

One-On-One Basketball Moves

Outside Live-Ball Moves

Many times you will receive a pass on the court and find that, although you are guarded, you are the closest one to the basket. It's now up to you to make a move with the ball so you can get off your shot. This is where you get to add your personal offensive touch. Being able to execute more than one of the following individual moves with the ball will greatly help you get free for your shot. Practice them when you're alone, using different fakes and varied speeds.

When you practice these moves, be sure that you turn, face the basket, and assume proper basketball position: your feet a shoulder's width apart and pointed toward the basket, your knees are flexed, and your shoulders are facing the basket. If you are right handed, keep the ball on your right side. If you are left handed, keep it on your left side.

The Drive

The drive, a quick move past the defender toward the hoop, is one of the most basic of all offensive basketball moves. If you are able to drive well, then you can get past your man and successfully penetrate the defense. Once you are close to the hoop you can then go for the shot yourself, possibly getting fouled; or, you can dish off to a teammate who can get an uncontested lay-up or a short- range jump shot.

Don't overuse the drive. What happens in a game when you continually look for the drive is that your defensive man automatically starts to back up once you have the ball. He knows what you want to do. By backing off, he denies you the first step to the hoop. This takes away any advantage that you had over him with the drive.

When this happens, a player has to bring out the best offensive weapon there is to get the drive back: the OUTSIDE shot. If the defense is laying off you to keep you from driving, then go for your jumper. After you make two or three of them, the defense will be forced to move back in close to keep you honest. Then you got your man right where you want him. He's more vulnerable than ever to your quickness, and you can use your drive again.

Sidney Moncrief says, "When I receive the ball I can set my man up for a drive by using ball, shoulder, or head fakes. Depending on the position of my defender, I can also fake a jump shot, get my man in the air, and go around him."

Moncrief goes on to say this about the mechanics of the drive. "When my man does go for one of my fakes, I push off my pivot foot, take a long quick first step toward the hoop, as I put the ball down hard on the floor just past the hip of the defender. When the ball is put down, I lift my pivot foot, push past the defender's shoulder and go for the hoop."

It's important to protect the ball with your body when you are driving. Do this by turning your trunk as much as possible to prevent any steals. For a drive to the basket, quickness and control are great assets to have. Practice your drive like this:

1. Face up and be square with the basket. Keep low, knees flexed, and in a good basketball offensive position.
2. With the ball in your hands, work on pushing off on your back foot and taking that first long step to the hoop.
3. Put the ball down hard on the floor, before you pick up your pivot foot.

Do this often. Once this first quick step starts to come naturally, you are on your way to becoming a dangerous driver. When you do commit yourself to going up for the shot, after the drive, concentrate on making the shot. It's going to be congested as you move to the hoop. Other players will pop out to pick you up. Concentrate on making the shot! Look to pass only if you can't get your shot off, or if you can spot a teammate in a better scoring position.

The Jab Step

The jab step is a common foot fake which, depending on the defensive player's reaction, is used to set up either a drive or a jump shot. To perform the jab step do the following:

1. Keep the ball in your hands at waist level or near your hips and establish proper basketball position.

2. Take a short, hard step (10 inches or less) toward the defensive man. At the same time, fake the dribble by bringing the ball down outside your knee.
3. Pause slightly to see the reaction of the defensive player.
4. If the defender lunges toward you, quickly take a longer step with the same foot and simultaneously push the ball out and drive right around his hip. (To get this move down in your mind, think of it as a one-two count move with a split second stop in the middle.

OR

When you make the jab step move and your defensive player plays you for the drive (he backs up and blocks your path), your next offensive possibility is to take a jump shot. You can do this by first, pulling back your lead foot and then going up for the shot.

It's important when you are going to make a jab step that your first step not be too long. Secondly, remember to keep in a crouched position with your knees bent. This coiled position assures you enough power to make the drive or jump shot.

The Rocker Step

The rocker step is a quick head-and-shoulder fake you can use to set up a drive. It begins just like the jab step. Do the rocker step as follows:

1. Keep the ball in your hands at waist level or near your hips and establish proper basketball position.
2. Take a short, hard step (10 inches or less) toward the defensive man. At the same time, fake the dribble by bringing the ball down outside your knee.
3. Once you see he hasn't been fooled, pull back to your original position.
4. When your defensive man moves toward you again, drive past him, using the same jab foot (think of this as a three-count move : jab step; rock back to your original position; powerful step and strong dribble past the hip of your defensive man.

The Rocker Step, Shot Fake, And Drive

This move is an elaboration upon both the previous moves. Perform it as follows:

1. Keep the ball in your hands at waist level or near your hips and establish proper basketball position.
2. Take a short, hard step (10 inches or less) toward the defensive man. At the same time, fake the dribble by bringing the ball down outside your knee.
3. Once you see he hasn't been fooled, pull back to your original position.
4. Fake a jump shot with your arms and ball by bringing the ball up to the level of your head as you would in the first phase of the jump shot.
5. Once your defender is taken in by your fake and moves toward you to block your jump shot, make an explosive drive and go right around him.

As with all these individual moves, it's important to maintain a crouched position when you make your fakes and when you go around your defender. If you straighten up, you will lose the power and quickness which makes these moves so effective.

The Crossover Step

Often the defensive player will overplay you to your strong side. In this case, the crossover step and the ability to dribble equally well with either hand will help you out of this defensive overplay.

To make this crossover step to the left, take the following steps:

1. Make a short hard jab step in the direction of the defensive player with your right foot.

2. Keep low and with the same leg, take a long step, crossing it over the outside of the defender's right foot.
3. Swing the ball very quickly from your right side to your left side as you make the leg move, cutting closely off the defender's shoulder.
4. Push the ball out behind the defender with your left hand, making sure it goes past his hip.

Reverse the above steps if you are being overplayed to the other side. In that case, you would be doing a crossover step to the right.

Dead-Ball Moves

Many times you will encounter situations in a game when you have already picked up your dribble and your defensive man is standing right in front of you preventing you from getting off a shot or passing the ball. It is just for cases like this that you need to have some dead-ball moves. Naturally, you can use these moves away from the basket, but they are more effective when you make them not far from the hoop, either in or close by the lane.

The Shot Fake And Jump Shot

To execute this move, do the following:

1. Start with a one-count stop. Bring the ball up toward your head to give the defensive man the impression that you are going to take a jump shot. He will lunge toward you at this moment.
2. Crouch down with your legs to gather your strength.
3. Go up with your jump shot just as your defensive man moves into you. Go up strong! Bump him a little with your shoulder, or forearm to prevent him from blocking your shot. Often your man will foul you and you get a three-point play out of the move.

Crossover

This is another power move that will help get you past your defender after you have given up your dribble. Do the following to execute the move:

1. Make a one-count stop.
2. Make a crossover step.
3. Go past your defender and shoot a lay-up.

Since this is a power move, making the shot will depend a lot on getting jumping power and positioning from your lower body. Be prepared to be fouled as you go to the hoop. Protect the ball from your man with the elbow as you go up.

Step-Through Move

To execute this move do the following:

1. Come to a one-count stop.
2. fake a jump shot.
3. If you want to go to the left, take a quick step to the side of the defender with your right foot. Protect the ball as you go toward the hoop.

Inside Moves With and Without the Ball

It's a necessity in winning basketball that a team have players with good, solid inside moves. These are the player (and not just the center), who can post their man, receive a pass in the paint, or down low "in traffic" and then turn it into a high-percentage shot and a possible three-point play.

The more players a team has like this, the better off it will be. A team that can rely on good inside movement for many of its points has these positive factors working in its favor:

1. It can count on getting most of its points from shots taken only a few feet away from the hoop instead of having to depend on long-range jump shots.
2. Three-point plays, (a field goal and a foul shot), occur more frequently "in the paint."
3. Strong continuous offensive play underneath the basket and the resulting personal fouls committed by the defense will quickly change the complexion of any game.
4. A player with good inside moves will cause the defense to double up and help out to keep him from scoring. This defensive maneuvering often results in freeing offensive forwards and guards for their outside shots.

Make Yourself Bigger

To play down low you have to make yourself bigger. You do this by setting yourself up with an exaggerated basketball stance.

Spread your feet wider than shoulder's width. Make sure your elbows are flared and your hands are up. What this big stance does for you is help keep your defensive man from stepping around you or reaching over your back to either steal or knock the ball away.

When fighting for position down low, the most important thing to do is to present yourself as a good target for your teammates. With so many players cutting in and out of the low-post area, this is often difficult.

Your own defender will be doing his best to get in front of you and cut off any passes, and any other defender coming through the low-post area will throw out his hand if it looks like he can steal an incoming pass.

Keep your man behind you at all times by continually maneuvering in front of him, blocking him with your upper arm, while at the same time presenting a target for a pass with your other arm held high. It's extremely important to have contact with the body of your defender so you can always know where he is and what type of move you can try to make.

To work successfully in the low post or in the lane, it will take a coordinated effort between the passer and you to finally get you the ball.

Reading The Defense

In the early part of every basketball game it becomes obvious how they intend to play the post man. Every post player should become aware of this fact.

As the ball is brought up court, the post man should line up on the high side of the box (rectangle along the foul lane). The post man should face into the lane. This simple maneuver, (facing the lane), causes many problems for the defender. Generally, a defensive man is not accustomed to see the man he is guarding squarely facing him and staring him in the eye. In such a position, the defensive man feels mighty foolish playing in front of the offensive man.

As the ball is brought into the wing area (free throw line, extended), the post man's first step should be toward the baseline to drive the man down. Then, he pivots into the defender to seal him off. The pivot must be executed properly ... knees flexed, hips lowered, feet spread wider than shoulder's width, arms up with elbows out, taking up a lot of space on the court.

Now is the time to note how your defender is playing you. Generally, each team will establish a certain pattern on guarding the post man. Usually, after two or three times down the court, the coach can see the trend. This is one of the first thing every good coach looks for from the bench. An intelligent post player determines this, too. He should call this to the coach's attention at an early time out. If a post man can come over to the bench and say, confidently and correctly, "They are fronting me when I'm low and siding me to the baseline side, when I'm high." Or, "They are playing directly behind me at all times." Then, you are well on your way toward being a good pivot man.

When the ball is thrown to the forward at a wing position, below the free throw line, and the defensive post man is playing on the low side (baseline side), the next possession the post man should line up on the low side of the box. He should be thinking "short hook to the middle" if he gets the ball. If the defensive man is playing on the high side of the post, not the

baseline side, The offensive post man should move up the lane to straddle the second lane mark, but he should stay on the lane. The post man should be thinking power lay-up if he gets the ball. If the defensive man is directly behind, get to the high side of the box. Think short hook to the outside or short jumper to the middle. You might even get a power lay-up by faking to the middle, then executing a quick drop step with the baseline foot, then, power it up.

If the defensive man is fronting you completely, slide up the lane to the third lane marker and move a half step off the lane. More will be said about the pass and type of shot to be used in different situations; but, to put things briefly, if the defensive man is playing on the high side, the post man should expect a bounce or overhead pass and be thinking power lay-up.

If the defender is on the low side you should expect a bounce, overhead, or halo pass, and be thinking hook to the middle.

If the defender is behind, look for a bounce, overhead, or halo pass, and be thinking quick pivot jumper or a one ball busting dribble-drive move.

If the defender is fronting, you should expect a lob pass from the forward at the strong-side wing; and, the guard at the point as you swing into the lane, or from a weak-side forward, who has flashed to the high post. The shot in all three cases will be either a baby jumper or a power lay-up.

The Rear Turn

When you're being closely guarded from behind in the low post, you often need to make a quick rear turn to spring yourself free to receive a pass. This move is made by hooking your outside foot around the outside foot of your defensive man and then quickly pivoting on your lead foot. Bend over slightly as you make the turn, being sure to make contact with your man with your rear and back.

Once you have good positioning, ask for the ball with either one or two hands. Hold this position for a two-count so the player with the ball can see you.

To prevent your defensive man from interfering with the incoming pass, it's important that you seal him off by putting the forearm of your non-target arm, bent at a 45-degree angle, on his chest, without using the hand to push or hold him. If you don't get the ball, by the end of the count, move somewhere and set a screen.

Another effective way of keeping the defender from reaching over and stealing a pass is to hook your non-target forearm in the crook of the defenders extended arm and push it down. Continue to signal for the ball with the other arm.

The Step Across

When your defender is playing in front of you on the ball side in the low post, you will never be able to receive a good pass unless you can get back in front of your man.

The best way to do this is to do the following:

1. Make a strong step in the direction away from the ball.
2. Come back quickly and step in front of your defender with the foot nearest the ball.
3. You can keep the man sealed off by keeping low and leaning against his leg and hip. This will keep him from getting around you again. Put your arm up and call for the ball.

The Reverse

If you are positioned down low on the ball side, but your man is keeping you from getting a pass, a good way to free yourself is with a reverse move. To make the reverse work for you, do the following:

1. Take a hard step toward the passer.
2. Then make a drop step with the foot nearest the baseline.

3. Hook the defender's foot with your foot and lean into his hip with your hip and forearm. This will hold him in his spot and keep him from going around you. With your free hand call for the ball and be ready to go right to the hoop with it.

The Lob Pass

Timing between you and the passer is critical if this play is going to work. The pass has to be accurate and out of reach of the defender; and, you have to hold him off before breaking to receive the pass and take it to the hoop.

The lob pass is best used when your man is fronting you low on the ball side. When this happens, do the following:

1. Turn and face the basket and lean your hip and butt into the back of the defender.
2. Place your forearm on his back and with your other hand make a target for the incoming pass.
3. Once the pass is over the hands of your defender, release from the defender, take the pass, and go to the hoop with it.

Ball Reversal

Many times your man will do a good job of fronting you and keeping you from getting a pass down low. When this happens on the ball side, what you can do is signal your teammate to swing the ball over to the opposite side of the court. As this is happening, time the passes and cut quickly to the ball.

The Flash Cut

The flash cut is always made from the "weak-side", away from the ball. you can move toward the passer from either the low, or high post areas. To make a flash cut you should, first, take a step or two away from where you want to go. Then, change direction, pick up your pace, and cut toward the passer to receive the ball. Your defender will be behind you at this point and you can either go up for a shot, or pass off.