

# Youth Basketball Drills & Sample Practice Plans ©



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# Youth Basketball Drills & Sample Practice Plans©

## Introduction

As we have mentioned in the Coaching Youth Basketball book, all children, especially young children have short attention spans. That's what makes them children! It is your job as coach to keep them focused and interested in what's going on. Keeping a 5-8 year olds' attention may be the most difficult thing you will encounter in coaching.

The best way to keep the players focused, is to have constant movement and change. You should attempt to have all the players involved with an activity/drill at the same time. That will cut down on the amount of time that a player is only standing around watching the other players go through the activity. The time that a player is not engaged in activity is the time you will "lose them".

Also, to keep everything new and exciting, each drill should last no more than 5-10 minutes. Gauge your team's attention span and adjust the length of each drill accordingly.

We have included a number of drills in this book so that you won't find yourself running out of things to do.

## Stretching & Warm Up

It is very important to have a short 5-minute warm-up before you get into the heart of your practice. The warm-up should consist of stretching and light cardio exercises. The drills found under the *Coordination/Conditioning Drills* Section, can serve as good warm up exercises. Stretching is very important and will help loosen tight muscles and help prevent muscle injuries.

### **Leg Straddle**

For this stretch, the legs should be slightly more than shoulder length apart. The players should start by attempting to touch the ground with their hands. On the coach's command, the players then attempt to touch their right foot with both hands. Then, once again on the coach's command, players should switch and attempt to touch their left foot with both hands. The players should then attempt to move their legs further apart and repeat the above actions. Remember to have the players keep their legs straight and not bend their knees.



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## Toe Touches

This is a simple stretch where players stand straight with their legs together and feet flat on the ground. The player then SLOWLY attempts to touch their toes while keeping their knees/legs straight. The players should not bounce when attempting to touch their toes.

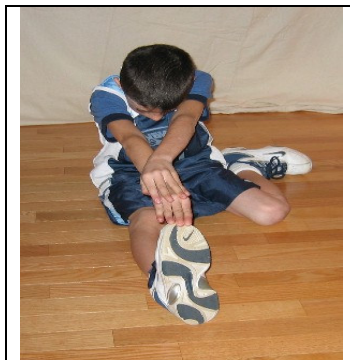
## Quad Stretch

In this stretch, the players start from a standing position. Balancing on one foot, the players grip their foot and pull their leg up towards their back (*see photo*).



## Hurdler Stretch

In this stretch the players start from a seated position extending one leg forward while having the other leg back (see photos). The players then lean forward, attempting to touch the foot of the leg which is forward. After a few seconds, the players should switch legs and stretch the other leg. *The players need to keep the leg which is forward, straight and not bend the knee.*



## Knee-to-Chest

In this stretch, the players lay flat on their backs with their legs extended straight. On the coach's command, the players should bend one leg at the knee and bring their knee into their

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chest. After a few seconds, the players return the leg to the ground and then pull the other leg toward their chest.



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## Coordination & Conditioning Drills

Basketball is a sport of constant motion. If a player is not in the proper condition, they will find it difficult to keep up with other players, and the offense and especially defense will suffer. It is essential that your players be in good physical condition. While many younger players can run all day long and seem to never get tired, many children today are out of shape. Conditioning should be part of every practice.

### **1. Circle Basketball Around Waist**

Players stand facing the coach while holding their basketball with both hands, waist high. On the coach's command, the player circles the basketball around their waist. After a few times, have the players stop and then circle the ball in the opposite direction. This drill may seem very easy, but you will be surprised how difficult yet fun it is for small players.



### **2. Circle Basketball Around Legs**

This is a variation of the "Circle Basketball Around Waist Drill" Once again, the players stand facing the coach. On the coach's command, the player circles the basketball in and out of their legs in a figure 8 pattern. Have the players stop and then circle the ball in the opposite direction.

### **3. Throw ball in air & catch**

In this drill the players stand facing the coach, holding their basketball with both hands, waist high. On the coach's command the players throw the ball up in the air and then catch it. Have the players start by throwing the ball up only a foot or two into the air. Once they master this, have the players increase the height of the throw.



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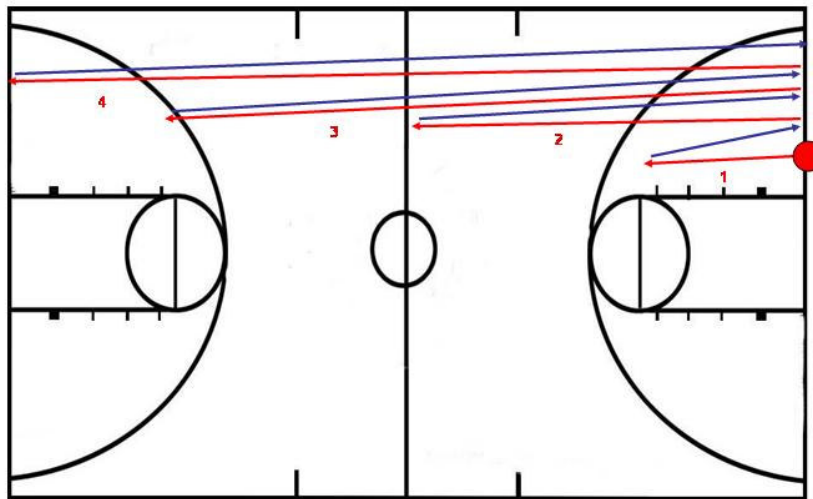
### 4. Throw ball in air, clap & catch

This is a variation of the previous drill with some added complexity. Simply add a clap. The players are to throw the ball in the air, clap, and then catch the ball. Have the players then increase the height they throw the ball **AND** have them increase the number of claps before the catch.

### 5. Gasers or Line Runs

In this drill, all the players line up at one end of the court. On the coach's command, all players proceed to run: 1) as far as the nearest foul line and back, 2) to  $\frac{1}{2}$  court and back, 3) to the furthest foul line and back, and 4) to the opposite end of the court and back. This drill is sure to help build a player's conditioning and endurance.

#### "Gasers or Lines"



### 6. Stuck in the Mud Drill

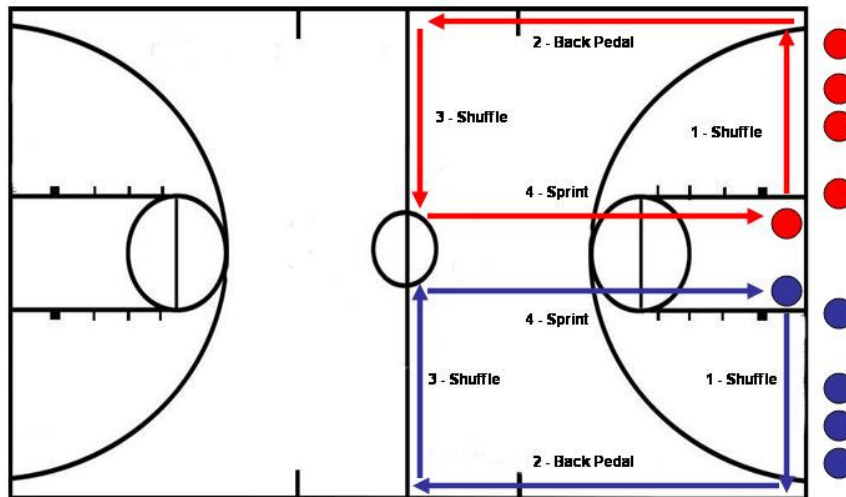
Designate a boundary area on the court where all the action will take place (usually on one half of the court). All players must stay in this area. Designate 1-2 players that are "it". At the start of this drill, all the players that are not "it" will begin to run and avoid the "it" players. It is the "it" players' job to tag the other players. When a player is tagged, the player is "stuck in the mud" and must stand still. The stuck player can get unstuck when another player crawls under his/her legs. The game ends after a certain time has elapsed or when all the players are stuck in the mud. This game can be done with or without using the basketball.

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## 7. Box Run Relay

For this drill, divide your team into equal teams. On the coach's command the first player from each team will shuffle down the baseline. Once they reach the corner of the court, the players will then back pedal to half court. At half court the players will then shuffle to the jump ball circle. Once they reach the jump ball circle, the players will sprint back to the starting line, tagging the next player who then continues the relay.

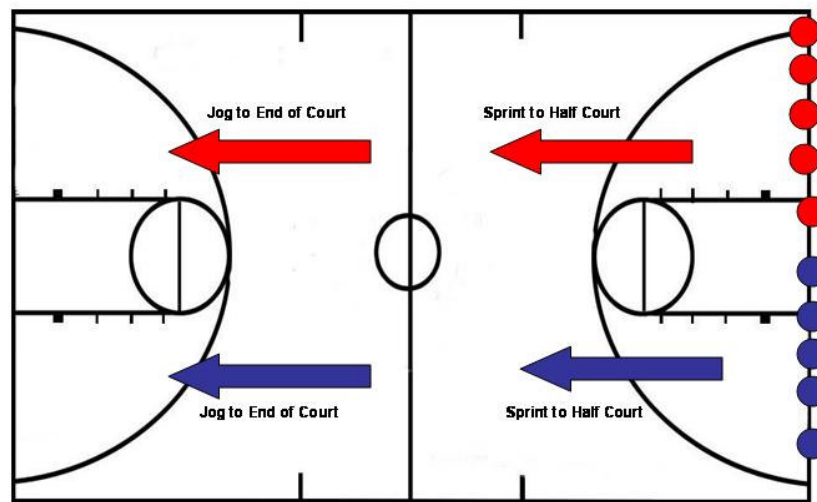
### Box Run Relay



## 8. Sprint – Jog Run

This is a simple conditioning drill where your players sprint to half court and then jog the rest of the way. You can change this order to a jog and then sprint if you want.

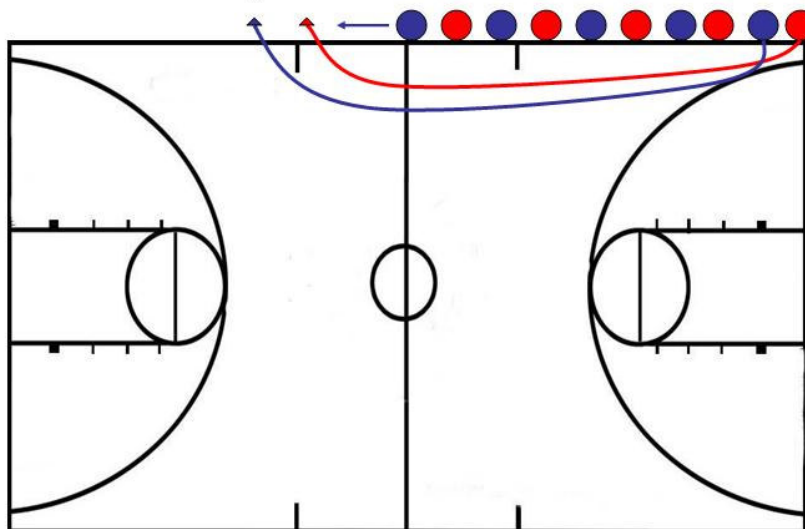
## Sprint - Jog



### 9. Sprint Past the Pack Run

In this drill, have your entire team line in a straight line outside the court. The team is to jog around the exterior of the court. On the coach's command the player at the end of the line should sprint to the front of the line (passing the other players). At each command the new player at the end of the line sprints to front. This continues until all players have had an opportunity to be the last in line (and sprint to the front).

### Sprint Past the Pack



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## 10. “Coach Says”

This is a way to break away from the traditional basketball drills. It teaches players to listen and to pay attention. This drill is just like the game “Simon Says”; however, instead of Simon it is “Coach Says”. The players only react to the coach’s commands if the coach starts the command by saying “Coach Says.....”. (example “coach says to hop on 1 foot”) When a player reacts to a command that does not start with the statement “Coach Says” then that player is out and must sit down until the game is over. The last player in the game is the winner.

## 11. Relay Races

Depending on the number of players on your team, break your team into 2 or 3 groups. From a starting point, mark out a point 25-30 yards down field. The players must go from the starting point, around the cones (25-30 yards down field) and back to the starting line, tagging the next player who then races downfield next. Once a player is done, the player goes to the end of the line and sits. The first team that has completed the race and has all players sitting is the winner.

There are numerous things that can be done in these races:

- Running
- Hopping (on 1 foot or both feet)
- Skipping
- Dribbling the basketball

## 12. Catch the Tiger’s Tail

In this drill, 1 Player is “Rabbit” or “Tiger”. For this player, put a shirt or *Pinnie* into the back of their shorts. Make sure that it sticks out of their shorts (resembling a tail). Section an area of the field that is in bounds. The object of this drill is to have the other players chase the “Tiger/Rabbit” and pull out the tail. Remember to give the “Rabbit” or “Tiger” a bit of a head start. The player that catches the “Tiger’s tail” will be designated as the next “Tiger”.

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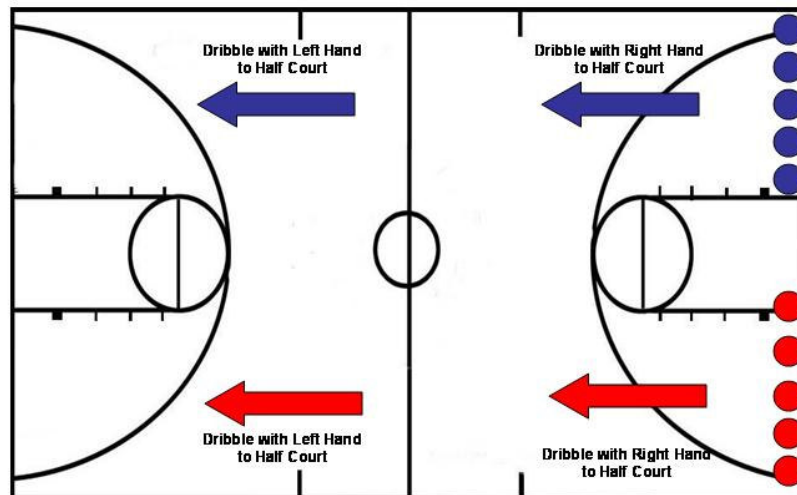
## Dribbling Drills

One of the most difficult things for young players to do is to control the ball. When dribbling a basketball, most new players kick the ball too hard, causing the ball to go too far away from them; therefore, losing the ball to another player. The key to proper ball control is to have the player keep the ball at a close distance while running in the direction that they want to go.

### 13. Righty – Lefty Drill

All the players can do this drill at the same time (if you have enough basketballs). For this drill, have the entire team line up at one end of the court. On the coach's command the players are to dribble to half court with their Right Hands. Once the players pass half court they should switch hands and dribble the rest of the way with their Left Hand.

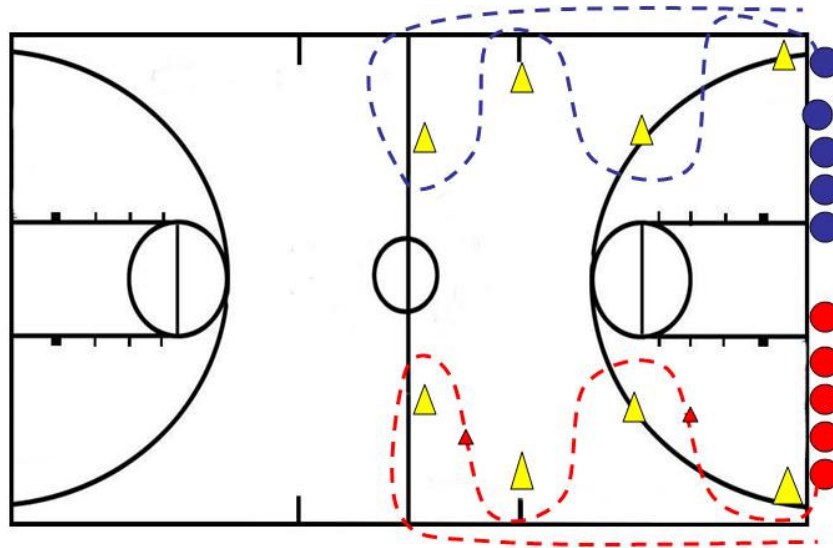
#### Righty – Lefty Drill



### 14. Dribbling Around Cones

This is a simple drill that helps develop ball control and coordination. Divide your team into 2-3 groups. Each group lines up in a straight line. Setup cones every 5 yards (3-4 cones per group should be fine for this age group). Then on the coach's command, have the players dribble around the cones. Variations of this drill: have the player shoot at the basket when they pass the last cone, or make the game into a relay race, the first team to finish dribbling through the cones, shoots and then sits in a straight line wins the game.

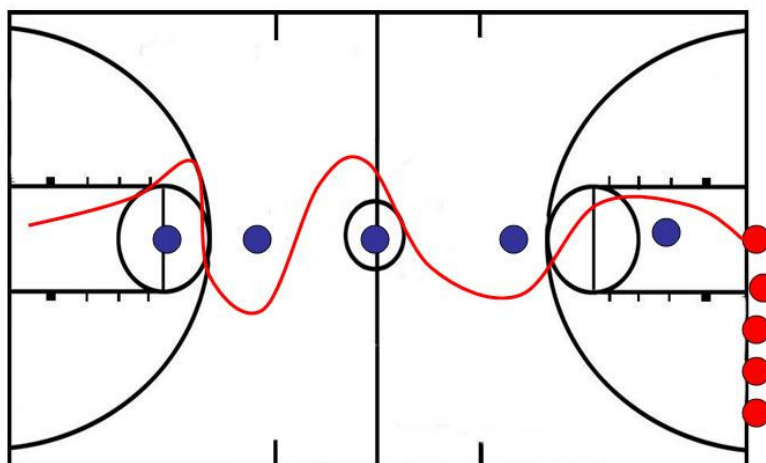
## Cone Dribbling Drill



### 15. Dribble Around Defenders Drill

For this drill, have a number of players (depending on your area and the spacing you want between the defenders) line up straight down the middle of the court. These players will be the defenders. The defenders can not move their feet, but can move their hands and lean for the ball. The defenders should have their hands up at all times. The ball handlers will dribble the ball between the defenders in a weaving like pattern. The goal is for the ball handler to successfully get to the other side of the court without losing control of the ball or having the ball touched by the defense.

### Dribble Around Defenders Drill

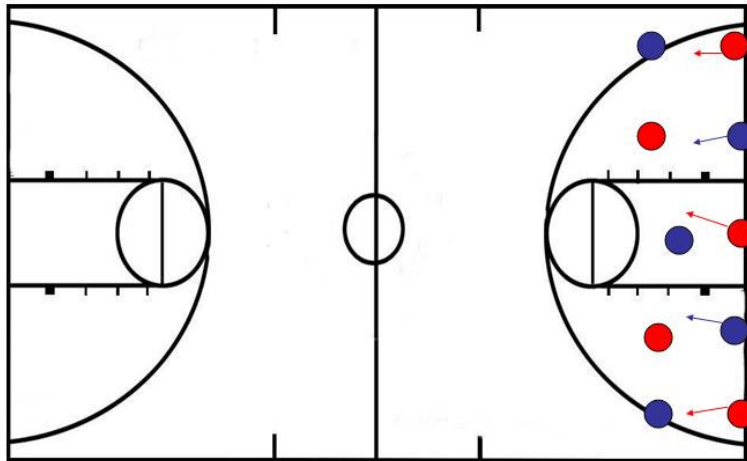


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### 16. One on One Dribbling

For this drill, have the players pair up. Each pair has 1 basketball. One player from each group starts on the base line with the ball (this group is on offense). The other group lines up approximately 3 feet away and they are on defense. The object of the game is for the offense to dribble the ball to the half court line. The goal for the defense should be to steal the ball or stop the dribble of the player on offense.

#### 1 one 1 Dribbling

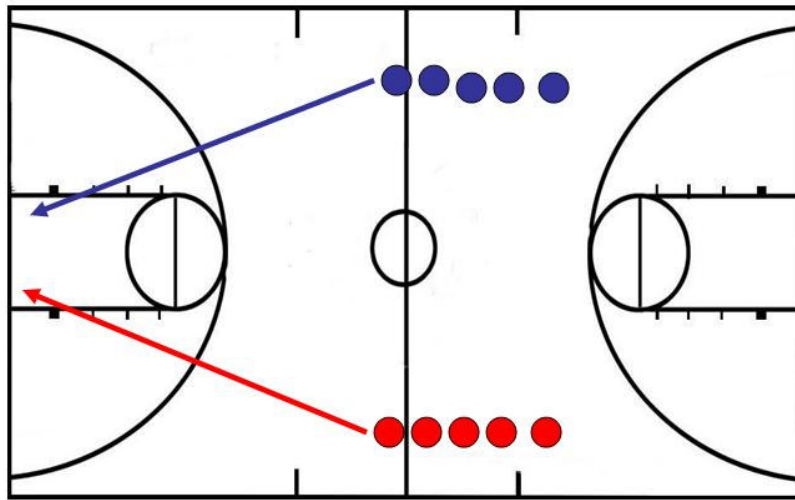


### 17. Half Court Lay up Relay

For this drill, divide your team into 2 groups. Each group lines up in a straight line at half court and the first person in each group has a ball. At the coach's command, the first person in each group dribbles down court towards the basket and shoots a layup. After making the shot (or after 2 attempts at making a shot) the players rebound their basketball and dribble back to half court, passing the ball to the next person in line. The next players in line then repeat the drill, until all have had a turn.



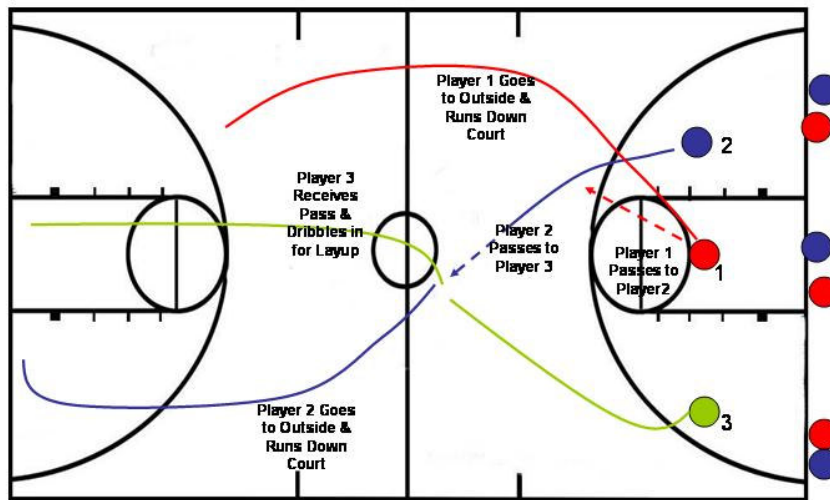
## Half Court Layup Relay



### 18. 3 Player Weave Drill

This is a more advanced drill. Three players start lined up across the court. The player in the middle starts with the ball (Player 1). Player 1 then passes the ball to the player on the right (Player 2). Player 1 then runs to the right side of the court while Player 2 goes to the middle of the court. Player 2 then passes the ball to the player on the left side of the court (Player 3). Player 2 then runs to the left side of the court while Player 3 goes to the middle of the court. Player 3 continues to dribble and then shoots a layup.

## 3 Player Weave Drill



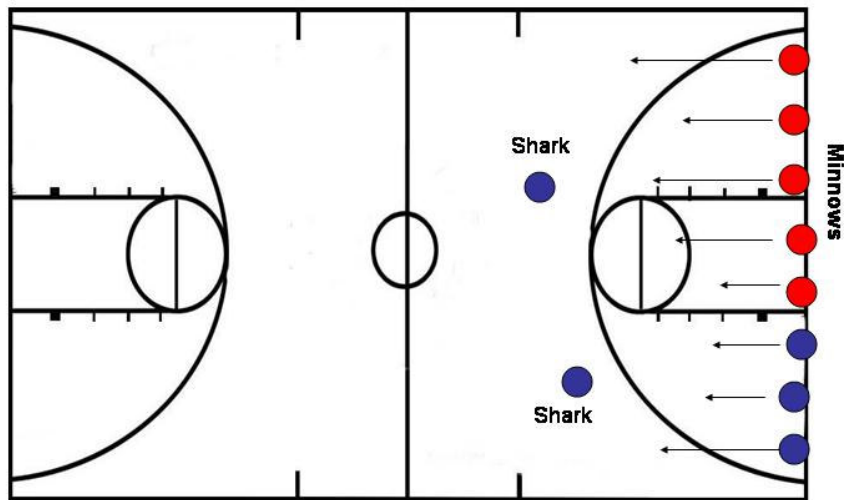
### 19. Follow the Leader

This drill can be done with or without the basketball. In this game, have your entire team line-up in a straight line behind the coach. The players are to do exactly what the coach or designated “leader” is doing. Without the basketball the coach can: Hop, Jump, Skip, Run with legs high, etc. With the basketball the coach can: Dribble the ball with their right hand, with their left hand, dribble while walking backwards, cross-over dribble, etc.

### 20. Sharks & Minnows

For this game, designate an area on the court for play (usually half court). All players must stay within this designated area. Start with one player designated as the “Shark”. The rest of the players are the “Minnows”. The object of the “Shark” is to kick the ball away from the “Minnows” (the ball needs to be kicked out of the designated area of play). Once a “Minnow” has their ball kicked away, they then become “Sharks”, and attempt to take the ball away from the other “Minnows”. At the start of the game the “Minnows” should be on the run trying to avoid the “Sharks” AND maintaining ball control. The game ends when there is only 1 “Minnow” remaining. This is also a great defensive drill.

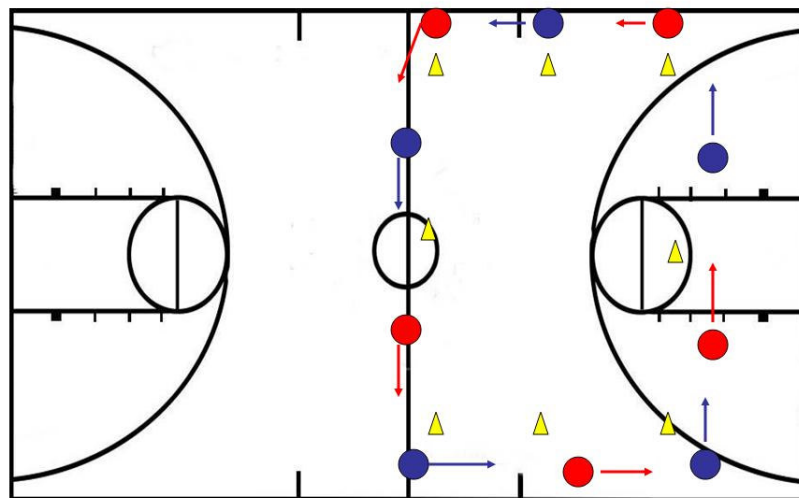
### Sharks & Minnows



### 21. SPACE MAN Drill

Evenly space players around square boxed area. Have players dribble around the area, maintaining ball control. The players should also have their heads up. The goal to this drill is for players to maintain ball control **and** maintain the same distance apart from each other as from the start of the drill.

### SpaceMan Drill

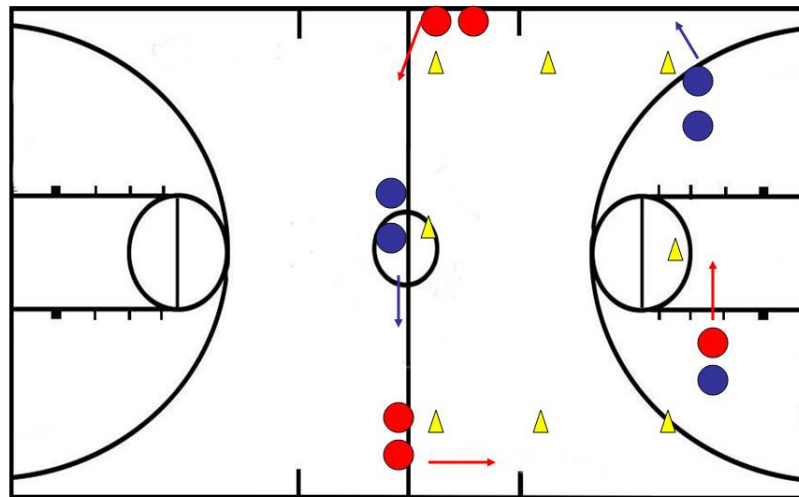


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## 22. Engine & Caboose Drill

This drill is somewhat like the “Space Man Drill”. Players pair up and each player has their own ball. Each pair of players is a “train”. One player will be the Engine and the other will be the Caboose. The Engine player is in front and the Caboose player lines up 1-2 yards behind the Engine Player. On the coach’s command, the players should dribble their basketballs around a designated area. The object of the drill is to maintain ball control and for the players to stay within the same distance (1-2 yards) of each other as they were at the start of the game.

### Engine & Caboose Drill



## 23. Change Direction Drill

The object of this game is for the players to “sneak up” behind the coach while the coach has his/her back turned. However, if the coach turns around the players must reverse direction and run back to the starting line. To start this game, the coach turns his/her back to the team and begins to walk up field. As the coach’s back is turned, the players should dribble their basketball down court after the coach (while maintaining control of the basketball). The coach should then turn to face the players and chase them back to the starting line. Once the coach turns, the players should Stop, Reverse Direction and quickly dribble the ball back to the starting line.

## 24. Head Up Dribbling

This drill works on the player’s ability to dribble with their head up. Each player has their own ball. The players are to dribble the ball while keeping their head up and looking at the coach. The coach will make hand motions (no talking) signaling what the players should do next.

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- 1 Finger can stand for dribble with Right Hand
- 2 Fingers mean dribble with Left Hand
- Coach pointing to Right means dribble to the Right
- Coach pointing to Left means dribble to Left
- Coach pointing Forward means dribble Forward
- Coach pointing Backwards means dribble backwards

### 25. Red, Yellow, Green, Purple Light

This game will help dribbling, coordination AND listening skills. Each player has their own ball and dribbles around the court maintaining ball control and remembering to keep their head up. The coach then calls out a command (“Red Light”, “Green Light”, “Yellow Light”, or “Purple Light”) and the players should react accordingly.

- **Red Light** – Means Stop. The players dribble the ball while standing in one place.
- **Green Light** – Means Go. The players move quickly around the court while dribbling the ball; but in control.
- **Yellow Light** – Means Slow Down. The players move slowly with the ball.
- **Purple Light** – Means - Stop dribbling the ball, place the ball on the ground, *then* after the ball has stopped, the players run around the ball in a circle.

All different variations can be used in this drill.

# Youth Basketball Drills & Sample Practice Plans©

## Passing Drills

Good fundamental passing is becoming a lost art form in basketball. However, the team that can properly pass the ball and find the open man will be the team that puts themselves in a better position to score. You may find that players do not want to work on passing drills. Many players feel they are boring and want to practice shooting. However, instill in your players that to get in the best position to shoot, they first must learn to pass.

### **26. Partner Pass**

Have the players pair up with a partner. The pairs should line up approximately 3-5 feet apart from each other (depending on skill level). Facing each other, the pair should pass the basketball to each other. Start with the chest pass then move onto the bounce pass. Emphasize good passing fundamentals.

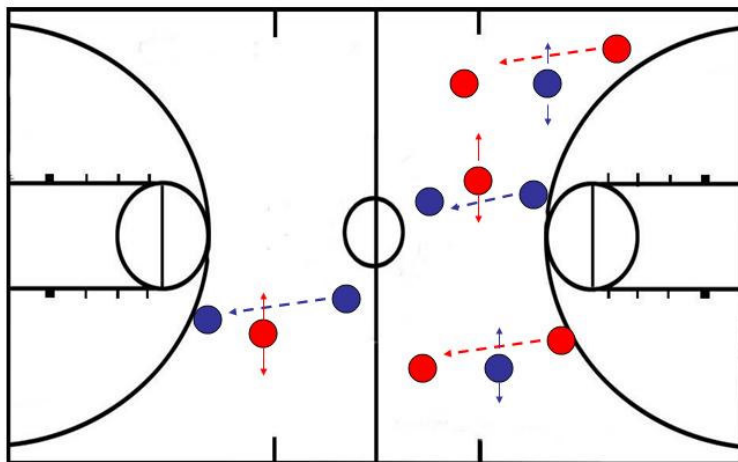
### **27. Triangle Pass & Receive**

Divide your team into groups of 3 players. Have each group form a triangle. Start by having your players pass the ball to each other in a clockwise rotation. Then have the players switch directions and pass to each other in a counter-clockwise direction. Once again, emphasize proper passing.

### **28. Monkey in the Middle Drill**

This game will help your players develop passing skills. Have your players form a circle. Place one player in the middle of the circle. The object of the game is for the players situated around the circle to pass the ball to each other (they can pass the ball to any other player in the circle). The object of the game for the person in the middle is to intercept a pass and take control of the ball. Once the player in the middle steals the ball, choose a new player to go in the middle.

#### **Monkey in the Middle Passing Drill**

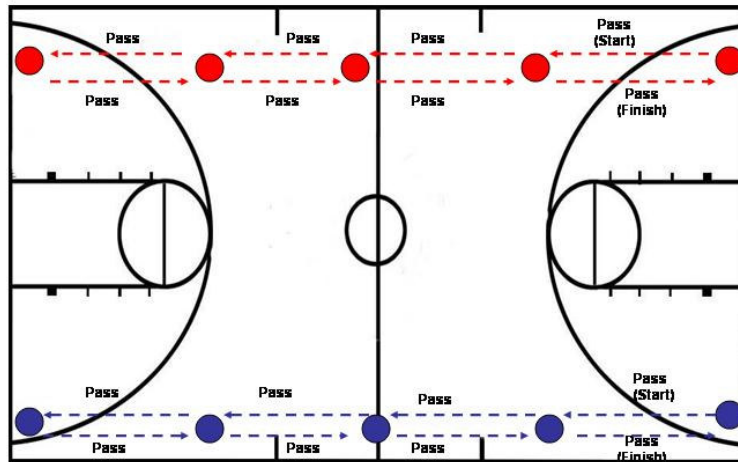


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## 29. Passing Relay Race

Divide your team into 2 – 3 even groups. The teams line up in a straight line down the court from one base line to the next. At the coach's command the first player passes the ball the second and so on until they reach the last player. The last player then passes it back to the player next to him/her until the ball reaches the person who started the drill. The first team that completes all their passes wins. All types of passes (chest, bounce, overhead) can be utilized in this drill.

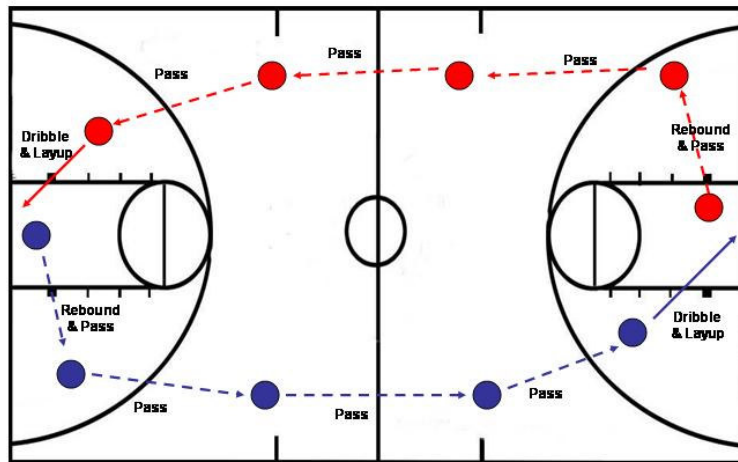
### Passing Relay Race



## 30. Fast Break Pass Drill

For this drill, have all your players line up around the perimeter of the court in an oval. The 2 players located under the baskets start the drill and both have basketballs. On the coaches command the players with the ball outlet a pass to the next player and the passing chain continues until it reaches the 2 players at the opposite basket just outside the key. Those 2 players then shot a layup into the basket. The players under both baskets (the original starters) then rebound the ball and start the passing again.

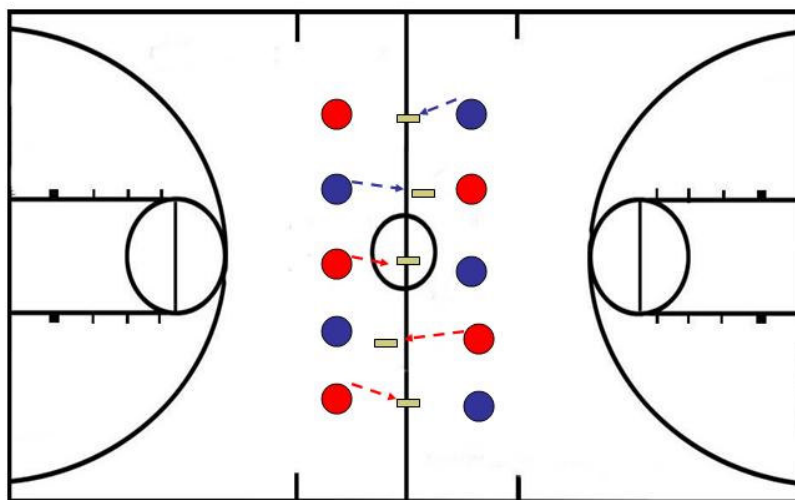
## Fast Break Pass Drill



### 31. Move the Stick Passing Drill

This drill will introduce and work on bounce passing accuracy. For this drill, have your players break into pairs. Each pair will have 1 basketball. Each player should be approximately 5 feet away from each other. Place a popsicle stick in the middle between the 2 players. The object of the game is for the players to hit the stick, thereby moving the stick towards the other player. Each player gets one turn then it is the other player's turn. As the one player tries to hit the stick, the other should attempt to catch the ball after 1 bounce.

## Move the Stick



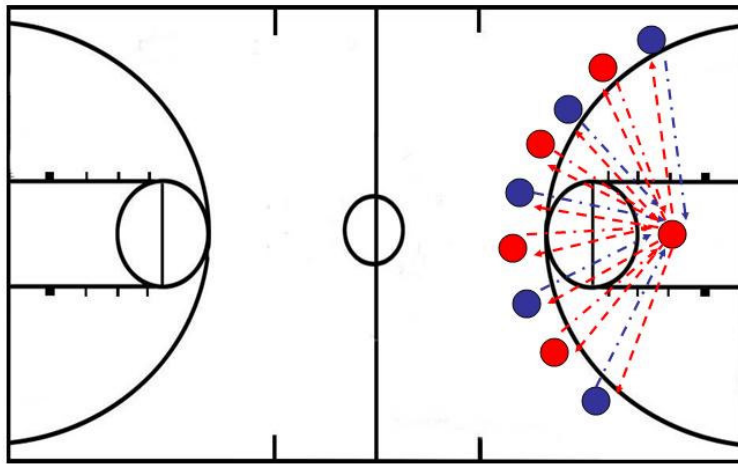


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### 32. Quick Back & Forth Pass Drill

In this drill, one player is positioned at the center of the key with a basketball. All the other players line up around the 3 point arc (closer if the players are younger and cannot reach each other with a pass). On the coach's command the player in the key passes the ball to the player to their furthest left, that player immediately passes back to the player in the center. This back and forth passing continues in a clockwise order until all players have gone. A new player then assumes the center position. All types of passes can be utilized in this drill. For a variation you can make a rule that the player returning a pass must use the same pass that the center player used.

#### Quick Back & Forth Passing

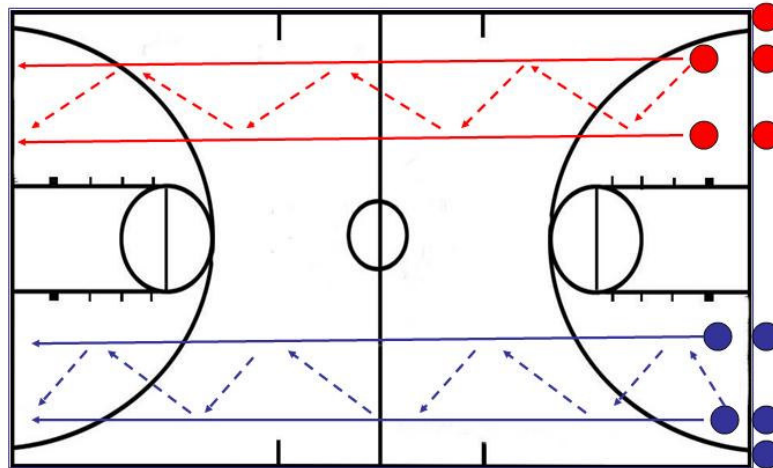


### 33. Shuffle Pass Relay

In this drill, 2 players line up approximately 5-6 feet away from each other with 1 basketball. On the coach's command, the players race down court passing the basketball to each other. Once they reach the opposite baseline, the players should turn and continue back to the starting line, handing the ball off to the next pair. All types of passing can be utilized in this drill (bounce pass, chest pass, etc.)

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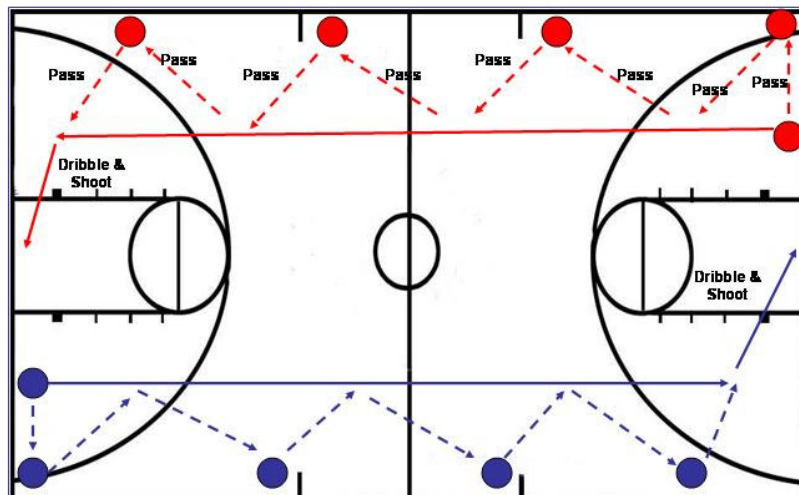
## Shuffle-Pass Relay



### 34. Pass it Down the Line Drill

In this drill, line up a number of players (4-8) on the sideline facing into the court. Another player should have 1 basketball and be approximately 5-7 feet away from the players on the sideline and should also be facing those players. On the coach's command, the player with the ball will run in a straight-line down the court, passing and receiving a return pass from each player. After he/she receives the last pass, the player should continue towards the basket for a layup.

## Passing it Down the Line

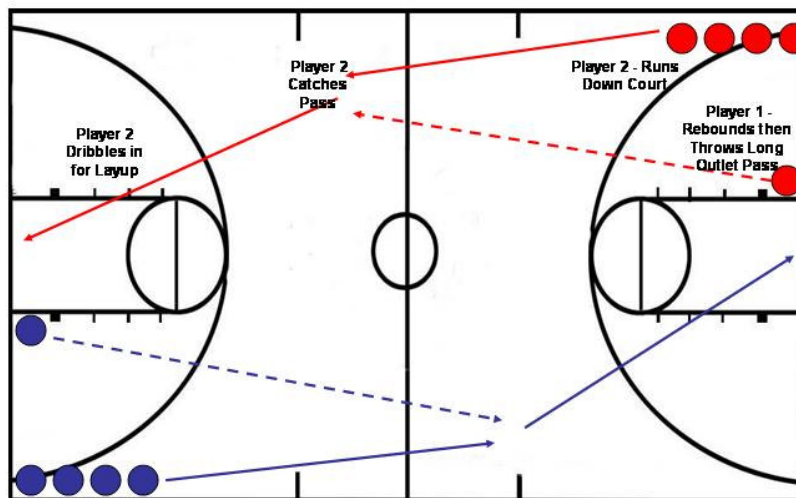


## Youth Basketball Drills & Sample Practice Plans©

### 35. Touch Down Pass Drill

The object of this drill is for players to develop their long passing skills. The long pass can be essential for fast breaks. In this drill, one player is designated the rebounder/passer. The other players line up towards the baseline, outside the 3 point arc. The rebounder gets the rebound (either a real rebound from another player/coach or an imagined rebound), and then throws a long outlet pass to the player running down court. The pass should be thrown over hand like that of a football throw and should reach over the half court line (depending on the age and strength of your players). The player receiving the pass should catch it and then continue to dribble towards the far basket and perform a layup.

#### TouchDown Passing Drill



### 36. Give & Go / Pass to Coach Drill

This drill combines ball-handling, passing, receiving, and shooting skills. Line up your team one behind the other in a straight line facing the basket. At the coach's command, the player starts to dribble towards the basket. The player then passes the ball to the coach. The player then runs around the coach towards the basket. The coach then passes the ball back to the player. The player receives the pass, dribbles towards the basket and then shoots. After your players become comfortable with this drill, have another player (instead of the coach) involved with the passing.

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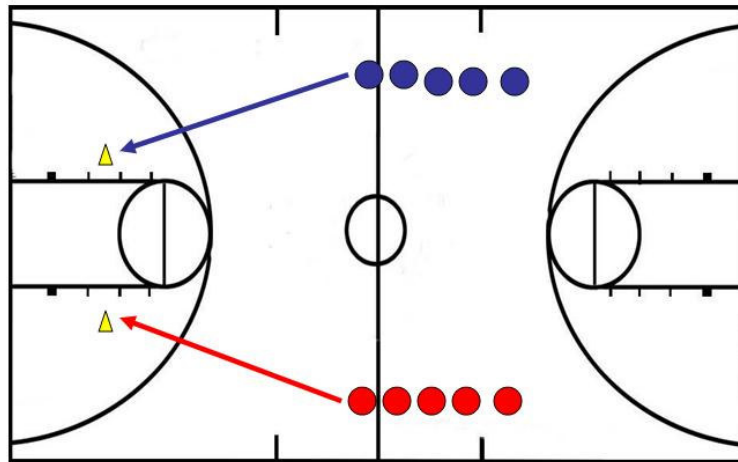
## Shooting Drills

The best way to become a better shooter is practice, practice, practice. That, of course is assuming that a player has learned the proper shooting fundamentals. All the practicing in the world will not matter, if a player's technique is wrong. Before having your players do shooting drill after shooting drill, make sure they know how to shoot the basketball. Since you will have players of all different skills, have the players do the drills below and watch for players that need help on the fundamentals, spend time correcting these players so that they do not develop any bad shooting habits.

### **37. Dribble Down and Shoot Drill (Jump Shot)**

For this drill, divide your team into 2 groups. Each group lines up in a straight line at half court and the first person in each group has a ball. At the coach's command, the first person in each group dribbles down court towards the basket stops at the cone and shoots a jump shot. After making the shot (or after 2 attempts at making a shot) the players rebound their basketball and dribble back to half court, passing the ball to the next person in line. The next players in line then repeat the drill, until all have had a turn.

Half Court JumpShot Relay

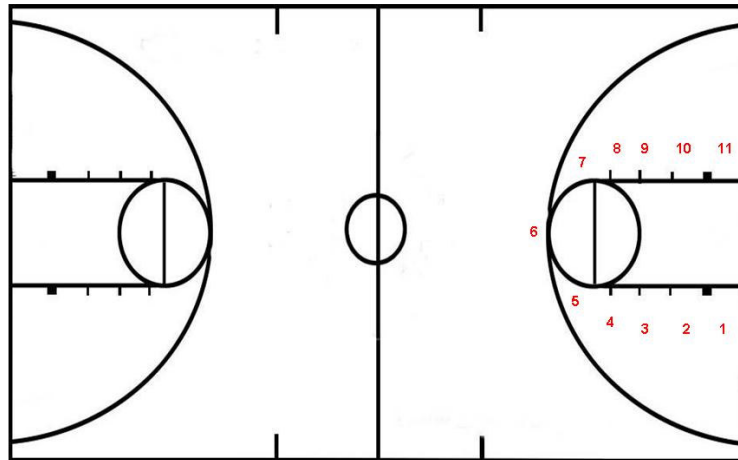


### **38. Around the World**

For this drill, each player must make a number of shots at various locations around the key (the skill level of your players will determine the distance the players are from the key). Players start from location #1 and when they make the shot go to location # 2. Players continue around the key (or Around the World) until they finish at location #11.

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## Around the World Shooting Drill



### 39. PIG, HORSE, ELEPHANT (or any other animal)

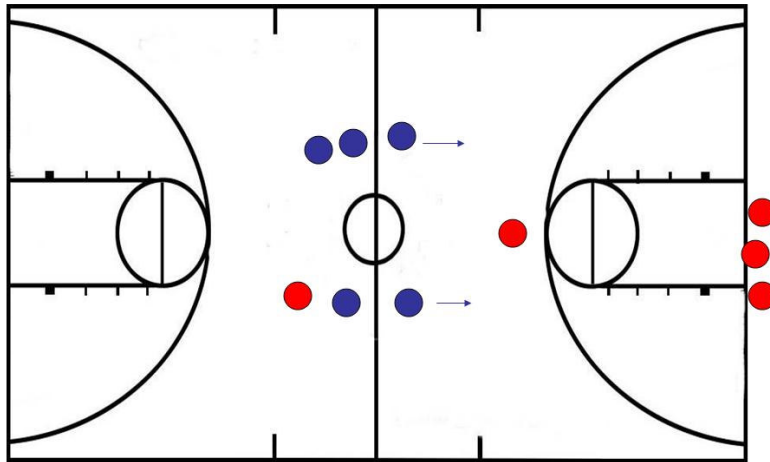
For this drill, break your team into a number of groups (so that each group has its own basket). One player from the group starts the game. That player calls out a shot they will be attempting (i.e. foul shot). If that player makes the shot, all the other players in the group must attempt that same shot. If a player misses the shot, that player receives a letter (P if playing PIG, H if playing HORSE). A player is out of the game if they receive all the letters of the animal. *If the player calling the shot misses the original shot, it becomes the next player in the group's turn to call out a shot.*

### 40. 2 on 1 Shooting drill

This drill works on shooting as well as the player's ability to find the open man. For this drill, 2 players are on offense while 1 player is on defense. Starting at half court, the two offensive players must dribble the ball up the court, pass to the open player and shoot at the basket. The offense is awarded a point if they score. The defender is awarded a point if they steal the ball, get the rebound off a missed shot, or prevent the offense from scoring for a certain period of time (usually 20-30 seconds).

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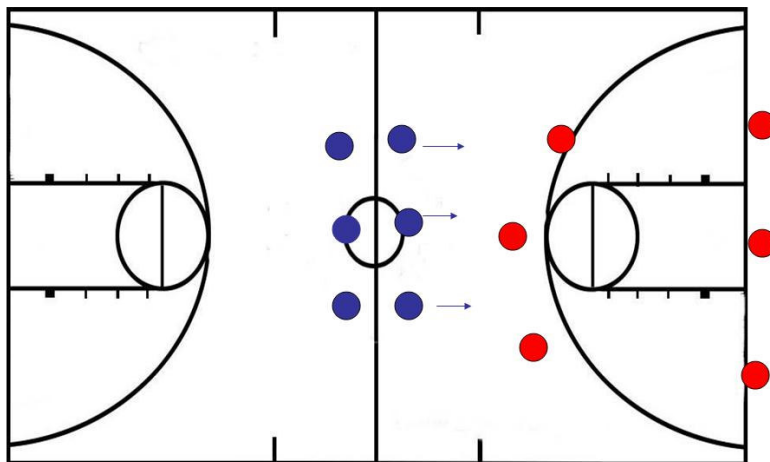
## 2 on 1 Shooting Drill



### 41. 3 on 3 Shooting Drill

This is like a mini game. 3 players are on offense, 3 players are on defense. Starting at half court, the offensive players must dribble the ball up the court, pass to the open player and shoot at the basket. The offense is awarded a point if they score. The defense is awarded a point if they steal the ball, get the rebound off a missed shot, or prevent the offense from scoring for a certain period of time (usually 20-30 seconds).

## 3 on 3 Shooting Drill



### 42. 10 Basket Team Shooting

Divide your team into as many groups as you have baskets. Each group will be assigned their own basket and each player will have their own basketball. At the coach's command, each team starts shooting at the basket from a designated distance (further

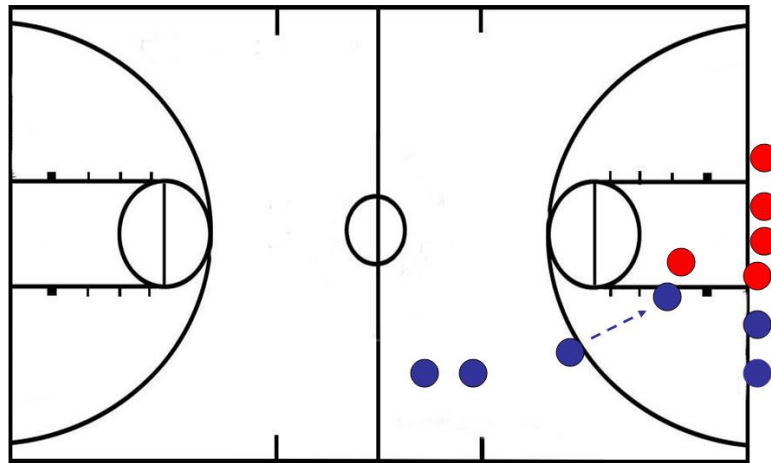
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outside the key for more advanced teams). The first team to make 10 baskets is the winner.

### 43. Low Post Shooting Drill

This drill will work a player's post-up skills as well as shooting from the low post. Two players are on offense (1 Post-up player and 1 Passer) and one player is on defense. The Post-up player must work on getting in the proper position so that they can receive a pass and are close enough to the basket to score from the low post. The Passer must use the appropriate pass (bounce pass, over head pass, etc.). The defender must try to prevent the pass and/or prevent the shot.

#### Low Post Shooting Drill



### 44. Head Fake & Go (or Shoot) Drill

For this drill, players will be practicing a good head and shoulders fake and then either shoot or drive to the basket. A head and shoulders fake consists of the player rapidly moving up as if they are going to shoot (but not jump). This move should cause the defense to jump to block the shot. Once the defender is in the air, the offensive player can either shoot (the defender in the air is out of position to block the shot) or dribble past the defender to score.

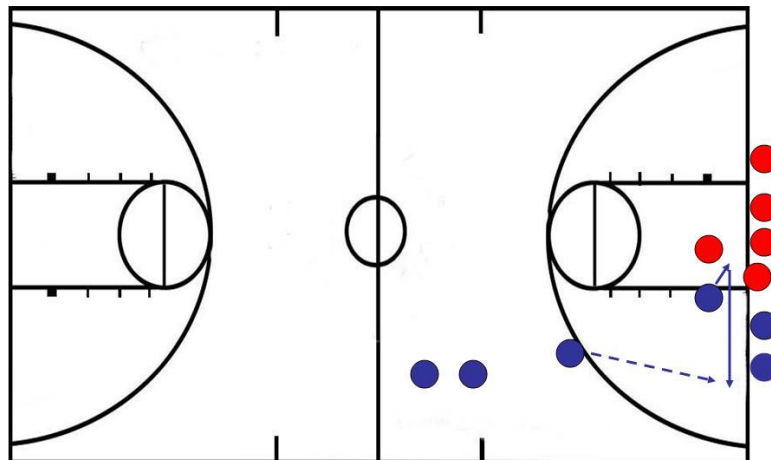
First have your team practice good head and shoulders fakes without a defender. Have them line up in the low post facing the basket. Execute the fake and then the corresponding next move (shoot or drive to the basket). After your players are comfortable with the moves, add a defender.

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## 45. Base Line Shooting Drill

This is a good drill for your Forwards to practice. In this drill you have two players on offense (1 Post-up player and 1 Passer) and one player is on defense. The Post-up player starts by posting up, makes a fake move as if they are going across or inside the key, then quickly runs out to the baseline area to receive a pass. The Passer must use the appropriate pass (chest pass, bounce pass, over head pass, etc.). The defender must try to prevent the pass and/or prevent the shot.

Baseline Shooting Drill





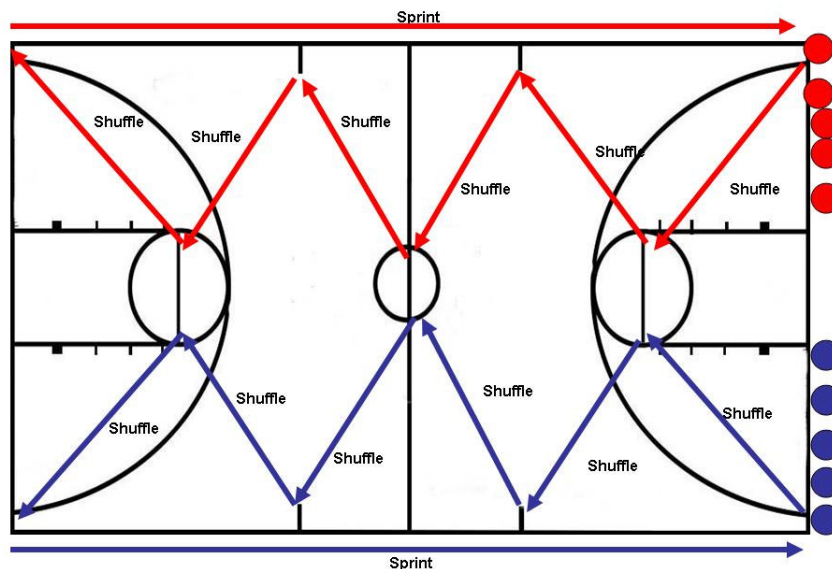
## Defense Drills

Defense is an extremely important aspect of basketball. It has been said that defense wins games and for the most part, this statement is true. Just think about it, by playing good, aggressive defense you will limit the scoring chances for the other team, thereby increasing your opportunities to score. For young players, teaching them to play defense is one of the easiest tasks you will face. Good defense can be played by any player, no matter the age or athletic skill of the player.

### 46. Defense Shuffle

This drill will help teach your players how to maintain the proper defensive stance and how to properly move from one part of the court to the other. Divide your team into 2 groups. Each group starts a corner of the court. The first players from each group assume a good defensive stance (feet slightly more than shoulder length apart, knees bent, back straight, arms up and out). On the coach's command the players start to shuffle their feet (do not cross feet) from the corner to the foul line, to the 5 second line, to half court, to the opposite 5 second line, to the opposite foul line, to the far corner of the court; and then sprint to the back of the starting line.

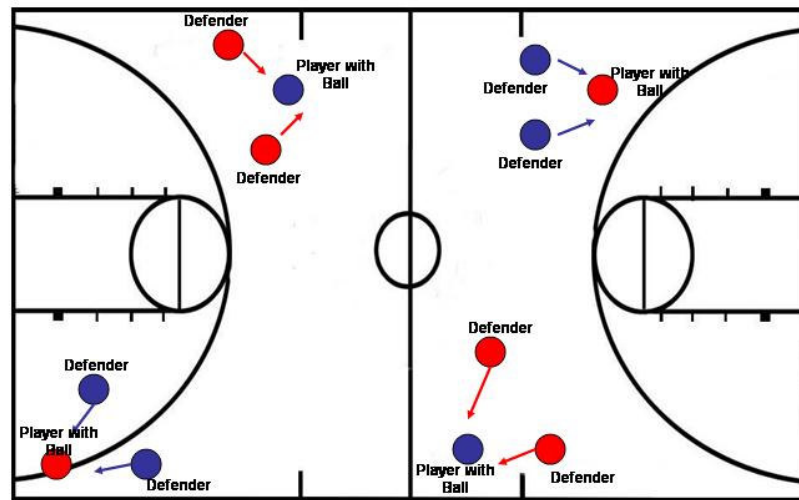
#### Defensive Stance Shuffle



### 47. Trap Drill

For this drill, divide your team into groups of 3. One player will have a basketball and be on offense and two players will be on defense. The player on offense will attempt to dribble the ball past the two defenders, while the two defenders attempt to trap the offensive player causing the player on offense to stop dribbling or lose control of the ball.

## Trap Drill



### 48. Mirror Drill

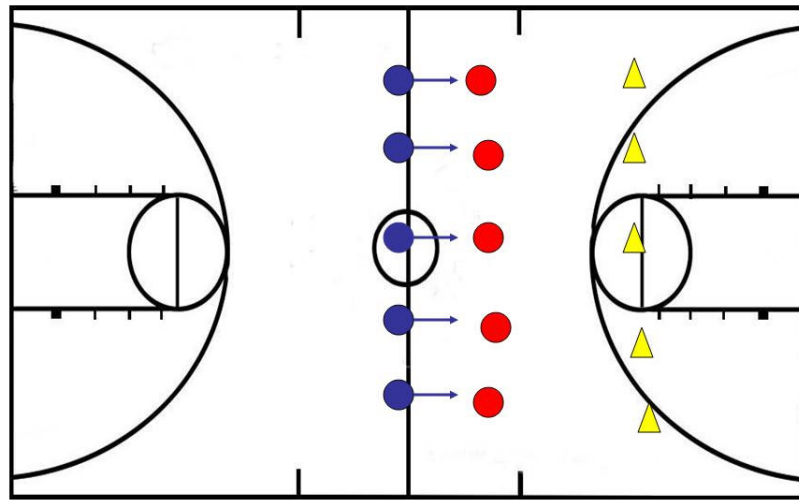
Divide your team into 4-6 groups, try to have no more than 4 players per group. Designate 1 player per group as the leader. All other players in the group will face the leader and must “mirror” every movement of the leader. If the leader shuffles right the group must shuffle in the same direction (it will be left shuffle since they are facing the leader). If the leader moves forward, the group moves backward. If the leader moves back, the group moves forward.

### 49. 1 on 1 Defense

Divide your team into two groups. One group is on offense and the other group is on defense. Pair up the players so that every offensive player has a player that is playing defense against them. All the players on offense should have a basketball and line up in a straight line across the half court line facing the basket. The defensive players should lineup 3-4 feet away from the offensive players. The object of the game is for the offensive players to dribble the basketball past an area down court (it could be line set up with cones across the court). The offensive player scores a point for getting the ball past the “goal” area. The defender gets a point if the steal the ball, get the offensive player to stop dribbling or prevents the offensive player from reaching the “goal” within a certain time period (usually 10 seconds).

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## 1 on 1 Defense



### 50. 2 on 2 Deny Defense

The goal of this drill is for the players on defense to learn how to keep their body between the offensive player and the basket. Set up a designated area. One pair of players is on offense, while the other pair is on defense. The goal of the offense is to move the ball over a designated “goal line” approximately 10-20 feet down court through **passing and dribbling** the ball. The object of the defense is to position themselves between the offensive player and the “goal line” as well as to position themselves to deny passes between the offensive players. Award 1 point if the offense cannot move the ball to the “goal line” under a certain time period (10-20 seconds). Award 2 points if the defense steals the ball or intercepts a pass. This game can also be done 3 vs. 3 or 4 vs. 4

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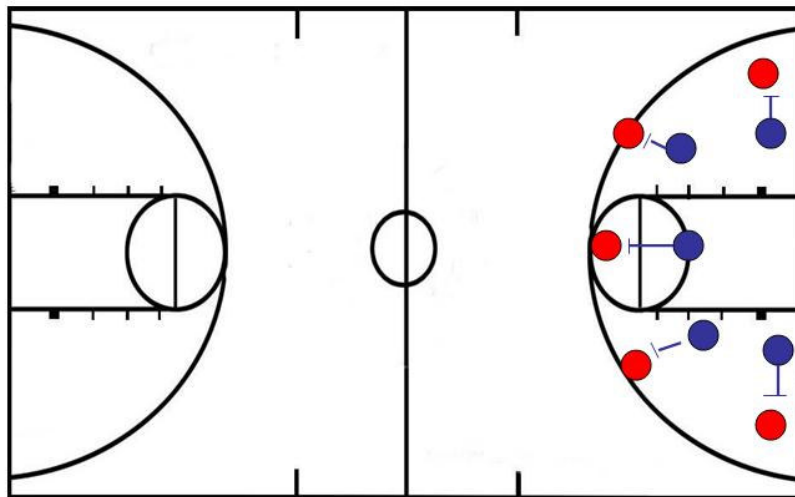
## Rebounding Drills

With offensive rebounding you *at least double* the number of opportunities you have to score (the original shot plus the shot you will get after the rebound). With defensive rebounding, you drastically reduce the other team's opportunities to score. This being said, you can see why it's so important that your team develop good rebounding skills.

### **51. Box-Out Drill**

This drill should be started without using the basketball. For this drill there are 5 defenders and 5 offensive players. The players on defense start off by "guarding" the players on offense. The players on offense move around the court. When the coach shouts "Shot", the players on defense must find the player that they are guarding and box that player out, putting them in good position to rebound the ball. The offense should attempt not be boxed-out and be in a position to rebound the ball. After a few practices have the teams switch places (defense is now offense). As the players get comfortable with the fundamentals of boxing out, the coach should then begin to shoot a basketball and have the players actually get the rebound.

#### Box Out Drill



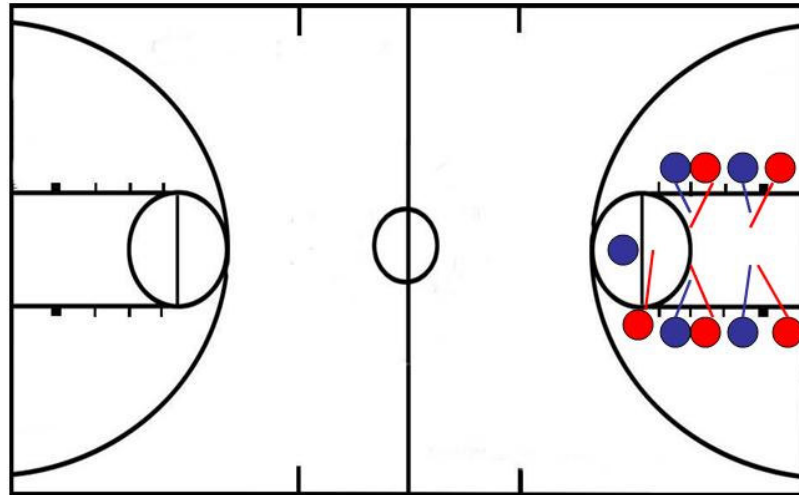
### **52. Foul Shot Box-Out Drill**

For this drill, your team will be practicing the proper way to box out during a foul shot. Break your team into groups of five. One group will be on offense with a shooter on the foul line. The other group will be on defense. All the players, except for the player shooting on the foul line are to line up in the proper spots for a foul shot. Two of the players on defense get the closest positions to the basket. The next two spots belong to the offensive players. The order continues in this fashion until all spaces or all players are occupied. The foul shooter will shoot the ball and all the players must attempt to get

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into the best position to rebound the ball. Whoever rebounds the ball becomes the next shooter and whatever team that person was on now is on offense and occupies the offensive area around the key.

### Foul Shot Box Out Drill

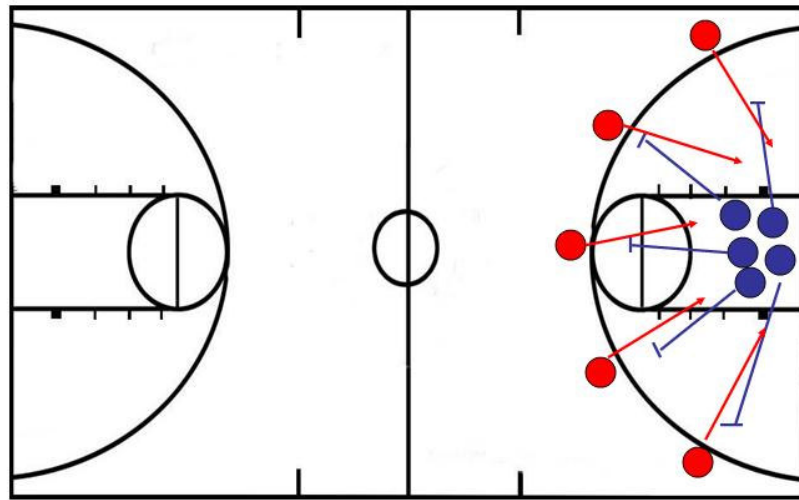


#### 53. “Find” & Seek Box-Out

For this drill, divide your team into 2 groups. One group will start in the key under the basket **and facing the basket**. The other group will start out on the perimeter of the court just outside the 3 point arc. Upon the coach shouting “Shot” the players who are out by the 3 point arc will race towards the basket trying to get into position for a rebound. The players under the basket will attempt to box out the closest player from the other who is in their area.

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## Find & Seek Box Out Drill



### 54. One on One on One .....Drill

This drill will work on boxing out, rebounding and shooting. This drill starts with one player on offense and all the other players attempting to rebound the ball. The player on offense will not be defended and must shoot the ball from outside the key. Upon shooting the ball all the players must properly position themselves to get the rebound. Whoever gets the rebound is now on offense.

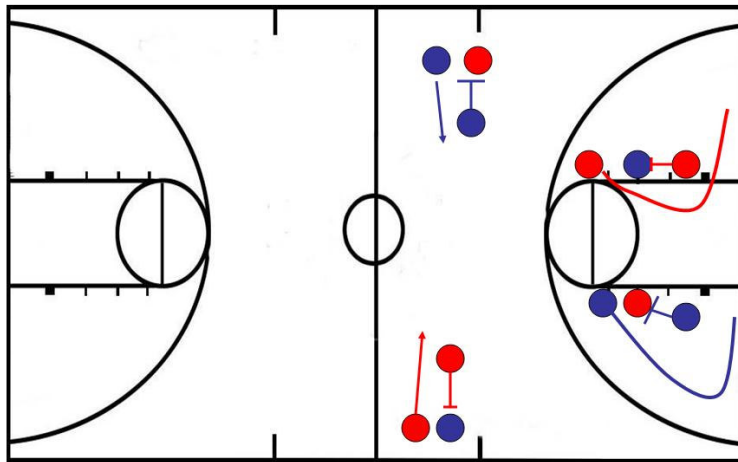
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## Other Drills

### **55. Pick Setting Drill**

By properly setting picks, your team will be able to free up a player to easily receive a pass, take an unobstructed shot, or dribble uncontested to the basket for an easy score. In this drill, divide your team into groups of three. Two players will be on offense and one player will be on defense. This drill should be done with and without the ball; however it's best not to use a ball when first introducing this drill. The player on defense is to guard one of the players on offense. The player not being guarded is the person to set the pick. He or she will set the pick by moving close to the defender and blocking their path so that the other offensive player can run by and get free of the defender. Note: You must explain to the player setting the pick that he/she can not move when setting the pick (once they engage the defender). The player's feet must be stationary. Moving while setting a pick is a violation. Have your players practice setting picks in all areas of the court, especially down low towards the basket. Once your team is comfortable with the fundamentals for setting picks, give each group a ball. Have the team practice dribbling towards the open area, or towards the basket for an easy score.

#### Pick Setting Drill



### **56. InBouncing the Ball Drill**

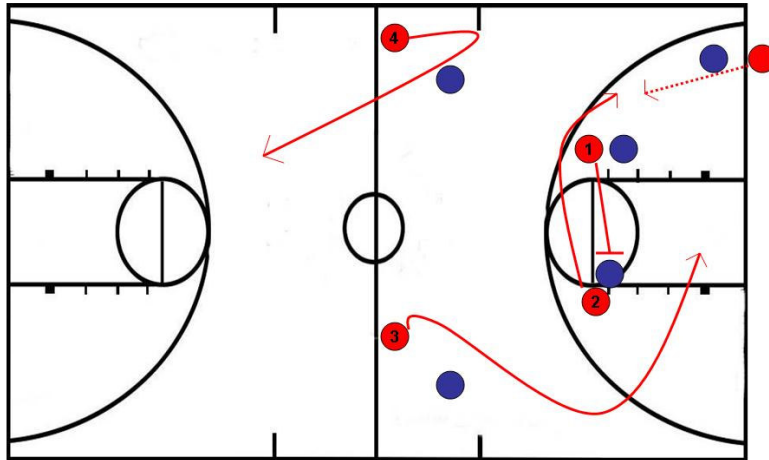
For the inbound play diagramed below, start by having your best passer inbound the ball. Players # 1-4 take their positions on the court as outlined below. The play starts by the player who is inbounding the ball, smacking the ball or yelling "Go!" so that all the players know to start the play.

- Player #1 crosses the key and sets a pick on Player #2's defender.
- Player #2 then runs around towards the inbounder. The pass should go to Player #2 if he/she is open.

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- Player #4 fakes a move towards the ball then runs down court towards the basket. If Player #4 is open, the inbounder can try a long football pass to Player #4.
- Player #3 fakes running down court then cuts towards the ball. If Player #3 is open, the inbound pass can go to him/her.

### In Bounding the Ball



### 57. Fast Break Outlet Drill

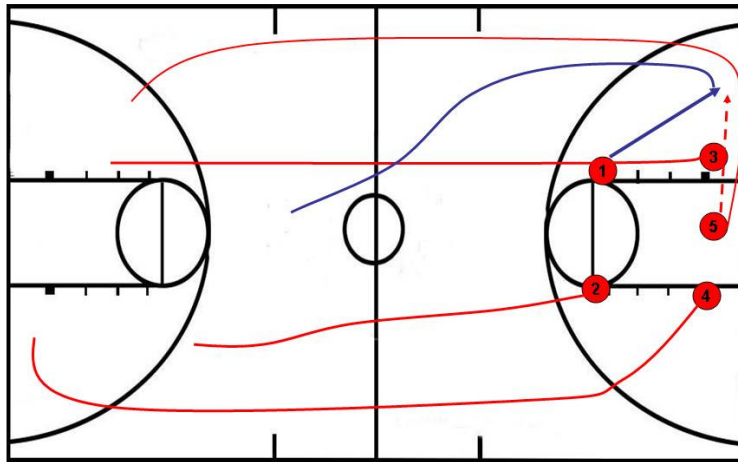
Many of your offensive points will come from fast breaks. The key to a successful fast break is having all your players know their roles and to stay in their lanes (not to bunch up in the same area of the court). This drill helps teach your team the proper fundamentals of the fast break.

This drill starts at the opposite basket, where the coach will simulate a shot by the opponent. Player #5 gets the rebound, and Player #1 (your best ball handler) races to the closest corner of the court ready for the outlet pass. Player #5 throws an outlet pass to Player #1 and then Player #5 proceeds to run down the sideline. After receiving the outlet pass, Player #1 dribbles the ball up court towards the middle of the court. In the meanwhile, immediately after the rebound, Players # 3, 4, and 2 break down court staying in their lanes. Player #3 runs straight down court, Player #4 runs down the opposite sideline than that of Player #5 and Player #2 runs down in the inner lane of the court (see diagram). This drill may seem complicated, but it does not have to work exactly as planned. However, your goal should be that the team knows to run immediately after the rebound, stay in their lanes and not bunch up. You will be amazed at all easy baskets you can get off the fast break.



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## Fast Break Outlet Drill



# Youth Basketball Drills & Sample Practice Plans©

## Practice Sample 1

Practice

Date:

	Drill	Comments
<i>Warm-up &amp; Conditioning</i>		<b>10 Minutes</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Jumping Jacks (3 sets of 10)</b>	
<b>2</b>	<b>Stretching: (Various)</b>	
<b>3</b>	<b>Circle Ball Around Waist &amp; Legs</b>	
<b>4</b>	<b>Box Run Relay Drill</b>	
<b>WATER BREAK</b>		
<i>Dribbling Drills</i>		<b>10 Minutes</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Righty-Lefty Dribbling Drill</b>	
<b>2</b>	<b>Dribble Around Cones Drill</b>	
<b>3</b>	<b>Space Man Drill</b>	
<b>WATER BREAK</b>		
<i>Passing Drills</i>		<b>10 Minutes</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Partner Pass Drill</b>	
<b>2</b>	<b>Monkey in the Middle Pass Drill</b>	
<b>3</b>	<b>Passing Relay Race</b>	
<b>WATER BREAK</b>		
<i>Shooting Drills</i>		<b>15 Minutes</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Dribble Down &amp; Shoot – Layup</b>	
<b>2</b>	<b>Around the World</b>	
<b>3</b>	<b>2 on 1 Shooting</b>	

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### Practice Sample 2

Practice

Date:

	<b>Drill</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<i>Warm-up &amp; Conditioning</i>		<b>10 Minutes</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Jog in Place</b>	
<b>2</b>	<b>Stretching (various)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arms out – circle motion</li> <li>• Toe Touches</li> <li>• Leg Straddle</li> <li>• Quad Stretch</li> </ul>	
<b>3</b>	<b>Sprint – Jog Run</b>	
<b>4</b>	<b>“Coach Says” Game</b>	
<b>WATER BREAK</b>		
<i>Defensive Drills</i>		<b>10-15 Minutes</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Defense Shuffle</b>	
<b>2</b>	<b>Trap Defense</b>	
<b>3</b>	<b>Mirror Drill</b>	
<b>WATER BREAK</b>		
<i>Rebounding Drills</i>		<b>10-15 Minutes</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Box Out Drill</b>	
<b>2</b>	<b>Foul Shot Box Out Drill</b>	
<b>3</b>	<b>Find &amp; Seek Box Out Drill</b>	
<b>WATER BREAK</b>		
<i>Shooting Drills</i>		<b>10-15 Minutes</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Dribble Down &amp; Shoot – Jump Shot</b>	
<b>2</b>	<b>10 Basket Team Shooting</b>	
<b>3</b>	<b>3 on 3 Shooting</b>	

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### Practice Sample 3

Practice

Date:

	Drill	Comments
<i>Warm-up &amp; Conditioning</i>		<b>10 Minutes</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Stretching</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deep Knee Bends with arms out forward</li> <li>• Toe Touches</li> <li>• Leg Straddle</li> <li>• Hurdler Stretch</li> </ul>	
<b>2</b>	<b>Sprint Past the Pack Drill</b>	
<b>3</b>	<b>Relay Races</b>	
	<b>WATER BREAK</b>	
<i>Dribbling Drills</i>		<b>10-15 Minutes</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Dribble Around Defenders Drill</b>	
<b>2</b>	<b>Red Light, Green Light Drill</b>	
<b>3</b>	<b>1 on 1 Dribbling Drill</b>	
	<b>WATER BREAK</b>	
<i>Defense Drills</i>		<b>10-15 Minutes</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>1 on 1 Defense Drill</b>	
<b>2</b>	<b>Defense Shuffle Drill</b>	
<b>3</b>	<b>Trap Defense Drill</b>	
	<b>WATER BREAK</b>	
<i>Other Drills</i>		<b>10-15 Minutes</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Pick Setting</b>	
<b>2</b>	<b>InBounding the Ball</b>	
<b>3</b>	<b>Fast Break Outlet Drill</b>	

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### Practice Sample 4

Practice

Date:

	<b>Drill</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<i>Warm-up &amp; Conditioning</i>		<b>10 Minutes</b>
<b>1</b>	Stretching (Various)	
<b>2</b>	Throw Ball in Air & Clap Drill	
<b>3</b>	Stuck in the Mud Drill	
<b>WATER BREAK</b>		
<i>Passing Drills</i>		<b>10-15 Minutes</b>
<b>1</b>	Football/Baseball Pass Drill	
<b>2</b>	Triangle Pass Drill	
<b>3</b>	Shuffle Pass Relay	
<b>WATER BREAK</b>		
<i>Shooting Drills</i>		<b>10-15 Minutes</b>
<b>1</b>	Low Post Shooting Drill	
<b>2</b>	Head Fake & Go Drill	
<b>3</b>	Dribble Down & Shoot – Layup & Jump Shot	
<b>WATER BREAK</b>		
<i>Game Situation Drills</i>		<b>10-15 Minutes</b>
<b>1</b>	3 on 3 Mini Game - Half Court	
<b>2</b>	5 on 5 Mini Game – Half Court	

## Youth Basketball Drills & Sample Practice Plans©

### Practice Sample 5

Practice

Date:

	<b>Drill</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<i>Warm-up &amp; Conditioning</i>		<b>10 Minutes</b>
<b>1</b>	Stretching (Various)	
<b>2</b>	Box Run Relay	
<b>3</b>	Gasers/Lines	
	<b>WATER BREAK</b>	
<i>Dribbling Drills</i>		<b>10-15 Minutes</b>
<b>1</b>	Head up Dribbling Drill	
<b>2</b>	Sharks & Minnows Game	
<b>3</b>	Dribble Around Defenders	
	<b>WATER BREAK</b>	
<i>Defense Drills</i>		<b>10-15 Minutes</b>
<b>1</b>	1 on 1 Defense Drill	
<b>2</b>	2 on 2 Deny Drill	
<b>3</b>	Trap Drill	
	<b>WATER BREAK</b>	
<i>Other Drills</i>		<b>10-15 Minutes</b>
<b>1</b>	Pick Setting Drill	
<b>2</b>	Fast Break Outlet Drill	
<b>3</b>	5 on 5 Full Court Game	

# Youth Basketball Drills & Sample Practice Plans©

## Practice Template Form

Practice

Date:

	Drill	Comments
Warm-up		
1		
2		
3		
1		
2		
3		
1		
2		
3		
1		
2		
3		
1		
2		
3		

General Comments:



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