



**BASKETBALL
ACT**

Shooting Philosophy and Teaching Points



Philosophy

Shooting is the **PREMIUM** skill in basketball

There are three primary elements to becoming a proficient shooter:

- 1 Correct shooting mechanics/technique
- 2 Time at task & shooting in game-like situations
- 3 Developing scoring mentality & self-belief

Players should strive to become a 90/50/40 shooter:

- ▶ 90% from free throw line
- ▶ 50% from 2pt. field goals
- ▶ 40% from 3pt. line

Shooting technique is a balance of individualism & correct biomechanics

Build confidence, build consistent messaging, build great shooters



Shooting Mentality

Players should be able to 'clear their mind' and shoot with freedom/confidence. Coaches must find the balance of allowing individualism vs teaching proven shooting fundamentals avoiding 'paralysis by analysis.' (build confidence, not confusion)

Shooting can only be mastered one way. **PRACTICE.**

Each Basketball ACT High Performance Athlete should have a weekly shooting program that is executed at game speed & ideally recorded to track progress and improvement. Coaches should have regular discussions with each player to provide feedback and consistent messaging.

Self-Awareness: Athletes need to develop their understanding of proven shooting fundamentals and how their own technique relates to them. Can they assess the outcome of a shot and how to correct their shot technique? Players should read where the ball hit on the rim, evaluate the reason why it happened, and then be able to remedy their next shot.

Coaches can assist this process with young players by employing open ended questioning, and guiding player discovery when teaching shooting.

Confidence: Preparation breeds confidence. By getting in the gym and committing to shooting game shots at game speed for thousands and thousands of repetitions, athletes will build confidence in their shot.



Shooting Fundamentals



Balance starts with the feet.

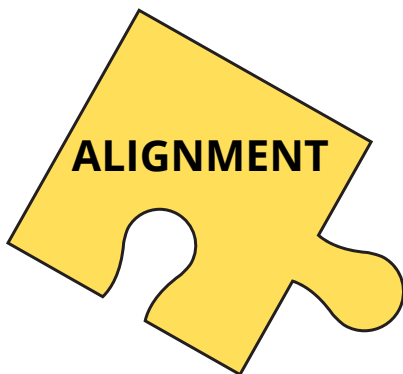
Players need to have a balanced base; feet outside the hips, with the shooting (power) foot slightly forward and pointing to the basket. For right handers this will be their right foot.

Hips should be down prior to the catch, so that there is power ready to go from low to high on the ball catch. Legs and hips are relaxed and flexed.

Coaches must teach shooting footwork off the catch, off the dribble and going both left and right.

In most cases young players will benefit from learning how to shoot utilising stride stop footwork and using inside footwork for both the catch & shoot and off the dribble to pivot and square up to the basket to shoot.

Developing correct shooting footwork takes significant practice and reinforcement.



Correct alignment facilitates the transfer of energy from the legs through the upper body to the release and flight of the basketball.

The 'set-position' relates to the player having the shooting foot, knee, hip, shooting elbow & the ball all aligned.

The ball should be positioned just below the chin at chest height (called the shooting pocket or set position) with the player sighting the basket/target over the top of the basketball.

The shooting hand should be under and behind the ball with fingers comfortably spread and the ball sitting on the fingers and heel of the hand, not on the palm.

The non-preferred hand, the balance hand, is on the side of the ball with all fingers pointing up.

There should be a wrinkle in the shooting wrist (so the shooting hand is directly under the ball).

The fingers should be spread and relaxed, with the index and middle fingers as close to the middle of the ball as possible.

The shooting arm should form a right-angle with the upper and lower part of the arm so that the ball is not close or too far away from the body.



Head up, back straight, eyes to the basket. When under pressure, inexperienced shooters will drop their eyes to the defender (off the target).

Nose should be over toes on the catch, eyes and head locked still (on the target) throughout the shot.

Without this focus it is merely a guess, and each shot is taken with hope, not accuracy. (Establish a target and shooting line at the set-position)

In the learning period young players should try and stay locked into the target the whole way through the shot. As they refine their shooting in the older ages e.g. U18/U20, shooters (after the release) can move eyes to the ball if that is more comfortable.





The follow-through begins at the start of the release phase of the shot and ends when the ball hits the basket.

As the player pushes through their feet/legs they create energy off the floor. The player should lift / extend the shooting elbow with the ball release occurring just before the peak of the jump. Players should land back on the floor with the same balance as the take off.

The ball must not go back behind the head (or into chest/shoulder) to then go forward.

The balance hand comes off the ball just before the release point and stays up with the thumb pointing to the shooter's eyebrow. (with the palm pointing to side, not the basket)

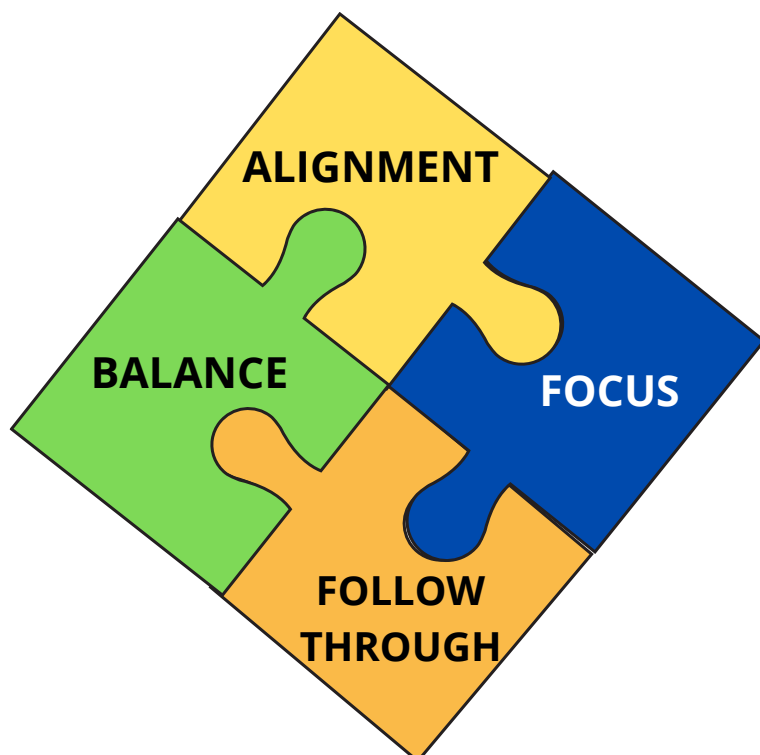
The shooting elbow should lock-out above the eyebrow (slightly forward of the face) remaining on the shooting line the whole way through the action. As young players mature physically they should develop a "high release point" above their forehead – power is generated primarily from their legs and wrist. Players should shoot the ball, not push the ball.

Full wrist extension should occur with the fingers snapping through the middle of the ball and finishing pointed down into the rim. The ball should come off the shooting finger(s), that is, the index and middle finger(s) and is the last contact point impacting on the flight of the ball.

Shots should be one smooth motion, with the ball having a high arc and be travelling on the downward path (not forward) when it reaches the target.

The higher you shoot the bigger the target and the bigger the margin of error.

Shooters need to generate backwards rotation on the ball with their shooting action which assists in the shooting arc, accuracy and the ball softens on the rim.



Summary

In correcting a players technique identify, isolate and focus on one or two significant technical elements that will allow the player to improve. Don't "over-coach"! Be careful of paralysis by analysis!

Commit each day to one or two 'Form' drills for 5-15 minutes to assist players in developing correct shooting mechanics. Form drills isolate specific components of the shooting technique. For example, one-handed shooting close to the basket - focus on the wide base with feet, comfortable ball position in the hand, elbow/ball alignment in the set-position, one-handed high release point, one motion, eyes find a target. Hold the follow-through until the ball hits the floor.

Free throws are the ultimate form drill to develop correct shooting technique, rhythm and confidence.

'Block' shooting is beneficial to develop shooting form, rhythm and confidence.

Correct shooting footwork must be emphasised, both for the catch & shoot and shots off the dribble. At the higher levels of the sport, players have less time and space to get their shot away. Consequently, players need to develop efficient & quicker shooting footwork.

Make yourself redundant – It's your job to help athletes be their own shot doctor (because in games that's the only person they can rely on to correct their shot).

Help athletes understand the power of the mind (awareness, confidence, habit). Great shooting (90/50/40) can only be achieved through practice (form, randomised, game speed, game situation, contested)

"All shots. All net. All the time" – PWL

Additional Teaching Points

Positive energy flow – power generated from the legs up and through the ball to basket

Cause & effect – common faults in young players include:

- 1 Ball not going straight
 - ▶ Incorrect body alignment
 - ▶ Ball not released off the index/middle fingers
 - ▶ The balance hand/thumb impacting on the ball at the release point
- 2 Flat arc
 - ▶ Lack of wrist-cock (must have wrinkles in the back of wrist)
 - ▶ Pushing the ball from their chest to basket rather than up straight
 - ▶ Low release point in front of their face (lower)
- 3 Shot falling short
 - ▶ Lack of physical strength; shoot closer to basket
 - ▶ Not engaging their legs in shot
 - ▶ Negative energy flow; pulling ball back, not having a “one-piece shot”

Use variability in developing a player's shooting proficiency. Start with small amounts and increase variability as the player improves. For example, pass the ball outside their body; adjust the shooting range; have them make some movement prior to catching the ball and shooting. Layer the drills adjusting distance, speed, movement, catches, dribbles, defender and making decisions. Search for the appropriate level of challenge for the player at that point in their development.

Recommendations

- 1 U10/U12 players should use a Size 5 basketball and practice/play on lower baskets to assist in the development of correct shooting technique.
- 2 KISS – Create an Individual Shooting Plan (ISP) for each player that can be shared with your assistant coaches to simplify improvement actions, keep the message consistent, and allow for progress to be charted (build confidence not confusion)
- 3 Practice must be deliberate, purposeful practice. Attention to detail !
- 4 Time at task – repetition is the mother of skill!





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