10 FREE BASKETBALL DRILLS

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1.1 Rapid Swing Pass

Breaking the zone defense can be tough – this drill will help condition players to pass quickly to spread the zone out.

What you need – To start, you only need 5 players on offense to begin the drill, spread out over the perimeter, as shown in the diagram below. Later, you can add defenders to help provide more game-like situations.

How this drill works – Above you see a typical perimeter offense used in a variety of situations during the basketball game. The purpose of this drill is to get players used to making quick passes to the person next to them.

Player 1 will start with the ball just outside the three-point line. He or she will pass the ball to either Player 2 or Player 3 to start. Then, the pass goes to the post position, and then cycles back around – 3,1,2,4… and then cycles back again.

Players can add a fake in here one way, and go back the other, but they should refrain from throwing the ball across the court – this type of pass is often intercepted. Adding a defense running a zone will help your players develop their swing pass timing and quickness, and help them spread a zone defense out.

Result – Your players will be more capable of stretching a zone defense out, capitalizing on offensive opportunities.

1.2 Box Out React Drill

This drill will condition players to immediately look to gain position on the box out when a shot is taken.

What you need – Match up an offense and a defense for this drill. The coach will be the one shooting the ball.

How this drill works – The defensive players are going to start out with position, but when the coach blows his or her whistle, the players are going to move around in their positional area, jostling for position under the basket.

When the coach takes a shot, all of the players are going to yell out, “SHOT”, and then try to box out their opponent. An offensive rebound scores two points, after starting out at a disadvantage, and a defensive rebound scores one point. Offense and defense switch after each shot.

The players should have an eye on both their matched player and the ball, in order to see when it is shot, then be able to quickly react to get position to make a rebound.

Result – Quicker reaction under the hoop in going to help you develop a stronger rebounding team – on both ends of the court.
1.3 Bump

This is a great shooting, rebounding, and pressure drill for your players, that also allows them to have a little bit of fun.

**What you need** – Divide the team into two groups and line them up single file at the foul line of opposite baskets. The first two players in the lines should have balls.

**How this drill works** – This is a fast-paced drill for teams of any age level, as it helps them develop a number of valuable skills, while keeping it fun.

The drill starts with the first player taking a foul shot, and the second player shooting right after. If the first player misses, he or she must gather the rebound and make the basket BEFORE the second player makes their basket. Once the first player makes the basket, they pass the ball to the next player, who tries to make their basket before the second player.

This continues on... if a shooter in behind a player makes his or her basket first, the player ahead is eliminated. This can make for fast-paced fun!

**Result** – Several skills are honed in this drill, especially making pressure shots.

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1.4 Run the Gauntlet

Driving through the lane can often be a physical offensive play. This drill helps players get used to the contact and maintain concentration.

**What you need** – Line up 4 players (2 a side) in the key, and have one ball handler at the top of the three point line. (See diagram for alignment). You can set this drill up at two stations if you have the numbers, or the coaches may have to join in this drill.

**How this drill works** – Driving the ball through the lane means that a player often has to drive through the arms and bodies of defenders. You often have a lot of slapping, reaching and body contact, but the driver still needs to maintain focus enough to make the basket.

In this drill, the ball handler (B) will drive the ball through the 4 players in the key. As the player is driving through the key, the four players will try to slap at the ball, the wrists, etc, and create a diversion for the player driving to the hoop.
The ball handler has to drive strong to the hoop and deliver the ball by lay up to the hoop. To make this drill more difficult, add a third player on each side that the driver has to make it through on his or her way to the hoop.

**Result** – Giving all of your players the chance to go through this drill will help them to develop the concentration and ball handling skill necessary to increase their success when driving to the basket.

### 1.5 Front Door, Back Door

This is both a passing drill for guards, but also a drill for the post position

**What you need** – Match up two post players and a guard, and run as many stations as you have baskets. The guards will start off with a ball. See diagram below for more details on positioning.

![Diagram](Diagram.png)

**How this drill works** – To start, the guard will handle the ball just outside the three point line. The two post players (defense in red) will be working the low post area in this drill. The 4 man will do one of two things: Fake roll backward and come front door, or fake front and go back door. At this point it is the responsibility of the 1 man to make the quick pass into the key so the team can score a quick basket.

To add another element to this drill, you can do a couple of things:
- Add a defender on the guard, to defend against the pass
- Add an off-side defender that will help the post player if he or she is beaten down low

The purpose of this drill is to improve the timing and the quick read skills of the guard, but also to help the post player learn to identify and execute a quick move underneath the hoop.

**Result** – Both your guard and your post player will begin to understand the importance of quick passes and quick cuts when you want to execute a back door pass down low.

### 1.6 Off The Glass Drill

This is a quick rebounding drill that teaches players to rebound at the top of their jump.

**What you need** – You can divide your team into two groups, and work either side of the backboard for this drill. Each line has one basketball they can use for this drill.

**How this drill works** – The line starts about 5 feet away from the backboard, inside the key. The first player in line tosses the ball up to the backboard, and then follows it up, jumps up grabs the ball and tosses it back up to the backboard while at the height of his or her jump. Once done, they go to the back of the line.
Following right behind them is the next player in line, who must approach the backboard, jump up, and grab the previous players rebound and put the ball up again – all while staying in the air. This should be a continuous drill, with the ball, nor the ball-player combination EVER touching the floor.

This drill teaches good control, and to capture the rebound at the height of the jump, rather than down on the ground.

This drill should be done for 1 minute without stopping, cycling players through continuously. A great warm-up drill for games.

**Result** – Improved rebounding skills, and getting the ball up high in their jump.

### 1.7 Around The Key Shooting

Players should be able to make all of the close in shots around the key

**What you need** – You can split the players into groups depending on the number of baskets you have. They should be at a basket with the key marked, along with foul shot positions.

**How this drill works** – This is a great end of practice drill that players can go through to im-

prove their close in shots while fatigued. Each player will have a ball, and they must make a basket from each of the six foul line up spots, and also at the foul line.

The kicker is, they have to be made in order, starting at one low post, and end at the other. If a player misses a basket, they start at the beginning. Practice ends when all players have made it around the world.

**Result** – Improved shooting percentage on close in shots – especially when players are fatigued from practice.

### 1.8 Loose Ball With Trailer

Chasing hard after a loose ball and gaining control for an offensive chance is a great drill to practice

**What you need** – You will start with three lines, at half court (shown in diagram), and the coach will be standing at center court with the balls.
How this drill works – Players in line one and two will be waiting for the coach to roll the ball. When the coach releases the ball (green), both players sprint after it. When one player reaches the ball and gains control, the other player assumes a defensive position.

Once a side has gained possession, a player from line 3 (blue) enters the fray as the trailing player. The player that has gained control of the ball can use the trailer to help them score a basket. **A shot attempt must be made within 5 seconds of gaining control.** Otherwise, defenders will already be back and the opportunity lost.

This drill requires quick recovery and thinking skills on the part of the offense, and solid defensive skills for the defender.

**Result** – Players will learn to capitalize on chances when they come on loose ball opportunities.

## 1.9 Passing Triangle

This is a basic drill that will help players to increase their passing accuracy and increase the skill set, with different pass types.

**What you need** – Divide the team into groups of three players. There should be two basketballs per group. The players will stand in a makeshift triangle to begin this drill. See the diagram below for more details.

**How this drill works** – This drill is going to work on the basic passing types that you have, in a drill that will keep players on their toes, and emphasize good passing technique, and reception.

To start the drill, the 1 player will make chest pass (red) to player 5. Player 5 will make a bounce pass (blue) across the key to player 4. Player 4 will make an overhead pass (black) back to player one.

When player 1 starts, by passing the ball to player 5, player 4 also has a ball and then passes the ball (overhead) to player 1. With two balls going, this drill should be continuous. It is a great concentration drill for all players, especially when you move them to different positions and they need to execute different passes.
You can increase the difficulty of this drill by allowing one, or even two defenders to lightly defend the passes, so the players have to make quick decisions to keep the ball going in the passing triangle.

**Result** – Better passing skills and players will learn to pass the ball quickly and accurately.

### 1.10 Double Team Drill

Double teams are a common way to neutralize top offensive players – and this drill will help your players develop solid double team skills.

**What you need** – Set up a four on four team drill, with an offense against a defense.

**How this drill works** – In this drill, you are going to have the players work four on four, and the object is to try and double team, or trap the man with the ball at all times.

The drill starts with player one passing to player two on offense (white). The defensive 1 and 2 players (red) will trap offensive player 2. Offensive player 2 then passes down to player 4, and defensive player 2 and 4 trap the offensive player down low.

This drill is not necessarily meant to constantly shut down the offense in this situation, it is merely meant to help players understand and execute an effective trap on certain positions on the court.

**Note:** Move the ball to both sides of the court, and also have the defensive players prepared to cover the open passing lanes when a player leaves his man to trap another.

**Result** – Great awareness of the trap or double team play. As a coach, you can teach them effective ways of pressuring opposing players while your defenders are trapping.