



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

# Youth Basketball Coaches Manual

3<sup>rd</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> Grade

(Junior League)

YMCA of Metropolitan Washington



# YMCA of Metropolitan Washington Winter Youth Basketball League Rules

## DIVISIONS:

- 4-5 year olds (Mini League)
- 6-7 year olds (Little League)
- 8-9 year olds (Junior League)
- 10-12 year olds (Senior league)

- Girls and Boys will be combined

## TEAM ROSTERS:

Rosters will be limited to 10-11 players.

## PLAYERS:

Each team will consist of no more than 10 players. Each team will play with 5 players and no less than 4 at the start of each game.

Our motto at the YMCA is; it's for Everybody! **Everyone** on each team will play and **Everyone** will play an equal amount of time on the court. Coaches use their discretion as to how to ensure the playing time.

\* The intent is to provide all participants equal playing time regardless of skill level or experience. It is the role of the coach to help ensure that every child plays and has a positive experience.

## Bathroom Policy

The children's parents are required to take care of their child's bathroom needs. If a child needs to use the restroom and their parents are not there a coach or team parent or YMCA staff member may take them, but they **MUST** be accompanied by two additional children.

A staff or coach is never to be alone with one child, and never take a child to the bathroom alone as well. When taking them staff or coach must check and clear the bathrooms and then send all three children in together. This is for protection of the child as well as staff and volunteers.

## COACHES AND SPECTATORS:

**Volunteer Coaches:** All coaches are volunteering their time to make this a great experience. We try and select coaches who are knowledgeable in skills we are trying to teach. If you have or are interested in being a coach/assistant or have a concern about a coach/assistant please notify the Program Director immediately.

**Referees:** The referees are in charge of the game and their decisions are FINAL; right or wrong.

Please cooperate with the Youth Basketball staff in creating and maintaining an environment in which each participant may have fun, learn the game and be a good sport. The referees may occasionally stop play for instructional purposes when necessary, and will subjectively make allowances (as discussed and set up by each league) based on ability, for violations. We encourage parents to focus on the children and not the referees.

Coaches agree to support and influence good sportsmanship, high moral standards and are responsible for the conduct of their players and spectators. This includes, but is not limited to, Unsportsmanlike disagreements with officials or insubordinate acts against supervisory staff.

The YMCA of Metropolitan Washington Staff reserves the right and WILL send home anyone (this includes coaches, players, spectators) who are in violation of the rules and regulations set by the program for the health, safety, and welfare of all participants.

**Spectators Code of Conduct:** As a spectator, we hope to provide a fun and rewarding experience for you and your child. In order to achieve our goal we ask that you adhere to the following criteria:

1. Applaud good plays by your own team AND the opposing team.
2. Never ridicule or scold a child for making a mistake during a game or practice.
3. Encourage players to always play according to the rules.
4. HAVE FUN! Make it enjoyable for you and your child.
5. As a parent you are not allowed to approach the coach and team's bench during a game. If you have a comment for the coach please wait until after the games is over to speak with the coach. If the coach feels you are being unnecessary then they may direct you and your complaint to the Program Director.

**Parent involvement:**

As a parent or guardian of our basketball league we want you to know we appreciate your help and leadership. We suggest you get involved on your child's team to make the experience more enjoyable for them. Whether it be snack, water, fruit, or high fives the kids DO appreciate you being there! ALL parents must be on site with their children as part of our YMCA policy. We appreciate your help in this matter.

**Simplified Basketball Terms for Beginners**

### **Coach**

A coach is an adult leader who teaches the team the basics of a sport. The coach acts as a teacher and a friend. They should give positive feedback first, and then in a teaching way explain to the player what they did wrong and how they can fix the mistake. For example: "John you're doing great, you are really hustling out there, next time you're in the game and you're on defense, I want you to try to stay between your man and the basket, okay? You're doing well." This way the players feel good about themselves and are still having fun. Also the player will be more likely to implement the skill a coach is teaching.

### **Out of bounds**

If the ball goes outside the lines on the floor that marks the outside of the court, it is out of bounds. (Coaches if you do not know where the outside lines are please ask the referee and they will show them to you.) After the ball goes out of bounds, the referee will decide which team touched the ball last and the other team will then get to inbound the ball to a teammate.

### **Traveling**

Traveling is when a player is moving with the ball on the court without dribbling the ball.

### **Double Dribble**

Dribbles the ball with two hands, or

- A) Dribbles the ball correctly, then stops dribbling the ball by picking it up with both hands, then starts to dribble the ball again.

### **Fouls**

Fouls include players pushing, hitting, holding, or tripping a player from the other team. On a foul call, the referee will either give the other team a throw in, or the player that was fouled will get to shoot foul shots from a designated foul line depending on the age group.

### **Team Work**

This is a critical part of the game of basketball. This is a team sport, which means that all the players must be involved both on and off the court. That means that one player does not always dribble and shoot the ball. There are no Michael Jordan's in this league, so every player should be involved in the game. Players should pass the ball to each other, and every player should have a chance to shoot, dribble, and rebound the ball.

**Together Everyone Achieves More**

## **TIME:**

Time is running

There are no overtime periods. All ties are final.

All divisions except the Senior League will play 4 quarters of the specified time for the division.

**Mini League (4-5 year olds):** 8 minute quarters

- Running clock
- Suggested Substitution at 4 minutes

**Little League (6-7 year olds):** 8 minute quarters

- Running Clock – Clock stops the last two minutes of each quarter
- Suggested Substitution at 5 minutes

**Junior League (8-9 year olds):** 10 minute quarters

- Running Clock – Clock stops the last minute of each quarter and the last two minutes of the fourth quarter
- Suggested Substitution at 5 minutes

**Senior League (10-12 year olds):** Two 20 minute halves

- Running Clock - Clock stops the last minute of each quarter and the last two minutes of the fourth quarter
- Suggested Substitution at 5 minutes

One minute between quarters.

3 minutes between halves (if time permits).

Each team will have 2 one minute timeouts per quarter/half.

- Timeouts may be called by the coach of the offensive team while the ball is in play.
- Anyone may call a timeout during a dead ball situation.

## **Substitutes**

Substitutes are team members sitting on the sidelines waiting for their turn to play. Substitutes are as important to the game as the players playing the game are. Everyone needs time to rest, watch the game, talk to the coach, learn from the coach, and cheer on the team. The cheering from the bench is one of the most crucial parts of the game. Support from the bench can always bring the players on the floor to a higher level. When players are substituted, it is not because they made a mistake, it's because the coach felt they needed a rest, or he wanted to teach them something. **Never pull a player out of a game because of a mistake.**

### **BALL SIZE AND RIM HEIGHT:**

#### **4-5 year olds:**

- Ball Size: 27.0
- Rim Height: 6ft

#### **6-7 year olds:**

- Ball Size: 27.0
- Rim Height: 8ft

#### **8-9 year olds:**

- Ball Size: 28.5
- Rim Height: 9 ft

#### **10-12 year olds:**

- Ball Size: official men's
- Rim Height: 10 ft

### **START OF GAME:**

The Mini League will do a coin toss to decide who gets the ball first.

A jump ball will start the game for all the other leagues. To start the 2<sup>nd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> quarters the ball will be put into play with a throw in under the alternating possession procedure.

All other jump balls will be alternating possessions.

- Jump balls occur when two opponents have one or both hands firmly on the basketball.

Teams will change baskets at the end of the first half.

Except in the Mini League (4-5 yr olds) they stay at the same basket the entire game.

### **Game Start/Jump Ball**

At the beginning of the game two players from each team will stand in the center circle, while all the other players on the court will stand on the outside of the circle. The referee will stand in the circle in between the two players, and throw the ball directly up and the two players will then jump for the ball, and try to tap the ball to their teammate. The two players jumping for the ball must tap the ball. They cannot grab the ball. If a player from each team gets hold of the ball at the same time, the referee will blow the whistle and there will be a jump ball. The possession of the ball will alternate at each jump ball.

### **SCORING:**

Scoring: field goal 2 points, free throws 1 point, 3 pointers will count if shot behind the three point line.

Mini – Junior League will not keep score on paper.

Senior League will stop scoring when one team is up by 15+ points and will continue as necessary. Score will be kept on paper.

After a basket is scored from either position, the other team will get the ball out of bounds under the basket to throw into a teammate.

### **PRESSING:**

The Mini and Little League teams **must** play a zone defense.

Junior and Senior League teams are allowed to play a man-to-man defense if they want to.

The defensive team must retreat back across the mid-court before engaging in either tactic. On out of bound plays, the defender must stay on the court at all times. 4 yr. olds – 12 yr. olds may not double team!

- 4 - 7 year olds cannot press at all. Half Court Retreat takes effect in this division.
- 8-12 year olds can ONLY half court press when the score is within 10 points.

### **LANE/KEY VIOLATIONS:**

When a violation occurs the whistle will be blown, players are asked to stop, a brief explanation will be given and the ball will be turned over and taken out of bounds (unless on a shooting foul). Violations include: double dribbling, traveling, lane violation, 5 second throw in violation, carrying the ball.

4-9 year olds: There is no time limit in effect for this age group.  
Coaches should still train players to understand moving in and out of the key.

10-12 year olds: There is a **5 second** time limit for being inside the key.

### **OUT OF BOUNDS:**

Teams have 5 seconds to put the ball in play.

Teams have 10 seconds to pass the half court line.

- Except 4-7 yr olds. No time limit for this age group.

### **SHOOTING FOULS/FREE THROWS:**

**Fouls:** Unnecessary contact of players constitutes a personal foul and equals a team foul. Charging, a half court violation (back court pressing), tripping, pushing, or contact from behind. This may occur on offense or defense resulting in a turn over.

- If a foul occurs while shooting, the player that was fouled will be awarded 2 free throws. Violating player is given a personal foul and a team foul.
- If a foul occurs in the course of play, the ball is awarded to the other team out of bounds. Violating player is given a personal foul and a team foul.

4-7 year olds: No fouls will be penalized. Ball will go out of bounds and referee will instruct players on the violation situation in order to educate the players on the violation that occurred. Blatant and obvious fouls will be called.

4-7 year olds will be awarded a shooting foul for flagrant fouls on the shot. The free throw is taken 3 steps in front of free throw line.

4-7 year olds CANNOT foul out of a game.

8-9 year olds fouls will be awarded the ball (on non-shooting violations) and free throws on shooting fouls. The 8-9 year olds shoot free throws from 12 feet (approximately a step in from the regulation line).

8-9 year olds will foul out of a game on the 6<sup>th</sup> personal foul.

10-12 year olds will be awarded the ball (on non-shooting violations) and free throws on shooting fouls.

During a free throw, players (other than the shooter) may enter the lane when the ball hits the backboard or rim. The shooter must land with both feet behind the free throw line in order for it to be legal.

**Technical Fouls:** Technical fouls will be called for any taunting, profanity, or unsportsmanlike conduct. A technical foul will be called after the first warning has been given. The result of a technical foul is 2 free throws and possession of the ball.

### **SUBSTITUTION RULE:**

All players must check in with the referee prior to entering the game. The substitution may occur at the end of the quarter, at a dead ball or if there is an injury.

**No substitutions on the fly.**

4-12 yr olds can have their coach notify the official and wait for the ok before entering the game.

### **COACHES CONDUCT:**

Coaches can only travel within the assigned areas. Coaches should not be moving all over the court except for the Mini League. They should be helping instruct on the court.

Any comments made to the referees or the staff should be made before the game, at half time, and/or after the conclusion of the game.

**JEWELRY:**

No jewelry (which includes: dangling earrings, necklaces, bracelets, watches, etc) shall be worn during games. This is to help ensure the safety of all participants.

**FOOD/SNACKS:**

Snacks should be provided for teams by team parents. We ask that you please throw your trash in the designated areas in order to help keep everything clean.

Please try to only have only water bottles in the gym. Other drinks are permitted (i.e. Gatorade, Powerade, drink boxes), but can lead to sticky spills. Please be respectful of the courts we are using.

# Practice Outline

## YMCA YOUTH BASKETBALL PRACTICE SESSION PLANS

Warm-up: (5 minutes)

Fitness component: (5 Minutes)

Skills Drills: (20 minutes)

Game / Play: (20 minutes)

Team Circle

# YMCA YOUTH BASKETBALL PRACTICE SESSION PLANS

## PRACTICE 1

### Warm-Up: (5 minutes)

Begin each practice with 5 to 10 minutes of warm-up activities to get players loosened up and ready to go. Players travel from one basket to the next dribbling, jump stopping, and shooting short shots (two to three feet).

### Fitness Component: (5 minutes)

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

### Key Idea: General fitness

"In basketball, running makes our hearts beat faster and our leg muscles stronger. Spread out into your own space. Everyone run in place and I will pass the ball to some of you. If you get the ball, pass it back to me and keep running!" Continue for about 30 seconds. "Playing basketball improves our physical conditioning or fitness. We get better at running, jumping and dribbling the ball, and we can keep going longer before we get too tired. How can I keep from getting too tired when I am running?" Encourage suggestions. "How about dribbling? It is also important to take a rest when you need one and to drink water during practice at home. We will talk more about the difference areas of fitness in our Fitness Circles.

### Skills Drills: (20 minutes)

1. Introduce, demonstrate and explain how to make overhead, bounce, and chest passes.
2. Have your players practice making overhead, bounce and chest passes.

### Description:

Pair up players. Practice the three types of passes.

### Game / Play: (20 minutes)

### Description:

Play 2 v 2 half-court games. Teams earn a point only when they complete a pass before shooting. Players can dribble three times before passing.

### Coaches' Cue:

Passing  
"Step in the direction of the pass." "Elbows in!"  
"Follow through— fingers pointed to target."  
Catching "Target hands."  
"Eyes on the ball!"  
"Reach!"  
"Pull it in." Dribbling  
"Dribble to move forward!"  
"Pass on the move!"  
"Control the ball."

# PRACTICE 1



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## INTRO TO VALUES (10 minutes)

### TEAM CIRCLE

#### Key Idea: YMCA Four Core Values

Gather players into a circle with one ball. "Everyone hand the ball to the one next to you until it makes it around the whole circle." After the ball has gone around the circle one time, have it passed to you. "We play basketball to be more healthy and fit, but it also teaches us to become good teammates and good people. This season we will talk about four qualities of a good person and teammate: caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility. Our team needs to have all of these qualities in our practices and games. Remember— we can't be a team without each of you doing your part.

Let's pass the ball to each other and say one of the core values before you pass. This will help you remember to use all four of the qualities so we can work together."

# PRACTICE 2

## Warm-Up: (5 minutes)

Individual or group—Players practice dribbling in the following ways either individually, in a small group, or under your direction:

- Dribbling and changing speed of travel (travel both fast and slow in general space).
- Dribbling while changing directions (forward and backward, right to left).
- Dribbling in straight, curved and zigzag pathways.



## Fitness Component: (5 minutes)

### Key Idea: Flexibility

Bring a rubber band and show it to the children or have them visualize one. "This rubber band is like our muscles. Can you tell me why?" Listen for children's responses—stretches when pulled, goes back to original shape, and so on. Demonstrate band movement. "Your muscles work the same way. When you reach and stretch, your muscles stretch just like the rubber band. When your body comes back, your muscles go back to their original shape. Everyone reach down to the floor with your arms slowly and then bring your arms back up." Have children repeat three times. "Your leg muscles need to stretch because we use them the most in basketball. When muscles are flexible, it keeps them from getting hurt and makes the muscles feel good."

## Skills Drills: (20 minutes)

1. Introduce, demonstrate and explain how to receive the ball in triple threat position. This position is a version of the ready position in which the player holds the ball to the side on the hip, with elbows out and gives the player the option of either shooting, passing or dribbling.
2. Practice receiving passes in the triple threat position.

### Description:

Players in fours practice passing from point to wing, to baseline, to a high or low post. Mark positions with tape or markers. Players pass, and then move to another position. Players receiving the ball must

- Present a target for the passer;
- Receive ball in the triple threat position and jump stop;
- Give a ball fake with a jab step before passing; and
- Perform a quick, accurate pass to a partner.

### Coaches' Cue:

"Target hands!"  
"Triple threat!"  
"Ready position."  
"Hand position."  
"Holding position."  
"Fake a pass, then make a pass."  
"Step toward your target."  
"Elbows in."  
"Fingers pointed at your target."



## Game / Play: (20 minutes)

### Goal:

Players will move to open positions on the court and be prepared to shoot, pass or dribble when they have the ball.

### Description:

Play 2 v 2 half court games. Teams must pass at least twice before shooting. Players cannot dribble. All restarts are made at half court.

## PRACTICE 2



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### INTRO TO VALUES (10 minutes)

#### TEAM CIRCLE

##### **Key Idea: Caring**

Gather children into a circle. Stand in the middle of the circle with a ball. Choose two children to pass the ball with you. "We're going to work on our passing skills." Pass repeatedly to them and not the others. "Tell me how you felt to have only two players get the passes." Listen to their responses. "Sharing the ball with your teammates shows you care about them. What other things can you do to show you care about your teammates?" Their responses should include encouragement, positive comments for good play, forgiving players who make mistakes, and so on. "Good. Those are all ways you can show you care."

# PRACTICE 3

## **Warm-Up: (5 minutes)**

### **Choose one of these two activities:**

1. Individual—Players dribble around cones spaced three feet apart. They try to dribble 60 seconds without bumping into any cones.
2. Pairs—Players pair up with partners of similar skill. Partner 1 dribbles toward the baseline while Partner 2 plays cooperative defense. You can increase the difficulty by moving to active defense.

## **Fitness Component: (5 minutes)**

### **Key Idea:** Cardio-respiratory 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. Every time it tightens, or beats, it pumps blood all over your body. When you play basketball, your heart beats faster and you breathe faster. Run in place with high knees. Feel your lungs and feel your heart beating by placing your hands over your chest. Count how many times your heart beats." Time for 15 seconds. Ask players the number they counted. "Running helps you improve your cardio-respiratory fitness—the heart and lungs working together to get blood to your whole body."

## **Skills Drills: (20 minutes)**

1. Introduce, demonstrate and explain how to shoot.
2. Practice shooting.

### **Description:**

Players in pairs shoot three shots from each of five spots marked around the basket (about six to eight feet away). Partners rebound the ball and pass accurately to shooters, who provide a target, receive the ball in triple threat, square up and shoot. The goal is to score on two out of three shots at each spot.

### **Coaches' Cue:**

"Square up!" "BEEF!"  
"Base firm."  
"Elbow under the ball."  
"Extend arm."  
"Follow through or flip wrist."

## **Game / Play: (20 minutes)**

### **Goal:**

Players will score as many field goals as possible.

### **Description:**

Play 3 v 1, 3 v 2, or 3 v 3 half-court games, depending on the skill proficiency of your players. Rotate players accordingly so that all players have a chance to play offense and defense. Players must complete two or more consecutive

# PRACTICE 3



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## INTRO TO VALUES (10 minutes)

### TEAM CIRCLE

#### Key Idea: Honesty

Gather children into a group near two cones about 10 feet apart. "What is a foul?" Listen to their responses. Choose a player to help demonstrate responses (including pushing, bumping players and tripping). "Should you admit to a foul if no one sees it? Those who think yes, stand at this cone. Those who think no, stand at this one." Wait for children to choose. "When you know you've fouled, you should raise your hand. You should never take unfair advantage of other players. Can you think of other ways honesty is practiced on the court?" Listen to responses and discuss. "All of those show honesty."

# PRACTICE 4

## **Warm-Up: (5 minutes)**

Pairs—Players practice shooting in a game of Around the Key. Use tape to mark shooting spots. Players should take all shots close to the basket.

## **Fitness Component: (5 minutes)**

### **Key Idea:** Cardio-respiratory fitness

Gather children in a group. “Everyone put your hand up in the front of you and make a fist. What did we pretend our fist was at the last practice?” Wait for response— should be the heart. “What do our hearts do?” Wait for responses—pumps blood. “Everybody open and close your fist. Put your hand over your chest and feel what is happening. Now, let’s run to the hoop and back. Will our hearts beat faster or slower?” Listen to responses— should be faster. “Put your hand over your chest. Is your heart beating faster or slower? Are your lungs breathing faster or slower? When we run during basketball, the heart beats faster just like the fist opening and closing and the lungs breathe faster. They slow down when we slow down. Making your heart beat faster helps to improve your cardio-respiratory fitness.

## **Skills Drills: (20 minutes)**

1. Introduce, demonstrate and explain creating passing lanes. Players create passing lanes by using cuts and screens, by maintaining space and court balance, and by keeping the middle open, and by quickly moving to a vacated spot.
2. Have your players practice chest passes and bounce passes.

### **Coaches’ Cue:**

“Quick cuts!”  
“Fake a pass, make a pass.”

## **Description:**

Play 3 v 1 games. Offensive players move to open space. Defenders play cooperative to active defense. Use offensive positions on one or both sides of the basket. Players pass, and then move to an offensive position (point, wing, baseline, or high or low post) adjacent to the ball. Players should provide a target for receiving the ball, receive it in triple threat, and use a ball fake before passing. Emphasize using quick jab steps to create passing lanes.

## **Game / Play: (20 minutes)**

### **Goal:**

Players will support their teammate with the ball.

## **Description:**

Play 3 v 1, 3 v 2, or 2 v 2 short-court games, depending on the skill proficiency of your players. Rotate players accordingly so that all players have a chance to

# PRACTICE 4



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## INTRO TO VALUES (10 minutes)

### TEAM CIRCLE

#### Key Idea: Respect

Gather children into a group. "What have you learned about basketball this season?" Listen to their responses. "What does respect have to do with playing basketball or any sports? It takes many years to master the game of basketball, so basketball deserves your respect. Every year there are new skills to learn and improve on; every year you play, you'll get better. That's why you need to come back next year! What examples of players showing respect have you seen this so far this season?" Listen to their responses and discuss.

# PRACTICE 5



## **Warm-Up: (5 minutes)**

Individual—Players dribble from one basket to the next, and then jump and shoot. All shooting should be close to the basket. Jump shots should be taken within two feet of the basket.

## **Fitness Component: (5 minutes)**

### **Key Idea:** Cardio-respiratory fitness

Gather children in a group. “Everyone find their own space. Put your fist up in front of you. We pretend our fist is our...” Wait for response—heart. “The heart does what things?” Wait for response—pumps blood and beats faster when we run or move faster. “When I say ‘Go!’ run in your own space and make your fist open and close faster at the same time. When I say ‘Stop!’, stop as fast as you can.” Begin activity. “When you run, your heart beats faster. Every time your heart beats faster, it gets stronger because it is a muscle. Muscles get stronger when you use them. Basketball is a great way to keep your heart healthy and strong and improve your cardio-respiratory fitness.”

### **Skills Drills: (20 minutes)**

1. Introduce, demonstrate and explain how to execute V-cuts and L-cuts. Players execute cuts by planting one foot on the court at the end of a slightly shortened stride, then pushing off that foot to shift their momentum in another direction. Players should use an L-cut or V-cut when a defender has a foot and hand in the passing lane to deny them from catching the ball.
2. Practice V-cuts and L-cuts.

### **Description:**

Play 2 v 2 games with the focus on players using V-cuts and L-cuts, receiving passes, and using jump stops and the triple threat position. Sequence:

- Player 1 ball fakes, jab steps, and passes to Player 2 who V-cuts as Player 1 is ball faking.
- P-2 catches the ball in a triple threat position using a jump stop.
- Repeat three times and rotate.
- When all four players in a group have practiced the V-cut three times, go through the rotation again, this time practicing the V-cut on the opposite side of the basket.
- Use the same sequence to practice the L-cut.

### **Coaches’ Cue:**

“Quick cuts!”  
“Fake a pass, make a pass.”

The defense should play passive, cooperative defense (to simplify, begin with no defense).

### **Game / Play: (20 minutes)**

Players will provide support to their teammate with the ball, using V-cuts and L-cuts to get open.

### **Description:**

Play 3 v 1, 3 v 2, or 2 v 2 short-court games, depending on the skill proficiency of your players. Rotate players accordingly so that all players have the chance to play offense and defense. Players must complete at least three passes before shooting. They receive one point for three consecutive passes, and two points for every field goal.

# PRACTICE 5



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## INTRO TO VALUES (10 minutes)

### TEAM CIRCLE

#### Key Idea: Responsibility

Gather children into a group between two cones about 10 feet apart. Stand in the middle of the circle with a ball. "I am going to show you two different ways to handle the same situation. Think about which is the best way to handle this."

Choose a player to receive a pass from you. Make a bad pass and then stomp angrily away from the group. Retrieve the ball and make another bad pass. This time, run to get the ball and make a pass that goes directly to the player. "If you think the first response is the way to handle making a bad pass, stand next to this cone. If you think the second way is better, stand next to this one." Ask players to explain their choices. "It's important to be a good sport in basketball." Highlight how and why. "That's being responsible to your teammate."

# PRACTICE 6

## **Warm-Up: (5 minutes)**

Individual—Players dribble from one basket to the next, and then jump stop and shoot. All shooting should be close to the basket (jump shots within two feet of the basket).

## **Fitness Component: (5 minutes)**

### **Key Idea:** Flexibility

Gather children in a group. Show them a rubber band or have them visualize one. Demonstrate how it stretches. “We pretend this rubber band is...” Wait for response—a muscle. “It moves back and forth, stretching and moving. Let’s move our bodies just like the rubber band.

Reach and stretch up and down. It’s important to stretch slowly without bouncing or quick movement.” Have children continue for minute. “Our muscles help us to move and stretch. We need to stretch muscles to keep them flexible or able to move easily. When muscles can move easily they don’t get injured and our bodies feel good.”



## **Skills Drills: (20 minutes)**

1. Introduce, demonstrate and explain how to use a jump stop prior to shooting.
2. Practice shooting off of jump stops.

### **Description:**

Play 1 v 1; defenders play cooperative defense. Players with the ball use a ball fake, jab step and drive to the basket. They jump stop about two feet from the basket and shoot. (To simplify, begin with no defense.)

### **Coaches’ Cue:**

“Arm should look like a yo-yo.”  
“Ball down, eyes up.”  
“Two-foot jump stop.”  
“Eyes on target.”  
“In the square, in the basket.”

## **Game / Play: (20 minutes)**

### **Goal:**

Players will attempt to score in 15 seconds or less.

### **Description:**

Play 1 v 1 games. The player with the ball starts at the foul line. Check the ball (defensive player starts with the ball and gives it to the offensive player when they are ready to play). The offensive player begins in triple threat position. The offensive player gets two points for every basket scored off a jump stop, and one point for every basket scored otherwise.

# PRACTICE 6



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## INTRO TO VALUES (10 minutes)

### TEAM CIRCLE

#### Key Idea: Faith

Have the team line up in two equal lines facing each other. Have the players stand diagonally across from one another, not directly across from one another. Give the ball to the first person in one of the lines. That person is going to pass the ball to the person across from them in the other line. The ball is caught then passed diagonally across to the next person in line and this continues until everyone has had a chance to catch and pass the ball.

Now do this again, but add in a second ball, then a third ball, etc. Begin a discussion about trusting your teammate to wait until you are looking before they pass you the ball. Explain the importance of trusting or having faith in your teammates.

# PRACTICE 7

## **Warm-Up: (5 minutes)**

Individual—Players dribble from one basket to the next and then jump stop and shoot. All shooting should be close to the basket (jump shots within two feet of the basket).

## **Fitness Component: (5 minutes)**

**Key Idea:** Muscular strength and endurance Gather children into a group. “Okay, everyone get down on the ground and do the crab walk.” Continue for 30 seconds to one minute. “Are your arms and legs getting tired? You used many of your arm and leg muscles to do the crab walk. What parts of the body do you use the most for basketball? That’s right—your arms and legs. The more you practice basket- ball, the stronger your muscles will get. What things can we do to get our muscles stronger for basketball?” Let them answer running and dribbling. “Right”. Now pretend you have a basketball in front of you. Pretend to dribble the ball in your spot.” Have children dribble for five counts. “Practicing dribbling helps make your arms stronger.”

### **Coaches’ Cue:**

“Quick cuts!” “Drop and drive!”  
“Watch the belly button of the player attempting to fake.”  
“Anticipate!”

### **Skills Drills: (20 minutes)**

1. Introduce, demonstrate and explain how to use a drop step and drive to the basket. Player’s backs lead the way as they make a reverse turn. Players should maintain a balanced stance, keep the weight on the ball of their pivot foot, and drop their non- pivot foot back.
2. Practice the drop step and drive.

### **Description:**

Play 2 v 2 games with a cooperative defense. Players with the ball will ball fake, jab step, then drop step and drive to the basket. Passive defenders try to shut down passing lanes. Offense off the ball uses various cuts to create a passing lane. For each 2 v 2 game, two other players will coach. One will coach three cooperative defenders to close down the lane; the other will coach the offense to reposition themselves to create open passing lanes. Switch roles after three attempts.

Coach: What was the goal of the game? Players: To score on drives.  
Coach: When should you drive?  
Players: When you have an open lane to the basket and no team-

### **Game / Play: (20 minutes)**

#### **Goal:**

Players will use drop steps and drive to the basket.

#### **Description:**

Play 3 v 1, 3 v 2, or 3 v 3 games, depending on the skill proficiency of your players. Rotate players accordingly so that all players have a chance to play offense and defense. Give two points for every basket scored off a drop step and drive, and one point for every basket scored otherwise.

# PRACTICE 7



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## INTRO TO VALUES (10 minutes)

### TEAM CIRCLE

#### Key Idea: Teamwork

Gather your players into a group. Start a discussion about the importance of teamwork. "Try to tie your shoe with one hand." Wait while the players attempt to tie their shoes with one hand. It cannot be done. Ask your teammate next to you to lend a hand and tie it with you." Wait while the players help each other tie their shoes. Explain that working together and depending on others will help teams achieve their goals.

# PRACTICE 8

## **Warm-Up: (5 minutes)**

Pairs—Partners take turns. One passes the ball, and the other either shoots from Around the Key spots or dribbles and drives to the basket.

## **Fitness Component: (5 min)**

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

Gather children into a circle. “What do our bodies need to do every day to keep going?” Wait for their responses. Discuss sleep and rest, eating, and doing regular activities. “There’s one more thing that’s really important—being active and exercising. Let’s pretend it’s a day that you do not have basketball practice. Your body needs to move every day. With no basketball today, what should we do to move our bodies?” Wait for their responses. If a child suggest an activity such as biking or swimming, have everyone act out that activity. Act out three activities. “It’s important to be active when you don’t have basketball practice. Your body needs to move every day.”



## **Skills Drills: (20 minutes)**

1. Introduce, demonstrate and explain proper on-the-ball positioning. Defenders can best keep their opponents with the ball from scoring by staying between them and the basket. Defenders should maintain an arm’s distance from the offensive player with the ball and consider their body position (ready and alert?) and court position (close enough or too close?).
2. Practice on-the-ball defensive positioning.

### **Description:**

Pair up players. The player with the ball dribbles forward in a zigzag pattern. The defensive players maintain proper defensive posture and attempt to block the offensive player’s forward progress. The defender tries to steal the ball without fouling or cause a turnover. Players switch roles after one length of the court.

#### **Coaches’ Cue:**

“Medium body posture.”  
“Active hands and active feet!”  
“See the ball.”

Coach: What did you do to keep the opposing team from scoring?

Players: Closely guarded opponent, rebounded so they wouldn’t get a second shot.

Coach: What defensive position or actions interfered most and kept your opponent from scoring? Player: Keeping the body between opponent and goal. Being sure you can always see the ball.

Guarding opponent closely. Keeping hands and feet moving; playing active defense.

## **Game / Play: (20 minutes)**

**Goal:** Defenders will play good on-the-ball defense.

**Description:** Play 1 v 1 games with active to competitive defense. Offensive players can dribble, but as soon as they pick up the dribble, defensive players move closer and use active hands and feet.



# PRACTICE 8



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## INTRO TO VALUES (10 minutes)

### TEAM CIRCLE

#### Key Idea: Healthy Habits

Get the players into a group. "Today we are going to talk about the benefits of being fit and eating well. Being healthy is a lot easier when it becomes a routine part of life." Ask the team for examples of healthy habits. Make a point of explaining that being active will help them be healthier and feel better. It also may help their basketball game. Also discuss how other good habits can help them, such as getting enough sleep, brushing their teeth.

# PRACTICE 9

## Warm-Up: (5 minutes)

All players—Divide players into two groups: a dribblers group, in which each player has a ball, and a defenders group, which does not have balls. The dribblers group should have more players. Keep the practice within a confined space. On a signal, the dribblers begin dribbling while the defenders attempt to steal the ball. If a defender steals a ball, he or she begins dribbling. Go for about 45 seconds, and then regroup and switch roles as needed.



## Fitness Component:(5 minutes)

### Key Idea: General fitness

Gather children into a circle. "Everyone is going to run in place. Let's start. Pretend that your body is going to run out of energy because you ate too many chips and drank a soda before practice. Start running slower and slower, and now stop! Now let's pretend that you ate a peanut butter sandwich and drank a glass of milk and a glass of water before practice. Let's run in place." Continue for 30 seconds. "See how you're able to run

much longer and keep your energy? Eating healthy foods and drinking plenty of water are healthy habits for every day. You should drink water several times a day and drink even more when you're exercising. Also make sure to get

## Skills Drills: (20 minutes)

1. Introduce, demonstrate and explain proper off the ball positioning. Defenders should position themselves so they can see the ball and simultaneously keep track of a moving opponent who may be trying to receive a pass.
2. Practice off-the-ball defensive positioning.

### Description:

Paired up players practice off-the-ball defensive positioning (partners can also coach each other). As an option, you can have a player with the ball waiting to pass to his or her offensive teammate.

Coach: How did you position yourself to prevent the offensive team from passing? Players: Overplayed toward potential passing lanes; closely guarded player with the ball.

Coach: How did you position yourself to deny a pass? Players: Overplayed toward the ball; kept hand in passing lane.

### Coaches' Cue:

"Medium body posture."  
"Active hands and active feet!"  
"See the ball!"  
"Anticipate!"

## Game / Play: (20 minutes)

### Goal:

Defenders try to deny offense from making successful passes; offense tries to make six consecutive passes.

### Description:

Play 2 v 2 games using a competitive defense. For each 2 v 2 game, two other players serve as coaches. One offensive player begins at the point, the other at a wing position. The ball starts at the point. From a triple threat position, the ball handler uses a ball fake to give his or her teammate a chance to get open; or the ball handler dribbles to open a passing lane if necessary. Rotate after a turnover or after six consecutive passes. One player-coach gives feedback for the on-the-ball defense; the other player-coach gives feedback for the off-the-ball defense.

# PRACTICE 9



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## INTRO TO VALUES (10 minutes)

### TEAM CIRCLE

#### Key Idea: Sportsmanship

Get the team together in a group. Ask what sportsmanship means to the team. Explain to the team that one way of showing good sportsmanship is that at the end of each game, no matter what the score is, the two teams will shake hands. Have the team give examples of good and poor sportsmanship.

# PRACTICE 10

## Warm-Up: (5 minutes)

Pairs—Partners take turns shooting three shots from each of five spots marked around the basket (approximately six to eight feet away). The partner not shooting rebounds the ball and passes it accurately to their shooting partner. The shooting partner gets in target position, receives the ball in triple threat, and squares up and shoots.

## Fitness Component: (5 minutes)

### Key Idea: Muscular endurance

Gather children into a group near two cones about 10 feet apart. Tell them that each cone represents a different food group. “This cone is healthy foods, such as fruits, vegetables, meats, milk and breads. This other cone is special treat foods, such as chips, soda, candy and sweet snacks. What foods can you eat to keep your body healthy, with enough energy for basketball?” As they respond, have them stand near the cone they choose. “It is important to eat more healthy foods. They give you more energy for basketball and help you grow. Special treat foods should be eaten in small amounts. Can you tell me other examples of healthy foods and special treat foods?”



## Skills Drills: (20 minutes)

1. Introduce, demonstrate and explain how to box-out to rebound. Players box out by getting between the opposing player and the basket, and putting their rear in contact with the opponent’s body
2. Practice boxing out and rebounding.

### Description:

Play 3 v 3 games with a 2 v 2 under the boards and a shooter and an outlet. The shooter shoots the ball. One the release P-1 and P-2 turn and box out their offensive players. P-3 (the outlet) moves right or left, depending on which side of the basket the rebound occurs. The player rebounding the ball turns and passes to P-3. Repeat three times, and then rotate teams. Also consider rotating duties within the teams—for example, the outlet person and the shooter become rebounders. The defenders try to successfully outlet three times in a row.

Coach: What was the goal of the game? Players: To prevent scoring and a second shot.

Coach: What did you do to prevent a second shot?

Players: Got the rebound after the first shot.

Coach: How did you position yourself to get the rebound?

Player: Moved between offensive player and basket.

### Coaches’ Cue:

“Create a stable wall between opponent and ball.”

“Elbows out—palms wide, feel for opponent.”

“Put buttocks under opponents.”

## Game / Play: (20 minutes)

### Goal:

Defenders try to prevent the offensive team from scoring—and from rebounding missed shots.

### Description:

Play 2 v 3 or 3 v 3 short-court games, depending on the skill proficiency of your players. Rotate players accordingly so that all players have a chance to play offense and defense. Players can’t dribble and must take at least three consecutive passes before shooting. The defensive team receives one point for winning or rebounding the ball after only one shot.

# PRACTICE 10



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## INTRO TO VALUES (10 minutes)

### TEAM CIRCLE

#### Key Idea: Keeping Perspective

Gather the players around in a group. This is time for reflection on the basketball season. Talk about some of the things the team accomplished this season. Ask the players to share what they learned throughout the season. Discuss some of the fun things that happened throughout the season. Ask the players to give examples of times they had fun during the season. "The most important thing in basketball is to have fun playing and learn new skills. I think you all did that!"