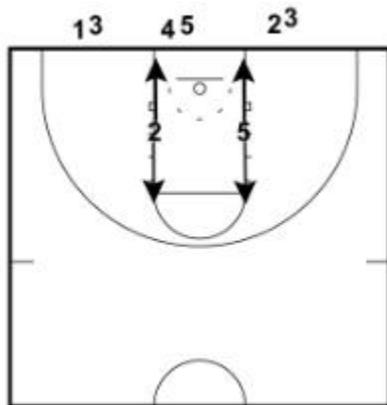


## Defensive Mirrors – Defense Drill



### **Overview:**

This is a fun drill for working on defensive footwork.

The drill requires players to mimic their partner's movements which is great for developing reactions while working on defensive footwork.

The only problem with this drill is that only two people can go at once so if you have a large group it might not be appropriate.

### **Setup:**

Everyone starts by finding a partner and standing in pairs behind the baseline.

If you have another coach, it's best to use both ends of the court.

For this example, we'll use the parallel lines of the key, but if you have two other parallel lines on your home court, you can use them too.

### **How it Works:**

The first pair comes out and sets themselves up directly opposite each other on the two parallel lines of the key.

The coach then assigns one of them the offensive player and the drill begins immediately.

The goal of the defensive player is to stay directly in line with the offensive player. The offensive player must work hard to try and separate themselves from being in line with the defender by sliding up and down the line of the key.

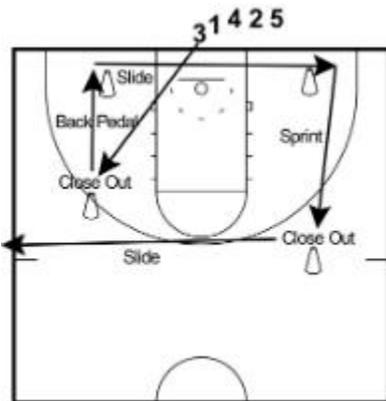
After 15 seconds, the coach calls out 'switch' and the two players swap roles.

After 30 seconds they step behind the baseline and two new players come in.

**Coaching Points:**

- Players must stay in a low defensive stance with their hands out wide the entire time of the drill.
- Encourage the offensive player to use head fakes and quick changes of pace to throw the defender off.
- Make sure you cover what good defensive stance is before running this drill.

## Defensive Specialist – Defense Drill



### **Overview:**

Defensive Specialist is a continuous drill that works on the different defensive movements players will make on defense including closeouts, defensive sliding, back-peddaling, and sprinting.

### **Setup:**

Since it's hard to explain where the cones and movements are by writing, I encourage you to take a look at the image associated with this drill for better comprehension.

You will require four D-men or cones for this drill.

All players begin in a straight line on the baseline.

### **How it Works:**

All players line up in a straight line on the baseline. Players perform this defensive course one-by-one.

The first movement is a sprint and then close out to the cone in front. The player then back-peddals around a cone directly behind them, and then slides across to the other side of the court.

When the first defender slides past the line, that triggers the next player in line to start the drill.

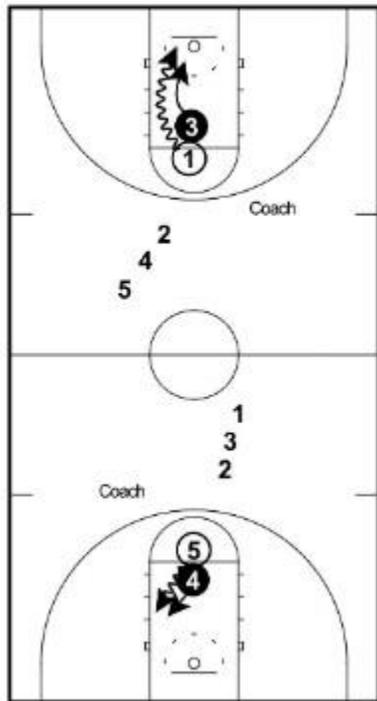
When the first defender has slid around the cone on the other side of the court, they again sprint to close out, and then once again slide to the opposite side of the court before returning to the end of the line.

Depending on the amount of players you have, run this drill for 3 – 5 minutes.

**Coaching Points:**

- Players must be sprinting and sliding at 100% effort throughout the entire drill.
- Hold the close out for a second or two before moving on.
- Make sure all defensive footwork is done well since this is a very important part of the drill.

## One-on-One – Defense Drill



I love using one-on-one drills at practice to teach both defense and offense.

By playing one-on-one, we're forcing the on-ball defender to have to 'guard their yard'. There's no help defense coming. They're on their own and must stay in front and challenge the shot.

### **Setup:**

This drill starts with two players at the free-throw line or top of the key depending on age and experience.

The defensive player starts with the basketball.

The other players wait behind them near half-way.

Use both ends of the basketball court if you have two coaches so that players get to play more often.

**How it Works:**

To start the drill, the defender hands the basketball to the offensive player. By handing the basketball to the offensive player, it ensures that the defender is challenging themselves by starting up close to the offensive player instead of standing back playing lazy defense.

The offensive player then has a maximum of 2 or 3 dribbles to attack the ring and get a clear shot.

Offensively, this drill teaches players not to waste their dribble and teaches them how to attack a defender one on one.

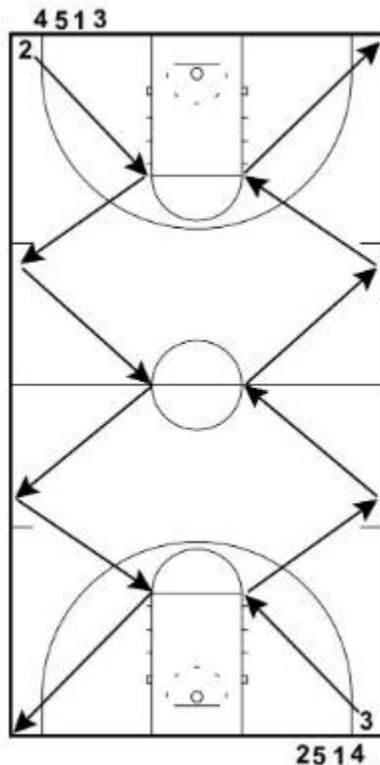
Defensively, players will learn how to keep an offensive player in front of them and challenge every shot.

After either a make or a miss, a new offensive player comes in, the previous offensive player switches to defense, and the previous defender joins the end of the line.

**Coaching Points:**

- Make sure you enforce the rule of 2 or 3 dribbles maximum depending on which you decide. We don't want to allow the offensive player to waste dribbles and time.
- Encourage the defensive player to get up close and play hard defense. It doesn't matter if they get beat a couple of times while they're working on defending.
- Make sure players are using good footwork and good fakes.

## Zig-Zag Slides – Defensive Drill



### **Overview:**

Zig-zag slides are a great drill for a beginning team.

The two most important things this drill teaches is how to defensive slide properly and also how to drop step when playing defense.

### **Setup:**

The drill begins with all players on the baseline lining up on one of the corners. No player should have a basketball.

No player should have a basketball.

### **How it Works:**

The first player will defensive slide from the corner to the high post and perform a 90-degree drop step so that they are now sliding back to the opposite sideline.

This process of sliding from one side to the other and drop stepping continues until the player reaches the opposite baseline.

They come back down the opposite side of the court using the same principles.

**Coaching Points:**

- Teach all players how to defensive slide and drop step at the beginning of the drill.
- Make sure players are in a low stance and don't have their legs straight.
- Players should never cross their feet!