PracticePad

FREE FOR COACHES

12U Basketball 4-Week Practice Plan

8 ready-to-run practices, 75 minutes each. Every drill has the setup, how it runs and what to coach.

WEEK 1

Ball handling and dribbling

Dribble with either hand with eyes up and use a change of direction to beat a defender.

WEEK 2

Layups and finishing

Finish layups off the correct foot with either hand and score through light contact.

WEEK 3

Shooting form

Shoot with balanced feet, a straight elbow and a held follow-through from range that fits each player.

WEEK 4

On-ball defense

Guard the ball in a low stance, stay in front without reaching and contest shots without fouling.

Want the rest of the season?

Scan for all 8 weeks on your phone with a practice timer, fair game-day rotations and a parent calendar. Free for coaches.

WEEK 1 · PRACTICE 1 OF 2 · 75 MINUTES

Ball handling and dribbling

Goal: Dribble with either hand with eyes up and use a change of direction to beat a defender.

0:00	**Dynamic court warm-up** Players go baseline to half court and back in lines: jog, high knees, butt kicks, skips for height, lateral shuffles, carioca, walking lunges with a twist, and backpedal into a sprint. Finish with two build-up sprints to get legs ready for game speed. Coaching points: Stay tall and quick off the floor. Build speed, do not start at max.	14 min
0:14	**Zig-zag dribble** Players dribble full court in a zig-zag between the sideline and lane line, using a crossover at each turn. On the second trip they add a retreat dribble before the cross. Finish each trip with a layup. Coaching points: Plant the outside foot. Protect the ball with your body.	10 min
0:24	Water break	3 min
0:27	**Speed dribble layups** From the baseline, players speed dribble the full floor and finish at the far rim using as few dribbles as possible. Count dribbles and try to lower it. Go both ways and both hands. Coaching points: Push the ball out ahead. Slow down only at the last step.	12 min
0:39	**Pressure dribble lanes** Divide the court into lanes using the sideline and lane line. A ball handler dribbles the length of the floor while a defender pressures and tries to turn them. Defense plays 50 percent at first, then live. Swap roles at the far end. Coaching points: Keep your body between ball and defender. Change direction on the turn.	15 min
0:54	Water break	3 min
0:57	**Dribble knockout** Everyone dribbles inside the three point arc and tries to tap other players' balls away while protecting their own. Knocked-out players do 20 crossovers outside the arc and come right back in. Shrink the area every minute and finish with a last-three-standing round. Coaching points: Protect with your body and off arm. Eyes up to find targets.	10 min
1:07	**Free throw cool-down** Split players across the baskets. Each player shoots two free throws while the others stretch calves, hamstrings and quads on the baseline, then rotates. Track team makes on a whiteboard and try to beat the last practice. Coaching points: Same routine every shot. Breathe out before you shoot.	8 min

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WEEK 1 · PRACTICE 2 OF 2 · 75 MINUTES

Ball handling and dribbling

Goal: Dribble with either hand with eyes up and use a change of direction to beat a defender.

0:00	**Around the rim form shots** Players partner up at a basket. Each shooter takes five one-hand form shots from each of five spots three to five feet from the rim, then switches with the rebounder. Older groups step back to the block line and add the guide hand. Coaching points: Elbow under the ball. Hold the follow-through.	8 min
0:08	**Chair attack moves** Place a chair or cone at the top and one at each elbow. Players attack the first chair with a crossover, the elbow with between-the-legs, and finish at the rim. Rotate in the move and the finish (inside hand, reverse, floater) each round. Coaching points: Sell the move at the chair. Low and tight on the change.	13 min
0:21	Water break	3 min
0:24	**Partner shadow dribble** Partners each have a ball. The leader dribbles freely in a half court, changing speed, hands and direction. The follower copies every move from a few feet behind. Swap leaders every 45 seconds. Coaching points: Eyes on your partner, not your ball.	9 min
0:33	**Escape the trap 2v1** Two defenders try to trap a dribbler near the sideline at half court. The dribbler uses retreat dribbles and splits or speed dribbles around the trap to reach a target cone. Add an outlet player at U14 and up so the handler can pass out. Coaching points: Do not pick up the dribble. Retreat to see the floor.	13 min
0:46	**1v1 king of the court** Run 1v1 games at every basket. Each game is one possession: score or get a stop to move up a basket, lose and move down. Play rounds of 45 seconds and crown the player who finishes at the top basket. Coaching points: Every possession counts. Make them take a tough shot.	11 min
0:57	Water break	3 min
1:00	**Rim-to-rim dribble relays** Teams of four line up on the baseline. First player speed dribbles to the far rim, scores, and speed dribbles back to hand off. Rounds alternate right hand, left hand and crossover every three dribbles. Losing teams play again, they do not run extra. Coaching points: Push the ball out in front. Finish before you celebrate.	8 min
1:08	**Stretch circle and shout-outs** Players sit in a circle and hold easy stretches for legs, back and shoulders. While they stretch, each player names one teammate who did something great today. The coach closes with one thing to practice at home. Coaching points: Slow breaths. Be specific with shout-outs.	7 min

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WEEK 2 · PRACTICE 1 OF 2 · 75 MINUTES

Layups and finishing

Goal: Finish layups off the correct foot with either hand and score through light contact.

0:00	**Partner passing on the move** Partners slide down the court about 12 feet apart, chest passing back and forth without traveling. On the way back they switch to bounce passes, then one-hand push passes with each hand. Two balls per pair for advanced groups. Coaching points: Step to every pass. Show a target hand.	14 min
0:14	**Power layups** Players dribble from the wing into a two-foot jump stop in the lane, chin the ball and go up strong off both feet. Add a coach bumping lightly with a pad on the way up. Score one point for a make, two for a make through the bump. Coaching points: Two feet, two hands. Shoulders square to the glass.	12 min
0:26	Water break	3 min
0:29	**Post footwork series** Players catch on the block with their back to the basket and work drop step baseline, drop step middle, up-and-under and a turnaround jumper. Start with no defense, then add a defender holding a pad. Coaching points: Feel the defender first. Big drop step, chin the ball.	13 min
0:42	**Rebound, outlet, layup** Groups of three: a rebounder, an outlet receiver on the wing and a runner. Coach shoots, the rebounder outlets to the wing, who hits the runner streaking for a layup. Rotate spots every rep. Coaching points: Pivot to the outside. Lead the runner.	12 min
0:54	Water break	3 min
0:57	**Beat the clock layups** The whole team runs layups at one basket from both sides for 60 seconds while the coach counts makes. Write the number down and try to beat it in round two and three. For U12, left side must be left hand. Coaching points: Hustle back to the line. Right side right hand.	10 min
1:07	**Huddle and goal check** Gather at center court while players stretch. Revisit the week's goal, ask two players to name what improved today, and set one specific thing to work on before the next practice. Close with the team chant. Coaching points: Players do the talking.	8 min

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WEEK 2 · PRACTICE 2 OF 2 · 75 MINUTES

Layups and finishing

Goal: Finish layups off the correct foot with either hand and score through light contact.

0:00	**Two-line layups** A shooting line at the right elbow and a rebounding line at the left. Shooter drives in for a right-hand layup, rebounder outlets to the next shooter, and both switch lines. Every two minutes swap sides for left-hand layups, then add pull-ups or reverse finishes. Coaching points: Last step is a strong jump. Use the backboard square.	10 min
0:10	**Contact finishing** A coach or teammate holds a blocking pad in the lane. Players drive from the wing or top, absorb the bump with the shoulder and finish high off the glass. Rotate finishes: off-foot, two-foot, reverse. Coaching points: Initiate the contact. Eyes on the rim through the bump.	12 min
0:22	Water break	3 min
0:25	**Chaser layups** A dribbler starts at half court with a three-step head start on a chaser. The dribbler races to finish while the chaser tries to contest from behind without fouling. Swap roles and switch sides of the floor. Coaching points: Finish strong, do not float. Chaser, hands up, not down.	9 min
0:34	**2-on-1 to the rim** Two offensive players start at half court with one defender in the lane. They attack and must make the defender commit before passing or finishing. Rotate so the shooter becomes the defender. Coaching points: Attack the defender's middle. Pass early, finish late.	11 min
0:45	**Weak-hand finishing battle** Two teams at one basket, one from each wing. On the whistle, the first player in each line drives and must finish with the weak hand, with makes counting a point. Every third round is 1v1 from half court with a chase defender. First team to 15 wins. Coaching points: Weak hand, strong finish. Use the glass.	11 min
0:56	Water break	3 min
0:59	**Sprint and shoot free throws** Players run baseline to baseline twice, then shoot two free throws while tired, just like late in a game. Track makes per player. Repeat for four to six rounds with a short walk between. Coaching points: Slow down your breathing first. Trust the routine.	9 min
1:08	**Stretch circle and shout-outs** Players sit in a circle and hold easy stretches for legs, back and shoulders. While they stretch, each player names one teammate who did something great today. The coach closes with one thing to practice at home. Coaching points: Slow breaths. Be specific with shout-outs.	7 min

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WEEK 3 · PRACTICE 1 OF 2 · 75 MINUTES

Shooting form

Goal: Shoot with balanced feet, a straight elbow and a held follow-through from range that fits each player.

0:00	**Ball-handling wake-up** Players spread out with a ball each and follow the coach through 30-second rounds: waist wraps, figure eights, right and left pounds, crossovers, between the legs and behind the back. Finish with a 30-second freestyle round of their best combo moves. Coaching points: Pound it hard below the knee. Eyes up the whole time.	11 min
0:11	**Catch-and-shoot footwork** Shooters sprint from the lane out to a spot, turn and catch with feet ready, stepping in with the inside foot. Rebounder passes and rotates. Rotate spots every five makes. Coaching points: Hands ready, knees bent. Inside foot first.	12 min
0:23	Water break	3 min
0:26	**Drift and fill on drives** A driver attacks from the top or wing while two shooters react: a baseline drive means the corner drifts up behind it, a middle drive means the wings slide down to the corner and slot. The driver kicks to whoever is open for a shot. Rotate spots every three reps. Coaching points: Move into the passing window. Feet ready before the catch.	12 min
0:38	**Partner shooting race** Partners share a ball. One shoots, the other rebounds and passes, and they switch after every shot. The pair that reaches 15 made shots first wins. Use spots inside the arc for younger players. Coaching points: Get the rebound before it bounces.	10 min
0:48	Water break	3 min
0:51	**Beat the pro** Each player shoots from a spot. A make earns a point for the player, a miss earns three points for the imaginary pro. First to 11 wins. Change spots and shot type each round. Coaching points: Game speed shots.	16 min
1:07	**Free throw cool-down** Split players across the baskets. Each player shoots two free throws while the others stretch calves, hamstrings and quads on the baseline, then rotates. Track team makes on a whiteboard and try to beat the last practice. Coaching points: Same routine every shot. Breathe out before you shoot.	8 min

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WEEK 3 · PRACTICE 2 OF 2 · 75 MINUTES

Shooting form

Goal: Shoot with balanced feet, a straight elbow and a held follow-through from range that fits each player.

0:00	**Dynamic court warm-up** Players go baseline to half court and back in lines: jog, high knees, butt kicks, skips for height, lateral shuffles, carioca, walking lunges with a twist, and backpedal into a sprint. Finish with two build-up sprints to get legs ready for game speed. Coaching points: Stay tall and quick off the floor. Build speed, do not start at max.	11 min
0:11	**Partner spot shooting** Pairs at five spots around the arc or inside it. Shooter takes five shots from each spot while the partner rebounds and passes. Switch after the circuit and track makes per spot. Coaching points: Show your hands to the passer. Same shot every time.	11 min
0:22	Water break	3 min
0:25	**Shooting with closeouts** Groups of three at a basket. The passer passes to the shooter and closes out with a high hand, but does not block. The shooter makes a quick shot or one-dribble pull-up. Rotate after each rep. Coaching points: Shoot over the hand. Closeout, chop your feet.	13 min
0:38	**Drive and kick** A driver at the top and a shooter on the wing. The driver attacks the lane and kicks out to the shooter, who has slid to the open spot. Add a help defender who must choose the driver or shooter. Coaching points: Shooter, move with the drive. Pass to the shooting pocket.	11 min
0:49	**Knockout** Players line up at the free throw line with two balls. If the shooter behind you makes before you, you are out, but knocked-out players shoot at the other basket and can earn their way back in by making two. Last player standing wins. Coaching points: Shoot your shot, do not rush.	9 min
0:58	Water break	3 min
1:01	**Rim-to-rim dribble relays** Teams of four line up on the baseline. First player speed dribbles to the far rim, scores, and speed dribbles back to hand off. Rounds alternate right hand, left hand and crossover every three dribbles. Losing teams play again, they do not run extra. Coaching points: Push the ball out in front. Finish before you celebrate.	8 min
1:09	**Stretch circle and shout-outs** Players sit in a circle and hold easy stretches for legs, back and shoulders. While they stretch, each player names one teammate who did something great today. The coach closes with one thing to practice at home. Coaching points: Slow breaths. Be specific with shout-outs.	6 min

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WEEK 4 · PRACTICE 1 OF 2 · 75 MINUTES

On-ball defense

Goal: Guard the ball in a low stance, stay in front without reaching and contest shots without fouling.

0:00	**Around the rim form shots** Players partner up at a basket. Each shooter takes five one-hand form shots from each of five spots three to five feet from the rim, then switches with the rebounder. Older groups step back to the block line and add the guide hand. Coaching points: Elbow under the ball. Hold the follow-through.	9 min
0:09	**Denial and backdoor recovery** A defender denies a wing from the top with a coach holding the ball. When the wing cuts backdoor, the defender opens up toward the ball and recovers to the ball side. Score a point for every deflection. Coaching points: Open to the ball and turn your head. Stay one step off the cutter.	12 min
0:21	Water break	3 min
0:24	**Closeouts** Defenders start in the lane, a coach passes to a shooter on the wing, and the defender sprints out, chops the feet with a high hand and lands in a stance about an arm's length away. Progress to the shooter attacking the closeout with one or two dribbles. Coaching points: Sprint, then short choppy steps. High hand, no flying by.	12 min
0:36	**Shooting with closeouts** Groups of three at a basket. The passer passes to the shooter and closes out with a high hand, but does not block. The shooter makes a quick shot or one-dribble pull-up. Rotate after each rep. Coaching points: Shoot over the hand. Closeout, chop your feet.	14 min
0:50	Water break	3 min
0:53	**Two-dribble 1v1** 1v1 from the wing or top starting with a pass from the defender. The offensive player must start in triple threat and is limited to two dribbles, so jabs, shot fakes and footwork decide it. Play to 5 and rotate opponents. Coaching points: Make the defender move first. Two dribbles, make them count.	15 min
1:08	**Huddle and goal check** Gather at center court while players stretch. Revisit the week's goal, ask two players to name what improved today, and set one specific thing to work on before the next practice. Close with the team chant. Coaching points: Players do the talking.	7 min

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WEEK 4 · PRACTICE 2 OF 2 · 75 MINUTES

On-ball defense

Goal: Guard the ball in a low stance, stay in front without reaching and contest shots without fouling.

0:00	**Partner passing on the move** Partners slide down the court about 12 feet apart, chest passing back and forth without traveling. On the way back they switch to bounce passes, then one-hand push passes with each hand. Two balls per pair for advanced groups. Coaching points: Step to every pass. Show a target hand.	10 min
0:10	**Hands-behind-back defense** Use the lane-line-to-sideline lane on each side of the floor. The defender guards a dribbler for the full length with hands clasped behind the back, so only feet and body angle can keep the ball in front. Switch at the far end and go again with hands live. Coaching points: Beat them to the spot. Nose over your toes, not your heels.	10 min
0:20	Water break	3 min
0:23	**1v1 from the wing** The defender starts under the basket and passes out to the wing, then closes out. The offense has three dribbles to score. Defense must get a stop to rotate to offense, and the coach rotates pairs every two minutes. Coaching points: Contain, do not reach. Force to the baseline or help.	10 min
0:33	**Full-court contain** Go 1v1 the length of the floor inside a lane. The defender tries to turn the dribbler three times before half court, then it is live at the far end. Rotate so each player goes both directions on offense and defense. Coaching points: Get your head in front of the ball. Turn, turn, turn.	12 min
0:45	**3v3 cutthroat** Three teams of three. Offense plays defense, and when the defense gets a stop it goes to offense while a new team steps in to defend. Score and stay on offense. First team to seven wins. Coaching points: Compete every possession.	14 min
0:59	Water break	3 min
1:02	**Team two-minute layups** Two lines at half court, one on each side. Players sprint in for layups from both sides, grab their own rebound and pass back to the next in line on the opposite side. The team must make a target number in two minutes (start at 35 for U12, 50 for varsity). Coaching points: Sprint, do not jog. Finish with the outside hand.	8 min
1:10	**Stretch circle and shout-outs** Players sit in a circle and hold easy stretches for legs, back and shoulders. While they stretch, each player names one teammate who did something great today. The coach closes with one thing to practice at home. Coaching points: Slow breaths. Be specific with shout-outs.	5 min

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