



Fitness Activities



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY



Ages: 6 to 7

Key Idea

General Fitness

Description

“In basketball, running makes our hearts beat faster and our leg muscles stronger. Spread out into your own space. Everyone run in place and I will pass the ball to some of you. If you get the ball, pass it back to me and keep running!” Continue for about 30 seconds. “Playing basketball improves our physical conditioning or fitness. We get better at running, jumping, and dribbling the ball, and we can keep going longer before we get too tired. How can I keep from getting too tired when I’m running?” Pacing. “How about dribbling?” Practice at home. “It is also important to take a rest when you need one and to drink water during practice and at home. We will talk more about the different areas of fitness in our Fitness Circles throughout the season.”

Key Idea

Flexibility

Description

Bring a rubber band and show it to the children or have them visualize one. “This rubber band is like our muscles. Can you tell me why?” Listen for children’s responses—stretches when pulled, goes back to original shape, and so on. Demonstrate band movement. “Your muscles work the same way. When you reach and stretch, your muscles stretch just like the rubber band. When your body comes back, your muscles go back to their original shape. Everyone reach down to the floor with your arms slowly and then bring your arms back up.” Have children repeat three times. “Your leg muscles need to stretch because we use them the most 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: 6 to 7

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. Every time it tightens, or beats, it pumps blood all over your body. When you play basketball, your heart beats faster and you breathe faster. Run in place with high knees. Feel your lungs and feel your heart beating by placing your hands over your chest. Count how many times your heart beats.” Time for 15 seconds. Ask players the number they counted. “Running helps you improve your cardiorespiratory fitness—the heart and lungs working together to get blood to your whole body.”

Key Idea

Cardiorespiratory Fitness

Description

Gather children in a group. “Everyone put your hand up in the front of you and make a fist. What did we pretend our fist was at the last practice?” Wait for response—should be the heart. “What do our hearts do?” Wait for responses—pump blood. “Everybody open and close your fist. Put your hand over your chest and feel what is happening. Now, let’s run to the hoop and back. Will our hearts beat faster or slower?” Listen to responses—should be faster. “Put your hand over your chest. Is your heart beating faster or slower? Are your lungs breathing faster or slower? When we run during basketball, the heart beats faster just like the fist opening and closing, and the lungs breathe faster. They slow down when we slow down. Making your heart beat faster helps to improve your cardiorespiratory fitness.”



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Ages: 6 to 7

Key Idea

Cardiorespiratory Fitness

Description

Gather children in a group. “Everyone find their own space. Put your fist up in front of you. We pretend our fist is our...” wait for response—heart. “The heart does what things?” Wait for response—pumps blood and beats faster when we run or move faster. “When I say ‘Go!’ run in your own space and make your fist open and close faster at the same time. When I say ‘Stop!’, stop as fast as you can.” Begin activity. “When you run, your heart beats faster. Every time your heart beats faster, it gets stronger because it is a muscle. Muscles get stronger when you use them. Basketball is a great way to keep your heart healthy and strong and improve your cardiorespiratory fitness.”

Key Idea

Flexibility

Description

Gather children in a group. Show them a rubber band or have them visualize one. Demonstrate how it stretches. “We pretend this rubber band is...” wait for response—a muscle. “It moves back and forth, stretching and moving. Let’s move our bodies just like the rubber band. Reach and stretch up and down. It’s important to stretch slowly without bouncing or quick movement.” Have children continue for one minute. “Our muscles help us to move and stretch. We need to stretch muscles to keep them flexible or able to move easily. When muscles can move easily they don’t get injured and our bodies feel good.”



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Ages: 6 to 7

Key Idea

Muscular Strength and Endurance

Description

Gather children into a group. “Okay, everyone get down on the ground and do the crab walk.” Continue for 30 seconds to one minute. “Are your arms and legs getting tired? You used many of your arm and leg muscles to do the crab walk. What parts of the body do you use the most for basketball? That’s right—your arms and legs. The more you practice basketball, the stronger your muscles will get. Then you can keep going much longer before you get too tired. What things can we do to get our muscles stronger for basketball?” Let them answer running and dribbling. “Right. Now pretend you have a basketball in front of you. Pretend to dribble the ball in your spot.” Have children dribble for five counts. “Practicing dribbling helps make your arms stronger.”

Key Idea

General Fitness

Description

Gather children into a circle. “What do our bodies need to do every day to keep going?” Wait for their responses. Discuss sleep and rest, eating, and doing regular activities. “There’s one more thing that’s really important—being active and exercising. Let’s pretend it’s a day that you do not have basketball practice. Your body needs to move every day. With no basketball today, what should we do to move our bodies?” Wait for their responses. If a child suggests an activity such as biking or swimming, have everyone act out that activity. Act out three activities. “It’s important to be active when you don’t have basketball practice. Your body needs to move every day.”



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Ages: 6 to 7

Key Idea

General Fitness

Description

Gather children into a circle. “Everyone is going to run in place. Let’s start. Pretend that your body is going to run out of energy because you ate too many chips and drank a soda before practice. Start running slower and slower, and now stop! Now let’s pretend that you ate a peanut butter sandwich and drank a glass of milk and a glass of water before practice. Let’s run in place.” Continue for 30 seconds. “See how you’re able to run much longer and keep your energy? Eating healthy foods and drinking plenty of water are healthy habits for every day. You should drink water several times a day and drink even more when you’re exercising. Also make sure to get enough sleep; exercise; brush your teeth; and say no to alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs. Keep your body healthy!”

Key Idea

General Fitness

Description

Gather children into a group near two cones about 10 feet apart. Tell them that each cone represents a different food group. “This cone is healthy foods, such as fruits, vegetables, meats, milk, and breads. This other cone is special treat foods, such as chips, soda, candy, and sweet snacks. What foods can you eat to keep your body healthy, with enough energy for basketball?” As they respond, have them stand near the cone they choose. “It is important to eat more healthy foods. They give you more energy for basketball and help you grow. Special treat foods should be eaten in small amounts. Can you tell me other examples of healthy foods and special treat foods?”



Dribbling



Time: 10 minutes



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Ages: 6 to 7

Type

Game

Activity

Players dribble and drive during a 1 v 1 game, keeping possession of the ball, focusing on increasing the proficiency of ball handling and dribbling. The objective is for players to be able to handle the ball and dribble under control.

Activity Description

1 v 1, modified half-court game—Explain how to start and restart the game. Each player takes a turn driving to the basket. His or her opponent plays cooperative defense. Players earn a point for keeping possession and attempting a shot.

Questions

Coach: What is the goal of the game?

Players: To put the ball in the basket, to score a basket.

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

Players: You can dribble fast or slow, change direction, or stop and start.

Coach: How do you do that? (This question is to see what players know about dribbling.)

Players: You keep the ball low, change hands, keep the ball at your side, use the finger pads, and keep your eyes over the ball.



Dribbling



Time: 10 minutes



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Ages: 6 to 7

Type

Skill Drill

Activity

1. Introduce, demonstrate, and explain how to handle the ball and dribble.
2. Have players practice ball handling and dribbling.

Activity Description

Individual—Each player practices dribbling. Players can choose the size and weight of the ball they use. At this point, you should 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:

- 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 in a series of curved pathways. If the player curves to the left, he or she must dribble with the right hand; if the player curves to the right, he or she must dribble with the left hand. The player must always keep the ball on the outside of the curve.
- 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.”

Variations

When working with the players on dribbling, you can vary the activity depending on the developmental needs of the player.



Passing



Time: 10 minutes



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Ages: 6 to 7

Type

Game

Activity

Pairs of players will play as a team keeping possession of the ball and focusing on passing and dribbling with a partner. The objective is for players to be able to pass and receive the basketball.

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.

A team earns a point when they have one completed pass before the shot. Limit them to dribbling three times or less before passing. Call modified traveling violations. For example, a player can take three steps without dribbling the ball before you call a traveling violation.

Questions

Coach: What is the goal of the game?

Players: To keep the ball to score; to dribble and pass to score.

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

Players: You have to catch the ball and pass it right to your teammate.

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

Players: The bounce pass and chest pass.

Coach: How do you play as a team?

Players: You work together and talk to each other.



Passing



Time: 20 minutes



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Ages: 6 to 7

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 8 to 10 times and then passes 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. They should try bounce and chest passes. The object is to make four successful passes in a row.

Tips

- “If you have the ball, you must dribble to move.”
- “Pass on the move.”
- “Control the ball.”
- “Lead your partner.”

For receiving

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

For passing

- “Put your hands on the sides of the ball, 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 thumbs down, backs of your hands facing each other, and move your weight forward.”

Variations

To use as a Game 2: Same as Game 1, except that if a team makes a basket, they get the ball again (two turns only).



Shooting



Time: 10 minutes



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Ages: 6 to 7

Type

Game

Activity

Players attack the basket, focusing on shooting close to the basket. The objective is for players to be able to shoot using basic technique.

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.

Teams earn one point if the ball touches the backboard or rim on the shot and two points if the ball goes into the basket. Call modified double dribble and traveling violations. For example, a player can stop and start toward the basket twice before you call a double dribble violation, and a player can take three steps without dribbling the ball before you call a traveling violation.

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 simplify: Have players shoot close to the basket.

To challenge: Increase the distance from the basket.



Shooting



Time: 20 minutes



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Ages: 6 to 7

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

Individual or pairs—Players practice shooting either 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 from each spot.

If pairs are playing, player 2 gets the rebound and passes the ball back to player 1. The key 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 count the number of baskets made or “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 your wrist and wave good-bye.” (The hand follows through after the shot.)



Position and Movement



Time: 10 minutes



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Ages: 6 to 7

Type

Game

Activity

Players will use the dribble to drive and score, keeping possession of the ball and attacking the basket. They focus 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.

Activity Description

2 v 2, modified half-court game—Players earn a point if they use five dribbles or less before shooting. Remind players that even though they are playing as a team, they should also attempt to dribble and drive to the basket.

Call modified double dribble and traveling violations. For example, a player can stop and start toward the basket twice before you call a double dribble violation, and a player can take three steps without dribbling the ball before you call a traveling violation.

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, speed, or pathways.

Variations

To use as a Game 2: Same as Game 1, except 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. Also, if a team makes a basket, it gets the ball again (second turn only).



Position and Movement



Time: 20 minutes



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Ages: 6 to 7

Type

Skill Drill

Activity

1. Introduce, demonstrate, and explain how to start and stop and change direction quickly while dribbling.
2. Have 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 a 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. Jump shots should be taken within two feet of the basket.

Tips

For dribbling

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

For a jump stop

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



Dribbling



Time: 10 minutes



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Ages: 6 to 7

Type

Game

Activity

Players keep possession in order to score, focusing on dribbling and protecting the ball. The objective is for players to be able to dribble under pressure.

Activity Description

2 v 2, modified half-court game—A player scores a point for keeping possession and attempting a shot. Opponents play cooperative defense. If a team makes a basket, it gets the ball again (two turns only).

Call modified double dribble and traveling violations. For example, a player can stop and start toward the basket twice before you call a double dribble violation, and a player can take three steps without dribbling the ball before you call a traveling violation.

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; change directions.

Variations

To use as a Game 2: Same as Game 1, except 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.



Dribbling



Time: 20 minutes



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Ages: 6 to 7

Type

Skill Drill

Activity

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

At this point, you should 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.

Activity Description

Dribble in different pathways:

- Play follow-the-leader with a partner (followers are three feet behind), changing to different pathways.
- 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 for 60 seconds without bumping into the cones.

Dribble around stationary players. Divide players into groups of 3 or 4. One player is the dribbler. The other players in the group become obstacles and arrange themselves in a zigzag obstacle pattern down the floor. The players try to cause the dribbler to lose control of the ball. They can stretch and pivot, but cannot move from their space; the defensive players cannot touch the ball or the dribbler. (You can make this activity more challenging by allowing the defensive players to touch the ball but not the dribbler, when the player is ready.)

Dribble against an opponent. Match partners with similar skill levels. Partner 1 dribbles toward the baseline while partner 2 plays cooperative defense. Increase the difficulty by moving to active defense. If partner 2 takes the ball away before 30 seconds are up, he or she gives it back; after 30 seconds, partners switch roles.

Tips

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

Variations

Remember you can either ask players if they want to change the parameters of the game (such as the size of the ball or the court) or change them yourself in order to accommodate their abilities.



Offensive Teamwork



Time: 10 minutes



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Ages: 6 to 7

Type

Game

Activity

Players play a 3 v 2 game, focusing on keeping possession of the ball. The objective is for players to be able to pass and receive with a partner in order to score and to support teammates with the ball.

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. The team must pass three times before shooting. Limit them 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 twice before you call a double dribble violation, and a player can take three steps without dribbling the ball before you call a traveling violation. Do not have jump balls, but alternate awarding possession from one team to the other.

Questions

Coach: What is the goal of the game?

Players: The goal is to play as a team, passing and scoring.

Coach: How do you help each other out?

Players: We help by getting ready to receive a pass and moving around.

Variations

Players can begin playing active defense.



Offensive Teamwork



Time: 20 minutes



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Ages: 6 to 7

Type

Skill Drill

Activity

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

Activity Description

2 v 2—Two players dribble and pass while the other two players try to gain possession of the ball, either by intercepting a pass or stealing the ball on the dribble.

Tips

- “Keep your body between the ball and your opponent when dribbling.”
- “Change directions, speed, and pathways.”



Defense



Time: 10 minutes



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Ages: 6 to 7

Type

Game

Activity

Players learn to use the basic defensive techniques to defend their own space. The objective is for players to be able to defend against an opponent.

Activity Description

3 v 3, short-court game using modified half-court rules—The offensive team must pass three times before shooting. Limit them to dribbling three times or less before passing. Defensive players earn a point when they take the ball away without committing a foul.

Call modified traveling violations. For example, a player can take three steps without dribbling the ball before you call a traveling violation. Do not have jump balls, but alternate awarding possession from one team to the other. Treat fouls like violations. Players should raise their hands when they foul.

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 use as a Game 2: Same as Game 1, except choose either 1 v 3, 2 v 3, or 3 v 3, depending on the skill proficiency of your players. Rotate players accordingly so they all have a chance to play offense and defense.



Defense



Time: 20 minutes



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Ages: 6 to 7

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

All players—Divide players into two groups. The groups stand on opposite sidelines of the gym and face each other. Each member of group A has a ball to dribble.

On a signal, group A begins dribbling toward the opposite sideline. Group B, without balls, begins moving forward, trying to take away the balls. If a group B player gains possession of a ball, that player dribbles toward the opposite sideline.

When players from group A or group B make it over the opposing team's sideline, they stay there until all balls are behind the sidelines. Group B now gets the balls, and the game begins again.

Tips

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



Defense



Time: 10 minutes



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Ages: 6 to 7

Type

Game

Activity

Players defend their own space while focusing on pressuring the ball handler. The objective is for players to be able to successfully steal the ball from an opponent.

Activity Description

3 v 3, regular half-court game—Defensive players earn a point when they take the ball away without committing a foul. The offensive team must pass three times before shooting. Limit them to dribbling three times or less before passing.

Call modified traveling violations. For example, a player can take three steps without dribbling the ball before you call a traveling violation. Do not have jump balls, but alternate awarding possession from one team to the other. Treat fouls like violations (players should raise a hand when they foul).

Follow regular half-court rules:

- If a team scores, the other team gets the ball at the top of the key (restart area).
- If a team gets an offensive rebound, that team can shoot again.
- If a team gets a defensive rebound, that team gets the ball at the top of the key (restart area).

Questions

Coach: What do you do when you try to steal the ball from an opponent?

Players: You watch the player, watch the ball, and try to figure out what the player will do.

Coach: How do you do that?

Players: You get low and keep your hands and feet active.

Variations

To use as a Game 2: Same as Game 1, except choose either 1 v 3, 2 v 3, or 3 v 3, depending on the skill proficiency of your players. Rotate players accordingly so they all have a chance to play offense and defense.



Defense



Time: 20 minutes



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Ages: 6 to 7

Type

Skill Drill

Activity

1. Introduce, demonstrate, and explain how to pressure the ball handler.
2. Have your players practice pressuring the ball handler.

Activity Description

All players—Divide players into two groups: a dribblers group, in which each player has a ball; and a defenders group, which does not have balls. The dribblers group should have more players. Keep the practice within a confined space.

On a signal, the dribblers begin dribbling while the defenders attempt to steal the ball. If a defender steals a ball, he or she begins dribbling. Go for about 45 seconds, and then regroup and switch roles, as needed.

Tips

- “Get into the ready position” (bend your knees; lower your body).
- “Keep your hands and feet active.”
- “Watch the player; watch the ball.”
- “Anticipate.”



Shooting



Time: 10 minutes



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Ages: 6 to 7

Type

Game

Activity

Players attack the basket, focusing on shooting within five to eight feet of the basket, and score as often as possible. The objective is for players to be able to receive a pass, square to the basket, and shoot accurately.

Activity Description

3 v 3, short-court game (use regular half-court rules)—Encourage players to score as much as possible. No dribbling is allowed in this game. Defensive players earn a point when they take the ball away without committing a foul.

The offensive team must pass twice or more before shooting. Do not have jump balls, but alternate awarding possession from one team to the other. Treat fouls like violations.

Questions

Coach: What is the goal of the game?

Players: The goal is to score following two consecutive passes.

Coach: From where on the court do you score most of your points?

Players: Most of the points are scored close to the basket.

Coach: Why is it better to shoot from a position close to the basket rather than far from the basket?

Players: You're more likely to score when you're closer (it's a high-percentage shot).

Coach: Besides shooting from close range, what else do you do to shoot successfully?

Players: We square our shoulders to the basket, keep our elbows under the ball and close to the body, keep one hand behind the ball and the other at the side of the ball, use a staggered stance with knees slightly bent, aim, and follow through.

Variations

To use as a Game 2: Same as Game 1 except choose either 3 v 1, 3 v 2, or 3 v 3, depending on the skill proficiency of your players. Rotate players accordingly so they all have a chance to play offense and defense.



Shooting



Time: 15 minutes



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Ages: 6 to 7

Type

Skill Drill

Activity

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

Activity Description

Pairs—Partners take turns shooting three shots from each of five spots approximately five to eight feet away from the basket. The partner not shooting rebounds the ball and passes it accurately to the shooting partner.

The shooting partner gets in target position, receives the ball in triple threat position and squares up and shoots. Have players either count the number of baskets made or “high five” partners when they score a basket.

Tips

For shooting

- “Keep your hands apart on the ball.”
- “Only fingers touch the ball.”
- “Keep palms up.”
- “Point your elbows toward the basket.”
- “Flip your wrist and wave good-bye.”

For triple threat

- “Keep the ball on your hip.”
- “Keep your elbows out.”
- “Hold the ball to the side on your hip.”



Passing



Time: 10 minutes



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Ages: 6 to 7

Type

Game

Activity

To play a 3 v 3 game, focusing on maintaining possession of the ball and supporting the ball handler. The objective is for players to be able to pass quickly and accurately and to support the ball handler.

Activity Description

3 v 3, short-court game using regular half-court rules—The team must pass three times before shooting. Limit them to dribbling three times or less before passing.

Call modified traveling violations. For example, a player can take three steps without dribbling the ball before you call a traveling violation. Do not have jump balls, but alternate awarding possession from one team to the other. Treat fouls like violations. A field goal is worth two points.

Questions

Coach: What is the goal of the game?

Players: The goal is to shoot as often as possible, to pass and shoot.

Coach: What do you do to help your teammate with the ball?

Players: We move to get open.

Variations

If needed, return to a 2 v 2 or 3 v 2 game.

To use as a Game 2: Same as Game 1, except choose either 3 v 1, 3 v 2, or 3 v 3, depending on the skill proficiency of your players. Rotate players accordingly so they all have a chance to play offense and defense.



Passing



Time: 15 minutes



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Ages: 6 to 7

Type

Skill Drill

Activity

1. Introduce, demonstrate, and explain how to pass while defended.
2. Have players practice passing while another player plays defense.

Activity Description

2 v 1, in an area the size of the basketball lane—Two offensive players, an attacker (O) and a supporter (S), play against one defensive player (X).

On the whistle, the defender attacks the ball (cooperative to active defense), the supporter moves to either side, and the attacker draws the defender and then passes.

The practice continues until either the offensive players have made three passes or the defender has possession of the ball.

Tips

- “Move quickly to the side.” (cue for the supporter)
- “Attack the ball.” (cue for the defender)
- “Pass as the defender advances.” (cue for the attacker)



Team Circle Activities



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Ages: 6 to 7

Key Idea

Four Core Values

Description

Gather children into a circle with one ball. “Everyone hand the ball to the one next to you until it makes it around the whole circle.” After the ball has gone around the circle one time, have it passed to you. “We play basketball to be more healthy and fit, but it also teaches us to become good teammates and good people. This season we will talk about four qualities of a good person and teammate: *caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility*. Our team needs to have all of these qualities in our practices and games. Remember—we can’t be a team without each of you doing your part. Let’s pass the ball to each other and say one of the care values before you pass. This will help you remember to use all four of the qualities so we can work together.”

Key Idea

Responsibility

Description

Gather children into a group. “When you come to practice, you should do three things: (1) Be ready to play. (2) Learn and improve your skills and work with others. (3) Have fun. I’m going to give you a way to remember these three things. It’s called a ‘team motto.’ Our team motto is *Play hard, play fair, and have fun!* Let’s say it together out loud. That’s great. Be sure to remember our team motto and put it into practice.”



Team Circle Activities



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Ages: 6 to 7

Key Idea

Responsibility

Description

Gather children into a group between two cones about 10 feet apart. Stand in the middle of the circle with a ball. "I am going to show you two different ways to handle the same situation. Think about which is the best way to handle this." Choose a player to receive a pass from you. Make a bad pass and then stomp angrily away from the group. Retrieve the ball and make another bad pass. This time, run to get the ball and make a pass that goes directly to the player. "If you think the first response is the way to handle making a bad pass, stand next to this cone. If you think the second way is better, stand next to this one." Ask players to explain their choices. "It's important to be a good sport in basketball." Highlight how and why. "That's being responsible to your teammates."

Key Idea

Honesty

Description

Gather children into a group near two cones about 10 feet apart. "What is a foul?" Listen to their responses. Choose a player to help demonstrate responses (include pushing, bumping players, and tripping). "Should you admit to a foul if no one sees it? Those who think yes, stand at this cone. Those who think no, stand at this one." Wait for children to choose. "When you know you've fouled, you should raise your hand. You should never take unfair advantage of other players. Can you think of other ways honesty is practiced on the court?" Listen to responses and discuss. "All of those show honesty."



Team Circle Activities



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Ages: 6 to 7

Key Idea

Responsibility

Description

Gather children into a group near two cones about 10 feet apart. Choose two players to help role-play. Set up a triangle of you and the two players. Let the children know you're role-playing with them. Each of you take turns passing. When it's your turn, miss the pass and role-play yourself as a player: "I couldn't get that pass! It was your fault—you made a bad pass!" Now as coach: "I want you to think about players who make excuses and blame others for their mistakes. Stand at this cone if you think it's okay to make excuses when you make mistakes. Stand at this cone if you think you should own and try to learn from your mistakes."

Key Idea

Caring

Description

Gather children into a circle. Stand in the middle of the circle with a ball. Choose two children to pass the ball with you. "We're going to work on our passing skills." Pass repeatedly to them and not the others. "Tell me how you felt to have only two players get the passes." Listen to their responses. "Sharing the ball with your teammates shows you care about them. What other things can you do to show you care about your teammates?" Their responses should include encouragement, positive comments for good play, forgiving players who make mistakes, and so on. "Good. Those are all ways you can show you care."



Team Circle Activities



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Ages: 6 to 7

Key Idea

Responsibility

Description

Gather children into a circle. “I want everyone to run in a circle, following the person in front of you, without bumping into each other. Keep a space about as long as a bicycle between you, and don’t go ahead of the person in front of you.” Encourage children to run slowly enough to follow all the directions. Continue activity for one minute. “Everyone stop. Did you bump into each other? Did anyone get upset with the person in front of you? You kept your body under control by not going ahead of the person in front of you. You kept your emotions under control by not getting upset with the person ahead of you—they couldn’t move any faster since you were all running in a circle as a group. Everyone can stay safe and learn when everyone is responsible for themselves.”

Key Idea

Responsibility

Description

Gather children into a circle. Stand in the center of the circle with a ball. Ask children to call to you and raise their hand if they are in a good position for a pass. Dribble the ball inside the circle, but do not pass to anyone. Continue for about one minute. “Did I share the ball with anyone?” Wait for their responses. “Do you think that is good teamwork? What is good teamwork?” Listen to their responses. Repeat the activity, but this time pass to players who call and raise their hands. “Teamwork is when all players are working together, not just keeping the ball to themselves. Responsible team members get in position to receive a good pass. They don’t always pass to the same person. And they always work hard.”



Team Circle Activities



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Ages: 6 to 7

Key Idea

Caring

Description

Gather children into a group near the basket. Have a ball ready. Ask a child in the group to pass to you. Shoot at the basket and miss completely. Retrieve the ball and make a bad pass. “That shot wasn’t very good, was it? How about that pass? Those were mistakes. What should you say to your teammates when they make mistakes?” Listen to their responses. “What could you say to make your teammate feel better? What could you say to make her feel worse?” Listen to their responses. Have players change the unsupportive, negative comments to positive ones. “It’s very important to forgive mistakes and be understanding of others, just as you would want them to be of you. Making mistakes is part of learning. Saying something that makes your teammates feel better shows you care about them.”

Key Idea

Respect

Description

Gather children into a group. “What have you learned about basketball this season?” Listen to their responses. “What does respect have to do with playing basketball or any sports? It takes many years to master the game of basketball, so basketball deserves your respect. Every year there are new skills to learn and improve on; every year you play, you’ll get better. That’s why you need to come back next year! What examples of players showing respect have you seen this basketball season?” Listen to their responses and discuss.



Warm-Up Activities



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Ages: 6 to 7

Description

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

Individual or group—Players practice dribbling in the following ways either individually, in a small group, or under your direction:

- Dribbling and changing speed of travel (travel both fast and slow in general space).
- Dribbling while changing directions (forward and backward, right to left).
- Dribbling in straight, curved, and zigzag pathways.

Choose one of these two activities:

1. Individual—Players dribble around cones spaced three feet apart. They try to dribble 60 seconds without bumping into any cones.
2. Pairs—Players pair up with partners of similar skill. Partner 1 dribbles toward the baseline while partner 2 plays cooperative defense. You can increase the difficulty by moving to active defense.

Pairs—Players practice shooting in a game of Around the Key. Use tape to mark shooting spots. Players should take all shots close to the basket.

Individual—Players dribble from one basket to the next, and then jump stop and shoot. All shooting should be close to the basket. Jump shots should be taken within two feet of the basket.

Pairs—Partners take turns. One passes the ball, and the other either shoots from the Around the Key spots or dribbles and drives to the basket.



Warm-Up Activities



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Ages: 6 to 7

Description

All players—Divide players into two groups: a dribblers group, in which each player has a ball, and a defenders group, which does not have balls. The dribblers group should have more players. Keep the practice within a confined space. On a signal, the dribblers begin dribbling while the defenders attempt to steal the ball. If a defender steals a ball, he or she begins dribbling. Go for about 45 seconds, and then regroup and switch roles, as needed.

Pairs—Partners take turns shooting three shots from each of five spots marked around the basket (approximately six to eight feet away). The partner not shooting rebounds the ball and passes it accurately to the shooting partner. The shooting partner gets in target position, receives the ball in triple threat, and squares up and shoots.