



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

# **YMCA Youth Sports**

## **Basketball Coaching Tips**

Maximize participation. Participation and movement is key in development. Try to keep groups and drill lines small in size. Give each of your players plenty of opportunity to participate in each drill. Rotate players into different positions so each player can begin to learn and develop in all areas of the game.

Be creative. Create new drills or make variations on existing drills often. Evaluate and keep notes of drills that are successful and unsuccessful for your players. Make the necessary adjustments to your practice plan and drills to create the most opportunity, participation and success for your player and team development. Ask for your players input. A players input can bring a positive energy and help them feel included.

These topics below are a few sample basketball drills designed for all types of skill levels.

Conditioning

Dribbling

Passing

Shooting

Offense/Defense

Defense

Rebounding

Thank you for your time and efforts as a volunteer!

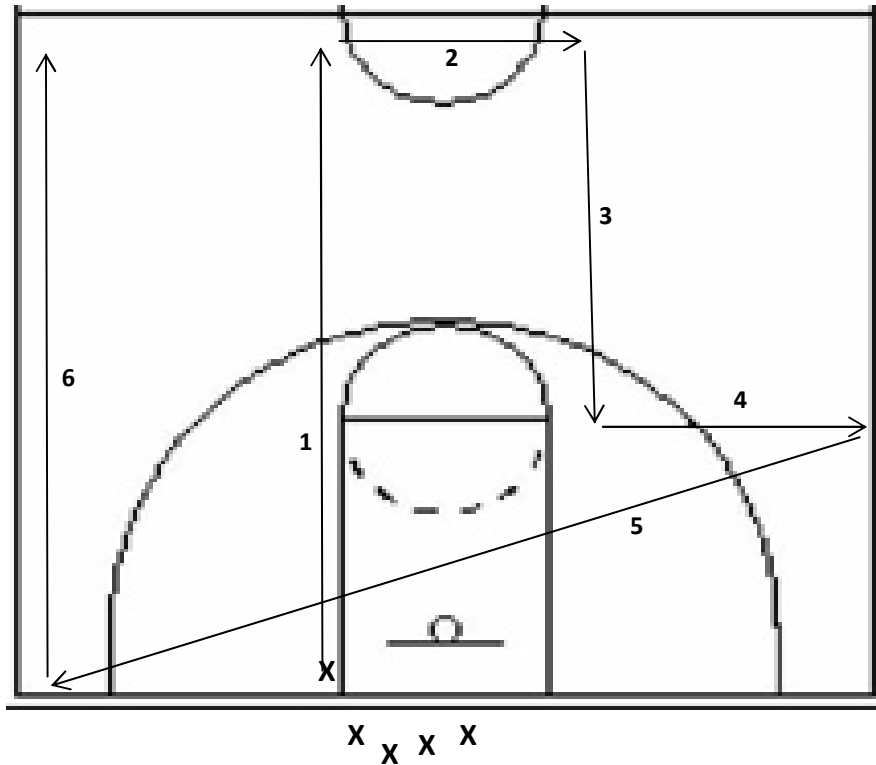
YMCA Youth Sports Staff



# Conditioning Drill – Army

Goal: Develop fitness, footwork and proper defensive position.

- Players form a line on the baseline under the basket.
- Players will always face the far end of the court.
- As first player reaches half court, the next player in line will start.
- Once all players have gone through drill, run again from opposite side.
- Split players evenly and run drill on both halves of court.



1. Sprint to half court.
2. Defensive slide to opposite side of center circle.
3. Backpedal to the free throw line.
4. Defensive slide to side line.
5. Defensive slide to opposite corner.
6. Sprint to half court.

Optional: Adjust length to fit your team. Older kids can finish final sprint the full length of court.



# Dribbling Drill – Red Light/Green Light

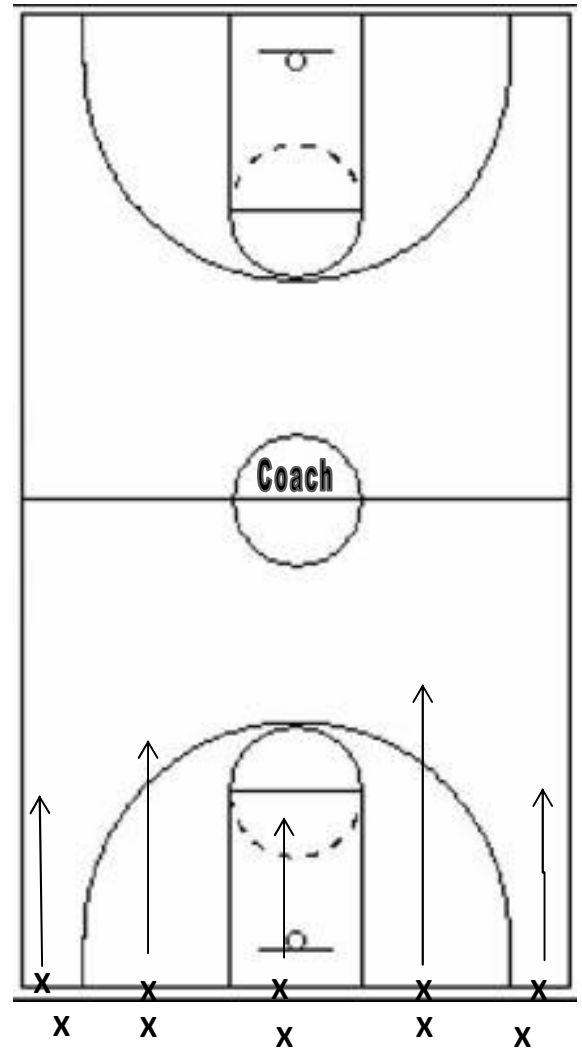
Goal: To improve dribbling control.

- Spread out all players along the baseline, each with a ball. If each player does not have a ball divide into two groups on both baselines.
- Players dribble towards center court on the coaches command of, "green light".
- Players keep dribbling but no longer advance up the court when coach says, "red light".
- Drills is complete once all players have reached half court.

Coach Tip: Remind players it is not a race and to focus on having their dribble under control.

Optional: Extend drill the full length of the court.

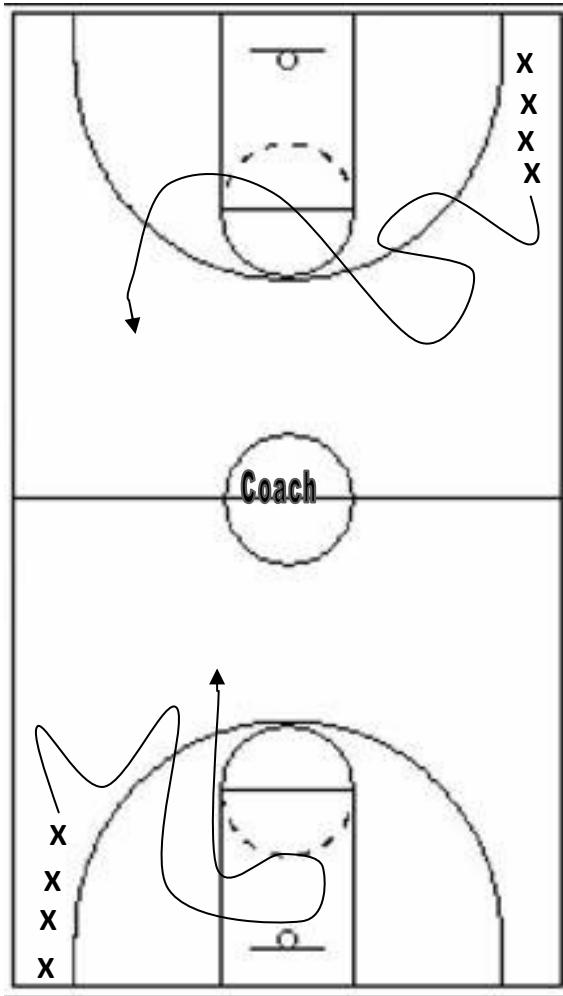
Optional: Make players switch hands on each red light command.





# Dribbling Drill – Follow the Leader

Goal: To improve dribbling control.



- Every player must have a ball for this drill. If not enough basketballs, have the other players do another drill/activity.
- Lead player leads the line around the court and each player in line must copy the moves the leader does.
- Keep a time limit and rotate through the line so each player can be the leader.

Coach Tip: Remind players it is not a race and to focus on having their dribble under control.

Optional: Make players switch hands or all attempt a lay up on coach's command.



# Dribbling Drill – Back Jack

Goal: To improve dribbling control.

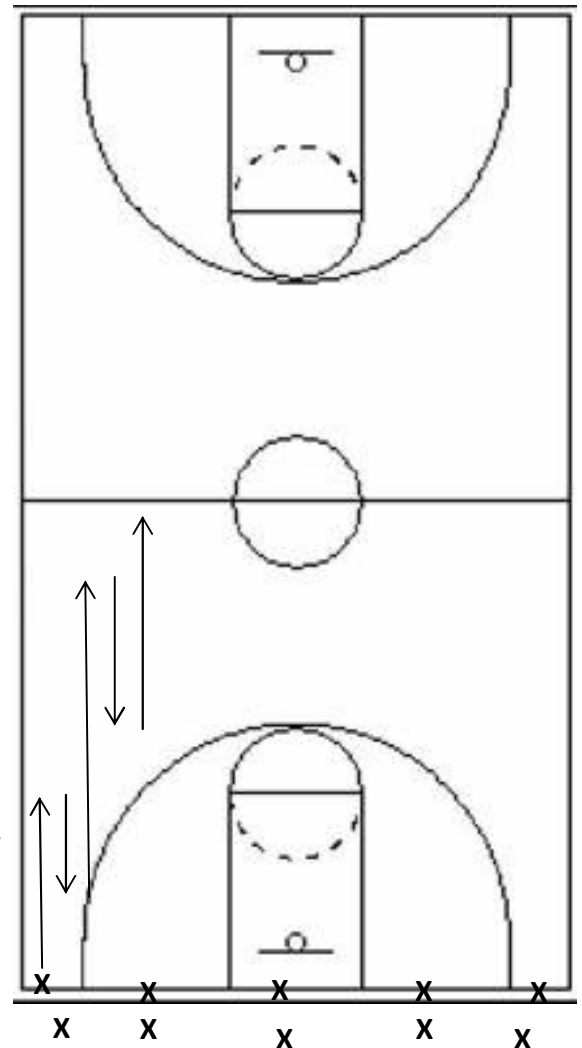
- Space out 4 or 5 players along baseline, each with a ball.
- On coach's command, players dribble towards half court.
- On coach's command, players will stop their forward movement and begin dribbling backwards.
- Second group starts as first group finishes at half court.
- Change dribbling hands and repeat drill back towards baseline.

Optional: Conduct drill full court.

Optional: Alternate hands with each command.

Optional: Allow for a jump shot on far end basket.

Coach Tip: Remind players to have their eyes up court.  
Stand at half court and use hand signals rather than voice command to improve court vision.



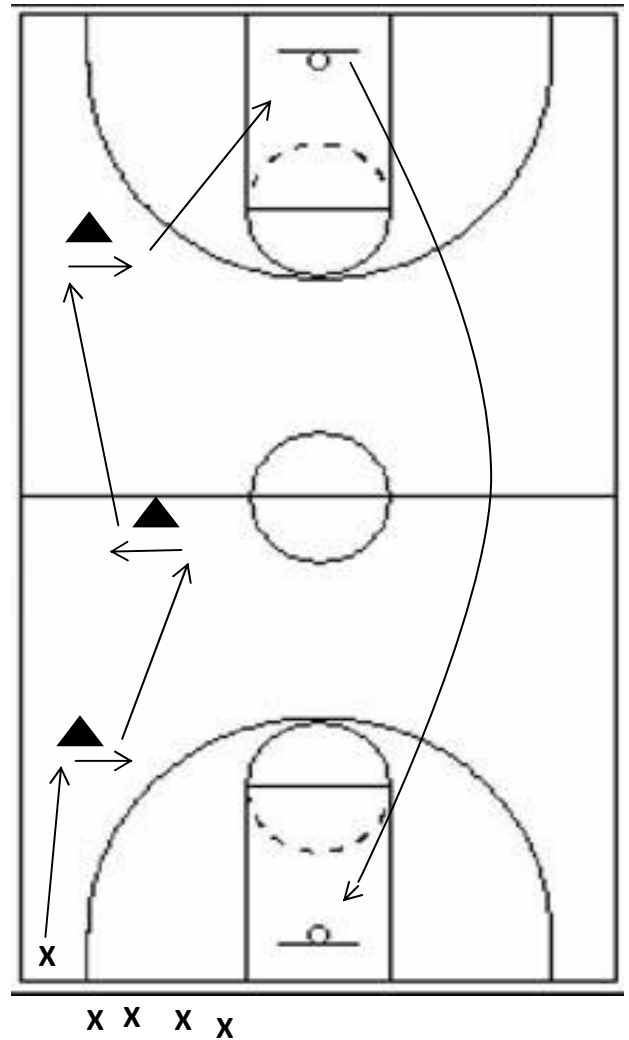


# Dribbling Drill – Point Break

Goal: To develop ball handling and conditioning.

- Players line up on baseline.
- Space out cones or 3 to 4 defenders on court.
- Player dribbles to first cone/defender and makes a move to get around obstacle. Player makes move at each cone/defender.
- Moves can be between the legs, around back or a simple crossover to opposite hand.
- Next player in line starts as lead player passes second cone/defender.
- Player finishes with lay-up and rebound.
- Player dribbles length of court for another lay-up.

Optional: Attempt jump shot rather than lay-up.  
Optional: Add more cones/defenders.



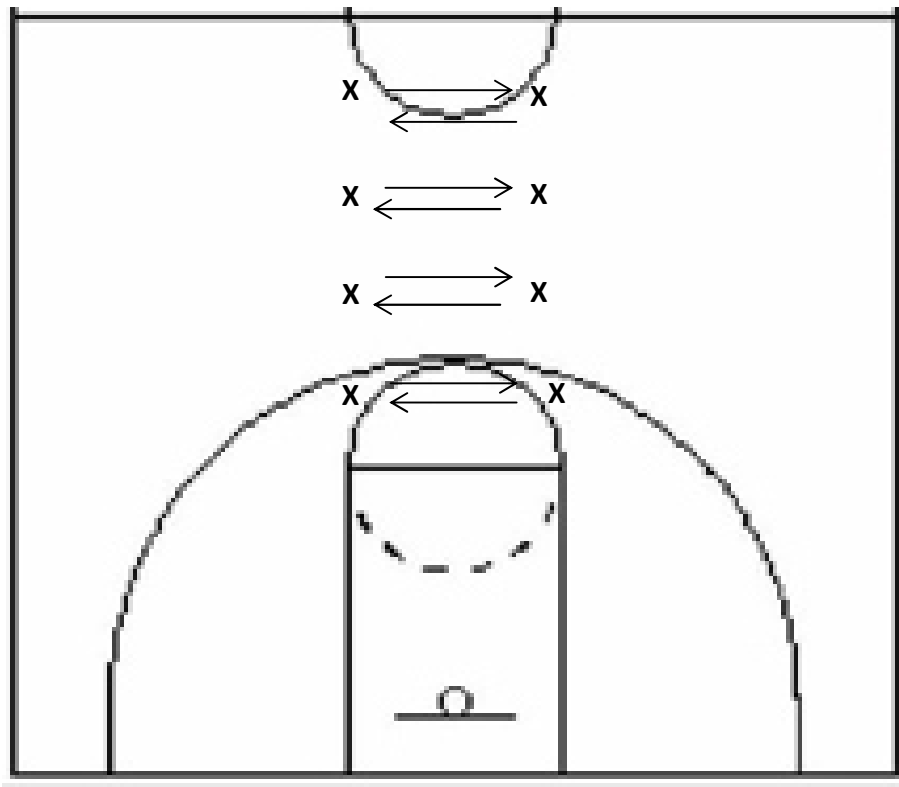


# Passing Drill – Pairs

Goal: To improve passing skills.

- Pair up players approximately 8-10 feet apart. One ball per group.
- Each player will make a different type of pass each time.
- Work on different passes (chest, bounce, overhead, etc.).

Coach Tip: If there is an odd number of players, have a group of three. Make a triangle or one player standing across from two, alternating between them.

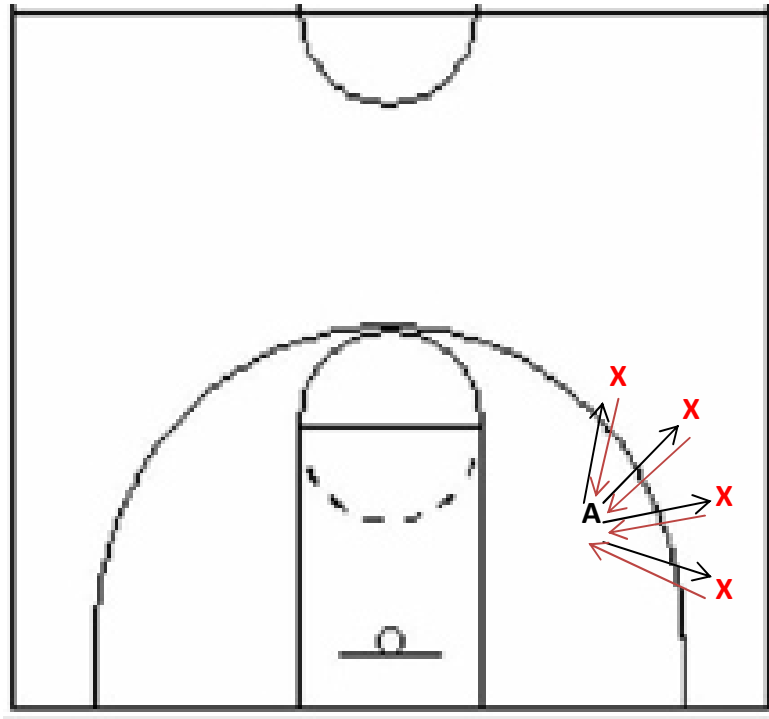




# Passing Drill – Rapid Fire

Goal: To improve passing skills.

- Player 'A' passes to each of their teammates as quickly as possible.
- Each teammate passes it back to Player A as quickly as they can.
- Player 'A' passes down the line and back.
- Rotate each player through the drill.
- Work on different passes (chest, bounce, overhead).



Optional: Break into two teams and race.

Optional: Player 'A' can pass to any player in the line at any time.

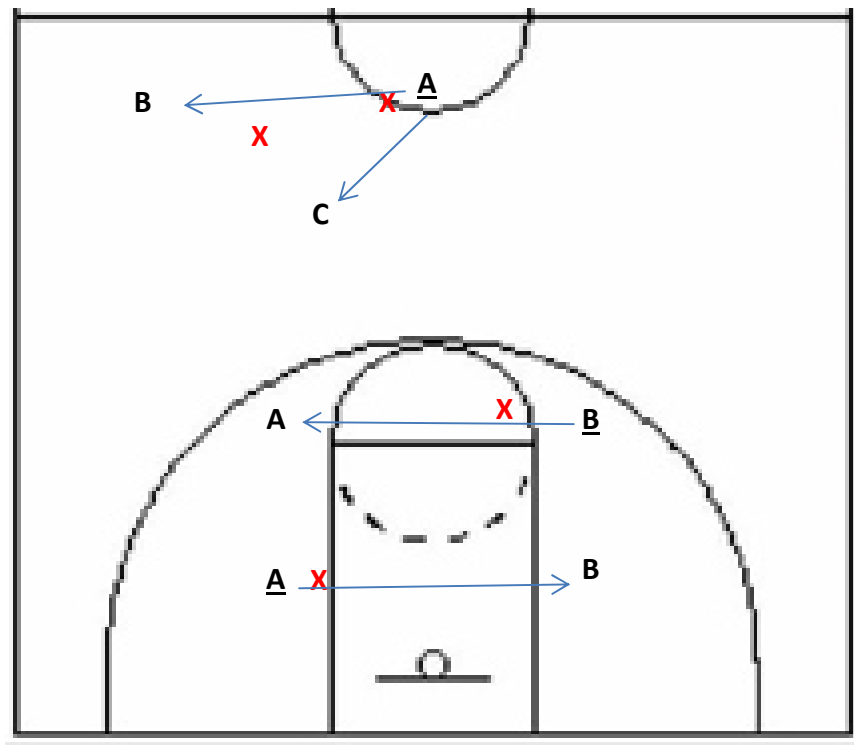




# Passing Drill – Bandit

Goal: To develop passing skills around a defender.

- Group players into groups of three with one basketball. Multiple groups going at once.
- Space players 'A' and 'B' about ten feet apart.
- Players 'A' and 'B' use various passes around the defender, player 'X'.
- Player 'X' works on closing in on player with the ball and getting into proper defensive position.
- Players 'A' and 'B' may not lob pass over defender.
- Defender may not drop back more than half the distance between passers.



Example of three separate groups shown.

Coach Tip: Remind defenders to have active arms and hands to eliminate passers vision.

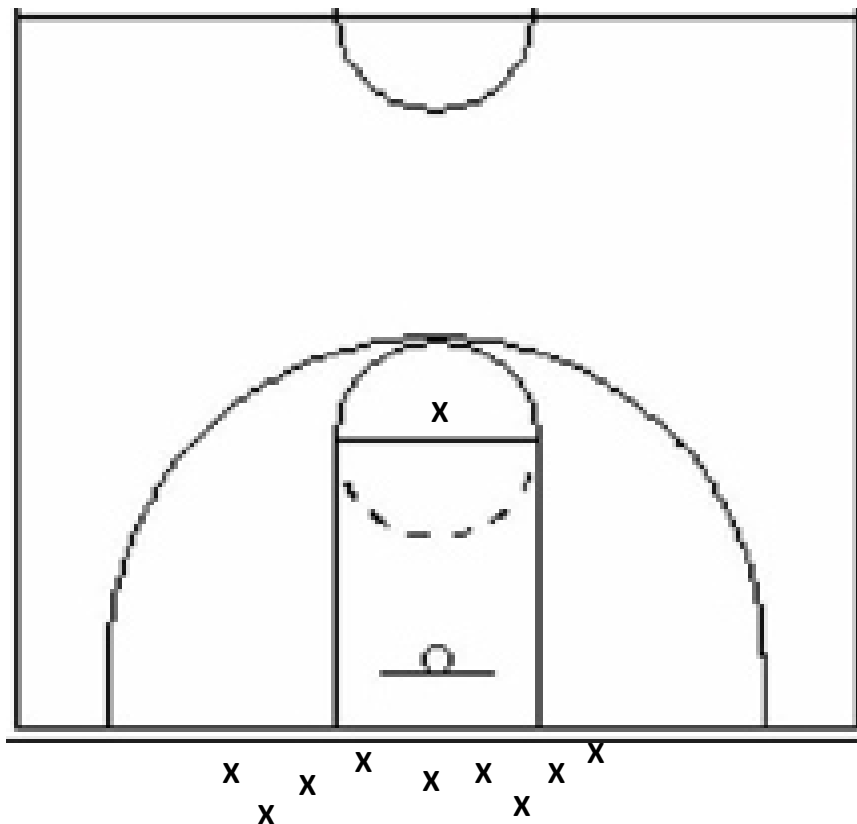
Optional: Make groups of five. Three players passing against two defenders.



# Shooting Drill – Pressure

Goal: To improve free throw shooting under pressure and improve conditioning.

- Have each player take two free-throw shots.
- Have the rest of the players on the baseline making noise.
- Determine a goal of made free-throws for the team.
- One sprint or lap around court for total number under goal.
- Example: 9 players = 18 attempts, team goal is 12 made baskets. Only 9 free-throws made, players run 3 sprints.





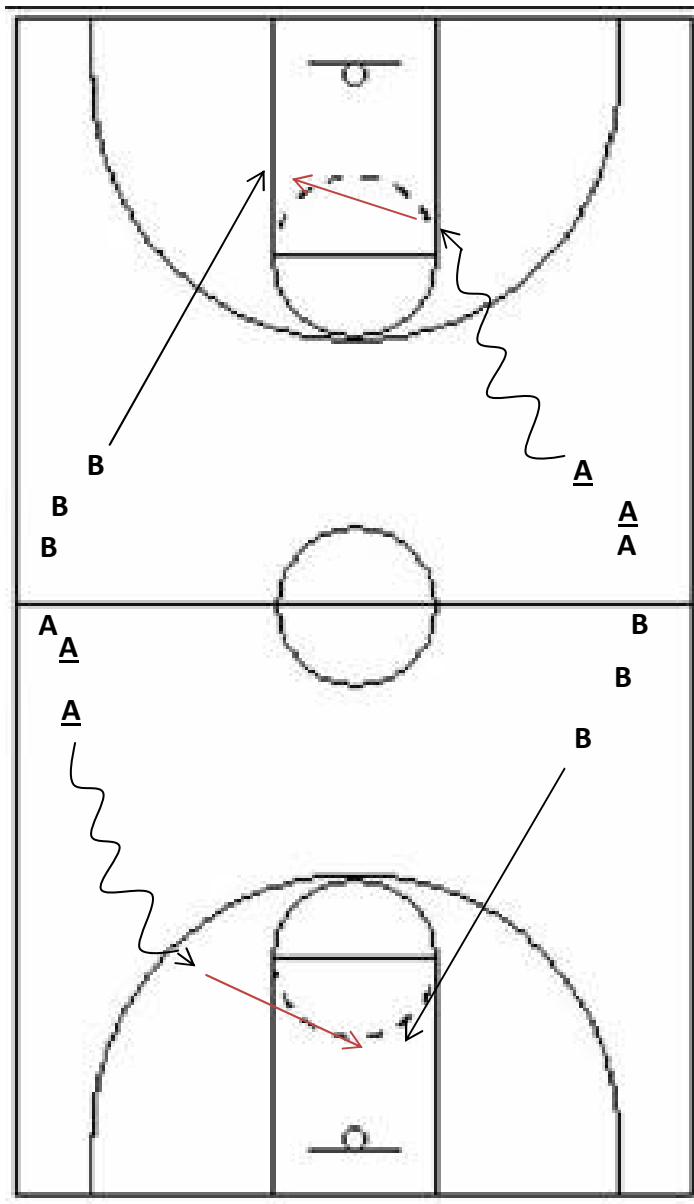
# Shooting Drill – Lay-up

Goal: To improve lay-ups, dribbling and passing.

- Divide players into 4 groups. Two balls per half court.
- As shown, Player 'A' dribbles towards basket while Player 'B' is running towards basket.
- Player 'A' makes a lead pass to Player 'B' at around the free-throw line.
- Player 'B' attempts lay-up and Player 'A' gets the rebound.
- As the rebound is collected, the next pair runs drill. Previous pair passes the ball to next in line and switches lines.
- Run each player through drill 3-5 times and then start ball on opposite side.

Optional: Make lead pass at around the three point line and have a jump shot attempt, rather than lay-up.

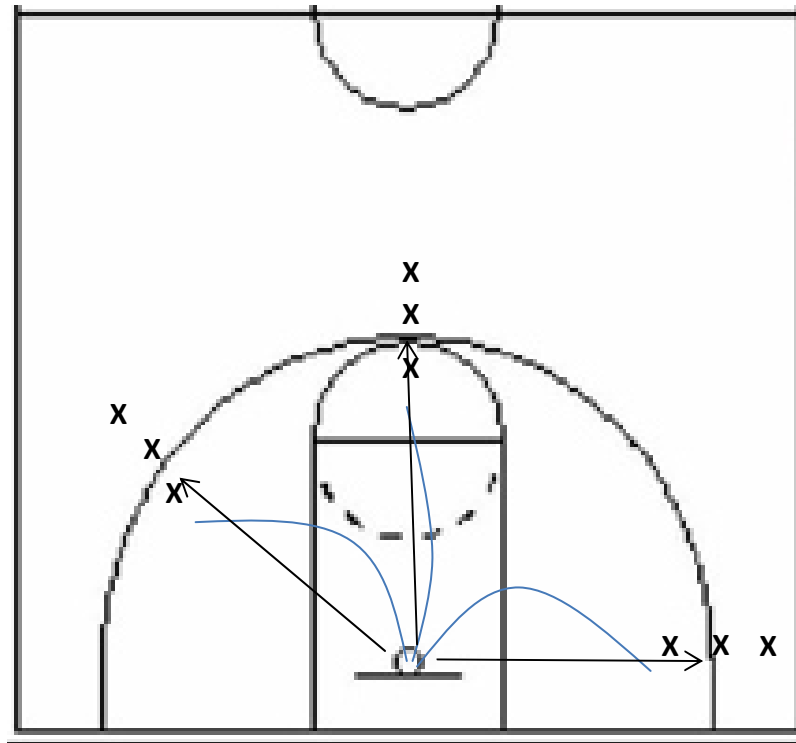
Optional: Have one defender stand in the middle (not attempting steal) so offense has to pass around defender.





# Shooting Drill – Shootout

Goal: To improve shooting under pressure.



- Divide into three groups, if uneven number of players, have one player shoot twice.
- Designate three shooting spots.
- Lead player from each group attempts one shot on coach's command.
- Player will get own rebound (make or miss) and pass to the next player in line.
- Player moves to back of same line.
- Each basket is one point. The first team to ten points wins.
- Rotate groups to each shooting location.

Optional: The two losing teams run sprints/conditioning.

Optional: Rotate shooting locations after each new game.



# Offense/Defense Drill – 3-2

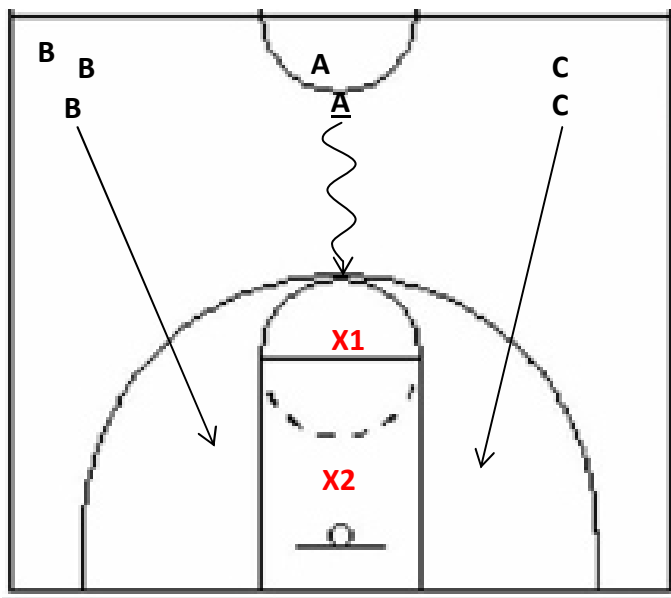
Goal: Offense- To be able to read the defense and make correct pass or shot.  
Defense- To force the offense into a difficult shot or turnover while being out numbered.

- Create three lines of offensive players at half court. The player in middle line starts with ball.
- Player 'A' drives towards the basket with players 'B' and 'C' going towards the basket attempting to get open.
- Player 'X1' will try to stop the ball before the free-throw line. Player 'X2' defends the first pass recipient.
- If offense obtains rebound, play continues. If defense obtains a rebound or creates a turnover, the play is over.
- Players 'X1' and 'X2' get in an offensive line and players 'B' and 'C' are now on defense. Player 'A' cannot return to the middle line.
- Players must rotate lines and play all positions.

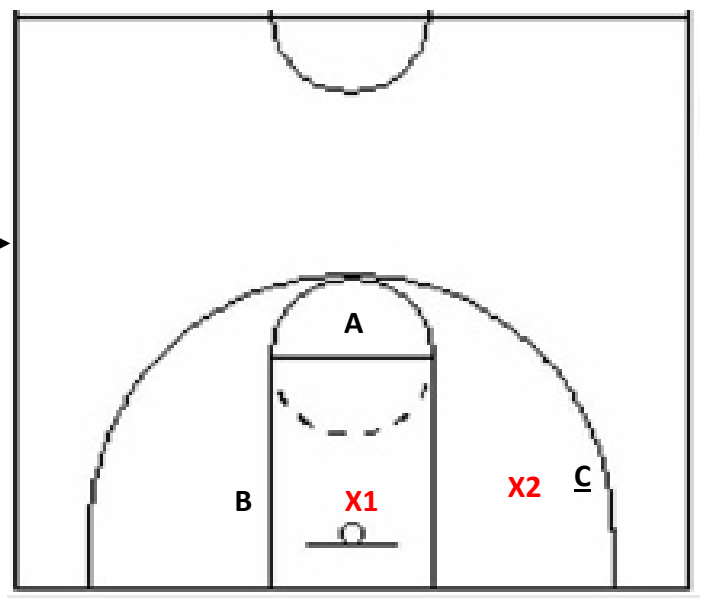
Coach Tip: Top defensive player must rotate down towards the hoop when bottom defender steps out to defend the wing.

Optional: Use this as a pre-game or pre-practice warm-up.

Optional: Add a player to each side to create a 4v3 fast break.



Player 'A' dribbles until 'X1' stops progress



Player 'C' has the ball. 'X1' rotates down to defend basket.



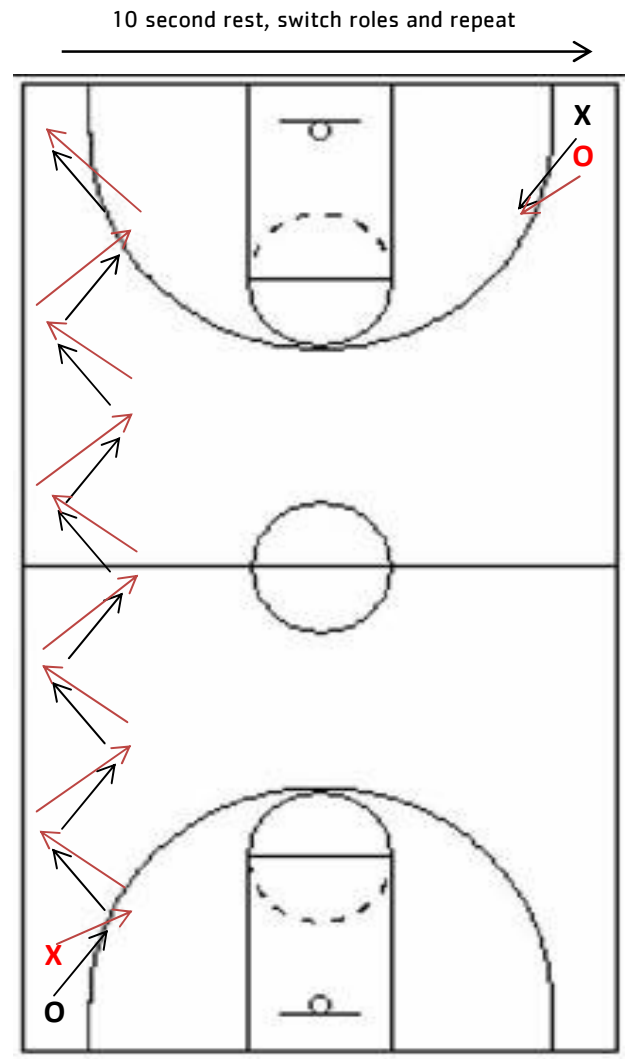
# Defense Drill – Zig Zag

Goal: Develop defensive pressure and work on defensive position and footwork.

- Pair players with comparable ability.
- Player with ball dribbles under control up court.
- Defensive player forces offensive player to change direction.
- Defensive player does not attempt steal.
- Second group starts when lead group is at half court.
- Players switch and run the drill back down court.

**Coach Tip:** Remind defense to have hips low and head up. Have pre-determined boundaries such as, the sideline and the lane. Keep dribbling area narrow.

**Optional:** Have defensive player keep hands behind their back or on head to promote footwork and hip movement.





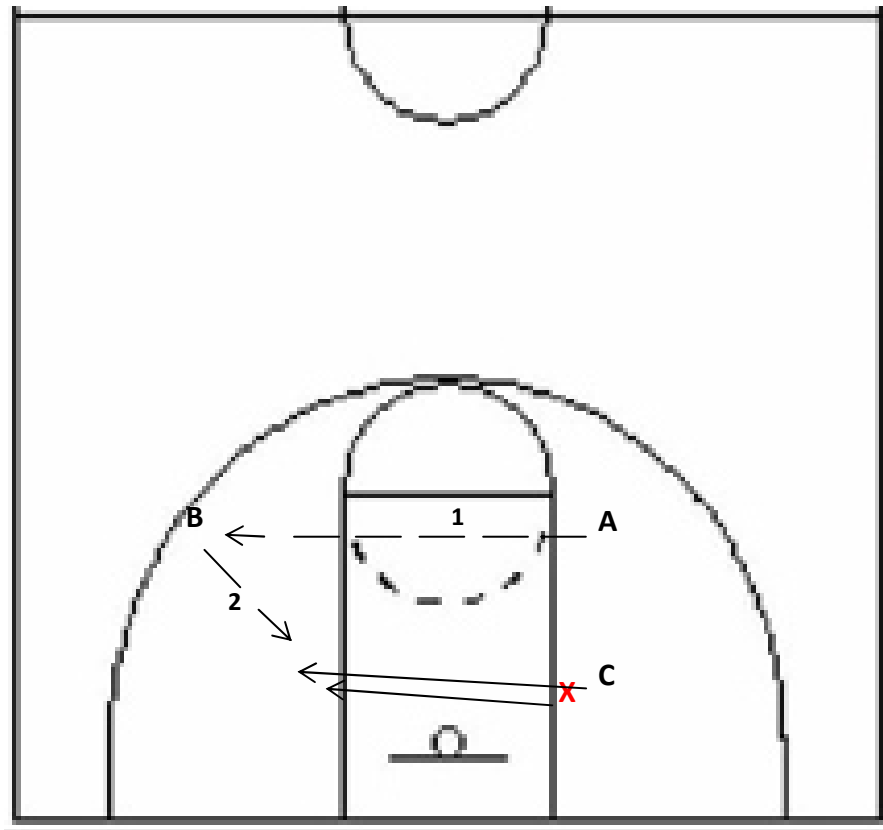
# Defense Drill – Flash

Goal: Deny the pass into the low post.

- Payer 'A' tries to pass to player 'C'. If denied, player 'A' passes to player 'B'. Shown (1)
- Player 'C' flashes across lane to lower block.
- Player 'B' tries to pass to player 'C'. Shown (2) If denied, player 'B' passes back to player 'A'.
- Player 'C' flashes block to block until pass is complete or until player 'X' has created a turnover.
- Rotate positions.
- Split players evenly and run drill on both halves of court.

Optional: Add another defender pressuring the ball on players 'A' and 'B'.

Optional: Allow player 'C' to attempt a score if pass is received.

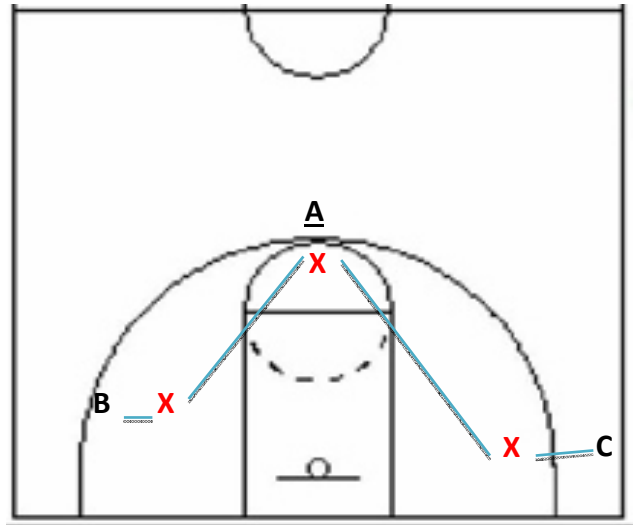




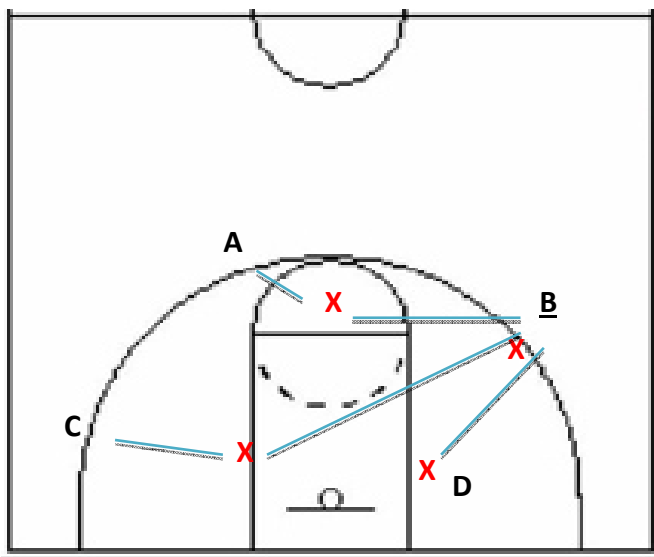
# Defense Drill – Vision and Position

Goal: Develop proper defensive positioning and vision as ball moves around.

- Offense slowly passes ball around the perimeter.
- Offense holds onto ball for 3–5 seconds while defense gets into correct position.
- Defense must be able to see the player they are guarding, as well as, the ball.
- Defenders should point to their man and to the ball to help their peripheral vision.
- Defense should always have their back towards the basket they are defending.
- Offense does not penetrate or attempt to score.



Player 'A' has ball. Lines are defenders vision lines.



Player 'B' has ball. Lines are defenders vision lines.

Optional: Start with 3v3 and add players with progression.

Optional: Allow offense to penetrate and attempt scoring.

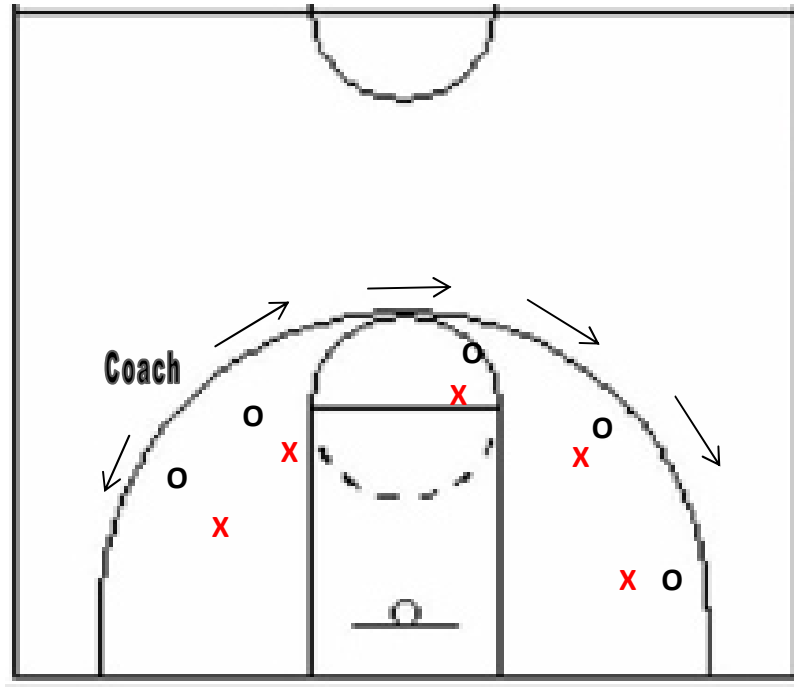
Optional: Play full court to work on conditioning and hustling back on defense.





# Rebounding Drill – Block Out

Goal: To improve blocking out and rebounding skills.



- Players pair up just inside the three point arc.
- All offensive players face the basket.
- Coach shoots ball from various spots behind players.
- Defense must block out the offensive players as they crash in for the rebound.
- Play game to six points. Defense is awarded one point for defensive rebound, offense is awarded two points for an offensive rebound.
- Switch offense/defense and repeat drill.

Optional: Add an extra defensive player.