



September Clinics: Skill Basics and Drills for Home

5th and 6th Grade

Sept 9th 2020 clinic focused on: 1. Passing; 2. Jump stop/triple threat/pivoting/sweeping; 3. Shooting basics; 4. Ball skills (stationary drills); 5. Dribbling. Future weeks will reinforce these skills and add additional ones.

Passing basics: Much of passing is hand-eye coordination. Pass back and forth with one basketball emphasizing stepping into the pass and stepping to receive the pass. Snap the ball from your chest, extend arms so elbows are straight, and be sure the back of your hands are facing each other with thumbs down after a pass. Be sure your child is not passing mostly with one side of her body, but instead is using both her hands and arms equally.

Drill to try at home: Work on perfecting technique, accuracy, and speed for chest pass and bounce pass. Once your child gets the form correct, add in movement, and pass back and forth while shuffling in one direction – be sure your child does not “travel” while shuffling, but instead passes the ball before moving her feet. As she advances, try passing two balls. You have one, she has the other. She will pass you a bounce at the same time you pass her a chest, then switch each time. This requires hand-eye coordination as well as quick thinking!

Jump stop/triple threat/pivoting/sweeping basics: Teaching your child how to jump-stop with both feet opens more possibilities once they catch the ball. They can then pivot on either foot, or as they advance, work on step around passes with either foot. Triple threat teaches your child how to protect the ball. The ball should be near their hip with one hand behind the ball and the other on the side of the ball. Eyes should be up, and your child should be in an athletic position ready to shoot, pass, or dribble (thus, the “triple threat”). Pivoting is a very important skill in basketball that opens your child up to successfully moving with the ball to look for the next play. Work on having your child pivot forward (lead with her front) while protecting the ball in triple threat. Pivot in reverse (lead with her back). Add in sweeps to protect ball.

Drill to try at home: Set a timer to see how long your child can pivot (without travelling or lifting her pivot foot off the ground) while keeping the ball away from you, her defender. Try to steal the ball and help her work on improving her sweeps to keep the ball protected. As your child advances, work on having her catch the ball with her back to the basket and use either a forward pivot and sweep, or, reverse pivot and sweep before she takes a shot.

Shooting basics: Put the basket at the height where YOUR child can shoot using correct form. Only put the basket to 10 feet when your child can use correct shooting form. We emphasize BEEF – Balance (using feet), Elbow in, Eyes on target, Follow-through. Ball should have an arc and spin backwards when you release off your second and third fingers.

Drill to try at home: Have your child work on form shots just in front of basket using only her shooting hand. Stress correct form, arc, and back spin. Play a game to 21 points: 2 for a “swish”, 1 for a make, and minus 1 for a miss.

Ball skills/dribbling/movement basics: Emphasize athletic position for stationary drills (knees slightly bent; back flat; toes facing forward (young girls tend to splay their feet with toes pointing outward); eyes up if possible. The more comfortable your child is dribbling the ball at an early age, the more confident she will be on the court. Stress good athletic position and looking UP while dribbling. Stress doing drills twice as often with your non-dominant hand.

Drills to try at home: Work on dribbling waist down (at first; older girls work on knee down) and stress the idea of keeping the ball “low” and “close” to your body. Work on form, speed, and dribbling in place without looking at the ball. Add in crossovers and add slight lean (put weight in foot you are passing from). A crossover is a PASS, not a dribble between your hands. Add dribbling drills with movement. Start with dribbling forward with one basketball – repeat using each hand. As your child gets more confident, add in a jump stop command and encourage them to jump stop, get in triple threat, and practice their pivoting and sweeps. Once your child can move with a little bit of speed with a single ball, try adding a second basketball so they can work on hand-eye coordination and ball control with their non-dominant hand at the same time as dominant. If this becomes easy, encourage them to alternate dribbles instead of dribbling in unison, and pick up the pace. Even try dribbling forward, and then backward with two balls.