



Pick & Roll Cheat Sheet

*Offensive solutions vs
common screen coverages*



BASKETBALL
ORBIT

Coverage Matrix

| OFFENSIVE STRATEGY | Low Drop | High Drop | Flat Show | Ice | Weak | Switch | Hedge | Blitz |
|---------------------------|----------|-----------|-----------|-----|------|--------|-------|-------|
| Reject | ○ | ✓ | ✓ | — | — | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Split / Snake | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ✓ | ○ |
| Dribble Over | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ✓ | ○ |
| Pull-Back | — | — | — | — | — | — | ✓ | ○ |
| Passes (Skip / Throwback) | — | — | — | ✓ | ✓ | ○ | ○ | ✓ |
| PnR (Wide / Short Roll) | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Pick & Pop | ✓ | ✓ | ○ | ○ | ○ | — | — | — |
| Ghost Screen | — | — | ○ | — | — | ✓ | ○ | ✓ |
| Slip / Touch Screen | — | — | — | — | — | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Re-Screen | ○ | ○ | ○ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | — | — |

✓ Primary solution

○ Situational read

— Low efficiency vs coverage





Coverage Overview (Defense)



How to read this page

Every screen coverage is designed to **take something away** and force the offense into specific decisions.

If you understand the **defensive priority**, the offensive solution becomes much easier to identify.

Low Drop

Defensive priority

- Protect the rim
- Take away the roll

What the defense gives up

- Space above the paint
- Pull-ups and pop opportunities

Common weaknesses

- Late close-outs
- Big defender staying too deep

High Drop

Defensive priority

- Take away pull-ups
- Slow down the ball handler

What the defense gives up

- Driving angles
- Early pocket passes

Common weaknesses

- Over-commitment by the big
- Delayed recovery

Flat Show

Defensive priority

- Momentarily stop the ball
- Control the angle of the drive

What the defense gives up

- Separation after the show
- Recovery windows

Common weaknesses

- Poor timing
- Over-anticipation

Ice

Defensive priority

- No middle penetration
- Force the ball toward the sideline

What the defense gives up

- Opposite-side attacks
- Re-angled screens

Common weaknesses

- Predictable positioning
- Vulnerability to quick adjustments



Coverage Overview (Defense)



Weak

Defensive priority

- Take away the ball handler's strong hand
- Influence direction early

What the defense gives up

- Natural driving angles
- Re-screen opportunities

Common weaknesses

- Overplaying one side
- Delayed help rotations

Hedge / Hard Show

Defensive priority

- Disrupt timing and rhythm
- Delay the ball handler

What the defense gives up

- Space behind the hedge
- Short roll advantages

Common weaknesses

- Recovery speed
- Rotations after the first pass

Switch

Defensive priority

- Eliminate immediate advantages
- Force one-on-one situations

What the defense gives up

- Matchups
- Temporary confusion during the switch

Common weaknesses

- Communication errors
- Early slips and ghost actions

Blitz / Trap

Defensive priority

- Take the ball out of the ball handler's hands
- Force rushed decisions

What the defense gives up

- Numbers advantage elsewhere
- Open passing lanes after the trap

Common weakness

- Long rotations
- Defensive scrambling

Key Reminder

Defensive coverages don't fail because of effort.

They fail because the offense **recognizes the intent** and plays out of the advantage.



Offensive Solutions (Offense)



How to read this page

Offensive solutions are not plays. They are **responses** to what the defense takes away. Each solution works best at a **specific moment** — before the screen, on the screen, or after the defense commits.

Reject

When it works best

- Switching defenses
- Overplayed screens
- Aggressive Coverages

What to read

- Defender's body position
- Anticipation of the screen

Common mistakes

- Rejecting too late
- No downhill advantage

Split / Snake

When it works best

- Drop coverage
- Flat shows
- Late or soft pressure

What to read

- Gap between defenders
- Position of the screener's defender

Common mistakes

- Forcing the split without space
- Losing balance in traffic

Dribble Over

When it works best

- Defenses that lock the screen angle
- Aggressive Coverages

What to read

- Defender positioning on the ball
- Screener's ability to re-angle

Common mistakes

- Speed without angle
- Dribbling sideways instead of downhill

Pull-Back

When it works best

- Aggressive hedges
- High pressure on the ball
- Late recoveries

What to read

- Recovery speed of the big
- Help defenders loading up

Common mistakes

- Over-dribbling
- Killing the advantage



Offensive Solutions (Offense)



Passes (Skip, Throwback, Bullet)

When it works best

- Rotations after penetration
- Traps
- Help coming from the weak side

What to read

- Help defender, not the ball defender
- Passing window, not the receiver

Common mistakes

- Passing too late
- Floating the ball instead of delivering it

Pick & Pop

When it works best

- Low Drop coverage
- Shooting big
- Big defenders protecting the rim

What to read

- Commitment of the dropping big
- Close-out timing

Common mistakes

- Popping without separation
- Early pass without forcing a decision

Pick-and-Roll (Wide/Short)

When it works best

- Drop coverage
- Hedge / Blitz situations
- Mismatches after the screen

What to read

- Position of the screener's defender
- Low-man commitment

Common mistakes

- Rolling without advantage
- No spacing behind the play

Ghost Screen

When it works best

- Switching defenses
- Aggressive anticipation
- Late communication

What to read

- Defensive expectations
- Switching habits

Common mistakes

- Using it without defensive pressure
- Poor timing between ball handler and screener



Offensive Solutions (Offense)



Slip / Touch Screen

When it works best

- Switch
- Hedge / Hard Show
- Blitz / Trap

What to read

- Defender stepping up to the ball
- Moment before contact

Common mistakes

- Slipping too late
- No spacing for the short roll

Re-Screen

When it works best

- Ice
- Switch
- Overplayed coverages

What to read

- Defender recovery
- Screen anticipation

Common mistakes

- Slow re-screen
- Same angle as the first screen

Key Reminder

No solution works everywhere.

The best offenses win by recognizing the moment — not by running more actions.



How to Use This Cheat Sheet



This cheat sheet is not a playbook. It's a **decision-making tool**.

Use it to identify defensive coverages quickly and choose the **most reliable offensive solutions** — without overloading your players.



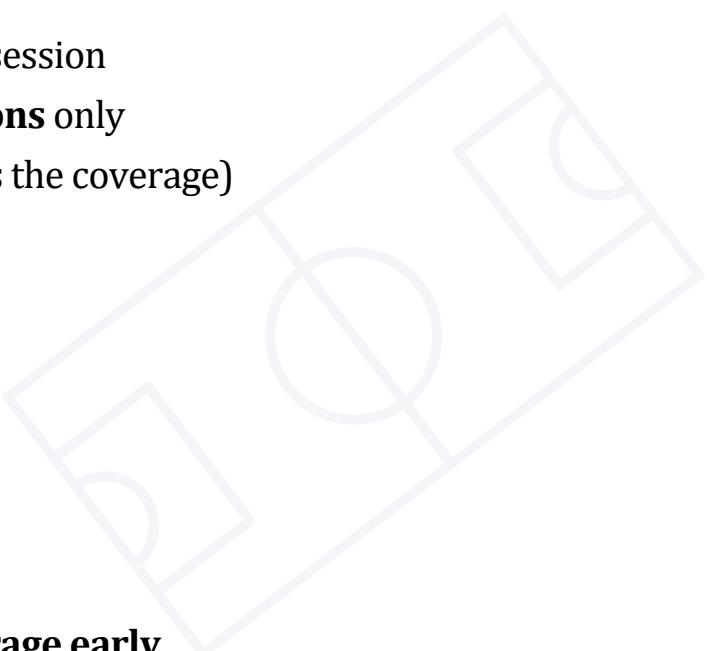
In Practice

- Pick **one defensive coverage** per session
- Teach **one or two primary solutions** only
- Start with guided reads (coach calls the coverage)
- Progress to live reads and free play

Coaching tip:

Don't correct the outcome first.

Correct the read.



In Games

- Identify the opponent's **base coverage early**
- Stick to **primary solutions** from the matrix
- Adjust only if the defense changes

Game reminder:

More plays don't beat coverages.

Better decisions do.



Teaching Mindset

- The matrix shows **what works best**, not what's mandatory
- Situational solutions depend on spacing, timing, and personnel
- Repetition builds confidence — clarity builds trust

✓ Simple Rule

If your players hesitate,
you're teaching too many options.



The goal is not to win the play.
The goal is to win the **advantage**.



Where strategy meets passion —this is Basketball Orbit



Hi, I'm Chris – Welcome to Basketball Orbit!

I'm the coach behind Basketball Orbit.
I create practical, game-based content for coaches
who want better decisions instead of more plays.



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