



MERCAN EDUCATION

NBA CLASS



Compiled by: Fred Poole

Study at Mercan, The Right Choice



Vocabulary

1. Dribble (v) / dribbler (n)

- 运球
- I can dribble with my right hand.
- Can you dribble between your legs?
- Can you dribble behind your back?
- Chris Paul is a good dribbler.

2. Shoot (v) / shooter (n)

- 投
- He shoots well.
- He shoots 3-pointers well.
- He is a good shooter.
- Kevin Durant can shoot from anywhere

3. Pass (v/n) / passer (n)

- 传球
- Pass the ball to the big man.
- Don't pass the ball when he is not open.
- He never passes the ball.
- Steve Nash makes great passes.

4. Rebound (v/n)/ rebounder(n)

- 篮板球
- Last game I got five rebounds.
- Tall guys rebound better than short guys.
- If you want to rebound you must box out (再抢篮板的时候抢位置).
- Dennis Rodman is a great rebounder.

5. Block (n/v)/ shot blocker (n)

- 盖帽
- He gets two blocks a game.
- It was a clean block.
- I blocked your shot.
- Dwight Howard averages 3.5 blocks per a game.

6. Steal (v/n)

- 偷球
- Quick players can steal the ball.
- Good defenders get four steals a game.

- In the last 10 seconds, he stole the ball and won the game.
- Michael Jordan was not only a good shooter, but he also had lots of steals.

7. Assist (n)

- 助攻
- The team with the most assists wins.
- He had ten assists last game.
- Point guards should have many assists.
- Magic Johnson had the most assists in one season.

8. Turnover (n)/ *Turn the ball over (v)

- 失误
- Don't turn the ball over.
- It's bad to have more turnovers than assists.
- You can't win with too many turnovers.
- Carmelo Anthony has many turnovers.

9. Pick (n/v)

- 掩护
- Set a pick to help your teammate score.
- You should set a pick then roll to the basket.
- You can also pick away from the ball.
- Your teammate should tell you if a pick is coming.

10. defend (v) / defense (n)

- 防守
- Defense wins championships (冠军).
- Tall guys should defend tall guys.
- Quick guys should defend quick guys.
- If one person doesn't play defense the team will suffer.
- Ron Artest plays good defense.



Positions

A. Positions (fill the table in with your teacher)

	<u>Attributes</u>	<u>Role</u>
11. Center	Usually the tallest player on the team	Getting Rebounds, blocking shots
12. Forwards		
13. Guards		
14. Point Guard (1)		
15. Post Player (5)		
16. Power Forward (4)		
17. Shooting Guard (2)		
18. Small Forward (3)		

B. Other Positions

	<u>Attributes</u>	<u>Role</u>
19. Outlet		
20. Pivot		
21. Playmaker		
22. Shooter		
23. Sixth Man		
24. Starting Line-up		
25. Substitute		
26. Swing Man		
27. Ball handler		
28. Wing		

1. Name a few NBA players that play the positions above.
2. Which position gets the most fame? Why?
3. Which position gets the least fame? Why?
4. Which position would you like to play? Why?



Vocabulary

1. superstar 超级明星
2. wealthy 富人
3. sophomore 有二年经验的人
4. championship 冠军
5. conference 联盟
6. nation 国家
7. clutch 至胜入球
8. jump shot 跳投
9. Chicago Bulls 芝加哥公牛队
10. amazed 是吃惊
11. leaping 跳跃
12. glide 滑翔
13. sidelined 退出的
14. record 最高纪录
15. retired 退休
16. respect 尊敬
17. majority owner 多数分数拥有人
18. playoffs 季后赛
19. drive 推动
20. contender 竞争者

Michael Jordan



Basketball **superstar** Michael Jordan is one of the most successful, popular, and **wealthy** athletes in sports history. He was born on February 17, 1963 in Brooklyn, New York. He was one of five children, his father worked as a supervisor in an Electric Plant and his mother worked at the bank. Jordan loved basketball from a young age, but he failed to make the high school basketball team as a **sophomore**. He continued to work hard and eventually made the team his following year. After high school Jordan went on to play the University of North Carolina where he played under the famous coach Dean Smith.

In Jordan's first year at North Carolina he led his team to a **championship** in their **conference** and eventually in the **nation**. He helped his team win the National Championship by making a **clutch jump shot** to beat Georgetown University in the finals.

The following year Jordan went on to play for the **Chicago Bulls**. At that time the Bulls were a losing team, but Jordan changed that very quickly. Jordan **amazed** his fans with his amazing **leaping** ability. People would say that he seemed to **glide** through the air. In his first year he was named an All-star. The following year Jordan was **sidelined** with a broken foot for the first 64 games, but he returned for the playoffs where he the Boston Celtics. In this series with the Boston Celtics Jordan gave his fans two of the greatest playoff games ever played by a single player, scoring 49 points in game 1 and 63 in game 2, setting a **record** for most points ever scored in the playoffs.

Jordan eventually went on to win his first Championship in 1991. He would follow up his first championship with two more championships in the following two years. Then suddenly after his third championship Jordan **retired** to play baseball. Jordan played baseball for two years out of **respect** for his father who had recently died. After two years in baseball Jordan returned to basketball to win three more championships. In 1998 Jordan retired again, only to come back the following year to play for the Washington Wizards for two years. The Wizards would be the last team Jordan played for.

Today Jordan is making history again by being the first African American as well as the first NBA player to be the **majority owner** of an NBA team. He is the owner of the Charlotte Bobcats, a team that barely missed the **playoffs** this year. Although they are just an average team now, with Jordan's **drive** you can be sure that he will bring them into **contender** status soon.



Quotes by Michael Jordan

1. "I've missed more than 9000 shots in my career. I've lost almost 300 games. 26 times, I've been trusted to take the game winning shot and missed. I've failed over and over and over again in my life. And that is why I succeed."
2. "I've always believed that if you put in the work, the results will come. I don't do things half-heartedly. Because I know if I do, then I can expect half-hearted results."

Fun Facts about the NBA

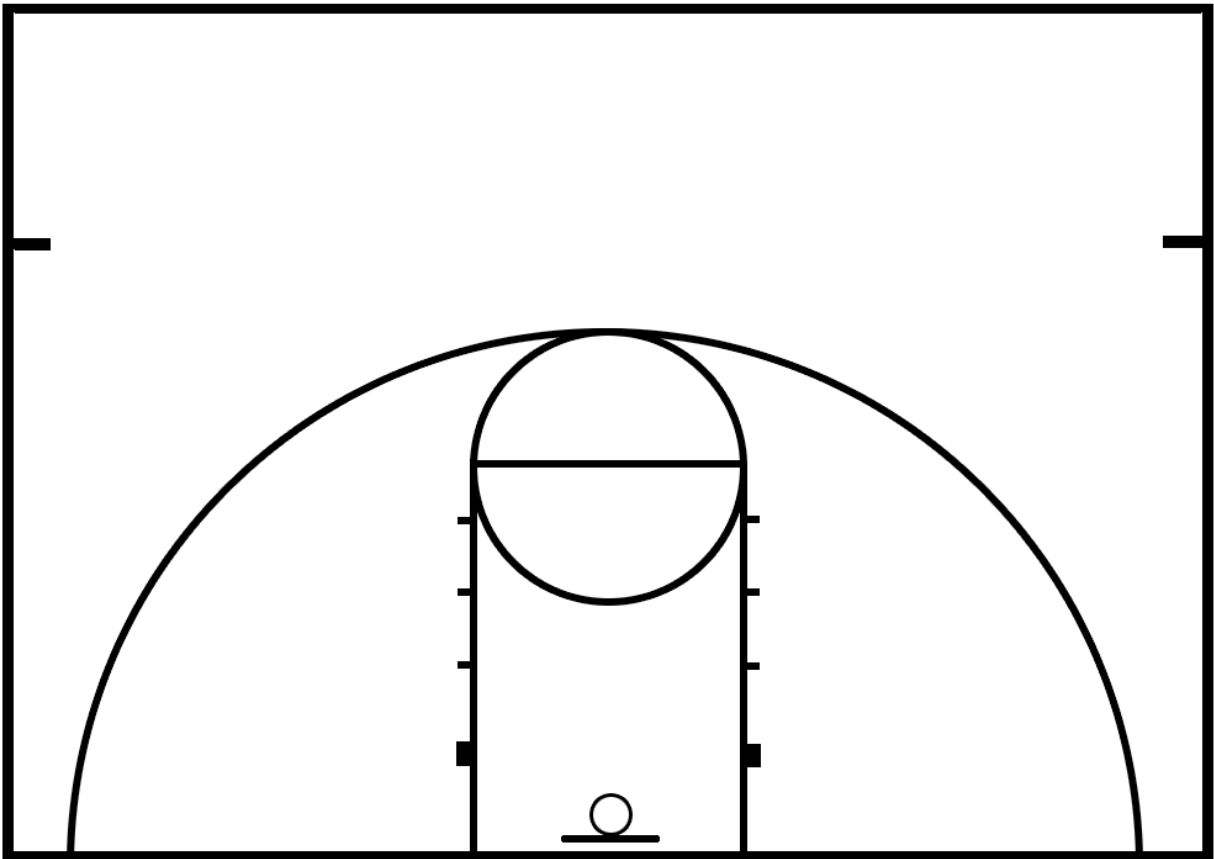
1. Most points scored in a single game: Wilt Chamberlain March 2, 1962 (100 points) followed by Kobe Bryant Jan. 22, 2006 (81 points)
2. Most points scored in one half: Wilt Chamberlain March 2, 1962 (59 points)
3. Most points scored in a quarter: George Gervin (33 points)
4. Most points scored in overtime: Gilbert Arenas December 17, 2006 (16 points)
5. Most three-point shots made in one game: Kobe Bryant, January 7, 2003 (12 shots)
6. Most three-point shots made in one half: Kobe Bryant, March 28, 2003 (8 shots)
7. Most three-point shots made in one quarter: Michael Redd, February 20, 2002 (8 shots)
8. Most points scored in a NBA All-Star game: Wilt Chamberlain (42 points)
9. Most points per game average in a NBA Season: Wilt Chamberlain, 1961-1962. (50.4 ppg.)
10. Most Points scored in a NBA Career: Kareem Abdul-Jabbar (38,387), followed by Karl Malone 36,928, Michael Jordan (32,292), and Wilt Chamberlain (31,419).
11. Most points per game in a NBA career: Michael Jordan (32.12 ppg.)
12. Most seasons leading scorer: Michael Jordan (10)



Vocabulary: (Parts of the court)

- | | |
|---------------------|------------------|
| 1. Three-point line | 8. Corner |
| 2. Wing | 9. High post |
| 3. Point | 10. Low Post |
| 4. Top of the Key | 11. Block |
| 5. Elbow | 12. Short Corner |
| 6. The Paint | 13. Sideline |
| 7. Baseline | 14. Half court |

Below is half of a basketball court, label the parts of the court



Discussion Questions

1. Where do the point guards usually play?
2. Where do the centers usually play?
3. What do the shooting guard and small forward usually play?
4. Where is your favorite place to shoot from?
5. Normal basketball courts and the NBA courts are different. Do you know how they are different?



Basketball Rules

Basketball is a team sport. Two teams of five players each try to score by shooting a ball through a hoop that is 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 half-court line. If the offensive team puts the ball into play behind the half-court line, it has ten seconds to get the ball over the half-court line. If it doesn't, then the defense gets the ball. Once the offensive team gets the ball over the half-court line, it can no longer return behind the half-court line. If it does, the defense is given the ball.

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 defense. The defense tries to steal the ball, contest shots, deflect passes, and get rebounds.

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 for 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 given until a certain number have added up during a half. Once that number is reached, then the player who was fouled is given a '1-and-1' opportunity. If he makes his first free throw, he gets to shoot a second. If he misses the first shot, the ball is live on the rebound.

Each game is divided into sections. All levels have two halves. In college, each half is twenty minutes long. In high school and below, the halves are divided into eight (and sometimes, six) minute quarters. In the pros, quarters are twelve minutes long. There is a gap of several minutes between halves. Gaps between quarters are relatively short. If the score is tied at the end of regulation, then overtime periods of various lengths are played until a winner emerges.

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 center 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 jump ball. 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.



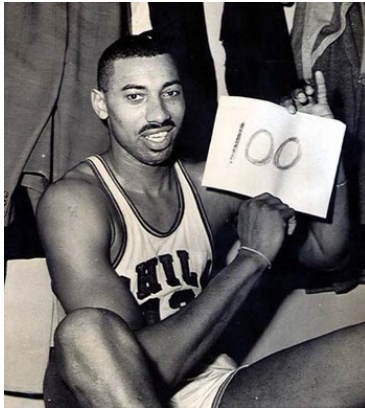
Fouls/ Violations

Personal Fouls	What is it?	What is the penalty?
1. Hitting		
2. Pushing		
3. Slapping		
4. Holding		
5. Illegal pick/ screen		
6. Charging		
7. Blocking		
8. Flagrant Foul		
9. Intentional Foul		
10. Technical Foul		
Violations		
1. Walking/traveling		
2. Carrying/palming		
3. Double dribble		
4. Jump ball		
5. Goaltending		
6. Backcourt violation		
7. Shot clock violation		
8. 3 seconds		
9. 10 seconds		
10. 5 seconds		

Vocabulary

- | | | |
|------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. Dominating 支配 | 13. reminisced 追忆 | 26. quantum leap = big jump |
| 2. tactics 战术 | 14. whipped 'em 大胜 | 27. phenomenal = great |
| 3. constant 不变的 | 15. debut 初次登台 | 28. matched up = compete against |
| 4. accomplishment 造诣 | 16. overtime 加时赛 | 29. frustration 挫折 |
| 5. consecutive 连续 | 17. eagerly 急切的 | 30. arch rival 主要竞争对手 |
| 6. mind-boggling 难以想象的 | 18. disappoint 失望 | 31. monstrous - huge |
| 7. announced 宣布 | 19. sensational 使人感动的 | 32. decades 几十年 |
| 8. prohibited 禁止 | 20. confrontation 面对 | 33. production 生产 |
| 9. varsity 大学运动代表队的 | 21. standout 杰出的 | 34. concentrated 集中 |
| 10. freshman 大学一年级学生 | 22. rivalry 竞争 | 35. marathons 马拉松 |
| 11. contest 竞赛 | 23. square off = compete against | 36. avid 狂热的 |
| 12. favored 应该赢了 | 24. victor = 胜利者 | |
| | 25. poured in = baskets made | |

Wilt Chamberlain



Dominating the game as few players in any sport ever have, Chamberlain seemed capable of scoring and rebounding at will, despite the double- and triple-teams and **constant** fouling **tactics** that opposing teams used to try to shut him down.

As Oscar Robertson put it in the *Philadelphia Daily News* when asked whether Chamberlain was the best ever, "The books don't lie."

The record books are heavy with Chamberlain's **accomplishments**. He was the only NBA player to score 4,000 points in a season. He set NBA single-game records for most points (100), most **consecutive** field goals (18) and most rebounds (55). Perhaps his most **mind-boggling**

stat was the 50.4 points per game he averaged during the 1961-62 season--and if not that, then perhaps the 48.5 minutes per game he averaged that same year.

During his career, his dominance caused many rules changes. These rules changes included widening the lane, making offensive goaltending illegal and changing the rules about inbounding the ball and shooting free throws (Chamberlain would leap with the ball from behind the foul line to put the ball in the basket).

In 1955, Chamberlain **announced** he would play college ball at the University of Kansas. Because NCAA rules at the time **prohibited** freshmen from playing at the **varsity** level, Chamberlain was placed on the **freshman** team upon his arrival at Kansas. His first **contest** with the freshmen was against the varsity, which was **favored** to win its conference that year. Chamberlain later **reminisced** about the game in



NBA Course: Lesson 2

the Philadelphia Daily News: "We **whipped 'em**, 81-71. I had 40 or 42 points, about 30 rebounds, about 15 blocks. I knew I had to show them either I could do it or I couldn't."

Chamberlain made his **debut** for the Jayhawks' varsity squad in a game against Northwestern on Dec. 3, 1956. He set a school record when he scored 52 points in an 87-69 victory. Chamberlain then guided Kansas to the 1957 NCAA title game against North Carolina. Although North Carolina beat Kansas by one point in triple **overtime**, Chamberlain was named the tournament's Most Outstanding Player. The following year Chamberlain registered for the NBA draft, but because of rules at that time, he was not allowed to enter the NBA until his class had graduated, so he decided to play for the Harlem Globetrotters. The next year Chamberlain was drafted by Philadelphia.

When Chamberlain finally slipped on a Philadelphia uniform for the start of the 1959-60 season, the basketball world **eagerly** awaited the young giant's debut -- and he didn't **disappoint**. In his first game, against the Knicks in New York, he pumped in 43 points and grabbed 28 rebounds. In a **sensational** rookie year, Chamberlain averaged 37.6 points and 27.0 rebounds and was named NBA Rookie of the Year, All-Star Game Most Valuable Player and NBA Most Valuable Player as well as being selected to the All-NBA First Team.

With Chamberlain, the Warriors went from last to second and faced the Boston Celtics in the 1960 NBA Playoffs. The series saw the first postseason **confrontation** between Chamberlain and defensive **standout** Bill Russell, a matchup that would grow into the greatest individual **rivalry** in the NBA and possibly any sport. During the next decade, the pair would **square off** in the playoffs eight times. Chamberlain came away the **victor** only once. In that initial confrontation, Chamberlain outscored Russell by 81 points, but the Celtics took the series, four games to two.

In a virtual repeat of his rookie year, he **poured in** 38.4 points and 27.2 rebounds per game in 1960-61. The next season he made a **quantum leap** in his performance. Posting a **phenomenal** average of 50.4 points per game, he became the only player in history to score 4,000 points in a season.

On March 2, 1962, Chamberlain set a record that may stand forever. In a game against the New York Knicks in Hershey, Pa., he scored 100 points in four quarters to help the Warriors win the game, 169-147. Despite the fact that Chamberlain had reportedly stayed out all night the previous evening, he obviously came ready to play against the Knicks. Chamberlain was so "on" that he even made 28 of 32 free throws, despite having, up to that point in the season, just a paltry .506 percentage from the stripe.

He hit 36-for-63 from the field, about which he commented to *HOOP* magazine, "My God, that's terrible. I never thought I'd take that many shots in a game." Toward the end of the game, the Warriors went out of their way to feed Chamberlain the ball, to the point of fouling the Knicks whenever they had possession.

In the 1966 division semifinals, the Sixers beat Cincinnati. The division finals saw the 76ers **matched up** against the Celtics -- and Chamberlain matched up against Russell once again. After years of **frustration**, Chamberlain finally got by his **arch rival** as Philadelphia raced by Boston in five games, ending the Celtics' eight-year stranglehold on the NBA title. Playing the Warriors in the 1967 NBA Finals, the Sixers came away with the championship, winning the series in six games.



NBA Course: Lesson 2

After his **monstrous** scoring year in 1961-62, Chamberlain's average dropped slowly each year until the 1967-68 season, when it rose slightly to 24.3 points per game from 24.1 the season before. During his first seven years Chamberlain scored an average of 39.4 points per game and led the league in scoring all seven seasons, a string matched only by Michael Jordan two **decades** later. In Chamberlain's second seven years, he averaged 20.7 points.

This drop in point **production** was mainly caused by the fact that his coaches wanted him to become more of a team player. He accepted his new role and **concentrated** on assists and defense. He led the league in assists for two years.

After Chamberlain retired he stayed active participating in **marathons**, volleyball tournaments, and many other sports. He was also an **avid** reader and wrote several books. Chamberlain died in 1999 in Los Angeles of heart failure.

Wilt Chamberlain's Quotes

Everybody pulls for David, nobody roots for Goliath.

Wilt Chamberlain

I believe that good things come to those who work.

Wilt Chamberlain

I couldn't have come close without my teammates' help because the Knicks didn't want me to make 100.

Wilt Chamberlain

Extra Discussion Questions

1. What rules do you think should be added to the NBA?
2. What rules do you think are stupid?
3. What do you think is more impressive Wilt Chamberlain scoring 100 points in a game or Michael Jordan scoring 69 points in a playoff game? Why?
4. Some people say that Wilt Chamberlain was only good because he was a giant among men. What does this mean? And do you think this could be true?
5. Playing street-ball and playing with a referee are two very different things. How are the rules different? How are the fouls different? What kind of street-games do you know?



More Basketball Vocabulary

Fill in the Blanks

Word	Example sentence	Meaning
backboard		a board behind the basket, off which the ball may rebound
basket	In the early days, peach baskets were nailed to the walls and used as goals.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. a container used to hold or carry things2. a net fixed on a hoop used as the goal
block		to stop the movement of an opponent, or stop an opponent's pass or shot
bounce	Players must bounce the ball on the floor as they run.	to rebound after hitting a surface
bounce pass	The crowd cheered when Mario threw a perfect no-look bounce pass.	
chest pass	Michael threw a quick chest pass, ran forward, and received a bounce pass back.	
draft		the annual process by which NBA teams select local or foreign players for their teams
drive	Allen Iverson is very difficult to stop when he drives to the basket.	A fast, strong dribble directly to the basket in an effort to score
exceed		to go beyond what is allowed



NBA Course: Lesson 3

foul	Larry's already had four fouls, so if he commits another one he'll be out of the game.	
free throw		a free shot taken from the free throw line as the result of a foul
game clock	The coach called a time-out, and the game clock stopped while he talked to his players.	
guarding		following an opponent to stop him from driving, shooting or passing easily
hoop		the round metal rim from which a basketball net is suspended
Shot clock	There was only 5 seconds left on the shot clock so he had to shoot.	In the NBA a team has a 24 second shot clock that starts once they cross half court.
lay up		a shot taken close to the basket that is usually banked off the backboard and into the basket
MVP	Michael was awarded MVP many times during his career.	
no-look pass	Crowds love the no-look pass, but coaches warn players not to use it just to show off.	a pass thrown without looking towards the receiver
overhead pass		a pass thrown from over the head, to clear a defender or for added power



NBA Course: Lesson 3

overtime	We won the game by outscoring our opponents in overtime.	
possession	The team whose player commits a violation loses possession of the ball.	to be holding, or be in control of, the ball
referees		officials who call violations and fouls, give penalties, signal field goals, and stop and start play
set shot	Practicing set shots is important because they are used to score from free throws.	
shoot		to throw the ball in an attempt to score a goal
slam dunk	Matt drove towards the basket, jumped high into the air and scored with a huge slam dunk.	
substitute		a player who comes into the game to replace a player on the court
technical foul	Their coach got a technical foul for arguing with a referee.	a foul called against a player or coach for unsportsmanlike conduct such as arguing with a referee
time-out		clock stoppage requested by a coach for a short meeting with the players
turnover		a player loses the ball to a member of the other team without taking a shot



Types of Defenses

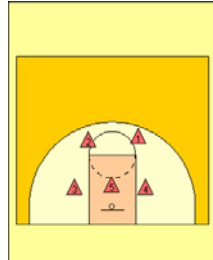
- 1. Man to Man** – This is probably the most common defense used at any level of basketball. Man to man defense is where each person is responsible for guarding only one person. However, if you are a good defensive team, each player will know that they need to play the **passing lanes** and that they need to play **help defense**.

Man to man can vary in a few ways, first if you play man to man you must decide if you are going to play **switch on picks** or **fight through picks**. Depending on the team that you play or the player that you are guarding both of these methods can be helpful or harmful. For example, if you are playing someone who is a good shooter you probably want to switch on picks, however if the person is good a driving then you'll want to fight through picks.

The second way that man to man can vary is by playing **straight up** or by **playing deny**. If you play straight up defense it means that you stay between your man and the basket, however if you play deny it means that you are playing the passing lane. Playing deny is usually only used in desperate situations, when you really need the ball. It is a very risky defense.

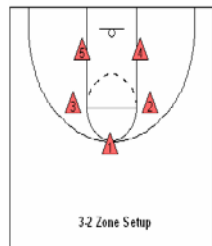
- 2. Zone Defenses-** In these types of defense

a. 2-3



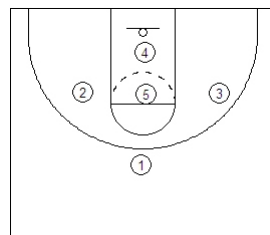
Strengths	
Weakness	

b. 3-2



Strengths	
Weakness	

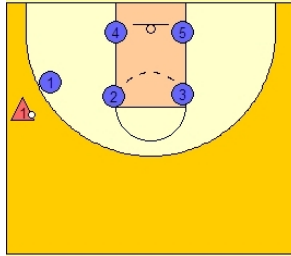
c. 1-3-1



Strengths	
Weakness	



d. Box and 1

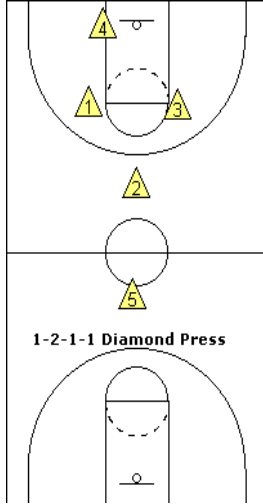


Strengths	
Weakness	

i.

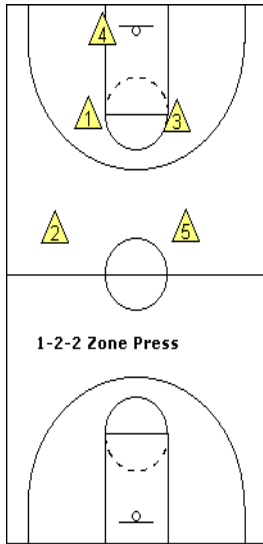
3. Half Court / Full Court Press

a. Diamond Press



Strengths	
Weakness	

b. 1-2-2 Press



Strengths	
Weakness	

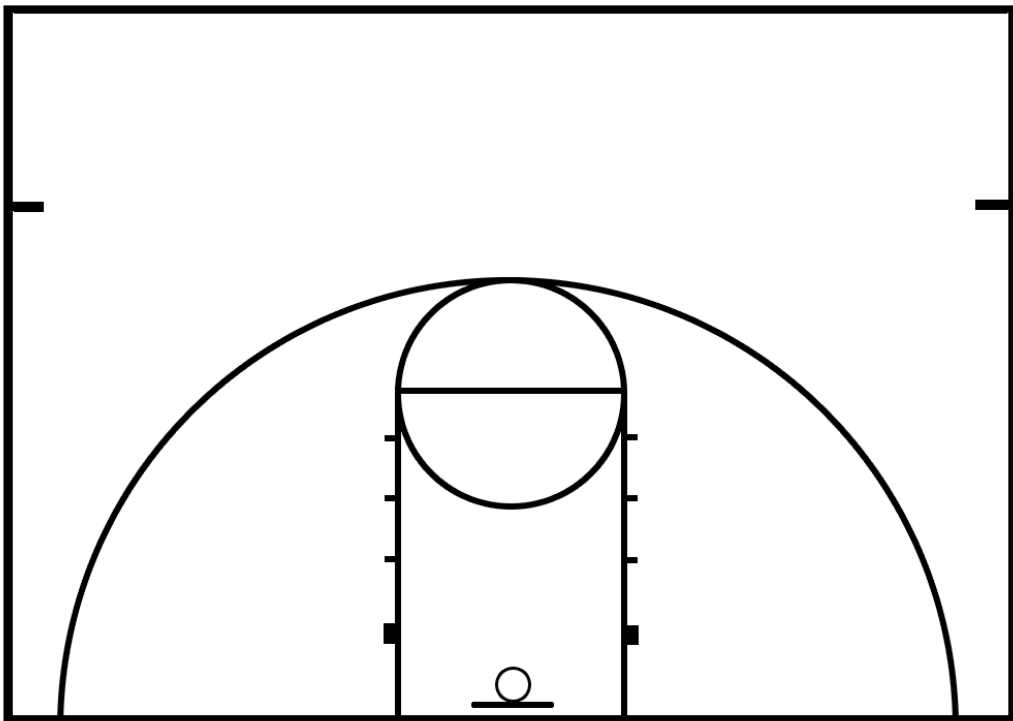
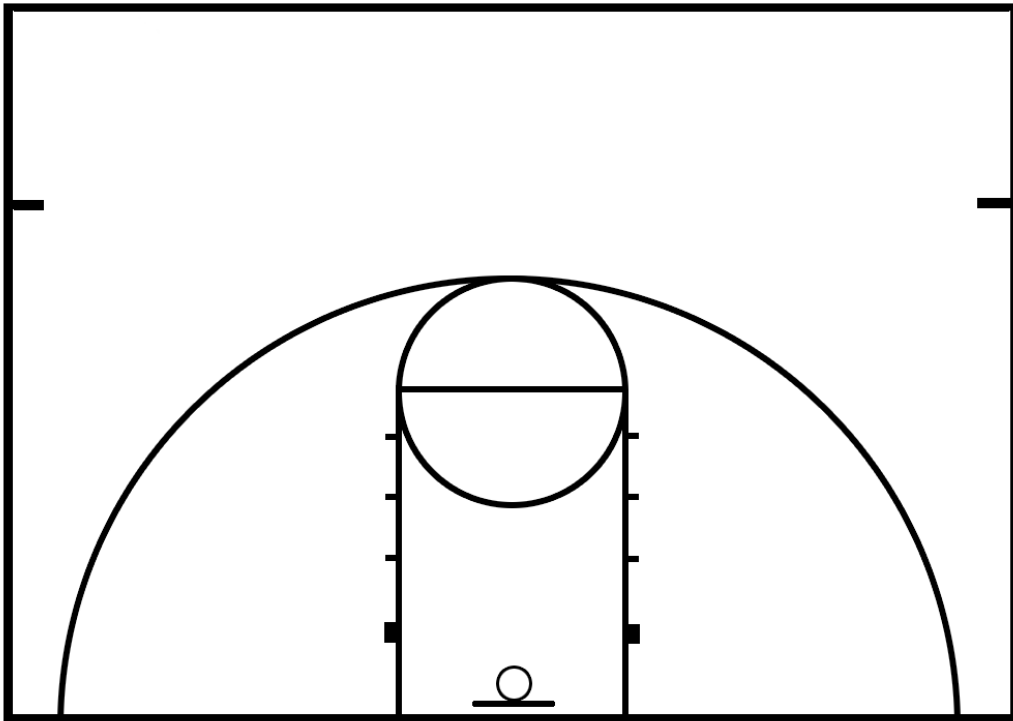
For each of the above defense discuss the following questions

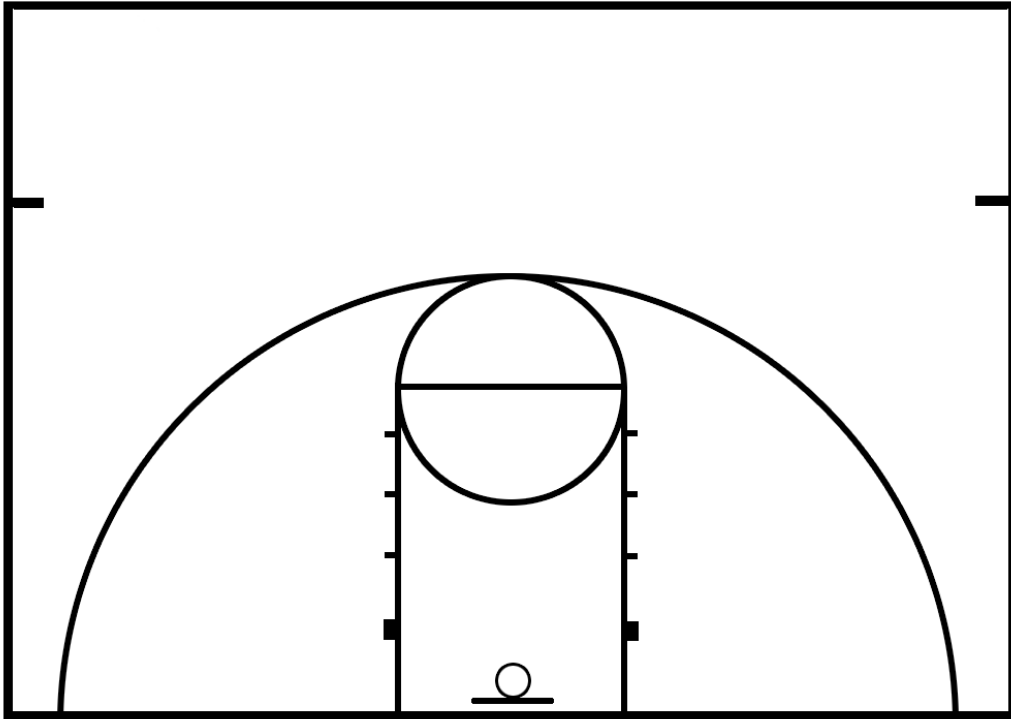
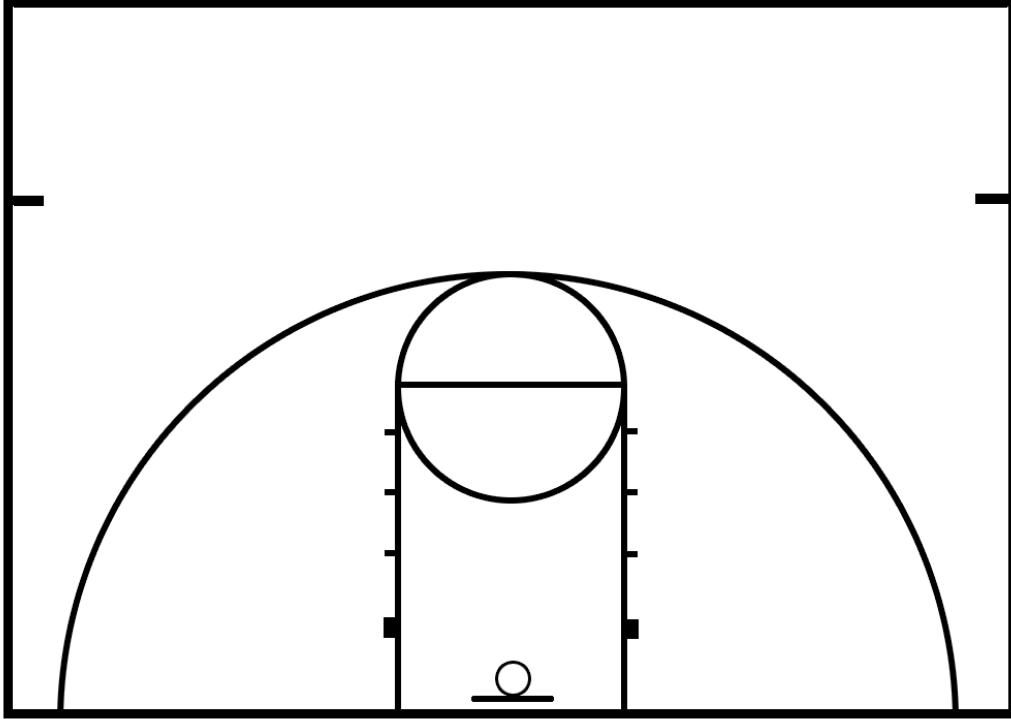
1. When would you use this defense?
2. What defense would be your main defense?

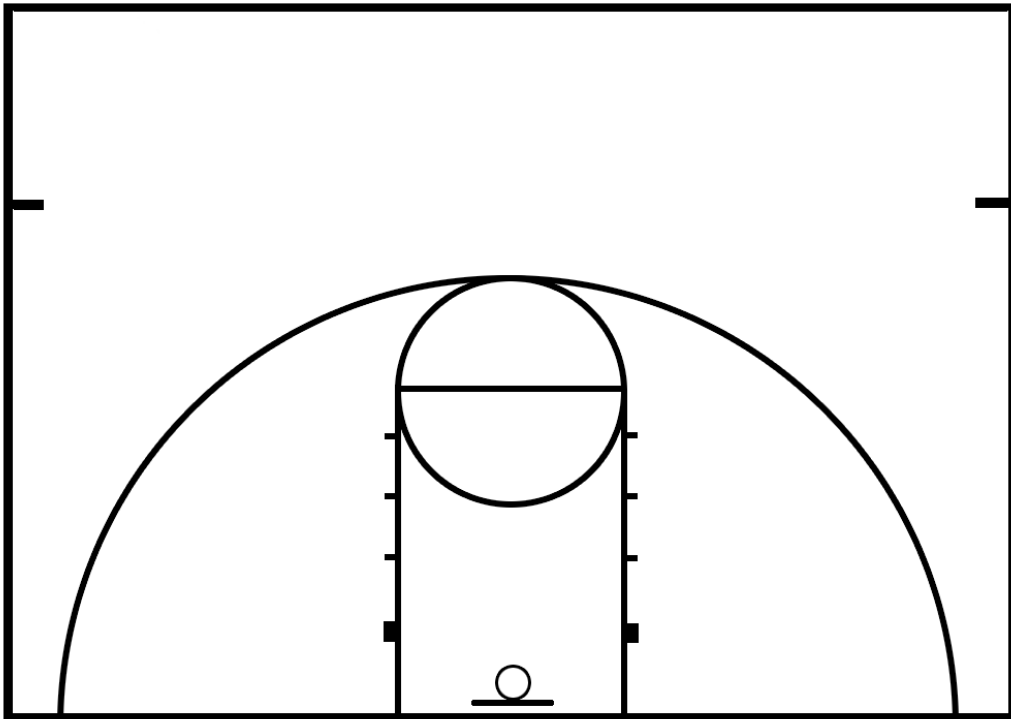
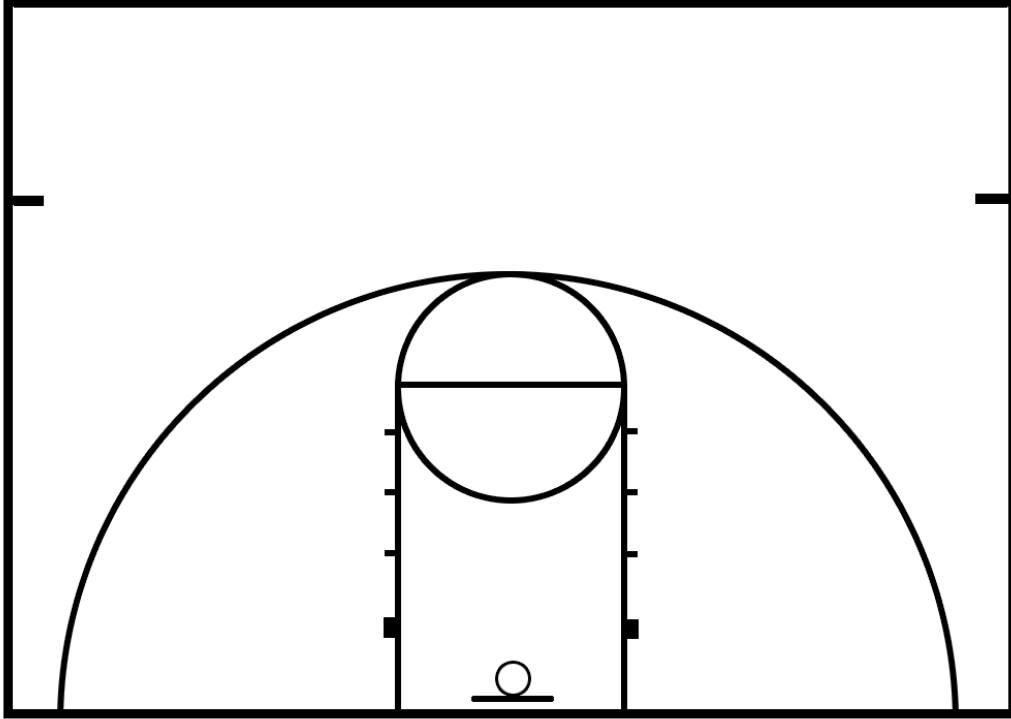


NBA Course: Lesson 3

On the following Diagrams draw the rotation for each of the zone defenses. Ask your teacher for help if you don't know how.









Vocabulary

1. cornerstone 基础
2. concepts 概念
3. accolades 荣誉
4. philosophy 哲理
5. attended 上（大学等）
6. awkward 笨拙的
7. unremarkable 平凡的
8. victories 胜利
9. Championships 锦标赛
10. Approaching 接近
11. Lineup 最佳阵容
12. adapted 适应
13. high-octane unit 强烈的
14. waltzed =easily
15. dramatic 激动人心的
16. prevailed 获胜
17. kept rolling 没停
18. durable 耐用
19. anticipating 期待
20. mental 心智的
21. physical 身体的
22. Division 赛区
23. rematch 复赛
24. plummeted 下降
25. ineffective 无效
26. crown 冠
27. sweep 全胜
28. unprecedented 前所未有的
29. unequaled 无敌
30. adversary 对手
31. expense 费用
32. coordinating 协调
33. subordinating 隶属
34. asserting 主张
35. eliminated 排除
36. notched = to get
37. revolutionizing 革命化
38. slide over 滑过
39. swooping across 俯冲攻击
40. alter 改变
41. funnel 漏斗
42. daring 大胆
43. looming 迫在眉睫
44. synonymous 同义
45. multitalented 多面手
46. hunch 预感
47. deflect 偏转
48. snapped 突然中断
49. trounced 大胜
50. hiatus 间断
51. deficit 缺失
52. gratifying 使满意
53. barely 几乎
54. acquired 获得
55. amassed 积累
56. stints 分别
57. commentator 评论员
58. paired 成对
59. blunt 直接
60. brutally frank 很直接
61. dabbled 涉猎
62. provocative 刺激物
63. irrefutable 不能驳倒的
64. radically 彻底的

Bill Russell

Bill Russell was the **cornerstone** of the Boston Celtics' dynasty of the 1960s, a great shot blocker who changed NBA defensive **concepts**. A five-time NBA Most Valuable Player and a 12-time All-Star, the center had 21,620 career rebounds, an average of 22.5 per game and led the league in rebounding four times. He had 51 boards in one game, 49 in two others and a dozen consecutive seasons of 1,000 or more rebounds.

His many individual **accolades** were well deserved, but they were only parts of Russell's **philosophy** of team play. His greatest accomplishment was bringing the famous Celtics 11 championships in his 13 seasons.





Until the Michael Jordan in the 1980s, Russell was believed by many as the greatest player in the history of the NBA.

William Felton Russell was born on February 12, 1934, in Monroe, Louisiana. His family moved cross-country to the San Francisco Bay Area, where Bill **attended** McClymonds High School in Oakland. He was an **awkward, unremarkable** center on McClymonds's basketball team, but his size got him a scholarship to play at the University of San Francisco, where he became great.

Russell grew to 6-9, and he teamed with guard [K. C. Jones](#) to lead the Dons to 56 consecutive **victories** and NCAA **Championships** in 1955 and 1956. Russell averaged 20.7 points and 20.3 rebounds in his three-year varsity career. With the 1956 NBA Draft **approaching**, Boston Celtics Coach and General Manager Red Auerbach was eager to add Russell to his **lineup**. Russell, Auerbach felt, was the missing piece to the puzzle.

Russell didn't join the Celtics until December because he was a member of the 1956 U.S. Olympic basketball team, which won a gold medal at the Melbourne Games in November. The Celtics jumped out to a 13-3 start, and when Russell arrived he **adapted** quickly. Playing in 48 games, he pulled down 19.6 rpg, the best average in the league, while scoring 14.7 ppg.

Boston's starting five of Russell, Heinsohn, Bob Cousy, Bill Sharman, and Jim Loscutoff was a **high-octane unit**. They posted the best regular-season record in the NBA in 1956-57, **waltzed through** the playoffs, and were heavily favored in the Finals against [Bob Pettit's](#) St. Louis Hawks. The teams traded victories until the series came down to a **dramatic** Game 7 in Boston. Tom Heinsohn scored 37 points for Boston, but the Celtics couldn't pull away. Last-second scores by the Hawks sent the game into overtime and then into a second extra period. The Celtics finally **prevailed**, 125-123, for their first NBA Championship.

Energized by their championship, the Celtics won 14 straight games to start the 1957-58 season, and they **kept rolling**. In his first full season in the NBA, Russell took control and led the league with 22.7 rpg. Early in the season, against the Philadelphia Warriors, he set an NBA record for rebounds in a half by grabbing 32 and ended up with 49 for the game. Although he was tough and **durable**, the thin Russell was not a muscleman. His rebounding greatness came from positioning, **anticipating** where the shot would come off of the rim and moving quickly to the ball. His game was as much **mental** as it was **physical**.

Boston posted the league's best regular-season record that year, finishing atop the Eastern **Division** at 49-23. The Celtics then returned to the NBA Finals for a **rematch** with the Hawks, who had won the West with a 41-31 mark. The teams split the first two games at Boston Garden, but when Russell went down with an ankle injury in Game 3, the Celtics' fortunes **plummeted**. With Russell **ineffective** the rest of the way, St. Louis won that game and two of the next three to take the series.



NBA Course: Lesson 3

Russell was voted the NBA Most Valuable Player for 1957-58. Oddly enough, he was only named to the All-NBA Second Team. In fact, during the five years that Russell was voted league MVP, only twice did he make the All-NBA First Team. The argument was that, while other centers were better than Russell -- that is, they had more conventional skills -- no player meant more to his team.

The Celtics reached the NBA Finals for a third straight season and regained the **crown** with a four-game **sweep** of the Minneapolis Lakers. Russell set a Finals record with 29.5 rpg in the series, and he helped launch the greatest championship run in the history of professional sports. Boston's 1959 title began an **unprecedented** and **unequaled** string of eight consecutive NBA Championships.

Russell's greatest **adversary**, Wilt Chamberlain, entered the NBA and joined the Philadelphia Warriors for the 1959-60 season, setting up a decade-long rivalry. The debate over who was the greater player would last even longer. Chamberlain put up incredible numbers during the period in which the two went head to head, but Russell helped the Celtics hang nine NBA championship flags in the Garden in his first 10 seasons.

As Celtics player Don Nelson told the *Boston Herald*, "There are two types of superstars. One makes himself look good at the **expense** of the other guys on the floor. But there's another type who makes the players around him look better than they are, and that's the type Russell was."

What became clear, both during the 1959-60 season and over the next several years, was that basketball was a team game. As Russell later wrote: "To me, one of the most beautiful things to see is a group of men **coordinating** their efforts toward a common goal, alternately **subordinating** and **asserting** themselves to achieve real teamwork in action. I tried to do that, we all tried to do that, on the Celtics. I think we succeeded."

Chamberlain was great, but the Celtics were better. They improved their regular-season record to 59-16 in 1959-60, at one point running off 17 straight victories. They **eliminated** Chamberlain and the Warriors in the division finals, then met St. Louis again in the 1960 NBA Finals. The Hawks extended the series to seven games, but Russell dominated Game 7, contributing 22 points and 35 rebounds as the Celtics won, 122-103, and **notched** their second consecutive championship.

Russell was **revolutionizing** the game in ways that were clearly understood, even if they weren't measured. His ability to leave his man and **slide over** to cover an opponent driving to the hoop was startling. He was unmatched at **swooping across** the lane like a big bird to block and **alter** shots. The rest of the Celtics defenders began to **funnel** their men toward Russell and become more **daring** with their perimeter defense, knowing that he was **looming** behind.

The dynasty was beginning to establish itself under Red Auerbach, and "Boston Celtics" and "NBA champions" became practically **synonymous** as the decade



NBA Course: Lesson 3

progressed. The team was **multitalented**, with many great players, but the enduring image was that of Russell, his head thrust forward from the slight **hunch** of his shoulders, his eyes scanning the court, his long left arm snaking out to **deflect** a shot. Boston won the title again in 1960-61, and Russell was named NBA Most Valuable Player, the first of his three consecutive MVP Awards.

Following another NBA Championship in 1965-66, Red Auerbach retired, and Russell took over as player-coach the following season, becoming the first African-American coach in the league. He led Boston to a 60-21 regular-season record, but the Celtics finally had their string of championships **snapped** when they lost to a powerful Philadelphia 76ers team in the Eastern Division Finals. The Sixers went 68-13 in the regular season and is considered one of the league's best ever, **trounced** the Celtics in five games to advance to the NBA Finals.

After that one-year **hiatus**, Boston returned to form in 1967-68, recapturing the championship under Russell's direction. In the Eastern Division Finals, the club came back from a two-game **deficit** to force a seventh game with Chamberlain and the 76ers. The Celtics were leading, 97-95, with 34 seconds left when Russell took over. He sank a foul shot, blocked a shot by Walker, grabbed a rebound off a Greer miss, and fed the ball to Sam Jones, who made the final basket in a 100-96 triumph. Boston then beat Los Angeles in six games in the NBA Finals.

The 1968-69 season was even more **gratifying**. The aging Celtics **barely** made it into the playoffs with a 48-34 record, then caught fire in the postseason. In Russell's third year as player-coach, Boston repeated as NBA champion by defeating the Lakers, who had **acquired** Chamberlain, in a seven-game battle for the title. The great Celtics leader promptly retired, having guided the team to 11 championships in 13 years. Russell had **amassed** 21,620 career rebounds, second in NBA history only to Chamberlain's 23,924.

Between coaching **stints** Russell was most visible as a color **commentator** on televised basketball games. For a time he was **paired** with the equally **blunt** Rick Barry; the duo provided **brutally frank** commentary on the game. Russell was never comfortable in that setting, though, explaining to the *Sacramento Bee*, "The most successful television is done in eight-second thoughts, and the things I know about basketball, motivation and people go deeper than that." He also **dabbled** with acting, performing in a Seattle Children's Theatre show and an episode of Miami Vice and he wrote a **provocative** autobiography, *Second Wind*.

Although the arrival of Michael Jordan later in the decade may have reopened the debate over who was truly the game's best player, what remains **irrefutable** is that Russell **radically** changed people's thinking about how basketball games are won.



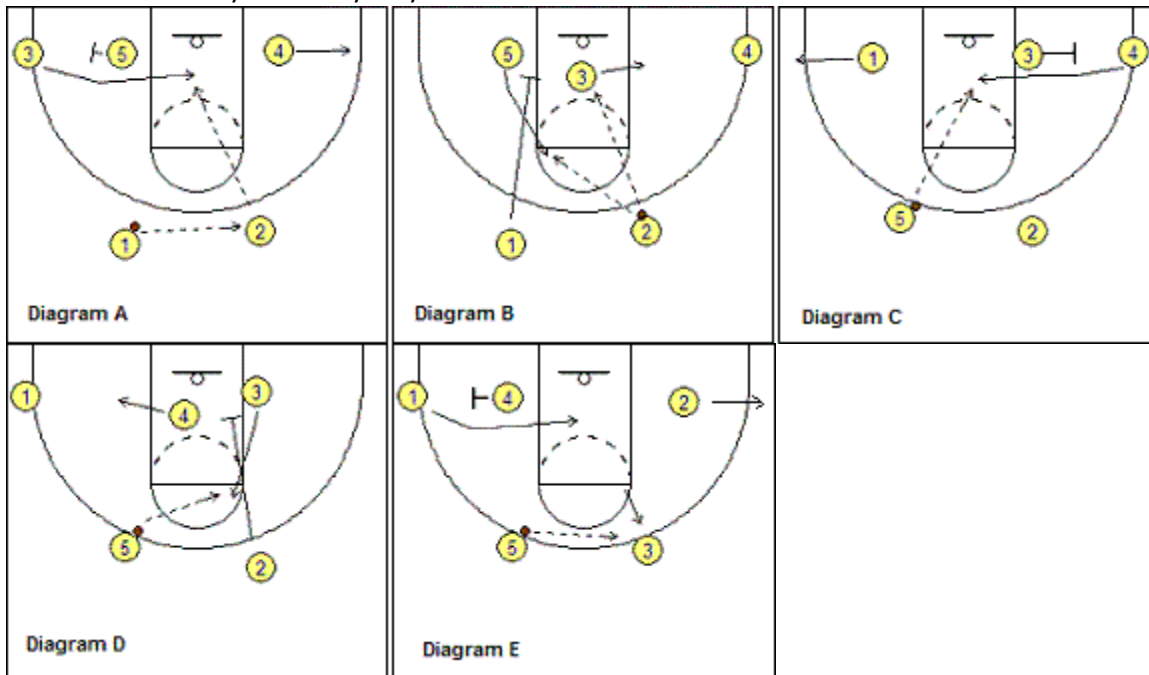
Basketball Slang

Terms	Guess the Meaning	Actual Meaning
1. Dimes		
2. Dish		
3. Break somebody's ankle		
4. On fire		
5. Brick		
6. Boards		
7. Stroke		
8. Sick		
9. Cold		
10. The Rock		

1. Take note of each of the terms above, are they nouns, verbs
2. Make a sentence with each of the above terms. In what situation would you use these words?

Offensive Sets

The **Flex** is the oldest offense in basketball and yet it is still effective today the Utah Jazz have utilized the Flex successfully for nearly 20 years.



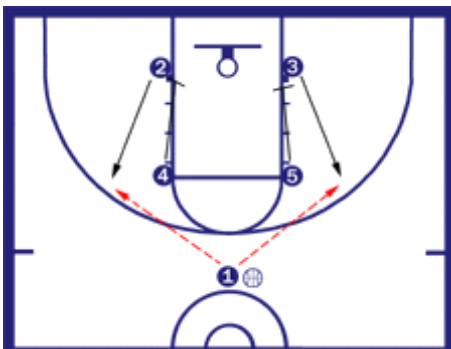


NBA Course: Lesson 4

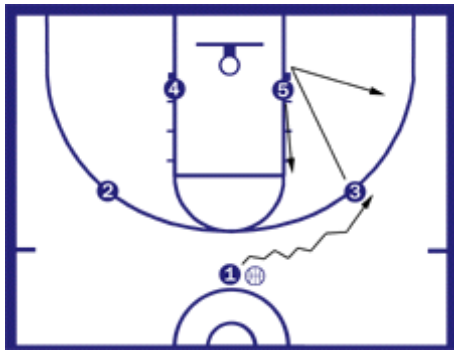
Read the following plays with your Teacher

Triangle Offense Formation: Principles

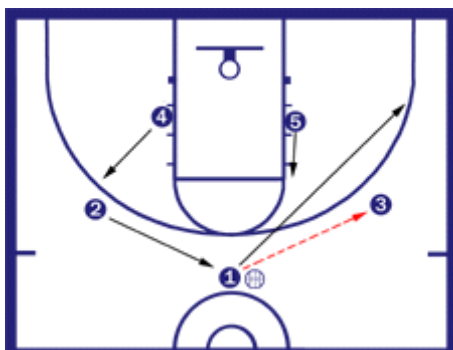
In the triangle offense all players must both understand and be able to play all positions (point guard, strong-side wing, weak-side wing, corner position and post positions) regardless of their size or athletic ability. Spacing is the most crucial parts of the triangle offense. 15' is the optimal space between players. This allows for more efficient passing. The shape of a triangle is formed on the ball side by the post player, the wing player and the corner man. The triangle can be formed on either side; it can be initiated by either a pass from the point guard to one of the wing men or by the point guard dribbling over to one of the wing positions. Whichever player ends up with the ball in the strong-side wing position becomes the "trigger man" - what he does with the ball will determine the offensive movement.



The triangle offense begins with 4 and 5 located at the high post positions and the two wing players on the lower blocks, as shown. When the point guard reaches the bottom of the mid-circle, 4 and 5 then downpick for 2 and 3 to get them open in the wing areas for a pass from 1.



You can also begin the triangle with 1 dribbling to either wing position with the wing player then v-cutting down to the corner position and the strong-side post player moving to the high-post elbow position.

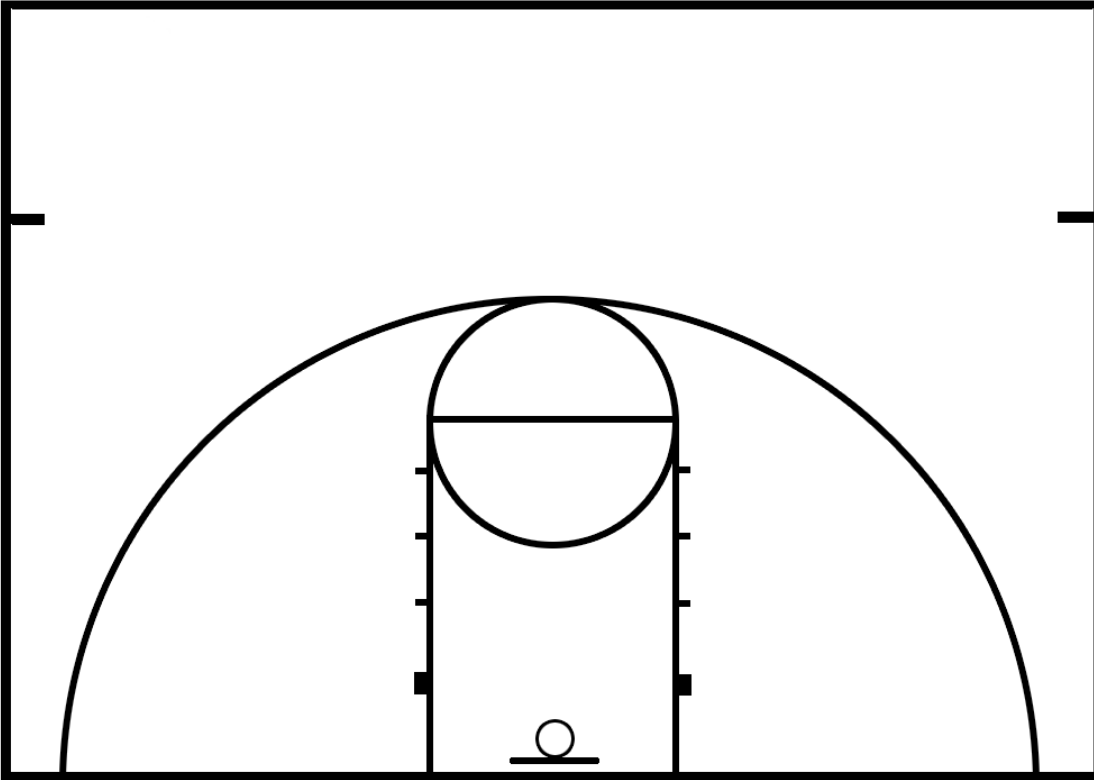


In this example, where 1 has passed to 3 on the wing then cut through to the corner, the triangle is set on the right side with 3 on the wing as the trigger man, 1 in the corner and 5 in the ball-side high post area. 2 moves up to the point area for defensive protection and 4 moves out to the weak side wing area. Now the triangle offense is set.

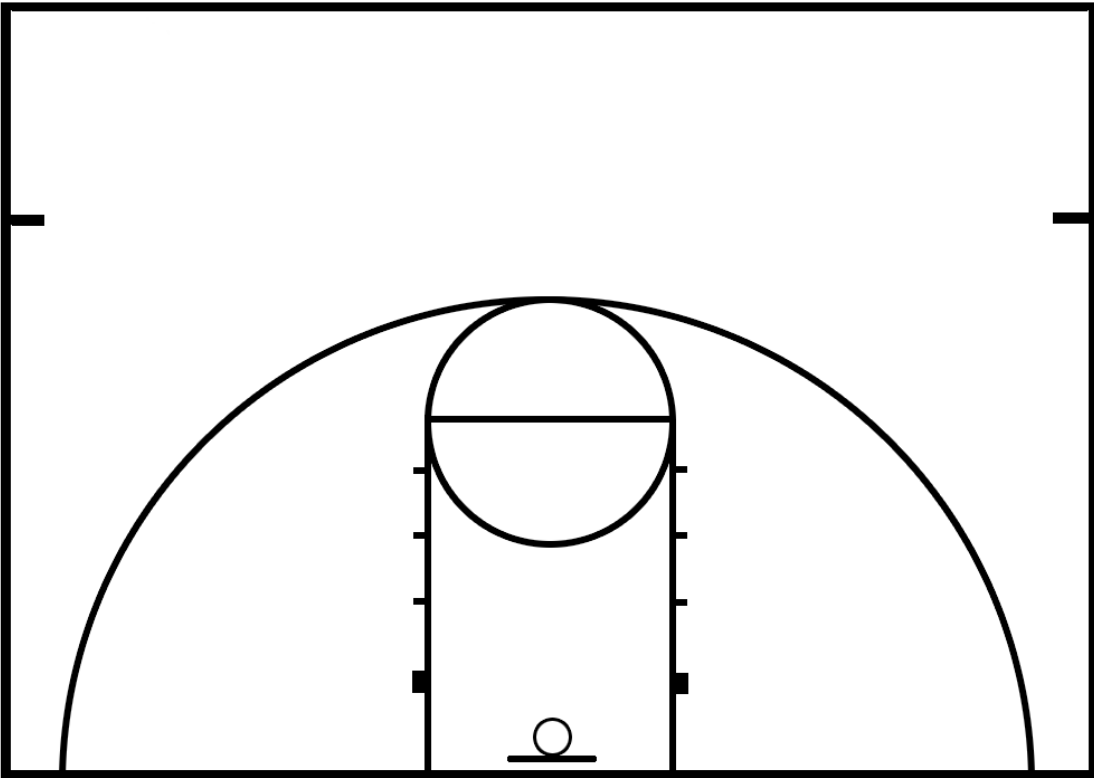


NBA Course: Lesson 4

Draw a Play for the 2-3 Defense



Draw a play for man to man





NBA Course: Lesson 4

Discussion Questions

1. What's the difference between an offense and a play?
2. Are offenses necessary? Plays?
3. Do you use offenses or plays when you play basketball?
4. What plays do you use?
5. How do you learn plays? Are plays useless if the defense knows them?

Offensive Terminology

1. Pick-n- roll
2. Give and Go
3. Reverse the Ball (swing the ball)
4. Post-up
5. Seal
6. Skip Pass
7. Over-load
8. V-Cut
9. Triple Threat Position
10. Jap Step

Look at the above terms. Discuss when and why you use each of these offensive tactics.

Vocabulary

- | | | |
|----------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. peer 同等的人 | 19. boycott 抵制 | 33. heartbreaker 令人伤心 |
| 2. unique 独特的 | 20. eligibility 资格 | 34. sprained 扭伤 |
| 3. grittiest 勇敢的 | 21. hapless 不幸 | 35. sweated out 坚持 |
| 4. competitor 竞争者 | 22. criminal justice 刑事司法 | 36. controversial 有争议的 |
| 5. quarter 将四等分 | 23. thieves 小偷 | 37. slick 灵活的 |
| 6. determination 决心 | 24. quarterback =ask teacher | 38. sweeping 全胜 |
| 7. scrappy 斗志旺盛的 | 25. respectively 分别地 | 39. rival 对手 |
| 8. achievements 业绩 | 26. roughest 最艰苦的 | 40. dominant 显性的 |
| 9. franchise 特许经营 | 27. era 时代 | 41. decade 十年 |
| 10. acrobatic 杂技的 | 28. Recriminations 反思 | 42. hamstring 肌腱 |
| 11. combined 结合 | 29. expletives 咒骂 | 43. intimidated 胁迫 |
| 12. savvy 悟性 | 30. hardwood 篮球场 | 44. dynasty= good for a long time |
| 13. sincerity 真诚 | 31. pounding 冲击 | 45. records 记录 |
| 14. compassion 慈悲 | 32. painful 痛苦 | 46. honored 荣幸 |
| 15. harshest 苛刻 | | 47. Anniversary 周年 |
| 16. circumstances 情况 | | |
| 17. lack of 缺乏 | | |
| 18. enrolled 报名 | | |



NBA Course: Lesson 4

Isiah Thomas

Isiah "Zeke" Thomas was one of the greatest "small men" ever to play basketball. His only peer at point guard in the NBA during the 1980s was the Lakers' Earvin "Magic" Johnson, who at 6-9 brought **unique** physical skills to the position.



Thomas, who stood barely over 6-feet, was in his day the **grittiest** performer to play the position, a **competitor** who offered no **quarter** and expected none in return. Like Johnson, Thomas had the skill and **determination** to take over a game at will.

Thomas helped build a last-place Detroit Pistons team into back-to-back NBA champions in the late 1980s. Thomas' sunny smile hid an inner toughness that made him a key member of a **scrappy**, physical group of players called the "Bad Boys" of Detroit.

Though Thomas was an unselfish player, his personal **achievements** were impressive. In 13 years with Detroit, he became the **franchise's** all-time leader in points, assists, steals and games played. He made the All-Star Team in all but his

final year and was named NBA Finals MVP in 1990.

Along with Johnson, Oscar Robertson and Utah's John Stockton, Thomas became the fourth player in NBA history to amass more than 9,000 assists. His 13.9 assists per game in 1984-85 set an NBA record for the highest single-season average ever, until Stockton bested it with 14.5 in 1989-90.

Thomas refused to let his height limit what he could do on the court. He was a dangerous shooter from any spot on the floor, a smart passer and a smooth, clever playmaker. He was also known for his full-speed, **acrobatic** drives into the teeth of the toughest and tallest big-men. Thomas took whatever defenses gave him, whether it was a three-pointer, the baseline, the lane or an alley-oop opportunity. He **combined** intelligence, court **savvy** and physical gifts to attain true NBA superstardom. Off the court, Thomas was a tireless charity worker known for his **sincerity** and **compassion**.

Isiah Lord Thomas III came into the world in 1961 under the **harshest** of **circumstances**. He was the youngest of nine children growing up in one of the poorest and dangerous neighborhoods of West Chicago. His family sometimes went without food or heat, and the **lack of** bed space forced some of the kids to sleep on the floor. Isiah's father left the family when he was 3 years old, leaving Isiah's mother to raise the children.

Thomas played high school ball at St. Joseph's in Westchester, where he led the team to the state-title game as a junior in 1978. In 1979, he was a member of the gold medal-winning United States team at the Pan-American Games.



NBA Course: Lesson 4

That fall Thomas **enrolled** at Indiana University. The street-hardened freshman impressed Coach Bobby Knight from the outset, averaging 14.6 points and 5.5 assists in his first season. That summer Thomas was selected to play on the 1980 U.S. Olympic Team, but a U.S. **boycott** of the Moscow Games robbed him of the Olympic experience.

As a 19-year-old sophomore, Thomas (16.0 ppg, 5.8 apg) steered the Hoosiers to the 1981 NCAA Championship. Following that season he passed up his final two years of collegiate **eligibility** and entered the 1981 NBA Draft.

The 1980-81 Pistons were the second-worst team in the league, with a 21-61 record. Detroit was one of the few franchises that didn't have a player capable of scoring 20 points per game. The **hapless** club made Thomas the second overall pick in the 1981 draft behind DePaul's Mark Aguirre, a childhood friend of Thomas who later became his teammate. (Thomas, who had promised his mother he would finish college, received his degree in **criminal justice** six years later -- on Mother's Day.)

During the mid-1980s, Thomas, Magic and Sidney Moncrief were the best all-around guards in the league. Still needing to carry much of the Pistons' offensive load, Thomas scored more than 20 points per game in each season from 1982-83 to 1986-87. The quick-handed guard was among the NBA's best ball **thieves**.

But above all, he was the great **quarterback**, consistently placing near the top of the league in assists. In 1984-85, he set an all-time record by averaging 13.9 assists. He was selected to the All-NBA First Team for three consecutive seasons from 1983-84 to 1985-86. While keeping his own point totals healthy, Thomas fed Laimbeer, Tripucka, John Long and Vinnie Johnson a steady diet of scoring opportunities. Thomas could pass to anybody. In being named MVP of the 1984 and 1986 All-Star Games, Thomas recorded 15 and 10 assists, **respectively**.

When Chuck Daly came aboard as head coach for 1983-84, the Pistons became a playoff team once again. They were quiet in the first three years of Daly's reign, losing annually in the preliminary rounds to the New York Knicks, Boston Celtics or the Atlanta Hawks. But then, in 1987, Detroit came within one game of reaching the NBA Finals.

The Eastern Conference Finals against the Celtics was one of the **roughest** of the era. **Recriminations** flew off the court, while elbows and **expletives** were traded on the **hardwood**. The experience was a painful one for Thomas. With five seconds left in Game 5, Larry Bird stole a Thomas inbounds pass and fed Dennis Johnson for a layup, giving Boston a 108-107 win. The war came to a head in Game 7. After 48 minutes of **pounding**, Boston survived, 117-114.

In 1987-88, the Pistons reached the NBA Finals for the first time since moving to Detroit from Fort Wayne in 1958. In a **painful** repeat of the previous season's loss to Boston, Detroit lost a seven-game **heartbreaker** to the defending NBA-champion Los Angeles Lakers. (Before the Game 1 tipoff, Thomas and close friend Magic Johnson exchanged what may have been the first on-court kiss in league history.)



NBA Course: Lesson 4

Holding a three-games-to-two series lead, the Pistons lost Game 6, 103-102, despite 43 points from Thomas (25 points in one quarter, setting an NBA Finals record), who played on a badly **sprained** ankle. Los Angeles, behind James Worthy's 36 points and 16 rebounds, **sweated out** Game 7 and won, 108-105.

Thomas and the Pistons peaked in 1988-89, when their 63-19 record was tops in the league. Detroit picked up Thomas's buddy, Mark Aguirre, from the Dallas Mavericks in a **controversial** midseason trade for Dantley, giving the Pistons still more scoring power. Seven Pistons averaged more than 13.5 points, a tribute to Thomas' unselfishness and **slick** playmaking.

The Bad Boys pulled out all the stops in the playoffs, **sweeping** Boston in three games and Milwaukee in four to reach the Conference Finals against **rival** Chicago. Despite a great effort from the Bulls' Michael Jordan, Detroit won in six games and advanced to meet the Lakers in the NBA Finals. Los Angeles, though **dominant** throughout the **decade**, was ill-prepared for the series. In his last season, 42-year-old center Kareem Abdul-Jabbar was ineffective and guards Magic Johnson and Byron Scott were slowed by **hamstring** injuries. The overpowering Pistons swept the Lakers for their first-ever NBA title.

The Pistons played and **intimidated**, their way to a second consecutive NBA Championship in 1989-90, becoming the second team since the 1968-69 Boston Celtics to win back-to-back crowns, and the sixth team ever to do so. During the season they used a 25-1 midseason tear to finish with a 59-23 record.

Thomas was named MVP of the Finals against the Portland Trail Blazers, averaging 27.6 points and 7.0 assists. After the series, Thomas told *HOOP* magazine: "We never quit. We always feel we are going to win, no matter what the score is. It's all a battle of will. You have to keep asking yourself, 'How bad do you really want it?'"

The Chicago Bulls, with scoring champion in Jordan, took the division title away from the Pistons in 1990-91. In the playoffs Thomas was slowed by a sprained foot, a pulled leg muscle, and an injured wrist. Detroit's dynasty came to an end and Chicago's **dynasty** began when the Bulls swept the Pistons in the Eastern Conference Finals.

Thomas retired with 18,822 points (19.2 ppg), 9,061 assists (9.3 apg), and 1,861 steals over 979 games -- all Pistons **records**. He shot .452 from the field and .759 from the free-throw line. In 1996-97, Thomas was **honored** as a member of the NBA's 50th **Anniversary** All-Time Team.



NBA Course: Lesson 5

Street-Ball Vocabulary

1. Ball in
 - a. 开始了
 - b. Alright, everybody ready, ball in!
2. Check ball
 - a. 开球之前先传给对方
 - b. Hey! Hey! You have to check the ball before you start.
3. Dancing
 - a. 无用花哨的运球
 - b. Look at him dancing he ain't got nothing.
4. D-up
 - a. 防守
 - b. This is game point, everybody D-up.
5. Run full
 - a. 打全场
 - b. Hey! You all wanna run full?
6. GAME
 - a. 一方获胜, 结束
 - b. That's game, lets run again.
7. In your face
 - a. 在有人防时出手
 - b. Ohh! That was in your face.
8. Money
 - a. 球一定要进
 - b. I'm money from this spot, you can't stop me.
9. No look pass
 - a. 不看队友的传球
 - b. Takes a lot of practice to be able to complete a successful no look pass.
10. Rob
 - a. 偷球
 - b. You just got robbed.
11. Skins vs. Shirts
 - a. 一队穿衣服, 一队上身光着
 - b. This team is skins, that team is shirts.
12. Switch
 - a. 在对方拆档时, 和队友交换防守的对象
 - b. Don't switch, stay with your man.
13. Trash Talk
 - a. 球员之间互相挑逗的“废话”
 - b. All you can do is trash talk, you ain't got game.



NBA Course: Lesson 5

Street-ball Rules/ Games

Game 1: Horse

This game needs at least two players and can be played with as many as 6 players. The game starts with one player choosing a shot from anywhere on the court. If he makes it then the person who is next in line will also have to make the same shot, if he misses this shot then the next player can shoot from wherever he wants. On the other hand, if he makes the shot then the person following him will also have to make the shot, if the second player misses then he gets a letter. The first letter that he gets is an “H”. If the player misses following another player for a second time then he will get a second letter, this time it will be “O”. When the player spells out the entire word “Horse” then he or she is out of the game.

Other variations

- “Pig” instead of “Horse”
 - Makes the game quicker, because of fewer letters.
- Add dribbling and moves
 - Instead of just shooting, you have to copy every move the player does, this makes the game more difficult

Game 2: “21”

“21” is usually played when you have an odd number of players for instance 3 or 5 players. When you have 4 or 6 players then most likely a game of 2 on 2 or 3 on 3 will be played. 21 is a game of all against all. There are no out of bounds and generally no fouls, if a foul is called the person with the ball remains with the ball. There are also no **take backs** (returning the ball to the three point line). Each basket is worth 2 points; after a basket is made the player who made the basket gets an opportunity to shoot a free throw. If he makes the first three throw he can take another free throw, if three free throws are made in a row then the ball is taken out at the top of the key. Each free throw is worth one point.

Other Variations

- Tips- the only difference in this version is that if another player misses a shot you can tip it in. If you tip in his/her shot that player will lose all or half of their points (to be decided before the game) and you will gain two points. For a tip to be legal the player must have both feet off the ground, if one foot is still touching when contact with the ball is made, then the tip does not count.
- No Free throws- some people believe that free throws are too easy, so instead of free throws you must shoot 3 pointers from the top of the key.

Half-court 2on2 /3on3

This is the most traditional game of street ball. The game is played on half of a court. After every change of possession the, the team with the ball must return to the three point line before continuing to play. After every made basket the team with the ball must check the ball to start playing, this gives the defensive a chance to set up. These games are usually played



NBA Course: Lesson 5

11 or 15 by ones, with no three pointers, every shot is worth 1. Generally in these games the offense calls the fouls. After a foul is committed the ball is taken out at the top of the key where the ball is checked and then play is resumed. Finally, the game must be won by two points. If the score is 10-10 then the game must go on until one team is ahead by 2 points.

Other Variations

- Make-it take-it (if you make a shot the ball remains yours)
- Make-it take-it after 3
- If you shoot an air-ball (does not touch rim), then the opposing team does not have to return it.

Street-ball Discussion Questions

1. What is the main difference between street-ball and organized ball?
 - a. Which do you prefer? Why?
2. Can street-baller play organized ball? Can people who play organized ball play street ball? Which person would have the hardest time adapting? Why?
3. Who do you think is the best street-baller in the NBA?
 - a. What makes him a good street-baller?
4. What problems arise during street-ball?
5. Do you talk trash when you play ball? Why or why not?
6. What other types of basketball games do you know?
7. When you play at a park, do you prefer to play with people you know or to mix up the teams?
8. Do you like playing with fair teams, or do you like having the best players on your team?
9. What role do you usually play during pick-up games? (rebounder, passer, shooter, defender)
10. Who was the best player that you have ever played against? What made him/her so good?

Vocabulary

- | | | |
|-------------------|------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. explosive 爆炸 | 10. league 与联合 | 19. rebellious 叛逆 |
| 2. identified 识别 | 11. splash=ask teacher | 20. desire 欲望 |
| 3. controversy 争议 | 12. signature 特征 | 21. contender 竞争者 |
| 4. jailed 监禁 | 13. baggy 松松垮垮的 | 22. role 作用 |
| 5. accused 指责 | 14. flashy 浮华的 | 23. terminated 终止 |
| 6. racially 种族 | 15. braided 编织的 | 24. stint 阶段 |
| 7. brawl 斗殴 | 16. promote 促进 | 25. upswing 蓬勃发展 |
| 8. conviction 信念 | 17. disruptive 制造混乱的 | 26. remainder 剩余 |
| 9. evidence 证据 | 18. run-ins 争论 | |



NBA Course: Lesson 5

Allen Iverson

An American basketball player known for both **explosive** play on the court and **controversy** away from the game, Iverson became the first great athlete to be strongly **identified** with the hip-hop movement.

Athletic success and controversy came to Iverson at an early age. At Bethel High School, he led the school's football and basketball teams to state championships his junior year. At age 17 he was **jailed** after being **accused** of starting a **racially** charged **brawl** in a bowling alley, but his **conviction** was later overturned because of lack of **evidence**. He was offered a scholarship to Georgetown University in Washington, D.C., where in two years he averaged 23 points per game and won two Big East Conference Defensive Player of the Year awards before making the decision to leave school to play professionally. Iverson was chosen first overall in the 1996 National Basketball Association (NBA) draft by the Philadelphia 76ers.



Although he was one of the smallest players in the **league**, standing 6 feet (1.8 metres) tall and weighing 165 pounds (75 kg), Iverson made a big **splash** immediately, leading his team with a scoring average of 23.5 points per game and winning Rookie of the Year. His quickness and his **signature** crossover dribble often left even the best defenders helpless. Off the court his **baggy** clothing, **flashy** jewelry, and **braided** hair were not part of the image the NBA wanted to **promote**. During his early years in the league, he clashed frequently with coaches and team officials, was portrayed by the media as a selfish, **disruptive** player, and had several **run-ins** with the law. Yet he developed a huge following of young fans that identified with his **rebellious** image.

Despite the controversies that followed him, Iverson proved his talent on the court, taking the league scoring title in 1998–99 and winning the scoring title, the steals title, and Most Valuable Player in 2000–01 while guiding the 76ers to the NBA Finals. In the middle of the 2006–07 season he was traded to the Denver Nuggets, where he was teamed with young superstar Carmelo Anthony. Iverson was an extremely good scorer, and in 2007 he became the sixth fastest player in NBA history to score 20,000 career points. Denver, however, failed to advance beyond the first round of the play-offs, and Iverson expressed a desire to play for a **contender**. Three games into the 2008–09 season, he was traded to the Detroit Pistons, but the Pistons finished the season with a losing record and were swept in the first round of the play-offs, leading Iverson and the team to part ways. He signed with the Memphis Grizzlies in September 2009, but, unhappy with his **role** on the team, he left the Grizzlies after playing only three games, and his contract was **terminated** soon thereafter. Iverson then announced his retirement from professional basketball, but he instead returned for a second **stint** with the 76ers after signing with the team in December 2009. The return of the still-popular Iverson led to an **upswing** in home attendance for the 76ers that proved to be short-lived. He



NBA Course: Lesson 5

left the team in February 2010 to spend time with his sick daughter, and the next month the 76ers announced that he would not return for the **remainder** of the 2009–10 season.



NBA Course: Lesson 6

History of Basketball Vocabulary

- | | | |
|------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Clergyman 牧师 | 11. staged 举行 | 21. merged 合并 |
| 2. physician 医生 | 12. heightened 高度 | 22. anticipated 预期 |
| 3. superior 优越 | 13. paving 摊铺 | 23. prominence 突出 |
| 4. vigorous 蓬勃 | 14. exploitation 利用 | 24. resuscitated 复苏 |
| 5. recreation 娱乐 | 15. rough 粗糙 | 25. credited 认为 |
| 6. elements 元素 | 16. disbanding 解散 | 26. injecting 注入 |
| 7. wooden 木 | 17. demise 死亡 | 27. rivalry 竞争 |
| 8. affixed 贴 | 18. dominated 主导 | 28. sustained 持续 |
| 9. servicemen 军人 | 19. exhibition 比赛 | 29. contributed 贡献 |
| 10. adopted 采用 | 20. specializes 专业 | |

History of Basketball

Basketball was invented in December 1891 by the Canadian **clergyman**, educator, and **physician** James Naismith. Naismith introduced the game when he was an instructor at the Young Men's Christian Association Training School (now Springfield College) in Springfield, Massachusetts. At the request of his **superior**, Dr. Luther H. Gulick, he organized a **vigorous recreation** suitable for indoor winter play. The game involved **elements** of American football, soccer, and hockey, and the first ball used was a soccer ball. Teams had nine players, and the goals were **wooden** peach baskets **affixed** to the walls. By 1897-1898, teams of five became standard. The game rapidly spread nationwide and to Canada and other parts of the world, played by both women and men; it also became a popular informal outdoor game. U.S. **servicemen** in World War II (1939-1945) popularized the sport in many other countries.

A number of U.S. colleges **adopted** the game between about 1893 and 1895. In 1934 the first college games were **staged** in New York City's Madison Square Garden, and college basketball began to attract **heightened** interest. By the 1950s basketball had become a major college sport, thus **paving** the way for a growth of interest in professional basketball.

The first pro league, the National Basketball League, was formed in 1898 to protect players from **exploitation** and to promote a less **rough** game. This league only lasted five years before **disbanding**; its **demise** spawned a number of loosely organized leagues throughout the northeastern United States. One of the first and greatest pro teams was the Original Celtics, organized about 1915 in New York City. They played as many as 150 games a season and **dominated** basketball until 1936. The Harlem Globetrotters, founded in 1927, a notable **exhibition** team, **specializes** in amusing court antics and expert ball handling.

In 1949 two subsequent professional leagues, the National Basketball League (formed in 1937) and the Basketball Association of America (1946) **merged** to create the National Basketball Association (NBA). The Boston Celtics, led by their center Bill Russell, dominated the NBA from the late 1950s through the 1960s. By the 1960s, pro teams from coast to coast played before crowds of many millions annually. Wilt Chamberlain, a center for the Los Angeles Lakers, was another leading player during the era, and his battles with Russell were eagerly **anticipated**.



NBA Course: Lesson 6

Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, also a center, came to **prominence** during the 1970s. Jabbar perfected his famed "sky hook" shot while playing for the Los Angeles Lakers and dominated the opposition.

The NBA suffered a drop in popularity during the late 1970s, but was **resuscitated**, principally through the growing popularity of its most prominent players. Larry Bird of the Boston Celtics, and Magic Johnson of the Los Angeles Lakers are **credited** with **injecting** excitement into the league in the 1980s through their superior skills and decade-long **rivalry**. During the late 1980s Michael Jordan of the Chicago Bulls rose to stardom and helped the Bulls dominate the NBA during the early 1990s. A new generation of basketball stars, including Shaquille O'Neal of the Orlando Magic and Larry Johnson of the Charlotte Hornets, have **sustained** the NBA's growth in popularity.

In 1959 a Basketball Hall of Fame was founded in Springfield, Massachusetts. Its rosters include the names of great players, coaches, referees, and people who have **contributed** significantly to the development of the game.

Discussion Questions

1. How do you think the game has changed since it was invented in 1891?
2. What makes basketball different from other sports?
3. Can you think of any new sports that are being invented today?
4. Why did James Naismith invent basketball?
5. What is the Hall of Fame?
6. Who are the Harlem Globetrotters? Have you seen them before? Do you like watching this type of basketball? Do you know what And-1 is?
7. The NBA started as a big man's game, now it has changed to a small, quick man's game. How do you think it will change in the future?
8. Think about the players that you have read about in past lessons, how did they players effect the game?

Rule Changes Vocabulary

- | | | |
|-----------------------|------------------|---------------------|
| 1. minor 小的 | 7. deflected 偏向的 | 13. impact 影响 |
| 2. revolutionized 革命性 | 8. explosion 爆炸 | 14. invention 发明的 |
| 3. comprehension 理解 | 9. banned 禁止 | 15. device 装置 |
| 4. constantly 不断 | 10. destroyed 破坏 | 16. collegially 大学的 |
| 5. adopted 采用 | 11. schemes 方案 | 17. infamous 臭名昭著的 |
| 6. contention 竞争 | 12. merged 合并 | 18. tempo 节奏 |

Rule Changes

Each season the NBA makes a half dozen or so rule changes, most often these are **minor** rule changes which don't affect the game at all, but sometimes these new rules have **revolutionized** the game of basketball. There have been at least 5 major rule changes which



NBA Course: Lesson 6

have changed the game beyond most of our **comprehension**, unless you watched the game before some of these rules were added you would have no idea what I mean

#5 Addition free throws after the teams fifth foul.

This rule, also known as the penalty, is one of the more unpopular ones. Many fans feel that this gives the referees too much control on a game, they feel that the refs could get a team into the penalty early than continually call ticky-tack fouls giving the opposing team free throws. But the season this rule exists is so that teams don't **constantly** reach to try to get steals. This has allowed the game to speed up, and it actually helps to limit the number of fouls in a game.

#4 Three Point line.

Originally something from the American Basketball Association, the three point line was **adopted** by the NBA prior to the 79-80 season. The addition of the three point line opened up the paint for big men and guards, and it made teams which left players open on the perimeter pay.

In recent years the three point line has been the issue of **contention** for many, some feel that it's too inviting for players to stand on the perimeter and just shoot threes. The NBA has addressed this issue and has moved the line back a couple of times.

#3 Widening the lane from six to twelve feet, than from twelve to sixteen feet.

Before 1952 basketball was a big man's game, guards couldn't get inside easily without being fouled hard or having their shots **deflected**. This was because the big guys down low would crowd the paint. In 1952 the NBA widened the lane from six feet to twelve; the doubling of the lane saw an offensive **explosion** in the NBA, guards who once couldn't get into the paint found it relatively easy to get in there.

The League widened the lane again twelve years later, taking it from twelve feet to sixteen feet. This once again increased scoring for the guards, but it did hurt the points output from the big men for a couple of years.

Without these changes the NBA game would still be dominated by the big guys, guards would still be on the perimeter and the game would be a lot slower than it is today.

#2 Banning Zone Defense

When the BAA(Basketball Association of America) **banned** zone defense in the winter of '47 some basketball fans thought they were mad. This changed defense completely, and **destroyed** old time-tested defensive **schemes**. When the BAA **merged** with the National Basketball League in 1949 to form the National Basketball Association, this rule was kept. The **impact** of this rule has led to speedier games, better defense, and more scoring.

#1 Shot clock

No **invention** in the history of sports has had more of an impact on a sport than the shot clock



NBA Course: Lesson 6

has had on basketball. This simple **device** revolutionized the game, not just professionally, but also **collegially**.

Legend states that the NBA added the shot clock after the Fort Wayne Pistons beat the Minneapolis Lakers 19-18, in the lowest scoring game in league history on November 22, 1950, This isn't true however, the league didn't add the shot clock until the 54-55 season, nearly four years after the **infamous** game. The game did have an impact on the concept of the shot clock, following the game many people around the league realized something had to be done to keep teams from holding the ball all game like the Pistons did.

The clock can still be found today, and it's still affecting the way teams run their offense. With only 24 second to get a play off the offense must hurry, this has lead to increase scoring and a much faster **tempo** game.

Discussion Questions

1. Which of the above rules do you think was necessary?
2. Which of the above rules do you think should not have been changed?
3. What other rule changes do you know?
4. What rules do you think the NBA should make?
5. What rules do you think the NBA should take away?

Vocabulary

- | | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. tenacious 顽强 | 19. varsity squad 后备队 | 36. pitching in 作出贡献 |
| 2. perfectionism 完美主义 | 20. Emboldened 大胆 | 37. surpassed 超过 |
| 3. Clutch 紧急关头 | 21. dilemma 困境 | 38. margins = score difference |
| 4. swish 使作沙沙声 | 22. powerhouse 厉害 | 39. Revitalized 复兴 |
| 5. relentless 无情 | 23. affected 影响 | 40. groin 腹股沟 |
| 6. notched =get | 24. broadcaster 播音员 | 41. sacrifice 牺牲 |
| 7. legendary 传奇 | 25. stare 瞪 | 42. campaigns 竞选 |
| 8. deficiencies 不足 | 26. ripped 撕 | 43. helm 掌舵 |
| 9. hustle 奔忙 | 27. regulation 规定的 | 44. absence 缺席 |
| 10. regard 把看作 | 28. exploits 业绩 | 45. scout 童军 |
| 11. humble 谦虚 | 29. launched 推出 | 46. Executive 经理 |
| 12. faulty 错误 | 30. resuscitated 复苏 | 47. rebuilding 重建 |
| 13. luxuries 奢侈品 | 31. determined 决心 | 48. free agent 自由间谍 |
| 14. drained 没精神 | 32. perennial = great | 49. consecutive 连续不断 |
| 15. outlet 发泄 | 33. eclipsed 超过 | |
| 16. immersed 沉浸 | 34. virtually 事实上 | |
| 17. neglecting 忽视 | 35. productive 有效的 | |
| 18. vitamin 维生素 | | |

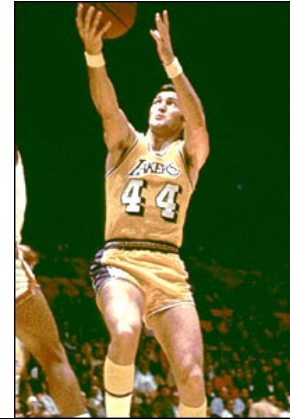


NBA Course: Lesson 6

Jerry West

Combine a deadly jump shot, tenacious defense, obsessive perfectionism, lots of confidence, and an a will to win, and you've got Jerry West, one of the greatest guards in NBA history.

West, with his lightning-quick release, was the guy the Lakers turned to for the big basket. Many players have been called "Mr. **Clutch**," but none of them lived up to it as well as West did. He was responsible for perhaps the most famous buzzer-beater of all time: a 60-foot **swish** that tied Game 3 of the 1970 NBA Finals against the New York Knicks.



West was motivated by a **relentless** drive to succeed. Years after a game in which he hit 16 of 17 shots from the field, sank all 12 free throw attempts, and **notched** 12 rebounds, 12 assists and 10 blocked shots, West told the *National Sports Daily*, "Defensively, from a team standpoint, I didn't feel I played very well. Very rarely was I satisfied with how I played."

Equally **legendary** was West's tolerance for pain. Not blessed with great size, strength, or dribbling ability, West made up for these **deficiencies** with pure **hustle** and an apparent lack of **regard** for his body. He broke his nose at least nine times. On more than one occasion West had to be helped to the court before games in which he ultimately scored 30 or 40 points.

Like many NBA stars, West came from **humble** beginnings. His first nickname, "Zeke from Cabin Creek," was actually based on **faulty** information. He grew up in Cheylan, W. Va., although his family got its mail in Cabin Creek. He was the son of a coal mine electrician who could afford no **luxuries** and who was usually too **drained** from work to play with his children. Jerry's closest brother, David, was killed in the Korean War when Jerry was only 12.

A smallish youth, West didn't make his junior high football, baseball or track teams. His only **outlet** was a basketball hoop nailed to a storage shed outside a neighbor's house. The dirt-covered court became his home. In the rainy spring he dribbled in mud. When it snowed West played wearing gloves. He practiced shooting until his fingers bled. He taught himself his quick shot release by bouncing the last dribble hard off the ground.

West completely **immersed** himself in practice, often **neglecting** to eat. His mother beat him when he showed up hours late for dinner. He became so thin that he had to receive **vitamin** shots. But the practice paid off. He made the **varsity squad** at East Bank High School, although he mostly sat on the bench during his junior year. Over the next summer he grew six more inches. As a 6-foot senior, West became the first player in state history to score 900 points in a season, averaging 32.2 points. With West's hot hand leading the way, East Bank won the 1956 state title.

The Minneapolis Lakers chose West with the second overall pick behind Robertson in the 1960 NBA Draft. **Emboldened** by the success of the westward-bound Brooklyn Dodgers and faced with the **dilemma** of finding a site for its home games, the Lakers **franchise** moved to Los Angeles for the 1960-61 season. The team had posted a 25-50 record in its last season in Minneapolis.



NBA Course: Lesson 6

With Elgin Baylor ("Mr. Inside") scoring nearly 35 ppg and West ("Mr. Outside") contributing 17.6 ppg, the Lakers improved to 36-43 and finished in second place in the Western **Division**. They edged the Detroit Pistons in the division semifinals but then lost to the St. Louis Hawks in the division finals.

During the remaining 13 seasons of West's playing career the Lakers missed the Finals only four times. However, the Lakers and West came out on the losing end in eight of those nine Finals. Six of the losses came at the hands of the **powerhouse** Celtics. A few months before winning the title against the Knicks in 1972, West told *Family Weekly*, "It would almost be better not to get to the playoffs at all than to go so far but no further."

No one was **affected** more by those defeats than West. "He took a loss harder than any player I've ever known," said longtime Lakers **broadcaster** Chick Hearn in the *National Sports Daily*. "He would sit by himself and **stare** into space. A loss just **ripped** his guts out." It's no wonder. West held himself to seemingly impossible standards. "I'm surprised when the ball doesn't go into the hoop," West said toward the end of his career. "I think I should make every shot."

The Lakers' seven-game defeat at the hands of the Celtics in the 1962 NBA Finals was particularly **heartbreaking**. After taking the series lead on Baylor's then record 61-point **performance** in Game 5, Los Angeles dropped the next two. In Game 7 a 15-foot Frank Selvy jumper at the buzzer that would have won the game in **regulation** bounced off the rim. Boston won in overtime, 110-107.

Despite the Lakers' failure to win more league titles, most of West's legendary **exploits** came during the postseason. In the 1965 NBA Playoffs, West averaged 40.6 ppg over 11 contests; his 46.3 ppg average against Baltimore in the division finals was a record for a six-game series.

In the 1969 NBA Finals against Boston, West became the only member of a losing team ever to win the Finals MVP Award. And in the 1970 NBA Finals against New York, West **launched** the famous bomb that, at least briefly, **resuscitated** the Lakers. The Knicks' Walt Frazier recalled thinking as West let the miracle shot fly, "The man's crazy. He looks **determined**. He thinks it's really going in!" It did, sending Game 3 into overtime. New York, however, won the game and the title. "It was a beautiful thing wasted," West later said.

As players on a **perennial** bridesmaid team, West and Baylor were frequently **eclipsed** by Chamberlain, Robertson and Bill Russell, who collectively won **virtually** every Most Valuable Player Award during West's and Baylor's most **productive** years. Although both ranked among the top four leading scorers in history when they retired, neither man ever won the award. Still, West was named to the All-NBA First Team 10 times in his career, and he was selected to the NBA All-Defensive First Team in four of his final five seasons.

Prior to the 1971-72 season the 33-year-old West was considering retirement. He thought of the broken noses, the broken hands, the pulled muscles and the lost championships. West returned, however, and helped make history. With Chamberlain now in the middle and Gail Goodrich **pitching in** on offense, the Lakers won a record 33 games in a row under new coach and former Celtics star Bill Sharman.

At midseason they were 39-3. At year's end they were 69-13, the best single-season record in NBA history until **surpassed** by the 1995-96 Chicago Bulls (72-10). Despite his age and



NBA Course: Lesson 6

physical problems West kept scoring, averaging 25.8 ppg while leading the NBA in assists with 9.7 per contest.

Having come this far, West would not be denied an NBA title. In the playoffs the Lakers swept the Chicago Bulls in four games and beat the Milwaukee Bucks in six. In the 1972 NBA Finals against the Knicks, Los Angeles lost Game 1 but then won four straight by relatively large **margins**. Including playoff games, the Lakers' record for the year was 81-16.

West's long wait had ended. He had finally won a championship, in one of the greatest seasons ever for an NBA team. **Revitalized**, he went on to play for two more years. In 1972-73 the Lakers lost yet another Finals to the Knicks. In 1973-74 a pulled **groin** limited West to 31 regular-season contests and only one playoff game. "I'm not willing to **sacrifice** my standards," West told the *Los Angeles Herald-Examiner* when he retired. "Perhaps I expect too much."

In 1974, the 36-year-old West left the game as the NBA's third-leading career scorer, behind Chamberlain and Robertson, with 25,192 points in 932 games. His average of 27.0 ppg game stands as the fourth highest among retired players, behind Michael Jordan, Chamberlain and Baylor. His 31.2 ppg in 1969-70 (at age 31) is the highest average ever for a player over 30. And his 6,238 career assists (6.7 apg) rank among the best ever. Only Jordan had a higher career scoring average in the playoffs, and only Kareem Abdul-Jabbar tallied more career points in the postseason.

After two years away from basketball, West became the Lakers' head coach for the 1976-77 season. In three **campaigns** with West at the **helm** the Lakers went 145-101 and returned to the playoffs after missing the postseason during West's **absence** from the team. He stayed on as a **scout** for three years and became general manager in 1982, helping to build the Lakers' dynasty of the 1980s.

West remained as uptight in the front office as he had been on the court. "If I'm not nervous, if I don't have at least a little bit of the same self-doubt and anxious feelings I had when I started playing, then it will be time for me to go on," he told the *Orange County Register* in 1990. "I must have that tension." West was elected to the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame in 1979. West was named the NBA **Executive** of the Year for 1995 after the Lakers posted their best record in four seasons.

He was also at the forefront of **rebuilding** the Lakers into championship shape by adding Shaquille O'Neal as a **free agent** and trading for Kobe Bryant, who entered the NBA out of high school in 1996. Those two players formed the nucleus of three **consecutive** championship teams beginning with capturing the 2000 NBA Finals.



NBA Course: Lesson 7

Top Ten NBA Teams of All-time

Discussion Questions

1. What team do you think was greatest of all time?
 - a. Why do you think they were great?
2. What makes a great team?
3. Which team was the best offensive team of all time?
4. Which team was the best defensive team of all time?
5. What do you think is more important offense or defense?
6. If you could choose from all the players in the past what would be your top 5 players for a team? Why did you choose these players? What does each player bring to the team?
7. People say for a successful team you need one star and 4 role players. Do you agree with this?
8. Can one player win a championship? Why or why not?
9. Why do teams that seem like they have all the necessary pieces to win a championship fail? (for example 2011 Lakers)
10. Do you think any team will ever go undefeated? Why or why not?

■ **The Top 10 Teams in NBA History** (chronological order)

1964-65 Boston Celtics	62 - 18	(.775)
Led by Bill Russell, Sam Jones, John Havlicek, Tom Sanders and Tom Heinsohn...Broke its own league record for most victories in a season and went on to win the Celtics' seventh consecutive NBA championship...Battled the Philadelphia 76ers in an East Finals for the ages, winning Game Seven 110-109; John Havlicek's deflection at game's end produced the legendary "Havlicek stole the ball!" radio call from Celtics broadcaster Johnny Most...Defeated the L.A. Lakers 4-1 in 1965 NBA Finals.		
1966-67 Philadelphia 76ers	68 - 13	(.840)
Propelled by Wilt Chamberlain, Hal Greer, Chet Walker and Billy Cunningham, started the season 46-4 and went on to set record for most victories in a season (broken by 1971-72 L.A. Lakers)...Ended Celtics' run of eight consecutive championships by defeating Boston 4-1 in Eastern Division Finals...Defeated the San Francisco Warriors 4-2 in 1967 NBA Finals.		
1969-70 New York Knicks	60 - 22	(.732)
Willis Reed, Walt Frazier, Dick Barnett, Dave DeBusschere, Bill Bradley and Cazzie Russell starred for one of the best passing teams in NBA history...Captured New York's first NBA Championship by defeating Los Angeles 4-3 in the memorable 1970 NBA Finals...Captain Willis Reed, who missed Game Six due to a torn leg muscle, hobbled onto the Madison Square Garden floor before Game Seven and scored New York's first two baskets to inspire the Knicks to a 113-99 victory.		
1971-72 L.A. Lakers	69 - 13	(.841)
Gail Goodrich, Jerry West, Wilt Chamberlain, Jim McMillian and Happy Hairston combined to bring Lakers their first championship of the Los Angeles era...Broke Philadelphia's 1966-67 record for wins in a season (broken by Chicago in 1995-96), at one point winning 33 consecutive games, a record that still stands...Won NBA record 16 consecutive road games...Best road winning percentage in NBA history (.816; 31-7)...Defeated New York 4-1 in 1972 NBA Finals.		
1982-83 Philadelphia 76ers	65 - 17	(.793)
Moses Malone joined the 76ers as a free agent and teamed with Julius Erving, Andrew Toney, Maurice Cheeks and Bobby Jones to bring the 76ers their first title in 16 seasons...Malone proclaimed the 76ers would sweep through the NBA Playoffs in "Fo', Fo', Fo'" and he wasn't far off as Philadelphia cruised in "Fo', Fi', Fo'" to post the best winning percentage in NBA Playoffs history at .923 (12-1).		



NBA Course: Lesson 7

1985-86 Boston Celtics

67 - 15 **(.817)**

Stung by a 4-2 loss to the L.A. Lakers in the 1985 NBA Finals, Larry Bird led the Celtics featuring Robert Parish, Kevin McHale, Dennis Johnson, Danny Ainge and a rejuvenated Bill Walton to the best record in franchise history and a 4-2 defeat of Houston in the 1986 NBA Finals...Posted 40-1 record at Boston Garden, best home winning percentage (.976) in NBA history...Fifth-best overall winning percentage ever (.817).

1986-87 L.A. Lakers

65 - 17 **(.793)**

The Lakers recaptured their place atop the NBA thanks to the "Showtime" fast-break style spearheaded by Earvin "Magic" Johnson and teammates Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, James Worthy, Byron Scott, A.C. Green and Michael Cooper...Johnson averaged a career-best 23.9 points per game and led the league in assists with a 12.2 average...Lakers defeated Boston 4-2 in the 1987 NBA Finals after winning 11 of their first 12 games in the playoffs.

1988-89 Detroit Pistons

63 - 19 **(.768)**

Isiah Thomas, Bill Laimbeer, Joe Dumars, Mark Aguirre, Vinnie Johnson and Dennis Rodman combined to form the heart of one of the strongest defensive teams in the modern era...Lacking a dominant center, Pistons featured a potent three-guard rotation and a deep bench that rebounded and defended relentlessly...Pistons were 15-2 in 1989 playoffs, including 4-0 sweep of L.A. Lakers in 1989 NBA Finals.

1991-92 Chicago Bulls

67 - 15 **(.817)**

Michael Jordan dominated the NBA and received strong support from teammates Scottie Pippen, Horace Grant, B.J. Armstrong, Bill Cartwright and John Paxson...Topped previous championship season by winning six more games than in 1990-91, the fifth-winningest season in league history...Defeated the Portland Trail Blazers 4-2 in 1992 NBA Finals.

1995-96 Chicago Bulls

72 - 10 **(.878)**

Featuring Superman (Michael Jordan), Batman (Scottie Pippen) and Rodman (Dennis Rodman), Bulls shattered record for most wins in a regular season...Won 87 of 100 games, including the playoffs...Ron Harper, Luc Longley, Toni Kukoc and Steve Kerr rounded out core of driven team that featured triangle offense...Started season an amazing 41-3...Jordan's first full season since returning from retirement.

Discussion Questions

1. Look at the above teams, these teams were voted as top ten teams in NBA history but were not put in order. Rank the above teams from 1 to 10 where 1 is the best and 10 is the worst. Please explain your answer.
2. This list does not take in account any teams after the year 2000. Do you think any of the teams in the last 10 years could break into this top ten? Which team? Why do you think this?

Records

Points Leaders

RK	PLAYER	PTS
1	Kareem Abdul-Jabbar	38,387
2	Karl Malone	36,928
3	Michael Jordan	32,292
4	Wilt Chamberlain	31,419
5	SHAQUILLE O'NEAL	28,596
6	KOBE BRYANT	27,868
7	Moses Malone	27,409
8	Elvin Hayes	27,313
9	Hakeem Olajuwon	26,946
10	Oscar Robertson	26,710

Rebounds Leaders

RK	PLAYER	REB
1	Wilt Chamberlain	23,924
2	Bill Russell	21,620
3	Kareem Abdul-Jabbar	17,440
4	Elvin Hayes	16,279
5	Moses Malone	16,212
6	Karl Malone	14,968
7	Robert Parish	14,715
8	Nate Thurmond	14,464
9	Walt Bellamy	14,241
10	Wes Unseld	13,769



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Assists Leaders

RK	PLAYER	AST
1	John Stockton	15,806
2	JASON KIDD	11,578
3	Mark Jackson	10,334
4	Magic Johnson	10,141
5	Oscar Robertson	9,887
6	STEVE NASH	9,252
7	Isiah Thomas	9,061
8	Gary Payton	8,966
9	Rod Strickland	7,987
10	Maurice Cheeks	7,392

Steals Leaders

RK	PLAYER	STL
1	John Stockton	3,265
2	Michael Jordan	2,514
3	JASON KIDD	2,477
4	Gary Payton	2,445
5	Maurice Cheeks	2,310
6	Scottie Pippen	2,307
7	Clyde Drexler	2,207
8	Hakeem Olajuwon	2,162
9	Alvin Robertson	2,112
10	Karl Malone	2,085

Blocks Leaders

RK	PLAYER	BLK
1	Hakeem Olajuwon	3,830
2	Dikembe Mutombo	3,289
3	Kareem Abdul-Jabbar	3,189
4	Mark Eaton	3,064
5	David Robinson	2,954
6	Patrick Ewing	2,894
7	SHAQUILLE O'NEAL	2,732
8	Tree Rollins	2,542
9	TIM DUNCAN	2,381
10	Robert Parish	2,361

Discussion Questions (Use above statistics to answer questions)

1. Who is the all time leading scorer?
2. Who is the all time leader in assists?
3. How important are stats?
4. Can you tell a good player from their stats? Why or why not?
5. Looking at the stats are you surprised by any of the leaders?
6. Which of these stat leaders is most likely to fall? Which one do you think will remain the longest?
7. What are some things that stats can't measure?
8. If someone has a lot of steals does that mean they are good at defense?
9. Which stat do you think is the most impressive?
10. Looking at today's players who do you think has a chance to enter into these top ten statistics?



NBA Course: Lesson 7

Vocabulary

- | | | |
|----------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| 1. showman 表演员 | 13. slump 衰退 | 24. distracting 使分心的 |
| 2. outrageous 无耻 | 14. prime 极好的 | 25. sleight 手法 |
| 3. cultivated 有教养的 | 15. formidable 强大的 | 26. persisted 坚持 |
| 4. purists 纯化论者 | 16. spectacle 景象 | 27. fundamentals 基础 |
| 5. potent 强有力的 | 17. tenure 任期 | 28. precision 精度 |
| 6. quintessential 精粹 | 18. inaugural 开始的 | 29. pirouettes 脚尖旋转 |
| 7. monstrous 巨大的 | 19. marquee 最有名的 | 30. incongruity 不协调 |
| 8. rampage 狂赛 | 20. endured 忍耐 | 31. notorious 臭名昭著的 |
| 9. veterans 有经验的 | 21. stumbled 是困惑 | 32. cordial 诚恳的 |
| 10. brawniest 粗壮 | 22. fruition 完成 | 33. grievances 抱怨 |
| 11. shrewd 精明 | 23. flamboyant 炫耀的 | |
| 12. mediocre 普通的 | | |

Pete Maravich

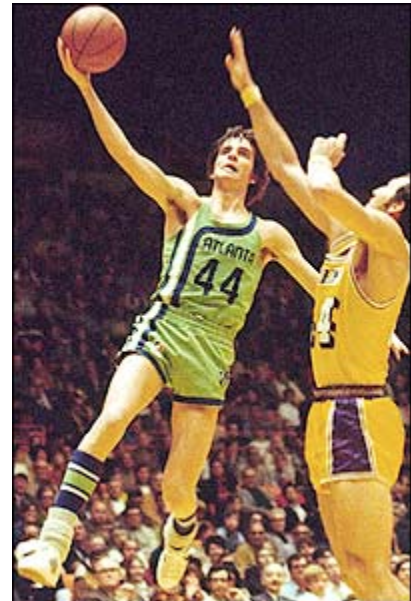
NBA Hall of Famer "Pistol Pete" Maravich was a spectacular **showman** who helped open up the game of basketball in the 1970s. After a legendary college career at Louisiana State, he played 10 **productive** seasons in the NBA, earning five trips to the NBA All-Star Game and one league scoring title.

Maravich wasn't the first player to dribble behind his back or make a deft between-the-legs pass. But his playground moves, circus shots, and hotdog passes were considered **outrageous** during his era and, perhaps because he **cultivated** a freewheeling image, some basketball **purists** felt he was more style than substance. But Maravich produced huge numbers, first as the all-time leading scorer in NCAA history and later as a **potent** force for both the Atlanta Hawks and the New Orleans Jazz.

As a youth Pete Maravich was the **quintessential** gym rat. After a successful high school career in North Carolina he enrolled at Louisiana State University. NCAA rules at the time prohibited first-year students from playing at the varsity level, so Maravich played for LSU's freshman team in 1966-67 and scored a **monstrous** 43.6 points per game.

When he moved up to varsity for his sophomore season he began the greatest scoring **rampage** in NCAA history. Over the next three seasons he averaged 43.8, 44.2, and 44.5 ppg, **respectively**, leading the nation in scoring each year. During his senior season he scored 50 or more points in 10 of LSU's 31 games, setting an NCAA record for most points (1,381) and highest scoring average in a single season. In 1970, he was named College Player of the Year.

The Atlanta Hawks selected the slender, 6-5 Maravich with the third overall pick in the 1970 NBA Draft, behind Bob Lanier and Rudy Tomjanovich. Maravich wasn't warmly received by the team's **veterans**, who resented his \$1.9-million contract—a huge amount at the time. The





NBA Course: Lesson 7

Hawks already had one of the NBA's best shooters in Lou Hudson, two of its **brawniest** rebounders in Walt Bellamy and Bill Bridges and one of the game's **shrewdest** playmakers in Walt Hazzard. Maravich replaced Joe Caldwell, who had jumped to the American Basketball Association after the 1969-70 season.

Maravich's first campaign established the pattern for his years with Atlanta: highly entertaining play and big numbers from "the Pistol" but **mediocre** seasons and quick playoff exits for the team.

First, however, Maravich suffered a sophomore **slump**. He missed 16 games in 1971-72 and averaged 19.3 ppg, a sharp drop-off by his standards. Lou Hudson was the Hawks' go-to guy, scoring 24.7 ppg, while Bellamy scored 18.6 ppg on .545 shooting from the field. The team **replicated** the previous season's 36-46 record and once again finished second to Baltimore in the Central Division. In the opening round of the playoffs Atlanta pushed the Boston Celtics to six games before falling. Maravich intensified his play during the postseason, averaging 27.7 ppg.

As Maravich adjusted to the pro game his numbers improved. He remained healthy in 1972-73 and helped the Hawks to a 46-36 record, the only winning season he would experience in his NBA **prime**. Maravich earned his first All-Star appearance and landed a spot on the All-NBA Second Team by averaging 26.1 ppg. He and Hudson (27.1 ppg) comprised a **formidable** offensive duo, ranking fourth and fifth in the NBA, respectively, but their styles couldn't have been more different. Hudson was an efficient, quiet scoring machine. Maravich, on the other hand, made each basket a **spectacle**. His passing skills began to pay off and his career-best 6.9 assists per game ranked sixth in the league.

Atlanta again finished second to Baltimore in the Central Division, then made its usual early exit from the playoffs. Maravich averaged 26.2 ppg during the postseason as the Hawks bowed to Boston in the conference semifinals for a second straight year.

The Pistol's final year with Atlanta was his highest-scoring NBA season yet -- and the team's worst during his **tenure**. He poured in 27.7 ppg in 1973-74, second in the league to Buffalo Braves center Bob McAdoo's 30.6. The Hawks, however, faded to 35-47 and missed the playoffs. Maravich played in his second NBA All-Star Game during the season and scored 15 points in 22 minutes.

Meanwhile, the **expansion** New Orleans Jazz were preparing for their **inaugural** 1974-75 season. The team needed a **marquee** player, and who better to launch the franchise than the greatest basketball legend in Louisiana State history?

After four impressive seasons in Atlanta, the Pistol fired mostly blanks in his first year in New Orleans. He scored only 21.5 ppg but shot a career-worst .419 from the field. Maravich worked hard on other **aspects** of his game, however, recording career highs in rebounds (422) and steals (120) and averaging 6.2 assists per game. Not surprisingly, New Orleans **endured** a difficult first season. A typical expansion mix of aging veterans, journeymen and unproven young talent (22 different players wore Jazz colors during the season), the Jazz **stumbled** to a 23-59 record, worst in the league.

The next couple of years saw Maravich peak, as his skills, savvy, and showmanship came to **fruition**. Still **flamboyant**, he managed to make his flashy moves not only decorative but also



NBA Course: Lesson 7

effective. And although Maravich's teams weren't winners, the Jazz did acquire a few good players such as Leonard "Truck" Robinson, thereby **distracting** opponents from concentrating solely on Maravich and consequently freeing him up. His **sleight** of hand with the ball and his creative shooting were unbelievable and his delight in the game was plain to see.

In 1975-76, Maravich was occasionally sidelined with minor injuries. He played only 62 games but shot a career-high .459 from the floor and raised his average to 25.9 ppg, third highest in the league behind McAdoo and the Los Angeles Lakers' Kareem Abdul-Jabbar. The young New Orleans team began to show signs of life as well. The Jazz finished 38-44 and **vaulted** out of the Central Division cellar, leaving last place to Maravich's former team, the Atlanta Hawks. Pistol Pete was rewarded during the postseason with his first selection to the All-NBA First Team.

The following season was Maravich's finest as a professional. He saw action in 73 games and led the NBA in scoring with a career-best 31.1 p p g. He scored 40 or more points 13 times, the most in the NBA that season and he led the league in total points (2,273), field goals attempted (2,047) and free throws made (501). On Feb. 25, 1977, he scored 68 points in a game against the New York Knicks despite the efforts of defensive ace Walt Frazier to bottle him up. Maravich's performance that day ranks as the 11th-best single-game total in NBA history. He returned to the NBA All-Star Game in 1977 and earned his second straight berth on the All-NBA First Team.

Although he was gaining more respect for his talents, Maravich's big numbers made little difference in the win column. Nobody ever suggested that he made a less than full effort, and he certainly provided prime entertainment value, but the notion **persisted** that he was for Pete first and the team second. **Critics** said that he had developed his game during countless solitary hours in the gym, and that he still played as if he were the only one on the court. It was a criticism that he never completely shook off.

Maravich missed 32 games in 1977-78 because of a **combination** of surgery on one knee, a bacterial infection and tendinitis in his other knee. He would be on the sidelines often throughout the rest of his career. He tore up one knee against Buffalo in classic Maravich style: instead of just throwing an outlet pass, he jumped into the air to whip a between-the-legs pass down three-quarters of the court. He landed awkwardly and never again played with his old joy and abandon.

In his 50 appearances that season Maravich threw in 27.0 ppg to top the Jazz. Although he didn't play enough games to qualify for the league scoring crown, Maravich earned another All-Star selection in 1978 as well as a berth on the All-NBA Second Team. Meanwhile, the Jazz climbed slowly toward respectability, finishing 39-43 but missing the playoffs by two games.

In 1978-79, Maravich's numbers declined in nearly every **category**. Once again he missed a sizable chunk of the year, seeing action in only 49 contests. He still managed to score 22.6 ppg and play in the NBA All-Star Game, but nothing came easily anymore. His knee problems were proving too tough to overcome. Although Maravich's game was not built on **fundamentals**, it did require **precision**, and his brace-encased knee slowed him down and turned his once-quick **pirouettes** into slow-motion spinouts.

The Jazz franchise, acknowledging declining fan interest in New Orleans, packed up and headed to Utah for the 1979-80 season, leading to **predictable** jokes about the **incongruity** of



NBA Course: Lesson 7

a team named the Jazz in wholesome Salt Lake City. Although the move marked the start of a winning future for the franchise, it was the beginning of the end for Maravich. He was already upset about his diminished playing time (he'd been benched for a month by Coach Tom Nissalke), but in reality he was no longer needed. Adrian Dantley had taken over as the team's top offensive threat, averaging 28.0 ppg for the season, third in the NBA.

Maravich played in 17 early-season games before he was waived by Utah on Jan. 17, 1980. Five days later he was picked up as a free agent by the Boston Celtics, the top team in the league that year behind rookie forward Larry Bird. On the surface, Maravich was an odd choice for the team-oriented Celtics, but he worked himself back into shape and applied his considerable skills to the unfamiliar challenge of serving as a part-time contributor. He averaged 11.5 points in 26 outings for Boston and was still capable of impressive scoring bursts. In one game he scored the final 10 points in a come-from-behind win over the Washington Bullets. During the postseason he managed a modest 6.0 ppg as the Celtics reached the Eastern Conference Finals.

Maravich was a **notorious** long-range bomber during his career, but until now he had never played in a league, college or pro, that used the three-point shot. All of his many points had come on two-pointers, even when launched from a great distance. In 1979-80, the NBA finally adopted the three-point shot. In his final season-with his skills rusty, his knees creaky, and his minutes limited-Pistol Pete Maravich finally got a chance to shoot three-pointers. He went 10-for-15.















After the season Maravich faced the reality of his bad knee and retired. He ended his 10-year career with an average of more than 24 ppg. Although he had left the Jazz on less than **cordial** terms, the **grievances** were forgotten over the ensuing years and his uniform number was retired by the franchise in 1985. He was elected to the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame in 1987, and was named to the NBA 50th Anniversary All-Time Team in 1996.

On January 5, 1988, Pete Maravich died of a heart attack while playing in a pickup three-on-three game in a California gym. He was 40 years old.



NBA Lesson 8

The NBA Today

 Eastern Conference	 Western Conference
<u>Atlantic</u>	<u>Southwest</u>
 Boston Celtics	 Dallas Mavericks
 New Jersey Nets	 Houston Rockets
 New York Knicks	 Memphis Grizzlies
 Philadelphia 76ers	 New Orleans Hornets
 Toronto Raptors	 San Antonio Spurs
<u>Central</u>	<u>Northwest</u>
 Chicago Bulls	 Denver Nuggets



NBA Lesson 8

 <u>Cleveland Cavaliers</u>	 Minnesota Timberwolves
 <u>Detroit Pistons</u>	 Portland Trail Blazers
 <u>Indiana Pacers</u>	 Oklahoma City Thunder
 <u>Milwaukee Bucks</u>	 Utah Jazz
<u>Southeast</u>	<u>Pacific</u>
 <u>Atlanta Hawks</u>	 Golden State Warriors
 Charlotte Bobcats	 Los Angeles Clippers
 <u>Miami Heat</u>	 Los Angeles Lakers
 <u>Orlando Magic</u>	 Phoenix Suns



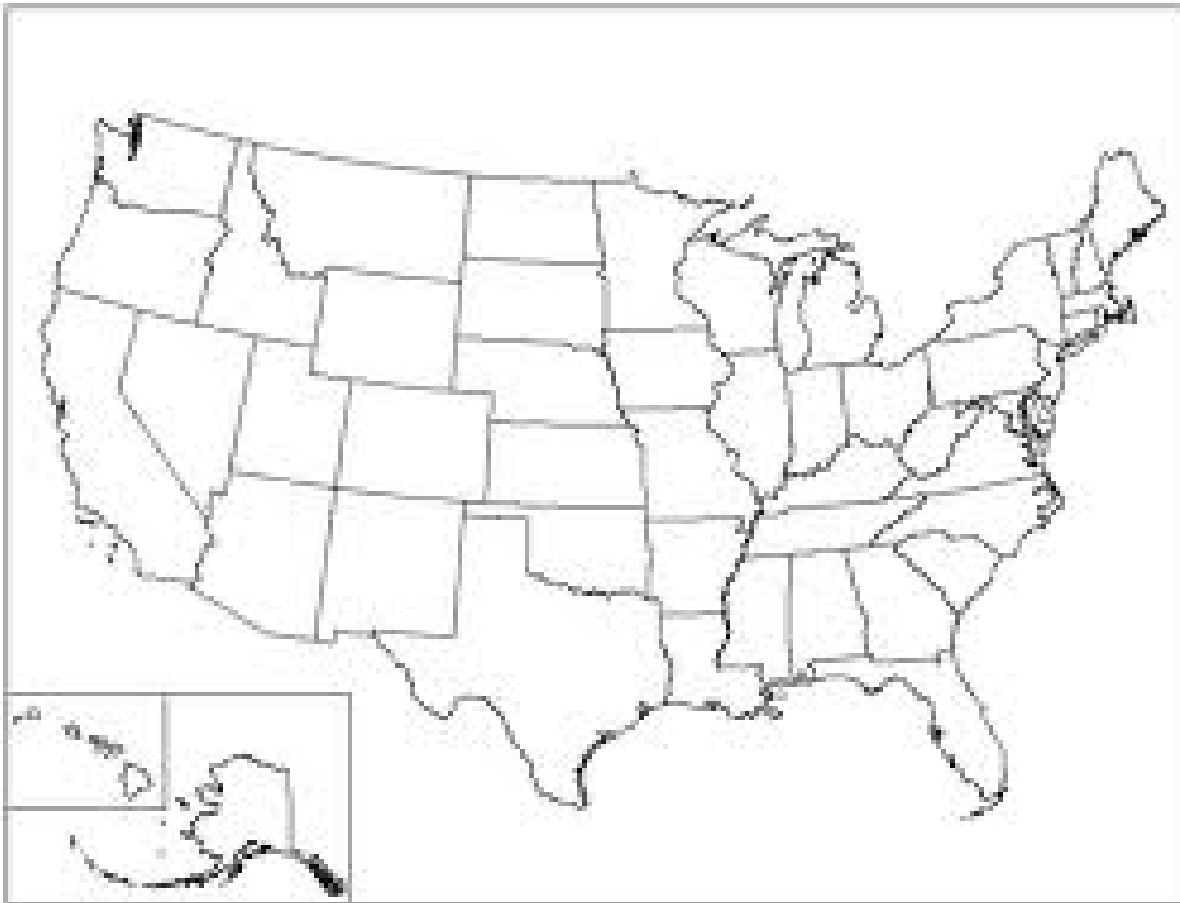
NBA Lesson 8



Washington Wizards



Sacramento Kings



Place the teams on the map

1. Who is the marquee player for each of the teams above?
2. When were the glory years for each of the above teams?
3. What is the defining moment for each franchise?
4. What teams are defined by their defense?
5. What teams are defined by their offense?
6. What franchise is the most popular?
7. What franchise is the least popular?
8. Which is your favorite team? Why do you like them?
9. Which team do you hate? Why do you hate them?
10. How many starters do you know for each of the teams above?
11. What are the top 5 franchises?
12. What are the bottom 5 franchises?



NBA Lesson 8

Today's Superstars

Vocabulary

- | | | |
|-------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| 1. underrated 低估 | 9. tremendously 巨大 | 17. awful 可怕的 |
| 2. slaughtered 屠杀 | 10. capabilities 能力 | 18. gifted 有才华的 |
| 3. struggled 挣扎 | 11. comparable 可比 | 19. granted 给予 |
| 4. ability 能力 | 12. ousted 驱逐 | 20. transformed 转化 |
| 5. nightmare 噩梦 | 13. downgrade 降级 | 21. reign 统治 |
| 6. injuries 受伤 | 14. havoc 破坏 | 22. discredit 败坏 |
| 7. threat 威胁 | 15. complimentary 互补 | 23. proven 证明 |
| 8. deserves 应受 | 16. legitimate 正当的 | |

10) Rajon Rondo, PG Boston Celtics

Rondo is the most **underrated** player in basketball. Forget the Big 3, Boston is Rondo's team. Rondo was the reason this Celtics team got through Dwayne Wade in the first round and then **slaughtered** Cleveland in the 2nd round. When guys like Pierce, Allen, and Garnett **struggled** to cap off Orlando after they went 3-0 and lost 2 consecutive games, Rondo carried the team through to the Finals. And not once did Rondo have a bad game. The Celtics playoff run went something like this: Every time that Rondo had a good game, they lost. Every time he had a great game, they won. Rondo's **ability** to get his teammates involved on every play, his defense, his driving ability, and his effort to grab boards has made him a match-up **nightmare** thus, has allowed himself to be called a top 10 player in the NBA.

9) Amare Stoudemire, PF New York Knicks

Amare is the greatest Knick since Patrick Ewing. That's how special this guy is. Yes, he has some questions regarding his previous **injuries** and his lack of effort in terms of grabbing rebounds and playing defense. However, Amare played every game last season. He has proved that he has worked hard to recover properly. And we do know one thing. If he does put in that effort that we saw against Los Angeles during this year's playoffs when the media was saying "Where's Amare?", and he responded by throwing down 44 points and 11 rebounds in a Game 3 Phoenix win, then Amare is clearly the best offensive **threat** in the paint. You can say that Gasol **deserves** to be here given the fact that Pau Gasol has solidified himself as the best big man in the game given his performance the last 3 years. However, this is solely from an offensive standpoint. He consistently gives you double-doubles and will score 20 a night, but Gasol struggles **tremendously** with one-on-one defense. Given Amare's physical **capabilities** and the fact that he has absolutely murdered Mr. **Fundamental** Tim Duncan in the paint repeatedly, we have to say Amare is a step above Gasol. I absolutely love Tim Duncan, but while Duncan has regressed from the form of being the best PF of all time, Amare has his best years ahead of him.



NBA Lesson 8

8) Chris Paul, PG New Orleans Hornets

Chris Paul is the most exciting player in the NBA to watch given his flash and athleticism. CP3 is a prized possession at point guard given his hard work ethic, ability to see the play develop, and his driving ability. Although he was sidelined and questions about his injury began to develop, we can be certain that Paul will come back to top-form.

7) Carmelo Anthony, SF New York Knicks

Melo is the smoothest player in the NBA and a good point guard like Billups enhanced his game even more. Carmelo finished 3rd in the league in scoring, and although he's received **criticism** for playing some selfish ball, he is still one of the best players in the league given his talent. New York knows how good this guy is with the proper coaching and the right weapons to use around him.

6) Deron Williams, PG Utah Jazz

Deron Williams is the best point guard in the game. His ability to see the floor is **comparable** to Paul's, but Williams gets the slight nod over Paul given his physicality. At 6'3" and 207 pounds, he is more of an offensive threat in terms of driving the lane, and he has proven himself to be a better defender than Paul. Williams had his best season last year, taking his Jazz to the second round of the playoffs last year before being **ousted** by LA. The Jazz are going to have a **downgrade** from last year given Boozer's choice to leave, but Deron can still lead this team to the playoffs and slip into the 8th seed spot.

5) Kevin Durant, SF Oklahoma City Thunder

Kevin Durant, at 21, became the youngest scoring leader in NBA history last season. He led his Thunder to the playoffs last year, giving the Lakers every bit of **havoc** during that first-round escape. This year, they'll be a year improved and the Thunder are looking like they'll be the best team in the West, only behind the Lakers. It is scary to imagine that Durant will have a better season than last year, but he will. He'll have around the same points and rebounds, but his assists will certainly go up now that he has trust in his **complimentary** players.

4) Dwight Howard, C Orlando Magic

Dwight Howard is the best big man in the game. This 7 foot **monster** is unstoppable in the paint on offense and has led his team to the Eastern Conference Finals two years in a row. How is he on defense? Back-to-back Defensive Player of the Year doesn't hurt his **resume** too much. Orlando hasn't received much attention given the offseason noise that the likes of Miami and New York have had, but the Magic are a **legitimate** championship contender.



NBA Lesson 8

3) Dwayne Wade, SG Miami Heat

A lot of people don't realize how good Dwayne Wade really is. Not only did he do something with Shaq that LeBron couldn't (cough, cough), but he was the leading scorer in the playoffs last year as well. Dwayne Wade's Heat last year were absolutely **awful** (a lot worse than what LeBron was given in Cleveland) and he still brought them to the playoffs. His **performances** over the last 2 years have proved that he is back to his performing level that he had in 2006. Wade's performance during that NBA Championship series may have been the best performance from a single player in the history of the game (even Jordan). D-Wade is the real deal and have we forgotten that South Beach is still Wade's team? After all, it hasn't been renamed around the streets from Dade to Wade County for no reason.

2) LeBron James, SF Miami Heat

LeBron is clearly the most athletic and physically **gifted** player in the league. At 6'9" and 270 lbs. he is a freak with ridiculous speed, power, and explosiveness. At first, LeBron was like a puppy who couldn't control his limbs when he entered the league. He was this absolutely gifted, amazing athlete who couldn't seem to control all the physical giftedness he was **granted**. Over the past 5 years, he has **transformed** into an incredible basketball player. Not only has LeBron brought the most difficult matchup to opposing teams because of his ability to drive through the lane and draw fouls while he slams it home, but his outside shooting performance and defensive game has improved tremendously over the past couple of years. LeBron has had a tremendous career and will continue to have a spectacular career (and he'll definitely get a few rings during his **reign** in South Beach).

1) Kobe Bryant, SG Los Angeles Lakers

Kobe Bryant, now that he has secured his 5th ring, is on pretty much everyone's list of Top 10 NBA players of all-time. The reigning back-to-back Finals MVP has cemented himself as the representative of the NBA over LeBron. This isn't to **discredit** LeBron's athleticism or talent; LeBron may be able to beat Kobe in a one-on-one matchup, but Kobe has to be placed above him just because of the fact that Kobe has **proven** himself as a winner. And for all you LeBron lovers that will raise the argument that he had the Cavs as his team last year and if he was on the Lakers, he would win a championship...I bring up one point...when LeBron closed out his season with the worse shooting performance of his life, he did nothing to help his team in any way and they got embarrassed on their home court...Kobe would have never allowed that to happen...When Kobe had the worse shooting performance in his career during a most pivotal Game 7, he grabbed 15 rebounds and played the most **tenacious** defense I've seen since Bruce Bowen. Kobe always finds a



NBA Lesson 8

way to win even if he has an off night, and we don't see that passion from LeBron. Kobe has the competitive fire to win that we have yet to see in LeBron.

Discussion Questions

1. Do you disagree with anyone on this list?
2. Who would be your top 5? Why did you pick these 5?
3. What do you think of when you think of the best players? Scoring? Defense? Big Dunks?
4. What do you think of great players who don't have Championships? Karl Malone, Allan Iverson, Reggie Miller? Why didn't they get rings?
5. If all the players above played in a one on one tournament, who do you think would win? Why?



NBA Lesson 9

Players Association Vs. The League

Vocabulary

- | | | |
|---|-------------------------|--------------------|
| 1. collective bargaining agreement (CBA) 集体谈判协议 | 6. revenue sharing 收益共享 | 12. contract 合同 |
| 2. public-relations 公关 | 7. union 联盟 | 13. salary cap 工资帽 |
| 3. reduction 减少 | 8. profits 利润 | 14. luxury tax 奢侈税 |
| 4. deal 交易 | 9. reinvesting 在投资于 | 15. inequity 不平等 |
| 5. commissioner 专员 | 10. roster 名单 | 16. guaranteed 保证 |
| | 11. obstacle 障碍 | 17. objected 反对 |
| | | 18. negotiate 谈判 |

Make no mistake, the NBA is watching closely as the NFL's **collective bargaining agreement** ends, knowing full well that the **public-relations** fallout coming from a small group of people unable to find ways to split up billions of dollars will be similar for both leagues. But, other than a wide drop in player salaries (the NBA is looking at about a 30 percent **reduction**), there isn't much in common between the two CBA fights—ironically, NBA owners want a new deal that looks a lot like the current NFL **deal**, and league officials have admitted as much.

“We've looked at the NFL, and we're not ashamed to say that appears to be a better system,”



NBA deputy **commissioner** Adam Silver said.

Here's how the NBA owners are hoping to NFL-ize their league's rules:

Revenue sharing. The NFL is more successful with **revenue sharing** than any other league. For the NBA, the issue is being handled outside of the CBA, but **union** chief Billy Hunter has made it

clear that the union will not sign off on a new labor deal until it sees how revenue sharing will work and whether it will have an effect on how teams spend on players. That creates a difficult three-way problem for the NBA, because its big-market teams like the Lakers and Knicks don't really want to share **profits** with the likes of Minnesota and Charlotte, while the union doesn't want to have a situation like Major League Baseball's, where small-market teams often sit on revenue-sharing payments without **reinvesting** the money into their **roster**.

Hard salary cap. Hunter says this is the No. 1 **obstacle** to a new labor **contract**, but the owners have been very stubborn on the issue and are not likely to give in. In the current system, teams are allowed exceptions to go over the **salary cap**, and then are taxed if they go over a higher “**luxury tax**” limit. But large-market teams can afford the tax—the Lakers have a payroll of \$91.5 million, which actually works out to more than \$110 million with the tax, while the salary cap is just \$56 million. The Kings, on the other hand, have a payroll of \$44 million. A hard cap would quickly balance that **inequity**.



NBA Lesson 9

Limited guaranteed money. It's never difficult to cut an NFL player, no matter how big the name, because the contracts are not fully **guaranteed**. The NBA wants to make similar rules to prevent players from riding out six-year contracts (the maximum under the current CBA) even after those players are no longer useful. The union has **objected**, and makes a pretty good point—teams are allowed to **negotiate** non-guaranteed years into contracts under the current CBA, but, simply put, none of them choose to do it. The union often accuses the league of seeking to make rules designed to “save the owners from themselves,” and guaranteed contracts is one example.

Discussion Questions

1. In your own words describe the CBA. What is it? What are its responsibilities?
2. What is revenue sharing? Do you think it's a good idea? What are the upsides? The downsides?
3. What is a hard salary cap? What is a soft salary cap? What is the advantage of each? Disadvantage?
4. Why is guaranteed money a problem? Do you think it's fair? If you were a player how would you feel? If you were the owner?
5. These are problems that have been discussed in professional sports. How would you fix these problems?
6. Do professional sports in your country have these problems? How do you fix them?
7. What is your feeling towards player unions?
8. Who should have more power players or the owners? Why?
9. Where does the NBA make the majority of its money?
10. What kind of expenses do owners have?

Top 10 Highest Paid NBA Players 2011

Vocabulary

- | | | |
|----------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| 1. amount 金额 | 5. extension 扩展 | 10. staggering 惊人的 |
| 2. generously 慷慨的 | 6. distinction 区别 | 11. speculations 推测 |
| 3. talent 人才 | 7. excess 多余的 | 12. reference 参考 |
| 4. aforementioned 上述 | 8. disclosed 披露 | |
| | 9. estimate 估计 | |

In National Basketball Association (NBA), there is a concept referred to as NBA salary cap which limits the **amount** of money that any of the teams involved can use for paying their players. The amount decided for the salary cap changes on a year-to-year basis. In 2008-09 season, the salary cap was \$58.68 million, in 2009-10 it was raised to \$57.7 million and at present (2010-11 season) it is \$58.44 million. Even though there is a limit on how much the team can spend, it doesn't stop these teams from spending **generously** to get the best possible **talent** and that shows when you go through the list of top ten highest paid NBA





NBA Lesson 9

players given below.

Rank	Player	Team	Amount
1	Kobe Bryant	LA Lakers	\$24,806,250
2	Rashid Lewis	Orlando Magic	\$19,573,511
3	Tim Duncan	San Antonio Spurs	\$18,835,381
4	Kevin Garnett	Boston Celtics	\$18,832,044
5	Michael Redd	Milwaukee Bucks	\$18,300,000
6	Pau Gasol	LA Lakers	\$17,823,000
7	Andrei Kirilenko	Utah Jazz	\$17,822,187
8	Gilbert Arenas	Washington Wizards	\$17,730,694
9	Yao Ming	Houston Rockets	\$17,686,100
10	Dirk Nowitzki	Dallas Mavericks	\$17,300,000

Highest Paid NBA Player 2011

As you can see in the **forementioned** list, the distinction of being the highest paid player in NBA as of 2010-11 season goes to Kobe Bryant - the shooting guard for Los Angeles Lakers. He led the Lakers to their 4th and 5th championship in the last 15 years in 2008-09 and 2009-10 NBA seasons **respectively**. On both the occasions, Bryant was named NBA Finals MVP. This dream run made Bryant one of the most sought after players of the league and bagged him a \$24.8 million deal with the Lakers thus making him the highest paid NBA player for 2010-11 NBA season. In April 2010, Bryant signed a three-year **extension** for a whopping \$83.5 million with the Lakers. This deal will run through the 2013-14 season, and make sure that he stays at the top of the list of highest paid NBA stars for the next three years to come (unless some other player bags a bigger deal.)

Michael Jordan \$30 Million Deal

While Kobe Bryant happens to be the highest paid player in NBA today, the **distinction** of being the highest paid NBA player of all time goes to Michael Jordan whose one year contract with Chicago Bulls earned him in **excess** of \$30 million. Even though the terms of this deal were not **disclosed**, some news reports did **estimate** that this deal with MJ cost the Bulls a **staggering** \$36 million. If **speculations** are to be believed, Bryant is slated to make a whopping \$30,453,000 in 2013-14 NBA season. If that happens, Bryant will become only the second player to make it to the \$30 million mark in NBA.

That was a brief information about the highest paid NBA player in the world today - Kobe



NBA Lesson 9

Bryant, along with a passing **reference** to other nine names which feature in the list of highest earning players in this league. As of today, it is being said that Bryant will not just join Jordan in the elite \$30 million club but also go ahead of him in terms of payment. These are mere speculations though, and the end result may be totally different. With NBA salary cap increasing by the year, it would be least surprising to see another player come up from nowhere and become the highest paid NBA player ever sometime in near future.

Discussion Questions

1. Why do professional athletes earn so much money?
2. Do you think they should make that much money?
3. How much money do you think is fair?
4. Do professional athletes just make money from their team? How else do they make money?
5. How many years can a Basketball player play in the NBA? MLB? NHL? NFL?
6. How much money do the bench warmers make?
7. Why do so many NBA players go bankrupt?
8. Do you feel bad for NBA players that go bankrupt?
9. If the league is losing money do you think it's fair that the players make so much money? Why?
10. Do you think the league would be better if we had 10 teams with lots of all stars or 30 teams with only one or two all stars?



NBA Lesson 9

Extra Reading (Homework)

History of NBA Labor Disputes

With all the recent talks of a possible lockout, I think it's time that we take a look at the history of past confrontations between the league and it's players.

EARLY WORKING CONDITIONS

The salary cap in sports is nothing new. Its origin in basketball can be traced back to the league's \$55,000 salary cap for the league's first season, 1946-47. Most players earned between \$4,000 and \$5,000, but there were a few exceptions. Tom King of the Detroit Falcons for example. He got the league's highest salary, \$16,500, not solely because of his playing ability, but also due to his front office duties as the team's publicity director and business manager. Philadelphia's star scorer, Joe Fulks, received \$8,000 for his league-leading 23.2 points a game (King's rookie season was a bit less successful. He averaged 5.1 points in his only year and the Falcons went out of business following the season).

COUSY ORGANIZES THE PLAYERS

Economic conditions continued unchanged through 1954, at which point Bob Cousy, the league's top player, began to organize the NBPA, which would become the first team sports player's union. Cousy began by writing to an established player from each of the league's teams in hopes of encouraging unity among the players. In 1955 Cousy went to the All Star game with a list of concerns: payment of back salaries to the members of the defunct Baltimore Bullets club; establishment of a twenty-game limit on exhibition games, after which the players should share in the profits; abolition of the \$15 "whispering fine" which referees could impose on a player during a game; payment of \$25 expenses for public appearances other than radio, television or certain charitable functions; establishment of an impartial board of arbitration to settle player-owner disputes; moving expenses for traded players; and payment of player salaries in ten installments rather than twelve, to provide more money to players cut during the season.

The ABA

With the formation of a new rival league, the American Basketball Association, in 1967, the players' salaries again began to increase. With players such as Rick Barry, Billy Cunningham and Zelmo Beaty jumping to the new league for bigger contracts, and with the new league's success in signing top college talent like Mel Daniels and Spencer Haywood, the NBA soon opened talks with the ABA about a possible merger of the two leagues. As a merger drew near in 1970, the players filed the "Oscar Robertson Suit", an antitrust suit to block any merger; do away with the option clause which bound a player to a team forever; the college draft, which limited the player to negotiating with one club; and restrictions on free agent signings; and seeking compensation for damages incurred in the past due to the option clause. The union then received a restraining order to block any merger, and the talks then died.

After attempts to work out a compromise with the players in 1971 and to get Congressional approval for a merger in 1972 failed, the NBPA (now led by NBPA President Paul Silas of



NBA Lesson 9

Boston who replaced Robertson in 1975) and the league reached a tentative agreement giving players free agency with their teams awarded compensation through 1980 (with the compensation of cash, players or draft choices determined by the NBA Commissioner) after which the player's former team would hold the right of first refusal on any free agent signings; limiting a team's right to a drafted player to one year after which he would go back into the draft a second time if unsigned; ending the option clause in all contracts (with the exception of one-year rookie contracts); and paying about 500 players \$4.3 million as a settlement and \$1 million for the union's legal fees, pending agreement of a new collective bargaining agreement and dismissal of the Oscar Robertson Suit. Along with a new six-year collective bargaining agreement which brought with it an increase in pension benefits; the minimum salary (from \$20,000 to \$30,000); the per diem; medical and dental coverage, term life insurance; the playoff pool; and player's shares for the All-Star Game, the players could claim a major victory. While the leagues did indeed merge, the players now could negotiate with more than one club, insuring a better position for contract negotiation.

ESTABLISHING A PLAYER-OWNER PARTNERSHIP

Following a new three-year collective bargaining agreement (which included increases in the minimum salary, elimination of no-trade agreements in player contracts in 1980) and Silas' resignation as union head in order to become coach of the San Diego Clippers, financial health of the league became a major concern. Numerous franchises suffered from serious losses, headed by Cleveland, Denver, Indiana, Kansas City, San Diego and Utah. Some, including Kansas City and San Diego, nearly provoked a player strike in 1982 as they fell behind on their deferred payments to former players, as the league totaled an estimated \$80 million to \$90 million in deferred money owed to players. With the very real threat of the loss of franchises and player jobs, the union, now led by its new president Bob Lanier, agreed to a new four-year collective bargaining agreement in March of 1983 after strained negotiations and the threat of a player strike. The agreement was ground breaking for professional sports as it included:

- a salary cap guarantying the players between 53% and 57% of the NBA's gross revenues (gate receipts, local and national television and radio revenue and preseason and postseason revenue)
- \$500,000 a year in licensing revenue
- a guarantee that the league will maintain 253 player jobs even if there is a reduction in the number of teams

The 1983 agreement would prove to be a major turning point for the league. An amendment later in the year which implemented the NBA's first league-wide substance abuse policy, proved to be a big step in cleaning up the league's image problems, and brilliant young players like Magic Johnson, Larry Bird and Michael Jordan excited the fans.

The financial well-being of the league improved under Commissioner David Stern, who assumed the position in 1984, but in 1987 the owners and players clashed over the salary cap, right of first refusal and college draft. Following a brief signing moratorium and a failed attempt at an antitrust suit by a player group headed by NBPA President Junior Bridgeman of Milwaukee, and the threat of union decertification, an agreement on a six-year collective bargaining agreement is reached, including:

- continuation of the salary cap; guarantying the players 53% of the leagues revenues
- reducing the college draft to three rounds in 1988 and two rounds in 1989
- eliminating of the right of first refusal after a player completes his second contract with



NBA Lesson 9

unrestricted free agency for certain veteran players

-the inclusion of five-year veterans who finished their careers prior to 1965 in the pension plan. Mutual good will continued under the cap until 1991, at which point the NBPA discovered that the league had underreported their income by excluding revenues from luxury suite rentals, playoff ticket sales and arena signage. After a legal dispute in which the league argued that the income fell outside of the defined revenues of the salary cap, and an increase of a total of \$92.7 in player salaries and pension funding due to a ruling in favor of the union, the players would no longer look at their agreement with ownership as the "partnership" Stern had frequently proclaimed it.

WORKING TO CLOSE CAP LOOPHOLES AND FINDING MORE

Creative accounting would open loopholes in the cap as the restructuring of contracts, early termination clauses, one-year contracts and balloon payments provided means for teams to circumvent the cap in order to sign players. Following the completion of the labor deal in 1994, the league and players managed to reach a no-strike, no-lockout agreement to protect the 1994-95 season, playing under the previous agreement in hopes of striking a new deal during the season. Talks were unsuccessful, and a lockout was imposed by the owners following the completion of the 1995 NBA Finals in an effort by the owners to put pressure on the players. When the union reached a highly-secretive agreement with the league which included a luxury tax, rookie salary cap and other provisions designed to tighten the salary cap; a group of players led by Michael Jordan and Patrick Ewing began an effort to decertify the union. Noting the concerns over possible restrictions on player movement, the player representatives chose not to ratify the agreement and sent it back for further negotiation. In August, after the union had imposed a deadline to pressure the league into concessions, the luxury tax was dropped and exceptions for veteran free agents were restored in a revised agreement. The group seeking decertification remained unsatisfied and chose to press for an end to the union in hopes that it would provide the players with a means to sue the league under antitrust law to end the salary cap, college draft and restrictions on free agency. A decertification election was then held in September of 1995, with the players voting 226-134 against, a few days later player representatives voted 25-2 in favor of ratifying the agreement. The owners quickly voted 24-5 in favor of the agreement and the owner-imposed lockout was lifted days later. The contract remained unsigned until June of 1996 when the players and owners finalized the deal. The final agreement included:

- unrestricted free agency for all players following the conclusion of their contracts
- a guarantee of 48.04% of all Basketball Related Income to the players, which now included luxury suites, international television and arena signage
- various player exemptions to the cap, with the league keeping the so-called "Larry Bird Exemption" which allowed teams to re-sign their own free agents at any price
- shortening of the college draft to one round, beginning in 1998
- rookie salary cap with a graduated scale depending on the position a player is drafted, allowing him free agency after his third season.

The Rookie salary cap proved to be a windfall for the players. Draft choices such as Kevin Garnett (six years, \$121 million) and Rasheed Wallace (six years, \$80 million) and Bryant Reeves (six years, \$65 million) all received huge contract extensions, while others like Antonio McDyess, Damon Stoudamire, Joe Smith and Jerry Stackhouse were traded before they could become free agents.

Another perceived problem was the loss of control over the players. After Latrell Sprewell was



NBA Lesson 9

suspended by the league for a year and had his contract terminated by Golden State after an attack on coach P.J. Carlesimo, an arbitrator ruled that the penalty was too harsh, shortening his suspension to the remainder of the season and reinstating his contract, citing past penalties for violence by players.

AGENT REVOLT

During the 1997-98 season the NBA owners voted to re-open the collective bargaining agreement, claiming losses by 13 teams. The union, now led by its new Patrick Ewing of New York and Executive Director William Hunter, was expected to meet owner demands (including greater authority for the Commissioner in disciplining the players, an inclusion of marijuana in the league's drug testing and a hard salary cap), with resistance, citing the league's new four-year \$2.4 billion television deal with NBC and Turner Sports as a counter to the plea of poverty and looking to restore the league's middle class and curb control of the Commissioner ability to impose punishment over players. Provisions in the television contracts guaranteeing the owners money even in the event of a work stoppage, and the failure of the rookie salary cap to curtail big contracts to young players may bring about a lockout during the summer and lead to the loss of games for the first time in the league's history.

The owners best chance for control of the situation would bring a work stoppage for the first time in the NBA as on July 1, 1998 the owners locked out the players. With the Larry Bird Exception softening the salary cap the league fought for a luxury tax and player salary limits to ensure more rigid cost control. After the loss of half of the season the players relented on maximum player salaries based on seasons played, and longer rookie contracts (now three years guaranteed with an optional fifth season).



Future of the NBA

David Stern envisions NFL-style replay

Vocabulary

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| 1. officiating 裁判的 | 5. controversy 争议 |
| 2. envisions 展望 | 6. eliminate 消除 |
| 3. controversies 争议 | 7. transitional 过渡 |
| 4. spotlight 聚光灯 | 8. promoted 提升 |

PHILADELPHIA -- After the first weekend of the playoffs included several **officiating** issues, NBA commissioner David Stern said he **envisions** the league going to an NFL-style replay system to reduce **controversies** in the future.

With several long-term issues more pressing -- including new collective bargaining agreements with both the players and the referees unions -- Stern doesn't think replay expansion will be in place by next season. But Stern thinks the technology, and perhaps even the challenge flags, are coming.

"Eventually we have to get to something where you may have someone sitting at the desk," Stern said before the Miami Heat played the Philadelphia 76ers in Game 3 of their first-round series. "

"Rather than having a Talmudic discussion between the referees [on replays] you might have one person whose job it is to keep the earphones on and always watch. And you might let a coach drop the flag in the last two minutes."

Last weekend there were several hotly debated calls in the final minute of games that put a **spotlight** on the officiating. The league issued a statement that officials in Game 1 of the Denver Nuggets-Oklahoma City Thunder series missed a key offensive goaltending call.

"The capturing of the picture is so precise that you now know going through the game what the call should've been," Stern said. "Do we stop the game every time? I don't think so, but there are going to be improvements made over the course of time that are going to **eliminate** a lot of the **controversy**."

This season has been a **transitional** year for NBA officials with several of the league's most experienced officials retiring or leaving the job over the last two seasons. Several younger officials have been **promoted** to work playoff games and become crew chiefs.

Over the last several seasons the league has continually expanded replay usage to include late-game out-of-bounds calls.



NBA Lesson 10

"We have to find a way to speed the game up and get it right, that is the most important thing," Stern said. "We have humans that officiate our games and they don't catch everything, but I believe they are the best at what they do."

Discussion Questions

1. How do referees control a game?
2. What happens when a referee makes a bad call?
3. Do you think referees are paid off?
4. Do you think it would be a good idea for the referees to use cameras and calls that they might get wrong?
5. When should they use the cameras?
6. When shouldn't they use the cameras?
7. Some people say that using cameras would make the game impure. What do they mean by this? Do you agree with this?
8. Can you think of a game where the referees made a really bad call? Do you think the game outcome would have been different if the referees could have used a camera?
9. What other sports use cameras for instant replay? What sports don't use it?

The NBA is going to Europe sooner than you think.

Vocabulary

- | | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Phases 阶段 | 12. Maximizing 取。最大值 | 23. reckless 不计后果的 |
| 2. steroids 类固醇 | 13. exposure 暴露 | 24. conspiracy theory 阴谋论 |
| 3. NBA lottery NBA 彩票 | 14. gravitate 吸引 | 25. reignite 点燃 |
| 4. Nike 耐克 | 15. bottom-dwellers | 26. meaningless 无意义的 |
| 5. Gatorade 佳得乐 | 16. suffers 遭受 | 27. schematics 图表 |
| 6. obsession 痴迷 | 17. root 为。。加油 | 28. prominence 突出 |
| 7. accessibility 易接近 | 18. abandoning 放弃 | 29. solidified 固化的 |
| 8. mentality 心态 | 19. fame 名声 | 30. experimenting 实验 |
| 9. exploded 爆炸 | 20. paycheck 付薪水的支票 | 31. globalizing 使全球化 |
| 10. highlights 突出 | 21. employ 使用 | |
| 11. marketable 可销售的 | 22. exerting 运用 | |

Sports, like people and the government, have **phases**. The NFL is currently in its golden era for quarterbacks. MLB is in its post-**steroids** age trying to recreate a new image for its sport. And the NBA is sort of stuck in a crossroads.

You saw the NBA enter its modern era in 1984; the birth of the **NBA lottery**, the three-point line and commissioner David Stern. Stern's vision for this sport was to create superhuman athletes the world could recognize. After all, the guys on a basketball court aren't wearing a helmet. It's easy to relate and to recognize them.



NBA Lesson 10

So Stern teamed up with **Nike**, **Gatorade** and Michael Jordan to create a model for the modern sports idol. Jordan became an **international obsession** with his winning ways, killer **mentality** on the court and his **accessibility** through the expanding media and advertising.

With Jordan's help the league **exploded** and kept expanding in the overseas television market up until 2004, when Jordan had been gone for a while. Other superstars like Allen Iverson, Tracy McGrady and Vince Carter put together athletic **highlights** but weren't winners or **marketable** abroad like Jordan. The league was in a free fall after a terribly officiated 2007 Finals between the Heat and Mavericks.

Stern knew it was time to start a new era of the NBA. So he arranged super teams in Los Angeles, Boston, Miami (and soon to be New York) **maximizing** the largest television audiences and **exposure** for his sport. His idea was that young, average fans will **gravitate** towards these "super teams" and one day he will be able to scrap out the **bottom-dwellers**. I'll explain more about that below.

It's harder to make the championship game in the NBA than any other sport. Since 2000, eight teams in the Eastern Conference have made the Finals and only three Western Conference teams have appeared in the title game (Lakers, Spurs and Mavericks). So 11 total teams in 10 seasons. Compare that to 15 in Major League Baseball and 16 in the NFL.

Basketball is a sport **dominated** by its scoring superstars and if your franchise doesn't have at least two elite players, you literally have a zero percent chance of even sniffing the golden NBA trophy. The NBA **extended** all of its playoff rounds to seven games back in the early 2000s, a move that commissioner Stern hoped would eliminate all upsets and put the league's marquee players in the Finals.

Stern's theory is that pro basketball **suffers** globally when teams like the 2004 Detroit Pistons win a championship without a star player. More than any other sport, fans **root** for individual players' success often times more than their own hometown team. I don't blame these people for **abandoning** ship and worshipping Kobe Bryant instead. The NBA is completely unfair the way it is set up in 2011.

Realistically there are only five teams that could win the 2011 NBA Finals. The Miami Heat, Boston Celtics, San Antonio Spurs, Los Angeles Lakers and the Dallas Mavericks. That's it. The rest of the 25 teams in the league are honestly just playing for some moderate **fame** and a **paycheck**. That's it.

So that's why many NBA teams have tried to roll the dice by tanking (playing bad) late in an NBA season. Tanking really doesn't have a pure definition. It basically means that certain NBA teams **employ** a strategy to lose on purpose.

Players stop **exerting** maximum effort, coaches put in really bad lineups and management pulls the trigger on some **reckless** trades in an attempt to lose as many games as possible. The NBA draft lottery rewards teams with the most losses, with a higher percent chance of drawing the top overall pick.



NBA Lesson 10

It's crazy because this idea of tanking doesn't exist in any other sport. If you tried this stunt in the NFL, you'd be immediately fired. In baseball draft picks don't matter much and continual losing will result in a demotion to the minors.

Which teams have struggled and therefore tanked the past 10 years? New Jersey, Milwaukee, Minnesota, Sacramento, Toronto and Memphis are some cities that come to mind. What do these cellar-dwellers have in common? They play in smaller television markets.

There will always be a competitive unbalance in life. There will always be rich people and always be poor people. There will always be sports dynasties and bottom-feeder franchises. But the NBA, more than any other league, wants this to happen. It is all a part of Stern's ultimate plan to get his league in Europe.

Here's where my **conspiracy theory** takes shape. I think that the NBA wants these small-market teams to fail on purpose. Stern knows that not one human being wants to see a Memphis-Milwaukee Finals. The NBA is a business and therefore wants its best resources (star players) playing in the largest television markets, to attract the biggest audiences, gaining buzz about this growing sport.

You can't tell me that the Grizzlies actually wanted to part ways with Pau Gasol for Kwame Brown and Javaris Crittenton. And Minnesota knew they were about to **reignite** the Boston dynasty when they traded 14-time All-Star Kevin Garnett to the Celtics for a bag of peanuts. There are two explanations for trades like this:

1. The league has set them up—similar to the WWE.
2. This is all part of the NBA's master plan to globalize and these executives are in on it too.

If David Stern can keep star players from staying away from these smaller markets, eventually owners of these teams are going to start losing money. And eventually they will want to sell their franchises back to the NBA, similar with what's going on with the New Orleans Hornets right now.

The tanking is going to continue. Like I stated above, if you can somehow draft someone like Kevin Durant, your franchise might have a future even in a small market. But with the tanking come hundreds of late-season, **meaningless** games between two teams who want to lose. Once tanking is brought to light by ESPN or even CBS's *60 Minutes*, sports fans would be **outraged** that organizations are supporting this losing cause.

What's the solution to fix the NBA's competitive problem? Scrap the smallest market teams that continue to fail and move the rights of those **franchises** to Europe. Stern would set up an expansion draft with all the other top players in the world. The **schematics** of the NBA would change but there could still be an Eastern and Western Conference but now also a European Division. Traveling would be crazy but teams could go overseas for a three-week period and vice-versa with foreign teams coming to America.



NBA Lesson 10

Free agency would now become like soccer, with teams buying and selling players. Eliminating the smaller market teams removes bad businesses from the NBA. Plus there is no denying that basketball is starting to overtake soccer as the world's most recognized sport. Yao Ming, Dirk Nowitzki, Manu Ginobili, Tony Parker and Zydrunas Ilgauskas are just some of the current foreign players who have gained **prominence** from the league. And you can add to that list guys like Hakeem Olajuwon, Dikembe Mutumbo, Toni Kukoc, Vlade Divac and Detlef Schrempf as successful players who originally put this idea into Stern's little head.

The NBA is entering a crossroads in eras. The Michael Jordan age **solidified** the league as entertaining and competitive. The new super-teams are just the early indication for where this sport is about to go.

One of my favorite quotes of all time is "You have to adapt before they adapt to you." The NFL has already begun **experimenting** with in-season games in London and the NBA will follow suit this year in March, when the Raptors and Nets travel to London to play a regular season game. The NBA needs to jump the gun and beat the NFL in **globalizing** its product.

Discussion Questions

1. This is an opinion article. Do agree with the opinion put forth above? \
2. Do you think David Stern, has any influence on the trades that happen in the NBA? Gasol trade?
3. Do you think people care more about super stars or good teams?
4. Do you think the NBA sets up good stories?
5. Shaq once said that everything he did and said was only for good press. What does this mean? How often do you think this happens?
6. Do you think the Shaq and Kobe fight was real?
7. Why is it so difficult to get to the championship game?
8. What do you think of the "tanking" tactic? Would you use it to get a better player?
9. What do you think of a world basketball league?
 - a. What would be some problems with this?
 - b. What would be the upside of this?
10. Do you think we will see a day when the entire league is joined into one league? For example a world soccer league, or a world baseball league.