



Program Goals of the MYBA

Goals for Grades 3 and 4

Version 2.2

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Mansfield Youth Basketball Association

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Table of Contents

Introduction.....	1
Where are we?	1
Where are we going?	1
Summary Table of Requirements	2
Goals for Grades 3 and 4.....	3
Teaching Seven Fundamental Skills.....	3
Catching and Passing	3
Dribbling	4
Shooting	4
Rebounding	6
Playing Defense in the 3/4 Division.....	7
Pivoting	7
Moving without the Ball	8
Understanding the Game	8
Understanding the Court	8
Explaining Fouls and Other Violations.....	8
Suggested Practice Format	9
Summary.....	10
Division Objective.....	10
Things Coaches Should Avoid.....	10
Glossary	11
Appendix A — Core Drills.....	13
Passing Drills.....	13
Bull-in-the-Ring	13
Four Corners — Pass and Follow	15
Dribbling Drills	17
Wave Dribble Drill.....	17
Dribble Tag Drill.....	18
Shooting Drills.....	19
Lay-up Drill — Coach Passes to Shooters	19
Two-Line Lay-up Drill.....	20
Rebounding Drills	22
Defensive Technique — Boxing-Out.....	22
McHale Drill Variation	23
Defensive Drills.....	24
Gorilla Drill.....	24
Zig-Zag.....	25
Combination Drills	27
Dribble, Pivot, Pass (Handoff)	27
Two-Line Rebounding and Outlet Pass.....	29
Fast-Break Drills	31
Eleven Man Continuous Action Fast-Break.....	31

Introduction

The normal progression for a coach in the Mansfield Youth Basketball Association (MYBA) is to move up through the grade divisions as his (or her) child grows. The MYBA believes that by setting division goals and guidelines that are both realistic and challenging, coaches will be better prepared to develop players' skills at each level.

Mindful of the goals of the MYBA, partially cited here as:

“ . . . provide the youth of Mansfield with the opportunity to learn, participate, and enjoy the game of basketball”

“ . . . accomplished through organized programs designed to educate and develop players, coaches, and referees.”

This document is intended as a map to guide us all toward reaching these goals.

Basketball is a simple game. To be successful, players must master the fundamental skills of catching, passing, ball handling, and shooting. Coaches must never lose sight of the value of repetition in the proper development of a player.

The MYBA is committed to having one basketball for each player at every practice. Coaches must plan their practice to maximize each player's opportunities for skill development.

It is expected that this document will be revised frequently to maintain and preserve its relevance. Comments and suggestions from the MYBA community are welcome and necessary.

Where are we?

Too many players arrive at Grade 6 without having learned the basics of the game. The MYBA has been successful in bringing more basketball opportunity to more players but less successful in delivering a focused message to developing players.

Where are we going?

The MYBA has developed this guideline to assist coaches and interested parents in setting realistic goals for player development. Through clinics, videos, and consistent teaching methods, the MYBA's goal is to elevate the skills of all players leading to a better level of play for all. By increasing the level of play at each level, greater enjoyment of the game of basketball will be experienced by players, coaches, and spectators.

Summary Table of Requirements

Skill	Key Points	This is important because
Lay-ups: Right-handed & Left-handed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take off with correct foot. • Use your right hand from the right. • Use your left hand from the left. 	The ability to use your weak hand (your left hand if you're a right-handed player) from your weak hand side is essential. This will allow you to protect the ball with your body and your free hand when shooting a lay-up. This greatly increases your chances of making the shot and/or drawing a foul.
Bunnies: Right-handed & Left-handed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use your right hand from the right. • Use your left hand from the left. • Don't travel while executing the drill. 	Just like shooting lay-ups, the ability to use your weak hand (your left hand if you're a right-handed player) from your weak hand side is essential. This will allow you to protect the ball with your body and your free hand when shooting while close to the basket. Again, this greatly increases your chances of making the shot and/or drawing a foul.
Jump Shots: Taken from 8 to 10 feet away from the basket	B Balance; triple-threat position; square up. E Elbow pointing down; proper release point. E Eyes on your target (rim or square). F Follow through for proper rotation and arc.	Proper shooting form is essential to your development as an accurate shooter. Your release, follow-through, and arc all work to assure proper direction and maximize your chance of a successful shot. Your focus on solid shooting mechanics will eliminate the need to change your shooting form as you grow and develop.
Dribbling: Right-handed & Left-handed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use your right hand going to the right. • Use your left hand going to the left. • Keep your head up; look where you're going. • Demonstrate one or more crossover moves. 	The ability to dribble with either hand — with your head up — is an essential component of your team's ability to beat pressure defenses. You must have the ability to confidently dribble with either hand while always thinking to pass first.
Catching & Passing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate an ability to catch good passes. • Demonstrate an ability to catch bad passes. • Demonstrate an ability to catch on the run. 	The ability to catch both good and bad passes is essential for good offensive basketball. Additionally, the ability to control rebounds is dependent on your ability to catch the ball off the backboard and to use your hands effectively.

Goals for Grades 3 and 4

By the end of the season, every player in the Division should be:

- Squaring to the basket
- Shooting with proper form
- Looking to pass or shoot before dribbling
- Using both hands to dribble as appropriate
- Moving without the ball to get open
- Beginning to use the off-hand while shooting lay-ups

Teaching Seven Fundamental Skills

Coaches must pay careful attention to proper development of the skills described in the following sections at every practice. It is through repetition and positive reinforcement that players will learn these important basics which are necessary for proper player development. Every coach must set the tone of practice through proper planning so that these skills can be practiced in small groups for short periods of time every week.

Catching and Passing

The goals are to develop players so that they can:

- Demonstrate an ability to catch good passes.
- Demonstrate an ability to catch bad passes.
- Demonstrate an ability to catch on the run.
- Look for open players and get the ball to them.

The ability to catch both good and bad passes is essential for good offensive basketball. Additionally, the ability to control rebounds is dependent on the player's ability to catch the ball off the backboard and to use her (or his) hands effectively.

In youth basketball, you should constantly stress the importance of the bounce pass. This pass is easier to catch and is more difficult to defend. You should teach that a bounce pass should be from the passer's belly to the receiver's belly. A common mistake with young players is to begin the pass from the forehead or higher. Doing this results in the ball bouncing too high.

Some drills you can use to develop these skills are:

- 3-man weave
- 2-man slide passing
- Keep away (with no dribbling allowed)
- 3-on-1; defender commits; pass to opposite wing

Dribbling

The goals are to teach the following:

- Use your right hand going to the right.
- Use your left hand going to the left.
- Keep your head up; look where you're going.
- Demonstrate one or more crossover moves.

The ability to dribble with either hand — with the head up — is an essential component of your team's ability to beat pressure defenses. The player must have the ability to confidently dribble with either hand while always looking to pass first.

Some drills you can use to develop these skills are:

- 3-on-1; defender commits; pass to opposite wing
- Zigzag (dribble in diagonal direction to specific point on the court)

Shooting

Lay-ups

The goals are to develop players so that they can:

- Take off with correct foot. The correct foot is always the inside foot.
- Use the right hand from the right.
- Use the left hand from the left.

The ability to use the weak hand (the left hand for a right-handed player) from the weak hand side is essential. This will allow the player to protect the ball with the body and the free hand when shooting a lay-up. This greatly increases the chances of making the shot and/or drawing a foul.

Some drills you can use to develop these skills are:

- Continuous circle drill (with up to 5 players)
- Practice the off-hand at lowered baskets
- Phantom lay-ups

Phantom lay-ups are simply regular lay-up drills done without the ball. From the right side, have your players pretend to dribble the ball. When they get to the block, they're to jump off the inside (left) foot and try to touch the backboard with the right hand. From left side, players jump off the inside foot (right) and touch backboard with left hand. Coaches can tape a string from the backboard to the appropriate height for smaller players.

In this drill, the rebounding line advances to the basket and pretends to rebound and pass. Ensure that all players demonstrate coordination without the ball prior to advancing to actual lay-ups.

Bunnies

A bunny is defined as a shot taken from close to the basket. It is most often executed using the backboard.

The goals are to teach the following:

- Use the right hand from the right.
- Use the left hand from the left.
- Don't travel while executing the drill.

Just like shooting lay-ups, the ability to use the weak hand (the left hand for a right-handed player) from the weak hand side is essential. This will allow the player to protect the ball with the body and the free hand when shooting while close to the basket. Again, this greatly increases the chances of making the shot and/or drawing a foul.

Some drills you can use to develop these skills are:

- Count the number made in 60 seconds

When counting the number made in 60 seconds, you should count number made with the off-hand separate from the number made with the strong hand.

- Execute alternating bunnies

Alternating bunnies are taken left hand/right hand, left hand/right hand, left hand/right hand, etceteras.

Jump Shots

Jump shots are to be taken from 5 to 8 feet away from the basket. The goals are to teach the following:

- **B** Balance; triple-threat position; square up.
- **E** Elbow pointing down; proper release point.
- **E** Eyes on your target (rim or square).
- **F** Follow through for proper rotation and arc.

Proper shooting form is essential to the development as an accurate shooter. The release, follow-through, and arc all work to assure proper direction and maximize the chance of a successful shot. A 45° angle is the ideal release angle for an outside shot. This will maximize the chance of a shot going in.

In general, youth basketball players shoot flat shots (shots without proper arc) due to poor shooting mechanics. The flat shot is also the result of the player taking shots outside of her (his) range. You must constantly remind your players to take their shots closer to the basket. This, of course, is in direct conflict with the player's desire to shoot the "three-pointer."

Coaches should quickly correct two-handed shooting. This can be a difficult habit to break in older players — start them the right way! Focusing on solid shooting mechanics will eliminate the player's need to change shooting form as she (he) grows and develops.

Some drills you can use to develop these skills are:

- Shooting over a defender whose arms are raised.
- Shooting while holding the follow-through for a 3-count.
- Shooting without a ball. This is done for form and follow-through. It's done as a warm-up drill.
- Elbow shots. Move, catch, square to the basket, and shoot.

In the Elbow shots drill, the shooter moves from one side of the lane to the other with two rebounders feeding the shooter. The shooter receives the pass, squares to the basket using the inside pivot foot, and shoots while moving from one side of the lane to the other.

Rebounding

Every player can be taught to rebound effectively. Desire coupled with a sound fundamental approach should result in solid rebounding for your team.

On the girls' side of the organization in the 3rd and 4th grades, it can be a particular challenge for coaches to get the girls to actually jump for a rebound. This should not, however, discourage you from continuing to try.

Bending at the knees while in the ready position is essential to getting greater height when rebounding. You must work to ensure that your players learn the importance of this early in their basketball development. Once your players experience the positive results of this, it becomes much easier for you to encourage them to continue.

Your message should be to teach your players to:

- Locate an opponent to box-out. This is generally "your man" in man-to-man defense.
- Make contact with the opponent with your backside/butt and with your arms out to the side. Knees must be bent and your feet should be spread apart.
- Use your arms to contain your opponent. Don't get too close to the basket.
- As the ball rebounds from the rim, concentrate on keeping your opponent behind you.
- Jump up and toward the basket for the ball. Don't just jump straight up.
- Grab the ball on its sides, keeping your elbows out to protect the ball. Keep the ball up as high as possible.
- While rebounding defensively, immediately pivot to look for the outlet pass. While rebounding offensively, keep the ball high and immediately go up strong to the basket.

Some drills you can use to develop these skills are:

- Jumping drill. Players jump continuously from the ready position for 30 seconds.
- Circle drill. Use rotating pairs of players — an offensive and a defensive player. The coach shoots to miss and the defensive player is to box-out and go get the rebound.
- Box-out of circle. That is, place the ball in the center jump circle — one player keeps the other player from the ball.

Playing Defense in the 3/4 Division

Defense in the Division is played only within the 3-point arc. The intent is to minimize the pressure on the players bring the ball up the court. Within the 3-point arc, only man-to-man defense is played in order to give all offensive players the opportunity to get to the basket. In both practice and game contexts, you should try to match players of roughly equal skill and size against each other.

Zone defense is not allowed. The principle of “helping out” on defense must be limited to the players returning to their man as soon as possible. The concentration should be on defensive stance and positioning.

The messages you should emphasize with your players are:

- Keep low
- Move your feet
- Avoid reaching fouls
- Play man-to-man only
- Play between your man and the basket

You should also teach your players the difference between “helping out” and the playing of a one-man zone.

Pivoting

There may be no other skill that is so basic to the game of basketball yet that is so often neglected at practice. The sequence of catching the ball, pivoting, and squaring-up in the triple-threat position needs to be ingrained in every player.

While players may pivot with either foot, young basketball players must first master pivoting with the foot that is opposite their shooting hand. That is, right-handed players should pivot with the left foot when in the triple-threat position.

Only by constant practice of this sequence of catching the ball, pivoting, and squaring-up in the triple-threat position can coaches stop the natural tendency of players to put the ball on the floor after receiving the ball. Our goals as coaches must be to get players to instantaneously look at all options (pass, shoot, dribble left, or dribble right) when receiving a pass or pulling down a rebound.

Use your creativity to make learning this skill fun!

Moving without the Ball

With the young players in this Division, there is a natural tendency to do too much standing-around during both practices and games. Players with the ball must be taught to consider a pass for better scoring opportunities. All other offensive players must be encouraged to move without the ball. Our goal as coaches must be to make all players understand this.

Some techniques for you to consider are to teach:

- Give and go
- Back door cuts
- Picks and rolls

Understanding the Game

Building on the knowledge base that began for some of your players in the Grade 2 Division, coaches and referees must begin to set expectations for all players with respect to their ability to understand and follow the basics of the game of basketball. In addition to the teaching that happens at each practice, every game should be treated as an ongoing teaching opportunity by both coaches and referees.

Understanding the Court

Your players in this Division will almost exclusively use the strong hand and want to drive right. By introducing players to using the weak hand, you will be laying a strong foundation for the future development of your players. Encourage your players to develop the left hand and teach proper spacing on offense. You'll find that the overall level of play will increase significantly. And, both sides of the court will be utilized.

Your primary teaching focus should be to communicate that players should:

- Stay out of the corners
- Know how to run the lanes
- Attack both sides of the court equally

Explaining Fouls and Other Violations

Players at this age must be taught all of the rules of the game. Referees should use infractions as teaching opportunities. Judgement should be exercised so as to maintain an even-handed and positive flow of the game.

Particular emphasis should be placed on:

- Traveling
- 3-second violations
- 5-second violations
- Back court violations

Suggested Practice Format

Managing the time available for practice is important to both you and your players. The following table is a recommended approach that may work for you:

Duration (in minutes)	Activity
05	Dribbling warm up using both hands
30	Skill development in small groups
15	Full court drills
10	Scrimmaging as a reward

It is recommended that scrimmaging be minimized during practice time. You're a lot more effective in your teaching of skills when you're conducting solid fundamental drills. Be creative. Make drills fun.

When you do use scrimmaging occasionally as a reward to your players, try to use innovative rules for your scrimmage session. These can help reinforce the fundamentals that you've been teaching.

For example, try:

- No dribbling allowed
- Weak hand dribbling only
- 3-on-3 with the 3-point line as the out-of-bounds line
- Minimum of 5 passes prior to a shot (unless one of the passes is a back-door pass)

Teachers and parents alike will tell you that the attention span of children is short. This fact needs to be considered in any instructional curriculum. Keep your drills focused on one or two skills areas and keep them relatively short. Consider a duration of 5 minutes as the optimum and a duration of 10 minutes as the maximum.

Choreograph your practices in advance and be prepared to transition from one drill to the next drill quickly and with minimal disruption. Remember, you only have 1 hour and you need to make the best use of your time.

Learning shows like Sesame Street utilize a teaching technique that keeps the subject audience both interested and engaged. You can use this technique in your practices. Introduce a new or review skill, explain the drill, and run that drill for a limited period. If the results are not what you expect, you may want to break the drill down to more basic components and try it at the next practice.

Summary

Grades 3 through 6 are undoubtedly the most important years in the development of young basketball players. It is during these years when coaches must be confident enough to know what players need to learn. Every coach must be prepared to meet the Division goals at each practice.

Only by reviewing these guidelines on a regular basis throughout your season will you be able to meet the needs of these developing players.

Division Objective

Through participation at practice with coaches and reinforcement of skills at home, players should be able to perform these fundamental skills:

Average Development	Advanced Development
Establish pivot with one foot	One-on-one moves facing the basket
Strong side lay-up off correct foot	Either side lay-up off correct foot.

Things Coaches Should Avoid

There are a few thoughts that you may want to consider that will help both you and your players be both more effective and successful. You might think of these as:

Things Coaches Should Avoid

Coaches should avoid	Instead, coaches should
Designating players as guards, forwards, or centers.	Move all of your players around to develop all skills.
Allowing players to stand around or sit around at practice.	Keep your players active. They learn through doing.
Concentrating on plays or implementing an offense.	Concentrate on skill development.

Glossary

TERM	DEFINITION
Box-out	Putting your body against your opponent's body to keep your opponent from getting good position for a rebound.
Bunny	A shot taken from close to the basket; usually taken from a 45° angle using the backboard.
Cross-over dribble	Switching the dribble from one side of the body to the other side of the body; usually executed in front of the body.
Drop step	A pivoting move that an offensive player makes while playing with his back to the basket. The purpose of the move is to keep the defender on the offensive player's back while making a move to the basket.
Get open	Moving to lose your defender. The term, open, suggests that the player has a clean line-of-sight to the player with the ball.
Jab step	A small step from the triple-threat position with the non-pivoting foot. One type of move to shed a defender. The move is intended to get the defender off balance and vulnerable to another move.
Jump stop	A way to stop (with or without the ball) so that the player stops balanced in the ready or triple-threat position prepared to shoot or receive a pass. If done correctly, both feet touch the floor at the same time, ready to pivot if necessary.
Move to the ball	When receiving a pass, the player should move in the direction from which the ball is coming.
Pivoting	Rotating on the ball of the foot to change position. The pivoting foot should not be dragged. Once the pivot foot is established, it must remain in the established spot on the floor.
Ready position	A position where the knees are bent and the player is balance and up on the balls of the feet. The hands are held ready at the sides of the body.
Square to the basket	Using a pivoting action to line up the shoulders parallel to the basket. The shoulders are then square to the basket.
Triple-threat position	A position from which the player may pass, shoot, or dribble. The knees should be bent as the player is gathered to execute any of the three options. See Ready position.
V-cut	A quick (instantaneous) change in direction when moving without the ball.

Appendix A — Core Drills

Passing Drills

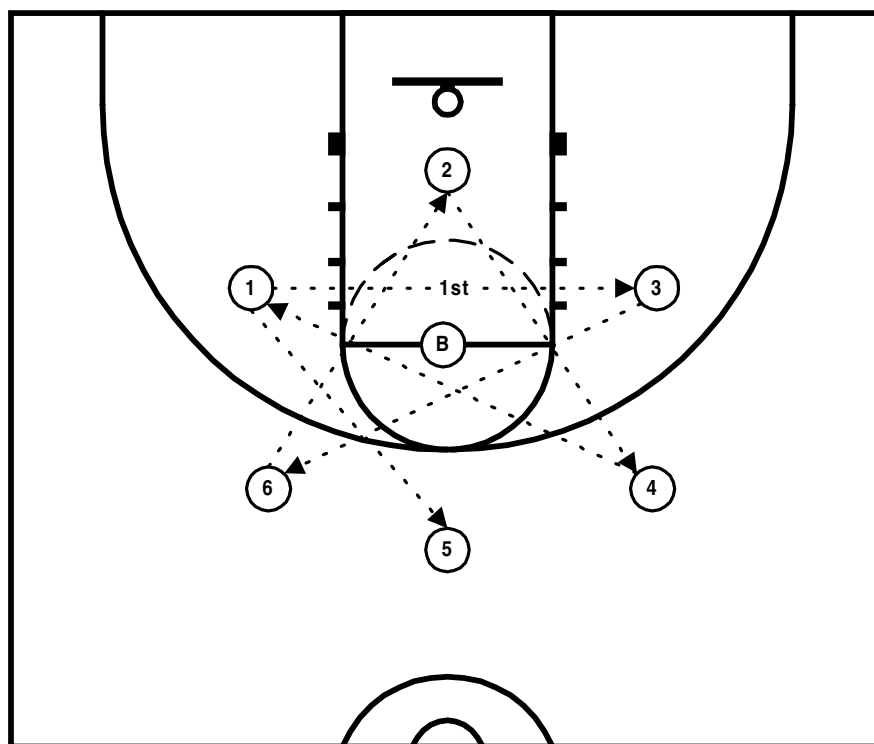
Passing is the fundamental move leading to the scoring attempt. Passing and catching are the primary *team* skills in offensive basketball.

Bull-in-the-Ring

This is an effective drill that stresses short quick passes. It also provides an opportunity to work on the development of fundamental defensive skills.

Setting It Up

- 1 Position five to seven players in a circle. For younger players, consider positioning them around the perimeter of the free-throw circle (a 12-foot diameter circle) to minimize the distances.
- 2 Position one player in the center of the circle (identified by the letter **B** in the illustration). This player should be prepared to play defense.
- 3 The players on the perimeter of the circle pass to each other. The player in the center of the circle defends against the passes and tries to intercept or deflect the ball.



- 4 The players on the perimeter, the offensive players, should pass the ball quickly. Do not allow them to pass the ball to the player located on their immediate right or left.

The illustration shows a possible pattern of passes with no passes to the immediate right or left of any player.

- 5 Passing movement continues until the player in the center of the circle either intercepts or deflects the ball.
- 6 The player making the intercepted or deflected pass changes position with player in the center of the circle.

An alternative to this is to allow the defensive player to remain in position for a specified amount of time. For example, you might consider 30 seconds. Alternate your players until each player takes a turn in the middle.

Teaching Points

- Stress short, quick passes. Your players should release the ball quickly. Players' hands should be always ready to receive the ball.
- Passes should always be made with enthusiastic purpose. Counsel your players to not "float" their passes.
- Players should fake their passes to try to get the player in the center of the circle to move.
- The player in the center of the circle should always use proper defensive hand position and foot movements.

Four Corners — Pass and Follow

This is drill that stresses quick ball movement around the perimeter with particular emphasis on moving to meet the ball.

Setting It Up

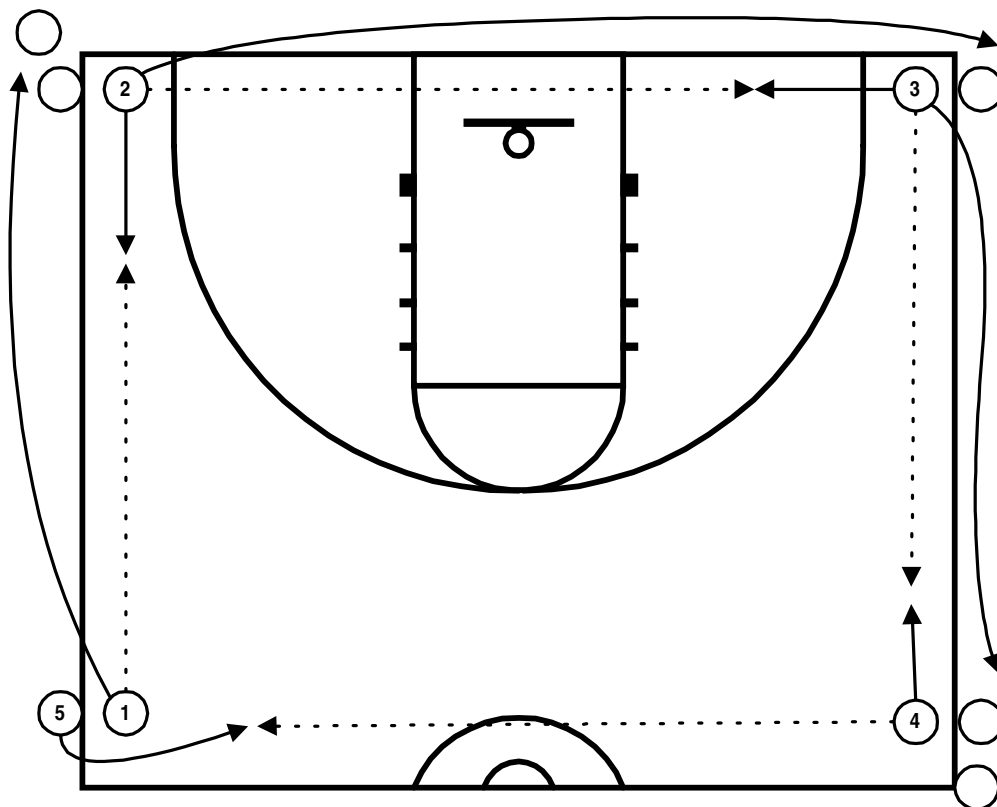
- 1 Position your players in four lines.
- 2 Put the ball in the possession of Player 1. Player 1 begins the drill on your signal.
- 3 Player 1 makes a crisp chest pass to Player 2, who steps to meet the pass while presenting his hands in the ready position to receive the ball.

Player 1 sprints to the end of Line 2 after passing. That is, he “follows the ball” to the line to which he passed.

- 4 Player 2 pivots toward Line 3 and makes a crisp pass to Player 3. Player 3, of course, steps to meet the pass while presenting his hands in the ready position to receive the ball.

Player 2 sprints to the end of Line 3 after passing. That is, he “follows the ball” to the line to which he passed.

- 5 This pattern continues as Player 3 pivots toward Line 4 and makes a crisp pass to Player 4.; and Player 4 passes to Player 5, now the first player in Line 1.



You can direct your players to reverse the direction of the ball on your signal. The direction of the ball *does* make a difference. Some of your players will be more comfortable with the direction being counter-clockwise. That is, they will be more comfortable making passes to their right.

For some of your players, changing the drill to a clockwise direction, as shown in the illustration, requires more precise and focused pivoting to make the pass to the left. This heightened concentration is a good thing.

The dashed lines in the illustration show the direction of the passes. The solid lines show the direction of player movement.

An alternative that you can use in this drill is to add a second ball. Start the balls in diagonally opposite corners. For example, place the balls in the hands of Players 1 and 3 to start the drill.

Teaching Points

- The emphasis in this drill is on handling the ball with speed and accuracy while on the move.
- Players should use a quick wrist-release when making the pass. Players should always step in the direction they're throwing the pass.
- Stress moving to meet all passes. You can't stress this too much. "Come to meet the ball" should be your most-used words at all of your practices.

Teach your players that the primary reason for this is to place one's body between the ball and the defender. Defenders always "come to the ball" — that's how they intercept passes. Emphasize to your players that it's *their* ball. They've got to want it more than the defender.

- The passer should focus on making a crisp pass to a specific area. For example, focus on the chest level of the receiver when making a chest pass.
- The receiver should always present a good target to the passer; always moving away from the imaginary defender.

Dribbling Drills

Dribbling is dependent on touch, not sight. Your players must learn to dribble with the head up — focussed on the offensive basket while seeing the whole court for passing opportunities.

Wave Dribble Drill

Setting It Up

- 1 Position your players between midcourt and the baseline. Ensure that each player has a ball and that there is enough room for each to move freely.
- 2 Players' knees should be bent and good body balance should be established and maintained. the wrists should be kept firm with the fingers spread wide to control the ball.
- 3 Stand directly in front of your players. Give directions (this is where the “wave” comes into play) to your players to move laterally to the right, laterally to the left, and forward. Mix the directions — you're developing a heads-up awareness while dribbling.
- 4 Each player should protect the ball with his body and his free hand.
- 5 On your last signal, the players speed dribble to the opposite end of the court and then back to the starting position.

Teaching Points

- Players should use a good dribble protection position.
- Each player should have his head up. He should use the slide dribble while pretending to look for a teammate to whom he can pass.
- While the player is speed dribbling, you should stress pushing the ball ahead so the player will achieve maximum speed.

Dribble Tag Drill

Setting It Up

- 1 Involve all ten players. Position eight players around the jump circle. Position two players inside the circle.
- 2 Each player should have a ball. The players inside the circle (Players 1 and 2) are designated as “it.” You signal the beginning of the drill.
- 3 Players 1 and 2 attempt to tag each of the other players. The other players avoid the tag by dribbling away. Players 1 and 2 must keep one hand in the air as they begin to try to tag one of the eight other players.
- 4 The eight pursued players may dribble anywhere in the halfcourt to avoid being tagged. When a player is tagged, he becomes “it” and goes to the center of the jump circle.

A variation on this is to have each tagged player leave the court to see how long it takes one or two dribblers to tag everyone.

Teaching Points

- As he dribbles, each player must not look at the ball and must keep his head up.
- Players must use the speed dribble, the change-of-pace dribble, and other maneuvers to avoid being tagged.
- Use of the halfcourt area is intended to restrict the area of movement. This helps develop quickness while dribbling.

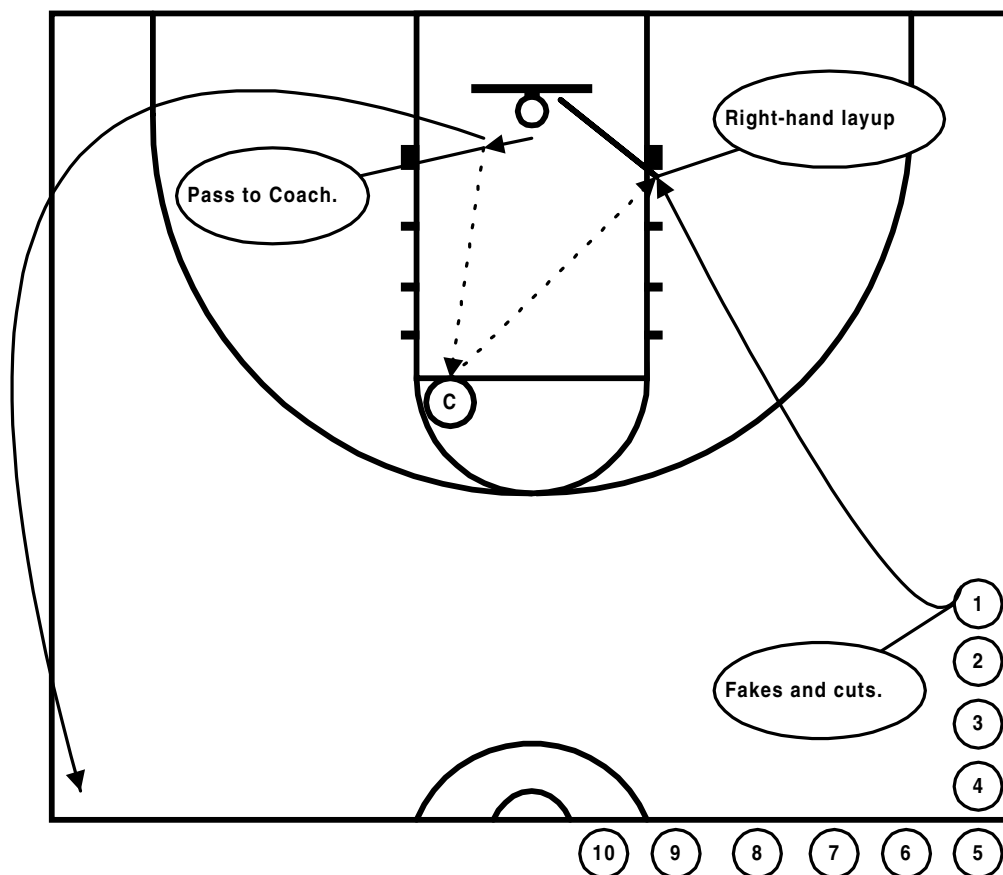
Shooting Drills

Every one of your players is interested in scoring. Concentration on solid shooting mechanics and repetition are keys to the development of effective shooters and scorers.

Lay-up Drill — Coach Passes to Shooters

Setting It Up

- 1 Position your players in one line on the right side of the court at the wing position. Position yourself with the ball near the foul line.
- 2 Player 1 fakes and cuts toward the basket with his hands up and in the ready position to receive a pass.
- 3 Pass the ball to Player 1 as she approaches the lane — not too far under the basket.
- 4 After receiving the ball, Player 1 shoots the ball, laying it up — using the backboard.
- 5 After shooting, Player 1 retrieves the ball, makes a good pass to you at the foul line, and sprints to form a line on the left side of the court at the wing position.
- 6 Player 2 fakes and cuts toward the basket and the sequence repeats with you making a pass to Player 2.



- 5 After rebounding the ball, Player 2 makes a crisp chest pass to the player positioned on the baseline — Player 3. Player 2 follows his pass, taking the position on the baseline opposite the shooting line.
- 6 Player 3 pivots and makes a good pass to the next player (Player 4) in the shooting line. Then, Player 3 sprints to the end of the shooting line.
- 7 The sequence repeats, with Player 4 dribbling and shooting a right-hand lay-up.

Repeat the sequence from the right until some specified number of consecutive lay-ups are scored. Then, switch the shooting line to the left side — positioning the single player on the baseline opposite the shooting line on the left.

As an alternative, have the shooter release the shot on the opposite side of the basket for a reverse lay-up.

Teaching Points

- Stress concentration and perfection. The drill must be run at full speed.
- There are to be no lazy passes — no passes are to be floated.
- Proper lay-up shooting fundamentals are to be used on every shot.
- The shooter, cutting to the basket from the front of the shooting line should move to meet the ball with his hands ready above his waist at all times.



Rebounding Drills

Offense sells tickets, defense wins games, rebounding wins championships.
 — Pat Summitt, University of Tennessee

Every one of your players can become a good rebounder — not just your tall players or those with jumping ability. Teach your players that “you *must* have the ball in order to score.”

Getting the body into a well-balanced position, timing the jump, retrieving the ball with two hands, and landing in good position are all crucial to being able to make a play. That play can be either going up strong in a scoring attempt or getting the ball to a teammate.

Defensive Technique — Boxing-Out

The purpose of this drill is to help the defensive player develop the skills and techniques of boxing-out.

Setting It Up

- 1 Pair up your players. Each pair of players establish one-on-one positions over the full length of the court.
- 2 Give a pre-arranged signal to your offensive players. For example, signal “to the right.”
 On this signal, all offensive players take two steps to the right.
- 3 The defensive player’s eyes should be on the waist and hips of the offensive player to be prepared for the direction of movement.
- 4 As the offensive player moves, the defensive player slide-steps forward, pivots on his left foot, swings his body around, and moves into the box-out position.

The player should have his knees bent, in a semi-crouch position, with his posterior extended into the thighs of the offensive player.

- 5 The player’s arms should be bent and extended to each side so that the offensive player cannot go around him. His hands should not drop below chest-height level. His hands should be ready to retrieve the ball.

As the player executes this box-out move, his eyes turn to the basket to find the ball.

Teaching Points

- Emphasize good defensive stance. Teach your player to use his eyes — emphasize which part of the play to watch.
- Stress correct footwork and positioning. Proper execution will allow the defensive player to make contact before the offensive player can make his move.
- Stress aggressiveness in maintaining the box-out position. Remind your player that his arms may be up and out, but he cannot intentionally hook his opponent.
- Look for the basketball. You can't stress this one too often.

McHale Drill Variation**Setting It Up**

- 1 Position one or two players at each basket.
- 2 The first player throws the ball high off the backboard. From the knees-bent semi-crouch position, he jumps for the rebound with his arms extended and his legs spread.
- 3 For a right-handed player, the right hand should be extended to grasp the top of the ball. The player pulls or rips the ball down to a position no lower than the chin.
- 4 After rebounding the ball, the player jumps back up immediately for a lay-up.

The player uses the right hand from the right side and the left hand from the left side.
- 5 After the lay-up, the player throws the ball high off the backboard on the opposite side and repeats the sequence.

Teaching Points

- Stress correct rebounding techniques.
- Emphasize the need to go back up strongly — protecting the ball while doing so.
- While going back up strongly after gaining possession of the ball, stress that the ball must be released softly against the backboard.

Defensive Drills

One of the two primary goals of the game is to prevent the other team from scoring. That is, you need to teach your players the skills they'll need to keep the opposition from getting good shots and easy scoring opportunities.

The components of the required skills consist of:

- Correct footwork and foot movement
- Body position and balance
- Effective use of arms, hands, and eyes

Through drills, driven by concentration and repetition, you can help your players to develop the necessary skills.

Gorilla Drill

Setting It Up

- 1 Position your players in two lines across the widest available practice area. Ensure that there is a proper interval between players. That is, have your players spread out.
- 2 Position yourself in front of your players.

You can use a whistle, a hand signal, or a voice command to run the drill.

- 3 All players get set in a good defensive position — knees bent and body balanced — with hands in the ready position.
- 4 At your signals, the players slide forward, laterally, and backwards — using shuffling and sliding movements.
- 5 There should be no crossing of the legs. The player should push off the foot that is opposite to the direction in which they are going to move.

That is, if the signal is to slide to her right, the player should push off the left foot.

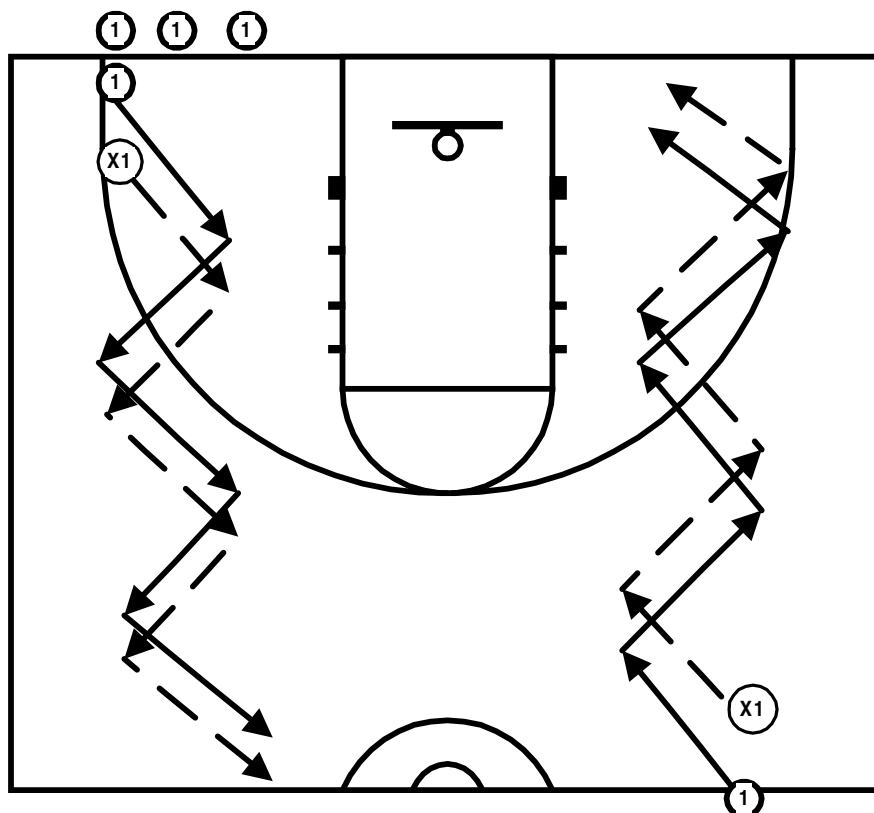
Teaching Points

- Stress proper defensive stance. If you're using this as a conditioning drill, you may want to consider directing your players to keep their hands above their heads for a number of minutes.
- Knees should be bent during the entire drill.
- Teach and emphasize the correct method of shuffling. Players should use the point-and-push method.
- As your players' skills improve, you may want to add balls to the drill while teaching various moves.

Zig-Zag

Setting It Up

- 1 Player 1 dribbles down the court in a zig-zag fashion. The defender, Player X1, must maintain the proper distance from (space relation to) the offensive player. This depends on the speed and agility of the players.
- 2 Player X1 must maintain the proper defensive stance.
- 3 The defender must always keep his body between the dribbler and the basket, with his head in line with the dribbler's shoulder.
- 4 To focus on the proper execution of the shuffle-step, begin the drill by having the defender place his hands behind his back or to grasp his shirt. As skills develop, allow the defender to use his hands.



- 5 There are two methods to consider while teaching the use of the hands:
 - One hand leads the dribbler and the other hand prevents the crossover dribble.
 - One hand leads the dribbler and the hand closer to the dribbler attacks the ball.
- 6 The defender tries to make the dribbler stop or reverse direction.

- 7 When you first introduce this drill, don't allow the dribbler to beat the defender. The emphasis here is to be on teaching good defensive skills. As defensive skills develop, you can open things up to make it more competitive.

Teaching Points

- Stress proper defensive stance and positioning.
- Teach and emphasize the correct method of shuffling so that the defensive player maintains an over play position and is able to force the dribbler to change direction.
- Stress the proper use of hands.
- Stress proper dribbling technique while the offensive player is under pressure.

Combination Drills

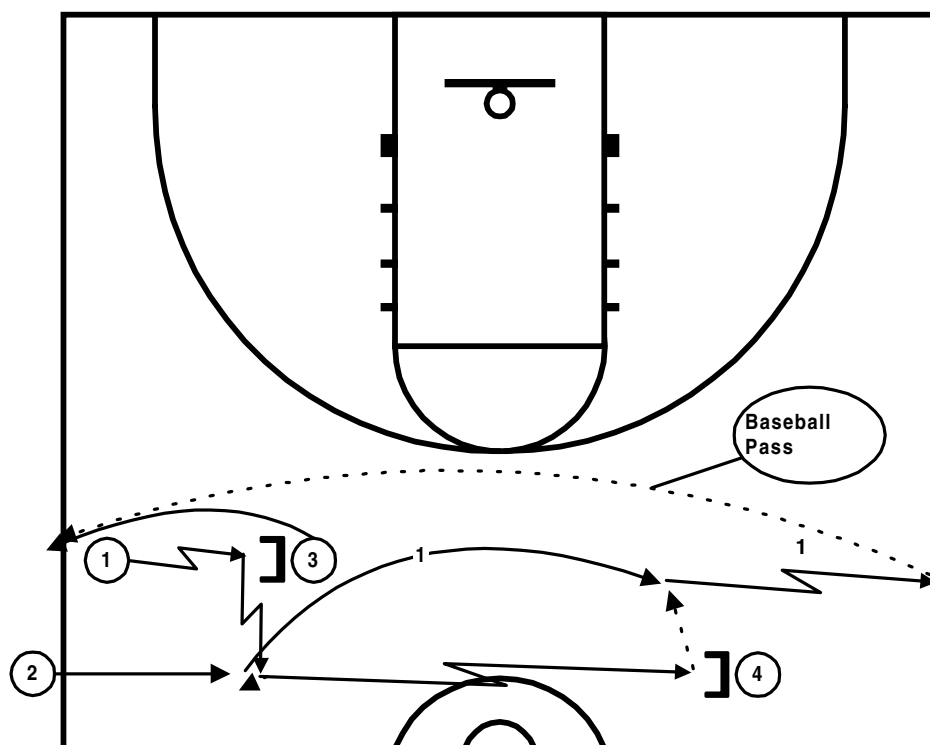
Combining several fundamental skills in a single drill is an effective way to use your limited practice time. This, of course, is more challenging when teaching younger players.

As your players develop in their ability to execute individual techniques, you may want to introduce combination drills into your practices. In addition to maximizing instructional time, combination drills provide learning contexts that are more game-like — providing your players with an understanding that they should work to become complete players.

Dribble, Pivot, Pass (Handoff)

Setting It Up

- 1 This drill is run from sideline to sideline — allowing more than one group to work at the same time.
- 2 Position offensive Players 1 and 2 at the sideline and defensive Players 3 and 4 at two designated spots on the court.
- 3 Player 1 dribbles toward the first defensive player (Player 3) who forces Player 1 to move to his right.



- 4 Player 1 stops, pivots, and hands off to Player 2 who is trailing the play.
- 5 Receiving the ball, Player 2 dribbles toward the second defensive player (Player 4).

- 6 Player 2 stops, pivots, and passes to Player 1 who is trailing the play.
- 7 Player 1 stops on the sideline, pivots, and throws a baseball pass to the first defensive player (Player 3) who has moved into position at the opposite sideline.
- 8 The two defensive players change to offense, the two offensive players change to defense, and the cycle repeats.

Teaching Points

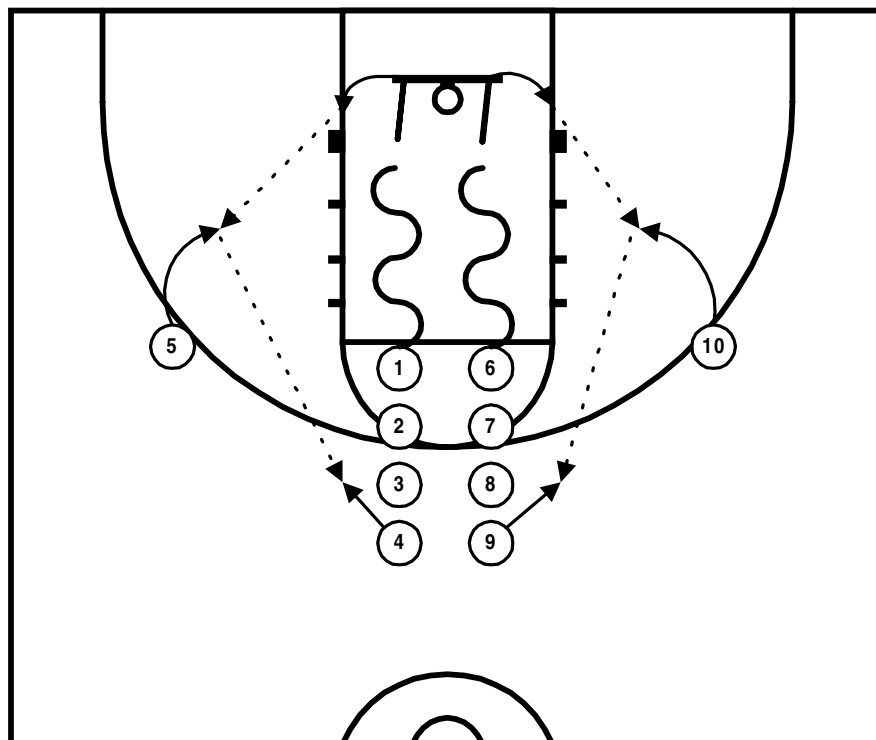
- Players should use a good dribble protection position when approaching the defensive player.
- The dribbler should execute a correct reverse pivot and handoff procedure.
- The player receiving the handoff should use proper timing on the cut.
- Defensive players should use proper bluff-and-drop procedures while defending.

Two-Line Rebounding and Outlet Pass

This drill involves all of your players and is a natural lead-in to working on a fast-break drill.

Setting It Up

- 1 Position eight of your ten players in two lines within the free-throw lane, starting at the free-throw line (or at the dashed-lines in the circle).
- 2 Position one player at each wing position. That is, position them like Players 5 and 10 as shown in the illustration at the foul-line extended area.



- 3 Player 1 tosses the ball against the backboard and goes up for the rebound — using the correct techniques.
- 4 As Player 1 comes down with the rebound, protecting the ball, she looks to the outside and makes a two-handed pass off the shoulder (or an overhead pass) to Player 5.
After making the pass, Player 1 cuts to Player 5's starting position on the wing.
- 5 Player 5 moves to meet the ball, pivots on her inside foot, and makes a two-handed chest pass (or a one-handed push pass) to Player 4.
After making the pass, Player 5 takes Player 4's starting position in the line.

- 6 Player 4 makes a V-cut (or an L-cut) to meet the pass from Player 5, receives the pass, and pivots to look up court.

Player 4 passes to Player 2, who continues the drill by tossing the ball against the backboard, rebounding, and making the outlet pass.

- 7 The same sequence of steps are executed on the right side of the lane with Players 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10.

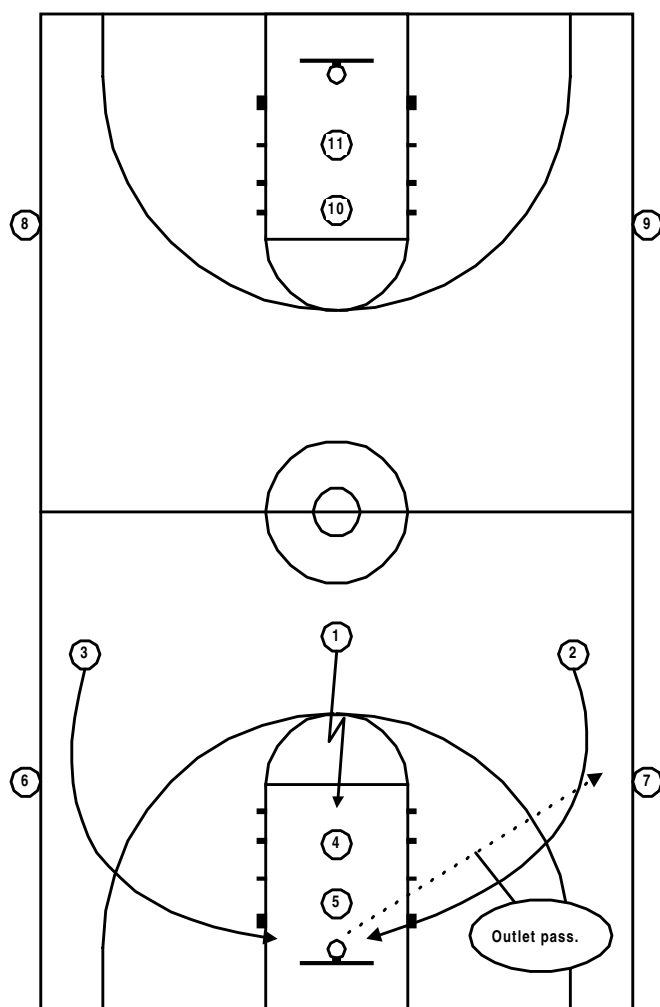
Teaching Points

- Emphasize correct rebounding techniques — including jumping with the legs in a spread-eagled position and rebounding the ball at its highest point.
- Emphasize proper execution of the outlet pass.
- Stress moving to meet all passes. You can't stress this too much. "Come to meet the ball" should be your most-used words at all of your practices.
- Emphasize "not bringing the ball down" below chest-height level. You may want to consider positioning yourself under the basket to "bother" the rebounder.

Fast-Break Drills

The fast-break depends on strong defensive rebounding, good passing, and well-conditioned players. Your fast-break will require a succession of fast, accurate passes — with dribbling used only when absolutely necessary.

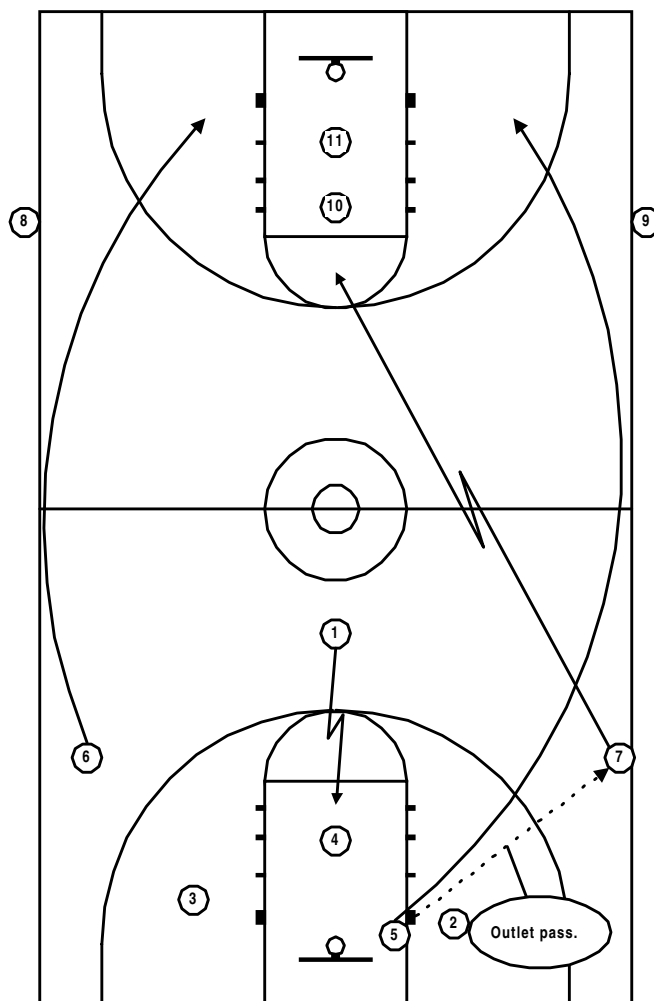
Eleven Man Continuous Action Fast-Break



Setting It Up

- 1 Players 1, 2, and 3 break against two defenders, Players 4 and 5. All five players rebound.
- 2 The player who gains control of the rebound makes an outlet pass to either Player 6 or Player 7.

- 3 The rebounder, taking the wing position on the side to which the outlet pass was made, breaks with Players 6 and 7 up court against Players 10 and 11. The receiver of the outlet pass brings the ball up in the middle of the floor.
- 4 All five players (the rebounder and Players 6, 7, 10, and 11) go for the rebound after the shot.



- 5 The player who gains control of the rebound makes an outlet pass to either Player 8 or Player 9. Then, he breaks with them up court against the players filling the two defender positions.

The defenders are, of course, from the original group of Players 1 through 5. Those not defending are now in position to receive an outlet pass to continue the drill.

Teaching Points

- The ball should always be advanced down the middle of the floor.
- The defensive players should always be in a stacked position (an I). That is, they should be positioned front-to-back, not side-by-side.

The front player stops the ball, the back player defends the first pass receiver, and the front player retreats to defend the second pass.

- Emphasize aggressive rebounding.
- The rebounder must execute a proper outlet pass.
- Players should fill the lanes correctly.