

EBYBA

Practice Guidelines

- Have every player touching the ball as much as possible.
- Use games that keep all kids playing until the end. Don't have the weak players get knocked out and watch the stronger players get more touches.
- Avoid rewarding "winners" and punishing "losers" (push ups, laps, etc).
- The games must replicate true game skills to be effective.
- Shorten or ideally eliminate lines.
- Keep it simple. The games should be easy to explain and to set up.
- Don't have too many different games. Find a few games that the kids love and just expand the game as they need more challenges.

What to Teach:

1. Lay ups - You should practice lots of lay ups with both hands. Your goal should be to get all players to make lay ups with their left and right hands equally well!! Teach them to jump off the proper foot. They should jump off the left leg when shooting a right hand lay up. They should shoot off their right leg when shooting a left hand lay up. It will be difficult but work on it. You'll probably need to start really close to the basket, with no dribble, and take just one step to practice the footwork. Once you add the dribble, they should dribble with their left hand when shooting left hand lay ups. And vice versa.
2. Footwork - Teach them triple threat positioning, pivoting on their left and right foot without traveling, jump stops, and to square to the basket as soon as they catch the ball in a triple threat position. You should spend a lot of time on footwork!
3. Shooting form
4. Ball handling - You should teach your players to dribble with left and right hands equally. Basic dribble moves such as the speed dribble, crossover, protect-the-ball dribble, and back-up dribble.
5. Athletic & movement skills - Teach them how to run, jump and land, skip, stop, move laterally, squat, lunge and any other basic movements.
6. Basic passes - Teach and practice the basic chest, bounce, and overhead passes.
7. Play plenty of 2 on 2 and 3 on 3 games to teach concepts (no dribble keep away). It gets the players more experience and allows them enough space to operate and use the new skills they have learned. Make sure to use plenty of fun basketball drills & games.
8. Offense - Do NOT use any structured or patterned offenses. First, get them comfortable on the court. They will start to figure things out on their own. Your main concern should be to have them move & not stand still.

If you use a few basic cuts and maybe screens in your shooting drills at the beginning of practice, then your players will already know how to move in a motion offense. Then you don't have to waste time teaching offense. Just let them play.

Once players feel comfortable on the court, show them proper spacing. As they progress, you can start to introduce them to motion offense situations.

9. Basic cuts & how to get open - If time permits, you can introduce the basket cut and straight cut. I would suggest that you just work these cuts into your shooting drills at the beginning of practice. This will save loads of time.
10. Defense - Teach the basic stance, defensive slide, and basic off-ball principles. Don't worry about spending as much time on defense. As they get older, you'll gradually spend more time on defense. Focusing on it 5 to 10 minutes per practice would be more than sufficient.

Basic Off Ball Principles:

- Stay between man and the ball
- Always stop the ball if it is in front of you!

For this age group, we are against zone defenses for development purposes.

Lay-Ups

The lay-up is the easiest shot and the first shot you should learn. It's not as easy as it looks at first, as a lot of kids have difficulty getting the correct footwork, and shooting off the correct foot. Then you must also learn to use either hand, and eventually do the reverse lay-up.

Footwork

When dribbling toward the basket, move slightly to one side of the hoop to create the proper angle. If you're on the right side, dribble right-handed, and plant your left (inside) foot and jump off that foot, and finally shoot with your right hand. As you raise your right hand, your right knee should also elevate. Pretend there is a string attached to your right hand and your right knee. Reverse this form if shooting from the left side.

As you approach the hoop, take a half step with your outside foot, then take a full stride with your inside foot pushing off the court. When jumping your outside knee should be bent. Go directly toward the basket, with your head up and eyes focused on the backboard. Go up strong and straight to the hoop. Don't shy away if there is a defender, just go strong to the hoop. You may get fouled and get a three point chance.

Aim

Always use the backboard ("use the glass") when shooting lay-ups from either side. Aim for the top corner of the box on the backboard. Focus in on this area; don't watch the ball. Keep your head up.

The Push Release

Younger players who are not yet strong enough for the underhand release should use the push release. Release the ball with the back of your hands facing you. Extend your shooting arm, as you push the ball to the hoop off your fingertips. You should go up with two hands, then release the ball with your outside hand. A very young player may need to shoot the ball with two hands.

Underhand Release

As you get stronger, you should develop the underhand shot. This release results in a softer shot, and more control when you are moving at high speed. Release the ball with your palm up and arm extended. Let the ball roll off your palm and then your fingertips, and lay the ball softly off the backboard. Use two hands going up, but then release the ball with your outside hand at the top of your jump. Be strong and concentrate... "finish"!

Simple drill for teaching the footwork

Have the players get into a line near the right side of the basket (to shoot the right-handed lay-up). Each player takes a turn. You can use more than one basket if you have enough assistants to watch each player's technique. This drill works on correct footwork. Have the player (with a ball) face the right side of the backboard with both feet together. Then have her take one step forward with the inside (left) foot, plant that foot and jump off of it and shoot the right-handed lay-up. When jumping, the right thigh comes up with the knee bent. Have each player work on this technique. Then try it on the run (without dribbling), and then with dribbling. Do the left side also... on this side you step forward and plant the right (inside) foot, and raise the left thigh and leg.

Proper Basketball Shooting Technique, Fundamentals, and Form

Stationary Basketball Shooting Form and Technique

Here's a quick roadmap of the stationary shooting fundamentals that we'll be covering:

1. Eyes on Target
2. Stance and Balance
3. Shot Pocket
4. Grip
5. Balance Hand
6. Delivery
7. Upforce and Landing
8. Follow Through
9. Correct Shot

EYES ON TARGET

- To improve accuracy, locate the target (rim) as early as possible.
- Keep your eyes on the target and do not follow the flight of the ball.
- Keeping your target focus is very important!



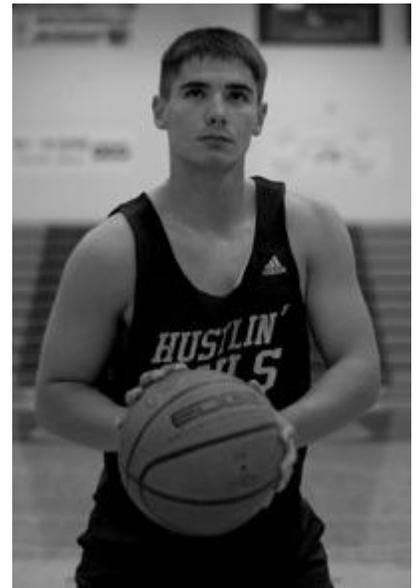
STANCE AND BALANCE

- Feet are shoulder width apart for good balance.
- Feet should be in a slightly staggered stance that is consistent and comfortable for you. Your shooting foot is slightly ahead of the non-shooting foot in a comfortable position.
- Point your feet in the general direction of the basket, but not necessarily directly at it. We prefer an open stance, but you can also use the closed (squared) stance if that's more comfortable for you. With an open stance, your feet point towards one side of the basket. For example, a right handed shooter will point his or her feet just to the left of the rim for a more natural position and shooting motion.
- Once you develop a comfortable stance, line up your feet the exact same way on every shot. Whatever stance you use, consistency is critical.
- Flex/bend your knees on every shot.



SHOT POCKET

- As you catch the ball, move it quickly into the shot pocket.
- Line everything up so the ball and your shooting eye form a straight line to the basket. This is VERY important.
- Position the ball several inches above your waist.
- Grip the ball properly and be ready to shoot.
- Position the ball in your shot pocket the SAME way every time you catch it.



GRIP

- Place the air hole between the middle and index fingers.
- Line up your fingertip pads parallel to the long seams of the ball, so you can monitor the back spin.
- Leave space between the ball and the middle of your palm. You should be able to insert a pencil between the ball and your palm area.



- Spread your fingers far enough apart to comfortably balance the ball in one hand.
- The ball should sit on your finger pads.



BALANCE HAND

- Your non-shooting hand should be on the side of the ball.
 - Your balance hand should not add force or spin to the shot.
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- Your non-shooting hand should not move on delivery and should ALWAYS come off the ball FIRST.



DELIVERY

- The ball should start motion directly upwards from the shot pocket (no dipping of the ball).
- Your elbow should be positioned comfortably under the ball.
- The ball stays in front of you and should not go behind your head.



- Uncoil your body with your legs, core, and arm power all coordinated.
- Your elbow and wrist should extend in a straight line to the basket.



- Your shooting hand should extend in a straight line to the rim.
- Hand position on delivery is very important. The ball should come off the hand with perfect symmetrical backspin.
- As shown in the picture to the right, your guide hand stays to the side and does not influence the flight of the ball.



Red Light, Green Light or Stop and Go Dribble (dribbling)

Skills taught: This develops dribbling skills.

How the game works: Have all the players line up on the base line with a ball. Coach yells “green light” and players move forward as quickly as possible while dribbling the ball. When the coach yells “red light”, the players must stop and maintain their dribble. Send back to the start any player not dribbling in control.

Tip: In the ‘red light’ position have the players assume a position with the left foot forward, left hand out protecting the ball, right foot back with right hand dribbling the ball waist high just in front of the right foot. (For an easy description, tell your players to “jump on their skateboards.”) Knees bent, with eyes on the coach.

Change from using right hand only to left hand only.

Mix it up to add right hand on red light, left hand on green. Or Reverse (dribble back while in the correct position facing forward (left foot forward, left hand out protecting the ball or opposite if dribbling with left hand)

Add more variations like through the legs or crossover dribble to change from green to red as players skills advance. Or call out “Reverse” (dribble back while in the correct position facing forward (left foot forward, left hand out protecting the ball or opposite if dribbling with left hand)

Form Shooting Drill

Drill Purpose (All Ages)

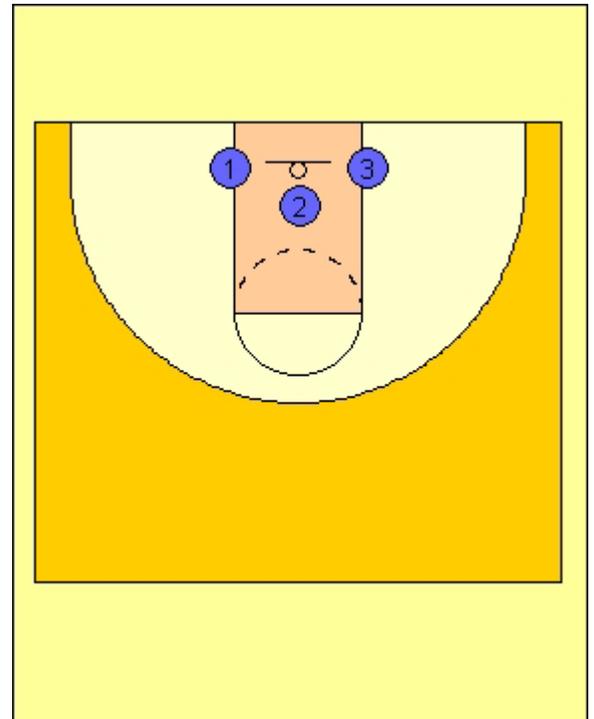
This drill will improve shooting form and develop [good shooting habits](#) so once players get in a game, they will consistently use proper form without thinking about it. This simple drill is critical for youth player and can greatly improve shooting percentages for all types of players. All youth coaches should run this drill almost daily.

Instructions

First of all, it's important to understand that this is drill requires you and all your players to pay very close attention to the details. It also requires a lot of repetitions. This is all about developing perfect [shooting form](#), so once you get in a game you use the proper form without even thinking about it.

Note: For the first time around, you'll need to demonstrate proper technique to all your players.

1. Each player needs to grab a basketball and find a basket. It works best to have three players (or less) at each basket. Two players on each side of the basket and one in front.
2. Each player should stand about 2 feet from the basket. (Yes, it's only two feet. Do not stand farther back!)
3. For right handed shooters, your right foot should be centered with the basket and pointing directly towards the middle of the basket.
4. Your left foot should be positioned shoulder width apart in a comfortable position. Most players leave their left foot slightly behind the other foot. The left foot should be pointing in the relative area of the basket but probably should not be pointing directly at it. Most players feel the most comfortable with their left foot pointing just to the left of the basket.
5. Bend your knees, at a comfortable angle somewhere around 45 degrees.
6. Now if you're feet are aligned properly, the rest of your body should follow suit.
7. Hold the ball in your hand, palm facing up. Your non-shooting hand can dangle to the side.
8. Slowly bring the ball in and hold it as if you were shooting with one hand.
9. Your arm should form a 90 degree angle.
10. Your tricep should be parallel with the floor and directly above your right leg.
11. Your wrist should be bent with fingers spread out. The ball should be sitting on your finger pads, NOT your finger tips.



12. Your index finger should be in the center of the ball.
13. Pause. This is when you make sure your arm, feet, and everything is in the correct form.
14. Look at the front of the rim.
15. Proceed to shoot with one hand, leaving your off hand to the side. The player should use his legs on every shot. At the end of the shot, the player should be up on his toes. This is very important, because players generate most of their strength from their legs to shoot the ball to the basket.
16. Hold your follow through. Tell your players, "It's like reaching into a cookie jar."
17. Grab the ball and repeat the process.
18. Get the ball quickly but don't hurry your shot! Take your time.
19. Each player should get a minimum of 20 repetitions, but 50 or 100 would be better.

Progression

As players master this skill, you can progress to other variations:

1. Use two hands instead of one. Just make sure the off hand is one the side of the ball and not used to propel the ball.
2. Do a jump shot. You should still stay two feet from the basket.
3. Flip the ball to yourself, pivot, and shoot a jump shot. Again, stay close to the basket and make sure you proper form, even though you are going slightly faster. Do not sacrifice form!

For more advanced players, we commonly start with one-hand form shooting and progress all the way to pivots. We generally spend a few minutes on each progression and check all the players to make sure their form is not slipping.

Points of Emphasis

Continually tell your players...

- Hold your follow through.
- Take your time and always make sure your form is perfect.
- Bend your knees.
- Don't stand back too far! Stay just a couple feet from the basket.

Motivation / Teaching Tips

Tip #1 - Tell you players, "Once you get good at it, don't think you can stop. There are NBA players that do form shooting everyday!"

Tip #2 - Assign a coach to each basket to make sure they are using proper form. Help them correct any problems. If they don't do it properly, this drill is a waste of time.

Tip #3 - Make sure your players do NOT dip one shoulder or lean too far forward. When shooting, you want your players to have an erect torso. I like to use the phrase "shoot tall."

Tip #4 - If you as a coach, don't know all the aspects of proper shooting form, consider picking up a good shooting video. We covered the basics above but there are more things to look for, like hand placement on the ball and so on.

Passing Drills

Passing Line Relay (Passing, Pivot)

Skills taught: This game teaches passing, catching and how to use your pivot foot.

How the game works: Divide your players into 2 equal teams. Line them up about 5-7 feet apart. The first player passes the ball to the second player in line. The second player must turn 180 degrees using a correct pivot and pass to the next player. Continue to the end and then work the ball back to the front. Rotate players in line so that everyone practices the passing off the pivot.

Tip: Use this drill to do chest passes, bounce passes and 2-hand overhead passes. Have the players vary which foot they pivot on.

Shuffle/Pass Relay (passing and catching on the move, footwork, conditioning)

Skills taught: For players who have achieved some confidence in passing, the next step is to learn to pass and catch on the move. Use this game to teach the players to shuffle (not cross their feet), to keep a target for the passer and to stay low with knees bent.

How this drill works: Divide the players into two equal teams. Each team will then divide into 2 lines and set up facing each other. The first pair in each line starts down the court throwing bounce (or chest) passes while shuffling down the court as fast as possible. Have the players both touch the end line and then return, passing the ball to the next pair in line.

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

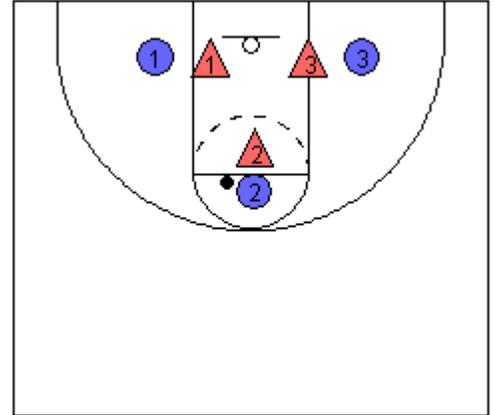
3-on-3 No-Dribble Keep Away

Purpose of the Drill

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

Instructions

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



Points of Emphasis:

- Teach kids simple pivoting principles before turning them loose in this drill.
- Teach kids how to v-cut and backdoor cut.
- As the skill level of the kids advance, introduce screens away from the ball to free cutters.
- Provide defenders with the basics of defending the passing lanes effectively. This is a foundational drill for denial defensive techniques.

Give and Go Drill

Goal: to work on passing the basketball and shooting

There are two lines starting at the top of the arc. One line goes on the side and the other one goes down the side of the paint.

The inside line passes to the outside line and then the outside line gives him a bounce pass back so they can lay it up or pull up and shoot a little jump shot.

Do this on both sides and then switch it to where the outside line passes to the inside line and then the inside line shoots it back out to the outside line where they should be ready to catch and shoot a 3 pointer or a good jump shot.

This is a great basketball drill in catching and passing while being ready to shoot the basketball in any situation.

Dribbling Drill

Dribble Tag

Goal - To practice dribbling and controlling the ball in a competitive situation.

One basketball per player.

Action - Players will maintain and control their dribble inside the three point area. At the same time, they will try to knock the ball away from the other players. A player is eliminated from the game if they: Lose their ball, double dribble, step out of the area or stop their dribble. As the group gets smaller, reduce the playing area to the foul lane.

Jump Stop Drill

Drill Purpose

This is a very important drill that all coaches should use. It will improve your players balance, reduce travels, improve pivoting skills to create space, and improve confidence.

Instructions

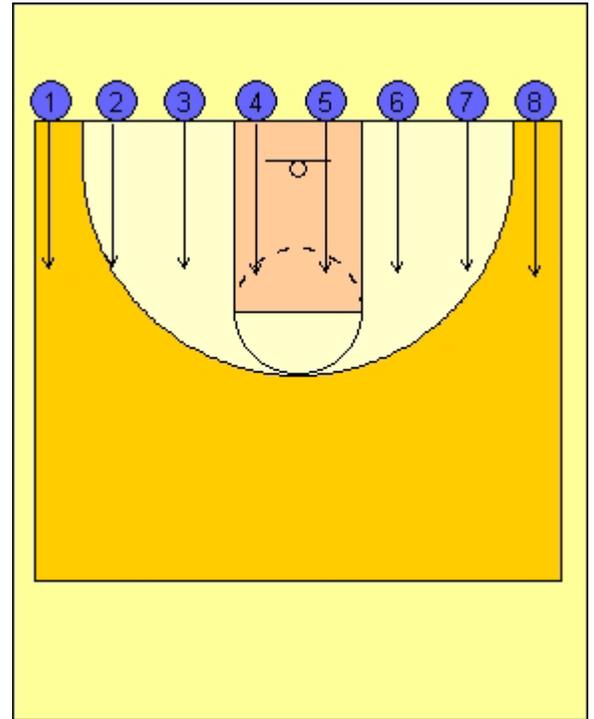
1. Line your players up on the baseline. If you have more than 10 players or a small court, you'll need to divide them into two groups because they won't have enough space.
2. Have each player spread out with about 5 feet between them, so they have enough room for pivoting.
3. When you blow the whistle, all players should start running at 3/4 speed.
4. At various intervals, blow the whistle and yell out their pivot instructions. Your choices are: front pivot left foot, front pivot right foot, back pivot left foot, back pivot right foot.

When the whistle blows, the sequence for the player consists of: jump stop (both feet should hit the floor at the same time), pause for a second, do a full 180 degree pivot, pause for a second, do a full pivot back to starting position, and stay in triple threat position until whistle blows again.

5. Watch every player to make sure they did the jump stop and pivot properly. If anyone traveled or if they're goofing off, make them start over again, back at the baseline.
6. If everyone did it correctly, blow the whistle again. All players should start running.
7. At various intervals, blow the whistle and yell out their pivot instructions. Your choices are: front pivot left foot, front pivot right foot, back pivot left foot, back pivot right foot.
8. When all players reach the end of the court, start over again. You can blow the whistle anywhere between 1 and 5 times during their trip down the court.
9. You should run this drill so players run down the court at least 5 times.

Points of Emphasis

Continually tell your players...



- Don't travel!
- Stay low when pivoting. Keep your knees bent and butt down, in a good triple threat stance.
- Don't get out of your triple threat stance until you hear the whistle. You always want to stay low, so you can take off quicker.

Motivation / Teaching Tips

Tip #1 - The motivation aspect of this drill is simple. If they do it wrong, they all have to go back to baseline and start over again.

Tip #2 - It's important to always mix things up and keep your players guessing. You should mix up the number of times and locations that you blow the whistle. You might want to let them run all the way down without blowing the whistle once. And next time blow the whistle 5 times.

Tip #3 - Vary the speed that your players run. Start out with half speed, then progress all the way to full speed. Again, mix things up.

Tip #4 - Add a ball. Generally, you should use a ball for this drill and have them dribble while they are running. However, you might want to start without a ball, especially when first teaching younger players how to run this drill. Or if you don't happen to have enough basketball balls, they will still get benefit without it.

Tip #5 - Make sure ALL players pivot properly. Their butt should be down, knees bent, with feet shoulder width or wider. The pivot should be a full 180 degree turn, and then back again. Some players will have trouble with this at first or just do partial pivots. But keep on them to do it right. It's an important skill to master!

Tip #6 - You might want to use this as a combo warm up drill every day. For me, it worked great as the warm up at the beginning of every practice. This saved time because they worked on important skills and warmed up at the same time.

Tip #7 - You really should run this almost everyday, especially if you have players at the high school level or younger. At the minimum, run the drill every other day.