

Simple Drills to Build Ball-Handling Skills

It is rare for a basketball team to sport a bunch of gifted ball handlers. Proficient dribbling comes from hours of work in the gym, constantly banging the ball on the floor with purpose and knowing the best way to maneuver around defenders while keeping control of the dribble.

To help you improve your ball handlers, here are some basic and advanced dribbling drills to use in your practices.

The following dribbling program, which focuses on ball handling, individual moves with the ball and getting the ball in proper position for a good shot, enables players to plan a dribbling workout, create a strong work ethic and set attainable goals.

Ball-Handling Drills

A daily routine will enhance a player's hand-eye coordination and a strong work ethic.

This routine is designed to build what I call "basketball strength," which enables your players to hold the ball with a certain confidence and makes it difficult for defenders to take the ball from your offensive players.

These drills also help players enhance quickness and develop fingertip control, an essential element of proper dribbling.

Tap drill

This is a fingertip-control drill with the arms moved straight, up, out and down while handling the ball in a standing position.

Around head

Have players move the ball 15 to 18 times around the head to the left and right.

Around waist

Tight rotations around the waist 15 to 18 times in both directions.

Around ankles

Tight rotations around the ankles 15 to 18 times in both directions.

Combination

Put together a set of the above four drills and have players do the set in succession 15 times.

Around left leg

Have players move the ball around the left leg with 15 to 18 rotations to the left and to the right.

Around right leg

Have players move the ball around the right leg with 15 to 18 rotations to the left and to the right.

Finger-tip dribble

All fingers are working separately using the left and right hand while the player is handling the ball.

Ball-Handling Drills (continued)

Stationary series

Crossover, between legs, behind back, spin, half-spin and recover.

Around left leg

Dribble the ball low with the left hand, around the left leg and without looking at the ball.

Around right leg

Dribble the ball low with the right hand around the right leg without looking at the ball.

Figure eight (moving)

Dribbling while moving and keeping the legs shoulder-width apart. Dribble the ball low without looking at the ball while moving.

Lay down series

Left- and right-hand dribble behind the head and underneath legs while laying down.

Wall dribble

Players use left and right hands, dribbling against a wall while standing and looking at one spot. Make sure players do not look at the ball when doing this drill.