



PERIMETER PLAYER PRINCIPLES

PHILOSOPHY:

- Think like your coach!!!
- If you are going to do something, then do it. Don't be hesitant or passive. Be decisive. Know what you are supposed to do and then do it aggressively.
- Know what coach expects in certain situations
- Know what our goal is for each player—are you supposed to pass the ball to a certain person or can you look to create offense?
- Look to score in the paint
- Attack first. Be an offensive threat.
- Have a scorer's mentality. Think shot first every time that you catch the ball. You don't have to shoot but you must be ready to every time that you catch.
- Guards have the ball more than other players and they can see what is happening on the court better than other players. Therefore, they are in the best position to be an extension of the coaching staff and a go-between for the other players.
- Ultimate measure of a perimeter player is the scoreboard. A shooting guard might have a good game, but if the team loses then the guard's individual performance misses its' mark when it comes to the big picture. It is a team game and you must figure out a way to help your teammates get better, while you also figure out the best way for you to contribute in a role that is conducive to team success.
- All perimeter players should strive for a point guard mentality. There are very few exceptions of a great player that is only a point guard or only a shooting guard. Some of the best players in the history of the game (Michael Jordan, Jerry West, Kobe Bryant, Lebron James, etc...) were versatile and had a well-rounded perimeter game.
- Better rebounder you are then the better chance you have to play and help your team.

LEADERSHIP:

- **Vocal Leadership** – If you aren't vocal, then it is impossible to achieve your potential as a leader. It's not enough to just "lead by example" on the court; perimeter players (those who handle the ball the most) have more control over the game and therefore must be able to control the game and keep their team organized (calling out sets, etc), which normally comes through vocalization.
- **Lead by Example** – Everybody can be a leader by what you do. Your passion, energy, integrity, example and enthusiasm can be contagious to your teammates.
- Leadership can't be turned on and off like a water faucet. The games are only the tip of the iceberg.



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GETTING OPEN:

- Moving without the Ball:
 - You create shots for yourself by what you do without the ball more than what you do after you get it.
 - Don't just move...move w/a purpose.
 - You must be aware of how your defender is playing you. You'll usually want to fake one way and then cut another to get open.
 - You'll notice that players who are most successful at getting open without the ball don't waste effort. They don't try to run from their defenders or play hide-and-seek, they read the defense and make sharp cuts. They use change-of-pace, sharp V cuts, and makes use of screens—either coming off of them or setting them.
- Receiving Screens
 - Set your man up
 - Be patient. Wait for the screen to be set.
 - Your first move should be opposite of where you want to end up
- Setting Screens
 - First responsibility is to set a wide, solid screen
 - Open up and step to the ball after setting screen
 - Screener will always be open if a switch occurs

RECEIVING THE BALL:

- You catch with 2-eyes, 2-feet, and 2-hands...in that order.
- Move your feet to catch a pass before you move your upper body (hands) to catch the ball. This will cut down steals and deflections.
- Best way to successfully catch the ball is to keep your defender from getting to the ball. Be strong, hold them off and catch the ball.
- Catch the ball with 10 fingers, not your palms. Look the ball in.
- Must do all of these things within seconds! Must be HABIT.
- Immediately get into "Triple Threat"
- Make a quick decision when receiving the outlet (seal for lob, box out for direct pass). If don't know then do a banana cut.
- All players should assume triple-threat position after catching the ball. This means they are squared-up and facing the basket putting them in a position to do one of three things when they get the ball: shoot, dribble, or pass. The more options you have with the ball, the greater threat you are to the defense.
- Anticipate—read the defense and know what you might do before receiving the ball.



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- If you're ready to shoot the ball before it gets to you—hand and feet positioned properly, knees bent, body lined up with the basket—you will be able to get off the shot much more quickly and score, even if your defender is quicker than you are.
- Even when you are standing still during a game you should be in a position to shoot.
- Come to the ball on a pass; don't wait for the ball to come to you
- Get in triple threat on the catch; don't put ball above head
- Hold defender off when receiving the ball from out-of-bounds
- A player should be able to successfully execute his play (pass, shot, and drive) within three seconds after receiving the ball.

DRIBBLING:

- There are only a few reasons to dribble the basketball:
 1. To advance the ball up-court.
 2. To improve a passing angle of spacing.
 3. To set or reset the offense.
 4. To get by a defender for a shot.
- Lateral dribbles are a waste of time and energy. You want to attack the basket at all times, even when reversing the ball. There's no reason to stand out front and pound the ball, going nowhere.
- A pullback crossover dribble is one of the most effective ways to beat pressure defenses.
- Changing speeds while dribbling also can shake loose a defender. When facing pressure defense it often isn't how fast you dribble, it's keeping them off balance. If you slow down or hesitate, thus making the defender slow down, you can cut sharply and work yourself free. This negates an advantage in the quickness the defender might have.
- Passing advances the ball quicker than dribbling.
- Never pick up your dribble without a pass or a shot.
- Whatever you can do with 1-ball, you should be able to do with 2-balls.
- Whatever you can do with the right hand, you should be able to with the left hand.
- All players should practice their dribbling as if they are the only point guard their team has.
- Protect the ball at all times

PASSING:

- General Tips
 - Rarely will you throw a direct chest pass. There is almost always a defender in the way.



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- Passing becomes easier as you become more familiar with your teammates and how they like to play. If you know what they like to do and what they can do, you can make better decisions during games.
- Read and pass away from the receiver's defender
- Never pass to a receiver that doesn't call for and want the ball
- Fake a pass; Make a Pass!
- Look off the receiver—use split vision to see the passing lane and receiver. Avoid telegraphing pass by turning the head and looking directly at the receiver. Use quick wrist action for all passes. Eliminate all unnecessary movements like winding up and stepping with the pass.
- There is a big difference between a completed pass and a successful pass.
- You pass the ball during a game far more often than you shoot it.
- MMC Rules
 - Direct pass to the post or lob it to the post; limit your bounce passes and "leading" passes
 - Don't throw it to the post if they are outside the paint
 - Get ball up in the air when lobbing to the posts

TYPES OF SHOTS:

- Layups
 - Must be able to explode and finish in the paint; sprint through the layup—don't shuffle feet or slow down
 - Be able to explode off of 1-and-2 feet
- Pullup Jumpers
 - Be able to stop on a dime and shoot on the way up
- Stepback Jumpers
 - Don't fadeaway; go straight up
- 3-Pointers
 - Only shoot when receiving an inside-out pass or on a designed play that calls for a "3".

PERIMETER MOVES:

- Moves
 - Layup
 - Manu Ginobili
 - Really sell it; don't slow down when making the move
 - Spin
 - Stay low and explosive when spinning; shoot when you spin—don't pass



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- Inside-out
 - Keep the ball low; sell the fake crossover
- Thru Leg Crossover
 - Keep ball low; lunge position
- Front Crossover
 - Keep ball low; protect it from defense; turn your hand over the ball
- Behind Back Crossover
 - Stay low
- Double Move Crossover
 - Keep ball low
- Show & Go (shot fake)
 - Butt low; ball high on the fake then explode
- Reverse Layups
 - Protect the ball from help defenders
- Pullup Jumpers
 - Stop on a dime; Get ball up in the air
- Stepback Jumpers
 - V-shape; straight up/down; go at angles
- Stepback Crossovers
 - Hesitate but stay low before exploding on crossover
- Steve Nash Floaters
- Key Points
 - Be efficient. Don't work on a lot of moves; rather perfect 2-3 "go to" moves.
 - Your explosive moves should look like a sprinter coming out of the starting blocks in track.
 - Confidence is built through skill development that is absorbed through repetition. Habits, Habits, Habits
 - Take advantage of what the defense gives you & make them pay.
 - All players should be able to dribble with either hand at a high rate of speed, and be able to change direction while dribbling. You don't need a lot of moves, though. A couple of strong moves, such as a crossover dribble or a behind-the-back move, are all you need, particularly at younger levels of play. Think of dribbling like giving away money. With each bounce of the ball you're giving away more money. So you want to be efficient in your dribbling and do it no more than necessary.
 - Best players have a counter move as an alternative to their main move.
 - "Long and Strong" w/your first dribble
 - Get somewhere. Get separation from defender.
 - Tuck ball like a running back when attacking the rim.
 - Stay low and explosive



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- Shot fakes—butt down; ball up
- Generally speaking, if you get fouled on a jump shot or get the shot blocked then you shouldn't have shot it.

HANDLING PRESSURE:

- Pullback dribble is one of best things to do against pressure and/or when stopped or slowed down while trying to attack
- Guards should act like post players to get open versus denial pressure on the press break.
- Expect to be pressured always. If the defense doesn't step up on you, nothing is lost in your preparation. You can prepare for pressure by:
 - Turning and facing your defender strong—you can't pass, penetrate with the dribble, or shoot if you fail to make the turn.
 - You dictate, not the defender—try to step into the defender and get them off balance. If possible get your lead foot even or outside their forward defensive foot. You can and must go where you maintain and advantage on the defender.
 - Protect the ball with your body and elbows—when your arms are extended is the point at which you have your weakest grip. This also allows a defender to use your own strength against you when you're bringing the ball closer back to your body to protect it. Also use a pivot with your body between you and your defender if they belly up on you before you can turn and step into their pressure. Turn with your elbows out and ball tight to your chin.
 - Take your time—the uncertainty of when and where you might attack is one of the most effective tactics against an aggressive defender. Over aggressive defenders almost always leave an opening to attack. Learn that and learn to take advantage of it. You don't have to rush things.
 - Keep your balance, keep your control—even a slower dribbler who protects the ball can handle the pressure and not turn it over if they keep their heads up, keep their body in balance and control. Practice dribbling the ball at various speeds and movement rhythms, such as walking, stepping slowly, then faster, then a little slower, using long strong a short strides.
 - Keep the defender on their heels of crossing their feet—pass first, dribble last. But when you must dribble you must put the defender literally on their heels. Changing speeds and rhythms is the best way to accomplish this and contributes to forcing the defender to cross their feet at some point. When you must dribble do so to penetrate, cover distance, advance the ball, or get out of trouble but do so confidently not fearful of losing the ball. Everyone loses the ball sometime; don't make that fear your focus.



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- Trouble spots:
 - Sidelines and Baseline (end lines)
 - Mid-Court Lines or Corne
 - Pass Before You Are Trapped

WORKOUTS:

- Either the workout beats you or you beat the workout.
- Shooting should always be practiced at game speed
- Make your workouts or practices harder than the games
- The point is to be able to break through the "comfort zone." That's the purpose of a workout, whether its weightlifting or running, where it really begins to hurt and you start to think of quitting. If you can train yourself to keep going, to break through that zone, you begin to develop a reserve of strength. It's like having money in the bank that you can withdraw when you need it. When it's late in the game and everyone is tired, if you have extra strength and mental toughness as a result of your conditioning program, chances are good that you'll come out ahead.
- "Fatigue makes cowards of us all." You need to be in shape or you won't be able to use your abilities to their fullest. Another benefit of being in great shape is that it reduces your risk of injury. Common injuries or ailments such as shin splints, cramps, and pulled muscles rarely happen to players who are in great shape.
- And practice only the shots you would take in a game and vice versa.



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Developing the Point Guard Mentality -- 8 Characteristics of Great Point Guards

Developing the skills of the point guard is a tedious, careful, and slow process. Coaches can cultivate excellent point guards if they take the right approach to the mental aspect of the game first. Great point guards are tough, unselfish; understand the game, and mentally strong. A winning point guard is in command when the game is on the line and makes all other players better by his presence.

Players are never too young to begin learning the truths of the game. Starting with the fundamentals, a young player must become comfortable with dribbling, passing, shooting, and playing defense. As players develop physically, they also gain knowledge of how to play the game. This development is key for point guards because their position is the most important on the floor. A good point guard makes the team go. **The following eight skills are necessary for great point guards:**

1. Study and understand your teammates-The point guard more than anyone of the floor knows each of his teammates inside and out. He knows all roles on the team and makes it a priority to enhance each of their strengths. He knows how to put them into situations where each player can be successful. For example, a post player is instructed to post up on the blocks and not float out to the perimeter. His skills and ability will impact the team most by playing around the basket. Roles are crucial to good teams and the point guard can solidify the team unit with good leadership skills.

2. Be the coach on the floor and in the locker room-A good point guard embraces his coach's philosophy of the game and instills it on the floor. Knowing what the coach wants and does not want is a rare trait among players. For example, if a team's philosophy is to shoot as many three point shots as possible, the point guard needs to get the ball in the shooter's hands in scoring areas often. If the style of play is to push the ball up the floor, then the point guard needs to organize the break, push it hard, and attack the defense. The term "coach on the floor" belongs to great point guards.

3. Earn the players trust- For a team to follow a leader, they must believe that he would do anything for them. Not only must he play extremely hard, but he can motivate teammates to do the same. Without confidence in your floor general, a team is left vulnerable.

4. Set the tone in practice-Your point guard must understand how a successful practice



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is run and what the goal of practice is. By serving as a model, he can set the pace for a good practice. Conversely, when a leader is not willing to give it his all, the team will suffer by having a bad practice.

5. Knowledge of each possible situation-Understanding what to do in every situations is the duty of a great point guard. He must know who is in the game and how he can set up teammates to be successful. Offensively, the game plan must be played out to perfection. Good shots, smart passes, and good screening are a must and can be dictated by the point guard. Point guards are responsible for knowing the time and score at all times, the importance of each possession, and control the tempo. He need to be aware of what is taking place and what needs to be accomplished on both ends of the floor. A good test is to watch a leader take over a game at winning time. When his team is out of time outs, the great players take over the does what it takes to win.

6. Unselfishness-Many coaches interpret this to mean the point guard should not look to score. This is not the case, especially if scoring is a strength of your point guard. Unselfishness means that he will sacrifice his game at times to find better opportunities for teammates. Great point guards always make others on the floor better because of his presence.

7. Defensive leadership-A great assist to a teammate for a layup is great, but can't match the impact of solid defensive play. Defense wins games and by taking a charge or forcing a turnover, any player helps his team win. It is more difficult to inspire teams to play defense at times. Players love offense and tolerate defense. A great point guard can lead a team to take ownership of the defensive end of the floor.

8. Handle success and defeat in perspective-Athletic competition is a constant flow of highs and lows. Young players are often greatly affected by the outcome of games. By developing a solid point guard, you will provide your team with a peer who can keep them grounded. Winning often breeds complacency in a team and a good point guard can keep success in perspective. Conversely, a loss can be tough on a team. Good point guards are able to pick up the team with his toughness and work ethic. This characteristic is the foundation of all great point guards.

Randy Brown has enjoyed a successful 23-year coaching career. Mentored by Basketball Hall of Fame coach Lute Olson at Arizona, he learned the game from the best. At 39, Randy became the head coach at Division I Stetson University in Deland, Florida. His efforts have helped develop 12 NBA players including Steve Kerr, Sean Elliott, and Jaamal Tinsley. He currently works as a basketball consultant, speaker, author, and mentor for coaches. Randy Brown can be reached at coachrandybrown@yahoo.com



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POINT GUARD TIPS

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Thanks to **Coach Duane Silver** for passing on this list from Sheridan Junior College Coach **Steve Smiley**. We have posted several things from Steve on our site. He is a former player of **Coach Don Meyer** at Northern State University where he wrote a great book, "Playing for Coach Meyer." This is a great list:

- 1. Vocal Leadership** – If your PG isn't vocal, they can't command the team. It's not enough to just "lead by example" on the court; the PG must be able to control the game and keep their team organized (calling out sets, etc)...
- 2. Lead by Example** – We all expect our PG's to be leaders, so they must lead by example on and off the floor. They have to have leadership qualities to be able to run a team. One good "on-the court" example would be their defensive stance and on-ball pressure as the ball moves up the floor. If they are a ball-hawk and showing extreme pressure to the ball, there is a good chance the rest of the team will also buy in to being in a stance.
- 3. Have a good relationship with the coach** - We all say that the PG must be an extension of the coaching staff on the court, so there must be a solid relationship between the coach and PG so they can always feel comfortable communicating with each other.
- 4. Not a "Shoot-first" player** - They don't necessarily need to always be a pass-first PG, especially in high school where the PG might also be the best scorer, but they can not be a player that typically will bring the ball up the floor looking to go one-on-one and creating shots just for themselves. The offense will become stagnant and other players will shut down, because they know their chances of being involved offensively are low.
- 5. Have a high IQ for the game / feel for the game** – They have to understand special situations, the flow of the game, the time & score, when to attack, when to pull it out, etc.
- 6. Have a high conditioning threshold** – if the PG isn't in shape and is expected to play big minutes and minutes at the end of the game, they will break down mentally once their body breaks down, so it is huge for them to be in great shape.
- 7. Make the easy pass, and not always the "assist" pass** – Sometimes PG's make foolish passes because they know the ball will be in their hand much of the time. Have them keep it simple. The reason Steve Nash can make the passes he can make is



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because he works on it every day and he is the best in the world. There aren't a lot of Steve Nashes out there, so use the KISS principle – "Keep It Simple, Stupid".

8. Be able to knock down the open shot – I couldn't shoot, and I played a lot of minutes, and it definitely hurt my team at times. The PG typically won't get a ton of shots off of set plays or screens because he or she is setting up others, but the PG must be able to hit the open shot in transition, on post-feed kick-outs, etc.

9. Have "Gears" – I'm talking about a change of pace in their game. The toughest PG's aren't the ones who are extremely fast, but the ones that are always playing at different speeds. They have deception in their game.

10. Have a "Motor" – summarizes a lot of the points already made, but the PG has to play extremely hard, and be eager to do all of the dirty jobs. The PG must be willing to guard the full length of the court, push the ball in transition, be vocal, and play with a tremendous amount of energy.