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Westside YMCA Youth Sports

Recreational Basketball

Coaches Packet



WESTSIDE YMCA YOUTH SPORTS
BEAVERTON HOOP YMCA
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*Content sourced from USA Youth Basketball Guidebook.



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BASKETBALL GAME RULES

PRE K – Grade 2

WESTSIDE YMCA BASKETBALL GAME RULES

In general, leagues will be governed by high school association rules. Please make sure all rules are read, understood, and passed on to your players.

- **Matching up Players:** At the start of each game, the beginning of the 2nd half and substitutions, players will line up at half court to “match up” with the player they are guarding
 - **Pre K-Kindergarten:** 4 on 4. **Grade 1-2:** 5 on 5.
- **Coaches/Referees:** During games coaches will be on the floor directing and encouraging players from both teams. Please be respectful and courteous to everyone in the gym. No constant yelling please.
 - Double dribbles/travels will not be called but encourage/remind players about the violation.
 - Blatant out of bounds violations must be called.
- **Defense:** All players must play man to man defense. No double teaming, pressing, stealing the ball off the dribble, trapping, or zone defense allowed.
 - Players are allowed to steal passes.
 - Players are not allowed to intentionally block shots. Arms/body must be positioned straight up and down. If defender unintentionally alters shot, then play on.
- **Backcourt Press:** There is no backcourt press. Defense must wait until the ball has crossed the half court line completely before they can start guarding the player.
- **Score:** Score will not be kept during the game.
- **Ball Size:** Junior Size (27.5")
*Pre-K: Size 3 (Mini)

TIME LIMITS

- Two 20 minute halves.
- Clock is kept by one of the coaches and will not stop time unless there is an injury or substitution.
- Half time will be 2 minutes.
- Each team has one 30 second timeout per game.

SUBSTITUTIONS

- Every player plays an equal amount of time.
- Substitutions occur at the 15, 10 and 5 minute mark of each half.

BASKETBALL GAME RULES



GRADES 3-5

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WESTSIDE YMCA BASKETBALL GAME RULES

In general leagues will be governed by high school association rules. Please make sure all rules are read, understood, and passed on to your players.

- **Defense:** All players must play man to man defense. No zone defense allowed. No double teaming defense. Teams may play 'help-side' defense.
 - **Players are allowed to steal the ball off the dribble and pass.**
- **Backcourt Press:** Defense must wait until the ball has crossed the half court line completely before they can start guarding the player.
 - Teams may man-to-man press in the final 90 seconds of a game if they are losing.
 - Teams who are winning are not allowed to press at all.
- **Scoreboard/Books:** A volunteer from one of the teams must keep score and the book.
 - **Volunteers** will record the final score of the game.
- **Score:** If a team is up by 30 points or more then the scoreboard will be cleared so that it shows Home-0 and Visitor-0 for the remainder of the game.
- **Ball Size:** Size 6 (28.5").

TIME LIMITS

- Two 20 minute running clock halves.
- The clock will not stop unless notified by the referee (injury, substitutions, etc.).
- Half time will be 2 minutes.
- Each team has one 30 second time out per half.
- One additional time out will be granted for overtime.
- Overtime will consist of one additional two minute period. Sudden death for additional OT.

SUBSTITUTIONS

- Every player plays an equal amount of time.
- Substitutions occur at the 15, 10 and 5 minute mark of each half.
- Players will line up at half court to "match up" with the player they are guarding.

FOULS

- Shooting fouls will be awarded free throw attempts according to high school association rules.
- No '1-and 1' or 'bonus' free throw attempts.
- Clock will run on free throw attempts.
- Non-shooting foul situations will be governed according to high school association rules.
- Personal and team fouls will not be recorded. Coaches/referees will use foul occurrences as teaching moments.

REFEREES

- It is a requirement that all players, coaches, and fans show respect for referees.
- Showing disrespect to a referee during the course of play will not be tolerated. Coaches are responsible for their team's players and fans.



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The YMCA Vision and Mission

Vision

Igniting the Passion for Excellence: Spirit, Mind and Body

Mission

To put the Christian principles of love, respect, honesty, responsibility and service into practice through programs that build a healthy spirit, mind and body for all.

Christian Mission Advancement

Our Christian Principles are defined as love, respect, honesty, responsibility and service. It is these principles that set us apart in all that we do. More than a health provider or a place for children to play, the Y's mission is to engage the entire person – spirit, mind and body – with the goal of leading them to become their best. Today, intentional dialogue around these principles serves to equip staff, volunteers and members in living out all that we do.



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General Information

- **Program Overview**

Our Recreational Basketball Leagues are designed to promote sportsmanship and self-esteem. There are no tryouts, and everyone gets equal playing time. Importance is placed on skill development, team work and having fun. Participants of all skill levels and abilities are welcome and encouraged.

- **Volunteer Coaches**

We depend on parent and community volunteers to coach our basketball teams. You don't need to be an expert, but being fun-loving, responsible and able to work well with children is a must!

- **Coach Meetings**

Coach Meetings will be scheduled before Fall, Winter, Spring and Summer basketball seasons. Date and time details will be available in confirmation emails as well as on our website. If you are unable to attend you must reach out to westside@ymcacw.org to coordinate receiving league information.

- **Trophies/Awards**

Trophies/medals will not be provided by Westside YMCA. We will provide certificates to each team for Coaches to recognize their players for their achievements during the season.



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YMCA of Columbia-Willamette Code of Conduct

***Staff and Volunteers who work with and around children**

Note: "Staff" applies to both paid employees and volunteers.

1. In order to protect YMCA staff, volunteers, and program participants, at no time during a YMCA program may a staff person be alone with a single child where he or she cannot be observed by others. As staff supervise children, they should space themselves in a way that other staff can see them.
2. Staff shall never leave a child unsupervised.
3. Restroom supervision: Staff will make sure the rest room is not occupied by suspicious or unknown individuals before allowing children to use the facilities. Staff will stand in the doorway of the rest room while children are using the rest room. This policy allows privacy for the children and protection for the staff (not being alone with a child). If staff are assisting younger children, doors to the facility must remain open. No child, regardless of age, should ever enter a restroom alone on a field trip or at another off-site location. Always send children in threes (known as the rule of three) and, whenever possible, with staff.
4. Staff should conduct or supervise private activities in pairs-- diapering, putting on bathing suits, taking showers, and so on. When this is not feasible, staff should be positioned so that they are visible to others.
5. Staff shall not abuse children including:

Physical abuse such as striking, spanking, shaking, kicking or slapping

Verbal abuse such as humiliating, degrading, threatening

Sexual abuse such as touching or speaking inappropriately

Mental abuse such as shaming, withholding kindness, cruelty

Neglect such as withholding food, water, basic care, etc.

No type of abuse will be tolerated and may be cause for immediate dismissal.

6. Staff must use positive techniques of guidance, including redirection, positive reinforcement, and encouragement rather than competition, comparison, and criticism. Staff will have age-appropriate expectations and set up guidelines and environments that minimize the need for discipline. Physical restraint is used only in predetermined situations (necessary to protect the child or other children from harm), administered in a prescribed manner, and must be documented in writing
7. Staff will conduct a health check of each child upon his or her arrival each time the program meets, noting any fever, bumps, bruises, burns and so on. Questions or comments will be addressed to the parent or child in a non-threatening way. Staff will document any questionable marks or responses.
8. Staff will respond to children with respect and consideration and will treat all children equally regardless of sex, race, religion, culture, economic level of the family, or disability.
9. Staff will respect children's right not to be touched or looked at in ways that make them feel uncomfortable, and their right to say no. Other than diapering, children are not to be touched on areas of their bodies that would be covered by a bathing suit.
10. Staff will refrain from intimate displays of affection toward others in the presence of children, parents, and staff.
11. Staff are not to transport children in their own vehicles or allow youth participants old enough to drive to transport younger children in the program.
12. Staff must appear clean, neat, and appropriately attired.
13. Using, possessing, or being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs during working hours is prohibited.
14. Smoking or use of tobacco in the presence of children or parents during working hours is prohibited.



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15. Possession or use of any type of weapon or explosive device is prohibited.
16. Using YMCA computers to access pornographic sites, send e-mails with sexual overtones or otherwise inappropriate messages or develop online relationships is not allowed.
17. Profanity, inappropriate jokes, sharing intimate details of one's personal life, and any kind of harassment in the presence of children, parents, volunteers, or other staff is prohibited.
18. Staff must demonstrate physical and psychological conditions that will not adversely affect children's physical or mental health. If in doubt, an expert should be consulted.
19. Staff will portray a positive role model for youth by maintaining an attitude of loyalty, patience, courtesy, tact, and maturity.
20. Staff may not be alone with children they meet in YMCA programs outside of the YMCA. This includes, but is not limited to, babysitting, sleepovers, driving or riding in cars, and inviting children to their homes. Any exceptions require a written explanation before the fact and are subject to administrator approval. Furthermore, it should not take place without the presence of another adult.
21. Staff should not give excessive gifts (e.g., TV, videogames, and jewelry) to youth.
22. Staff may not date program participants who are under the age of 18.
23. Under no circumstances should staff release children to anyone other than the authorized parent, guardian, or other adult authorized by the parent or guardian (written parent authorization on file with the YMCA).
24. Staff are to report to a supervisor any other staff or volunteer who violates any of the policies listed in this Code of Conduct.
25. Staff are required to read and sign all policies related to identifying, documenting, and reporting child abuse and attend trainings on the subject, as instructed by a supervisor.
26. Staff will act in a caring, honest, respectful, and responsible manner consistent with the mission of the YMCA.



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HEADS UP: CONCUSSION IN YOUTH SPORTS

A Fact Sheet for COACHES AND YOUTH SPORTS STAFF/VOLUNTEERS

THE FACTS

- A concussion is a **brain injury**.
- All concussions are **serious**.
- Concussions can occur **without** loss of consciousness.
- Concussions can occur **in any sport**.
- Recognition and proper management of concussions when they **first occur** can help prevent further injury or even death.

WHAT IS A CONCUSSION?

A concussion is an injury that changes how the cells in the brain normally work. A concussion is caused by a blow to the head or body that causes the brain to move rapidly inside the skull. Even a “ding,” “getting your bell rung,” or what seems to be a mild bump or blow to the head can be serious. Concussions can also result from a fall or from players colliding with each other or with obstacles, such as a goalpost.

The potential for concussions is greatest in athletic environments where collisions are common.¹ Concussions can occur, however, in **any** organized or unorganized sport or recreational activity. As many as 3.8 million sports- and recreation-related concussions occur in the United States each year.²

RECOGNIZING A POSSIBLE CONCUSSION

To help recognize a concussion, you should watch for the following two things among your athletes:

1. A forceful blow to the head or body that results in rapid movement of the head.
-and-
2. Any change in the athlete’s behavior, thinking, or physical functioning. (See the signs and symptoms of concussion.)

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

SIGNS OBSERVED BY COACHING STAFF
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Appears dazed or stunned▪ Is confused about assignment or position▪ Forgets sports plays▪ Is unsure of game, score, or opponent▪ Moves clumsily▪ Answers questions slowly▪ Loses consciousness (even briefly)▪ Shows behavior or personality changes▪ Can’t recall events prior to hit or fall▪ Can’t recall events after hit or fall
SYMPTOMS REPORTED BY ATHLETE
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Headache or “pressure” in head▪ Nausea or vomiting▪ Balance problems or dizziness



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- Double or blurry vision
- Sensitivity to light
- Sensitivity to noise
- Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy
- Concentration or memory problems
- Confusion
- Does not “feel right”

Adapted from Lovell et al. 2004

Athletes who experience any of these signs or symptoms after a bump or blow to the head should be kept from play until given permission to return to play by a health care professional with experience in evaluating for concussion. Signs and symptoms of concussion can last from several minutes to days, weeks, months, or even longer in some cases.

Remember, you can't see a concussion and some athletes may not experience and/or report symptoms until hours or days after the injury. If you have any suspicion that your athlete has a concussion, you should keep the athlete out of the game or practice.

PREVENTION AND PREPARATION

As a coach, you can play a key role in preventing concussions and responding to them properly when they occur. Here are some steps you can take to ensure the best outcome for your athletes and the team:

- **Educate athletes and parents about concussion.** Talk with athletes and their parents about the dangers and potential long-term consequences of concussion. For more information on long-term effects of concussion, view the following online video clip: http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/tbi/Coaches_Tool_Kit.htm#Video. Explain your concerns about concussion and your expectations of safe play to athletes, parents, and assistant coaches. Pass out the concussion fact sheets for athletes and for parents at the beginning of the season and again if a concussion occurs.
- **Insist that safety comes first.**
 - Teach athletes safe playing techniques and encourage them to follow the rules of play.
 - Encourage athletes to practice good sportsmanship at all times.
 - Make sure athletes wear the right protective equipment for their activity (such as helmets, padding, shin guards, and eye and mouth guards). Protective equipment should fit properly, be well maintained, and be worn consistently and correctly.
 - Review the athlete fact sheet with your team to help them recognize the signs and symptoms of a concussion.

Check with your youth sports league or administrator about concussion policies. Concussion policy statements can be developed to include the league's commitment to safety, a brief description of concussion, and information on when athletes can safely return to play following a concussion (i.e., an athlete with known or suspected concussion should be kept from play until evaluated and given permission to return by a health care professional). Parents and athletes should sign the concussion policy statement at the beginning of the sports season.

- **Teach athletes and parents that it's not smart to play with a concussion.** Sometimes players and parents wrongly believe that it shows strength and courage to play injured. Discourage others from pressuring injured athletes to play. Don't let athletes persuade you that they're “just fine” after they have sustained any bump or blow to the head. Ask if players have ever had a concussion.



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- **Prevent long-term problems.** A repeat concussion that occurs before the brain recovers from the first—usually within a short period of time (hours, days, or weeks)—can slow recovery or increase the likelihood of having long-term problems. In rare cases, repeat concussions can result in brain swelling, permanent brain damage, and even death. This more serious condition is called *second impact syndrome*.^{4,5} Keep athletes with known or suspected concussion from play until they have been evaluated and given permission to return to play by a health care professional with experience in evaluating for concussion. Remind your athletes: “It’s better to miss one game than the whole season.”

ACTION PLAN

WHAT SHOULD A COACH DO WHEN A CONCUSSION IS SUSPECTED?

1. **Remove the athlete from play.** Look for the signs and symptoms of a concussion if your athlete has experienced a bump or blow to the head. Athletes who experience signs or symptoms of concussion should not be allowed to return to play. When in doubt, keep the athlete out of play.
2. **Ensure that the athlete is evaluated right away by an appropriate health care professional.** Do not try to judge the severity of the injury yourself. Health care professionals have a number of methods that they can use to assess the severity of concussions. As a coach, recording the following information can help health care professionals in assessing the athlete after the injury:
 - Cause of the injury and force of the hit or blow to the head
 - Any loss of consciousness (passed out/knocked out) and if so, for how long
 - Any memory loss immediately following the injury
 - Any seizures immediately following the injury
 - Number of previous concussions (if any)
3. **Inform the athlete’s parents or guardians about the possible concussion and give them the fact sheet on concussion.** Make sure they know that the athlete should be seen by a health care professional experienced in evaluating for concussion.
4. **Allow the athlete to return to play only with permission from a health care professional with experience in evaluating for concussion.** A repeat concussion that occurs before the brain recovers from the first can slow recovery or increase the likelihood of having long-term problems. Prevent common long-term problems and the rare second impact syndrome by delaying the athlete’s return to the activity until the player receives appropriate medical evaluation and approval for return to play.

**If you think your athlete has sustained a concussion,
take him/her out of play, and
seek the advice of a health care professional experienced in evaluating for
concussion.**



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YMCA Recreational Basketball Coaching

The goal is to teach skills to players using progressive coaching. Progressive coaching focuses on engaging with students on an individual as well as group level. Assess the strengths and weaknesses of each player individually in order to set goals for each player. Goals should be challenging, attainable, and allow the athlete to keep building on a particular skill. Also set team goals to give the entire group something to strive for together. Keep team goals attainable, and challenge the team to work towards goals each practice session.

For example: if you have eight players on your team and six of them are familiar and comfortable with stationary ball handling, then working on stationary ball handling would not be a good team goal. The majority of players would not be challenged by a goal to acquire a skill they already know. In this case it would be better to set mastering stationary ball handling as an individual goal for the two players who need the practice, and assign a team goal learning dribbling to advance the ball. This goal will challenge the team to learn a new skill (dribbling to advance) while reinforcing and building upon a prior skill (stationary handling.) You will have to balance the needs and skills of each individual player against the team as a whole, and set aside time to work with players who need extra instruction and practice.

Skills are separated into eight categories: Ball Handling & Dribbling, Footwork & Body Control, Passing & Receiving, Rebounding, Screening, Shooting, Team Defensive Concepts, and Team Offensive Concepts. The focus of this document is to outline what skills should be taught and when, as well as common difficulties and mistakes made by players.

**EVERYONE
PLAYS,
EVERYONE WINS**

Youth Sports





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Basketball Skills for Introductory-level players:

Introductory level instruction focuses on basic skills, gaining confidence with the ball, and offensive principles. Teaching defensive principles isn't advised for players at this level. Defensive principles are listed below for reference, and are marked with an asterisk (*).



Ball Handling and Dribbling

- **How to hold a basketball:** hold basketball with two hands, one on each side, fingers spread, thumbs pointed up at waist-level. Emphasize a slight knee bend, strong grip on the ball, and head up.
- **Familiarity with the basketball:** control moving basketball from hand to hand while stationary. Once the player is comfortable with the movement, have them begin to increase their speed.
- **Triple-threat position:** proper stance should be taught once players are able to hold and move the ball correctly. When players first receive the ball they have the potential to dribble, pass, or shoot; they are a "triple-threat" to the opposing team. This skill can be taught as a group where each player has a basketball. Emphasize standing in a balanced position, holding the ball just above the waist, hand position, and holding the ball using the pads of the fingers.
- **Stationary ball-handling** – the first dribble: start in triple-threat position with the ball in the player's shooting hand. Emphasize controlled dribbling rather than slapping at the ball, using hard pushes, and follow through on hand motions while dribbling. As training progresses introduce dribbling with the non-dominant hand, using finger pads to control the ball, dribbling at waist level, and keeping head up at all times.
- **Dribbling to advance the basketball:** this skill should be taught first at a walk, then a jog, and finally at a sprint. Players will have to learn how to position their hands slightly behind the top of the basketball to account for the forward motion, and that hand placement will depend on how fast the player is moving. Emphasize dribbling at the waist and keeping the head up.



Footwork and Body Control

- **Stopping and landing:** teach players to stop and land in a good position for proper balance – knees slightly bent, feet wider than shoulders, hands above the waist, head up and at a midpoint between the knees.
- **Pivoting:** to make a pivot, pick one foot that will not move forward or backward; it will only spin. This foot is now 'planted' and becomes the pivot foot. The other foot can move so that the body may swivel and turn accordingly.
- **Running, pivoting, and body control:** this skill builds off of the proper stopping and landing position, as well as pivoting. Instruct players to launch out of a pivot into a run and then stop at a specified target in a jump stop.
- ***Proper stance:** introduce proper defensive stance; the focus should be on the footwork and body control needed on defense. Player's feet should be set wider than shoulder-width, hands above waist level, chin up, and the head positioned above the knees and not leaning forward.
- ***Introducing lateral movement:** slowly introduce defensive movement, focusing on footwork. Start from a defensive stance and instruct players to move in a certain direction. Make sure players are sliding and not crossing their feet or running sideways.



Passing & Receiving

- Passing and receiving are important abilities to develop. As with ball-handling and dribbling, these two skills allow the basketball to be advanced legally throughout the court of play. At the Introductory Level, passing and receiving take on the most basic form. Start by teaching the players to bounce pass to the coach and then two-hand chest pass to the coach. When players are comfortable with this step, introduce passing to teammates. Progress through two-hand bounce passes, one-hand bounce passes, one-hand chest passes, and finally two-hand chest passes. Encourage players to make strong passes without lobs when first learning to pass. Especially at this young age, develop players to use both hands equally, stepping into the pass with one foot while keeping the pivot foot stationary.
- **Individual receiving:** Players should be taught to catch the basketball with their hands, rather than to corral it with their chest and arms. The younger players' instinct will be to corral the basketball, rather than extend their hands to catch it. It is important to correct this behavior before a bad habit or improper technique is formed. Encourage players to control the basketball (hold it instead of immediately dribbling again) with the catch. Progress to catching bounce passes and chest passes from the coach, and then teammates.



Rebounding

- Rebounding — both offensive and defensive — is an important aspect of basketball that should be taught. However, this is not to be done at the Introductory Level. At this early stage, players must begin by simply learning how to grab the basketball with both hands. Therefore, coaches should focus on teaching the fundamental skills that assist with this, such as body control, running, stopping, and jumping. At this level, due to the physical and psychological development of young players, defending the pass is neither applicable nor recommended. Place an emphasis on building players' confidence with the basics of passing and receiving the basketball before introducing defense.
- **Snatching the basketball:** teach players to jump and grab, or snatch, the basketball using both hands. Players should extend both arms fully above their heads and grab the basketball with both hands, pulling it toward them in a hard, downward motion. The basketball should be brought down to chin level, with players' elbows out to protect the basketball. Players should be instructed to snatch the basketball from a standing-jump position, and then from a one-step-and-jump position.



Shooting

- **Basic shooting mechanics:** Shooting is a necessary fundamental to learn, as the objective of the game is to score the basketball. This may be the most important level for the proper development of a player's shooting mechanics. If improper habits are formed early in a player's development, they can be more difficult to correct later on. As a result, it is critical to emphasize proper shooting techniques at this stage, regardless of a player's strength or size. A basketball is not used initially to ensure strong habits are created prior to introducing one. To teach the mechanics of shooting, it can be helpful to use the acronym, B.E.E.F., which stands for balance, elbow, eyes, and follow-through.
- **Balance:** To begin, feet should be comfortably set at or just wider than shoulder width apart. Toes should be facing forward, toward the basket or the instructor, with the same foot as the shooting hand positioned just ahead of the other foot. The proper distance "ahead" can be ensured by having players bring their feet together. The toe of the back foot should fit comfortably in the indentation of the arch of the front foot. There should be a slight bend at the knee, the back should be straight, and the head should be over or slightly ahead of the rear end. Shoulders should be parallel, or "square" to the basket or instructor.
- **Elbow:** At the initial stage of the shot, the elbow of the shooting arm should be next to the side of the player where the basketball will eventually be held in the "shooter's pocket." The elbow should not be out to the side at this stage because it will not allow for a smooth lift through the process of the shot. As the player begins the shooting process by raising the arm, the elbow should remain in alignment with the toe and knee of the shooting hand. The elbow will be in a "U," not "V" shape as the shooting hand is lifted.
- **Eyes:** Once the shooting motion begins, players' eyes should be focused and locked on the rim of the basketball hoop. The exact location on the hoop is not as important as consistency is. Once players pick a place on which to focus, they should look at the same place for every shot.
- **Follow-through:** follow-through may be the most important element in learning to shoot the basketball. As the imaginary basketball in this exercise is in flight, instruct players to hold a strong and proper follow-through position for a few seconds to allow the "basketball" to reach the rim.



- To begin developing a comfort level with the mechanics of the shot, isolate the upper body by having players start on their knees with a basketball. Begin teaching the form with the shooting hand only, as the guide hand can be challenging at this age due to the strength and size of young players. Start with exercises on one knee with one hand, and then one knee with both hands. Progress to shooting from a standing position. If a player struggles with the mechanics of the follow-through, have them practice shooting from a position on the ground. When a player is laying on the ground, it isolates the shooting arm and allows the player to focus solely on this aspect of the shot.

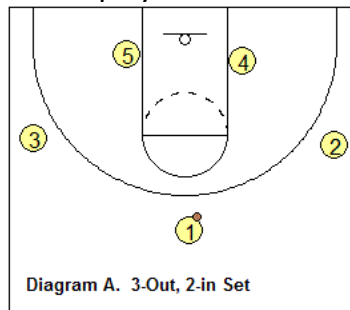


Team Defensive Concepts

- Once your players understand and can properly execute the individual defensive skills, the coach can begin organizing them together into defensive team concepts. The primary defensive objective in basketball is to stop the opponent from scoring. At this level, we are concerned with proper stance and the ability to guard one offensive player.
- **Understanding defending one offensive player:** This level will stress the importance of just guarding or defending one offensive player with and without the ball. The help side defensive concept is not introduced at this level as the young player needs to develop on ball defense in a one on one situation.
- **Emphasize keeping hands straight out or straight up and moving feet.**

Team Offensive Concepts

- Once players understand and can execute the individual skills explained in this level, coaches may begin providing instruction on offensive tactics. The primary objective on offense, scoring, is achieved most easily when the basketball is moved effectively between the players on the court. At this level, coaches should focus on teaching players how to be aware of where their teammates are on the court during various offensive scenarios.
- **Proper floor and player awareness:** The most important concept when coordinating an offensive attack is to maintain balance on the court. To do this, it is crucial that players learn how to be aware of where their teammates are around them. At this level, start with three players standing inside the lane. On command, the players must spread out on the half court line, making sure they are aware of where their teammates are located. As players improve, increase the number on the court to four, and then to five players at a time. The progression for proper floor and player awareness is to have the players switch places with a teammate on command by the coach. Once the players are spread out on the half court, the coach will pass the basketball to one player and the players must be able to pass the basketball to their teammates easily if they are properly spread out.
- **Recognizing spots on the floor:** Once the players are aware of where their teammates are located, the coach can teach the areas each player is located on the half court – baseline, wing, high post, and low post, top of key. Emphasize that players remain in the spot and not in-between spots.



- **Inbounding the basketball:** When inbounding the basketball at this level, the passer must make a pass to the player moving to the basketball. At this level, players moving away from the basketball should not be passed to. To avoid crowding, the players should have balanced spacing. Encourage two players moving to the basketball and two players moving away from the basketball. Emphasize movement by having players move and exchange places with a player in another area.
- **Spacing:** It is important for young players to understand that spacing on the court is important for team basketball. Coaches may begin teaching this concept to players at the Introductory Level by using markers (cones or discs) placed on the court. The markers should be spread out and spaced approximately 12 to 15 feet apart. Instruct players to sprint to a marker on command. Continue the drill with the players sprinting to a new marker on command of the coach. To show the importance of spacing have players pass a ball to the nearest teammate. Next, have players try to pass a ball to a teammate much further away. Highlight that shorter passes are easier, and longer passes are more difficult.
- **Transition from defense to offense:** At this level, transition from defense to offense is about proper spacing and knowing the spots on the floor. Emphasize short accurate passes, discourage long passes and excessive dribbling.

Basketball Skills for Foundation-level players:



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Ball Handling and Dribbling

- Ball-handling and dribbling are of paramount importance. These two skills allow the basketball to be advanced legally throughout the court of play. At the Foundational Level, ball-handling and dribbling will develop such that players may engage in two-on-two, three-on-three, four-on-four, and eventually five-on-five basketball.
- **Triple threat position with a teammate:** As a warm-up, this is a good way to continue building on overall ball-handling skills. From the triple-threat position coaches will have players execute all three options from the stance: dribbling, passing, and shooting. Start encouraging players to pound the basketball into the floor to build confidence with the dribble.
- **Stationary ball-handling:** Stationary ball-handling without a dribble is an efficient and fun way to help players increase their level of comfort when moving the basketball. Drills to use include straight arm taps, passes around the body, and passes around the knees, figure 8s, eggbeaters, and front-to-backs. More advanced drills add some dribbles: wall dribbling, rhythm dribbling, figure 8 dribbling, single-arm and double-arm pendulum dribbling, and behind-the-backs. Although many of these drills are never executed in the game, they are still necessary to develop a player's confidence when handling the basketball under duress.
- **Dribbling on the move:** dribbling while moving skills are more advanced and are best introduced after a healthy comfort level is established with stationary ball-handling skills, to help alleviate frustration. The three drills to introduce at this stage are behind the back, between the legs, and spin dribbling. All three of these drills can first be introduced with the player on the baseline in a triple-threat. Moving forward, in a zigzag motion, ending on the opposite baseline in a triple-threat position. They can be used both to beat a defender of the dribble and protect the basketball when changing directions.
- At the Foundational Level, it is appropriate and necessary to begin developing skills for a player to successfully defend the basketball, better known as on-ball defense. On-ball defense is critical to learn both for personal success as well as within a player-to-player team defensive scheme.
- **Stationary on-ball defensive mechanics:** First, coaches should work on mechanics and defensive positioning around the basketball before introducing a moving offense. This will allow the first-time defender to gain confidence and a general understanding of on-ball defense. Although it is best to focus only on defense to begin, coaches can eventually encourage offensive players to display proper footwork and basketball positioning.
- **Closeouts:** Closeouts are a critical habit to begin forming early on. They enable the player to defend a shooter and penetrator at the same time, through the use of good body control and positioning.
- **Full-court zigzag:** Coaches can utilize the full-court zigzag skill to begin teaching players how to defend the basketball in the open court. It is recommended to begin working technique without offense before playing any type of simulated live-action in the full court. This skill has the potential to cause players to become frustrated when attempting to learn it, if not introduced properly.



Footwork and Body Control

- Footwork and body control are important in all levels. At the Foundational Level, these two skills will be developed through drills performed at a tempo closer to that of an actual basketball game, which requires changes in direction to happen more quickly.
- **Pivoting:** This skill advances a young player's ability to use proper footwork and body control when pivoting. It is important that players learn how to pivot correctly, as this is essential to a number of other skills, such as shooting and passing.
- **Body control when changing direction and/or speed:** Players that are able to change speed and direction will become more efficient in all aspects of their basketball games. Understanding how to vary speed and direction forms the basis for many other skills that players will learn at higher levels. In order to change direction, instruct players to push off of the foot opposite the direction they wish to travel. To travel to the right, push off the left foot; to travel left, push off the right. To travel backward, push off the foot in front of the body; to travel forward, push off the back foot. As players begin to travel in a new direction, they should turn their shoulders in the direction they wish to travel. To change direction efficiently, players must learn to push off of the appropriate foot quickly. It is important that players change speed when they change direction.
- **Defensive Principles:** At this level, the focus is on defensive stance. There will also be instruction on body movement which will involve pivoting and performing drop steps while in the proper stance. To learn these skills, players will be engaged in defensive slide drills. Initially, drills will involve neither a player on offense nor a basketball, but as players become comfortable, that will change. Over time, the drills will include a player on offense, and eventually, a player with a basketball.
- **Proper stance:** The proper defensive stance should be introduced at the Introductory Level with continued progression throughout this level. Feet should be wider than the shoulders, hands above the waist, with the chin up and the head in a position above the knees, though not leaning forward. This will give the player the ability to move in all directions and allow making the necessary pivots to become a good defender.
- **360-Degree movements:** When moving on defense, players should remain in the proper stance (see last bullet point) and should use footwork similar to that which is described in the section "Body control when changing direction and/or speed" listed above. Defensive players should practice following the player on offense around the basketball court.

Passing & Receiving



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- At the Foundational Level, passing and receiving continues to work on efficiency and proficiency of the basics previously introduced, while also learning new skills and concepts that will be needed for game like situations progressing forward.
- **Stationary passing:** players at this level should continue working on improving chest and bounce passes, with both hands and one hand. Passes should be crisp with high velocity and accuracy, leaving the hand quickly, hitting the receivers target with little movement needed. New drills to add in at this stage as wrap-around bounce passes, overhead passes, and fake passes.
- **Passing with one player on the move:** In this scenario, it is imperative to pass the basketball to where the teammate is running, not to where they currently are. The pass must be made in front of the running teammate. The runner should not have to break a stride to catch the basketball. With experience, players will be able to gauge how far in front of each of their teammates the basketball needs to be thrown. Conversely, when passers are also moving, it is important that they take their own momentum into account, especially if the player receiving the basketball is stationary.
- **Passing with two players on the move:** Understanding how to hit a moving target, while also moving, is an important skill to learn, as players will constantly be in this situation.
- **Passing in advantage situations:** Once the actual skill of passing begins to develop, it is important to begin understanding angles and how to use other basketball skills, such as dribbling, to create better passing angles. These types of concepts can be learned within the context of advantage situations. Progress from drills with two-on-one advantages to drills with three-on-two advantages.
- **Catch as a threat:** Especially at this level, it is important to instill in players that they must always pose a legitimate offensive threat once they catch the basketball. Too many times, players catch the basketball and place it over the head, standing straight up. A good defender will jam an offensive player that does this, taking away most offensive options. The offensive player should always keep defensive players guessing and reactive. As soon as the basketball is received, encourage players to get the basketball into the shooting pocket, in triple-threat, ready to make something happen.
- **Concept – meeting a pass:** When receiving the basketball, players should begin making a movement back toward the passer, especially when in the presence of a defender. Even the slightest movement back toward the basketball will not only save a potential turnover, but many times will draw a personal foul from an aggressive defender. Further, meeting a pass in the half court will many times help to create momentum, which can assist in squaring up to the basketball leading to a fluid and strong shot attempt. There are not many positives to catching the basketball flat footed as an offensive player.

Rebounding

- Most often, possession of the basketball comes as a result of securing a rebound after a missed shot attempt. Therefore, rebounding — whether offensive or defensive — is an important aspect of basketball to teach. This level will develop a player's ability to snatch the basketball with both hands, which was taught in the Introductory Level. In addition, players will begin learning what to do with the basketball once it is secured.
- **After rebound, score or pass:** Teach players what to do with the basketball once it is secured on an offensive rebound. Instruct players to snatch the basketball with both hands at the peak of the jump, instead of allowing the basketball to come down to them. At this point, it is important for players to determine whether a shot is available. If no shot is available, the player should pass the basketball out from under the basket to a teammate on the perimeter.
- **Free-throw rebounding:** When rebounding free throws, the offensive player should line up as far up the lane as possible in the box. When the basketball hits the rim, an offensive player should immediately step down the lane hard and quick, to try to beat the inside defender for the rebound.



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This makes it more difficult for the defensive rebounder to make contact and block out the offensive player.

- At this level the initial skill for defensive rebounding is taught, which includes securing the basketball from a missed shot, body positioning, pivoting, and blocking out. After the rebound is the outlet pass, which starts the offensive transition.
- **Body positioning and blocking out:** As the basketball is shot, the players must locate their opponents first, achieve an inside position and box out their opponent using a front or rear pivot to get into a position between their opponent and the basket and putting their rear in contact with the opponent. This is done to ensure that the offensive player is behind the defensive player and so that the defensive player can see the flight of the basketball when the shot is taken. Encourage defenders to use either a front or rear pivot; whichever method gets them in front of the offense, sealing the offensive player away from the basket.
- **After rebound, pivot and outlet pass:** Immediately upon gaining possession of the basketball, the defensive rebounder should land wide with the legs. Encourage players to get the rebound at the peak of the jump, with the hands and arms straight. Pivot and pass to the perimeter player to start the offensive transition.
- **Free-throw rebounding:** For rebounding free throws on defense, the best rebounders should be placed in the positions closest to the basket, as this is where the rebounds generally go.

Screening

- It is important that the young player at this level knows how to set a proper screen to get a teammate open for a pass and then how to react to the teammate who uses the screen. This level should also be teaching the skill of how to use the screen based on the defender.
- **Setting a screen:** Basically, a screen is a jump stop with the knees slightly bent, feet wider than the shoulder, head and chin up, and hands and arms either crossed at the chest or at the hip area for protection. It is up to the teammate that is using the screen to come close enough so that his defender will run into the screen.
- **Using the screen:** Using the screen to get open may look easy but will take repetitions and an understanding of where the defender is located. To start with, the player using the screen must make a jab step in the direction opposite of how they want to use the screen. If the offensive player wants to go over the top of the screen, a step should be taken in the opposite direction first before they cut over the screen. Hands should come up as the player comes off the screen to give a good target and be in a ready position to shoot the basketball.
- **Types of cuts:** The hard part of teaching the use of screens is what type of cuts to make for the offensive player using the screens. This is determined by the defender. At this level we are working on the types of cuts without a defender. Several types of cuts are introduced and then repeated so the offensive player becomes accustomed to the footwork for each cut. There are four cuts to teach using the screen: back cut, curl cut, flare cut, and straight cut.
- **Screener reacting to the cuts:** The screener's main job is to get set and let a teammate use the screen. Once the offensive player cuts off the screen, the screener then reacts to these cuts. Remind screeners to travel in the opposite direction of the cut. Many times the player that is the most open to receive a pass is the screener, so hands must be ready to catch the basketball.
- Defensive principles of screening is an area that may be very new to the players in the Foundational Level. It is imperative that the teaching be slow when going over defending the screens. At this level, awareness of screens is the most important aspect of defending the screen. In this level, the focus is on defending screens in one of two ways: going over the top of the screen, or "switching" after the screen.

Shooting



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- Shooting is a necessary fundamental to learn in the game of basketball, as the object of the game is to score the basketball. This level will continue to emphasize the correct skills and mechanics necessary for a solid fundamental shot, which is important to developing players' shooting consistency.
- **One-hand form shooting:** The guide hand, or "of hand," will be placed behind the back to allow the player to focus on the mechanics of the shooting hand. Continue to reinforce proper mechanics, rather than makes and misses. As the player becomes comfortable with the skill, change locations on the floor along with the distance from which the player is shooting, careful not to extend too far.
- **Two-hand form shooting:** It is important to reinforce that the guide hand is intended to be a guide. The hand should stay with the basketball until just above the head. At this point, the guide hand will stop and allow the shooting hand to complete the shooting motion. Beginning players have the tendency to push through the basketball with the guide hand, which is not the purpose of that hand. Continue to reinforce mechanics rather than makes and misses, as the consistency of a player's shot will develop through repetition of the proper technique.
- **Two-hand shooting from a self-pass:** Once the player begins to become comfortable with the mechanics of the form shot, it is important to develop the footwork necessary to shoot a basketball after receiving it on a pass. Instruct players to begin in a triple-threat stance, about five feet away from the front of the rim. Players will pass the basketball to themselves by tossing the basketball directly in front of them with the proper backspin, so that it returns after the bounce. As the basketball is returning, the player will begin stepping toward the basketball with one foot, followed by the second, resulting in a one-two step. This concept is more commonly known as, "ball in the air, feet in the air." If a player is right handed, it is most natural to lead with the left foot, followed by the right. In this particular instance, the left foot would be considered the "inside foot." It is important to begin this process with players passing to themselves, rather than receiving an actual pass from a teammate or coach. The basketball comes more slowly with this technique, allowing players to develop the correct footwork rather than rushing it. It gives players some control over the learning process and allows them to progress at their own pace.
- **Two-hand shooting from a hop:** Receiving the basketball on a hop tends to present many more issues for players than receiving on the inside foot, so be careful not to compromise proper mechanics just to teach this skill. Instruct players to use the "ball in the air, feet in the air" technique. In this case however, players will move both feet at the same time instead of one and then the other. The timing is critical to avoid traveling, to increase the ability to get the feet set, and to help get the shot off quickly.
- **Five-minute warm-up shooting routine:** Many times, players will walk into a gym and immediately begin shooting from the three-point line. Although this may be a fun activity, it does not allow a player to warm up properly or work on shooting mechanics. A five-minute warm-up shooting routine players can do every time they walk into a gym may be as simple as performing skills from earlier in this level in succession.
- **Layups:** To begin learning the footwork and technique of a layup, it is best to begin without using a dribble. Emphasize developing proper footwork, proper knee drive, using both hands, controlling momentum, proper use of the backboard, and becoming comfortable with using a dribble into footwork.
- **Shooting from a pass while stationary:** This skill is similar to two-hand shooting from a self-pass, but the difference is that players will receive the basketball from a teammate or coach rather than from themselves. The biggest adjustment for the player will be developing timing with the footwork while receiving the basketball from another individual. As the pass is made, the shooter will step with one foot at a time, beginning with the inside foot in the one-two step pattern described above.



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Then, the shooter will receive the basketball low and progress upward into the shot. The player will work on receiving with the one foot first, then switch feet. Once the one-two step pattern becomes comfortable, players may begin receiving the basketball on a hop.

- **Shooting off a pass; receiving in the one-two step pattern:** When first learning the footwork into a shot, it is best to create a natural angle that leads to an easy square-up. For example, having the player make a straight cut from the wing to the elbow and receiving the basketball from the opposite elbow will lead to a natural inside foot (one-two step) square-up. At this level, getting comfortable with the different components is important and being able to get the body to work together throughout the shot, rather than working against itself. Once the player gets comfortable with this footwork, move the player to the other side of the court to use the opposite foot as the inside foot. As the player gains confidence in the footwork on both sides, adjust the angle from which the player receives the basketball, making some more challenging than others.
- **Shooting off a pass; receiving on a hop:** This skill is the same as detailed above, except that the player will receive the basketball while both feet are in the air, catching it on a hop. The hop allows more freedom of movement for the player, but this is not always used positively. Sometimes, players fade to the side or backward. Ensure that any momentum from the cut itself goes straight upward or slightly forward on the shot. If learned properly, the hop can be used to get a shot off more quickly than by using a one-two step pattern. It is critical that the fundamentals are learned correctly in order to provide strength for the shot, especially as the player attempts to extend shooting range.
- **Shooting off of the dribble in the one-two step pattern:** Beginning with the player at the free-throw line, have the player take one dribble at a desirable angle in the direction of the shooting hand. As the dribble is taken, the player will plant the inside foot, followed by the outside foot. It will be important that the player brings the outside foot all the way around the body to fully square to the rim. Once the player becomes comfortable with the footwork on the strong side, change directions to the weak side. This side can be more challenging due to the dribble being on the opposite side of where the shot will originate. Remember that the player will need to get the basketball from one side of the body to the other in order to shoot the basketball. Many players will want to accomplish this by using a crossover dribble, but it would likely get stolen in the presence of a live defender. Therefore, instruct players to dribble with the guide hand, which will require them to shift the basketball over to the shooting hand in midair without an additional dribble. As players improve, use more difficult shooting angles and incorporate additional dribbles.

Team Defensive Concepts

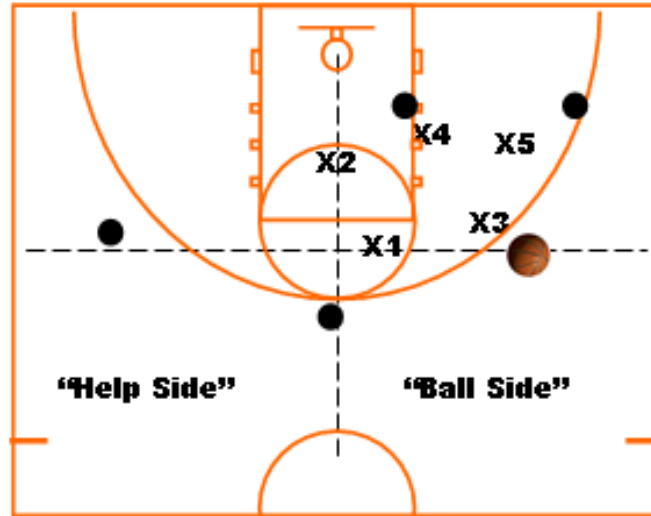
- Foundational level defensive team concepts are introduced with the half court team defense gradually progressing from one on one to two on two, three on three, four on four and finally five on five team defensive concepts. Help side defense is introduced along with rotations when the offense breaks down the defense. Defending the passing lanes, defending of ball screens and defensive transition are introduced in this level as part of the defensive concepts.
- **On-ball defense:** Stance wider than the shoulders, eyes on the waist of the offensive player, inside foot up, inside hand down and head lower than the shoulders of the offensive player. Play one on one starting at any position on the half court restricting the offensive player to one or two dribbles. The defender works on keeping between the offensive player and the basket. On the shot, the defender works on getting the hand up high, calling out shot and boxing out. Usually the player who stays the lowest wins the battle so it is important that the defender's head is lower than the offensive player's shoulders. The inside foot is the foot closest to the rim line which should be up in



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the staggered stance. This will force the offensive player to the sideline/baseline rather than the middle. The defender must try to force the offensive player to use his weak hand in a one on one situation. The key to the defenders footwork is to move the foot first in the direction he will go to stop the dribbler.

- **Deny the ball:** The deny position of the defender is to not allow the offensive player to catch the ball in a position where he would like to catch. The deny position is knees bent with the chest facing the offensive player. The inside hand is up and out with the thumb down and the palm of the hand open to the offensive player with the ball. The chin is turned to the ball and is on the shoulder so the defender can see both ball and the offensive player he is guarding who is working to get open for the pass. It is important for the defensive player to keep a distance of about 3-4 feet from the offensive player who is working to receive the pass. The defender must not allow the offensive player to "get into his body" and then make a move to get open. The deny position does not necessarily result in steals but will make the offensive player work to receive the pass outside of his normal area.
- **Help side defense:** Help side defense is the first concept in putting the team defense together in order to create a defensive unit. The strong side is the side of the court that contains the ball. The rim line is the divider for the strong side and the help side. The help side is the side of the court that does not contain ball. The help side defense is predicated on the ball line which is the path of the ball from the offensive player on one side of the court to the offensive player on the opposite side of the court. The help side defender should always be one step of the ball line in order to be able to see the ball and his man. The help side defender needs to be in a defensive stance at all times and be ready to move quickly when his offensive player moves or when the ball moves. The ball line continually changes as the ball moves and the players move on the court and the defender must be adjusting his position. The key to being in great defensive position when moving from help side to ball side or ball side to help side is to move on air time of the ball being passed. The defender then will be in great position when the pass is received by the offensive player.
- **Rotation defense:** Rotation on defense occurs when the offense breaks down the defense by beating or getting by the on ball defender with the use of the dribble. When the dribbler beats the defender, the help side defenders must rotate to stop the dribbler from getting to the basket. The main rule for rotation is rotate over and down. This simply means to rotate to the ball and then down to cover the helper. Help the helper is the term the players must understand. The defenders must always be in a position to see the ball and see the offensive player they are guarding in order to make the proper rotation when the dribbler beats the on ball defender. The help side defender must be in position to rotate to the ball and stop the offensive player outside the lane if the offensive player goes baseline past the on ball defender. The defender on the ball should be shading the dribbler to go to the baseline so the rotation can stay constant with the over and down concept.



- **Defending the ball screens:** Defending of ball screens involves communication and the ability of the defenders to react to the of ball screen which many times takes place on the help side of the court. Off ball screen defenders need to stay in a stance and keep in proper help side ball-you-man position. As the offensive player sets the screen of the ball, the defender that is guarding the screener steps back to create a “window” for his teammate who is guarding the player using the screen to slide behind the screen and continue guarding his player. The defenders need to stay wide in good basketball position with the arms out to help them adjust to the screener. The switch may also occur on the of ball screen by the defenders if the defender that is guarding the screener calls out screen and then switch to indicate to his teammate that he will take the player using the screen. After the switch is made the defender who is switching on the screener will be quick to get on ball side of the screener if he rolls. The defender guarding the player using the screen may also work to get over the top of the screen by getting his lead foot on the top of the screener and this allows for the defender to stay with his offensive player as he uses the screen.
- **Defensive transition:** Defensive transition is important to stop easy baskets by the offensive team pushing the ball up the court in a fast break situation. As the shot is taken, the designated offensive player – usually the point guard- should be the first player back to stop the initial fast break. The first defender back should not allow any offensive player to get behind him for an easy basket or a pass over the top him. The second defender back should be in a position at the top of the key with the first defender in the lane. The third player defending the transition should read the situation but most often will cover the free throw line area as this area is open when the top defender drops down to cover the lane pass the fourth and fifth defenders after sprinting down the court will read what offensive player is open and cover this area which is usually the weak side area and the post area.

Team Offensive Concepts

- In this level, the players are ready for more organized offensive tactics such as advantage opportunities in transition, lane responsibilities in the transition, half-court spacing, of-basketball screening, attacking, and movement without the basketball. Motion concepts are now introduced with the players playing all positions rather than being labeled as a post, point guard, or wing. Position skills are now being developed within the framework of the motion offense. Inbounding the basketball is now a vital part of the offense.



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- **Advantage opportunities in transition:** The transition is started either with an outlet pass from the rebounder to a teammate positioned down-court or with a dribble by the rebounder. Once the basketball is advanced by the guard from the outlet pass, the player must center the basketball as quickly as possible at the midpoint between the two sidelines. The decision making occurs by the player with the basketball in the middle of the court which must be drilled and executed in practice situations. Several rules determine the decisions – make only as many passes for the transition basket as there are defenders. For example if a two offensive vs one defensive situation occurs, a shot should be taken after one pass. If a three offensive players vs two defenders occurs, the shot should be taken after two passes.
- **Later responsibilities in transition:** The responsibilities for running the lane in this level involve all five players in an organized transition – lanes include two outside lanes, two inside lanes and a middle lane. Start with two lines – one on the baseline and one at the wing on the same side as the baseline. The first player in the baseline line will face the basket and throw the basketball up on the backboard, jump, and reach to secure the rebound. The first player in the line at the wing is the outlet. He will call outlet as the basketball is secured by his teammate. Hands are up and his back is parallel to the sideline. The rebounder will throw an overhead pass to the outlet player and then sprint to the outside lane for a layup at the opposite basket. The outlet player will dribble to the middle of the floor and then make the pass to the rebounder for a layup. The dribbler will dribble hard to the free-throw line elbow area and make the pass. The players will switch positions and return in the same method – the rebounder now is the outlet and the outlet is now the rebounder. Continue drills with three, then four, and finally five lines. All players must rotate to each spot in the drill which will make them familiar with all the transition lanes.
- **Half-court spacing:** This was covered in the Introductory Level, but now we have half-court spacing in relation to trying to score in a half-court setting. Start with three players – one at the top of the key and one at each wing at the free-throw line extended. The top player starts with the basketball and passes to one of the wing players. After the pass, the player will make a basket cut. The opposite wing makes a direct cut to the free-throw line and looks for the pass. If he does not receive a pass, he goes to the top of the key and replaces the player who made a basket cut to keep the proper spacing. The player making the basket cut goes opposite the basketball to the wing replacing the player who made the direct cut for the basketball. As the basketball gets passed from the wing to the top of the key, the wing who passed the basketball will execute a cut to get open for a possible pass back to him. The basketball gets passed from the top of the key to the opposite wing and a basket cut is made. The opposite wing who originally caught the pass is now the direct cutter to the basketball at the free-throw line area and will pop out to the top of the key if no pass is made to him at the free-throw line area. This drill can now expand to a five-player half-court spacing drill with two additional players now on the baseline. The players simply fill five positions – start with the wing and baseline players exchanging position or the wings setting a screen for the baseline players. The drill starts as previously with the player at the top of the key making a basket cut after a pass to the wing. The baseline player moves to the wing after the wing makes his direct cut to the basketball and fills the top of the key. The cutter now goes baseline opposite the basketball.
- **Attacking and movement without a basketball:** At this level, attacking and movement without the basketball is extremely important and the best drill to teach this is called Cutthroat. This is a fast paced drill with teams of four lined up on the baseline side by side. Each team should have a different color of jersey to easily distinguish who is on each team. The coach is near the half court circle and is the cutthroat referee. He makes all calls and is the only referee for the drill. If another coach is available, he will be placed on the baseline to make sure the next team comes on the court



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at the proper time. There are three main rules for the offensive team – on every catch the player must square up to the basket, after a pass the player must move and on a made basket the player must turn and point to the passer and yell thank you. The offensive team works to score a basket within the framework of the rules and will stay on offense if they scored. If the offensive team does not score or exits due to not performing one of the rules, the defensive team goes to offense and the new team on the court is always on defense. After a score or change of possession the basketball is quickly passed to the coach out front and the coach will make the pass to the offensive team to start the new offensive possession. The drill works best with three or more teams involved. Keeping track of the team's wins and losses from day to day makes the drill very competitive. Teams may be changed each day so the players do not have the same players as teammates each day.

- **On-ball screening:** When teaching of basketball screening, it is best to start with two on two situations with the screener going away from the basketball to set a screen. As the screen is being set, the player using the screen keeps his eye on the defender which will dictate his movement. The two on two drill starts with the player making a pass to the coach. The player can start at the top of the key and pass to the coach at the wing. The passer then will set a screen for his teammate who is at the opposite wing. The player using the screen will take a v-cut in the opposite direction he would like to go to set the defender up to run into the screen. This should be done at various positions on the court – start the passer at the wing and the coach at the top of the key with the screen being set for a teammate at the block. The passer can be in the post area – block – and make the pass to the coach at the wing and set a screen across the lane for a teammate on the opposite block. This is easily expanded into a three on three drill which is a great way to teach many basketball skills. Instead of passing the basketball to a coach, the basketball is now passed to a teammate that is being defended. Three-on-three develops the player's skills before moving on to four-on-four or five-on-five situations.
- **Motion concepts:** Motion concepts have already been touched on in several places and is the basis for most offenses. A simple motion offense can occur from a set with a point guard, two wings and two baseline players which is probably the most common motion set to start the offense. The offense may also start with two guards on top with two wings and a single baseline player in the post or on the baseline area. The smaller quicker team will want to spread the court and create opportunities for drives to the basket. A five-out allows for good spacing that will be effective for drives to the basket because it keeps the middle of the court open. Court balance is necessary to allow the offense to make passes and cuts. The spacing as talked about previously is always 12 to 15 feet apart. Keeping the middle or lane area open is a very good offensive maneuver because it enables the cutters to cut through the lane to receive the basketball without much defensive traffic. When a player cuts to the basket and does not receive a pass the player should continue through and fill an open spot on the side of the court with the fewer players – usually the opposite side where the player came – which will keep the middle open and the floor balanced. When a player makes a cut, the player who is the next player away from the cutting player should move in quickly to the vacated area. When replacing a player at the point, the new player should fill wide above the three point line creating a better passing angle. This is a great opportunity to reverse the basketball to the other side of the court and make a basket cut.



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We thank you for volunteering your time to coaching youth basketball with The YMCA. Remember to have fun, build relationships and enjoy your time with the team!

Good luck on the court,

Westside YMCA Staff

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