

How to Shoot a Basketball

Proper shooting form is important to shooting success. This six step guide breaks down the fundamentals of shooting mechanics and form. Concentrate on executing the proper form by beginning in close range, and over time, begin to shoot from longer distances.

Step 1: Body Stance & Position

- A. Square body to the basket or target.
- B. Begin with your knees and hips slightly bent with equal weight on each foot, dominant foot should be slightly in front of non-dominant foot (no more than a few inches).
- C. Mentally prepare to catch ball and shoot.

Step 2: Hand Placement

- A. Place shooting hand behind the basketball and position balance hand on the side of the basketball.
- B. Leave a small space between the basketball and the middle of your palm.
- C. Spread your fingers far enough apart to balance the ball in one hand so it is sitting on your finger pads.

Step 3: Shot Pocket

- A. The shot pocket is the area where the player is most comfortable starting their shot from. This area is typically around the lower chest or stomach area and either in the middle of their body or slightly to the shooting hand side.
- B. Position the ball in the your shot pocket the same way every time you catch the basketball.

Step 4: Eyes on Target

- A. Pick a target and be consistent. Target options include, center of back of the rim, just over the front of the rim, first loop in net, entire hoop, or practice spot on the wall) and line up your body, shot pocket and eyes to the target.

Step 5: Wrist and Elbow Position

- A. Bend shooting hand back as far as possible (almost 90 degrees)
- B. Raise up arm to create a 'L' shape with upper and lower arm. Keep elbow in and not flared out.

Step 6: Shoot

- A. Basketball is lifted from the shot pocket.
- B. Player lifts into the air and knees and hips straighten out.
- C. The elbow of the shooting arm straightens up into the air and is lifted above shoulder height.
- D. Near the peak of the shot snap the wrist in the direction of the rim finishing with fingers pointed towards the ground.
- E. Balance hand (non-dominant hand) should stay flat and not guide the basketball to the hoop.
- F. Ball should roll off your fingertips, producing back spin.
- G. When returning to the ground, you will notice your momentum has moved your body slightly forward from take-off point.