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8 Keys to Ball Movement

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The Spurs 8 keys to Ball Movement

Posted by: [Kyle Ohman](#) / In: [Basketball Coaching](#), [Basketball Coaching Articles](#) / 30 Oct 2015 / [Comments: 0](#)



This article was written by Basketball HQ co-founder and skill development coach Kyle Ohman.

1. Ball Reversals

- Make the Defense Move
 - The more times the ball goes from side to side, the more the defense must rotate and closeout.
 - Be down ready on the back side as the ball is swung to you.
 - Attack closeouts that are too close, and shoot the ball when the defense closes out short with hands down.
- Don't Catch and Hold the Ball
 - Be thinking one play ahead and be decisive with your moves.
 - Don't waste your dribbles. Either drive the closeout, shoot, or move the ball.

2. Player Movement

- Don't Stand
 - Players that stand are easy to guard and force one on one offense.
 - Sometimes you may need to space, but most of the time you should always be moving.
- Hard Cuts
 - Read your defender and make the appropriate cut.
 - Back cut
 - Face cut
 - Make decisive cuts.
 - Set up your defender before cutting.
 - Slow to fast.
 - Look to score on every cut.
 - Your cut may open up a scoring chance for a teammate.



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3. Screens

- Set GREAT Legal Screens
 - Use screens to help get other teammates open.
 - Must head hunt on screens.
 - Never screen and stand.
 - Read the defense and offensive player using the screen to determine whether you should roll or space after you set the screen.
 - Slip the screen if you are being overplayed.
- Use Screens to Get Open
 - Set up your defender before using a screen. EVERY TIME.
 - Read your defender when using the screen and then make the appropriate cut.
 - Curl cut
 - Straight cut
 - Fade cut
 - Pro cut
- On the Same Page
 - The player using the screen and the player(s) setting the screen must work together.
 - Must have great timing and spacing when executing a screen.
- Hand Offs
 - Use hand offs similar to ball screens to help teammate: open.
 - If your defender is cheating the hand off, fake it and then make a move.

Resources: [Game Situation Hand Off Shooting Drill](#), [Game Situation Pick & Pop Shooting Drill](#)

4. Penetration

- Drive and Kick
 - Great penetration forces the defense to suck in and help, which opens up the kick out pass.
 - Get your shoulders to the basket before making the kick out pass.
 - This sells that you are attacking the basket and makes the defense sink in.
 - Receiver needs to be down ready to either shoot, drive, or swing the ball. Don't catch and hold!
 - If you catch and hold, the defense can recover and the ball movement is dead.
- Stay Under Control
 - Don't leave your feet and open yourself up to charges and wild passes.
 - Don't over penetrate into trouble.
 - If you get too deep into the defense, there are too many hands to deflect your pass.

Resources: [Two Ball Drive and Kick Shooting Drill](#)

5. Passing Angles

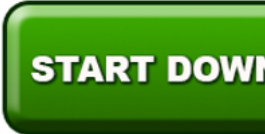
- Receiver Needs to Create Passing Lanes
 - Don't stand and watch on penetration.
 - Either slide up or down to create a great passing lane.
 - A great time to move is once your defender turns their head to watch the ball.
 - Find the passers eyes, especially when the ball goes into the post.
- Down Ready
 - Don't catch the ball standing straight up and down.
 - Anticipate what you are going to do with the ball by how the defender is guarding you; shoot, drive, or swing pass.

Resources: [Game Situation Post Skip Pass Shooting Drill](#)

6. Inside Out


- Post Play
 - Get the ball into the post and then look for kick outs when the defense helps.
 - Find the post players eyes and create passing lanes by moving up or down.
 - Hard cuts on the weak side will be open with a great post passer.
- Pass Fakes
 - Being unselfish opens up opportunities for pass fakes and keeps.
 - Works great for hand offs in the high post area.
 - Must sell the pass.
 - Use your body to shield the ball from the view of the defender.

Resources: [Game Situation Post Entry Relocate Shooting Drill](#)



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7. Designed Plays

- Executing Offense
 - Use set plays to help establish ball movement and player movement.
 - It can be a set play or a motion offense.
- Read the Defense
 - Don't be a robot to the play.
 - If the defense is cheating the play than make them pay.

8. Unselfish Plays

- Extra Pass
 - Turn down an okay shot for a great shot.
 - This type of play will be contagious and lead to better shots for everyone.
- Set Up Teammates
 - Make a move with the specific desire to set up another teammate for an easy shot.
 - Not just the point guards responsibility.
- Celebrate Winning Plays
 - Get excited when a teammate makes an unselfish play.
 - It must be all about the team.

San Antonio Spurs Ball Movement



If you look at any of the great offensive teams like the Spurs, you will quickly realize that ball movement is a big part of why they are so successful. The ball movement opens up high percentage looks for all five players on the floor. Instead of having to shoot isolated and contested shots, they are getting the defense moving, taking advantage of poor closeouts, and getting the ball to wide open players.

This all comes from five players on the floor being unselfish and being willing to turn down a good shot for a great shot. It also has a lot to do with having players that understand what goes into great ball movement. This is why it is so important to develop your players basketball IQ. It may take a little bit longer, but once you do, your offense will flow and you will find that you are getting the high percentage shots that you used to only dream about.

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