

Your Team

Practice Plan · U13 · Oct 7, 2026 · Practice #1

Duration: 90 min · Players: 10 · Focus: Passing · V-Cuts · Spacing

Phase: Early Season · Space: Full Gym



COACH'S NOTES

First practice of the season. Establish the culture of precision passing. Players need to understand that good offense starts with moving WITHOUT the ball. Introduce the V-cut as our bread-and-butter way to get open.

WARMUP & ATHLETICISM

12 MIN

Opening Question & Team Circle

ORGANIZATION

Players gather in a circle at centre court before anything else. Coach poses one question. Everyone answers in 1-2 sentences. No right or wrong answers — just thinking out loud.

GAME CONNECTION

Elite teams don't just practice skills — they develop basketball IQ. Starting with a question builds the habit of thinking about the game, not just playing it.

STRETCHES & DEBRIEF

Today's question: 'What does it mean to be open? How do you get open when someone is guarding you?'

Every player must answer — no passing

Coach listens, doesn't correct yet — let them think first

Takes 3-4 minutes maximum, then move straight into warmup

Dynamic Warmup — 7 Movements

ORGANIZATION

Single file line along the sideline. Each movement covers the full length of the court (baseline to baseline). Coach leads the first time through, players lead rotation after Week 3.

GAME CONNECTION

Dynamic stretching activates the muscles you're actually about to use — ankles, hips, hamstrings, shoulders. Static stretching before practice reduces power output. Save that for the end.

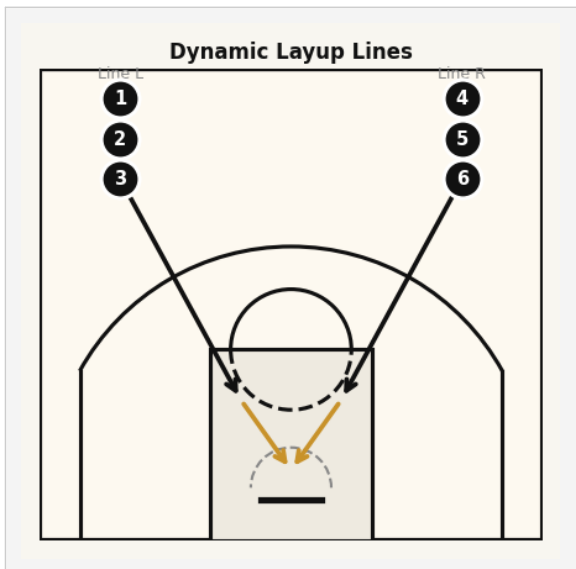
MOVEMENTS

1. HIGH KNEES — drive knees to hip height, arms pumping, full length of court
2. BUTT KICKS — heels to glutes, stay on balls of feet, keep torso upright
3. LATERAL SHUFFLE — stay low, don't cross feet, switch direction at half court
4. LEG SWINGS — stop at each foul line, 10 swings each leg (front/back then side/side)
5. HIP CIRCLES — 5 forward, 5 backward each hip, hands on hips
6. CARIOCA (grapevine) — hips rotating, quick feet, both directions
7. ARM CIRCLES + WRIST ROLLS — 10 forward, 10 backward, then shake out wrists

Dynamic Layup Lines

ORGANIZATION

Two lines at half court, alternate sides. Every player has a ball.



GAME CONNECTION

Finishing at the rim under pressure — this happens every single possession.

POINTS OF EMPHASIS

1. Eyes up — never look at the ball while moving
2. 2-foot gather before the glass
3. Land balanced and clear the lane immediately

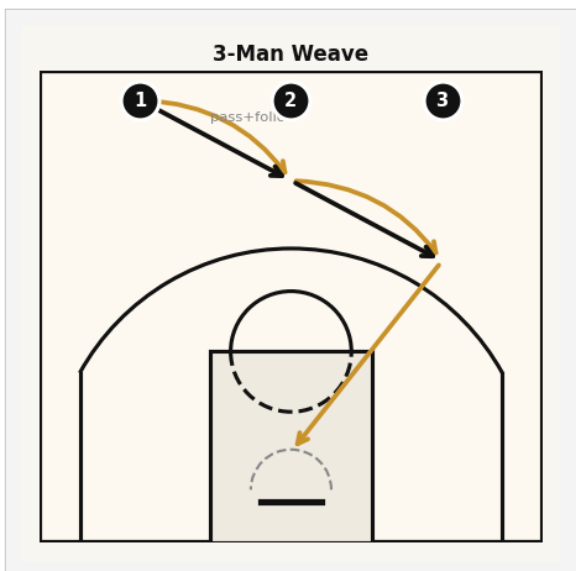
PROGRESSIONS

Too easy: add a trailing defender. Too hard: slow to a jog, focus only on footwork.

Passing Warm-Up: 3-Man Weave

ORGANIZATION

Groups of 3 starting at baseline. Pass and follow your pass. No dribbling.



GAME CONNECTION

Passing ahead in transition — the quickest way to score before the defense sets.

POINTS OF EMPHASIS

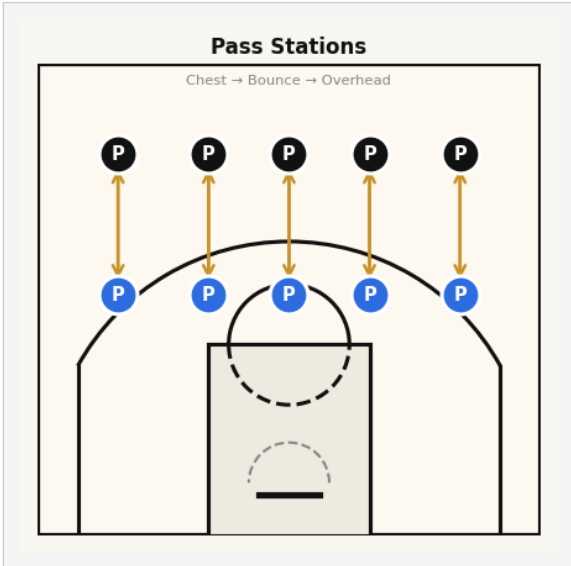
1. Lead your teammate — throw where they're going, not where they are
2. Step into every pass
3. Call name before passing

PROGRESSIONS

Too easy: speed it up, add a 4th player. Too hard: walk-through at half speed first.

Chest / Bounce / Overhead Pass Stations**ORGANIZATION**

5 pairs across the gym. Coach calls pass type on whistle. 30 seconds per type.

**GAME CONNECTION**

Wrong pass type at the wrong moment is a turnover — a chest pass into traffic, a bounce pass over a defender.

POINTS OF EMPHASIS

1. Thumbs DOWN on chest pass release
2. Bounce pass lands 2/3 of the way to receiver
3. Step INTO the pass — power from legs, not arms
4. Receiver shows target hands at all times

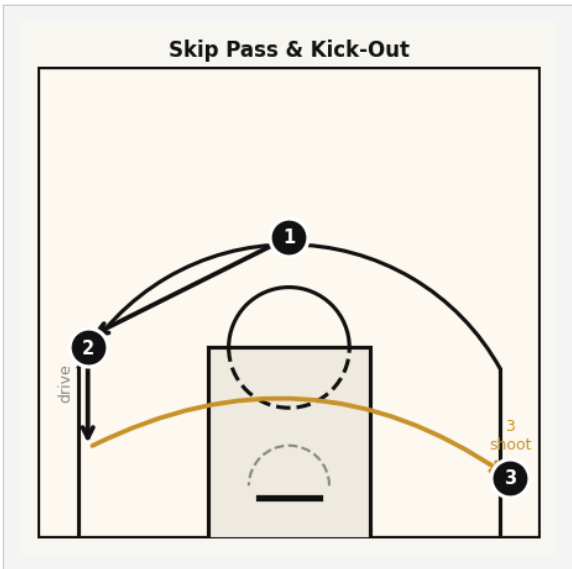
PROGRESSIONS

Too easy: add defensive pressure between pairs. Too hard: stationary only.

Skip Pass & Kick-Out Drill

ORGANIZATION

Ball starts at top of key. Player drives baseline, kicks to opposite corner shooter.



GAME CONNECTION

The kick-out pass to a corner shooter is one of the highest-value plays in basketball — it collapses the defense and creates open 3s.

POINTS OF EMPHASIS

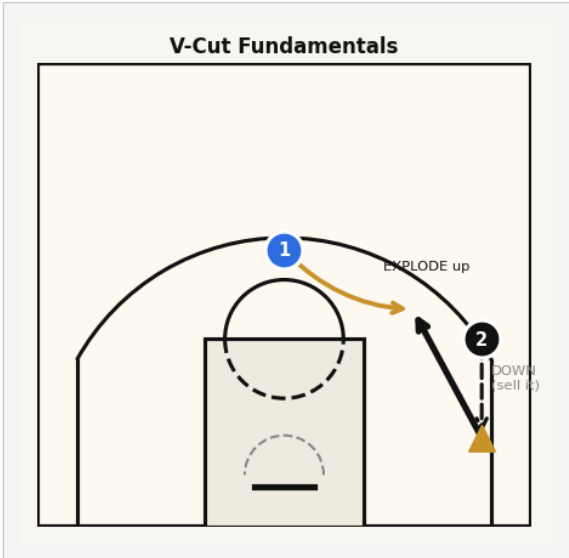
1. Driver must SELL the drive — attack the rim first
2. Kick-out is a sharp chest pass, not a lob
3. Receiver must be set and ready BEFORE the pass arrives
4. Follow your shot for offensive rebound

PROGRESSIONS

Too easy: add a help defender who rotates to the corner. Too hard: walk through positioning first, no defense.

V-Cut Fundamentals (No Defense)**ORGANIZATION**

Groups of 3. One passer at top of key, two cutters take turns. Rotate every 5 reps.

**GAME CONNECTION**

Every time a player is guarded, a V-cut is their way out. Two hard steps down, explode up to the ball.

POINTS OF EMPHASIS

1. The DOWN step must be CONVINCING — sell it
2. Change of pace and direction at the cone — not gradual
3. Hands ready for the catch BEFORE you arrive
4. Catch and face up immediately — look for shot or next pass

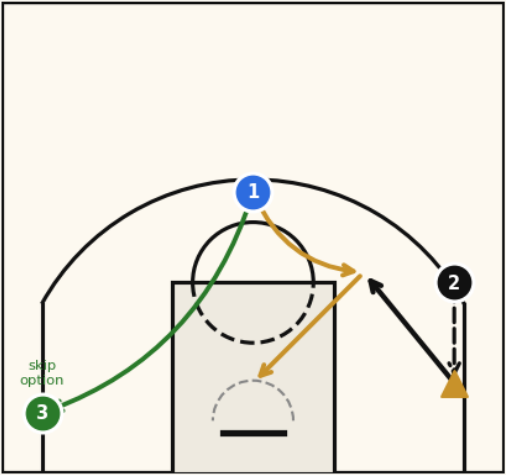
PROGRESSIONS

Too easy: add a token defender who applies light pressure. Too hard: walk through both steps slowly, no ball.

V-Cut into Layup (Live Read)

ORGANIZATION

3 stations simultaneously. Passer decides: give it back if open, skip to corner if defender jumps the cut.

V-Cut → Layup (Live Read) 

GAME CONNECTION

Reading the defense after the cut is what separates good cutters from great ones.

POINTS OF EMPHASIS

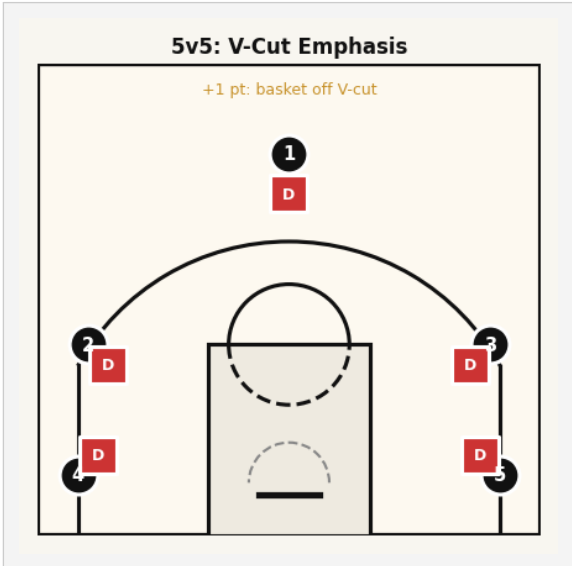
1. Cutter must immediately look for the ball on the way up
2. Passer reads: defender jumps cut = skip to corner
3. Finish through contact — don't shy away from the rim
4. Third player must stay ready — the skip pass may come anytime

PROGRESSIONS

Too easy: add a live defender guarding the cutter. Too hard: remove skip option, simplify to 2-man.

5v5 Emphasis Scrimmage: No Standing Still**ORGANIZATION**

Full court 5v5. Rule: offense scores a bonus point if the basket came from a V-cut catch.

**GAME CONNECTION**

Everything today — the passes, the V-cuts, the spacing — must now happen under game pressure with real defenders.

POINTS OF EMPHASIS

1. If you're standing still, you're helping the defense
2. Make your cuts game-speed, not drill-speed
3. Talk: call for the ball when open
4. Defense: stay connected to your player through cuts

PROGRESSIONS

Too easy: live full rules, no bonus point. Too hard: 4v4, more space for cutters to succeed.

Static Stretch + Session Debrief**ORGANIZATION**

Players sit in a circle at centre court. Coach leads 6 static stretches held 20-30 seconds each while running the debrief conversation. Everyone stretches together — no one leaves early.

GAME CONNECTION

Static stretching after practice improves flexibility and recovery. Combining it with the debrief means players are still mentally engaged while their bodies cool down. This is what professional teams do.

STRETCHES & DEBRIEF

1. SEATED HAMSTRING STRETCH — legs straight out, reach for toes, hold 25 sec
2. BUTTERFLY STRETCH — soles of feet together, elbows press knees down, hold 25 sec
3. QUAD STRETCH — standing, one hand on partner's shoulder for balance, hold 20 sec each leg
4. HIP FLEXOR LUNGE — one knee down, lean forward, hold 25 sec each side
5. SHOULDER CROSS-BODY STRETCH — pull arm across chest, hold 20 sec each arm
6. NECK ROLLS — slow and controlled, 5 each direction

DEBRIEF (during stretches): 3 things we did well today | 1 thing to remember for next practice | What we're building toward next session