



New Berlin Athletic Association
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SHOOTING

BASKETBALL DRILLS

Table of Contents

6. SHOOTING	3
6.1 LAY-UP PROGRESSION (👉).....	3
6.2 FULL COURT LAY-UP (👉).....	5
6.3 SET SHOT SHOOTING STROKE (👉).....	6
6.4 LIGHTNING (👉).....	7
6.5 THREE PLAYER SHOOTING DRILL (👉).....	8
6.6 DROP STEP (👉).....	9
6.7 FOUR PLAYER SHOOTING DRILL (👉).....	10

6 SHOOTING

6.1 Lay-up Progression

Level: Beginner

The most important concept in teaching the lay-up is to have the kids master the one-footed take-off. In games, the players who have mastered the one-footed take-off will score many more points than those who have not. The reason is that the one-footed take-off allows a player to maintain their momentum when moving into the shot, and if they get a step advantage on the defender, the defender can never recover. The players who gather to a two-footed take-off need to slow down then come to a stop, and this allows the defender to recover and contest the shot.

Teaching the one-footed take-off is much more difficult than it may appear. For many young players, it is best learned in slow deliberate steps, over the course of four separate practices.

Practice #1

- One-footed hop. Have the kids hop up and down on one foot. Tell the right handed players to hop on their left foot. Tell the left handed players to hop on their right foot. Have them drive the knee of the non-jumping leg up toward their chin with each hop. Then explain that this is the take-off foot for the lay-up.
- Air lay-up. No ball – it only messes them up at this point. We're concentrating on footwork. Have the player stand about eight feet away from the basket on the side of the lane. For right handed players, have them take one step toward the basket with the left foot. Have them drive the right knee high into the air and leap off the left foot toward the basket. Put the right hand behind the imaginary ball and "shoot" it off the backboard while airborne. Land on two feet. Left handed players reverse the process, and work on the opposite side of the basket.

Practice #2

- Air lay-up. Same drill as the first practice. You need to remind them what foot they will take-off from.
- One step lay-up. They get to use a ball but no dribble. Have the kids start about eight feet away from the basket. Have the right handed kids take one step with their left foot, drive their right knee up in the air, jump off of the left foot, shoot the ball while in the air, and then land on two feet. For left handed kids, reverse the process. The main thing is footwork, don't worry if the ball doesn't come close to going in the basket at this point. Some 3rd graders may not be able to do it, but most 4th graders should. Really emphasize the one-footed take-off.

SHOOTING

Lay-up Progression

Level: Beginner

Practice #3

- One step lay-up. Same drill as the second practice.
- Running air lay-up. No ball. Have the kids get in a line about 20 feet away from basket. Have them take turns running toward the basket pretending as if they were dribbling the ball, then take-off of one foot shooting an imaginary lay-up, then landing on two feet. Emphasize height on the take-off. Often, young players jump out rather than up, and shoot the ball too low as a result.

Practice #4

- Running air lay-up. Same drill as the third practice.
- The real thing. Ball, dribbling, everything. By now, they are really ready to show you that they can do it. Have the kids get in a line about 20 feet away from basket. Have them take turns dribbling to the hoop, jumping off of one foot and shooting the lay-up. Don't worry that the shots don't go in. The main thing is to continue to emphasize the one-footed take-off. With regular practice, the shots will start to fall.

Of course, not every kid will have the one-footed take-off mastered by the end of the fourth practice. As the season progresses, it is important to keep working on the lay-up. The kids who are having success at the lay-up should be encouraged to increase the tempo to game speed when practicing, and incorporate some of their individual moves (hesitation, cross-over, etc...) into lay-up practice. For the kids who are in the earlier stages of mastering this skill, it may be helpful to spend a couple of practice sessions with them reviewing some of the earlier drills such as the one-footed hop, the air lay-up, the one step lay-up, and the running air lay-up.

SHOOTING

6.2 Full Court Lay-up

Level: Intermediate

Have a player start at one end of the gym, dribble as fast as they can, and then shoot the lay-up. This drill addresses a number of topics: ball handling, shooting, and offensive transition. It does this by having the kids dribble with speed, but under control, and then gather control into the lay-up. This drill is helpful to improve “finishing” on fast breaks.

A slightly more advanced version of this same drill is to have a second player, on defense, chase the dribbler. Let the offensive player get about a 10 foot lead before you let the defensive player start. It will vary according to the relative speed of the pair in the drill. The idea is to make sure the player with the ball feels some pressure. This creates a more game-like environment and forces the shooter to really concentrate on making the lay-up.

SHOOTING

6.3 Set Shot – Shooting Stroke

Level: Beginner

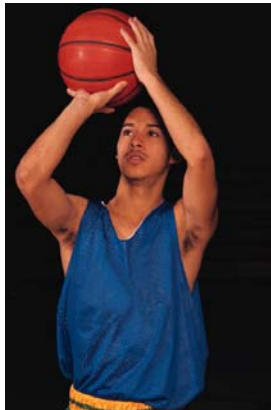
Explain to the players that on the set-shot, unlike the lay-up, they should take-off from two feet. The set-shot is used when we do not have a clear path to the basket, or our momentum has been stopped. The coach will need to clearly differentiate the set-shot from the lay-up techniques, as well as the situations when each should be used.

Each player should have a ball, but we're not shooting at the basket. The idea is to practice set shot form by shooting the ball straight up in the air to a point about 12 feet above the ground. Tell the players to try to get a *perfectly straight backward rotation* along one of the ball's seams.

Points of emphasis:

- bend at the knees and waist,
- power hand is the shooting hand behind and underneath the ball,
- other hand is the guide on the side of the ball,
- shooting arm should start parallel to the ground from the armpit to the elbow,
- when taking the shot extend shooting arm straight out and up to the basket,
- flop the wrist over the top at release,
- feel the ball leave the index (pointer) finger last.

Many young players want to shoot the ball in a manner similar to the chest pass. Often, they will point both elbows out to the side, and flick the ball with two hands rather than developing a shooting stroke with the power hand underneath the ball. One technique to coach them out of this habit is to tell them “no chicken wings.” Instruct them to “make a shelf” by keeping the shoulder-to-elbow portion of their arm parallel to the ground at the start of the shot.



SHOOTING

6.4 Lightning

Level: Beginner

Lightening is a shooting game where the players start by taking a “long” shot (from about the free-throw line), and if they miss, they get their own rebound and continue shooting from anywhere on the court they wish until they make a shot. During each round, two players are paired off in a mini shooting competition. Let’s say Players 1 and 2 are paired off. Player 1 takes her long shot first, and let’s say she misses. Player 2 takes her long shot and she also misses. The two players get their own rebounds and each continues to shoot (from anywhere) until one player makes a shot. If Player 2 is the first to make a shot, then Player 1 is knocked out of the competition. If Player 1 is the first to make a shot, then both players remain in the competition. Only the player shooting first can be knocked out of the competition. Let’s say that in our example that Player 1 was the first to make a shot. She remains in the competition and goes to the end of the line. The next pairing is Player 2 vs. Player 3 with Player 2 shooting first. And so on.

This game seems to work well with a grouping of about five or six players. You can have two games of Lightning going on opposite sides of the court. The kids love this game.

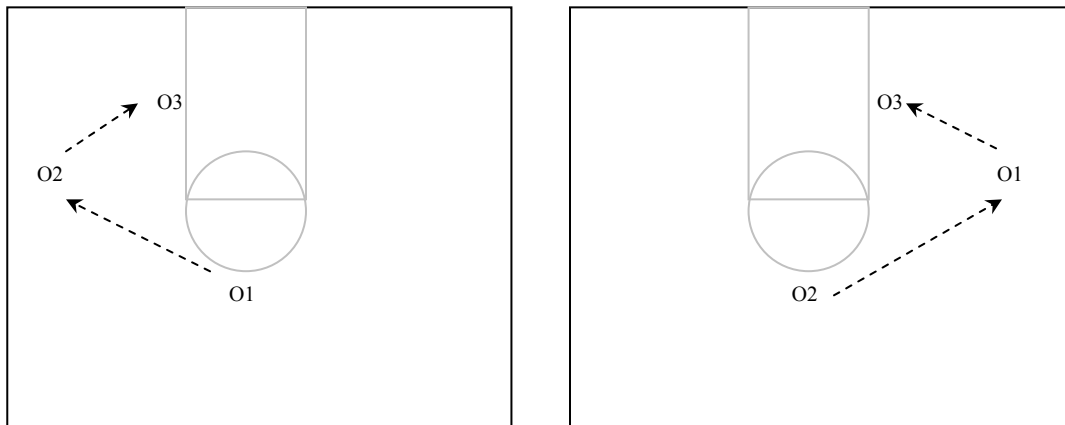
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6.5 Three Player Shooting Drill

Level: Intermediate

Have player O1 start at the point with the ball, player O2 start at the left wing, and player O3 on the left block, or low post. The point O1 passes to the wing, and the wing O2 passes to the post O3 who catches, turns and shoots. Then, player O1 runs to the wing on the right side of the court, and O2 runs to the point. Player O3 gets her own rebound, throws an overhead outlet pass to the point (which is now occupied by O2). Player O2 passes to the wing on the right side (now occupied by O1), who makes the entry pass to the right side low post. The post player catches and shoots, and the process continues. The shooter should take four shots from each side, and then each player takes a turn as the shooter.

This drill can be modified to take the shot at any spot on the court. The main thing is that it keeps three players active, moving, and working on passing, catching and shooting, simultaneously.



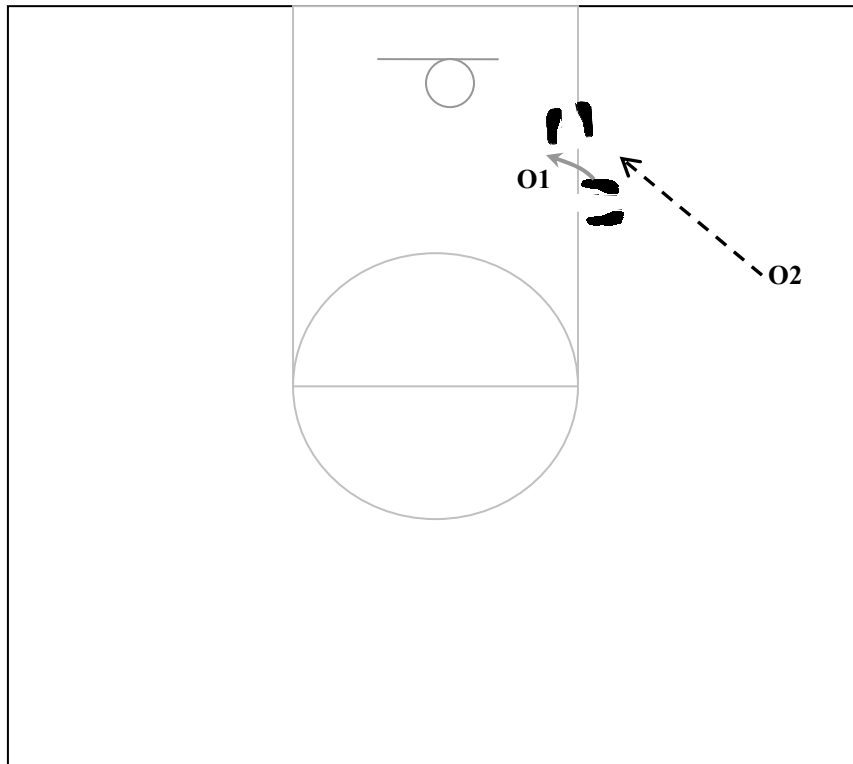
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6.6 Drop Step

Level: Advanced

Have an offensive player, O1, establish post position on the block with their back to the basket. Another offensive player, O2, will make the entry pass to the post. The post player, O1, should get his baseline side foot in the air moving toward the basket *while the pass is in the air*. His baseline side foot should land at about the same time the ball touches his hands. Then, he can square up to the basket by taking a step with the other foot. This creates a seal with the defender on his back and gives him a clean look at the basket. Shoot it off the backboard. Practice it on both sides of the basket.

The drop-step is one of the most effective post moves at all levels of basketball. Players who master it will score a lot of points. 5th and 6th graders can do it.



SHOOTING

6.7 Four Player Shooting Drill

Level: Advanced

Have player O4 start by grabbing an imaginary rebound then making an overhead outlet pass to O1 at the point. O1 passes to O2, at the wing, who passes to O3 who shoots. Immediately after shooting O3 runs to the opposite corner and gets ready to shoot again. O1 runs from the point to the vacant wing area, and O2 runs to the point. O4 rebounds, then makes an overhead outlet pass to O2 at the point. O2 passes to O1, at the wing, who passes to O3 who shoots. The shooter should take four shots from each side. Each player should take a turn as the shooter, the rebounder and each perimeter position. This drill provides a good opportunity to really focus on making good crisp passes and catches. Make sure they pass and catch with two hands not one. You may need to remind players to “step into” their passes. It will help the ball get there much more quickly. No one should need to dribble the ball in this drill. Of course, the drill can be modified to shoot from any spot on the court.

