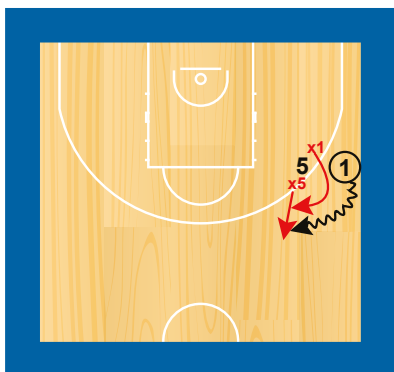


## 1.2.9 DEFENDING ON BALL SCREENS – "DOUBLE"



### GUARDING THE ON BALL SCREEN – DOUBLE

x1 takes away the baseline drive and forces the dribbler to use the screen. x5 steps out, toes to the sideline, to "show their number".

As the dribbler moves, x5 steps out to guard the ball and x1 follows the dribbler hard to form a double team with x5. x1 must get into position quickly to ensure the dribbler cannot split the two defenders by dribbling between them.

---

## FOLLOW-UP

---

1. Discuss with a coaching colleague how they prefer to defend off ball screens – do you agree?  
Discuss any difference in philosophy
2. Have an assistant coach record how many times an opponent uses an on ball screen and how your players defended it each time. Do they defend it as you prefer?
3. Discuss with a coaching colleague how they improve the ability of their players to defend screens.

## 1.3 ZONE DEFENCES

### 1.3.1 WHY ZONE IS NOT RECOMMENDED FOR PLAYERS UNDER 15

*Any defence played in the half court which does not incorporate normal man to man defensive principles (which include help defence) can be considered to be a zone. For this purpose, trapping defences which rotate back to man to man defensive principles are acceptable.*

There are a number of reasons why playing zone defence is not recommended with players under the age of 15. And some competitions specifically prohibit zone defences being played and will penalise teams (by technical foul on the coach) if they do so.<sup>17</sup>

The defensive principles of rotation, “help and recover”, containment, vision of the entire court and positioning relative to both your player and the ball are important fundamentals that underpin most, if not all, defensive philosophies.

The rationale for the introduction of the “no zone” (in the half court) rule is that zone defences with young players can limit the development of individual and team skills.

The reason for this is that the zone defence (particularly with young players) tends to:

- limit opportunities to drive to the basket (as there are 2 or 3 defenders in position at the keyway);
- limit opportunities to pass to players cutting into the key (as there are 2 or 3 defenders in the keyway, young players often struggle to “see” the pass or to make the pass);
- force players to shoot from outside before they have developed the strength and technique to do so;
- players often lack the strength to throw a “skip” pass (from one side of the court to the other).

By having teams play man to man defence provides greater opportunity for offensive players as there will often be less defenders in position directly near the basket. This reduces the need for defensive skills such as closing out and positioning. Accordingly, both offensive and defensive players will miss out on valuable learning and development.

<sup>17</sup> For example, Basketball Australia introduced a “no zone defence” at its U14 Club Championships in 1996 (and continues to do so)

Whilst the “no zone” rule focuses on the defence, it was introduced to enhance the development of both offensive and defensive skills. Indeed, it is up to the offence, through ball and player movement, to prove that it is a zone defence.

It is important to remember that the “no zone” rule applies only in the half court and zone presses and trapping defences are allowed, if they fall back to man to man principles in the quarter court.

Where a “no zone” rule is applied it is recommended that it is not for referees to adjudicate whether or not a zone defence is being played. Instead, an independent official (or “zone buster”) is appointed to each game. This person needs a reasonably high level of knowledge as it can at times be difficult to determine whether or not a team is playing zone defence.

# 1.4 DEFENDING SITUATIONS OF DISADVANTAGE

## 1.4.1 2v1 AND 3v2

There are many situations that will occur during a game where the defence is outnumbered, for example:

- Defending in “transition” (whether after a turnover, score or a missed shot);
- After the defence has double teamed a player and the ball has been passed;
- After a defender has rotated to help a team mate.

The first rule to defending situations of disadvantage is for all players to hustle and move quickly so that the situation of numeric disadvantage exists for only a short period of time. Regardless of whether a player has made a mistake, missed a shot they must quickly move to defend the next play.

The outnumbered defender should attempt to “steal time” from the opponents (to give their team mates sufficient time to recover) and this is best done by putting doubt into the mind of the offensive players. In a situation of numeric disadvantage, one offensive player may be undefended. If the outnumbered defenders can put doubt into the mind of the offensive player about what they are going to do (and who they will defend) that can be sufficient to win the contest.

To put doubt in the mind of the offensive players, an outnumbered defender can:

- Be active – “hedge” in one direction and then move in another. Keep arms and hands high and moving;
- Adopt a position on the court (e.g. stand in the passing lane) but be ready to move quickly to another position (e.g. move into the driving lane);
- Defend the easiest basket – for example, a defender may stay in the key to stop a layup, even if this does allow an open outside shot;
- Attack the person with the ball – this is often unexpected of the defender, but rather than “hedging” and “retreating” move quickly to defend the person with the ball being as aggressive as possible. If the person passes the ball the opponent may get an open shot, however such pressure can be effective as the player may not make an effective pass;
- If there are two defenders (e.g. defending 2 against 3 offensive players) one defender may defend the basket while the other pressures the ball.

---

## FOLLOW-UP

---

1. What do you believe are the key principles defenders should adhere to when they are in a situation of disadvantage (e.g. 1 v 2 or 2 v 3)? Ask your players their opinion – do they agree with you?



---

**LEVEL 1**

---



**TEAM**

---

---

**CHAPTER 2**

---

# **OFFENSIVE TACTICS AND STRATEGIES**

---



---

## CHAPTER 2

---

# OFFENSIVE TACTICS AND STRATEGIES

---

---

### 2.1. OFFENSIVE MOVEMENT

2.1.1	Basic Floor Spacing - Pass and Cut / Give and Go	303
2.1.2	Motion Offence - 5 Out - Replacing the Cutter	308
2.1.3	Motion Offence - 5 Out - Purposeful movement - timing and spacing	309
2.1.4	Motion Offence - 5 Out - Ball Reversal	312
2.1.5	Motion Offence - 5 Out - Dribble Penetration - Receivers' Principles	314
2.1.6	Motion Offence - 5 Out - Dribble Entry	317
2.1.7	Introducing Screens - 5 Out - Pass and Screen Away	318
2.1.8	Scrimmage Activity	320
2.1.9	Allowing Creativity in Decision Making	321
	<i>Follow-up</i>	322

---

### 2.2. SCREENING

2.2.1	Off Ball Screens - Role of Screener - Setting the Screen	323
2.2.2	Off Ball Screens - Basic Cuts of Screen - Straight Cut	324
2.2.3	Off Ball Screens - Basic Cuts of Screen - Curl Cut	325
2.2.4	Off Ball Screens - Basic Cuts of Screen - Back Cut	326
2.2.5	Off Ball Screens - Basic Cuts of Screen - Flare Cut	327
2.2.6	Off Ball Screens - Role of Screener – Pop or Roll	328
2.2.7	Off Ball Screens - Down screens	329
2.2.8	Off Ball Screens - Up screens	333
2.2.9	Off Ball Screens - Back screens	335
2.2.10	On Ball Screens - Dribbler Options	336
	<i>Follow-up</i>	339

---

### 2.3. TRANSITION

2.3.1	Basic Fast Break - Starting the Break	340
2.3.2	Basic Fast Break - Running Wide Lanes	342
2.3.3	Basic Fast Break - Pass the Ball Ahead	343
2.3.4	Basic Fast Break - 2v1 Fast Break	344
2.3.5	Basic Fast Break - 3v2 Fast Break	346
2.3.6	Basic Fast Break - Moving into Offence	348
2.3.7	Activities to Practice Fast Break Principles	350
	<i>Follow-up</i>	357

---

### 2.4. OFFENCE AGAINST FULL COURT PRESSURE

2.4.1	Attacking Full Court Zone Pressure - General Principles	358
2.4.2	Attacking Full Court Zone Pressure - Purposeful Movement	361
2.4.3	Attacking Full Court Man to Man Defence	365
	<i>Follow-up</i>	367

---

### 2.5 OFFENSIVE REBOUNDING

2.5.1	Rebounding and Defensive Transition	368
-------	-------------------------------------	-----

---

## 2.1. OFFENSIVE MOVEMENT

### 2.1.1 BASIC FLOOR SPACING - PASS AND CUT / GIVE AND GO

*Coach Marv Harshman<sup>18</sup> reminds us of the challenge of putting a team together – “players know how to dribble, shoot and pass. The challenge is to teach them why they should do it a certain way, and when they should do it”.*

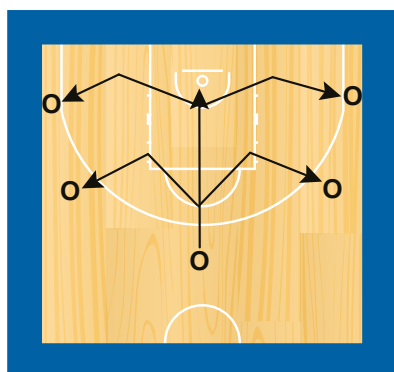
Before teaching the intricacies of an offensive system, players must be taught how to work together, including:

- Basic Floor Spacing;
  - Ball Reversal
  - Pass & Cut
  - Pass, Cut & Replace
- Basic Motion Offence
- Introducing Post Players
- Basic Screening Principles
- Motion Offence with Screens
- Basic Fast Break Principles
- Press Offence

Young players will often tend to follow the ball, which can result in them crowding around the ball. This can be exacerbated when young players lack the strength to throw passes across the court so their team mates move closer to the ball.

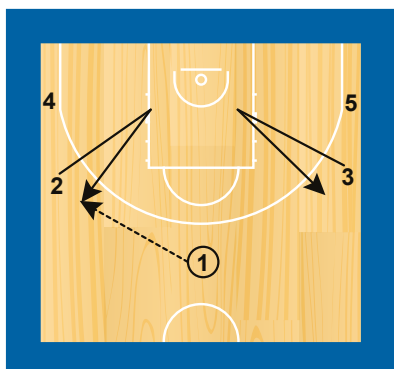
<sup>18</sup> Harshman was head coach at Pacific Lutheran (1945-58), Washington State (1958-1971) and Washington (1971-1985) and was inducted into the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame in 1985

#### A METHOD OF TEACHING COURT SPACING IS TO START WITH THE “HEAD-HANDS-FEET” METHOD:

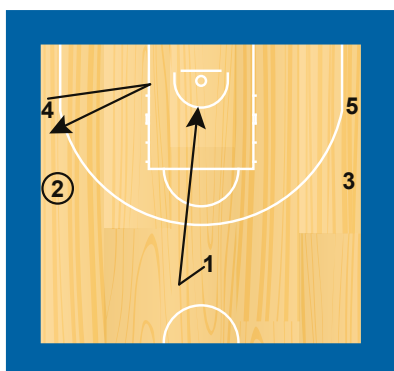


This spaces players around the perimeter and, if you join them up, they look a little like a “stick” figure, with a head, two hands and two feet. Mark these spots on the floor with cones and tell your players that they must be at either the head, hand or feet position and only one person at each position.

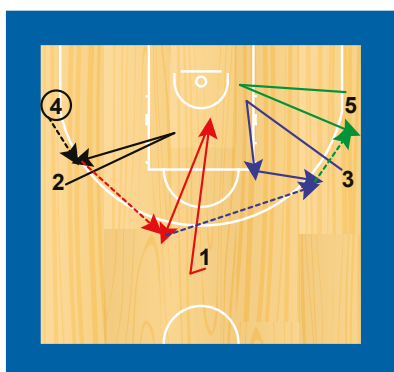
Any cut must go into the “heart” (the key) but then come out to one of those positions.



Initially have only the players closest to the ball leading.



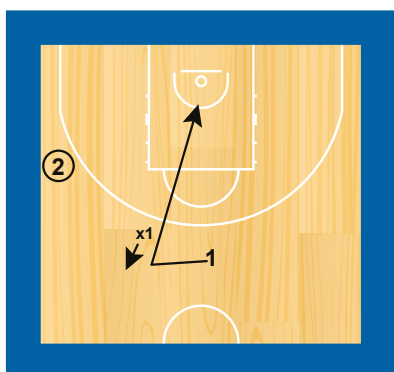
Players can use varying leading techniques. Here 4 uses a v-cut and 1 uses a back cut.



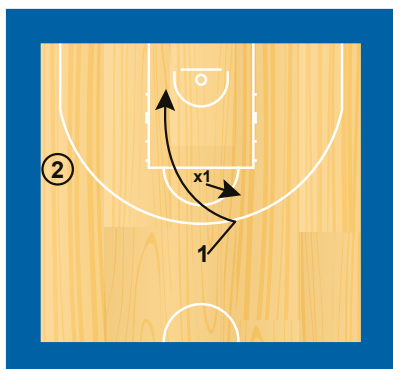
Emphasise the concept of “ball reversal” – moving the ball from one side of the court to the other.

Particularly with young players it is better to make short passes, rather than passing across the court.

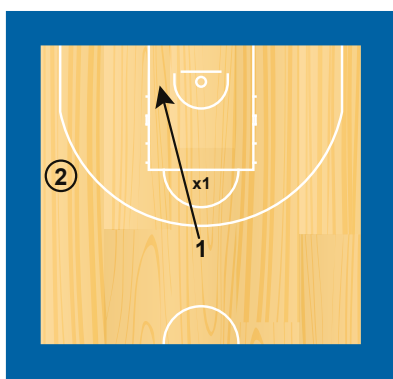
The cuts (shown in various colours) are not done all at the one time. Players cut, when the person next to them has the ball.



Add defenders so that players now must react to the defender in making a cut. Here, the defender is in the “passing lane”, so that the offensive player steps high, shows their hands and then back cuts.

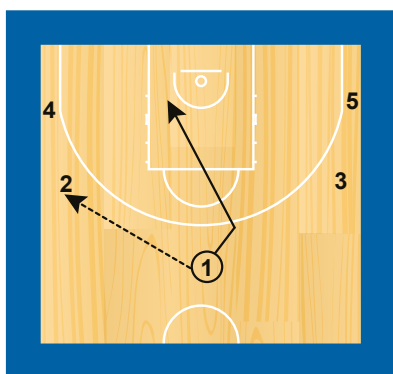


If the defender stands back, the offensive player cuts to the basket. They may move in one direction first (to get the defender to move) and then cut.



Or they may perform a straight cut, which will be most effective if the defender is looking at the ball and has lost sight of the offensive player.

Defenders only guard the one offensive player (no help defence at this stage) and focus is on the 1x1 contests.



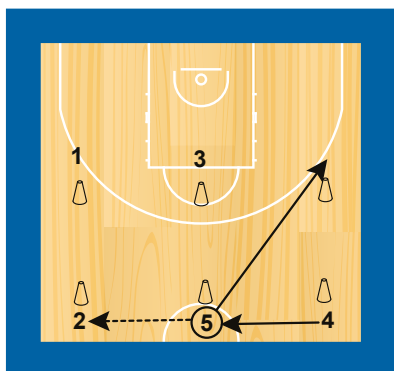
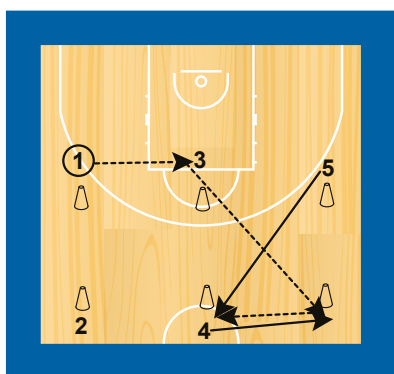
### **“PASS AND CUT” / “GIVE AND GO”**

Perhaps the simplest play in basket is “pass and cut” or “give and go”. The player passing the ball, then cuts to the basket looking to receive a pass back.

### “THE PUZZLE GAME”

In the earlier examples, individual players moved but there was little cohesion between players.

The Puzzle Game is a simple passing activity that can be used to help players to learn the importance of moving rather than standing still. And, in particular, how making a cut can be effective even if the player does not receive the ball because the player creates a space that another teammate can move into.



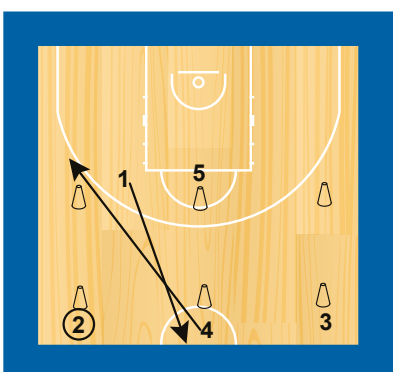
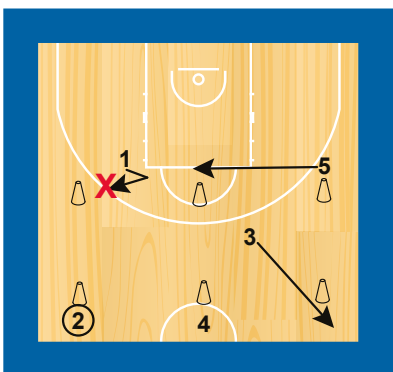
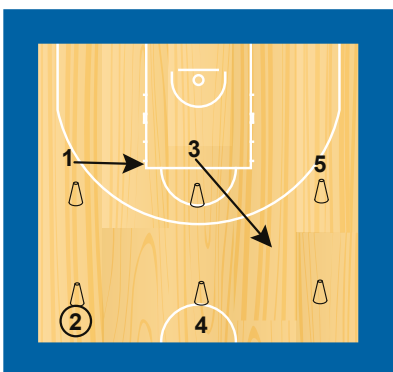
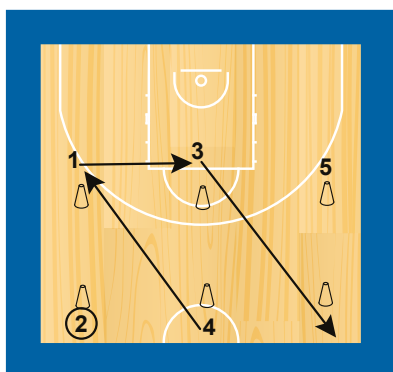
With 5 players, set up six cones and each player stands behind one cone, leaving one cone free. The rules of the game are:

- The ball can only be passed to a person standing at a cone;
- Only one person at each cone;
- A player cannot move past a cone where someone is standing to get to the vacant cone (e.g. Player 2 cannot move past Player 4 to get to the open cone).
- The ball can only be passed to someone next to the person with the ball.  
For example, Player 1 cannot pass to Player 5 but can pass to Players 2, 3 and 4.

In the two diagrams show the game being played according to the rules, with Players 3, 4 and 5 involved in cutting and passing.

The diagram above shows the game being played according to the rules, with Players 3, 4 and 5 involved in cutting and passing.

However, Players 1 and 2 were unable to cut, because they were never next to the vacant cone. The last rule to introduce is that no player should be at the same cone for more than a certain period of time. Initially, make it relatively long such as 5 or 6 seconds and then reduce the time.



The last rule will emphasise the importance of moving to create a space for a teammate. Here Player 3 cuts to the vacant cone, moving away from the ball. In this position they cannot receive the ball.

However, by them moving, Player 1 can now cut, as can Player 4. The cut by Player 3 also creates an opportunity for Player 5 to cut. They could cut to replace Player 3 (which means Player 1 would have to remain). Or they could replace Player 4.

Once players understand this last rule, allow passes to any player so long as they are at a cone.

As players get better they may start to move from their cone at the same time as another player. For example, Player 3 leaves their cone and Player 1 starts to move towards it.

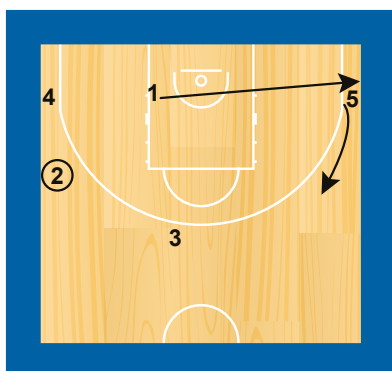
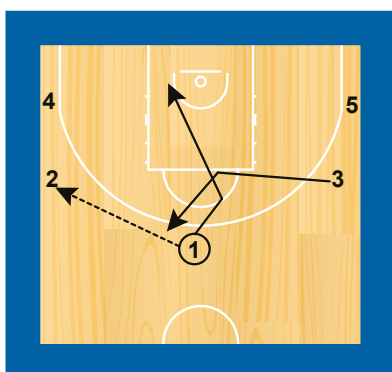
Introduce a rule that a player cannot return to their cone once they leave it. For example, if Player 5 replaced Player 3 before Player 1 got to the cone, Player 1 cannot return to their cone. Nor can Player 5 move back.

In this situation, another player must move to create a space for Player 1. There are many ways that a gap can be created, for example:

- Player 4 replaces Player 1 (shown)
- Player 2 passes to Player 4 and then moves to replace Player 1
- Player 3 moves and then Player 4 moves to their space.
- Player 4 cuts to the cone where Player 5 started and then Player 1 can replace Player 4.

## 2.1.2 MOTION OFFENCE - 5 OUT - REPLACING THE CUTTER

*The “Pass and Cut” is a fundamental of many “invasion” sports like basketball. After introducing that, teams need to be introduced to movement of other players to maintain good floor spacing.*



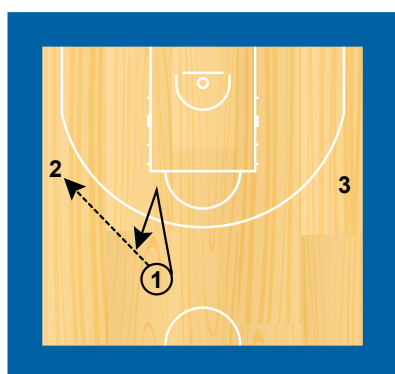
### REPLACING THE CUTTER

After cutting to the basket, the player nearest to the gap cuts toward the ball and then fills the space on the perimeter. Player 3 does not simply follow the 3 point line, but cuts into a threatening position in the key and then moves out.

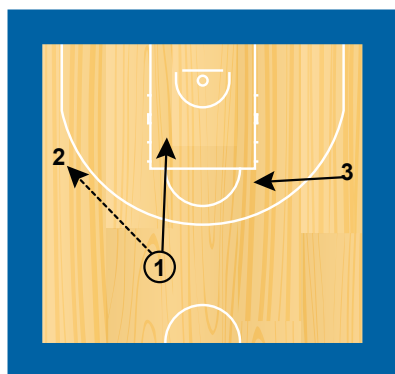
The other players then balance to fill the positions on the perimeter. This follows the simple rules established in the puzzle game previously discussed.

## 2.1.3 MOTION OFFENCE - 5 OUT - PURPOSEFUL MOVEMENT - TIMING AND SPACING

*A key element of a motion style offence is to read the movement and actions of defenders and offensive team mates and then moving appropriately. When a team is first learning this offence the coach may wish to specify some rules that will assist them to read each other.*

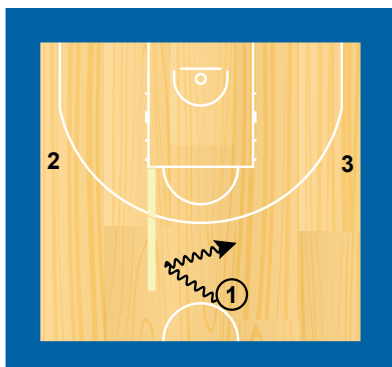


"Pass and Cut" is one of the basic movements in basketball. When 1 cuts from the top of the key, they may replace one another provided that they have not gone past the free throw line.

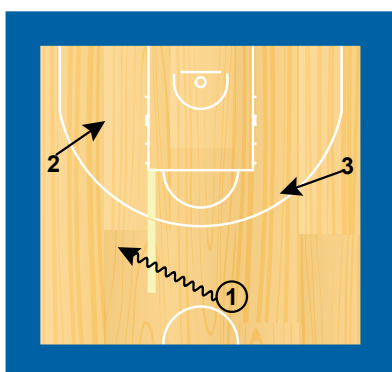


Once 1 has cut past the free throw line they must continue to move towards the basket. This rule, assists 3 to get the timing of their cut correct. They start to replace 1, after 1 cuts past the free throw line.



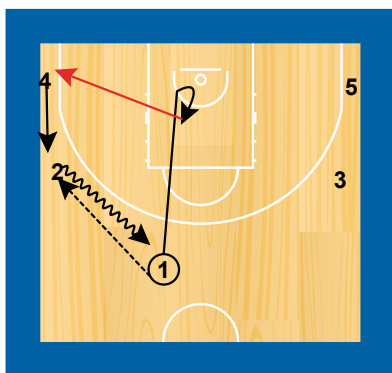


Similarly, 1 may dribble at the top of the key, changing direction from time to time.



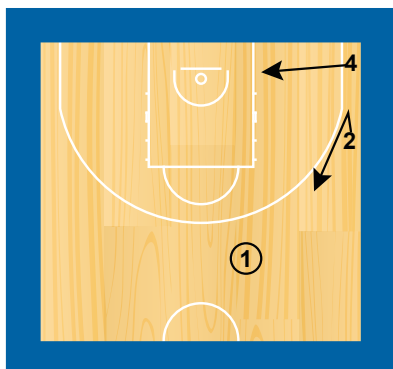
Once 1 dribbles past the "elbow extended" they must continue to move away from the top of the key and continue to dribble to the wing.

This rule, enables both 2 and 3 to time their cuts – 2 cutting towards the basket and 3 replacing 1.

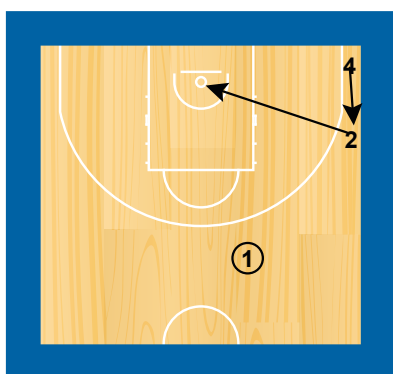


Whenever a player does cut into the key, coaches may introduce a rule that they must stop and face the ball, to allow other perimeter players to move.

After 2 or 3 seconds the player that cut to the key may cut to the vacant area on the perimeter.

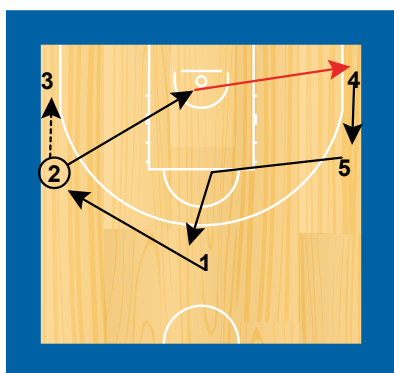


If 2 moves toward 4, 4 may cut to the basket immediately.

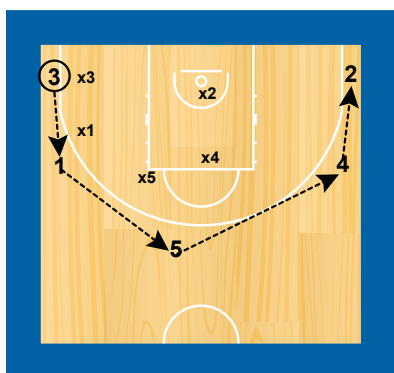


If 2 cuts across the 3 point line, they must continue to the basket, and 4 may then replace them at the wing.

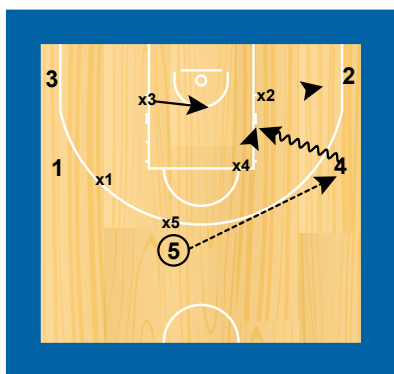
## 2.1.4 MOTION OFFENCE - 5 OUT - BALL REVERSAL



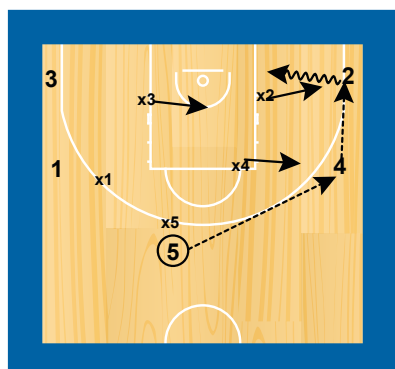
Initially, "Motion Offence" emphasizes the movement of players, with players needing to be able to play in all positions on the court.



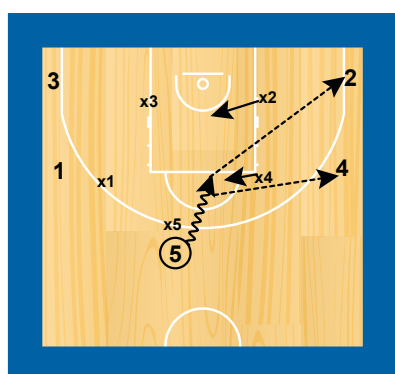
Moving the ball requires defenders to move significantly, often in a short period of time.



As defenders are moving to a new position, this may create opportunities to dribble. Here x4 is in a poor position to defend 4's drive to the basket and x3 is not yet in a help position.



"Ball Reversal" can also create the situation where a defender needs to close-out over a long distance (e.g. from the split line to the perimeter), which places the offensive player in an advantageous situation.



Often the defence will move assuming that the offence is going to reverse the ball and pass it to the other side of the court. This can provide an opportunity for a player at the top of the key to penetrate.

## 2.1.5 MOTION OFFENCE - 5 OUT - DRIBBLE PENETRATION - RECEIVERS' PRINCIPLES

*"Motion Offence" utilizes the concepts of floor spacing and player movement to allow players to develop an understanding of the game that can be transferred to any system of offence.*

A common mistake made by coaches of junior players is to introduce a series of set offenses that the players learn as automatons. This results in the players moving in a set pattern (regardless of whether or not that move makes sense having regard to what the defence is doing) with little understanding of why that movement is correct or incorrect in the circumstances.

They do not master the tactical decisions and technical fundamentals that are required in these moves and this often results in a poorly executed offence.

Instead, young players should be introduced to a motion offence that is based upon technical and tactical fundamentals. In addition to the concepts of floor spacing and player movement, we need to add to the concepts of ball reversal and player movement and principles when and how, dribble should be used.

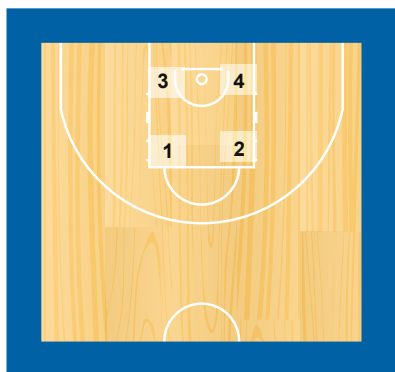
### PRINCIPLES FOR DRIBBLE PENETRATION

On dribble penetration the dribbler should:

- Go at the defender's hips/shoulders;
- Be a scorer first;
- Get both feet inside the key on penetration;
- Come to a jump stop (one count) in the key;
- Use of shot and foot fakes to create penetration opportunities.

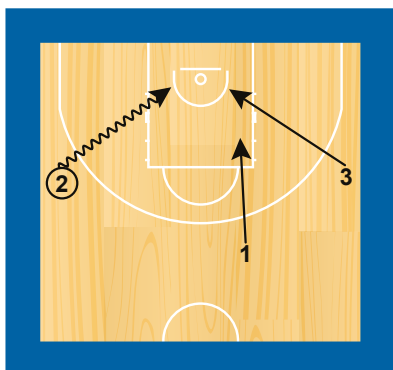
### RECEIVERS' PRINCIPLE

The receivers' principles dictate the movement of the team mates after dribble penetration:



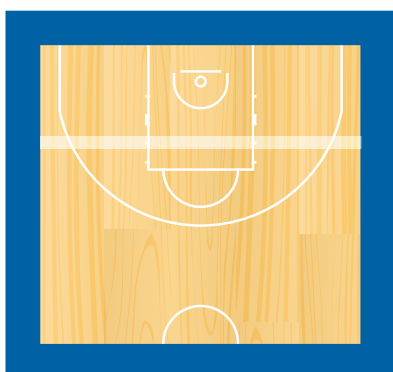
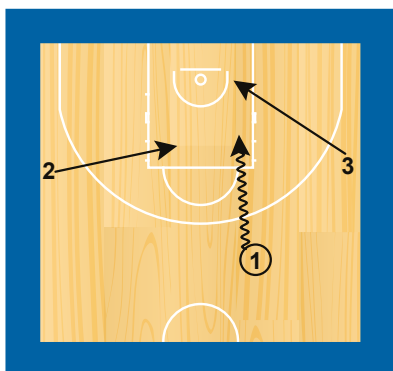
### RECEIVER SPOTS

There are four receiver spots in the keyway, and two of these can be filled on dribble penetration.



### INTRODUCING RECEIVER SPOTS 3x0

Receiver Spots can be introduced 3x0, with one player moving to a spot near the basket and the other teammate moving opposite the dribbler

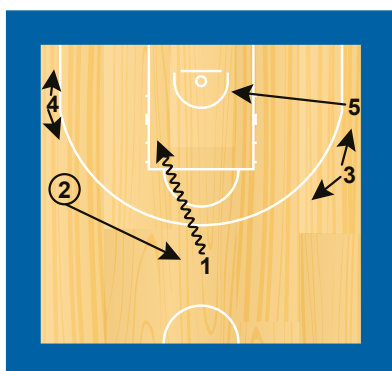
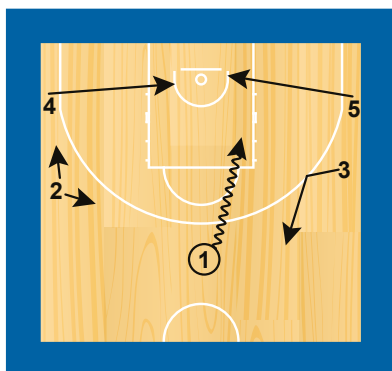
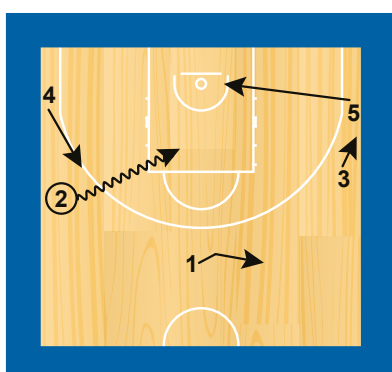
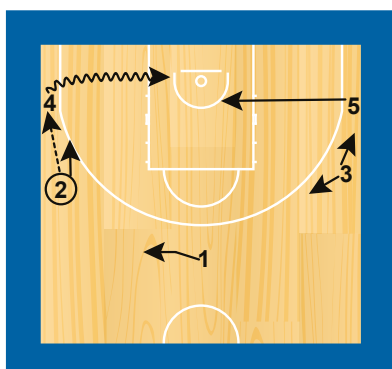


### 5 OUT RECEIVERS

To introduce the principle for 5x0, a line above the block (about half way to the free throw line) dictates that anyone on or below the line gets to a Receiver spot at the basket

Increasingly in basketball, teams look to score from outside shots, particularly after first driving into the key. This can equally be effective for junior athletes, however their shooting is not usually as accurate and consistent from the perimeter.

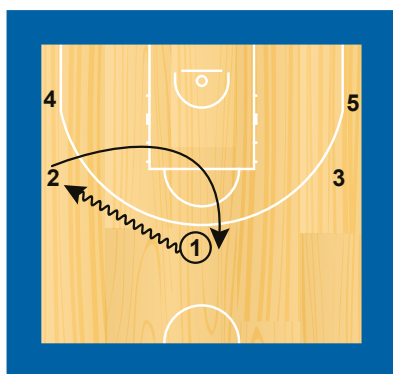
Accordingly, once 5 players are introduced, having players "spot up" on the perimeter is important as well as having players inside the keyway.



In "5 out" (no post players) the receivers' principles are:

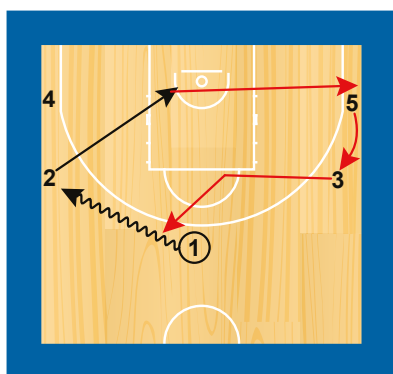
- At least two players inside the key (including the dribbler)
- Player opposite the dribbler flares for the perimeter shot
- Player on the same side as the dribbler moves behind the dribbler, as an outlet pass. They should not get too close though as they do not want their defender to put pressure on Player 4.
- Player at the top of the key remains back on defensive balance

## 2.1.6 MOTION OFFENCE - 5 OUT - DRIBBLE ENTRY



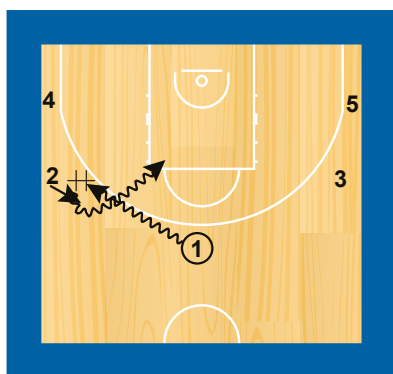
### SHALLOW CUT

Rather than passing the ball, a “dribble entry” can be used, where the ball is dribbled to the wing. The player that is dribbled at moves. They can simply replace the dribbler – a shallow cut.



### BASKET CUT

The player dribbled at can also cut to the basket and other players move to fill the spaces on the perimeter.



### HAND-OFF

Players can also interchange with a dribble hand-off. The dribbler, should come to a jump stop (one count) and hold the ball in two hands – on top and underneath the ball.

The wing player runs past to take the ball and immediately starts to dribble. They should aim to penetrate to the elbow.

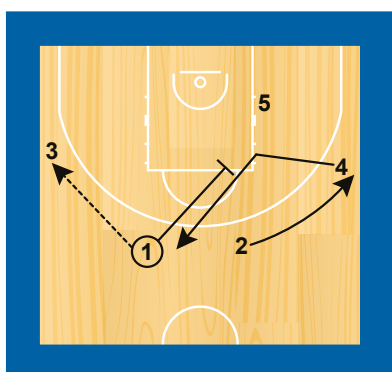


## 2.1.7 INTRODUCING SCREENS - 5 OUT - PASS AND SCREEN AWAY

*It is easy to integrate screens into motion offence either by allowing players to set screens when they wish or by having a rule of when a screen may be used (e.g. on a guard to guard pass, down screen for the perimeter player).*

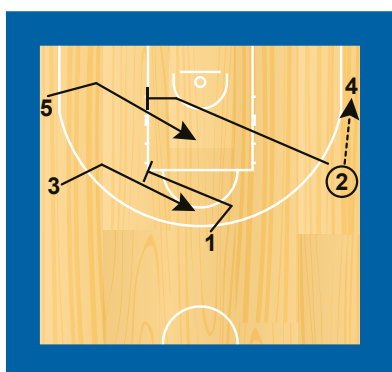
The movement of players that is the foundation of motion offence remains the foundation when screens are introduced.

Some examples of screens being used are:

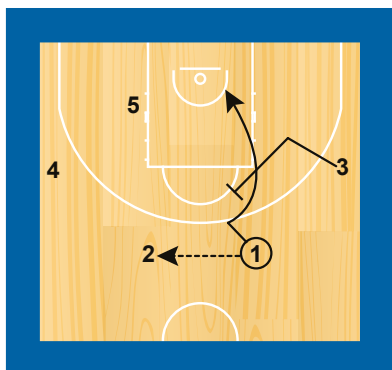


### PASS AND SCREEN AWAY

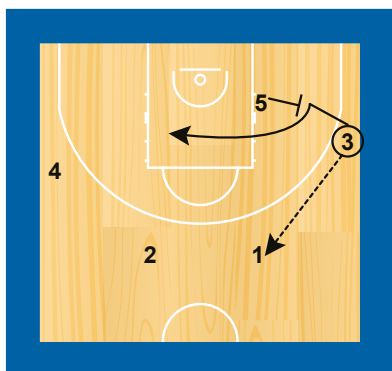
Pass to the wing and down screen for either the perimeter wing player or the low post.



Pass and cut to the basket and then set a screen for the baseline player. The point player can also "exchange" with the wing perimeter player, either by simply swapping positions, or through a screen.

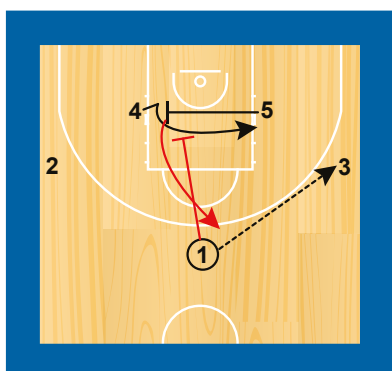


Another example of the guard and perimeter wing player exchanging, this time through the use of an up screen. After the screen, 3 would pop to the guard position and 1 would move out to the perimeter if they did not receive a pass on the cut to the basket.



### POST SCREENS

Post players (either high or low) can also set a back screen for a perimeter player.



Screens between post players can be integrated with screens between perimeter players and post players.

---

## 2.1.8 SCRIMMAGE ACTIVITY

---

### **“TWO HALVES SCRIMMAGE”**

Designate two teams (3x3, 4x4 or 5x5) who will play against each other for two halves. They play in the half court and the coach can stipulate any particular rules in order to change the emphasize of the drill (e.g. no dribble, must pass to post before can take an outside shot) , allow only off ball screens or simply play normal rules.

After the defence gets the ball, either through a steal, rebound or an offensive score, they go to the other end to score unguarded. They can shoot a two point shot or a three point shot and continue

shooting until they get a score.

Defence then return the ball to the offence and play contested in the half court.

At half time of the scrimmage, the defence should have a lead – as they scored on every possession! Offence and defence then swap for the second half. So that the new offence who have a lead, must keep that lead by scoring, as they know that the new defence will score every time that they have possession.

---

## 2.1.9 ALLOWING CREATIVITY IN DECISION MAKING

---

*Having rules or parameters will help players to initially learn a motion style offence to reduce the number of decisions that they must make.*

---

Although the offence encourages movement, young teams will often have players standing still as they take time to make a decision.

Coaches must be careful not to lose the focus of the motion style offence, which is to react to whatever the defence is doing, rather than using pre-determined movement. Therefore, the coach must adopt a “reads not rules” attitude, allowing players to deviate from the set rules. Implicit in this (particularly with young teams) the coach must also accept that at times players will make the wrong decision.

To assist the players to develop, coaches must:

- Ask an athlete why they made the decision they did rather than immediately tell them that they did wrong. Remembering that the coach has a different perspective of the court than players do, the player may literally have seen the situation differently and accordingly taken a different decision to the coach.
- Focus players on continuing to play – the more rigid the rules for offensive movement are, the more likely that if one player makes an incorrect movement that other players will stop, not knowing how to now react;
- Give a lot of opportunities at practice for the team to play in contested situations with aggressive defence. The more the coach stops activities in practice the less able the players will be able to react to what happens during a game;
- Reinforce to athletes that it is OK to make a mistake As coach Dean Smith<sup>19</sup> reminds us “what to do with a mistake – admit it, learn from it, forget it”.

<sup>19</sup> Coach Smith was the Head Coach of the Men's program at the University of North Carolina for 36 years, where his teams won 2 NCAA championships and overall had a win-loss ratio of 77.6% (879 wins – 254 losses)

---

## FOLLOW-UP

---

1. Have someone film one of your games. At the end of the game write notes on how well you think the team implemented your basic offensive team tactics. Review the video – did you see anything different?
2. Often a team can play well and not score and vice versa (play poorly but still score). How else can you measure the effectiveness of your team's offensive movement?
3. How do you define a good shot for your team? Have an assistant coach assess in a game whether or not shots were good or bad. Is your team primarily taking good shots?

## 2.2. SCREENING

### 2.2.1 OFF BALL SCREENS - ROLE OF SCREENER - SETTING THE SCREEN

*A “screen” is where one offensive player attempts to block the path of a teammate’s defender.*

*The basketball rules specify that:*

Screening is an attempt to delay or prevent an opponent without the ball from reaching a desired position on the playing court.

**Legal screening** is when the player who is screening an opponent:

- Was stationary (inside their cylinder) when contact occurs.
- Had both feet on the floor when contact occurs.

**Illegal screening** is when the player who is screening an opponent:

- Was moving when contact occurred.
- Did not give sufficient distance in setting a screen outside the field of vision of a stationary opponent when contact occurred.
- Did not respect the elements of time and distance of an opponent in motion when contact occurred.

If the screen is set within the field of vision of a stationary opponent (front or lateral), the screener may establish the screen as close to them as they desire, provided there is no contact.

If the screen is set outside the field of vision of a stationary opponent, the screener must permit the opponent to take 1 normal step towards the screen without making contact.

If the opponent is in motion, the elements of time and distance shall apply. The screener must leave enough space so that the player who is being screened is able to avoid the screen by stopping or changing direction.

The distance required is never less than 1 and never more than 2 normal steps.

A player who is legally screened is responsible for any contact with the player who has set the screen.<sup>20</sup>

#### SETTING THE SCREEN

A player setting a screen should use a jump stop (one count) to ensure that they are stationary prior to any contact with the defender – remembering that the intended purpose of the screen is that there will be contact. The screener should also be in a low, balanced stance to ensure that they can hold their position when there is contact.

Sometimes in a team offence, they will designate that a particular screen is set at a certain time. Even in this case though, the screener should communicate to their teammate that they are screening. The screen should have both a visual cue (often a raised fist is used) as well as verbal.

The screener should also use a verbal cue to communicate to the cutter when to move, such as “wait, wait, GO”.

<sup>20</sup> Article 33.7, Basketball Rules

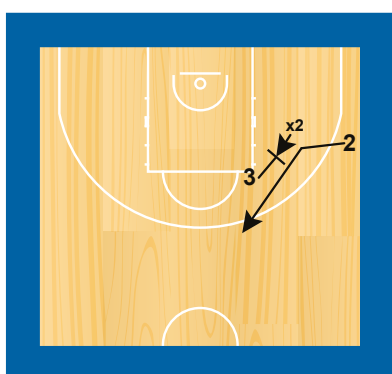
## 2.2.2 OFF BALL SCREENS - BASIC CUTS OF SCREEN - STRAIGHT CUT

### OFF BALL SCREENS- CUTTING OFF AN OFF-BALL SCREEN

The player who will cut off the screen should set up their cut, which they can do by:

- moving slowly to determine the position the defender is taking relative to the screen;
- showing a "target hand" to receive a pass, as the defender may react;
- when cutting off the screen, cut close to the screener "shoulder to hip" ensuring that there is no room for the defender to move past the screener;
- "lock off" the screen with their arm on the hip of the screener;
- communicate to the screener what cut that they are making either by naming the cut (e.g. "straight", "curl") or by identifying to where they are cutting (e.g. "basket", "top", "flare").

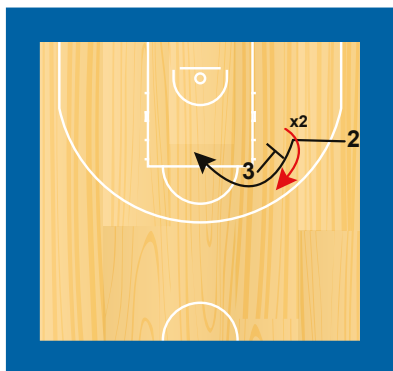
There are four basic types of cuts that can be used with an off-ball screen. The "key signal stimulus" or "cue" is the action the defender takes to defend the cutter.



### "STRAIGHT CUT"

The cutter moves toward their defender and then cuts over the top of the screen. If the defender steps into the screener makes a straight cut.

## 2.2.3 OFF BALL SCREENS - BASIC CUTS OF SCREEN - CURL CUT



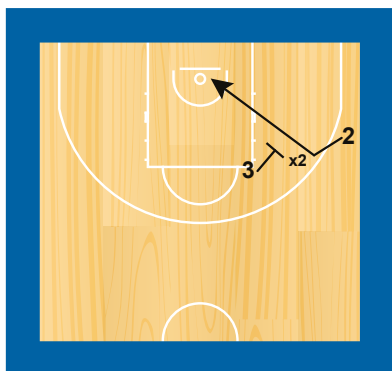
### "CURL CUT"

If the defender stays below the screen (to stop a "back cut") the cutter steps toward them and then cuts off the top of the screen.

If the defender "locks" to the cutter to run behind them, the cutter curls to cut to the basket. As the defender is behind them, if they made a straight cut, the defender may be able to get to a position to interfere with the pass.



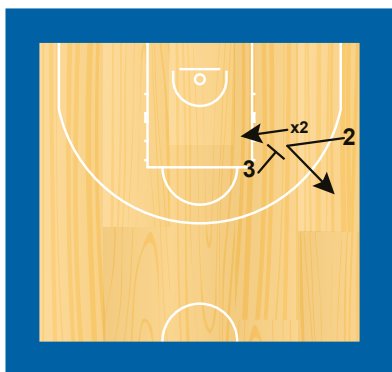
## 2.2.4 OFF BALL SCREENS - BASIC CUTS OF SCREEN - BACK CUT



### "BACK CUT"

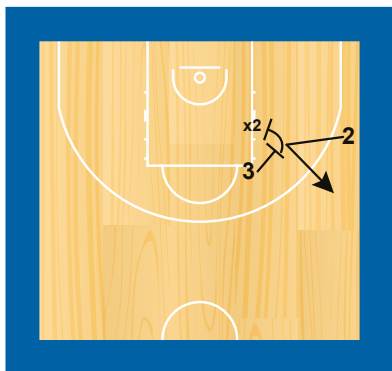
The defender may step in the path of the cutter so that they cannot go over the top of the screen. The cutter steps into their defender (as if cutting over the top of the screen) and then changes direction to "back cut" toward the basket.

## 2.2.5 OFF BALL SCREENS - BASIC CUTS OF SCREEN - FLARE CUT



### "FLARE CUT"

If the defender moves under the screen, in order to beat the cutter to the "other side" of the screen, the cutter should move toward the screen and then move away from the screen, so that the screener is between them and their defender.

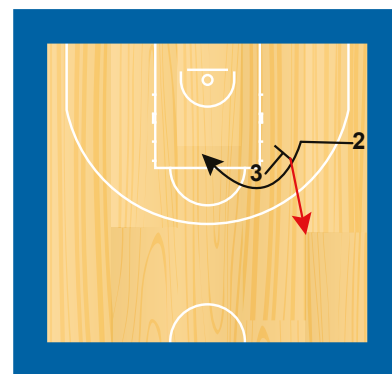
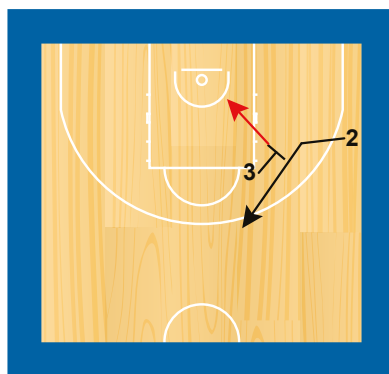


The screener may also turn to face the defender and "re-screen"

## 2.2.6 OFF BALL SCREENS - ROLE OF SCREENER – POP OR ROLL

### SCREENER MOVEMENT

After the cut, the screener should also move. The general principle is “one high, one low”. So that if the cutter makes a straight cut, the screener would roll to the basket. Similarly, if the cutter made a curl cut, the screener would “pop” high.



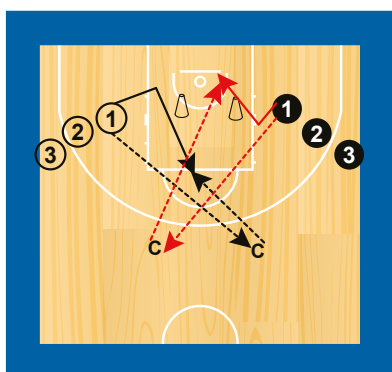
## 2.2.7 OFF BALL SCREENS - DOWN SCREENS

### TEACHING OFF BALL SCREENING AND CUTTING DOWN SCREENS

A down screen is set by a player moving toward the baseline, for example:

- high post player setting a screen for a low post player;
- guard at the top of the court ("point position") setting a screen for a wing perimeter player.

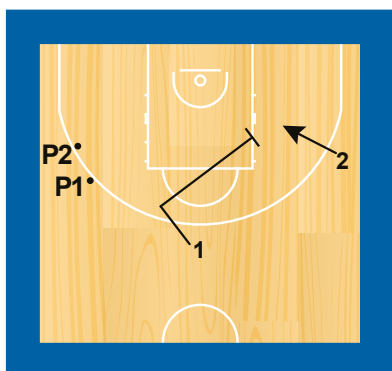
Typically, when setting a down screen, the screener's back will be facing the ball.



### "DOWN SCREEN CUTS"

The player passes the ball to the coach and will then cut off a "screen":

- A cone or preferably a chair is placed inside each block replicating the screener
- Players cut off each chair to receive pass from the coach.
- Initially Coaches calls the required cut, straight, back, curl and flare
- Players make the required cut, calling out the cut ("e.g. "straight", "flare" etc) and where on the court they will be.
- Players rebound their own shot and pass back to the coach and move to other side

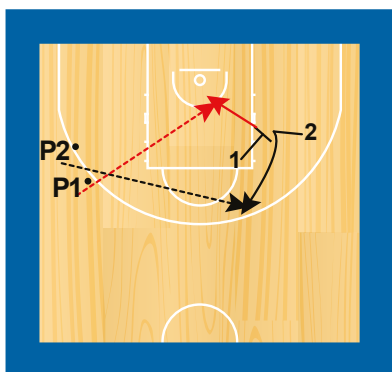


### "2X0 DOWN SCREEN"

Two passers have a ball each. One player sets a down screen for the other. The cutter practices all four cuts, calling out the cut they make (this can also be chosen by the coach).

#### Teaching Points

- Screener uses visual signal ("clenched fist")
- Screener comes to a jump stop (one count)
- Screener calls wait, wait and then "go" when they are in position
- Cutter calls the type of cut, straight, curl, back, flare
- Cutter cuts late, locking off with arm shoulder to hip



### OFFENSIVE COMMUNICATION

On a Straight Cut:

Cutter- "straight" Screener – "basket"

On a Back Cut

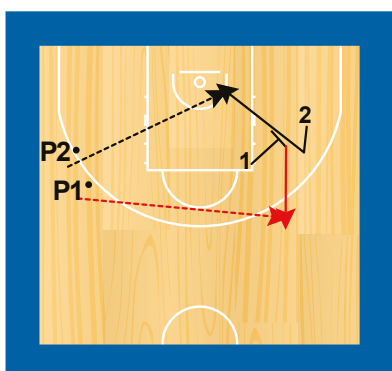
Cutter- "back" Screener – "pop"

On a Curl Cut

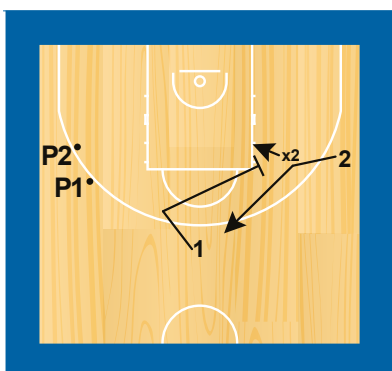
Cutter- "curl" Screener – "pop"

On a Flare Cut

Cutter- "flare" Screener – "post"



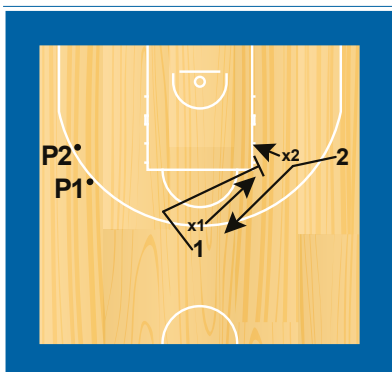
With a flare cut, the screener may "re-screen" before moving to the post.



### "2X1 DOWN SCREEN"

Defence plays on the cutter and can choose how they wish to play. Cutter must read their defender and make correct. This can be done with one passer, who passes to the cutter if they get open and to the post player if the defender is able to guard the cutter.

The coach should emphasise to the passer to be patient - it is a 2v1 situation so eventually one offensive player will be open.

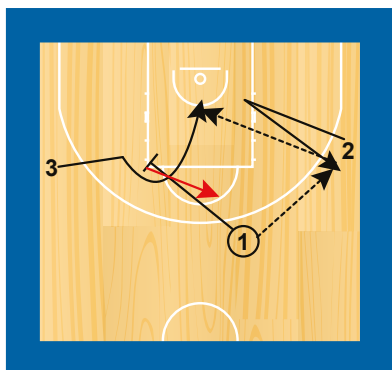


### "2X2 DOWN SCREENS"

2x2 contested drill, with 2 passers. The coach may instruct defenders how to defend or may leave it up to them.

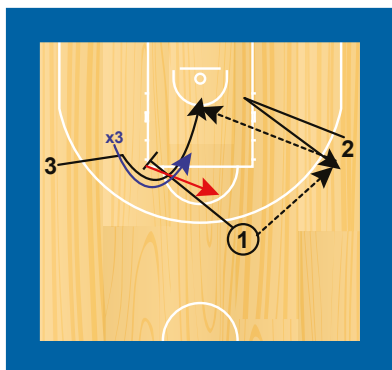
### PRACTICING MOTION OFFENCE WITH SCREENS

There are many activities that can be used to practice motion offence and a number of different activities are set out below. Coaches are encouraged to use activities that include both offence and defence, to assist in the players' decision making and not to constantly stop the play or instruct players.



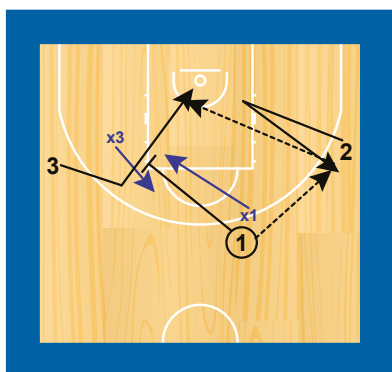
#### "3X0 DOWN SCREEN"

Guard passes then ball and then sets down screen.



#### "3X1 DOWN SCREEN"

Introduce a defender to the cutter.



Introduce defender to the screener

---

### **“TWO HALVES SCRIMMAGE”**

Designate two teams (3x3, 4x4 or 5x5) who will play against each other for two halves. They play in the half court and the coach can stipulate any particular rules in order to change the emphasize of the drill (e.g. no dribble, must pass to post before can take an outside shot) , allow only “off ball” screens or simply play normal rules.

After the defence gets the ball, either through a steal, rebound or an offensive score, they go to the other end to score unguarded. They can shoot a two point shot or a three point shot and continue shooting until they get a score.

**Defence then return the ball to the offence and play contested in the half court.**

At half time of the scrimmage, the defence should have a lead – as they scored on every possession! Offence and defence then swap for the second half. So that the new offence, who have a lead, must keep that lead by scoring, as they know that the new defence will score every time that they have possession.

This activity places a focus on the concept of “points per possession”.

---

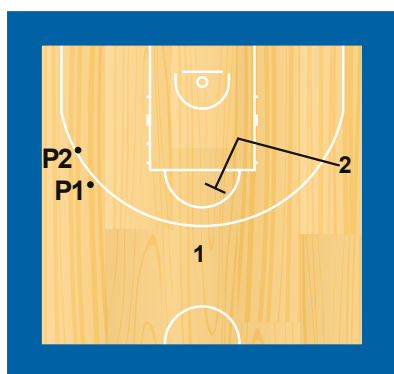
## 2.2.8 OFF BALL SCREENS - UP SCREENS

### UP SCREENS

An up screen is set by a player moving away from the baseline, for example:

- Wing perimeter player setting a screen for a guard;
- High Post player setting a screen for a perimeter player.

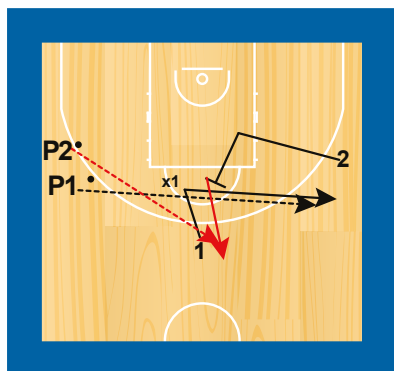
Generally, the screener has their back facing the baseline or the baseline/sideline corner.



### "2X0 UP SCREEN DRILL"

Wing player moves toward the basket and then sets screen for the guard, with back facing the baseline corner.

Guard steps toward the ball and toward their defender, and then cuts off the screen.



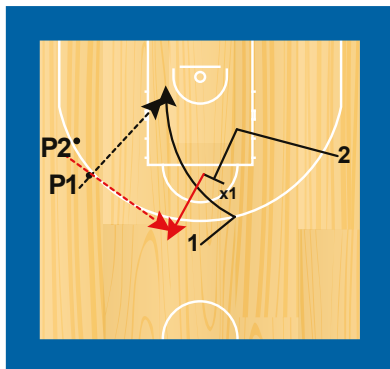
### "FLARE CUT"

Where a defender remains between cutter and the player with the ball, the cutter makes a flare cut to the wing and the screen can pop.

### COMMUNICATION

- Screener calls "wait, wait, go"
- Cutter calls "flare", Screener calls "pop"





### "STRAIGHT CUT"

Where a defender moves in anticipation of a flare cut, the cutter steps away from the ball (to commit the defender) and then cuts hard to the basket.

### COMMUNICATION

- Screener calls "wait, wait, go"
- Cutter calls "straight", Screener calls "pop"

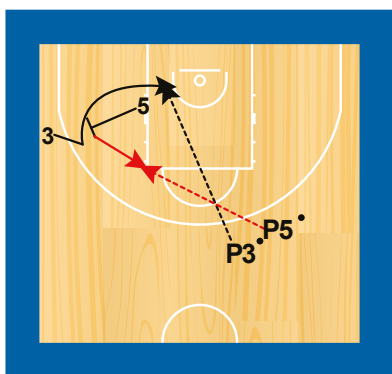
Progress activity to introduce 1 and then 2 defenders

## 2.2.9 OFF BALL SCREENS - BACK SCREENS

### BACK SCREENS

A back screen is set by a player who is stepping away from the basket. An up screen and a back screen are similar. A back screen typically has the screener's back facing the basket.

The most common example of a back screen is the screener stepping out from the low post to set a screen for the perimeter player.



### "2X0 BACK SCREEN"

- 3 starts with the ball and passes to P3.
- 5 sets a back screen for 3 with 5's back to the basket
- 3 steps towards the ball then cuts off 5, along the baseline
- 3 cuts to the edge of the backboard then stops
- 5 "shapes up" to the ball with a forward pivot and hands up to receive the pass

### OFFENSIVE COMMUNICATION

- 5 calls "wait, wait, go"
- 3 calls "basket" and 5 calls "pop"

## 2.2.10 ON BALL SCREENS - DRIBBLER OPTIONS

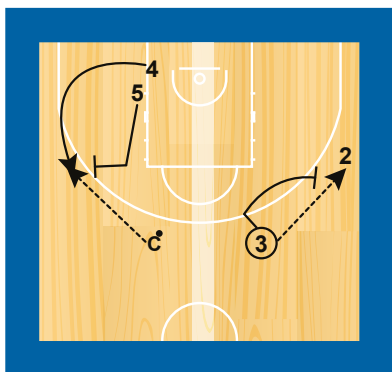
### ON BALL SCREENS

Setting a screen for the player that has the ball is very common, often with a “big” setting the screen for a guard. The screen is set in the same way as for an off ball screen (i.e. visual and verbal communication and coming to a jump stop).

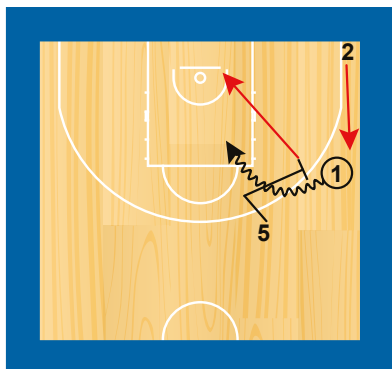
Options that all players must be able to execute are:

- Dribbler:
  - “turn the corner” and penetrate to the keyway (not just dribble around the 3pt line). They should aim to have both feet in the keyway and be ready to shoot or pass
  - “split” between the two defenders, using a cross-over dribble to quickly change direction
  - “runner” – on penetration be able to shoot a shot at the top of the keyway whilst on the move – using lay-up footwork
  - “step back” – if the defender guarding the dribbler goes under the screen, the dribbler must be able to step back and shoot a perimeter shot. A “step back” is also used if the defender is close to the dribbler to create the space to shoot.

- Screener:
  - “slip the screen” – if the defender guarding the screener steps high to put pressure on the ball, the screener must be able to “slip” and cut to the basket before setting the screen
  - “roll” – after the dribbler uses the screen, the screener must be able to reverse pivot (“belly to the ball”) and cut to the basket. The “Pick and Roll” is a fundamental play, similar to “Give and Go”
  - “flare” or “pop” – after the dribbler uses the screen, the screener must be able to flare to the perimeter to receive a pass from the dribbler. The screener must then be able to shoot a perimeter shot, pass or drive.



As an initial activity, players can set ball screens on either side of the floor. A coach can guard the dribbler



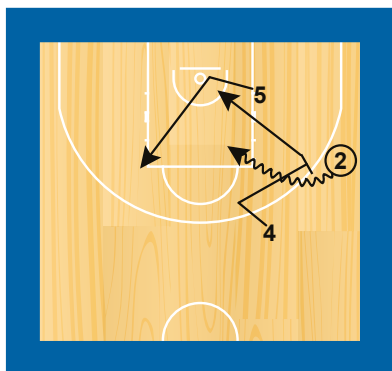
### “PICK & ROLL SCREEN – CORNER”

Dribbler: Drive hard to the elbow (separation)

Screener: Roll “belly to the ball”<sup>21</sup> to move to the basket

Corner: Lift out of corner and fill where the ball started

If dribbler can’t score or hit the roller look back to the corner player lifting to the wing who may be able to pass to the post player



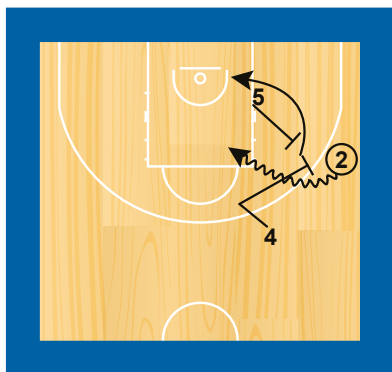
### “PICK & ROLL – WITH POST (EMPTY OUT)”

Dribbler: Drive hard to the elbow (separation)

Screener: Roll “belly to the ball” to the basket

Post: Empty out of the post and get to the opposite elbow

If dribbler can’t score or hit the screener rolling, look to the post at opposite elbow



### “PICK & ROLL – SCREEN THE SCREENER”

Dribbler:

- Drive hard to the elbow (separation)
- Look to pass to the screener on the roll

Screener:

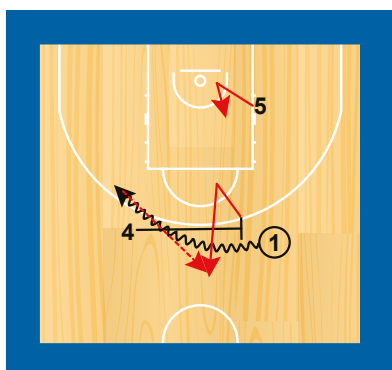
- Wait after the dribbler has driven off your shoulder
- Use the screen to get to the basket

Post:

- Back screen the screeners defender

If dribbler can’t score or hit the roller look to pass to either wing

<sup>21</sup> “Belly to the ball” means that as the dribbler moves past the screener, the screener reverse pivots (so that their “belly” continues to face the ball). The alternative technique is to “step through” where the screener does a forward pivot, stepping with the foot that was closest to the dribbler.



### "PICK & ROLL - POP"

Dribbler:

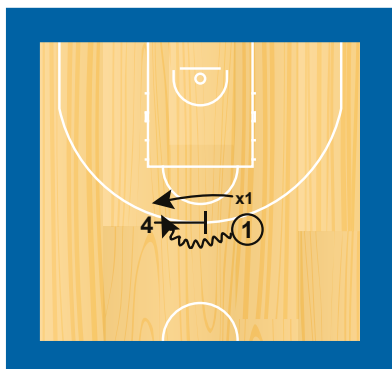
- Drive hard off the screen (separation)
- Look back at the screener who "pops" to the 3 point line

Screener:

- Step to the foul line and "pop" back to the 3 point line

Low Post:

- Step to the basket and "duck in" (as the screener catches, attack defenders high foot)
- If fronted look to seal for lob



### "PICK & ROLL - SCREEN / RE-SCREEN"

Dribbler:

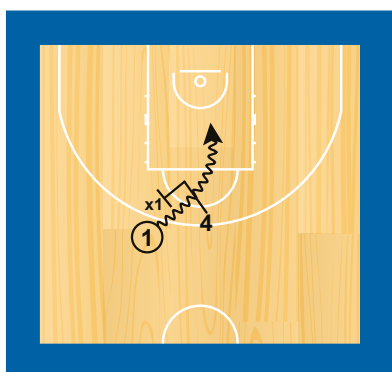
- Drive hard off the screen (separation)
- Ball defender goes under the screen

Screener:

- Screen
- Belly to ball and re screen – roll on top of the defence

Dribbler:

- Drive hard off the re screen

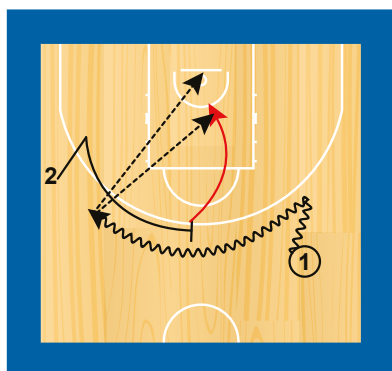


### "2X0 PICK & ROLL"

Dribbler moves across the key to receive a ball screen from teammate. Teammate rolls to the basket to receive pass or rebound shot.

### "2X1 PICK AND ROLL"

Introduce a defender, so that dribbler must choose correct action.



---

## FOLLOW-UP

---

1. What is your preferred contested activity for developing offensive skills in screening? Discuss with a coaching colleague their preferred activity.
2. Conduct a contested activity in practice that includes screens. During the activity instruct the defenders how to defend the screening situations (both on and off ball). Record whether or not the offence correctly react to how the opponent is defending screens.

*Record how well your players react to how defenders are defending screens in a game. Is there any difference between performances during practice and during games?*

## 2.3. TRANSITION

### 2.3.1 BASIC FAST BREAK - STARTING THE BREAK

*Basketball is a dynamic game with teams moving immediately from defence into offence. The “fast break” is simply moving from defence to offence as quickly as possible. Basketball players should play fast break from the moment they start playing. Coaches should not prevent young players from fast breaking, since this is fun for the players and helps them to develop important basketball fundamentals.*

Important principles for the fast break are:

- Starting the Break:
  - Outlet Pass;
  - Dribbling Out;
  - Stealing the ball
- “Running wide lanes”;
- Passing the ball ahead;
- Advantage/Disadvantage – 2x1
- Advantage/Disadvantage – 3x2
- Moving into offence -  
“Be Quick but Don’t Hurry”

#### STARTING THE BREAK

There are a number of important aspects to starting the break:

#### OUTLET PASS - THE DEFENSIVE REBOUNDER

The defensive rebounder must land with the ball at least at shoulder height – moving it away from any offensive rebounders. The defensive rebounder must turn to the nearest sideline, facing the baseline corner on that side. They may turn slightly in the air or pivot quickly after landing.

#### OUTLET PASS - THE POINT GUARD

The guard should move to the sideline that is closest to the rebounder, and should turn their back to that sideline so that they are facing the defensive rebounder. Receiving the ball near the free throw line extended. If they are defended, they should move either to the baseline or the middle of the court.

The point guard should not catch the ball while standing still, but should be on the move as they receive the pass. After catching the ball, the guard must look (putting their “chin to shoulder”) in the direction they wish to move, before moving or bouncing the ball.

If the guard does elect to dribble the ball, they must be able to use a long bounce to begin with and then dribbling with the ball in front of their body, using alternate hands when there are no nearby defenders. Many young players will only use their preferred hand and this needs to be discouraged.

### **STARTING THE BREAK – DRIBBLING OUT**

Particularly when a “long rebound” is taken (i.e. the ball has bounced well away from the basket), the rebounder may see their opportunity to dribble the ball rapidly. Whilst young players will no doubt make some mistakes, coaches need patience to allow this skill to develop.

### **STARTING THE BREAK – STEALING THE BALL**

Many fast breaks begin with a steal of the ball. If the player that stole the ball is in an advantageous position then they should dribble quickly. Other team mates should sprint down the court to get into position to receive a pass or rebound a missed shot.



---

## 2.3.2 BASIC FAST BREAK - RUNNING WIDE LANES

---

### **RUNNING WIDE LANES**

Once the rebound has been secured, the second guard and forward must sprint, getting to half way, without watching the ball. A common mistake is that players do not start running until the outlet pass has been made, however the result of this is that the point guard does not then have anyone to pass ahead to.

In general, players must run towards the nearest sideline, however if there is a teammate ahead of them, they should cross to the other sideline. Once they have reached the half way line, they should turn their head ("chin to shoulder") so that they can see any pass that is thrown to them, or if help is needed they can move back towards the ball.

---

## 2.3.3 BASIC FAST BREAK - PASS THE BALL AHEAD

---

### PASS THE BALL AHEAD

To effectively run the fast break, players must develop a mentality of passing the ball ahead to a player that is open. They must also develop the ability to throw the pass and this can be challenging for young players. Rather than throw the pass whilst stationary, players should be encouraged to develop the ability to throw a chest pass, whilst on the run.

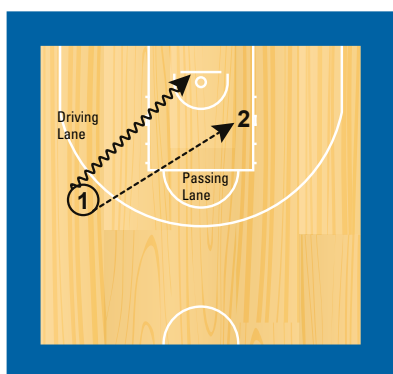
Coaches should not stop activities to berate players for missing a pass, instead coaches should accept that as the mentality and skills of fast break basketball are developed, there will be mistakes made. These mistakes are an important part of development.

## 2.3.4 BASIC FAST BREAK - 2v1 FAST BREAK

### ADVANTAGE / DISADVANTAGE – 2X1

A key aspect of fast break basketball is looking to create opportunities for the relatively easy score of a lay-up, hopefully without defence! However, fast break basketball can also create an opportunity of out-numbering the defence.

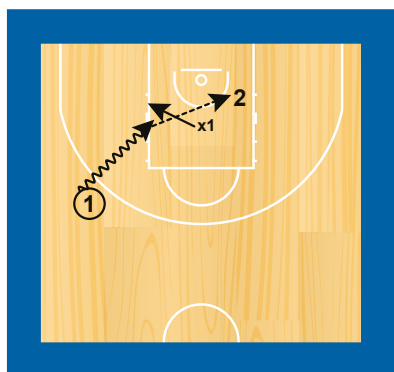
The key to scoring in a 2x1 situation is understanding the concepts of the “passing lane” and the “driving lane”:



### “DRIVING LANE” / “PASSING LANE”

The “driving lane” is the path directly between a player with the ball and the basket. The “passing lane” is the direct path between the player with the ball and a teammate that they may pass to.

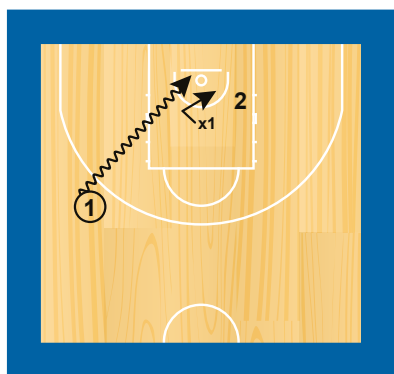
The player with the ball should attack the basket and then the defender will tell them what to do!



### “IF THE DRIVING LANE IS DEFENDED – PASS”

If the defender commits to guarding the dribbler, the dribbler should pass to their open teammate. The teammate should run to the basket, not the side of the backboard.

Players need to be able to pass with both their left and right hands in order to make this pass. In this diagram, 1 would probably be dribbling left hand, but passing with their right hand has a better angle to get the ball to 2.



### “IF THE DRIVING LANE IS NOT DEFENDED – DRIVE”

If the defender does not commit to guarding the dribbler, the dribbler should attack the basket.

The role of the defender is to make the dribbler believe that the defender has committed to one action but to then do the other.

For example, if the dribbler thinks the defender has committed to the driving lane then the dribbler should pass the ball. If the defender pretends to commit, they may then be able to move into the passing lane to intercept the pass.

The biggest mistakes that young players make are:

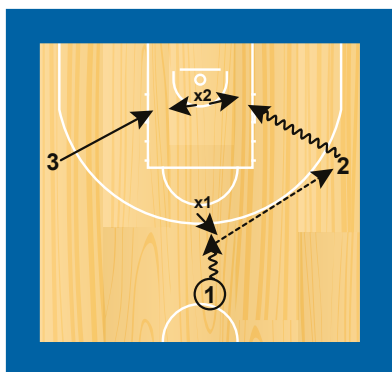
- Deciding what to do at the start of the play, instead of reading the defender and then making a decision;
- Not attacking the basket, but dribbling or running to the side of the keyway.

Young players may also make a mistake in reading the defender. The coach should ask the player what they saw and then discuss what action should have been taken.

### 2.3.5 BASIC FAST BREAK - 3v2 FAST BREAK

### ADVANTAGE / DISADVANTAGE – 3X2

Another common advantage / disadvantage situation in fast break basketball is 3 offensive players against 2 defensive players. The goal of the offence is to get one of the defenders to commit to guarding the ball, and then passing the ball to a 2x1 situation.

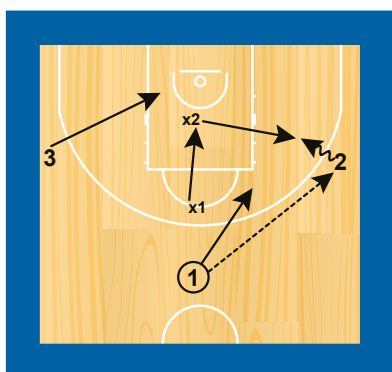


## MAKE 3X2 INTO 2X1

Most defences will adopt an “I” formation in this situation – in the middle of the court, with one defender above the free throw line and one in front of the basket.

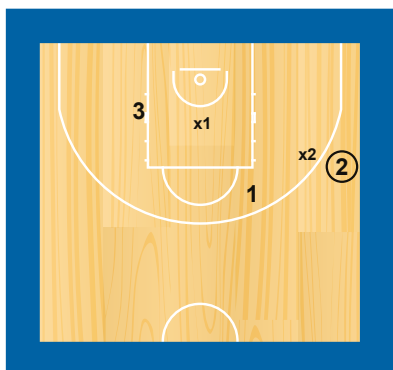
If the first defender commits to guarding the dribbler, a quick pass to the wing creates a 2x1 situation with offensive players 2 and 3.

To take advantage of this situation, 2 must attack quickly – before x1 can recover into a defensive position.

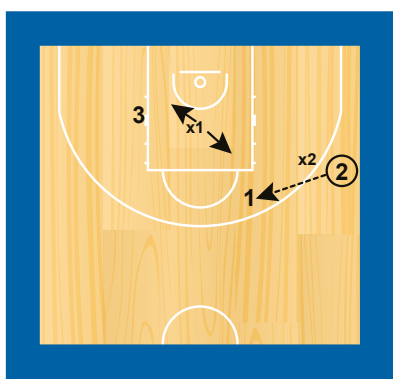


## PASS TO THE WING

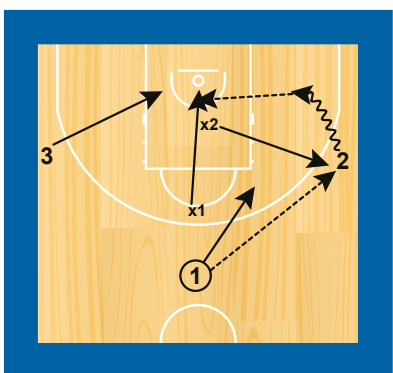
If x1 does not commit to guarding the ball, passing it to a wing perimeter player can force a defender to move out of the key to defend the wing. In this situation, the other perimeter player (3) should attack the basket, and the guard (1) should move to the ball side elbow.



With x2 defending on the wing, there is now a 2x1 situation with 3 and 1 against x1.



If the ball is passed back to 1, x1 must decide whether to guard 1 or remain with 3. 1 must be a scoring option, either a jump shot or driving to the basket. This must be done before x2 can recover.



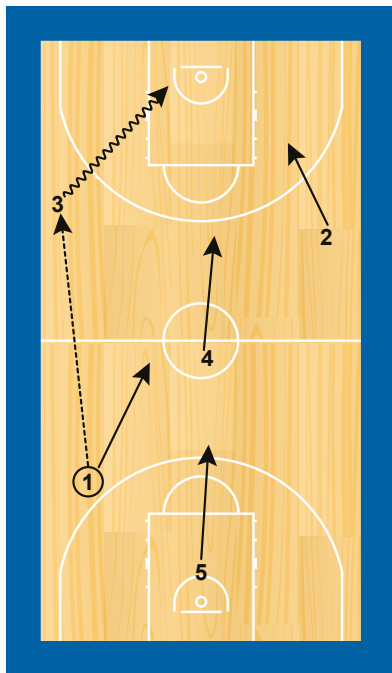
### 3X2 – THE MOST COMMON MISTAKE

The most common mistake made by young players, is that they do not look to pass the ball back to the guard.

When the ball is initially passed to the wing (2), 3 will be initially open, however most defenders in x1's position will move back to the basket – often intercepting a pass to 3, but leaving 1 wide open.

Whilst coaches can tell players this, it is better that they let the players “learn” this through playing. Asking directed questions such as “what was defender x1 doing” can help players realize the best option.

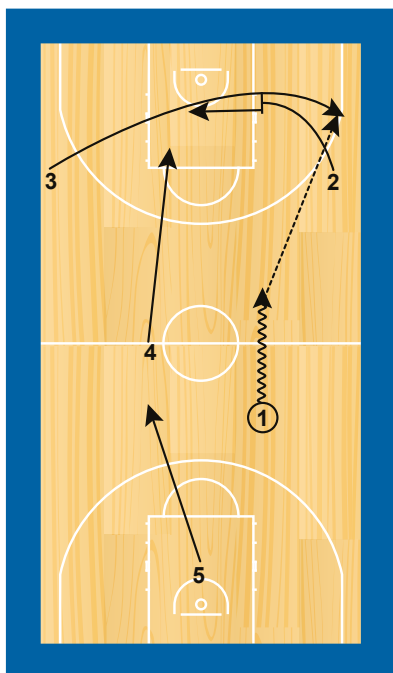
## 2.3.6 BASIC FAST BREAK - MOVING INTO OFFENCE



### MOVING INTO OFFENCE – BE QUICK BUT DON'T HURRY<sup>3</sup>

A fast break team should aim to get the ball as quickly as possible into offence, and if there is no lay-up opportunity, the team moves into half-court offence – this does not need to be complex.

<sup>3</sup> John Wooden

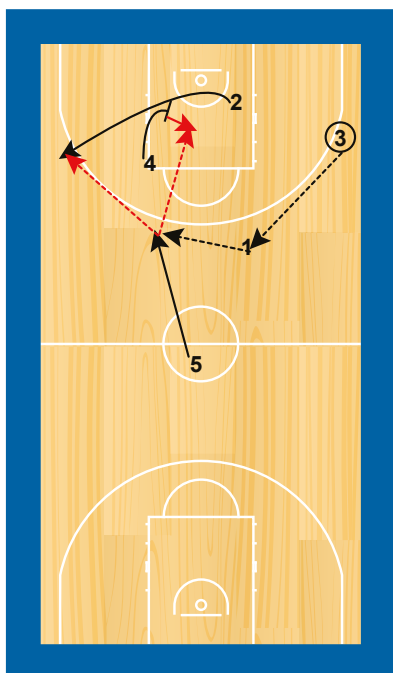


Players may simply run to positions on the floor or they can use some simple screening action as is shown here.

The main focus is to get the ball to below the free throw line extended as quickly as possible – as this will force the defence to extend to the basket quickly (if they don't do this, the wing perimeter player will have a lay-up).

After the ball has reached the wing perimeter position, most teams will then look to:

- Feed a post player; or
- Reverse the ball.

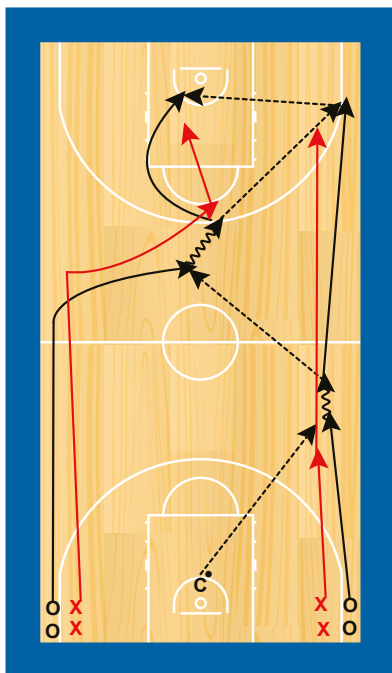


Screens can be utilized, however it is important that coaches of young players do not forsake teaching players the fundamentals of play including screening.

A common mistake that coaches make is teaching players a particular set of moves (e.g. 4 screens for 2) without teaching them how to set the screen, cut off it nor the post and perimeter skills once they receive the ball.



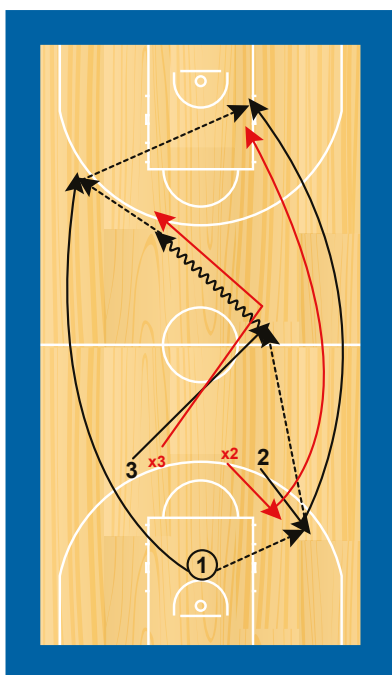
## 2.3.7 ACTIVITIES TO PRACTICE FAST BREAK PRINCIPLES



### PRACTICING FAST BREAK FUNDAMENTALS

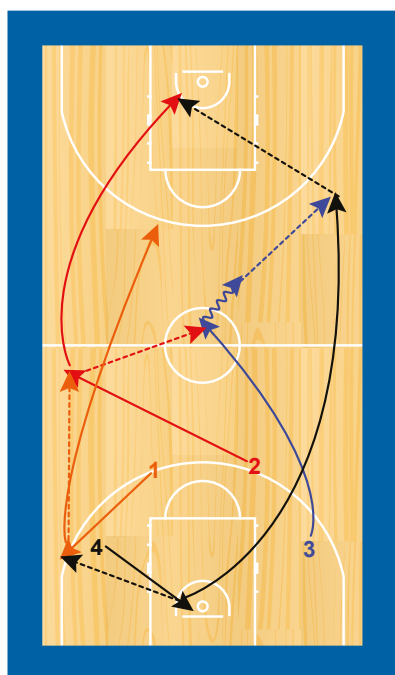
#### "2X2 FAST BREAK"

Rebounder outlets the ball to one of the offensive players who move to play 2x2. The players contest "up and back" and then new players join the activity.



#### "1+2 ON 2"

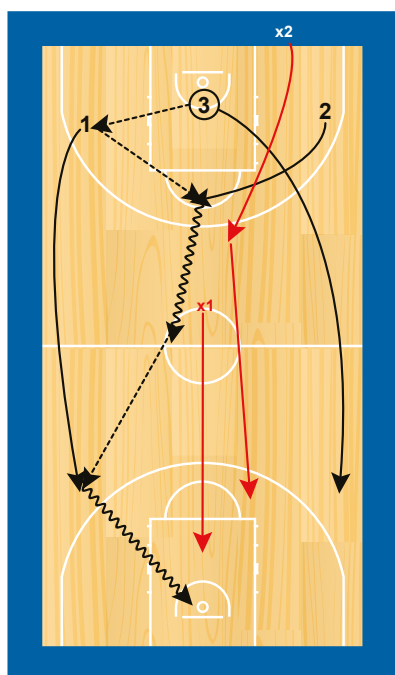
The players on the first and second pass are closely guarded.



### "4X0"

A pre-determined movement of players that emphasizes passing the ball ahead and also moving up the floor quickly.

Player 4 starts the activity by rebounding the ball. They can either throw the ball against the backboard or preferably have the previous 4 players go "up and back" so that they shoot a lay-up which Player 4 will rebound.

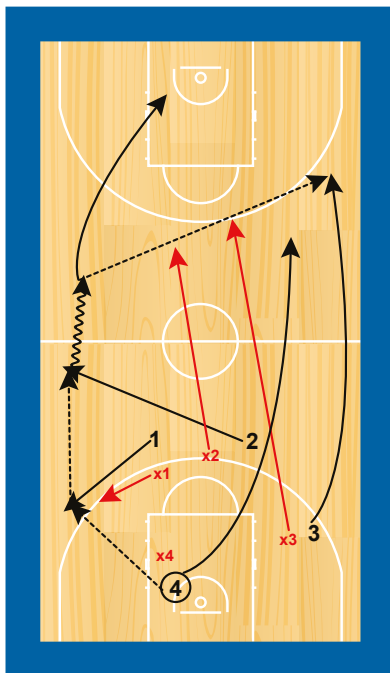


### "3X2 STARTING THE BREAK"

One defender starts from a position of disadvantage (on the baseline). Offence must move quickly up the court and take advantage of only one defender being in their initial position.

Instead of Player 3 starting with the ball, you can have x2 pass the ball to whichever offensive player they choose.

As an alternative, have two defenders start on the baseline, so that it will become 3x3 if the offence don't move the ball quickly to get a shot.

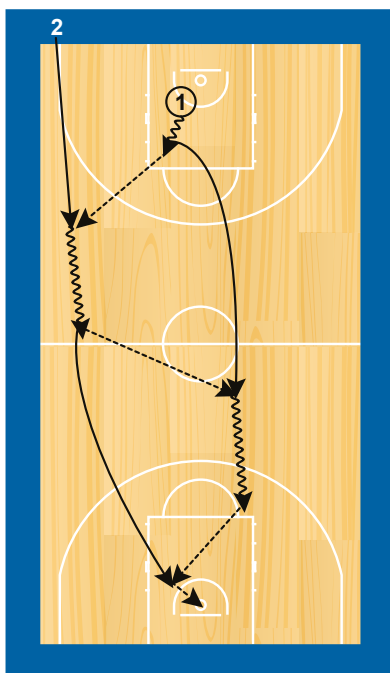


### 4X4 FAST BREAK ACTIVITY"

Initially run the drill with a passive defence, moving down the floor but not looking to steal the ball.

Restrict the number of dribbles that the offence can take.

Progress activity 4x4



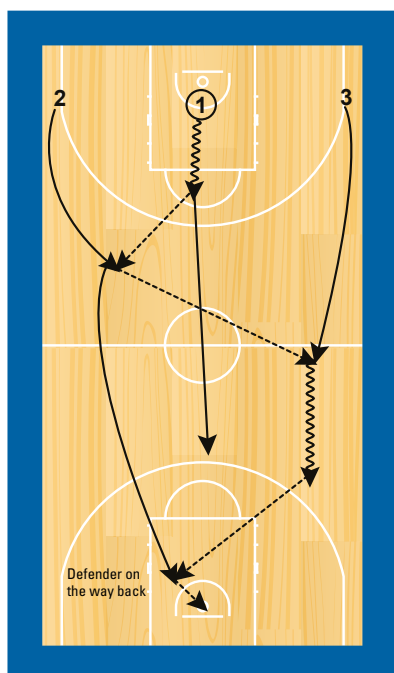
### "RUNNING THE FLOOR"

#### "2X0 / 1X1"

2x0 fast break situation, with players passing to their teammate if they are ahead.

If a player can catch up and get ahead, they get it back!

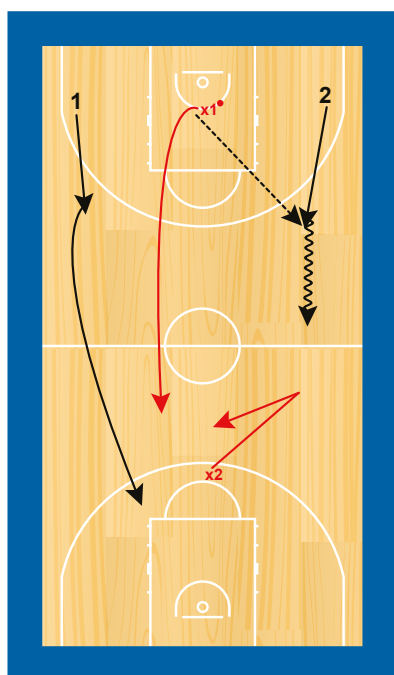
Play 1x1 back, with whoever took the shot being on defence.

**"3x0" / "2x1"**

3x0 fast break, with shooter playing defence against the other two players on the way back.

On initial break, players may go for a lay-up or shoot a jump shot. If the shot is made, the offence must pass in from the baseline and the defender may deny this pass if they wish.

If the defender steals the ball, they must go for another lay-up (or jump shot) without being defended.

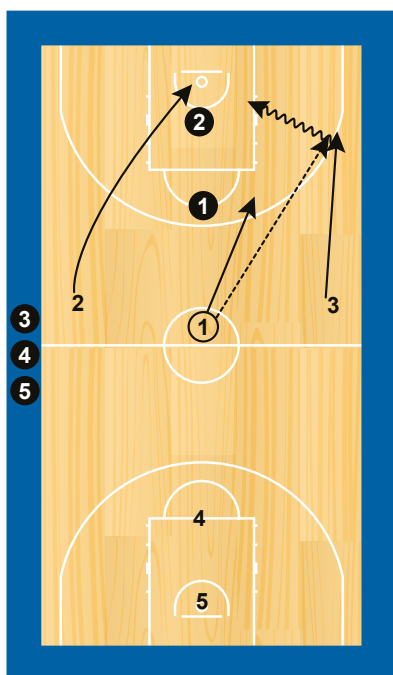
**"2x1 PLUS 1"**

One defender starts in position to guard their basket. The other defender starts with the ball at the other end of the floor and passes to the offence.

Offence advance the ball as quickly as possible, looking for 2x1 possibility. The second defender sprints down the floor in an effort to make it 2x2.

Can have players return to the other end of the floor playing contested 2x2, or have them step off and another group start.

Can also use with "3x2 plus 1" and "4x3 plus 1"



## "3X2 CONTINUOUS"

Divide players into two groups with at least 5 players in each group.

Each team defends one basket and attacks one basket. Play 3x2 and when defence get the ball (either the offence scored, the defenders stole the ball or there was another violation by the offence), a third player steps in from the sideline to play 3x2 at the other end.

Given the advantage that the offence has, the coach may limit the offences:

- Number of attempted shots;
- Time in which to take a shots; and/or
- Number of passes.

## "3X3"

Play full court 3x3, with first team to make 5 baskets win. To emphasize the fast break mentality, the coach may designate that an open lay-up is worth 2 points.

## "PASS AHEAD RUSH"

Player with the ball starts at the free throw line, facing the nearest baseline.

At least 2 (no more than 4) players stand on baseline. The player with the ball dribbles to touch the baseline and other players start to sprint down the floor.

After touching the baseline, the ball carrier passes as quickly as possible to whichever player is closest to the basket for a lay-up. The dribbler must get to the other free throw line, and all players must get to the baseline and play resumes.

As variations, coaches may:

- If dribbler cannot pass the ball to the furthest player, they should pass as far as they can and call that player to pass to the furthest player.
- Add defence on some or all of the running players, so that the dribbler must determine who is open.

**“WAKE FOREST”**

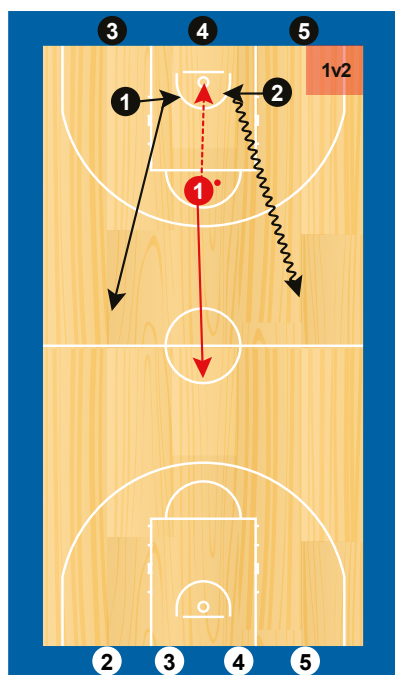
This activity requires at least 10 players, divided into two teams. It is a fast paced, competitive activity that has a number of “advantage / disadvantage” situations and it also places an emphasis on the importance of free throws.

The activity may be done with all successful baskets scoring 1 point (regardless of where the shot was taken) or with normal scoring or the coach may designate that an open lay-up is worth 2 points and other shots are worth 1 point.

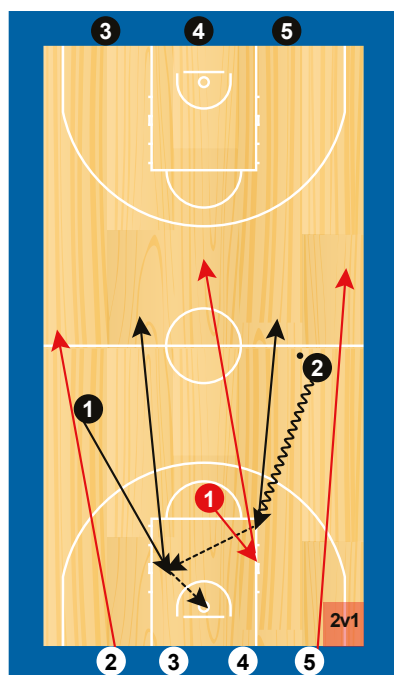
The activity proceeds like a game. When the defence secure the ball at one end (either defensive rebound, steal, offensive turnover or offensive score) they proceed on offence to the other end. If the offence get a rebound they take another shot:

**STAGE 1 – 1V2 / 2X1**

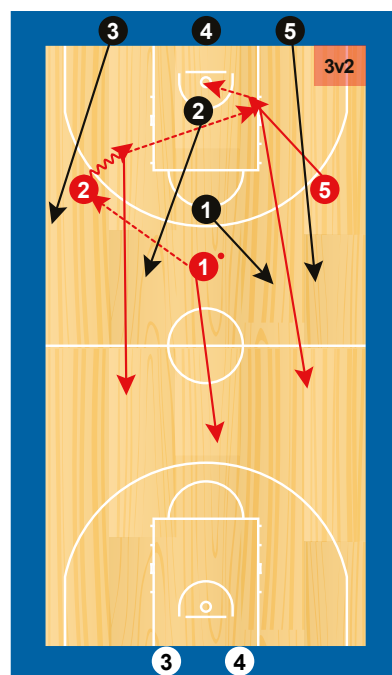
1 player takes a foul shot. 2 players from the other team line up to rebound. Once the defence secures ball, they proceed 2v1 to the other end.

**STAGE 2 – 2V1 / 3V2**

In 2v1, once the defence secures the ball, two additional players step in, and proceed 3v2 to the other end.

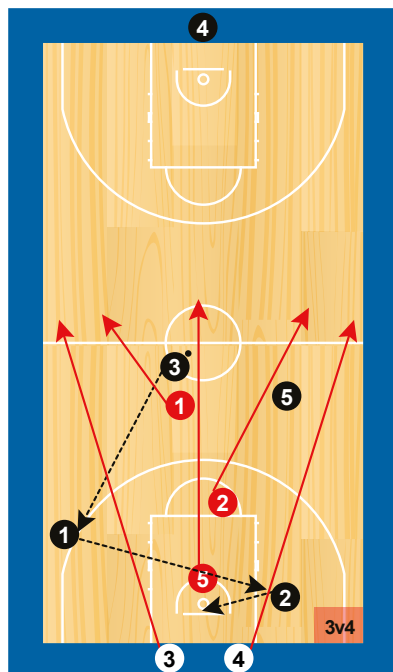
**STAGE 3 – 3V2 / 4V3**

In 3v2, once the defence secures the ball, two additional players step in and proceed 4v3 to the other end.

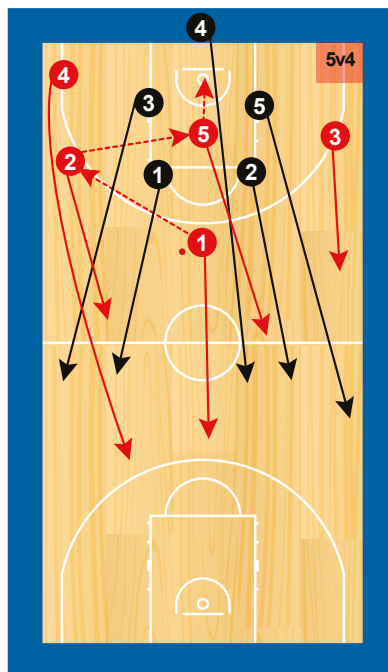


**STAGE 4 – 4V3 / 5V4**

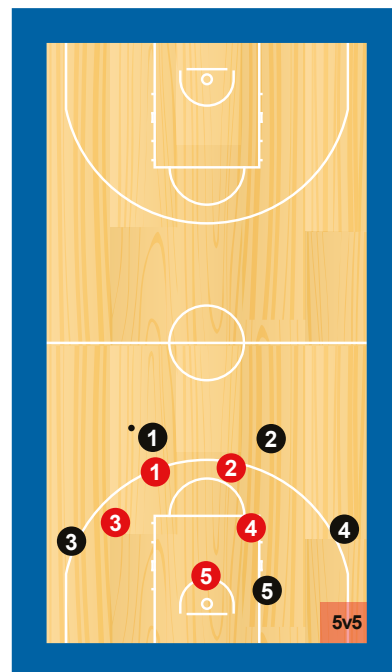
In 4v3, once the defence secures the ball, two additional players step in to proceed 5x4 to the other end.

**STAGE 5 – 5V4 / 5V5**

In 5v4, once defence secures the ball, the last player steps in to proceed 5v5 to the other end.

**STAGE 6 – 5V5 / FREE THROW**

Teams play 5v5 and once the defence secure a ball the activity stops. The other team now take a free throw, and the activity starts again with players returning to the baselines.



---

## FOLLOW-UP

---

1. Have an assistant coach record during a game:
  - a. How quickly your team inbound the ball after the opponent scores;
  - b. How long it takes your team to progress the ball into a half court offence;
  - c. How many times your team gets a “fast break” shot and whether it was 1v0, 2v1 or 3v2.

*Are you happy with these results?*

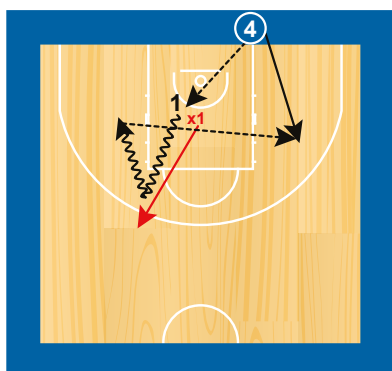
2. What is your preferred activity to practice transition offence? How often do you practice 1v0, 2v1 and 3v2 at practice. Compare that to how often your team gets those opportunities in a game. Are you happy with the “transfer” from practice to games?



## 2.4. OFFENCE AGAINST FULL COURT PRESSURE

### 2.4.1 ATTACKING FULL COURT ZONE PRESSURE - GENERAL PRINCIPLES

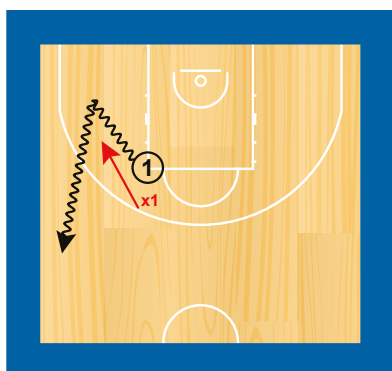
*Teams may play full court defence using either “man to man” defence or a “trap” (defence) where defenders are not guarding a particular player but defend an assigned area of the court.*



#### RETREAT DRIBBLE

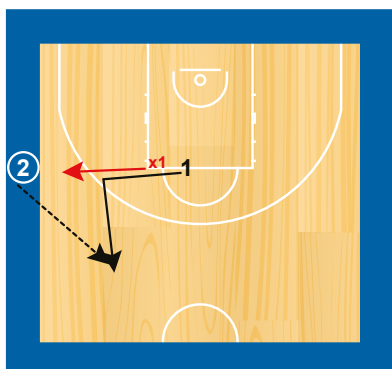
One of the most effective tools that an offensive player can use to beat any pressure is to use a retreat dribble (i.e. go backwards).

This can give the dribbler space to see an open teammate. It also gives the player the opportunity to see the pass.



Retreating also creates the situation where the defender must now “close out” – moving forward to get to the player. This is a difficult skill, and often creates the opportunity for the dribbler to get past them.

Particular if the dribbler goes backwards at an angle, rather than straight back, it means the defender is now on their side, which can also be an advantage to the dribbler.



### BEATING "MAN-TO-MAN" DEFENCE

Full court defence often starts when the offence are passing the ball in from out of court, either after a basket or foul / violation by their opponent.

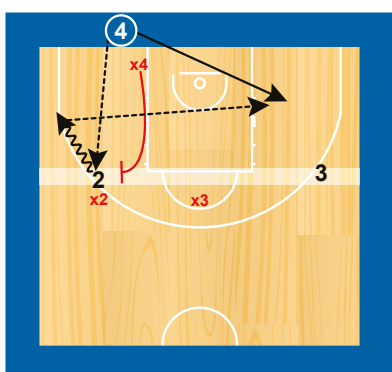
When denied in this situation, it can be effective to move towards the sideline or baseline (forcing the denying defender to move backwards) and to then quickly change direction (either sideways or backwards).

If the full court defence is "man to man", it can be effective to have other offensive players move down court, so that the player with the ball now plays 1x1, without the prospect of any double teaming. If additional help is required, it is often the centre or forward who will cut back to receive a pass – as their defender may be less able to place pressure on the dribbler.

### BEATING A TRAPPING ZONE DEFENCE

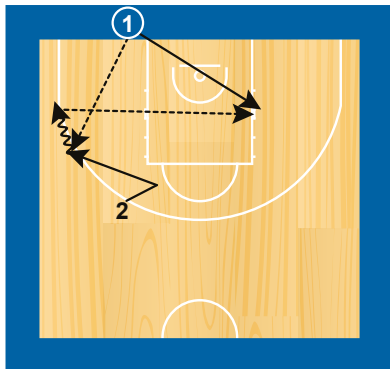
Coaches may wish to implement a particular structure for playing against a full court "trap" (or "zone press"). Below is a basic framework that can be utilized that focuses on ensuring that:

- The player with the ball has three passing options;
- Purposeful movement by players to ensure that players do not simply "stand around".



### RETREAT WHEN THE 2ND DEFENDER COMMITS

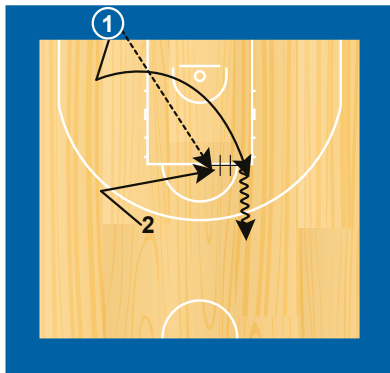
A retreat dribble can be very effective to releasing pressure. Keeping the dribble alive, the dribbler wants to attract a trapping defender, once that defender starts to commit, a retreat dribble can create space to pass to an open teammate. To make this most effective, the ball should be caught no closer to the baseline than the free throw line, in order to ensure that there is room to retreat.



### POINT GUARD INBOUND

Having the point guard inbound the ball, can disrupt the defence, particularly when the defence is designed to immediately trap the player receiving the pass (usually the point guard).

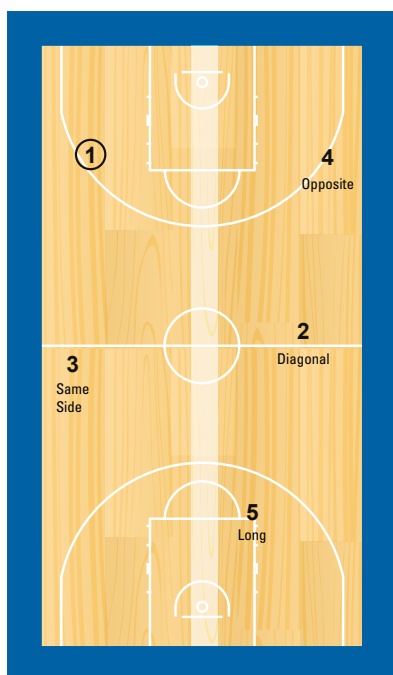
The point guard may step into court to receive a pass or may cut past the receiver to receive a hand off.



### PASS OVER HALF WAY

Many trapping defences are designed to double team the ball at, or near, the half way line. Accordingly, having players look to pass the ball across the half way line rather than dribble it across can avoid this double team being effective.

## 2.4.2 ATTACKING FULL COURT ZONE PRESSURE - PURPOSEFUL MOVEMENT



### PURPOSEFUL MOVEMENT

In playing against full court pressure, the offensive players can adopt the following positions:

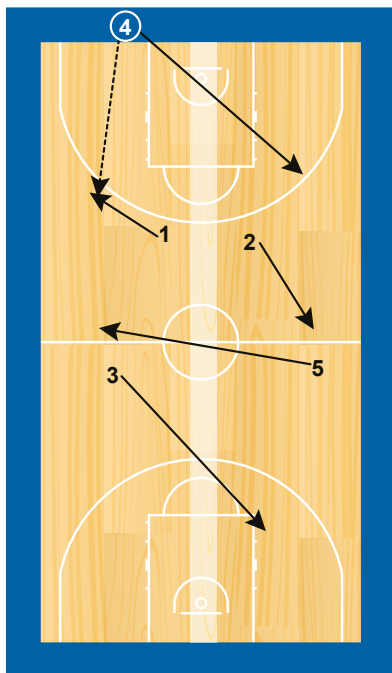
Opposite: level with the ball, on the other side of the court

Diagonal: ahead of the ball (1 pass away) on the other side of the court

Same Side: one pass away from the ball on the same side of the court

Long: ahead of the ball, approximately two passes away, generally on the opposite side of the court.

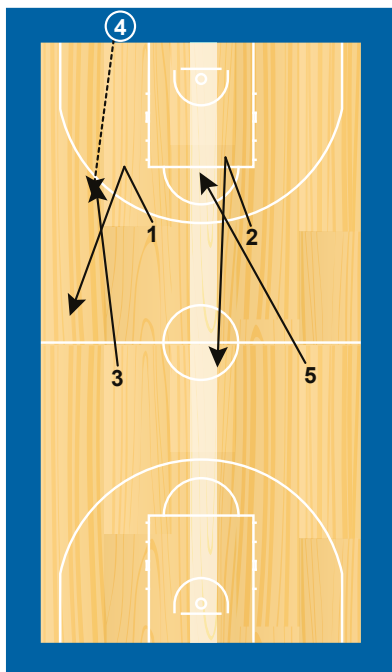
The player with the ball (1) has 3 passing options (4, 2 and 3) however it is important that those players do not stand still. They must be in a “gap” where they can receive a pass.



### INBOUNDING THE BALL

By starting in a "box" formation (2 players at half way, 2 players at the 3pt line), players can quickly move into position:

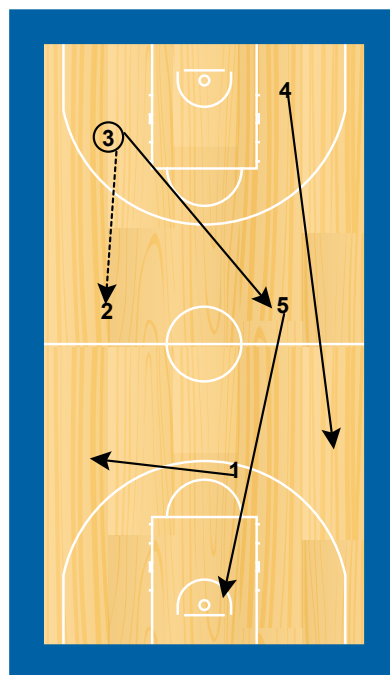
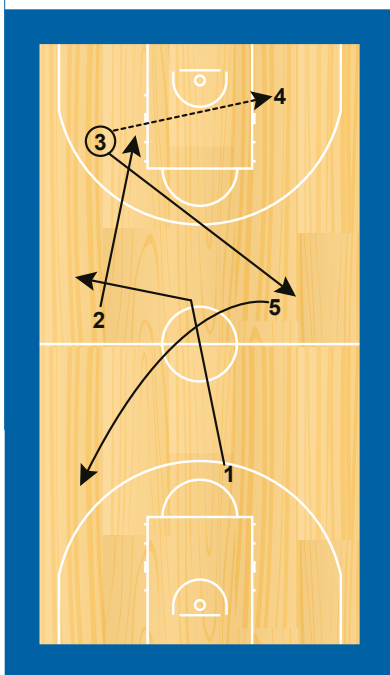
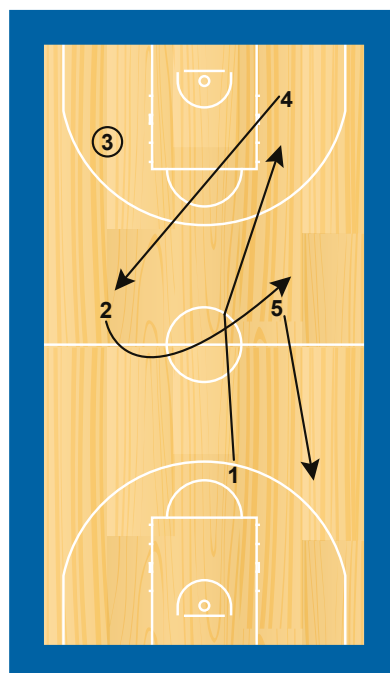
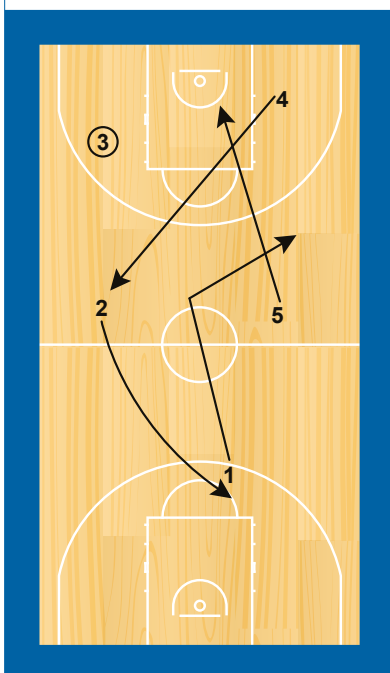
- 1 – receives the pass
- 4 moves to the "Opposite" position
- 2 moves to the "Diagonal" position
- 5 moves to the "Same Side" position
- 3 moves to "Long"

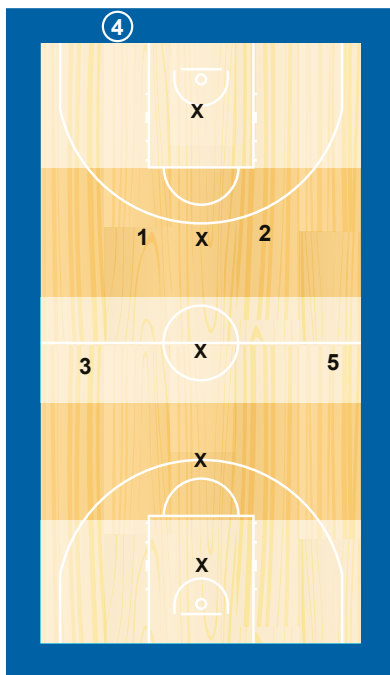


If Players 1 and 2 can't get open, Players 3 and 5 cut toward the ball, and 1 and 2 move to create space. Players 3 and 5 can also move to screen for either 1 or 2.

### ROTATING CUTS

It is not necessary to stipulate specific cuts that players will make, again the emphasis is on the positions on the floor being filled. It is also preferable that cuts are aggressive, toward the ball (e.g. Players 1, 3 and 5) rather than away from the ball (Player 2). Cuts away from the ball are important though to create space for a teammate to cut into. The more players are given the opportunity to practice, the more comfortable they will become in getting to the various positions.





### PRACTICING BEATING FULL COURT PRESSURE

Dividing the court into 5 areas, and placing 1 defender in each area, can provide a framework for practicing the purposeful movement needed to defeat full court defensive pressure.

Additional defenders can then be added into areas to increase the level of pressure.

---

## 2.4.3 ATTACKING FULL COURT MAN TO MAN DEFENCE

---

*Full Court “man to man” is an aggressive defence that will quicken the tempo of the game and is most effective when defenders are able to switch and trap.*

---

It is often most effective when it puts doubt into the minds of the offensive players and has them hesitate before acting.

Full court defence has the added advantage that the offensive team has only 5 seconds in which to inbound the ball and only 8 seconds to progress the ball into their front court.

Some general principles that will assist an offensive team facing full court defence:

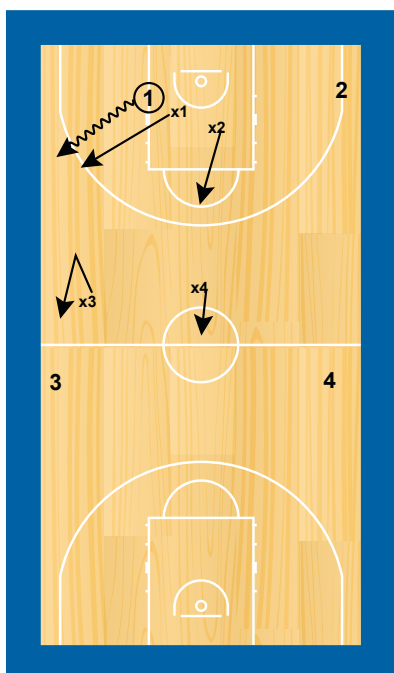
- Passing the ball is often more effective than dribbling as it covers greater distance in quicker time. It is better to throw short passes to players moving toward the ball rather than long passes (particularly with junior players that may not have sufficient strength to throw long passes).;

- Getting the ball back into play quickly when the opponent scores often means they do not have time to set their full court defence. Players should practice, grabbing the ball from the net, keeping it at shoulder height, stepping out of bounds in two steps (while looking where they may pass) and then passing as quickly as possible;

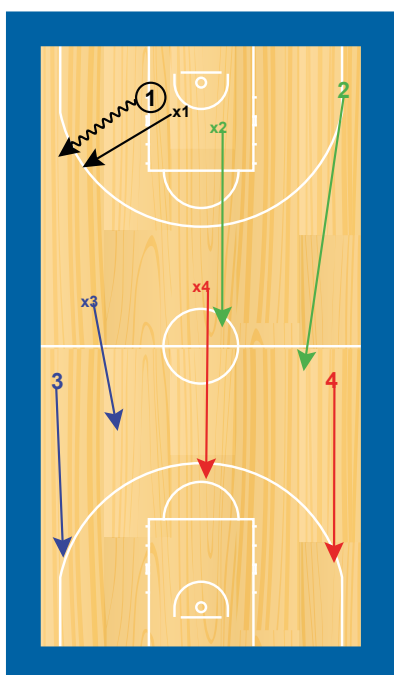
- Using a “retreat” dribble to get space from a defender will help to identify potential passes.

A full court “man to man” defence is most effective when help defenders are close to the ball.





Both x2 and x3 are in positions that could trap the dribbler. x4 is in position to help if 1 turns into the middle of the court or attempts to throw a cross court pass.



If 2, 3 and 4 all move quickly into their front court, it leaves 1 and x1 in a one on one situation. There is no defender available to trap or help.

In addition to clearing the court, teams may have a different player (e.g. 3 or 4) dribble the ball down. Whilst they may not be as proficient as 1 is at dribbling, their defenders are also likely to be less effective at pressuring the dribble than x1.

Finally, after clearing the court so that the dribbler has a 1v1 situation, a post player may move up the floor to set an on ball screen.

Although this brings another defender near the ball, it will probably be a big defender that is less proficient at defending on the ball.

---

## FOLLOW-UP

---

1. How many of your opponents regularly apply full court pressure?  
Do they use a zone or “man to man” alignment or a mixture of both?
2. When in a season do you introduce tactics to play against full court pressure?  
Why do you do it at this time?

## 2.5 OFFENSIVE REBOUNDING

### 2.5.1 REBOUNDING AND DEFENSIVE TRANSITION

*Basketball is a game of alternating possession – when one team scores, the other team gets the ball. At its simplest, this means that teams will generally have the same number of possessions. Rebounding is a key to changing that equality and to getting more possessions than your opponent.*

#### OFFENSIVE REBOUNDING

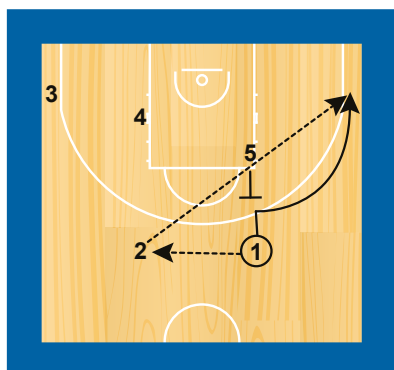
In the first place, rebounding requires the players to be in a position where they can actually compete to get the ball. This is instinctive for some players but others, particularly on offence, may not move to a position where they may get the ball. One way that coaches can emphasise this is to award points to players in training activities based upon whether they moved to a rebounding position, not just to the one player that got the rebound.

Secondly, it is important to teach players to anticipate a rebounding situation. Many young players do not get to a rebounding position because they do not anticipate when the shot is to be taken – this is particularly an issue for offensive players. It is important that young players learn to anticipate their teammates' shots and equally, they must learn that the presence of rebounders is an important aspect in determining whether or not a shot is a good option at that time.

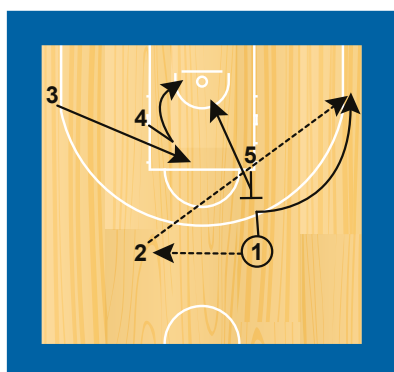
Often in training, coaches will do activities that focus on a particular aspect of the game (e.g. screening and shooting) and the activity then finishes once that is complete (e.g. the shot has been taken). However, to emphasise offensive rebounding, coaches can allow activities to continue until a basket is made or defence controls the ball.

Similarly, offensive rebounding can be added when practicing other offensive moves. The offensive move should not end with the shot but should also end with a score, with players taking offensive rebounding positions.

Coaches should prepare a strategy for both offensive and defensive rebounding.. This includes explaining to players what their responsibilities are and the "pathways" that they may use to contest the rebound. This way, players will consider rebounding as part of the offence or defence and this will also help develop their anticipation of the shot.



This is an example of a play that a coach may use to get a shot. It finishes when the shot is taken.



In this diagram, the same play is shown, however the coach has also shown offensive rebounding responsibilities. This will help to foster a rebounding "attitude" amongst the team.



---

**LEVEL 1**

---



**TEAM**

---

---

**CHAPTER 3**

---

**MANAGEMENT**

---

---

## CHAPTER 3

---

# MANAGEMENT

---

---

### 3.1. TEAM RULES AND DISCIPLINE

---

3.1.1	Making Team Rules Clear	373
-------	-------------------------	-----

---

### 3.2. GAME PREPARATION

---

3.2.1	Team Goals for Young Players (Under 12)	374
3.2.2	Team Goals for Junior Players (Under 16)	375
3.2.3	Setting Goals and Strategies for Games	376
	<i>Follow-up</i>	378

## 3.1. TEAM RULES AND DISCIPLINE

### 3.1.1 MAKING TEAM RULES CLEAR

*Whatever rules a coach wants for their team (relating to both on and off court) must be stated clearly and then when necessary, the coach must enforce the rules.*

At both practice and games, coaches have the opportunity to reinforce on court rules (how the team is to play) and these may change over the course of a season.

Off court rules (how the players interact and present themselves) are equally important although inexperienced coaches often do not regularly review them or take steps to enforce them until something major occurs.

Things to consider in relation to the team rules are:

- Have as few as possible – the coach should be able to explain why each rule is important;
- Each team should have their own rules – in determining team rules coaches should consider for each team what is necessary. This will depend upon the personalities, skills and experiences of the players, which differs with every team. Having the players involved in determining the team rules (particularly in relation to off court) is useful;
- Write the rules down – coaches often provide a “playbook” (which essentially contains the on court rules) but should equally have the off court rules written down and provided to everyone on the team. With junior players they should also be provided to the parents. Having players sign the rules and displaying the rules where players will see them (e.g. in the changing room) can be important to ensuring they are followed;

- Use the players’ language not the coaches – simply, the rules need to make sense to the players. Particularly with junior players they should be expressed in language appropriate to the age of the players which may mean using appropriate colloquialisms;

- Use positive language – wherever possible the rules should be stated as what will be done (e.g. “we accept responsibility as a team for whether we win or lose”) rather than what to avoid (e.g. “do not blame team mates when we lose”).

Finally, to ensure that the team rules are clear they must be enforced consistently by the coach. If a team rule is that “we accept responsibility as a team for whether we win or lose” and after a loss one player says to another “the referees were unfair, we would have won if John hadn’t been fouled out”, the coach must act.

In this example, the player is not taking responsibility as a team – they are both blaming the referees but also blaming the loss on John not playing. Whilst this may not require much of a penalty, the coach should at least correct the player and remind them that the team must take responsibility and that the result of the game is the aggregate of every possession. Obviously, the coach must not make comments like this either.



## 3.2. GAME PREPARATION

### 3.2.1 TEAM GOALS FOR YOUNG PLAYERS (UNDER 12)

#### PLAYERS AGED 12 AND UNDER

Winning should not be the fundamental objective. Instead, the players should learn to be good sports, respect the rules of the game, the referees and the opposing team, and to always try their best.

It is not that winning is unimportant, it is just that the other factors are more important. It is important for the players to strive for and experience “success”, however that does not have to be winning a game and often can be successfully “transferring” skills from practice into the game.

For this reason, the coach should organise the practices and games such that all players have an equal chance to participate. They should divide playing time among all of the players who have reasonably fulfilled their commitment rather than allowing the best players to play the most and keeping some players on the bench.

Neither is it enough that all the players get onto the court. Participating in a game means that players should be able to play without restriction.

For example, some coaches tend to let their best players have the ball and shoot while two or three other children are simply “filling up” the court. Obviously, those children are not participating in the game.

Similarly, all players should be encouraged to participate in all aspects of practice. The coach must not, for example, teach post moves only to tall players.

Practice sessions for players in this age group should be focused on fundamental skills and not vary relative to upcoming opponents.

Practices should include competitive situations, as this plays an important role in keeping the players motivated and interested. However, the coach should ensure that all players experience “success” and most of all, the performance of the coach can be judged by the smiles on the players’ faces and whether or not they wish to continue to play the sport.

## 3.2.2 TEAM GOALS FOR JUNIOR PLAYERS (UNDER 16)

### PLAYERS AGED 13-14 YEARS OLD

The coach of 13/14-year-olds should also allow all the players who go to practice to play many minutes throughout the season, otherwise their motivation will decrease and it will be more likely that they quit the sport or make little effort.

With players at this age, games are an excellent test of the effectiveness of the work done during practice sessions. With this in mind, it is necessary to consider the following steps:

- before each game, coaches should establish the collective and/or individual performance goals that they consider most important for that game, taking into account what the team worked on at practice during that week or in preceding weeks;
- before the game, coaches should establish a simple procedure to evaluate whether or not those goals are achieved, and to what degree;
- during the game or afterwards, if it has been recorded on video, the coach or a capable colleague should make note of the behaviours that constitute the performance goals;
- after the game, coaches should study the notes taken and assess what has occurred with the performance goals established before the game; this assessment will provide them with the information necessary to know how the players are assimilating the work done during training.

For example, the coach is working on screens during the training sessions and wants to monitor how the players are transferring these skills into the game. In the next game, they establish setting screens as a priority performance goal, and the coach may pay particular attention to whether or not the player made the correct cut off a screen. Focusing on the “process” instead of whether or not a basket was scored will help to evaluate the effectiveness of the screen.

Basically, the interaction between practice sessions and games - using the games as test experiences, is a fundamental element for 13/14-year-old teams. The game goals established by the coach should mainly be performance goals because what they are interested in is observing the players' progress in the basketball fundamentals that make up the contents covered during practice.

### 3.2.3 SETTING GOALS AND STRATEGIES FOR GAMES

*Coaches should establish realistic goals for each game, including a realization that certain aspects will not go well and that mistakes will occur – they do at all levels. So coaches should be prepared to tolerate their players' mistakes and continue to coach the game without letting those mistakes affect them emotionally.*

Coaches should regard the game as a constructive experience, whether that be:

- reinforcing positive aspects so that the players will repeat them;
- on the other hand, observing what goes wrong and what can realistically be improved, in order to work on it in later practice sessions.

Games are not the appropriate environment for correcting serious mistakes - that is what practice is for. Nor are games the time to introduce new strategies and concepts - again that is what practice is for.

The coach's focus in a game must be that the important thing is not what has already happened and cannot be changed, but what is happening right now or what could happen during the rest of the game.

For example: what is important is not that the opposing team has scored several baskets using fast-breaks, but what the team can do to stop that happening in the future. Too many coaches focus on diagnosing the problem instead of focusing on the "treatment" – what the team needs to do.

#### SELECTING STRATEGY

First, coaches should specify the goals and plans for the game, obviously bearing in mind their teams' characteristics and general objectives for the season.

Secondly, coaches should anticipate the most likely problems to arise during the game (for example, a mini-basketball coach could anticipate that their players will lose the ball when the opposing team pressures them).

Thirdly, coaches should decide what they would do to offset these problems. This includes specific instructions, which repeat or relate to teaching points used in practice. For example, if the coach anticipates that the team may have the ball stolen from them, they can emphasise the importance of pivoting, protecting the ball and leading to the ball.

To help offset problems the coach should also remain positive (in the previous case, for example, tell the players not to worry and encourage them even when they lose the ball).

By anticipating possible problems, the coach is preparing a simple strategy for the game:

GAME:

DATE:

GOALS AND PLANS FOR THE GAME

MOST LIKELY CHALLENGES

SOLUTIONS FOR THOSE CHALLENGES?

In presenting information to the team before the game, the coach does not have to detail everything that they have thought about or considered. For example, the coach shouldn't go into detail as to why they think the opposition may steal the ball. Instead, they can set the positive goals of what the team need to do (pivot, protect the ball, lead for the ball).

It can also be useful to set goals that divide the game into time periods, possibly even smaller than the quarters or halves that the game is played in. For example, where a coach anticipates that the opposition is a better team they may set a goal of being within 5 points every 5 minutes. This enables the coach to "reset" the player's focus each five minutes.

In a 40 minute game, if a team was outscored by their opponent by 4 points every 5 minutes, they would lose by 32 points, which players may find disheartening.

However, the likelihood is that there will be 5 minute periods where the team did better than others and setting these "mini goals" can help the team perceive their success. Providing information to the Team

Coaches must be careful with their own behaviour because the players and parents will often imitate what the coach does. If the coach is nervous about the result, the players are also likely to be nervous.

Some general principles to follow are:

- maintain a balanced attitude around the players with respect to the games. Whilst we strive to win, winning is not everything;
- it is not a good idea to talk too much about the game beforehand, nor refer to the possible score, especially using stressful comments such as, "We've got to win next Saturday";
- the coach should remind the players that the important thing is for them to enjoy themselves and do the best they can;
- the coach needs to give the players factors by which to judge their success other than the final score line. This should relate to what has been worked on at practice. This places focus on continuing to improve;
- At this time it is important for the coach to strengthen the players' perception of control. To do this, they should avoid referring to aspects that players cannot directly control (e.g. the final score) and concentrate on controllable aspects (e.g., the player's own behaviours).

Thus, the team's goals before a game should be performance goals, and the coach's instructions and comments should focus solely on the players' behaviour. Also, right before a game, the coach should keep in mind that the players tend to be nervous, and that under these conditions their attentional capacity is quite reduced.

Accordingly, the coach must avoid trying to transmit too much information or very complex information. Pre-game goals should refer to three or four key aspects of the game, drawing upon teaching points or goals used in practice sessions.

---

## FOLLOW-UP

---

1. Ask each player to write down your team rules.  
Do they write down all the rules that you thought were in place?
2. Discuss with a colleague how you each communicate your team rules and expectations.
3. Reflect upon the last time a parent raised an issue with you. To what extent (if at all):
  - a. Did the parent have different expectations about the situation than you did;
  - b. Could you have done something earlier to avoid the situation occurring?
4. What goals might you set for a team that you expect to lose an upcoming match to a better opponent?
5. Would your answer to question 4 change if you thought that your team could lose by 60 points (based upon the relative skill of the teams).
6. Discuss with a coaching colleague the difference between goals that are “process orientated” and goals that are “outcome focused”. In what circumstances do you use the different types of goals?
7. What is your response to the statement “sport is a contested activity and there must always be a winner and loser. Winning is therefore the most important thing”?
8. How is “success” different to “winning”? Which do you think is most important for junior teams?

---

**LEVEL 1**

---



**TEAM**

---

---

**CHAPTER 4**

---

**GAME COACHING**

---

---

## CHAPTER 4

---

# GAME COACHING

---

---

### 4.1. PREPARING A GAME PLAN

---

4.1.1	Substitutions and Feedback	381
4.1.2	Talking to Officials	382
4.1.3	Changing Tactics with Young Teams (U12)	383
4.1.4	Communication with Players During Games	384
4.1.5	Communication with Officials During Games	387
	<i>Follow-up</i>	388

# 4.1. PREPARING A GAME PLAN

## 4.1.1 SUBSTITUTIONS AND FEEDBACK

*When coaching young teams, games are the opportunity for the players to “put into practice” the team and individual skills that they have been working on in training.*

### SUBSTITUTIONS

With young teams, all players must be given an opportunity to play in every game and the coach should make regular substitutions.

The substitutions should also give players the opportunity to play with each of their team mates, not have a “first five” that play together and a “second five” which play when the game is either won or lost.

Instead, the coach should make regular substitutions (every few minutes) and if they have an assistant coach it is a good idea to have him/her keep track playing time to make sure everybody gets to play.

Some parents may complain to the coach that they are not winning games because they are not playing the “best” players all the time. The coach should explain (at the start of the season) that they will be making sure that all players get to play.

### PROVIDING FEEDBACK

Particularly with young teams, games are not the time to teach new ideas and the coach’s feedback should refer to what has been done in training.

Feedback should also be given constructively, by acknowledging what the player is doing well, making a correction by instructing them on what you want them to do and then finishing with a positive comment.

This method of giving feedback is sometimes referred to as the “sandwich” method, for example:

**Positive:**

*“You’ve done a great job of keeping vision of the player you are defending.”*

**Constructive Instruction:**

*“Remember, when the ball is passed you need to jump to the ball to make sure you stay between your player and the ball.”*

**Positive:**

*“You did this really well at practice.”*

The use of “cue words” (like “jump to the ball”) can help the coach give the feedback quickly and also reinforces to the player what was done in practice.

Some coaches like to use a whiteboard to provide feedback to players. If the coach wants to do that during games (particularly with young teams) then they should also do it at practice, so that the players get used to that method of communication.

Importantly, all of the statements in this example are worded positively. The coach should not focus on what the player is doing wrong and instead must focus on instructing them on what to do (the second statement).



---

## 4.1.2 TALKING TO OFFICIALS

---

The coach should introduce themselves to the officials (referees and scoretable) before the game (if there is time) and should thank the officials after the game. That should be the extent of the interaction with the referees when coaching young teams.

The coach should focus on their players, not the referees! The more the coach speaks to the referee, the more players are also likely to also focus on the referees.

Often in games involving young teams, game officials will also be young and inexperienced. They will make mistakes, but the coach should be supportive of the officials.

If during a game the coach needs to speak to the referee they should do so politely and respectfully.

It is best to do so during a break in play and the coach should get the referees attention and ask them to come over.

The coach should then ask their question, which should be as specific as possible.

The coach will need to speak to the scoretable officials throughout the game and again should do so politely and respectfully.

For example, if a coach believes the score is incorrect, yelling at the scoretable during play is unlikely to resolve anything. Instead, the coach should approach the scoretable during a break in play and ask them to clarify the score. The scoretable will involve the referee if necessary.

Most importantly, whilst all officials strive to have the perfect game (with no mistakes, they might make mistakes, just as players and coaches might.

The role of the coach is not to berate the officials nor to blame the result of a game on them. The coach must focus on the performance of their team.

---

## 4.1.3 CHANGING TACTICS WITH YOUNG TEAMS (U12)

---

### CHANGING TACTICS

Often in a game a coach will see that their opponent is playing in a specific way and that their own team will be successful if they make a change of tactics. With young teams though, the coach should be careful in making any changes.

More often with junior players the “change” of tactics is actually reinforcing or reminding players of what you want them to do.

Rather than make changes by yelling from the sideline, the coach of young players should use a timeout or a substitution to make any changes.

Where a team has practiced a number of tactics (e.g. a full court zone press and a half court man to man defence), the coach can introduce a signal (such as a number, colour, or a physical symbol such as a fist), to designate which tactic to use.

During practice, the coach should use that symbol to make the change in tactic, rather than stopping practice to make the change.

Any change in tactics must still emphasise what the team has been doing in practice and the coach should not introduce something in the game that has not been done in practice. The coach should also resist any temptation to set up a play for a particular situation in the game (e.g. last shot of the game).

## 4.1.4 COMMUNICATION WITH PLAYERS DURING GAMES

### COMMUNICATION

During a game, the coach's behaviour can decisively influence the players' performance, either positively or negatively. How should they behave so that their players do their best and make the game a beneficial experience?

Below are some suggestions for differentiating between active periods (when the game is playing) and pauses in the game (periods when play is stopped - after a personal foul, time-outs, half time, etc.).

### FEEDBACK DURING PLAY

During periods of active participation, the coach's behaviour can interfere negatively with the performance of the players.

For example, the coach who reprimands players from the sidelines or gives them instructions during active play, may make them more nervous or distract their attention from the game. Similarly, non-verbal behaviour can also profoundly affect the performance of players. In particular, players who are on the bench will be very conscious of the coach's behaviour (even if the players on court are not as aware) and this can result in players entering the game scared of making mistakes.

For this reason, it is better for the coaches to talk to the players during pauses and not during periods of active participation.

Sometimes a coach will be very animated on the sideline, almost as if they are playing the game – calling out for where players should go, or when the ball should be passed etc. This behaviour can also be counter-productive, as players learn not to react to what is happening in the game, but to react to what the coach is calling out.

In any case, if the coach feels that they should speak to the players during the periods of active participation, they should refer to what the players should do at that moment, not to aspects that have already occurred. That maybe something important later on but at the moment "what happened" is not relevant, but rather "what you will do" is key.

For example, a player makes a mistake while playing defence, allowing the player they are guarding to score. The coach gets angry and gets up from the bench to reprimand the player for what has happened, warning them to pay attention next time.

While this is happening, the team is attacking. The players have rapidly taken the ball and they are now moving forward, looking to get a good shot. Hearing the coach, the player who made the mistake gets nervous and distracted; so on receiving the ball makes a wrong decision and loses it.

What happened? Although the coach was perhaps right in speaking to the player, by doing it at the wrong time, he has had a negative effect on the player's performance in the following play.

### DURING PAUSES IN PLAY

There are many pauses during a game which provide a coach with the opportunity to provide some feedback. Whether this is an individual player having a pause (e.g. being substituted off) or whether it is a break in play (e.g. timeout). Coaches may even be able to speak to a player during a break such as during free throws.

The activities of both the coach and the players during pauses are essential. If properly used, breaks in the game can be a great help for the players to recuperate physically (as far as possible) and prepare themselves to perform better during upcoming periods of play.

Coaches should always provide feedback to a player that is coming off the court. Whilst “good work” is better than nothing, it is most effective if the coach gives specific feedback. Whenever possible, positive feedback should always outweigh any correction or instruction. Many coaches provide feedback, using a “sandwich” approach (positive comment – correction – positive comment).

For example:

*“I am really happy with how you are boxing out, you are doing that really well.”*

(Positive)

*“When your player has the ball, you need to give them a little more space so you have time to react. Remember, arm’s length.”*

(Correction, using cue word – “arm’s length”)

*If you position yourself at arm’s length, you will be able to stop their dribble penetration, just like we practiced last Thursday.*

(Positive, building perception of being in “control”)

The last comment is a positive one because it refers back to practice – giving the player confidence that they have done this before, and that they can do it now.

In basketball, pauses can be divided into three categories: during game time when the referee stops the game e.g. (when calling a personal foul, when the ball goes out, etc.), time-outs and half time.

### **DURING TIME-OUTS AND OTHER BREAKS IN PLAY**

The behaviour of the coach during pauses in game time is important:

- comments to the players should be very clear, specific and concise. If giving feedback to a particular player, get their attention first and then provide the feedback;
- any feedback must be to get the players to focus on key aspects of the upcoming period of play, without stopping to analyse what has already occurred in previous

plays. Before making the comment, the coach will have analysed a previous play, but their comments must be “action oriented” (“This is what we are going to do”);

- the coach should speak purposefully; if the coach is nervous or angry, they should first calm down, then speak to the players;
- pauses in play provide a good opportunity for the coach to reinforce efforts made by players on less showy tasks; for example defensive actions, helping teammates, running back, etc.;
- the coach can also use breaks to encourage the players after their errors, getting them to concentrate on tasks during the next period of active participation;

Coaches should adopt a routine for time outs, half time, and breaks between quarters. For example, during time-outs:

- teach the players to move quickly to the sidelines or the bench. This can be worked on in practice by using simulated time-outs to provide instruction (which is also good practice for the coach to keep their message short);
- allow fifteen seconds for the players to drink water, wipe off the sweat and relax a little while the coach determines what to say;
- establish that the only person to talk during the timeout is the coach; not the assistant coaches nor the players, only the coach. Otherwise, the players’ attention will wander and they will not be able to concentrate on the comments that the coach has decided to make;
- do not try to say too much, especially to younger players and do not speak too quickly;
- speak energetically but without getting wound up. Use full sentences, give clear and precise instructions; use words and phrases that are understandable to the players. Often the best words to use are the teaching points or cue words used in practice sessions;
- focus on what you want the team to do, not what they may have been doing wrong;

## AT HALF TIME BREAKS BETWEEN QUARTERS

Half time is the longest pause in the game and therefore the time when the coach can intervene directly to the greatest extent.

Half time should be used for the players to rest, go to the bathroom, drink water, etc., and for the coach to talk to them about improving their performance during the second half.

When addressing the players during half time, the main objective is to help them improve their performance during the second half, leaving for a later time any comments about what happened during the first half that are not relevant to achieving this objective.

The coach should establish a workable routine for half time, to ensure they make the best use of the time. Again, this may be something practiced in training sessions.

The most important thing is for the coach to THINK before they SPEAK. The coach should also leave some time for the players to have to themselves, so even in a 10 minute long half time, the coach may choose to only speak for two or three minutes.

The coach should also refer to the pre-game goals, particularly highlighting behaviours that they want repeated. Where correction is necessary, the focus should be on what to do, and referring to a pre-game goal can help to relay the urgency. For example,

“Our goal was to keep them to less than 10 offensive rebounds, and they have 9 already. We need to box-out. Remember, see your opponent, make contact and then look for the ball”.

## POST GAME

Once the game is over, the coach should adopt a balanced attitude regardless of what has occurred. They should neither be euphoric when their team wins and/or the players have played well nor be depressed when they lose and/or play badly.

A coach working with young players should remember that games are a unique educational experience, with the most important moment coming at the end of the game. It is then that young players have to learn to tolerate the frustration of defeat or of having played badly and also to place victory and a good game in the proper perspective.

The coach must lead their team in shaking hands with opponents and officials, thanking them for their participation in the game.

The game has finished and there will be time to analyse it later. What is important initially is that the coach show support to the players. It is not necessary to organise a talk or, for example, try to convince the ones who are sad that losing is not important. It's enough that the coach be there with them and say a few encouraging words.

Straight after the game is not the moment to analyse, explain or correct anything. The players need time to let their emotions, because this too is something they can learn from basketball. Too often after a game the immediate thoughts of players, spectators and coaches look at the closing minutes of the game. A player who missed the final shot may feel like they lost the game.

However, in reality the team will have missed many shots during the game and each of them contributed to the final result.

## 4.1.5 COMMUNICATION WITH OFFICIALS DURING GAMES

### INTERACTING WITH REFEREES

In most games there is little reason for the coach to interact with the referees.

If the coach spends all game complaining to the referees and querying calls, they should not be surprised if their players also focus on referee calls – players (and parents) will mimic the coach. In junior basketball, the coach should have very limited interaction with the referees and instead should concentrate on their own team.

In interacting with referees, coaches should:

- shake hands with the referees before and after the game;
- if it is necessary to clarify a rule interpretation or bring something to the referee's attention, ask a specific question and accept the referee's answer;
- instead of yelling at the referee during play, the coach should wait for a break in play and then politely ask the referee their question;
- coaches must accept and expect that referees will make mistakes in every game (in this regard they are just like players and coaches);
- coaches must also recognize that court positioning mechanics followed by referees are designed to give them the best possible view of the play. The position where the coach is standing is almost always different to the referee (and is not necessarily as good).

### INTERACTING WITH SCORETABLE OFFICIALS

Coaches will have interaction throughout the game with scoretable officials, whether that is asking for a timeout, querying how many fouls a particular player has or seeking to clarify whether or not an error has occurred in the score or with the clock.

In many cases the scoretable officials will be volunteers, however regardless of their level of experience the coach should be courteous whenever speaking to them. In particular, although the coach may be frustrated about what is happening on court, when calling a timeout they should not yell or “bark” at the officials. Nor should the coach yell from their own bench and instead they should walk to the scoretable and request the timeout.

If the coach believes that the scoretable has made a mistake they should wait for a break in play and then ask to clarify what they believe is incorrect. The coach can also approach the referee, again during a break in play, and ask them to investigate. If necessary, the coach should call timeout (to stop play) and then speak to the officials.

Yelling at the scoretable, particularly while the game is continuing is not appropriate, and could lead to another error as the officials are distracted from what they should be doing by the coach's behaviour.

Coaches should remember the importance of them being a role model. The scoretable may make errors, just as players, coaches and referees may make errors. The coach must always remember that context and their role should remain to work with their team – to control what they can control!

---

## FOLLOW-UP

---

1. Have a colleague sit on your bench during a game and record how often you:

- a. Make a negative comment or action (such as shaking your hand);
- b. Make a positive comment or action;
- c. Provide constructive correction (i.e. telling an athlete what to do, not what they did wrong);
- d. Make a comment toward officials.

*Are you surprised by the number of negative (a, b or d) comments that you make?*

2. Reflect upon your last five games. What goals did you set for the team? How did you track their performance in relation to these goals? Could you be more effective?

3. Discuss with a coach from a team sport played on a larger field (e.g. football) how they provide feedback to players during the game? How does it compare to what you do?

4. Have someone film your timeouts. In watching the video, observe:

- a. If you are using a whiteboard – is it facing you or the players;
- b. Are the athlete's concentrating on you for the whole timeout;
- c. How many messages did you give during the timeout;
- d. Is it clear from watching the video what you wanted to tell the players?

5. Have a coaching colleague watch one of your games and write down some key things about your team's performance (either good or bad). Immediately after the game, discuss with them what you think the team did well or need to improve. Did you identify the same things that they did?

---

**LEVEL 1**

---



**TEAM**

---

---

**CHAPTER 5**

---

# **GAME REVIEW AND ANALYSIS**

---



---

## CHAPTER 5

---

# GAME REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

---

---

### 5.1 PRACTICE PREPARATION

---

5.1.1	Incorporating Review of Games in Practice with Young Players (U12)	391
	<i>Follow-up</i>	392

## 5.1. PRACTICE PREPARATION

### 5.1.1 INCORPORATING REVIEW OF GAMES IN PRACTICE WITH YOUNG PLAYERS (U12)

*Especially with young teams that are just learning how to play basketball, the result of the game is a poor indicator of whether or not the team played “well”.*

However, it is often the only way that players (and their parents) will judge the team’s “success”.

The coach should provide some review of the game which highlights where the team, and individual players, are improving and the areas for continued improvement. With players so young doing video review sessions, having weekly “one on one” meetings or undertaking statistical analysis of the game (all strategies that are used with professional teams) is unlikely to be productive. Likewise, simply saying “well done, we played well today” at the end of the game is also unlikely to be productive.

Some ways to incorporate game review with very young players are:

- Set goals at the start of the game that relate to things that have been focused on at practice and then “measure” those goals. For example, counting the number of times the team “reversed” the ball in offence. Having 2 or 3 goals for any one game is probably sufficient (although there will be many more that could be focused on);
- Introduce one or two activities at practice that specifically relate to things that happened in the game, and tell the players how they relate. For example, “last week our opponent had more than 20 offensive rebounds so we need to work on blocking out today”;
- Acknowledge good performances by the team or individual players. For example, having the players shake hands at the start of practice and congratulate each other because the team reversed the ball 20 times in the previous game. This acknowledgment should focus on “process” or effort rather than simply top scorers. If the coach is going to acknowledge individual players they should make sure that all players get recognized;
- Set goals at the start of practice, similarly to those used in games, and provide feedback at the end of practice;
- Use contested situations in practice and give them a “game situation” (e.g. we are down by 4 points with 2 minutes to go) which relates to the previous game;
- Provide a short written report (which can be written in the style of a newspaper article) after each game. Parents who may be unable to watch a game will particularly appreciate this and it allows the coach to focus on the transfer of skills from practice to training.

---

## FOLLOW-UP

---

1. Discuss with a coaching colleague how you assess whether or not your team played “well”.
2. Ask parents what feedback (if any) they are given about the performance of their child in other activities (e.g. dance, music, swimming, school). Could you incorporate any of these strategies?