



NJB Coaches Clinic
Sunday, November 2, 2025
Wilson High School

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Agenda

1. Introductions and Brief Discussion of Philosophy
2. Ball Handling and Shooting Drills
3. Small Sided Games and Team Drills
4. Team Offense
5. Team Defense
6. Baseline Out of Bounds Plays (BLOBS)
7. Question and Answer

Ball Handling and Shooting Drills

Ball Handling Warmup (1 Ball per Player)

Stationary-

- a) Right Hand Pound
- b) Left Hand Pound
- c) Right Hand In-Out
- d) Left Hand In-Out
- e) Crossovers
- f) Pound Cross
- g) Between Legs (continuous Figure 8)
- h) Pound Between
- i) Behind Back (crossovers)

Moving- Everything is forward and backward.

Go to half court forward. Then return backward to baseline.

- a) Toe Touches
- b) Lunges
- c) Figure 8- No Dribble (SLAPS)
- d) Between Pound
- e) Between Behind
- f) In n Outs

Texas Layups

How the Drills Works:

The drill begins with 4 lines around the court at the free-throw line extended and a player under each ring with a basketball. The players under the ring each and make two passes to the sideline before receiving the ball back for a layup. The last person to pass them the ball follows them in and rebounds the layup and then they become the next person to sprint down the court.

Purpose:

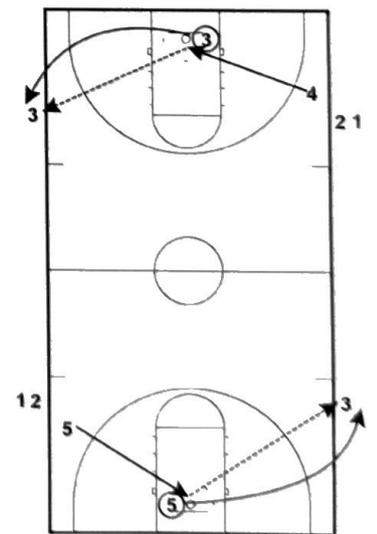
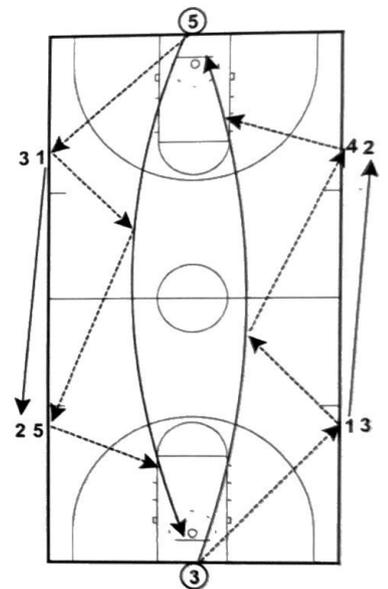
This is a great drill to increase the intensity of practice and work on finishing layups at full speed.

Setup:

- 4 lines of players on each free-throw line extended on the sidelines.
- One player with a basketball under each ring.
- Minimum of 10 players.

Instructions:

1. The drill begins with both players under the ring passing to the player on their right.
2. Immediately after passing they sprint up the court and receive the pass back.
3. Since the basketball can never hit the floor, they catch and immediately pass to the next line of players up the floor before continuing on to receive the basketball for a layup.
4. The player that passes the basketball to the player laying the ball in must sprint in and catch the basketball before it hits the floor



and then pass out to the opposite side of the court and now they become the runner.

5. This continues for the coaches set amount of time.

Scoring System:

- Drill is run for 3 - 5 minutes.
- Run the drill once and see how many layups your team scores and then continually try and beat that number.

Variations:

Left Hand Layup - To practice finishing layups with the left-hand, reverse the drill so that player are passing to their left.

Consequences - You can add consequences for every time the ball touches the floor or for every missed layup.

Coaching Points:

- The ball must never touch the floor.
- Make sure players aren't traveling when they receive the basketball. Many youth players will take too many steps before passing.
- Players should be communicating loudly and showing target hands to receive each pass.
- The runner must be sprinting down the court on each possession. No jogging!

5 Minute Drill

How the Drill Works:

The coach picks 5 different spots on the floor. Teams shoot for one minute at each spot as a team. The winner is the team that scores the most baskets in total in 5 minutes.

Purpose:

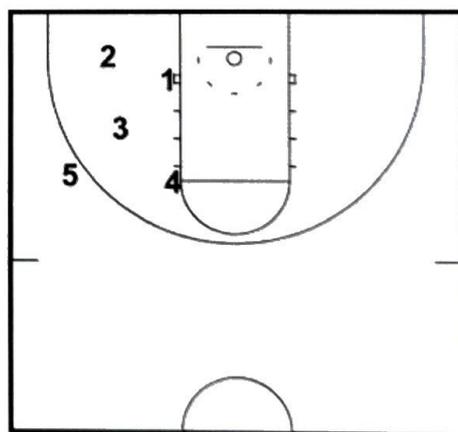
A great drill to get all players shooting from all areas of the floor. Always high intensity since there is only a small amount of time at each spot.

Setup:

- Tell the players the different spots on the floor they'll be shooting from.
- Depending on the number of players you have, split the group into 2 to 4 teams.
- One basketball per team.
- Coach must have a stop-watch, watch, or scoreboard to keep track of the time.

Instructions:

1. Shooting Spots can be anywhere but I usually use:
 - Blocks
 - Short corners
 - 45s
 - Elbows
 - 3 pointers
2. The first thing you must do is make sure all the players know the 5 spots they're going to be shooting from. The change-over must be quick so there is no time to remind them during the drill.
3. On the coaches call the players start shooting as the coach starts the clock.



4. Every minute the coach calls out 'change' or blows a whistle to let the players know they have to change spots.
5. At the end of 5 minutes the coach stops the drill and asks each team for their score.

Scoring System:

- Teams keep their own score by counting out loud on each make.
- The team with the most made baskets after 5 minutes wins the game.

Variations:

Two Basketballs - Instead of one basketball, teams shoot with two basketball's each.

Change Time Limit - The coach can choose to increase the time limit to 2 minutes if there's large numbers in the teams.

Coaching Points:

- Players must be in stance when they catch the basketball so that they can get the shot off quickly.
- Make sure players are hustling after each rebound so their teams gets to take as many shots as possible.
- Teams **MUST** call out their score loud after each score. Forces all players to pay attention and work as a team.



21 CONES

How the Drill Works:

Place 21 cones at the baseline of one end of the floor and split the players up into two teams at the other end of the floor. Players shoot and are 'rewarded' a cone if they make the shot which they must sprint to the other end of the court to receive. The team with the most cones at the end of the game wins.

Purpose:

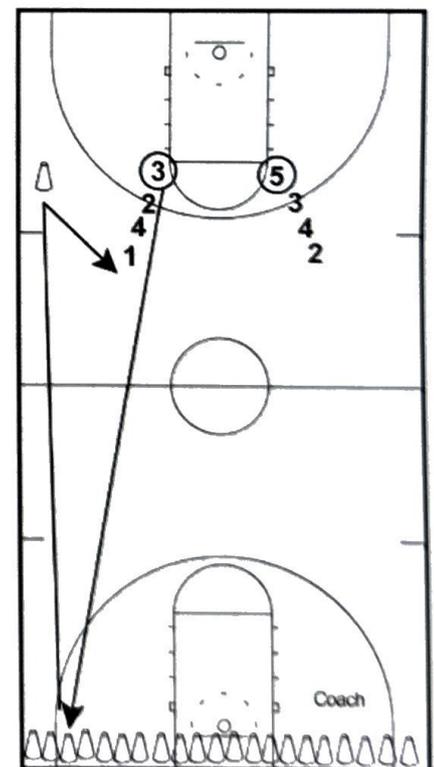
It's a fun variation to a normal shooting drill that keeps players interested and excited. Also works on shooting under pressure.

Setup:

- Place 21 cones at the opposite end of the court.
- Split your group up into two teams.
- One basketball per team.

Instructions:

1. Players start shooting on the coach's whistle.
2. On every make by a team, the person who shoots must rebound the ball and pass it back to the next person in line before running down to the other end to receive a cone for their team.





3. The player then places the cone in their teams 'safe-house' near their line and joins the end of the line.

Scoring System:

- The team that finishes with the most cones at the end of the game wins!

Variations:

Increase or Decrease Cones - I've used this drill with both 13 or 33 cones as well. Use any number of cones as long as it's an odd number so there's a winner.

Shooting Position - Usually adults will shoot three-pointers but youth teams can shoot from the elbow or anywhere else on the floor.

More Groups - Instead of playing with only two groups, you can create up to 4 groups and place the cones in the middle of the court instead.

Coaching Points:

- Make sure players rebound the ball after a make instead of running straight away to get a cone!
- Don't allow teams to just let their best three-point shooters shoot. Everyone has to take it in turns.
- Take note of who your best shooters under pressure are! You'll need to know come game-time!
- If you don't have cones, you could use tennis balls or anything else similar.

Small Sided Games and Team Drills



SMALL SIDED GAMES

How the Drill Works:

Depending on the amount of players you have, create small-sided games of anything from 2 on 2 to 4 on 4. Then let the kids play and learn!

Purpose:

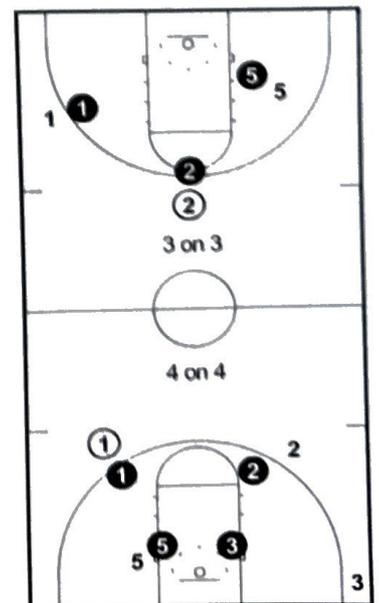
There are many benefits to small-sided games that are listed here (<http://www.basketballforcoaches.com/reasons-small-sided-games/>). To share some of the major benefits: More touches, more opportunities to shoot, easier decision making, etc.

Setup:

- Use both halves of the court and create two small-sided games depending on how many players you have.
- Explain to each team that they must advance the ball to a certain line (either half-court or the third line if you have one) before they can score.
- One basketball per game.

Instructions:

1. Start the game and let them play!
2. Make adjustments and team changes when you need to, but I recommend trying not to interrupt too much.





Let the players learn from their own mistakes by experience.

Variations:

Games of Different Sizes - Make sure to vary the sizes of the games to give kids exposure to different scenarios.

Coaching Points:

- Let them have fun!
- Stop the game if you see a mistake 3 times in a row. Until then let the kids experiment and learn on their own as much as possible.
- Stress the importance of spacing.

3-on-2 Continuous

How the Drill Works:

This is a full court continuous 3 on 2 drill. Three players attack two defenders and regardless of if the offensive team scores or turns the basketball over, the two defenders outlet the basketball to a line at mid-court and then attack three on two at the other end of the court.

Purpose:

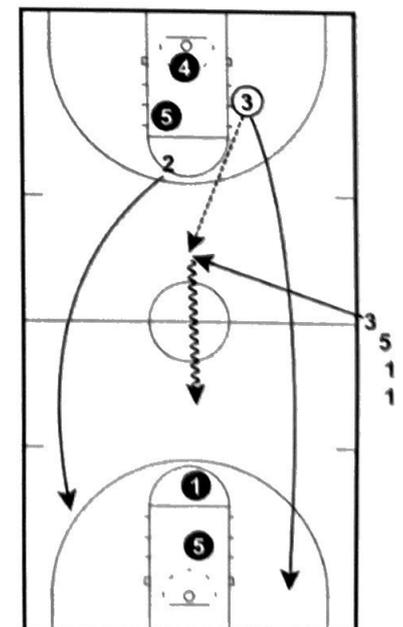
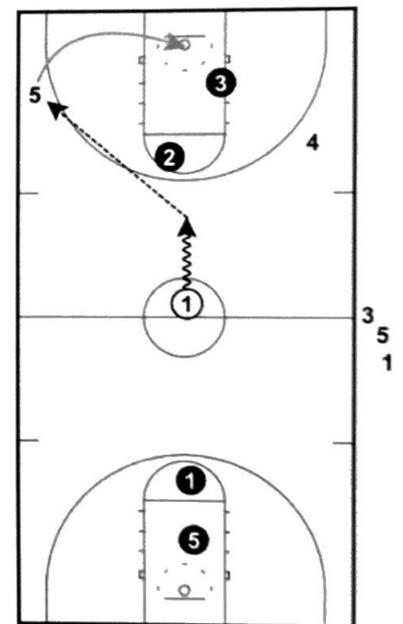
By always having an extra offensive player the players learn that they must space the court well to get an open shot each trip down the floor. This is one of my favourite drills for improving decision making.

Setup:

- The drill starts with 3 offensive players in the middle of the court, 2 defenders in each half court, and the rest of the players standing in one line out of bounds at the half court line.
- Only one basketball is needed for this drill.

Instructions:

1. The three offensive players attack two defenders at one end of the court and will either score or the defensive players will get the basketball.
2. Once the two defensive players get the basketball (either by steal, rebound, or because the offensive team scored), they outlet to the next player in line at half way who sprints in to help advance the ball.
3. The two defenders now become offensive team and they get an extra player from the sideline to give them 3 players. They now attack towards the other end of the court 3 on 2.



4. As for the 3 previous offensive players, 2 of them become the next defenders and 1 of them joins the end of the out of bounds line.
5. This process repeats for a set amount of time.

Variations:

Continuous 4 on 3 - The exact same process as what's written above except that instead of 2 defenders there are 3, and instead of 3 offensive players there are 4.

Coaching Points:

- Make sure the offensive players are staying spaced on the floor so that they can get open looks.
- There's no reason the offensive team shouldn't be taking an open shot.
- If you want to make the drill more advanced, don't allow the players to dribble the basketball.

Plus One

How the Drill Works:

The group of players is split into two teams and each time starts on one baseline. The drill starts with a 2 on 1. Each time there is a change of possession, a new player from the defensive team enters the drill. This continues until the drill finishes with 5 on 5.

Purpose:

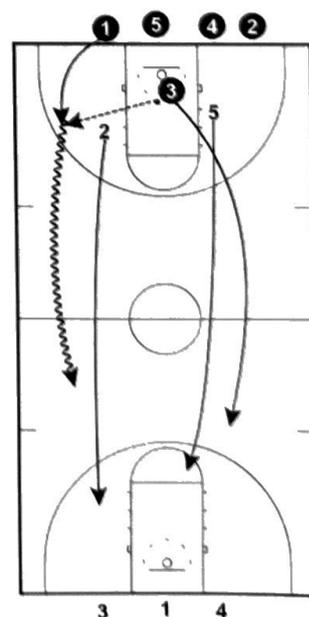
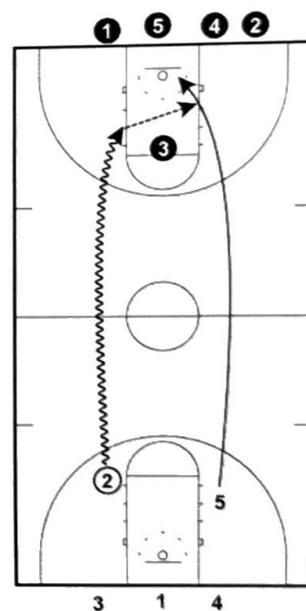
This is a great drill for simulating real advantage/disadvantage situations that happen during games. It's also great for conditioning and developing basketball IQ.

Setup:

- Split the group up into two teams. Each team starts on one baseline.
- The advantage team starts with 2 players on the court and a basketball.
- The disadvantage team starts with 1 player on the court.
- The rest of the players start behind the baseline.

Instructions:

- 1.** The two offensive players attack the single defender in an advantage situation.
- 2.** On a change of possession (score, steal, rebound, etc), another player from the defensive team joins the game and the drill becomes 2 on 2 down the other end of the floor.
- 3.** On the next change of possession another defender is added to make the drill 3 on 2.
- 4.** This continues until both teams have 5 players on the court.
- 5.** Then the teams swap over who starts with the basketball so both teams have the advantage.



Scoring System:

- Normal scoring. Two points and three points.
- Remember that you must play an even number of games so that both teams have been the advantage team an even number of times.

Coaching Points:

- This is a transition drill so encourage the players not to slow down too much. I usually play with a 15 second shot clock on each possession.
- When in advantage, teams should always get an open shot if they have good spacing on the floor!

2-on-2 Frenzy

How the Drill Works:

The drill begins by playing 2 on 2. On either a score or a stop, the offensive team must transition quickly to defense while the defense outlet passes to two new offensive players on the closest free-throw line extended. They then attack two on two and this routine repeats.

Purpose:

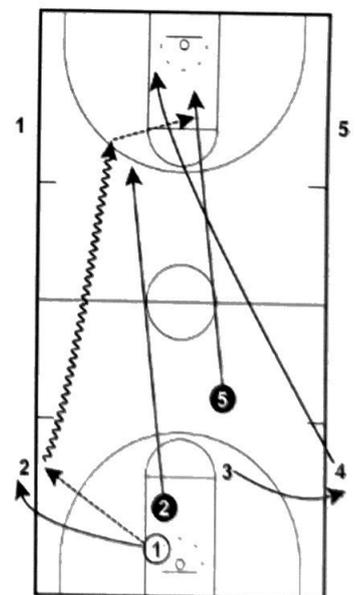
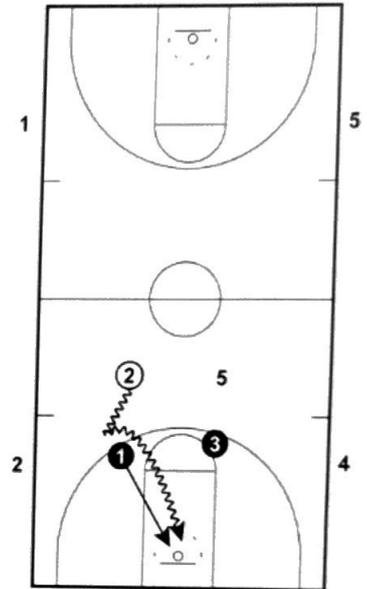
A great transition drill to work on player conditioning as well as offensive and defensive transition. The offense and defense will be faced with a new situation each time.

Setup:

- This drill is performed best with 8 or more players, but you must have at least 6.
- 2 players begin on defense, 2 players begin on offense, and then you must have at least 1 player on each free-throw line extended.

Instructions:

- 1.** The drill begins with the 2 offensive players attempting to score against the two defenders in the half court.
- 2.** On either a stop or a score, the defenders outlet the basketball to one of the two players on the closest free-throw line extended while the two offensive players quickly transition to defense.
- 3.** On the catch, the two new offensive players sprint down the court and attempt to score quickly in transition.
- 4.** They then become the new defenders as the sequence continues.
- 5.** There is no scoring system and the stops when the coach decides.



Variations:

Fewer Players - If you only have 6 or 7 players (less and the drill won't work), instead of 4 groups starting on each extended free throw line, have 2 groups start at the mid-court line.

Coaching Points:

- Remind your players that it's a transition drill, we don't want players slowing the basketball down too much.
- Depending on the number of players you have, this drill is great for conditioning. Use it for short spurts during training.

Team Offense

5-Out Motion Offense – Complete Coaching Guide

5 Out Motion Offense Complete Coaching Guide

The 5-out motion offense is a fantastic primary offense for basketball teams at any level, but especially youth basketball teams.

It's a positionless offense that relies on spacing the floor and a set of rules that assists players to determine their movements and actions.

Due to players making decisions and reading the play of their teammates and defenders, the 5-out motion offense is great for teaching players how to play basketball.

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Who Should Run the 5-Out Motion Offense?

As a positionless offense, I highly recommend the 5-out motion offense for all youth basketball teams since it allows all players on the team to develop into well-rounded basketball players.

This is important because it's impossible to know which players will grow in height and which players won't.

Countless times I've seen players who have matured and grown early in life get assigned to the post position only to have their teammates who developed at a later time quickly catch up to them.

When this happens the player who developed early has had barely any practice at dribbling, shooting from the outside, etc.

So it's imperative that all youth coaches use a positionless offense like the 5-out motion offense.

But with that said (sorry for the rant), it's especially a great offense for teams that lack height and want to run a fast offense with a lot of movement.

Strengths:

- **Creates positionless players** – All 5 players on the court are required to pass, cut, dribble, shoot, screen, etc. This is imperative for a great youth basketball offense.
- **Can be used as a delay offense** – If your league doesn't have a shot clock and you want to hold up the basketball, the 5-out motion offense will provide movement and keep the defense honest while not looking at scoring options.
- **Players learn how to play basketball** – Don't overlook this benefit. Players learn to read their teammates and defenders and make decisions accordingly. This is an important process that players won't learn from running set plays all game.
- **Every player contributes** – When running this offense, one or two players can't dominate the basketball. All players will be involved and must contribute to the team's offense.
- **Requires great spacing** – If players are all in the correct positions, your team will always have great spacing at all times. This opens up driving lanes and makes it difficult for defenders to help each other.

- 1. If your being denied and the player with the ball looks at you, back cut immediately** – Never hesitate. This assumes you're only being denied one pass away from the basketball.
- 2. If you believe you can attack the basket and score on your defender, do it** – Players must understand their own abilities and the abilities of their defender. If a player thinks they can attack, they should do it immediately on the catch.
- 3. Players must square up to the rim when they have the basketball** – A player can't telegraph what they're going to do by facing a certain direction. By squaring up, players can shoot, pass, or dribble.
- 4. Every action must be performed with purpose** – If you cut, cut hard. If you're screening, focus on setting a great screen. Never pass and stand still.
- 5. Spacing is always on the NBA three-point line** – The NBA three-point line is about 2 feet behind the normal three-point line.

Setting Up the 5 Out Motion Offense

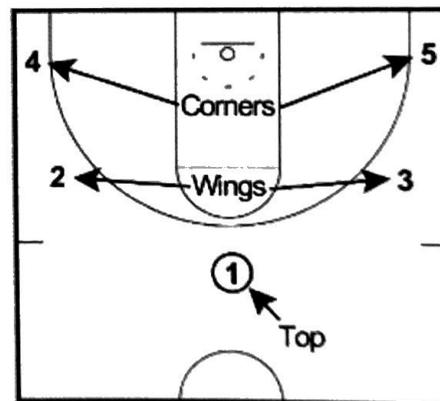
'5 out' simply means that all offensive players on the floor are starting outside the three-point line.

There are 5 spots that must always be filled unless players are performing an action like screening or cutting.

The five spots are:

1. Left corner
2. Left wing
3. Top
4. Right wing
5. Right corner

These spots should be on the NBA three-point line which is about 2 feet behind the regular three-point line used by all other levels.



- **Difficult for opposition teams to scout** – Since there are no 'set' passes or actions, teams won't be able to work out a specific action they can stop to disrupt the offense.
- **The opposition can't crowd the key area** – All defenders on the opposition team will be required to guard all areas of the floor. This prevents them from keeping their biggest players on the inside.
- **Easy to teach due to progressions** – One of the best things about the 5 out motion offense is that it can be taught in progressions. Players aren't forced to learn the complete offense all at once which will overwhelm them.

Weaknesses:

- **Not great for teams with one dominant player** – If you have one or two dominant players that contribute the bulk of your team's scoring, this might not be the offense for you if you want your team to continue to play that way. All players must contribute in the 5 out offense. Even the weaker players.
- **Players can get stuck in the motions of the offense** – When you first implement this offense with your team, you'll find that they're so focused on running the offense properly, that they forget to look for scoring opportunities.
- **Sometimes difficult with a shot clock** – Similarly to the above point, if your players aren't constantly searching for scoring opportunities, the shot clock can play a factor and force your team to rush a shot with a few seconds left.
- **Can take some time for players to master** – While your players can quickly pick up the actions and movements of the 5 out, it does take time for players to learn how to quickly read the game and make smart decisions on the court.

5 Out Motion Rules

The 5 out motion offense is governed by 5 rules that players must follow at all times for the offense to run smoothly.

When teaching the 5-out motion offense to your team for the first time, I highly recommend you use cones to mark these 5 spots on the floor to allow players to get used to where each position is.

How to Run the 5-Out Motion Offense

There are 4 progressions that you gradually introduce one by one into the continuity of your 5-out motion offense.

All coaches must make sure they start with progression one and move up without skipping steps.

This allows the players to gradually learn the concepts of the 5-out motion offense without being overwhelmed with the entire offense all at once.

These are the 4 progressions:

Progression 1: Basic cutting

Progression 2: Screening away

Progression 3: On-ball screen

Progression 4: Dribble at

Let's go through each of the progressions in more detail...

Progression #1 – Basic Cutting

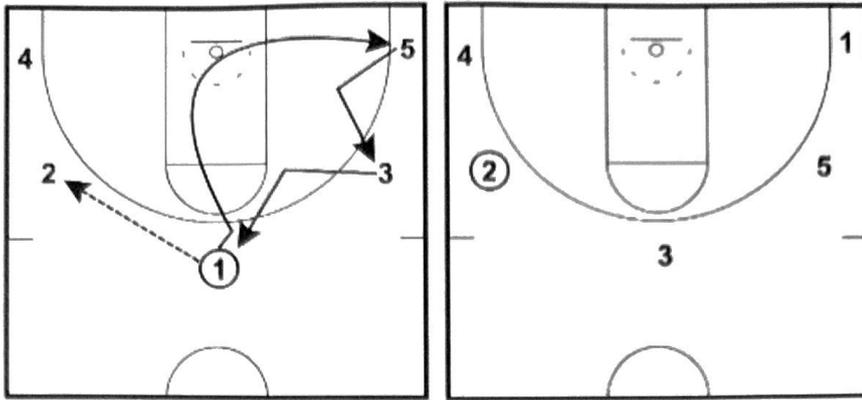
The easiest way to begin teaching your team the 5-out offense is to start with the basic movements of passing and cutting in a 5-0 situation.

Start by setting out 5 cones at the 5 fill spots on the court. Let your team know that when they're not cutting, they must be in one of these 5 positions.

Now it's time to teach the cuts...

There are 4 passes and cuts that can be made during progression 1.

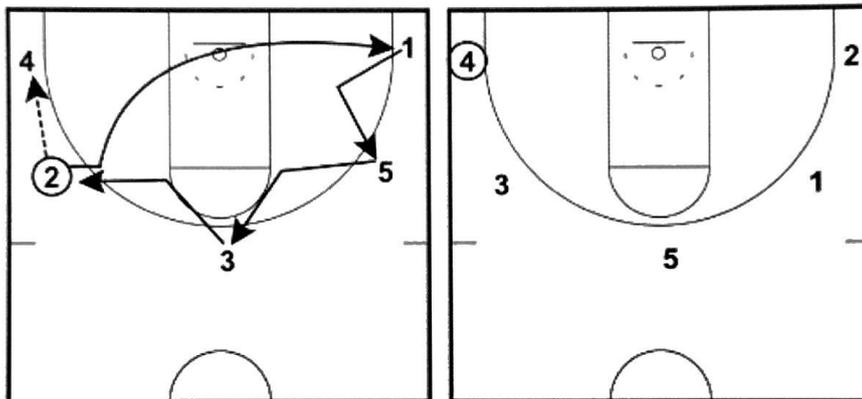
1. Top to Wing Pass



On a top to wing pass, the passer basket cuts all the way through the key and fills the opposite corner.

Once 1 has cut, 3 and 5 must fill up the positions closer to the basketball.

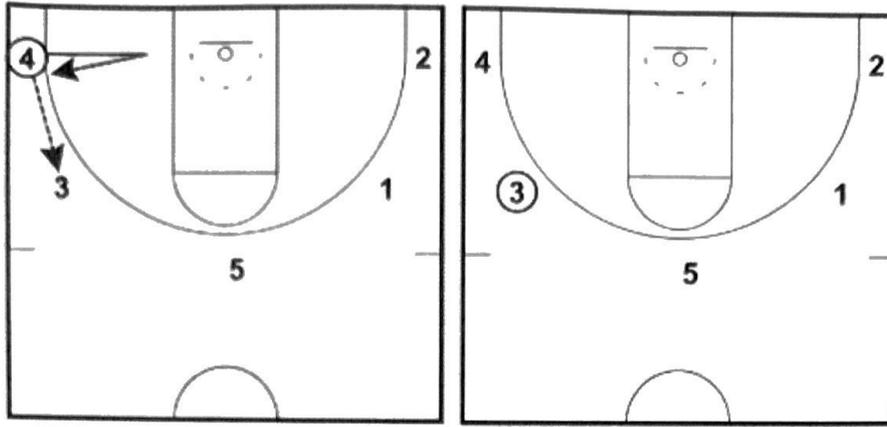
2. Wing to Corner Pass



On a wing to corner pass, the passer also basket cuts all the way through the key and fills the opposite corner.

Once 2 has cut through, 3, 5, and 1 must all fill up the positions closer to the basketball.

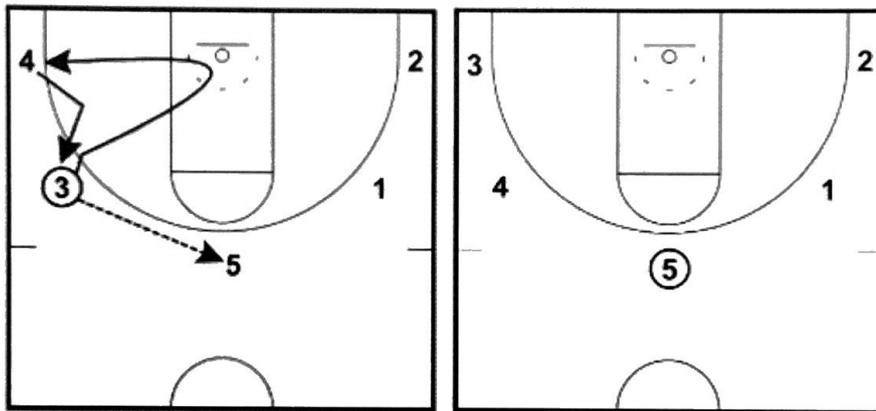
3. Corner to Wing Pass



On a corner to wing pass, the passer basket cuts and replaces themselves.

The other 4 players wait in the same spot for the next action.

4. Wing to Top Pass



On a wing to top pass, the passer basket cuts and then fills the corner of the same side they cut from.

On 3's cut, 4 fills up closer to the basketball and then 3 replaces them in the corner. The other 3 players wait for the next action.

Progression Practice:

Have your players practice this progression until they're comfortable with the passes and cuts.

This simple progression can be a great offense for a youth basketball team by itself. It will provide great spacing and get your players reading the play and making decisions.

Coaching points when teaching progression #1:

- Remind your players that if they're being overplayed, they must back cut immediately when the player with the basketball is looking at them.
- To set up the defender and get open on a front cut, after passing the player should take one step away from the ball and then explode to the ball-side of their defender on the cut to the rim looking for the basketball.
- If the defender 'jumps to the basketball' taking away the front cut, the passer should back cut and try to step in front of their defender to open up the passing angle.
- Always watch the basketball on cuts. If a shot is put up, they need to know immediately to establish rebounding position.
- Cut hard on all cuts to the rim. Doing so will make the cutter a threat to score which will force weak side defense to help.

Progression #2 – Screen Away

Once your team is comfortable with the cutting phase (making the correct cut 80% – 90% of the time), it's time to introduce the action of screening away after a pass instead of cutting.

This action can be performed on any top to wing, wing to corner, or wing to top pass. The only pass it can't be performed on is the corner to wing pass.

Before implementing this action, you must decide whether you want the player being screened to always curl, or whether you'll give them the option of cutting to the top or curling.

I recommend all youth basketball teams (below high school) get this player to curl off the screen every time so that there's no confusion.

For high school teams and higher, you can allow them to read the defense and perform the most appropriate option.

Option 1 – Screened player always curls off the screen

Here's how it works on a top to wing pass...

1. 1 makes the pass to 2 on the wing. Instead of cutting, 1 decides to set an away screen.

Note – It's important that 2 waits while this screen is being set so that the curling option is not missed due to passing to 4 too quickly.

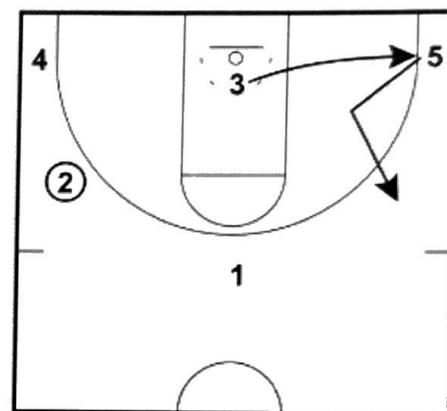
2. 1 screens for 3 making sure that they set the screen at an angle that allows the 3 to cut to the rim.

3. 3 can either front cut or back cut towards the rim depending on how quickly the defense reacts to the screen. **But they must cut to the rim since they were screened.**

4. After 3 has used the screen, 1 **pops back out to the same spot that they set a screen from.** If 1's defender attempts to help on the cut from 3, you'll find that 1 will often get an open shot from the top of the key.

5. After the cut, 3 fills the weakside corner position since 5 has filled 3's previous position on the wing.

Then all players are back in position for the next action to be made.



Option 2 – Screened player has the choice of curling or popping out

If you're coaching an experienced basketball team, you can give the player being screened the option to curl or to pop out to the perimeter and receive the pass.

The difference when using this option is that **the screener must go the opposite direction to the cutter.**

If the cutter decides to pop out to the perimeter, the screener will cut to the rim and then fill the corner.

If the cutter decides to curl, the screener will pop out to their original position.

Here's an example of a top to wing pass using option 2...

1. 1 makes the pass to 2 on the wing. Instead of cutting, 1 decides to set an away screen.

Note – It's important that 2 waits while this screen is being set so that the curling option is not missed due to passing to 4 too quickly.

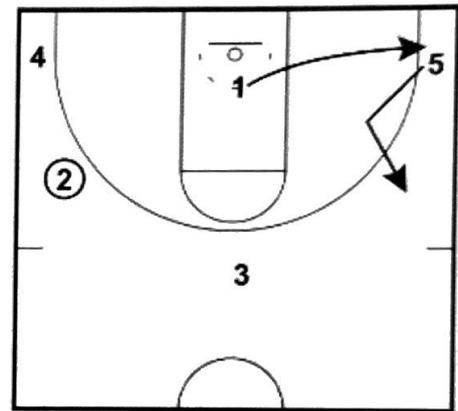
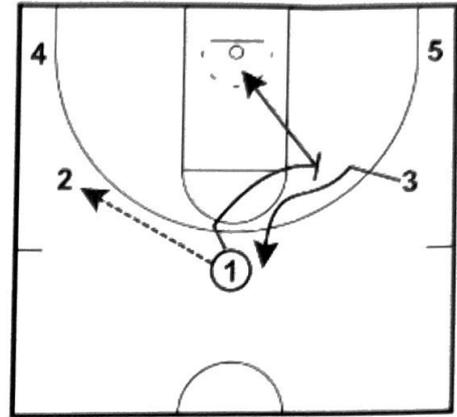
2. 1 screens for 3 making sure that they set the screen at an angle that allows the 3 to cut to the rim.

3. 3's defender cheats and goes under the screen so 3 pops out to the top perimeter position to catch and look for the open shot.

4. Reading this, 1 cuts to the rim **because they must go the opposite direction of the cutter.**

5. 1 then fills the corner position as 5 has filled 3's previous spot on the wing.

I've found that inexperienced teams can struggle with option 2 so I recommend starting with option 1 and then progressing to option 2 if you think your players are capable.



Coaching points when teaching progression #2:

- Players must be setting screens on the correct angle. This means the screener's bum should be facing somewhere between the player with the basketball or the basket. Too often youth players will set screens too high that allow the defender to quickly slip under it.
- The player setting the screen must make the player being screened aware with a verbal cue and a visual sign. I recommend you teach the screener to hold their arm up in a fist and call out the player's name before setting the screen.

Progression #3 – On-Ball Screen

Once your players are comfortable with cutting and screening away, next up is the action of setting on-ball screens.

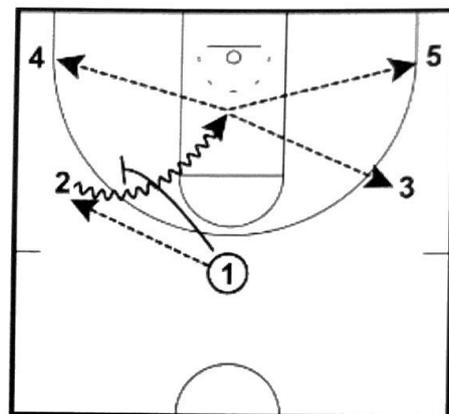
This action of the pick and roll is often very effective because the offensive players are spaced out well.

The on-ball screen can be used after any pass in the offense.

Here are two examples of setting an on-ball screen in the 5-out motion offense:

Example #1 – Top to Wing Pass On-Ball Screen

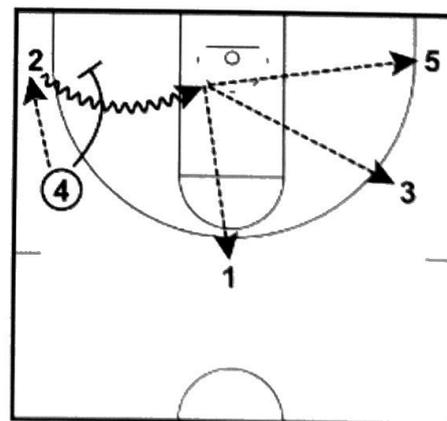
1. 1 passes from the top to 2 on the wing and then sets an on-ball screen on their defender.
2. 2 uses the on-ball screen and drives hard to the rim surveying the options that are presented.
3. Depending on how the defense reacts, 2 can pass to any of the perimeter players or make the shot in the key.



If the basketball is kicked out and the shot isn't immediately taken, all players must find one of the 5 fill spots and the 5-out motion offense starts again.

Example #2 – Wing to Corner Pass On-Ball Screen

1. 4 passes to 2 in the corner and then sets an on-ball screen on their defender.
2. 2 uses the on-ball screen and drives hard to the rim surveying the options that are presented.
3. Depending on how the defense reacts, 2 can pass to any of the perimeter players or make the shot in the key.



A lot of coaches who run the 5-out motion offense make it a rule that on each pass to the corner the passer sets an on-ball screen. So if it works for you, consider incorporating it as a rule into your offense!

Coaching points when teaching progression #3:

- As with the previous progression, it's super important that players are setting the on-ball screen at the correct angle that allows the player with the basketball to attack the rim.
- The three players not involved in the pick and roll should do their best to move into open positions where they can catch and shoot or catch and drive.
- Start to introduce to the players that they must take into account each player's skill set before making an action. For example. Your team should not set an on-ball screen for player that can't dribble the basketball well.
- Just like in the screening away progression, players must be giving a visual and verbal cue to the player they're about to set an on-ball screen for by saying their name and holding up a fist.

Progression #4 – Dribble At

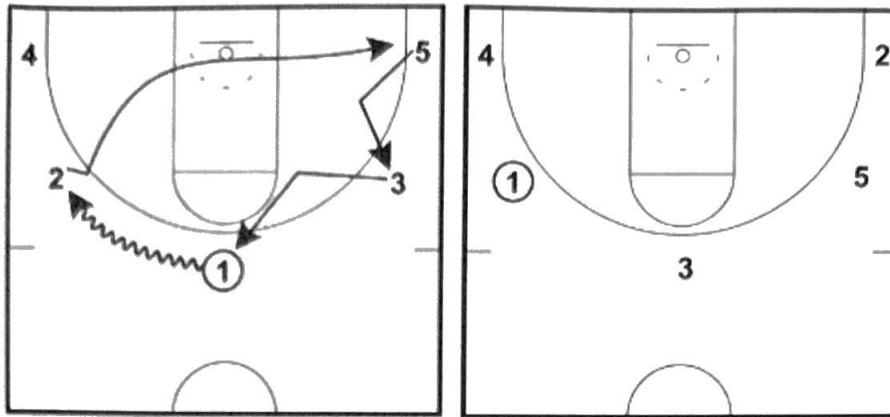
Another action to add to this continuity offense is the 'dribble at' action.

This can be used when a player with the basketball is being heavily pressured and the only options to pass are being denied well by the off-ball defenders.

In this scenario, the player with the basketball may decide to dribble towards another player at a different spot.

When this happens, the two offensive players involved (the dribbler and the player they're dribbling towards) have two options.

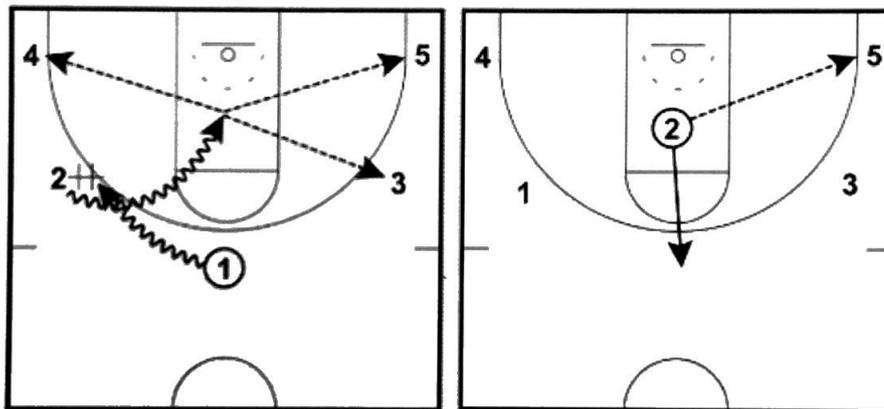
1. Backcut



If the player without the basketball is being denied, they can make a hard back cut looking to receive the basketball for a layup.

If they don't receive the pass, they fill the weakside corner, the other players rotate towards the basketball, and the next action begins.

2. Hand-off



The other option is to perform a hand-off between the two players.

This is similar to the pick and roll where the other 3 players on the court should hold their positions and wait.

The player that receives the hand-off should attack the rim and kick out to shooters if the defense slides over to help.

Coaching points when teaching progression #4:

- When performing hand-offs, the player with the basketball should rotate their hands so that they're on the top and bottom of the basketball. This allows the player receiving the hand-off to grab the basketball on the sides.
- In my opinion, I don't like hand-offs for youth basketball. For my youth teams, I have them automatically back cut on a dribble at.

Piecing the 5-Out Motion Offense Together

Once your players have learned the basic 4 progressions of 5-out motion offense, you've established a fantastic primary offense that will teach them how to read and play the game of basketball.

Now that they can confidently perform all the actions, the next important step is for players to work out what actions work the best for them and their teammates.

For example:

- Players will work out that the best players to set on-ball screens for are the quick guards who make great decisions.
- The best players to away screen for are those that cut hard to the rim and can finish the layup or close shot.
- The best shooters on the team should primarily set away screens so that they're cutting back out to the basketball for the open shot.

While a lot of this knowledge will develop with experience, I believe it's important for the coach to talk to the team and each player individually about what they're good at and what they need to improve on.

Doing so will help their decisions when running the 5-out motion offense during the game.

Advanced

Flex Action Progression

Once your team has mastered the basic progressions of the 5-out motion offense, you can choose to add a more advanced flex cut progression.

This is best used on a pass from the wing to the top of the key and can potentially give you an open layup off the flex cut or an open jump shot off a down screen.

Here's how it works:



1. 2 makes the pass to 1 at the top of the key.

2. After making the pass, 2 will basket cut as usual. But instead of filling to the same side, 2 sets a flex screen for 5.

3. 5 uses the flex screen and cuts through looking to receive the pass for the layup. If 5 isn't open, they simply cut all the way through to the corner as 4 has moved up the wing to replace 2's spot.

4. 3 then sets a down screen for 2.

5. 2 uses the down screen and pops out to the perimeter looking to receive the basketball for the jump shot.

6. 3 can reverse pivot and seal 2's defender if they have a mismatch inside. If not, 3 fills the closest corner.

Even if the offense doesn't get a great look from the flex option, you will notice now that all five spots are now filled and the team can move on to the next action of the offense.

Variation – Cutting Through the Nail

Another variation of this offense I wanted to share with you is the option to 'cut through the nail' every time a player cuts to the top of the key.

This is most commonly seen in Bob Huggins' Open Post Motion offense.

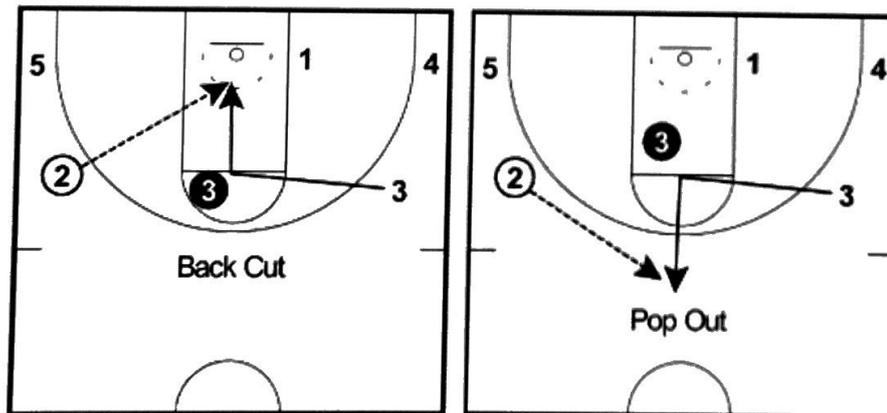
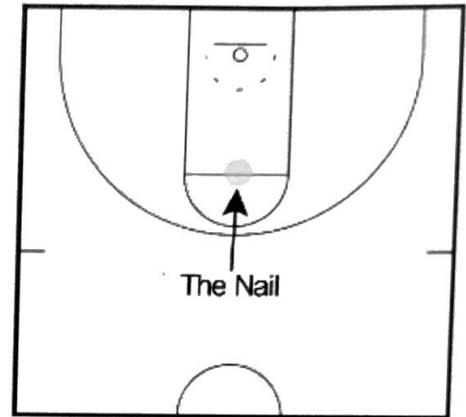
Instead of filling to the top spot just like any of the other 4 spots, players are required to L-cut through the nail.

Note – The 'nail' is the spot at the very middle of the free-throw line.

When players cut through the nail, they're required to decide whether to back cut or to pop out to the top spot depending on how their defender is playing them.

If the defender is denying them from receiving the basketball, the player must immediately back cut and then fill the weak side corner.

If the defender is playing off them, the player cuts out to the top spot to receive the pass.



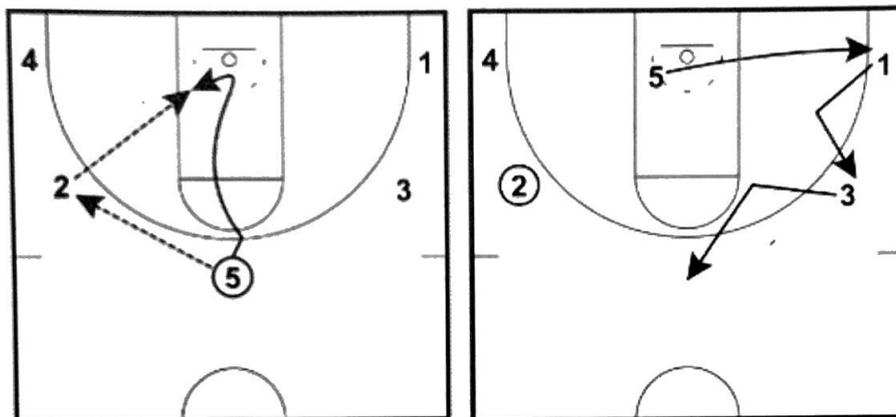
By implementing this variation to the 5-out motion offense you will achieve two things...

1. It will take away the defenders ability to get a deflection which leads to the opponent's fast break.
2. It can lead to some easy scores off the back cuts.

Getting the Basketball to the Post

The best way to get the basketball inside to players who have a mismatch is to allow those players to establish quick post up position after every through the key.

The player posting up is only allowed to hold this position for 1 – 2 seconds before clearing out if they don't receive the pass.



This ensures that the 5-out motion offense continues to run smoothly.

To take advantage of this mismatch, it's important that players with the basketball are looking at cutters to take advantage of the 1 – 2 seconds that they secure inside position.

Posting up isn't restricted to your biggest players. Any match up on the floor with an advantage in the post can use this technique.

Transition Defense and Rebounding

One thing a lot of coaches will find confusing is that since all our players are standing outside the three-point line, who's going to rebound!?

The answer to this question will depend more on the personnel on your team and how aggressive you want to be rebounding the basketball.

I'll give you three options. Pick the one you like the most depending on your coaching style and players on your team.

- 1. The point guard always plays safety. The other four players crash the boards.**
- 2. The point guard and shooting guard always play safety. The other three players crash the boards.**
- 3. Everyone below the free throw line rebounds. Everyone above the free throw line plays safety.**

What you'll quickly realize is that the 5-out motion offense can lead to a lot of offensive rebounds as long as your designated players are willing to work hard for them.

By starting on the perimeter when a shot is put up, it's incredibly difficult for the defense to box out an offensive player with a running start.

If you have any tough and athletic players on your team, expect them to grab a lot of offensive rebounds!

Conclusion

The 5-out motion offense is a great offense for any basketball coach to learn and implement with their team.

Being a very common offense, even if you don't use it with your own team, it's important for all coaches to learn about so that they know how to defend when playing against it.

It allows players to practice all skills, gets the whole team involved, and can be easy to teach as long as you're using the right progressions and not trying to implement the whole offense at once.

Any basketball coach who uses this offense will know they're improving their players!

Team Defense

The term "Pack Line" was not used until the late 1950s or early 1960s. It was a term used by the NHL to describe a defensive strategy where the defensemen and forwards would form a "pack" in front of the net, trying to block shots and prevent the opposition from getting into the scoring area. This strategy was often used by teams that had a strong defensive backline but a weaker forward line. The term "Pack Line" was also used to describe a defensive strategy in basketball, where the defensemen would form a "pack" in front of the basket, trying to block shots and prevent the opposition from getting into the scoring area. This strategy was often used by teams that had a strong defensive backline but a weaker forward line.

Pack Line Defense – The Complete Guide



The 'Pack Line defense' was created by [Dick Bennett](#) of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, Wisconsin-Green Bay, University of Wisconsin, and Washington State. It is now commonly used in some form by many coaches including Tom Izzo at Michigan State, Sean Miller and Chris Mack at Xavier, Tony Bennett at Virginia, and Steve Alford at UCLA.

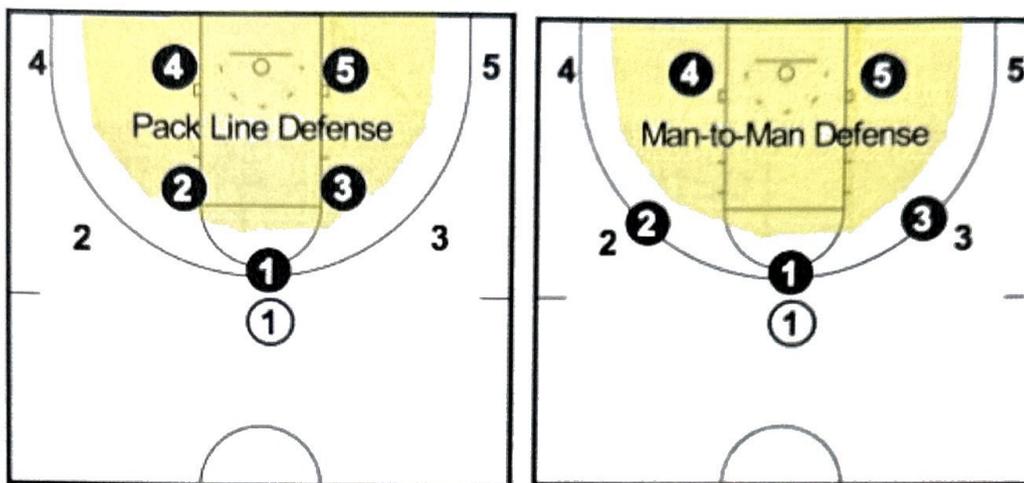
For a bit of history, the term 'Pack Line' wasn't coined or even thought of by Bennett. The word was brought to the attention of Bennett by a person at a marketing company after convincing Bennett to create a DVD on his new defensive system.

Weaknesses of Pack Line Defense

Overview of Pack Line Defense

The 'Pack Line' defense is a variation of man-to-man defense. The biggest difference between the two is that instead of the off-ball defenders being out pressuring their player and denying the pass, everyone except the player guarding the ball must be inside an imaginary line 16 feet from the rim.

This 16ft line is know as the pack line. You can see the differences in positioning in the diagrams below...



When in Pack Line defense all players are inside the shaded yellow area protecting against penetration. In traditional man-to-man defense the players are denying the pass one pass away.

At all times there must be one defender pressuring the player with the basketball, and four defenders in gap/help positions. The only exception is if the offensive player picks up the dribble and it becomes a 'dead ball', then all players can go out and deny looking for the steal.

The premise behind this defense is that by having four players within the pack line, it discourages the opposition from penetrating and getting inside the paint and forces them to beat you with well executed offense and great outside shooting.

When the ball is passed around the perimeter, the next defender closes out with high hands to prevent the rhythm shot and then provides on-ball pressure while the defender who was playing on-ball defense falls back within the packline.

Again just to emphasize the most important point... At all time there must be one defender pressuring the player with the basketball and four defenders in gap/help positions.

What teams give up in exchange for always being in help position is that players don't have the benefit of denying the pass on the perimeter. This is why the pack line defense is also referred to as 'sagging man-to-man'.

For this reason, the pack line defense requires the players to be patient and play smart defense until the offensive team takes a contested jump shot, or makes a mistake.

As you can probably tell, all five players must work together as a defensive unit for this defense to be successful. If any of the five players aren't performing their job properly, there will be open gaps that can lead to easy scores.

Advantages of Pack Line Defense

- 1. Prevents Dribble Penetration** – Due to four defenders always being inside the pack line, the offensive players will find it hard to find gaps through the wall of defenders.
- 2. Prevents Back-Door Cuts** – This is a great defense if you're playing against an offense like the Princeton offense that likes to utilize the back-door cut. Since your players are sagging off their man, the offensive team will find it hard to get easy layups off back-door cuts.
- 3. Lower Opponent Field Goal Percentage** – If your team can be patient on defense and not gamble, it will lead to the opponent taking tough contested jump shots.
- 4. Increased Rebounding** – Sagging off their players will put your players in better rebounding positions... as long as they box out.
- 5. No Easy Scores** – This advantage ties in with dribble penetration. If the opponent can't get to the ring and your defense is packing the paint, there will be no easy opportunities to score.
- 6. Always in Help Position** – Unlike traditional man-to-man defense, your players don't need to move to be in help position... they're already there!

Weaknesses of Pack Line Defense

- 1. Three Pointers Can Beat You** – As your players are playing off their player and are in help position, it can lead to open three-pointers if your players don't react quick enough and close out on the ball. If a team gets hot from three
- 2. If There's No Shot Clock** – If you coach in a league that doesn't use a shot clock then the opposition can use as much time as they like passing the ball around the perimeter until they find an open shot. It will come down to who is more patient, the offense or defense.

3. Must Be Patient – One problem that arises when using this defense at a youth level is the players sometimes aren't patient enough. They want to gamble and get a steal so they can stop playing defense and start playing offense.

The 7 Areas of Pack Line Defense

1. Transition/Conversion Defense

Transition defense is the start of every defensive possession and could be the most important of all. There are two main things you need to remember...

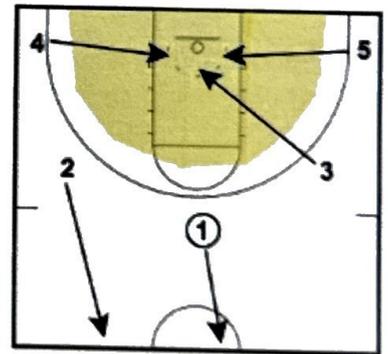
- 1. Never allow easy buckets in transition.**
- 2. "Always take a guy out if he loafs back during a game" – Dick Bennett**

The first thing coaches must do is decide how many players they want to send to glass for offensive rebounds and how many they want to immediately send back.

We recommend to always send two guards back on defense and the other three to the glass. That means the guards must get back as soon as the shot is put up... not after the rebound is secured by the other team.

When the ball is rebounded by the other team or a shot is made, the three players that went to the glass must turn and **SPRINT** back to half-way without regard for their player. Sprinting to half-way is non-negotiable and players should immediately be subbed out if they don't do it. When they get to half court, then they can find their player and establish proper defensive position.

No easy transition scores!



Conversion/Transition Defense

2. On Ball Defense

Contrary to what some coaches think about the pack line defense, there should be A LOT of pressure placed on the ball-handler.

Whoever is on the player with the basketball should be right up on them and harassing them without fouling. We want to make it difficult for them to see the floor and it will make it difficult for the other team to pick as apart with their passing.

The reason we can allow the on-ball defender to apply so much pressure to their player is because, as long as everyone's in the right position and are playing as a unit, they have the confidence that if they get beat off the dribble then there will be immediate help.

Even if they offensive player thinks they can beat their defender one-on-one, they're going to look up and see a wall of defenders and pass the ball off to the next guy.

To teach our players to apply constant pressure we run a lot of one-on-one drills with lots of pressure and recommend you do too. You need to get your players comfortable with being so close to the offensive player.



Photo Credit: [let the games begin](#) via [Compfight cc](#)

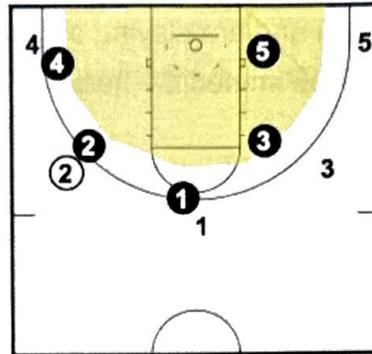
3. Off Ball Defense

While the on-ball defender is applying constant pressure to the ball, the other four players should be within the pack line in their correct gap/help position.

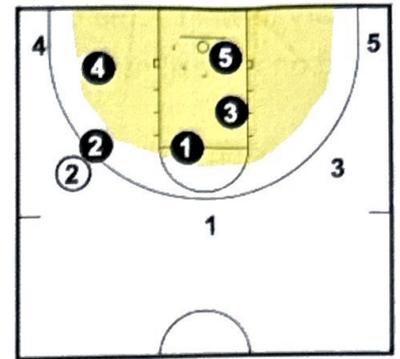
At all times players should be in a ball-you-man position and down in a low stance ready to react if a pass is made.

If your players are ever out of stance you should immediately sub them out of the game. If they're not in the correct position that's not always bad depending on how new the defense is to them. They might just need more practice at learning where they're meant to be. But being in stance is an attitude towards defense and should be non-negotiable.

Players must constantly be readjusting their position to the correct gap as the ball is passed around on offense. Remember: All five players **MUST** be working together as a unit for this defense to be successful.



Full denial in 'dead ball' situation.



Gap positions from the wing.

The only exception to the rule of being within the pack line is if the ball

is picked up by the offensive player and become a 'dead ball'. In that case, everyone hustles out to their player and denies the pass looking for the steal. If a pass is made by the offensive team everyone hustles back to their correct gap position.

4. Close Outs

Since all off ball defenders are always in help positions, they must recover to their player every time they catch the ball. This means they'll be closing out very, very regularly and must to learn how to do it properly.

There are a few important things for players to remember and coaches to teach when closing out...

- 1. High Hands** – We need to keep our hands up on the close out to discourage the rhythm shot.
- 2. Short Choppy Steps** – The last couple of steps should be short and choppy. This allows you to keep your weight back and absorb the dribble.
- 3. No Baseline** – Don't allow your player to get an easy baseline drive on the close out. Close out so that if they do happen to get by you, they're running into the help defence in the middle of the floor.

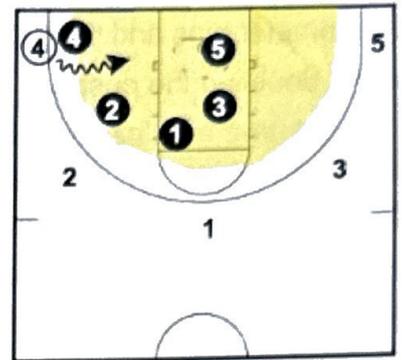
5. Don't Give Up Baseline

This is more a 'rule' of the defense than it is an area... but because of how important it is to the success of the defense, I thought I'd include it anyway.

Under no circumstances do we let the opposition drive the ball baseline. If they drive baseline we get beat.

We need to force the dribbler towards the middle of the floor where our help defenders are located.

You'll understand the importance of not giving up baseline in the next section when we discuss post-play.



Never allow them to drive baseline.

6. Guarding the Post

How you defend the post is one of the few aspects of the pack line defense that the coach will control and that will change on a game-to-game basis.

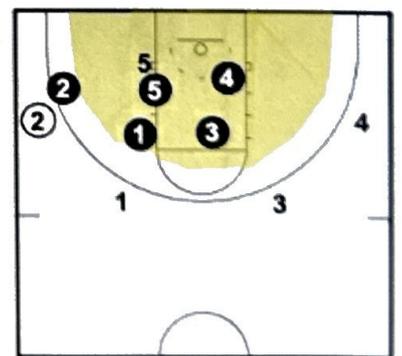
Guarding the post can be broken down into two areas...

1. Before the post gets the ball

When we're in pack line defense we never want the ball to get into the post. That's the danger zone. How we prevent the ball from entering the post changes with different coaches.

Coach Bennett teaches to 3/4 front the post from the high side and discourage the pass. The reason he never fronts the post is because he doesn't want to allow offensive rebounds and easy baskets.

Coach Boone allows his team to front when the ball is below the free-throw line to completely discourage the ball entering the post at all.



Denying the post 3/4 front from the high side.

2. When the ball is in the post

It's crucial that on the flight time of the ball entering the post, your players slip behind their player and establish good defensive position on the post player.

One of the main early rules of the pack line defense was "if the ball gets into the post area, get it out of there as soon as possible". I believe this isn't as important as it used to be since we've entered the era of perimeter bigs and post-play skill has gone down. Also, if you're running this defense with a youth team, doubling the post isn't usually necessary.

So the first thing you need to do is decide whether you're going to double the post or not. Traditional pack line defense doubles anyone in the post. The great thing about this strategy is that the players don't have to decide whether to quickly go and double or not. They KNOW they have to straight away. So there is no confusion.

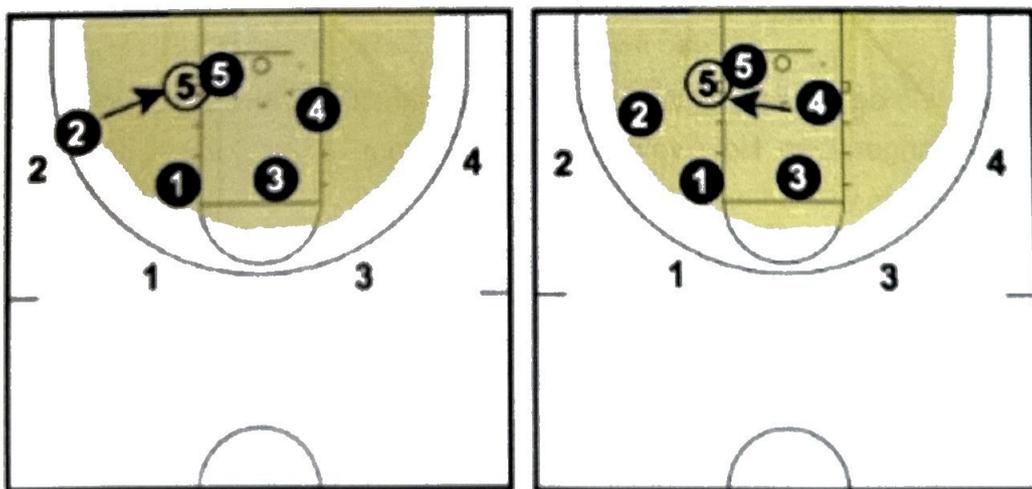
If you choose to double only the one or two best post players on the other team, it will slow down the double because it forces the players to think.

I won't go into extensive detail on the different methods of doubling the post because I've written a thorough article about that topic [here](#), but you need to decide what's best for your team.

Dick Bennett recommended two methods:

1. Choke the Post – This involves bringing the closest perimeter player down looking for a deflection if the post puts the ball on the ground and to force the big to pass the ball back out.

2. Big to Big – Bennett like doubling big-to-big because they're close and usually are the taller and longer defenders on the court. The guards are also quicker to rotate.



Left: Choking the post. Right: Doubling big to big.

One last very important note: Never allow the basketball to be fed to the post player from the top of the key.

7. Defending Screens

Coach Bennett believes in fighting through all screens and not cheating. He doesn't like switching because he feels it will hurt the team come the end of the season.

Players should be within touching distance of their player at all times when they're being screened. He believes that if you're that close and have are determined to get through the screen, then the screen won't be very effective.

One important thing to note is that while being screened the only responsibility the player has is to chase down the player running off the screen. They shouldn't worry about helping at all. Just chasing down their player.

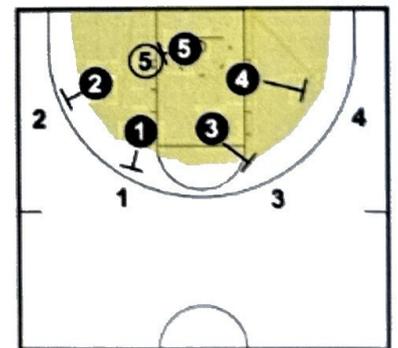
The only exception to the 'fight through all screens' rule is when the screen is set on the weak side of the floor and the obvious option is to cheat over or under the screen and still be in position.

8. Rebounding

Everyone knows the saying... "A defensive possession doesn't end until we've secured the defensive rebound". That means we can't slack off after forcing them into a contested shot... we have to go and get the ball!

On the shot everyone needs to find their player and box out. If they're in the right help position we will usually have a good advantage to establish early positioning first.

The key is for players to be aggressive and really want to rebound the basketball.



Must box out on every shot.

Conclusion

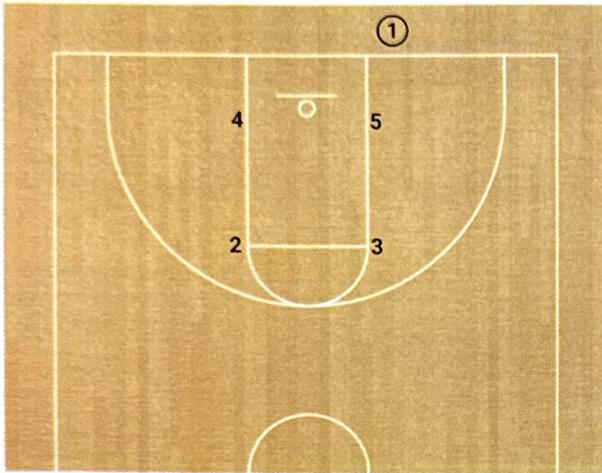
The Pack Line defense really is a 'team' defense. Everyone must be on the same page defensively for it to be effective. If there's anyone on the team not in position it can lead to easy defensive breakdowns.

It's a great defense to implement for teams on any level. It's can be used in youth basketball teams all the way up to variations of the pack line defense in the NBA. It cuts down penetration, forces the other team to beat you from outside, emphasizes the importance of playing as a unit, and teaches them how to play in help position.

Baseline Out of Bounds Plays

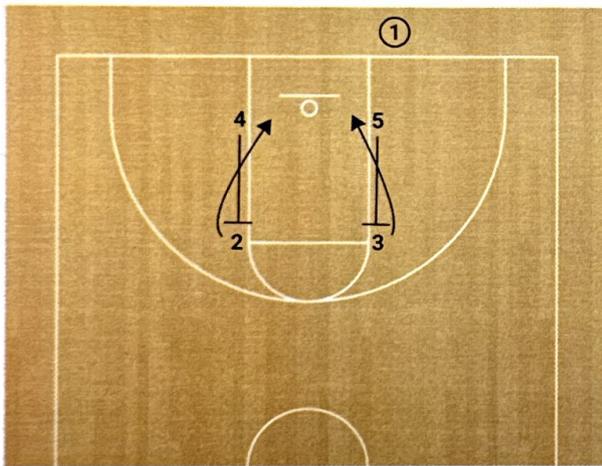
(BLOBS)

Kobe-BLOB (35 Strong Side)



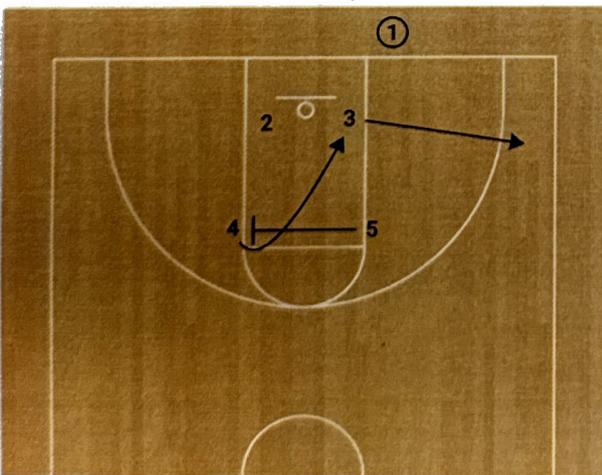
Phase 1

Set up quickly



Phase 2

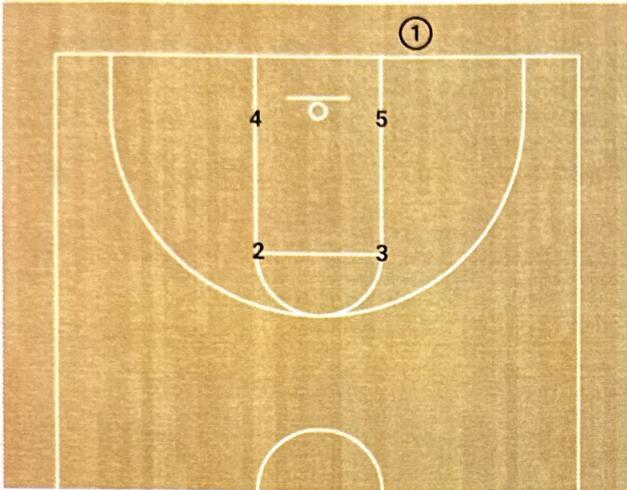
Players 4 and 5 will set up screens for Players 2 and 3 who will roll to the basket looking for the ball.



Phase 3

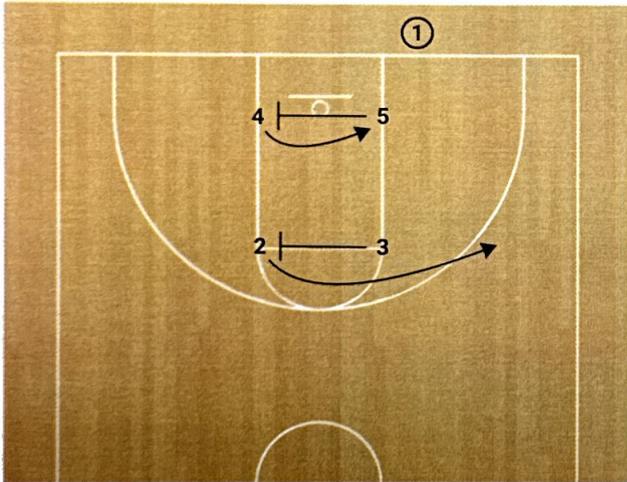
Player 5 will set a second screen across for Player 4 who will roll to the basket. Simultaneously, Player 3 will clear out to the 3 point line if they don't receive the pass on the initial screen.

Magic - BLOB (35 Strong Side)



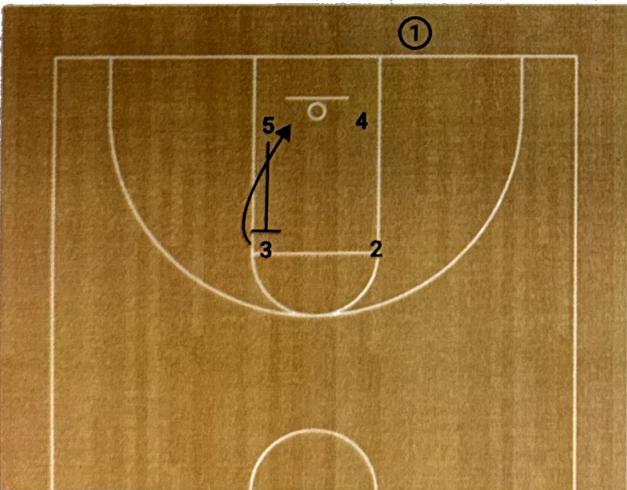
Phase 1

Set up quickly



Phase 2

5 and 3 set cross screens for 4 and 2. 4 looks to establish position under the basket. 2 pops out to 3 point line.



Phase 3

Player 5 sets a second screen for Player 3 who will roll to the basket.