

City of West Sacramento Parks & Recreation

Youth Basketball Coaches Handbook

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City of West Sacramento Parks & Recreation

Youth Basketball

Jr. NBA/Jr. WNBA

The Game

Basketball is a sport played by two (2) teams, each composed of five (5) players. The object of the game is to score points by throwing the ball into the opposing team's basket. A goal or basket scored on the court during play is worth two (2) points if shot from within the arching three-point line. Outside of the three-point line a goal or basket scored is worth three (3) points. A goal or basket scored from the free throw line during a foul shot is worth one (1) point.

Players & Positions

The standard player positions in basketball are:

forwards	(2)
center	(1)
guards	(2)

League Description

The level of competition in the West Sacramento Parks and Community Services Youth Basketball program is designed for instructional and recreation play.

The leagues are as follows:

- Boys 5-6
- Girls 5-7
- Boys 7-8
- Girls 8-10
- Boys 9-10
- Boys 11-12
- Girls 11-14
- Boys 13-14

Player Eligibility

All players must be in the age group which corresponds to their current age as of draft day. Players may be moved up in an age group if the parent and/or Recreation Supervisor feels it is for the best of the participant. No players may be moved down an age group.

Team Rosters

Each team may carry 12 players. Players may only be added to or removed from a roster by the Recreation Supervisor. Coaches cannot add to or remove players from their team's roster.

Liability Release Forms

All players must have, on file with the department office, a completed Agreement, Waiver, and Release for a Minor form before they may participate in practices and/or league play.

Schedules and Other Related Materials

All coaches will receive a league schedule for their team. It is the coaches responsibility to distribute schedules to their team parents.

It is also the coaches responsibility to distribute to each and every team parent any other materials given to them for distribution by the Recreation Supervisor in charge of youth basketball.

Uniforms and Equipment

All players will receive from the Parks and Recreation Department printed, numbered t-shirts or jerseys, which are to be worn as a uniform. It is recommended that all players wear shorts or sweat pants during games. Regular pants are OK, but may be uncomfortable to wear during the course of the game. All pants/shorts must not have pockets since pockets present a safety hazard for other players.

All players are required to wear soft-soled, non-marking shoes during all practice and games that take place on any indoor facility being used by the Youth Basketball program.

Scorekeepers/Staff

Score keepers/staff will be provided by the City of West Sacramento Parks and Recreation Department. They may be called upon to verify a rule or handle any league related questions.

Officials

Sacramento Metro Officials Association will provide officials for all Boys 9-14 and Girls 11-14 games. The City of West Sacramento Parks and Recreation Department will provide officials for all other divisions. The City provided officials are meant to work with the kids and help teach in-game fundamentals to the younger age groups.

Officials have complete control of the games. They have the authority to eject players, coaches, and/or spectators from the game for misconduct, delay of game, or for the overall good of the game and its participants. Any player who directs remarks toward the officials, coaches, opposing players and/or spectators after being ejected from a game is subject to a suspension, the length of which will be determined by the Recreation Supervisor in charge of Youth Basketball.

Line-ups

Line-ups must be given to the scorekeepers five (5) minutes prior to game time. Line-ups must include each player's first and last name and their jersey number.

Playing Time

All players must play an equal amount of playing time.

Coaching Tips

- 1. Be on Time.** Try to arrive at the game/practice before your players. After the game/practice do not leave until the last player has left and/or been picked-up.
- 2. Have a Parent/Coach meeting.** By setting aside 30-60 minutes at the beginning of the season, you'll be able to answer a lot of the questions which the parents undoubtedly have. You'll also be able to remind them about arriving to, and picking-up their child(ren) from, practices and games on time.
- 3. Team Rules.** Establish your team's rules and the penalties for violations of those rules. Some things you might want to include:
 - Dress appropriately. (i.e.; team t-shirt, and shorts or sweat pants. All players must wear gym shoes.)
 - Be on time to practice and games.
 - Good attitude and acceptable behavior.
 - No foul or abusive language.
 - Good attendance.
- 4. Good Communication.** Be sure that you keep your players and parents informed about things that are important to the players and the team (i.e.; change in practice location or time, picture day, a pizza party, etc.).
- 5. Be enthusiastic!** The coaches are the only individuals who can generate excitement about a team's identity. If you're excited about the team, they'll be excited about the team.
- 6. Participation.** As West Sacramento Youth Basketball coaches you're being asked to do a very important job, and that is to help mold your players into better human beings and citizens. Basketball is merely the tool used to help you do this.

It is important that your players participate as much as they can in the activity the team is currently involved in, whether it be a practice, a game, whatever.

No child should be more important than another. You send this message to them by having your players get equal playing time, despite the level of their skill.

The other part of participation involves practices. Involve all players in practice activities.

7. Maximum Effort

Of course everyone wants to win their games, but that is not the #1 goal in this program for anyone, including coaches. Winning will be the result of preparation, hard work, discipline, and even luck. Always be reminding your players to give maximum effort. If they do their best everyone can be proud, even if they lose.

Maximum effort is very important in practice. The only way to improve one's skill and proficiency is by practicing, practicing, practicing.

8. Sportsmanship

Kids are always reminded to be good sports when they lose, but that needs to happen when they win, too. Strongly discourage any type of behavior that is unsportsmanlike, win or lose. Taunting, abusive language, name calling or any other acts of unsportsmanlike conduct towards another player, coach, team, spectator, and/or official, has no place in sports, despite what they may see on TV or displayed by individuals they may come in contact with. Let your good example be their model.

9. Fun

Make playing for you fun. From practices to games, the kids should look forward to every opportunity they will get to play basketball for you. Practices should be challenging, but enjoyable for all of your players.

10. Improvement

After a couple of weeks of playing you should begin to get an idea as to what each of your players can and/or will do. More important than winning is the improved development of fundamental skills and work habits.

Your goal as a coach needs to be to figure out what you can do to help each child become a better basketball player. Whether it be a certain skill, effort in practice and/or games, attitude, or sportsmanship.

Set it in your mind as a goal for each child that they will have shown progress in a certain area, which your coaching has determined needs improvement by the end of the season. Now, work toward that goal.

11. Play It Safe

The safety and concern for all participants, on your team or not, is to be put before everything else. Please do not allow your players, or players from other teams, participate in activities, which can put them at risk for injury or worse.

12. In Summary...

- Be on Time.
- Use Good Communication.
- Be Enthusiastic.
- Emphasize Participation, Maximum Effort, Sportsmanship, and Fun.
- Identify areas that need Improvement.
- Play it Safe.

13. Team Meetings. All of these things are items you should be discussing with your players at the conclusion of practices and games. Please set aside five (5) minutes after every practice to talk about those things which are important in the development of good character.

Teaching the Fundamentals of the Game

The first fundamental to instill in young players is that **basketball is a team game**. Everybody has to learn how to dribble, pass, defend, rebound, and hustle if the team is to play well and succeed. **The most important rule to bear in mind is that every member of your team wants to play in the game. That's why the players joined in the first place. You must never ever lose sight of this reality.**

DRIBBLING

As with all basketball skills, the only way to get better at dribbling is by practicing. Practice dribbling so players become equally adept with either hand. With younger players the earlier you encourage them to use both hands, the better off they'll be. Let the kids know that practicing dribbling only during practice is not enough. If they really want to become proficient at this basic basketball skill, they will have to practice on their own. They can learn to dribble while standing around with their friends at home, in the backyard, at the playground, or even while watching television. The more they become accustomed to the feel of the ball the better they will become dribbling without looking down at the ball. Remind players that this takes time — and not to be discouraged with the initial frustrations of dribbling a basketball.

COACHING TIP

Set up four or five chairs or cones down the middle of the court. One player at a time attempts to dribble as fast as possible up court while weaving around the

chairs. This drill forces players to use both hands while keeping their head up and eyes off the ball.

REBOUNDING

Rebounding is all about positioning. The defensive player's job is to immediately turn around and "**box out**" the opposing player as soon as a shot goes up. After all, if the defensive player is positioned between the basket and the opponent, logic suggests that player will have a better chance of collecting the rebound.

As soon as a shot goes up, the defensive player turns his or her entire body around facing the basket. At the same time, the player should "feel" where the shooter is so the defender can keep the offensive player away from the ball. Rebounding position should be reinforced in every scrimmage. After all, the top coaches will tell you defense and rebounding win games.

PRACTICE TIP

Three players — one on the left corner of the free-throw line, one in the middle of the free-throw line and the other at the right corner — assume a defensive position. Three other players take a position opposite the defenders. The coach shoots the ball and the defensive players practice boxing out the offensive players while all six go for the rebound.

SHOOTING

Like dribbling, shooting a basketball takes practice, practice, and more practice. In terms of technique, emphasize resting the ball on the fingers, and not in the palm. The ball should roll off the fingertips when released. The ball should be loaded into the shooting position by the dominant hand. The other hand should be used to balance the ball. From there, the shooter should focus on the basket, and aim at the back of the rim. The ball should be hoisted in a soft trajectory at the basket, not in a straight line. The shooter should follow through by flicking the fingers and wrist toward the basket. If the ball doesn't go in, remind players to break for the basket for the rebound. Players should always "follow the shot" in case the ball does not go in. This way they can be in a position to contend for a rebound.

PRACTICE TIP

Divide the team into two groups at either end of the court. Similar to H-O-R-S-E, in this drill one player takes a shot from anywhere on the court. If he makes the shot, then every other player must take the same shot. A free-throw counts as one point, all other baskets count as two. The idea is to get to 21 points as fast as possible. As players reach 21, they leave the game. The drill is over when one player remains.

PASSING

There are two kinds of passes — the chest pass and the bounce pass — that every player has to master. But before players can advance to that stage, they have to master the basics. The chest pass should be a practice staple. Teach players to hold the ball in both hands, and to direct the ball towards their

teammate by pushing the ball from the chest with both hands. The teammate should catch the ball in the air with both hands. The bounce pass is fundamentally similar to the chest pass. The ball is still thrown with both hands, and it is directed at a teammate. This time, however, the ball is bounced once before being received. What makes this pass a little tricky is that the bounce pass usually is thrown to a player who is on the move. Hence, the player making the pass has to accurately anticipate how quickly his or her teammate is moving.

COACHING TIP

Have two lines of players set up at one end of the court. On your whistle, they both start running down the court, parallel to each other, while passing the ball back and forth. It's important that they mix up their passes (chest and bounce) and they move quickly. As they get close to the other end of the court, the last one with the ball should put up a lay-up. The key is quick passing.

Creating Your Line-Up

1. The Point Guard: This player handles the ball as the team moves up the court and into its offensive plays. The point guard is much like the quarterback of a football team. Point guards must be excellent ball handlers who are able to see the whole court — that means being able to dribble without looking at the ball. A talented point guard who can also make a jump shot and drive to the basket is essential to a team's success.

2. The Shooting Guard: While this player has solid ball handling skills, he or she is usually the team's best shooter and top scorer. This player is also referred to at times as the "off guard." The shooting guard is normally the team's most athletic player on the floor.

3. The Small Forward: The small forward is usually the most versatile player on the court. This person plays both an "inside" and "outside" game. He or she must have the skills to shoot and dribble the ball well, while using his or her size and strength to battle near the basket for rebounds. Don't be fooled by the name, small forwards need to be big.

4. The Power Forward: This player is known as the team's primary rebounder at both ends of the court. On defense, power forwards can start a fast break by grabbing a rebound and making a quick outlet pass to one of the guards. Big and strong, the power forward may not be the most graceful player on the team, but his or her presence is always felt.

5. The Center: To be successful at any level, a team usually needs a talented big man in the middle. Traditionally, the center is the tallest player on the team. The center's job is to anchor the team's defense and rebound the ball at both ends of the court. Additionally, the center is the team's primary low post scorer on offense.

DRILLS

REMINDER: One way to keep practice interesting and fun is to limit each drill to no more than 10 minutes.

SINGLE LINE PASSING

Set up two single file lines facing one another. A player from the front of one line passes the ball to the player at the front of the other line and runs to the back of that line.

KING OF THE CIRCLE

Place two players who are both dribbling basketballs in the center circle at mid court. Both players have to keep dribbling the ball while attempting to steal their opponent's ball. To make it even more interesting, blow a whistle every 10 or 15 seconds and have the players change the hand they are dribbling with.

SIDE TO SIDE SLIDE

Set up two single file lines, one to the right of the free-throw line, the other to the left. The first player in line assumes the defensive position. The next player dribbles down the court in a zig-zag — three dribbles to the right using the right hand, three dribbles to the left using the crossover to go from the right hand to the left hand and so on down the court. The defensive player slides from side to side staying in front of the dribbler.

TEAM SHOOTING GAME

Divide the team into two groups, one at either end of the court. Both teams start 10 to 15 feet from the right or left side of the basket. The first player in line takes a shot. If he misses, the next player shoots from the same spot. The entire group moves to the next spot as soon as somebody makes a shot from the first position. The winning team is the group that can hit all 10 shots — corner, between the corner and free-throw line, free-throw, opposite space between the free-throw line and corner and opposite corner — and back before the other team.

Good luck this season and thank you for volunteering!