



Pleasanton Youth Basketball (PYB) 25/26 Practice Drills



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Basketball Terminology

Defense:

The team without the ball is called the defense. They try to steal the ball without fouling, contest shots, steal and deflect passes, and garner rebounds.

Offense:

The team with possession of the ball and with the goal to score. Offense can move the ball towards their hoop by dribbling or passing and ultimately shooting to try to score.

Baseline:

End line beneath each basket.

Foul Line:

Free throw line.

Key or Foul Lane:

Also known as the "paint." Rectangular area from baseline to foul line with circle at top what is meant by circle at top?.

Elbow:

Area of the court where the foul line and the side of the key meet.

Crossover Dribble:

A dribble in which the ball is moved from one hand to the other while the dribbler changes directions.

Pivot Foot:

The foot stays in contact with a spot on the floor while moving the other foot to adjust the position of the body or to evade a defensive player.

Jump-stop:

The action of coming to a complete stop where both feet land in a spot simultaneously.

Assist:

A pass that leads directly to a teammate scoring a basket.

Bank Shot:

Also called "using the glass," this means a player shoots so that the ball hits the backboard before going in.

Wing:

Area just on or outside the 3-point line, even with the foul line. (foul line extended)

Block:

Rectangular block on the outside of the key by the baseline.

Post-up:

Getting an offensive position near the basket along the key.

Drop Step:

It is also called a "Reverse pivot." When posting up, one takes a step backward, towards the basket, and behind the defender to move around him/her.

1+1:

Free throws were making the first shot earn a second shot. If the first shot is missed, the ball becomes live.

Violation:

It is the most minor class of illegal action. Most violations are committed by the team in possession of the ball when a player mishandles the ball or makes an illegal move. The typical penalty for a violation is the loss of the ball to the other team.

Triple Threat position:

The position is when a player facing a defender receives a pass but has not dribbled yet. The offensive player's feet are slightly wider than shoulder width and slightly on the balls of their feet, their knees flexed, with both hands on the basketball in front of them or almost resting on their thigh, presenting the defender with an opponent able to move in any direction. One foot is held as the pivot, and the other is slightly ahead. From this, the player can choose from three options: to shoot, to dribble (drive) past the defender, or to pass it to a teammate. There are also options to get the defender out of their defensive stance by using jab steps and shot fakes. (what do you think of this description to keep it all the terminology on the same page? This stance is used when a player receives a pass but hasn't dribbled yet. Feet are slightly wider than shoulder-width, knees bent, on the balls of the feet, holding the ball near the thigh. One foot is the pivot, the other slightly ahead. From this position, the player can shoot, dribble, or pass. Jab steps and shot fakes can also be used to shake the defender.)

General Items Needed for All Practices:

- **Basketball:** For grades K-3, size 27.5 recommended (Boys 3rd uses 28.5), which is smaller and lighter, making it easier for K-3 graders to handle, dribble, and shoot. Ideally, one basketball per player to maximize individual touches and skill development time. If a one-to-one ratio isn't feasible, ensure at least one ball for every two players to facilitate partner drills and keep engagement high.
- **Cones or markers:** At least 10-15 are highly versatile. Cones are indispensable for defining boundaries for drills, marking specific spots on the court, creating dynamic dribbling courses with turns and obstacles, or even serving as targets for passing and shooting drills. Their colors also help young players quickly understand where to go and what to do, aiding in spatial awareness and drill organization.
- **Whistle:** A simple but essential tool for the coach. A whistle allows for quick, clear signals to start, stop, or get the undivided attention of the players, especially important in a noisy gym. This improves efficiency during transitions between drills and ensures safety by immediately stopping play if needed.
- **Pinnies:** These inexpensive vests are excellent for easily distinguishing teams during scrimmages and team-based activities. For K-3 graders, clear visual cues are vital for them to identify teammates versus opponents, reducing confusion and allowing them to focus more on the game. The City of Pleasanton does not provide pinnies.

**ALL BASKETBALLS AND CONES WILL BE PROVIDED BY
THE CITY OF PLEASANTON**

Important Notes for Coaches:

- **Keep it fun!** Engagement and enjoyment are absolutely paramount for this age group. The primary objective is to foster a love for basketball, not to create future NBA stars. Incorporate games, use imaginative language, encourage laughter, and celebrate every small victory. If kids are smiling and eager to come back, you're doing it right. Avoid drills that are overly complicated or require long periods of standing and waiting.
- **Positive reinforcement:** Always, always encourage and praise effort, not just immediate success. Acknowledge when a player tries a new skill, even if they don't master it immediately.
- **Simplicity:** Break down complex skills into very small, manageable steps. Young children have shorter attention spans and are still rapidly developing their fundamental motor skills. Introduce one concept at a time and build upon it gradually. Avoid overwhelming them with too many instructions at once.
- **Repetition with variation:** Kids learn through repetition, but a drill repeated identically for too long can lead to boredom. Repeat core actions (dribbling, passing, shooting) but vary the context or add a small, fun challenge to keep it fresh and engaging. For instance, after stationary dribbling, move to dribbling while walking, then dribbling around cones. This reinforces the skill while maintaining interest.
- **Safety first:** Ensuring the playing area is clear and supervising all activities closely is non-negotiable. Before each practice, quickly scan the court for any loose equipment, slippery spots, or other hazards. Teach safe practices from day one, such as looking before moving, avoiding accidental collisions, and dribbling with control.
- **Flexibility:** Adapt drills based on your group's skill level and energy levels. If a drill isn't working or players are getting frustrated, don't hesitate to simplify it, modify it, or quickly pivot to something else that will re-engage them. The goal is consistent progress and enjoyment for *all* participants, not rigid adherence to the printed plan. Trust your instincts as a coach!

WEEK 1

Introduction & Basic Ball Handling

Warm-up/Stretches (5 Minutes)

Begin with light jogging around the court, encouraging players to move freely and shake out their bodies. Incorporate simple dynamic stretches (e.g., large arm circles, lunges, torso twists, etc.). During this time, emphasize listening to the coach, following directions, and establishing a routine for future practices.

Rule Review (10 Minutes)

Equipment:

One basketball per player and cones

Drill Instructions:

1. Have each player grab a basketball. Gather the players in a huddle so everyone can see and hear you.
2. "Traveling" Demo & Explain:
 - a. Tell the kids, "Traveling is like walking or running with the ball without bouncing it. Or, once you stop dribbling and pick up the ball, if one foot stays on the ground, that's your 'pivot foot.' You can spin around on that foot, but you can't lift it up and move it before you pass or shoot."
 - b. Take a few big steps with the ball without dribbling. Exaggerate it and say, "Oops! That's traveling!"
 - c. Dribble, stop, pick up the ball, and then shuffle your feet around. Say, "Oops! My pivot foot moved! That's traveling too!"
3. "Double Dribble" Demo & Explain:
 - a. Tell the kids, "Double dribbling is when you dribble the ball, then stop dribbling and hold it with both hands, and then start dribbling again. Once you stop dribbling, you have to pass or shoot!"
 - b. Dribble the ball, stop, pick it up with two hands, and then immediately start dribbling again. Exaggerate it and say, "Oops! Double dribble!"
4. Tell the kids, "Now, let's play a fun game! I'm going to try to make some 'oops' mistakes, and I want you to tell me when I do. Then, you can try to move around, and if you accidentally make a mistake, say 'Oops!' and we'll help each other out."
5. Practice & Correct:
 - a. Walk around with the ball without dribbling and ask, "What did I do?" (Hopefully, they say "Traveling!")
 - b. Dribble, stop, and then dribble again and ask, "What was that?" (Hopefully, they say "Double dribble!")
 - c. Encourage players to try dribbling and stopping, reminding them of the rules.

Drill Purpose:

This drill helps players understand and avoid two common basketball mistakes: traveling (taking too many steps without dribbling) and double dribbling (dribbling, stopping, then dribbling again). Understanding these rules makes the game fair and fun for everyone.

Stationary Dribbling (10 Minutes)

Equipment:

One basketball and one cone per player

Drill Instructions:

1. Players spread out on the basketball court in 1-3 lines, facing the coach while standing over a cone.
2. Players will be in a good basic offensive basketball position.
 - a. Offensive Basketball position means having your head/eyes up, butt down, hands to the side, and back straight
3. Players will dribble the basketball in place with their dominant hand.
4. Players will dribble the basketball in place with their non-dominant.
5. Players will dribble the basketball in place, alternating hands, pushing the ball from one side to the other.
6. Repeat two or three times.



Drill Purpose:

The purpose of the drill is to practice getting a feel for the basketball and maintaining control while dribbling. Focusing on pushing the ball down with their fingertips, not slapping it with their palm

Walking Dribble (10 Minutes)

Equipment:

One basketball per group and 4 cones (2 on baseline / 2 at half court)

Drill Instructions:

1. Players will form 2 lines at one of the baselines, facing the coach at half court.
2. The first person in each line has the basketball.
3. On your signal, players will dribble their ball while walking in a straight line towards the other cone.
4. Once they reach the second cone, they should turn around and dribble back to the starting cone. They can pivot if they're comfortable, or simply turn their body to change direction.
5. Players should continue dribbling back and forth between the cones.
 - a. Emphasize "Eyes up, see where you're going!"

Drill Purpose:

Moving with the ball is a fundamental skill in basketball. Keeping their head up is vital for seeing teammates, defenders, and the basket. It also helps players avoid looking at the ball while dribbling, a common habit for beginners. Maintaining the ball close to their body helps prevent turnovers and allows for quicker reactions.

Partner Passing Drill (10 Minutes)

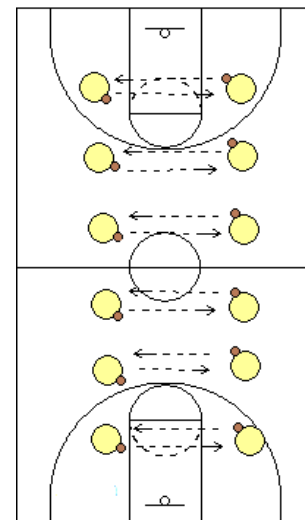
Equipment:

One basketball per pair

Drill Instructions:

1. Form Pairs: Have players find a partner and stand facing each other, about 5-7 feet apart. Each pair should have one basketball.
2. Introduce the Chest Pass (5 minutes):

- Demonstrate: Show players how to hold the ball with two hands at their chest. Explain that they will push the ball directly to their partner's chest, taking a small step forward as they pass.
- Emphasize "Pop": Highlight the wrist action, where their thumbs should point down and out after releasing the ball, as if "shaking hands" with their partner.
- Start Close: Begin with partners standing very close to ensure accuracy.
- Gradually Increase Distance: As players become more comfortable and accurate, instruct them to slowly increase the distance between them.



3. Introduce the Bounce Pass (5 minutes):

- Demonstrate: Show players how to hold the ball with two hands, similar to the chest pass, but explain that they will aim to bounce the ball about two-thirds of the way to their partner. The ball should then bounce up to their partner's chest or waist.
- Emphasize Control: Remind them to push the ball down and out to ensure a good bounce that reaches their partner.
- Practice: Have pairs practice the bounce pass, focusing on the correct bounce point and comfortably receiving the ball.

Drill Purpose:

This Partner Passing drill teaches players the fundamental techniques of both chest passes and bounce passes, while simultaneously improving their passing accuracy and fostering team communication.

Hoop Shoot Fun (10 Minutes)

Equipment:

One basketball per player

Drill Instructions:

- Demonstrate the Goal: Briefly show them how to use two hands to push the ball up towards the hoop. Point out the big square on the backboard (if there is one) or simply the middle of the rim as their aiming point.
- Take Turns Shooting: Have players line up and take turns shooting from a comfortable distance. For very young players, they can stand right under the hoop.
- Focus on "Up and Towards": The main goal is just to get the ball up and in the direction of the basket. Don't worry about perfect form at this stage.

Drill Purpose:

The "Hoop Shoot Fun" drill introduces players to the basic motion of shooting a basketball, fostering enjoyment and building confidence by celebrating every attempt. This approach helps them start to understand aiming while creating a positive foundation for future skill development.

Recap (5 Minutes): Gather the team in a circle to quickly review a favorite drill or new skill learned, asking simple questions to encourage participation. Conclude with a positive team cheer or group high-five to build camaraderie and end practice on a high note.

WEEK 2

Dribbling Control & Passing

Warm-up/Stretches (5 Minutes)

Begin with light jogging around the court, encouraging players to move freely and shake out their bodies. Incorporate simple dynamic stretches (e.g., large arm circles, lunges, torso twists, etc.). During this time, emphasize listening to the coach, following directions, and establishing a routine for future practices.

Control Dribbling (15 Minutes)

Equipment:

One basketball per player and cones

Drill Instructions:

1. Have each player find their own cone on the court where they won't bump into anyone.
2. Ask the players to dribble the ball while standing still.
3. Keep it Low (Knee Height): Explain that dribbling the ball around their knee height (or lower) makes it much harder for someone to take the ball from them. Remind them by saying, "Keep it low, low, low!"
4. Soft vs. Hard Dribbles:
 - a. First, ask them to dribble "softly" with their fingertips, like they are gently pushing the ball to the ground. This helps them feel how to keep the ball close and in control. Say, "Be soft with your fingertips!"
 - b. Next, have them try dribbling "harder" by pushing the ball down with more force. Explain that this makes the ball come back up faster, ready for their next push. Remind them, "Push the ball, don't slap!"
5. Dribble on Each Side:
 - a. Have players dribble the ball just to the right side of their body, using only their right hand.
 - b. Then, have them switch and dribble the ball just to the left side of their body, using only their left hand.
 - c. Ask them to notice if one side feels easier or harder than the other. This helps them get a better feel for the ball.

Drill Purpose:

This drill teaches young players how to keep the basketball close to their body while dribbling, making it harder for others to steal. It helps them feel how to dribble softly for better control and how to push the ball for quicker dribbles.



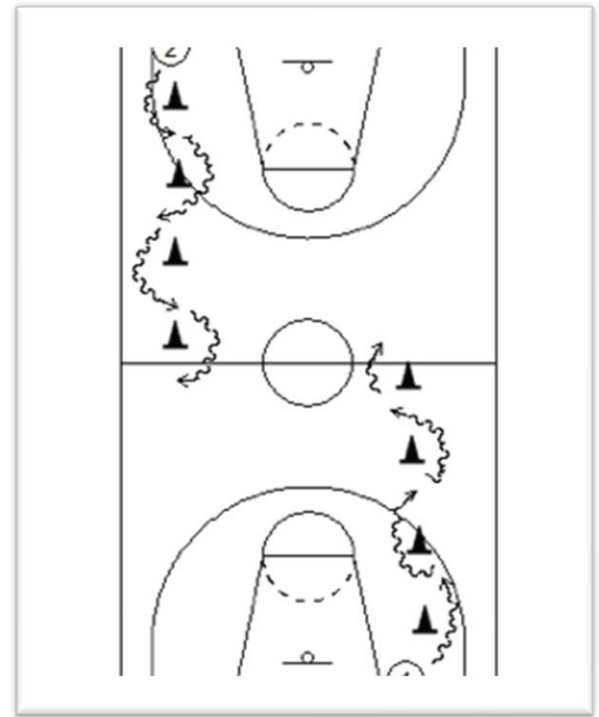
Dribble Relay (15 Minutes)

Equipment:

One basketball per group and 5-10 Cones

Drill Instructions:

1. Players will form 2 lines at the baseline
2. The coach sets out five (5) cones per line, spaced evenly to half court
3. Have players dribble their basketball around each cone, using only the hand they are most comfortable with (their dominant hand). Have all players go and sit once completed
 - a. Encourage them to make big, wide turns around the cones.
4. Now, have the players try to dribble around each cone using only their other hand (their non-dominant hand).
 - a. Explain that this might feel tricky, but it's really good for them to practice.
5. Finally, challenge the players to switch hands as they dribble around each cone. For example, they might use their right hand to go around one cone, and then their left hand to go around the next.



Drill Purpose:

This drill helps players learn how to dribble the ball while moving around obstacles and changing direction. It teaches them to keep good control of the ball.

Partner Passing (10 Minutes)

Equipment:

One basketball per pair

Drill Instructions:

1. Each pair should stand about 8 to 10 feet away from their partner
2. The Chest Pass:
 - a. One player starts with the ball. They'll use a chest pass.
 - b. Tell them to hold the ball with both hands in front of their chest.
 - c. They should take a small step forward while pushing the ball straight out from their chest to their partner.
 - d. Their hands should extend out towards their partner, almost like they're giving a hug to the ball and then pushing it away.
 - e. The receiving player should be standing in an athletic position facing their partner with their hands in front of them chest high, ready to receive the pass.
3. The Bounce Pass:
 - a. Now, the player who just received the ball will use a bounce pass to return it.
 - b. Tell them to push the ball down towards the floor.
 - c. They should aim for a spot on the floor about two-thirds of the way to their partner.
 - d. The ball should bounce once and then come up to their partner's chest.
4. Players should keep passing the ball back and forth, alternating between a chest pass and a bounce pass.
5. Remind players to always look at their partner before they pass. This helps them make sure their partner is ready for the ball.
6. Explain what a passing lane is:
 - a. The passing lane is the open space that allows for a successful pass to be made.

Drill Purpose:

This drill helps players learn how to accurately pass the ball to a teammate using two different types of passes: a chest pass and a bounce pass.

Form Shooting (10 Minutes)

Equipment:

1 basketball per group

Drill Instructions:

1. Have players stand close to the hoop, facing it directly. They should be close enough that they can easily toss the ball into the hoop with one hand.
2. **Explain BEEF** – a simple way to remember the important parts of shooting. Go through each letter:
 - a. **B - Balance:**
 - i. Tell players to stand with their feet about shoulder-width apart, like they're ready to jump. Their knees should be a little bit bent, making them strong and steady.
 - b. **E - Eyes:**
 - i. Tell players to look straight at the basket, either at the rim (the orange circle) or the small square on the backboard. Their eyes should stay "locked on" the target until the ball goes in.
 - c. **E - Elbow:**
 - i. Have players hold the ball in their shooting hand (the hand they use to shoot). Their elbow should be tucked in, pointing right at the basket. It should look like their arm makes an "L" shape / at 90 degrees.
 - d. **F - Follow-Through:**
 - i. After they push the ball towards the basket, tell them to stretch their shooting arm all the way out, like they're trying to reach into a cookie jar on a high shelf. They should keep their hand up in the air until the ball goes in the hoop, also referred to as "signing" their shot
3. Have players practice pushing the ball towards the hoop using all the BEEF steps. Since they are close to the hoop, they don't need to shoot with a lot of power.



Recap (5 Minutes)

For today's practice, we focused on improving our dribbling skills, learning how to control the ball while moving and standing still. We also worked on our passing, practicing both chest and bounce passes to teammates. Finally, we learned the "BEEF" fundamentals to start building good shooting form. Ask kids what "BEEF" stands for.

WEEK 3

Shooting Form & Defensive Stance

Warm-up/Stretches (5 Minutes)

Begin each practice with warm-up activities and stretching to get players loosened up and ready to go.

BEEF Shooting Fundamentals (20 Minutes)

1. Player should be properly balanced, with feet shoulder width apart and a ball in his/her hands.
2. Keep the knees bent (use your legs to shoot).
3. Keep shooting hand under the ball with elbow locked (elbow should be in – never outward, away from the body), opposite hand should be to the side of the ball, helping to “balance” the ball, never helping to “shoot” the ball.
 - a. The ball should be on their fingertips above their palm in the “shooting pocket”
4. Find the target (front or back of the rim – differs from coach to coach), and focus on a “consistent” target (the rim) every time.
5. Square Up to the basket – Which means your shoulders and hips are “square” (parallel) to the basket (toes pointing straight at the basket).
6. Shoot with lots of “arc” on the ball (60 degrees is the preferred arc), try to get lots of “back-spin rotation” on the ball.
7. And most importantly – Follow through: Keep the shooting hand up and fully extended, keep your fingers pointed at the rim, and keep your arm up until the ball goes in the basket or misses.



Defensive Stance Shuffle (15 Minutes)

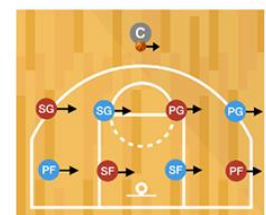
Equipment:

Cones to mark the boundary area/lane

Drill Instructions:

1. Get in your "Invisible Chair":
 - a. Have all the players spread out.
 - b. Tell them to stand with their feet about as wide as their shoulders.
 - c. Next, tell them to bend their knees a lot, like they're trying to sit in an invisible chair. They should feel like they're sitting in a chair like at school.
 - d. Their weight should be on the balls of their feet, not their heels, so they're ready to move quickly.
 - e. Finally, have them put their arms out wide, like they're trying to hug a really big tree.
2. Practice Sliding (No Crossed Feet!):
 - a. While in their "invisible chair" stance, have them practice sliding side-to-side.

A Defensive Stance



B Mass Footwork Drill

- b. Emphasize that they should never cross their feet. A good way to think about it is imagining a rope tied between their knees – this will help them slide instead of stepping over their feet.
- c. You can have them shuffle a few steps to the right, then a few steps to the left.

3. Mirror Drill (Pair Up!):

- a. Now, have the players find a partner.
- b. One player will be the "offensive" player, and the other will be the "defensive" player.
- c. The "offensive" player will stand in a small space, about 5 to 7 feet wide, facing the basket. Their job is to shuffle side-to-side within that small space.
- d. The "defensive" player's job is to "mirror" the offensive player. This means they need to stay directly in front of the offensive player, shuffling side-to-side just like them, without touching them and keeping their backs to the basket. They should try to keep their "invisible chair" stance and wide arms.
- e. After a minute or two, have the players switch roles so everyone gets a chance to be both the offensive and defensive player.

Drill Purpose:

The purpose of this drill is to teach players how to properly guard an opponent and move side-to-side on defense without getting tangled up. This is a fundamental skill for playing good defense in basketball.

Dribble Chase (15 Minutes)

Equipment:

1 basketball per person

Drill Instructions:

1. Have all the players spread out in a special area, like half of the basketball court. Make sure they have enough room so they're not too close to each other.
2. At the coach's whistle/cue, everyone should start dribbling their own basketball, just like they're bouncing it up and down.
3. The coach will shout out a number, like "Tag 2!"
4. When a number is called, players try to gently touch that many other players' basketballs with their free hand. It's not about trying to take the ball away, just a light touch.
 - a. Important: Remind players to keep dribbling their own ball the whole time!
5. While they're trying to tag others, remind them to keep their head up and look around. This helps them see who to tag and who might be trying to tag *their* ball.
6. Make sure everyone stays within the designated playing area.
7. Keep the game going for about 15 minutes, calling out different numbers.

Drill Purpose:

This drill helps players learn to control their basketball while moving around and watching out for their teammates. It also helps them learn to keep their head up, which is super important in basketball!

Recap (5 Minutes)

Gather the group. Review the defensive stance and discuss the importance of "sticking to your person" (staying in front of the offensive player) to make it difficult for them to shoot or pass. Ask, "Why is it important to stay low on defense?" or "What's one thing you remembered about shooting today?"

WEEK 4

Rebounding Basics & Target Passing

Warm-up/Stretches (5 Minutes)

Begin each practice with warm-up activities and stretching to get players loosened up and ready to go.

Box Out Fun (15 Minutes)

This drill teaches players how to box out, which means getting in front of an opponent to block them from getting the basketball after a shot:

1. Have your players get into groups of two.
 - a. Each pair will face each other. One player will be the "shooter" (they won't actually shoot a ball), and the other will be the "rebounder."
2. When you yell "Shot!", the "rebounder" needs to quickly turn around.
3. The "rebounder" should turn their back to their partner (the "shooter").
 - a. Tell them to spread their arms and legs out wide, like they're making a big wall with their body. This "wall" stops the "shooter" from getting the ball.
4. After making their "wall," the "rebounder" should jump up with both hands in the air, pretending to grab a basketball at its peak that just came off the rim.
5. As they practice, remind them to:
 - a. Look for the player they're guarding
 - b. Turn their back towards where the shot would come from
 - c. Spread their arms and legs to block the opponent
 - d. Reach up with both hands
6. After a few tries, have the players switch roles so the "shooter" becomes the "rebounder" and vice versa.



Rebound and Outlet (10 Minutes)

Equipment:

1 Basketball & 1 Cone (for kids to form a line away from the basket)

Drill Instructions:

1. Have the player stand around the basket, ready to grab the ball.
2. You (the coach) will shoot the ball off the rim or backboard. It doesn't matter if it goes in, we just need a missed shot to rebound!
3. As the ball comes off the rim, players, one at a time, need to "box out" their imaginary opponents (using what they learned in the last drill). Then, they should jump and grab the ball firmly with both hands.
 - a. Remind them to grab it with two hands and secure it close to the body!
4. Once a player has the ball, they need to pivot. This means they'll keep one foot planted on the ground and spin around with the other foot to face a teammate or you (the coach) who will be waiting near the sideline or original shooting position.

- a. Emphasize pivot and look!
5. The player with the ball should then make a strong, accurate pass to the coach. They can use either a chest pass (pushing the ball straight out from their chest) or a bounce pass (bouncing the ball once on the ground so it reaches their teammate).
 - a. Make sure no one is standing in the passing lane!
6. Explain to the kids that this quick, accurate pass helps them start a "fast break," which means getting the ball down the court super fast for an easy basket!

Drill Purpose:

This drill helps players practice getting the ball after a missed shot and then quickly passing it to a teammate to start a fast break. This gets your team moving down the court quickly for an easy scoring chance!

Target Passing (15 Minutes)

Equipment:

Basketball and Cones (use as targets)

Drill Instructions:

1. Spread out your targets around the basketball court. You can put them in different places and at different distances from where the players will stand.
2. Give each player a basketball, or have them share if you don't have enough for everyone.
3. Have the players stand a few steps away from a target, facing it.
4. Practice Two Types of Passes:
 - a. Chest Pass:
 - i. Tell them to hold the ball with both hands right in front of their chest.
 - ii. They should pretend they are pushing the ball straight out from their chest towards the target.
 - iii. As they push, tell them to take a step forward with one foot. This helps them throw the ball with more power.
 - b. Bounce Pass:
 - i. Tell them to hold the ball with both hands in front of their waist.
 - ii. They should aim to bounce the ball on the floor so it hits the target *after* it bounces.
 - iii. Again, tell them to take a step forward as they throw the ball.
5. Encourage players to try and hit the targets with their passes.
6. Make it More Challenging:
 - a. Have them try to hit different targets around the court.
 - b. Challenge them to hit the same target two or three times in a row.
 - c. Once they get good at hitting close targets, have them take a few steps back to make it harder.

Drill Purpose:

This drill helps players practice passing the ball accurately to a teammate. It teaches them how to make strong and precise passes.

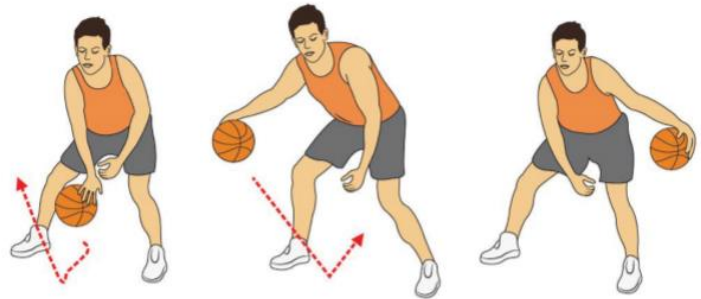
Simple Crossover Dribble (10 Minutes)

Equipment:

1 Basketball per player

Drill Instructions:

1. Have each player find their own spot on the court where they have enough room to dribble without bumping into anyone.
2. Tell players to start dribbling the ball with their favorite hand (the one they use most often) right in front of them, around waist height.
3. Now, tell them to gently push the ball from their favorite hand directly across their body to their other hand. It's like they're handing the ball off to their other hand, but they're still bouncing it. The ball should stay low, around their knees, as it goes across.
4. Once the ball reaches their other hand, they should immediately start dribbling with that hand.
5. Players should keep switching the ball back and forth, pushing it from one hand to the other, making sure to keep dribbling with the hand that has the ball.
6. Encourage them to start very slowly. The goal isn't to be fast right away, but to get a good feel for pushing the ball low and smoothly across their body.
7. Coaching Tips:
 - a. Remind them to push the ball with their fingertips and not to pick it up or bounce it high.
 - b. Emphasize keeping the ball low to the ground and making the switch quickly.
 - c. Make sure they are comfortable dribbling and crossing over with both their dominant and non-dominant hands.



Drill Purpose:

This drill helps players practice switching the ball from one hand to the other while keeping control. It's an important skill for dribbling past defenders during a game. heads up and dodge the defenders in front of them.

Recap (5 Minutes)

Discuss the importance of finding the ball after a shot (rebounding) and making a good, quick pass to a teammate (outlet) to start the offense. Ask them to demonstrate a box-out stance.

WEEK 5

Spacing & Offensive Movement

Warm-up/Stretches (5 Minutes)

Begin each practice with warm-up activities and stretching to get players loosened up and ready to go.

Spacing Drill (15 Minutes)

Equipment:

3 basketballs

Drill Instructions:

1. Have all the players stand randomly on the court. They don't need to be in any special spots to begin.
2. You, the coach, will pass several basketballs onto the court.
3. As soon as a player catches a basketball, everyone else (all the players who *don't* have a ball) needs to quickly move away from their teammates.
4. Find Open Space:
 - a. Imagine you're spreading peanut butter on toast – you want to cover the whole piece of bread, not just one spot. That's how your players should spread out on the court!
 - b. Encourage players to look all around them to find the biggest empty spaces. They shouldn't just stand still; they need to keep moving to find those open spots.
5. While they're playing, use these simple phrases to remind them:
 - a. "Find open space!" (Imagine the court is a big field, and they want to find the empty spots).
 - b. "Don't clump together!" (Remind them not to stand too close to their friends).
6. Keep passing balls and having players react for about 15 minutes. The more they practice, the better they'll get at finding open space!

Drill Purpose:

This drill teaches players to move without the ball to create open areas on the court. This makes it harder for the other team to guard them and gives them space to pass, dribble, and shoot.

Pass, Cut, Shoot (15 Minutes)

Equipment:

1 basketball per group

Drill Instructions:

1. Have all players form a straight line at the top of the big circle (the "key") near the basket.
2. You, the coach, should stand a little closer to the basket, either near the free-throw line or to the side (the "wing").
3. The first player in line passes the ball to you.
4. Immediately after passing, they need to run quickly towards the basket. Think of it like they're trying to sprint past you to get to the hoop. This quick run is called a "cut."
5. As the player cuts/runs towards the basket, you'll give them a soft, easy pass back.
6. The player should try to catch the ball and take a quick shot right away, like a layup (a shot close to the basket) or a regular jump shot, if they're comfortable.



- After the player shoots, they should get their own rebound, pass the ball back to the coach, and go to the back of the line.
- The next player in line repeats the steps.

Drill Purpose:

This drill teaches players to move without the ball after passing to get open for a shot. It helps them understand that after you pass, you shouldn't just stand still!

Mirror Defense (10 Minutes)

Equipment:

One basketball per pair

Drill Instructions:

- Have players pair up.
- Use cones or imaginary lines to create a small square on the court, like a 10x10 foot box. This is your "playing area."
- One player in each pair gets a basketball, but they won't be dribbling yet. They just hold it.
- The player with the ball is the "offensive player." Their job is to move slowly within the square. They can move side to side, forward, and backward.
- They are not trying to get past their partner, just moving to give the defender something to follow.
- The player without the ball is the "defensive player." Their main goal is to stay directly in front of the offensive player, like a mirror. No matter where the offensive player goes, the defender tries to keep their body between the offensive player and an imaginary basket.
 - Teach players to move their feet by sliding them, not by crossing them over. Think of it like a crab walking sideways.
 - Remind them to bend their knees a little, like they're sitting in an invisible chair. This helps them move quicker.
 - Tell defenders to look at the offensive player's belly button. This will help them react to the offensive player's body movements.
- Emphasize that defenders should not reach out, grab, or push the offensive player. The goal is to move their feet to stay in front, not use their hands.
- After a few minutes (about 2-3 minutes), have the players switch roles so the offensive player becomes the defender and vice versa. Do this a few times so everyone gets a chance to practice both roles.

Drill Purpose:

This drill helps players learn how to stay in front of their opponent and move their feet quickly on defense.

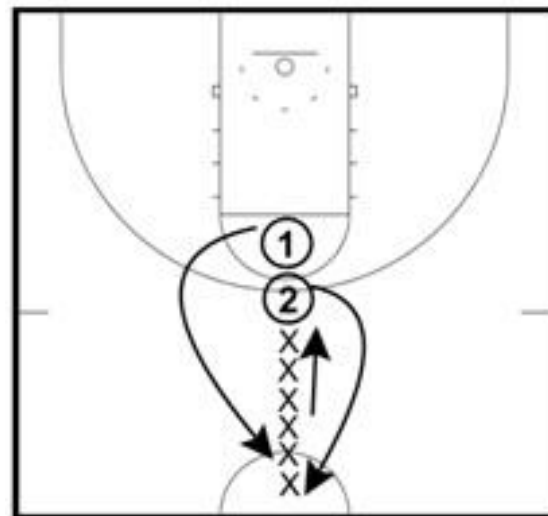
Knockout (10 Minutes)

Equipment:

2 basketballs

Drill Instructions:

- All players line up in a straight line behind the free throw line.
- The first two players in line have a basketball.
- The drill begins with the first person in line taking a shot. If they make it, they quickly rebound their ball and throw it to the next person in line. If they miss, they must rebound the ball and score as quickly as possible.
- As soon as the first player has shot, the second player can begin.
- If player 2 scores before player 1, player 1 is out.
- The drill continues until there is one person left, and they are crowned the winner.



Drill Purpose:

The goal of the game is to make your shot before the person behind you makes their shot. The first shot must always be from the free throw line but after that can be from anywhere on the floor.

Recap (5 Minutes)

Review the importance of staying spread out on offense to create opportunities for teammates, and staying diligently in front on defense to protect the basket. Ask, "What did you learn about finding open space today?"

WEEK 6

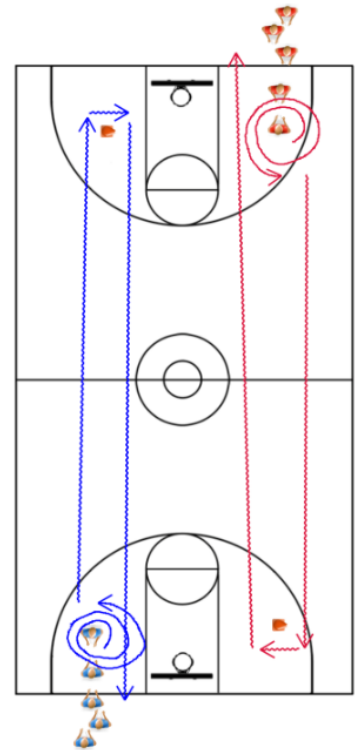
Review & Games

Warm-up/Stretches (5 Minutes)

Begin each practice with warm-up activities and stretching to get players loosened up and ready to go.

Dribble Relay Race (15 Minutes)

1. Split all the players into small teams with the same number of kids on each team.
2. For each team, place one cone at a starting line. Then, put another cone about 15 to 20 big steps away from the first cone. This will be the turning cone.
3. Have each team line up behind their starting cone. The first player in each line should have a basketball.
4. When you say "Go!" the first player from each team starts dribbling their basketball.
They need to dribble the ball all the way down to the far cone.
5. Once they reach the far cone, they should dribble in a small circle around it.
6. After going around the cone, they dribble the ball back to their starting line.
7. When they get back to the starting line, they need to tag the hand of their next teammate in line. This teammate then takes the ball and starts dribbling!
8. The game continues until everyone on the team has had a turn. The first team where everyone finishes and sits down wins!
9. Repeat using both hands and different variations (e.g., backwards, crossovers)



Target Practice Game (15 Minutes)

Equipment:

Basketball & Cones

Drill Instructions:

1. Split all the players into small teams with the same number of kids on each team
2. Place these targets all around the court. Put some close to the players and some farther away.
3. If you want to make it a game, tell the kids that hitting targets closer to them gets fewer points, and hitting targets farther away or in harder spots gets more points. This makes it a fun challenge!
4. Round 1: Chest Pass
 - a. Tell the kids to hold the ball with both hands in front of their chest.
 - b. Explain that they should push the ball straight out from their chest towards the target, stepping forward as they throw.
 - c. Their hands should "follow through" like they're shaking hands with the target.
5. Round 2: Bounce Pass
 - a. Tell the kids to hold the ball with both hands in front of their chest, just like the chest pass.
 - b. Explain that this time, they'll aim the ball to hit the ground about halfway between them and the target.

- c. The ball should bounce up to the target. They should still step forward as they throw.
6. Round 3: Choice
 - a. Encourage them to try both chest passes and bounce passes.
7. Remind them to use two hands for every pass to make it strong and accurate.

Drill Purpose:

This drill helps players practice throwing the ball accurately to a teammate using different types of passes. It's all about aiming carefully and making sure your passes go where you want them to.

Shooting Stations (10 Minutes)

Drill Instructions:

1. If you have more than one basketball hoop, split your players in half, with one group at each hoop. If you only have one hoop, all players will work together at that hoop.
2. Have each player stand about three big steps away from the basket. They'll practice shooting from close range.
3. Focus on **"BEEF"**: Explain that "BEEF" is a helpful way to remember good shooting form:
 - a. **B**alance: Make sure your feet are steady and you're not leaning too much.
 - b. **E**yes: Keep your eyes on the basket.
 - c. **E**lbow: Keep your elbow tucked in, pointing towards the basket.
 - d. **F**ollow-through: After you shoot, your hand should look like it's reaching into a cookie jar.
4. Have the players take turns shooting from their spot. Encourage them to focus on using their "BEEF" form every time.
5. Walk around to each group (or observe all players if you have one hoop). Watch each player shoot and give them positive reinforcement.
6. Remind players to keep practicing their **"BEEF"** form.

Scrimmage or King of the Court (10 Minutes)

Equipment:

(1) Basketball

Recap (5 Minutes)

Bring the team into a huddle. Offer plenty of positive reinforcement for their hard work, effort, and teamwork throughout the first few weeks. Ask each player to name one specific thing they feel they improved on today or since the start of the season. End with a strong team cheer.

WEEK 7

Dribbling & Passing

Warm-up/Stretches (5 Minutes)

Begin each practice with warm-up activities and stretching to get players loosened up and ready to go.

Head-Up Dribbling (15 Minutes)

1. Give one basketball to each player.
2. Have all the players spread out in a designated area on the court. You can use half the court or even a smaller space if you have a lot of players.
3. Tell the players to dribble their basketballs without moving around too much at first.
4. The main goal of this drill is for them to keep their eyes up and look around the gym, not down at their ball.
5. As the players are dribbling, move around to different spots in the designated area.
6. From your spot, you can hold up a certain number of fingers (e.g., 2 fingers, 5 fingers) or call out a color you see in the gym (e.g., "Look at the blue wall!", "See the red sign!").
7. Ask the players to tell you what they see (the number of fingers or the color) while they are still dribbling. This helps them practice looking around.
8. Remind the kids that looking up is super important in basketball.
 - a. In basketball, if you only look at your ball, you won't see your teammates who are open, or the defenders trying to steal the ball, or where you need to go to score.

Two-Ball Dribbling (15 Minutes)

Equipment:

2 basketballs per pair

Drill Instructions:

1. Have each player/partner group stand in their own space with two basketballs.
2. Tell the first partner to try dribbling both balls at the same time, just like they're bouncing them straight down. It's okay if the balls don't bounce perfectly at first!
3. Now, have them try dribbling the balls one after the other. So, one ball goes up while the other goes down, like a drumbeat.
4. This drill is tricky, so remind them that it's okay to make mistakes. The more they try, the better they'll get.



Drill Purpose:

This drill helps players become really good at dribbling with both hands and improve their eye-hand coordination. It's tough, but even trying will make dribbling one ball much easier!

Overhead Passing (10 Minutes)

Drill Instructions:

1. Have the kids get into groups of two, with one basketball for each pair.
2. Tell them to hold the basketball with both hands up over their head, almost like they're about to do a soccer throw-in.
3. Ask them to take a step forward with one foot, then throw the ball to their partner.
 - a. Encourage them to push the ball strongly with both hands from over their head.
 - b. Their arms should reach out all the way toward their partner as they throw.
4. Remind them to aim for their partner's chest.

Shuffle Passing (10 Minutes)

Equipment:

(1) Basketball for each pair

Drill Instructions:

1. Have the kids get into groups of two, with one basketball for each pair.
2. Divide the partners into two groups. Position each group behind the baseline in straight lines and 10 feet apart.
3. The two lines turn inward and face the other group. A basketball is given to the pair (first two players in line).
4. When the signal is given, the first two players of each team quickly side shuffle up the court to the opposite baseline and back while chest passing the ball back and forth to each other.
5. Upon returning, they hand off the ball to the next two players in line.
6. This continues until all players have participated.
 - a. (This relay can also be performed using a bounce pass up and down the court.)

Recap (5 Minutes)

Discuss how looking up while dribbling helps them make better decisions on the court because they can see where their teammates and opponents are.

WEEK 8

Defense & Rebounding

Warm-up/Stretches (5 Minutes)

Begin each practice with warm-up activities and stretching to get players loosened up and ready to go.

Active Hands Defense (15 Minutes)

Equipment:

(1) Basketball for Coach

Drill Instructions:

1. Have all the players spread out a little bit so they have their own space.
2. Defensive Stance: Tell the kids to get into their "ready" position for defense. This means:
 - a. Bend their knees like they're about to sit in a chair.
 - b. Keep their back straight.
 - c. Spread their arms out wide like airplane wings.
 - d. Head and chin up; eyes forward
3. You, the coach, will stand in front of each player, or a small group of players, holding the basketball.
4. Move the basketball in different directions: left, right, up, and down. Don't move it too fast at first.
5. As you move the ball, tell the players to move their hands quickly up/down and side-to-side
6. While they are doing the drill:
 - a. Remind them to keep their knees bent in the "ready" position.
 - b. Encourage quick, shorthand movements
 - c. Remind them to maintain their balance
7. Keep rotating through players or having them work in small groups



Defending without Fouling (10 Minutes)

Explanation:

- Explain to the kids that in basketball, we can't push, hit, hold, trip, or bump into another player. When we do, it's called a foul.
 - a. Show them examples of these actions. For instance, gently push your hand out as if pushing someone, or briefly hold your arm out as if holding someone's shirt.
 - b. Tell them, "We want to play fair and not do these things when we're trying to get the ball back."

Equipment:

Cones

Drill Instructions:

1. The player starts on the baseline in the corner with their back to the opposite baseline.
2. The player begins at an angle and begins to step-slide towards the middle of the floor.

3. After a few step-slides, the player will perform a drop-step and begin sliding back to the sideline.
4. Repeat this drill.

Drill Purpose:

This drill teaches players to change direction in a low, defensive stance. This drill simulates guarding an offensive player who has the ball. This drill also builds endurance in the feet and legs.

Rebounding Tipping Drill (15 Minutes)

Drill Instructions:

1. Have your players stand around the basket, just like they would during a game when someone shoots.
2. You, the coach, will shoot the ball or gently toss it off the backboard or rim so it bounces off. The goal is for the ball to be reachable for your players.
3. Before jumping for the ball, remind players to "box out." This means using their body to block out an imaginary opponent, so they have a better chance of getting to the ball.
4. As the ball comes off the backboard or rim, players should jump up high and try to "tip" it. Tipping means just bouncing the ball with their fingertips *back up* towards the hoop or backboard. It's like gently hitting the ball up instead of catching it.
 - a. Encourage them to use both hands when they tip.
5. After tipping the ball once or twice, players should then try to grab the ball securely with both hands.
6. Keep shooting or tossing the ball, giving all players a chance to practice.

Pivot Practice (10 Minutes)

Equipment:

(1) Basketball

Drill Instructions:

1. Have each player stand still with the ball.
2. Explain that when they stop dribbling or catch the ball, one foot must stay glued to the floor like it's stuck with super glue. This is their pivot foot.
3. Their other foot can move around in any direction.
4. Have players practice taking small steps forward with their moving foot, keeping their pivot foot still.
5. Now, have them try taking small steps backward with their moving foot.
6. Finally, have them move their free foot from side to side.
 - a. Remind them, "One foot stays still!"
7. Stand a few feet away from each player and gently pass them the ball.
8. When they catch it, tell them to immediately choose their pivot foot and start practicing their pivots (forward, backward, and side-to-side).
9. As they pivot, encourage them to turn their head and look around the court, just like they're looking for an open teammate.
10. Emphasize holding the ball close to their body with both hands. Tell them to "Protect the ball!" by keeping it away from imaginary defenders.

Recap (5 Minutes)

Review good defensive posture (staying low, arms out) and the importance of keeping arms up on rebounds to get the ball. Ask, "Why do we keep our pivot foot still?"

WEEK 9

Layups & Court Awareness

Warm-up/Stretches (5 Minutes)

Begin each practice with warm-up activities and stretching to get players loosened up and ready to go.

One-Step Layups (20 Minutes)

Equipment:

One basketball per player

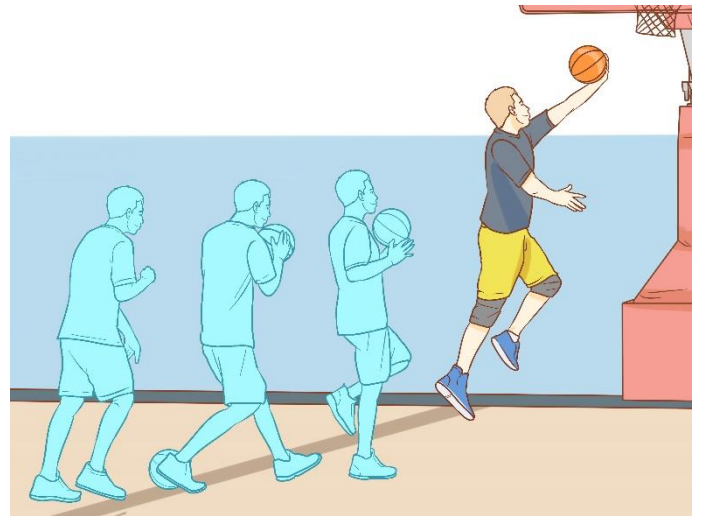
Drill Instructions:

Right Side Layup

1. Have players start on the right side of the basket, a few steps away.
2. Tell them to take one dribble with their right hand.
3. As they dribble, they'll take one step forward with their left foot (this is the foot that isn't on the same side as their shooting hand).
4. From that left foot, they'll jump up towards the basket.
5. While jumping, they'll shoot the ball with their right hand.

Left Side Layup

1. Now, have players move to the left side of the basket, a few steps away.
2. They'll take one dribble with their left hand.
3. As they dribble, they'll take one step forward with their right foot (the foot that isn't on the same side as their shooting hand).
4. From that right foot, they'll jump up towards the basket.
5. While jumping, they'll shoot the ball with their left hand.



Bringing the Ball Up and Shooting

- No matter which side they're shooting from, explain these important steps:
 - a. Use Two Hands, Then One: Tell players to gently bring the ball up with both hands towards the basket. Just before they shoot, they'll let go with one hand and release the ball with only their shooting hand.
 - b. Aim for the Square: Encourage them to aim for the top corner of the small square on the backboard (if there's a square).

Drill Purpose:

This drill teaches players how to shoot a layup using just one step, helping them develop the coordination and touch needed to score close to the basket.

Moving Without the Ball (15 Minutes)

Equipment:

One basketball

Drill Instructions:

1. Spread out all the players around the basketball court. No one should have a ball yet; only you (the coach) will have the ball.
2. Hold the basketball and look at one player. As soon as you look at them, that player needs to quickly move to an open spot on the court, pretending to get ready to catch a pass.
3. Remind the kids that when they are on offense and don't have the ball, they should always be moving. They should never just stand still.
4. Keep looking at different players to get them to move. Use the coaching cues below to help them remember what to do
 - a. "Cut to the basket!" (When they are moving towards the hoop.)
 - b. "Find open space!" (When they need to move away from other players.)
 - c. "Don't stand still!" (Remind them to keep moving.)

Drill Purpose:

This drill teaches players how to move around the court when they don't have the ball to get open for a pass. Moving without the ball helps draw defenders away, creating space for teammates to score.

Lead Pass Drill (15 Minutes)

Equipment:

One basketball per pair

Drill Instructions:

1. Divide the players into pairs. Give one basketball to each pair. Have each pair find an open space on the court.
2. In each pair, one player will be the runner and the other will be the passer. The runner stands slightly in front of the passer.
3. When you say "Go!", the runner starts to jog forward at a steady speed.
4. As the runner jogs, the passer throws the ball ahead of their partner. The goal is for the runner to catch the ball without slowing down or stopping.
 - a. Remind players to throw the ball with a soft, arching throw, like a rainbow, so it's easy to catch.
5. The runner should try to run right to where the ball is going to land and catch it while still moving.
6. After a few passes, have the players in each pair switch roles so the runner becomes the passer and the passer becomes the runner. This way, everyone gets to practice both skills.
7. Encourage players to keep trying until they can consistently throw and catch the ball while moving.

Drill Purpose:

This drill helps players practice throwing the ball to a moving teammate so they can catch it easily without stopping. It teaches them to throw accurately and at the right time, which is important for scoring points in a game.

Recap (5 Minutes)

Discuss how moving to get open without the ball is just as important as moving with the ball, and review the steps for a successful layup, emphasizing the correct footwork for both sides.

WEEK 10

Game Situations

Warm-up/Stretches (5 Minutes)

Begin each practice with warm-up activities and stretching to get players loosened up and ready to go.

Inbounding Drill (20 Minutes)

Equipment:

One basketball per pair

Drill Instructions:

1. Place cones along the sideline (the long line on the side of the court) and the baseline (the short line at the end of the court, under the hoop). These cones show where the ball goes "out of bounds."
2. Split your players into small groups of 3-4 kids.
3. In each group, one player will be the "thrower-in." This player stands outside the cones with the basketball. They can't step on or over the cones.
4. The other players in the group will be "receivers." They stand inside the cones, ready to get the ball.
5. The thrower-in's job is to quickly find a teammate who is open (not being guarded closely) and throw them the ball.
 - a. The thrower-in has only 5 seconds to throw the ball! Help them count it out.
6. The receivers' job is to move around quickly to get away from any imaginary defenders and find an open spot. They can use quick movements like running toward the ball or cutting sharply to get free.
7. After a few passes, have the players switch roles so everyone gets a chance to be the thrower-in and a receiver.

Drill Purpose: This drill helps players practice passing the ball in from out of bounds and receiving the ball when a teammate throws it in. It teaches them how to quickly and accurately get the ball back into play after it goes out of bounds.

Scrimmage (30 Minutes)

Equipment:

One basketball per side

Drill Instructions:

1. Divide your players into small teams of either two players per team (2-on-2) or three players per team (3-on-3). This keeps things simple and gives everyone more chances to touch the ball.
2. Simple Rules
 - a. No stealing: For now, tell kids not to try and steal the ball from each other. We want them to focus on other skills.
 - b. Gentle defense: Encourage kids to stay in front of the player they are guarding, but no pushing or rough play.
 - c. No shot clock: Don't worry about how long they hold the ball. The goal is to learn, not rush.
 - d. No scorekeeping: Don't keep track of who wins or loses. The important thing is for everyone to have fun and learn.
3. Have the teams play a game just like they would in a real basketball game.

4. Coach and Teach (This is the most important part!): Stop the game, even if it's every 30-60 seconds! This is your chance to teach.
5. When you stop the game, tell the kids what they did well. Be specific!
6. If a rule is questioned, gently explain it. Your main job is to help them learn, not just to blow the whistle.
 - a. Remember, the goal is for everyone to enjoy playing and learn something new each time.

Drill Purpose:

This drill helps kids learn how to play together as a team in a real game. It also teaches them basic basketball rules and skills like passing, shooting, and defense in a fun way.

Recap (5 Minutes)

Have a brief discussion about the good decisions they made in the scrimmage and how understanding the basic rules helps everyone play a fair and fun game. Encourage them to observe these rules during their actual games.

WEEK 11

Advanced Shooting and Defense

Warm-up/Stretches (5 Minutes)

Begin each practice with warm-up activities and stretching to get players loosened up and ready to go.

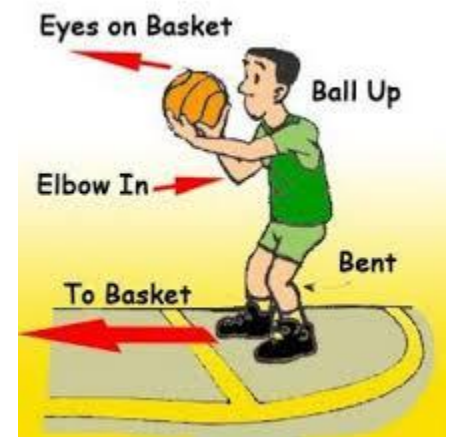
Free Throw Practice (20 Minutes)

Equipment:

One basketball per player

Drill Instructions:

1. Have your players line up in front of the hoop, but much closer than the regular free-throw line. Start about 5 to 8 feet away from the hoop. You might need to adjust this distance based on how strong your players are and how tall the hoop is. The goal is for them to feel successful.
2. Review **"BEEF"** Shooting: This is a simple way to remember how to shoot.
 - a. **B** - Balance: Make sure your feet are shoulder-width apart and you're balanced
 - b. **E** - Elbow: Keep your shooting elbow tucked in and pointed towards the hoop.
 - c. **E** - Eyes: Keep your eyes focused on the hoop.
 - d. **F** - Follow Through: After you shoot, your hand should reach up and "follow through" like you're reaching into a cookie jar on a high shelf.
3. Have each player practice shooting using the **"BEEF"** form.
4. Remind them to use a smooth, continuous motion when shooting. It should be one fluid movement from start to finish.
5. Make it Fun: Turn it into a friendly challenge! See who can make the most free throws in a row.



Drill Purpose:

This drill helps players practice shooting free throws, which are "free points" you get during a game when the other team fouls you. Making free throws can be really important, especially in close games!

Staying in Front (15 Minutes)

Equipment:

One basketball per pair & cones

Drill Instructions:

1. Have your players find a partner. Each pair will need one basketball.
2. Use cones to create a small square.
 - a. A good size is about 10 big steps by 10 big steps (10x10 feet). This keeps the drill focused and prevents players from running all over the court.
3. In each pair, one player will be the **"Offensive Player"** (with the ball), and the other will be the **"Defensive Player"** (without the ball).

- a. **Offensive Player's Job:** The Offensive Player dribbles the ball *slowly* inside the square. Their goal is to try and dribble past the Defensive Player, just like they would try to get to the basket in a real game.
 - b. **Defensive Player's Job:** This is the most important part of the drill! The Defensive Player's only job is to stay directly in front of the Offensive Player. They should shuffle their feet (slide side-to-side without crossing their feet) to keep their body between the Offensive Player and where the basket would be.
4. No Stealing! Remind the Defensive Player that they are *not allowed* to try and steal the ball. The focus is purely on staying in front.
 5. Encourage them to bend their knees and stay in a low, athletic stance, like they're ready to pounce. They can keep their arms out to the sides for balance.
 6. Tell them to watch the Offensive Player's body and try to guess which way they'll go next so they can move quickly to block them.
 7. After a few minutes (about 2-3 minutes), have the players switch roles so the Offensive Player becomes the Defensive Player and vice versa. Do this a few times so everyone gets practice on both sides.

Drill Purpose:

This drill teaches players how to properly guard an opponent and stay in front of them, which is a key defensive skill in basketball. It helps players practice staying balanced and quick on their feet.

Passing Drill (15 Minutes)

Equipment:

One basketball per pair & cones

Drill Instructions:

1. Have each player find a partner to practice with.
2. Have partners stand a few steps apart. Start with a Bounce pass by pushing the ball firmly towards the floor so it bounces up to their partner's chest. Remind them to aim for their partner's chest after the bounce.

Pass Around a Cone:

1. Place a cone between each pair of partners.
2. Tell players to pretend the cone is a defender. They need to bounce the ball around the cone so their partner can still catch it.
3. Encourage them to think about how they can make the ball curve or go around the cone.

Passing with a "Pretend" Defender:

1. One player stand between the passer and the receiver, but they don't try to steal the ball. This is the "passive defender."
2. The passer needs to figure out how to bounce the ball around the "passive defender" so their partner can receive it.
3. They might need to bounce the ball quicker and lower to fit through a small space.
4. Repeat the same steps using a Chest pass

Drill Purpose:

This drill helps players practice passing in different ways. It teaches them to change how they pass the ball so their teammates can catch it easily, even when a defender is in the way.

Recap (5 Minutes)

Discuss the importance of a strong defense in preventing opponents from scoring easy points, and how making free throws can be crucial in winning close games. Praise their sustained effort.

WEEK 12

Rebounding & Outlet Drills

Warm-up/Stretches (5 Minutes)

Begin each practice with warm-up activities and stretching to get players loosened up and ready to go.

Rebounding & Fast Break Outlet (15 Minutes)

Equipment:

One basketball and cones

Drill Instructions:

1. Place two cones near halfway to half-court, one on each sideline. These are your "outlet spots."
2. Have your players line up under the basket.
3. You (the coach) will stand a few steps away from the basket and shoot the ball.
 - a. Make sure it bounces off the backboard or rim so players can grab the rebound.
4. As soon as you shoot, players should pretend there's an imaginary opponent trying to get the rebound. They need to "box out" by getting between the basket and their imaginary opponent.
5. When the ball comes off the rim, players should jump up and grab it with two hands.
 - a. Tell them to bring the ball in close to their body to protect it.
6. Once they have the ball, they need to quickly turn (or "pivot") towards one of the sidelines. They're looking for a teammate at one of the "outlet spots" you marked with a cone.
7. The player with the rebound should then throw a strong, accurate pass to the teammate (or the assistant coach) standing at the outlet spot.
8. The player who receives the pass at the outlet spot should immediately start dribbling quickly up the court towards the other basket, pretending to start a fast break.

Drill Purpose:

This drill helps your team quickly turn a defensive rebound into a fast offensive attack. Players will learn how to get the ball after a missed shot and quickly pass it up the court to start a fast break.

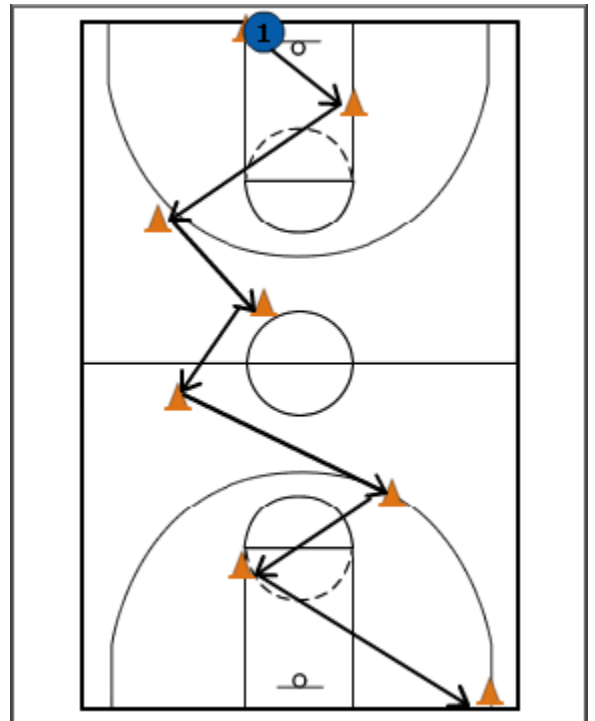
Zig-Zag Dribble (15 Minutes)

Equipment:

One basketball per person and 10-15 Cones

Drill Instructions:

1. Place 10-15 cones in a zig-zag pattern. Make the turns a little tighter than usual. This means the cones should be closer together.
 - a. Optional: Pick a few spots along the course where players *must* perform a crossover dribble. You can mark these spots with a different colored cone.
2. Tell the kids they'll try to complete the course as fast as they can while keeping control of the ball.



- a. Show them how to go through the cones and where they need to do the crossover dribble.
3. Have players go through the course one at a time, or in small teams if you want to make it a race.
4. Use a stopwatch to time each player or team from start to finish. This adds a fun challenge!

Drill Purpose:

This drill helps players practice dribbling the ball while moving in different ways and controlling the ball. It also helps them learn to dribble with both hands and change directions quickly.

Spot Shooting (15 Minutes)

Equipment:

One basketball per player & 5 cones

Drill Instructions:

1. Place cones on the court at different spots around the basket. Imagine a big circle around the hoop, and put cones at different points on that circle. Good places are:
 - a. Right Wing: About halfway between the corner and the top of the key on the right side.
 - b. Left Wing: About halfway between the corner and the top of the key on the left side.
 - c. Top of the Key: The area straight out in front of the hoop, near the free-throw line.
 - d. Right Baseline/Corner: The very corner of the court on the right side, near the hoop.
 - e. Left Baseline/Corner: The very corner of the court on the left side, near the hoop.
2. Have your players line up at one of the cone spots.
3. Each player will take 3 to 5 shots from that spot, rotating in line after each shot
4. **Focus on Form:** As they shoot, remind them to use their **BEEF** form:
 - a. **Balance:** Make sure their feet are under them and they're not leaning.
 - b. **Eyes:** Keep their eyes on the basket.
 - c. **Elbow:** Keep their shooting elbow pointed towards the hoop.
 - d. **Follow Through:** Make sure their hand finishes like they're reaching into a cookie jar.
5. Encourage them to imagine the ball going into the hoop before they even shoot.
6. If they're ready, have them practice catching the ball and shooting quickly, without holding onto it for too long.
7. Once each player has taken their 3-5 shots, they move to the next cone spot. Keep rotating through all the spots.

Drill Purpose:

This drill helps players practice shooting from different areas on the court, making them better shooters from anywhere. It also helps them learn to shoot quickly.

Recap (5 Minutes)

Review how strong rebounding directly leads to offensive opportunities and the vital role of a good outlet pass in starting a fast break. Praise their effort on the more challenging dribbling course.

WEEK 13

Full Court Fun & Review

Warm-up/Stretches (5 Minutes)

Begin each practice with warm-up activities and stretching to get players loosened up and ready to go.

Full Court Dribbling Race (15 Minutes)

Equipment:

One basketball per group/team and cones

Drill Instructions:

1. Divide all the players into 2 or 3 teams. Try to make the teams even.
2. Have each team line up at one end of the basketball court, right on the baseline (the line at the very end of the court).
3. Each team will need one basketball. The first person in line should have the ball.
4. Place a cone at the opposite baseline, directly across from each team's line. This cone is where they will turn around.
5. On the whistle or "Go," they need to dribble all the way to the cone at the other end.
6. Once they reach the cone, they should touch it with their hand and turn around and dribble the ball all the way back to their team's line.
7. As soon as they get back, they tag the hand of the next teammate in line.
8. The player who was tagged then takes the ball and starts dribbling down the court, just like the first player did.
9. The first team to have all their players complete the relay wins! Repeat 2-3 times

Drill Purpose:

This drill helps players practice dribbling the ball without losing control while also building their ability to keep going (stamina). It's also a fun way to cheer on teammates!

Full Court Pass & Move (15 Minutes)

Equipment:

One basketball

Drill Instructions:

1. Divide your players into two teams. Try to make the teams even.
2. Have each team start at opposite ends of the basketball court.
3. One player on a team starts with the basketball at their end of the court.
 1. The goal for the team with the ball is to move it all the way to the other end of the court and try to score, using mostly passes.
4. To make it easier for young kids and to focus on passing, each player can only take one dribble at most when they have the ball. After that one dribble, they must pass or shoot.
5. As soon as a player passes the ball, they should move to an open space. Don't just stand still!
6. Encourage players to look for teammates who are open and not surrounded by defenders.
7. The other team tries to stop the passes and get the ball back, just like in a real game.

Drill Purpose:

This drill helps your team practice passing the ball to their teammates and moving to open spaces on the court. It teaches them to work together and communicate without relying too much on dribbling.

Scrimmage (20 Minutes)**Equipment:**

One basketball

Recap (5 Minutes)

Gather the team. Celebrate their progress throughout the season and discuss how all the individual skills they've learned now come together to make them better players in a real game. Remind them of the "fun" aspect of basketball.

WEEK 14

Celebration & Fun Games

Warm-up/Stretches (5 Minutes)

Begin each practice with warm-up activities and stretching to get players loosened up and ready to go.

Skills Challenge (20 Minutes)

Equipment:

One basketball per player and cones

Drill Instructions:

1. Dribbling Station: A timed dribbling obstacle course (could be the more complex one from Week 12).
2. Shooting Station: Players make as many shots as possible in 60 seconds from a close, easy range (e.g., 3-5 feet).
3. Passing Station: Players try to hit a target X number of times with different types of passes (chest, bounce, overhead) from various distances.

Keep scores if the kids enjoy a friendly competition, but heavily emphasize participation, effort, and sportsmanship over winning.

Scrimmage (30 Minutes)

Equipment:

One basketball

Recap (5 Minutes)

End the season with a big, enthusiastic team cheer. Have a collective "thank you" from the coaches to the players for their hard work and dedication. Lead a high-five line to celebrate a fantastic season of learning, growth, and fun in basketball!

Drill List: PRIMARYLY FOR GRADES (K-3)

DRIBBLING

Red-light/Green light:

Have all players line up on the baseline with a ball. On your whistle the players begin dribbling towards the other baseline. Have them walk for the first couple of rounds. On the next whistle the players must stop either with a stride stop or jump stop and get into the “ready-triple threat” position. If they lose control of their ball or don't immediately stop they must return to the baseline. The first player to make it to the opposite baseline is the winner. On the return trip have them use the left hand. Progress to having them run and dribble.

Snake Dribbling:

All players with a ball. Players form a winding line in the middle of the court; they are spaced a few feet apart. The players all begin dribbling while in the line. The player at the end of the line must dribble through the line weaving in and out of the other players until they reach the front of the line and stop (they continue dribbling in a stationary position) each time a player is at the end of the snake they must work their way to the front and stop. You can progress with this drill to having the snake move around the court, have the players in line try to knock the ball away from player attempting to make their way to the front of the line and have players use their non- dominate hand.

Staring Dribble Drill:

Pair up players according to skill and size. Have players face each other and hold the ball in whatever hand they wish. On your whistle the players must begin dribbling and staring into each other's eyes. If a player blinks, looks away or looks down at their ball the other player earns a point. They begin a new game. The first player to 5 points wins. You can use many variations of this drill; use their weak hand only, allow them to move around, switch up partners; add a second ball for more advanced players.

SPLAT:

All players have a ball and stand with the coach in the center circle in the middle of the gym. The coach has a soft ball (nerf or other soft skin ball). The coach calls out a player's name and throws the soft ball into the air. The player whose name was called puts down their basketball and runs to get the soft ball. All other players dribble as fast as they can away from the player with the soft ball. When the player catches the ball and yells “stop” all players must stop immediately and put their ball down beside them. The player with the soft ball can take 3 steps towards the closest player and try to throw the ball at them. If the target is hit they have to give their ball to the player who got them out and return to the center circle. If the target catches the soft ball or the player throwing the ball misses, the original person stays in the middle. Everyone returns to the middle and the ball is thrown into the air again.... the coach calls a new name each time.

Bird on a Wire:

All players are on the base line with a ball. One player is the “bird” and is standing on a line that goes across from sideline to sideline. On the coaches command all the players speed dribble across the court to the opposite baseline. The “bird” tries to tag the players trying to cross the court but must stay on the line. They can run all along the line. If a player is tagged, they get rid of their ball and become a bird too. Do several rounds. You can vary this by staggering the “birds” on different lines across the court and by having them steal the ball instead of tagging the player.

Musical Cones or Hula Hoops:

This is a fun dribbling drill that is a twist on musical chairs. Hula Hoops make the game really fun, but you can substitute cones if you don't have access to 10 Hula Hoops. Each player gets a hula hoop or a cone and a ball. The players spread out around the court. On your whistle (or if you have music in your gym...when the music starts) the players start dribbling around the court. The coach removes one to the hula hoops or cones. On the coach's next whistle (or when the music stops) the players must speed dribble and get one foot inside the hula hoop, or one foot on the cone. The player without a hula hoop or cone is out of the game. Continue until only one player remains. Vary the game requiring certain types of dribbling or allowing players to knock the other player's balls away during the game.

Dribble Around Defenders:

Have 4 or 5 players stand down the center of the court. These players can't move their feet, but they can use their hands and lean for the ball. The other players start from one end and try to dribble in a weave pattern through the defenders. The goal is to get through the defenders without losing control of their ball or having it touched by a defender.

1 V 1 dribbling:

Pair up players according to skill and size. Line up pair either along the base line or across the sideline (depending on how many pair you have. You want each pair to have lots of space) One player has the ball and is on offense. The other player lines up

about 3 ft away and is on defense. The object for the offense is to try to dribble the ball across the court, the defense tries to steal the ball or stop the dribble of the offense.

PASSING

Line Coach Pass:

Line up all players in a line facing the coach. Each player has a ball. Have each player pass the ball to the coach and the coach passes it back to the player. This is a good drill to introduce passing to players. It allows the coach to instruct all players on the proper passing technique. Have players focus on passing and catching with 2 hands, 2 eyes and 2 feet. Watch for players stepping into the pass and snapping the hands towards the target. Make sure that when receiving the pass, the players hands are ready and in the proper position. Do several rounds up and down the line. Show both the chest pass and the bounce pass.

Wall Pass:

Each player has a ball. Have players find a spot on the wall. Have player start making a bounce pass to the wall and catching the return. Progress to players performing a chest pass and catching the return.

Give and Go:

Divide team up into 2 lines facing each other about 10ft apart. One ball is needed. The first person with the ball makes a chest pass to the opposite line and then runs to the end the opposite line.

Passing Line Relay:

Divide team into 2 equal teams. Line them up across the court from sideline to sideline about 5ft apart. The first player in each line has a ball. They pass the ball to the next player in line. That player must turn 180 degrees using a pivot and passes to the next player in line. This continues to the end of the line and then back to the front. If the ball is dropped or the pivot is not done properly the team must send the ball back to the start to begin again.

Triangle Passing:

Divide players into groups of 3. Have each group form a triangle. Have them pass to each other into a clockwise direction. Then have them pass in a counterclockwise direction. Progress with this drill by having the groups of 3 move around the court while continuing to pass and maintain proper spacing.

Rapid Passing:

One player is in the center of the key with a basketball. All other players are lined up about 2 feet in from the 3 point arc. On the coaches command the player in the key passes the ball to the player furthest on the left, that player immediately passes the ball back to the player in the center. The player continues passing quickly to the next player all across the line until they have passed to each player. Then the player at the far right takes the center position and the player from the middle gets in line on the far left. Each player rotates through rapid passing. All kinds of passes can be used. Emphasize good form in passing and receiving.

Ultimate Basketball:

Divide team into 2 teams of 5. The game is played on the full court. The teams cannot dribble and can only take 2 steps. Teams pass the ball down the court and try to get the ball passed to a player behind the baseline, teams get 5 points for each time they do are able to do that. If a pass is dropped the other team gets possession. First team to get to 20 points wins. Emphasize communication, passing under pressure and getting open for a pass.

4 Square Passing:

Set up a large square in one half of the court. Have players divide up on each corner of the square. Each corner has a ball. The coach tells the players what kind of pivot (right/left) they will do and what kind of pass (bounce/chest). On the whistle the first player in each line dribbles to the center of the square, performs the pivot and passes the ball back to the line. The player then follows the pass to the back of that line. After they get the hang of it see how many passes they can do in a row or how long they can go without dropping a pass.

Middleman Passing:

Divide team up into groups of 3. Have the 3 players line up a couple of feet apart in a straight line. Player 1 on the right has a ball and Player 3 on the left has a ball. Player 2 is in the middle. Player 1 passes to player 2; player 2 passes right back to Player 1 and turns to Player 3. Player 3 passes to player 2 who passes it immediately back to Player 3. Player 2 turns back to player 1 to start the whole sequence over again. Do rounds of 30 seconds and then switch positions. Progress to adding a pivot to the drill before the pass.

SHOOTING

Pizza Waiter:

This is a silly drill to introduce and reinforce proper shooting form. Have all players in ready position. Have them show you how a waiter would bring you pizza on a tray. Make sure all players have their palm facing up with their arm bent in an L shape under the hand. The elbow should be over the knee and under the hand. As the players show you their Pizza Waiter position, place a ball on their "tray". Instruct them that a good waiter doesn't drop their food so they need to use their other hand to gently hold the pizza (ball) on the tray. After they are able to show you the proper position have the players toss their "pizza" in the air until you blow your whistle. On the whistle the players should get into their Pizza Waiter position. Make corrections as needed. Do several rounds.

Cookie Jar:

Tell players that at the end of their shots they need to be trying to get cookies out of a cookie jar up high on a shelf. Arm extended, wrist bent, fingers down. Have players go through the shot progression without a ball. Have them show you ready-triple threat position, bent knees, pizza waiter, push up with legs, cookie jar. Have them stand around the basket and shoot an imaginary ball several times, this will help them focus on the technique without having to worry about the ball too.

Shoot To Wall:

Have players stand 3 feet away from the wall and shoot up to the wall. Players catch the ball and repeat. Make brief adjustments. Help them with verbal cues to remember the shooting sequence. Progress to marking a square on the wall and having them shoot to the target.

Partner Line Shooting:

Partners are positioned on a line about 10-15 ft apart. The goal is for the shooter to land the ball on the line. Players should hold the ball in good form, directly over the line. The player shoots the ball up and tries to have it land directly on the line. The partner catches the ball and then it is their turn to try to shoot the ball to land on the line. Teams get a point for every time their ball lands on the line.

Dribble and Shoot:

Divide team up into 2 groups. Have groups lined up at half court. Mark spots on both sides of the basket with a cone. Those are the spots that the players will shoot from. On coach's command, players from each line dribble down the court stops at the cone and shoots. After making the shot or making 2 attempts the player gets the rebound, dribbles back to the line and passes the ball to the next player in line.

2 on 1 shooting drill:

2 lines are formed at half court. These players are the offensive players. One line is formed under the basket. These players are the defense. On the coaches command the offensive players dribble down towards the basket, pass to the open player and shoot at the basket. The defensive player tries to steal the ball. The defensive player is awarded a point for a steal or getting a rebound off a missed shot. Players rotate to a different line after each turn.

1-2 Put It Up:

Have your team line up across the baseline. All players have a ball. Explain & demonstrate the footwork and shot progression of a layup. Have the players begin walking while dribbling their ball across the court. Give them the verbal cue "pick it up", players should pick up dribble. Give second verbal cue "1-2 Put It Up". Players should attempt to step twice...first with the right foot, then the left foot...and then the right-hand w/ball and right leg go UP for the shot. Repeat several times.

DEFENSE

Pistol Defense:

Set team up in a 5 v 5 formation with offense and defensive players. Give one player a ball and have all other defends get into the proper defensive position. Have them point their fingers (or pistols) at their player and the ball. Demonstrate how to move and adjust to stay between their player and the basket, while also being able to see the player with the ball. Have offensive players pass the ball around and have the players adjust for each pass. Do several rounds and then switch teams.

Stance and Slide

- Where they go: Line players up at lane-line (outside of key), facing mid-court. Right foot touching the lane-line.
- On whistle, player gets in defensive stance.
- Next whistle, players slide to other side of lane and touch line with left foot. Continue back and forth for 30 seconds.
- Key point: Lead foot should be pointing in direction player is sliding.
- Make it a game: coach blows whistle and points left or right to vary direction of players.

Side to Side

- Where to go: Two teams lined up in corners. One team on offense, each with ball.
- On whistle, offensive player dribbles to each cone. Defensive player slides in good stance, staying a half step in front of dribbler.
- At each cone, offensive player uses change of direction dribble (crossover, between legs, etc.)
- Key point: Defensive player should be at arm's length from dribbler.
- Make it a game: Upon reaching final cone, offensive player dribbles on breakaway to basket. Defender tries to stop lay-up. Offense and defense then switch.