

COACHING PRINCIPLES

THE ART OF SHOOTING

Great shooters are made through hours and hours of practice, repetition, and sacrifice. Practice and sacrifice are necessary for all athletes, but repetition is the key to becoming a great shooter. Shooters are made by shooting a basketball over and over correctly. If a player does not practice shooting a basketball correctly, he will not become a better shooter.

Shooting a basketball is a muscle-memory reflex in that all body parts must go through the same motions every time the basketball is shot. The entire body must be memorized to do the same thing each time the basketball is shot. The basketball must be shot the same way every time.

The skill of shooting a basketball can only be accomplished through repetition and hours and hours of practicing properly. The following are four basic steps in shooting a basketball. Each is simple to learn but take repetition to master. The four basic steps begin with the letters, "B", "E", "E", "F" which spells "BEEF".

I. Balance

A. STANCE

1. FEET

- Right foot forward four to six inches (for a right hand shooter)
- Feet should be parallel.
- Feet are a comfortable distance apart - should width apart.
- Feet pointed toward the basket.
- Weight on balls of feet not on heels.

2. LEGS

- Legs bent at knees to have proper balance (not straight legged)
- Legs flexed when the ball is caught.
- Legs under body.
- Power comes from legs.

3. BODY

- Head, trunk, feet in vertical line
- Body cannot be leaning forward or backwards.
- All body parts under control.
- Head directly below mid-point between feet.
- Head control body balance.

II. Elbow Straight

A. ELBOW

- All is guided by elbow.
- All will go in direction in which elbow is pointed.
- Elbow in and pointed toward basket.
- Elbow under the ball, not floating.
- Elbow raised according to individual strength (right angle).
- Right foot, knee, hip, shoulder, elbow, wrist, and index finger should all be in a straight vertical line (for right hand shooters).
- Elbow must be straight.

B. HANDS

- All held with fingers not palms or finger tips (middle and last finger joints).
- Index finger of shooting hand should be in the middle of the ball with thumb supporting the ball.
- Remaining three fingers hold ball in place.
- Opposite hand is used to hold ball in place (Fingers not palm).
- Opposite elbow out with wrist cocked.
- Ball should be caught in shooting position.

C. WRIST

- Wrist should be cocked and under the ball as far as possible.
- Wrist in comfortable position.
- Wrist provides power, control, and arch.

III. Eyes on Rim

A. EYES

- Eyes focused on the front of the rim (middle prong).
- Ball shot to go over the front of the rim.
- Eyes should never follow the flight of the ball but remain focused on the front of the rim (concentration).
- Confidence - knowing the ball is going in.

IV. Follow Through

- The shooting hand (index finger) must be pointed into the rim (not snapped downward).
- Hand straight forward or slightly turned outward (never turned inwards toward body)
- Opposite hand stays in place.

in the same spot every time and pointed toward the basket or slightly to the left of a line perpendicular to the free throw line. The balance foot is about 15 to 18 degrees to the left.

Crip

The ball is on the whole shooting hand, with the balance hand on the side or under ball.

Wrist

Free throw shooters should cock the wrist back and lock it in place, much as they would for a set shot.

Elbow

Keep the elbow in close to the body, up, and in front of the wrist.

Weight Forward

Shooters should assume a modified basic position with weight over the front foot, hold the head steady, and keep the back straight.

Aim

The focus should be on the center eyelet in the back of the rim. A player should fix on

Free Throw Techniques

The key differences with regard to field goal shooting are alignment (foot position), keeping the weight forward, focusing on the same specific target each shot, pausing at the bottom of the shot, and establishing a ritual.

The complete free throw technique is shown in Figure 4.13.

Players should know how a good shot looks and feels and be able to shoot free throws with eyes closed. A shot should be executed with controlled tension—not too relaxed or too tight.

Align

The shooting foot, elbow, hand, and ball are aligned in a vertical plane with the basket. The alignment of the shooting foot should be

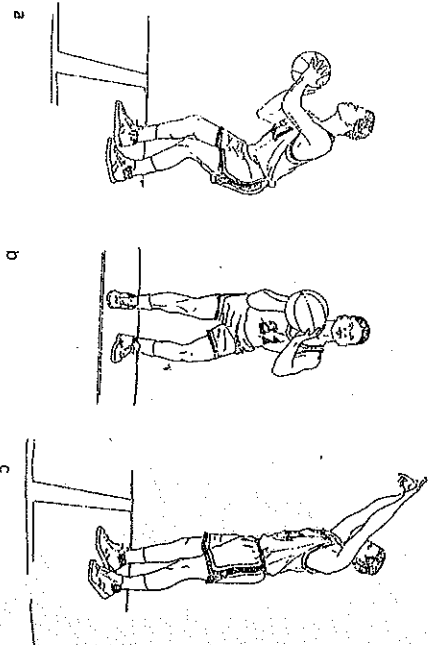


Figure 4.13 The free throw: get down with weight forward (a). Pause at the bottom of the shot (b). Follow through (c).

the net and think "make them pay." The focus on the target should continue until the ball goes through the net.

Pause

At the bottom of the shot the player should pause until physically and mentally calm and focused, but no longer. After the pause, all motion should be up and over toward the basket.

Follow-Through / Don't back off FT

Full extension and pronation are keys to the follow-through. The shooter should come up off the floor—get power from the legs. The upper arm should be at 30-35 degrees from the vertical on the follow-through.

Ritual

A ritual should be developed for the complete shot. Help each player do the same thing the same way, every time. It is much easier to groove a pattern that is always the same. A deep breath just before the shot should always be part of the ritual.

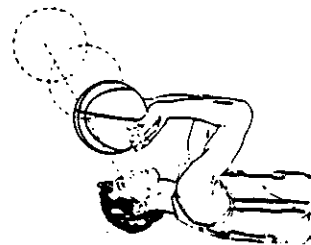
COACHING POINTS FOR FREE THROW SHOOTING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin in a low position on every shot (align) • Move weight forward, follow through • Pause at the bottom of each shot • Develop and follow a ritual • Keep it simple and do it the same each time

1. Body balance and control. Key--keep knees bent.
2. Stance--feet separated to about shoulder width.
3. Grip--shooting hand behind the ball and other hand used to balance or support it.
4. Position of elbow--pointed toward the goal.
5. Position of the ball before release--transfer ball balance from support hand to the shooting hand.
6. Sighting of the basket and target areas--key your sights on the nearest part of the rim.
7. Release of the ball--smooth release, pushing it toward the target.
8. Force behind the ball--first, push off your feet to obtain height for jump shot. Second, extend the forearm. Third, flex the wrist fourth, precision control by the fingertips.
9. Follow through--your momentum will carry you in toward the goal.
10. Flight arc of the ball--medium arc. If you are shooting off the front of the rim, increase the arc of the ball.
11. Concentrate on:
 - a. good percentage shot.
 - b. target that is familiar.
 - c. splitting the middle of the basket.
 - d. knowing where each shot hits in relation to your target.
 - e. know how to adjust your shooting techniques--don't miss the target in the same area and the same way.
12. Confidence--knowing that the ball is going through.

CHAMPIONS ARE MADE, NOT BORN!

What is a Good Shot?

1. A shot in which the player has obtained efficiency.
2. One that is taken on balance and in a smooth, rhythmic motion.
3. It should not be taken when tightly guarded unless a fake or offensive maneuver can reduce the effectiveness of the defense and free one for a good shot.
4. Team rebounding positioning and defensive balance must be available.



Shooting Concentration



BASIC SKILLS IN SHOOTING

<p>Hand Position on the Ball</p> <p>Span between thumb and first finger should not be too wide as this tends to tighten the wrist and not allow proper relaxed shooting form.</p>	<p>Keep the ball resting on the 1) Fingers and pads at the base of the fingers, not on the palm of the hand; finger control assures better accuracy.</p> <p>2) Slight pressure of the finger tips as if trying to leave fingerprints on the ball will give better ball control. To check your hand position, one finger should fit loosely between your palm and the ball with the basketball in your hand.</p>	<p>When shooting, with one hand guide the ball with the other hand. This helps you with the previous two suggestions and keeps the shot headed in the proper direction. There is less chance of curving the shot off-line.</p>
<p>The Arm Position</p> <p>Immediately before releasing the ball on a shot, the shooting arm should be more or less perpendicular to the floor and the elbow leading toward the basket. The wrist, elbow and shoulder should be in a straight line up and down.</p>	<p>Before extending the arm to shoot, the arm should be cocked with the forearm pointing basically upward, the upper arm basically parallel to the floor and the wrist bent backward to help the fingers support the ball.</p>	<p>Upon releasing the ball allow the arm to follow a forward motion so that the hands, wrist and arm form a fish-hook.</p>
<p>Proper Arc of Flight</p> <p>Shot that is too flat</p>	<p>This arc is too high.</p>	<p>This shot leaves the finger tips at approximately a 45° angle to the floor. It is a soft shot.</p>