

Basketball Passing Drills for Beginners



Youth basketball passing drills are great for teaching two of the most fundamental, but often most neglected skills in basketball:

PASSING and CATCHING

Learn how to play basketball better by improving your passing and catching skills with excellent drills you can do alone or with a partner.

Remember...

Basketball is a *team* sport.

Individual players may be able to [dribble](#) and [shoot](#), but if they can't pass the ball to a teammate or receive a pass in return, teams are going to have a hard time scoring, and the game isn't going to be much fun.

Most basketball drills involve passing and catching anyway, so introducing basic passing drills is definitely the place to start working with your beginner.



As a matter of safety, it's really important to teach players the [fundamentals of catching a basketball pass](#).

Until players are able to catch the ball consistently, they won't be able to master the basketball passing drills.

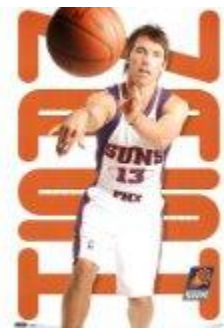
There are a variety of passes a player will need to use in the course of a game, and the youth basketball drills provided below will give players the opportunity to work on all of them.

Before advancing to the drills, it's important to first learn how to throw the different [types of basketball passes](#).

It's also helpful to learn some key pointers for [becoming a good passer](#).

The following basketball passing drills are designed for 1-2 people. If you have a team of players, most of these drills will work fine if you just divide all of your players into pairs.

These drills will give you the opportunity to work on every type of basketball pass. Make sure to use each one in every drill. If you're not sure how to execute a particular pass, click on its link for helpful coaching tips.



[Bounce Pass](#)
[Chest Pass](#)
[Overhead Pass](#)
[One-Hand Push Pass](#)
[Baseball Pass](#)
[Behind-the-Back Pass](#)

4 Passing Drills to Preach Fundamentals

Developing young players' passing abilities is one of the keys to successful basketball coaching. The basis of any basketball team's offense is their aptitude for passing the ball between each other effectively to create the shooting opportunities.

If players cannot pass then they will make it easy for the opposition to defend and they will find it extremely difficult to get into scoring positions. Here we will look at a few [basketball tips](#) and drills that can be put into practice to get your players moving the ball between each other quickly and under control.

Chest Pass

A simple and effective drill when coaching young players is to set them up in a circle of around five meters in diameter and have one player start off in the middle of the circle.

One of the players making up the circle starts with the ball and begins the drill by passing it to the player in the middle. They then follow their pass and move to the middle and as they do this, the middle player with the ball passes it to the next player in the circle and follows the ball again to take up their new position.

The passes must be chest passes delivered crisply to each other and they should look to catch the ball and pass it on without dropping it. Your players must continue to quickly pass and move in this manner for the entire drill and you can set different targets depending on the ability of your players. For example, you may ask for 50 passes to be completed before the ball touches the ground and if it is dropped before they have to start over.

This passing drill will get players used to quickly moving the ball on to each other and then moving which they will need to do in fast attacks.

Chest Pass

Another skill they need to be able to grasp is passing the ball while moving as they will not always be able to stop and pick out a pass during games.

One way to get your players passing and moving is to get them into pairs and have one partner from each form a line on the sideline with the other partners lining up opposite them with around a fifteen foot separation.

Each pair should start with one ball and they should side step down the court and every couple of steps pass the ball across to their partner. Young players may struggle to play an accurate pass to their partner with them both moving at first but through practice they will start passing to a moving target while they are moving which will become vitally important during games.

These two drills both utilize the chest pass and it is also an important part of [basketball coaching](#) to get your players used to distributing the ball using the bounce pass and the overhead pass as well so they can find a pass in all situations during games.

Bounce Pass

The technique for the bounce pass is basically the same as the chest pass. The player holds the ball in front of their chest with their thumbs pointing up and their fingers forward. Like the chest pass they will step into the throw and push through the ball, however the bounce pass is a slower pass than the chest pass and they are of course looking to bounce the ball off the ground into their teammate's hands.

An easy way to practice the bounce pass is to get your players into pairs and stand them a few feet apart and tell them to aim for a spot about a quarter of the distance away from their partner. Through practice they will start to get a feel for where to bounce the ball and at what speed so that it is easy to receive and working in pairs will help them become comfortable with the skill before moving onto more complex drills.

Overhead Pass

Practicing the overhead pass can be done in this way as well by pairing players up and going over the technique with them until they are comfortable with it. This time the ball starts above the player's head and they should keep their fingers up and thumbs back. As with the chest pass they should step into the throw and push through the ball aiming for their teammate's chest.

The overhead pass is used in games from stationary positions primarily such as in an inbound pass, passing after a rebound or an outlet pass. It is not used on the run so players need not practice moving and passing with the overhead pass.

Improving your player's passing skills is vital to the success of your team and it is especially important to develop passing ability within young players as they need to be able to do the basics on the court if they want to become better players. Getting your players used to quick and accurate passing and moving will make your offense much more potent and cause problems for defenses each game.

BASKETBALL PASSING DRILLS for 1 Player (see below)

[Ball Handling Warm-Up](#)

[Ball Spins](#)

[Wall Passing](#)

[Wall Passing on the Move](#)

[Target Practice](#)

BASKETBALL PASSING DRILLS for 2 Players (see below)

Partner Passing Series

Partner Passing with a Dummy Defender

Partner Passing on the Move

Passing with Pressure

Partner Passing with 2 Balls

Basketball Passing Drills #1: Ball Handling Warm-Up

Start with [stationary ball handling drills](#) to warm up your hands.

Basketball Passing Drills #2: Ball Spins

Pass to yourself by tossing the ball out in front with a backspin. (With both hands on the side of the ball, thumbs up, and fingers pointing out in front, rotate the wrists quickly so the thumbs face you and the fingers point up. This quick rotation puts a backspin on the ball that should make it come back toward you.)

- **Jump Stop** – Catch the pass with a [jump stop](#) with both feet on the floor in good balance and in good [triple threat](#) position.
- **Pass Basketball Move** – Catch the pass with a jump stop and then add a [basketball move](#).
- **Shooting Form** – Catch the pass, jump stop, and go up for an imaginary [jump shot](#), releasing the ball with [good shooting form](#).
- **Turn and Shoot** – Catch the pass, square up to the basket, and shoot.
- **Turn, Move, and Shoot** – Catch the pass, [square up to the basket](#), make a basketball move, and shoot.

If you have a basket, great! If you don't, you can still get a ton of benefit out of working on your technique while shooting at an imaginary target.

Basketball Passing Drills #3: Wall Passing



I will assume for these drills that you don't have a Toss Back sitting out in your driveway. If you do, I would use it instead of a wall.

Stand about 12 feet from the wall in a good balanced position. Pass and catch the ball as quickly as you can in a specified period of time. Try this with each type of pass.

- **30 Seconds** – See how many passes you can make in 30 seconds. How about 60 seconds?
- **Back Away** – Back up farther from the wall. See how many passes you can make in 30 seconds from each distance as you move farther away from the wall. This is a great drill for working on strength and accuracy.
- **Get Closer** – Move as close to the wall as possible. Be careful because the closer you get, the faster the ball will come back at you. This helps develop quick hands.

Basketball Passing Drills #4: Wall Passing on the Move

Mark 2 lines on the ground in front of the wall about 5 feet apart. Start with your outside foot touching one of the lines. Pass the ball off the wall, slide, and catch it at the other line.

Use a chest pass and take short quick sliding steps without crossing your feet. Keep moving laterally while you are passing and catching. Change direction each time you hit a line. This works on leading your pass, [quickness](#), [agility](#), and using both hands to catch the ball.

- **Move Lines Farther Apart** – Gradually move the lines farther apart until you get to to 12 feet, if possible, which is the width of the lane.
- **Jump Stop and Shooting Form** – Each time you catch the pass, jump stop, and shoot a jump shot off the wall. Concentrate on hitting a target and holding your follow through.
- **Rapid Fire** – Make quick passes off the wall while you slide 10-12 feet one direction. See how many passes you can make and how few mistakes you can make as you quickly slide from side to side. Adjust your distance from the wall to make it more challenging. The closer you are, the quicker you have to react. The farther away you are, the stronger you need to be.

Basketball Passing Drills #5: Target Practice

Put tape markers on the wall or identify cracks or spots on the wall for targets. See how many times you can hit a particular target in 30 seconds.

- **Hit Them All** - See how long it takes to hit every target.
- **Mix Up Passes** - Use a different pass to hit each target.

Note: It may not be possible to hit all targets with every type of pass.

A quick coaching tip:

Basketball passing drills can become boring and monotonous if done too long in isolation from other skills.

I suggest that once the basic skills are taught and practiced a few times, [incorporate passing and catching into your shooting drills](#), dribbling drills, etc.

This will not only liven things up, but it will be more game-like and help kids see how the different fundamental skills all work together.

Team/Partner Passing Drills

Good fundamental passing is becoming a lost art form in basketball. However, the team that can properly pass the ball and find the open man will be the team that puts themselves in a better position to score. You may find that players do not want to work on passing drills. Many players feel they are boring and want to practice shooting. However, instill in your players that to get in the best position to shoot, they first must learn to pass.

Partner Pass

Have the player's pair up with a partner. The pairs should line up approximately 3-5 feet apart from each other (depending on skill level). Facing each other, the pair should pass the basketball to each other. Start with the chest pass then move onto the bounce pass. Emphasize good passing fundamentals.

Triangle Pass & Receive

Divide your team into groups of 3 players. Have each group form a triangle. Start by having your players pass the ball to each other in a clockwise rotation. Then have the players switch directions and pass to each other in a counter-clockwise direction. Once again, emphasize proper passing.

Monkey in the Middle Drill

This game will help your players develop passing skills. Have your players form a circle. Place one player in the middle of the circle. The object of the game is for the players situated around the circle to pass the ball to each other (they can pass the ball to any other player in the circle). The object of the game for the person in the middle is to intercept a pass and take control of the ball. Once the player in the middle steals the ball, choose a new player to go in the middle.

Passing Relay Race

Divide your team into 2 – 3 even groups. The teams line up in a straight line down the court from one base line to the next. At the coach's command the first player passes the ball the

second and so on until they reach the last player. The last player then passes it back to the player next to him/her until the ball reaches the person who started the drill. The first team that completes all their passes wins. All types of passes (chest, bounce, overhead) can be utilized in this drill.

Fast Break Pass Drill

For this drill, have all your players line up around the perimeter of the court in an oval. The 2 players located under the baskets start the drill and both have basketballs. On the coaches command the players with the ball outlet a pass to the next player and the passing chain continues until it reaches the 2 players at the opposite basket just outside the key. Those 2 players then shot a layup into the basket. The players under both baskets (the original starters) then rebound the ball and start the passing again.

Move the Stick Passing Drill

This drill will introduce and work on bounce passing accuracy. For this drill, have your Players break into pairs. Each pair will have 1 basketball. Each player should be approximately 5 feet away from each other. Place a popsicle stick in the middle between the 2 players. The object of the game is for the players to hit the stick, thereby moving the stick towards the other player. Each player gets one turn then it is the other player's turn. As the one player tries to hit the stick, the other should attempt to catch the ball after 1 bounce.

Quick Back & Forth Pass Drill

In this drill, one player is positioned at the center of the key with a basketball. All the other players line up around the 3 point arc (closer if the players are younger and cannot reach each other with a pass). On the coach's command the player in the key passes the ball to the player to their furthest left, that player immediately passes back to the player in the center. This back and forth passing continues in a clockwise order until all players have gone. A new player then assumes the center position. All types of passes can be utilized in this drill. For a variation you can make a rule that the player returning a pass must use the same pass that the center player used.

Shuffle Pass Relay

In this drill, 2 players line up approximately 5-6 feet away from each other with 1 basketball. On the coach's command, the players race down court passing the basketball to each other. Once they reach the opposite baseline, the players should turn and continue back to the starting line, handing the ball off to the next pair. All types of passing can be utilized in this drill (bounce pass, chest pass, etc.)

Pass it Down the Line Drill

In this drill, line up a number of players (4-8) on the sideline facing into the court.

Another player should have 1 basketball and be approximately 5-7 feet away from the players on the sideline and should also be facing those players. On the coach's command, the player with the ball will run in a straight-line down the court, passing and receiving a return pass from each player. After he/she receives the last pass, the player should continue towards the basket for a layup.

Touch Down Pass Drill

The object of this drill is for players to develop their long passing skills. The long pass can be essential for fast breaks. In this drill, one player is designated the rebounder/passer. The other players line up towards the baseline, outside the 3 point arc. The rebounder gets the rebound (either a real rebound from another player/coach or an imagined rebound), and then throws a long outlet pass to the player running down court. The pass should be thrown over hand like that of a football throw and should reach over the half court line (depending on the age and strength of your players). The player receiving the pass should catch it and then continue to dribble towards the far basket and perform a layup.

Give & Go / Pass to Coach Drill

This drill combines ball-handling, passing, receiving, and shooting skills. Line up your team one behind the other in a straight line facing the basket. At the coach's command, the player starts to dribble towards the basket. The player then passes the ball to the coach. The player then runs around the coach towards the basket. The coach then passes the ball back to the player. The player receives the pass, dribbles towards the basket and then shoots. After your players become comfortable with this drill, have another player (instead of the coach) involved with the passing.