

players in the game, whilst also protecting their own.

- The last player with their basketball still safely in the circle is the winner.

SCARECROW TAG

- Work within the half court.
- Each player starts with a basketball.
- Two or three players are 'it', and they must run around and try to tag as many players as possible while dribbling the ball.
- Once tagged the player must stand in a scarecrow position, and can only rejoin the game after another player dribbles their basketball through the scarecrow's legs.

FOLLOW THE LEADER

- The team can either work as one or be split into two groups.
- Each player has a basketball, and one member of the group acts as the 'leader'.
- The leader then dribbles along the lines of the court, using a change of direction move any time the lines change direction.
- The leader can also throw a change of pace move in or any other trick move, and the rest of the group must follow their lead and execute the skill.

DRIBBLE RELAYS

- Dribble relays are always fun for the kids, and are also good because they add the element of competition to the game.
- Feel free to put in a number of obstacles such as change of pace moves, or dribbling on their knees etc.
- The danger with dribble relays is that players will get caught up in trying to win the race, and will start to be sloppy with their execution of the skills. Make sure you pick them up on this if it happens.

Warm Up Drills Incorporating Dribbling

As a general rule, all warm up drills should involve dribbling, passing and shooting where possible. This will ensure maximum activity for all kids from the very start of your session. I have listed two of my favourite warm up drills incorporating dribbling below;

TWO MAN SERIES

- Players work in pairs.
- One player rebounds and outlets the ball to their partner, who dribbles the ball up the middle of the floor.
- The rebounder then sprints the outside lane wide, and cuts to the basket once they hit the foul line extended.
- The dribbler gets to around the point area, then feeds their partner the ball for a lay-up. They then get the rebound, make the outlet pass, and the drill continues as above.
- This drill can be varied in many different ways, i.e. taking a jump shot instead of a lay-up, getting the dribbler to make 2 change of direction moves before passing etc.

TWO BALL/THREE LINE DRILL

- Start in three lines on the endline, with a ball starting in each of the outside lines.
- The players on the outside dribble the ball up the floor. They alternately pass to the player in the middle lane, who then returns the ball to them.
- When they get to the foul line extended they go at the basket and make a layup.
- This drill can be varied by getting the dribblers to execute change of pace or change of direction moves before feeding the ball to the player in the middle lane.

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BUILDING BETTER **BASKETBALL**

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DRIBBLING



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Welcome back to Building Better Basketball, a ten part educational resource for junior coaches throughout Australia. Australian Institute of Sport Scholarship Coach, Marissa Fillipou, will be presenting the series in 2003. We hope you will find it not only an enjoyable read, but useful in improving your coaching skills and therefore the opportunities that you provide your players.

Marissa began playing basketball with the Eltham Wildcats in northern suburban Melbourne at the age of 7. She played at both domestic and representative level as a junior, as well as in the ABA, before turning her attention to coaching. She coached at various levels with Eltham from Under 8's through to Under 16's, and was also an ITCP Network Coach within metropolitan Victoria. She has also been on the coaching staffs of Under 16 and Under 20 State Teams from 2001 through to 2003.

The focus of this edition of Building Better Basketball is on a skill that most kids love to execute, dribbling. As you heard from Jacko in the 2002 series of Building Better Basketball, dribbling is an often misused skill of our game, and in this edition I will outline some drills and strategies that will hopefully be beneficial in helping your kids to learn how to use their dribble more effectively.

Dribbling with a Purpose

When teaching dribbling to your kids, make sure that they understand that dribbling should only be done with a number of distinct purposes in mind. These include;

- A mode of advancing the ball into the offensive end of the floor (passing is another one)
- To facilitate the opportunity for a pass or shot (by improving your player's position on the floor)
- To relieve pressure
- To make an offensive move

The Five Categories of Dribbling Skills

Dribbling can be categorised into five separate areas;

1. **The Control or Protection Dribble**; Used primarily when dribbling whilst being defended.
2. **The Speed Dribble**; Used mainly when trying to get from one place to the next as fast as possible and when not being directly defended, for example on the fast break.
3. **The Retreat or Retract Dribble**; Used when trying to create distance between you and the defender in order to see the floor better or to create space to make a pass.
4. **Change of Direction moves**; i.e. crossover, behind back etc
5. **Change of Pace moves**; i.e. hesitation, onside dribble etc

Key Teaching Points

There are a number of Key Teaching Points to consider when teaching dribbling. You might recognise the list below from your Aussie Hoops resources;

1. **Stance**; As a general rule, a good, low, balanced stance is a necessity when attempting to execute most basketball skills, i.e. defence, passing etc, dribbling is no different.
2. **Dribble height**; The ball should not bounce up any higher than the player's waist when dribbling. For change of direction moves, the ball should pass below the player's knees when changing hands.
3. **Fingers spread**; This will maximise the player's control of the ball
4. **Hand Position**; The dribbling hand must be on top of the ball, rather than on the side or slipping underneath. The other hand can be used to protect the ball from the defence by ensuring a control dribble stance, keeping body and an arm bar between defence and the ball.
5. **Guide the ball**; The ball should be guided with a gentle pushing action, rather than patted.
6. **Use both hands**; Make sure your players can dribble with their right and left hand, and also that they dribble with their head up so they can see the court.

DRILLS FOR IMPROVING DRIBBLING

I have listed some of my favourite drills for improving dribbling below. It is important that you ensure that each of your dribbling drills have clear **points of emphasis**, and that you have explained these to your

young players so that they understand why they are doing a particular drill, and how it will improve their dribbling. In other words, avoid 'drilling for drilling's sake'. It is then your responsibility to ensure that your athletes are attempting to execute these points of emphasis at all times when doing the drill.

Basic Dribbling Drills

CORRIDOR DRILL

- Use the splitline as a guide to separate the court into two halves
- Offence then works the ball up the floor with a defender, within the confined space of the corridor.
- Coach should indicate the intensity at which the drill should be executed, depending on what you are trying to achieve, i.e. 50% if still at learning speed, or 90% if wanting to more closely simulate game conditions.

'X' DRIBBLING DRILL

- Players separate themselves around the four corners of the half court to start the drill
- Start with one ball in each corner of the 'X'.
- Players dribble the ball at the middle of the 'X', execute a change of direction move, then feed the ball to the player on the next tip of the 'X'.
- Drill runs continuously.

COMBAT DRIBBLING DRILL

- Players work in pairs. One player sets up at the end line and one at the half way line, facing each other.
- Each player starts with a ball.
- Players dribble the ball directly at each other, with both executing a change of direction move to go past their partner, who acts as their opponent.
- Execute the drill in the same way for change of pace moves.

1 ON 2 DRIBBLING

- Similar to 'Corridor Drill', but with two defensive players. This will force the offensive player to provide greater protection on the ball.
- This drill can also be done stationary, with the defence just looking to knock away the ball and the offence protecting it.

Points of Emphasis for dribbling drills;

- **Stance**; Ensure offence is in a control dribble stance, using their body and an arm bar to protect the ball from the defence.
- **Ball Height**; The ball should not bounce above waist level in a normal control dribble stance, and should pass below knee level when executing all change of direction moves.
- **Aggressive Change of Direction**; Push off the outside foot hard to beat the defender.
- **Crossover past the lead foot**; With all change of direction moves, the ball should hit the floor past the lead foot. This allows some protection for the ball with the body, and will generally ensure that the ball is swung quickly past the hands of the defence, keeping it safe.

Fun Games for Teaching Dribbling

KNOCKOUT

- Players can either work in pairs or groups of three or four
- Work within a confined space The three jump ball circles are the most suitable
- Each player is dribbling a basketball and must try to knock the basketball from the other