

Most Common Defensive Formations

Defensive Formation #1) *Man-to-Man*

Each of the five defensive players guards one of the five offensive players. Even if switching is used, each player is responsible for one offensive player at a time.

Defensive Formation #2) *Zone*

Each defender is responsible for guarding a certain area, or zone, instead of guarding a specific offensive player. The goal is to double-team the player with the ball. When an offensive player with the ball enters a zone between two defenders, those two defenders attack the dribbler while the other 3 defenders guard their areas.

Defensive Formation #3) *2-1-2 Zone*

Two defenders are positioned above the foul line, one is in the lane and the other two are low on either side of the basket.

Defensive Formation #4) *2-3 Zone*

Two defenders spread out from another above the foul line and the other three players are spread across the bottom half of the lane.

Defensive Formation #5) *1-3-1 Zone*

One defender is positioned out front, three are across the foul line extended and the fifth is down under the basket. The player out front tries to force the dribbler right or left. As that player drives, another defender comes up for the double-team.

Defensive Formation #6) *2-2-1 Zone Press*

This is usually a full-court defense. As soon as the ball is thrown inbounds after a basket, the defense starts guarding immediately (called full-court press). Again, the idea is to get two defenders double-teaming (trapping) the dribbler while the other three guard the rest of the floor.

