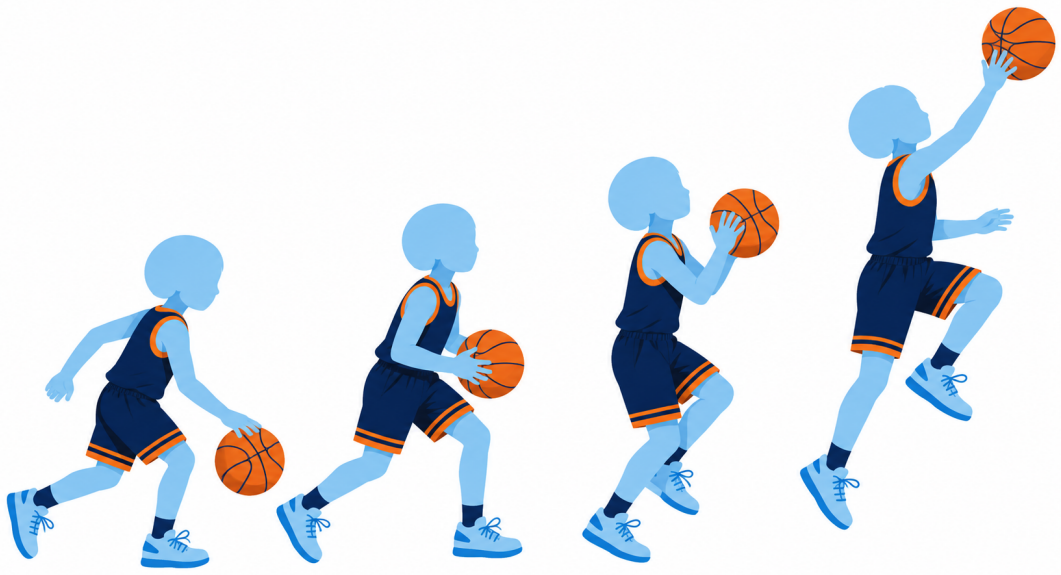
THE PRACTICAL PARENT
COACH PLAYBOOK

THE COACH'S WORKBOOK

Basketball edition: printable plans, checklists, and forms for your first season coaching 7 to 9-year-olds



Print the pages you need. Skip the rest.

A free companion to *Coaching Youth Basketball for Beginners*

Panicked Parent Press • panickedparent.com

HOW TO USE THIS

Print the pages you need. Not all of them, and not in order.



Before your season starts, fill in the league rules page (3) and the goals page (4). Those two shape everything else.

Print several copies of the practice plan (5) and the substitution sheet (12). You will use those repeatedly.

Practices 1, 2, and 3 (pages 6 to 8) are three complete practices. You can run them as written.

The one-page cheat sheet (15) is the page worth keeping on your clipboard all season.

You do not need to have read the book to use this workbook. Every page works on its own.

Find the page you need

Before the season

League rules 3
Season goals 4
Gym bag 14
Parent messages 13

Practice

Practice plan 5
Practices 1, 2, 3 6–8
Drill cards 9–10

Game day

Game-day checklist 11
Substitution sheet 12

Anytime

One page to keep with you 15
End of season 16

The simple rule

You do not need to have read the book to use this workbook. Every page works on its own. Print what you need, write on it, take it to the gym.

YOUR LEAGUE'S RULES

Fill this in before your first practice



Get the answers from your league handbook, website, or coordinator. Typical answers are shown in gray, but your league may differ.

Ball size *often size 5 or 6, about 27.5 to 28.5 in.*

Hoop height *often 8 or 9 feet*

Defense allowed *often man-to-man only*

Where must defenders wait? *often behind half-court*

Minimum playing-time rules

Substitution pattern *quarter breaks, sometimes dead balls*

Timeouts per team, and length

Game structure *quarters or halves, how long*

Are fouls called? Free throws?

Mercy rule

Players per side *often 5v5*

Practice day, time, and space

Cancellation policy and contact

Ask this first

What does your league require of adult volunteers? Background check, safety training, two-adult rules? Clearances can take weeks, and some leagues will not let you run a practice until yours clears.

YOUR THREE SEASON GOALS

Small and specific beats big and vague



Pick up to three things you want your players to be able to do by the end of the season. Good goals at this age are small and specific.

Good goal: "Every player can dribble the length of the court without losing the ball." Not: "Win the league."

1 **Goal 1**

2 **Goal 2**

3 **Goal 3**

End of season: how did it go?

PRACTICE PLAN

One page, one practice. Fill it in before you leave the house.



PRINT SEVERAL COPIES OF THIS PAGE

Date

Today’s focus (one or two skills, no more)

Plan about 45 minutes of activity for a 60-minute slot

The other 15 minutes disappear into late arrivals, water, explanations, and general chaos. That is not wasted time. That is reality.

1. **Warm-up** *about 10 min*

2. **Skill 1** *about 10 min*

3. **Skill 2** *about 10 min*

4. **Game or scrimmage** *about 10 to 15 min*

One coaching cue I will repeat today

Backup activity if something falls apart

Equipment I need

PRACTICE 1: BALL CONTROL

Run this as written. About 45 minutes of activity.

1

Warm-up and dribbling

0 to 10 min

Every player with a ball, spread out so nobody can touch the person next to them. Dribble in place. Then dribble while walking. Then while jogging.

Say this: "Eyes up. Look at me, not the ball."

2

Teach one skill: control

10 to 25 min

Dribble and Freeze. Players dribble around the space. When you call "freeze," they jump stop (land on both feet at once, knees bent) and hold the ball still. Run it several times. Add movement: forward, backward, change direction on your call. Correct one thing only: keep the ball below the waist, or keep eyes up. Pick one. Not both.

3

Simple game

25 to 35 min

Red Light, Green Light with basketballs. Green light means dribble forward. Red light means jump stop and hold the ball. This is a dribbling drill that does not feel like one.

4

Scrimmage

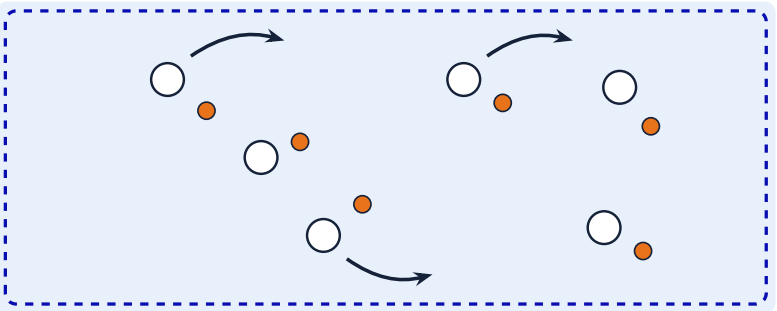
35 to 45 min

Let them play. Do not stop it every twenty seconds.

Your one cue: "Eyes up."

Finish

Bring everyone in. Name one thing that went well. Send them home.





PRACTICE 2: PASSING

Run this as written. About 45 minutes of activity.

1

Ball handling warm-up

0 to 10 min

Same as last time. Individual dribbling, right hand, left hand, moving forward, stop and start. Repetition is the plan working, not the plan failing. If it looks rusty, that is normal.

2

Partner passing

10 to 25 min

Pairs, one ball each pair. Start close together. Chest pass, catch with two hands, step toward the target. Once they are accurate, move them further apart. Do not let distance become more important than accuracy.

Say this: "Two hands. Step and push. Thumbs down."

3

Pass and move

25 to 35 min

Groups of three. Pass, then move to open space. Pass again. If everyone follows the ball, stop and reset. The rule: do not stand next to the ball.

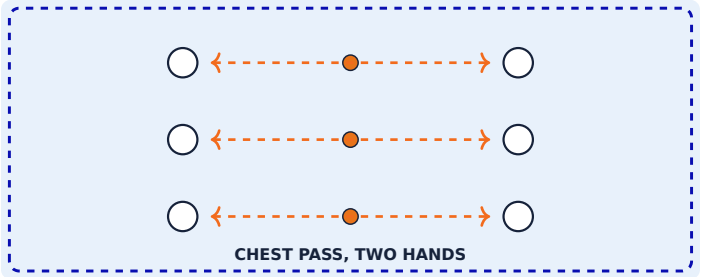
4

Passing game or scrimmage

35 to 45 min

Give each group a target: "How many good passes can you complete in one minute?" Only count passes the teammate catches. Try to beat the score.

Your one cue: "Pass and move." Praise the movement, not just the pass.





PRACTICE 3: PUT IT TOGETHER

Run this as written. About 45 minutes of activity.

1

Ball handling warm-up

0 to 10 min

Same as the last two practices. Individual dribbling, right hand, left hand, stop and start. Then tell them: "Today we use dribbling and passing together, and I will teach you your first defense job."

2

Quick passing review

10 to 20 min

Pairs. A few minutes of partner passing to wake up what they learned in Practice 2. Keep it short and keep it moving.

Say this: "Stay between your player and the basket."

3

Introduce defense

20 to 30 min

Show the defensive stance: knees bent, hands out, eyes up. Then try Defensive Slides between two cones if you have them. Slide low, feet never crossing. Speed comes later. Form first.

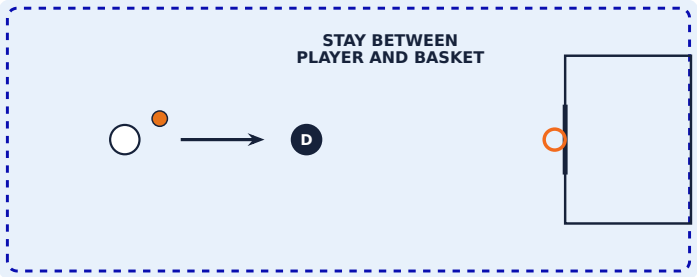
4

Small-sided scrimmage

30 to 45 min

Two-on-two or three-on-three if you have room. Fewer players means more touches and more chances to actually guard someone.

Your one cue: "Find your player."



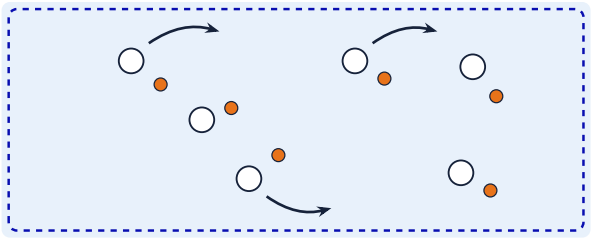


DRILL CARDS (1 OF 2)

Five drills is enough for a whole season. You do not need a hundred.

Dribble and Freeze

ball control **1 ball each**





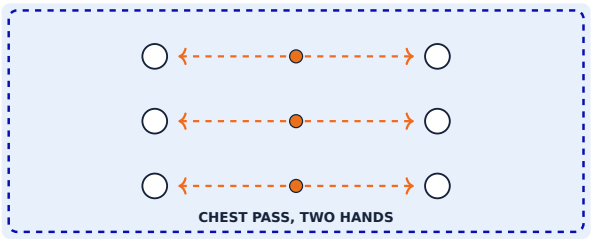
Players dribble in their own space. On "freeze," they jump stop and hold the ball.

Easier: everyone stands still and dribbles in place.

Harder: call direction changes.

Partner Passing

passing, catching **1 ball per pair**





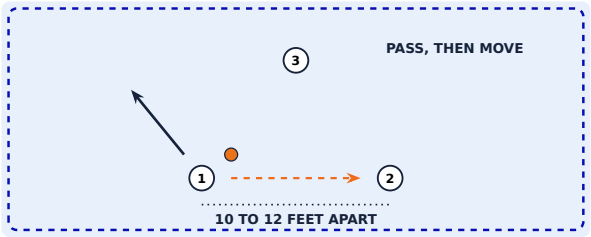
Pairs pass back and forth. Chest pass, two hands, step toward the target, thumbs down at the finish.

Easier: stand closer together.

Harder: move further apart, or add a bounce pass.

Pass and Move

passing, moving **1 ball per three**





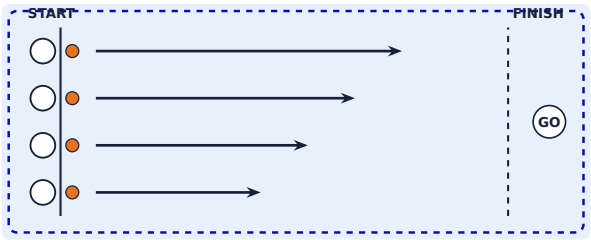
Groups of three. Pass, then immediately move to open space. Pass again.

Easier: tell them exactly where to move after passing.

Harder: add a defender.

Red Light, Green Light

dribbling, speed **1 ball each**





Green light: dribble forward. Red light: jump stop and hold the ball. Anyone who loses control goes back a few steps.

Easier: walk instead of run.

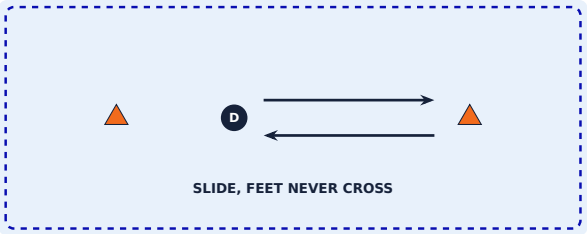
Harder: add "yellow light" for slow dribbling.

DRILL CARDS (2 OF 2)

Add this one when the first drills feel easy

Defensive Slides

defense cones





Slide between two cones, staying low, feet never crossing.

Easier: move the cones closer, go slower.

Harder: add a partner with a ball to shadow.

If a drill is not working

Stop it. Do not let it limp along for five more minutes.

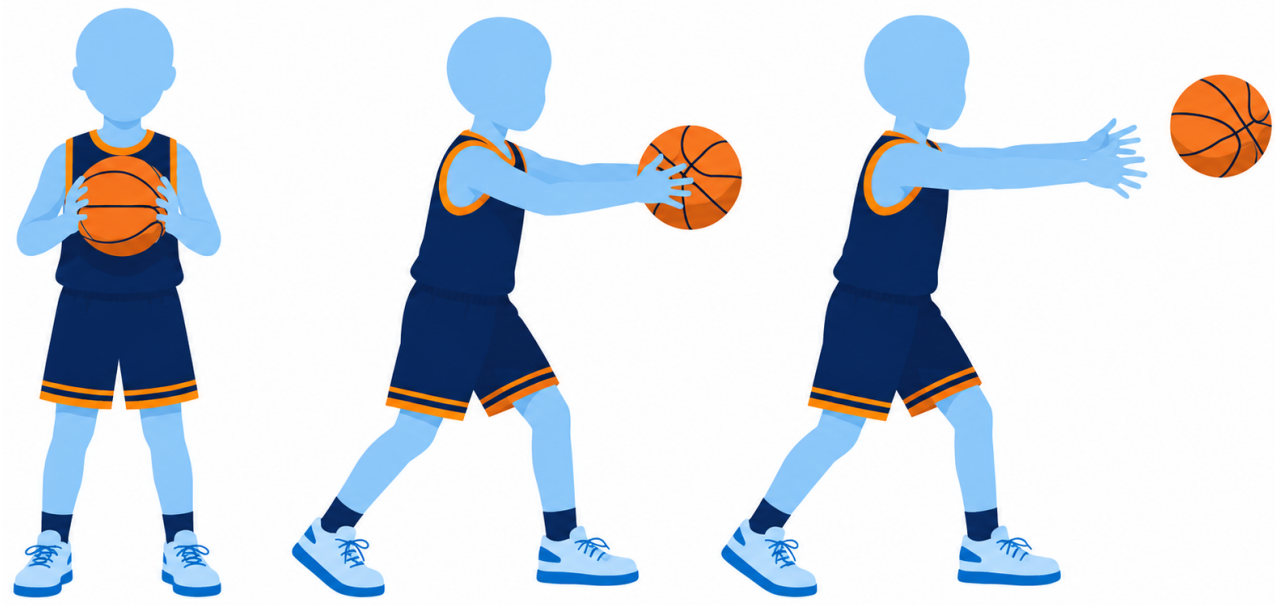
Make the group smaller. Two groups of five beats one group of ten.

Take something away. Remove the defender, movement, or ball.

Move closer. Shorter passes, closer shots, smaller space.

Give one instruction, not five.

If none of that works, switch to something they can already do and come back to it next practice.



GAME-DAY CHECKLIST

Work down the list. Tick as you go.



Before the game

- [ ] Know when and where to arrive.
- [ ] Have your roster and parent contact information.
- [ ] Confirm the meeting point with parents.
- [ ] Bring basketballs and equipment.
- [ ] Know your league's rules for substitutions, timeouts, and fouls.
- [ ] Plan a simple warm-up.
- [ ] Decide on one or two things to emphasize. Not six.

During the game

- [ ] Watch all the players, not just the ball.
- [ ] Keep instructions short.
- [ ] Track substitutions on your sheet.
- [ ] Coach one thing at a time.
- [ ] Praise the behavior you want to see again.

After the game

- [ ] Bring the team together.
- [ ] Name one thing that went well.
- [ ] Name one thing to work on next.
- [ ] Let them go. Keep it short.

Inbounding: the messiest five seconds of the game

When your team passes the ball in, tell them: "Spread out, close enough to catch it. One steps away, one comes to get it. Hands up." Stay 10 to 15 feet from the passer, not in the far corners. The instinct is to run at the ball. That is what causes turnovers.

SUBSTITUTION SHEET

Do not rely on memory while you are coaching



PRINT SEVERAL COPIES OF THIS PAGE

Write your roster down the left. Tick each period a player is on the floor.

Player	1st	2nd	3rd	4th

Check your league's playing-time rules before your first game. Many require close to equal time for every player.

PARENT MESSAGES

Copy, change the details, send. Pick one channel and use only that one.

Before the season

Hi everyone, I'm [name], coaching [team] this season. Practices are [day, time, location], starting [date].
Please bring a water bottle and gym shoes to every practice. I'll send updates through [text group / email / app] only, so please make sure you're on it.
My goal this season is for the kids to learn the basics, get plenty of playing time, and enjoy it enough to want to play again next year. Looking forward to meeting everyone.

Practice cancelled

Practice tonight is cancelled due to [reason]. Next practice is [day, date, time] as normal. Sorry for the short notice.

Game-day details

Game this [day] at [time], at [location]. Please arrive by [time] so we can warm up. Wear [uniform]. Bring a water bottle.

"Why isn't my kid playing more?"

Thanks for asking, and I understand. I'm trying to give everyone close to equal time across the season, and I track it every game so nobody gets missed. If you'd like, I can walk you through what I've got written down for [child]. Happy to talk after practice, just not during the game.

Handle disagreements privately and later, never on the sideline in front of the kids.



COACH’S GYM BAG

Pack this the night before. Take a photo of this page.

- [ ] Basketballs
- [ ] Cones
- [ ] Whistle, if your league uses one
- [ ] Today’s practice plan
- [ ] Clipboard and pen
- [ ] Substitution sheet, on game days
- [ ] Water for yourself
- [ ] First-aid supplies, per league policy
- [ ] Roster with parent contact information
- [ ] Emergency contact information
- [ ] Fully charged phone

If you only do one thing tonight

Put the basketballs and the roster in the bag. Everything else on this list is recoverable if you forget it. Those two are hard to improvise.



ONE PAGE TO KEEP WITH YOU

If you print only one page, print this one. Clip it to your clipboard.



How to teach anything

Explain it in one sentence. Show them. Let them try. Watch. Correct one thing. Let them try again.

The five reminders

1. On offense: spread out. Do not stand next to the ball.
2. With the ball: look up. See teammates, defenders, and the basket.
3. After you pass: move. Do not stand and watch.
4. On defense: stay between your player and the basket.
5. Always: move your feet.

When it falls apart

1. Stop.
2. Make sure everyone is safe.
3. Get their attention.
4. Give one instruction.
5. Restart with something simple they can already do.

Three drills you can run without thinking

Dribble and Freeze • Partner Passing • Red Light, Green Light

The practice shape

Plan 45 minutes of activity for a 60-minute slot. Warm-up, one skill, a second skill, then a game. The missing 15 minutes are late arrivals, water, and chaos. That is normal.

After the game, ask three questions

What did we do well? What did we learn? What will we work on next?

You do not need to be a basketball expert. You need a plan.

END OF SEASON

Fill this in once, while it is still fresh. It makes next season much easier.

Look back at your three goals. How did the team do on each?

Three things that worked well

Three things you would change

Did the players improve? Name someone specific and what changed.

Did they have fun? Be honest. What is your evidence either way?

One thing to carry into next season

Notes to future you



WHAT'S IN THE FULL BOOK

This workbook covers the forms. The book covers the reasoning.

Coaching Youth Basketball for Beginners covers the rest:

- How to actually teach dribbling, passing, shooting, layups, defense, and spacing to kids who have never played
- What to do when a practice falls apart, a player cries, or a drill you spent twenty minutes planning does not work
- Coaching your own child without wrecking the car ride home
- Handling parents, assistants, and the ones who coach from the sideline
- Game day in full: substitutions, timeouts, referees, and what to say when you are losing by twenty
- Finishing the season so the kids want to play again next year

Basketball Coach's Workbook

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