



TEAM

DEFENSE SKILL

DEVELOPMENT



PURPOSE

One of the most common ways of attacking the zone is to pass and cut through the gaps. In this drill, we will teach players how to 'bump the cutter' slowing him down and at the very least making a much more difficult angle for the pass.

SETUP

Have the players form two lines, one at each elbow. With a player at the top of the key with the ball, and another just above the dotted line – the defender.

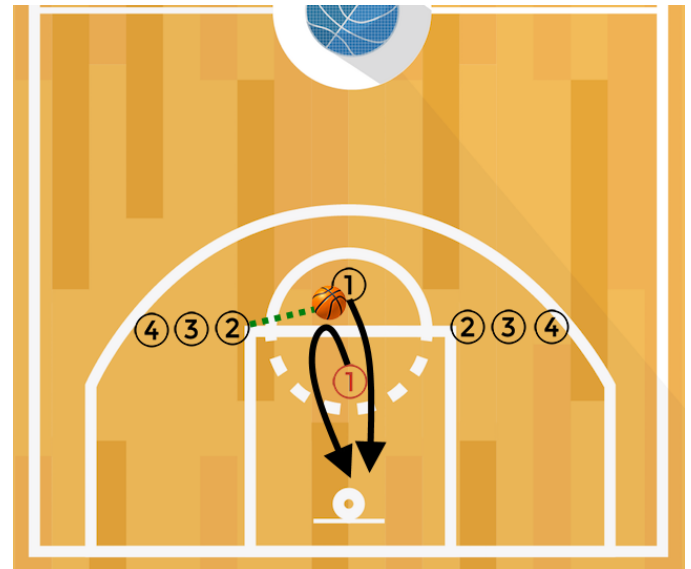


Figure 1: Bump the Cutter Drill

EXECUTION

1. The player with the ball will pass to either side, and then attempt to cut across the face of the defender.
2. The defender's job is to get inside of the offensive player, bumping him out away from the ball, and then following him down through the cut to defend the pass.

COACHING TIPS

- You can run this drill a couple different ways – have the defender stay on for a set amount of time, have the offense and defense do three rotations and then get out, or just match players up by size and speed and have them work together.



PURPOSE

Oftentimes, since players are assigned zones instead of a man to guard, it can be difficult to properly secure defensive rebounds. To combat this, this next drill will teach players to see the shot go up, find a defender, box him out, and secure the rebound.

SETUP

The rebounder will start in the middle of the paint with the ball, with four players spread out just inside the arc. You'll also need a coach to stand on the baseline ready to participate.

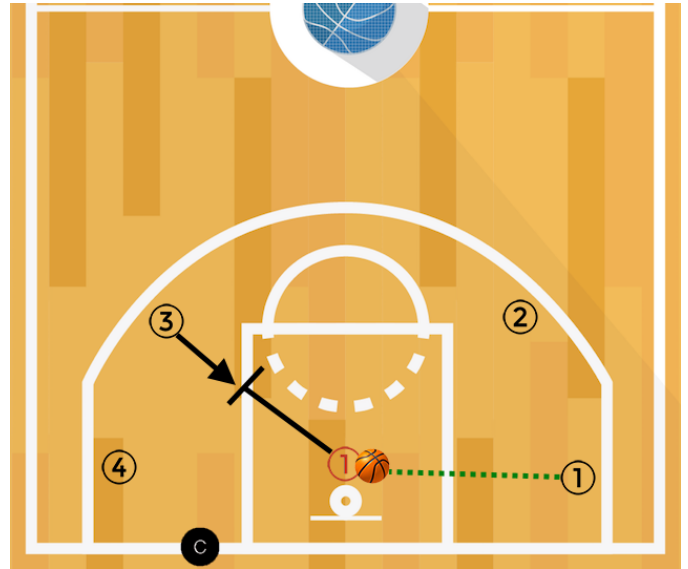


Figure 1: 4 v 1 Box out Drill

EXECUTION

1. On the coach's signal, the rebounder will start out by passing the ball to the first shooter - #1 as seen in the diagram.
2. As soon as this happens, the coach will point to one of the three remaining players.
3. This designates that player as the offensive rebounder, signaling the rebounder to go box him out.
4. If the offensive rebounder secures the rebound, they will try to score a quick hoop.
5. If the defensive rebounder secures the rebound, they will pass the ball to the coach, who will step up onto the floor to act as an outlet pass.
6. The coach will then pass the ball to the next shooter - #2 - and again call out another player to act as offensive rebounder, until he all four players have taken a jumpshot.

COACHING TIPS

- One of the best ways to keep players motivated for this drill is to keep score. Keep the same five players through for a whole rotation of the drill, allowing them to earn points for offensive/defensive rebounds - and then crown your rebound champion at the end!



PURPOSE

Learning how to communicate and work as one unit as a defense is important regardless of whether you're playing a man or zone defense. This next drill allows players to work on tracking the ball, closing out under control, and most important of all, communication.

SETUP

You'll need 8 players, paired off in matchups of similar size and skill. The four offensive players will be spread around the arc, and the four defensive players playing defense inside. The offensive point guard will start with the ball.

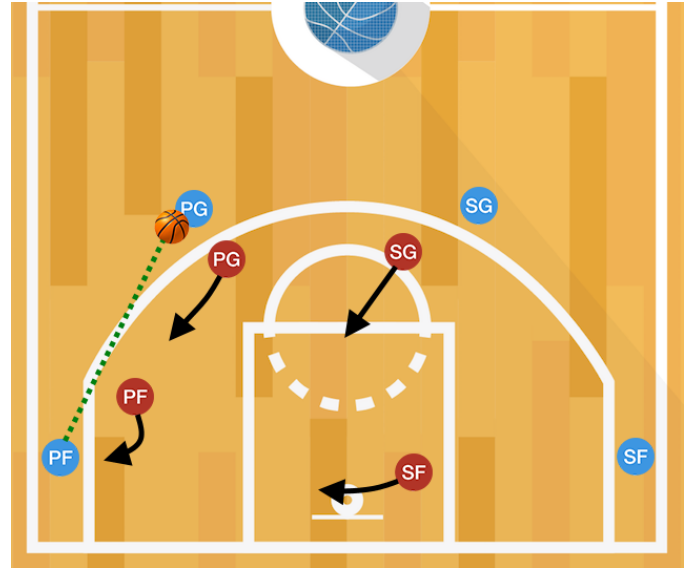


Figure 1: Halfcourt Shell Drill

EXECUTION

1. To begin, the offense will pass the ball, slowly, around the arc.
2. Giving the defense time to adjust their position and communicate with each other.
3. As the ball gets passed around the arc, the defense will continue to shift accordingly - if the ball is one pass away, they are in the passing lane, denying the pass to their man, and if they're two passes away, they drop down into help defense.
4. The goal here isn't for the offense to score or the defense to get steals, it's just to teach players the basics of team defense.

COACHING TIPS

- Don't be afraid to pause this drill at any time.
- Step in, correct players' positioning, encourage them to be louder - this is a teaching drill, so take full advantage of every teachable moment!



DENY AND DEFLECT DRILL



PURPOSE

The main purpose is giving the defense a chance to work on high intensity pressure defense, also giving the offense a chance to work on making good decisions when faced with a high pressure defense.

SETUP

The drill will begin with three players on offense and three players on defense, with a pair at the top of the arc, and the other two pairs each filling a wing. The player on offense at the top of the arc will start with a basketball.

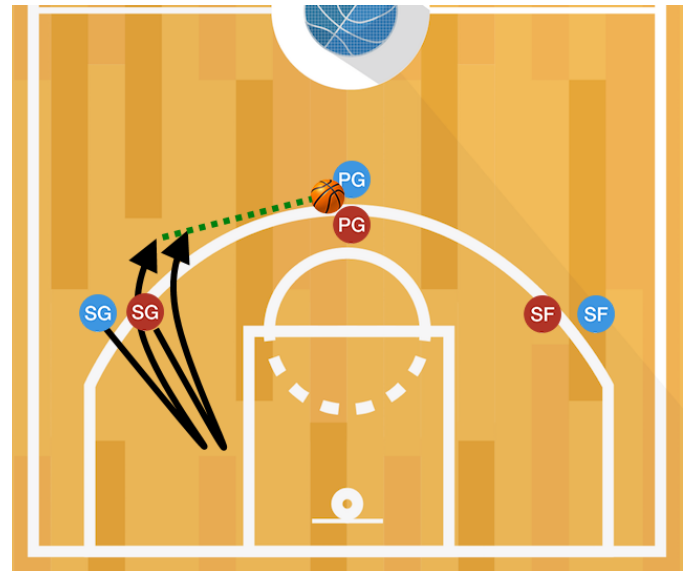


Figure 1: Deny and Deflect Drill

EXECUTION

1. The goal of the drill is for the team on offense to complete 15 passes in a row, while the defense plays deny defense, attempting to deflect or steal the ball.
2. If they're able to steal the ball - or even deflect it - they switch to offense and offense switches to defense.
3. The first team to complete 15 passes in a row wins.
4. At first, force the offense to get open simply by using cuts.
5. After the team has run through the drill a couple times and gets more comfortable, you can begin to allow the offense to set off ball screens as well.

COACHING TIPS

- If you can, divide the teams into fours - this drill can be absolutely exhausting, and it's a good idea to have a fourth player available to sub in when necessary.
- Also, feel free to adjust the number of passes in a row required to complete the drill, up or down, depending on the frequency of success the offensive team is having completing the goal.
- Lastly, don't forget to make sure the player matchups are players of similar size, athleticism, and ability when possible.