



### Teaching Progression for Team Offense

Offensive skills: dribbling, passing, catching, shooting and rebounding.

- Present each skill.
- Practice it.
- Challenge higher skill: do the skill; do the skill more times (make five baskets); do the skill at higher speed; do a minimum of the skill in a limited time (make five baskets in 30 seconds).

Practice individually against defense: Attack to score.

Use the Mini-Basketball game of 1-on-1 to isolate basic offense against defense.

### Practice team skills first without defense and then against defense

- Give-and-go is one of the most important team skills of recognizing and working with your teammate where the ultimate goal is scoring. An athlete passes the ball to a teammate (who has moved to get open) and cuts to the basket for a return pass.

### Identify your athletes' abilities

On a lower ability level team, athletes may never acquire all five of the offensive skills. It is important to identify what they can do and what they can do well, in order to build the best offense.

### Place athletes in positions that best fit their abilities

- Utilize the strength of each athlete. For example, if an athlete can pass but not catch, he or she could be the point guard.
- Work around your best athlete. As in the mainstream, each team has an athlete or two who is higher in ability and game understanding than others. By utilizing their strengths, the coach gives his/her team the best chance for success.
- Assist each athlete in improving those skills. Provide time during practice for repetition and reinforcement of those individual skills.
- Help each athlete play a role, know and understand that role, and feel important to the team by playing it.
- Provide opportunities for all athletes to participate meaningfully. Give each athlete time on the court during practice and during competition. An opponent can help to elevate everyone's skill. Athletes rise to the occasion. As opponents and situations become increasingly challenging, athletes' abilities improve to meet those challenges. Athletes' abilities improve with each practice and with each game.

### Create a simple offense

The structure will give the team the best chance to play to its strengths and succeed. Simple structure will help, not complicate, athletes' learning the game and playing together. It provides them stability and some certainty of what to do and where to move. The following is a simple offense called "Go Jerry." It has been successfully played by lower ability athletes/teams.

- Team is the offense on the half court without defense. Each of the athletes is identified by a number. Their placement on the court is based on following abilities:
  - #1: best all-around athlete who is right-handed
  - #2: guard/average dribbler
  - #3: good driver/rebounder
  - #4: inside shooter/rebounder
  - #5: good passer
- All athletes have Set-Up spots. #4 and #5 take positions one behind the other on the block on the left side of the court. #3 is in the same corner about 3m away.
- When athlete #1 reaches mid court, this is the visual cue for everyone to break (Cut) to their new positions. The verbal cue "Go Jerry" (who is the #4 athlete) is also given at this time.

## Special Olympics Basketball Coaching Guide

### Teaching Basketball Skills



- #2, #3, #4 and #5 move to their new positions, while #1 dribbles toward the top and right side of the key creating a passing angle.
- The cutting provides movement into open areas. It also gives the point guard a better passing angle. The offense then has an advantage over the defense.
- #1 passes to #5.
- #5 has four options:
  - turn and shoot,
  - pass to #1, who has cut to basket for return pass or rebound,
  - pass to #4 or #3 for inside shots, or
  - pass to #2.
- There will always be at least three rebounders (#3, #4, and #1), who are the most active in getting the ball.
- Once the offense is learned, it is important for the coach to assist athletes in performing it under more game-like conditions. One way to do this is to move athletes to the division or mid court line. The coach cues “Offense” and “Set Up” as the ball is picked up by the point guard. The athletes run to their spots and then run the offense on the “Go Jerry” cue.
- Athletes begin at their defensive end. The rebounder passes or hands off the ball to #1, who dribbles the ball up the court. The coach cues “Set Up” with the athletes running to their spots and then running the offense on the “Go Jerry” cue.
- Progress from offense to defense to offense. This now is the most game-like situation. The team is prompted in recognizing the transition from offense (when they get the ball) to defense (when their opponent has the ball) to offense (when they get the ball again).

#### Coaching Tips

- The following physical cues are suggested to assist the athletes’ learning the offense. Tape X’s on the floor for the athlete Set-Up cued spots. Tape different colored X’s on the floor for their end-of-cut cued positions. As the offense is learned, gradually remove the physical cues; use already existing lines on the floor.
- Verbalize the cues; reinforce good cuts. Your athletes will be able to repeat the offense.
- Reinforce not only cutting to the proper spots, but also throwing bounce passes and finishing the play. It is important for the receivers and the rebounders to Go Get the Ball whenever a pass is thrown or a shot is taken. As the ball leaves the shooter’s hand, everyone yells “Rebound,” turns to the basket and then goes for the ball. The coach must reinforce “Go Get the Ball.”
- Success is built on a team’s ability to score. Moving to the ball reinforces assertive play and gives a team more opportunities to score.

Provide a controlled scrimmage where offense goes against defense and the play is full court. Reinforce appropriate play, good teamwork and good results (effort and outcome).

#### Coaching Tips

- A coach can help athletes further develop self-esteem and team spirit by getting their input.
- Have them talk about what they are learning.
- Watch basketball games together.
- Discuss rules.
- Discuss what went right and what went wrong in your last game or practice, plus what they can do to improve. The interaction makes them feel valued and gives the coach important feedback.
- Offense, scoring and development can occur because the coach provides the necessary opportunities.
- Concepts are made concrete while athletes’ abilities are utilized. Even though offense is measured by the number of points scored, coaches can recognize and praise the contributions of all athletes.
- Reinforcing each athlete’s specific strengths enhances everyone’s experience. The most positive environment can be created for all and will yield the greatest gains.