

60 FUN

Basketball Drills and Games for Youth Coaches

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- **Monkeys In The Middle**
- **B-Ball Drag Race**
- **Space Invaders**
- **Shot Gun Passing**
- **Ram Shooting**

**By Jeff and
Joe Haefner**



How to Make Basketball Practice Fun: 60 Fun Youth Basketball Drills & Games

www.BreakthroughBasketball.com

By Jeff and Joe Haefner

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Skill Codes for Each Drill

Here's an explanation of the codes associated with each drill. Most of the drills build a variety of skills, so we used codes to signify the skills that each drill will develop. Use the table of contents below and this key to find the drills that fit your needs.

A=Agility

AP=Aggressive Play

BH=Ball Handling /
Dribbling

C=Conditioning

CM=Communication

D=Defense

F=Footwork

O=Offense

P=Passing

R=Rebounding

S=Shooting

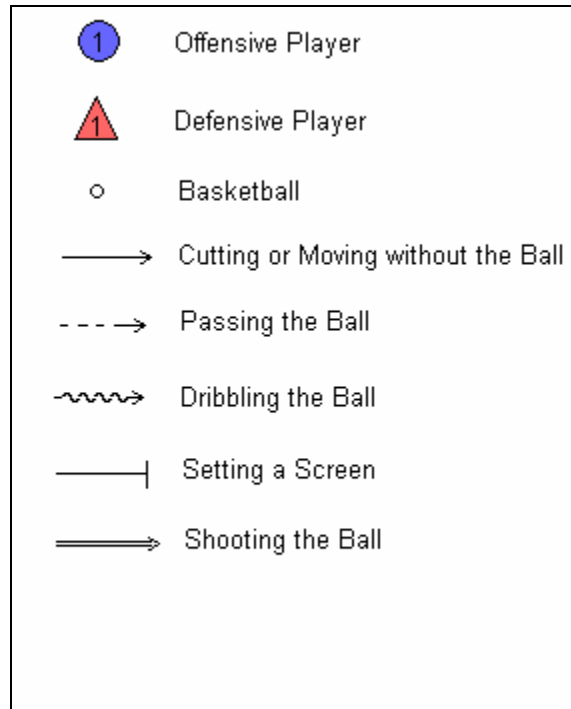
TW=Teamwork

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Key to Diagrams



HOW TO MAKE YOUR YOUTH BASKETBALL PRACTICE FUN

All youth coaches fight this battle.

You want your players to practice hard, develop skills, and become better basketball players.

But you also want them to have fun. Unfortunately, skill development can be monotonous and NOT very enjoyable!

So what do you do?

Follow these seven simple, yet highly effective steps and we guarantee that your players will love you for it...

7 Critical Elements to Make Your Practice FUN

#1 – Make your practices fast paced.

Kids enjoy fast paced drills and practices. They don't like waiting around and they lose focus when things are moving slowly.

So you must keep them moving at all times.

Your players should not be standing in lines waiting. They should move from drill to drill efficiently, and they should participate in drills that are highly active and fast paced.

#2 – Set your players up for success.

Position your players to experience success, otherwise, they'll become discouraged and lose their enthusiasm.

The simple fact is that ALL young players need to enjoy success at some level, and it's your job to set them up for achievement, be it large or small.

#3 – Establish discipline.

In order for your players to have fun, there must be order and discipline. This will allow you to run a smooth and organized practice, giving everyone the opportunity to learn and enjoy themselves in a safe and productive environment.

#4 – Get your players' attention.

Young players have very short attention spans, so it can be difficult to grab their attention and hold it. However, it's important to be able to do so in order to run a productive practice.

#5 – Structure your practice properly.

It's tricky for new coaches to know how to organize a practice—when to give breaks, when to use certain drills and for how long. But a good structure can break up the monotony, save time, and keep things flowing smoothly.

#6 – Stay positive and upbeat.

Your mood can be contagious. If you're down, your players will pick up on it, which makes for a miserable practice.

Everything starts with you, so keep a positive and upbeat attitude and the team will follow suit.

#7 – Make your drills fun.

In order to develop basketball skills, you **MUST** run drills. There's just no way around 'em. Drills should account for at least 75% of your practice time. So if your drills are boring, 75% of your practice will be boring.

To help you, we have provided you with a bunch of exciting drills and games to incorporate into your practices. But don't stop there. We'll also give you some tips on how to make your own existing drills more enjoyable.

Element #1 - How to Keep Your Practice Fast Paced and Fun

Kids love to stay active and keep moving, so it's imperative that you structure a practice that is fast paced and fun. Here's how...

Plan Ahead of Time

The #1 key here is preparation. You must have a well thought out practice plan.

If you don't already use a written practice plan, start now. This will allow you to keep things moving quickly and keep your players on track.

Transition to New Drills Quickly

This goes back to preparation. You need to have a plan and know exactly what drill is next. The last thing you want to do is have to think in between drills and try to figure out what to do. Get everyone running to the next spot and keep things moving.

Choose Drills That Are Fast Paced

Kids enjoy drills that require them to run around and be active. Things like dribbling through cones and using chairs are great ways to keep them moving.

Use Multifaceted Drills

It's more fun to use drills that incorporate a variety of skills. For example, a drill where kids dribble through cones, pass, and shoot a lay up is more entertaining than a simple lay up drill. Not to mention a better use of practice time.

Consider Using Stations

Four-minute stations work great for a large group of young players. Simply set up a station at each basket or in different areas of the gym with a coach or parent at each one. You might have cones set up for dribbling in one area and chairs set up in another area for Musical Slides.

Split the team into small groups and explain how each station works before letting them have at it.

When 4 minutes expires, the whistle goes off and the kids rotate clockwise to the next station. If you have 6 stations, then it takes 24 minutes to complete the entire sequence. You can experiment with the time, but with large summer camps, we have found that 4 minutes is just enough time to demonstrate the drill and let the kids practice for a few minutes.

Kids really love it because things are constantly changing and moving quickly.

Use Assistant Coaches or Parents to Serve as Passers and Rebounders.

Some drills move faster if you have some capable helpers to keep things moving, so put your assistant coaches and parents to work for you to keep practice flowing as smoothly as possible.

Keep Everyone Busy. No Waiting in Lines.

You'll need to choose drills that complement the number of players, balls, and baskets that you have, but there will be times when you have an activity that doesn't allow for participation of the entire group.

If you have some drills where you just can't keep everyone occupied, give your players "busy work" drills that can be done on the side with little supervision.

Here are 10 ideas for "busy work" drills and/or activities to keep your players active and learning at all times.

- Jump rope
- Two Ball Dribbling
- Mikan Drill
- Free Throw Challenge
- Partner Passing
- Lay up drills
- Rebounding drills
- Spider Dribbling
- Figure 8 Dribbling
- One on One

You can almost always come up with the right combination of drills to keep everyone busy.

Element #2 - How to Make Your Players Feel Successful

It's critically important to make sure that all of your players experience success. Without some level of achievement, it's nearly impossible for them to enjoy themselves. Success helps to keep players motivated and enthusiastic about playing basketball.

Success can come in a variety of forms. Most people think of winning as success. But that's not what we're talking about here.

We believe that you should forget about winning and focus instead on learning, celebrating each player's individual improvements along with the triumphs of the team as a whole.

Here are just a few ways that you can celebrate those small, but meaningful accomplishments:

- Run a mix of drills that vary in difficulty so EVERY player has the opportunity to succeed. Sometimes, just completing a drill can create a feeling of victory and satisfaction for your players.
- Verbally reward and praise improvement. Give your players lots of compliments when they're doing well and let them know how much they have improved. Congratulate them on the progress they've made. It's easy to forget how much they have grown as players, and it's your job to remind them.
- Reward hard work because this usually results in improvement too.
- Measure performance and reward development. Your options are unlimited here. This can be as simple as tracking the number of form shots a player makes during practice, then showing how much they improved a few weeks later. It's a "small" success that makes players feel good and motivates them to keep working.

A few other things that you can measure include:

- Number of rebounds per game
- Number of shot attempts per game
- Number of assists per game
- Length of offensive possessions
- Whether you out rebounded the other team. (You don't always have to focus on wins or losses, especially with youngsters.)
- Track the number of footwork mistakes (travels) in certain drills. Then show them on paper how much they improved over time.

You see, not everything is about winning.

- Don't be overly critical. If you see that a player isn't executing a drill properly, be sure to mention what they're doing right as well. Players will respond better to criticism if it's "sandwiched" between a couple of favorable comments.

Element #3 - How to Establish Discipline and Keep Players Under Control

One of the best ways to get your players to enjoy themselves and get the most from this experience is by establishing the right kind of discipline.

That's right! Discipline, structure, accountability, and follow-through.

Kids actually have more fun if they have a good set of rules in place. They respond well to structure because it makes them feel more secure. They know what to expect and how to perform.

True, some will test you. Expect it! But remember to be consistent and always mean what you say. If you tell your team that talking during a team meeting means a lap around the gym, then enforce it—always, and for EVERYONE.

Have you ever watched the TV show Super Nanny?

It's funny because her teachings are really effective and reinforce many of the things that we incorporate into basketball practices.

We recommend watching her TV show to help with your practices. But in the meantime...

1. Set rules.
2. Communicate those rules both verbally and in writing.
3. Have a written schedule.
4. Have a written practice plan.
5. Follow through with your rules.

It's actually quite simple.

Kids are smart. They know what they can get away with.

So you must establish some very basic rules and expectations. You owe it to your players, their parents and especially to yourself. Do you really want to coach 20 kids without any discipline or structure in place?

When rules are broken or expectations are not met, then there have to be consequences, every time. Not some of the time. Every time!

The behavior of your players will very quickly change if you are consistent.

This is where most coaches screw up!

They let things slide here and there. They are not consistent in handing out discipline.

Most coaches (and parents for that matter) continually give out verbal threats, but there's rarely any action behind their words.

Kids quickly pick up on this and will begin to ignore your directions. That's why there must be disciplinary action EVERY time.

Don't be wishy-washy, and very soon, you won't even have to give out discipline because your players will learn that they can't get away with misbehaving.

Set a precedent on the first day of practice. This really works!

When you're ready to start practice, blow the whistle and tell the kids to bring it in.

It never fails. A few kids will hustle in and several others will mill around and slowly walk to you. Some might not even listen at all.

At this point, you immediately discipline them. Have them all get on the line and start running sprints.

Then, blow the whistle and call them in again. Trust us; they'll sprint to you this time.

This will most likely be the last time that you'll need to make them run for a while. Occasional reminders may be necessary, but your players will generally know that you mean business.

Don't let them get away with things that are detrimental to themselves or your practice, and you'll still have tons of fun! Because that's what it's all about!

Now, you might be worried about establishing discipline because you don't want to be the bad guy and you want them to have fun.

We don't blame you.

Well, don't worry. They will actually like you even more for it.

Trust us. We've been there!

Here are some basic rules that have worked for us.

- No talking when a coach is talking.
- No lying. Period. There are very severe consequences for this.

- Always be on time.
- If you can't make practice, always call.
- Unsportsmanlike behavior is never acceptable.

It's also important to have a written schedule and consistency. Structure your practices with some regularity so that your players will know what to expect. Kids enjoy the organization and it helps to keep them in line.

For example, if your players know that practice will probably start with some hard defensive drills and then after 30 minutes they'll get 15 minutes of fun games that they really love, they'll be more likely to work through the tough stuff so they can move on to something more enjoyable. Especially at the risk of NOT being able to participate in the games if they break the rules.

As far as discipline goes, running sprints and reducing playing time are always surefire ways to effectively reprimand or correct your players' behavior. Just be certain that whatever you choose is age appropriate (you wouldn't have a 6 year old run a mile for talking while the coach is talking) and that your players' parents are well aware of all rules and consequences.

If you're in the middle of your season, you can still have a "transition day" where you start fresh with a set of rules. Then, stay consistent with your discipline from there on out. Because without the discipline, you'll be cutting your players short and struggling to reach your goals.

The Group Clap Trick

Here's a silly little trick that will help you keep your players organized and well behaved.

This trick works best when you're working with large groups, like youth camps.

To this day, we still find it unbelievable that this works, but it does. Here's how...

At the very beginning of the camp/practice, split the players into 4 groups. Have each group sit down in a neat line in four different areas of the gym.

Let the players know that whenever you blow the whistle, they all need to sprint to their groups and get in straight line facing the specified direction.

The group that gets lined up first gets two claps.

Yes, that's right. Everybody simply claps twice.

It's simple, but it really helps you get players to behave and stop messing around between drills.

Once each group is in line, give instructions for the next drill. For camps, we like to blow the whistle and give two claps between every drill that needs to be demonstrated.

Element #4 - How to Grab and Hold Your Players' Attention

If you can't get your players' attention on a consistent basis, you'll struggle to run a smooth and enjoyable practice.

Even worse, you'll end up frustrated and yelling at your players, which is not fun for anyone!

To get some ideas for getting your players' attention, we solicited advice from a school psychologist. They use special techniques to keep the attention of kids that have trouble focusing. Many of these techniques can be applied to coaching.

Here are a few techniques to get your players' attention and keep them focused:

1) Do less talking and more showing.

Young kids have a very short auditory attention span, so you should limit talk to a max of 2 minutes. Then start showing. All too often, coaches talk, and talk, and talk. But it doesn't do ANY good because no one is listening! It's easy to forget that young kids aren't much different than you as an adult.

For example, how many times have you ignored the written assembly instructions on a piece of furniture or a toy and just focused on the illustrations to get the job done?

The truth is that we tend to learn more from the "showing" than the "telling".

2) Use all the senses.

Again, do more than just give verbal instructions. You can get their attention by tapping into visual senses and actually showing them how to do something on the court. You can use cue cards, chalk boards, and so on.

Another sure way to get a player's attention is to put your hand on their shoulder. You obviously can't be everywhere and use this technique in all situations, but keep this in mind when you need to quickly GRAB a floundering player's attention. If an assistant coach is nearby, they can do the same.

3) Use point sheets.

Start a reward system where players can earn points by paying attention. Keep track of their points on sheets. Then, as players earn points they can earn rewards like play money that can be used to buy Gatorade, drinks, or other items that you have on hand.

4) Choose topics that are of interest to your players.

This might seem like a trivial tip, but few coaches seem to remember it. Kids are more interested in things that they can relate to.

So, if anything, keep this in mind when structuring your practice: Mix some interesting stuff in between the boring stuff.

For example, when working on form shooting you can say, “Did you know that Dwayne Wade does form shooting every day?”

Learn about your kids’ favorite players and talk about them. This little trick will keep them both interested and enthused.

5) Provide frequent breaks.

It helps to provide frequent breaks between drills and activities. If players know that breaks are coming and you don’t push them too hard, they’ll pay more attention during practice.

6) Explain and show the reason why.

A great way to get your players on board is to explain the reason *why* you do certain things. Most coaches neglect this super effective tactic and instead they just jam the tactics down their players’ throats.

Explaining the “reason why” is a proven psychological trigger that causes people to take a desired action. Humans, by nature, want to know the reason why they are doing things.

If your players don’t understand the reason you want them to keep their knees bent, always be ready to help, see man and ball, apply ball pressure, and so on, then they will NOT give 100%!

7) Constantly change things.

Don’t dwell on the same drill for too long or your players will completely lose focus. Continually change things and move onto new drills every 2-5 minutes.

8) Use a timer.

A common technique used by school psychologists is to use a timer. You can do the same thing during your practices.

Set a timer that beeps every two minutes so you know when you’ve been talking for too long and when to move onto the next drill. A stopwatch is also effective and less distracting to players.

10) Ask questions to keep things interactive.

When you’re talking, be sure to ask the group and individuals questions. This type of interaction is much more interesting than just listening to someone talk, and it keeps players attentive, as they’ll want to be prepared in case they’re called on.

11) Use their first names frequently

Nothing grabs a player's attention more than calling out their name. In fact, anything that is about "you" or has your name in it will draw your attention.

If you don't know all of your players names, heaven forbid, learn them!!

12) All eyes on you.

During the brief moments that you're talking, make it a non-negotiable rule that ALL eyes are on you. This makes it a lot harder for players to lose their focus.

Element #5 - How to Structure Your Practice

The organization of your practice can have a profound effect on the entire experience for you and your team. A good structure will help you keep your players attentive, having fun, and everything running smoothly.

A well-organized practice gives everyone the opportunity to have fun.

Our first and most important suggestion is to prepare well ahead of time and develop a written practice plan.

Take the time to strategically plan out and script your entire practice. You should know exactly which drill to run next by looking at your practice plan, which will help you dramatically improve the efficiency of your practice.

Beyond that, here are 10 suggestions to help you better structure your practices:

- 1 – Introduce new drills and concepts at the beginning of practice when players are most attentive.
- 2 – Limit each drill to a MAX of 3-5 minutes. Young players just don't have the attention span and brain development to benefit from drills longer than this.
- 3 - If you have a tough or boring drill coming up, be sure to follow up with a fun one, and let players know what's coming. Many times, just knowing that something fun is around the corner will help them get through a difficult drill.
- 4 – Start to develop a consistent pattern and be sure that you don't go too long without something fun. If you work on intense stuff for too long, your players will get rambunctious and they'll never recover.
- 5 – Choose drills that are fast paced and incorporate conditioning. Avoid running players at the end because they will become anxious about the end of practice. Your normal drills should be so fast paced that you don't need conditioning at the end.
- 6 – Logically organize drills so there is little down time. If a particular drill requires lots of time to set up, then run that drill directly after a break so you can set up while players are getting drinks.
- 7 – Use your players to help you set up drills, so they're constantly involved. For example, you can teach them how to get cones and set them up for certain drills. Have them run to set up the cones between drills so there is no down time. You can even make a game out of it. The player that gets their cones set up first gets two claps.
- 8 – Use your imagination to keep players busy at ALL times. If a certain drill requires only 5 players, have the rest of your players work on ball handling or jump rope on the side to keep them busy. No standing and waiting.
- 9 - End each practice on a positive note. Team oriented drills give them a feeling of togetherness as they leave the floor.

10 – Break up the monotony. It helps to break things up throughout practice to avoid boredom. Players generally lose focus after working on the same thing for too long, so the more variety the better. For example, you could do 5 minutes of defensive drills and then change things up to a competitive shooting drill that they enjoy.

Element #6 - How to Keep Your Attitude Positive and Upbeat

This comes down to your attitude and how you interact with your players.

Do you continually yell at players to keep them in line?

Do you criticize players more than you compliment them?

Here are a few techniques to keep things positive and upbeat:

Use the sandwich technique.

When correcting players, be sure to start and end with a compliment. For example, if Billy doesn't do a good job of blocking out say, "Hey Billy, way to hustle down the court. Next time the shot goes up, be sure to pivot and block out your man. But good job with the hustle. Keep it up."

You see how this is more positive than simply correcting the kid? If you correct and critique kids too much, they'll get discouraged and that's the last thing you want.

Don't put too much pressure on yourself by worrying about winning.

Too many coaches fall into the trap of feeling like they need to win all of their games. This added pressure can cause stress and a negative attitude.

Remember that your goal is to make a difference in your players' lives, not to win the national championship.

Offer occasional non-verbal rewards.

For a fun way to keep things interesting and provide a little motivation, try giving out rewards after practices.

We used to give a Gatorade to players every time they took a charge and drew the foul during a practice. This helped with "top of mind awareness", so they were often thinking about charges. But the players also had a lot of fun with it. One of the first things they'd say after games, with a big SMILE on their face, would be, "Did you see that charge coach? You owe me a Gatorade!"

Players can be motivated to achieve goals by occasionally offering tangible rewards or by utilizing a tactic of the great Morgan Wooten. Wooten offered "Permissions" to his players.

Permissions are rewards granted to players for outstanding efforts or reaching set goals. The permissions are earned throughout the practice and then totaled up at the end. Each permission resulted in one less lap, suicide, or other conditioning drill.

Show players that you care.

Demonstrate that you care about players by showing a sincere interest in what they do both on and off the court. For example, you could attend their choir concerts, soccer games, baseball games, or whatever they participate in. This will show them that you really care about them and will help you build a better relationship.

It all comes down to three simple rules to keep in mind:

Smile.

Enjoy yourself.

Set a good example.

Element #7- How to Make Your Drills Fun

We have supplied you with 50 fun drills that you can use to make your practices fun, yet educational. But don't stop there!

You can make almost any ordinary drill fun. Just use your imagination.

You can do things like:

- Turn the drill into a game. Nothing says, "FUN" like a game. You can turn a simple lay up drill into a game by keeping track of missed shots. If you miss you're out. The last player standing wins.
- Gimmicks. Tricks like offering points will make any drill enjoyable. Allow players to earn redeemable points for paying attention, properly executing a drill, helping out a teammate, or whatever you choose. Points can get players rewards that range from a Gatorade to a few less sprints.
- Take a few tips from your childhood. Remember your favorite childhood games like "Mother, May I", "Red Rover" and "Tag"? They're still being enjoyed by kids today and you can incorporate basic basketball skills into almost all of them to create fun new activities for your team.
- Add props. Using simple props like cones, chairs, mats, and other common items found in the gymnasium can take ordinary drills to a whole new level. Have players dribble through cones to improve their ball handling skills or
- Occasionally Add Competitive Twists to Your Drills. We use the word "occasionally" because you shouldn't use competition too much. In fact, some young kids do not respond to competition and are DEMOTIVATED by it.

But as long as you're careful, adding competition to your drills can be a great way to spice things up, make things fun, and keep players working hard.

As an example, you could establish teams for a shooting drill and reward the team or individual player that makes the most shots.

With a little imagination, you can come up with ways to make almost all your drills competitive. Just remember that comparisons between teammates can make some players feel badly about themselves and can spur rivalries between teammates. In short, it can squash a player's motivation. If you need to compare teammates, do so only to model a desired behavior or skill. For example, "Watch how Joe follows through with his free throw shot, try that next time you're at the line and see how it feels."

Developing Skills and Having Fun

As coaches, we all know that we can't play games the entire time. Otherwise, the players wouldn't develop their basketball skills properly. There are moments that you'll have to teach and spend a few minutes having the kids run a drill that may not be so "fun." A great way to do this is to teach a skill and follow it with a game that works on developing that particular skill.

For example, spend a couple of minutes explaining how to shoot a lay up. Have the kids work on it for 3 or 4 minutes. Then, have them see who can make the most lay ups in 2 minutes.

Show them how to do a chest pass. Have your players partner up and do chest passes for a couple of minutes. After that, see who can get the most chest passes in 30 seconds.

Try using this formula:

Lecture (2 minutes) + Skill Building (2 to 4 minutes) + Game (1 min to 3 min) = 5 to 9 minutes, which is about the perfect amount of time to spend on a particular skill.

The drills and games in this ebook are an excellent jumping point for incorporating both fun and focus into your practices. Pick and choose according to the skills being enforced or just start from the beginning and work your way through. Either way, you'll be pleased. When you get to the end, switch things up a bit and try one of the many variations offered for each drill/game. Your players are sure to love them and you'll be amazed at all of the progress they'll make.

Shooting Drills

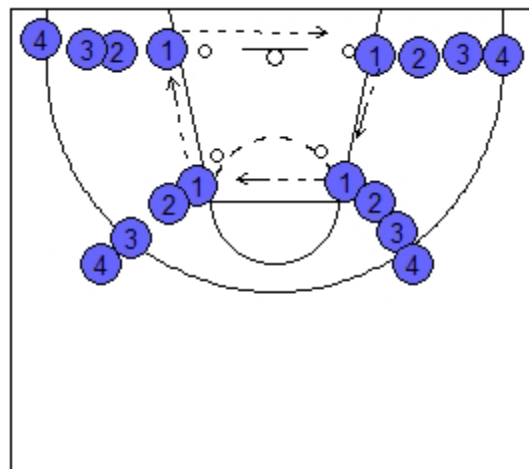
Ram Shooting

Purpose:

(P, S, CM) This drill will help develop proper passing and shooting techniques. This drill also emphasizes communication between teammates.

Instructions:

1. Divide the team into four lines. One line on each block and one line on each elbow. Give each line one ball.
2. The first person in each line shoots the basketball and retrieves it, make or miss.
3. After retrieving the ball, the shooter passes the ball back to the line they were in and rotates clockwise to the end of the next line. Rotations are displayed in the diagram to the right.
4. All four lines work as a team and keep track of how many baskets are made total.



Teaching Tips:

Stress to the players that communication is very important in this drill. Players need to make game quality passes and take game quality shots.

Variations:

- The time limit of this drill can be changed from five minutes to whatever you desire.
- Also the spots on the court that the players shoot from can be varied.

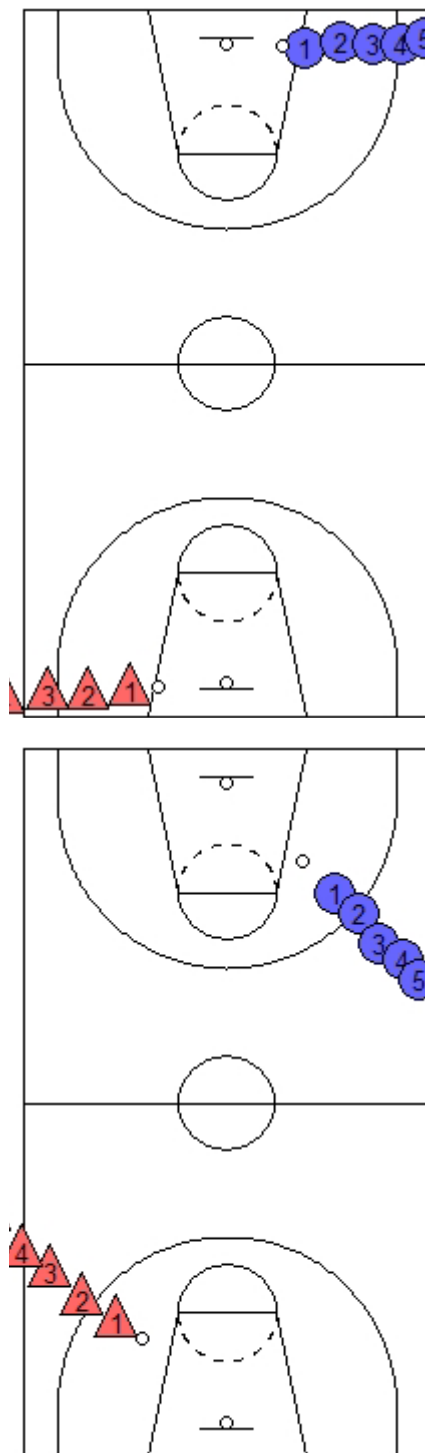
Follow the Leader

Purpose:

(P, S) This drill helps to develop proper passing and shooting techniques and teaches players how to follow their shots and put the ball back into the basket.

Instructions:

1. Begin the drill with two groups of five, standing in line at the baseline. Each group has one ball.
2. The first person in line shoots a baseline jump shot.
3. The shooter follows the shot and if it goes in, passes it to the next person in line.
4. If the shot misses, the shooter must try to catch the rebound before it hits the floor. If they can, they put the ball back in the basket.
5. After everyone in line attempts a shot at the first spot, the line then moves to another spot and begins again.
6. A jump shot is worth two points and a put back is worth one. Each team must keep a running tally. The team with the most points at the end of the drill wins.



Teaching Tips:

Stress the importance of watching where the ball bounces off the rim, as well as proper passing and shooting techniques.

Variations:

- Vary the difficulty of this drill by changing the spots from which players must shoot.

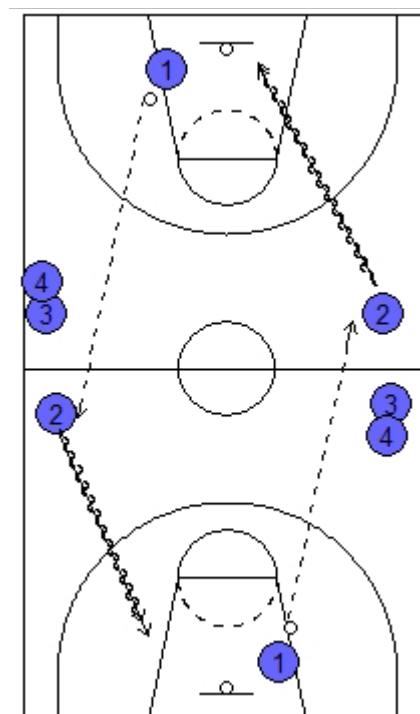
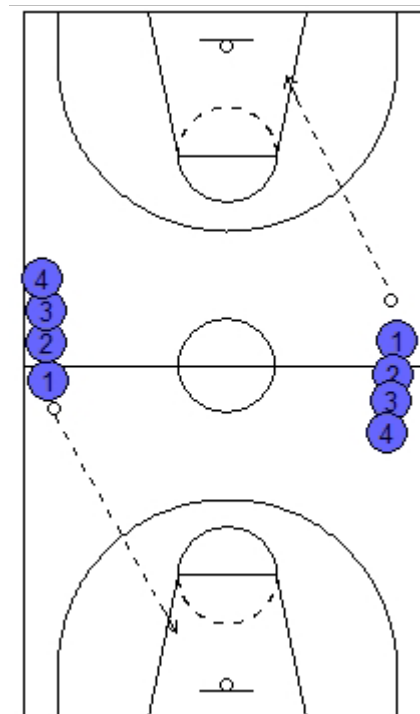
Long Lay Ups

Purpose:

(BH, S, P) This drill helps develop ball handling, shooting and passing skills. The emphasis is on fast break lay ups and overhand baseball passes.

Instructions:

1. Split the team into two lines. One on the right side at half court and one on the left side. Give each line one ball.
2. The person at the front of the line will sprint down the right side of the court, dribbling the basketball and attempt a fast break lay up.
3. After attempting the lay up, the shooter grabs their own rebound, takes two dribbles in the other direction and throws a baseball pass to the next person standing in the opposite line.
4. This person catches the ball, sprints down the right side dribbling, and attempts a lay up. They then pass the ball to the next person in the opposite line, and so on.
5. Both lines are to work as a team and count how many lay ups are made.



Teaching Tips:

Stress that players keep their heads up when dribbling and use proper footwork when attempting the lay up. Also stress correctly passing the ball to a teammate by leading the pass out in front of them.

Distance of the pass should be adjusted according to age level.

Variations:

- Give players a strict time limit in which to make a certain number of lay-ups as a team. As the team progresses, the time should decrease as the number of lay ups required increases.

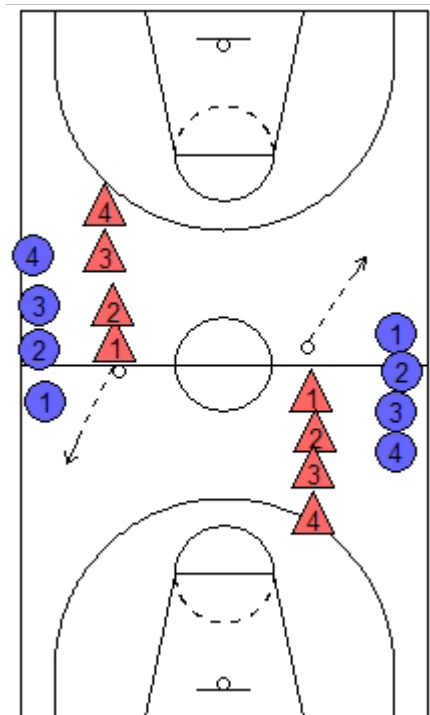
Pressure Lay Ups

Purpose:

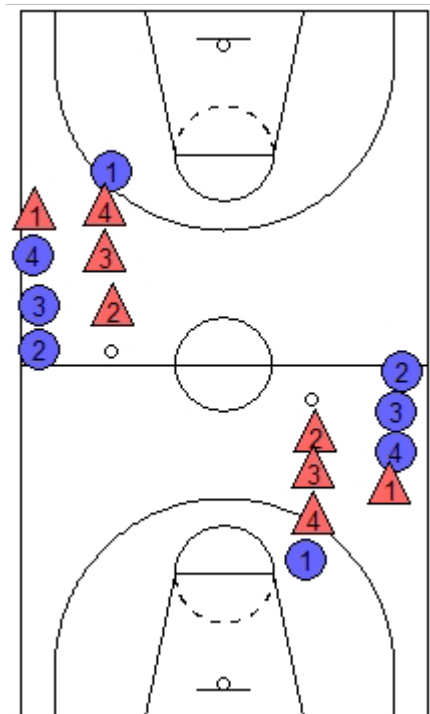
(S, BH) This drill helps to teach players how to make lay ups in high pressure situations.

Instructions:

1. Divide the group into four lines that stand at half court. Two on the right side and two on the left side.
2. The inside lines on the right and left sides of the court have one ball each. The first person in the inside line passes the ball to the first person in the outside line, who then dribbles the ball down the right side and attempts a lay up.
3. After releasing the ball, the passer must sprint to catch the person trying to attempt the lay-up and apply pressure on the player.



4. After the lay up is attempted, the two players now run to the two lines on the other side of the court and switch sides (see diagram).



Teaching Tips:

Players need to be reminded to push the ball out in front of their bodies when they speed dribble. They also need to be reminded to keep their heads up and shield the defender from the ball when attempting the lay up.

Variations:

- Keep track of the number of lay ups made in 5 minutes. Make a goal for the students.
- Turn the drill into a one on one transition defense drill by giving the defense a little head start to the basket.

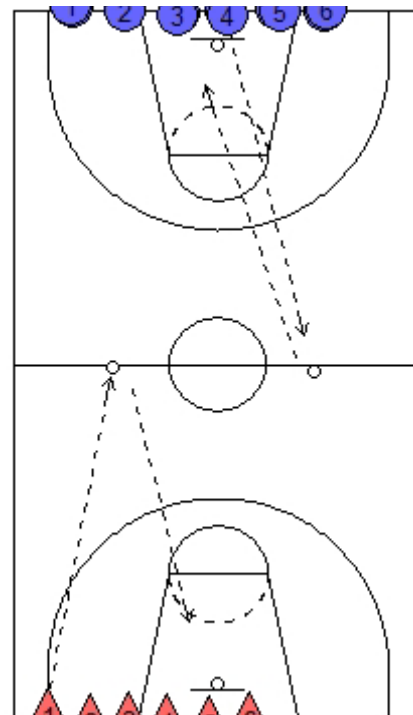
B-Ball Drag Race

Purpose:

(BH, S) The objective of the drill is to be able to dribble and shoot under pressure.

Instructions:

1. The students are broken into two groups on each baseline.
2. Each group member is given a number. A person on one baseline will have the same number as a person on the opposite baseline.
3. Two basketballs will be set at half court.
4. The coach will call out a number. If the players number is called they will sprint out from each side and run to get the ball set at half court for their group.
5. The student that dribbles to their basket and scores a basket first gets a point for their team.



Teaching Tips:

Stress pushing the ball out in front of the body when attempting to speed dribble as well as using correct form when attempting a lay-up.

Variations:

- This drill could be made into a strictly dribbling drill by having every team member dribble a ball out to get the ball in the middle of the court and have to dribble both balls back at the same time. The first person back would get a point for their team.

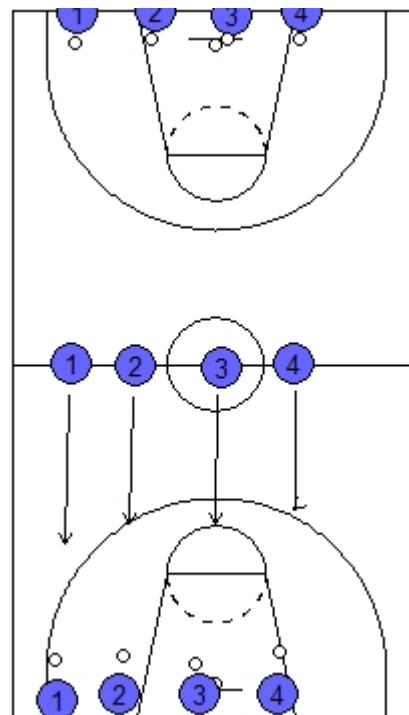
Three Team Shooting

Purpose:

(C, S) This drill helps players with their conditioning and their ability to shoot the basketball both off the pass and when they are tired.

Instructions:

1. Break your team up into three groups of four players each. One group is on each baseline and one group is in the middle of the court as shown to the right.
2. The four players at half court are to spread out along the midline.
3. The groups of four players standing on each baseline are each given a basketball. On the whistle, the players in the middle run toward the baseline and call for a ball to be passed to them by a player on the baseline.
4. The player then catches the ball, shoots on the near basket and retrieves their own rebound.
5. The person who passed the ball then runs to the other end of the court and receives a pass from the other baseline, and the rotation continues.



Teaching Tips:

Players need to be reminded to work hard in this drill for conditioning purposes. They also need to give a target for the ball to be passed and use proper footwork and shooting techniques. Be sure to remind passers to be precise.

Variations:

- The type of shot taken can be varied in this drill (three pointer, mid-range, lay up, etc.).
- Give the students a time limit and goal for the number of shots to make. This can be varied depending on the ability of the team or the time that you have available.

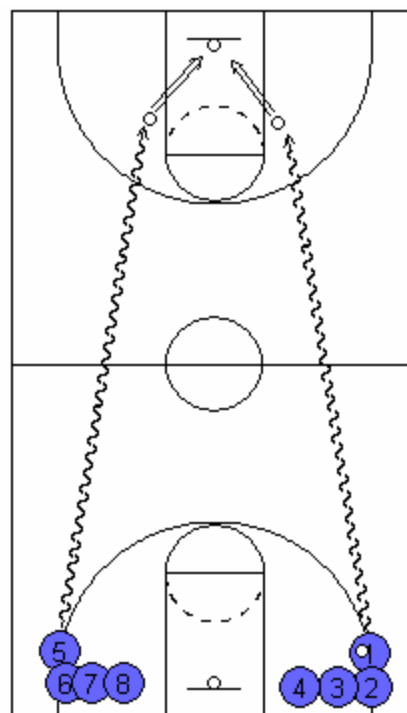
Shoot Till You Make It

Purpose:

(TW, S, C, BH, R) The purpose of this drill is to encourage and develop teamwork, shooting, conditioning, dribbling and rebounding.

Instructions:

1. Separate players into two or three teams with the skill and ability levels equally divided.
2. Each team is to line up on the same end line of the court. The first player in line for each team has a ball.
3. On the whistle, the first players from each team are to begin dribbling towards the other end of the court as fast as they can.
4. When they get to the other end, they are to take a shot at the elbow area of the court and retrieve their own rebounds. If they missed the first shot, he keeps shooting close to the hoop until he makes the shot.
5. When a player makes the shot, he then retrieves his rebound and dribbles as fast as he can back to his teammates, handing the ball off to the next player in line, who then executes the same routine.
6. The team that finishes in the fastest time is the winner.



Teaching Tips:

Encourage players to cheer on their teammates as they execute their turn in the drill. Remind players to focus on correct fundamentals and techniques, as they are more likely to dribble and shoot triumphantly with proper execution.

The younger the players are, the closer the shot should be.

Variations:

- Move the shooting position and run the drill several times.
- Require players to dribble with a certain hand.
- Have them perform a dribble move (crossover, behind-the-back, and so on) at half-court.
- Do not allow lay ups, require them to make the shot from the selected spot.

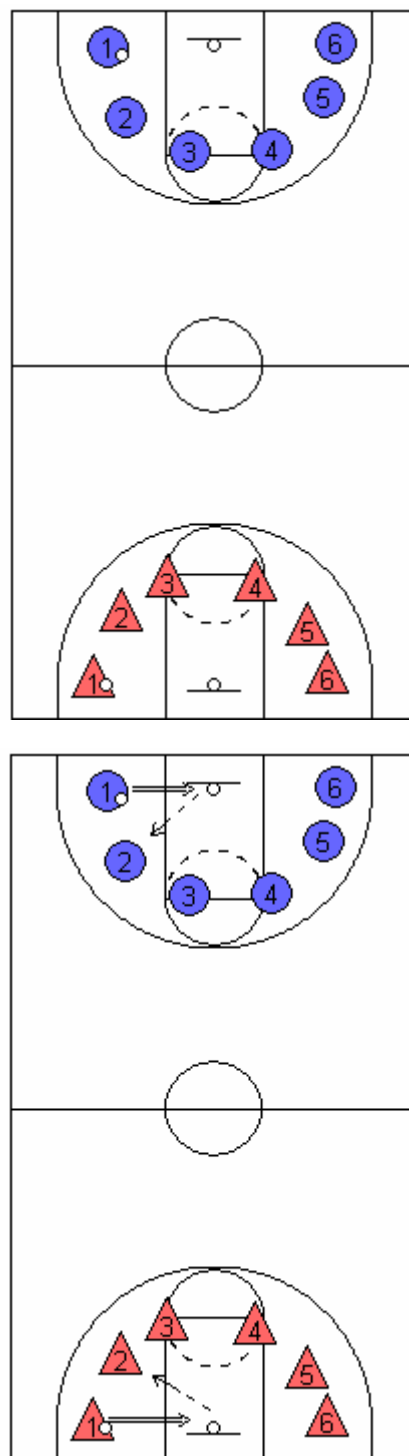
Half Moon

Purpose:

(S, R, P, TW) This is a fun drill that does it all -- it teaches players how to catch and shoot, follow their shot, slide out to a shooter, and make good passes.

Instructions:

1. Divide your squad into two teams. Scatter your players inside the three point line on each end of the court. (Youth – 10 to 15 feet away from hoop)
2. Give the ball to one player in the corner (on each end of the court).
3. On the whistle, the player on each side of the court that has the ball will take a shot. They will follow their shot and pass it to the next player.
4. The first shooter slides out and put token pressure on the new shooter.
5. This process will continue until one team reaches a set number of baskets and is declared the winner.



Teaching Tips:

It is very important to make sure your players are always using good shooting form and technique. Continually watch them and immediately fix any problems! Feet should be square to the basket, knees bent on the catch, follow through, and so on.

Make sure your players jump straight up and land exactly from the point they jumped. It makes the player's shot difficult to block. If you find the players lunging forward or not landing where they first jumped, tell them they can not cross the 3-point line until the ball hits the rim.

After the first game, have the players switch sides of the court.

Variation:

- Make it a best of 3 or 5 series to add extra intensity to the drill. Make it more competitive by rewarding the winner.

Knockout

Purpose:

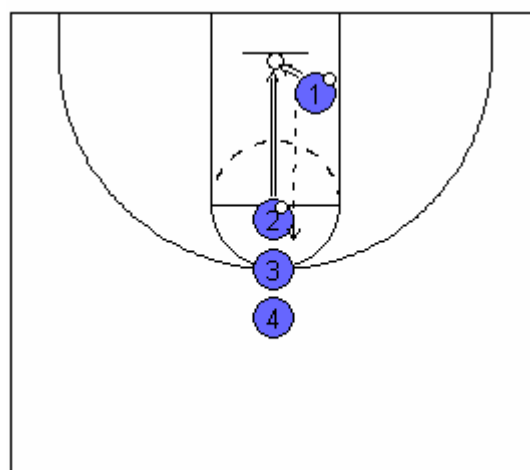
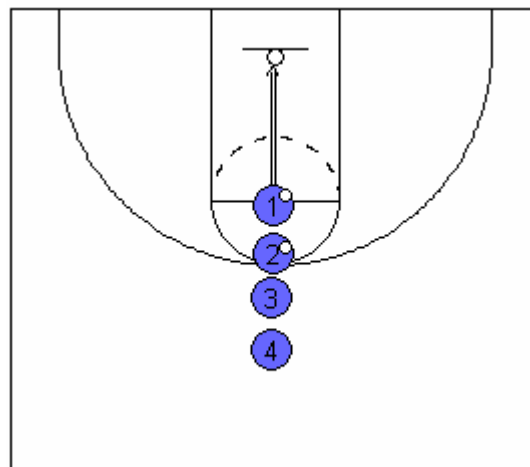
(S, R, P) Your players will love this drill! This is a great drill to break up the monotony of practice while also helping your players deal with pressure situations, namely, free throws late in the game. Hitting free throws down the stretch can be the difference between a win and a loss.

Instructions:

1. Line your players up at the free throw line in single file. Give the first two players in the line a basketball.
2. On your whistle, the first player in line will shoot a free throw. If they make it, they will retrieve the ball and pass it to the next person in line without a basketball. If they miss, they must retrieve the ball and make a lay-up.
3. The next player in line is allowed to shoot a free throw as soon as the previous player's ball hits the rim or goes through the net. If the previous player misses, the next player is attempting to make a free throw (or rebound shot) before that player makes their rebound shot.

Avoid rushing too much to prevent ruining your shooting mechanics.

4. If the scenario in step 3 occurs, the previous player has to sit out for the rest of the drill.
5. This process continues until only one player remains.



Teaching Tips:

This drill is a great way to keep your players from getting bored. Use this drill as a break from some of the more necessary, tedious parts of practice.

If you notice some of your players starting to cheat, (shooting in front of the free throw line, knocking another player's ball away) make them sit out until the next game.

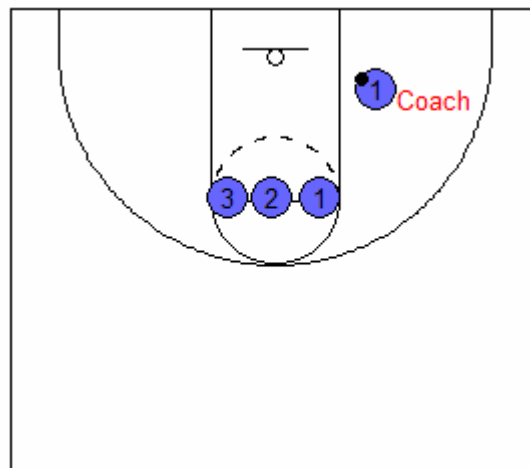
Anything Goes

Purpose:

(A, S) This drill is great for teaching youth players how to shoot under pressure.

Instructions:

1. Have three players stand in the key at one end of the court (*see Variations below*).
2. The coach then shoots the ball toward the basket and all three players are to go up for the rebound at the same time. The player who gets the rebound must shoot the ball immediately. The other two players are to try to stop him from shooting using any means, other than causing physical injury. Fouls are allowed in this drill!
3. The first of the three players to get a basket wins and remains on the court.
4. The other two players sit down, and two more come in to play.
5. The drill continues until there is only one player left standing. This player is the winner of the drill.



Teaching Tips:

Try to group players together that are of the same relative height and/or athletic ability. Emphasize aggression, yet fun!

Variations:

- If you have a larger group, you can have the same drill going at the other end of the court with an assistant coach or parent monitoring activity. This way, more players are involved. More practice, more development, more team building, more fun!

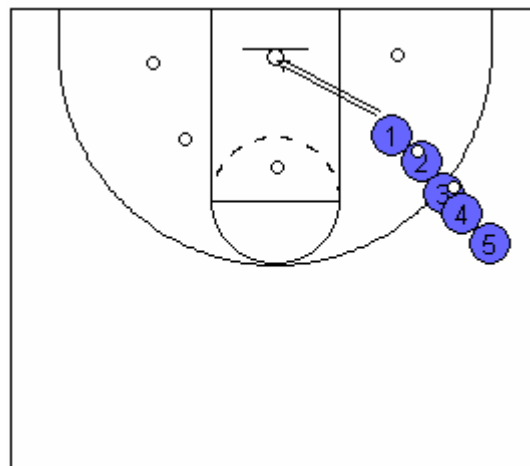
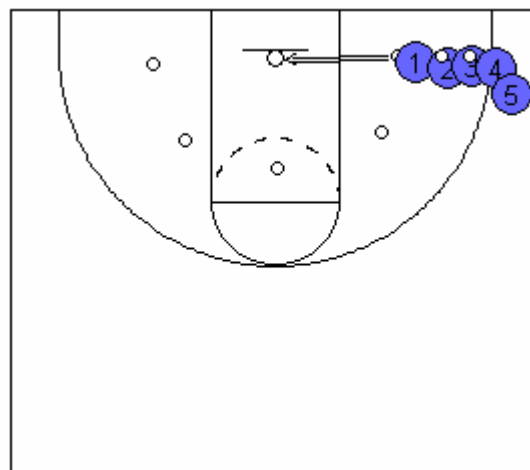
5 Spot Shooting

Purpose:

(S, R, P, TW) This is a fun shooting drill that forces players to follow their shot and rebound the basketball.

Instructions:

1. Pick 5 spots on the floor. Split your team into two groups and line them up at the first spot, giving each group 3 balls.
2. On the whistle, the first player in line shoots the ball. As soon as the ball hits the rim, the next player in line shoots. The shooter hustles after the ball and passes to the next person in line without a basketball.
3. After the team makes a certain number of baskets, they are to move to the next spot.
4. The first team to make the designated amount of baskets from each spot is the winner.



Teaching Tips:

Lower the number of baskets made and the distance from the hoop based on age group. For example:

- Make 3 from 5 feet away for 8 year olds.
- Make 5 from 15 feet away for 13 year olds.

Variations:

- To make this drill more difficult, only count swishes.
- For advanced players, have the team make a certain number of baskets in a row before they move onto the next spot.

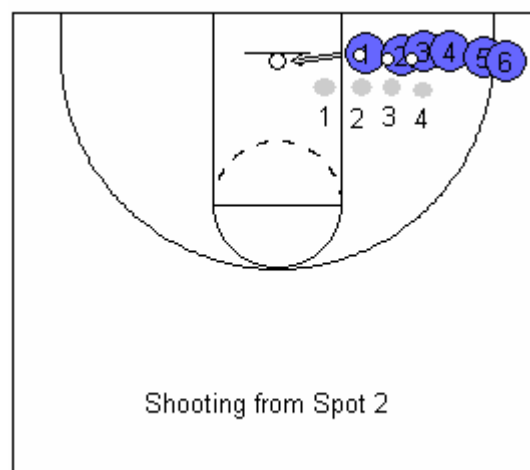
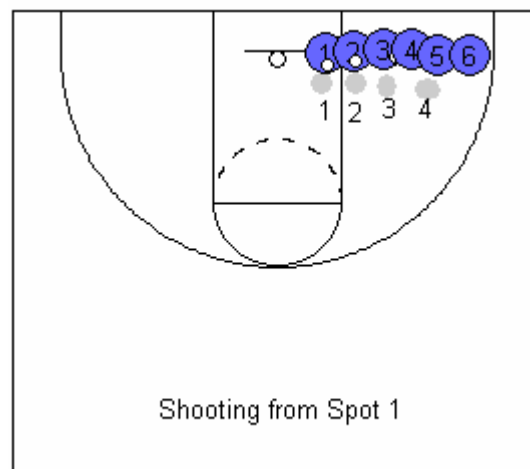
Make 'em and Step Back

Purpose:

(S, R, P, TW) This is another fun shooting game that focuses on shooting with proper form, rebounding your shot and passing.

Instructions:

1. Split your team in half. You only need one basket for this game, but put each group at different baskets if possible. Each line needs three basketballs.
2. Each basket has 4 spots. The first spot is about 3 feet way from the basket. The second spot is 6 feet away. The third spot is 9 feet away, and the fourth spot is 12 feet away.
3. On the whistle, the first person in line shoots the basketball, rebounds their own shot and passes it to the next person in line without a basketball.
4. As soon as the first person's shot hits the rim or goes through the hoop, the next person in line starts.
5. As soon as the team makes 4 shots, they move to the second spot.
Make 3 from the 2nd spot
Make 2 from the 3rd spot
Make 1 from the 4th spot.
6. The first team to make the designated amount from each spot wins.



Teaching Tips:

Make sure everybody is using proper shooting form.

Variations:

- Have the teams make 5 baskets from each spot.
- Only count swishes.

- Have the teams shoot from more than 1 shooting angle on the floor. For example: side of the hoop, front of the hoop, angled to the hoop.
- Use 5 or 6 spots for older players.

Line Shooting

Purpose:

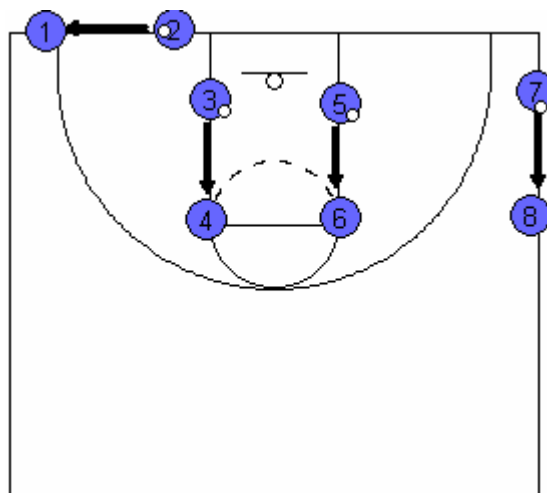
(S) This is a great shooting drill that focuses on proper shooting form. A lot of players get caught up with how many they make or miss. If they make a shot with bad form, they think that's how they are supposed to shoot. If they miss with good form, they don't think they should shoot that way. If you take them away from the hoop, they do not concentrate on the misses or makes. We also provide a twist to make it competitive.

Instructions:

1. Each player needs a partner. Each pair is to find a line on the basketball court (Half court lines, out of bounds lines, free throw lanes).

Each group needs a ball.

2. The player is to square to the line, try to shoot the ball to their partner and have it hit the line. If the ball hits the line, it counts as a make. If the ball misses the line, it counts as a miss.
3. At first, just have the players shoot back and forth while concentrating on good form.
4. After a minute or two, have each pair count to see who can make the most out of 10.



Teaching Tips:

Make sure that players are using good shooting form. If the player is right-handed, the player's right foot can be on the shooting line or slightly to the right of it and vice-versa if the player is left-handed.

Variations:

- Change the number of shots from 10 to 15, 20, or another pre-determined number, depending on skill level.
- See who can make the most consecutive "shots".

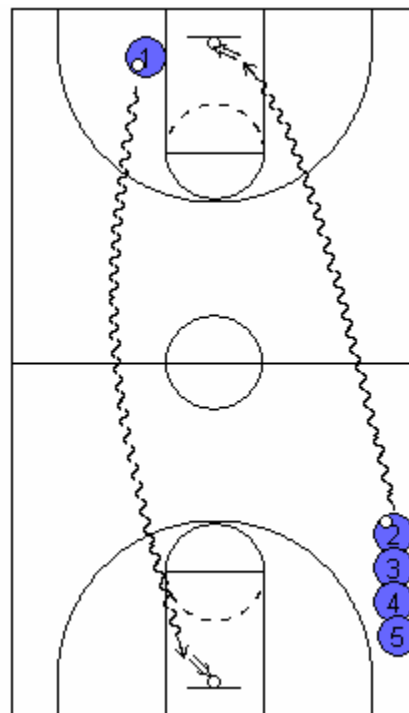
Competitive Full Court Lay Ups

Purpose:

(S, D, P, R) This is a fun drill that helps players improve their ball-handling, dribbling speed, and lay up accuracy.

Instructions:

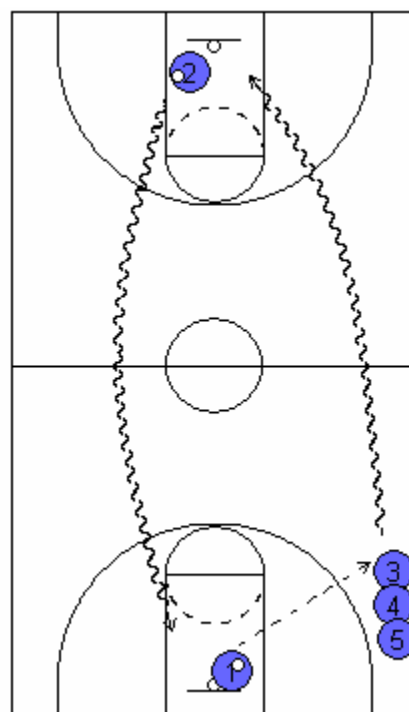
- Start with one player at the opposite end of the court from the rest of the team as shown in the diagram to the right. If you are shooting right-handed lay ups, the players start on the right side. The player on the opposite end, along with the first player in line will each need a ball.
- On the whistle, both players are to dribble down the court for a lay up.



- The player that started on the opposite end will rebound his shot and outlet the pass to the next person in line.

The player who started in the front of the line shoots a lay up, gets his own rebound, and dribbles to the opposite end of the court to do another lay up.

- This pattern continues throughout the drill.
- Pick a number of lay ups that the group must make in a specific amount of time. For example, have them try to make 20 lay ups in 2 minutes. Adjust these numbers according to the age of your players.



Teaching Tips:

Have the players try to use a minimal amount of dribbles. Remind them to push the ball out in front of them when dribbling, which helps them develop speed with the dribble.

Variations:

- If you have two full length courts, split your team up into two groups and have them compete. The first team to 25 lay ups wins.
- Switch sides and do left-handed lay ups.

Ball Handling Drills

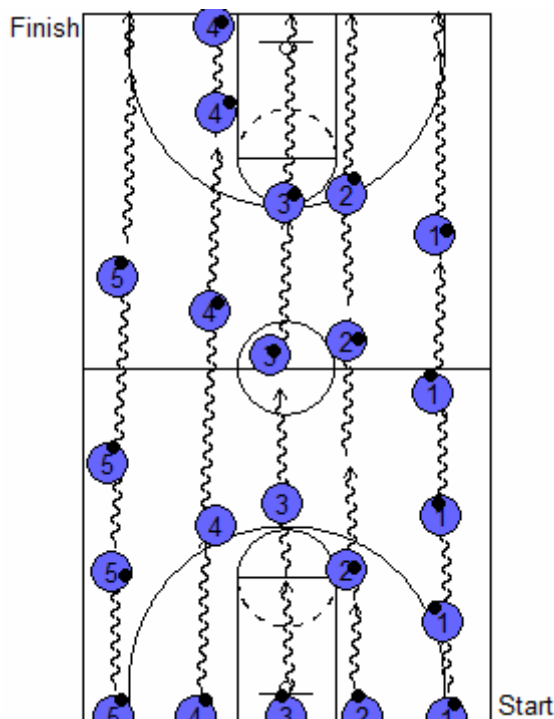
Red-Light Green-Light

Purpose:

(BH, TW) This drill helps develop young players with dribbling skills and teaches them how to control the ball better, using both hands. It also develops a “team” atmosphere and attitude.

Instructions:

1. Divide your team into two groups. For example, if there are 10 players on your team; five players will be in group one and five players in group two.
2. The first group is to stand at the baseline of one end of the court and spread apart, each with a ball. The players are instructed to dribble only with their right hands. If they use their left hands, they will have to return to the baseline and start at the beginning. If they lose control of the ball, they will have to start again as well.
3. Upon hearing the first whistle blow, the players are to begin to walk (or run, if they can) towards the other end of the gym while dribbling. Upon the next whistle, the players are to stop immediately and cease dribbling. Upon the next whistle, the players are to begin dribbling again. And so on.
4. The player who reaches the other baseline first is the winner.
5. The next group then begins the drill.
6. On the return trip, have the players switch hands. If they started the drill dribbling with their right hands, then they will dribble with their left hands in the next round.



Teaching Tips:

When forming teams for this drill, put the same ability levels within the same groups. For example, the less talented/developed dribblers in one group and the more advanced in another. Go slow when executing this drill for the first time in order to make sure that they do it properly from the very beginning. Once you've accomplished that, they should get the idea of how to dribble with both hands properly and with control.

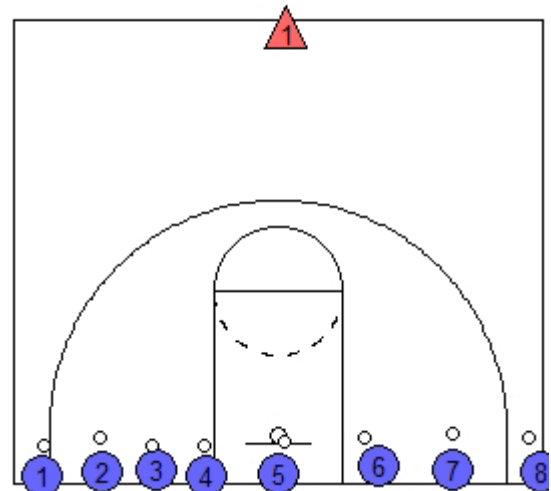
Simon Says

Purpose:

(BH) This drill will help players develop better ball handling and dribbling skills as well as other fundamentals of the sport. An emphasis is put on following the directions of the coach.

Instructions:

1. Give each player a basketball and have them spread out on the baseline with you, the coach, standing at center court.
2. Call out a skill for players to execute. For example, “Simon says, dribble with your left hand.” Players are to then start dribbling with their left hands until “Simon” says, “Stop”.
3. If a player dribbles with the wrong hand, or does not dribble at all, they are to sit on the sideline with their ball and help the coach spot players that mess up.
4. Continue calling additional directions for the remaining players. As in the traditional children’s game, if a direction is called without “Simon” saying it, the players that are fooled and actually start to execute the skill called are out.
5. The game continues until one player remains standing.



Teaching Tips:

Be sure that players are executing each skill properly.

Variations:

- Depending on the size of your team, you can also have players complete this drill in pairs, so a passing element can be added.

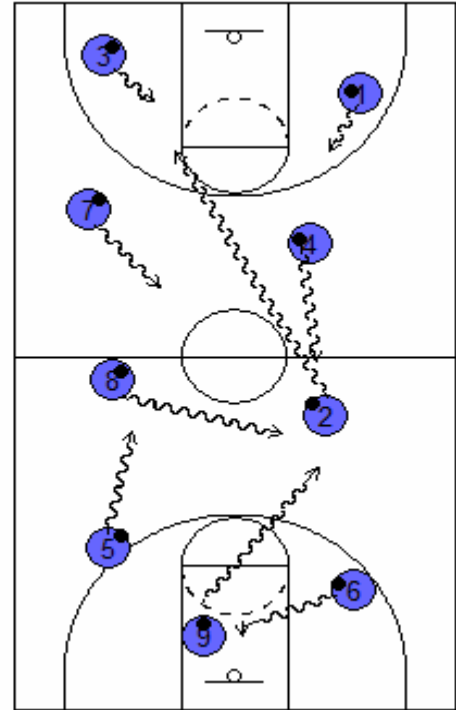
Keep it Bouncing

Purpose:

(C, BH, TW) This drill improves dribbling skills as well as team and competitive attitude development. It also helps to increase ball and floor awareness and self-discipline.

Instructions:

1. Have your players spread out around the floor, each with a ball.
2. On your whistle, they are to begin dribbling and moving around, trying to tap the other players' balls out of bounds.
3. When a player loses their ball, they must do either five push-ups or run a lap around the court before coming back into the drill.



Teaching Tips:

Be sure your players keep their heads up and use both arms. They will become much better dribblers the more they try to tap away other players' balls, instead of just protecting their own ball.

Variations:

- You can vary the difficulty of the drill by making the court smaller or bigger.

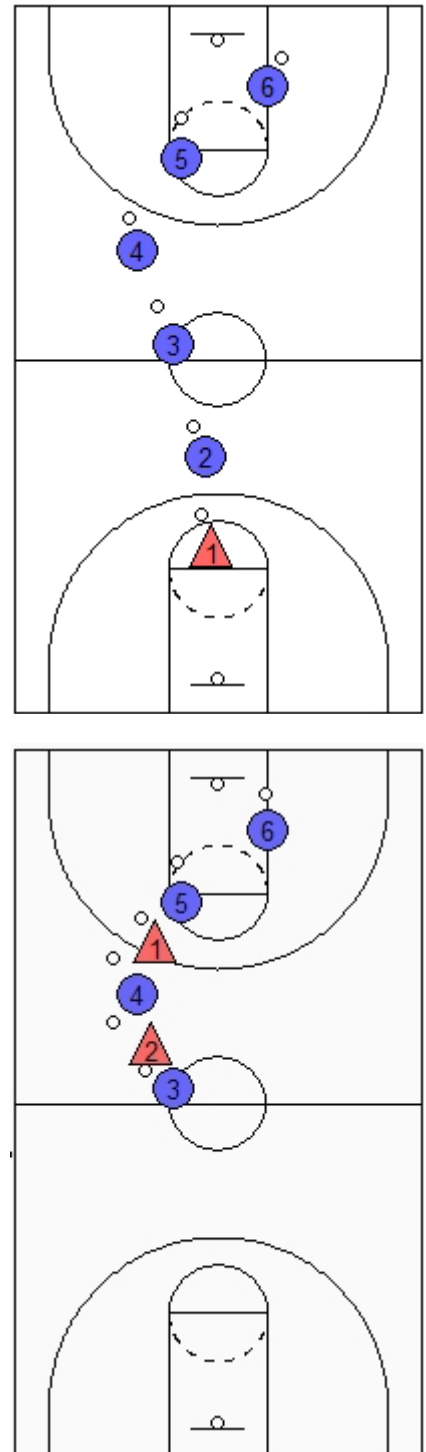
Snake Dribbling

Purpose:

(BH) This drill does a great job of developing ball-handling skills. It allows all students to be working on ball handling at the same time, and forces players to keep their heads up and avoid defenders when they are dribbling.

Instructions:

1. You'll need one ball for each player.
2. Have all players form a winding line that resembles a snake, each with a ball in their hand.
3. The last person in line must dribble the ball low with their head up through the snake, until they reach the front of the line and stop.
4. Each time a player becomes the tail of the snake they must work their way to the front and stop.



Teaching Tips:

Remind players that they need to keep their heads up to navigate through the snake. Players must also vary their dribble and use their body to protect their dribble. If you have a large group of players, you may need to form more than one snake.

Variations:

- Variations of this drill include only allowing players to use their dominant or non-dominant hand while dribbling through the snake.
- Another variation allows for the other members of the snake to attempt to knock away the player's ball, forcing the ball handler to protect their dribble.
- If there is a large group of players and more than one snake is formed, have the snakes compete to see which one can get around the gymnasium in the shortest amount of time.

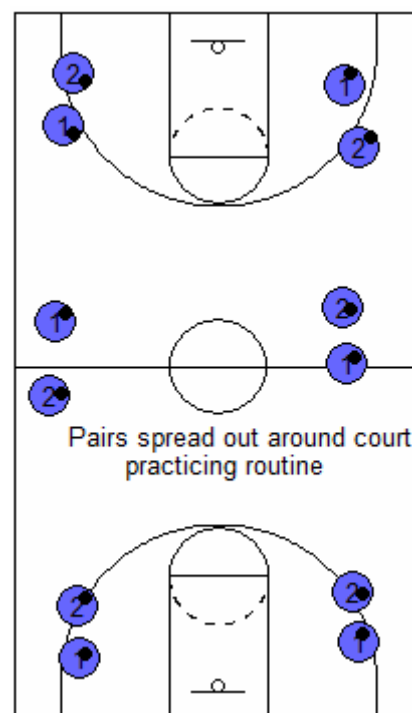
Dribble Dance

Purpose:

(BH, TW) This drill helps to develop dribbling skills and cooperation. When executed correctly, it almost looks as if the players are dancing!

Instructions:

1. Group players in pairs of similar dribbling ability.
2. Instruct them to create a short dribbling routine with their partner. Encourage players to be creative in creating their routines.
3. Provide rules for group routines:
 - Routine must include at least three or more skills/fundamentals
 - Both hands must be used equally
 - Use eight counts (or beats) for each skill
 - Stationary dribbling must be included
4. Have players write down their routines and give them a week to practice, perhaps at the end of each practice. The following week have them present their routines to their teammates.



Teaching Tips:

Make sure that the pairs are adhering to all of the given parameters.

Variations

- When the routines are presented, have the other teammates rate the performances on a scale of 1-10. The pair with the highest score is declared the winner. For more advanced dribblers, require mirroring, movement relationships (such as leading and following) and/or alternating.
- For advanced players, allow them to pass the ball back and forth to each other while executing the dribbling routine.

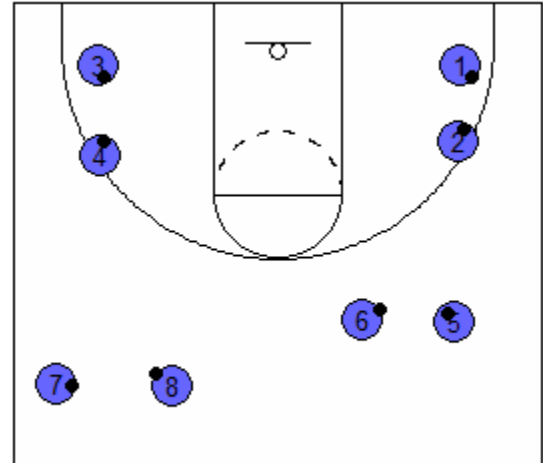
Staring Drill

Purpose:

(BH) This is a good drill for lower level age players. It aids in the development of dribbling and focusing skills.

Instructions:

1. Pair players up according to their size and skill.
2. Explain to them that they are going to be participating in a staring competition.
3. Instruct the players to hold the ball in whichever hand they choose and to face their opponent (partner). On the whistle, they are to stare into the other player's eyes, with their head up, while dribbling in place. You, as the coach, can decide whether players are permitted to use both hands to dribble or just one.
4. When a player blinks, loses control of the ball, looks down at the ball, or otherwise looks away, the other player scores a point and they begin again.
5. The first player in each pair to reach 5 points wins.



Teaching Tips:

Move about the floor and offer encouragement and correction as necessary, demanding proper execution of the drill.

Variations:

- Have the players use their 'weak' hand only.
- For those partners who may be more advanced at this skill, challenge them by allowing them to move to the left, right or backwards.
- Time the drill and see which pairs out of all can keep looking up and maintaining the dribble the longest.
- Switch partners frequently.
- For older players, require two ball dribbling (two balls per player) for this drill.

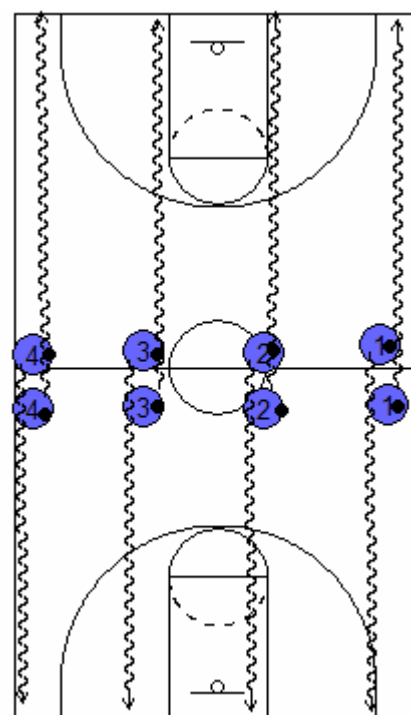
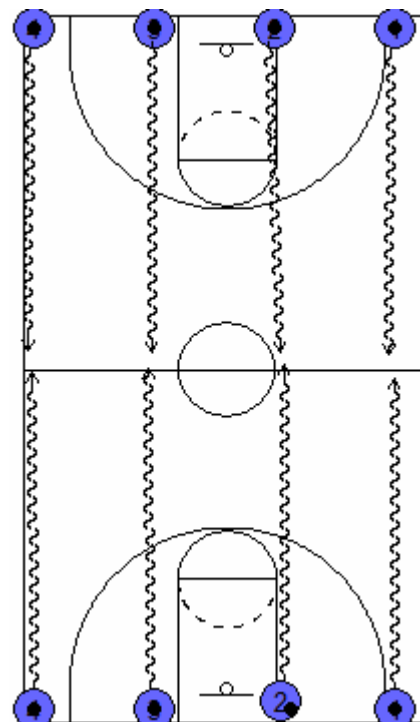
Mirror Dribble

Purpose:

(BH, C) This drill increases dribbling skills by forcing players to look forward and not at the ball. It also improves cardio fitness as it involves much movement, jogging/running.

Instructions:

1. Assign partners and have each pair line up on opposite baselines, facing one another. Give each player a ball.
2. On the whistle, both players are to advance towards one another while speed or power dribbling (either jogging or running with the dribble).
3. When they reach the center of the court, they are to return to a controlled dribble and execute whatever change-of-direction dribble skill that is called out or has been instructed prior to beginning the drill. Examples of these include; crossover dribble, hesitation dribble, and step-back dribble.
4. After executing the instructed center court skill, the players then resume the speed/power dribble, advancing toward the opposite baseline from which they started.
5. Once players arrive at the opposite baseline, they continue dribbling.
6. On the next whistle, players then execute the same drill, only this time using their left hands to dribble.
7. Run this drill anywhere from 3-6 times.



Teaching Tips:

Emphasize the importance of keeping your head up and exploding into a speed dribble after performing the change of direction skill at center court.

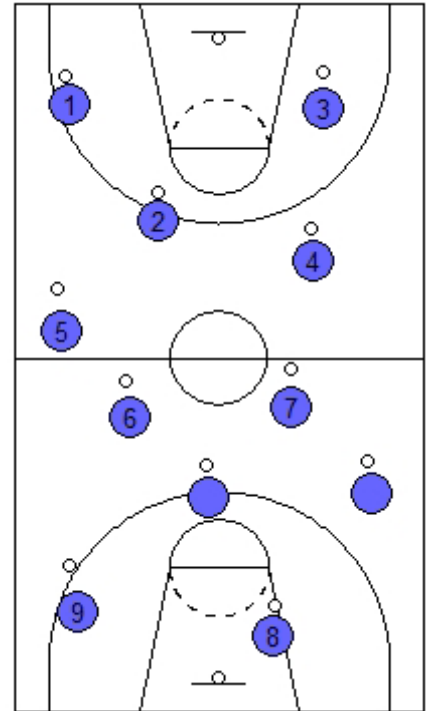
Basketball Flag Tag

Purpose:

(BH) The purpose of this drill is to develop better ball handling skills as well as better ball protection.

Instructions:

1. Each player has a basketball and a flag belt with two flags.
2. The boundary line is the basketball court.
3. Tell players that the object of the game is to attempt to remove the flags from other players and place those flags on their own belt.
4. Only one flag can be removed at a time and once a player loses both flags, they must sit down and dribble while seated.



Teaching Tips:

Fouling is not allowed. Players must attempt to take flags and protect their basketball within the rules of the game.

Variations:

- The size of the court may differ depending on the size of the group you are working with.

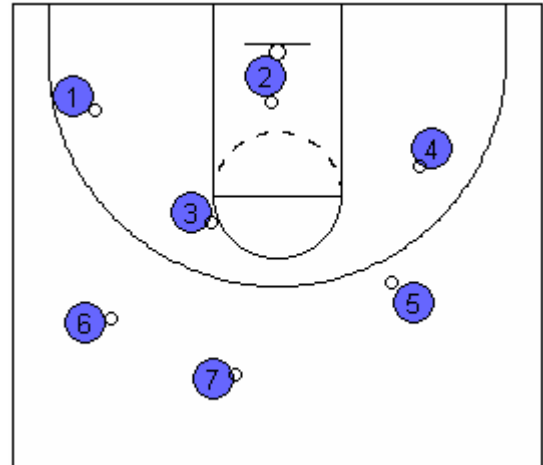
King of the Court

Purpose:

(BH) This is a tremendous drill that teaches players to keep their head up & look around the court while dribbling.

Instructions:

1. Have the players spread across the half of the court.
2. Players should try to knock the ball away from the other players.
3. If a player loses control of the basketball or another player touches their basketball, the player is then eliminated from the game. If a player double dribbles, travels, etc., he is also eliminated.
4. When eliminated, the players go to the other half of the court and work on ball-handling drills.
5. As players are eliminated or certain amount of time passes, make the boundaries smaller.



Teaching Tips

You want to make sure the players are using proper dribbling form. No carrying the ball, traveling, double-dribbling, etc. Make sure they are dribbling with their finger-tips (not with their palm), protecting the ball with the opposite arm, and scanning the court with their head up. You want the players to practice the right way, so players do not develop or continue with bad habits.

As a coach, you always want your ball-handlers to be “strong with the ball,” because every little bump is not going to be called during a game. As a result, I allow some bumping during this drill. This will get players use to game-like situations where a foul may be missed or not called. By no means, do I mean that you should allow a player to tackle or even give a moderate shove to another player. This will cause a player to get injured and is not the right way to play the game. Make sure to let the players know that there is no fouling, and you can judge the amount of bumping or fouling you allow.

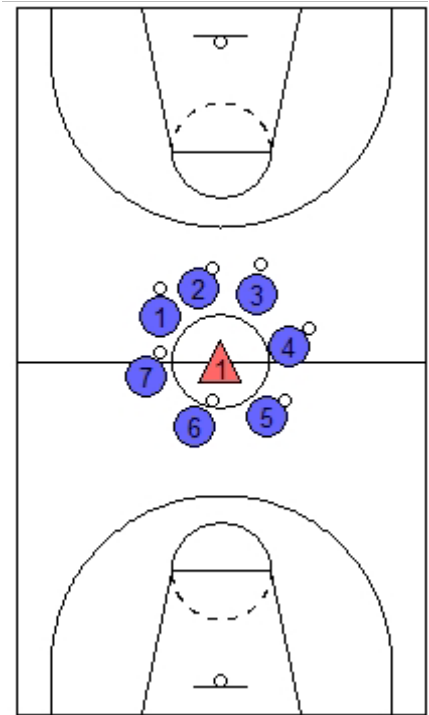
F-A-S-T

Purpose:

(BH) This drill helps develop speed dribbling, catching, and dodging skills.

Instructions:

1. Each person is given a basketball and is in a small circle in the middle of the court. The coach is to stand in the middle.
2. With a soft skin ball in your hands, call the name of a player and throw the ball into the air. The player will then leave their basketball and runs to get the soft skin ball.
3. Every other player then dribbles as fast as they can away from the person in the middle. When the player catches the ball and yells “stop”, everyone must stop immediately and set their balls down beside them.
4. The player in the middle with the “soft “ball may take three steps toward the nearest student and attempt to throw the ball at them. If the target is hit with the ball, that person must give their basketball to the player that got them out and go to the center of the court. If the person throwing the ball misses or the ball is caught by the target, the original person stays in the middle. Everyone then returns to the middle and the ball is thrown in the air and a new name is called.



Teaching Tips:

Remind players that they must push the ball out in front of their bodies to speed dribble effectively.

Variations:

- The number of steps taken to get close to the target may be changed depending on the size of the gym.
- The circle in the middle can be close to the person throwing the ball or it can be moved away from the middle, depending on the gym size.

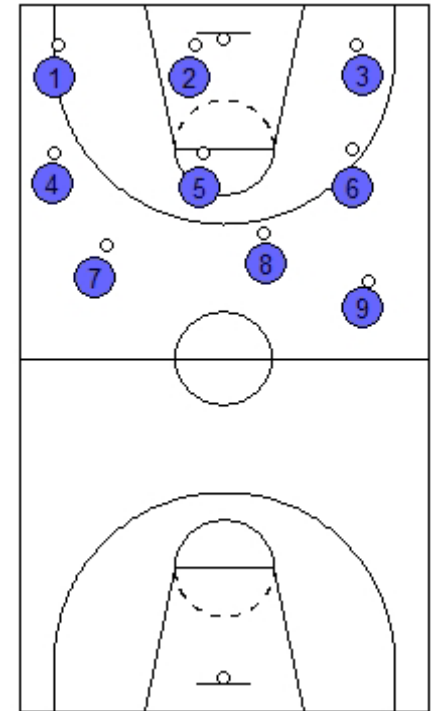
Keep Your Head Up

Purpose:

(BH, CM) This drill is to help improve ball handling as well as catching and throwing skills. It also stresses the importance of communication.

Instructions:

1. Each player begins with a basketball spread out in half the gymnasium.
2. Have all players begin to walk around dribbling the basketball.
3. Toss a tennis ball to one of the players.
4. The player must catch the ball with their off hand and toss it (underhanded) to another player.
5. If a player drops the ball, he/she must sit down and dribble the ball in place. The last person standing is the winner.



Teaching Tips:

Players must be reminded to keep their heads up and be ready to receive the ball.

Variations:

- The size of the court can be adjusted, depending on the size of the group.
- Additional tennis balls can be added depending on the ability of the group.
- Players should also try doing the drill using their off hand to dribble.

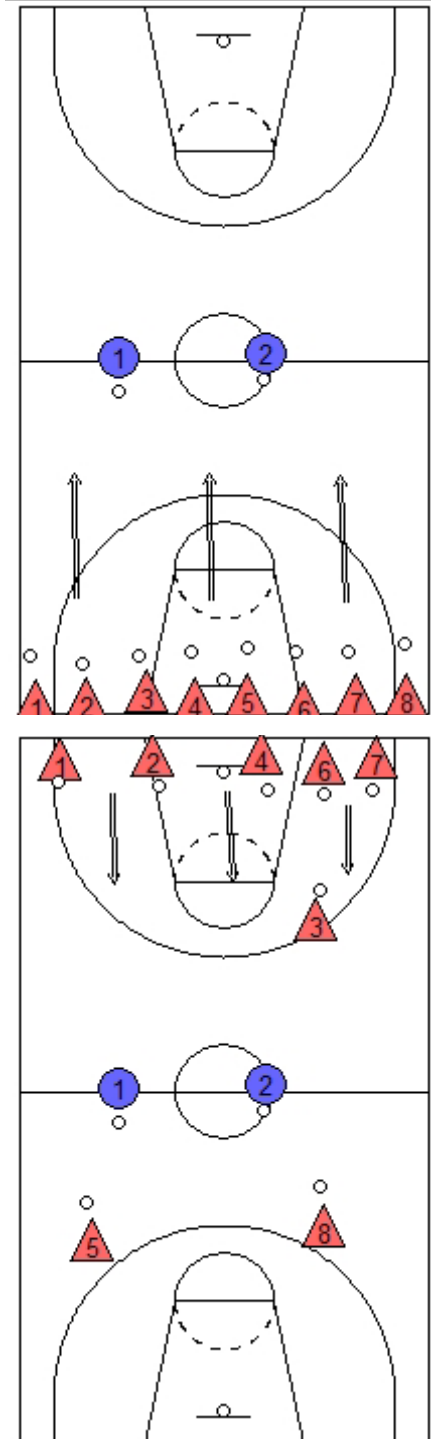
Sharks and Minnows

Purpose:

(BH, D) This game allows players to develop better ball handling skills against defensive pressure.

Instructions:

1. You'll need a minimum of 10 players and one ball per player.
2. Have every player stand on one end of the gym and give them each a ball. All of these players are the "MINNOWS".
3. Select two or three players to be the "SHARKS".
4. Each "MINNOW" must dribble their ball safely to the other side of the "SEA", or gym, without being "EATEN", or tagged, by a "SHARK", who also must be dribbling a ball at all times.
5. Once a "MINNOW" is "EATEN", they become an "OCTOPUS" and must stand in the spot where they were tagged with the ball between their feet. The "OCTOPUS" cannot move, but may attempt to tag the "MINNOWS" passing by.
6. After all "MINNOWS" reach the other side, they must now attempt to cross the "SEA" again, and avoid being tagged by the "SHARKS" and the "OCTOPI".



Teaching Tips:

You can vary the name of the game depending on the age group of your team. Older players probably don't need a creative name, but with younger players, you can really play up the Sharks and Minnows theme to make the game more fun.

Variations:

- This game can be made more difficult by having the players use only their non-dominant hand to dribble and/or increasing the number of "SHARKS" in the "SEA".
- Conversely, the game can be made easier by allowing the students to use both hands to dribble and/or limiting the number of "SHARKS". The bigger the space you have, the easier the game will be for the players

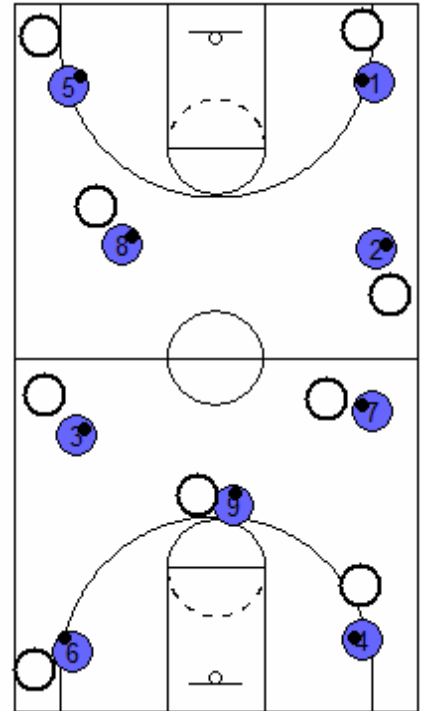
Hula-Hoop Drill

Purpose:

(BH) This is a fun dribbling drill that forces players to keep their head up and see the entire court in order to succeed. This drill also requires players to anticipate the movement of the other players on the floor.

Instructions:

1. Have all players get a hula-hoop and a ball, and spread out around the court, laying their hoops on the floor.
2. On the whistle, the players are to begin to dribble around the court. While they are moving, the coach removes one of the hula-hoops from the floor.
3. On the next whistle, players are to speed dribble and get at least one foot inside of a hula-hoop.
4. The player who is unable to get to a hula-hoop is out of the game.
5. Continue removing hula-hoops until only two players remain.
6. The last player standing in a hula-hoop upon the whistle is the winner.



Teaching Tips:

Encourage students to constantly be aware of where the other players are and to continue moving. Emphasize the importance of keeping their heads up, not looking at the ball, and making quick, decisive moves.

The players who are knocked out can be the ones who run onto the court and remove hoops before the coach blows the whistle during the drill.

Variations:

- Use music instead of a whistle.
- Allow only a certain type of dribble (left-handed only, dribbling in and out of hoops, etc.).
- Allow more experienced players to try to knock the other players' balls away.

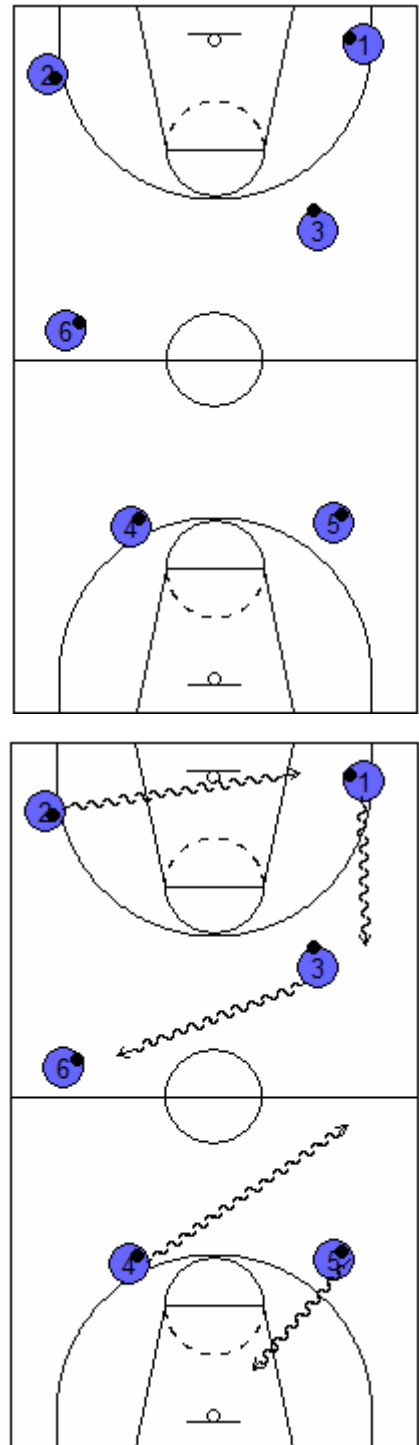
Dribble Tag

Purpose:

(BH) This drill builds the competitive spirit and increases development of dribbling skills. It also aids in awareness of the court and other players.

Instructions:

1. Give each player a ball and have them spread out throughout the court. The sidelines of the court are considered “out of bounds.”
2. All players are “it.”
3. On the whistle, players are to dribble while trying to tag another player and avoid being tagged themselves. When a player gets tagged they are out and must move to the sideline. If a player purposely quits dribbling to avoid being tagged, they are out. Also, if a player loses control of the dribble or steps out of bounds, they are out.
4. If two players tag each other at the same time, they are both out.
5. The last player left dribbling and untagged is the winner.



Teaching Tips:

Remind players to look up while dribbling to avoid being tagged and to maintain their concentration and awareness in order to avoid losing control of dribble and/or stepping out of bounds.

Variations:

- To keep the game moving continuously, re-use players that have been tagged by allowing them to come back into the game. Once a player gets tagged, all of the players that got tagged by him/her gets to come back in.
- Have two different drills going at the same time by using half of the court for the drill. This is especially good if you have players with varying degrees of dribbling skills.

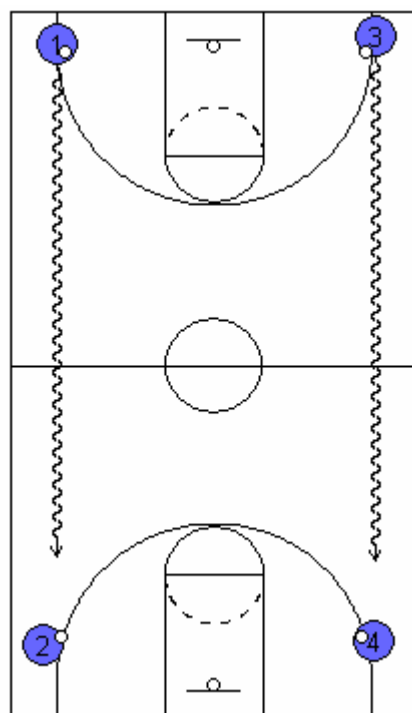
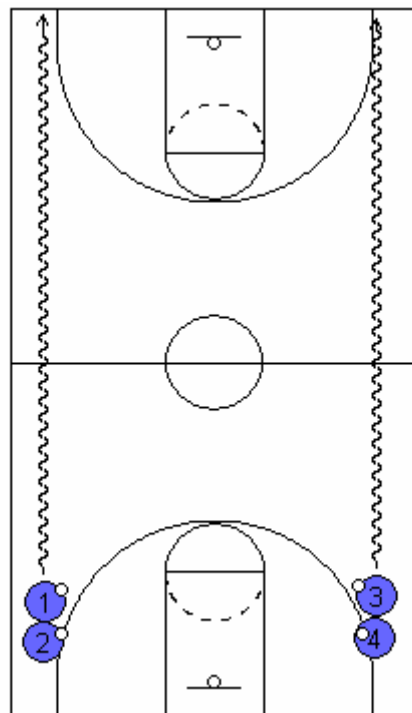
Dribble Relays

Purpose:

(BH, A, C) This drill is simple but it will help your players improve their ball-handling skills. It will teach them how to sprint up the court without losing control, and improve their endurance.

Instructions:

1. Form at least 2 lines (If 12 or more players, form 3 lines).
2. Have the first two players in each line get a basketball.
3. On the whistle, each team starts.
4. The first player dribbles up and down the court as quickly as possible. (Dribble down with right hand, dribble back with left hand.)
5. When the 1st player reaches the 2nd player in line. The 2nd player begins.
6. Continue this until the last person has finished.



Teaching Tips

If a player loses control of the ball, make sure he/she gets the ball and starts from the point where he/she lost control of the ball. Otherwise, players will fumble and kick the basketball down the court, and the drill will lose its purpose.

To keep the players from looking at the ball, you could position yourself at one end of the court between the two lines and make sure the players maintain eye-contact with you.

Let the players know that if they do this drill correctly (head up, etc.), it will help them find open players, see the defense while dribbling, and decrease the number of turnovers.

Variations:

- At half court, have them do a change-of-direction dribble, such as a crossover, behind-the-back, spin move, or step-back dribble.

Cone Tip-Over Drill

Purpose:

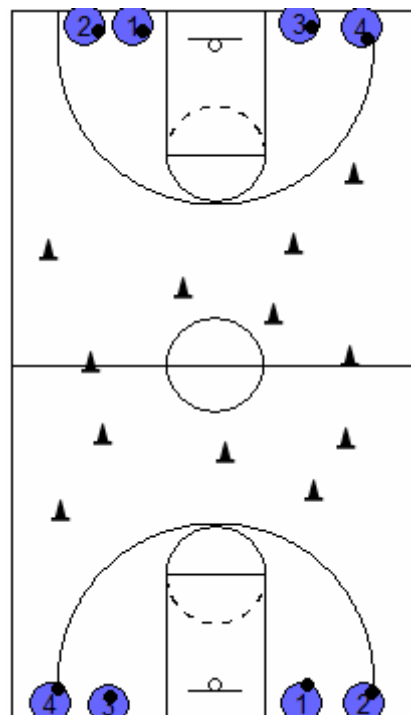
(BH, TW) This is an ideal drill to help develop dribbling skills. It also initiates team development as players learn how to work together.

Instructions:

1. Set up 5 to 10 cones on each half of the court. Have two teams and each player needs a ball.
2. On the whistle, team 1 knocks over as many cones as possible while maintaining their dribble. Team 2 tries to pick up any cone that is knocked over while maintaining their dribble.

If a player from team 1 loses their dribble, they must pick up a cone. If a player from team 2 loses their dribble, they must knock down a cone.

3. After 30 to 60 seconds. One point is awarded to team 1 for each cone that is knocked over and team 2 receives a point for each cone still standing. The team with the most points wins.



Teaching Tips:

Encourage players to focus mentally on exactly what they are doing and to avoid being distracted.

Variations:

- Have them dribble with their weak hand only.

Dribble Weave

Purpose:

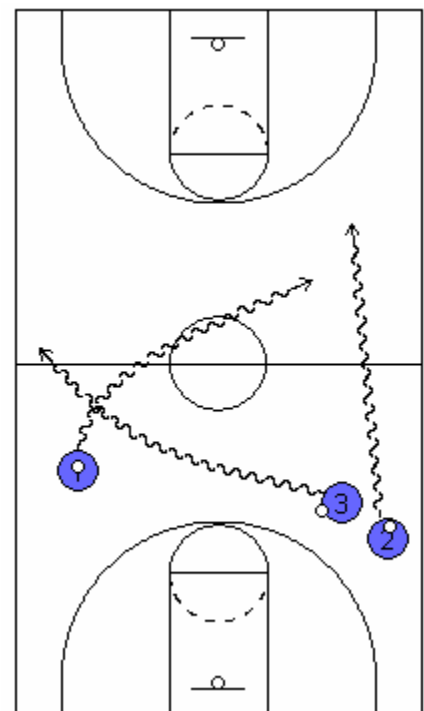
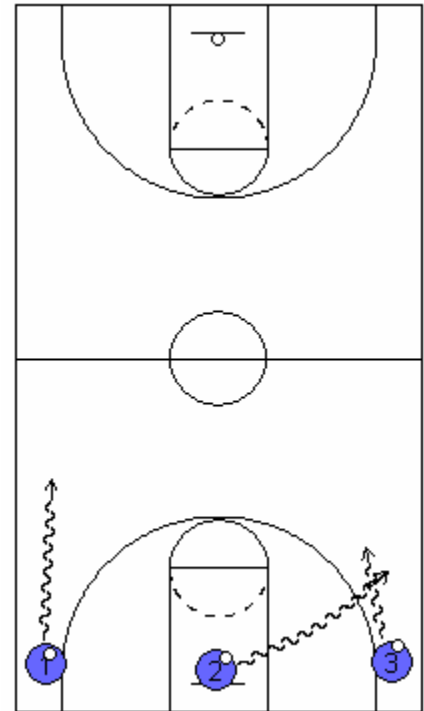
(CM, TW, C, BH) This drill emphasizes communication between teammates and includes a conditioning component. The basketball skill being developed is ball handling.

Instructions:

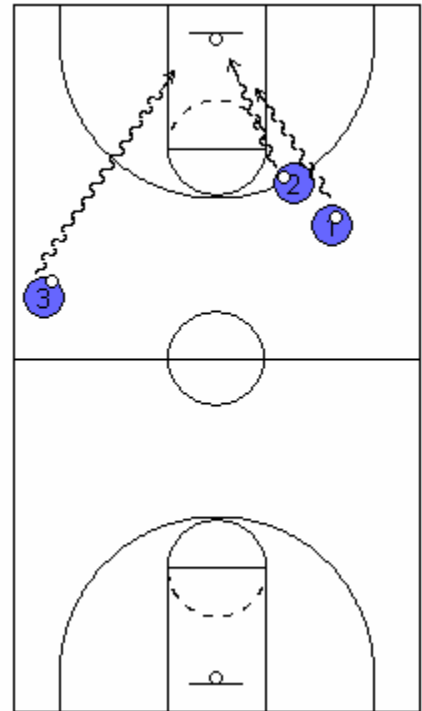
1. Divide players into two groups of three.
2. Players in each group are lined up on the base line as shown in the diagram to the right.
3. Each player at the front of the line is given a ball.
4. Players are to create a weave pattern while dribbling the basketball up the court.
5. Players 1 & 3 start by dribbling up the court.
6. Player 2 starts by dribbling behind player 3.
7. As soon as player 2 gets near player 3, player 3 dribbles towards the opposite baseline to weave behind player 1.

Player 2 continues to dribble up the court.

8. As soon as player 3 gets near player 1, player 1 dribbles towards the opposite baseline to weave behind player 2.



9. Each player will then attempt a lay-up on the other end and weave back down the court with their group, again making a lay-up when reaching the basket.
10. Once Group 1 returns to the baseline, the Group 2 then weaves up and down the court, attempting lay-ups at each basket.



Teaching Tips:

Players should be reminded to keep their heads up when dribbling, and to use the appropriate hand on the correct side of the court.

Variations:

- Have the player crossover or use a different dribble move as soon as they have to change direction.
- Use one ball and take one dribble and pass while moving up and down the court in the weaving motion.

Passing Drills

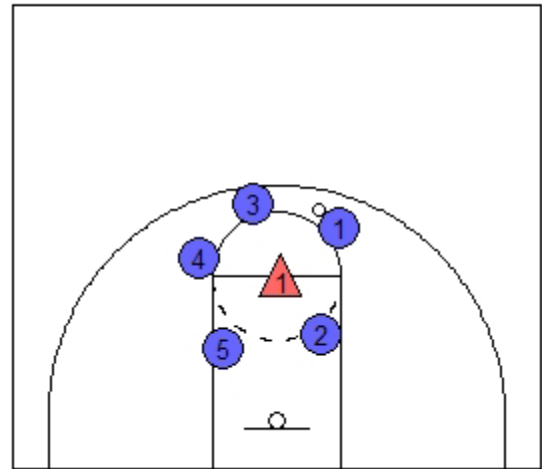
Protect the Cone

Purpose:

(P, D) This drill focuses on the bounce pass and chest pass, as well as defensive strategy.

Instructions:

1. Have five players form a circle with one additional player standing in the middle. A cone is placed in the middle of the circle with the single player.
2. Give the group one ball and have them try to knock down the cone by using both communication and cooperation. The players are to pass the ball to one another using bounce and chest passes.
3. The person in the middle is to try to protect the cone from being knocked over.
4. Once a player knocks the cone down, that player must enter the middle and now become the cone protector.



Teaching Tips:

Stress to players that they must talk to each other when passing the ball and use correct form.

Variations:

- This drill can be varied by changing the number of players both inside and outside of the circle.

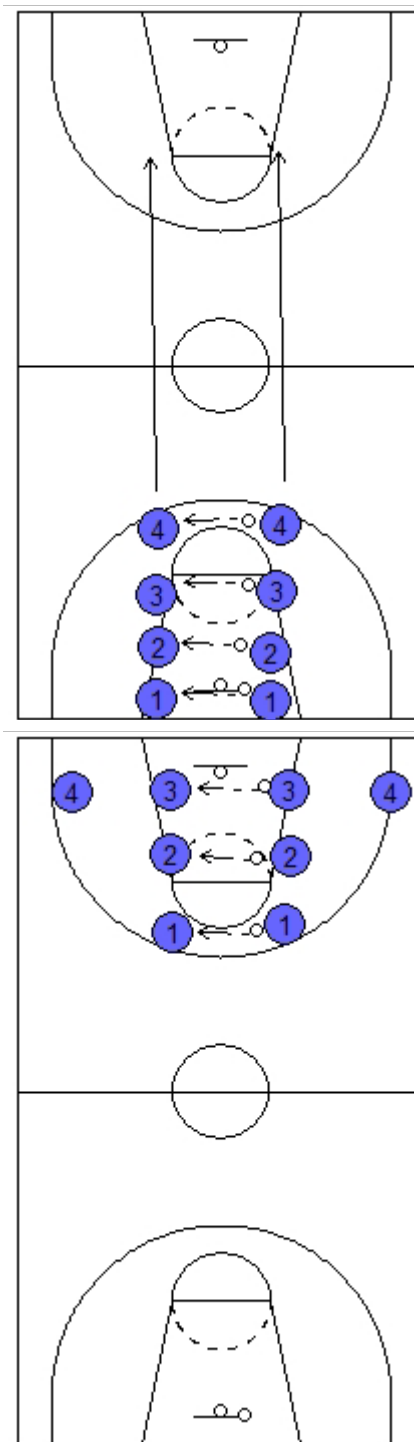
Shot Gun Passing

Purpose:

(P) This drill focuses on using correct form when bounce, chest and overhead passing the ball.

Instructions:

1. Have five players line up on each side of the basketball key. Each player on the right side of the key is given a basketball and must stand across from a player on the other side of the key.
2. On the whistle, the players are to pass the ball back and forth to one another. On the word, "Go", both lines, while passing the ball back and forth, are to begin to shuffle slide to the other end of the court.
3. When the first person in each line reaches the baseline, they are to then run out to the sidelines and begin overhead passing back to the opposite baseline.
4. When the players reach the opposite baseline, they must then move inside to the key and begin chest passing the ball up the middle of the court.



Teaching Tips:

Stress the importance of accurate passes, as well as ball awareness. The pattern of passing in this drill makes for a tricky environment if you are not paying attention.

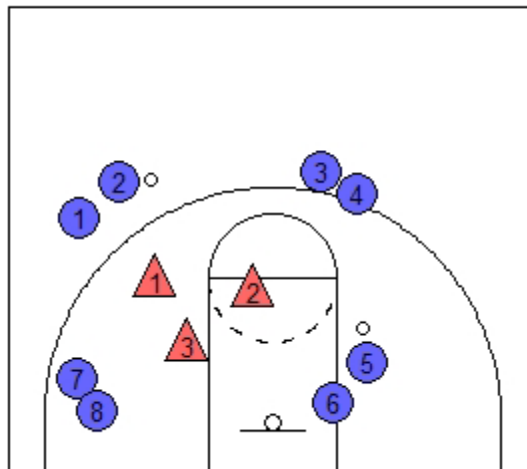
Space Invaders

Purpose:

(P, D) This drill focuses on all three styles of passing (bounce, chest, overhead) and also works on defending passes for beginning basketball players.

Instructions:

1. Using cones or flat panel mats, create 4 small areas that form four corners of a square. These mats are the “spaceships”.
2. Each “spaceship” has two passengers, each facing another spaceship. The passengers must pass two “secret data files” (basketballs) from “ship” to “ship” without having the files stolen by “aliens”.
3. Three students will stand in the middle of the square and act as “aliens” attempting to steal the “data files” before they can make it to another “spaceship.”
4. If an “alien” is able to steal the basketball, they are to then switch spots with the person on the “spaceship” who made the pass.



Teaching Tips:

Players need to focus on making accurate passes as well as using different types of ball fakes to pass the ball successfully.

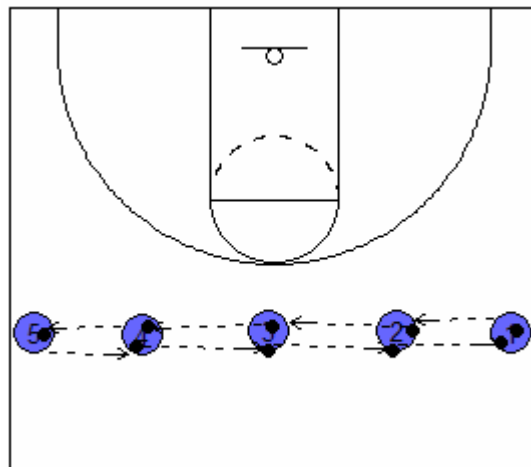
Passing Line Relay

Purpose:

(P, F) This drill both teaches and helps to develop passing and catching skills, while also instructing players how to use their pivot foot.

Instructions:

1. Divide the players into two equal teams at mid-court. Line them up about five- seven feet apart.
2. The first player passes the ball to the second player in line. The second player must turn 180 degrees using a correct pivot and pass to the next player in line.
3. Continue to the end of the line and then have the players work the ball back to the front. If a ball is dropped, or a player incorrectly executes a pivot, the team must quickly send the ball to the front of the line and start again.
4. The team that successfully gets the ball through the line and back the fastest wins the drill.



Teaching Tips:

Make sure that players are executing the pivot correctly and have them vary which foot they pivot on when doing the drill again.

Variations:

- You can also use this drill to practice chest passes, bounce passes and 2-handed overhead passes.

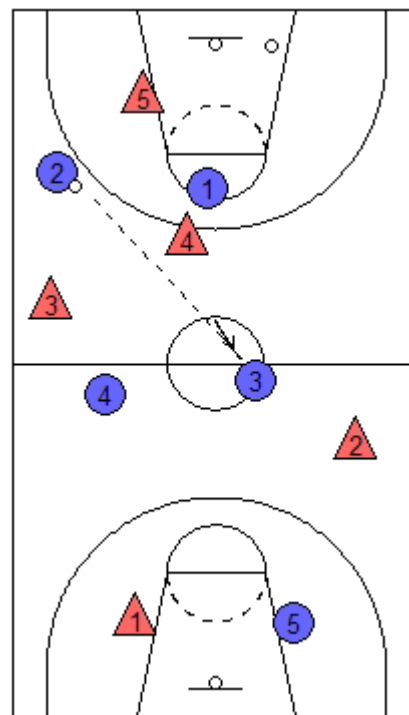
Ultimate Basketball

Purpose:

(CM, P) This game reinforces player communication and correct ball passing under pressure. The game also teaches players to work hard to get open for their teammates, because if you cannot get open, you cannot move the ball down the court.

Instructions:

1. You'll need 1 ball and 10 players.
2. Divide players into two teams.
3. The teams are to play a full-court game of basketball, but are not allowed to dribble or walk with the ball, except for the two steps allowed when attempting a lay-up. Players are to pass the ball to open teammates in order to get the ball down the court to score.
4. All basketball defensive rules apply. No fouling or rough play is allowed.



Variations:

- If you have a smaller group, the game can be played in a half-court setting.
- To make the game a little easier for younger players and incorporate the aspect of ball handling, allow each player to dribble the ball one or two times before passing it to a teammate.

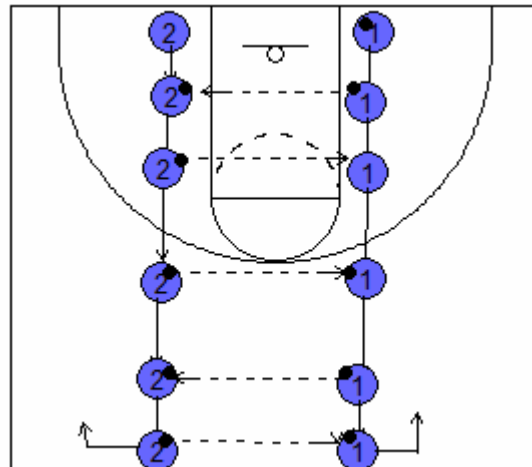
Shuffle Pass Relay

Purpose:

(P, F, TW, C) This drill is great for young players who have achieved some level of confidence in passing. It emphasizes passing and catching on the move, footwork, teamwork and conditioning.

Instructions:

1. Separate the players into two equal teams. Each team will then divide into two lines and set up facing each other as shown in the diagram to the right.
2. The first pair in each line starts down the court throwing bounce or chest passes while shuffling down the court as fast as possible.
3. Have the players both touch the baseline at the opposite end of the court and then return, passing the ball to the next pair in line.



Teaching Tips:

Younger players will often travel with the ball before they can make the exchange from catching to throwing. Work towards improving this skill with them as well as with older players. If you have a team that needs to “talk” more on the court, make them call out “ball” when they are ready to receive the pass.

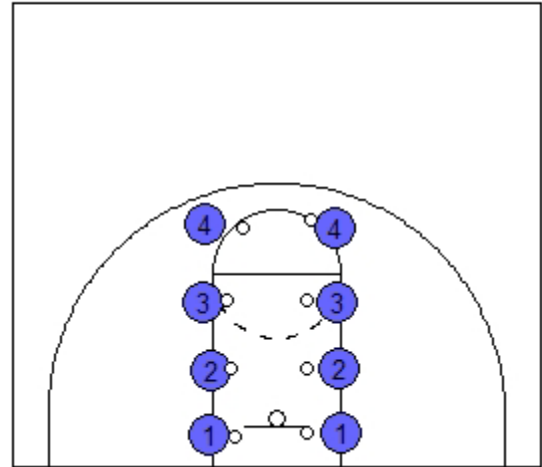
Two Ball Passing

Purpose:

(P, CM) This drill gives players great practice with the chest, bounce and overhead passes, and stresses hand-eye coordination and communication skills.

Instructions:

1. Break players into two groups and have them face each other, standing on either side of the basketball key.
2. Each player has a basketball facing their partner across the key. On the whistle, all players are to pass the ball with their right hand to their partner, back and forth until the coach blows the whistle to stop.
3. The players then repeat the drill, now using their left hands to pass the ball.
4. The next passing pattern involves one partner performing a bounce pass at the same time the opposite partner is attempting a chest pass. In time, switch the pattern so each partner has a chance to attempt the chest and bounce pass.
5. The last pattern involves the overhead pass and the chest pass at the same time. Again, give each partner a chance to attempt both passes.



Teaching Tip:

Have players keep track of how many successful passes they can make and hold a competition.

Pass and Switch

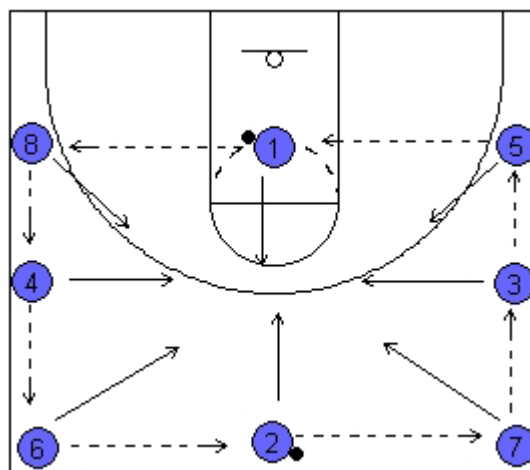
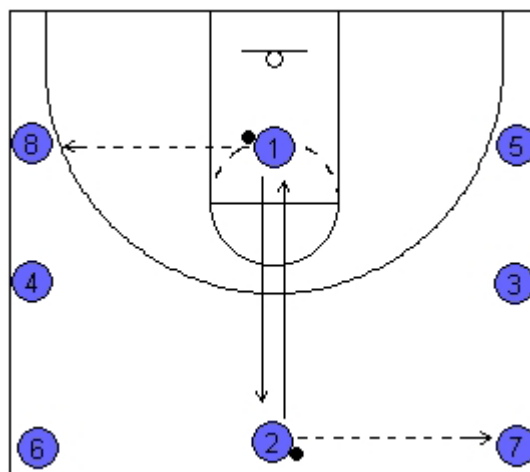
Purpose:

(P, C, TW) This drill is meant to simulate high speed, game-like situations to help players improve passing speed and accuracy. It's also a lot of fun for players because it's fast paced!

Note: This drill is set up for 8 players. If you have more players, use more court space.

Instructions:

- Each player has a partner:
 - 1 - 2
 - 3 - 4
 - 5 - 6
 - 7 - 8
- Players 1 and 2 will start with a ball.
- Player 1 and Player 2 will pass the ball to their right.
- After passing the ball, they sprint to exchange places with their partner.
- The drill should keep moving quickly and all players will immediately pass the ball to right then switch with their partner. As both balls go around the court, players must sprint and beat the ball.



Teaching Tips:

Continually tell your players to make accurate passes and move as quickly as possible without sacrificing form and accuracy.

When passing, step toward your receiver. When catching, extend your hands and step toward the pass.

As in shooting, the ball should have backspin on it. This is accomplished by following through on every pass.

You can spice things up and add a bit of motivation by:

- Giving them a reward if they don't drop the ball after two minutes and get X number of passes completed.

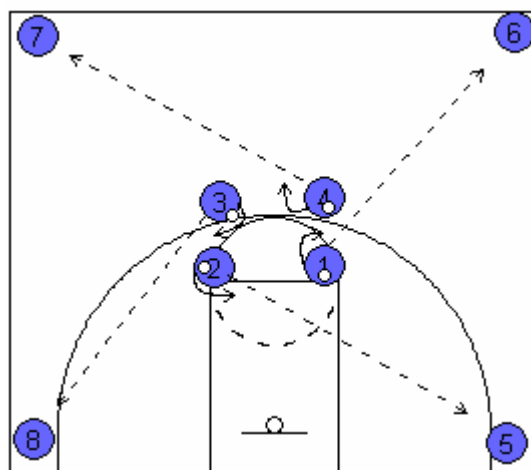
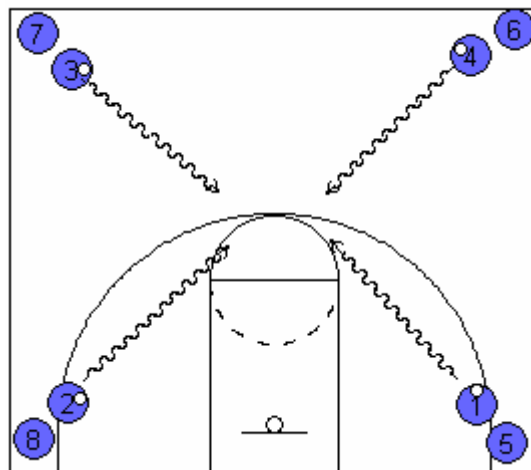
Four Corners Passing

Purpose:

(P, F, TW, BH) This drill is designed to help your players develop great footwork while incorporating some passing into the drill.

Instructions

1. Have your players split up and go to all four corners of one half of the court.
2. Before the whistle, the coach will call out which pivot he/she wants (right, left).
3. On the whistle, the first player in each line will dribble a basketball towards the middle of that half of the court.
4. Then the players will execute the pivot the coach said to use.
5. After completing the pivot, the player should be facing one of the four corners. The player will then pass the ball to the next player in line and follow the pass to the back of that line.
6. Continue this drill until you feel it is being performed correctly. Ideally, the players will be in sync throughout the drill.
7. After the players get the hang of this drill, you could see how many passes they can make in 30 seconds to keep the drill competitive and fun.



Teaching Tips:

Continually tell your players to make sure they are pivoting and not traveling. One foot must be planted at all times! Have them make a crisp pass to the next person in line – bounce pass or chest pass.

Variations:

- You can also see how long they can go without dropping the ball and reward the winning group.

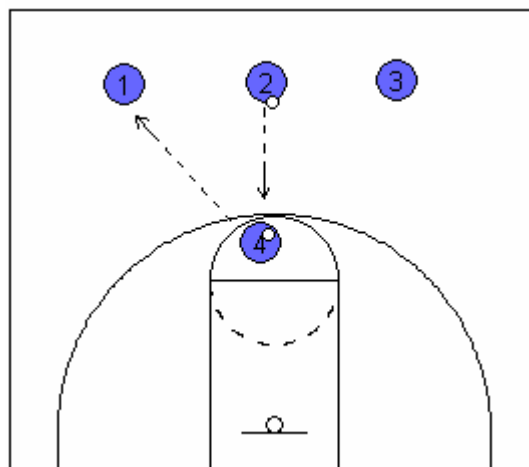
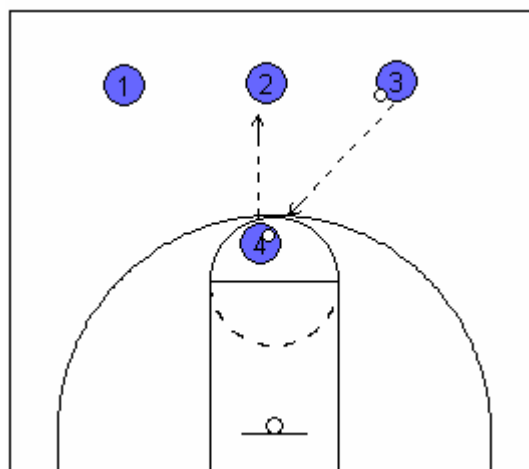
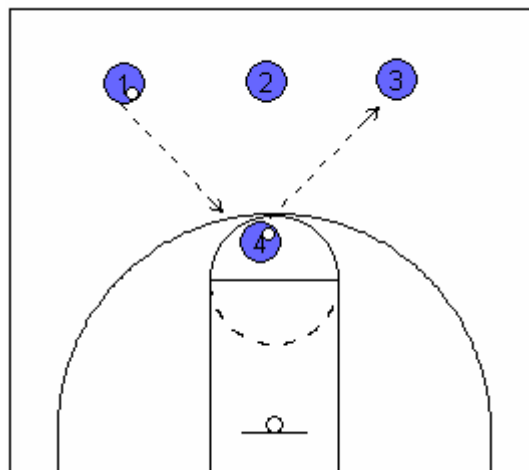
Machine Gun Passing

Purpose:

(P) If you have players that have been dropping passes or if you just want to improve your passing and catching, this drill is perfect. It is great for improving hand-eye coordination (catching & passing).

Instructions:

1. Form a line of 3 people next to each other.
2. They should be about 4 to 5 feet apart.
3. Have a 4th player stand about 12 to 15 ft away facing the other 3 players.
4. Player 4 starts out with a ball & Player 1 also has a ball.
5. Player 4 passes the ball to Player 3.
6. After Player 4 has released the ball, Player 1 passes the ball to Player 4.
7. Player 4 then passes the ball to Player 2, and simultaneously, Player 3 passes it to Player 4.
8. Then Player 4 passes the ball to Player 1. Simultaneously, Player 2 passes the ball to Player 4.
9. Then return to the position you were in step 1. Repeat the Process Over and Over.
10. To add a competitive aspect, see who can make the most accurate passes within 20 seconds. Accurate means the ball is not above the head or below the waist and two feet to the right or left.



Teaching Tips

Make sure the players are making accurate passes and not just flinging the ball everywhere. This drill is best done with 4 players, because the players get confused with what person to throw the ball to when there is more than 4 players.

You want to do this drill as quickly as possible. It really improves hand-eye coordination and the amount of time it takes a player to make a pass. Players really want to focus on doing quick SNAP-passes.

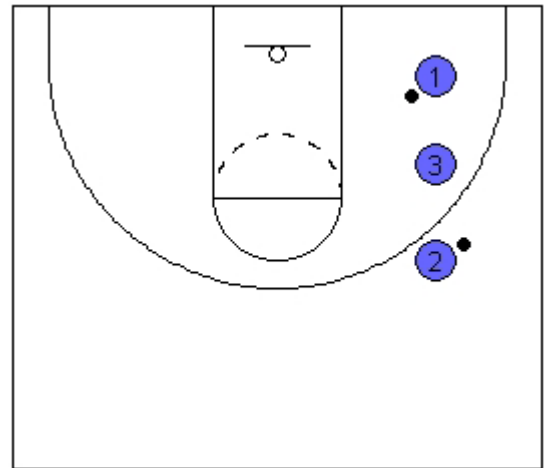
Middle Man Passing

Purpose:

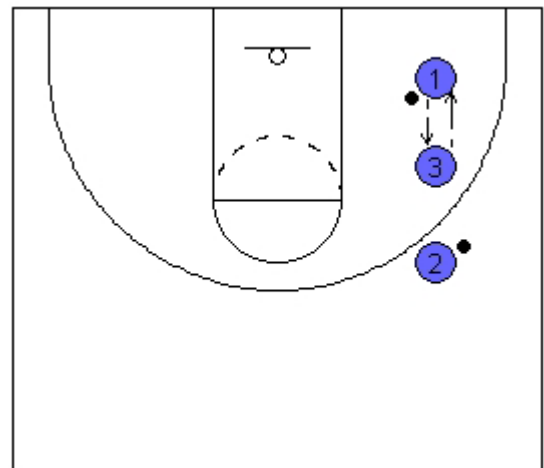
(P) This passing drill is meant to overload the middle player and will help players improve passing speed, accuracy, strength, and confidence. If done properly, the middle player really gets a workout! You can also add a twist to this drill and work on pivoting at the same time.

Instructions:

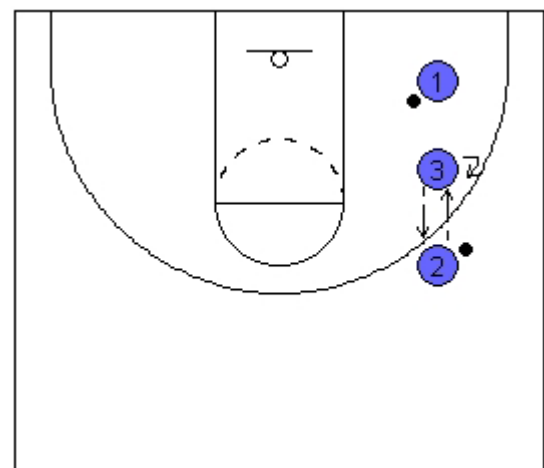
1. Position three players as shown in the diagram.
2. Players 1 and 2 will need basketballs.



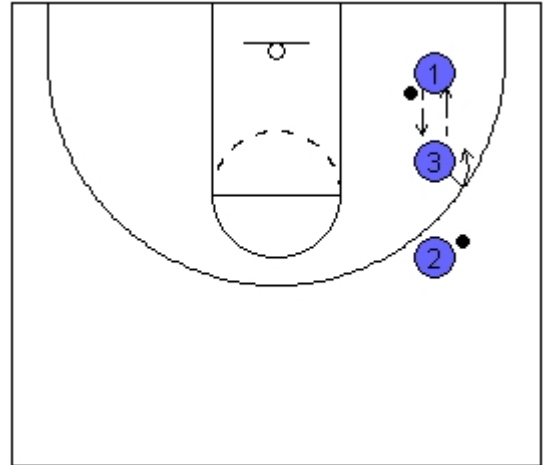
3. Player 1 passes to 3.
4. Player 3 immediately returns the pass.



5. Player 3 turns to 2.
6. Player 2 passes to 3.
7. Player 3 immediately returns the pass.



8. Player 3 turns to 1.
9. Player 1 passes to 3.
10. Player 3 immediately returns the pass.
11. Continue for 30 seconds.



Variation:

- To make this a multi-use drill, use a specific pivot to turn (drop step, front pivot, etc).

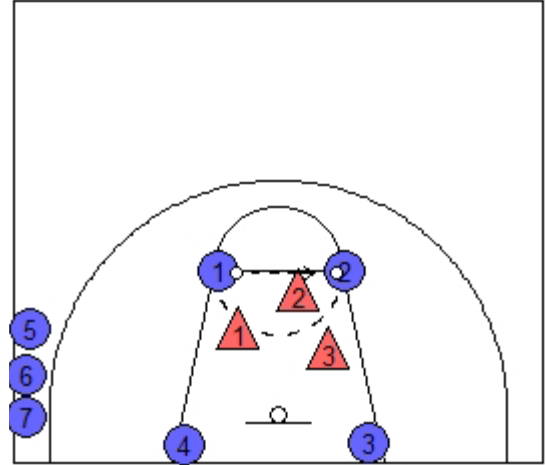
Monkeys in the Middle

Purpose:

(CM, P, D) This game is great for emphasizing communication between teammates, correct passing techniques and pressure defense.

Instructions:

1. You'll need 1 ball and a minimum of 7 players.
2. Four players spread out into the four corners of the basketball "key" area. These four players will be passing the ball to each other, using the bounce, chest and overhead pass.
3. Three other players will spread out inside the "key" area and act as "MONKEYS" trying to get the "BANANA", or ball.
4. The two other defenders may cover whom they wish.
5. Once the ball defense, or "MONKEYS", tips the ball, the person who made the bad pass becomes a "MONKEY IN THE MIDDLE" and is replaced by a player waiting in line to enter the drill. The "old Monkey" steps out of the drill and waits in line to come back in.



Teaching Tips:

Remind players inside the "key" that there must always be pressure on the person with the ball. For large groups, a different game can be played on each half of the court. Additional players can either be made "MONKEYS" or lined up on the sideline, waiting to enter the game when someone makes a bad pass.

Variations:

- Variations of this game include limiting passes to chest, bounce, or overhead passes only. The game becomes a great deal more difficult if you only allow bounce passes.
- Another variation that raises the level of difficulty for the players inside the "key" is to make the defense, or "MONKEYS" completely steal the ball, instead of just requiring a tip to get out of the middle.

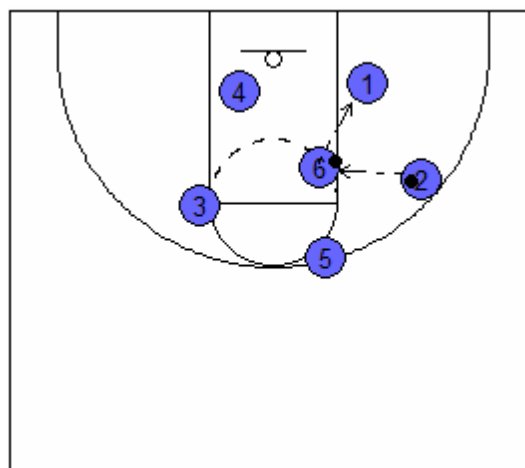
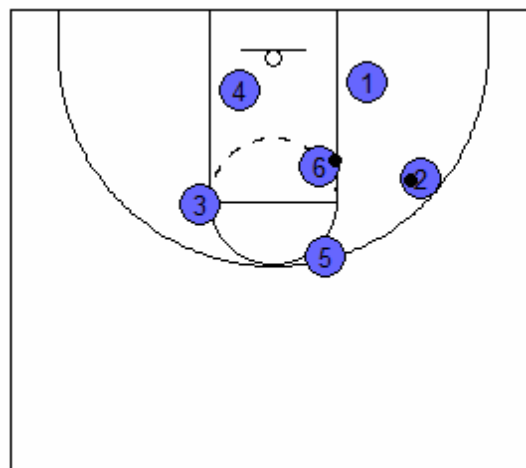
Circle Passing

Purpose:

(TW, P) This drill increases team camaraderie as well as passing skills. Additionally, it improves both mental and physical focus, and builds the competitive spirit that is necessary in basketball players.

Instructions:

1. Instruct players to get into circles of groups of 4-6 each. Have the groups spread out around the court.
2. One member of each group is to get inside the circle with a ball.
3. Another member on the outside of the circle has a ball as well.
4. On the whistle, the player inside the circle throws the ball to the player directly to the right of the other player with the ball. The player on the outside of the circle with the ball then immediately passes his ball to the player inside the circle as shown to the right. This continues until the player inside the circle has gone around the entire circle three times.
5. Another player then enters the circle and executes the drill.
6. The drill continues until all players have had their turn inside the circle.
7. Time the drill and see who can do it the fastest.



Teaching Tips:

Encourage players to use their peripheral vision. Remind them that this drill requires quick thinking and concentration as well as physical skill.

Variations:

- Alternate the type of passes that players are to use.
- Have the player inside the circle call out the name of the player he is passing it to next prior to passing it to him.

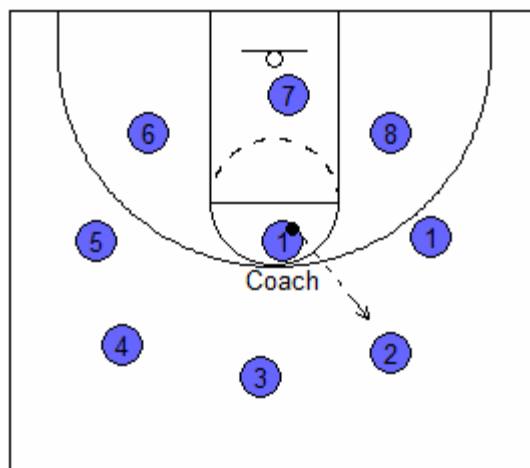
Clap Passing Drill

Purpose:

(P) This drill helps to develop both passing and awareness skills.

Instructions:

1. Begin the drill with all of your players in a circle around you, the coach.
2. Pass the ball to random players. Each player must clap before they catch the ball.
3. If a player doesn't catch the ball, forgets to clap before catching the ball, claps when you fake a pass to them, they must sit down at their spot.



Variations:

- To make this drill a bit more difficult, bring a second person into the circle to pass a second ball while you are passing the first

Offense / Defense Drills

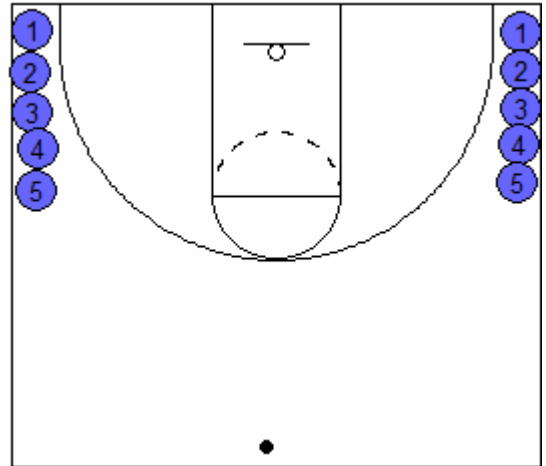
War

Purpose:

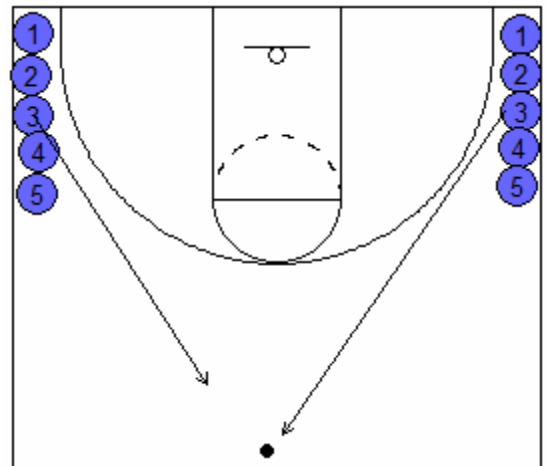
(AP, O, D) This drill helps develop aggressive play as well as a competitive attitude to the ball and one-on-one skills.

Instructions:

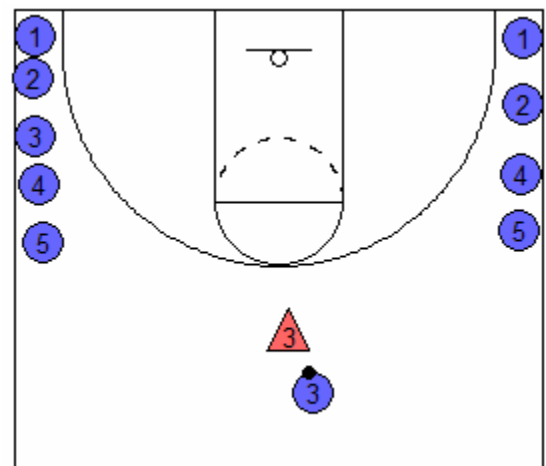
1. Divide the team into two even groups and have the two teams line up on opposing sidelines. Give every player on each team a number.



2. Place the ball at half-court and call out a number, for example, "Player number 3!" Player 3 from each side will then sprint out to get the ball.



3. The player that picks the ball up first is the offensive player and the other player assumes the defensive role.
4. The offensive player then tries to score and can use his teammates on the sidelines for passing only. The sideline teammates cannot move once they have received the ball, but they can move up and down the sideline without the ball to get open for a pass.
5. If the defensive player steals the ball or gets a rebound, he must "check" the ball by passing it out to one of his teammates before he can attempt to score.
6. After one of the players scores, or both have at least had an offensive attempt, they are to return to the sideline. The ball is again placed at half-court and another number is called.



Teaching Tips:

With younger players, shrink the playing area by moving the two teams in several steps from the sidelines.

Variations:

- Mix this game up by calling out multiple numbers so players can play 2-on-2 or 3-on-3 and so on.

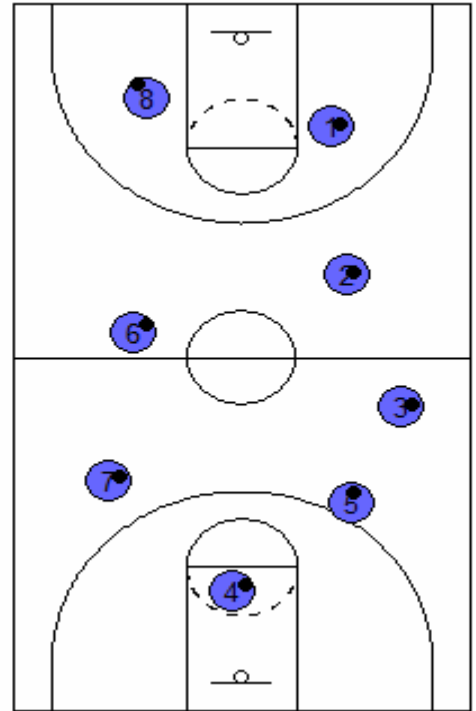
Ball Scramble

Purpose:

(A) This drill helps players develop their skills in reaction to loose balls.

Instructions:

1. Have all players spread out across court, each with a ball.
2. On your whistle, all players are to drop their balls and run to half-court (or the bleachers) and back.
3. While the players are running, remove one ball from the court.
4. The player that is unable to get a ball is out and must sit either on the sideline or in the bleachers.
5. The drill continues until only one player is left standing with a ball.



Teaching Tips:

As the players diminish in number, start to reduce the playing area and really encourage hustling after the ball. Run this drill for 5-10 minutes and reward the winner by allowing them to sit out the next round of sprints, etc.

Variations:

- You can vary the difficulty of this drill by removing more than one ball at a time.

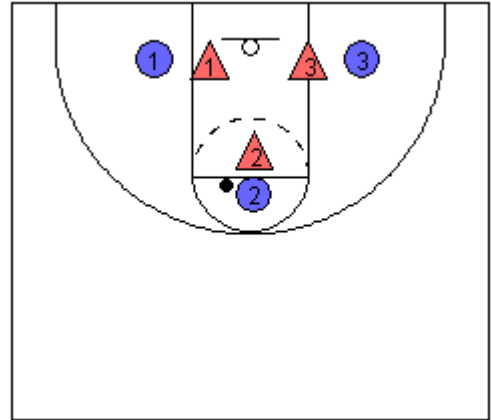
3-on-3 No-Dribble Keep Away

Purpose:

(P, F, O, D) This drill is a fun way to teach kids to move to get open for a pass and provides a context for developing an understanding of effective spacing. For the passer, it provides practice in pivoting and protecting the ball from a defender.

Instructions:

1. Divide the team into two groups of three. One team will be on offense and the other on defense. The team on offense keeps the ball for two minutes, which is one round.
2. The offensive team gets one point every time they complete a pass to a teammate.
3. A pass has to be made every five seconds. If the team does not pass within the five seconds, they lose a point and time starts over. They can get negative points, but this isn't likely. In fact, if this is happening, you should stop the drill and teach the prerequisite cutting skills more thoroughly. Count each five-second sequence out loud.
4. A steal, taking more than five seconds to pass, dribbling the ball, or a pass that goes out of bounds erases a point, but the offense gets the ball back for the remainder of the round.
5. After one round, the offense and defense change roles and round two is played. Play for two or three complete cycles.
6. The team with the most points after all rounds are played is the winner.



Teaching Tips:

Be sure to teach your players simple pivoting principles before turning them loose in this drill. As the skill level of the players advances, introduce screens away from the ball to free cutters. Provide defenders with the basics of defending the passing lanes effectively. Provide the kids with positive rewards for their total completed passes and feel free to adjust the time parameters to suit the age and abilities of your team. Depending on the age range, you might consider finding a fun piece of music that lasts about two minutes to make the drill more engaging.

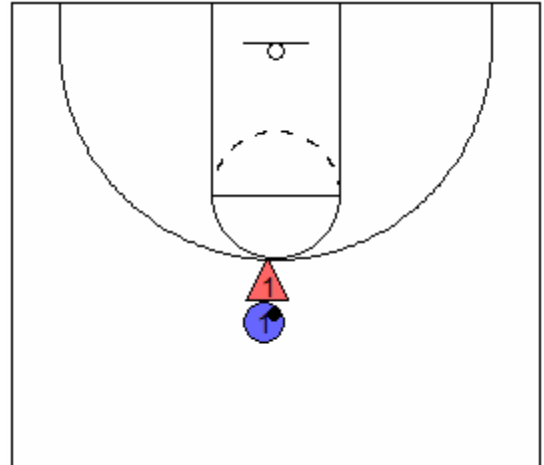
Freeze Drill

Purpose:

(D, PO) This is an ideal drill for younger, less experienced players. It teaches proper defensive positioning without fouling.

Instructions:

1. Group players in pairs of near-equal ability.
Place two pairs of players at both ends of the court. If you have additional goals available on the sides of the floor, drop them down and use them as well.
2. Pairs are to start at the top of the key on each goal with the offensive player possessing the ball.
3. On the whistle, the offensive player tries to score. The defensive player tries to prevent this by keeping himself positioned between the player and the goal.
4. On the next whistle, all players freeze.
5. Scoring in the game does not come from scoring baskets, but instead from the following criteria: on each “freeze” whistle, if the defender is not between the player they are guarding and the basket, the offensive player gets a point, and vice versa.
6. The first player in each pair to reach three points wins.
7. That pair then switches roles.



Teaching Tip:

“Freeze” players often throughout the drill, but do allow for competition and quick movement. Call out those who are not giving 100% or who may be crossing their feet over rather than moving side-to-side while defending.

Variation:

- For older players, baskets that are scored can be counted. Have them play to five or higher.

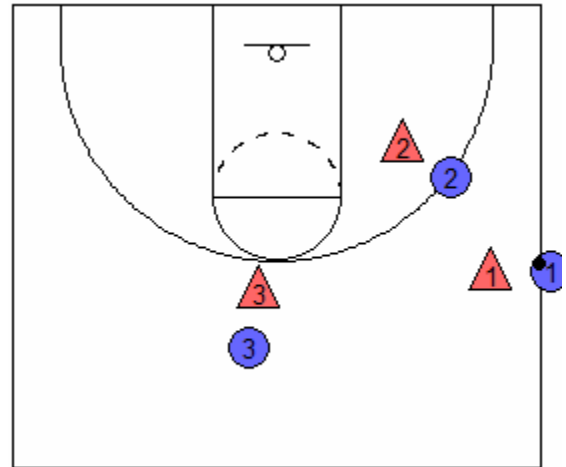
Three-on-Three

Purpose:

(CM, TW, D) This drill encourages teamwork, cooperation, and competition. Additionally, it improves and polishes fundamental skills and communication in a game like atmosphere.

Instructions:

1. Assign teams of three players each. The teams that are not playing are to be seated off to the side of the court. Two teams will play one another on half of the court.
2. One team inbounds a pass and the three-on-three competition begins.
3. The team that scores first wins and stays on the floor.
4. The next group of three players comes out and they get to inbound, pass the ball, attempting to score first.
5. Again, the team that scores first remains on the floor.
6. The object is to remain on the floor as long as possible.



Teaching Tips:

Encourage players not to foul. If they do, they will be called and the player fouled gets a free throw. Instruct students to quickly rotate in and out of the games as a team wins.

Variations:

- To make the offense understand the importance of “good shots” and “good possessions”, place restrictions on the game such as shooting:
 - After 5 passes.
 - Only lay ups.
 - After every player touches the ball.
- To add a defensive twist: Start with two teams. Every time you get a defensive stop, you get one point. If you do not score, another team rotates in. If you score, you get to play defense and the defense goes out.

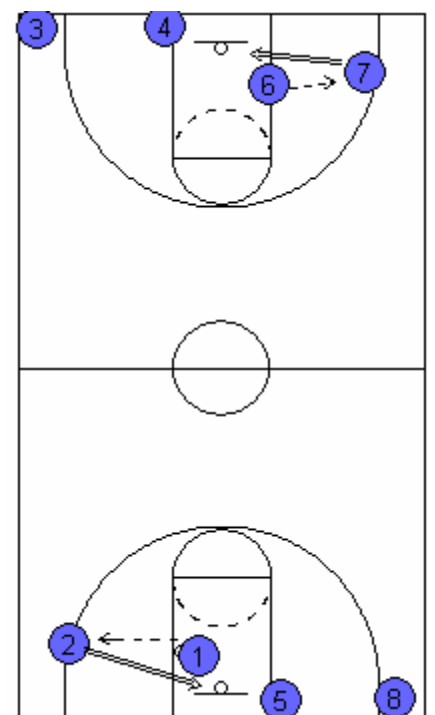
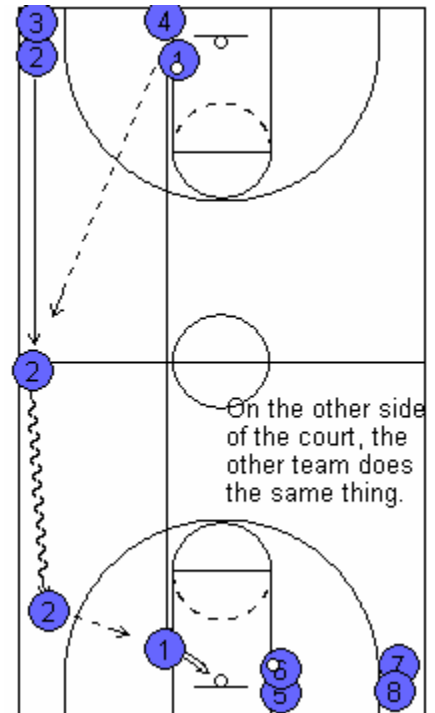
Outlet and Post

Purpose:

(O, R, P, S, C) The intent of this drill is to strengthen the play of the fast break, rebound, outlet pass, filling the post, entry pass, lay-up and 3-point shooting. It also is great for conditioning.

Instructions:

1. Players are to line up in 2 lines on both ends of the court.
2. On the whistle, the post player from each line throws the ball against the backboard, purposely missing, and grabs the rebound. After the rebound is in the post players' hands, the guards break towards half-court and each call out, "Outlet, Outlet."
3. The post players throw the outlet pass to the guard and sprint towards filling their lanes at their corresponding baskets. Meanwhile, the guards, after receiving the pass, pivot and begin dribbling to their corresponding end of the court, at the wing position.
4. When the post player sees the guard arrive at the wing position, they are to fill the post.
5. The guard makes a pass into the post player, who then executes a post move or passes the ball back out to the guard. If the post player executes a post move, he takes a shot. If he passes back out to the guard, the guard shoots the 3-pointer.
6. Once the shot is taken, the second group starts down the court. As soon as the last group has finished, the first group starts back down the court.
7. Set a number of points and see who can get to the goal first.



Teaching Tips:

Emphasis on correct, game-like movement and shooting is expected. Make sure players do not start down the court until the shot on the opposite end of the court has been attempted.

Variations:

- The coach can instruct whether the post player takes the shot or passes back out to the guard, rather than letting the post player decide.
- Assign a specific type of pass that the guard must make as the entry pass into the post player.

Fastbreak Weave

Purpose:

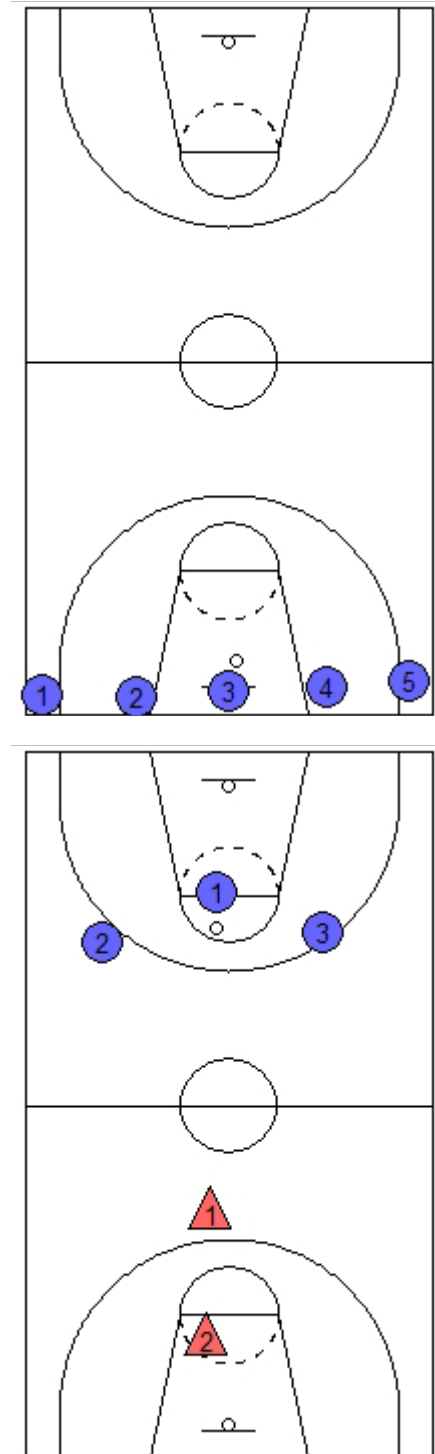
(BH, P, S, CM, O, D) This drill helps develop ball handling, passing and shooting skills. It also improves team communication and transition offense and defense.

Instructions:

1. Five players begin on the baseline.
2. The five players begin the weave passing drill. Each player must pass the ball to a teammate and then run behind them.
3. The last person to touch the ball on the other end will shoot the lay-up.
4. The person who shoots the ball and the person who assisted on the shot run back and play defense against the remaining three players to set up a three on two fast break situation.
5. The drill finishes when the defense gets the rebound or the offense scores a basket.

Teaching Tips:

Players should call the name of the person to whom they are passing. Correct defensive and offensive strategies for a three on two situation should be discussed before beginning the drill.



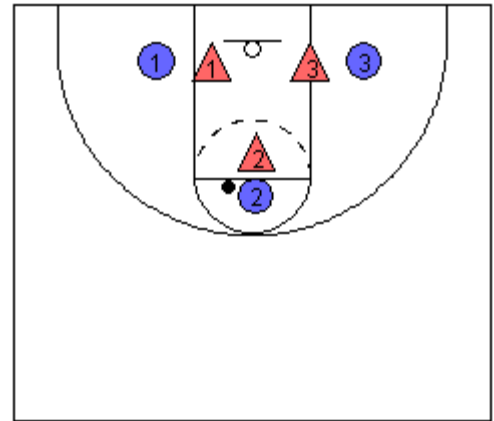
3-on-3 No-Dribble Keep Away

Purpose:

(BH, O, P, D) This drill provides a fun way to teach kids to move without the ball to get open for a pass and provides a context for developing an understanding of effective spacing. For the passer, it provides practice in pivoting and protecting the ball from a defender. Obviously, it helps kids overcome dribble mania and to see the court.

Instructions:

1. The team on offense keeps the ball for two minutes, which is one round. Depending on the age range, you might consider finding a fun piece of music that lasts about two minutes to make the drill more engaging.
2. The team with the ball gets one point every time they complete a pass to a teammate.
3. There has to be a pass every five seconds. If the team does not pass within the five seconds, they lose a point and the counting starts over. They can get negative points, but this isn't likely (In fact, if this is happening, you should stop the drill and teach the prerequisite cutting skills more thoroughly). The coach will count each five second sequence out loud.
4. A steal, taking more than five seconds to pass, dribbling, or a pass that goes out of bounds erases a point, but the 'offense' gets the ball back for the remainder of the round.
5. After one round, the offense and defense change roles and you play round two.
6. Play for two or three complete cycles and provide the kids with positive rewards for their total completed passes.
7. Feel free to adjust the time parameters to suit the age and abilities of your kids.



Teaching Tips:

Teach kids simple pivoting principles before turning them loose in this drill. Teach kids how to v-cut and backdoor cut.

As the skill level of the kids advance, introduce screens away from the ball to free cutters.

Provide defenders with the basics of defending the passing lanes effectively. This is a foundational drill for denial defensive techniques.

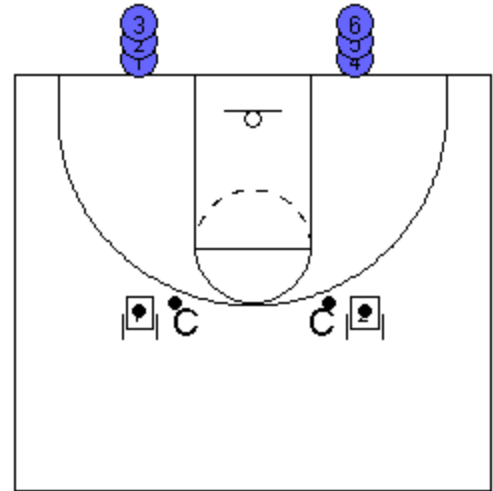
Pivot 21

Purpose:

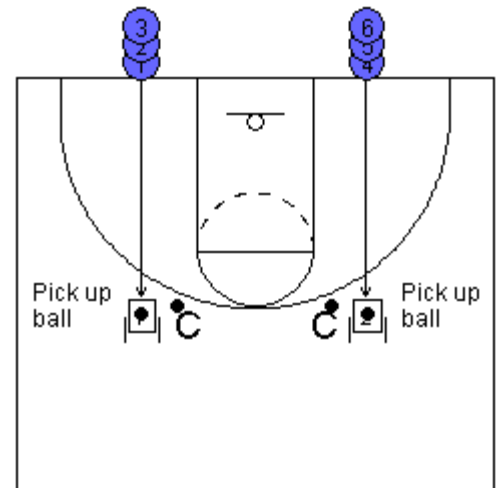
(F, BH, S, A) This is a really fun drill that improves footwork, pivoting, ballhandling, and lay ups. It's fun because the drills acts as a game and it's fast paced. The players will really get into it!

Instructions:

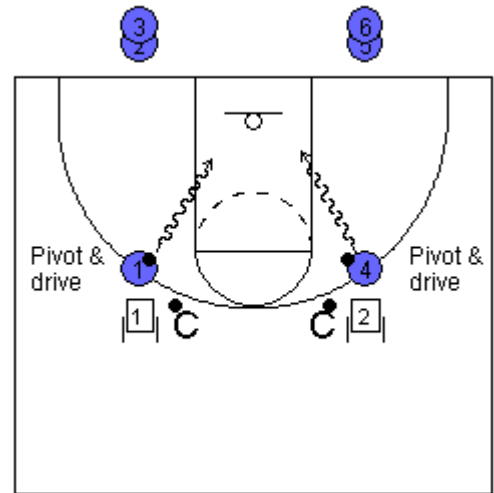
1. The goal of the game is to make 21 lay ups before the other team.
2. You'll divide your players into two equal teams. Each team should get in their own line on either side of the basket.
3. You'll need two chairs positioned just past the three point line. Place a ball on both chairs.
4. You'll need two coaches or players to replace balls. So you'll have a total of four balls for this drill.



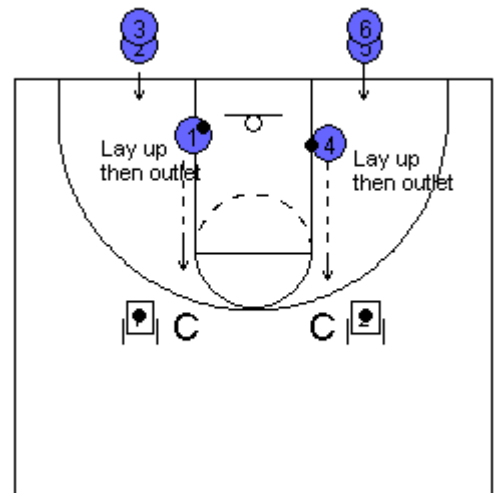
5. On the coach's command, the first player in each line will sprint to the chair and pick up the ball.



6. After picking up the ball, they should pivot, dribble to the basket, and shoot a lay up. (Even though it's a race, make sure they use good pivoting footwork and lay up form.)
7. The coach should replace the ball as it's removed from the chair.



8. The next player in line can start running to the chair as soon as the first player shoots their lay up.
9. After the player shoots the lay up, they get their own rebound and immediately pass the ball to their coach.



10. After passing the outlet to the coach, the player should get back in line and be ready to go again.

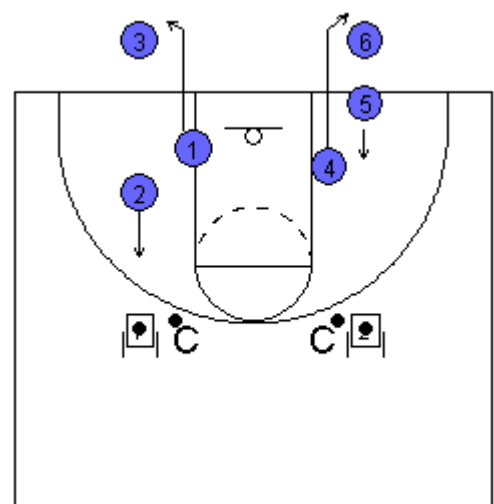
The goal is to make 21 baskets before the other team. Whoever reaches 21 first, wins! You can reward the winner with Gatorades or just about anything they will enjoy.

The drill can get chaotic at times, but it's fun!

When running this drill, you'll want to make sure the kids are using proper pivots and proper form shooting lay ups. They will want to go as fast as possible, but don't let them make bad pivots.

You should also specify which pivot they'll use for the drill. (Front pivot with left foot, back pivot with right foot, etc.)

And you'll want to make sure they dribble with the appropriate hand (use left hand of left side of the basket and vice versa).



Teaching Tips

Have your players stay low when picking up the ball and make a nice pivot that squares your feet to the basket and make sure they shoot good lay ups, no outside shots.

Variations

- If you're feeling brave, you can add a little twist and allow your players to start running as soon as the other player picks up the ball. This makes it even more fast-paced (but a little more out of control).
- Vary the pivots to work on different footwork (front pivots, back pivots, etc).
- Move the chairs farther back so they have to run and dribble farther.

Musical Slide

Purpose:

(D, A) This drill will teach players the proper defensive stance and improve their lateral quickness, which will increase their ability to shut down their opponent.

Instructions:

1. Place 2 chairs 15 feet apart, and have a player sit in one of them.
2. On the whistle, have the player raise their rear end up about 3 inches above the seat of the chair, and do a defensive slide to the other chair. Make sure the player's arms are extended.
3. Once the players understand this concept, set a group of chairs up in a large circle, the amount of chairs should be one less than the total amount of players. (12 Players, 11 Chairs)
4. Have the players gather in a circle around the chairs, and let them know that when the music starts, they are to slide in a circle until the music stops, and then find a chair to sit in.
5. With this process, one player will be eliminated. In between the music, the coach should remove one chair from the circle. Eventually, one person will be left and shall be declared the winner.

Teaching Tips:

Continually tell your players to keep their defensive stance low to the ground. They need to maintain proper form (feet wide, low base, don't let feet come together) and move quickly.

Keep the pushing and shoving to a minimum in the musical chairs game.

Variations:

- If you want to combine conditioning with the defense in this drill, have the players that are eliminated from the musical chairs game do a number of wind sprints after they're eliminated.
- At the beginning of the drill before the musical chairs, the two chairs can be closer or further than 15 feet apart. 15 feet is just a guideline.
- During the music in musical chairs, you could designate a whistle blow to mean that the players must rotate in the opposite direction. It will keep the players from getting bored from moving in one direction.

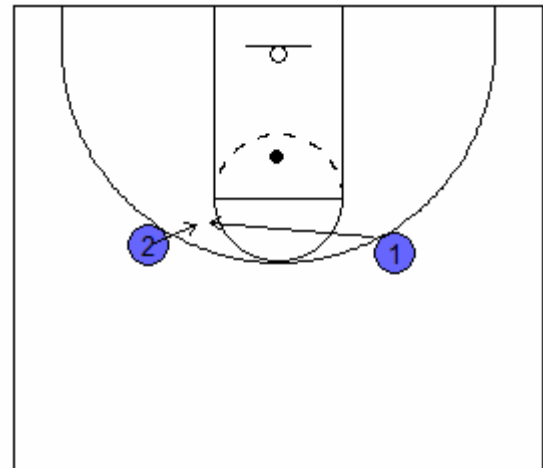
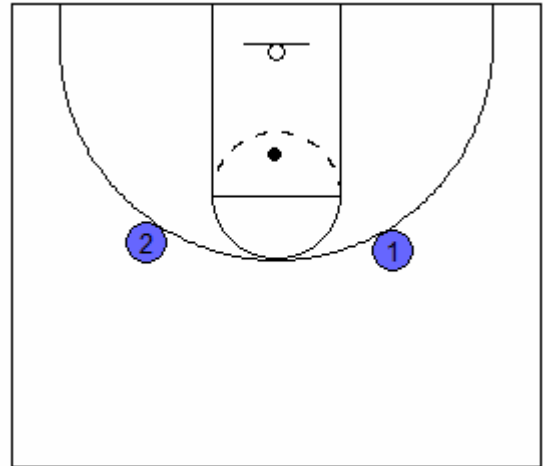
Scramble Drill

Purpose:

(O, D) The purpose of this drill is to teach both offensive and defensive skills, particularly “boxing out”.

Instructions:

1. This drill is for use with two players at a time.
2. The coach or parent places the ball on the floor.
3. Instruct the two players to stand a few feet (same distance) from the ball, with their backs to one another.
4. When the whistle is blown, the players may turn around, and Player #1 must prevent Player #2 from getting the ball by boxing him out.



Teaching Tips:

Make sure that players are boxing out in the proper manner. Do not let them foul or execute the drill in a way that would be inappropriate in a game situation.

Variations:

- To maximize player participation, have different coaches or parents monitoring the same drill with different players spread out around the floor.
- A rotation system can also be used, enabling players to rotate to a different group and participate in the drill with different players.

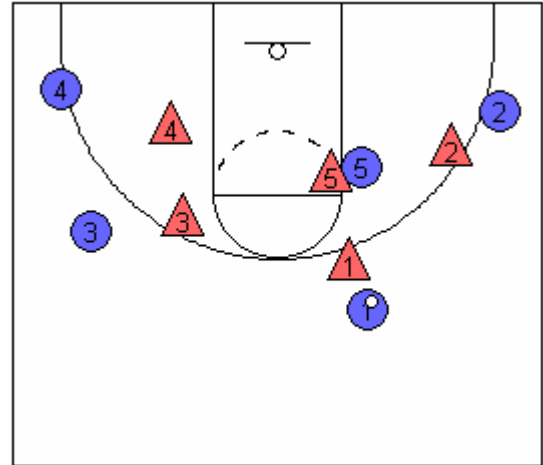
The Defensive Challenge

Purpose:

(D, O) This drill is great because it provides a positive, fun twist to scrimmaging that encourages and rewards defense. It also gets your players in the mentality of, “I want to play defense.”

Instructions:

1. Perform this drill with 3-on-3, 4-on-4, or 5-on-5 in the half-court or full court.
2. Split your players into two teams.
3. Only the defense can score points, either by forcing a turnover or securing a rebound.
4. If the defense gets a defensive stop, the team stays on defense.
5. If the offense gets a basket or the defense fouls a shooter, the offense and defense switch.
6. Play to 5 points or whatever you deem necessary.



Teaching Tips:

If the defense is having a reoccurring problem, fix it immediately so they know how to react the next time.

Variations:

- If the defense fouls two or three times in a row, the offense and defense switch.
- Play without any boundary lines. This gives the offense more freedom and makes the defense work harder.
- Force the defense to get 2 or 3 stops in a row before a point is awarded.
- If you have too many players, divide the group into 3 or 4 teams. If the defense does NOT get a stop, they rotate out. The offense rotates to defense and a new team comes in on offense.

Defensive Slide Relays

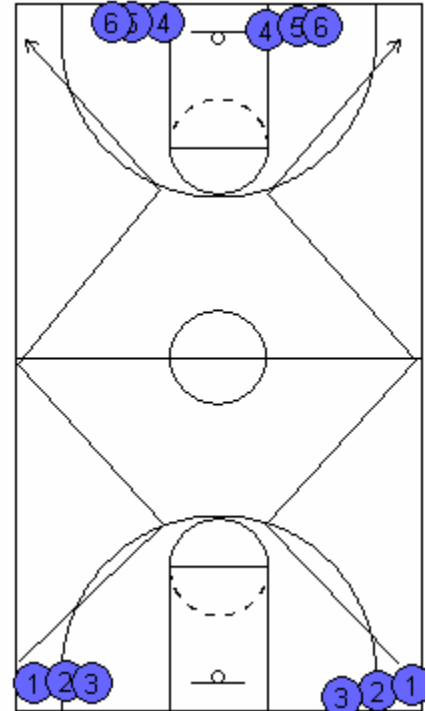
Purpose:

(D, A) This drill is great for focusing on the defensive stance and slide while providing a fun, competitive aspect that will keep your players motivated. It's also perfect for improving players' agility.

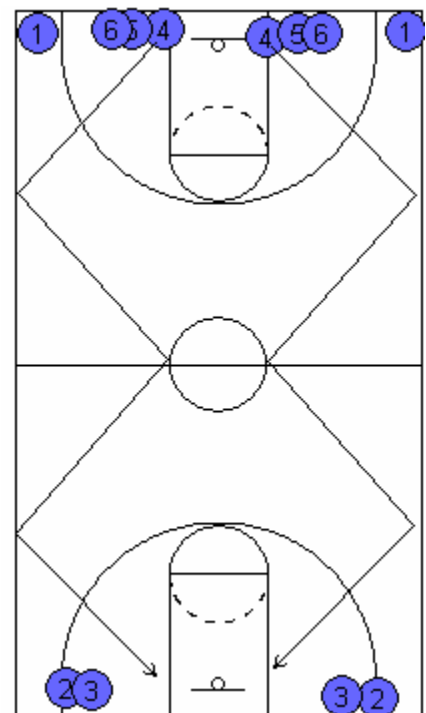
Instructions:

1. Split your players into two teams, placing half of the players from each team on opposite sides of the court.
2. On the whistle, the first player slides diagonally to a designated mark. Next, he does a "defensive drop step" and continues sliding in the other direction.

The player is to face the baseline that he started from the entire time sliding down the court.



3. When the first player finishes, the next person in line begins.
4. Continue this same pattern until the last person has gone.
5. The team that finishes first, wins.



Teaching Tips:

Don't allow your players to do this drill with improper form. Make sure they are doing a proper stance and slide throughout the entire drill. If they cheat or use bad form, make them start over.

Variations:

- For 8 year olds and younger, have the players just slide to half-court.
- Have the players slide all the way down and back (2 court lengths), instead of just down (1 court length).
- Vary markings on the court where players are to switch sliding directions.
- Mix up the drill to involve different types of movements, such as the slide, sprint and backpedal. For example, have the teams slide to the 1st point, sprint to the 2nd point, slide to the 3rd point, and sprint through the finish.

Speed Square Game

Purpose:

(D, A, C) This drill is a fun way to improve basketball speed, quickness and conditioning.

Instructions:

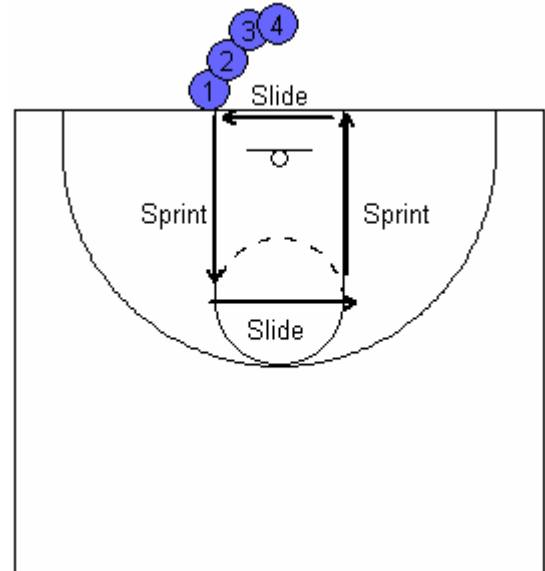
1. Split your players into two teams and line each team up at the baseline of two different baskets.

2. On the whistle, the first player sprints up to the elbow.

Next, he gets into a defensive position and slides to the opposite elbow.

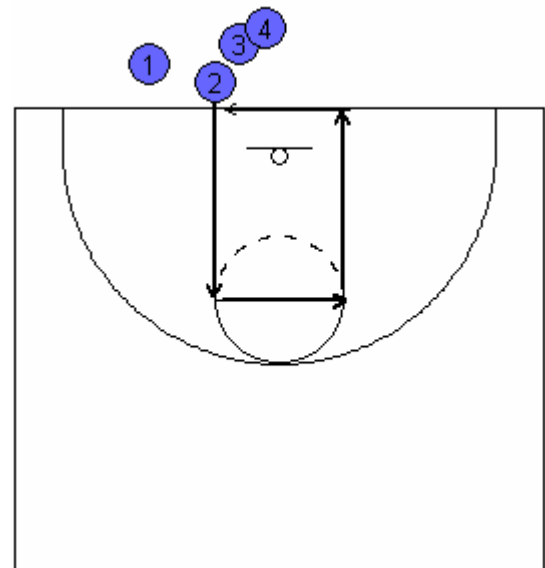
Then, he backpedals to the baseline.

Finally, he gets into a defensive stance and slides through to the finish.



3. Once the first player finishes, the next player in line starts the same pattern.

4. The first team to finish wins.



Variations:

- To provide conditioning, have each player go through 4 to 5 times.
- Make the square bigger, so they have to cover more ground.

Circle Challenge Drill

Purpose:

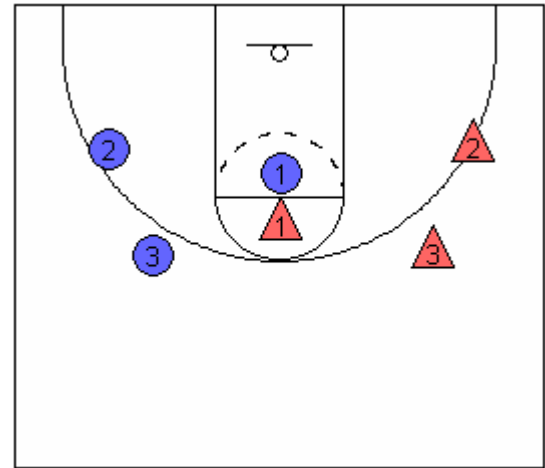
(R, AP) This is a fun drill that provides practice in establishing and maintaining a strong box-out and post-up stance. This drill also promotes the aggressiveness needed for effective boxing out and posting up and can be used to add some motivation to practice routines.

Instructions:

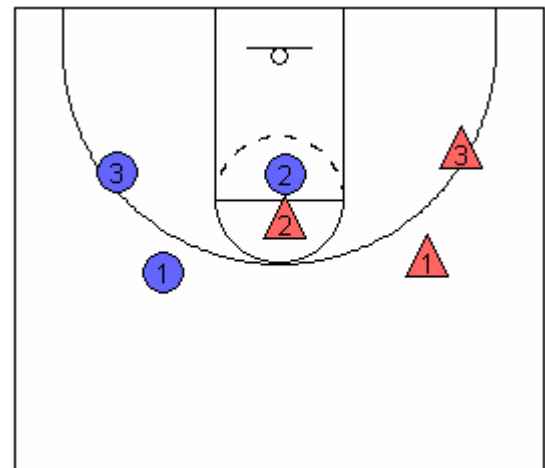
1. Position two size-matched players back-to-back in the circle. Have another two size-matched pairs waiting their turn, observing and encouraging.

On the coach's signal, the back-to-back players try to push each other out of the circle, using their box-out and post-up stances.

The player who manages to push the other out of the circle is the winner.



2. After the round, the next two size-matched players step into the circle for a turn. Players from the original pair go to the back of their respective lines.
3. Rotate through three times.



Teaching Tips:

Remind your players to....

- Keep their legs about shoulder-width apart, their knees bent, and their backs straight to establish a low center of gravity.
- Raise their arms so that their hands are about shoulder-height and positioned just outside and a little forward of each shoulder.

Use the phrase “Pull the chair” to remind players of the effective arm technique for boxing out and posting up.

Encourage players to use their butts as the power point. Adjust your language according to the age of your players and how well you know them. You can have fun with this, but know your audience.

Expect some players to be a little shy about this drill at first. Start with players who will not be shy in order to establish a good momentum and atmosphere for the drill.

Variations:

- You could also structure the drill so that the winner stays in the circle. In this case, try to have size-matched groups stationed at the circle, and try to keep four players at a particular circle so that there is not too much waiting.
- You could also open this drill up to include your whole team, regardless of size. This would provide practice in dealing with real game mismatches. Plus, some relatively small players have the technique and strength to push bigger players around.

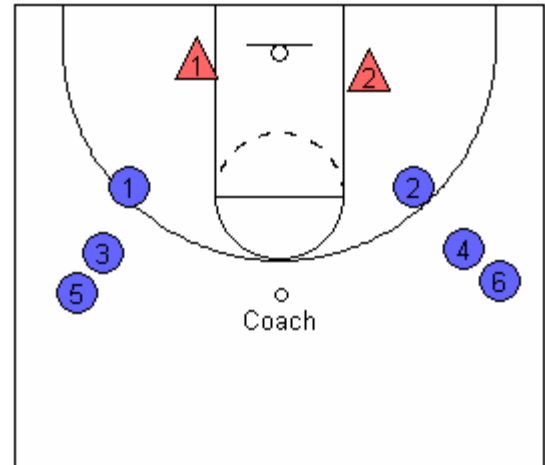
Two-on-Two Box Out

Purpose:

(R, S, AP) This rebounding drill is great for encouraging aggressive behavior, both from an offensive and defensive perspective. It is a competitive drill, so it also has an element of challenge and fun.

Instructions:

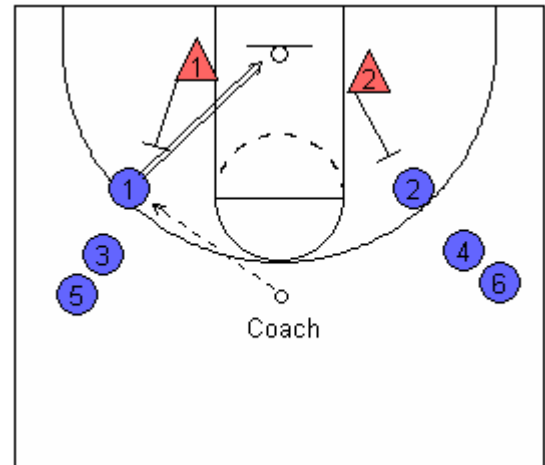
1. Position two defensive players at the low blocks and lines of offensive players at the wings, free-throw line extended. Have a coach with a ball above the top of the key.



2. The coach will pass to one wing or the other, and that player will shoot. Meanwhile, the defenders will close on their men and box out.

The ball is live until someone “rebounds” it. Even if the shot goes in, it is still live. There is no out of bounds.

The defensive team stays on defense as long as they get the rebound. Offensive players become defensive if they get the “rebound”. Otherwise, they go to the back of the wing line.



Teaching Tips:

Since there is no out-of-bounds, make sure to establish safety guidelines relevant to the physical hazards present in your practice setting.

Inform players that getting rebounds must conform to normal rules. In other words, without traveling violations, pushing, tripping, etc. You don't want people diving all over the place risking injury. You might even want to ban diving after rebounds.

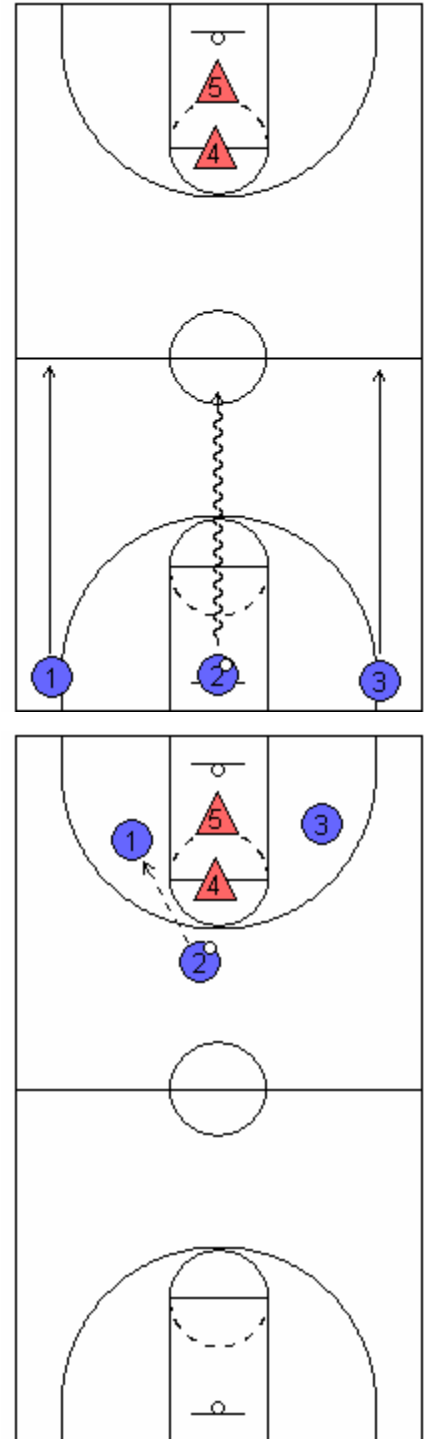
Three-on-Two, Two-on-One Break

Purpose

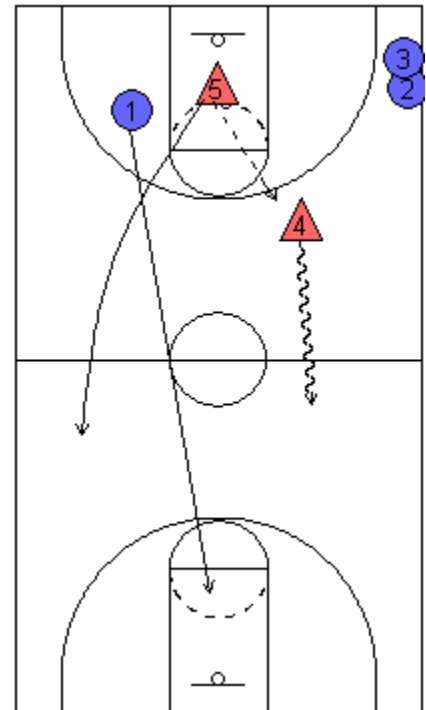
(P, S, TW, O, D, R) This is a fun drill designed to teach players how to take advantage on the fast break, creating easy baskets for themselves and their teammates.

Instructions

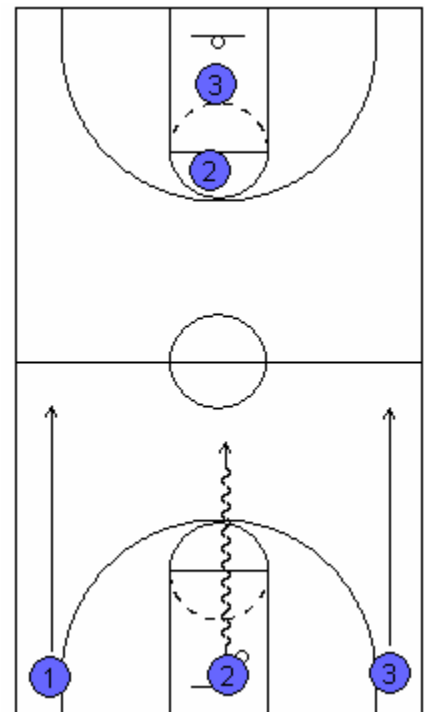
1. Put two of your players at one end of the court, and three more at the opposite end. The group of three should have a basketball.
2. On the whistle, the player with the ball will start dribbling towards the defense, and the other two offensive players will sprint ahead of the dribbler, spreading out on each side.
3. The player with the ball will dribble until one of the defenders commits to them.
4. Next, the player with the ball will pass it to one of the open offensive players on either side, and, ideally, a lay up will ensue. If an extra pass is needed, allow your players to make that pass.



5. The player who either takes the shot (make or miss), or turns the ball over will sprint back to the other end of the court and play defense.
6. The two original defenders become offensive players and execute a two-on-one break.



7. After they score or a rebound is secured by the defense, the next group of three starts down the court.
8. The two offensive players who did not sprint back on defense become the defenders to face the next group of three.



Teaching Tips:

Continually tell your players to...

- Make a defender commit to you before passing.
- Look up while dribbling; see the floor.
- Take care of the ball – no turnovers!

Keeping the ball under control is vital in making this drill go successfully; continue to tell your players that staying under control is just as important as making the lay up at the other end.

All young players want to shoot the ball and score a lot of points, but it is important for them to know that being unselfish is the key to making a fast break work successfully.

Variations:

- Don't allow dribbling throughout the drill at first, then progress to dribbling once the players reach half-court. This helps players break the habit of catching and instantly dribbling. After catching the ball, it emphasizes seeing the defense and reacting to what is given to them.

You can reference the “Fast break Weave” for a different variation.

Bonus Coaching Tips from Coaching Expert Barry Adams

(For more information on Barry Adams or Cascade Sports Camp, visit www.cascadesportscamp.com)

Inducted into the National High School Coaches Association Hall of Fame in 1998, Coach Barry Adams is regarded as one of the top high school coaches in Oregon's history. With 656 career wins, Barry's high school teams saw State Tournament action 16 times, taking two titles in four Championship games and placing nine times overall.

Adams was selected as Oregon's Coach of the Year four times and as the Coach of the Year in District 7, which encompasses 5 states, in 1983 and 1992. He also served as the President of the Oregon Athletic Coaches Association, President of the High School Basketball Coaches Association, and as the Commissioner of Basketball for the International World Masters Games in 1998.

Over the years, Barry Adams has taught thousands of students the fundamentals of basketball, specifically shooting, with great success. Through Cascade Sports Camp, one of the premier basketball camp destinations in the Pacific Northwest, which he has directed for 39 years, Barry has worked with over 55,000 students who have all benefited from his intimate understanding of the jump shot and sheer knack for teaching players both young and old.

Here, Mr. Adams offers some insightful tips and advice on running a successful basketball program for coaches of all age groups.

On making practice fun...

Finish practice with a competitive drill-- competitive kids like to keep score. Have the losers sing a song, collect basketballs, etc.

Sit your team down and ask them what they would like to do for fun's sake. Maybe they would like bowling or celebrating birthdays. With 12 on a team the average would be 2 or 3 birthdays during the winter season.

Go out and shoot paint balls on a Saturday after practice, or go out for pizza...let the kids be silly, stupid and funny.

Make it so that the coaches have to run 2 laps if the team accomplishes something.

Finish with a competitive shooting contest. Put coaches in it so everyone's equal. Losers *all* "pay the price".

On structuring your practices...

First of all your practices should be planned out for the first 4 or 5 weeks, while you do your most important work.

Your practices should "mirror" your style and purpose for the season. If you are runners, practice should be built around that. Position and skill work should occur daily.

Keep track of time spent. If you spend more than 8% of your time on team offense, and you're not spending 50% of your time on skill development, you are shortchanging your kids.

Deal regularly with the mental aspect of being an athlete, working hard on "your game", but doing what is necessary for your team. Your job is to expect your kids to come daily to practice, to do more than other teams in your league do, and there's nothing wrong with expecting that out of them and reacting at times when they don't show up with a solid attitude.

On keeping your players' attention...

They should find out quickly that "what you say, you mean". You are not threatening, you are promising.

Keep your rules and expectations to a minimum, but respond when people aren't ready to listen, to hustle, to help make "us" better, etc.

Don't over talk and don't over-try-to-scare kids into the proper attitude. Explain your system, simple expectations, etc. carefully and politely to your kids, and let them realize that that's what coaches are hired to do.

Explain that "it is okay not to win, but not okay not to work at being a winner"! They need to know you are a classy person, that you are concerned with their health and welfare first, but you expect them to work diligently at the tasks in front of them.

On establishing control and discipline...

Show them you care. You are a reasonable human being, but your basic expectations need to be met.

Of course, your rules are for everyone and again, you aren't just threatening them, you are promising them. If you tell them they will be dismissed from the team if they skip a practice, you must be ready to do just that.

If you back up from your own set of expectations, the whole program will lack purpose and direction because "all things" are negotiable.

On helping players gain confidence and feel successful...

This is a tough one. Kids need to know you speak a balanced and honest talk. If you give praise to youngsters for anything they do...your praise will mean little. If you don't give them enough "attaboys", you become too critical.

Your job is to correct mistakes, poor decisions, not focusing, etc....because that is what coaching is. Like teachers using a red pencil to mark an answer incorrect on a students test. YOUR JOB IS TO CORRECT, while at the same time, be positive for the good things kids do. If they are working hard trying to accomplish things, smile, speak loudly, high 5 people, and at the same time, if they simply won't work at blocking out on the defensive board, get after them...because it will make them better players and they can gain more playing time that way.

I always limited my after game comments to 1 minute. My assistant's job was to time me so I didn't say things I couldn't take back tomorrow at practice. The next day, if I was upset about how we played, or finished a game, etc., I was much better prepared to discuss our problems or difficulties.

Handle kids with class, but expect them to "work" at performing what was expected of them.

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