



A Guide
for
New Coaches

A GUIDE FOR NEW COACHES

To win a basketball game your team must score more baskets than your opponent, which can be done by having players use good shot selection combined with accuracy, and by restricting/limiting your opponents scoring opportunities.

Officials (referees) can make two types of "calls" – violations (which are rule infringements not involving player contact) and fouls – which are rule violations involving contact. When a player has amassed 5 fouls they are removed from the game. When a team has amassed 8 team fouls in a half of basketball their opponent receives two "free throws" - uncontested shots taken from the foul line for each subsequent foul. Fouling at all costs is not a sound strategy, rather teaching players to apply pressure to their opponent will enable your most skilled and valuable players in the game to benefit your team.

Guidelines for Offence

Moving the ball towards the basket is done via either passing or dribbling or a combination of both. Appropriate Spacing is one of the most important considerations for your team. Players without the ball should always be moving into space, and a player with the ball should always be looking to pass the ball to these players in space. After passing, players should continue to move to the next available space so they can receive a return pass.

Effective (and efficient) ball and player movement will create high percentage scoring opportunities.

All 5 players on court can move anywhere (no restrictions for any player). When the ball has been advanced to a position close to the basket which will allow a player to take an uncontested shot (and shot from within their shooting range), a shot should be taken. There are no limits on the number of passes or the amount of dribbling to provide this shot. As more than half the shots taken in a game of basketball miss, all players should make rebounding a priority to secure more shot opportunities.

Use fakes to create shot opportunities – fake a pass, fake a shot, fake a dribble. When the defence reacts to your fakes, see the space created and then perform your skill without a defender pressuring you into a mistake. If you don't have the ball keep moving to open spaces, and if you do have the ball keep passing it towards the basket your team is scoring at. After passing keep moving into space towards your scoring basket so you can receive a pass to score.

Guidelines for Defence

Good defence is restricting your opponents their opportunities scoring opportunities, or providing them with very difficult opportunities.

If you do any of these things consistently, your opponent will find it very difficult to score points, and your teams chances of winning will increase dramatically. Defending is done by having every player "match up" with their opponent so that passing and catching the ball becomes difficult. Players defend with their hands (to intercept or steal a pass), so they need to be able to move their feet quickly and get into position to be able to defend successfully.

When a player is dribbling, the defender should be able to move athletically in all directions to keep between them and their basket they are defending (and maintain sufficient space so they are not dribbled past; yet be close enough to also pressure the dribbler). Players not defending the ball can be further away from the player they are defending, ready to sprint and "help" their team mate should they need to stop the dribbler scoring.

If the player being defended passes the ball and then sprints towards the basket for a return pass to score, the defender should stay between them and the ball so that they cannot receive the pass to their advantage (and score uncontested). At all other times players should position their body so that they are between the player they are defending and the basket they are defending. This will make the player they are defending have to work hard to get past the defdner to score, rather than them receiving the ball unopposed.

As more than half shots taken in a game of basketball miss, all players should make rebounding a priority to secure the ball and prevent your opponent obtaining more shot opportunities.

Rules - violations and fouls

Travelling violation

Upon catching the ball a player can step with one foot in any direction and any number of times (pivot) without dribbling. If the player takes another step they must dribble otherwise the official will call a "travelling" violation, and possession will be forfeited to your opponent. Once a player starts dribbling they can continue until they pick up the ball; then they can either pivot, pass or shoot.

Double dribble violation

When a player stops dribbling they are not permitted to re-start dribbling again. If they do this the official will call a "double dribble" violation, and possession will be forfeited to your opponent. The same call will be made if they dribble the ball with both hands at the same time (players can use either hand but only one at a time to dribble the ball).

Carrying (the ball) violation

When dribbling, the players hand must remain on the top and sides of the ball only – never “cupping” the ball from underneath and dribbling the ball. If they do this the official will call a “carrying” violation, and possession will be forfeited to your opponent.

Dribbling is a skill that takes daily practice over a long period of time to become proficient. As many beginners look down at the ball when dribbling and do not see their team mates and defenders, their decision making is greatly disadvantaged – usually resulting in turning the ball over to your opponent. Over dribbling should be discouraged – effective dribbling is best used to create a pass or a quality scoring opportunity.

Player substitutions (“subs”)

Whenever the official blows their whistle to call a foul or violation, players can be substituted into the game. When players go onto the court it is a good idea for them to ask (the player they are replacing), who they are defending so they know who to defend. Players must wait at the score-bench for the official to signal for players to go on the court (exchange same number of players on for those subbed off).

Jump Ball

When two players are holding the ball at the same time for a 1 second count, the official will call a “jump ball” and give the ball to a player from a team who will then inbound the ball to their team (each time this occurs possession is exchanged to the other team). A jump ball (whereby two players contest a ball thrown upwards by the official) is executed in the centre circle of the court at the beginning of a game to start the game.

Out of bounds violation

The ball must be kept in play at all times (inside the baselines and sidelines), otherwise the ball is called out by the officials and possession is given to your opponent (if touched by your team last). The ball must be inbounded by a player wholly behind the inbound line (cannot have a foot on the line or step over the line whilst making an inbound pass).

The 3 second rule (violation)

This rule is open to interpretation by officials, usually depending upon the affect it has upon the defensive team. Generally players are allowed to be in the key for 3 seconds if their team is in possession and shooting – otherwise they have to leave the key before 3 seconds has elapsed. If the officials determine that an player in the key is not affecting the defensive team, they may allow any players to be in the key for longer.

Charge foul

If a player dribbles into a defender who has maintained their position for a 1½ second count; the official will call a “charging” foul, and possession will be forfeited to your opponent. If a defender has arrived at the same time (or just before the player with the ball has), the official will call a foul on the defender (usually a blocking or holding foul).

Blocking foul

If a defender is moving (particularly if their hands are outstretched from their body); and the player dribbling makes contact with the defender;, the official will call a foul on the defence. If contact is made with the defenders body they will usually call a "blocking" foul, and if contact is made with the defenders arms they may call a "hands" or a "checking" or a "holding" foul.

Shooting foul

If the offensive player is shooting and the defender makes contact with their body, arms or hands; the official will call a foul on the defence. If they were shooting a 2 point shot they will receive two "free thows" - uncontested shots taken from the "foul line".

If they shot attempt went in, they will be awarded a bonus shot from the foul line (a 3 point play).

Holding foul

If an offensive player without the ball is being held by a defender, the official will call a foul on the defender. Likewise, an offensive player must be allowed to move around the court without being obstructed or a flou will be called on the defensive player.

Remember, once a player has amassed 5 fouls they will be removed from the game, so they must play wisely to defend without fouling to stay in the game.

As a coach you need to be aware of a players individual foul count so that you can "sub" them off if they quickly accumulate 3 fouls; and then speak to them about adjusting they way they are defending so that they can go back on court and play without "fouling out" of the game.

As the are no time-outs during your games to convey messages to your players, utilise every opportunity available to communicate "cues" or key phrases to your players during game stoppages (when the referee blows their whislte for a violation or foul). It is important to communicate an offensive instruction during an offensive phase of the game and likewise a defensive instruction in a defensive phase of the game. Avoid instructing players what they should have done in the phase they were just in when they are already in a different phase of the game.

Also utilise the opportunities you have to communicate to your team's substitute players seated on the bench next to you to instruct them about what you need them to do for the team when they go on court.

COURT LEGEND

