

# ROOKIE BASKETBALL

*A condensed guide for coaches & players grades 2 & 3*

Keep it simple, make it fun and stick to easy fundamentals!

THE VERY BASICS!



By  
**Bruce Owens**

HOW MUCH IS TOO MUCH?

HOOPZONE Basketball

ALSO AVAILABLE IN  
PDF  
Adobe



This booklet is designed to give our volunteer coaches some direction for instructing kids in grades 2 and 3 in the game of basketball. As we know there is so much we could coach them but I have condensed here what is necessary for this age group trying to keep it simple. When coaching your teams keep reminding them of these key fundamentals. Encourage your team, make it fun and stress the importance of fundamentals and doing it right!

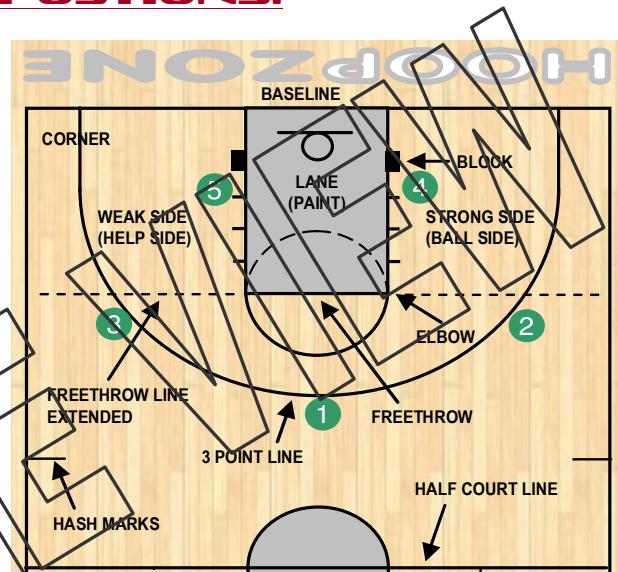
*"SUCCESS in youth sports is not measured by the scoreboard but by how well the team executes"*  
Coach Owens

## THE FLOOR AND PLAYER POSITIONS:

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)



## 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 3 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 defender's head.

## **SHOOTING (JUMP SHOOTING):**

Easily remembered and coached is the **B-E-E-F** principles. Beef is simply an acronym that is used to remind basketball players of the fundamentals of shooting a basketball. By working on the points of B-E-E-F you put yourself in a better position to score.

**B = Balance, E = Eyes on target, E = Elbow in and under ball, F = Follow through**



### **BALANCE**

- Feet are shoulder width apart for good balance.
- Feet should be in a slightly staggered stance that is consistent and comfortable.. Your shooting foot can be slightly ahead of the non-shooting foot.
- Point your feet in the general direction of the basket.
- Once you develop a comfortable stance, line up your feet the exact same way on every shot. Consistency is critical.
- Flex/bend your knees on every shot.



### **Additional Keys**

- As you catch the ball, move it quickly into the "shot pocket" position.
- Line up so the ball and your shooting eye form a straight line to the basket.
- Position the ball several inches above your waist in the shot pocket.
- Grip the ball properly and be ready to shoot.



### **EYES ON TARGET**

- Knowing where you plan to shoot 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, focus to the front of rim.
- Keep your eyes on the target and do not follow the flight of the ball.



### **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. By placing the 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. Your pointing finger should be pointing right at you.
- 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.

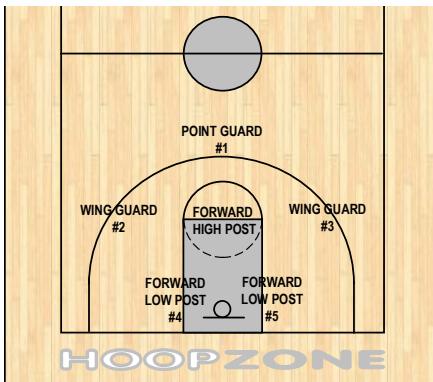


### **FOLLOW-THROUGH**

- 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.
- As shown at left, your guide hand stays to the side but does not influence the flight.
- Hold your follow through position until the ball hits the rim.

## OFFENSE:

Players must first learn the offensive skills that will be used to run their team offense. As simple as that sounds, I have seen many youth basketball coach's jump right into teaching their team offense before teaching the skills needed to run the offense. If the players are not proficient at dribbling, passing, screening, pivoting and shooting - how are they supposed to run an offense? It's a fact that offensive players spend 80% of their time moving without the ball. Based on this, players must learn to cut and move in order to be an asset on the court.



### OFFENSIVE PLAYER POSITIONS

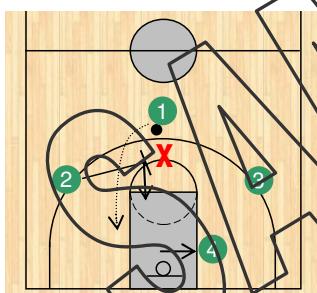
**THE POINT GUARD** (#1) runs the offense and watches the backcourt for defense. His role is important to the team as he is an extension of the coach on the floor.

**THE WING GUARDS** (#2 & #3) should excel in passing, penetrating the ball with dribbling or passing and making the outside shot.

**FORWARDS**-(#4 & #5) are the taller players on the team who generally operate in the low and high post areas. The forwards are also the main rebounders on the team.

### TIPS FOR OFFENSE:

- Players should put the team first.
- Players should be patient when running the team offense and forced to do so.
- Players should maintain proper floor spacing. They should stay spread out and run the offense.
- Players should watch the ball, their teammates and the defense.
- Players with the basketball should be in a good triple threat position facing the basket. This will allow them to either dribble, pass or shoot the ball.
- Players should not dribble the ball too quickly. They should first look the court over for a possible pass to an open teammate.
- Players should keep their dribble alive until they are ready to pass or shoot the basketball.
- Players should use their offensive skills to execute their team offense. These would include proper dribbling, passing, cutting, screening, and shooting.

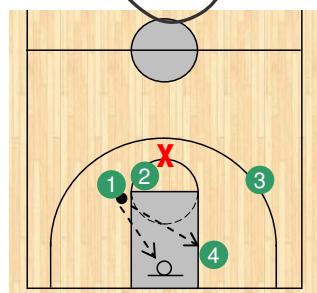


### #1 PICK AND ROLL PLAY

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.

