

Man-to-Man

Man-to-Man Defense Tips

1. Most of the time, you should keep between your man and basket (but sometimes post players, will have to "front" a strong post-up player).
2. Guards get into a low position with your weight evenly balanced, on the balls of your feet, nearer your toes. Don't be flat-footed. Keep your weight off your heels. The key to good defense is you must move your feet and stay between the player and the hoop. Do not reach in a take a quick swipe with your hand. You will either get a foul, or the offensive player will go right around you.
3. Guards out front can play back off your man a couple steps if the offensive player is very quick, and outside his/her normal shooting range. This space will give you time to react, so that the offensive player will not get around you. If your opponent is a good outside shooter, then you must play tighter.
4. This brings us to the next point...know your opponent! Know his/her strengths and weaknesses. If he/she is a good shooter, stay close. If he/she can't dribble very well, stay up close and keep the pressure on. If he/she is quick and a good dribbler then stay back a couple steps. If he/she is right-handed and always goes to the right, over-guard the right side and force him/her to the left.
5. Watch the offensive player's eyes when passing... this will often tell you where the pass is going.
6. Watch the offensive player's belly-button, especially if he/she is quick and hard to stay with. The offensive player can fake you with a head fake, eye fake, arm or shoulder fake, or a jab-step, but the belly-button will always go only in the direction that he/she is going.
7. When the shot goes up, yell "shot!" and all defenders should box-out their men, and go for the rebound, and get the fast-break going.
8. Hustle! Hustle! Hustle! You have to love playing tough, hard defense. Your good defense will win many games for you, especially those games when your offense is "off". It's not so bad if your shots aren't falling, if the other team can't score either. Your defense will keep you in the game until your offense finally gets going. When you are behind, the best way to catch up is by playing great defense and getting those rebounds. Who said, "Good offense wins games, but good defense wins championships"? Believe it. Much of good defense is inspiration and perspiration.

