



Special Olympics

BASKETBALL COACHING GUIDE

Teaching Basketball Skills



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Warm-up

A warm-up period is the first part of every training session or preparation for competition. The warm-up starts slowly and systematically and gradually involves all muscles and body parts that prepare the athlete for training and competition. In addition to preparing the athlete mentally, warming up also has several physiological benefits:

- Raises body temperature
- Increases metabolic rate
- Increases heart and respiratory rate
- Prepares the muscles and nervous system for exercise

The warm-up is tailored for the activity to follow. Warm-ups consist of active motion leading up to more vigorous motion to elevate heart, respiratory and metabolic rates. The total warm-up period takes approximately 1/3 of the training session and immediately precedes the training or competition. A warm-up period will include the following basic sequence and components:

Activity	Purpose	Time
Slow aerobic jog	Heat muscles	3-5 minutes
Stretching	Increase range of movement	5-10 minutes
Event specific drills	Coordination preparation for training/competition	5-10 minutes

Jogging

Jogging is the first exercise of an athlete's routine. Athletes begin warming the muscles by jogging slowly for 3-5 minutes. This circulates the blood through all the muscles, thus providing them greater flexibility for stretching. A jog should start out slowly, and then gradually increase in speed to its completion; however, the athlete should never reach even 50% of maximum effort by the end of the jog. Remember, the sole objective of this phase of the warm-up is circulating the blood.

Stretching

Stretching is one of the most critical parts of the warm-up and an athlete's performance. A more flexible muscle is a stronger and healthier muscle. A stronger and healthier muscle responds better to exercise and activities and helps prevent injury. Please refer to Stretching within this section for more in-depth information.

Event Specific Drills

Drills are progressions of learning that start at a low ability level, advance to an intermediate level and, finally, reach a high ability level. Encourage each athlete to advance to his/her highest possible level.

Kinesthetic movements are reinforced through repetitions of a small segment of the skill to be performed. Many times, the actions are exaggerated in order to strengthen the muscles that perform the skill. Each coaching session should take the athlete through the entire progression so that he/she is exposed to the total of all of the skills that make up an event.

Basketball Warm-up Activities

Arm Circles

1. Hold arms out to sides at shoulder height.
2. Make 15 small circles rotating arms forward.
3. Stop, then repeat arm circles by rotating arms backward 15 times.



Footwork

1. Jog for 2 minutes.
2. Perform fundamental footwork skills such as Agility Footwork Activities (Page 49) down the court and back.
3. Combine running forward and backward, sliding, hopping, skipping, jumping, cutting, pivoting and stopping for 2-3 minutes.

Dribbling

Bend over, keep Head Up and Protect the ball with opposite-to-dribbling arm.

1. Dribble the ball with one hand 10 times.
2. Change to the other hand and dribble the ball 10 times.
3. Alternate hands (right-left-right-left) and dribble the ball 10 times.
4. Dribble the ball around and alternating each leg (in a figure “8”) 10 times.

Key Words

➤ Head Up, Protect



Partner Passing

Partners stand 2 meters apart with one ball between them.

1. Pass the ball back and forth, working on good form (Step And Push).
2. Make 10 bounce passes.
3. Make 10 passes in the air.

Key Words

➤ Step, Push





Shooting

Each athlete has a ball.

1. Place ball in proper hand position.
2. Bend and shoot ball overhead – Follow Through directly overhead.
3. Shoot 10 times to oneself and/or to partner or wall.
4. Move to basket and shoot 10 short bank shots (inside the lane at the block).

Key Words

- Follow Through

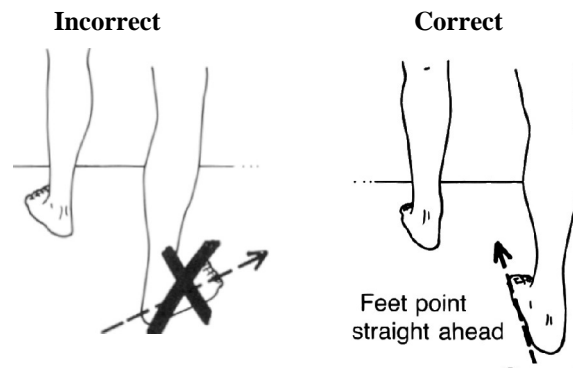




Stretching

Flexibility is a major element to an athlete's optimal performance in both training and competing. Flexibility is achieved through stretching, a critical component in warming up. Stretching follows an easy aerobic jog at the start of a training session or competition.

1. Begin with an easy stretch to the point of tension, and hold this position for 15-30 seconds until the pull lessens. When the tension eases, slowly move further into the stretch, stretching until tension is again felt. Hold this new position for an additional 15 seconds. Each stretch should be repeated four to five times on each side of the body.
2. It is important to continue to breathe while stretching. As you lean into the stretch, exhale. Once the stretching point is reached, keep inhaling and exhaling while holding the stretch. Stretching should be a part of everyone's daily life. Regular, daily stretching has been demonstrated to have the following effects:
 - Increase the length of the muscle-tendon unit
 - Increase joint range of motion
 - Reduce muscle tension
 - Develop body awareness
 - Promote increased circulation
 - Make you feel good
3. Some athletes, such as those with Down Syndrome, may have low muscle tone that makes them appear more flexible. Be careful to not allow these athletes to stretch beyond a normal, safe range. Several stretches are dangerous to perform for all athletes, and should never be part of a safe stretching program. Unsafe stretches include the following:
 - Neck Backward Bending
 - Trunk Backward BendingInstead, try "Look to the right; then look to the left."
4. Stretching is effective only if the stretch is performed accurately. Athletes need to focus on correct body positioning and alignment. Take the calf stretch, for example. Many athletes do not keep the feet forward, in the direction that they are stretching.





5. Another common mistake that athletes make when stretching is bending the back in an attempt to get a better stretch from the hips. An example is a simple sitting forward leg stretch.

Incorrect



Correct

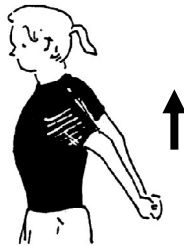


6. As you can imagine, there are a host of stretches and variations of them to achieve your goals. However, we will focus on some basic stretches highlighting major muscle groups. In addition, we will also have some reminders to keep breathing while stretching. We will start at the top of the body and work our way to the legs and feet.



Upper Body

Chest Opener



Clasp hands behind back
Palms facing in
Push hands toward sky

Triceps Stretch



Raise arms over head
Bring hand to back
Pull slightly on bent elbow

Side Arm Stretch



Raise arms over head
Clasp hands, palms facing up
Push hands toward sky

Side Stretch



Raise arms over head
Clasp forearms
Bend to one side

Shoulder Triceps Stretch



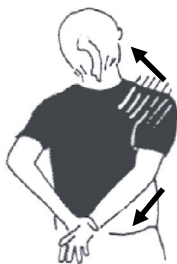
Take elbow into hand
Pull to opposite shoulder

Shoulder Triceps w/ Neck Twist



Take elbow into hand
Pull to opposite shoulder
Turn head away from elbow

Neck-Shoulder Stretch



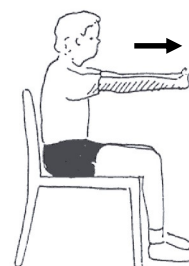
Hands behind back
Clasp wrist, pull arm down
Bend neck to opposite side

Trunk Twist



Stand with back to wall
Turn, reach palms to wall

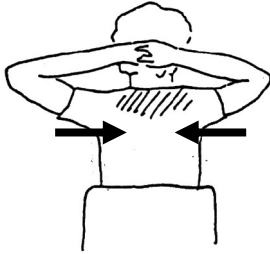
Forearm Stretch



Clasp hands in front of you
Palms out
Push out, away from body



Chest Stretch



Clasp hands behind neck
Push elbows back

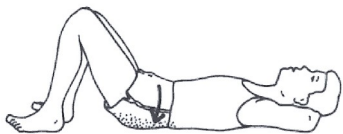


Side view



Low Back & Glutes

Low Back Tilts



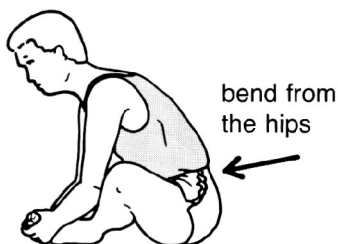
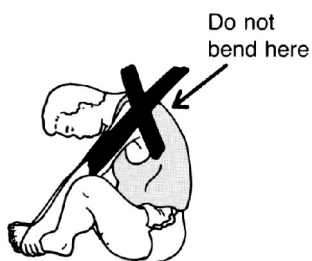
Lie on back, knees bent
Flatten small of back to ground

Full Body Stretch



Lie on back, legs straight out
Reach out with both legs and arms

Groin Stretch



Sit, bottoms of feet touching
Hold feet/ankles
Bend forward from hips

Supine Hamstring Stretch

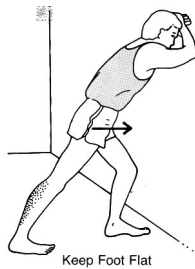


Lie on back, legs outstretched
Alternating legs, bring legs to chest
Bring both legs towards chest



Lower Body

Calf Stretch



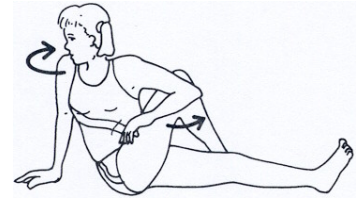
Stand facing wall/fence
Bend forward leg slightly
Bend ankle of back leg

Calf Stretch w/Bent Knee



Bend both knees to ease strain

Side Hamstring Twist

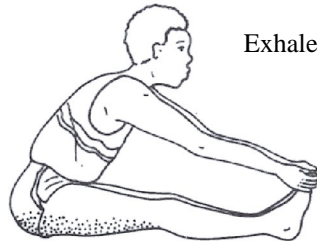


Sitting, bring one leg over knee of other
Push bent leg with opposite elbow
Turn head in opposite direction

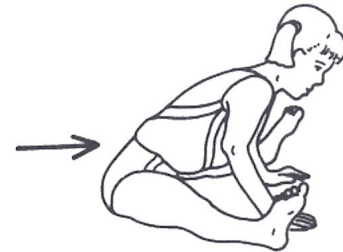
Hamstring Stretch



Legs straight out and together
Leg are not locked
Bend at hips, reach toward ankle



As flexibility increases, reach toward feet
Push out toward heels, forcing toes to the sky



Seated Straddle Stretch

Legs straddled, bend at hips
Reach out toward the middle
Keep the back straight

Hurdle Stretch



Correct alignment of lead leg is important in hurdle stretch whether you are a hurdler or not. The foot must be aligned in the forward direction of running.

Sit with legs outstretched, bend knee with bottom of foot touching opposite thigh
Toes of the straight leg are toward sky
Bend at hips in nice easy stretch



Step Ups



Step onto support, with bent leg
Push hips in toward support

Standing Hamstring Stretch



Rest heel of foot on support
Push chest-shoulders in and up

Ankle Rotations



Sitting, hold foot and ankle
Rotate ankle in both direction



Stretching - Quick Reference Guidelines

Start Relaxed

- Do not begin until athletes are relaxed and muscles are warm

Be Systematic

- Start at the top of body and work your way down

Progress from General to Specific

- Start general, then move into event specific exercises

Easy Stretching before Developmental

- Make slow, progressive stretches
- Do not bounce or jerk to stretch farther

Use Variety

- Make it fun, work same muscle using different exercises

Breathe Naturally

- Do not hold breath, stay calm and relaxed

Allow for Individual Differences

- Athletes start and progress at different levels

Stretch Regularly

- Always include in warm-up and cool-down
- Stretch while at home also



Using Plyometrics in Basketball Training

Plyometrics

Part of Speech: *noun*

Definition: a type of exercise using explosive movements to develop muscular power, esp. bounding, hopping, and jumping

Source: *Webster's New Millennium™ Dictionary of English, Preview Edition (v 0.9.6)*
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Basketball players might benefit from plyometric exercise to improve agility, speed, vertical leap and/or general body awareness and control.

1. You do not need to schedule specific workouts emphasizing plyometric training. For basketball players, plyometric drills can be incorporated after the warm-up and preceding the main body of training. These drills should emphasize a full and smooth range of motion. Use the pre-stretch of the muscle to facilitate rapid movement, mechanical efficiency and coordination.
2. As with other types of training, plyometric exercises are performed in intervals over the course of the season. Volume and intensity will vary over the course of the season. In general, the volume of plyometric exercises for basketball players will be low to moderate. The intensity also will be low to moderate.
3. Begin each season with a gentle introduction to plyometric training using simple rhythm drills. As your athletes become accustomed to the exercises and their fitness grows, gradually increase volume and intensity.
4. Once athletes have learned basic rhythm skills, slowly introduce power exercises. Basketball players will employ a small volume of power drills combined with rhythm exercises.
5. As the competition phase of the season begins, plyometric work stresses rhythm and speed development. Once the peak competition phase starts, reduce plyometric training to one light session per week, though your athlete can continue to include plyometric drills in the warm-up. Stop any strenuous plyometric training 7-10 days before playoffs begin.

Rhythm Drills

Rhythm drills are a good method to help players develop strength through plyometrics. These drills usually follow stretching and flexibility exercises, and are done in conjunction with strength exercises, such as sit-ups and lunges. In addition, rhythm drills help players enhance both overall fitness and specific muscle development.

Types of Rhythm Drills used in Basketball Training

1. Skipping – Easy
2. Skipping – High
3. Skipping Kicks
4. Butt Kicks
5. High Knees



Butt Kicks

Butt kicks are a universal drill throughout sport. They are a great drill used in basketball training to help athletes develop those fast-twitch muscles needed for the constant starting, stopping, pivoting and turning required in basketball.



While doing butt kicks, the back is straight with a slight forward body lean. The body lean is natural as the player would assume while running.

Remember, arms are legs higher up. Encourage your athletes to keep pumping and driving them throughout the drill.



Emphasize quickness in bringing the heels to the buttocks, not in moving up the basketball court. You can even have your athletes practice the drill while stationary and add movement once they have mastered it to the best of their ability.



Aerobic Fitness for Basketball Players

Basketball requires running for extended periods of time; therefore, your players must be able to produce energy aerobically. However, although basketball players need to be aerobically fit, they do not need to be distance runners. Be balanced in your approach to fitness. Set standards, yet do not place fitness ahead of the ultimate goal of developing good basketball players and a good basketball team. A fit, skilled team is much more powerful than a fit, unskilled team. Aerobic fitness has three primary benefits::

1. Creates good cardiovascular capacity and strengthens muscles and tendons
2. Allows players to run at a steady pace without incurring oxygen debt, getting really tired and being unable to recover
3. Allows your players to recover quickly from short sprints, making them more effective in the game

Aerobic fitness is best developed during preseason training. However, if your schedule cannot be extended to include fitness in the preseason, you can integrate fitness exercises and activities into your weekly training sessions. This can be achieved through steady pace runs, ball skill drills or fitness circuits. For more information on general fitness, please refer to the Athlete Nutrition, Fitness and Safety section in the general coaching section.

Sample Aerobic Fitness Activities

Steady Pace Runs

These runs are slow, continuous long-distance running. They can last for 20-30 minutes. You can add variety to these runs by having your players run with the ball through cones and around benches or defenders. Also, encourage athletes to run on their own at home with friends or family. Many families will welcome the invitation to involve siblings or friends in regular jogs.



Anaerobic Fitness for Basketball Players

Basketball demands both aerobic and anaerobic capacity. During games, basketball players must be able to sprint hard, recover quickly and then sprint hard again. Anaerobic training starts once your athletes have developed basic aerobic fitness, because recovery capacity is developed by increasing aerobic fitness. In basketball, the demand for anaerobic speed is relatively short. The important point here is the ability of the player to recover quickly from multiple speed bursts.

Sample Anaerobic Fitness Activities

Fartlek Runs

Fartleks, also known as speed play, are another effective tool for basketball training because they can closely resemble the type of running during the course of a game – varied pace. Fartleks are easy to integrate in a workout. Players can jog around the perimeter of the court, jogging on one side of the court and sprinting on the other side. You can change intensity and variety by jogging two sides and running one side or running two sides and jogging one side, etc. You can mix the jog-sprint sides according to the fitness and ability level of your players.

Another variation is to have the team jog in single file around the outside of the court. At the whistle, the athlete at the back of the line sprints to the front. You can either monitor pace by blowing the whistle at faster intervals, or simply let the team monitor pace by letting the back runner know when his or her predecessor has reached the front of the line.

Shuttle Runs

Shuttle runs are a staple in basketball training. Essentially, shuttle runs are repetition or interval runs that involve numerous changes of direction. You can change the following sample shuttle run to meet the needs of your players. Just remember to keep the basics in mind when developing the run: athlete ability and fitness level.

1. Run to foul line and back
2. Run half court and back
3. Run to opposite foul line and back
4. Run to opposite base line and back
5. Repeat 3-4 times



Strength Training in Basketball

Strength training is important for basketball players. The basic elements of speed, mobility and endurance are all functions of muscular strength. According to the President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports, improvements in absolute muscular endurance, motor ability and athletic abilities are directly associated with an individual's muscular strength.

Strength training for basketball usually has two purposes:

1. Improving overall strength
2. Developing muscle balance and preventing athlete injury

Basketball requires significant anaerobic energy, which is directly related to muscle strength. Therefore, a muscle with greater strength can respond better to challenges without incurring extreme fatigue and requiring a longer recovery period. Basically, strength training improves an athlete's ability to run fast and produce anaerobic energy. Basketball players need to be able to run fast, sometimes very fast.

The following basic strength training routine can be accomplished outside of the weight room and easily incorporated into an athlete's home training program. For more information on circuit and fitness training, please review the Athlete Nutrition, Safety and Fitness section in the general coaching section.

Sample Strength Training Routine

1. Light running to warm up
2. Push-ups
3. Lunges
4. Sit-ups – crunches
5. Medicine-ball throws (please refer to Athlete Nutrition, Safety and Fitness section for medicine-ball throw exercises)
 - Overhead Toss
 - Forward Toss
 - Side Toss
 - Straight Arm Forward Toss to Partner

Push-Ups

Push-Ups – Up Position



- Make sure your athletes fully extend their arms in the start position, with a straight back. They can help keep a straight back by squeezing their abdominal muscles.

Push-Ups – Down Position



- When athletes are in the down position, they want their elbows to be parallel with their shoulders.

Push-Ups with a Clap



- For variety and increased intensity, add a clap to the push-up exercise. This can help athletes test themselves and each other while working hard, yet still have fun.



Lunges

90-degree angle, thigh parallel to ground



Explode off the ground, pushing up strong from the ground



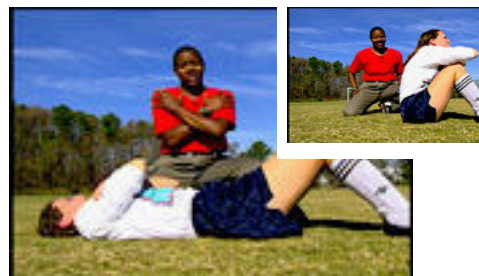
Sit-Ups

Sit-Ups – Hands Behind Neck (up position)



- Here the athlete squeezed the abdominals coming up, pulling with the elbows. Next time, we want to work on keeping the elbows straight out to the sides and parallel to the ground.

Sit-Ups – Crossed on Shoulders



- To reduce strain on the neck, athletes can place their hands on their opposite shoulders. As long as they are squeezing the abdominals, they are achieving the same intended result – stronger stomach muscles.



Basketball Individual Skills Competition

The **Ten Meter Dribble**, **Target Pass** and **Spot Shot** events make up the Individual Skills Contest (ISC). The individual skills competition is designed for low-ability athletes who have not yet mastered the skills needed to participate meaningfully in team basketball. The ISC is not meant to be an additional medal opportunity for athletes already involved in team play. Each event challenges the athlete to perform skills without the pressure of a defender.

Athlete Readiness

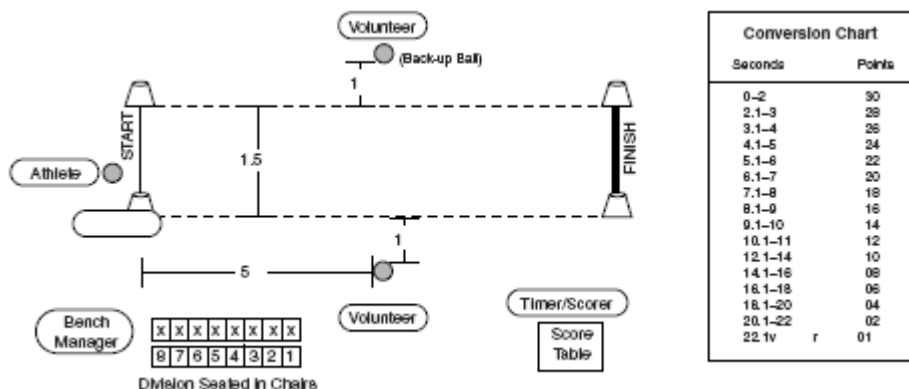
- Athlete can dribble the ball.
- Athlete can pass the ball to a target.
- Athlete can catch the ball.
- Athlete can shoot the ball at a basket of regulation height.

Ten Meter Dribble

In the Ten Meter Dribble, the athlete dribbles the ball one-handed for 10 meters (32 feet, 10 inches). The athlete must also catch the ball after he or she crosses the finish line.

Teaching the Ten Meter Dribble

1. Review the dribbling skill using proper form while dribbling in place (ball at the side of the body).
2. Direct the athlete to walk forward as he/she continues dribbling the ball. The coach walks alongside, verbally encouraging and physically and verbally prompting when necessary.
3. Play "Follow the Leader: The athlete follows the coach as they dribble the ball ten meters. Encourage the athlete to keep the ball low and close and to keep head up.
4. Set up the Ten Meter Dribble event. Walk the lane with the athlete from start to finish.
5. Direct the athlete to dribble the ball within the lane boundaries from start to finish, with the coach walking alongside. Reinforce staying within the boundaries and catching the ball once past the finish line.
6. The coach now stands just beyond the finish line, encouraging the athlete at the start line to dribble toward the coach.
7. Conduct the Ten Meter Dribble. The coach stands at the side and times the athlete from start to finish. Reinforce staying within the boundaries and catching the ball when past the finish line.
8. Gradually remove the prompts.



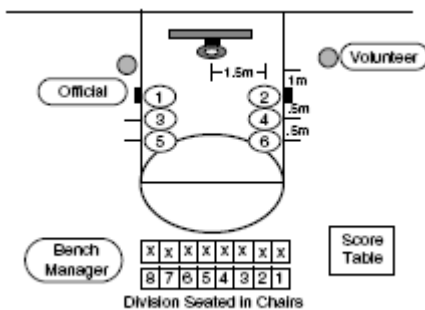


Spot Shot

In the Spot Shot, the athlete attempts two shots from six pre-determined spots. Three spots are to the left of the basket; three additional spots are to the right of the basket (basically the places around the “lane” occupied by players while a free throw is being shot). The athlete receives points for hitting the net, backboard and rim as well as making the basket.

Teaching the Spot Shot

1. Place the hands in proper shooting position: two-handed set shot or one-handed shot.
2. Review the shot with proper form as the athlete shoots to himself/herself and then to the coach. The coach physically prompts hand and body position. Take five shots.
3. Take a position at spot #1, which is one of the two shortest shots in front and to the side the basket. The athlete bends the knees and extends using the legs to initiate the shot. Focus on the top corner of backboard’s square as the target. Reinforce powering from the legs and reaching for the corner or the target on the backboard.
4. As the athlete develops strength and the ability to shoot the ball, gradually move from spot. Acknowledge a successful attempt if the net, rim or backboard are hit. Make scoring a basket exciting. Provide lots of high fives.
5. Conduct the Spot Shot.
6. Gradually remove the prompts.



Key Words

- Bend and Extend
- Power From the Legs
- Reach For the Basket

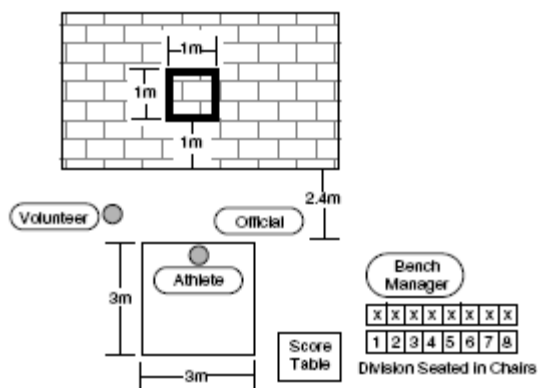


Target Pass

In the Target Pass, the athlete passes the ball to a target that is 2.4 meters (7 feet) away. The athlete receives points according to the accuracy of his or her pass and a catch or trap.

Teaching the Target Pass

1. Pick up the ball with proper hand placement (dominant hand on top, other hand on side). Coach can physically prompt as necessary.
2. Push the ball (as in a dribble) forward toward the wall. The athlete is actually performing a bounce pass to the wall. The coach will initially catch the ball as it returns from the wall.
3. Add a step to give more force to the pass as the athlete continues to bounce pass to the wall. Keep hand up and eyes on the ball. The passing hand's palm will provide a target for a catch.
4. Set up the Target Pass, adding the target to the wall. Step and push pass the ball to the target (inside the square), not the floor. Step and Reach For Square. The coach is still catching the ball as it comes off the wall.
5. To work on the catch, face the athlete away from the wall. Physically prompt the catching position – the passing hand's palm faces the coach with fingers up forming a target; other hand is to the side with fingers pointing to the side, and only the thumb is up. Catch a bounce pass – Feel for Ball and Gather It or Relax And Give.
6. Go back to the wall; the athlete passes one ball at a time to the wall, aiming at the target. Encourage the athlete to catch the return or trap the ball against the body or the floor.
7. Gradually remove the prompts.



Key Words

- Step And Reach For The Square
- Relax And Give
- Keep Your Eyes On The Ball
- Look The Ball Into Your Hands

Coaching Tips

- Spend time on each event during each practice. The athlete may be at a different level of progression in each event.
- As the athlete develops skills, gradually remove the prompts but continue reinforcement and acknowledgment.
- Conduct mock competitions throughout the season, and record scores to monitor progress.
- Put these scores on a big chart in the gym so that the athletes can see their progress.



Dribbling

Dribbling is one of the most fundamental skills that must be learned. Not only is it important to learn how to dribble well, but it is also important to know when, and when not, to dribble. To become a good dribbler and ball handler, you must practice dribbling as often as you can, using both hands.

Skill Progression – Dribbling

Your Athlete Can	Never	Sometimes	Often
Attempt to dribble a basketball in any manner	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dribble the ball in any manner at least three bounces in a row	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dribble a ball with one hand more than three bounces in a row while standing in place	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dribble the ball with the opposite hand more than three bounces in a row while standing in place	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dribble the ball with one hand, then the other hand, three bounces in a row each, without stopping, while standing still	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dribble the ball with one hand while walking forward ten steps	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dribble the ball with one hand while running forward 20 steps	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dribble the ball with either hand while moving in any direction (forward, backward or sideways)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dribble the ball with either hand while moving in any direction while protecting the ball from a defender	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Totals			

Teaching the Dribble

Key Words

- Feel for the Ball
- Head Up
- Protect



Faults & Fixes Chart – Dribbling

Error	Correction	Drill/Test Reference
Athlete pushes the ball too far out to make contact on the bounce to continue the dribble.	Start with dribbling in place, controlling the bounce and meeting it with your hand.	Stationary Dribbling
Athlete slaps at the ball at the top of the dribble.	Remember to have your hand low and feel for the ball as it comes back up off the floor.	Stationary Dribbling with partial coach assist. Coach can simulate the ball bounce to help the athlete feel meeting the ball and then pushing rather than slapping it back down.
Athlete watches the ball when dribbling.	Keep your head up and look occasionally for the rim.	Give the athletes a spot on the wall in front of them to focus on.
Athlete doesn't "protect" the ball.	Practice keeping your body between the ball and the defender.	Protect the Ball While Dribbling
Athlete takes too many dribbles.	Push the ball out from the waist more and run after it.	Dribble While Moving or Dribble and Slide
Athlete loses balance on the forward foot, causing the pivot foot to drag (travel).	Hop before you stop and land with feet shoulder width apart, with your head up.	Practice the Bunny Hop!
Athlete dribbles too high or wide to control the ball when changing direction.	Practice dribbling at knee height: stationary and then moving and changing direction.	Dribble and Slide



Coaches' Tips for Basketball – At-A-Glance

Tips for Practice

1. Assist the athletes by letting them put their hands on top of yours to feel the rhythm of dribbling. Start by using guided discovery. Allow the athlete to feel the roundness of the ball, the dimples and the weight. Ask the athletes what the ball feels like.
2. Ask them to drop the ball and catch it. Direct them to place the ball on the floor, the dribbling hand on top, and the other hand to the side and almost under the ball. In this way, when the ball is picked up, it is in proper position for them to begin and continue dribbling.
3. When dribbling the ball, the lower the bounce, the easier the control. Dribble the ball three times and pick it up.
4. Reinforce proper position of hands, head and body.
5. Practice each hand separately. Conduct a mini competition to see if the athletes can keep the ball dribbling for 15, 30, 45 and 60 seconds.



Dribbling Drills

For athletes with lower ability who have little experience dribbling, who dribble a ball with a flat hand or in the palm, or who dribble with two hands on the ball, use the following drills:

Key Words

- Feel for the Ball
- Head Up
- Protect

Stationary Dribbling

Perform while standing in place or simply moving with the ball.

Reps: Three sets of ten dribbles with each hand

Purpose of the Drill

- Develop ability and confidence in dribbling
- Teach athletes that once they catch a ball they have been dribbling, they must pass it

Steps

1. Start dribbling with one hand only and count out loud to ten with the right hand and then to ten with the left hand.
2. If the athlete has to catch the ball with both hands to control it, he or she must then pass it to the coach or another player (this prevents a “double dribble” call)
3. The coach or other player then passes the ball back to the athlete to begin again.
4. This may also be done in a circle with several athletes. Each time an athlete either completes 10 dribbles with each hand OR has to catch the ball with two hands, that athlete passes to another player in the circle.

Stationary Dribbling in Multiple Positions

Perform while standing, then kneeling, and finally sitting.

Reps: Three sets of ten dribbles in each position with each hand

Purpose of the Drill

- Develop ability and confidence in dribbling
- Develop ability to switch hands while dribbling

Steps

1. Start dribbling and count out loud to ten with the right hand and then to ten with the left hand.
2. Then keep dribbling as you kneel on the floor (ten with the right and ten with the left hand).
3. Then move from kneeling to sitting on the floor and count to ten again with each hand.



Dribbling while Moving Forward

Reps: Two round trips; each round trip is from baseline to the far baseline and back

Purpose of the Drill

- Develop skill of controlling and protecting the ball while moving
- As confidence grows, the athlete can add speed to the dribble as well as the skill of stopping

Steps

1. Stand in place and dribble the ball three times.
2. Push the ball slightly forward and walk forward.
3. Keep head and eyes looking forward, not down.
4. Gradually add speed and more forward push to the ball.

Alternate Hands 5-4-3-2-1-Dribble

Reps: Three sets of 5-4-3-2-1 as described below.

Purpose of the Drill

- Practice switching dribbling hands
- Developing body and ball awareness as the ball shifts from side to side

Steps

1. Stand in place and dribble the ball five times.
2. Bounce the ball in front of the body and over to the other hand.
3. Dribble the ball five times with the other hand.
4. Bounce the ball back over to the first hand and perform four dribbles with each hand, without stopping.
5. Repeat the pattern, each time doing one fewer dribble on each side.
6. Once this is mastered, you can have athletes reverse the process and increase the number of dribbles on each side back up to five.

Dribble and Slide

Reps: Two to three rounds of 30-60 seconds per practice

Purpose of the Drill

- Practice dribbling and moving the ball intentionally
- Practice keeping focus on other players instead of the ball while dribbling

Steps

1. Each player has a basketball and lines up with space between players, but so all can see the coach.
2. Players start dribbling in place.
3. The coach now uses arm movements (think airline stewards showing where the exits are on a plane) to direct the group to move left, right, to the back and to the front.
4. For fun, try a diagonal or a snaking pattern back – have fun with the hand signals!
5. Make sure athletes are using correct footwork and are keeping knees bent and heads up.



Mini-Basketball: Dribbling Tag

Reps: Two to three rounds per practice

Purpose of the Drill

- Practice dribbling and protecting the ball
- Practice trying to legally steal the ball from an opponent

Steps

1. The group is divided into no fewer than two teams of two athletes each.
2. Each player has a ball and wears a scrimmage vest for team identification.
3. The area of the court depends upon the size and ability level of the group. The lower the ability level, the fewer the athletes. If there are two athletes, a jump ball circle can be used. If there are four to six athletes, the area inside the three-point arc and baseline can be used.
4. The coach signals the athletes to begin dribbling. Each athlete must keep the ball bouncing and protected while trying to tip an opponent's basketball away or outside the arc and the baseline.
5. If anyone stops his/her dribble, or the basketball goes outside the boundaries, those athletes are out of the game.
6. If a foul occurs, the ball handler stays and continues playing while the opponent is out of the game.
7. Play Dribble Tag for 1-2 minutes.
8. The team with the most athletes left dribbling inside the arc at the end of the time period wins.
9. A best-of-three game series can be played to heighten competition.



Hot Griddle Dribble

Reps: Two trips up and down the length of the court, stopping at the free-throw lines (extended), half court line and base lines.

Purpose of the Drill

- Practice changing from speed dribble to stationary dribble
- Practice keeping balance and setting up fake move or pass from a dribble

Steps

1. Start at the base line and fast-dribble up to the first free-throw line.
2. At that line, stop running and keep the dribble alive.
3. While stationary at the stopping point, start moving your feet quickly up and down, in place (as if on a hot griddle).
4. Hold that movement for 10 seconds and move on to the mid court line and repeat.
5. Repeat again at the other free-throw line and then again at the far baseline.
6. Turn around and repeat on the way back.



Protect the Ball While Dribbling

Reps: Two to three rounds with a coach

Purpose

- Practice dribbling and protecting the ball
- Practice moving while keeping the ball from an opponent

Steps

1. Have athletes work one-on-one with a coach or assistant.
2. Athlete starts dribbling in place.
3. Coach takes the unprotected ball to show what we do NOT want to happen.
4. Coach instructs athlete to keep his/her body between the ball and the defender, with an arm bent to further shield the ball.
5. Now the coach moves around while the athlete continues to dribble, making sure the athlete moves the body to keep it between the ball and the coach.
6. Finally, the athlete is instructed to move forward and back or side to side while keeping the ball protected.





Passing

Skill Progression – Passing

Your Athlete Can	Never	Sometimes	Often
Attempt to pass a basketball	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pass the ball in any manner and in any direction	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pass the ball in any manner to an intended target	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Make a two-handed chest pass in any direction	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Make a two-handed chest pass to an intended target	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Make a bounce pass to an intended target	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Make a two-handed overhead pass to an intended target	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Make a lob pass to an intended target	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Make a baseball pass to an intended target	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Participate in team passing drills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Totals			

Faults & Fixes Chart – Passing

Error	Correction	Drill/Test Reference
Chest pass is too soft.	Start with elbows close to your body and push your wrist and fingers through the ball.	Target Pass
Bounce pass is too high and too slow.	Start with the ball at your waist and aim for a bounce spot closer to your teammate.	Modify the Target Pass to be a Bounce Pass. Target can be on the floor for bounce or the wall for a target.
Overhead pass is too soft.	Make sure the ball is over your head and not behind it when you start.	Passing Under Pressure
Passes are off target.	First two fingers of each hand should be pointing to the target/person at the end of the pass.	Target Pass



Coaches' Tips for Basketball – At-A-Glance

Tips for Practice

1. Assist an athlete with lower ability by standing behind him or her. Put your hands over the athlete's hands and guide the athlete through the chest pass motion.
2. Mark a target on a wall and ask the athlete to chest pass the ball to the target. Gradually increase the distance between the athlete and the wall as the athlete's skill increases. Progress to starting at the same spot and asking the athlete to chest pass the ball to targets placed in several different locations, at varying heights and distances.
3. Demonstrate passes that bounce before, on and well beyond the halfway spot.
4. Allow the athletes to experiment with both short and long bounce passes to teammates standing at various distances.
5. Encourage games of "tips" or just "catch," to give athletes practice handling the ball.
6. Encourage families to play passing games at home between practices.



Passing & Catching Drills

For athletes who have lower ability, impairments or a fear of the ball, start by using the following drills.

Key Words

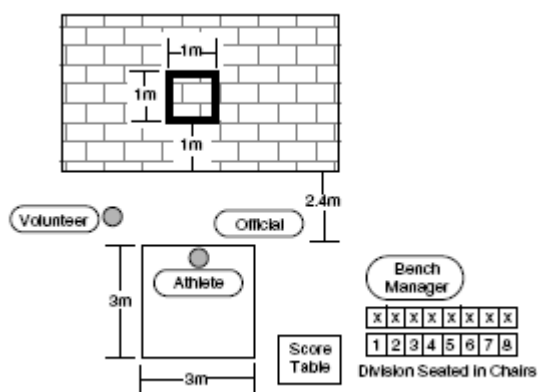
- Look – Pass Through the Open Door
- Step and Push
- Give a Target
- Move to Get Behind the Ball
- Relax and Give
- Protect

Target Pass (Individual Skill Competition – but can also be used as a drill)

In the Target Pass, the athlete passes the ball to a target that is 2.4 meters (7 feet) away. The athlete receives points according to the accuracy of his or her pass and a catch or trap.

Teaching the Target Pass

1. Pick up the ball with proper hand placement (dominant hand on top, other hand on side). Coach can physically prompt as necessary.
2. Push the ball (as in a dribble) forward toward the wall. The athlete is actually performing a bounce pass to the wall. The coach will initially catch the ball as it returns from the wall.
3. Add a step to give more force to the pass as the athlete continues to bounce pass to the wall. Keep hand up and eyes on the ball. The passing hand's palm will provide a target for a catch.
4. Set up the Target Pass, adding the target to the wall. Step and push pass the ball to the target (inside the square), not the floor. Step and Reach For Square. The coach is still catching the ball as it comes off the wall.
5. To work on the catch, turn the athlete to face away from the wall. Physically prompt the catching position – the passing hand's palm faces the coach with fingers up forming a target; other hand is to the side with fingers pointing to the side, and only the thumb is up. Catch a bounce pass – Feel for Ball and Gather It or Relax And Give.
6. Go back to the wall; the athlete passes one ball at a time to the wall, aiming at the target. Encourage the athlete to catch the return or trap the ball against the body or the floor.
7. Gradually remove the prompts.



Key Words

- Step And Reach For The Square
- Relax And Give



Loose Ball Recovery

Reps: Each athlete gets three times at the front of the line.

Purpose of the Drill

- Develop visual tracking skill
- Teaches “move to the ball”

Steps

1. Coach divides athletes into as many equal-ability groups as there are coaches or assistants.
2. Athletes in each group line up one behind the other.
3. The coach instructs first athlete to Give A Target and be ready to move.
4. The coach rolls or bounces the ball to the left or right of the athlete.
5. The athlete moves to get behind the ball, catches it, passes it back to the coach, and returns to his/her position.
6. Drill is repeated so that each athlete gets three to five attempts before going to the end of the line.
7. The emphasis is on movement and tracking.
8. Each athlete has an individual goal of recovering more than he/she did each previous time.



Key Words

- Move to Get Behind the Ball
- Go Get the Ball
- Give a Target

Passing under Pressure (Keep away)

Athletes with average to moderate ability – who can move to get behind the ball and can catch pass the ball – who are now ready for this drill.

Reps: Three rounds of 1- to 2-minute games

Purpose

- Develop quick passes to avoid steals
- Teaches players to move to get open for a pass



Steps

1. The coach divides the group into pairs.
2. Partners stand the width of the lane apart, facing each other.
3. Passing and receiving are practiced using all passes: chest and one-handed bounce passes plus one-handed and overhead passes.
4. A defender is added to each group.
5. The ball starts with one teammate versus the defender.
6. The athlete with the ball looks for the OPEN DOOR and passes to his/her teammate.
7. If the pass is not deflected or stolen, the defender turns and moves to defend against the athlete who has the ball.
8. When the defender makes a steal or deflects the ball, he/she becomes a teammate passer.
9. The person whose pass was deflected or stolen becomes the next offensive teammate.
10. Drill continues for 1-2 minutes.

Key Words

- Look for the Open Door
- Give a Target
- Move to Get Behind the Ball

Mini-Basketball: Two-on-One (in the backcourt)

The focus is on passing and catching as well as moving to get open. It is not on shooting. As the skill level increases, the defender can try to score after a steal. The offense attempts to recover and defend. The drill now becomes a transition drill as well as a skill drill.

Reps: One round of two to three possessions for each team

Purpose

- Develop teamwork and movement against a defender
- Teaches moving the ball up the court

Steps

1. The coach pairs the athletes into equal teams. (Each team of two has one better athlete and one weaker athlete.)
2. Two offense athletes and two defenders are at the end line.
3. The coach stands near them and gives the ball to the offense (team A).
4. The goal is for the offense to get the ball to the division line without it being stolen or turned over.
5. One of the other two athletes (team B) becomes a defender – he/she takes a position between the players on offense on the court.
6. As players advance the ball, the coach follows the play, verbally and physically prompting when necessary.
7. As soon as the defense steals the ball, the coach calls the athlete's name, and the athlete throws the ball to the coach.
8. Count the number of successful passes.
9. Each team will have two to three possessions.
10. Team with highest number of successful passes wins.
11. The rotation is defense/rest off court/offense/defense/etc.

Mini-Basketball: Two-on-Two (in the backcourt)

The above drill can be made more challenging when it is two-on-two in the backcourt. The offense is challenged to move more effectively to get open as well as to advance the ball. As the skill level increases, the defenders can try to score after a steal. The offense attempts to recover and defend. The drill now becomes a transition drill as well as a skill drill.



Steps

1. Two defenders take positions between offenders at the division line.
2. The drill is conducted as above.

Partner Pass

Reps: Three trials of 30 seconds each

Purpose

- Developing accurate and fast passes
- Teaches teamwork

Steps

1. Divide athletes into teams of two – keeping athletes of similar skill together.
2. One athlete has a ball and is positioned a set distance from a partner.
3. The first athlete chest passes the ball to partner.
4. The second athlete steps up to catch the pass and immediately passes it back to the partner.
5. The first athlete steps up to catch the pass and bounce passes it back to the partner.
6. This repeats as long as the athletes can keep the passes going while alternating pass types (bounce, chest, overhead, one-arm).

Partner Pass and Dash

Reps: Three trials of 30 seconds each

Purpose

- Developing accurate and fast passes
- Teaches athletes to move out after a pass and to move in to catch a pass
- Develops proper footwork for sliding into and away from plays
- Teaches teamwork

Steps

1. Divide athletes into teams of two – keeping athletes of similar skill together.
2. One athlete has a ball and is positioned a set distance from a wall (9-12 feet is recommended).
3. The second athlete is positioned immediately behind the first.
4. The first athlete chest passes the ball to the wall and immediately slides to the right.
5. The second athlete steps up to catch the pass and immediately passes it back to the wall and slides to the left.
6. The first athlete slides back to the center to catch the pass, passes it back to the wall and then slides to the left.
7. This repeats as long as the athletes can keep the passes going while alternating sliding to the right and then left after each pass.

Teaching Two-Handed Bounce Pass

1. Hold a basketball with both hands, at chest height and under the chin.
2. Position the hands at the side of the ball, fingers pointing to target and thumbs behind the ball.
3. Step forward with one foot toward the intended target.
4. Extend elbows and push the ball forcefully toward a spot on the floor halfway to the target.
5. Release the ball by snapping hands forward so the palms face out and the thumbs point toward the floor.
6. Follow through toward the spot; track the ball to the target.

Key Words

- Step and Push
- Follow Through



Coaching Tips

- For athletes with lower ability, mark a spot on the floor that is halfway between two athletes facing each other. Have the passer aim at the spot so it will bounce up to the height of the other athlete's chest.



Teaching Two-Handed Overhead Pass

1. Hold a basketball with both hands above the head.
2. Step forward toward the target.
3. Move the forearms forward and pass the ball toward the target.
4. Release the ball by snapping the hands and arms forward.
5. Follow through with the palms turned out and the thumbs pointed down.

Key Words

- Step and Push
- Follow Through

Coaching Tips

- Explain that this pass is used to pass over an opponent who is pressuring the athlete. Let the athlete practice the overhead pass over an opponent who is standing with arms and hands up in front of the passer.

Teaching One-Handed Pass

1. Hold the basketball in dribbling position, with one hand on top of the ball and the other on the side.
2. Pick up the ball and place it to the side of the body.
3. Rest the elbow of the passing hand near the hip; the passing hand is behind the ball.
4. Step forward toward the target.
5. Release the ball by snapping the passing hand toward the target.

Key Words

- Step and Push
- Hand Behind
- Open Door
- Follow Through



Coaching Tips

- Explain that this pass is used to pass around an opponent who is pressuring the athlete. The ball is protected with the body, slightly turned away from the defender, and with the opposite arm, elbow out. The athlete looks for the Open Door and then passes through it.
- The pass can be an aerial pass or a bounce pass.



Catching

While catching is obviously part of the passing skill (it isn't a good pass if it isn't caught!), here are some tips to break down the catching skill for instruction.

Your Athlete Can	Never	Sometimes	Often
Attempt to catch a basketball in any manner	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Catch the ball in any manner	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Catch a bounce pass in arms and chest	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Catch a bounce pass with hands only	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Catch a chest pass in arms and chest	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Catch a chest pass with hands only	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Attempt to catch a pass in any manner while moving	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Catch a pass in any manner while moving	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Catch a pass with hands only, while moving	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Totals			

Teaching Catching

Key Words

- Get Behind the Ball
- Give a Target
- Catching the Egg
- Relax and Give with the Ball

Coaching Tips

For athletes with lower ability, impairments or fear of the ball, the following progression is recommended:

- Begin by bounce passing the ball to the athlete from a short distance. A softer ball can also be used.
- Work on getting the athlete to move his or her feet so that the athlete gets behind the oncoming ball. The ball can be trapped with arms and chest. Progress to catching the ball with the hands only. Then catch an aerial pass.
- Some athletes, because of other impairments, may never be able to catch an aerial pass. If they have tunnel vision or are extremely small, the best throw to them is either a bounce pass or a rolling-the-ball pass.
- Regardless of the height of the pass, the receiver's hands are at the level of the pass with palms facing forward.



Key Words

- See the Ball
- Slide





Shooting

Shooting is the most important skill in basketball. To win, you have to score points. All the other skills are tools a team uses to get the ball and its players into position to score. If your athletes can develop confident, accurate shooting skills, they will be hard to stop on the court!

Your Athlete Can	Never	Sometimes	Often
Attempt to shoot a basketball in any manner	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hit the backboard with a one-hand set shot	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Make a basket with a one-hand set shot	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hit the backboard on a lay-up attempt	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Make a basket on a lay-up attempt	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hit the backboard with a jump shot	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Make a basket with a jump shot	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Totals			

Faults & Fixes Chart – Shooting

Error	Correction	Drill/Test Reference
Mechanics are correct but athlete still misses.	Watch athlete's eyes to make sure he or she is keeping eyes on the target while shooting.	Rapid Fire Shooting with a focus on "spotting" the basket before shooting
Athlete lowers the ball while flexing the knees, lengthening the shooting stroke and making it easier to block the shot.	Remind athlete to keep the ball high and move only the legs during the down and up part of the shot.	Shoot to Self
When athlete jumps at the end of the shot, he or she drifts off balance and misses.	Have athlete work on jumping and landing on the same spot of the floor.	Jump Shot Drill
Shot is short of the basket.	Make sure athlete is using the legs to start the shot and is following through.	Start with a lower basket and move up.
Athlete is slow to shoot after receiving a pass.	Have athlete practice being in a shooting position (knees bent) when receiving a pass, and immediately turning to shoot.	Rapid Fire Shooting



Coaches' Tips for Basketball – At-A-Glance

Tips for Practice

1. It is important that the athlete feels power for the shot coming from the legs. The movement sequence begins with the knees and is followed by the elbow, wrist and fingers. Physical prompting may be needed to assist the athlete in preparing for the shot as well as shooting it. Proper hand placement on the ball is critical.
2. Younger athletes can practice by shooting to a partner, at a target on the wall or at a lower basket. Demonstrate putting an arc on the shot by lifting the shooting hand's elbow so the ball has a better chance of going into the basket. Explain that it is best to use the backboard. The backboard softens the shot and allows a greater margin for error.
3. Demonstrate lay-up; then have the athletes practice the motion without a ball while facing, but positioned away from, the basket. Practice jumping off one foot and landing on two feet. Instruct the athletes step by step through pretend shooting and landing.
4. Repeat sequence with a ball before actually shooting a lay-up at a basket. The lay-up can also be done from a two-foot jump.
5. Practice the motion of the shot without jumping and without the ball. Next, practice the motion of the shot with jumping but without the basketball. Finally, add and complete the jump shot.
6. Use an adjustable basket with backboard to help athletes build confidence in their shooting ability. Remind the athlete to lift his/her elbow to put arc on the shot so that it has a better chance of going into the basket.
7. Set up an imaginary wall (hanging a blanket or using an opponent with hands up) above which the athlete must jump in order to see the basket and shoot the ball. Practice the jump shot close to the basket and banking it off the backboard, gradually increasing the distance and using only the rim as a focus.



Shooting Drills

Use the following drills for athletes who are young, small or beginning basketball players.

Key Words

- Bend and Extend
- Follow Through (Gooseneck)

Shoot to Self - Shoot to Wall - Shoot to Partner

Reps: Three sets of ten shots each to self and wall

Purpose of the drill: To master the technique of using the whole body from bottom to top in each shot: Start with a balanced stance, then bent knees, then smooth motion up through back, shoulders and shooting arm; finally, let the ball roll off finger pads and follow through with the shooting hand.

Steps

1. Focus on good form, not on the basket.
2. Place ball in proper shooting position in hands and up to face.
3. Bend legs and then extend them while shooting above head.
4. Knees, elbow, wrist and hand extend in sequence.
5. Follow Through.
6. Shoot ten to self; then shoot ten to wall or partner.
7. Emphasize good form.





Teaching a One-Handed Set Shot

1. Hold the ball in good dribbling position.
2. Bring the ball up to the shooting position. The shooting hand is behind and slightly under the ball; the non-shooting hand is to the side of the ball; thumbs are up and apart from one another.
3. Face the basket and look over the ball, focusing on the target.
4. Keep the shooting-side leg slightly forward.
5. Bend knees; lift elbow and extend shooting arm toward basket.
6. Release the ball by snapping the shooting hand down, rolling the ball off the fingertips to impart lift and backspin to the ball.
7. During this Follow Through, hand and arm form a Gooseneck.

Key Words

- High
- See the Basket over the Ball
- Follow Through (Gooseneck)

Teaching a Lay-Up Using the Backboard

1. Face the front of the backboard and stand two steps away and to the right of the rim for a right-handed shooter.
2. Pick the ball up to chest height in proper shooting position.
3. Sight the target over the ball. Focus on the top right corner of the square on backboard for a right-hander.
4. Step forward onto right foot, then left foot.
5. Raise the shooting-side knee as the ball is lifted to the forehead.
6. Extend body toward basket off left foot.
7. Gently lay the ball up against the backboard on the top right corner of the square.
8. Land on both feet under the backboard.

Key Words

- Softly Lay the Ball Up On the Backboard



Coaching Tips

- ❑ For lower ability athletes, a step leading to a two-foot takeoff gives more power and body control. Mark the top corners of the square on the backboard with red tape. Left-handed athletes approach the basket on the left side. They start by stepping on the left foot, then the right foot as they raise the left knee and ball, preparing to shoot. Once the motion and shot can be performed, practice approaching the lay-up from a walking dribble, from a running dribble and from receiving a pass.



Teaching Shooting a Jump Shot

1. Hold the basketball in proper hand position (shooting hand is behind and slightly under the ball, non-shooting hand is on the side of the ball supporting it).
2. Face and focus on the basket.
3. Bend knees slightly.
4. Raise the ball above forehead (shooting-hand side of head) as the legs extend, and jump straight up off feet.
5. Release the non-shooting hand from the ball as the ball is shot toward the basket (elbow, wrist and hand extend in rhythmical sequence).
6. Land on the floor and track the ball to the basket.

Key Words

- Bend and Extend
- Reach For Basket
- Up - Shoot

Shoot to Lower Basket, then at Regular Basket

Athletes with average to moderate ability – can move to get behind the ball and can catch/pass the ball – are now ready for this drill. As skills improve, the coach increases the demand:

- The coach places the basketball on the floor for the athlete, who picks it up, brings his/her shooting-side leg under the ball, places the ball in front of the face, and shoots.
- The coach bounce passes the ball to the athlete, who takes one step to catch it, brings his/her shooting-side leg under the ball, places the ball in front of the face, and shoots.
- The coach chest passes the ball to the athlete, who takes one step to catch it, brings his/her shooting-side leg under the ball, places the ball in front of the face, and shoots.
- The coach varies passes to the athlete, who takes one step to catch the ball, brings his/her shooting-side leg under the ball, places the ball in front of the face, and shoots.

Reps: Three shots per athlete in line; go through the line three times

Purpose

- Improve shooting technique through repetition
- Improve quickness in shooting

Steps

1. Line up two to four athletes behind one another at the side of the basket.
2. Hand the ball to first shooter, making sure that the athlete receives it in proper hand placement.
3. The athlete brings the ball up to the face and shoots it.
4. Each athlete takes two to three shots, then rotates to the end of the line.
5. While in the line, each athlete holds a pretend ball and mimics the shooter.



Rapid Fire Shooting

For athletes who can shoot, use the following drills that add more movement. Make sure the shooter turns to face the basket before shooting. On the turn, the ball is brought up to the face into proper shooting position. This drill can be done at any spot. For example, if the athlete shoots from in front of the basket, the passer is at the side. The rebounder is always underneath. In addition, the rebounder does not always have to be a coach; for a team drill, have athletes rotate to all positions; shooter to rebounder to passer to shooter, etc.

Steps

1. One athlete (the shooter) is within his/her shooting range to the side and 1-2 meters from and facing the basket.
2. Another athlete (the passer) is at the middle of the free-throw line or at the top of the key.
3. Coach, or another athlete, is under the basket with back to basket (the rebounder).
4. The rebounder and the passer each have a basketball.
5. Passer bounce passes ball to the shooter.
6. As soon as the passer passes his/her basketball, the rebounder calls the passer's name and passes to the passer.
7. The shooter shoots, and the rebounder rebounds the shot.
8. Rebounder always rebounds; only the passer passes to the shooter; the shooter continues shooting for 30-45 seconds.
9. After the time period, the athletes rotate to the next position in the triangle.
10. Count how many shots are made, and record individually.

Key Words

- See the Basket
- Down and Up
- Follow Through (Gooseneck)
- Step and Push
- Pass to the Target
- Bounce Pass

Two-Ball Lay-up or Power Up

A higher ability athlete can be the re-bouncer. This rebounding position demands focus on the ball, movement to the ball, recognizing the vacant block and replacing one ball while changing focus to one being shot.

Reps: Each athlete has two or three (depending on ability and interest) attempts of 30 seconds each

Purpose

- Quick positioning and setting of shooting stance
- Practice shooting from the post

Steps

1. Two basketballs are placed on the floor, one on each block.
2. Coach or higher ability athlete rebounds under the basket and with back to basket.
3. Shooter stands inside the lane, bends down, picks up one ball, brings it up to shooting position and then shoots the ball.
4. After shooting the ball, the shooter runs across the lane, picks up the other ball, turns to face the basket, brings the ball up to shooting position and then shoots this ball.
5. Rebounder chases and rebounds each basketball shot and replaces it on the vacant block.
6. Continue drill with the shooter moving and shooting from side to side for 30-60 seconds.
7. Count the number of shots made, and chart for individual improvement comparisons.



Mini-Basketball: Shooting under Pressure

This is a team-against-the-defender drill. The amount of pressure is geared to the ability of each athlete. A coach or volunteer can do this better than another athlete. Plus, the coach does not want to set up a drill that goes against what he/she is teaching. For example, a teammate would never pass and then defend another teammate. In addition, the coach can change to different shooting positions on the floor.

Reps: Three rotations of 60 for each three- to four- person team

Purpose

- Develop confidence in shooting over a defender
- Improve quickness in shooting

Steps

1. Two to three equal ability athletes are at each basket.
2. One athlete is the shooter, who takes a position within shooting range to side and front of the basket.
3. Other athletes line up behind the shooter.
4. Coach is passive defender.
5. The coach starts the drill by bounce passing the ball to the shooter.
6. Shooter steps to receive it, brings shooting side leg under the ball, then brings the ball up to shooting position and shoots the ball over “hands up” type pressure from the coach.
7. Shooter follows for the offensive rebound and shot, then goes to the end of the athletes’ line.
8. Coach repeats the drill with each of the other athletes, one at a time.
9. Count how many baskets each team makes in 60 seconds. Repeat drill, trying to improve on team scores.

On Your Back Shooting

Reps: Two 30-second trials – or time how long it takes to get 5 in a row

Purpose

- Perfect technique of having shooting hand behind the ball and proper elbow/shoulder alignment
- Work on release over fingertips and follow through
- Practice catching the ball as it returns and getting lined up to shoot again

Steps

1. Athlete lies on back with the ball above the shooting shoulder.
2. Athlete holds the ball with shooting hand behind the ball and index finger at the midpoint of the ball.
3. Make sure the elbow is lined up between the ball and the shoulder – not sticking out to the side.
4. Athlete shoots the ball straight up in the air with full elbow extension and follow through.
5. The ball should go up and come back directly into athlete’s hands so he/she can catch it and repeat the shot.

Eyes Wide Shut Shooting Drill

Reps: Two sets of 20 free throws with athletes working in teams of two

Purpose

- To teach kinesthetic (physical) memory of how to shoot the ball without visual distractions
- Develop the ability to ignore visual distractions while shooting



Steps

1. Have one athlete be a shooter and a second athlete as the rebounder.
2. The shooting athlete positions himself/herself at the free-throw line and visualizes a successful free throw – then closes his/her eyes.
3. The shooter shoots a basket with eyes closed, attempting to keep proper form and follow through.
4. The rebounder rebounds the ball and tells the shooter what happened, i.e., “You shot too hard or too soft,” “It went to the left,” etc.
5. This is repeated for 20 shots, with the rebounder keeping track of the number of successful attempts.
6. At the end of 20 shots, the athletes switch places and repeat the drill.

One Dribble Lay-ups

Reps: Two 30-second drills per athlete or until athlete achieves five consecutive lay-ups

Purpose

- Develop a shot close to the basket
- Practice footwork close to the basket

Steps

1. Athlete starts in a balanced stance at the middle hash mark on the side of the lane that is athlete’s strong side.
2. Strong leg (pivot foot) should be back and weaker leg front.
3. Dribble with the strong hand and take a small step with the weak-side foot.
4. Pick the ball up at about knee height as the strong leg comes forward.
5. Move straight up and through the shot in a strong-hand lay-up, putting the ball high above the box on the backboard.
6. Land in balance and catch the ball either as it comes through the net or as a rebound.
7. Then repeat the drill using the weak side.

Shoot and Move

Reps: Two sets of shooting 20 seconds from each of three positions

Purpose

- Develop the ability to catch and shoot in one motion with a quick release

Steps

1. Three players are assigned to each group (or two players and a coach), with a whistle and stopwatch.
2. Establish marks on the floor at 9 feet, 15 feet and behind the 3-point line (cones work well for this).
3. Have one athlete (or coach) with a stopwatch and whistle, one athlete as a rebounder and one athlete as the shooter.
4. The drill starts when the timer blows the whistle.
5. The rebounder starts by passing (chest pass) to the shooter, who is already in shooting position at the 9-foot mark.
6. The rebounder keeps passing balls to the shooter at the 9-foot mark until the timer blows the whistle (at 20 seconds).
7. The shooter moves back to the 15-foot mark and continues shooting until the next whistle (20 seconds again).
8. Finally, the shooter moves behind the 3-point line and continues shooting until the final whistle (20 seconds).
9. Rebounder keeps track of successful baskets.
10. Athletes switch places and repeat the drill.



Defending

Your Athlete Can	Never	Sometimes	Often
Assume proper body stance: legs bent, head and hands up and weight on balls of feet	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maintain proper body position while moving sideways, forward and backward	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maintain proper body position while moving in relation to the ball	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maintain proper body position while moving in relation to opponent and the ball	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Totals			

Faults & Fixes Chart – Defending

Error	Correction	Drill/Test Reference
Athlete gets too close to a player who receives a pass, allowing them to drive past.	Form an imaginary triangle between athlete, the ball and the player athlete is defending, making sure athlete can see both the ball and the player.	
When defending during a shot, athlete fouls the shooter.	Remind athlete to keep arms straight up overhead and not reaching over.	
The offensive ball handler moves around the athlete.	Make sure athlete is moving the feet and sliding to match their movement – side to side and up and back.	Ike Like Mike

Coaches' Tips for Basketball – At-A-Glance

Tips for Practice
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ball focus and movement are essential, since the goal of defense is to stop or to limit the offense from scoring. Specific tasks help a defender know what to perform and how to perform it. 2. Work on both man-to-man and zone defenses so athletes know different strategies for different situations. 3. Teaching footwork and hand placement while on defense will help athletes focus on specific skills.



Teaching Defending



Key Words

- See the Ball
- Head and Hands Up
- Slide



Defending Drills

Defensive Positioning and Movement

“Ike Like Mike”

1. Athletes spread out in the gym, at least arm’s length from one another. All athletes will move in the same way and in the same direction as the leader. Coach can also point direction of the movement and say key words as athletes follow the leader.
2. Now the leader defends a player who has a basketball. All athletes will move in the same way and in the same direction as the leader.
3. The goal for each athlete is to do cued footwork skills, not getting caught off balance, three times in a row.
4. Three times equals one point; the first athlete to accumulate five points becomes the next leader.

Key Words

- See the Ball
- Slide



Rebounding

Your Athlete Can	Never	Sometimes	Often
Attempt to catch in any manner a basketball that is tossed into the air	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Catch a ball that is tossed into the air	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Attempt to catch in any manner a ball that rebounds off the backboard	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Track the ball as it is shot at the basket	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Turn to face the basket and take ready position for rebounding	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Catch the ball in any manner after it rebounds off the backboard and bounces once on the floor	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Catch the ball with hands only after it rebounds off the backboard and bounces once on the floor	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Catch the ball in the air with hands only after it rebounds off the backboard	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Move to "box out" an opponent before jumping for a rebound	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Participate in team rebounding drills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Totals			

Faults & Fixes Chart – Rebounding

Error	Correction	Drill/Test Reference
Opponents keep cutting athlete off from the rebound.	Advise athlete to locate opponent before focusing on the ball so he/she can get between opponent and the basket.	Two-Line Block Out
Athlete loses balance as people move around him/her near the basket.	Make sure athlete keeps feet apart enough to keep balance and move off the balls of the feet.	Repetitive Jumping
Athlete has trouble holding on to a rebound.	Make sure athlete is grabbing with both hands as firmly as possible.	Jump up to Grab a Ball



Coaches' Tips for Basketball – At-A-Glance

Tips for Practice

1. Rebounding is the most challenging of the basic skills, because it involves positioning, tracking the ball, timing, moving (jumping), catching and balance.
2. Break down rebounding into its component parts from the skill progression and build one upon the other. In that way, the athlete can work toward effectively rebounding the ball during a game.
3. Going for the ball is the concept put into concrete terms. Reinforce in all drills and game play.
4. Being able to reach higher than the opponents is very helpful in rebounding, so work on vertical leap and reaching up to grab a loose ball.
5. Rebounding is one skill that is used on both offense and defense, so it is worth extra time in practice to build this skill.
6. The keys to rebounding include: quickness and strength, to jump; endurance, so jumping doesn't wear you out; peripheral vision, to see what and who is around you; and balance, to maintain control during and after the rebound.

Teaching Rebounding

Key Words

- See the Ball
- Go Get the Ball



Rebounding Drills

For lower ability athletes, focus is on the proper body positioning and going to the ball without the pressure of an opponent. The following drills are appropriate for non-jumpers and beginning jumpers.

Jumping

If athlete still does not jump off floor, physically and visually prompt the movement by putting the athlete in the proper position and moving him/her through the jumping movement. If athlete still does not jump off floor, coaches can stand next to the athlete to model jumping, leading with their arms up in the air. On “Ready,” make sure the athlete is balanced with head over feet. On “Bend,” make sure the athlete maintains balance while bending at the knees. On “Jump,” model pushing up through the knees to arms extended up as if to grab a rebound. If progress is slow, be sure to look for small victories in each phase of the jump progression.

Reps: Two sets of ten jumps each

Purpose of the Drill

- Develop basic jumping skill

Steps

1. Coach demonstrates; athletes watch, and then perform.
2. Take a position with legs bent, elbows at sides and hands up.
3. Bend legs and extend, sending body off floor into the air with arms overhead.



Key Words

- Bend and Jump

Repetitive Jumping

Reps: Three sets of ten jumps

Purpose

- Practice maintaining balance between jumps
- Build endurance for repeated rebound attempts



Steps

1. Take proper body position.
2. Bend and jump.
3. Land under control and on balance, cat-like.
4. Repeat nine more jumps in succession.

Key Words

- Bend and Jump
- Land Cat-Like

Jumping and Grabbing a Ball

Reps: Three out of five attempts

Purpose

- Develop reach and grab skills
- Practice control and protecting the ball while coming down with a rebound

Steps

1. Hold a ball up and out of the athlete's reach. If you aren't tall enough to hold the ball out of reach, a slight toss works.
2. Instruct the athlete to "Rebound the Ball."
3. Athlete jumps, grabs the ball and places it under his/her chin with elbows out.

Key Words

- See the Ball
- Rebound

Rebounding a Tossed Ball

For the average ability athlete who can track and go to the ball, the following drill is appropriate. As with other drills, practice follows demonstration.

Reps: Depending on the formation you choose, each athlete in each position at least twice

Purpose

- Progression of skills necessary for rebounding, from jumping through boxing out an opponent.
- Game simulation helps put skills into a competition context

Steps

1. Instruct the athlete to "Rebound the Ball."
 - Toss a ball in the air.
 - The athlete takes a step, goes to the ball and pulls it to his/her chest with elbows out.
 - Rebound at least three of five attempts.
2. Two to three athletes now stand in a single-file line in front of and facing the basket.
 - Coach stands under the basket with his/her back to the basket.
 - Coach tosses the ball backward and upward to bounce off the backboard.
 - Each athlete initially gets three attempts to rebound before rotating to the end of the line.
3. Same as the previous drill, add a pivot to the outside and a pass out to a waiting teammate.
 - After the pass out, rotate athletes – re-bouncer to outlet to outlet to end of line.



4. Add a coach-defender who pressures the rebound and the outlet pass.
 - The athlete is forced into position (block out) with coach-defender behind.
 - Athlete must pass or dribble out and pass to outlet while being defended, like in a game.

Two-Line Block Out

Reps: Each athlete in each position at least three times

Purpose

- Simulate game experience of rebounding in a crowd
- Reinforce boxing out opponents as part of the rebound move

Steps

1. The coach or shooter has the ball in the middle of free-throw line.
2. Two athletes take positions on either side of the lane at the second mark; an additional two athletes are at the same mark, but farther off the lane.
3. The athletes at the two spots closest to the basket are defenders and take proper defensive position. The athletes farther off the lane are offensive players.
4. The shooter shoots; defenders call SHOT, turn, step to block or box out the offense, which includes the shooter. Defenders pivot backward, putting their buttocks next to the opponents' thighs, elbows out, hands up. All then go for the rebound based on where the ball comes off the rim or backboard.
5. Rotate athletes among positions.
6. As athletes' skills increase, add more speed to the drill, quickly going from offense to defense.

Mini-Basketball: Rebound Ball

This is an excellent game for encouraging assertive play. It also uses all the skills in a game-like situation, but without a full team. Athletes can learn to effectively move to the ball under pressure with this drill.

Reps: Practice each day for 3-5 minutes

Purpose

- Exposure to competing for a rebound
- Develop quick reaction time

Steps

1. The coach divides the athletes into groups of three to four athletes per basket, keeping athletes of similar ability together.
2. Two to three athletes (rebounders) stand in front of the basket.
3. A shooter stands within shooting range in front of the free-throw line.
4. After the ball is shot, each re-bouncer goes for the ball.
5. On the rebound, the athlete who gets the ball yells Ball and passes it to the coach, who calls Outlet.
6. The game continues until one of the rebounders gets two to three rebounds. That person becomes the next shooter.
7. The former shooter becomes a rebounder.
8. The game continues for 2-3 minutes.



Footwork

Footwork is an essential part of both offense and defensive movement on the court. The ability to move and change directions or stop quickly is critical to success on the basketball court. While specific footwork is outlined in several drills, this section gives some basic drills that will also be helpful.

Your Athlete Can	Never	Sometimes	Often
Run forward, then run backward	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Slide right, then slide left (step one foot to side, then step with other foot replacing first foot)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hop on one foot, then hop on the other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Skip (step then hop on that foot, step with other foot then hop on that foot)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cut (run diagonally for three steps, plant and push off the outside foot to change directions, turn hips to face desired direction and run three steps in that direction)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Stop (perform a two-step stop and later a jump-stop on the whistle)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pivot (put weight on the ball of one stationary foot; other foot steps as the body circles around the pivot point)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Totals			

Teaching Footwork

Key Words

- Head Up
- Elbows Bent With Hands Up (Ready)
- Run On Balls of Feet
- Get Low To Stop
- Pivot
- Slide

Agility Footwork Activities

Before doing the activity, demonstrate the skill. All athletes then do the skill in their places. When performing the two-step stop or the jump-stop, the athletes are to stop in no more than two steps, or a step to a jump-stop upon hearing the whistle. A game can be played, such as “Red Light, Green Light.”

1. Line team up at the baseline in equal rows of four athletes across.
2. Coach starts the first row.
3. Athletes perform one of the above two footwork activities down the court, stopping at the free throw line, half court, far free-throw line and far baseline.
4. As soon as the athletes pass the closest free-throw line, the coach starts the next row.
5. Coaches perform the footwork activities alongside the athletes, verbally and physically prompting as necessary.
6. Once at the far baseline, the coaches help line up the rows to return with the same footwork activity.



Coaching Tips

- Especially suitable for warm-up
- Once ball handling skills are learned, do a series of footwork drills while dribbling



Additional Basketball Drills

Pivoting Away from Defender

1. Divide into equal-ability groups of two.
2. Coach hands ball to offender; begins counting seconds out loud.
3. Defender takes a position close to offender, pressures and tries to tap ball away.
4. Offender pivots and moves the ball up and down the court.

The goal is for the offender to keep the ball away from the defenders for 5 seconds. The drill can be made more challenging by adding a teammate with the offender.

- Teammate will move back and forth while passer pivots and moves the ball.
- After 3 seconds and on “Pass” cue from coach, the athlete passes to teammate. Offender learns to stay calm, keep head up, pivot, move ball and pass to teammate.

Getting Out of Double Team

A double team will occur during a basketball game. This drill teaches the double team as well as provides practice getting out of it. Offender learns to stay calm, to keep head up, to pivot and to move ball. Defense learns to apply pressure and go after the ball without fouling.

1. Divide into equal-ability groups of three.
2. Two defenders take positions in front of offender; they will pressure and try to grab ball or tap ball away. Close The Door: step to the offender and stand next to the other defender.
3. Coach hands offender the ball begins counting seconds out loud.
4. Offender pivots away from defenders and moves ball up and down the court. Go To The Open Door: move to an open space away from the defenders. The goal is to control ball for 5 seconds without losing it.

Key Words

- Close The Door
- Find The Open Door
- Pivot
- Keep The Ball Moving

Circle Passing

One team can play against the other, but at opposite ends of the floor. A lower ability team may pass the ball in and out of the circle in a particular direction. Coach counts the number of passes in 60 seconds. This activity is fun and can go faster as skill increases. It adds movement to passing that is more game-like.

1. Coach divides group into teams of four, five or six.
2. Each team takes a position around one of the circles.
3. One person from each team goes to the middle of that team’s circle.
4. A person on the outside of the circle starts with the ball. The ball is passed to the person in the middle. The passer follows the pass, moving into the middle.
5. The person in the middle passes to a teammate on the outside of the circle, follows his/her pass and takes that person’s place.
6. The circle passing and moving continues for a prescribed number of passes (25) or a prescribed amount of time (60 seconds).
7. If the ball goes out of control or out of play, it always begins with a person on the outside of the circle.

Key Words

- Face Your Teammate Before You Pass
- “Hands Up” – Give A Target
- Follow Your Pass



Four Corner Passing Drill

This is a good team activity where all work together. One ball is used first. As the athletes learn the skill, the coach can add more difficulty. For example: Add a return pass. Pass, follow, return pass and continue to follow, pass back and go to the end of the line. The ball and athletes must change direction when the coach cues Reverse. Add a second ball to activity. It must start in the opposite corner from the other ball. Add the cue Reverse to the activity with two basketballs.

1. In the drill's simplest form, the team lines up using the four corners of the half court. There will be at least two athletes in each corner.
2. One of the athletes starts with a ball. The ball is passed counterclockwise around the square. Specify either bounce pass or chest pass.
3. The team member will pass the ball, follow the pass and go to the end of that particular corner's line.
4. The person who just received the pass will pivot to his/her right, pass to that corner's first person, follow the pass and take a position at the end of the line. The ball continues around the square, as do the athletes.

Key Words

- See The Ball
- Hands Up
- Give A Target
- Go To Meet The Pass / Follow Your Pass
- Turn And Face Your Teammate Before Passing

Dribble, Shoot, Rebound, Pass Game

1. This is a transition game for lower ability athletes.
2. The coach divides group into two teams of equal ability (Team A and Team B).
3. Each team lines up along opposite sidelines and wears scrimmage vests of similar color.
4. Each team has one basketball, different in color from the other team's. An athlete can use only his/her team's basketball.
5. Coaches are at each end to officiate.
6. The coaches begin with each respective team's basketball and at opposite ends of the court.
7. At the same time, coaches hand balls to the first athlete on each team.
8. That athlete dribbles the full length of the court, takes one shot at the basket (preferably a lay-up), gets his/her own rebound, passes it to the next teammate closest to him/her at that end of the court and goes to the end of that line near mid court.
9. This athlete now dribbles full length of the court, takes one shot at the basket (preferably a lay-up), gets his/her own rebound, passes it to the next teammate closest to him/her at that end of the court and goes to the end of that line near mid court.
10. The game consists of four 6- to 8-minute running time quarters.
11. Scores are announced at the end of each quarter by the scorer.
12. A running total of made baskets is kept for each team.
13. At the half, the teams change sidelines; the score is announced, and play resumes.
14. When the game finishes, teams huddle together; the final score is announced. Teams line up to shake hands with their opponents. Team cheer is given.

Assistant coaches can note best dribblers, passers, rebounders and shooters. Encourage and enforce proper skills. In addition, this is a game in which parents, siblings and volunteers can all join. One condition for the non-Special Olympics athletes or basketball-experienced people is that they can only shoot from outside the lane.

Full Court Double Post Lay-up Drill

This is a continuous drill that lasts 2-3 minutes. It emphasizes passing and receiving on the move, taking a controlled lay-up or jump-stop lay-up and conditioning. Change posts every 60 seconds. Count the baskets made at each end. Do this drill periodically. It is the team against a goal, setting a personal best team mark.

Special Olympics Basketball Coaching Guide

Teaching Basketball Skills



1. Four “posts” take positions at the corners where the free-throw lines meet the lane lines.
2. Half the team lines up under one basket; the other half lines up under the opposite basket.
3. Moving counterclockwise will emphasize right-handed lay-ups.
4. The first person under each basket begins by passing (out letting) the ball to the post ahead.
5. After the pass, each continues up that sideline and receives a return pass from the post.
6. The athlete dribbles to the half court, passes to the next post and continues up sideline.
7. Once the athlete reaches the free-throw line extended, he/she cuts toward the basket.
8. The post bounce-passes the ball just in front so that the athlete can shoot a lay-up without dribbling.
9. The first person under the basket rebounds the ball and passes to the post on the other side, continuing the activity up court.

Key Words

- Grab The Ball
- Move Under Control
- Hands Up
- Give A Target
- Lay Up The Ball Softly

Go to the Ball

The drill continues for 2-3 minutes. A second ball can begin after the teammate in position #3 has the first ball. Coaches should be stationed at each of the positions to prompt the athletes. Count the baskets made at each end. Do this drill periodically. It is the team against a goal, setting a personal best team mark

1. The team is lined up in single-file order under one of the baskets.
2. Positions 2-3-4-5 are located on the hash marks opposite one another.
3. One person takes each of those positions on the court.
4. #1 passes to #2, who has moved toward the ball. #1 follows to take #2’s initial position.
5. #2 receives the ball and pivots, facing up court and #3.
6. When #2 locks up court, #3 cuts toward the ball.
7. #2 passes to #3 and follows to take #3’s initial position.
8. #3 receives the ball and pivots, facing up court and #4.
9. When #3 locks up court, #4 cuts toward the ball.
10. #3 passes to #4 and follows to take #4’s initial position.
11. #4 receives the ball and pivots, facing up court and #5.
12. When #4 locks up court, #5 breaks toward the basket.
13. #4 passes long to #5 and takes #5’s initial position.
14. #5 grabs the ball and then dribbles it in for a lay-up.
15. #5 gets his/her own rebound and dribbles the ball back outside the court to the line under the far basket.

Key Words

- See The Ball
- Hands Up
- Give A Target
- Go To Meet The Pass
- Grab The Ball
- Turn And Face



Understanding the Game

Do not assume that lower ability players will know even the basic aim of the game. Such players may have difficulty with simple concepts such as distinguishing between teammates and opponents.

Basketball is a game where players try to throw a round inflated ball through a raised basketlike goal. It is played on a court by two teams of five or three players. Points are made by shooting the ball through a high metal hoop and net at the opponent's end of the court. The large round ball used in this game is also called a basketball.

History

Early basketball

Basketball is unusual in that it was invented by one man, rather than evolving from a different sport. In 1891, Dr. James Naismith, a Canadian minister on the faculty of a college for YMCA professionals in Springfield, Massachusetts, sought a vigorous indoor game to keep young men occupied during the long New England winters. Legend has it that, after rejecting other ideas as either too rough or poorly suited to walled-in gymnasiums, he wrote the basic rules and nailed a peach basket onto the gym wall. The first official game was played in the YMCA gymnasium on January 20, 1892. "Basket ball," the name suggested by one of his students, was popular from the beginning and, with its early adherents being dispatched to YMCAs throughout the United States, the game was soon played all over the country.

Interestingly, while the YMCA was responsible for initially developing and spreading the game, within a decade it discouraged the new sport as rough play, and rowdy crowds began to detract from the YMCA's primary mission. Other amateur sports clubs, colleges and professional clubs quickly filled the void. In the years before World War I, the Amateur Athletic Union and the Intercollegiate Athletic Association (forerunner of the [NCAA](#)) vied for control over the rules of the game.

Basketball was originally played with a soccer ball. The first balls made specifically for basketball were brown, and it was only in the late 1950s that Tony Hinkle, searching for a ball that would be more visible to players and spectators alike, introduced the orange ball that is now in common use.

Rules and regulations

The object of the game is to outscore one's opponents by throwing the ball through the opponents' basket from above while preventing the opponents from doing so on their own. An attempt to score in this way is called a shot. Two points are scored for a successful shot, three points for a successful long-range shot (6.25 meters from the basket) and one point for each successful free throw.

Playing the game

The ball may be advanced toward the basket by being shot, passed, thrown, tapped, rolled or dribbled. *Passing* is the act of throwing the ball from player to player. *Dribbling* is the act of running while continuously bouncing the ball. The ball cannot be kicked or struck with the fist, and must stay within the playing court.

Running with the ball without bouncing it, called *traveling*, is illegal. *Double dribbling*, the act of dribbling with two hands or starting a second dribble after having caught the ball after a first one, is also illegal. A player's hand cannot pass the vertical while dribbling, so that his hand is partially below the ball; this is known as *carrying* the ball. In higher levels of basketball, time limits are imposed on advancing the ball past halfway, remaining in the restricted area (also known as the "paint") and attempting a shot. Rules are generally stricter in the NBA. Contrary to popular belief, there is no limit to the number of steps a player can take between bounces while dribbling.

To interfere with the ball while it is on its downward flight for a basket, or while it is bouncing on the basket, is called *goal tending*, and is a violation. Goal tending is one of the most complicated calls of basketball, and is significantly different in international basketball.

Fouls

An attempt to unfairly disadvantage an opponent through personal contact is illegal and is called a foul. These are most commonly committed by defensive players; however, they can be committed by offensive players as well. Players who



are fouled either receive the ball to pass inbounds again, or receive one or more free throws if they are fouled in the act of shooting, depending on whether the shot was successful. One point is awarded for making a free throw, which is attempted from a line 4.5 meters (15 feet) from the basket.

If a team surpasses a preset limit of team fouls in a given period (four in international and NBA games), the opposing team is awarded free throws on all subsequent fouls for that period. Offensive fouls and double fouls are not counted as team fouls in the NBA, but they are counted in international games.

A player or coach who shows poor sportsmanship, for instance, by arguing with a referee or by fighting with another player, can be charged with a technical foul. A player or coach with two technical fouls is disqualified from the game and is required to leave the court. Blatant fouls with excessive contact or that are not an attempt to play the ball are called unsportsmanlike fouls (or flagrant fouls in the NBA) and incur a harsher penalty; in some rare cases a disqualifying foul will require the player to leave the stadium.

If a player commits five fouls (including technical fouls) in one game (six in some professional leagues, including the NBA), he is not allowed to participate for the rest of the game, and is described as having "fouled out." If no substitutes are available, the team must forfeit the game. Some leagues, including the NBA, allow disqualified players to re-enter the game at the cost of a technical foul on the team.

Players

A team consists of five players and up to seven substitutes, although in series where there are three games or fewer, only five substitutes are allowed. Any number of player substitutions is allowed during the game, although substitutes can only enter a game during a stoppage of play.

Male players generally wear shorts and a sleeveless top, and high-top sneakers that provide extra ankle support. Female players have worn shirts and skirts in the past, but most female players now wear uniforms identical to those worn by men.

Common techniques and practice

Positions

During the first five decades of basketball's evolution, a player occupied one of three positions, as follows: two guards, two forwards, and one center. Since the 1980s, more specific positions have evolved, as follows:

1. Point guard
2. Shooting guard
3. Small forward
4. Power forward
5. Center

On some occasions, teams will choose to use a *three guard offense*, replacing one of the forwards or the center with a third guard.

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Role of the Official

Officials

A referee and one or two umpires, called game **officials**, control the game. On the scorers' table, there are **table officials**, who are responsible for the administration of the game. The table officials include the **scorer**, who keeps track of the score, time outs and fouls by each player; the timer, who controls the scoreboard; and the [shot clock](#) operator.

Referees and umpires generally wear a black and white striped shirt and black trousers. These officials are responsible for the overall management of the game, to ensure the teams compete in a fair, honest and consistent environment.



The Basketball Court

The gymnasium or playing area (court) should be well defined to encourage organized activity. This permits the coach more time to spend on activities and less time on disciplinary measures. The area surrounding the court should not offer any physical hazards that might injure an athlete or damage the facility or equipment.

A basketball court consists of a level, hardtop surface, usually wood, and two baskets with backboards. Basketball can be played in a gym, at a playground or on a driveway. In addition, the dimensions of the court can be modified to suit the number and abilities of the athletes.

A basket consists of a nylon net hanging from a metal rim that is attached to a backboard. The backboard is usually rectangular and made of Plexiglas and has a square painted on it above the area where the rim is attached. The regulation height of the rim from the playing surface is 3.05 meters (10 feet). However, for instructional purposes, coaches may use an adjustable standard (backboard pole) that can be lowered and set according to an athlete's ability.

Coaching Tips

- Discuss the boundaries of a basketball court. When taking athletes to a gym or outdoor court for practice, show athletes the marking on the court and show them how to measure the boundaries, if they are not already marked. Assist athletes with marking the boundaries.
- Walk around the court area and discuss what should be removed or repaired. Explain the importance of making the playing area safe and ready for play so that when they play at home or at school, the athletes will know how to be safe.



Modifications & Adaptations

In competition, it is important that the rules not be changed to suit athletes' special needs. However, coaches can modify the training exercises to accommodate an athlete's special physical, cognitive or communication needs. This may assist the athlete in mastering the basketball skills.

For more extensive information related to various disabilities and suggested modifications in coaching technique, see the Coaching Special Olympics Athletes section of this guide; specifically the Information and Problem Solving section.

http://www.specialolympics.org/Special+Olympics+Public+Website/English/Coach/Coaching_Guides/Coaching+Special+Olympics+Athletes/Information+and+Problem+Solving.htm

Modifying Skills

Modify the skills involved in an exercise so that all athletes can participate. For example, if an activity calls for jumping, pair athletes of similar jumping ability. This will challenge them without making them feel inadequate next to a much more skilled athlete.

Accommodating an Athlete's Special Needs

Use the sound of a bell for visually impaired athletes and a different colored ball for deaf athletes. Be sure that deaf athletes have a sign language interpreter or that you have an effective system for communication worked out with that athlete. Remember that each athlete is an individual and may learn or react differently from the other athletes. Check on each athlete in each activity to assess level of mastery and readiness before moving on.

Modifying Your Communication Method

Different athletes require different communication systems. For example, some athletes learn and respond better to demonstrated exercises, whereas others require greater verbal communication. Some athletes may need a combination – to see, hear and even read a description of the exercise or skill.



Home Training Program

1. If athletes only train once a week with their coaches and do no training on their own, progress will be very limited. A minimum of three training sessions is needed to facilitate a training effect. The Home Training Program for Basketball is designed to help facilitate basic sport skills and fitness activities between athletes and families or friends. The program can also be used as a basis for a Partners Club program. The Home Training Program can be used in homes, schools, group homes and parks and recreation programs.
2. An Athlete Handbook/Home Training Guide can be downloaded from the Special Olympics website www.specialolympics.org to assist coaches in integrating Home Training into their season, as well as helping athletes and families with ideas on how to practice between practices!
3. The Basketball Home Training Program consists of simple warm-up and stretching exercises, basic skills practice, agility and conditioning activities and mini-game play. When the program is followed two or three times a week, the results can be dramatic. The program also promotes important nutrition guidelines and active lifestyle hints while encouraging social interactions between athletes, friends and families, and it can be fun for everyone.
4. Nothing improves the athlete's sport ability like playing! Parents/Guardians can challenge the athlete to family shooting or timed dribbling competitions for additional practice or just social outings.
5. To be effective, coaches should run a home training orientation for family members and/or training partners. This should be an active session where parents get hands-on experience with the different activities.
6. As a motivational tool, a coach may want to award a certificate of achievement to athletes and training partners who complete a set number of home training sessions during the season. The record keeping and scoring system are included in the Home Training Guide.



Cross Training in Basketball

Cross training is a modern-day term that refers to the substitution of skills other than the skills directly involved in the performance of an event. Cross training came about as a result of injury rehabilitation and is now also used in injury prevention. When basketball players sustain injuries that keep them from playing in a game, other activities can be substituted so that the athletes can keep up their aerobic and muscular strength.

- A reason to "cross train" is to avoid injury and maintain muscular balance during a period of intense sport specific training. One of the keys to success in sport is staying healthy and training over the long haul. Cross training allows athletes to do event specific training workouts with greater enthusiasm and intensity, or less risk of injury.
- Within Special Olympics, there are many sports that use some of the same skills and muscle groups as basketball. There are several individual sports that are excellent cross training sports. Cycling uses the legs, especially the quadriceps muscles. Cycling helps athletes develop areas prone to injury and essential for defense. Roller skating and speed skating also develop muscle strength, balance, power and endurance. Tennis enhances agility and lateral movement.
- Soccer and team handball are very similar team games in comparison with basketball. Team handball, especially, requires similar basic skills of moving, dribbling, passing, catching and defense. However, there is limited dribbling, and the ball is thrown into a goal on the floor instead of a basket in the air.
- The purpose of cross training is for the athlete to take part in activities that place similar demands on the body as basketball. These sports are different, challenging and fun. However, training is specific. The advantage of cross training activities is enhancing general fitness, not improving specific basketball skills.



Basketball Specific Concepts & Strategies

Training Sessions

There are five simple ways to create a training environment that brings out the best in each Special Olympics athlete.

Be organized

- Make sure that all training and playing schedules are understood.
- Pre-plan the training session; bring a written outline to practice.
- Review it briefly with the assistant coaches and players before starting.
- Be fully equipped to run the session (cones, balls, scrimmage vests, watch, etc.).
- Move quickly from one activity to the next.
- If possible, have athletes bring their own basketballs and water bottles.

Develop, with your athletes, a simple agreement for behavior and an agreement to abide by the Special Olympics Athlete Code of Conduct (see the section on Special Olympics Basics). Do this at your first Parent's Meeting and your first practice.

- Athletes should understand the value of team rules. For example,
- Arrive on time.
- Come properly dressed.
- Listen to coaching instructions.
- Give 100% at all times.
- Support and encourage teammates.

Provide activities that are short and active.

- Some athletes may have difficulty standing around and watching or concentrating for a long period of time.
- They may become distracted and disruptive.
- Prepare athletes for game situations as well as skills improvement.
- Have enough help (coaches, parents or helpers) to keep the practice on schedule.
- Have brief water breaks after each activity.

Provide levels of coaching assistance appropriate for each athlete.

- Some athletes can understand brief verbal direction and demonstration.
- Others will need physical prompting or physical assistance to perform a skill.
- Use the Key Words rather than long explanations to explain and reinforce the technical components of skills and concepts.

Ask questions, rather than always dictate.

- Challenge athletes to think. Ask them questions that require thought and interaction.
- Listen to what they say.



During Competition

Before the Game

Arrive approximately one hour before the game. Allow enough time to register the athletes. In addition, give the athletes time to change into their uniforms, use the rest room and become familiar with the facility.

Have athletes run through a pre-game warm-up routine before the competition. If possible, team leaders can conduct it. A typical warm-up routine might include:

- 2-3 minutes of jogging and 5-10 minutes of stretching before taking the court
- 3-5 minutes of Two-line Lay-up and Rebound Drill
 - Divide the team to form two lines – one line will lay-up to the right facing the basket; the other will rebound to the left facing the basket.
 - The first person in the lay-up line dribbles in, shoots a lay-up and continues to the end of the rebound line.
 - The first person in the rebound line runs to the basket, jumps up (if able) and gets the rebound from the lay-up made or missed.
 - The rebounder dribbles the ball clear of the basket, passes it to the next person in the lay-up line and runs to the end of the lay-up line.
 - Lay-up and rebound drill continues for 5 minutes.
- 3 minutes each of Individual Skills Practice, which includes ball handling: passing, catching and dribbling and shooting with rebounding. The group can be divided so that there are not too many athletes at the one basket.
 - Divide the team into two groups.
 - One group practices shooting and rebounding in pairs at the basket; after five shots, the shooters become rebounders and the rebounders shooters.
 - The other group practices ball handling (ball circling body parts and/or Dribble Five Spots) and passing under pressure in three's and at half court.
 - After 5 minutes, the groups switch roles and positions.
- 5-minute review of actual offensive and defensive positions with the starters on the court.
- 2-3 minutes of team talk covering position assignments, key responsibilities, offensive basket and defensive basket.

Coaching Tips

- The lower the skill level of the team, the more prompting required. Coaches may need to assist athletes with the pre-game warm-up routine. However, the routine can be learned if it is practiced during training sessions, not just performed at competitions. In addition, higher ability athletes can lead each group. Always be positive and encouraging, but do not over-psych the athletes. Finish with a team cheer.

During the Game

1. Encourage and support the athletes. Be positive and specific.
2. Do not coach an athlete who has the ball; it will be too distracting. Allow the athletes to make their own decisions and their own mistakes.
3. Develop team leaders who can prompt and help lower ability athletes.
4. Commit to providing playing time for each athlete (assuming safety and behavior considerations are met).
5. Watch the game actively and assess what the opponents and your athletes are doing and not doing; make adjustments through substitutions and time-outs.
6. When giving players information, be specific and always correct the first mistake.
7. Keep substitutions simple.
 - Plan strategies before the game as to the best playing combinations. Prepare athletes by playing those combinations during practice.



- Do not move lower ability athletes from one position to another within a single game. Allow them the stability of playing one position.
 - Substitute purposefully:
 - Rest tired or injured athletes.
 - Improve the defense; send in a more aggressive player.
 - Adjust to what the opponent is doing to limit their effectiveness.
 - Protect a player who has three or more fouls.
 - Send in a specialist – the best defender, re-bouncer, free-throw shooter, etc.
 - Remove an athlete who has become too distracted.
 - Always play to your strengths.
 - Play a lower ability athlete with stronger athletes at the end of the 2nd and 3rd quarters.
8. Call time-outs wisely:
- Stop an opponent who has made four to six points without your team scoring.
 - Make needed team adjustments on offense or on defense. For example:
 - If one of the opposing team members is a good shooter, play the best defensive player on him/her.
 - If the opponent has one strong player and the rest are of lower ability, double-team (place two defenders) on that player. The rest of the team can protect the basket in a triangle zone, which is the back three players in the 2-1-2 zone.
 - If the team has continued to run up and down the court without a good shot or rebounding opportunity, call a time-out; ask the team to pass the ball to the point guard as soon as possible. The point guard will dribble the ball up court slowly and cue the team to Set Up.
 - If the opponent presses, spread out the offense and keep the basketball in the hands of the best players. Design the offense with this as a part of it.
 - Go onto the court, re-position the players and walk through the adjustment if necessary, even during time-outs.
 - Be calm and refocus the team.
 - The athletes will be more likely to perform what was previously practiced.
 - Pressure is distracting. There will be a regression of skills during a game, especially if the team is young or inexperienced. The team will become more confident and skilled over time because of the training and competition opportunities provided.
9. Use the halftime effectively.
- Break for water.
 - Focus on the good plays and efforts.
 - Identify one thing that needs to be done during the second half.
 - Go onto the court, if necessary, to re-position the offense and defense.
 - Set up the first offense and defensive play.
 - Perform a team cheer; then go onto the court.

After the Game

1. Line up immediately to shake hands with the opponent. Coach the athletes to appreciate sportsmanship and the other team as fellow basketball players, win or lose.
2. Call the team together. Focus on their efforts, not only on the outcome. Acknowledge each athlete's contribution. Help athletes deal with winning and losing.
3. Announce the next practice or event.
4. Never correct any mistakes after the game; wait until practice.
5. At home, spend a few minutes reviewing the team's performance. Prepare some useful comments and activities for the next practice.



Team Play

Basketball is a game played with two teams of five players each (we'll deal with three-on-three basketball a little later). The game does not have to be complicated. A team is either attacking the opponent's basket with the goal of scoring, or it is trying to regain possession of the ball while defending its basket and keeping the other team from scoring.

- However, the biggest challenge for the coach is teaching athletes game concepts and strategies, simply and effectively, so that the athletes can meaningfully play the game. Concepts or strategies can be isolated and transferred to the game. The game itself becomes the best teacher. Approximately half of the training time should be spent on basic skills and half on game play.
- One way that athletes can learn and practice basic game concepts or strategies is Mini-Basketball. Concepts and strategies are isolated in this mini game involving few people and simple offense and defense. The coach begins with one-on-one and progresses to five-on-five team play.



Attack (Offense) vs. Defend (Defense)

Athlete Readiness

- Athlete can dribble, shoot and move to the basketball.
- Athlete can move forward, backward and sideways while keeping hands up.
- Athletes should move in a step and slide motion (illustrate to players).
- Athlete can grab the basketball.

Teaching Attack vs. Defend

1. Place one athlete with the ball on offense; direct that athlete to attempt to score.
2. Place one athlete on defense, facing offender an arm's length away and with back to basket.
3. Direct defender to stay between offender and basket. Wherever offender moves, defender moves to prevent offender from dribbling to basket.
4. When offender picks up ball, defender places nearest hand over ball, preventing or discouraging shot.
5. Athlete should play defense while trying not to foul the offensive player.

Mini-Basketball: One-on-One

1. One offensive player and one defender are at the foul line.
2. Goals for defender are to stay between offensive player and the basket and to obtain the ball before offender scores.
3. Offensive player can dribble as well as shoot.
4. After the ball is shot, defender actively goes for rebound.
5. If offensive player gets rebound, that player stays on offense.
6. As soon as score is made or defender gets ball, play is over.
7. Rotation is defense to offense to end-of-the line to defense, etc.

Key Words

- Attack - Offense
- Defend - Defense

Coaching Tips

- When you begin, physically prompt athletes by placing them in the correct positions. Stand behind defender. For athletes with lower ability, the coach may have to physically assist the athlete in moving to stop the offender. With repetition, less and less prompting will be required.
- While playing, each athlete must recognize when he or she is on offense and when on defense. Some athletes get the ball under a basket and shoot, regardless of whether they are at their offensive or defensive baskets. As soon as athletes shoot at the wrong basket, stop play and correct.
- Make the most out of each moment. Ask your athletes:
 1. What do you do when you have the ball?(Attack the Basket)
 2. What do you do when the opponent has the ball? (Defend)



Changing Baskets after Halftime

Athlete Readiness

- Athlete can identify a teammate by the color of scrimmage vest he or she is wearing.
- Athlete can identify the basket at which he/she shoots and the basket at which he/she defends.

Teaching the Concept

1. The team stands behind the coach at the team's bench area; each athlete should be able to see the court and baskets.
2. The coach points to and identifies the basket farthest from the team as the shooting basket - Offense.
3. The coach asks the team at which basket they are shooting; the team responds by pointing and saying "Offense."
4. If necessary, the coach then physically assists the athletes into their team offense positions on the court.
5. At the beginning of the second half, the team and the coach return to the bench.
6. The coach points to the basket closest to the bench, which is now the new shooting basket.
7. The coach asks the team at which basket they are now shooting; the team responds.
8. The coach asks the team at which basket they are now defending; the team responds.
9. If necessary, the coach then physically assists the athletes into team offense positions.

Key Words

- Offense
- Defense

Coaching Tips

- A tool that is quite helpful is a clipboard with a picture or diagram of a basketball court. When the coach identifies the shooting basket, he/she points to the basket on the clipboard and then the basket on the court.
- After halftime when the coach is identifying the baskets, the coach points out the baskets as they were during the first half. Then the coach physically moves the clipboard so that basket is now at the other end.
- The coach then asks the athletes at which basket the team is now shooting. The coach then instructs or physically assists the athletes to run to their Set-Up spots, their positions on offense.
- Ask your athletes:
 1. At which basket must we shoot?
 2. At which end do we play defense?



Three Seconds in the Lane

Athlete Readiness

- Athlete can move forward, backward and sideways.
- Athlete can recognize areas on the court.

Teaching the Concept

1. Identify the lane areas of the court one is defensive, one offensive.
2. Use the terms Hot and Cold. Identify offensive end with Hot: on offense, one must move through it or else burn up.
3. Identify the defensive end with Cold: on defense, it helps to defend the opponent.
4. Constantly reinforce Hot and Cold with proper positioning.
5. Set up athletes' positions on offense where all athletes are outside the lane.
6. During half-court or full-court play, stand on the court. As players move into their Set-Up positions on offense, move them out of the lane.

Key Words

- Hot
- Cold

Coaching Tips

- Concrete examples give a concept a form that the athlete can identify in his/her physical world.
- The three-second lane is as difficult to understand as changing baskets at halftime. It is permissible to be in the lane during half of the game, but then these lanes change just as the baskets change.
- Equate the three-second lane with offense, the shooting basket. This is not a first-year concept to learn for a lower ability or a beginning basketball team. This probably can be addressed during the second or third year, after a team has a firm understanding of offense.
- Ask your athletes:
 1. In which lane can we stand? Where is it Cold?
 2. In which lane must we move in and out? Where is it Hot?



Fast Break

The fast break is a play in which the defensive team gains possession of the ball and moves the ball quickly down the court. The goal is to score before the other team has a chance to set up a strong defense.

- All five players take part in the fast break and have various responsibilities. The ball is usually passed to the point guard, who dribbles it down the middle. Two teammates “Fill The Lanes” (explain) that are on either side of the point guard. These teammates run just inside the sidelines to give the dribbler enough dribbling space. In addition, running near the sidelines prevents defenders from stopping the play. The two remaining teammates initially trail the play and then move to get good rebounding positions under the basket.

Athlete Readiness

- Athlete can turn and forward. [is something missing?]
- Athlete can pass, catch, dribble and rebound the ball.
- Athlete recognizes and works with teammates.
- Athlete recognizes offensive and defensive ends of the court.

Teaching the Fast Break

- Review going for the ball.
- Review the rebound progression.
- Perform a Break-Away drill.
- After the point guard receives the ball he/she turns to face offensive basket, looks for the opening, drives down court and lays the ball up. The rebounder/passers trails the dribbler, rebounds a missed shot and attempts to make a follow-up shot.
- Perform a Two-Player Break.
- Plus Trailer Drill: A teammate is added to the above drill; he/she becomes one of the “WINGS” (explain) filling the nearest fast break lane.

Key Words

- Rebound
- Turn And Look
- Outlet
- Fill The Lanes
- Trail

Coaching Tips

- A lower ability team can fast break even though it may look more like a Break-Away or a Two-Player Break. Any player who rebounds the ball then outlets it to the best dribbler. That player may be moving to an open space or running down court.
- Teach the team to look for and pass to the designated dribbler.
- A coach wants the ball dribbled by the player who has the best ball control. This minimizes turnovers.
- The best rebounder and fastest player is taught to run down court after the ball is thrown, in order to offensively rebound.
- Defenders can be added to the above drill one at a time and after the athletes have learned the particular fast break skill. Since the emphasis is on offense, give the advantage to the offense. There should be one more athlete on offense than defense.
- A higher ability team can progress to perform a traditional three-lane fast break.
- In order for it to be effective, all athletes need to know their responsibilities. Identify specific tasks and practice them.



Free Throw

Athlete Readiness

- Athlete recognizes official areas and court lines (free-throw lane and lines).
- Athlete can shoot.

Teaching the Free Throw

1. Set up a free-throw situation and explain why it has occurred (athlete has been fouled, especially while shooting).
2. Two defenders take positions underneath lane at the blocks.
3. Opponents alternate positions up the lane spaces (maximum four defensive players and two offensive players).
4. The free-throw shooter has both feet behind the free-throw line.
5. The players around the lane cannot move into the lane until the ball has left the shooter's hands.
6. The free-throw shooter cannot enter the lane until the ball hits the rim.
7. Practice the situation during controlled scrimmages.

Key Words

- Feet Behind The Line
- Hold Your Position
- Go Get Ball After It Leaves Shooter's Hand
- Come In After Shooting

Coaching Tips

- Do not spend much time on this concept with a beginning basketball team. It could be set up during the scrimmage portion of practice. Take proper positions and administer the free throw with play continuing.
- The free throw can be practiced in groups of three or four athletes when in stations or at the end of practice. During a game, athletes are fouled when they are tired. Practice free throws at the end of practice to simulate this.
- Ask your athletes:
 1. As a free-throw shooter, where are your feet? (Behind The Line)
 2. Where on offense can we line up? (Next To Defense, Alternate Position Along The Lane)
 3. Where on defense can we line up? (At First Spaces Under Basket, Alternate Position Along The Lane)



Jump Ball

Athlete Readiness

- Athlete can jump.
- Athlete can time the jump to tap the ball while in the air.
- Athlete can try to tap the ball to a teammate.

Teaching the Jump Ball

1. Demonstrate and review the jump.
2. Hold the ball above the athlete's head and ask the athlete to tap it to a teammate.
3. Toss the ball above athlete's head and ask the athlete to tap it to a teammate.
4. Take the position at a jump ball circle and repeat skill.
5. Have the team line up around the center circle and next to an opponent.
6. Repeat the skill.
7. Remember, one player from each team stands at the top of the key protecting their basket.

Key Words

- Jump and Tap
- Tap To a Teammate

Coaching Tips

- There are jump balls at the beginning of the game and the start of overtime. After the beginning jump, possession of the ball alternates between teams on each jump ball (held ball) situation thereafter.
- Teach your two best jumpers (who have the best sense of timing) to be your jump-ball experts. Presently, jump balls do occur during held ball situations during the game and at the start of each half during international competition.
- Time needs to be spent with all athletes on the jump ball; however, this concept is not a high priority.
- Ask your athletes:
 1. Where does the jumper line up? (In the Circle)
 2. To whom does the jumper tap the ball? (Teammate)
 3. Where are the non-jumpers? (Outside and Around The Circle)



The Give-and-Go

The give-and-go is one of the most important team skills. An athlete learns to recognize and work with a teammate where the ultimate goal is scoring. An athlete passes the ball to a teammate who has moved to get open. The passer cuts to the basket for a return pass. This skill assists athletes in making the transition from skills to game play. The skill does not exist in isolation; it is incorporated into offense and team play.

Athlete Readiness

- Athlete can identify a teammate by the color of scrimmage vest he/she is wearing.
- Athlete can pass and catch, pivot, dribble, shoot and move to the ball.
- Athlete can move forward, backward and sideways.

Teaching the Concept

1. Review the bounce pass.
2. Teach the V-cut. The athlete takes one step to the basket, plants that outside foot, turns his/her hips toward the teammate with the ball and moves one or two steps toward the ball. The athlete receives the ball and attempts to score.
3. Practice receiving the pass and turning (pivoting) to face the basket. As the athlete pivots to face the basket, the athlete raises the ball to a position in front and to the shooting side of the body. The athlete is now in an effective position to pass, dribble or shoot. This position is called “triple threat.”
4. Perform the give-and-go without defense.
5. Perform the give-and-go against a passive defender on the receiver.
6. Perform the give-and-go against passive defenders one on the receiver and the other on the passer-cutter.
7. Perform the give-and-go against more active defense.

Key Words

- Go Get the Ball
- Bounce Pass to Teammate
- V-Cut

Mini-Basketball: Two-on-One (in the front court)

1. Teams are comprised of two athletes; team members wear same-colored scrimmage vests.
2. Attacking team plays with two on the court.
3. Defending team plays with one on the court and one off the court.
4. Offense must make at least one pass before shooting.
5. Defender protects basket but tries to steal ball.
6. If ball goes out of bounds, it counts as a possession and a turnover.
7. If offense shoots and gets rebound, play continues.
8. If defender gets the ball, play is over and ball is passed to coach.
9. Each team stays on offense or defense for three possessions.
10. On each possession, a new defender plays defense.
11. Each team plays offense and defense two to three times.
12. Offense scores two points for a score and one point for offensive rebound; defense scores one point each for a steal or a rebound.



Recognizing and Working with Teammates

Athlete Readiness

- Athlete can identify a teammate by the color of scrimmage vest he or she is wearing.
- Athlete can pass and catch, dribble, shoot, defend and move to the ball.
- Athlete can move forward, backward and sideways.

Teaching the Concept

1. Create teams of three.
2. Place scrimmage vests of the same color on each team, different from the other teams' colors.
3. Require a minimum of one pass before a shot can be taken.

Key Words

- Go Get the Ball
- Bounce Pass to Teammate
- V-Cut

Mini-Basketball: Three-on-Three (w/o conversion)

1. Create equal ability teams of three athletes at each basket.
2. Attacking team, team A, faces the basket.
3. Defending team, team B, plays between the basket and offenders (use offensive players).
4. Coach stands at the division line, giving ball to offense.
5. Offense must make at least one pass before shooting.
6. Defenders protect basket but try to steal ball.
7. Ball going out of bounds counts as a possession and a turnover.
8. If offense shoots and gets rebound, play continues.
9. If defense gets the ball, play is over and ball is passed to coach.
10. Each team stays on offense or defense for three possessions.
11. Each team plays offense and defense two to three times.
12. Award two points for offensive score and one point for rebound; one point each for a defensive steal or rebound.

Coaching Tips

- When you first begin, physically prompt athletes by placing them in the correct positions. Stand behind the defenders. For athletes with lower ability, the coach may physically assist the athletes in staying between offenders and the basket.
- With repetition, less and less prompting is required.
- Ask your athletes:
 1. Where do you stand on defense? (Between Opponent And Basket)
 2. What are you trying to do on offense? (Score)
 3. Who is your Teammate? (Wearing Same-Colored Shirt)



Mini-Basketball: Three-on-Three (w/ modified conversion)

Play three-on-three as above with the following exceptions.

1. When the defense gets the ball or when the offense scores, the ball is thrown to the coach.
2. The teams change offensive and defensive positions.
3. The coach passes to middle offender, and play continues.
4. Each team stays on offense or defense for three possessions.
5. Each team plays offense and defense two to three times.
6. Award two points for offensive score and one point for rebound; one point each a defensive steal or rebound.

Coaching Tips

- The goal is to assist athletes' changing from offense to defense and changing their positions on the half court. With the ball being passed to the coach after a score or a defensive steal or rebound, athletes have more time to make the adjustment. The coach can also verbally and physically prompt, if necessary.

Mini-Basketball: Three-on-Three (with conversion)

Play three-on-three with the following exceptions.

1. When the defense gets the ball or when the offense scores, the ball is dribbled back to a position beyond the foul line extended.
2. The teams change offensive and defensive positions.
3. Play continues as before.
4. One pass must be made before an offender can shoot.
5. Play continues for 2-3 minutes
6. Award two points for offensive score and one point for rebound; one point each for a defensive steal or rebound.

Coaching Tips

- This progression allows a more game-like situation. All athletes are challenged to react to the ball and to take possession of it. Each must get into position quickly. When on offense, the team faces the basket.
- When on defense, the team has its back to the basket and is positioned between opponents and the basket. The defense must dribble or pass the ball to a teammate beyond the foul line extended before it attacks the basket.
- With lower ability athletes, the coach verbally prompts the offense to "Take the Ball Back" and to "V-Cut" to get open. With repetition and reinforcement, less prompting is necessary.
- Ask your athletes:
 1. Who do you pass to? (Teammate)
 2. Where do you dribble or pass the ball after you go on defense? (Behind The Foul Line)
 3. What must you do to get open? (V-Cut)
- Teach a simple three-player offense. The structure will help athletes with lower ability know what to do and where to move. Each athlete should have only one or two tasks to perform. It is helpful if they learn a position on one side of the court. This helps to provide a point of reference that each can find.

Teaching the Three-Player Offense

1. Position athletes on the court according to their abilities.
 - Your most skilled athlete is #1; the point guard.
 - Place the other two athletes one behind the other at the block (free-throw lane space) to the left of the basket and with their backs to the basket.
2. On GO, each breaks to a spot.
 - #2 athlete comes up the lane between defenders.
 - #3 athlete runs just outside the block on the opposite side of the basket.
 - Neither stands behind an opponent (defensive player); each moves to an open space.
3. #1 passes to #2 and breaks to the basket.



4. #2 pivots, faces the basket with the ball protected and passes back to #1, who shoots.
5. #1, #2 and #3 go for the rebound.
6. Or #2 can pivot, face the basket and dribble for a lay-up.
7. Initially, #1 can pass to #3 as well. The play continues.

A simple player-to-player defense is encouraged. This helps athletes learn to defend a player with the ball and another without. This is an excellent transition to the five-player game. A triangle zone (explain) defense with the top defender on the ball can also be played. This lets athletes defend an area and the opponent with the ball in their area. It places them in the best rebounding position. Or two athletes can be assigned other opponents with one athlete back protecting the middle. This is the best of individual defense (pressure on the ball) and zone defense (protection of the basket).



Team Defense

Athlete Readiness

- Athlete can pass and catch, dribble, defend and move to the ball.
- Athlete can recognize and work with teammates.
- Athlete does not defend nor take the ball away from teammates.
- Athlete recognizes which basket to defend.
- Athlete understands the basic rules of the game.

Certainly, the aim of the game is to score more points than your opponent. Conversely, it is also to limit the number of points your opponent scores. Team defense is the concept that focuses on that aspect.

- When teaching team defense, it is much easier to begin by teaching a zone defense. Each team member learns how to defend an opponent, but within the safety of a smaller space.
- The 2-1-2 zone defense is one of the more easily taught zones. The coach is able to use court markings to place athletes close to the basket to prevent high percentage shots. Each athlete has one task to perform. It is important for the coach to recognize the abilities and capabilities of all team members for their strategic placement in the zone, making the team defense most effective.
- Concerning the placement of athletes, it is suggested that the most skilled all-around athlete (#1) be placed in the middle of the zone. This person is a stabilizing force, helping teammates and protecting the most vulnerable area (the middle). The smaller and quicker athletes take the top spots (#2 and #3). Taller athletes are at the bottom spots (#4 and #5) and closer to the basket. However, it is suggested that at least one of the positions be played by a smaller athlete who is assertive and who jumps or moves to the ball strongly.



Teaching Progression for Team Defense

Teach defensive positioning on the athlete with the ball.

- An athlete, coach or volunteer demonstrates proper stance, arm position and body position (arm's length away from athlete with the ball, between opponent and basket, and with back to basket).
- While the team is spread around the court, each volunteer works with three to four athletes, verbally prompting proper body position.
- Then the group is divided so that there are four athletes and one coach/volunteer at each basket to individually practice positioning and movement one-on-one at the five zone positions. One offensive athlete has a ball and tries to drive past or shoot over one defensive athlete.

Key Words

- Belly to the Ball (explain)
- Step to the Ball

Teach zone areas for which each athlete is responsible

- Optional: Tape X's on the floor, and gradually remove them over the course of the season. Make sure this is approved by the facility manager before putting tape on the floor.
- Use existing lines or marks on the court for cues, i.e., the junction of the foul line and lane line for the top spots on each side of the lane (#2, #3); the middle of the lane for the middle defender (#1); the low post blocks on the lane for the two bottom spots on each side of the lane (#4, #5).
- At the top spots, each athlete places his/her outside foot on the spots. At the bottom spots, each athlete places his/her inside foot on the spots. #1 is responsible for the lane.
- Place athletes in their areas; have them individually recognize their positions and court markings. Each area is two sliding steps out in radius from the athlete's originating position.
- Cue Belly to the Ball and Step to the Ball (explain) and reinforce them throughout the progression.
- Direct athletes to move within their areas while the team on offense passes the ball around the perimeter. Each athlete adjusts to defending the opponent who has and does not have the ball in his or her area. Emphasize that:
 - It takes all five athletes moving together to stop the ball and,
 - When one defender moves, all must move, otherwise openings occur for scoring. (#3 moves to fill ball side block area.)

Teach offense-to-defense conversion

- Athletes line up in positions at their own offensive end of the court. Athlete shoots ball and coach retrieves. Coach cues "Defense" and "Go to Your X." Assistants physically prompt athletes to run to the other end and set up their defensive positions on their respective X's.
- Athletes sprint to opposite end and set up defense on their spots.
- Athletes move on defense as ball is passed by offense.
- Keep reinforcing "Belly to the Ball" and "Step to the Ball."
- Gradually remove the X's on the court.

Practice offense-to-defense-to-offense conversion

- Repeat above drill, beginning with ball shot at offensive end and athletes sprinting to defensive end to set up 2-1-2 zone.
- On a defensive steal and rebound, team breaks down court to offensive spots.
- Get offensive center out of lane; use strong physical prompt plus verbal cues (Hot, Get Out of the Fire). The coach must do this from day one, or athletes will have problems discriminating between defensive and offensive ends as well as getting out of the lane.



Coaching Tips

- Athletes with lower ability can play team sports. The key is making the concepts, athletes' roles and responsibilities as simple and as concrete as possible. Through the development of skills and the repetition of their use in the game, the concepts become understandable.
- When teaching player-to-player or man-to-man defense, a player is responsible for defending a player, not an area. The above progression is extended as follows.

Teach off-the-ball defense (helping)

- Review proper defensive stance and movement.
- Teach a point-the-gun (open up) position on defending an opponent without the ball.
 1. One hand points to player defending; other hand points to player with the ball.
 2. Defender must always know where the ball is.
 3. Each defender must be able to see it without turning his/her head.

Key Words

- Step to the Ball
- Belly to the Ball
- Ball
- Help
- Deny

Mini-Basketball: Help and Recover positioning with passing

- Tape a dotted line down the middle of the court, lengthwise. This line is basket to basket.
- Movement and positioning should be demonstrated by the coaches, then practiced by the athletes.
- Two players play stationary offense at each side, with one coach being the point guard.
- Defenders take defensive positions on the offenders.
- Point guard is on one side of the basket-to-basket line.
- Athletes are positioned, taught that they play arm's length away from the offender on the ball side and on the basket-to-basket line on the help side (non-ball side).
- Ball is passed slowly from the point guard to one offender.
- Cue "Step to the Ball" and "Belly to the Ball."
- Defender on the ball plays between the offender and basket.
- Defender off the ball has one foot on the basket-to-basket line, other foot on the help side of the court, and back to the basket.
- As the ball moves, the two defenders move and call their positions.
 1. When on the player with the ball, an athlete yells Ball.
 2. When one pass away from the ball, the athlete yells Deny.
 3. When two passes away from the ball, the athlete yells Help.
- They pivot and slide to position while facing the ball.

The defense's goal is a deflection, steal or rebound. Play in 1-minute intervals against a set offense. Keep score; the defense gets one point each for a deflection, steal or rebound. Each team has two to three times on defense. The team with the most points wins.



Mini-Basketball: Help and Recover positioning with passing and limited dribbling

- One element is added. When the offender receives the ball, he or she can drive.
- The ball side defender must try to stay with the driver and stop the dribbler (Stop The Ball) before he/she gets to the basket.
- The help side defender should be in position to help stop the dribbler (Stop The Ball) from shooting a lay-up.
- On the pass back to the point guard, all defenders recover to positions (Step To The Ball) and play Belly To The Ball.
- When the point drives, the defenders take a step to pinch (explain) the middle.
- When the point guard passes, the defenders recover to ball side defense or help side defense according to where the ball is.
- Play continues, and athletes yell their positions in relation to the ball as they move (Ball, Deny and Help).

The defense's goal is a deflection, steal or rebound. Play in 1-minute intervals against a set offense. Keep score; the defense gets one point each for a deflection, steal or rebound. Each team has two to three times on defense. The winning team totals the most points.

Mini-Basketball: Shell positioning with passing

- Four offensive players line up in a box outside the lane. There is no one in the lane.
- The offense passes the ball around the perimeter.
- The defenders Step To The Ball, play Belly To The Ball, position properly if ball side or help side (on basket-to-basket line) and yell their position (Ball, Deny, and Help).

The defense's goal is a deflection, steal or rebound. Play in 1-minute intervals. Keep score; the defense gets one point each for a deflection, steal or rebound. Each team has two to three times on defense. The winning team totals the most points.

Mini-Basketball: Shell positioning with passing and limited dribbling

- As above; however, now an offender can dribble after receiving the ball.
- The defenders Step To The Ball, play Belly To The Ball, position properly if ball side or help side (on basket-to-basket line) and yell their positions (Ball, Deny, and Help).

The defense's goal is a deflection, steal or rebound. Play in 1-minute intervals. Keep score. The defense gets one point each for a deflection, steal or rebound. Each team has two to three times on defense. The winning team totals the most points.

Coaching Tips

- A combination defense can be quite effective, especially for a lower ability team. One or two players defend player-to-player defense, and the rest defend in a zone. This provides the coach with the best of two systems: pressure on the ball that is distracting, and stability on the court that protects the basket.
- In addition, there are some athletes who can focus on a player but not on an area. They contribute to the team by defending the player with the ball as a chaser while the rest of the team plays a zone behind them.



Team Offense

Team offense is based on the fundamental skills of dribbling, passing and catching, shooting and offensive rebounding. A coach can present each of these skills and assist in the athlete's individual development. However, skills are just skills until an athlete uses them appropriately and successfully in game play with other teammates. Offense means scoring points making baskets. The ultimate goal of any of the offensive fundamental skills is to assist the athlete and the team in scoring. Certainly the aim of the game of basketball is to score more points than your opponent.

Athlete Readiness

- Athlete can pass and catch, dribble, shoot and go for the ball.
- Athlete can recognize and work with teammates.
- Athlete does not take the ball away from teammates.
- Athlete recognizes at which basket to score.
- Athlete understands the basic rules of the game.



Teaching Progression for Team Offense

Offensive skills: dribbling, passing, catching, shooting and rebounding.

- Present each skill.
- Practice it.
- Challenge higher skill: do the skill; do the skill more times (make five baskets); do the skill at higher speed; do a minimum of the skill in a limited time (make five baskets in 30 seconds).

Practice individually against defense: Attack to score.

Use the Mini-Basketball game of 1-on-1 to isolate basic offense against defense.

Practice team skills first without defense and then against defense

- Give-and-go is one of the most important team skills of recognizing and working with your teammate where the ultimate goal is scoring. An athlete passes the ball to a teammate (who has moved to get open) and cuts to the basket for a return pass.

Identify your athletes' abilities

On a lower ability level team, athletes may never acquire all five of the offensive skills. It is important to identify what they can do and what they can do well, in order to build the best offense.

Place athletes in positions that best fit their abilities

- Utilize the strength of each athlete. For example, if an athlete can pass but not catch, he or she could be the point guard.
- Work around your best athlete. As in the mainstream, each team has an athlete or two who is higher in ability and game understanding than others. By utilizing their strengths, the coach gives his/her team the best chance for success.
- Assist each athlete in improving those skills. Provide time during practice for repetition and reinforcement of those individual skills.
- Help each athlete play a role, know and understand that role, and feel important to the team by playing it.
- Provide opportunities for all athletes to participate meaningfully. Give each athlete time on the court during practice and during competition. An opponent can help to elevate everyone's skill. Athletes rise to the occasion. As opponents and situations become increasingly challenging, athletes' abilities improve to meet those challenges. Athletes' abilities improve with each practice and with each game.

Create a simple offense

The structure will give the team the best chance to play to its strengths and succeed. Simple structure will help, not complicate, athletes' learning the game and playing together. It provides them stability and some certainty of what to do and where to move. The following is a simple offense called "Go Jerry." It has been successfully played by lower ability athletes/teams.

- Team is the offense on the half court without defense. Each of the athletes is identified by a number. Their placement on the court is based on following abilities:
 - #1: best all-around athlete who is right-handed
 - #2: guard/average dribbler
 - #3: good driver/rebounder
 - #4: inside shooter/rebounder
 - #5: good passer
- All athletes have Set-Up spots. #4 and #5 take positions one behind the other on the block on the left side of the court. #3 is in the same corner about 3m away.
- When athlete #1 reaches mid court, this is the visual cue for everyone to break (Cut) to their new positions. The verbal cue "Go Jerry" (who is the #4 athlete) is also given at this time.



- #2, #3, #4 and #5 move to their new positions, while #1 dribbles toward the top and right side of the key creating a passing angle.
- The cutting provides movement into open areas. It also gives the point guard a better passing angle. The offense then has an advantage over the defense.
- #1 passes to #5.
- #5 has four options:
 - turn and shoot,
 - pass to #1, who has cut to basket for return pass or rebound,
 - pass to #4 or #3 for inside shots, or
 - pass to #2.
- There will always be at least three rebounders (#3, #4, and #1), who are the most active in getting the ball.
- Once the offense is learned, it is important for the coach to assist athletes in performing it under more game-like conditions. One way to do this is to move athletes to the division or mid court line. The coach cues “Offense” and “Set Up” as the ball is picked up by the point guard. The athletes run to their spots and then run the offense on the “Go Jerry” cue.
- Athletes begin at their defensive end. The rebounder passes or hands off the ball to #1, who dribbles the ball up the court. The coach cues “Set Up” with the athletes running to their spots and then running the offense on the “Go Jerry” cue.
- Progress from offense to defense to offense. This now is the most game-like situation. The team is prompted in recognizing the transition from offense (when they get the ball) to defense (when their opponent has the ball) to offense (when they get the ball again).

Coaching Tips

- The following physical cues are suggested to assist the athletes’ learning the offense. Tape X’s on the floor for the athlete Set-Up cued spots. Tape different colored X’s on the floor for their end-of-cut cued positions. As the offense is learned, gradually remove the physical cues; use already existing lines on the floor.
- Verbalize the cues; reinforce good cuts. Your athletes will be able to repeat the offense.
- Reinforce not only cutting to the proper spots, but also throwing bounce passes and finishing the play. It is important for the receivers and the rebounders to Go Get the Ball whenever a pass is thrown or a shot is taken. As the ball leaves the shooter’s hand, everyone yells “Rebound,” turns to the basket and then goes for the ball. The coach must reinforce “Go Get the Ball.”
- Success is built on a team’s ability to score. Moving to the ball reinforces assertive play and gives a team more opportunities to score.

Provide a controlled scrimmage where offense goes against defense and the play is full court. Reinforce appropriate play, good teamwork and good results (effort and outcome).

Coaching Tips

- A coach can help athletes further develop self-esteem and team spirit by getting their input.
- Have them talk about what they are learning.
- Watch basketball games together.
- Discuss rules.
- Discuss what went right and what went wrong in your last game or practice, plus what they can do to improve. The interaction makes them feel valued and gives the coach important feedback.
- Offense, scoring and development can occur because the coach provides the necessary opportunities.
- Concepts are made concrete while athletes’ abilities are utilized. Even though offense is measured by the number of points scored, coaches can recognize and praise the contributions of all athletes.
- Reinforcing each athlete’s specific strengths enhances everyone’s experience. The most positive environment can be created for all and will yield the greatest gains.



Throw-In

Athlete Readiness

- Athlete can pass and catch.
- Athlete can identify a teammate by the color of scrimmage vest he/she is wearing.
- Athlete can stay behind the line until passing the ball.

Teaching the Throw-In

1. Divide the group into pairs.
2. One partner is out of bounds, the other is in bounds as a receiver. There are no defenders.
3. Coach gives the ball to the passer, who throws a bounce pass to his/her teammate.
4. Receiver V-cuts to get open and meets the pass.
5. Passer steps inbounds to receive a pass back.
6. Change responsibilities so that each athlete has a chance to inbound the ball and receive a pass.
7. Add a defender in front of the passer. This defender pressures the pass and then defends the athlete stepping onto the court.
8. Then add another defender on the receiver. The receiver has to work harder to get open.
9. The goal for offense is making three of five passes. The goal of defense is making three of five steals or deflections.
10. Consistently reinforce proper out-of-bounds placement and a proper throw-in by the passer during scrimmages.
11. Teach when the athlete can move (after a made basket) and when the athlete can't move (violation).

Key Words

- Feet Behind The Line
- Hold Your Position
- Come In After Passing

Coaching Tips

- The coach should identify the two or three best passers on the team, and designate these players to inbound the ball during games.
- Ask your athletes:
 1. Where are your feet? (Behind the Line)
 2. To whom will you pass? (Teammate)
 3. When can you run onto the court? (After Passing)

Teaching Out-Of-Bounds Play At the Sideline

1. Initially, use your offensive Set-Up positions. Athletes already know where they are to move (cut) on "Go."
2. Use one of the designated passers to yell "Go" and inbound the ball.
3. Add a simple "box" set-up position.
4. Each athlete has one cut and task to perform.
 - Your best all-around athlete (#1) takes the ball out-of-bounds.
 - The best re-bouncers (#4 and #5) are at the top of the free-throw lane; the best passers (#2 and #3) are on the blocks. Ideally, the best rebounder (#4) and inside shooter are opposite the ball.
 - On "Go," #4 and #5 cut toward the basket, and #2 and #3 cut away from the basket.
 - #1 passes the ball to #3 and then cuts to the nearest corner.
 - #3 turns and bounce passes the ball to #1 for a shot.
 - #3, #4, and #5 Go Get the Ball for an offensive rebound and score.



Teaching Out-Of-Bounds Play At Baseline

1. Initially, use your offensive Set-Up positions. Athletes already know where they are to move (cut) on “Go.”
2. Use one of the designated passers to yell “Go” and inbound the ball.
3. Add a simple “box” set-up position as before.
4. Athletes will have one cut and one task to perform.
 - Your best all-around athlete (#1) takes the ball out of bounds.
 - The best rebounders (#4 and #5) are at the top of the free-throw lane; the best passers (#2 and #3) are on the blocks. Ideally, your best rebounder (#4) and inside shooter is opposite the ball.
 - On “Go,” #4 and #5 cut toward the baseline, and #2 and #3 cut toward the top of the key and turn to face the ball.
 - #1 passes to #4 and then cuts to the nearest corner.
 - #4 powers up a shot.
 - #3, #4 and #5 Go Get the Ball for an offensive rebound and score.



Cool-Down

The cool-down is as important as the warm-up; however, it is often ignored. Abruptly stopping an activity may cause pooling of the blood and slow the removal of waste products in the athlete's body. It may also cause cramps, soreness and other problems for Special Olympics athletes. The cool-down gradually reduces the body temperature and heart rate and speeds the recovery process before the next training session or competitive experience. The cool-down is also a good time for the coach and athlete to talk about the session or competition.

Activity	Purpose	Time (minimum)
Slow aerobic jog	Lowers body temperature Gradually reduces heart rate	5 minutes
Light stretching	Removes waste from muscles	5 minutes

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