ROOKIE LEVEL

ROOKIE
Rookie Level ABCD’s

At the Rookie level, the game is all about fun, being active, and learning basic fundamental skills. This is the first introduction to basketball for most players and it should be a positive experience. Five-on-five competitions should be limited until later in the level(s). The goal of the Rookie level is to engage in activity and form a base of motor skills.

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<th>ALWAYS FUN</th>
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One very important way we can ensure that the players have fun is through our high-fives, smiles, and positive encouragement. Coaches, parents and organizers should use their body language and positive reinforcement to create an enjoyable environment. Fun also plays out through a variety of skill-related, interactive games. Whether it’s a relay race, or dribble tag, these skill-related games make it fun to learn and play.

In the early stages of the Rookie level of the curriculum, players should play the game voluntarily in their free time because it’s an activity that they enjoy. As their enjoyment grows and they mature, basic fundamentals of the game will be acquired. Some of the fundamentals that are introduced in the Rookie level include having a good athletic stance, running, jumping, stopping, balance, ball-handling, passing, receiving, and shooting. These movements and skills will lay the foundation for skills acquired later in the pathway.

In their first introduction to basketball, some players have the tendency to be individualistic or shy, while others see the game as an opportunity to spend time with friends. Players at this level may be very aware of their feelings and the feelings of others. Therefore, it is important to emphasize sportsmanship & fairness, instill confidence, and teach them to respect each other. By incorporating these messages on a daily basis, players will grow in their social understanding and sport etiquette.

In this level, Jr. NBA players are encouraged to lead an Active Lifestyle. Getting exercise from multiple sports and activities helps create healthy habits for the rest of their lives. Being active also translates to better productivity in school and overall health. This foundation of being active develops a base for athletic development in basketball and beyond. Encourage players to be active!
Skill Checklist

At the conclusion of the Rookie Level, Jr. NBA players should be proficient at each of the following skills. Judging proficiency at this level is the responsibility of the coach.

**Ball Handling**
- Toss & Catch
- Stationary Control Series
- Stationary Dribble Control Series
- Stationary Dribble Low, Middle, High
- Walking Control Dribble
- Stationary Crossover
- Walking Crossover
- Jogging Dribble
- Running Dribble
- Change of Direction Dribble
- Dribble & Balance
- Dribble Balance & Push

**Passing**
- Hitting the Target
- Catching & Receiving
- Stationary Chest Pass
- Stationary Bounce Pass
- Pass to a Moving Player
- Catch and Pass Quick Decision
- Slide & Pass

**Shooting**
- Stationary Form Shooting
- Strong Hand Lay-Up
- One-Dribble Shooting
- Lay-Up Form
- 1-2 Step Shooting
- Using the Backboard
- Jump Stop Shooting

**Recognizing Open Teammates**
- Pivot & Pass

**Defense**
- Defensive Stance
- Defensive Slide
- Stay between Man and Basket
- Tracing the Ball
- Change of Direction

**Offense**
- Pass & Cut
- Ball Reversal
- Triple Threat
- Drive and Kick (Pass)
- Give & Go

**Rebounding**
- Jump, Catch and Land

**Footwork & Conditioning**
- Athletic Stance/ Triple Threat
- Defensive Stance/Slide
- Controlled Running
- Change of Direction
- Two Foot Jump Stop
- Pivoting Basics
- Leaping
- Body Control

**Other**
- Understand the Basketball Court Markings
- Introduction to Rules (Travel, Double Dribble, Out of Bounds, Scoring)
Practice Plans

The chart below indicates approximate amounts of time to be spent on each portion of practice. The twelve practice plans to follow are samples that reinforce Rookie level principles.