

# Topic: Using advantage

In order to teach how to use advantage we need to teach a few basic terms:

1. Spacing
2. Passing lanes
3. Driving lanes

All too often players stumble and struggle to make decisions in fast break, transition, or broken play situations. The above terms should help and guide players in reading plays and make decisions based on what they see.

Not many players have born good decision making and good instincts when it comes to a team offense. Often, I found that players force shots, have bad timing on passes, or generally don't take opportunities because they simply don't know what they are looking for and what to base their decision about.

By laying out and explaining those guidelines, we can help players make better decisions, teach them to exploit weaknesses in the defence, and how to work together, trust each other to do the "right thing" at the right time and eliminate frustration around the unknown and the chaos on the basketball court.

## Spacing:

The term 'spacing' in basketball refers to how far away members of the offense are from one another on the court.

The late Detroit Pistons and Dream Team mentor Chuck Daly is credited with the oft-used quote "Offence is spacing, spacing is offence." Perhaps now more than ever, the ability to create, maintain and attack space is crucial to effective team offence.

In junior level, especially U10 and U12 as well as division 2 teams, players make unsuccessful plays because of poor spacing, that mainly result in turnovers, forced shots or layups.

## Passing/Driving lanes

- Driving lane – An open path between a player to the basket.
- Passing lane – A clear and open path between the player with the ball and player without the ball.

In this case, Player 1 has a clear driving lane to the basket, and also a clear passing lane to player 2.

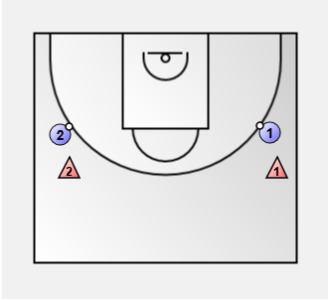
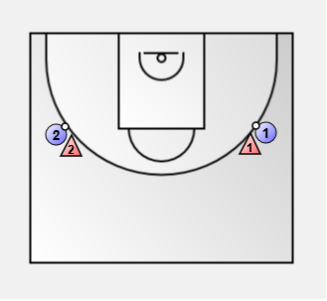
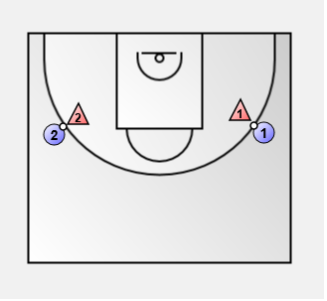




## 1x1 advantage:

The purpose of the following **1x1 chase drills** assist the players to recognise the principal of **Driving lane**, and how it might look like in different situations. Later, depending on their skill level, we would like the players to be able to create advantage by beating their defender.

- These are also good drills to teach making lay-ups under pressure.

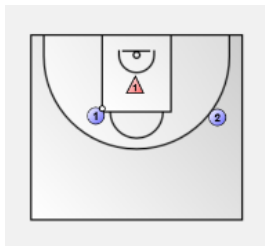
Level 1:	Level 2:	Level 3:
		
<p>Defender starts behind the offense, chasing the player that is going to the lay-up.</p>	<p>Defender starts next to the offense, with their back to the basket.</p>	<p>Defender starts between the offense and the basket, but their back to the player with the ball.</p>

- You can change the positions on the court.

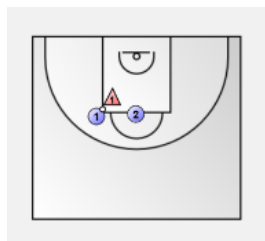
## 2x1

Here we will introduce the other two principles:

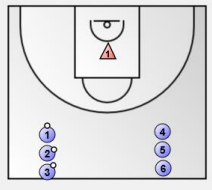
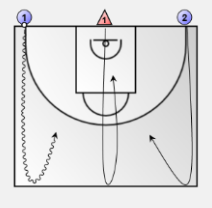
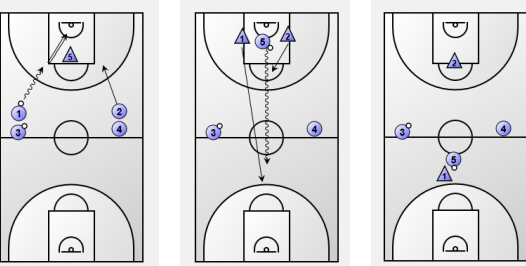
1. **Passing lane:** An effective Passing lane will be a clear path between the player with the ball and the other players, that will allow the offense to create an efficient play, for example: in the case of 2x1, we want a pass to create a good shot and a quick score.
2. **Spacing:**  
In the case of 2x1, or any other advantage, offensive players should be spaced (picture below).



The simple reason is to make the defence run between players rather than offense standing close and then defenders can cover more than one player quickly (picture below).



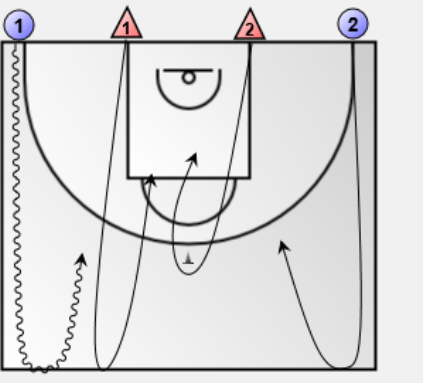
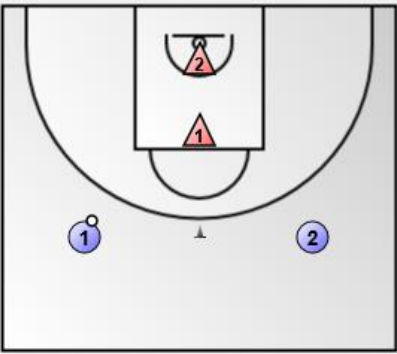


Half court 2x1	Baseline 2x1	2x1 → 1x1		
 <p>This is the simplest form of 2x1. You can have players starting from closer or further away from the basket. The further they are, the more they will be depended on dribbling.</p>	 <p>This drill will have more variations and will simulate a fast break. It will vary according to the skill level and decision making of the players – offense and defence.</p>	 <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Start from a half court 2x1 and play to a score or a stop.</li> <li>2. Player that was shooting (made or missed) or the one that turned over the ball, goes back to defence, and the first defender will play offence to the other basket.</li> <li>3. Play 1x1 to a score or a stop.</li> </ol>		

## 2x1+1

These drills will emphasis more the **Driving lane** and **Passing lane** principles.

Because we have now a second (delayed) defender joining, the offense will have to use their advantage quicker. Here you can also talk about **communication** between players as a big factor of success.

Baseline half court 2x1+1	Continues half court 2x1+1
 <p>This is similar to the baseline 2x1 drill, but with two defenders. One defender will run around the cone. Second defender will run to the half court.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You might have to change the distances according to the players' skill level.</li> </ul>	 <p>In this game we are playing 2x2.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The rules are that on the start of every play a defender will need to touch the cone, before joining the defence.</li> <li>In case of change of position (rebound or a steal): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Offense will need to get the ball behind the 3-point line.</li> <li>One of the defenders will need to touch the cone.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

# 3x2

In 3x2, players will have to follow the principles: **driving lane**, **passing lane**, and **spacing**.

Inexperienced players will struggle with the combination between passing lane and spacing, as there are now two players off the ball that are depended on each other's decisions.

To assist players, one of my rules of spacing is that there must be at least one player without a ball outside the 3-point line. This way we always have a passing option with good spacing.

- The only rule I would put in for the defence is that the ball must be always covered. This is particularly important for our defensive principles – Man to Man as well as Zone.

Half court 3x2	Baseline 3x2	3x2 → 2x1
		<p data-bbox="836 902 1386 963">In this drill we are starting with a 3x2 situation that transitions to 2x1 full court.</p>

# 3x2+1

Like the 2x1+1 drill, this is a higher level of using advantage. Players will have to follow the three principles: **driving lane**, **passing lane**, and **spacing**.

- As the players progress in the drill, you should start emphasising the use of communication as a mean to use advantage on offense, and to overcome disadvantage on defence.

3x2 + 1 full court	Continuous 3x2 + 1 half court



# Transition Game:

"Transition" refers to the process of changing from defence to offense (transition offense), or offense to defence (transition defence). Your transition offense can be a slow, walk-it-up-floor transition, an aggressive fast break transition, or something in between. You have to decide which is best for your team and personnel. We will focus on **Transition Offense**.

## Transition offense:

The most important rule to ingrain in your players' minds is to always maintain control. Rushed transition will most likely result in turnovers, unnecessary contested lay-ups, bad passes, and so on. Players have to learn to recognize when to push the break, and when to slow down. Some teams like to push the break every opportunity they can (after a steal, defensive rebound, an opponent's score, etc). Some teams only push it up after a steal or a score, or only certain times of the game.

I personally encouraged my players to recognise, read the situation and make a decision according to the advantage principles we discussed before.

- Driving lane open → GO FOR IT!
- Passing lane open for a quick score → PASS IT!
- No advantage → SLOW IT! CREATE IT!

In my transition offense we use 5 lanes. We would like to get to specific spots so we can predict where players are going to be, and flow into our offense smoothly. This also allow the offense to use advantage, mainly caused by bad transition defence, more efficiently.

		<p>All options start the same way:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Player 5 rebounds and pass to 1.</li> <li>• Player 1 (ball handler) opens to receive the ball. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Back to the sideline or swoop.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Player 2 (wing/runner) sprint up the court.</li> <li>• Players should get organised and do the same action back.</li> </ul>
		<p>Option 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Kick ahead to a lay-up.</b></li> </ul>





		<p>Option 2:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Pass to the wing,</li> <li>2. Ball handler cuts for a lay-up</li> </ol>
		<p>Option 3:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Pass to the wing,</li> <li>4. Ball handler cuts to the corner,</li> <li>5. Pass to 5 for a lay-up (Trailer).</li> </ol>
<p>1)</p>	<p>2)</p>	<p>Option 4:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Pass to the wing, Ball handler cuts to the corner,</li> <li>2. Pass to 5 on the elbow. Pass to 1 – corner shot.</li> <li>3. Pass to 1 – easy lay-up.</li> </ol>
<p>3)</p>		

Once you have gone through these options, you should bring more options, **add defenders** (start from an advantage situation – 3x1 / 3x2), or **add elements according to your team system**:

1. Pick & Roll
2. Hand-off
3. Opposite screens
4. Flare screens