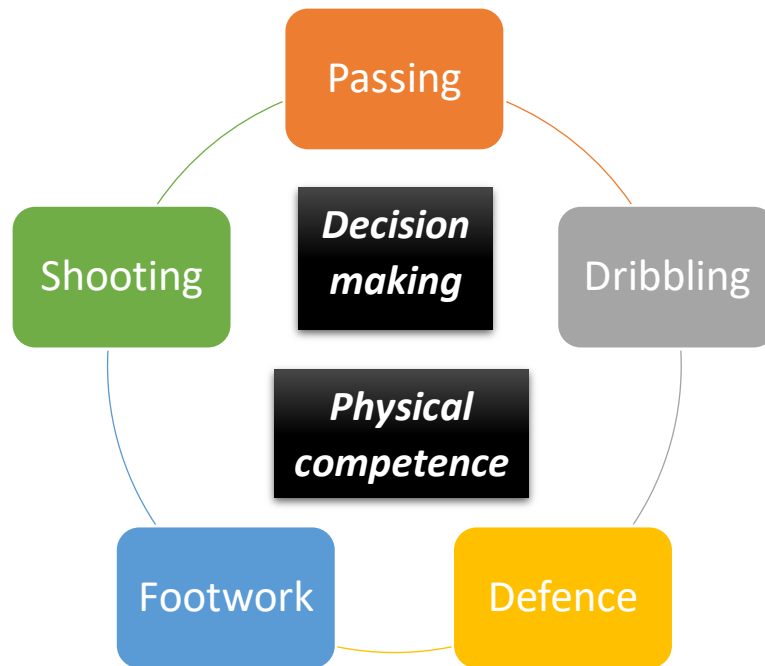


Topic: Developing individual skills

As junior coaches developing our players is our main goal. It is the most important thing we do. In my view, ideal development pathway for junior players will be one that will allow them to:

1. Improve their game,
2. Love and enjoy the game,
3. Allow them to play basketball in any level and adjust to any team system.

Basketball individual skills can be separated into a few categories:



Coach Peter Lonegran, Basketball Australia Director of High-Performance Coach, call these the 5 greats of basketball - **Dribbling, Shooting, Defence, Passing, and Footwork** (pivot). As shown in the chart, these are the fundamentals every basketball player needs to acquire throughout his junior basketball years. We should try to address all those fundamentals in every session, especially in U10 and U12 level. In U14 and above, we should have drills that combine number of elements and teach more advanced forms.

To complete a junior player's development, we would need to address two more elements:

1. **Decision making** – Which skill or response a player chooses to use to get the desired result. For example, which finish a player uses around the basket in different situations.
2. **Physical competence** – The physical abilities that are needed in the game of basketball. These could be defined as general fitness, ability to perform specific movements, level of strength etc.

Sometimes you will meet players that have great skills. However, as soon they are being put in a game situation, they lose confidence, or just not able to handle the pressure. Another factor is players that are not fit and get tired quickly, and therefore not able to perform.

To address this issue, as soon as players have the basic ability to perform the skill, you should incorporate in your session decision making and game situation drills that will allow the players to adjust their skills and explore the use of those skills in game pace, and later with defence.

Individual skills:

Passing:

1. **Reaction passes** – In pairs, one player delivers a chest pass, the second deliver a bounce pass.
 - **Level 1** – One player delivers a chest pass, the second deliver a bounce pass.
 - **Level 2** – Swap the type of passes on call.
 - **Level 3** – Choose a leader. The leader decides what type of pass to do, the other player will need to respond with the opposite.
 - **Level 4** – Do the same on the move with or without layups.
2. **Passing tag** – Players need to tag a runner (touch the player with the ball) as a team.
 - Decide if players can dribble or not.
3. **10 passes** – Two teams. The goal is to make 10 passes in a row. Once a team gets 10 passes, one of the players shoots a free-throw. Each made free-throw is a point.

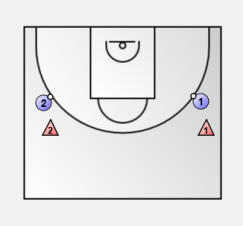
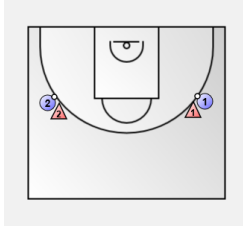
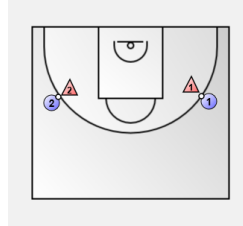
Dribbling:

1. **Dribble tag** - Half of the team with a ball:
 - Dribblers tag the runners.
 - Runners tag the dribblers.
2. **Dribble shooting tag** – players without a ball now play defence on either half court.
 - Players with a ball, try to score.
 - If a player makes a shot, they keep the ball and try to score to the other side.
 - If a shot is missed:
 - i. Offensive rebound – try to score again or decide to go to other side.
 - ii. Defensive rebound – try to score to the other side.
 - If a player loses the ball – stay on defence, defender takes the ball and try to score.
3. **Dribble shooting tag with passers** – 3 groups: offence, defence, and passers.
 - Same game as before.
 - Players with the ball can pass to the players outside and receive the ball back.
 - Passers stay out of the game. You will have to rotate the groups.

Shooting:

1. **Contested shooting and layups:**
 - Choose any ball handling drill.
 - Have players compete perform the drill and make a shot.
 - You can have any ball handling drill and start from any position on the court.

2. 1x1 chase drills:

Level 1:	Level 2:	Level 3:
 <p>Defender starts behind the offense, chasing the player that is going to the lay-up.</p>	 <p>Defender starts next to the offense, with their back to the basket.</p>	 <p>Defender starts between the offense and the basket, but their back to the player with the ball.</p>

Footwork:

Pivot and Lay up series.

Defence – will be taught in the 1x1 section.

Topic: 1x1 game

1x1 is the heart and soul of basketball. In every team system, players will be required to eventually use their individual skills in a 1x1 situation. Some systems, like dribble drive, will require higher level of 1x1 skills and will depend on players' ability to create advantage.

Also, we have many players that eventually play basketball in other places – state teams, interstate, etc. Team offensive systems usually take time to learn, and different coaches have different views on offense. But individual defensive concepts never change and therefore players can immediately be a part of the defensive game.

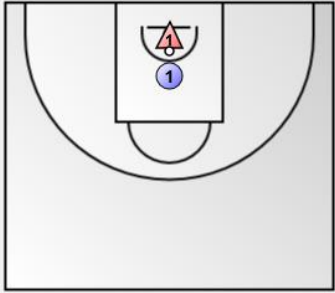
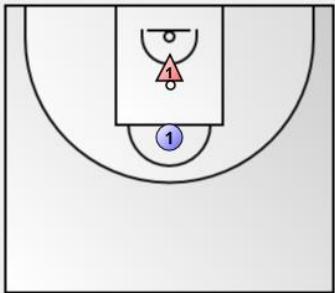
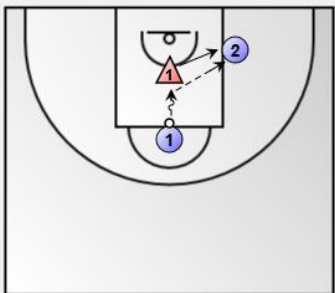
I use 1x1 drills to mainly teach individual defensive skills. In basketball, defensive skills are extremely hard to perform physically. Therefore, these skills are hard to teach from a technical point of view in the young ages because of lack of physical development. However, if we focus on the outcomes wanted from the defence in the different situations, the players can figure out their way to achieve those results. Later, when players are more physically developed (girls at about 13-15 years old, boys at about 14-16 years old) we can design specific drills to develop aspects of physical competence that are relevant for defence.

- A few more points to consider:
 1. Some players that are not fast, quick, or strong, can still be good defenders, if they are taught what is needed and then allowed to explore and find their own way to achieve those results.
 2. Improving individual defence will then force the offense to be more creative, skilful, and basically play better to beat the defence. It will also help players to cope with good defensive teams in games.
 3. Players that are not good scorers or not good on offense can still be great defenders and rebounders and contribute to the team game in that aspect.

4. Every 1x1 drill has an offensive and defensive aspect. You can choose which one you want to focus on.

1x1 drills:

1x1 in the key:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The defender hands the ball to the offense. • The offense has one dribble to make a shot. <p>Offensive concepts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect the ball – use pivot foot. • Choose your finish. <p>Defensive concepts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevent the shot. • Position – Always between the player and the basket, chest towards the player. • Hands up – Force a tough shot over your hands, do not block, and be ready to rebound. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The defender hands the ball to the offense. • The offense has maximum two dribbles to make a shot. • Later you can <p>Offensive concepts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect the ball – use pivot foot, use fake to release the pressure. • Attack the basket – use change of direction/speed. • Choose your finish. <p>Defensive concepts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevent the shot. • Position – Always between the player and the basket, chest towards the player. • Hands up – Force a tough shot over your hands, do not block, and be ready to rebound. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Player 1 attack the basket with one dribble. • Defensive player step to the dribble and player 1 passes to player 2. • Defender step in to defend the ball. <p>Offensive concepts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timing of the pass. • Type of pass – Pass on the move, preferably one hand pass. <p>Defensive concepts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevent the shot. • Position – Always between the player and the basket, chest towards the player. • Hands up – Force a tough shot over your hands, do not block, and be ready to rebound. • Help and Recover. 	

1x1 change of speed:

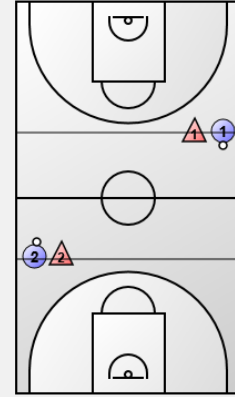
- Offense starts close to the sideline.
- Defence starts next to the offense, chest (midline) in front of the shoulder.
- Offense can only do maximum 3 dribbles at the time, after there needs to be change of speed (slow/stop) or change of speed (backwards/forwards).
- Once offense go in the three-point line, play live.

Offensive concepts:

- Ball handling.
- Change of speed/direction.
- Create advantage.

Defensive concepts:

- Position – Keep up and respond to the offense. Quick reactions.
- Hands up – Force a tough shot over your hands, do not block, and be ready to rebound.
- Chase, recover and reposition



1x1 contain:

Step 1:

- Offense dribble and play in the confined space.
- Defence position nose/chest in front of the ball.

Step 2:

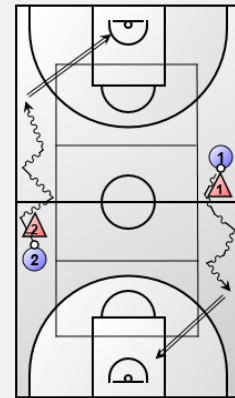
- Play live.

Offensive concepts:

- Ball handling - protect the ball, face forward.
- Create space.
- Change of speed/direction.
- Create advantage.

Defensive concepts:

- Position - Always be in front of the ball.
- Contain the ball.
- Hands' position – one hand above the ball, other hand protecting the pass.
- Chase, recover and reposition



1x1 off the ball:

- Offensive player trying to get the ball and score.
- Defence puts pressure on the player, preventing him/her from getting the ball.

Offensive concepts:

- Change of speed/direction.
- Create advantage, move in and out.
- Signal for a pass.
- Curl/backdoor.

Defensive concepts:

- Position – between the player and the basket.
- Always see your player.
- Chase, recover and reposition

