



## Youth Basketball Drills

### Pre-Practice List

1. Secure practice equipment: 8-10 basketballs – very small to 28.5; 12-15 upright cones; 5-10 floor dots; 12-15 practice pennies (6 of 1 color and 6 of another); any items to aid your drills – hoola hoops, cubes, etc.
2. Buy and print nametags for all kids – use for 3 practices.
3. Insure you have enough volunteers or coaches. High school students, moms/dads, friends, other coaches.
4. Print off any important information for parents – practice and competition schedules, rules, etc. Also follow up with an email.
5. If you haven't already had a parent meeting, plan for this – hold during the last 20 min of practice if you have enough coaches.
6. Plan practice that allows for no down time.

### Youth Basketball Concepts and Rules

1. Triple threat / Athletic Stance (they will use this in all sports)
2. Spacing
3. Team concept – who is on their team, who is the opponent. Use pennies and color bands.
4. Offense=trying to score.
5. Defense=don't let the other team score.
6. Doing two skills at once (example: running and catching or passing and talking)
7. Moving to the right means dribbling with right hand, moving to the left means dribbling with left hand.
8. Sportsmanship, teamwork, attitude, effort, communication
9. Unified Partner Philosophy – who is a partner and who is an athlete. Roles
10. Terminology
  - a. "Baseline", "Center Court", "Basket or Hoop", "Out of bounds" – 1<sup>st</sup> practice-3<sup>rd</sup> practice
  - b. "Offense", "Defense" – Every practice!! 😊
  - c. "Sideline", "Free throw line", "lane" – 4<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> practice
11. Rules
  - a. "Traveling" and the hand signal associated. The concept that if players are moving with the ball, they must be dribbling.
    - i. Think soccer – we wouldn't let kids pick up soccer ball with their hands, run, then throw it in the goal.
  - b. "Double Dribble" – if they pick up their dribble, they must pass.
  - c. Taking ball out of bounds after a made basket



## Youth Basketball Drills

### Skills to Incorporate

1. Jump stops
2. Pivots
3. Dribbling – both hands and progress to not stalling at the ball
4. Passing – bounce pass, chest pass, overhead pass, and passes on the move
  - a. Wall passing then pass to a partner
5. Catching – proper hand position
6. Shooting – proper hand position and base. Begin working on follow through
  - a. Lay-up lines for UJ
  - b. 8-15 yr/old – lay-ups
7. Dribbling to jump stop then to pivot
8. Dribbling to passing
9. Catching to dribbling
10. Defense – moving laterally (shuffle)
  - a. Staying between player and basket
11. Rebounding

-----

### First practice Notes:

- Welcome – Introductions
- Set your ground rules. Determine how you will get everybody's attention in a loud gym with balls flying everywhere. Example: Whistle – to the center / balls away
- Whistle and triple threat – teach...dribble/pass/shoot. (practice this multiple times throughout practice and the year as you will need a way to get their attention)
- Expectations – come to every practice...on time with shoes on, ready to practice at 6:00. Free shoot when they arrive. (more important that parents know this)
- Talk about having FUN, becoming BETTER TEAMMATES, and becoming BETTER BASKETBALL PLAYERS!!! It's also good for parents to know that you are going to help their child get better.
- Determine partners for the day - "athlete" and "partner". Role of looking out for one another. Insure they go everywhere together. Don't let it only be one sided – athletes also have a responsibility.
- Work on "center court" / Work on "baseline" – great warm-up drill. Make sure they are spaced.



## Youth Basketball Drills

ALWAYS DO DYNAMIC WARM-UP – Remember, you are building lifelong habits. Jog to jump stop / stretches – can use red cube or introduce athlete leader (10-15yolds)

- Knee hug, quad stretch, lunges, groin stretch, lateral shuffles, back pedal (slow), sprint
- Try to keep it the same each time so kids get comfortable with the stretches.

Coaching notes: the movement doesn't have to be perfect but start to get them to do it a few times right and build on that. Get them to move in different planes at different speeds. Sports are not solely side to side and front and back but are also circular and diagonal.

## Stationary Ballhandling

### Circle Ballhandling

- Build a circle – partner, athlete, partner with the coach in the middle and assistant coaches around the outside.
- The coach in the middle leads the drills
- Start with no dribbles. Ball Slaps, ball taps, Ball around waste, ball around both legs, ball around 1 leg, figure 8 for 12-15 yr olds.
- Then dribble – right hand, left hand, crossover, 1 dribble cross, 2 dribbles cross
- As you progress through mid-season, the 10-15 year olds can possibly get to 2 ball dribbling – they LOVE IT!!!!

Coaching notes: Talk about where to place ball in hand – pads of hands – not on figure tips but ball should never touch palm of hand. Soft but strong hands. Teach the proper dribbling stance – knees bent and chest up. Ball should stay below the waste. Work on dribbling without looking – Coach can make numbers with their hands and kids call it out.

Fun GAME – Simon Says!

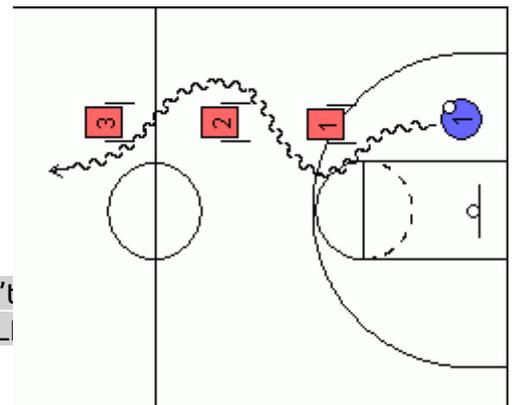
## On-the-move Dribbling

- Start on baseline - Dribble to line on floor, dot or cone and jump stop and get into triple threat

Fun GAME: Red light, green light

### Zig Zag Cone Dribbling

Coaching notes: Anything on-the move should be done under control. Only have them go as fast as they can to continue their dribble. Teach them it's OK to lose the ball as that means they are trying to do it right. Again, use the same points as stationary – ball below waste, eyes up, proper hand position. Work left AND right even if they can't do it. Commend the kids for trying and failing so they don't have them dribble with their RIGHT hand when going right and LEFT.



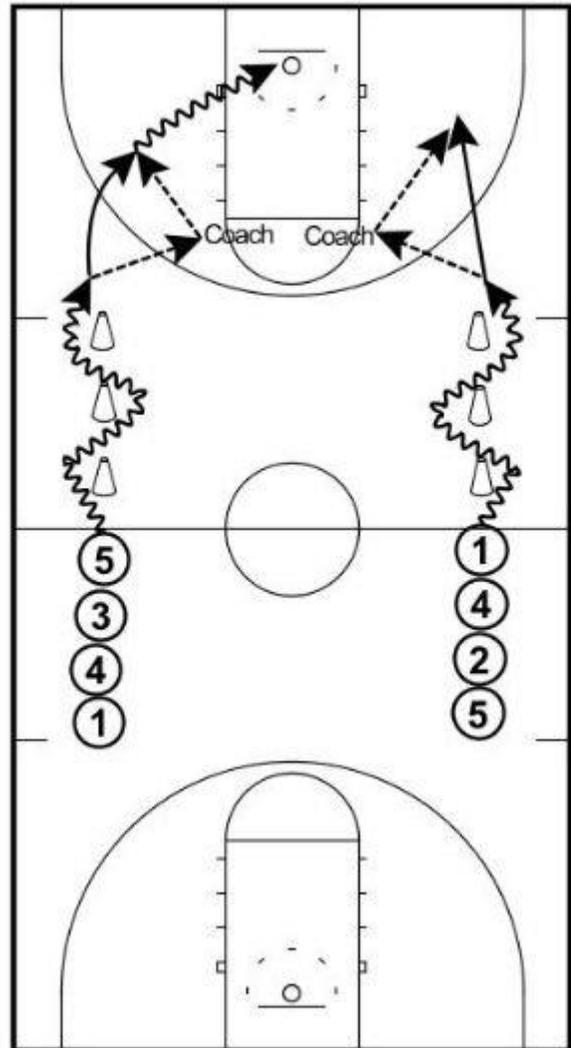


## Youth Basketball Drills

### Give and Go Drill (practice #3 or #4 after teaching dribble to pass)

- Kids start at half court and dribble around the cones using their right hand when going right and left hand when going left
- When they arrive at the last cone, they jump stop and pass the ball to a coach
- Then they move towards the basket and receive the ball from the coach, catch, and make a basket. Then go to the other line

Coaching notes: Teach "give the ball up" and then "go" to the basket and the concept of dribbling with the correct hand. You will need coaches at the start of the line to let them know when the next kid can start (when shot goes up) and you will need coaches directing each kid through the cones to remind to dribble with correct hand.



## Passing

### Partner passing Drill

- Use lane lines on floor. Bounce pass, chest pass, overhead
- If you have kids scared of the ball, use a wall or partner them with somebody who can pass to them without hitting them in the face.
- Progression – bounce pass, chest pass, overhead, right hand, left hand, 1 dribble pass, 2 dribbles pass, 2 crossovers pass, add 2 balls (with 10-15 year olds only)



## Youth Basketball Drills

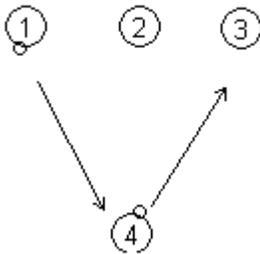
Coaching notes: Teach catching first. Hands ready at your chest. Call "ball". Teach keeping their eyes on the ball and not shying away (they will want to step back). Then go to passing. Every time they pass, they call the name of the receiver. This will help them learn teammates' names and also make sure they have the eyes of the receiver BEFORE passing. For chest and bounce pass, ball starts at chest, must step WITH the pass, extend arms and flick their wrist so palms of hands are point out and thumbs are down. HOLD follow through.

### On-the-move lane line passing

- After they can pass and catch, then have them slide down the court from 1 baseline to the other. They will call names and make sure the partner sets athlete up for success with a good pass. Stay in tight so the passes aren't very long.
- Start with NO finish at the end then as you progress, they can shoot the shot at the end.
- Once a group gets to half court, next group goes.

Coaching notes: Keep moving! They will want to stop or move in one place. This is good for when they start playing games...you'll find they stay in one horizontal plane instead of moving down the floor towards the basket. Also have them communicate names. Make sure they aren't RUNNING too much in between passes. Catch, pass, catch pass

### Rapid Fire Passing



- Start with 2 basketballs or it gets too confusing. Also, have 1 in middle and at least 4-5 teammates on the outside (this diagram shows 3). This drill teaches eye contact and communication. Start very slow.
- #4 has a ball and #1 has a ball. #4 throws ball to either 2 or 3 then receives ball from #1. #4 then throws that ball to either 2 or 3 (whoever doesn't have a ball already) then receives ball from other kid.

Coaching notes: This is a mid-season passing drill for 8-15 year olds. Younger kids can start with 1 in the middle and 2 on the outside. Coach must really direct to start. Kids can't pass until the receiver is looking at them and they must get attention by calling names. Teaches teamwork and they will need this when they start to play 5 on 5. Start with having the partners in the middle then rotate athletes in as they are ready.



## Youth Basketball Drills

### Shooting

**Partner Form shooting Progression – BEEF.** Base or Balance / Elbow / Eyes / Follow through

- Use the lane lines and start with no ball then add a ball and have them shoot to their partners or even to a wall if you have space.
- Work on hand placement with 1 hand only then add the 2<sup>nd</sup> hand.

Coaching Notes: Base is shoulder width and toes pointing towards your target. Talk about where dominant hand should be placed. Use the seams. Elbow in. Up and out – reach for the cookie jar at the top of the refrigerator! Fingers pointed down to the floor, elbow extended. When you add the second hand, placed where all the seams come together. As a coach, you can hold that off hand as they shoot so they see that it is only a “guide hand”.



### **3 Line Shooting**

- Line up with heels on the lane line on each side of the basket and then one at the same distance in front of the basket. 3-5 basketballs and no more than 6 kids per basket...3 if possible.
- Take turns working on form only.
- Move further away but only as far as they can keep that same form.
- Don't let them use the backboard yet.



## **Youth Basketball Drills**

Coaching notes: Work on “squaring up” to basket – toes pointed towards goal. Eyes on the front of the rim – pick out a spot. Taking turns will be a huge point to make in this drill! ☺ They can also cheer when a teammate makes a basket. As they get better at this drill, you can have a competition between baskets on how many “good form made baskets” they have. Don’t count a basket if they don’t try to do it right. Rotate lines so they get to shoot all shots.

### **Defense**

#### **Fun introductory progression**

- Explain what Defense is and why it’s so fun!
- Stance, heat em up, Sssslide, Rebound, take a charge (if safe)

#### **2 on 2 defense drill**

- Teach player to player defense. Coach and ball moves but players stay still. Teach the concept of staying between the player and the basket. Be creative on how you get them to stop their player.
- Then progress to the offensive players move slowly and slightly.
- Can end with a shot by a player and rebound.

### **Rebounding**

#### **Loose ball drill**

- Be creative with this. You can partner them up and have them ready in a stance with hands up.
- Coach throws a ball either towards the basket or somewhere in the gym and they race to go get the ball. Winner gets a point!
- Whoever gets the ball, DRIBBLES it back to another coach and passes it to them and goes to the end of the line. This should be rapid fire so kids aren’t standing around long. Use 2 baskets if needed. 4-6 groups per basket.



## **Youth Basketball Drills**

### **Items to discuss with parents last 20 min of practice**

- Behaviors and tricks – have the fill out the form during practice.
- Important medical items to know – seizures, etc...
- Contact information and then coach shares with all parents so they can connect
- Medical application / Class A. Expectations
- What is a “Unified Partner” – in general and important rules to note as they watch
- Parents, help as needed either as Assistant coaches or for your individual kid. We realize this is a first for many of the kids. Shared ownership in this experience.
- For safety reasons, have them stay during practice until you as a coach feel comfortable. You as a coach are NOT a babysitter 😊
- As a coach, you will learn each week how to best mentor each kid and what they need to be successful. Explain to the parents that the first practice was an assessment and starting week 2, more coaching will happen.