



# BEHREND BASKETBALL CAMP



## DEFENSE

Playing great defense is very similar to being a great rebounder. You must be in the correct position and work hard. If you do those two things there will be a place on the floor for you. Every team needs a defensive stopper and while it is not the easiest job and definitely not the most glamorous, if you do it well the coach will recognize it.

Positioning is key for the defense.

1. Stay between your man and the basket. This goes for when he does not have the ball and especially when he does. You may shade your man in one direction or the other (if he's right handed try to make him go left) but never let him get between you and the basket. If that happens he will either get a lay-up or force one of your teammates to help out – taking them out of position.
2. Defensive Stance- When playing defense you should always be in a defensive stance. This is similar to the triple threat position. Knees bent, feet a little more than shoulder width apart, one hand up and one hand extended slightly toward the defense with the palm up. Your knees are bent but do not bend over, keep your head up and back fairly straight. The same stance is used whether your man has the ball or not.
3. Defending off the ball- Defending your man when he does not have the ball requires extreme concentration. You must see the ball and your man at all times by being in a ball-you-man triangle. If you draw a line between the man you are guarding and the man with the ball you should be on the basketside of that line (between your man and the basket) off a couple steps so that you can draw an imaginary triangle between yourself, the man you are guarding and the man with the ball. The more you want to deny your man the ball the closer to him and the line between the ball and man you will be. Of course if you get too close he may sneak by you for the backdoor lay-up! Remember that the only man who can score is the man with the ball. If your teammate is beaten off the dribble to your side be ready to help by getting your body in front of the man with ball and then recovering to your man.
4. Defending the ball- In a defensive stance you will face your man. Generally you want to be about an arm's length away from your man. However this will depend upon him and you! Is he a great shooter? Then get right up on him and make him dribble. Is he a great driver or quicker than you? Then step back and give him some room. Try to keep him in front of you and make him pass or shoot the outside shot.
5. Defending the shooter- Always try to challenge shots. This does not mean that you will try to BLOCK all shots, just get a hand up to try to distract the shooter. In the NBA the coaches keep track of how players shoot when challenged (shot with a hand up) and how they shoot when open. In the NBA wide-open players make about 65% of their shots; when challenged they only make about 35% of their shots. If they take 50 shots in a game that would mean 15 more shots are made if they are unchallenged or 30 points – a big difference.
6. Step Slide- We teach our players a technique called the step-slide when playing defense on the man with the ball. Here you must first step with your outside foot so that your feet are slightly more than shoulder width apart. Then you must slide your inside foot toward the outside foot so that they are again should length apart. With this technique your feet are never closer together than shoulder length apart (as opposed to the traditional defensive slide where they tend to come together). It helps you to stay on balance and keep from hopping when playing defense. To check this out have someone watch you or else step slide in front of a mirror and your should see that your head does not bounce up and down but remains at the same level.

Once you know the basics for positioning the key is hard work.