

NATIONAL COACHING INSTITUTE

Task 11

Advanced Strategies & Tactics: Half-Court Offenses

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Table of Contents

1 Offensive Principles

- Checklist for Offensive Success... page 1
- Skill Development... page 1
- Teamwork... page 3
- Balance... page 4
- Ball Movement... page 6
- Special Situations... page 14
- Critical Thinking... page 14

2 Flexibility

- The Need to Change... page 1
- Adapting to F.I.B.A. Rules... page 1
- Adapting the Players on the Team... page 6
- Adapting to the Opposition... page 9

3 Adolescent Athletes

- The Human Element of Youth Sports... page 1
- Engagement... page 1
- Management... page 3
- Motivation... page 4

4 Conclusion

- Coaching Young Players... page 1
- Elite Basketball Players in Ontario... page 1
- Playing for the National Team... page 2
- YouTube Channel... page 2
- Works Cited... page 3

1

Offensive Principles

- **Checklist for Offensive Success...** page 1
- **Skill Development...** page 1
 - Offensive Skill Development Chart... page 2
- **Teamwork...** page 3
 - Communication... page 3
 - Trust... page 3
 - Equal Opportunity... page 4
- **Balance...** page 4
 - Transition... page 4
 - Half-Court Spacing... page 5
 - Ability to Rebound... page 6
 - Preparation for Defense... page 6
- **Ball Movement...** page 6
 - Passing and Cutting... page 6
 - Practice Planning: Moving without the Ball... page 8
 - Dribble Penetration... page 9
 - Training: Speaking to Officials... page 10
 - Post Play... page 11
 - Ball Reversal... page 13
 - Pressure Release... page 13
- **Special Situations...** page 14
- **Critical Thinking...** page 14
 - Awareness... page 13
 - Decision-Making... page 13

Checklist for Offensive Success

Basketball Xs and Os should be flexible, able to adjust to better suit a team and its players. While coaches must be nimble enough to change with the times, they should also hold certain core principles consistent. Adolescents are learning about themselves as they attend school, participate in sport and live their lives so a totally unstructured environment would be unduly trying. It is easier for student-athletes to understand clearly articulated standards and if learning gaps exist, coaches can set concrete targets for improvement (Schreck, 2011, p. 57).

Fluid ball movement, selfless passing and high-percentage scoring chances are characteristics of some of the greatest offenses over the years. The 1980s Boston Celtics and Los Angeles Lakers and the 2000s Phoenix Suns exhibited these attributes as they won countless games (Paine, 2010). These professional teams are relevant to youth basketball because they played at a high pace, showcased creativity and seemed to have a lot of fun.

When coaches focus too much on exact offensive and defensive systems, they forgo a chance for the team to reach a higher level of play (Auerbach, 1961, p. 9). A motion offense provides many benefits to a basketball team, such as an emphasis on physical and technical training and critical thinking on the court. Instead of memorizing patterns for every defense, players form solid habits in practice apply the same principles and take advantage of opportunities in games.

Coaching Checklist

Some coaches are very strict and regimented; others provide more room to operate. Irrespective of the coach's philosophies, successful offenses contain a combination of these principles.

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Skill Development | <input type="checkbox"/> Ball Movement |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Teamwork | <input type="checkbox"/> Passing and Cutting |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> Trust | <input type="checkbox"/> Post Play |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> Transition | <input type="checkbox"/> Special Situations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Half-Court Spacing | <input type="checkbox"/> Critical Thinking |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ability to Rebound | <input type="checkbox"/> Awareness |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Preparation for Defense | <input type="checkbox"/> Decision-Making |

Skill Development

If a team is blessed with the a star, like Dimitris Diamantidis and Panathinaikos B.C. in the 2011 Euroleague (→ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zUrJZRjxndE>) or Jonas Valančiūnas and Lithuania in the 2011 Men's U19 World Championship (→ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2aAoBOVnbMI>), coaches may choose to focus the offense on their skills. If talent is equally distributed, the coach must develop the entire squad.

OFFENSIVE SKILL DEVELOPMENT CHART

- Athletes in the Midget Development Program are fourteen and fifteen years old. They have recently completed the Train to Train stage at the end of Grade 9 and will be entering the Train to Compete stage as they play varsity basketball in the fall.
- The program endeavours to guide and instruct the athletes as they segue from T2T to T2C.
- M.D.P. is a mix of experienced club players and late entry athletes.
- Some athletes may be experiencing their Peak Height Velocity (P.H.V.) or "Growth Spurt."

SKILL	COMMENT	SUGGESTIONS
General Skills	The P.H.V. period is not a time to teach refined skills(Taha, 2009).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Master the Simple Skills • Continue Physical Training
Ballhandling	Sixty percent of drills should focus on the weak hand. The stronger side will develop along with the weaker one (Pasquali, 2010, p. 6).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First Step • One and Two Dribble Moves <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Cross-Step ◦ Dribble Crossover ◦ Hesitation Move ◦ Retreat Dribble • Playing with Contact
Shooting	Put up <i>lots</i> of shots at game intensity as part of the 10,000 hours of dedicated practice (Coyle, 2009, pp. 24-28).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the Same Release Every Time • Consistent Shooting within 22' • Shooting off the Bounce • Shot-Fake and Drive
Passing	A pass is not a pass if you have tried everything else first (Carrill, 2004, p. 204).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hit the Target Provided • Pass with the Inside Hand • Feints and Fakes
Cutting	<p>Basketball demands that all players possess the ability to move quickly in any direction and stop on a dime (Winter, 1997, p. 123).</p> <p>The cutter must "sell" the cut, using feints and footwork to take the defender out of position (Jackson J. D., 2010, p. 23)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Winning the Short Race <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Backdoor Cuts ◦ Baseline Cuts ◦ Blast Cut • Exit Cuts
Catching	The initial component of movement towards the basket is being ready to do so (Repeša, 2009).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Always Provide a Target • Catch the Ball Ready to Attack
Footwork	If you pivot sharply, it gives you another way out of difficult situations (Carrill, 2004, p. 149).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Front Pivot • Reverse Pivot
Transition Skills	Spend seventy percent of game situations practice should be devoted to full-court situations (Pasquali, 2010, p. 12).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Passing the Ball down the Court • Catching the Ball at Full Speed and Attacking under Control
Screening	It's not as much the screen itself as reading how the defense plays the screen (Oliver, 2011).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Away from the Ball <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Back Screen ◦ Down Screen • Ball Screen
Guard Play	Elite athletes always attempt skills beyond their capabilities, even if they are not initially successful (Syed, 2010, p. 85)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1-on-1 Moves • Read and React to the Defense
Post Play	Teach the entire move - from footwork to body position to ballhandling to decision-making - and how to use it (Carrill, 2004, p. 23).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Winning the Battle of the Front Foot • Adjusting to the Position of the Ball • One Great Move and a Counter

Teamwork

Players live for moments when they can lose themselves in the action and it is up to the coach to reawaken that spirit so the team blends together effortlessly (Jackson, 1995, p. 79). Although initially a team may play together reluctantly, they will eventually come to enjoy the increased scoring possibilities that come from sharing responsibilities

(→ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KXG4LbOKbBk>).

COMMUNICATION

Everyone must be on the same page in order to work together. Every team should communicate throughout the game (verbally and non-verbally). Coaches should standardize terminology and speak clearly and concisely. Communication is a process that each player can personally control so there is no reason not to speak up.

TRUST

Building trust among young players is tricky, especially at high levels. Players feel that they must stand out to reach their prep school, post-secondary and professional aspirations. Just like the post who needs the ball after sprinting the length of a court on a rim run, perimeter players who cut to the basket should receive a pass because it's a correct decision that makes their efforts worthwhile. If players know that they will get the ball back, they are more than willing to give it up and cut. When a team shares the ball, everyone has a chance to shine (→ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VKIBRA-3Txc>).



The Duke Blue Devils gather for a brief huddle during a stoppage in play during their 2009-10 championship season.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

To threaten the defense, everyone must be capable of taking (and making) high-percentage shots. Some athletes may be able to create their own shot, others will rely on teammates. Two players can each generate a partial advantage and combine their efforts into a full one-second edge.

For the coach: any offense that provides equal opportunities necessitates equal skill development. There will be some specialization among the players but everyone must reach a high overall level. All athletes must be able to handle the ball, shoot it and contribute to scoring chances. Focus on the improvement of all players, whether they start or come off the bench. When a team assigns major ballhandling abilities to one player, other players may not fully develop their skills (Carrill, 2004, p. 45).

For the player: Anyone who wants to be a part of an equal opportunity offense needs to carry their share of the load. In this case, every player is a possible target for a pass but whether they receive the ball is based on merit. Objective feedback from the coach informs the athlete about where they stand, their strengths and weaknesses and what they can do to get better.

Balance

Effective offensive players are those who continually create and fill space throughout the court (Oliver, 2011). The goal of a skill-based offense is to create an advantage (timing, spacing or personnel) and take a high-percentage shot for the team. Often, the shot will be a result of attacking the basket. When the floor is properly spread, defenders must choose between helping or guarding their assignment, opening passing lanes for open shots.

TRANSITION

Teams coached by Mike D'Antoni play fast because they want to score before the defense is ready. D'Antoni feels that teams get their best shots in the first seven seconds of the possession:

Most coaches believe defences are more vulnerable late in the shot clock, that you can get them out of position with a lot of passing. I don't know why defences wouldn't be more vulnerable before they get set. (McCallum, 2006, p. 145)

An emphasis on transition is not carte blanche to take any type of shot. Transition is a way for players to take the high-percentage shots that suit their skills and abilities.

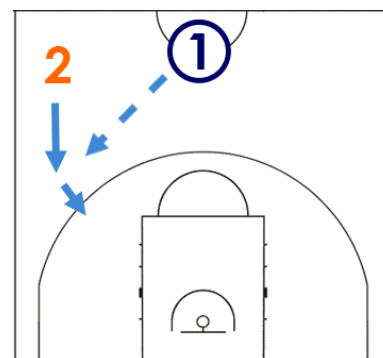
Young basketball players feel that they should dribble the ball down the court. The ball should be passed because it is faster and it builds a culture of sharing the ball

(→ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3Jn8OjS-6rY>). A post who can corral the offensive rebound and skillfully initiate the fast break is difficult to defend but any advantage created by the mismatch is dissipated by the delay caused by too much dribbling. Teams should make the outlet pass as soon as it is available (Winter, 1997, p. 73).

Good transition teams display speed under control to generate a high quality shot (Winter, 1997, p. 57). Maintain the advantages that are created in transition with the secondary break and early offense (Pasquali, 2010, p. 12). For example, if an early entry pass is made to the wing, players should be used to attacking the rim right away (→ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yu-ymyNFUw>). Frequently, coaches practice moves from the wing in a half-court setting (catching and curling after a blast cut or a V-cut instead of catching the ball on the run and finishing).

If the immediate 2-on-1 or 3-on-2 chance is unsuccessful, those trailing the play should not give up on the fast break. As the play progresses to the 5-on-5 level, offensive players should look for early offense: transferring the numerical advantage into a high-percentage scoring chance before the defense is fully set up. Players need to be walked through the concept of filling open spaces and moving the ball ahead of the defense (Oliveri, 2011).

Split the court in transition and segue into a balanced half-court offense (Pasquali, 2010, p. 41). This balance will generate shot opportunities as the defense recovers after stopping the fast break and facilitates rebounding (→ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M2kTA4Lcyus>).



Players should practice catching the ball on the wing and attacking the basket in a variety of situations.

HALF-COURT SPACING

If the court is balanced during transition and early offense, it should be easy to move into a half-court set without wasting time. Teaching athletes how to play anywhere on the court means is that the team is always ready, even if someone is not in their favourite position.

The team's ability to shoot from the outside will determine how far they can space themselves from the basket. An older team will be able to play farther away than a younger one and a more skilled starting line-up will stretch the defense more than bench players will.

The main goal of the offense is to a shot you can make every time you have the ball (Carrill, 2004, p. 120). Nobody should occupy a position that is beyond their scoring capabilities. They will not be guarded and their teammates will not pass to them. A young player who cannot make a three-point shot should not stand in the corner waiting to shoot; they should spot up within their range, look to cut or shot-fake and drive to get closer to the basket.

One strategy to provide chances to attack the basket is for the offense to offset the defense. If there two guards are pressuring the ball, the offense should utilize a one-guard front; if there is a single guard matching up to the ball, the offense should employ a two-guard front. When the defense is aggressive, the offense should slow the tempo. When the defense is passive, the offense should attack promptly before the opponent can adjust (Pasquali, 2010, p. 65).

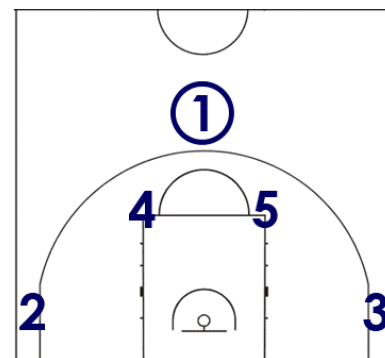
Teams should create offensive options for both the strong and weak sides of the court (→ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eqBXerxk-MI>). Too often, a young team will pass the ball on one side and it will never reach the opposite side. Pressured by the defense (not the shot clock), a player will force a poor shot with plenty of time left. Sometimes, the ball is reversed to the top of the key and passed back to the strong side without a look to the weak side. Consequently, two or three athletes become disengaged, impairing their readiness to cut, rebound and get back on defense. Over the course of a game, this builds frustration.

Adolescent players may struggle with bad spacing habits, such as always setting up on the right side of the court, coming towards the ball or failing to recognize a passing lane and choosing to hold the ball or execute a dribble push instead. They do not maliciously wish to monopolize the ball but they do not know what to do without it. The coach needs to explain how to handle common situations and practice dynamic 2-on-2 and 3-on-3 drills before expanding to 5-on-5 play (Oliver, 2011).

The offense must provide space for one player to pass the ball to any teammate. Since each player will spend more time without the ball - even if they are a star - everyone must learn about ball and player movement (Jackson, 1995, p. 88). Vocabulary like a "purposeful cut" and a "safe pass" should be outlined in concrete terms.

"Stand as far back from the net as the possibility of scoring permits. No, farther. Farther... Farther..."

- Hirohide Ogawa,
Enlightenment through
the Art of Basketball



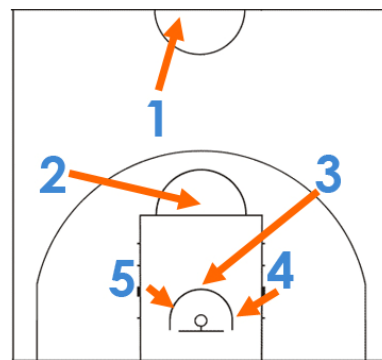
The "Horns" set is a common alignment used by Euroleague and N.B.A. teams to equally space players, provide multiple options and allow the offense to attack either side of the key.

ABILITY TO REBOUND

Whenever the shot goes up, every player should look for the rebound or begin transition defense. The number of players devoted to offensive rebounding depends on their squad, the type of shots that they take and their ability to get back in defense

(→ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WZFBKk0wO-s>).

At the 2011 Men's U17 National Championships, Team Ontario would drive into the paint but was not always able to finish. Tall athletic players enabled second and third chance opportunities that their opponents could not guard. A team that takes a fair amount of shots close to the basket should feel more comfortable crashing the boards than one that shoots frequently from the outside.



John Wooden's U.C.L.A. teams crashed the boards with three forwards inside, a guard chasing long rebounds and one player back.

PREPARATION FOR DEFENSE

Good teams are continually thinking about what will happen next. Whether a team jams the rebounder to delay the outlet pass, presses the length of the court or falls back to midcourt is a decision based on a team's personnel. A team can succeed using a number of strategies but they will struggle if they are constantly playing in the moment without looking ahead. Rules to fill and replace or cover the top of the key when the point guard drives are created for both offensive and defensive balance.

It is important to keep moving from one stage of the offense to another. Sprint down the court in transition, continue to pass and cut, look for the offensive rebound and get back into position. Players must always move their feet; charges can be taken in transition if the last player back is moving and looking for a moment when the opponent is unaware and out of control

(→ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v4ILFOd31-g>). Illegal use of the hands fouls are called when a player runs to a specific spot, assumes an unbalanced position and reaches out as the ballhandler sprints past them.

Ball Movement

Actions and reactions are connected to each other. As one offensive action finishes, another begins and the ball flows fluidly. When the offense is inefficient, the ball stops often (Pasquali, 2010, p. 65). For many teams, this evolution occurs during the Train to Compete stage.

PASSING AND CUTTING

Movement without the ball should be practiced as much as ballhandling, shooting and passing. Players should not feel that a drill is only work that is not connected to success on the court. Every practice situation should be a form of preparation for game situations (Carrill, 2004, p. 104). Making drills and workouts meaningful promotes engagement and intrinsic motivation among youth (Schreck, 2011, p. 71).

Talented players begin getting special treatment in junior high school and may sense that they are greater than the team (Jackson, 1995, p. 89). As hard as it may seem for that talented player to believe at the time, everyone is not attending the game to see them dribble into double-team traps. A player who is a “ball stopper” and holds or dribbles the ball too long wastes the shot-clock and frustrates both coaches and teammates, often forcing “hero shots” that lead to nothing (McCallum, 2006, p. 89). Against poor defenders, excessive dribbling may lead to an opportunity but athletic defenders who are supported by teammates will not break down as easily.

Passing and cutting through the key or driving, kicking the ball out and making an exit cut are not inherently interesting activities and young players will not execute these skills spontaneously if they are worried that they will not get the ball back and will become separated from the action after they move away from the ball. When they see these actions as a method to improve the team’s scoring chances and possibly get the ball back in better position, they will buy in (→ http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x_F8qvEO7Xg).

At the secondary level, at times it is not possible to provide every player with a ball to maximize their dedicated practice. Perhaps players may not take enough shots to achieve mastery of the skill but they definitely will not complete enough passes. Coaches can use 3-on-3 play to provide more repetitions. The game is played at a higher pace and each player handles the ball more, providing experiences that a young player can rely upon when they play a 5-on-5 game.

Passing and Cutting Drills:

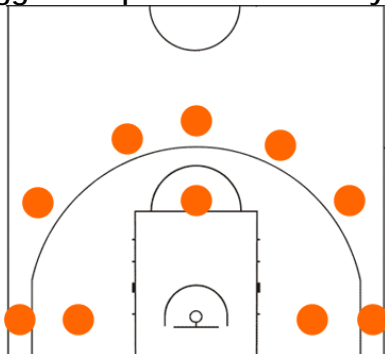
- Scrimmages with no dribbling
- Games (such as tag or handball)
- Pass and follow the pass
- Part method drills with an extra passer or pressure release
- One Shooter with Two Passers (time intervals, count made baskets)
- After completing one part of the drill, a player must instantly cut to another spot for a catch and shoot chance.

QUALITIES OF A GREAT CUTTER

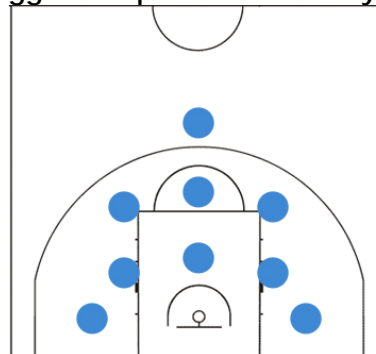
Cutting does not equate to running at full-speed without interruption. There may be times when it is necessary to sprint to a certain spot in order to win a race against a defender but most cuts involve a series of steps. A ball cut down the middle of the key involves: feint to set up the defender, cut to the middle of the key, pause at the rim, reverse pivot to maintain eye contact with the ball, back out of the key, pause in a shooting spot and run to the next spot.

Spacing should be adjusted to match the skills of the passers and cutters. When filling a space, athletes should check that they are within their scoring range without interfering with teammates.

Suggested Spots for Outside Players:



Suggested Spots for Inside Players:



QUALITIES OF A GREAT PASSER

A great passer not only sees the player who will catch the ball but what they will do with the ball, throws catchable passes and makes decisions (Carrill, 2004, p. 48). Passing and cutting is not only a matter of getting rid of the ball and forgetting about but continually thinking about the next play (→ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N9wmh0CHpAI>).

Grade passes to encourage accountability and improve performance. Types of passes include a forced pass that is a last resort and risks a turnover, a “dirty” pass which is an afterthought that does not improve the team’s chances and a “clean” pass which is on-time, on-target and contributes to a one-second advantage (Pasquali, 2010, p. 5).

QUALITIES OF A GREAT SCREENER

All players should be active screeners during the offensive set. Beginning with a ball screen in transition or a back screen during early offense, screens should occur as frequently as cuts. It is as easy to cut through the key and set a Flex screen as it is to cut and fill a space. Giving players freedom to screen multiplies the number of threats that the defense must handle.

Players should consistently watch the defense and adjust their roll to the open space vacated by the defense. After setting a screen away from the ball, players cannot get caught watching the paint dry. There is always something else to do, such as sealing inside, rolling to the basket, popping to the outside, setting another screen or cutting again (→ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KcsIJldXfaU>).

Moving without the Ball

Too often, “Motion” means that one player attacks 1-on-1 (or 1-on-2/3/4/5) while the others watch. Allowing players the freedom to make decisions does not equate to permissiveness. A team that runs a “Motion” offense must understand how to move without the ball so that the team gets the best possible shot.

Repetitive drills and strict adherence to the core principles of the offense gradually convinces athletes to play together, although not every player will adapt at the same pace (Jackson, 1995, p. 90). Drills should breakdown a specific game situation, such as beating the defender to the finish line in order or rotating based on the movement of the help defender.

Practice Plan:

- a. Explanation: The Importance of Everyone Getting Involved
- b. Fundamentals: Curl Drill
- c. 1-on-0: Penetrate and Kick/Catch and Shoot
- d. 3-on-3 Competition: Three Options (Games to 7)
 - i. Pass and Cut Through
 - ii. Screen Away from the Ball
 - iii. Screen Towards the Ball
- e. 5-on-5 Competition: Controlled Scrimmage (No Dribbling)

Observations:

The hardest skill to teach the players was to be ready to catch the ball. Breaking the habit of straight legs and hands by the sides and establishing a routine of bent knees and hands which providing a passing target was tricky for some players who were used to being the primary ballhandler. During some of the 3-on-2 (with a trailer) drills at the beginning of practice, the players would collapse into the paint so maintaining good spacing was a point of emphasis.

The Penetrate and Kick/Catch and Shoot drill caught on slowly. At first, players wanted to shoot outside shots instead of driving and dishing before cutting away for an open look. The coach needs to set a tone of moving the ball quickly and driving aggressively at the basket in order to simulate game situations.

Some of the players with less athleticism and experience were able to win 3-on-3 match-ups by moving the ball ahead of the defense so that their team could take open high percentage shots. This team easily won their half-court game (not shown on the camera) by keeping the defense off-balance and creating a one second advantage. During the controlled scrimmage, patterns like the give and go and downscreens occur more frequently than when unlimited dribbling is allowed.

YouTube Clips:

- ➔ Part I: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x5kAe3K8gul>
- ➔ Part II: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xHzlp6AG5Bw>
- ➔ Part III: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IVbYxXa2ZIU>

DRRIBLE PENETRATION

The first step of any good offense is to penetrate the defense with a pass or dribble, forcing the defense to help, rotate or otherwise adjust their positioning (Jackson, 1995, p. 88). If the offense maintains good spacing, they will be able to pass the ball to an open player in a scoring position.

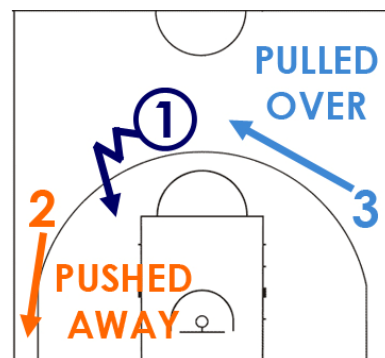
When individuals attack 1-on-1, it is within the team setting. This is not a National Basketball Association isolation play but explosive dribble penetration as the other four players act to improve their scoring chances (Pasquali, 2010, p. 14). Whether the play results in a lay-up, a trip to the line or a pass for an open shot, the outcome should be a high-percentage shot for the team.

Movement without the ball does not stop when penetration commences. Generally, if the ballhandler dribbles at a teammate, they are “pushed over” by one spot and if the ballhandler dribbles away from a teammate, they are “pulled towards” the ball by one spot. Outside and inside players should move within circles where they can quickly catch the ball and score.

If a help defender rotates, the teammate should adjust their position so the passing lane is intact

(➔ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6KoBbqFOoEQ>).

Communication is important as the dribbler has a narrow focus (the basket) and may not see every open play or extra defender.



Penetrate and Kick fundamentals remain the same for 3-on-3 and 5-on-5 play.

QUALITIES OF A GREAT BALLHANDLER

An elite player must be a threat in multiple areas (Scariolo, Man-to-Man Offense and Spacing, 2010, p. 18). Practice dribbling from a variety of spots (both sides of the court) to develop well-rounded players. Players can choose diverse ways to attack: dribble at the space between two defenders, towards a defender in order to freeze them or around the defense into open space.

Use the dribble to push the ball when the pass is unavailable, space the floor, shorten the distance for passing, change passing angles, retreat from trouble and drive to the basket (Kryzewski, 1989, p. 34). An excellent ballhandler can perform all of these tasks while keeping their teammates involved in the ball.

PLAYING WITH CONTACT

Young players may not be used to rough play and the interpretation of what constitutes a foul varies across the province of Ontario. Some officials are learning how to work a three-person system wherein Centre Position is responsible for calling contact on the drive to the basket. The referee may be concerned about positioning and not focus as much on the play as they would have had they been accustomed to the system.

Teenagers must learn to work with officials. In high school, players are speaking for themselves for the first time and may not understand how to communicate respectfully. Following the example of a professional game is not a good strategy so coaches must teach ballhandlers how to get the calls that they deserve.

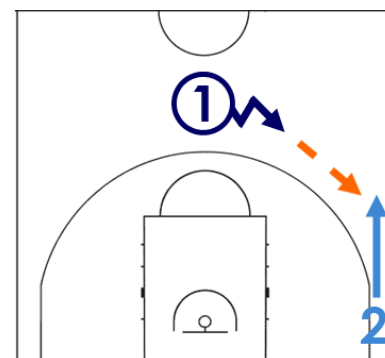
Speaking to Officials

DO...

- Remain Calm
- Approach the official during a stoppage in play
- Talk about specific plays
- Assume a neutral body position
- Ask questions
- State your point simply and briefly

DON'T...

- Never use profanity
- React with emotion
 - Loud yelling
 - Demonstrative gestures
 - Staring down the referee
- Delay the game
- Talk from the bench



Both the passer and cutter are responsible for shortening the distance of the pass.



Dirk Nowitzki talks to Bob Delaney during the 2011 N.B.A. playoffs.

Furthermore, since practices should mimic games, all ballhandling drills should include contact to prepare players for games. A player could (safely) hit a teammate as they attempt to remain balanced, control the ball or keep the dribble alive. If there is a foul during a scrimmage, players should learn to gather themselves and attempt the foul shots.

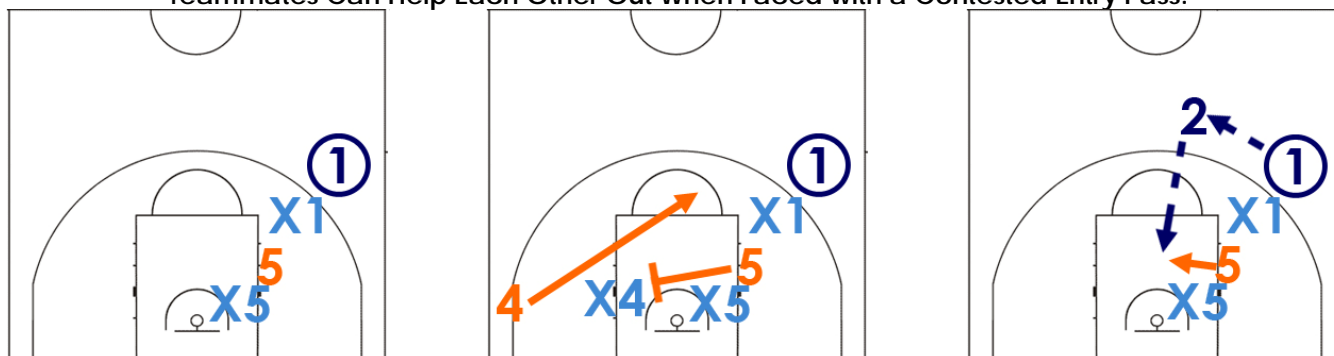
POST PLAY

It is challenging to play in the post: there is an ongoing physical battle for position, defenses double-team and the sixteen foot key forces players away from the basket. The power post up game that works at lower club levels will not work when athleticism, skill and experience are evenly matched. All players should learn to post up because it creates high percentage shots, new passing angles for cutters and better offensive rebounding odds.

POST ENTRY PASS

International Basketball Federation (F.I.B.A.) offenses use posts as a primary option because of the stress they place on the defense (Obradović, 2007, p. 24). Even if the ball is not passed inside, posts are active as screeners, passers, and cutters. The wide key allows for high-low and two-post sets without the bigs interfering with each other (Scariolo, New FIBA rules analysis, 2010).

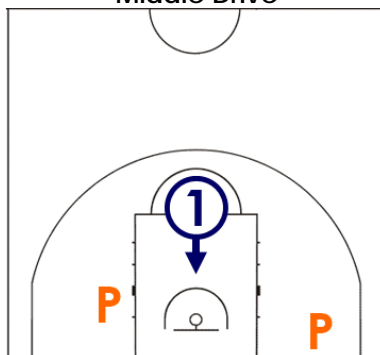
Teammates Can Help Each Other Out When Faced with a Contested Entry Pass:



Nothing is set in stone. When a drive to the basket is unlikely to succeed, it should not be undertaken. Likewise, a pass inside should not be forced if it is likely to be tipped or stolen. If the post is set up in a scoring position, they should receive the ball. If not, other options exist to create a post-up chance.

REACTING TO DRIBBLE PENETRATION

Middle Drive

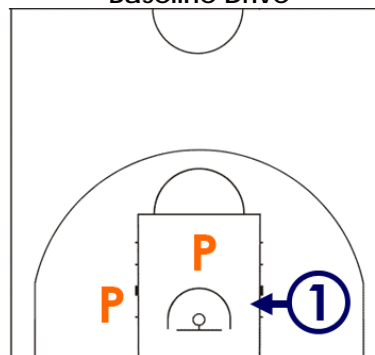


Passing Lanes:

- Outside the Key
- Short Corner
- Front of the Rim
- Either Side of the Rim

Rebounding:

Baseline Drive



- Bottom of the Free Throw Circle
- Opposite Side of the Key
- Front of the Rim
- Back towards the Shooter
- Weak Side

Posts have as much responsibility to move and create space as any other player. If a player cuts or drives to the key, the inside players must move to create passing lanes. Posts should be far enough away so that their defender must choose between guarding them and helping

(→ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sGctZuNKOFU>).

Ballhandlers who habitually make bad passes at the last minute should realize that it is the passer's responsibility for the ball to get through. When the lane is crowded, a viable option is simply getting the ball to the rim and let the post rebound the miss. When an inside player creates space, they should remain ready to catch and score if the dribbler passes or rebound if the shot goes up. Screening the helper who rotated to prevent recovery to their check is an effective counter to aggressive defense (Scariolo, Man-to-Man Offense and Spacing, 2010, p. 19).

SCREENING AND ROLLING

Screening and rolling is used by many teams to involve the post in the offense and it can prove very effective, especially if the post can handle the ball. It is unsophisticated coaching to tell a post to set up on the block or set a screen for the ball because this information does not help the player learn more about the game and how to make decisions.

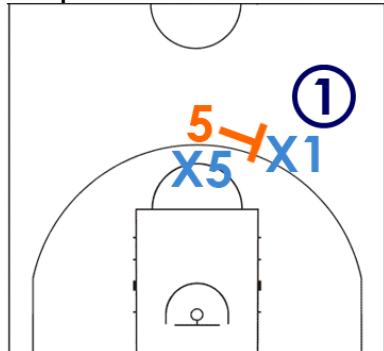
When teaching the screen and roll, players must understand why they are performing the action, what high percentage scoring chances are likely to result and what to do if the defense counters the play (elite defenses will likely take away the shot and the initial drive to the basket so the players must be more creative to get a good shot).

Too often, a post will set a ball screen and immediately roll to the low block. If the defense has switched and the post has a match-up advantage, this could work but it is far from the only possibility. Rolling to the foul lane area and reading the play creates more space for the ballhandler to drive and other players to flash to the hoop

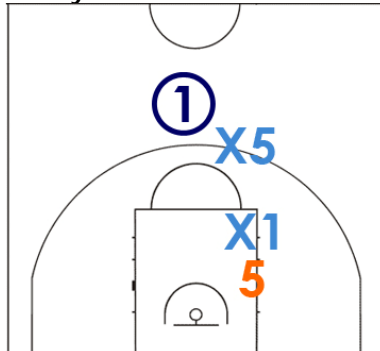
(→ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gKGCMvt5ueA>).

The post can always catch and shoot it, finish his roll once the drive stops, set a follow-up screen and crash the boards later. In F.I.B.A. plays, posts are very dynamic and will only pause briefly before moving on to their next task.

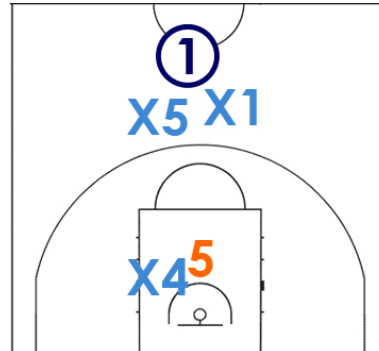
The post screens for the ball...



...may lead to a GOOD outcome...



...or a BAD one.



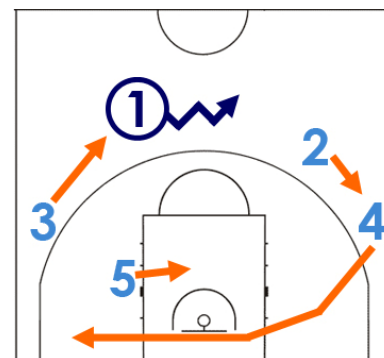
The result of a ball screen depends on the personnel of the team and how the opponent defends. Reading the defensive reaction is an integral to creating a scoring chance as the initial action.

BALL REVERSAL

If the offense only plays on one side of the floor, the defense can set up a wall and deter penetration. Moving the ball from one side to another forces the defense to guard the entire area inside the arc. Too often, the ball stops at the top of the key and the opportunity to attack passes.

If the guard to guard pass is denied, a dribble push or a high screen could also reverse the ball, moving everyone over one space. The ball reversal is not a reset button but a gateway to a key component of the offensive game plan (Wooden & Nater, 2006, p. 16).

Hall of Fame coach Aza Nikolić - known for his time with Pallacanestro Varese and the Yugoslavian Men's National Team - said that his favourite offensive actions is when three players on the strong side reverse the ball to the two on the weak side. Then, one of the original three cuts to the ball side (Pasquali, 2010, p. 68). Shuffle cuts, Flex cuts and back screens can serve a useful purpose.



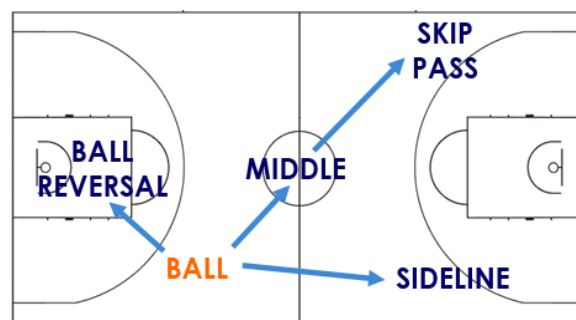
A team can use a dribble push to rebalance the court.

Players are as open as they will ever be when they catch the ball (Oliver, 2011). Waiting - especially during the ball reversal - allows the defense time to catch up, closing out the ballhandler and packing the paint with help. If there is a lane to the basket, take it; if not, move the ball. Against elite defenses, a lane will not suddenly appear after the ball is frozen.

Once the offense attacks as the ball is reversed or immediately afterwards, the defense recognizes that they must take the ball movement seriously. Defenders will hurry to the next position and leave openings on the original side of the court. "Short" is the name of a play used by the Phoenix Suns (and international squads) where the ballhandler comes off the high rub and attacks the hoop. As the defense collapses, a shooter comes high on the opposite side to receive a hook pass (→ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dp-ZROHh53g>).

AGAINST PRESSURE

If the defense pressures or traps the ball, the offensive players must remain calm and attack the press in an organized fashion. There should be continuous safe movement of the ball until the opportunity to score arises (Wooden & Nater, 2006, p. 107). In practice, applying ball pressure the length of the court and training ballhandlers to pivot, pass and dribble with a defender right on top of them lessens the intimidation of the press.



Spacing - against full or half-court pressure - exposes passing lanes within the defense.

Against pressure, there should be an immediate threat to score. If defensive gambling is penalized, the opponent might become reluctant to press. All players should be an equal part of the press attack in order to put maximum pressure on the defense (Wooden & Nater, 2006, p. 109). Attempt to recognize what the defense is doing in order to attack more efficiently (Winter, 1997, p. 91). Easy scoring opportunities, like 2-on-1 and 3-on-2 fast breaks, pressure the defense back.

Every offense needs a pressure release, a safe option that the ballhandler can rely upon if they become stuck (Oliver, 2011). For example, a player could flash to the high post from the weak-side, the other guard could come behind the line of the ball or a denied player could cut backdoor. The pressure release should safely control the ball and promptly look to exploit the defensive imbalance.

Special Situations

In international play, teams must face low shot clocks, out-of-bounds and end-of game situations own their own. The coach should instruct simple routines and train players to remain calm and focused. Good teams must learn to play without the coach (Carrill, 2004, p. 122). F.I.B.A. teams must practice their sideline frontcourt inbound plays

(→ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zn8zn1vxjys>).

Critical Thinking

Basketball demands that players must think for themselves. When every offensive play is unique, athletes must engage their minds as much as their bodies. Coaches can facilitate by automating skill performance as much as possible, freeing up attention span to perceive action on the court (Syed, 2010, p. 231). Help players master the situations which occur most often at their level so they have a wide base of knowledge (Carrill, 2004, p. 33)

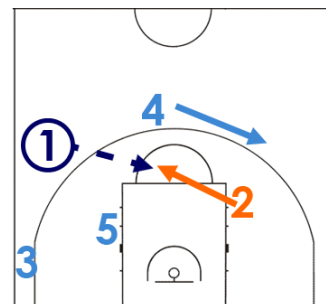
AWARENESS

Players in all sports have been able to train awareness by watching games or video footage and asking intelligent questions about what is happening. Even mental training in athletics is not a fixed skill (Dweck, 2006, p. 90). Watching games with players and discussing them afterwards is an important leadership exercise for a coach (Auerbach, 1961, p. 205).

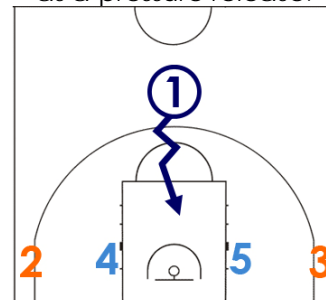
As the ball moves from one teammate to another and players cut in sequence, players have to be aware of the spaces that have been created and filled. If one player cuts one way, the next player to move must make a different cut (Carrill, 2004, p. 123). Each situation will be dissimilar so athletes must make decisions based on what is happening now and what will happen next.

DECISION-MAKING

Sound habits are forced in dynamic practices which mimic a variety of game situations. F.I.B.A. is emphasizing 3-on-3 play for younger age groups because it fosters this player independence. Generally, teachers who support student autonomy have a more positive impact relative to those who are controlling (Deci, 1996, p. 143). Coaches should provide emotional support so the players are willing to experiment and create on the court (Schreck, 2011, p. 184). They must keep a patient outlook because teaching young people how to make choices is a long-term process.



The high post can serve as a pressure release.



Flattening out generates a quick scoring chance for a skilled ballhandler.

2

Flexibility

- **The Need to Change...** page 1
- **Adapting to F.I.B.A. Rules...** page 1
 - Travelling Violation... page 1
 - Practice Planning: Improving Footwork... page 2
 - 24-Second Shot Clock... page 3
 - 8-Second Violation... page 3
 - 5-Second Violation... page 4
 - Continuous Play... page 4
 - New International Key... page 5
 - Wider Three-Point Arc... page 5
- **Adapting the Players on the Team...** page 6
 - Define a Team Identity... page 6
 - Inspire 1-on-1 Play... page 6
 - Training: 1-on-1 Play... page 7
 - Teach All Skills to All Plays... page 7
 - Practice Planning: Screening and Rolling Skills... page 8
- **Adapting to the Opposition...** page 9
 - Create Multiple Opportunities... page 9
 - Coach Principles, Not Situations... page 9
 - Case Studies: DOs and DON'Ts... page 10

The Need to Change

Coaches must improve themselves from one season to another. No team is ever the same as the one before since players, rules and opponents are constantly changing. The perfect system for one team may be entirely unsuitable for another with different characteristics.

Coaches cannot claim ownership of a system that is implemented irrespective of the situation. They must continuously evaluate players to determine their current level and their potential. They must adapt their instruction to meet the needs of those athletes at that particular moment. Just as it is inappropriate to coach skills that are too simple or too complex for the players, it is poor practice to teach a system which is not made for those who play within its structure.

A sound offensive system should suit the abilities of the players who must execute it. It should reflect the pace that the team wishes to set and the environments where they play. The system should be clear so that all team members understand the core principles but scalable so it can become more complex if required. It must be flexible so that it can evolve along with the team.

Adapting to F.I.B.A. Rules

As new international rules, ranging from new court markings (like the wider key and no-charge circle) to points of emphasis (like travelling violations), are adopted throughout the country, teams must adjust how they play the game. F.I.B.A. rules favour a game that is more skilled which delegates increasing responsibilities to players. If the goal of Canadian basketball is to develop players who can play internationally, the new F.I.B.A. rule changes made in 2010 should be part of the offensive systems coached.

TRAVELLING VIOLATION

At the 2011 Men's National Championships, travelling violations were called frequently based on the F.I.B.A. interpretation. Catching the ball and "opening up" (also called a blast step) was called a travel, sometimes resulting in five or six turnovers per team. Travelling was called in transition (→ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Eh4qcl6EVFA>) and half-court situations (→ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zpGGP2K6Hds>).

Instructing the correct footwork in practices enables players to feel comfortable and confident handling the ball. Players who compete at the high school, club, Amateur Athletic Union (A.A.U.) and elite development levels are placed in a bind because they play under two different sets of rules. High schools in Ontario and A.A.U. follow National Federation of High Schools rules, which permit the blast step. Players who habitually use a cross-step in order to curl into the middle of the paint or attack baseline demonstrate legal footwork according to both rule sets.

If players master the cross-step (→ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6uhJeM99I4U>), they can use their body to cut off the defender and attack quickly with the ball. Players should be aware of the defense as they get open so they can establish a pivot foot which is furthest away

from their defender. Players should remain balanced so they do not have to stop and square up in order to get ready to attack. Sweeping through, pausing and taking a negative step are habits common among young players which freeze the ball so that the defense can catch up.

It is also important that players possess the ability to attack with either foot so that they cannot be forced to a “weak” side. If a player can cross-step with their left foot while dribbling with their right hand as well as they can cross-step with the right foot while dribbling with their left hand, they become very tough to guard. Shooters should catch the ball with a hop step so that they are able to shot-fake and drive both ways to beat a defender who is closing out. Point guards who can take an explosive step in either direction can create a high percentage shot as soon as the defender gets off-balance (➔ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sDx6MELZBm4>).

Players must be able to finish inside with a two-foot takeoff. When a player attacks the rim and picks up their dribble, they must pivot in order to close off their bodies so the defense cannot reach the ball (➔ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hFc4dd52qXw>). A post player may execute an inverted jump-stop after catching the ball in transition to get balanced in order to finish strong (Messina, 2008). A player who pivots after catching or picking up the dribble (for example to use a step-through or “McHale” move) must jump off both feet (Williams, 2011).

Improving Footwork

If a team has trouble during the game, it is due to a lack of practice preparation. If coaches know that new rules or points of emphasis are forthcoming, they should train players ahead of time.

Practice Plan:

- a. Explanation: Officials’ Points of Emphasis at Upcoming M.D.P. Camp
- b. Demonstration: Travelling (F.I.B.A. Travel)
- c. Fundamentals: Practice Cross-Step
 - i. High Post
 - ii. Wing Position
- d. 1-on-0: Catch and Cross-Step
 - i. Wing Entry
 - ii. Drive and Kick
- e. 1-on-1 with Advantage: Close-Out Drill
- f. Decision-Making: 3-on-3, 2 Trips Down the Court
- g. Conclusion: Why Footwork Is Important

Observations:

Initially, players expressed concern that the rules had not been called this way during the past season. At the beginning and end of the drills, it was necessary to communicate the importance of these exercises. Some players were more focused on the demonstrations and adapted quickly whereas others performed the moves that they always did until receiving one-on-one feedback.

In order to help break some of the bad habits (leading with the non-pivot foot), the drills started at a slow from a stationary position before introducing movement without the ball and passing. Both feet were practiced before the drill was increased to game intensity.

YouTube Clips:

- ➔ Part I: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yxywXxatKg0>
- ➔ Part II: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5FIViwBFCtk>
- ➔ Part III: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dpgDnPfvySI>
- ➔ Part IV: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WSUyHjQbJTs>

24-SECOND SHOT CLOCK

In Canada, the U17 age group utilizes a twenty-four second shot clock, which is extended to thirty seconds for the U15 category. After the ball is brought up the court, there can be as little as sixteen seconds remaining. Offenses must be easy to set up so additional time is not wasted as players get into position. Players must be versatile so they can play in multiple spots on the court (top of the key, wings, corners and inside).

It cannot take too long to generate a good shot as the clock winds down. Teams must be able to efficiently combine smaller half-second edges into a clear one-second advantage. Options include expanding and contracting the defense with dribble penetration and kick outs (➔ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hqTqK95Fa-Q>) and quick ball movement to shift the defense (➔ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Uj5npEcUeQ>).

Practices which teach players how to read and react establish a set of general principles to create a good shot in a short amount of time. If a team only relies on set plays, players follow a series of steps rather than thinking from themselves. Mental training should encourage a wide focus about all the opportunities occurring on the court rather than a narrow focus about an individual role. Beginning with part-method drills (2-on-2, 3-on-3, etc.) and progressing to whole-method situations can teach players to execute under pressure (Wooden, 2009).

8-SECOND VIOLATION

In the eight seconds provided to advance the ball over half-court, players cannot over-dribble the ball. Using several seconds to dribble the ball forces the team to rush which could lead to careless passing. When only a few ticks remain, a player may attempt a long cross-court pass which can be easily read and stolen by the defense. When a ballhandler prematurely picks up their dribble, seconds elapse before teammates can help.

In practice, players should always face pressure while dribbling the basketball so that all drills also refine defensive skills. Both offense and defense should perform mental training to rehearse in-game decisions.

Players should be encouraged to outlet the ball as soon as possible and move the ball down the court with passes. Transition drills should emphasize passing instead of dribbling. Sharp passes always beat quick defences (➔ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fAdrOI9J7-Q>).



Ricky Rubio keeps his head up as he brings the ball up against pressure so he can evaluate his options and calmly make decisions.

5-SECOND VIOLATIONS

Once a player catches the ball and is closely guarded or the ball is placed at the disposal of the inbounder, the referee begins counting five seconds. If the offense is disorganized or one player freezes the ball, a violation may be called after five seconds. Under pressure, a ballhandler may force a pass or take a bad shot, wasting the possession.

Coaches should teach multiple options for different offensive situations (Oliver, 2011). It can be a long process but players need to learn how to look at all of their teammates who must always be ready to catch the ball and attack. When both the passer and the potential receiver fail, a “hero shot” often results (→ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gk8NG6yqm8A>).

Player should be coached to move without the ball instead of watching the ballhandler. As the referee counts up to five seconds, team members should move towards the ball. Players should sprint when moving without the ball, beating the defence in a race to a good scoring position. Making every cut a short race encourages a competitive work ethic and gives the offensive player the ball closer to the basket with an advantage over their defender (MacKay, 2010).

When looking to pass, players cannot “make love with their eyes” to the intended target (Messina, 2008). The defense can anticipate the pass and move into the passing lane. Ball fakes and pivoting are crucial to moving the ball safely without committing a turnover.

CONTINUOUS PLAY

International basketball encourages players to play. Coaches cannot micro-manage the game because the pace is quicker and there are fewer timeouts. If players are to understand the reads and reactions that they must make, coaches must instruct all possibilities of the offensive system (Oliveri, 2011). The thought process cannot be too complicated and overwhelm the athlete. It should be easy for players to make decisions; even checklists which prevent aviation accidents lose effectiveness if they are longer than a page (Gawande, 2010, p. 121).

Practice activities should always occur under pressure in order to mimic game conditions so players become used to the experience. Under pressure, adolescents utilize the amygdala, which regulate fear and instinctive reactions. Increased testosterone during puberty also swells the amygdala. Even if teenaged athletes become use to these situations, coaches cannot expect them to make decisions as rationally as an adult would. (Underwood, 2006).

Showing end-game situations on the court and discussing them as a team will eventually benefit the team. Adolescents have difficulty balancing risk and reward and foreseeing the consequence of their actions. The prefrontal cortex, important in planning and decision-making does not mature until the twenties but coaches can help by calmly explaining what to do ahead of time.

NEW INTERNATIONAL KEY

There are more opportunities to place players outside the sixteen foot wide key so teams may run a set with a high post and low post or two low posts on each side of the key. If a post is double-

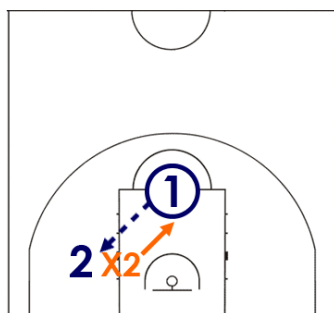
teamed, their partner is closer to the hoop than with the trapezoid key and a greater threat to score or rebound (Scariolo, New FIBA rules analysis , 2010). All players must be aware of the basketball and ready to catch and attack the basket given the opportunity.

Even at the elite level, if there has not been coaching regarding the ready position, moving without the ball and anticipating the next move, the play degenerates into a two-person game and a low-percentage shot (→ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gKPOK1dtaUs>). A squad that reads the defense and reacts can expose a double-team by flashing to the ball from the weak-side. Posts who duck in and close their bodies off in order to finish strong become exceptionally difficult to stop (→ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4TMCqAVPT0>).

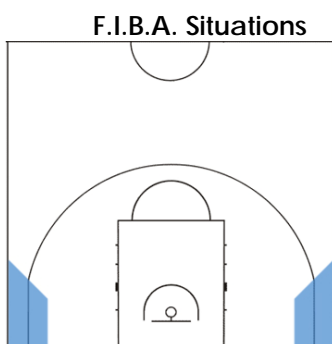
In order to take a charge, a defender must establish a position four feet away from the basket. Cuts along the baseline are available, if the dribbler is aware of teammates and selfless enough to pass the ball promptly. Weak-side players are an active part of any effective offense (→ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=59hTZbsazp4>). The defense can collapse upon the ballhandler as they enter the foul line circle, perhaps after one or two dribbles. Once a player helps, it becomes harder to box out close to the basket so all offenses should include plans for offensive rebounding (Scariolo, New FIBA rules analysis , 2010).



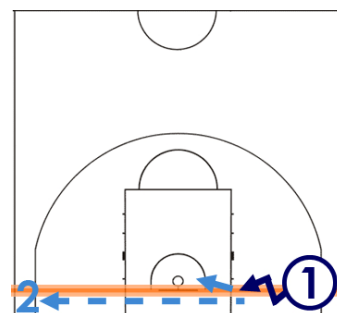
Montepaschi Siena collapses around Drew Nicholas of Panathinaikos opening up passing lanes.



When the help defender steps up, passes to baseline teammates open up.



Players avoid passing the ball into the shaded areas, which have the lowest FG% on the court.



On a baseline drive, finishing at the basket and the pass to the corner are the only realistic options.

WIDER THREE-POINT ARC

The international three-point line was widened to 22 feet, 1.7 inches in order to better space players and permit more opportunities to attack 1-on-1. At first, the defense was able to adapt to the court markings and lower points per game and shooting percentages for two-point and three-point field goals. Players catching the ball outside the arc are farther away from the basket so defenders tend to sag off in order to curtail the drive (Scariolo, New FIBA rules analysis , 2010).

If there is no movement without the ball, the defense will simply sag and assume a help position. Once the drive is cut off, the ballhandler will feel pressure to pass or shoot which may result in a less than ideal possession (→ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=11R05gnLqYs>).

Unless players are expert shooters from the corners, they are unlikely to catch the ball there, eliminating the areas near the sidelines as a possibility for passing and cutting (Scariolo, New FIBA rules analysis, 2010). If players do not feel that a pass to the corner will result in a good shot, they will not look for it (→ http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XGFv5_j3q60).

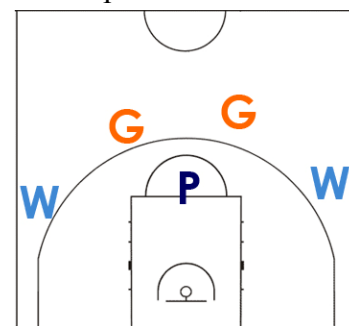
Athletes must become expert shooters and excellent 1-on-1 players. If shooting improves, the defense must close the gap with the ballhandler in order to close out, which increases number of chances to attack with the dribble. The Centre for Performance in Peel devotes half of each session (Williams, 2011). If a player cannot pass, the ball stops moving. If he cannot shoot, he will always be open. If he cannot dribble, the defense will attack him (Carrill, 2004, p. 42).

Once a player beats their defender, there will be increased space. At the highest level, athletes cannot make one move and immediately get to the basket; the defense is quick enough to help. However, it is very hard to help the helper - so long as the offense maintains their spacing - so decision-making becomes more important. Patient ball movement will create an open shot eventually (→ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=al-toWHPqDI>). Coaches must constantly encourage athletes to pass and cut, sharing the ball with the entire team.

Adapting to the Players on the Team

A team's systems and the skills of the players continually impact each other. The tactics should suit the team members and the athletes should focus upon recognizing and improving their scoring opportunities. Over the course of a season or the multiple years that a coach works with a group of players, there should be constant progress. Insisting upon one path can lead to a series of undesirable outcomes, ranging from an offense that is merely a bad fit that doesn't suit the attributes of the team to a tactical focus that curtails physical and technical development.

Pete Carril is known for the Princeton Offense because it fit a team that shot well from the outside, moved ceaselessly and was able to make decisions with the ball. The same spacing also showcased the athleticism of John Wooden's teams at U.C.L.A. and highly skilled post play. Both Hall of Fame coaches selected similar court positioning for entirely different reasons. Once the ball was in play, the offenses emphasized the unique traits of each team.



The 4 Out, 1 In set can be used to meet a variety of needs.

DEFINE A TEAM IDENTITY

A team that does not understand their relative strengths and weaknesses and how to adjust to them is likely to fall short when they encounter adversity. Coaches must sell the players on the role they will play and engender buy-in from all stakeholders (Wooden & Nater, 2006, p. 18).

INSPIRE 1-ON-1 PLAY

Every player should be a threat to score on their own. First, players must recognize what is a good shot for them because some young players may be very limited when they first begin

competing in organized basketball. For young players, this requires defining in concrete terms what is a good shot for them with a plan to increase their opportunities as they train.

Once the capabilities of the players - and their potential for improvement - have been assessed, it is incumbent upon the coach to put them in opportunities where they can succeed. For some, this may be the ball at the top of the key with the green light to attack but for others it may be limited to catch and shoot opportunities from short range. If players are not able to create scoring chances, there is no incentive for the defense to guard them.

Training 1-on-1 Skills

- 1-on-1 skill development requires physical, technical and tactical work

Physical →

Balance • Get Low • Maintain Centre of Gravity • Prepare for Contact
Explosiveness • Drop Hips • First Step • Acceleration and Deceleration
Quickness • Linear, Lateral and Vertical • Ability to Change Direction

Technical →

Footwork • Protect Ball • F.I.B.A. Travelling Rule • Pivoting
Ballhandling • Low & Hard Dribble • One & Two Dribble Moves • Ball Fakes • Passing
Shooting • Catch and Shoot • Pull-up Jumper

Tactical →

Court Awareness • Shot-Clock • Defense: On-Ball and Help • Teammates: Open Cutters
Decision-Making • Anticipation • Shot Selection • Create Advantage

TEACH ALL SKILLS TO ALL PLAYERS

As athletes progress from the Train to Train stage into the Train to Compete setting, they are should begin to follow an offensive structure that makes the most of the practice already undertaken. A coach cannot ignore physical and technical training in favour of tactics. If an offense requires addition physical or technical training, this should be completed before the tactics are practiced (Pasquali, 2010, p. 40).

Renato Pasquali commented that “We have to prioritize the technical teaching with respect to the tactical teaching: the tactical only gives short-term results; the technical skills will follow the player for their entire career” (Pasquali, 2010, p. 7). If coaches cheat on skill development, they create mindsets among players like one held by Kwame Brown, who believes that “fundamentals” means isolation plays (McCallum, 2006, p. 142).

LEFT & RIGHT

A team that can only handle the ball with their dominant hand is not ready to execute a system predicated upon driving and kicking. As soon as the game started, the ballhandlers would be forced to their weak-side, directing the ball away from the paint and towards the sidelines and double-teams. Instead of drives into the middle from the right wing, players will feel more comfortable attacking baseline, leading to less fruitful options.

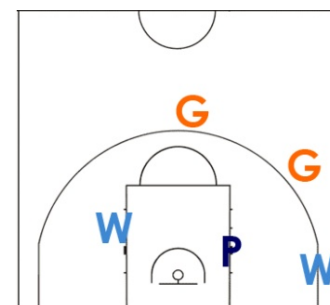
Bad passes will abound as players will have difficulty pivoting and passing off the dribble; players must be ambidextrous if they are going to throw side and circle passes with their inside hand. Three quarters of the plays will be run to the right side of the court and it becomes increasingly difficult to involve all players with the offense.

Starting drills on the left side nurtures the ability to go both ways and athletes in the Train to Compete stage should spend about two-thirds of their time working with their weak hand (Pasquali, 2010, p. 13). Physical training drills which focus on balance, quickness, agility and strength should not negate the left side. When a team practices a system, they need to use both sides of the court (→ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Etv1WlkmqgA>).

BIG & SMALL

As many coaches have said over the years: “you can’t coach size.” You can coach larger players and enhance their abilities to handle the ball, pass and shoot. The forward who plays away from the basket adds tremendously to a team if they can contribute to a skill-based offense. Too often, bigs in Canada are coached to play a power game that delays their development and will not work at the next level anyways. Elite basketball teams need posts who can shoot the ball from the elbow or outside the arc (→ http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x_B-vtdHKcQ), pass to cutters (→ http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A4WMf6_voX0) and read the defense and make decisions (→ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O5ldASnWahM>).

When a post is not athletic or skilled enough to handle the basketball after a screen has been set, they jam up the entire offense. The opponents can hedge the screen without worrying about the rotation behind them (→ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YE0fkQMT6ZE>). If a post has not developed their footwork, passing or shooting, they should focus on scoring in transition and rebounding (Messina, 2008).



The same alignment could be used for the Flex (all players can fill all positions) or the Triangle (each player fills a role).

Screening and Rolling Skills

Before a team comes together in 5-on-5 whole method drills, players must practice the required skills in 1-on-1 part method exercises. If players can’t execute all the skills required, a coach should not select the system. If a coach wishes to set screens on the ball because the ballhandler can pull up and shoot and the post can catch and finish, they should also be prepared to teach the footwork required to seal inside, shooting from the outside and passing if the defense rotates.

Practice Plan:

- a. Fundamentals: Catch and Shoot
 - i. N.B.A. Roll
 - ii. Drive and Kick
- b. 1-on-0: Catch and Control Passes under Pressure
- c. 1-on-1: Seal in the Post
- d. Decision-Making: Ball Reversal

Observations:

These drills proved how difficult it can be for a coach to alter engrained habits; each player will adapt at their own pace. If a screener is never utilized properly when playing with their primary squads, they will not immediately understand what to do. Forwards who set screens in F.I.B.A. play must be able to catch and shoot, fill and create space and move the basketball.

During practice, some taller players who were accustomed to mostly rebounding or playing on the block did not instinctively make the right decisions. It was apparent that the players had not mastered the skill - the footwork necessary to set a screen and get to a scoring position. Some players required large corrections, such as keeping a low centre of gravity and maintaining a balanced posture, whereas others could work on little things, like reading the defense.

Reinforcement and repetition taught players what to do and how to do it but not everyone reached the same level of performance. The drills were a step in the right direction; the posts got on the same page so that when they were combined with the guards, the teams were able to play together.

YouTube Clips:

- ➔ Part I: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kJCo1ww_5fY
- ➔ Part II: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_N1I-UyQvuY
- ➔ Part III: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y-4F32erDs8>

Adapting to the Opposition

At the Canadian Interuniversity Sport level, teams have access to video footage of all games. When teams meet - especially conference opponents who play each other up to three times annually - they take away each other's primary and secondary options (Oliver, 2011). The ability to adjust over the course of the game often determines who is victorious.

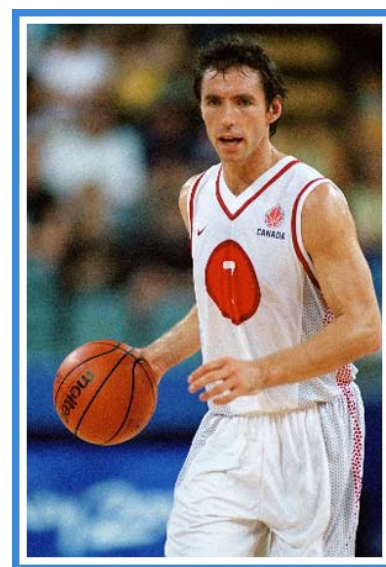
GENERATE MULTIPLE OPPORTUNITIES

Teams must be able to create advantages across the court. One game, there may be an edge due to dribble penetration, the next game mismatches might be created while setting screens on the ball. An offensive set that can change with the circumstances has greater potential than a rigid option. When teaching players what to do, it is equally important to explain why so they understand the decision-making process and can involve their own critical thinking.

A flexible offense needs options to enter the ball into the wing (with a pass or a dribble push when denied), enter the ball into the post, reverse the ball and relieve pressure (Oliver, 2011). There should be some plan to handle a defense that switches, hedges, traps or run and jumps the ballscreen and different methods of attack that are not contingent upon a single player.

COACH PRINCIPLES, NOT SITUATIONS

Rather than planning for every possible situation, filling practices with tactics rather than skill development, coaches should instruct a set of principles which can be adapted to various situations. Abstract concepts like "set the tone of the game" are less effective than concrete strategies like moving the ball and attacking in transition.



Canada allowed Steve Nash to push the ball in the 2000 Olympics. Now the team adjusts their strategy to the opponent.

Case Studies

↑ Playing Against Better Talent

DOS

Selecting the Right Opportunity: Coach Tim Brady realized where Team Territories stood relative to its opponents and emphasized mastery-oriented goals throughout the training sessions. The inbounder looks at multiple options as the team sets screens before an open shot is taken (→ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F4mbX2U6Z7Q>).

Force the Defense to Make Decisions: Newfoundland cannot beat Ontario 1-on-1 so they generate several situations that put the defense under pressure. The ballhandler uses a dribble push to change the angle of the entry passes, a cutter sets a Flex screen along the baseline while another sets a ball screen and the point guard and high post participate in a Give and Go. In the span of fifteen seconds, the defense has made a half-dozen decisions (→ http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u6Qq8_jh6ZU).

DON'Ts

Playing to the Opponent's Strengths: British Columbia is slower and less athletic than Ontario yet they attempt to play at a fast pace. Against full-court pressure, B.C. places four players at midcourt but since they are unable to win a race to the ball, they run forty feet to get the ball near the baseline. When the ball is advanced, the ballhandler cannot beat his defender and an outside shot is forced with time remaining on the shot-clock (→ http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XJE3ehdX2_I).

↑ Playing Against Lesser Talent

DOS

Attacking as the Ball is Reversed: Newfoundland packs the key in order to neutralize Alberta's penetration. When the ball is reversed, Alberta does not hesitate and promptly locates an open shooter (→ http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q8_T9r5dPVI).

Involving All Five Players: Ontario's point guard can beat his defender at any time. However, instead of playing 1-on-1 with B.C.'s best defender, Ontario chooses to involve the entire team because their opponent cannot match their depth. The ball is moved around the key and the defense falls into the trap of watching the ball, instead of their assignment. Later, an Ontario player flashes from the weak-side and converts the open lay-up (→ http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mub_1nQKGRE).

DON'Ts

Freezing the Ball: At one end, Ontario moves the ball swiftly (dribbling and passing). The shot may be slightly rushed but over the course of the game, the defense is always reacting to what they do. At the other end, B.C. holds the ball and allows the defense to catch up (→ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XDyMZdhJU9E>).

↑ Playing Against Pressure

DOS

Passing Quickly Out of the Double Team: When the B.C. post realizes that the wing defender has doubled down, he moves the ball quickly. Unfortunately, the receiver does not act as promptly and tries to force the ball into a small space between two defenders, losing possession (→ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IV-l1ssLXP4>).

Moving the Ball Towards the Basket: During this possession, B.C. is not satisfied by beating the pressure and they take advantage as Ontario sprints to recover. This was a rare occasion when B.C. punished Ontario for pressuring them; the ball was moved at the basket with purpose (→ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bERr4ch5jN0>).

DON'Ts

Throwing Casual Passes: B.C. attempts to reverse the ball and pass up the sideline. However, the ball freezes momentarily as it is reversed. The post is not an expert passer and stares at the receiver before putting too much air under the pass. The weak lob is almost stolen (→ http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XJE3ehdX2_I).

3

Adolescent Athletes

- **The Human Element of Youth Sports...** page 1
- **Engagement...** page 1
 - Empowerment... page 1
 - Goals... page 2
 - Collaboration... page 2
- **Management...** page 3
 - Compromise... page 3
 - Training Schedule... page 4
 - Failure... page 4
- **Motivation...** page 4
 - Flow... page 5
 - Challenge... page 5
 - Training: Hall of Fame Moves Based on Fundamentals

The Human Element of Youth Sports

Coaches cannot succeed without considering the human element of sport (Carrill, 2004, p. 20). Teenagers are very egocentric, incorrectly understanding themselves to be at the centre of attention. This trait can be exacerbated on the basketball where a culture of showcasing one's skills at the expense of others pervades the sport. Some adolescents believe that an imaginary audience is watching their every move, their experience is unique and that misfortune will not befall them (Enright, Shulda, & Lapsley, 1980, p. 102).

Teenagers are focused inwards, at the expense of others. They are constantly evaluating themselves in relation to others with a biased perspective. As they enter middle and late adolescence, this self-focus will increase. If they feel stressed about their social predicament, the emotions which affect the amygdala will increase. Fortunately, throughout adolescence, this egocentrism will be gradually replaced by an acceptance that they are part of something bigger, a peer group, a team and eventually society (Enright, Shulda, & Lapsley, 1980, pp. 112-113)

Engagement

Teenagers can be very fickle with their energy level and attention spans. If they have too much energy, it can be challenging to communicate coaching points. Dynamic activities in practice and an up-tempo style of play could suit a team that is constantly improving (Holzman, 1987, p. 178). For those that may be holding back, they could be waiting for something to catch their interest. Put them in a position where they can succeed - such as making a Flex cut, catching and scoring - so they gain a positive feeling for the sport. That intrinsic motivation makes dedicated practice seem fun instead of a chore (Syed, 2010, p. 65).

EMPOWERMENT

If teenagers believe that their pursuits and pastimes are significant, they will feel better about themselves. Players will follow the team's goals if they believe that they are meaningful and achievable (Deci, 1996, p. 152). Empowerment means that all stakeholders have a say in how they accomplish their goals (Pink, 2009, p. 98). Those who work in autonomous conditions have more confidence, greater self-actualization and better mental training than those who are controlled (Deci, 1996, p. 185).

On the basketball court, it means that once coaches instruct technique and tactics, they step aside and allow athletes to decide exactly how the game will unfold. Since F.I.B.A. games do not permit a coach to control every aspect of a game, players should learn self-reliance in practices, workouts and life. Players should perform a task because they are engaged and choose to do so, not simply to comply with a coach.



Basketball can be an empowering and enjoyable experience for young players, like Jan Veselý.

Players are not pawns - to be moved about by a coach - but people - capable of thinking for themselves. Whether it is a type of offensive system to run or a drill in practice, individual autonomy makes the activity more enjoyable and stimulating (Pink, 2009, p. 88). It is not a chaotic environment but one where informed choices - and the subsequent consequences - triumph. Setting limits helps people remain responsible, focusing their efforts to act within their own interests and values (Deci, 1996, p. 149). Even little choices, like the format of a scrimmage, can have a big effect on an athlete's attitude towards the sport.

GOALS

Selling players that they should follow an offensive system because it will make learning easier later is difficult for a coach. The prefrontal cortex, important in planning and decision-making, does not mature until the twenties. Coaches must establish meaningful short-term goals to convince athletes to participate (Underwood, 2006). The player may be saying "I need exposure" so the coach replies "you'll get exposure and look great when we take high percentage shots."

A coach will not be able to meet their goals for offensive execution if athletes do not achieve their mastery-oriented goals and become better players. During the teaching process, Phases C (1-on-1 work) and D (decision-making) cannot be completed if time is not devoted to Phases A (fundamental repetition) and B ("on-air" practice) (Pasquali, 2010, p. 6).

If the athlete is only worried about the outcome of a game, their ego is fragile. Performing in a skilled based offense demands that players continually improve themselves throughout the season. When a player commits to this goal and takes pride in how far they have come, they enjoy themselves more, irrespective of the result of the game (Cresswell, Hodge, & Kidman, 2003, pp. 16-17). They become more likely to challenge themselves, persist during adversity and retain a more positive attitude (Barron & Harackiewicz, 2001, p. 706).

Appropriate mastery-oriented goals include: improving a team's advantage with every touch of the ball, moving without the ball and becoming an ambidextrous ballhandler. Performance-oriented goals, like scoring twenty points, can adversely impact the team's scoring chances.

Failure-oriented goals indicate low self-esteem because they highlight the ideal of "not failing" instead of actively achieving accomplishing meaningful objectives. When learning and improvement are critical, failure-oriented goals are disastrous. Teenagers will delegate effort towards tasks which are easier to achieve and sacrifice progress in order to avoid public failure (Burton & Naylor, 2002, p. 480).

Characteristics of Failure Avoidance in a Skill-Based Offense:

- Afraid of missing a shot or losing the ball
- May choose not to attack (pass immediately or take one static dribble and pass)
- Stands outside scoring range
- Does not understand the problem because in their mind, they are following the coach's instructions (pass the ball)

COLLABORATION

On a basketball team comprised of peers, collective goals are as effective as individual mastery-oriented ones. Often, team goals are more effective than pleas for each member to increase their

effort. Collective goals should be a combination of mastery and performance-oriented objectives and never failure-oriented (Burton & Naylor, 2002, p. 475). Red Holzman, who coached the New York Knicks in the 1970s convinced the team, which included six Hall of Fame players, that they would have to play team basketball to become stars (Holzman, 1987, pp. 94-95). The squad won two championships in four years and is still remembered for their motion offense.

An incentive to reach collective goals is that adolescents do not want to let down their peers and teammates (Iso-Aloha, 1995, p. 197). While group activities can add a touch of competition and motivation, simply scheduling the activities does not entail immediate improvements in performance (Bandura, 1991, p. 267). Finding combinations who complement each other or natural rivalries can add interest to drills, like 2 Balls, 3 Shooters and 2-on-2 Downscreen/Attack.

When goal setting is the result of collaboration between athletes and coaches, the goals are likely to be very relevant and engender a high degree of commitment. Playing with friends can be very intrinsically motivating and a coach should not curtail that joy with strict rules. A skill-based offense offers a basic structure with plenty of opportunities to interact with each other. The coach should say that “after you pass, you can cut or screen away but you can’t stay in one place.”

Management

The season is so long; there are thousands of possessions, scores of training sessions, dozens of games and countless personal relationships. Considerable time must be devoted to planning to ensure all team members make continuous progress throughout the year (Wooden, 2009).

COMPROMISE

Brinkmanship can be a perilous tactic with at-risk youth. Coaches sometimes issue ultimatums such as stick with the plan or stay on the bench. When diverse players come together to form a team, everyone will adapt and form new habits at their own pace. Demanding immediate adherence to every aspect of the system can negate future progress. Leaders from all fields value compromise; when Jack Layton, a Toronto politician, was unable to convince someone completely, he’d settle for fifty or seventy-five percent with a smile, knowing the long-term positive personal connection would make up for any short-term delay (Monsebraaten, 2011).

A player who wants to control the ball will not adjust instantly to a motion offense. Their initial instinct to dribble might remain intact. Rehearsing one situation at a time (backdoor pass when the receiver is denied, extra pass to find an open shooter) gradually incorporates them into the system.

When Phil Jackson took over the Chicago Bulls, the first step to instituting the Triangle Offense was convincing Michael Jordan to buy in and addressing his concerns. The next step was to outline the roles and responsibilities for the remaining players (Jackson, 1995, p. 101). If there is a complicated issue, deal with the social nodes of the group and convince them first. This momentum will aid the coach’s message as it permeates among the players.

TRAINING SCHEDULE

Given the alertness cycle of teenaged athletes, critical learning should take place afternoons when attentiveness is at its peak for the day. Morning or evening sessions could be used for physical training or individual skill development (Underwood, 2006). Due to the number of adolescents who do not always eat properly, the coach should watch energy levels during morning practices. As the season progresses, the team should follow nutrition routines to form positive habits.

Elite youth teams in Europe devote much more time to physical training, individual skill development and part-method work than to whole method scrimmages and games. Concepts such as numerical superiorities and offensive and defensive rules are established in 1-on-1, 2-on-2 and 3-on-3 setting during the first half of the week and reinforced later in the week during the 5-on-5 tactical training before the weekend games (Corral, 2009, p. 10).

FAILURE

In a skill-based offense, mistakes of commission are essential. When players test themselves, they are bound to make the occasion mistake. Mistakes of omission, when an athlete forgets to act or chooses not to do something are harmful and lead eventually to offensive stagnation. A team can correct turnovers due to bad passes by working on passing, cutting and catching. Addressing an unwillingness to pass to an open teammate is far trickier.

Failure is not an identity but a step in the process (Dweck, 2006, p. 83). If a team is stifled by a defense which traps the dribbler after a ball screen, this setback may serve as a catalyst to make the extra pass. Successful athletes possess a “growth” mindset, which enables them to recognize their mistakes and learn from them. If a player drives into the paint and rifles a pass that the post cannot handle, the passer is accountable. The dribbler could have prevented the turnover by making a pass that suited the receiver’s skills at that moment.

Frustrated athletes possess a “fixed” mindset, believing that they are doomed to fail repeatedly. Adolescents are some of the biggest believers in the fixed mindset, feeling that it is not possible to improve in school, sport and life because their current stage of development is their destiny (Dweck, 2006, p. 57). Coaches inspire youth to believe that they can overcome adversity, creating opportunities to demonstrate competence in an activity (Schreck, 2011, p. 100).

High effort is a risk for those with fixed mindsets who worry they will be diminished if they work hard and fall short (Dweck, 2006, p. 42). Coaches must encourage all team members to adopt a growth mindset, so they can contribute everything they need to attain athletic success.

Motivation

All players must be serious 1-on-1 threats in order to challenge the defense (Obradović, 2005, p. 19). Becoming dangerous with the ball requires good habits, established with dedicated practice. Coaches may have trouble inspiring team members to perform the repetitions required for

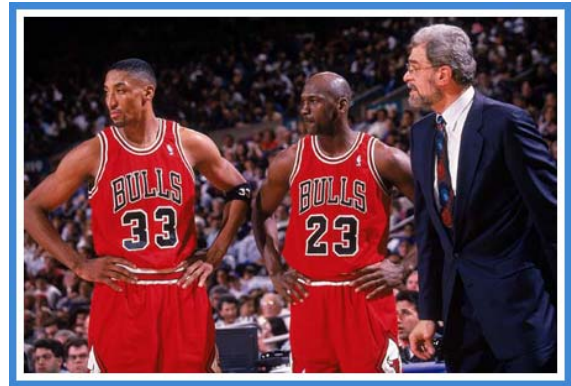
continuous improvement. Adolescents on elite basketball teams have many skills and abilities. As well, their experience in games and practices leads them to believe that they are ready for greater responsibilities (Csikszentmihalyi, 2008, p. 183). But they can never place the cart (fundamental skills) before the horse (being a great player).

FLOW

“Flow” is a psychological term used when a person becomes entirely immersed in what they are doing. On the court, this occurs when the game (1-on-1, team play or even a match of “H.O.R.S.E.”) becomes so intense that an athlete loses track of themselves; they cease to think then act and just play. Flow requires a challenging activity, clear goals and feedback, deep concentration on the task at hand and a sense of control (Csikszentmihalyi, 2008, pp. 48-67)

In a skill-based offense, flow is created when the game is difficult enough to push the players to their limits. The coach provides frequent feedback on how the team can improve their performance. Players are very focused on their task - whether it is running the fast break, cutting along the baseline or tipping an offensive rebound. Most importantly, they feel that they have control over their actions and the freedom to play how they wish.

Coaches can motivate athletes to reach a state of flow in practice by ensuring that the activity is stimulating and appropriate for their skill level. If a player is bewildered by the speed of a team shooting drill, they may need to devote more time to form shooting. If a player seems to be loafing during the same drill, they could step back or work on shooting off the bounce. Most importantly, players must see the drill as important and choose to commit themselves to it without reservation.



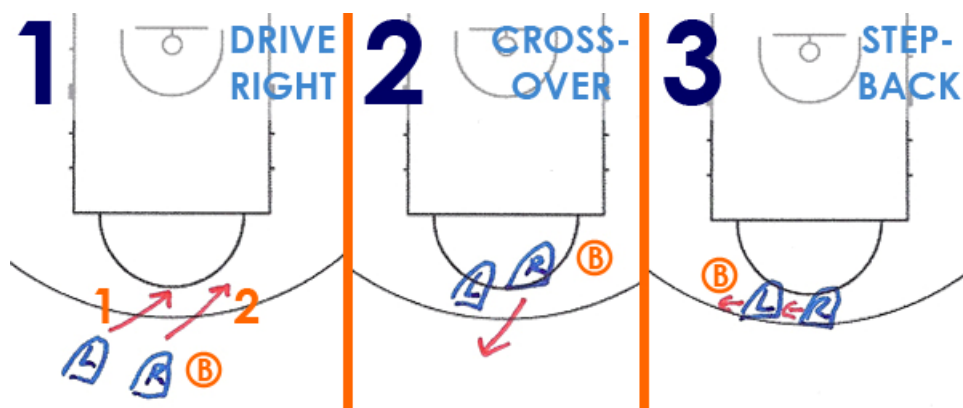
Phil Jackson produced flow when he matched Scottie Pippen and Michael Jordan against each other for highly competitive scrimmages in practice.

CHALLENGE

Attempting expert moves demonstrated by role models is a good way to incorporate creativity into practices. Since many young athletes visualize themselves performing like their idols, these moves motivate young athletes to acquire the physical performance factors and fundamental skills they need. Watching the performance of role models can be as beneficial as reviewing one's own video (Halden-Brown, 2003, p. 46).

Hall of Fame Moves Based on Fundamentals

Michael Jordan • Last Shot: An effective and easy-to-learn move is the step-back jumper that Michael Jordan used to defeat the Jazz in the 1998 Association Finals. Defender Byron Russell was completely thrown off by the move, which consisted of Jordan dribbling hard towards the hoop with his right hand before crossing the ball over to his left as he stepped back.



Instructions:

- 1) With the ball in the right hand, dribble towards the basket
 - a. At the top of the key, cross-step with the left foot
 - b. Take a hard right-handed dribble and stop on the right foot
- 2) Create space from the defender
 - a. Step-back with the right foot
 - b. Crossover to the left hand
- 3) Pull-up and shoot
 - a. Hop step to the left
 - b. Set feet and get balanced before shooting

Necessities:

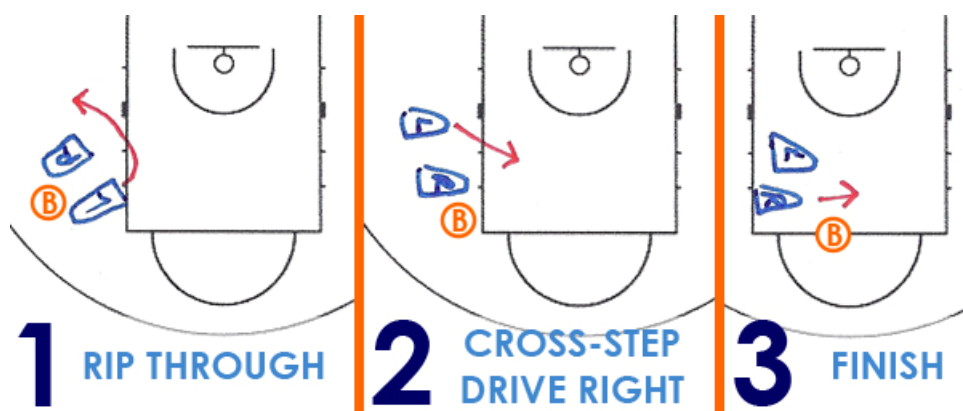
- Physical Performance Factors
 - Leg Strength: alternating lunges, two foot jumps
 - Balance: remain balanced while moving, regain balance
- Fundamental Skills
 - Ballhandling: dribble against contact, pull ball with hand backwards/sideways
 - Shooting: outside shooting, off the dribble
- Decision-Making Questions
 - Is the on-ball defender off-balance?
 - Where is the help defense?

Target Audience:

- Point Guards
- Wing Players

→→→ Link: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yDaNON_5uSk

Magic Johnson • Junior Sky Hook: Magic Johnson used this move to defeat the Boston Celtics in Game 4 of the 1987 Finals. His speed, skill and size permitted him to catch the ball on the wing and finish strong in the paint.



Instructions:

- 1) Catch ball and pivot to the baseline
 - a. Reverse pivot with the left foot
 - b. Rip through with two hands
- 2) Drive in the middle
 - a. Cross-step with the left foot
 - b. Start a right-handed dribble
- 3) Finish with a hook shot
 - a. Pick up the dribble in the centre of the key
 - b. Jump off the left foot

Necessities:

- Physical Performance Factors
 - Leg Strength: single foot jumps, split squats
 - Quickness: first step
- Fundamental Skills
 - Pivoting: reverse pivot, rip through
 - Post Moves: hook shot
- Decision-Making Questions
 - Is it possible to get to the rim?
 - If the shot is missed, where is the best offensive rebounding position?

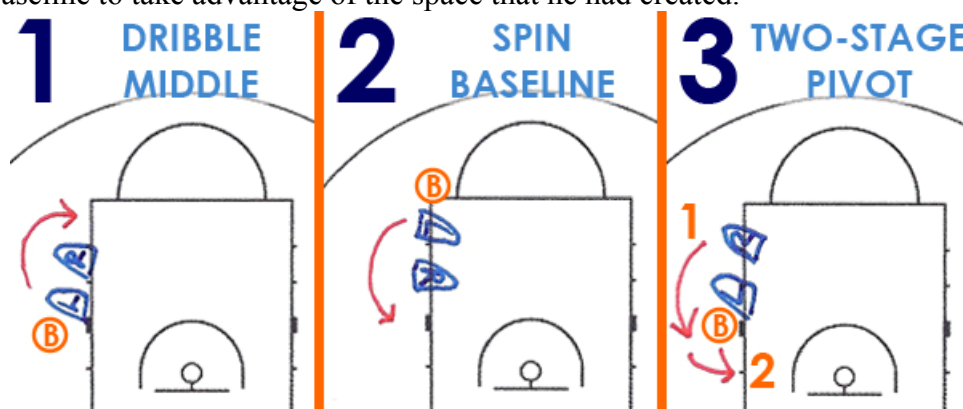
Target Audience:

- Post Players
- Tall Guards

→→→ Link:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VwF_v_1rgN8

Larry Bird • Turnaround Jump Shot: Larry Bird executed this quick move that has several reads and involves teammates cutting to the basket. He drove middle to draw the defense before spinning baseline to take advantage of the space that he had created.



Instructions:

- 1) Drive into the middle of the key
 - a. Front pivot with the left foot
 - b. Start dribble with the left hand
- 2) Spin towards the baseline
 - a. Pull the ball back sharply with a retreat dribble and pivot on the right foot
 - b. Pivot on the right foot and pick up the dribble
- 3) Execute a two-stage pivot on the left foot
 - a. Use ball fakes and shot fakes to confuse the defense
 - b. Finish with a 10' bank shot

Necessities:

- Physical Performance Factors
 - Core Strength: protect ball, ball fakes
 - Balance: regain balance after spinning
- Fundamental Skills
 - Ballhandling: retreat dribble
 - Passing: ball fakes, keep head up to look for cutters
- Decision-Making Questions
 - Is anyone cutting to the basket or spotting up?
 - Can ball fakes create more space or time to score?

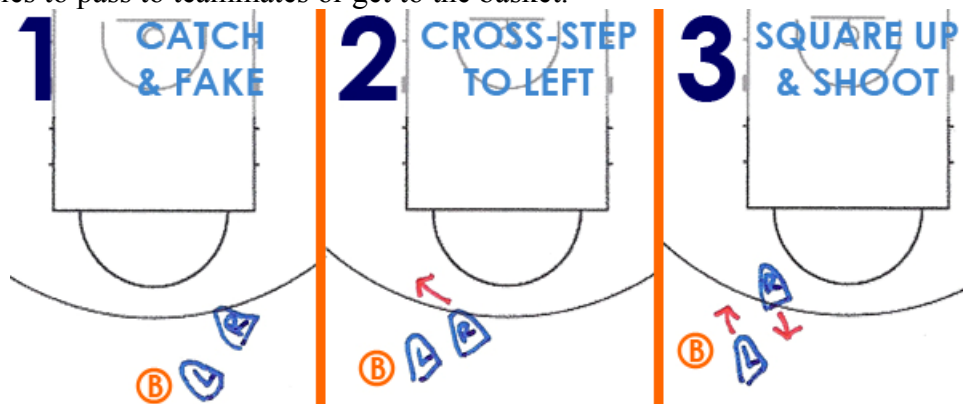
Target Audience:

- Post Players
- Wing Players and Forwards

→→→ Link:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pObmIXI6Qnc>

Kevin Durant • Three-Point Shot: Opponents must defend Kevin Durant all over the court because of his long three-point shooting range. His ability to shoot from the outside creates opportunities to pass to teammates or get to the basket.



Instructions:

- 1) Catch the pass as the ball is reversed
 - a. Keep knees bent
 - b. Fake to the right with the head, shoulders and the ball
- 2) Dribble to the left
 - a. Cross-step with the right foot
 - b. Dribble with the left hand
- 3) Shoot if there is room
 - a. Square up to the basket
 - b. Pick up the dribble and shoot

Necessities:

- Physical Performance Factors
 - Explosiveness: fake drive, push backwards, two foot jumps, elevate over defense
 - Balance: body control, maintain balance during fake, regain balance to shoot
- Fundamental Skills
 - Ballhandling: ball fakes, hard dribble
 - Shooting: outside shooting, off the dribble
- Decision-Making Questions
 - Is there enough room to take a balanced shot?
 - Would an extra pass improve the team's overall scoring chances?



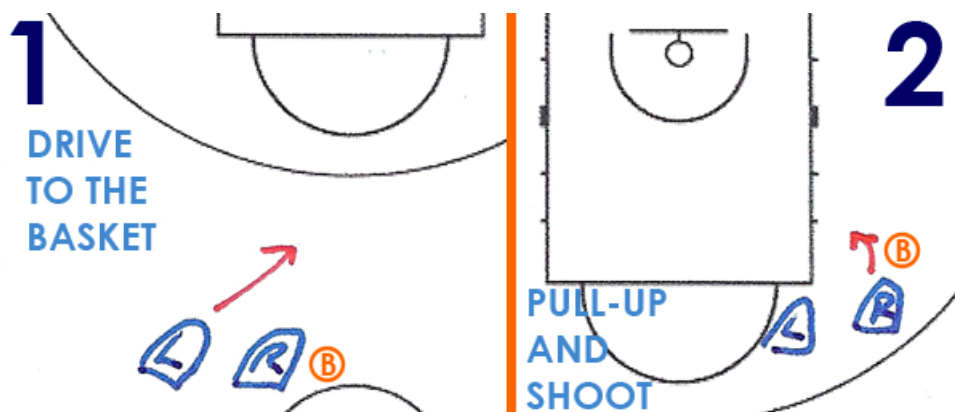
Kevin Durant can create a lot of space for himself with his step-back move. When he releases his shot at the top of his jump, it is nearly impossible for a defender to block.

Target Audience:

- Ballhandlers
- Wings and Forwards

→→→ Link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZVfxO5PEH24>

Kobe Bryant • Pull-up Jump Shot: As time wound down, Kobe Bryant gained control of the ball in the backcourt after a jump ball. He dribbled quickly into scoring position before stopping on a dime and shooting.



Instructions:

- 1) Control the ball and move towards the basket
 - a. Cross-step with the left foot
 - b. Dribble hard with the right hand
- 2) Stop and shoot
 - a. Plant the left foot and front pivot with the right foot
 - b. Pick up the ball and shoot

Necessities:

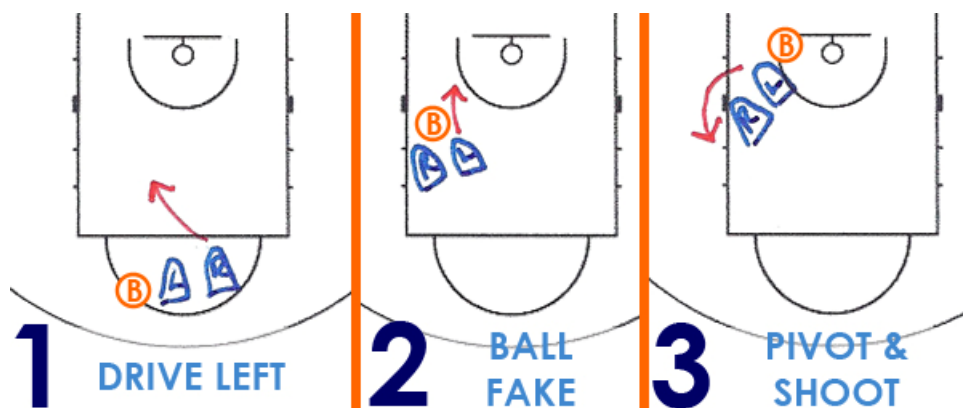
- Physical Performance Factors
 - Speed: advance ball quickly, dribble past defender
 - Quickness: acceleration and deceleration
- Fundamental Skills
 - Ballhandling: speed dribble, dribbling against contact
 - Shooting: quick release, pull-up jump shot
- Decision-Making Questions
 - How much time is on the clock?
 - What is the best shot that the team can get?

Target Audience:

- Point Guards
- Ballhandlers in Transition

→→→ Link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KeKHAIkE6cg>

Rajon Rondo • Ball Fake: Known for his trademark ball fake, which takes advantage of his long arms and large hands, Rajon Rondo is one of the quickest players in the world.



Instructions:

- 1) Drive to the left side of the court
 - a. Cross-step with the right foot
 - b. Dribble with the left hand
- 2) Fake a pass or shot
 - a. Plant the left foot close to the basket
 - b. Extend the arm to fake a pass to a cutter
- 3) Square up to the basket and shoot
 - a. Front pivot with the left foot
 - b. Take off both feet

Necessities:

- Physical Performance Factors
 - Explosiveness: first step, two foot jumps
 - Quickness: acceleration and deceleration, pivoting
- Fundamental Skills
 - Ballhandling: dribble into traffic, protect ball when faking and pivoting
 - Post Moves: hook shot, power lay-up
- Decision-Making Questions
 - Where is the help defense?
 - Is anyone cutting to the basket or spotting up?

Target Audience:

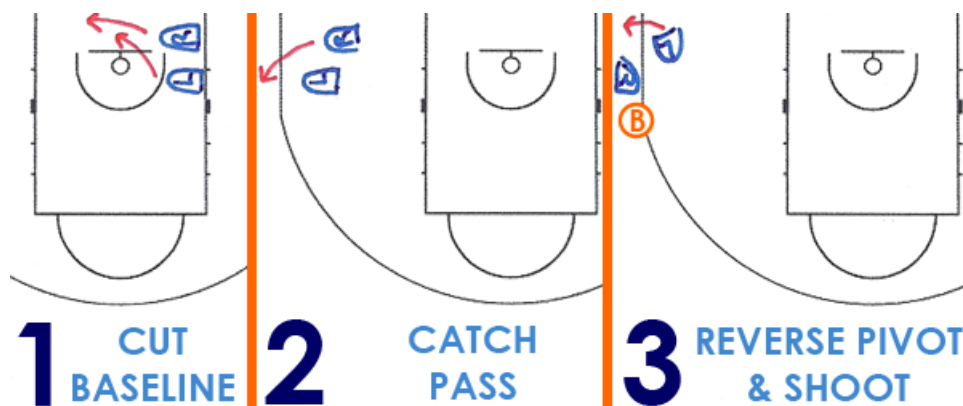
- Point Guards
- Shorter Players

→→→ Link:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oEZOCmjFUUk>

Rajon Rondo steps through two defenders after executing a ball-fake and spinning.

Ray Allen • Catch and Shoot: Over the years, Ray Allen has become adept at using screens in order to get open for outside shots. From a sideline inbound, Allen cut baseline towards the corner, caught the ball and hit a three-point basket.



Instructions:

- 1) Cut on baseline side of the screen
 - a. Use a fake to set up the defender for the screen
 - b. Win the short race to the corner
- 2) Square up to the passer
 - a. Front pivot with the right foot
 - b. Use the left shoulder to protect the passing lane
- 3) Shoot the ball immediately
 - a. Reverse pivot with the left foot
 - b. Get feet outside the three-point arc and shoot

Necessities:

- Physical Performance Factors
 - Balance: remain balanced while cutting, catch the ball in a ready position
 - Quickness: manoeuvre through traffic
- Fundamental Skills
 - Moving without the Ball: set up defender, win race to the finish line
 - Catching: catch ball with two hands, initiate shot as soon as possible
- Decision-Making Questions
 - How is the defender playing the screen?
 - Where is the passing lane with the inbounder?

Target Audience:

- Shooting Guards
- Wing Players

→→→ Link:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cgeaa2eYj_8

Steve Nash • Bounce Pass: Steve Nash is dribbling the ball on the right side. As he reads his defender, he is scanning the court for cutters. Nash rejects the screen and passes the ball to Marcin Gortat, who had slipped the screen, off the dribble for the open dunk.



Instructions:

- 1) Drop hips and read the defense
 - a. The left foot goes forward as the right foot drops back slightly
 - b. Hesitate slightly to disrupt defender
- 2) Dribble to the left
 - a. Cross-step with the right foot
 - b. Keep the ball in the left hand
- 3) Pass off the dribble
 - a. Turn the corner to improve passing angle
 - b. Execute a bounce pass with the inside (left) hand

Necessities:

- Physical Performance Factors
 - Balance: drop hips, split squats
 - Quickness: acceleration and deceleration, quick feet
- Fundamental Skills
 - Ballhandling: dribbling in traffic hesitation dribble, using the ball screen, cross-step
 - Passing: passing off the bounce with accuracy, one hand bounce pass
- Decision-Making Questions
 - How is the defense playing the screen?
 - Where will the cutters be when the pass gets to them?

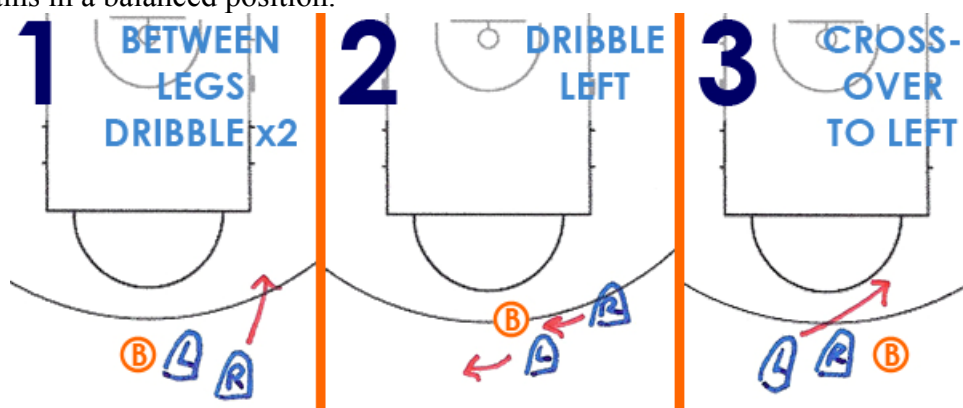
Target Audience:

- Point Guards
- Players Using a Ball Screen

→→→ Link:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9-6CPR8Izyc>

Derrick Rose • Crossover Dribble: This crossover dribble is effective because Derrick Rose attacks the basket as soon as he gets the opportunity. Rose constantly watches his defender as he dribbles the basketball and attacks when the opponent becomes off balance. While dribbling, Rose remains in a balanced position.

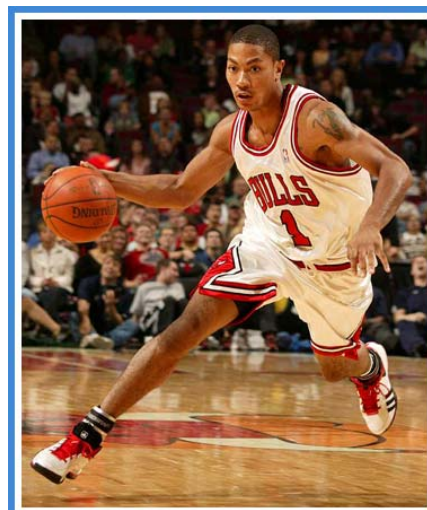


Instructions:

- 1) Dribble between legs
 - a. Step forward with the right foot
 - b. Dribble the ball from the left hand to the right and back
- 2) Dribble left and crossover
 - a. Retreat dribble away from the defender
 - b. Stay balanced and crossover to the right hand
- 3) Drive to the basket
 - a. Cross-step with the left foot
 - b. Attack the basket

Necessities:

- Physical Performance Factors
 - Leg Strength: alternating lunges, two-inch runs, lateral speed
 - Balance: drop hips, look to explode towards hoop
- Fundamental Skills
 - Ballhandling: read defender, keep the ball low, pull ball with hand backwards/sideways
 - Passing: side pass, circle pass, passing off the dribble, passing with the inside hand
- Decision-Making Questions
 - Is the on-ball defender off-balance?
 - Is it possible to get to the basket or is it necessary to pull-up and shoot or pass?



Skill-based offenses require a solid change of direction move.

Derrick Rose moves the ball into his right hand as he pushes off his left foot and drives to the basket.

Target Audience:

- Point Guards
- Ballhandlers

→→→ Link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AvzpW8geZA>

4

Conclusion

- Coaching Young Players... page 1
- Elite Basketball Players in Ontario... page 1
- Playing for the National Team... page 2
- YouTube Channel... page 2
- Works Cited... page 3

Coaching Young Players

Initial instructors are determined by proximity and availability. A young person begins the activity with an open mind and decides whether they like it based on that first environment. The knowledge of the original coach is not correlated to the latter success of the athlete as much as whether the coach is caring enough to inspire a passion for the sport (Coyle, 2009, pp. 171-176).

Intrinsic motivation makes dedicated practice seem fun instead of a chore (Syed, 2010, p. 65). When a late entry athlete joins a team or a teenager who has been balancing multiple activities decides to devote more time to basketball, they are still forming their opinion about the sport. Overwhelming them with tactical training can make the sport seem dull and dreary. Installing a skill-based offense that grants freedom to individual players nurtures enthusiasm for the game.

Young athletes must learn the meaning of dedicated practice (Coyle, 2009, pp. 80-81). Coaches can introduce a whole-method situation, such as getting down the court and moving in to scoring positions. Players repeat the drill in meaningful part-method drills, for example making a wing entry and cutting through the key to get a return pass. Coaches need to instill a physical memory about how it *feels* to remain balanced, set up the defender and make a hard cut to the basket. This connection enables athletes to build good habits and become great players (Holzman, 1987, p. 48).

Elite Basketball Players in Ontario

In the Train to Compete stage, athletes begin to specialize and train for a sport year-round (Canada Basketball, 2008, p. 52). Athletes will be active at school, with their club and as part of a travelling team. They may also participate in group workouts, personal training and low organizational games in the community. Elite Development Program coaches - even those who work with the provincial team - must understand that they could be the fourth, fifth or even sixth coach for that player during the season (Cheng, 2011).

A skill-based offense can aid these players because it is easy to teach. Some teams only play together for a brief time. While instructing skills, coaches are also implementing the offense. Athletes are balancing a number of commitments and want to make the best decision; they should not be made part of a “tug of war” between coaches. A player can travel to a tournament without undoing the progress they achieved within the skill-based offense.

Basic motion offense principles (spacing, playing with teammates, creating an advantage) are applicable to any other system. If another team runs the Flex, the player can add their improved passing and 1-on-1 abilities to the mix. When the player returns, they can enhance the skill-based offense by screening away from the ball.



Ontario's U17 Men's team got numerous good scoring chances by running an open skill-based offense centered around elite players like Duane Notice.

Summer basketball has always been emotionally enticing for the best players. Now it is attracting the next tier of players because it is seen as the primary path to a scholarship. Coaches have to work within the current system if they want to coach the best athletes (Cheng, 2011). Mismatches, poor defense and an idle pursuit of the highlight reel will not push anyone to reach and surpass their limits. When the players are not travelling, a coach can still make a difference improving 1-on-1 abilities, developing an intermediate game and instructing a team offense.

Since there are so many teams and tournaments, the competition to training ratio may become skewed. Playing and travelling with a summer team that rarely practices makes it hard for athletes to reach the target of forty-percent physical and technical training (Canada Basketball, 2008, p. 56). The Elite Development Program can provide a bit more of this training to make up for the excess games with other teams. The coach can focus on skill development, knowing that they are also accomplishing tactical preparation for their competitions at the same time.

Playing for the National Team

For the foreseeable future, Canada will struggle to field the best Senior Men's National Team possible. There is a solid group of Canadian professional and collegiate players but the best are often unavailable for competitions (Sekeres, 2011). Due to academics, citizenship issues and personal preferences, there are no guarantees that Canada's stars will play for the country.

One way to counteract this trend is to develop a wide base of players who are familiar with international basketball and capable of stepping in for any particular competition. Two Ontario O.U.A. schools which use a skill-based offense, Carleton and Ryerson, provided three members of Canada's core rotation at the 2011 World University Games, winning a silver medal.

Instructing more and more athletes in the Train to Compete stage and beyond with solid fundamentals and thorough knowledge of the offense's core principles will prepare more Canadians to play international ball. If Canada wishes to dream big dreams, all coaches must embrace skill development and making every young player better.

YouTube Channel

The video clips used for instructional purposes can be found on my YouTube channel.

→→→ Link: <http://www.youtube.com/user/coachbourgase>

→ **Part 1** • F.I.B.A. Examples:

<http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL379418C8D55A6F89>

→ **Part 2** • 2011 Men's National Championships:

<http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL9470B6D01DFBF7C0>

→ **Part 3** • Hall of Fame Moves Based on Fundamentals:

<http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLCED01CF344B8ACEE>

→ **Throughout** • Practice Footage: These clips are unlisted. To access the footage, enter the link into the browser window exactly as it appears.

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*"When we play well,
no one's going to defend us well."*

- Steve Nash