

TEAM DRILLS

Basketball Fundamentals - Setting Screens

A screen or "pick" occurs when an offensive player attempts to block, or "screen", a defensive player away from the man he is guarding, thereby freeing up that offensive player for an open shot or pass. Setting good screens (or "picks") is a very important fundamental part of the game. It is often assumed that players will know how to do this, but like any other fundamental, it must be taught correctly. Screens are most helpful in freeing up a teammate against a man-to-man defense, and in out-of-bounds plays, and there are times when you can screen a zone defense as well. Setting good picks are basic to most offensive plays. The "pick and roll" is still one of the simplest plays, but when done correctly, one of the most difficult to defend.

Important elements in executing an effective screen.

1. The screener must make contact with (but not foul, hold or push) the defender that he/she is trying to block. If you do not make contact, and get up tight, the defender will simply slide around you.
2. Be strong. Get your feet wide and plant your feet solidly. Do not move your feet once you have established this position or you will get called for a "moving screen" (a foul). You must be stationary and not move with the defender, and you must not push the defender away. If a defender bumps into you and you are not stationary, you will probably be called for the foul.
3. Keep your arms tucked into your chest, not only to physically protect yourself, but also so the ref can see that you are not pushing with your hands, or grabbing or holding the defender.
4. The angle, or direction, of the pick and the timing of the pick are probably the most important, and most overlooked factors in setting a screen. You must have the correct angle, or position, when you set the pick. You must anticipate the direction that your offensive teammate wants to go, and then make contact with his defender in a position so that you are directly in the way of the defender, and he/she cannot get around you. If you don't get the right angle, the defender will simply slide around you. Perhaps this is best demonstrated in the diagram. In Diagram A, the screener does not make contact, and the defender slips behind. In Diagram B, the pick is too high (a common mistake), and the defender slides behind the pick and stays with the defender. In Diagram C, the pick is too low, and the defender can fight over the screen. Diagram D shows a good pick, followed by screener "rolling" to the hoop.

Common Screening Errors

○ = Offensive teammate ● = defender ● = screener

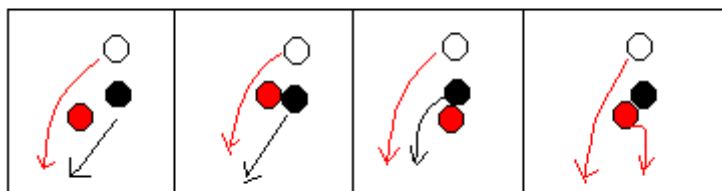


Diagram A
"Too wide"

Diagram B
"Too high"

Diagram C
"too low"

Diagram D
Perfect pick & roll

5. After your teammate cuts around the screen, the screener "seals" off the screened defender and "rolls" (cuts) toward the hoop. If the defense switches the screen, often the "roller" will be open for the pass.

6. The timing of the offensive player receiving the pick. The player receiving the pick must be patient and wait for the screen from his teammate to arrive. Often, you will see a player make his cut just before the pick is "set", and the defender easily gets around it (because it never had a chance to be set). You must wait for the pick to be set, and then cut hard around it.

7. The offensive player receiving the screen must cut hard, and close to the teammate setting the screen. You must "rub off" your teammate's screen... that is, brush against him as you go by. If you don't brush close to the screen, the defender can slip through the screen.

8. Remember, there are two options on the pick and roll play... pass either to the cutter, or if the defense switches, pass to the "roller".

Dribble-Tag Drill

This drill will improve dribbling and ball-handling and the kids seem to like it. It is similar to the kid's game "tag."

Set-up:

Every player on the team has a ball, and is restricted to a half court area. All the players must dribble the entire time.

The Drill:

Start the game with one player as "it". While maintaining the dribble, each player must try to tag another player, who is then "it". Players try to avoid getting tagged and becoming "it". They must stay within the half court area and must continue dribbling. If a player leaves the area, or double-dribbles, stops dribbling, or gets tagged, then he/she is "it".

This drill will help develop ball handling, and to avoid getting tagged, players must keep their heads up. If you have a large group with some good ball handlers, and some not so good, you can put the better dribblers on one end, and the other group on the other end, so the same kids don't get picked on all the time. You can vary this drill by making them use the opposite (weak) hand only.

3-Line Layup Drill

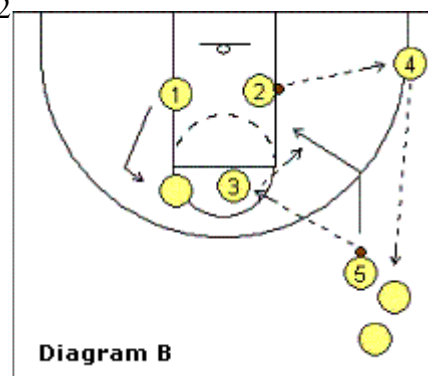
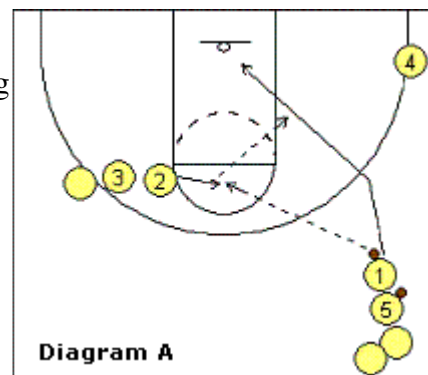
This drill helps improve players' passing, cutting, receiving and ability to make lay-ups. You can use it as a pre-game warm-up drill.

Drill:

A few players line up at the top of the key, one player in the right corner, and the rest of the players line up at half-court near the right sideline. Use two balls as seen in the diagram. Player #1 passes to player #2 and cuts down the right sideline, then makes sharp cut to the basket. Player #2 passes the ball back to #1 who shoots a lay-up (see diagram A). After shooting, #1 goes to the top-of-the-key line.

Player #2 rebounds the shot and passes to player #4 in the corner. Player #2 then follows the pass and goes to the corner. Player #4 passes to the next player in line, and follows the pass, going to the end of half-court line. Run this drill for both right and left handed lay-ups.

You can vary this drill by having the shooting line shoot jump shots.

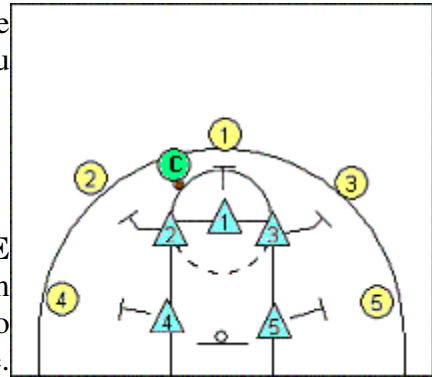


Rebounding "War" Drill

This drill stresses boxing out and rebounding, and running the fast break off the rebound. There are variations of this drill, you can make your own adaptations.

Setup:

This is a 5-on-5 drill, so divide the team into two squads. **(USE PARENTS AS THE OFFENSE IF NEEDED)** One team starts out on defense with all five players in the paint area... two at the blocks, two at the elbows and one at the free-throw line. The offensive team starts with all five players on the perimeter arc, or you can put them in a 1-3-1 set with three perimeter players, one at the high post and one in the short corner. Optionally, you can vary the offensive setup according to what you expect your next opponent will play.



Running the Drill:

The coach will shoot the ball up from somewhere at the 12-17 foot range. The defenders must each find a man to box out. The defender must "find" his/her man and go make contact before going for the ball. The offensive players (except the point guard) all crash the boards for the rebound and immediately look to score if they get the rebound. If the offense seems to be taking too long to shoot, or if someone yells "set it up", start over with the coach taking another shot.

If the defense gets the rebound, they immediately look for the outlet pass and run your fast break. Once they get the ball up the floor, the drill is over. Reset (as in the diagram) and the coach takes another shot to re-start the drill.

Rules and Pointers:

Rebound everything, including made shots. Go after every loose ball, even if it is out-of-bounds **(there is no out-of-bounds in this drill)**. Allow a certain amount of physical play... this is "war". This obviously depends on the age group you are working with. Let it be aggressive and physical, but keep it under control so that no tempers flare and no-one gets injured. No "dirty play" is allowed. Make sure the defensive players are using good boxing-out technique. Do not allow flagrant pushing or holding... if fact you can call a foul if this happens, and then reset again.

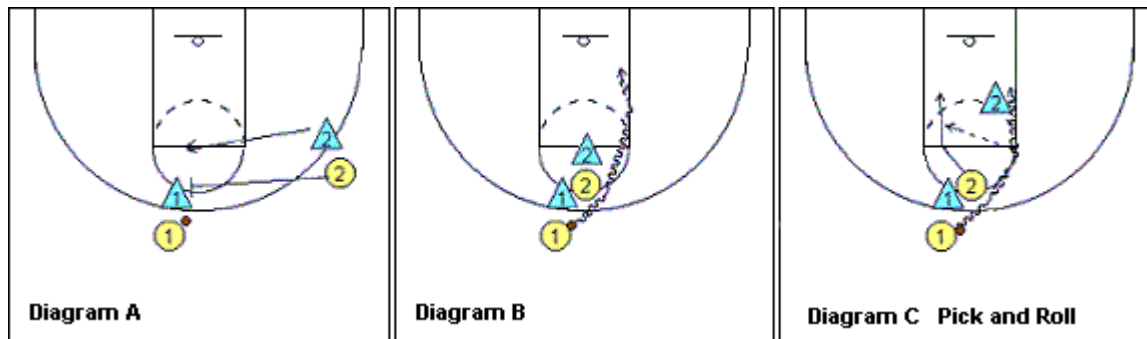
Scoring:

Award 1 point for a made basket. Award 1 point for defensive rebounds, 2 points for offensive rebounds, and 1 point for steals. Subtract 1 point for a turnover or a foul (but again "let them play" as much as you can). You can run the drill for 10 minutes, giving each team 5-minutes on defense and 5-minutes on offense. Or you can play to a score of 15. Losers run.

Pick and Roll.

O1 and O2 have defenders on them. O2 sets a front screen for O1 (Diagram A). O1 dribbles around the screen, "brushing off" the screener. If the defense does not switch, O1 takes it in for the lay-up (Diagram B), and O2 will roll as the trailer for the rebound.

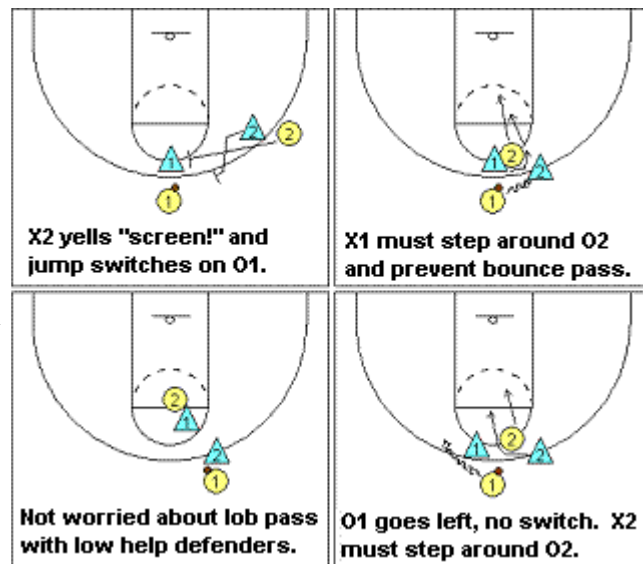
Now see Diagram C for the next option. If the defenders switch the screen, O2 (after screening and pinning the defender) should "roll" to the hoop, and expect the bounce pass from O1.



Pick and Roll Defense Drill

Try "jump-switching" outside pick and roll screens, and also hand-off (weave) screens. The screener's man yells "screen!" as the pick is being set. He "jumps" out on the ball, switches and stops dribble-penetration. Meanwhile, to prevent the bounce-pass to the "roller", the screened defender aggressively steps around and maintains contact with the screener as he/she rolls off the screen. An over-the-top lob pass can be intercepted by our low helpside players.

If the ball-handler goes in the opposite direction instead, the defenders do not switch, and X2 must now aggressively step around O2 to deny the bounce pass. After several possessions, rotate offense and defense. You can play live, keep score, with losers doing push-ups.



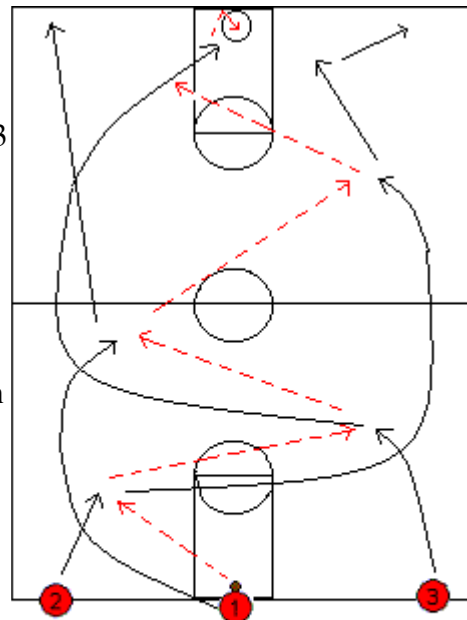
Passing Drill #1 - 3-Man Full-Court Weave

This old drill is still one of the best for passing and catching on the move and conditioning. Players start at one end of the court in three lines, one in the middle and one near each sideline.

The middle player O1 starts the weave by passing to one of the sideline players. O1 then cuts wide around and behind player (O2). O2 now passes to the opposite sideline player (O3) and cuts around and behind O3. O3 now passes to the original middle person (O1) and cuts around O1. And so it goes (see diagram). No dribbling is allowed except for one dribble to finish the lay-up. The ball should never touch the floor except that the last pass to the shooter is always a bounce-pass.

First run the drill with chest passes, and then again with bounce passes. Receivers should move toward the ball, and show a target for the passer. Players should stay wide and always cut around and behind the player they just passed to. Passers must call out the receiver's name before passing and the number of the pass in the sequence (e.g. "Ross 1", "John 2", "Bill 3"), and receivers should yell "ball". Initially run the drill with five passes being made before completing the lay-up. Finally, try running the drill with each team using only three passes to complete the drill... now they really have to sprint.

Expect the players to run the drill at full-speed at all times. If not, stop the drill and have them just run some full-court sprints. Most players would rather run the drill than sprints.



3-Man Weave (showing 5 passes)

———— = player cut
- - - - = pass

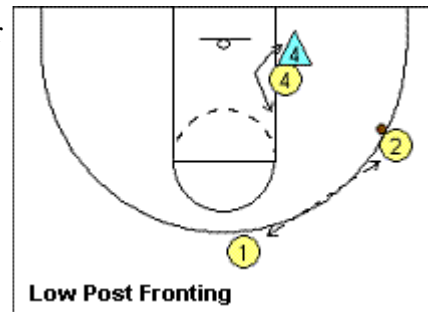
The next three-some can start once the previous group is beyond half-court. Start a new line at the far end, and when all groups have come to that end-line, go back the other way. If you have an odd number, the one or two players left behind will yell "one (or two) back!" and a player(s) will sprint back and go again with that three-some.

Low Post Fronting Drill

When the ball is on the wing, 1/2 or 3/4 front the low post from the baseline side (and double-team with our opposite wing player). Fronting from the baseline side stops the baseline drop-step move. The defender straddles the post player with one foot behind and one foot in front with one arm wrapped around the front of the post player.

When the ball is at the point, step below and around, and get both feet above the offensive post with an arm bar on him/her and a hand in the passing lane. Try stepping under (rather than in front of the offensive player) you will never give up inside position this way. If you step in front, it is possible for the offensive player to seal you and get inside position for the quick inside pass.

See the diagram. Pass the ball back and forth from the wing to the point. The post defender must quickly re-position with each pass. You can use both low blocks to teach defense on both sides of the court. This is a very simple but important drill in teaching correct fronting and defensive footwork.



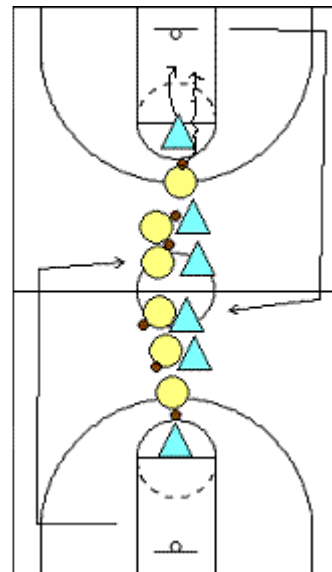
1-on-1 Drill

All defenders must learn how to play good 1-on-1, on-ball defense. In this drill, each player has a partner (opponent) that he/she goes 1-on-1 against. Each pair has a ball. Use both ends of the court. The player with the ball starts at the top of the key and tries to make a move, or shoot the outside shot and score on the defender. The defender must stop the offense, box-out and get the rebound. Have post players paired up with post players, and guards paired up with guards.

Rotation (see arrows in the diagram)

After a pair has finished their duel, they get in line on the other end of the floor, but switch offense and defense for the next possession.

This drill is also great for offensive players working on their 1-on-1 moves... jab step, shot fake, dribble moves, etc.



2-on-1 Drill

This offensive drill helps players read the defense in a 2 on 1 situation, and helps them to learn when to take it to the hoop or pass off to their teammate.

Setup:

Make two lines, one with players out at half court on the left sideline. The other line is made up of the other players, and is opposite along the right baseline. There is a token defender (maybe a parent) on the ball. The defender is in the paint area and will try to stop the 2 on 1 break.

The Drill:

Player #1 has the ball, makes a fake or jab step, and goes around the token defender. He/she then dribbles toward the hoop, and tries to exploit the 2-on-1 situation with the defender. The first player in the “post” line along the baseline is his/her teammate. The player with the ball has to decide whether to take it to the hoop, stop and pop a jumper, or pass off to his/her teammate. He/she should try to get the defender to commit. If the defender comes up, he/she should pass to the post player. The post player should maintain proper spacing and take it strong to the hoop and lay it in off the glass. If the defender lays back, the guard should take it to the hoop. In this drill, discourage the outside jumper. The offense should try to get a lay-up every time.

Players rotate through both lines

