

COACH MAC'S **5 FAVORITE**

BASKETBALL DRILLS



Skyrocket your team's development
with these five awesome drills

COACH MAC

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INTRODUCTION

First of all, a sincere thank you for subscribing by email and downloading a copy of my free e-book.

Before you jump into the drills, I have something to confess...

I've actually included my favorite seven drills. Not five.

You see, while I was creating the eBook I ran into a dilemma. I wrote down ten of my favorite drills intending to narrow that number down to five. I managed to cross out three... and then I got stuck.

I wanted to include a few drills that work on a combination of different skills and a few drills that specialize in a certain skill. And they had to be drills that will work with both young and old age groups.

When I got down to choosing the five from the final seven, I just couldn't. So I decided to just go with seven and include two extra drills! I hope that's okay with you.

I decided to put this eBook together because I'm constantly receive emails and tweets asking me for my favorite youth basketball drills.

I thought if I put a few of my favorite into an eBook, it can be a significant help to coaches looking for drills.

But a word of warning...

I'm not sure what you're expecting, but these drills are not complex or fancy. Parents and other coaches won't be 'in awe' during your practices and tell you that you have the most fancy and brilliant drills. In fact, they're all quite simple.

But much more important than how they look, they work. And that's what's important.

The drills on the following pages will make your players better.

I encourage you to spend some time going through this eBook, work out which drills you think would benefit your team the most, and then incorporate them into your next practice.

Without further ado, let's move onto the drills.

DRIBBLE KNOCKOUT

How the Drill Works

All players begin the drill in a small area designated by the coach. Players dribble around and try to knock the ball away from each other without losing their own basketball.

Purpose

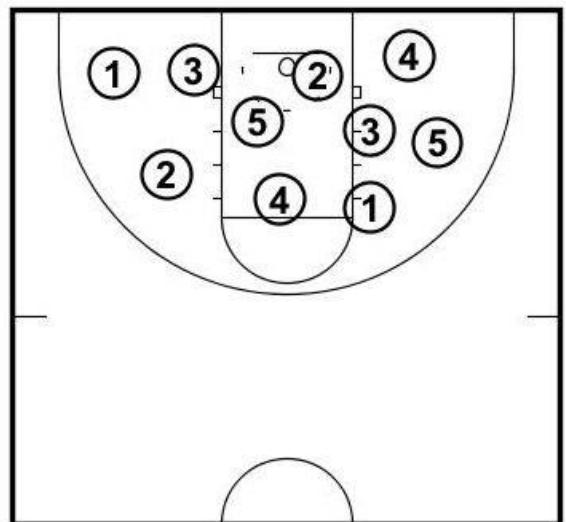
To work on dribbling skills and court awareness. It's a great drill because the players are in a tight space and must have a good handle on the ball in order to evade the other players and knock their basketball away.

Setup

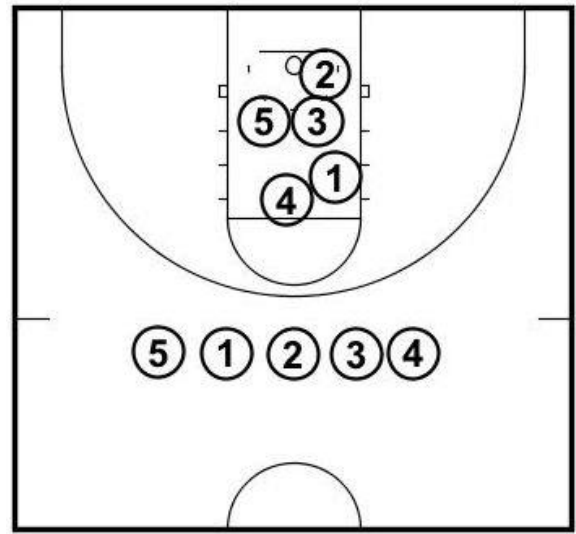
- All players must have a basketball.
- Coach must designate the area everyone's allowed in.
- All players stand inside the designated area depending on the size of the group

Instructions

1. On the coaches call, all players try and steal the ball away from each other while keeping their own dribble alive.
2. When a players ball is knocked away out of the designated area, they are then out and must go and stand on the sideline and wait till the rest are finished.



3. Coaches must watch and if a player either travel or double-dribbles, they are automatically out.
4. As the group gets smaller and smaller, you should move them to a smaller space like only the key area.
5. The last one in wins!



Scoring System

Players are gradually knocked out of the game by losing their ball out of the designated area. This can be from others hitting the ball away or simply losing control of the ball.

The last player in wins the game!

Variations

- Players can only use their non-preferred hand. This variation really changes youth players! I recommend using it.

Coaching Points

- Players must keep their head up!
- Make sure no players are standing off by themselves. They must attack each other!
- Players should be in a low stance with their off-hand up protecting the basketball.

RAINBOW SHOOTING

How the Drill Works

Players line up in two lines on the baseline and take it in turns to pass the ball to a shooter and then cut around in a U-shape to receive the ball and take a shot.

Purpose

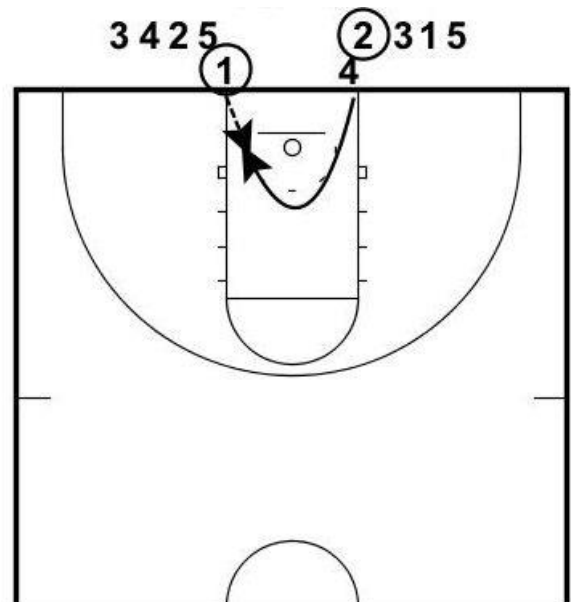
This is a great warm-up and shooting drill for youth basketball. It gives players a chance to shoot many repetitions from all spots on the floor.

Setup

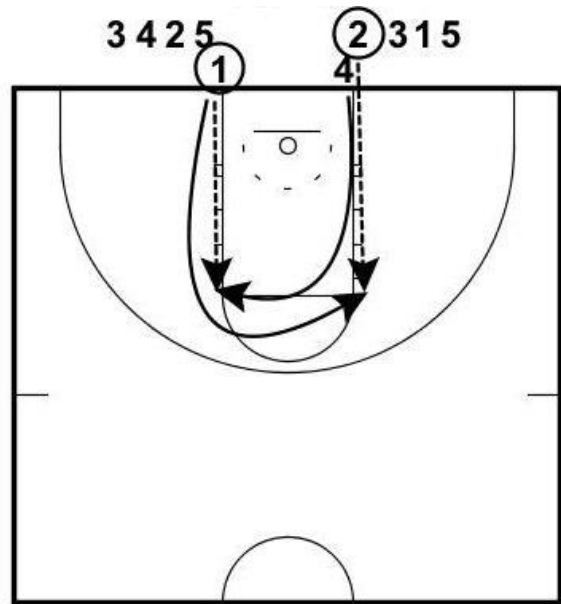
- Two basketballs. One to the first person in one of the lines, and the other to the second person in the other line (because the first person in the line without a basketball will be the first player to cut).
- Everyone below the baseline. Half of your team on each side starting just outside the key line. Refer to the diagram.

Instructions

1. The player at the front of the line without a ball does a half circle and receives the pass off the player at the front of the other line. The player that received the pass does a layup, rebounds the ball, and then passes to the line he received the ball off. Then joins that line.



2. The player that passes to the shooter does a half-circle behind the shooter to the other side and receives the pass. Same as the first player, they do a layup, rebound, and then pass to the line they received off.
3. This continues until all players have shot a layup from both sides or until you've made the required amount of shots.
4. Once completed, they then move onto the next shot. I have 5 different spots my players must all shoot from twice. Your spots may be different depending on age.
 - a) A layup.
 - b) From the block.
 - c) From the elbow.
 - d) From the 3-point line.
 - e) Fake and drive.



Scoring System

The whole team scores as a team. The coach sets a number of makes from each position and the players must count out loud as they make shots and encourage each other.

For example the team might make 20 layups, 15 shots from the block, 10 shots from the elbow, 5 threes, and then 20 fake and drive layups.

Coaching Points

- Make sure players are using both left and right hands on the layup.
- All players should be loud and calling for the ball.
- Showing a target with their hands.
- Square up on the inside foot.

FOUR CORNER PASSING

How the Drill Works:

Players start behind a cone at the four corners of a square area. On the coaches call, they dribble in towards the middle, make a jump stop, pivot, and pass to the next line before joining the end of it.

Purpose:

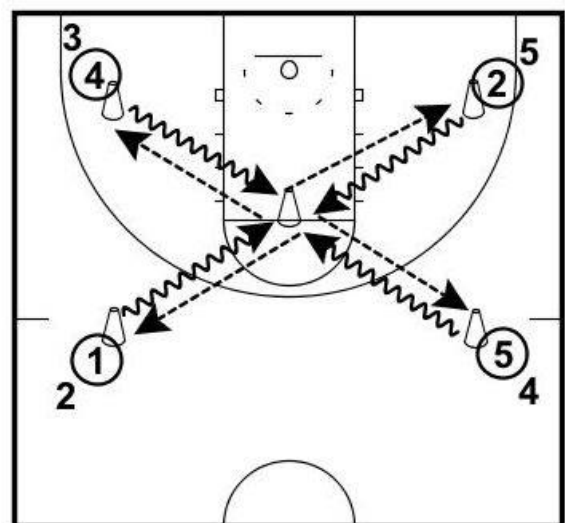
The drill works on incredibly important fundamental footwork skills all youth players must learn: The jump stop, front pivot or reverse pivot, and then passing to a teammate.

Setup:

- A coach marks the corners of a large square with four cones.
- The players line up evenly behind each cone, facing the middle of the square.
- A coach can stand in the middle of the square or place an object in the middle of the square so they players are all running to the same point.
- One basketball at the front of each line.

Instructions

1. The first thing a coach must do is tell the players which pivot foot they'll be using, whether they'll be performing a forward or reverse pivot, and then make sure they all know which line they'll be passing to. I make sure everyone points which at which line they're passing to so that no one gets confused.



2. On the coaches whistle or call, the first player of each line dribbles in, performs a jump stop, performs the correct pivot, passes to the next line, and then joins the end of the line they passed to.
3. The coaches waits for all passes to be made and then calls for the next group to start dribbling in who then perform the same series of moves.
4. Every couple of minutes change the pivot or direction.

Variations:

Pivot – Can perform a front or a reverse pivot. Make sure you teach these different pivots to them first before doing the drill. But this drill can help them practice it.

Directions – Change whether the players are passing to the left or the right. This will change which pivot foot they use and the hand they'll be dribbling with.

Coaching Points:

- Jump stops should be small and balanced. Young players have a tendency to jump as high as they can. Emphasise that the higher you jump, the more off balance you will be when you land.
- Players should stay in stance when they pivot and not raise up.
- Emphasise hard, flat passes to the next line. It's a passing drill too!
- The player receiving the ball should have target hands showing and immediately go into triple threat position upon catching the ball.

FULL COURT 4 ON 3 - NO DRIBBLING

How the Drill Works:

This is a competitive small-sided game. Players play 4 on 3 for down the full court with no dribbles allowed.

Purpose:

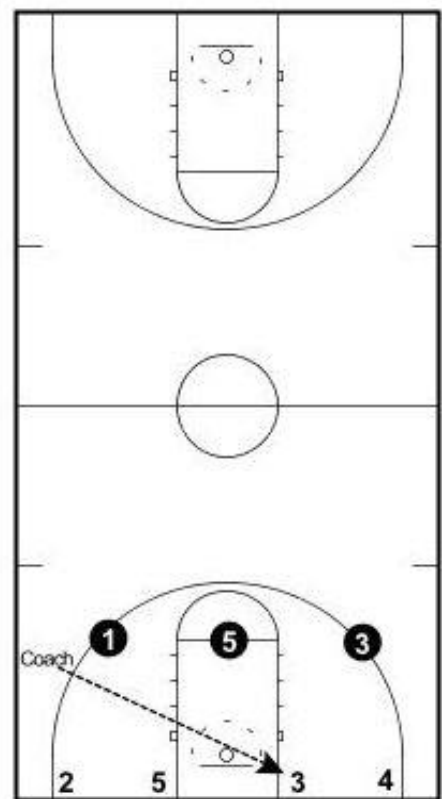
Giving the offensive team an extra offensive player is a great way to teach them to pass to the open player and read the play. With the correct spacing, one of the offensive players will always be open. A great passing drill in a competitive game.

Setup:

- Four offensive players spread out along the baseline.
- Three defensive players spread out along the closest free-throw line extended.
- Coach with a basketball.

Instructions

1. The coach passes the ball to one of the offensive players and the game starts.
2. The players play a real game and have free control to do whatever they want to move the ball down the floor as long as they don't dribble the basketball.



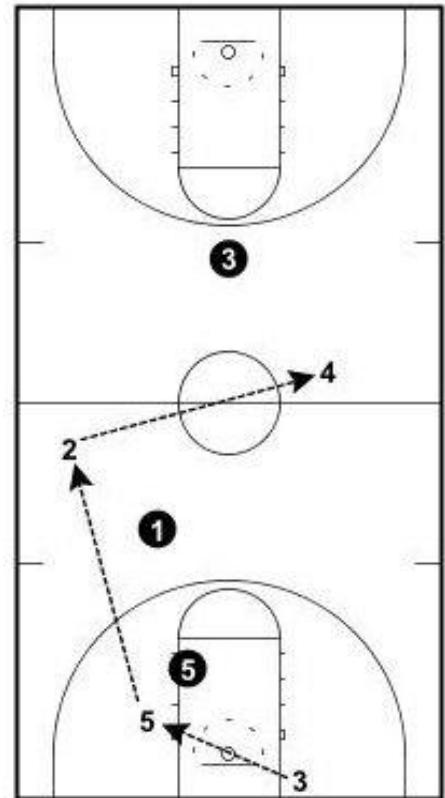
3. Once the defense gets a steal, a rebound, or the shot is made, three of the four offensive players sprint down and become the three new defenders while everyone else hurries off the court and joins the end of a line.

Scoring System:

Scoring is not kept since the teams will be constantly changing, but the players are looking to score the basketball.

Variations:

Add a Defender - If you really want to push your players you can add an extra defender to make it 4 on 4. I do this occasionally just to change things up for the final few minutes of the drill. But it does make it much harder for the players and will require patience by the passer and great movement and spacing.



Coaching Points:

- Emphasise the importance of spacing when you have an extra player. Don't allow one defender to guard two offensive players.
- The player with the ball must be patient and wait for a smart pass.
- Since this is a small-sided game, try not to give too many lectures during the drill. Let them play and learn from experience.

PLUS ONE

How the Drill Works:

The squad is split into two teams with at least 5 players. The players will play a game up and down the court adding a player at each end.

Purpose:

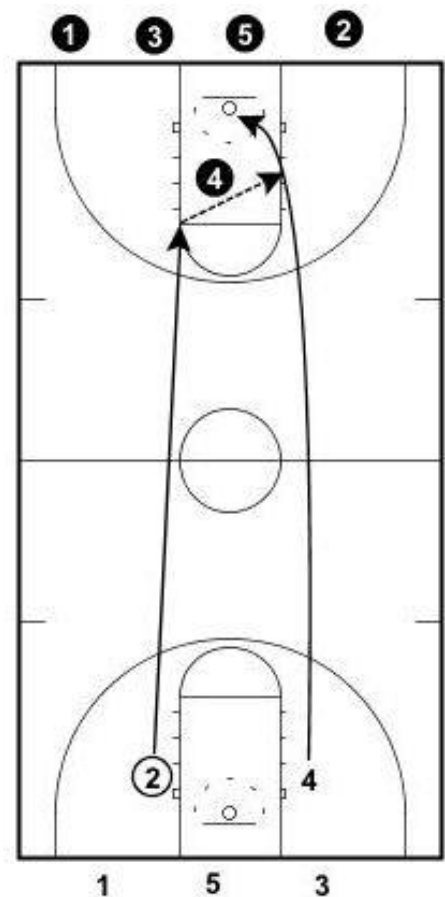
This is a terrific advantage/disadvantage drill. One team will always have an extra player when they play offense. This drill simulates real game situations and is great for working on conditioning and developing player IQ on offense and defense.

Setup:

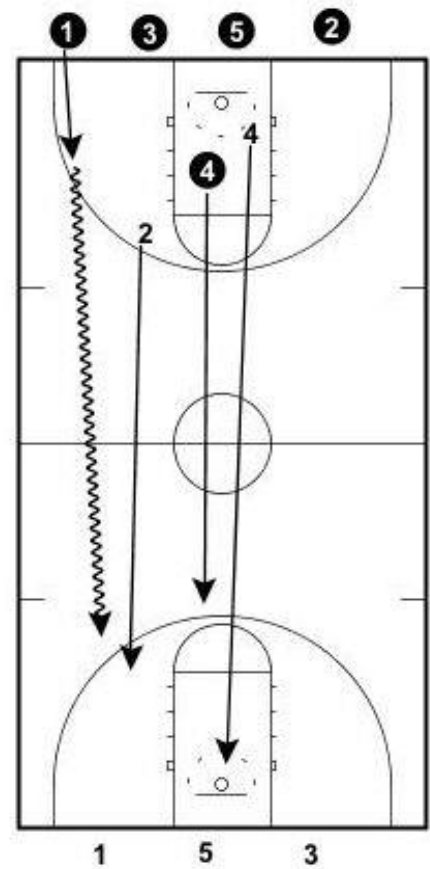
- One Basketball
- 2 teams of 5 players.
- The advantage/offensive team starts with the ball and with two players.
- The disadvantage/defensive team starts with one player in.
- The rest of the players from both teams start on the baseline.

Instructions

1. The two offensive players attack the one defender in an advantage situation.



2. Once the defender gets the ball (whether the offensive team made the shot or not), another player from the defensive team immediately comes in to make it 2 on 2.
3. They play to the other end of the court and again, when a shot is made or missed, another offensive player comes in to make it 3 on 2.
4. This pattern continues until they finish with 5 on 5.
5. Then the teams swap over so now the defending team starts with 2 on 1 and has the advantage.



Scoring System:

Normal scoring. Two pointers and three pointers.

Remember that one team has an advantage so the teams must both play as the advantage team an even amount of times for the scoring to be fair.

Coaching Points:

- This is a transition drill so try not to let the players hold the ball up to much. I usually make a 15 second limit on each possession.
- The players must run hard!
- This is a great drill for basketball IQ. Make sure your players are making the right reads with an offensive advantage and are in the correct spots when disadvantaged on defense.

TITAN SHOOTING

How the Drill Works:

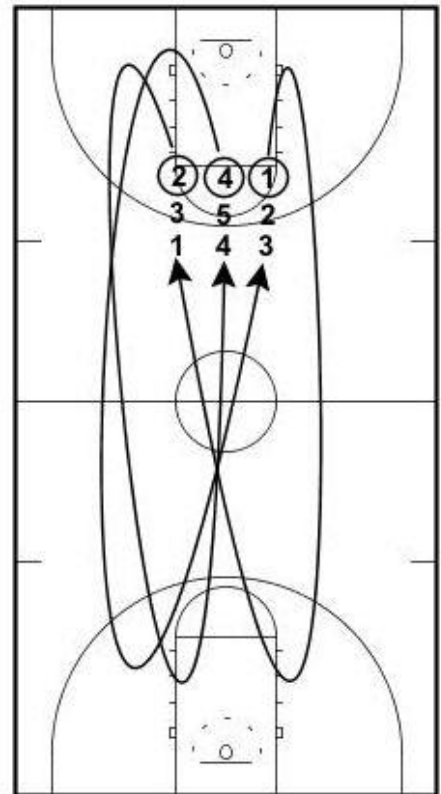
Players line up in three lines on the free-throw line. One line in the middle and one on each high post. Players shoot against a time limit while running back to a designated line after each shot for conditioning.

Purpose:

A fantastic team conditioning shooting drill if you have a limited number of baskets. The team attempts to make a certain number of shots against a time limit.

Setup:

- Only one basket needed.
- Three lines of players. One on each high post and one in the middle of the free throw line.
- One basketball at the front of each line.
- The coach picks a line that the players must run to depending on the amount of players and age of the players.



Instructions

1. The first player in each line shoots the ball, gets their own rebound, and passes it back to the same line they shot from.
2. After passing back to the line, the player must run to the designated line chosen by the coach and then sprint back and join a different line.

3. This process continues for all players until the time limit is up.

Scoring System:

The coach sets a target amount of makes before the drill and the players have a certain amount of time to achieve it.

The entire team counts out loud whenever a basket is made.

The coach writes down the score at the end of the drill and that can be used as the target to beat whenever you run the drill in the future.

Variations:

1. **Time** - I usually run this drill for three minutes but you can change the length depending on the level and age of your players.
2. **Distance to Run** - Depending on the amount of players and the amount of space you have, you can vary the distance that players run between these four options:
 - a) No running. Join the end of the line after shot.
 - b) Run to half court.
 - c) Run to opposite free throw line.
 - d) Run full court.
3. **Shooting Distance** - If you have older players that utilise the three point shot, you can run the Titan Shooting drill from the three point line.
4. **Competing Teams** - Instead of setting a target number for your whole squad, you can split the squad into two different teams and run the Titan Shooting drill at opposite ends of the floor against each other.

Coaching Points:

- Players must be showing target hands when preparing to catch and shoot.

- Make sure the players are sprinting at 100%. This is a conditioning shooting drill. Players are tired in the game and so we want them shooting tired in practice.
- Players must call for the ball. There will be a lot of congestion so the passer must know who they're passing to.
- Players must chase down the rebound. Emphasise that the quicker they rebound and get the ball back to the next player, the more shots they'll get as a team.

WAR

How the Drill Works:

An incredibly fun drill that all players love. Players line up along the sidelines in two teams and are assigned a number by the coach. The coach then calls out specific numbers and the players sprint in and play a full court game against each other.

Purpose:

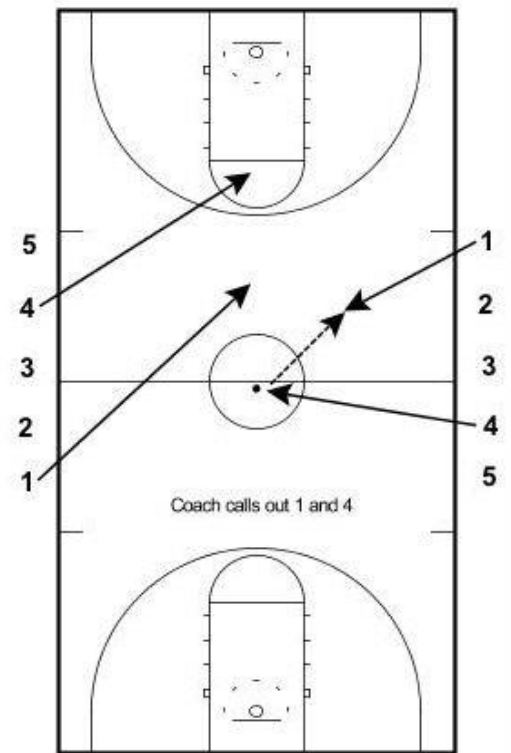
A great drill to make small-sided games lots of fun. This drill involves small-sided games over and over again using different line ups.

Setup:

- Divide all the players you have into two equal teams (you must have an even number of players) and line them up along opposite sides of the court.
- Give each individual on each team a consecutive number depending on how many players you have (eg. 1-10).
- For example if you have 20 players all up, you'll have two teams of 10 players. And on each team, each player will have a number between 1 and 10.
- Coach needs a ball and to stand in the middle of the court.
- Assign each team a basket to score in so that players know which way to attack and which way to defend.

Instructions

1. To start the drill, the coach throws the ball up in the air and calls out specific numbers of the players. So if the coach calls out 2, 4, and 6, the players numbered 2, 4, and 6 from both teams will play against each other. The great thing about this drill is that you can make them play 2 on 2, 4 on 4, or even 10 on 10 (I save that one for last!).
2. The numbered players that are called out sprint in to try and get possession and then try and score.
3. Both teams keep playing until there is a score and then they go back to their lines.



Scoring System:

You can either set a number of points and the first team to reach that number wins. Or play for a certain amount of time and the team with the most points at the end wins.

Variations:

Include coaches and even parents in on the action. In fact, at the end of every year with my junior teams I have a coaches/parents vs players game of this. Incredibly fun.

Coaching Points:

- The coach calling out the numbers must keep a fair idea of how many turns each kid has had to make it even.
- I do want to make coaches aware that the initial sprint in to gain possession is usually hard fought (no harder than in the games really), but do make sure no kid is doing anything dangerous when attacking the ball.
- Make sure you choose everyone for the final possession. The kids love it!

WHAT'S NEXT?

You've now made it through my five (seven) favorite youth basketball drills. I hope you've enjoyed the eBook as much as I enjoyed putting it together for you.

Using the correct drills with your players is very important for long-term success and I hope this eBook has provided you with a few different drills that you can use with your team to help them improve their basketball skills.

Now that you're subscribed to my newsletter I will be sending you emails of my blog updates and also weekly coaching tips that ONLY go out to my subscribers. Just because I like you guys so much!

If after reading this short ebook you have any questions (whether they're questions about the ebook or coaching in general) please don't hesitate to contact me.

The absolute best way to contact me is on **Twitter** at [@abballcoachmac](https://twitter.com/abballcoachmac) or on my **FaceBook** page (<https://www.facebook.com/BasketballForCoaches>).

Alternatively, if you'd like to contact me by private email you can reach out to me at coachmac@basketballforcoaches.com.

Finally a sincere thank you to you all for being coaches. You're all making a difference, remember that.

Keep up the good work!

– *Coach Mac*