Read and React Layers

Layer #1 – Pass and Cut

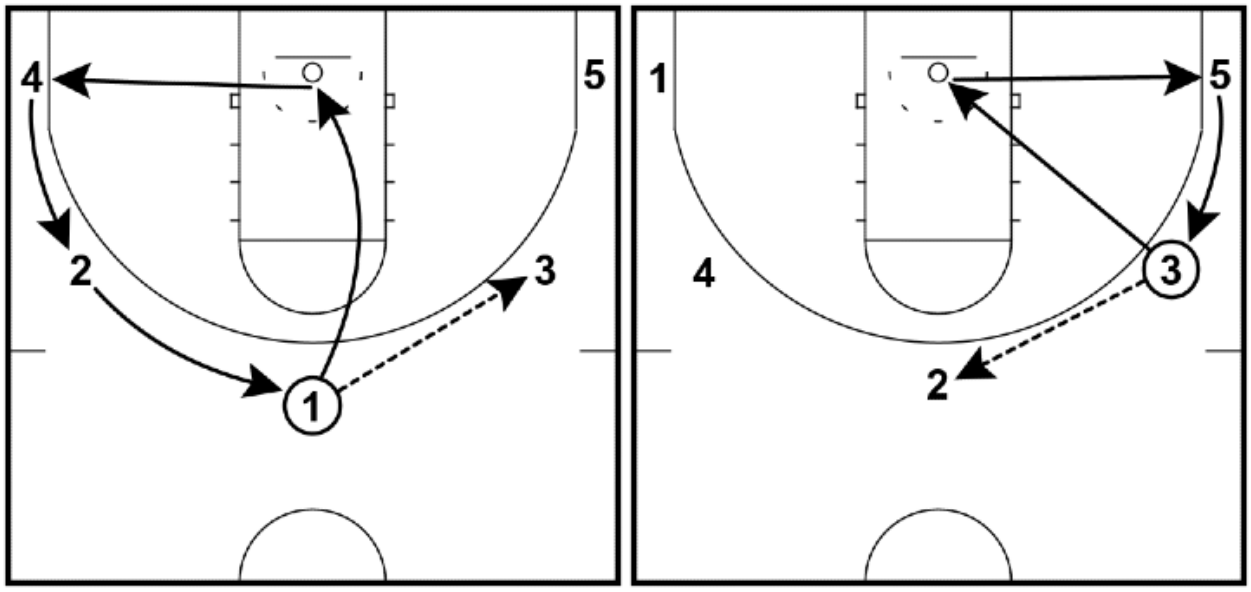
This layer is the foundation of the entire offense.

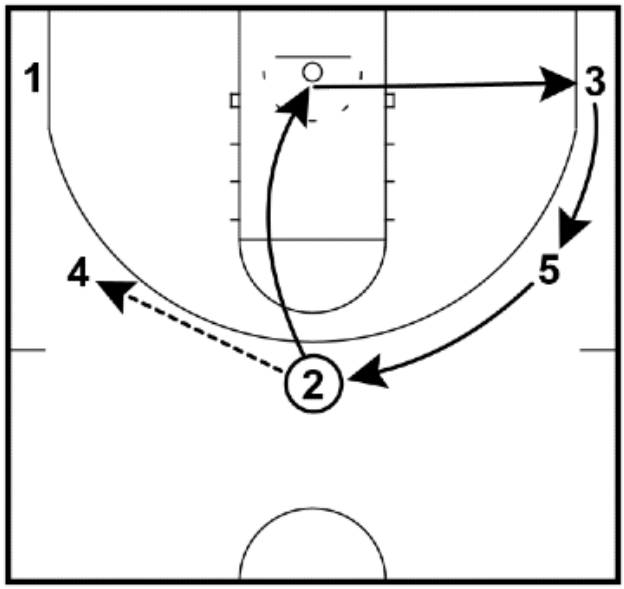
After passing to a perimeter player one pass away, the passer must cut hard to the basket.

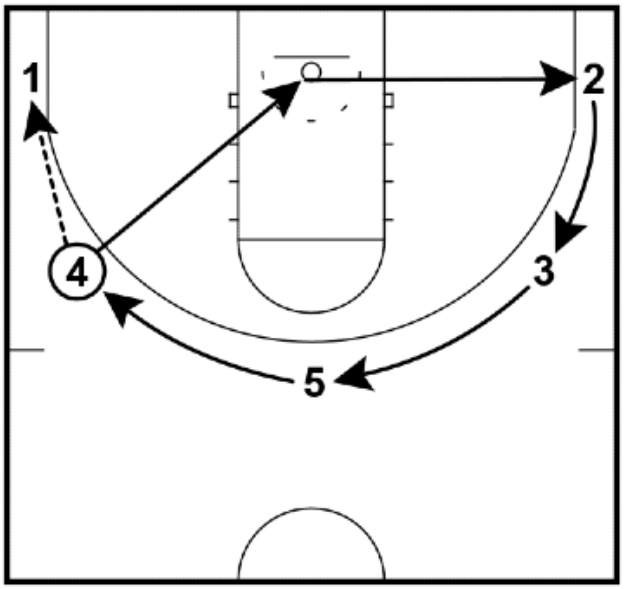
Torbett emphasizes that every cut should be a scoring cut.

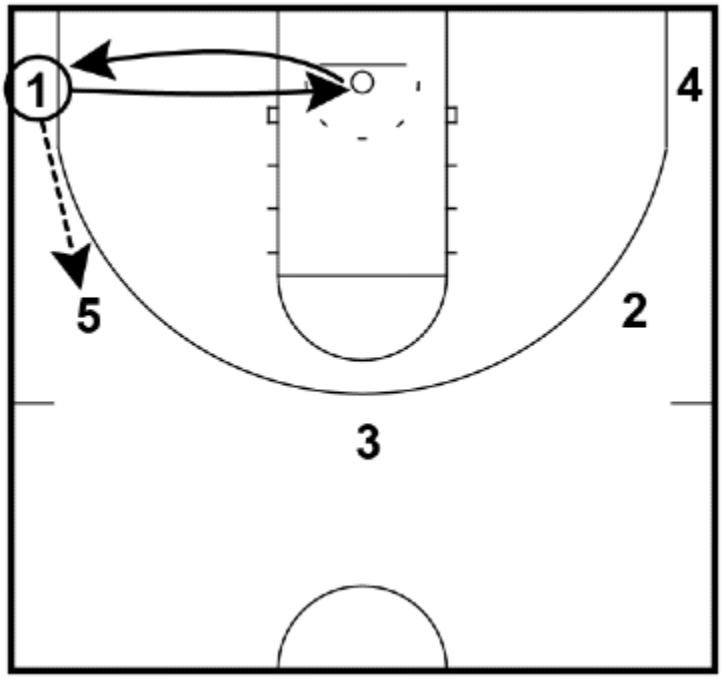
Cutters should finish their cuts at the rim.

The second part of this layer is perimeter players filling the open spot when one is vacated above them.




1
3
4
5
2


1
2
4
3
5


1
4
5
2
3

Layer #2 – Post Pass and Cut

When the ball is passed to the low post, the rule stays consistent with Layer #1.

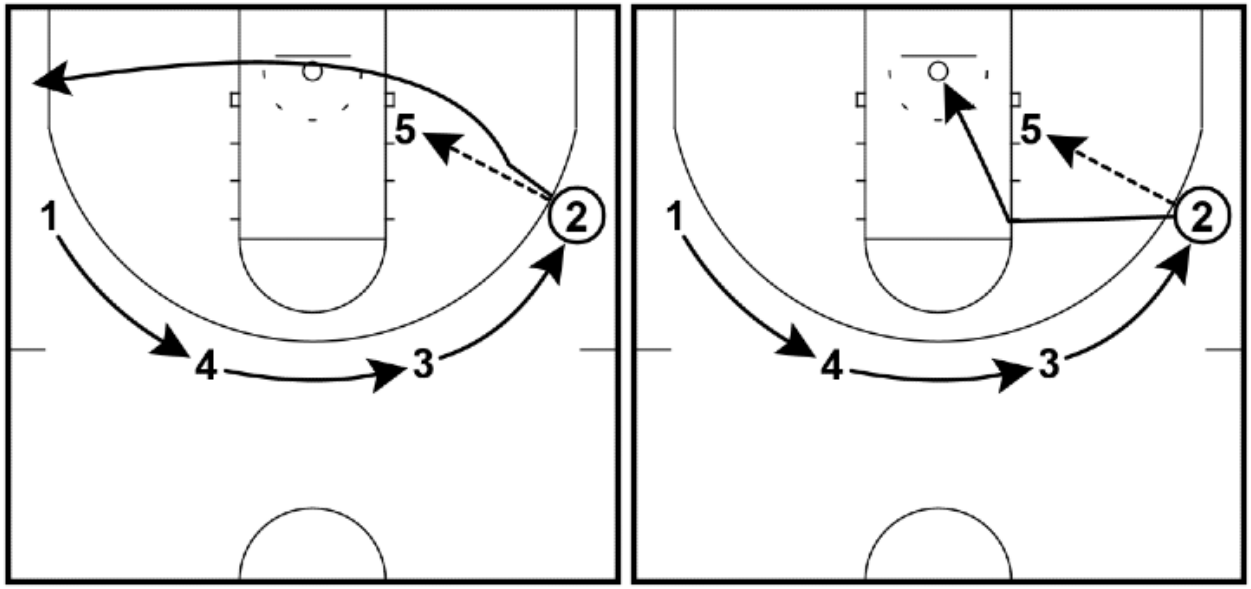
The passer cuts to the basket.

He or she has two choices:

“Laker cut” low or high.

Remind cutters to cut in a way that gives the post player room to operate.

The first diagram below shows a low Laker cut, and the second diagram demonstrates a high Laker cut.



Layer #3 – Dribble At Back Cuts

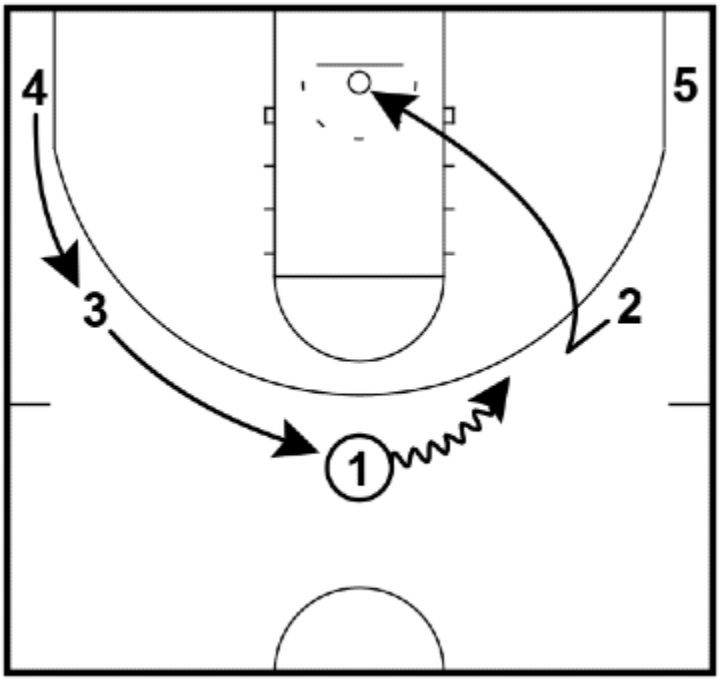
The next layer of the offense teaches players what to do when a teammate dribbles at them.

In the Read and React, a dribble at triggers a backdoor cut.

The same fill rule applies – fill an open spot above you when there is one available.

Note that this is different than dribble penetration to the basket.

This layer only applies when the ball handler dribbles at a teammate.



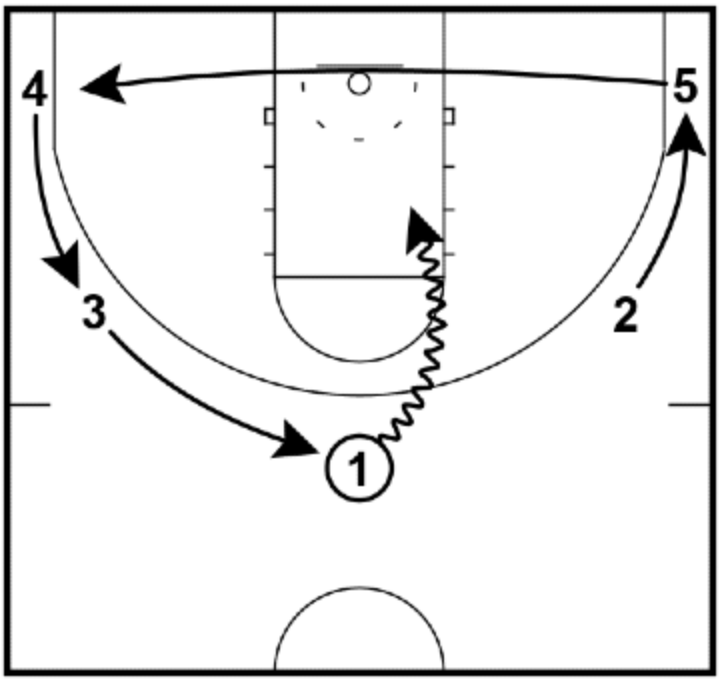
Layer #4 – Circle Movement on Dribble Penetration

This layer may take a bit longer to master.

When a ball handler drives to the basket, the other perimeter players are instructed to move in the direction of the drive.

On a drive to the right, everyone moves to the right.

On a drive to the left, everyone moves left.



Layer #5 – Post Reaction on Penetration

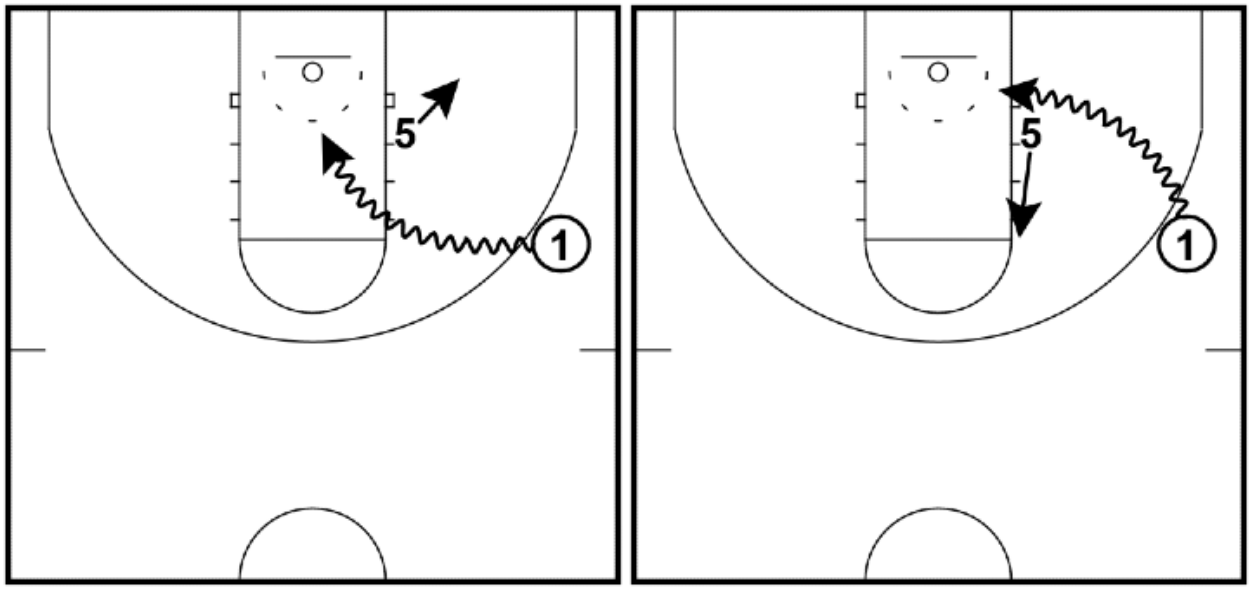
In the Read and React, post players (if you choose to use them) can be stationed on the ball side or weak side of the floor.

Their reads on dribble penetration are the same regardless of which of these options you choose.

If the ball is driven above the post player, he or she slides to the short corner.

If the ball is driven from the baseline, the post player slides up toward the elbow.

The goal of both of these actions is to maximize space for the ball handler and free up the post player for an open shot if their defender helps.



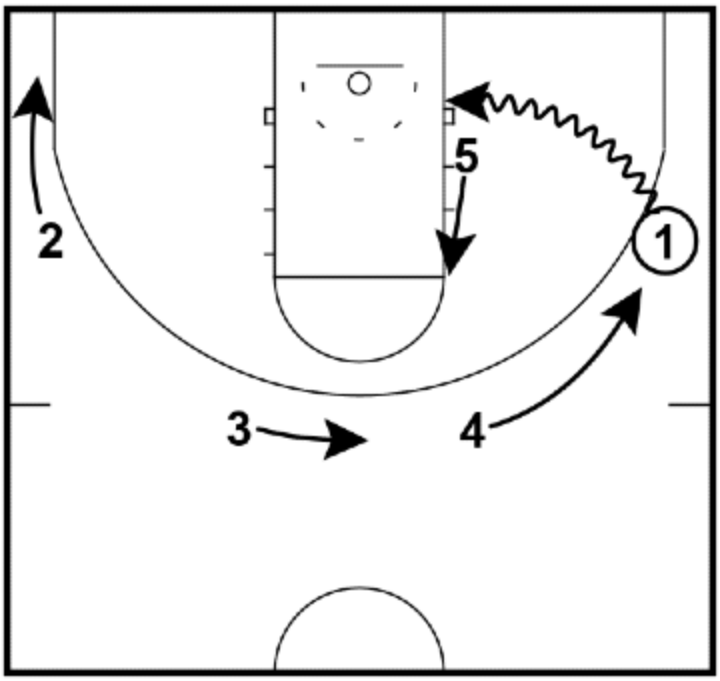
Layer #6 – Baseline Penetration

In the Read and React, baseline drives are treated differently than other drives.

Drivers along the baseline need a passing option in the weak side corner, so the closest player to that corner must “drift” all the way down.

Other perimeter players execute their typical circle movements.

Layers 5 and 6 are combined in the diagram below.

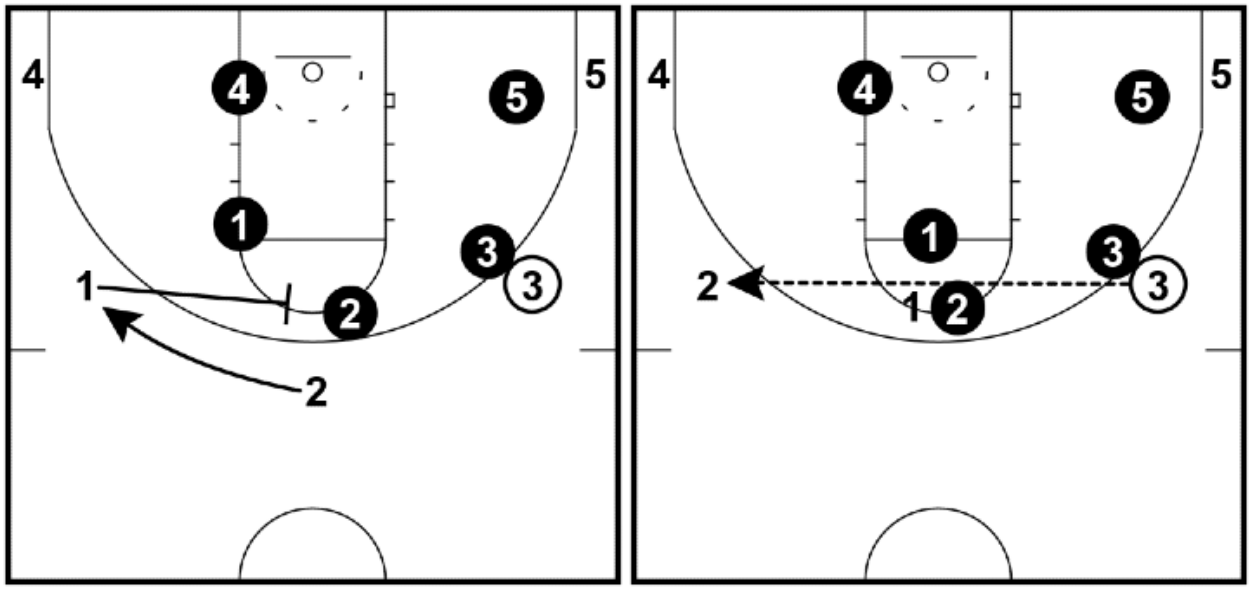


Layer #7 - Pin and Skip

This layer is frequently used against zone defenses, but can be very effective versus man-to-man as well.

Weak side players execute a pin screen if they see a teammate’s defender jumping to the ball in help position.

The goal of a pin screen is to free up the cutter for a shot or to post-up the screener after the screen.



Layer #8 – Circle Reverse

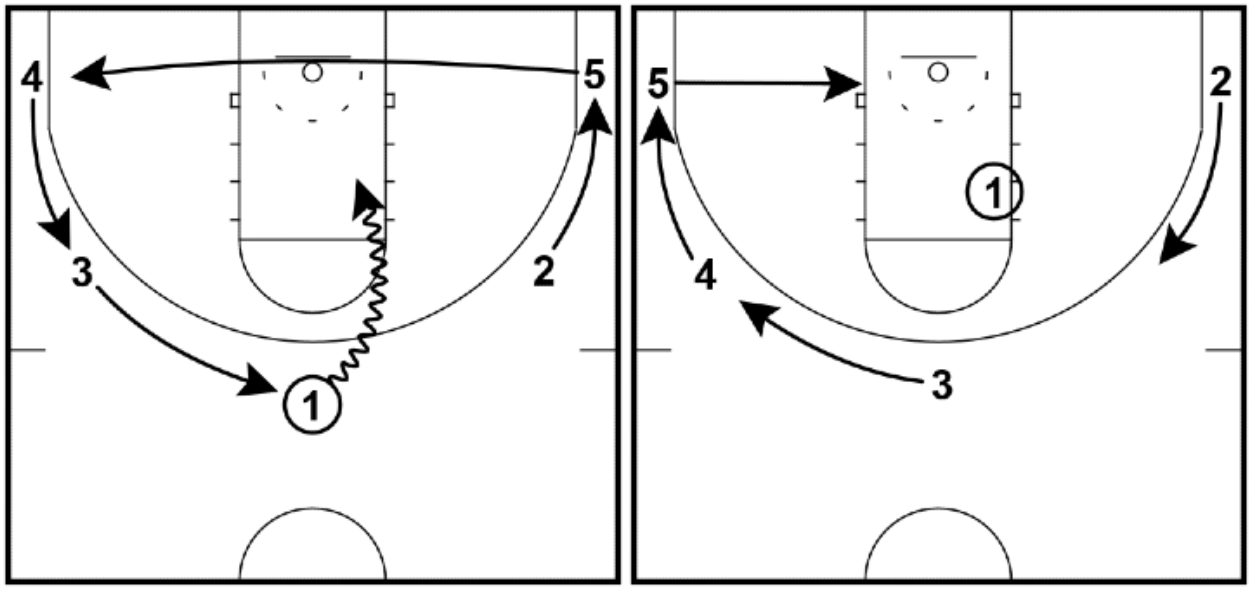
This layer gives the offense a pressure release option when a ball handler picks up his or her dribble.

On the drive, players follow the circle movement rule.

However, if the dribble becomes dead and no pass is immediately available, the perimeter players reverse the circle movement by moving in the opposite direction.

The circle reverse layer helps teams limit turnovers and can lead to some backdoor layups.

The first diagram below shows circle movement, and the second shows circle reverse cuts.



Layer #9 – Post Screens

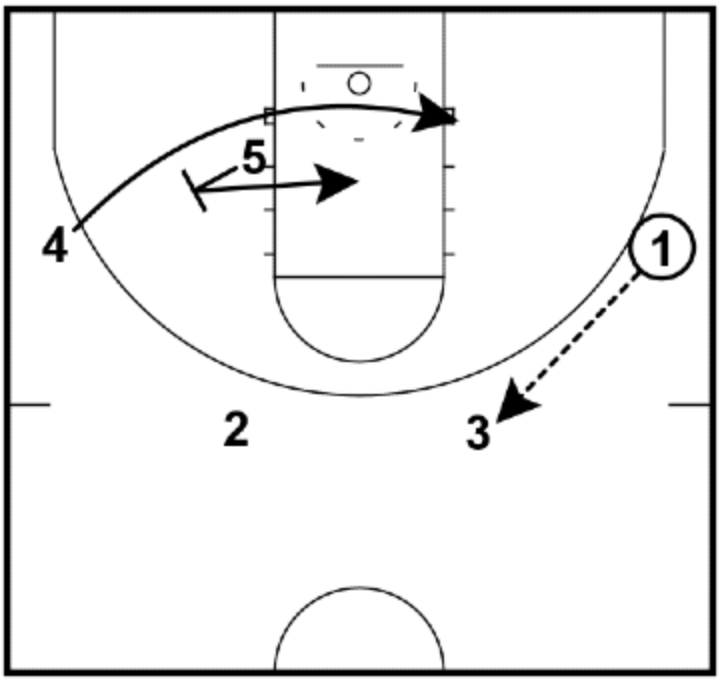
This layer is good for teams running Read and React from a 4-out alignment.

Post players have the option of stepping away from the basket to set back screens for perimeter players.

After screening, the post player should come back to the ball, ready to receive a pass.

These back screens could be set at different angles.

The diagram below shows the post setting a flex screen on the baseline.



Layer #10 – Back Screens

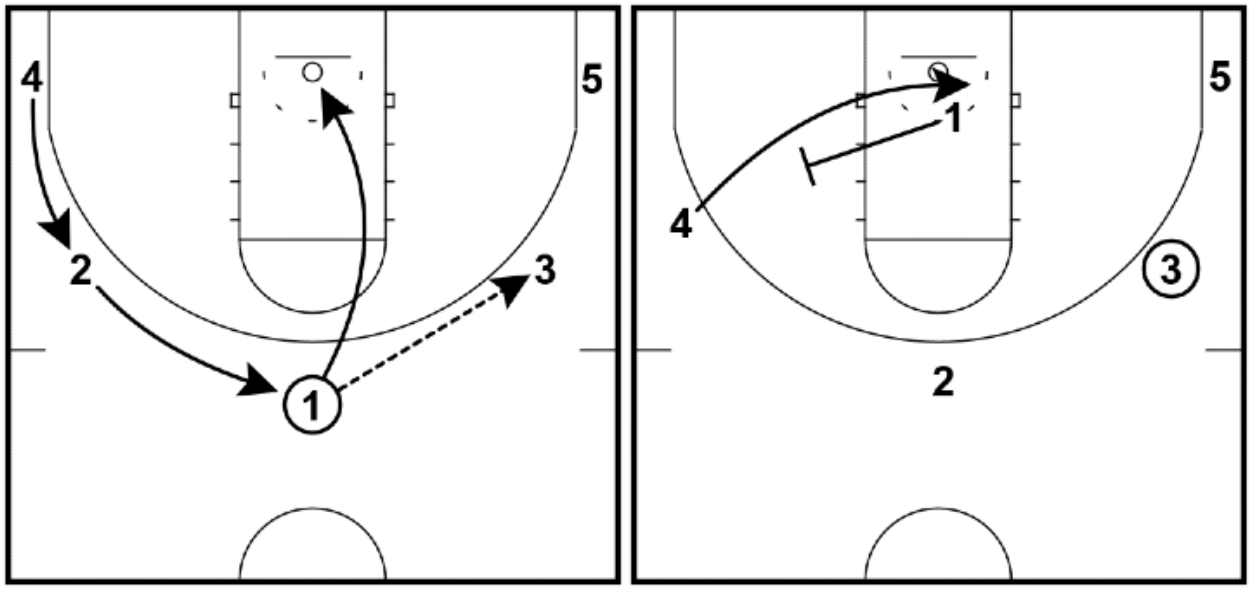
This layer is an extension of Layer #1.

The foundation of the Read and React is a basket cut after each pass.

If you install Layer #10, players will set a back screen for a teammate after basket cutting.

Cutters can screen for any perimeter teammate, which adds some randomness to the offense.

Teach players that by setting good back screens, they will free themselves for open jump shots.



Layer #11 – Staggered Screens

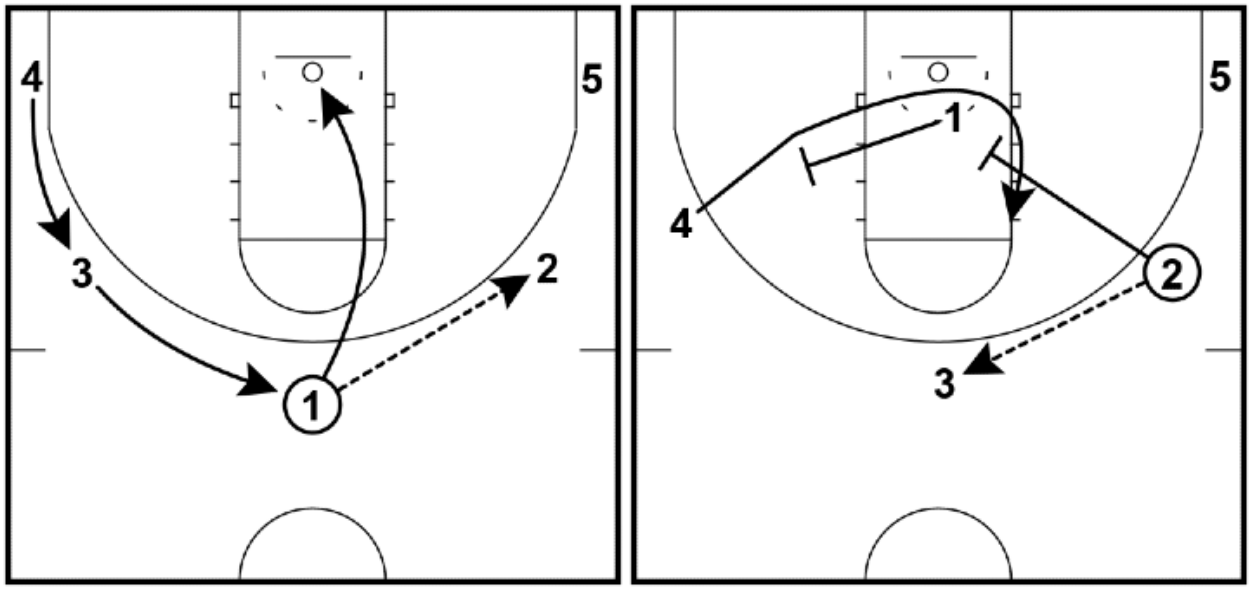
This layer happens when two actions occur consecutively.

In the diagrams below, Player 1 passes, cuts, and sets a back screen for Player 4.

As this action occurs, Player 2 passes to Player 3 and begins his or her cut.

As the cut happens, Player 4 is coming off the back screen.

Player 2 sets a screen for Player 4, turning the back screen into a staggered screen.

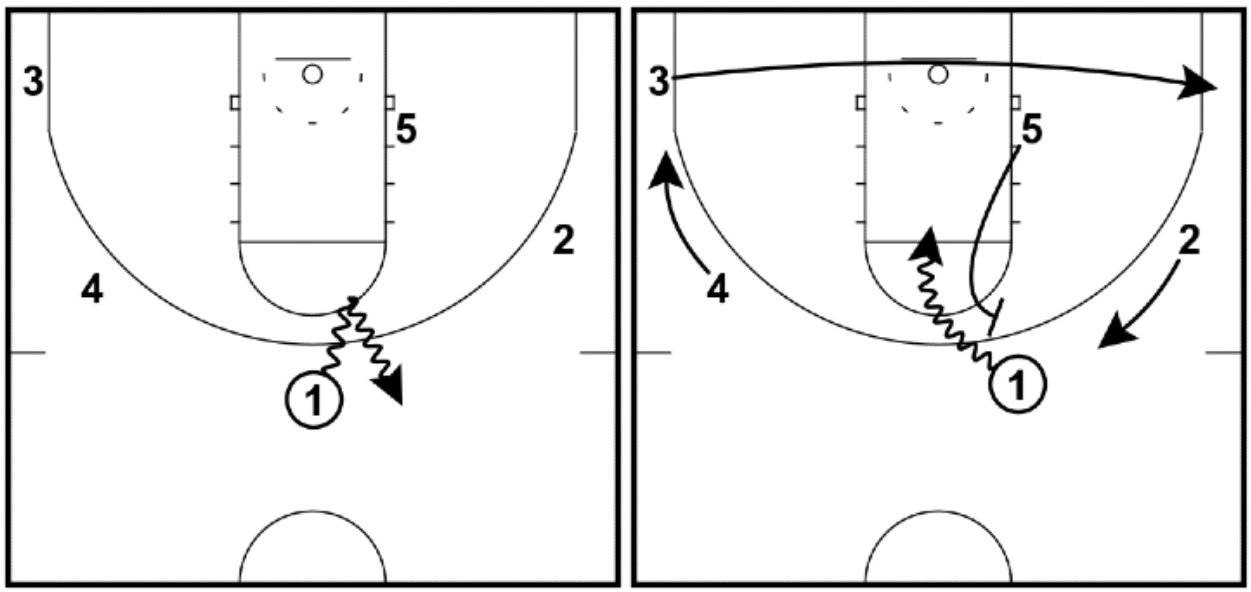


Layer #12 – Ball Screens

When a ball handler reverses their dribble away from the basket, it signals a ball screen set by the post player.

This is a subtle way of adding random ball screens to your offense.

Circle movement still happens if the ball handler drives the ball off the ball screen.



Layer #13 – Post Pass and East / West Cut

This layer provides some alternatives to the basic post pass and cut taught in Layer #2.

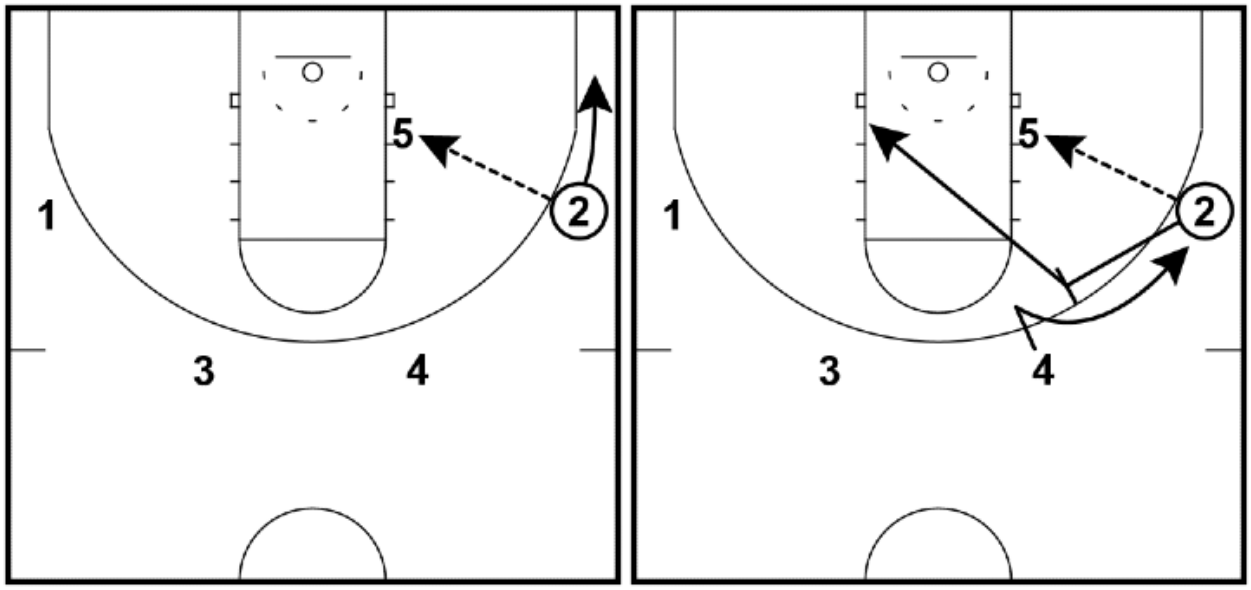
There are two ways to make east/west cuts after making a post entry pass.

The first is to simply relocate to another perimeter spot.

The second is to “X-Cut.”

Execute an X-cut by screening for the nearest perimeter player, then cutting to the basket.

The first diagram below shows a relocation, and the second shows an X-Cut.



Layer #14 – Corner (Pass and Cut)

This layer is a counter to how the defense may guard your basket cuts.

If a defender bumps your cut by getting chest-to-chest, making it difficult to finish the cut at the rim, it is best to abandon the cut.

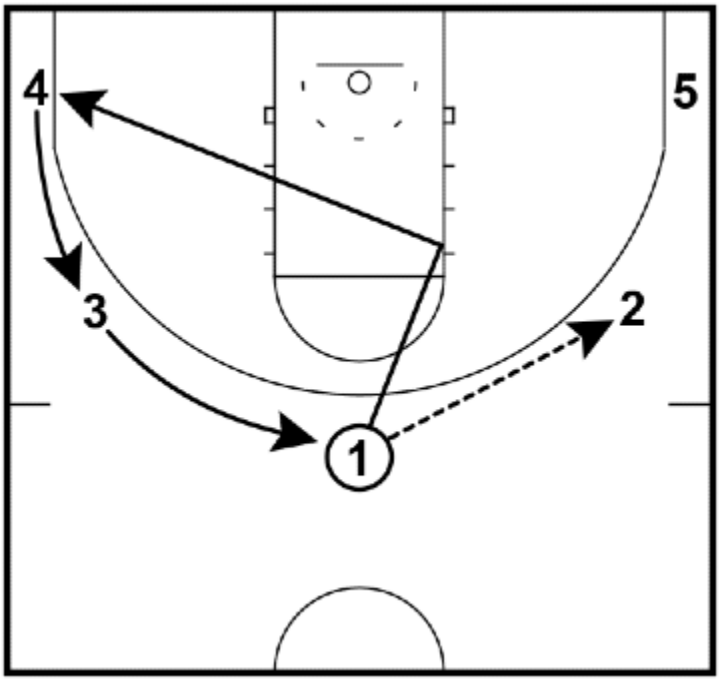
Torbett gives two suggestions in this scenario.

The first is setting a back screen – this is Layer #10.

The second option is simply cutting out to an empty spot.

Torbett calls this “corner” because the cut makes a corner with the attempt at a basket cut and the fill to the empty position.

The back screen option was already shown in Layer #10, so the diagram below shows the corner option.

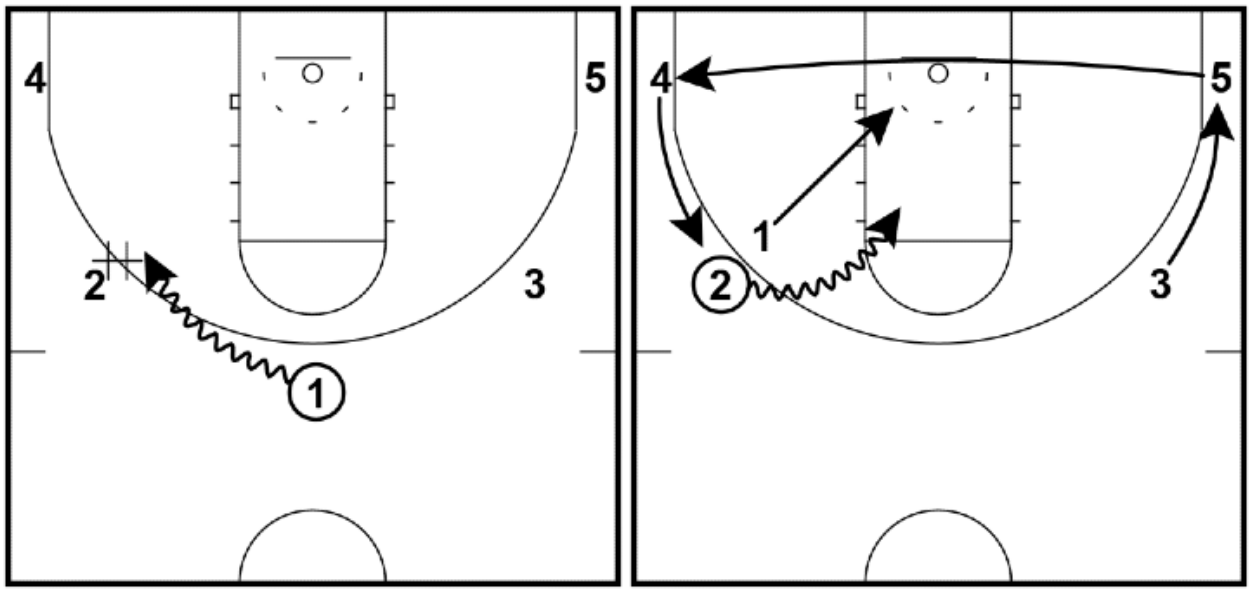


Layer #15 – Power Dribble

The power dribble is an action that triggers a dribble handoff.

The ball handler will dribble at a teammate, but begin to turn his or her back to signal a handoff rather than a backdoor cut.

The original ball handler can roll to the basket and the other perimeter players will execute circle movement.

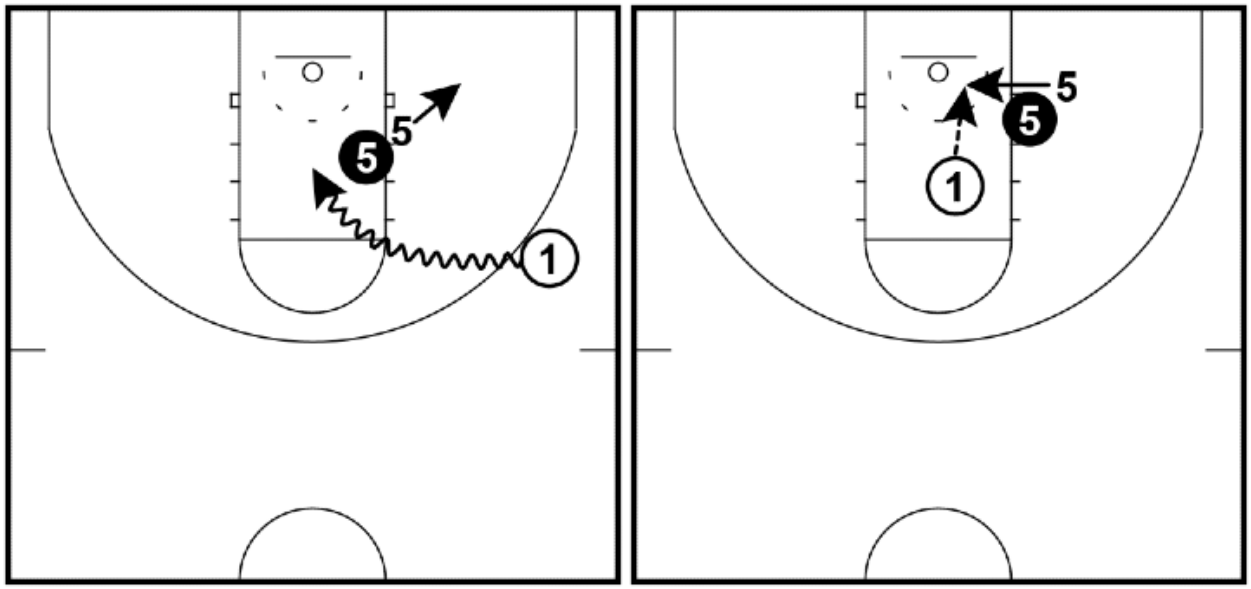


Layer #16 – Advanced Post Reactions

This is an extension of Layer #5.

That layer stated that post players should step to the short corner on drives that happen above them.

This layer teaches the player in the short corner to backdoor cut if their defender steps out with them to deny them the ball.



Layer #17 – Transition Offense

The last four layers of the Read and React offense are supplemental layers.

These are more conceptual than specific actions.

The first of these is transition offense.

The offense wants to seamlessly flow from transition offense to half court offense.

Create an advantage in transition and maintain that advantage throughout the possession without giving the defense a chance to catch up.

Layer #18 – Press Break

This layer encourages coaches to view half court and full court offense the same way.

A press can be attacked by using the pass and cut and dribble-at concepts.

These rules help to create consistency and lets players just play “offense,” regardless of their position on the floor.

Layer #19 – Full Court Trips

This concept also focuses on flowing from the full court to the half court.

Torbett drills this by running transition cycles 5 on 0, then adding one defender at a time to force the offense to make decisions.

The drill progresses from 5 on 0 to 5 on 1, 5 on 2, 5 on 3, 5 on 4, and 5 on 5.

Layer #20 – Flowing Naturally from Set to Set

When a team has mastered the Read and React offense, it can flow from one layer to the next, from full court to half court offense.

A team that achieves this goal will play together beautifully and be extremely difficult to guard.