

# 10 Bonus Fun Drills & Games

And

## Bonus Tips from Coaching Expert Barry Adams

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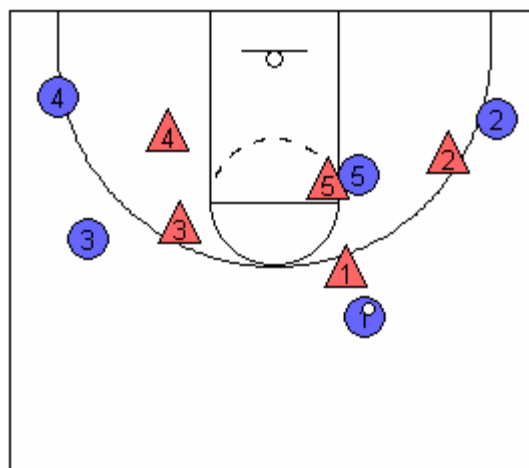
## The Defensive Challenge

### Purpose:

(D, O) This drill is great because it provides a positive, fun twist to scrimmaging that encourages and rewards defense. It also gets your players in the mentality of, “I want to play defense.”

### Instructions:

1. Perform this drill with 3-on-3, 4-on-4, or 5-on-5 in the half-court or full court.
2. Split your players into two teams.
3. Only the defense can score points, either by forcing a turnover or securing a rebound.
4. If the defense gets a defensive stop, the team stays on defense.
5. If the offense gets a basket or the defense fouls a shooter, the offense and defense switch.
6. Play to 5 points or whatever you deem necessary.



### Teaching Tips:

If the defense is having a reoccurring problem, fix it immediately so they know how to react the next time.

### Variations:

- If the defense fouls two or three times in a row, the offense and defense switch.
- Play without any boundary lines. This gives the offense more freedom and makes the defense work harder.
- Force the defense to get 2 or 3 stops in a row before a point is awarded.
- If you have too many players, divide the group into 3 or 4 teams. If the defense does NOT get a stop, they rotate out. The offense rotates to defense and a new team comes in on offense.

## Defensive Slide Relays

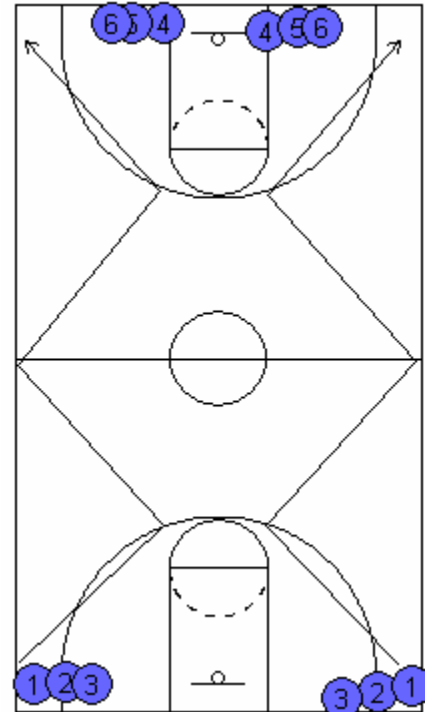
### Purpose:

(D, A) This drill is great for focusing on the defensive stance and slide while providing a fun, competitive aspect that will keep your players motivated. It's also perfect for improving players' agility.

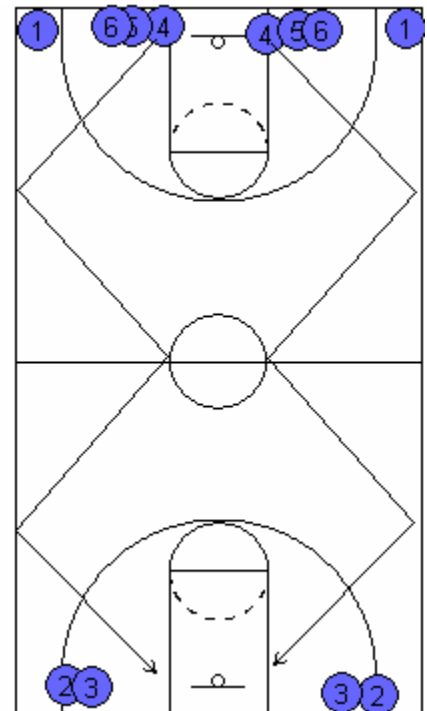
### Instructions:

1. Split your players into two teams, placing half of the players from each team on opposite sides of the court.
2. On the whistle, the first player slides diagonally to a designated mark. Next, he does a "defensive drop step" and continues sliding in the other direction.

The player is to face the baseline that he started from the entire time sliding down the court.



3. When the first player finishes, the next person in line begins.
4. Continue this same pattern until the last person has gone.
5. The team that finishes first, wins.



**Teaching Tips:**

Don't allow your players to do this drill with improper form. Make sure they are doing a proper stance and slide throughout the entire drill. If they cheat or use bad form, make them start over.

**Variations:**

- For 8 year olds and younger, have the players just slide to half-court.
- Have the players slide all the way down and back (2 court lengths), instead of just down (1 court length).
- Vary markings on the court where players are to switch sliding directions.
- Mix up the drill to involve different types of movements, such as the slide, sprint and backpedal. For example, have the teams slide to the 1<sup>st</sup> point, sprint to the 2<sup>nd</sup> point, slide to the 3<sup>rd</sup> point, and sprint through the finish.

## Speed Square Game

### Purpose:

(D, A, C) This drill is a fun way to improve basketball speed, quickness and conditioning.

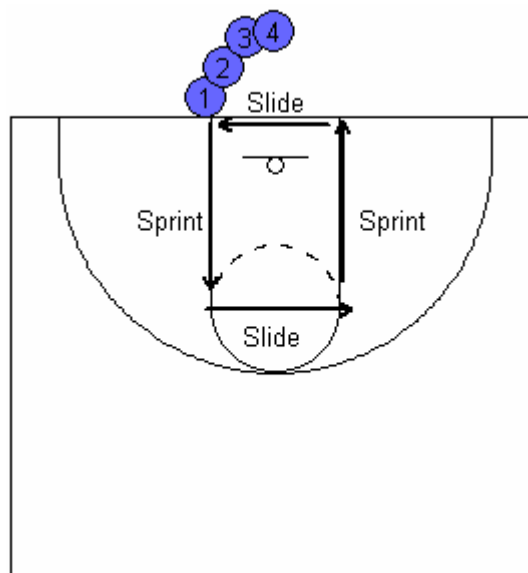
### Instructions:

1. Split your players into two teams and line each team up at the baseline of two different baskets.
2. On the whistle, the first player sprints up to the elbow.

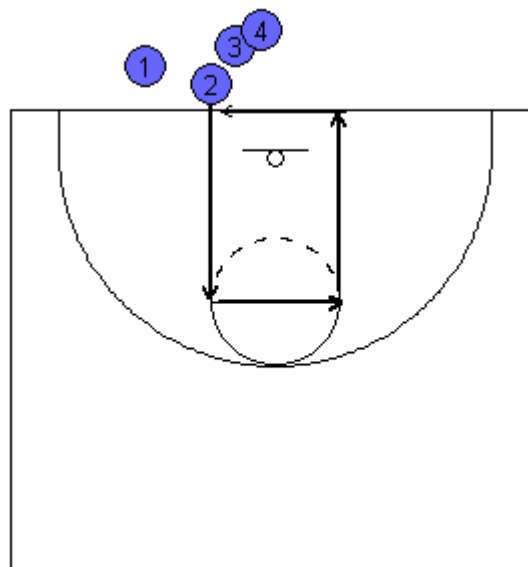
Next, he gets into a defensive position and slides to the opposite elbow.

Then, he backpedals to the baseline.

Finally, he gets into a defensive stance and slides through to the finish.



3. Once the first player finishes, the next player in line starts the same pattern.
4. The first team to finish wins.



### Variations:

- To provide conditioning, have each player go through 4 to 5 times.
- Make the square bigger, so they have to cover more ground.

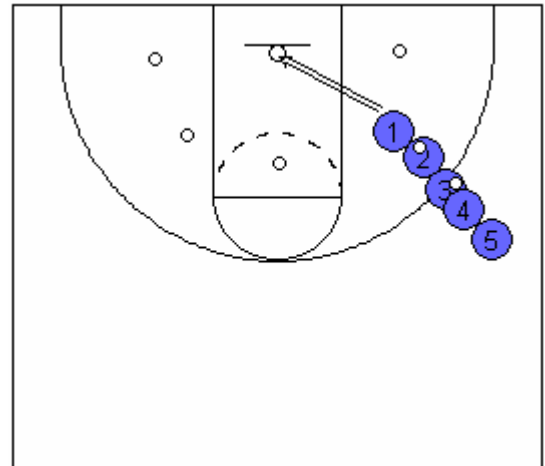
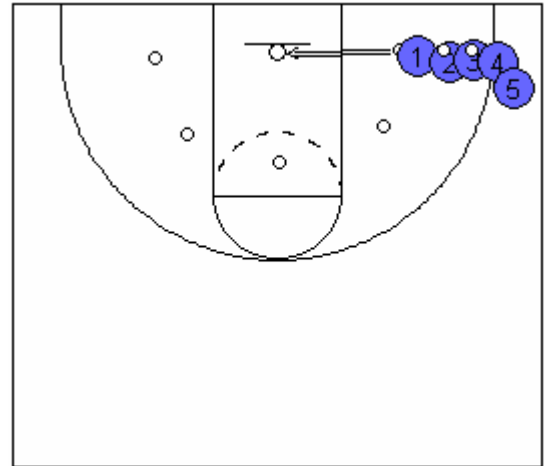
## 5 Spot Shooting

### Purpose:

(S, R, P, TW) This is a fun shooting drill that forces players to follow their shot and rebound the basketball.

### Instructions:

1. Pick 5 spots on the floor. Split your team into two groups and line them up at the first spot, giving each group 3 balls.
2. On the whistle, the first player in line shoots the ball. As soon as the ball hits the rim, the next player in line shoots. The shooter hustles after the ball and passes to the next person in line without a basketball.
3. After the team makes a certain number of baskets, they are to move to the next spot.
4. The first team to make the designated amount of baskets from each spot is the winner.



### Teaching Tips:

Lower the number of baskets made and the distance from the hoop based on age group. For example:

- Make 3 from 5 feet away for 8 year olds.
- Make 5 from 15 feet away for 13 year olds.

### Variations:

- To make this drill more difficult, only count swishes.
- For advanced players, have the team make a certain number of baskets in a row before they move onto the next spot.

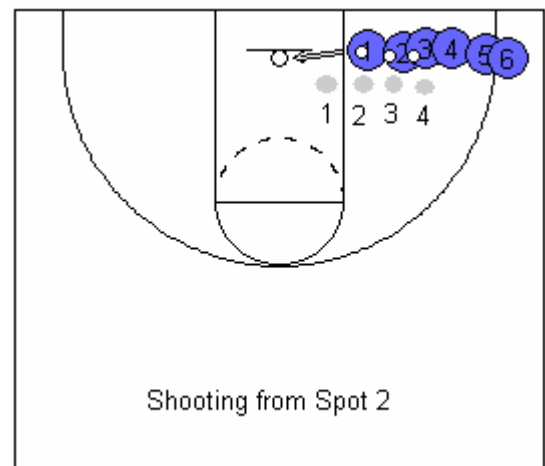
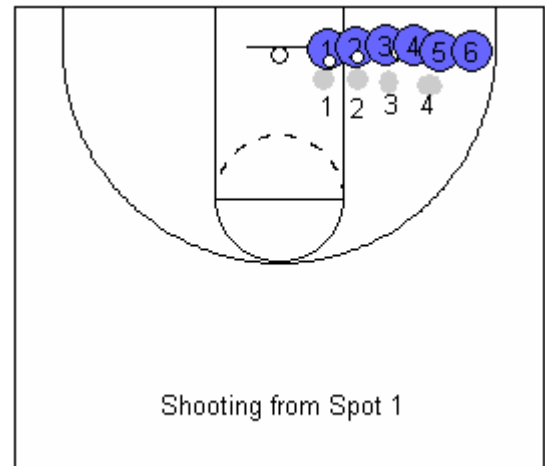
## Make 'em and Step Back

### Purpose:

**(S, R, P, TW)** This is another fun shooting game that focuses on shooting with proper form, rebounding your shot and passing.

### Instructions:

1. Split your team in half. You only need one basket for this game, but put each group at different baskets if possible. Each line needs three basketballs.
2. Each basket has 4 spots. The first spot is about 3 feet way from the basket. The second spot is 6 feet away. The third spot is 9 feet away, and the fourth spot is 12 feet away.
3. On the whistle, the first person in line shoots the basketball, rebounds their own shot and passes it to the next person in line without a basketball.
4. As soon as the first person's shot hits the rim or goes through the hoop, the next person in line starts.
5. As soon as the team makes 4 shots, they move to the second spot.  
Make 3 from the 2<sup>nd</sup> spot  
Make 2 from the 3<sup>rd</sup> spot  
Make 1 from the 4<sup>th</sup> spot.
6. The first team to make the designated amount from each spot wins.



### Teaching Tips:

Make sure everybody is using proper shooting form.

### Variations:

- Have the teams make 5 baskets from each spot.
- Only count swishes.

- Have the teams shoot from more than 1 shooting angle on the floor. For example: side of the hoop, front of the hoop, angled to the hoop.
- Use 5 or 6 spots for older players.

## Line Shooting

### Purpose:

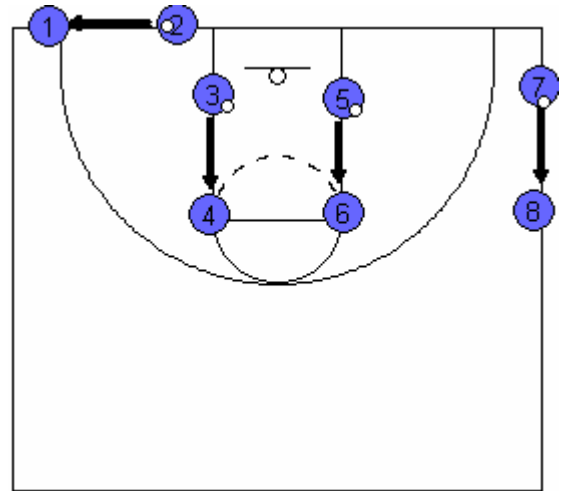
(S) This is a great shooting drill that focuses on proper shooting form. A lot of players get caught up with how many they make or miss. If they make a shot with bad form, they think that's how they are supposed to shoot. If they miss with good form, they don't think they should shoot that way. If you take them away from the hoop, they do not concentrate on the misses or makes. We also provide a twist to make it competitive.

### Instructions:

1. Each player needs a partner. Each pair is to find a line on the basketball court (Half court lines, out of bounds lines, free throw lanes).

Each group needs a ball.

2. The player is to square to the line, try to shoot the ball to their partner and have it hit the line. If the ball hits the line, it counts as a make. If the ball misses the line, it counts as a miss.
3. At first, just have the players shoot back and forth while concentrating on good form.
4. After a minute or two, have each pair count to see who can make the most out of 10.



### Teaching Tips:

Make sure that players are using good shooting form. If the player is right-handed, the player's right foot can be on the shooting line or slightly to the right of it and vice-versa if the player is left-handed.

### Variations:

- Change the number of shots from 10 to 15, 20, or another pre-determined number, depending on skill level.
- See who can make the most consecutive "shots".

## Circle Challenge Drill

### Purpose:

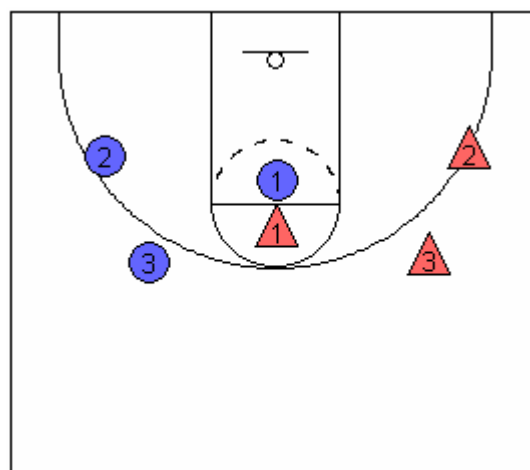
**(R, AP)** This is a fun drill that provides practice in establishing and maintaining a strong box-out and post-up stance. This drill also promotes the aggressiveness needed for effective boxing out and posting up and can be used to add some motivation to practice routines.

### Instructions:

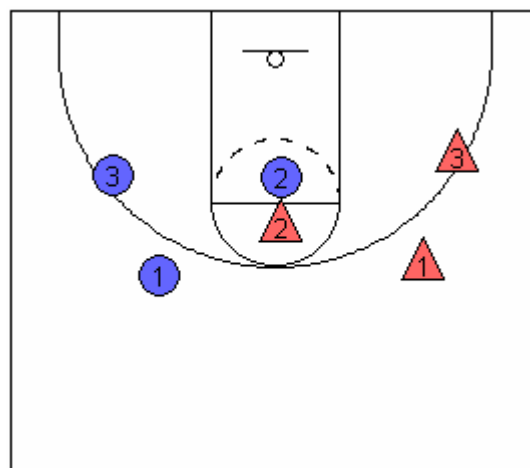
1. Position two size-matched players back-to-back in the circle. Have another two size-matched pairs waiting their turn, observing and encouraging.

On the coach's signal, the back-to-back players try to push each other out of the circle, using their box-out and post-up stances.

The player who manages to push the other out of the circle is the winner.



2. After the round, the next two size-matched players step into the circle for a turn. Players from the original pair go to the back of their respective lines.
3. Rotate through three times.



### Teaching Tips:

Remind your players to....

- Keep their legs about shoulder-width apart, their knees bent, and their backs straight to establish a low center of gravity.
- Raise their arms so that their hands are about shoulder-height and positioned just outside and a little forward of each shoulder.

Use the phrase “Pull the chair” to remind players of the effective arm technique for boxing out and posting up.

Encourage players to use their butts as the power point. Adjust your language according to the age of your players and how well you know them. You can have fun with this, but know your audience.

Expect some players to be a little shy about this drill at first. Start with players who will not be shy in order to establish a good momentum and atmosphere for the drill.

### **Variations:**

- You could also structure the drill so that the winner stays in the circle. In this case, try to have size-matched groups stationed at the circle, and try to keep four players at a particular circle so that there is not too much waiting.
- You could also open this drill up to include your whole team, regardless of size. This would provide practice in dealing with real game mismatches. Plus, some relatively small players have the technique and strength to push bigger players around.

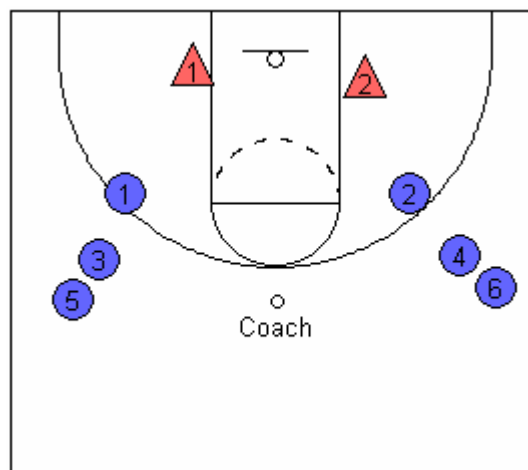
## Two-on-Two Box Out

### Purpose:

**(R, S, AP)** This rebounding drill is great for encouraging aggressive behavior, both from an offensive and defensive perspective. It is a competitive drill, so it also has an element of challenge and fun.

### Instructions:

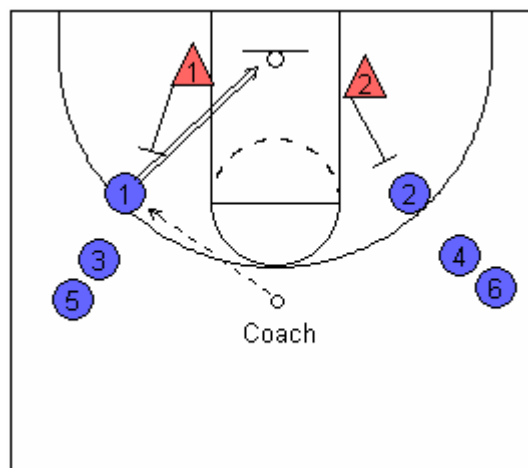
1. Position two defensive players at the low blocks and lines of offensive players at the wings, free-throw line extended. Have a coach with a ball above the top of the key.



2. The coach will pass to one wing or the other, and that player will shoot. Meanwhile, the defenders will close on their men and box out.

The ball is live until someone “rebounds” it. Even if the shot goes in, it is still live. There is no out of bounds.

The defensive team stays on defense as long as they get the rebound. Offensive players become defensive if they get the “rebound”. Otherwise, they go to the back of the wing line.



### Teaching Tips:

Since there is no out-of-bounds, make sure to establish safety guidelines relevant to the physical hazards present in your practice setting.

Inform players that getting rebounds must conform to normal rules. In other words, without traveling violations, pushing, tripping, etc. You don't want people diving all over the place risking injury. You might even want to ban diving after rebounds.

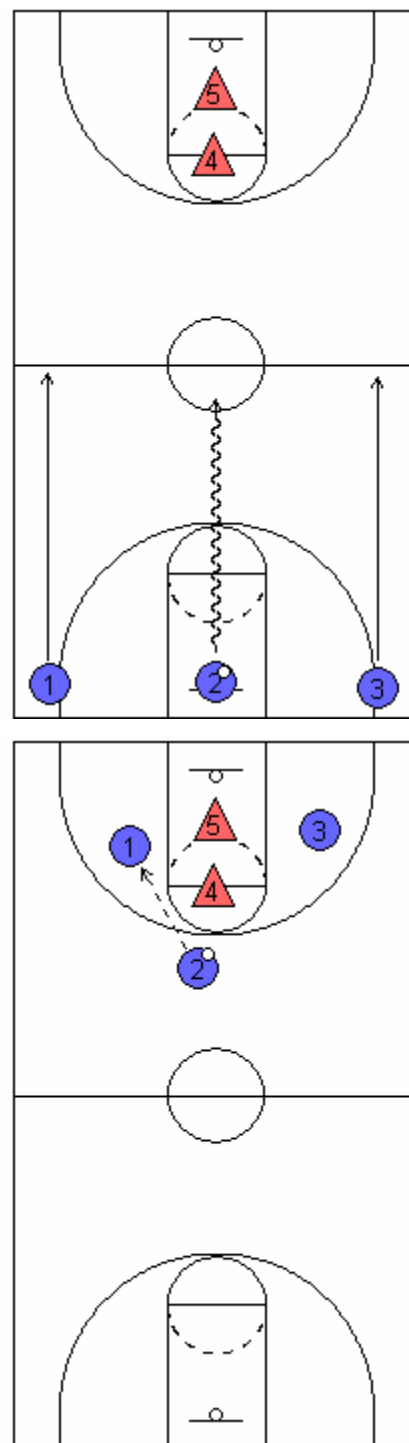
## Three-on-Two, Two-on-One Break

### Purpose

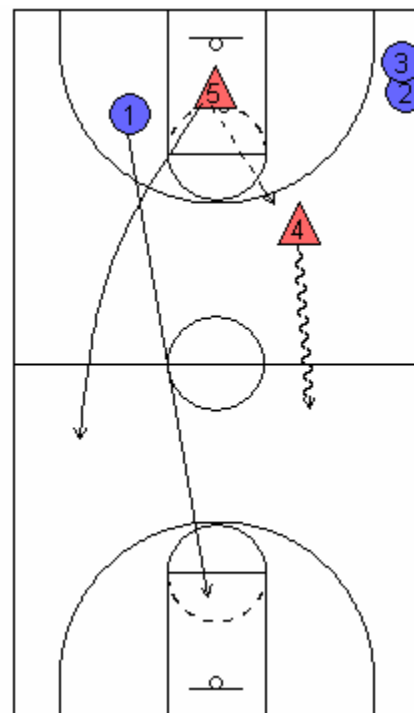
**(P, S, TW, O, D, R)** This is a fun drill designed to teach players how to take advantage on the fast break, creating easy baskets for themselves and their teammates.

### Instructions

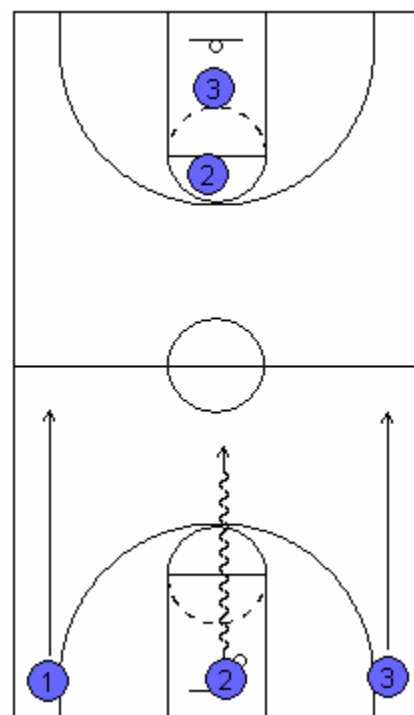
1. Put two of your players at one end of the court, and three more at the opposite end. The group of three should have a basketball.
2. On the whistle, the player with the ball will start dribbling towards the defense, and the other two offensive players will sprint ahead of the dribbler, spreading out on each side.
3. The player with the ball will dribble until one of the defenders commits to them.
4. Next, the player with the ball will pass it to one of the open offensive players on either side, and, ideally, a lay up will ensue. If an extra pass is needed, allow your players to make that pass.



5. The player who either takes the shot (make or miss), or turns the ball over will sprint back to the other end of the court and play defense.
6. The two original defenders become offensive players and execute a two-on-one break.



7. After they score or a rebound is secured by the defense, the next group of three starts down the court.
8. The two offensive players who did not sprint back on defense become the defenders to face the next group of three.



### Teaching Tips:

Continually tell your players to...

- Make a defender commit to you before passing.
- Look up while dribbling; see the floor.
- Take care of the ball – no turnovers!

Keeping the ball under control is vital in making this drill go successfully; continue to tell your players that staying under control is just as important as making the lay up at the other end.

All young players want to shoot the ball and score a lot of points, but it is important for them to know that being unselfish is the key to making a fast break work successfully.

**Variations:**

- Don't allow dribbling throughout the drill at first, then progress to dribbling once the players reach half-court. This helps players break the habit of catching and instantly dribbling. After catching the ball, it emphasizes seeing the defense and reacting to what is given to them.
- You can reference the "Fast break Weave" for a different variation.

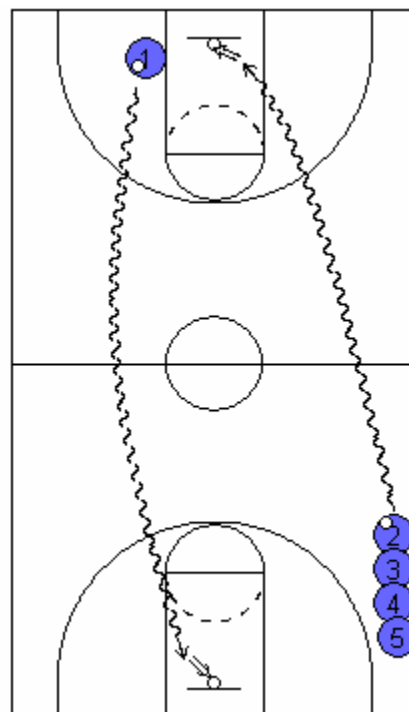
## Competitive Full Court Lay Ups

### Purpose:

**(S, D, P, R)** This is a fun drill that helps players improve their ball-handling, dribbling speed, and lay up accuracy.

### Instructions:

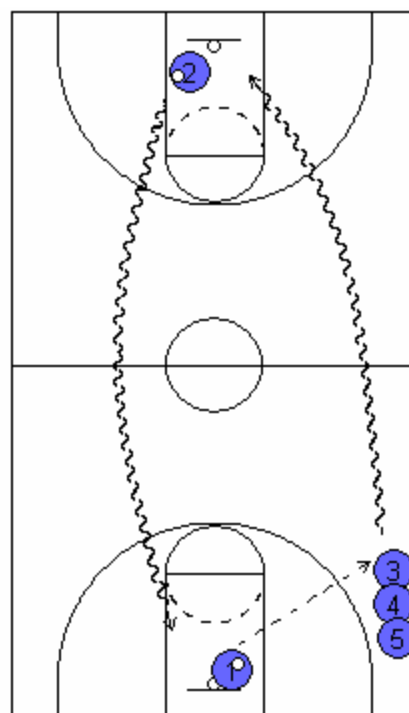
1. Start with one player at the opposite end of the court from the rest of the team as shown in the diagram to the right. If you are shooting right-handed lay ups, the players start on the right side. The player on the opposite end, along with the first player in line will each need a ball.
2. On the whistle, both players are to dribble down the court for a lay up.



3. The player that started on the opposite end will rebound his shot and outlet the pass to the next person in line.

The player who started in the front of the line shoots a lay up, gets his own rebound, and dribbles to the opposite end of the court to do another lay up.

4. This pattern continues throughout the drill.
5. Pick a number of lay ups that the group must make in a specific amount of time. For example, have them try to make 20 lay ups in 2 minutes. Adjust these numbers according to the age of your players.



**Teaching Tips:**

Have the players try to use a minimal amount of dribbles. Remind them to push the ball out in front of them when dribbling, which helps them develop speed with the dribble.

**Variations:**

- If you have two full length courts, split your team up into two groups and have them compete. The first team to 25 lay ups wins.
- Switch sides and do left-handed lay ups.

## Bonus Coaching Tips from Coaching Expert Barry Adams

For more information on Barry Adams or Cascade Sports Camp, visit [www.cascadesportscamp.com](http://www.cascadesportscamp.com).

Inducted into the National High School Coaches Association Hall of Fame in 1998, Coach Barry Adams is regarded as one of the top high school coaches in Oregon's history. With 656 career wins, Barry's high school teams saw State Tournament action 16 times, taking two titles in four Championship games and placing nine times overall.

Adams was selected as Oregon's Coach of the Year four times and as the Coach of the Year in District 7, which encompasses 5 states, in 1983 and 1992. He also served as the President of the Oregon Athletic Coaches Association, President of the High School Basketball Coaches Association, and as the Commissioner of Basketball for the International World Masters Games in 1998.

Over the years, Barry Adams has taught thousands of students the fundamentals of basketball, specifically shooting, with great success. Through Cascade Sports Camp, one of the premier basketball camp destinations in the Pacific Northwest, which he has directed for 39 years, Barry has worked with over 55,000 students who have all benefited from his intimate understanding of the jump shot and sheer knack for teaching players both young and old.

Here, Mr. Adams offers some insightful tips and advice on running a successful basketball program for coaches of all age groups.

### **On making practice fun...**

Finish practice with a competitive drill-- competitive kids like to keep score. Have the losers sing a song, collect basketballs, etc.

Sit your team down and ask them what they would like to do for fun's sake. Maybe they would like bowling or celebrating birthdays. With 12 on a team the average would be 2 or 3 birthdays during the winter season.

Go out and shoot paint balls on a Saturday after practice, or go out for pizza...let the kids be silly, stupid and funny.

Make it so that the coaches have to run 2 laps if the team accomplishes something.

Finish with a competitive shooting contest. Put coaches in it so everyone's equal. Losers *all* "pay the price".

### **On structuring your practices...**

First of all your practices should be planned out for the first 4 or 5 weeks, while you do your most important work.

Your practices should "mirror" your style and purpose for the season. If you are runners, practice should be built around that. Position and skill work should occur daily.

Keep track of time spent. If you spend more than 8% of your time on team offense, and you're not spending 50% of your time on skill development, you are shortchanging your kids.

Deal regularly with the mental aspect of being an athlete, working hard on "your game", but doing what is necessary for your team. Your job is to expect your kids to come daily to practice, to do more than other teams in your league do, and there's nothing wrong with expecting that out of them and reacting at times when they don't show up with a solid attitude.

### **On keeping your players' attention...**

They should find out quickly that "what you say, you mean". You are not threatening, you are promising.

Keep your rules and expectations to a minimum, but respond when people aren't ready to listen, to hustle, to help make "us" better, etc.

Don't over talk and don't over-try-to-scare kids into the proper attitude. Explain your system, simple expectations, etc. carefully and politely to your kids, and let them realize that that's what coaches are hired to do.

Explain that "it is okay not to win, but not okay not to work at being a winner"! They need to know you are a classy person, that you are concerned with their health and welfare first, but you expect them to work diligently at the tasks in front of them.

### **On establishing control and discipline...**

Show them you care. You are a reasonable human being, but your basic expectations need to be met.

Of course, your rules are for everyone and again, you aren't just threatening them, you are promising them. If you tell them they will be dismissed from the team if they skip a practice, you must be ready to do just that.

If you back up from your own set of expectations, the whole program will lack purpose and direction because "all things" are negotiable.

### **On helping players gain confidence and feel successful...**

This is a tough one. Kids need to know you speak a balanced and honest talk. If you give praise to youngsters for anything they do...your praise will mean little. If you don't give them enough "attaboys", you become too critical.

Your job is to correct mistakes, poor decisions, not focusing, etc....because that is what coaching is. Like teachers using a red pencil to mark an answer incorrect on a students test. **YOUR JOB IS TO CORRECT**, while at the same time, be positive for the good things kids do. If they are working hard trying to accomplish things, smile, speak loudly, high 5 people, and at the same time, if they simply won't work at blocking out on the defensive board, get after them...because it will make them better players and they can gain more playing time that way.

I always limited my after game comments to 1 minute. My assistant's job was to time me so I didn't say things I couldn't take back tomorrow at practice. The next day, if I was upset about how we played, or finished a game, etc., I was much better prepared to discuss our problems or difficulties.

Handle kids with class, but expect them to "work" at performing what was expected of them.

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