

Hudson Recreation Youth Basketball

Coaching Manual

Thank you for volunteering your time to become a coach! We know that it is a significant time commitment so we have created a manual to help get you through the season. The recreation Instructional league is designed for kids to be active, socialize, and most importantly learn and improve their skills in the game of basketball. We would like for you, as coaches, to focus on the basic skills and knowledge of the game as this league will be the baseline of their young careers.

Grades K-2 are the Fundamental stage. Many of these children have never played basketball before and may be very timid to try something new. During practices we want to work on basic skills until everyone on the team is proficient in that skill. Coaches at this age level should emphasize on building confidence and slowly introducing new skills and drills. Most importantly, we want these children to have fun at their practices and games so they stay interested and excited as their skills progress.

As the kids get older and enter the Grades 5-8 divisions, we ask that coaches build upon the basic skills and introduce more difficult drills to advance the kids skill sets. Coaches please be aware of the range of skills your athletes possess. We do not want to ask the players to execute drills that are well above their skill set. Practices in these age groups should continue to focus on building core skills that will be best for the athletes in the long haul rather than focusing solely on game plans. While it is important to teach kids this age how to properly execute an offensive play, if they do not have the basic skill set, they will be set up in a position to fail.

The following pages give examples of drills and games of all experience levels to help guide you as coaches and keep practices new and engaging.

Ball Handling Drills / Games

Beginner

Throw – Clap – Catch: This drill is designed to get the kids familiar holding a basketball and working on hand eye coordination. Player with a ball will throw the ball up in the air on the coach's whistle/command. First few attempts just have them throw and catch the ball. Next add a hand clap after the toss before they catch the ball. You can have them clap multiple times to increase difficulty.

Stationary V Dribble / Pound the ball: Players line up in rows each with a ball. Instruct players to pound the ball to the ground using their fingertips (do not slap the ball). Do with both hands.

Staying in the same spot, players should dribble the ball on one side back and forth and then side to side. Repeat with both hands. While in the same stationary position, have player's crossover from one hand to the other back and forth. Teach them to keep using their fingertips to control the ball and keep their eyes up (as much as possible). Now is a good time to teach them to use their off hand to protect the ball while dribbling. These stationary drills can be done standing, kneeling, or sitting.

Basic Dribbling: Have players line up on one baseline. Players will dribble up and down the court (not racing) dribbling the ball with proper technique (using fingertips and dribbling waist high and eyes up). Start at 50% speed and work your way up to full speed.

Variations – Doing same drill have players execute it moving backwards, performing a crossover every quarter way down the court (Free throw line, half court, opposite free throw line), create into a relay race, be creative and add your own spin!

Red-light / Green light: All players line up on the baseline with a ball. On your whistle the players begin dribbling towards the opposite baseline. Have them walk the first couple of rounds. On the next whistle, players will come to a stop by completing a "jump stop" to get into triple threat position. If they lose control of the ball or don't stop immediately, they must return to the starting baseline. First player to reach the opposite baseline is the winner. On the way back have them use the opposite hand.

Pirate Basketball: Two or three players are assigned the starting pirates and line up at half court without a ball. All others line up on the baseline with a ball. When the coach blows his whistle to signal the start, the pirates chase the athletes with the ball and try and steal it. If you get your ball stolen or slapped away from you, you become the pirate and the person who stole the ball takes it and dribbles away.

Sharks and Minnows: All players stand on one end of the gym with a ball. All of these players are Minnows. Pick a couple of players to be the sharks who also have a ball. On your whistle, the minnows try to dribble their ball across the SEA without being tagged by a shark, who also must dribble continuously. If the minnow is tagged, they become an octopus and have to put their ball between their feet and have to stand still. Octopuses can now try to tag out the Minnows but cannot move.

Dribble Relay Races: You can be creative and split up the team into smaller teams. Have them go one at a time either up and down the court or through an obstacle course of cones. You can have them use one hand only or have them switch hands halfway or at every cone. Once they return to their line they tag the next person in line to go and then sit until everyone on their team has finished.

1 V 1: (Do this drill after teaching basic form and strategy for defense) Players will match up according to skill and size. Have the defender line up roughly three feet from the offensive player with the ball. On the whistle, the offensive player attempts to go across the court dribbling the ball. Defender moves their feet to shut off offensive player from reaching the other side or steals the ball if they can.

Intermediate / Difficult

King/Queen of the Court: All players have a ball and start in a designated area (smaller the area the more difficult). On the whistle, all players start dribbling around while trying to knock the ball away from other players. If your ball gets knocked out of the designated area, you are out. Last one in wins.

Variation – To make it continuous, create two designated areas and split the team up to start. If you get your ball knocked out, you go to the other area and keep playing. You can also tell the kids to only use one hand while dribbling.

Wraps: Wrap the ball around the following body parts to gain control and feel of the ball. Ankles, knees, waist, head, around the world (up and down the previous locations), single leg, double leg when spread, figure 8 through legs,

Dribble around one leg: Start in a wide stance, dribble the ball low around one leg. Use the same hand as the side of the leg you dribble around. Next step is figure 8 dribbling using both hands.

Scissors: Start with your right foot forward and left foot back. Cross the ball between your legs and jump to switch the positioning of your feet so you can immediately cross the ball back to the other side. Every time you go through the legs you should be switching feet.

3 Dribble Crossover: Pound the ball 3 times before crossing it over in front of your body. Then pound the ball three times before crossing it back. Repeat process to ensure that the player is pounding the ball.

Variations – Pound three times then cross through the legs, behind the back, or combination of all three.

Chair Changes: Place a chair or a cone about the free throw distance but can be up top, on the wing, or in the corner. Start about 8-10 feet behind the object. Dribble straight at the chair. At the chair, use a change of direction dribble (crossover, inside out, behind back, etc.) to go beyond the chair and make a lay-up or pull up jumper.

Snake Dribbling: Line up 5 or 6 kids about 3-4 feet apart while everyone has a basketball. On the whistle the leader starts to move the line at half speed. Person in the back of the line weaves in and out between the other players to get to the front and becomes the leader. Once they are at the front the next person at the back will go. This is a great drill to emphasize the kids to keep their eyes up while dribbling, protecting the ball with the off hand, and varying their dribble to get through the line.

War: Divide the team into two even groups and assign each player a number on both teams. Teams should line up on opposite sidelines starting in the corners near the hoop of one half of the court. Place a ball at the half court line and call out a number. The players with the corresponding number called out from each team will race to the ball. The player that picks up the ball first is the offensive player and the one without the player assumes the defensive role. The offensive player then tries to score and can use his teammates on the sideline for passing only. The sideline players cannot move once they have received the ball, but they can move up and down the sideline without the ball to get open for a pass.

If the defensive player steals the ball or gets the rebound on a miss, they must “check” the ball by passing it to one of their teammates before trying to score. After one player scores or both have at least had an offensive attempt, they are to return to the sideline. The ball is returned to half court and a different number is called.

Passing Drills

Beginner / Intermediate

Partner Pass: Have players pair up based on skill and size with one basketball. Pairs should stand 5-10 feet apart. Players will pass back and forth to one another using proper technique (stepping into pass, thumbs down when releasing pass). Start with bounce pass then move to chest. Have players receiving passes give the passer a good target with hands out ready to catch.

Middle Man Passing: Split team up into groups of three. Players in each group will line up in a straight line as if they were playing monkey in the middle. Players on the ends have a basketball and the player in the middle does not. On the whistle, the player in the middle receives a pass from one of the end players and immediately passes it back. They will then turn to face the opposite side and repeat the process on the other end. This drill can be done with bounce and chest passes. Do for 30 seconds then switch the middle player.

Shuffle Pass: Have a line of 5-6 players line up about 7 feet apart. Standing across about 10 feet away from them should be one player with a ball. That player will start on one end passing the ball to the players in line. Players in line will receive the pass and pass back to the single player. Single player should shuffle down the line passing and receiving passes. Try to have players not stop when making or receiving passes and gradually increase speed shuffling.

Give and Go: Divide the team up into two lines, single file, facing each other about 10 feet apart. Player in the front of one of the lines has a ball. That player makes a bounce or chest pass to the opposite line then runs to the end of the line they pass to.

Passing Line Relay: Divide team into 2 equal teams. Line them up across the court from sideline to sideline about 5 ft apart. The first player in each line has a ball. They pass the ball to the next person in line. That player must turn 180 degrees using their pivot foot and pass to the next player in line. This continues to the end of the line and then back to the front. First team to get the ball back to where it started wins.

Triangle Passing: Divide players into groups of 3. Have each group form a triangle. Have them pass to each other into a clockwise direction. Then have them pass in a counterclockwise direction. Progress with this drill by having the groups of 3 move around the court while continuing passing and maintaining proper spacing.

Monkey in the Middle: Split team up into groups of three, one ball for each group. One player is in the middle and the other two players try to pass back and forth. Player in middle should approach the player with the ball about 2-3 feet back as if they are defending them. This is a great drill to teach how to pass with pressure and use your pivot foot to create space and an angle to make the pass.

Ultimate Basketball: Divide team into 2 teams of 4 or 5 depending on what you have available. The game is played full court. The teams cannot dribble and can only take 2 steps. Teams pass the ball down the court and try to get the ball passed to a player behind the baseline, teams get 5 points for each time they are able to do that. If a pass is dropped, the other team gets possession. First team to 20 points wins. Emphasize communication, passing under pressure, and cutting to get open for a pass.

Shooting Drills

Beginner / Intermediate

Pizza Waiter: This drill is to introduce the basic mechanics of a proper shooting form. Have all your players in a ready position and have them show you how a waiter would bring you a pizza on a tray. All players should have their palms facing up with their arms bent in an L shape under the hand. Their elbow should be over their knee and under the hand. As players are in this position, you can place a ball on their hand. Once the ball is placed, instruct them to use the other hand to gently hold the ball on the side so it does not fall.

Cookie Jar: Tell players at the end of their shots they need to follow through in a motion that is similar to reaching for a cookie in a jar that is up high on a shelf. Arm extended, wrist bent, fingers down. Have players go through the whole progression without a ball. Have them show you triple threat (ready) position, bent knees, pizza waiter, push up with legs, cookie jar. Have them stand around a basket and shoot an imaginary ball several times while you make corrections.

Shoot To Wall: Have players stand 3 feet away from the wall and shoot up to the wall. Players catch the ball and repeat while you make brief adjustments. Have them try to hit the same spot with every shot. That spot should be roughly the height of the hoop they play on.

Dribble, Jump stop, and Shoot: Split team up into groups to use available hoops. Players will start in a single file line at each hoop roughly 3 feet behind the 3 point arc (you can start top of the key, on the wings, or in the corners). Only the first two in each line have a ball. On go, the first player in line will dribble towards the hoop. Using a cone or your directions, designate a spot for the player to make a jump stop. After setting their feet square to the basket the player will shoot with proper form. Have them follow their shot, get the rebound, dribble to another designated spot near the initial starting line, jump stop, and bounce pass to the next person in line.

Lay up lines

Triple Threat Drill: Split team into two groups using both baskets. Place three cones down as spot markers. Two spots outside both sides of the free throw lane and one near the free throw line (depending how far back you want to be). Players will line up on the baseline parallel to one of the cones. First person in line will throw the ball out towards the first cone with backspin so it comes back to them as they reach the cone. They will catch the ball and get into triple threat position facing the hoop as if they were going to shoot. After they properly get in position, they spin the ball to themselves again at the next cone and repeat the process. As this player moves on to the second cone, the next person in line will do the same at the first cone. When they reach the final cone, they actually shoot the ball, get their rebound, and get back into line.

Follow the Leader: Begin the drill splitting the team up into two groups, one at each hoop. Set a cone down at the first mark where you want to shoot, same on both sides. Each group will line up single file at the mark. The first person in line shoots a jump shot. The shooter follows the shot and if it goes in, they pass to the next person in line. If the shot misses, the shooter must try and catch the rebound before it hits the floor. If they can, they shoot from where they collect the rebound (only one chance for a rebound shot). After everyone in line attempts a shot at the first spot, the line then moves to another spot and begins again. A made jump shot is worth 2 points and a made put back is worth 1 point. This drill emphasizes proper shooting form and following your shot.

Sources for Extra Drills/Games

<http://emporiarec.org>

www.coachesclipboard.net

www.breakthroughbasketball.com

www.basketballforcoaches.com

www.basketballcoaching101.com