



## **Tips for Conducting Safe Training Sessions**

Though the risks can be few, coaches have a responsibility to ensure that athletes know, understand and appreciate the risks of basketball. The safety and well-being of athletes are the coaches' primary concerns. Basketball is not a dangerous sport, but accidents do occur when coaches forget to take safety precautions. It is the head coach's responsibility to minimize the occurrence of injuries by providing safe conditions.

1. Establish clear rules for behavior at the first practice, and enforce them.
  - Keep your hands to yourself.
  - Listen to the coach.
  - When you hear the whistle, Stop, Look, and Listen.
  - Ask the coach before you leave the court.
2. Make sure athletes bring water to every practice.
3. Check your first aid kit; restock supplies as necessary.
4. Identify the nearest phone accessible during practice.
5. Ensure that the locker rooms and/or rest rooms are available and clean during practice.
6. Train all athletes and coaches on emergency procedures.
7. Do not allow athletes to play while wearing watches, bracelets or jewelry, including earrings.
8. Provide proper stretching exercises after warming up at the beginning of each practice.
9. Provide activities that also improve general fitness levels. Fit athletes are less likely to get injured.
10. Make the area safe. Repair warped boards or holes on the floors, remove protruding objects from walls, etc., that could cause injury. Simply telling athletes to avoid obstacles is not enough.
11. Walk the court to see that safe conditions exist. The floor should be clean, lighting should be adequate and padding provided where needed. There should be no unnecessary equipment or obstacles and no loose objects.
12. Identify a safe area where basketballs can be stored during practice. Safe areas must be at least two meters to the side or beyond the court. Unused basketballs can be placed in ball bags and stored in this location.
13. Check the basketballs for proper inflation and loose panels.
14. Check the baskets and nets.
15. Encourage athletes to wear knee pads, knee braces, athletic supporters, eyeglass straps and mouth guards when needed. Some athletes need the extra protection.
16. Encourage athletes to wear comfortable, loose-fitting clothing, one or two pairs of white cotton or cotton-blend socks, and properly fitted and tied court shoes.
17. Evenly match athletes physically in games where they play against each other and in activities such as one-on-one, scrimmages, Mini-Basketball, etc.
18. Provide one-to-one instruction, especially to athletes with lower ability.
19. Always have at least two coaches at each practice and game to provide:
  - One-to-one coaching of athletes with the lowest ability
  - One-to-two coaching of athletes with lower ability
  - One-to-three coaching of athletes with moderate ability
  - One-to-four coaching of athletes with higher ability