



## Williamstown Cannons Basketball Club

Basketball Basics: A basic explanation of the game, rules and player positions. An ideal handout for new players to basketball (and their parents!)

# Basketball Basics – Rules and Player Positions

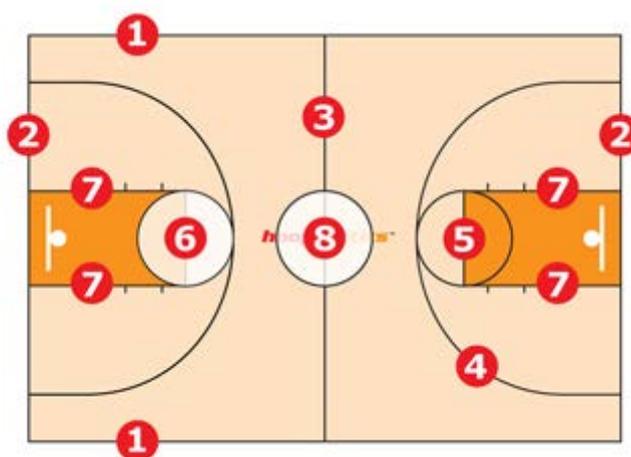
## Overview

Basketball is a team sport. Two teams of five players each try to score by shooting a ball through a hoop elevated 10 feet above the ground. The game is played on a rectangular floor called the court, and there is a hoop at each end. The court is divided into two main sections by the mid-court line.

The ball is moved down the court toward the basket by passing or dribbling. The team with the ball is called the offense. The team without the ball is called the defence. They try to steal the ball, contest shots, steal and deflect passes, and gather rebounds.

## The Court

1. Sideline
2. Baseline / Endline
3. Midcourt Line
4. 3 point line or arc
5. Free throw line
6. Free throw circle
7. Key Line
8. Centre Circle

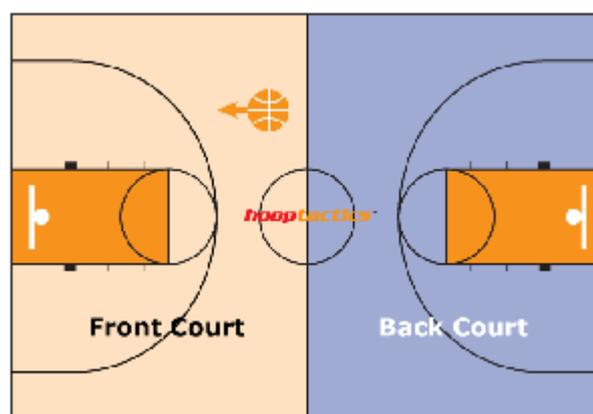


## Front Court

The term Front Court is used to denote the offensive end of the court from the midcourt line to the baseline.

## Back Court

Back Court is used to denote the area behind the mid court line. It includes the half of the court from the midcourt line back to the endline. Once the ball is advanced across the midcourt line into the front court, it cannot go back into the Back Court.



In this example, the team is shooting to the left so the left is the front court and the right is the back court.

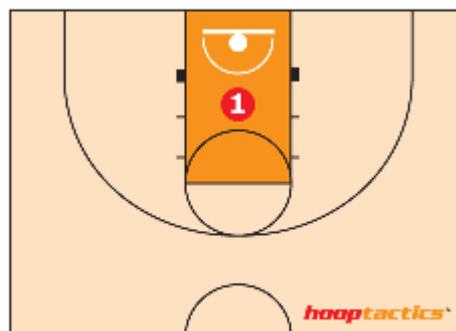
## Court Terminology

The following are common terms used to identify specific areas of court.

### The Key or Three Second Area

This is the area below the free throw line and between the key lines. It is called the "Key" or Three Second Area. If any offensive player remains in this area for more than three seconds it is a violation and the other team gets the ball. **Defensive players are able to stay in this area for as long as they wish.**

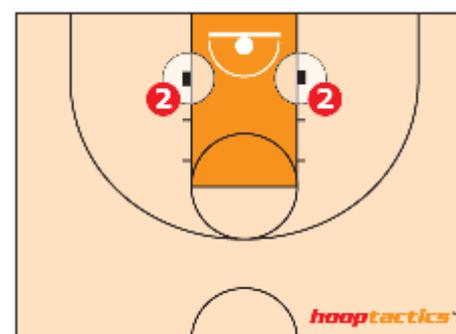
**Note: in U10 (and ABBA U12) this time is extended to 5 seconds.**



Three Second Area

### The Block

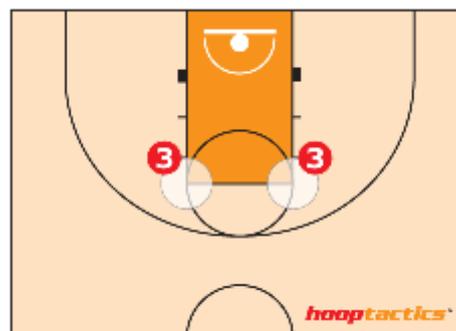
The block is a buffer area painted on the key lines separating offensive and defensive players during a free throw attempt. Additionally, it is a very strategic area during the game. Any player - offensive or defensive - establishing a position on the block gains a definite advantage.



Block

### The Elbow

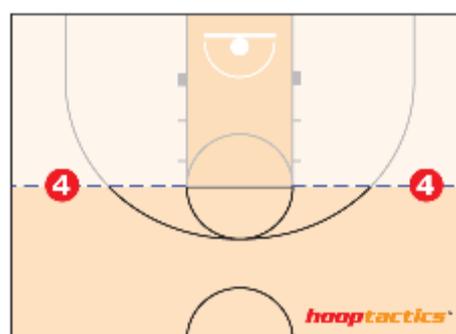
The elbow is the area of the court where the free throw line meets the key line. Like the "Block", the Elbows become important on dribble penetration. Any player - offense or defence - who gets to the elbow first will gain an advantage.



Elbow

### Free Throw Line Extended

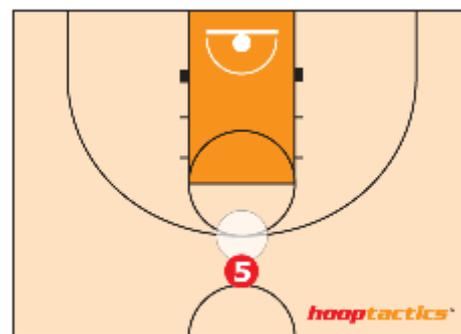
This imaginary line represents the extension of the free throw line across the width of the court. Most coaches use it to establish defensive rules. When the ball is above the free throw line extended a certain rule applies. When the ball is below it another rule applies. It is also used as a reference for offensive player alignment.



Free Throw Line Extended

### The Top of the Key (or Top of the Circle)

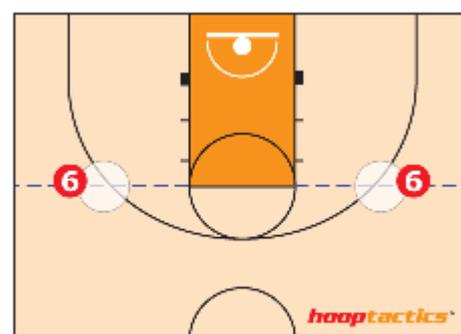
The top of Key is the area straight out from the basket just outside the free throw circle. It is used primarily as a reference for aligning offensive and defensive players. It is where the Point player normally positions themselves.



**Top Of Circle (Key)**

### The Wing

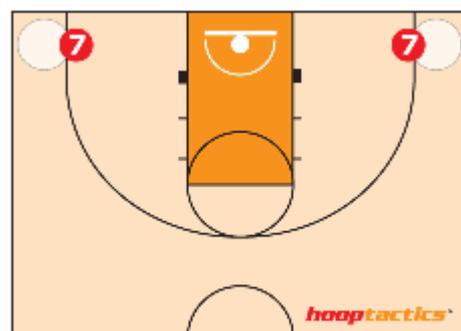
The wing area is located on the side of the court near the free throw line extended. Wing areas are designated "Ballside" or "Weakside" according to the location of the player with the ball. The wing on the same side as the ball handler is the "Ballside or Strongside" wing. The wing on the side away from the ball handler is the "Weakside" wing.



**Wing**

### The Corner

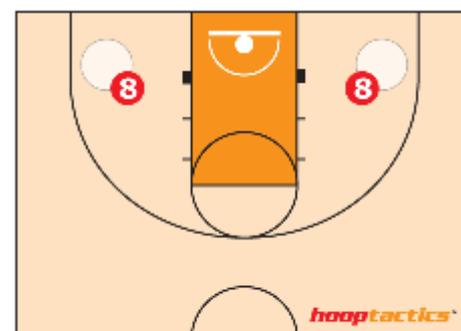
The "Corner" is primarily used to designate the area where the sideline and baseline meet. This is another favourite area from which players like to shoot. It is usually an open area when zone defence is played. However, it is also an area where the defence can readily trap an offensive player with the ball.



**Corner**

### The Short Corner

The short corner is an area along the baseline half way between the sideline and the key line. It is a strategic offensive area especially used against zone defences.



**Short Corner**

## Scoring and Length of Game

When a team makes a basket, they score two points and the ball goes to the other team. If a basket, or field goal, is made outside of the three-point arc, then that basket is worth three points. A free throw is worth one point.

Free throws are awarded to a team according to some formats involving the number of fouls committed in a half and/or the type of foul committed. Fouling a shooter always results in two or three free throws being awarded the shooter, depending upon where he was when he shot. If he was beyond the three-point line, then he gets three shots. Other types of fouls do not result in free throws being awarded until a certain number of fouls has been accumulated during a half. Once that number is reached, then the player who was fouled is awarded a '1-and-1' opportunity. If he makes his first free throw, he gets to attempt a second. If he misses the first shot, the ball is live on the rebound.

Each game is divided into two halves. In juniors, each half is twenty minutes long. There is a gap of several minutes between halves.

Each team is assigned a basket or goal to defend. This means that the other basket is their scoring basket. At halftime, the teams switch goals. The game begins with one player from either team at centre court. A referee will toss the ball up between the two. The player that gets his hands on the ball will tip it to a teammate. This is called a tip-off.

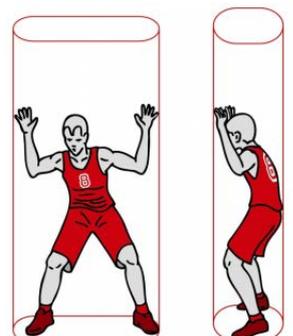
In addition to stealing the ball from an opposing player, there are other ways for a team to get the ball. One such way is if the other team commits a foul or violation.

## Fouls and Violations

Basketball fouls are called when the official feels there has been physical contact between two players and that one player has gained an advantage because of that contact.

Here are some basic guidelines used by the officials to determine which player has committed the foul after contact has occurred:

- The first player to become set in a position on the court has the rights to that position.
- When a player moves into the path of an opposing player and does not properly establish their position in time, then obstructs the path of and contacts the offensive player - that player is responsible for the contact made.
- A player cannot extend an arm or leg in the pathway of an opponent. When this happens, that player is responsible for the contact made.
- Players have the right to the area extending from their feet, which are set on the floor, up. This is their floor space and is called the "cylinder" principle.



## **FOULS**

Fouls are caused by illegal physical contact or actions.

**Illegal Use of Hands** – This is a foul called when a defender slaps, hacks, or smacks an offensive player with the ball.



**Blocking** – Blocking is illegal personal contact resulting from a defender not establishing position in time to prevent an opponent's drive to the basket.



**Elbowing** - When a player swings their elbows in an excessive manner and makes contact with their opponent.

**Holding** – A “Holding Foul” occurs when a defender holds, grabs, or pulls an offensive player (it doesn’t matter if the offensive player has possession of the ball or not).



**Pushing** – A “Pushing Foul” occurs when a defender pushes an offensive player or bumps into the body of an offensive player.



**Charging (Charge)** – A “Charging Foul” occurs when an offensive player runs into (or over) a defensive player who already has position (the defender must first establish position).

**Flagrant foul** - Violent contact with an opponent. This includes hitting, kicking, and punching. This type of foul results in free throws plus the offense retaining possession of the ball after the free throws.

**Intentional foul** - When a player makes physical contact with another player with no reasonable effort to steal the ball. It is a judgment call for the officials.

**Technical foul** - Technical foul. A player or a coach can commit this type of foul. It does not involve player contact or the ball but is instead about the 'manners' of the game. Foul language, obscenity, obscene gestures, and even arguing can be considered a technical foul, as can technical details regarding filling in the scorebook improperly or dunking during warm-ups.

## FOUL PENALTIES AND CONSEQUENCES

- If a player is shooting while being fouled, then he gets two free throws if his shot doesn't go in. However if the shot goes in whilst he was shooting, the score counts and he is awarded only one free throw.
- Three free throws are awarded if the player is fouled while shooting for a three-point goal and they miss their shot. If a player is fouled while shooting a three-point shot and makes it anyway, he is awarded one free throw. Thus, he could score four points on the play.
- Inbounds - If fouled while not shooting, the ball is given to the team the foul was committed upon. They get the ball at the nearest side or baseline, out of bounds, and have 5 seconds to pass the ball onto the court.
- One and one - If the team committing the foul has seven or more fouls in the period, then the player who was fouled is awarded one free throw. If he makes his first shot, then he is awarded another free throw.
- Flagrant Foul - Two free throws, possession of the basketball out of bounds, and the player committing the foul is disqualified.
- Intentional Foul - Two free throws and possession of the basketball out of bounds.
- Technical Foul - Two free throws and possession of the basketball out of bounds.

## VIOLATIONS

Violations are actions by players that break a basketball rule – such as traveling, stepping on the line, and double dribbling the ball.

**Walking/Traveling** - Taking more than two steps without dribbling the ball is traveling. Moving your pivot foot once you've stopped dribbling is traveling.



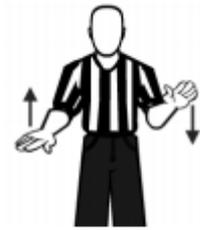
Traveling

**Carrying/palming** - When a player dribbles the ball with his hand too far to the side of or, sometimes, even under the ball.



Palming/ carrying the ball

**Double Dribble** - Dribbling the ball with both hands on the ball at the same time or picking up the dribble and then dribbling again is a double dribble.



Illegal dribble

**Held ball** - Occasionally, two or more opposing players will gain possession of the ball at the same time. In order to avoid a prolonged and/or violent tussle, the referee stops the action and awards the ball to one team or the other on a rotating basis – this is called a “Jump Ball”.



Jump Ball

**Centre line Eight Second Rule** - A team in control of the ball in its back court must get the ball over the centre line into their front court within 8 seconds.

**Back Court violation (Cross Court)** - Once the offense has brought the ball across the mid-court line into their front court, they cannot go back across the line into their back court during possession. If they do, the ball is awarded to the other team to pass inbounds.



Back Court / Cross Court

**Time restrictions** - A player passing the ball inbounds has five seconds to pass the ball. If he does not, then the ball is awarded to the other team. Other time restrictions include the rule that a player cannot have the ball for more than five seconds when being closely guarded.

**Key Time Violations** - If any offensive player remains in the key area for more than three seconds it is a violation and the other team gets the ball. **Defensive players are able to stay in this area for as long as they wish. Note: in U10 (and ABBA U12) this time is extended to 5 seconds.**

**Shot Clock Violations** - If the Shot Clock is being used for a game (only applicable at senior and higher levels), then the team in control of the ball must shoot for goal within 24 seconds. The Shot Clock starts when a team gets control of the ball in court (regardless of whether it is the back court or front court). It will stop when the referee blows the whistle, or if the shot goes through the ring.

**Goaltending** - If a defensive player interferes with a shot while it's on the way down toward the basket, while it's on the way up toward the basket after having touched the backboard, or while it's in the cylinder above the rim, it's goaltending and the shot counts. If committed by an offensive player, it's a violation and the ball is awarded to the opposing team for a throw-in.

## **Player Numbering System and Player Positions**

The Williamstown Cannons Basketball Club has implemented a Club wide numbering system for coaches to use when explaining offensive and defensive positioning. The numbering system consists of 1 to 5 which are associated with various player positions. Ideally, coaches should endeavour to rotate players through all positions so that players learn multiple positions (eg. not just tallest player at 5 spot) as the tallest player may not necessarily be the biggest player in 2 seasons!

### **Positions 1 and 2 – Guards**

These are potentially your shortest players and they should be really good at dribbling fast, seeing the court, and passing. It is their job to bring the ball down the court and set up offensive plays.

Offensive -- Dribbling, passing, and setting up offensive plays are a guard's main responsibilities. They also need to be able to drive to the basket and to shoot from the perimeter.

Defensive -- On defence, a guard is responsible for stealing passes, contesting shots, preventing drives to the hoop, and for boxing out.

### **Positions 3 and 4 - Forwards**

Your next tallest players will most likely be your forwards. While a forward may be called upon to play under the hoop, they may also be required to operate in the wings and corner areas.

Offensive -- Forwards are responsible to get free for a pass, take outside shots, drive for goals, and rebound.

Defensive -- Responsibilities include preventing drives to the goal and rebounding.

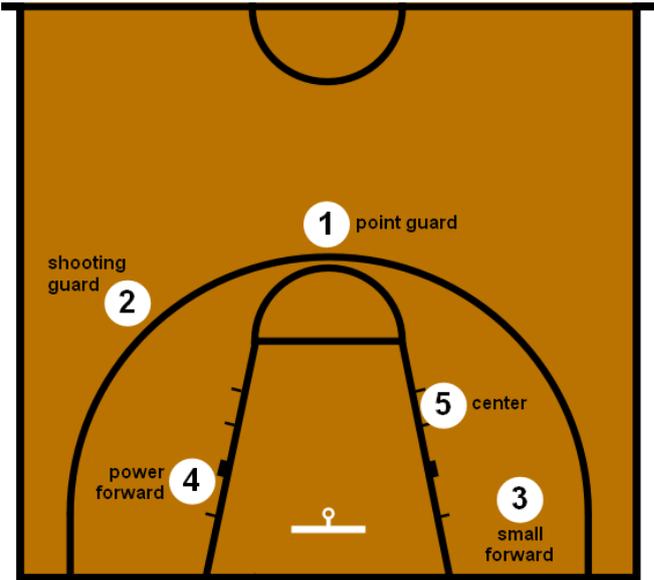
### **Position 5 - Centre**

Centres are generally your tallest players and are generally are positioned near the basket.

Offensive -- The centre's goal is to get open for a pass and to shoot. They are also responsible for blocking defenders, known as picking or screening, to open other players up for driving to the basket for a goal. Centres are expected to get some offensive rebounds

Defensive -- On defence, the centre's main responsibility is to keep opponents from shooting by blocking shots and passes in the key area. They also are expected to get a lot of rebounds because they're taller.

An example of an offensive set up using the 1 to 5 numbering system



An example of a zone defence using the 1 to 5 numbering system

