

- The shooter and passer should be situated in game specific spots on the floor, i.e. passer at the guard spot and shooter at the wing.
- The balls are fed quickly and continuously to the shooter, who looks to make a certain number of baskets before the players rotate (I like to use around 10).
- I like this drill as it forces the athlete to shoot the ball at tempo (as long as the rebounder and passer are doing their job well), and it provides an opportunity for much repetition.

- **3 in a Row Shooting**

- Players should work in pairs in this drill to maximise activity
- The shooter must make 3 shots in a row before they can rotate with their partner
- This drill is great as it demands consistency in that the athletes must reciprocate good shooting habits for at least 3 shots in a row or they don't get out of the drill.

- **2 Miss Shooting**

- This drill is similar to the one above with the difference being that the athletes continue to shoot until they miss 2 shots in a row. They then rotate with their partner.
- You can then put different conditions on the drill, i.e. athletes must make 20 shots in 3 minutes. This then puts pressure on the athlete to not miss 2 shots in a row, as in order to reach the specified target they must keep shooting.
- I also like this drill as it promotes the advantages of the athletes being as perfect as possible with every shot, otherwise the end result becomes out of their reach.

NOTE; *All of the shooting drills above can also involve shooting off the live dribble and off the 1 on 0 move.*

FUN GAMES FOR DEVELOPING SHOOTING

Most young kids (and many older kids!) love playing shooting games. As well as being fun for the kids and lightening the mood at your training session, shooting games can be good tools for improving shooting. It is important though, that you ensure that when including shooting games in your sessions, that in their excitement and their competitiveness to win the game (which should always be encouraged), that your athletes don't compromise the quality of their shooting by forgetting about focusing on their technique and tempo.

- **Net-Net**

- This game is particularly great for practicing foul shooting, but can also be good for all other shooting situations.
- Athletes can work individually or with a rebounder.
- The shooter starts with a score of 3, they win the game if they get to 0, but lose it if they get to 10
- If their shot is a swish, they go down one point. If they miss the shot, they gain one point. If they make the shot but it is not a swish, they stay on the same score.
- Once again, this drill is great as it encourages the athlete to shoot the ball as perfectly as possible, but if their shot is not perfect it may still go in, which is still a pretty good result for them. It also puts them under some game specific pressure with each shot.

- **4-Up**

- Your athletes work in two teams of even numbers. The two teams shoot from corresponding spots on the court, i.e. the elbows.
- When one team makes a shot, they go 1 up. If they make another shot before the other team does they go 2 up. If the other team makes a shot the score is then 1 up again, and so on until one team gets to 4 up.

Some Important Things to Remember When Teaching Shooting

- Always practice shooting at game tempo and in game specific situations for maximum results.
- Try to be as perfect as possible with every shot, and value every opportunity you have to become a better shooter.
- In a game, shoot every shot as its own shot, regardless of the result of your last few. If technique and tempo are correct on the next one, chances are it will go in.
- Do your best to make yourself redundant in regards to coaching your shooters. Athletes should develop key words to remind them of important technical areas that they need to focus on with their shot, i.e. legs, follow through etc, so that during a game when guidance from coaches is limited, they have the ability to make corrections to their shot themselves
- Finally, shoot lots and lots of shots.... Practice, practice, practice....

Coaches Series

Edition 1 – Dribbling

Edition 2 - Passing

Edition 3 – Shooting

All 2002 and 2003 editions can be found on the Basketball Australia website www.basketball.net.au



2003

BUILDING BETTER

BASKETBALL

ISSUE NO. 3

SHOOTING



For more information visit www.basketball.net.au

Welcome back to the Building Better Basketball Coaches Series for 2003. This edition of the series focuses on a rather complex, but highly important skill of our great game, shooting.

1. Some Key Teaching Areas

The following teaching points regarding shooting are outlined in your Aussie Hoops resources. When coaching beginners, you should ensure that your players are exposed to these basic fundamentals of shooting, with the focus being on developing good habits with your players. It is often difficult for coaches to be 'process focused' rather than outcome focused, particularly when teaching shooting, but if you commit to getting the process right, your players will benefit in the long run.

Stance - Once again, a good low balanced stance is an essential element of a good shot, as it is with most basketball skills. A player's ability to create momentum into their shot and to prepare early to shoot (more on this later), are both dependant on them being in a good, low stance prior to the shot.

Straight Lines - A concept that I like to use to help young players manage their own shooting technique, is 'Straight Lines'. This merely means that all aspects of their shot should be in a 'straight line', for example, shoulders should be squared up to the basket, follow through should point at the basket, feet should point at the target etc.

Target - When shooting the ball, the athletes' eyes should be focused on the target for the duration of the shot. Whilst this might sound simple, you would be amazed at the amount of shooters who sight the ball during flight, rather than staying focused on the target. As for what the target should be, many coaches teach their athletes many different things. I am not going to buy into this argument, other than to say that it is beneficial for athletes to be involved in the decision making regarding what their target is. It is important that they are comfortable aiming for the 'front of the ring' or the 'back of the ring' or whatever, and that they understand the benefits of whichever technique you teach them.

Elbow Position - The shooting elbow should sit directly under the ball, and should point at the ring. Once again the 'straight lines' concept comes into play here, i.e. you should be able to draw a straight line from the top of the ball, down through the shooter's forearm to their elbow, and then down through their knee to their toes.

Shooting Grip - The ball should sit comfortably in the shooter's hand, rather than the shooter holding it there. Their hand should be reasonably relaxed, with their non-shooting hand just resting on the side of the ball for protection. Their fingers should be spread with the ball up off the palm of their hand.

Follow Through - An effective follow through is perhaps the most important part of any shot. Once again, the 'straight lines' concept is important here, as the follow through should be straight and high, and point directly at the basket. Another good teaching point to remember is 'hard on the elbow, soft on the wrist'. This will encourage your players to drive hard through their elbow, but use their wrist to help guide the shot before snapping it on release.

2. Game Specific Shooting Situations

Shots can be created in a number of different ways in a game of basketball. As your athletes continue to develop good shooting habits in a static situation, it is important that they also begin to practice shooting the ball under game conditions and at game tempo. Most shots taken in a game can be categorised into one of the four scenarios below;

i. Catch and Shoot

This is possibly the most common shooting situation in a game. A shot may result from a ball reversal, a skip pass, or some inside/outside action where the ball is fed to a post or a cutter inside the key, and then passed back out to a player on the perimeter for the shot.

ii. Off the Live Dribble

A shot off the live dribble is most often available to ball carriers, i.e. point guards. It may also be created in a transition situation depending on your team philosophies. A shot off the live dribble will often follow a change of direction or change of pace move.

iii. Off a Cutting Action

A highly specific way for a player to create a shot is off a cutting action, i.e. a v-cut, a basket cut or a flare cut. These shots involve different skill groups to the catch and shoot scenarios, as players have generally had to contend with getting free from their defender before catching the ball, and are usually moving quite quickly, either towards the basket or away from it, depending on the type of cut.

iv. Breaking Down a Defender (1 on 1 move)

A very important skill for all players is the ability to break down their defender to create a shot for themselves. This often happens at the wing, but can be applicable at any spot on the perimeter. The ability to shoot the ball well in any of the following situations will often be the difference between an average, and an excellent offensive player;

- Shot fake, shot
- Drive fake, shot

- Shot fake/drive fake, crossover dribble into jump shot
- Shot fake/drive fake, outside dribble into jump shot
- Shot fake and drive fake combinations into any of the above

3. Developing a Consistent Shooting Technique

The process of developing a consistent shooting technique will differ for almost all players, therefore there can be no one teaching process that will guarantee that your kids will develop into the next Shane Heal or Belinda Snell. It is important to take into account each athlete's specific strengths and weaknesses when developing their shooting technique, as well as assessing what comes naturally to them shooting wise, and what doesn't.

Taking the above into account, I have listed some important elements to developing a consistent shooting technique below. On the whole, it is most important that once you have identified sound technique with your athlete, that they look to reciprocate these good behaviours on every shot. Shooting the ball with the same good technique each time will develop consistency and ensure good habits with your shooters;

i. One Hand Shooting

Get your athlete to set up as close to the basket as they possibly can. Sit the ball on their shooting hand only, their other hand is not involved at all. They then shoot the ball with one hand, ensuring that their fingers are spread, that they drive hard through the elbow and soft through the wrist, that their index and middle fingers are the last to release from the ball and that they snap their wrist and extend their arm on their follow through.

ii. Shooting Stance

It is important that your athletes catch the ball in their shooting stance, then elevate straight up into the shot. A lot of players make the mistake of catching the ball in an upright position and then bending to shoot, which slows down the shot and eliminates any advantage that can be gained through momentum. For any shots that are taken off the dribble, the athlete should pick up their dribble in a low stance then elevate into their shot.

iii. Early Preparation

Many players make the mistake of starting their shot only once they have received the ball. I believe that huge advantages can be gained through preparing to shoot prior to receiving the ball. I call this 'early preparation'. This involves your athlete being in a low stance, and catching the ball in the air and on the forward movement, to increase momentum into the shot and improve quickness of release.

iv. Use of Floor

The sprung floors used in basketball courts can be used to the advantage of shooters. Through early preparation into the shot, athletes will push down into the floor as they catch the ball. The floor will then help the athlete generate power as they elevate into their shot.

v. Forward to Upward Movement

It is important that your players catch the ball on the forward movement as mentioned above, but that they are then able to elevate straight up into their shot. As a guide, they should land after shooting on around the same spot on the floor as they elevated from. A lot of players have difficulty with this skill, and many end up making 'forward to forward' movements or 'forward to sideways' movements, or many just won't jump on their shot at all.

vi. Elevation

As mentioned above, elevation into the shot is crucial in making players more aggressive and athletic when shooting, and harder to guard in general. It also puts a better arc on their shot as it is released from a higher point.

vii. Release Ball from Above Eye Level

As a general guide, the ball should be released from above eye level. This will ensure that the shot goes UP, and not OUT. Many players form a bad habit of releasing the ball from about chin height.

viii. Extend and Hold Follow Through

A good follow through is essential to completing any shot. The follow through should be straight and high, and should point directly at the basket. Many players form the bad habit of 'pulling out' of their shot, rather than leaving their follow through up until the ball hits the ring or the shot goes in.

SOME GOOD SHOOTING DRILLS

Basically, a good shooting drill is any drill where an athlete is shooting the ball at game speed and in game specific situations. Athletes will benefit most when they are forced to repetitiously reciprocate good shooting behaviours at game speed, only then will you see a difference in the way they shoot the ball in competition. Following are some of my favourites;

- **Shotgun Shooting**
 - Players work in groups of 3 (a shooter, passer and rebounder), with 2 basketballs in each group.