



SHOOTING

SHOOTING CONCEPTS

Shooting is a key basketball skill that is learned through repetition of proper techniques. Not all players become great shooters, but with good technique and plenty of practice, any player can develop into a good shooter.

When practicing shooting, it is important to be aware of individual differences among players. Not all players have the strength or coordination necessary to use the same technique, but two players can use slightly different styles and still adhere to the basic principles of shooting. Habits form early in young players—it is essential that proper technique is ingrained in athletes at an early age. The concept here is for young shooters to learn the basic shooting principles and positive action necessary to allow them to develop their shooting ability and become better shooters as they mature.

Practicing can be much more productive if players incorporate the following basic principles:

- All players should begin shooting practice close to the basket
- Aim at the hoop—have a “quiet eye” on the target
- Select an appropriate angle of release where the elbow finishes at around forehead level
- Use all joints that can be used—knees, elbows, and wrist
- Incorporate hip extension to add power
- Start from a balanced position—triple threat position
- Practice, practice, practice

SHOOTING GRIP

Hold the ball in the hand with the palm up. Quickly move the ball back and forth from side to side. If the ball is not held on the finger pads, the player will lose control. This is excellent for younger players who often grip the ball incorrectly. It cannot be emphasized enough the number of players who start with a poor grip. So many other problems are magnified by this basic mistake.

RELEASE

The release is the key to good shooting. To develop a consistent release, the shooter lies on his/her back and shoots the ball up in the air with one hand. The player needs to lock the elbow and wave goodbye to the ball. The ball should return to the same hand. It is important to note that the ball should come off the middle and index finger last. This will ensure the ball stays on line providing these fingers point at the middle of the basket at the finish.

Another way to work on the consistency of a player’s release is to have the player seated on the ground with the shooting arm forming the perfect 90° angle. It is like they are holding a tray. The parent stands behind the player and gives downward resistance. The player must push up and slightly out. At the very end, the parent releases the hand and the player snaps the wrist like elastic. Have them close their eyes to focus on the feeling.

“B-E-E-E-F” technique (Formation Shooting)

Form shooting is done at a slow pace, concentrating on achieving the perfect form. The movements are exaggerated for emphasis. You can also break it down further by concentrating on a specific body part, i.e., wrist, foot, elbow. The following “B-E-E-E-F” technique will help break down proper shooting form by emphasizing Balance, Eyes, Elbow, Extension, Follow Through.

BALANCE

Player squares up to the basket with toes pointed to hoop, feet shoulder-width apart with knees flexed.

EYES

Eyes should be focused on target (basket), never leaving target during shot.

ELBOW/HAND PLACEMENT

Extend shooting hand directly in front of you and then bend it 90° (making an “L”) upward at the elbow; R-cup your shooting hand so the ball fits in it with the guide hand guiding the ball in position. As the ball is raised up to the release point, guide-hand fingers are pointed to the ceiling.

EXTENSION

Feet push off floor, knees straighten, hips raise, elbow lifts to shoulder height, pushing ball up and out and releasing shot through fingertips, getting rotation on the ball.

FOLLOW THROUGH

Release the ball off the fingers and push fingers through the ball while bringing the wrist through to put some backspin on the ball. Follow through with the palm facing down, **directing** the ball into the basket.

SHOOTING DRILLS

ONE-HAND SHOT

Player starts in a basic shooting stance with basketball in shooting hand; the ball should be off shoulder height. Player performs a shot using shooting hand only with good extension and high release. Shooter must keep eyes on the hoop and use legs to get initial power for shot, then flick of the wrist for high accuracy and great form on shot. This drill is used for building strength in shooting arm.

SHOOTING ON BACK

Player starts with basketball in shooting hand only while lying on their back. They attempt to use the same basic shooting principles, only difference is they are laying flat on their back so they have to use their wrist and shoulder to perform the drill. This is used for building strength in shooter’s arm.

WALL SHOOTING

Player starts in a basic shooting stance with basketball in shooting hand, only using a wall to shoot the ball off. This is a drill players can perform if they don't have a basketball hoop and still work on their shooting technique and shot form.

SHOOTING OFF THE CATCH

Player starts 3 feet from hoop, stepping into the shot with left foot first then right foot and shoot. The player must catch the ball in a ready basic shooting stance and extend to a jump shot. They must then continue the drill again by stepping back to the starting point and perform the same footwork and shot. If player is left handed, the foot technique is opposite.

SHOOT OFF THE PASS

Player receives the basketball at the predetermined point and makes one right-hand dribble in the forward direction to the right. Using the correct footwork, player steps into the shot with shooting hand. The player then continues the drill by back-pedaling to the starting point but this time receives the ball and goes left side with the one left-hand dribble and shoots with shooting hand.

MIKAN

Player stands directly under front of basket with ball. Player takes cross-over step to right and makes hook lay-up with right hand, using the backboard. Player gets ball as it comes through net and quickly steps to the right side for a hook lay-up with left hand. Continue to alternate sides making five shots from each side.