



**Minneapolis  
Park & Recreation Board**

## **MPRB : BASKETBALL DRILLS**

**Division: 6U-8U**



Adapted from [www.basketballforcoaches.com](http://www.basketballforcoaches.com)

Updated 12/11/2020

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## Passing Drill – Continuous 3 on 2

### Overview:

As the name suggests, it's continuous 3 on 2. Having an extra player on offense means that there's always someone open as long as the offensive team keeps spaced apart.

### Setup:

The drill starts with 3 offensive players in the middle of the court, 2 defenders in each half court, and the rest of the players standing out of bounds at the half court line.

Only one basketball is needed for this drill.

### How it Works:

The three offensive players attack two defenders at one end of the court and will either score or the defensive players will get the basketball.

Once the two defensive players get the basketball (either by steal, rebound, or because the offensive team scored), they outlet to the next player in line at half way who sprints in to help advance the ball.

The two defenders now become offensive team and they get an extra player from the sideline to give them 3 players. They now attack towards the other end of the court 3 on 2.

As for the 3 previous offensive players, 2 of them become the next defenders and 1 of them joins the end of the out of bounds line.

### Coaching Points:

- Make sure the offensive players are staying spaced on the floor so that they can get open looks.
- There's no reason the offensive team shouldn't be taking an open shot.
- If you want to make the drill more advanced, don't allow the players to dribble the basketball.



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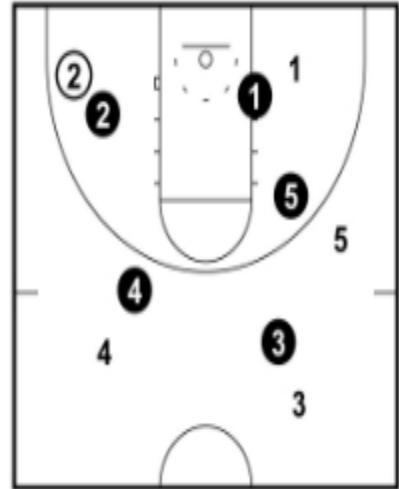
## Passing Drill – Count ‘em Up

### **Overview:**

This drill is a more advanced version of the Monkey in the Middle game. It works on getting open, denying the offensive player, and making smart passes to limit turnovers.

### **Setup:**

The first thing you need to do is split the kids up into two even team. Preferably the teams are different colors so that they can differentiate between each other during the drill. The drill involves only one basketball.



### **How it Works:**

The first thing that happens is that all players must match-up and stick to their individual opponent.

The goal of the drill is to move around make a certain amount of passes set by the coach without the opposition deflecting the basketball or getting a steal. No dribbling or shooting allowed.

The amount of passes that must be made should be between 5 and 20 depending on age and experience.

Players are allowed to move around wherever they want within the playing area.

If the defenders get a steal or deflect the basketball out of bounds, it becomes their ball and the offense and defense switch roles.

For each time that a team successfully makes the certain number of passes, they get 1 point.

### **Coaching Points:**

- Encourage players to set screens for each other and use body fakes to get open.
- Encourage the best players to play against each other and challenge each other.
- Spacing is of the utmost importance. Don't allow players to sprint at the basketball.

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## Passing Drill – Partner Passing

### Overview:

Partner passing teaches the absolute basics of passing and allows your players to practice different types of passes and the correct technique.

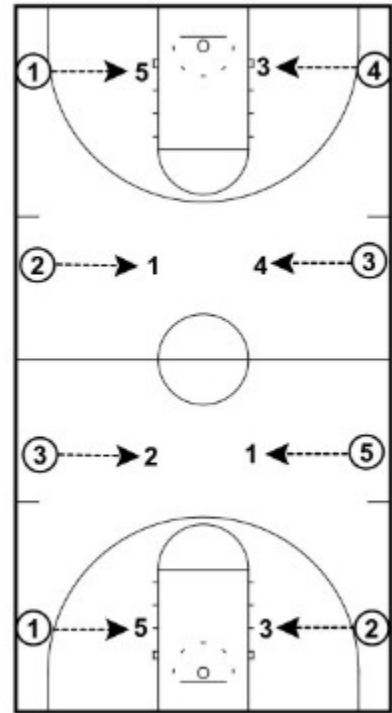
A great drill for kids beginning to learn the game of basketball.

### Setup:

Players get into pairs and should have one basketball between them. Once the players are in pairs, they must stand on a line parallel from their partner.

### How it Works:

The coach will explain which type of pass they want performed and then the players will pass back and forth to each other. Make sure they step when they pass, pass should start at the belly button. Receiving player should give passing player a target, and step to receive the ball.



Every minute or so the coach can change the type of pass the players are performing or increase the distance they are apart if it's too easy. Mix in a fake pass before the real pass, have the coaches act as defense, and bite hard on their fakes if they do it right (full extension, eyes look at the fake).

### Coaching Points:

- Make sure you mix up which type of pass you want them to perform (bounce pass, chest pass, overhead passes, one-handed push-pass, etc.)
- Don't allow players to be silly and throw the basketball too hard at their partner. It will end up with bloody noses.
- Make sure all coaches are teaching the same passing technique so the kids don't get confused.

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## Passing Drill – Stationary Pickle in the Middle

### Overview:

This main goal of this drill is to teach the basics of spacing between players and also to teach decision making on the catch. When players are young we all know they constantly sprint towards the basketball. By keeping them stationary in this drill, we show them that it's easier to keep the ball away from the defense if we're spread apart.

### Setup:

Select one or two players to be the defenders and get the rest of your players to spread out in a small area like the three-point line.

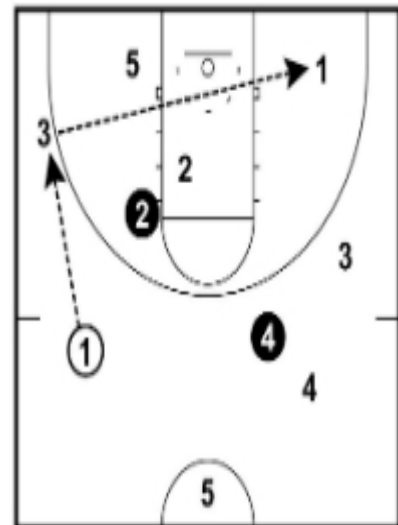
The team on offense will only need one basketball.

### How it Works:

When the drill begins, the defenders will run around trying to steal the basketball from the offensive team. The defenders goal is to get a deflection or a steal. The offensive players must stay in one space and pass the ball around to each other keeping the basketball away from the defenders. After a minute or two, swap the defenders over.

### Coaching Points:

- Allow the defenders to sprint around wildly. They'll have fun.
- Encourage the offensive team to make quick decisions when they receive the basketball.
- Make sure everyone is getting a turn to pass on offense. If they're not, join in the game and pass them the basketball.



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## Shooting Drill - 21 Cones

### Overview:

'21 cones'.

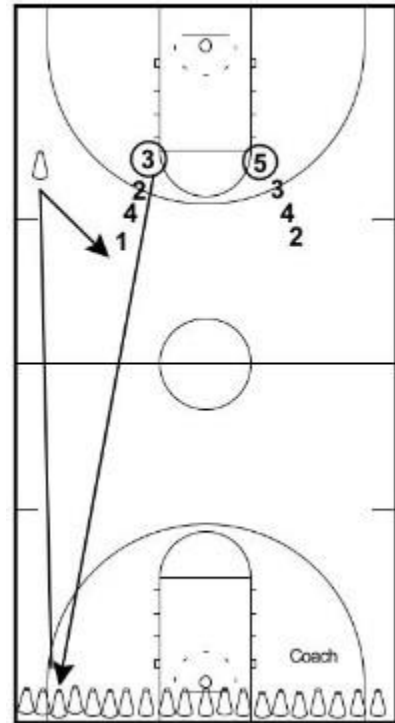
All players are in two teams and each time a player hits a shot, they're awarded a cone for their team.

### Setup:

Place 21 cones on the baseline of one end of the court and then split your players up into two teams. Each team has only one basketball.

### How it Works:

The two teams of players shoot from the designated spot. When a shot is made, the shooter is rewarded by being allowed to sprint to the other end of the court and retrieve a cone for their team. The team that finishes with the most cones is the winner.



### Coaching Points:

- Everyone must be shooting. Not just the best shooters on each team.
- If you don't have cones, you could use tennis balls or anything else similar.
- You can decrease or increase the amount of cones.

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## Shooting Drill – Chase Down Layups

### Overview:

Chase down layups is used to teach players to finish layups at full speed and with pressure. Since youth basketball is normally decided by which team makes more layups, this is a drill you should use often.

### Setup:

The drill begins with two lines of players down each end of the floor. One offensive line and one defensive line.

One basketball starts at the front of the offensive line at each end of the court.

### How it Works:

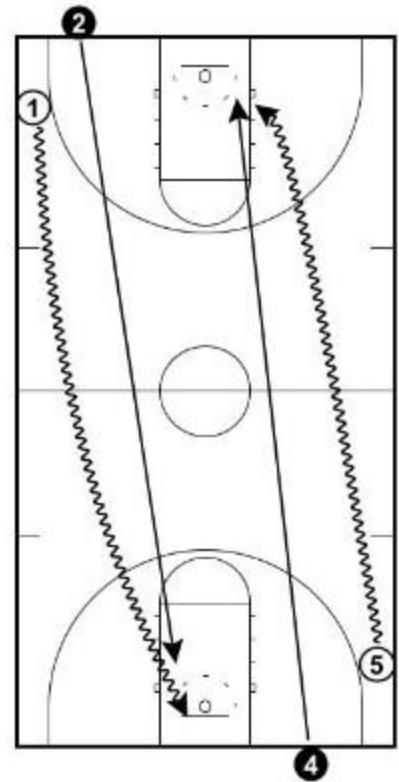
The coach starts the drill by bringing the offensive player out from the baseline and gives them an advantage over the defender who always starts on the baseline. It's up to the coach's discretion how far in front the offensive player is.

We want the offensive player far enough in front that they have to sprint while dribbling down the floor and then when they finish at the rim there's close defensive pressure behind them.

When they're both set up, the coach calls out 'GO' and both players sprint to the other end of the floor. The offensive player must try and finish at the rim and the defender must pressure the shot without fouling. The pair then passes the basketball to the next player in line at their current end of the floor.

### Coaching Points:

- No fouling. You don't need a major injury while running this drill.
- Switch sides of the floor so that players are dribbling and finishing with their left hand. Make sure players are attacking the ring at the correct angle.



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## **Shooting Drill – Mikan’s**

### **Overview:**

Named after Minneapolis Laker great George Mikan, this is a great drill to work on shooting close to the basket. It's a great warm up drill to start every shooting workout with. Rebounding and quick feet also play a role in this drill.

### **Setup:**

Players start under the basket on their dominant side. One player at each end with one ball. Determine the number of shots each person should take (10 is a good number to start with).

### **How it Works:**

Stand to one side of the basket slightly inside of the block facing the baseline. Jump and power the ball up for a lay-up. Make sure to use the backboard.

Soon as you land, jump back up and rebound the ball out of the net. Try to rebound the ball as high as possible. When you grab the ball, keep it above your head. Your jump should transition you to the other side of the hoop. If you shoot on the right side, your jump should take you to the left side.

Continue the process side to side working on your left and right hands. As soon as one person finishes, have the next person start immediately.

### **Coaching Points:**

- Explode to the basket with each jump.
- Get the ball up and off the glass, aim for the top corner of the square.
- If you want, do races or keep track of total makes for the player/team.

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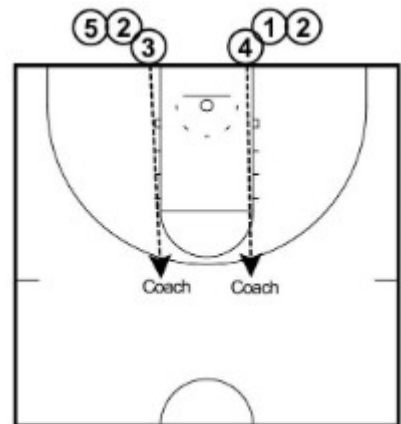
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## Shooting Drill - Pivot Shooting

### Overview:

This is a great drill for incorporating footwork into a shooting drill that players will enjoy.

Players perform a jump stop on receiving the pass from the coach, pivot around to square up to the basket, and then make a variety of scoring moves.

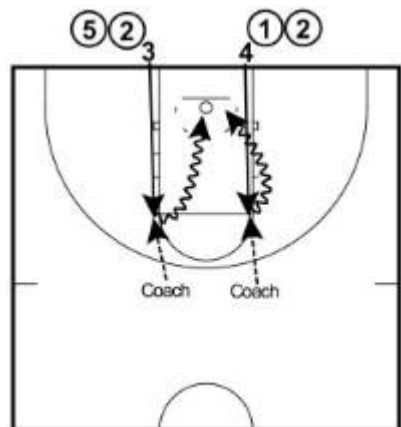


### Setup:

Players all start on the baseline in two lines. There are two coaches/parents at the top of the key. One in front of each line. Two basketballs for each line.

### How it Works:

Players will begin the drill by making a chest pass out to the coach in front of them. Immediately after making the chest pass, the player will explode to the free-throw line where the coach will pass the ball back to them.



After catching the basketball in a jump stop, the player must pivot around using good technique and square up to the basket before shooting or attacking the rim.

The coach decides which scoring move they want the players to make.

### Coaching Points:

- Make sure every player is jump stopping correctly. You might need to run through this with the players before running the drill.
- Players should not raise up out of their low stance when pivoting.
- Change up whether your team attacks the rim or takes a jump stop. Keep it interesting.

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## Shooting Drill – Shot Race

### Overview:

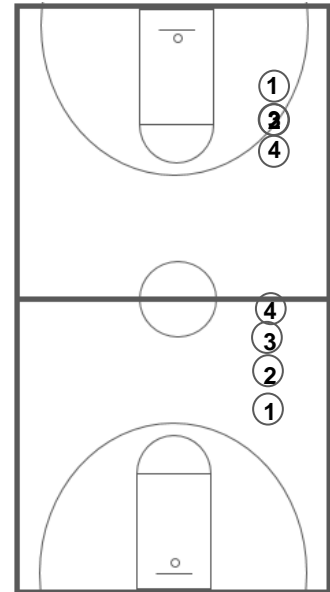
Works on shooting in a fun and competitive way.

### Setup:

Split the players into two teams, one on each end of the court. Based on the skill level of your team, pick a spot in front of the basket to shoot from, place a cone there. Also, based on their skill level, pick a number of makes that is appropriate to win. You can do multiple games in a row.

### How it Works:

Have the players take one dribble and then shoot. Players will race to see who can make the number of baskets first. The team should call out the total number as they make it. Players should get their own rebounds and make good passes back to their teammates.



### Coaching Points:

- Have a coach at each end of the floor if possible. Watch for the correct form, racing may cause the kids to hurry, so make sure they are using good technique.
- Hustling for rebounds and making good passes will help the teams get more shots.
- Try to split your best shooters up evenly.

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## Ball Handling & Dribbling Drill – Basic Ball Handling

### **Overview:**

Basic drill to work on good dribbling techniques. Have to walk before you can run.

### **Setup:**

Spread the kids out around the court so they have enough room to dribble.

All players must have a basketball.

### **How it Works:**

Work on the basics of dribbling, using fingertips instead of palms, try to keep your head up as they dribble, knees slightly bent, off hand used to protect the ball, etc. (see the technique page for more details on dribbling).

Start with one hand, switch to the other hand, try cross overs. Work on other skills that get the use to handling a basketball, such as finger tips back and forth in the air, going around the waist, head, knees, between the legs. This will just help them get a feel for the ball.

### **Coaching Points:**

- Work with them on technique and keep reiterating the basic points.
- Encourage them to push their limits and go faster. If the ball gets away from them that is good because it means they are seeing what they can do.
- Keep it upbeat and moving. This drill can get a little boring, so try to help with the energy. Be goofy!



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# Ball Handling & Dribbling Drill – Dribble Knockout

## Overview:

This drill works on ball-handling and protecting the dribble.

All players dribble around in a small area and the goal is to knock other players' basketball out of the area while keeping your own basketball alive.



## Setup:

The first thing the coach must do is determine the area the players will be dribbling in. This will depend on the amount of players you and what areas are marked on the floors (you can reduce the size once the field has been narrowed down).

All players must have a basketball.

## How it Works:

On the coach's call, all players begin dribbling and attempt to knock each other's basketball out of the playing area.

As more and more players get out, the coach must pause the game and make the playing area smaller. This continues until you have a winner.

## Coaching Points:

- If a player fouls someone else, travels, or double dribbles, they're out. It's the coach's job to keep an eye out for these things.
- Constantly remind players to keep their head up.
- Use this drill sparingly as you are excluding kids from the game once they are out.

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## Dribbling Drill – Sharks and Minnows

### Overview:

Sharks and Minnows is one of my favorite games for youth practices.

The aim of the game is for the minnows (dribblers) dribble from baseline to baseline without getting tagged by the sharks (taggers).

### Setup:

The drill starts with you selecting one or two 'sharks' who will be the taggers. You may want to start with just coaches as sharks.

Everyone else will start on the baseline and have a basketball. These are the 'minnows'.

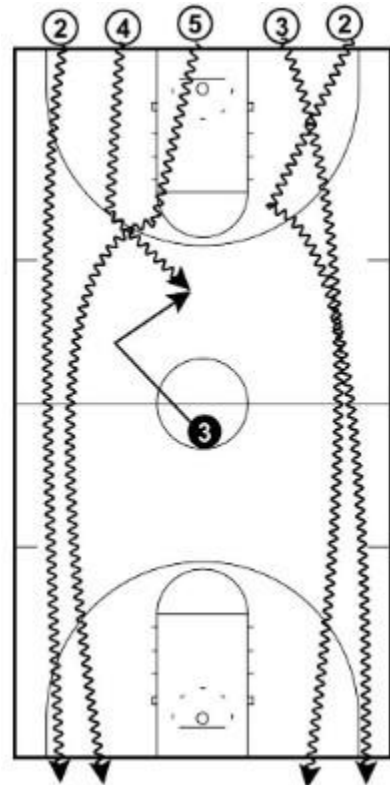
### How it Works:

On the coach's call, the minnows must attempt to dribble to the other baseline without getting tagged by a shark.

If a shark does tag them, they now turn into sharks for the next round. The last player alive that hasn't been tagged is the winner.

### Coaching Points:

- As always, if there's a dribbling violation by a minnow they are immediately out.
- Implement a time limit if players are taking too long to get from one side to the other.



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## Dribbling Drill – Dribbling Lines

### Overview:

This is a simple drill to teach the basics of dribbling to new players. It's a good way to introduce new moves without overwhelming them and will also help to improve the technique of the movements players already know.

### Setup:

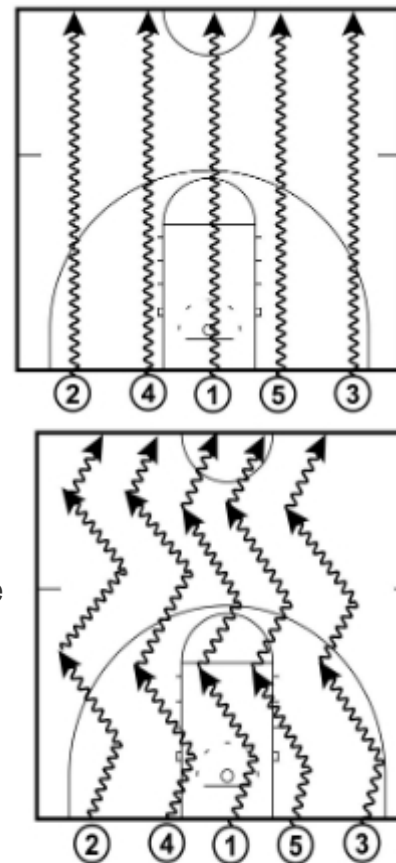
Every player has a basketball and lines up on the baseline. If you have more than 8 players, create two lines on the baseline instead of one.

### How it Works:

The coach will instruct the players to use different dribbling movements to dribble up to either the half-court line or full court.

Tell them the dribble movement you want to be performed first, and then say 'go'. **Here are a few to use:**

- Knee level
- High dribbles — shoulder height
- Knee level moving backwards
- Baby dribbles moving backwards
- Two dribbles forwards — crossover the basketballs (repeat)
- Two dribbles forwards — hesitate — two dribbles forwards (repeat)
- Two dribbles forwards — one between the legs — one crosses over (repeat)
- Two dribbles forwards — one behind the back — one crosses over (repeat)
- Lateral slide while dribbling basketballs knee level (both directions)
- Waist level
- Baby dribbles — 1"
- Waist level moving backwards



### Coaching Points:

- Players must keep their heads up at all times. Hold up a certain number of fingers and have them call them out during the drills.

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## Dribbling Drill – Collision Dribbling

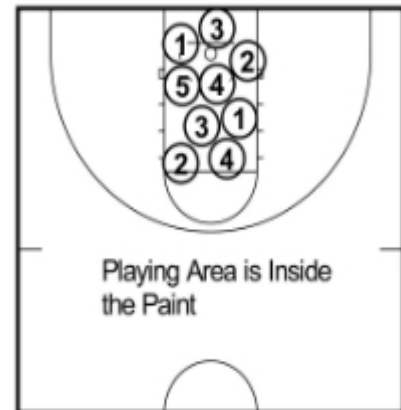
### **Overview:**

Similar to dribble knockout except players aren't allowed to hit the basketball of the other players away.

Instead, the aim of the drills is to navigate through and dodge all the other players using dribbling moves and by being creative with the dribble.

### **Setup:**

All players have a basketball and are in a small space determined by the coach.



### **How it Works:**

On the coach's call, all players will start dribbling around each other in the small space aiming to keep their dribble under control.

This drill will improve ball-handling because players must react to other players and can't predetermine their actions. It also forces all players to keep their heads up or they'll run into someone!

### **Coaching Points:**

- Don't allow players to all dribble in the same direction or it will be too easy.
- Keep reminding the players to keep their heads up!
- Encourage players to use both hands, not just their strong hand.

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## Dribbling Drill – Two-Ball Dribbling

### Overview:

This drill works on ball-handling with both hands and concentration.

### Setup:

Setup three “gates” using cones. These will signify when a skill needs to be switched. All players should line up on the baseline, first two players should have two basketballs each.

Need 4 basketballs for this drill.

### How it Works:

A coach will blow the whistle or yell go. The first player should start dribbling with two hands, keeping the ball around waist height. Once through the first gate, they should try to lower the dribble to around the knee.

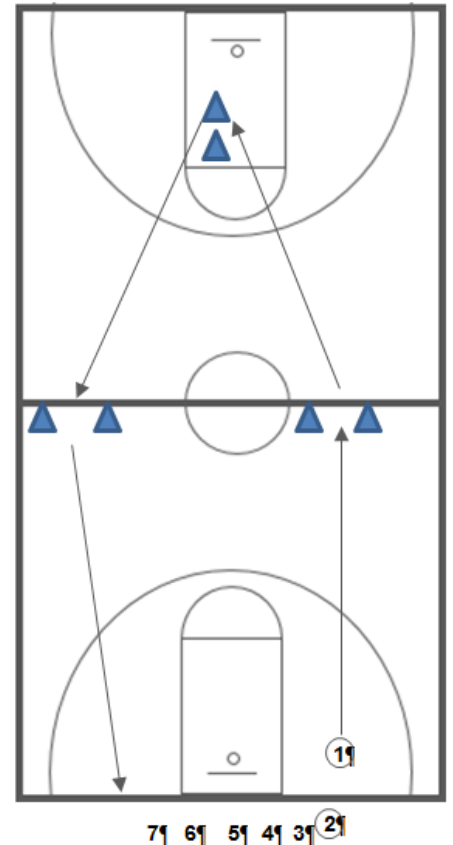
After the second gate, try to cross the balls over. After the third gate, get to the baseline as fast as you can, keeping the balls under control.

Once player 1 is at the second gate, the next player can start. If you have six or eight basketballs, you can stagger the kids through faster.

You can change up the skills depending on your team’s abilities. Other ideas are baby dribbles (1” off the floor), wide dribbles, changing levels, or just use the same skill all the way around.

### Coaching Points:

- Players should do their best to look up while dribbling.
- Coaches should help keep the balls corralled as much as possible, so they aren’t rolling all over the gym.
- Once complete, players should make good passes or handoffs to their teammates.



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## Defense Drill – Defensive Mirrors

### Overview:

The drill requires players to mimic their partner's movements which are great for developing reactions while working on defensive footwork. The only problem with this drill is that only two people can go at once so if you have a large group it might not be appropriate.

### Setup:

Everyone starts by finding a partner and standing in pairs behind the baseline. If you have another coach, it's best to use both ends of the court.



For this example, we'll use the parallel lines of the key, but if you have two other parallel lines on your court, you can use them too.

### How it Works:

The first pair comes out and sets themselves up directly opposite each other on the two parallel lines of the key.

The coach then assigns one of them the offensive player and the drill begins immediately. The goal of the defensive player is to stay directly in line with the offensive player. The offensive player must work hard to try and separate themselves from being in line with the defender by sliding up and down the line of the key.

After 15 seconds, the coach calls out 'switch' and the two players swap roles. After 30 seconds they step behind the baseline and two new players come in.

### Coaching Points:

- Players must stay in a low defensive stance with their hands out wide the entire time of the drill.
- Encourage the offensive player to use head fakes and quick changes of pace to throw the defender off.
- Make sure you cover what good defensive stance is before running this drill.

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## Defense Drill – One-on-One

By playing one-on-one, we're forcing the on-ball defender to have to 'guard their yard'. There's no help defense coming. They're on their own and must stay in front and challenge the shot.

### Setup:

This drill starts with two players at the free-throw line or top of the key depending on age and experience. The defensive player starts with the basketball. The other players wait behind them near half-way. Use both ends of the basketball court if you have two coaches so that players get to play more often.

### How it Works:

To start the drill, the defender hands the basketball to the offensive player. By handing the basketball to the offensive player, it ensures that the defender is challenging themselves by starting up close to the offensive player instead of standing back playing lazy defense.

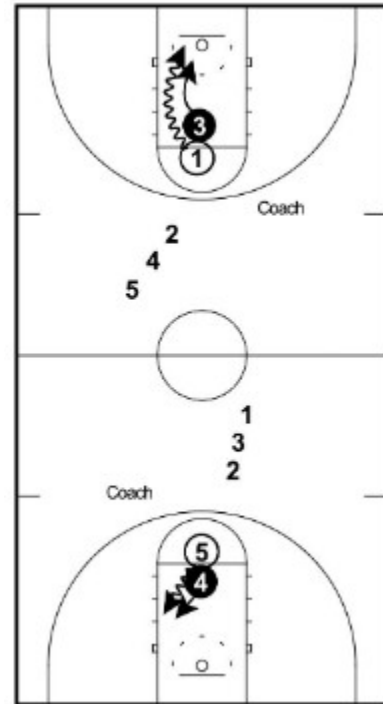
The offensive player then has a maximum of 2 or 3 dribbles to attack the ring and get a clear shot.

Offensively, this drill teaches players not to waste their dribble and teaches them how to attack a defender one on one. Defensively, players will learn how to keep an offensive player in front of them and challenge every shot.

After either a make or a miss, a new offensive player comes in, the previous offensive player switches to defense, and the previous defender joins the end of the line.

### Coaching Points:

- Make sure you enforce the rule of 2 or 3 dribbles maximum depending on which you decide. We don't want to allow the offensive player to waste dribbles and time.
- Encourage the defensive player to get up close and play hard defense. It doesn't matter if they get beat a couple of times while they're working on defending.
- Make sure players are using good footwork and good fakes.



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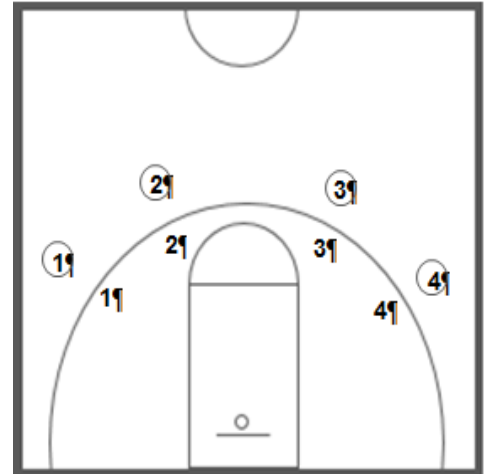
## Defense Drill – Shell Drill

### Overview:

This drill will teach proper man-to-man defense, learning about proper ball pressure, denial and contesting positioning.

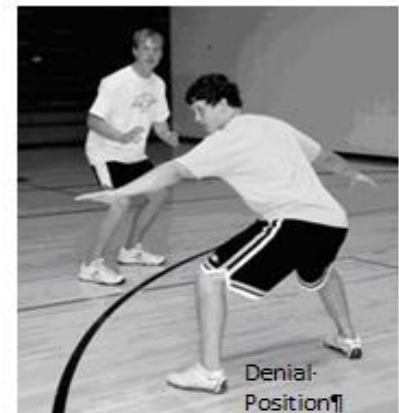
### Setup:

Four offensive players guarded by 4 defensive players, spread out around the three point line. Offensive players will not move or dribble. Defensive players will not steal the ball.



Ball pressure means a defensive stance, arms out, knees bent, up on the player.

Denial position is hand out in the passing lane. This is used when we are trying to stop a pass from going to the player. The closer to the basket the offensive player is, and the closer to the pass, the more we want to use the denial positioning. Head positioning is key, so the defender can see both the ball and his offensive player. Defensive player should be about 1/3 the distance away from his player to the ball. If played too far out on the wing, the backdoor cut is accessible to the offensive player.



Contest positioning allows the pass through, but keeps the player in front of the defensive player, so he can apply ball pressure once the offensive player receives the ball. This defensive is effective if the offensive player is out far enough on the wing that they are not likely to score or if the ball is two passes or more away. Remember, just because you are in this position, doesn't mean you won't be able to intercept a pass.



Only one basketball is needed for this drill.

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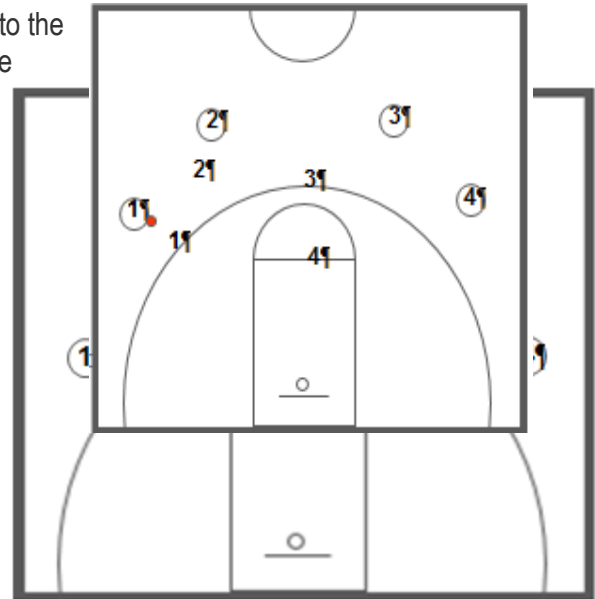
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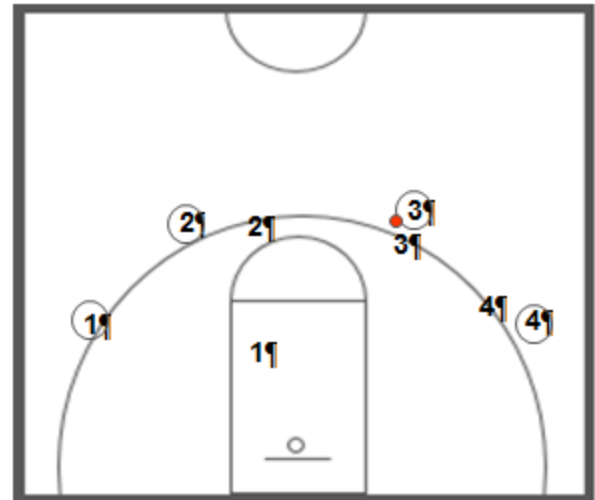
## How it Works:

Player 1 will start with the ball. Defensive player 1 will apply pressure to the ball. Defensive player 2 will be in the denial position, as player 2 is one pass away. Defensive players 3 and 4 will fall into the contesting positioning, as they are two passes away.

On the coach's whistle or command, player 1 will pass the ball to player 2. Defensive player 2 will apply ball pressure, defensive player 1 and 3 will be in the denial position as they are both one pass away, and defensive player 4 will remain in the help position, as they are still 2 passes away.



Again, on the coach's whistle or command, player 2 will pass to player 3. Defensive player 3 will apply ball pressure, defensive player 2 and 4 will be in denial position as they are one pass away, and defensive player 1 will go to help position, as they are now two passes away.

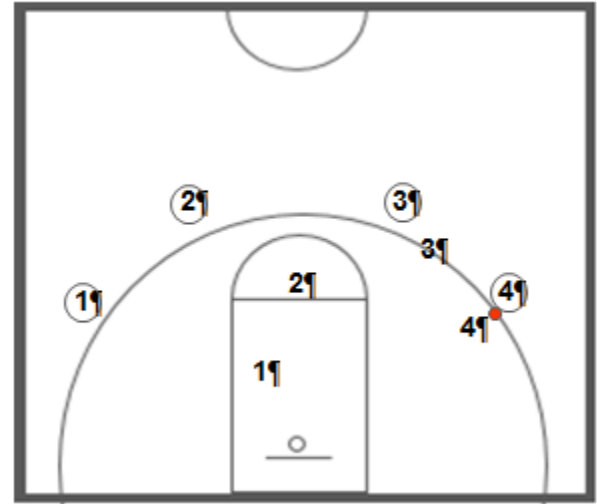


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Again, on the coach's whistle or command, player 3 will pass to player 4. Defensive player 4 will apply ball pressure, defensive player 2 and 4 will be in denial position as they are one pass away, and defensive player 1 will go to help position, as they are now two passes away.



### Coaching Points:

- This drill can get a little slow and will be a hard concept for the kids to grasp. Don't spend too much time explaining up front, but have your coaches work through changes as you go. The first time will be tough, but keep introducing the concept.
- If you have 10 players, go with 5 positions, or odd numbers, add a coach.

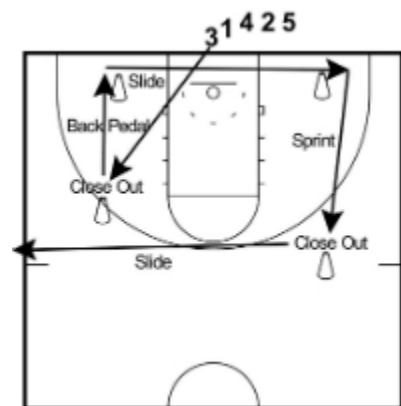
## Defense Drill – Defensive Specialist

### Overview:

Defensive Specialist is a continuous drill that works on the different defensive movements players will make on defense including closeouts, defensive sliding, back-pedaling, and sprinting.

### Setup:

Since it's hard to explain where the cones and movements are by writing, I encourage you to take a look at the image associated with this drill for better comprehension.



You will require four D-men or cones for this drill.

All players begin in a straight line on the baseline.

### How it Works:

All players line up in a straight line on the baseline. Players perform this defensive course one-by-one.

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The first movement is a sprint and then close out to the cone in front. The player then back-pedals around a cone directly behind them, and then slides across to the other side of the court.

When the first defender slides past the line, it triggers the next player in line to start the drill.

When the first defender has slid around the cone on the other side of the court, they again sprint to close out, and then once again slide to the opposite side of the court before returning to the end of the line. Depending on the amount of players you have, run this drill for 3 – 5 minutes.

### **Coaching Points:**

- Players must be sprinting and sliding at 100% effort throughout the entire drill.
- Hold the close out for a second or two before moving on.
- Make sure all defensive footwork is done well since this is a very important part of the drill.

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## Fun Drill – Around the World

### Overview:

This is a fun game that helps kids shoot from different angles. The locations of the shots can be adjusted for any age group

### Setup:

Break the teams into two groups, one team on each end. Pick 3 to 5 spots of the floor that are your “countries” and place a cone at each one.

Depending on the age and skill level of your team, you can have them make a set number of shots from each location, or a consecutive number of shots from each location before moving on. You can set it up as a competition, or just have two ends.

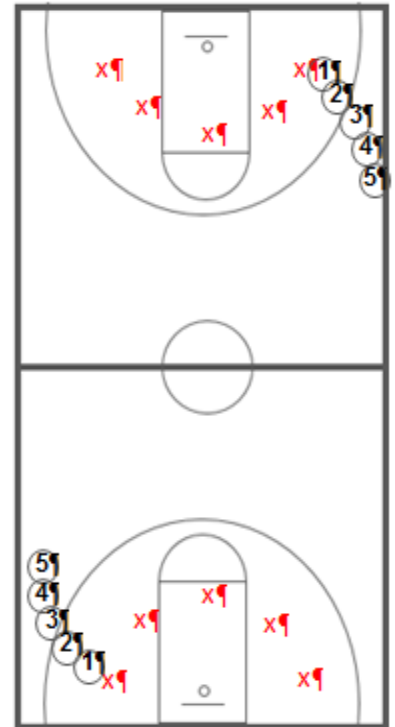
### How it Works:

The drill begins with the coach calling out ‘go!’ which triggers both teams to start. Each player will shoot from the location, then rebound the ball and pass it to the next player in line.

Continue shooting at that location until the number of makes requirement has been met. Have the kids shout out the number of makes they have at each location.

### Coaching Points:

- A coach should be on each end helping the kids with proper shooting.
- Make sure the players are hustling after the rebound and making good passes to their teammates. Preach that a bad pass hurts the team’s effort!



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## Fun Drill – Freeze Shot

### Overview:

Freeze shot is another fun game that kids will end up begging you to let them play each practice. It involves splitting up into two teams, a shooting team and a dribbling team, and then the dribbling teams must run around the half-court one-by-one while the shooters try and get them out.

### Setup:

The first step is to split your group up into two similarly even teams. The dribbling team must all have a basketball and they should be lining up at one of the corners of the baseline. The shooting team will have one or two basketballs and will be lined up around the free-throw line or closer depending on age and skill.



### How it Works:

The drill begins with the coach calling out 'go!' which triggers both teams to start. For the dribblers, the goal of the game is to make as many home run's as they can. A home run is when a dribbler makes it all the way around the outside of the half court and back to the line.

The shooters must attempt to get them out by making a shot. If a shot is made the shooters must call out '**STOP**' and the current dribbler must freeze, and is out for this round. The next dribbler can begin immediately when this happens.

If the dribbler makes it home without being frozen, they get one run and can join the end of the line to run again. This continues until all the dribbling players are out and then the teams switch roles. The team with the most amount of runs at the end of the game wins.

### Coaching Points:

- The shooting team players must rebound their own shot and pass it back to the next person in line.
- If your players are struggling to make shots, consider splitting the shooting team in two and putting them on both elbows, or even closer so that they have more chance of scoring.

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## Fun Game – Game-Winner

### Overview:

This drill is an awesome way to finish practice on a high note. Each time it is run, the players end up leaving practice with a smile on their face.

Easy drill, it is one long-distance shot where, if made, the shooter wins some kind of prize or award.

### Setup:

Depending on the age of your team, select a distance away from the basket that is outside of their comfortable shooting range, but close enough that the kids can still throw/shoot the basketball and there's a chance it will go in.

All you need is one basketball for this drill.

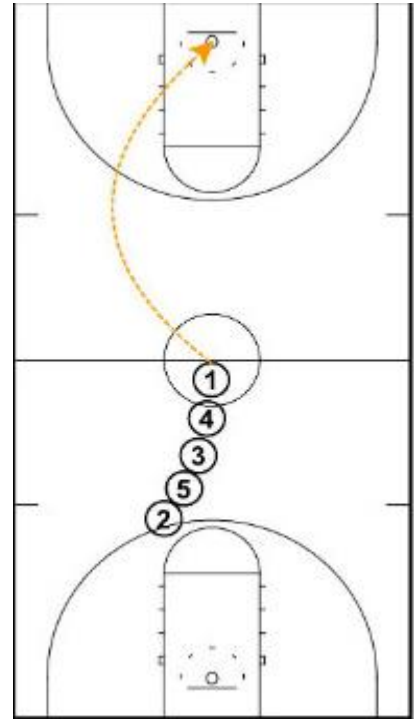
### How it Works:

For this example, we'll say that distance is the half-way line. Get all the players in one line at half-way and they each take a single shot.

The players that make the shot get a reward from the coach. This could be anything from a small prize to being the leader of warm-ups the following week.

### Coaching Points:

- This is meant to be a fun drill to finish off practice. Make sure you and your players are having a good time!
- Make sure there's a safe area under the rim so that no one will accidentally get hit by a missed shot attempt.
- The coach should take a shot too!



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## Fun Drill – Lightning

### Overview:

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

### Setup:

All players line up in a straight line behind the free throw line.

The first two players in line have a basketball.

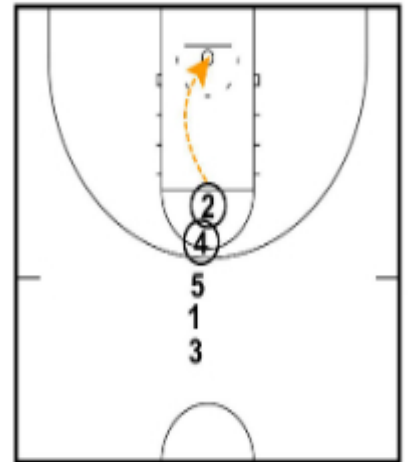
### How it Works:

The drill begins with the first person in line taking a shot. If they make it, they quickly rebound their ball and throw it to the next person in line. If they miss, they must rebound the ball and score as quick as possible. As soon as the first player has shot, the second player can begin.

If the player behind scores before the player in front, the player in front is out. The drill continues until there is one person left and they are crowned the winner.

### Coaching Points:

- The person in front must always shoot the basketball first.
- This is an elimination game, so use sparingly, or insert yourself behind one of the lesser performers.
- Players can't intentionally miss the free throw shot off the backboard and lay the basketball in.
- Don't be afraid to join in!



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## Fun Drill – Small-Sided Games

### Overview:

I recommend playing small-sided games for the benefits listed here. Depending on the amount of players you have, we believe 3 on 3 or 4 on 4 are the best small-sided games to use.

### Setup:

Use both halves of the court and create small-sided games depending on the amount of players you have.

Tell each team they must advance the ball to either half-court or the third line of the court if you have one.

Each game needs one basketball.

### How it Works:

Start the game and let them play!

Make adjustments and team changes when you need to, but I recommend trying not to interrupt too much.

Let the players learn from their own mistakes by experience.

### Coaching Points:

- Small-sided games are the best.
- Stop the game if you see a mistake 3 times in a row. Until then let the kids experiment and learn on their own as much as possible.
- Stress the importance of spacing.



## Fun Drill – Clash

### Overview:

Clash is a great drill to incorporate fun small-sided games into your practices. It's a series of small-sided games between two teams that can be played in both the full court and half-court.

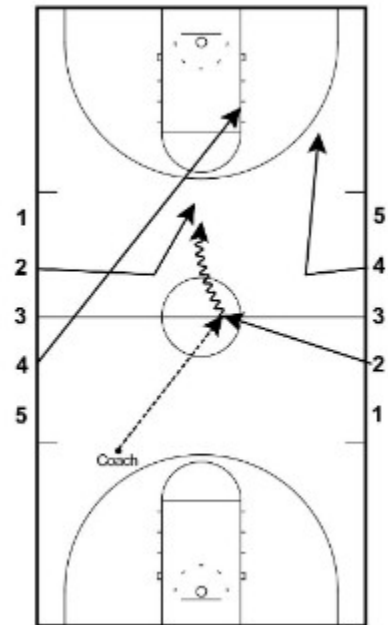
This is always one of the most favorite drills no matter what level I'm coaching.

### Setup:

The drill is set up by splitting your group into two teams and lining each half up along opposite sidelines.

For example, let's say there are 12 players total and 6 players on each team. You will give the each individual player on each team a number from 1 – 6.

The drill requires one basketball and it always starts with the coach.



### How it Works:

The drill begins with the coach throwing a basketball out into the middle of the court and calling out a few numbers between 1 and 6.

If the coach wants to play games of 3 on 3, they might call out "1, 4, and 5!" If this happens, numbers 1, 4, and 5 from both teams come out and play a game of 3 on 3 until a score occurs.

The coach can play games with any number of players from 1 on 1 to 6 on 6.

### Coaching Points:

- Try to match the best players up against each other.
- Throw the basketball out to the advantage of one side each time because you don't want players running into each other as they scramble for the basketball.
- Finish off the drill by calling everyone in!

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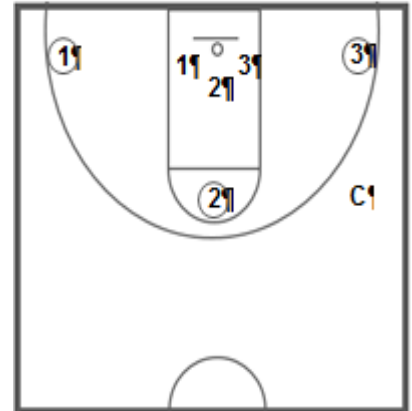
## Rebounding Drill – 1-2-3 Rebound

### Overview:

This drill helps close-out on the shooter as well as boxing out of the two non-shooters.

### Setup:

Three players, who are on defense, are positioned in the middle of the lane area. The players are numbered 1 through 3.



Three offensive players are positioned approximately 15 feet from the basket, one at the free-throw line, and the other two, one on each side of the court, straight out from the basket along the base-line.

Only one basketball is needed for this drill.

### How it Works:

A coach, who has the ball, calls out a number, 1, 2 or 3, and then passes to one of the offensive players. The number of the defensive player that is called is responsible for the shooter and the other two defensive players are responsible for the two non-shooters.

The shooter, who is not allowed to dribble, takes a shot and then all three defensive players are responsible for stepping into the player they are guarding, make contact so as to block out and then rebound the basketball.

The defensive team needs three rebounds to switch to offense and then a new group steps in to play defense. If one of the offensive players rebounds the basketball, then they play live 3-on-3. Rotate in other groups or use both ends of the floor, depending on your numbers.

### Coaching Points:

- Make sure the defensive player on the shooter does a good close-out and boxes out without fouling.
- Teach them to find their man and box out without holding.

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## Rebounding Drill – Around the World Rebound

### Overview:

This drill helps close-out on the shooter as well as boxing out.

### Setup:

Four or five players line up around the 3-point arc and 1 player, the defender, is in the middle of the lane with the basketball.

Only one basketball is needed for this drill.



### How it Works:

The player in the middle passes the ball to any of the players on the 3-point line, or inside of the arc, and then closes out in a good defensive stance. The offensive player, who received the pass, is allowed 1-2 dribbles to take the ball to the basket, shoot a jump shot or attempt a 3-point shot.

Once the shot is taken, the defensive player blocks out and attempts to rebound the missed shot. The offensive player also goes for the rebound (if offensive player gets it he/she should attempt to score). The drill continues until the defensive player gets the basketball, even if the offensive player makes the basket. The offensive player should continue to battle for the basketball.

When the defensive player secures the ball he/she gives it to the offensive player, who now becomes the defensive player, and replaces that player on the 3-point line. The new defensive player then passes to another player positioned on, or near, the 3-point line and the drill starts again.

### Coaching Points:

- This drill can get physical, so be diligent on calling fouls if necessary. A foul on the offensive player ends the possession. A foul on the defensive player restarts the turn with a different offensive player.
- Offensive player should not leave position too early once receiving the pass, nor be allowed to dribble more than a couple times.

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## Rebounding Drill – 3 on 2 Box-out

### Overview:

This drill helps defenders find a rebound threat and work on boxing them out, whether it is their guy or not.

### Setup:

A coach stands under basket with the basketball, 1 offensive player starts just above the free-throw line and 1 offensive player starts at each free-throw line extended area, inside of the 3-point line (wing areas).

Two defensive players stand facing the offensive players on the “big” blocks.

Only one basketball is needed for this drill.

### How it Works:

As the coach passes the ball to one of the 3 offensive players, the 2 defensive players (who are not allowed to look at the coach) sprint out to guard the 2 non-shooters.

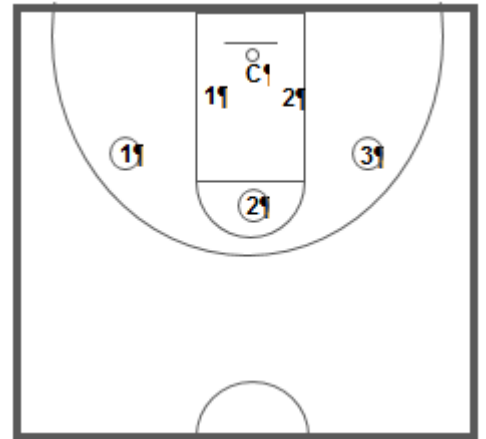
The shooter does not go for the rebound. The defenders know that the offensive player with the ball will shoot immediately so their focus should be to move towards the 2 non-shooters, make contact as to block out and then rebound the basketball.

As soon as the shot is taken the non-shooters should go hard to the basket for an offensive rebound.

Defenders must get 3 rebounds to switch to offense.

### Coaching Points:

- Have the outlets run full speed down the court to keep the drill moving.
- Offensive rebounder should not leave free-throw line until shot is taken.



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## Footwork Drill – Explode, Pivot, Pass

### Overview:

This drill focuses on basic footwork fundamentals. It's a really quick and simple drill to run. Your team can get a lot of benefit out of it even if it's only run for 5 minutes.

### Setup:

Players get into groups of 2 or more, preferably 3 players in each group if possible.



Each group has one basketball and should start in a straight line behind either the sideline or the baseline.

### How it Works:

The player starting with the basketball must begin the drill behind the line in triple threat stance. Their first action is to take two explosive dribbles out from the line and then perform a controlled jump stop. After the jump stop, the player pivots 180 degrees until they're facing their group and makes a strong chest pass to the next person in line. They then jog to the end of the line. This process continues for a set amount of time.

### The three main things coaches are looking at are:

No traveling when exploding off the dribble.

A controlled jump stop.

A controlled pivot.

### Coaching Points:

- The player receiving the basketball should be starting in a low stance and showing target hands.
- Players must explode out with the dribble. Don't allow them to go half-speed.
- Switch up which kind of pivot the players use. It can be forward or reverse, and with their left or right foot.

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## Footwork Drill – Four Corners

### Overview:

This is a great drill for working on jump stops, pivoting, and passing. It will allow the coach to teach the different kinds of pivots and is a drill the players enjoy doing.

### Setup:

The coach must first create a large square in the half-court by placing four cones an even distance apart. There must also be another cone or D-man in the exact middle of the square. You can see where I recommend placing these cones in the diagram.



Split your team up into four groups and send each group to a cone. The cones will be the starting position for each line. The person at the front of each line has a basketball.

### How it Works:

The first thing the coach must do is tell the players which way they'll be passing (either right or left) and which kind of pivot they should use.

When the coach calls out 'go', each player with a basketball dribbles in towards the middle cone, performs a jump stop a couple of feet away, pivots, and then passes to the next line before joining the end of it. The next player in line that catches the basketball does not start until the coach has called out 'go' again.

### Coaching Points:

- Each player must be pivoting the same direction so that two balls don't end up being passed to one line. Do make sure to reverse the direction half way through the drill.
- Use front and reverse pivots and make sure players aren't traveling. Explain to the players it's better to jump stop with a small hop. The higher they jump, the more off-balance they'll be when they land.

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## Footwork Drill – Red Light, Green Light

### Overview:

This is a simple but effective drill that will improve and allow you to teach jump stops and pivoting.

### Setup:

The drill starts with every player line up along the baseline holding a basketball.

If you have more than 10 players, I recommend creating two lines.

### How it Works:

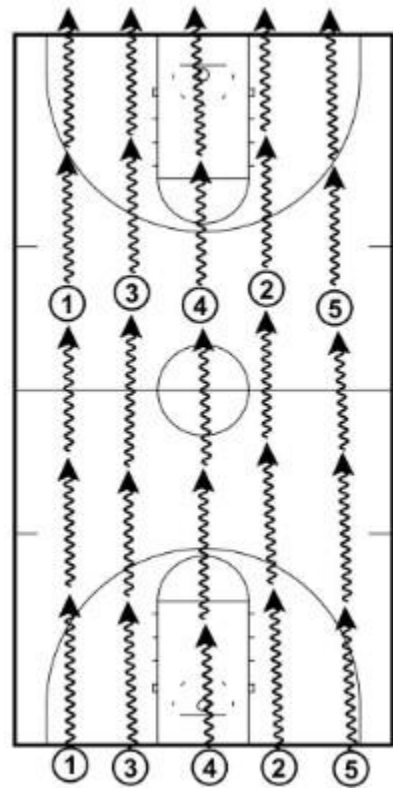
Everyone starts on the baseline in triple threat position. The coach will then lead the players up the court by calling out 'go' and 'stop'. On go, the players begin dribbling at a comfortable pace towards the opposite end of the court. When the coach says stop, the players must immediately perform a jump stop.

This continues until the players reach the other end of the court. Once your players are comfortable with the jump stops and are performing them correctly, you can make the drill more advanced by adding pivots.

You can either say 'pivot', and allow them to pivot either way. Or you can be specific and say 'right foot pivot' or 'left foot pivot'.

### Coaching Points:

- Players must not jump too high on the jump stops.
- Make sure players in good stance when they land after the jump stop. Knees bent and head up.
- If adding pivots, make sure players don't raise out of their stance when pivoting.



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## Footwork Drill – Jump Stops & Pivots

### Overview:

Teaches the basics of a jump stop and pivot.

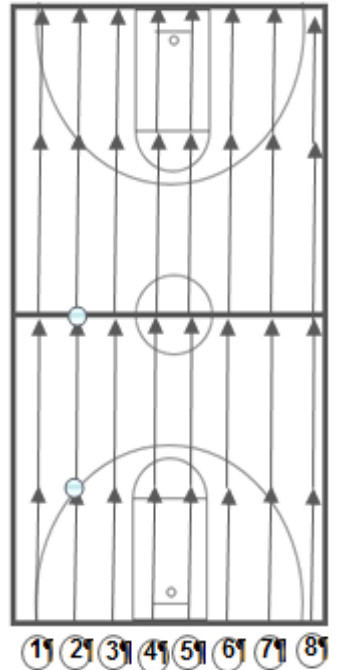
### Setup:

All players line up on the baseline spread out (break into two groups if there is not enough room). No balls are needed for this drill.

### How it Works:

The coach blows their whistle or yells “go”. Players will run to the free-throw line and do a good jump stop. They will then do a front pivot and pivot back. Continue this to half-court, the opposite free-throw line, and then have them sprint through the baseline.

If doing two groups, the second should follow one line behind. Do this a couple different times.



### Coaching Points:

- Players should not be bouncing or jumping in their jump stop. Explain it more as a “quick stop”.
- Players should find their balance before pivoting, so they are not falling over. Always under control.
- Pivot of both the right and left foot. You could add back-pivots as well.

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