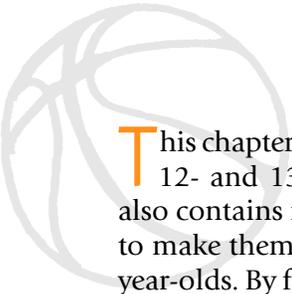


Practice Plans for 12- to 13- Year-Olds



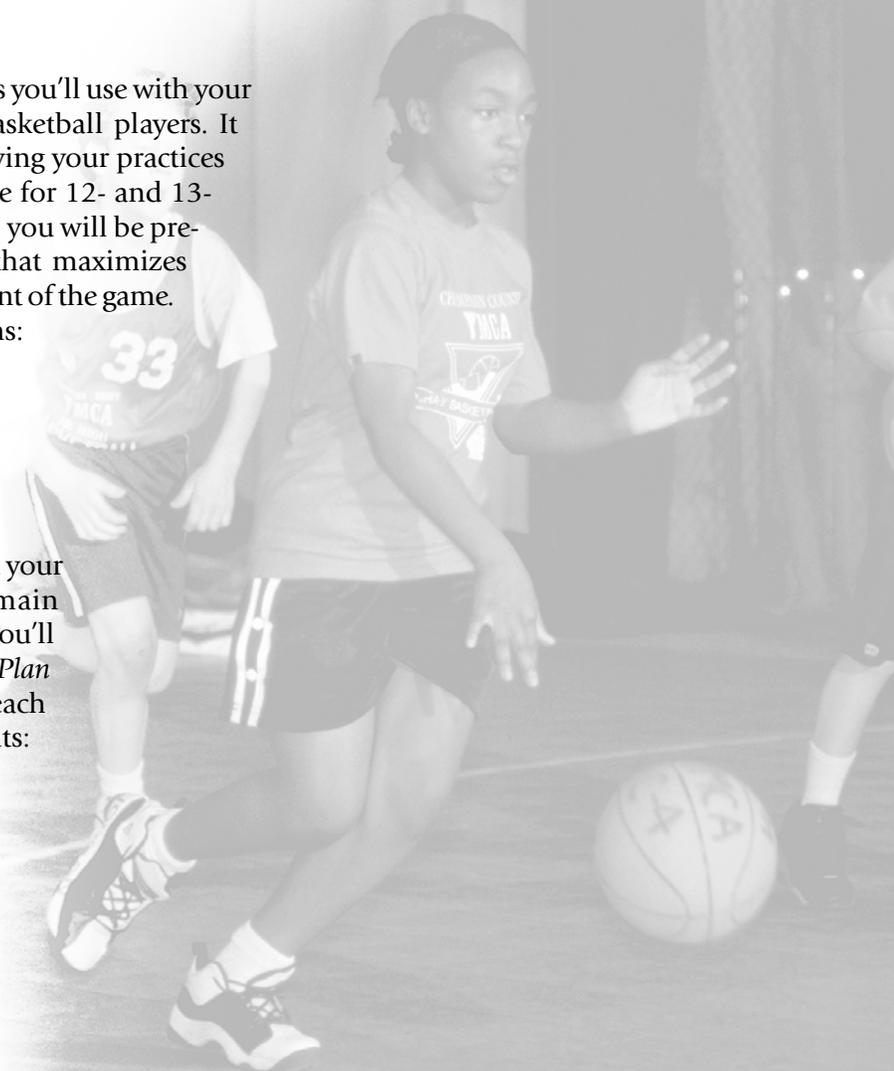
This chapter contains the 14 practice plans you'll use with your 12- and 13-year-old YMCA Winners basketball players. It also contains recommendations for modifying your practices to make them developmentally appropriate for 12- and 13-year-olds. By following these practice plans, you will be presenting the game and coaching in a way that maximizes players' skill development *and* their enjoyment of the game.

Each plan contains the following sections:

- ⊙ Purpose
- ⊙ Equipment
- ⊙ Practice Plan

Purpose focuses on what you want to teach your players during that practice; it is your main "theme" for that day. *Equipment* notes what you'll need on hand for that practice. The *Practice Plan* section outlines what you will do during each practice session. It consists of these elements:

- ⊙ Warm-Up
- ⊙ Fitness Circle
- ⊙ Games
- ⊙ Skill Practices
- ⊙ Team Circle and Wrap-Up



You'll begin each session with about five minutes of warm-up activities. This will be followed by five minutes of a Fitness Circle, during which you lead players through a series of stretches as you briefly discuss an item that relates to their fitness. Then you'll have your players play a modified basketball game. You'll look for your cue to interrupt that game—your cue being when players are having problems with carrying out the basic goal or aim of the game. At this point you'll "freeze" the action, keeping the players where they are, and ask brief questions about the tactical problems the players encountered and what skills they need to "solve" those problems. (Review chapter 8 for more on interrupting a game and holding a question-and-answer session.) We provide discussion questions in each practice plan. In addition, we provide coaching points, when appropriate, with games and skill practices as points of emphasis in most effectively conducting the practice.

Then you'll teach the skill that the players need to acquire to successfully execute the tactic. Chapter 13 contains descriptions of all the skills, so a page reference will be given to guide you to the appropriate description. During this skill practice session, you'll use the IDEA approach:

- I** Introduce the skill.
- D** Demonstrate the skill.
- E** Explain the skill.
- A** Attend to players practicing the skill.

Your introduction, demonstration, and explanation of a skill should take no more than two to three minutes; then you'll attend to players and provide teaching cues or further demonstration as necessary as they practice the skill according to the practice plan.

After the skill practices, you will usually have the athletes play another game or two to let them use the skills they just learned and to understand them in the context of a game. Note that in Game 1 when players are being introduced to a new tactic or skill, they will play an even-sided game (4 v 4). This allows them to encounter the challenges they will face in executing the tactic or skill in competition. Then in most Game 2s they should play lopsided games (4 v 1, 4 v 2) to increase their chances of experiencing success and beginning to master the new skill. However, if your players are showing proficiency with the new skill, you can use even-sided games in Game 2. The choice is yours; for more on this issue, see chapter 8.

The Practice Plan section concludes with a Team Circle that focuses on character development. As players cool down and stretch, you will talk to your players about some aspect of basketball that relates to one of the four core values—caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility. Following this, you'll wrap up the practice with a few summary comments and remind them of the next practice or game day.

A note about Fitness and Team Circles: These times are meant to be true discussions—not lectures where you're doing all the talking and your players are doing all the listening. Ask the questions provided, and wait for your players to respond. Don't immediately feed them the answers that we pro-

vide. These answers are meant simply to help you guide the discussion. Your role in Team Circles is as much to ask questions and get players to respond as it is to dole out information.

Twelve- and 13-year-olds don't possess the size, strength, stamina, and skills to play the full-blown adult version of basketball, and attempting to fit them into the adult mold will prove frustrating for all involved. We suggest you incorporate the following modifications into your practices to help your players learn the game, improve their skills, and have fun while they're at it. These suggestions fall into three categories: equipment and court, rules, and scrimmages.



Equipment and Court

Equipment and court should be substantially modified for young players to best learn the game and improve their skills. We recommend the following guidelines:

- ⊙ Size of ball: regulation ball (#7)
- ⊙ Height of basket: 9 to 10 feet
- ⊙ Free-throw line distance: 12 to 15 feet
- ⊙ Court size: Half court, short court, full court

We encourage you to consider these changes during each practice. Whether you make them or not depends on how your players are responding. The more skilled they are, the more likely they'll need greater challenges to continue improving.

Making Games Simpler or More Challenging

Here are ways to make practice games simpler or more challenging:

- Equally increase or decrease the number of players suggested (e.g., if we suggest playing 3 v 3, make it simpler by playing 2 v 2, or make it more challenging by playing 4 v 4).
- Add an extra defender to make it harder on the offense (e.g., 3 v 4 instead of 3 v 3) once players have acquired the skills they need to be successful.
- Add an extra offensive player to make it easier for the offense (e.g., 4 v 3 instead of 3 v 3).
- Change the type of defense played. The three types of defenses (see "Scrimmages") are cooperative, active, and competitive. To make a game simpler, have your players play a cooperative defense; to make it more challenging, have them play an active or a competitive defense.
- Begin with *no* defense.
- Perform the skill or game at a slower than normal pace to make it simpler.
- Increase or decrease the number of passes you require before the offense can attempt a shot.

Rules

You need to strike a balance between calling the players for violations and fouls every time they commit one, while still teaching the appropriate rules and the skills they need to comply with the rules fully in the long run. In the previous two levels of YMCA Winners basketball, we have recommended that you allow players an extra step before calling traveling, and allow one double dribble violation per player possession before calling double dribble. As players mature to the 12 to 13 age level, we recommend you do call these violations now, to help players refine their ballhandling skills. We also recommend that you teach and call the over-and-back violation and most clock violations: the 3-second lane violation; the 5-second inbounds violation; and the 10-second backcourt violation. We still recommend the following modifications, though, for this level:

- ⊙ **Clock rules:** Don't run a shot clock.
- ⊙ **Defense:**
 - Use a player-to-player defense.
 - Do not use a full-court press; in most cases, the defense can pick up their players at half court or closer to their own basket.

While the following points are not really rules modifications, they are worth noting here and emphasizing in practice:

- ⊙ Don't allow players to wear jewelry. Doing so is dangerous to them and to other players.
- ⊙ Players should call their own fouls.
- ⊙ Don't allow players to undercut a player shooting a lay-up.
- ⊙ Players should keep control of their body and the ball: no rough play.
- ⊙ Players should be good sports and show respect. Don't tolerate unsporting conduct.

Scrimmages

Besides the obvious changes in court and equipment, a casual observer of a YMCA Winners basketball practice would note another difference in the practice setting: the number of players used in scrimmages and practice games. Using smaller numbers allows players to touch the ball more often and thus practice the skills they need to acquire. It also keeps everyone more active and gives players more experience in a variety of situations that call for different tactics and skills. Here are suggestions for scrimmages and practice games:

- ⊙ Use small-sided games (e.g., 1 v 1, 2 v 1, 2 v 2, 3 v 2, 3 v 3, 4 v 4) on half-court play or cross-court playing (short court, see figure on page 85). Remember, using small-sided games means more touches per player,

which means players develop skills more quickly. The greatest leaps in skill improvement are made through the use of small-sided games.

- ⊙ Use modified half-court games in which players play 1 v 1 or 2 v 2, taking turns trying to score.
- ⊙ Use “regular” half-court rules: an offensive rebound can be shot again, while a defensive rebound must result in that team or player restarting at the top of the key.
- ⊙ Rotate partners (opponents) and teams often. Play three- to five-minute games, then rotate players. Changing partners changes the game.

A note regarding defense: Control defensive play by instituting three levels of involvement:

- 1. Cooperative Defense (cold)**—The player assumes a defensive posture two arm lengths from the opponent, is relatively passive, and at times even coaches the opponent.
- 2. Active Defense (warm)**—The player assumes a defensive posture about one and a half arm lengths from the opponent, has active hands and feet, but makes no attempts to intercept the ball.
- 3. Competitive Defense (hot)**—The player assumes a defensive posture, is positioned appropriately, and attempts to intercept the ball.

Okay, on to the practice plans themselves. Following are practice plans for the 2 weeks of your preseason and then for the 10 weeks of your competitive season.

Key to Diagrams

- ⊕ = Side basket
- ⊙ = Player with ball
- O = Offensive player
- X = Defensive player
- C = Coach
- PC = Player-coach
- > = Pass
- ~> = Dribble
- > = Move
- ====> = Shoot
- R = Rebounder
- P = Partner
- = Marked spots
- | = Screen or box out
- S = Shooter

Week 1, Practice 1

PURPOSE

To attack the basket by using a power dribble.

Equipment

-  One basketball per two players, if possible
-  Court space with three or four baskets
-  Tape or markers
-  Different colored vests or shirts to differentiate teams

Warm-Up (10 minutes)

Begin each practice with 5 to 10 minutes of warm-up activities to get players loosened up and ready to go.

Players dribble, jump stop, and shoot, traveling from one basket to the next. All shooting should be 2 to 4 feet from the basket.

Fitness Circle (5 minutes)

Following the warm-up, gather the players and demonstrate the stretching protocol (see chapter 15 for stretches for the major muscle groups). Ask a team leader to lead stretches in subsequent practices. After the team is finished stretching, briefly discuss the fitness concept for that practice.

Key Idea: General fitness

Gather team into a group. “Do we play basketball to get in shape or do we get in shape to play basketball? Let’s talk about both sides. What do you think?” Discuss for two or three minutes. “We should improve our fitness—cardiorespiratory, flexibility, and muscular strength and endurance—in order to play better basketball. By playing basketball we get lots of opportunities to improve our fitness. All season we’ll be talking more about the different areas of fitness and ways to improve those abilities.”

Game 1 (10 minutes)

Following the Fitness Circle, get the kids playing a game. Follow most games with a time of questions and answers—with YOU asking the questions and your PLAYERS providing the answers—about what the goal of the game was and what skills and tactics they needed to perform to succeed in the game. For many games, we provide diagrams or figures (or refer to diagrams and figures on previous pages) showing how the game is begun. We also often provide coach’s points for you to pass along to your players during the games.

Week 1, Practice 1

Goal

Players will drive hard to the basket and shoot.

Description

Play 3 v 3 half-court games. Give two points for scores off of drive, and one point for other baskets. Instruct defenders not to clog the lane so that players can drive. Defenders should play “warm” defense.

Coach: What was the goal of the game?

Players: Drive and score.

Coach: What’s a good way to drive?

Players: Drop step and dribble.

Coach: What should you do if it’s congested in the lane?

Players: Stop and shoot if open, or pass off.



Skill Practice 1 (10 minutes)

Follow Game 1 with a Skill Practice. Introduce, demonstrate, and explain a skill or tactic, and then attend to your players as they practice that tactic. The question-and-answer session, in which your PLAYERS tell you what skills and tactics they need to be successful in the game, leads directly to the Skill Practice. We often provide coaching points with the Skill Practices; pass these points along to your players. We also provide coach’s cues—phrases to help your players focus on the task at hand—during many Skill Practices and Games.

1. Introduce, demonstrate, and explain how to use a *jump stop* prior to shooting.
2. Practice shooting off of jump stops.

Description

Play 1 v 1; defenders play cooperative defense. Players with the ball use a ball fake, jab step, and drive to the basket. They jump stop and shoot two to four feet from the basket. Watch for good form on the jump stops and the shots; players should use the square on the backboard. (See figure on page 108.)

COACH'S point

☞ Briefly describe charging fouls and blocking fouls (which often occur when a player drives to the basket). See page 277.

☞ Instruct players to raise their hand when they foul.



COACH'S cues



"Triple threat!"
 "Ready position!"
 "Hand position!"
 "Hold the ball on the side of the hip!"

Driving to basket

"Jab step and ball fake!"
 "Arm should look like a yo-yo!"
 "Ball down, eyes up!"
 "Two-foot jump stop!"
 "Eyes on the target."
 "In the square, in the basket!"

Coach: How should your dribble change when someone is guarding you?

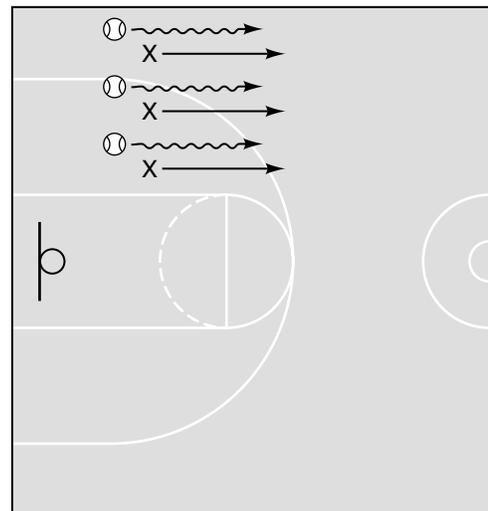
Players: Keep the ball closer to your body and keep the ball between yourself and the defender.

Skill Practice 2 (10 minutes)

1. Introduce, demonstrate, and explain how to do a *crossover dribble* (see pages 254–255).
2. Practice the crossover dribble.

Description

Play 1 v 1; defenders play cooperative defense. Players with the ball perform crossover dribbles going down or across the court. Players switch roles after one time down the court.



Week 1, Practice 1

Game 2 (10 minutes)

Goal

Players will use a crossover dribble to drive and score.

Description

Play 3 v 1, 3 v 2, or 3 v 3 games, depending on the skill proficiency of your players (see chapter 8 for help on deciding how to use lopsided games). Rotate players accordingly so that all players have a chance to play offense and defense. Players can't dribble—except to drive to the basket.

Switch teams halfway through the game, with the two defenders joining one offensive player on the offensive team, and two offensive players switching to defense. (See figure at the top of page 95.)



Use examples illustrating how driving to the basket can create passing lanes.

Team Circle (5 minutes)

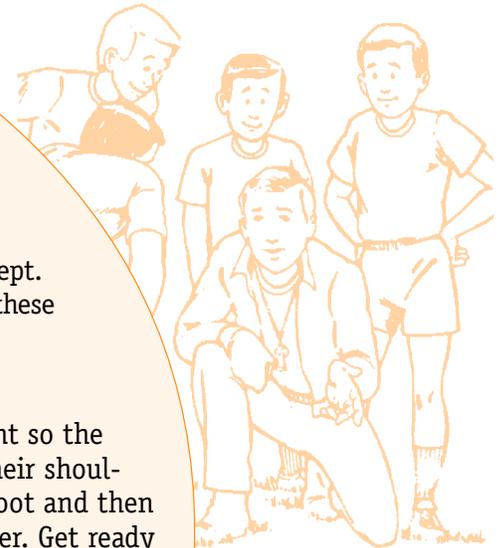
Conclude practice by gathering your players and leading them through the same stretches you led them through in the Fitness Circle. As you are stretching, discuss a character development concept. These aren't lectures; you want your players' active participation in these discussions.

Key Idea: Four core values

Gather the players into a single-file line. "Everyone turn to your right so the person to the side of you is now in front of you. Put your arms on their shoulders. We are going to walk forward, as a group, using first the right foot and then the left. We will walk slowly, so take your time so we all move together. Get ready with your right foot, now step; get ready with your left foot, now step." Repeat for four steps. "Let go of your teammates. Did we have to work together to walk as a group? We did. All season we will need to work together, with everyone doing their part. We will talk about four values that all players should have—caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility. We need to understand and use these values or qualities every practice and game."

Wrap-Up

Make summary comments about practice. Remind them of the next practice and give them a sneak preview of its emphasis: using cuts to elude defenders and create space in the attack.



Week 1, Practice 2

PURPOSE

To create space in the attack by creating passing lanes.

Equipment

-  One basketball per two players, if possible
-  Court space with three or four baskets
-  Tape or markers
-  Different colored vests or shirts to differentiate teams
-  Two cones



 Teach rules on traveling and double dribbling (see page 278).

Warm-Up (10 minutes)

Play 1 v 1 games, starting at the foul line. Defense checks the ball and offense begins in a triple threat position. (See figure on page 102.)

Fitness Circle (5 minutes)

Key Idea: General fitness

Gather the team into a group. “Last practice we talked about different kinds of fitness. Can you tell me what they were?” Listen to responses until they say *cardiorespiratory*, *flexibility*, and *muscular strength and endurance*. “What are some examples of physical activities to improve cardiorespiratory fitness?” Discuss examples (walking, running, swimming, and so on). “Muscular strength and endurance?” Discuss examples (ballhandling skills and drills, dribbling, passing, etc.). “Flexibility?” Discuss examples (leg and arm stretches). “By working hard at all the practices and outside of practice you can help attain the overall fitness you need for basketball.”

Game 1 (10 minutes)

Goal

Players will provide support for their teammate with the ball.

Description

Play 2 v 2 half-court games. Players must complete at least three passes before shooting. They receive one point for three consecutive passes, and two points for every field goal. (See figure at the top of page 91.)

Week 1, Practice 2

Coach: What was the goal of the game?

Players: To support the player with the ball.

Coach: How were you able to support the player with the ball?

Players: Using a ball fake and replace, jab step, moving quickly.

Coach: What did you do if your defender was closely guarding you?

Players: Used a cut to get away.

Coach: When would a V-cut be most effective, close to the lane or away from the lane?

Players: Away from the lane, 10 to 12 feet.

Coach: When would the L-cut be most effective?

Players: Close to the lane near the baseline.



Skill Practice 1 (15 minutes)

1. Introduce, demonstrate, and explain how to execute *V-cuts* and *L-cuts* (see page 250).
2. Practice *V-cuts* and *L-cuts*.

Description

Play 2 v 2 games with the focus on players using *V-cuts* and *L-cuts*, receiving passes, and using jump stops and the triple threat position.

Sequence:

- O_1 ball fakes, jab steps, and passes to O_2 , who *V-cuts* as O_1 is ball faking.
- O_2 catches the ball in a triple threat position using a jump stop.
- Repeat three times and rotate.
- When all four players in a group have practiced the *V-cut* three times, go through the rotation again, this time practicing the *V-cut* on the opposite side of the basket.
- When all four players have practiced the *V-cut* on both sides of the basket, go through the rotation again, using the same sequence to practice *L-cuts* on both sides of the basket.

The defense should play passive, cooperative defense.



👉 The only difference between *V-* and *L-cuts* is the angle from which the offense moves into the defense, then toward the pass.

👉 Emphasize making “razor-sharp” cuts.

👉 Teaching off-the-ball movements is important—as we know, good players know how to get open.

Week 1, Practice 2 (cont'd)



👉 Teach the five-second inbounds rule and lane violations (see page 278).

Game 2 (15 minutes)

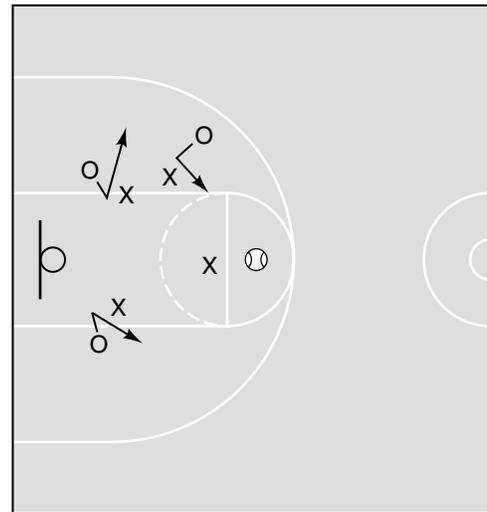
Goal

Players will provide support to their teammate with the ball, using V-cuts and L-cuts to get open.

Description

Play 4 v 2, 4 v 3, or 4 v 4 games, depending on the skill proficiency of your players. Rotate players accordingly so that all players have a chance to play offense and defense.

Players must complete at least three passes before shooting, and they can't dribble except to reposition. They receive one point for three consecutive passes, and two points for every field goal.



Team Circle (5 minutes)

Key Idea: Respect

Gather the team into a circle near two cones about 10 feet apart. "What should you do if your opponents are committing fouls, complaining to the officials, and doing things that are not fair?" Listen to their responses. "Stand at this cone if you should continue to play your game and not try to commit fouls. Stand at this cone if you should get back at the other team by playing the same way and complain to the officials." All players should vote. Ask players why they voted the way they did. Have players at the "complaining" cone think of other options instead of complaining. "You should not change the way you play your game or stop showing respect to your opponents or the officials. It's important to show respect even if the other team is not."

Wrap-Up

Make summary comments about practice. Remind them of the next practice and give them a preview of the next practice's emphasis: attacking the basket through the give-and-go.



Week 2, Practice 1

Warm-Up (10 minutes)

Players pair up and practice shooting off of various offensive moves. The shooter shoots 25 consecutive shots; the rebounder quickly returns the ball. After 25 shots they switch roles. The shooter follows this pattern:

- First 10 shots—no dribble
- Next 5 shots—dribble once
- Next 5 shots—dribble twice
- Last 5 shots—use a crossover dribble

The shooter keeps moving around the perimeter during all 25 shots.

COACH'S CUES



Crossover dribble

"Plant same-side foot as hand that's dribbling."

"V-cut in opposite direction."

"Change hands with the dribble."

"Cross the ball over in front."

"Keep the ball low."

Shooting

"Square up!"

"BEEF!"

"Base firm."

"Elbow under ball."

"Extend arm."

"Follow through or flip wrist."

PURPOSE

To attack the basket through the give-and-go.

Equipment

- One basketball per two players, if possible
- Court space with three or four baskets
- Tape or markers
- Different colored vests or shirts to differentiate teams

Fitness Circle (5 minutes)

Key Idea: Overload principle

Gather the team into a group. “Who can tell me what *overload* means?” Listen to their responses. “If your bodies do a little bit more work than they have done before, they will adapt and be able to do even more. We’re talking about small amounts of work or activity—too much harms your body and causes injuries. Your fitness will improve and you’ll be able to do more activity in practice before getting too tired. Let’s use the acronym F-I-T—what do you think it stands for?” Listen to their responses. “F stands for *frequency*, or how often you practice the activity; I stands for *intensity*, or how hard you practice or play; and T stands for *time*, or how long you practice the activity. FIT is a good way to remember how to use the overload principle to improve our fitness.”

Game 1 (10 minutes)

Goal

Players will pass and cut to the basket looking for return passes and good shots.

Description

Play 3 v 3 half-court games. Teams must make at least two passes before taking a shot. Shots must be within five feet of the basket. Offensive players pass and cut to the basket, presenting a target if they’re open. If they receive the ball as they’re cutting to the basket, they shoot. (See figure at the top of page 95.)

Coach: What was the goal of the game?

Players: To pass and cut; to present target if open.

Coach: What happened when you were able to get open?

Players: The ball was returned and the shot was attempted.

Coach: How did you get open?

Players: Used a ball fake, ran ahead of defender, kept body between defender and ball on way to basket.

Coach: What did the other offensive player do to create an open lane for you to attack the basket?

Players: Moved out of the lane.



Week 2, Practice 1

Skill Practice 1 (10 minutes)

1. Introduce, demonstrate, and explain how to execute a *give-and-go* (see page 240).
2. Practice the give-and-go.

Description

Play 2 v 1 half-court games with cooperative to active defenders. Another player serves as coach. The offense practices the give-and-go three times, using L-cuts or V-cuts toward the basket; then players rotate. (The defender goes to offense; one of the offensive players becomes the coach.)

Skill Practice 2 (10 minutes)

Description

Play 2 v 2 games with active to competitive defenders. Two other players serve as coaches. The offense practices the give-and-go three times; then players rotate. (The offense becomes the defense; the defense becomes the coaches; the coaches become the offense.) (See figure on page 163.)



- "Pass and cut!"
- "Target hand!"
- "Keep the defender behind you!"

Coach: What did you do to complete the give-and-go when there was competitive defense?

Players: Used more fakes. Dribbled to create passing lanes. Got open to support player with the ball.



- ☞ Emphasize that a give-and-go works from all positions on the court.
- ☞ Make sure players cut away from the ball and toward the basket.



Week 2, Practice 1^(cont'd)



👉 Teach rules on technical fouls (see pages 277–278).

Game 2 (10 minutes)

Goal

Players will execute the give-and-go play.

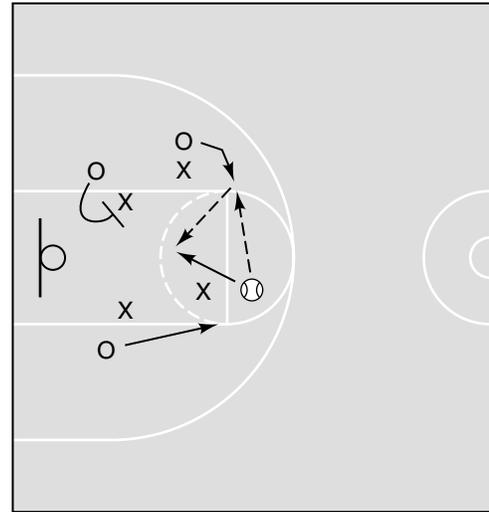
Description

Play 4 v 2, 4 v 3, or 4 v 4 games, depending on the skill proficiency of your players.

Rotate players accordingly so that all players have a chance to play offense and defense.

Teams must make at least two passes before taking a shot.

Shots must be within five feet of the basket. Offensive players pass and cut to the basket, presenting a target if they're open. If they receive the ball as they're cutting to the basket, they shoot. Give the offense an extra point if they use the give-and-go to score.



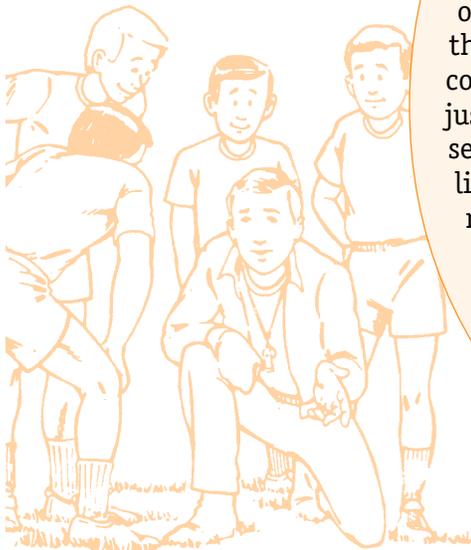
Team Circle (5 minutes)

Key Idea: Respect

Gather the team into a group. “Remember the scenario I talked about in the last practice? The opponent who wasn’t playing fairly? If you play against a team that does those types of things, how should you handle the end of the game? Stand at this cone if you think you should still go to every player and the coach to shake hands. Stand at this cone if you think you should just walk away.” Ask players why they voted as they did. Then separate the team into two groups. Practice an end-of-the-game line-up for both pleasant and fair opponents and for rude opponents. “You should always show your opponents respect by shaking hands at the end of the game, no matter what happens during the game.”

Wrap-Up

Make summary comments about practice. Remind them of the next practice and give them a preview of the next practice’s emphasis: off-the-ball defense.



Week 2, Practice 2

Warm-Up (10 minutes)

Players pair up and practice shooting off of various offensive moves. The shooter shoots 25 consecutive shots; the rebounder quickly returns the ball. After 25 shots they switch roles. The shooter follows this pattern:

- First 10 shots—no dribble
- Next 5 shots—dribble once
- Next 5 shots—dribble twice
- Last 5 shots—use a crossover dribble

The shooter keeps moving around the perimeter during all 25 shots.



Crossover dribble

"Plant same-side foot as hand that's dribbling."

"V-cut in opposite direction."

"Change hands with the dribble."

"Cross the ball over in front."

"Keep the ball low."

PURPOSE

To win the ball through off-the-ball defense.

Equipment

- One basketball per two players, if possible
- Court space with three or four baskets
- Tape or markers
- Different colored vests or shirts to differentiate teams

Fitness Circle (5 minutes)

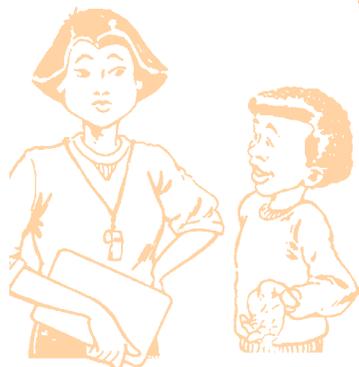
Key Idea: Overload principle

Gather the team into a group. "What does FIT stand for and when do we use it?" Listen to their responses. Discuss frequency, intensity, and time. "I want you to choose a letter of FIT and demonstrate it." As players give examples and demonstrate, encourage other players to try also. If frequency is chosen, increase repetitions. If intensity, they should try harder or faster. If time, lengthen the amount. Encourage basketball-related activities such as running and shooting. "You need to practice skills and running outside of practice and participate in other physical activities and exercise. This will give your body enough workload to overload and improve your fitness levels or abilities."

Week 2, Practice 2 (cont'd)



👉 Teach rules on holding, tripping, and hand-checking (see page 277).



• Game 1 (10 minutes)

• Goal

• Defenders will prevent the offensive team from passing, receiving passes, and scoring.

• Description

• Play 4 v 4 half-court games.

• Players can't dribble except to drive to the basket or reposition to make a pass. They must make

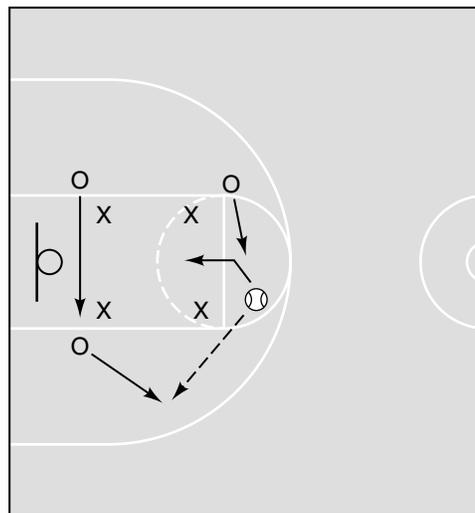
• at least three consecutive passes before shooting. Defensive team

• receives one point for each

• turnover and two points for

• each steal without fouling. Treat fouls like violations—the other team

• gets the ball.



Coach: How did you position yourself to prevent the offensive team from passing?

Players: Overplayed toward potential passing lanes; closely guarded player with the ball.

Coach: How did you position yourself to deny a pass?

Players: Overplayed toward the ball; kept hand in passing lane.

• Skill Practice 1 (10 minutes)

1. Introduce, demonstrate, and explain proper *off-the-ball positioning* (see pages 271–272).

2. Practice off-the-ball defensive positioning.

• Description

• Paired-up players practice off-the-ball defensive positioning (partners can also coach each other). As an option, you can have a player with the ball waiting to pass to his or her offensive teammate. (See figure on page 117.)

Week 2, Practice 2

Game 2 (10 minutes)

Goal

Defenders try to deny offense from making successful passes; offense tries to make six consecutive passes.

Description

Play 2 v 2 games using a competitive defense. For each 2 v 2 game, two other players serve as coaches. One offensive player begins at the point, the other at a wing position. The ball starts at the point. From a triple threat position, the ball handler uses a ball fake to give his or her teammate a chance to get open; or the ball handler dribbles to open a passing lane if necessary. Rotate after a turnover or after six consecutive passes. One player-coach gives feedback for the on-the-ball defense; the other player-coach gives feedback for the off-the-ball defense. (See figure on page 118.)



"Medium body posture."
"Active hands and active feet!"
"See the ball!"
"Anticipate!"

Game 3 (10 minutes)

Repeat first game, except play 2 v 4, 3 v 4, or 4 v 4 games, depending on the skill proficiency of your players. Rotate players accordingly so that all players have a chance to play offense and defense.



 Remind players to stay focused on defense.

Team Circle (5 minutes)

Key Idea: Responsibility

Gather the team into a group. "What should be on your 'mental list' before you come to every practice?" Listen to responses and then lead a discussion about bringing proper equipment (a water bottle, workout clothes); being mentally prepared to work hard and learn new ideas; being well rested; and having eaten well and drunk water during the day. "Each player is responsible for preparing for each practice before practice starts. It's your responsibility to the team to come to practice prepared. Good players are prepared for all practices and games."

Wrap-Up

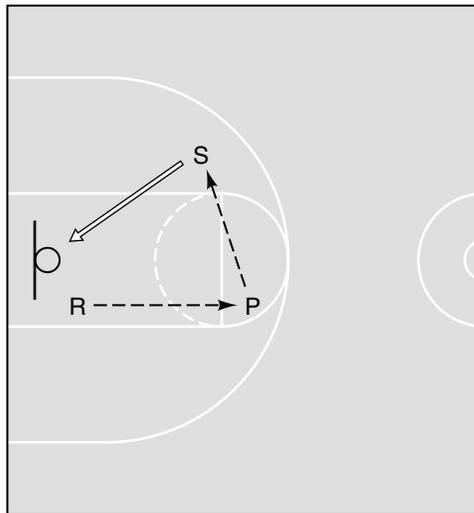
Make summary comments about practice, and remind them of the next practice: its emphasis is on rebounding.



Week 3

Warm-Up (10 minutes)

Groups of three players—a shooter, passer, and rebounder—play “Rapid Fire.” The shooter has one basketball; the passer has another. The shooter keeps moving, shooting without dribbling (later you might add shooting off the crossover dribble). The shooter shoots, working on balance, position, and technique; the passer uses bounce and chest passes to pass to the shooter; and the rebounder outlets to the passer. After one minute, players rotate positions. The shooter becomes the rebounder; the rebounder, the passer; and the passer, the shooter.



PURPOSE

To win the ball by rebounding.

Equipment

- One basketball per two players, if possible
- Court space with three or four baskets
- Tape or markers
- Different colored vests or shirts to differentiate teams
- Two cones

Fitness Circle (5 minutes)

Key Idea: Overload principle

Gather team into a group. “What does FIT stand for, and when do we use it?” Listen to their responses. Have a review discussion. “When we think about the second area of FIT, what is it? *Intensity*, or how hard you practice the activity. Raise your hand if you think that the only way to increase the intensity of an activity or make it harder is to go faster.” Encourage all players to vote. “You can overload the work your body is doing by going faster and/or by going a longer distance, as in running, for example.

Every time you run a greater distance or faster, your body will adapt and you’ll be able to do more next time.”

Game 1 (10 minutes)

Goal

Defenders try to prevent the offensive team from scoring—and from rebounding missed shots.

Description

Play 4 v 4 half-court games. Use a competitive defense. Players can't dribble, except to drive to the basket or to reposition to make a pass, and must make at least three consecutive passes before shooting. The defensive team receives one point for winning or rebounding the ball after only one shot. Treat fouls like violations—the other team gets the ball. (See figure on page 200.)



Coach: What was the goal of the game?

Players: To prevent scoring and prevent a second shot.

Coach: What did you do to prevent a second shot?

Players: Got the rebound after the first shot.

Coach: How did you position yourself to get the rebound?

Players: Moved between the offensive player and the basket.

(You could repeat this game with an offensive focus. In this case, the offensive team would earn a point for each shot attempt and rebound. You'd want to instruct your offensive rebounders to protect the ball, and to tip the ball to the basket or assume a shooting position as quickly as possible, like a pogo stick.)

Skill Practice 1 (15 minutes)

1. Introduce, demonstrate, and explain how to *box out* to rebound (see page 268).
2. Practice boxing out and rebounding.

Description

Play 3 v 3 games with 2 v 2 under the boards and a shooter and an outlet. The shooter shoots the ball. On the release, X_1 and X_2 turn and box out their offensive players. X_3 (the outlet) moves right or left, depending on which side of the basket the rebound occurs. The player rebounding the ball turns and passes to X_3 . Repeat three times, then rotate offense to defense. The defenders try to outlet successfully three times in a row. (See figure on page 121.)

Week 3



"Create a stable wall between opponent and ball."
"Elbows out—palms wide, feel for opponent."
"Put buttocks under opponents."

Game 2 (15 minutes)

Goal

Defenders try to prevent the offensive team from scoring—and from rebounding missed shots.

Description

Play 2 v 4, 3 v 4, or 4 v 4 games, depending on the skill proficiency of your players. Rotate players accordingly so that all players have a chance to play offense and defense. Players can't dribble and must make at least three consecutive passes before shooting. The defensive team receives one point for winning or rebounding the ball after only one shot. (See figure on page 200.)



 Talk about the possible fouls that can occur (e.g., over the back; see page 277).

Team Circle (5 minutes)

Key Idea: Honesty

Gather the team into a group near two cones about 10 feet apart. Identify three honesty situations that are important for your team to practice. These could be traveling, tripping, or another rule infraction. First, ask players how they would respond, and then discuss how you would prefer them to respond. "Being honest about a play during the game and in practice is an important part of the game. Good players are honest even when an official, coach, or opponent didn't see it happen."

Wrap-Up

Make summary comments about practice and give reminders for the first game.



Week 4

Warm-Up (10 minutes)

Groups of three players—a shooter, passer, and rebounder—play “Rapid Fire.” The shooter has one basketball; the passer has another. The shooter keeps moving, shooting without dribbling (later you might add shooting off the crossover dribble). The shooter shoots, working on balance, position, and technique; the passer uses bounce and chest passes to pass to the shooter; and the rebounder outlets to the passer. After one minute, players rotate positions. The shooter becomes the rebounder; the rebounder, the passer; and the passer, the shooter. (See figure on page 203.)

PURPOSE

To create space in the attack by setting screens.

Equipment

- One basketball per two players, if possible
- Court space with three or four baskets
- Tape or markers
- Different colored vests or shirts to differentiate teams

Fitness Circle (5 minutes)

Key Idea: Flexibility

Gather the team into a group. “It’s important to stretch our muscles. What area of fitness does that improve? Right—flexibility. It’s also important to stretch muscles that have been used the most in a sport or activity. In basketball, what do we use the most? Our legs and arms. I am going to show you the proper way to stretch the different muscles in your legs and arms.” Choose stretches that include quadriceps (front of thigh), hamstrings (back of thigh), calves and Achilles tendon (back of the lower leg and ankle), arms, and deltoids (shoulders). Remind players to get in position and hold their stretch, not to bounce, and they shouldn’t feel pain.

Week 4

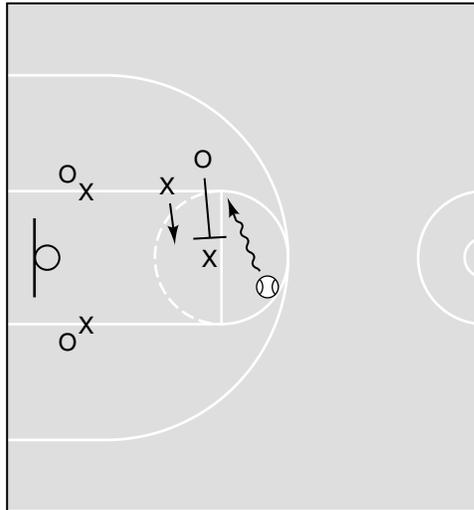
Game 1 (10 minutes)

Goal

The ball handler tries to use teammates' positioning to lose his or her opponent and attack the basket.

Description

Play 4 v 4 half-court games. Have different players restart plays. Give one extra point for a basket scored off a screen. Players call their own fouls.



Coach: What were you trying to do in the game?

Players: Use teammates' positioning to lose opponent and attack the basket.

Coach: Why is the teammates' positioning so important?

Players: To create an open shot for the player with the ball.

Coach: What would be a good body position for the player trying to free his or her teammate?

Players: Wide base, bent knees, arms across body to protect self.

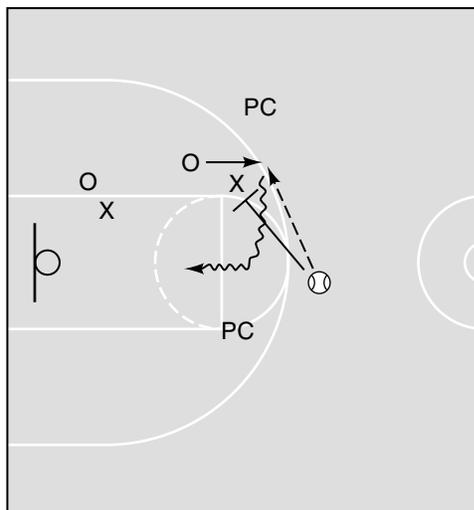


Skill Practice 1 (15 minutes)

1. Introduce, demonstrate, and explain how to *set screens* (see page 238).
2. Practice setting screens.

Description

Play 3 v 2 games with two other players acting as coaches. Offensive players execute screens. The defensive player plays active defense. One coach will watch to see if the screen is set correctly; the other coach will watch to see if the ball handler uses the screen correctly. The goal is to successfully execute a screen three times in a row.





 Point out common errors: setting a screen with your side and setting a moving screen.



"Stand firm, straddle feet."
 "Hands across chest ready to take impact."
 "Roll toward basket or roll to a passing lane."

Game 2 (15 minutes)

Goal

The offense attempts to screen the on-the-ball defender so the player with the ball can attack the basket.

Description

Play 4 v 2, 4 v 3, or 4 v 4 games, depending on the skill proficiency of your players. Rotate players accordingly so that all players have a chance to play offense and defense. Have a different player restart the play each possession. Give one extra point for a basket scored off a screen. Players call their own fouls. (See figure at the top of page 207.)

Team Circle (5 minutes)

Key Idea: Respect

Gather the team into two groups. "Think about professional teams. What ways do they show respect for their opponents?" Discuss with players. Lead discussion to talking about saying positive comments such as "good game" and "nice play today" along with a handshake. "Let's say this is the end of a game. Your two groups are professional teams that played against each other. Show me what you do at the end of the game." Use one of the discussion examples for players to try. "When you say positive comments to your opponents at the end of a game in addition to shaking or slapping hands, it shows you respect your opponents. Good professional players show they respect opponents."

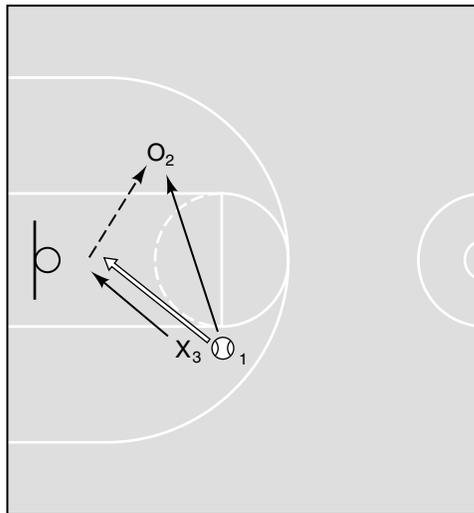
Wrap-Up

Make summary comments about the practice and give reminders for the next game.

Week 5

Warm-Up (10 minutes)

Players play “Rebound-Outlet.” Player O_1 shoots the basketball, guarded by X_3 . X_3 rebounds the shot and makes a strong outlet pass to O_2 . As soon as 1 takes the shot, he or she moves quickly to play defense on 2. Player 1 then rebounds 2’s shot and makes an outlet pass to X_3 . After 2 takes the shot, he or she plays defense on X_3 . The players continue the process for the duration of the warm-up.



PURPOSE

To defend space against screens.

Equipment

- One basketball per two players, if possible
- Court space with three or four baskets
- Tape or markers
- Different colored vests or shirts to differentiate teams

Fitness Circle (5 minutes)

Key Idea: Flexibility

“Your muscles need to be stretched every day to prevent injuries. Lie down on your back with one leg up in the air. Stretch your knee toward your face and hold it there for 10 counts. Now let’s try the stretch again. . . . See if you can use FIT. Repeat the stretch again, holding the stretch now to 15 counts and stretching your leg a bit farther. You should not stretch so far that you hurt yourself, lock your knee, or feel pain. Just stretch until you feel a gentle pull. Stretching helps to prevent injuries and improves your flexibility, an important part of fitness.”



☞ Teach rules on pushing.



Game 1 (10 minutes)

Goal

Offensive players will screen on-the-ball defenders so the player with the ball can attack the goal; defenders will effectively defend against the screen.

Description

Play 4 v 4 half-court games. The offense must make at least two passes before taking a shot. All shots must be within 5 feet of the basket. Have different players restart the play on each possession. Give an extra point for a basket scored off a screen. Give the defense a point for not allowing a shot. Players call their own fouls. (See figure at the top of page 207.)

Coach: What is the purpose of an on-the-ball screen?

Players: It allows the player with the ball to drive past the screener and lose the defender to set up a shot or a drive.

Coach: How can you get around the screen once it is set?

Players: Fight over the top (i.e., slide between the player setting the screen and the player you're guarding); duck behind the screener.

Skill Practice 1 (10 minutes)

1. Introduce, demonstrate, and explain how to *fight over the top of a screen* (see page 239).
2. Practice fighting over the top of screens.

Description

Play 2 v 2 games with a competitive defense. Offensive players execute screens; defenders being screened must fight over the top of screens, trying to keep the offense from shooting. Two player-coaches evaluate defenders' abilities to fight through screens. (See figure at the top of page 169.)

Skill Practice 2 (10 minutes)

1. Introduce, demonstrate, and explain how to *slide behind a screen* (see page 245).
2. Practice sliding behind screens.

Description

Play 2 v 2 games with a competitive defense. Offensive players execute screens; defenders being screened must duck behind the screens and stay with their opponents, trying to keep them from shooting. Two player-coaches evaluate defenders' abilities to slide behind screens. (See figure at the bottom of page 169.)

Week 5



"Stay with your opponent!"
"Talk! Let teammates know the screen is there."
"Stand away from the person setting the screen to allow your teammate to move around the pick."

Game 2 (10 minutes)

Repeat Game 1. Rotate players accordingly so that all players have a chance to play offense and defense.



☞ Perform in slower motion, if necessary, to help players understand and perform the task.

☞ Take advantage of "teachable moments."

Team Circle (5 minutes)

Key Idea: Responsibility

Gather the team into two groups. Give one group a ball. Have them dribble and pass to each other. Have one player try to distract the rest of the group. Continue this for one minute. Bring the team together as a group. "How should you respond to someone who is trying to distract you?" Discuss their responses. "If you're at practice and talk to your teammates or distract other players, you're interrupting the practice. It's your responsibility to the team to pay attention at practices and games so you and your teammates can learn and play your best."

Wrap-Up

Make summary comments about practice and give reminders for the next game.

