



— **COMPLETE** —

BASKETBALL

PLAYBOOK

Press Breakers

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INTRODUCTION

Full court pressure can be an intimidating force, especially if your team is not accustomed to it. The extra ball pressure in the back court can cause even the most skilled players to become confused, panic, and turn the ball over to your opponent for easy layups.

That's why it's essential to practice the press break. To give your team an understanding of how to inbound the ball under pressure, and beat the traps through smart ballhandling and passing.

The most effective press breaks use short, quick passes, as the defense is often looking to bait you into throwing up loopy floaters that allow them the time to recover and maybe even intercept.

We'll review three time-tested press breaks in this section, all of which can be used with any age or competitive level.

1.

Press Break – Guard Stack



Setup:

For this iteration of the man press, the defense will come out matched up man to man, with the exception of the man defending the inbounder – the center in Figure 1 – who will stay back as a safety.

The rest of the defenders will line up in front of their matchups, looking to deny the inbound pass.

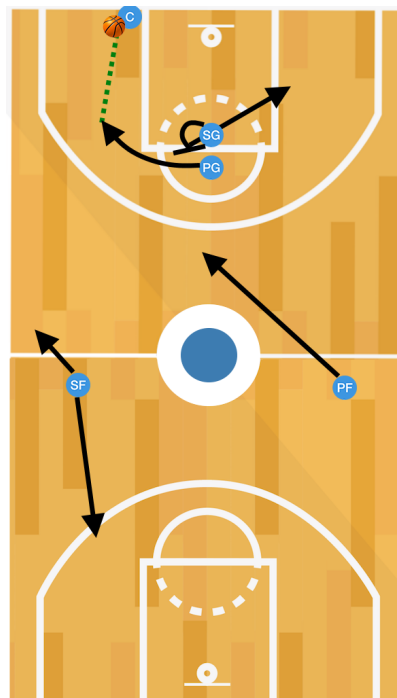


Figure 1: Guard Stack

Execution:

1. The play will begin with the shooting guard setting a pick for the point guard, freeing him up to sprint over to the ball side.
2. The shooting guard will sprint over to the weak side, and the power forward will print over from the weak side to the middle of the court, just above the arc.
3. The small forward will read his defender, either coming up to provide another option in the backcourt, or sprinting deep for the Hail Mary pass over the top.

Options:

- The first look on this and most press breaks is to get the ball to the point guard.
- If we can't get it to him, look to hit the shooting guard on the weak side or the power forward in the middle of the court.
- However, if the small forward beats his man deep, you can ignore the point guard and take the deep shot, especially if you've got a center with the strength and accuracy to make that pass consistently.

2.

Press Break – 1-4 Guard Cross Screen



Setup:

This next press break will have the team come out in a 1-4 alignment, with the small forward inbound and the rest of the team lined up on the free throw line extended.

The point guard will be on the ball side elbow, with the shooting guard on the other.

The power forward will line up on the same side as the point guard while the center lines up on the weak side.

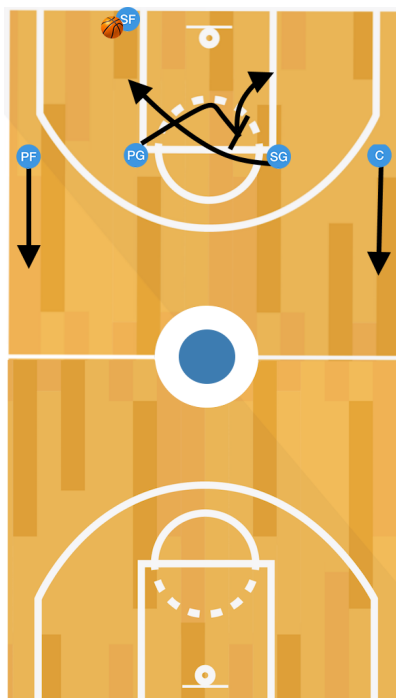


Figure 1: 1-4 Guard Cross Screen

Execution:

1. On the inbounder's signal, the point guard will come down into the paint and then up to set a cross screen for the shooting guard.
2. He will then space out to the weak side as the shooting guard sprints over to the strong side.
3. Both the power forward and center will sprint down the court, clearing out their men with them.

Options

- The player receiving the cross screen – the shooting guard in Figure 1 – is the first option.
- The point guard is the second option, and if either the power forward or center are able to lose their man deep, you can consider throwing the pass over the top.

3.

Press Break – 1-4 PG Stagger



Setup:

The offense will come out in a 1-4 alignment here, with the center inboundng.

The rest of the team will line up on the free throw line extended, with the small forward on the ball side wing, the shooting guard on the ball side elbow, the power forward on the weak side elbow, and the point guard on the weak side wing.

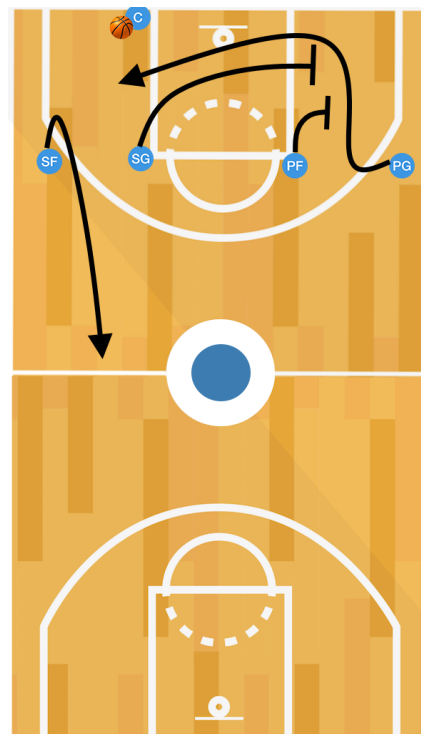


Figure 1: 1-2-11 Press Pt. 1

Execution:

1. The play will begin with the power forward heading down towards the near baseline to get in position for the first of two staggered screens for the point guard, with the shooting guard providing the second.
2. The point guard will sprint across the baseline, off the screens, receiving the pass and keeping momentum to keep going right down the floor. The small forward will step towards the ball initially, then take off towards the far hoop.

Coaching Tips

- We're looking to get the point guard open, but once again, if the small forward can get his man out of position and beat him down the court, you have to look at throwing the pass up and over the top.