

Shooting

Shooting Drills

Form Shooting Drill

Having good, solid form is a key element in being a good shooter. To work on your mechanics, use a close to the basket shooting drill.

Stand 2 or 3 feet from the backboard and on one side of the basket. Using only your shooting arm, shoot a bank shot into the basket. Use perfect form (ball on finger tips, elbow in, shoot up-and-out towards the basket, follow through with good backspin on the ball). Rebound the ball and shoot again. Shoot at least 15 shots from each side of the basket. Shoot with your right arm from the right side of the basket, and shoot with your left arm from the left side of the basket. Once you've shot 15 shots from each side, step back 2 or 3 feet further away from the basket and repeat the drill.

Mikan Drill

Named after George Mikan, one of the NBA's early stars, this drill is a key to improving your shot. The drill involves shooting a hook shot in the lane, but it really helps you improve your overall game. The Mikan drill helps you improve your hook shot, but it also helps you improve your coordination, touch around the basket, shot release, follow through, and confidence in your short range game.

Start in front of the basket, 2 to 3 feet in front of the rim. Jump off of your left leg and shoot a right-handed hook shot off the backboard and into the basket. Rebound the ball, and immediately go into the shooting motion of shooting a left-handed hook shot (jumping off of your right leg). Remember to explode up and off the ground as you shoot the shot. Keep both hands on the ball until you are in the final stages of releasing the shot. Fully extend your shooting arm, and release the ball high in the air, using your non-shooting arm to create space between you and the defender. Shoot 15 shots with each arm, then move back 2 or 3 feet and repeat the drill, shooting another 15 shots with each arm.

Distance Shooting Drill

Improving the distance on your shot is important to becoming a better offensive player. Extending your shooting range should be a goal for any player, regardless of what position you play, or what your shooting range is currently.

After you are warmed up and have done some close-in form shooting drills, work your way back to the furthest distance from the basket you are comfortable shooting from (in other words, the extent of your current shooting range). Shoot 10 jump shots from this range. Once you have made 8 out of 10, you are ready to move back 1 to 2 feet further than you would normally shoot from. Make sure you use the same form on the shot you normally use, getting extra strength and power from your lower body. Really focus on shooting with perfect form. Shoot 10 jump shots from this distance. Then, move back another 1 to 2 feet and repeat the drill. Continue to move back 1 to 2 feet from the basket for each series of 10 shots, but stop once you are unable to maintain solid form on the shot. Once you can no longer use your typical shooting form, stop the drill. Your goal is to increase your shooting range over time, a little bit each workout.

Fake and One-Dribble Moves

There will be times in a game when you catch a pass and immediately go up for a jump shot. But it is important that you're able to shoot the basketball at the end of a move as well. Working on

fake and one-dribble move drills will help you improve this part of your game, and more realistically simulates scoring opportunities you'll likely get in actual games..

Toss the ball out to yourself, catch it and pull it into your body and get into the triple threat position. Make a good, solid pump fake and then take one strong dribble to your right. Make sure your dribble moves you past an imaginary defender and towards the basket (the dribble should take you at a 45-degree angle towards the basket). Come to a solid, on-balance stop, then go up for your jump shot. Do this drill 5 times pump faking and dribbling to your right, and 5 times dribbling to your left. Do this drill from 4 to 5 different spots on the floor (for example: on the baseline, on the right and left wings, and on the right and left elbow).

Quick Shot Drill

One of the most important parts of being a good shooter is having a quick shot, and a quick shot release. Even if the defense is playing you close, a quick shot release will allow you to still take the shot, even under lots of pressure.

Here is a great quick-shot drill. The next time you go out to the court to shoot around, make a point to work on the quickness of your shot release. Take a few jump shots like you regularly do (at your regular speed). Now, concentrate on shooting the ball much more quickly. Speed up your shot, all the way from bringing the ball through your shooting pocket, to the actual shot, and the release of the basketball. Concentrate on speeding up the process, but without sacrificing or changing your shooting form at all. Shoot at least 25 jumpers at this faster speed.

Do this drill each time you take the court to work on your shot, and pretty soon you'll start to notice that you shoot the ball with a much quicker release.

Fall-Away Jumper Drill

If you watch an NBA game, you'll notice that a lot of players shoot fall-away jumpers. There's a reason for that: players in the NBA are so tall, such good athletes, and such good jumpers, that it can be very difficult to shoot the basketball. Jumping straight up and taking the jumper isn't an option, because the shot can easily be blocked.

So players look for ways to create enough space to shoot the basketball. One technique to create space is the fall-away. Try this drill and start practicing working on a fall-away jump shot. Start on the block with your back to the basket. Now, shoot a turnaround jumper to the baseline, falling slightly away from the basket. Concentrate on shooting the ball with perfect form, getting good arch on the ball, and keeping your body on-balance, even though you are drifting slightly back from the basket. Shoot 20 jumpers from each side of the basket.

Shooting these from the blocks is a good way to start learning the fall-away jumper, especially for inside players. After several workouts of shooting the fall-away from the block, move to other spots on the floor (such as the elbows, the wings, shorter shots in the lane).

Body control is very important in the game of basketball, and shooting the fall-away tests your ability to shoot the ball under control. Most coaches teach jumping straight up while shooting jump shots, and this is the right thing to teach. But as you move from one level to the next, and players get taller, and have better jumping ability, learning and using the fall-away will be a big part of your game. Now, if you have an open jump shot, then use classic jump shot form (jump straight up or slightly forward for the jumper). But if you are playing against a good defender, and he is playing you tight, a fall-away may be what you need to get room to take the jumper.