

Welcome and Introduction

Welcome to the 2007 Desert Foothills Basketball Club Coaching Manual. This manual is a compilation of knowledge, advice, sample practices and training programs from a variety of sources. Many experienced basketball coaches who have participated in our past programs, basketball trainers who have worked with the Desert Foothills Competitive teams, and former players who have played at the college and professional level all have openly provided much of what you will find printed in this handbook.

The aim of this handbook is to provide coaches of this age group with the following:

- *What to expect in terms of player behavior.*
- *How to teach basketball fundamentals.*
- *Basic techniques to teach at this age.*
- *Drills and exercises to use during practices*

We believe that this handbook will guide you in the right direction, and will provide you the basic knowledge and insights into coaching the young basketball player. Many of the fundamentals, drills, games and practice plans may be new to you so please take the time to read this handbook and try some of the skills and techniques prior to practices.

Our Mission:

To introduce the game of basketball to children that are in 1st and 2nd grade in an environment that centers on the development of fundamentals, teamwork, promotes fun, provides each player with an opportunity to touch the ball often, and excites them to return to the basketball court.

Characteristics of a 1st-2nd Grade Player

- Short attention span.
- Can attend to only one problem at a time.
- May understand simple rules that are explained briefly and demonstrated.
- May or may not understand or remember what the lines mean on the court, what team they are playing on or what goal they are going for. We need to be patient and laugh with them as they get “lost” on the court.
- Easily bruised psychologically. Shout praise often. Give “hints” don’t criticize.
- Need generous praise and to play without pressure. No extrinsic rewards (trophies, medals, etc.) should be given for winning.
- Prefer “parallel play” (Will play on a team, but will not really engage with their teammates. Thus, a 3 against 3 game is, in reality, a 1 against 5 game because they all want the ball at the same time.
- Very individually oriented (me, mine, my).
- Constantly in motion, but, with no sense of pace. They will chase something until they drop. They are easily fatigued but recover rapidly.

- Development for boys and girls are quite similar.
- Physical coordination limited. Eye - hand coordination is not developed.
- Love to run, jump, roll, and hop.
- Catching or throwing skills not developed.
- Can balance on their “good” foot.

Things You Can Expect

- Most players cry immediately when something is hurt. Some cry even when something is not hurt.
- No matter how loud we shout, or how much we “practice” it, they cannot or will not pass the ball.
- Somebody will come off the court in need of a toilet. Somebody will stay on the court in need of a toilet.
- Twenty seconds after the start of a game, every player will be within 5 feet of the ball.
- During the season, you will end up tying at least 40-50 shoelaces.
- They will do something that is absolutely hysterical. Make sure that you laugh!

Coaching Rational

It is important to understand at the outset that players coming to any sport prior to the age of 8 years old, in general, do not do so by their own choice. As a result, their coaches need to give them something about which to get excited. Further, at this age, learning to play basketball is secondary to most other things in their lives.

With the above assumptions, lets look at some things that we can do to energize the younger players, and, hopefully, get them to the point where they will enthusiastically sign up for next year!

- Each session should be geared around touching the ball as many times as possible. Involve the ball in as many activities as possible. Basic movements such as running, skipping, hopping, etc. need to be emphasized
- Training should not last for more than 60 to 90 minutes. This is primarily due to the physical fatigue and attention span considerations.
- Have as many different kinds of activities ready as you can get into one hour. Emphasis needs to be placed on what is FUN!
- Every player should bring his or her own ball.
- Every player should bring plenty of water for breaks.
- Remember that although they may have very similar birthdays, their physical and / or mental maturity may vary as much as 36 months.
- Activities need to accommodate these individual differences whenever possible.

- Team play and passing is an alien concept to these players. They know that if they pass the ball, they may never get it back. In fact, they often steal it from their own teammates.
- Plan for at least four, 90-second drink breaks, especially in warmer weather. Their “cooling system” is not as efficient as in older players.

Expectations

We have spent countless hours over the past 10 years putting together this handbook. It is filled with many great drills and ideas to help you coach a successful youth basketball team. We have broken down drills into basic basketball fundamental categories that will aid you as a coach and parent get the most out of your players with limited time and facilities. We have sections that include teaching basketball fundamentals, selecting and using the drills, practice planning, game strategy and individual player development. Finally, we put our focus not only on player development but also on the kids enjoying the sport of basketball in an atmosphere of good sportsmanship and fair play with an equal opportunity. We want the kids to have fun while learning basketball fundamentals.

There is too much material for any one player to absorb in one season and don't expect all players to develop at the same rate. Just by following this handbook will not make your child a competitive player or your team a championship team. We understand that 90% of the recreational league players will never play competitive basketball or play on a Middle School team or High School team. As a recreational coach you should not expect anything more than teaching kids basketball fundamentals in a fun and organized way and encourage all players and parents to continue training outside of your team sessions.

For those players that desire a more competitive and higher level, we suggest you start with the individual player development section. This will help players develop at a higher skill level but the commitment needs to be consistent on a year round basis. Do not expect your child to work on their skills a couple hours for a few weeks and magically turn into a competitive player. Natural athleticism will always provide an advantage but if your child works on the individual player development drills on a consistent basis you can almost guarantee great improvement.

How to use this basketball handbook

This handbook contains many articles, drills, teaching hints and practice plans that can be used for players of all ages and skill levels. We also include DFAC philosophies for game situations for both offense and defense. This handbook is a work in progress and we will be constantly updating the handbook. Understand that there is too much material here for any one team to incorporate in one season instead it should be used as a building block for younger players and can continue to be followed all the way to their High School years.

Organizing practices, teaching fundamentals using the drills and coaching game-strategies are all vitally important the success of young players and their teams. Start with the "[Key Pages](#)" and use the basketball handbook to help select your offenses and defenses. We have organized all the materials to help you organize great practice sessions and to promote fundamental team play. We have put the complete contents together in one handbook and also broken down each section for easy reference.

We also have a player development section that includes player tips and a training manual that parents can use to develop their child outside of normal DFAC practices and games.

We hope that you not only find this material useful as a coach and parent but actually implement in materials into your coaching and training routines.

Stretching/ Warm-Ups

It is important not to go overboard with stretching at this age. Kids at this age are very flexible and too much stretching can do more harm than good. Listed below are some good warm ups to get the kids going and capture their attention. More than anything, the stretching gives the players a routine and can help get them focused for the upcoming practice.

Court Position Game – To get the players to learn the positions on the court, call out the different positions on the court and have them run to them. You would yell, “Elbow, Baseline, half court, short corner, etc.”

Jumping Jacks – Have the players each count and perform 20 jumping jacks

Line Jumps – Have each player pick a line and jump side-to-side over the line over front to back.

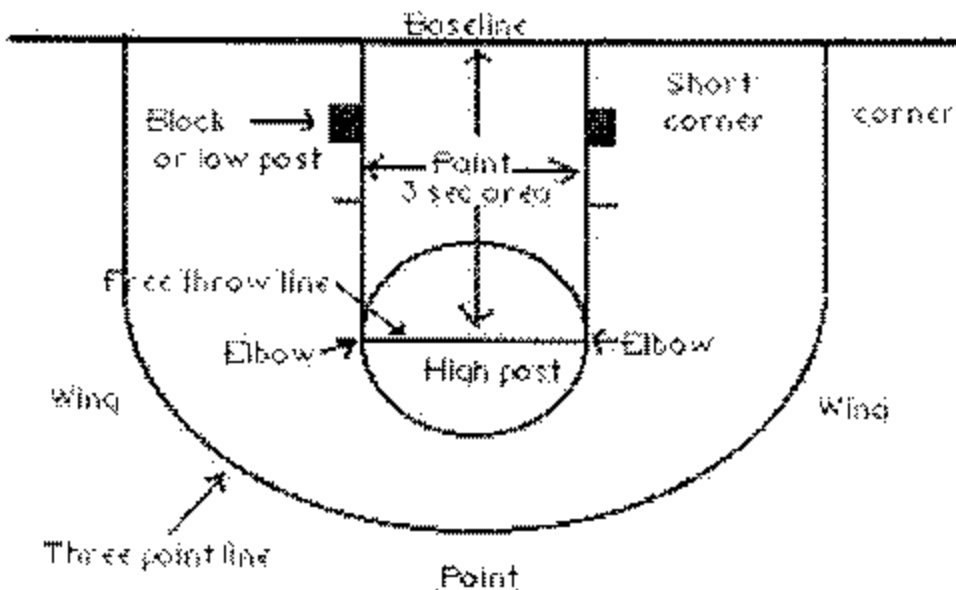
Arm Circles – Have the players do arm circles forward and backwards and large and small circles.

Follow the leader – Run circles around the court and have the players follow you to get warmed up. You can run in zigzag lines and in different movements to keep them on your toes and alert.

Court Positions

Listed below are the different positions on the court and the terminologies that basketball coaches use. It is important to teach the players each spot as it will be easier to communicate with them during practice and in games to place them in the correct positions on the court.

Basketball Court Terminology



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Coming Soon

Ball Handling Section

The Ball handling section teaches the player how to “handle the ball” while playing basketball. This section lists the different techniques and positions the players will be in during the games and the proper form to hold the basketball.

Listed in the manual are basketball drills that players can perform to help develop their muscle strength and hand-eye coordination. There are many ball handling drills that are not basketball moves that would not be performed in the games. However, working with the players on these drills will help them reach a greater level of comfort with the basketball in their hands. This will also help them improve in other areas of development such as passing, shooting and dribbling ability.

Tips for teaching the ball handling

1. Make sure players use correct form when performing drills
2. In order to see improvement, these drills MUST be performed at game speed.
3. After the players are able to perform the drills with proper form encourage them to go as hard as possible. Making mistakes is okay during these drills if it's due to them pushing themselves to go harder.

Ball Handling Drills

Finger Grabs

Hold the ball with the fingertips, squeezing it while rotating it back and forth from hand to hand.

Ball Slaps

Hold the basketball in your right hand and transfer it to your left hand by slapping it into your left hand as firmly as possible. The ball should continue to be transferred back and forth from right to left hand.

- *Palms do not touch the ball, only the fingertips and finger pads.*

Wrist Flicks

Perform the shooting motion with your wrist and snap the wrist.

Squeeze Drill

Arms up over your head, elbows locked and squeeze the ball out of your hand back and forth.

Tap Drill

Start out like the Squeeze drill, (Elbows locked) and tap the ball back and forth between your hands. Keep the ball moving back and forth and bring the arms down to waist and back up again.

Toss and Catch

Throw the ball straight up and catch it with fingertips not using any part of the body. Now throw it higher and clap 3 times before you catch it.

Keep your feet stationary. Toss the ball out in front and step up and catch the ball with a quick stop in triple threat. Repeat, only this time square up to a basket.

Holding the Ball

Hold the ball in triple threat position. Move the ball around without moving your feet. Use rips to move the ball side to side. Next add jab steps and pivot forward and backwards.

Body Circles

- **Head** - Start moving the ball around your head. Bring the ball behind your head and catch it with your other hand behind your head and bring it around head and back going faster and faster.
- **Waist** – Circle around the waist.
- **Legs** – Circle around the legs below your knees. (*Keep your feet together and slightly bend your knees*)
- **Right Leg, Left Leg**
- **In and Out** – Circle around legs once, drop right leg back and go through, bring leg back up and go all the way around and then same with the left leg and continue.

Figure 8

Ball Rolls

Keep feet together, bend over and roll the ball around your legs. Start out using only the left hand, then only the right hand and then both hands. Try to develop a nice smooth touch and move the ball around the legs as quickly as possible. Advance to **Figure 8 Dribbling**.

Cradle or Single Flip

The ball is held at knee level between the legs with one hand in front and one hand in back. Drop the ball and reverse hand positions and catch the ball before it hits the ground. Continue alternating hands.

(Younger players may need to catch it off the bounce)

Dribbling Section

As beginning players are learning the basics of basketball, one of the easier concepts for them to learn is to dribble the basketball. This section will teach coaches and players how to dribble correctly, the types of dribbles, and drills and games that the players can learn to become great at dribbling the basketball.

The section has been broken up into 6 segments:

1. How to Dribble

2. Dribbling Violations

3. Types of Dribbles

4. Stationary Dribbling Drills

5. Dribble Moves

6. Dribble Games

Section 1: How to Dribble

- Dribble the ball off of the finger pads and not the palms of your hands, and your weight should be on the balls of your feet.
- Don't look at the ball. Keep your head up and eyes forward.
- You must learn to use either hand so when doing drills always work both hands.

Section 2: Dribbling Violations

Traveling – This is when a player runs with the ball without dribbling.

Double Dribble – When a player dribbles the ball, picks the ball up then dribbles again.

Carry or Palming violation – When the player's hand comes underneath the ball when they dribble it is a carrying violation.

Section 3: Type of Dribbles

1. Control Dribble

Use this dribble when the defender is in a good position but too far away to touch the ball.

- Knees bent, Chest out and back straight, similar to a sprinter coming out of the blocks in a race.
- Feet and shoulders are square to the defender.
- The dribble should come up to your thigh.
- The key here is that you need to have the ball in a control dribble before you make most moves.

2. Power Dribble

Use this when the defender is right on you and ready to touch the ball, deflect it or steal it.

- The key is to protect the ball by keeping your body between the defender and the ball. Get your forearm up and use it as an arm bar to protect the ball.
- Dribble the ball very low and bounce the ball behind your rear foot to keep it far away from the defender.
- You will move in a step slide and you must be able to move forwards and backwards.

3. Speed Dribble

Defender is out of position and you're wide open to advance the ball quickly up the court.

- You run at full speed.
- You're almost throwing the ball out in front and sprinting to go get it.
- Your wrist should bend back almost 90 degrees so that you can push the ball out in front of you.
- Since there is no one in position to take the ball from you, you can let the ball bounce very high - all the way up to your chest.
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6 Reasons to Dribble:

1. To advance the ball up the court.
2. To create a shot for yourself or drive to the hoop.
3. To create a shot for a teammate.

4. To improve a passing lane or angle.
5. To get out of trouble.
6. To kill the clock at the end of a game.

Section 4: Stationary Dribbling Drills

Dribble High-Low

Start by dribbling the ball in front of you so that the ball reaches waist high. Gradually bounce the ball harder and harder until you are dribbling the ball as high as your shoulders. Then gradually dribble the ball lower and lower until you are on one knee, finishing as close to the floor as possible. Pound the ball to keep it going and bring it back up to your waist. Repeat with your other hand.

Kills

Dribble the ball waist high then suddenly slam down (Kill) the ball as low as you can and hold it for a few seconds and then bring it back up to waist high. Do this several times and repeat with the other hand.

Machine Gun

Get on your knees and dribble the ball as fast and as hard as you can in front of you keeping the ball as low as possible.

Typewriter

While still on your knees dribble using only one finger of one hand. Then switch fingers and rotate fingers dribbling about 5 times with each finger. Switch hands and repeat.

V-Front

Dribble the ball crossing it in front of you making a "V" with the dribble. Try to get the ball out as wide as you can.

Low V-Front

Dribble the ball low back and forth in front of you making a "V" with the dribble as low as you can.

High V-Front

Same as Low-V only dribble the ball as high as your shoulders each time.

Low "V" to high "V"

Start with the low "V" and work up to a high "V" and back to a low "V".

Single Hand "V's"

Repeat the "V" drills this time using only one hand. Switch hands and repeat.

After you have mastered the "V's" you can blend them into one continuous drill starting with both hands in front, then high, then low, then single hand high, single hand low, switch hands continue. Also, begin to vary the speed from fast to slow. We call this "V's" Higher, Lower, Faster, Slower.

Snap Side

Dribble the ball at your side front to back using one hand. Switch sides. Rock back and forth if you want.

Dribble Around the Right Leg

First use both hands to move the ball around then use only your right hand.

Dribble Around the Left Leg

First use both hands to move the ball around then use only your left hand.

Figure 8 Dribble

First use both hands to move the ball around making a figure 8 around the legs. Repeat using only your right hand. Repeat using only your left hand.

Crossover Dribble

Dribble the ball right to left and back in place.

One Dribble and Crossover

Dribble once on your side and cross the ball over to your other hand and dribble once and cross it back.

Two Dribble and Crossover

Same as One Dribble Crossover only dribble twice each time before the crossover.

Crossover Behind the Back (Sit on it)

Cross the ball back and forth behind your back keeping the dribble lower than your butt.

Kill Crossover

Same as One Dribble Crossover only use the kill (low) dribble to crossover.

Dribble Circles

Similar to body circles except that the ball is dribbled. Dribble around your left leg then your right. Next, using both hands, dribble around both legs, which should be together. Next, Kneel down on one knee and dribble around your body and under your leg. Switch knees and continue. Then, while on your knees, dribble around your body, using both hands. Lay down and dribble the on your side. Move the ball around and dribble under your legs switching to your other hand and go back. Next try to dribble the ball around your head to the other side of you body.

Grasshopper

Dribble back and forth between the legs, changing leg positions (Hopping) each time the ball goes through the legs trying to stay in place.

Spider Dribble

Dribble the ball between your legs touching it in front once with each hand and touching it in back once with each hand and continue keeping the ball centered between your legs. To start out, spread your legs slight wider than shoulder width apart. Place the ball on the ground between your legs. Reaching from in front of you, touch the top of the ball with your right hand then left hand then reach from behind and touch the ball with your right hand then left hand and back in front right, left, behind right, left. After you can do this try it dribbling the ball with the same progressions, front right, front left, back right, back left and continue. Advance progression is to do the Spider Dribble walking forward and backward.

Section 5: Dribble Moves

When trying to get by a defender to either score or pass there are many different dribble moves that can be performed by an offensive player. However, when broken down there are two basic things that the ballhandler is doing to get open; **(1) change of pace (speed) and (2) change of direction**. It is important to emphasize that whether the players are performing a crossover, behind the back, or stutter step move, they are trying to change their pace or change their direction, and many times they are doing both. Most players that have problems beating other players off the dribble because they do neither while they are performing moves.

For dribble moves to work the player must have proper footwork and balance. A player's body goes where their feet go. Footwork and balance are the most important things for dribble moves; the ball is the last and easiest part of the move if the player has the correct balance and footwork. However, most players and coaches focus too much on the upper instead of the lower body.

Tips

- Use proper footwork , biggest key to dribbling moves
- Stay low on dribble moves and bend you knees. Raising up when you dribble makes you slower and wastes motion.
- The harder the player moves with their hands, the faster the ball and playergo
- Stay compact with movements, no wasted motion.
- Keep eyes up and don't look at the ball!
- Take a larger then normal first step once move is made to cover more ground and be quicker
- Don't "belly out" when making moves, when practicing moves on cones or defenders your want to go shoulder to shoulder to attack the defender and not give the defender space to recover.
- Focus on one or two things at a time to not confuse the players and to keep things simple.

Crossover Move

The crossover is simply a change of direction move with the player crossing the ball below the knees in front of them with a low quick bounce.

Right to Left Crossover

As you approach the defender dribbling the ball in your right hand, take a step out with your right foot (as if you will drive hard to the basket going to the right).

1. Give a head fake to the right to sell the move and make the defender think you are going right.
2. When the defender goes to the right to stop your drive, push off of your right foot and quickly switch the ball using a low right to left dribble below the knees.
3. For the player to become quicker he/she needs to stay low and bend his/her knees and be compact. The person is shifting their weight and movement from one direction to the next, the key to a quick move is planting the foot and a quick change of direction.

Left to Right Crossover

1. As the offensive player approaches the defender dribbling the ball in his/her left hand, he/she takes a step out with the left foot (as if he will drive hard to the basket going to the left).
2. The player gives a head fake to the left to sell the move and make the defender think the player is going left.
3. When the defender goes to the left to stop the offensive player's drive, the offensive player pushes off of his/her left foot and quickly switches the ball to the right hand using a low left to right dribble below the knees.
4. For the player to become quicker he needs to stay low and bend his knees and be compact. The person is shifting their weight and movement from one direction to the next, the key to a quick move is planting the foot and a quick change of direction.

Fake Crossover or Inside Out Move

This move is the counter to the cross-over move. The player wants the player to think that he/she is going to cross-over but he/she goes in a straight direction.

Right hand fake crossover

1. As the offensive player approaches the defender dribbling the ball in the right hand, the player wants to start out like he/she is doing a cross over with the ball.
2. Take a hard step to the left and plant your left foot, you can dip your shoulder to the left and stay low to sell the move.
3. As you plant your left foot, you will push the ball from the right to left side as if you were going to cross over, but you move your hand over the top of the ball and pull it back to the right.
4. Keep the ball low and below the knees to not be called for a carrying or palming violation.

Left hand fake crossover

1. As you approach the defender dribbling the ball in your left hand, start out like you are doing a cross over to fool the defender.
2. Take a hard step to the right, plant your right foot.
3. The ball will stay in the left hand and the player will push off of his right foot and
4. To sell the move you can dip your shoulder slightly to the right to make the defender think you are going that way.
5. Keep the ball below the knees to not be called for carry.

Hesitation Dribble or Rocker Move

The hesitation dribble is an intentional change of pace or speed. The object of this move is to sucker a defender closer to the ball before the dribbler blows past him. This move can also be used as a counter to the cross over dribble.

Right Hand Hesitation

1. Dribble to the defender at a fast speed with the ball in your right hand.
2. Stop quickly while still dribbling the ball or "hesitate" for a quick second.
3. When the defender relaxes, you want a quick explosion towards the basket.
4. The first step should be with the left leg, it should be a little bit longer to create space and get by the defender.
5. You should push the ball out with right hand.

Left Hand Hesitation

1. Dribble to the defender at a fast speed.
2. Stop quickly while still dribbling the ball or “hesitate” for a quick second.
3. When the defender relaxes, you want a quick explosion towards the basket.
4. The first step should be with the right leg and a bit longer to create space and get by the defender.
5. You should push the ball out with the left hand.

Between the Legs

The between the leg dribble is the same movement as the crossover, only the ball is crossed between the leg to better protect the ball.

Right to Left Between the Legs

1. As you approach the defender with the ball in your right hand, take a step out with your right foot (as if you will drive hard to the basket going to the right).
2. Give a head fake to the right to sell the move and make the defender you are thinking you are going right.
3. When the defender goes to the right to stop your drive, pushes off of your right foot.
4. Instead of crossing in front on the knees, place your left foot a little more in front of your body and throw the ball between your legs from right to left. It is the same motion as a crossover
5. The key to an effective between the legs move is to bend the knees and get low with the shoulders. It makes for less wasted motion and a quicker transition from right to left.

Left to Right between the Legs

1. As the offensive player approaches the defender with the ball in his left hand, he takes a step out with the right foot (as if he will drive hard to the basket going to the right).
2. Give a head fake to the right to sell the move and make the defender you are thinking you are going right.
3. When the defender goes to the right to stop the offensive player's drive, the offensive player pushes off of his right foot.

4. Instead of crossing in front on the knees, the player throws his left foot a little more in front of him and throws the ball between his legs from his right to left hand.
5. The key to an effective between the legs move is to bend the knees and get low with the shoulders. It makes for less wasted motion and a quicker transition from right to left.

Behind the Back move

This is another form of the cross over only it is behind the back. Since this dribble is behind the back, it is easier to protect the ball from the defender.

Behind the back right to left

1. As you approach the defender dribbling the ball in your right hand, take a step out with the right foot (as if you will drive hard to the basket going to the right).
2. Give a head fake to the right to sell the move and make the defender you are thinking you are going right.
3. When the defender goes to the right to stop your drive, push off of your right foot.
4. You will perform a low right to left crossover behind the back and to ensure consistency slap your behind or your hamstring.
5. Make sure to bend your knees and squat like you are sitting in a chair to have

Behind the back left to right

1. As you approach the defender dribbling the ball in your right hand, take a step out with the right foot (as if you will drive hard to the basket going to the right).
2. Give a head fake to the right to sell the move and make the defender you are thinking you are going right.
3. When the defender goes to the right to stop your drive, push off of your right foot
4. The offensive player will perform a low right to left crossover behind the back
 6. The player should slap his/her backside and
 7. For the player to become quicker he needs to stay low and bend his knees and be compact. The person is shifting their weight and movement from one direction to the next, the key to a quick move is planting the foot and a quick change of direction.

Tips***

- When players are starting off for players it is hard to grasp all of the moves and have success, many times they might get frustrated.

- A good point is for a player to work on one move and their counter move to that.
- Once they get great at that they can go on to the next set of moves individually.
- A player would work on mastering the cross-over first and as a counter their inside out or hesitation dribble.
- A great example of this is Gary Payton of the Miami Heat and former Sonic. He never had that many ball-handling moves he had a great hesitation and crossover and an occasional spin. He was able to be a hall of fame player with a great move and a great counter.
- Players can have fun with the moves and use many different combinations of moves: hesitation and crossover. Inside out and then a cross over, etc. However, make sure to keep it simple and master a couple of moves before they go onto the next.

Section 6: Ball Handling/Dribble Games

While the basic fundamentals of dribbling are very simple, many times doing the same drill over and over again can get boring the players as well as coaches. Below is a list of games for the players to help them develop their skills and have fun at the same time!

****Teaching Tip****

In order to teach them the correct fundamentals is it important to enforce the double dribble, travel, carry, and other violations. If the player does the drill while traveling or missing the cone they have to come back and do the drill the correct way to help them learn the rules of the game and do things with the proper form.

Beehive

Put all players in a defined area like all inside the three-point arc or if fewer players all inside the lane. Have all players dribble randomly using correct techniques while avoiding the other players. Coach can add commands like fast, slow, right hand only, left hand only, crossovers, low dribbles or any of the dribble moves we have worked on. Players should work on proper technique and maintaining control of the ball while dribbling.

Queen or King Bee

Use the same setup as the Beehive except as players are dribbling the coach or coaches will walk around inside the grid and attempt to “sting” or tag the players. When the players are tagged they will stand in triple threat until there is only one player left (the Queen or King Bee) or until the coaches get too tired to chase the kids anymore. After one player is the Queen or King they can be the “Stinger” for the next round.

Dribble War

Use the same setup as the Beehive only players will try to knock the ball away from the other players as they keep control of their own dribble. Players will be knocked-out if they get their ball knocked away from them, dribble outside the boundary, travel or double dribble. After players are knocked out they move and sit on the baseline. When there are only a few players left move them to a smaller grid.

Knee Touch Tag

Use the same setup as Dribble War only players tag the other players knee instead of knocking their ball away while keeping control of their own dribble.

Obstacle Course drill

Place 5-6 cones (water bottles or chairs) about 4 feet apart across the entire court.

The players will line up in a straight line behind each other, they will start dribbling with their right hand on the left side of the cone and dribble on the right side of the cone and then the left of the next cone. If looking from above the players will basically be creating a bunch of 8's as they go back and forth through the cones.

To mix it up you can also:

- Time the players and see who is fastest through the course
- Team Relays (if you have enough cones)
- Have the entire team timed to improve and work on improving their score at each practice
- You can create your own obstacle course placing the cones where you want to increase the challenge for the player.

Dribble races

Line up the players into two teams. Set up two cones (Water bottles if no cones are there) at the other end of the court. Players have to dribble around the cone and back, when they are done they have to sit down.

- Time the players and see who is fastest through the course
- Team Relays (if you have enough cones)
- Have the entire team timed to improve and work on improving their score at each practice

Green light red light dribble game (Teaches quick stops and dribbling up the court)

Have the players line up on the baseline in triple threat position, spread 5 feet apart. When you yell green light they go and red light stop. On the stops the players have to quick stop and be in triple threat position.

Simon Says dribble game

Line up the players on the baseline 5 feet apart and have the players start in triple threat position. Yell commands dribble with left hand, right hand, cross over, Dribble straight Stop, Pivot off of left foot. This will encourage the players to learn the different moves and think on their feet. As a coach this also helps you work on communicating with them while you are in games for

Follow the leader dribble game

Either the coach or the player can be follow the leader. Have the players line up behind you and each other about 5 -10 feet apart. They have to follow the other player around the court and mimic their moves. The player or coach can go around the court around 2-3 times and do whatever move or direction that they want.

Lay-Up Section

The lay-up is one of the more difficult concepts for beginners to grasp. There is a lot of coordination and muscle memory involved to make a lay-up. Players might get discouraged in the beginning when trying lay-ups. However, the most important aspect is encouraging the correct form and fundamentals. In the long run they will make more shots and have more confidence.

Correct Lay-up Form

There are four basic keys to help players make a right handed lay-up:

1. Jump off of the inside (left foot)
2. Right knee up in the air

3. Shoot the ball over hand with right hand (knee and hand should raise at same time)
4. The ball should hit the top right corner of the basket

Lay-up Drill

4 point lay- up game

To get the players to use the correct form and to not worry about making the lay-ups you can play the 4 point lay-up game. The players get a point for each correct fundamental move. This allows the players to focus more on fundamentals and not just about making the shot!

Line up the players behind each other at the right side of the court. The player gets a point for each correct move:

1. 1 point for starting the drill in triple threat position
2. 1 point for going off of left (inside) foot
3. 1 point for hitting the backboard
4. 1 point for making the shot

The game can be played individually by having each player count their points and playing to 20 points. You can also have the players count the score as an entire team and play to 50 points. This is a great drill because the players that are not as talented can compete with the better players just by doing things the correct way.

Lay-up Correction (Puppet on a string)

For the players that are having problems using the correct leg and hand, you can use the analogy: puppet on a string, your right hand and leg go up at the same time as if they are on a string.

Puppet Lay-Up

If they are still having problems with this, have the player stand in front of you. Put one hand high and one hand lower. Have the player touch your lower hand with their right knee and your higher hand with their right hand.

Drill

Stand just in front of the basket and have each player one at a time jump and try to touch both of your hands while simulating the lay-up form driving to the basket.

Shooting Section

Shooting is a difficult concept to teach younger players because most do not have the strength and muscle memory to shoot the ball with the proper form. Many players just try to heave the ball in the air and “shoot from the hip”. It might not be possible for the players to shoot with the correct form but it is still important to teach them the fundamentals and get these concepts engrained in their minds for the future.

The shooting section contains the correct shooting techniques using BEEF, drills to be performed to teach shooting, and shooting games. Within each section there are little tips and reminders to help coaches teach the fundamentals and things to watch for in players’ shots.

The section has been broken up into 3 segments:

1. Teaching Shooting with BEEF Principles

2. Shooting Form Drills

3. Shooting Games

TIPS

Basketball Height -Make sure young players get to practice on a lower height basketball hoop the regulation 10 feet hoops

Size of the basketball – The players should use a 28.5 ball at the very largest, the bigger regulation men's basketballs are

Patience – It takes many hours of practice to become a good shooter

Footwork, footwork, footwork – Many times coaches and players focus on the upper body and the arms when many of the elbow and release problems with the shot stem from improper footwork.

Section 1: BEEF Shooting

BEEF is an easy acronym to help teach the players to shoot with the proper form, standing for: Balance, Eyes, Elbow, and Follow Through. This is one of the most widely used methods for teaching the correct shooting form for players of all ages.

Balance

The first concept that you want to teach the players is to have good balance when shooting the ball. Here are the main points of emphasis for good balance:

1. Feet shoulder width apart
2. Toes pointed at the rim (if righty, right foot slightly in front of left)
3. Knees slightly bent
4. Back straight
5. Head up

TIPS

- Have the players each stand in a straight line and demonstrate good balance
- To help them understand balance, have each player stand in a straight line and lightly nudge or push them to try and have them try to stay on balance.
- The main problem that younger kids have is bending their knees. Have each player imagine that they are sitting in a chair to get lower.

Eyes

Eyes refer to where the shooter aims his/her shot. When shooting any shot, the players' eyes must be on the same target each time. Some players see the front of the rim, some look at the back, either one is right.

TIPS

- Ask each player where they focus their eyes when they shoot the ball and where they aim.
- Encourage them to look at the same spot each time they shoot, whether it is the front or back of the rim. There is no wrong way as long as they aim at the same spot each time.

Elbow

1. The elbow affects the aim of the shot and where the ball goes.
2. When shooting the ball the elbow should be pointed at the rim.
3. The players elbow should be at a 90 degree angle directly slightly off to the side of the body so the shooter can see the basket.
4. Many young players' elbows stick out to the side as they try to shoot to get more power and this makes them shoot to the side and not be as accurate.
5. A good rule of thumb is that the shooting elbow should be in line with the predominant or lead foot in a jump shot.

TIPS

- Have each player stand in the shooting position without the ball and demonstrate where their elbow should be positioned.
- Go around and check each player's form and make sure that they have the elbow underneath the ball and the arm at a 90 degree angle.

Follow Through

1. The follow through is the last part of the shot, this is what gives the player the correct spin and rotation on the ball.
2. The correct form has the ball coming off of the player's fingertips and them snapping their wrist.
3. The best way to do this is to make sure that after the ball is released, the player's arm is fully extended at an approximately 45 degree angle (the elbow is above the eyes) and the hand is bent at the wrist "waving goodbye" to the ball.

TIPS

- Have the players imagine that they are sticking their hand in a cookie jar or in the basket to simulate a correct wrist snap is also effective.
- Really emphasize that snap and have them practice this many times without the ball in their hands.

Section 2: Shooting Form Drills

In this first set of drills the players will start out without shooting on the basket. The instant gratification of making shots makes it difficult for players to focus on the correct fundamentals. This will help them learn the fundamentals and build up to shooting on a basket for the next set of drills.

Drill Set I

1. Without the ball in their hand, have each player line up at half court and shoot imaginary shots focusing on BEEF. Have each player shoot about 10 imaginary shots as you walk through and look at their form.
2. Have the players each grab a basketball and practice shooting to themselves. They should shoot the ball up in the air a couple of feet in front of them while moving up the court.
3. Pair up the students and have them stand about 10-15 feet apart and shoot the ball to each other, have each student correct each other and look at their form.
4. Have the players move to a wall and let them shoot the ball at a brick about 10 feet high. Make sure that they aim for the same spot on the wall. Each time they shoot have the player go through the checklist of BEEF.

TIPS

- Have the players focus on their arc of the ball (have them shoot like a rainbow)
- Try to concentrate on one or two things to work on with the entire team to keep it simple for everyone. One practice you might just look at footwork and knees and then build up to the other parts of a shot.
- Each player's shot is unique like a batting swing, you want to focus on the correct form but realize that even great NBA shooters have certain flaws in shots and their own unique style.

Drill Set II

Shooting Form Drill

1. Have the players line up in a straight line behind each other about 5 feet away from the basket.
2. Have each player shoot a shot and rebound their shot.
3. As a coach you can focus on each player's form.
4. The players can shoot from the different spots on the court: 45 degree angle and the short corner.
5. You can play a game and see how many they make or how many.

Shooting Rainbows

This is a correction drill for players that are constantly hitting the bottom of the rim and have bad arc on their shots. This drill is great for players and takes the pressure off of making the shot and really helps them focus on their arc. It is also a great rebounding drill for the other player.

1. Have the players line up in two lines at opposite ends of the basket in the short corner with one ball in the left line.
2. Have the players shoot the ball to each other over the rim like a rainbow.

3. Have the team see how many shots they can shoot over the rim to the other teammate without touching the ground.
4. After the player shoots they go to the other line at the end.
5. After the players get the ball over the rim and have the correct form, have the players aim for the very back of the rim and try to make the shot.

**** For shooting and aiming another thing you can do is have the players to try and rest the ball on front or back of the rim. See who can, hit that spot the most****

Section 3: Shooting Games

Bump-Out or Knockout

1. Line the players up in a straight line at the dashed half circle about 5 feet from the basket.
2. The first and the second player in the line each have a ball.
3. The first player shoots, then the second player shoots right after them.
4. If the second shooter makes the shot before the first shooter, then that shooter is out. Hence the name bump-out.
5. After the shot is made, the player passes the ball to the next player in line.

Shooting Form Game (Same as Lay-up point game)

1. Have the players line up at the left, right or center of the court.
2. The player gets 1 point for each correct fundamental move while shooting:
 - 1 point for good balance (knees bent and feet pointed at the rim)
 - 1 point eyes on the rim
 - 1 point for elbow under the ball at 90
 - 1 point for holding follow through
 - 1 point for making shot.

Passing Section

Just like shooting and ball-handling, passing requires correct technique. Here are a few general rules before we discuss in more detail the different kinds of passes and their proper techniques:

- Aim for teammate's hands or chest, somewhere above the waist and below the shoulders.
- All passes should be accurate and crisp.
- Keep both hands on the basketball until the pass is released.

Two-Handed Chest Pass

- Most accurate and effective pass.
- Place each hand on either side of the ball and spread the fingers evenly.

- As you step towards the receiver, fully extend your arms as you push the ball out from your chest and snap your wrists outward so that the back of your hands are now facing each other.
- Basketball should have a lot of backspin.

Two-Handed Bounce Pass

- Slowest pass available.
- Best used on the fast break, to a teammate in the post, under a defender, to a teammate making a back door cut, or on out-of-bounds plays.
- Same form as two-handed chest pass.
- Ball should hit the floor 2/3 of the way to teammate (receiver).
- You want to hit the receiver between the knees and the waist.

In addition to chest and bounce passes there are also several other types of passes, including but not limited to the overhead pass, baseball pass, and the behind the back pass. We do not wish to teach any others at this time besides the Two-Handed Chest and Bounce passes due to the formation of bad habits that can occur, that may prohibit the players growth as a basketball player.

The 5 Passing Lanes

Each game situation presents the possibility for one perfect pass. Imagine yourself faced by a defender crouched over in good defensive position. What you should now see is not just this player, but actually, five possible passing lanes. These five lanes are:

- Over the top of the defender's head.
- Near the left side of his head.
- Near the right side of his head.
- Near his right leg.
- Near his left leg.

Receiving a Pass

One of the most important, yet most overlooked fundamentals is catching the basketball. We feel any discussion about basketball passing tips must involve the fundamentals of catching.

- Always give the passer a good target to throw to by keeping the hands above the waist and the fingers spread, ready to catch the basketball.
- Use your eyes to watch the ball all the way in to your hands.
- Move toward the ball until you've made contact.
- Always use BOTH hands when catching the basketball, and do not let the basketball bounce off your body first.
- Block the ball with one hand with the fingers spread and immediately put the other hand on the basketball as you guide it in to triple threat position.

Passing Drills

Step and Pass

Start with everyone having a partner. One partner should line up on the foul line, and one should line up on the baseline. There should be one basketball per group and the partners should be facing each other. Groups should be no closer than arms length apart. Discuss the proper techniques of the chest pass and also catching the basketball. Then demonstrate the proper technique. Partners should then make 25 "perfect" chest passes back and forth to each other. Repeat using Bounce Pass.

Circle Passing

Form a circle at midcourt with one player in the middle. A person in the circle starts with the basketball and makes a chestpass it to the player in the middle of the circle. The passer then follows his pass to the middle of the circle. The player who caught the pass then passes to the next person in the circle (clockwise). This passer then moves into the circle to replace the spot where the previous player came from. Try to get 25 passes in a row without any drops or bad passes.

Wall Passing

This will help players develop their two-handed chest pass as well as the bounce pass. Performing the drill regularly will improve a player's reflexes and form. Also, it will help a player to develop ball rotation and arm strength. Perform the drill like this:

Stand six feet from a wall and pass the ball chest-high to a spot you have marked on the wall. Concentrate on your form. Make 20 passes like this. Step back two feet and take 20 more chest passes. This completes the set. Do another set, but, this time use bounce passes. Next, see how many chest or bounce passes you can make in a minute. Try to increase the number with each practice session. Before you reach the end of this drill, your arms will begin to tire and your fingertips might even become sore. Keep concentrating and maintaining form throughout the drill.

Passing Games

Monkey in the Middle

Player 1 and player 2 stand 8-10 feet apart. Player 1 has the ball. Player 3 is the defensive player, and stands between players 1 and 2. Player 3 guards player 1 and tries to deflect the pass from player 1 to player 2. Player 1 works on ball fakes and steps through the defense to make the pass. When player 2 receives the ball, player 3 hustles over to contest player 2's pass to player 1. Player 2 must wait until player 3 is on him before he attempts a pass. Player 3 stays in the middle and defends both passes until he gets three deflections. Whoever is making the pass when the ball is deflected is now in the middle.

Bull In The Ring

Form a circle with players standing at least four feet from each other. Place one defensive man in the middle. The object of this drill is to pass the ball to each other without the defensive man touching, deflecting, or stealing the ball.

In this case, the passer who makes the mistake becomes the defender and the defender takes his place on offense. The other rule of this game is: you are not allowed to pass to players standing on either side.

Footwork Section

The proper footwork is one of the most important and over looked over parts of basketball. Many problems with shooting, ballhandling, passing and defense all stem from the lack of proper footwork. Sound footwork and fundamentals can make up for the lack of quickness or athletic ability and should be one of the main focal points for teaching youth players.

Athletic Stance:

Whether on offense or defense as a player you always want to be in an athletic position:

- Weight on the balls of your feet
- Feet shoulder width apart
- Knees bent and flexed
- Head up

Pivoting

When you have the ball in your hand and are stationary on the court (not dribbling the ball) as a player you can move one foot forward as long as the other foot (pivot foot) is planted on the floor. This is called pivoting.

****You cannot change your pivot foot, once you start pivoting off of one foot you cannot change your pivot foot or you will be called for traveling.*****

Purpose of the Pivot

A player shot use the pivot when they want to improve a passing, shooting or dribble angle.

How to Pivot

Front pivot (Left foot as pivot foot or stationary)

A forward pivot would have the player pivoting (spinning), or stepping forward in a counterclockwise motion. The left foot will be stationary and the player will pivot around in a circle moving his/her right foot.

Reverse Pivot (Left foot as pivot foot or stationary foot)

A reverse pivot would have the player pivoting, or stepping backwards (drop-stepping) in a clockwise motion with his/her right foot.

Which Pivot foot to use?

- The pivot foot that a player uses depends on the game situation.
- It is important to teach players to learn how to pivot off of both feet.
- Outside, perimeter players most often will use their non-dominant foot as the pivot foot when facing the basket.
- To make this simple for youth players if they are right-handed, the left foot should be the pivot foot, and left handed players should use the right foot as the pivot foot.

Teaching the pivot

Have the players line up in a single file line on the baseline

The first player in the line has the ball in his/her hand in triple threat position.

The player dribbles out to the cone and does a quick stop

When the

Offensive Tactics

It is a big enough challenge for most coaches to get their team shooting at the correct basket, let alone trying to run an offensive system for their players to follow. While we realize the challenges of coaching youth players, we have laid out the basic offensive team principles and some concepts that will help you coach the players.

Perspective :

The average score for a recreation game at the first grade level is in the high teens and low twenties if you are lucky. So in all likelihood your team is not going to be an offensive juggernaut. While it might get frustrating in communicating with players and you might get discouraged as a coach with their progress.

Common Offensive Problems for Youth Players

1. Poor spacing (Players all coming to the player with the ball and crowding around it)
2. Over dribbling
3. No passing

3 keys to a good offense:

1. SPACING

- The most important part of any offense at any level is spacing.
- Spacing helps create passing and driving lanes for players to get easy shots for players.
- Proper spacing is having the players 10-12 feet apart from each other.
- It is easier for

* When players are screening for each other they are obviously going to be next to each other, however the rest of the time on offense to create lanes for passing and driving the players should be spaced far apart.

Teaching Tips

- Place cones or designate spots on the floor where the players should be when they
- Court should be spread out evenly, all 4 players should not be on one side
- Tell kids that they are in a bubble and they should not be able to touch each other without the ball on offense

2. MOVEMENT

For players to get open and create shots for themselves it is important that they move **WITHOUT THE BALL..**

Cutting

Make sure they do not move to the ball

3. SCREENING

There are 2 types of screens in basketball, you can either set a ball screen or an off the ball screen.

Ball screen- When an offensive player screens for another offensive player with the ball in his/her hand

Off the ball screen- An offensive player screens for another offensive player to get him/her open to receive the ball.

OFFENSIVE PLAYS

Let each player get the opportunity to bring the ball up the court

Ball screen

Give and Go play

Encourage passing

Use bubble don't want to go inside the bubble

Fast break and layups

DEFENSE CREATES Offense

Players score in short corner on right side

Players score on fast breaks

Rebounding

Rebounding is the last part of the offensive game

Correct rebounding form

Defensive Tactics

At this age we would like to introduce the basics of defense to the players and hope that they can build on this in the future. As they continue to mature as basketball players, defense is the one thing EVERY player can be good at. Some of the things we would like to introduce at this age: guarding the player that is wearing the same color wrist band, staying between your man and the basket, and the defensive stance.

The wrist band rule has been designed to help the players learn how to play basic man-to-man defense and not just run around following the basketball. As simple as it may sound, players at this age still have a difficult time grasping the concept, and will most likely need to be reminded to guard the player with the same color wristband on multiple occasions throughout the game.

Defensive Stance

A player's defensive stance can often be the difference between being a good defensive player and a defensive liability out on the floor. Most coaches seem to want players to get in a lower crouch than players want to do. Most players, it seems, want to stand erect. A good rule to follow is this: *Make sure your head is always lower than the head of the guy you are guarding.* If you stay lower than him, you will be more ready to move than him. If he lowers his head to drive, you need to lower your head even more to stay in front of him.

Players get blocking fouls when their knees are OUT. If you will examine a little further, you will see that their heads were up, too! At the moment of the block, the defender's head is likely higher than the dribbler's.

Besides being lower than your man, you should have your weight back. Be ready to move when he moves. Get in your man's bubble and have your weight back.

Players often stay away from their man. When the man fakes or looks to shoot or pass, it's only then, they move forward. So, what happens? You get to the bubble (to the man); but, your weight is forward so that you can not possibly beat him to where he is going.

Imagine trying to win a hundred yard dash. One guy is in the starting blocks ready to burst forward. You start several feet in front of him; but, you have to touch the starting line when the gun goes off. Obviously, you would be several steps behind after ten yards. Apparently, this isn't as obvious to some basketball players. In games at all levels, players stay too far from who they are guarding. At times, they lunge forward, and the guy with the ball blows right by them.

Why do players allow this to happen? If you want to win a race, you have to lean in the direction of the finish line. In basketball you have to lean in the direction of the basket. This is the finish line your guy wants to beat you to.

Defensive Drills

Foot Fire

Players get into a crouched defensive stance, and raise and lower their feet off the ground about 4" very rapidly for about 30secs to 1 minute depending on their conditioning level. This develops foot speed critical in getting and keeping good position while defending.

Defensive Slides

Players get into a defensive stance. Players' center of gravity should be low to move quickly, but not leaning forward too much. Their backs should be straight with their butt out a little bit, knees bent and hands about waist level and out to swipe at the ball. When the coach blows the whistle, players slide to the left by pushing off the inside of their foot. When coach blows the whistle, the players change direction and slide to the right. Repeat for 30 seconds. Do this drill 4-5 times.

Basketball Terminology

Like any sport, Basketball has its own list of terminology that people will be able to

Box-Out – When a player is on defense, after the ball is shot, the defensive player boxes out the offensive player to

Quick Stop – To stop quickly when dribbling the ball, the

Triple Threat position – In this position the player can pass, shoot, or dribble. Hence triple threat, this is the position the player should be in every time they catch the ball.

Man-to-man defense – This is

Zone defense – Defense where the player guards only the people in his/her zone instead of matching up to a man, Typical zone defenses are 2-3, 1-3-1, or 3-2 sets.

Fast break – This is

3 second violation-

10 second violation – Once the ball is in bounded on the other end, the player needs

Over and back violation – When a player crosses half court with the basketball and then

Charge foul – When the player has the ball and

Blocking Violation

Game speed -

The Glass – The glass is a term used to describe the backboard as most backboards are

Steal-

45 degree angle- This is an angle used to describe the