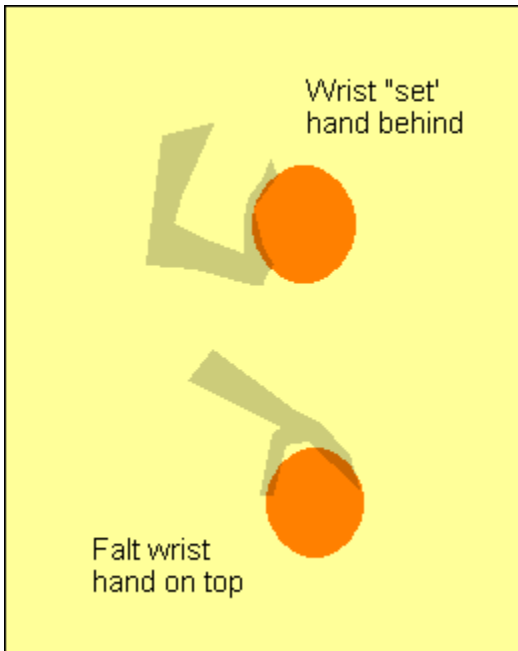


Mike M^{ac}Kay - Manager of Coach Education and Development

Little things make a big difference. Working with players on an effective stance it amazes me the number who do not or cannot set their wrist.

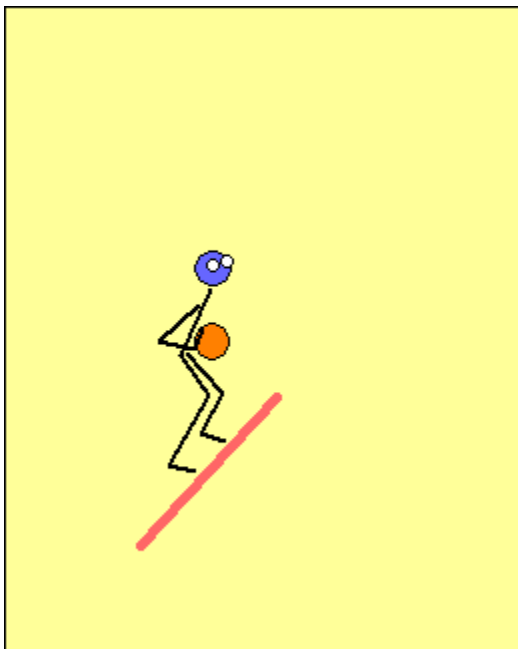


Set the wrist

Players need to set the wrist when catching the ball. Top players do it automatically. This action loads the muscles so that your hands can spring forward. It is like using starting blocks for the hands. It puts that final snap into the universal release that is used in dribbling passing and shooting.

Many beginning players hold the ball with a flat wrist or worse the hand on top of the ball. Some even cheat by bending at the fingers. Good defenders can take advantage of this player by realizing that before any attacking movement, the ball must flip back first when the wrist is finally set. This actually requires the ball to move slightly forward if the ball is below the shoulders

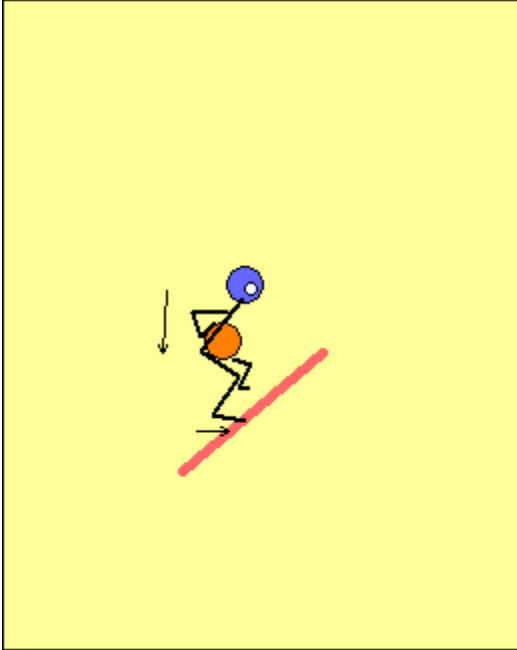
and move back behind the head if above. A player who on top of the ball is someone who you can easily jam as a defender. This player usually ends up pivoting high or away to avoid pressure.



1 on 1 play

Here is a drill I use with players when first developing their one on one stance and jab fakes.

Start with both feet parallel to a line on the floor. The player should be balanced with the wrist set.



On the jab the foot only moves to cover the line not go past the line. This ensures a short jab. The player's weight goes down like in a sitting action. The heel of the non jabbing foot should stay on the floor. If the heel rises up the player has stepped and not jabbed. In order to move the player will have to rock back first.

There are different theories on what to do with the ball. My main point is that it is "tight" to the body and the wrist remains set. As a small player I find I can put it on my knee. If the ball is hit it will not go anywhere. Taller players sometimes put it to the outside of the hip. Again the key is the ball stays tight.