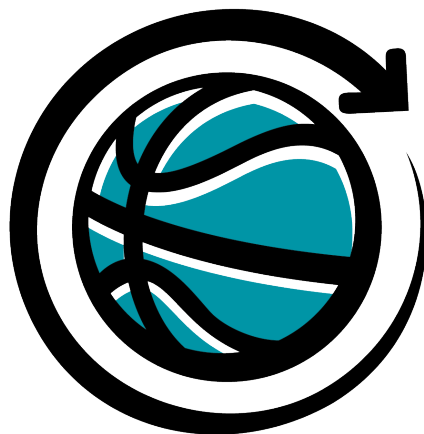


21 SSG'S FOR YOUR NEXT PRACTICE

www.transformingball.com



TRANSFORMING
B A S K E T B A L L

This book is a collection of some of my favourite activities when I started coaching with small-sided games. While many of the original activities were more games-based, I have adapted them to align with a constraints-led approach by sharing more specific constraint manipulations on each page.

For all the activities, you can watch the original video by clicking on the button below on each page.



[Watch the video!](#)



If you try any of these out in practice, I would love to hear how it goes! Please connect with me through the Transforming Community, or on Instagram through @transformingbasketball, or X through @transformbball. Send me a message and let me know how it went. If you want to receive access to the latest Transforming activities and connect with like-minded coaches using the CLA around the world, then be sure to check out our Transforming Membership Community. It is the ultimate resource to help you and your program fulfil their complete potential.

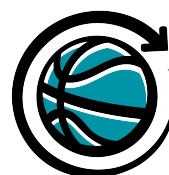
Thanks for your support!

Alex Sarama



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TRANSFORMING
BASKETBALL



Location:
Antwerp, Belgium



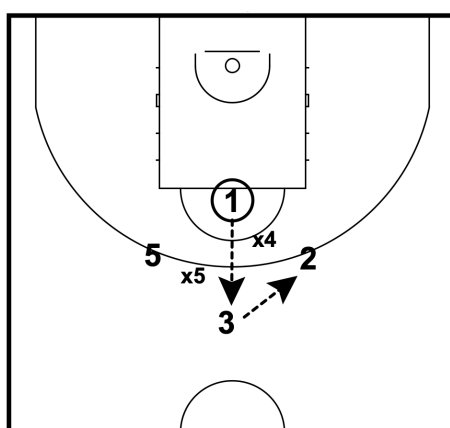
Good For:
Passing, Warm-up, Laughter



Ages:
All



This idea comes from soccer warm-ups, and the famous 'Rondo' of FCB Barcelona. While playing pass touchdown/ keep-away is far more representative, kids always seem to enjoy this so it can be useful in short doses.



EXPLANATION AND CONSTRAINTS

This can be done in many formats: 4-on-2, 5-on-2, 5-on-3, etc. Offense must pass the ball without the defense touching the ball. On any deflection or steal, the passer becomes the new defender and the defender swaps out. You can introduce a constraint, such as 1 or 2 seconds on the ball, to speed up the pass decisions. Floor markers work well here, as without the players will self-organise by making the area bigger, which is too easy.

Constraint 1 = Offense must connect by using names before they catch the ball. This is simply a fun team-bonding constraint that can be used for a couple minutes, changing groups frequently.

Constraint 2 = Defense can tag the passer while in possession of the ball. If they complete a 'two-hand touch' while the passer is holding the ball, then they also swap out. This means the "ball doesn't stop!"

Constraint 3 = Offense can't look at who they are passing too. No-looks only, otherwise become the new defender!

Constraint 4 = The Rondo has to keep moving clockwise or anti-clockwise! When the coach says change, change direction.

Constraint 5 = Make the area bigger and give offense one dribble, removing the tag rule. Offense can use their dribble to advance inside the rondo and create a passing angle. The defenders can steal the dribble.



[Watch the video!](#)





Location:

Gothenburg, Sweden Dribbling, Defensive Movements, Warm-Ups



Good For:

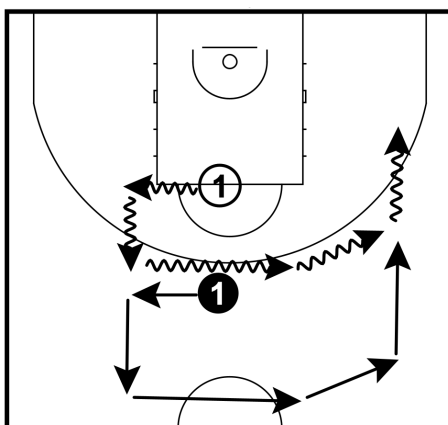


Ages:

All



This works well as an alternative to static dribbling, which has very little learning benefit.



EXPLANATION AND CONSTRAINTS

Players partner up, with one person designated as the lead and one as the 'mirror.' The mirror must copy the lead who is moving in different lateral, forwards, backwards and diagonal planes. This can be done one ball between two, or ideally a ball each to keep everyone active. Coach will let players know when to change.

Constraint 1 = Experiment with some different constraints. E.g. weak hand only, make a move on every change of direction, can only move skipping etc.

Constraint 2 = When partner 'connects,' the mirror must pass the ball and then get it back. For younger kids, this can be a verbal connection by using the partner's name. For older kids, the cue can be verbal only, and much more subtle (e.g. showing a hand). Can also load in a dribble move into the pass (e.g. cross-over before a one hand push).

Constraint 3 = Vary the passes every single time. Passer has to explore as many different ways to pass as possible.

Constraint 4 = Upon a trigger word by the coach, the mirror has 6 seconds to try and tag the lead. The lead can go anywhere on the court, but not of bounds, to escape. This is a fun way of increasing intensity within the warm-up and building spatial awareness.



[Watch the video!](#)





Location:
Malmo, Sweden



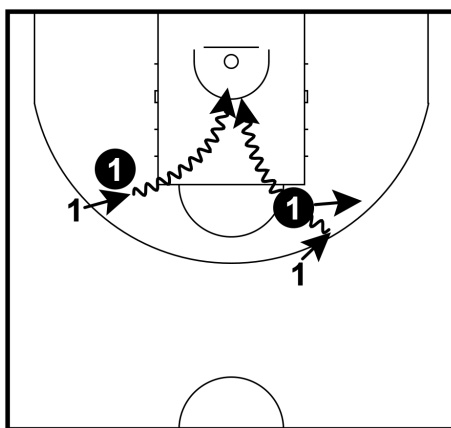
Good For:
Footwork, Attacking Close-Outs



Ages:
U10 - U16



This is a useful activity for attacking without travelling, especially for players who play with FIBA rules.



EXPLANATION AND CONSTRAINTS

Players partner up and go from different spots around and inside the perimeter, being sure to use the corners too. One partner is a guided defender, whose only job is to give the offense the initial decision. The guided defender faces the offense and drops the basketball left or right for offense to catch the ball after one bounce. If the defender moves, offense has to catch and cross-step back in the opposite direction. If the defender doesn't move, they just take the straight line to the basket. Have offense stay for x3 reps, with the guided defender giving different directions and decisions for all x3 reps.

Constraint 1 = Add a shot decision by having the guided defender move backwards on the drop. Mix this in with the reads above, still staying for x3 reps. Can progress this further by having the guided defender take away time and space again after initially sagging.

Constraint 2 = Guided defender also attempts to steal the ball as they move left or right. This starts naturally encouraging rips and ways to protect the ball on the drive.

Constraint 3 = Guided defender can follow and also give a decision on the finish at the rim.



[Watch the video!](#)





Location:
Bologna, Italy



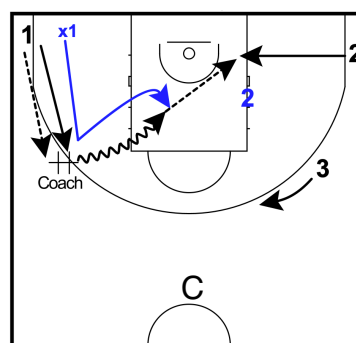
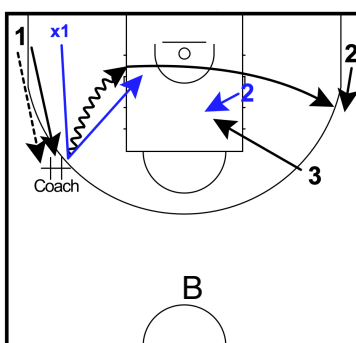
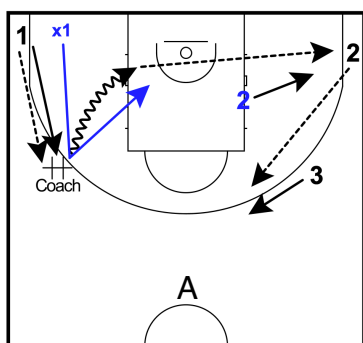
Good For:
Spacing Concepts, Cutting, Zero
Seconds, Floor is Lava



Ages:
U14+



This is a good advantage SSG developing principles of play within dominoes and playing out of the two side.



“DOMINOES”

Dominoes is a term from NZ Coach Ross McMains. This is the moment an advantage is triggered offensively, where the offense drive and kick or pass the ball to get a great shot.

EXPLANATION AND CONSTRAINTS

When coach connects with 1 facing the basket in the corner, 1 sends an extra pass and sprints for a ‘get’ action with the coach. The coach controls the advantage by placing the ball on the outside hip for a baseline drive, with the defender having to hi-5 the coaches’s inside hand (distance to defender affects the size of the advantage). The coach can simulate a middle drive by placing the ball on the inside hip, with both players having to chase over. The last option is for 1 to backdoor cut from 1 if x1 overplays the sprint, receiving the pass on the cut.

The following are good potential solutions that can be encouraged with effective constraints:

Separate: when the wing player lifts towards the slot to prevent the take two defender from guarding both players. From here, the shot, drive or extra decision is made even more obvious because this stretches the take two.

Ghost Cut: when the corner player OR slot player cuts behind the head of the low defender, and like a ghost, emerges in a scary place underneath the basket. Note the wing player could also do this vs a defender that turns to watch the ball.

Place a constraint on the first passer by not allowing them to receive the ball back until they get back outside the 3PT line after their drive and kick (floor is lava). This encourages the concept of getting into and out of space to keep dominoes.

Constraint 1 = 3-on-3, offense can now set hammer screens. Coach can reduce the advantage or make the situation neutral by lengthening their hand to the defender.



[Watch the video!](#)





Location:

Atyrau, Kazakhstan



Good For:

Warm-Up, Ball Control

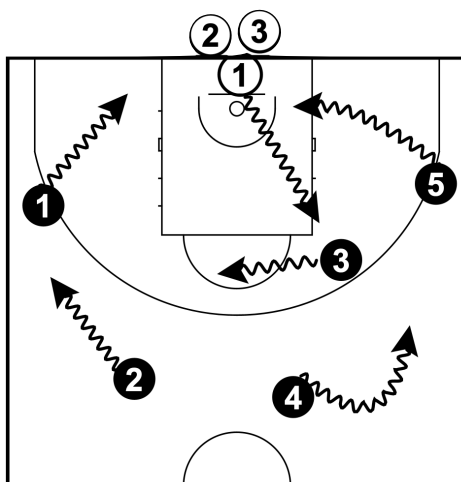


Ages:

All



Not only is this fun, but a lot more beneficial for improving ball handling as opposed to static dribbling, going through cones, tennis ball drills, Maravich series etc.



EXPLANATION AND LOADS

Divide your players into equal teams of between 3 to 6 players. Each half-court area can host two teams, or with larger numbers, use cones to divide the court into three equal sectors so you can hold x6 teams at one time. One team (the taggers) are lined up on the baseline, while the other team (the evaders) are spread out anywhere in the HC area. Everyone should have a ball, but if struggling with numbers, give balls to just the evaders and the first person in the taggers line.

As soon as the first player from the taggers team dribbles out, the coach starts keeping time. The player must keep their dribble alive and tag one of the evaders. As soon as this happens, they speed dribble back and hi-5 the next person in line for their turn to go. The player that gets tagged waits on the sideline, and the team keeps going until everyone is out. Show the time to your players, and then flip teams. The fastest time wins! If one of the evaders steps out of bounds at any-time, they go out and the taggers job is done.

Constraint 1 = Introduce constraints. E.g. can only dribble with the weak hand, can only skip or move laterally etc. Chain tag also works well, with the first tagger going back and linking hands with their second teammate. Each tag is one extra person on the chain. If the chain breaks, the tag doesn't count!

Constraint 2 = To avoid players waiting, instead of players going out after being tagged, the team that gets the highest number of tags in one minute wins. Teams can't tag the same player twice in a row.

Constraint 3 = After being tagged, the tagged player has to go and score a lay-up on a basket the other end of the floor, before coming back into the game. Can take this further by constraining the finish/ add a defender down the other end. If the other team manage to tag everyone out in that time, then they win.



[Watch the video!](#)





Location:
Trieste, Italy



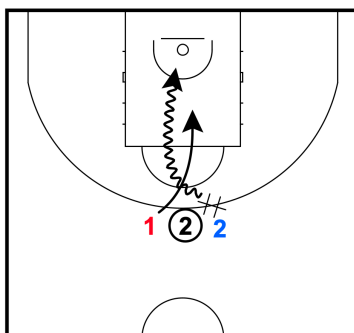
Good For:
Leveraging advantage, ball control,
change of speed.



Ages:
U12+



Luka Doncic is one of the best players in the world at the hostage dribble. For younger players, a fun analogy is giving a piggyback ride!



EXPLANATION AND CONSTRAINTS

Players work in groups of threes, staying for x2 or x3 reps before changing roles. The player in the middle serves the ball on a platter to the left or right, determining who is offense and defense. The player who receives the ball on their side grabs the ball, and looks to hostage dribble the defender immediately before exploding to the rim for a finish. Players should be encouraged to take a look at their defender during their hostage so they can alter their positioning if needed.

Constraint 1 = Increase variability by moving to a new perimeter spot on the floor each time. This will enable a greater variety of finishes from different angles.

Constraint 2 = Change the distance by starting further away (e.g. at the half-court line). This is slightly harder as there is a greater distance over which the offensive player is trying to hostage the defender.

Constraint 3 = Add in extra offensive and defense players in different positions (e.g. low post, wing, corner etc). The offensive player now has to make the shot or pass decision coming off the hostage.



[Watch the video!](#)





Location:

Astana, Kazakhstan



Good For:

Warm-Up, Change of Direction

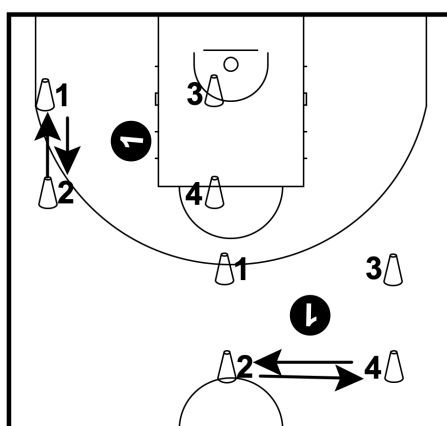


Ages:

All, especially U14



I have taken many concepts from Canada's Mike MacKay over the years, including this fun warm-up game. It may be necessary to keep time to encourage as many 'steals' and exchanges as possible within the time period.



EXPLANATION AND CONSTRAINTS

A player stands in the middle of the grid. A grid with four outside players and one 'inside' player works well, but you can easily make this bigger if you have more players. The players on the outside have to try and exchange spaces, while the inside player tries to 'steal a spot' by arriving at an empty pylon before the outside player.

Constraint 1 = Introduce connections. Players must connect through verbals (using hands to point) or non-verbals (using name of person they want to exchange with).

Constraint 2 = Coach says 'scramble.' Upon hearing this, players have 10 seconds to find a new group and start playing again. This is good to use in environments where you want to break the ice and get players learning each others names.

Constraint 3 = Add a basketball. Players still have to exchange with the added stress of dribbling. Can constrain this further by introducing weak hand only, cross-over or behind the back on every change of direction etc.



[Watch the video!](#)





Location:
Bologna, Italy



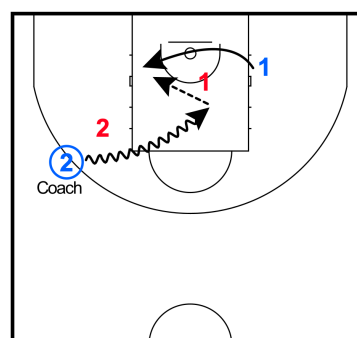
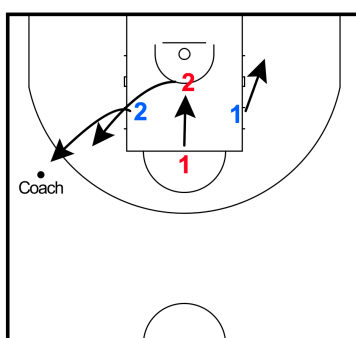
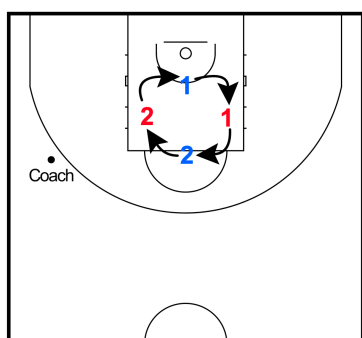
Good For:
Spacing Concepts, Finding a Window,
Converting a 2-on-1



Ages:
U14+



This is a good advantage SSG for encouraging players to keep the dominoes falling and obtaining a great shot. This encourages the key 'mid-dominoes' concept of not allowing 1 defender to guard 2.



"FIND A WINDOW"

Rather than use the word 'get to a spot', the post player simply has to find their window to receive the ball as penetration happens. This is a lot less rigid and gives more flexibility. With a middle drive the wheel under is used, but here they could find their window early (on same side if defender helps early) or late (on other side of the rim if defender helps late).

EXPLANATION AND CONSTRAINTS

The teams face each other in the circle with the players wheeling in either a clockwise or anti-clockwise direction. The coach decides at anytime to connect with the player closest to them in the wheel (use their name or look with eyes), cuing the player to sprint and receive the ball from the coach's hands. One defender must sprint up to the coach and hi-5 the coach's inside hand. The other off-ball offensive team-mate gets to the weakside dunker ready to 'find a window' on the drive, while their defender is stunting to try and disrupt the 2-on-1. The goal of offense is to try and score using the temporary 2-on-1, before the second defender can recover after hi-5ing the coach.

Constraint 1 = Communication is vital here, otherwise defense won't succeed. They must connect by determining who is going to the ball and who is guarding the low post. Ensure the players use some form of succinct verbiage (e.g. "ball") to get this done or they lose one point.

Constraint 2 = Change the start to something more unpredictable. Players can space anywhere as opposed to the weakside dunker.

Constraint 3 = Apply the concepts of task simplification if too challenging. Use the same start but remove a defender and practice this 2-on-1 if there is too much challenge. This gives the ball handler a little bit more time and space to make the pass decision, in addition to making it easier for the off-ball player to find their window.



[Watch the video!](#)





Location:

Kaunas, Lithuania



Good For:

Dribbling, Change of Speed, Dynamic
1-on-1 Concepts

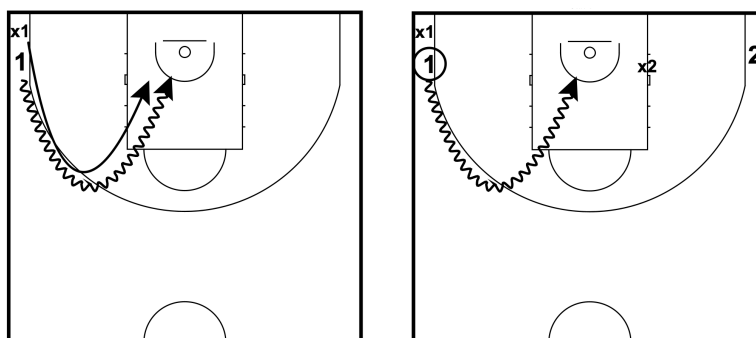


Ages:

U10 - U16



Around the Arc is a great game for encouraging deception, while ensuring that players will always approach the rim for their finish at a slightly different angle.



EXPLANATION AND CONSTRAINTS

Start off giving the lead player both basketballs, with the trail player standing behind them. They will do a two ball dribble out of the corner, "around the arc" but being sure not to step inside. As soon as they leave the ball in their outside hand 'floating in the air,' they will explode to the rim with the ball in their inside hand. The player behind will grab the ball, and attempt to score before the player in front of them. The lead player can choose to go any-time around the arc. 1pt if the lead player scores first, 2 pts if the trail player scores.

Constraint 1 = Players now have a ball each. The player in front plays with their speeds, stopping, starting, skipping etc. As soon as they go, it's a race to score first. If the lead player manages to brake suddenly and get the trail player to collide into them while going 'around the arc,' they get an extra point (trail player must stay within an arm's distance).

Constraint 2 = One basketball. Live 1-on-1 as soon as the offense enters the 3PT line. They can also fake the drive - if they get the defender to go inside the 3PT arc before they have entered, they receive a bonus point.

Constraint 3 = A coach now acts as a facilitator for the 1-on-1. If the coach connects, the lead player must throw a one hand pass off the dribble to the coach. They can then immediately front cut to receive the ball back, or curl around the coach if they place the ball on their hip.

Constraint 4 = 2-on-2 with an additional pair in either the post, corner or wing (change the spots). Exactly the same start, but now playing 2-on-2. If the coach connects for the pass, they can connect from further away to challenge the passer to make a one hand skip across the split lane. This would now mean the off-ball teammate is on the same side of the ball when it is driven, providing an opportunity to either push, pull or hold the corner.



[Watch the video!](#)





Location:
Malaga, Spain



Good For:
Warm-Up, Fun



Ages:
Mini-Basket - U14



Thanks to Mike MacKay for this great idea. This is a really fun warm-up for younger players.



EXPLANATION AND CONSTRAINTS

You can do this with bibs if you have no scarves. Players start by moving randomly around the court - ask them to experiment with different movements (e.g. skips, shuffles, back-peddalling etc). They must connect with their eyes with a teammate, using their name (if they don't know the name learn it on the spot!). After connecting, throws the scarf in the air and catch the other person's before it hits the floor. You can make this a competition by saying first to 6 connections and exchanges, first to 6 connections but touch a sideline or baseline after each exchange etc.

Constraint 1 = Add a ball. Encourage players to connect in a 'leadership voice.' This means confident projection and being loud enough to hear.

Constraint 2 = Find a partner, and stand a few metres apart. Drop and catch the scarves at the same time, accelerating forward and, catching the partner's scarf before it hits the floor.

Constraint 3 = Give one player both scarves. Player has to sprint and catch the first one, while the partner throws the other scarf behind their head as soon as the first one is caught. This means the player has to quickly decelerate and change direction to catch the second scarf.



[Watch the video!](#)





Location:
Trieste, Italy



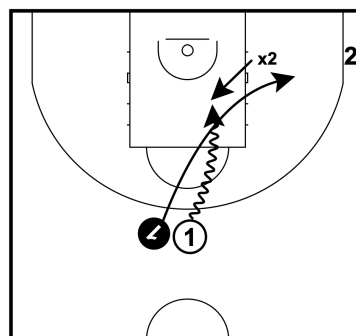
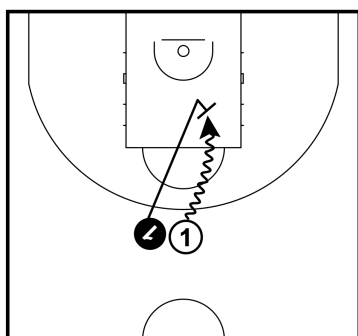
Good For:
Leveraging advantage, ball control,
defensive recovery



Ages:
U12+



This is a useful advantage start because it provides the added benefit of the defense working to recover back to a neutral position.



EXPLANATION AND CONSTRAINTS

Start this 1-on-1 to build the mindset of the defender needing to recover without help. The offensive player faces the basket, while the defender is on their side parallel to the half line. Starting 2-on-2 immediately may make the defender too reliant on the fact that their teammate can help and they don't attempt the cut-off as aggressively. For the offensive player, the intention is trying to keep their advantage.

Constraint 1 = Play 2-on-2 with a weakside pair. They can start on the low post, wing or corner. This is a good opportunity for the off-ball offensive player to 'find the window.'

Constraint 2 = Play 3-on-3, adding in a transition trip. This is a good way to start teaching the "In" and "Out" responsibilities with 1 guarding 2. Offensively, emphasise how to exploit this with ideas from the "Two Side 3-on-2" SSG.

Constraint 3 = Add in extra offensive and defense players in different positions (e.g. low post, wing, corner etc). The offensive player now has to make the shot or pass decision.



[Watch the video!](#)





Location:
Riga, Latvia

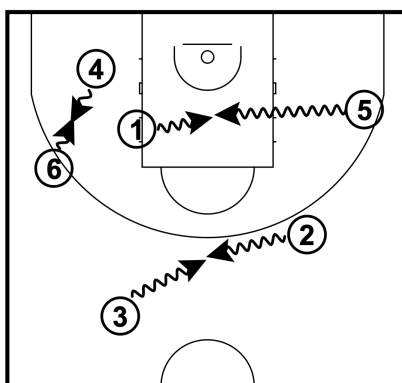


Good For:
Learning names, ball control, breaking the ice



Ages:
U12 and U14

This is a fun warm-up game with lots of options to change constraints. Dr Sergio Lara-Bercial (ICoachKids) is the originator of this game.



EXPLANATION AND CONSTRAINTS

Players dribble around the half-court area. They have to connect with the eyes, saying the name of the team-mate, followed by a hi-five. If they don't know their name, they say "and your name is?" After connecting, touch a sideline, base-line or half-line. The first player to connect with 4 different teammates and touch 4 different lines wins.

Constraint 1 = Only dribble with the weak-hand. As well as using the name, players have to say either what they ate for breakfast, their hometown or their favourite team (etc). After one person finishes first, play it again and players have to use the same connections but memorise what their team-mate said in the previous game!

Constraint 2 = Coach moves around the floor, players have to keep vision of them. If coach puts right hand up, dribble with the right to make connections. Left hand = dribble with the left. If coach does a follow-through = shoot a lay-up. If coach mixes two hands together, play dribble knock-out.

Constraint 3 = Change the hi-5 sequence (e.g a hi-5 then a low-5) or develop your own secret handshake with each player.

Constraint 4 = After connecting, have to score a lay-up before the next connection. No normal lay-ups allowed, be as creative as possible. Have one coach playing defense in each basket.

Constraint 5 = If doing as a warm-up, get the players to do different movements for each round, making every movement as different as possible.



[Watch the video!](#)





Location:
Paris, France



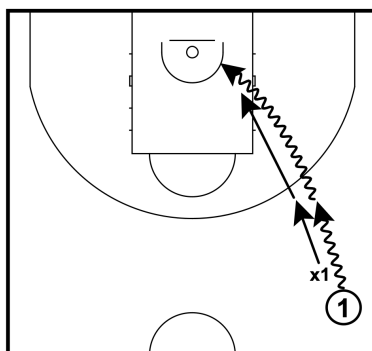
Good For:
Change of speed, converting an advantage, finishing vs pressure



Ages:
U12+



This is a fun game for playing 1-on-1 utilising change of speeds



EXPLANATION AND CONSTRAINTS

The defender is attempting to be deceptive, because whenever they touch the offensive player's hips, it starts the 1-on-1. Therefore the defender fakes and tries to be deceptive to confuse the offense. When the defender finally touches a hip (either side), offense must drive through the open window while the defender tries to recover.

Constraint 1 = To change the advantage to make it appropriate for your group of players, change the defender's touch. Touching the shoulder reduces the advantage, while touching the back increases the advantage.

Constraint 2 = Do this laterally with the offensive player moving sideways. When the defender touches a hip, they either have to explode in a straight line, or use a change of direction to attack.

Constraint 3 = Load in some extra players to add the shot or pass decision.



[Watch the video!](#)





Location:
Riga, Latvia



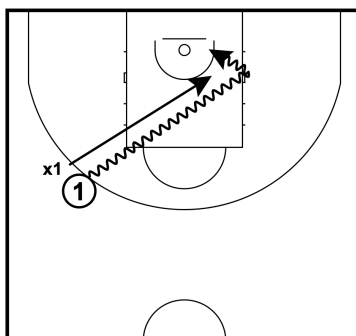
Good For:
Finishing vs a primary defender



Ages:
U13+



Guided defense is a great way to develop repetition without repetition. Guided are simply constraints that can be placed on the defense based on how they guard the offensive player.



EXPLANATION AND CONSTRAINTS

With guided defense, the defender's job is to provide varied decisions for the offense. They can still contest and attempt to steal/ block the ball. The offense starts dribbling the ball, and can explode any-time between their second and fifth dribble. In this example, the offensive players were actually over-constrained for a short amount of time to finish like Rajon Rondo with his textbook fake. However, guided defense could still be used to create some repetition without repetition within this.

A = Defender trail after offensive player lands on two

B = Complete a cut-off by forcing the offensive player to counter after landing

C = Remain 'neutral' by attempting to stay square in front of the player after they land.

Constraint 1 = Stay for x3 reps, with the defender giving a different decision every time (e.g. C, A, B, OR straight line, A, C etc). Any combination is fine so long as there is variation!

Constraint 2 = Live but with an advantage start. Defense stands next to offense, with offense holding the ball on the defender's hips. As soon as they move the ball off the hips, it's live 1-on-1.



[Watch the video!](#)





Location:
Athens, Greece



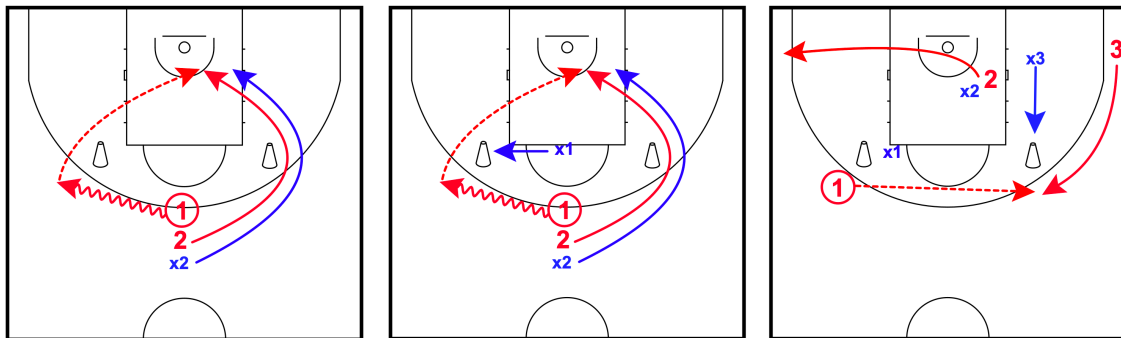
Good For:
Lateral dribbles, making a lead pass,
finishing off a cut



Ages:
U12+



This is a SSG idea from Francesco Nanni. It is excellent for developing the ability to pass off the dribble to cutters



EXPLANATION AND CONSTRAINTS

Starting with 2-on-1, the ball handler cues the start by using a skate dribble to get in-front of a pylon. As soon as they start to go, the offensive player cuts around the opposite pylon. The defender must trail - they cannot move inside of the pylon. The passer will then send the pass off the dribble, leading the cutter on for the score.

Constraint 1 = Experiment with constraints. E.g. cutter can only finish on weakside of basket (ensures pass comes earlier). Can also change the distance or locations of the pylons to make the pass harder / change the angle.

Constraint 2 = 2-on-2 (middle diagram). Add a defender in a drop at the FT line. As soon as the ball handler moves, it's live. If the defense cheats towards the middle to prevent the pass to the cutter, the ball handler drives the baseline looking to score or pass.

Constraint 3 = Replace the pylons for players. Offense and defense have to learn how to navigate around the screens. This includes the defender 'getting skinny' to try and navigate around the screen.

Constraint 4 = If the cutter is not open coming off the screen, they finish their cut and wait in the smile for the screener to come and set a pindown. The screener cannot score, but acts as a facilitator within the 3-on-2.

Constraint 5 = 3-on-3 (last diagram). The cutter needs to get in and out of space as quickly as possible, so they sprint the exit if they don't receive the pass on the cut. As the cut happens, 3 lifts out of the corner looking for the throwback pass. Live 3-on-3 from here.



[Watch the video!](#)





Location:
Valencia, Spain



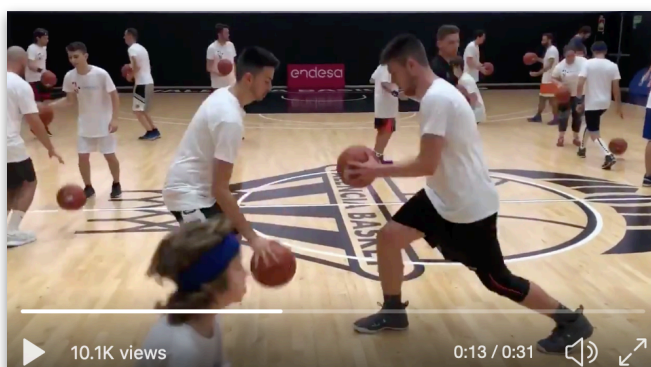
Good For:
Warm-Up Game



Ages:
Mini-Basket - U14



A twist on the classic game, adapted for basketball! This is always really popular amongst Mini-Basket age kids.



EXPLANATION AND CONSTRAINTS

Start by playing with the feet. Players have a ball each and find a partner. They hop on the spot, timing their dribble with the bounce. On the 1-2-3, they reveal whether they are a rock, paper or scissors:



Rock = feet together

Paper = feet apart



Scissors = split lunge



Players play best of three with their partner. They then have to scan the floor quickly, finding a new partner as soon as they finish their game.

Constraint 1 = If both players get the same on the reveal (e.g. two rocks), it's a race for the first player to tag the other player's knee to get the point. Can do lots of different things for this - e.g. first player to knock the other player's ball, first to score a lay-up etc.

Constraint 2 = Use the same start to flow into a tag game. Ensure the players are all on the rim line, facing each other a metre apart. They play rock, paper, scissors, and whoever wins tries to tag the loser. The loser has to 'get to home' which is the sideline closest to them, before being tagged.

Constraint 3 = Use the same start for 1-on-1. Move to a basket, and have a third player with no basketball showing hungry hands. As soon as the players play, the loser has to quickly pass their pass to the third player, before sprinting back on defense. The winner keeps their ball and tries to score first.



[Watch the video!](#)





Location:
Kartepe, Turkey



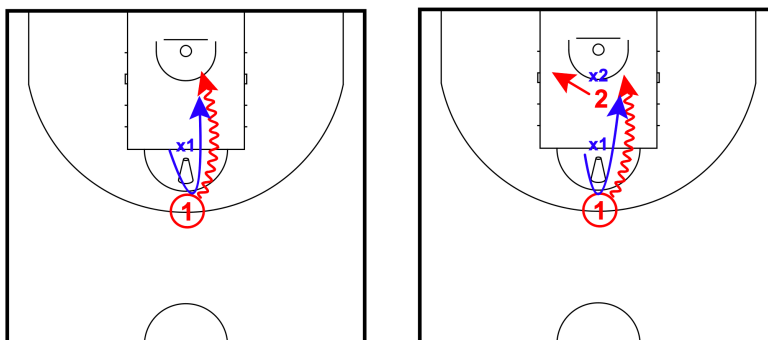
Good For:
Using advantage,
attacking in opposites



Ages:
Mini-Basket to U14



For older players, reduce the advantage by placing two pylons in-front of each other, with the defender having to chase over the closest one.



EXPLANATION AND CONSTRAINTS

Place cones in random spots both in the mid-range and on the perimeter; including off-spots too. The offense starts in a ready position behind the cone, with the defender facing them. The defender cues the start by chasing over the left or right of the cone. The offense has to read this by attacking and passing the pylon on the opposite side. The defender has to complete a chase before contesting the shot. Keep playing until a stop or score (defender doesn't have to clear the ball).

Constraint 1 = Offensive player starts with the dribble, making it slightly harder.

Constraint 2 = Offensive player does random combo dribbles on the spot. They move as soon as the defender goes. Can also introduce constraints such as can't score in the key etc (this tends to encourage step-backs, side-steps etc).

Constraint 3 = The 'cat' can be deceptive and fake. They can suddenly change direction to try and catch the mouse off-guard!

Constraint 4 = Introduce a passer. As soon as the offensive player shows hungry hands, the passer sends the ball. This cues the defender to pick a side. The receiver can use a 'stampede' by starting to move towards the ball already, as opposed to waiting for the ball to come to them, increasing their advantage.

Constraint 5 = If the defender doesn't move, the receiver shoots the ball as soon as their feet hit the floor.

Constraint 6 = Add in extra offensive and defense players in different positions (e.g. front of smile, block, corner, wing). If placing a player on the smile (right diagram) they have to find a window in a manner that "clears the run-way for take-off". This gives space for the driver in-case the help defender x2 stays with their check.



[Watch the video!](#)





Location:
Mallorca, Spain



Good For:
Finishing against help,
Reading 2-on-1's

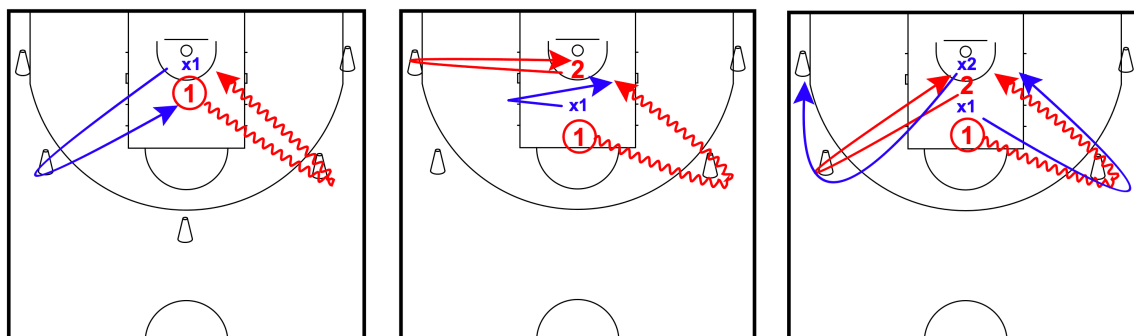


Ages:
U12+



This is an effective 1-on-1 format for developing the ability to finish over and around a help defender. You can use the same starting format to easily play 2-on-1 or 2-on-2.

5



EXPLANATION AND CONSTRAINTS

Offense starts in front of the smile, with the defender right under the basket (left diagram). The offensive player speed dribbles around a pylon, with a dribble max of 5 dribbles to get around a cone and score from their starting position. The defender has to sprint around the opposite cone on the opposite side. If the offense chooses the top cone, the defender chases over the top.

Constraint 1 = Offense starts with dribble combos. They can use a change of direction once when inside the key to change direction and choose a new pylon. The defender must also adjust.

Constraint 2 = 2-on-1 (middle diagram). The 2-on-1 will always come from a different angle. The defender only has to get one foot outside the key before contesting. The other teammate can sprint around the low or high pylon on the opposite side (just ensure they don't only run around the corner spot).

Constraint 3 = 2-on-2 (right diagram). The first defender sprints around whatever pylon offense goes around. The second offensive player must sprint around the opposite pylon on the weakside, while the defender only needs to get their foot next to it. Decrease the advantage by saying that the help defender only has to get one foot outside the paint.



[Watch the video!](#)





SHADOW 1-ON-1



Location:
Copenhagen, Denmark



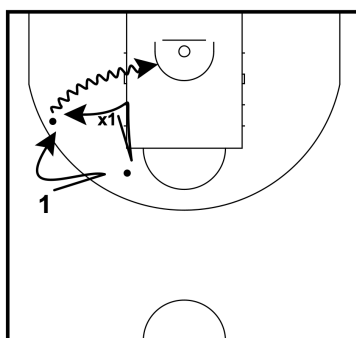
Good For:
Change of Speed,
Being Deceptive



Ages:
U12+



A 1-on-1 game that is excellent for developing deception in players of all ages.



EXPLANATION AND CONSTRAINTS

This 1-on-1 format naturally encourages deceptiveness. The small dots on the diagram represent two stationary basketballs - it works better if you can use chairs to place the balls on. The offensive player starts, and has to try and 'shake their shadow' (the defender). The defender has to try and stay in-front of the offense, because the offense can pick the ball up off either chair to score. The one rule is that when the offense retreats to the starting spot, the defender must also move back to theirs.

Constraint 1 = As soon as the action is over and the offense scores or the defender gets a stop, leave the ball (a waiting player will come and secure it for safety). The players have to race to the ball on the other chair and play 1-on-1. This encourages players to quickly sprint into the next action.

Constraint 2 = Repeat the same set-up on the other side of the floor. The offense starts going as soon as the player on the other side picks up the ball. If the player manages to pick the ball-up early while the other pair are still playing, finish around them. Otherwise if the player picks the ball up while the other pair have finished, it becomes an instant 2-on-2. This encourages the offense to have vision and survey the floor while they are focussed on their action.

Constraint 3 = 2-on-1. Replace the chairs for players. As soon as the offensive player receives the ball through a hand-off, the player that hands-off is allowed to screen (but can't score). Encourage 3's - if the defender goes under, screener is encouraged to twist.

Constraint 4 = To take this down a different route, remove the balls and place an inbounder on the closest side. The offensive player starts in the corner or top, and uses the players as a screen to try and get open.

Constraint 5 = 2-on-2. As soon as the offensive player chooses a player to receive the ball from, they work together as a pair. The other screener that is not used becomes the second defender. Offense have to try and score before the second defender can get back into the play.



[Watch the video!](#)





Location:
Santiago, Spain



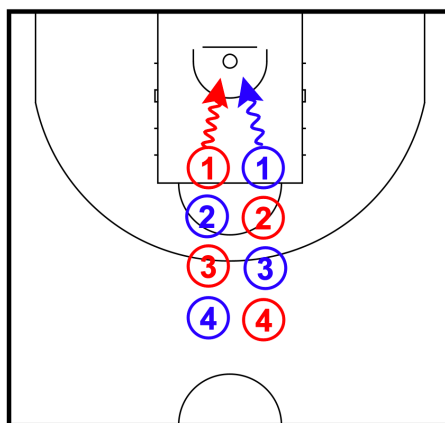
Good For:
Finishes, Warm-Up



Ages:
All



This idea comes from a Basketball Australia Clinic. This is a fun activity for warm-ups.



EXPLANATION AND CONSTRAINTS

Players start close to the basket, balancing on their outside foot (right foot if on the right side, left on the left). Players have a ball each, with the competition being first to score. As soon as players bump the ball, the race is on. Start with no dribbles - this means players have to take a cross-step to take their lay-up.

Constraint 1 = Players have one dribble, but have to shoot landing outside the key.

Constraint 2 = Players now balance on their inside foot and only have one step to score.

Constraint 3 = Move players back to the FT line. They now have to do a quick ball handling sequence (e.g. waist/ankle wrap) before the finish.

Constraint 4 = Players are allowed to block or knock each other's ball away! Introduce a points system, with the player that scores first earning a point.

Constraint 5 = Have to finish on the other side of the backboard. This means players will 'X' and must get in front first to get the first shot attempt. Can also change the start sequence - e.g. 3 scissor through the legs before going or place a constraint on the shot (e.g. inside hand only results in a lay-back finish).



[Watch the video!](#)





Location:

Bologna, Italy
Riga, Latvia



Good For:

Passing to a Cutter, Finishing off a Cut,
Shot or Pass Decisions

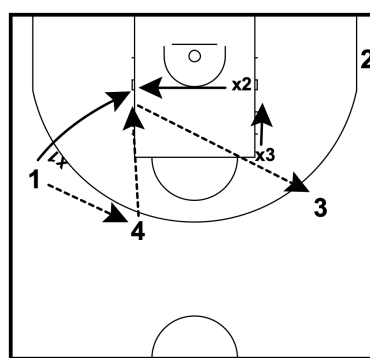
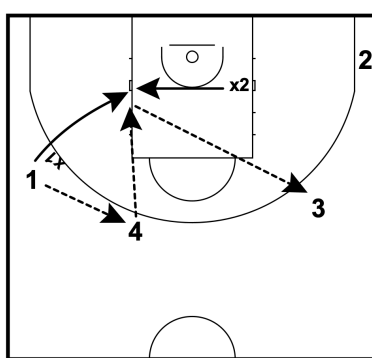
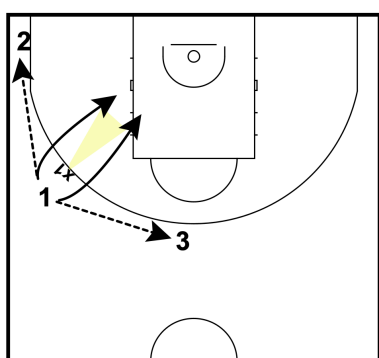


Ages:

U14+



This is great for encouraging players to go 'through the branches' (straight through the defender's arms) vs 'going around the branches', which gives time for a defender to recover. Many youth players take the long route instead of the short route when basket cutting.



EXPLANATION AND CONSTRAINTS

The defender stands with their heels on the 3PT line facing the basket, with the offensive player holding the ball. The player connects by looking to the left or right. After sending the pass, they will immediately cut and receive the ball back for a score. The defender can only move once they see the offensive player passing their shoulder - eyes must be towards the rim instead of looking behind to see the offensive player.

Constraint 1 = Offensive player starts dribbling, sending the pass to 2 or 3 off the dribble. Even better if they can do combo dribbles (e.g. scissor through the legs) before the pass!

Constraint 2 = 3-on-2+1. Use a player that only facilitates. If x2 leaves to help early and take away the pass back to 1, 4 reads the situation and skip passes to 2 or swings to 3. If 1 catches on the cut, they have to shoot or pass based on whether x2 stays or go's, while x1 peels back. This can also be a good situation to encourage the two side concepts from the "Two Side 3v2" SSG shown earlier on.

Constraint 3 = Add an extra player to make it 3-on-3. If the low "In" player helps, the "Out" player (x3) must "take two." This is a good time to ghost cut!



[BLIND START 1V1](#)

[BLIND START 3V2](#)