

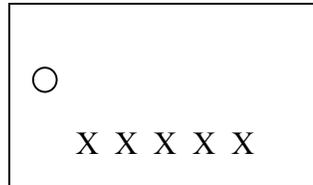
THE HOLY GRAIL – TEACHING THE CORRECT SHOOTING TECHNIQUE

- If this is all you teach your players this season, you have succeeded! -

Teaching players the correct shooting technique is a difficult skill to teach, but it is probably the most important thing a basketball player can learn. The following explains the correct technique and one possible way for you to teach it to your players. I recommend you set aside a solid 20 minutes of training to teach players the technique.

Skill: The Shooting Technique.

Start by getting players to line up along the base line/side line facing the wall.



By having players face the wall they ignore whether the ball is going in the ring and focus solely on getting their technique correct. Do not include any balls to begin with. This is the difference between a 'shooting drill' and a 'shooting technique drill'.

Stand in front of your team and talk them through the following points. As you explain each of the points below you yourself should do the explained point for players to learn from, the players should simultaneously complete the point, and then correct players before moving on to the next point.

1. "Stand with your feet shoulder width apart."
Players do this as you do it. Pick up any mistakes.
2. "Put your preferred foot an inch in front of the non-preferred."

Summary: I am a right hander, so I stand with my feet shoulder width apart with my right foot only an inch in front of the left. No more than an inch! Now all your players are standing in front of you with their feet in the shooting position. Move up to the legs.

3. "All the power from a shot comes from your legs. Bend your knees! If you are struggling to make the distance on your shots, chances are you are not bending your knees."
'Bend your knees' is the catch-cry of most junior coaches, and for good reason. Players often try to shoot from their arms in a bench-press like fashion, but the problem is they are not strong enough to do so. The legs are where the muscles are and bending your knees gets all that leg power into the shot.
4. "Keep your back straight".

I have never labored this point too much. Keeping your back straight keeps players balanced and therefore produces a more accurate shot. However, I have found players over emphasise this aspect to the point where the rest of their technique suffers. Definitely mention it and don't allow players to lean forward over their toes, but at the same time there's no need to bring a leveler to trainings.

Summary: Players are standing in a line facing the coach with their feet set, knees bent and back relatively straight.

5. We now move on to the most complex aspect, the hands. Players should pretend there is a ball in their hand and we will add a ball later when the fresh air shot is mastered. Unfortunately for me, a picture tells a thousand words in this case.

Players will find it fascinating that the ball is shot with one hand, in this case my right hand. **The left hand is merely supporting ball** from rolling off my right hand. The finished shot highlights that the non-preferred hand (in this case the left hand) plays no part in propelling the ball forwards. Be sure players are not using this 'support hand' to follow through - only one hand waves goodbye.

The right elbow is straight in the first photo- very important. If the elbow is straight throughout the whole shot, the ball will stay on the same line as your elbow.

Look at the finished shot. You will notice that the **hand is inverted**. By flicking the ball as it leaves your hands, or "**waving goodbye**" as I like to explain to players, the ball has a little bit of spin on it. If it hits the rim, it will fall forwards and into the ring. It also gives an added bit of control rather than merely shot-putting the ball in the direction of the ring.

6. Summary:

Players face the wall → Feet shoulder width apart → Knees bent → Back straight
→ Elbow straight or 'tucked in' → Wave goodbye → Once you have inspected each players shot, include a ball Inspect each players shot again.

Conclusion: This technique is crucial to your player's long-term accuracy. It requires coaches to be very patient as it is a difficult skill for players to learn. Constantly remind players of the technique when you are running shooting drills throughout the season so they are reminded of the correct technique. In about two seasons of correct coach monitoring, this technique will be common to all players in a match scenario.

This technique was hard to put into words, so if you have any questions, give me an e-mail.