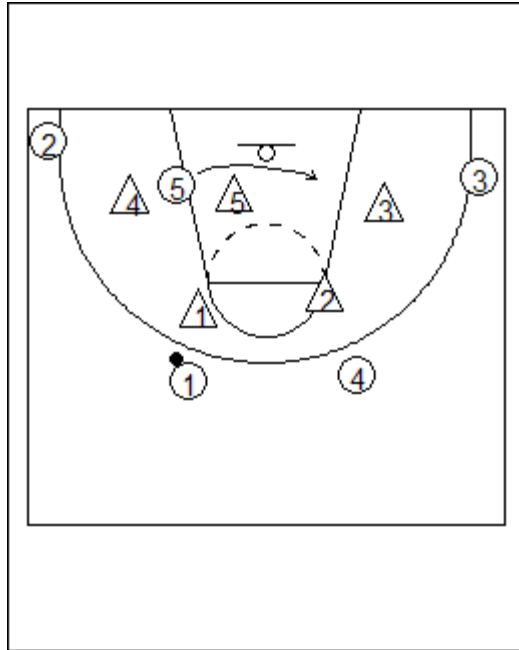




Mario DeSisti: Zone offense

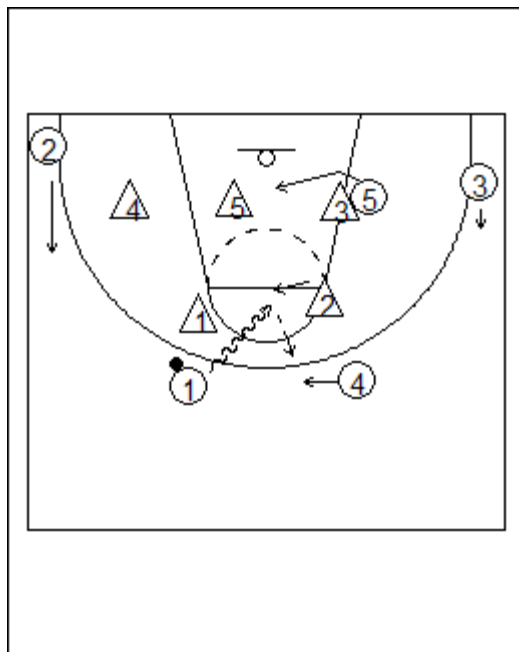


1

Transition

You do not want to run a different zone offense vs. different zone defenses. Coaches are too good at disguising the zone. You need to be able to come down the floor at attack right away. Especially vs. match up zones. Allow the zone to match you. Penetration breaks it down.

The transition is the same man or zone. The centre can be on either side but better scoring opportunities will be created if the centre is away from the guard's initial penetration.



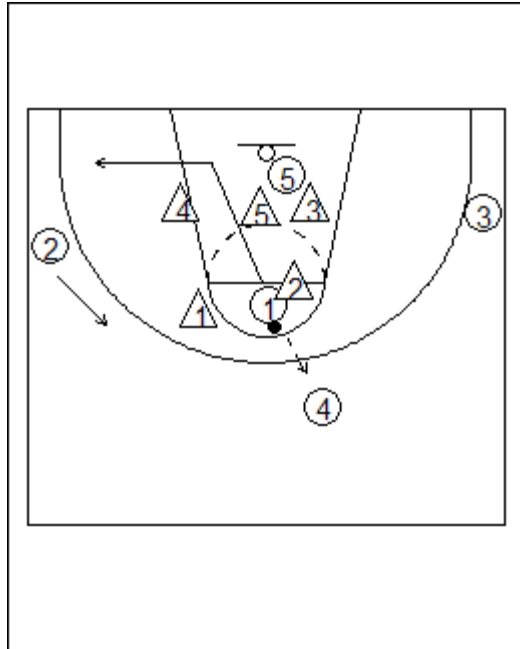
2

Penetrate - rotate - pass - pass

The perimeter players want to follow these concept:

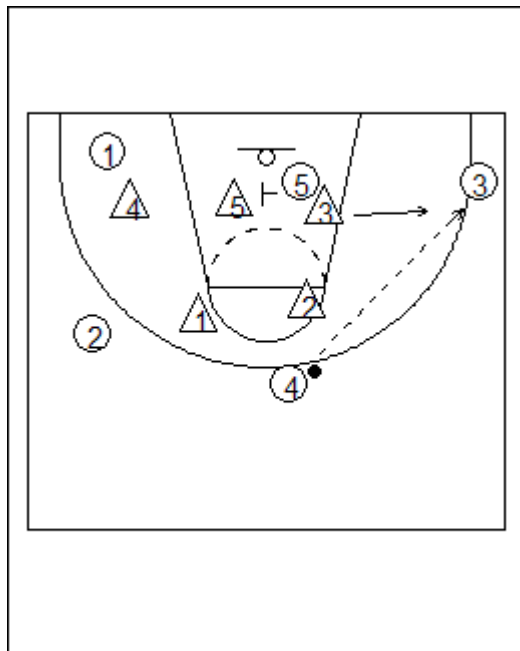
- Penetration too draw two defenders - make two players in the zone start to guard you. Do not go so deep that you get trapped. Freeze the second defender. If you see a chest you know it is time to pass.

The other players must move on this penetration. The centre starts to move to the rim. This collapses the defense even more. The perimeter players move into space.



3

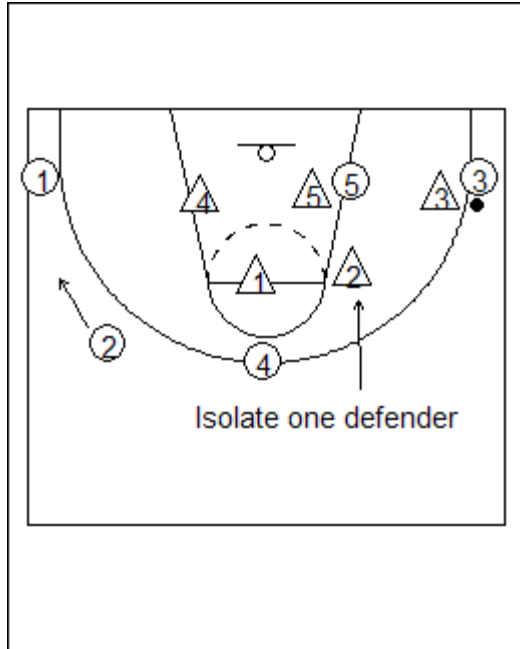
- Pass - off the top the rugby pass is preferred, on middle penetration from the side the skip pass is the pass of choice. After penetration look to split the defense and move away.



4

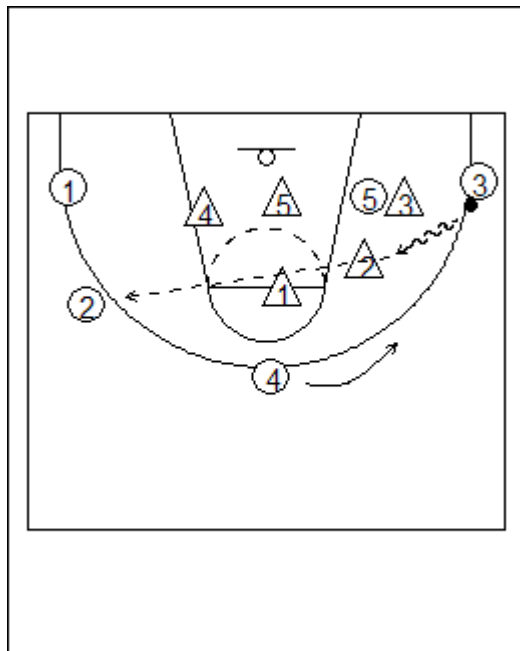
- Pass (if no shot appears) one more time before another penetration

This is because the first penetration has collapsed the defense. A second consecutive penetration is meeting a defense already in the key.



5

- After passing move away from the direction of the pass. This counteracts the movement of the zone, which rotates in the direction of the ball. We want to isolate one perimeter defender. Make this person guard air.

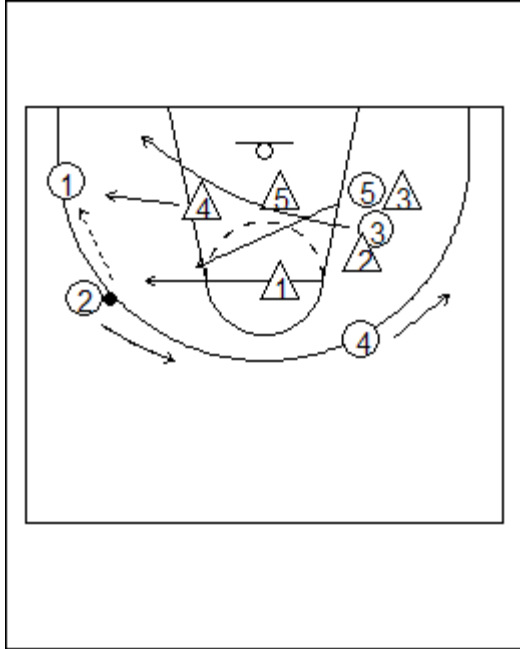


6

We are now ready to repeat the process.

Penetrate-Rotate-Pass-Pass

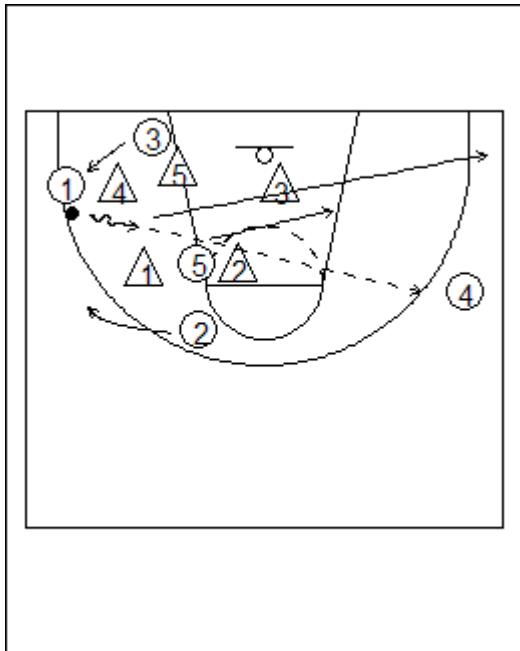
In this example a middle penetration occurs from the side. This is where a skip pass is preferred.



7

After penetrating 33 looks to split the defense and cut to the other side. Since the corner is filled he/she can stay in the short corner. #5 X-cuts off of #3's movement.

#2 moves away form the direction of the pass isolating one perimeter defender.



8

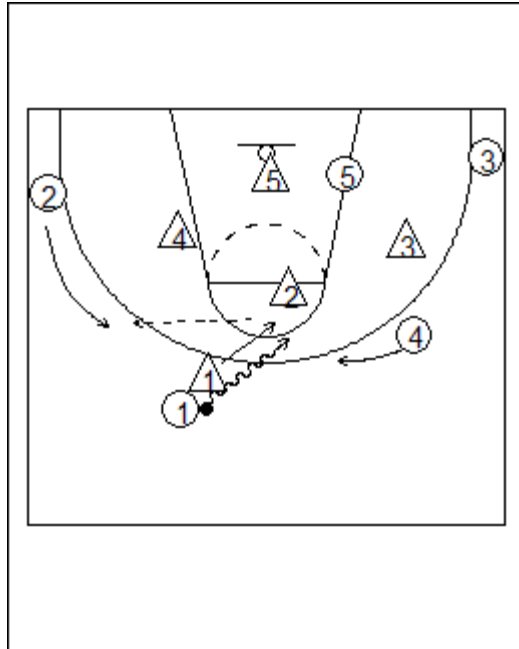
We are now ready to repeat the procedure.

Penetrate-rotate-pass-pass

Remember this is not continuity. Players have options and can read the defense. In this case 31 penetrates skips the ball, splits the defense and continues through to the corner. # 5 follows off the cut by #1. # 3 rotates out of the short corner behind the penetration.

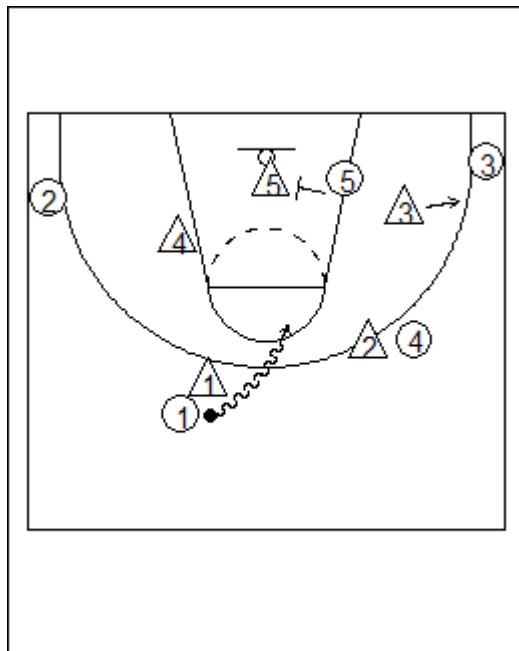
Let's now look at some reads the offense can make.

Penetration

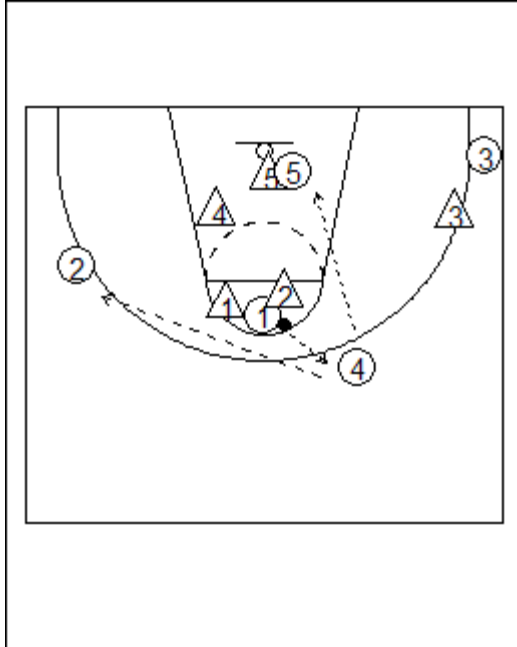


If on penetration the penetrator senses that the first defender is still guarding him/her the pass that is open is in the area in which the dribble originated.

If on penetration the defense does not show a chest and cheats to defend the perimeter players look to score or to the centre sealing inside.

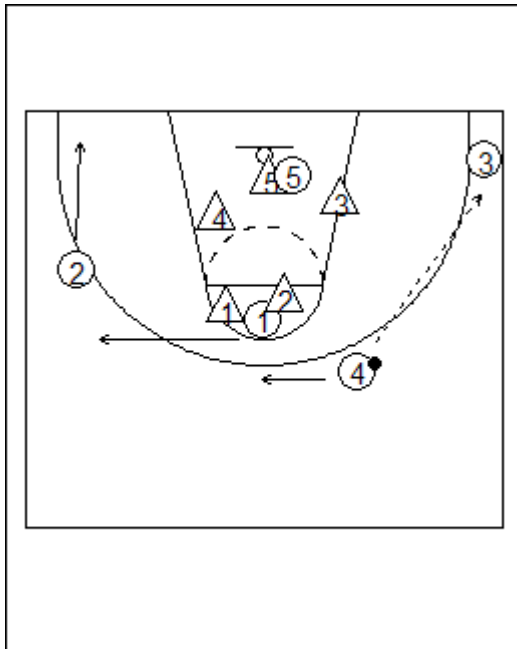


Read the second pass



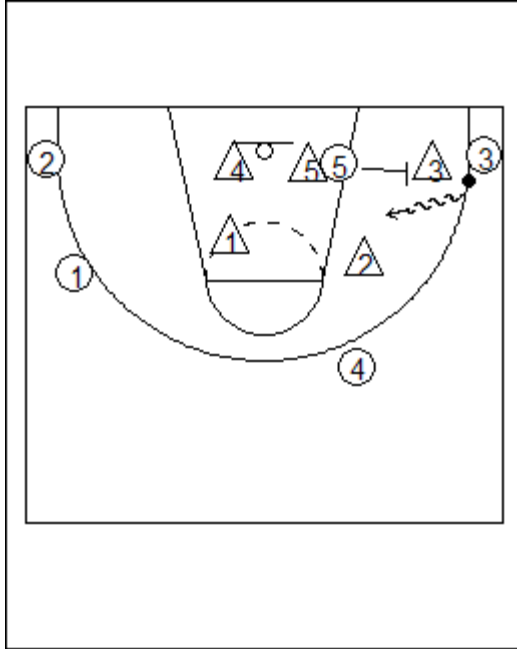
Zone defenses get very good at reading the eyes of the offense. Pass fakes and passing against the grain of where you are looking work very well against an aggressive zone.

The penetrator does not always have to split the defense. If the zone is very compact it is sometimes better to move away. Also you may want to change up the positioning of your shooters.

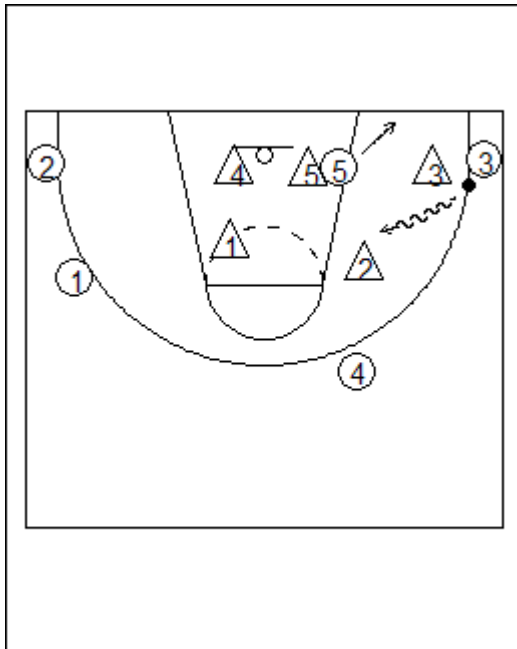


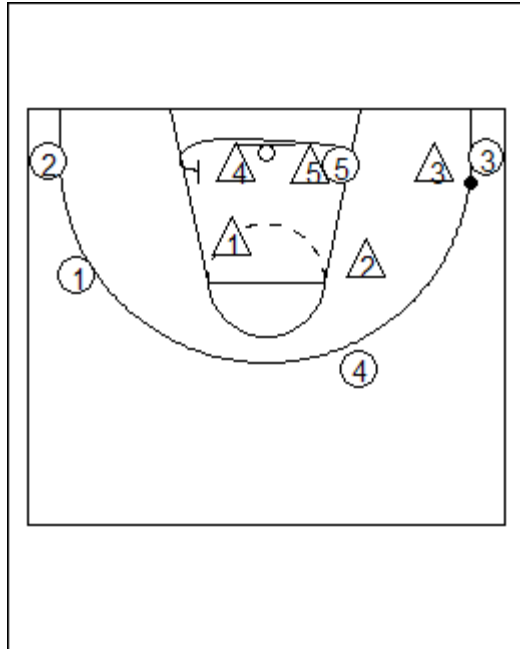
Centre

A non-shooting centre can step out and back pick the zone. The back pick allows for easier vision of the defense.



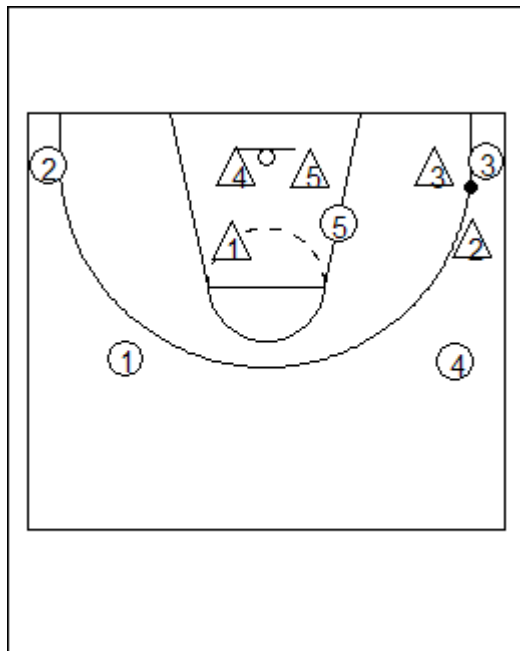
A shooting centre can step to the short corner off of penetration.





15

A non-shooting centre can also look to go thru and look to screen in the zone on the other side.

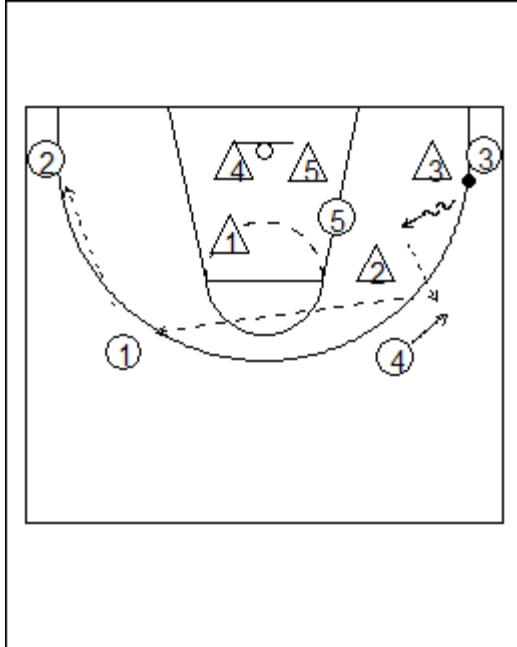


16

Corner trap

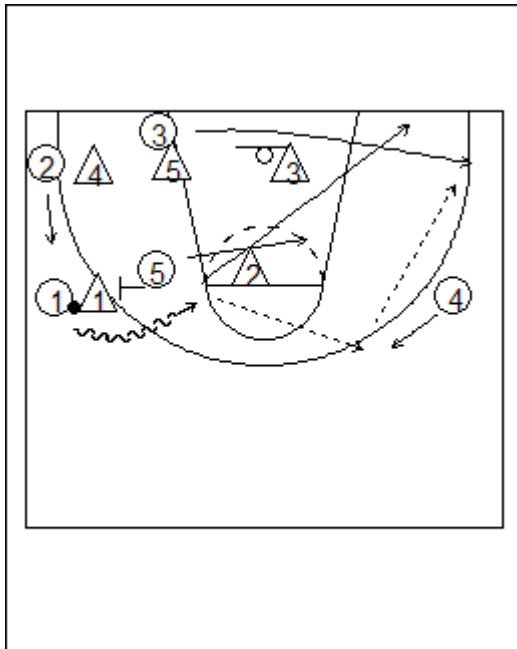
If the defense try's to trap the corner the other players must rotate quickly to space. Also the penetration should be occurring before the trap can arrive.

Rugby pass



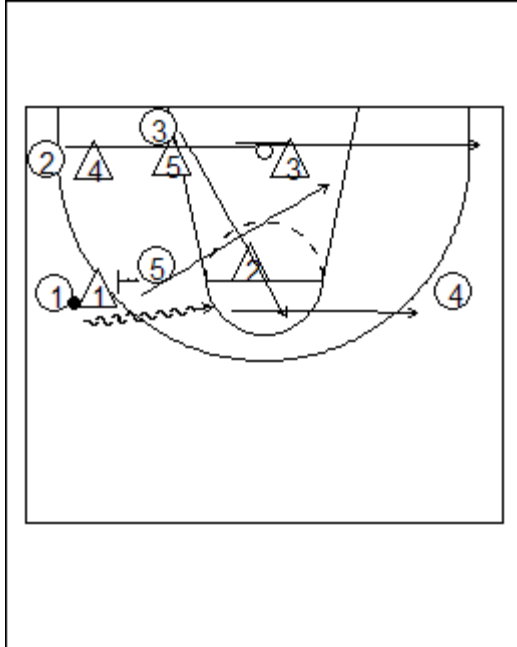
You can make the safer rugby pass. This may mean three passes before penetration. Remember that players are always looking for open on balance shots.

Corner denied



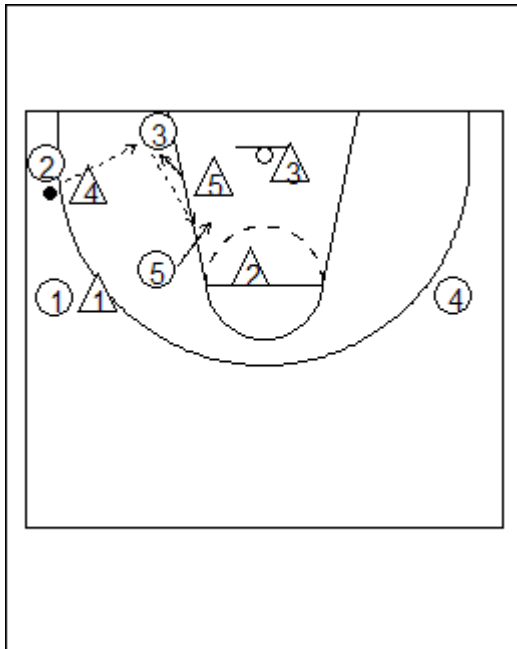
If the corner is denied this is because the zone has matched the overload. A high pick is very difficult for the zone to defend.

In this example the short corner #3 runs through to fill the corner on the reversal. #1 after penetrating fills the new short corner and #2 rotates behind the pick. #5 cuts to space.



Another excellent option is for the corner to run through to the other side, the centre cuts low after picking the zone and the short corner x-cut to the high post or top.

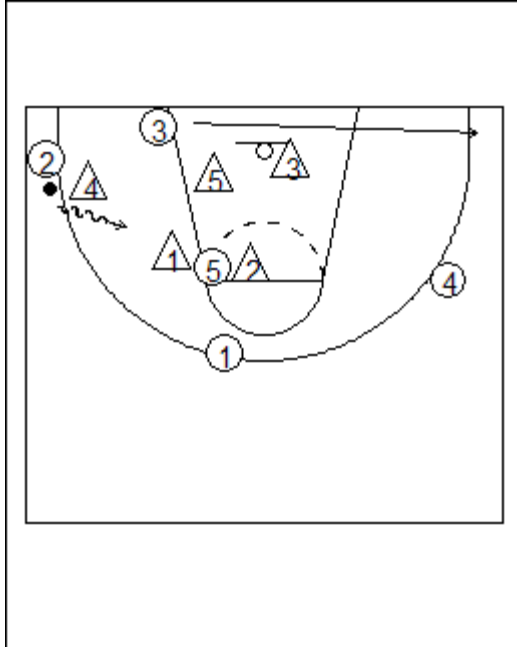
Short Corner



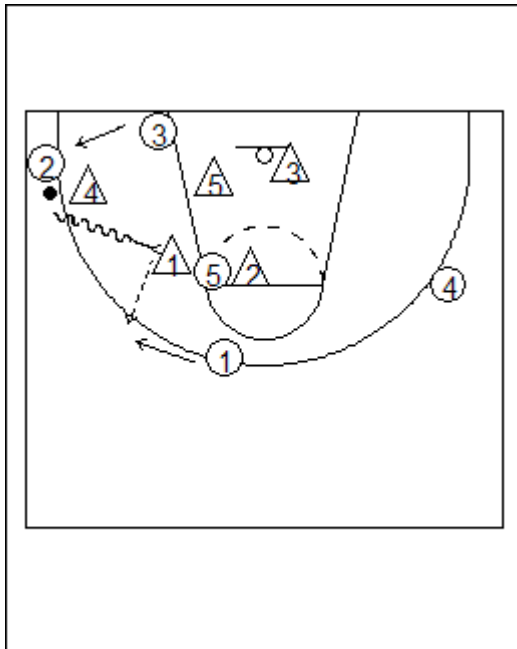
Anytime the short corner receives the ball the centre dives the rim. The other players move to space.

Short Corner cut options

Can run the baseline on a reversal

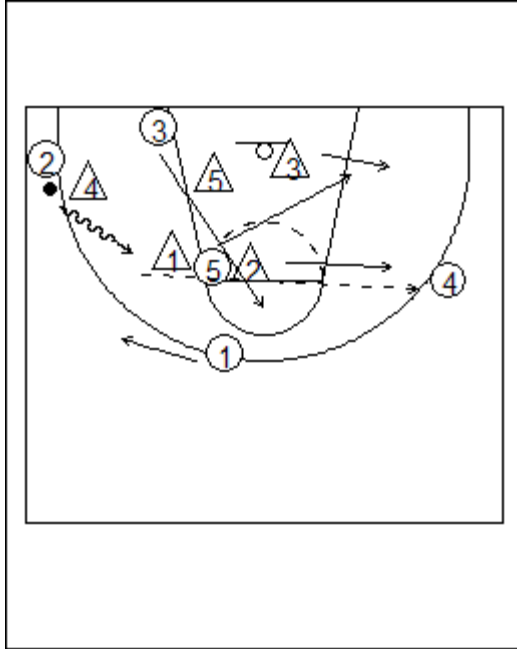
**Run behind the penetration**

Can run behind the penetration. This can work off a pass directly from the penetrator or off the second pass. Especially with a fake.

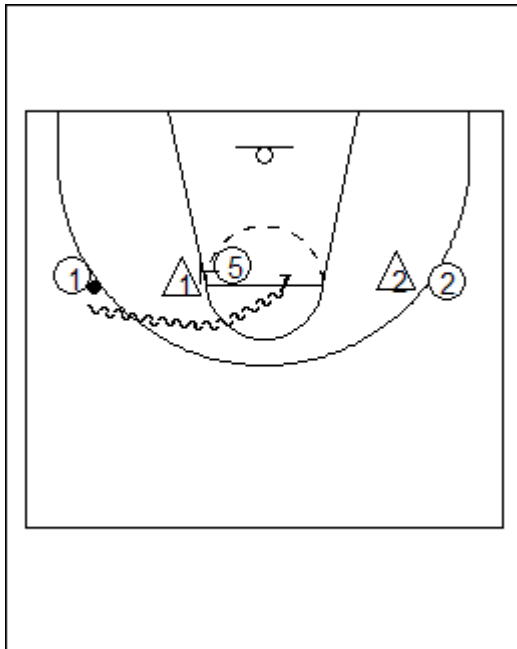


X-cut to the high post

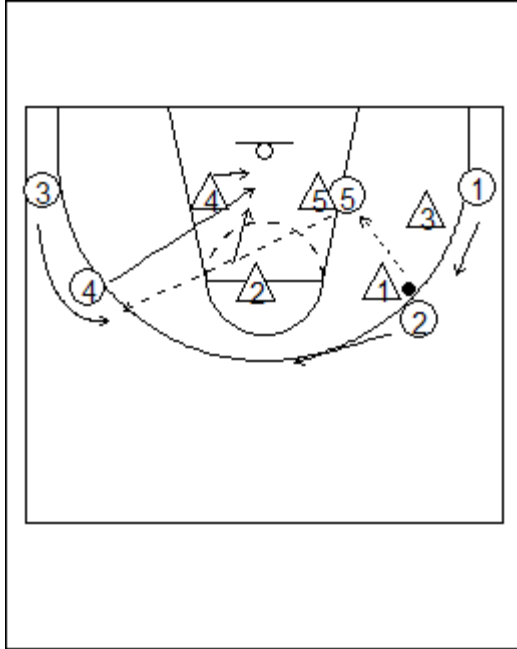
The short corner can also x-cut to the high post when the ball is reversed. If a good three point shooter he/she may go right to the top.

**Shooter vs. Non-Shooter**

it is a good idea to pick the zone for a non-shooter. Because the zone is sagging in and staying tight to the shooter you can get into the heart of the defense with the penetration.



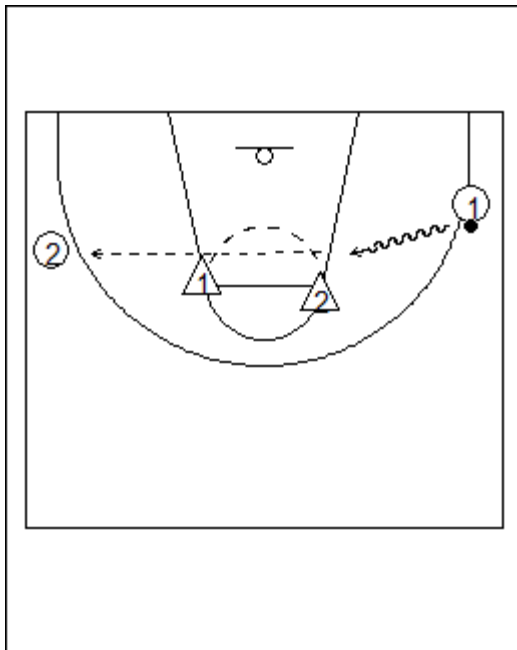
Centre with the ball inside



When the centre has the ball inside it is important for the other players to move. One difficult move for the zone to cover is one of the backside players to duck to the rim. This collapses the back side. The shooter spots in the diagonal. The other players must move above the centre to open spots.

Drills

2on 2

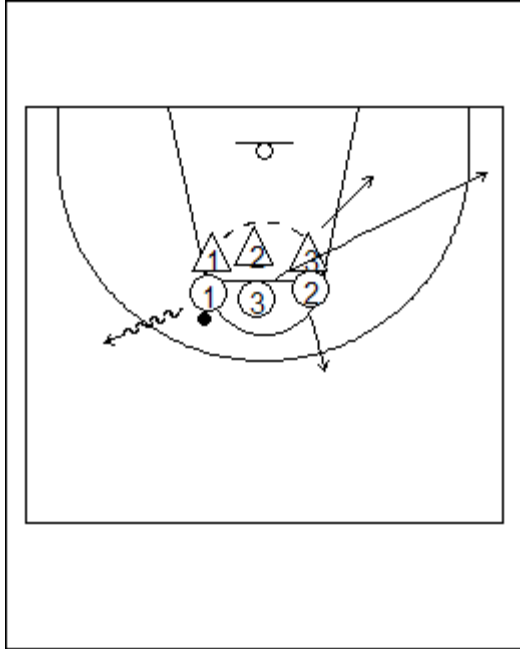


Work on throwing the skip pass off penetration. The drill is continuous. Allow for passes and then look for a shot. The zone cannot cheat.

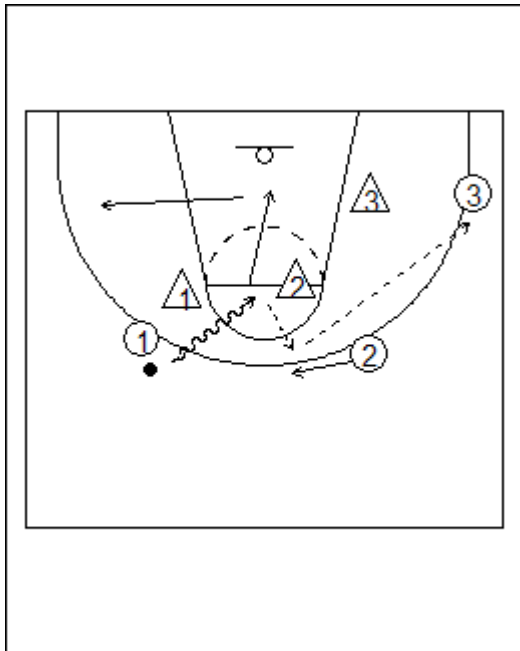
Drills

3 on 3 penetration pass pass

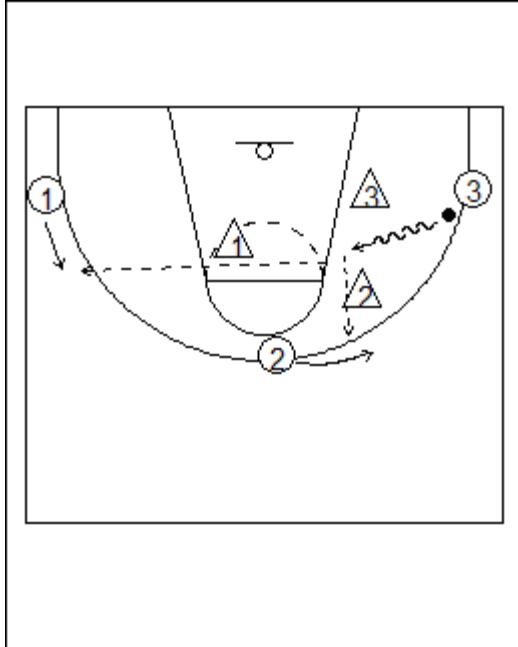
The drill starts the same as man to man.



The players work on their penetration pass pass.



The wing player reads the skip pass or the rugby pass.



4 on 4

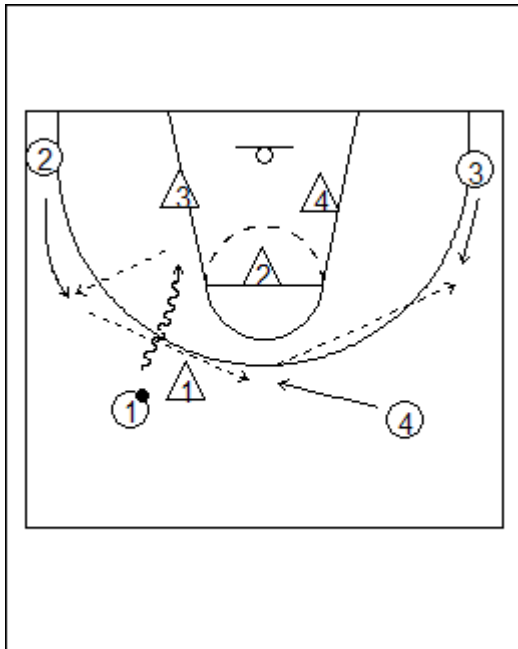
The offense start at the opposite end and transitions up to attack the zone. The defense can take any shape it wants.

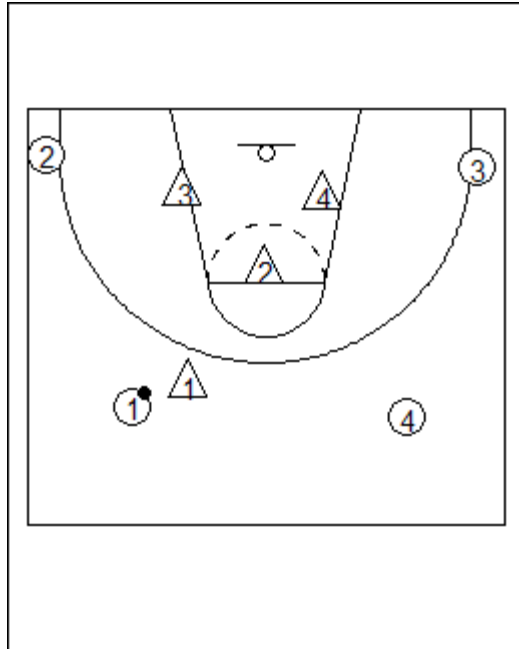
The offense is working with the 4 perimeter players using the penetration rotate pass pass rules.

It is important that the coach helps the athletes with the concepts.

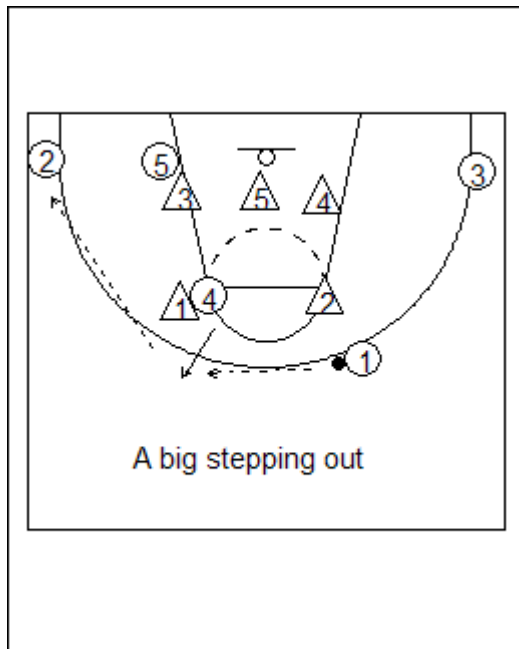
Keys:

- Ensure that the penetration draws two defenders.
- Others rotate
- move after passing
- Look at the rim
- Shoot the ball
- Rules for rebounders and defensive balance (above foul line balance/ below rebound)



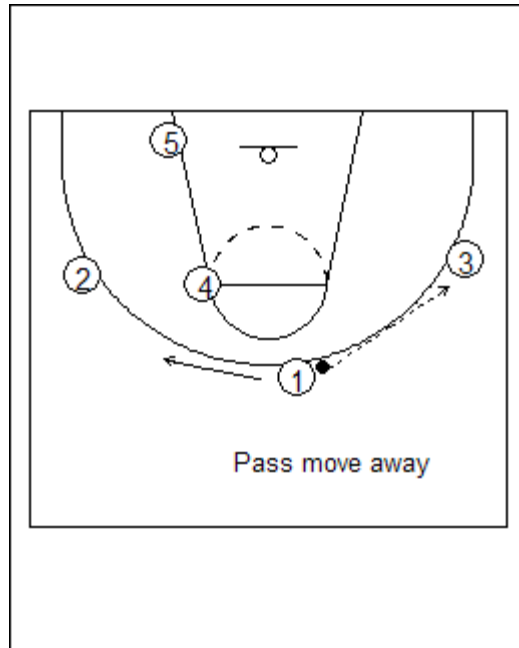
4 on 4 with a post

The drill is the same except the centre now works on sealing, screening, picking and cutting against the zone. We are trying to get the ball inside.

Zone offense

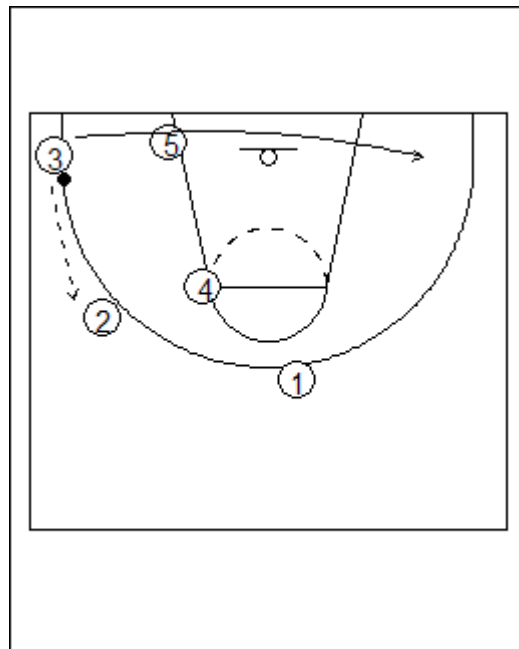
- 1) Need good passers
- 2) Make the ball arrive in the heart of the defense
 - a) penetrating pass
 - b) dribble penetration
- 3) No more than 3 passes on the perimeter - one of the 3 should be a skip. If reach 3 need a penetration (pass, dribble)
- 4) Use a big player at the top to be a passer. Better vision. Can return inside.
- 5) Offensive rebound - very difficult to box out
- 6) If you play a system where is the weakest defender. As a coach you get to decide who has to guard your best player. Go 1 on 1 on the reversal.
- 7) If the defensive centre is weak use lots of cuts in the interior.
- 8) you should be able to attack any zone with the same basic options. You don't have the time to have a different offense for each defense.

Perimeter rules

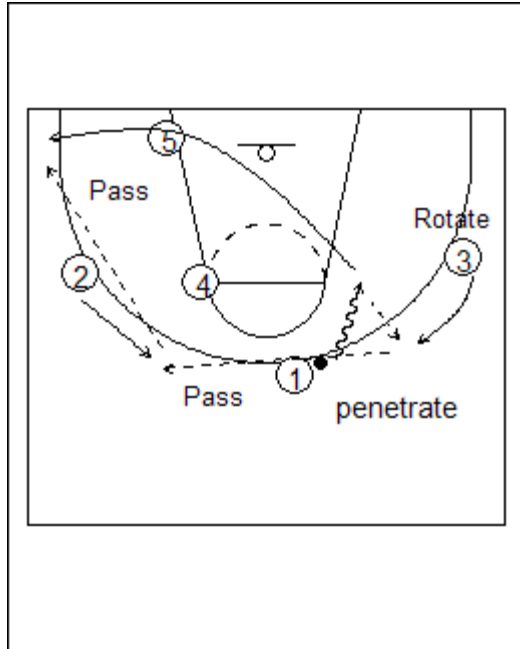


- 1) pass move away
- 2) penetrate - rotate - pass (shot) - pass (shot)
- 3) use pick

Corner pass



If you pass out of the corner you move away by running the baseline to the opposite side.

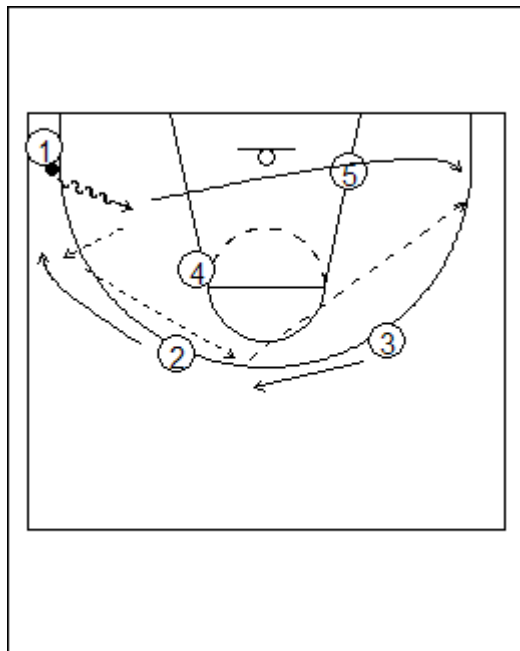


35

Penetrate - rotate - pass - pass

This is the heart of a good zone attack.
After penetration if the penetrator goes away it will open up skip passes and overload situations.

If after completing the four moves no shot occurs repeat the process.



36

The cycle is repeated since no shot occurred.

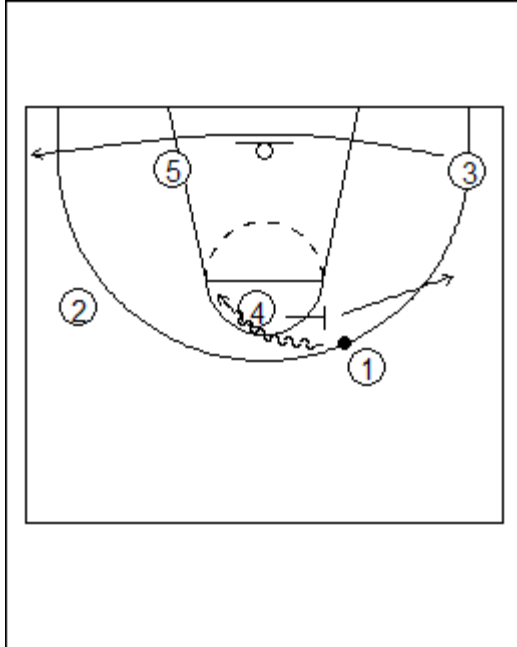
Once you have established the pattern break it with fakes and passes against the grain.

Remember that after making a perimeter pass move **AWAY** from the ball.

Shot fakes and pass fakes are very important.

Never follow a penetration with an immediate penetration. The defense has been collapsed by the first penetration and has not had time to expand again.

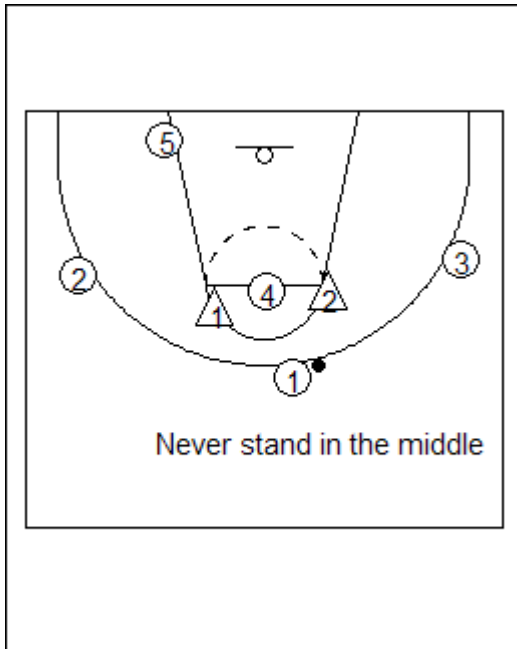
Pick the zone



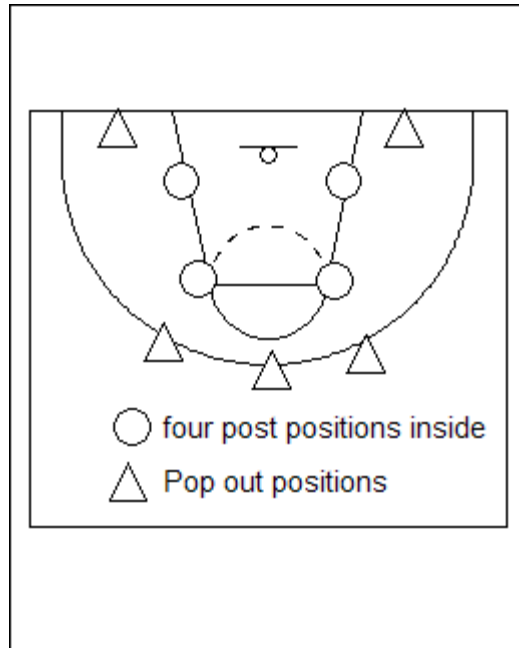
The posts can also step out and pick the zone. Very tough to defend since there is no one to hedge. If you are a shooter run away. If you are a non-shooter roll to the basket.

Post rules

- 1) never stand in the middle
- 2) move to 4 positions
- 3) When the high post has the ball he must see three players
- 4) Post can step out to receive the ball.

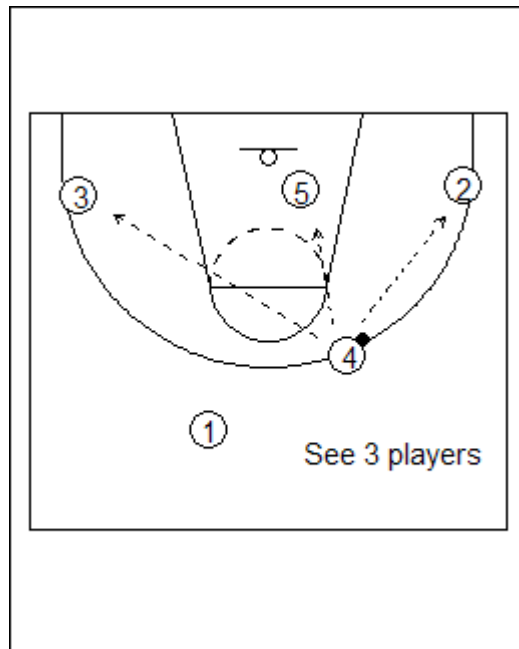


If 4 stands in the middle it takes away the penetration of the guard.



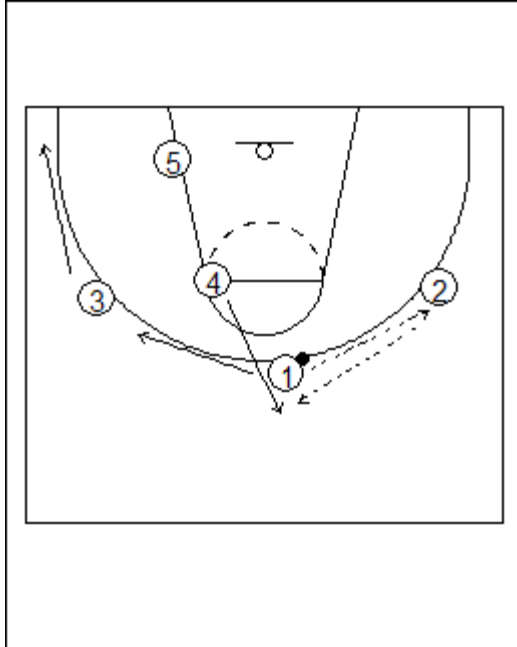
The posts occupy the four interior positions. Remember if you can seal in the key to get the ball do so. These positions are reference points to avoid 3 seconds.

The posts can also pop out to positions to help in passing the ball.



Whenever a high post has the ball he should be able to see three offensive players. The fourth player is for defensive balance and a pressure release.

Post pop out

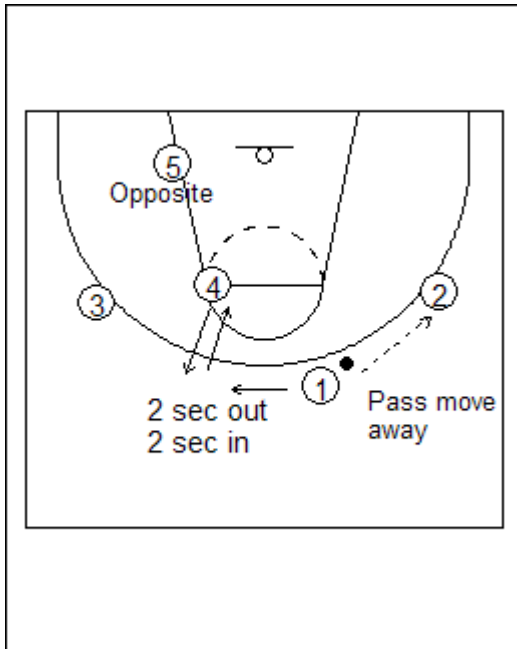


This is a good way to give the zone another look.

It is especially good if the defense starts sagging.

When 1 passes the ball to 2 he sides away. This keys 3 to do the same. It now opens a space for 4 to step into to accept a pass. This creates an overload on the help side of the defense.

"System"



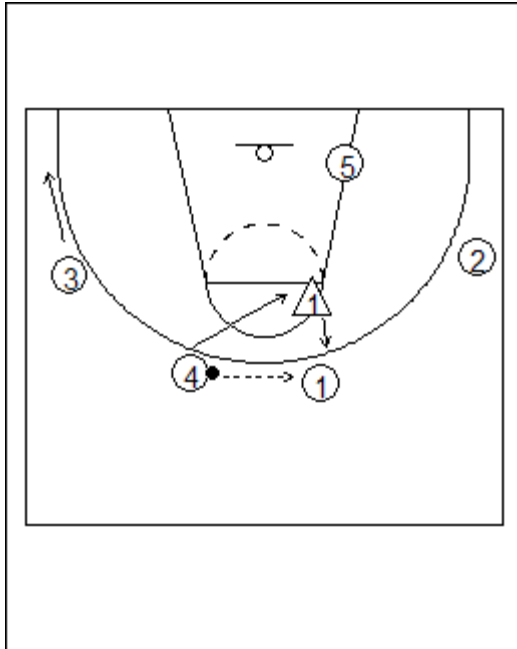
Also after a more patterned system that flows into the zone motion.

Rules

- 5 stay opposite side of the ball
- 1,2, 3 pass and move opposite
- 4 - 2 sec out, 2 sec in

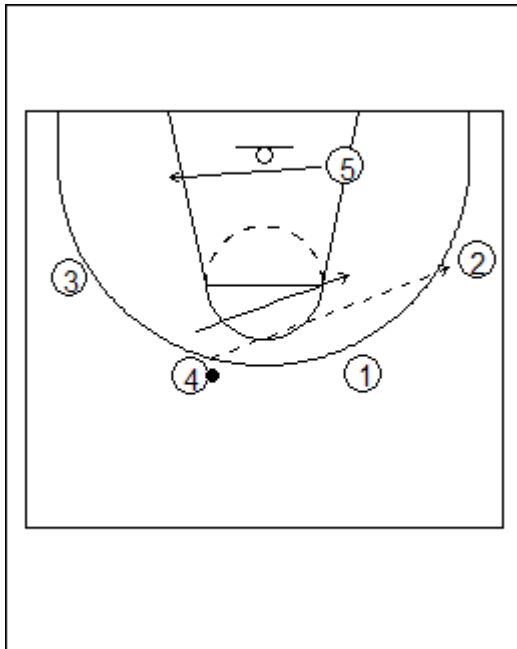
Short pass

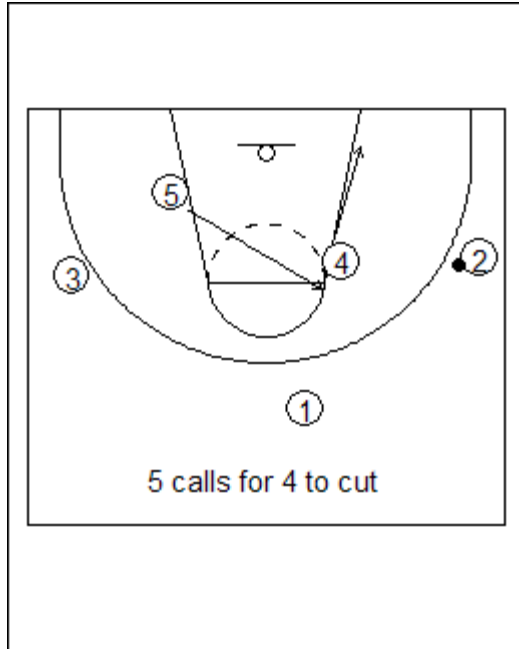
On a short pass 4 cuts in behind the defender in the zone who now will guard the ball.



Long pass

On the pass to the wing 4 cuts to fill the open space. 5 goes away

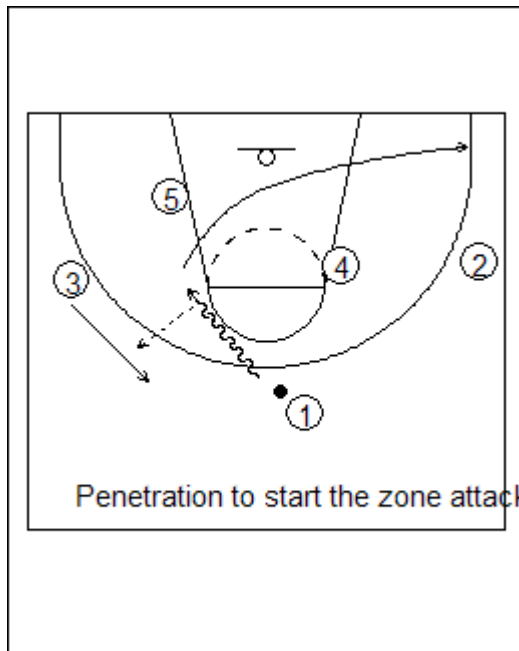




Low player calls the cut

5 can now direct 4 by telling him to cut low. If no call stay in the high post.

It works best if 4 and 5 are interchangeable.



Zone attack can now be started

- a) penetration
- b) post pop pass
- c) system
- d) pick