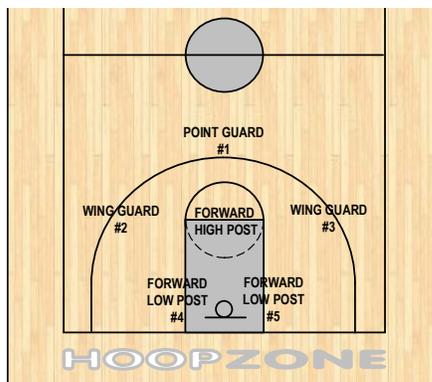


OFFENSE

An offense is a method to score baskets and get open shots against your opponent. Most coaches consider their offense to be a continuous motion or a play that can be run over and over again. It's common to have more than one offensive set, usually a primary offense and a secondary offense. When coaching young kids it is best to keep the offense simple.

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 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

GUARDS-Guards are usually the smaller, quicker players on the team, with good ball handling skills and outside shooting ability. Their primary roles lie in advancing the ball up the court, penetrating (getting past the man guarding them) by pass or dribble and being the first line of defense in protecting against a fast break (a situation in which the defensive team gain possession of the ball and moves into scoring position so quickly that its members outnumber their opponents) if possession of the ball is lost.



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 GUARD (#2 & #3) should excel in passing, penetrating the ball with dribbling or passing and consistently making the outside shot.

FORWARDS-Forwards are the taller players on the team who generally operate in the low and high post areas and sometimes in the key area. Reasonable outside shooting ability is required and good ball handling skills to enable them to dribble to the basket. The forwards are also one of the main rebounders in the team.



CENTER-The centers are usually the tallest players on the team and work closest to the basket to take advantage of their height, generally around the key area. Playing where they do the center is in the primary rebounding position and should attempt to get all rebounds.



COACHING TIPS FOR OFFENSE:

- Players should put the team first.
- Players should be patient when running the team offense.
- Players should maintain proper floor spacing. They should stay spread out and pass the ball around for a good shot.
- 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 cut from the weak side of the court to the strong side of the court.
- Players should make good fakes before making cuts.
- Players should cut behind the defense, not in front of them. This makes it harder for the defense to react to their move.
- Players should look for good, high percentage shots. They should shoot within their range.
- Players should use their offensive skills to execute their team offense. These would include proper dribbling, passing, cutting, screening, and shooting.