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### Playing Under Control

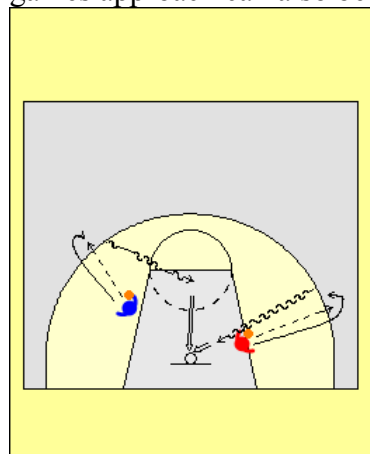
The first snowfall of the winter is always a reminder to us that we have to pay a little more attention to the road conditions: This is especially true for new or younger drivers who do not have lot of experience driving under these conditions. Drivers in slippery conditions need to:

- Control their speed when they approach an intersection or other traffic. No sharp turns or breaking at high speeds.
- Be prepared for the other vehicles to stop or turn in front of them at any time.
- Be alert; constantly scan anticipating what is going to happen.

Watching some basketball over the break I noticed that many younger and inexperienced players need to play basketball with the same caution as driving on icy road. Many players try to play at speeds which they cannot control. This leads to poor decisions, travels, poor shot selection, charges, turnovers and in some cases injury. As their strength, skill and size improve they will be able to play at faster speed. The faster their operational speed becomes the better they will be able to play, but when learning too much speed kills!

What follows is a progression for younger players on learning how to play under control and yet still be effective in attacking the basket. We often have to simplify the options to make decisions and execution easier. As the players confidence grows more speeds and options can be added. It will also illustrated how to take players through TLC (Teaching, Learning , Competing)

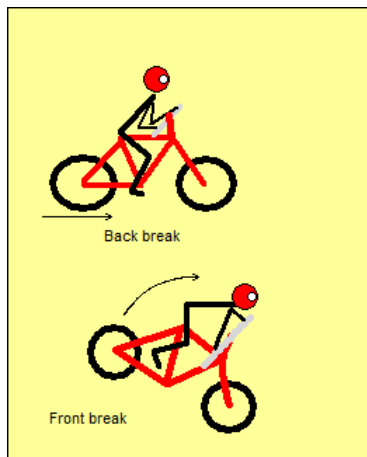
When first introducing a skill, the initiation stage, it is important to allow the players to practice at their own speed. They require a good demonstration of what the skill should look, feel and sound like. Allow them to process the information in his/her own way before you provide too much feedback. It is also important that they understand *why* the skill is being done in a certain way. This will help them in formulating the skill in their mind. This is why the old idea of whole-part-whole is important. The whole shows the why. Using a games approach can also be effective in showing the why.



### Self-toss to 1,2 power lay-up or dribble jump shot

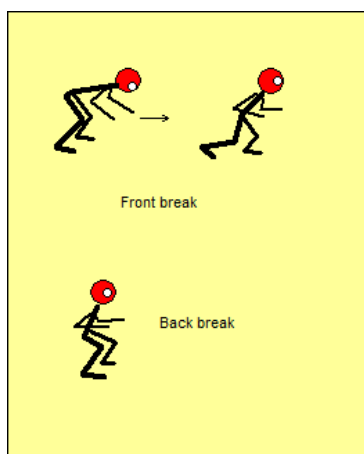
The players toss the ball with back spin to a perimeter position somewhere outside the three point line. Upon catching the ball and scanning the basket, the player drives to the basket for a 1-2 power lay-up. If attacking the foul line the player does a dribble jump shot. These should be accomplished with a maximum of two dribbles. The foot work on the layup is a 1, 2 count, with the outside foot hitting first closely followed by the inside foot.

The quick 1, 2 pull up jump shot is preferred over the hop to a jump stop when going for the dribble jump shot. It is quicker and does not allow the defense to recover.



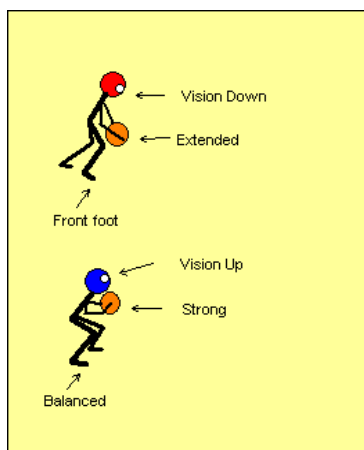
## Stopping

The first bike I had a child had only breaks on the rear wheel. You applied them by pedaling backwards. When travelling at speed and applying your back breaks you would go into a slide that you could learn to control. I had great fun in speeding along the drive way and slamming on the back break. My older brother go a hand me down bike from a cousin. This bike had hand breaks, one for the back and one for the front. I found out the hard way that when you were traveling at speed and slammed on the front break you lost your balance as your momentum carried you up and over the handle bars.



This same concepts applies to players when running at speed. If they try to stop quickly using the front of their feet. they will continue to rotate forward. They will either fall over or take an extra step to maintain their balance.

If they learn to stop by sitting down and using their back break they can remain on balance.



## Being strong with the ball

When coming to a stop with the ball players need to quickly get into a strong position.

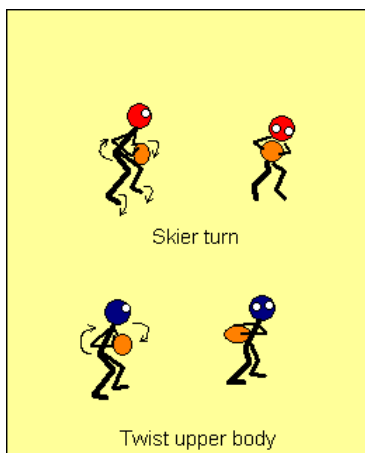
- Their vision is up,
- Their weight is over the top of their feet
- Their elbows are under the ball, the wrist is flexed and the ball is tight to the body. They are a spring ready to uncoil.

This allows them to:

- absorb contact and remain on balance
- to pivot in any direction
- to make a strong, high percentage shot attempt

The player who stops in a weak position will often

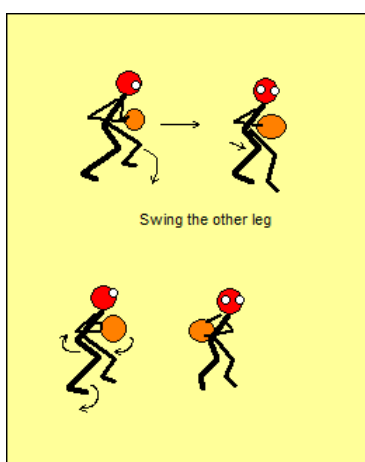
- Have his/her eyes looking down.
- The arms are extended with the ball down low
- The weight is on the front of their feet. They often will have taken an extra step to catch his/her balance.



### Twisting with the ball

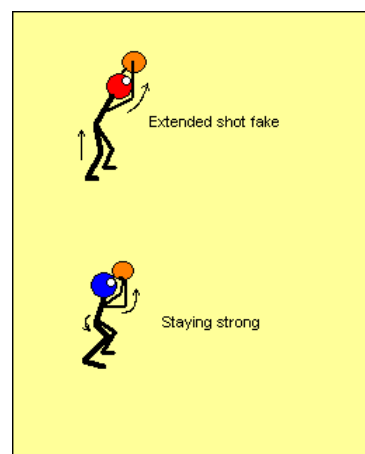
Players will often need to twist to protect the ball. This may not be a full pivot. Players who move the upper body, but not the lower body often get in an off balanced position.

Renato Pasquali, from our Senior Men's coaching staff, uses the analogy of the movement a skier makes when transferring weight from one ski to the other. There is a weight shift and the feet and hips both turn. Picture most sports where power is being generate. It is the twisting of the hips that produces this power. This keeps the player in a strong position from which he/she is still explosive. This is NOT a travel.



Too often when players pivot they are focusing on twisting their foot and swinging the other leg around. This often leads to dangerous twisting of the knee and the player ending up in a poor biomechanical position. They have no balance or power.

**A pivot generates from the hips,** The same skier twisting starts the motion of the pivot. The only thing is that one foot slides forward or back. This keeps the player in a strong position and safe since the knee and the toe are pointing in the same direction.



From this strong position players need to be able to pivot and fake. Often when faking players will put their body off balance or weak by extending the ball, arms and legs.

To stay strong when faking players need to disassociate the action of the upper body from their lower body. When the ball is being raised the lower body is lowering or sitting down. The faking with the eyes and shoulders is often more effective than raising the ball too high. Don't lose the C formed by the bicep, forearm and wrist. This keeps the player strong to shoot at any time.



### **1,2 Power lay-up**

This lay-up is very important skill for players to learn who are driving into traffic. The footwork is the same as the regular lay-up starting with the outside foot followed quickly by the inside foot. The only difference is that the player does not continue to drive the outside foot up. He/she takes off on both feet.



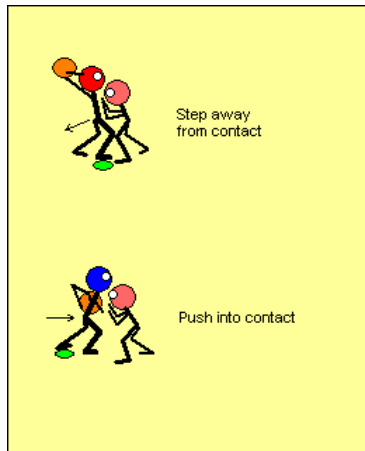
### **Pivot Away**

If trouble occurs the player can use the outside foot to pivot away. As they become more adept they can also develop a little baby hook from this position.



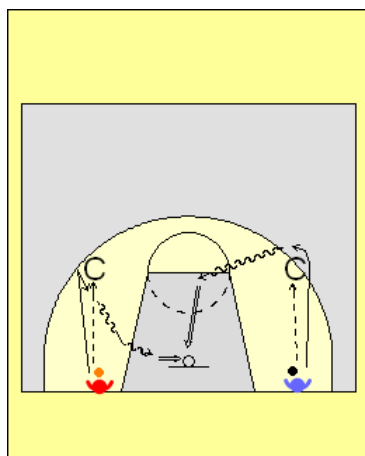
### **Step through**

If the defense moves up the player can step through by continuing to pivot. Throughout the whole process the player stays strong and on balance.



### Why the outside pivot foot?

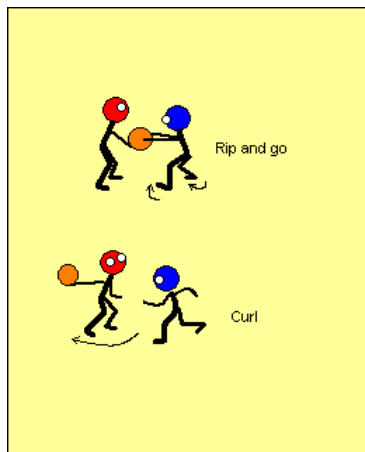
- It allows the players to carry a little more speed. A straight two foot jump stop requires a lot of strength to come to a complete balanced stop.
- The player is stepping into the contact. If a bump occurs they can push into it. If the inside foot is used they often have to step back to gain their balance and power. This puts them in a weaker position.
- They can KOB (keep on back) the defender by cutting him/her off on the second step.



### Applying the skill vs. imaginary defenders

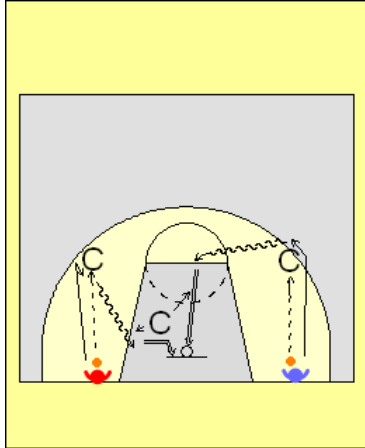
After having time to practice the skill at their own pace players are ready to apply the skill in a game like situation vs. imaginary defenders. This is an excellent drill to work on these the middle jump shot and baseline 1, 2 power lay-up off a dynamic 1on 1 from a wing catch.

The player starts on the baseline and passes the ball to the coach. Depending on the how the coach hold the ball the player either takes the ball baseline or middle. The coach controls the move. Mix it up.



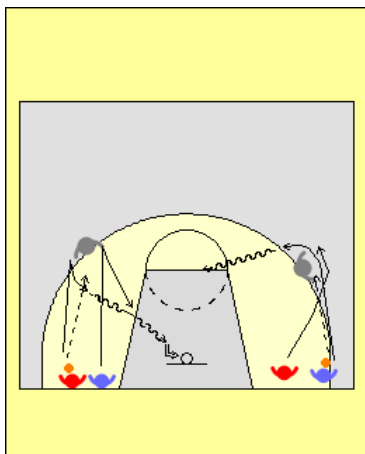
If the coach holds the ball out to the side the player rips the ball and goes baseline. It is important to work on proper footwork to prevent traveling. A little skier hip turn put the player in a strong athletic position before the dribble.

If the coach holds the ball behind him/her the offensive player curls, takes the ball for the middle dribble jump shot. Try to take the ball from the coach with the outside foot down. This allows for a stronger and tighter curl. If the inside foot is used the next step will lead to wide turn since it is with the outside foot.



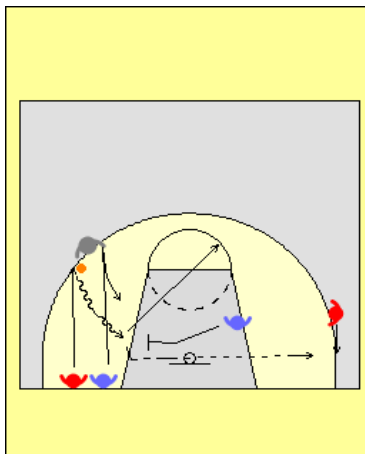
### **Coach as a guided defender**

Once the players have the correct technique it is important that they apply the skill against a guided defender. Often the coach is the best person to do this at first as the other players may not have the body control to prevent rough or dangerous play. Eventually they will be able to assume this role if you instruct them the proper way to do it.



### **Apply the skill against a live defender**

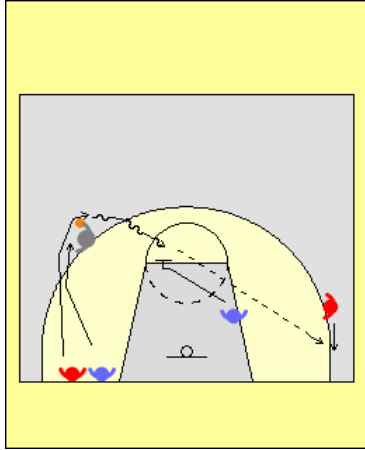
The offensive and defensive player line up on the baseline. When the ball is passed to the coach both players run to the coach. The offensive player must read if it is the lay-up or curl. The defender must slap the coaches other hand if it is the lay-up, and chase the offensive player if it is the curl. In both situations the offensive player has a brief one second advantage on the defender. If the player executes properly he/she should not lose this one second advantage and make the basket.



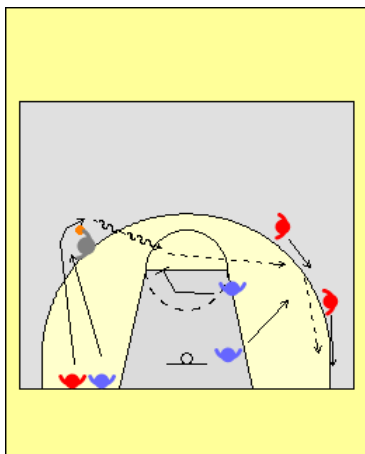
### **Dynamic start to 2 on 2**

The players must now read what to do when the defense rotates to take away the one second advantage. By passing the ball to the open player the advantage is maintained. It is important that after passing the passer exit the key to open space. Too often players who penetrate stand after passing and clog the key.

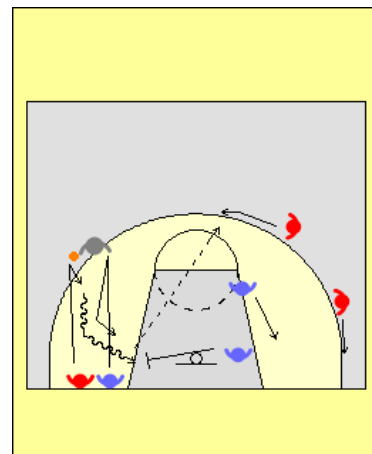
This pass does not have to be a fast pass. This is where the player can come to a 1, 2 stop and pivot if need be. The accuracy and strength is more important when first learning than the speed of release.



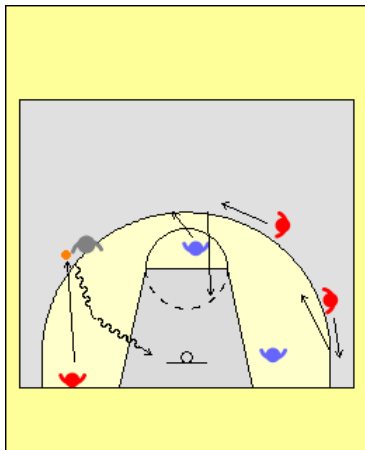
The same is true when penetrating to the middle. If need be come to a balanced stop.



**Dynamic start to 3 on 3**  
By adding another pair the offensive player who gains the one second advantage must read who is open when the defense helps. The coach controls if it is a baseline or middle penetration. We are working on defense and offense at the same time. These can be teaching or learning drills depending on



where the coach feels the players are in their development. Be sure to work from both sides of the court. It is also a good idea to let the players transition out of this drill. To turn it into a competing drill the coach can have the players keep score. Use a games approach.



**Deload - 3 on 2 secondary cuts**  
Often as a coach we must deload and activity rather than continue to load it. Here we have eliminated one defender. The player who drives pretends that help has come and he/she must come to a 1, 2 stop. The other offensive players have moved on penetration. Once the offensive player pivots the other offensive players must make a secondary cut based on what their defenders have done on the original cut. By eliminating the on ball defender it gives the offensive players a chance to have some success early. Load the third defender back into the drill when ready. These are good learning drills. Allow the players to play through mistakes. To compete allow transition. Scoring occurs for making use of the desired skills and concepts.