

## Defensive Rotations

Once each player on the team has an understanding of correct floor position in relation to the ball and their opponent, it is important to teach how the team will defend against both dribble and pass penetration.

At some point, a defender will be beaten by an offensive opponent. When this occurs help must be provided. When help is provided it often allows other offensive players to become open. This is where defensive rotation becomes essential as it provides coverage of highest percentage scoring areas.

Defensive rotation is vitally important in defending both dribble and pass penetration. At all times it should be clearly understood that all defenders are primarily responsible for defending the ball, and then their immediate offensive opponent.

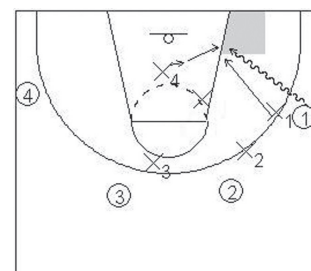
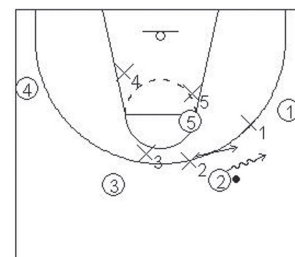
If defenders only guard their own player then the opposition will score easy lay-ups on almost every penetration.

Most teams have a rule to force or channel the ball towards either to the side line and base line or to the middle of the floor. Which ever way it is usual for help to come from the split line and from below (closer to the baseline) the ball.

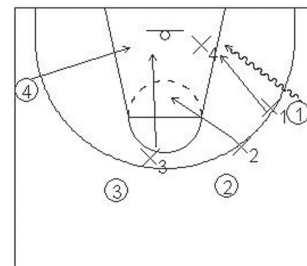
If the ball is penetrated baseline as in the diagram opposite, help will come from the split line. The goal of the help coming to the ball in this instance is to trap it in what is called the short corner. This is the position on the floor from around the edge of the key towards the baseline.

It is important that the defender rotating across (X4) does not allow the dribbler to get into the key.

X4 should be taught to anticipate the drive by O1 and to hedge (move early) one step toward the key when they think that O1 may drive.



The most likely pass will be for a (high percentage) lay-up to O4. This is where rotation must occur. X3 must leave their player and rotate down to defend O4. X2 must also rotate and defend the two offensive players O2 and O3. This is done by moving to the top of the key, closer to the ball than either O2 or O3, and keeping vision of them and the ball..



The aim of team help defensive is to prevent the opposition getting high percentage shots.

If the ball is passed out, in this instance to O2, the nearest defender X2 must defend the ball. X3 would rotate back to the original opponent and X4, who has the vision of where the ball has gone, would rotate back to O4.

A potential problem with this rotation is that O4 may be left temporarily unguarded for a lay-up.

An alternate method of rotation when the ball is passed is a switching rotation.



### Switching Rotations

In this rotation, the defender who rotated to guard the penetration have switched. So X3 is now guarding O4 and X4 is now guarding O1.



On the initial rotation X2 was guarding both O2 and O3. Who they will ultimately guard will depend on where the ball is passed. If the ball is passed to O4, X2 guards O3 (who is closest to the ball) and X1 guards O2 (the player that is left).

If the ball is passed to O3, X2 guards them and X1 guards O2. If the ball is passed to O2, X2 guards them and X1 guards O3.



A disadvantage of a switching rotation is that it can lead to defensive mismatches, with "bigs" defending perimeter players.

If a fifth player is added, for example a post player, the same rules would apply

### Help would come from split line

### Rotation would be the same.

The only difference would be that the post player's defender, X5, would not generally get involved, staying with O5. The post defender therefore has a no help rule and must defend their player.

