Training Handbook

Mission Statement

"Our objective is to create a fun and safe club atmosphere for our members by providing a supportive environment, combined with professional club policies to enhance the experience of playing basketball"
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About this handbook

This handbook has been developed to assist all coaches in the area of player education and development. It is intended to offer basic information on basketball training drills, and skill development. All coaches should always endeavour to keep their own skills and knowledge base current and up to date, and should use this handbook in conjunction with any other relevant information that the individual may deem useful.

As the coach, what should you teach?

At Laurimar Thunder Basketball Club there are players of varying ages, from U/8’s right through to older age groups, and also varying skill levels. The Club feels that the most important thing for juniors and those who haven’t had much experience playing basketball is that they need to learn the basics, and develop their game from the ground up.
It is important for the coach to remember that players need to learn the fundamental skills of the game - like passing, performing lay-ups and dribbling the ball, before they can learn the more technical ones - like man-to-man defence, on ball and off ball screens, and low post offence.

**Training Time**

The emphasis on training should be centred on having fun at all times, especially when dealing with the younger age groups (U/8’s, U/10’s and U/12’s). It stands to reason that if game time is always about having fun, then so should training time.

Coaches need to remember that children essentially play sport to:

- Have fun
- Make friends
- Learn new skills and increase self confidence
- Be challenged
- Be actively involved and to be successful

The overall aim of every coach should be to get the players on the court and doing lots of different drills and developing new skills, whilst enjoying themselves while they’re at it.

The attention span of the younger players can at times be quite short, so running different drills and varying your training methods can keep the players interested and fresh.

Training should be the time where players work on developing their core basketball skills, such as defensive stance, and master tasks such as pivots and dribbling with their opposite hand, crossovers and basic man to man defence. Shooting drills should always be prominent during training, as scoring is an essential part of the game. Game simulation may also be very useful, as it allows the players to practice newly learnt skills in match conditions before they are tried in a game.

**Developing a Club Program**

Ian Stacker, (VBA State Director of Coaching) discusses the basic skills that need to be emphasised throughout the various age groups.

**Under 8’s**

The major focus of coaching this age group should be to keep the game as much fun as possible. This age is also when foundation is set for future skill development and areas of focus should be centred around:

- Developing dribbling and passing ability with either hand.
- Start to emphasise man to man defence and the importance of being a good defender.
- Practice sessions should consist almost exclusively of individual skill development using fun drills where possible.
- Emphasise drills that enhance development of hand eye co-ordination.
**Under 10’s**

As Above.

Most of your players will be playing basketball for the first time and it is essential that the foundation is set for skill development.

Emphasise the development of the basic skills, dribbling, passing, shooting and man to man defence.

**Under 12’s**

Players who have been involved for several years may now be ready to move towards more advanced skills. The coach must be careful not to get too carried away with trying to implement a team offence that is confusing for the players.

Now is the time to introduce some basic principles of offensive play and to provide some more challenges defensively.

These include:

- Introducing more advanced dribbling skills like behind the back, reverse and side dribbles.
- Continuing to emphasise the development of the weaker hand when dribbling, passing and shooting lay ups.
- Emphasising offensive fundamentals of spacing (floor balance) and creating a passing lane between the ball and themselves. Major emphasis should still be on development of individual offensive skills.
- Man to man defence should still be emphasised with players now ready to work on defensive triangle mainly through 2 on 2 drills where they only need to be concerned with their player or the player with the ball.

**Under 14’s**

Players who have come through your club program now have a good idea of the most basic fundamentals.

The Under 14 player should now be ready to learn some more advanced offensive and defensive techniques. Work can now be done on basic principles of passing game offence.

These include:

- On ball and off ball screen
- Cutting
- Dribble movement off the ball in ½ court offence.

Care should be taken not to get too involved with teaching a complicated offence to these players.

Simplicity is important. Players should not be put in a situation where they are trying to remember the offence. Emphasis should rather be placed on reading the defence and taking advantage of what the defence offers.

At the defensive end, work should now be done on help and recover, defending screens, forward leads and weakside to strongside cuts.
Under 16’s

This age group is now ready for more refinement on the work in the Under 14 age group. Passing game skills and team defence are most important and attention should be paid to ensuring skills in these areas are executed correctly.

Post offence and defence should be covered in this age group with all players learning to play with their back to the basket. Don’t forget though that your 6ft male or female may still be a guard when they reach maturity, so keep emphasising the guard skills also.

Players now should have a solid understanding of man to man defence, however, work should still be done on rotation, ½ court and full court pressure defences.

Zone defence and zone offence should now be introduced at this level. A good understanding of man to man principles is an important ingredient of a good zone defence.

Under 18’s

These players, if they have been through the whole system, now have a solid foundation to accept greater challenges in their play.

Continuity offences can be used although the current trend is still towards passing game offences where the players are working at reading the defence rather than going from point A to point B.

At the NBL and WNBL level, coaches are still working at teaching their players how to screen, cut and keep good spacing, so obviously work is still needed to be done on these basic offensive fundamentals.

Defensively the players can be taught to play extended zone or man to man defences, although again, the basic principles of man to man are most important.

Basic Skill Development

Below is some general advice on what fundamental skills to teach to younger players. It is broken down into 3 levels. As you perfect each level, you can advance to the next one to teach more technical skills & concepts.

(As taken from Breakthrough Basketball website. The following information also contains several links, which may also prove to be informative. You should read all of the following information first, then go back and click on the links).

All beginner players should start at Level 1 - no matter the age.

Depending on the age and skill level, you may progress through the levels at different rates.

It may take a long time to teach all of the skills at one level and that’s fine. For young players, the focus should be on the long-term development, not how many games they win. Progressing too quickly may hurt them in the long run. You want to have a solid foundation first.

Level 1 (7 to 10 Year Olds)

Lay ups - You should practice lots of lay ups with both hands. Your goal should be to get all players to make lay ups with their left and right hands equally well. Teach them to jump off the proper foot. They should jump off the left leg when shooting a right hand lay up. They should shoot off their right leg when shooting a left hand lay up. It will be difficult but work on it. You’ll probably need to start really close to the basket, with no dribble, and take just one step to practice the footwork. Once you add the dribble, they should dribble with their left hand when shooting left hand lay ups.
Footwork - Teach them triple threat positioning, pivoting on their left and right foot without travelling, jump stops, and to square to the basket as soon as they catch the ball in a triple threat position, ie: Pass-Shoot-Dribble. You should spend a lot of time on footwork!

**Shooting form** - Developing proper muscle memory and shooting form at a young age is extremely important! Bad habits are extremely hard to break when they get older. Allow the players to dip their elbows, which will give them more strength. To learn more on shooting, we also have the Breakthrough Basketball Shooting Guide.

**Ball handling** - You should teach your players to dribble with left and right hands equally. Basic dribble moves such as the speed dribble, crossover, protect-the-ball dribble, and back-up dribble.

**Athletic & movement skills** - Teach them how to run, jump and land, skip, stop, move laterally, squat, lunge and any other basic movements.

**Basic passes** - Teach and practice the basic chest, bounce, and overhead passes.

Play plenty of 2 on 2 and 3 on 3 games to teach concepts (no dribble keep away). It gets the players more experience and allows them enough space to operate and use the new skills they have learned. Make sure to use plenty of fun basketball drills & games.

(For more on this, read Could 3 on 3 Basketball Be the Best for Youth Players?)

**Offense** - DO NOT use any structured or patterned offenses. First, get them comfortable on the court. They will start to figure things out on their own. Your main concern should be to have them move and not stand still.

If you use a few basic cuts and screens in your shooting drills at the beginning of practice, then your players will already know how to move in a motion offense. Then you don't have to waste time teaching offense. Just let them play and have fun.

Once players feel comfortable on the court, show them proper spacing.

As they progress, you can start to introduce them to motion offense situations.

**Basic cuts & how to get open** - If time permits, you can introduce the basket cut and straight cut. I would suggest that you just work these cuts into your shooting drills at the beginning of practice. This will save loads of time.

**Defense** - Teach the basic stance, defensive slide, and basic off-ball principles. Don't worry about spending as much time on defense. As they get older, you'll gradually spend more time on defense. Focusing on it 5 to 10 minutes per practice would be more than sufficient.

Basic Off Ball Principles:
- Stay between man and the ball
- Always stop the ball if it is in front of you

**Level 2 (10 to 12 Year Olds)**

You should now expand into more advanced skills from everything mentioned above. But remember, if your 10 to 12 year olds are inexperienced, then you should start in Level 1. And at the beginning of each season, you should consider starting at level 1 again until those skills are perfected. Then you can progress into some of the more advanced stuff below.
Lay ups - reverse lay ups and jump-stop lay ups.

Teach more cuts: back cut, curl cut, etc.

Continue to focus on shooting form and introduce some movement for shooting drills (shooting off the dribble and off the catch). To learn more on shooting, we also have the Breakthrough Basketball Shooting Guide.

Ball handling & dribbling - teach more dribble moves such as the inside-out dribble (fake crossover), hesitation move, and between-the-legs.

Passing - continue to teach basic passes and introduce some advanced passes (baseball pass and wrap around pass). Use other drills such as machine gun passing and pass and switch.

Passing under pressure - you can use pair passing with a defensive player in the middle running back and forth to pressure the passer. You can use this drill to practice breaking pressure: full court press breaker drill.

Teach basic screens.

Footwork - introduce jab steps and ball fakes (pass fakes and shot fakes).

Rebounding - introduce rebounding technique.

Basic post moves - drop step and jump hook.

Spacing - introduce more basic spacing concepts.

Offense - keep playing 2 on 2 and 3 on 3 to teach concepts. You can also start to introduce more motion offense situations and play some 5 on 5.

Defense - keep emphasizing and spend a little more time on the defensive stance, defensive slide, and off-ball principles mentioned in Level 1. If you feel that your players are ready, work on more off-ball defense principles.

In our Man to Man Defense System, we provide step-by-step how to build and teach your defense.

Level 3 (12 to 14 Year Olds)

Lay ups - practice lots of contested lay ups.

Continue to teach basic cuts and add more cuts.

Continue to emphasize shooting form.

Practice shooting on the move, off of the pass and the dribble. To learn more on shooting, we also have the Breakthrough Basketball Shooting Guide.

Ball Handling & Dribbling - teach more dribble moves such as the spin move, behind-the-back. Incorporate some double-moves (crossover followed with a behind-the-back).
Passing - introduce some other advanced passes (dribble pass, behind-the-back pass, pick and roll pass).

**Passing Under Pressure** - You use Pair Passing with a defensive player in the middle running back and forth to pressure the passer. You can use this drill to practice breaking pressure: Full Court Press Breaker Drill.

Teach Basic Screens.

**Footwork** - continue to work on jab steps, pivots, and ball fakes (pass fakes and shot fakes).

**Rebounding** - put more emphasis on rebounding technique and spend more time on rebounding drills.

**Post moves** - keep practicing post moves mentioned above while introducing a few more when the players are ready drop step counter and up-and-under move.

**Spacing** - advance to higher levels of spacing drills.

**Offense** - introduce more motion offense situations. You should start to notice that your players are becoming much better at reading the defense.

**Defense** - Emphasize basics from previous levels and move on to rotations and situations.

In our Man to Man Defense System, we go into great detail about rotations and situations.

### Basic Skills and Practice Drills

Learning the basic skills of basketball is essential for all players; no matter what age they are when they start playing. Coaches should work on teaching these skills and allow the players time to develop at their own speed at all times.

The information below is a guide to some of the basic fundamental skills of the game, and some basic drills that can be easily run on any given training night. The drills are by no means an exhaustive list, and can be varied to suit the player’s developmental needs.

### Passing and Catching

Passing is the fastest way to move the ball. Successful passing, that is the pass that is received by the receiver in the right place and at the right time, will depend on good timing. There are many drills that give opportunities to develop passing and catching ability. Basic passes can be made direct (chest to chest), low (bounced off the floor), or high (overhead).

**Points to Note**
- It is important to develop accuracy with passing.
- Quick passing is essential to beat opponents so that they don’t have time to move in to intercept. So no lob passes.
- Receivers have to move to get free for the ball and should signal with their hands, where the ball is required.
Main Fundamentals

Passing
• Hold the ball with fingers spread and pointing at receiver, elbows in. Do not palm the ball.
• Step towards receiver.
• Release ball by fully extending arms and fingers.
• For an overhead pass - raise the arms straight above head, fingers pointing up; make pass with a strong wrist action.
• All passes should have backspin. Thumbs start behind the ball. After the ball is released fingers should be pointing at the receiver with thumbs pointing to the floor.

Catching
• Signal for a pass by raising one or both hands.
• Move towards ball, arms outstretched, fingers forwards.
• Keep the eyes on the ball.
• Receive by flexing the arms.
• Bring ball under control, close to the body.

Practice Drills

Individual passing and catching against a wall
• Feet in tandem to get power into pass.
• Make all passes with strong wrist action.

Passing in pairs
• Two lines facing each other about 3-4 metres apart. Pass backwards and forwards between pairs using chest, bounce and overhead passes. Concentrate on backspin and correct follow through.
• Pass and move in pairs, pass to partner and move with arm raised signaling for return pass. Use a stride or jump stop to prevent traveling.
• Passing on the move in pairs, run up and down court passing the ball without traveling.

Cat and mouse
• In threes, two passing and catching with one trying to intercept. Stress can be placed on the passer or receiver by making the middle player stay with one or the other.

Three-man weave
• In threes on end line, ball with middle player who passes and follows the ball, going behind the receiver. After passing, sprint to get ahead of the ball.

Ten consecutive passes
• Even numbers, man-to-man defence, no contact. A team tries to make ten consecutive passes without the other team touching the ball. If they do, that team tries to make ten consecutive passes.

“Pepper-Pot”
• One player facing several others in group, work with two basketballs. Passes are timed so that the individual is releasing a pass as the other ball is passed to him/her.

Pass and pressure
• Two lines facing each other over a short distance, one ball. First player in the line passes to first in other line then follows to pressure the next pass. No contact.
• Pivot step to protect ball and make the pass.
Around the circle
- One circle of five or six players. Two or three balls in play, pass across or around the circle.
- Increase the speed of the passes as they go.

The clock
- One team forms a circle and pass on ball around circle. Another team takes it in turn to dribble around the circle. When all dribblers have gone around circle, count the number of passes made and change places.

Speed passing
- In pairs, count the number of passes made in 30 seconds.

Cross lines
- Individuals or teams at ends of a cross. One team makes chest passes, the other makes bounce passes.

**Dribbling**
Bouncing the ball is used in basketball to move the ball under control from one spot to another. By the rules of the game, this is a continuous bouncing action using either hand; the dribble ends when the ball is caught in one or two hands. Any number of bounces and steps can be taken and the dribbling hand may be changed. Players should practice bouncing the ball on the spot and moving, using the left hand and using the right hand.

**Points to Note**
While bouncing the ball
- Change hands, the ability to use either hand is essential in basketball
- Change speed
- Change direction
- Change height of bounce (rhythm) - low bounce for greater control against opponent who is trying to steal the ball
- Bounce the ball so that dribbler’s body is between opponent and the ball - look at the opponent, not the ball
- Where can the ball be bounced - between legs, behind the back
- Dribble ball past an opponent to a target

**Main Fundamentals**
- Bend knees to get body low. Keep ball low when being closely defended, higher (waist to stomach level) when dribbling at speed.
- Push the ball with spread fingers using a strong flexible wrist action.
- Keep body between the defender and the ball for protection. Keep the head up, look at the game, not the ball.

**Practice Drills**
Random dribbling
- Allow players to work alone, trying changes of hands, direction, speed and height of bounce.

Static dribbling
- Stay in one place, bounce ball rapidly very close to floor, bend knees not back, use right and left hands, player to always keep head up.
- Try a figure of eight dribble around both legs.

Follow the leader
- One line of players each with a ball, follow and copy one player who moves off and attempts “tricks”.
Watch the signal
• Everybody with one ball, dribble and watch coach who directs movement of players.

Linked pairs
• In pairs, each with a ball, dribble with designated hand whilst holding hands with other, free hand.

Dribble and follow
• In pairs, one ball between two, one dribbles, stops, pivots and passes to partner who repeats.

Zig-zag dribble
• Zig-zag from the side to the centre of the court (work over full length and half width of the court). Important principle - use right hand moving right and left hand moving left. Change hands every time the direction changes.

Control and speed
• Dribble between obstacles (witches hats or chairs) on one side of court and straight back down other side as fast as possible.
• When passing an obstacle, protect ball with body by dribbling with hand farthest from obstacle. On speed dribble let ball bounce high and push well ahead.

Keeping possession
• In a restricted area, half of the players each have a ball. The other half without a ball, chase and try to steal one without fouling.
• Protect ball with body, head up. If the opposition touches a ball, they take possession and dribbles off. The player who has lost the ball then becomes the chaser. Repeat.

Dribble relay
• Various team relays across the court using different dribbling skills.
• 1 v 1 dribble
  • Select or mark cut a “corridor” across the court and let the children work in pairs playing one against one in the ‘corridor’.
  • Object is to dribble across court without committing an error, whilst partner works on good defensive footwork, trying to stop dribbler’s progress by maintaining good body position.

**Shooting**
In shooting at the basket, the ball is guided rather than thrown. Beginners may practice this by shooting at a target on the wall, or by attempting to drop the ball on a target on the floor. Shots can be made from a standing position (set shot), jumping (jump shot) or after a run and jump (lay-up).

**Points to Note**
• Shooting is a coordinated skill that involves a lot of different movements, which should be practiced in isolation to develop the correct movement patterns.
• Teach shooting technique first, working with a large target.
• When players shoot for the basket, have them start from close in and gradually increase the distance of the shot as they gain more confidence.
• Once the basic mechanics of the shot have been mastered, players should practice shooting at speed and with pressure to simulate game conditions.
Main Fundamentals - The BEEF of shooting

**Balance**
- To be on balance the feet should be about shoulder width apart. A right-handed shooter should have their right foot slightly forward. This helps to align the right hand side of the body with the target and avoids rotation in the shooting movement.
- Knees should be bent as the power from the shot starts with the straightening of the legs.

**Elbow straight**
- The right forearm and elbow (right handed shooter) is in line from the right hip to the basket.
- As the elbow extends to shoot the ball, it stays in a straight line pointing to the basket. The left hand steadies the ball on the side and is not involved with pushing the ball.

**Eyes on the target**
- The shooter should focus on the target for the duration of the shot. Focus on the ring or a spot on the backboard, if you are shooting a bank shot (off the backboard).
- Watching the flight of the ball is a bad habit for shooters.

**Follow through**
- The wrist should be "cocked" back holding the ball. As the power comes from straightening the legs, up through the body and to the straightening elbow, the wrist flexes, rolling the ball off the finger tips.
- Pretend you have a really long arm and you reach up and try to stick your hand in the basket. A good follow through will have the elbow fully extended, wrist flexed, with fingers and thumb pointing to the floor.
- Emphasis should be placed on shooting up, rather than at the ring. The shooter should try to drop the ball into the ring, as a narrow angle greatly reduces the chance of scoring.
- A good shot has a smooth flowing motion, which starts from the legs, up through the body, finishing with a high shoulder extension and the follow through.
- Players should be encouraged to practice shooting from close in to begin with. Shooting from too far out will encourage bad techniques as the youngsters will start to throw the ball to get the distance.

Shots to teach players

**Lay-up shot**
- A shot performed off a run and jump (one foot take off) reaching up to the basket to score. As long as a player is moving, either on the dribble or moving to receive a pass, they are allowed to take two steps for the lay-up shot.
- Take off on the left foot for lay-ups shot with the right hand; take off on the right foot for lay-ups shot with the left hand.

**Set shot**
- The BEEF of shooting: Balance, Elbow straight, Eyes on target, Follow through.
- Strength starts from the legs; the body and shooting arm should be fully extended on release of the ball.

**Jump shot**
- Same technique as the set shot, but the ball is shot after jumping off both feet. The ball should be released at the peak of the jump. Stay on balance while jumping (jump straight up), don’t fade to the side, forwards or backwards.
- Jump shots should be taught only after players are confident with set shots.

Practice Drills

Teaching lay-up progression
- Players stand side on to a wall with a ball, feet together. First practice the takeoff step. Take one step with the left foot, jump up bringing right knee upwards. Shoot at an imaginary target using same hand position as with the set shot.
• Secondly, standing as before, take two steps, right foot then jump off the left foot.
• Thirdly add the dribble, one bounce as you step with the left foot, pick the ball up, right, left and shoot.
• Foot and handwork is opposite for left handed lay-up.
• Once players are confident with their coordination practice lay-ups at a basket.

Two-lines, shoot and rebound
• Two lines facing the basket. One shooting and one rebounding line. Shooting line dribbles towards the basket to shoot the lay-up. Aim ball and push it into the small square.
• Shooter joins rebounding line.
• Rebounder passes the ball out and joins shooting line.

Ball rotations
• Rest the ball on the fingers of one hand only (shooting hand), with the elbow bent and ball in front of the head. Extend the elbow as you would with a shot, concentrating on rolling the ball off the finger tips to get plenty of backspin upon release. See how fast you can get the ball spinning.
• Pass and cut
• Shooter passes ball to a teammate and cuts (runs) to the basket for return pass. Make lay-up with or without bouncing the ball.

Shoot and rebound
• Three or five lines around the basket. Shoot and follow your shot to collect your own rebound.
• Pass back to the line, and join the end of the next line rotating in a clockwise direction.

Around the clock
• Shooting from selected spots around the key. Take one shot at each spot and count the number of shots taken and the number of shots scored.

High repetition shooting
• In pairs, one shooting, one rebounding. Shoot from different spots around the basket within range.
• Rebounder makes good crisp passes back to shooter, and the shooter shoots quickly to simulate game conditions.

Twenty-one
• Two teams, each at fixed points from basket. First in line shoots and scores two points if shot is successful, if the shot misses and the shooter collects the rebound before the ball hits the floor, or bounces twice as a variant, they are allowed one more attempt. If successful, the rebound shot scores one point.
• First team to 21 points.

Overload
• A number of players stand in a semi-circle around the basket, a smaller number, two or three, stand inside the key. The attackers have one ball, which can be passed around until one player is free to shoot.
• If a shooter misses, they exchange with a defender.

Knockout
• One line of players stand facing the basket, the first two in line with a ball each.
• Each player must take their first shot from the position at the start of the line. If it goes in, pass back to the next person in line and join the end of the line. If it misses keep shooting from anywhere on the court until you score.
• If the person directly behind you scores before you do, you are knocked out of the game.
• Continue until someone wins.
**Defense**

**Defensive position**
- In basketball the defender can get as close to the opponent as they like, provided no contact takes place. The defender may move anywhere on the court with their opponent.

**Defensive movement**
- When trying to stay between a dribbling player and the basket, the defender will move sideways by defensive sliding.
- In a crouched position lift and step sideways with the lead foot, push off with the trailing foot. The step and push with defensive sliding should be done quickly and the feet should not come together or cross.
- Defensive sliding can be practiced with just the movements, against a dribbler anywhere on the court, or defending the basket.

**Getting the ball**
- Basketball is a no contact game, which means that tackling is not possible.
- Possession can be gained either passively or actively.
- The ball is acquired passively when the opposition scores or makes a mistake.
- The active method involves playing a type of defense, which forces the opposition into errors or causes them to take poor shots, which will miss. This means playing “man-for-man” defense in which each member of a team marks one member of the opposition.
- The guiding principle here is “play your man, not the ball”. The ball is acquired by rebounding, stealing or diving on a loose ball.

**Rebounding**
- Involves jumping to catch the ball in the air when a shot has been missed and the ball bounces off the ring or backboard.

**Stealing**
- Can be snatching the ball from an opponent (without making contact) or intercepting a pass. Care must be taken with interceptions since they often involve lunging for the ball, which may cause the player to commit a foul.

**Diving on a loose ball**
- Requires players to fall on or run and pick up a loose ball, which is bouncing, or rolling across the floor.

**Offense**
- Running a good offense relies heavily on the players to get free for the pass. There is no need to get complicated with offenses at an early age.
- As with most ball sports, youngsters tend to gravitate around the ball. Encourage your players to space themselves out to make it easier to pass and move.
- Stress the following points to beginners;
- On attack a player tries to obtain the highest percentage shot, i.e. close to the basket
- Pass ahead and move towards the goal for a return pass
- Simple tactic – look ahead: pass ahead: move ahead

**Offensive movement**
- Moving without the ball is an important game skill on its own since most of the game is played without the ball. It is also an essential prerequisite for all ball skill development and should therefore be constantly stressed.
Co-ordination and agility
The following activities are mostly enjoyable games designed to improve the player’s abilities in running, turning, stopping, jumping and maintaining balance. A small selection of these activities could be used at every session; possibly as a break from ball skill practices, or as a concluding activity at the end of the training session.

Main Fundamentals

Easy running
• Be relaxed, head up, run on heels and toes, swing bent arms freely.

Fast running
• Be relaxed, head up, run on toes, pump bent arms well forwards and backwards.

Turning
• Turns should be made quickly and sharply (not curves). Drive off opposite leg with well-bent knee, e.g. off right leg when turning left.

Stopping
a) Stride Stop
• (1-2 stop or 2-count stop): from an easy run, place one foot out in front as a brake and bend the knees. From a fast run make a shallow jump landing on one foot allowing the other to swing forward in a longer-than-normal stride; front foot goes down flat, knees well bent.

b) Jump Stop
• (1-count stop): make a shallow jump and land with both feet simultaneously, parallel from heel to toe; knees must be well bent, adopt a “sitzdown” position.

Pivoting
• Turning on the ball of one foot is called pivoting. It is used to protect the ball, to face the basket, to change direction while sliding and to block out for a rebound.
• When in possession of the ball you may pivot using the same foot as often as you like.
• The ball of the foot must stay on the ground though. Keep knees bent while pivoting to maintain balance.

Reversing
• Involves stopping and running off in opposite direction. Use a stride stop with well-bent front knee, pivot on the balls of both feet and drive hard off the front leg.

Jumping
a) Running jump (one foot take off):
• Approaching the take-off, make a long final stride with front knee well bent, drive hard upwards and reach high with opposite hand, e.g. when jumping off left foot, drive right knee up and reach with right hand.

b) Run and jump (two foot takeoff):
• Make a jump stop with a good sit-down position to prevent forward movement in the jump, hands should be held low in the stop then thrown up into the jump.
• Stress vertical jump, land on take-off spot, no drifting in the air. Land softly with knees bent.

c) Standing jump (two foot takeoff):
• Technique as for the second part of run and jump.

Practice Drills

Zig-Zag
• Run full length of court making frequent changes of direction.

Random running
• Group work in restricted area to develop use of peripheral vision. Head up, no collisions.
Run and reverse
- Running the length of the court; on command, Stop! Turn! Run! Move off in opposite direction.

Running and stopping
- Random running; on command, stop, using stride or jump stop.

Running, stopping and jumping
- Jump stop and maximum vertical jump.
- Knees bend to facilitate good stop and high jump. Land on take-off spot, no drifting.

Run and chase
- In pairs, first child tries to escape chaser who attempts to stay within one arms length of partner. Both must stop in one pace, on command.

“Suicides”
Working individually, start at baseline, run to near foul line and return, run to halfway line and return, run to far foul line and return, run to far baseline and return.

Rolling ball
- Teams line up in files at halfway line. Coach rolls ball into front half of court and first in each team runs to pick it up. Winner scores for his or her team.

Run and jump to touch backboard
- Two lines behind baseline on either side of court. First person in each line runs out to a point opposite the foul line, makes a sharp change of direction towards the backboard and makes a one foot running jump to touch as high as possible on backboard with one hand.

Continuous leapfrog
- Teams line up one behind the other at one end of court. Last person in line leaps all others then “makes a back”.
- Every time someone becomes the last in line, they leap over all the others.

Tag
- Two chasers within a set area of the court. Each time a player is tagged, they join with the chasers and help with the chasing until all players have been tagged.
- Can be done with dribbling balls.

Pivot and pass
Groups of three in one line with a ball. Middle player receives ball, pivots and passes to the third player, then back again. Continue for several passes and rotate.

Dribble/pivot/pass
- In teams of three or four, one behind the other dribble out, make stride stop, pivot, pass and follow. Repeat using a jump stop stressing the use of either foot for pivoting.

Circle block out
- Place a ball in the middle of one of the court circles. Four players stand on the circle line with their backs to the ball.
- Four more players match up by facing them. On command the outside players attempt to get the ball. The inside players try to stop them by pivoting (backwards) in their opponent’s path.
**Ball handling**
There are hundreds of different ball handling drills players can practice to develop their confidence and control of the basketball. Ball handling drills can be fun and challenging, and rewarding. While practicing ball-handling drills, ensure players have their fingers well spread with only the pads of the fingertips touching the ball. Whenever possible keep the head up (*do not watch the ball*) and develop quickness as the players gain confidence.

The following information on ball handling comes from Coach’s Clipboard, http://www.coachesclipboard.net

**Hold The Ball Correctly**
The most difficult skills, including shooting, passing, catching, dribbling, and rebounding, involve holding the ball. Work on these skills every day. Here is how to practice holding the ball:

1. **Hold the ball with your fingertips.** The palms of your hands should not touch the ball.
2. **Make sure your fingers are far apart.**
3. **Hold the ball as much as possible** at home while watching TV or listening to the radio or music.

Do ball handling drills at the start of nearly every practice and throughout the entire season. Players can really improve their ball handling skills by the end of the season. Most importantly, these drills can also be done at home, or in the off-season, without the rest of the team.

All of the players line up in rows facing the coach, and spread out so they don’t get into each other’s way. Everyone has a ball. Do each one for about 30 to 60 seconds and then move to the next one. With all of these drills, try to keep your player’s eyes forward, without looking at the ball.

**Finger Grabs**
Hold the ball with the fingertips, squeezing it while rotating it back and forth from hand to hand. The ball should not touch the palms of the hands.

**Slaps**
Pound or slap the ball hard from hand to hand.

**Tipping**
Tip the ball back and forth from one hand to the next, starting with your hands straight up over your head. Then gradually move the ball down, while continuing to tip it back and forth. Go down to your chest, then your waist, knees, and ankles, and then back up again. Keep your elbows straight.

**Circles**
Put your feet together and make circles around both legs. Then circle around the back. And then circle around the head. Then combine them and move the ball in circles around your head, then down your body, down around your knees, and then around your ankles. Then come back up again. Be sure to use your fingertips, not the palms.

**Around Each Leg and Figure Eights**
Put one leg forward and move the ball in a circular motion around the leg. Then do the other leg. Finally, spread your legs out wide with the ball in front of you. Move the ball around through your legs in a figure-of-eight motion. Keep your eyes forward and don’t let the ball hit the floor. After 30 seconds, reverse the direction.

**Toss Up and Catch Behind**
Toss the ball up over your head. Reverse pivot and catch the ball behind your back.
Drops
Put the ball between your feet and grab it with both hands. Start with the left hand behind your left leg and your right hand in front of your right leg. Drop the ball and let it bounce once. Quickly, move your left hand in front of your left leg and your right hand behind your right leg, and catch the ball as it bounces up. Drop it again and switch your hands back to the original position (left behind, right in front) and catch it. Repeat this motion continuously. For a more difficult variation, try catching the ball before it actually hits the floor.

Basketball Training Session Plans
When running weekly training sessions, some coaches may find it more useful if they take a little bit of time beforehand and think about what skills they want to teach and develop on any given night, and how they want go about teaching those skill to the players. Laurimar Thunder Basketball Club encourages the use of Weekly Training Session Plans to assist with this process.

Training Plans are a structured and easy way to plan your training session, and they can be kept and used as a reference and evaluation tool if needed. They are also very useful for novice coaches, as they allow the coach to be able to structure the session and keep it on track.

It gives the coach a quick reference point and something to refer back to in order to keep the session moving forward and to keep it fresh and interesting for the players.

Below is an example of a training session plan, showing what skills and drills are going to be run during that training session, and how long to spend on each drill. This sample is quite detailed and structured, however session plans can be created to be more basic to cater for young or inexperienced players (U/8's), and gradually developed to be more complex to suit the player’s developmental needs, as they get older.

Training Plans should always be tailored to suit the developmental needs of each individual team, and should be used by the coach to guide them during that training session. When dealing with younger players, remember to vary drills and create a fun learning environment, in order to keep them interested and enjoying themselves.

(Please refer to the end of this document for a template of the Weekly Session Training Plan)

Example of a Weekly Training Session Plan

Weekly Training Session Plan - Laurimar Thunder Basketball Club: U/14 Boys

Date: 25/2 Time: 5:30 – 6:30 Week Number: 01

Major Objectives or Points of Emphasis:
Review player’s fundamental skill levels and fitness.
Teaching emphasis is defensive skills.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Skill / Drill</th>
<th>Coaching Points</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5:30 – 5:40</td>
<td>Warm-up drills</td>
<td>Correct lay-up form - strong rebounds.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lay-up And Rebounding Lines</td>
<td>Footwork, balance, Pivoting technique.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Line Running Drills</td>
<td>Head-up - speed and protection dribbles, change of pace</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Line Dribbling Drills</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stretching</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5:40 – 5:50  Defensive Stance and Footwork

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mass Defensive Drill</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mirror Drills</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Low stance, quick feet, “wide then wider”.
- Quickness, effort.

5:50 – 6:05  Team Man-Man Defense in Backcourt

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shell Drill</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ballside / weakside / split line.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flat triangle - see your man &amp; ball, “point the pistols”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On ball and deny stance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication - “Ball”, “Dead”, “Help”, “Shot”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help and recover.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Passes only - token defense - teach players to move to correct positions.
- “Jump to the ball”.

6:05 – 6:15  Defending the Dribbler

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Slide Run Slide, Turning And Channeling The Dribbler</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Turn in the backcourt, channel to sideline / baseline</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6:15 – 6:20  Mothball

- Free-throw routine and form. Strong to the basket.

6:20 – 6:30  Scrimmage

- No dribbles for first five minutes.

**Useful Links**

This handbook is intended to give coaches some of the basic fundamentals of basketball, and an overview of some of the technical skills and drills that are available. It is by no means an exhaustive document, and is subject to change. All individuals who intend to coach a team on behalf of Laurimar Thunder Basketball Club should endeavour to always keep their own knowledge and skills current and up to date, and should strongly consider pursuing an accredited coaching course.

Below are some basketball resource sites to get you going on your path to knowledge.

- [www.playbytherules.net.au](http://www.playbytherules.net.au)
- [www.basketball.net.au](http://www.basketball.net.au)
- [www.coachesclipborad.net](http://www.coachesclipborad.net)
- [www.justinsbasketballcoaching.com/](http://www.justinsbasketballcoaching.com/)
- [www.breakthroughbasketball.com/pr/fun-youth-drills.html](http://www.breakthroughbasketball.com/pr/fun-youth-drills.html)
- [www.ducksters.com/sports/basketballglossary](http://www.ducksters.com/sports/basketballglossary)
- [www.ebasketballcoach.com › Basketball Coaching](http://www.ebasketballcoach.com › Basketball Coaching)
- [www.eBasketballCoach.com](http://www.eBasketballCoach.com)
- [www.degerstrom.com/basketball/drills/](http://www.degerstrom.com/basketball/drills/)
- [www.guidetocoachingbasketball.com/](http://www.guidetocoachingbasketball.com/)

Should We Teach Basketball Skills To Players Under the Age of 10? - Useful information for all levels of coaches, not just coaches who work with players under the age of 10.
Weekly Session Training Plan Template

The weekly session training plan template is available to be printed off and utilised by all coaches for their use at any time. It is not a mandatory requirement of coaching on behalf of the Club, but is provided as a coaching tool. All coaches should consider their coaching style, and should seek out and gain access to resources and coaching tools that they deem relevant to their needs.

Laurimar Thunder Basketball Club:

Date:  Time:  Week Number:

Major Objectives or Points of Emphasis:

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