /pivot</b>	This begins with a balance. Players learn how to start in a balanced stance. They then progress to moving, stopping and pivoting, all done while on balance. Begin without the ball progressing to	Balance becomes an issue through this stage as players are progressing through puberty. Care must be taken to constantly work with players on proper form. They should be able to execute the proper starts, stops and pivots without	Once the player has completed puberty, they can begin to work on some more specialized starts, stops and pivots that are more position related.

	movement with the ball. Use both feet to start and stop.	travelling; from a stationary start and while moving and catching the ball. Use both feet.	
<b>Shot (layup) form</b>	<p>The players are working on the correct form. Stationary shot form is taught using phase one, two and three. Players should learn the basic right and left hand layup. It is important that form is a higher priority than range on the shot.</p> <p>By the end of this stage, players should have acquired the proper form for catching and shooting (layups) off the pass and for shooting (layups) off the dribble.</p>	<p>In this stage the player will have less time to perform the skill. The emphasis is on using correct form to maintain the one-second advantage. The player must work on consolidating and refining the skill of shooting the ball against defence.</p> <p>The players will also acquire and consolidate the outside-in-power layup that is used close to the basket when contact can occur.</p>	<p>Once the player has completed puberty, they can begin to work on some more specialized shooting (layups) that is based on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the position the player will play</li> <li>• individual characteristics of the player</li> </ul> <p>Players must use a form that is safe. Positional play should not be a reason to limit players from shooting the ball.</p>
<b>Dribble form</b>	<p>Players are introduced to and acquire the ability to dribble with the eyes up with both hands. They should be able to perform changes of speed and changes of direction. The speed at which they dribble should never be faster than their vision or balance.</p>	<p>At this stage the defensive pressure is increased. For this reason players should be able to dribble with the eyes up, with both hands, while being closely guarded. Players need to consolidate and refine when to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• go fast and when to go slow</li> <li>• change direction</li> <li>• stop and start a dribble</li> <li>• fake</li> </ul>	<p>At this stage, position specialized dribbling becomes a priority. Positional play does <i>not</i> include restricting a player from dribbling. All positions need to be able to dribble the ball.</p>
<b>Pass form</b>	<p>Players are introduced to and acquire the skill to pass the ball to a teammate. Both the receiver and passer are learning how to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Show target hands</li> <li>• Shorten the pass</li> <li>• Pass to the right and left.</li> <li>• Use the proper pivot foot</li> <li>• Use the universal release</li> <li>• Pass from a stationary position</li> </ul>	<p>As defensive pressure increases, players must learn to consolidate and refine the ability to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pass against pressure</li> <li>• Pass on time and on target.</li> <li>• Know how to pass to a cutter</li> <li>• Know to pass to a sealed player</li> <li>• Move or seal to create passing lanes.</li> </ul>	<p>At this stage position specialized passing becomes a priority. Positional play does <i>not</i> include restricting a player from passing. All positions need to be able to pass the ball.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pass from the dribble</li> </ul>		
<b>Dynamic one-on-one</b>	<p>Players are introduced to playing one-on-one. It is recommended that the players learn to play from dynamic starts and not always from a stationary position. The offensive player should always have a release pass available. This helps the players learn not to force contested shots.</p>	<p>Players at this stage learn to anticipate the defence and make use of a crossover, curl or shot. This is the foundation of team play. They are learning to play one-on-one within the context of all five players on the team.</p>	<p>At this stage, position specialized one-on-one becomes a priority. Positional play does <i>not</i> include restricting a player from playing one-on-one. All positions need to be able to play one-on-one.</p>

### Technical Principles of Play

The concepts of play that are applied in the base games (one-on-one, two-on-two, three-on-three). The players must learn the concepts from both the offensive and defensive point of view. Players are introduced to the following ideas :

#### One-second advantage

Offensively, the idea is to create an advantage where the offensive player can take a high percentage shot. The defence is working to prevent this advantage and to force the offence to turn the ball over or take low percentage shots.

#### Flow

The offence does not want to freeze the ball. Each action that occurs must be linked to the previous action. Teams flow through their early clock, mid-clock and late clock offence. They do not take time to set-up each section individually. This continuous flow means that no time is wasted on the shot clock. Defence is attempting to disrupt the flow of the offence. If it can force multiple disruptions in flow it will force the offence into poor shot selections. Even though younger players do not use a clock, it is imperative that they are taught the concept of flow in their play as it creates a seamless progression in their growth as players.

#### Conceptual play

Players are taught to play the game using the technical concepts of play rather than strategies first. The concepts allow the players to work together to create one-second advantages that give them an opportunity to score

#### Global Player

Every player needs a solid foundation in the basic basketball skills and concepts of the game. When taught positional play at a younger age the player is often restricted in learning some of the basic skills and concepts. This solid foundation allows the player to take their future positional play to higher levels when it is appropriate to play a position.

<p><b>Technical (when)</b></p>	<p>30 percent of instructional time is spent on individual skills. When should I dribble with the left hand/right hand? 20 percent of time is spent on multi-player skills. When should I cut to get the ball?</p> <p>Progression of Concepts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attacking the open basket</li> <li>• Spacing</li> <li>• Penetration</li> <li>• Pass and cut</li> </ul> <p>The defence is learning the three basic rules:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protect the basket</li> <li>• Pressure the ball</li> <li>• One and half</li> </ul> <p>Teaching is done in transition or from dynamic starts.</p>	<p>30 percent of instructional time is on introduction, acquisition of new skills and refinement of old. Some should become creative. A major emphasis is on learning to read on defence and offence.</p> <p>Concepts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attacking the open basket</li> <li>• Spacing</li> <li>• Penetration</li> <li>• Pass and cut</li> <li>• Sealing</li> <li>• Screening at the end (ball screens is the last to be added)</li> </ul> <p>The defence is still consolidating the three basic rules:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protect the basket</li> <li>• Pressure the ball</li> <li>• One and half</li> </ul> <p>Additional rules are loaded:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Denying position on the floor</li> <li>• Rebounding</li> </ul> <p>Teaching is done in transition or from dynamic starts.</p>	<p>40 percent of the time is spent on the acquisition and consolidation of specialized skills, refinement and creative of the basic technical skills.</p> <p>Concepts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attacking the open basket</li> <li>• Spacing</li> <li>• Penetration</li> <li>• Pass and cut</li> <li>• Sealing</li> <li>• Screening</li> </ul> <p>The defence is applying the three basic rules:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protect the basket</li> <li>• Pressure the ball</li> <li>• One and half</li> </ul> <p>More positional specific defence rules must be applied.</p> <p>Teaching is done in transition or from dynamic starts.</p>
<p><b>Attacking/defending the basket</b></p>	<p>Players learn to drive the ball when they see an open basket. If a defender is between the basket and the player with the ball, a pass should be made. On defence, the players learn the first rule, which is to protect the basket.</p>	<p>Players look for opportunities to attack the basket when playing. This can be with the dribble or by passing to a cutter. Defence is making use of the three rules; protect the basket, ball pressure and one and half.</p>	<p>Players must learn to attack the basket when playing at the various positions. Perimeter players must learn to attack poor close outs by the defence. Interior players learn to attack poor positioning by sealing inside.</p>

<b>Space</b>	Use of the grid to help players to learn to play in space. There are never two players in the same grid space. This is especially effective when playing the base games of one-on-one, two-on-two, three-on-three and four-on-four.	Players learn to use the three-point line and key for spacing principles. In general, it is important to stay away from catching the ball in the space between the three-point line and the key.	Players must learn to play in space within positional play.
<b>Penetration</b>	This is a continuation of attacking the basket. The player without the ball must move to create a passing lane for the player driving the ball. After passing, the passer must move to make new space. The defence is introduced to the one and half rule.	Players must be introduced to movement as a perimeter and interior player. Details such as: when the movement should occur, pausing for one second on the catch, playing against a defender needs to be consolidated. Towards the end of this stage, players should know how to make secondary cuts on the pivot.	Penetration principles from the various positions need to be taken to the refinement stage.
<b>Passing &amp; Cutting</b>	After passing, the players learn to cut to the basket, open and then exit to vacant space. Other players learn to fill the vacant space when the passer looks at them and is ready. Back-door cuts are added at the end of this stage.	Players should consolidate and refine the passing and cutting principles introduced in the L2T stage. Players are introduced to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Being on time and on target</li> <li>• Skip pass</li> </ul>	Players learn the specific passes and cutting action for their positions.
<b>Rebounding</b>	The skill is introduced and acquired at this stage.	The skill is consolidated and refined. Physical contact increases at this stage. Players are taught to properly move their feet to get their body in position.	The skill is applied to positional play.
<b>Posting &amp; Sealing</b>	Should not be taught or emphasized at this stage	<i>ALL</i> players learn how to use their body to seal a defender or how to escape from a seal on defence. Coaches must be alert to the differences in physical maturation. Players learn how to pass the ball to a person in the post position: pass high, bounce pass, triangle pass, lob and how to move in relation to the ball in the post.	At this stage post play becomes more positional and strategic. All players must still be able to defend and score inside.

		<p>Players learn simple ways to score from the interior. The emphasis is still on playing one-on-one within five. They must also learn when and how to pass out of the post.</p>	
<b>Screening</b>	Should not be taught or emphasized at this stage	<p>Screening is introduced at the end of this stage. Off-ball screens are introduced before on-ball screens. A coach should not feel pressured to rush to introduce screening. Moving too quickly to this concept often limits the development of the previous concepts.</p> <p>It is recommended that screens are used to create a one-second advantage to allow the players to play free. The players use one screen as a way to read the defence rather than multiple screens in a complex strategic pattern.</p> <p>Switching screens defensively at this stage is recommended when a coach is concerned with the amount of time required to properly teach how to defend the numerous number of possible screens.</p>	<p>Screening is a major emphasis of this stage. Players must be taught how to properly set, read and defend a variety of screens. A concern is that coaches often put players in positions that they player will never play at the next stage of development. For this reason teaching should progress from a global approach to more positional specific.</p>
<b>Isolations</b>	Should not be taught or emphasized at this stage	Should not be taught or emphasized at this stage	<p>Isolations occur in positional play. It is important to understand that the player isolated is playing one-on-one within all five players, rather than one-on-one on their own.</p>
<p><b>Decision Making</b>  Players need to be able to think for themselves on the floor. In training, the coach must provide the players with problems and allow them to come up with the solution. Too often coaches tell the players the solutions without allowing the players the valuable experience of learning. There is no depth of</p>			

understanding developed. With this in mind coaches need to go through the phases of teaching:

Phase A – introduce the skill on air (one-on-zero, two-on-zero, etc.)

Phase B – the coach guides the decision making of the players by providing reads

Phases C – the players use the skill in break down drills with live defence

Phase D – the players use the skill in game like situations (two-on-two, three-on-three, four-on-four and five-on-five)

**General – reading the offence/defence**

Technical basketball (decision making) is taught through two-on-one, three-on-two and four-on-three. The offence is learning to SEE and FIND the open player. For example: In a two-on-one situation the player must decide if they have an open basket. If the answer is yes, attack with the dribble. If the answer is no, pass the ball to the player who is open to attack. This gives the offence success with their basic skills. The defence is required to apply their three rules: protect the basket, ball pressure and one and a half.

By starting playing straight three-on-three, the offensive players do not have the skills to get to the point where they can use their decision making ability. The offence needs a chance to grow first.

The majority of the decisions made by the players involve when to use specific skills. For example; when the player with the ball sees an open basket, should they shoot or dribble the ball?

In technical teaching the offence is given a one-second advantage. The object is for the player to USE the one-second advantage. For example, a two-on-two drill starts with the defender of the ball standing beside the offensive player. If the offensive player effectively uses their advantage it forces the help defender to defend. The offensive player must now see and then find the open player. Defence is constantly applying the three defensive rules.

The player's decision making begins to include more situations involving other players.

In technical teaching the offence sees, finds, uses and CREATES a one-second advantage. Now the offensive player must make use of screens, fakes or dribble move to break down their initial defender. Once the advantage has been created, the player must use the advantage. If the defence helps, see and find the open player and pass the one-second advantage on to the next player.

At this stage, player's decisions also need to include game situations such as: match ups, time and score.

<p><b>Player specific – Who am I? Who is guarding me? Who is my teammate? Who is guarding my teammate?</b></p>	<p>This is done in very generic terms at this stage. The coach should ensure that match ups reflect the player’s abilities to provide meaningful competition and not be seen as a way to exploit poor match ups to win games.</p>	<p>Players need to begin to understand the strength and weaknesses of their teammates and opponents. Play to the team’s strengths and to the opponents weaknesses.</p>	<p>In all competitive situations, players need to recognize this situation. It becomes more positional at this stage.</p>
<p><b>Strategy</b>  What is the team going to do? This is where the coach develops a plan for how the team will play in transition, on offence and defence. The chosen strategy should not restrict player growth and development. It should provide opportunities for ALLPLAYERS to make use of their skills and concepts of play.</p>			
<p><b>Strategy (long term organizational plan of the players into a method of play)</b></p>	<p>Players participate equally in controlled games designed to enhance skill development. Players learn a basic awareness of offence and defence. 10 percent of the time is spent on basic offence/defence.</p> <p>Three-on-three progressing through four-on-four with limited five-on-five at the very end. This allows for more touches of the ball. The basket is more open and provides opportunities for the players to use their basic concepts.</p> <p>Teach through use of the grid.</p>	<p>To use the basic skills for all positions in a competitive environment. Players learn basic team maneuvers that involve multi-player and multi-positional play. 30 percent of instructional time is spent here. Basic offences and defences should be consolidated and refined before introducing more complex strategies such as zones and presses.</p>	<p>40 percent of the instructional time is spent here. Acquisition and consolidation of specialized strategies, refinement and creativity of the basic strategies. Players are exposed to an expanding array of team maneuvers and an increased knowledge of positional movement.</p> <p>Early clock – player’s time  Mid clock – coach’s time  Late clock – player’s time</p>
<p><b>Early clock transition offence/defence</b></p>	<p>There should be no team strategy at this stage. The players learn to advance the ball or defend the advancing ball, using their concepts of play. A shot clock is not used at this stage.</p>	<p>There should be limited team strategy at this stage. ALL players advance the ball or defend the advancing ball, using the concepts of play. ALL players need to learn the skills and decision making required to play in transition, both from an offensive and defensive prospective.</p> <p>A shot clock is used at this stage.</p>	<p>Teams progress towards a more positional approach to playing in transition. This should not restrict players but enhance their skills and decision making.</p>

<b>Mid clock ½ court offence/defence</b>	There should be no team strategies at this stage. The players should play through their concepts of play. Looking to find an open player. No shot clock is used at this stage.	<p>There are limited team strategies. The players should flow into their half-court offence from transition. They are looking to make use of one-second advantages that appear.</p> <p>Set plays are used as a means to create a one-second advantage. Once the advantage is taken the players play free using their concepts of play. Players are not running elaborate patterns and playing keep away.</p>	<p>The offence needs to flow from transition into the mid-clock offence. The set should enhance or build upon the strengths of the players. There needs to be a sense of urgency in each action that occurs (reading the defence). As one action is ending the next action has already begun. The set is to create a one-second advantage.</p> <p>There needs to be opportunities for each position to create a one-second advantage. The coach should know how these advantages can occur within the offence and what defences may do to stop them The coach will develop depth to the offence by progressively teaching counters, reads or pressure releases. This is preferred over continually adding new sets.</p>
<b>Late clock</b>	This does not apply at this stage.	Even though late clock situations do occur at this stage, the coach is not encouraged to run special plays or sets at this time. Players should attempt to maintain good spacing and timing throughout the entire shot clock. This will lead to a one-second advantage that allows the players to play free.	Any set offence must take into account the time on the shot clock. Players must be given pressure releases to allow the offence to continue to flow without disruptions. When late clock situations occur, the coach must have accounted for the concepts that will be used to prevent contested or forced shots from occurring.
<b>Special situations</b>	Players are given a simple method to inbound the ball and to line up for foul shots and jump balls.	Players are introduced to foul line situation, jump ball and inbound plays. These should not be too elaborate and take up too much time in training.	Coaches begin to build a bigger repertoire of special situations. More time can be devoted in training to time and score situations.

<b>Pressure/press-breaks</b>	This does not apply at this stage.	<p>ALL players need to be involved in learning how to: handle the ball, move and pass versus player to player pressure. Trapping and double teaming is allowed as long as the remaining players are matching up in rotation.</p> <p>The use of zone presses is discouraged at this stage in that it promotes positional play.</p>	Players are introduced to zone pressure and press-breaks. Players are progressively given more positional roles.
<b>Zone</b>	This does not apply at this stage.	Zones are not recommended at this stage since zones put players in positions. Also, it can monopolize teaching and prevent coaches from spending time on skills and concepts of play.	Coaches can use zones as part of their strategy of play. Coaches should be careful that playing zone does not hurt the continued development of the players.
<p><b>Tactics</b> These are adjustments for a specific opponent or game.</p>			
<b>Tactical (short term adjustments to the plan, usually competition specific)</b>	<p>Short term adjustments are made to enhance the learning of the skills and concepts of the game and to allow the players to cooperate in a competitive environment.</p> <p>This can mean changing the makeup of teams or adding modified rules to provide more meaningful competition rather than stacking teams so one team can win.</p> <p>Coaches should not use tactical adjustments to trick young players so the coach's team can score an easy basket.</p>	<p>Simple reminders about the strengths and weaknesses of an opponent. Elaborating on scouting reports or having half the team walk through the opponent's sets is not recommended at this stage. Preparation for an opponent is done through working on the concepts on offence and defence that will be used for the next competition.</p> <p>Only 15 percent of the time should be spent here.</p> <p>Players are encouraged in drills to understand an opponent's main strengths / weaknesses.</p>	20 percent of the time is spent on competition specific tactics. It is still best to prepare for the opponent by practicing the required concepts and skills needed for the best competition. Some team and player specific preparation can occur, but not at the detriment of continued development. For example: when coaches spend the majority of time in training sessions leading up to the competition, on having players learn the opponent's sets and defences. This limits player development.
<b>Planning for the next</b>	This does not apply at this stage.	In planning for the next opponent the	The coach uses the same approach as in the

<p><b>opponent - Relationship between the offence/defence and offence/defence of the opponent. Relationship between the player's strength/weaknesses and strength/weaknesses of the opponents. Where in the season is the team?</b></p>		<p>coach is aware of where their team will be able to see, find use and create one-second advantages. In training, the coach ensures that their team is working on the skills and concepts required to introduce, acquire, consolidate and refine these skills and concepts. This is done using a global approach. All players get to work on the skills and concepts.</p> <p>The coach uses the rules of defence to help the players prepare for how the opponent likes to score.</p>	<p>T2T stage, but a more positional approach is used. The coach can make use of video, hand-outs, and meetings to prepare the team for the opponent.</p>
<p><b>Other Points to Consider</b></p>			
<p><b>Periodization</b></p>	<p>Single periodization. Maximum of two sport specific sessions per week.</p> <p>Athletes are encouraged to be as active as possible in a variety of activities.</p>	<p>In the early part of this stage single periodization with a general prep and specific preparatory stage. Double periodization can occur in the later part of this stage.</p>	<p>This phase can be a single, double and in elite situations triple periodization.</p>
<p><b>Length of Program</b></p>	<p>12- 20 weeks</p>	<p>20 - 35 weeks</p>	<p>35 - 45 weeks</p>
<p><b>Training to Competition</b></p>	<p>For every minute of game time, three minutes will be spent on skill development. This will enhance the experience of playing the game. 75 percent of the time devoted to training, 25 percent spent in games (not competition).</p>	<p>For every game, there needs to be one hour minimum of training. Games for learning versus games for competition. The ratio of 75 percent training and 25 percent competition is still applicable.</p>	<p>Competition becomes more important and training takes on a more competitive nature. 40 percent of training is devoted to technical and tactical skills and fitness. 60 percent is devoted to competition and competition specific training.</p>

<p><b>Physical</b></p>	<p>Continue with fundamental movement skills (agility, balance, coordination and speed). Own body weight exercises for strength. Basic flexibility Neuromuscular training (prehabilitation – twisting, bending, squatting, lunging, pushing, pulling)</p>	<p>Fine tune the fundamental movement skills. Strength training continued medicine ball, Swiss ball and body weight for strength. Core strength is vital. Flexibility training Continue neuromuscular training. <b>Note:</b> During PHV coaches must be aware of limitations.</p>	<p>Develop the aerobic and anaerobic systems in sport-specific context. Individualized conditioning Neuromuscular training (prehabilitation) Strength and power training. Develop proper technique first.</p>
<p><b>Recovery</b></p>	<p>Introduce recovery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Post activity snack/hydration</li> <li>• Cool down</li> <li>• Basketball vacations</li> </ul>	<p>Recovery continued</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of down time</li> <li>• Sleep</li> <li>• Nutrition/hydration</li> <li>• Pre/post-game</li> <li>• Being alert to overuse or growth pain</li> </ul>	<p>Expanded recovery techniques becoming more player specific.</p>
<p><b>Mental/Emotional</b></p>	<p>The main focus is on building confidence through the skills of the game. Players can be introduced to the following topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus and concentration</li> <li>• Self-debrief</li> <li>• Imagery</li> <li>• Simple goal setting</li> <li>• Centred breathing</li> </ul>	<p>Focus on building confidence through the skills of the game and developing good training routines.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-confidence</li> <li>• Focus and concentration</li> <li>• Anxiety</li> <li>• Debrief</li> <li>• Imagery</li> <li>• Goal setting</li> <li>• Centred breathing</li> <li>• Developing routines</li> </ul>	<p>Build confidence and introduce the athlete to the mental skills required for competition.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anxiety management</li> <li>• Distraction plans</li> </ul>

<p><b>Social/Life lessons</b></p>	<p>Multi-sport involvement  Lead themselves  Self-directed play  Nutritional advice  Develop good play habits  Relationships <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do what is right</li> <li>• Do as best as possible</li> <li>• Treat everyone with respect</li> </ul> Dealing with adversity  Delayed gratification</p>	<p>Multi-sport involvement  General and specific training  Self-directed practice  Introduction to planning and periodization  Training and performance diary/log (time management)  Nutrition/hydration  Basic leadership skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lead</li> <li>• Give energy</li> <li>• Know how to follow</li> <li>• Lead others</li> </ul> Fitting sport into life  Relationships <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Constructive/destructive behavior</li> </ul> Lifestyle choices (high risk behaviors)</p>	<p>Some players may choose sport-specific training, others will still be multi-sport. It should not be multi-sport in a season.  Integrated sport into lifestyle  Dealing with being an athlete  Self-directed practice/play  Injury prevention and recovery  Nutrition/hydration  Leadership  Relationships  Lifestyle choices (high risk behaviors)  Planning for the future</p>
-----------------------------------	--	---	--

# FUNDAMENTAL TEACHING

---

The first concept to remember while training a basketball team is that it does not matter what the coach knows, but what they can teach the players. There is a need to individualize the training to match the needs of each player. The coach is responsible to assist each player to grow in three areas:

## 1. MENTAL GROWTH

- Stimulate the players to grow up as responsible people and players. It is necessary to stimulate their mental growth by teaching them how to listen, how to concentrate and how to communicate, to name a few. Coaches must develop their own philosophy in regards to this topic.
- Give players problems to solve. The answer is not always obvious. Challenge them to expand their thinking and stay away from creating robots; the players need to think for themselves.
- Ask them questions to help them recognize the tactical or technical situation. They need to understand why they are doing what they are doing. This will lead to a deeper understanding of the game.

A young person was struggling in his relationships with other people. He had a tendency to fly off the handle when things did not go his way. In an effort to improve himself, he went to see his mentor for advice. The mentor suggested that every time the young person felt like lashing out at someone he should hammer a nail into a board. The young person followed this advice and it seemed to work. Instead of being harsh to his colleagues he would go back and hammer a nail into the board. After a week he returned to his mentor, because he had a problem. The board was completely full and there was no more room for any more nails. His mentor recommended that instead of hammering in a new nail, each time he felt critical of others, remove one of the existing nails. Again he followed his mentor's advice. At the end of the week all of the nails were removed. He approached his mentor and said: "Mentor, I have followed the advice as you instructed. In the last two weeks I have become less callous to my colleagues, but they are still cold to me. Why have they not accepted that I have changed?"

The mentor responded; "Think of the board as colleagues. You have driven in nails and then removed them, but has the board remained the same?"

"No," replied the young person, "It still has all of the holes in it."

"Exactly," answered the mentor. "When you are harsh to people it is like driving a nail into the board. It hurts. When you decide to put the nail back with an apology or simple gesture of kindness there is still a scar lefty from the first deed. It takes time for things to heal."

(As told by Coach Renato Pasquali)

## 2. TECHNICAL GROWTH OR IMPROVEMENT

- Teach the players the ability to play any type of basketball. The intent is to develop the “global” player who has the ability to make use of all of the fundamentals skills and concepts of the game.
- The main job as a coach is *not* to restrict the skills the players use, but to expand their repertoire of skills. The coach should not be the reason why a player cannot play at the next stage of the game.
- Do not neglect working on the fundamentals and constantly teach and refine the basic fundamental skills of the game; stance, stops/starts and pivots, shot form, pass form, dribble form and dynamic one-on-one (from both an offensive and defensive perspective). Players must learn to be lifelong learners who love to train.
- Help the players to grow-up strategically and tactically. By constantly talking the game, encouraging players to watch and allowing them to ask questions to help grow their basketball IQ.

## 3. ATHLETIC GROWTH

- Build athletes first and basketball players second. If players do not acquire the proper fundamental movement skills, these skills become the limiting factor in performance later on. For example; if a player cannot move from a lunge to a one-foot balance they will not be able to properly execute a one-footed layup.
- Agility and Coordination. Coaches must spend time working to increase the player’s ability to change direction and move in a synchronized manner. Players need to have the ability to use both hands and feet. This will greatly enhance their technical ability.
- Balance. The more effective a player’s balance, the quicker they will be able to move. In order to move with control, one first must find their balance. For example, if a player has their head too far forward in their defensive stance, in order to move backward, they must first get their head over their body before they can push backward. This costs valuable time.
- Speed needs to be trained every day. Players must constantly work to improve the speed at which they execute their skills. The speed at which to execute skills should never be faster than the vision, balance and co-ordination. For example, if a player is dribbling as fast as they can but their head is down, a problem is about to occur. This player will not be able to see open teammates or if defenders are in their path.
- By improving their strength, players will:
  - Know how to use their bodies. This is essential for the correct execution of skills. For example, players who have developed upper body strength can use their forearms to prevent the screener from getting to their feet. Players who have core strength can cut at speed; therefore they are better able to utilization open space when it quickly appears and have superior timing in their cuts.
  - Be able to increase the intensity of their game, both defensively and offensively. As the games becomes more intense there is more physical contact.

It is necessary to train the players to have the ability to play any type of basketball, not only the systems of play. Do not neglect working on the fundamentals with all player. The intent is to teach them how to play, not plays.

For every fundamental that is taught, do not underestimate the value of teaching the appropriate footwork. Fundamentals start with the feet.

## **TEACHING PROGRESSIVELY**

Practices should be delivered in a progressive manner. Otherwise, it may hinder the development of the players. It is not necessary to teach to the players everything but follow a correct teaching progression, step-by-step. These progressions take the players through the stages of skill development. It not only allows the players to master the technique, but the decision making that goes along with the skill. In the final stage, the players are able to use the skill in competition without consciously thinking about their execution. Very often a coach progresses too quickly; from introducing a skill to using the skill in a competitive situation. This is a prescription for poor performance.

## **PHASES OF TEACHING**

**Note:** Phase C and D cannot be developed if phase A and B are not developed.

- **Phases A – Initiation and Acquisition** – In this phase, players require a good demonstration of what the skill looks like. They also need to understand where it fits into the overall scheme of the game. When first introduced, players should be given plenty of time to wobble; they need to figure it out for themselves. The drills are done one-on-zero. As the player progresses, the coach can add more technical teaching. The final component is speed.
- **Phase B – Acquisition and Consolidation** – During this phase the coach guides the offence by acting as a guided defender. This builds the player's decision making capacity. The coach is able to give the players an exaggerated look that makes it easier for the player to make the right decision. If players are used, too often the read given by the defence is incorrect or too subtle for the player to correctly read. For example, when guarding a player cutting to get open, the coach denies the player (gives the player a clear indication to cut back-door).
- **Phase C- Consolidation and Refinement** - The player needs to be able to use the skills against live defence, usually in a one-on-one situation. It is sometimes best to give the same player multiple repetitions before switching roles.
- **Phases D – Refinement and Consolidation** – In the final phase the players must be able to demonstrate competence in using the skill in a game-like situation. A coach knows a player has achieved mastery when they perform the practiced skill in a game-like situation without being consciously aware. For example, a player drives and scores using a left hand layup. It is not until the coach brings it to the player's attention that they are aware of using this skill.

# DAILY PRACTICE PLAN

---

In order to teach the necessary skills and concepts the coach must be committed to a long-term plan. Players cannot develop these skills and concepts on one practice and three games a week. The ratio needs to be reversed. Running an effective practice is one of the best ways to assist the players in their development.

## **PART ONE: WARM UP (5%)**

Warm up – games approach or fundamental movement skills  
Movement prep – injury prehabilitation

## **PART TWO: INDIVIDUAL FUNDAMENTALS (30%)**

Shooting, passing and dribble form  
Dribble start/pivot foot  
Dynamic one-on-one  
Combination drills - dribble/pass/shoot  
Defensive skills/abilities

## **PART THREE: BREAK DOWN OFFENCE / DEFENCE (30%)**

1v1 Decision making  
2v2 Game situation – half-court – defence/offence  
3v3 Advantage/game situation - means that there is an advantage given to the offence (i.e. three-on-two). It may be only a brief advantage before the third defender arrives.  
2v1 Transition drill  
3v2 Transition drill – full-court – defence/offence  
3v3 Advantage

## **PART FOUR: HALF-COURT AND FULL-COURT (30%)**

4v4 Break down defence/offence  
5v5 Offensive/defensive system  
5v5 Scrimmage

## **PART FIVE: (5%)**

Cool down, recovery

## **ADVICE FOR THE COACHES**

### **Positioning on the Floor**

- Stay in the position where the execution of the fundamentals can be best seen.

### **Voice (tone, timing and rhythm)**

- Voice – change the tone and the intensity as players have to understand when talking about or underlining something important.
- Speak slowly while explaining and emphasize the main part of the explanation.
- Speak loud only every once in a while, otherwise the players do not understand when to increase their level of concentration.
- Coaches should not speak too often to a single player otherwise they think they are the only one making mistakes. They should take them aside for a while and let the practice to go on. Coach on the fly. It is important not to stop the drill to coach one person.

### **Demonstration**

- Players learn 80 percent from what they see and only 20 percent from what they hear.
- If a coach is not good enough to demonstrate, use the best player.
- During the demonstration, slow down when emphasizing the main part of the movement.

### **Corrections**

- The most important part of coaching.
- Sometimes allow the players to analyze their execution of the fundamentals. Let them realize if they can see and/or understand their mistakes.
- Break down the movement to correct the part that has to be analyzed.
- Divide the corrections of the single player (while practice is running) from the collective corrections (stop the practice only every once in a while).
- The quantity and the rhythm of the corrections add to the quality and the intensity of the entire practice.

### **Goals of the Drill**

It is important to finalize the goal of each exercise or drill and keep up the attention of the players on them. Exercises by themselves do not teach basketball, they only help and permit the players to analyze the execution of the fundamentals.

Generally, during the practice, the idea is to work only on correcting the errors of the team (keep rhythm flowing). It is better to work 30 minutes with a single player or two players at most. This way the player is not ashamed of making mistakes or being corrected often. In these 30 minutes, the plan is to work on one movement only, not on all the fundamentals.

## **Offence versus Defence**

In order to develop the global player, who has taken their skills to the unconscious level of play, a vast amount of training time must be spent learning offensive skills. This is not to underscore the importance of defence, but early in the learning of the game, defence will dominate and the offence will never catch up. At first the defence must be guided. This helps the offence learn to read, but at the same time it is educating the defence to have a deeper understand of how their actions can influence the offence. In Phase C and D drills, the defence is expected to compete and they can also be instructed to improve their performance. The intent is to use basic rules of defensive play to help the defence handle any situation they may face in a game. If only one strategic way of playing defence is used, the offence never learns to read. They only become competent at reading the defence the team strategy employs. For example, if players are forced baseline, when do they learn to play against a defence that may play heads-up or force middle?

We have to prioritize the technical teaching with respect to the tactical teaching: the tactical only gives short-term results; the technical skills will follow the player for his entire carrier.

**Renato Pasquali**

# PREPARING TO PLAY

---

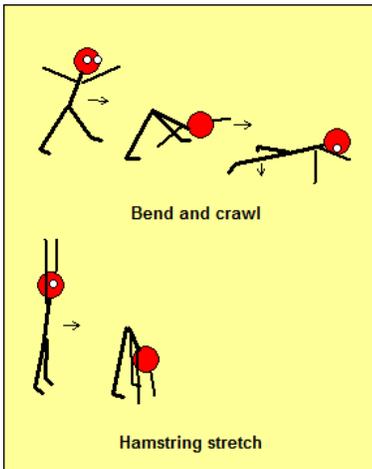
The following exercises were developed by Tim Manson, Sylvester Walters and Doug Christie of TERNION\*.

The exercises are excellent for athletes to work on fundamental movement skills and muscular conditioning. The whole package can be done as part of a pre-season conditioning program. Choose a variety for pre-practice and pre-game movement preparations. The coach must judge the number of reps to achieve the desired outcome.

As with any activity, form is the most important component. This will ensure the safety of the athlete. Keep the reps low at first until athletes build endurance. If they lose form, stop.

Balance is crucial. The players will wobble at first but this is how they learn to stabilize.

## Lunges and squats

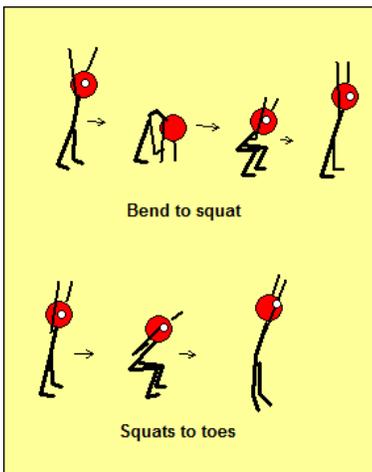


### Bend and Crawl

Start in a wide, cross position. Open up the hips. Bend at the waist until touching the floor. Walk on hands until arms are under the shoulders. Bend at the knees until they touch the floor. Walk back and stand for one repetition.

### Hamstring

Stretch up tall. Bend at the waist. Go as far as possible and hold for five seconds. No bouncing. Remember to breathe.

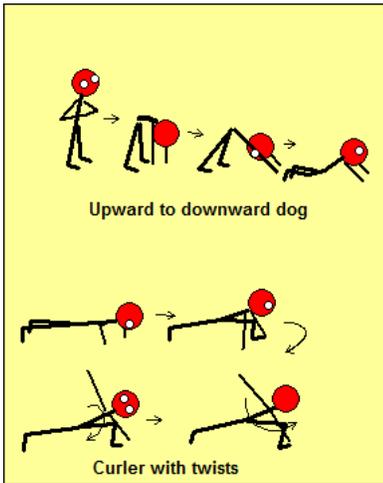


### Bend to Squat

Feet shoulder width, stretch up tall. Bend slowly at the waist on the exhale. Sit the hips back until in the tuck position at the bottom of a squat. Keep the chest up. Now stand up, returning to the original position.

### Squat to Toes

Start with feet, shoulder width apart. Initiate the squat by pushing the hips back. Go until the thighs are 90 degrees to the floor. Explode back up finishing on toes.

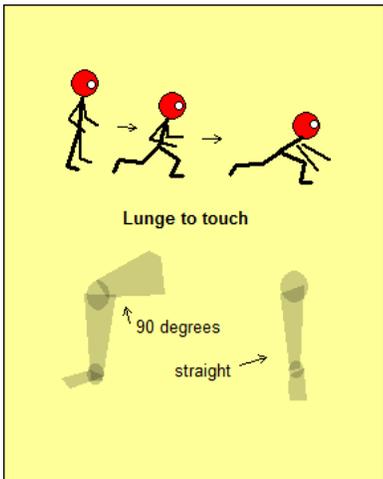


### Upward Dog to Downward Dog

Start in a standing position. Bend at the waist and move into a downward dog position. Push through to upward dog. Walk the hands back and stand for one repetition.

### Curler with a Twist

Start in a push up position. Step one foot through until the knee is at a 90 degree angle and the shin is straight. Twist to the right, hold, twist to the left and hold. Bring the back foot forward and stand for one repetition.

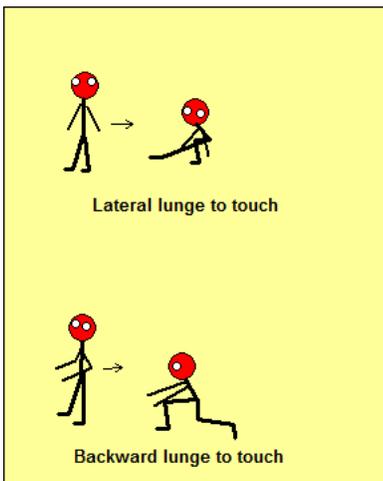


### Lunge to Touch

Standing upright take a lunge until the knee is at a 90 degree angle.

Keeping the chest upright and looking forward, touch the floor with both hands. Return to the standing position in one smooth motion.

The shin needs to be upright and straight so no twisting is occurring in the joint.

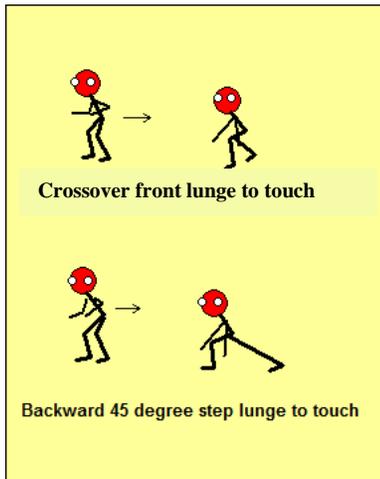


### Lateral Lunge to Touch

Start standing and move with a side-step in to lateral lunge. Sit the hips back and keep the chest up. Touch the floor in front of the foot. Remember to keep the shin straight and the knee at a 90 degree angle.

### Backward Lunge

Start standing and step straight back into a lunge. With the chest up, touch the floor in front of the toe.

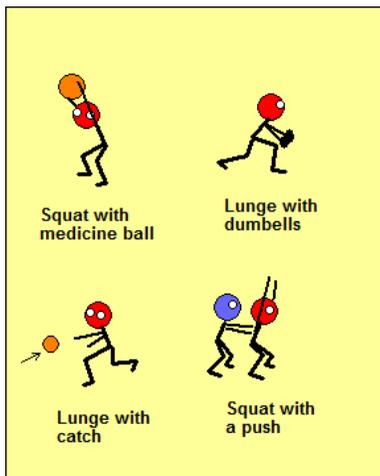


### Crossover Front Lunge to Touch

Step the right leg over the left leg, keep the shin straight and sit in the lunge. Touch the floor. Step back. Repeat going in the other direction.

### Backward 45 Degree Step Lunge to Touch

Step the right leg back behind the left leg at a 45 degree angle. Touch the floor in front of the foot. Return on balance and repeat going to the other side.



### Loading the Exercises

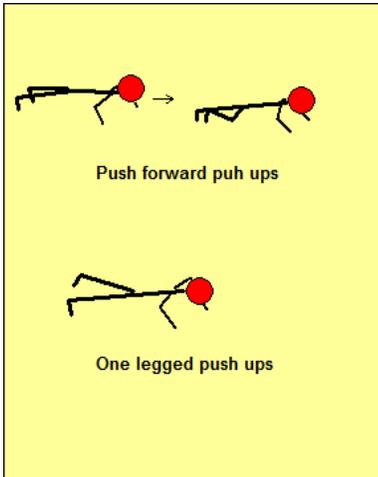
- Adding in weights-as the athlete progresses in their form and endurance, weights such as medicine balls and dumbbells can be added. Again, form is the most important point to emphasize. This should not be sacrificed for speed and weight.
- Add in catching and manipulation - this forces the athlete to put the lunge and squat into the unconscious mind. Doing Maravich type ball handling activities also helps build awareness.
- Instability- doing the exercises on a mat makes the athlete work on their stabilizing muscles. Also, by having a partner or coach provide subtle pushes, pulls and rotations to the athlete, during various times of the activity, forces the stabilizing muscles to respond.
- Eyes closed – this helps the athlete feel the activity and improves balance awareness.
- Freeze – at various points in the activity, freeze and hold the balance. This increases stabilization.

The above loads can be placed on all of the following exercises as well. It is impossible to list all the variations that can occur in each exercise when loaded with the above concepts. Start with the basic exercise and work on proper form. The loads should only be added after mastery of the form has occurred.

In general, the progression should be:

- form
- stabilization (balance)
- endurance
- movement into and movement out of the activity
- strength/power

## Push Ups and Planks

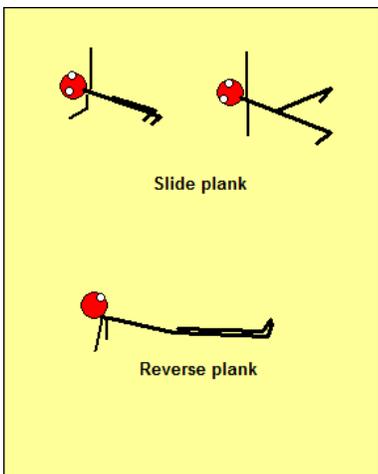


### Push Forward Push Up

Start in a good push-up position. The hands are under the shoulders. Push forward and bend one knee until it hits the floor. Push back and repeat with the other knee bending. The feet stay on the floor at all times.

### One Legged Push Ups

Do a push up with one leg raised off the floor. Do a set of five then raise the other leg for another set of five.

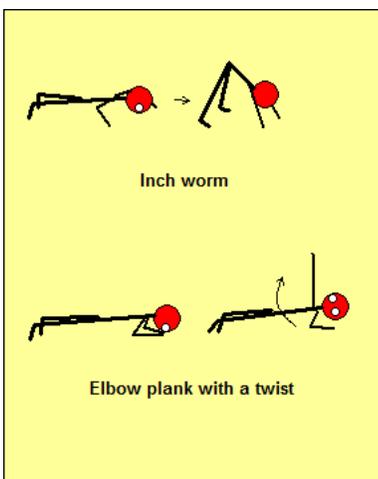


### Side Plank

Support the body by having the elbow directly under the shoulder. Raise the body in a straight line. When looking from above, the hips should be stacked on top of one another. A more advanced version is to support with just the hand under the shoulder. Raise the top leg.

### Reverse Plank

With the back to the floor and the hands by the shoulders, raise the hips so the body is in a straight line with only the heels supporting.

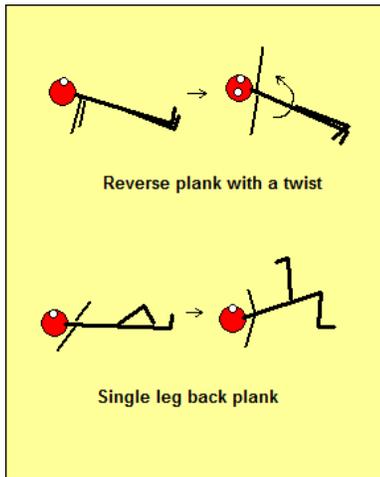


### Inch Worm

Start in a push-up position. Walk the feet into the hands keeping the legs straight as possible. Walk the hands forward.

### Elbow Plank with a Twist

Start in an elbow plank. Once this has been mastered a twist can be added. Be sure that if sweating that the elbow does not slip.

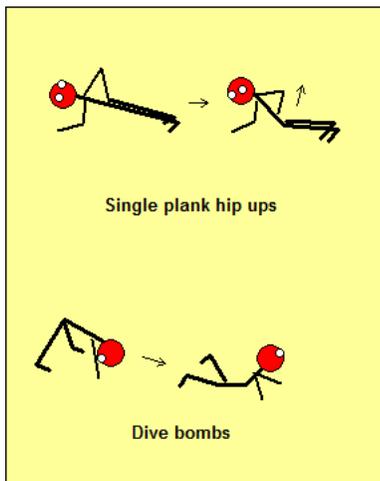


### Reverse Plank with a Twist

Start in the reverse plank. Slowly raise one hand and twist to the sky. This is an advanced move and people with lack (loose) shoulders should avoid.

### Single Leg Back Plank

Lie on back with one knee bent at 90 degrees. Lift the hips using the leg that is bent. Raise the other leg in the air. Keep the body straight.

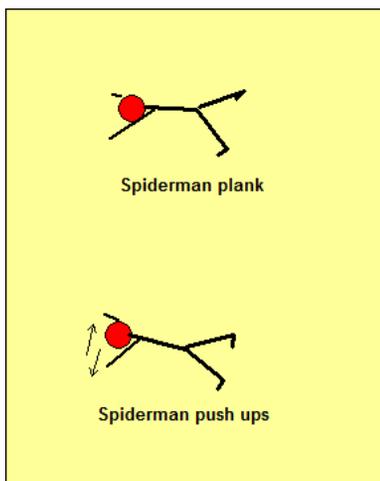


### Side Plank Hip Ups

Start in a side plank. Move the hips down until they touch the floor. Rise back up to a side plank. Keep the body stacked.

### Dive Bombs

Start in a downward dog. Shoot through trying to have the chest almost brush the floor. Finish in downward dog.



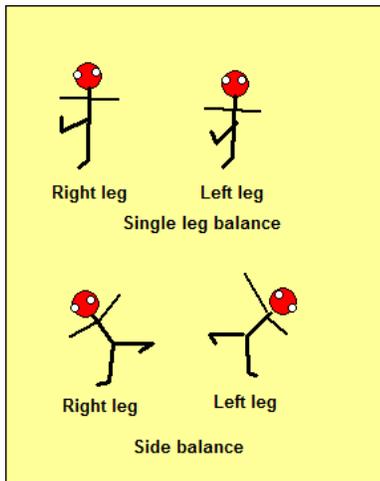
### Spiderman Plank

Take a wide stance with the feet and hands in a push up position. Use core to hold a tight body line.

### Spiderman Push-Ups

In the same extended position as the above exercise; do a push up keeping the body straight.

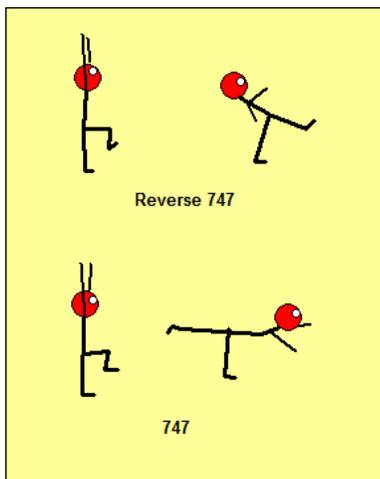
## Balances



### Single Leg Balances

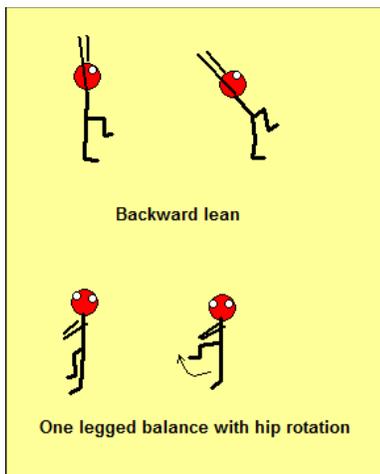
These balances can be done statically or moved dynamically from one to the other. Keep the body straight and look ahead.

- Single leg balance with the leg extended
- Side balance



- Reverse 747
- 747

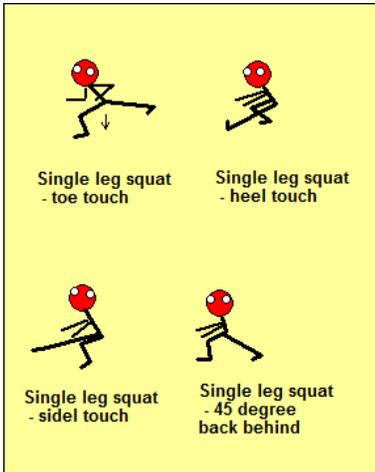
Again, each exercise can be done individually or moved dynamically from one to the other. Remember, balance is learned by losing balance and catching it.



- Backward lean
- One legged balance with hip rotation

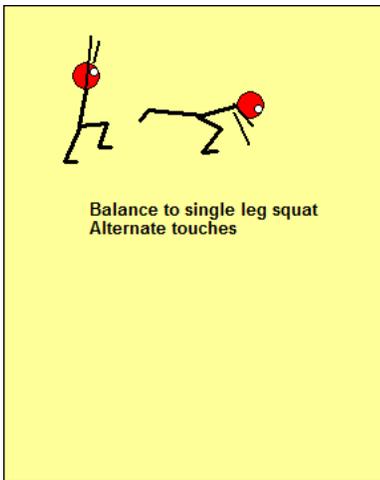
Only hips rotate in the last balance. Keeps the arms point straight ahead. Pretend to be moving a knee over a hurdle while balanced.

## Single Leg Squats



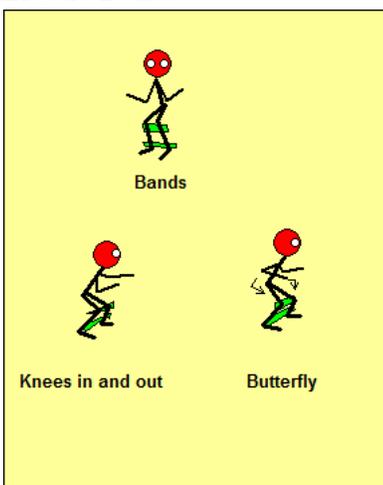
In all of the single leg squats, it is important to maintain good form. The athletes should always remember to get low for safety. The athlete squats with one leg until the other heel or toe touches. Use control.

- Single leg squat touch the back toe,
- Single leg squat touch the heel in front,
- Single leg squat touch the toe to the side,
- Single leg squat touch the toe behind at 45 degrees (keep the shin straight).



- Balance to single leg squat touch the floor with hands in front

## Elastic Bands



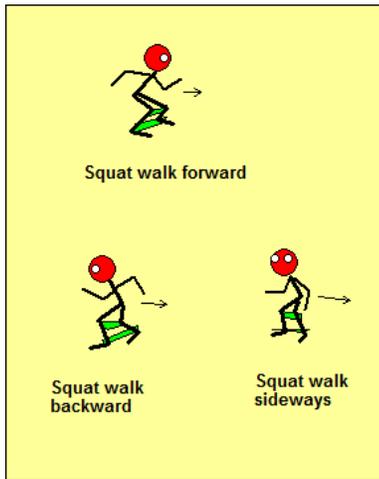
Two bands are placed on the legs. One just below the knees and the other at the ankle.

### Knees in and out

Start in a good stance. Only the knees move in and out. The athlete is activating the muscles that keep the knees strong.

### Butterfly

Start in a good stance. Only the hips move in and out (the athlete will think they are moving their knees out, but it is the hip that is moving). The athlete is activating the muscles in the butt.



### Squat Walk Forward

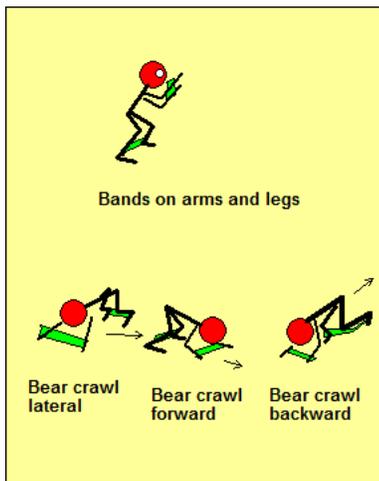
Get in a good stance. Take long strides maintaining the stance. Use the arms.

### Squat Walk Backward

Same as above but in opposite direction.

### Squat Walk Sideways

Be sure to stay in stance and move up and down. The upper body should not sway. Keep it upright. Use the legs to stretch the elastic not the whole body.



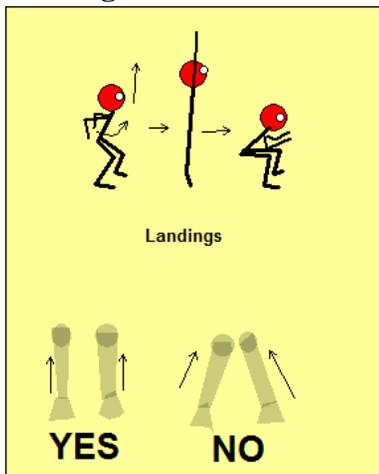
### Bands on the Arms and Legs

#### Bear Crawls

These are excellent for hips and shoulders.

- Lateral -both the right arm and leg move at the same time. Then the left arm and leg.
- Forward
- Backward

### Landings

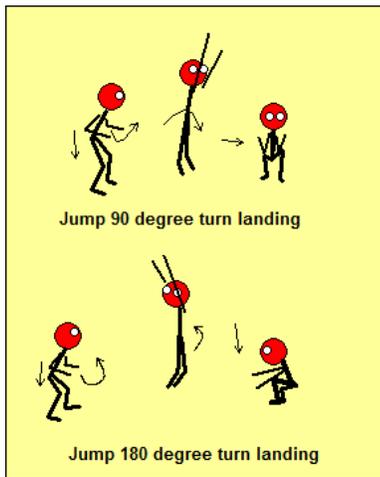


### Jumping and Landing

Most injuries in basketball occur when the athlete is decelerating. Landing from a jump is the greatest deceleration. When jumping, the athlete must use good "rhythm bounce" technique. Do not jump from a deep squat; make a quick bounce downward to stretch the muscles and then let them go. The knees cannot push in. This will occur just before takeoff.

Fully extend the hips in the air and land in the same spot from where originally jumped.

On landing, land quiet and get low. Meet the floor by bending before hitting it. Stick the landing by holding it for one second before standing up. Do not look at the floor when landing.

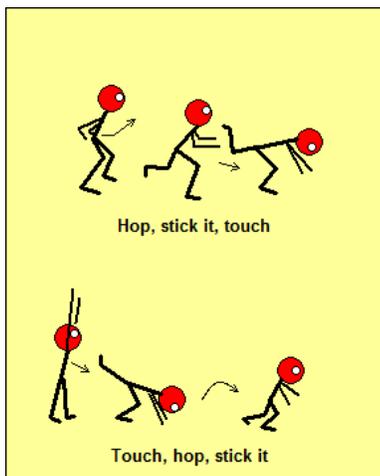


### Jumping with Turns

The athlete needs to have good form before adding turns. In all jumps, another way to load the jumps and landings is to close the eyes. This forces the athlete to "feel the floor" and bend when meeting the floor.

Get the athletes to **Jump, complete a 90 degree turn and land.** Then, see if they can complete with **180 degree landing.**

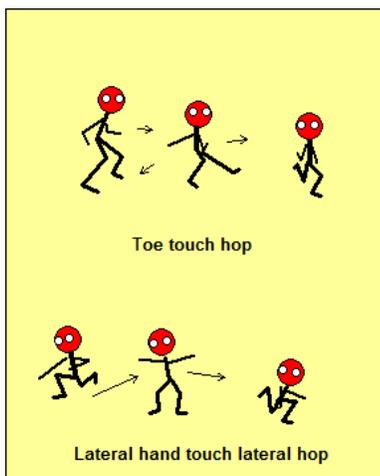
### Movement



The idea is to move as jumping as this puts different stresses on the body. The player must learn to stick the landing with balance. Use small hops at first as we will be landing on one foot.

Hop. Stick it, touch - Start on two feet, hop land on one foot. Hold the finish. Get low to be safe. Use a control to touch the floor in front. These hops can be in all directions (forward, sideways and backwards, different angles) and landing on left then right.

Touch, hop. Stick it - Use the controlled balance to touch the floor then hop from one foot to a landing. Stick it. Go in all directions.

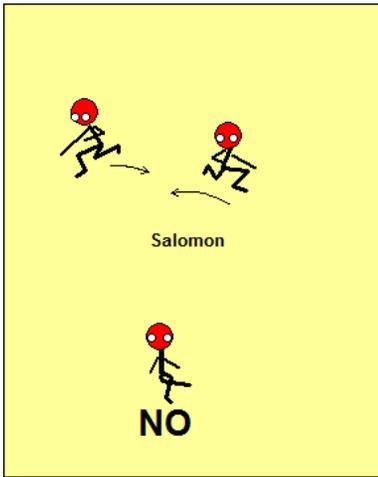


### Toe Touch Hop

Start in a balanced stance. Reach one foot out to the side. The intent is to put weight on the foot balancing with. Push from this foot and hop sideways. Stick the landing and repeat in the other direction.

### Lateral Hand Touch to Lateral Hop

Start in the balanced stance. Do a one-leg squat to touch a hand to the outside of the same side foot. Load the body and do a lateral hop opposite the side touched. Stick the landing and repeat.



### Salomon

This is a good activity to emphasize the lateral pushing that is prevalent in basketball. Do a touch outside the foot and then push to the other foot. Hold the landing. Do not allow the back leg to swing too far behind the body. Watch the shin angle.

# FUNDAMENTAL MOVEMENT SKILLS

## **Loading a Warm Up**

**A general progression used to load a warm is as follows:**

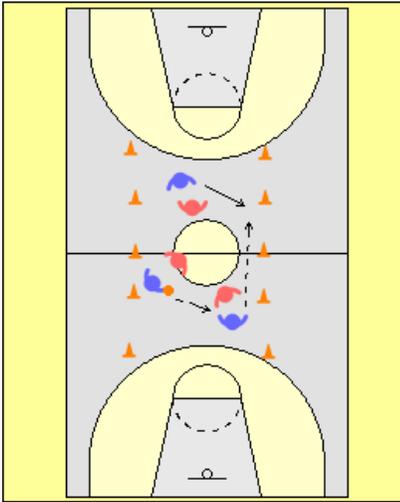
- Increase body temperature
- Fundamental movement skill or movement prep
- ABCs (agility, balance co-ordination and speed)
- Basketball activities

There are many ways to increase the body temperature from running laps, form running, skipping, ball-handling drills, to playing low organized games. As this is usually the first activity that starts a practice it is important that the physiological impact of the activity be taken into account. Starting practice each and every day by running a lap does not, in general, motivate athletes to be on time and give it their all. Variety and an element of fun or challenge are important.

Movement prep are exercises that are designed to activate the core, excite the nervous system and help the athletes build key movement pattern form, stability and flexibility that will prevent injuries. Squatting, pivoting, lunging, jumping/landing, running and sliding need to be done daily as they build a vital part of all basketball movements. The general progression to follow:

- Form first
- Stabilization – hold form while facing external forces (pushing, pulling, twisting, etc.)
- Endurance – hold form or produce multiple quality reps
- Movement into and movement out of the action
- Speed
- Strength/power

The ABCs need to be done daily. An activity to increase body temperature can also be improving agility. The same can be said for basketball activities. A ball handling activity can also work on agility, balance, co-ordination and speed. Try to finish a warm up with speed. This gets the nervous system firing at its greatest capacity.



### **Increase Body Temperature**

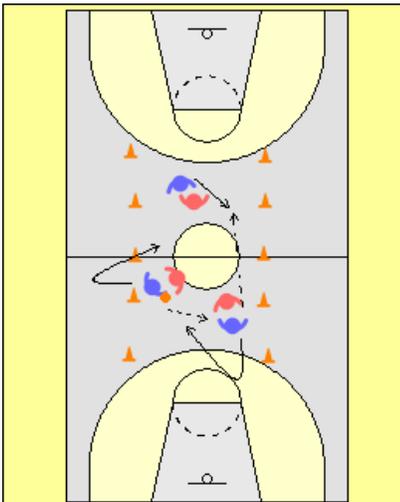
The first goal of a warm up should be to warm the body. This is done with light aerobic activity. The use of low organized games is a fun way to start practice. It gets the players energized and increases the body temperature at the same time.

### **10 Passes**

The pylons define the boundary for the game. Two equal teams must pass the ball 10 consecutive times without a fumble, going outside the boundary or travelling when having possession of the ball. The defence takes over possession when a violation occurs.

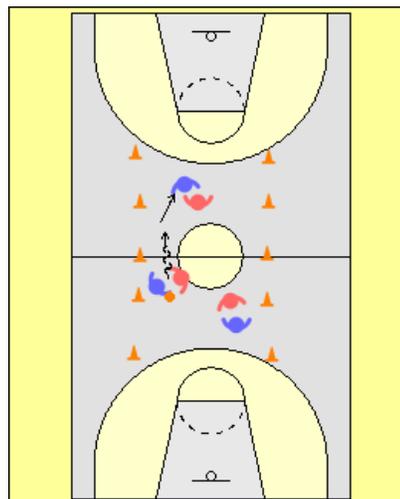
### **Mental Load**

It encourages the players to talk; the player who receives a pass must call out with a leadership voice, the number of the catch. It is important to make each player count individually. This way the loud leader does not dominate. The quiet player learns to talk.



### **Pass and Move**

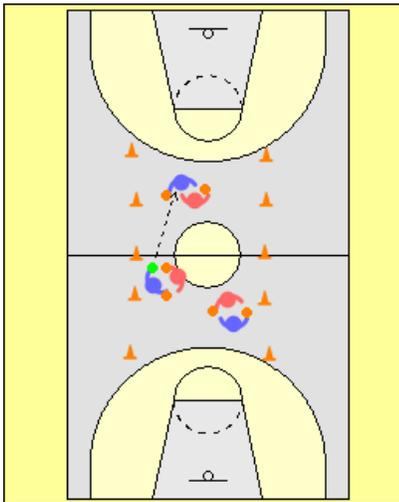
Next, the concept of moving after passing is loaded. The player must touch outside the pylons before returning to the game.



### **Pass off the Dribble**

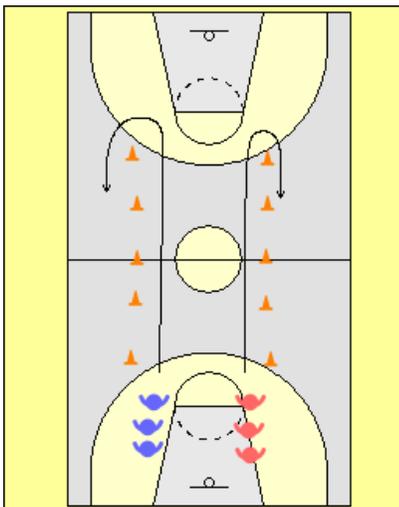
In this version the player with the ball must pass or dribble within one second of possession. This forces the player to scan when dribbling, keep their dribble until ready to pass and making quick accurate passes off the dribble.

A five-second count can be loaded when dribbling to encourage passing.



### Everyone Dribbles

The final version of the game has everyone dribbling a ball. A second ball is passed in order to achieve ten consecutive passes. It is ideal to start with a ball that is easy to catch and pass with one hand.



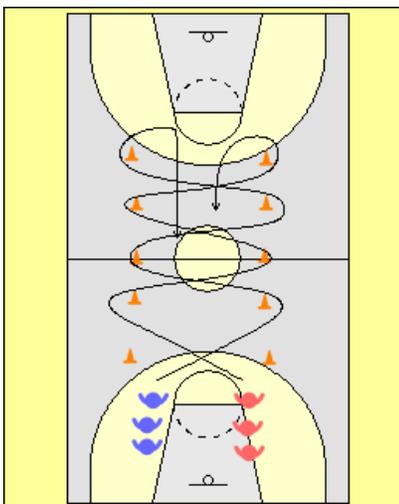
### Dynamic Movement

Next, the idea is to move into the dynamic movement part of the warm up. This is where working on fundamental movement skills are the backbone of all human movements.

The players line up in two lines at the end of the pylons. They can perform a variety of movements:

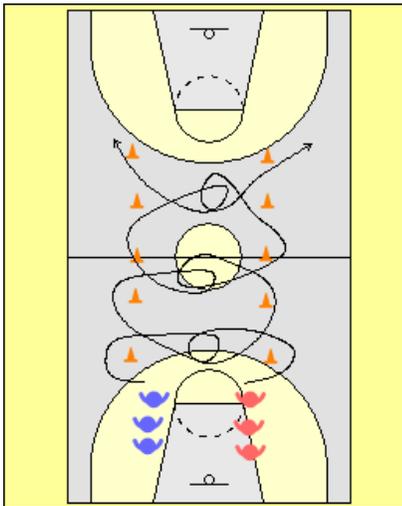
- Forward jog
- High knees
- Kick the butt
- Carioca
- Gallops
- Slides
- Backward run
- Knee out/knee in

Once the athletes have mastered the movements a basketball can be loaded into the activities.



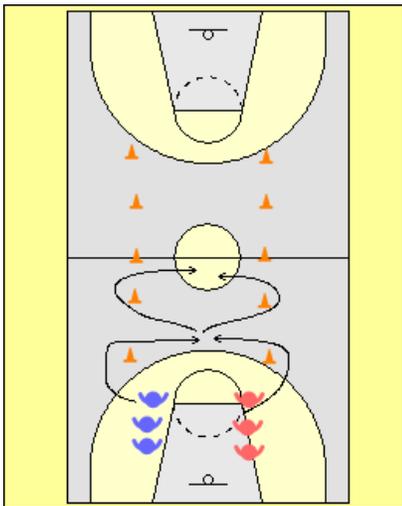
### Zigzag

The players work on cutting around pylons. They also must communicate when crossing with the opposite person in the middle. The more complex version is to have them run back through the middle. This means lots of bodies and lots of communication.



### **Circling the Partner**

The players shuffle into the middle circling each other and then back around the pylon. This makes them work on coordinating their movement and making quick forward and back movements.

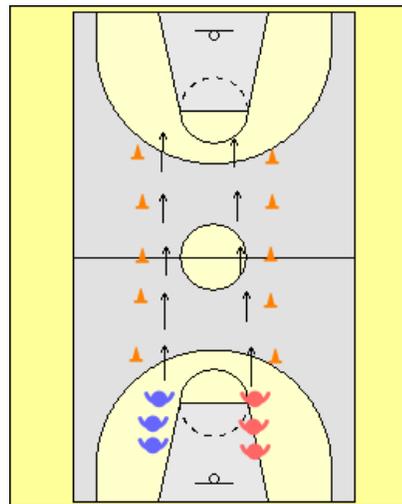


### **Coordinated Jumps**

The players work in pairs. They circle the pylon and then come together for a coordinated jump. They can:

- Bump shoulders in the air
- Clap outstretched hands while jumping
- Bump the basketballs in the air

This forces players to jump under control and land on balance. Once they land they must get back under control before moving to the next pylon.



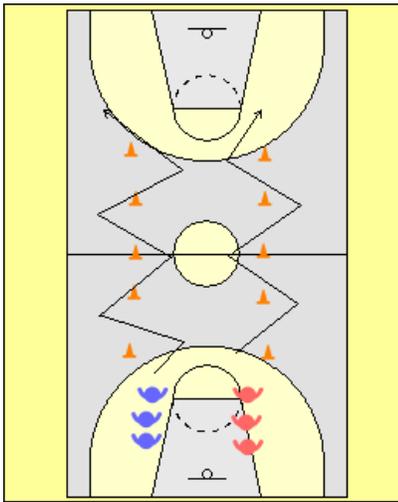
### **Movement Prep**

In this sequence, the players work on power yoga type movements that build core strength plus flexibility:

- Walking lunges
- Walking squats
- Walking slide lunge
- Inch worm
- Inverted hamstring stretch (i.e. 747)
- Forward lunge
- Hops

The players should also work on the following core exercises while in their line:

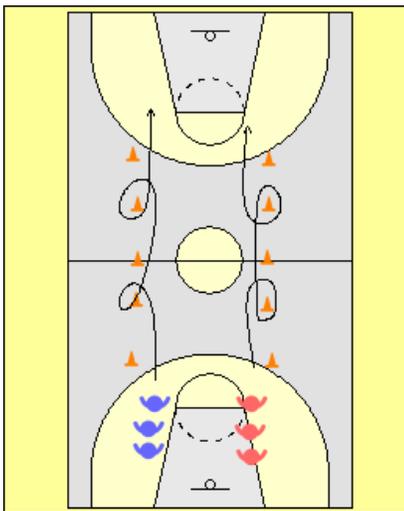
- Hip crossovers
- Front bridge
- Side bridge
- Back bridge



### Agility Footwork

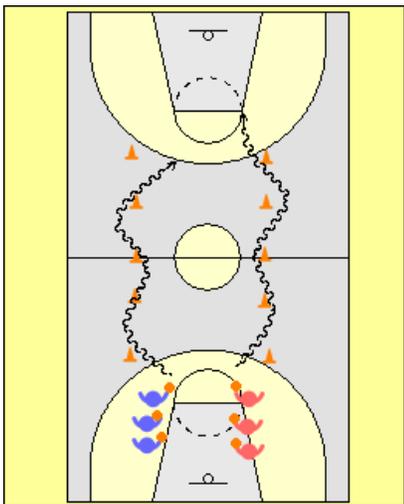
The player works on specific agility footwork that may be needed later on in the practice:

- Lateral bounding – hop from one leg to the next in a zigzag fashion. These are important if working on creative layup finishing moves
- Icky shuffles
- Figure of eight
- One foot hops
- Cross country skier



### Two Forward One Back

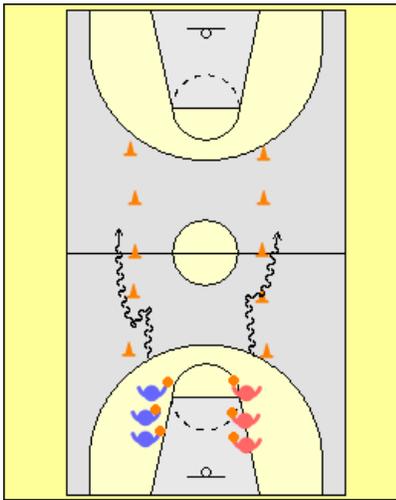
This will be especially important when working on the pull-back crossover dribble.



### Basketball Skills

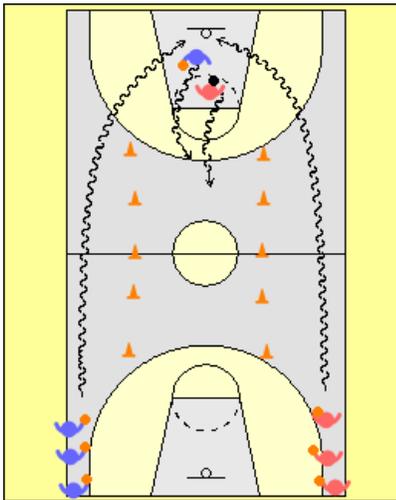
Without changing the formation of the drill the next progression is dribbling and layups. The players work on various dribble moves at each pylon and score a layup at the far basket. On the way back a speed dribble can be used.

- Have a coach show ten fingers to keep the eyes up
- Coach takes away the prime angle for the layup



### **Pull-Back Crossover**

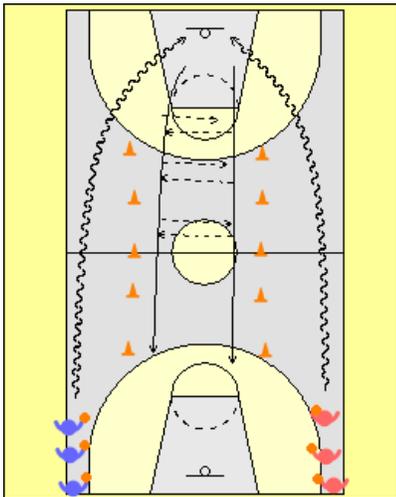
This is a very important dribble for all of the players to master. They go forward for two pylons and backward for one, followed by an immediate crossover dribble.



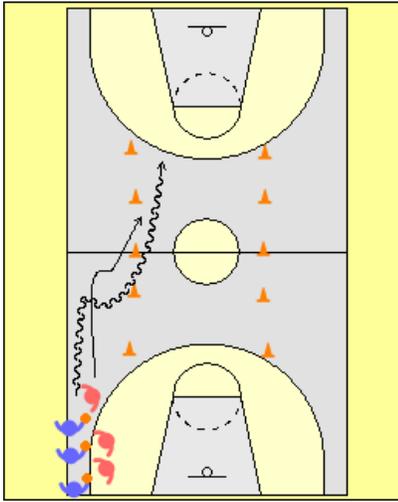
### **Russian Layups**

It is important to note the same basic set-up of the drill. This means there is little wasted time in learning a new activity. The focus can be on the skills.

Two players dribble down and score a layup. They come back through the middle with one player on offence and the other on defence. It forces the defender to be able to dribble low and under control going backwards.

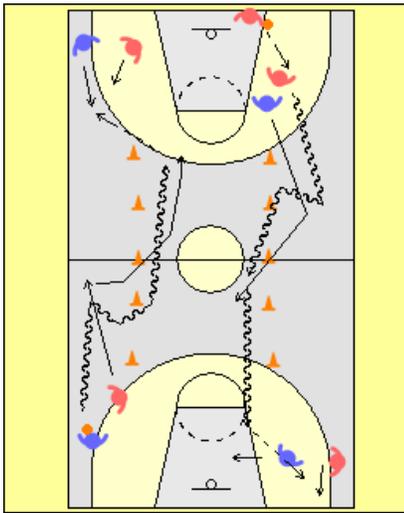


This time after scoring, the players pass the two balls back and forth when returning down the centre lane.



### **Pull-Back Crossover with Guided Defence**

Next, the idea is to move into the main concept that the coach wanted to work on for that day; the pull-back crossover dribble to avoid crossing half on the side line. The players partner up with one ball. The guided defender forces the ball-handler towards the half-court line. The ball-handler uses the pull-back crossover to cross in the middle of the floor. Lastly, the players play one-on-one in the centre lane.



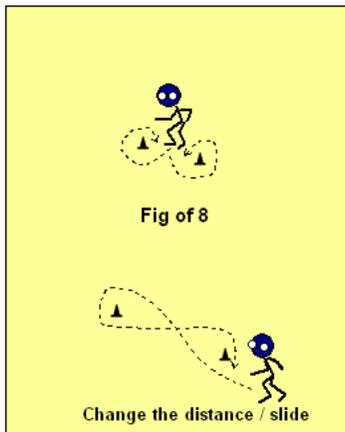
### **Two-on-two**

The final progression is to play two-on-two in the full-court. Now, the players see how the various warm up and skill activities fit into the game. The practice reads like a book. Too often, coaches choose drills that do not fit together; the logical progression for the players is lost.

### **Loading an Agility Drill**

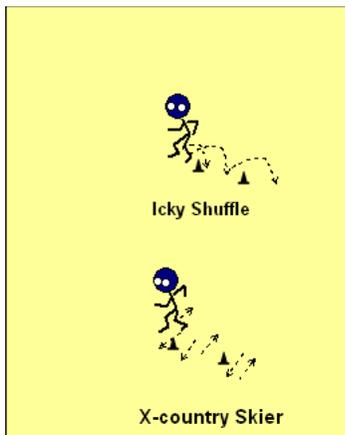
The Canadian Sport for Life expert group produced the booklet called Developing Physical Literacy: A Guide for Parents of Children Ages zero to 12. It makes reference to the contribution of various sports to the development of fundamental skills. Team sports lead the way by being a strong developer of 10 of the 12 fundamental skills (agility, balance, coordination, running, jumping, sliding, sending of an object, receiving an object, dribbling, swimming, striking and rhythmic). Basketball is one of the best for developing the fundamental skill of agility. Below is a basic agility drill that can be applied to a number of different sports to aid in the development of this key fundamental skill.

One teaching component that is stressed in the new basketball NCCP is the idea of loading a drill. Instead of having 100 different drills, the emphasis is on adding another element to the drill. This way the athlete can focus the new challenge rather than having to learn the pattern of a new drill. Great coaches make sure that the skill equals the challenge. By loading the athlete physically, mentally and social/emotionally the coach is constantly challenging the athletes.



The athletes pair off with a partner. Each pair has two markers. These are preferred to pylons as they are easier to step over for the players. The first agility footwork is a figure of eight. The players take short choppy steps to move forward, sideways and backwards. Be careful that they do not take long bounds and jump over the pylons. Each player does three figure eights while the partner counts.

The first way the drill can be loaded is to **change the distance** between the pylons. At this stage, instead of choppy steps the athlete can slide in the distances between the pylons. To make the athletes go faster, time them. This also loads them emotionally as it adds pressure. Athletes can be made more efficient by counting the number of steps it takes.

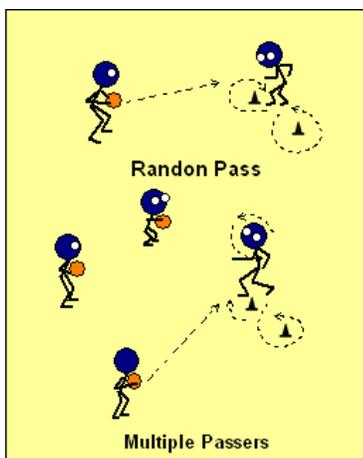


### Change the Footwork

Other footwork patterns can be used. The **icky shuffle** is a good one as it promotes planting an outside foot and pushing off in the other direction. The player starts outside the pylons. The foot closest to the pylon steps lateral followed by the outside foot. The first foot is then planted outside the second pylon. The second foot is raised, but is not set down. Two feet inside the pylon, one foot outside.

Another one is the **x-country skier**. The player starts with a staggered stance. The player shifts their feet and arms from front to back while shuffling to their left/right.

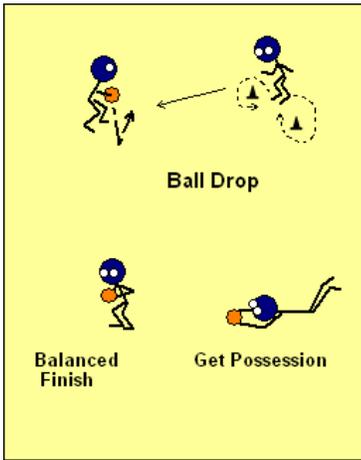
Coaches should find footwork patterns that are applicable to their sport. Additional pylons can be used to make it more like an agility ladder.



### Vision

In most sports keeping the eyes up to see what is going on is crucial. Very often when first learning the agility drills, players will watch their feet. Eventually the players need to keep their eyes up. Telling them does not always work. By adding in a random pass, the player must keep their eyes up at all times in anticipation of the pass. If it is a sport like lacrosse the players can do the drill with the stick in their hands. For soccer they can trap the pass and then pass it back with their feet. In a racket sport, like badminton the shuttle could be hit to the player who then hits it back. In baseball it could be a rolled ball. In volleyball the player has to bump the ball back to the passer.

Load in multiple passers. This forces the athlete to scan the field of play. Learning to look to the centre, to the left and then the right is a very important skill that is often overlooked. Add more speed and velocity to the passes as the players improve.



### Explode

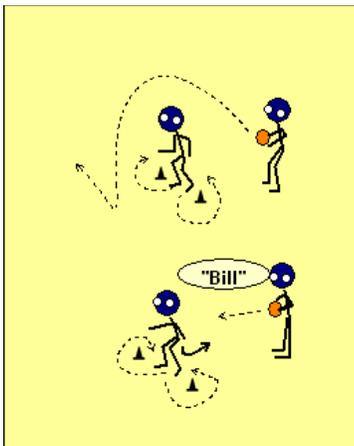
The next concept is to load in is the ability to see a stimulus and explode from footwork. Changing direction quickly and under control is the key to agility. The player performs the same footwork pattern. This time the partner drops the ball. The player explodes from the pylons to catch the ball before it hits the floor on the second bounce. The player can finish the drill by:

- Being in a good balanced stance
- Diving to gain possession

In basketball, there is a need for both. If the ball is dropped the players has to get it in a controlled stance. If it is rolled the players dives to get the loose ball. The ball is not always dropped directly in front of the player, change the angles. In volleyball it is an excellent way to practice diving to save a ball. In football it is recovering a fumble. The lacrosse the player must get to the ball and pick it up with their stick. In badminton the player could come forward for a drop shot or go back for a high clear.

To load the players mentally combine the passing and ball drop drills. This adds in decision making as the player must be alert to whether it is:

- a pass and have their hands ready
- a bounce, explode to where they can get the ball under control
- a rolling ball where they must dive for possession.

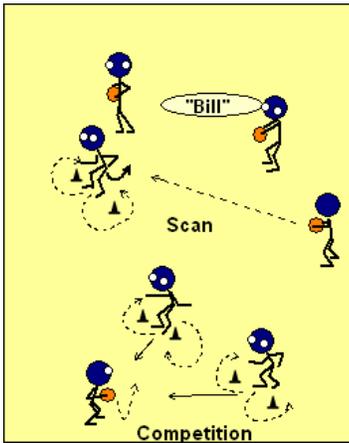


### Use Peripheral Vision

This time the partner stands behind. The ball is tossed over the head. When the player sees the ball, they explode to locate the ball.

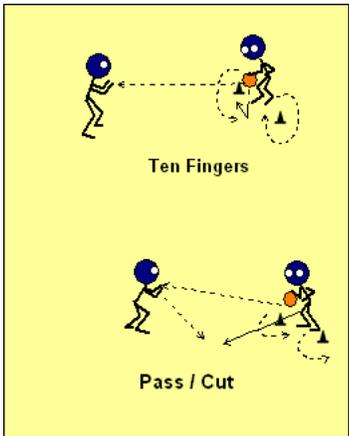
### Auditory

In many sports a player must respond to a verbal cue. Here the partner calls the players name and they turn and find the ball.



Turn it into scanning by having multiple passers. When the player turns they must scan to find the ball. The ball could be passed or rolled. Remember the player could also do a sport-specific skill after retrieving the ball.

The highest level of loading is to turn the activity into a competition. Two players compete for the ball. They may play one-on-one to score. Safety is a concern when it's made into a competition.



### Perform the Skill with an Implement

Not, the players are asked to do the same footwork pattern while dribbling the ball. In football the QB can be holding the ball ready to throw. In soccer it is dribbling with the feet. In badminton it is volleying the shuttle off the racquet.

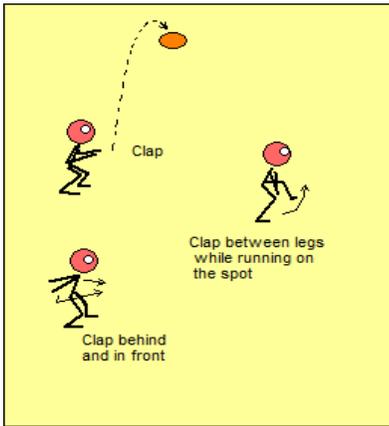
To ensure vision, the partner randomly shows a target (i.e. 10 fingers) indicating the pass should be made. To make it scanning, have multiple players who randomly show targets.

The final load is to have the footwork agility drill as a way to start another action. The player performs the footwork. When the partner calls for the pass, by showing ten fingers, the pass is made. The player cuts to receive a return pass and dribbles to the basket to score a layup. It is a more creative way to do a layup line. In any sport involving scoring the players does the agility work while standing in line. In football a running back and linebacker both do the agility footwork. When the toss is made to the running back the linebacker comes to make the tackle.

Agility is such an important fundamental skill in so many sports. By using simple agility drills that can be loaded into so many different drills, the coach can ensure that the player's footwork and ability to change direction under control improves.

### Coordination

Here are a few fun drills that involve hand eye coordination, and moving the body in space. At this stage, the player dictates the difficulty level on their own.

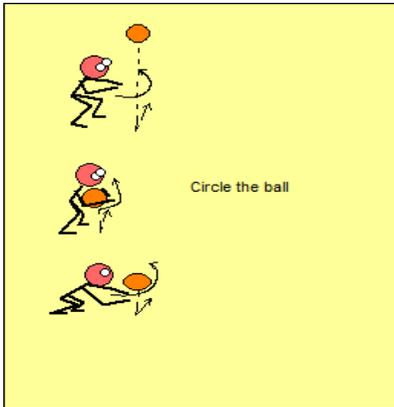


### Toss Clap and Catch

Toss the ball in the air. See how many claps can be completed before catching the ball. Next time, try to increase the number of claps.

To load this exercise:

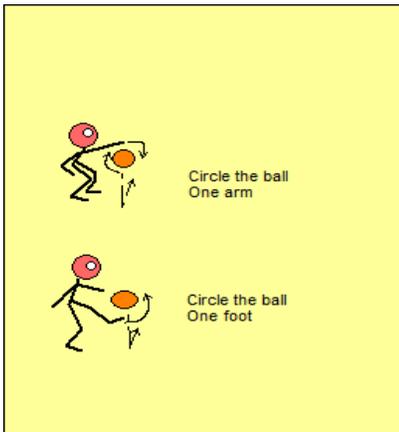
- Alternate claps behind the back and in front of the body.
- Clap between the legs while running on the spot
- Slap the thighs instead of clapping
- Catch the ball behind the back



### Circle the Ball

Toss the ball up in the air and let it bounce. Join the right and left hands together to form a circle. As the ball bounces circle the ball. The player will have to get lower and lower as the ball bounces lower.

Do it while circling arms in the other direction.



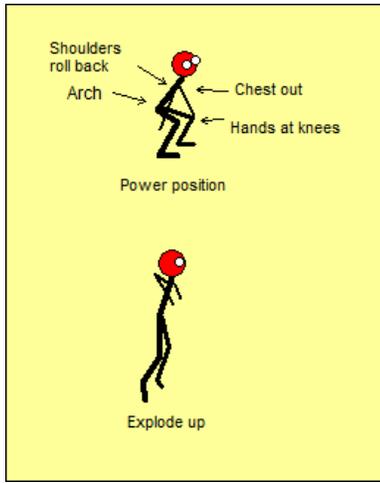
### Circle the Ball with Arms

Toss the ball in the air. As it bounces, circle it with an arm as many times as possible. Change directions the next time. Try the other arm.

Try it with feet. Be careful of spacing with this exercise as the player may end up kicking it. It is great for hip flexibility.

## Power Burpee

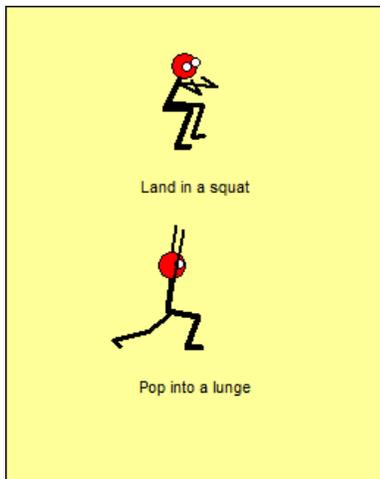
In working with athletes their core strength, leg strength, balance, and hip and hamstring flexibility have been major limiting factors in their ability to perform simple basketball skills effectively. Getting into, staying in and moving in stance being the main challenges. Doing movement prep in practice certainly helps, but it is often not enough for most athletes. With this in mind the power burpee is an activity that can be done at home in a very small space. It is basically taking the activities of movement prep and doing them in a confined space. I have seen a dramatic improvement in the players who have been using the power burpee. It is imperative to work on the proper technique as players tend to cheat. Cheating means the wrong muscles are being used. Start off by using body weight. Eventually it can lead into using light kettle bells or dumbbells.



### Power Position

The players need to start in a power position. This is a deep stance simulating lifting a heavy Olympic bar. The chest should be forward, the shoulders rolled back and a slight arch in the lower back. The hands are at the knees. Ask the players to tighten their core before beginning.

From here the player explodes up popping the hips and jumping off the floor. The arms simulate lifting a bar. Raise the elbows to shoulder height.

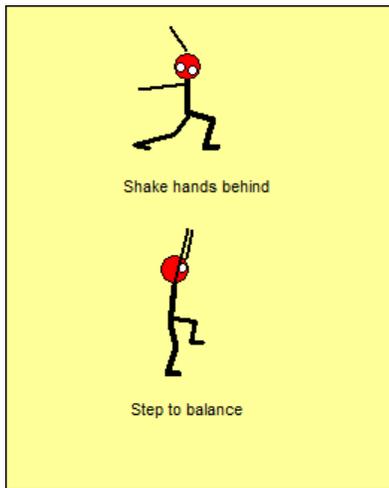


### Land in a Squat

The player lands in a squat position. The arms simulate a bar at the shoulders. The players need to be on balance and have good alignment of the knees. The back should be in the same starting position (chest forward, shoulders back and lower back arched). If there is poor flexibility and core strength the player will bend at the waist and lean forward.

### Pop to a lunge

From the squat the player explodes into a lunge position. As they progress the players need to go deeper and deeper. Balance is key. Watch for alignment of the lead foot and knee. They should feel the whole foot on the floor.

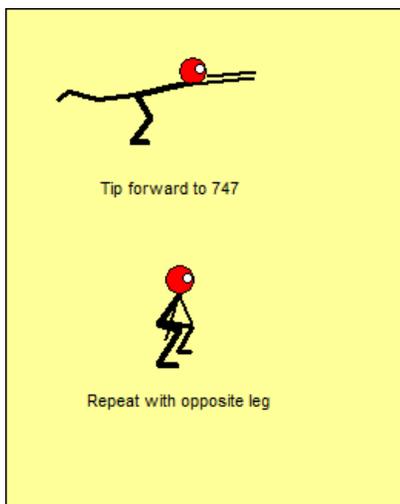


### Twisting Lunge

The player forms a large C shape with the extended leg (back leg) and the arm on the same side of the body. Take the opposite hand and pretend to shake hands with someone. Now, twist and shake hands with an imaginary person directly behind. The other arm stays up in the C shape.

### Step to One Foot Balance

Take a second to get the foot properly placed and tighten the core. Next, in one movement, step from the lunge to a one-foot balance. If the player sways at the hips it is usually because they are not tightening the core. Hold for a minimum of five seconds. Be sure the hips are level and the thigh of the raised leg is parallel to the floor.

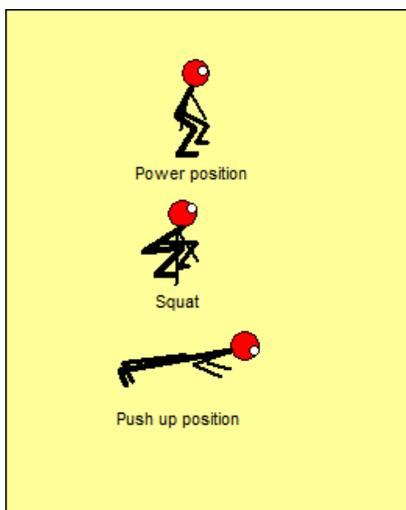


### 747

From the one-legged balance tip, the body forward to a 747 balance. The arms are extended and the back leg is straight. The players need to keep the hips level and tighten the butt muscles to straighten the raised leg. There can be a slight bend in the leg which the athlete is balancing on. Hold for a minimum of five seconds.

### Repeat the Entire Sequence

The entire sequence, starting with the power position is repeated only when going to the lunge the opposite leg is put in front.

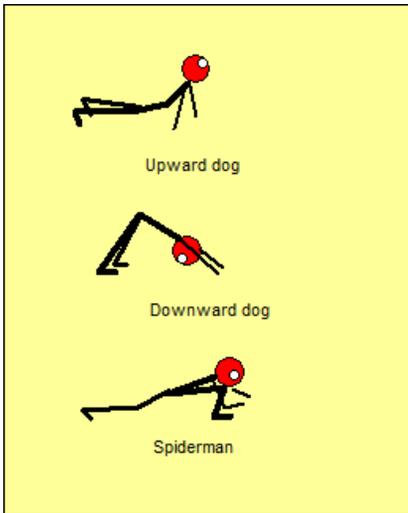


### Power Burpee

After completing the 747 on the second leg, the player returns to the power position for a third time.

The player explodes up and lands in a squat. The hands are placed on the floor beside the feet.

From this position the player shoots the legs back into a push up position. Hold this position for a five second count. Keep the elbows in to the side of the body. Add a twisting push up to load the drill.



### Upward Dog

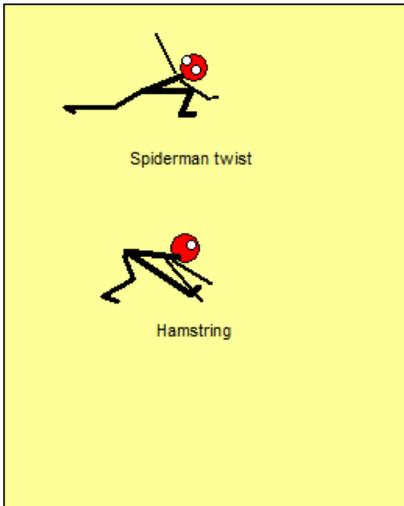
Move slowly to the upward dog position by raising the chest and lowering the hips. Again hold for a five-second count. The hips should not touch the floor.

### Downward dog

Raise the hips and push back into a downward dog position. Keep the heels flat. Many players will have to slightly bend their knees to accomplish this move. The head should be pushed in between the arms making a straight line to the floor from the hips. Hold for five seconds.

### Spiderman

Step the leg forward into a Spiderman pose. Try to touch the floor and heel with the elbow on the same side as the front leg. The back leg is straight and the front knee at 90 degrees.



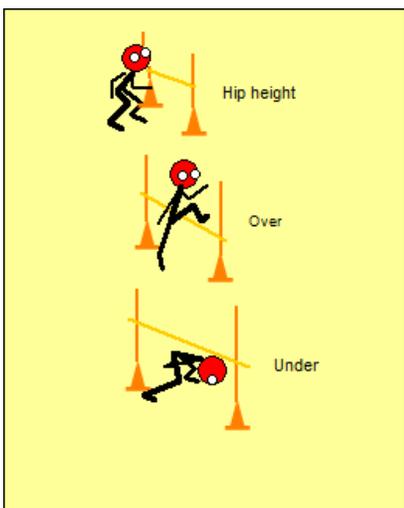
### Spiderman Twist

Take the arm that is down on the floor and twist in the direction of the front leg. Hold for five seconds.

### Hamstring Stretch

The final action is to take the arm that is extended and place it on the floor outside the front leg. Raise hips, lift the toe and straighten the leg to stretch the hamstring. Hold for five seconds.

Switch legs and repeat the Spiderman and Spiderman twist with the opposite lead leg.



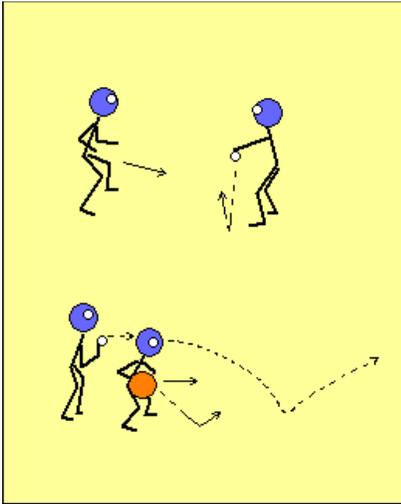
The final exercise is done since there is no lateral movement in the power burpee. A hurdle works best but athletes can also pretend. With young players a tall pylon will work. Step over and get the chest to the pylon on the way back.

The hurdle is set to the height of the instep. The player steps laterally over the hurdle. On the way back the player steps under the hurdle. These exercises can be done in two separate activities because the heights may not work until the player has developed the proper strength and hip mobility to get low enough.

Going under the hurdle forces the players to get low in stance and move laterally.

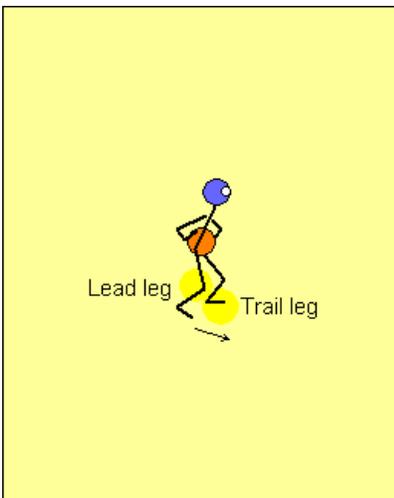
## Tennis Ball Toss with a Basketball

Through the Coaches Clipboard by Basketball BC (<http://highperformancebasketball.ca/>) there are some great clips of the tennis ball drop drills that are excellent for teaching explosive starts.

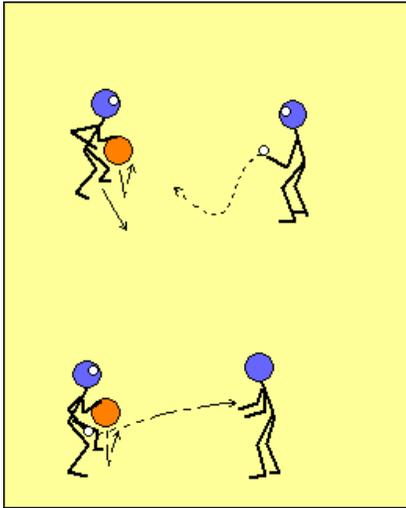


The athletes pair up with one tennis ball for the group. One player drops the ball the other must explode to catch the ball before it bounces the second time. On the website, there are a number of variations.

Add a basketball. The player was in a triple threat stance facing a basket, outside the three-point line. The player with the tennis ball stood behind the player with the ball. The tennis ball was tossed over the shoulder and bounced so that it would eventually reach the basket. If the player with the basketball had it in their right hand, the tennis ball was tossed over the left shoulder. The player with the basketball had to explode out of their stance and catch the tennis ball in the other hand before the second bounce.



The focus here is on not traveling. When the players do the drill with no basketball, a natural “plyo step” (a quick backward weight shift) will be seen to load their legs so they can push. The players must be ready to push with both legs. The trail leg (the pivot foot) must be loaded. The player should feel weight on their foot. Be ready to push off through the big toe. It helps to turn the toe out so the player creates a “skate blade” effect. This allows the player to push off more effectively since the knee will be inside the toes. The player also wants to give a push with the lead leg. Too often players will rise up on their toes. This means the foot has to go down before it can push. The joints need to be flexed so they can explode on command.

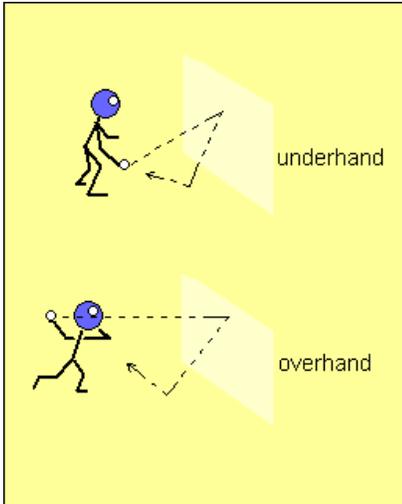


### **Explode off the Bounce**

The final activity is to have one player dribble with the ball. The partner randomly tossed the tennis ball in various directions. The ball-handler exploded to catch the ball before the second bounce. Upon catching the ball, the ball-handler tossed the ball back to their partner and was ready to go again.

The partner tossing the ball cannot be too nice. Make the person stretch.

## Teaching Progression

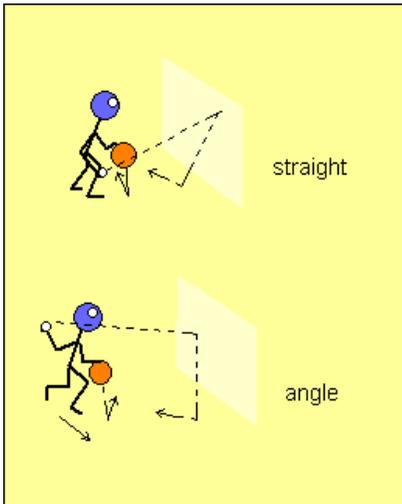


### Tennis Ball Toss and Catch

The player has a tennis ball and tosses the ball against the wall. If the player is in the initiation stage of the skill it is ideal to allow them to explore which way the ball can be tossed and caught. As the player advances they can use various methods to toss and catch.

- Underhand – catch with a bounce
- Underhand – catch with no bounce
- One-handed catch – right or left
- Two-handed catch
- Overhand throw
- Throw on an angle – move to catch
- Throw as if moving

This is a good warm up activity as it will increase the body temperature and also add some agility and coordination.



### Add a Basketball

The same drills are done but the activity has been loaded with dribbling a basketball. Again, the first time the athletes do it, allow them to experiment. As they improve make them work on the different techniques. This forces them to keep their eyes up when dribbling.

It can be loaded in the same way.

# BASKETBALL SKILLS

---

## Stable, Strong Stance

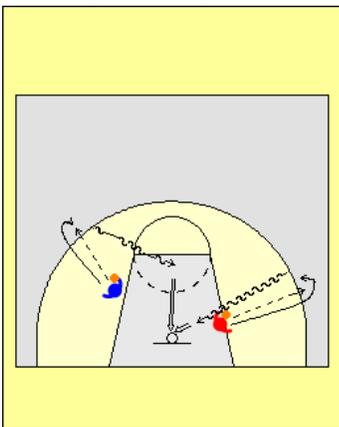
The first snowfall of the winter is always a reminder to pay a little more attention to the road conditions. This is especially true for new or younger drivers who do not have lot of experience driving under these conditions. Drivers in slippery conditions need to:

- Control their speed when they approach an intersection or other traffic. No sharp turns or breaking at high speeds.
- Be prepared for the other vehicles to stop or turn in front of them at any time.
- Be alert- constantly scan, anticipating what is going to happen.

Many younger and inexperienced players need to play basketball with the same caution as driving on icy road. Many players try to play at speeds which they cannot control. This leads to poor decisions, travels, poor shot selection, charges, turnovers and occasionally injuries. As their strength, skill and size improve they will be able to play at faster speed. The faster their operational speed becomes the better they will be able to play, but when learning too much, speed kills.

What follows is a progression for players to learn how to play under control and yet still be effective in attacking the basket. It is important to simplify the options to make decisions and execution easier. As the player's confidence grows, more speeds and options can be added. It will also illustrate how to take players through Phase A, B, C and D of teaching.

When first introducing a skill, the initiation stage, it is important to allow the players to practice at their own speed. They require a good demonstration of what the skill should look, feel and sound like. Allow them to process the information in their own way before providing too much feedback. It is also important that they understand why the skill is being done in a certain way. This will help them in formulating the skill in their mind. This is why the old idea of whole-part-whole is important. The whole shows the why. Using a games approach can also be effective in showing the why.

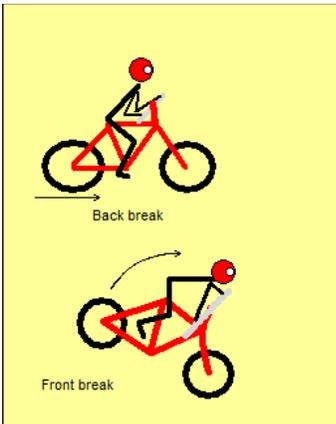


### **Self-Toss to One, Two Power Layup or Dribble Jump Shot**

The players toss the ball with back spin to a perimeter position somewhere outside the three-point line. Upon catching the ball and scanning the basket, the player drives to the basket for a one to two power lay-up. If attacking the foul line, the player does a dribble jump shot. These should be accomplished with a maximum of two dribbles. The foot work on the layup is a one, two count, with the outside foot hitting first, closely followed by the inside foot.

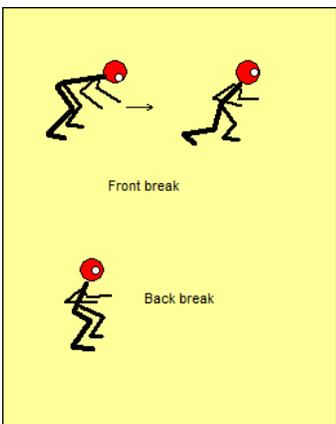
The quick one, two pull up jump shot is preferred over the hop to a jump stop when going for the dribble jump shot. It is quicker and

does not allow the defence to recover.



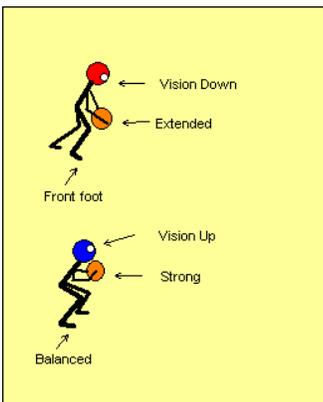
### Stopping

The first bike a child rides has breaks on the rear wheel. The brake was applied by peddling backwards. When travelling at speed and applying the back brakes, a slide would happen to learn control. More advanced bikes have hand brakes, one for the back and one for the front. When traveling at a high speed and slamming on the front brake the momentum carries forward (over the handle bars).



These same concepts apply to players when running at speed. If they try to stop quickly using the front of their feet, they will continue to rotate forward. They will either fall over or take an extra step to maintain their balance.

If they learn to stop by sitting down and using their back break they can remain on balance.



### Being Strong with the Ball

When coming to a stop with the ball, players need to quickly get into a strong position:

- Their vision is up
- Their weight is over the top of their feet
- Their elbows are under the ball, the wrist is flexed and the ball is tight to the body. They are a spring ready to uncoil.

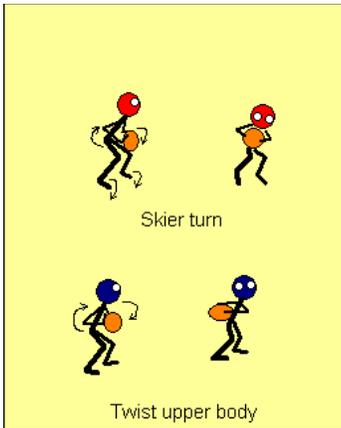
This allows them to:

- Absorb contact and remain on balance
- To pivot in any direction
- To make a strong, pass or shot

### The player who stops in a weak position will often:

- Have their eyes looking down
- The arms are extended with the ball down low or up high
- The weight is on the front of their feet. They often will have taken an extra step to catch their balance.

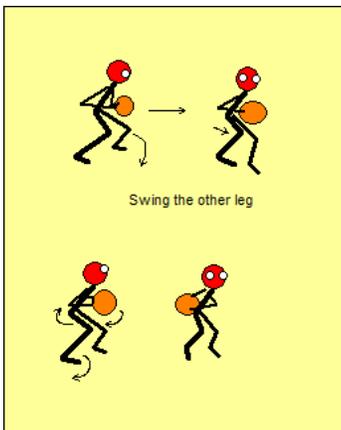
## Pivoting



### Twisting with the Ball

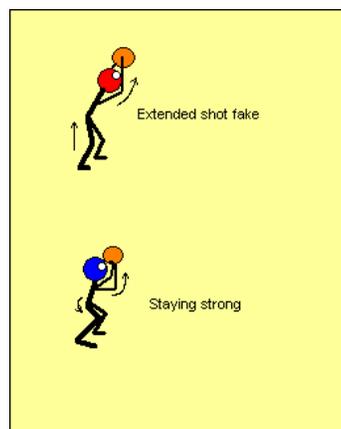
Players will often need to twist to protect the ball. This may not be a full pivot. Players who move the upper body, but not the lower body often get in caught in an off-balanced position.

Coaches use the analogy of the movement a skier makes when transferring weight from one ski to the other. There is a weight shift and the feet and hips both turn. Picture most sports where power is being generated. It is the twisting of the hips that produces this power and keeps the player in a strong position from which they are still explosive.



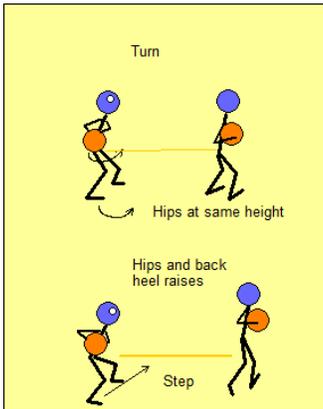
Too often when players pivot they are focusing on twisting their foot and swinging the other leg around. This often leads to dangerous twisting of the knee and the player ending up in a poor biomechanical position. They have no balance or power.

A pivot generates from the hips, The same skier twisting starts the motion of the pivot; one foot slides forward or back. This keeps the player in a strong position and safe since the knee and the toe are pointing in the same direction.



From this strong position players need to be able to pivot and fake. Often when faking, players will put their body off balance or weak by extending the ball, arms and legs.

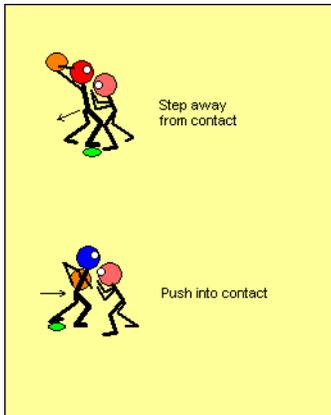
To stay strong when faking, players need to disassociate the action of the upper body from their lower body. When the ball is being raised, the lower body is lowering or sitting down. The faking with the eyes and shoulders is often more effective than raising the ball too high. Do not lose the C formed by the bicep, forearm and wrist. This keeps the player strong to shoot at any time.



### Stepping Versus Pivoting

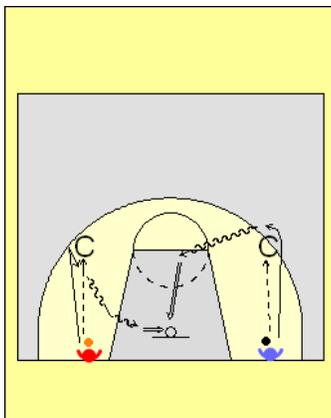
Many players actually step instead of pivoting. Stepping actually puts the player in an unbalanced position as the weight has shifted forward onto one foot. In a pivot the weight remains over top of both feet and the hips stay level.

In general, the pivot foot should be the foot opposite from the defence. Also, never put the ball behind the pivot foot.



### Why the Outside Pivot Foot?

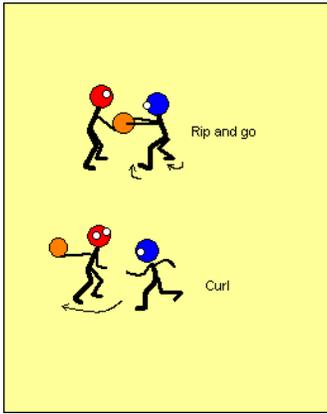
- It allows the players to carry a little more speed. A straight two-foot jump stop requires a lot of strength to come to a complete balanced stop.
- The player is stepping into the contact. If a bump occurs they can push into it. If the inside foot is used they often have to step back to gain their balance and power. This puts them in a weaker position.
- They can KOB (keep on back) the defender by cutting them off on the second step.



### Applying the Skill Against Imaginary Defenders

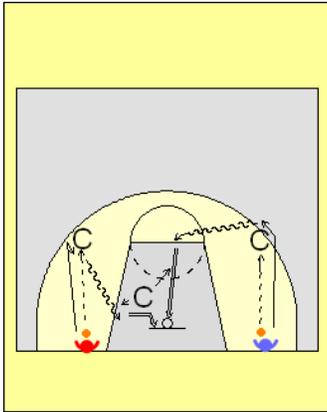
After having time to practice the skill at their own pace, players are ready to apply the skill in a game-like situation against imaginary defenders. This is an excellent drill to work on: the middle jump shot and baseline one, two power lay-up off a dynamic one-on-one from a wing catch.

The player starts on the baseline and passes the ball to the coach. Depending on the how the coach holds the ball the player either takes the ball baseline or middle. The coach controls the move. Mix it up.



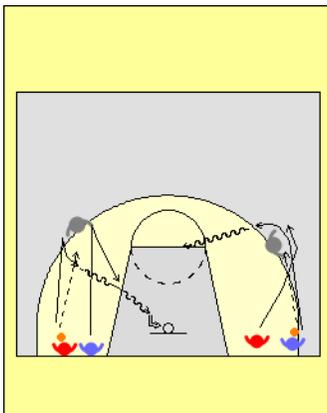
If the coach holds the ball out to the side, the player rips the ball and goes baseline. It is important to work on proper footwork to prevent traveling. A little skier hip turn puts the player in a strong athletic position before the dribble.

If the coach holds the ball behind them, the offensive player curls, takes the ball for the middle dribble jump shot. Try to take the ball from the coach with the outside foot down. This allows for a stronger and tighter curl. If the inside foot is used, the next step will lead to wide turn since it is with the outside foot.



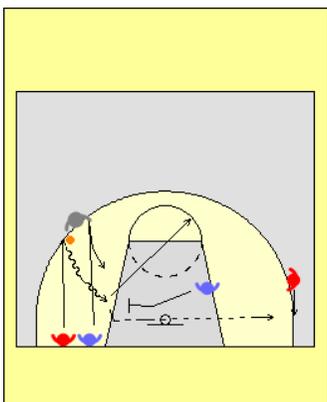
### Coach as a Guided Defender

Once the players have the correct technique, it is important that they apply the skill against a guided defender. Often the coach is the best person to do this at first as the other players may not have the body control to prevent rough or dangerous play. Eventually they will be able to assume this role if instructed properly.



### Apply the Skill Against a Live Defender

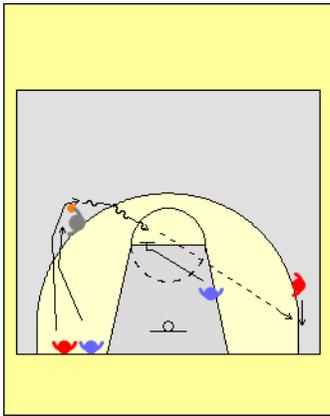
The offensive and defensive players line up on the baseline. When the ball is passed to the coach, both players run to the coach. The offensive player must read if it is the lay-up or curl by where the coach is positioned with the ball. The defender must slap the coach's other hand if it is the lay-up and chase the offensive player if it is the curl. In both situations the offensive player has a brief one-second advantage on the defender. If the player executes properly they should not lose the one-second advantage and make the basket.



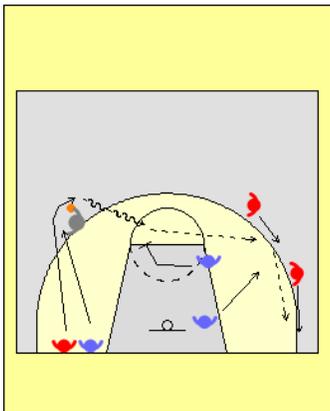
### Dynamic start to two-on-two

The players must read what to do when the defence rotates to take away the one-second advantage. By passing the ball to the open player the advantage is maintained. It is important that after passing, the passer exit the key to open space. Too often players who penetrate stand after passing and clog the key.

This pass does not have to be a fast pass. This is where the player can come to a one, two stop and pivot if need be. The accuracy and strength is more important when first learning than the speed of release.

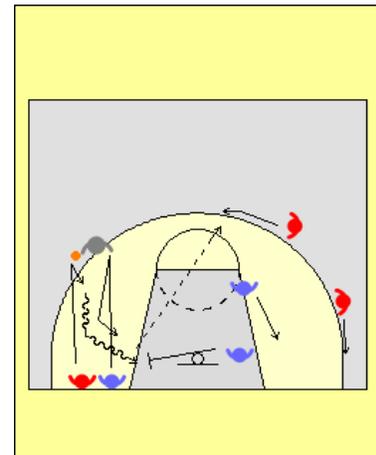


The same is true when penetrating to the middle. If need be, come to a balanced stop.

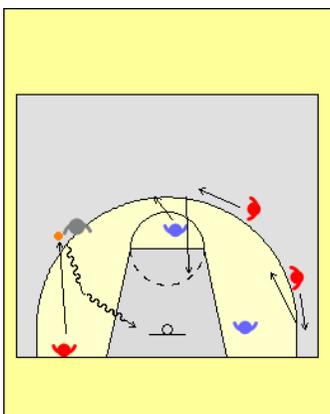


### **Dynamic Start to Three-on-three**

By adding another pair, the offensive player who gains the one-second advantage must read who is open when the defence helps. The coach controls if it is a baseline or middle penetration and the players are working on defence and offence at the same time. These can be teaching or learning drills depending on

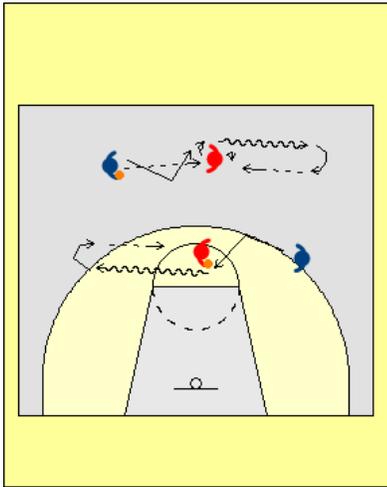


where the coach feels the players are in their development. Be sure to work from both sides of the court. It is also a good idea to let players transition out of this drill. To turn it into a competing drill the coach can have the players keep score. Use a games approach.



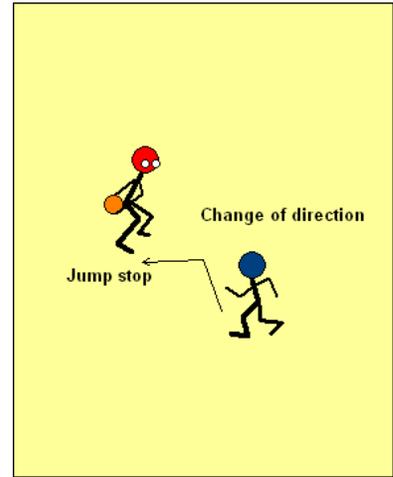
### **De-load – Three-on-two Secondary Cuts**

The coach must often de-load an activity rather than continue to load it. Here we have eliminated one defender. The player who drives pretends that help has come and they must come to a one, two stop. The other offensive players have moved on penetration. Once the offensive player pivots, the other offensive players must make a secondary cut based on what their defenders have done on the original cut. By eliminating the on-ball defender, it gives the offensive players a chance to have some success early. Load the third defender back into the drill when ready. These are good learning drills. Allow the players to play through mistakes. To compete allow transition. Scoring occurs for making use of the desired skills and concepts.

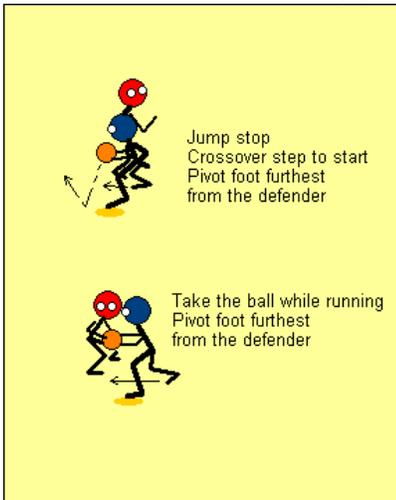


### Change of Direction Dribble Starts

Each pair of players has one basketball and spreads out in space. The players face each other from a distance of about three metres. The player without the ball shows their hands indicating a pass from the player with the ball. Upon receiving the pass the player with the ball holds it on the side near one hip. This indicates the movement of the player who made the pass.

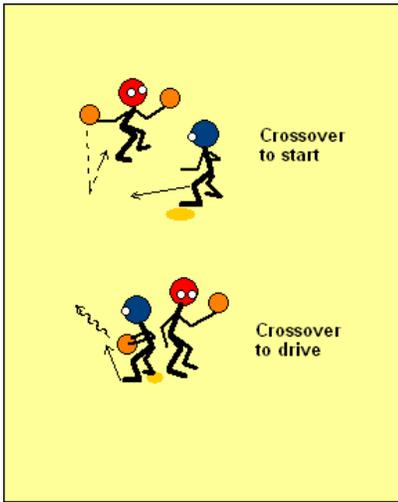


The player starts their movement away from the side of the ball, makes a change of direction cut back to the side of the ball, taking a handoff with a jump stop. Come to a complete stop. When first learning, the players will go too fast and end up travelling. In any fundamental drill being taught the intent is to start by teaching proper footwork. The players should start their dribble with a



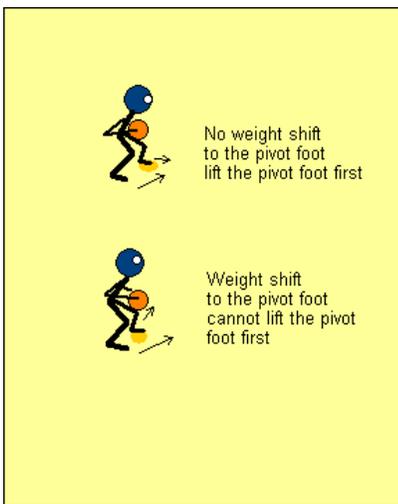
crossover step. The pivot foot is the foot furthest from the defence. This will allow the player to make space, but also resist any contact by the defender. This is a very important concept that players need to learn. The ball must leave the hand before the pivot moves. The player will dribble twice, jump stop and pivot to face their partner. When the partner shows hands the drill is repeated. Be sure to have the partner alternate the hip the ball is placed on.

In the second version of the drill the players need to work on taking the ball without stopping. The pivot foot is the outside foot. This allows the player to smoothly take the ball and put it down with a crossover step. Again the player goes for two dribbles, stops, pivots and passes when the hands are shown.

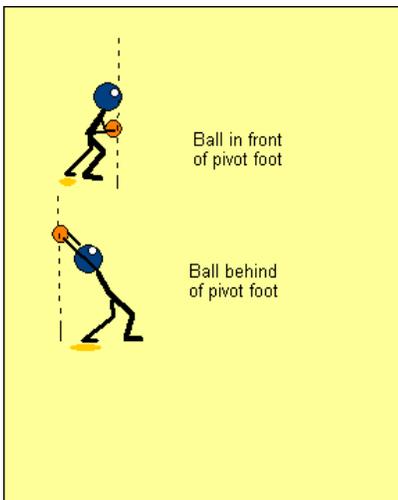


### Crossover Starts

Each player has a ball and faces one another from about one meter distance. The player executing the footwork passes their ball to the partner. Both balls are held out at shoulder height. The partner drops one ball. The player must start with a crossover step to retrieve the ball. The foot furthest from the ball moves first. Only two steps are required- the crossover step to start and the second step to square up. Next, the player must begin their dribble to the basket with a crossover step. This time they will use the outside foot to move first. The purpose of the drill is to learn to start with crossover steps. It is important to go slowly at first as players will often want to slide or lift the pivot foot before moving.



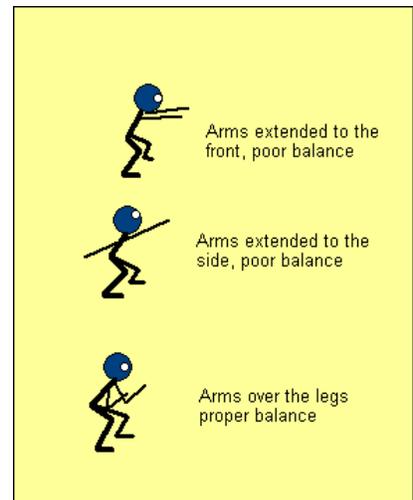
A key teaching point is to have the players emphasize a weight shift to the pivot foot. If this is done correctly it is impossible to move the pivot foot first. If no weight shift occurs, the pivot foot will lift or shuffle.

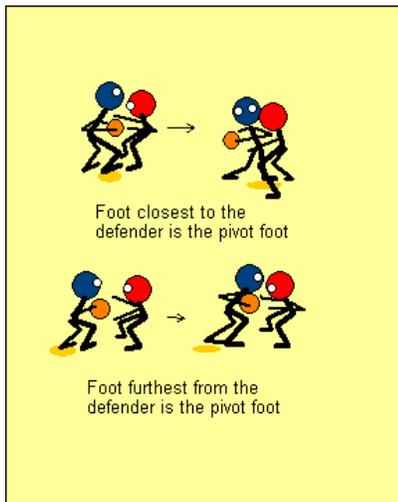


### Relationship of the Ball to the Pivot Foot

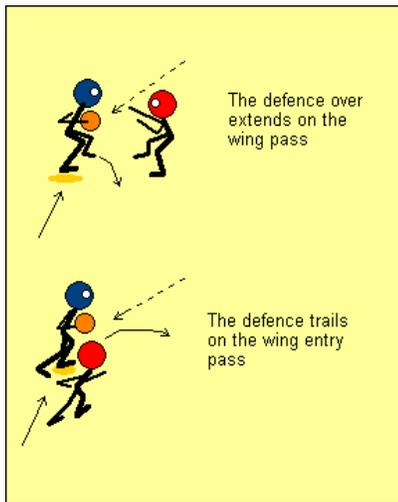
The player with the ball wants to keep the ball in front of the pivot foot. This allows the player to remain on balance.

**Note:** Balance is when the player is in a bent athletic position with the arms over top of the knees. The position of the arms is crucial in staying on balance.



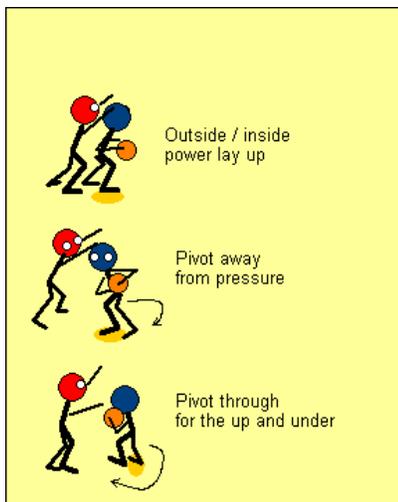


Players need to learn that the foot furthest from the defence is the pivot foot. This allows the offensive player to create space to avoid the pressure defence. It also allows the offensive player to push or resist any contact from pressure defence. When the foot closest to the defender is used as the pivot foot, the defender can step over top of the pivot foot and make the offensive player put the ball behind the pivot foot. There is no space in which to move. This very often leads to a dirty pass, one that does not help the offence create or maintain a one-second advantage.



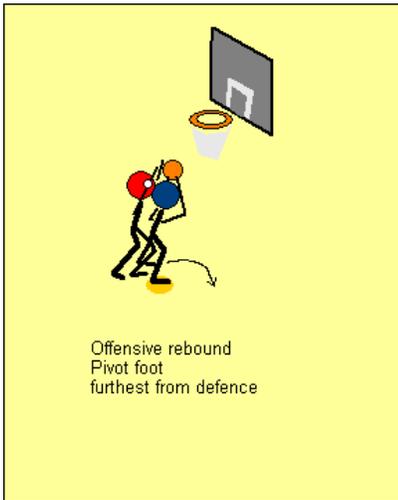
When catching a wing entry pass, if the defence over-extends the player should use the foot opposite from the defence as the pivot foot. The player rips the ball low and starts to attack the basket with a crossover step.

If the wing player anticipates the defence trailing on the wing entry, the offensive player wants to catch the ball with the foot furthest from the defence as the pivot foot. The player uses a crossover step to attack the middle in one action, not stopping the ball. By using the outside foot the player can push off to resist and contact, but more importantly make the next step to the middle. If the ball was taken with the inside foot it is next to impossible to step to the inside on the next step.



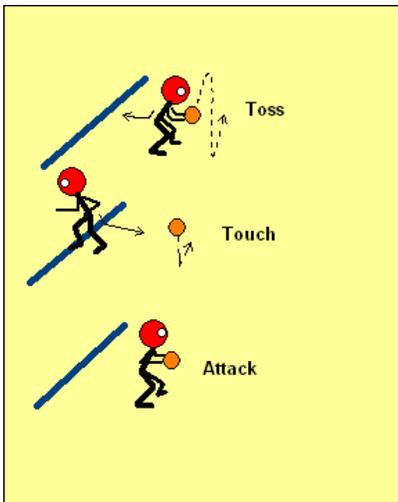
When attacking the basket, if a defender is present, it is recommended that the offensive player use an outside/inside power layup. This allows the offensive player to:

- Push against any contact from the defender.
- Cut off the defender with the last step
- Come to a balanced stop
- Fake before shooting
- Pivot away to create a pass if the defence covers the basket. The outside foot is the pivot foot- the one furthest from the basket.
- If the defence over-plays the passing lane, the offensive player can re-pivot for the up and under, at the unprotected basket.



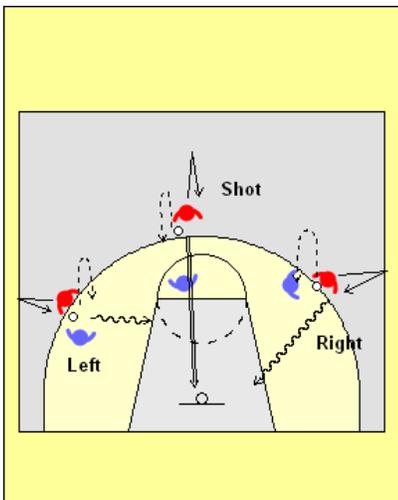
When offensive rebounding, if the offensive player cannot immediately put the shot back up, the pivot foot furthest away from the defence is the pivot foot. This allows the rebounder to make space for pivoting and passing.

## DRIBBLE START, JUMP-STOP AND JUMP-SHOOT



### Self-Toss and Touch

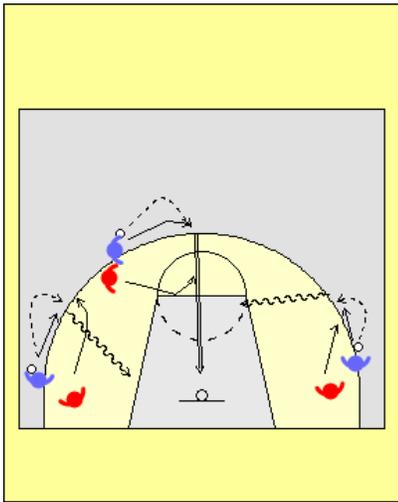
One way to introduce the jump stop to receive the ball is to have the players practice a self-toss and touch. The player tosses the ball up in the air with back spin. Before catching, the player pivots and goes and touches the sideline (it can be any designated touch line). On the return, the player catches the ball with a two-foot jump stop. This allows the player to use a crossover to start their move to the basket.



In Phase A, the players practice on air going right, left and shooting the ball. Give them time to figure it out for themselves. This is very important when first learning a skill.

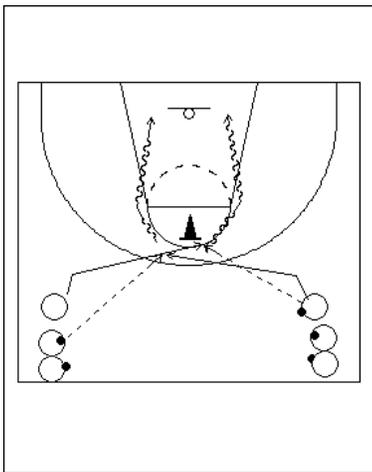
In Phase B, the coach provides the guides to the players. The player can go right, left or shoot.

In Phase C, the defence is live. Have the defender move from a help or deny position into ball defence.



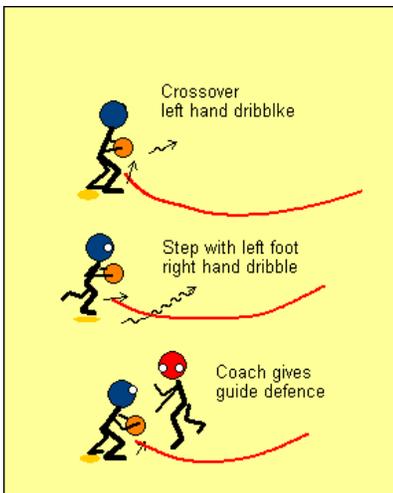
### Self-Toss

The players can also work on self-toss where they do not have to touch a line. This simulates a pass coming from the top to the wing or from one side to the other when a player cuts to the top. As before have the players go through the four various phases. Here they are working on the crossover move, the curl or the shot.



### 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. Be sure to show hands to indicate when 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. Be sure not to cut until the player with the ball makes 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. Attack the paint; do not dribble the ball to a spot outside the key. Do not stop the ball in either move. The intent is 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,

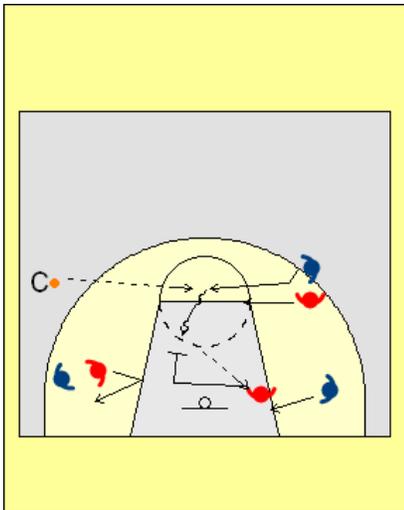
crossover with the inside foot as the ball is dribbled at the basket. Key points: eyes up, show target hand to catch, make use of the proper footwork.

### **Phase B – Coach Guides**

The coach guides the offensive player play giving a defensive read. This is helping 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.

### **Phase C – Live Defence**

The drill is now 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. This way they can explore the different options.



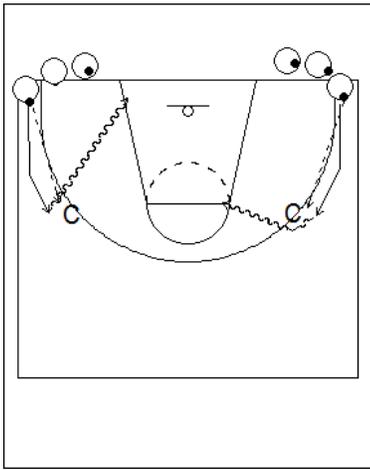
### **Phase D – Use in a Game-Like Situation**

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. Should I shoot or pass the one-second advantage on to a teammate who is open?

### **Other Ways to Load the Drill:**

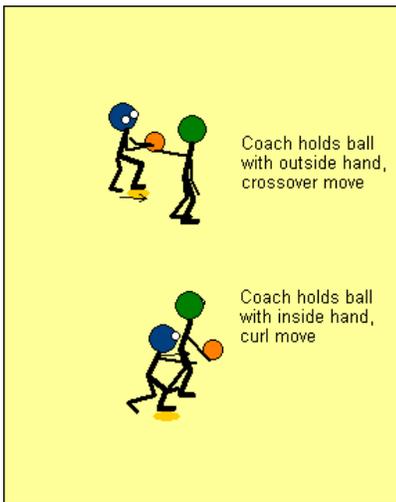
It is often a good idea to have a coach available for a pass. If the offensive player does not have a good pass encourage the player to pass.

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



### Corner to Wing Cuts

Each player has a ball and lines up in two lines on the baseline. Two coaches line up at the attack spot (place where the three-point line and foul line extended meet). The first player in line passes the ball to the coach and runs up to receive a hand off. If the ball is in the outside hand of the coach, the player takes the ball, does a crossover move to attack the basket. Finish with an outside/inside power layup. If the coach holds the ball with their inside hand, the player curls behind the coach taking the ball with the outside foot and performs a dribble jump shot in the key. No more than two dribbles.

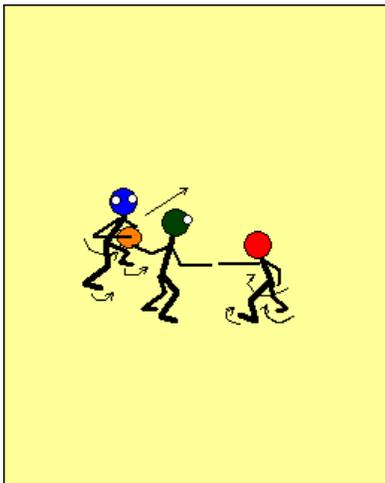


### Phase A – On Air

The coach has the players work on one move at a time, perfecting the footwork.

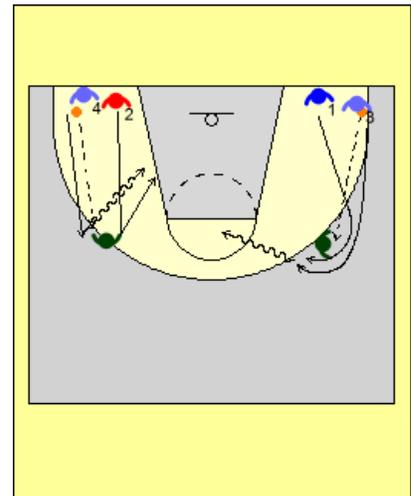
### Phase B – Coach Guides

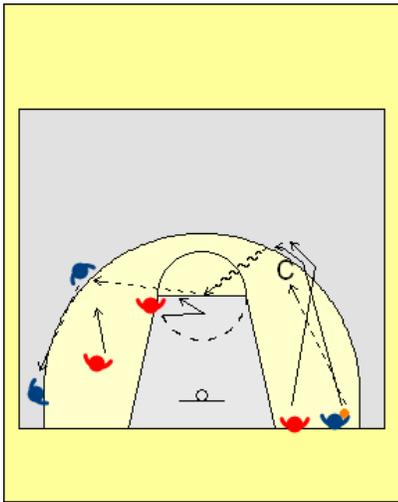
The coach mixes up between the curl and the crossover move.



### Phase C – Live Defence

Next, there is a second line of defenders to the inside of the offensive players. On the pass, both players run out to the coach. If the coach holds the ball with the outside hand the defender must touch the inside hand of the coach before playing defence. This creates a one-second advantage for the offensive player. If the ball is held with the inside hand, the defender must circle behind the offensive player who is going to take the dribble jump shot.

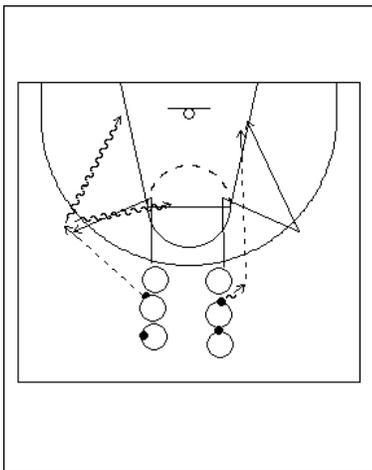




**Phase D – Use in a Game-Like Situation**

Here the same drill is used to initiate a three-on-three situation. The coach gets to decide the direction of the one-second advantage by where they hold the ball for the offensive players. Build in transition. Allow the teams to transition after the make or miss.

**Note:** This drill can also be done from other positions on the floor to simulate different cuts.

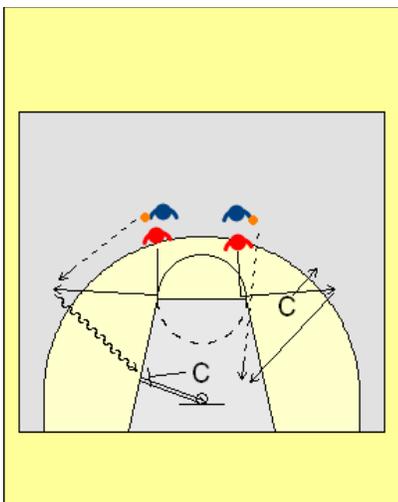


**Pivot/Flare**

**Phase A – On Air**

This drill works on footwork to catch the ball from a different angle. Two lines are formed at the top of the three-point line with every player with a ball except the first player in each one line. The first player in line cuts to the elbow and does a jump stop. The player does a pivot to open up to see the passer. The player then shows their hands as they cut to the attack spot to receive the pass. It is important that the pass is delivered when the player is outside the three-point line and able to catch the ball with a jump stop facing the basket. The pass is made and the player visualizes the defence either giving them a crossover move to the baseline or a crossover move to the middle. The

player can pull up for the jump shot or use the outside/inside power layup. The player also practices the back-door cut. The player should never catch the ball where they cannot be effective. If, when getting to the three-point line the player is not open, both the passer and the cutter need to recognize that it will be a back-door cut. The back-door pass is delivered in the key or a lob to the corner of the backboard on the side of the cut.



**Phase B – Coach Guides**

- The coach can give the player on the catch three reads:
- Play on the high side – crossover and attack the baseline
- Play on the low side – crossover and attack the middle
- Sag on the catch – shoot the ball
- Deny the pass – go backdoor

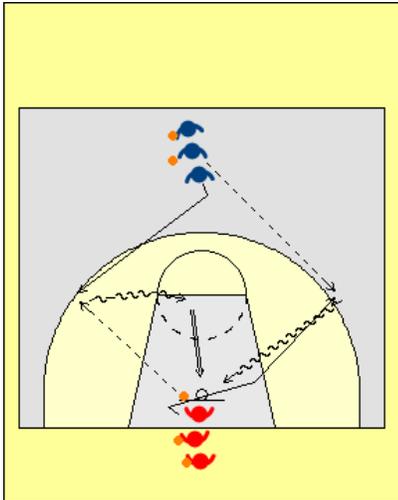
The coach can also give a read to the player after the catch. If the coach shows a chest in the drive line to the basket, the player should stop and shoot the ball. If the coach shows only an arm in the drive line, the player should do an outside/inside power layup. If the coach is not in the area the player can do the normal layup.

### Phase C – Live Defence

Have the players compete against a live defender. Again, it is best to let the player stay on offence for three or four repetitions in a row. This gives them a chance to use different moves and learn from them. If they have no shot they should learn to pass back to the coach rather than practice taking bad shots.

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

Start a two-on-two, three-on-three or four-on-four situation with this cut and read. Once the play starts the player must learn to play one-on-one within the team. They can shoot or transfer on the one-second advantage to someone else.



### Alternate Wing Entry, Flare

#### Phase A – On Air

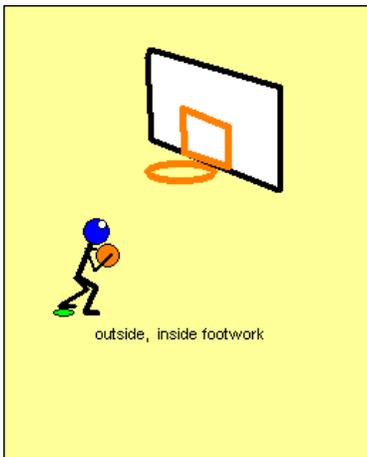
Form two lines with every player with a ball except one player in the top line. The first player can choose to go in either direction and make a flare cut to the attack spot. The timing of the pass must be perfect. Catch the ball with a jump stop so the next step is a crossover step in either direction. The player anticipates the defence by visualizing the action of the defence. The player goes either middle or baseline. On the middle drive, the jump shot is taken. Baseline, the outside/inside power layup is used. After passing, the player at the bottom cuts out to the attack spot looking to receive a clean pass from the next player at the top. Catch the ball to start with a crossover in either direction. Players alternate.

### Phase B – Guide

The coach can give the offensive players reads on the catch.

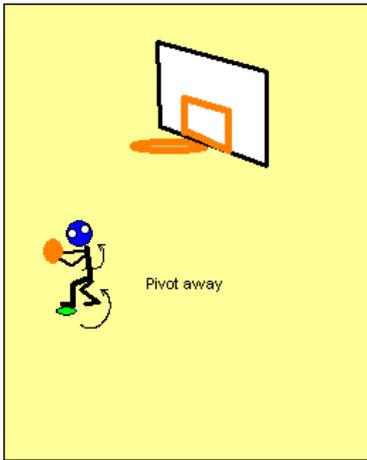
## LAYUPS

### LAYUP FORM – Phase A



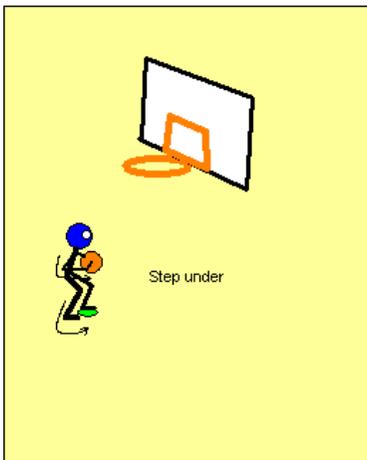
### One, Two Power Layup

This layup is very important skill for players to learn who are driving into traffic. The footwork is the same as the regular lay-up starting with the outside foot followed quickly by the inside foot. The only difference is that the player does not continue to drive the outside foot up; they take off on both feet.



### **Pivot Away**

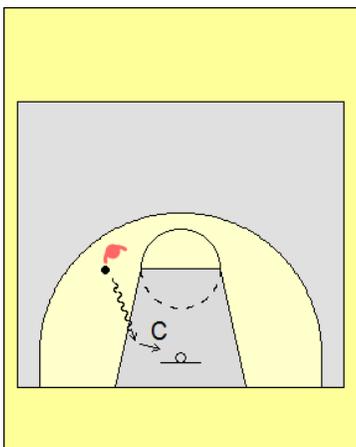
If trouble occurs, the player can use the outside foot to pivot away. As they become more adept they can also develop a little baby-hook from this position.



### **Step Through**

If the defence moves up, the player can step through by continuing to pivot. Throughout the whole process the player stays strong and on balance.

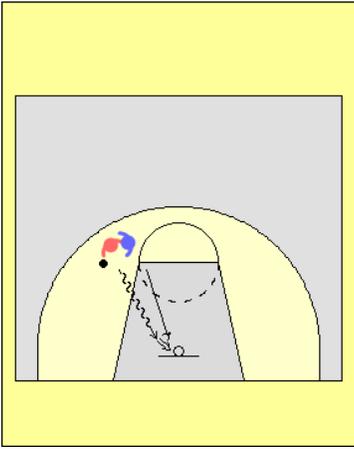
It is important to add in different phases of teaching.



### **Phase B – Coach Guides**

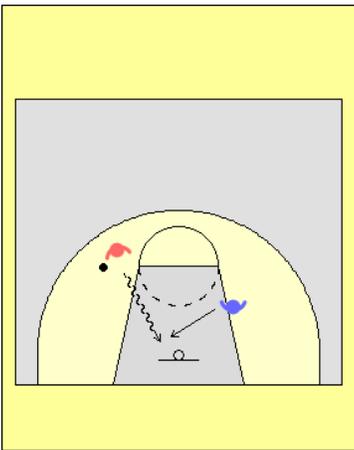
When the player drives the coach gives the player different reads:

- If the coach is not present, do a normal speed layup
- If contact may occur use the one, two power
- If the coach is ready to block, pivot away
- If the coach moves up, use the up and under



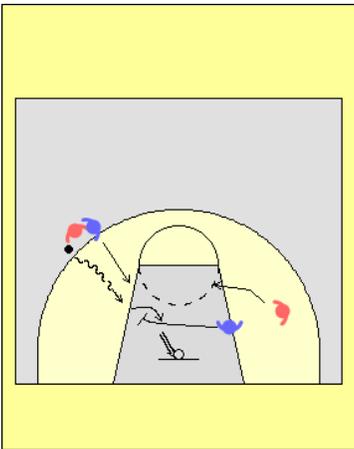
### **Phase C – Versus Live Defence**

Here the defender gives the player with the ball a slight one-second advantage. This is live once the ball is put on the floor.



### **Phase C – Versus Live Help Defence**

Here the offensive player drives to the basket and must read the help defender.

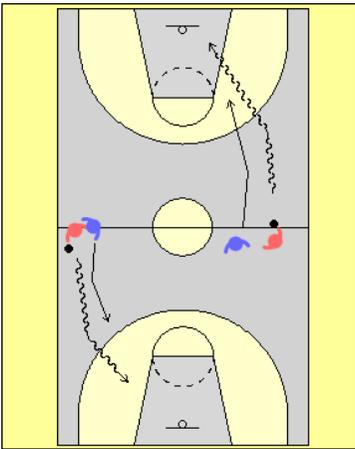


### **Phase D – Compete two-on-two**

Next, the two drills are combined. When the offensive player beats the defender they must read the help.

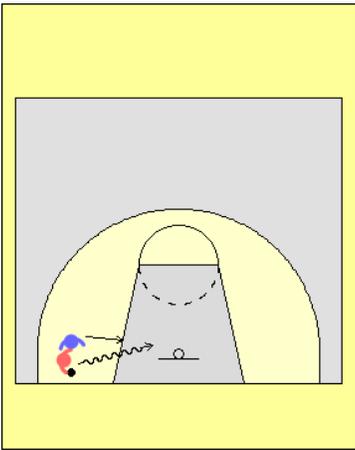
Players at this stage of development must be able to do a number of different layups. The coach should use the same phases of teaching as demonstrated for the one, two power layup. It is better to take one layup through the four phases than to teach a number of different layups on air and expect the athlete to be able to use them in a game. Too often, players can do a left-hand layup with no defence on them in a warm-up situation, but once the defence is involved the player will not use the left hand. This is why it is important to take the player through the four teaching phases.

Here are the layups that the players should master at this stage:



### Speed Layup

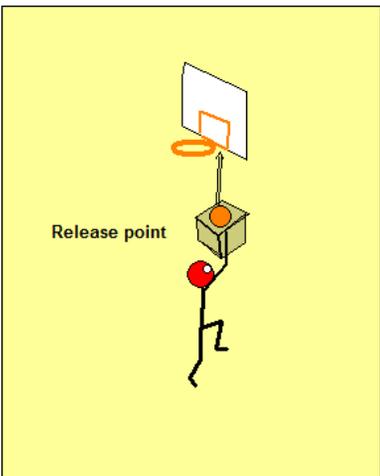
When the player has an open basket and needs to accelerate to the basket. Very often the player will slow down when doing this layup and allow the defender to catch up. The player should try to KOB (keep on back) the defender with their dribble. The player should stretch ensure that the defender cannot come over the top.



### Baseline

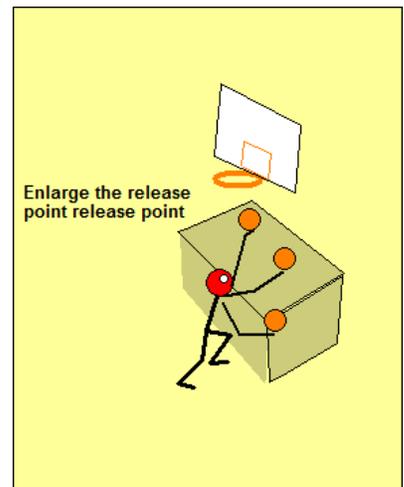
The player uses the right foot and the left hand on the right side and the left foot, right hand on the left side. As the shot is released the player should end up facing the backboard.

Players can also use the one, two power when driving baseline.



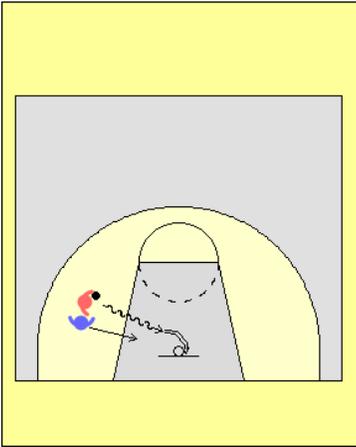
At this stage, players need to learn to enlarge the release point of their layups. Too many players release the ball at the same spot every time. This is fine when no defence is present. As the player begin to face taller help defence it becomes very easy for a shot blocker to time a block since all they have to do is block the release point, not the ball.

The eyes must be up to see the defender.



The player must learn to:

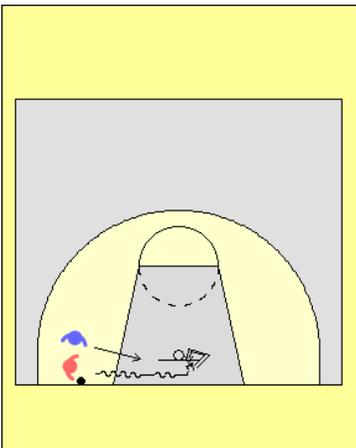
- Stretch and reach when the defender is behind
- Hook the ball when the defender is to the inside
- Extend up and over a smaller defender who is reaching in low



### **Baby Hook**

This layup is used when driving to the middle. The player should use the basket to protect the ball. The player needs to drop the inside shoulder when shooting this shot.

Players can also use the one, two power when going middle.



### **Reverse Layup**

When driving baseline sometimes the basket will open up on the far side if they beat the help defender. The player needs to step on the other side of the midline to ensure that they can find the backboard. The player can open to the basket or close the body. Each has its advantages.

**Note:** There are many other layups that the players can learn. It is important to take them through the progressions. Be sure that the player can do them on the right and left side. Eyes must be up at all times. Many bad layups should have been pull up shots or passes for assists.

## **SHOOTING**

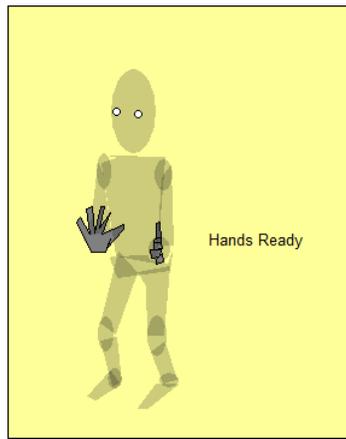
### **Points of Emphasis**

- Hands preparation
- Teach in three phases (one, two and three)
- Alignment (elbow – knee – foot)
- Arm extension (until the ball touches the ring)
- Put the hand inside the ring (check shot form)
- When to use a jump stop versus one, two stop or inside pivot

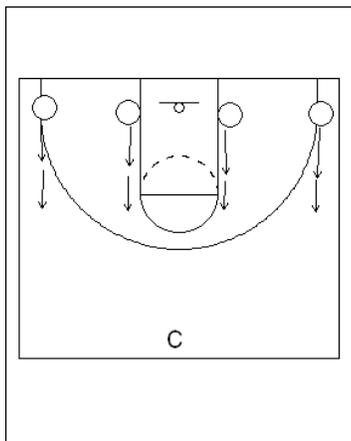
### **Hands Preparation – Building the arm of the shooter**

#### **Hand and Arm Preparation is Key**

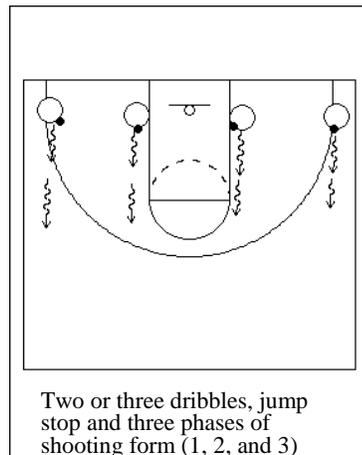
- A. Walk and show shooting hand: keep arms along the side of the body; raise the shooting forearm by bending the elbow to 90 degrees. Dorsi-flex the shooting hand so that the palm faces forward.



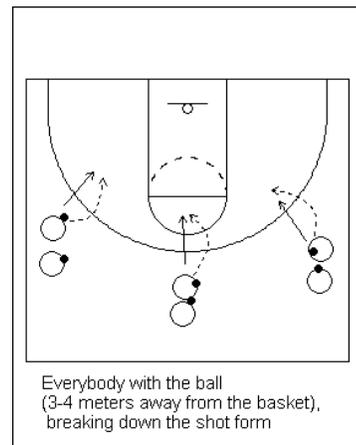
- B. Walk and show both hands: keep arms along the side of the body, raise both forearms by bending the elbows to 90 degrees. Dorsi-flex the shooting hand so that the palm faces forward. The non-shooting hand is kept with the palm perpendicular to the other palm. A ball should fit in the hands. The player is ready to catch the ball without having to move the hands.



**Diagram A-B**



**Diagram C**



**Diagram D**

- C. Everybody with a ball, toss the ball and catch it putting the hands in the right position, strong hand on the back with bent wrist and weak hand on the side.

- D. Everybody with a ball (three to four meters away from the basket), toss the ball. breaking down the shot form: each player has a ball on hip; bring ball to front of shoulder

### Three Phase Breakdown (One, Two and Three)

Phase 1: Triple threat position - This position permits the player to shoot, put the ball on the floor and pass without extra movement to change position.

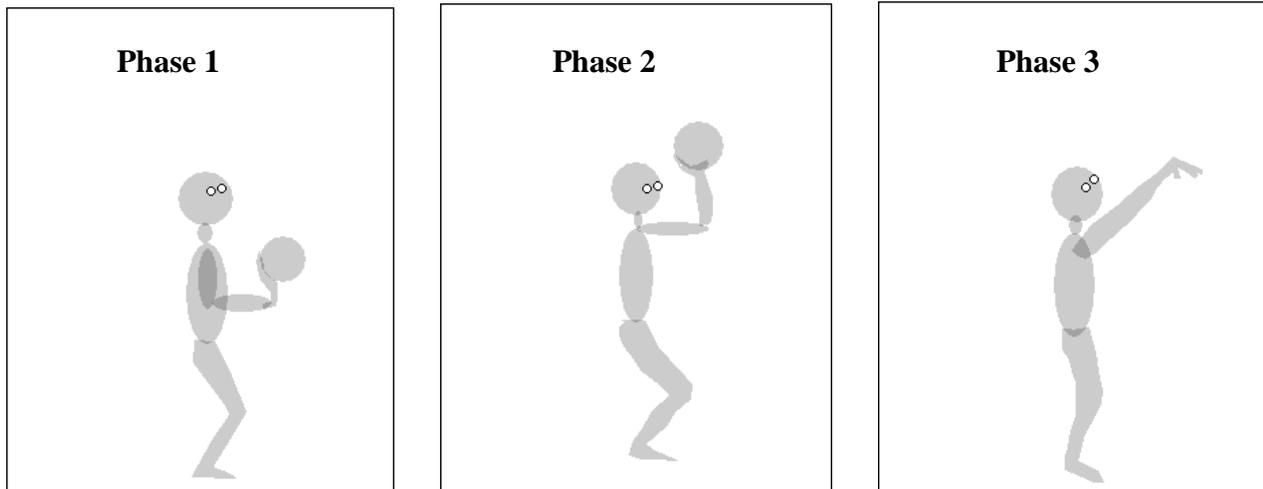
Shooting alignment - Player drops hips and makes sure knee is aligned with the ball of the foot. Elbow is in line with knee.

Phase 2: Bring the ball up above the forehead and in front of the face. Hips and legs are flexed like a loaded spring. Make sure the ball sits on fingers like the top of a table or waiter carrying a tray. The elbow must be below the ball.

Phase 3: Finish the shot.

- Arm extension

- Open hand with the fingers pointing in the direction of the ball
- On toes
- Every player has to check the position of his arm and hand and eventually make the corrections on their own.



\*Make sure to shoot the ball with legs and finish on toes.

On each phase (up-on-in) the player has to wait one second (to check the right position) before going to the next phase in order to allow the coach to see if one of the phases is not correct. The coach has to tell the player which phase is not correct and the player has to put his attention on it.

**(Diagram 1) One dribble shot** - Everybody starts with the ball extended in the left hand on their left side with bent knees: let the ball bounce on the floor, reach and catch it with two hands (the player is simulating catching a pass from the left), use a crossover step with the left foot and rip the ball for a right hand dribble, pick up the ball and take a shot following the three phases. The players perform some repetitions on the right and then on the left side.

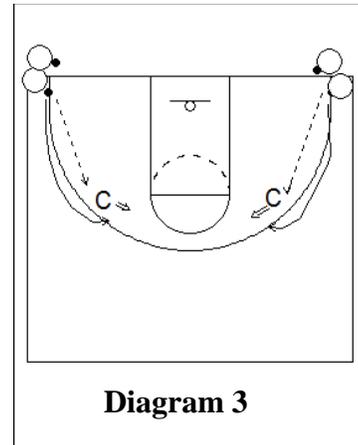
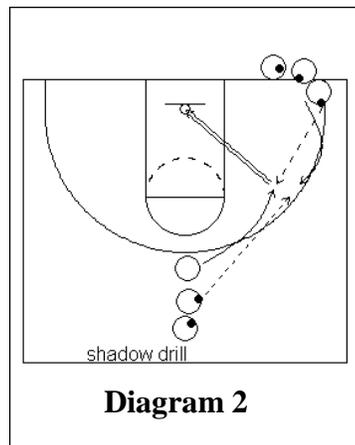
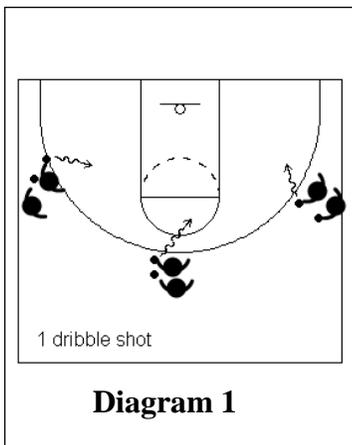
Jump stop to shoot: A *one foot jump stop* is preferred. This allows the player to quickly convert horizontal energy into vertical. However, if players are not strong enough they may stop in a two-foot jump stop.

When attacking from right side with the non-dominant hand, the player must bring the right hand over to pick up the ball so that the hands are already in proper position on the ball. When attacking from the left side going to the dominant hand, the player must try to pick up the ball with the shooting hand behind and under the ball as quickly as possible. The idea is to eliminate twisting the ball in the hand.

**(Diagram 2) Two-line shooting**: One line on baseline and one line at the three-point line on top. The top player cuts and focuses on hand preparation and footwork to receive the pass and then must work on the three phases of shooting. The passer then cuts to receive pass from top and works on the three phases of shooting as well.

**(Diagram 3)** Pass to the coach; run behind the coach, take a hand off and one to two stop to shoot.

Coaching point: On every shooting drill check and correct the players, reminding them WHICH PHASE they have to pay attention to, in order to have good shot form.



\*Shooting must be done slowly to work on form. The speed at which the players perform the drill should never exceed the speed at which they can properly execute the skill.

### Free throw shooting

- Deep breath
- Imagine shot going in before shooting
- Bend knees and shoot (on, two and three)

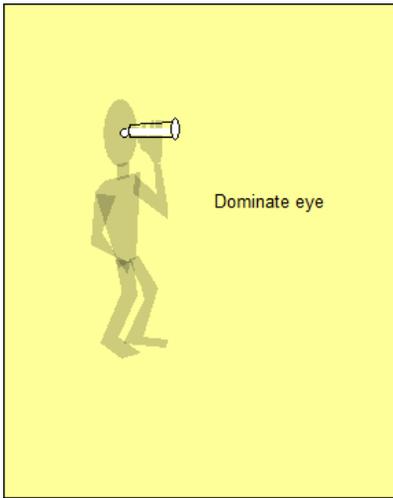
Form shooting should take place for the first 20 to 30 minutes of practice when mentally and physically fresh. Game-like shooting can take place at a different time in practice. Here, the focus is form.

### **Exceptions for body types**

- Players with wide shoulders may bring their shooting foot slightly forward in order to align the shoulder over the knee.
- Players with narrow shoulders can stay square more easily.
- Tall skinny guys/girls can take a step further forward.

### **Dominant eye**

A player's dominant eye will have an impact on how the player sights the basket. The player may slightly turn the head to lead with the dominant eye, a cross dominant shooter (right handed, but left eye dominant or vice versa) may have the ball more towards the left eye at release. Coaches need to be aware of these idiosyncrasies. They are not errors in the players shooting form.



Dominant eye paper test – The players can create a paper tube. Find an object and look through the tube with both eyes open. Close one eye at a time and see what happens to the object. If the object stays still the eye that is open is the player's dominant eye. If the tube moves when one eye is closed, the closed eye is the dominant eye.

The most important factors for good shooting are:

- 1) Hand preparation
- 2) Bent legs and hinging slightly forward at the hips
- 3) Start and finish of every shot must be the same – on balance

If they are not doing it properly or omitting one of the key factors they are not feeling the movement.

### **Teaching Shooting**

Phase A – Shooting form (one, two, three) jump stop, ball catching, position of the body, extension of the arm, follow through and soft release.

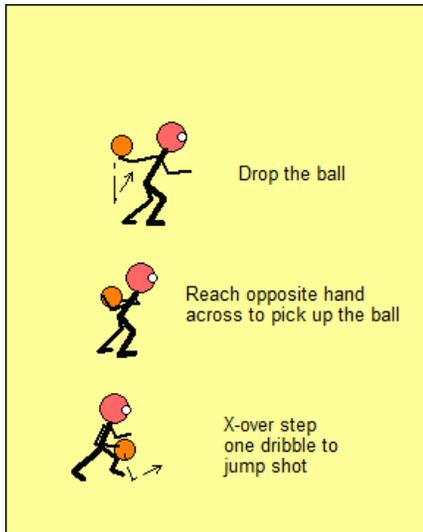
Phase B – Consistency of the movement without the addition of pressure, shooting without time limits and percentage.

Phase C – Exercises with stress: shooting with defence, shooting range and percentage, reading the defence

Phase D – Shooting session on game situation, coaching the shooting form within the rhythm of the game.

It is important that each player have the ability to adapt to the rhythm and intensity of the game. Shooting form has to be adjusted to the characteristics of every single player.

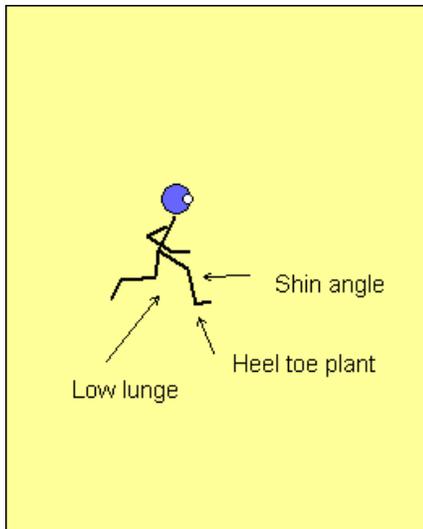
## Dribble jump shot



### Dribble Jump Shot Form

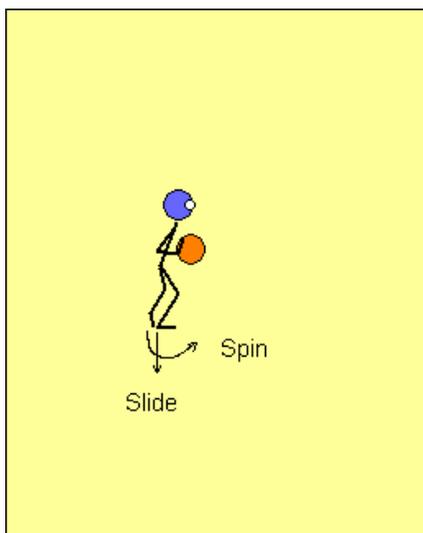
The player starts with the ball in an outstretched hand. The ball is dropped to simulate receiving a pass. Reach across with both hands to catch the ball. No one-handed catches. The ball is ripped to the other side of the body where the player takes one crossover step into a dribble jump shot.

Eventually players can take more than one dribble. Work on going both right and left.



### Inside Pivot Jump Shot Off the Dribble

The player must be able to perform a lunge. The lead foot must be a heel-toe plant with the shin angle pointing back to create a breaking action.

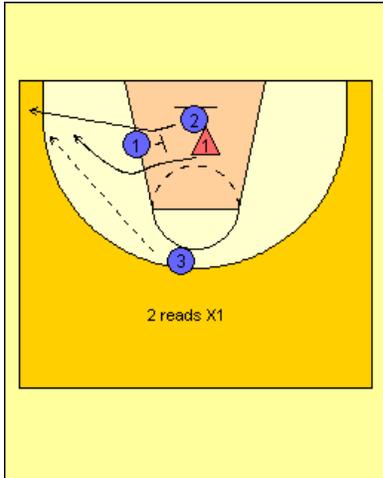


The second foot must get around quickly to a square position. For a right-handed shooter going right the player will have a tendency to over rotate. By focusing on sliding the right foot to the side to get square and not spinning it forward, helps the athlete stay square and on balance. This keeps the shooting shoulder still.

Going left it is not as much of a problem for a right-handed shooter. Here the tendency is to under rotate. The opposite is true for a lefty.

## Game- like Shooting

In game-like shooting, the players practice game-specific shots. Working on the movement into the spot and receiving the type of pass that will be received in the game. It is very important to add guided defence to allow the player to read. If no reading is occurring, the drill will be more of a rhythm and reps shooting. Read the defence – drive to basket or shoot? Read the defence as to the type of cut to make into the shot. The focus is on reading the defence not on form. If a shot is missed, let it go, be ready for the next one.

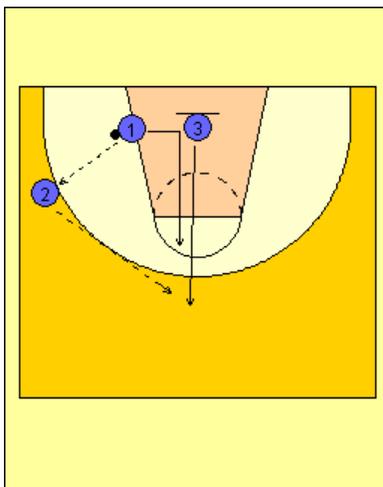


### Example

The coach should decide what types of shots the players will see on offence.

- Off transition
- Off cuts
- Off picks
- Off penetration
- Off screens

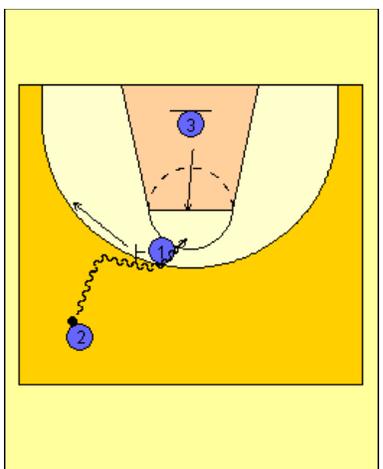
This diagram shows a player reading and shooting off a screen.



### Three Player Read and Shoot Off a Cut

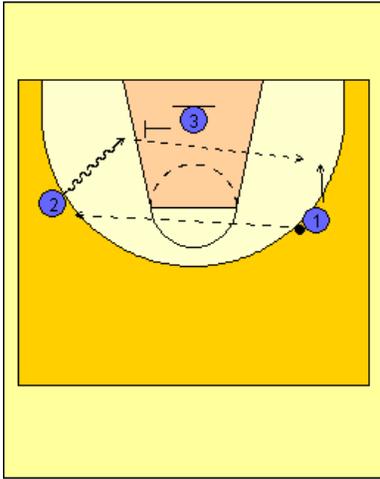
*Player Three* starts under the basket and makes a hard cut to the top on the pass from *Player One* to *Player Two*. After passing, *Player One* must cut through the spot that was occupied by *Player Three* before running hard to contest *Player Three's* shot. *Player Three* must read if he has a shot or drive. *Player Two* must deliver a good crisp pass and should also communicate the options to *Player Three*. Mix up the spots and the cuts.

It can also be done with four players by adding distance.



### Three Player Read Off a Pick

*Player Two* dribbles the ball off the pick set by *Player One*. *Player Three* can either sag or step up on *Player Two*. If *Player Three* sags, *Player Two* looks to shoot. If *Player Three* hedges, pass to *Player One* for the shot.



### Three Player Read and Shoot Off Penetration

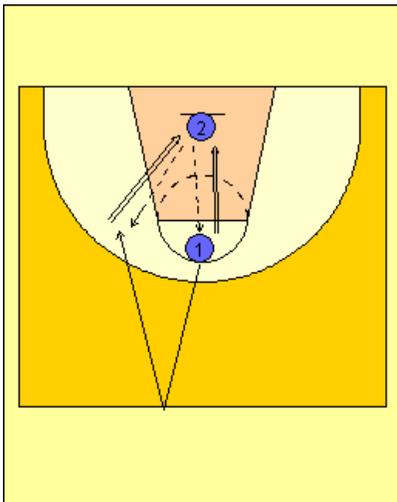
*Player One* skips passes the ball to *Player Two* who drives the ball hard baseline. *Player Three* gives a defensive read to *Player Two*, either early help or late help.

On early help (out of the key); *Player Two* looks to skip the ball back to *Player One* on the diagonal for the shot.

On late help (in the key), *Player Two* can shoot or pass to *Player One* on the deep drift in the corner.

### Conditioning and Shooting

Conditioning and shooting drills are designed to improve the conditioning of the team, help players shoot when fatigued and to put pressure on the shooters.

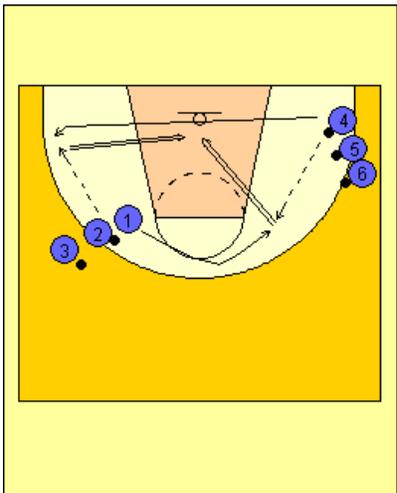


#### Examples

1) Partner shooting with a line touch

*Player One* receives a pass from *Player Two* and shoots the ball. *Player One* then runs and touches the centre line with their foot. They return to a new spot and catch the pass and shoot, and then continue to do this until the target is achieved.

The player can shoot from the same spot, different spots or alternate between shots and layups.



Competitive shooting drills – take a normal shooting drill like Canada shooting and add a target that must be reached. Make 20 shots in two minutes. If the players do not achieve the target the drill is repeated or a simple exercise is performed to work on conditioning. This way their conditioning work out is based on their ability to shoot.

This can be done as a competition where the team that achieves the target avoids the exercise and the teams that did not win have to do the 10 push ups (as an example).

## PASSING (Progression teaching)

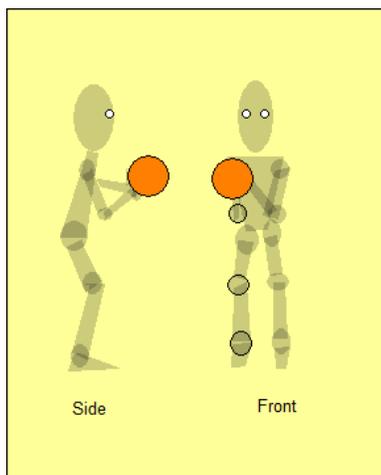
Passing is not an individual skill like shooting or ball handling. It is a core skill by which a player starts to build a relationship with a teammate. Great teams are teams that pass the ball with pride.

*Trust among teams is built with a good and accurate pass.*

The different game situations determine the type of pass. Read the defence to choose the type of pass that is needed to be made. Passing is a need every single player on the team has. Let the players choose as many different types of passes as possible (build their own fantasy).

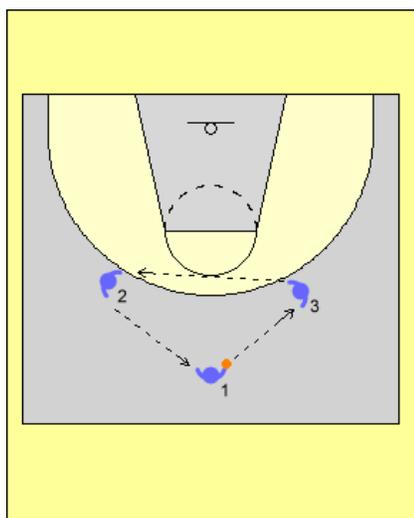
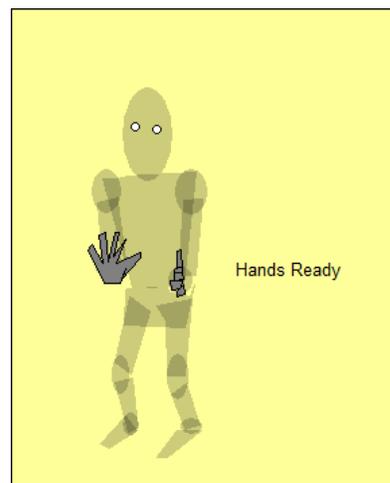
### Key points:

- Hands preparation (receiver) – “Show hands”
- Position where the ball has to be released – “From shoulder “
- Timing (passer) and target (receiver) – “On time and target”
- Pass under pressure (pivot foot) – “Keep the ball in front of pivot foot”
- Make the pass shorter (passer and receiver) – “Step to the ball”



When teaching passing, start the player with the ball in a good ready position (first phase of shot form). The player should have their wrist set and is ready to pass, dribble or shoot.

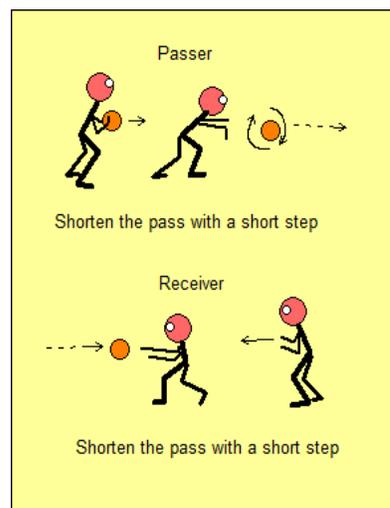
The receiver should be in the same ready position, showing their hands.



### Side Pass

Start practicing passing in a group of three players in a triangle formation. This allows them to work on a side pass which is much more prevalent than the chest pass once defence becomes a factor in the game.

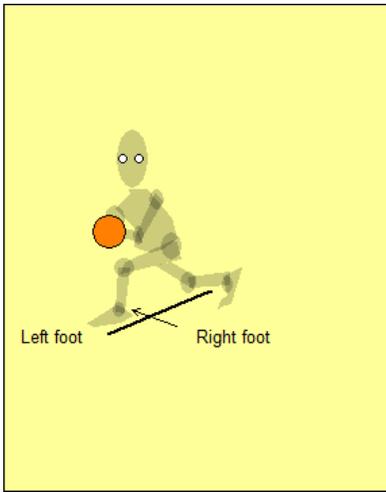
Both the passer and receiver have a responsibility to shorten the pass.



This is accomplished by stepping into the pass and stepping to receive the ball. A good passer must be

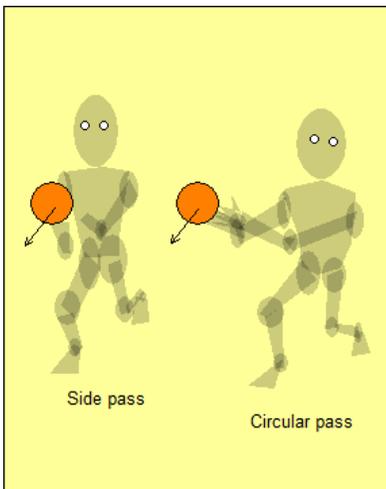
able to step with either foot (depending on which foot has been established as a pivot foot). Some key points to watch for:

- The player uses the same universal release, wrist flick, as in shooting the ball.
- The guide hand is still involved; this is not a one-handed pass, 1.5 hands.
- Be able to use both pivot feet.
- The step is short, this allows the player to:
  - Generate power in the direction of the pass
  - Shorten the pass
  - The player can push back if the pass is not open
- Notice that the shoulders of the passer get closer to the knee when passing. This helps with balance and power generation.



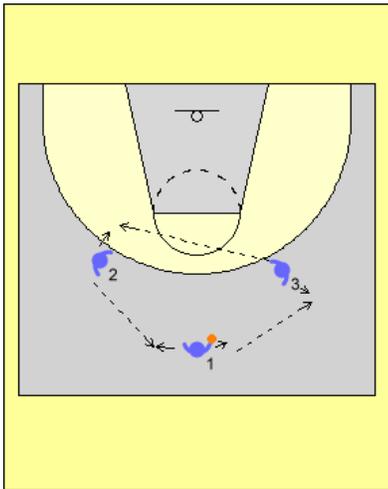
### **Error Detection**

When doing a crossover step the players will often cross their upper legs. This puts the player in an unbalanced position. When stepping, there should be a twisting of the hips that allows the player to stay on balance by stepping without crossing the upper legs.



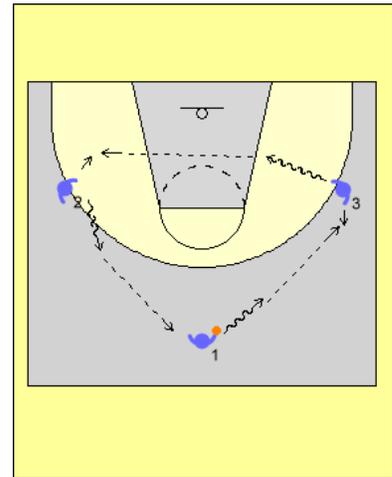
### **Circular Pass**

The players need to be able to throw a circular pass from the ready position. This pass is needed when the defence is close. It is important for the coach to be able to explain the subtle difference in the two passes. The side pass is pushed from the shoulder. The circular pass is more of a side-arm toss around the defence. For this reason the elbow must lead the ball, ever so slightly, just before release. If the elbow leads, the player can only generate power from a wrist flick. It is still a 1.5 handed pass.



When practicing the circular pass the receiver will give a target outside their body frame and will have to move to catch the ball.

Passing off the dribble can be added. The players need to be able to make the side pass and the circular pass from a stationary position and using a dribble. Be sure to go both right and left.



It is important that the coach brings attention to the players about the timing of the pass. When a pass is made the player receiving the ball has an appointment to meet the ball at the right spot at the right time. The coach can assist the players by using words *on time*, *late* or *early* to define the timing. Words such as *on target*, *high*, *low*, *inside* and *outside* can help the players understand the proper spot.

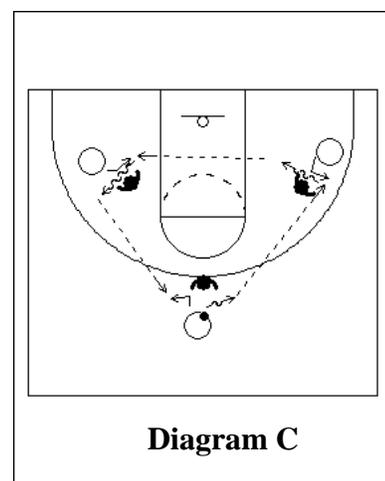
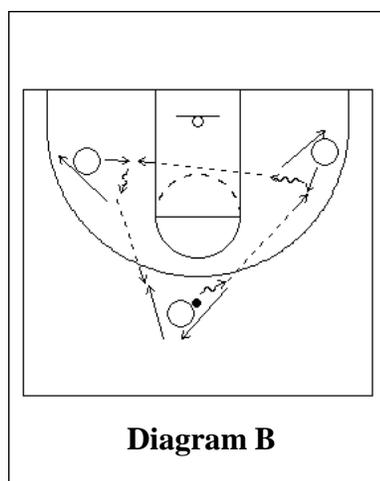
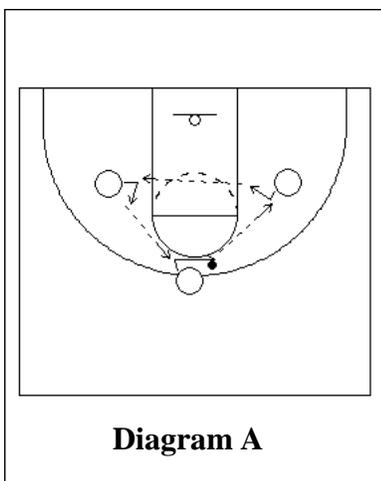
## EXERCISES

**Triangle passing:** Progression teaching in groups of three. The players practice form passing – shoulder pass or circular pass (outside shoulder line). Shoulder pass: leaves from shoulder and is passed in a straight line.

**Circular pass:** Leave from shoulder, but the ball moves outside the shoulder line to get around the defender.

Points of Emphasis:

- Take a short step towards the target
- The ball should be at the shoulder (phase one) to pass
- Finish the pass with a follow through like phase three of shooting (This is the universal release of the wrist used in passing, dribbling and shooting)
- The passer must bring the chest closer to their knee (stay low)
- The receiver must take a short step towards the passer in order to shorten the pass.



Try to always pass with the arm on the same side as the target (right hand when passing to the right, left hand when passing to the left) and pass only if the receiver is showing a target with hands ready.

**Diagram A** – The passer looks at the receiver (eye contact) and waits to see the target hands of the receiver (target). The passer takes a short step and makes a shoulder pass to the receiver. The receiver steps with the foot closest to the passer when the ball leaves the passer's hand (timing). Upon catching the ball, the receiver pivots and makes a crossover step to make the next pass. The players should never cross their femurs when doing this drill. They will lose their balance.

**Triangle pass:** The same drill as **Diagram A**, but add a guided defender. The receiver has to show the target and hold the defender with the forearm before stepping to meet the pass. Make a crossover step before the next pass.

**Diagram B** – Triangle passing: make a dribble before the pass (passer). The passer returns back to the original spot. Meet the pass with a few short steps (receiver) before catching the pass. Catch the ball with the foot closest to the passer. Next, make a crossover step (the foot furthest from the original passer is the pivot foot) before the pass to the next receiver.

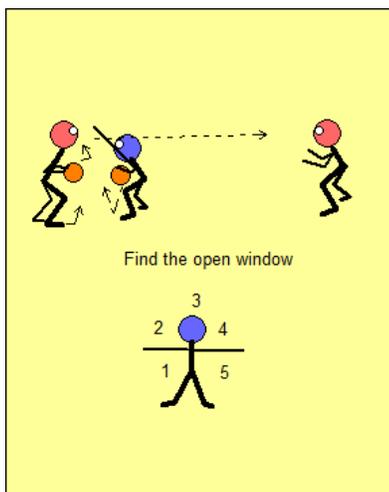
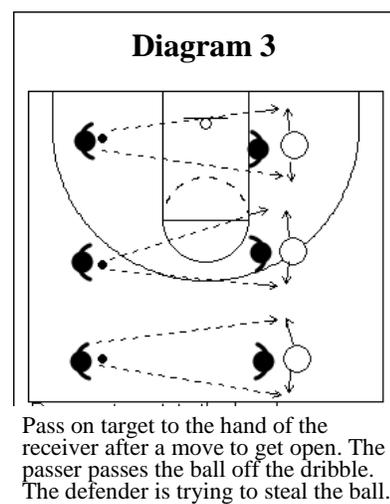
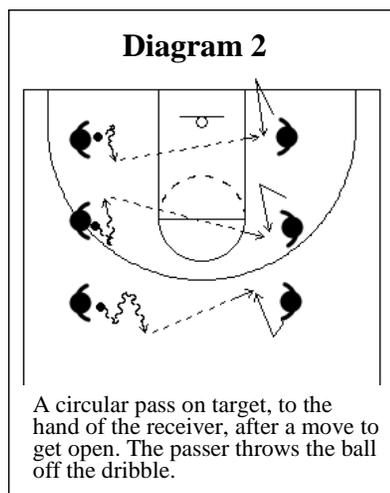
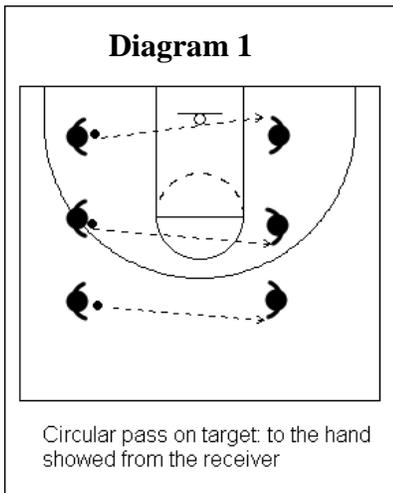
**Diagram C** – Add a soft defender (Phase C of the teaching progression). The same drill as **Diagram B**, but add a guided defender. Offensive player has to hold the defender with the forearm before releasing to meet the pass. The player dribbles by their defender to make the next pass.

## **ON TARGET**

**Diagram 1** – Groups of two. One player shows a target while other practices shoulder or circular passes. Receiver must meet the pass by taking a short step.

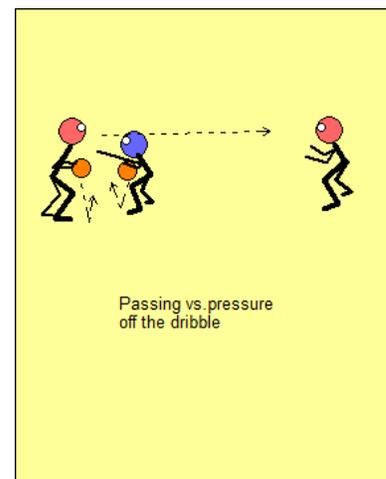
**Diagram 2** – Same setup as previous drill, but this time ball-handler must move side-to-side. When the receiver shows target hands, the passer must pick up the ball and execute the shoulder pass and get it to the receiver on time (At the appointment – the ball and the receiver must arrive at the right spot at the right time). The receiver must still meet the pass with a short step and catch with two hands.

**Diagram 3** – Variation, add a soft defender facing the passer. No eye contact; the defender cannot see where the ball will be passed. The passer must work on faking. The passer is passing to the appointment spot not to the spot where the receiver begins. The receiver needs to move first by indicating a target.



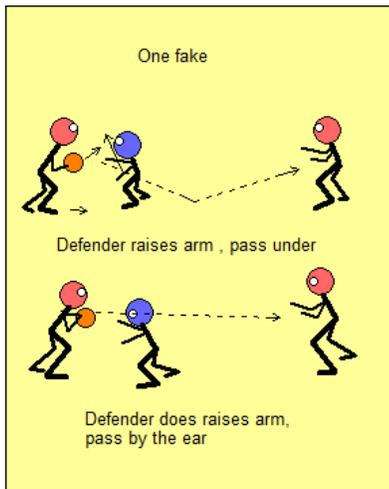
### Passing Versus Pressure

Here is a version of the previous drill that focuses on reading the open window. It helps with the passer's awareness. In this version, the passer is static and the defender is dribbling a ball. The dribbler can change hands and is trying to deflect the ball. The passer must read which of the five windows is open to pass through. It is recommended that the passer and receiver start close together at first. If not, the quality of the passes will be poor.



In the second version, the passer is also dribbling. The drill can be loaded by the passers passing to the receiver only when the target is shown. It cannot be stressed enough that the coach must make error detections and corrections. Many players will focus on the outcome and make a lazy, loopy, overhead pass. The coach must ensure the players focus on the process. All of the correct footwork and body position must still be in place.

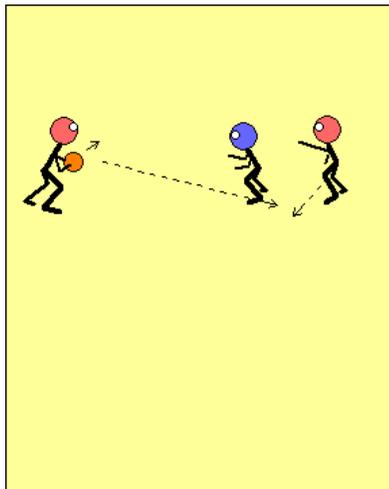
In the final version, the defender is not dribbling. The defender can cover two of the five windows.



### Pass Fake

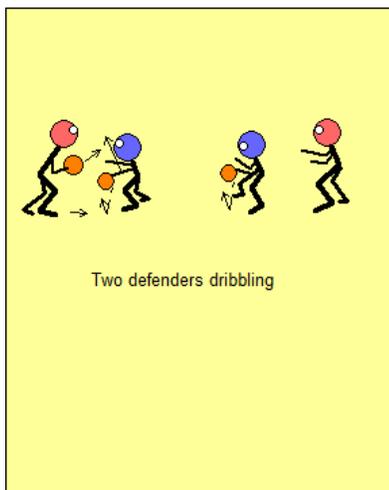
The passer should only make one fake when passing to a teammate. This is a shrug of the shoulder and the ball. It is either a shrug up or down. The passer should stay compact so they can read the reaction of the defender quickly and make a quality pass. If the defender reacts to the shrug up, pass under the arm. If the defender does not react, pass by the ear. The opposite is true for the shrug down.

When the offensive player makes more than one fake, the defender will start to randomly move their arms. The chances for a deflection increase.



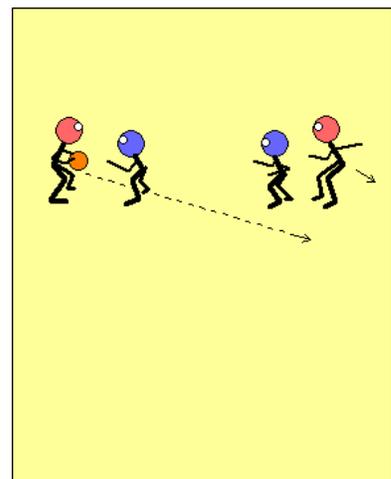
### Fake the Defender Off the Ball

It also important the passer learns to fake the defender off the ball. In this version of the drill, the defender plays with their back to the receiver. The passer and receiver must communicate with target hands as to where the pass will be made. The defender tries to read the passer's eyes. A smart defender will start to guess that sometimes the pass will be opposite of where the passer is looking. The fakes must be convincing. The timing of the pass and the movement of the receiver is very important. The receiver must break first. This allows the passer to judge the speed and timing of the pass.



In this version both defenders are dribbling. It gives the two offensive players a slight advantage. At the same time it is improving the ability of the defenders to dribble and not watch the ball at the same time.

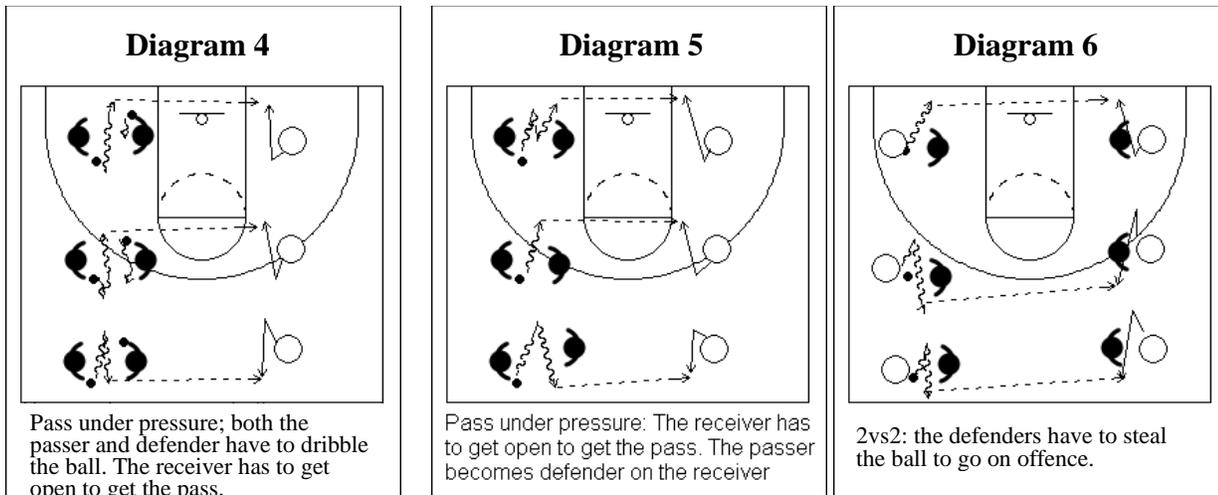
In the final version, the defenders do not have basketballs.



## PASS ON TIME, ON TARGET

**Diagram 4 (5 – 6)** – The passer and defender each dribble one ball facing each other. The receiver is about 10 feet away behind defender. The passer must look to pass the ball to the receiver on time and on target, by passing either over the defender's dribbling hand or over their head. The defender may knock

down the pass with the opposite hand. The defender is allowed to switch dribbling hands. Load the drill by adding a defender, with the ball, on the receiver.



### SUGGESTIONS:

- Pass the ball from shoulder-to-shoulder.
- Stay low while pivoting and push the ball with legs to have more balance on the physical contact.
- Bring the ball outside the body of the defender and hold the ball with both hands until passing it (one and half hands).
- Move the ball with short moves with energy. The arms should not be extended when faking.
- Only one fake is required.
- Under pressure the pivot foot is always the one away from the defence.

### PASS ON TIME, ON TARGET (DEFENCE ON THE PASSER)

#### Note: Teaching progression

Phase A – the drill is done on air (1vs0, 2vs0, etc.)

Phase B – the coach guides the offensive player's actions

Phase C – add a guided defender to the drill. The defender is usually placed to give the offensive player a one-second advantage.

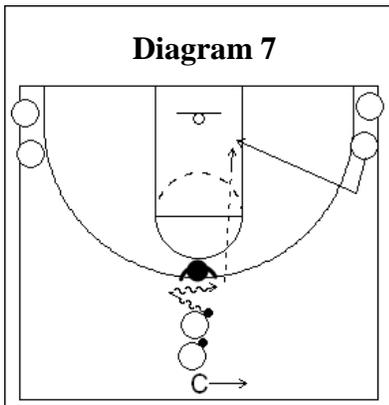
**Passing to win: Diagram 7** – Phase A – One line in each corner outside the three-point line and one line with balls up top. The coach stands behind ball-handler. The ball-handler dribbles side-to-side scanning the court. The coach lifts an arm signalling for the player on that side to cut and receive a pass. The receiver must time the cut to when the passer is ready. On the catch, the receiver must keep moving and either attack middle or baseline (dynamic one-on-one). The passer cuts to the basket and fills the spot of the receiver.

**Points of emphasis:** The ball-handler must deliver pass on time to the appointment (outside the three-point line foul line extended). This is the timing between the passer and receiver. Too often it is the receiver cutting too soon, before the passer is ready. After a few repetitions a defender on the ball-handler is added (as shown in the diagram). This would be Phase B of the teaching progression.

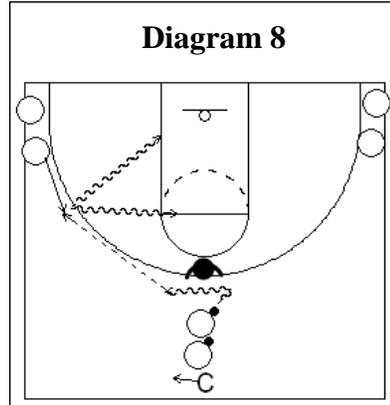
It is important that the passer be on the same side of the floor as the receiver. Shorten the pass by taking it to the appropriate side before passing.

**Back-door passing: Diagram 8** – Back-door passing: The same drill, but this time a pass fake from the shoulder signals for the cutter to cut back-door. The passer must deliver a bounce pass in the key, or an over the top pass leading the cutter to the basket. After a few repetitions a defender on the ball-handler is added.

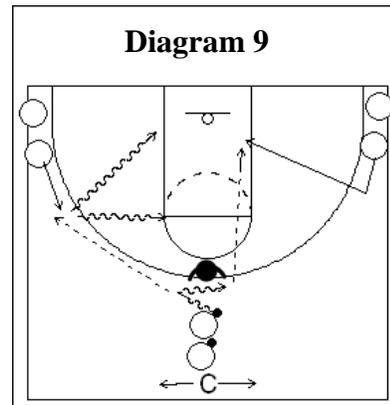
**Diagram 9:** The player without the ball decides whether to execute a back-door cut or catch and penetrate.



**Diagram 7**  
2vs1: The coach indicates to the receiver who will cut, he also indicates a back-door cut. The passer must make a quick decision.



**Diagram 8**  
2vs1: The coach indicates the player that has to receive the ball and play 1vs0. The passer has to dribble before passing.

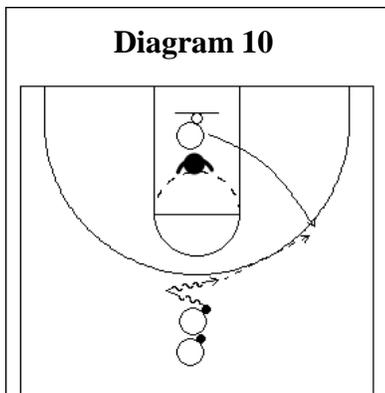


**Diagram 9**  
2vs1: The coach indicates the receiver that can play 1vs0 or a back-door cut. Player has to make a quick decision.

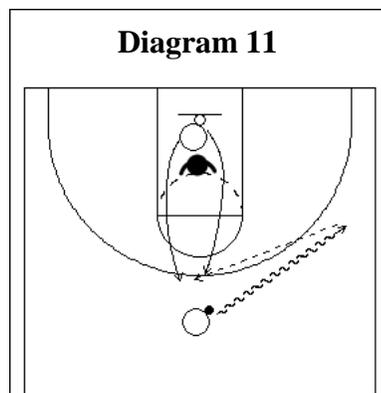
### DEFENCE ON THE RECEIVER

**Diagram 10 – 11** – Phase C – Add a defender on wings. The players can start from different areas on the floor.

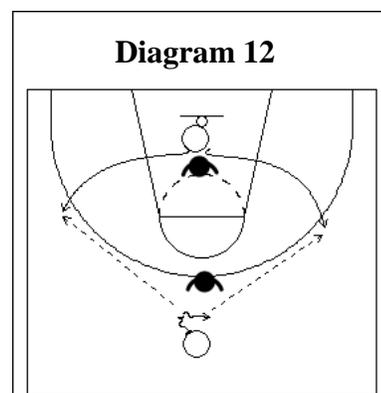
**Diagram 12** – Phase C – Add a defender also on ball-handler (2vs2).



**Diagram 10**  
2vs1: The defender is in front of the offensive player facing the ball. The offensive player decides when to get open and play 1vs1.

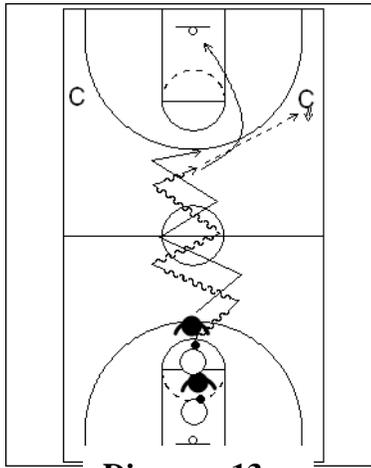


**Diagram 11**  
2vs1: The defender is in front of the offensive player facing the ball. The offensive player decides when to get open and play 1vs1.

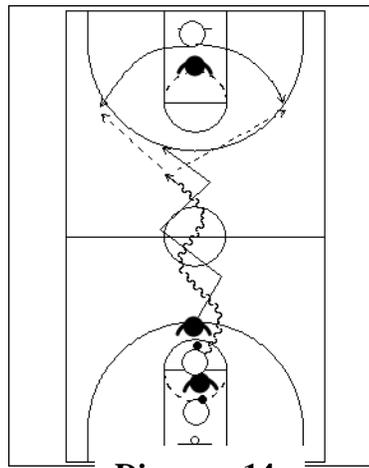


**Diagram 12**  
2vs2: The player under the basket decides where to get the ball.

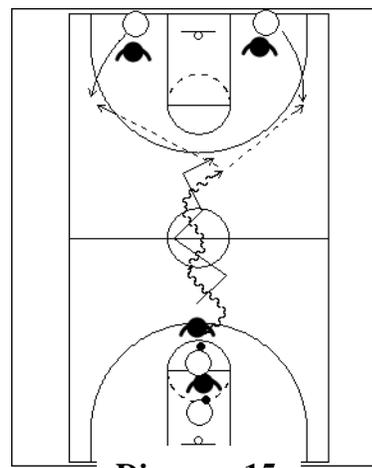
**PASS UNDER PRESSURE (1vs1 pivot foot) Diagram 13 – 14 – 15**



**Diagram 13**



**Diagram 14**



**Diagram 15**

**Diagram 13 – 14 – 15** – Progress from 1vs1 to 3vs3 from three-quarter court: The ball-handler has to keep the dribble alive until the receiver gives them a target. One pair starts at the far foul line and goes one-on-one full-court. The next pair is waiting to go. The dribbler must keep their eyes up and is scanning the receivers. In **Diagram 13** one of the two coaches shows their hands. In **Diagram 14**, the offensive player will break to get open when the dribbler is in position to pass. In **Diagram 15**, there are two offensive players with a slight one-second advantage. The pass must be on time and on target.

Try to always pass with same hand as the side of the receiver (i.e. right hand on right side, left hand on left side). Pass only if the players are showing a target with ready hands.

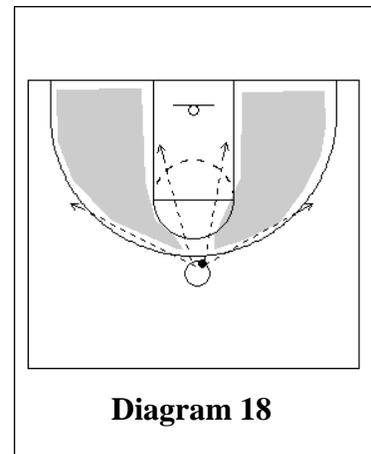
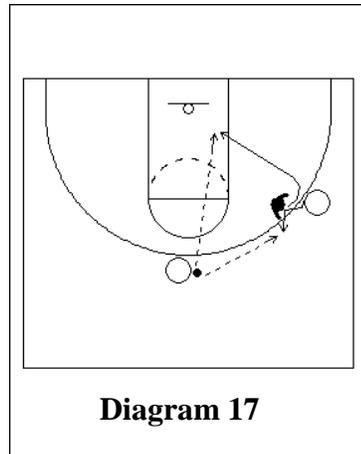
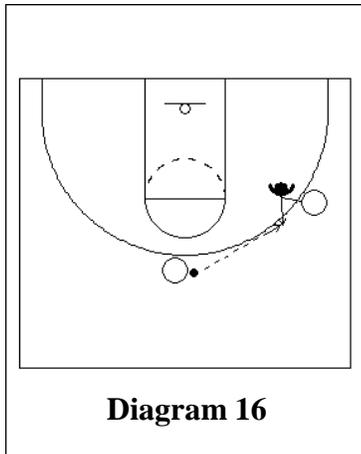
### **MAKE THE PASS SHORTER (under pressure)**

The offensive player makes contact with the defender to avoid being denied (**Diagram 16**). Back-door cut if the defender overplays the offensive player, rolling around the defender and holding them with the inside forearm (**Diagram 17**). Make a short step toward the ball to meet the pass and holding the defender with the inside forearm to make the pass shorter.

**Diagram 16** – 1vs1 to get open (defence faces the basket) and attack the basket (two dribbles max.)

**Diagram 17** – 1vs1 get open and back-door cut (defender play facing the ball)

**Diagram 18** – The ball has to be passed in the paint or on the three-point line

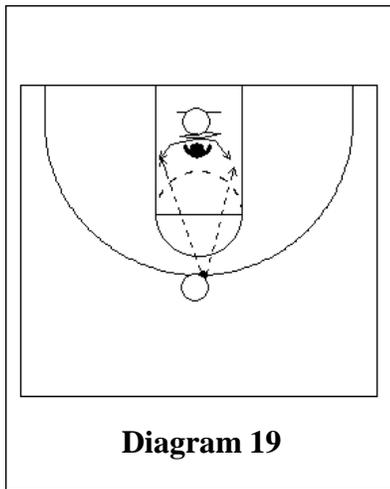


### **PASS IN THE PAINT UNDER PRESSURE**

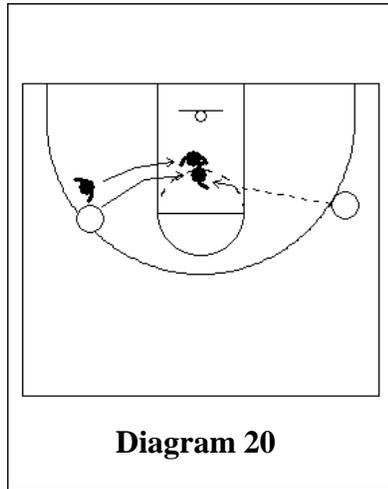
**Diagram – 19 – 20 – 21:** The offensive player tries to get position in the key, using outside/inside footwork to seal the defender (foot furthest away from defender is the pivot foot). The outside/inside step allows the receiver to push into and put the defender on their back. The passer is at top of the key. The passer must pass inside the key only. On the catch the offensive player tries to score. If the defender stays behind, use a bounce pass. If defender plays three-quarter defence, use a lob or high pass.

Add a cut to a seal **Diagram 20** and **Diagram 21**. The offensive player starts with a slight advantage since the defender is positioned shoulder-to-shoulder, but facing in the opposite direction. It is important to seal in the key and not continue to run. In **Diagram 20** the offensive player uses a “right foot, left foot stop” to seal the defender. The offensive player is on the high side. In **Diagram 21**, the offensive player uses a left foot, right foot to stop and seal. The offensive player is on the low side.

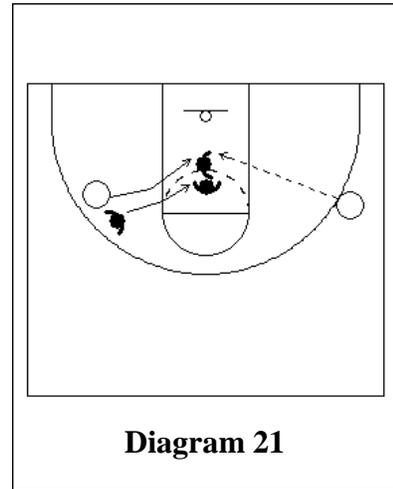
1vs1 fight in the paint



Weak-side cut (in front of the D)



Weak-side cut (back-door cut)



### FULL-COURT PASS

**Diagram 22 – Phase A**– Players line up in two lines at centre on the sidelines. Every player has a ball except the first player in one of the lines. The player without the ball runs wide, sprinting to get ahead of the ball. The first player with the ball takes two dribbles with their outside hand and makes the pass, with two hands, to the player running up the floor. The receiver catches the ball with two hands and scores a basket. The passer stops, changes direction and sprints to the other basket. The player in the opposite line takes two dribbles and makes the pass. This action continues. The dribblers must not dribble too soon or else they will end up in front of the runners.

**Phase B** – A coach stands in the key. If the receiver sees the chest of the coach in the drive line they will pull up for a shot. If the coach is not in the drive line, the players continue in for the layup.

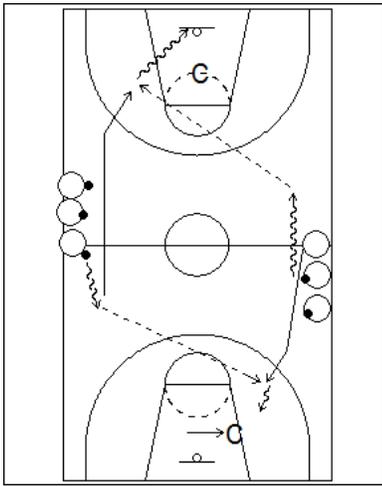
**Diagram 23** –The players line up at the free throw line and face the opposite end. There is a line of players near the sideline of the same free throw line. The coach (C) places cones in the far corners of the court. The offence starts to bring the ball up the floor, the wing runs the floor. The ball-handler can only pass the ball inside the imaginary line of the ball and the corner. The wing can only cut at the basket when reaching the free throw line extended at the three-point line (see **Diagram 27**).

**Diagram 24 – Phase B** – i) The coach plays defence on the ball-handler. The ball-handler must beat the coach to get up the floor.  
ii) Coach plays defence up the floor.

**Diagram 25 – Phase C** – A defender to the wing player is added.

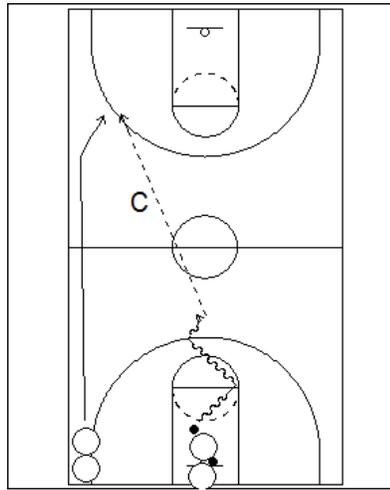
**Diagram 26 – Phase C** – Two wings with defenders. The ball-handler has no defender on them. The ball-handler starts up the floor. The wings try to get ahead of defenders. The ball-handler is not allowed to score the ball. They must pass to one of the wings or swing the ball.

Push the ball with two hands



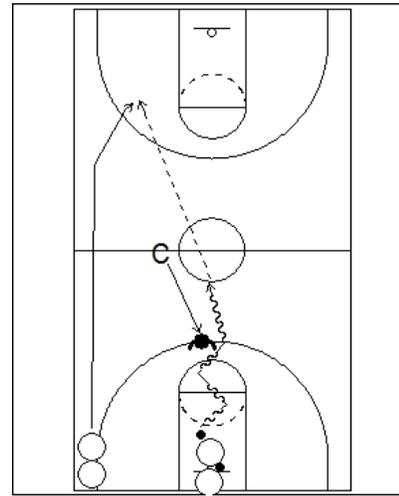
**Diagram 19**

Two versus the coach (high/low)



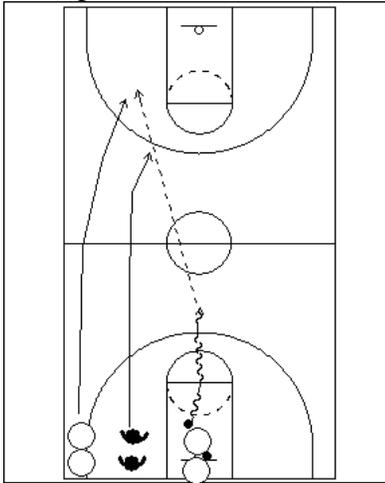
**Diagram 23**

Two versus the coach



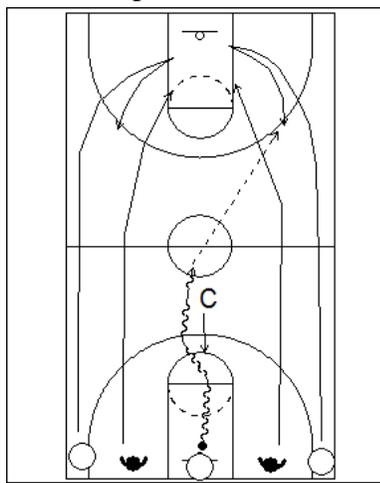
**Diagram 24**

2vs1 (passer cannot shoot)



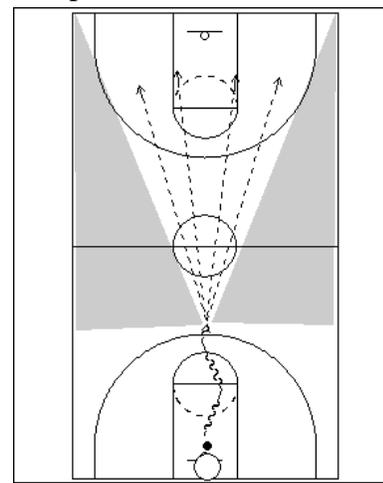
**Diagram 25**

3vs2 (passer cannot shoot)



**Diagram 26**

pass inside the white triangle



**Diagram 27**

### Key Points

- Getting open on the wing. Block arm of defender at the elbow and step over his foot. Seal then step to catch the ball. The passer must deliver the ball to the target on time.
- When playing 1vs1 or 2vs2, they must have support (an outlet) in order for them not to force shots. Do not encourage the players to take bad shots. The ball can always be passed to the outlet. Move to get the ball again.
- When passing with defence in front, keep chest moving toward the basket and use a circular pass.
- Use one and half hands when passing, especially when passing on weak-side.
- Make only one fake then find the angle to pass immediately from the fake.
- If a crossover is necessary when passing, make sure to step forward and to not cross femurs.

### Passing

Keep ball in front of pivot foot. Keep shoulder close to the knees when looking to pivot and pass.

Drill: the ball-handler starts at half and dribbles to the three-point line. Have two receivers lined up at the attack spot. The ball-handler picks up his dribble and a defender pressures them. The coach counts to three or four before signalling to which side to pass to. The receivers must work on moving to catch the ball and shortening the pass. This concept is the same as in **Diagram 27** but start from half-court.

### Getting Open

Start the run, stop (create contact) and then continue to run.

If possible, try to catch on a two-foot jump stop, facing the basket, in order to have the choice of pivots. If not, then use the reverse pivot to catch and create space. This is consistent with having a foot furthest from the defender as the pivot foot.

### SUGGESTIONS:

- Keep eyes up in order to see both players at the same time.
- Pass the ball always on the white triangle (**Diagram 27**), the receiver can see both the ball and the basket.

- Drive the ball slowly in order to be in balance and see the timing and the target while dribbling. The player is dribbling too fast when the eyes go down.
- Two-hand pass from the chest. Never use one-hand pass while dribbling in the open court, the coordination is lessened the pass will not be precise.
- Pass the ball in front of the player running in fast break.
- A one-hand pass from the shoulder can be used if there is need to pass the ball on the opposite side of the hand dribbling the ball and without defensive pressure.

No pass – no relationship

Forced pass – a forced relationship, it is never completed or never whole

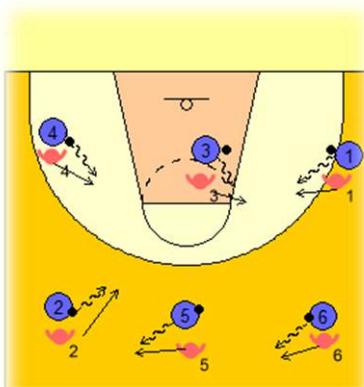
Dirty pass – a pass made after holding on to the ball for a long time

Clean pass – a pass made on time on target) - build a relationship of trust

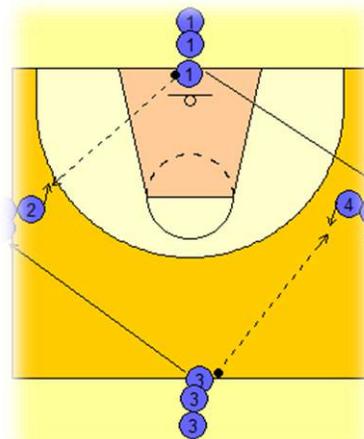
Players always have to make a short step before every pass with the foot from the side of the pass (in the direction of the pass and without crossing the legs), in order to:

- Increase the balance.
- Improve the angle of the pass without using a dribble.
- Decrease the distance between the passer and the receiver.

This is very important if there is a need to pass the ball to the low post; it is less important if having to pass the ball in a straight line. With the short step, the player also has to have their knees bent.



**Diagram 1**

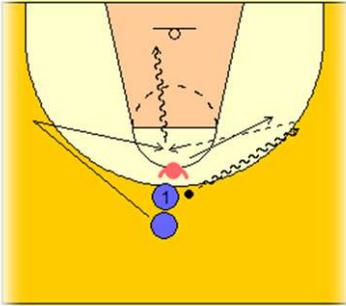


**Diagram 2**

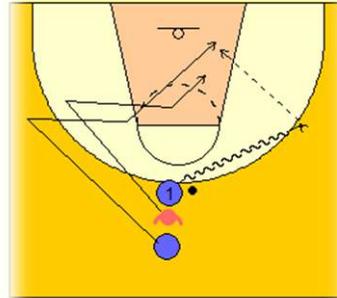
In **Diagram 1**, the idea is to teach the players how to use the pivot foot under pressure: the ball-handler makes two to three dribbles before picking up the ball. The defender has to put pressure on the ball for five seconds. The ball-handler has to rotate on the pivot foot to defend the ball and always keeping it in front of the pivot foot. The pivot foot is the one furthest from the defender.

**Diagram 2** “Rhombus Drill”: the players with the ball have to pass to the player on his left side and then run behind the lane on his right side. The receiver has to make one step toward the ball, show his hands (meet the pass), catch it and do the same. Option 1 - the passer makes one dribble before passing the ball.

Option 2 - when the coach says “switch” the exercise changes the rotation from one direction to the other. Make sure that the passer passes the ball only to the receiver that shows his hands.



**Diagram 3**



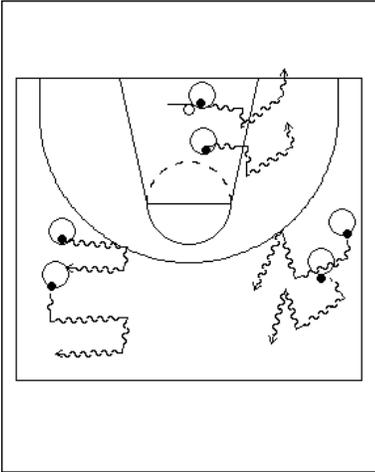
**Diagram 4**

**Diagram 3–4:** passing exercise in game situation to teach how to pass on timing and on target.

“Dean Smith drill”: Four-on-four; the offensive players have to make 11 points. Every pass counts one point but they have to make one basket before to make 11 points. Each player can also use two dribble to attack the basket or to release the defensive pressure.

# DRIBBLING

## BALL HANDLING WITH A PARTNER

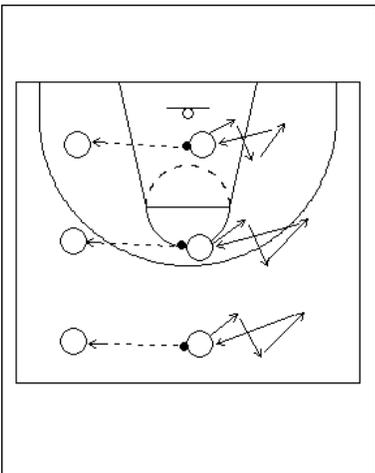


### Partner Mirror Dribble

Each player has a ball and a partner of similar ability. One player leads by dribbling and the other player follows behind mirroring the actions of the leader. When the coach calls “change,” the two turn around and exchange roles.

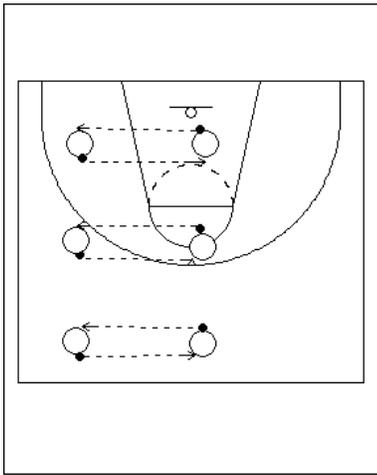
### Key Points of Emphasis:

- Move in broken lines. Basketball players need to learn move with sharp changes of direction and speed. It is important for players to not move around in circles.
- Use both hands.
- Use all available space. They must be aware of the other groups that are performing the drill. Find open space.



### Three Slides

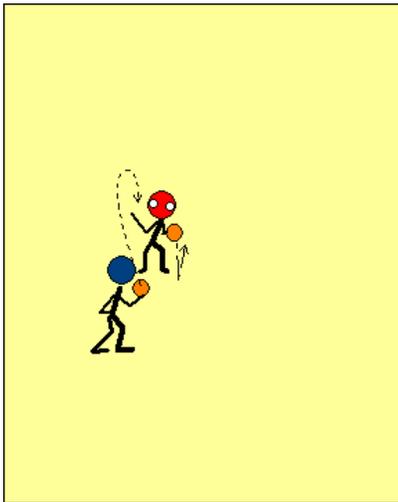
Each pair has one basketball and an abundance of open space behind them. The partner without the ball shows hands (10 fingers); this is the indication for the player with the ball to pass. After passing, the player performs two defensive slides to the right, hip turns, two defensive slides to the left, hip turns and a final two slides to the right. Upon completion of the slides, the player cuts back to their partner and show hands. The player with the ball passes and does the set of three defensive slides. While the player without the ball is doing defensive slides, the player with the ball is working on ball handling, performing various Maravich-type drills, constantly scanning their partner so the pass can be made when the hands are shown.



### Partner One Dribble Pass

Each player has a ball and faces each other about two metres away. The balls are in the same hands. Each player bounces the ball at the same time with one dribble. The ball is immediately passed with one hand to the open hand of their partner. Both passes happen at the same time. The players alternate back and forth, one dribble pass. As the players improve the speed and height of the dribbles should improve. The passes will become crisper and more on a straight line rather than a soft pass with a high arc.

Load the drill by having the players move and make the passes.



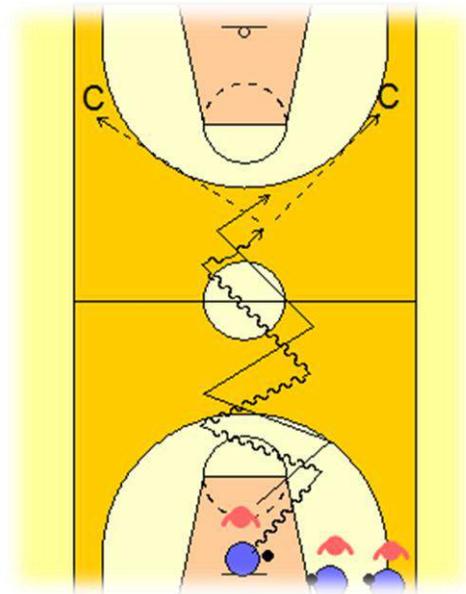
### Left Hand Dribble/Catch

Each partner has a ball. While one player dribbles with the left hand the other partner tosses the second ball with a high soft arc so the dribbler can catch the ball with one hand. This forces the dribbler to keep the eyes up and focus on the ball being caught, not the ball being dribbled.

At this stage, the players should be using low hard dribble with their eyes up. To load the drill, have the players move as they toss, dribble and catch.

Never say “keep the head high while dribbling” as it’s difficult to run like this. Keep eyes up.

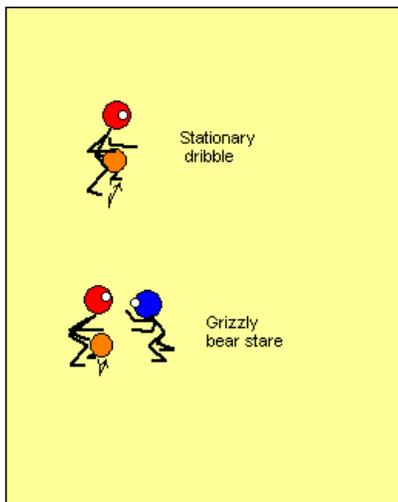
- Ball handling exercise with two balls (dribble high, dribble down, around the body, etc...)
- Ball handling with the indication of the coach (side dribble drive, back dribble drive, change of hand and direction) to teach to the players the position of the hand on the ball.
- Every player with the ball: “the hunter and the hares” (protection of the ball).
- Drills with the cones (with change of hand, change of speed and direction).
- The execution of the exercise has to be 60 percent with the weak-side hand (both shooting and dribbling). Bilateral exercise with two balls. As soon as a player improves the weak hand they automatically improve the strong one.
- Teach dribbling under pressure (full-court one-on-one with two receivers). The ball-handler has to pass only to the receiver that shows their hands. Five seconds to pass the half-court line (**Diagram. 5**). Do not abuse the dribble. Avoid useless dribble.



**Diagram 5**

## **Dribbling Versus Pressure**

Many players have developed the ability to do many tricks and stunts while dribbling the ball. These skills build the ball-handler's confidence, but often do not carry over to being able to handle the ball under the pressures of the game and a real defender. What follows is a progression that can be used to help the players build towards being able to handle the ball against an aggressive defender. They also show how to make use of TLC. (Teaching, learning and competing drills or games).



### **Wobble Stage**

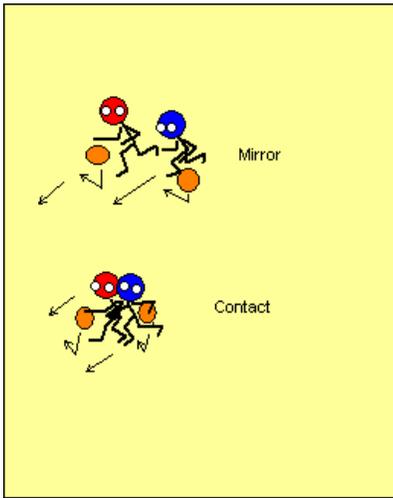
Players need to learn new skills in isolation and at their own pace. It is like a baby learning to walk. Give players the opportunity to dribble on their own in a stationary manner.

Key points:

- Be in an athletic stance – the knees and hips are bent
- Dribble the ball at knee height just outside the foot
- The ball is pushed and absorbed not slapped
- The eyes are up scanning the surroundings

### **Loading the drill**

- Have a defender do a grizzly bear stare. This adds pressure to keeps the eyes up. It also makes the dribbler comfortable with someone in their personal space (both players can be dribbling at the same time)
- Move the ball with different dribbles; front-to-back, side-to-side, crossover



### **Mirror**

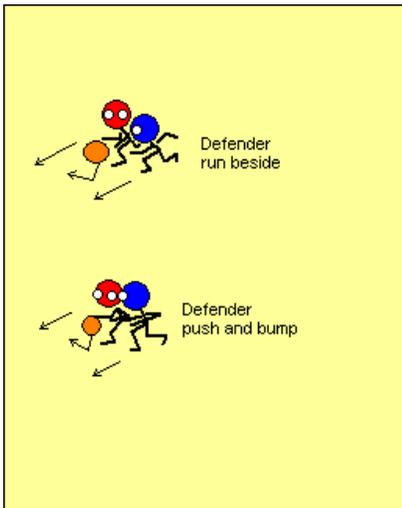
One player is the leader. The other player must mirror the leader's movements. This can be done in a confined space and usually while facing each other. Also have the players do it while moving forward. The dribble uses hesitations and changes of speed. The closer the players can be to one another, the better it is for feeling comfortable dribbling in a confined space.

### **Contact**

This can take two forms;

- Dribble while staying in contact with each other.
- Dribble in a straight line and then coordinated bumping each other after a certain number of dribbles.

It is important that players learn to handle little bumps that occur when dribbling. Ideally they should have the weight on the outside foot when the contact occurs. They are able to absorb the contact by bracing themselves and pushing back.

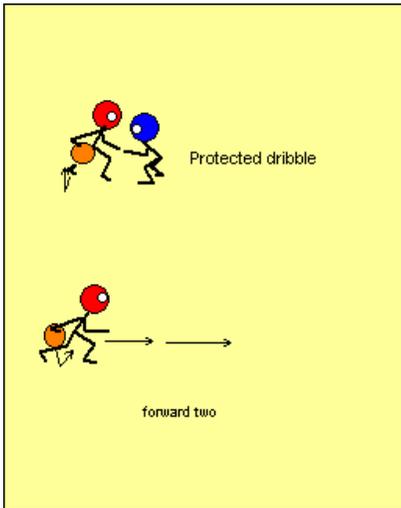


### **Defender Run Beside**

The ball-handler dribbles in a straight line while a defender runs beside as close as possible. Be sure that the dribbler is keeping the eyes up. Using 10 fingers for passing is one way to ensure that scanning is occurring. Often the ball-handler will want to start to slide instead of run. The ball-handler should be able to go at various speeds and eventually lean into the defender.

### **Defender Pushing and Bumping**

When the ball-handler is ready more contact can be added. Next, the defender can apply a steady push or random bumps. The ball-handler does not want to get pushed off the line. Stay low and lean into the defender by getting the head and shoulder in front of the defender's chest. These are fouls that often do not get called.

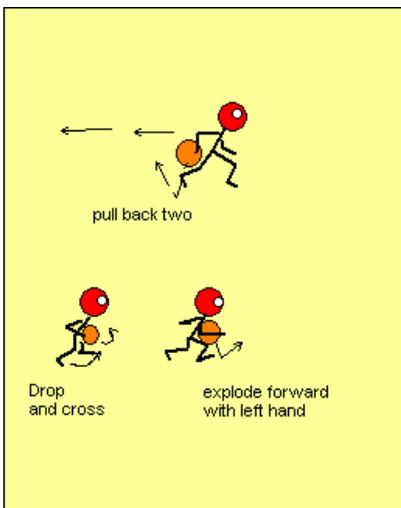


### Protected Dribble

Eventually the ball-handler must learn when to get into a protected or crab dribble stance. Here the ball-handler is perpendicular to the defender. The ball is dribbled by the back foot to keep it protected. The other arm is up to prevent the reach. If the reach occurs do not extend the arm, this will often lead to an offensive foul call. It is much more effective to turn the shoulder.

### Pullback Crossover (Two Forward)

Against tough defence all ball-handlers need a pullback dribble. Practice in isolation first by moving forward with two dribbles from the crab dribble stance.



### Two Back

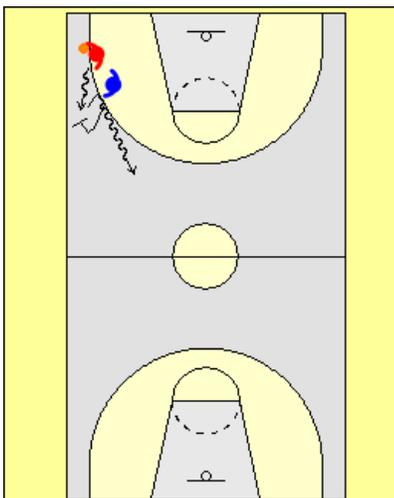
Then go back for two dribbles with the ball in the same hand. The ball is by the back foot the whole time to keep it protected.

### Back Pivot to a Backward Crossover

The key move is to back pivot and cross the ball backward at the same time. This way the ball is protected from the defence.

### Explode Forward with Other Hand

The dribbler should explode past the defender moving forward. Go through any arms.

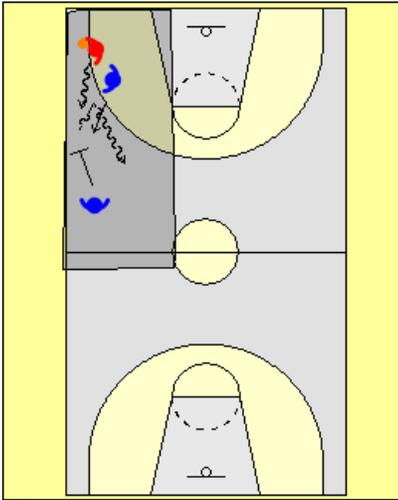


### Add Guided Defence

After the players have practiced in isolation they need to go against a guided defender. This helps them polish the key components and work on the decision making of when to use the move.

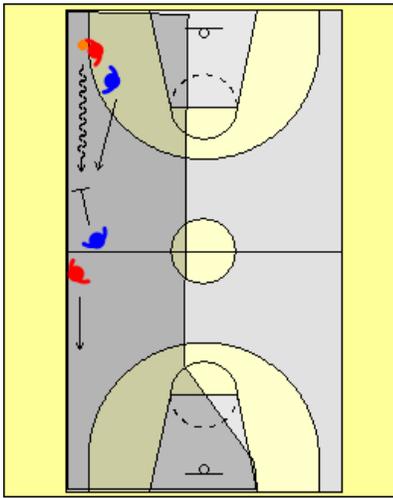
The defender runs beside the dribbler. If the defender:

- Places their chest in front of the ball-handler; or,
- Angles the ball-handler dangerously close to the sideline; they must pull-back and crossover to get to the middle of the floor. The players can work in pairs spread out around the gym. Be sure to work on going right and left.



### **1vs2**

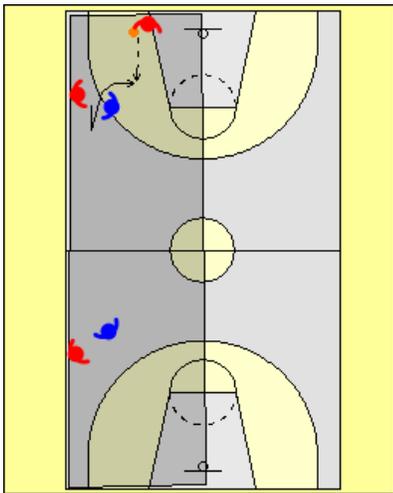
Another time to use this dribble is when faced with a double team. The ball-handler is working to get the ball over the half-court line versus two defenders. This can be used as a teaching or learning drill.



### **Two-on-two**

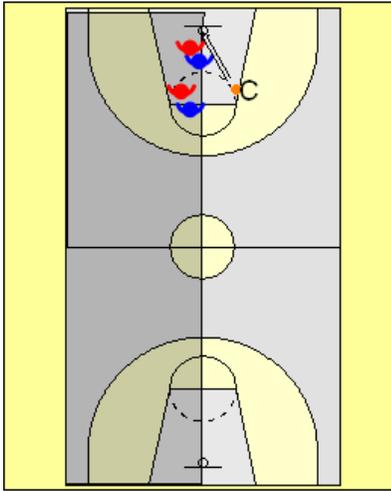
By making it two-on-two the ball-handler must decide when to pass and when to dribbler. The defenders are working on directing the ball into the trap and the timing of when to get a good trap.

This is an excellent learning drill. Players need to learn to play through the mistakes.



### **Competing**

Here the players compete in a two-on-two game with an in-bounder. By restricting the size of the court the challenge becomes more difficult for the offence.



### **Competing Off the Rebound**

Another way to start the game is to have the player box out on a shot attempt. If the ball goes in, it must be inbounded. On a miss, an outlet pass or break out dribble is used.

What type of listener are you?

Just waiting for the pause so you can tell the story?

Looking for the points you disagree with?

Interested in learning from the other person?

Coach Pasquali

Players in every position will have to be able to dribble the ball. Similar to layups, players must master a number of different dribbles. The coach must take each dribble through the four phases of teaching. Players need the following dribbles:

- Speed dribble (open court)
- Control dribble (in traffic)
- Change of pace
- Change of direction (crossover, spin, behind the back, between the legs)
- Fakes (inside/out, fake spin, hesitate and go)
- Positional players at this stage need to be able to beat defenders with the dribble. The guard has to be able to beat the defender at the top in transition. A wing player, who can beat their defender off the dribble from the side, can create problems. Finally post players need to learn the dribble series to the middle when catching the ball in the post.

All dribbles must be executed with the eyes scanning the floor. Going too fast with the head down is an accident looking to happen.

## DYNAMIC ONE-ON-ONE PROGRESSION TEACHING (WITH BALL)

- Pivot foot: crossover step and catch and go
  - Read the defence:
  - Decision making
    - a) Catch and shot
    - b) Pass
    - c) Drive to the basket
  - Dynamic ne-on-one
  - Play with only two dribbles (maximum)
- 
- Slow – quick: teach two different rhythms
  - Power jump stop if the defender is beside the offensive player while shooting
  - Lay-ups if the defender is behind the ball
  - Jump stop and jump shot if the defence is in front of the offensive player

HALF-COURT OFFENCE

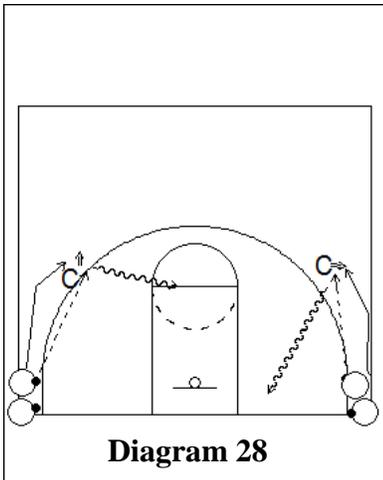
FULL-COURT OFFENCE

## PLAY ONE-ON-ONE ONLY IF THERE IS A ONE SECOND ADVANTAGE

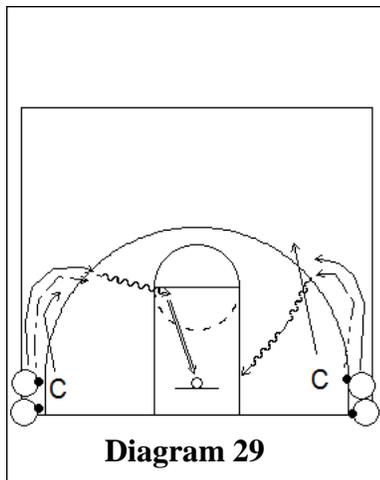
### Dribble Starts

Coaches will need to spend time on the proper footwork for starting the dribble – especially off of a crossover step and taking the ball immediately off a catch and dribbling. Strict attention to detail on this point cannot be overemphasized enough.

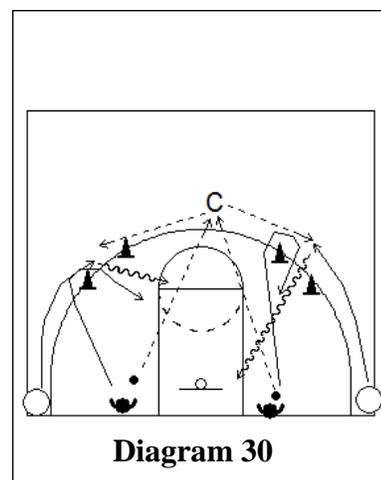
1vs0 curl or crossover step



1vs1 read the defence



One-on-one live. Read the defence



**Diagram 28** (right side of diagram) Phase A – Players line up at baseline, pass to the coach (C), run with hands prepared, and take ball from the coach. Sweep the ball and go baseline using a crossover step in front of the coach, finish with an outside inside power layup.

**Diagram 28** (left side of diagram) Phase A – Players line up at baseline, pass to the coach, run with hands prepared, cut around behind the coach, take ball while stepping with top foot, keep going with a dribble (top hand) to the middle and shoot pull-up jumper.

**Diagram 29** Phase B – coach plays guided defence. Players self-toss to the attack spot, run to get ball. Coach gives them a read of either middle or baseline. Players must anticipate by shoulder checking (sneak a peek) where the coach is playing.

**Diagram 30** Phase C – Offence lines up at three-point line and baseline. Defence lines up with ball at the baseline and key. There are two cones spaced about six-feet apart at the three-point line. The defensive player passes to the coach, the offence runs to receive pass from the coach. Offence must look to see which way the defence is going. If the defence runs to the top cone then the offence must sweep and go to the basket. If the defence chases behind the lowest cone, the offence keeps moving towards middle for a pull up jumper.

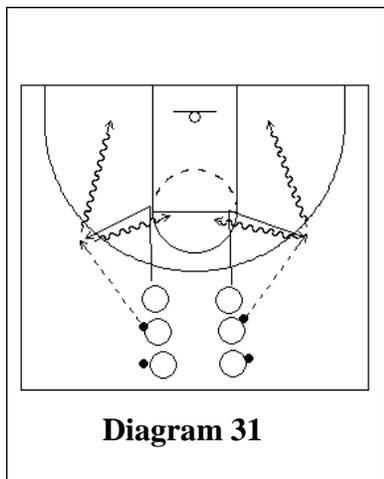
**Dribble Start (Player getting open from the wing spot)**

**Diagram 31** Phase A – The first player in line, without a ball, runs to the elbow, bumps out (jump stops, reverse pivots and cuts) on the foul line extended. Catch the ball with a two-foot jump stop facing the basket (pass has to be on time and on target) and drives to the basket: Sweep the ball and go baseline with a crossover step, finish with an outside/inside power layup or take the ball with a crossover step to the middle and shoot a pull-up jumper.

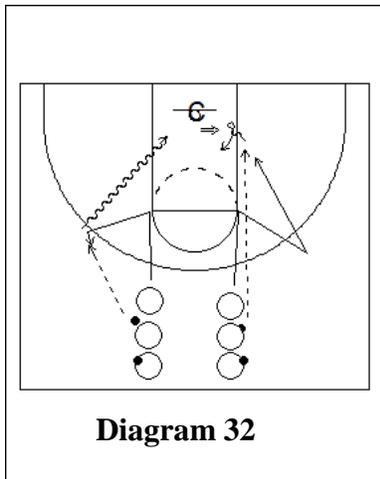
**Diagram 32** Phase A – The player executes a back-door cut if denied. The coach will stay under the basket: when the player goes to the basket (driving or with a back-door cut), if the coach (C) raises up their arms, the player will take a power jump stop with a shot fake, then turns back on the pivot foot for a jump shot. If the coach keeps his arms down the player have to finish with a power layup.

**Diagram 33** Phase B – the concept is the same as in **Diagram 32** but the coach guides the defence: 1) forcing to base line 2) forcing to the middle 3) deny and force them to a back-door cut.

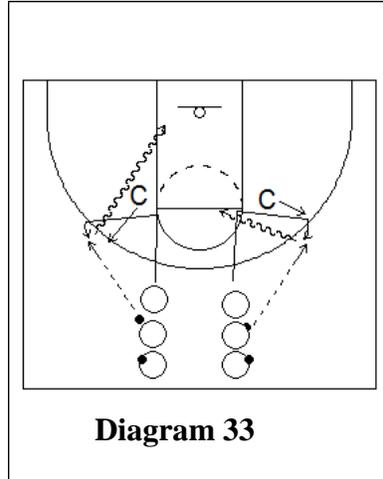
1vs0 Two-foot jump stop / back-door



1vs0 read the defence

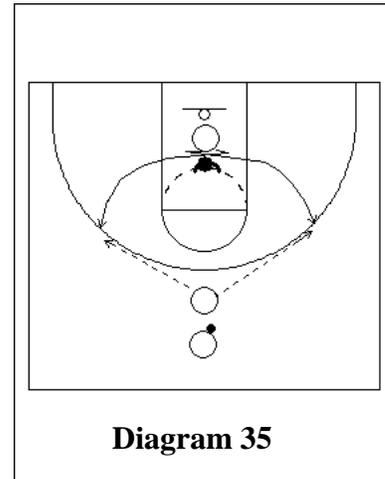
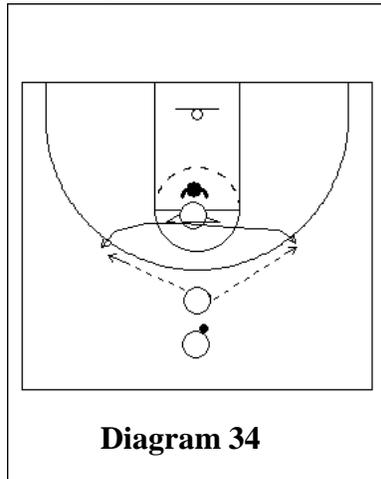


1vs1 read the defence



**Diagram 34** Phase C – one-on-one live. The offensive player tries to get open and receive the ball on the wing spot. Read the defence before catching the ball and playing one-on-zero with a maximum of two dribbles.

**Diagram 35** Phase C – Like the previous diagram. The offensive player starts from under the basket. The players have to use fakes and changes of speed. Read the defence before catching the ball and playing one-on-one with a maximum of two dribbles. On both diagrams (with different timing and spacing) the offensive player has to learn how to exploit the one-second advantage.



### One-on-one Reading the Defence

**Diagram 36** - Protect the ball: The offensive player with the ball. The defensive player faces the basket. As soon as the ball-handler decides to drive to the basket, the defender will start to defend the penetration:

- If the defence remains behind; finish with a quick layup.
- If defence is beside; power layup (one-foot jump stop and power shot or turn on pivot foot for a jump shot).

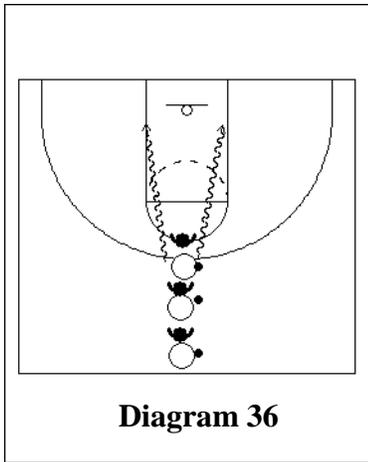
**Diagram 37** - Teaching the two speeds (slow-quick): The offensive player start dribbling slowly-slowly towards the basket. The defender goes backward staying on the offensive player's side. When the ball-handler changes speed, the defence will be active and will try to stop the penetration:

- If defence remains behind; finish with a quick layup.
- If defence is beside; power layup (one foot jump stop) and power shot or turn on pivot foot for a jump shot.
- If the defence gets in front, jump stop with a jump shot.

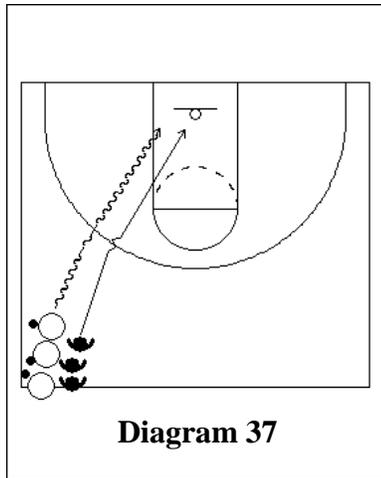
**Diagram 38** - Read the defence. When the player with the ball starts to dribble towards the basket, the defensive player runs to touch the hand of the coach, before recovering to stop the penetration.

- If the defence remains behind, finish with a quick layup.
- If the defence is beside; power layup (one-foot jump stop and power shot or turn on pivot foot for a jump shot).
- If the defence is in front; jump stop with a jump shot.

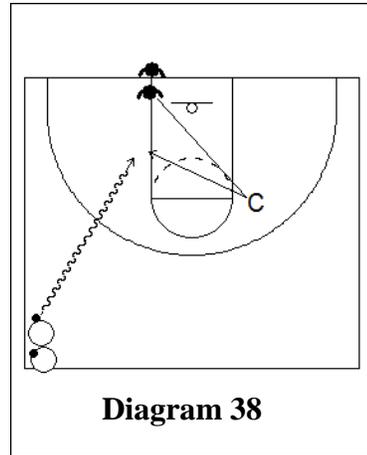
1vs1 protect the ball



1vs1 two speeds (slow-quick)



1vs1 read the defence



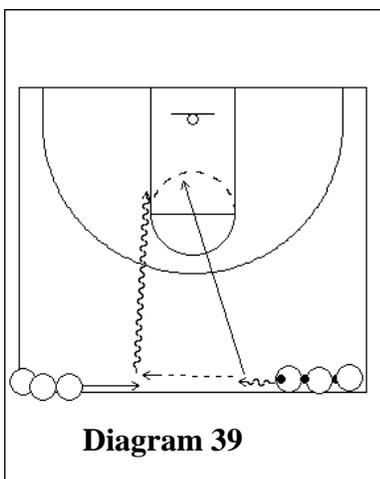
**Diagram 39** – One-on-one from half-court: the player with the ball passes the ball to the player in the line in front of them and plays defence. The receiver goes to the basket reading the distance of the defence.

- If the defence remains behind, finish with a quick layup.
- If the defence is beside, power layup (one foot jump stop) and power shot or turn on pivot foot for a jump shot.
- If the defence is in front, jump stop with a jump shot.

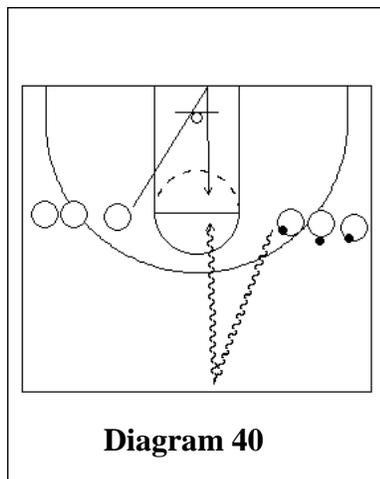
**Diagram 40** – The player with the ball dribbles to the half-court line, changes direction and attacks the defender recovering from the base line. The ball-handler has to attack the defence on one of their shoulders. If they move to close on the penetration the ball-handler has to change direction and beat them on the other side.

**Diagram 41** – The ball-handler dribbles and sets the ball down at the attack spot and runs to play the defence on the opposite side on the player attacking from the attack spot. The offensive player runs to pick up the ball from the opposite attack spot and dribbles to the basket, reading the position of the defender.

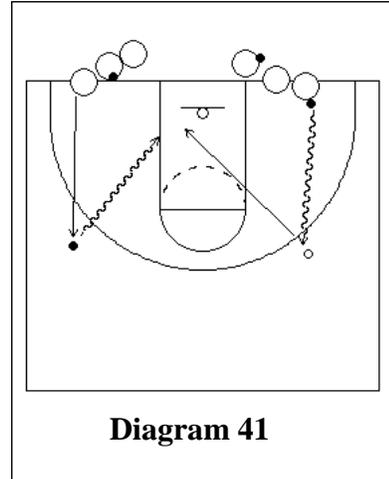
Read the defence (full-court)



Attack the shoulder of the D.



Power lay-up or jump shot

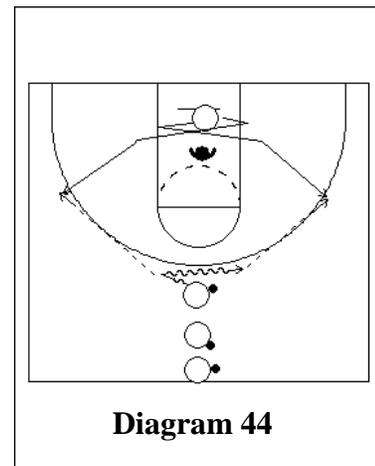
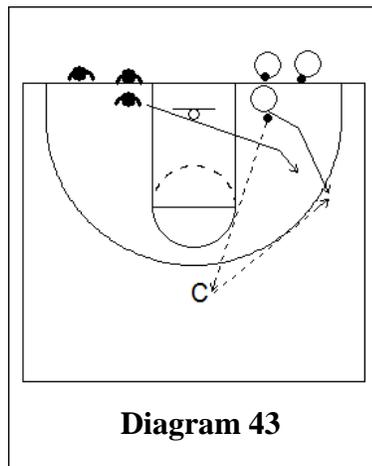
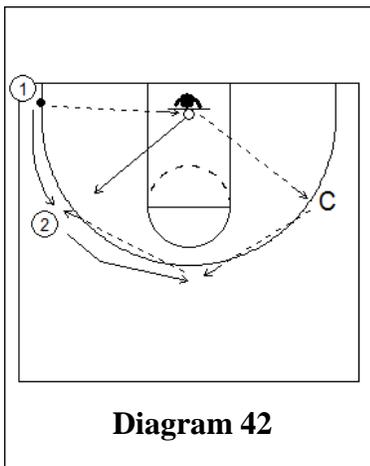


## Drills to Create a One Second Advantage and Dynamic One-on-one

**Diagram 42** – *Player One* starts with the ball and passes the ball to the defender, under the basket and runs to the foul line extended. The defender passes to the coach and anticipates defending *Player One*. In the meantime *Player Two* runs to the top of the key. When *Player Two* receives the ball they quickly pass the ball to *Player One* who has filled the open space. The defence starts to play defence on *Player One*. There is a two dribble maximum. Dynamic one-on-one; do not freeze the ball.

**Diagram 43** – The offensive player passes the ball to the coach and runs out the three-point line to receive the pass. The defender moves only when the coach has the ball in their hands. Now, they play dynamic one-on-one.

**Diagram 44** – The player at the top is dribbling the ball. The offensive player under the basket decides to run and receive a pass outside the three-point line. The defender is facing the offensive player which drastically reduces the one-second advantage and they have to use fakes and change of speed.



**Note:** The offensive player should always be supported (another coach or player). This means if the player does not have an uncontested shot, the ball should be passed to the player in support. The offensive player has to understand when they are taking a good shot or a bad shot. In case of bad one-on-one they must avoid taking a bad shot and pass the ball back to the support and get open again to receive the ball and try to play one-on-one one more time.

## **PVAD**

“Position improves Vision;  
Vision improves Anticipation;  
Anticipation improves Decision.”

There are **two** types of coaches:

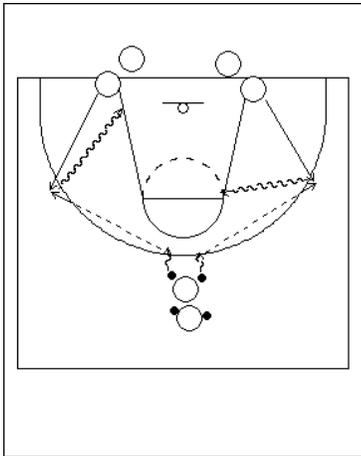
The first coach makes the players the number one priority by placing the players in front of them. This coach pushes the players to succeed and ensures they are the focus.

The second coach puts themselves before the players. They use the players to boost their status in order to place the spotlight on the coach.

What kind of coach do you want to be?

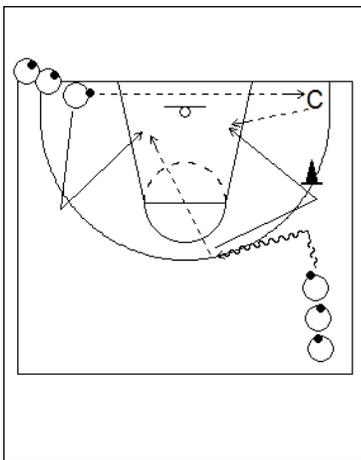
Coach Pasquali

## COMBINATION OF DRIBBLING, PASSING AND SHOOTING DRILLS



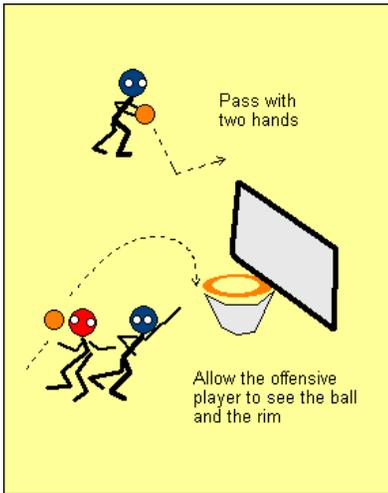
### Two Ball Wing Entry Pass

The players form three lines. The players along the top line need two basketballs each. The players on the baseline must establish who goes first. The idea is to alternate lines. The passer must learn to scan who is open first. The rhythm of the pass is crucial. The ball should be delivered to the cutter when they arrive at the attack spot. The wing players then will either drive baseline or to the middle. To take the drill to Phase B, add guides to the passer and to the wing players.



### Back-door Pass

The players form two lines and each player has a ball. The player in the corner starts by throwing a skip pass to the coach in the corner. For younger players, they may need to shorten the pass by dribbling (pretending it is baseline penetration). The player at the top centres the ball by taking it to the middle. The player in the corner must time their cut to arrive at the attack spot at the same time the player at the top is ready to make a wing entry pass. The wing player makes a change of speed and cuts back-door to the basket. The passer either delivers a bounce pass in the key or a lob to the corner of the square. It is important that this pass is made on the same side of the court as the receiver. Throwing a back-door pass from ball-side to help side often leads to a turnover. After making the pass, the player turns and cuts to the wing and then cuts back-door to receive a pass from the coach. It is best to have a pylon or a coach there so the player will keep the spacing before going back-door.



This back-door pass should be made with two hands. Fake the wing entry pass to put the defender out of position.

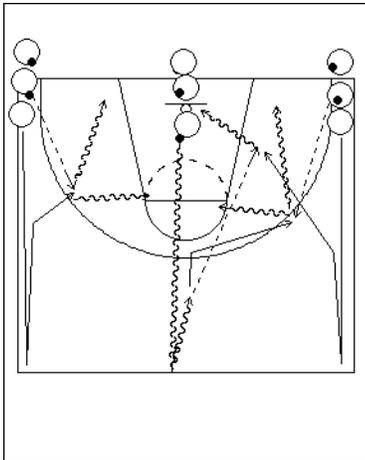
If throwing the lob, make the pass to the corner (of the back-door). This allows the receiver to see the ball and the basket at the same time and helps anticipate their next action.

As in all of the other drills the coach can go through the various phases:

**Phase B** - add a guided defender

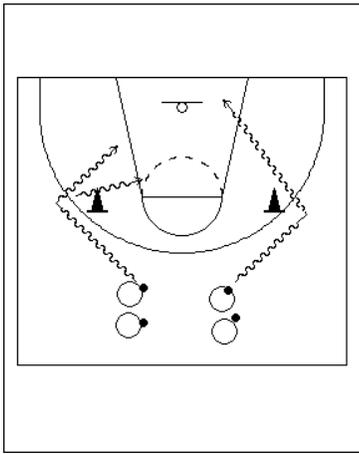
**Phase C** - add live defence. In this drill, the passing players should not go back-door. The offence can either catch the ball on the wing and play one-on-one or go back-door. It is important to encourage the defence to mix-up the defensive formations.

**Phase D** - use the centring dribble to start a game-like situation. With this scenario the passers and the receiver also have to read the help defence.



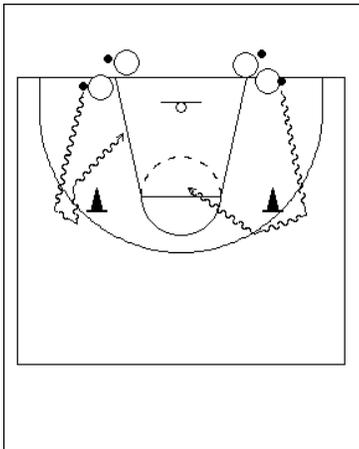
### Three Line Entry Pass

Form three lines along the baseline. Everyone has a ball except the two players in the front of the outside lines. The player in the middle has the ball and initiates the drill by starting a speed dribble to half-court. The two outside players sprint to half and return; running along the outside lanes. The player in the middle makes a pass to the player who before them. This player performs a layup as if in transition. The wing player who does not receive the pass will get a pass from the next player in the corner. When they are at the attack spot the passer in the middle makes a change of direction cut to receive a pass from the other corner at the attack spot. The timing of the pass is very important. There should be a pass to players between the key and three-point line as they need to receive this pass in space. The players receiving passes from the corner can attack middle or baseline.



### See What Teammates are Doing? (shooting drill)

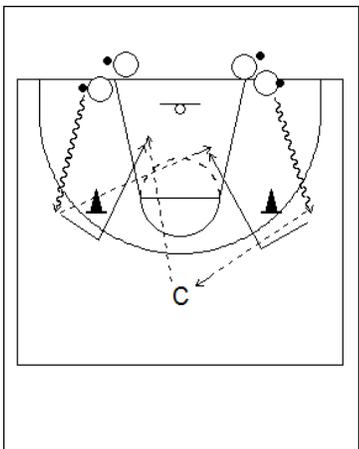
Form two lines at the top and each player has a ball. Two pylons are placed at the attack spot. The first two players dribble at the pylons and make a change of direction. The player who arrives first to the pylons chooses to go baseline or to the middle. The other player must read what the first player does and do the opposite. This forces the player to dribble with their eyes up and be aware of their teammates.



### Baseline

This version of the drill is exactly the same as the previous one except that the players dribble out from the baseline. The player that reaches the pylon has the choice to go around the pylon or crossover. The second player must do the opposite.

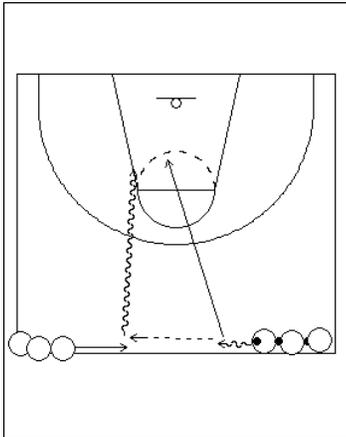
During this drill, the emphasis is on dribble jump shots and outside/inside power layups.



### Pass to the coach

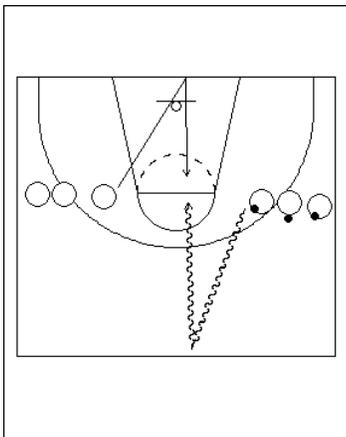
The coach positions themselves at the top of the three-point line. When the players are dribbling the coach will show their hands to one of the two players. That player will pass the ball to the coach and cut to the basket. The opposite player makes a pass to the cutter. After passing the player cuts to the basket and receives a return pass from the coach. This drill makes the players keep their head up.

## 1V1 READ THE DEFENCE



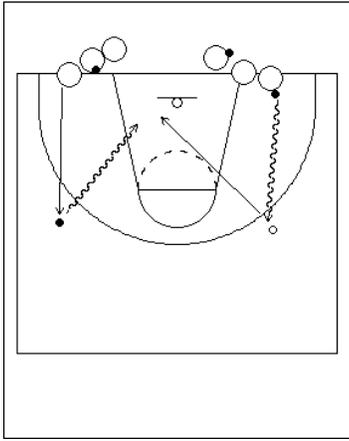
### 1vs1 Check the Distance

Form two lines of players at half-court. One line has balls, the other line does not. The first 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 and they must learn how to maintain their advantage and create a scoring opportunity. Once established this drill can be completed in the full-court where the passer can decide to go to either basket.



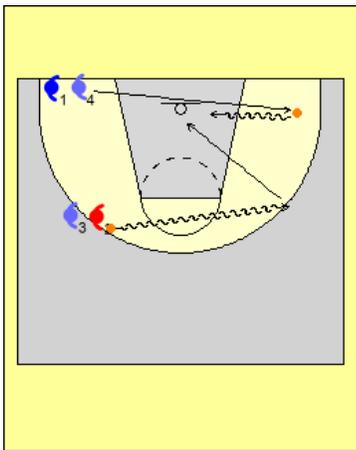
### Body Fakes

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. One line has basketballs, the other line 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. The two players play one-on-one. Encourage the defender to escape the paint to play defence.

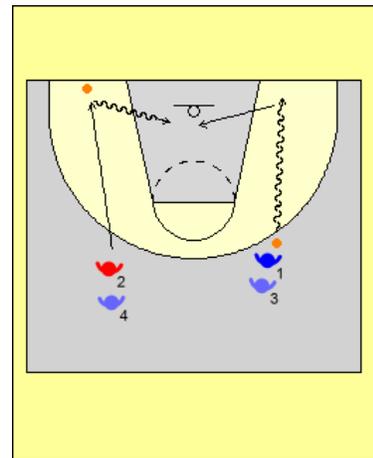


### Jump Shot or Layup

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. 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 outside/inside power layup. If there is no defender, use speed layup.



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



# DEFENSIVE RULES

---

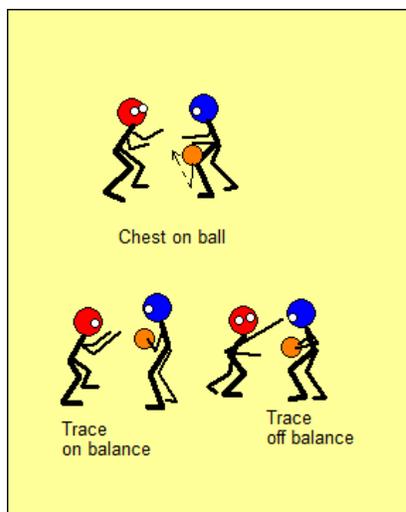
This manual will not go into elaborate details on how to teach defence. Remember that this manual is mainly about teaching the basic offensive skills of the game. In order for the offence to improve the defence needs to play progressively and become more competitive. It is suggested that the coach teach the defenders these basic rules as this will help develop a deep understanding of the game. Also it gives the offence varying reads. When the coach moves into the concepts and strategy part of the training, more detail can be added to the defence.

## 1 – Protect the Basket

Someone must always be responsible to protect the basket; prevent the opponent from shooting uncontested layups. By playing between the check and the basket the player is protecting the basket. Make the offence go around, not a direct uncontested line. When playing help defence and denial defence, the positioning of the players must take into account the basket and the ball.

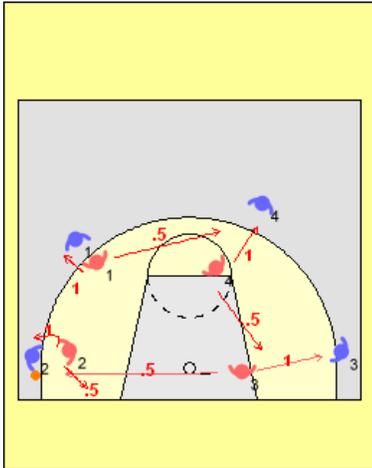
## 2 – Pressure on the Ball

From three-quarter court (pick up at opponent foul line) the ball-handler under pressure has to be put under pressure. Do not allow the ball-handler to easily see the other players on the floor and force them to change hands (while dribbling) and direction (crossover) as often as possible. Also, do not allow the ball-handler to determine which side to dribble to (strong-side or weak-side) this will help to confuse the team's offence. Everybody else should be in the passing lane. Once the player crosses the half-court line the defender has to keep them on the same side; do not allow any crossovers. This will allow the other four defenders to identify which is ball-side and help-side. Do not allow the offence to enter the ball where and when they want. The entry pass is the beginning of the offensive set and therefore it is important to deny as much as possible. 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 could cause an unbalance.



### 3 –Play 1.5 on the Player without the Ball

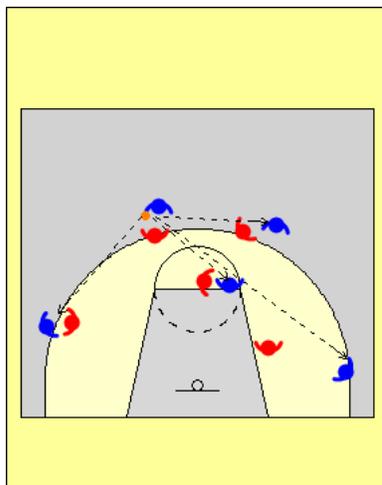
Players should be aware of the first step to playing good team defence, which is to make sure that they are always defending and ready to help on the eventual penetration/rotation.



At any point in a defensive possession, the players must know whom they are guarding (one) and whom 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

Make sure the player is always in the passing lane ready to deny the pass and to help versus penetration. Team defence will be very effective only if five players are in good position. The defence has to look like a wall. Allowing the players to play a sagging defence may work when players cannot shoot or attack a bad close out. Be reminded that as better teams are being played, this strategy will prove to hinder the development of players and more importantly the offensive players never learn to play with pressure.



### 5 – Make the Offensive Player Move Before the Catch the Ball

Never allow the check to catch the ball near the three-point line, make them move if they want the ball. This will help teammates to defend cuts and screens. Always make the offensive player feel under pressure.

### 6 – Box out

Finish the play by securing the rebound.

# TEACHING A CONCEPTUAL OFFENCE

## TECHNICAL CONCEPTS OF PLAY

---

Presented in this section is a step-by-step sequence for teaching players how to play the game. It is the foundation of all basketball played at the higher levels. Skipping these important skills and concepts to teach strategies and tactics can seriously harm the player's long-term development. Tactics work for a single game where fundamentals last for the player's entire career. It is not possible to teach the concepts of the offence in a single practice; it must be part of long-term program. An athlete's development will best improve through constant repetition and error detection and correction by the coach.

### Points to consider

#### Learn how to Play with Fun

Players today have different experiences than when many coaches were growing up. In this generation, they have cell phones, computers, social media etc. If the practice does not have an element of fun, players will often not come back. Play and fun are important elements and crucial if the players are going to stay with it for a long time.

#### Teach how to Play the Game (Fun and Evaluation of the Game)

Make use of fun competitive games that challenge the players to think and be active early in practice. These games do not have anything to do with basketball (i.e. tag-type games). By their very nature they force the players to learn how to compete and conjure up a strategy on how to win the game. It also sets a positive tone for the practice that can last the rest of the session.

#### Realistic Analysis and Technical Expectation

The coach must be realistic in their expectations for the team. The coach must know the ability level of the team. If the ability is not strong, there is no sense forcing the players into a higher level of complexity. For example, if players cannot dribble, pass and shoot layups using both hands, it is pointless to introduce complex strategies such as ball screens to the players. The coach can be realistic by **choosing a technical program that fits the team**. Too often coaches choose a system of play based on:

- What they did as a player
- A coaching resource from a high-level coach (book, website, DVD, etc.)
- Watching high level competition on TV (NCAA, NBA, etc.)

Coaches need to understand the stage of development that their players are participating. The system of play needs to be based on **simple concepts that can be adapted to the level of the team**. Fundamental skills and principles of play will be instilled in the player for their career. Teaching tactics last only for one game. For example, when a coach of younger players teaches the defence to sag off in a zone, because the players on the other team cannot shoot, the coach is teaching a tactic that works only for the short term. The coach

is not preparing the players for the future when players will be able to shoot an outside shot with efficiency. This may be the very next game.

### **Fundamental Teaching with Global Method (Analysis Later)**

Start with the important general concepts when teaching young players. Over-analysis and concentrating on too many details harms the young player's development. The K.I.S.S. (Keep It Short and Simple) principle is still an effective teaching methodology. In addition, young players require a good model of what the skill should look-like so they can slowly work to perfect the skill on their own. They also need to understand why they are doing the skill in a certain way. This all helps in the learning process. Here, the first focus is to concentrate on the use of the player's feet. When learning any fundamental skill for the first time, players need to concentrate on what the feet should do first.

### **Exercise Decision Making Without Analysis**

Young players need to make decisions as to when to use the skill or concept. This should be done in a positive learning environment. They require multiple repetitions in drills so that the proper cues for making the decision can be developed. At first the coach will act as a guide to assist in the decision-making process. If using players at first to guide, they may not have the understanding and competency to give a good read for their teammate. Again, over-analysis during the decision-making process can confuse and frustrate the learner.

### **Exercise and Drills of Game Situation**

Players learn to play the game by playing the game. To develop a deeper understanding of the concepts and skills players need to apply these in game situations. These situations need to be **easy to understand and execute**.

The coach of young players needs to teach skills and concepts in a way that enables the players to:

- Understand why they are doing the skill
- How and what to do
- When to do the skill

This is best conveyed through simple rules of play. Progressively, over time, the coach will load and refine the rules of play to guide the player's development. For example, instead of giving the players a set play to run, the coach should use simple offensive rules:

- If someone is open pass the ball
- Two dribble maximum on offence in the half-court
- Think shot, then pass, then drive when receiving the ball
- Catch the ball where it can be an offensive threat

### **70% Full-court and 30% Half-court**

Players at this stage of development need to learn to play through the transition from offence to defence and defence to offence. The majority of the scoring will occur out of advantage situations created through transition. For this reason:

- Players on offence need to learn how to maintain and make use of these one-second advantages created through transition.
- Players on defence need to learn how to prevent these advantages from occurring in transition and recover.

Asking players to run elaborate half-court offences with multiple passes and actions is futile and will only lead to frustration for the coach and players. The game is played in a very up and down manner with one or two passes before a shot is attempted.

### **Progressive Teaching Method (Coach Guide the Defence)**

The coach must progressively teach skill development through various phases– starting with an introductory phase, where the general model is developed by practicing on air. In the second phase, the coach guides the decision making and execution of the skill by acting as a guided defender. In the third phase, the skill is applied in a one-on-one situation versus live defence. In the final phase, the skill is applied to game-like situations. By teaching skills and concepts in this systematic progressive approach, the coach can ensure that the players develop a deeper understanding of the skill or concept.

### **Mentality Drills to Stimulate Pride and Competition**

By starting drills in situations that require the players to think, anticipate and react quickly, the coach increases the player's deeper understanding of the concepts of the game and how to apply them. This is also a way that the coach can add an element of fun to practice. For example, instead of starting a drill where the players play three-on-three, from a static start, the coach starts the drill by having one player try to save the ball from going out of bounds.

### **Ball-handling (Individually and with Partner)**

All players need to learn to handle the ball. Being able to handle the ball, with the eyes up, verses pressure and equally with both hands, is one of the most important skills a coach needs to impart to young players. This can be accomplished by **using the left hand (or left side of the court) on every experience.** By starting drills on the left side it places players in situations where they must use their left hand. The right hand will also develop in these situations. The opposite is not also true.

# OFFENSIVE CONCEPTS

---

## 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.

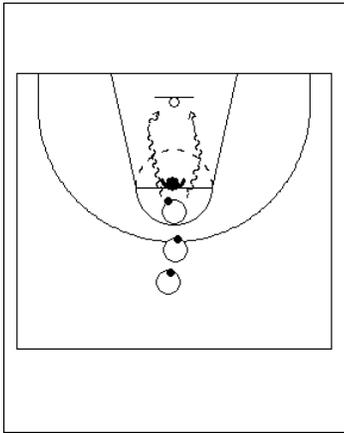
### Mid-Clock

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.

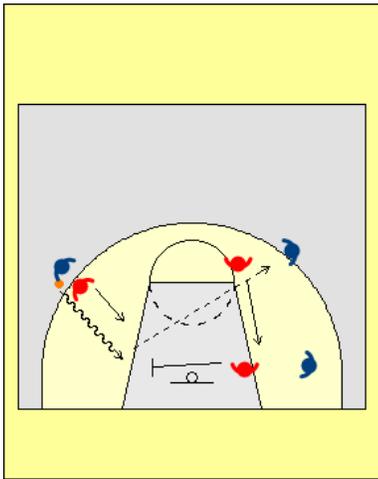
## ATTACKING ONE-ON-ONE WITH THE BALL (DRIBBLING)



### 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.



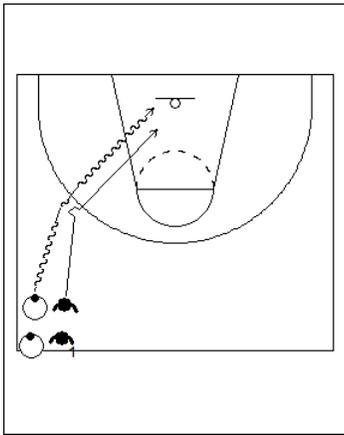
### Phase D – Game-Like Situation

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.

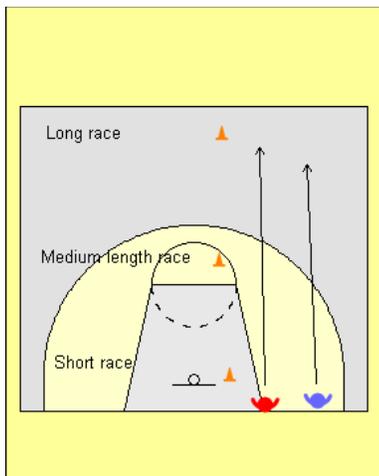


## Change of Speed

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.

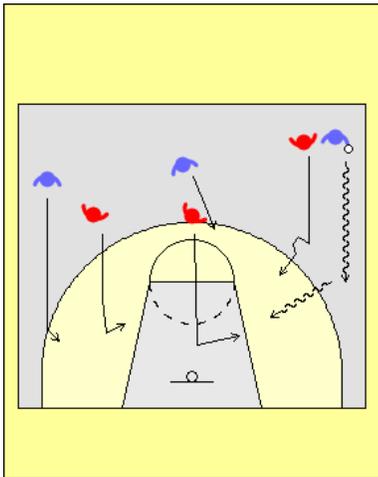
Two lines of players at half-court. The outside line is on offence and has a ball. The inside is the defence and faces the opposite basket in a shoulder-to-shoulder position. The offensive player begins the drill by walking or a slow dribble to the basket. The defence must mirror the speed while staying 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.



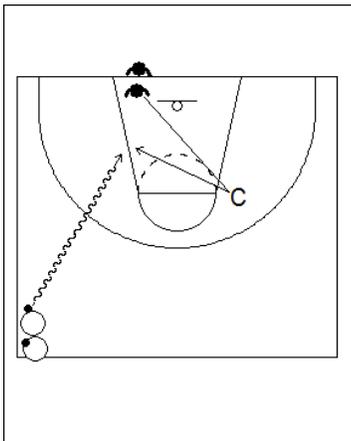
An important concept that players must learn is that in a short race, the person who starts first wins, no matter how fast the other person. In a medium race, it is a 50/50 proposition as to who will win. In a long race, the person who starts first may lose the advantage to someone who is faster. Speed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



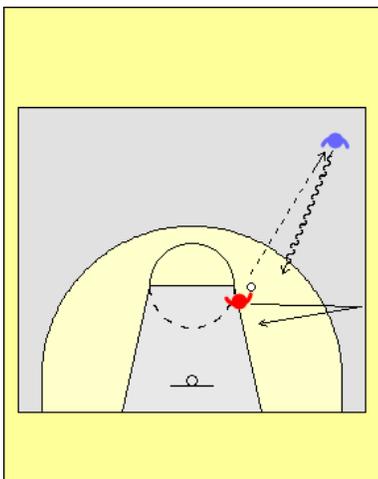
### Phase D

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

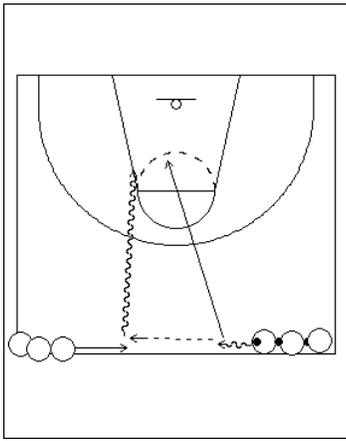
The players start in two lines – one under the basket and the other at half-court with basketballs. The player at half-court starts to attack the basket with the dribble. The player under the basket must run and touch the hand of the coach before returning to play defence on the player with the ball. 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

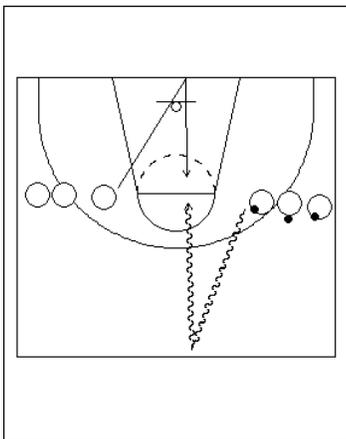
The defence can also touch at different spots. This changes the angle that the defence recovers. This builds different reads in the offence and the defence. Here the defender starts with a pass and then goes and touches the sideline before recovering. Be careful of players who cheat by throwing a high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

## 1V1 READ THE DEFENCE



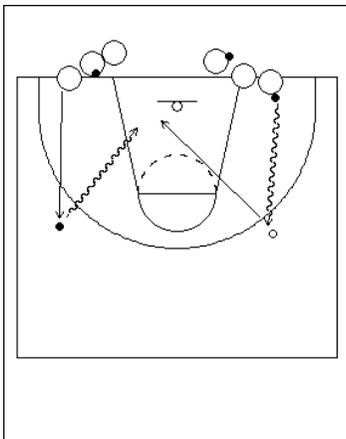
### **1vs1 Check the Distance**

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.



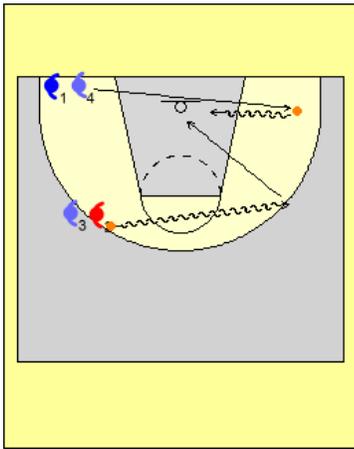
### **Body Fakes**

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.

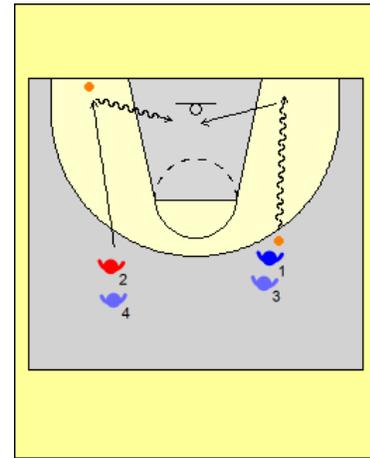


### **Jump Shot or Layup**

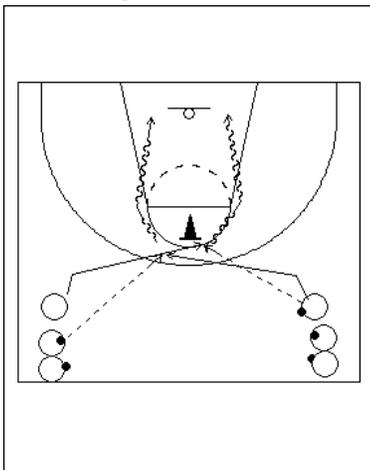
The players form two lines on the baseline. The first player in one line has a ball while the first player in the other does not. The rest of the players alternate with and without a ball. One ball is placed on the floor at the attack spot in front of the player who does not have a ball. The player with 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.

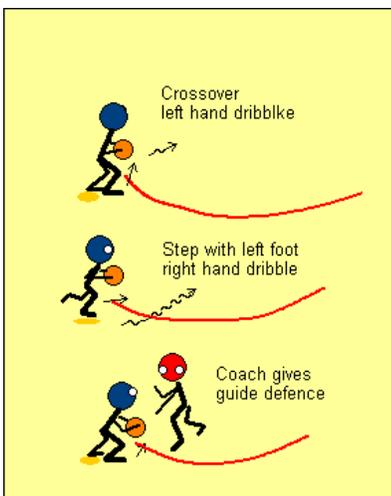


### Attacking Drills – Phase A, B, C and D



#### 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,

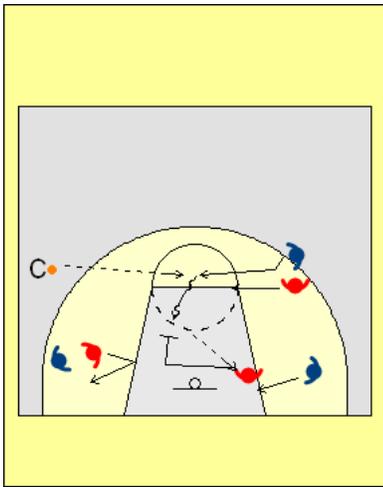
crossover with the inside foot as the ball is dribbled at the basket. Key points: eyes up, show target hand to catch, make use of the proper footwork.

### **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:**

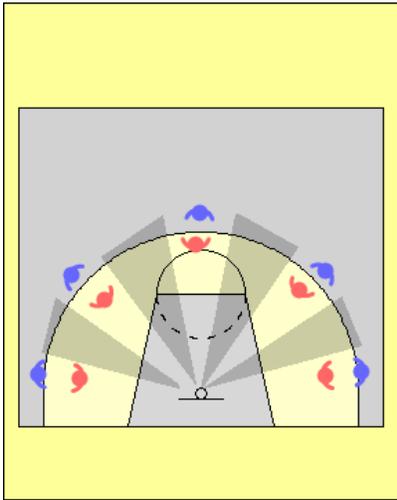
It is often a good idea to have a coach available for a pass. If the offensive player does not have a good pass the coach can encourage the player to pass. This will prevent the players from taking bad shots.

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

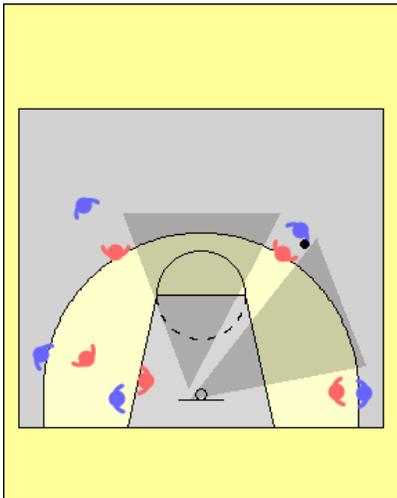
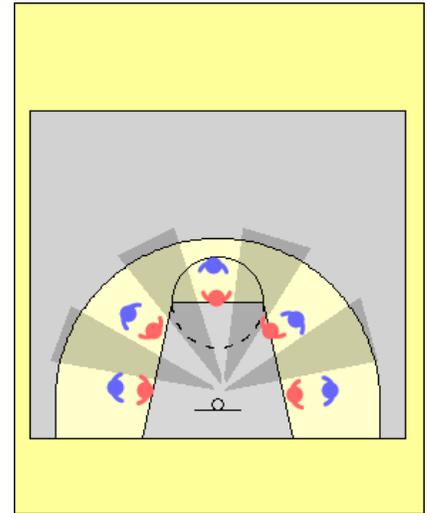
## SPACE

Proper spacing means that:

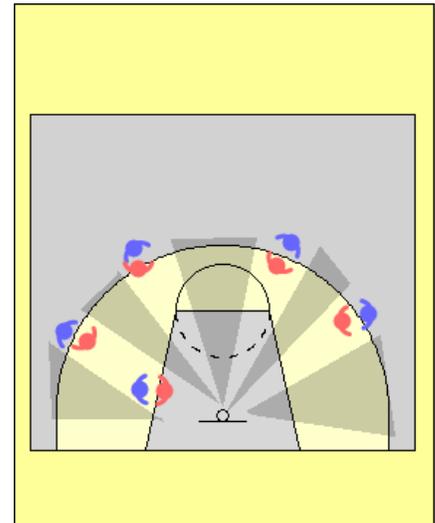
- It is difficult for the defence to guard two offensive players with one defender.



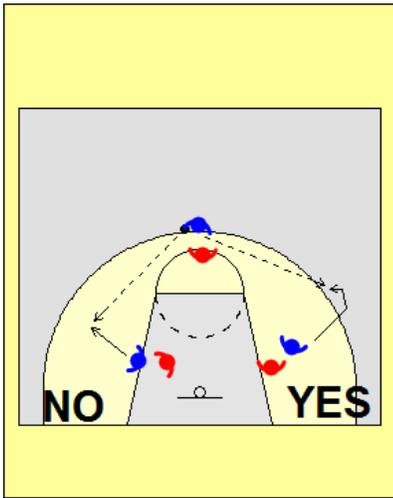
When players sneak in from the three-point line it makes it very easy for one defender to guard more than one person. The space in which offensive players can operate is reduced.



The various positions that players fill on the floor create different size gaps in which offensive players can play. It also makes it harder for help defence.



- The offensive players are in position to receive an accurate pass from a teammate.
- The offensive players are in a position to have proper vision to anticipate and therefore to make better decisions.
- Spacing is not static and is constantly flowing. With the exception of the opening jump ball, inbounds plays and foul shots, players are very rarely static. Players must constantly react to the ball, teammates and the defender.
- Spacing is maintained throughout the entire shot clock.
- PVAD – Position (P) improves vision (V), which improves the ability to anticipate (A), which improves the ability to make better decisions (D). For example, players learn to use the three-point line and key for spacing principles. In general, players should not be catching the ball in the space between the three-point line and the key when a player is moving away from the basket.

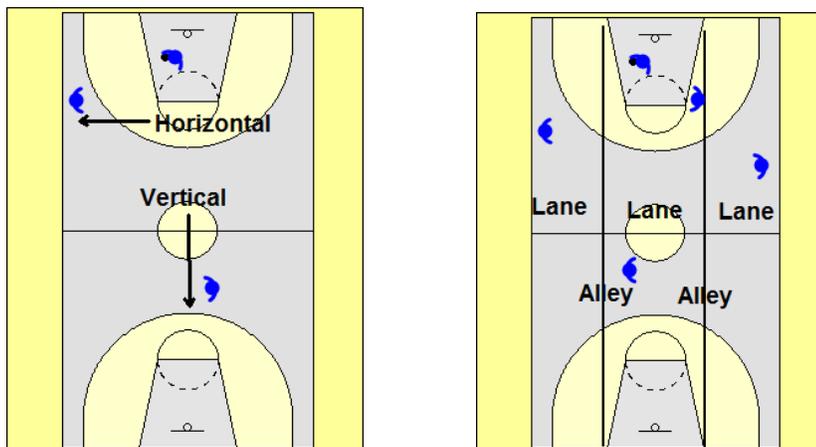


When the ball is passed to the player before they have reached the three-point line, the player is not in position to see the basket. Therefore, the player cannot anticipate their next option. This often leads to missed opportunities as the players cannot make a quick decision until they are square to the basket.

In addition, by catching the ball so close to the basket it is easier for one defender to guard two offensive players. The basket can also become crowded as the defender of the ball can help defend the basket.

### Early Clock

When the offence receives the ball it must stretch the floor both horizontally and vertically. Players fill the lanes and the alleys when they run the floor. Proper distance must be maintained between players. One common error is running too far ahead of the distance the ball can be passed.



### Mid-Clock

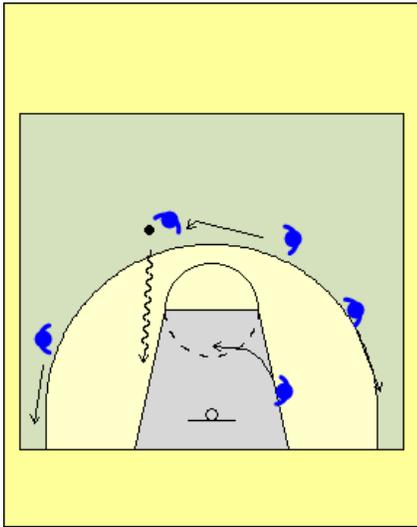
Players flow from their transition offence into the mid-clock positioning. Coaches at this stage can use offence sets to initiate the offence as long as time is not wasted. Once the movement begins the proper timing and spacing of the players needs to be maintained throughout the entire shot clock. When the offence struggles it is often the rhythm of the offence breaking down as the cause.

### Late Clock

Very often coaches will initiate some special spacing late in a clock to allow for isolation situations. One common example is for the four players without the ball to flatten to the baseline to give the player at the top room to attack.

## PENETRATION

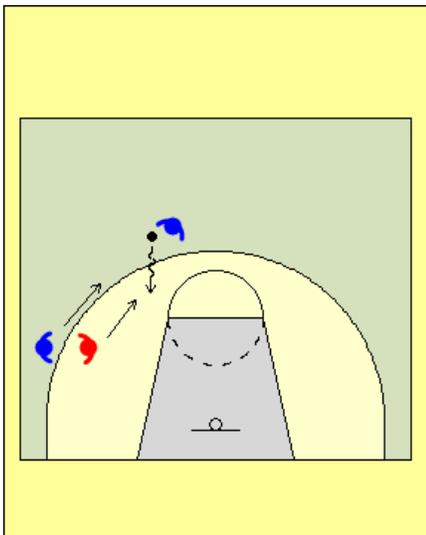
Penetration is a continuation of attacking the basket. When a player with the ball dribbles to the basket the players without the ball must move to create passing lanes for the player driving the ball (when the defence helps). After passing, the passer must move to make new space.



### Top Penetration

This occurs when the ball is driven from the top to below the foul line, preferably in the key. The other players move to maintain open spacing. It is important that:

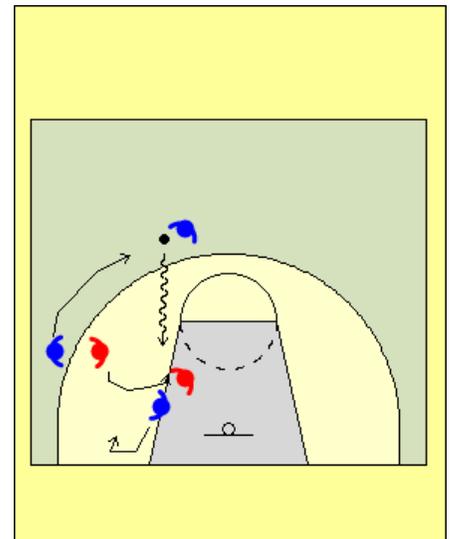
- The players do not let one defender guard two offensive players.
- The players find a space where the passer/dribbler can see them. The key is to not hide behind the back of a defender (three in a row – ball, defender, player).
- The player read the ball and then read their defender. They need see that the ball is being penetrated and then read what the defender is doing.



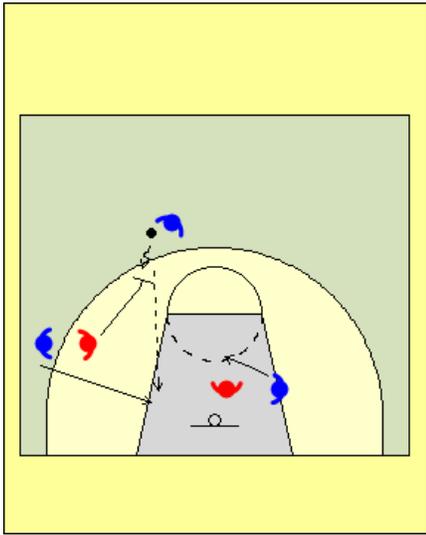
### Moving Too Soon

In this situation, the player without the ball moves before the dribbler has crossed the foul line. This allows their defender to guard two players at once.

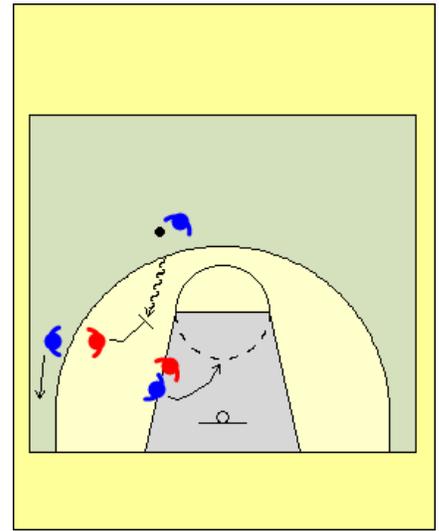
In the example to the right, the wing player waits until the dribbler crosses the foul line.



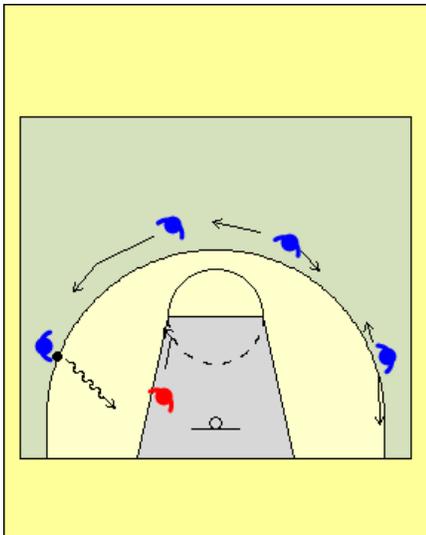
The player has read that their defender has provided help and therefore they rotate behind the penetration. The post player slides to the short corner and they go to the spot that is toughest for the defender to recover to.



In the example to the left, the defender has helped and left the basket open. Here the wing player attacks the open basket. The post moves to the front of the basket in when their defender helps back-door.

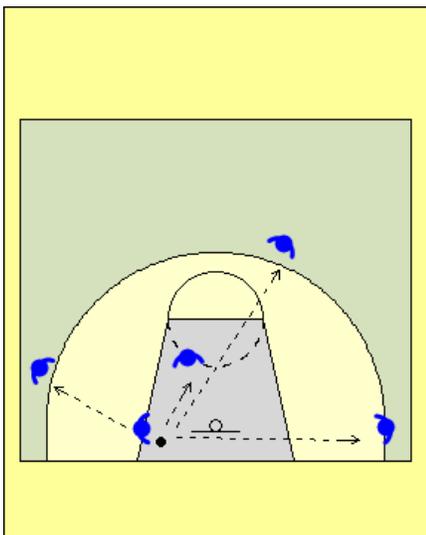


In the example to the right, the wing defender helps over but there is a ball-side post. In this case the wing slides to open space in the corner and the post circles to the front of the basket.



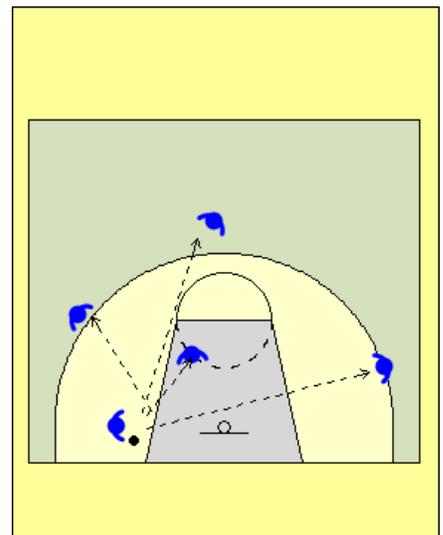
### Side Penetration

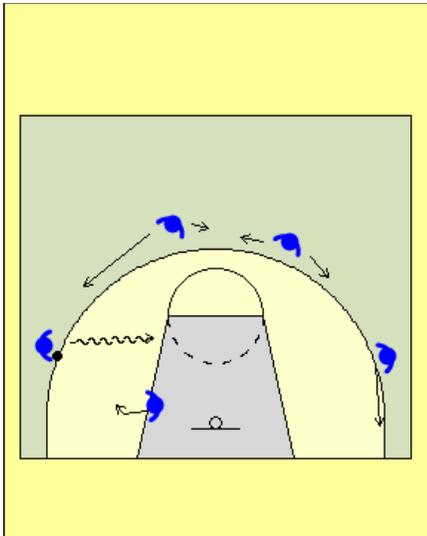
When the ball is driven from the side to the baseline the other players move to find open spots where the ball-handler can see them. It is here that the perimeter players can move in either direction by reading the movement of the ball and then the defender.



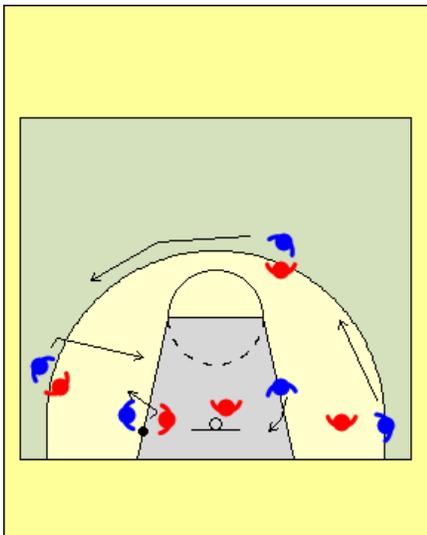
The deeper the penetration the deeper the receivers need to be to open passing lanes.

If the penetration is not that deep into the key, the receivers can stay higher where the dribbler can see them.



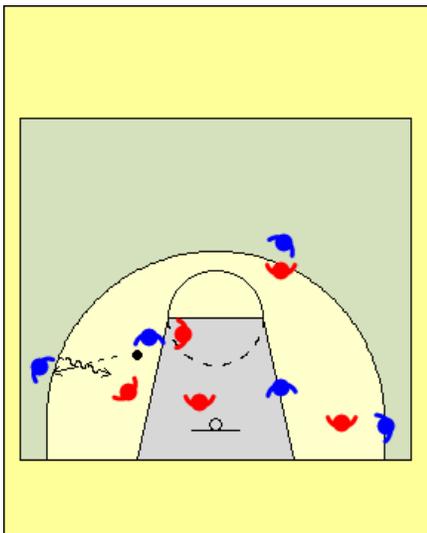


When the penetration is to the middle from the wing the players must still move to find space. They read the ball first and their defender second.



### Secondary Cuts

Whenever the penetrator stops and pivots the other players must make secondary cuts. The defence is very vulnerable at this point as they have a tendency to watch the ball.

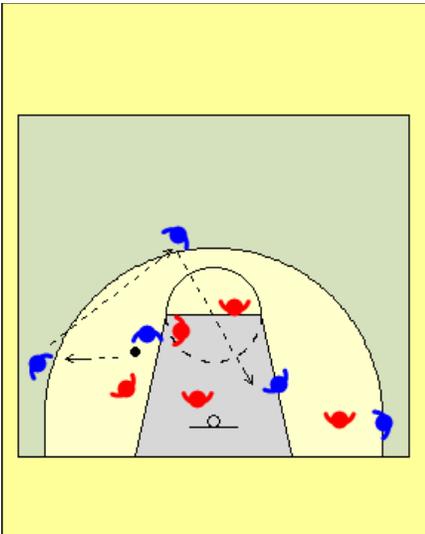


### Wait One Second After the Initial Penetration

In general, it is important to stay away from immediate penetration following the pass out from the first penetration. The intent is for the receiver to freeze and look at the basket. Driving the ball immediately means dribbling into an already collapsed defence which often leads to an offensive charge. The key is to wait until the defence is closing out and the passer has left the key. The other perimeter players should avoid rushing to fill the open perimeter spaces too soon as this closes a natural double gap into a single gap (diagram to the left).

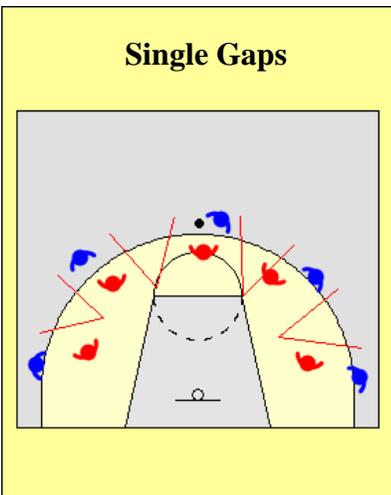
### Pentrate Pass Pass

It is desirable to look for passes immediately after penetration as very often the entire defence has collapsed into the key. It is a great situation as players will be open while the defence scrambles to recover.

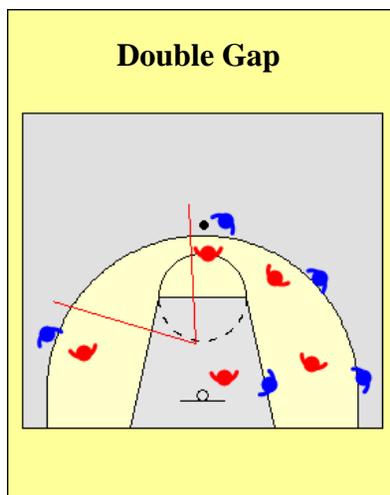


Players need to be taught how to recognize single, double and triple gaps. These can appear from the initial spacing in the offence or from the flow as players start to make a cut.

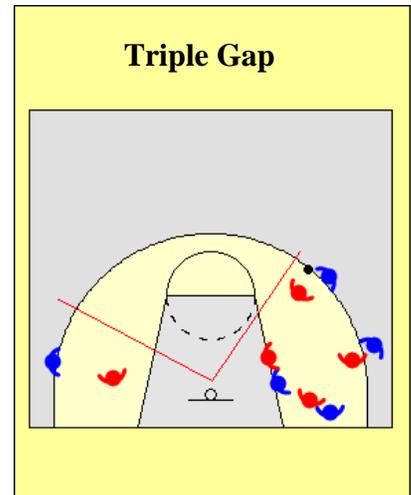
#### Single Gaps



#### Double Gap

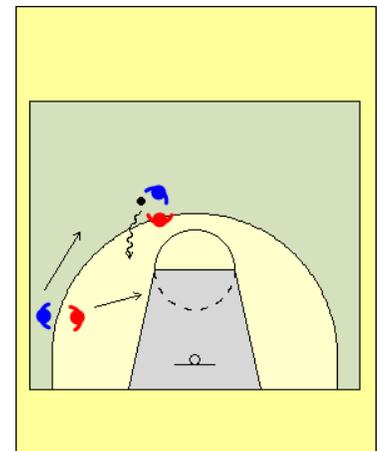
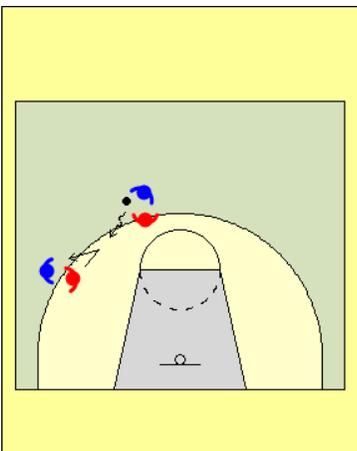


#### Triple Gap



If the wing player has poor spacing and is too close to the offensive player penetrating for the top, a single gap is created which allows the wing defender to guard two players at one time.

By moving lower on the wing, a double gap is created which forces the wing defender to guard only one player at a time.



### **Early Clock**

Top penetration early often occurs from a strong breakout dribble from a rebounder or when the player receiving the outlet beats the player trying to contain the ball in transition.

Side penetration occurs when the ball is pushed to the wing early in transition.

### **Mid Clock**

Players need to be taught to attack bad closeouts when they occur in the half-court offence. Other players must be in tune to these reads by the player with the ball.

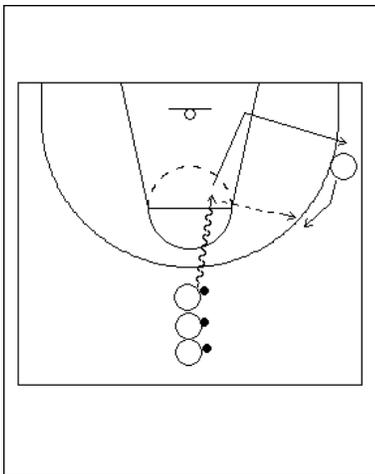
### **Late Clock**

Spacing may have to adjust late in the clock to provide the opportunity for double or triple gaps to appear. This works best when it flows naturally from the offence and not when a call is made.

## **SPACING AND PENATRATION DRILLS**

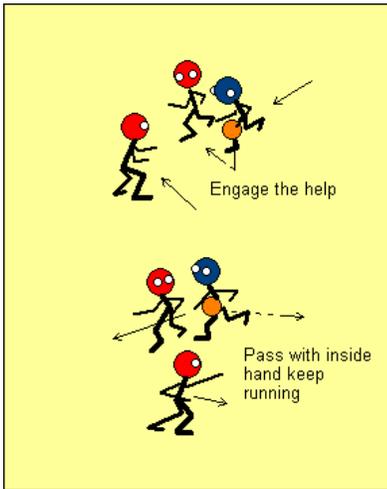
These drills are designed to help the players to work on:

- proper dribbling for penetration
- movement off the ball
- proper passing off penetration
- shooting the ball off penetration
- movement after passing
- decision making when receiving the ball off penetration

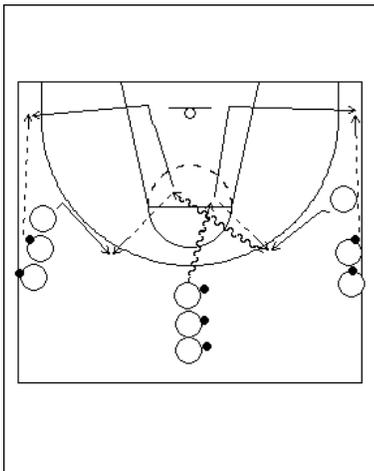


### **2vs0 Penetrate and Kick**

The players at the top have the ball. The players on the wing must wait for the penetration to occur. Moving too early allows the defence to help on the ball and guard the perimeter player at the same time. The penetrator dribbles with the outside hand and must attack the paint to try and pass the ball with the inside hand. The wing player circles behind the penetration for their shot. Keep running after passing and fill the same side as the pass.



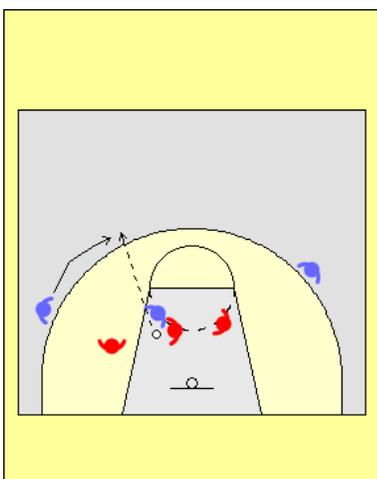
It is an easy pass to make using the inside hand. The dribbler does not have to reach across the ball and twist the wrist into unnatural positions. Some stronger players can make this pass, but it is not a natural movement. Here the jump stop is not recommended because it is a slower pass and allows the defence to anticipate the pass. In addition, it takes the passer longer to vacate the key. The longer the key is occupied the longer the players have to wait for the next penetration to occur.



### Continuous Penetrate and Kick Shooting

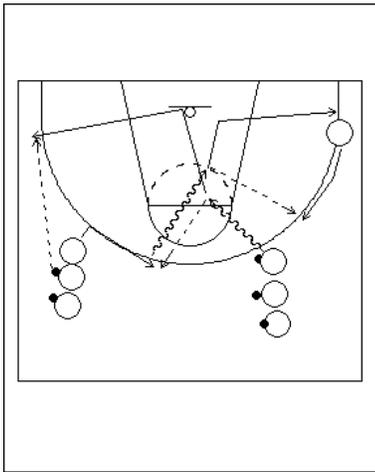
The players form three lines. In the two outside lines the first player does not have a ball but everyone else has a ball. The first player in the middle line penetrates to the middle. The wing player on that side rotates behind the penetration for the pass. The passer continues their cut out to the same side (corner) and receives a pass for a shot from the second player in the outside line.

During this drill, it is imperative that the receiver of the pass (off penetration) shows the intent to shoot for one second before penetration. This player then penetrates with the intent of attacking the key. The wing player from the far outside line rotates behind. The passer continues to cut to the same corner as they passed. The player who received the pass from the penetration waits for one second before continuing to penetrate to shoot a dribble jump shot.



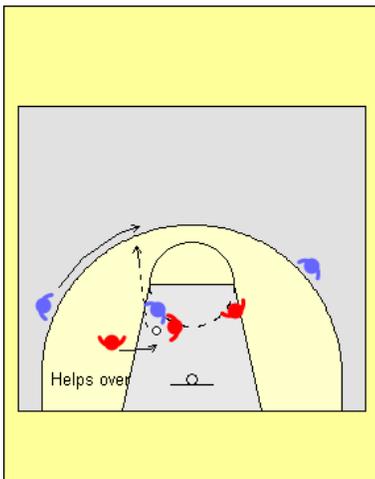
With this drill it is important to stress that the player who receives the pass off penetration waits one second before penetrating. If this player penetrates immediately on the catch they are driving into an already collapsed defence. Also, their own teammate may still be occupying the key and they need time to vacate the space.

By showing shot, the player will see open teammates for the pass but will also be able to attack a defender who is closing out rather than standing and waiting for the penetration.



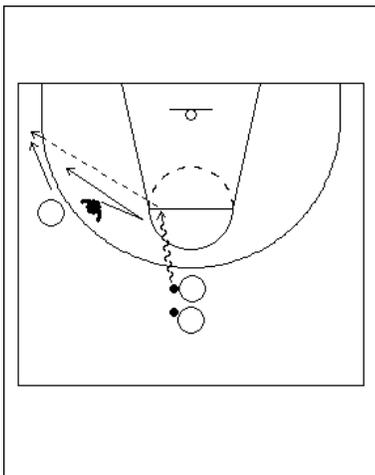
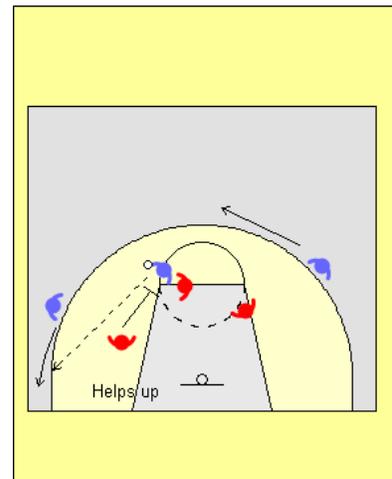
### Middle Penetration

The players form three lines. Everyone has a ball except the first player in the two outside lines. The first player in the middle line attacks the key. The first player in the outside line to the side of the penetration rotates behind to catch a pass. The passer continues their cut to the ball-side corner where they receive a pass for a shot from the second player in line. The receiver of the pass waits for one second before continuing their penetration and then makes a pass to the player rotating behind for a shot.



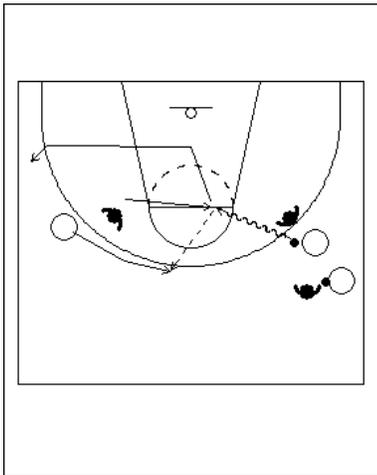
### Rotate Away Versus Rotate Behind

This drill is designed as a read for the offensive player. If the defence helps, the player needs to slide away from the penetration. If the defence helps over, they must rotate behind. The key is to create the longest possible recovery by the defender.



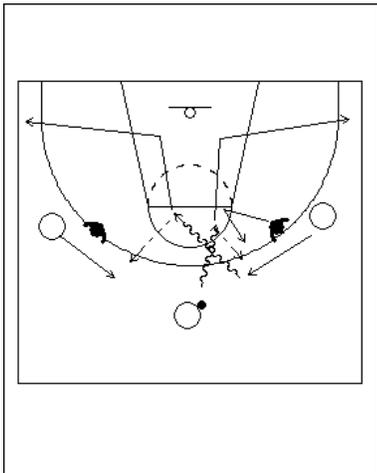
### 1vs1 Penetration/Kick

In this drill the key is to identify the defender that is helping up in order to focus on working to slide away. The defender starts in passing lane defence while the middle player penetrates the key. The help is a stunt with the hand and foot into the passing lane. The defender should recover with a hand up in the passing lane.



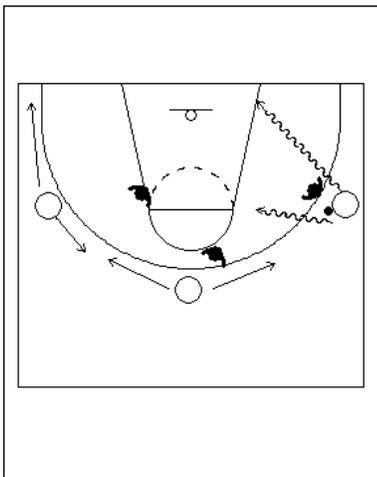
### **2vs2 Advantage**

This drill focuses on where players should penetrate and kick-out the ball in a game-like situation. The defender on the wing player starts with his back to the offensive layer. This gives the offence a brief one-second advantage. The player must read the help defence. Next, the players play two-on-two. The key for this scenario is to not focus on taking a three point shot until the ball has gotten into the key; either with penetration or a pass. These are the easiest three point shots since the player is receiving the pass coming from the direction of the basket. It is easier to walk into the shot as the player is likely already square to the basket.



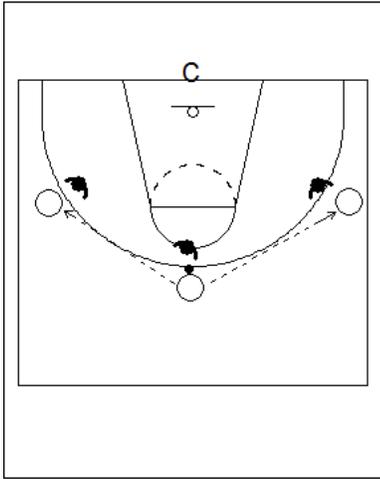
### **3vs2 (Advantage) Spacing**

This drill focuses on three offensive players against two defenders. The player without a defender starts the drill by attacking with penetration to the key to mimic a two-on-one situation. If help shows, the player should make the open pass as it is important for players to learn to find the open player. The player should deliver the pass with a one-second advantage. Meanwhile, player receiving the pass must remember their options - shot first, pass second and penetrate third (wait the one second).



### **3vs3 (Advantage) Spacing**

The intent of this drill is to play three-on-three starting with a disadvantage. One defender starts with their back to the defender and this creates a one-second advantage. The other offensive players must read the penetration before they move. The drill can be loaded by adding a transition to the drill, by allowing the players to go three-on-three in the other direction.



### **3vs3 After Coach Signals**

In this drill, three offensive players are passing the ball around the perimeter. The defence is in the passing lanes but they do not touch the ball. When the coach holds up their fist, this signals the player with the ball to penetrate. The players then play three-on-three using the rules of play. The key to note here is that there are still no positions at this stage of development as each player learns to do all the skills from all positions on the floor.

## **PASSING, CUT AND REPLACE**

It is important to note that player movement, at the right time, puts tremendous pressure on the defence. Players need to be taught the proper rhythm (timing and spacing) of how and when to cut. Some key indicators and areas of focus are:

- The signal for when to cut:
  - Eye contact with the ball-handler is very important
  - The ball-handler must always be ready and able to make the pass
- Two speeds – slow then fast. The offensive player has a tremendous advantage since they know when they are going to cut.
- Before cutting the player needs to enlarge the space. If the defender is low, take them lower before cutting high. If the defender is high, take them higher before cutting back-door.
- The three-point line is a frame of reference. If a player is denied at the three-point line, cut to the basket. There is no sense in catching a pass beyond the three-point line outside of a player's range of effectiveness.
- The player should finish their cut at the basket. The player should open up at the basket so they can see the ball and the next available open space (exit to the open space).
- Players should not replace themselves. The player should not return to the spot from which they just cut.
- On cuts, passes should only be made to the player when they are in the key or at the three-point line. Passing to a player at the midway point limits their ability to anticipate the defence.

### **Early Clock**

At this stage, players cut to fill the lanes and to get open for outlet passes. Players running the floor must still be able to cut back to the ball if there is pressure. The first three steps are crucial in beating the defence down the floor.

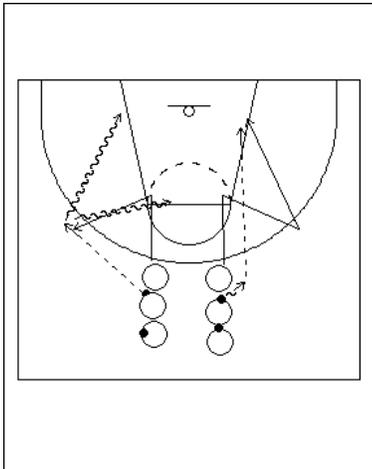
### **Mid Clock**

These are the cuts that occur within the half-court offence. Players also need to learn pressure release when passes are denied. The timing and spacing must be practiced.

### **Late Clock**

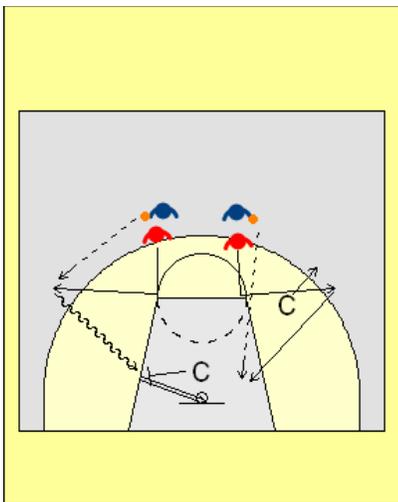
If spacing has been maintained throughout the entire clock, hard cuts can still be effective for players at this time. Very often the defence does not want to foul and may not be on point.

## Passing and Cutting Drills



### Pivot/Flare – On Air

This drill works on footwork to catch the ball from a different angle. Two lines are formed at the top of the three-point line with every player with a ball except the first player in each line. The first player in line cuts to the elbow and does a jump stop. The player does a pivot to open up to see the passer. The player then shows their hands as they cut out to the attack spot to receive the pass. It is important that the pass is delivered when the player is outside the three-point line and able to catch the ball with a jump stop facing the basket. The pass is made and the player visualizes the defence either giving them a crossover move to the baseline or a crossover move to the middle. The offensive player can pull-up for the jump shot or use the outside/inside power layup. The player also practices the back-door cut. It is important to maximize the effectiveness of any shot and thus when the player gets to the three-point line and they are not open, both the passer and the cutter need to recognize that it will be a back-door cut. The back-door pass is delivered in the key or a lob to the corner of the backboard on the side of the cut.



### Pivot/Flare – Coach Guides

The coach can give the player on the catch four reads:

1. Play on the high side – crossover and attack the baseline
2. Play on the low side – crossover and attack the middle
3. Sag on the catch – shoot the ball
4. Deny the pass- go back-door

During the drill, the coach can also give a read to the player after the catch. If the coach shows a chest pass in the drive line to the basket the player should stop and shoot the ball. If the coach shows only an arm in the drive line, the player should do an outside/inside power layup. If the coach is not in the area the player can complete a normal layup.

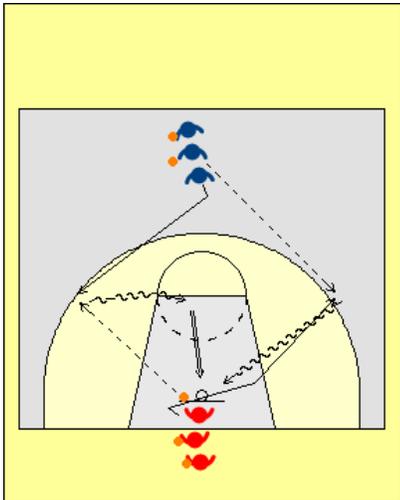
### Pivot/Flare – Live Defence

In this drill the players compete against a live defender. In this scenario is best to let the player stay on offence for three to four repetitions in a row as this gives them a chance to use different moves and learn from them. If the player does not have a shot the emphasis should be to pass back to the coach rather than practice a bad shot.

### Pivot/Flare – Use in a Game-Like Situation

Start a two-on-two, three-on-three or four-on-four situation with this cut and read. Once the play starts

the player must learn to play one-on-one within the team.



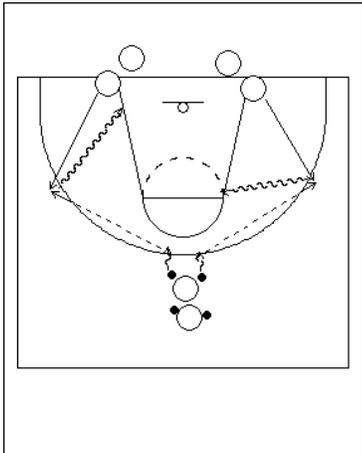
### **Alternate Wing Entry, Flare – On Air**

Players should form two lines with every player having a ball except one player in the top line. The first player can choose to go in either direction by making a flare cut to the attack spot. The timing of the pass must be perfect. The player receiving the ball should do so with a jump stop as that will provide the opportunity for a crossover step in either direction. The player anticipates the defence by visualizing the action of the defence and then goes either middle or baseline. On the middle drive the player shoots while on the baseline they utilize the outside/inside power layup. After passing, the player at the bottom cuts out to the attack spot looking to receive a clean pass from the next player at the top. A great focus here is to have the next player once again catch the ball so they can start with a crossover in either direction but have the next player do the opposite of the previous player.

### **Alternate Wing Entry, Flare – Guide**

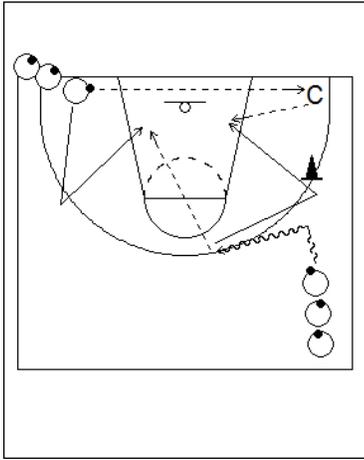
The coach can give the offensive players reads on the catch.

## **COMBINATION OF DRIBBLING, PASSING AND SHOOTING DRILLS**



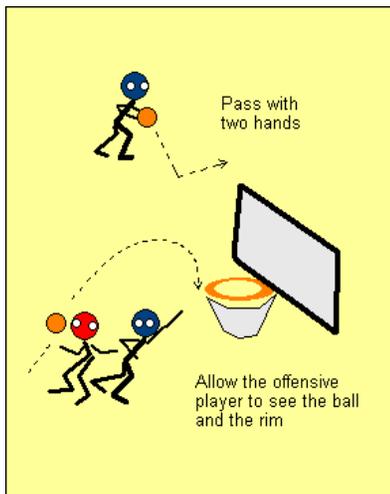
### **Two Ball Wing Entry Pass**

The players form three lines. The players in the top line need two basketballs each. The players on the baseline must establish who goes first (preferable not to have the same line going first each time). The passer must learn to scan who is open first. The rhythm of the pass is crucial as it should be delivered to the cutter when they arrive at the attack spot. The wing players will then either drive baseline or to the middle. To load the drill it is ideal to add guides to the passer and to the wing players.



### Back-Door Pass

The players form two lines as shown with everyone with a ball. The player in the corner starts by throwing a skip pass to the coach in the corner. For younger players they may need to shorten the pass by dribbling and pretending it is baseline penetration. The player at the top centres the ball by taking it to the middle. The player in the corner must time their cut to arrive at the attack spot at the same time the player at the top is ready to make a wing entry pass. The wing player makes a change of speed and cuts back-door to the basket. The passer either delivers a bounce pass in the key or a lob to the corner of the square. It is important that this pass is made on the same side of the court as the receiver. Throwing a back-door pass from ball-side to help side can lead to a turnover. After making the pass the player turns and cuts to the wing and then cuts back-door to receive a pass from the coach. It is best to have a pylon or a coach there so that the player will keep space before going back-door.



This back-door pass should be made with two hands by faking the wing entry pass to put the defender out of position.

If throwing the lob, the player should make the pass to the corner of the back-door as this allows the receiver to see the ball and the basket at the same time. This way the player can read the help defence and anticipate their next action.

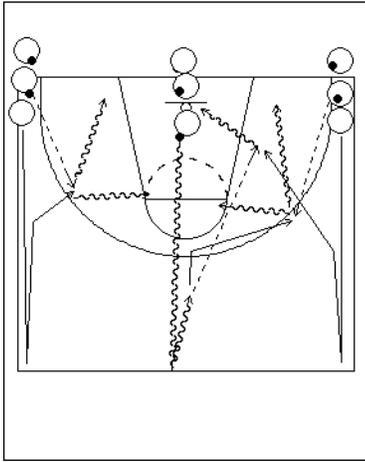
As in all of the other drills the coach can go through the various phases:

**Phase B** – add a guided defender

**Phase C** – add live defence. In this drill the passers should not be going back-door. The offence can either catch the ball on the wing and play one-on-one or go back-door.

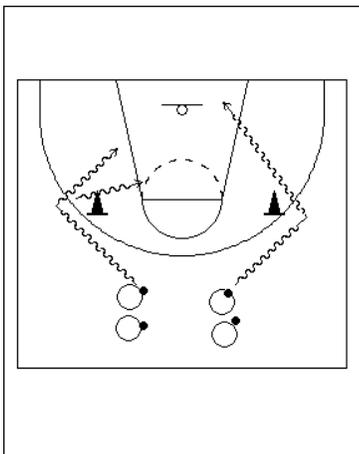
**Phase D** – use the centring dribble to start a game-like situation.

Next, the passers and the receiver also have to read the help defence.



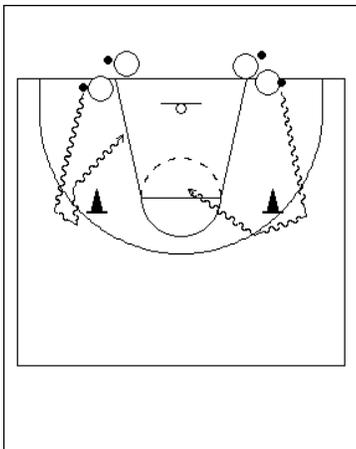
### Three Line Entry Pass

Form three lines on the baseline. Everyone has a ball except the two players in the front of the outside lines. The player in middle has the ball and initiates the drill by starting a speed dribble to half-court. The two outside players sprint to half and return running the outside lanes. The player in the middle makes a pass to the player who is out in front. This player scores a layup as if in transition. The wing player who does not receive the pass will get a pass from the next player in the corner when they are at the attack spot. The passer in the middle makes a change of direction cut to receive a pass from the other corner at the attack spot. The pass has to be received in space. The players receiving passes from the corner can attack idle or baseline.



### See what Teammates are Doing (Shooting Drill)

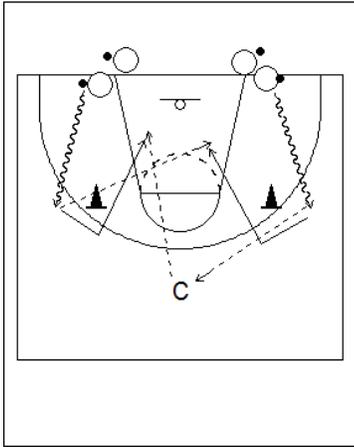
Players form two lines at the top with each player having a ball. Two pylons are placed at the attack spot. The first two players dribble at the pylons and make a change of direction. The player who arrives first to the pylons chooses to go baseline or to the middle. The other player must read what the first player does and do the opposite. This drill forces the players to dribble with their eyes up and be aware of their teammates and surroundings.



### Baseline

This drill is very much the same as the previous with the exception of the players dribbling out from the baseline. The player that reaches the pylon has the choice to go around the pylon or to crossover in front while the second player must do the opposite.

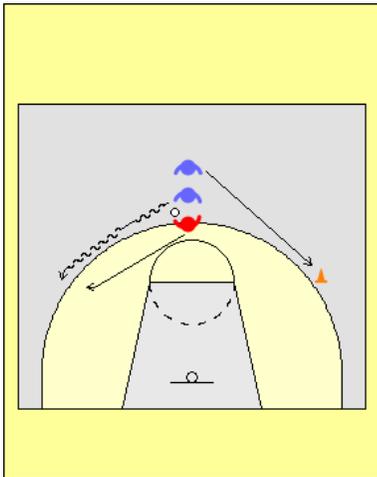
With this drill the emphasis is on dribble jump shots and outside /inside power layups.



### Pass to the coach

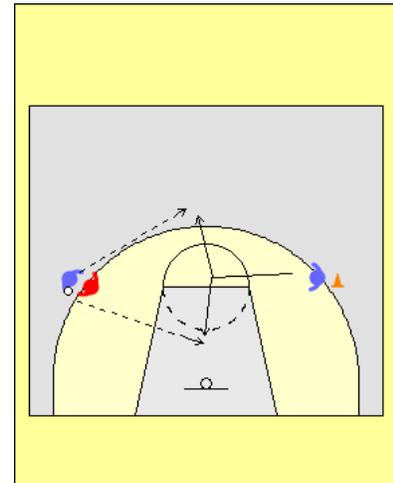
In this drill the coach positions themselves at the top of the three-point line. When the players are dribbling, the coach will show their hands to one of the two players. That player will pass the ball to the coach and cut to the basket. The opposite player makes a pass to the cutter. After passing, the player cuts to the basket and receives a return pass from the coach. This drill encourages players to keep their head up.

## PLAY WITH TEAMMATES

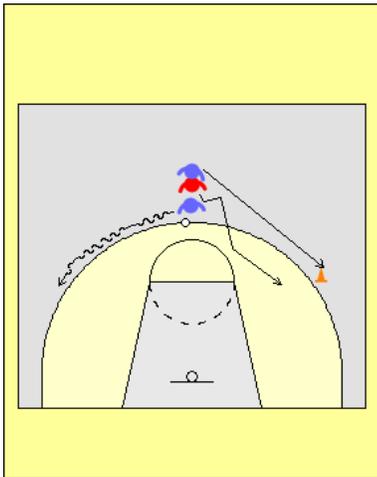


### Three Player Pass to Cutter – Guard the Passer

Three players line up at the top. The first player is the defender, the second is the passer with the ball and the third is the cutter. The passer dribbles the ball to an attack spot while the defender plays pressure defence on the ball. The cutter touches the pylon and establishes eye contact with the passer. When the

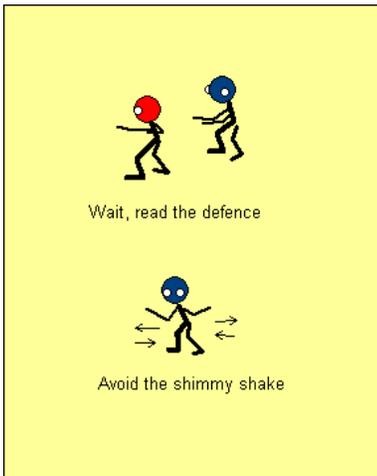


passer is ready, the third player cuts. In this drill the key is to pass outside the three-point line or in the key as making a pass in the area between the three-point line and key provides poor spacing. It is important to note that if the player has to move off the three-point line it is automatically a back-door cut (this is a time when the pivot foot of the passer is essential). If the player uses the foot closest to the defender they will face extreme pressure and usually deliver an inaccurate pass. The players should use the foot furthest from the defender and keep the ball in front of the pivot foot.



### Three Player Pass to Cutter – Guard the Cutter

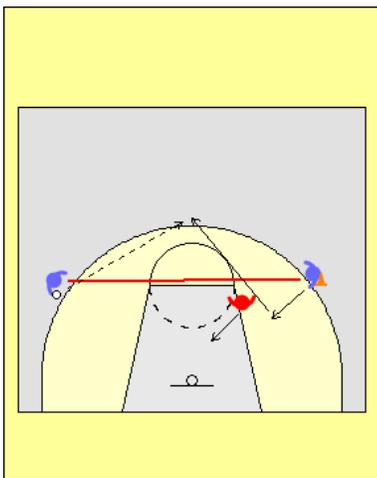
This drill sets up the same as the previous drill except the first player in line has the ball and the second player in line is the defender. The ball is dribbled to the attack spot and the cutter must run to the opposite attack spot. The defender establishes good help side position.



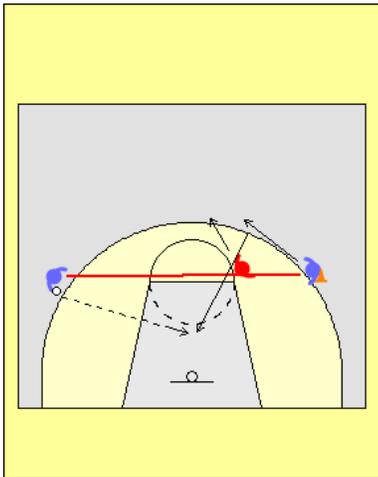
### Common Errors

The most common error is the player not waiting to read the defence or to make sure the passer is looking. In many cases the best cut is no cut while the focus should be definite changes of speed and direction.

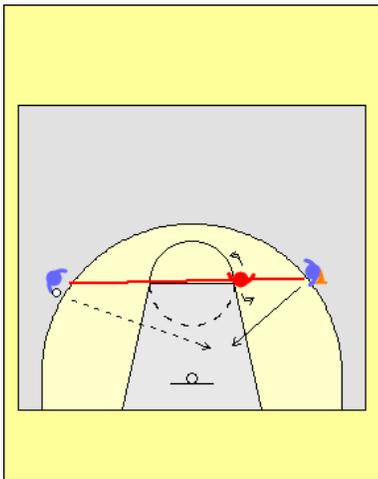
The other common error is for the offensive player to cut into the defence and then does the shimmy shake. This is where the cutter fakes back and forth a couple of times. This is very difficult for the passer to read. He or she has a 50/50 chance of guessing right.



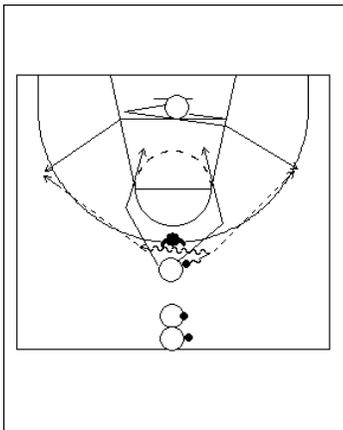
It is important that the cutter learns to read the defence as the focus is to enlarge the space that the defence gives. If the defender is below the line (between the cutter and the ball) try to force the defence even lower as in a short race, the cutter can make a quick change of speed and direction and be open at the top. The key is to catch the ball at the three-point line, anticipate the defence and attack right left or with a shot.



If the defence is playing above the line the player should take the defender even higher. The player can use the three-point line as a guide to cut back-door to the basket where the pass is made in the key. The point of emphasis here is for the passer to make quality decisions when passing. Without a defender the player will often throw chest passes from the middle of the body.



If the defence plays on the line it is important to put them in a vulnerable position. In this formation it is impossible for the defender to see the ball and the cutter at the same time. If the defence turns their head the cutter can attack at an advantageous angle. Using a catch fake with the hands and eyes will cause the defender to turn often.

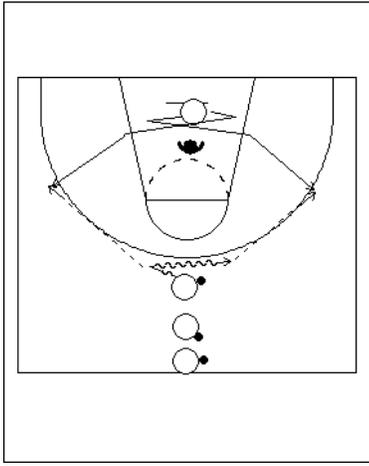


### **2vs1 Double Exit**

In this drill the focus is on making a wing-entry pass followed by a give-and-go. The line at the top has basketballs except the first player who turns and plays defence on the second player. A second offensive player is standing under the basket. This player can choose to exit to either attack spot. The offensive player at the top can shorten the pass by dribbling slightly to the side. It is important for the pass to arrive at the cutter when they are exactly at the attack spot as it is ineffective to provide a pass to a player who is running away from the basket inside the three-point line (unless they are in the key).

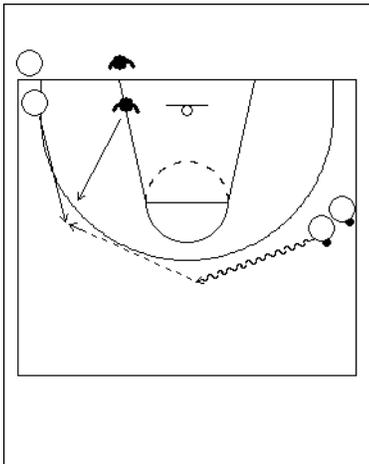
When catching the ball between the key and three-point line it is impossible to anticipate the defence and create the one-second advantage and therefore the offensive player cannot help as they cannot see their teammates. Additionally, there is no space for a back-door cut.

Once the offensive player on the wing catches the ball, the passer executes a give-and-go pass. This may be in front or behind the defender, depending on the action of the defence on the pass.



### **Timing of the Pass (On Time/Target)**

In this drill the defence is focused on the cutter. The passer must deliver the pass at the exact moment to the exact spot. The pass is either a back-door pass in the key or to the player at the attack spot at the three-point line.



### **Make Pass Shorter**

In this drill the focus is on making the back-door pass or the wing-entry pass off the dribble. The wing player must shorten the distance of the pass by dribbling the ball to the ball-side or top. It is important to note that making these passes from the other side often leads to a turnover.

## REBOUNDING

Players are taught when and how to use their bodies to gain position to offensive rebound. At the same time players are taught to have defensive balance whenever a shot is taken. Not all players can go for the rebound; some must be protecting the basket as safeties. Rebounding needs to be emphasized in every drill or activity. It is through this emphasis that players build a rebounding mentality.

### Early Clock

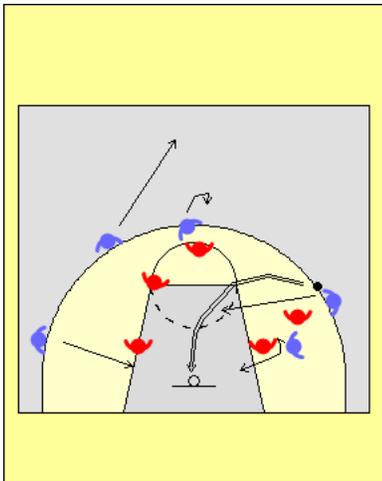
A shot taken early often has an easier time to be rebounded since the defence has not had a time to get set. Coaches must decide what shots are acceptable during the early clock and who should rebound these shots.

### Mid Clock

During the half-court offence, the players should have a better understanding of what shots will be taken and when. Coaches can have more control at this time on who should be in rebounding position. This should be built into the offence.

### Late Clock

Many offensive rebounds can be picked up at this time during the clock as many shots are forced and can have random caroms off the basket. During this phase, safeties become a priority.



One rule that can be used in all game-like drills is that players below the foul line extended go for offensive rebounds. Those above the foul line extended become safeties. This tactic provides the opportunity for rebounding to be practiced in every drill.

The other way is to assign rebounding responsibilities by position or individual player. The main issue with this method is that some players never have to learn to rebound both offensively and defensively except in drills designed for rebounding.

Rebounding is an integral part of the game and should be stressed at all times.

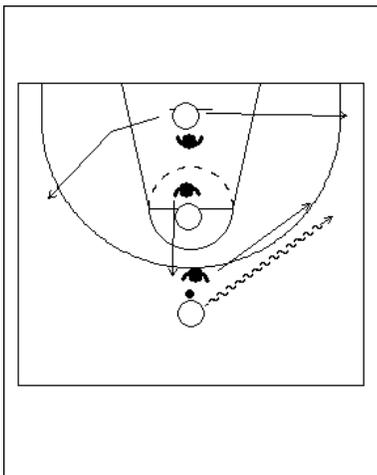
## RUNNING A CONCEPTUAL OFFENCE USING THE FIRST FIVE OFFENSIVE CONCEPTS

### RULES:

- 1 – Pass the ball if teammates are open.
- 2 – Penetrate every time there is not an open shot or open teammates.
- 3 – Cut only if the ball-handler is looking (and can see the cut).
- 4 – Replace the open spot on the perimeter.
- 5 – Catch the ball where most efficient (the three-point line, not inside the line or away from the line).
- 6 – Options after catching the ball – 1. Shoot, 2. Pass, 3. One-on-one.

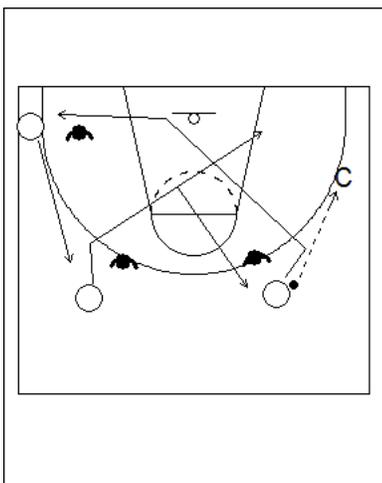
### 3vs3 HALF-COURT

These drills are used to practice the rules for half-court offence. This is not something that can be put in place in one practice. A commitment to training over long period of time is required.



#### Spot-up (One Guard)

The three offensive players start in a straight line. The bottom player can choose to exit either side. The top player dribbles the ball to a side. The middle player must find open space. They then play three-on-three using the rules of play.



#### Cut and Replace (Two Guards)

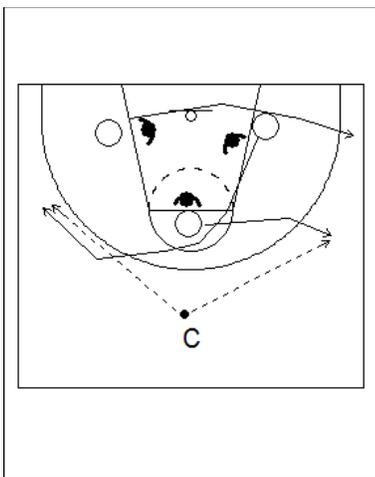
The coach stands on the wing. While the defence plays denial the other three offensive players fill the other perimeter spots. On the pass the player wants to cut to the basket. Following the rules the other players fill space. If denied at the three-point line the player must cut back-door.

On the catch there should not be a freeze of the ball. It is integral to remember to think shot first, pass second and drive third. The coach should always be available to receive a pass.

### 2vs2 ADVANTAGE (half-court)

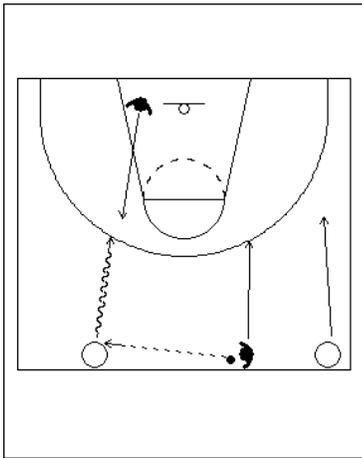
The purpose of these drills is to give the offence a brief one-second advantage. Can the player exploit and maintain the one-second advantage. The defence is attempting to recover.

The answer is to spend time on teaching them to shoot. By solving this problem with a tactic or strategy it only works for a short time. But over a long period of time this does not solve the problem.



### Exchanging Space (Spot Up) Three-on-three

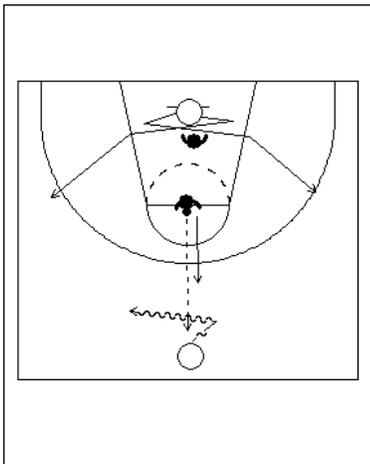
The players start in a triangle. The coach designates each offensive player as number one, two and three. The numbering system will determine who will move first, second or third when indicated. The players cannot go back to the same side they started. The coach passes to any open player and they play three-on-three. This drill teaches the players to find open space, be aware of the movement of their teammates, play from different positions and find familiarity with the rhythm of offence.



### From the side

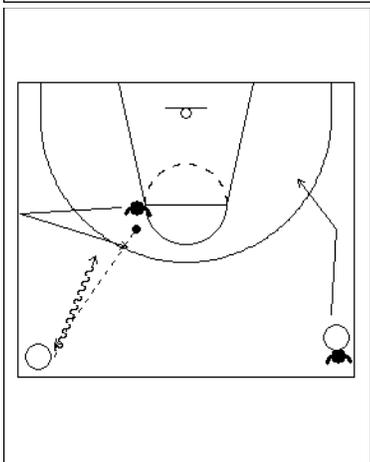
One defender is under the basket while the second defender is at half-court on the outside of the centre lane. Both offensive players are at half-court in the outside lines. All three players at half-court are in the same line. In this drill both offensive players are given a one-second advantage. The player with the ball has to keep their head up and decide if they can make the pass to their teammate who is running on the wing. If this does not occur the play can be slowed down by playing two-on-two. The defence is working on slowing down the ball and recovering on defence.

**Note:** The coach must be aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the players. In the advantage drills the coach may have to change the width and length of the court to give the offence a one-second advantage. If the players cannot pass for distance it should be shortened. If the defence is arriving too quickly (before the offence has a chance to pass) the defence should have to run a further distance. The players should be placed into situation where they use their left hand to initiate action.



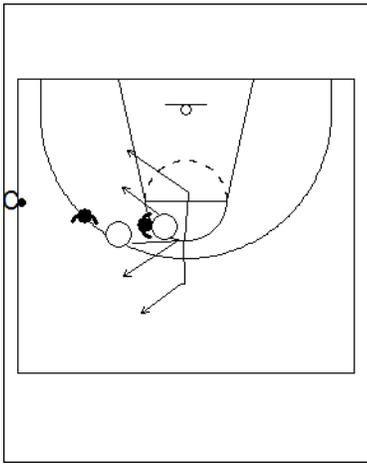
### From the Middle

One offence player is under the basket with one defender guarding. The second defender is at the foul line with the ball. The second offensive player is at the top. The action starts when the defence at the foul line passes to the offensive player on top; playing two-on-two. The offensive player under the basket is cutting to either wing to get open.



### Timing of the Pass

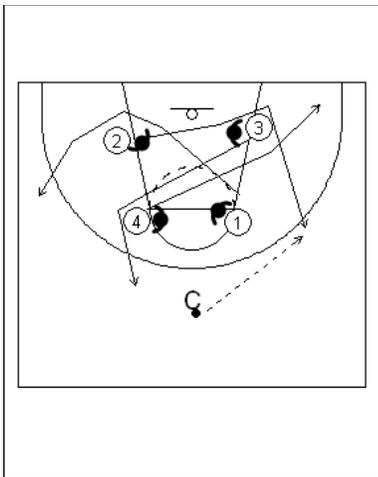
In this drill the player are going two-on-two with the defence coming from a different angle. One defender is at the elbow with the ball. The second defender is behind one offensive player at half-court with their back to the offensive player (to create a one-second advantage for the offence). The second offensive player is at half. This player receives a pass from the defender at the elbow. Once the pass is made the defender must touch the sideline before playing defence. This creates a brief two-on-zero situation and therefore important for the offence to advantage and maintain the one-second advantage. The defence is working to recover.



### 2vs2 After S. O. B.

Another way to start two-on-two situations is by having a coach or another player inbound the ball. A simple concept when inbounding is the player furthest from the ball faces the ball while the player closest to the ball faces the other offensive player with their back to the ball. The player furthest from the ball cuts first. The player with their back reads the first cutter and goes opposite. Once the ball is inbounded, the players play two-on-two using our concepts.

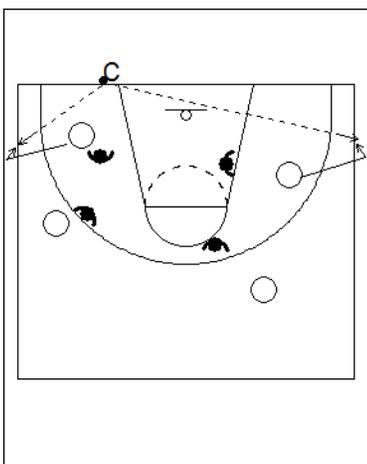
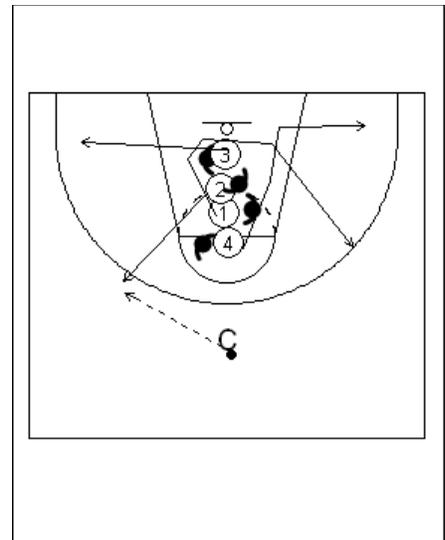
## FOUR-ON-FOUR



### Exchanging Places (Finding Spots)

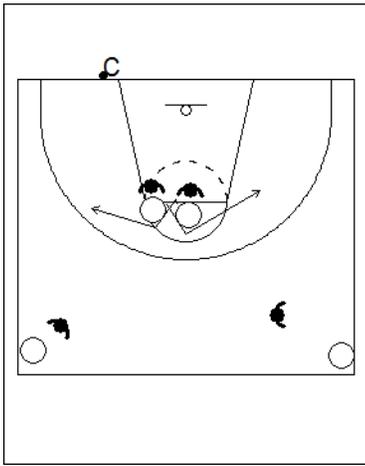
Here is the same drill, only they start in a box formation to initiate four-on-four. Again, they must move in sequence and find the open space, but they cannot go out on the same side as they start.

This formation can also start in a stack of four players. Again this is used to start the play.



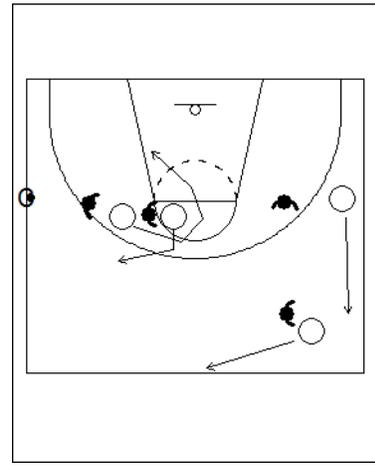
### 4vs4 Save the Ball

Another way to start playing four-on-four or five-on-five is to have the players moving randomly about the court. When the coach calls a colour, that team must save the ball from going out of bounds. One player saves it and the others must communicate and position themselves to receive the ball. That team attacks the far basket on offence (the coach can designate which basket the team will be attacking).



#### 4vs4 B. O. B.

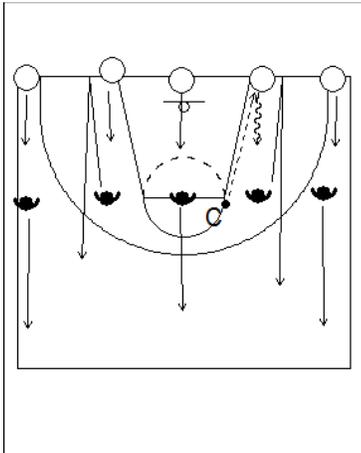
The coach stands with the ball out of bounds. Both teams move randomly on the court. The coach calls a colour and sets the ball down. The team with the corresponding uniform colours must inbound the ball. The team attacks whichever basket the coach designates.



#### 4vs4 S. O. B.

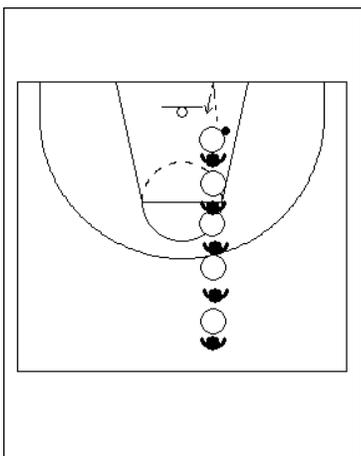
This is the same drill but on the side inbounds.

### FIVE-ON-FIVE



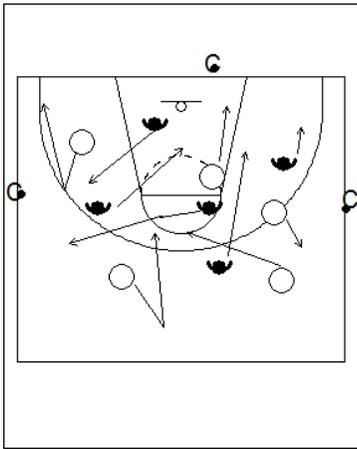
#### 5vs5 Advantage

Players line up as defenders along the foul line extended and the offence on the baseline. The coach passes to one of the offensive players. The opposite defensive player must touch the baseline before returning on defence.



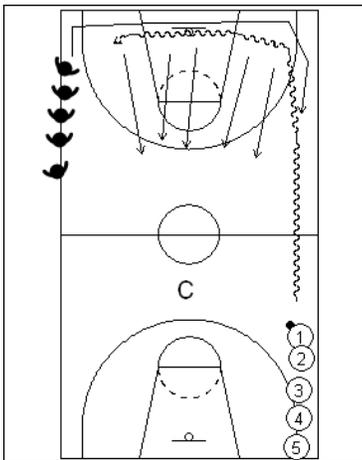
#### 5vs5 Tap-In

All the players line up in one straight line in front of the backboard, with an offensive player alternating a defensive player. The ball is tossed up on the backboard and kept alive by tipping. The players rotate back to the end of the line. When the coach calls "stop," the player who has the ball takes the ball and their team is now on offence.



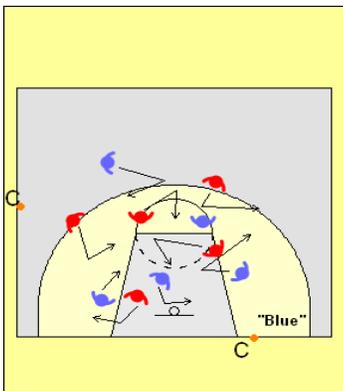
### 5vs5 Match-Up

The players from both teams are moving randomly in space. The coach passes (or rolls) the ball to one team. This team is now on offence. The team that saves the ball gets to start on offence. This drill can also be done with a shot where the team that rebounds the ball goes on offence.



### Run the Court

The five offensive player and five defensive players line up in opposite corners of the gym. The first offensive player has a ball. When the coach says “go” the players start to jog along the perimeter of the court. When the coach blows the whistle the team on offence starts to attack the far basket and the defence must match-up and play defence. This is a creative way to start playing five-on-five.



### Inbounding

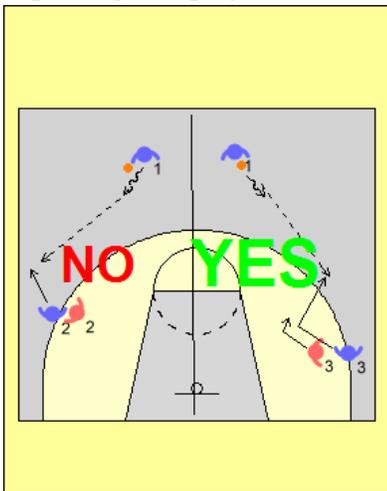
Both teams are moving randomly in the half-court. One coach is on the sideline and the other is on the baseline. Both coaches have balls. One will call a colour and set the ball down. That team must inbound the ball and attack the basket.

## SEALING AND POSTING

**ALL** players must learn how to use their body to seal a defender. The interior player must create a target that the perimeter players can pass to. Players learn how to pass the ball to a person in the post position— pass high, bounce pass, triangle pass and lob. Players also position themselves so that the defence cannot defend the ball in the post and the perimeter player at the same time. The key in the post is to move in relation with the basketball.

### Passing Inside

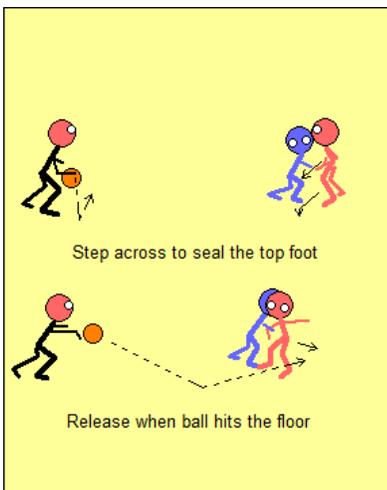
It is difficult to create a one-second advantage on every pass that is made, especially as individual and team defence improves. When encountering teams that can play excellent denial defence, and prevent back-door passes, players will have to learn how to seal to get open for passes. These seals will occur on the perimeter and when players start to take advantage inside. Players need to learn the side pass and circular pass against a defender and how to keep their appointment before moving on to passing to a player who is sealing.



#### Passing to the Sealed Perimeter Player

It is important to know to get the ball at the attack spot where there is an ideal angle to pass the ball. Catching the ball too high and near the sideline limits the options the offence has in attacking the defence.

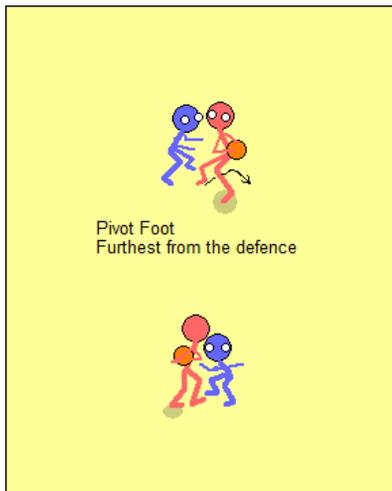
The offensive player must walk their check closer to the basket to seal. When the player breaks to receive the pass they will have the proper spacing.



The offensive player steps across the top foot of defender and seals with their forearm and shoulder. Eye contact must be made with the passer. It is easier for players to catch a bounce pass in this situation. The receiver releases to the ball when the ball hits the floor.

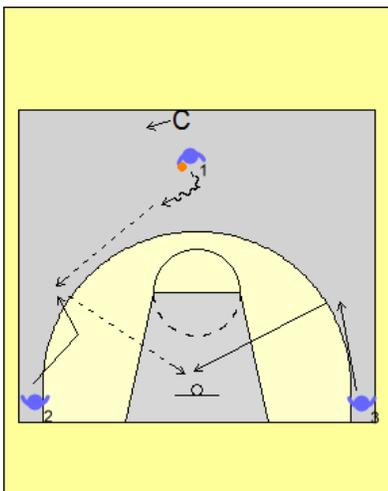
**Note:** This is different than when not sealing the defender. When sealing, the ball moves first, then the receiver. When cutting, the receiver moves first, followed by the ball.

When the pass is an air pass it is difficult to know when to release. The passer knows that they are not passing to the receiver but to a spot outside body of the receiver.



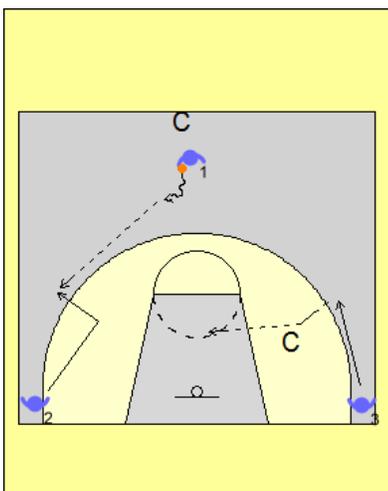
In this situation the offensive player has been designated as a passer. On catching the ball, the player uses the pivot foot furthest from the defender (drop pivot). The player looks to make a quality pass to someone who can create the one-second advantage as this player should not be playing static one-on-one. It is important to note that while the player is shot faking and jabbing they will likely miss the player who is open for the pass.

To have the team play one-on-one inside five players need to anticipate when they can create a one-second advantage and when they need to be a quality passer who makes the pass that creates the one-second advantage for another player. The intent should be to have the ball in a position where players can look to pass to inside players who are sealing or cutting the basket.



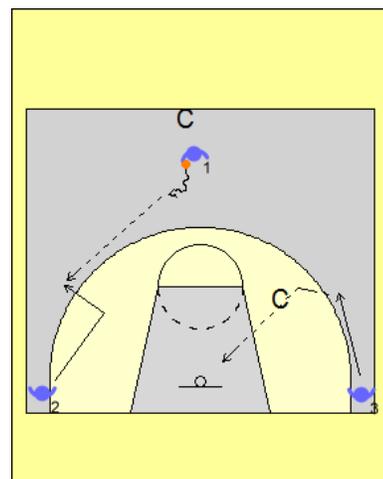
### Passing to the Inside Cutter

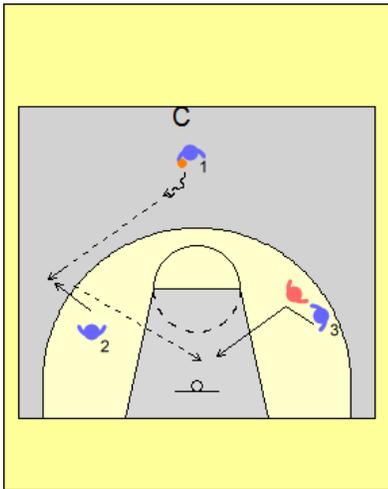
This drill is the same as when passing to the wing player on the perimeter. The ball-handler must scan to see which wing player is open (the coach signals from behind the ball-handler). This player executes a seal and pop to catch the ball at the attack spot. The opposite wing cuts up to the wing for spacing when they see the pass has been made. When the player on the wing drop pivots and has made eye contact the player cuts to the basket to receive a pass. Once the players have mastered the concepts they can move to the next phase of skill development.



### Coach Guided Defence

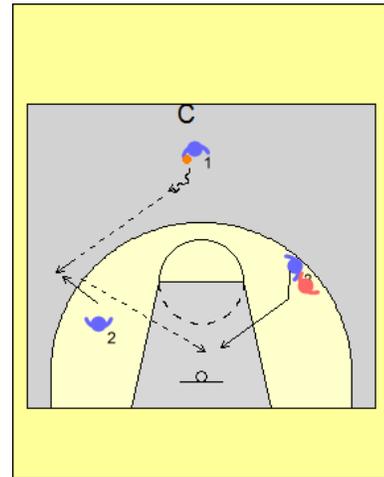
In this drill the coach guides the cutter on what type of cut to make. If the defence is low, take the defender lower; if the defence is high take the defender higher (enlarge the space).





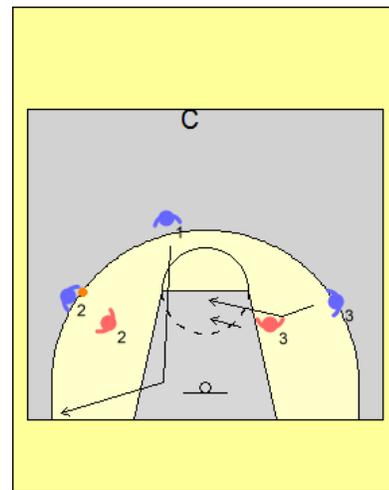
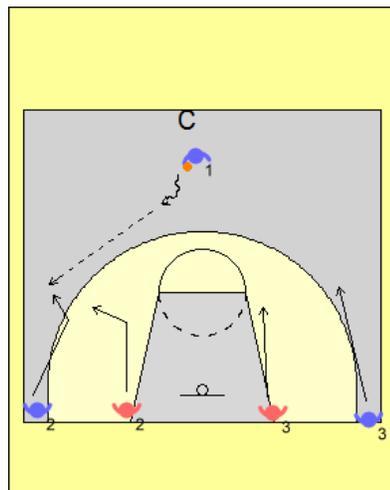
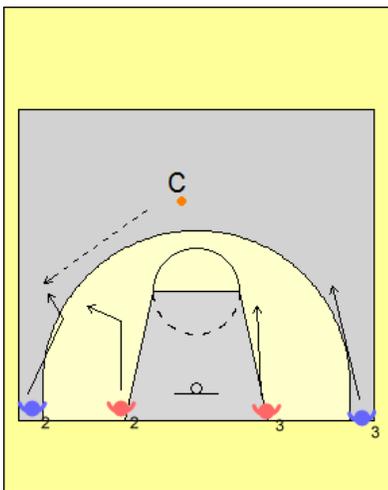
### Guided Defence

With this drill the offence is given a one-second advantage. In the first example, the defender is above the offensive cutter. In the second example, the defender has been placed below the offensive player.



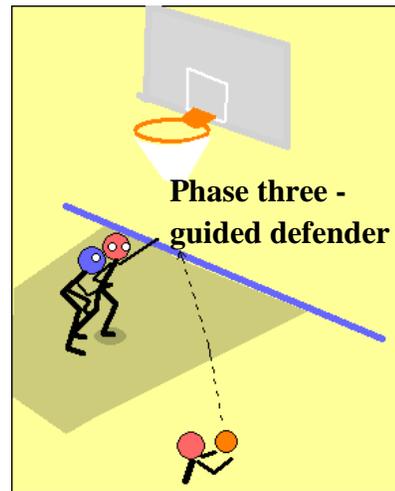
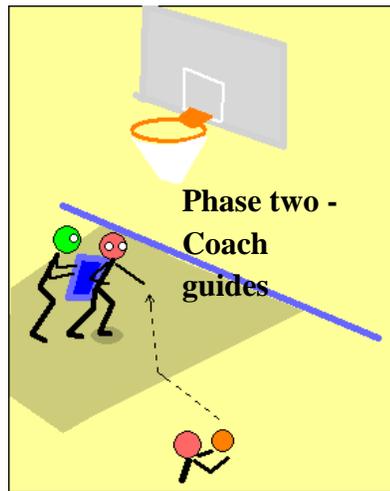
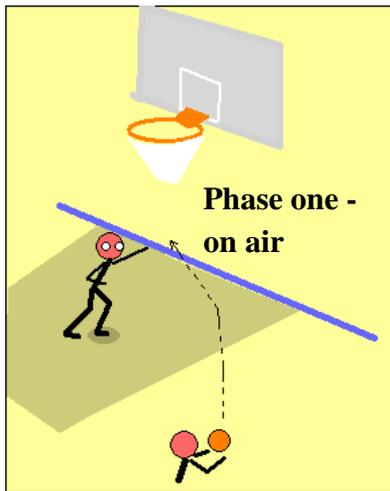
The intent is to work on the timing of the cut, the quality of the pass and keeping the player behind (Keep on Back).

Based on the level of players, the coach knows will know how much of an advantage to give the offensive players. It is important to give the offence a slight advantage and eventually let the defence play live.



### Two-on-two

In this drill two-on-two is played with two defenders on the wing players. They are given a one-second advantage by having the defence start away from the wing players. The coach decides which wing player to pass the ball to. In the second version the ball-handler who makes the pass and then cuts is used. After the cut they play two-on-two. For three-on-three a defender can be placed on the ball-handler.

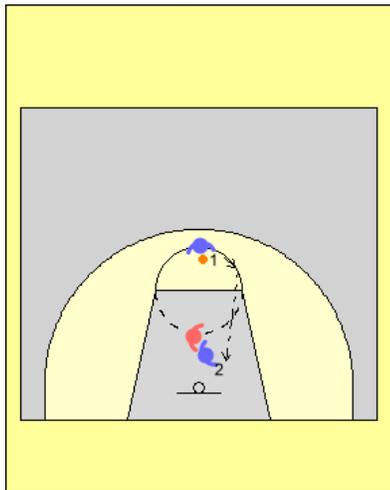


### Passing to a Sealed Player

In this drill players are working on passing to a player who has a seal inside and three phases of teaching skill development are used. In phase one the posted player is working on presenting a target and holding position against an imaginary defender. After catching the ball, the player uses the pivot furthest from the defender. The passer is working on an air pass or a bounce pass depending on the target.

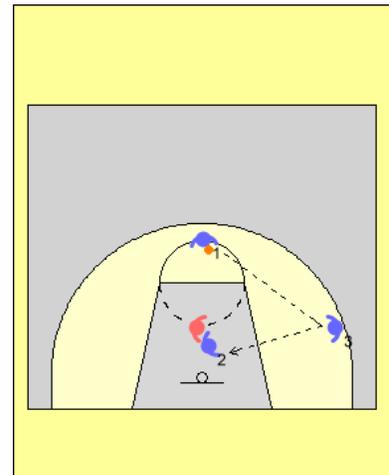
In phase two, the coach plays guided defence. The player gets to work on holding their seal, releasing to catch the ball and the use of the proper pivot foot (furthest from the defence)

In phase three, the players go one-on-one against a guided defender. The first intent is to score but the key is to work on sealing and being able to pass into this player. To load the drill defence can be placed on the passer.



It is important to work on these passes from different positions around the key with the emphasis on sealing and making the right pass. The defence is fighting for position while the offence is holding their seal.

To load the drill a perimeter player with a relay pass can be added.



## DEVELOPMENT OF THE INSIDE PLAYER

The following are the clinic notes from a presentation by Ettore Messina, a well-known international basketball coach.

**The more information you receive the harder it is to implement.**

More is not always better. The art of coaching is in picking the right information to use at the right time. It is important to make the selection of what information to use. Today it is even harder because people are exposed to so much information. You cannot teach them everything. The key is to know what to absolutely teach *now*. What comes next? What comes last?

A good teacher knows where to start and where he wants to progress to in the end. What is the endpoint? You need to help players grow. They need to walk on their own.

Define the system – it is what I feel comfortable with in an organized way. It begins with an organized method of teaching. Start with the basics. The coach must create steps that lead somewhere. These steps cannot be too small and not challenge the athlete or be too big to create frustration. An appropriate step will assist the athlete in learning how to handle frustration.

You want players to learn from mistakes. Are you willing to accept mistakes? As a coach, you must decide what levels of mistakes you are willing to accept from the players. The more complex the more mistakes. The coach must think these things through before he works with the athlete.

**Prepare in order to prepare the athlete.**

When teaching there can be wide range of interpretations. Keep it simple; players need to read and react? This is a long process. Limit the options. It is difficult to see and react with large numbers of people when first learning. The player must read themselves before they can read their opponent. As the player grows, more freedom is allowed. This requires self-discipline and aggressiveness in reaction to the read. This is what is required at a higher level of play. It also requires unselfishness. It is a simple game when we limit the options. Allow the players to interpret the game – read and react.

What the player sees is not always the same as the coach.

Players improve:

- Mentally – self-confidence, play simple and play under pressure
- Physically – faster, stronger, jumps, balance
- Technically – move, execution of the shot, where and when to go

There is an interaction between each element.

For example; when executing a low post move on air, with no defence, the player may be fine in their execution. Add defence and a problem has been created. They need to learn to absorb contact. Need to emphasize the physical and the technical.

Example: If fitness improves, the player has more confidence and they may be willing to try something they may not have previously. It is not just about technical repetitions. The coach must be like the great chef.

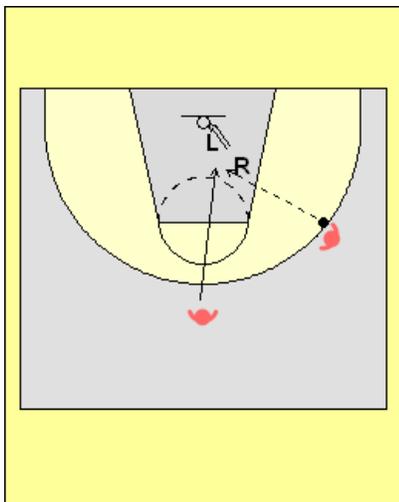
### **The Player with Size**

Players need to understand how to become better and know the importance of doing something for the team. The shorter, faster players dominate at younger ages. It takes longer for the young, “big” player to develop. Eventually with patience, they will dominate the game. Many coaches will not put the young, “big” player on the court because they may hurt the team’s performance. For this reason, it is crucial to find ways to assist the young, “big” player in developing certain key skills. This growth in confidence to play sends a strong signal to his teammates who will also have confidence in his abilities.

Can the young inside player

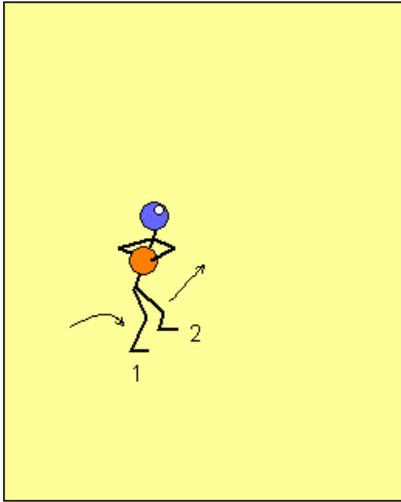
1. Score in the fast break?
2. Control his body balance on an offensive rebound?
3. Make his foul shots?
4. Handle contact?
5. Be in the right position on defence?

If they can accomplish these skills, they can stay in the game and be a positive contributor to the team.



### **Scoring on the Fast Break**

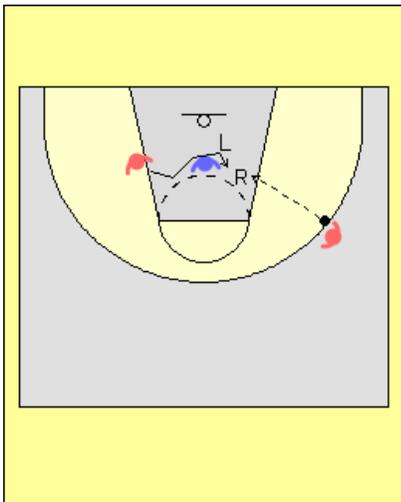
The player needs to come to a jump stop so they do not travel. It is recommended that the player use a reverse jump stop. The footwork is outside–inside. This concept allows the player to gain control of their body, have their momentum towards the basket, cut off the defender and protect the ball from the defender.



On the right side of the floor the player will generally land right foot/left foot. On the left side of the floor, it is the left foot then right foot. By landing on the outside foot first, the player can push off the outside foot and generate momentum to the basket. The player does not have to think about coordinating their feet; which leads to a travel often. This is especially difficult when trying to make a catch in traffic.

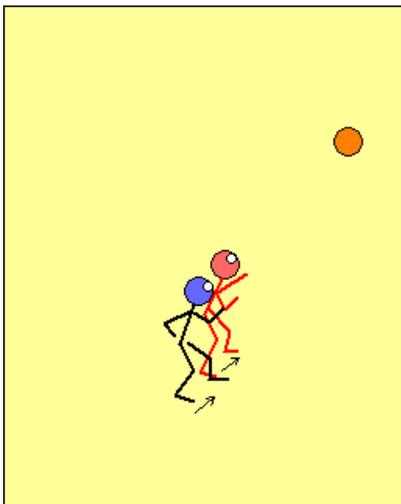
When practicing, the coach should pass the ball in different ways (regular pass, bad pass high, bad pass low, etc.).

The player will get accustomed to do a reverse jump stop automatically. It is much easier for a player to catch a bounce pass as it does not extend them. The coordination between the arms and the legs is crucial. The eyes need to watch the ball on the catch and then quickly find the target.



### Reverse Jump Stop on Finishing a Cut

When the offensive player cuts across the lane they are likely to be misdirected in setting up the defender. To finish the cut, the player uses the same outside/inside step to cut off and seal the defender. The tendency is to finish the cut by running all the way to the block. It cannot be stressed enough – the importance of planting the outside foot first as it allows the player to generate power back into the defender. This is so important in maintaining balance and assisting the player in dealing with contact.

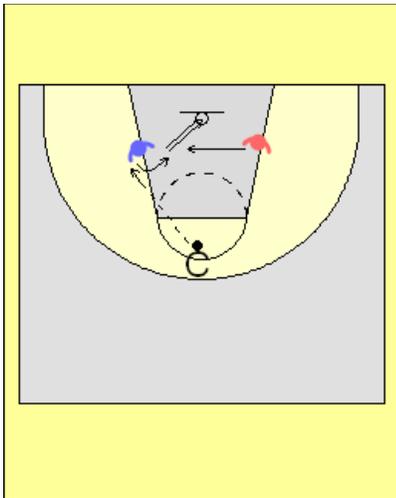


### Offensive Rebounding

The same footwork is used when offensive rebounding. The player moves forward, plants the outside foot past the defender who is attempting to block out and then cuts in front of the defender with the inside leg. Too many players plant the inside foot first. This means the second step is the outside foot. If contact occurs during this action, the natural momentum of the player is away from the basket. The player is knocked off balance.

In all of these situations the player, once they have the ball, want to drop their inside shoulder and

lean to the basket. It is important to protect the ball and for fakes to be used to gather the body for an explosive move to the basket.

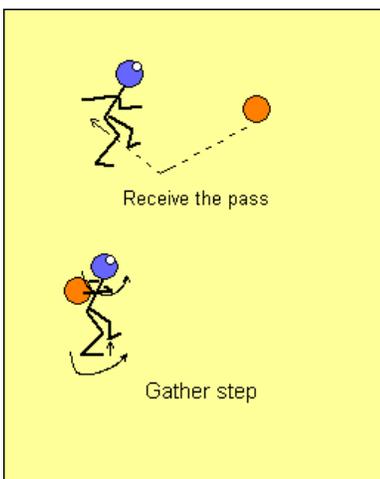


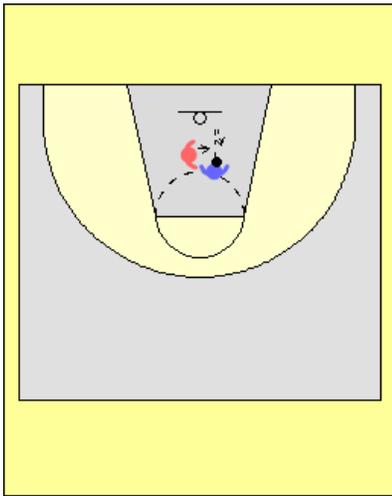
### Scoring off Penetration

Two players line up on either side but their feet are not parallel to the baseline as this would require a 180 degree pivot to score. The players are slightly turned in with their heel closest to the basket, planted and ready. The coach passes to the outside hand of one of the players. This player must catch the ball, pivot and attempt a shot. The other player comes to contest the shot. This is done to create game-like situations and build confidence of the “big” player.

Key points to consider:

- Jump in the air
- No dribble
- Do not be afraid of contact
- Gather step when receiving the pass. The player uses the inside heel plant to convert his momentum to vertical power (this is the same footwork used by volleyball players and high jumpers)
- Rip the ball to the inside shoulder. This will become the outside shoulder once the pivot is complete. It protects the ball from the defender and also aids in a quick pivot
- Drop the inside shoulder
- Do not release the ball at the same time as the contact. Contact first then the shot release.

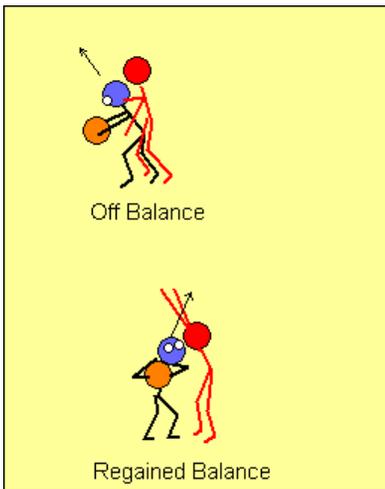




### How to Absorb Physical Contact on an Offensive Rebound

In this drill the offensive player tosses the ball off the backboard and catches their rebound. As soon as both their feet hit the floor the defensive player pushes with their chest to force the player off balance. It is crucial that players land properly on two feet as the defensive player crowds the rebounder, trying to get them to lean away from the basket.

Players with poor core strength will often land off balance. The purpose of the drill is for the player to regain their balance before attempting to score.



When landing, the player's bodyline will generally be pointing away from the basket. To gain their balance they are not throwing elbows or pushing off but rather using their gather-step and pivot to get their body facing the basket.

It cannot be emphasized enough that balance must be taught before quickness. Once the player learns to find their balance they can start to move faster.

### Teaching

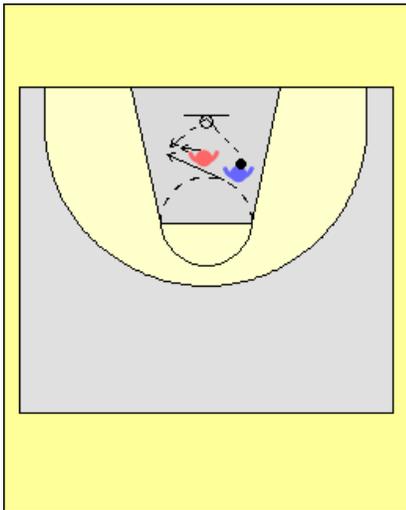
There is tendency when teaching to go too fast.

Three parts:

- Explaining – slow motion
- Repetition – repeat the move until the player can do the move without thinking
- Provide the players with goals
  - 10 reps in 30 second
  - 10 in a row, no misses
  - Add guided defence

Another way of saying this is:

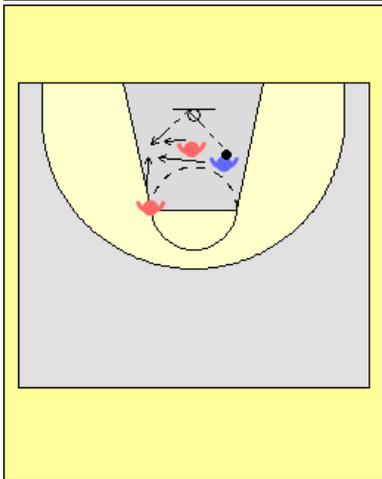
- Slow motion – learning
- Normal speed – repetition
- Added speed – to stress



### **Loading the Drill**

In this drill the offensive player tosses the ball on an angle towards the backboard and must run across the lane to catch the rebound. The defender crowds them when the rebounder's feet hit the floor. The player must regain their balance and direct momentum back to the basket.

A short fake move can be used to regain balance as long as it does not raise the player's centre of gravity. If the opposing player jumps on the fake the offensive player can draw a foul by creating contact.



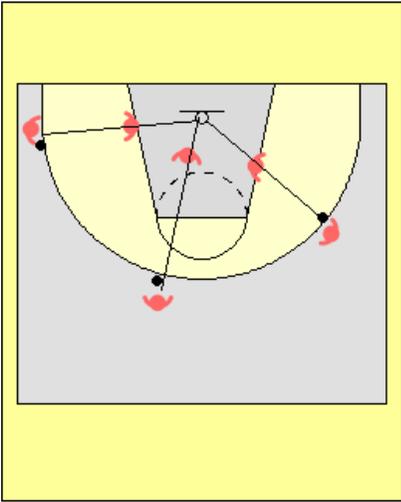
### **Add a Double Team**

In this version of the drill, a second defender comes to double team the post player but they cannot double team until contact occurs.

### **Foul Shooting**

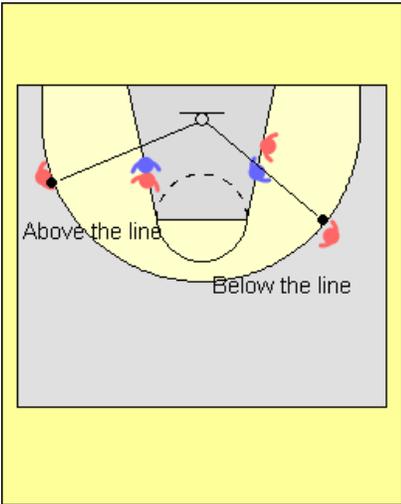
It is important to teach young, "big" players how to be a consistent foul shooter. The recommendation is to work on this before developing a repertoire of back-to-the-basket post moves. The player will get fouled and shoot foul shots due to the nature of their position.

There is no pressure of time or defence when learning the foul shot. The player has to set their feet and acquire a routine. If they learn to make one out of two to start they are making a positive contribution to the team.

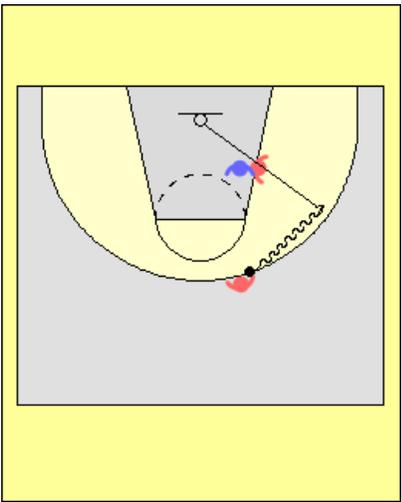


**Be on the Line**

When posting players must learn that it is not just a spot on the floor but rather a line – between the basket and the passes is the post player.

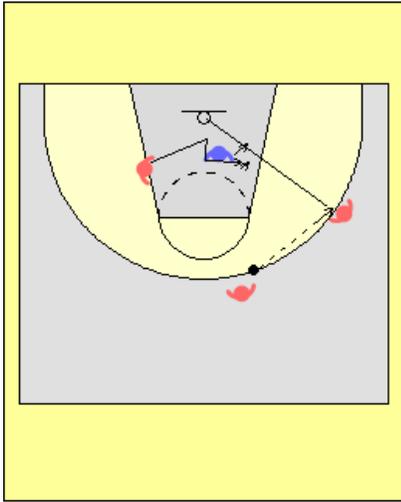


If the player is above or below the line, the defender has a great opportunity to defend the post player.

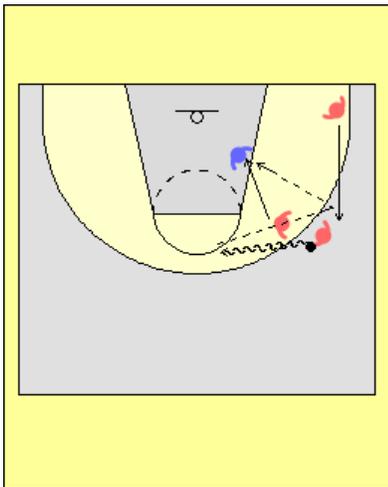


**Learning How to Post**

The simplest way for a novice post player to learn about the line is to have a perimeter player bring the ball to the line while the post stays still (no seal) as this helps the perimeter player understand angles.

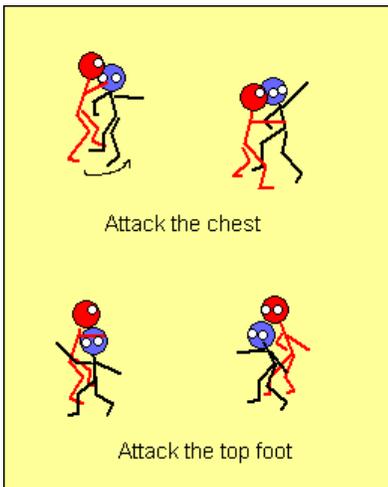


The other important concept to consider is having the ball passed to the wing while the post cuts and posts up. If the ball and the player are moving at the same time, it increases the difficulty of having a good post on the line.



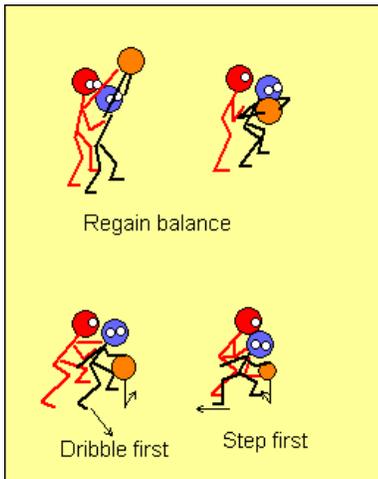
### Complex Posting

When actions before the post up are added the difficulty to create the proper line increases. In this drill the posting player sets a ball screen and then rolls into the post looking for the relay pass from the wing. The key is to simplify the action for younger players and repeat this drill for increased familiarity.



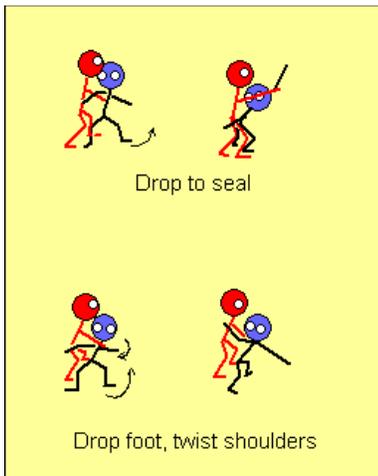
### How to Seal a Defender

When executing the reverse jump stop at the end of the cut to post up, players often make the mistake of attacking the chest of the opposing player. When this occurs, the defender can easily circle around the offensive post player and establish good defensive position. The key for the offensive player is to attack the top foot by using power from the outside step (to step over the top foot of the defender). Players must learn to go through the arm of the opposing player with a rip or a swim action (attack the elbow where the arm will bend; but not excessively).



### Ball on the Block

The key for getting the ball on the block is regaining balance after catching the ball. Generally, the player will receive a little push on the back from the opposing player and this gets their back heel off the floor and has their bodyline going away from the basket. If the player is using a dribble move, they must be sure to step first before the dribble. If the dribble comes first, the defensive player can often drive the player away from the basket. By stepping first, the player can use a strong gather step.



### Post Move Progression

The first move to teach the inside player is an attacking move directly on the catch (when they have the player sealed on the high side). If they are right handed they should start on the left block. The player catches the ball and uses the foot furthest from the defender to pivot.

When the player drops the foot to seal the defender they generally drop their upper torso and this gives the perimeter player no target. When the foot drops the same shoulder must twist back in the opposite direction towards the ball as this allows the player to show a target and also shortens the distance on the catch. It is important to stay away from teaching the next move until players have mastered other areas.

### Move #2

Drop step and shot

### Move #3

Drop step – dribble middle – jump hook

### Move #4

Drop step - dribble middle – spin back – layup

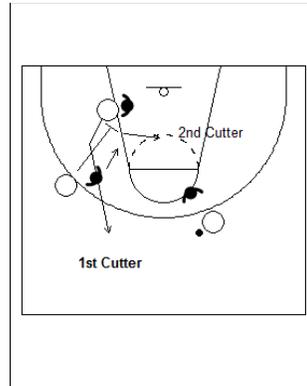
When dribbling in the key, the dribble needs to be started with two hands to protect the ball. It is not the same dribble that is used on the perimeter.

## SCREENING

Screens are used to create a one-second advantage. Players can use screens as a way to create confusion for the defence. Properly reading the defence gives the offence a one-second advantage. Players must be taught how to properly set and read a variety of screens.

### Fundamentals of the Screening Game

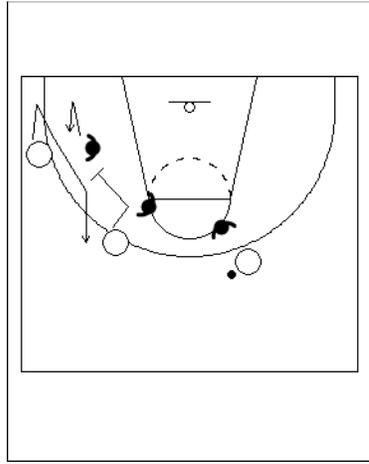
- There must be visual and verbal communication. The players must use hand signals and cue words. The coach must determine who communicates – one player, two, three, etc.
- On each screening action there is a first cutter and second cutter – usually one goes outside (to the ball) and one goes inside (to the basket). A term used for this is “one out, one in.”



- The defenders will show the offensive players what to do (i.e. read the defence).
- After every screening action spacing on the floor must be re-established.
- There should always be a focus and action towards the basket.

### Cutting Principles

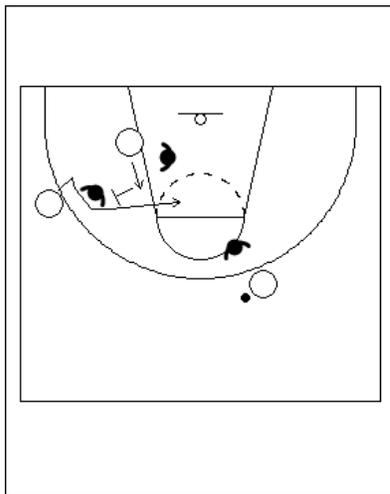
- Cut to be open and not to be guarded – cut hard, looking at the ball.
- Cut to the front of the basket, open up to see the ball and then exit out to the three-point line
- Cut through contact – execute an incidental screen by running through the arms of the help defender while cutting to the basket. This makes it difficult for the defender to recover to the second cutter.
- Change pace or stop/start if the defender is following or tailing tight behind.
- Take one to two misdirection steps to set-up the cut. Enlarge the space by moving away from the screen before cutting off the screen
  - Down screen – drag the arc
  - Other types of screens – v-cut or stop/start



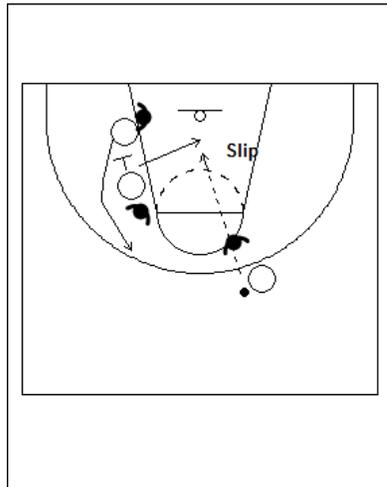
- Players need to be quick second cutters. A player will not be open for long and therefore cutters must force the defender to make a quick decision.
- By getting the inside arm through first, players can cut tight off screens. Players should grab the screener when possible as this prevents the defender from taking the inside path over the screen.
- Players should wait for the screen to be set. Some examples of the rules on receiving screen:
  - Wait and watch
  - First rule – wait
  - Second rule – wait
  - Third rule – wait
  - Better to be late than early
  - Sprint to set it, walk to use it

### Screening Principles

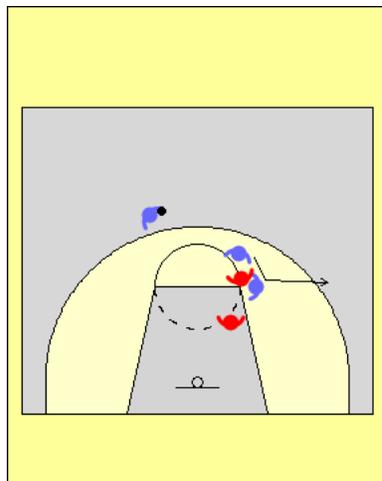
- **Location** – players should know where on the floor each type of screen should be set. It is important for players to be familiar with proper spacing and position for screens.
- **Every screener should be a cutter first** –in the diagram below, the post player sets the back screen by cutting to the key first; setting up the screening angle.



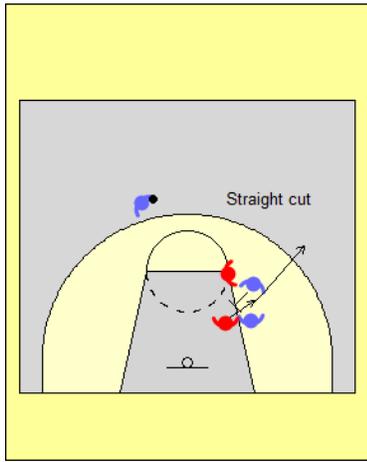
- **Sprint to screen** – this method forces the defender to focus on the screener and not be a helper. When players sprint to screens it is easier for them to slip (when the screener becomes the first cutter). This occurs when the basket is left unprotected by the defence after the screen is set.



- **Angle of screen** – wherever the back of the screener is facing determines the direction where the cutter should cut.



- **No fouls on screen** – the screen must be stationary and take a two foot stop – wide and low. On blind screens the offensive player must give the defender one step.
- **First cutter and second cutter action** – the first cutter reads their defender, while the second cutter reads the first cutter.

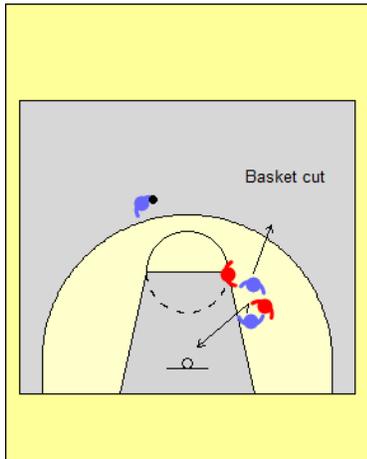
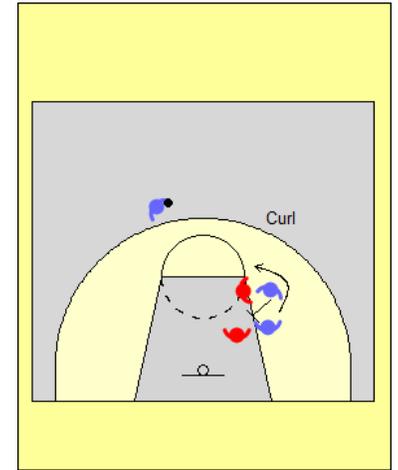


### **Straight Cut**

The read is when the defender of the cutter is following the cutter and the defender of the screener is in a good hedging position.

### **Curl**

When the defender of the cutter trails the screen and the defender of the screener is not in a good hedging position.

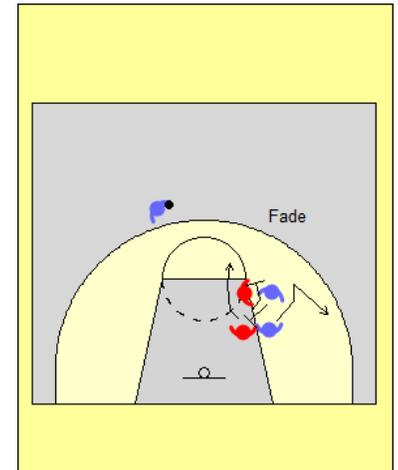


### **Basket Cut**

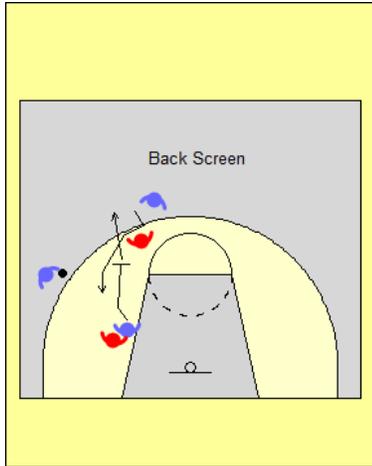
If the defender cheats above the screen early, the cutter cuts to the basket. The screener can second-cut to the outside.

### **Fade**

If the defender of the cutter takes a short cut the cutter fades. The screener can rescreen (change their screen angle) to set a second screen as the defender recovers.



## Types of Screens

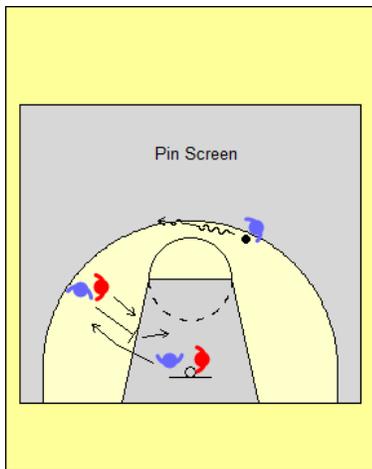
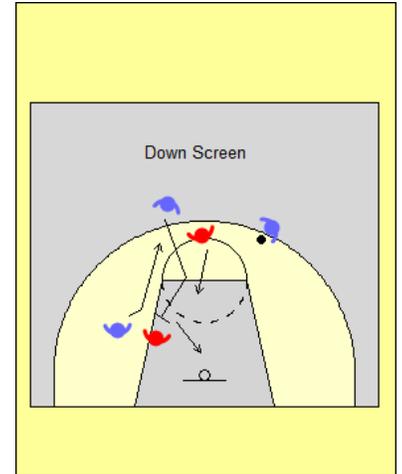


### Up Screen (UCLA Screen)

A player from the baseline comes up to screen for a player at the top.

### Down Screen

This can occur for a player coming off the post or be set for a wing player. A player on top screens for a player below.

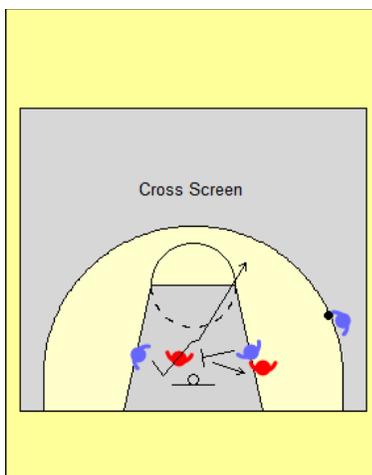
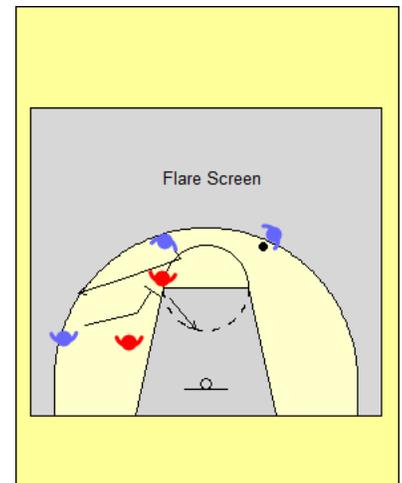


### Pin Screen

A player on the perimeter, closer to the sideline, screens for a player closer to the basket.

### Flare Screen

A player closer to the sideline screens with their back to the corner for a player closer to the middle of the court.

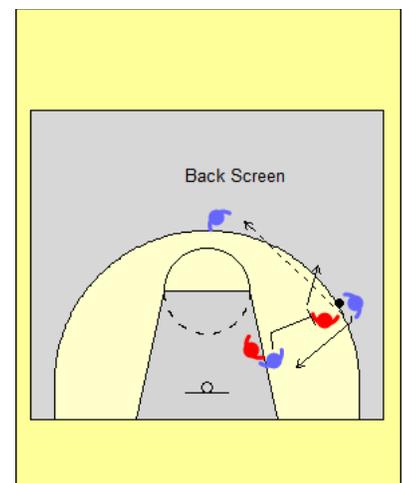


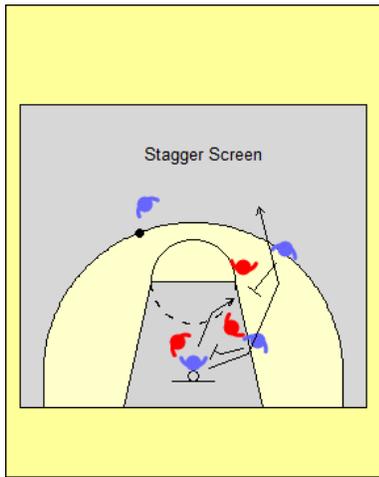
### Cross Screen

A player from one side of the key screens across to the other side. This can be high or low.

### Back Screen

A player closer to the middle of the court screens with their back to the basket for a player closer to the sideline.





## Stagger Screen

The diagram shows an example of a multiple screen. The player at the basket receives a pin-down followed by a down screen.

## Ball Screens

### Why do teams run a Pick-and-Roll or Ball Screen Offence?

1. The ball is usually in the hands of good ball-handlers/decision-makers.
2. Teams are more likely to determine who gets shots.
3. Teams can establish tempo – control tempo.
4. Teams can create mismatches.
5. Preferable offence is established without making an entry pass.
6. Teams are able to spread the floor and allow more penetration and offensive rebound opportunities.
7. Teams can take a shot blocker away from the basket.
8. Teams can put the best defender in the pick-and-roll.
9. Teams exploit the worst defender in the pick-and-roll.
10. Teams can pick an early foul on a “big” if they make a poor hedge.
11. Teams are able to make one defender guard two players on the weak-side.

### Ball Screen Offence – Questions

Q. Where is the screen set?

A. Middle, elbow, wing and corner.

Q. How is the ball brought to the screen?

A. Dribble, pass and cut away and pass and hand-off

Q. What is the angle?

A.

Q. Where are other players positioned?

A. Spread, high-low, double high, empty corner (for pick and pop) and one in corner (for roll and lift).

## **Concepts that must be taught:**

The ball-handler should:

- Use the hesitation, crossover, inside-out and back-up dribble. Players should be able to split the defence if the hedger leaves space.
- Know to wait for the screen unless the defence rejects the screen.
- Reject the screen when the on-ball defender leans or peaks to get over the screen early.
- Get to the lane; think basket first and pass second.
- Make a pocket pass (quick pass from the hip pocket), take at least two dribbles off the screen.
- Stay on the top foot of the hedge.
- Feel their defender and see the others.
- Pass off jump stop and pass in the air.
- Utilize the pocket pass.

The Screener should:

- Slip against the early show and a trap.  
Sprint to screen – the objective is to arrive at the screen without their defender.
- Move the screen down if defender goes under the screen – twist.
  - Twist when their defender shows early on a middle screen.
  - Twist when the defender downs a wing ball screen.
- Pop and roll properly.

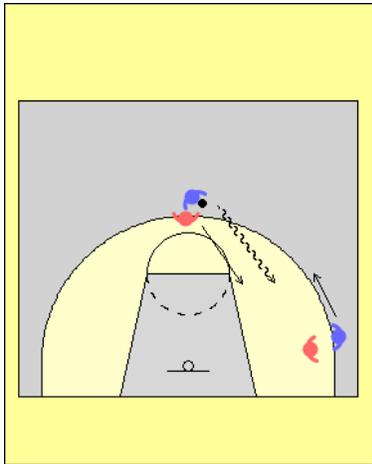
Teams should:

- Lift off the baseline when only one on a side.
- Get the ball to the weak-side quickly against a trap.
- Look for the open player when they get two-on-one on a side.
- Find the passing lane for the penetrator.

## **Types of Ball Screens**

1. Wing
2. Middle
3. Dribble hand-off

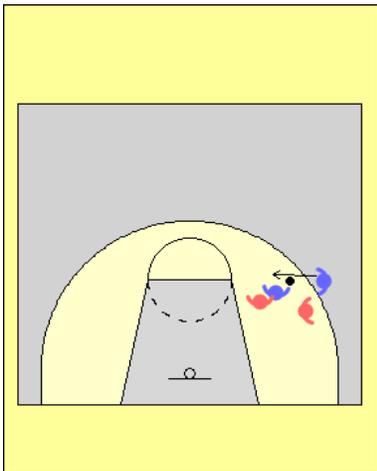
## Dribble Hand Offs



### Dribble Hand-Offs

Dribble hand-offs are a very effective way in keeping the ball alive when an interior player cannot make a pass to a perimeter player. In this drill, the post player dribbles at the inside leg of the defender.

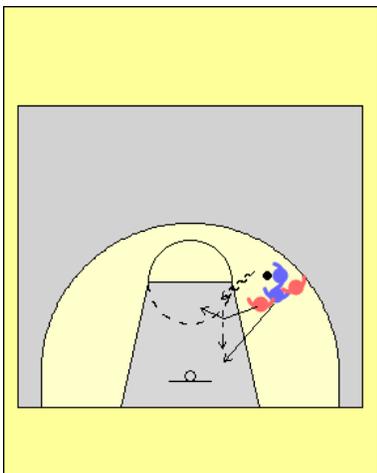
It is important to note that if the post can attack the basket to score, a dribble hand-off is not the best option. In this case the best approach is to use the penetration principles and have the wing read off the help defender.



### Drop Pivot

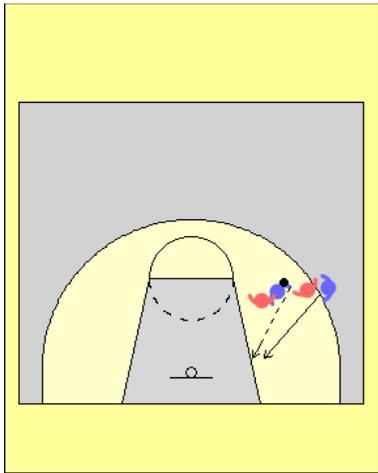
One option is for the post player to come to a jump stop and perform a drop pivot as this allows the wing player to cut "down-hill" when taking the hand-off. It also acts as a seal by the post and facilitates rolling after the hand-off.

The passer should hold the ball with one hand on top and one hand on the bottom of the ball. This allows the receiver to take the ball with her hands on the side of the ball. A second option is for the dribbler to hold the ball out to the side for the wing player to receive.



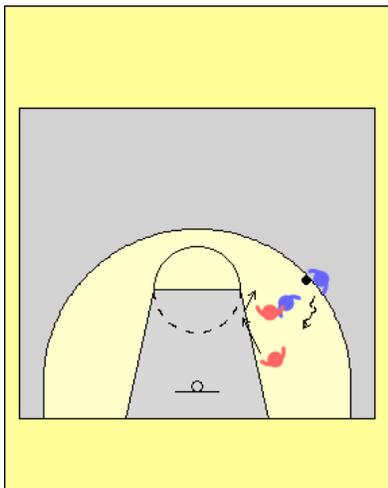
### Dribble Hand Off and Roll

The wing takes the hand-off and dribbles to the basket, while the post rolls. If the post defender helps, the wing can pass to the post.



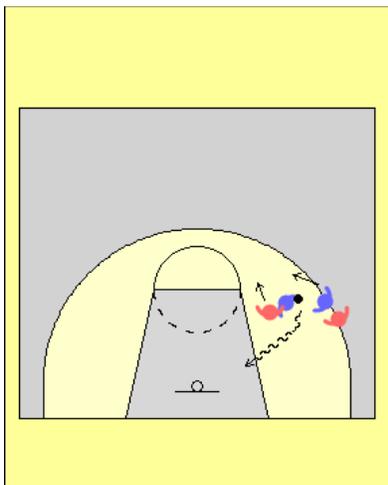
### Back-Cut

If the wing defender attempts to jam the wing on the cut to the basket, the wing back-cuts to the hoop. The post can throw a drop bounce pass or a high overhead flick.



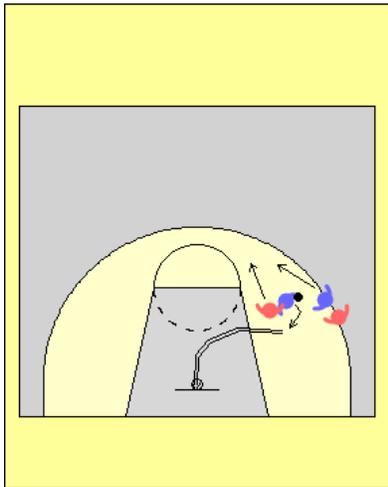
### Defender Goes Behind

When the wing defender cuts under the hand-off the wing can stop behind the post. Then, they can look for a shot or look to penetrate in either direction based on which side the defender closes out.



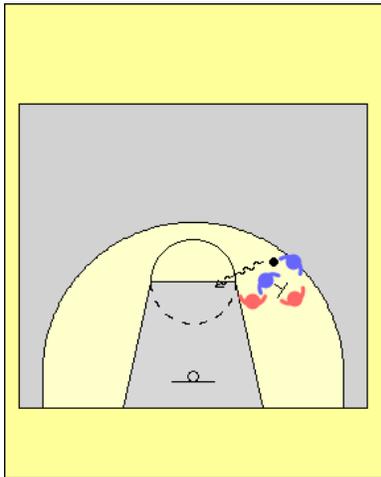
### Fake Hand-Off

The post can fake the drop pivot with a hesitation fake spin move. The player keeps the ball and drives to the basket. This method is effective when teams want to attempt to switch.



### **Fake Hand-Off Shot**

The post fakes the hand off and pivots for a shot.



### **Hand Off to Ball Screen**

After handing off the ball, the post immediately runs a ball screen for the wing player. This screen makes it very difficult for the defence to hedge on.

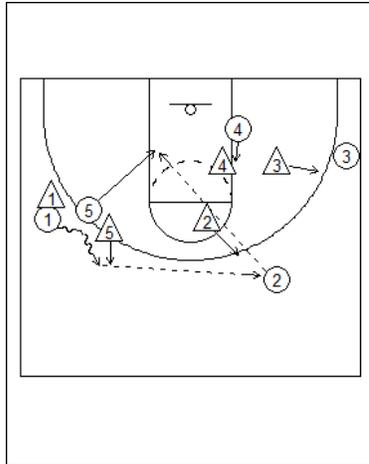
### **Team Switches**

Mismatches may develop on a switch. The perimeter player can take the post defender off the dribble or the post may be able to set-up inside.

## What are Some Solutions to Various Defensive Ball Screen Tactics?

### Tactic: Hard Hedge

Solution: Players should slip screen or make a quick reversal across top or to corner. In addition, and offensively against a hard show, the ball can reversed quickly to hit the roller as the screen defender has extended and may not be able to recover.



### Tactic: Two-under

Solution: Players can re-screen by coming off one way, re-screening and coming back. The screener must get below the ball to set the second screen.

### Tactic: Trap

Solution: The player can sprint to the middle, outlet on either side of the ball and attack four-on-three. The key is to attempt to get the ball to the weak-side as quickly as possible.

### Tactic: Switching

Solution: Players can make a pocket pass or take the “big” outside and attack.

### Tactic: Down

Solution: Players can attack the “big” with Euro-step, inside-out or crossover. The screener re-screens by turning and putting their back to the baseline.

## PICK-AND-ROLL (PROGRESSION TEACHING)

Pick-and-roll is the most employed offence of the modern basketball game (estimated at between 35 and 45 times per game). At the highest levels of play it is integral to see pick-and-roll actions from the transition offence to the end of the possession (no matter if the execution is effective or not). If the guards have good ability to read the situation or if the screener is fast enough to quickly roll to the basket, it can also be used against a zone defence.

During the preparation of the defensive game plan it is very important to decide to defend the opposite team’s pick-and-roll. The basic offensive concepts in pick-and-roll are to create:

- Five-on-four situations and find the open offensive player before the fifth player can recover.
- One-second advantages for the offensive players.

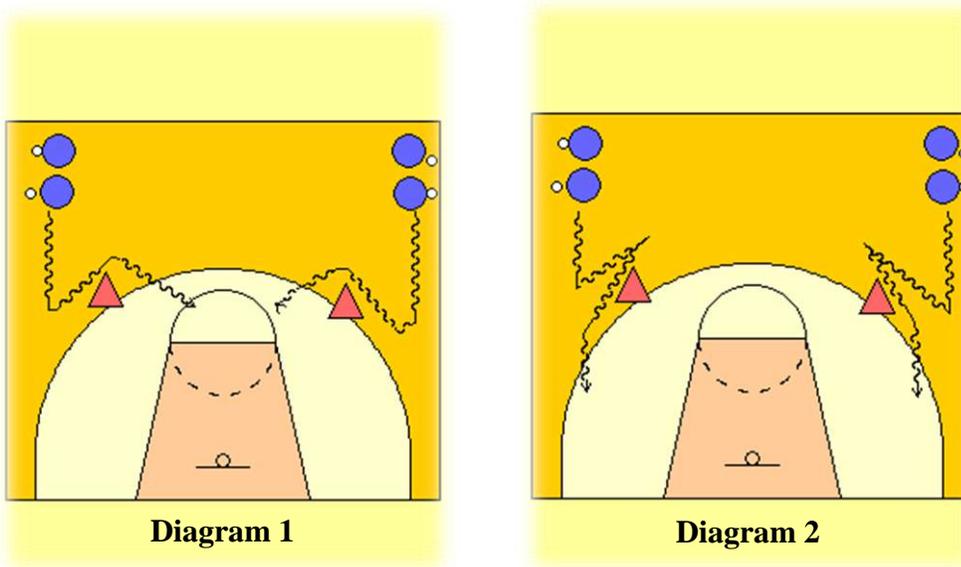
- An advantage from a derived option.
- Running pick-and-rolls within an offensive possession as the players can find best options and create action or flow into an alternative tactic if nothing materializes

It is important for players to have the basic foundation of skills and concepts before they can attempt to use a complex concept such as pick-and-roll. In youth programs many coaches have adopted the need to run pick-and-roll because of the dominant use at higher levels of play but players need to master the basic skills and concepts first.

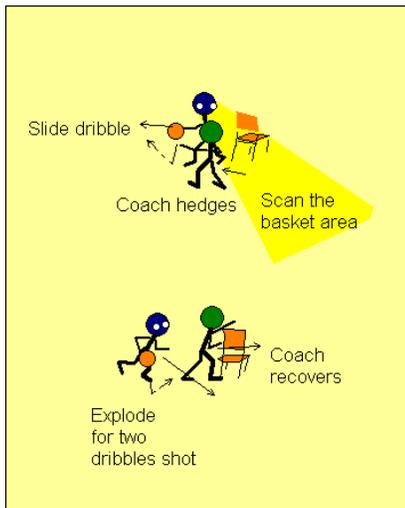
In order to execute and successfully defend the pick-and-roll, a high level team may spend up to 50 percent of its training time on this concept. Pick-and-roll should be taught and utilized with other offensive concepts instead of as an indispensable and essential solution.

When players reach the Train to Train stage of the Long Term Athletic Development model it is appropriate to begin to teach this concept.

What follows is some technical advice on how to begin to use pick-and-roll within an offence. In **Diagrams 1-4**, the ball-handlers are taught how to use the screen. It is essential that the guards take the ball below the screen before. In Phase A, the use of a chair to simulate the pick is added. In Phase B, the coach can provide guided defence. In Phase C, the team moves to live defence. Next, the progression to advantage situations: two-on-one, three-on-two, four-on-three in Phase D where game-like situations are simulated.



In **Diagram 1**, if the defender of the ball-handler hits the screen, take the jump shot from two or three points.



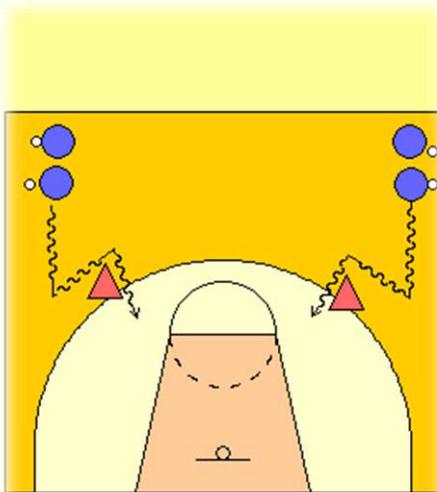
When the coach adds the guided defence it is important that the players focus on the important teaching points:

- The eyes are always scanning the area of the basket. This allows the ball-handler to see all of their teammates and their defenders.
- When the coach hedges, the ball-handler must slide dribble to protect the ball. The intent is to slide so that the player can change direction quickly when required.
- When the coach recovers, explode for two dribbles for the shot. The key is not to get in to a wrestling match with the screen defender.

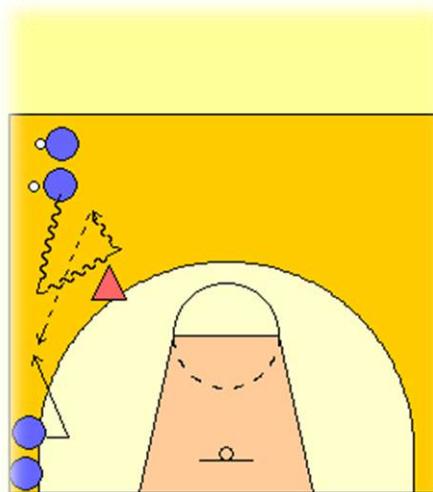
In **Diagram 2**, if the defence passes under the screen, change hands and make two dribbles to the baseline with a jump shot. Be sure to add the guided defence once the players have had a chance to get the idea of the drill.

In **Diagram 3**, the ball-handler splits the defence against an aggressive help that does not get close to the screen. Never allow the ball-handler to use more than two dribbles after they have passed the screen. They must either pass or shoot the ball to exploit the advantage. This should be one strong low crossover dribble.

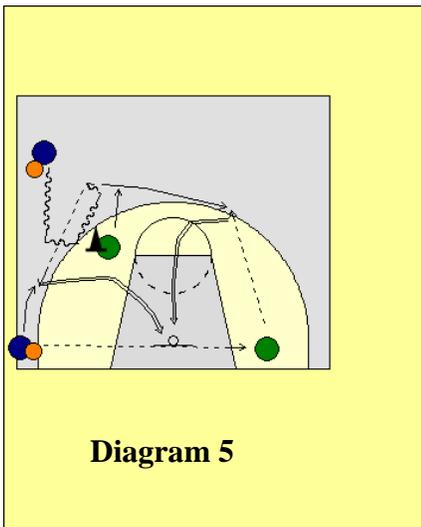
In **Diagram 4**, the ball-handler has to retreat to avoid the aggressive help and pass the ball to the other guard (triangle pass) who has to be ready to catch the ball and shoot. The pass has to be on time and on target. Work on the footwork of the passer and the receiver.



**Diagram 3**

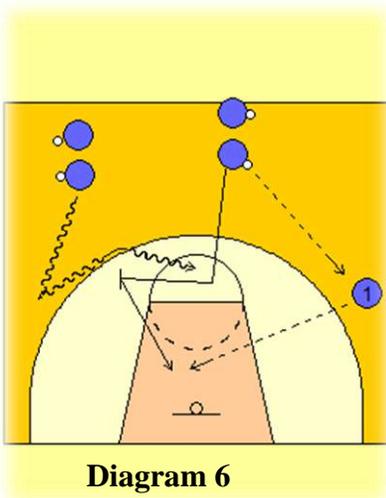


**Diagram 4**



To optimize the drill the player in the corner can make a pass to the coach on the far baseline. The player at the top uses the screen and reads the other coach hedging. The corner offensive player must time their cut to be available for the triangle pass. The player on the wing shoots the ball. After passing, the top player cuts to receive a pass back from the coach for a second shot.

**Note:** The pivot foot of the passer is the one furthest from the defence. It is a drop pivot to make space to pass. Do not take the ball behind the pivot foot.



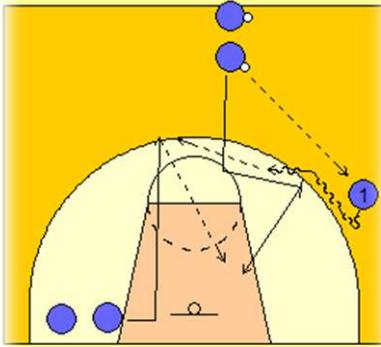
In **Diagram 6**, the idea is to practice with both the screener and the ball-handler. The screener passes the ball to the coach, and fakes a cut to the basket to then set a screen for the ball-handler. The ball-handler has to pass shoulder-to-shoulder before taking a jump shot. The screener rolls to the basket and receives the ball from the coach. The footwork for the player rolling is our outside/inside footwork. This helps the player play on balance. If they have to pivot, use the leg furthest from the defence. In this situation, the roller can see the ball and the basket at the same time. Both guard and screener take a shot.



### Slip the Screen

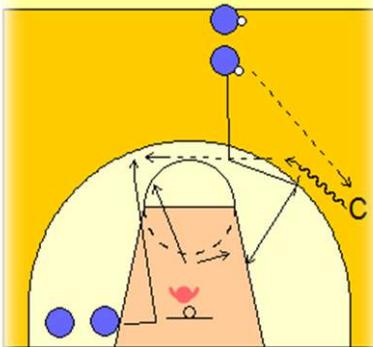
The coach guides the screener. When setting the pick, the screener looks over their inside shoulder (place chin on inside collarbone). If the defender is cheating early to hedge, slip the pick and go to the basket. If the defender is visible, continue with the pick.

The coach provides a guide by mixing up how they play defence. If the pass is made to the player slipping, the ball-handler cuts for a shot from the other coach.



**Diagram 8**

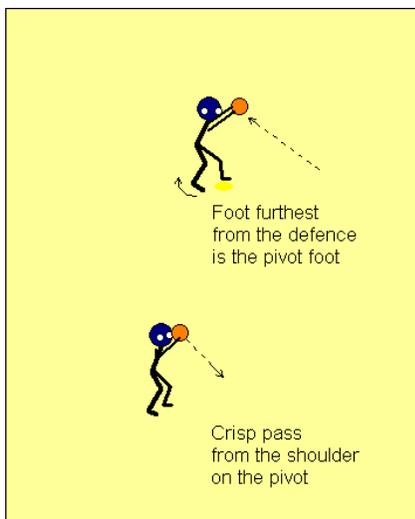
In **Diagram 8**, the intent is to work on the triangle pass between the two inside players (high-low pass) with a focus to teach the timing between screener and the other inside player. While the first is rolling to the basket, the second runs outside of the paint.



**Diagram 9**

The drill in **Diagram 9** is like **Diagram 8**, but a guided defender is added (Phase B-C) that has to decide to either defend the player running outside or the one going into the paint. It is crucial that all players feel confident shooting the outside shot. If not, the defensive team will not guard the player in the pick-and-roll action; therefore nullifying any one-second advantage that can be created.

The timing of the cut is very important. In the next phase the coach adds the guide. The receiver must decide to pass or shoot the ball based on the read given by the coach. The intent is to still create a two-on-one situation for the players.

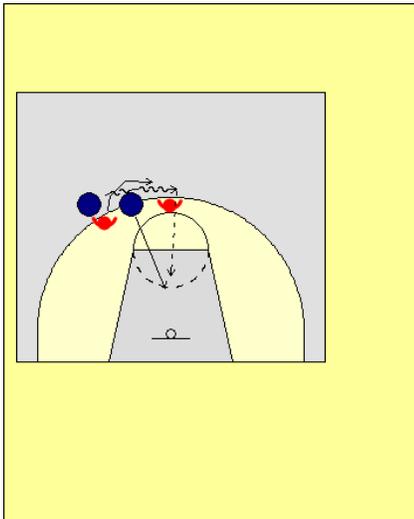


Make sure the passes are realistic:

- No chest pass
- No soft passes

The top foot is the pivot foot of the player filling the high post. Catch the ball high and make a quick crisp pass from the shoulder and back pivot.

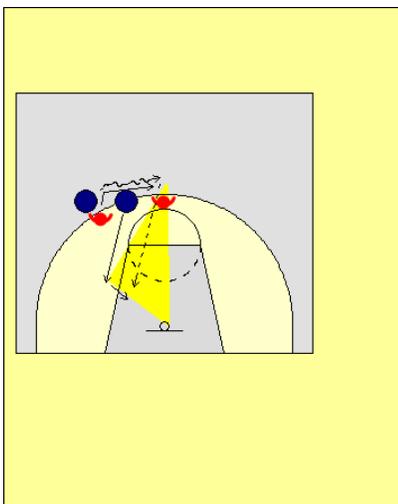




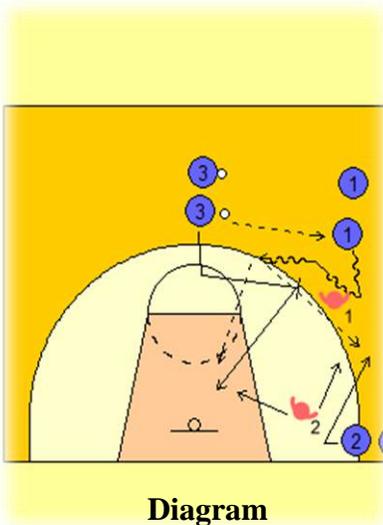
**See the Ball and the Basket**

In the diagram to the right, the defence did a poor job of forcing the ball-handler back to the sideline. Since the player who set the screen rolled directly to the basket, they are in a position where they could not see the ball and basket at the same time. Also, there is very little room for the pass.

If a third defender enters into the play, the roller is vulnerable to being surprised. This often leads to a fumble, travel or an offensive foul.

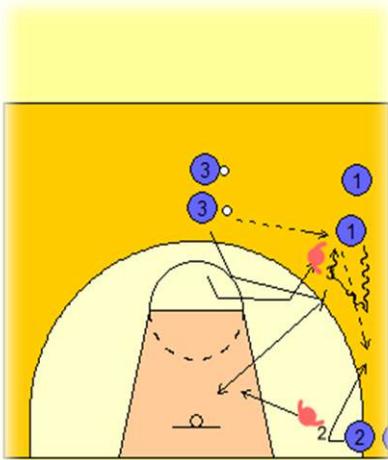


In this drill, the situation is the same but the screener rolls to space. This puts them in a position where he can see the ball and basket. More importantly, they can see the third defender. This allows for anticipation, which is a very important element to have on offence. They can anticipate a pass or shot before the ball arrives.



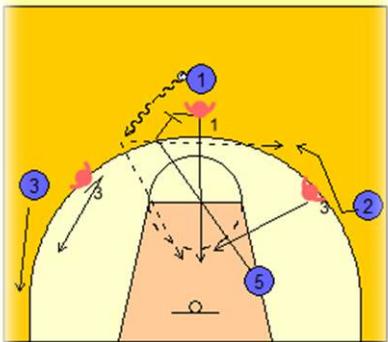
**Diagram**

In **Diagram 12**, the players play three-on-two and put two defensive players on the guard using the pick and the perimeter player in the corner. The drill starts with the player on top making a pass to the wing (allow this pass to occur). After the pass, they set a ball screen for the wing player before rolling to the basket. The two defenders will decide who they want to cover and the three offensive players have to find the open person. The ball-handler has only two dribbles after he has passed the screen. The players are working on the use of the triangle pass to find the open player.



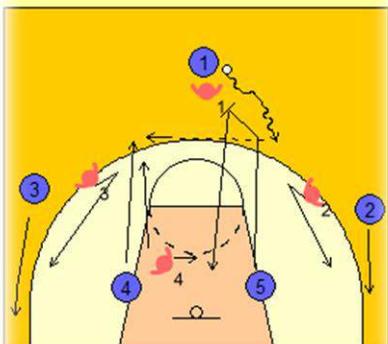
**Diagram**

In **Diagram 13**, the idea is to put the defence on the screener and the offensive player in the corner (still working on the triangle pass). The defence mixes up how it plays defence. This forces the offence to read the open player. Remember, only two dribbles once the screen is used.



**Diagram**

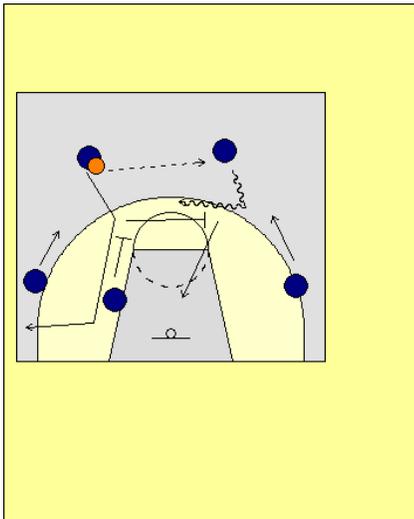
In **Diagram 14**, the players are playing four-on-three with the same rules as in the previous diagrams (**Diagrams 12 and 13**) but a perimeter offensive player has been added. Here, triangle passing and spacing are taught. No one is guarding the inside player who is setting the screen. The three defenders have to try to cover the screener, help on the ball-handler and then recover.



**Diagram**

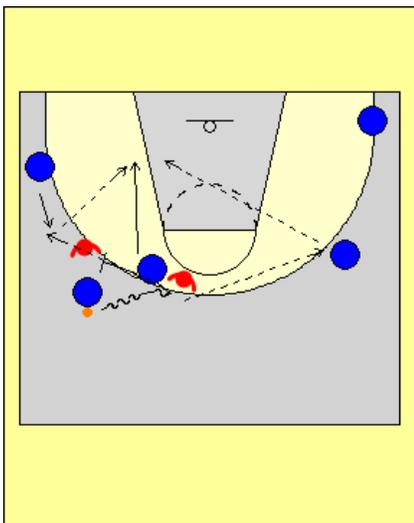
**Diagram 15** is like before, but the players are still going five-on-four. Here, timing between the two inside players and the spacing with the three perimeter players are focused on. There is only one defender of the two inside players.

It is up to the coach to use their imagination to create game-like situations.



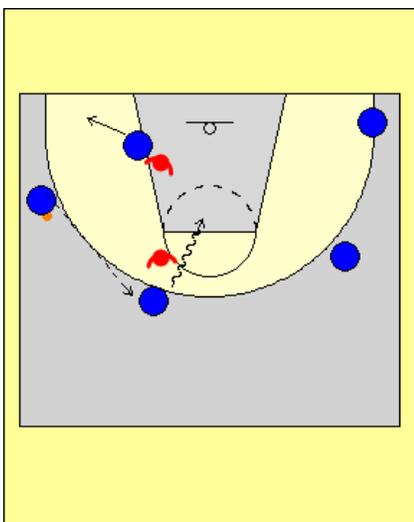
### Pick-and-Roll in the Offensive System

Using the offensive system, the pick-and-roll as an option to begin the offence can be added. On the guard-to-guard pass, the post up-screens an immediately sets the pick. This play action makes it difficult for the defender of the post player to be on time for the pick. It is important that the players are allowed to play with freedom. The more they have worked on the skills and concepts, the more effective they will be. Skipping the foundation work and moving directly to the system is asking for a disaster at some later time.



### Against Switching Defence

When the defence switches the pick, the first option to teach is to make use of the triangle pass. If done properly, the switching defender will be out of position and can feed the post player inside.



If not open, get the ball back to the guard. The post player slides to the short corner to make space. The guard creates a one-second advantage off the dribble.

**Note:** Avoid overuse of analysis early in teaching.

The above exercise will help the coaches to teach the rules that are used while attacking with a pick-and-roll offence. But coaches have to be clear that these options have to be interpreted by the team as a team offence and not only as a two-person game, both defensively and offensively. The two best players are not isolated.

It is used to create the one-second advantage; the players are playing two-on-two within the five players of the entire offence. The pick-and-roll offence will be more effective if used the proper way and needs to be practiced every day with different defensive options and from different positions on the court.

### **Early Clock**

Screening in the early clock is often used to free-up a shooter or to create penetration. They are effective since the defence often is not set and in position to properly defend.

### **Mid Clock**

The coach must decide on the screens used with the half-court offence. It is recommended that when opportunities appear to attack the basket. Screens are a way to create a one-second advantage.

### **Late Clock**

A solid screen late in the clock can be effective if the players read the options correctly. Against good defensive teams it is important to stay from running ball-screens too late in the clock. Many teams will trap the ball and with limited time the offence cannot exploit the options available.

## **Isolations**

Isolations are mostly used when the offence has an advantage over a defensive match up (size and speed). The recommendation for this concept at this stage of development is to use it sparingly. The player isolated is still playing one-on-one with the five players on the floor. If help comes, the one-second advantage is passed to the open player. If the ball is frozen it allows the defence to build its help and therefore flow of the offence is very important. The exception is when the ball is isolated in the post as the player with the ball can slow play down and read the defence.

## **ADDITIONAL POINTS TO CONSIDER**

### **Exploit the One Second Advantage**

Anticipating the action is better than reacting to the action. The player without the ball must take a look at their defender by putting their chin on the shoulder as they prepare to receive a pass. This allows the offensive player to know what the defence is doing before catching the ball. This also creates a one-second advantage for the offensive player and puts the defence in a situation where they are trying to recover.

### **Teaching 2vs1**

Once the offensive player beats their check and creates the one-second advantage, they must read the next defender. This creates a two-on-one situation for the offence. The offensive player must make the decision to shoot or to deliver the one-second advantage to a teammate. This is done in the half-court as well as in the full-court. The player with the ball should not take a shot with a defender on them but rather find the open player. The player without the ball must move to be available for the pass and to force a long recovery by the defence.

### **One-on-one with Five Players**

Traditionally, with NBA one-on-one, isolation basketball is played. One player competes against their defender and often ignores their teammates. This often leads to forced shots and therefore is a tactic to stay away from all one-on-one should be done within the context of the five players on the floor as players need to learn to play with their teammates. When an offensive player creates a one-second advantage, the one-second advantage is transferred to a teammate when the player with the ball passes to an open teammate (when the defence helps).

When a player forces a shot while a teammate is open it sends a message of lack of trust to the open teammate. Passing the ball is one of the most important ways a team builds a positive relationship with each other. By delivering an accurate pass to a teammate they become a better player.

### **Do Not Stop the Ball**

When a player holds or freezes the ball for four seconds or constantly dribbles (while stationary) the pass that is delivered after this situation is often not a good pass. An inaccurate pass forces the receiver to move out of an effective scoring position by being too low, high, low, soft or hard. It forces the offence to create a brand new one-second advantage because the defence has a chance to fully recover. By keeping the ball moving, once the one-second advantage is maintained, the defence is always in a scramble mode.

**Ball in the Paint with a Pass or a Dribble**

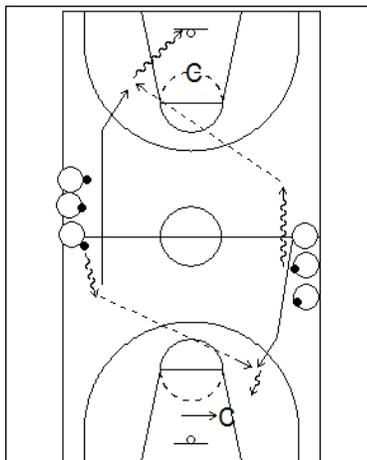
From the beginning of teaching, players must have instilled in them the mentality of bringing the ball into the key with penetration, while maintaining good spacing. This is especially true when players do not have open teammates to pass the ball to (if somebody is cutting through the key or posting up).

# STRATEGIES

---

## EARLY CLOCK OR TRANSITION

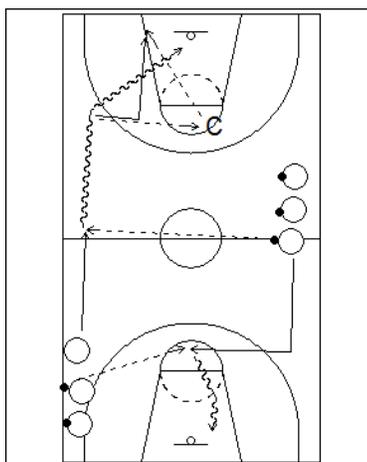
### TRANSITION PASSING AND SHOOTING DRILLS



#### **Two Lines Full-court Shooting**

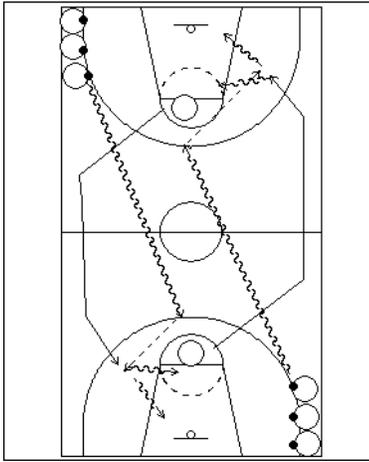
The players line up in two lines on both sidelines at half-court and every player has a ball except one. The player without the ball starts to run to one of the two baskets. The player with the ball on the opposite side of the court takes two dribbles in the same direction and makes the pass to the player running to the hoop. The player receiving the pass continues in and scores the basket. The player who passed stops, changes direction and heads to the opposite basket. This cues the next player to take two dribbles and make a pass. The drill continues with players alternating the basket they attack.

In Phase B, a coach is placed at either end of the court. When the player drives to the basket they must read the positioning of the coach. When the coach places their chest in front of the player, the player pulls up and shoots the jump shot. If the coach does not show their body, the player continues in for the layup.



#### **Full-court Passing/Layups**

The first line is at half-court with every player possessing a ball. The second line is at the foul line extended. Every player has a ball except the first player in the line. This player starts the drill by running up the outside lane to the far basket. The first player on the far side makes a pass to the player at half-court. This player must keep their head up. The coach who is stationed at the high post will show hands for a pass or no hands. The player must make the proper decision. After passing, the second player runs down the outside lane and then makes a change of direction cut to the foul line. The pass is received and the player works on a crossover or curl move.



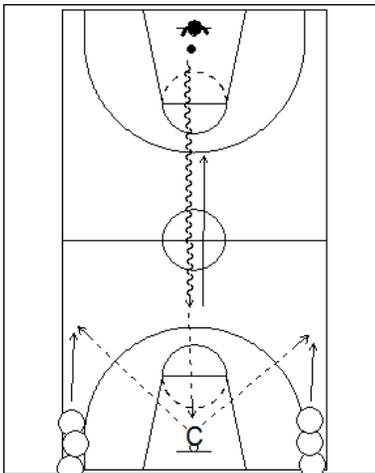
### Running the Outside Lane

Two lines are formed in diagonal corners. Each player in these lines has a ball. One player is placed at each foul line without a ball. The player in the corner starts to dribble to nearside elbow at the opposite basket. The player at the foul line sprints to the near sideline and up the outside lane. The player with the ball delivers the pass when the player hits the attack spot. The same action is happening on the other side. The dribbler becomes the next player at the foul line.

## FULL-COURT TRANSITION DRILLS

### RULES:

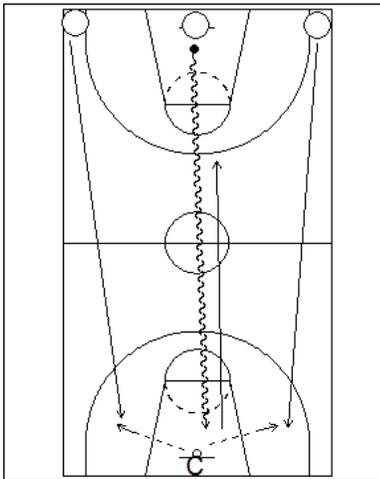
1. Players should always pass the ball to a teammate who is open.
2. If there is no teammate in front of the player they must push the ball towards the basket.
3. Players should always run quickly when they are without a ball.
4. There should be three lanes no matter where the ball is located.



### One versus Zero / Two versus One (Split the Court)

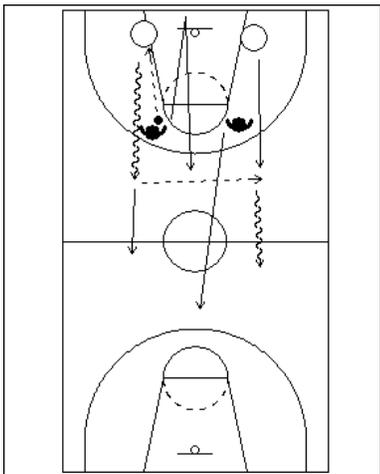
The defender starts with the ball under the far basket. The coach is under the opposite basket. The two offensive players are lined up in the corner. The player with the ball pushes the ball with a speed dribble using alternate hands.

When the coach shows hands, the player passes the ball to the coach. The two offensive players start to sprint. The coach passes the ball to one of the two players. Next, they play two-on-one.



**One versus Two / Two versus One (Be Quicker with Passes)**

Three players are lined up on the baseline. The player in the middle has the ball. When ready, they start to attack the far basket to score. The two outside players are on defence and attempt to stop the player in the middle from scoring. The coach catches the rebound and outlets the ball to the two outside players returning to attack the one defender. To load the drill and learn to attack at speed, add no dribbles in the back court and one pass only in the front court.

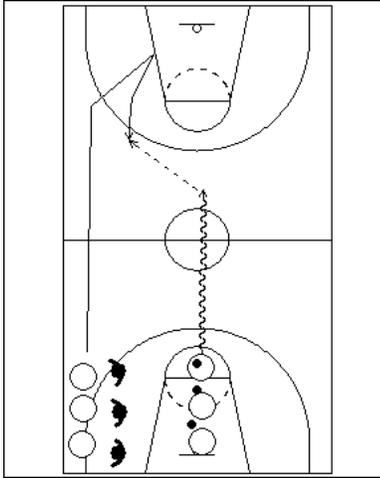


**Two versus Two (Keep Advantage)**

The two offensive players are on the baseline and the two defenders are at the foul line extended. One of the defensive players has the ball. The player can pass to either of the offensive players. Once the pass is made, the defender must touch the baseline, before returning to play defence. The other defender must protect the basket and slow down the defence until their teammate can return.

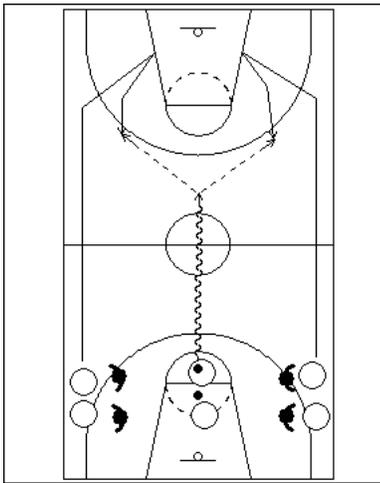
## FULL-COURT PROGRESSION OF DRILLS OF GAMES SITUATIONS

The following drills focus on using the one-second advantage in the full-court. It is important for players to master this to learn to speed dribble and attack the basket with no defender and dribbling under control to make a clean pass.



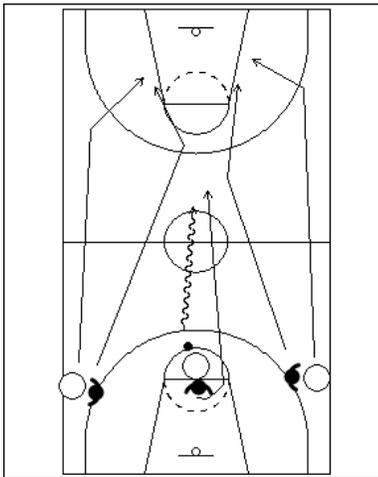
### **Drive Under Control**

The passer line is at the foul line with the ball. The offensive player is at the sideline and defended by a defender. The action begins when the player with the ball starts to dribble. This player cannot score. They must dribble under control and decide if they can deliver a pass to the offensive player. The offensive player on the wing sprints to get an advantage. The defender is trying to get a position where they can protect the basket. If the ball cannot be passed on the wing the offensive player goes down and comes back to get open. It is important for players to slightly change the angles at which they go to and from the basket. Once the pass is made, the passer is out of the drill.



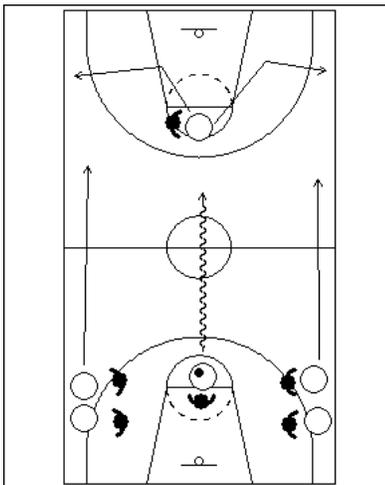
### **See Both Sides of the Court**

This drill is similar to the previous one but with two offensive players. The passer must scan both sides of the floor. Once the pass is made, the passer is out of the drill.



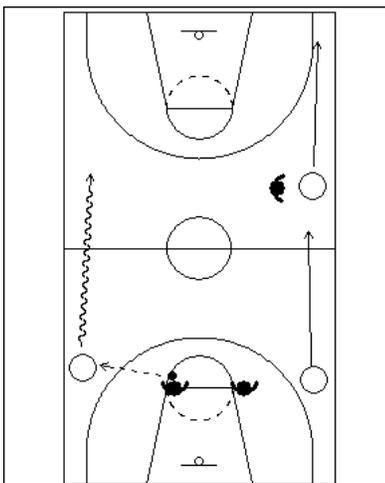
### Three-on-three

This drill is the same as previously but with three-on-three. The third defender stands with their back to the middle player. Once the middle player dribbles everyone else is live; creating a slight one-second advantage. The middle player can score.



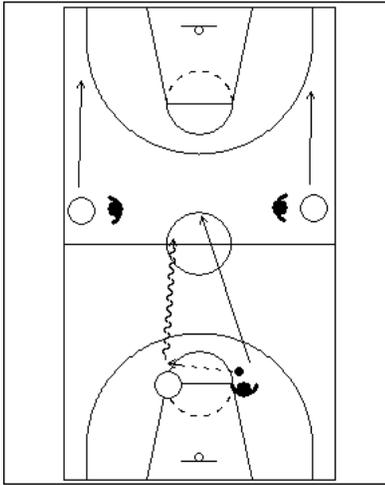
### Exploit the Advantage

In this drill a fourth pair is added on offence and defence. The players start at the foul line at the far end. The offensive player can cut to open space.



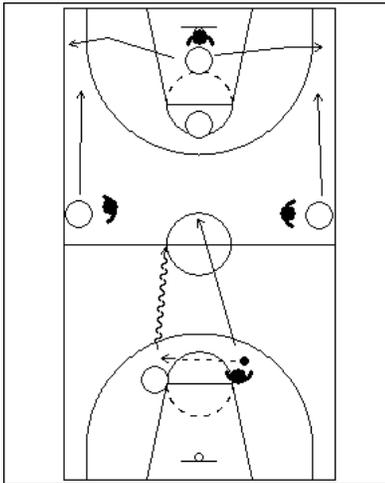
### Three versus Three (Lateral Drive)

In this drill the ball-handler has the slight one-second advantage on the side of the court with two offensive players on the same side. The defenders start on the inside of the offence. The drill starts when the defender makes the pass to the offensive player. The offence must also learn how to play in space.



### **Three versus Three (Middle Drive) Advantage**

In this drill the advantage is in the middle with two wings on the opposite sides.



### **Four versus Four (Middle Drive) Advantage**

In this drill another pair is added on offence at the far end. The ball-handler must keep control and see all open players.

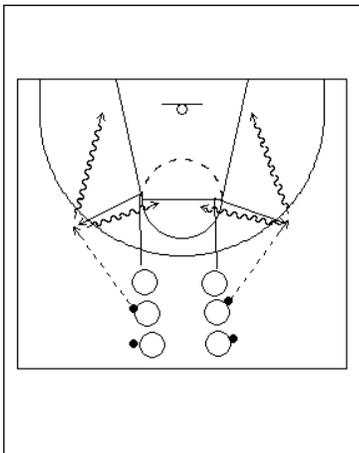
# TEACHING A CONCEPTUAL-BASED OFFENCE (STAGE TWO – MID TO LATE CLOCK)

---

Before a coach introduces the following concepts they should ensure that the players have a thorough understanding of the concepts and skills in the previous stage, as follows:

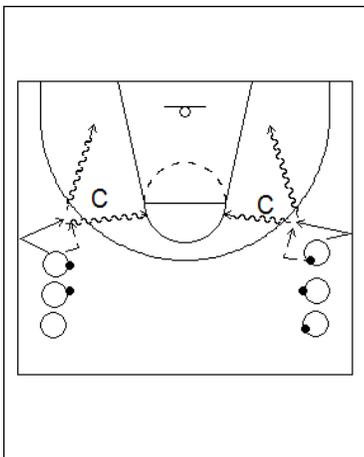
- Cut and replace (eye contact when cutting)
- Exploit the one-second advantage (read the defence)
- Teaching two-on-one (half-court and full-court)
- One-on-one with five players (play with all teammates)
- Do not stop the ball (action is better than reaction)
- Progression teaching (developing in phases)

## QUICK REVIEW



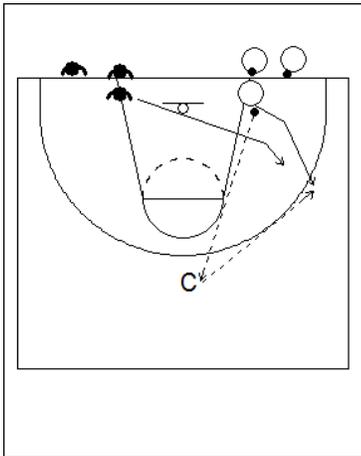
### **One versus Zero Dribble Start – Phase A**

Players are in two lines at the high elbows. Everyone has a ball except the first player in each line. The first player runs to the elbow and does a jump stop, pivots and then cuts out to the attack spot. The second player passes when the player is outside the three-point line, but in an area where the player is a threat. Using a crossover step the player attacks the middle for a dribble jump shot or baseline for an outside/inside power layup. It is important to emphasize on proper footwork, pass and finish.



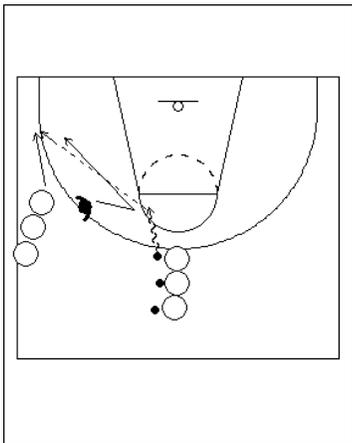
### **Read the Coach's Defence – Phase B**

To load the drill a guide is added to the wing player on the catch. The player must decide to shoot, drive (right/left) or go back-door.



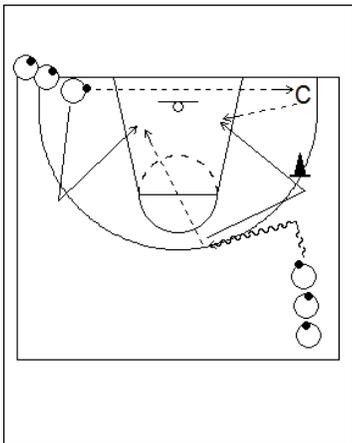
### One versus One Active Defence – Phase C

In this phase, the players to play live one-on-one. They are in two lines on the baseline while one line has a ball. This first player with a ball passes to the coach (standing at the top) and then cuts to the attack spot. When the player starts to run, the first player in the other line runs out to play defence.



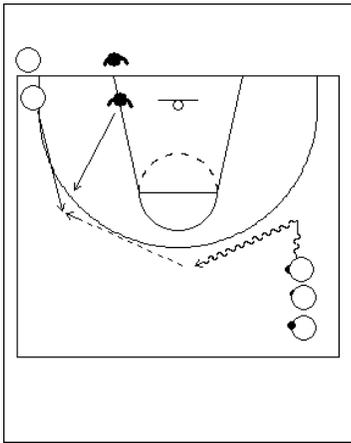
### One-on-One Game Situation – Phase D

The players form two lines with the basketballs at the top. One defender is on the passing line defending the wing player. The player with the ball attacks the paint. The defender helps and recovers. The wing player slides to an open space. On the catch it is live one-on-one.



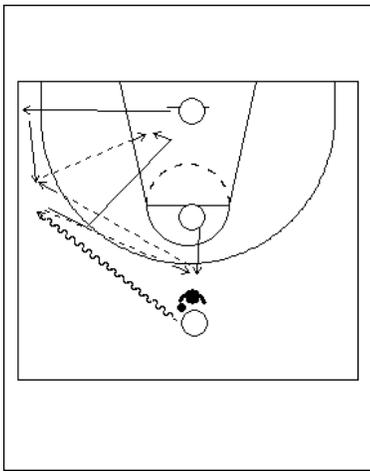
### Back-Door Cut-Pass – Phase A

Both lines have a ball. The player in the corner passes to the coach and cuts to the wing outside the three-point line. The player at the top dribbles the ball to the top. The wing player goes back-door. After passing, the passer cuts to the opposite attack spot and goes back-door to receive the pass from the coach in the corner. It is important for the first pass to be in the key.



### Contested Back-Door - Phase B

To load the decision making of the players and to increase the precision of the cuts and passing a guided defender is added.

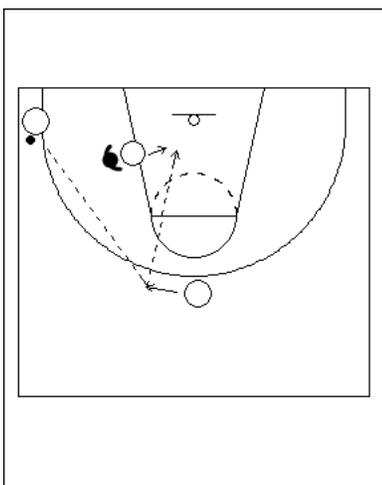


### Three versus One Triangle Pass - Phase C

As a new concept, it is recommended for the players to be familiar with the three versus zero drill (Phase A). Additionally, the coach should act as a guide on defence to help with the execution and decision making (Phase B). In Phase C, active defence is loaded into the drill and the focus is on sealing inside and using a triangle pass to make the best pass to the inside player.

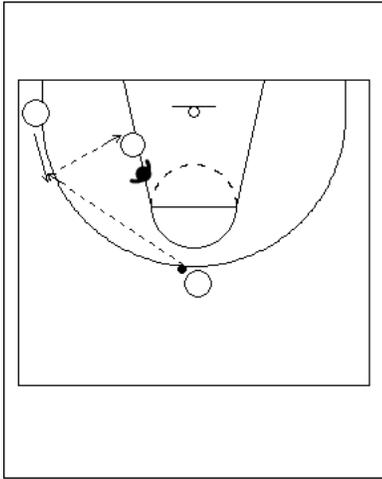
The top player has the ball and dribbles it over to the attack spot. The bottom offensive player cuts out to the same corner. The offensive player at the foul line pops out to the top. The defender guards the wing player with the ball. The pass is made to either corner or the top. After passing, the wing player cuts to the ball-side of the basket. The defence jumps to the ball-side on the pass.

The following are examples of outcomes of this drill.



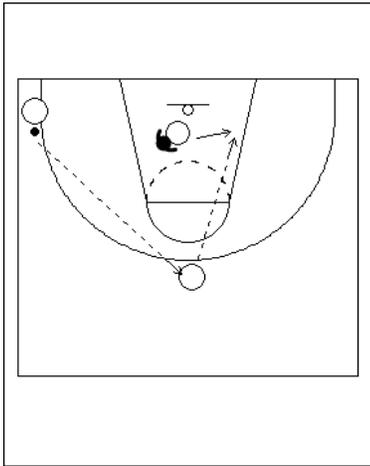
### Example A

In this example, the ball has been passed to the corner. The defence has correctly gotten to the ball-side and taken away the pass from the corner. The player at the top must shorten the pass and call for the triangle pass. It is important for the inside player to maintain their seal, and to not release the contact and allow the defender to move on the pass. The passer from the top can lead the offensive player to the basket with their pass.



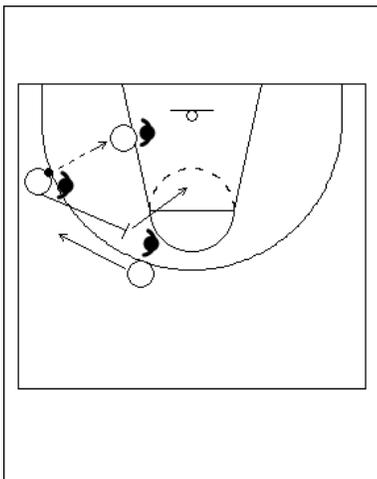
### Example B

In this example the pass has been made to the top. With the defence in the correct denial position the corner player must shorten the pass to allow for an effective triangle pass.



### Example C

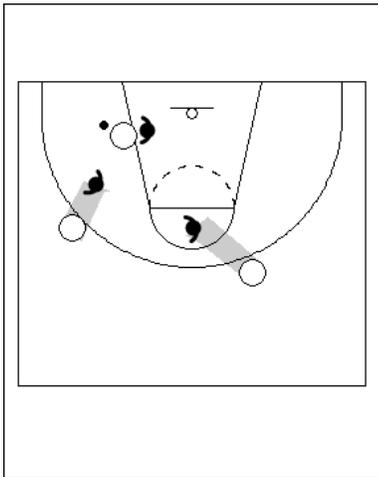
In this example, the player that cuts goes to the basket; which is very common. Since, by rule, the player can only stay in this position for three seconds there generally is not enough time for a triangle pass to develop. In addition, if the passer tries to pass to space it takes the inside player away from the basket and often into the help defence.



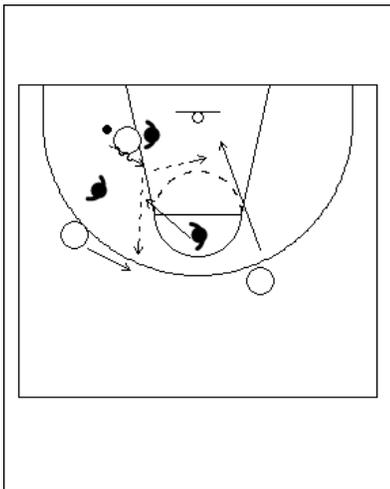
### Ball in the Post

It is not ideal to assume that once the ball is in the post that the player will shoot every time. Therefore, the perimeter players must learn to move in space and stay away from a position where the defender can guard the post and the perimeter player. The other key is to not fill the corner of the low post as this restricts the vision of the post player. Since the post player cannot see everyone on the court at once they have to turn their head and this can lead to double teams.

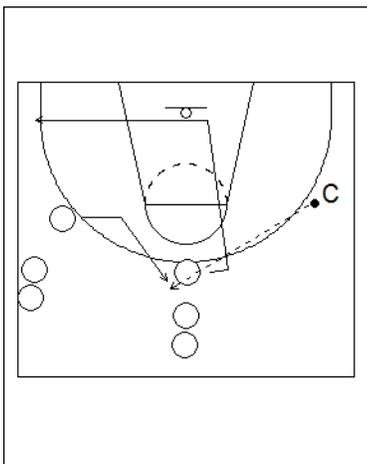
In this example, the two perimeter players screen for one another. This is an advanced concept that should not be used until the players learn the offensive system.



A simple rule for a player at this level is for them to play on the shoulder of the defender. By positioning themselves with this method, they take away the vision of the defender. If the defender turns their head the player can easily cut to open space.

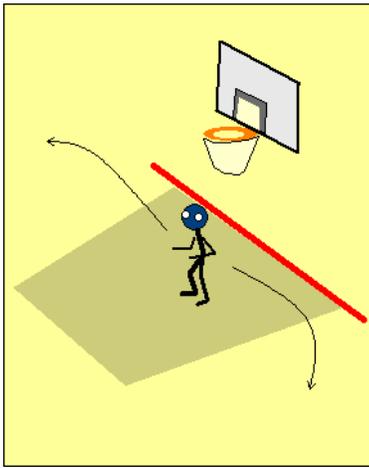


When the post player dribbles the other players should make hard, secondary cuts as the defenders will have a tendency to turn their heads to the ball.

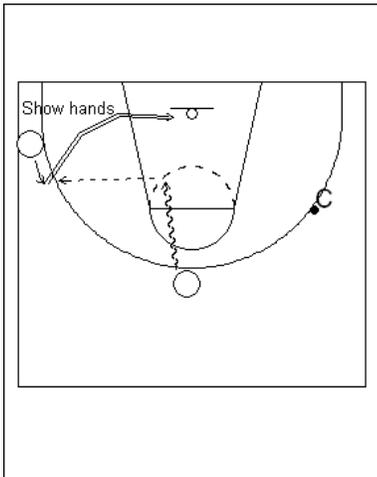


### **Two versus Two Cut and Replace**

In this drill the concept is the same as in Phase A but with no defence. The player at the top has the ball and they cut to the ball-side post to open-up. While looking for the ball the entire time, the player balances out to the corner. The offensive player in the wing spot replaces the cutter to the top.

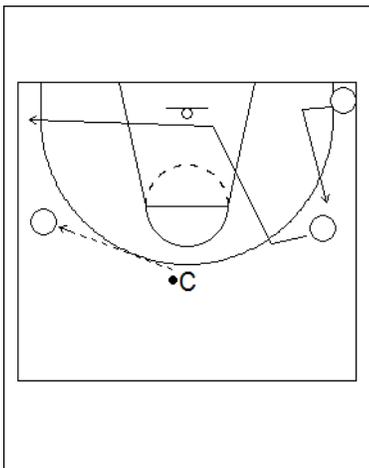


It is very important to open up when the player reaches the basket and to see what their teammates are doing. Players still want to see the ball when they exit the key for open space.



When the player at the top catches the ball, they want to receive it anticipating the defence – jump stop, already square to the basket. Then, the player can attack the basket with a crossover move. If their teammate shows hands they should pass the ball.

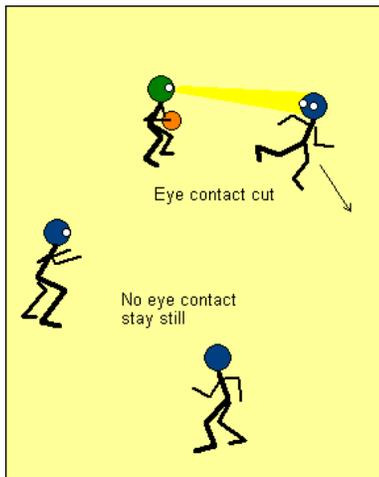
In Phase B, the drill can be loaded with a guide on defence. In Phase C, the players go two-on-two with live defence. The coach is always open for a pass while the players are working on cutting.



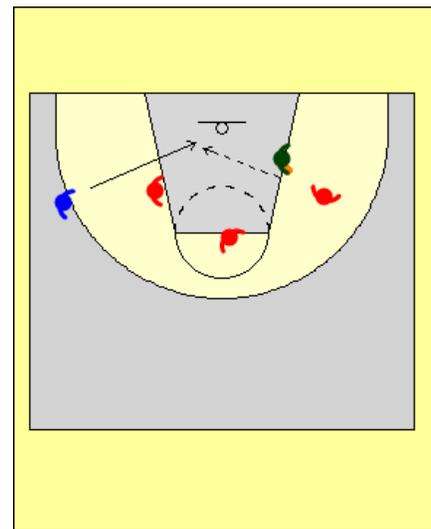
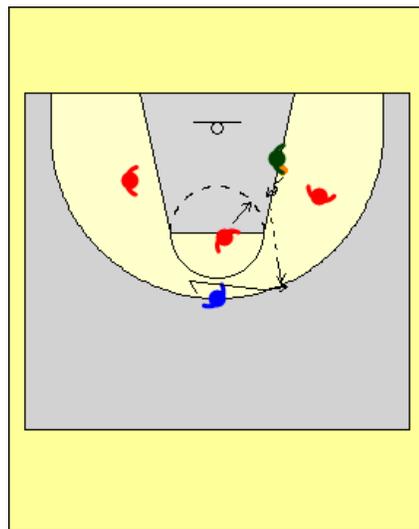
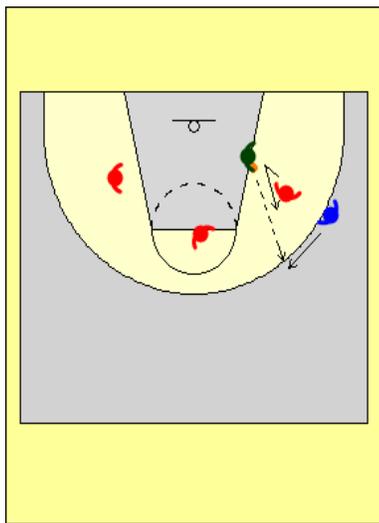
### **Three versus Three Cut and Replace**

This drill starts in Phase A with no defenders. The coach has the ball at the top and three players fill perimeter spots on offence. The concept is only cut when the player with the ball (coach) makes eye contact. After cutting, the player opens up at the basket and fills the open space. If the player above cuts to the basket, the player needs to fill the open spot. If a pass is made to one of the players, the other players can still cut, but only when looked at by the player with the ball.

In Phase D, the format is three-on-three while the defence plays in the passing lanes.



The following is one of the most important concepts that players need to learn. It is integral for cutting players to keep eye contact with the ball-handler. Cutting without eye contact leads to turnovers, too many players in the key at one time and poor timing on cuts. In many cases the best cut is no cut.



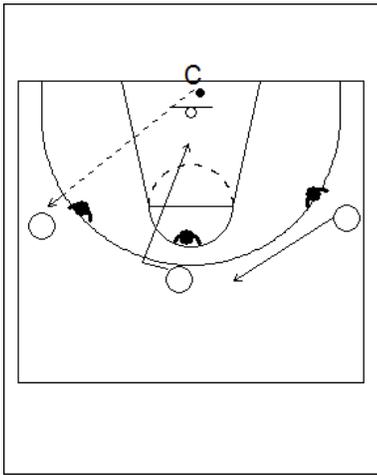
### Play One-on-One Three Times – Post Pass

In this drill the coach has the ball in the post position. The offensive player is playing one-on-one against their check. The coach should make it difficult for the defender to help and also watch the offensive player (and coach). The coach passes and the players play one-on-one.

In the second drill, the offensive player moves to the second position at the top and plays against that defender. If the coach dribbles, the defender stunts.

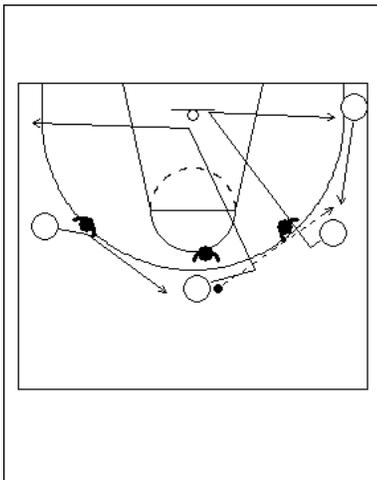
In the third example, the offensive player moves to the third position where they see the defence, turns and makes a cut to the basket. By playing offence three consecutive times it is very rare that the player will use the same move three times as they will be thinking about reading the defence.

It is important for players to play off the back shoulder of the defender.



### Three versus Three Cut/Replace

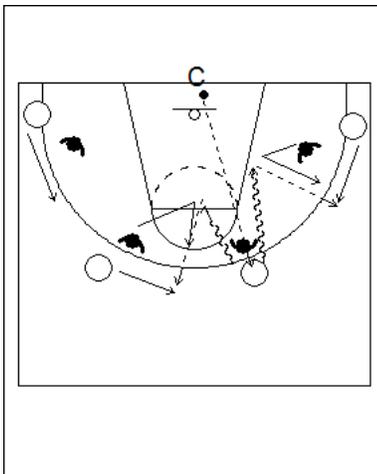
In this drill, the concept is to play three-on-three. The coach has the ball under the basket, while the defence is live. The drill starts when a pass by the coach is made. The player the coach looks at cuts while the other players must either fill or wait.



### Four versus Three Cut/Replace

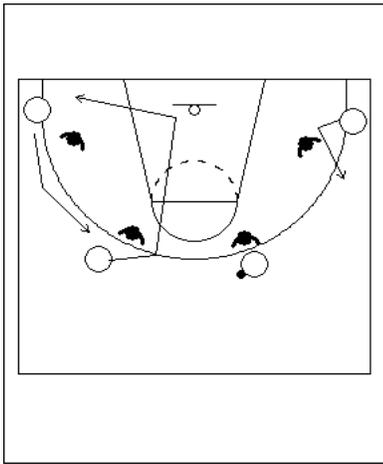
This is a very important drill for teaching the players the sequence of their options; shot, pass, dribble, attack. The defence starts by playing in the passing line. The offensive player initiates the drill with a back-door cut when the passer looks at them. The next player fills. It is important to note that this is not a time where a three-point shot should be taken since the ball has not been penetrated into the key first.

The player receiving the pass must go through their options with the ongoing focus of finding the open player.



### Four versus Four Advantage

In this drill, the concept is four-on-four and it begins with the coach passing the ball to one of the perimeter players. The defence is covering the passing lanes. Once the ball is passed the offence starts to penetrate.



**Four versus Four Cut/Replace (Two dribbles)**

In this drill the players cut and replace with four-on-four. The drill starts with a back-cut by the player the passer looks at. The offensive players have a two-dribble maximum.

# OFFENSIVE SYSTEM

---

The material previous to this section is the foundation on which all basketball is based and therefore it is integral that players are familiar with these concepts before implementing offensive systems. If players are taught offensive systems prior they will lack in:

- **Handling pressure situations** – where the defence takes away the pattern. Good offences always have pressure releases (a back-door cut when denied, etc.).
- **Knowing about dynamic one-on-one situations** – where players take advantage of bad close outs, utilize opportunities to attack the open basket with a cut and how to seal inside.

When you first move to a new city the drive home can be very draining. You must pay attention to every street sign, looking for the ones that correspond to your directions. Eventually as you drive the route more often you begin to relax and take notice of stores along the street. You find yourself saying; "I never noticed that before." One day you drive home and you do not even remember how you got there. The route has become part of your subconscious.

This is the same for players when learning an offensive system. Each time the coach puts in a new "set" or play it is like driving in a new city for the first time. The player has to concentrate on the directions and they cannot see what else is happening around them. When you teach by concepts the players will take time to learn the route, but once it is part of their subconscious they can focus on other things as they play, such as reading the defence.

Coach Pasquali

The system that is used should:

- Have the players play multiple positions.
- Be used only to initiate the offence. The pattern is not as important as the concept of creating a one-second advantage.
- Flow from transition.
- Teaches the players to read
- Create quality shots based on the one-second advantage and the abilities of the players.

## OFFENSIVE SYSTEM (RULES)

### Four Plus One (Four Perimeter Players and One Inside Player)

The player may stay in the post for one possession or players may move from the inside to outside during a single possession but this is not a permanent post player.

### Post-up Game for Every Player

Every player has the opportunity to seal and play inside.

### Back Screen

This is the first screen that is taught. The reason is that it fits with the overall offensive concepts –

First option is always to get the ball in the paint and second option is to shoot the three point shot.

### **Dribble Drive Penetration**

For the same reason as the back screen this method gets the ball into the paint and for a kick-out and three-point attempt.

### **Pick-and-roll**

This should be the last option taught to the players.

### **Offensive Flow**

In any good offensive system, each action connects – as one is finishing, the next is occurring. On an inconsistent team, the action stops, then starts.

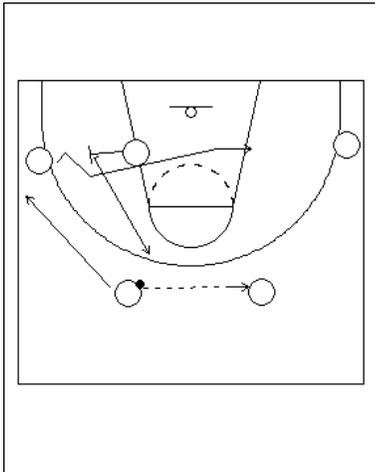
### **Offensive Tempo**

The offence must reflect the opposite tempo of the defence. If the defence wants to slow down the offence should go faster and if the defence is trying to press, play should be slowed down.

### **Offensive Rhythm**

Timing and spacing must be maintained throughout the entire shot clock.

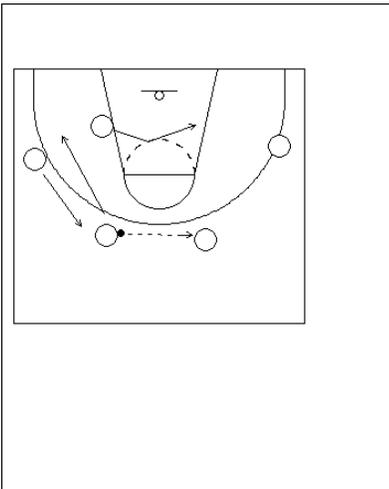
## **OFFENSIVE SYSTEM - EXAMPLE #1**



### **Basic Move**

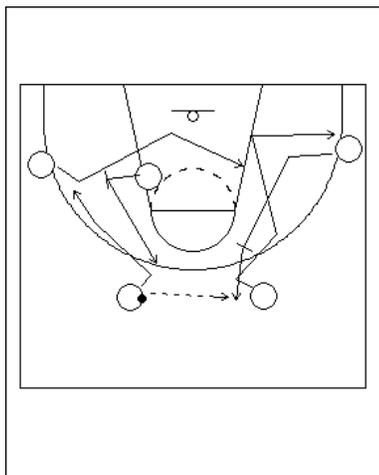
The basic set that the players flow into is with one post player on the ball-side and four perimeter players; two in the guard spots and two wings or forwards.

On a guard-to-guard pass, the post sets a back screen for the wing player. The post immediately faces up to the guard spot. The guard who made the pass flares to the wing spot.



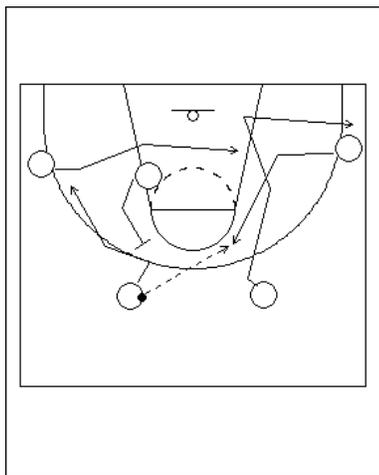
### **Post Stays**

The post has the option of following the ball if there is a mismatch. In this case the wing and the guard exchange spots.



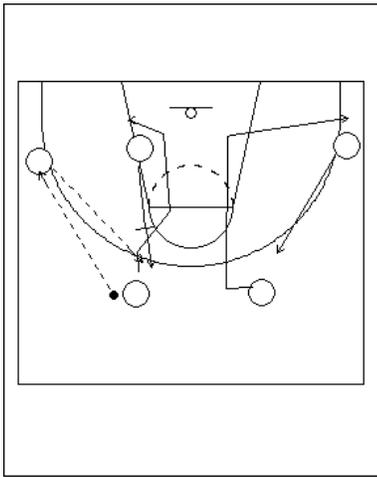
### **Weak-Side Back Screen**

If the opposite guard is being denied, the weak side wing can set a back screen for the guard. If the wing makes a cut in the direction of the basket first it creates a better angle for the screen. On the guard-to-guard pass, the post sets the back screen and the guard flares.



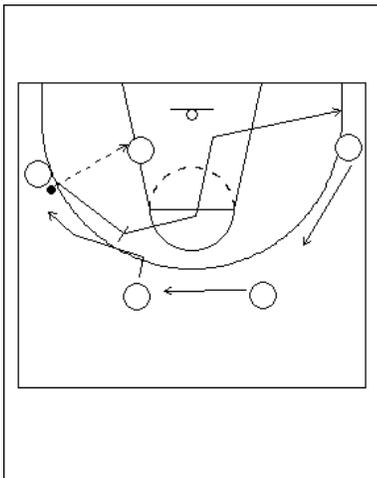
### **Weak-Side Back-Door, Strong-Side Back Screen**

To initiate action the weak-side guard goes back-door, while the weak-side wing cuts to replace. This allows for the guard-to-guard pass. Instead of back screening for the wing, the post sets a back screen for the guard. The ball-side wing makes a hard basket cut to the opposite post to create the open space for the post-to-guard back screen.



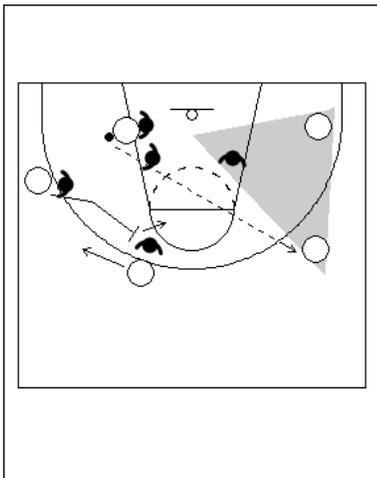
**Pass to the Forward**

If the ball is passed to the forward the post sets a back screen for the ball-side guard. The weak-side players exchange.

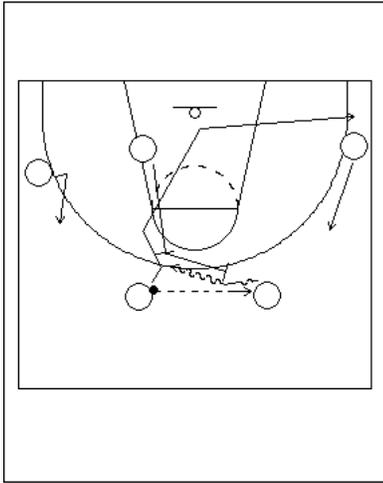


**Ball into Low/Post**

When the ball is passed to the post the perimeter players must move to create the idea of spacing. The wing passer can screen for the ball- side wing. After screening, this player cuts through. The other players spot-up. The key is not to fill the ball-side corner when the ball is in the post as it makes it difficult for the post player to see all players on the floor at one time.



If teams double the post, players need to look to pass the ball to create a two-on-one.



### **Pick-and-Roll**

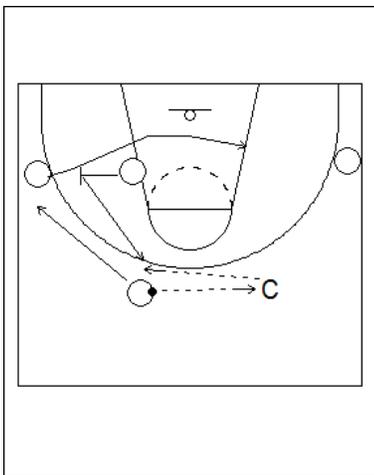
It is important to note that when players are setting a ball screen that there is screen-action first. The ball is passed guard-to-guard while the post-up screens and then immediately sets the ball screen. This makes it difficult for the post player's defender to be involved in the ball screen defence.

Concepts to remember:

- Let the players feel free to play after a few passes (cut, penetration, spacing), in order to see the players potential talent.
- The execution of the system has to be flexible.
- The coach may change the offensive options after timeout.

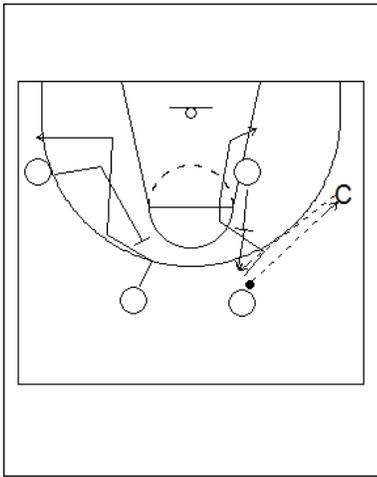
### **Four versus Four Breaking Down the Offensive System**

The following are four-on-four drills to work on various components of the offensive system.

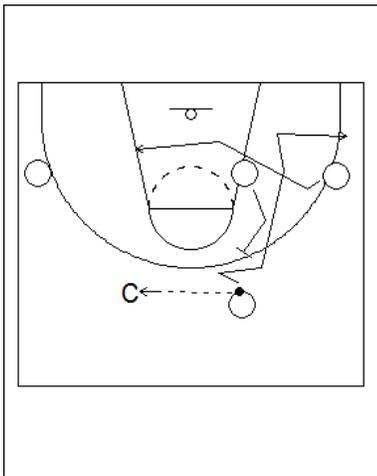


### **Guard to Guard Pass**

In this drill the coach acts as the second guard. The players are working on reading off the back screen flare action and move into pass and replace and penetration.



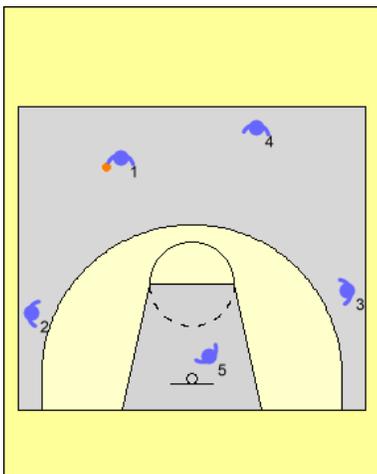
In this drill the coach is working on back screens for the guard when the ball is passed to the forward.



In this drill players are working on the back-cut by the forward followed by the back-screen for the guard.

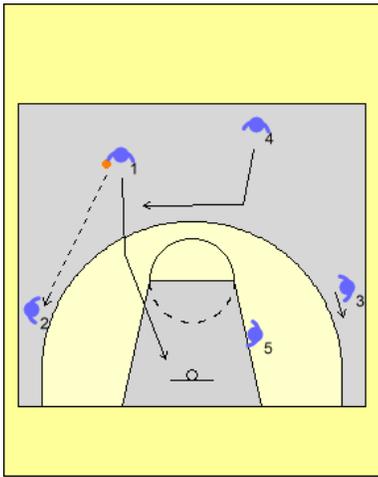
## OFFENSIVE SYSTEM – EXAMPLE 2

In this example, the offence can easily flow from transition into the set. The post exits and cuts away from the ball to create a natural double gap on the ball-side. It is important to remember that the only purpose of the set is to create a one-second advantage. Players play free once that occurs.

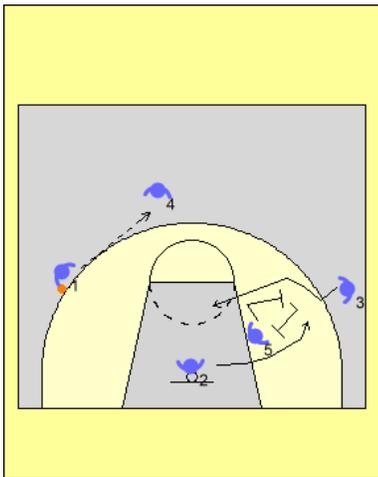


### Initial Spacing

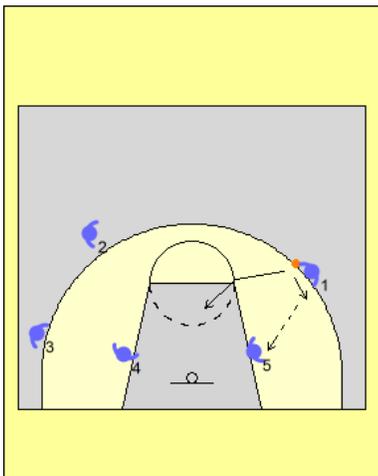
The players flow in transition to *Player Four* out player one in set, with the post exiting away from the ball.



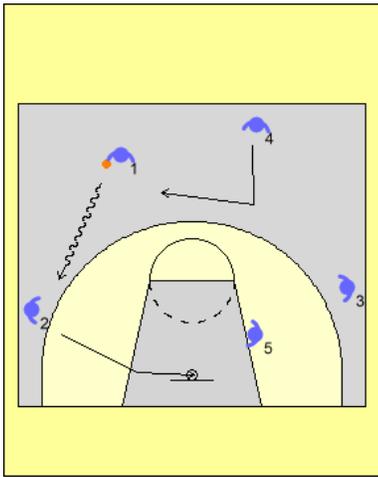
In this drill the ball is pushed in transition to the ball-side wing. After passing *Player One* keeps on attacking the basket, while *Player Four* looks to cut to receive the reversal pass.



In this motion, the pass to *Player Four* makes *Player Five* set a back screen for *Player Three*; to cut to the basket. *Player Five* continues to set a pin-down screen for *Player One* who cuts off the screen to the wing.



This concept shows *Player One* looking to feed *Player Five* in the post. The remaining players play free using their post principles of play.

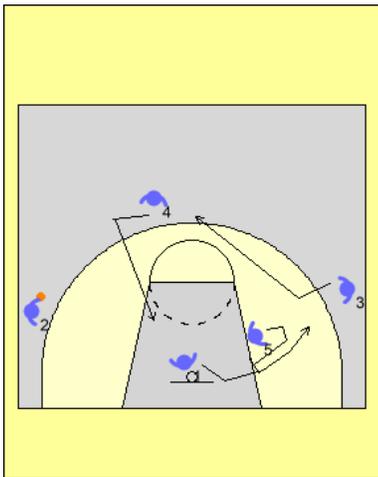


### Pressure Releases

In order to maintain flow, all offensive systems must contain pressure releases. The players must anticipate these actions by the defence and respond accordingly with no disruptions.

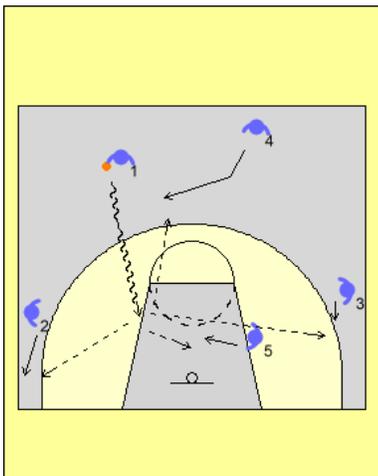
### Dribble Entry

If the wing push to *Player Two* is not open, *Player One* can push *Player Two* through with a dribble. *Player Four* cuts to receive the reversal pass. On the pass to *Player Four* the same action continues where *Player Five* sets the back screen for *Player Three*; followed by a pin-down screen for *Player Two*.



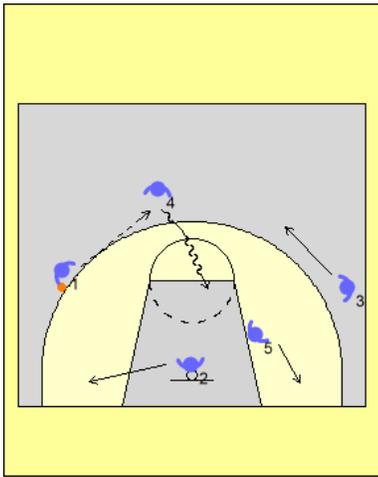
### Reversal Denied

If the reversal pass to *Player Four* is denied at the top, *Player Four* cuts back-door. *Player Three* fills the reversal spot and *Player One* uses the pin-down screen from *Player Five*.



### Play Free – Penetration

*Player One* beats their check into the natural double gap. The other players forget the pattern of the offence and play free using the penetration principles.

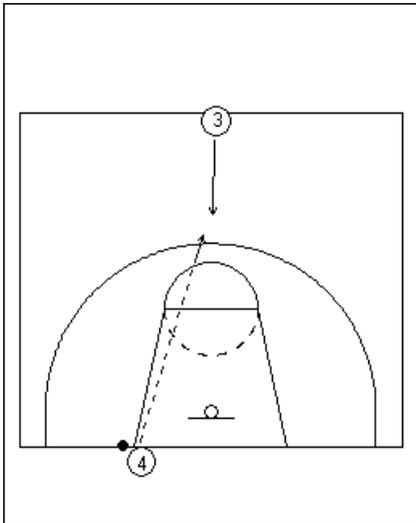


### Play Free – Dynamic One-on-One

In this scenario, if the catch is made at the top, *Player Four* can attack their check with the crossover or the curl. The other players respond to the penetration. The offence is not reset.

These examples can be utilized for pressure releases and opportunities to play dynamic one-on-one. It is important for the players to explore these opportunities by using break down drills that use all four phases – on air (A), coach guides (B), live defence (C) and competition/scrimmage (D).

# PRESS-BREAK



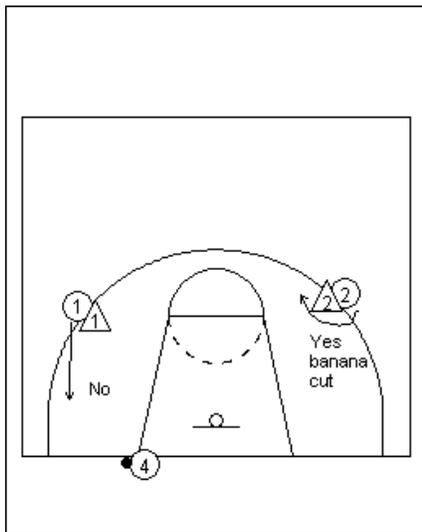
## Press-Break

Questions to be asked:

- Fast shot or trying to just get over half?
- Who can hand the ball against pressure?
- Who are the best passers?
- Who can finish at the end of the press?
- Who can inbound the ball and who can get open in the middle of the floor?

It is important that players are placed where they have the highest chance of success. Players need to show confidence. The keys are to know whether to use a fast press-break or a control press-break, continually looking to create three passing options (side, middle and back) and to always have a pressure release option.

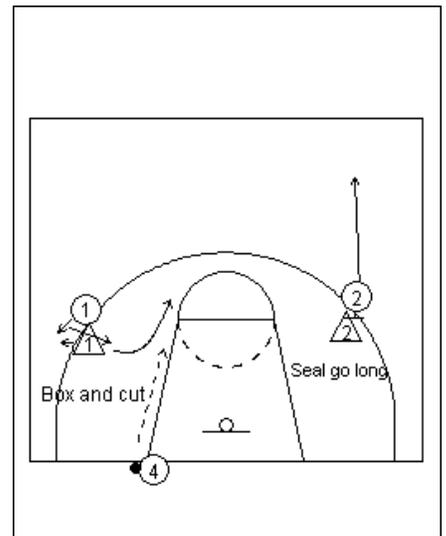
The following is an example of a press-break.

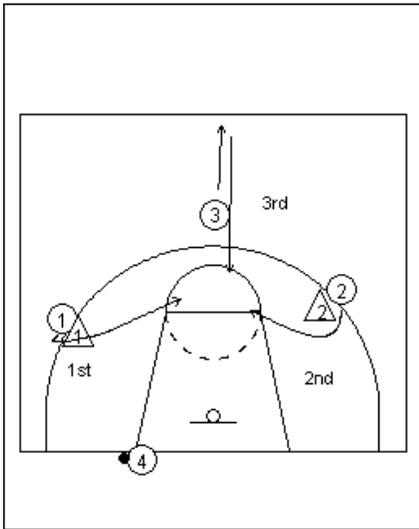


## Inbounding

The inbounding player needs to be positioned so they can see the whole court. This player needs to be able to throw long and should void standing directly under the basket for more space.

It is important to never receive a pass below the foul line extended. This can be avoided with a banana cut, seal (over the top) and fake-out (cut middle).

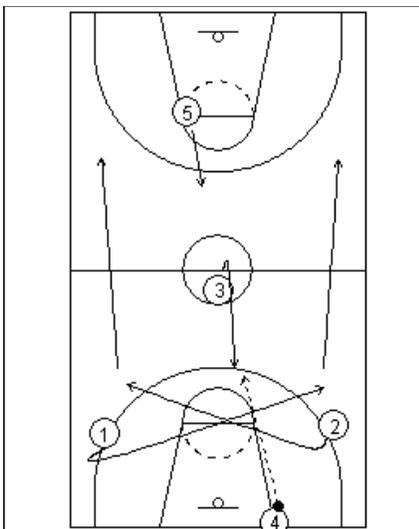




### Inbound Sequence

For added room, players should stay well back off the baseline. The first look is the guard on the ball-side, followed by guard on the help-side and the last is a player cutting back hard through the middle.

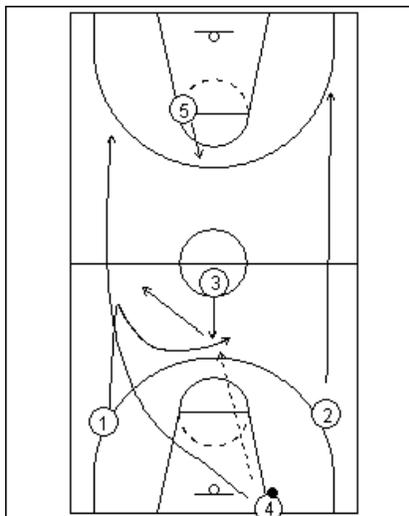
Against tremendous pressure it is much better to go to the pressure release person as the main option can result in better opportunities when the ball is in the middle of the floor.



### Fast Press-Break

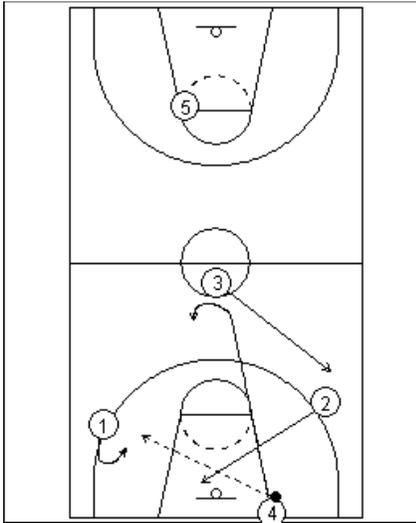
With this concept the intent is to go vertical by going over top of the pressure. On the pass *Player Three* in the middle, *Player Five* cuts back for a second vertical pass (double middle). *Player One* and *Player Two* go hard back-door up the wings and *Player Four* trails.

Next, *Player Three* reads the defence and attacks pressure. The options are middle to *Player Five*, sideline to *Player One* or *Player Two* or take on and dribble middle.



### Controlled Press-Break

With this motion, *Player One* goes hard and then cuts back for the hand-off. After taking the hand-off, *Player Three* must spread the defence by running wide and filling the lane.

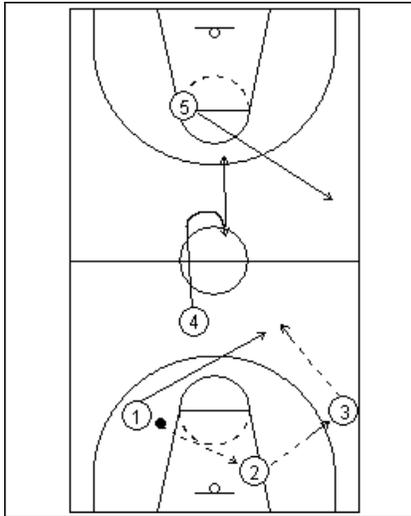


### Controlled Press-Break

In this scenario, *Player Four* enters the ball to *Player One* and sprints to half and button-hooks back to the ball. *Player Two* cuts back behind the ball for reversal, while *Player Three* cuts away from the side where ball was entered (they set-up for reversal).

Following, *Player One* penetrates the sideline (fast press-break), *Player Four* stays middle at half and *Player Two* stays back under basket for reversal.

The entry can be run for *Player One* or *Player Two*. *Player Three* always goes away from the ball and *Player Four* always sprints to half.

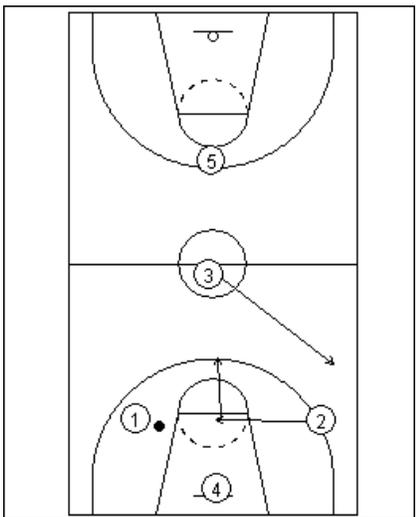


### Controlled Press-Break

In this system, *Player One* passes the ball back to *Player Two*. *Player Two* quickly reads and makes one more pass to *Player Three* and they look for *Player One* cutting through the middle.

The reads for *Player Two* are vertical (middle to *Player Four*), taking on their check or looking middle to *Player One* for a give and go.

*Player Three* can look to the side for *Player Five*, in the middle for *Player Four* or back to *Player Two* (who will bring the ball up quickly by dribbling away from all the action).

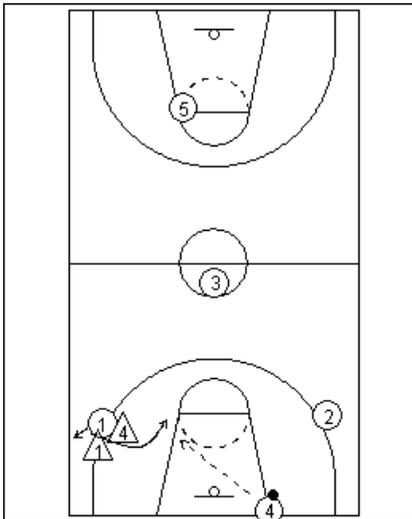


### Versus One-Two-One-One Overplay Reversal

If teams do not guard *Player Three* cutting and over-play *Player Four* at half and *Player Two* on the reversal, *Player Three* then holds ball.

*Player Four* inbounds the ball and steps in for ball reversal and *Player Three* holds at half. To overload the overplay, *Player Three* breaks away from the ball after reading *Player Two's* defender.

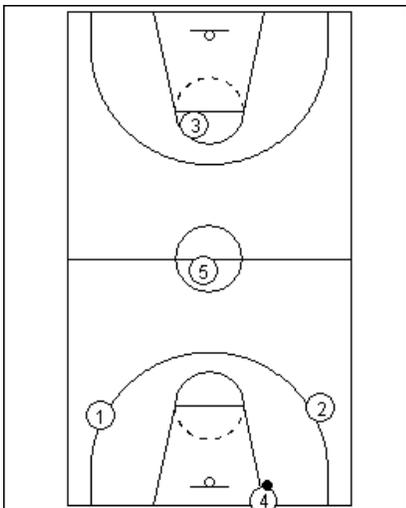
At this stage, *Player One* reads that the defence overplays *Player Four* and matches up with *Player Three*. *Player Two* needs to flash open at free throw line, while *Player One* reads that defence stays to overplay *Player Two*. In a controlled press-break the pass is made back to *Player Four* who makes one more pass to *Player Three*. In fast press-break, the pass is made to *Player Two* in the middle.



### One Guard versus Two Guards

When teams only have one good ball-handling guard they must work hard to get the ball. When double teamed they need to be faking and splitting the trap as much as possible.

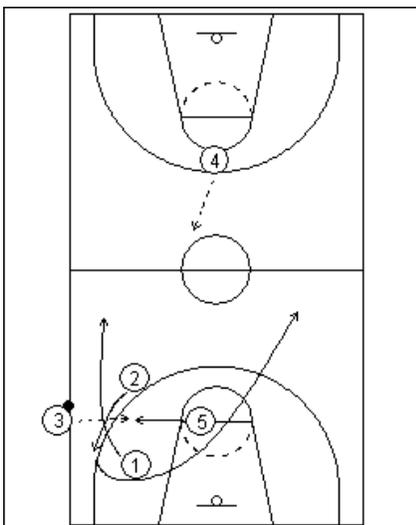
If there are two good guards both are potential pass receivers. One player can cut and clear space for the other player.



### Place Players Where They Will Be Most Effective

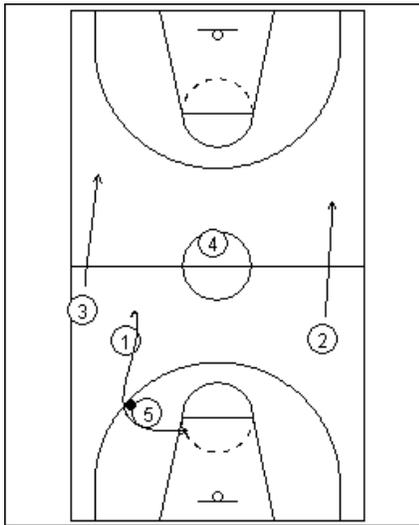
If *Player Five* is a good passer they can be the middle pressure release as this allows the other players become potential scorers. In addition, it is unlikely that *Player Five's* defender will defend the pass.

The inbounding player needs to be the best passer; able to throw the ball far and make good decisions.



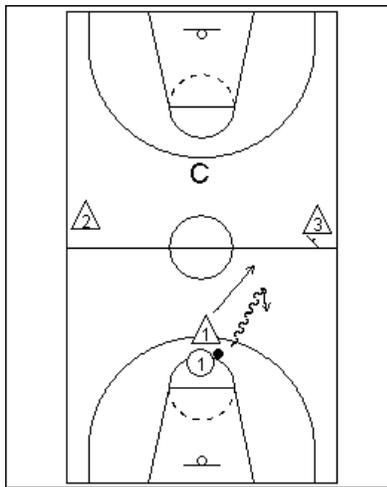
### Sideline Backcourt

This is the same concept as the two guards use their cuts to get open. *Player Five* is the pressure release. On the pass to *Player Five*, *Player Four* runs the double middle, while the guards go back-door. This can be executed controlled or fast.



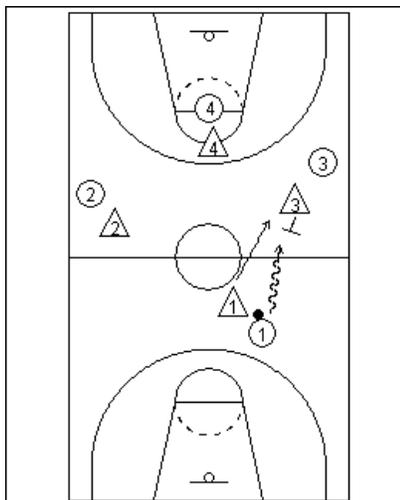
### Controlled Break

*Player One* fakes long and comes back for the hand-off. During a fast press-break the player looks for any vertical passes up the floor.



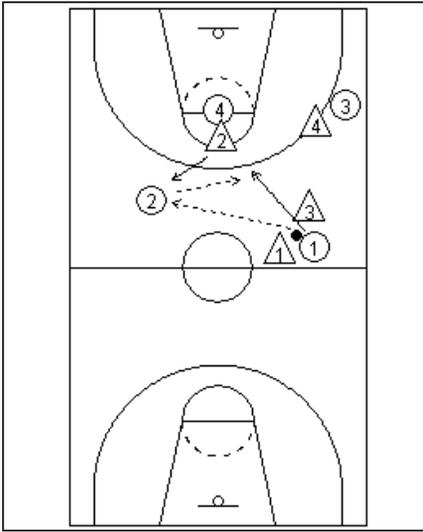
### One versus Three Guard Drill

*Player One* attacks the press. They can use a pull-back dribble to avoid the trap and attack the other side. The key is to keep the dribble alive.



### Four-on-Four

The coach signals one of three types of defensive trap and rotation for the guard to work on reading— rotate after the trap (leave the opposite guard open), no rotation (leave the wing) open and leave the middle open. In addition, the guard should be reminded about throwing the ball off the leg of a defender during a trap if nothing appears open.



### **Give and Go Out of the Trap**

Players should be aware to run a hard give-and-go on any pass out of a trap. They can split the double team and cut hard to instantly create a five-on-three. To load the drill a fifth defender can be added, followed by five-on-five and mixing the types of pressure.

# ZONE ATTACK

---

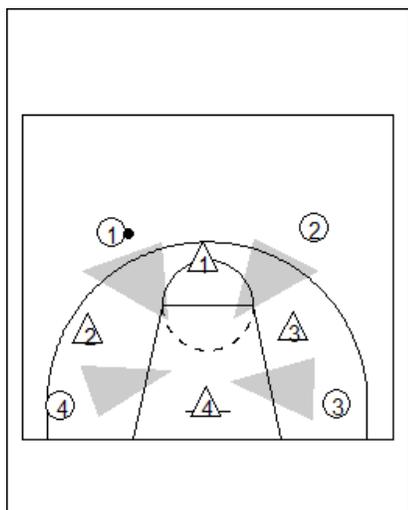
The following is a conceptual approach to teaching zone offence.

## Objective

1. Increase the offensive player's ability to read the defence.
2. Improve the decision-making skills of the offence.
3. Increase and improve the skills needed for attacking a zone defence.

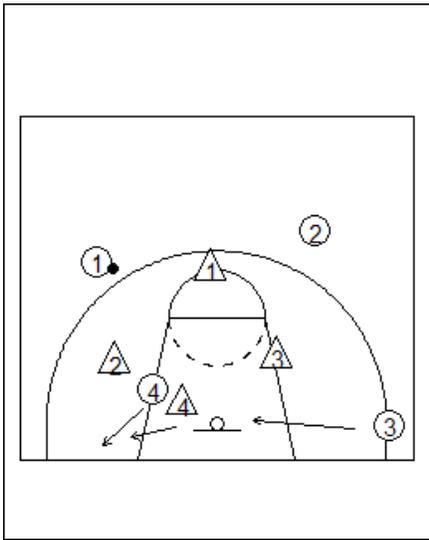
## Key points:

- Teach the concepts using four-on-four initially – more space and more touches gives the offence an advantage
- Flow into the action
- One concept at a time
- Use drills and games approach
- Concepts versus strategy



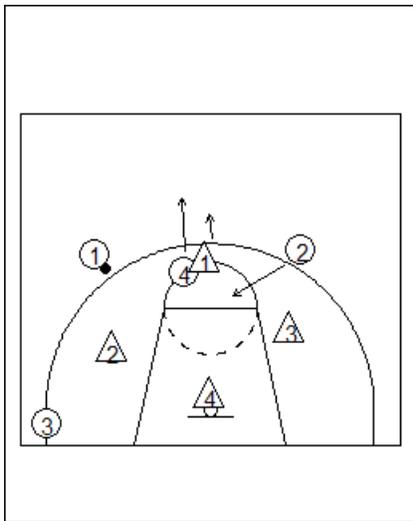
## Concept 1 – Spacing

In this scenario, players are looking to get into the gaps and seams. The offensive players read to see if the zone is an odd or even front. The Perimeter players position themselves in the gaps and this will cause confusion as to who will guard the offensive player. In addition, inside players look to seal a defender to create a seam or to pop to space to aid in ball movement and create bigger gaps and seams.



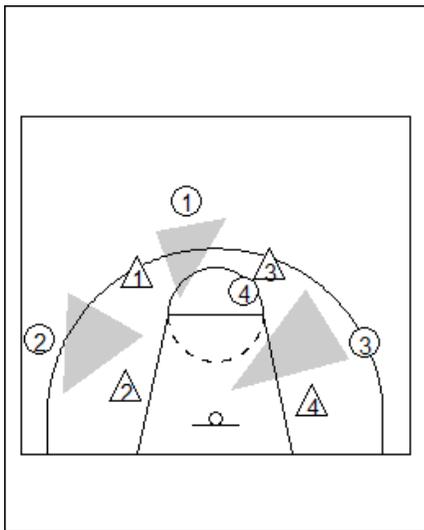
### Odd Front Zone with a Low Post

*Player Four* looks to seal the bottom of the zone to create a gap and a seam. If *Player Four* is covered, they can pop to the short corner to drag the defender. This creates a seam or gap that another player can use for an advantage.



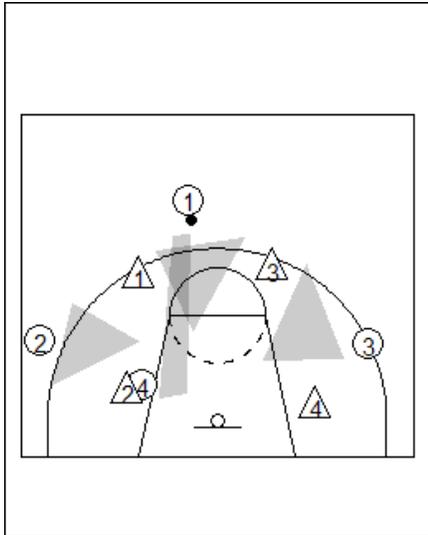
### Odd Front Zone with a High Post

The concept is the same as previous but the post seals one of the defenders to create a seam for them or to make a bigger gap for the perimeter. *Player Four* can also pop to pull a defender or to aid in ball reversals.



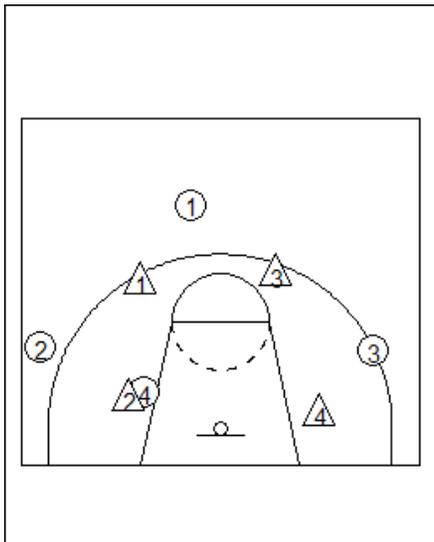
### Even Front Zone

The perimeter players position themselves in the gaps. *Player Four* (the high post player) looks to seal one of the top defensive players creating a seam. The high post player should not start in the middle of the floor as it takes away the drive line for the guard.



### Low Post Sealing Against an Even Zone

*Player Four* seals the bottom player of the zone to create a seam in which to receive a pass. In addition, *Player Four* can step to the short corner to enlarge the gaps and seams.



### Concept 1 – Games Approach

The first scenario is to play four-on-four against odd and even front zones. The score is multiplied by the amount of ball movement away from or to the ball. The players are not allowed to cut or dribble (lots of fake passes) and the posts are working on the seal and pop. The idea is to create confusion in the defenders.

Players should learn to position themselves where they can receive passes by moving in and out and up and down in the gaps and seam. They always need to be ready to shoot, should they find an open opportunity.

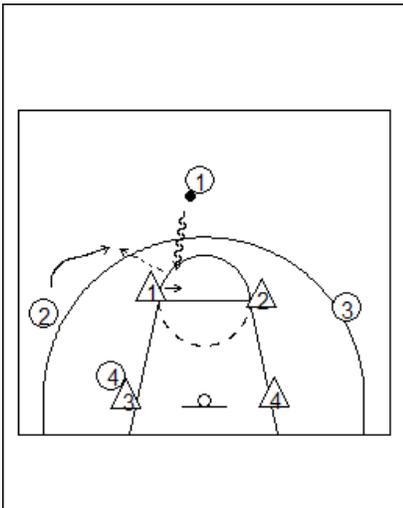
## Concept 2 –Penetration

Penetrating is important to collapse and distort the shape of the zone. There are three types of penetration dribbles:

1. Freeze dribble - used to force a defender to stay in one area
2. Lateral dribble - use to pull a defender out of the area being defended
3. Attack dribble – where the basket is attacked.

In addition, penetration can be made with passing. A good zone offence should have a mixture of perimeter passes and penetrating passes into the zone.

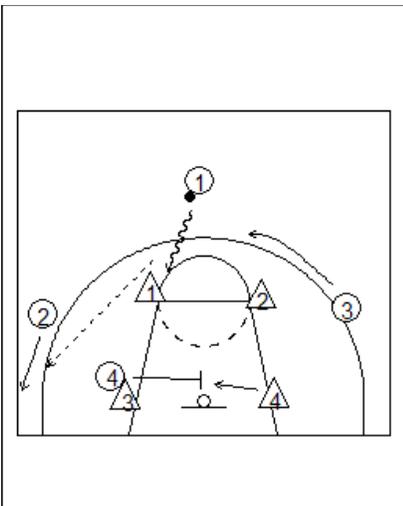
Lastly, penetration also occurs with cutting – especially vertical cuts that attack the basket. An important concept for players is to attack an open basket; if there is an open line between the player and the basket they should take it.



### Freeze Dribble

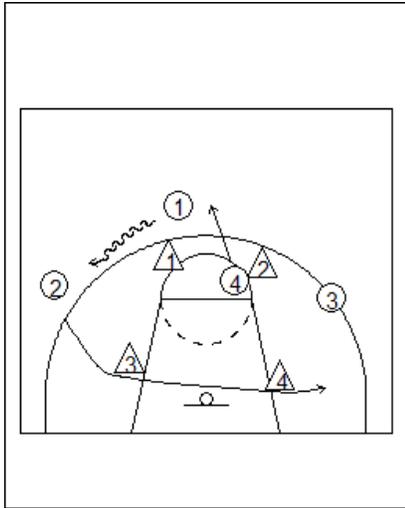
Perimeter players should penetrate at the inside foot of the next defender to freeze them and create a shot for the next player.

In this scenario, the post attempts to seal in the next defender which allows the perimeter to slide or rotate and provide an open shot. If *Player Two* rotates behind, it forces a long recovery for the next player in the zone.



### Perimeter Player Slides

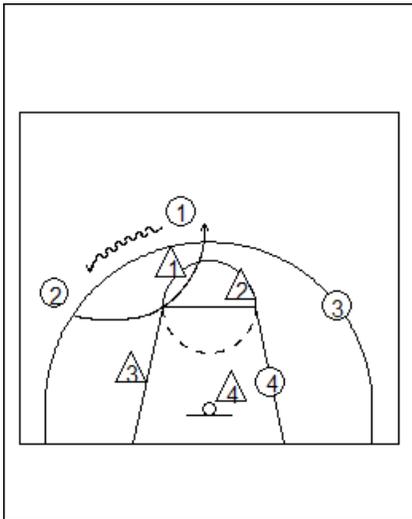
Using a freeze dribble is often effective to isolate a defender in the zone. In this scenario *Defender One* is vulnerable if *Player Two* slides and *Player Four* screens the next defender and then releases to seal the next defender. This is an effective way to get a post-up against the zone.



### Dribble Pushes and Pulls

A dribble push is when a perimeter player dribbles at the next offensive player. The purpose is to pull a zone defender out of position. The player dribbled at may run through the zone or shallow-cut to replace the dribbler. The player who is being dribbled away from is pulled.

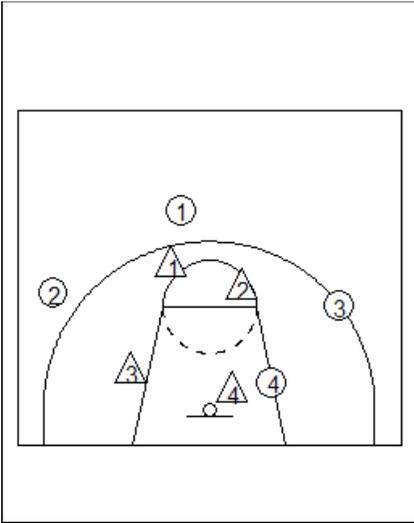
In this scenario, *Player One* dribbles at *Player Two*, pulling *Defender One* out of position. *Player Four* then pops out behind to fill the space vacated by *Player One* and *Player Two* runs through to create an overload. It is important to read how the zone defends. If the defender stays with the dribble, the player being pulled should be opened and if the defence bumps the player being pushed on the reversal should be found.



In this scenario, *Player One* dribbles at *Player Two* who uses a shallow cut to fill the spot vacated by *Player One*. Meanwhile, *Player Four* seals in the zone.

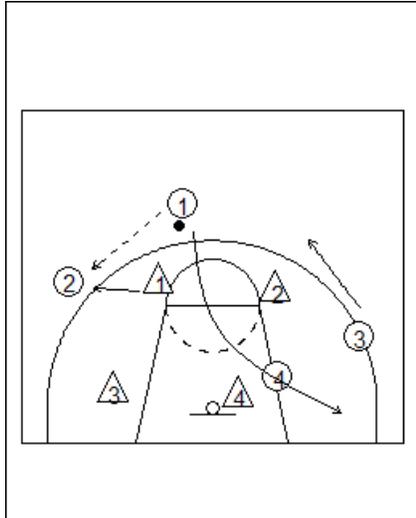
## Concept 2 – Games Approach

This scenario is the same as previous but the players go four-on-four and dribbling is added so players can freeze or push-pull. The drill can also be loaded with penetrating and rotating.

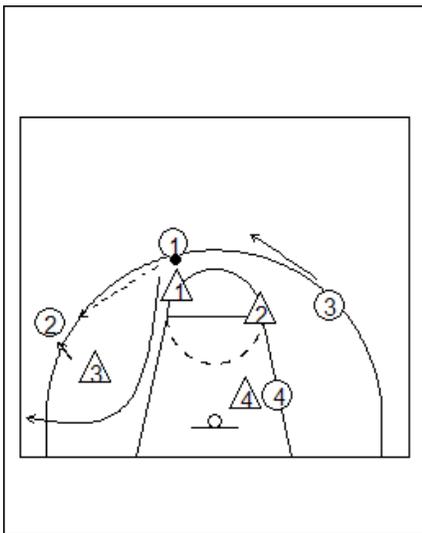


### Concept 3 – Cutting

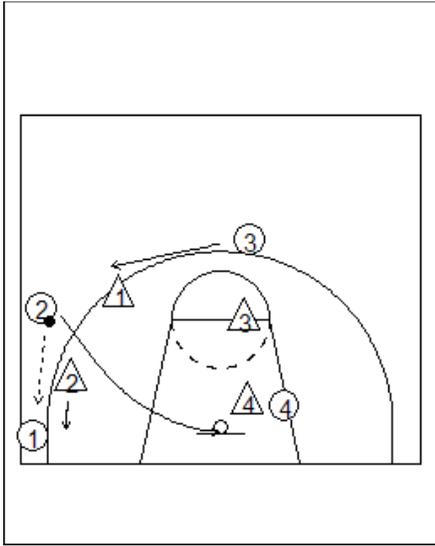
Cutting can be used to confuse the zone or overload one side. The key is to be aware of which defender is guarding the players in the zone – at the top, the first wing pass, the post, the skip, etc. It is important to know this information as it will influence the type of cuts players make.



If the top defender guards the wing player the ball should be reversed. The top player then cuts away.

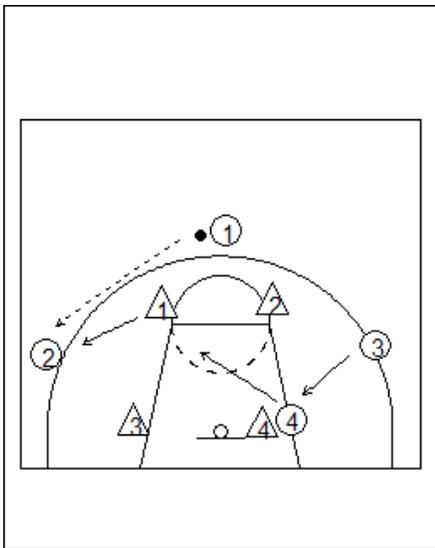


If the bottom player guards the ball, the top player looks to cut to the ball-side corner. These cuts work very well with the penetration principles.



### Pass to the Corner

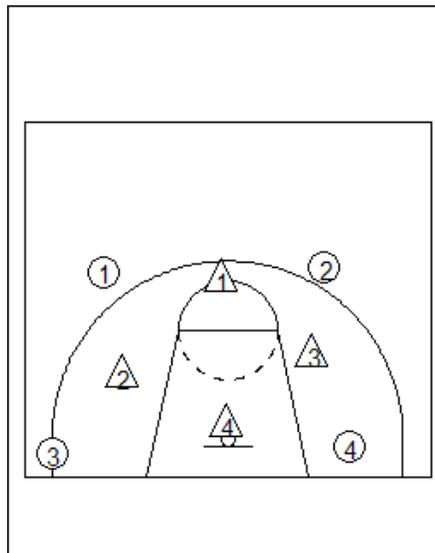
If the defence attempts to bump, it is ideal to cut after passing to the corner.



### Fill a Spot Someone Just Left

An additional cutting concept is to do so behind the defence into a space vacated by a defender. A second offensive player fills the spot vacated by the first offensive player. This type of action can cause confusion for the defence.

In this scenario, *Player Four* cuts to the high post when *Defender One* moves to defend the ball. This provides the opportunity for *Player Three* to cut behind *Player Four's* cut; looking for the diagonal when *Defender Four* moves with the cut.

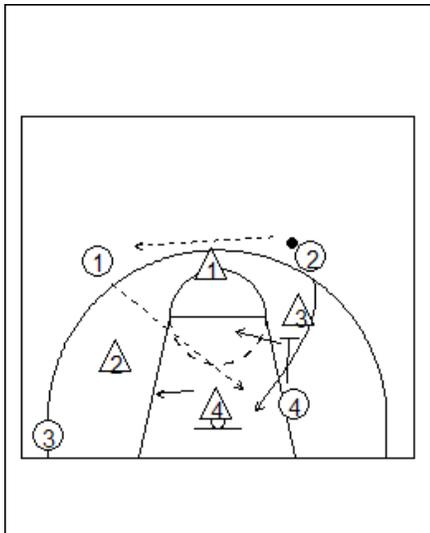


### Concept 3 – Games Approach

This scenario has the same rules as previously with the addition of cutting. The key is to read the defence to see who is guarding the first pass. Pulls, freezes and pushes are used in combination with the cuts.

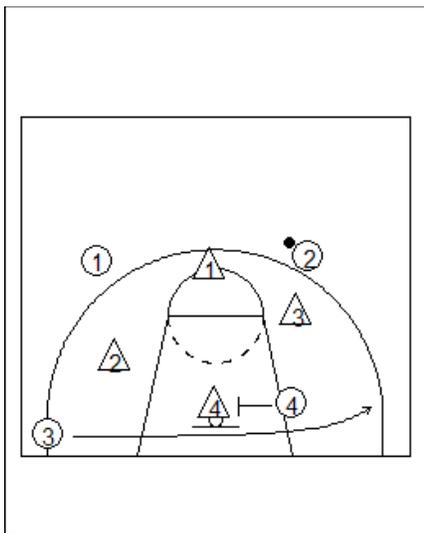
### Concept 4 – Screening/Picking

With this concept, screens and picks are used to create holes in the zone as it is difficult for the defence to use hedging and switching to defend.



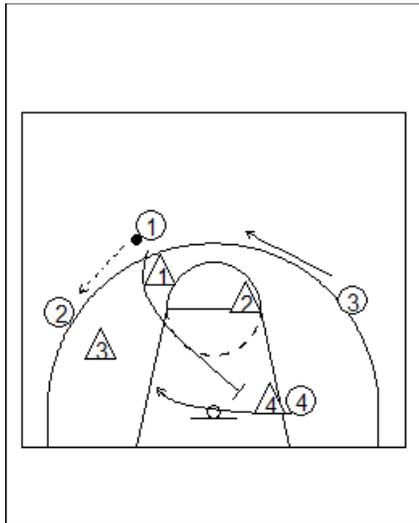
#### Back Screen (One)

In this scenario, *Player Four* sets a back screen on *Defender Three* to allow for *Player Two* to cut to the basket.



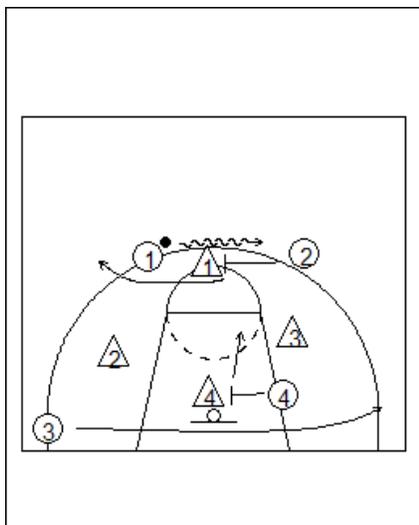
#### Back Screen (Two)

*Player Four* screens for *Player Three* to run the baseline.



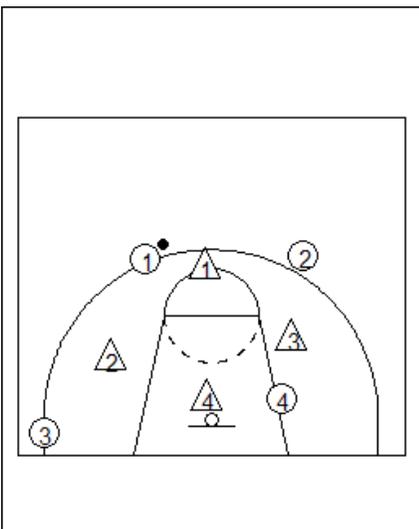
### Back Screen (Three)

After passing to *Player Two*, *Player One* flows through the key and centre-screens for *Player Four*.



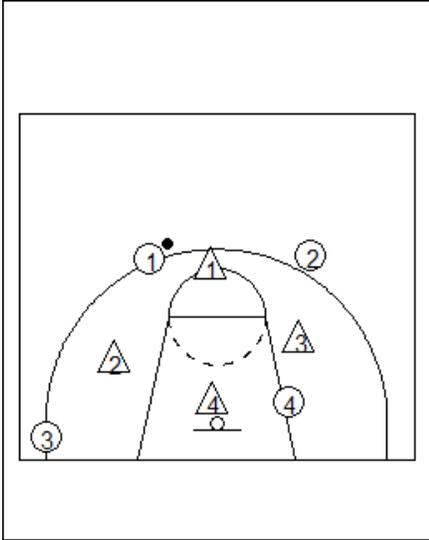
### Back Screen (Four)

*Player Two* sets a pick for *Player One* at the same time *Player Four* screens for *Player Three* along the baseline.



### Concept 4 – Games Approach

The same rules as previously apply but screens and picks are added. This drill should see players go through a perimeter screen for the interior on cuts, interior screens for the perimeter to cut, perimeter picking the ball (run to spot) and interior picks on the ball (roll).

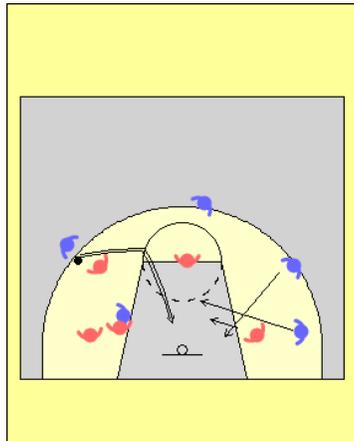


### Basic Rules

This drill sets a standard for basic rules – interior player spends two seconds in, two seconds out and perimeter players penetrate, rotate and pass.

### Zone offence – other points to points to consider

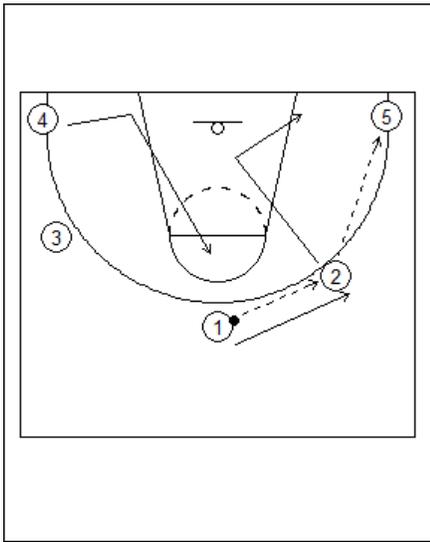
- The coach should control who defends their players. The offence gets to position themselves against the defender of their choice.
- What is the shape of the zone, what are the slides, who covers where, odd or even front, what is the spacing, where are the gaps and seams, where is an opportunity to seal?
- Pass fakes, shot fakes
- Rebounding. Make use of a duck and dive to create a weak-side rebound.



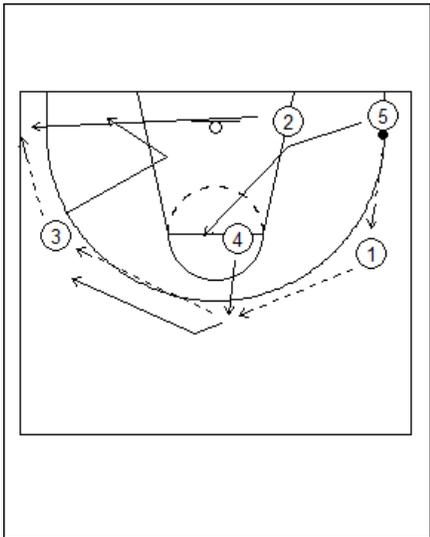
- Screen or seal the zone—centre screen, seal, release
- Dribble penetration – freeze, force a defender to move, pull a defender, make a defender guard the ball
- Overload – away, pop, stacks
- Player movement – fill the spot someone just left
- Attack behind – cut the back of the head – Russian spot
- Passing—penetrating passes, reversal passes – be in position to make the next pass – skip (flare screen)

### Simple Zone Attack

When coaches see a zone for the first time they often fall into the trap of assigning players permanent positions. Here is a simple zone offence that allows for players to play multiple positions. As stated before it is important that players learn the skills and concepts behind the system and not just the system.



The offence starts with five perimeter players. The ball is moved around the outside to the corner. The wing player cuts to the ball-side of the basket and out to the short corner. The opposite corner cuts to the high post. The player on the top slides to fill the wing. The offence has now overloaded the zone.



The ball is reversed. The player in the short corner follows the ball and becomes the corner on the reversal. The high post steps out to become the new top player. Once the ball is passed to the corner the same cutting action occurs.

# SPECIAL SITUATIONS

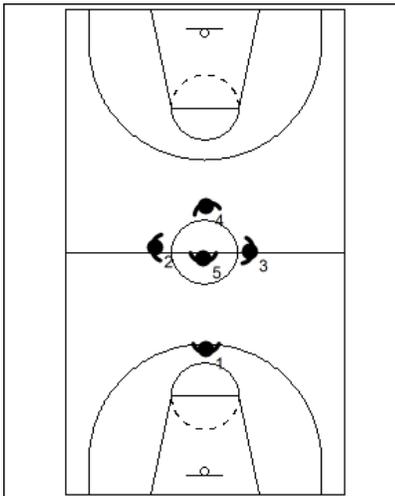
---

The coach needs to prepare their team for various situations that occur during a game. These include:

- The jump ball
- Foul line
- Inbounds plays
  - Frontcourt sideline (SLOB)
  - Frontcourt baseline (BLOB)
  - Backcourt sideline
  - Backcourt baseline (cannot run)
  - Backcourt baseline (run)
  - Midcourt (front court only)
  - Midcourt (can go either way)

## JUMP BALL

Although there is only one jump ball, coaches should prepare their team as it can have a huge impact on the tone of the game. It is important to distinguish whether it is an offensive or defensive jump. If it is likely the opposing team will win the jump then a defensive position is ideal.

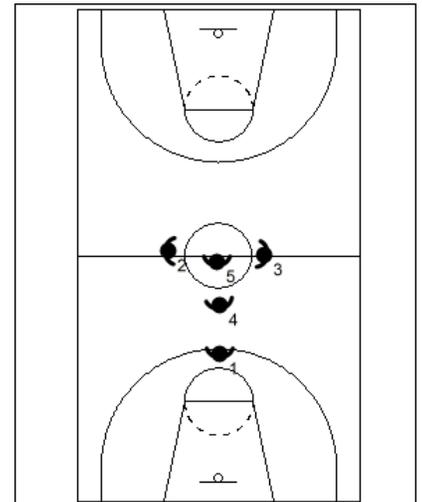


### Offensive Jump

An extra player is placed on the offensive side of the circle. It is likely that one player will act as a goalie to prevent the easy layup.

### Defensive Jump

The extra player is on the defensive side of the circle. It is important for the players to be alert to special set plays; such as a screen for the jumper.



## FOUL LINE

Many games can be won or lost at the foul line. Coaches need to be prepared on offence for situations when a player misses foul shots or late in a game when a foul shot must be intentionally missed. On the defensive side, teams must practice boxing out against various strategies that teams may have to score a late basket or to gain an extra possession.

Foul shots are also a great time to communicate. Many teams make use of huddles or coaches may call particular players over to the sideline for individual instructions.

## **INBOUNDS PLAYS**

Coaches should have their team prepared for all possible inbound situations – on offence and defence.

There are two schools of thought for running inbound plays. The keys are to:

1. Have numerous plays to confuse the defence.
2. Have one basic play with options from which the players read the defence.

The coach must balance the time it takes for players to learn multiple plays with the easy identification of having only one play.

The coach needs to consider the following questions.

Q. Will the play work against man and zone defences?

Q. Will the play work from all locations on the court?

Q. Is it dependent on only one individual to execute? What happens if they foul out?

Q. How are the options or reads communicated (verbal, signals)?

Q. Is there a play to score from the front court in the last two minutes of the game?

- Does the inbounds play score quickly or is it just to get the ball inbounds?
- Is the plan to switch screens when defending an inbounds play?
- Will there be a pre-switch screen?
- Can a stack be defended?
- While defending an inbounds can the team protect the basket, stop the primary scorer, get a five-second count or quickly foul a poor foul shooter?

# DEFENSIVE RULES

---

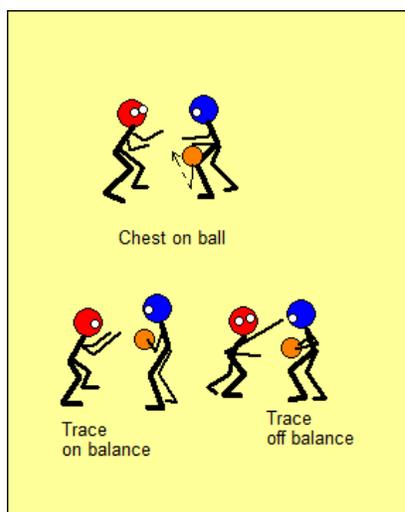
## 1. Protect the Basket

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

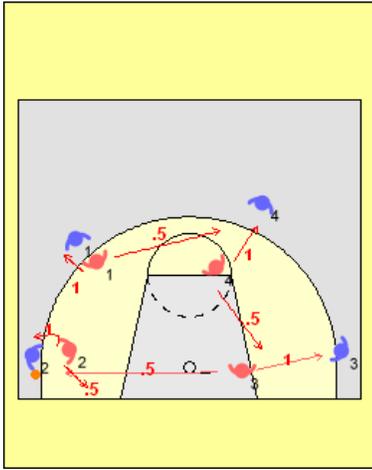
From three-quarter court (pick up at the opponents' foul line) there has to be pressure on the ball-handler. The ball-handler should find it difficult to see their teammates on the floor and force them to change hands (while dribbling) and direction (crossover) as often as possible. In addition, the 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

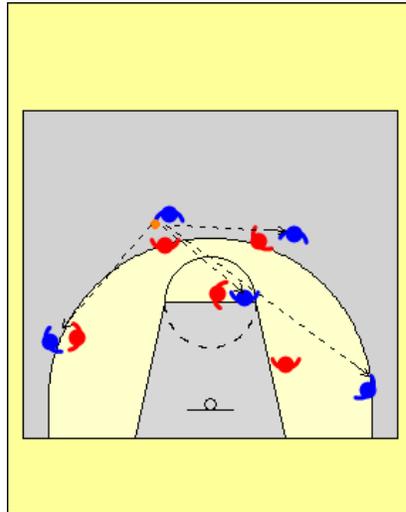
As a strong team principle for team defence, it is important for players to defend their check and be ready to help on the eventual penetration/rotation.



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.

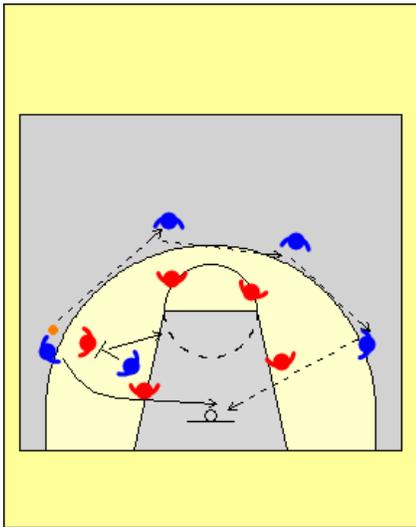
#### 4. Always Stay in the Passing Lane

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).

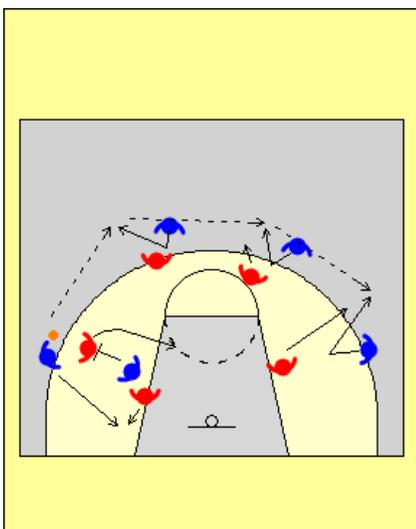


#### 5. Make the Offensive Player Move Before they Catch the Ball

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.



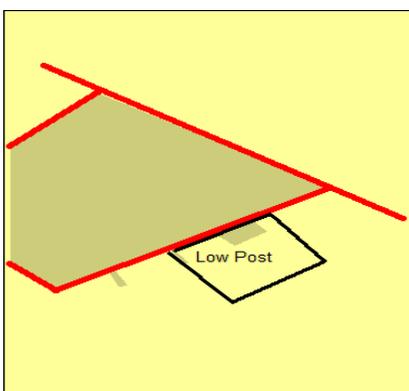
A former Yugoslavian coach once said that the best offence is to take the ball from three players on the strong-side of the floor and reverse it to the side with two players; then quickly bring a third player from the strong-side to the weak-side. In this scenario, it is very difficult to defend the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



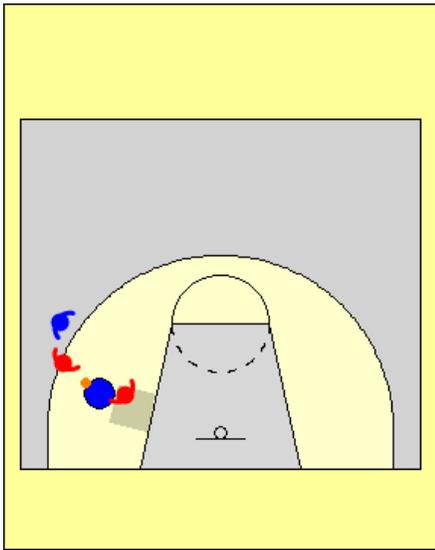
By making the perimeter players move to catch the ball it slows the timing of the ball reversal. The players defending the screen have time to hedge and recover.

## 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.

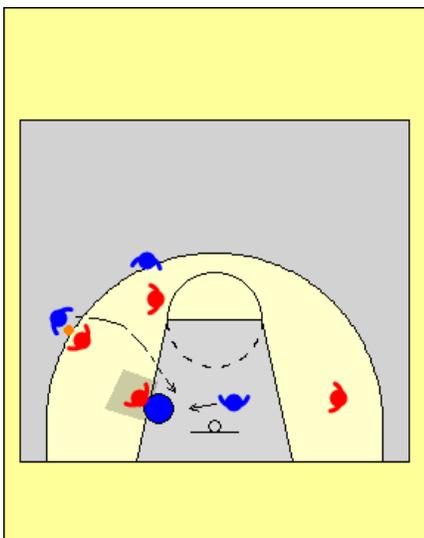
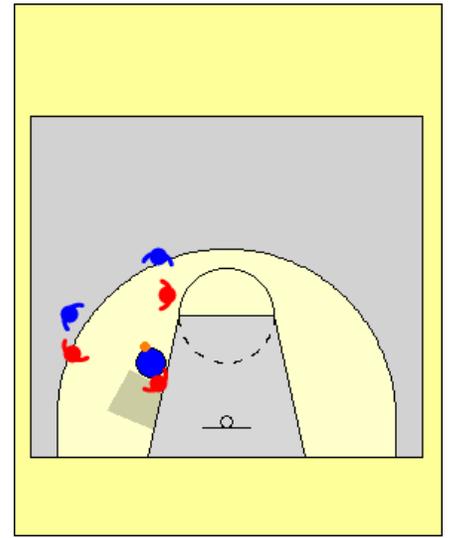


The low post is defined as a one metre square (box) on the floor. This is the spot where the defence wants to inhibit the ball from entering. It is a great idea to use masking tape to mark this on the court when training as it helps players become familiar with the location.



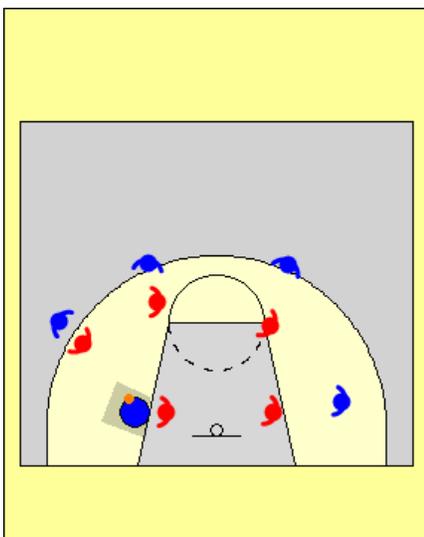
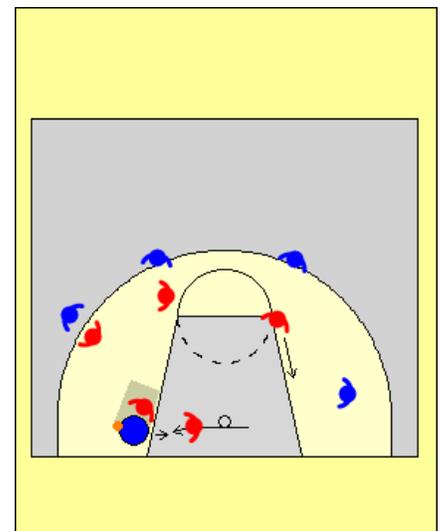
If the offensive player catches the ball in front of the box, it is very easy to have the wing defender guard two players.

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.

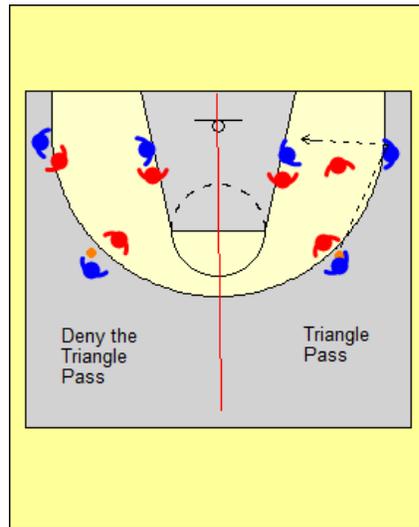
If the post-up is below the box, weak-side help can come on the dribble. The post defender takes away the middle and the vision of the post.



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

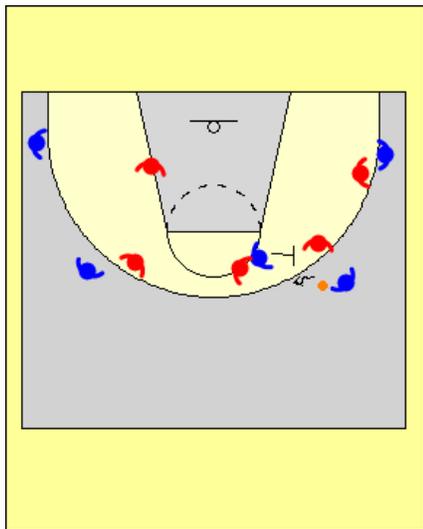
### One-on-one Defence

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.

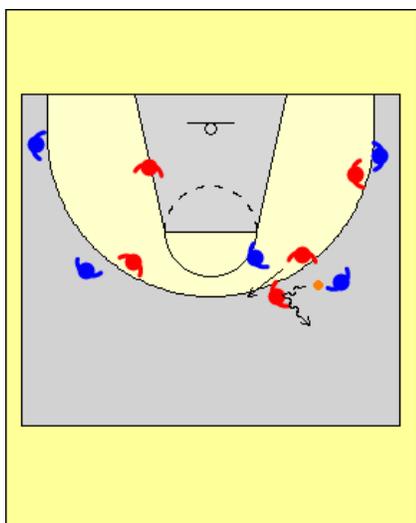
### Pick-and-roll Defence

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

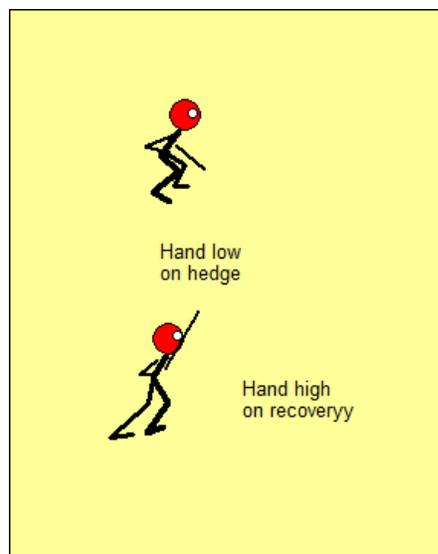
and basket while rolling to the paint. On the trap, the “big” player keeps one hand down on the ball to avoid a split and continues to keep their arms high while recovering. The guards must force the ball-handler to use the screen and try to anticipate the pick while fighting over the top. It is important for pick-and-roll action to be defended with all five defenders.

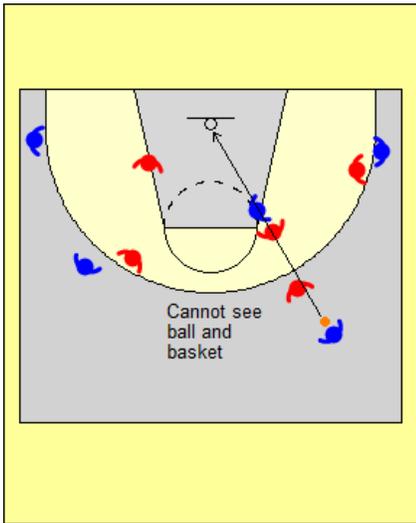


The defender of the ball has to make the ball-handler use the pick and communicate the action early and loud. The players who are one pass away from the pick are preventing the triangle pass, while the weak-side defender is responsible for the slip.



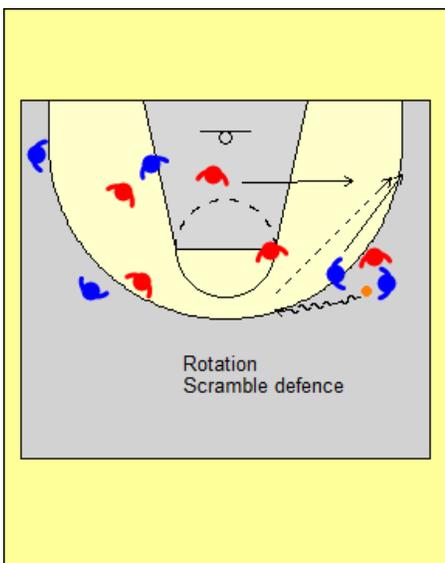
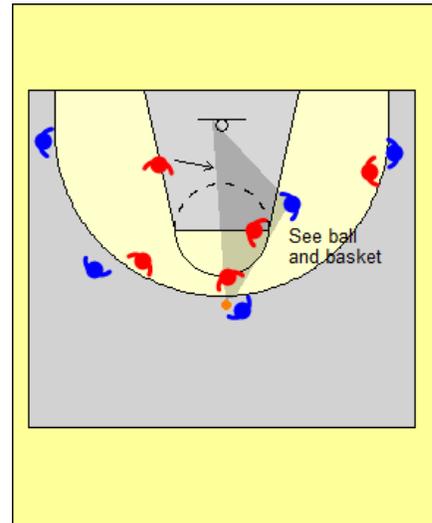
When the ball-handler uses the screen, the defender of the screener hedges out (with hands low) to force the ball-handler back towards the sideline. This puts pressure on the ball and makes the ball-handler retreat. When recovering, the defender recovers with their hand high to try and cause a deflection on the pass.



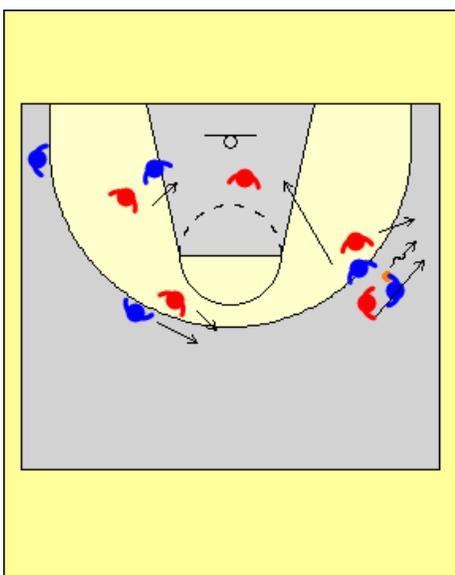
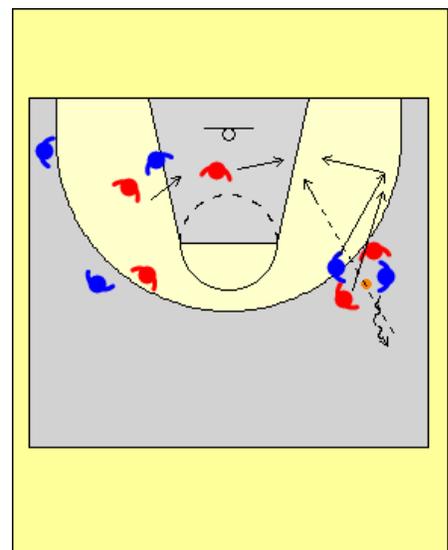


The defender of the ball-handler goes over the screen but under their teammate.

If completed properly the vision of the roller is restricted as they cannot see the ball and the basket at the same time. This makes it easier for help defence to help if necessary.



When a team is running a pick-and-pop it is often difficult to help as teams often resort to long rotations that leave them vulnerable. In this scenario the players do the same action as the pick-and-roll. The only difference is that the defender recovers in the passing lane forcing the offensive player to go back-door. This allows the help to stay in the key.



If a team sets the screen to go to the baseline or the team wants to inhibit the ball-handler from using the screen it should be trapped. The players who are one pass away deny while the weak-side defender can help on the roller.

## **Ball Screen Defence – Fundamentals**

- The ball screen defence includes both coverage (two players involved at the screen) and support (three defenders off the ball).
- On-ball defenders responsibilities are to:
  - Be with the ball-handler.
  - Force the ball-handler to use the screen (unless coverage dictates otherwise).
- Screener defender's responsibilities are to:
  - Call the coverage.
  - Arrive with the screener.
- Off-ball defender's responsibilities are to:
  - Form a triangle behind the ball.
  - Pull in when the ball goes away from them (player should be prepared to bump roller).
  - Work out when the ball comes to their check.

### **Ways to Defend Ball Screens:**

1. Hard Hedge (Over-under)
2. Soft hedge
3. Switch
4. Squeeze (Two under)
5. One Under
6. Trap (Blitz)
7. Down (Ice or red)

## The Five W's of Pick-and-Roll Defence (Answers dictate the scheme used)

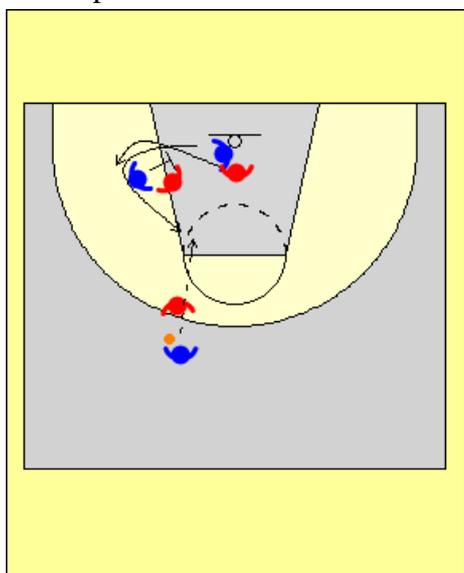
1. Where is it being set?
  - a. Side
  - b. Middle or high
  - c. Angle
2. Who is involved?
  - a. Shooter versus non-shooter
  - b. Shooter versus non-shooter setting the screen
  - c. Popper versus roller.
3. What is their alignment?
  - a. Position of "four-person"
  - b. The position of shooters
4. What is the communication?
  - a. Communicate early, loud and continuous
  - b. Screen defender should control the talk as they are never blind to action
5. What is the coverage?

### Pick-and-Roll coverage is poor if:

1. Players are not talking.
2. The guard does not force ball to the screen.
3. The forward or centre are not arriving with the screener
4. There are splits.
5. Players are lacking effort.
6. The Centre is not in their stance.
7. Opponents engage the three other defenders

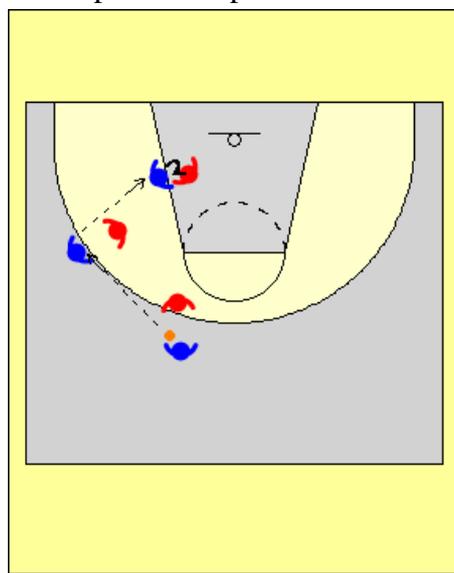
### Down-screen Defence

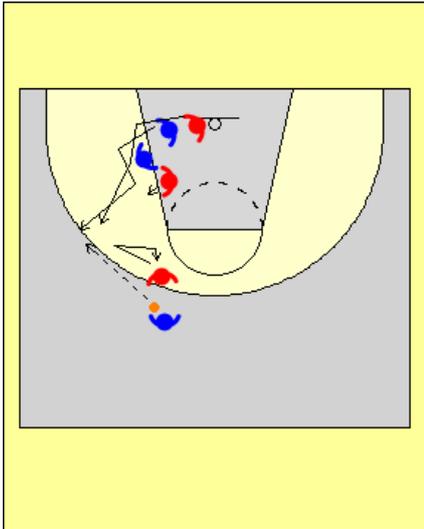
In order to be ready to help in case of curl and to avoid flash, the defender of the screener has to keep their feet higher than the feet of the screener – staying in the passing lane and ready to deny the pass to the low-post. The guard has to follow the offensive player and read the screen. If the screen is close to the baseline they must step through. If the screen is high the defender must chase. It is important that the defender of the passer makes a step toward the pass to help on the curl.



If the defender of the screen stays behind or too low, the offensive player using the screen can easily curl the screen.

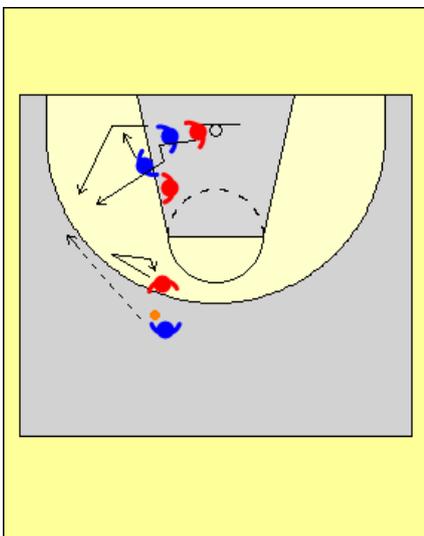
If the player does not curl and cuts to the wing, it is too easy for the screener to split the defender and post-up in the low block.





The defender of the screen must stay above the height of the screen (both feet) to put the defender in position to protect against the curl.

On the catch, the player who was guarding the passer must jump to the ball to discourage the quick middle penetration by the wing player. The defender must immediately return to passing lane defence.

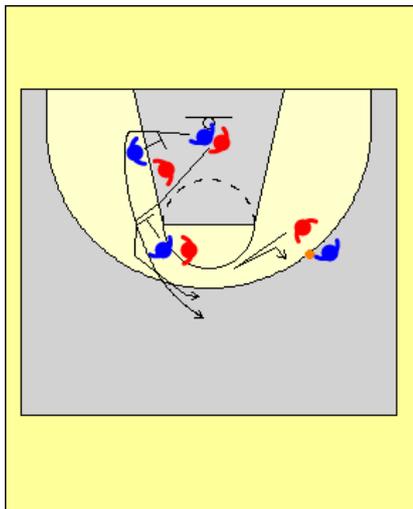


### **Moving Screen**

The screener will often move slightly lower after the offensive player uses the screen. The player guarding the cutter must chase and then jump through the space between the screener and their defender. It is important for the player guarding the screener to not stand beside the screener as it creates a double screen on their teammate.

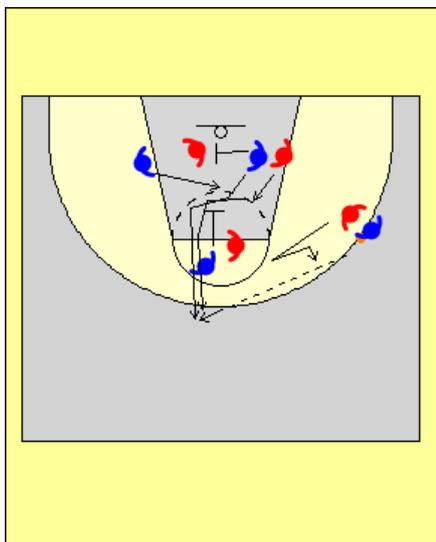
### Double-screen (Stagger) Defence

Similar to the down-screen, the defenders of the screener on the passing lane should use same rules as previous. The guard has to chase over the first screen and step through the last screen.



### Screen the Screener

The post player should be forced to go over the top of the first screen as it allows a shorter path for the player helping on the screen to recover. The second screen still has to be chased while the player guarding the passer jumps to help on the quick attack.



### Weak-side Cut

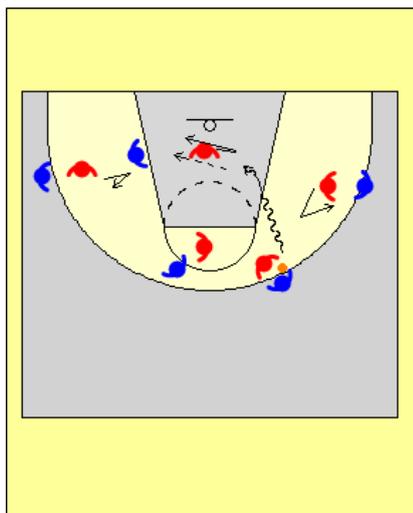
Defenders should inhibit their checks from cutting in front of them. They can stop their check with the forearm when they get in to the paint and force them to the baseline or to the top of the key (deny three-point line). Depending on their balance, the defender will decide either to see the ball or to see the player on the critical point of the cut.

### Back Door

On the first step to the basket by the offensive player, the defender has to slide back. On the second step, they have to turn their head and immediately see the ball. If the offensive player comes back on the three-point line the defender has to again turn their head toward the offensive player.

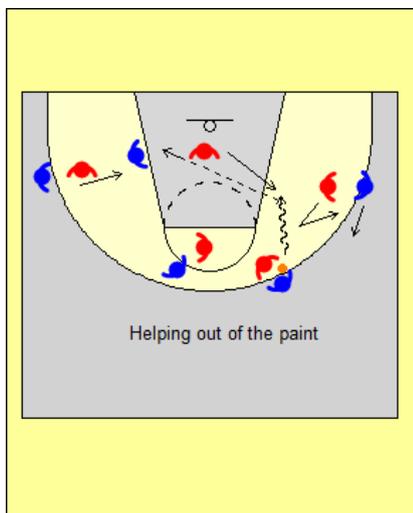
### Against Penetration

On every penetration by the guards from the perimeter, the defence has to fake and retreat with the closest defender (extending one arm to try to touch the ball) and help with the “big” from the weak-side (never allow a pass to the player in vision of the penetrator). The “big” has to help only once the penetrator is in the paint and read if they are looking to pass or shoot the ball.



The wing player on the side of the penetration stunts and recovers, while the post does not leave the key to help – they protect the front of the basket to force the offensive player to pull up or take a charge. If the pass is made, the player can deflect the ball or still recover.

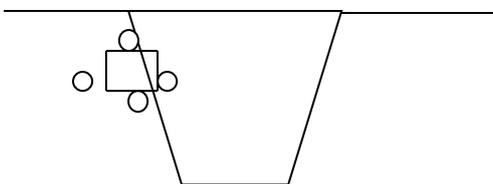
It is important to note that if help is provided off the ball-side there is no one who can help the helper as it usually leads to an easy three-point shot or defenders confused and scrambling from the penetration.



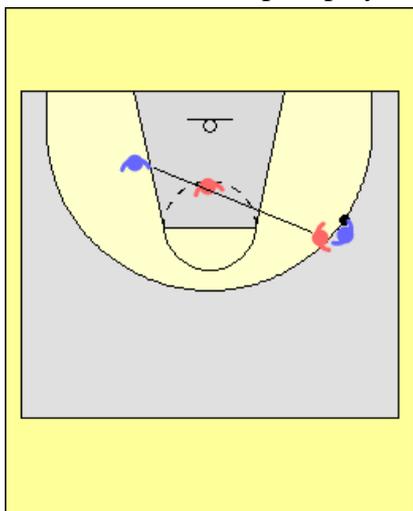
In this example, the post player is helping up and out of the key. This has to be avoided as it allows an easy pass that no defenders can provide help on.

### Low Post Defence

The ball should never be allowed in the low post. The defender should play in front if their check is close to the paint (three-quarter defence if they are close to the baseline). The player should stay behind if they catch the ball one step outside the paint; which then allows for help.

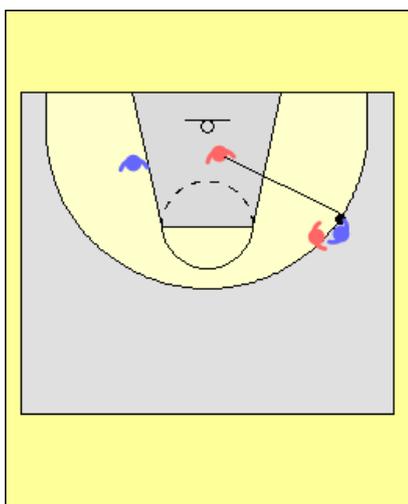


- = Where the low post player can catch the ball
- = Where the low post player should not catch the ball

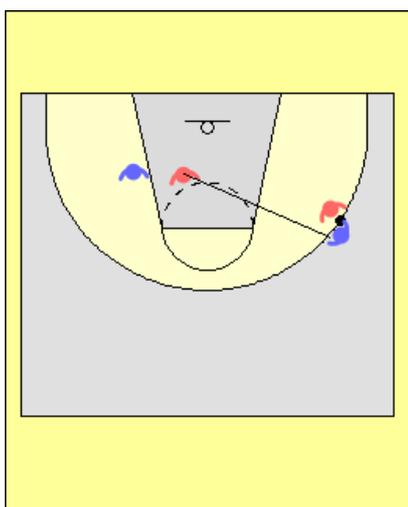


### Playing Away from the Ball on Defence

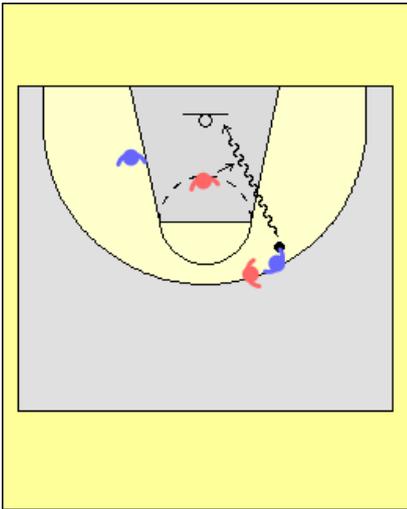
Young “big” players are often unsure how to position themselves properly on defence. It is important for them to play to their strength (size) and show the perimeter defenders that they can help them. Additionally, the help defender should not align with their teammate as the offensive player will have a clear path to the basket.



When the perimeter player is forcing the ball baseline, the post defender aligns in the driveline for the offensive wing player. This discourages the drive and makes it easier to rotate to help as the player moves up the line.

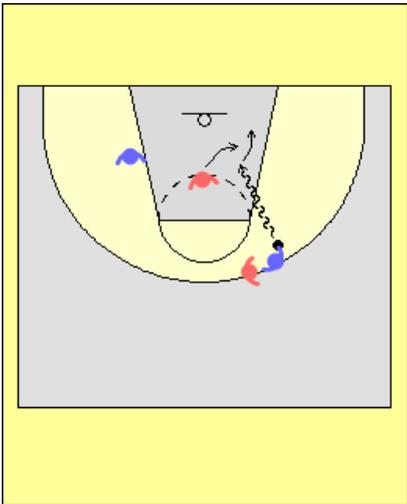


If the perimeter player is forcing middle, the post defender appears in the driveline of the offensive player.



### Contesting the Shooting Shoulder

In order to stay in the game, the young “big” player must use their fouls wisely. Players should be taught to contest the shooting shoulder. When a perimeter player drives to the basket too often, the player contests the shoulder closest to the basket. In the example to the left, this would be the left shoulder. The problem is that the ball is being shot from the right.



In this example, the player moves a little further to get in the driveline and contest the right shoulder to create a tougher shot for the driving player. At this stage, it is not necessary for a blocked shot or for taking a charge but to elevate the confidence they are in the right position.

## DEFENSIVE EXERCISES (TRAINING THE DEFENSIVE MENTALITY)

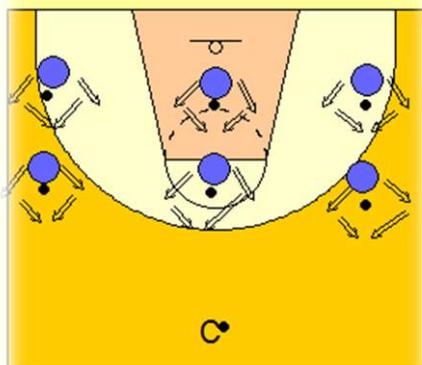


Diagram 1

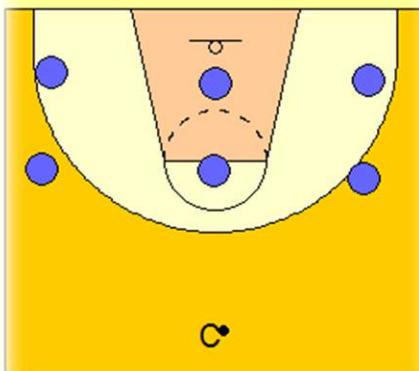


Diagram 2

### Post

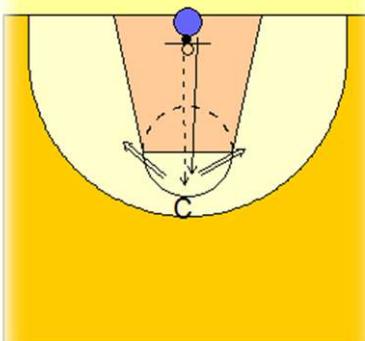
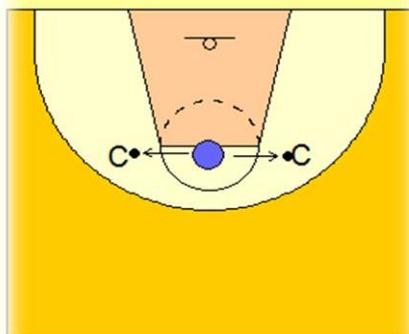
Each player has a ball on the floor in front of them. Players have to slide around the ball (pretending the ball is the low-post) for 10 seconds.

### Mirror

Players stand in front of the coach who indicates the direction in which the players have to slide. The coach can alter the drill by calling “rebound” for the players to show a box-out and jump or “penetration” for the player to act as if taking a charge.

### Five Recover

With two coaches lined-up free throw extended, one bounces the ball on the floor (alternating). Players have to slide and take it before the ball bounces twice.



### Close-out and Slides

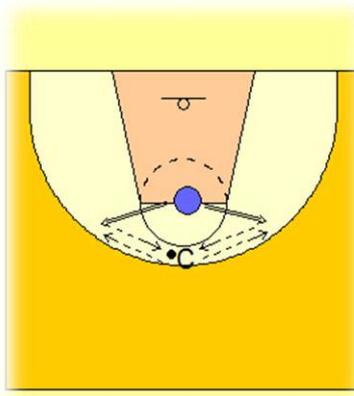
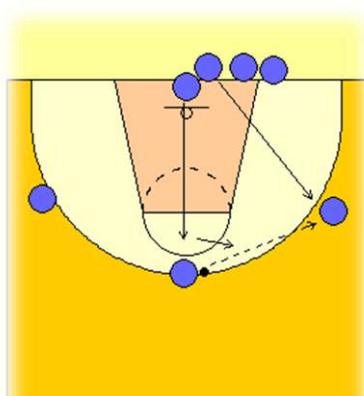
The player passes the ball to the coach and runs to close-out. The coach fakes a shot, fakes a drive to the right and then the left. The player has to retreat and recover. Following, the coach throws the ball on the glass and the player has to box-out and get the rebound.

### **Close-out and deny**

The player under the basket runs toward the player with the ball to close-out. After the pass they will slide on the passing line while the next player under the basket will do the same. The rotation is important as the player on offence goes behind the lane under the basket, the defensive players will replace them.

### **Five slides**

The coach stands in front of the player and rolls the ball on the floor. The player has to slide to take it and pass back to the coach for five recovers.

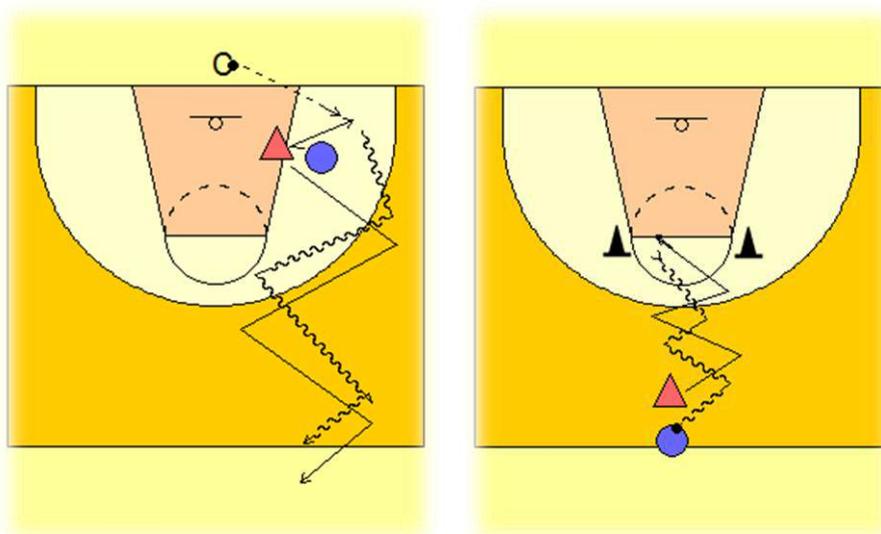


### **Five second to pass the half-court line**

The coach takes the ball out, while the offensive player tries to get open and receive the out-of-bounds pass. The defender has to force them to receive the ball below the foul line extended, and prevents them from passing the half-court line before five seconds. The defending player's goal is to force the offensive player to changes of directions as much as possible.

### **Goal**

The offensive player has five seconds to pass through the cones while the defender has to resist and keep them outside it.



### Three second deny

The offensive player passes the ball to the coach and tries to get open in less than three seconds. The defensive player has to deny them for three seconds before the coach passes the ball to the other coach. The offensive player cuts and the defensive player denies on the other side for at least three seconds as well. If the offensive player gets the ball early they play one-on-one with a rule of only two dribbles for a shot to be taken.

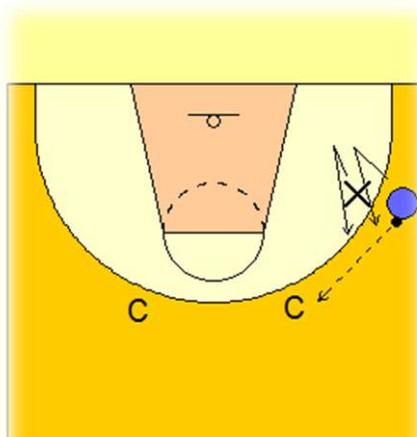


Diagram 9

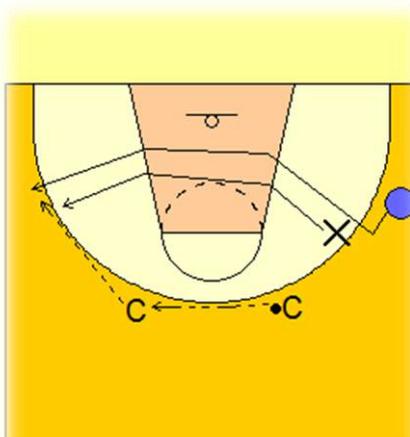
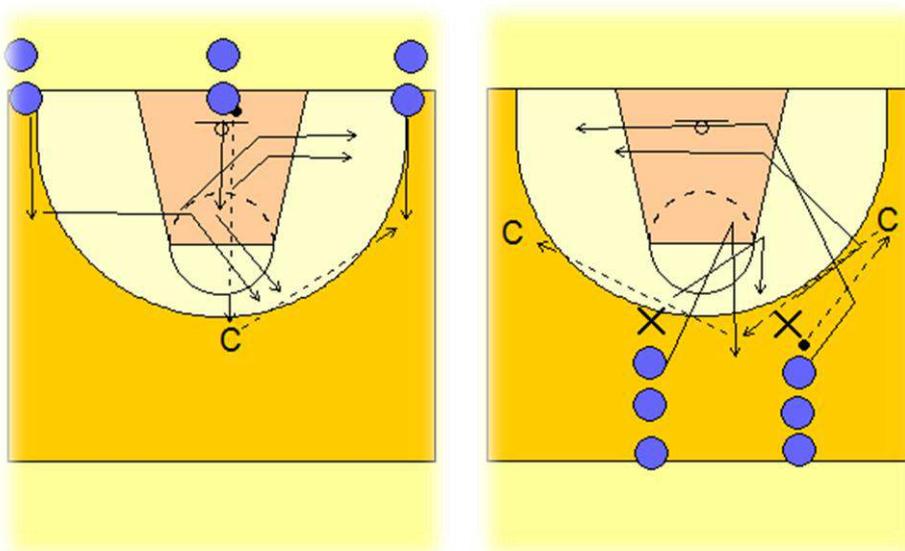


Diagram 10



### Weak-Side Cut Defence

The player in the middle passes the ball to the coach. All three players run to the foul line extended. The coach passes the ball to the player on their right side while the middle player has to defend the cut of the player on the other side of the floor. It is important to inhibit the ball from being caught in the paint.

### Two-one-two, cuts-defence

Two coaches act as supporters. The goal for the defender is to inhibit the offensive player from getting the ball into the paint and move quickly toward the ball on every pass.

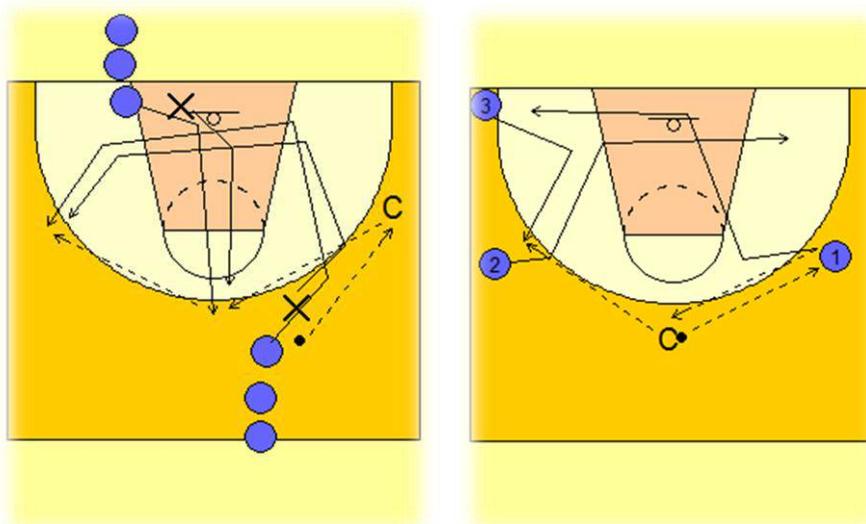


Diagram 13

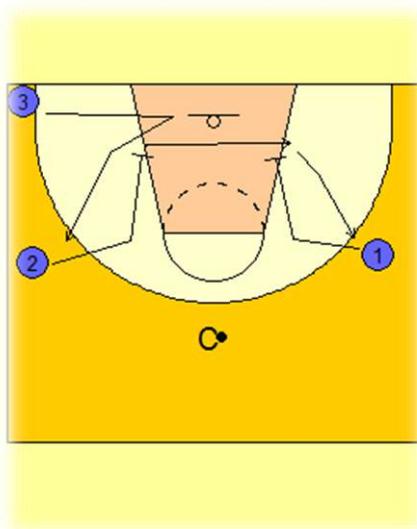
Diagram 14

### Two-one-two slow down the reverse

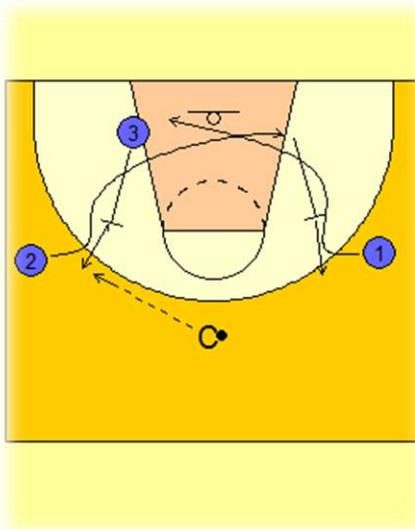
The guard passes the ball to the coach and then cuts through for a post-up. The “big” runs to the top of the key to receive the ball from the coach and moves the reverse side of the guard. After the pass they have different options – ball screen, post-up on the ball-side or back-door cut.

### Three-on-three pentha-drill

Three players defend the weak-side and back-door cut.



**Diagram 15**



**Diagram 16**

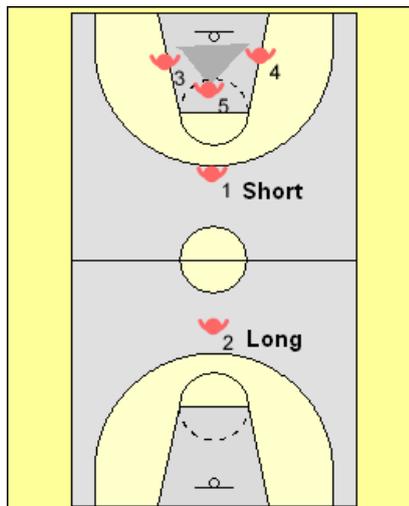
**Three-on-three penta-drill – loaded**

*Player Two* sets a screen for *Player Three*. Following a post-up, they go to the other side and receive a down-screen from *Player One*. The defence must defend this sequence.

**Three-on-three penta-drill – loaded again**

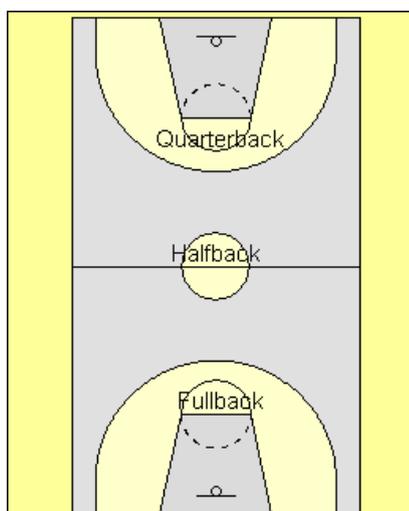
Same as previous drill plus working on back screen defence.

# TRANSITION DEFENCE



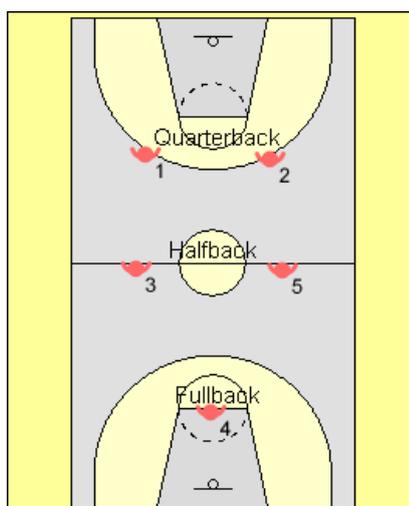
## Transition Defence

The most common defensive transition strategy when a shot is taken is for *Player One* to play a short safety at the top of the three-point line, for *Player Two* to stay as long safety past the centre circle and for the remaining players to form a defensive rebounding triangle.

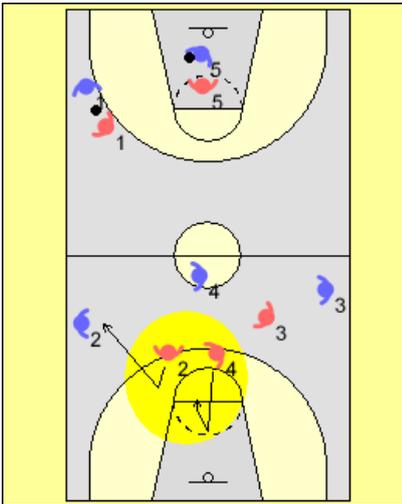


Another approach is to designate the three circles as specific positions – Quarterback, Halfback, Fullback and “Get backs” (sprint back on defence).

Depending on the strategy of the opposing team the players are assigned different positions. If playing a team that does run and uses a specific player to bring the ball up the floor, the players can play quarterback and halfback. If the opposing team is fast-breaking, the players can play halfback and fullback.

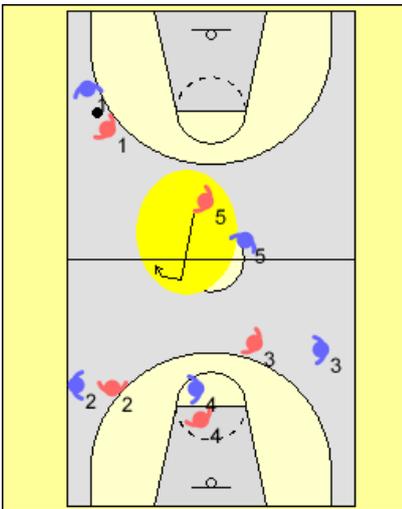


This strategy allows the coach to indicate to the players when to be turned and facing the ball. If running a press, the coach can indicate to the front line that they need to be facing the ball by quarterback; the second line is turned at halfback and the last line by fullback. These adjustments can be made as applicable.



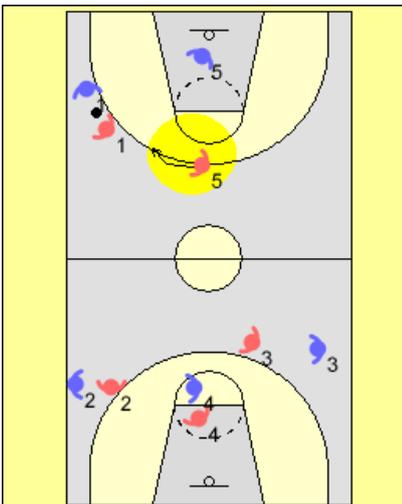
### Release

This is a crucial element of this defensive strategy. In the example to the left *Player Four* has sprinted back to protect the basket to allow *Player Two* to move out to deny the pass up the floor. Most early three-point shots are due to the release not occurring. It also means a scoring opportunity at the basket if *Player Two* moves out too soon and leaves the basket open.



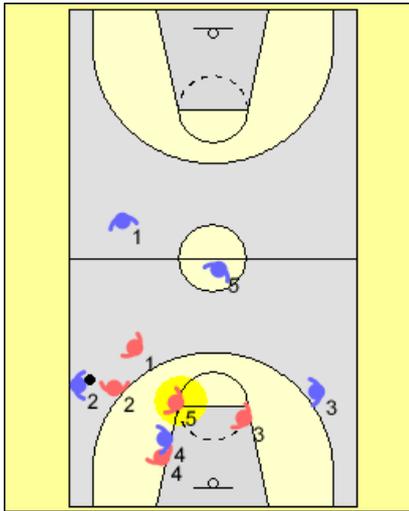
### Shadow

Against teams that have one dominant player who brings the ball up the floor a trail defender can used. In this example, the trail defender sprints to the halfback position to help on the guard bringing the ball up the floor. This is often effective as the offensive player who is being guarded by the shadow is not allowed to dribble or handle the ball.



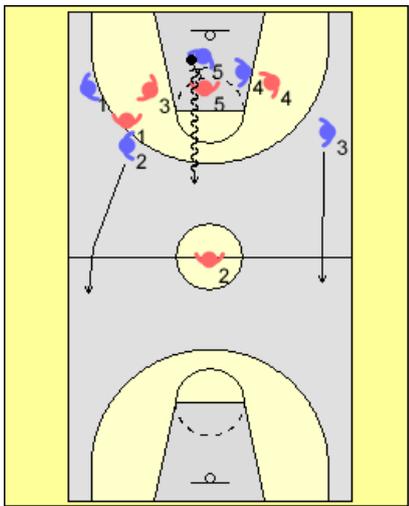
### Quarterback Shadow

In this example, the trailing defender turns and looks to help by the foul line since their offensive player is trailing behind the ball. This is an effective strategy when a team uses a non-ball-handler as an inbounder player.



### Fullback Shadow

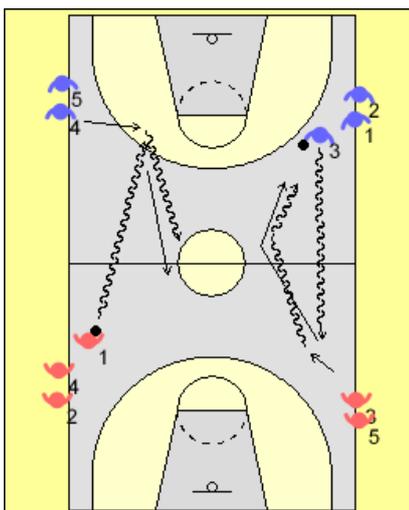
In this example, the trailing defender sprints to the fullback position to assist in stopping the ball; going inside to a dominant post player or to clog the lane to prevent penetration.



### Break Out Dribbles

One of the biggest weaknesses of this type of defensive strategy is the use of the break-out dribble by the rebounder. Many teams deploy a player to jam (this is usually the player closest to the defensive rebounder) the rebounder to prevent a quick outlet pass or dribble. If a team gets the quick breakout it can often create as advantage as with long rebounds from a three-point shot it is often more difficult to jam.

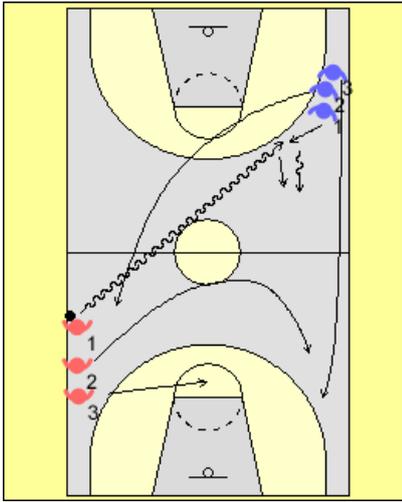
The following are drills to teach players beneficial concepts for playing transition defence. All players take part in all positions.



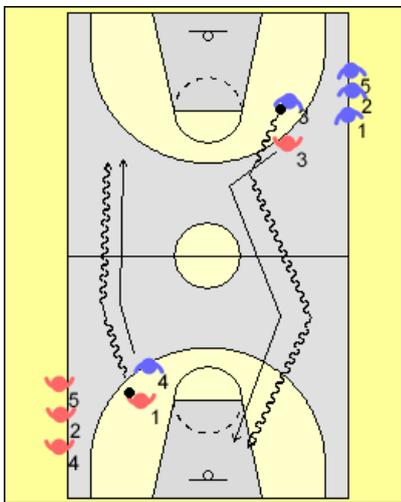
### Containing the Ball

A key concept in any transition defence is to contain the ball; which is very difficult in the open court. It is important for the first line defender to make the ball move to a certain area of the floor (generally the sideline). Instant ball pressure also prevents the player from making an easy pass up the floor; especially the long cross-court pass that forces the most rotation by the defence.

The players form four lines near the hash marks. The player with the ball dribbles hard to a specific spot and sets the ball down. This player is now the short safety who must funnel the ball to the sideline. The player on the other side picks up the ball and becomes the offensive player. They play one-on-one to the far basket.

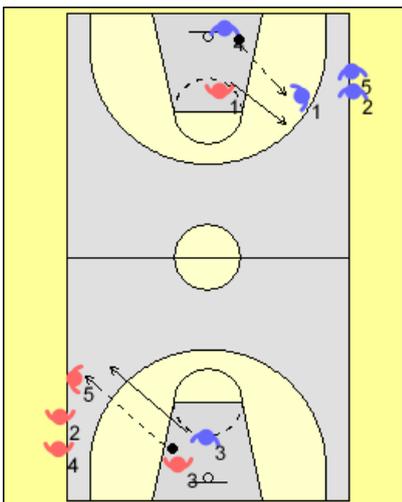


In this drill, the defensive team does a dribble-up and sets the ball down. The offensive team breaks as the ball is being dribbled. The coach may blow a whistle to indicate when the ball has to be set down.

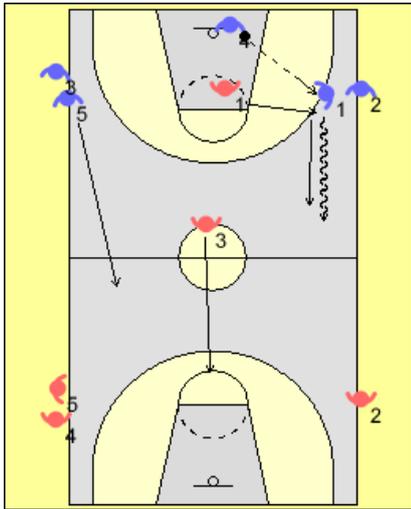


### Full-court one-on-one with Transition Defence

To load the drill, the players form a line along the sideline and are restricted to an area where they can play one-on-one.

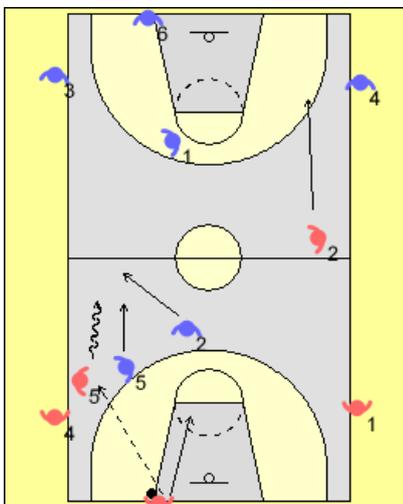
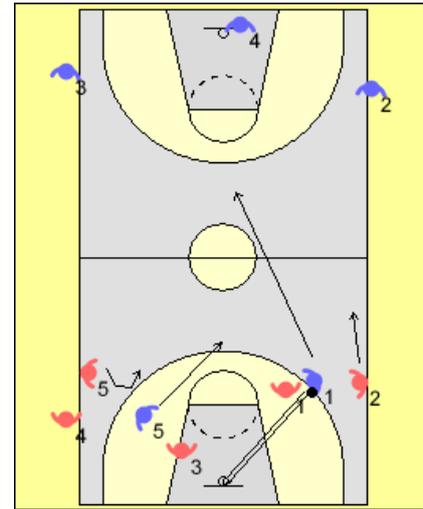


When the defender gains possession of the ball off a turnover, made or missed shot they pass the ball to the next player in line. The offensive player must quickly go from offence to defence. The drill can be loaded by allowing a break-out dribble to put more pressure on the defender.



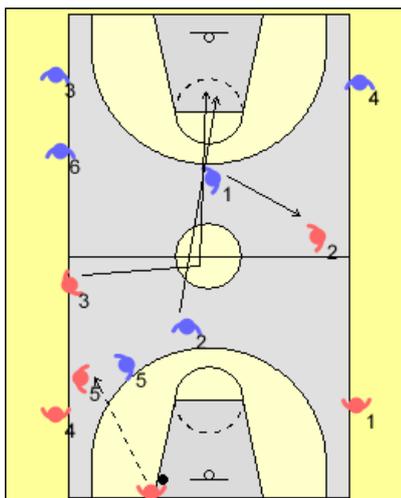
### Two-on-two Continuous Transition Defence

In this drill, when the defence gets the ball it is passed to the next two offensive players. The two players who were on offence must quickly become the long and short safety. The players who were on defence fill in as the next substitutes.



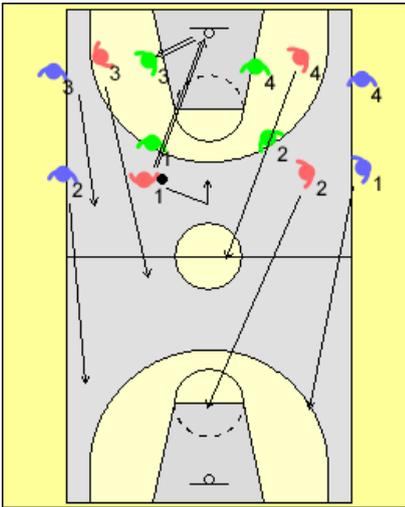
### Three-on-three Continuous Transition Defence – Loaded

The third player is standing out of bounds ready to inbound the ball to allow the team to practice the shadow technique. The player guarding the inbound player can stop and help since they are trailing.



### Release

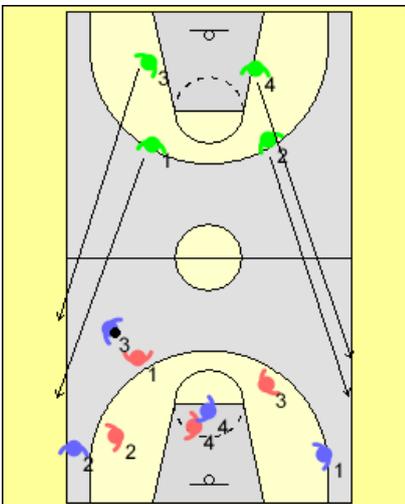
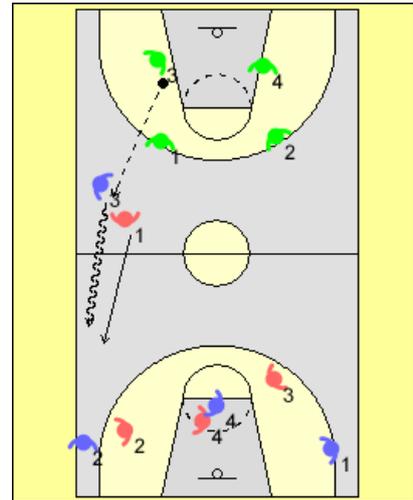
By placing the third offensive player up the floor the defence is forced to practice the release technique as this offensive player runs to the basket. This player must run through the center circle to simulate a first “big.” The long safety cannot give up the basket until the other player releases. It is important to note that all of these drills are continuous.



### Four-on-four-on-four Transition Defence

This drill requires 12 players that will provide conditioning from contact movement.

When the team on offence gives up the ball, they must quickly match the team that is out of bounds.



The defensive team must sprint the floor to set-up in the spots out of bounds when ball possession changes. Players will cheat if they are not directed to certain spots on the floor.

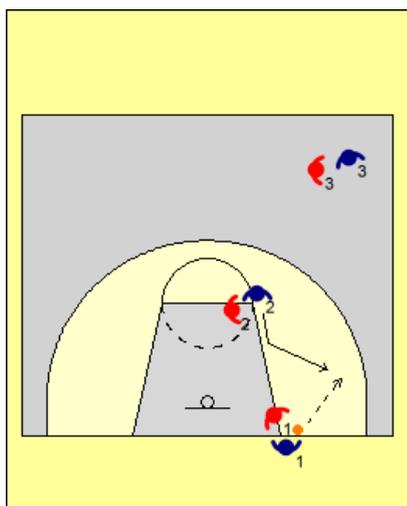
A way of keeping score is to record the number of score-stop-scores a team can string together.

# PRESSURE DEFENCE

---

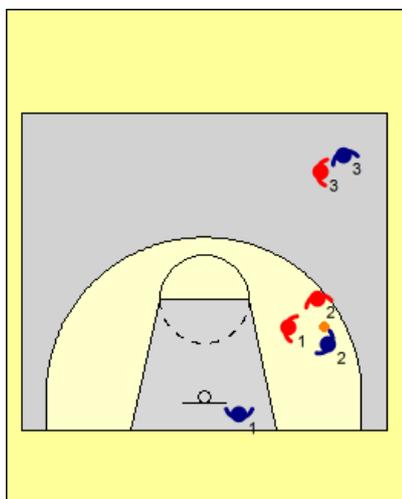
## Defending the Dead Ball in Full-court Defence

The following baseball terms can help players understand the different ways to defend the ball when it is being inbounded. It is great to use when playing three-on-three in the full-court. By using these concepts it helps the players become better at attacking and applying pressure as they learn the strengths and weakness of each method. When teaching progresses into time-and-score situations, players are able to simulate different late-game situations easily. These concepts are the foundation of building all person-to-person and zone presses. It is important to note the same concepts can be used when defending a front-court inbounding situation.



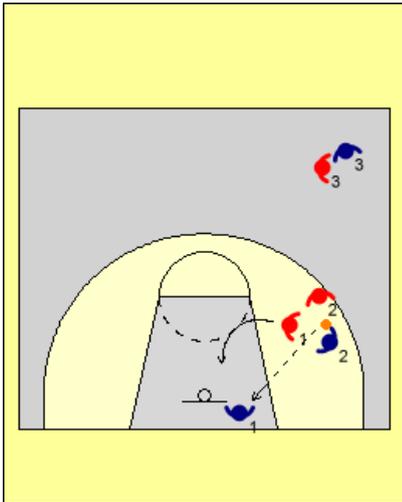
### Catcher

The player inbounding the ball represents home plate. The defender closest to the plate is designated the catcher (*Red Player One*). The pressure should be on the inbounding player with a slight angle to encourage the pass to the corner. The other defenders deny any cuts to the middle and do not let their check go long.



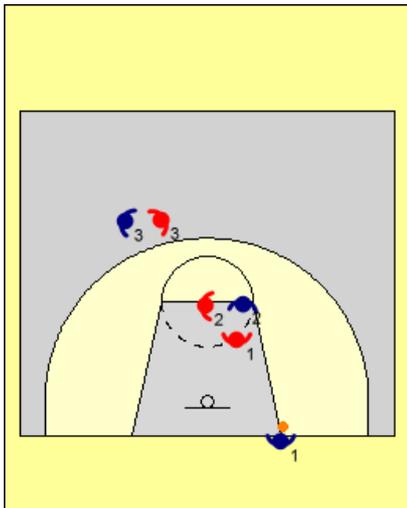
If the catcher can get to the first pass in one or two slides they players should look to trap. The other defender prevents the ball-handler from going up the slide line and allows the pass backwards to the inbounding player.

The catcher works very well against teams that have one dominant ball-handler. It is also effective when teams put a non-ball-handler as the inbounding player.



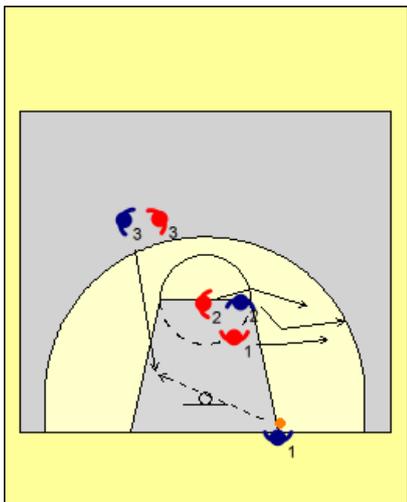
On the return pass the player guarding the ball-handler must to cut to prevent the quick dribble up the middle. It is important not to allow the player who was double-teamed to get the ball back.

From an offensive perspective, the best way to beat this concept is to throw long over the top or to have the inbounder be a ball-handler who can take the ball against pressure.



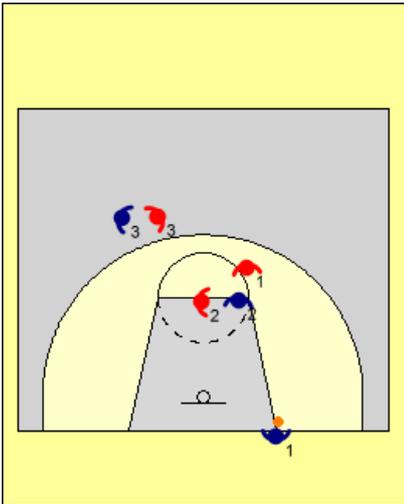
### Shortstop

In shortstop, the defender of the inbounder face-guards the best ball-handler of the opponent. The other defenders prevent the ball going long or to the middle.



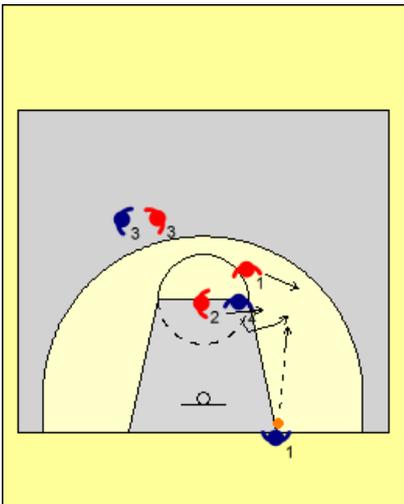
The intent is to force someone else to have to catch the ball and bring it up the floor.

The best way to beat shortstop is to throw long over the top or to have the inbounder pass the ball in quickly and sprint up the floor for a return pass before their check can recover.



### Right/Left Field

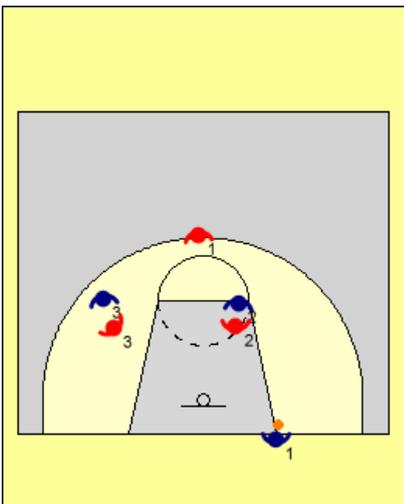
In right field, the defender of the inbounding player plays behind the best ball-handler. The other players prevent the cut long or to the middle.



With this concept, the player is allowed to cut to the corner to catch the ball. If the ball-handler tries to dribble quickly up the floor, the defender is there to slow them down.

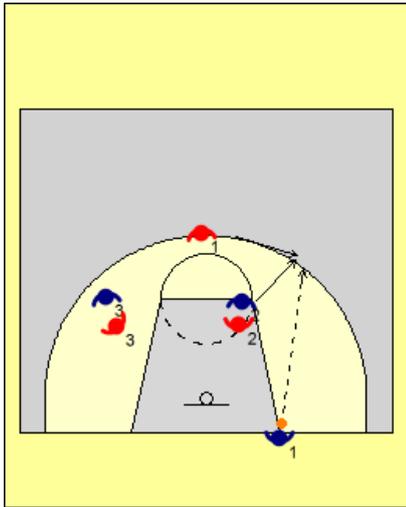
This is a good way to slow down the opponent who wants to go quickly after inbounding. As long as the inbounding player stays behind the ball, their defender can shadow the ball and slow down its progress.

The best way to beat this is to have the inbounding player clear up the floor quickly after inbounding.



### Centre Field

In this situation the defender of the inbounding player plays behind the players who are the primary receivers. The other players guard the belly button and deny the cuts to the ball.



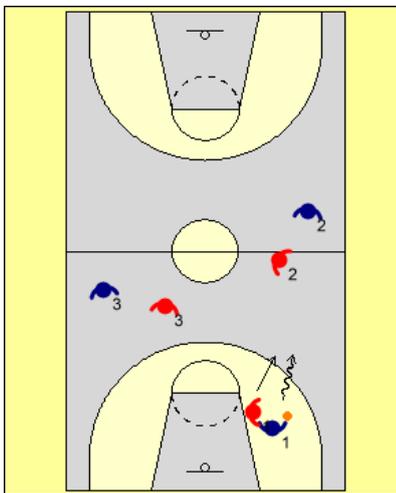
If the inbound player tries to go long, the centre fielder is there to intercept.

This works best when trying to get a five-second count or if the other team is unable to throw long.

From an offensive perspective, the best way to beat this concept is to use a formation where more than one player can go long.

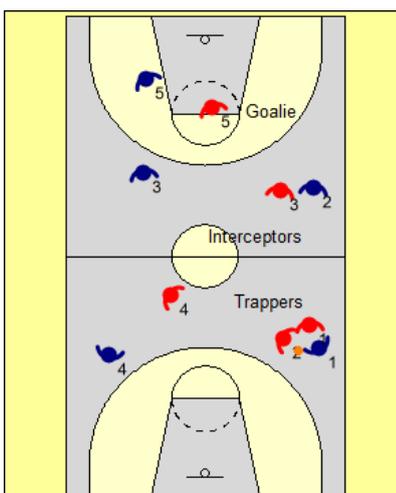
## CONCEPTS OF PRESSURE DEFENCE

These concepts apply to person-to-person and zone pressure.



### Forcing the Ball

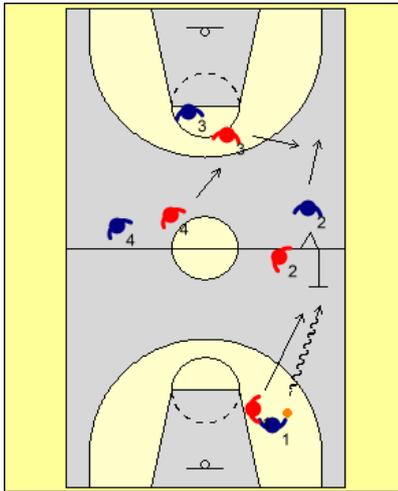
In most pressure situations, the intent is to force the ball to a specific position on the floor; preferably having the ball-handler dribble to the sideline. Some presses may force the player to dribble with a weak hand and to force the ball across half at the sideline.



### Trappers, Interceptors and Goalie

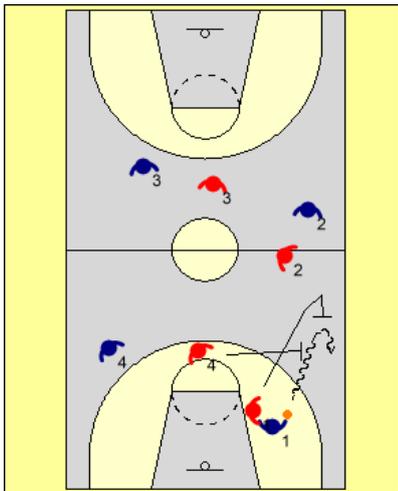
Whenever a trap occurs players assume the following roles:

- Trappers – these are the two defensive players in the trap. They are putting pressure on the ball but should not reach and foul. Turnovers usually come from the deflection of a pass.
- Interceptors – these are the two player who have positioned themselves in the passing lanes of the next logical pass receivers. They usually are defending one-and-a half players.
- Goalie – this player protects the basket. In extreme cases a coach may decide to play with three interceptors and no goalie.



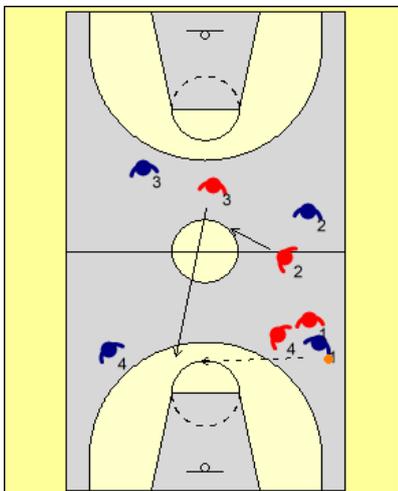
### Strong-Side Traps

A good time to set a strong-side trap is when the dribbler is dribbling out of control, has just crossed half-court or the trapper can get in position in two steps. Following, the other players look to rotate.



### Blind Side Traps

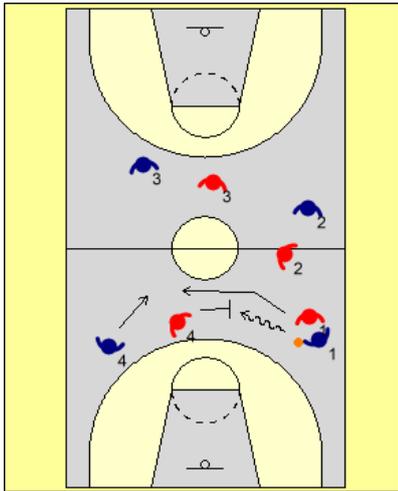
Blind side traps are very effective against a weak ball-handler. The player guarding the dribbler forces them to the sideline and then tries to cut them off. The next closest player in the middle runs a “fire” (this is an example of a verbal cue the defence can use to signal a trap). The trapper must anticipate the spin dribble or a back pivot.



### Shoot the Gap

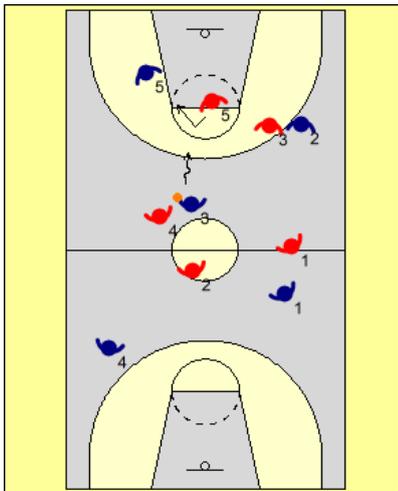
When a fire is called, the next player on the help side looks to rotate up and shoot the gap between the next offensive player. A player on the ball-side must fake at the ball-handler, trying to slow them down. It is rare to blind side trap in half-court person-to-person defence.

In some presses coaches may want to allow the pass back. This type of press is trying to slow the offence down and waste time. It also effective when the player trailing is not a good ball-handler.



### Ball in the Middle

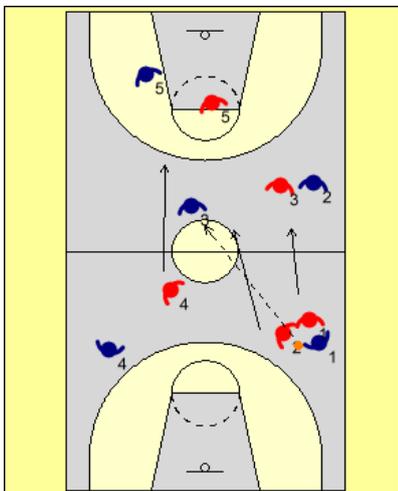
When the ball gets into the middle it is important not to allow the dribbler to split two defensive players. The defence can jump-switch to slow down the ball or fake recover to encourage a pass back out to the wing.



### Fake Recover (Stunt)

When caught as the last defender protecting the basket, the goalie wants to fake at the ball-handler and then recover to the offensive player closest to the basket. The hope is that this will slow down the offensive player or create a bad pass.

Fake recovers or stunts can also be used by a strong-side defender to fake a strong-side trap.



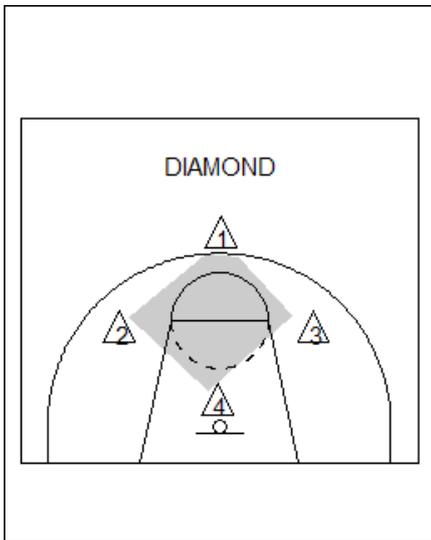
### Sprint out of traps

When the ball is passed out of a trap, all players must sprint to recover and get in front of the ball.

# ZONE DEFENCE

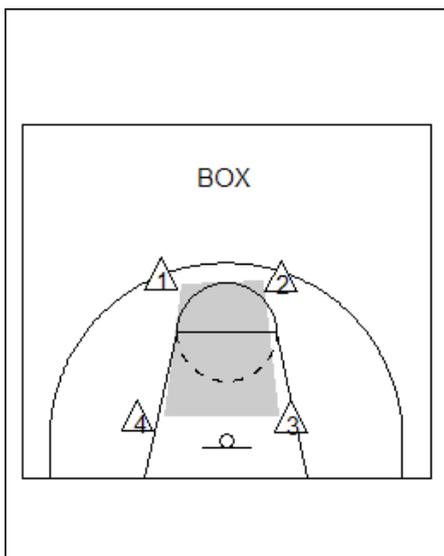
---

What follows is a conceptual approach to teaching zone defence.

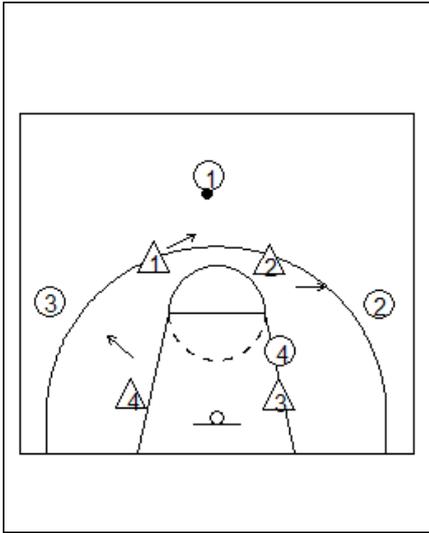


## Conceptual Zone

The defence can either be in a diamond shape (a one-front defence) or a box (an even-front defence).

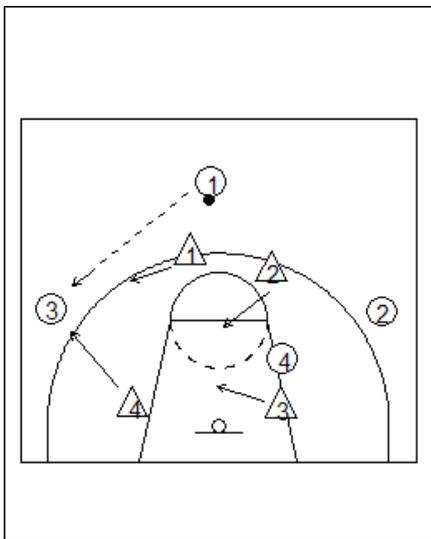


## Box formation with an even two player front



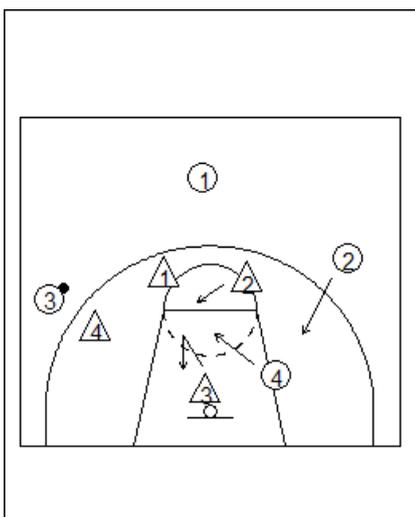
### 1. Match the ball

Someone must be designated the ball which allows the other players to establish their roles. This does not mean that the defender must run out of position to guard the ball but helps everyone else know what their roles are on the next pass.



### 2. Move on the Air Time of the Ball

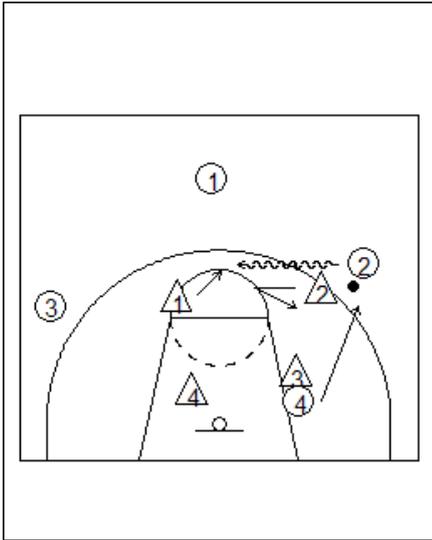
As a pass is made, the defence moves while the ball is in the air calling "ball." The other players match appropriately. This concept is the same with person-to-person defence.



### 3. Passing on Cutters

Offences use cutters to disrupt a zone and therefore the defence must front the cutter to a certain point and pass the cutter on to the next defender.

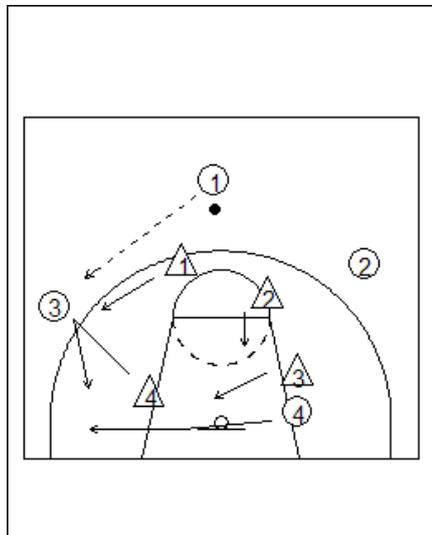
*Defender Three fronts Player Four and then passes them on to Defender Two. Defender Three must recover to prevent Player Two from back-cutting into the space vacated by Player Four.*



#### 4. Passing on Dribblers

This concept similar to passing on cutters where if the defender stays too long the zone is vulnerable to dribble pulls.

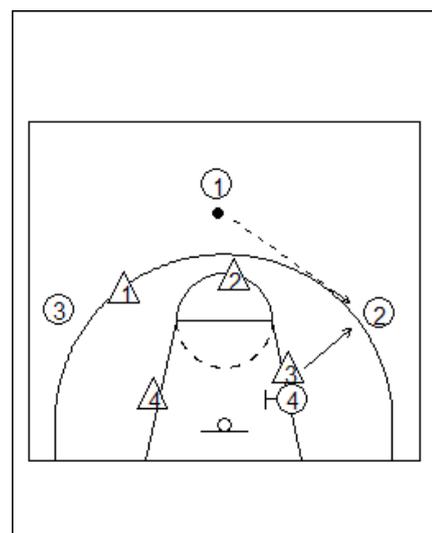
*Defender Two* must pass *Player Two* onto *Defender One* and recover back to *Player Four* filling the vacated space.



#### 5. Bump Move

It is important to work on bump moves against teams that employ baseline runners or overloads.

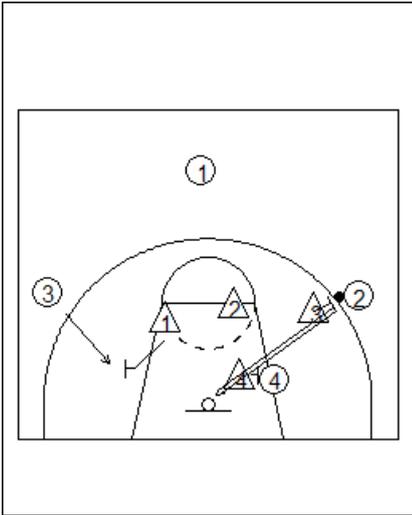
*Defender Four* moves to *Player Three* and then is bumped back by *Defender One* so they can cover *Player Four* (the runner).



#### 6. Sit on Top of Screens

Players cannot get sealed or screened by the zone. The players can “sit” above so they can go in either direction.

*Defender Three* sits on top of the screen near *Player Four* to cover *Player Two* after a pass.



## 7. Box Out

The biggest weakness of a zone is defensive board coverage. All players must become involved, especially the guards at the top. If a team sends a player back as a safety, the guard must get involved in rebounding.

\* "TERNION was created with the athlete in mind. Today's athletes face many obstacles both physically and mentally. TERNION will address these obstacles with innovative and revolutionary ideas, thus bringing the athlete into balance with mind, body, and sport. We will teach, direct, assist, empower and motivate our athletes. TERNION uses athletic performance science for the purpose of injury prevention, efficiency of movement mechanics and overall performance enhancements metrics. TERNION will empower and motivate clients toward maximizing their universal athletic potential. Our real life experiences, positive solutions, and truthful feedback give our athletes an environment that is conducive for a legacy of success"

## GLOSSARY

**Attack Dribble** – dribbling to the basket and getting into the key or paint.

**Centre Screen** – screen on the person in the middle or centre of the zone defence.

**Drop Pivot** – same as a reverse pivot or back pivot.

**Euro Step (power step)** – the act of completing a two-foot stop and stepping by the defender.

**Flare Screen** – the screener has their back to the corner and the cutter is cutting to the wing to catch a skip pass.

**Freeze Dribble** – the act of dribbling directly at a defender to make them "freeze."

**Lateral Dribble** – the act of moving laterally to influence a defender to move out of position.

**Odd/Even Front Zone** – One-three-one, one-two-two or three-two are be odd front zones (one defender) and two-one-two, two-three or two-two-one are even front zones.

**Pocket Pass** – the ball is at hip level and mimics a pass from the pocket of a pair of pants.

**Russian Spot (or short corner)** – this is location just outside the key on the baseline and is an excellent place to attack a zone.

**Splits the Defence** – to dribble or cut between two defenders; usually happens when the help is late.