



Fitness Activities



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY



Ages: 3 to 5

Key Idea

Cardiorespiratory Fitness

Description

Gather children into a group. “Everyone hold one hand up and make a fist. Squeeze your fist tightly, then let go. Keep tightening and letting go.” Children continue for 10 counts. “Your heart is a special muscle that tightens and relaxes just like your fist is doing. Your heart is about the size of your fist. Let’s put our fists over our chests. Every time it tightens, or beats, your heart pumps blood all over your body. When you run during basketball, your heart beats faster. The beat slows down when you slow down. Let’s run with high knees for 15 counts while we count together. Stop and feel your heartbeat by putting your hand over your chest.” Model for players. “Running strengthens your heart and lungs and improves your fitness.”

Key Idea

Flexibility

Description

Bring a rubber band and show children or have them visualize one. “This rubber band is like our muscles. When I pull it, it stretches; when I let go, it pulls back to its original shape.” Show the action of a band—stretch it out and back; repeat, using a gentle, slow action. “Your muscles work the same way. When you reach and stretch, your muscles are stretching just like the rubber band. When your body comes back, your muscles go back to their original shape. Everyone slowly reach down to the floor with your arms and then bring your arms back up.” Have children repeat three times. “Your leg muscles need to stretch because we use them a lot in basketball; it makes them more flexible. When muscles are flexible, it keeps them from getting hurt and makes the muscles feel good.”



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Ages: 3 to 5

Key Idea

General Fitness

Description

Gather children into a group. “Everyone jump 10 times. Our muscles help us jump. When you use your muscles a long time without getting too tired, it improves your endurance, which means you can run longer without getting tired. Now run really fast to the free throw line and back.” Wait for them to return. “Running strengthens your heart and lungs. Now touch your toes; try to keep your fingers down there while I count to 10. Stretching makes you flexible, like a rubber band. When we play basketball, our bodies run, jump, and move. It makes our bodies stronger and improves our fitness, which means we can run and play longer and faster. Having good physical fitness is important for basketball and for being healthy. Every practice we’ll talk about fitness in our Fitness Circles.

Key Idea

Healthy Habits

Description

Gather children in a circle. “Do you know that when your body doesn’t eat healthy foods and get enough sleep it moves slowly. Let’s pretend we have no energy to move because we didn’t eat enough healthy foods or get enough sleep.” Begin to move slowly and encourage the children to follow. Move extremely slowly. “Everyone stop. Now I am going to fill your bodies up with healthy foods.” Act out giving them foods. “Pretend we are sleeping. When I say ‘Wake up!’ you can move faster because you have enough energy and enough rest. Wake up and move faster. Stop! What are some other healthy habits you have learned?” Examples: daily exercise, brushing teeth, saying no to drugs, no smoking. “It’s important for everyone to practice healthy habits.”



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Ages: 3 to 5

Key Idea

Healthy Habits

Description

Gather children into a group. “When I say ‘Go!’ we all will run as fast as we can, without bumping into each other, staying in this area.” Mark boundary areas for children. “Ready, go!” Have children run for about a minute or until fatigued. “You had enough energy to run. But when you don’t take care of your body, you can get tired much faster playing basketball. I am going to say a habit and you shout if it is healthy or unhealthy.” Examples: taking drugs, smoking, brushing teeth, drinking plenty of water, getting plenty of sleep/rest, eating a variety of foods. “Can you think of any others? Healthy or unhealthy?”

Key Idea

Muscular Strength and Endurance

Description

Gather children into a circle. “Everyone find your own space so that you don’t bump your neighbor. You’re going to run in your own spot for 30 seconds, then stop. Ready, go!” Time children and verbally let them know the time remaining; stop them at the end of the time. “What part of the body did we just use the most when we ran?” Encourage their responses. “When we play basketball, which part of the body do we use the most?” Wait for their responses. “Muscles in our body help us to move our legs. Playing basketball will help our leg muscles get stronger and grow bigger.”



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Ages: 3 to 5

Key Idea

Muscular Strength and Endurance

Description

Gather children in a group. Have a ball and show children the differences between a dribble with minimal effort and close to maximum effort. “Watch how the ball moves when I dribble it two different times.” Show both dribbles to children. “Let’s make a circle and you show me how you would dribble the ball. Show me a slow dribble; pretend you have a ball. Now step back two big steps and show me a fast dribble as you go across the circle.” Highlight the ball going farther in the second dribble. “You can dribble the ball farther when the muscles in your arms are strong. The muscles in your arms get stronger when you practice dribbling.”

Key Idea

Muscular Strength and Endurance

Description

Have children spread out in a group. “Put your hand on the front of your thigh, then lift your leg up and set it down. Did you feel the muscle get tight when you lifted it up and then relax when you set it down? Try it again five times.” Assist players if needed. “Muscles tighten or contract when you move. You use the thigh muscles or quadriceps when you play basketball. The more you practice, the stronger your thigh or quadriceps muscles will get. That’s called improving your muscular strength.”



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Ages: 3 to 5

Key Idea

Safety and Rules

Description

Gather children into a circle. “What are the easiest ways to get hurt while playing basketball?” Wait for answers (slipping and falling, getting poked in the eye, getting hit in the face with a pass). “What’s the best way to keep from getting hurt? How do we prevent these accidents from happening?” Point out that while no sport is injury free, their risks of being hurt are much reduced when they follow the rules and care about each other.

Key Idea

Training and Conditioning

Description

Gather children into a circle. “What will you do tonight after you eat dinner?” Wait for their responses. “At the end of the day what do you do?” Encourage children to discuss sleep. “Let’s pretend you are at your homes, and you climb into bed to go to sleep. Everyone lie down. Now let’s pretend it’s morning and a new day. You don’t have basketball practice today. Your body needs to move every day to stay in good physical condition for basketball. What should we do to move our bodies?” Wait for their responses. If a child suggests biking, walking, or swimming, and so on, have everyone pretend to do that activity. Then have them “sleep” again, wake up, and choose another physical activity idea.



Dribbling



Time: 10 minutes



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Ages: 3 to 5

Type

Game

Activity

Players will learn that they must be able to dribble to attack the basket (target) to score in basketball. The objective is for players to be able to play a 1 v 1 game of basketball in a predetermined area while following simple start and restart rules.

Activity Description

1 v 1, modified half-court—Explain how to start and restart the game. Each player attempts to dribble and shoot at a target. His or her opponent plays cooperative defense. No traveling or double dribble violations are called.

Questions

Coach: What are you trying to do?

Players: Score a basket (or put the ball into the target).

Coach: What do you have to do to get the ball close to the basket (target)?

Players: Dribble and run.

Variations

To simplify: Use a large-size basket or target and/or place the basket or target low.

To challenge: Increase the height of the basket or target.



Dribbling



Time: 10 minutes



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Ages: 3 to 5

Type

Skill Drill

Activity

1. Introduce, demonstrate, and explain how to dribble without losing control.
2. Have your players practice dribbling without losing control.

Activity Description

Individual—Players should stand apart from each other (allow 15 seconds for them to move to their own space); on a signal, they begin dribbling around the court without losing control. Players stop and catch the ball quickly on a signal. Repeat three times using short intervals (20, 30, and 45 seconds).

Tips

- “Use your finger pads.”
- “Keep your eyes over the ball.”
- “Keep the ball low.”
- “Keep the ball at your side.”

Variations

To simplify: Keep the interval short (10, 12, or 15 seconds).

To challenge: Lengthen the interval.



Dribbling



Time: 10 minutes



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Ages: 3 to 5

Type

Skill Drill

Activity

Individual—Each player practices dribbling. Players can choose the size and weight of the ball they use.

Activity Description

Easier Activities

- Dribbling with one hand.
- Dribbling continuously with left and right hands.
- Striking a ball down and catching it.

More Difficult Activities

- Dribbling and moving with the ball.
- Dribbling in different places around the body while stationary.
- Dribbling continuously while switching hands.
- Dribbling at different heights.

Tips

- “Use your finger pads.”
- “Keep your eyes over the ball.”
- “Keep the ball low.”
- “Keep the ball at your side.”

Variations

To simplify: Let players use a ball of a size and weight that allows them to succeed.

To challenge: Let players use a ball of a size and weight that will challenge them.



Dribbling



Time: 10 minutes



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Ages: 3 to 5

Type

Game

Activity

The objective is for players to be able to handle the ball and dribble under control. Players will attack the basket (target) to score in basketball.

Activity Description

1 v 1, modified half-court game—Each player attempts to dribble and shoot at a basket (or target). His or her opponent plays cooperative defense. Players earn a point if they attempt a shot close to the basket (or target). Designate the area (such as the lane) from which players must shoot to earn a point. Do not call any traveling or double dribble violations.

Questions

Coach: What is the goal of the game?

Players: The goal is to score a basket (put the ball into the target).

Coach: How do you move toward the basket (or target) with the ball?

Players: We move by dribbling and running, by dribbling under control.

Variations

To use as a Game 2: Players earn one point for a shot attempt and one point for dribbling under control. Players determine whether they achieved one or two points; if the ball did not slip out of their hands as they played, it was dribbled under control.



Dribbling



Time: 20 minutes



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Ages: 3 to 5

Type

Skill Drill

Activity

Individual—Each player practices dribbling. Players can choose the size and weight of the ball they use.

Activity Description

Have them try the following activities:

- Dribbling and moving with the ball.
- Dribbling in different places around the body while stationary.
- Dribbling continuously while switching hands.
- Dribbling at different heights.



Passing



Time: 10 minutes



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Ages: 3 to 5

Type

Game

Activity

To keep possession of the ball, focusing on passing and receiving. The objective is for players to be able to pass and receive the basketball. Pairs of players will play as a team.

Activity Description

2 v 1, modified half-court game—Two players become partners and play against one defensive player, then one partner must switch roles with the defensive player. Switch at least twice so all players get to play defense. Limit them to dribbling three times before passing. Do not call any traveling or double dribble violations.

Questions

Coach: What would you do with the ball if you had a teammate?

Players: Pass to him or her.

Coach: What do you have to do to be successful at passing?

Players: Catch the ball and pass the ball right to my partner or teammate.

Variations

To simplify or to increase the challenge, modify the ball (size and weight) and basket (height and size) to meet players' needs.



Passing



Time: 20 minutes



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Ages: 3 to 5

Type

Skill Drill

Activity

1. Introduce, demonstrate, and explain how to pass and receive.
2. Have your players practice passing and receiving.

Activity Description

Individual or pairs—Demonstrate throwing and catching, and then have players practice some of the following throwing and catching activities:

- Tossing to self and catching.
- Catching from a skilled thrower.
- Bouncing a ball to self and catching it.
- Passing or throwing to a target.
- Catching the ball in different places around the body.
- Passing the ball against the wall and catching it.

Tips

For receiving:

- “Target the hands.”
- “Keep your eyes on the ball.”
- “Reach for it.”
- “Pull it in.”

For passing:

- “Put your hands on the sides of the ball, with your thumbs pointing to each other.”
- “Step forward with your preferred foot.”
- “Push the ball forward at chest level, elbows out, and snap it.”

After the pass:

- “Move your thumbs down, backs of your hands facing each other, and move your weight forward.”

Variations

To simplify or to increase the challenge, modify the ball (size and weight) and basket (height and size) to meet players’ needs.



Passing



Time: 10 minutes



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Ages: 3 to 5

Type

Game

Activity

To keep possession of the ball, focusing on dribbling and passing the ball to a partner. The objective is for the players to be able to execute both the chest and bounce pass. Pairs of players will play as a team.

Activity Description

2 v 1, modified half-court game—Two players become partners and play against one defensive player, then one player must switch roles with the defensive player. Switch at least twice so all players get to play defense. Limit players to dribbling three times before passing. Do not call any traveling or double dribble violations.

Questions

Coach: What is the goal of the game?

Players: The goal is to keep the ball to score or to dribble and pass to score.

Coach: What types of passes are there? (This question is to see how much players know about passing.)

Players: Two types of passes are the bounce pass and the chest pass.

Variations

To challenge: Have players pass only and not dribble.

To use as a Game 2: Choose either 2 v 1 or 2 v 2. Rotate players accordingly so they all have a chance to play offense and defense.



Passing



Time: 10 minutes



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Ages: 3 to 5

Type

Skill Drill

Activity

1. Introduce, demonstrate, and explain how to chest pass and bounce pass.
2. Have your players practice chest passes and bounce passes.

Activity Description

Pairs—Players practice passing to each other. After they have passed the ball four times, they change partners.

Tips

For chest pass

- “Keep your chest high.”
- “Keep your thumbs down and together.”
- “Step forward.”

For bounce pass

- “Snap your thumbs down and together.”
- “Bounce the ball so your partner catches it waist high.”
- “Step forward.”
- “If you have the ball, you must dribble to move.”
- “Pass on the move.”
- “Control the ball.”
- “Lead your partner.”

Variations

To simplify skill practice, limit the number of practice activities or limit the practice to the chest pass only.



Passing



Time: 10 minutes



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Ages: 3 to 5

Type

Skill Drill

Activity

1. Introduce, demonstrate, and explain how to dribble and pass to a partner.
2. Have your players practice dribbling and passing to a partner.

Activity Description

Pairs—Partner 1 dribbles the ball 8 to 10 times and then passes it to partner 2. Partner 2 starts dribbling forward and then passes back to partner 1. The partners continue to dribble and pass to each other from one end of the gym to the other. The goal is to make four successful passes in a row (adjust number as necessary).

Tips

For chest pass

- “Keep your chest high.”
- “Keep your thumbs down and together.”
- “Step forward.”

For bounce pass

- “Snap your thumbs down and together.”
- “Bounce the ball so your partner catches it waist high.”
- “Step forward.”
- “If you have the ball, you must dribble to move.”
- “Pass on the move.”
- “Control the ball.”
- “Lead your partner.”

Variations

To simplify: Limit the number of practice activities or limit the practice to the chest pass only.



Shooting



Time: 10 minutes



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Ages: 3 to 5

Type

Game

Activity

To attack the basket, focusing on shooting close to the basket. The objective is for players to shoot using basic technique. Players score by shooting in a 2 v 2 game.

Activity Description

2 v 2, modified half-court game—Players earn one point if they hit the backboard or the rim of a modified basket and two points if it goes into the basket. Designate the area (such as the lane) from which players must shoot to earn points.

Call modified double dribble violations. For example, a player can stop and start toward the basket three times before it is a violation. If a violation occurs, the player's opponent takes a turn.

Questions

Coach: What is the goal of this game?

Players: The goal is to shoot at the basket and score points.

Coach: How do you do that?

Players: You shoot close to the basket.

Variations

To use as a Game 2: Choose either 2 v 1 or 2 v 2, depending on the skill proficiency of your players. Rotate players accordingly so they all have a chance to play offense and defense.



Shooting



Time: 20 minutes



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Ages: 3 to 5

Type

Skill Drill

Activity

1. Introduce, demonstrate, and explain how to shoot baskets with a set shot.
2. Have your players practice shooting baskets with a set shot.

Activity Description

Individuals or pairs—Players can practice shooting individually or in pairs in a game of Around the Key. For this game, mark shooting spots with tape in an arc around the basket (inside the key). All shots should be close to the basket. Each player moves from spot to spot in order, shooting at each spot. If pairs are playing, player 2 gets the rebound and passes the ball back to player 1.

The keys to success will be the size and weight of the ball the player uses as well as the height and size of the basket or target. Players should “high five” their partners when those partners score a basket.

Tips

- “Keep hands apart on the ball.”
- “Only fingers touch the ball.”
- “Keep palms up.”
- “Point elbows toward the basket.”
- “Flip the wrist and wave good-bye.” (The hand follows through after the shot.)



Position and Movement



Time: 10 minutes



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Ages: 3 to 5

Type

Game

Activity

To keep possession of the ball and attack the basket, focusing on driving and dribbling to shoot. The objective is for players to be able to start and stop, change directions quickly while dribbling, and jump stop. Players dribble and drive to shoot.

Activity Description

2 v 2, modified half-court game—If a team makes a basket, that team gets the ball again (gets a second turn). Designate the area (such as the lane) from which players must shoot to earn a point. Call modified double dribble and traveling violations. For example, a player can stop and start toward the basket three times before you call a double dribble violation, and a player can take four steps while not dribbling before you call a traveling violation. If a violation occurs, the team’s opponent takes a turn.

Questions

Coach: How do you use the dribble in basketball?

Players: To get close to the basket to shoot, to beat your opponent.

Coach: How do you do that?

Players: You change direction.

Variations

To simplify or to increase the challenge, modify the ball (size and weight) and basket (height and size) to meet players’ needs.

To use as a Game 2: Choose either 2 v 1 or 2 v 2. Rotate players accordingly so they all have a chance to play offense and defense.



Position and Movement



Time: 20 minutes



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Ages: 3 to 5

Type

Skill Drill

Activity

1. Introduce, demonstrate, and explain how to start, stop, and change direction quickly while dribbling.
2. Have your players practice starting and stopping and changing direction quickly while dribbling.

Activity Description

Individual—Players practice starting and stopping and changing directions quickly while dribbling, using the following activities:

- Dribble moving slowly at first, and then gradually increase speed.
- On a signal, quickly stop both moving and dribbling—jump stop.
- Dribble in general space. On the signal, stop quickly in a front-back stance, maintain the dribble, and then continue moving forward on the signal. To increase the challenge, pivot in another direction, and then continue moving.
- Move from one basket to the next by dribbling, and then jump stop and shoot. All shooting should be close to the basket (within two feet).

Tips

For jump stops

- “Stay in a balanced position.”
- “Keep a front-back stance.”
- “Bend the knees.”
- “Lower the body.”

Variations

To simplify or to increase the challenge, modify the ball (size and weight) and basket (height and size) to meet players’ needs. To simplify: Limit the number of skill practice activities.



Dribbling



Time: 10 minutes



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Ages: 3 to 5

Type

Game

Activity

To keep possession of the ball, focusing on increasing the proficiency of ball handling and dribbling. The objective is for players to be able to handle a ball and dribble under control. Players keep possession of the ball using a dribble.

Activity Description

2 v 2, modified half-court game—Each player attempts to dribble and shoot at a basket (or target) while being guarded by an opponent. The offensive team must pass twice or more before shooting. Teams earn a point if they dribble and attempt a shot close to the basket (for example, in the lane). Designate the area (such as the lane) from which players must shoot to earn a point.

Call modified double dribble and traveling violations. For example, a player can stop and start toward the basket three times before you call a double dribble violation, and a player can take four steps while not dribbling before you call a traveling violation. If a violation occurs, the team's opponent takes a turn.

Questions

Coach: What are the different ways that you have moved toward the basket (target) while dribbling?

Players: Dribbling fast or slow, changing direction, and stopping and starting.

Coach: How do you do that?

Players: Keep the ball low; change hands; keep the ball at my side; use my finger pads; keep my eyes over the ball.

Variations

To use as a Game 2: Choose either 2 v 1 or 2 v 2. Rotate players accordingly so they all have a chance to play offense and defense. Also, players earn one point for a shot attempt and one point for dribbling under control.



Dribbling



Time: 20 minutes



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Ages: 3 to 5

Type

Skill Drill

Activity

Individual—Each player practices dribbling. Players can choose the size and weight of the ball they use.

Activity Description

Have them try the following activities:

- Dribbling and changing the speed of movement (moving both fast and slow in general space).
- Dribbling while changing directions forward and back or right to left.
- Dribbling in different pathways:
 - Move in straight, curved, and zigzag pathways in general space.
 - Follow the straight lines on the gym floor.
 - Move in a straight pathway. Each time a player meets another person or hears your signal, he or she turns quickly to the right or left and continues dribbling.
 - Move throughout general space, quickly moving from side to side in a zigzag.

Tips

- “Use your finger pads.”
- “Keep your eyes over the ball.”
- “Keep the ball low.”
- “Keep the ball at your side.”



Dribbling



Time: 10 minutes



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Ages: 3 to 5

Type

Game

Activity

To keep possession of the ball, focusing on dribbling and protecting the ball. The objective is for players to be able to dribble under pressure. Players keep possession of the ball until they shoot.

Activity Description

3 v 2, modified half-court game—Three players play offense and two players defend, then two offensive players must switch roles with the defensive players. Switch at least twice so all players get to play defense. Players earn a point if they keep possession of the ball (dribble with control) until they shoot or they attempt a shot close to the basket.

Designate the area (such as the lane) from which players must shoot to earn a point. Call modified double dribble and traveling violations. For example, a player can stop and start toward the basket three times before you call a double dribble violation, and a player can take four steps while not dribbling before you call a traveling violation. If a violation occurs, the team's opponent takes a turn.

Questions

Coach: What ways can you move to protect the basketball from your opponent when dribbling?

Players: Keep the ball on my side; keep the ball low; and change directions.



Dribbling



Time: 20 minutes



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Ages: 3 to 5

Type

Skill Drill

Activity

1. Introduce, demonstrate, and explain how to keep possession of the ball while dribbling.
2. Have players practice keeping possession of the ball while dribbling.

Activity Description

Individual—Each player practices dribbling. Players choose the size and weight of the ball they use. Provide players with situations in which they must dribble with either hand without looking at the ball. Set up obstacles so players can learn to vary the force of the bounce. Here are some examples:

Dribble in different pathways. Play follow-the-leader with a partner (followers are three feet behind) or design strategies to outwit an imaginary opponent from baseline to baseline.

Dribble around stationary obstacles. Set up cone markers three feet apart. Players try to dribble 60 seconds without bumping into the cones.

Dribble around stationary players. Divide players into groups of five to six players. One player is the dribbler. The other players in the group become the obstacles and arrange themselves in a zigzag obstacle pattern down the floor. The players try to make the dribbler lose control of the ball. They can stretch and pivot, but cannot move from their spots; the defensive players cannot touch the ball or the dribbler.

Dribbling against an opponent. Match partners with similar skill levels. Partner 1 begins dribbling and moving toward the baseline while partner 2 plays cooperative defense. Increase the difficulty by moving to active defense.

Tips

- “Keep your body between the obstacle and the ball.”
- “Keep the ball at your side.”



Defense



Time: 10 minutes



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Ages: 3 to 5

Type

Game

Activity

To defend your own space, focusing on basic defensive technique. The objective is for players to be able to defend an opponent. Players learn basic defensive technique.

Activity Description

3 v 3, short-court game—Defensive players earn a point when they take the ball away. Limit offensive players to dribbling three times or less before passing. Call modified double dribble and traveling violations.

For example, a player can stop and start toward the basket three times before you call a double dribble violation, and a player can take four steps without dribbling before you call a traveling violation. If a violation occurs, the player's opponent takes a turn. Starting with this game, call fouls as violations.

The defender can touch the ball, but he or she cannot touch the opponent. If a violation occurs, the opponent gets the ball.

Questions

Coach: What do you do when you are playing defense?

Players: Try to get the ball and protect the basket.

Coach: How do you defend your basket?

Players: Play the person with the ball and try to get the ball.

Variations

To Simplify: Modify the size and height of the basket or target.

To Challenge: Modify the size and height of the basket or target and limit rule modifications.

To use as a Game 2: Choose either 1 v 3, 2 v 3, or 3 v 3. Rotate players accordingly so they all have a chance to play offense and defense.



Defense



Time: 15 minutes



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Ages: 3 to 5

Type

Skill Drill

Activity

1. Introduce, demonstrate, and explain how to defend against an opponent.
2. Have your players practice defending against an opponent.

Activity Description

Pairs—Match players of similar skill. The defensive player moves in a defensive position in front of the offensive player, who dribbles slowly, then gradually faster in a zigzag pathway. Then have players perform the same exercise and switch roles. Have players change partners every three to five minutes.

Tips

For basic defensive position

- “Keep the knees bent.”
- “Keep your body low.”
- “Put one hand up, one hand down.”
- “Keep a wide stance.”

For playing defense

- “See the ball, not the opponent.”
- “Play the ball.” Players should focus on the ball, not the person dribbling it.

Variations

To simplify: Modify the ball to meet players’ needs.

To Challenge: Use a larger ball.



Offensive Teamwork



Time: 10 minutes



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
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Ages: 3 to 5

Type

Game

Activity

To play a 3 v 3 game, focusing on keeping possession of the ball. The objective is for players to be able to pass and receive and to support teammates with the ball. Groups of three players will play as opposing teams.

Activity Description

3 v 3, short-court game. Limit players to dribbling three times or less before passing (you can modify the number of dribbles as necessary). Call modified double dribble and traveling violations.

For example, a player can stop and start toward the basket three times before you call a double dribble violation, and a player can take four steps without dribbling the ball before you call a traveling violation. If a violation occurs, the team's opponent takes a turn. Also call modified foul violations. This allows the defender to touch the ball, but not the opponent. If a violation occurs, the opponent gets the ball.

Questions

Coach: What do you have to do to work as a team?

Players: You have to help each other out and support your teammate.

Coach: How do you help each other out?

Players: You get ready to receive a pass and move around.

Variations

To challenge: Limit the rules modifications.

To use as a Game 2: Choose either 2 v 3 or 3 v 3. Rotate players accordingly so they all have a chance to play offense and defense.



Offensive Teamwork



Time: 15 minutes



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Ages: 3 to 5

Type

Skill Drill

Activity

1. Introduce, demonstrate, and explain how to dribble and pass in a game situation.
2. Have your students practice dribbling and passing in a game situation

Activity Description

Groups of four—Three players dribble and pass while the fourth player tries to steal the ball. Rotate the player trying to steal the ball every two minutes. This is a no-contact game. Limit the space used for the game to half of a short court.

Tips

“Change directions, speed, and pathways.”

Variations

To challenge: Have players play 2 v 1.



Team Circle Activities



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Ages: 3 to 5

Key Idea

Four Core Values

Description

Gather children into a circle. “This season we’ll talk about four qualities of a good person and teammate. Number one is *caring*. Can you tell me ways you show caring to others? Helping someone up when they fall? Good! Number two is *honesty*. What ways do you show honesty? How about if you tell someone if you played with their game or toy? That’s honesty. Number three is *respect*. Do you know what respect is? One thing that shows respect is listening to adults when they speak to you, like you’re doing now. Number four is *responsibility*. One way to show you’re responsible is to pick up after yourself. Don’t wait for others to pick up for you.” Ask them to share ways they show the four values in other areas of their lives. “Good teammates show these values to each other. We’ll talk more about these four values during the season.”

Key Idea

Responsibility

Description

Gather children into a group. “I want us all to pretend we’re eggs. Eggs have shells that can break. What would happen if we bumped into each other as eggs? Right. We would crack and break. Let’s move around the court being eggs. Don’t bump each other or we’ll break!” Continue this exercise for about one minute. “We were all careful not to bump each other so our ‘shells’ wouldn’t break! That was great! You were in charge of or ‘responsible’ for your moving. When we’re careful of each other, we’re responsible for our space and other players’ space. This shows responsibility during practice and games.”



Team Circle Activities



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Ages: 3 to 5

Key Idea

Honesty

Description

Gather children into a group near two cones about 10 feet apart. “Can you step out of bounds when you have the basketball? What if it’s an accident and nobody saw you? Those of you who think it’s okay to step out of bounds, stand by this cone. Those who think it’s not okay, stand by this one.” Wait for children to choose. Then ask them why they chose the cone they did. “Stepping out of bounds, even if it’s an accident, is against the rules. What should you do if it happens? Those of you who think you should just keep playing, stay at this cone; those of you who think you should tell the coach and give the ball to the other team, go stand by that cone.” Wait for everyone to finish choosing. “It’s important to be honest. If you step out of bounds with the ball, even if nobody sees it, tell the coach and give the ball to the other team.”

Key Idea

Caring

Description

Gather children into a circle. Stand in the middle of the group with a ball. Pass to each child and give him or her a turn to pass back to you. “I am going to pass the ball. If a pass comes to you, pass the ball back to me.” Work around the whole circle. Talk to the children about playing and learning when they come to practice. “Who had a turn to touch the ball?” Wait for their responses. “I made sure everyone had a chance to touch the ball. Raise your hand if it felt good to be able to have a turn. How would you have felt if you did not have a turn?” Listen to their responses. “We need to share the ball and take turns so everyone can learn and play. Sharing and taking turns show you care.”



Team Circle Activities



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Ages: 3 to 5

Key Idea

Caring

Description

Gather children into a group about 10 feet from a basket. “Let’s pretend we’re playing a basketball game. Watch what I do with the ball.” Tell a child in the group you’re passing to him. Make a bad pass. “That pass wasn’t very good, was it? What would you say to me so that I don’t feel bad about the pass?” As children respond, have each player who makes a supportive comment try to make a basket. If players make unsupportive comments, encourage them to change their words to become more supportive; after they have changed the words, have each of them try to make a basket. “It’s very important to support your teammates, especially when they make mistakes. Saying something that makes someone feel good shows you care.”

Key Idea

Responsibility

Description

Gather children into a circle. You’re in the middle of the circle with a ball. You’ll try to dribble the ball out of the circle. The children will have two chances to keep the ball from escaping the circle. During one turn they’ll use minimal effort, and during the second they’ll use their maximum effort. “I am going to try to dribble the ball out of the circle. Everyone work together to keep the ball in the circle. Pretend that you are snails that can’t get to the ball fast enough.” Begin to dribble and try to get the ball out of the circle, reminding players that snails move slower. “This time move like busy bees that fly fast and keep moving.” Repeat activity, encouraging players to be “busy bees.” “When you try to be like busy bees, you’re being responsible to your teammates.”



Team Circle Activities



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Ages: 3 to 5

Key Idea

Respect

Description

Gather children into a group. “I’m going to ask you some questions about things I notice on this team. Tell me if you agree. Do you try to learn new skills at practice? Do you work hard to improve your skills? Do you help your teammates? Do you follow directions? Do you feel good about yourselves when you play a good game?” Listen to responses following each question. “Think about players who will be your opponents. What qualities or things do they have or do? Are they the same as you?” Listen for yes or no. “It’s important to think of our opponents in the same way we think of ourselves. You respect yourself, and you should respect your opponents. They are a lot like you and are learning the same things.”

Key Idea

Responsibility

Description

Gather children into a group. Dump five to six balls out of a mesh ball bag, leaving them where they stop. “Pretend we just finished one activity in practice and we’re getting ready to do something else. Everyone walk away from the balls and make a group circle.” Pick up the balls, then go to the group. Dump balls out again. “Now come back and you pick up the balls, then go make a circle. Which way makes it faster for me to get to your circle?” Listen to their responses. “What do you think we should do with the balls?” Listen to their responses. Discuss picking up equipment before doing another activity. “We can have more fun and learn more when we work together. That is a shared responsibility between the coach and the players.”



Team Circle Activities



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Ages: 3 to 5

Key Idea

Respect

Description

Gather children into a single-file line near two cones about 10 feet apart. “I am going to walk down the line two times. Remember how it feels each time I pass you.” Walk down the line and nod to each player. Repeat, but this time tell each player “great game” or “nice play today” and shake his or her hand. “Which time that I passed you made you feel better?” Ask children to stand near a cone that represents their choice. “Shaking hands and saying ‘good game’ are important traditions that show we appreciate our opponents’ efforts in a game. It shows respect for your opponents.” Divide team in half and have them practice an end of game “respect ritual.”

Key Idea

Keeping Perspective

Description

Gather children into a group near two cones about 10 feet apart. “What did you most enjoy learning about in basketball this season?” Listen to their responses. “Players who thought they tried their best to learn, stand by this cone. Players who think they had fun this season, stand by this one. Both of those are important. You should try your best and have fun no matter what happens during the season. The most important thing in basketball is to have fun playing with friends and to learn new skills. I think you all did that! Next year is another chance to have fun and make new friends!”



Warm-Up Activities



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Ages: 3 to 5

Description

Players free dribble and handle the ball in space (one ball per player), using an area no larger than half-court.

Individual—Players should stand apart from each other (allow 15 seconds for them to move to their own space); on a signal, they begin dribbling around the court without losing control. Players stop and catch the ball quickly on a signal. Repeat this exercise three times in short intervals (20, 30, and 45 seconds).

Individual—Each player has a ball to practice dribbling. Have them try the following activities:

- Dribbling and moving with the ball.
- Dribbling in different places around the body while stationary.
- Dribbling continuously while switching hands.
- Dribbling at different heights.

Individual—Players dribble in different pathways:

- Move in straight, curved, and zigzag pathways in general space.
- Follow the straight lines on the gym floor.
- Move in a straight pathway. Each time a player meets another player or hears your signal, he or she turns quickly to the right or left and continues dribbling.
- Move throughout general space, quickly moving from side to side in a zigzag.

Pairs—Partners play follow-the-leader in single file while dribbling (have players leave three feet between them); they should switch who leads frequently.

Pairs—Partners practice shooting in the game “Around the Key.” They keep track of the number of baskets made.

Individual—Each player dribbles from one basket to the other, and then jump stops and shoots. All shooting should be close to the basket (within two feet).



Warm-Up Activities



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Ages: 3 to 5

Description

Pairs—Partner 1 dribbles the ball 8 to 10 times and then passes it to partner 2. Partner 2 starts dribbling the ball forward and then passes it back to partner 1. The partners continue to dribble and pass from one end of the gym to the other.

Pairs—The defensive player moves in a defensive position in front of the offensive player, who is dribbling slowly and then gradually dribbles faster in a zigzag pathway. The offensive player changes speed and directions. The players move down the length of floor, and then switch roles.