

COACHING FIRST STEPS BASKETBALL

A guide to coaching kids age 6-8 in game settings!

NOT TOO MUCH ... BUT JUST ENOUGH

● **HOW MUCH IS TOO MUCH AT THIS AGE?**

● **JUST WHAT SHOULD WE FOCUS ON?**

● **WORKING WITH YOUNG KIDS ON TEAMS.**

● **AN OFFENSE AT THIS AGE?**

● **FOCUS ON THE **FUNDAMENTALS!****



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HOOPZONE Basketball

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The primary aim of this book is to introduce beginner basketball coaches and kids to the first steps of being on your first team. This book is a basic guide for coaches to teach the skills of the game, team structure and rules at ages 6-8. Maybe you've been coaching a few years and you want something to refer to or maybe you're a parent wanting to install fundamentals in your athlete, then this book is for you!



As with any sport there are lots of tips that go into solid fundamentals. What I've done in this book to condense down to only what these very beginners should be taught. Let's not overwhelm them but rather give them a few simple tips they can remember in starting their basketball careers off. Once the ground work is laid for beginners then more can be added in time.

Good luck,

Coach 

Contents

Understanding the Game	2
Basic Terminology	3
Coaching Expectations.....	4
The Basketball Court & Positions.....	6
Ball Handling.....	7
Dribbling	8
Passing.....	10
Rebounding.....	12
Setting & Receiving Screens (Picks)	13
Pivoting	14
Shooting.....	15
Offensive Positioning.....	20
Offensive Plays.....	21
Defensive	24

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COACHING EXPECTATIONS:

● Communication! - Communication!

- Phone calls to parents
 - » Introduce yourself and practice information
 - » Reminders of game and or practice changes
 - » Reminder about pictures, banquets, tournament games
- Practice conversations with parents & players
 - » Next practice reminders
 - » Next game reminders
 - » Things to work on at home
 - » Individual tips for players
 - » Drink and snacks if needed
- Communication at games
 - » Teaching and instructing of players
 - » Encouragement of players at all times
 - » Team huddle after game
 - » Be active and involved

● Organized and Prepared

- Practice plans
- Concept of what drills and skills to teach
- On time to games and practices

● Fair

- Treat and work with all kids the same
- Teach all players all skills
- Encourage both the best and worst players on your team

● Sportsmanship

- Teach your players to respect the other team and officials
- Lead by example
- Don't yell or berate officials for calls- they are doing the best they can.

You can do it coach!

Coaching TO DO's:

- Instill Sportsmanship in the players.** Many players have been brought up watching trash talking and selfish basketball. Teach them to respect their opponents and the game.
- Be their coach, role model, and authority figure.** Players have to learn that the coach's vision is reality. They should treat their coach as an authority figure, and willingly abide by the coach's rules. Many coaches try to be best buddies with their players, which makes for a hard transition to high school, because the high school coaches are so demanding.
- Make the players' experience enjoyable and productive.** If practice is all about fun and games players will have a hard time adjusting to the demands of a high school coach. High school basketball is very competitive and practices are for working hard, instruction, and improving. Teach players that working hard and giving every ounce of energy for a common goal is the fun part.

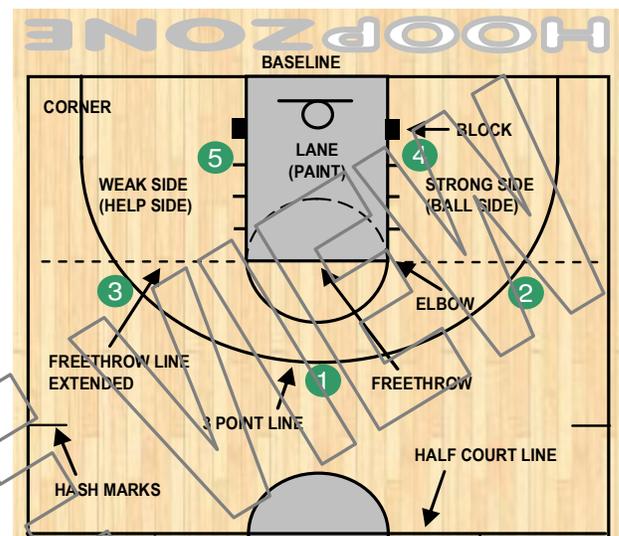
THE BASKETBALL COURT AND PLAYER POSITIONS:

A basketball court has symmetry; one half of the court is a mirror image of the other. Thinking of the entire court as two half-courts, divide it into frontcourt and backcourt. The frontcourt is the half of the court where the offense's basket is located. The backcourt is the other half. Thus one team's backcourt is the other team's frontcourt.

Our diagram at right shows the different areas of the court and notes the "basics" that every youth basketball coach and players should be familiar with. Most kids this age will be learning these for the first time and it will help not only for games but practice placements also.

The diagram also shows the offensive number scheme we use to let kids know where to go on the floor.

- 1 = Point guard
- 2 = Right wing guard
- 3 = Left wing guard
- 4 = Right forward (post)
- 5 = Left forwards (post)



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PASSING:



Unfortunately passing and catching the basketball are two skills that are often overlooked by players and coaches. More time is often spent on dribbling and shooting drills. However, for players and teams to be more successful on offense proper passing and catching skills must be developed.

Work with your teams on Chest passing, Bounce passing and Overhead passing

THE MAIN 4 TYPES OF PASSES:

CHEST PASS:

This involves you pushing the ball with two hands from your chest outwards, thrusting the ball towards a teammate snapping at wrists and ending thumbs down.

BOUNCE PASS:

This involves a pass, with two hands, bounced to a teammate off the ground. The pass begins like the chest pass but is skipped off the floor.

OVERHEAD PASS:

The ball is brought behind your head with 2 hands and snapped forward to a teammate. Use for quickness or to keep high away from defense.

PASSING TIPS:

- Be in a triple threat position before passing.
- Players should use the pivot to avoid the defender and improve their passing angle.
- Players should step toward teammate when passing.
- Players should extend their wrists and fingers outward.
- Players should pass to their teammate's chest or extended hand.
- Players should always pass and catch the basketball with two hands at this age.
- Players should use overhead pass after a rebound to get the basketball over the defense.

CATCHING THE BALL TIPS:

- > Players should catch the ball, get into a triple threat position and look over the entire court. This will help them follow the action on the court.
- > Players should make cuts and fakes to get open for a pass.
- > Players should move quickly toward the passer to catch the ball.
- > Players should give the passer a target, usually an extended hand, away from the defender.
- > Players should practice working on a variety of passing and catching drills.

PIVOTING:

Pivoting is just moving side to side leaving one of your feet stationary while moving the other one.

The pivot is a fundamental skill that can get a player relief from pressure defense, and can be a great skill to have to begin an offensive move. To pivot, turn on the ball of your foot. Once you choose your pivot foot, it must maintain contact with the ground until you dribble, shoot or pass. (You can go airborne to shoot or pass) If your pivot foot moves and you do not dribble, shoot or pass, it is a violation called traveling, and the ball is awarded to the other team. A reverse or back pivot is when you turn backwards and when you turn forwards it is called a forward or front pivot. All players should know how to pivot 90 degrees and 180 degrees. Pivoting can be done with, or without, the ball.

Examples of when to pivot:

- > A player who receives the ball while standing still may pivot.
- > A player who ends their dribble may pivot to get a better passing lane.
- > A player without the ball may use a pivot move to fake their opponent in the direction they plan on moving. Jab step or "V" cut.

COACHING TIPS FOR PIVOTING:

- You must keep your head up and alert.
- Begin in a triple threat position, knees bent a little.
- Establish a pivot foot, your pivot point must not change.
- Your pivot foot must not slide.
- Pivots should be made on the ball of your foot; therefore, lift up the heel of the pivot foot.
- Hang on firmly to ball while pivoting.
- If your defender is in your face you must "rip" (hang on firmly) the ball when pivoting.



EYES ON TARGET

- Knowing where you intend to place the ball begins with your eyes focused on the basket
- To improve accuracy, locate the target (rim) as early as possible.
- Before shooting, see the whole floor, but when shooting, narrow your focus to the front of rim.
- Keep your eyes on the target and do not follow the flight of the ball.
- Keeping your target focus is very important!



ELBOW UNDER BALL

- This is the most important step. The elbow is directly under the ball in line with the basket. Not too close or too far from the body. I place my elbow under the ball, the elbow will keep the ball straight to the basket. Do not allow your shooting arm to stick out to the side or be on an angle.
- When the elbow is straight, the ball will rest in one hand easily and can still be released straight to the target.
- Your balance hand should not add force or spin to the shot.
- The ball should start motion directly upwards from the shot pocket (no dipping of the ball).
- Your elbow should be positioned comfortably under the ball.



FOLLOW-THROUGH

- Your shooting hand should be fully extended in a straight line to the rim.
- Allowed the ball to roll off your finger tips and your wrist snaps so that your fingers are pointed down and straight toward the basket.
- The ball should come off the hand with perfect symmetrical backspin.
- As shown in the picture to the left, your guide hand stays to the side and does not influence the flight of the ball.
- Hold your follow through position until the ball hits the rim.



Additional Keys

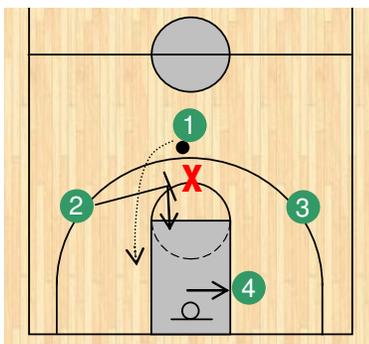
- Your wrists should be floppy (relaxed).
- Fingers should be pointed at the target (rim).
- Finish high. You should see your fingers at the top square of the back board.

*The basics of all jump shots are the same: **Balance, Eyes on the Target, Elbow In and Under, Follow Through.** It is relatively simple; the key is doing it over and over again until it becomes second nature. It takes good basic form and hours of practice to be an outstanding shooter! The B.E.E.F. method is simple for learning how to shoot a basketball and makes learning to play basketball more fun.*

OFFENSIVE PLAYS FOR THIS AGE:

At HOOPZONE Basketball we use the concept of teaching the kids HOW TO PLAY, before teaching the kids HOW TO RUN PLAYS. This is easy to say and sometimes very difficult to do.

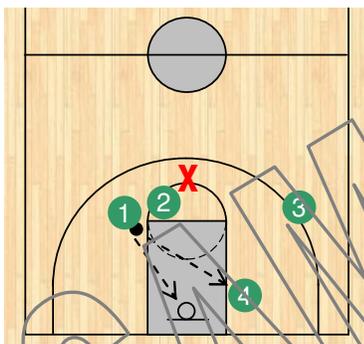
It is common to hear coaches talk about the importance of teaching youth basketball players the fundamentals. Most coaches will agree that one of the main goals of youth coaches should be to teach the kids HOW TO PLAY. We start the basketball season with plans to run drills and teach skills, but then reality sets in.



PLAY #1 - PICK AND ROLL PLAY

This is one of the simplest ways for youth to open up their offense.

In this set #2 sets a pick (screen) for #1 point guard. This side screen shown at left is easiest for a right handed point guard to dribble. Once the pick is set the forward on screen side should move out of the lane area as shown by #4 to open the lane up.



#1 point guard dribble drives hard off pick (screen) towards basket. After #1 drives #2 rolls into lane for possible pass or rebound.

Once #1 dribble past their defender #1 looks to drive and shot or pass to forward, #5 as defense collapses.

#2 (screener) should always open up to ball following #1 dribbling past as shown. By doing so they may get a pass.