

THOUGHTS AND SKILLS

4TH-6TH GRADE - FUNDAMENTAL STAGE



THOUGHTS FOR GRADES 4-6

-Constraints: Personal constraints are still evident but all players should be able to shoot on a 10-foot goal. Players should be able to have consistent mechanics with their shot. Ball handling skills are unaffected by constraints and should continue to be pushed for further development.

-Purpose: This age group should still be about learning and having fun but winning and losing games or drills should be introduced. Continue to teach basketball through games but incorporate more serious drills and instruction. Emphasize life skills through basketball and promote proper conduct/behaviors.

-Movement Patterns: Help build proper fundamental movement patterns (balancing, running, jumping, pivoting, etc.) through dynamic warmups and games with added stimuli to make games more challenging. Incorporate tools like the reaction ball and agility ladder into training.

-Playing Time: Distribute playing time relatively evenly. All players should get to participate in each contest.

-Skill Development: Teach "positionless" basketball, meaning all players learn all skills. There should be no breakdown drills separating guards and posts.

-Practice Considerations: Attention spans are very short. Keep everyone involved as much as possible in practice. Limit time spent waiting in lines, for games to finish, for instruction to end, etc. Be prepared to manage limited practice resources carefully - space, jerseys, balls, etc.

-Small Sided Games (SSG): Use SSG and 3v3 as much as possible. This allows more players to handle the ball and make decisions. Begin keeping score. Introduce 5 on 5 and full court play.

-Offseason Programming: Players have the opportunity to develop basketball skills through seasonal skill camps in the offseason, playing AAU, as well as the Kosta Koufos Little Eagles Camp.

SKILLS FOR GRADES 4-6

Carry Over From Previous Development Stage

Rules and Terminology: Don't assume players know the rules. Use common language to describe positions, places, equipment. Take the time to explain basic court markings and rules.

Ball Handling: Introduce basic change of pace and direction moves. Emphasize weak hand development.

Passing/Catching: Teach pass fakes. Teach wrap around pass. Pass with both hands. Develop passing and catching skills on the move - "Ball in the air, feet in the air." Make players catch on two feet.

Pivoting: Place a heavy emphasis on jump stops. Introduce Triple Threat position, and the basics of the jab series (Jab, Rip, Crossover Step, Shot Fake). Teach players to avoid "Turtling" - turning your back to the defense to avoid pressure.

Shooting: Continue to teach "Ready, Up, In" and BEEF shooting techniques. Teach footwork for shooting off the catch and off the dribble.

Layups: Refine basic layup techniques. Place a heavy emphasis on power layups off two feet.

Rebounding: Teach basic box out technique.

Team Offense: Have some basic organization. Teach spacing/cutting. Emphasize distance between players (12-15 feet) for spacing. Teach basic screening concepts. Get players moving. DO NOT build an extensive playbook.

1 on 1: Begin playing 1 on 1 from catch and off of a live dribble.

Team Defense: Make sure players all see the ball at all times and move when the ball moves. Introduce defending cuts and screens. Introduce basic off the ball defensive principles. Understand being in help and rotating. Play as little zone defense as possible.

Individual Defense: Refine proper defensive stance and slides. Teach proper closeout technique.



GAMES FOR GRADES 4-6

Coach Says

Teaches players how to listen and develops movement patterns.

Line Tag

Develops movement patterns, and acceleration/deceleration.

Dribble Tag

Teaches protect dribbles (Body between ball and defense), evading defenders, and dribbling with head up.

Red Light, Green Light

Develops agility, acceleration/deceleration, and ball handling.

Ultimate Basketball

Teaches pivoting, passing and catching under pressure.

DRILLS FOR GRADES 4-6

Dynamic Warmup

5 minutes each practice to develop movement patterns and balance.

Agility Ladder & Reaction Ball

Developing foot speed, quickness and coordination.

Form Shooting/BDT shooting

Familiarizes players with the mechanics of their shot.

5 Man 4 Ball

Volume shooting, teaching shooting prep and communication, and allows players to work on their shooting technique.

Shell Drill

Teaches fundamental team and individual defensive principles.

Stationary Ball Handling (1 Ball & 2 Ball)

Familiarize players with the ball in the simplest drills possible, adding a second ball for more challenge.

Full Court Dribbling (1 Ball)

Teaches basic speed dribble ball handling.

3v3 & 4v4 Wildcat

SSG to build decision making, guard skills and an attack mentality.

2v2 and 3v3 Louisville

Teaches communication, transition offense and defense, as well as advantage and disadvantage situations.

2v1, 1v2

Teaches ball handling and advantage offense.