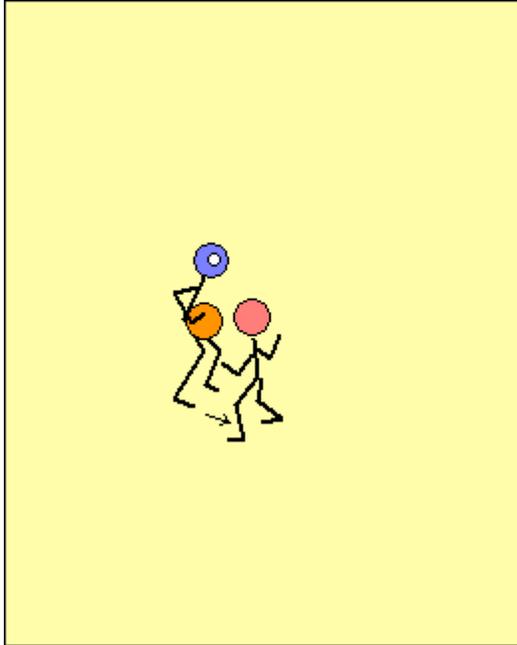


Mike MacKay - Manager of Coach Education and Development



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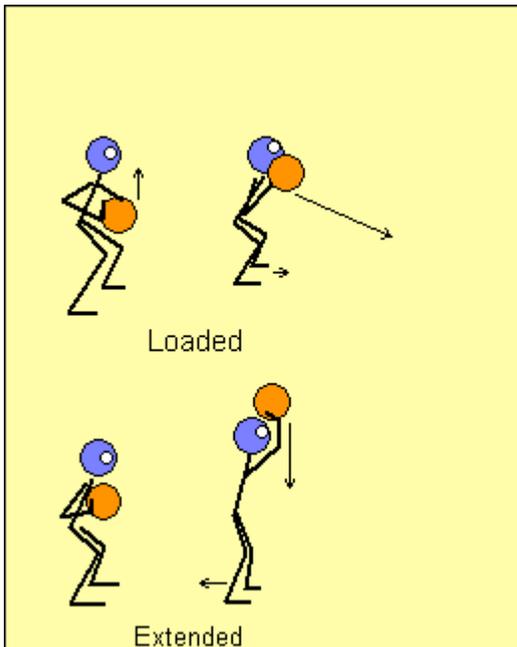
I was able to spend some time talking basketball with one of my mentors MacMillan. We discussed the idea of pushing and pulling and how it applies to basketball. Player need to be in a position to push. It is more explosive.



Jab step

This is a push by the offensive player. Read the reaction of the defence. Also to be explosive the player must keep the wrist loaded so that the ball can be pushed forward. Also the legs must stay loaded so that the body can be pushed forward. Players who are extended will actually pull themselves to start their forward momentum.

If you jab too far you will have to pull back to move in another direction.

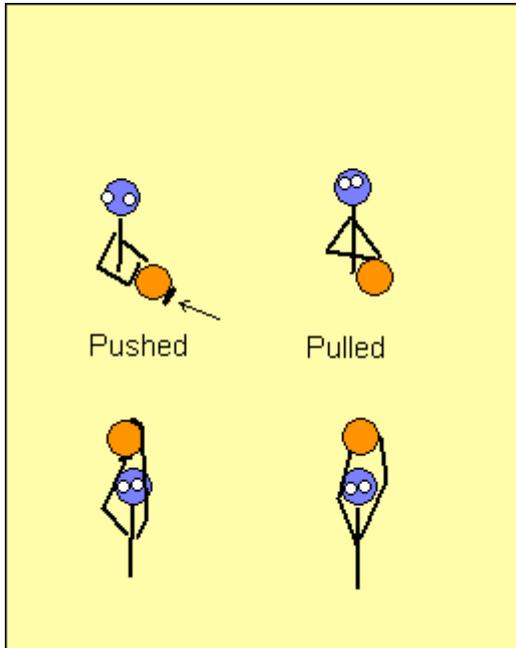


Shot fake

The same concept applies. If the player tips the ball and fakes with the eyes he/she can stay loaded. This allows the player to push the ball and push from the legs in an explosive manner.

If the player extends by raising the ball and straightening the knees the ability to push is lost. The ball must be pulled down and the body is pulled forward by leaning first to generate momentum.

Note: If the player attempts to push from this position with the legs very often he/she will split the feet which is often a travel.

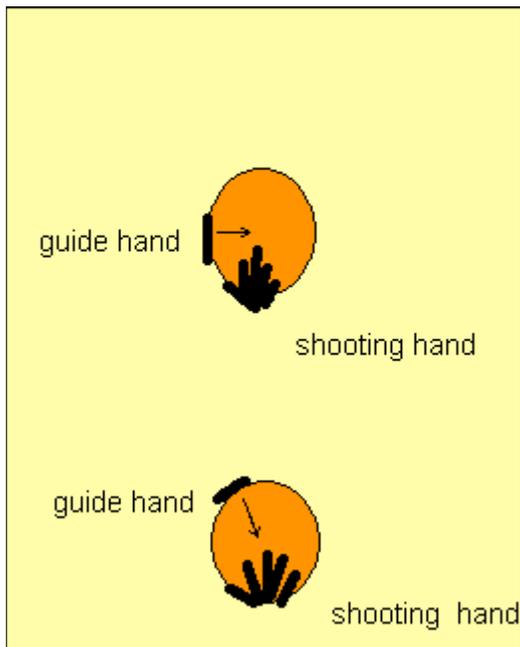


Taking the ball to the shooting pocket.

Kobe Bryant is one of the best at getting the ball from his low pocket to the shooting pocket. He has fast hands. One reason for this is that he places his left hand under the ball when the ball is on his left hip. This allows him to push the ball to his shooting pocket instead of pulling it. He also keeps his wrist locked on his right hand.

The ball is taken to the shooting pocket in a straight line, which is a diagonal. The same is true for his pick up with the dribble. He does not have lazy hands. He gets under the ball and pushes it to his shooting pocket on the diagonal.

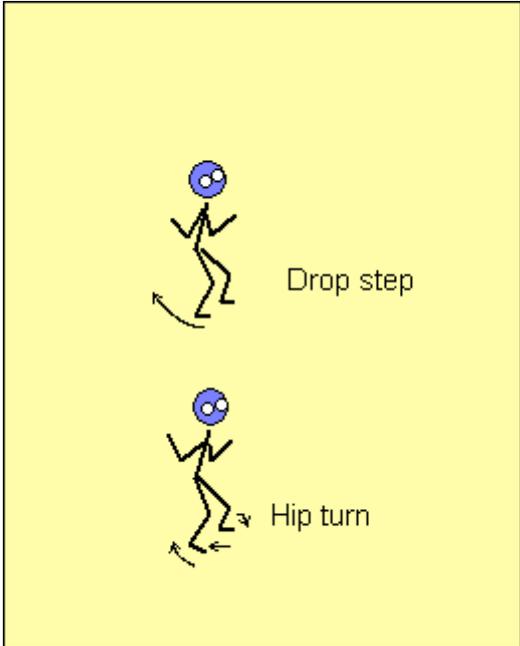
This is going to cause people moments for reflection. It is not how we have been taught in the past. This is an advanced skill for when you are closely guarded, but one that even younger players can master.



Where we traditionally have asked players to place the guide hand and shooting hand is great for the release of the ball with no defence. Once defence starts to get closer players need to have the hands in a stronger position for protection. In order to pull the ball the guide hands needs to be in a position where it can push energy back into the shooting hand.

When we ask players, especially younger, to hold a ball with the guide hand putting energy to the side we are asking the players to hold only half of the ball. It is easily knocked away and cannot be moved quickly from this position.

Many people still keep the ball in front of the body when in triple threat. This form of triple threat came from the time when the shot was the two handed shot from the chest. I have old basketball books from the 1920's and early 30's that promote this position. As defences have become more aggressive our triple threat has changed.



The final example is a hip turn vs. a drop step. A drop step is initiated by pulling the leg backward. This is slow. A hip turn is a quick jump on both feet to allow for a push foot. It is a natural movement when we want to move fast.

The same is true in defensive slides. If the player pulls themselves along it is slow. They will usually have a bobbing action. If the player pushes with the back leg it is quicker.