Welcome to the Rookie Basketball Association (RBA)!

Coaches are encouraged to send your player home with “homework”, drills and skill work that players can work on at home. Six days working on skills will develop more improvement than one practice a week.

This guide has been compiled from a variety of sources as an equipping resource. It is by no means inclusive of all basketball knowledge. For families playing basketball for the first time, this guide may seem overwhelming. Not all of these drills need to be done every week; your player may not even do all of them or many of them. Simple things such as having discussions with your player about basketball skills—helping your player to know you are interested in activities important to them, encouraging your player to use their opposite hand, i.e., using a fork with opposite hand, brushing teeth with opposite hand—dribbling with their opposite hand will not seem so foreign, and watching a basketball—seeing other players in triple threat position, floor spacing and teamwork, will begin to make a difference for your player. Please use this tool to enhance the RBA experience for you and your player. Many of the concepts of basketball are explained along with drills that can be done at home in a basement, garage, driveway, or while on a walk with your player. All players are encouraged to ask parents to be involved in at-home drills as well as to ask for permission to use their basketball inside the house.
RBA Fundamental Quick Guide

**Ball Handling**—To promote successful handling of the basketball during loose balls, rebounds, dribbling between legs and behind back

**Dribbling**—use fingertips, firm but relaxed, emphasis on controlling the ball

**Passing**—elbows out, step forward, “pop” the ball at the target, fingers will point to the target and thumbs will point to the floor

**Shooting**—using the BEEEF technique
- B—balance—both feet shoulder-width apart and under shooter, feet, hips, and shoulders pointing at target
- E—elbow—elbow is in and pointing at target
- E—eyes—looking at rim, player crouches down, or compresses “spring” to explode on extension
- E—extension—player fully extends body at top of jump
- F—follow through—player follows through on shot by flipping wrist forming a “goose neck” or “seven”

**Offense**
1. Find an open space, spread out
2. Get in ready position, hands up for a pass
3. Pass towards the basket
4. Yell, “shot” when shot is taken
5. Box out & Rebound

**Defense**
1. Find the player you guard
2. Get between him/her and the basket
3. The closer to basket, the higher your hands
4. Yell, “shot” when shot is taken
5. Box out & rebound

**Teamwork** is the ability to work together toward a common goal.

**Marks of Excellence**

These Marks are character qualities that will enhance players as people and athletes.

The marks play a role on the court as well as in every day life. We encourage you to discuss with your players how it applies on and off the court.

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<td>Devoted actions for the benefits of others</td>
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<td>Being at rest with myself and others</td>
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<td>Holding oneself in</td>
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WARM UP CONCEPTS
At the beginning of each practice session, during a proper warm up, is the ideal time to train and develop fundamental movements. The purpose of a warm up is to prepare the player to practice or play the game by warming the body and at the same time using the muscles in all of the movement planes that the body requires. It should also be fun. The following are just a few examples:

WARM UP DRILLS

STRETCHES
• Right foot over left, bend to touch toes to unison count of ten; left over right to unison count of ten
• Bend to right, bend to left, bend to center; hold each to count of ten
• Touch toes, count of ten
• Arm circles

JUMPING CYCLE
• 15 Jumping Jacks
• Easy continuous jumping for 15 seconds
• Easy continuous jumping arms above head for 15 seconds
• Rest for 15 seconds

PARACHUTE JUMP
Players jump as high as they can and land on both feet in a balanced position, repeat 5 times

ANIMAL WALKS
A fun way to warm up while utilizing dynamic stretching. Make the animals move in different directions—forward, backward, left, right, turn in a circle.
Some examples:
• Horse—gallop like a horse (skipping action—helpful in lay ups)
• Dog—walk on hands and feet, opposite arm and leg.
• Deer—bounding, hold the knee high in the air
• Scorpion—lying face down take the right leg and lift it behind your back to touch your left hand. Switch legs
• T-Rex—lunge walk, add some twists
• Stork—balance on one foot, have them reach down and touch the floor with their hand
• Kangaroo—hopping on two feet
• Bear—walking on the same hand and foot at the same time
• Spider—pretend to crawl along the wall, stay low to the floor
• Crab—with belly facing up move on hands and feet, work different directions
• Seal—drag the feet, flippers, by pulling yourself along with your arms
• Frog—squat down and explode out into a two-foot jump
• Inch worm—start with the hands on the ground and walk out to a push-up position, now walk the feet to the hands
• Duck walk—walk in a crouched position, keep the arms in like wings
FITNESS AND STAMINA

FITNESS AND STAMINA CONCEPTS
The difference between a good player and a great player is the shape they are in. Fitness is important for the following reasons:
- Improved flexibility, quickness, strength, and stamina
- Increases the vertical jump
- Basketball is a contact sport and requires physical strength and stamina
Strength and conditioning training must be a part of the practice routine and can often be disguised in drills and fun games. Proper technique is required for maximum effectiveness and injury prevention.

FITNESS AND STAMINA DRILLS
LINE JUMPS
Players line up on a line. Jump over a line both forward and backward as they would jump rope for one minute in 10-second increments. They keep count of how many jumps they make. Next, place feet parallel to the line and jump over it going from side-to-side for a minute in 10-second increments. Keep count once again. Five seconds on same drills using one foot at a time.

ARM DRIVE OPPOSITE
Player gets in basketball stance, remaining stationary, having both arms out in front ready for arm drive. The arms should go from the head level to knee level, moving up and down alternating arms.

PLANK
Player starts in a position similar to a push-up position but instead they have their weight on their arms. Through the plank they should feel the core area being worked on. Hold the position for 10 seconds. Repeat 2 times.

FOOTWORK

FOOTWORK CONCEPTS
The prerequisites of correct footwork: quickness, balance, agility, and technique. Players need:
- Quickness to deceive and beat an opponent
- Balance to maintain body control
- Agility to change speed and body position quickly
- Technique to make optimal use of quickness, balance, and agility
It is recommended that players execute footwork as follows:
- Maintain a balanced position
- Move along straight lines whenever possible
- Change direction sharply
- Execute combinations of footwork patterns and fakes with and without the ball
When introducing players to the fundamentals of footwork, start without the ball—it distracts beginning
players and should be introduced only once players can correctly perform fundamentals without it.

READY POSITION

The ready position is a balance stance that provides a strong base and therefore enables players to initiate movement in any direction.

To get into a ready position, emphasize the following:

- Feet shoulder width apart, slightly staggered
- Weight distributed evenly on balls of both feet
- Bend ankles, knees, and hips
- Head upright and looking forward, back fairly straight
- Arms are extended out to side in position to intercept a pass (defense); or in position to receive a pass (offense)
- Must be balanced

Have the player get into the ready position from different movements such as:

- From a jump
- From a 1-2 step
- From any random movement

> Add pivots out of ready position

- Front pivot and a reverse pivot on each foot. Start in the ready position move to pivot
- Have them get into the ready position from different movements and add in the pivots

TRIPLE THREAT POSITION

The triple threat position is an extremely important stance in basketball, as all offensive movements originate from this position. This should be one of the first skills players learn, as it is something they will always have to do. Whenever players catch the ball on the court within their shooting range, they should face the hoop and get into the triple threat stance. This stance allows them to become a threat to attack the defense and move quickly in any direction they choose to go. In a triple threat stance, the offensive player has three movements they can make. From this position, the player can 1) shoot, 2) dribble, or 3) pass.

To get into a triple threat position, emphasize the following:

- Feet are shoulder width apart in a stable, balanced position
- Shooting foot ahead of non-shooting foot in heel-toe relationship
- Weight is evenly distributed on balls of feet
- Knees bent, butt down, back slightly flexed
- Chin over shooting foot
- Hold ball with dominant hand on back of ball, with finger tips on ball, fingers comfortably spread, wrist bent back
- Non-shooting hand on the side of the ball, fingers point upward
- Ball is held near hip and tight to body when not preparing to shoot

PIVOT

Pivoting is one of the most important basic basketball skills a player must master. Pivoting occurs when a player rotates his/her body position, maintaining balance with one foot in constant contact with the
A player can use pivots to:

- Protect the ball from defensive player
- Improve view of court while in possession of ball
- Square up to the basket
- Improve passing or driving lane
- Beat a defensive player by pivoting around him/her

Once a pivot foot is established, it may not be changed. A player must visualize that their pivot foot is stuck to the ground, until they dribble or pass the ball. When a player catches the ball or stops dribbling the ball, the first foot to hit the floor is the pivot foot. Therefore, it is a good idea to have a player come to a jump stop on two feet, so that their pivot foot is not pre-determined. Once this occurs, it is up to the player to choose a pivot foot based on the situation.

When pivoting, emphasize the following:

- Keep the pivot foot in constant contact with floor
- Stay low
- Pivot quickly and aggressively
- Lead with elbows
- Stay in triple threat stance

There are two types of pivots:

- **Front Pivot**—in the front pivot, a player turns forward while pivoting on one foot. That player does not lose sight of the basket and remains in a triple threat position throughout the movement
- **Reverse Pivot**—in the reverse pivot, the player turns their back, away from where they were. Again, the player must remain in a triple threat stance so that they protect the ball.

**JUMP STOP**

Jump stops are used at the end of a dribble or when receiving a pass, to prevent a traveling violation after speed dribble, and to establish the pivot foot.

- As a player picks up dribble, he/she will land on both feet simultaneously
- The landing should be soft and on balance
- After the jump stop, player should be in the triple threat position
- After a jump stop occurs, a player is able to use either foot as the pivot foot.

**BALL HANDLING**

**BALL HANDLING CONCEPTS**

Becoming comfortable with how the basketball feels is a critical first step for young players. The more often they have the ball in their hands, the quicker their touch will develop. They must be able to hold and move the ball properly before they can begin to work on fine motor skills like dribbling and shooting.

When practicing ball handling/ball familiarization drills, emphasize the following:

- Keep eyes up and off the ball
- Player should be in a balanced position—feet shoulder-width apart
- Use your fingertips, not your palms—fingertips exert more control
• Learn to become comfortable with the basketball using both hands
• Encourage player to try to go faster in these drills

**BALL HANDLING DRILLS**

Ball handling consists of a variety of drills to get player’s hand movement and ball movement preparing them for finger-tip control, hand-eye coordination, and ball handling. The drills are all done in a standing stationary position.

**STATIONARY BALL HANDLING**

**BALL SLAPS**
Player will tap ball with finger tips, start in front of self, reach up high, move down to feet, behind back, between legs.

**BALL SLAMS**
Players stand with their feet shoulder-width apart, and slap the basketball with their fingers spread wide, alternating from hand to hand.

**AROUND LEG**
Start by rolling ball around one leg, don’t look at feet just feel the ball. Switch legs. Reverse directions. Pick up ball and wrap around single legs.

**FEET TOGETHER WRAP AROUND**
Start by rolling ball, switch directions.

**BODY WRAPS**
Player stands with their feet shoulder-width apart and pass the ball around their head and then their waist. You can then have them stand with their feet together and try to pass the ball around their knees and ankles. Player then works ball back up from ankles around, then knees around, then waist around, then head.

**FIGURE EIGHTS**
Player stand, with their feet just wider than shoulder-width apart. Starting with the ball in their right hand, they pass the ball between their legs behind their left leg and around, then back in between their legs and around their right leg. Younger players may begin by rolling the figure eight.

**DROPS**
Players put the ball between their feet and grab it with both hands. Start with the left hand behind left leg and right hand in front of right leg. Drop the ball and let it bounce once. Quickly move left hand in front of left leg and right hand behind right leg, and catch the ball as it bounces up. Drop it again and switch hands back to the original position (left behind, right in front) and catch it. Repeat this motion continuously. For a more difficult variation, try catching the ball before it actually hits the floor.

**HAND-EYE COORDINATION**

**DROP AND CATCH**
Drop the ball and catch it, throw the ball up and catch it. Add a clap. Drop the ball, clap, and catch. Throw the ball up, clap, and catch. Clap as many as you can. Drop the ball, clap as many as you can, and catch. Throw the ball up, clap as many as you can and catch.

**BALL BALANCE**
Player starts with two basketballs using a basic pound dribble with both hands and the two basketballs in
front of player. Player must keep head up and eyes looking in front. Try rotating the ball forward or to the side and then regaining balance.

SIDE TO SIDE
Player keeps basketball in right hand and moves ball in front of body from side to side using the same hand without carrying the ball. Player must attempt the drill with the left hand as well.

FRONT TO BACK
Player starts in side slide position with ball in the behind hand, then slide across while pounding the ball in the forward direction.

WALKING FIGURE EIGHT
Player lines up on a line and walk to a predetermined spot weaving a figure eight without dribbling. Walk backwards to the starting spot, weaving on the way back.

DRIBBLING

DRIBBLING CONCEPTS
Dribbling is the act of bouncing the ball against the floor with one hand while running, walking, or standing. The purpose of dribbling is to enable players to move the ball at varying speeds.

When practicing dribbling, emphasize the following:

- Start in triple threat position
- Keep center of gravity low, body compact and moving together
- Keep head up and never watch the ball; maintain court awareness
- Push the ball down with fingertips; don’t slap at ball
- Keep dribble low; less chance of defender deflecting it
- Protect the ball with body, outside leg, and non-dribbling arm against defensive pressure or in congested areas
- Learn to use both hands effectively

The following actions violate the rules governing dribbling:

- Bouncing the ball with two hands at the same time
- Having the pivot foot leave the floor before releasing the ball from the hand to initiate the dribble/pass/shot
- Letting the ball come to rest in the hand while continuing to move; known as carrying or palming the ball
- Dribbling, stopping, and starting again in a single possession

TYPES OF DRIBBLING

STATIC/STATIONARY DRIBBLING
In the static dribble, player dribbles the ball under control and in a stationary, protected position.

DRIBBLING WITH MOVEMENT
When dribbling while moving, player should push the ball ahead in the direction they are going. The control dribble is a low, controlled, protected dribble that players use while moving at medium-slow speed. Players use this dribble to improve a passing angle, move the ball away from defensive pressure in congested areas, or move the ball up the court toward the basket when closely guarded. Players use the
speed dribble when they are running near top speed and are in an uncontested area with little defensive pressure; for example, on a fast break or breakaway.

**CHANGE-OF-DIRECTION Dribble**
When changing direction while dribbling, player plants foot in one direction, changes dribbling hands, then pushes the ball in the opposite direction.

**Dribbling Tips:**
- Dribble with a purpose, don’t over dribble, and don’t forget there are four other players on your team on the court
- Dribble the ball up the court with your off or weaker hand so that when the defense pressures you or overplays you, you can go to your strong hand
- Show the defender different moves to keep him/her guessing
- Don’t waste your dribble
- Don’t pull up your dribble without the intention of passing or shooting; this invites overplay, denial and trapping
- When dribbling on the fast break, push the ball in the front to cover more distance

**Dribbling Drills**

**Dribble Line Drills**
This drill should be done in the driveway, or a place that has room for the player to run. Player executes the designated dribble move at an agreed upon mark. Use these various types of dribbling: right-hand, left-hand, alternating hand (cross over, more advanced—behind the back, between the legs), protection dribble, high dribble, low dribble, retreat dribble (dribble two steps backwards) and go, retreat dribble and crossover and go, protection dribble (turn sideways to protect the ball) and go, and protection dribble and crossover and go, and have player use opposite hand for coming back.

**Seated Dribbling**
Player should be seated on floor while performing one-hand dribble. Player must alternate and change hands so they get used to dribbling with the left hand and right also. Start by rolling ball around self. Finger dribble. Lay down and dribble. Write name with ball dribble. Turn on side and dribble. Dribble high while seated.

**Walking Figure Eight Dribble**
Same as above but players dribble the figure eight.

**Tom Tom Dribble**
Spread feet wide. Dribble ball with right hand passing it to the left hand. Dribble ball with left hand between legs and to the right hand. Dribble ball with right hand now behind to the left hand that should also be behind. Then dribble the ball back to the right hand now in front of the body, repeat.

**Drum Dribble**
Either standing or on one knee have player dribble ball, changing hands with each touch. Start with a steady dribble then work down to super fast low dribbles. Then have them dribble with one finger on each hand and with their balled up fist.
TWO-BASKETBALL DRILLS

TWO BALL TOGETHER
Player starts using a basic pound dribble with the two basketballs to the front of player moving the basketballs from side to side without carrying the balls. Player must keep head up and eyes looking in front.

TWO BALL OPPOSITE
Player starts using both hands but alternative pound dribbles with two basketballs in front of player. Player must keep head up and eyes looking in front.

TWO BALL SIDE TO SIDE
Player starts using a basic pound dribble with two basketballs in front of player. Player then moves basketballs from right to left and back right again. Player repeats motion and keeps head up and eyes looking in front.

TWO BALL FRONT TO BACK
Player starts using a basic pound dribble with the two basketballs on the side of player. Player then moves basketballs from front to back, player repeats motion and keeps head up and eyes looking in front.

TWO BALL INSIDE OUT
Player starts using a basic pound dribble with the two basketballs on the side of player. Player then moves basketballs from outside to inside and back outside again. Player repeats motion and keeps head up and eyes looking in front.

TWO BALL FIGURE 8 STATIONARY
Player starts using a basic pound dribble with the two basketballs in front. Player begins moving both balls to right, dribbles left ball through legs, around right knee, back between legs and around left knee all while dribbling second ball with right hand.

TWO BALL EYES CLOSED STATIONARY
Player starts with two basketballs using a basic pound dribble with the two basketballs in front. Player dribbles basketballs spelling out their name with the two basketballs and player’s eyes closed. Player repeats motion and keeps head up and eyes closed.

TWO BALL AROUND ONE LEG
Player starts with two basketballs using a basic pound dribble with the two basketballs in front of player. Player then dribbles basketball 1 around one leg while bouncing basketball 2 in the other hand in front of player. Player repeats motion and keeps head up and eyes looking in front.

TWO BALL STATIONARY DROP
Player starts with two basketballs. Standing straight upright, player bounces ball 1 from left hand and moves ball 2 across from the right hand to left hand. Before he receives ball 1 with the right hand, he bounces ball 2 with the left hand. Player repeats motion and keeps head up and eyes looking in front.

TWO BALL STATIONARY HIGH
Player starts with two basketballs using a basic pound dribble with the two basketballs in front of player. Player dribbles ball 1 with high dribble and ball 2 with low dribble; player repeats motion and keeps head up and eyes looking in front.

TWO BALL TOGETHER WALKING
Player starts with two basketballs using a basic pound dribble with the two basketballs in front while walking. Player repeats motion and keeps head up and eyes looking in front while walking.

**TWO BALL OPPOSITE WALK**
Player starts with two basketballs using a basic pound dribble with the two basketballs in front while walking with alternate dribble motion. Player repeats motion and keeps head up and eyes looking in front while walking.

**TWO BALL SIDE TO SIDE WALK**
Player starts with two basketballs using a basic pound dribble moving the two basketballs from side to side in the same direction in front of player. Player repeats motion and keeps head up and eyes looking in front while walking.

**TWO BALL INSIDE OUTSIDE WALK**
Player starts with two basketballs using a basic pound dribble with the two basketballs in front moving them from outside to inside while walking. Player repeats motion and keeps head up and eyes looking in front while walking.

**TWO BALL HIGH LOW WALK**
Player starts with two basketballs using a basic pound dribble with the two basketballs in front. Basketball 1 must be a low dribble and basketball 2 must be high dribble all while walking. Player repeats motion and keeps head up and eyes looking in front while walking.

**BEHIND LEG/BEHIND BACK**
Player starts with one basketball moving in a forward running motion with a pound dribble. The ball must go between the legs on the second dribble and then directly around the back on the third dribble. The player uses this as an attack move off a basic pound dribble.

**INSIDE OUT/BEHIND BACK**
Player starts with one basketball using a basic pound dribble moving in forward direction then using the inside out dribble on second dribble and going directly behind the back.

**STUTTER STEP/BETWEEN LEGS/BEHIND BACK**
Player starts with one basketball using a pound dribble moving in the forward direction. Before the second dribble player attempts the stutter step (chopping feet in forward direction) going between the leg and behind the back for the third dribble.

**HESITATION CROSSOVER**
Player starts with one basketball using a pound dribble moving in a forward direction. Before the second dribble player goes to hesitation move (body raises up and then back down) to crossover move in front of the body for third dribble. Hesitation move makes the defender come out of his defensive stance.

**CHANGE SPEED/DIRECTION, BETWEEN THE LEGS, BEHIND THE BACK, SPIN**
Player starts with one basketball, using the pound dribble toward the right direction moving forward. Player then changes speed to make a between-the-leg dribble and then behind-the-back dribble into a spin move, changing direction.
BALL CONTROL DRILLS

RIP THROUGH UNDER KNEES
Player tosses ball in air, steps forward, catches it and moves into triple threat position. From the triple threat position, player rips the ball through (pulls the ball quickly with force) under the knees from one side to the other to avoid the ball from getting intercepted by the imaginary or parent defender.

RIP OVER EYES
Player tosses ball in air, steps forward, catches it and moves into triple threat position. From the triple threat position, player rips ball through over the eyes to avoid the ball from getting intercepted by the defender.

RIGHT PIVOT FOOT
Player tosses ball in air, steps forward, catches it and steps forward with left foot across imaginary or parent defender. This will help the offensive player protect the ball and also make the defender shift across to the left.

LEFT PIVOT FOOT
Player tosses ball in air, steps forward, catches it and steps forward with right foot across the imaginary or parent defender. This will help the offensive player protect the ball and also make the defender shift across to the right.

RIGHT HAND POWER Dribble
Player tosses ball in air, steps forward, catches it and moves into triple threat position. Player then moves into rip through over eyes and then under knees. The player moves from the right foot pivot, player can go straight into the right hand power dribble. Pounding the ball will keep the ball from getting deflected by the defender.

LEFT HAND POWER Dribble
Player tosses ball in air, steps forward, catches it and moves into triple threat position. Player then moves into rip through over eyes and then under knees. The player moves from the right foot pivot, player can go straight into the left-hand power dribble. Pounding the ball will keep the ball from getting deflected by the defender.

UPSTAIRS/DOWNSTAIRS
Bounce the ball while pretending to walk up and down the stairs. Start by crouching down as low as possible while dribbling. Start walking and dribbling while gradually straightening legs until all the way up on tiptoes. Keep walking and dribbling up high and "walk back down the stairs" by gradually lowering body back down to the floor.

YO-YO
Keep the ball bouncing while you bounce with slow, high bounces all the way to quick, small bounces, and then all the way back up to slow, high bounces. See how long you can keep that up without losing control. Walk forward while doing "Yo-Yo." Now walk backward.

RISE AND SHINE
Bounce the ball while standing in one place. While you are bouncing it, lower your body down to the floor in a sitting position with your legs out straight in front of you. Dribble it on the right side of your
body with your right hand, then between your legs, then on your left side with your left hand. While dribbling, lower your body until you are lying down ("going to bed"). Try it on one side of your body and then the other. Keep your dribble alive, sit up, and then stand up ("it's time to rise and shine!").

**COFFEE GRINDER**
Get into a "coffee grinder" position (extend legs out behind and hold yourself up with one arm almost like a push-up position, but just using one hand). Dribble the ball with your free hand while pivoting around in a circle on your supporting hand. Swap hands.

**BOUNCE AND CATCH CHALLENGE**
Bounce the ball between your legs from the rear to the front and catch it with both hands out in front of you. Now try to bounce it from the front to the rear and catch it with your hands behind your back. Bounce the ball hard so it goes up high, run under it, and catch it. Bounce the ball, turn around in place, and catch it. Bounce the ball while doing different locomotor movements: walking, running, skipping, sliding, hopping, going backwards. Bounce the ball to a certain rhythm.

**PASSING**

**PASSING CONCEPTS**
Passing and receiving the basketball are two fundamental aspects of offensive basketball that must be worked on so players can learn to share the basketball and promote team play. The purpose of successful passing is to move the ball up the court quickly, or to move the ball into an area to improve scoring opportunities for teammates. Every successful pass requires two things: a good passer and a good receiver.

When practicing passing, emphasize the following:
- Always be in a triple threat position
- Anticipate the movements of teammates and use peripheral vision to look for open receivers
- Focus and make eye contact on receiver’s target
- Hold ball with finger tips and finger pads while keeping elbows in near body
- Pass ball toward target by flicking the wrists, finishing with thumbs pointed down and pinky finger up
- Step in the direction of the pass to give it more power
- Follow through as ball is released

When practicing receiving, emphasize the following:
- Show a target
- Anticipate passes directed toward them
- Be in a ready position with hands up in position to receive ball
- Trace flight of ball, see ball into hands
- Absorb the ball by catching it with your fingers and bend at the elbows
- Get into triple threat position when ball is caught

**TYPES OF PASSES**

**CHEST PASS**
The chest pass is a straight, quick pass that moves on one plane. The distance between passer and receiver should be about 8-10 feet for children. This pass is often the best method to advance the ball up
the court or around the perimeter, but is generally not a good penetrating pass.

**BOUNCE PASS**
The bounce pass is similar to a chest pass except the ball hits the ground about two-thirds of the distance toward the receiver and hitting the receiver in their target hands. The bounce pass is effective when either the passer and/or the receiver is being pressured. The bounce pass is the most effective pass into the post to penetrate the key.

**OVERHEAD PASS**
The overhead pass is effective during transition to cover a longer distance in advancing and out-letting the ball up the court.

**ONE-HANDED PUSH PASS**
Once players have mastered the chest pass and bounce pass, they can move to the one-handed push pass. This pass is slightly quicker than the chest pass and a more natural movement.

Passing drills should be practiced in this progression:
- Stationary—stressing the technique
- Passing on the run; in motion
- Games approach—passing in the half court offense and transition
- Incorporate fakes such as 1) looking away and 2) faking one way and going the other

**PASSING DRILLS**

**WALL PASSING**
Have player stand 6 feet from a wall and throw chest passes at the wall; the player aims at a target at about chest height and concentrates on technique. The player begins the drill close to the wall but moves farther away as skill increases. Execute other passes: bounce pass, overhead pass, one-hand push pass.

**PARTNER PASSING**
Have player line up across from a partner about 8-10 feet apart with one ball. Players will pass the ball to their partner stressing the following points:
- Practice receiving concept of target (protection) hand and control hand
- Practice two-hand bounce pass from the middle of the passer’s body first
- Practice one-hand push bounce pass from the side hip area of the body second

**Key habits to emphasize:**
1. Stay low and step into each pass.
2. Passes should be crisp and on target.
3. Receivers should step toward the ball on the catch.
4. Receivers give a target with their hands and call for the ball.
5. Passers call the name of their teammate.

**SHOOTING**

**SHOOTING CONCEPTS**
Shooting is a key basketball skill that is learned through repetition of proper techniques. Not all players become great shooters, but with good technique and plenty of practice, any player can develop into a
good shooter.

When practicing shooting, it is important to be aware of individual differences among players. Not all players have the strength or coordination necessary to use the same technique, but two players can use slightly different styles and still adhere to the basic principles of shooting. Habits form early in young players—it is essential that proper technique is ingrained in athletes at an early age. The concept here is for young shooters to learn the basic shooting principles and positive action necessary to allow them to develop their shooting ability and become better shooters as they mature.

Practicing can be much more productive if players incorporate the following basic principles:

- All players should begin shooting practice close to the basket
- Aim at the hoop—have a “quiet eye” on the target
- Select an appropriate angle of release where the elbow finishes at around forehead level
- Use all joints that can be used—knees, elbows, and wrist
- Incorporate hip extension to add power
- Start from a balanced position—triple threat position
- Practice, practice, practice

**SHOOTING GRIP**

Hold the ball in the hand with the palm up. Quickly move the ball back and forth from side to side. If the ball is not held on the finger pads, the player will lose control. This is excellent for younger players who often grip the ball incorrectly. It can not be emphasized enough the number of players who start with a poor grip. So many other problems are magnified by this basic mistake.

**RELEASE**

The release is the key to good shooting. To develop a consistent release, the shooter lies on his/her back and shoots the ball up in the air with one hand. The player needs to lock the elbow and wave goodbye to the ball. The ball should return to the same hand. It is important to note that the ball should come off the middle and index finger last. This will ensure the ball stays on line providing these fingers point at the middle of the basket at the finish.

Another way to work on the consistency of a player’s release is to have the player seated on the ground with the shooting arm forming the perfect 90° angle. It is like they are holding a tray. The parent stands behind the player and gives downward resistance. The player must push up and slightly out. At the very end, the parent releases the hand and the player snaps the wrist like elastic. Have them close their eyes to focus on the feeling.

Form shooting is done at a slow pace, concentrating on achieving the perfect form. The movements are exaggerated for emphasis. You can also break it down further by concentrating on a specific body part, i.e., wrist, foot, elbow. The following “B-E-E-E-F” technique will help break down proper shooting form by emphasizing Balance, Eyes, Elbow, Extension, Follow Through.

**BALANCE**

Player squares up to the basket with toes pointed to hoop, feet shoulder-width apart with knees flexed.

**EYES**

Eyes should be focused on target (basket), never leaving target during shot.

**ELBOW/HAND PLACEMENT**

Extend shooting hand directly in front of you and then bend it 90° (making an “L”) upward at the elbow;
cup your shooting hand so the ball fits in it with the guide hand guiding the ball in position. As the ball is raised up to the release point, guide-hand fingers are pointed to the ceiling.

**EXTENSION**
Feet push off floor, knees straighten, hips raise, elbow lifts to shoulder height, pushing ball up and out and releasing shot through fingertips, getting rotation on the ball.

**FOLLOW THROUGH**
Release the ball off the fingers and push fingers through the ball while bringing the wrist through to put some backspin on the ball. Follow through with the palm facing down, directing the ball into the basket.

**SHOOTING DRILLS**

**ONE-HAND SHOT**
Player starts in a basic shooting stance with basketball in shooting hand; the ball should be off shoulder height. Player performs a shot using shooting hand only with good extension and high release. Shooter must keep eyes on the hoop and use legs to get initial power for shot, then flick of the wrist for high accuracy and great form on shot. This drill is used for building strength in shooting arm.

**SHOOTING ON BACK**
Player starts with basketball in shooting hand only while lying on their back. They attempt to use the same basic shooting principles, only difference is they are laying flat on their back so they have to use their wrist and shoulder to perform the drill. This is used for building strength in shooter’s arm.

**WALL SHOOTING**
Player starts in a basic shooting stance with basketball in shooting hand, only using a wall to shoot the ball off. This is a drill players can perform if they don’t have a basketball hoop and still work on their shooting technique and shot form.

**SHOOTING OFF THE CATCH**
Player starts 3 feet from hoop, stepping into the shot with left foot first then right foot and shoot. The player must catch the ball in a ready basic shooting stance and extend to a jump shot. They must then continue the drill again by stepping back to the starting point and perform the same footwork and shot. If player is left handed, the foot technique is opposite.

**SHOOT OFF THE PASS**
Player receives the basketball at the predetermined point and makes one right-hand dribble in the forward direction to the right. Using the correct footwork, player steps into the shot with shooting hand. The player then continues the drill by back-pedaling to the starting point but this time receives the ball and goes left side with the one left-hand dribble and shoots with shooting hand.

**MIKAN**
Player stands directly under front of basket with ball. Player takes cross-over step to right and makes hook lay up with right hand, using the backboard. Player gets ball as it comes through net and quickly steps to the right side for a hook lay up with left hand. Continue to alternate sides making five shots from each side.
LAY UPS

LAY UP CONCEPTS
The lay up is a shot that is taken close to the basket. Lay ups should be worked on from both the right- and left-hand sides. The lay up is taken on the move, usually off the dribble or a pass. The name is derived from the action of shooting—that is, laying the ball off the backboard.

When practicing lay ups, emphasize the following:
- By using the right hand on the right side and the left hand on the left side, players can use their body to protect the ball from the defender.
- To attain maximum height on the jump, players should jump off the foot on the side opposite the shooting hand.
- Players should convert forward movement into upward momentum by leaning back slightly, dropping the hips, and shortening the last two or three strides.
- To set up the take-off foot, players usually take stutter steps during the last few dribbles or just before receiving a pass.
- Players should concentrate on learning to pick up the ball with both hands.

LAY UP DRILLS
WALL SHOOTING
Player should have a basic level proficiency with the one-handed set shot before starting to learn the lay up, especially when learning with their weak hand. Player can develop proficiency with the weak hand by shooting one-handed set shots against a wall.

THE ONE-STEP LAY UP
The player starts from just in front of the basket in the following stance:
- The feet are parallel and shoulder-width apart
- The knees are bent
- The player is holding the ball; the shooting hand is behind the ball, and the off hand is on the side of the ball
- The player concentrates on a point on the backboard
The player then takes a step with the inside foot (for example, the left foot on the right side) and shoots a lay up. Emphasize the following points:
- Step with the correct foot
- Simultaneously jump and drive the opposite knee upward
- Shoot with the correct hand using the correct arm motion

THE TWO-STEP LAY UP
To shoot a two-step lay up, players back up one full step from the starting position for the one-step lay up, and assume the triple threat position. They then take two steps and jump off the correct foot for shooting a lay up. Emphasize the teaching points for the one-step lay up and the following:
- To prepare for the jump, make the second step shorter than the first
- Keep the ball in front—do not move it from side to side

THE THREE-STEP LAY UP
To shoot a three-step lay up, players position themselves three running steps from the basket (choosing a reference mark on the floor often ensures consistency). They then assume the starting position for the two-step lay up and shoot a lay up using three steps and no dribble. Shooting in this way is actually traveling, but it helps develop a running rhythm.

**THE ONE-DRIBBLE LAY UP**

This part of the teaching progression is identical to the three-step lay up except that the player adds a dribble that coincides with the first step. The key points of this sequence are as follows:

- Dribble the ball with the outside hand (i.e., the left hand when doing a left-handed lay up)
- The ball and the first step should hit the floor at the same time
- Pick up the ball by letting it bounce up into the dribbling hand. Trap the ball with the off hand, thus forming a good shooting grip with the hands

**COMPLETE LAY UP OFF THE DRIBBLE**

To perform the lay up off the dribble, players need to be able to take stutter steps—to make it possible to arrive on the correct foot for shooting. Concentrate on jumping off the correct foot using the following progression:

- Dribble on the spot, then shoot a one-dribble lay up
- Start at about 20 feet from hoop, and dribble toward the basket at half to three-quarter speed to shoot the lay up

**BALL TOSS LAY UPS**

Have player toss the ball to themselves, catch with a jump stop. The player then pivots, still in a triple threat stance facing the basket, and dribbles in for the lay up.

**POWER LAY UPS** (two-foot jump stop)

Power lay ups provide increased strength, protection, and control of the basketball when there is defensive pressure. A player makes a dribble move to the goal and about 2-3 feet from the basket, performs a jump stop. The player’s shooting hand is behind the basketball when the shot is performed. The lay up is taken when both feet jump simultaneously.

**REBOUNDING**

**REBOUNDING CONCEPTS**

The focus of rebounding for young players should be on creating a desire for the basketball. Great emphasis must be placed on the importance of having possession of the ball. Any player, regardless of their size can be an effective rebounder, and it is important for young players to understand this. Rebounding, much like defense, is a choice. A player either wants to be a good rebounder or they do not. Unlike scoring, rebounding involves all five players on the floor. Every player is a potential rebounder on each missed shot. Thus to out-rebound the other team, each player must neutralize the player he or she is guarding, every time on the floor.

Understanding tendencies:

In general, shots taken from the wing on one side of the floor will rebound on the other side (75%). Also most shots off the backboard will come off the front rim (also 75%). The longer the shot, the longer the rebound. 3-point shots will often bounce out to the short corner or elbow. The less arc, the harder and
quicker the ball will come off the rim. Players need to learn and understand how the rebounds are likely to move and anticipate the bounce.

When practicing rebounding, emphasize the following:

• The first thing to do when a shot is taken is not to follow the ball, but to find your player. Rebounding begins when the shot is released, not after it hits the rim.

• Next, you must go and make contact with your player. If you can’t make contact with your player, cut him/her off from going to the basket.

• Now you must turn and “box out” your player—getting your elbows up, arms up and out, your butt down and legs flexed. Contact must be maintained with your player.

• Finally, go and get the ball with two hands and two feet—two hands to secure the ball and two feet to land on the ground in a wide, balanced stance.

• If you can’t rebound the ball, at least get a piece of the ball to “keep it alive”.

• Come down with the ball chinned, and held tightly in hands with elbows out and ball below chin.

• Successful rebounding is simply a matter of desire, aggressiveness, awareness, and consistency.

**REBOUNDING DRILLS**

**CATCH YOUR OWN**

Player starts on one left side of basket, about six feet from out of bounds. The player throws the ball off the backboard over the goal. The player moves to the other side to catch the ball. Repeat back to other side. Have players see how many they can catch in 30 seconds.

**OFFENSE**

**OFFENSIVE CONCEPTS**

When teaching young players offense, some of the most important concepts to remember are that of **patience** and **spacing**. When players get the ball, they often start panicking. When this happens, their initial instinct is to do something without thinking. It is important that they slow down, not become over anxious, and take the time to make their decisions.

As for spacing, everybody usually wants to be close to the ball. If players are left to figure this concept out on their own, it will be 10 players within 2 feet of one basketball. This leaves little or no room for the player with the ball to do much of anything. It is important that players are instructed to space out, which will give them more room to operate.

There are several other offensive suggestions that may be followed depending on the skill level of your athletes:

• After every pass a player makes, they must cut or move

• When a player dribbles toward you, you must cut or get out of the way

• Use the cut the defense gives you

It is also important to remember that every player should learn every position and that offense is not about learning a pattern; it is about learning to use their skills to work together to put the ball in the basket. When players are assigned specific positions, their personal development is consequently limited. In team offense, players must integrate their skills into the flow of the game, while understanding and applying the basic rules of team offense. The following team offensive rules apply at all levels of basket-
ball:

- **See the ball.** Players should see the ball at all times by using peripheral vision and by turning their head to the ball
- **See your teammates.** Players must keep teammates in view at all times
- **Maintain appropriate spacing.** Avoid cluster around the ball on offense and on defense
- **Attack the middle.** Players attacking the middle can create better shot angles and passing angles
- **Read the defense.** Players can react to defense and take advantage of what the defense gives them, forcing defenders to make errors
- **Get back on defense.** Once a team loses possession, players must get back immediately on defense

### OFFENSIVE MOVE CONCEPTS

An acronym used in describing offensive concepts in attack basketball:

**A**—Attack the basket  
**C**—Create space  
**T**—Teammates

**ATTACK THE BASKET.** There are many ways this can be accomplished:

- **Attack with your eyes**—players need to learn to scan the rim upon receiving the ball. This doesn’t always imply squaring the body to the basket. Sometimes a simple peek over the shoulder is all that is required.
- **Attack with your body**—this may be a cutter going to the basket or putting your body in position so you can attack the basket with a pass, shot, or drive. The classic triple threat position embodies the idea of attacking the basket with your eyes and body. The player is able to shoot, drive, or pass the ball.
- **Attack with the ball**—the basket can be attacked with the ball by dribbling, passing, or shooting.

**CREATE SPACE**

If the basket is not open, players need to learn to use and create space. On a fast break a wing player should stay wide in the lane because the defender is between him/her and the basket. By doing this it leaves the basket open for the ball handler. He/she uses the spaces by dribbling to the open basket.

**TEAMMATES**

When the basket is not open and space has been created, players must now start to include their teammates in their decisions. On one level, it is recognition of strengths and weaknesses.

- Who is guarding me?  
- Who is my teammate?  
- Who is guarding him/her?

This often involves having a plan based on our collective strengths and weakness. If one sees a good shooter in the corner, the teammate should recognize and set a screen to bring the shooter to the ball. Good offense is a blend of skills, rhythm (timing and spacing), decision making, and teamwork.

### DEFENSE

**DEFENSIVE CONCEPTS**

Successful defense in basketball depends on each player’s learning and executing a set of fundamental
skills to defensive play. Any player can be a good defensive player and have the opportunity to be a con-
tributor on the defensive end. Defense is a choice. There is some technique to becoming a good defen-
sive player, but more important than learning technique is learning to consistently work hard. It is im-
portant for coaches to make an extra effort to encourage and reinforce the acquisition of defensive skills.

READY POSITION

The ready position is the basic body position for defense. It is a balanced defensive stance that provides a
strong base and enables players to initiate movement in any direction. Assuming this position enables
defensive players to maintain a position between the offensive player and the basket, and react to the
offensive player’s movement.

When in a defensive-ready position, emphasize the following:
- Feet shoulder-width apart, slightly staggered
- Weight distributed evenly on balls of both feet
- Bend ankles, knees, and hips
- Head upright and looking forward, back fairly straight
- Arms are extended out to side in position to intercept a pass
- Hands are above elbow and below shoulder, the closer to the basket the higher the hands are raised
- Must be balanced

DEFENSIVE SLIDES

The defensive slide enables players to move laterally while maintaining the ready position. Players should
maintain this stance unless they have been beaten, in which case they turn, run to cut off the player with
the ball, and then assume the defensive-ready position.

When performing defensive slides, emphasize the following:
- Point toe in direction of the slide
- Push off the back leg and reach with the front leg while propelling the body with a strong lateral push
- Make sure the feet do not come together or cross—maintain a wide base
- As player slides, make sure they do not bob up and down by keeping the feet close to the floor. The
  level of their head must remain constant
- When a player is sliding, have the lead hand up in passing lane and the trailing hand down to discour-
  age a cross over
- If a player wishes to change direction while guarding the ball, that player must perform a “drop step”
in which the trail leg is dropped back to a 45 degree angle while the lead foot is used to push off into a
new direction.

DEFENDING THE PLAYER WITH BALL/WITHOUT BALL

When guarding the dribbler, the following points should be followed:
- Get low and ready to move in any direction
- Stay at least one arm’s length away from your player
- Keep eyes on the mid-section of player
- Stay between the ball and the basket
- Once the offensive player has started to dribble, drop-step and perform defensive slides to maintain
  proper defensive positioning
- Pressure the dribbler to reverse direction or pick up his/her dribble
If beaten, turn and sprint to regain position between the dribbler and the defensive basket.

When guarding a player without the ball, the defender must do the following:

- Be between their player and the ball
- Be in the ready position
- Point to the ball and to their man
- Be between their player and the basket

Players are often over taught the details of team defense to the point that they forget the basic concepts. Some of the basic concepts that we want to teach the players on ball defense:

- To mirror the offensive player’s movement
- To turn the ball handler in a new direction
- To channel the ball handler in one direction

**DENY STANCE**

The purpose of the denial stance is to not allow the defender’s player to catch the ball. When denying the ball on the right-hand side of the floor, the defender must have his back to the ball, yet his head must be rotated in such a way that he can see the ball and the player. Their right hand is out in the passing lane, discouraging the pass to the wing. Their feet are shoulder-width apart.

**HELPFUL WEBSITES:**

**RBA WEBSITE:**
http://salvationarmynorth.org/community/duluth/community-pages/rookie-basketball/

**RESOURCES:**
http://www.breakthroughbasketball.com/
http://www.responsiblesports.com/responsible_coaching/default.aspx
http://www.positivecoach.org/
http://www.nba.com/india/jrnba/
http://stevenashyb.wordpress.com/
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Www.eteam.com/basketball/instruction/tips

**SOURCES:**

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*Coaches Guide* by Jr NBA India
*Breakthrough Basketball Drills* by Jeff & Joe Haefner
Steve Nash Youth Basketball
Long Term Athlete Development Model Canada Basketball