

Season Plan for 3- to 5-Year-Olds

At this age, children need understanding and skills to enable them to play a game. From a tactical perspective, you need to help them to see the need to keep the ball, to shoot baskets, and to try to stop their opponents from scoring. Boys and girls should still play together at this age level.

Overview of the Season Plan

The Season Plan on the next page provides a weekly guide and addresses tactical and skill components, and other activities that are fully detailed in the Practice Plans document. The Season Plan has five components:

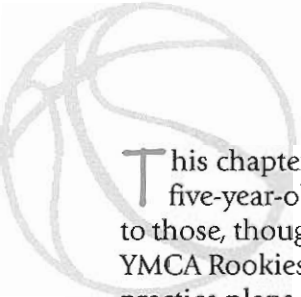
- **Purpose:** The purpose of the practice is your main focus.
- **Tactics and Skills:** Tactics are knowing what to do during the game (and when to do it), and they require an understanding of the problems faced by each team during the game and how those problems can be solved. Ways to maintain possession of the ball would be tactics. Skills are the physical skills traditionally taught, such as passing or shooting the ball or controlling the ball during play.
- **Rules and Traditions:** You will teach the rules of the sport to young children gradually, as part of playing games and learning skills. Traditions are those unwritten rules that players follow to be courteous and safe, such as raising your hand when you foul someone or playing cooperatively with the others on your team.
- **Fitness Concepts:** Even young children can understand some simple concepts about health and fitness, such as the idea that exercise strengthens your heart, so some of these are suggested as the focus for brief discussions during practice.
- **Character Development Concepts:** The four core values—caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility—can all be related to many situations that arise while playing basketball. For example, playing cooperatively with teammates shows that you care about them. Again, we'll suggest some specific ideas for briefly discussing character development values.

Season Plan for Teams of 3- to 5-Year-Olds

Week	Purpose	Tactics and Skills	Rules And Traditions	Fitness Concepts	Character Development Concepts
1	Playing the 1 v 1 game; boundaries, rules	Starting and restarting the game; dribbling; play cooperative defense	Start and restart rules ; keep control rule	General Fitness Participation in sport is good.	Four Core Values The four core values are introduced.
2	Playing the 1 v 1 game under control; handling the ball	Dribbling under control		Cardiorespiratory Fitness Your heart is a muscle.	Responsibility to others Players should stay under control.
3	Keeping possession of the ball	Passing and receiving	Unwritten rule Being a good sport	Muscular Strength and Endurance Playing basketball strengthens leg muscles.	Honesty If you break a rule, raise your hand and tell the coach.
4	Keeping possession of the ball	Dribbling and passing to a partner (chest pass bounce pass)		Safety and Rules Follow the rules.	Caring Take turns with teammates.
5	Attacking the basket	Shooting with basic technique; shooting close to the basket	Modified double dribble rule	Healthy Habits Eat nutritious foods and get enough sleep.	Caring Support teammates when they make a mistake.
6	Keeping possession of the ball; attacking the basket; dribbling and driving to shoot	Starting, stopping, and changing direction quickly while dribbling; jump stop	Modified traveling rule	Flexibility Stretching muscles makes them flexible.	Responsibility It's important that everyone work hard during practice.
7	Keeping possession of the ball	Ball handling; dribbling under control		Muscular Strength and Endurance Your arm muscles get stronger when you practice dribbling.	Respect Respect your opponents.
8	Keeping possession of the ball	Dribbling under pressure		Training and Conditioning Being active outside of practice is important.	Responsibility Listen to the coach and share team duties.
9	Defending your own space	Basic defensive technique	Modified foul rule	Muscular Strength and Endurance Playing basketball strengthens thigh muscles.	Respect for Opponent Shake hands with opponents at the end of a game.
10	Playing a 3 v 3 Game; keeping possession of the ball	Passing and receiving; supporting teammate with the ball		Healthy Habits List and discuss the habits that should be part of daily routine.	Keeping perspective on the game Learn and have fun while playing.

Note: The plans in this Chapter are for use with the 3 to 5 year-old age group referenced in the YMCA's "Coaching Basketball" online course.

Practice Plans for Four- to Five- Year-Olds

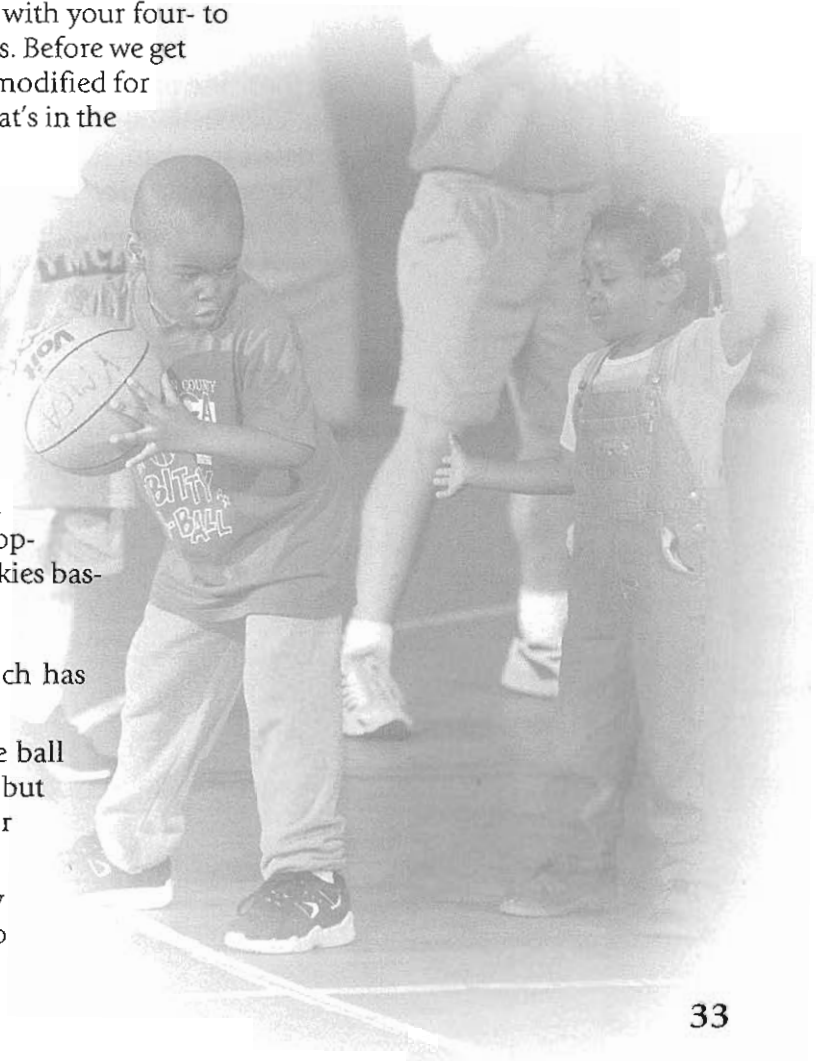


This chapter contains 10 practice plans to use with your four- to five-year-old YMCA Rookies basketball players. Before we get to those, though, we'll explain how basketball is modified for YMCA Rookies and give you a quick review of what's in the practice plans and how they are to be used.

Game Modifications

All games for four- to five-year-olds will be played on a half-court or short courts (see figure 6.1) with modified rules (see chapter 9 for basketball rules). Because young players have to learn about violations (such as forgetting to dribble the ball while moving) and fouls (illegal contact with an opposing player) gradually, the rules for YMCA Rookies basketball have the following modifications:

- © Players are to follow a self-space rule, which has three parts:
 - Players may not block shots or touch the ball when the ballhandler is holding the ball, but they may steal the ball when it is passed or dribbled.
 - Defending players may not intentionally get in the path of an offensive player to take a defensive charge.



—Defending players may not undercut an offensive player who is shooting an uncontested layup. This rule minimizes fouls and controls playing defense.

- ⊙ Only player-to-player defense is used, not zones.
- ⊙ No shot clock or scoreboard is used.
- ⊙ Players are to follow a keep control rule, which says that players must keep physical control of their bodies and the ball. No rough play is allowed.
- ⊙ All players must be good sports and show respect. Players who show unsporting conduct should be penalized by being removed from the game for a time.

Games may be played in one of two ways:

1. **Modified half-court games.** Individual players (1 v 1) or teams (2 v 1, 2 v 2, 3 v 2, or 3 v 3) take turns trying to score, and then switch roles from offense to defense or vice versa.
2. **Short-court games.** Short-court games require baskets at the sides of a regular basketball court. Each short court is half of a regulation-size court, but players run across it widthwise, rather than lengthwise. Using a short court is best for developing skills in younger players.

For four- and five-year-olds, use modified half-court rules throughout the season. Even in the short-court game, teams should alternate being the offensive or defensive team, just as they do for modified half-court.

During game play, be sure to rotate partners (opponents). You can arrange several short games (three to five minutes) and rotate partners at the beginning of each new game. Remember that changing partners changes the game. Have no more than seven players to a team.

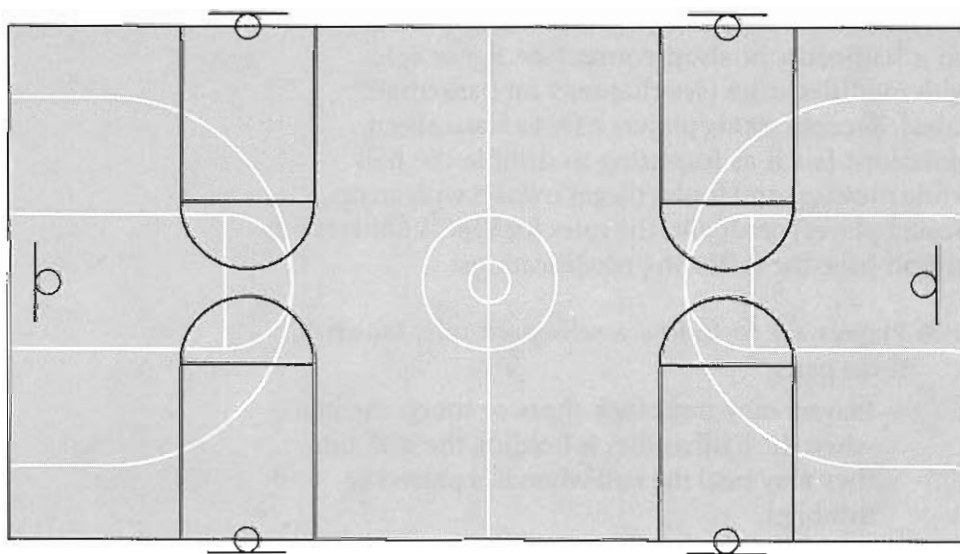


Figure 6.1 Crosscourt playing area.

Having the right amount and type of equipment is critical to the success of the YMCA Rookies program. All aspects of the game must be modified to fit this level. Table 6.1 gives you some examples.

To help players learn, you can work with players in two ways:

- ⊙ Teach by invitation. Adjust for individual differences in players by inviting the players to decide some of the parameters of the practice situation themselves, such as choosing the size of the ball.
- ⊙ Vary the parameters of the practice yourself in order to make play easier or more challenging for individuals or small groups.

Using either strategy allows players to succeed while being challenged; play isn't too hard or too easy.

To simplify the game or to increase the challenge for players, try the following:

- ⊙ Change the size and weight of the ball.
- ⊙ Change the size and height of the basket.
- ⊙ Give players timed goals, and then increase or decrease the interval or duration.
- ⊙ Give players trial goals, and then increase or decrease the number of times the skill must be done successfully.

In the YMCA Rookies basketball program, players focus on skills related to offense. Defensive skills are important, but if those skills are introduced too soon, players may have difficulty developing offensive skills, especially if their peers play defense aggressively. Introduce defensive skills after players have

TABLE 6.1

Modified Factors in Basketball

Factors	YMCA Rookies basketball
Size and weight of ball	Junior #5
Height of basket	5 feet—bushel baskets or wash baskets hung on the walls work well
Size of basket	Large to regulation
Number of players	Small sided (1 v 1, 2 v 1, 2 v 2, 3 v 2, 3 v 3)
Court size	Half-court, short court
Number of players per team	7

developed some proficiency with off- and on-the-ball skills. Rather than eliminating defense, we recommend that you control defensive play by using two levels of involvement:

1. **Cooperative defense (cold).** The player assumes a defensive posture two arm lengths from the opponent and is relatively passive.
2. **Active defense (warm).** The player assumes a defensive posture about one and a half arm lengths from the opponent, has active hands and feet, but makes no attempts to intercept the ball.

Players who are four to five years old should use cooperative defense; players who are six to seven years old start out using cooperative defense and then move to active defense.

Here are some other ways to make practice games simpler or more challenging:

- ⊙ Equally increase or decrease the number of players suggested (for example, if we suggest playing 2 v 2, make it simpler by playing 1 v 1, or make it more challenging by playing 3 v 3).
- ⊙ Begin with *no* defense.
- ⊙ Add an extra offensive player to make it easier for the offense (for example, 3 v 2 instead of 2 v 2).
- ⊙ Add an extra defender to make it harder on the offense (for example, 2 v 3 instead of 3 v 3) once players have acquired the skills they need to be successful.
- ⊙ Perform the skill or game at a slower than normal pace to make it simpler.
- ⊙ Increase or decrease the number of passes you require before the offense can attempt a shot.

All these suggested modifications will help your YMCA Rookies players develop their basketball skills at a level at which they can succeed. As they become more skilled, the game rules will become more like those of the official game. YMCA Rookies practices will give your players a good foundation to build on as they grow.



Practice Plan Organization

Each plan contains the following sections:

- ⊙ Purpose
- ⊙ Equipment
- ⊙ Practice Plan
- ⊙ Coach's Point
- ⊙ Variations

Purpose focuses on what you want to teach your players during that practice; it is your main theme for the day. *Equipment* notes what you'll need on hand for that practice. We'll address the *Practice Plan* in depth in just a moment. The *Coach's Point* lists helpful reminders for you, points of emphasis to most effectively conduct the practice. We include *Variations* to games at the end of each plan, providing you with modifications to keep skill practices and games fun and interesting and to help players of varying skill levels.

The Practice Plan section outlines what you will do during each practice session. It consists of these elements:

- ⊙ Warm-Up
- ⊙ Fitness Circle
- ⊙ Game 1
- ⊙ Skill Practices and Games
- ⊙ Team Circle and Wrap-up

You'll begin each session with 5 to 10 minutes of warm-up activities. (Note: All times given in the practice plans are approximate.) This warm-up will be followed by five minutes of the Fitness Circle, during which you briefly talk with players about an idea that relates to health or fitness. Then, in Game 1, you'll be working on the first two steps of the four-step process for teaching basketball: having players play a modified basketball game and helping them discover what they need to do. The game will be designed to focus players' attention on a particular aspect of basketball. Start the game but, when it's clear that the players are having trouble achieving the goal of the game, stop the game and ask questions and get answers similar to those shown in the plans. The questions and answers will help the players see what skills they need to solve tactical problems in the game.

The third part of the four-step process of teaching basketball is teaching the skills identified in Game 1 through the skill practices. In each skill practice, you'll use the IDEA approach, which means you do the following actions:

- I** Introduce the skill.
- D** Demonstrate the skill.
- E** Explain the skill.
- A** Attend to players practicing the skill.

Chapter 8 contains descriptions of all the skills, so we give you a page reference in the skill practices to guide you to the appropriate description. The introduction, demonstration, and explanation should be very brief to fit young children's short attention spans. As the players practice, you will attend to individual children and guide them with teaching cues or further demonstration.

After the skill practices, you will have the children play another game to finish the four-step process. This lets them use the skills they just learned and

helps them understand how to utilize those skills in the context of a game. Note that in Game 1, when players are being introduced to a new tactic or skill, they usually will play an even-sided game (such as 3 v 3). This allows them to encounter the challenges they will face in executing the tactic or skill. Then, in most Game 2s, they play lopsided games (such as 3 v 1 or 3 v 2) to increase their chances of experiencing success and beginning to master the new tactic or skill. However, if your players are showing proficiency with the new tactic or skill, you can use even-sided games in Game 2. The choice is yours; for more on this issue, see chapter 4.

Each practice plan concludes with a Team Circle, which focuses on character development. You will take about five minutes to talk to your players about some aspect of basketball that relates to one of the four core values: caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility. Following this talk, you'll wrap up the practice with a reminder of the next practice day and time and a preview of what will be taught in the next practice session.

Note that Fitness and Team Circles are meant to be true discussions, not lectures where you do all the talking and the players do all the listening. Ask the questions provided and wait for your players to respond. Don't feed them the answers that we provide; these answers are meant to help you guide the discussion only. Your role is as much to ask questions and get players to respond as it is to dole out information.

The plans in this chapter, combined with the information in the rest of this book, should give you what you need to lead practices. Just remember to be patient and caring as you work on skills. Different children will progress at different rates, and it's more important that they learn the sport in a positive way than it is that they learn quickly.

Key to Diagrams

△ = Cone

• = Marked "spot" on court

■ = Block

---→ = Pass

—→ = Run

~~~~~→ = Dribble

P = Player or partner

↪ = Shoot

O = Offensive player

X = Defensive player

S = Supporting player

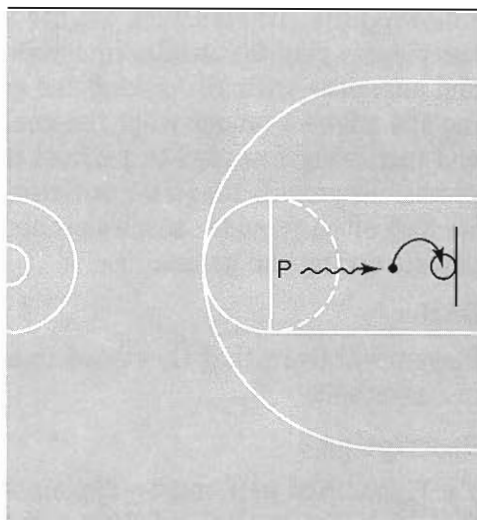


# Practice 1

## Warm-Up (10 minutes)

Begin each practice with 5 to 10 minutes of warm-up activities to get players loosened up and ready to go.

1. Players free dribble and handle the ball in space (one ball per player), using an area no larger than half-court.
2. Players dribble and shoot at a target: a hoop mounted against the wall, a bushel basket at a low height against the wall, or a square or circle taped on the wall.



## PURPOSE

To play a 1 v 1 game, focusing on boundaries and rules and dribbling. The objective is for players to be able to play a 1 v 1 game of basketball in a predetermined area while following simple start and restart rules.

## Equipment

- ☒ One basketball per player
- ☒ One portable basket per two players (if possible)
- ☒ Tape (optional)

## Fitness Circle (5 minutes)

Following the warm-up, gather the players and briefly discuss the fitness concept for that practice.

### **Key Idea:** General fitness

Gather children into a group. "Everyone jump 10 times. Our muscles help us jump. When you use your muscles a long time without getting too tired, it improves your *endurance*, which means you can run longer without getting tired. Now run really fast to the free throw line and back." Wait for them to return. "Running strengthens your heart and lungs. Now touch your toes; try to keep your fingers down there while I count to 10. Stretching makes you flexible, like a rubber band. When we play basketball, our bodies run, jump, and move. It makes our bodies stronger and improves our fitness, which means we can run and play longer and faster. Having good physical fitness is important for basketball and for being healthy. Every practice we'll talk about fitness in our Fitness Circles.

"At the beginning of each practice, after the warm-up, we'll have a Fitness Circle. The Fitness Circle is a time during which we will learn more about how basketball makes you healthy and fit and how being healthy and fit helps you play better basketball."

# Practice 1

(cont'd)



☞ Spend time getting players to understand how to play a modified half-court game. These games are more cooperative than competitive, limiting players' focus to boundaries, starting and restarting game play, and keeping control. Be flexible regarding violations (such as double dribbling or traveling); however, you will need a keep control rule. For example, if a player just picks up the ball and starts running with it without dribbling, that would be out of control. Teach cooperative (cold) defense to the players.



## Game 1 (10 minutes)

Following the Fitness Circle, get the kids playing a game. After letting the players play for awhile, interrupt the game for a time of questions and answers—with YOU asking the questions and your PLAYERS providing the answers (about what the goal of the game was and what skills and tactics they needed to perform to succeed in the game). For many games, we provide diagrams or figures showing how the game is played. We also often provide “coach’s points” for you to pass along to your players during the games.

### Goal

Players will learn that they have to attack the basket (target) to score in basketball.

### Description

1 v 1, modified half-court—Explain how to start and restart the game. Each player attempts to dribble and shoot at a target. His or her opponent plays cooperative defense. No traveling or double dribble violations are called.

You’ll follow Game 1 with a Skill Practice, during which you’ll introduce, demonstrate, and explain a skill or tactic, and then attend to your players as they practice it. The question-and-answer session, in which your players tell YOU what skills and tactics they needed to be successful in the game, leads directly to the Skill Practice. We often provide coaching points with the Skill Practices; pass these points along to your players. We also provide “coaching cues”—phrases to help your players focus on the task at hand—during many Skill Practices and Games.

Coach: What are you trying to do?

Players: Score a basket (or put the ball into the target).

Coach: What do you have to do to get the ball close to the basket (target)?

Players: Dribble and run.

## Skill Practice 1 (10 minutes)

1. Introduce, demonstrate, and explain how to dribble without losing control (see pages 121–122).
2. Have your players practice dribbling without losing control.

### Description

Individual—Players should stand apart from each other (allow 15 seconds for them to move to their own space); on a signal, they begin dribbling around the court without losing control. Players stop and catch the ball quickly on a signal. Repeat three times using short intervals (20, 30, and 45 seconds).

# Practice 1

## COACH's cues



- "Use your fingerpads."
- "Keep your eyes over the ball."
- "Keep the ball low."
- "Keep the ball at your side."

## Skill Practice 2 (15 minutes)

### Description

Individual—Each player practices dribbling. Players can choose the size and weight of the ball they use.

### Easier Activities

- Dribbling with one hand.
- Dribbling continuously with left and right hands.
- Striking a ball down and catching it.

### More Difficult Activities

- Dribbling and moving with the ball.
- Dribbling in different places around the body while stationary.
- Dribbling continuously while switching hands.
- Dribbling at different heights.

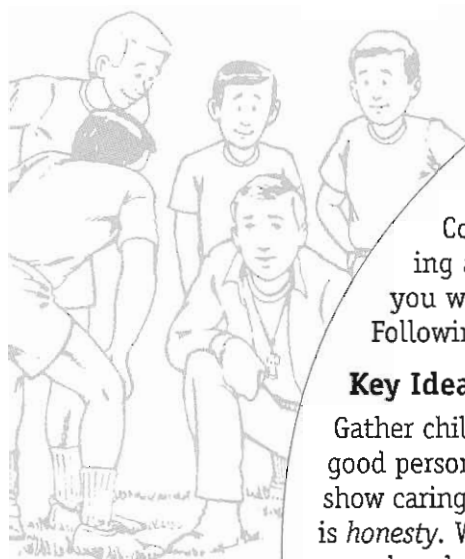
## Game 2 (5 minutes)

### Goal

Players will use boundaries and rules and will dribble in game play.

### Description

Same as Game 1.



## Team Circle (5 minutes)

Conclude practice by gathering your players and discussing a character development concept. These aren't lectures; you want your players' active participation in these discussions. Following the discussions, wrap up the practice with a few comments.

### **Key Idea:** Four core values

Gather children into a circle. "This season we'll talk about four qualities of a good person and teammate. Number one is *caring*. Can you tell me ways you show caring to others? Helping someone up when they fall? Good! Number two is *honesty*. What ways do you show honesty? How about if you tell someone if you played with their game or toy? That's honesty. Number three is *respect*. Do you know what respect is? One thing that shows respect is listening to adults when they speak to you, like you're doing now. Number four is *responsibility*. One way to show you're responsible is to pick up after yourself. Don't wait for others to pick up for you." Ask them to share ways they show the four values in other areas of their lives. "Good teammates show these values to each other. We'll talk more about these four values during the season."

### **Wrap-Up**

Make summary comments about practice. Remind players of the next practice day and time and give them a sneak preview of that practice—handling the ball and dribbling.

## Variations

In working with the players on levels of dribbling proficiency, you can vary the activity depending on the developmental needs of the player.

### **To Simplify**

- Skill Practice 1: Keep the interval short (10, 12, or 15 seconds).
- Skill Practice 2: Let players use a ball of a size and weight that allows them to succeed.
- Games 1 and 2: Use a large-size basket or target and/or place the basket or target low.

### **To Challenge**

- Skill Practice 1: Lengthen the interval.
- Skill Practice 2: Let players use a ball of a size and weight that will challenge them.
- Games 1 and 2: Increase the height of the basket or target.

# Practice 2

## Warm-Up (10 minutes)

Individual—Players should stand apart from each other (allow 15 seconds for them to move to their own space); on a signal, they begin dribbling around the court without losing control. Players stop and catch the ball quickly on a signal. Repeat this exercise three times in short intervals (20, 30, and 45 seconds).

### Fitness Circle (5 minutes)

#### **Key Idea:** Cardiorespiratory fitness

Gather children into a group. "Everyone hold one hand up and make a fist. Squeeze your fist tightly, then let go. Keep tightening and letting go." Children continue for 10 counts. "Your heart is a special muscle that tightens and relaxes just like your fist is doing. Your heart is about the size of your fist. Let's put our fists over our chests. Every time it tightens, or beats, your heart pumps blood all over your body. When you run during basketball, your heart beats faster. The beat slows down when you slow down.

Let's run with high knees for 15 counts while we count together. Stop and feel your heartbeat by putting your hand over your chest." Model for players. "Running strengthens your heart and lungs and improves your fitness."

## Game 1 (10 minutes)

### **Goal**

Players will attack the basket (target) to score in basketball.

### **Description**

1 v 1, modified half-court game—Each player attempts to dribble and shoot at a basket (or target). His or her opponent plays cooperative defense. Players earn a point if they attempt a shot close to the basket (or target). Designate the area (such as the lane) from which players must shoot to earn a point. Do not call any traveling or double dribble violations.


### **PURPOSE**

To play a 1 v 1 game, focusing on playing the game under control. The objective is for players to be able to handle the ball and dribble under control.

### Equipment

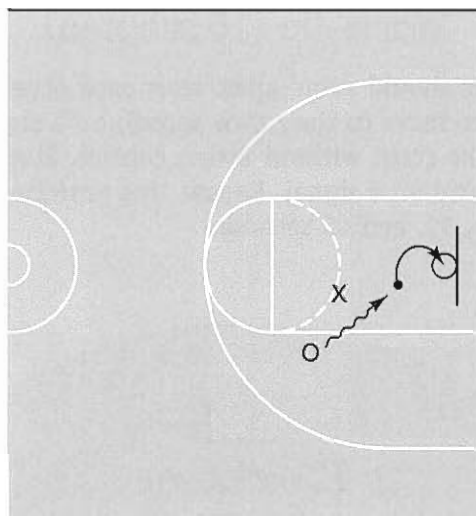
- ☒ One basketball per player (if possible)
- ☒ One portable basket per two players
- ☒ Tape or cones as markers (optional)



 Modifying is the key to success with this age group. Keep asking yourself, "How can I modify this and still have the basic principles of basketball?"

# Practice 2

(cont'd)



Coach: What is the goal of the game?

Players: The goal is to score a basket (put the ball into the target).

Coach: How do you move toward the basket (or target) with the ball?

Players: We move by dribbling and running, by dribbling under control.

## Skill Practice (20 minutes)

### Description

Individual—Each player practices dribbling. Players can choose the size and weight of the ball they use. Have them try the following activities:

- Dribbling and moving with the ball.
- Dribbling in different places around the body while stationary.
- Dribbling continuously while switching hands.
- Dribbling at different heights.

### COACH's cues



"Use your fingerpads."

"Keep your eyes over the ball."

"Keep the ball low."

"Keep the ball at your side."

# Practice 2

## Game 2 (10 minutes)

### Goal

Players will keep possession of the ball using a dribble in a game.

### Description

Same as Game 1, except that players earn one point for a shot attempt and one point for dribbling under control. (Players determine whether they achieved one or two points; if the ball did not slip out of their hands as they played, it was dribbled under control.)

### Team Circle (5 minutes)

#### Key Idea: Responsibility

Gather children into a group. "I want us all to pretend we're eggs. Eggs have shells that can break. What would happen if we bumped into each other as eggs? Right. We would crack and break. Let's move around the court being eggs. Don't bump each other or we'll break!" Continue this exercise for about one minute. "We were all careful not to bump each other so our 'shells' wouldn't break! That was great! You were in charge of or 'responsible' for your moving. When we're careful of each other, we're responsible for our space and other players' space. This shows responsibility during practice and games."

#### Wrap-Up

Make summary comments about practice. Remind players of the next practice day and time and give them a sneak preview of that practice—passing and receiving the basketball.



## Variations

When working with the players on levels of dribbling proficiency, you can vary the activity depending on the developmental needs of the player. You can establish an accountability check, in which you or a player's peer witnesses a demonstration of proficiency for each activity.

# Practice 3

## PURPOSE

To keep possession of the ball, focusing on passing and receiving. The objective is for players to be able to pass and receive the basketball.

### Equipment

- ☒ One basketball per player
- ☒ One portable basket per two players (if possible)
- ☒ Tape or cones as markers (optional)

## Warm-Up (10 minutes)

Individual—Each player has a ball to practice dribbling. Have them try the following activities:

- Dribbling and moving with the ball.
- Dribbling in different places around the body while stationary.
- Dribbling continuously while switching hands.
- Dribbling at different heights.

## Fitness Circle (5 minutes)

**Key Idea:** Muscular strength and endurance

Gather children into a circle. "Everyone find your own space so that you don't bump your neighbor. You're going to run in your own spot for 30 seconds, then stop. Ready, go!" Time children and verbally let them know the time remaining; stop them at the end of the time. "What part of the body did we just use the most when we ran?" Encourage their responses. "When we play basketball, which part of the body do we use the most?" Wait for their responses.

"Muscles in our body help us to move our legs. Playing basketball will help our leg muscles get stronger and grow bigger."



# Practice 3

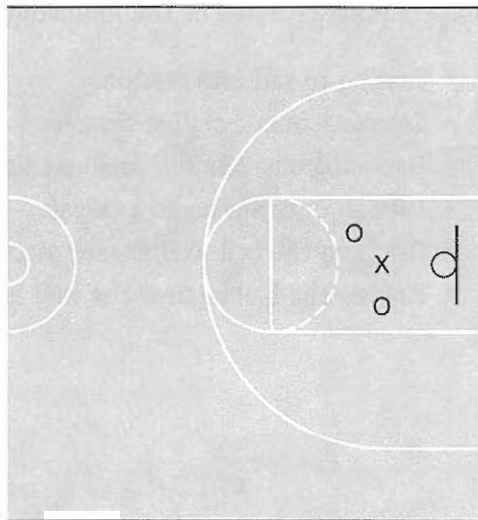
## Game 1 (10 minutes)

### Goal

Pairs of players will play as a team.

### Description

2 v 1, modified half-court game—Two players become partners and play against one defensive player, then one partner must switch roles with the defensive player. Switch at least twice so all players get to play defense. Limit them to dribbling three times before passing. Do not call any traveling or double dribble violations.



Explain to players that they are expected to be good sports and to show respect to other players. If a player shows unsporting conduct, he or she will be removed from the game for a few minutes.

Coach: What would you do with the ball if you had a teammate?

Players: Pass to him or her.

Coach: What do you have to do to be successful at passing?


Players: Catch the ball and pass the ball right to my partner or teammate.



## Skill Practice (20 minutes)

1. Introduce, demonstrate, and explain how to pass and receive (see pages 119–121).
2. Have your players practice passing and receiving.



 You may have to spend more time on basic receiving and passing skills.

# Practice 3

(cont'd)

## Description

Individual or pairs—Demonstrate throwing and catching, and then have players practice some of the following throwing and catching activities:

- Tossing to self and catching.
- Catching from a skilled thrower.
- Bouncing a ball to self and catching it.
- Passing or throwing to a target.
- Catching the ball in different places around the body.
- Passing the ball against the wall and catching it.

### COACH'S cues



#### for receiving

- “Target the hands.”
- “Keep your eyes on the ball.”
- “Reach for it.”
- “Pull it in.”

#### for passing

- “Put your hands on the sides of the ball, with your thumbs pointing to each other.”
- “Step forward with your preferred foot.”
- “Push the ball forward at chest level, elbows out, and snap it.”

(After the pass) “Move your thumbs down, backs of your hands facing each other, and move your weight forward.”

## Game 2 (10 minutes)

### Goal

Pairs of players will play as a team.

### Description

Same as Game 1.

# Practice 3

## Team Circle (5 minutes)

### Key Idea: Honesty

Gather children into a group near two cones about 10 feet apart. "Can you step out of bounds when you have the basketball? What if it's an accident and nobody saw you? Those of you who think it's okay to step out of bounds, stand by this cone. Those who think it's not okay, stand by this one." Wait for children to choose. Then ask them why they chose the cone they did. "Stepping out of bounds, even if it's an accident, is against the rules. What should you do if it happens? Those of you who think you should just keep playing, stay at this cone; those of you who think you should tell the coach and give the ball to the other team, go stand by that cone." Wait for everyone to finish choosing. "It's important to be honest. If you step out of bounds with the ball, even if nobody sees it, tell the coach and give the ball to the other team."


### Wrap-Up

Make summary comments about practice. Remind players of the next practice day and time and give them a sneak preview of that practice—dribbling and passing the ball to a partner.

## Variations

To simplify or to increase the challenge, modify the ball (size and weight) and basket (height and size) to meet players' needs.



 Remember to use teaching by invitation or to vary the game parameters yourself.

# Practice 4

## PURPOSE

To keep possession of the ball, focusing on dribbling and passing the ball to a partner. The objective is for the players to be able to execute both the chest and bounce pass.

### Equipment

- ☒ One basketball per player
- ☒ One portable basket per two players (if possible)
- ☒ Tape or cones as markers (optional)

## Warm-Up (10 minutes)

Individual—Players dribble in different pathways:

- Move in straight, curved, and zigzag pathways in general space.
- Follow the straight lines on the gym floor.
- Move in a straight pathway. Each time a player meets another player or hears your signal, he or she turns quickly to the right or left and continues dribbling.
- Move throughout general space, quickly moving from side to side in a zigzag.

## Fitness Circle (5 minutes)

### Key Idea: Safety and rules

Gather children into a circle. "What are the easiest ways to get hurt while playing basketball?" Wait for answers (slipping and falling, getting poked in the eye, getting hit in the face with a pass). "What's the best way to keep from getting hurt? How do we prevent these accidents from happening?" Point out that while no sport is injury free, their risks of being hurt are much reduced when they follow the rules and care about each other.

# Practice 4

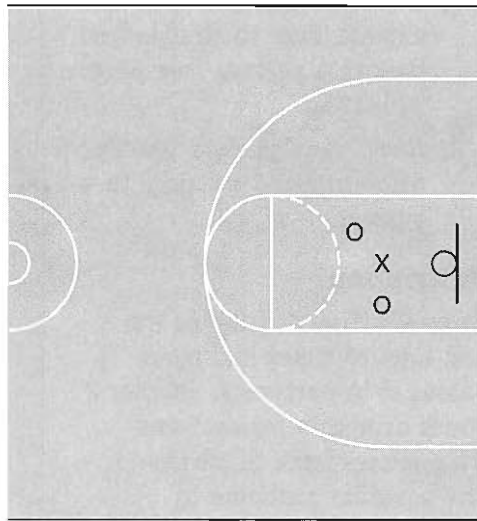
## Game 1 (10 minutes)

### Goal

Pairs of players will play as a team.

### Description

2 v 1, modified half-court game—Two players become partners and play against one defensive player, then one player must switch roles with the defensive player. Switch at least twice so all players get to play defense. Limit players to dribbling three times before passing. Do not call any traveling or double dribble violations.



Coach: What is the goal of the game?

Players: The goal is to keep the ball to score or to dribble and pass to score.

Coach: What types of passes are there? (This question is to see how much players know about passing.)

Players: Two types of passes are the bounce pass and the chest pass.



## Skill Practice 1 (10 minutes)

1. Introduce, demonstrate, and explain how to chest pass and bounce pass (see page 120).
2. Have your players practice chest passes and bounce passes.

### Description

Pairs—Players practice passing to each other. After they have passed the ball four times, they change partners.

#### COACH'S cues



#### for chest pass

"Keep your chest high."

"Keep your thumbs down and together."

"Step forward."

#### for bounce pass

"Snap your thumbs down and together."

"Bounce the ball so your partner catches it waist high."

"Step forward."



☞ Encourage players to move when they dribble.

☞ Remind passers to pass a little in front of their partners.

# Practice 4

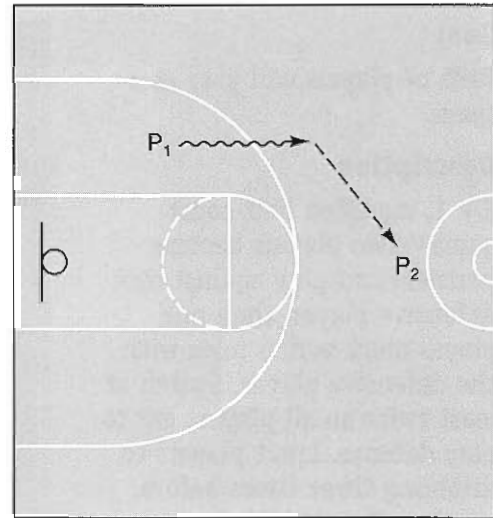
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## Skill Practice 2 (10 minutes)

1. Introduce, demonstrate, and explain how to dribble and pass to a partner (see pages 119–122).
2. Have your players practice dribbling and passing to a partner.

### Description

Pairs—Partner 1 dribbles the ball 8 to 10 times and then passes it to partner 2. Partner 2 starts dribbling forward and then passes back to partner 1. The partners continue to dribble and pass to each other from one end of the gym to the other. The goal is to make four successful passes in a row (adjust number as necessary).



### COACH'S cues



- "If you have the ball, you must dribble to move."
- "Pass on the move."
- "Control the ball."
- "Lead your partner."

## Game 2 (10 minutes)

### Goal

Players will play in offensive teams of two, dribbling and passing in a game.

### Description

Same as Game 1, except choose either 2 v 1 or 2 v 2. Rotate players accordingly so they all have a chance to play offense and defense.

# Practice 4

## Team Circle (5 minutes)

### **Key Idea:** Caring

Gather children into a circle. Stand in the middle of the group with a ball. Pass to each child and give him or her a turn to pass back to you. "I am going to pass the ball. If a pass comes to you, pass the ball back to me." Work around the whole circle. Talk to the children about playing and learning when they come to practice. "Who had a turn to touch the ball?" Wait for their responses. "I made sure everyone had a chance to touch the ball. Raise your hand if it felt good to be able to have a turn. How would you have felt if you did not have a turn?" Listen to their responses. "We need to share the ball and take turns so everyone can learn and play. Sharing and taking turns show you care."

### **Wrap-Up**

Make summary comments about practice. Remind players of the next practice day and time and give them a sneak preview of that practice—shooting the ball.



## Variations

- To simplify skill practice, limit the number of practice activities or limit the practice to the chest pass only.
- To increase the challenge during games, have players pass only and not dribble.

# Practice 5

## PURPOSE

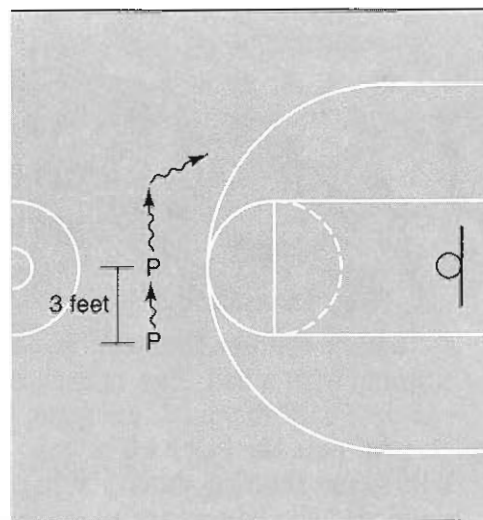
To attack the basket, focusing on shooting close to the basket. The objective is for players to shoot using basic technique.

### Equipment

- ☒ One basketball per player (if possible)
- ☒ One portable basket per two players (if possible)
- ☒ Tape or cones as markers

## Warm-Up (10 minutes)

Pairs—Partners play follow-the-leader in single file while dribbling (have players leave three feet between them); they should switch who leads frequently.



## Fitness Circle (5 minutes)

### Key Idea: Healthy habits

Gather children in a circle. "Do you know that when your body doesn't eat healthy foods and get enough sleep it moves slowly. Let's pretend we have no energy to move because we didn't eat enough healthy foods or get enough sleep." Begin to move slowly and encourage the children to follow. Move extremely slowly. "Everyone stop. Now I am going to fill your bodies up with healthy foods." Act out giving them foods. "Pretend we are sleeping. When I say 'Wake up!' you can move faster because you have enough energy and enough rest. Wake up and move faster. Stop! What are some other healthy habits you have learned?" Examples: daily exercise, brushing teeth, saying no to drugs, no smoking. "It's important for everyone to practice healthy habits."



# Practice 5

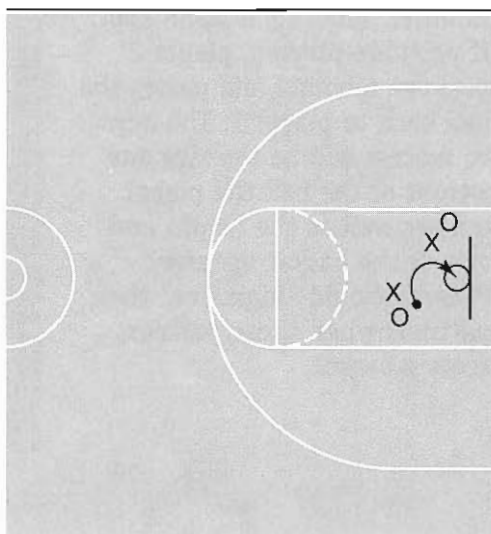
## Game 1 (10 minutes)

### Goals

Players score by shooting in a 2 v 2 game.

### Description

2 v 2, modified half-court game—Players earn one point if they hit the backboard or the rim of a modified basket and two points if it goes into the basket. Designate the area (such as the lane) from which players must shoot to earn points. Call modified double dribble violations. For example, a player can stop and start toward the basket three times before it is a violation. If a violation occurs, the player's opponent takes a turn.



**Coach:** What is the goal of this game?

**Players:** The goal is to shoot at the basket and score points.

**Coach:** How do you do that?

**Players:** You shoot close to the basket.




## Skill Practice (20 minutes)

1. Introduce, demonstrate, and explain how to shoot baskets with a set shot (see pages 122–125).
2. Have your players practice shooting baskets with a set shot.

### Description

Individuals or pairs—Players can practice shooting individually or in pairs in a game of Around the Key. For this game, mark shooting spots with tape in an arc around the basket (inside the key). All shots should

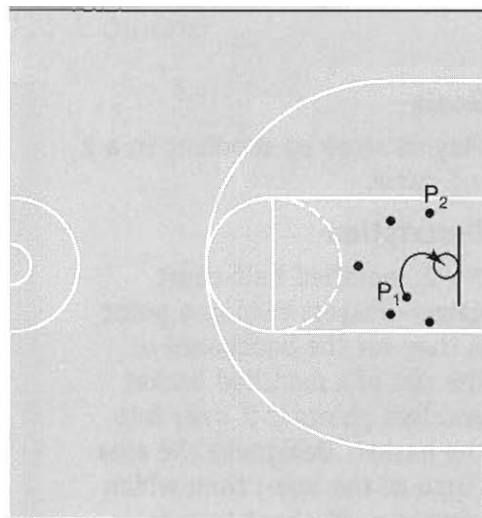


 Limit the number of teaching cues you provide when you model and teach shooting.

# Practice 5

(cont'd)

- be close to the basket. Each
- player moves from spot to spot
- in order, shooting at each spot.
- If pairs are playing, player 2
- gets the rebound and passes the
- ball back to player 1. The keys
- to success will be the size and
- weight of the ball the player
- uses as well as the height and
- size of the basket or target.
- Players should "high five" their
- partners when those partners
- score a basket.



## COACH'S cues



"Keep hands apart on the ball."

"Only fingers touch the ball."

"Keep palms up."

"Point elbows toward the basket."

"Flip the wrist and wave good-bye." (The hand follows through after the shot.)

## Game 2 (10 minutes)

### Goal

Players score by shooting.

### Description

- Same as Game 1, except choose either 2 v 1 or 2 v 2, depending on the
- skill proficiency of your players. Rotate players accordingly so they all
- have a chance to play offense and defense. (See chapter 4 for more on
- the use of lopsided games.)

# Practice 5

## Team Circle (5 minutes)

### Key Idea: Caring

Gather children into a group about 10 feet from a basket. "Let's pretend we're playing a basketball game. Watch what I do with the ball." Tell a child in the group you're passing to him. Make a bad pass. "That pass wasn't very good, was it? What would you say to me so that I don't feel bad about the pass?" As children respond, have each player who makes a supportive comment try to make a basket. If players make unsupportive comments, encourage them to change their words to become more supportive; after they have changed the words, have each of them try to make a basket. "It's very important to support your teammates, especially when they make mistakes. Saying something that makes someone feel good shows you care."

### Wrap-Up

Make summary comments about practice. Remind players of the next practice day and time and give them a sneak preview of that practice—driving and dribbling to shoot.



Find simple methods for helping players keep track of their progress; children at this age will vary in their ability to count and keep score. For example, you could award a token to a player each time he or she achieves a goal.

# Practice 6

## PURPOSE

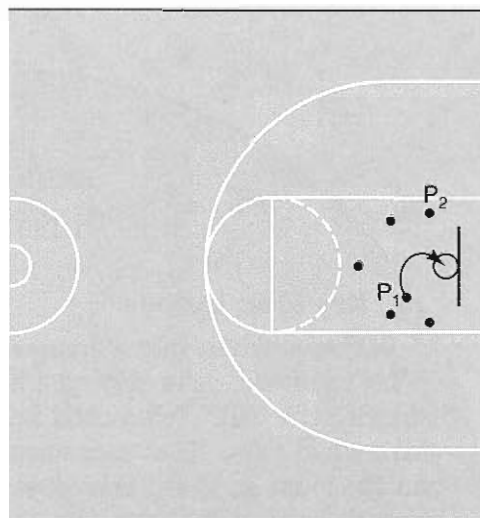
To keep possession of the ball and attack the basket, focusing on driving and dribbling to shoot. The objective is for players to be able to start and stop, change directions quickly while dribbling, and jump stop.

### Equipment

- ☒ One basketball per player
- ☒ One portable basket per two players
- ☒ Tape or cones as markers (optional)
- ☒ Rubber band

## Warm-Up (10 minutes)

Pairs—Partners practice shooting in the game Around the Key. They keep track of the number of baskets made.



## Fitness Circle (5 minutes)

### Key Idea: Flexibility

Bring a rubber band and show children or have them visualize one. "This rubber band is like our muscles. When I pull it, it stretches; when I let go, it pulls back to its original shape." Show the action of a band—stretch it out and back; repeat, using a gentle, slow action. "Your muscles work the same way. When you reach and stretch, your muscles are stretching just like the rubber band. When your body comes back, your muscles go back to their original shape. Everyone slowly reach down to the floor with your arms and then bring your arms back up." Have children repeat three times. "Your leg muscles need to stretch because we use them a lot in basketball; it makes them more flexible. When muscles are flexible, it keeps them from getting hurt and makes the muscles feel good."

# Practice 6

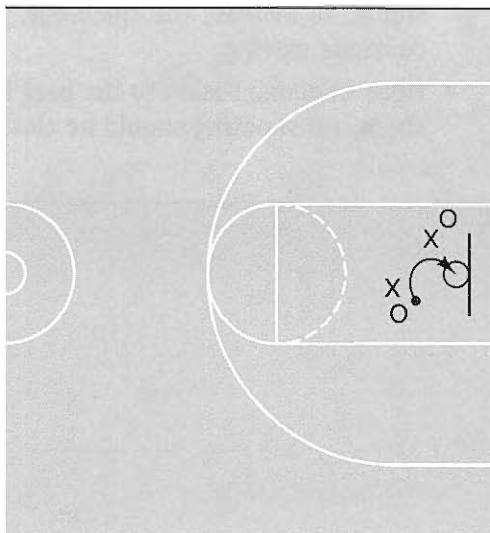
## Game 1 (10 minutes)

### Goal

Players dribble and drive to shoot.

### Description

2 v 2, modified half-court game—If a team makes a basket, that team gets the ball again (gets a second turn). Designate the area (such as the lane) from which players must shoot to earn a point. Call modified double dribble and traveling violations. For example, a player can stop and start toward the basket three times before you call a double dribble violation, and a player can take four steps while not dribbling before you call a traveling violation. If a violation occurs, the team's opponent takes a turn.



Coach: How do you use the dribble in basketball?

Players: To get close to the basket to shoot, to beat your opponent.

Coach: How do you do that?

Players: You change direction.



## Skill Practice (20 minutes)


1. Introduce, demonstrate, and explain how to start, stop, and change direction quickly while dribbling (see pages 116–117).
2. Have your players practice starting and stopping and changing direction quickly while dribbling.


### Description

Individual—Players practice starting and stopping and changing directions quickly while dribbling, using the following activities:

- Dribble moving slowly at first, and then gradually increase speed.
- On a signal, quickly stop both moving and dribbling—jump stop.



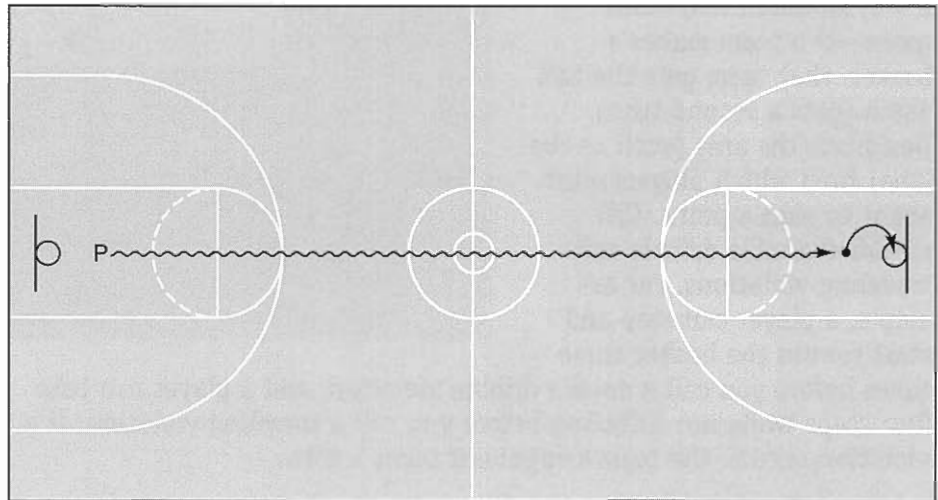
 Demonstrate the whole skill first, and then break it down into parts.

 Focus on one idea at a time.

# Practice 6

(cont'd)

- Dribble in general space. On the signal, stop quickly in a front-back stance, maintain the dribble, and then continue moving forward on the signal. To increase the challenge, pivot in another direction, and then continue moving.
- Move from one basket to the next by dribbling, and then jump stop and shoot. All shooting should be close to the basket (within two feet).



## COACH's cues



for jump stops

"Stay in a balanced position."

"Keep a front-back stance."

"Bend the knees."

"Lower the body."

## Game 2 (10 minutes)

### Goal

Players dribble and drive to shoot.

### Description

Same as Game 1, except choose either 2 v 1 or 2 v 2. Rotate players accordingly so they all have a chance to play offense and defense.

# Practice 6

## Team Circle (5 minutes)

### **Key Idea:** Responsibility

Gather children into a circle. You're in the middle of the circle with a ball. You'll try to dribble the ball out of the circle. The children will have two chances to keep the ball from escaping the circle. During one turn they'll use minimal effort, and during the second they'll use their maximum effort. "I am going to try to dribble the ball out of the circle. Everyone work together to keep the ball in the circle. Pretend that you are snails that can't get to the ball fast enough." Begin to dribble and try to get the ball out of the circle, reminding players that snails move slower. "This time move like busy bees that fly fast and keep moving." Repeat activity, encouraging players to be "busy bees." "When you try to be like busy bees, you're being responsible to your teammates."

### **Wrap-Up**

Make summary comments about practice. Remind players of the next practice day and time and give them a sneak preview of that practice—keeping possession of the ball.

## Variations

- Remember, changing the ball can make skill practice simpler or more challenging.
- To simplify the skill practice, limit the number of skill practice activities.



# Practice 7

## PURPOSE

To keep possession of the ball, focusing on increasing the proficiency of ballhandling and dribbling. The objective is for players to be able to handle a ball and dribble under control.

### Equipment

- ☒ One basketball per player
- ☒ One portable basket per two players (if possible)
- ☒ Tape or cones as markers (optional)

## Warm-Up (10 minutes)

Individual—Each player dribbles from one basket to the other, and then jump stops and shoots. All shooting should be close to the basket (within two feet).

## Fitness Circle (5 minutes)

### Key Idea: Muscular strength and endurance

Gather children in a group. Have a ball and show children the differences between a dribble with minimal effort and close to maximum effort. "Watch how the ball moves when I dribble it two different times." Show both dribbles to children. "Let's make a circle and you show me how you would dribble the ball. Show me a slow dribble; pretend you have a ball. Now step back two big steps and show me a fast dribble as you go across the circle." Highlight the ball going farther in the second dribble. "You can dribble the ball farther when the muscles in your arms are strong. The muscles in your arms get stronger when you practice dribbling."

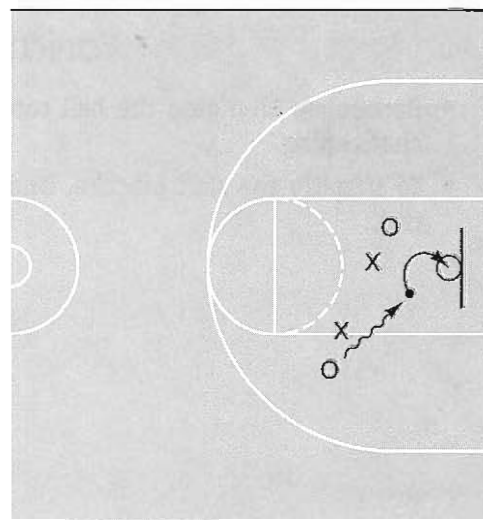
## Game 1(10 minutes)

### Goal

Players keep possession of the ball using a dribble.

### Description

2 v 2, modified half-court game—Each player attempts to dribble and shoot at a basket (or target) while being guarded by an opponent. The offensive team must pass twice or more before shooting. Teams earn a point if they dribble and attempt a shot close to the basket (for example, in the lane).





# Practice 7

Designate the area (such as the lane) from which players must shoot to earn a point. Call modified double dribble and traveling violations. For example, a player can stop and start toward the basket three times before you call a double dribble violation, and a player can take four steps while not dribbling before you call a traveling violation. If a violation occurs, the team's opponent takes a turn.

**Coach:** What are the different ways that you have moved toward the basket (target) while dribbling?

**Players:** Dribbling fast or slow, changing direction, and stopping and starting.

**Coach:** How do you do that?

**Players:** Keep the ball low; change hands; keep the ball at my side; use my fingerpads; keep my eyes over the ball.



## Skill Practice (20 minutes)

### Description

**Individual**—Each player practices dribbling. Players can choose the size and weight of the ball they use. Have them try the following activities:


- Dribbling and changing the speed of movement (moving both fast and slow in general space).
- Dribbling while changing directions forward and back or right to left.
- Dribbling in different pathways:
  - Move in straight, curved, and zigzag pathways in general space.
  - Follow the straight lines on the gym floor.
  - Move in a straight pathway. Each time a player meets another person or hears your signal, he or she turns quickly to the right or left and continues dribbling.
  - Move throughout general space, quickly moving from side to side in a zigzag.

### COACH's cues



"Use your fingerpads."  
"Keep your eyes over the ball."  
"Keep the ball low."  
"Keep the ball at your side."



 You can review previous dribbling activities.

# Practice 1

(cont'd)

## Game 2 (10 minutes)

### Goal

Players keep possession of the ball using a dribble.

### Description

Same as Game 1, except choose either 2 v 1 or 2 v 2. Rotate players accordingly so they all have a chance to play offense and defense. Also, players earn one point for a shot attempt and one point for dribbling under control.



## Team Circle (5 minutes)

### Key Idea: Respect

Gather children into a group. "I'm going to ask you some questions about things I notice on this team. Tell me if you agree. Do you try to learn new skills at practice? Do you work hard to improve your skills? Do you help your teammates? Do you follow directions? Do you feel good about yourselves when you play a good game?" Listen to responses following each question. "Think about players who will be your opponents. What qualities or things do they have or do? Are they the same as you?" Listen for yes or no. "It's important to think of our opponents in the same way we think of ourselves. You respect yourself, and you should respect your opponents. They are a lot like you and are learning the same things."

### Wrap-Up

Make summary comments about practice. Remind players of the next practice day and time and give them a sneak preview of that practice—dribbling under pressure.

## Variations

To make the skill practice easier, use fewer activities.

# Practice 8

## Warm-Up (10 minutes)

Individual—Each player dribbles from one basket to the other, and then jump stops and shoots. All shooting should be close to the basket (within two feet).

## Fitness Circle (5 minutes)

### **Key Idea:** Training and conditioning

Gather children into a circle. "What will you do tonight after you eat dinner?" Wait for their responses. "At the end of the day what do you do?" Encourage children to discuss sleep. "Let's pretend you are at your homes, and you climb into bed to go to sleep. Everyone lie down. Now let's pretend it's morning and a new day. You don't have basketball practice today. Your body needs to move every day to stay in good physical condition for basketball. What should we do to move our bodies?"

Wait for their responses. If a child suggests biking, walking, or swimming, and so on, have everyone pretend to do that activity. Then have them "sleep" again, wake up, and choose another physical activity idea.

## Game 1 (10 minutes)

### **Goal**

Players keep possession of the ball until they shoot.

### **Description**

3 v 2, modified half-court game—Three players play offense and two players defend, then two offensive players must switch roles with the defensive players. Switch at least twice so all players get to play defense. Players earn a point if they keep possession of the ball (dribble with control) until they shoot or they attempt a shot close to the basket. Designate the area (such as the lane) from which players must shoot to earn a point. Call modified double dribble and traveling violations. For example, a player can stop and start toward the basket three times before you call a double dribble violation, and a player can take four steps while not dribbling before you call a traveling violation. If a violation occurs, the team's opponent takes a turn.

### **PURPOSE**

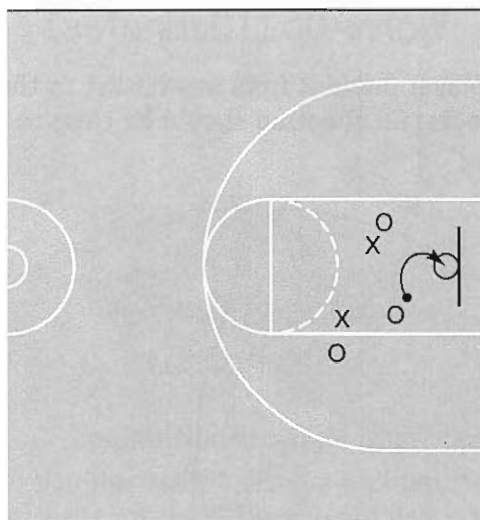
To keep possession of the ball, focusing on dribbling and protecting the ball. The objective is for players to be able to dribble under pressure.

### Equipment

- ☒ One basketball per player
- ☒ One portable basket per two players (if possible)
- ☒ Tape or cones as markers (optional)

# Practice 8

(cont'd)



**Coach:** What ways can you move to protect the basketball from your opponent when dribbling?

**Players:** Keep the ball on my side; keep the ball low; and change directions.



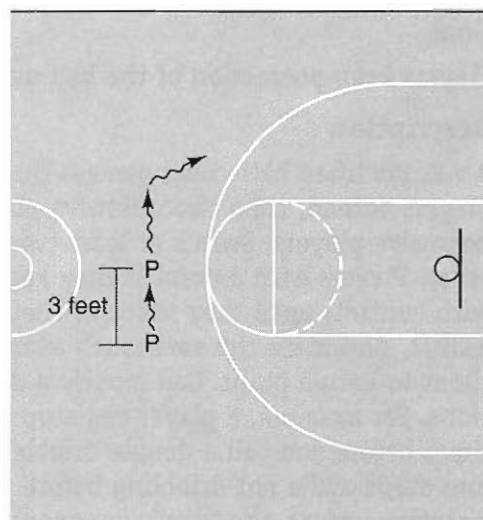
## Skill Practice (20 minutes)

1. Introduce, demonstrate, and explain how to keep possession of the ball while dribbling (see pages 121–122).
2. Have players practice keeping possession of the ball while dribbling.

### Description

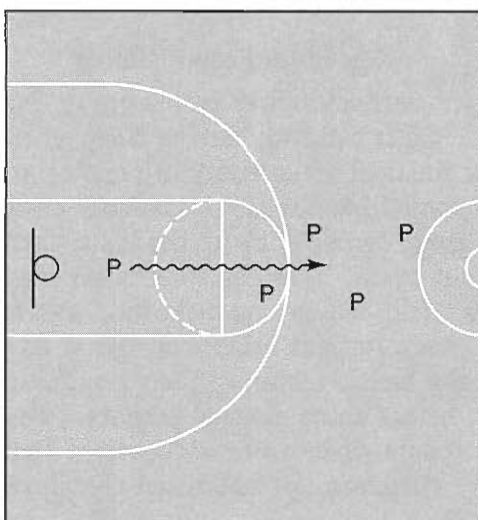
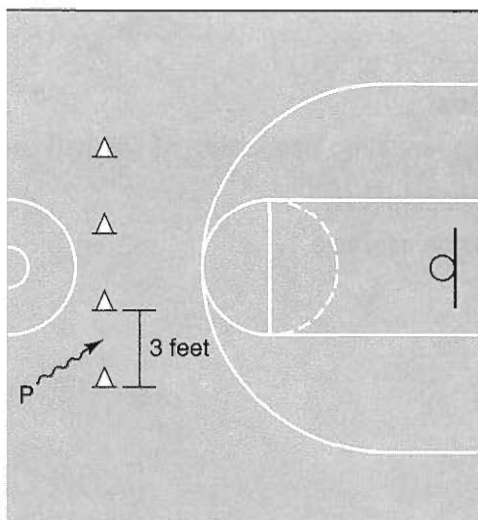
Individual—Each player practices dribbling. Players choose the size and weight of the ball they use. At this point, you should provide players with situations in which they must dribble with either hand without looking at the ball. Set up obstacles so players can learn to vary the force of the bounce. Here are some examples:

- Dribble in different pathways:
  - Play follow-the-leader with a partner (followers are three feet behind).
  - Design strategies to outwit an imaginary opponent from baseline to baseline.



# Practice 8

- Dribble around stationary obstacles. Set up cone markers three feet apart. Players try to dribble 60 seconds without bumping into the cones.
- Dribble around stationary players. Divide players into groups of five to six players. One player is the dribbler. The other players in the group become the obstacles and arrange themselves in a zigzag obstacle pattern down the floor. The players try to make the dribbler lose control of the ball. They can stretch and pivot, but cannot move from their spots; the defensive players cannot touch the ball or the dribbler. (When the player is ready, you can make this exercise more challenging by allowing the defensive players to touch the ball but not the dribbler.)
- Dribbling against an opponent. Match partners with similar skill levels. Partner 1 begins dribbling and moving toward the baseline while partner 2 plays cooperative defense. Increase the difficulty by moving to active defense. If partner 2 takes the ball away before 30 seconds are up, he or she gives it back; when 30 seconds are up, partners switch roles.



## COACH's cues



"Keep your body between the obstacle and the ball."

"Keep the ball at your side."

# Practice 8

(cont'd)

## Game 2 (10 minutes)

### Goal

Players keep possession of the ball until they shoot.

### Description

Same as Game 1.



### Team Circle (5 minutes)

#### Key Idea: Responsibility

Gather children into a group. Dump five to six balls out of a mesh ball bag, leaving them where they stop. "Pretend we just finished one activity in practice and we're getting ready to do something else. Everyone walk away from the balls and make a group circle." Pick up the balls, then go to the group. Dump balls out again. "Now come back and you pick up the balls, then go make a circle. Which way makes it faster for me to get to your circle?" Listen to their responses. "What do you think we should do with the balls?" Listen to their responses. Discuss picking up equipment before doing another activity. "We can have more fun and learn more when we work together. That is a shared responsibility between the coach and the players."

#### Wrap-Up

Make summary comments about practice. Remind players of the next practice day and time and give them a sneak preview of that practice—defending an opponent.



Find success in everything players attempt. Use the KIS principle: (Keep it successful!).

## Variations

- When working with the players on dribbling, you can vary the activity depending on the developmental needs of the player. You can establish an accountability check, in which you or a player's peer witnesses a demonstration of proficiency for each activity.
- To simplify the skill practice, limit the number of skill practice activities.

# Practice 9

## Warm-Up (10 minutes)

Pairs—Partner 1 dribbles the ball 8 to 10 times and then passes it to partner 2. Partner 2 starts dribbling the ball forward and then passes it back to partner 1. The partners continue to dribble and pass from one end of the gym to the other (see the figure on page 52).

## Fitness Circle (5 minutes)

**Key Idea:** Muscular strength and endurance

Have children spread out in a group. "Put your hand on the front of your thigh, then lift your leg up and set it down. Did you feel the muscle get tight when you lifted it up and then relax when you set it down? Try it again five times." Assist players if needed. "Muscles tighten or contract when you move. You use the thigh muscles or quadriceps when you play basketball. The more you practice, the stronger your thigh or quadriceps muscles will get. That's called improving your muscular strength."

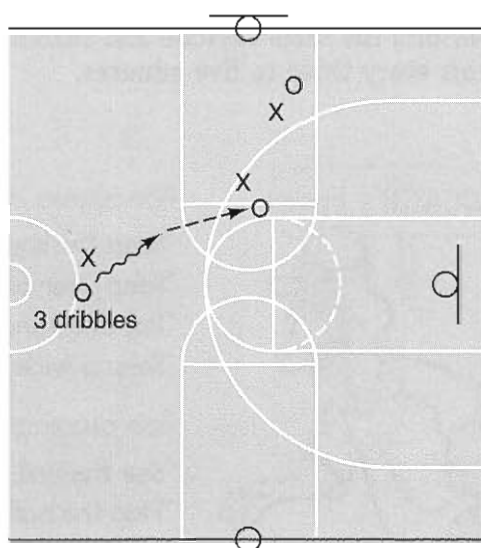
## Game 1 (10 minutes)

### Goal

Players learn basic defensive technique.

### Description

3 v 3, short-court game—  
Defensive players earn a point when they take the ball away. Limit offensive players to dribbling three times or less before passing. Call modified double dribble and traveling violations. For example, a player can stop and start toward the basket three times before you call a double dribble violation,



## PURPOSE

To defend your own space, focusing on basic defensive technique. The objective is for players to be able to defend an opponent.

## Equipment

- ☒ One basketball per player (if possible)
- ☒ One portable basket per two players (if possible)
- ☒ Tape or cones as markers (optional)

# Practice 9

(cont'd)



- and a player can take four steps without dribbling before you call a
- traveling violation. If a violation occurs, the player's opponent takes a
- turn. Starting with this game, call fouls as violations. The defender can
- touch the ball, but he or she cannot touch the opponent. If a violation
- occurs, the opponent gets the ball.

Coach: What do you do when you are playing defense?

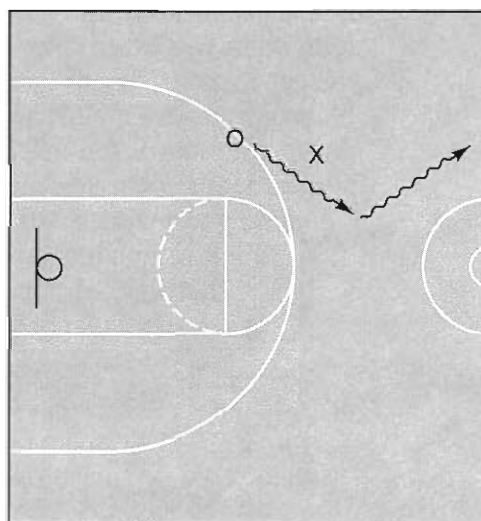
Players: Try to get the ball and protect the basket.

Coach: How do you defend your basket?

Players: Play the person with the ball and try to get the ball.

## Skill Practice (15 minutes)


1. Introduce, demonstrate, and explain how to defend against an opponent (see pages 126–129).
2. Have your players practice defending against an opponent.



### Description

Pairs—Match players of similar skill. The defensive player moves in a defensive position in front of the offensive player, who dribbles slowly, then gradually faster in a zigzag pathway. Then have players perform the same exercise and switch roles. Have players change partners every three to five minutes.



 Try not to get caught up in the details of defense. More will come later when players are more developmentally ready. As we know, defense is hard work!

### COACH's cues



for basic defensive position

"Keep the knees bent."

"Keep your body low."

"Put one hand up, one hand down."

"Keep a wide stance."

for playing defense

"See the ball, not the opponent."

"Play the ball." (Players should focus on the ball, not the person dribbling it.)



# Practice 9

## Game 2 (15 minutes)

### Goal

Players will use basic defense in a game.

### Description

Same as Game 1, except choose either 1 v 3, 2 v 3, or 3 v 3. Rotate players accordingly so they all have a chance to play offense and defense.

### Team Circle (5 minutes)

#### Key Idea: Respect

Gather children into a single-file line near two cones about 10 feet apart. "I am going to walk down the line two times. Remember how it feels each time I pass you." Walk down the line and nod to each player. Repeat, but this time tell each player "great game" or "nice play today" and shake his or her hand. "Which time that I passed you made you feel better?" Ask children to stand near a cone that represents their choice. "Shaking hands and saying 'good game' are important traditions that show we appreciate our opponents' efforts in a game. It shows respect for your opponents." Divide team in half and have them practice an end of game "respect ritual."

#### Wrap-Up

Make summary comments about practice. Remind players of the next practice day and time and give them a sneak preview of that practice—passing and receiving and supporting the teammate with the ball.



## Variations

- To simplify skill practices, modify the ball to meet players' needs. To simplify games, modify the size and height of the basket or target.
- To increase the challenge during skill practices, use a larger ball. To increase the challenge during games, modify the size and height of the basket or target and limit rule modifications.

# Practice 10

## PURPOSE

To play a 3 v 3 game, focusing on keeping possession of the ball. The objective is for players to be able to pass and receive and to support teammates with the ball.

### Equipment

- ☒ One basketball per player (if possible)
- ☒ One portable basket per two players (if possible)
- ☒ Tape or cones as markers (optional)

## Warm-Up (10 minutes)

Pairs—The defensive player moves in a defensive position in front of the offensive player, who is dribbling slowly and then gradually dribbles faster in a zigzag pathway. The offensive player changes speed and directions. The players move down the length of floor, and then switch roles (see the figure on page 70).

## Fitness Circle (5 minutes)

### Key Idea: Healthy habits

Gather children into a group. "When I say 'Go!' we all will run as fast as we can, without bumping into each other, staying in this area." Mark boundary areas for children. "Ready, go!" Have children run for about a minute or until fatigued. "You had enough energy to run. But when you don't take care of your body, you can get tired much faster playing basketball. I am going to say a habit and you shout if it is healthy or unhealthy." Examples: taking drugs, smoking, brushing teeth, drinking plenty of water, getting plenty of sleep/rest, eating a variety of foods. "Can you think of any others? Healthy or unhealthy?"

## Game 1 (10 minutes)

### Goal

Groups of three players will play as opposing teams.

### Description

3 v 3, short-court game (see the figure on page 69)—Limit players to dribbling three times or less before passing (you can modify the number of dribbles as necessary). Call modified double dribble and traveling violations. For example, a player can stop and start toward the basket three times before you call a double dribble violation, and a player can take four steps without dribbling the ball before you call a traveling violation. If a violation occurs, the team's opponent takes a turn. Also call modified foul violations. This allows the defender to touch the ball, but not the opponent. If a violation occurs, the opponent gets the ball.

# Practice 10

**Coach:** What do you have to do to work as a team?

**Players:** You have to help each other out and support your teammate.

**Coach:** How do you help each other out?

**Players:** You get ready to receive a pass and move around.

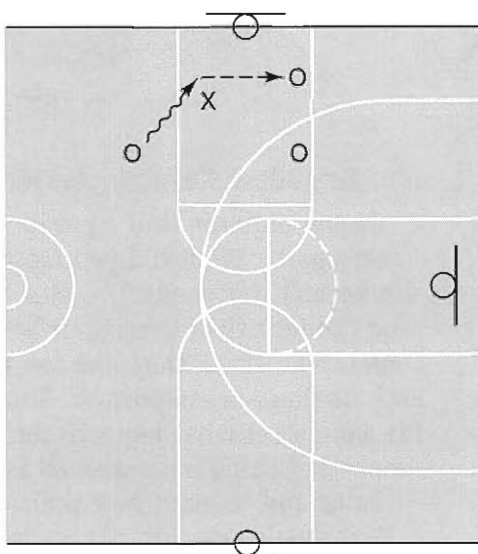


## Skill Practice (15 minutes)

1. Introduce, demonstrate, and explain how to dribble and pass in a game situation (see pages 119–122).
2. Have your students practice dribbling and passing in a game situation.

### Description

Groups of four—Three players dribble and pass while the fourth player tries to steal the ball. Rotate the player trying to steal the ball every two minutes. This is a no-contact game. Limit the space used for the game to half of a short court.



COACH's cue



"Change directions, speed, and pathways."

COACH's point

The key in this practice is to get the players to move to an open space.

# Practice 10

(cont'd)

## Game 2 (15 minutes)

### Goal

Groups of players will play as opposing teams.

### Description

Same as Game 1, except choose either 2 v 3 or 3 v 3. Rotate players accordingly so they all have a chance to play offense and defense.



### Team Circle (5 minutes)

#### Key Idea: Keeping perspective

Gather children into a group near two cones about 10 feet apart. "What did you most enjoy learning about in basketball this season?" Listen to their responses. "Players who thought they tried their best to learn, stand by this cone. Players who think they had fun this season, stand by this one. Both of those are important. You should try your best and have fun no matter what happens during the season. The most important thing in basketball is to have fun playing with friends and to learn new skills. I think you all did that! Next year is another chance to have fun and make new friends!"

#### Wrap-Up

Make summary comments about what players learned over the season.  
Encourage players to come back next year.

## Variations

- To increase the challenge during the skill practice, have players play 2 v 1.
- To increase the challenge during games, limit the rules modifications.