



Special Olympics Basketball Coaching Guide

Planning a Basketball Training & Competition Season

Eight- Week Training Program

The following eight-week training plans have been used successfully with athletes of varying abilities with all training sessions. These are offered as samples and not as required training programs. In a best-case scenario, you will have many more than eight weeks to train, and many more opportunities for competition, than are listed here.

Week One – Practice 1

1. Warm up with footwork activities and a ball, then stretch.
2. Conduct Basketball Skills Assessment Tests (BSAT's) – Dribble, Rebound, Perimeter Shooting.
3. Cool down and team talk.

Week One – Practice 2

1. Warm up with footwork activities and a ball, then stretch.
2. Conduct Basketball Home Training Program – emphasis on dribbling theme.
3. Play Dribble Tag; also introduce the concept of offense and defense.
4. Cool down and team talk.

Week Two – Practice 1

1. Warm up with footwork activities and a ball, then stretch.
2. Divide into four equal groups and conduct four skill stations (10 minutes each) – dribbling, passing/catching, shooting and going after the ball.
3. Conduct a controlled scrimmage.
4. Cool down and team talk.

Week Two – Practice 2

1. Warm up with footwork activities and a ball, then stretch.
2. Divide into four equal groups and conduct four skill stations (10 minutes each) – dribbling, passing/catching (introduce throw-in), shooting and going after the ball.
3. Teach a simple offense on the half court; scrimmage.
4. Cool down and team talk.

Week Three – Practice 1

1. Warm up with footwork activities and a ball, then stretch.
2. Divide into four equal groups and conduct four skill stations (10 minutes each) – dribbling, passing/catching, shooting with Rebound Ball and one-on-one defense.
3. Review a simple offense on the half court; teach a simple defense; scrimmage.
4. Cool down and team talk.

Week Three – Practice 2

1. Warm up with footwork activities and a ball, then stretch.
2. Teach simple pre-game warm-up routine.
3. Divide into four equal groups and conduct four skill stations (5-7 minutes each) – dribbling, passing/catching, shooting with Rebound Ball, and one-on-one and then two-on-one defender.
4. Review a simple offense and defense on the half court and scrimmage (introduce 3-second lane).
5. Cool down and team talk.

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Week Four – Practice 1

1. Warm up with footwork activities and a ball, then stretch.
2. Use pre-game warm-up.
3. Divide into four equal groups and conduct four skill stations (5-6 minutes each) – dribbling, passing/catching, shooting with Rebound Ball and two-on-one defender.
4. Review a simple offense and defense on the half court and scrimmage (introduce changing baskets at halftime).
5. Cool down and team talk.

Week Four – Practice 2

1. Warm up with footwork activities and a ball, then stretch.
2. Use pre-game warm-up.
3. Divide into four equal groups and conduct four skill stations (5 minutes each) – dribbling, passing/catching, shooting with Rebound Ball, and two-on-one and then two-on-two defense.
4. Review a simple offense and defense on the half court, and scrimmage (teach jump ball and practice changing baskets at halftime).
5. Cool down and team talk.

Week Five – Practice 1

1. Use pre-game warm-up and then stretch.
2. Divide into four equal groups and conduct four skill stations (4-5 minutes each) – dribbling, passing/catching, free throw with rebounding and two-on-two.
3. Review the offense and defense on the half court; play a shortened game (set up a situation with ball out of bounds under the basket).
4. Cool down and team talk.

Week Five – Practice 2 (Play a game against a local team.)

Week Six – Practice 1

1. Use footwork activities, run through the pre-game warm-up, and then stretch.
2. Divide into four equal groups and conduct four skill stations (4 minutes each) – dribbling, passing/catching, free throw with rebound ball, and two-on-two and then three-on-two.
3. Review the offense and defense on the half court; play a shortened game (emphasize playing positions and changing ends at halftime; review situation with ball out of bounds under basket; set up situation with ball out of bounds at the sideline).
4. Cool down and team talk.

Week Six – Practice 2

1. Use footwork activities, run through pre-game warm-up, and then stretch.
2. Divide into four equal groups and conduct four skill stations (4 minutes each) – dribbling, passing/catching, free throw with rebound ball, and three-on-two and then three-on-three.
3. Review the offense and defense on the half court; play a shortened game (emphasize playing positions and changing ends at halftime; review situation with ball out of bounds under basket and at sideline).
4. Cool down and team talk.



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Week Seven – Practice 1

1. Use footwork activities, run through pre-game warm-up, and then stretch.
2. Divide into four equal groups and conduct four skill stations (3-4 minutes each) – dribbling, passing/catching, free throw with rebound ball, and three-on-two and then three-on-three.
3. Review the offense and defense on the half court; play shortened game (emphasize playing positions and changing ends at halftime; review situation with ball out of bounds under basket and at sideline).
4. Cool down and team talk.

Week Seven – Practice 2 (Play a game against a local team.)

Week Eight – Practice 1

1. Use footwork activities, pre-game warm-up, and then stretch.
2. Divide into four equal groups and conduct four skill stations (3-4 minutes each) – dribbling, passing/catching, free throw with rebound ball, and three-on-two and then three-on-three.
3. Prepare for Area Tournament; set up any situations and scrimmage.
4. Cool down and team talk.

Week Eight – Practice 2 (Compete in the Area Tournament.)

1. Travel; arrive; register team and Individual Skills athletes; review schedule.
2. Eat snack or meal an hour and a half before competing (or after competing when necessary).
3. Warm up and stretch 20 minutes before competing.
4. Compete.
5. Receive awards.
6. Cool down.
7. Return home.

After the Eight-Week Season

1. Continue training athletes going beyond Local or Area competition.
2. Invite athletes, parents, group home staff, facility host, sponsors, etc.
3. Have an end-of-the-season party to celebrate and recognize athletes' achievements and assistant coaches' help.
4. Thank the facility host.
5. Thank assistant coaches.
6. Thank other volunteers.
7. Send a follow-up news story and photos to media.
8. Evaluate the season.
9. Develop the season plan for next year.



Sample Practice Schedules

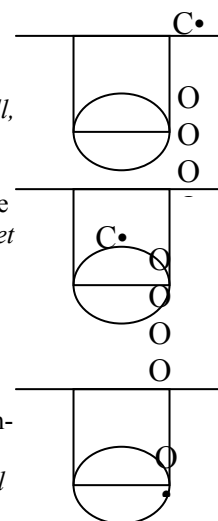
Basketball Week-1 Practices

Suggest Two Practices Minimum (repeating and reinforcing concepts for both)

20 minutes Warm up en masse in waves of four, starting at one end of court: Jogging (forward, backward; defensive sliding)
 Dribbling, passing and moving to ball (in pairs and moving sideline to sideline). *First person dribbles to opposite sideline, turns toward ball-hand side, pulls ball in new direction, stops halfway, bounce passes to partner who moves to catch ball before continuing dribble and repeating what partner did.*
 Stretching: Calves, hamstrings, quads, groin and arms

25 minutes Skill Work (one or two coaches per basketball; stations 5 minutes each; jogging to next station; athletes are ability-grouped to match strength and size for safety)

- Rebounding: Go to the Ball (from rolling ball straight and then to each side, bouncing ball straight and then to each side, tossing ball straight and then to each side). *Set up station with coach and line of athletes; athletes go to the ball, catch ball, bounce pass back to coach and go to end of line.*
- Shooting: Pick up ball in proper shooting position (shooting hand on top; guide hand at side); then shoot short shots. *Set up station with coach in front of basket and to side of line of athletes along lane line; athletes use backboard for shot. If time permits, player takes ball out of coach’s hand in proper shooting position.*
- Two-on-the-coach (Two offenders work on passing, moving, rebounding and scoring against one coach-defender). *This is the beginning of offense.* Three-on-three: Work on formation of defense in triangle (step to ball; belly to ball). *Focus is on defense, reacting and moving to stop ball; start by passing the ball with defense stepping to ball and belly facing ball.*



35 minutes Team Concept for Five-on-five Teams

- Offense and two or three defense with no opponent – work on “Go” offense.
- Then scrimmage (play); coaches may need to “shadow” and assist low-ability athletes to positions on court.

Individual Skills Work with ISC Athletes: 10m Dribble; Target Pass; Spot Shot

- Conduct ISC and score; record efforts.
- Then play low-organized fun games using skills, i.e., Beat the Clock: see how many shots from positions 1 and 2 can be made in 30 seconds.

Conditioning Activities: Jump-the-Lines; Sit-ups; Push-ups

10 minutes Bring team together for cool-down stretching and reward efforts: winner’s circle with each athlete receiving accolades; coach notes one positive per athlete.



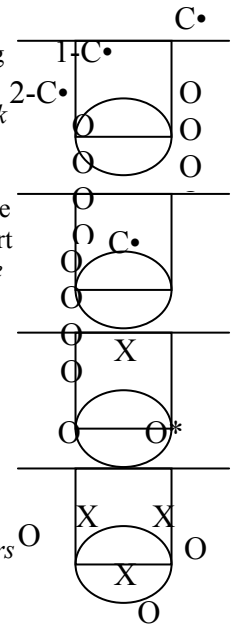
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Basketball Week-2 Practices

Suggest Two Practices Minimum (repeating and reinforcing concepts for both)

- 20 minutes Warm-up: Jogging (forward then backward; side to side [defensive sliding])
 Dribbling, passing and moving to ball (in pairs and moving sideline to sideline)
 Stretching: Calves, hamstrings, quads, groin and arms.
- 25 minutes Skill Work (one or two coaches per basketball; stations 5 minutes each; jogging to next station; athletes are ability-grouped to match strength and size for safety)

- Rebounding: Go to the Ball (from rolling ball, bouncing, tossing; add shooting with athletes still in line, but coach shooting from side). *Set up station with coach and line of athletes; athletes go to the ball, catch ball, bounce pass back to coach and go to end of line.*
- Shooting: Pick up ball in proper shooting position (shooting hand on top; guide hand at side); progress to receive pass, shoot and follow for rebound; then short shots. *Set up station with coach under basket and in line of athletes along lane line.*
- Two-on-the-coach: Two offenders work on passing, moving, rebounding and scoring against one coach-defender who offers increasing levels of pressure.
- Three-on-three: Continue work on defense (step to ball; belly to ball / add Close the Door on drive). *Focus is on defense, reacting and moving to stop ball; start by passing the ball with defense stepping to ball and belly facing ball, then dribble to gap with defense "closing the door" with closest defenders coming together and not allowing offender to go through the gap.*



- 35 minutes Team Concept for Five-on-five Teams
- Offense and two-on-three defense with no opponent – continue work on “Go” offense. Run to set-up positions from half court; proceed into offense.
 - Then scrimmage in 5- to 7-minute blocks of time.
 - Add jump ball practice to start game, add sideline play at offensive end: *team goes to “set up” position with best passer or point guard taking ball out of bounds.*

Individual Skills Work with ISC Athletes: 10m Dribble; Target Pass; Spot Shot

- Conduct ISC and score; record efforts.
- Then play low-organized fun games using skills (two-player Keep Away from Coach).

Conditioning Activities: Jump-the-Lines; Sit-ups; Push-ups

- 10 minutes Bring team together for cool-down stretching and reward efforts: winner’s circle with each athlete receiving accolades; coach notes one positive per athlete.

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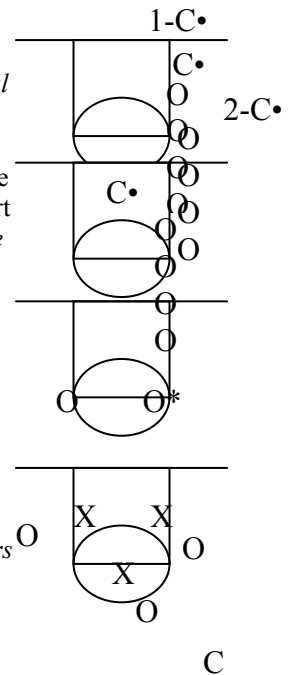
Basketball Week-3 Practices

Suggest Two Practices Minimum (repeating and reinforcing concepts for both)

20 minutes Warm-up: Jogging (forward then backward; side to side [defensive sliding])
 Dribbling, passing, and moving to ball (in pairs and moving sideline to sideline)
 Add playing Dribble Tag for 5 minutes: *Divide athletes by ability, putting groups with each coach; depending on level of athlete, put two athletes in jumpball circle; each has a ball; each must start dribbling ball and prevent opponent from stealing ball while dribbling his/her own ball.*
 Stretching: Calves, hamstrings, quads, groin and arms

25 minutes Skill Work (one or two coaches per basketball; stations 5 minutes each; jogging to next station; athletes are ability-grouped to match strength and size for safety)

- Rebounding: Go to the Ball from rolling ball, bouncing, tossing, and shooting. *Coach shoots from corner as last week; add pressure with coach trying to steal ball and providing physical contact with athlete.*
- Shooting: Pick up ball in proper shooting position (shooting hand on top; guide hand at side); progress to receive pass, shoot and follow for rebound; then short shots: *Set up station with coach under basket and in line of athletes along lane line.*
- Two-on-the-coach: Two offenders work on passing, moving, rebounding and scoring against one coach-defender who offers increasing levels of pressure; add that athletes must make at least two passes before shooting.
- Three-on-three: Continue work on defense (step to ball; belly to ball / add Close the Door on drive). *Focus is on defense, reacting and moving to stop ball; start by passing the ball with defense stepping to ball and belly facing ball, then dribble to gap with defense "closing the door" with closest defenders coming together and not allowing offender to go through the gap; add – when defense gets ball, pass back to coach with teams switching from offense to defense.*



35 minutes Team Concept for Five-on-five Teams

- Review "Go" offense and two-three defense with no opponent; run to set-up positions from half court and then from defense; proceed into offense.
- Scrimmage in 5- to 7-minute blocks of time.
- Continue jump ball and sideline out-of-bounds play on other side of basket; add lining up and shooting free throw.

Individual Skills Work with ISC Athletes: 10m Dribble; Target Pass; Spot Shot;

- Conduct ISC and score; record efforts.
- Then play low-organized fun games using skills (two-on-two coach-athlete teams).

10 minutes Bring team together for cool-down stretching and reward efforts; go over plans for competition this week (uniforms; travel logistics; parent and coach responsibilities)



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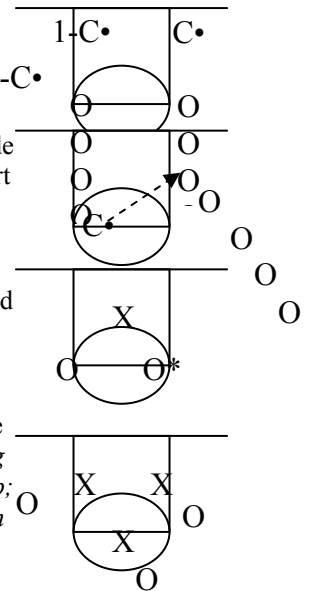
Basketball Week-4 Practices

Suggest Two Practices Minimum (repeating and reinforcing concepts for both)

20 minutes Warm-up: Jogging (forward then backward; side to side [defensive sliding])
 Dribbling, passing and moving to ball (in pairs and moving sideline to sideline)
 Playing Dribble Tag for 6 minutes: *Divide athletes into four groups – two groups lower ability, two groups higher ability; lower teams play in one half court; higher teams play in other half court; play in 3-minute time blocks; winning teams have more players left on the court at end of time.*
 Stretching: Calves, hamstrings, quads, groin and arms

25 minutes Skill Work (one or two coaches per basketball; stations 5 minutes each; jogging to next station; athletes are ability-grouped to match strength and size for safety)

- Rebounding: Go to the Ball from rolling ball, bouncing, tossing and shooting. Coach shoots from corner as last week; add more pressure with coach and/or athlete behind trying to steal ball and providing physical contact with athlete.
- Shooting: Receive ball in proper shooting position (shooting hand on top; guide hand at side); progress to receive pass, shoot and follow for rebound; then short shots: *Set up station with coach now at foul line, with pass coming at different angle.*
- Three-on-the-coach: Three offenders work on passing, moving, rebounding and scoring against one coach-defender who offers increasing levels of pressure; add that athletes must make at least two passes before shooting.
- Three-on-three: Continue focus on defense (step to ball; belly to ball; close the door on drive). *Focus is on defense, reacting and moving to stop ball; stepping to ball and belly facing ball, then “closing the door” when offender drives gap; continue when defense gets ball, pass back to coach with teams switching from offense to defense.*



35 minutes Team Concept for Five-on-five Teams

- Continue review of “Go” offense and two-three defense with no opponent; run to positions from half court and then from defense; proceed into offense.
- Scrimmage in 5- to 7-minute blocks of time.
- Continue jump ball, sideline out-of-bounds play and shooting free throw; add end-line out-of-bounds play to score under own basket.

Individual Skills Work with ISC Athletes: 10m Dribble; Target Pass; Spot Shot

- Conduct ISC and score; record efforts.
- Then play low-organized fun games using skills (two-on-two coach-athlete teams).

10 minutes Bring team together for cool-down stretching and reward efforts; go over plans for competition this week (uniforms; travel logistics; parent and coach responsibilities).

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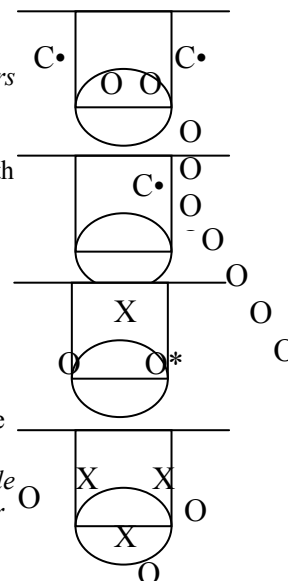
Basketball Week-5 Practices

Suggest Two Practices Minimum (repeating and reinforcing concepts for both)

20 minutes Warm-up: Jogging (forward then backward; side to side [defensive sliding])
 Dribbling, passing and moving to ball (in pairs and moving sideline to sideline)
 Playing Dribble Tag for 6 minutes: *Divide athletes into four groups -- two groups lower ability, two groups higher ability; lower teams play in one half court; higher teams play in other half court; play in 3-minute time blocks; winning teams have more players left on the court at end of time.*
 Stretching: Calves, hamstrings, quads, groin and arms

25 minutes Skill Work (one or two coaches per basketball; stations 5 minutes each; jogging to next station; athletes are ability-grouped to match strength and size for safety)

- Rebounding: Go to the Ball from rolling ball, bouncing, tossing and shooting; then play Rebound Ball: *Two players at a time with coach shooting and players trying to grab ball first.*
- Shooting: Receive ball in proper shooting position; shoot without and then with pressure. *Set up station with coach under basket who passes to athlete and comes out to offer hand-up or in-face pressure.*
- Three-on-the-coach plus One: *Three offenders work on passing, moving, rebounding and scoring against one coach-defender and athlete teammate, who offer increasing levels of pressure.*
- Three-on-three: Continue focus on defense (step to ball; belly to ball; close the door on drive). *Focus is on defense, reacting and moving to stop ball; start by passing the ball with defense stepping to ball and belly facing ball, then dribble to gap with defense “closing the door” with closest defenders coming together and not allowing offender to go through the gap; continue when defense gets ball, pass back to coach with teams switching from offense to defense.*



35 minutes Team Concept for Five-on-five Teams

- Continue review of “Go” offense and two-three defense with no opponent. Run to positions from C half court and then from defense; proceed into offense.
- Scrimmage in 5- to 7-minute blocks of time.
- Continue jump ball, sideline out-of-bounds play and shooting free throw; add end-line out-of-bounds play to score under own basket.

Individual Skills Work with ISC Athletes: 10m Dribble; Target Pass; Spot Shot

- Conduct ISC and score; record efforts.
- Then play low-organized fun games using skills (two-on-two athlete teams).

10 minutes Bring team together for cool-down stretching and reward efforts; go over plans for competition this week (uniforms; travel logistics; parent and coach responsibilities).

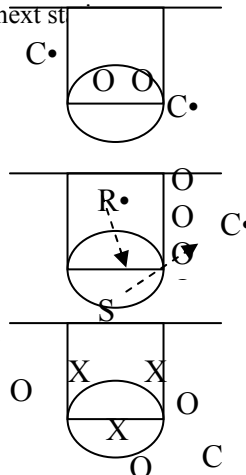


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Basketball Week-6 Practices

Suggest 2 Practices Minimum (repeating and reinforcing concepts for both)

- | | |
|------------|---|
| 25 minutes | Warm-up: Formalize pre-game warm-up (jogging, then partner dribbling and passing)
Stretching: Calves, hamstrings, quads, groin and arms
Lay-up and shooting (two lines: one shooting, the other rebounding)
Add Fast Break drill: Coach throws long; athlete runs, grabs ball first (does not dribble a bouncing ball), then dribbles in for lay-up, gets rebound and passes to coach; repeat coming back down court with new coach throwing ball. |
| 20 minutes | <p>Skill Work (one or two coaches per basketball; stations 5 minutes each; jogging to next station; athletes are ability-grouped to match strength and size for safety)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rebounding: Rebound ball. <i>Two players at a time, with coach shooting and players trying to grab ball first.</i>• Shooting: Rapid Fire Shooting in group of three with two balls. <i>Set up station with rebounder, passer and shooter, with coach near athlete to provide assistance.</i>• Three-on-three: Offense-defense. <i>Defense steps to ball, belly to ball and "closes the door;" offense works with teammates, moves to get open, rebounds and is aware of 3-second lane violation; when defense gets ball, pass back to coach with teams switching from offense to defense.</i> |
| 35 minutes | <p>Team Concept for Five-on-five Teams</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continue review of "Go" offense and two-three defense with no opponent. Run to positions from half court and then from defense; proceed into offense.• Scrimmage in 5- to 7-minute blocks of time.• Continue jump ball, sideline out-of-bounds play from both sides of court, shooting free throw, and end-line out-of-bounds play at both sides of court to score under own basket. |



Individual Skills Work with ISC Athletes: 10m Dribble; Target Pass; Spot Shot

- Conduct ISC and score; record efforts.
 - Then play low-organized fun games using skills (three-on-three teams of one coach and two athletes).
- 10 minutes Bring team together for cool-down stretching and reward efforts; go over plans for competition this week (uniforms; travel logistics; parent and coach responsibilities).

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Basketball Week-7 Practices

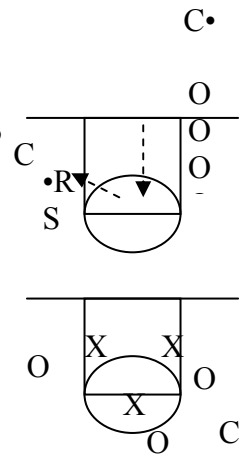
Suggest Two Practices Minimum (repeating and reinforcing concepts for both)

25 minutes Warm-up: Review pre-game warm-up (jogging, then partner dribbling and passing)
 Stretching: Calves, hamstrings, quads, groin and arms
 Lay-up and shooting (two lines: one shooting, the other rebounding)
 Continue Fast Break drill: Coach throws long; athlete runs, grabs ball first (does not dribble a bouncing ball), then dribbles in for lay-up, gets rebound and passes to coach; repeat coming back down court with new coach throwing ball.

20 minutes Skill Work (one or two coaches per basketball; stations 5 minutes each; jogging to next station; athletes are ability-grouped to match strength and size for safety)

- Rebounding: Rebound Ball. *Two players at a time, with coach shooting and players trying to grab ball first.*

- Shooting: Rapid Fire Shooting from opposite side in groups of three with two balls. *Set up station with rebounder, passer and shooter and coach near athletes to provide assistance; rotate clockwise every 30 seconds.*



- 3-on-3: Offense-defense. *Defense steps to ball, belly to ball and “closes the door;” offense works with teammates, moves to get open, rebounds and is aware of 3-second lane violation; when defense gets ball, pass back to coach with teams switching from offense to defense.*

35 minutes Team Concept for Five-on-five Teams

- Continue review of “Go” offense and two-three defense with no opponent. Run to positions from half court and then from defense; proceed into offense.
- Scrimmage in 5- to 7-minute blocks of time.
- Continue jump ball, sideline out-of-bounds play from both sides of court, shooting free throw and end-line out-of-bounds play at both sides of court to score under own basket.

Individual Skills Work with ISC Athletes

- 10m Dribble; Target Pass; Spot Shot
- Conduct ISC and score; record efforts.
- Then play low-organized fun games using skills (three-on-three teams of one coach and two athletes).

10 minutes Bring team together for cool-down stretching and reward efforts; go over plans for competition this week (uniforms; travel logistics; parent and coach responsibilities).



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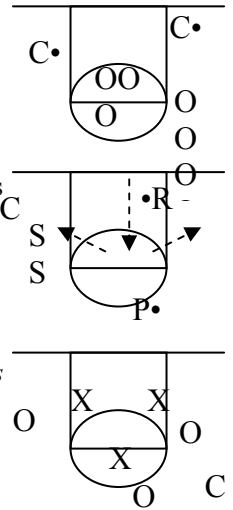
Basketball Week-8 Practices

Suggest Two Practices Minimum (repeating and reinforcing concepts for both)

25 minutes Warm-up: Review pre-game warm-up (jogging, then partner dribbling and passing)
 Stretching: Calves, hamstrings, quads, groin and arms
 Lay-up and shooting (two lines: one shooting, the other rebounding)
 Continue Fast Break drill: Coach throws long; athlete runs, grabs ball first (does not dribble a bouncing ball), then dribbles in for lay-up, gets rebound and passes to coach; repeat coming back down court with new coach throwing ball.

20 minutes Skill Work (one or two coaches per basketball; stations 5 minutes each; jogging to next station; athletes are ability-grouped to match strength and size for safety)

- Rebounding: Rebound Ball. *Three players at a time, with coach shooting and players trying to grab ball first.*
- Shooting: Rapid Fire Shooting from both sides in groups of four with two balls and two shooters. *Set up station with rebounder, passer and shooters; rotate clockwise every 30 seconds.*
- Three-on-three: Offense-defense. *Defense steps to ball, belly to ball and "closes the door;" offense works with teammates, moves to get open, rebounds and is aware of 3-second lane violation; when defense gets ball, pass back to coach with teams switching from offense to defense.*



35 minutes Team Concept for Five-on-five Teams

- Scrimmage in 5- to 7-minute blocks of time.
- Continue jump ball, sideline out-of-bounds play from both sides of court, shooting free throw and end-line out-of-bounds play at both sides of court to score under own basket.

Individual Skills Work with ISC Athletes

- 10m Dribble; Target Pass; Spot Shot
- Conduct ISC and score; record efforts.
- Then play low-organized fun games using skills (three-on-three athlete teams).

10 minutes Bring team together for cool-down stretching and reward efforts; go over plans for culminating competition this week (uniforms; travel logistics; parent and coach responsibilities).