

Effective Session Guidelines

1. Have a Purpose

Each drill, breakdown or scrimmage during practice should have a purpose and coaches should have clear outcomes for each section of practice. Drills are not done for the sake of drilling but to work on specific outcomes related to particular aspects of the game, drills are merely the process to achieve these outcomes.

Eg. The 3 man weave is not a pattern for players to follow at practice but a means to work on passing, catching and finishing on the move. When running this the emphasis should not be on following the pattern of the drill but the key teaching points of these areas of the game.

2. Multi-dimensional drills

Although drills may focus on one or two primary skills or concepts, as practice time is limited, aim to work on a multiple number of skills within a drill.

3. Teach transition within drills (no gap drilling)

The game is not played in the half court so do not teach it in the half court. Try to include a transition element in as many drills as possible. This also helps build players conditioning.

4. Teach rebounding within drills

Include a rebounding and out-letting element in as many drills as possible to teach players rebounding habits.

5. Make drills competitive

Ideally drills should build towards replicating a competitive game like situation. Chairs will not turn out for the opposition so teaching players to beat a chair should only be part of the drilling process eventually players must compete against live opposition.

6. Score and Time drills and scrimmage situations

Keeping score not only raises the intensity of the drill but it also teaches players to play with the pressure of the scoreboard. Likewise timing drills teaches players to play with the pressure of a shot clock or scoreboard.

7. Drill on both sides of the court

The game is played on both sides of the court so practice it on both sides of the court. Players need to work on dribbling, passing, pivoting, defending, posting up etc. on both sides, with both hands and using both feet.

8. Teach players communication cues

If you want players to communicate tell them what to say. Build this into your teaching of the drill, tell players what you want them to communicate.

9. Demand application

Identify and communicate the key teaching points for each part of practice and ensure athletes apply what is being emphasised. Through ongoing application key teaching points become habits.