

TRANSITION OFFENSE

AGAINST ANY DEFENSE



DEJAN ILIC

TRANSITION OFFENSE AGAINST ANY DEFENSE

A Comprehensive Guide For Basketball
Coaches

Dejan Ilic

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This book is dedicated to basketball coaches worldwide. It will help aspiring and experienced coaches alike to improve their game by mastering an effective transition offense and equipping their players with the tools and knowledge they need to succeed.

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INTRODUCTION

Transition Offense Against Any Defense is a practical guide to basketball coaching, written by expert basketball coach and former player Dejan Ilic. Featuring a comprehensive breakdown of essential basketball techniques and strategies, readers will uncover a step-by-step blueprint that arms coaches and players alike with the knowledge they need to counter a wide range of pick and roll defenses, including drop, flat, hedge, trap, switch, ice, under, and much more.

This book features simple instructions, no-nonsense advice, and a collection of more than 140 high-quality, full-color diagrams to illustrate every point. The content gives coaches the confidence and skills they need to gradually implement these must-know offensive principles and empower their players with strategies for success. This complete handbook covers fundamental spacing and timing, common and advanced offensive maneuvers, 3v0 and 5v0 drills, and detailed instructions for coaches on how to put everything together.

Perfect for beginner and experienced basketball coaches, Transition Offense Against Any Defense breaks down author Dejan Ilic's two decades of basketball experience, arming you with a concise and powerful set of principles that you can use to control the court, counter any defense, and dramatically improve your team's offensive game.

FAST BREAK LANES AND SPACING

Proper spacing is one of the fundamental requirements for any basketball offense to thrive. Different coaches have different ideas and philosophies about spacing. One of the best definitions out there is that spacing is good when players find a position on the court that allows their teammates to shoot, drive, cut, or pass without interference. Players must use the whole court from sideline to sideline and from half-court line to baseline and be aware of their teammates' actions with and without the ball. Good spacing should never allow one defender to control multiple offensive players.

Spacing and timing are fundamental concepts that all basketball players should learn from a young age. Unfortunately, many players lack this knowledge, even at the pro level. Instead, they are more focused on their skills and athleticism, which are essential, but understanding spacing and timing allows players to know which moves from their skill set to use, when to use them, and why.

When starting a new season, primarily when working with a new team unfamiliar with the system, coaches should teach spacing from day one. The best place to start is transition offense by teaching the players how to run the fast break properly. Proper fast break lanes are a prerequisite to good spacing. A team must have smooth continuity from running a fast break to playing a secondary break and early offense without disrupting the flow or messing up the spacing. There are many ways to run the court, and there is no universal solution. Most of the time, how the court is run depends on

the roster and player capabilities. Here are some things to consider. Can the bigs run the court well? Can a point guard push the ball up the floor? How well can combo guards and wings move the ball down the court? As a coach, one of the most important things is to know your players and what they are capable of, and then choose the system that's right for them. There is no "best" system. There is only the system that best fits a specific team.

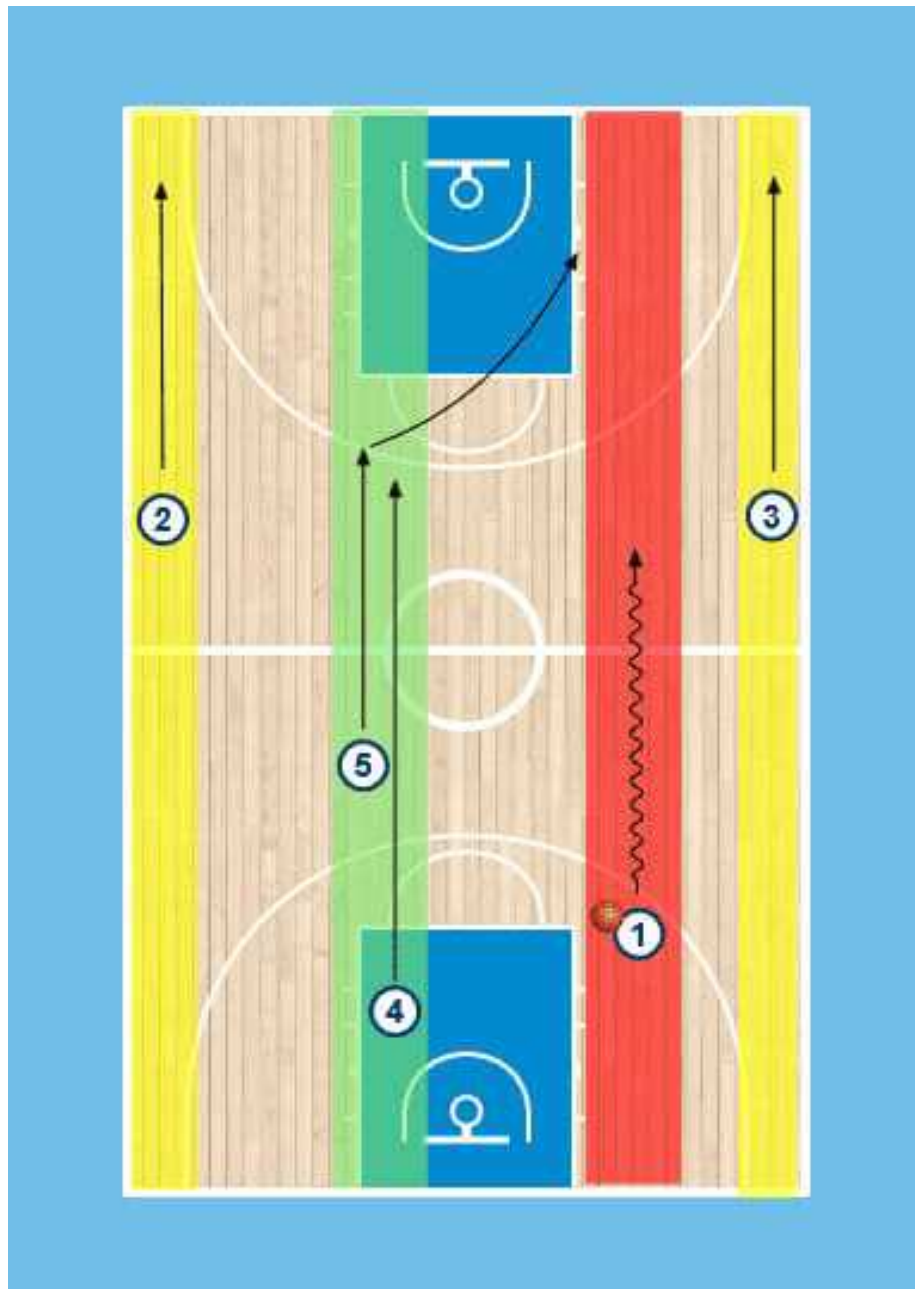


Diagram 1

The system in this book uses a specific set of running lanes. As shown in Diagram 1, Players 2 and 3 (guards/wings) must run as wide as possible next to the sideline (yellow). If they do not receive the outlet pass or cut to the basket, they should run to the corner and space the floor. Player 1 (point guard) should drive the ball between the elbow line extended and the three-point line (red). That way, he can have the best angle to pass to all four teammates. Players 4 and 5 should run on the elbow line extended on the opposite side from the point guard (green). Once Player 5 reaches the three-point line, and no one drives to the basket, he should cut to the opposite low post. However, if he sees that the guards or wings are driving, he should not cut all the way to give them a clear path to the basket. Player 4 runs the same lane as Player 5, spots up on the three-point line, and spaces the floor. If there was no opportunity to finish the fast break by passing, driving, or cutting, the players must flow into the default spacing shown below in Diagram 2.

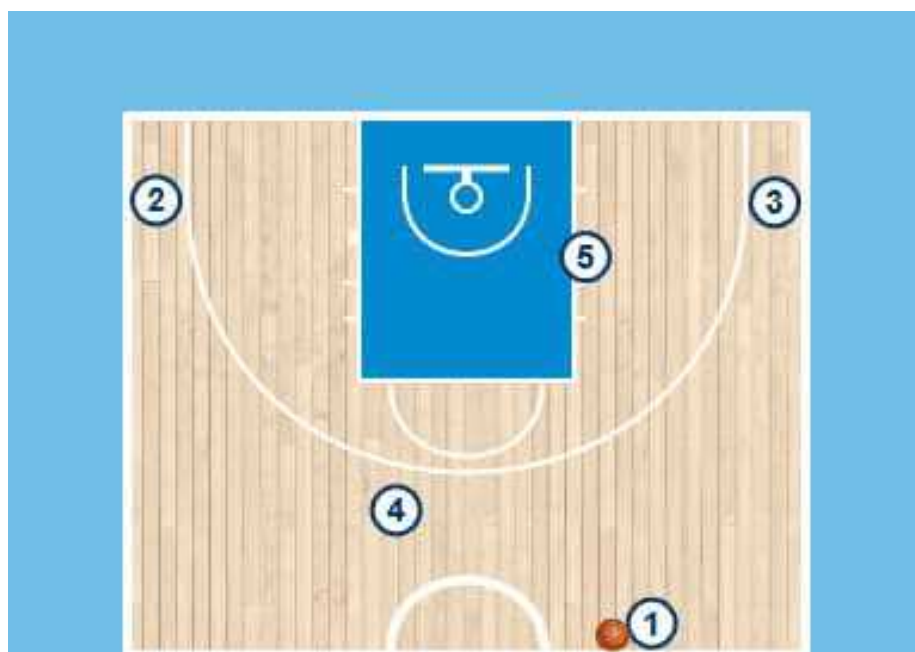


Diagram 2

Players 2 and 3 are in the corners, in line with the rim, spacing the floor. Player 5 is at the ball-side low post, and Player 4 is on the three-point line next to the lane line extended. Players 4 and 5 are

always on the opposite sides, diagonally from each other. Every offensive set within this system, including transition offense, should start from this spacing. Also, when players improvise but do not find a way to score, they should always flow right back to this default spacing and re-run the offense if there is sufficient time on the clock.

Players must learn to flow naturally into the offensive spacing, which is the foundation for the entire offensive system. It is a smooth progression, and that is precisely how coaches should teach it. When teaching players, especially something new, coaches must use a clear and logical step-by-step progression of ideas rather than jumping from one idea to another. Start with the basics and gradually move to the more complex steps, but only when players have mastered the previous step. When teaching this system, it must be clear to everyone where to begin, what the final result should look like, and why each incremental step is required.

3 VS 0 DRIVE AND KICK

One of the best ways to start teaching fast break lanes is through 3vs0 drills. A wide variety of 3vs0 drills with different entries and finishes can be used, but one drill greatly complements this system. The three segments of this drill are the drive-kick, pass and pick, and pass and screen away. If coaches do not have time to go through all the options and segments in a single practice, they can spread them out over multiple practices.

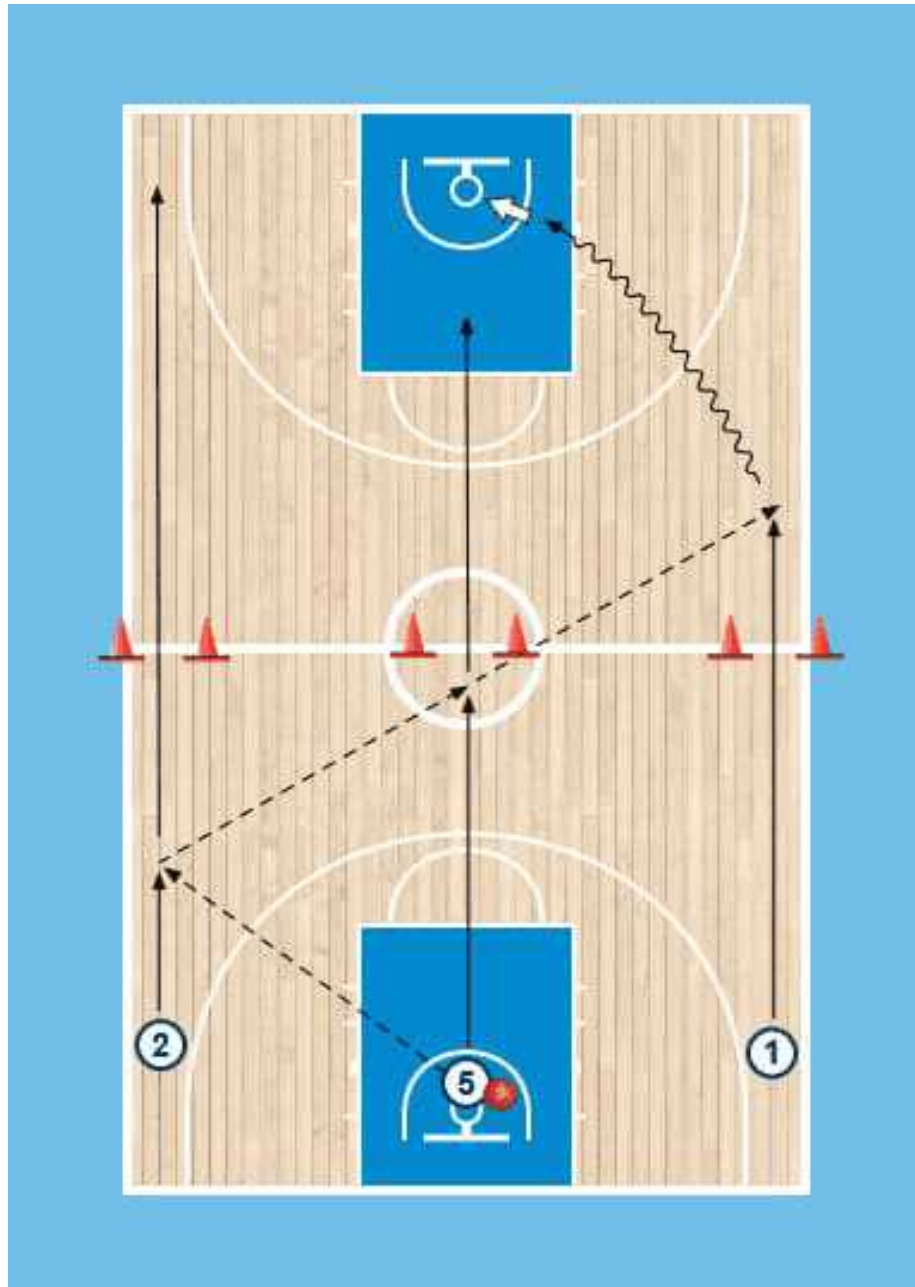


Diagram 3

Here is how the drill goes. The bigs are always in the middle (position 4/5), the guards/wings are on the sides, and each has a dedicated running lane. In the beginning, coaches can create cone gates at the half-court line to force the players to run the lanes correctly. However, after a couple of practices when the players have developed the habit of running in their lane, the cones should be removed. Players must make three passes: Player 5 passes to Player

2, then Player 2 passes back to Player 5, and finally, Player 5 passes to Player 1. All passes must be precise and sharp. Coaches can change the pass type to their liking and use a two-handed, inside hand, outside hand, or an overhead pass. The players should receive the third pass outside of the three-point line.

Coaches should go through all the different options and finishes step-by-step. For example, the first option in Diagram 3 shows that Player 1 drives baseline, Player 5 follows the drive and dives to the middle of the paint, while Player 2 runs to his spot in the corner and spaces the floor. Each option should be done four times in this exact way:

1. The drill should start as shown in Diagram 3. Player 2 should be on the left side, Player 5 should be in the middle, and Player 1 should be on the right side. The first pass goes left to Player 2, and Player 1 finishes on the right side.
2. In the second repetition, Players 1 and 2 must change the sides, but the roles stay the same. The first pass goes right to Player 2, and Player 1 finishes on the left side.
3. In the third repetition, players must change the sides again (now it is the same as repetition 1), but they also change the roles. The first pass goes left to Player 1, and Player 2 finishes on the right side.
4. In the fourth and final repetition, players must change the sides again. The first pass goes right to Player 1, and Player 2 finishes on the left side.

By doing this, guards and wings will have the opportunity to do both options from both sides. Once players finish all four reps as described, coaches can progress to the next option.

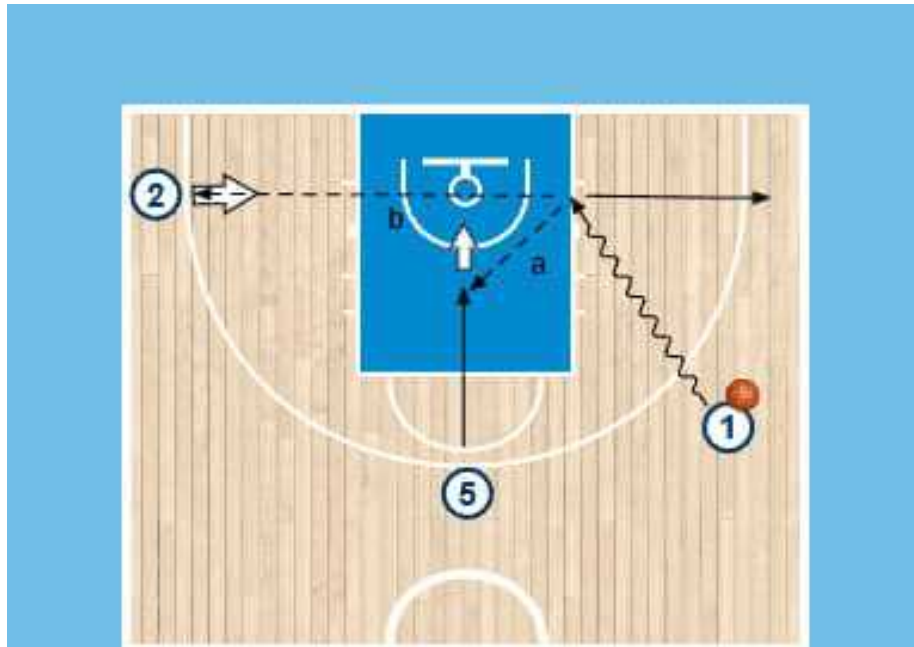


Diagram 4

All subsequent options will have a logical progression and add up to the previous one. If Player 1 cannot drive all the way, he can pass to either Player 5 or Player 2. Keep in mind that each option is separate, and each should be done four times the same way as the first one (changing sides and roles). Here are the following two options:

- a) If X5 (defensive Player 5) helps, Player 1 should pass to Player 5. He can either use a bounce pass with his inside (in this case, left) hand or an alley-oop lob pass with the outside (right) hand over X5. Player 5 finishes with a no-dribble drop step or a dunk.
- b) If X2 rotates, Player 1 should pass to Player 2. He can only use a step-out pass with his outside (right) hand. Player 2 catches and shoots. The shot simulates that the closeout is late or non-existent.

Players should throw both passes from outside of the painted area. If players are any closer to the basket, it is usually too late for the defense to help, and in that case, players should look to score, not to pass. One important thing repeats throughout this drill: whenever

a player drives and makes a pass, he should immediately run outside the three-point line and find proper spacing again. In this case, once Player 1 passes to Player 5, he should immediately backpedal to the corner, correct his spacing, and repeat that throughout the drill.

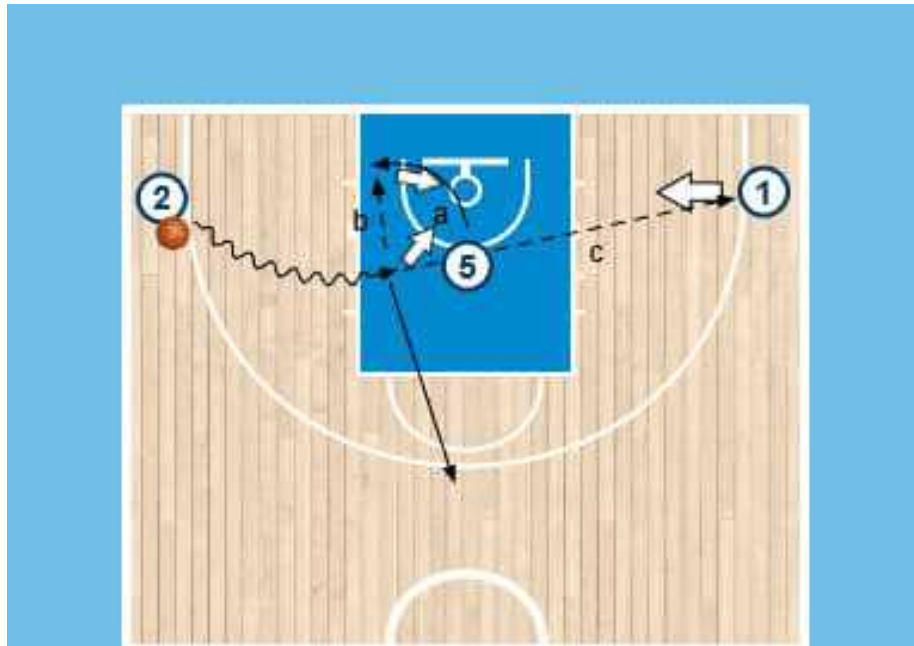


Diagram 5

Attacking the closeout has become one of the most important things in modern basketball, and players should always focus on it, even in the drills without a defense such as this one. In the last option, Player 2 took a shot immediately upon the catch, meaning that he read that the closeout was late, and he took the opportunity for an open shot. In this case, the closeout is aggressive or too aggressive, and Player 2 decides to drive to the basket. One more important rule in this drill and in basketball, in general, is that players should drive to the opposite side from the one they received a pass. If they receive a pass from the left, they should drive to the right, and vice versa. If they receive a pass from the right, they should drive to the left. There are a couple of reasons for this. First, there are usually fewer defenders on the opposite side of the floor. Second, the helper has a longer rotation to recover, and he is easier to beat because of the momentum. In this case, Player 2 received a pass from baseline

(his left), meaning he should drive to the middle (his right). Player 5 dives under the basket to open the lane for the drive. Player 2 has three options (once again, each is a separate one, and players should do each four times):

- a) Player 2 drives all the way and finishes.
- b) Player 2 makes a pocket bounce pass to Player 5 with his inside (left) hand.
- c) Player 2 makes a push pass to Player 3 with his dribble hand (right). Player 3 catches and shoots.

Both passes should be made from the lane line, same as before. Also, following the same rule as Player 1 on the first drive, Player 2 should sprint outside the three-point line immediately after the pass and re-adjust his spacing.

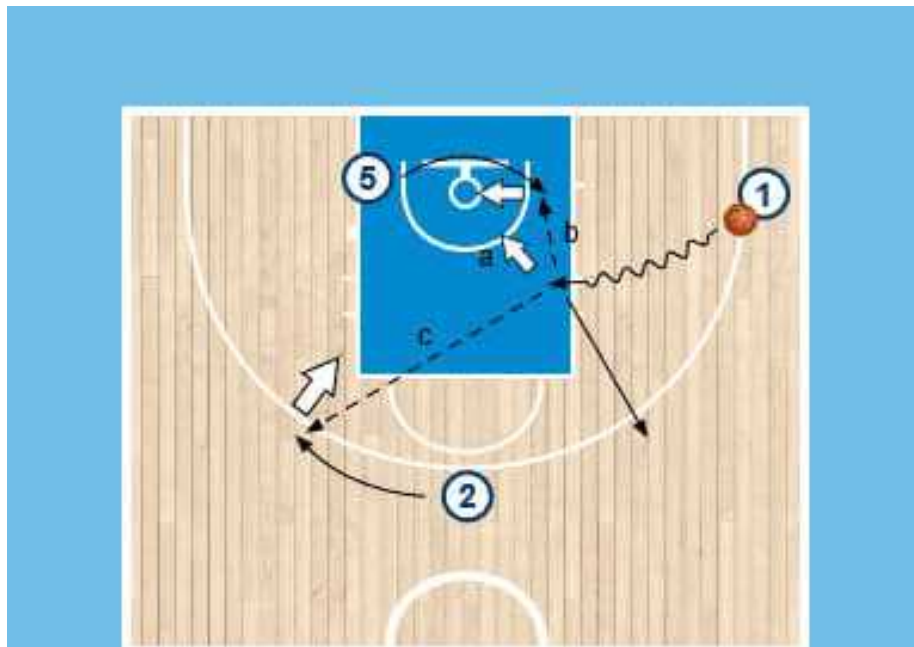


Diagram 6

Like Player 2 in the last option, Player 1 sees an aggressive closeout coming and decides to drive. Only this time, he decides to drive middle, for two reasons:

- 1. Since he already beat his defender baseline once, he might be overly aggressive to close the baseline drive.

2. Players will have the reps driving baseline and middle for the drill's sake.

Similar to the last option after the drive, Player 1 can:

- a) Drive to the basket and finish.
- b) Pass to Player 5 using a pocket bounce-pass with his inside (right) hand.
- c) Pass to Player 2 using a push pass out of dribble with his outside (left) hand. Player 2 shoots, simulating a bad closeout.

After passing to either teammate, Player 1 sprints out and re-adjusts his spacing.

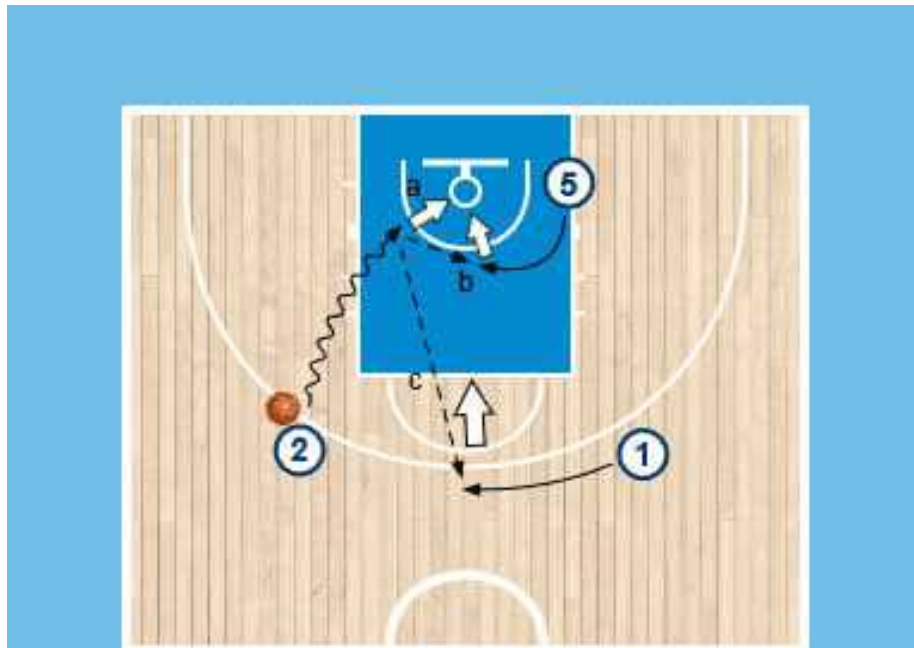


Diagram 7

In the next option, Player 2 attacks the closeout and can then do one of three things:

- a) Drive to the basket and finish.
- b) Pass to Player 5 using a pocket bounce-pass with his inside (right) hand.

- c) Pass out to Player 1 using a hook pass with his outside (left) hand or throw an overhead pass with both hands.

It is up to coaches how many options will be done in this drill. The drill can practically be run indefinitely. However, it should not become too repetitive for players. Both perimeter players have driven to the middle and baseline on both sides and have done both roles. Bigs also covered all sides and angles, so it is okay to stop here and progress to the next segment - pass and pick.

3 VS 0 PASS AND PICK

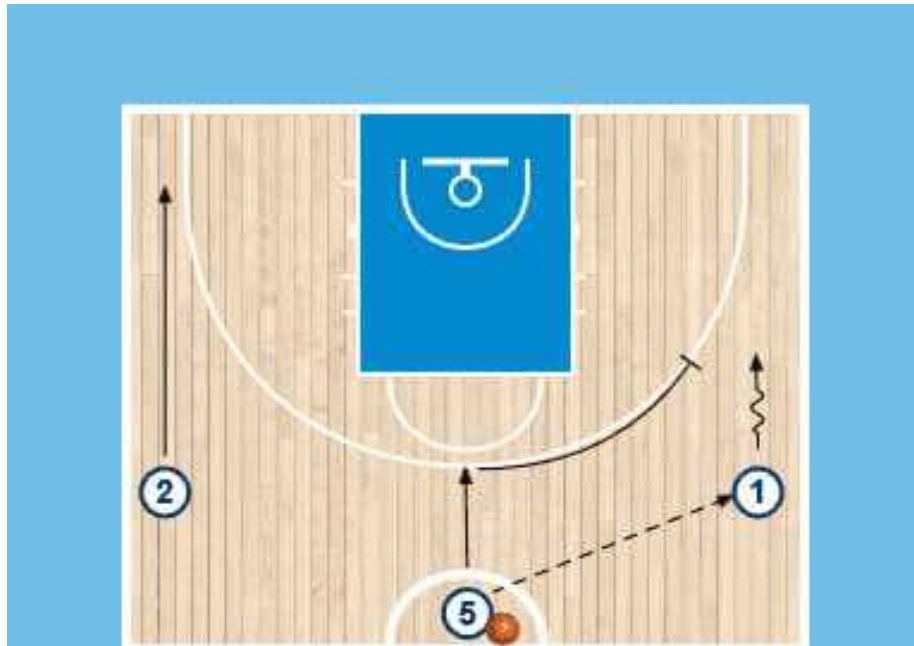


Diagram 8

In this segment, instead of Player 1 driving baseline and Player 5 cutting to the paint, Player 5 changes direction after the third pass and sprints to set the pick for Player 1. The pick-and-roll game has become a crucial part of modern basketball. Initially, only a couple of options existed, but as more teams began using the pick-and-roll offense and defenses adapted, the more these options evolved. Nowadays, there are many ways to defend and attack the pick-and-roll, and which one is used depends on the factors involved. However, coaches should not go through all of them at once. Instead, the team's staff should scout the opponents and determine which pick-and-roll defense they play, and the coach should construct the offense to attack it. For example, if the scouts determine that the opponent's bigs hedge on the side pick, the

coach should only go through hedge options in this drill for that particular game. This segment will cover the most popular ways to defend the pick-and-roll and the best ways to attack in those situations. Players must know all those principles to understand this system and play successfully.

First of all, coaches need to teach players to distinguish the three types of pick-and-roll spacings used in this system:

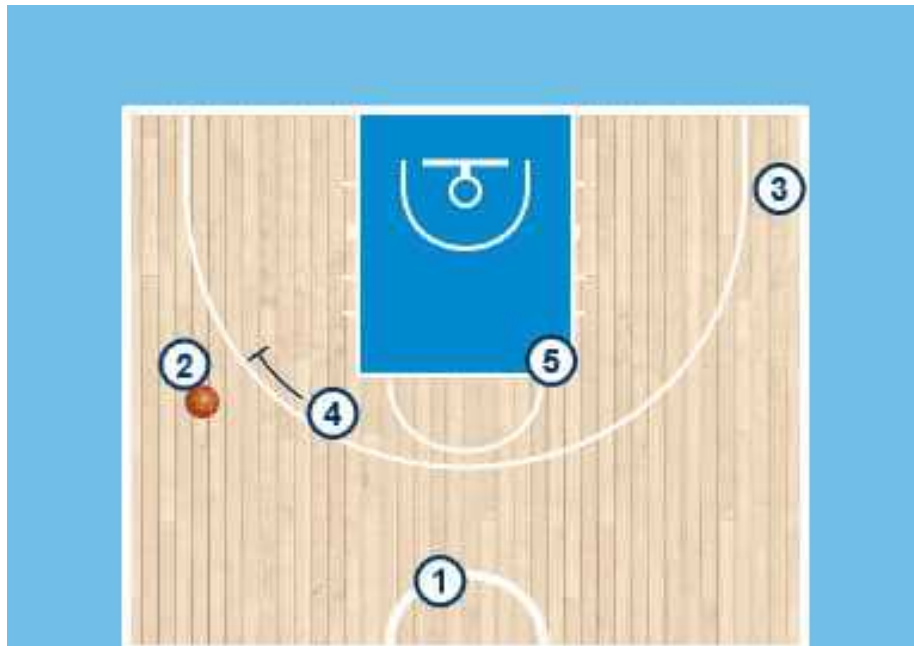


Diagram 9

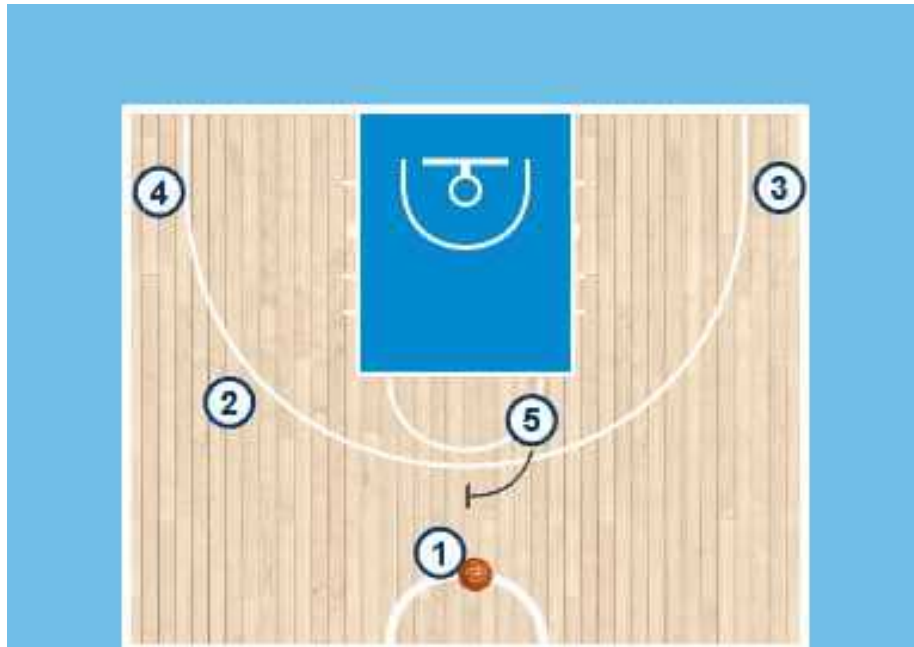


Diagram 10

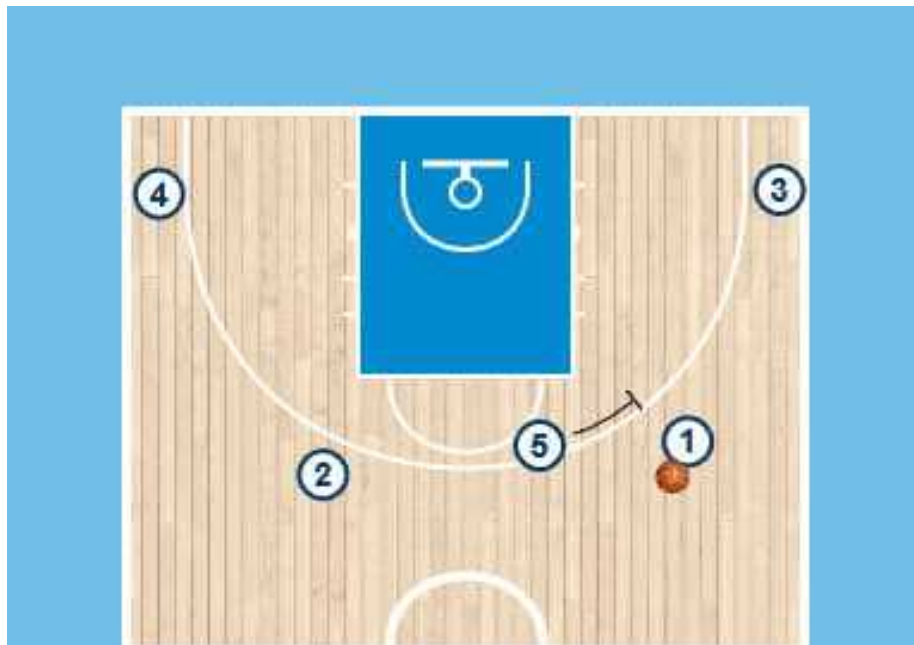


Diagram 11

- 1) Clear-side pick when there is no player in the ball-side corner. Three players are in front, and no one is behind the ballhandler. (Diagram 9)
- 2) Top pick when one player is in front, and two are behind the ballhandler. (Diagram 10)

- a) If X5 plays too passive or goes back to Player 5 too early, Player 1 can pull up from the free-throw line.
- b) If X5 helps, but there is no help-side rotation, Player 1 can make a bounce pass or an alley-oop pass to Player 5.
- c) If X5 helps and X2 rotates, Player 1 can make a skip pass to Player 2 for an open shot.
- d) Player 2 can also cut and attack the basket in the same situation.

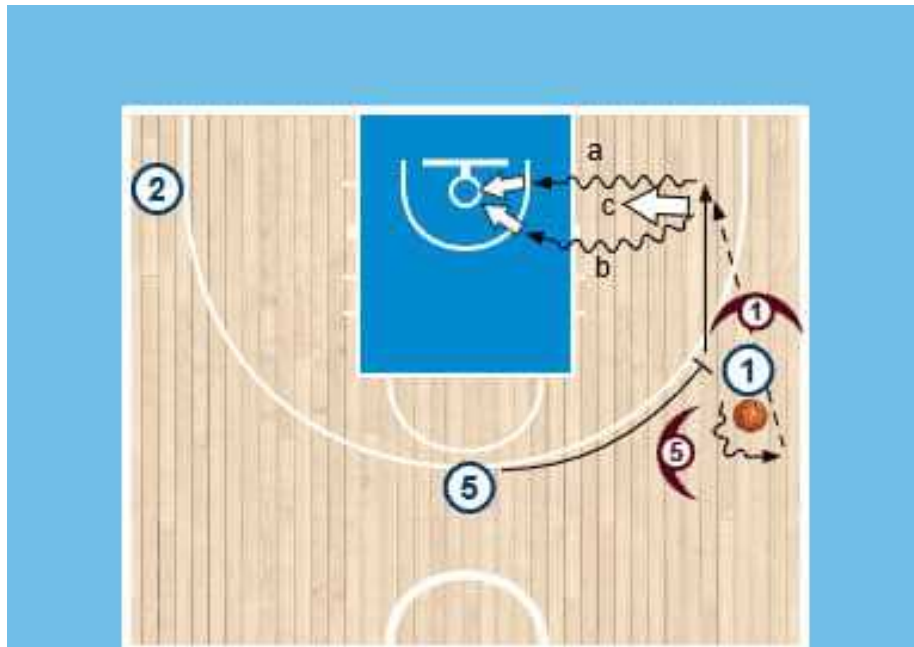


Diagram 13

Diagram 13 shows a different situation when X5 hedges and X1 goes over the screen. Against an aggressive defense like a hedge or a trap, bigs should not hold the screen. Instead, they should set a quick screen or slip without making the screen. Remember that the timing is of the utmost importance here, and if Player 5 misses the timing, nothing will happen. Player 5 should slip when X5 starts to hedge or is still hedging, not when he starts to recover. The angle of the slip is essential, as well. He must open wide into the short corner or even pop out to the corner three-point line to be in line with Player 1, who can then have a better angle to make an easy pass. This pass is possible because there is no player in the ball-side corner. To make a successful pass, Player 1 must first do a short

defensive dribble to keep the ball away from the hedging defender. After that, he must do a wide step-out pivot towards the sideline and pass with his outside hand fully extended to avoid the recovering X1 playing the passing lane. After receiving a pass, Player 5 can:

- Drive the baseline and finish if X5 does not recover and there is no help-side defender.
- Drive the middle and finish if X5 recovers and is overly aggressive to close the baseline.
- Catch and shoot if X5 does not recover, and a help-side defender rotates, but he is late.

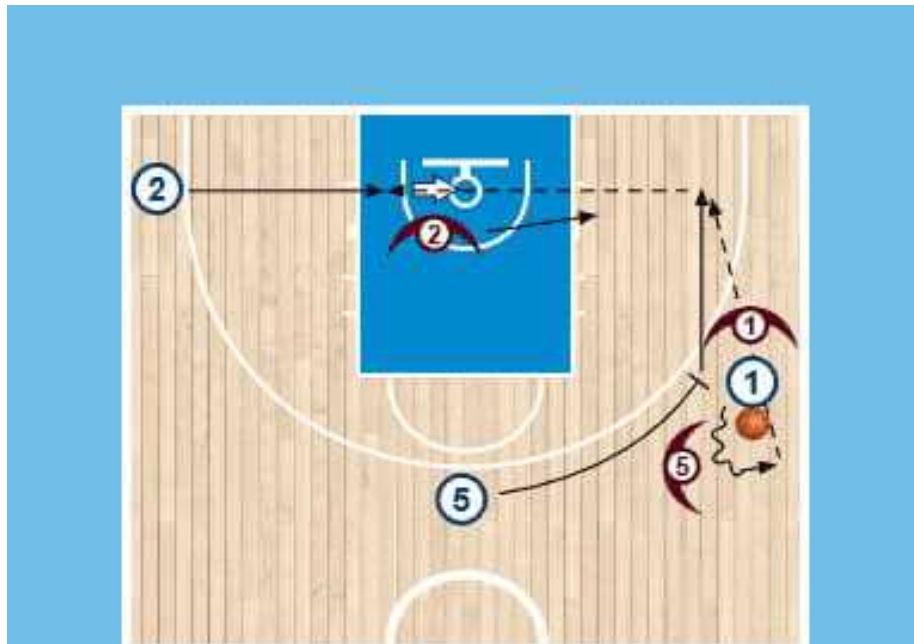


Diagram 14

If the help-side defender rotates all the way, Player 2 can cut, and Player 5 can find him with a step-out baseline pass. That was the fourth option, but coaches can also add their own ideas.

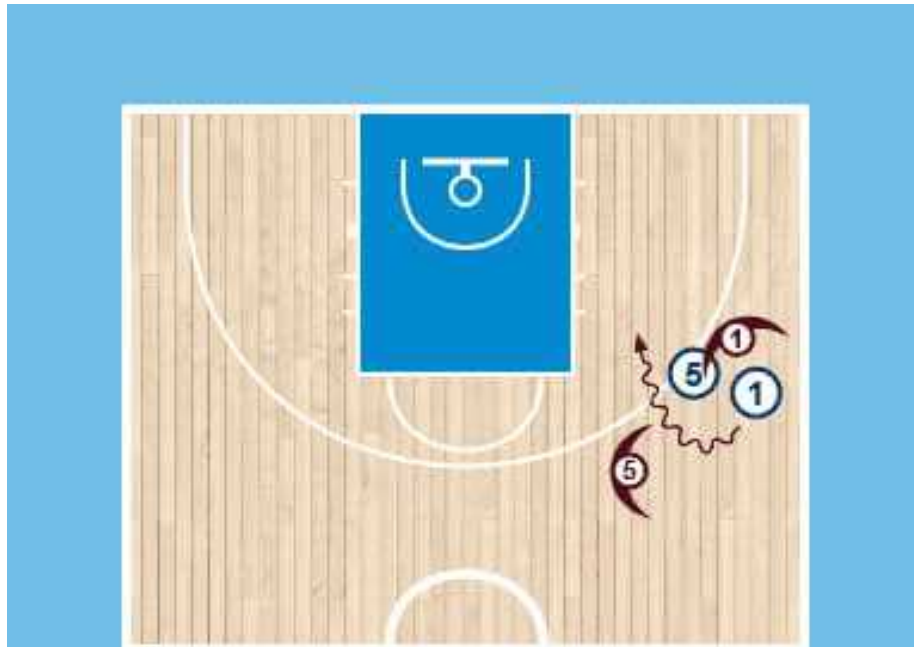


Diagram 15

For example, the ballhandler can attack the hip of the hedging defender and then have multiple options similar to when he attacked the drop. Alternatively, he can split the defense if there is a gap between the screen and the hedge, and have another set of options (Diagram 15).

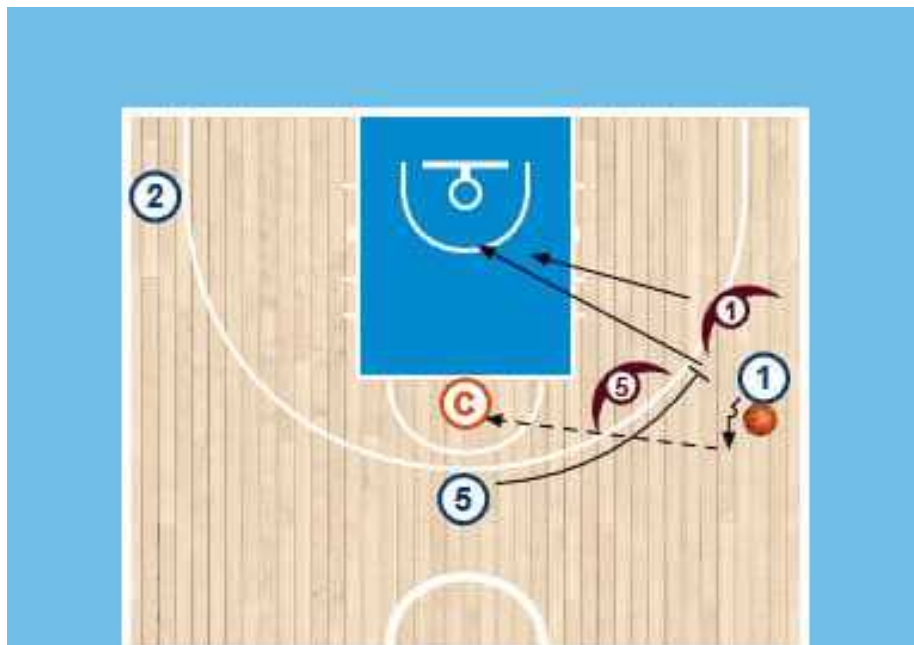


Diagram 16

side does not exist at that moment. Diagram 17 shows that defender X2, who was the primary help-side defender while Player 1 had the ball, is now stuck between helping and not helping.

- a) If X2 does not help, the coach can make an easy high-low lob pass to Player 5.
- b) If X2 helps, the coach can throw an overhead skip pass to Player 2.

Advancing the ball to the middle is the key to exploiting the interior mismatch. However, sometimes coaches want to attack the perimeter mismatch instead. Perhaps they have a ballhandler who is a dominant one-on-one player, or the defensive big man is too slow to defend him. On the other hand, sometimes their offensive bigs are not skilled enough to handle the interior mismatch, so coaches decide to attack the perimeter mismatch. It is all about understanding the factors involved, and deciding which of the two mismatch situations gives the team a better opportunity to score. In any case, here is how to attack the perimeter mismatch.



Diagram 18

Diagram 18 shows that the switch has already happened. X5 guards Player 1 on the perimeter, while X1 plays in front of Player 5 on the

low post. The key to beating bigger defenders off the dribble is to force them to move laterally. Most big men move well in a straight line, forward or backward. So attacking them with a straight line drive is not a good option. However, their lateral movement is not nearly as good in most cases. Having that in mind, Player 1 should set the defender up with a slow and apparent side-step dribble so the defender reacts with a lateral step in one direction. Then Player 1 must change the pace and beat them with a fast crossover drive in the opposite direction, as shown in Diagram 18. Finally, Player 5 should hold X1 on his back and clear the lane so Player 1 can drive all the way to the basket. However, if X5 does not react to the side-step dribble during the perimeter mismatch isolation, Player 1 can exploit that, as well, and drive to the middle.



Diagram 19

In some cases, the defense will try to isolate the screen. Some coaches like to call this "ice" or "side" in short. For example, Diagram 19 shows that the defender X1 guards Player 1 parallel to the sideline, denying him the opportunity to use the screen, isolating him, and forcing him to go baseline where X5 is waiting for him.

Because he cannot set the screen, Player 5 must adapt to the situation in one of two ways.

- a) Dive to the basket. Player 1 must make one dribble to the baseline to adjust the passing angle and force X5 to react. He then makes an inside hand pocket bounce pass to Player 5 through the gap between X1 and X5.
- b) Pop out to the three-point line. Player 1 must make one dribble to the baseline to adjust the passing angle and force X5 to react. He then makes a hook pass or an overhead pass over X1 to Player 5. Player 5 can either drive or advance the ball to the other side. X5 is too far away to react, and the defense must help and rotate.

Another way to attack the isolation is to flip the screen. However, the spacing needs to be adjusted a bit. Player 1 must set up the flip by repositioning himself further away from the sideline and the basket, so he can have more space to drive. Diagram 20 shows Player 1 adjusting the spacing.

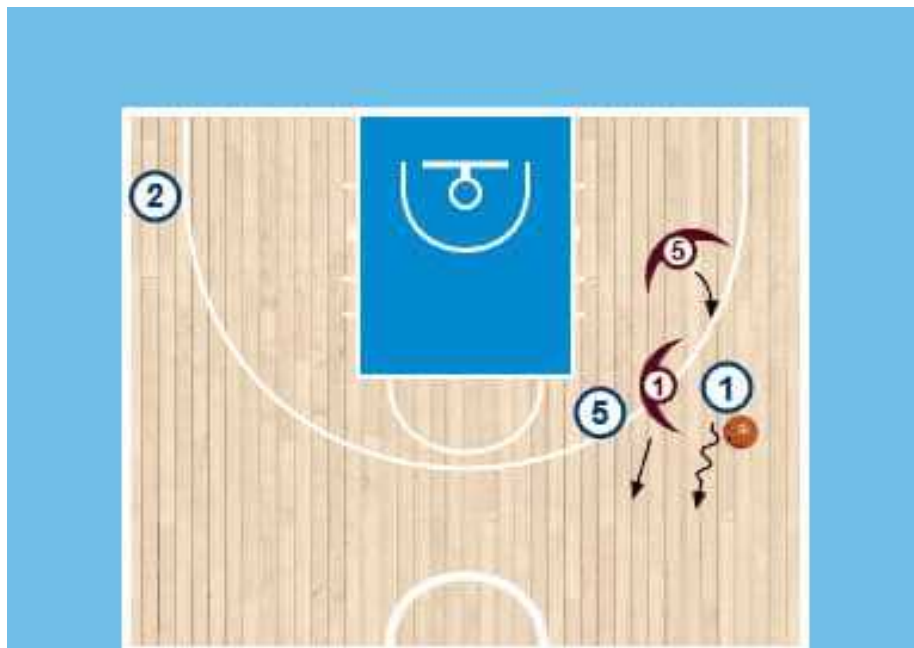


Diagram 20

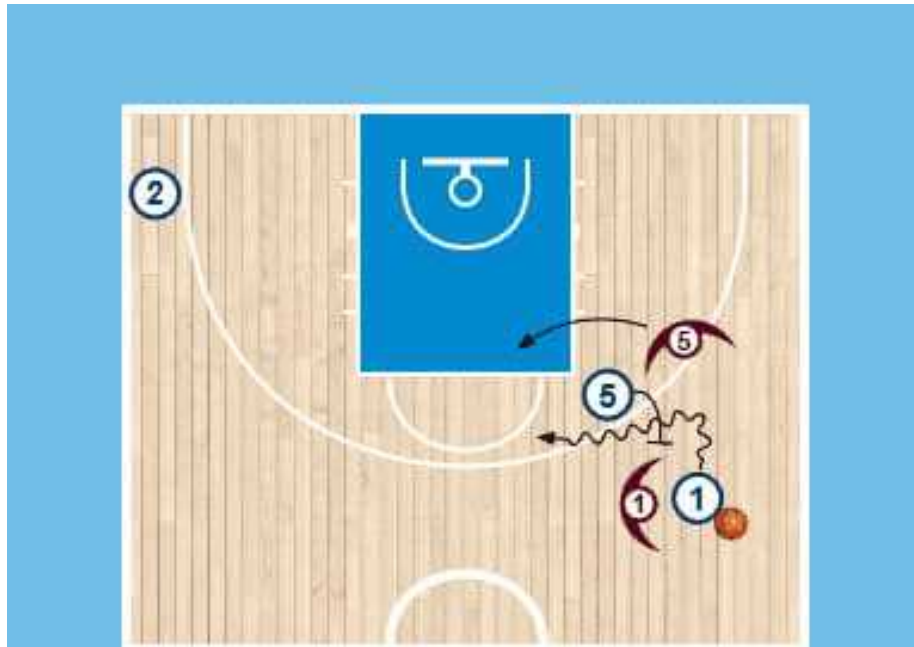


Diagram 21

The spacing and angle should now allow Player 5 to flip the screen properly. Player 1 should use the screen and immediately curl around Player 5 using a so-called "snake" move, forcing X5 to react.



Diagram 22

Player 5 must hold the screen until Player 1 clears the screen with a snake move. After that, he should roll the opposite way towards the

baseline. Player 1 attacks wide off the snake and forces X5 into a two-against-one situation. This situation is similar to attacking the drop, and the principles are the same:

- a) If X5 plays too passive or goes back to Player 5 too early, Player 1 can pull up from the free-throw line.
- b) If X5 helps, but there is no help-side rotation, Player 1 can make a bounce pass or an alley-oop pass to Player 5.
- c) If X5 helps and X2 rotates, Player 1 can make a skip pass to Player 2 for an open shot.

This chapter will not cover all types of pick-and-roll defenses. For example, attacking the drop-and-under, push-and-under, or push-and-through defenses with a re-pick would disrupt the continuity of this transition offense, which is essential. There will be more regarding this topic in the following chapters.

3 VS 0 PASS AND SCREEN AWAY

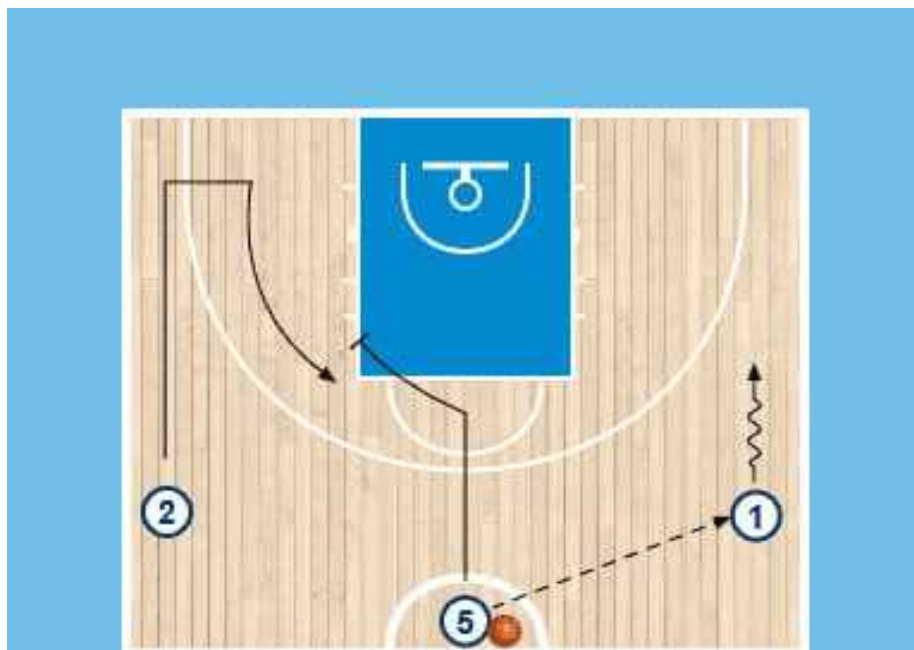


Diagram 23

In the next 3vs0 segment, instead of setting a pick for the ballhandler after the third pass, Player 5 sets a screen for Player 2. Before using the screen, Player 2 must set his man up and force him to run into Player 5 and utilize the screen properly. Also, when using the screen, Player 2 must rub his shoulder against the screener's shoulder, so there is no gap for the defender to slide through.

There are many different ways to defend this type of screen. For example, X2 can push Player 2 out of his intended path and force him to miss the screen. If he lacks the strength to do so, he can trail behind Player 2 or go over the screen. He can even deny Player 2

from going to the screen by playing in the so-called "top lock" stance, forcing him to go the opposite way, similar to isolating the ballhandler during the on-ball screen. X5 can play the drop, stay in the passing lane so Player 2 cannot curl to the basket, and even stunt Player 2 if X2 is late to recover. However, this chapter will not cover everything because this is only a progression to another drill and is not essential to our transition offense system. It will cover only the most common situations. Regardless, coaches can go through as many options as they deem necessary. Diagram 24 shows the first two options.

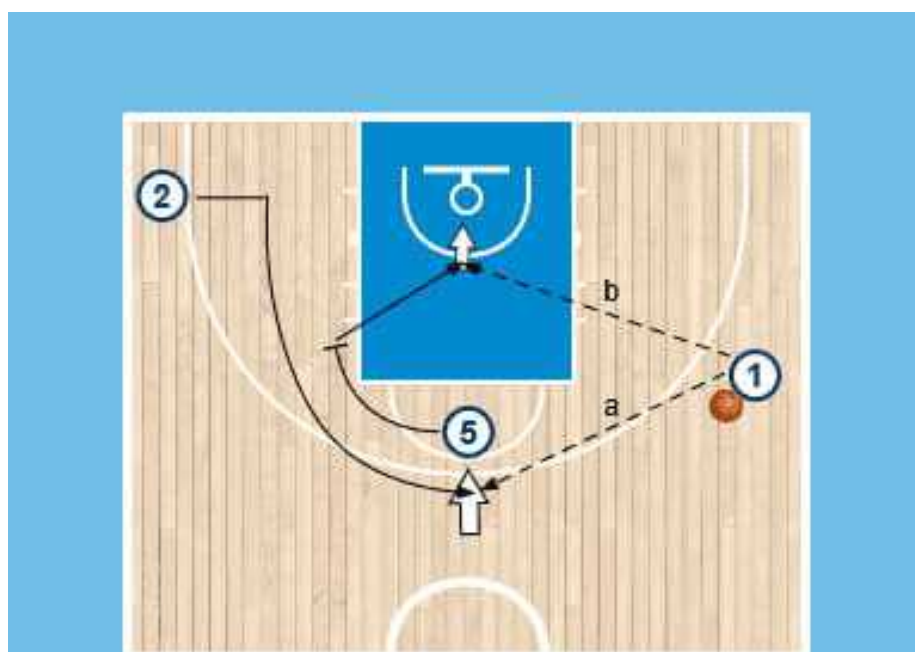


Diagram 24

If X2 is trailing behind Player 2, while X5 is in the lane preventing the curl, X1 can:

- a) Pass to Player 2 for the catch and shoot if X5 does not overextend to help.
- b) Pass to cutting Player 5 if X5 overextends to help.

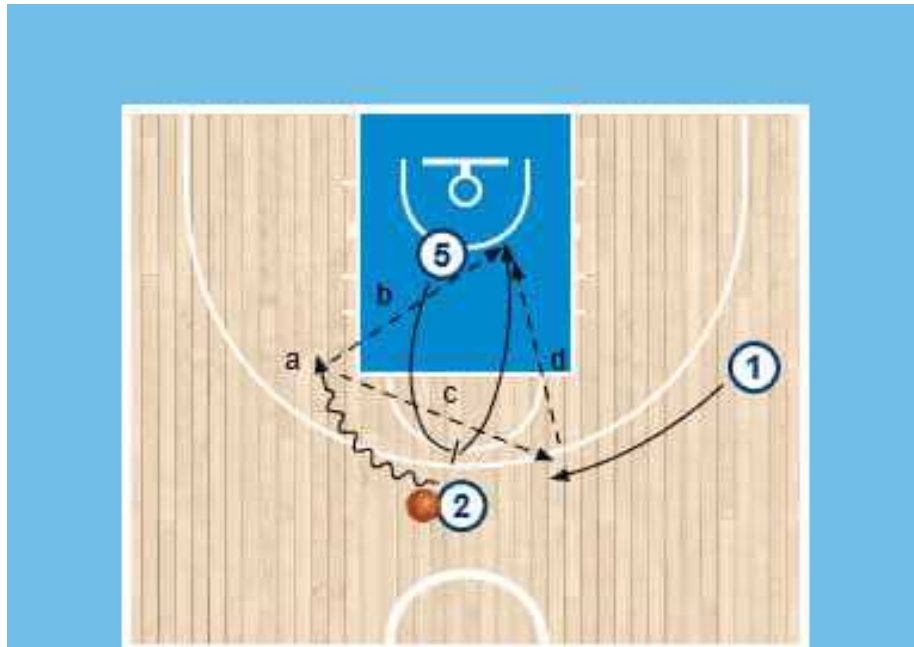


Diagram 25

If Player 2 cannot catch and shoot, Player 5 should immediately sprint back and set the pick for Player 2. This introduces the second type of pick-and-roll spacing that this system will use - the top pick.

However, since this drill lacks more players, especially in the weak side corner, it will be limited to fewer options. The following chapters will cover the top pick-and-roll in detail. For now, Player 2 can:

- a) Pull up from the elbow if there is no help.
- b) Make an inside hand bounce pass or an alley-oop pass to Player 5 if there is no bump.
- c) Make a hook pass or an overhead pass to Player 1 if X1 bumps Player 5 and is late. Then, Player 1 can catch and shoot.
- d) If Player 1 cannot catch and shoot, he can pass to Player 5, who sealed his defender in the low post.

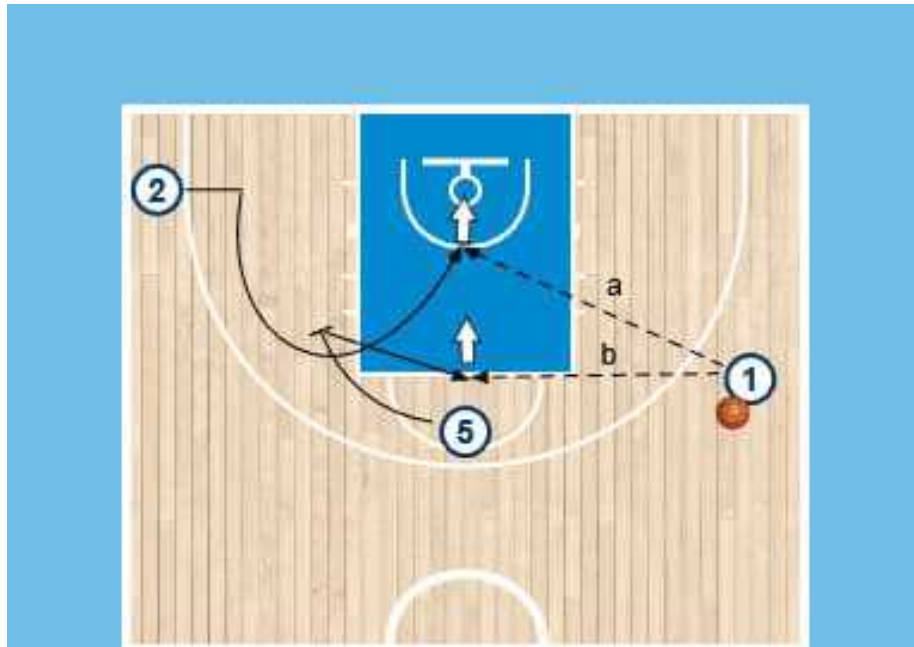


Diagram 26

Diagram 26 represents a situation in which X2 trails again, only this time X5 is not helping, so Player 2 has the opportunity to curl to the basket. The screener and the player using the screen must always open in the opposite directions after the screen. If one attacks the basket, the other should pop out, and vice versa. In this case, because Player 2 curls to the basket, Player 5 pops out to the free-throw line. Some coaches even teach a non-verbal way to communicate that the player will curl. For example, if Player 2 taps Player 5 on the stomach or shoulder while clearing the screen, it is a signal for him to know that Player 2 will curl, and he must pop out.

If that happens, the passing Player 1 can:

- a) Pass to Player 1 after the curl if there is no help.
- b) Pass to Player 5 for an open shot if X5 helped.

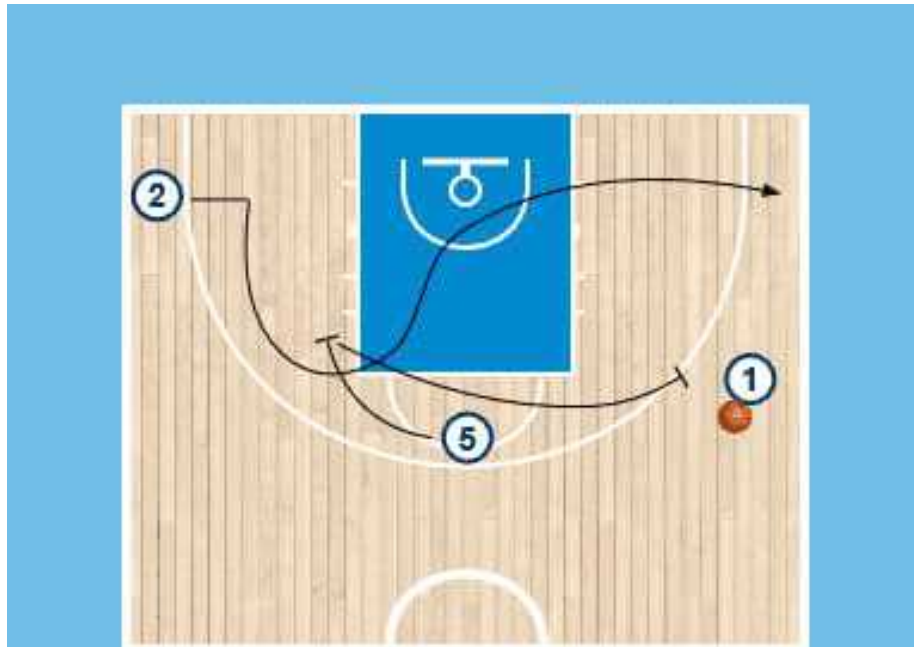


Diagram 27

If Player 1 cannot pass to either player, Player 2 should continue and fill the ball-side corner, while Player 5 sprints to set the on-ball screen for Player 1. Doing so introduces the third and final pick-and-roll spacing in this system - the side pick. This is the last option in the 3vs0 "pass and screen away" segment, and coaches can choose any option they like coming off the pick. Then, they should separate the side pick options into a different segment, possibly even into a separate practice, depending on their available time. The next chapter will cover all the details regarding the side pick-and-roll.

3 VS 0 SIDE PICK

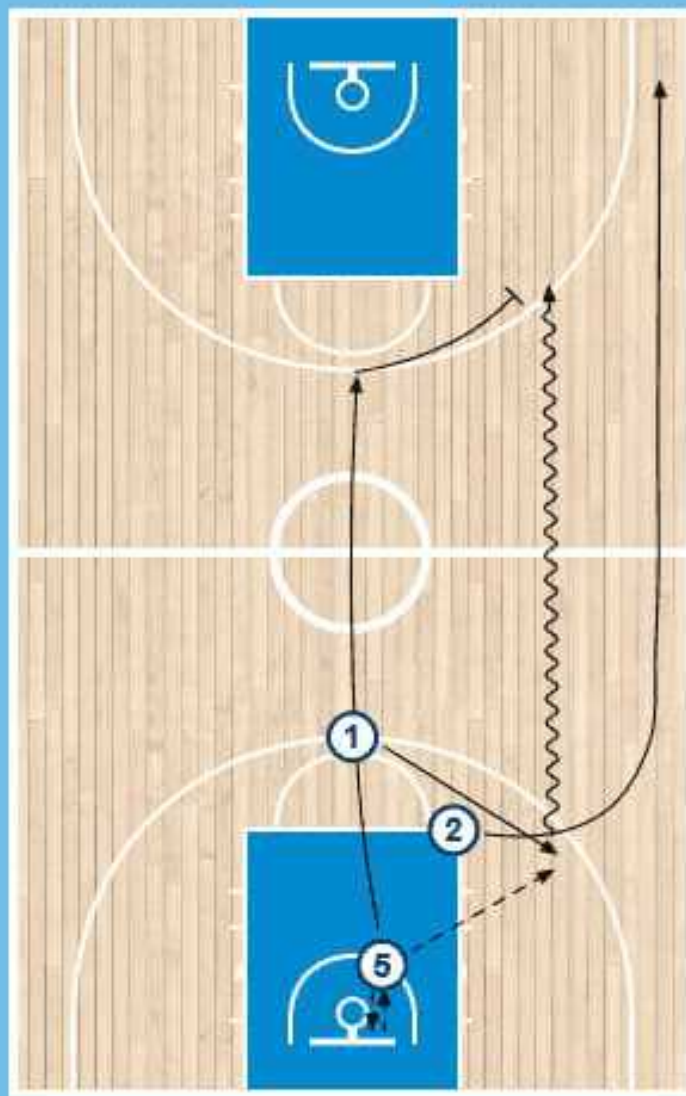


Diagram 28

Instead of going through all "pass and screen away" options to get to the side pick option, coaches should change how the drill starts. This way, they can focus on side pick options and go through them separately. First, unlike the previous 3vs0 drill, this one is circular, and coaches can simultaneously use both sides of the court. Second, it is up to the coach how many reps of each option he will want to do, and whether or not he wants to switch the roles for players 1 and 2. For example, perhaps he has a combo guard who needs to understand how to play both positions. Next, coaches should change the side after the players do the required number of reps. Alternatively, they can complete all options on one side and then change the side to avoid losing time to change the sides after every option. Again, it is entirely up to them.

The drill starts with Player 5 throwing the ball off the backboard to himself, grabbing the rebound, and declaring the ball. That is the signal for Player 1 and Player 2 to start running. Player 1 sprints below the free-throw line level to receive the entry pass, while Player 2 sprints next to the sideline. Once Player 1 receives the ball, he pushes it up the court, and all players are in their respective transition lanes. Player 2 sprints to the corner, Player 5 changes direction after crossing the three-point line and sprints to set the pick, while Player 1 sets his defender up for the pick. Once again, after scouting the opponents, coaches can decide which pick and roll options they will use in this drill.

11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99 100 101 102 103 104 105 106 107 108 109 110 111 112 113 114 115 116 117 118 119 120 121 122 123 124 125 126 127 128 129 130 131 132 133 134 135 136 137 138 139 140 141 142 143 144 145 146 147 148 149 150 151 152 153 154 155 156 157 158 159 160 161 162 163 164 165 166 167 168 169 170 171 172 173 174 175 176 177 178 179 180 181 182 183 184 185 186 187 188 189 190 191 192 193 194 195 196 197 198 199 200 201 202 203 204 205 206 207 208 209 210 211 212 213 214 215 216 217 218 219 220 221 222 223 224 225 226 227 228 229 230 231 232 233 234 235 236 237 238 239 240 241 242 243 244 245 246 247 248 249 250 251 252 253 254 255 256 257 258 259 260 261 262 263 264 265 266 267 268 269 270 271 272 273 274 275 276 277 278 279 280 281 282 283 284 285 286 287 288 289 290 291 292 293 294 295 296 297 298 299 300 301 302 303 304 305 306 307 308 309 310 311 312 313 314 315 316 317 318 319 320 321 322 323 324 325 326 327 328 329 330 331 332 333 334 335 336 337 338 339 340 341 342 343 344 345 346 347 348 349 350 351 352 353 354 355 356 357 358 359 360 361 362 363 364 365 366 367 368 369 370 371 372 373 374 375 376 377 378 379 380 381 382 383 384 385 386 387 388 389 390 391 392 393 394 395 396 397 398 399 400 401 402 403 404 405 406 407 408 409 410 411 412 413 414 415 416 417 418 419 420 421 422 423 424 425 426 427 428 429 430 431 432 433 434 435 436 437 438 439 440 441 442 443 444 445 446 447 448 449 450 451 452 453 454 455 456 457 458 459 460 461 462 463 464 465 466 467 468 469 470 471 472 473 474 475 476 477 478 479 480 481 482 483 484 485 486 487 488 489 490 491 492 493 494 495 496 497 498 499 500 501 502 503 504 505 506 507 508 509 510 511 512 513 514 515 516 517 518 519 520 521 522 523 524 525 526 527 528 529 530 531 532 533 534 535 536 537 538 539 540 541 542 543 544 545 546 547 548 549 550 551 552 553 554 555 556 557 558 559 560 561 562 563 564 565 566 567 568 569 570 571 572 573 574 575 576 577 578 579 580 581 582 583 584 585 586 587 588 589 590 591 592 593 594 595 596 597 598 599 600 601 602 603 604 605 606 607 608 609 610 611 612 613 614 615 616 617 618 619 620 621 622 623 624 625 626 627 628 629 630 631 632 633 634 635 636 637 638 639 640 641 642 643 644 645 646 647 648 649 650 651 652 653 654 655 656 657 658 659 660 661 662 663 664 665 666 667 668 669 670 671 672 673 674 675 676 677 678 679 680 681 682 683 684 685 686 687 688 689 690 691 692 693 694 695 696 697 698 699 700 701 702 703 704 705 706 707 708 709 710 711 712 713 714 715 716 717 718 719 720 721 722 723 724 725 726 727 728 729 730 731 732 733 734 735 736 737 738 739 740 741 742 743 744 745 746 747 748 749 750 751 752 753 754 755 756 757 758 759 760 761 762 763 764 765 766 767 768 769 770 771 772 773 774 775 776 777 778 779 780 781 782 783 784 785 786 787 788 789 790 791 792 793 794 795 796 797 798 799 800 801 802 803 804 805 806 807 808 809 810 811 812 813 814 815 816 817 818 819 820 821 822 823 824 825 826 827 828 829 830 831 832 833 834 835 836 837 838 839 840 841 842 843 844 845 846 847 848 849 850 851 852 853 854 855 856 857 858 859 860 861 862 863 864 865 866 867 868 869 870 871 872 873 874 875 876 877 878 879 880 881 882 883 884 885 886 887 888 889 890 891 892 893 894 895 896 897 898 899 900 901 902 903 904 905 906 907 908 909 910 911 912 913 914 915 916 917 918 919 920 921 922 923 924 925 926 927 928 929 930 931 932 933 934 935 936 937 938 939 940 941 942 943 944 945 946 947 948 949 950 951 952 953 954 955 956 957 958 959 960 961 962 963 964 965 966 967 968 969 970 971 972 973 974 975 976 977 978 979 980 981 982 983 984 985 986 987 988 989 990 991 992 993 994 995 996 997 998 999 1000 1001 1002 1003 1004 1005 1006 1007 1008 1009 1010 1011 1012 1013 1014 1015 1016 1017 1018 1019 1020 1021 1022 1023 1024 1025 1026 1027 1028 1029 1030 1031 1032 1033 1034 1035 1036 1037 1038 1039 1040 1041 1042 1043 1044 10

a) Pass to Player 5 if no one helps.

- b) Pass to Player 2 if X2 helps. Then, X2 can shoot or drive to the basket after reading the X2 closeout.

This option will probably work only a few times against a good defensive team, especially if they did their scouting correctly. The player in front of the ball should give his best to stay open and receive the pass. If the opponent does not adjust and keeps allowing the pass, coaches should keep using this option. However, if the defense adjusts and denies the pass to the middle, the offense must also adjust.

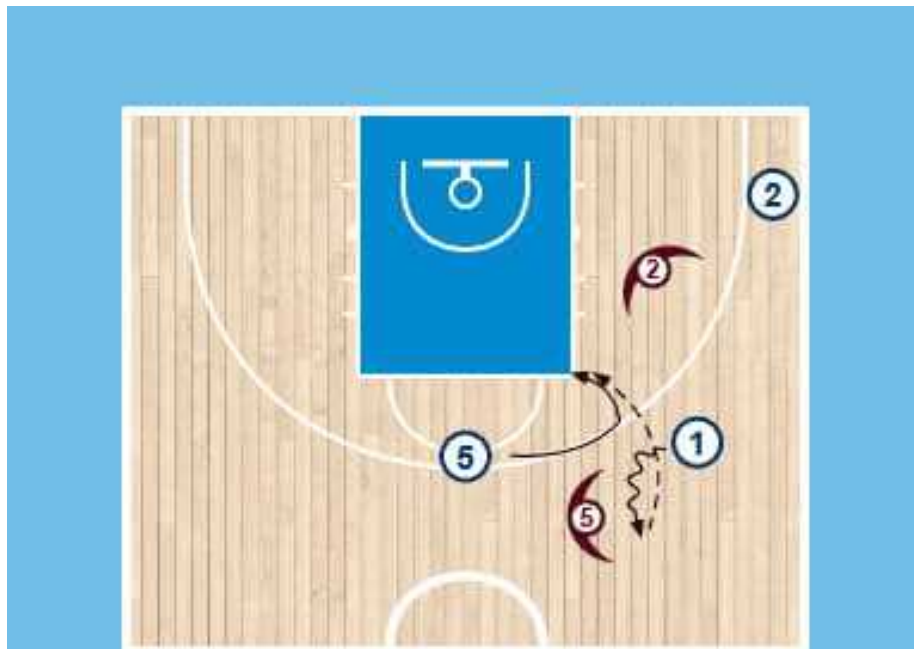


Diagram 31

Player 5 now slips to the elbow using a short roll. Next, Player 1 throws a bounce pass to Player 5 through the gap between X1 and X5 or a lob pass over X1. This time Player 2 must remain in the corner to space the floor. The rule is simple. If Player 5 rolls to the basket, Player 2 lifts. If Player 5 short rolls, Player 2 stays in the corner.

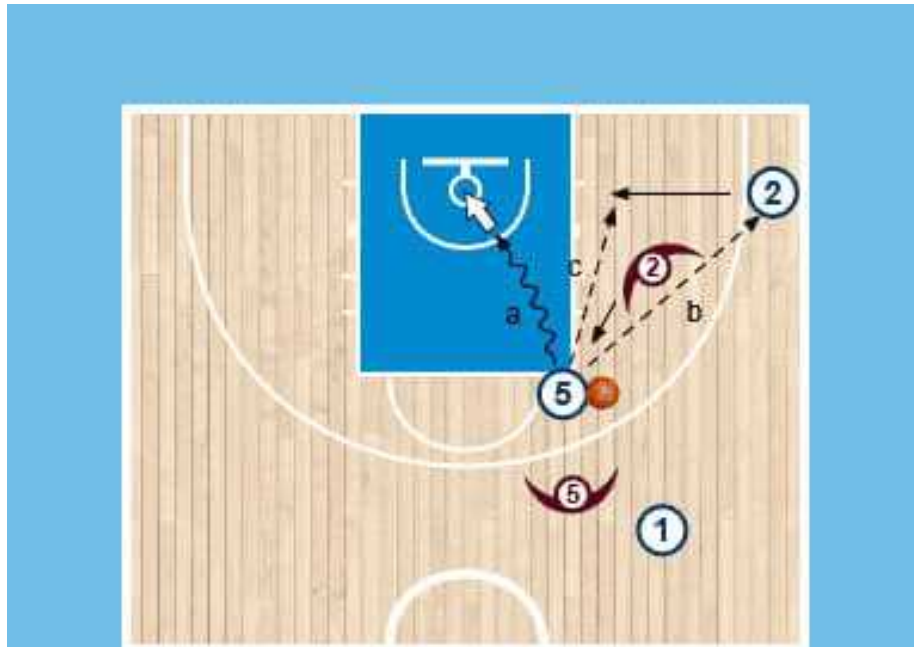


Diagram 32

After receiving a pass at the elbow, Player 5 can:

- a) Drive to the basket and finish if there is no help (or if he sends a rotating X2 back to his man using a fake pass to the corner).
- b) Pass to Player 2 if X2 stunts and tries to recover.
- c) Pass to cutting Player 2 if X2 rotates fully.

The number of options is limited because it is a 3vs0 drill. The following chapters will cover all the options when all five players are on the court. Once the coaches are satisfied with the number of options and reps, they can move on to the next progression.

5 VS 0 DRIVE AND KICK

Once the team gets familiar with all 3vs0 options and coaches decide it is time to move on, they should progress to 5vs0 options starting with the drive-and-kick. The drill is similar to the previous drive-and-kick variant, but it has more options and a different entry, similar to the side pick and roll drill.

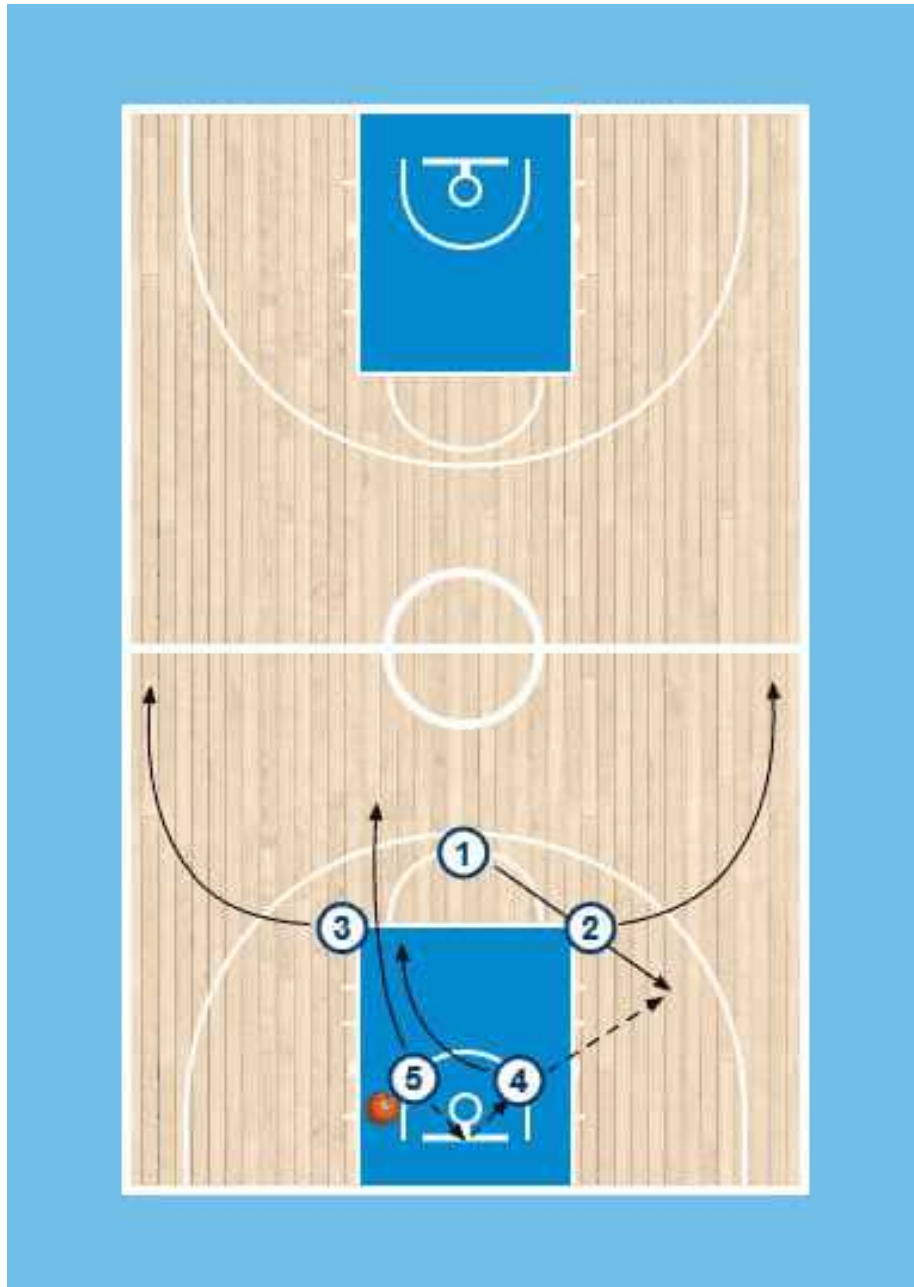


Diagram 33

The drill starts with Player 5 passing the ball off the backboard to Player 4, who catches and declares the ball. That is the signal for all other players to move. Players 2 and 3 immediately sprint wide to their running lanes. Player 4 passes the ball to Player 1 and runs to his lane trailing Player 5.

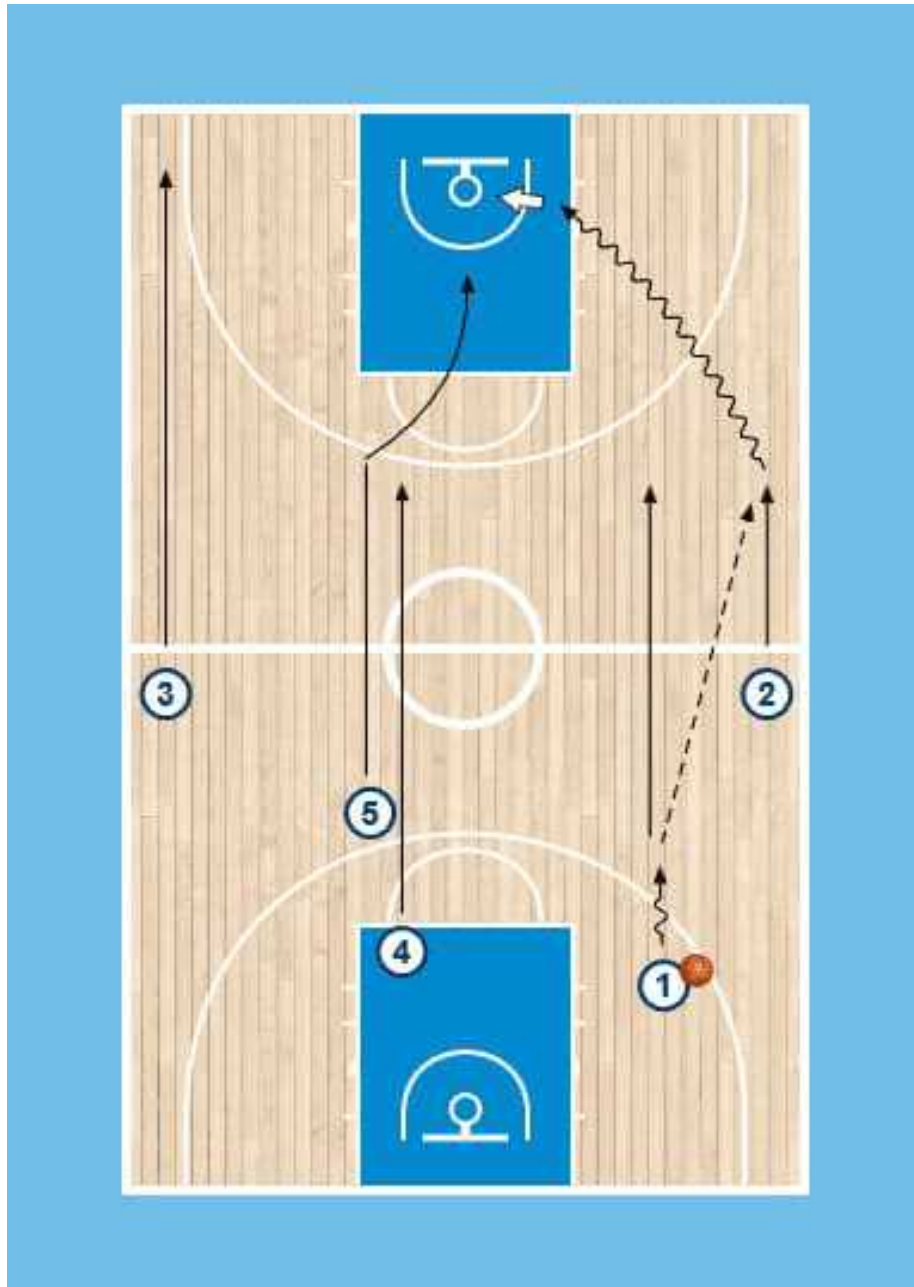


Diagram 34

Next, Player 1 passes to Player 2, who drives to the basket and finishes. That is the first option in this drill. Each option should be done four times in this exact way.

1. The drill should start as Diagram 33 shows. Players 3 and 5 should be on the left side, Player 1 should be in the middle, and Players 2 and 4 should be on the right side.

The first pass goes right to Player 1, and Player 2 finishes on the right side.

2. In the second repetition, players change sides, but the roles stay the same. The first pass goes left to Player 1, and Player 2 finishes on the left side.
3. In the third repetition, players change sides again (now it is the same as repetition 1), but Players 2 and 3 change roles. Usually, Players 4 and 5 do not change roles. However, if coaches have both bigs skilled to play inside and outside, they can also change the roles. The first pass goes right to Player 1, and Player 3 finishes on the right side.
4. In the fourth and final repetition, players change the sides again. The first pass goes left to Player 1, and Player 3 finishes on the left side.

By doing this, guards, forwards, and bigs will have the opportunity to do both roles on both sides. Once players finish all four reps as described, coaches can progress to the next option.

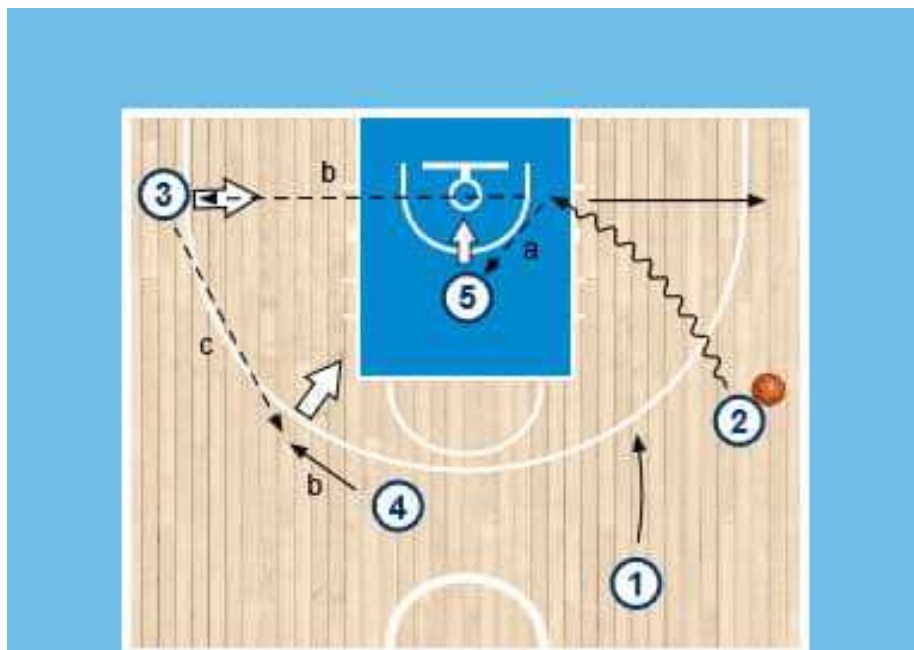


Diagram 35

If Player 2 cannot drive all the way, he can pass to either Player 5 or Player 2. Keep in mind that each option is separate, and players should do each four times, the same as in the 3vs0 drive kick drill. Depending on the defense, Player 2 can:

- a) Pass to Player 5 if X5 helps, and X3 does not rotate. He can either use a bounce pass with his inside hand or an alley-oop lob pass.
- b) Pass to Player 5 if X5 helps, and X3 rotates. He must use a step-out pass with his outside hand. Player 4 moves towards Player 3 and spots up to one pass away. The timing for Player 4 to move is when the ball leaves the passer's hand. After that, Player 3 catches and shoots. The shot signifies that the closeout is late or non-existent.
- c) If there is a stunt or rotation from X4, Player 3 can make a swing pass to Player 4, who catches and shoots.

After driving and making the pass to either player, Player 2 must backpedal outside of the three-point line to the corner.

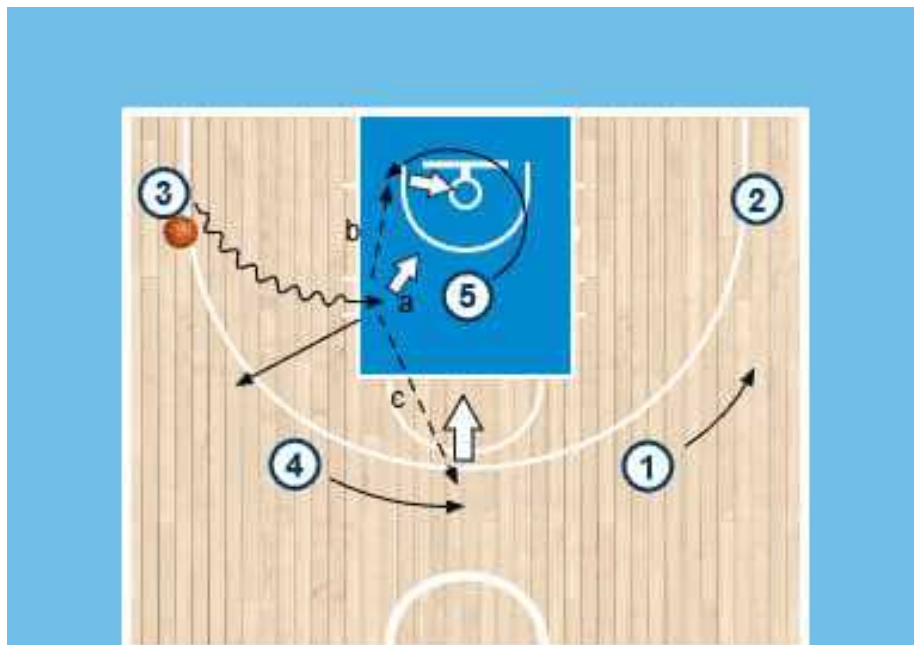


Diagram 36

If X3 recovers but is too aggressive, or X4 rotates aggressively to close the baseline, Player 3 can drive to the middle. Player 5 dives

under the basket to open the lane for the drive while Players 4 and 1 shift to the right. Player 3 has three options:

- a) He can drive all the way and finish if there is no help.
- b) He can pass to Player 5 using an inside hand bounce pass if X5 helps.
- c) He can pass to Player 4 for a catch and shoot if X4 stunts from one pass away.

Both passes should be made from the lane line, same as before. Then, Player 3 should sprint outside the three-point line and re-adjust his spacing.

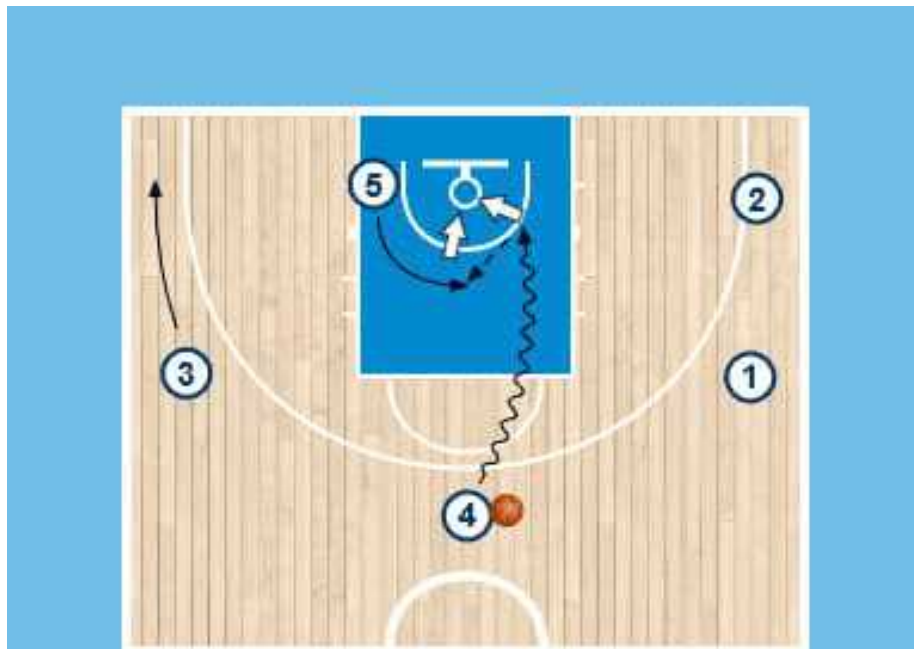
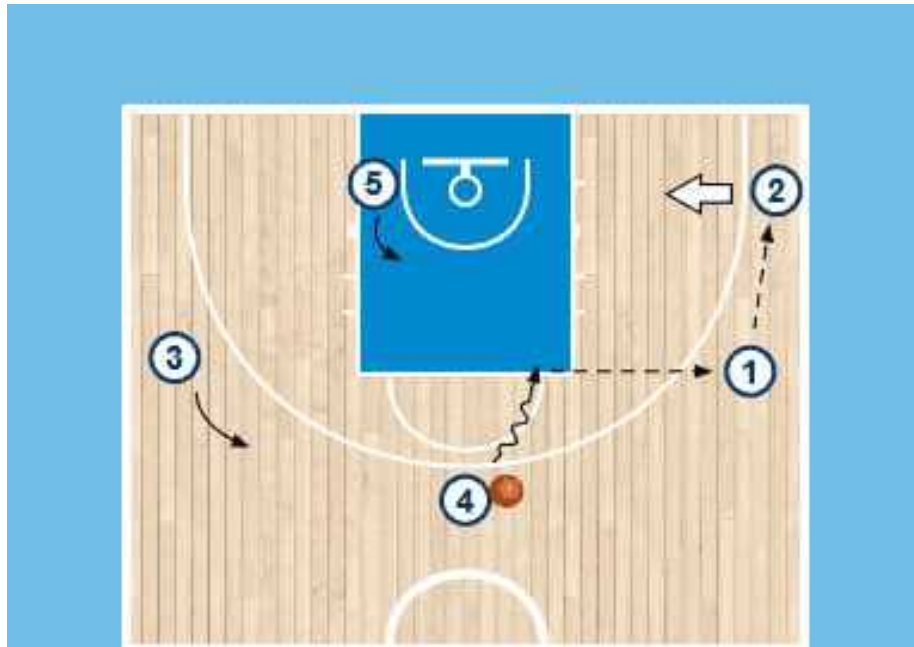


Diagram 37

If X4 recovers but is too aggressive on the closeout, Player 4 can drive to the basket, while Player 5 reacts accordingly. Player 4 can either finish if X5 does not help, or pass to Player 5 if X5 helps.



If X1 stunts the drive from one pass away, Player 4 can make a kick-out pass to Player 1. Usually, the defense is connected, and X2 will stunt Player 1 on the catch or even rotate all the way. In this situation, Player 1 will rarely have the opportunity to catch and shoot, so he should make a swing pass to Player 2 for an open shot.

If, however, X2 is the one to help, Player 4 should make a kick-out pass to Player 2. Again, usually, X1 will rotate to help, so Player 2 should make a pass to Player 1 for an open shot.

Coaches can add as many options as they like to this segment. Also, they can initiate the 5vs0 drive kick drill as a warm-up, or after the warm-up, as a progression to 5vs0 transition offense. This drill serves primarily as a full-court warm-up to get the players physically and mentally ready for the next drill and improve the offensive ball flow. Once coaches are satisfied with the number of options, reps, and flow, they should move on to the next segment.

TRANSITION OFFENSE FLOW

If the players cannot score during the fast break, they must seamlessly flow into the transition offense. Some coaches use the term secondary break or early offense, but the principle is the same - the offense must keep flowing without stopping and calling a set offense. Transition offense must be an automatic trigger that happens instantaneously, without losing time. Players must know what to do regardless of what happens and how the opponents play on defense. That is one of the reasons why running lanes, spacing, and timing are of the utmost importance.

First, coaches should walk their players through the complete transition offense from beginning to end to allow them to see the whole picture and get familiar with the idea. After that, they can cover all options step-by-step in detail.

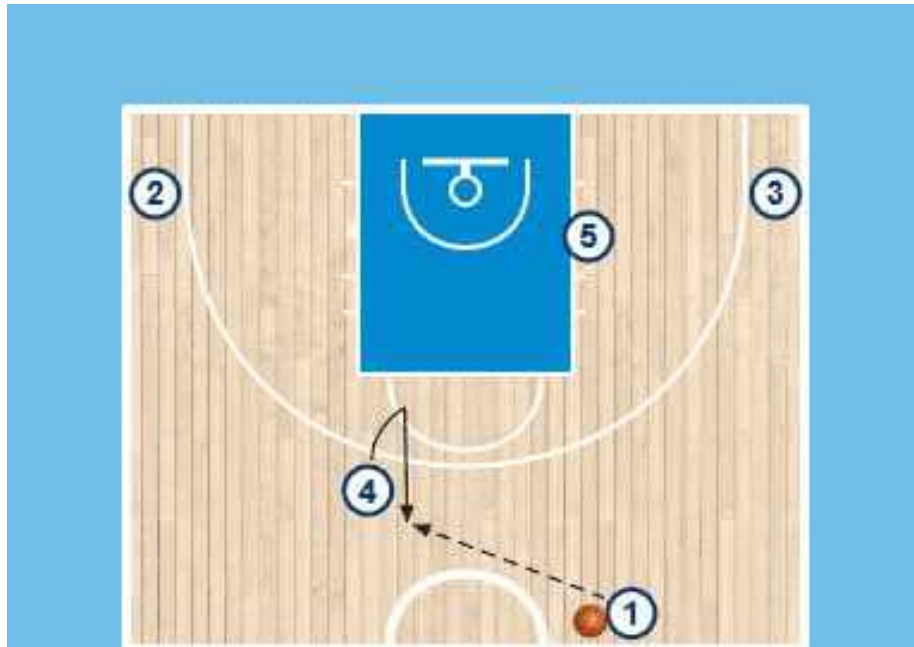


Diagram 40

The offense starts with Player 1 passing the ball to Player 4, who must get open to receive the pass. The idea is to transfer the ball to the other side of the court as fast as possible and change the help side.

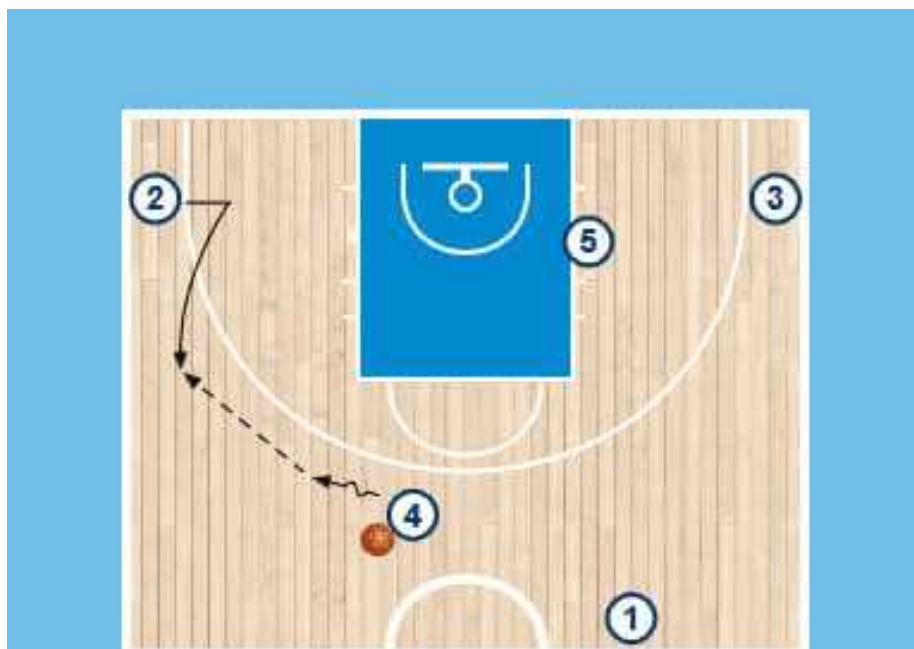


Diagram 41

Player 4 advances the ball to Player 2, who gets open and catches the ball at the free-throw line extended. This is a setup for the clear-side pick and roll.

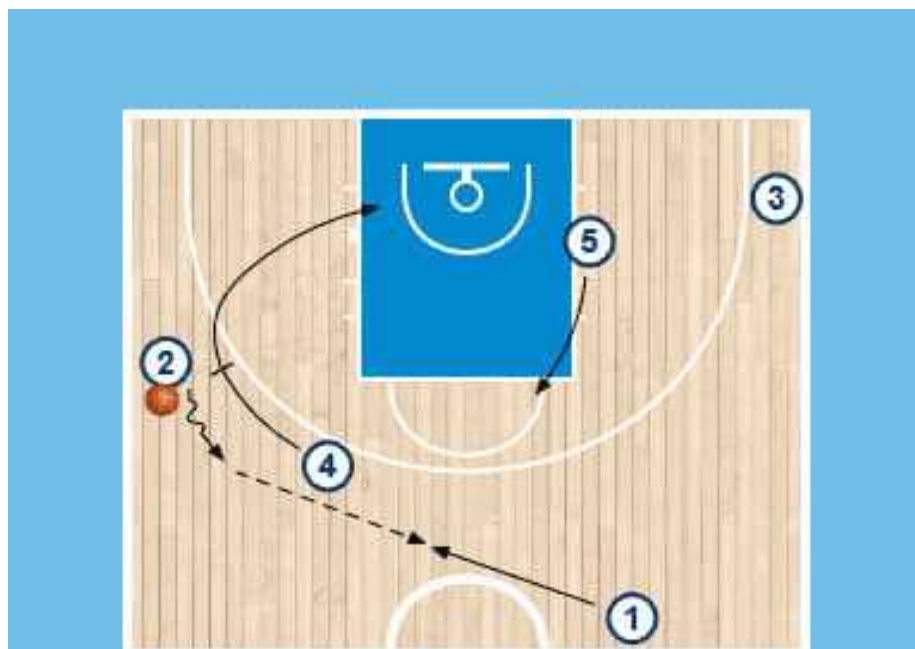


Diagram 42

Players 2 and 4 play the clear-side pick, after which Player 4 rolls to the basket. While that happens, Player 5 makes the flash cut to the free-throw line for the potential high-low. The flow continues if the team does not have a scoring opportunity after the clear-side pick. For example, if Player 2 does not pass or finish after the pick, Player 1 moves towards the ball and receives the pass. He must receive the ball one step away from the imaginary line that goes from rim to rim.

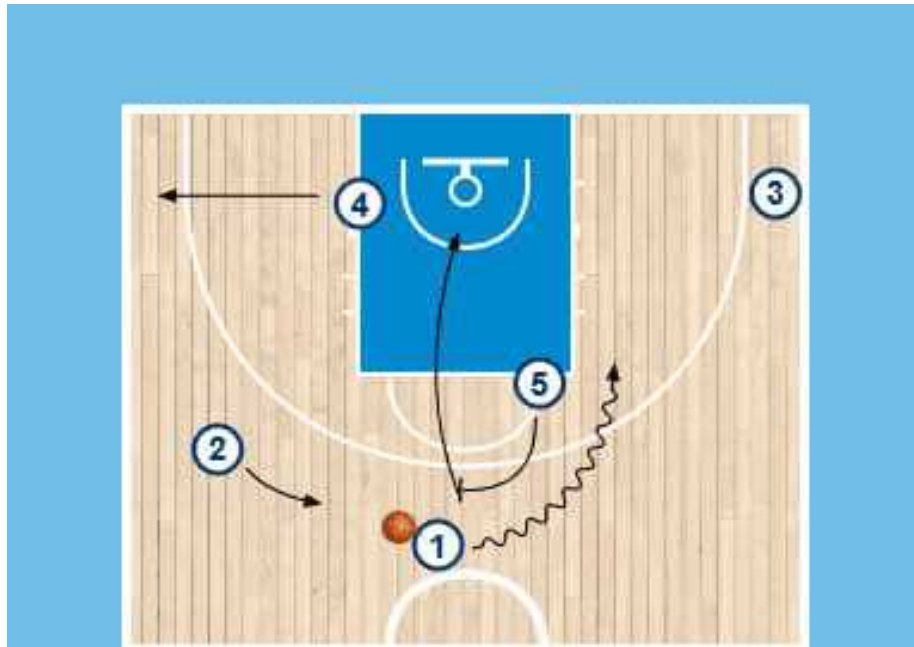


Diagram 43

Player 5 continues moving, setting the top pick immediately after Player 1 catches the ball. Coaches should make sure that their players get the timing right every time. If Player 5 is too early or too late to set the screen, it will not work as intended. After setting the screen, Player 5 rolls to the basket. Player 1 attacks wide of the pick, outside the elbow, and Player 2 adjusts his spacing and moves towards to ball. There are two options for Player 4. In this case, Player 4 spaces out to the corner, and the offense remains in the 4-out-1-in spacing. That will happen in most cases.

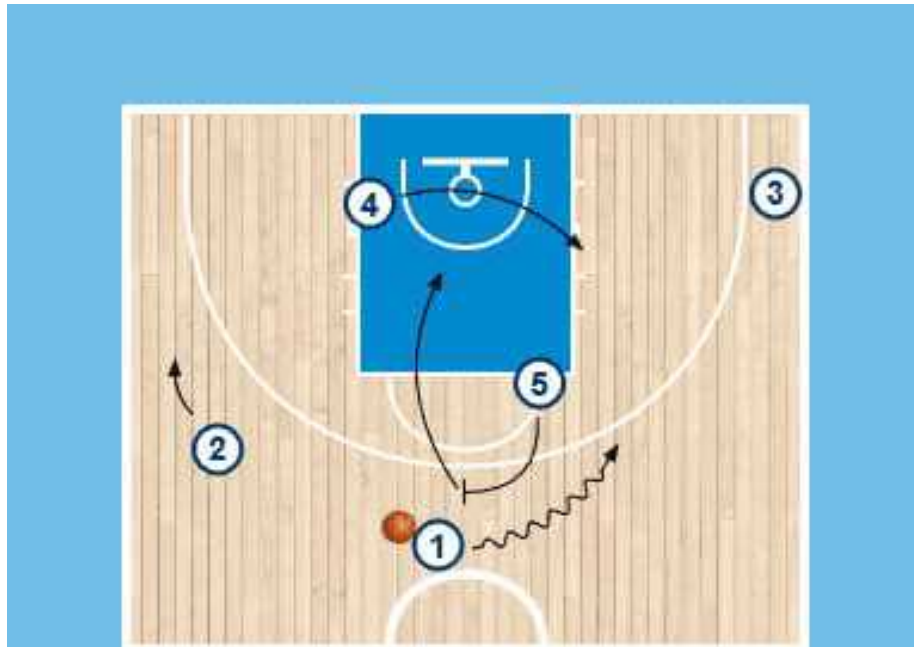


Diagram 44

The other option is to cut to the opposite low post. The offensive spacing now changes to 3-out-2-in. This spacing is better in some special situations addressed in the following chapter.

TRANSITION OFFENSE OPTIONS

The next drill starts the same way as the 5vs0 drive-and-kick drill and follows the same principles, including the four reps per option, the same way as before.

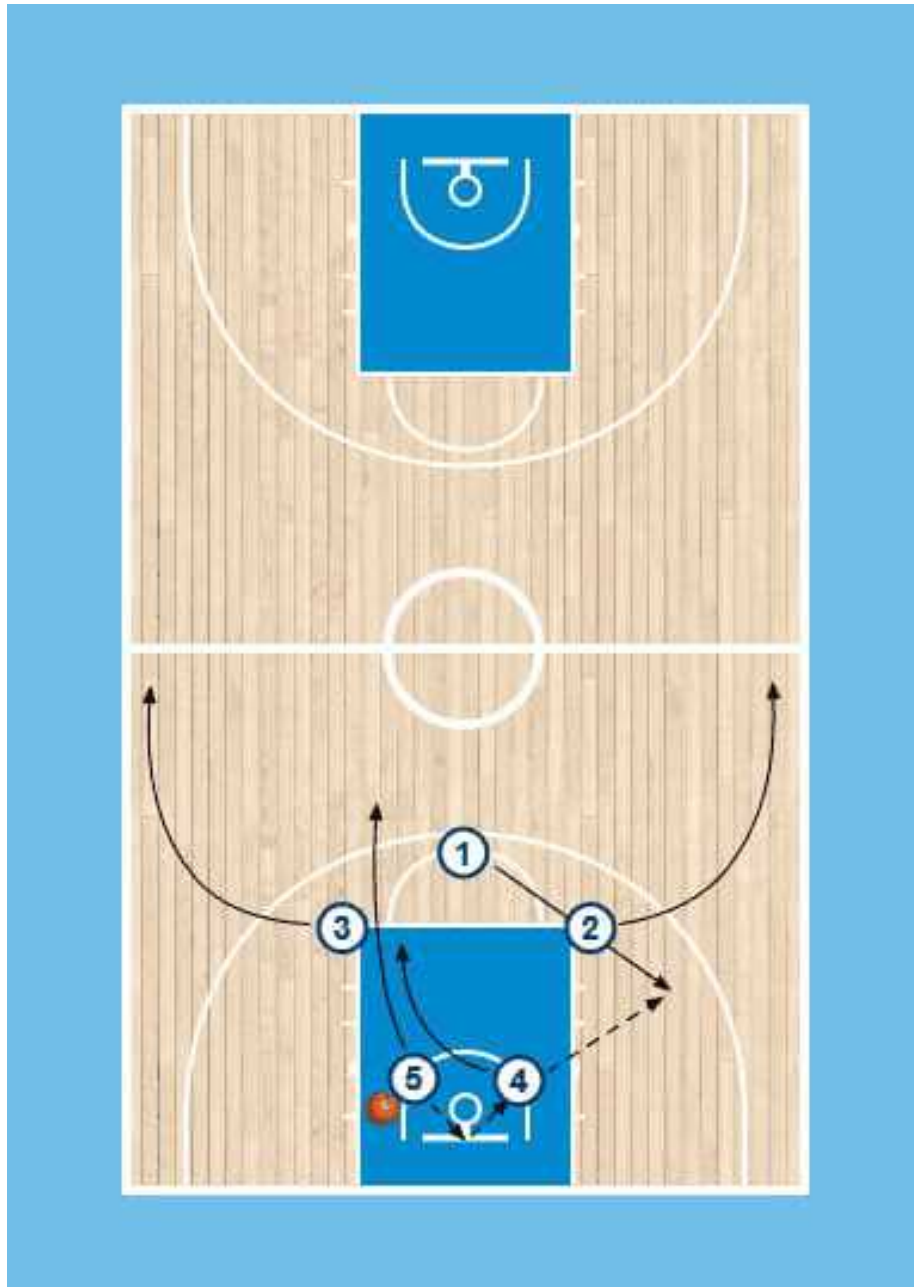


Diagram 45

It should start with Player 5 passing the ball off the backboard to Player 4, who catches and declares the ball. At that moment, all players start running to their designated lanes. Players 2 and 3 immediately sprint wide to their running lanes. Next, Player 4 passes the ball to Player 1 and runs to his lane trailing Player 5.

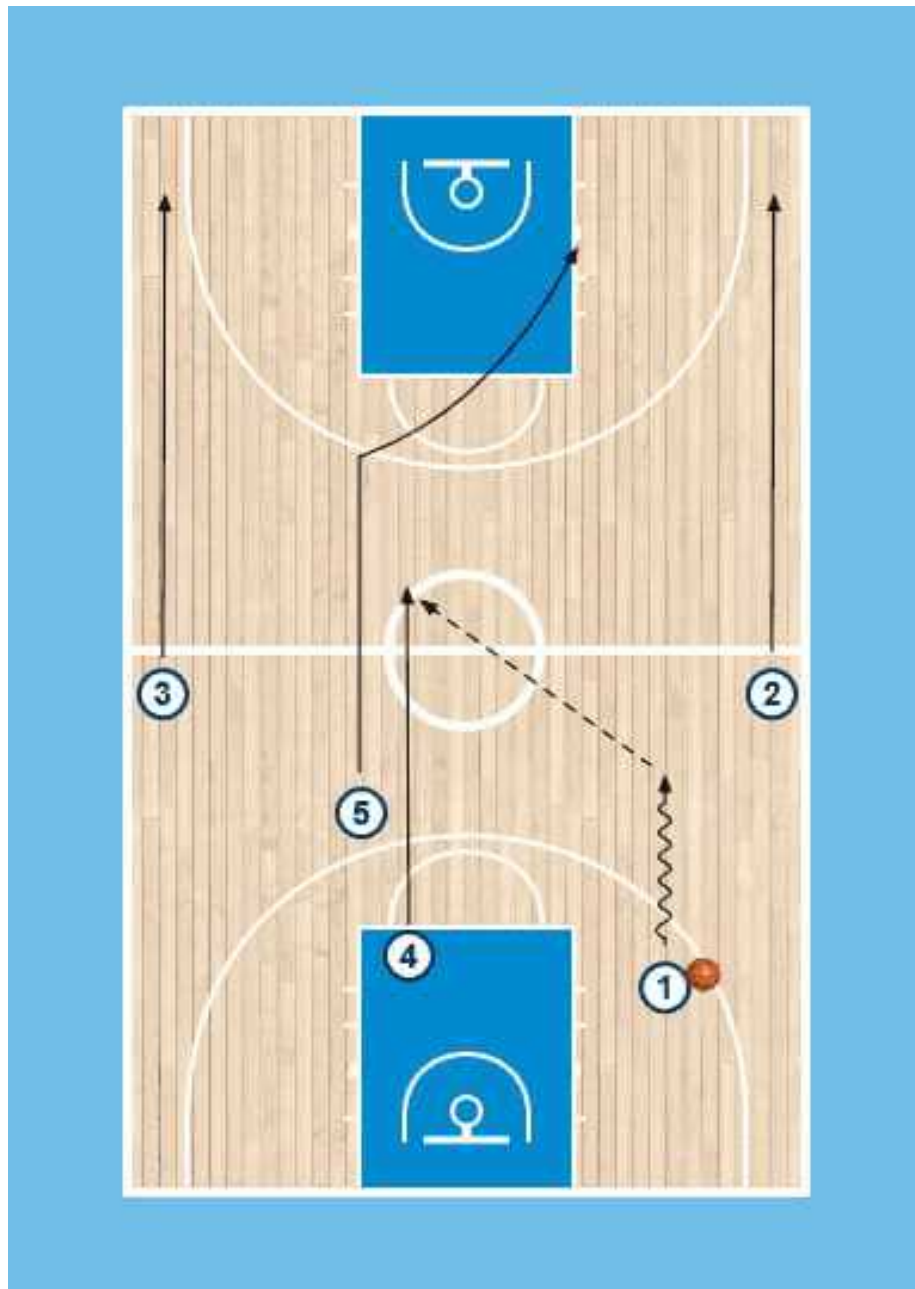


Diagram 46

Then, Player 1 makes an early pass to Player 4. The idea is to advance the ball up the court as fast as possible while transferring the ball to the other side and forcing the help defense to adjust. It also avoids unnecessary dribbling. Advancing the ball with the pass is faster than advancing with the dribble. The pass can also happen earlier if X1 plays full-court press, and Player 1 struggles to advance the ball to the frontcourt. If Player 4 grabs the rebound and Player 1

is out of position or denied, he can drive and advance the ball himself, which is something most modern power forwards must be able to do.



Diagram 47

Since this transition offense always starts with a pass to Player 4, some opponents might try to deny the pass. In that case, Player 3 must read the situation and flash to the free-throw line extended to receive the ball. At that moment, Player 4 can try to make a backdoor cut because X4 is out of position after denying. If the backdoor is successful, Player 4 has an easy 3vs2 situation. He can drive to the basket or pass to Player 5 or Player 2 if their defenders help.

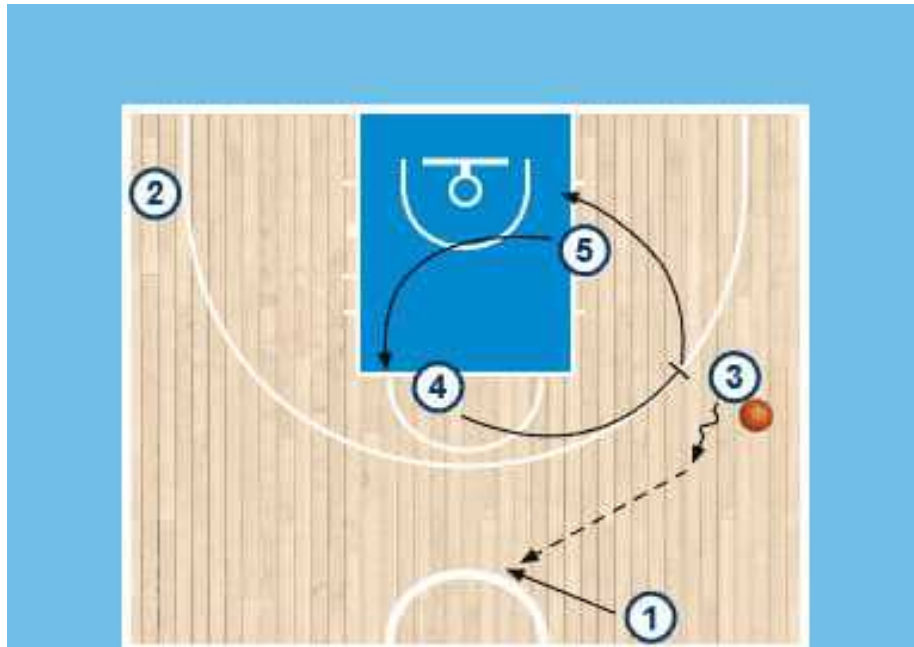


Diagram 48

If a backdoor pass cannot happen, Player 4 continues the offensive flow and plays the clear-side pick with Player 3. Player 5 moves to the free-throw line for the potential high-low. Player 1 adjusts his position and moves to the middle. If Player 3 cannot pass or score off the pick, he passes the ball to Player 1.

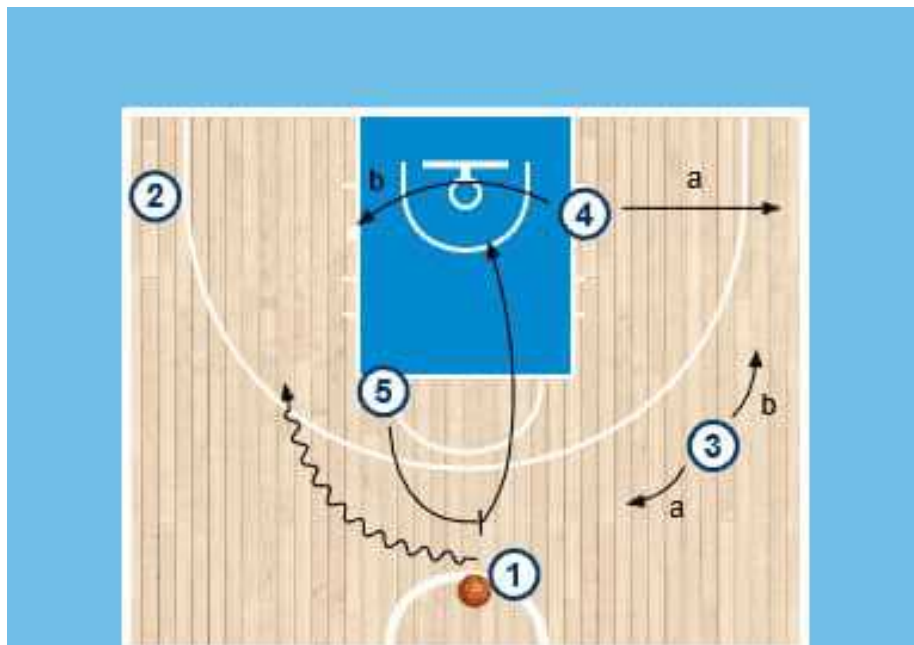


Diagram 49

Player 5 sets the screen as soon as Player 1 catches the ball and rolls to the basket while Player 1 attacks wide of the pick. Player 4 can space out to the corner or cut to the opposite low post, as mentioned in the previous chapter, and Player 3 moves accordingly.

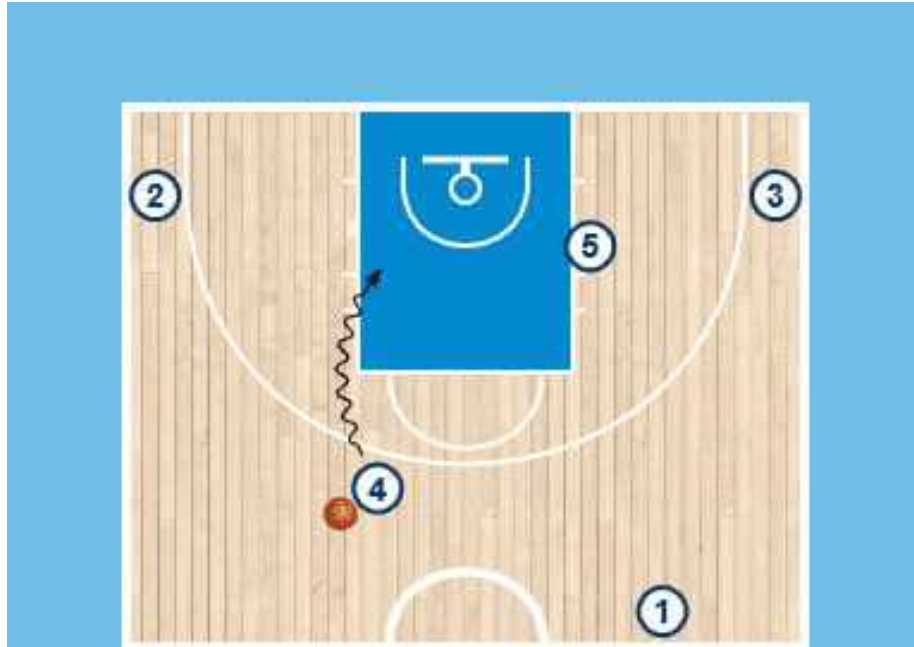


Diagram 50

If Player 4 was not denied and could receive the pass initially, his primary goal should be to attack one-on-one, especially if he has a favorable matchup. He should not blindly transfer the ball to Player 2 without being a threat to the basket. Many players make that mistake, and coaches should always teach them to be an offensive threat, regardless of the situation. Player 2 must remain in the corner and space the floor, and he should start moving only when Player 4 starts looking to pass to him.

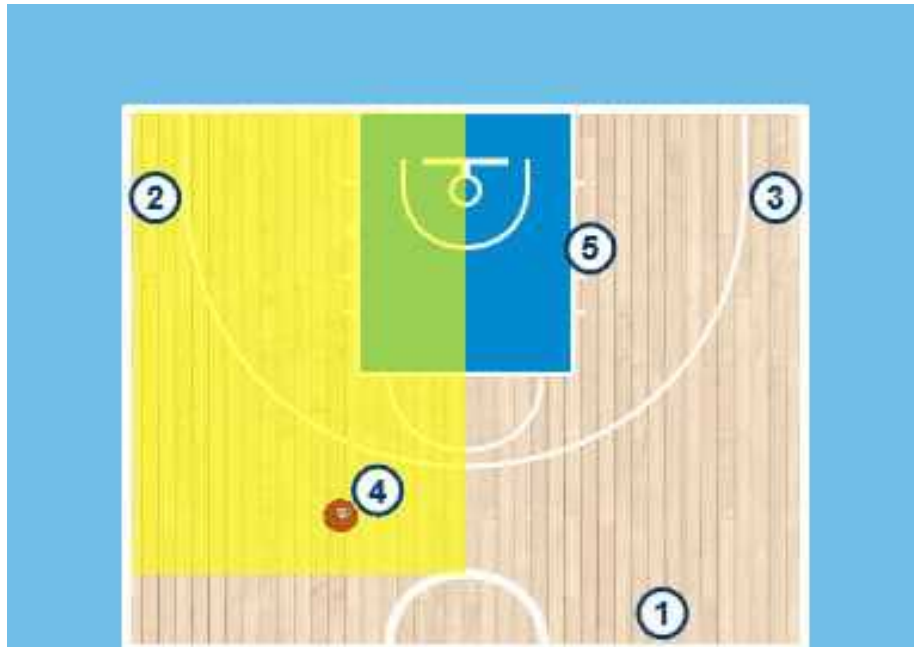


Diagram 51

If Player 4 was unable to play one-on-one or was unsuccessful, he should progress to playing the clear-side pick with Player 2. Players should use the entire quarter of the court (marked with yellow) when playing the clear-side pick and use all the space available for their two-man game. Again, there will be plenty of options depending on the defense, and proper spacing is essential.

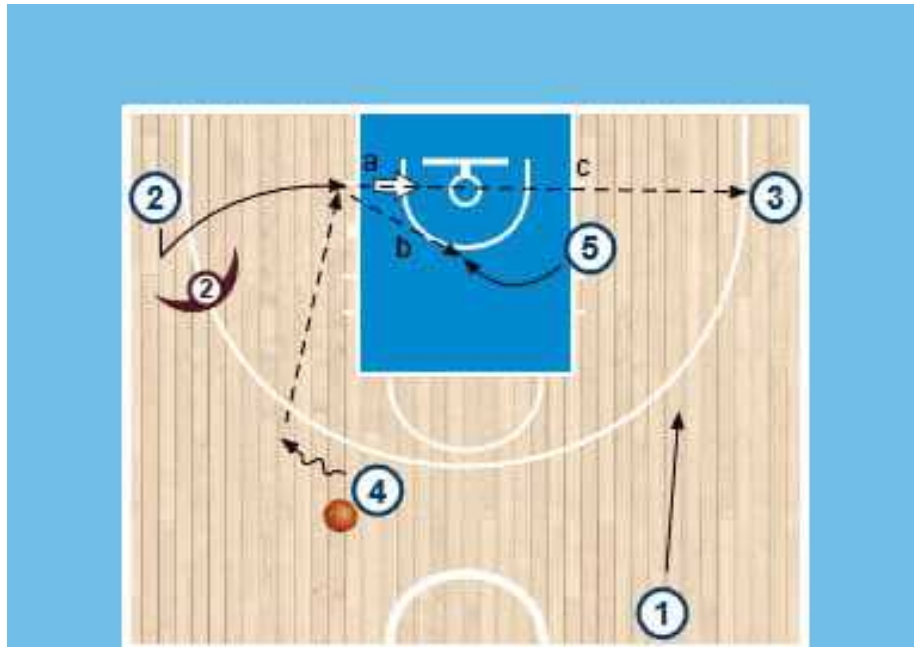


Diagram 52

If X2 denies the pass, Player 2 should make a backdoor cut to the baseline. Player 4 must have good timing to throw a quick bounce pass at the right moment. Otherwise, this option will not work. If Player 2 receives the ball successfully, he can do one of the following:

- a) Attack the rim and finish if there is no help.
- b) Pass to Player 5 if X5 helps.
- c) Throw a baseline pass to Player 3 if X5 helps, and X3 rotates.

This situation is similar to the drive-kick one, and if the ball goes to Player 3, players are already familiar with the continuation.

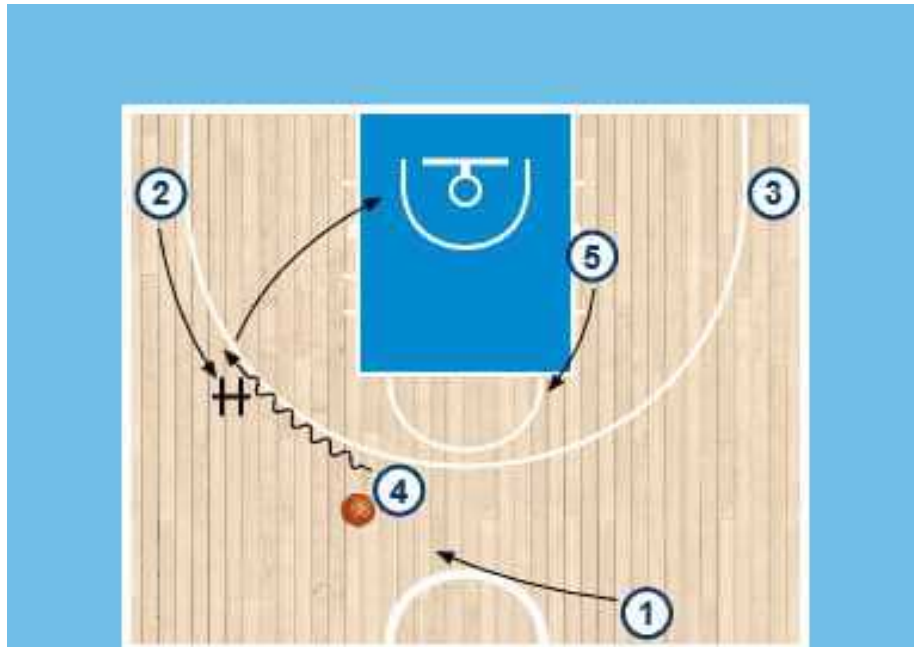


Diagram 53

Another option to use if the defense is playing Player 2 too aggressively is the handoff. In this case, pass-pick becomes the handoff, and continuation is the same.

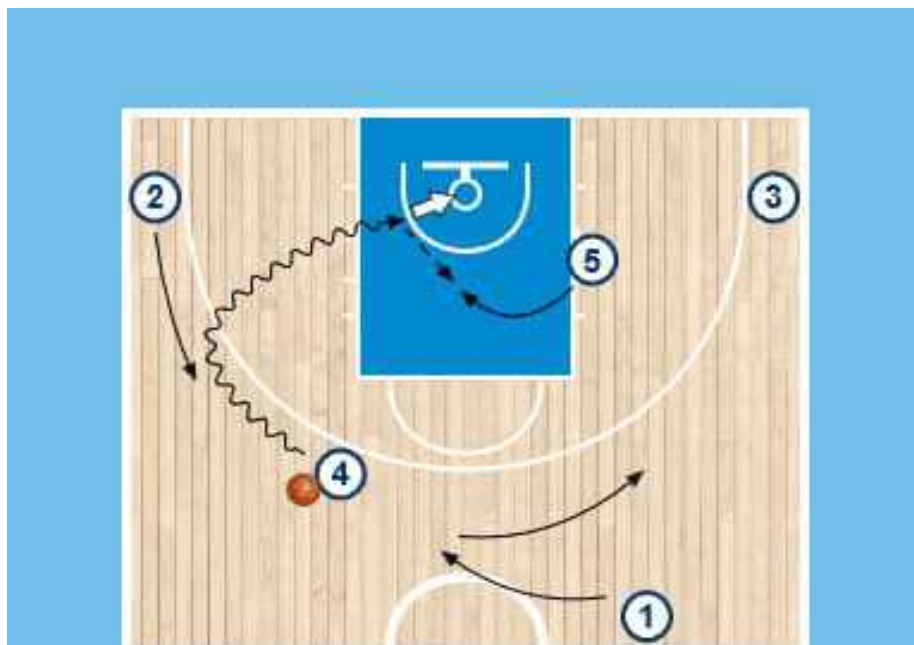


Diagram 54

If the opponents try to defend with an aggressive switch or hedge on the handoff, Player 4 can fake the handoff and drive to the

basket. Then, he can either finish or pass to Player 5 if X5 helps.

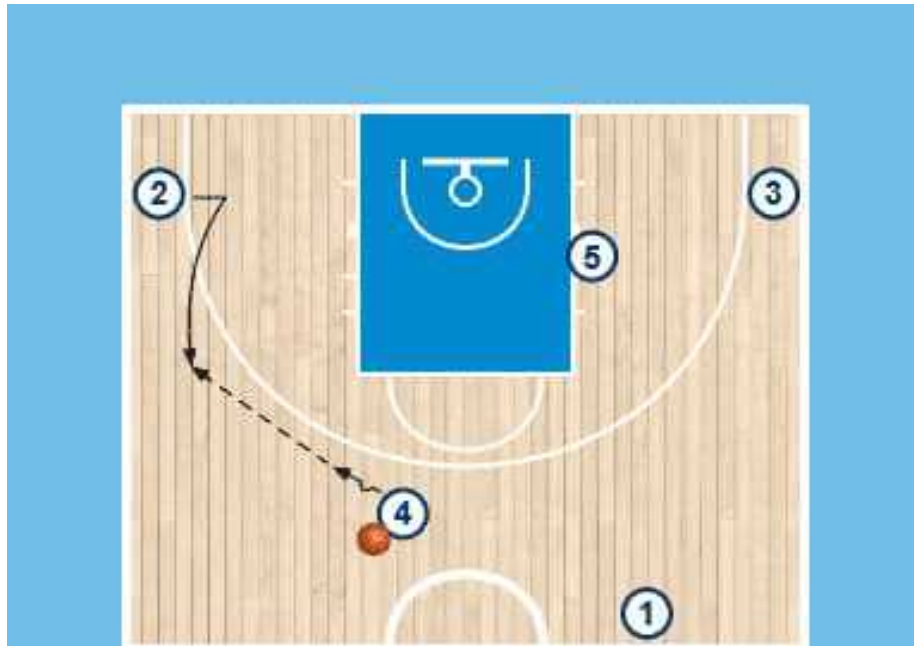


Diagram 55

If X2 is not denying, Player 4 can pass the ball to Player 2. He must receive the pass under the free-throw line level. Starting the pick from anywhere higher than the free-throw line extended will mess up the spacing. Once Player 2 receives the ball, he has various ways to play the pick, depending on the defense.



Diagram 56

If X2 anticipates the screen and tries to step over the screen too early, Player 2 can beat him baseline, away from the screen. After that, Player 2 has the options covered in the drive-and-kick segment - finish, pass to Player 5, or pass to Player 3. Player 2 should always try to attack away from the pick if the defense allows it. Even a short jab step to the baseline is sometimes enough to make X2 react. If nothing else, it will help Player 4 set a better screen, and the offense will have a more significant advantage after the pick and roll.



Diagram 57

If X4 plays in a drop and X2 goes over the screen, Player 4 must hold the screen while Player 2 drives wide off the pick and attacks the elbow. After the screen, Player 4 rolls wide, close to the baseline. This way, X4 has a longer rotation back and is not able to control both players simultaneously while X2 recovers. It is an easy 2vs1 situation. Player 2 can take the pull-up shot from the elbow or pass to Player 4.

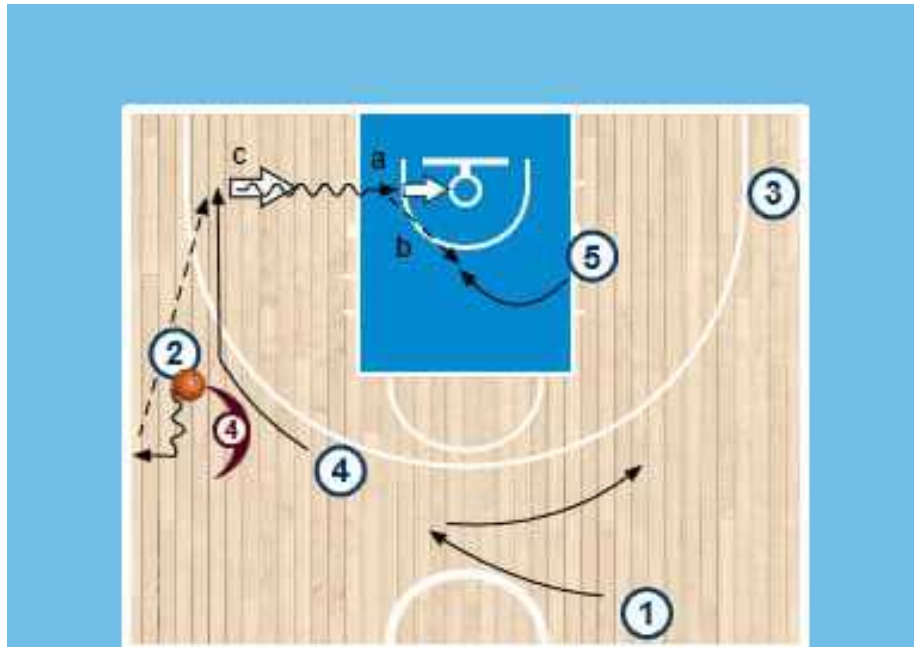


Diagram 58

If X4 hedges, Player 4 should slip the screen and backpedal to the short corner. Player 2 must do a quick defensive dribble to avoid the hedge and make a step-out pass to Player 4 using his outside hand. Player 4 can then drive or shoot if he is a good mid-range shooter. If he chooses to drive, he can either finish or pass to Player 5, depending on whether the defensive player is helping or not. These options are possible if X3 does not rotate from the help side.

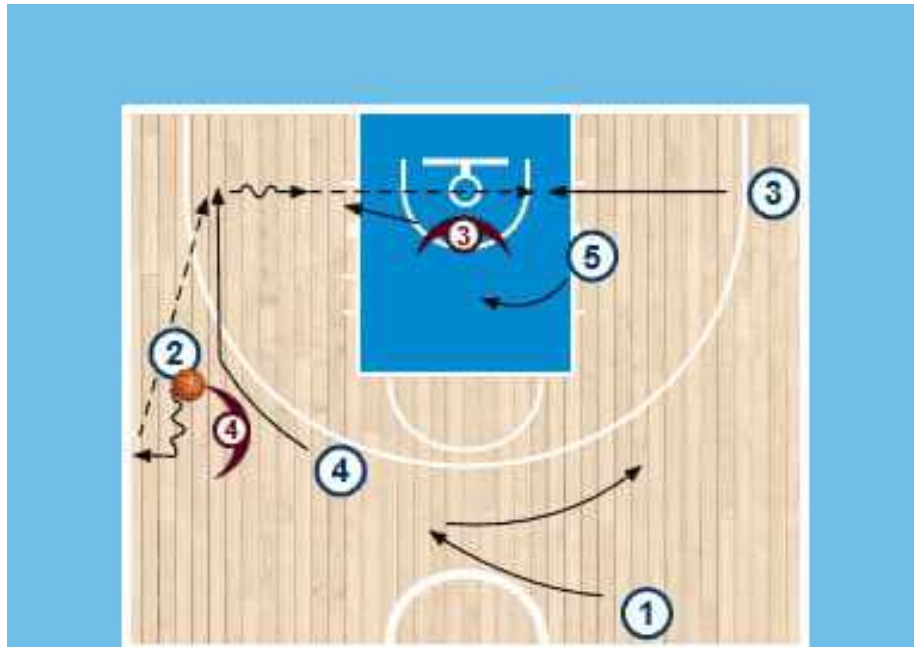


Diagram 59

However, if X3 rotates to help, Player 3 has a clear path to cut the baseline and receive the pass for an easy finish. He must have good timing not to cut too early or too late. Player 4 must also have good timing when passing the ball and be able to read if he needs to drive and pass or pass immediately after the catch, using a step-out baseline pass with his outside hand.



Diagram 60

This time, X2 and X4 switch. After the switch, X2 will usually go under the screen and let the roller go to the lane line. Then, while the help-side player X3 fills the paint, he steps around the big man to front him. That is why passing from that angle is challenging for Player 2, especially when a taller X4 is guarding him and disrupting the passing lane. Therefore, Player 2 should instead pass the ball to Player 5, who must recognize the switch and flash to the free-throw line.



Diagram 61

Now that the ball is in the middle of the floor, the help side is not defined. Advancing the ball to the middle puts X3 in a problematic situation, and he must decide if he wants to help or not. Player 3 should lift from the corner, and if X3 follows his man and does not help, Player 5 has an easy high-low lob pass to Player 4, who must establish a good position in the paint to receive the lob without interference. For this high-low idea to be successful, coaches must have a post player that can make a good decision depending on whether X3 helps or not.

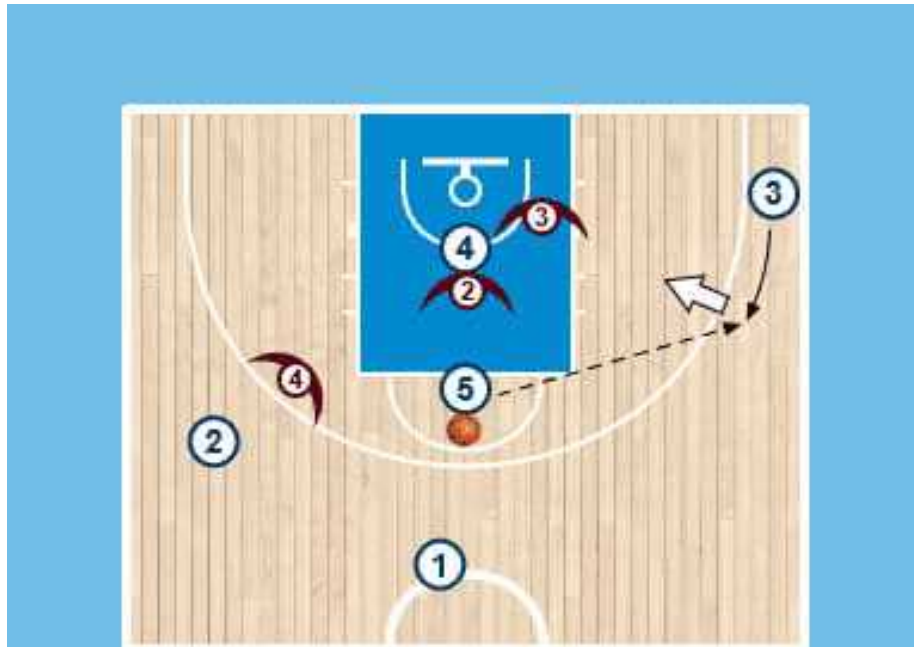


Diagram 62

Alternatively, if X3 stays and helps, Player 5 has an easy skip pass to Player 3, who must lift from the corner the same as before. The lift is important because Player 5 will have a shorter and quicker pass, and X3 must cover a longer distance to get back to Player 3. Both will result in a more significant advantage, usually an open shot.

There is another option for attacking the switch if coaches like to utilize the perimeter mismatch instead. For example, if they have a dominant guard or X4 is not a good defender, they want to exploit it.

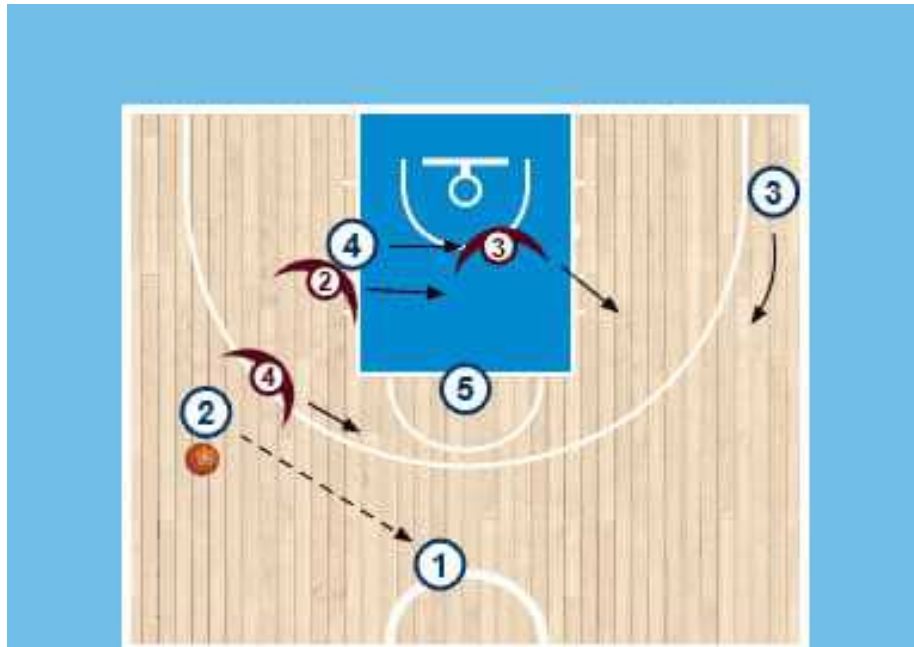


Diagram 63

Again, the key to attacking bigger defenders is to force them to move laterally. As already explained, Player 2 can do it off the dribble by making a side-step dribble one way and attacking the other way. However, in this situation, it is better to attack with a "pass and pass back" method. After the switch, Player 2 passes to Player 1. Player 4 moves to the paint, forcing X2 to move with him, while Player 3 lifts from the corner to force X3 away from helping. After the pass, X4 will move laterally towards the ball.

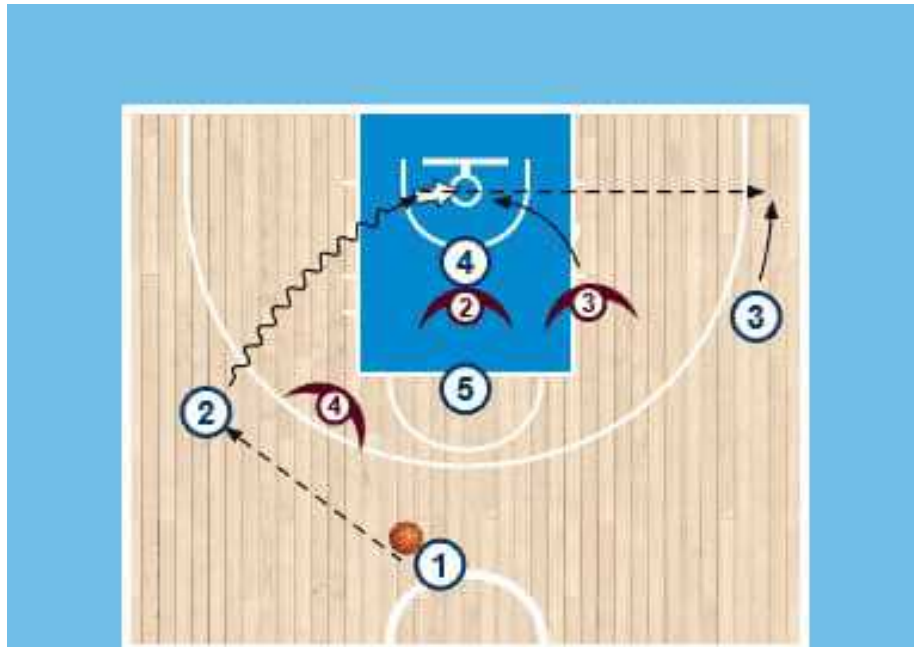


Diagram 64

Once Player 4 moves towards the ball, Player 1 passes back to Player 2, who explodes to the basket immediately off the catch, forcing X4 to react laterally to stop the drive, which he probably will not be able to do. Then, Player 4 must "seal" and hold X2 on his back to clear the lane so Player 2 can drive all the way to the basket, while Player 3 cuts back to the corner to open up the passing lane. Player 2 can finish if X3 is too late to help or pass to Player 3 if X3 rotates on time.

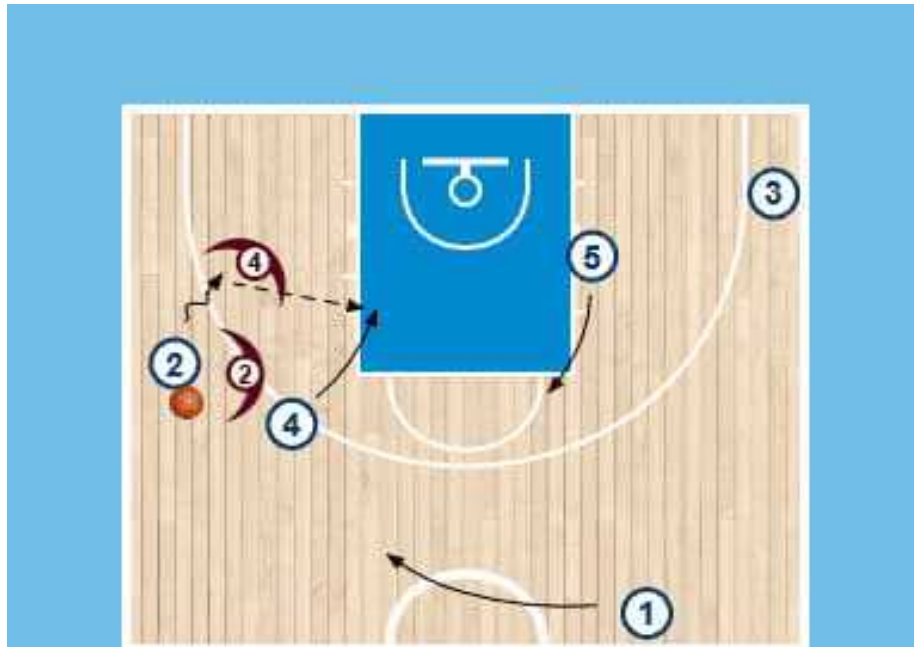


Diagram 65

If defensive players try to isolate the screen, Player 4 can dive to the basket. Player 2 must make one dribble to the baseline to adjust the passing angle and force X4 to react. He then makes an inside hand pocket bounce pass to Player 4 through the gap between X2 and X4. Flipping the screen is another way to attack the isolation defense. However, this would disrupt the flow of this system, and it is not a part of the progression.

The same goes for the drop-and-under, push-and-under, and push-and-through situations. Smart defensive teams would usually avoid the early mismatch or a disadvantage by going under the screen. While there is an option to attack X2 with an immediate re-pick, coaches should not utilize it this early in the offense because it would disrupt the flow, similar to flipping the screen against the isolation. Instead, Player 2 should progress to the next segment of this offense and pass the ball to Player 1, who will play the top pick. However, because this progression is usual and automatic, the opponent might deny the pass to Player 1.

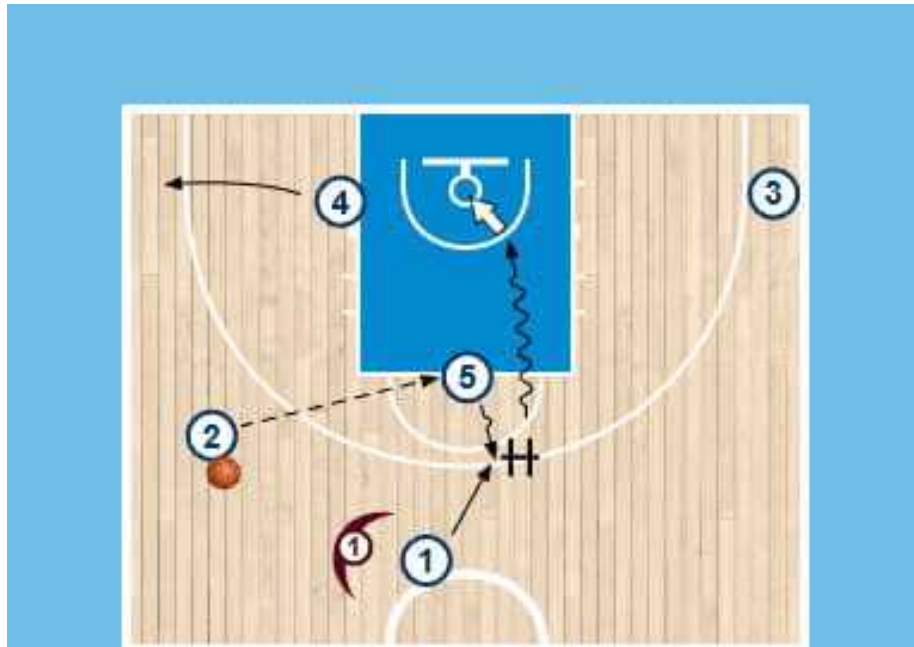


Diagram 66

If Player 2 cannot pass to Player 1 because X1 denies the pass, he should pass to Player 5 instead. After that, Player 1 can make an immediate backdoor cut, because X1 is overextended, to receive a defensive handoff from Player 5. If X1 tries to follow Player 1 or runs into the screen, Player 1 can drive off the handoff and attack the basket. Player 4 must sprint to the corner and space the floor.

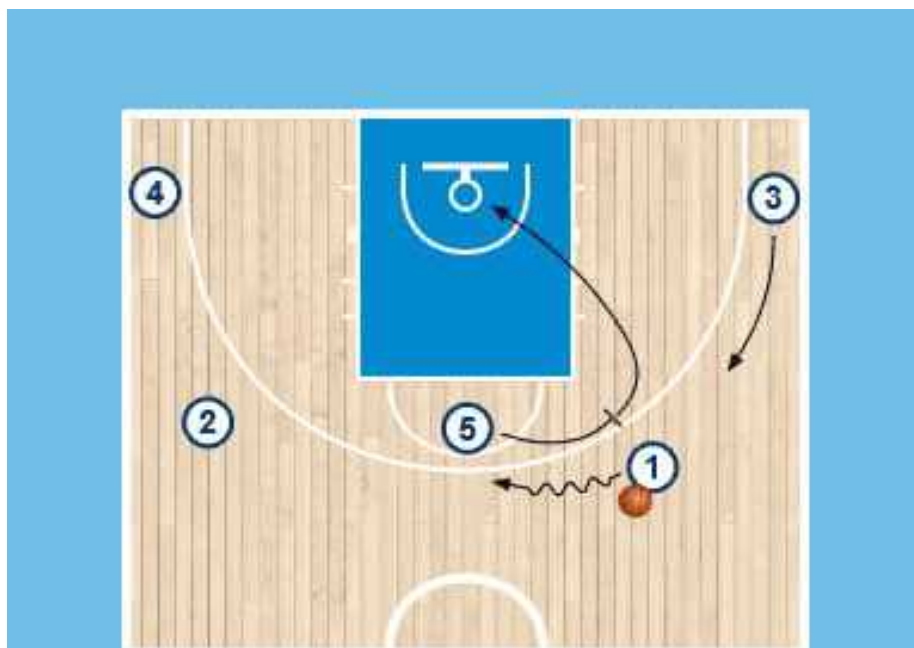


Diagram 67

However, if X1 goes through or under during the handoff and gets back in position to defend Player 1, Player 1 must stop and use an immediate re-pick. Player 5 must read the defense and immediately follow X1 after he goes under, to set another screen. The re-pick is a side pick situation which is covered later in detail.

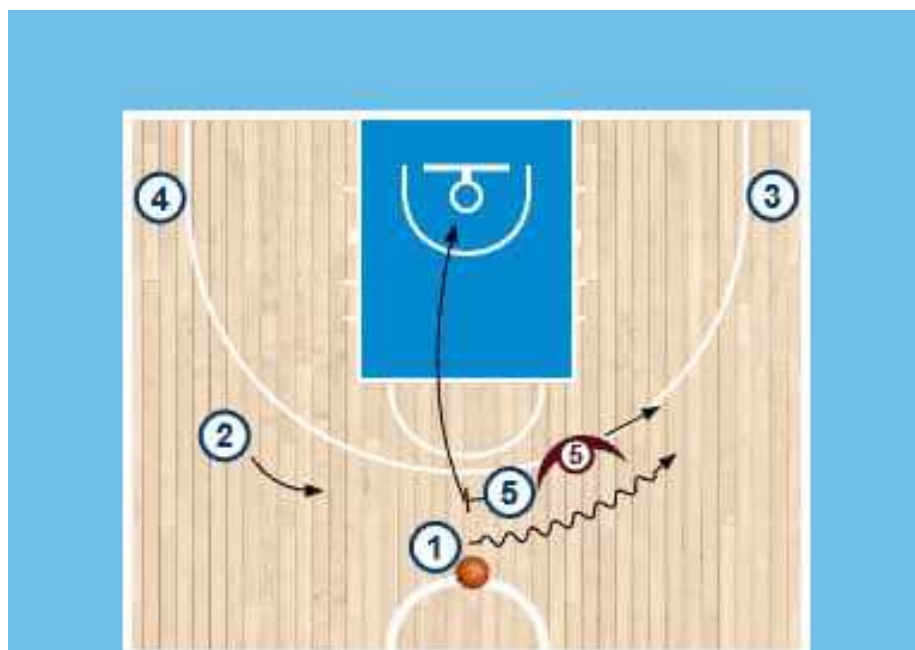


Diagram 68

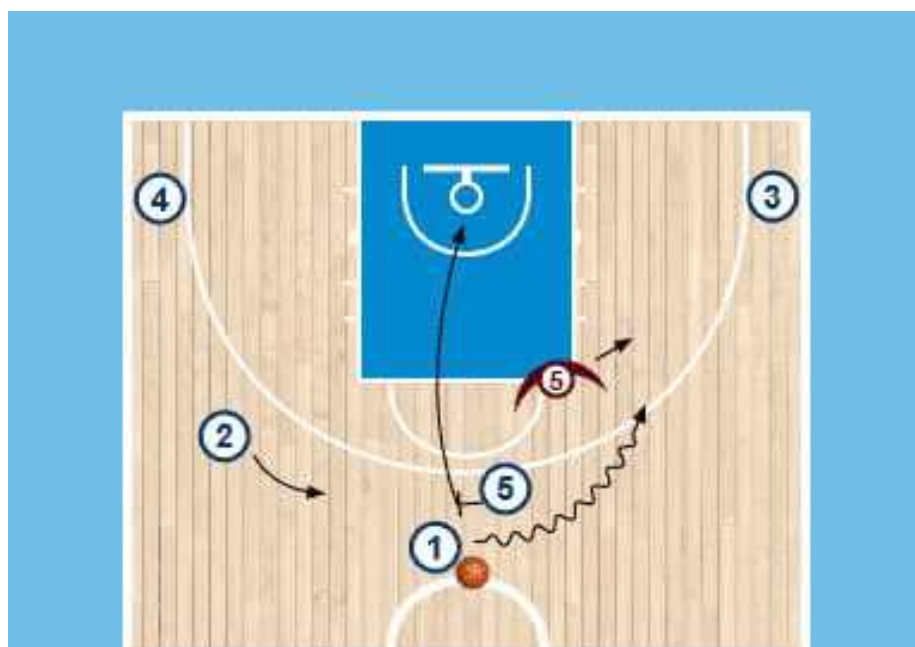


Diagram 69

If Player 1 receives the pass, he can play the top pick with Player 5, who must set the screen immediately upon the catch. If X5 plays flat (Diagram 68) or in a drop (Diagram 69), Player 5 must hold the screen the same as before. Player 1 must drive wide off the pick, which forces X5 to move laterally, making him cover a greater distance to recover back to Player 5. It also forces the help side players to rotate and bump Player 5 who rolls to the basket. After setting the screen, Player 5 must rotate the hips and roll to the basket by sprinting in a straight line, if possible. That will make him more challenging to bump. Many bigs are lazy and sloppy, running wide while rolling to the basket, making them closer to help side defenders and easier to bump. Player 5 should try to avoid that at all costs. Depending on who bumps and where the bump occurs, Player 1 has a couple of options.

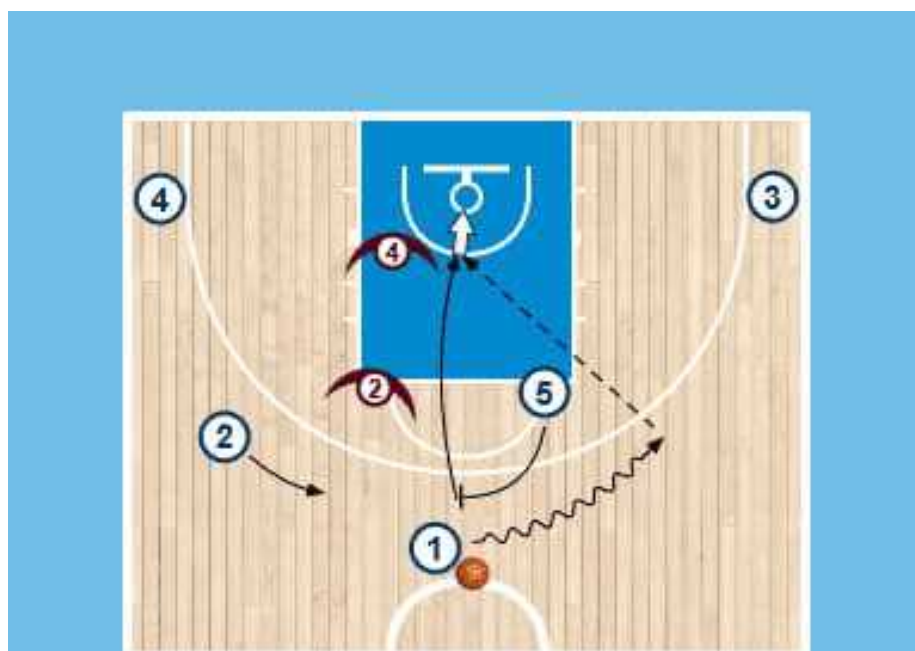


Diagram 70

If no one bumps Player 5 or X4 is late, Player 1 can make a direct pass to Player 5 for an easy finish.

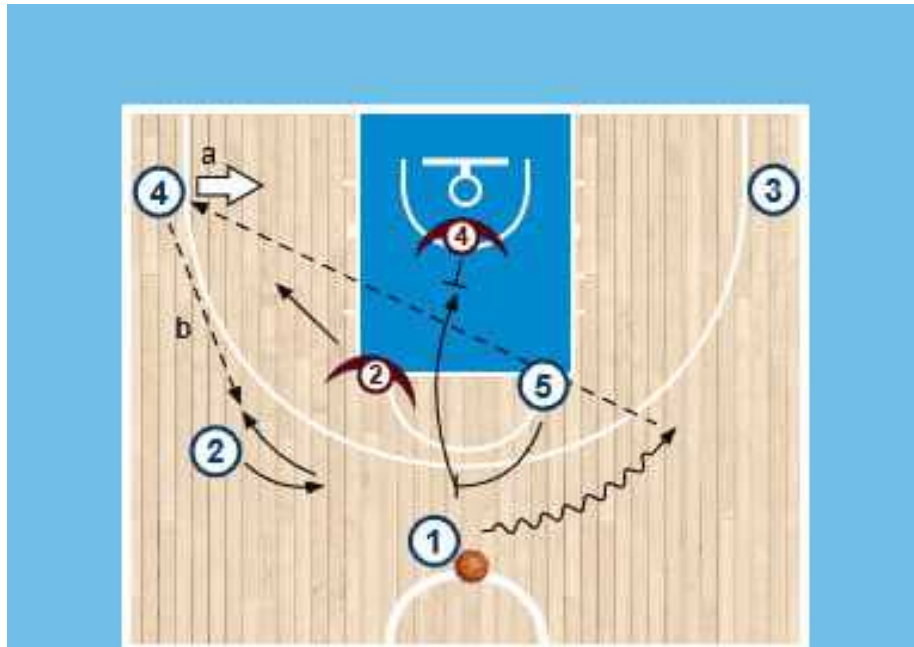


Diagram 71

If X4 bumps low, Player 1 can make a skip pass to Player 4 in the corner. He must use a one-handed hook pass or a two-handed overhead pass. Usually, the defense will "x-out" in this situation, meaning that X2 will rotate and sprint to close out Player 4, while X4 tries to recover to Player 2 after bumping Player 5. Depending on the defense, Player 4 can:

- a) Catch and shoot if X2 is late to close out properly.
- b) Make a swing pass to Player 2 if X2 arrived on time, but X4 is late on the "x-out". Player 2 then reads and attacks the closeout by shooting or driving.

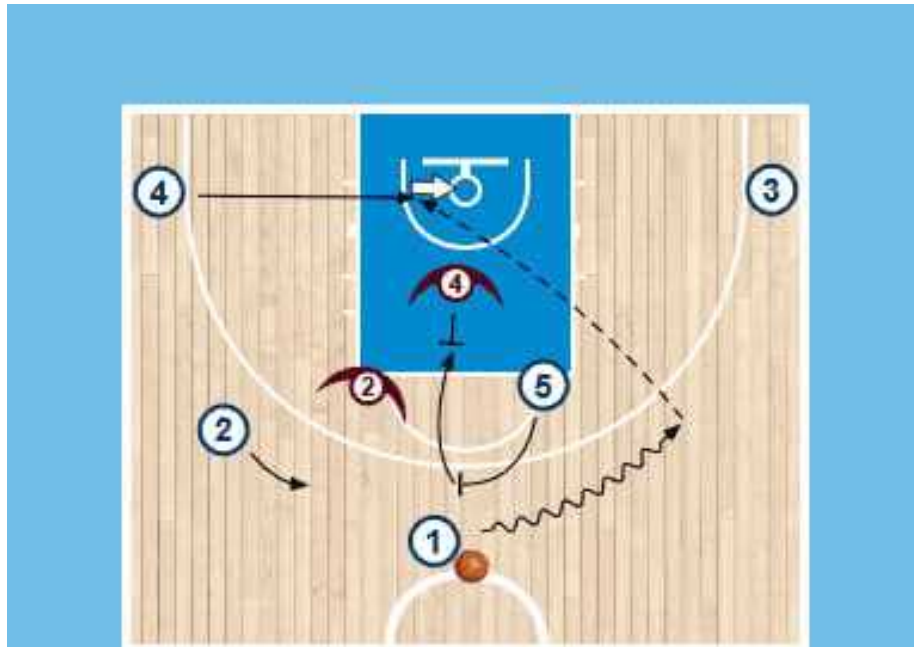


Diagram 72

If X4 bumps too high, Player 4 can cut baseline for an alley-oop lob pass. However, if that is too advanced, he can cut a bit further behind X4's back and receive the bounce pass for an easy layup.

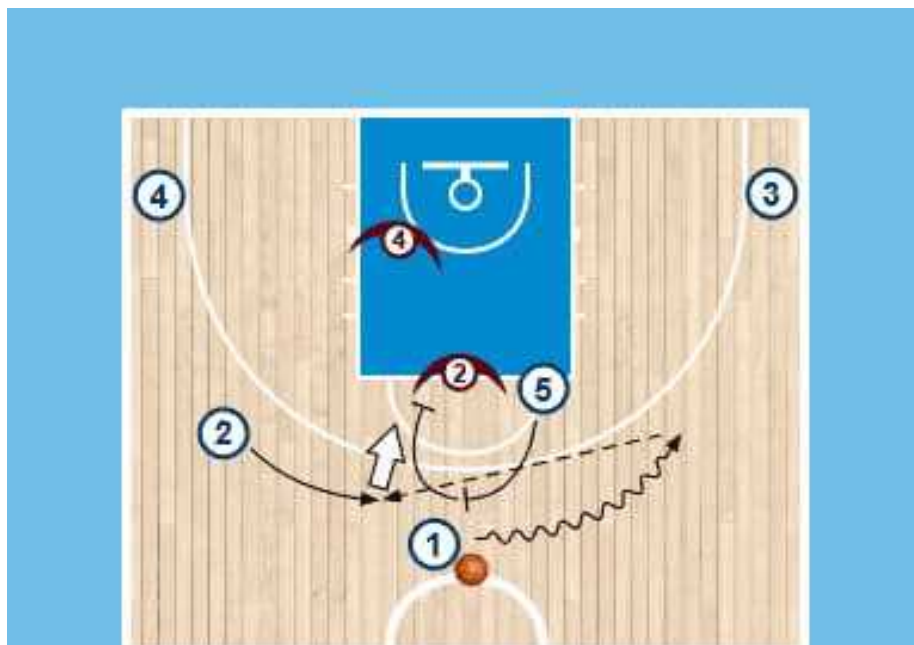


Diagram 73

Usually, teams bump with X4 because his man is furthest from the ball. However, some coaches decide to bump with X2, who is closer

to the ball. If that happens, Player 2 must be a good shooter, and the defense will be in trouble. Also, this time, Player 5 should not roll to the basket after setting the screen. Instead, he must change the roll into a pindown screen for Player 2 and block X2 from being able to recover. Then, if everything happens as planned, Player 1 can pass to Player 2, who will have an open three-point shot.

Diagram 74

Short roll is another option coaches often use against a flat defense. This time, instead of rolling to the basket, Player 5 should short roll to the opposite elbow using a quick backpedal. First, Player 1 must make one strong dribble towards X5 to force him to react. Then, he must pass to Player 5 using a bounce pass through the gap or an overhead pass. Finally, Player 2 must move to the free-throw line extended.

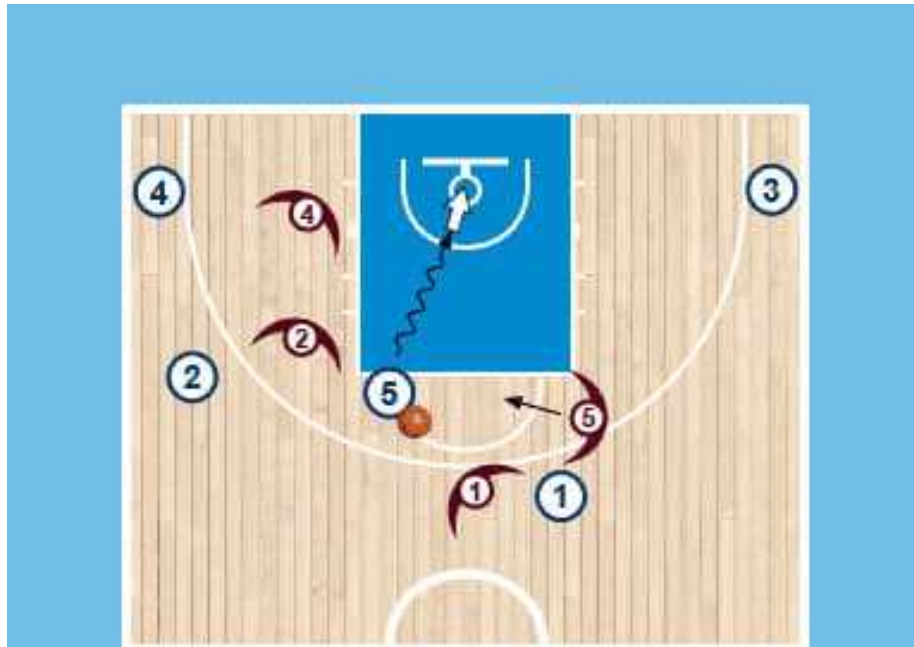


Diagram 75

Player 5 must face the basket immediately upon the catch. He should look over his outside shoulder every time to see if the X2 or X4 rotate to help. Also, his teammates might cut to the basket, and he must be ready to make the pass. Usually, X2 will stunt Player 5 on the catch to allow X5 to recover. If that does not happen, or Player 5 sends him away using a fake pass on the catch, he should have a clear lane to drive to the basket.

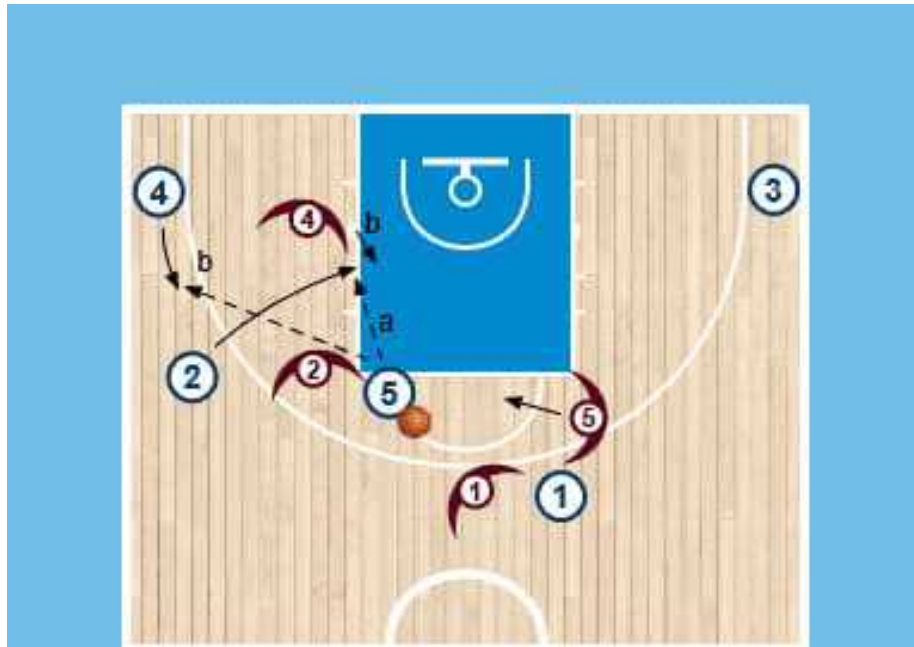


Diagram 76

In most cases, X2 will stunt successfully. However, coaches can use one of the following two options to counter the stunt and adjust the spacing because there are too many players on the ball side. The first one is to have Player 2 cut to the basket simultaneously with X2's stunt while Player 4 slightly lifts from the corner. Then:

- If X4 does not rotate, Player 5 can pass to a cutting Player 2.
- If X4 rotates, Player 5 can make a skip pass to Player 4.

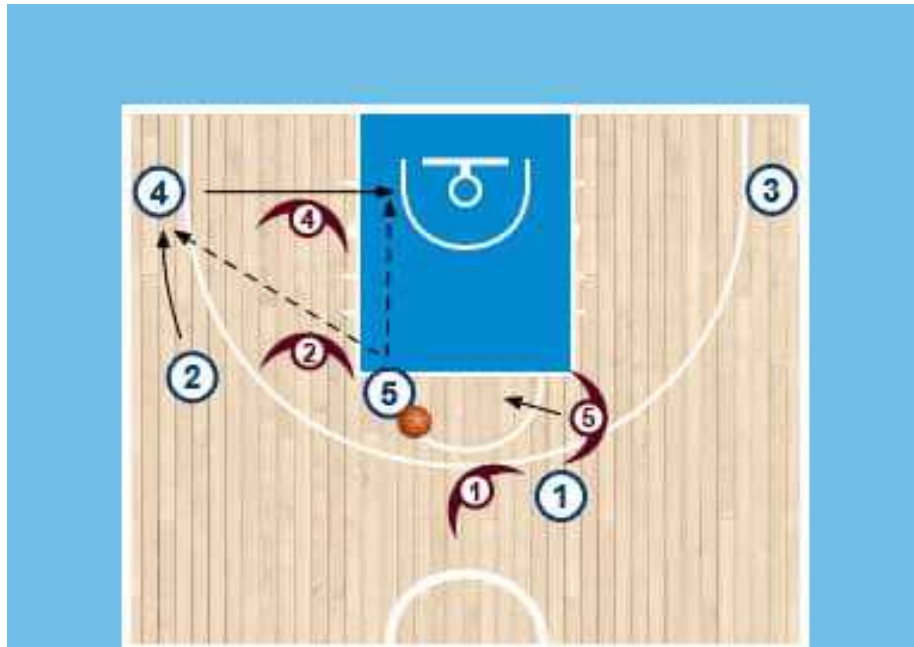


Diagram 77

The second way to attack is if Player 4 cuts to the basket while Player 2 moves to the corner. X2 will be late to recover because of the stunt, and X4 will be in a difficult situation against two players. Player 5 can pass to either player, depending on what X4 does. Coaches can get a similar option if Player 4 cuts across after the roll, and Player 2 moves to the corner after passing to Player 1 (Diagram 82).

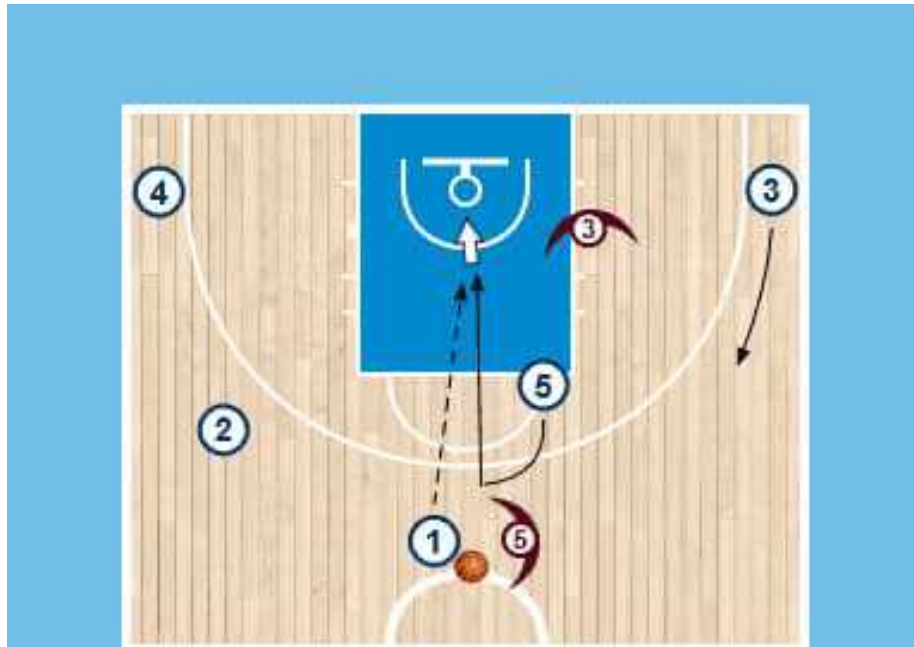


Diagram 78

The next couple of options will address how to attack a team that hedges the top pick. The first option is that Player 5 slips the screen exactly when X5 starts to hedge. Therefore, he must time it perfectly. That way, Player 5 and X5 will end up going in the opposite directions. If X3 does not rotate to cover the slip, Player 1 can pass the ball to Player 5. Player 3 must lift from the corner to distract X3 from helping.

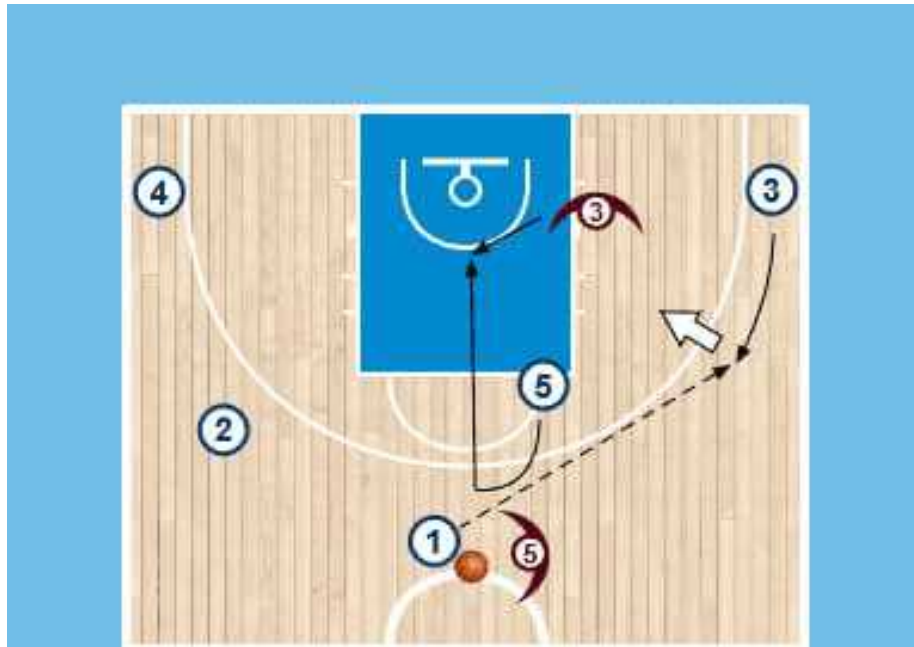


Diagram 79

However, if X3 helps and rotates, Player 1 can make a skip pass to Player 3 for an open shot. Again, Player 3 must lift because Player 1 will have a shorter and quicker pass, and X3 must cover a longer distance to get back to Player 3, which will be almost impossible.

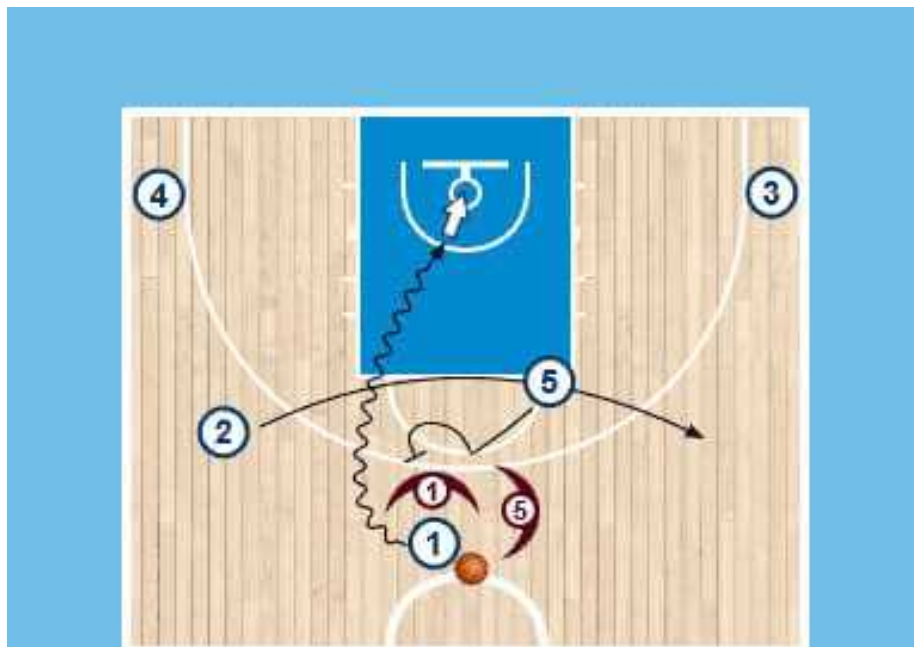


Diagram 80

If X5 hedges too early and is overly aggressive, Player 5 can flip the screen. Again, timing is of the essence. First, Player 2 must cut across when Player 5 starts moving before flipping the screen, which will open the driving lane for Player 1. Then, at the last moment before the pick, as soon as X5 starts hedging, Player 5 must change the angle of the screen and set a "flat" screen attacking X1's outside hip. Usually, the defense cannot react, and Player 1 can drive to the basket. If X3 or X4 rotate, Player 1 can make an easy kick-out pass.

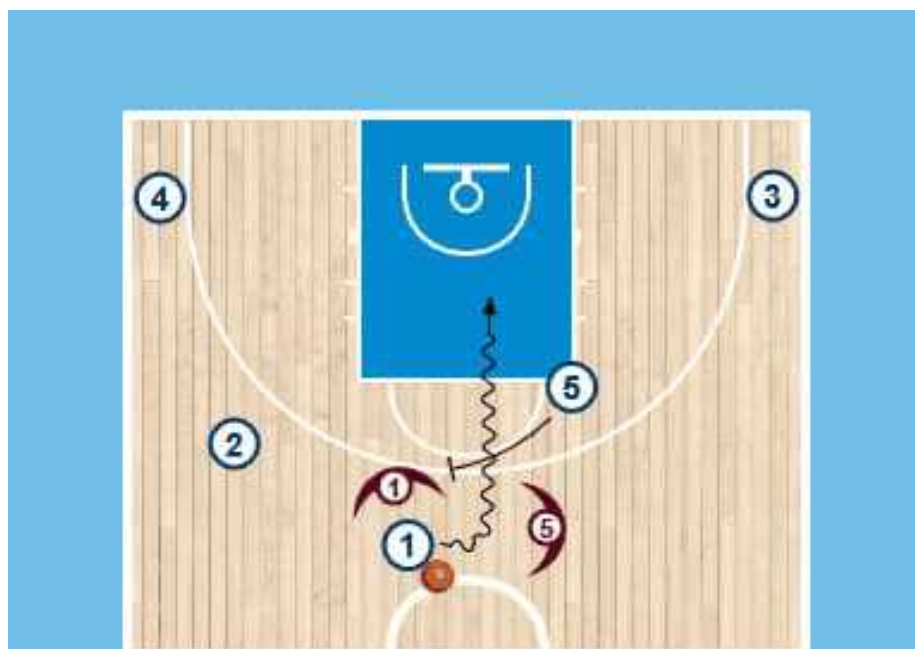


Diagram 81

If X5 is late and hedges too far away from the screen and leaves a gap between him and X1, Player 1 can split the defense and attack the basket using a sharp change of direction and driving through the gap. Again, if X3 or X4 rotate, Player 1 can make an easy kick-out pass.

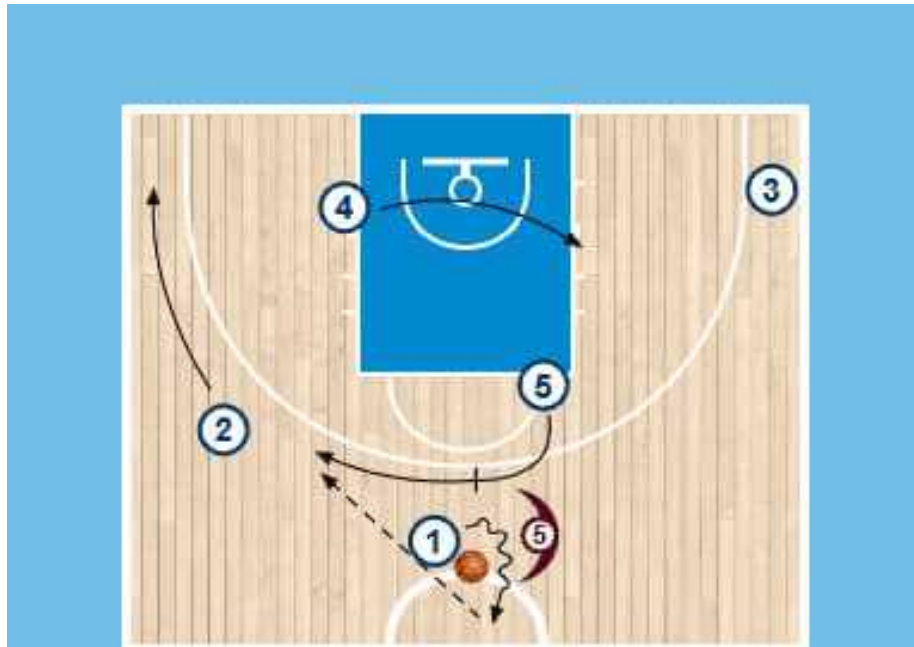


Diagram 82

Coaches can also attack the hedge by changing the spacing. As explained, if Player 4 cuts across the paint to the opposite low post, the spacing will change. After that happens, there is only one player behind the pick instead of two, leaving more space. To take full advantage of extra space, Player 2 must move to the corner. That will leave room for Player 5, who can now slip the pick and pop to the three-point line when his defender hedges. Next, Player 1 must use a defensive dribble to avoid the hedge and a reverse pivot to adjust the angle and pass to Player 5. Then, Player 5 has a couple of different options, depending on if X2 helps or not.

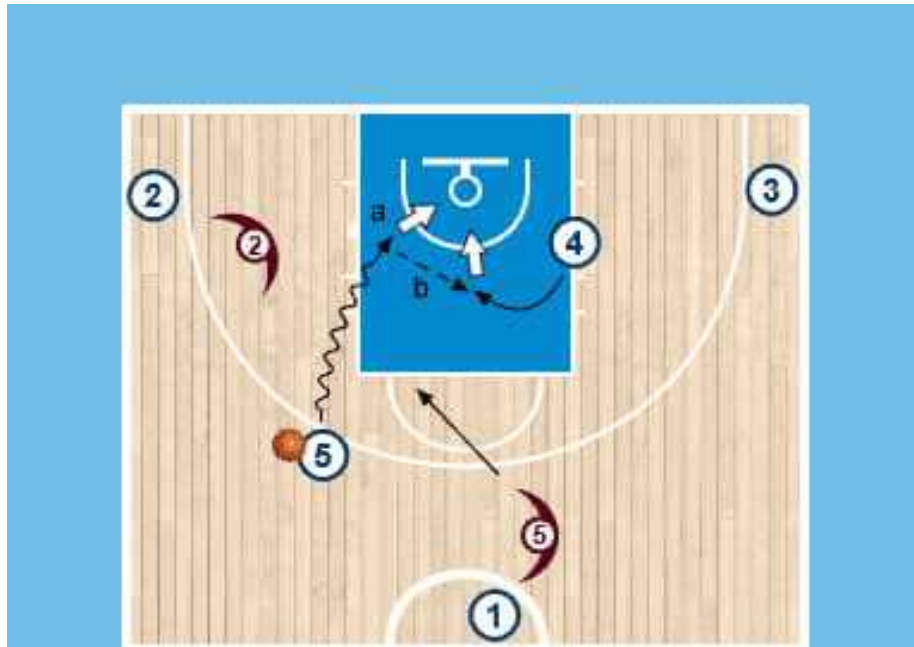


Diagram 83

If X2 does not help, Player 5 can drive to the basket. If the timing was right, X5 should not be able to recover. Player 5 can finish if there is no help, or he can pass to Player 4 if X4 helps. If X3 rotates to stop the drive, Player 5 can make a skip pass to Player 3 for an open shot.



Diagram 84

If X2 helps on the drive, Player 5 can make an easy kick-out pass for an open shot, considering it is one pass away and no one can rotate to help. That is an automatic shot, especially because Players 4 and 5 are in a good position for an offensive rebound.

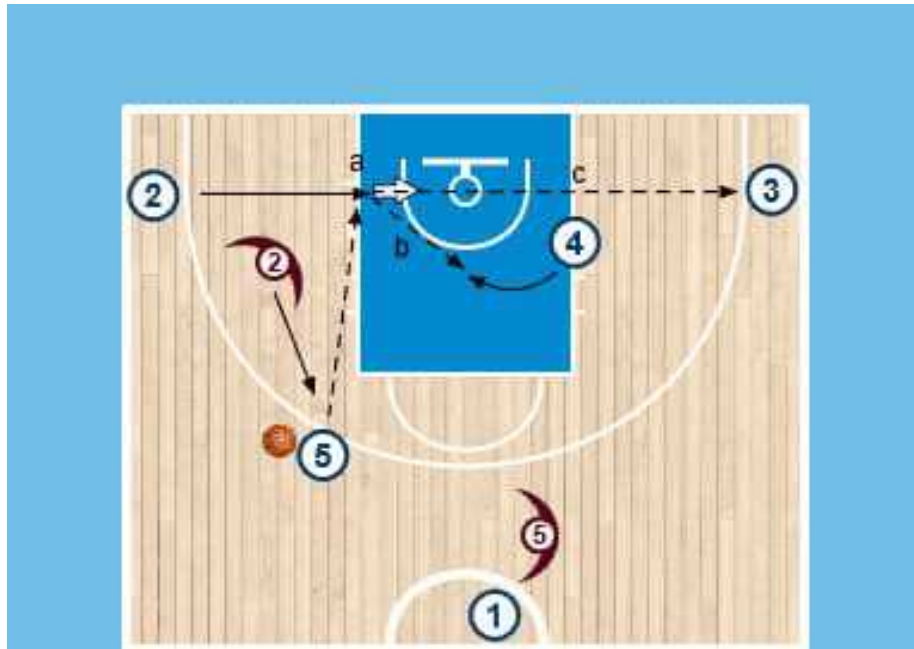


Diagram 85

If, however, X2 fully rotates on the catch, Player 2 must cut baseline to receive a bounce pass from Player 5. Then, he can:

- a) Finish if there is no help.
- b) Pass to Player 4 if X4 helps.
- c) Pass to Player 3 if X4 helps, and X3 rotates.

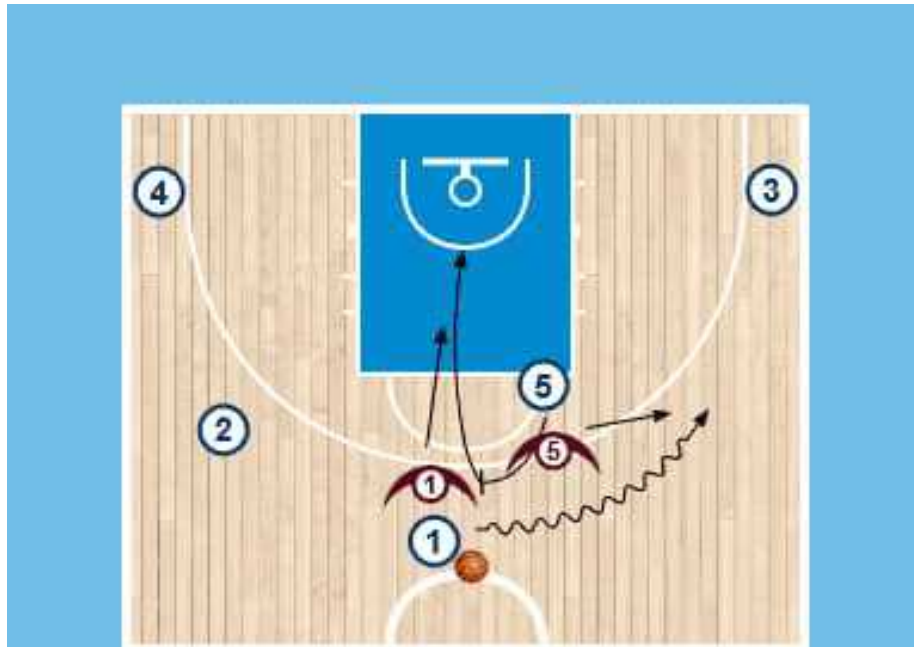


Diagram 86

If the defense decides to switch, Player 5 must hold the screen to force them to switch and dive to the paint, while Player 1 drives wide outside the three-point line to set up the high-low.



Diagram 87

Then, Player 4 must make a flash cut to the free-throw line and immediately look to throw a high-low lob pass to Player 5. It should

be possible because the defending team has nobody in a position to rotate and help or interfere with the pass. X3 should not have time to rotate because he was one pass away while Player 1 had the ball. It is essential not to allow the defense to deny the pass to Player 4. He must get open at all costs. Also, Player 5 must fight to have a good position in the paint so Player 4 can make a quick pass. It is necessary to do everything quickly to avoid the offensive three seconds. However, if the coaches want to exploit the perimeter mismatch again, there is a slightly different approach.

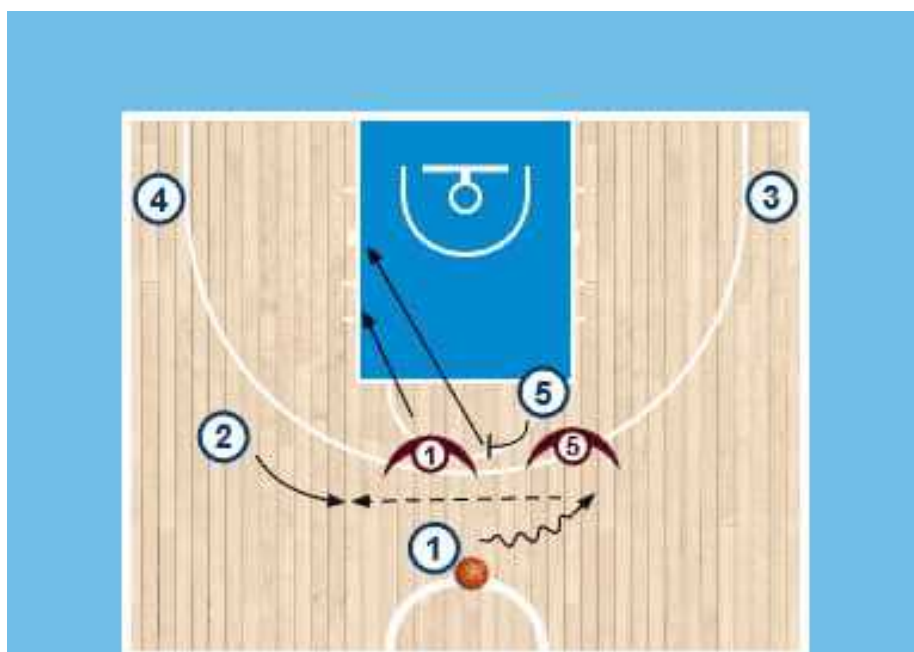


Diagram 88

Coaches should implement the same "pass and pass back" method, similar to the clear-side pick situation. First, Player 5 must hold the screen to force X1 to switch, then roll diagonally to open the lane. Next, Player 1 must drive wide enough to force X5 to switch. Then he must pass back to Player 2, forcing the X5 to move laterally towards the ball.

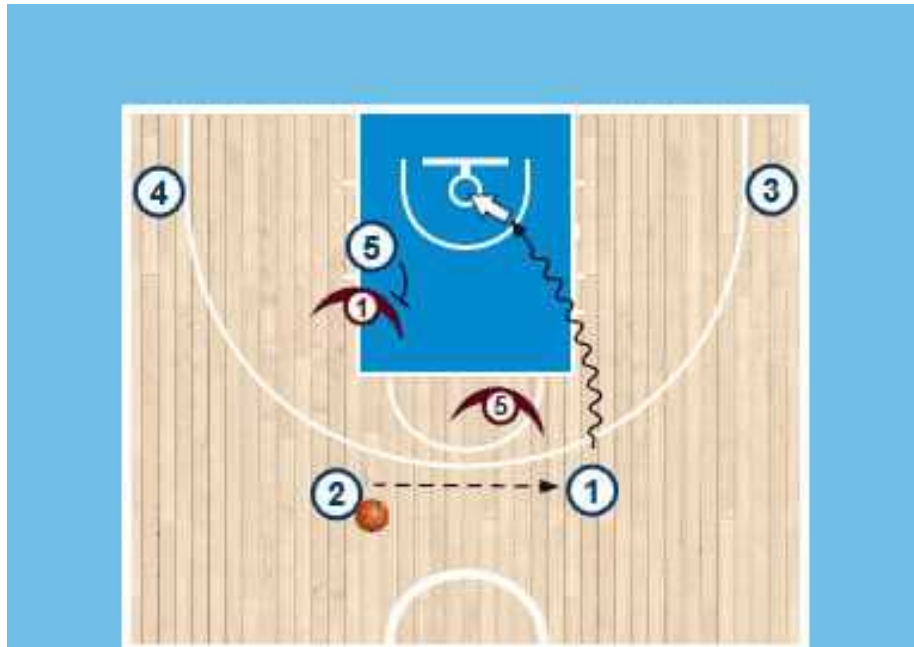
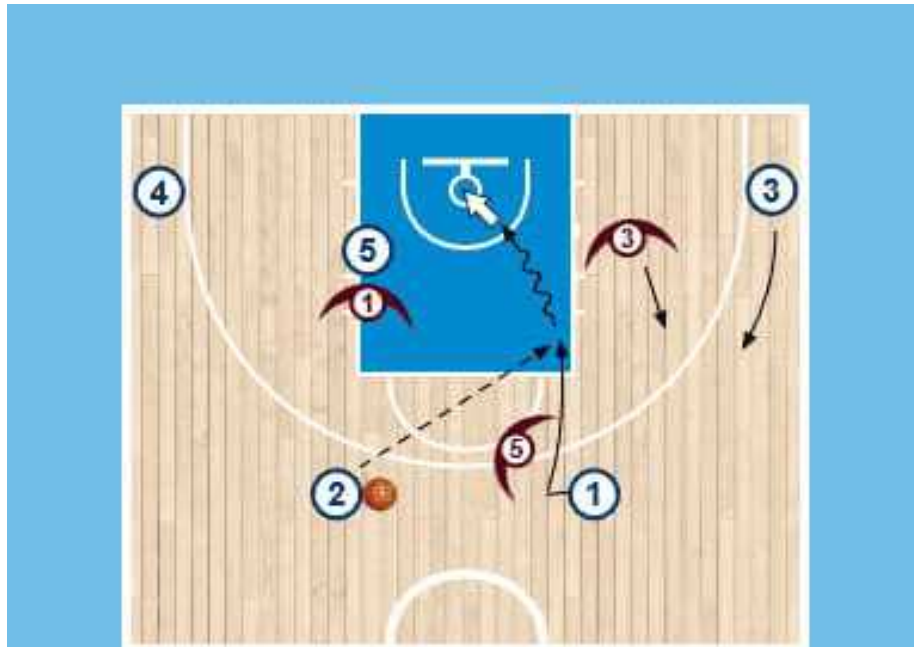


Diagram 89

Once X5 moves, Player 2 must immediately pass back to Player 1, who drives the opposite way off the catch. It will be difficult for X5 to react laterally and stop a much quicker Player 1 on the drive. Also, Player 5 must hold and seal X1 on his back to clear the lane for Player 1's drive. If X3 or X4 rotate to stop the drive, Player 1 has an easy kick-out pass to either player. However, if X5 adjusts and denies the pass back to Player 1, players have a couple of options to overcome it.



If X5 denies the pass, Player 1 can make a backdoor cut to get open. Considering he is much quicker than X5, it should not be a problem. Also, Player 3 must lift from the corner to distract X3 from helping. If X3 does not help, Player 2 can make the pass, and Player 1 has a clear path to the basket.

However, if X3 decides to help, Player 2 cannot pass to Player 1. So instead, he should make a skip pass to Player 3, who must lift again to shorten the passing distance and force X3 to have a longer rotation back if he tries to recover. Player 3 can shoot if X3 is late or drive if X3 is too aggressive on the closeout.

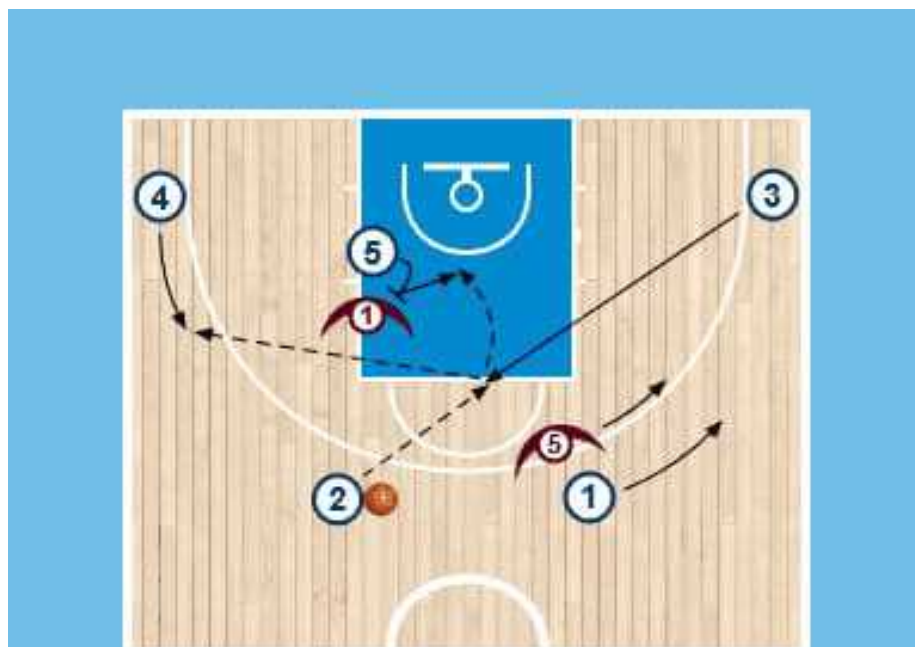


Diagram 92

Finally, if Player 1 cannot make a backdoor cut, he can shift to the right, moving X5 away from the ball. At the same time, Player 3 must flash cut to the free-throw line to set up the high-low. Then, after receiving the ball, he can throw a lob pass to Player 5 if no one helps. Player 5 must establish a good interior position to receive the lob. Alternatively, Player 3 can throw a skip pass to Player 4 if X4 helps. Again, it is essential that Player 4 lifts from the corner.

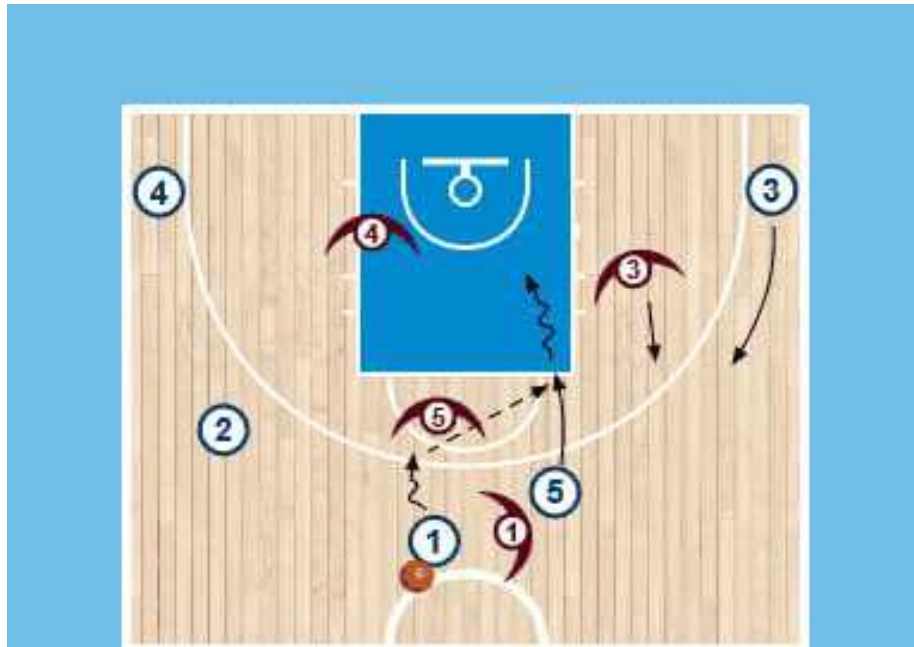
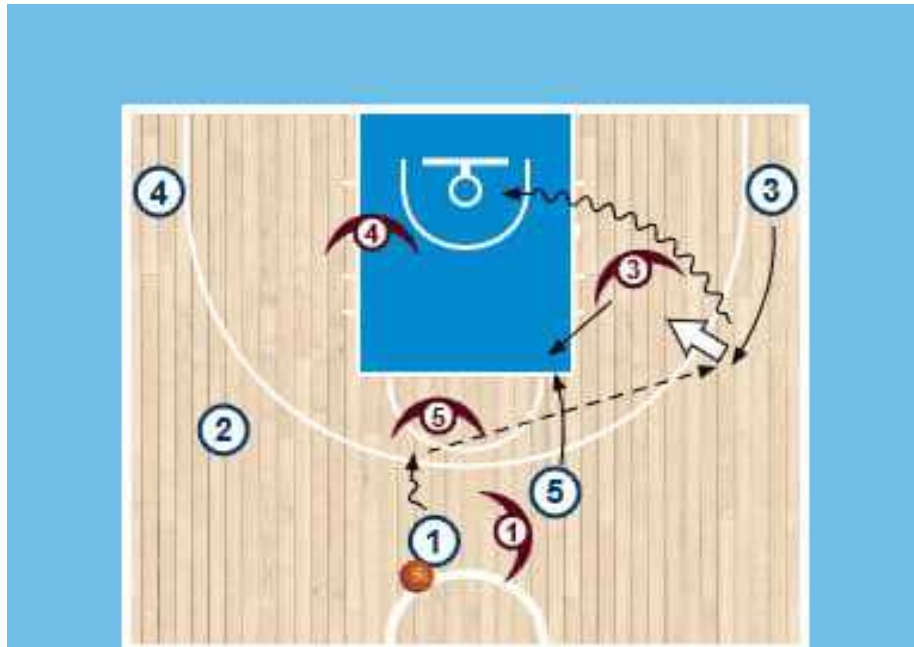


Diagram 93

In some rare cases, the defense might try to ice the screen. Perhaps the ballhandler is too dominant when driving to his right, and the defense wants to force him to go left. Regardless, the first option for Player 5 is to cut to the basket without setting the screen. At the same time, Player 3 must lift from the corner to distract his defender from helping. Player 1 attacks X5 to make him react, then throws a pocket bounce pass through the gap to Player 5, who can drive to the basket.

If X4 does not help, Player 5 can finish, and if X4 rotates, Player 5 can pass to Player 4, who can either spot-up or cut baseline.



If a cutting Player 5 provokes X3 to rotate and help, Player 1 can make a skip pass to Player 3 instead. Then, Player 3 can catch and shoot or drive to the basket, attacking the baseline, in case of an overly-aggressive closeout.

The second option for Player 5 is to pop out to the three-point line. This situation is similar to when Player 5 pops out against the hedge. Usually, X3 will rotate to help or stunt when Player 5 catches the ball. If so, Player 3 can cut baseline and receive an easy bounce pass. If there is no help, Player 5 can drive or shoot.



Diagram 96

In the final option, X5 plays in a drop instead of up close, so Player 5 can flip the screen. Player 1 should use the screen and immediately curl around Player 5 using a snake move, forcing X5 to react. Player 5 must hold the screen until Player 1 clears the screen with a snake move. After that, he should roll to the opposite side. Player 1 attacks wide off the snake and forces X5 into a two-against-one situation.

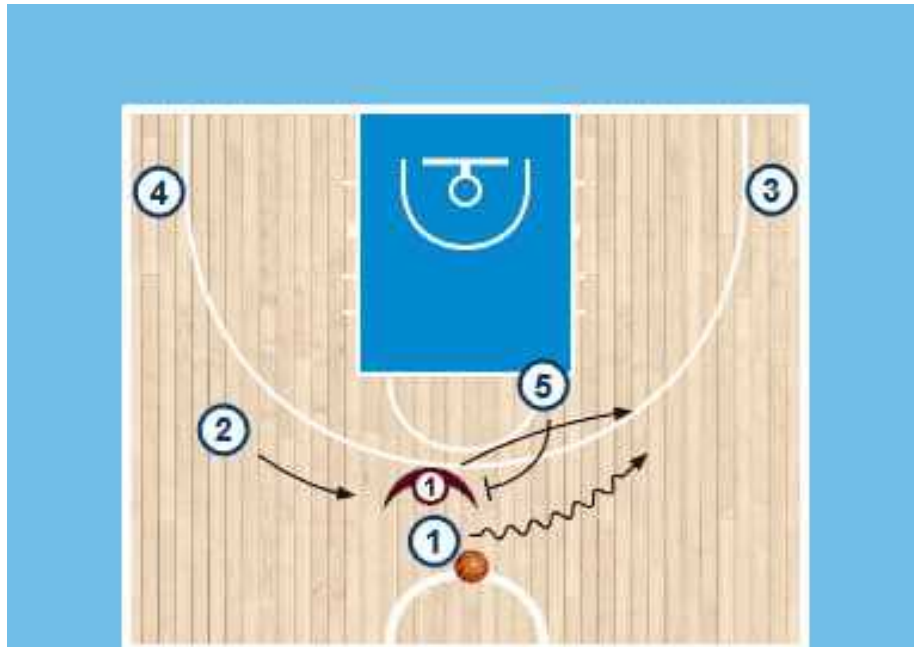


Diagram 97

Many teams will decide to defend the top pick by going under the screen. Perhaps Player 1 is not a good shooter off the dribble, or the defense wants to avoid unnecessary rotations. In any case, the offensive player must read that the defender went under the screen and set an immediate re-pick. The next segment will cover various options to play the re-pick depending on the defense. Usually, after going under, the defense will drop or switch the re-pick.

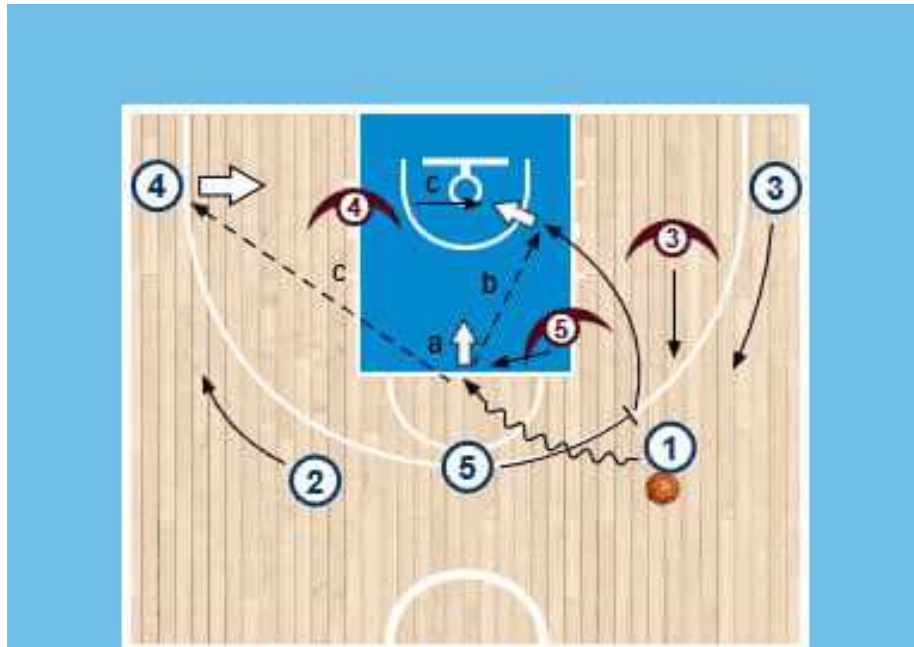


Diagram 98

If X5 plays in a drop position, Player 5 should hold the screen a bit longer, while Player 1 attacks wide of the screen to force the X5 to move laterally. After that, Player 1 can:

- a) Pull up from the free-throw line if X5 plays too passive.
- b) Pass to Player 5 if X5 helps, and X4 does not rotate.
- c) Pass to Player 4 if X5 helps, and X4 rotates.

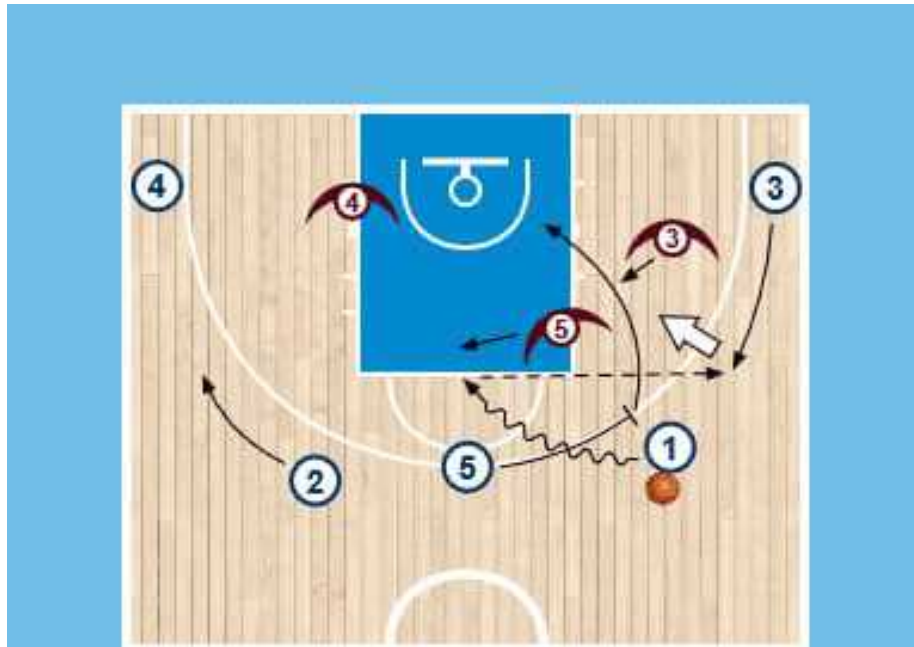


Diagram 99

If X3 helps or bumps the roller, Player 1 must pass to Player 3. Passing behind is always a good option against a passive pick-and-roll defense such as the drop. If X3 overextended and is late to recover, Player 3 should have an open catch-and-shoot situation.



Diagram 100

Diagram 101

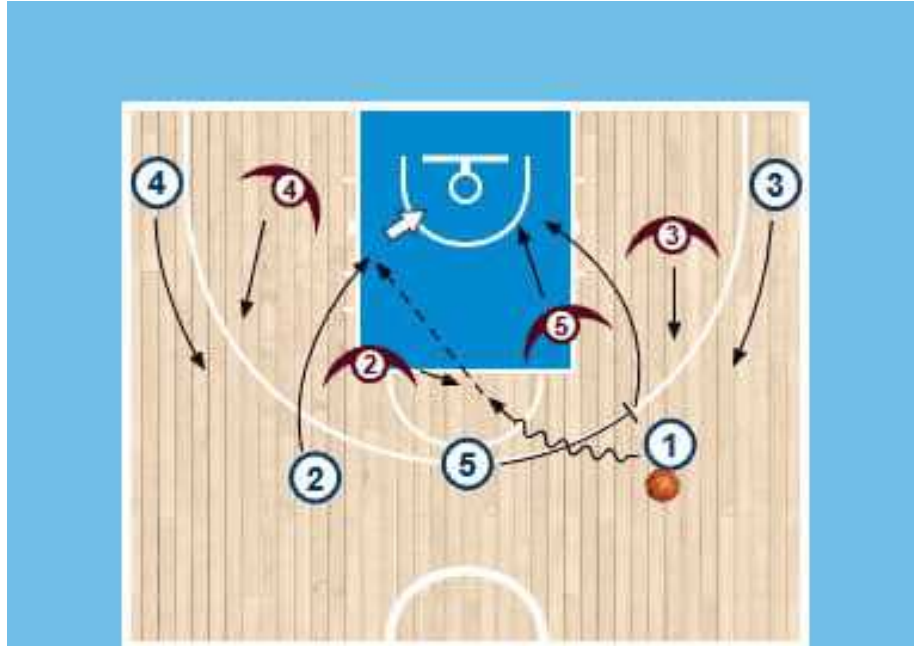


Diagram 102

Another way to attack the same situation is with a backdoor cut. When Player 1 drives and X2 helps, Player 2 can make a back door behind X2's back. At the same time, Player 4 must lift to the free-throw line level to prevent his defender from helping. It also shortens the passing distance if X4 helps. There are two possible outcomes, depending on the situation. If X4 does not help, Player 1 can pass to cutting Player 2 for an easy layup.

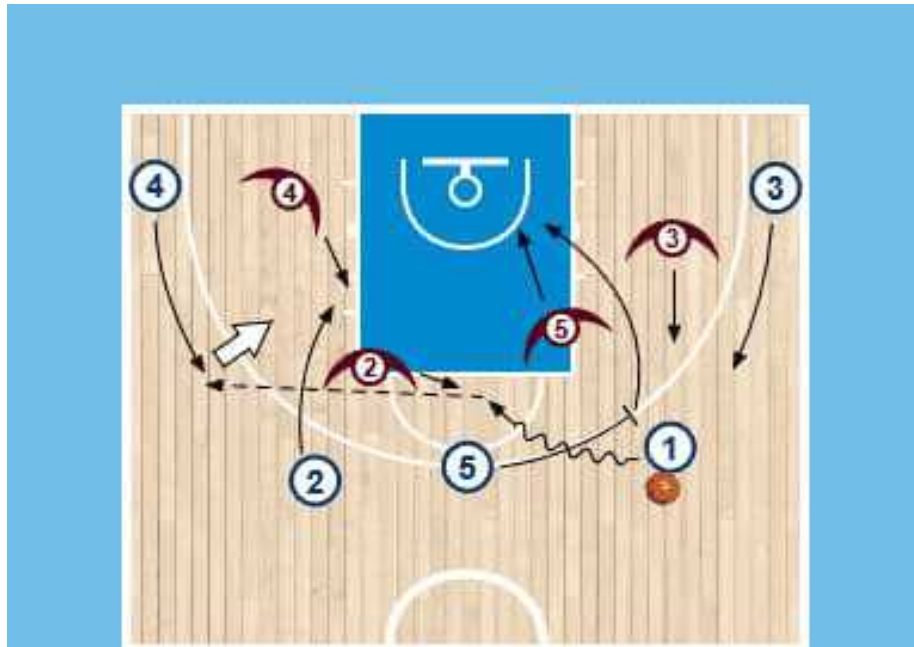


Diagram 103

However, if X4 helps, Player 1 can pass to Player 4, who lifts from the corner for an open shot. Usually, this will happen because the defense adjusts after Player 2 makes a successful backdoor cut a couple of times. So, it is essential that Player 2 cuts every time, with an intention to score and force the defense to rotate.

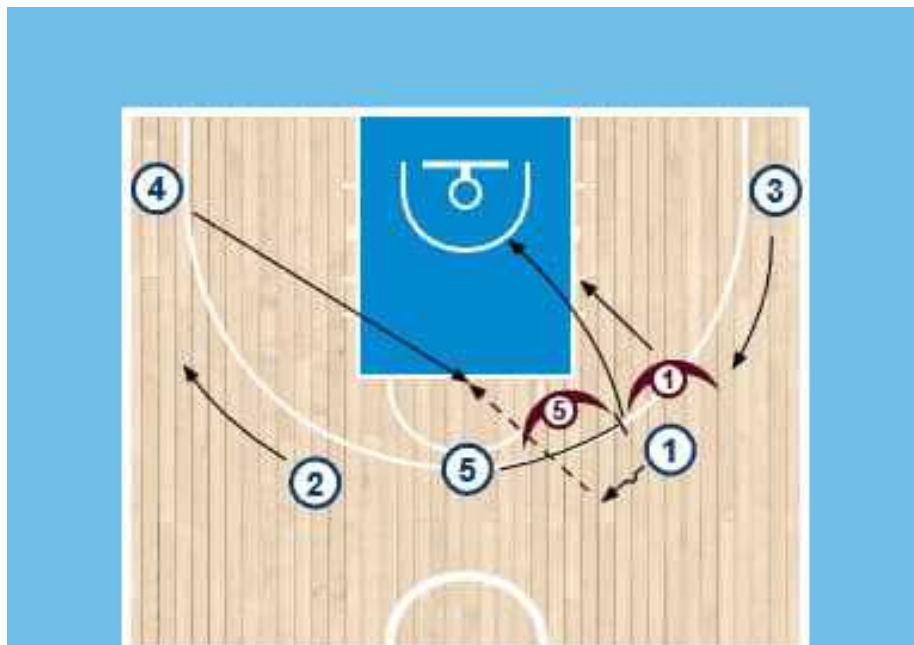


Diagram 104

If X1 and X5 switch and coaches want to exploit the interior mismatch, Player 4 must flash cut to the free-throw line. Player 2 and Player 3 move to the free-throw line extended to prevent their defenders from helping during the high low. Player 5 dives to the paint and establishes a good position while X1 tries to front him. Player 1 then passes to Player 4.

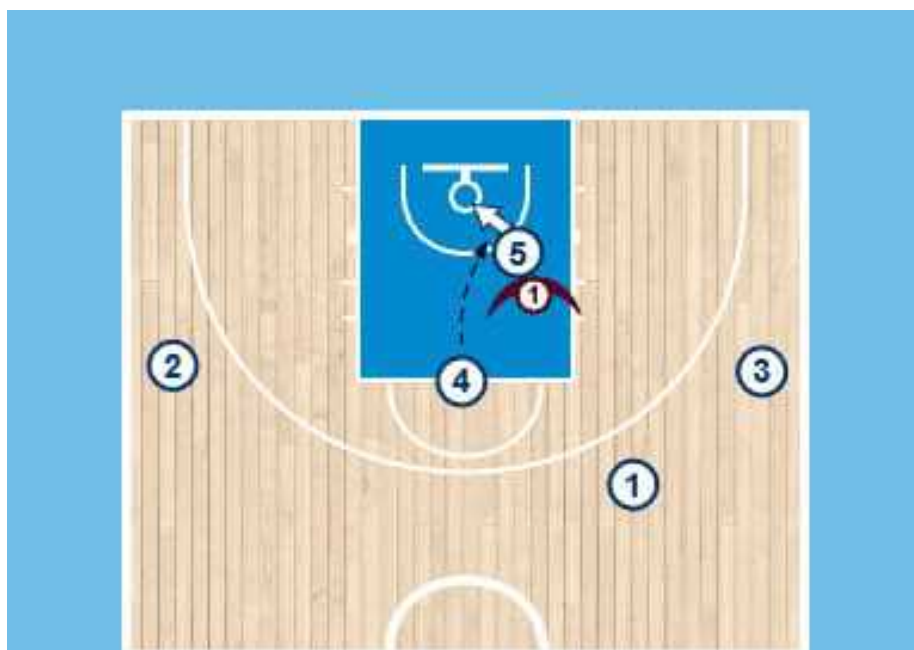


Diagram 105

After that, it should be an easy high-low situation. Player 4 can throw a lob to Player 5, with no players close enough to rotate. If, however, X2 or X3 rotate, it should be an easy read for Player 4, who can pass to either player for an open shot. Also, coaches can use the same idea if the opponents use a "switch and switch out" move with X4. Alternatively, if coaches decide to attack the perimeter mismatch instead, they should have a slightly different approach.

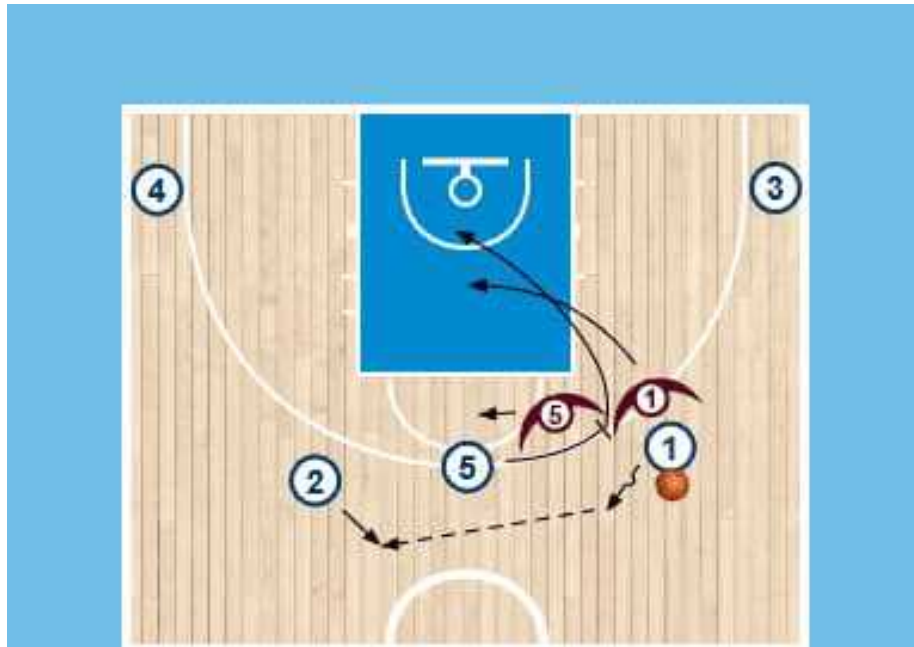


Diagram 106

Again, coaches can use the pass and pass back method to attack the perimeter mismatch after the switch. After forcing the switch, Player 5 dives to the paint, and Player 1 passes to Player 2. This time, Player 2 must move towards the ball to receive the pass, while Players 3 and 4 stay in the corners to space the floor for the potential drive. Again, passing to Player 2 will force X5 to move laterally towards the ball.

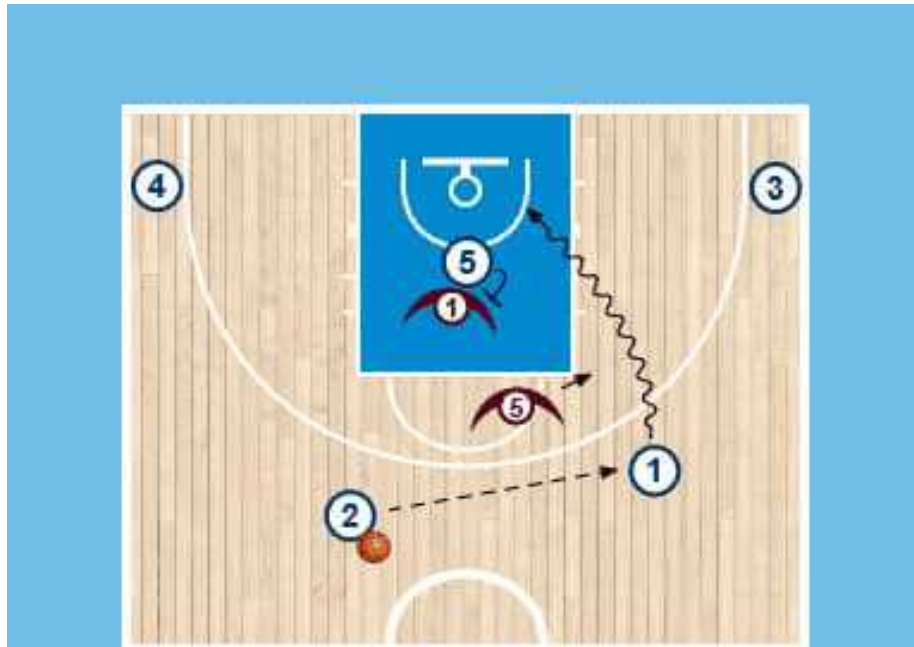


Diagram 107

Once X5 moves, Player 2 immediately passes back to Player 1, who drives the opposite way off the catch. It will be difficult for X5 to react laterally and stop a much quicker Player 1 on the drive. Also, Player 5 must hold and seal X1 on his back to clear the lane for Player 1's drive. If X3 or X4 rotate to stop the drive, Player 1 has an easy kick-out pass to either player.

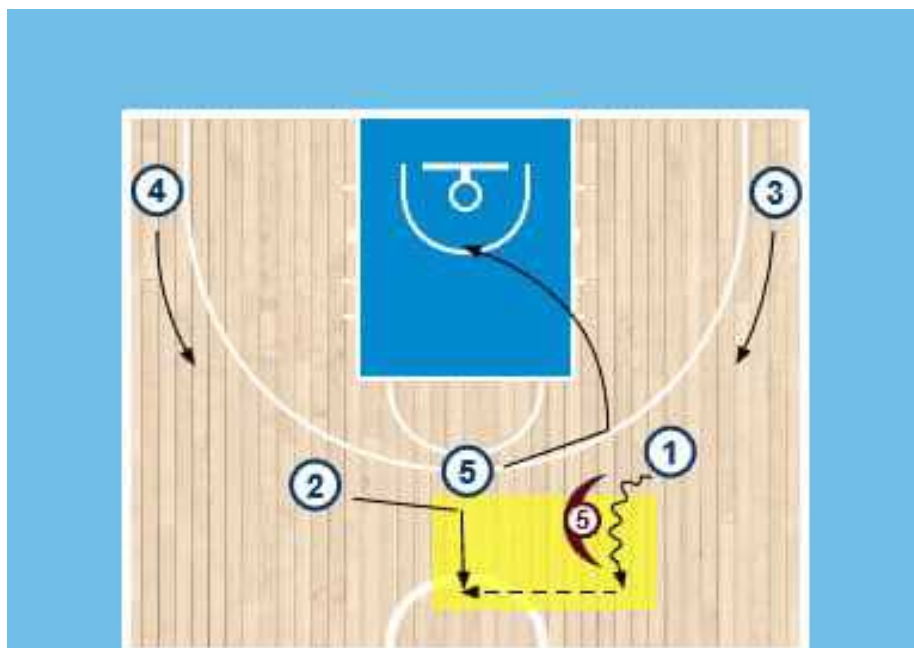


Diagram 108

Usually, if X1 defends the top pick by going under and X5 stays in drop, it is difficult to hedge the re-pick because they are out of position. However, in some cases, if they do a strong push-and-through or even push-and-under if positioned high enough, they can manage to hedge the re-pick. In any case, if the defense manages to hedge, Player 5 must slip the screen, and Player 1 must pass the ball forward to Player 2, who must get open and receive the pass in line with Player 1 or higher. Players 3 and 4 must lift to force their defenders away from helping.

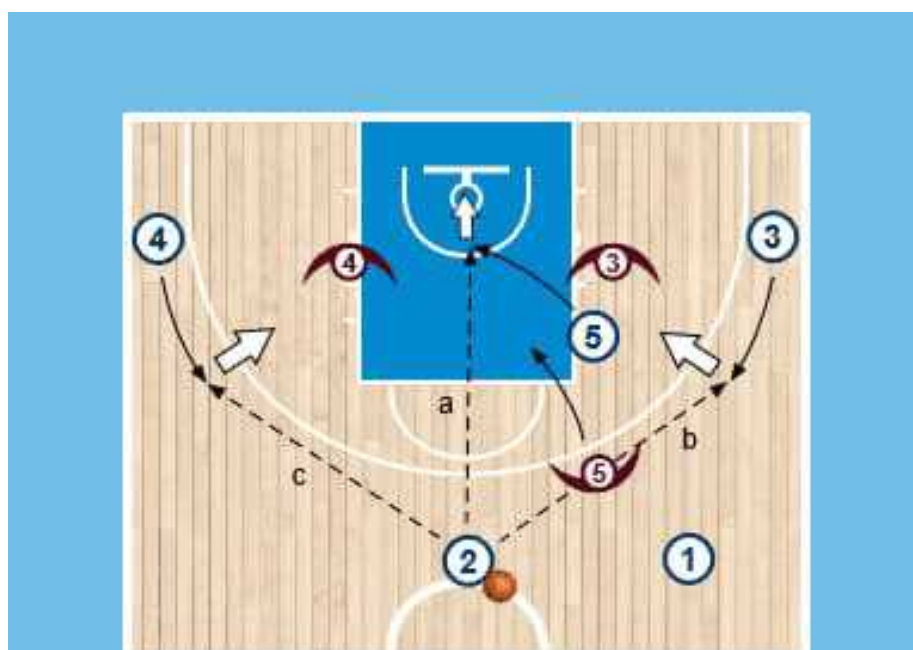


Diagram 109

After receiving the pass, Player 2 must make a split-second decision. If X3 and X4 follow their man and do not help, Player 2 can throw a bullet pass to Player 5. If X3 or X4 help, Player 2 can make a skip pass to either player. Coaches must have an intelligent Player 2 who can make that decision if they want to attack the hedge successfully.



Diagram 110

If the defense adjusts and denies the pass to Player 2, coaches can adapt and use another option. This time, instead of diving to the basket after the slip, Player 5 must backpedal to the elbow using a short roll. Then, Player 1 must pass to Player 5 using a pocket pass if X5 and X1 leave a gap or a short lob over X1. Player 5 then has a couple of options depending on the defensive rotation.

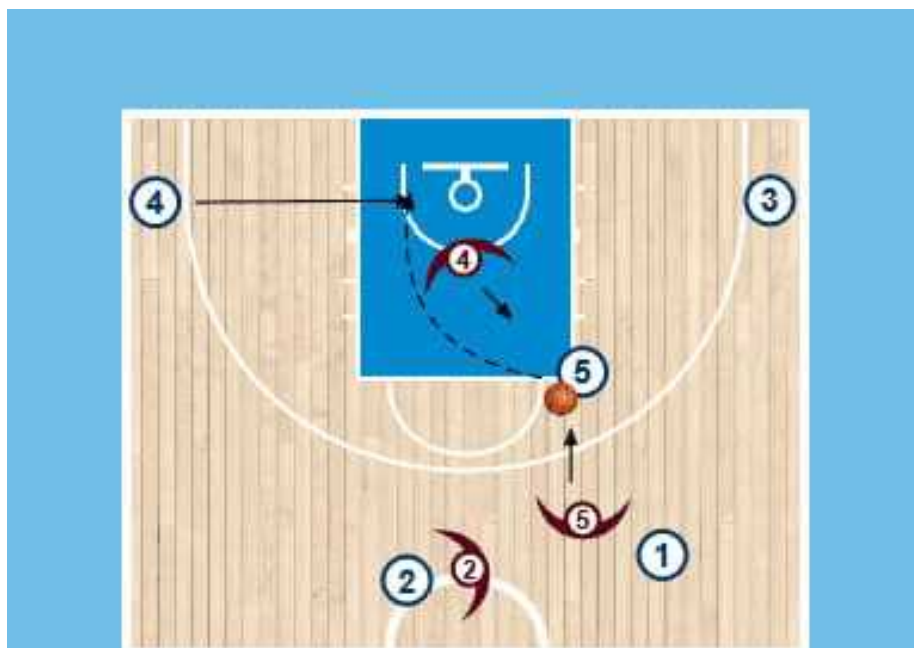


Diagram 111

X5 is still out of position, and while he tries to recover, someone must rotate and help. Player 5 must immediately face up to the basket after the catch and read which player is helping. If X4 rotates to help, Player 4 must cut baseline. Then, Player 5 can throw an alley-oop pass to Player 4 for an easy finish.

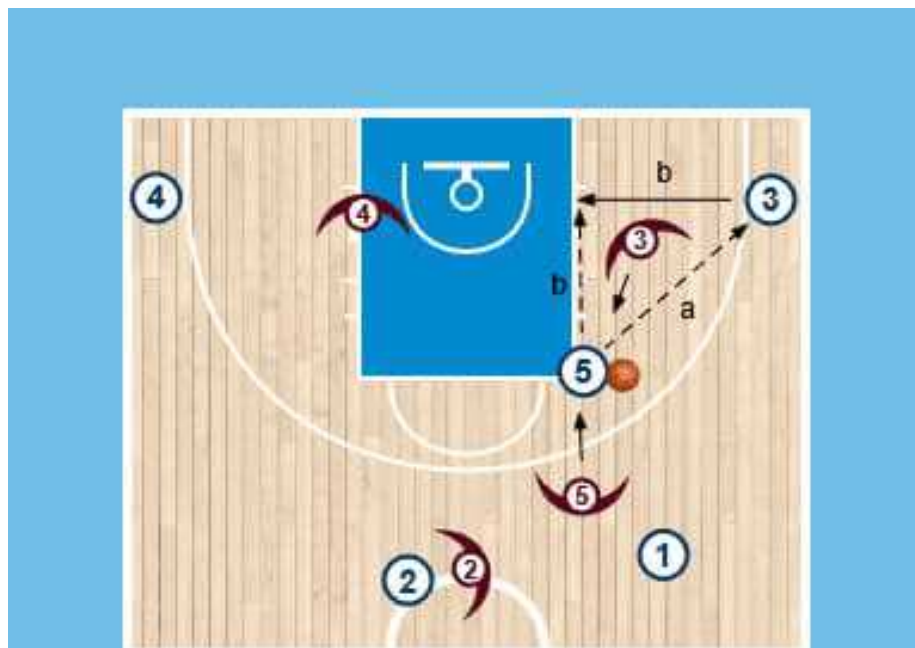


Diagram 112

If X3 rotates to help, Player 5 has two options:

- a) If X3 only stunts and recovers, Player 3 must remain in the corner. Player 5 can pass to Player 3, who can shoot if X3 is late to recover or drive baseline if X3 recovers too aggressively.
- b) If X3 fully rotates to Player 5, Player 3 must cut baseline. Then, Player 5 can make a bounce pass to Player 3 for an easy finish.

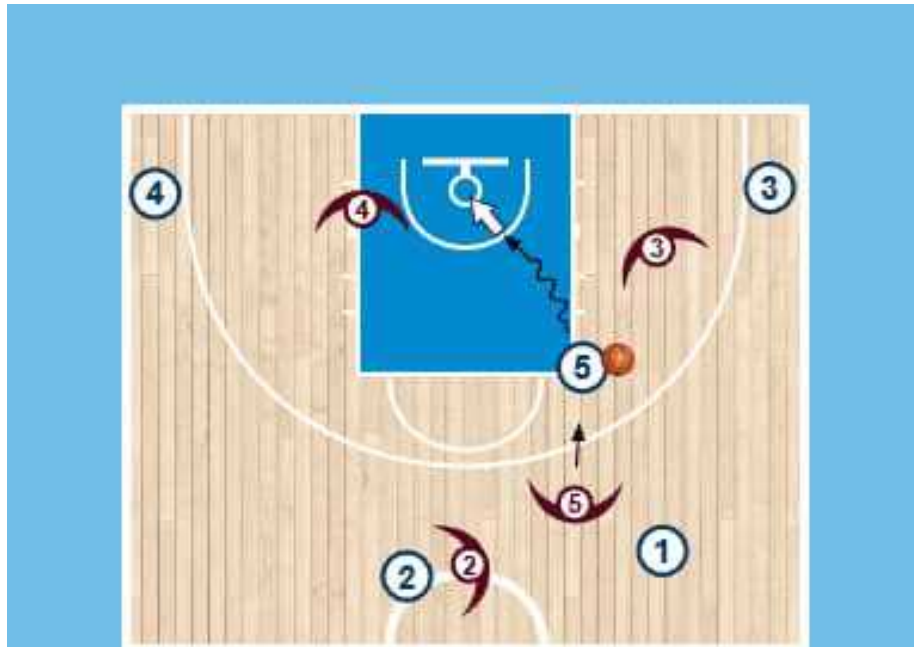


Diagram 113

If no one helps, Player 5 has an easy drive to the basket. However, the same thing can happen if X3 only stunts Player 5 on the catch and recovers. In that case, Player 5 can send X3 back to his man with a fake pass immediately after the catch. After that, he should have an open drive to the basket.

PLAYING AGAINST A ZONE

Zone defenses are becoming ever more popular, even in the NBA. Take the Miami Heat, for example. Nowadays, every coach must have an offensive playbook against the zone and teach their players how to play against different zone defenses, regardless of player formation and defensive principles. However, many coaches do not know that they can use most of their man-to-man set plays against a zone, with a slight adjustment, of course. The one in this system is no exception.

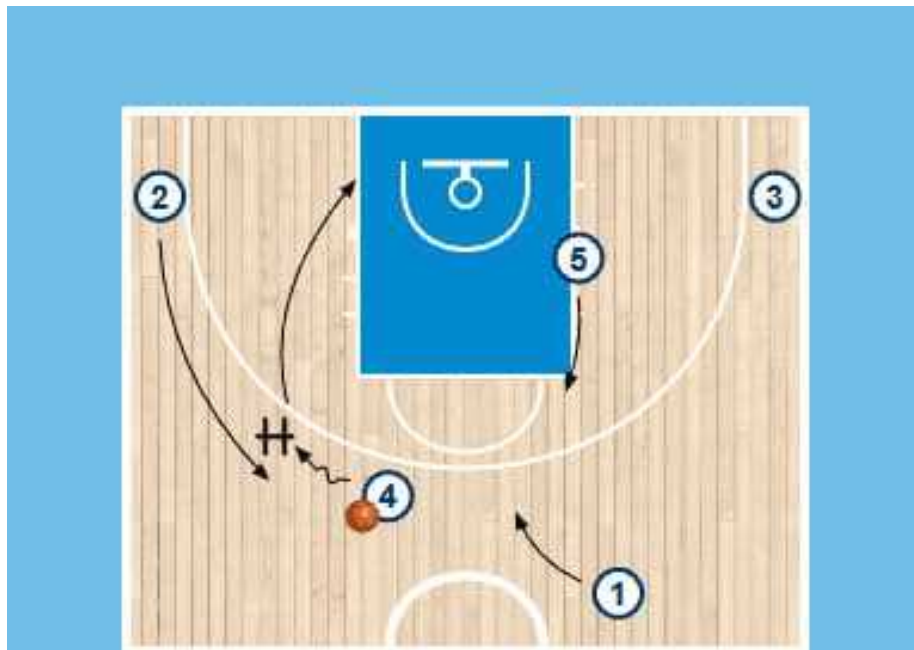


Diagram 114

The play will start the same as always. There is no point playing the clear-side pick because of the zone defense. The main point of the first part of the offense is to force the zone to move to one side of the court by moving the ball. That will set up a better angle and

spacing for the top pick. Player 4 can hand off the ball to Player 2 and dive to the post. He can also pass to Player 2 and cut without setting the screen. Alternatively, Player 4 can cut immediately, while Player 1 passes to Player 2.

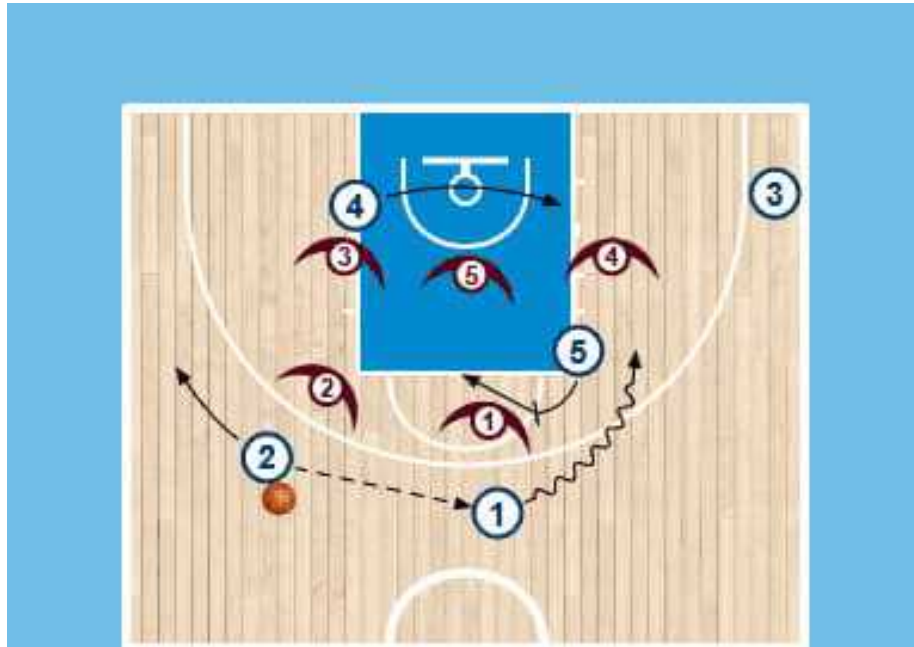


Diagram 115

Coaches are usually most familiar with playing against a 2-3 zone. After receiving a pass, Player 2 must give the defense time to react and hold the ball until everyone moves towards the ball. After that happens, he must pass the ball back to Player 1. The timing is essential here, and everything must happen simultaneously. Player 5 must set the screen at the same time Player 1 catches the ball, so X1 does not have any time to react. He must set and hold the screen almost at a flat angle, targeting X1's outside hip. Player 1 must drive wide off the pick, forcing X4 to react, while Player 4 cuts to the opposite low post. Player 5 short rolls to the free-throw line, and Player 2 positions for the skip pass.

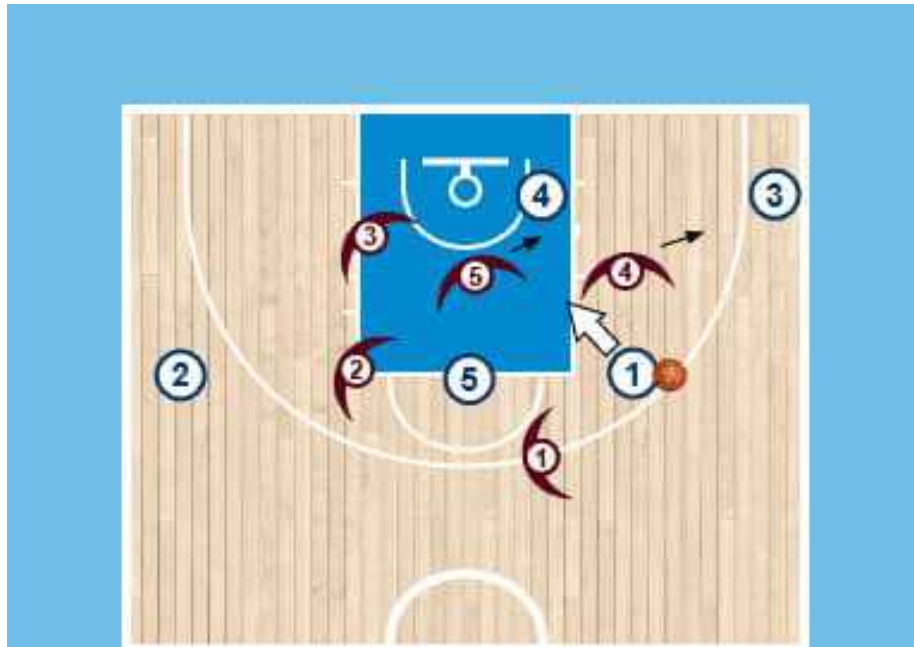


Diagram 116

If Player 5 sets a good screen, Player 1 should be out of position and late. If no one helps or Player 1 tricks X4 with a fake pass, he can pull up and have an open shot from mid-range.

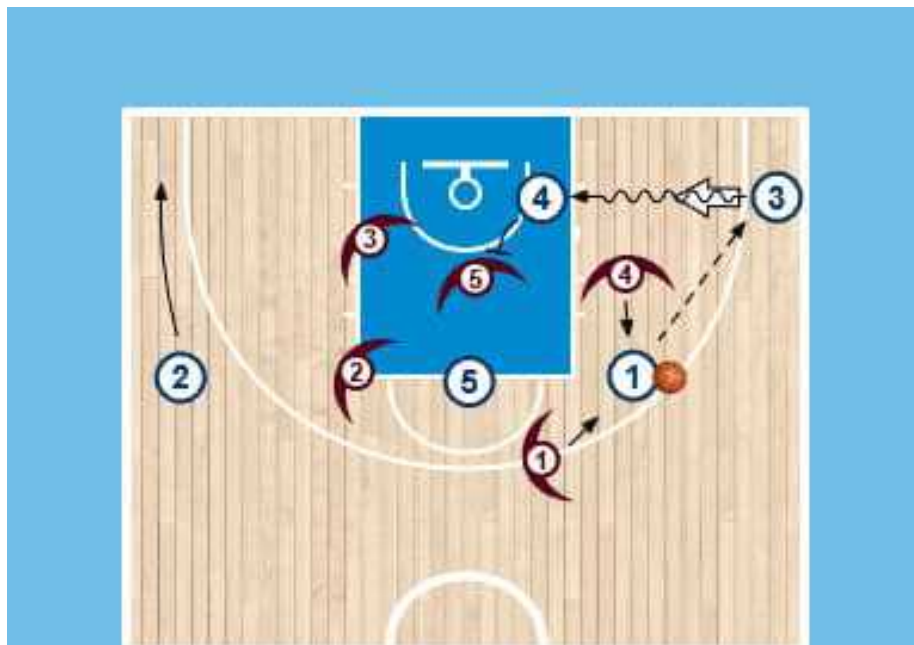


Diagram 117

Next, if X4 rotates to help stop Player 1's drive and overextends, Player 1 has an easy kick-out pass to Player 3 for an open corner

three-point shot. Alternatively, Player 3 can drive baseline, while Player 4 seals X5 and Player 2 opens a corner pass if X3 rotates to stop the drive.

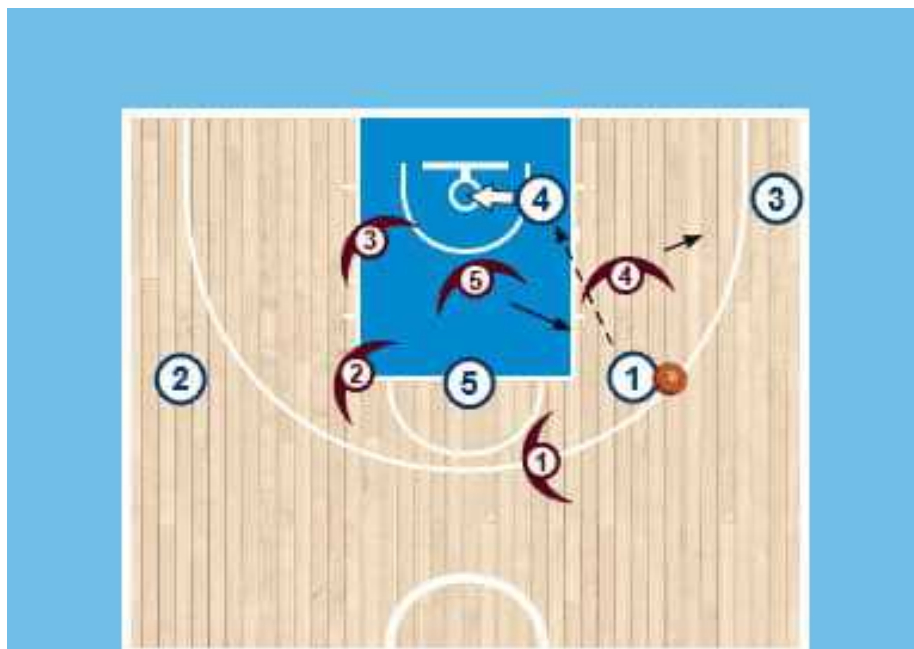


Diagram 118

If X4 decides to cover Player 3 and X5 now tries to stop the drive, Player 1 can pass the ball to Player 4, who will be wide open behind the defense.



Diagram 119

Also, Player 1 can make a pass to Player 5, who short rolled to the free-throw line. After receiving the ball, Player 5 can catch and shoot if no one helps. If X5 helps, Player 5 can pass to Player 4 or Player 2 depending on if X3 rotates to Player 4. If Player 5 is a better cutter and Player 4 is a much better shooter and passer, coaches can switch their roles if necessary.

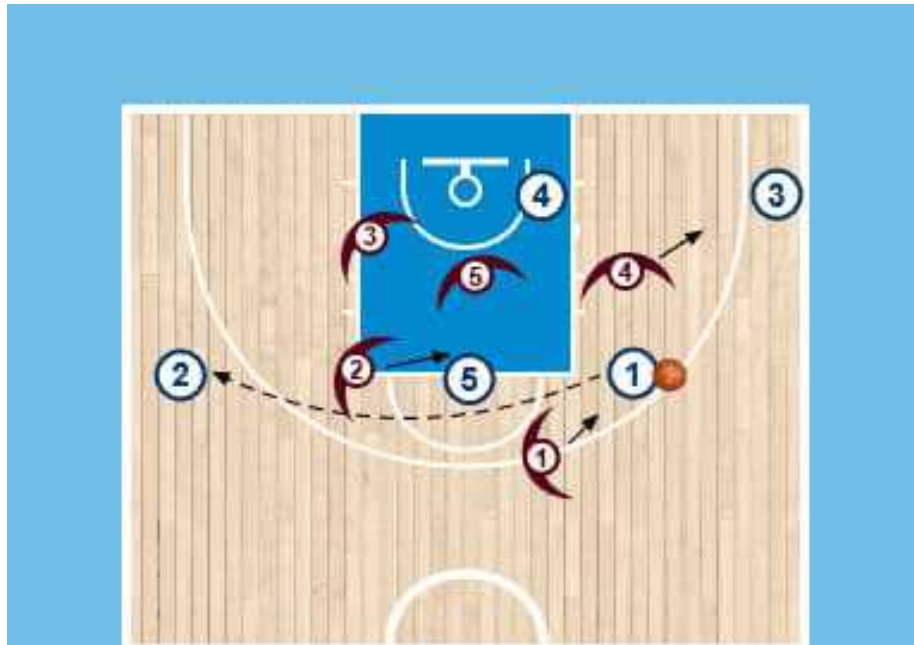


Diagram 120

If, however, X2 rotates early and denies the pass to Player 5, Player 1 can make a skip pass to Player 2. Depending on the defensive rotation, Player 2 can have a couple of options after receiving a skip pass and reading the closeout correctly.

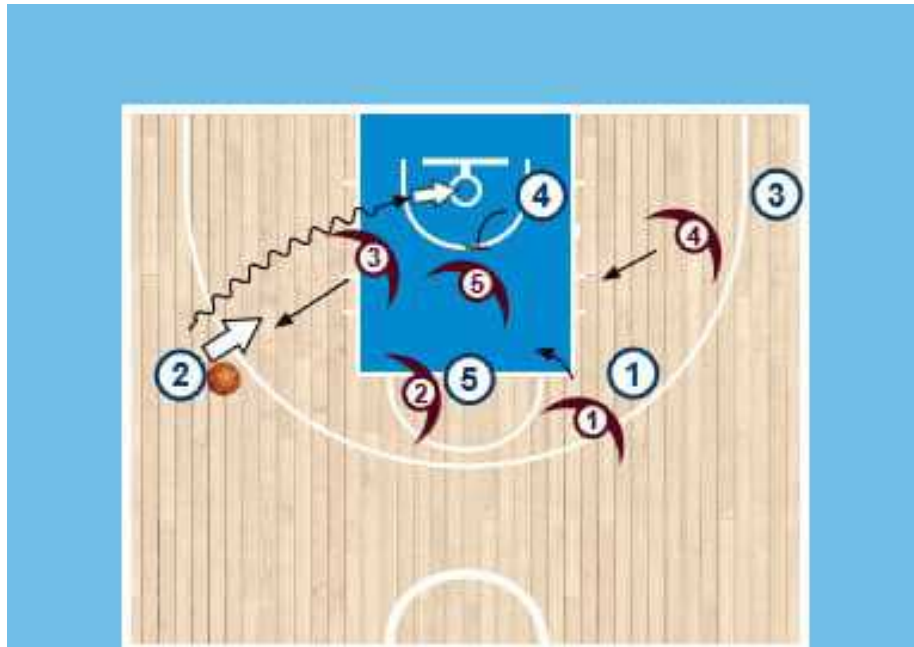


Diagram 121

Player 3 will try to recover and close out the best he can, depending on how deep he helped. If the closeout is late or passive, Player 2 can take an open shot. If, however, X3 sprints to recover and is too aggressive on the closeout, Player 2 can drive baseline. Again, Player 4 must seal X5 to clear the lane. If X4 rotates, Player 3 has an open baseline pass to Player 3 in the corner.

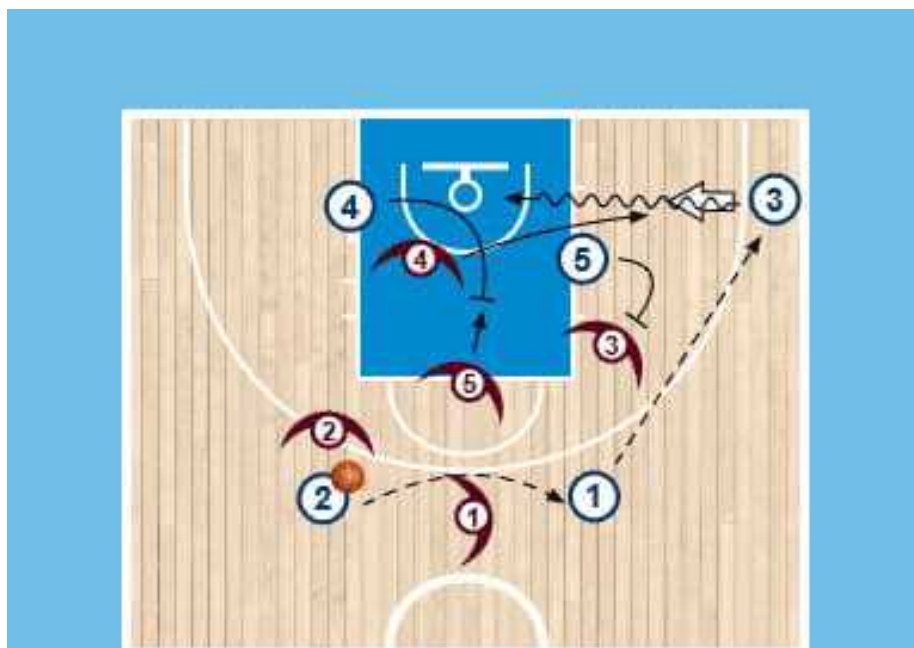


Diagram 122

Coaches can implement this offense against any zone, regardless of the player formation. However, it might require a slight adjustment once again. For example, imagine playing against a 1-3-1 zone, an odd formation that differs from a 2-3 zone. If Player 5 sets the same screen on X1 as before, it will simply not work. Instead of making an on-ball screen, Player 5 must set a flare screen on X3 and open the corner pass to Player 3, who then has the same options as before.

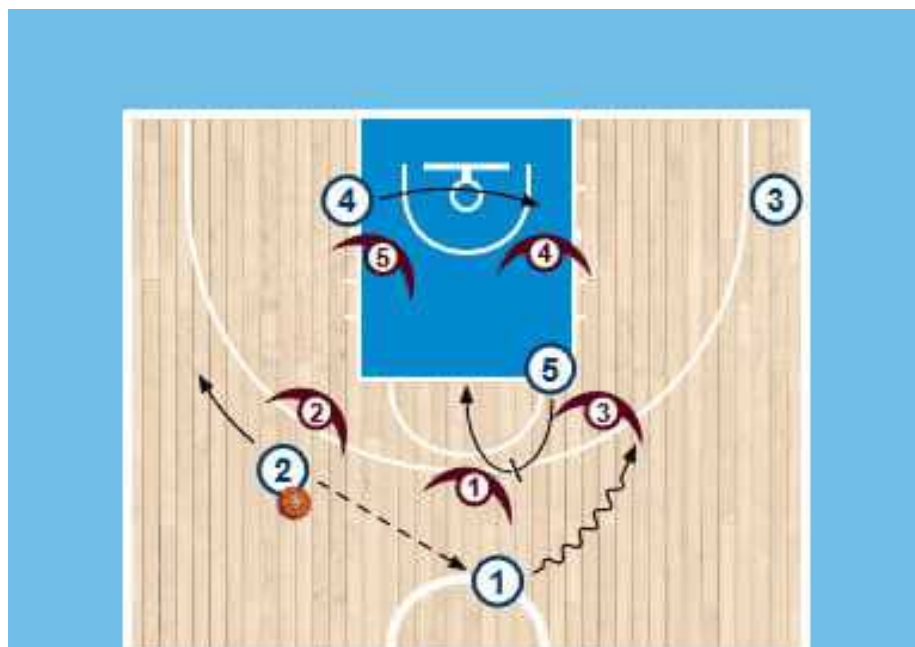


Diagram 123

Another often used zone is a 1-2-2 zone, especially in the NBA. Coaches must use it to avoid the defensive three seconds. Attacking a 1-2-2 zone is similar to attacking a 2-3 zone. After moving the defense one way, Player 2 should pass to Player 1, who attacks the other way coming off the pick. Player 5 short rolls to the free-throw line, Player 4 cuts to the opposite low post, and Player 2 positions for a skip pass.

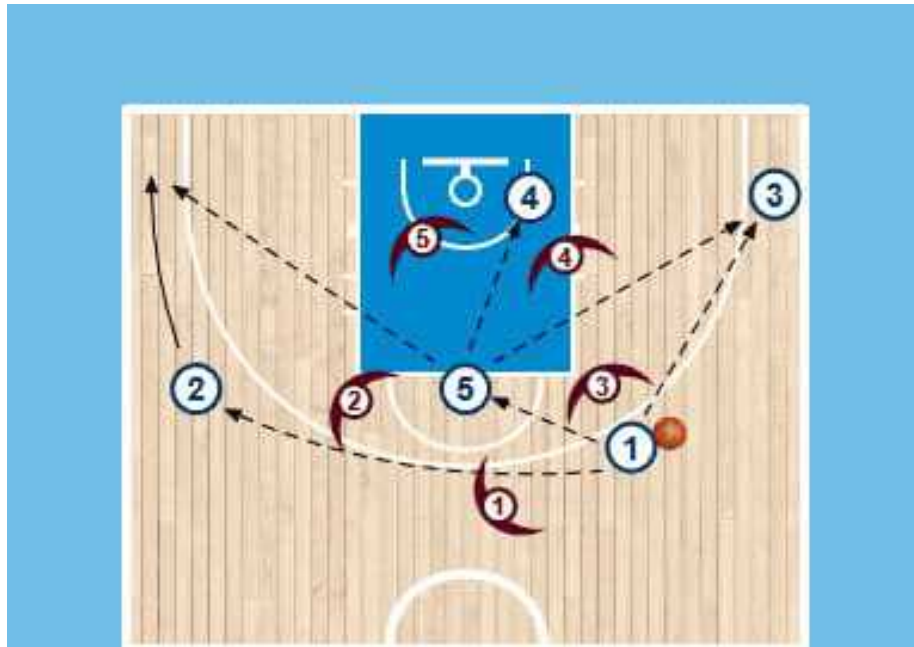


Diagram 124

Usually, X3 will pick up the ballhandler, while X1 is still out of position because of a good screen. Player 1 can then use all the options already covered, including passing to Player 5, who can also have multiple options, depending on the defense. Most importantly, it is essential to have intelligent players who can read the defensive rotations and choose the correct options when passing, driving, or shooting, regardless of the zone player formation.

PRESS BREAK

Many coaches like to control the game's pace by changing their defense. Most of them have multiple ways to defend the pick, often out of necessity. Sometimes it depends on their personnel, and sometimes on the offensive players' skills. For example, if a starting big man is mobile, and his substitution is not, coaches might adjust the defense by going from hedge to a drop. Alternatively, if the ballhandler is a great scorer, coaches might trap or switch, and if he is not, they might play him under the screen. Those are all individual changes that depend on the situation and were already covered.

However, coaches might want to change the defense on a team level to slow down or speed up the game. It all depends on the team's scoring potential. If the opponent has more talented players and has higher scoring potential, coaches might choose a more conservative approach and slow down the game. They must play passive, use zone defenses, obstruct the offensive flow with fouls, and use everything in their defensive playbook to play the game with fewer possessions, forcing the opponent to have fewer scoring opportunities. And vice versa as explained in the next paragraph.

If the opponent has fewer talented players and lower scoring potential, coaches can play more aggressively and look to speed up the game as much as possible. One of the best ways to play more aggressively and increase possessions is to play a full-court man-to-man press. Doing so forces the opponent to either lose the ball early or take the shots in the early phase of the offense, resulting in a faster pace and more possessions. In modern basketball, every coach must have an offense against that scenario, a so-called "press break". It must either result in quick points or help the team

advance the ball to the frontcourt and seamlessly flow into transition offense.

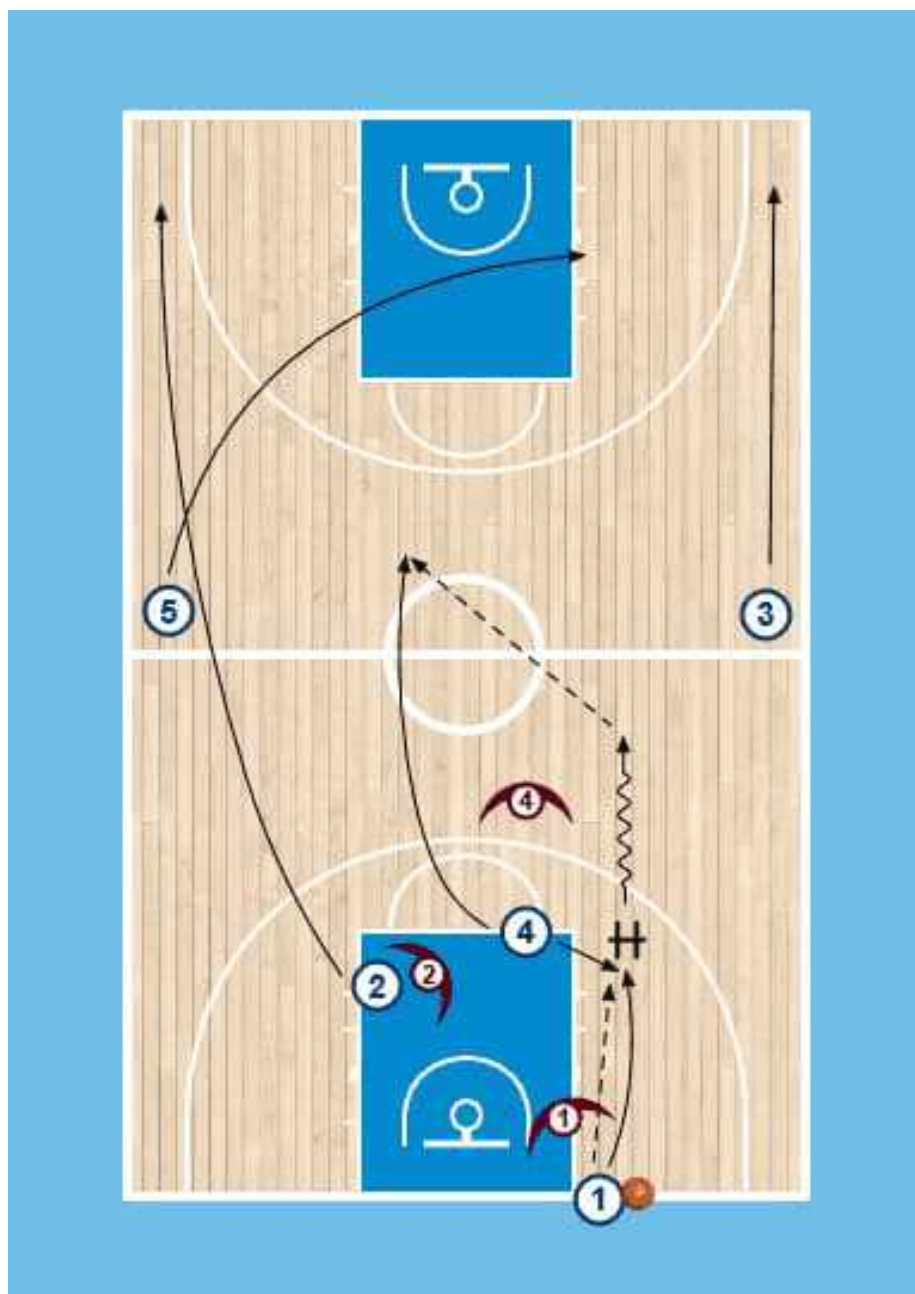


Diagram 125

Many press break ideas work, and most of them include crossing two players when inboundng so someone can get open. However, many coaches like to cross two guards, which is not always good. Nowadays, guards and forwards have similar athleticism and are often the most aggressive players on the team. Usually, they will

switch the cross, denying opponents the opportunity to get open or create an advantage. Therefore, this press break uses a different approach, with Player 4 screening for Player 2.

In most cases, X4 is not used to playing full-court, and he will probably not be aggressive and close to Player 4. If that is the case, there is no need to screen. It is crucial that Player 1 inbounds the ball every time, and everyone positions as Diagram 125 shows. If Player 4 notices that X4 is not aggressive, he should do a short pop and receive the ball. After passing, Player 1 must immediately sprint to receive a handoff from Player 4 and attack off the dribble. That should usually result in an easy 3vs2 or 4vs3 situation because X4 is not able to react or match Player 1's speed in the open court. After the handoff, all players must start running their lanes to space the floor in transition. If there is no opportunity to score, players must automatically flow into the transition offense. Player 1 passes to Player 4, everyone else is in position, and the offense can begin.

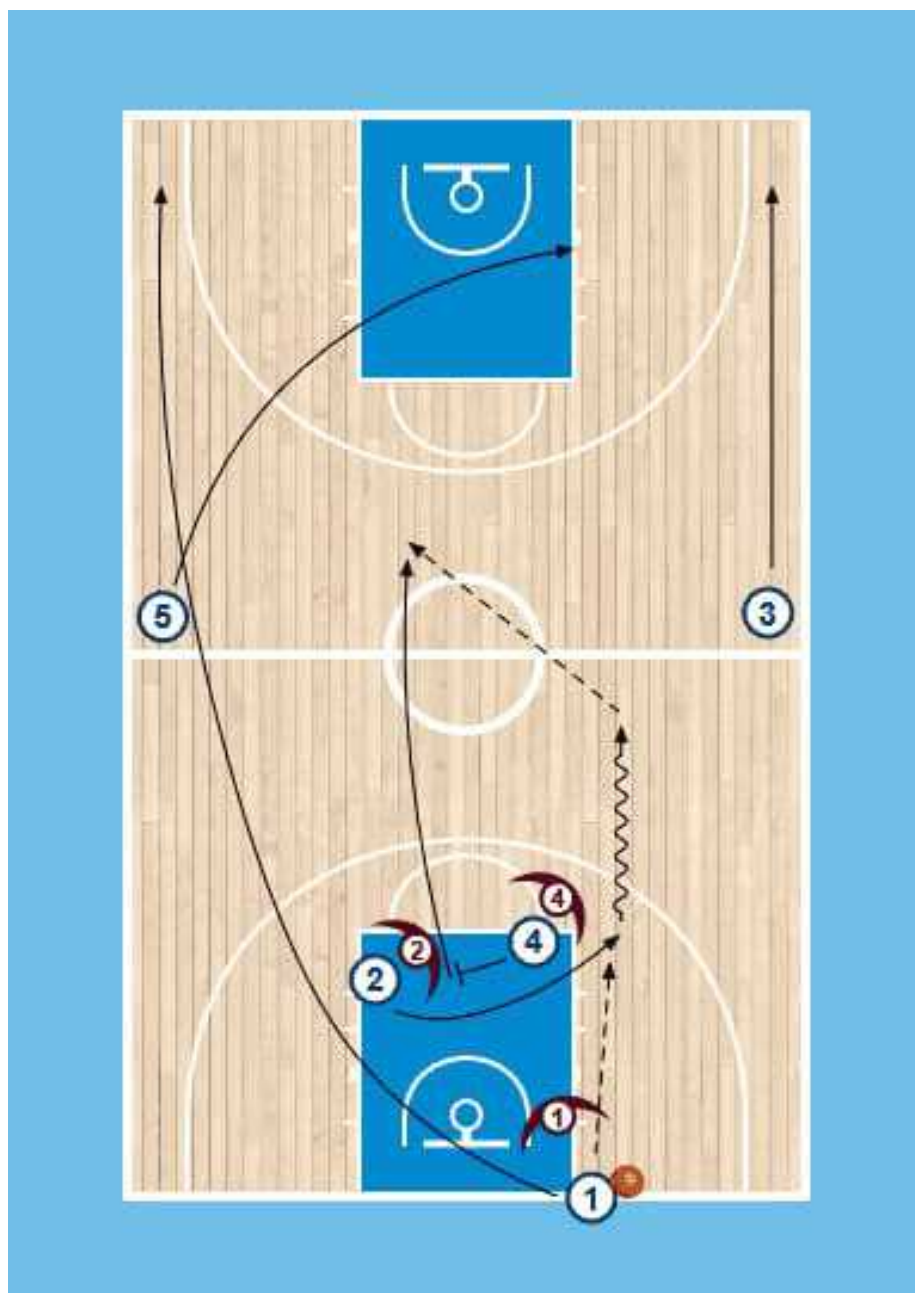


Diagram 126

If Player 4 cannot receive the ball, he must set a screen for Player 2 to get open. First, Player 2 must set his man up before using the screen. Then, Player 4 must hold the screen and set it at the correct angle, allowing Player 2 to slightly curl towards the half-court, receive the ball in motion, and attack. In that case, Player 1 and 2 have switched their roles, so Player 1 must fill the opposite corner to replace Player 2. Other players run their usual lanes and look to

spread the floor while Player 2 drives the open court. Finally, if there is no easy opportunity to score during the fast break, Player 2 must pass the ball to Player 4, starting the transition offense continuation.



Diagram 127

This time, if X4 helps to stop Player 2 from receiving the ball or switches, Player 4 needs to pop after setting and holding the screen. Then, if Player 1 does not have an open pass to Player 2, he can pass the ball to Player 4.

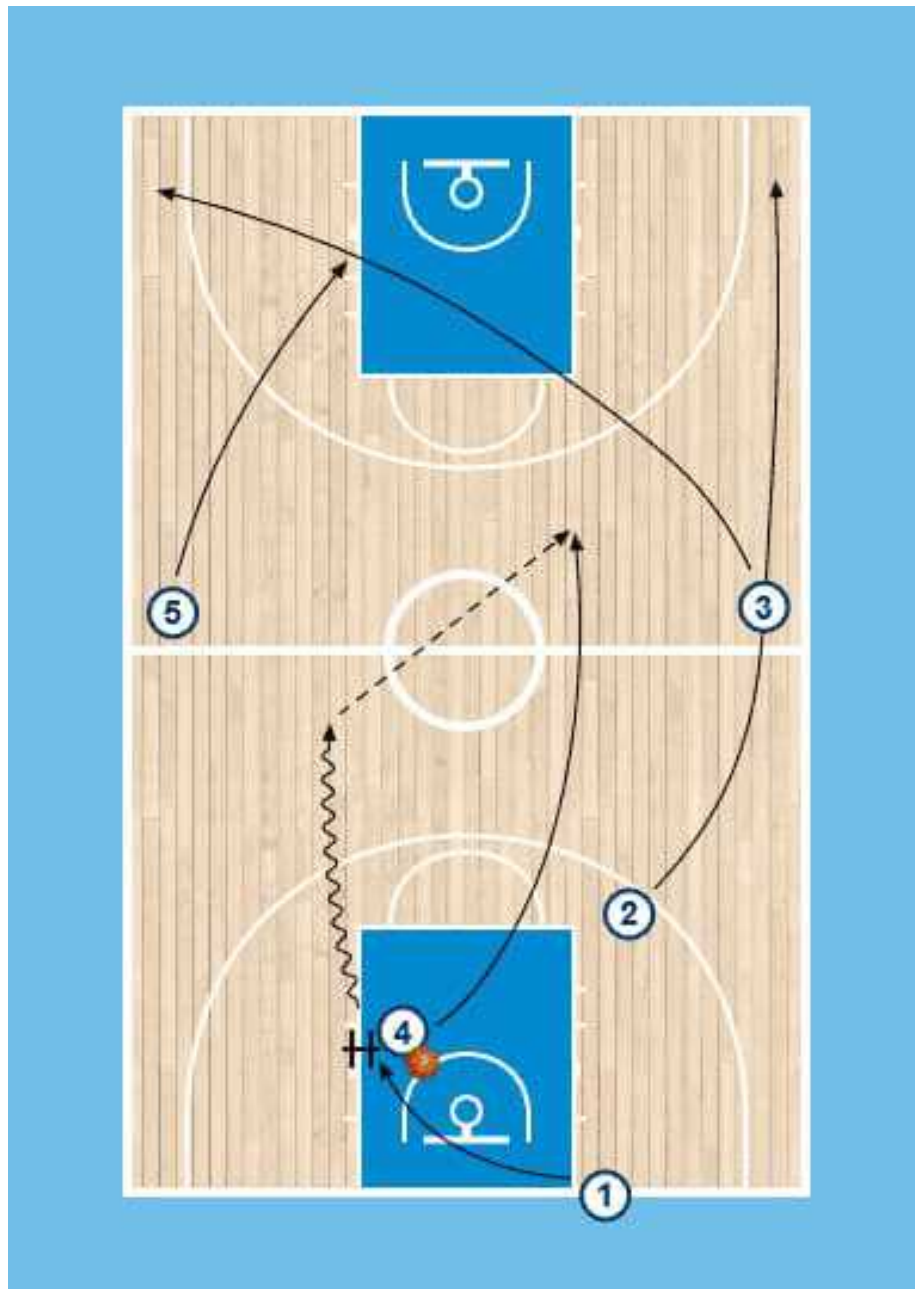


Diagram 128

After passing to Player 4, Player 1 must sprint to take the ball off the handoff and drive the open court. Finally, Player 3 must cut to the opposite corner to balance the spacing. The last two press break options show why all perimeter players must understand how to play all three perimeter positions. If they cannot score during the fast break, they must flow within the offense regardless of their position.

If X4 is a good defender, coaches can switch roles for Player 4 and Player 5 which will force X5 to play full court. This is one of the reasons all players need to know how to play multiple positions within this system. As a continuation, coaches can simply play the same offense with Players 4 and 5 in opposite roles, perhaps changing the top pick with Player 4 into a pick and pop. Another option is to use an alternate entry that starts with Player 5 setting a clear-side pick for Player 1, covered by Diagram 144 in the following chapter.

ALTERNATIVE ENTRIES

If players break the play or try to improvise but cannot find a scoring opportunity, they must always know how to get back to something familiar within the system. They cannot get stuck, regardless of whether it is a transition offense or a regular set offense. Nowadays, there are plenty of different offensive ideas and entries, and whatever the coaches choose, players must be able to find the flow again if the primary offensive idea fails. Whatever happens, they must know how to correct their spacing and get back to the system. Also, if coaches start having trouble with the default entry, they can change it to an entry of their liking. In any case, here are some ideas coaches and players can use to start things differently and still get the same result.

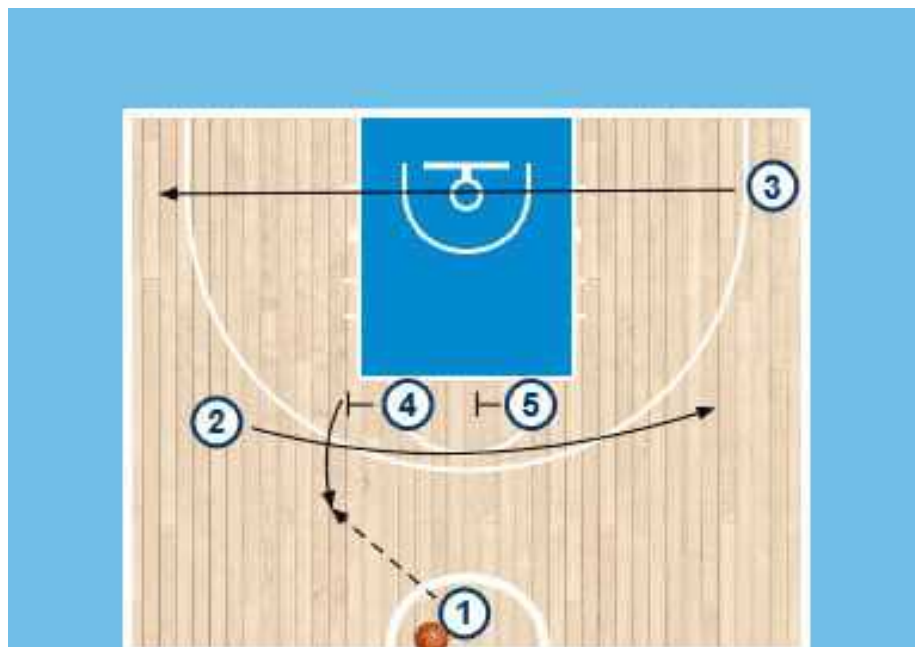


Diagram 129

"Iverson cut", or "AI cut", as coaches abbreviate it, is becoming increasingly popular in professional basketball worldwide. Coaches love to use this entry because it gives them good spacing and multiple options during and after the cut. Usually, one perimeter player cuts across two bigs, while the other cuts to the opposite corner. Although there are plenty of options, this segment covers only a couple of options related to the offensive system used in this book. With the first option, Player 4 pops out and receives the ball after Player 2 clears the screen. Coaches can use this option if X4 denies the pass during the regular entry. The Iverson cut forces X4 to help while Player 2 cuts across, so Player 4 can quickly receive the ball on the pop-out.

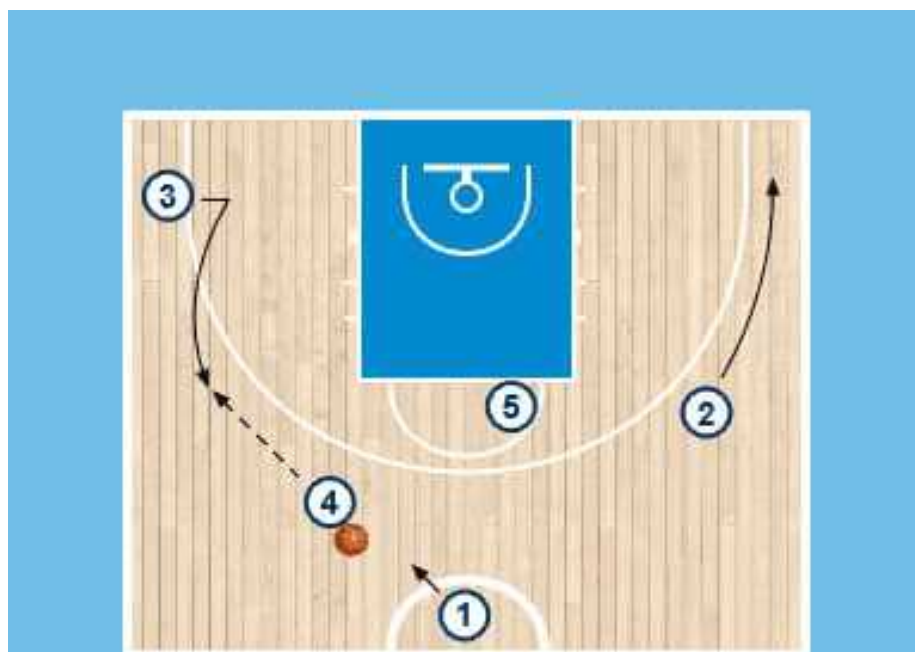


Diagram 130

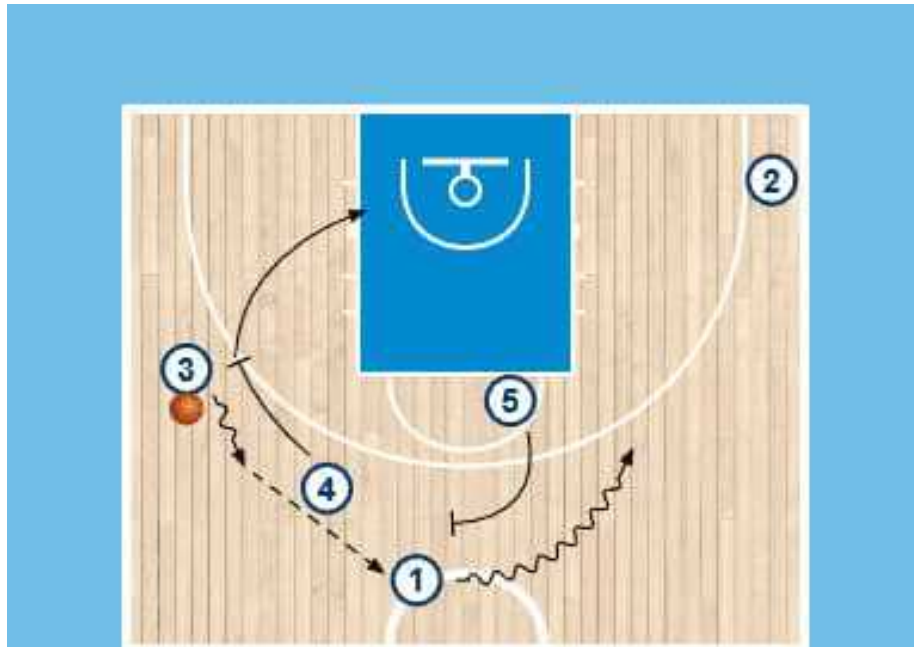


Diagram 131

After that, the continuation is familiar. First, Player 2 moves to the weak-side corner, and Player 4 advances the ball to Player 3. Then, the team plays a clear-side pick into the top pick, the same as before. Player 4 can pop out or cut across the paint depending on the defense.

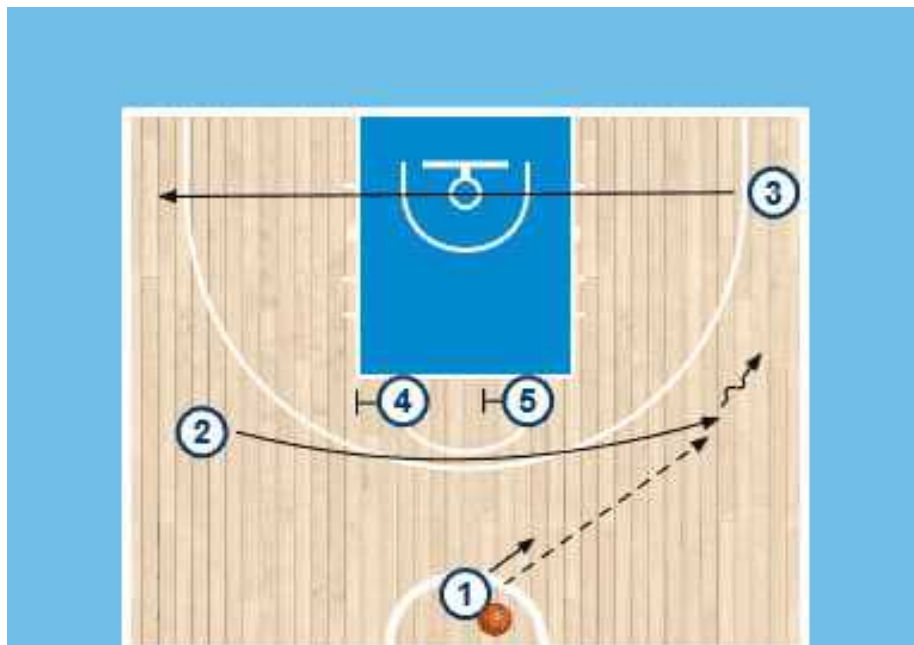


Diagram 132

The second option is when Player 2 receives the ball coming off the Iverson cut. If X2 trails behind or Player 2 is a significantly better ballhandler than Player 3, coaches can choose this option instead of the first. Now, Player 2 can play the clear-side pick, but before doing so, he must drive slightly towards the baseline to adjust his spacing to play the clear-side pick under the free throw line level.

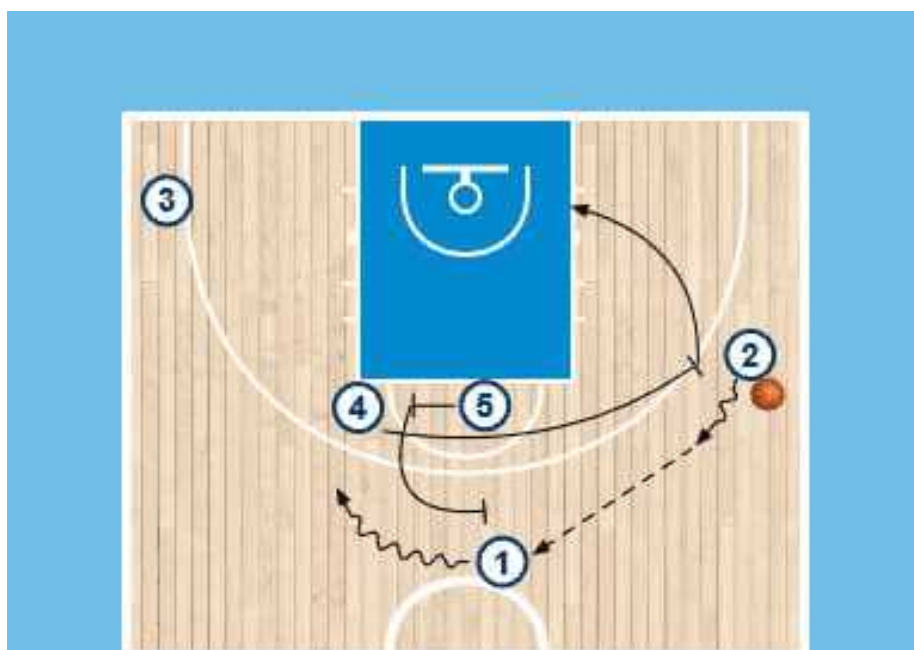


Diagram 133

Then, Player 5 screens for Player 4, who sprints into the pick. If X4 trails behind and X5 does not help, Player 4 can curl after the screen, as well. If there is no scoring opportunity after the first pick, Player 2 can advance the ball to Player 1. The good thing here is that if X5 helped during the screen for Player 4, he should probably be out of position to hedge the top pick. Depending on the defense, players can use one of the options already covered in the previous chapters.

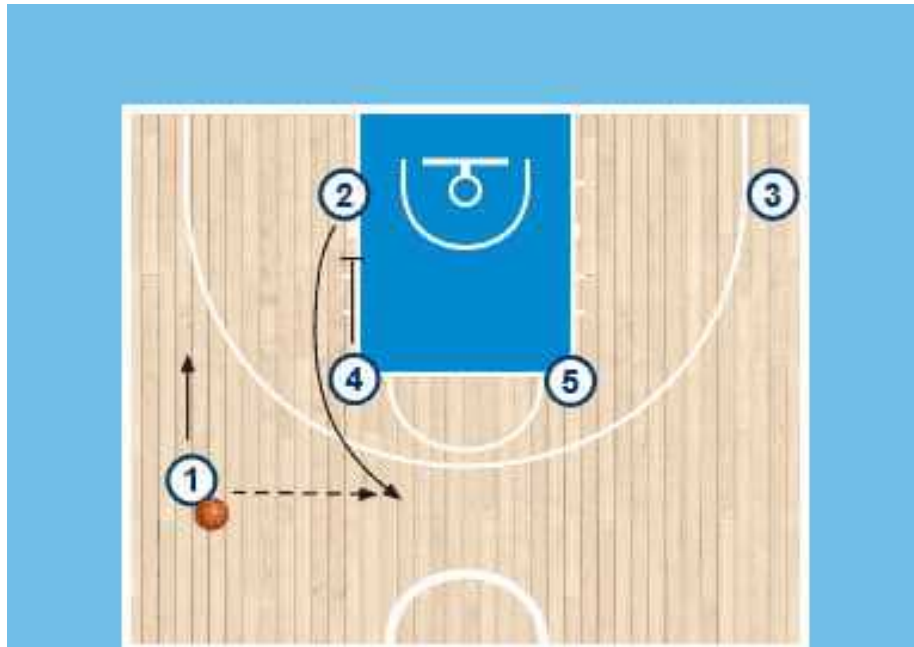


Diagram 134

Another popular entry, especially in Europe, is the "zipper". Player 4 sets a pindown screen for Player 2, who sprints to the perimeter and receives the ball. In this entry, the zipper replaces the clear-side pick. Some coaches like the option when Player 2 sets a backscreen for Player 4 and then pops out to the perimeter, with the same result. In any case, Player 2 must receive the ball in motion to keep the advantage going into the pick.

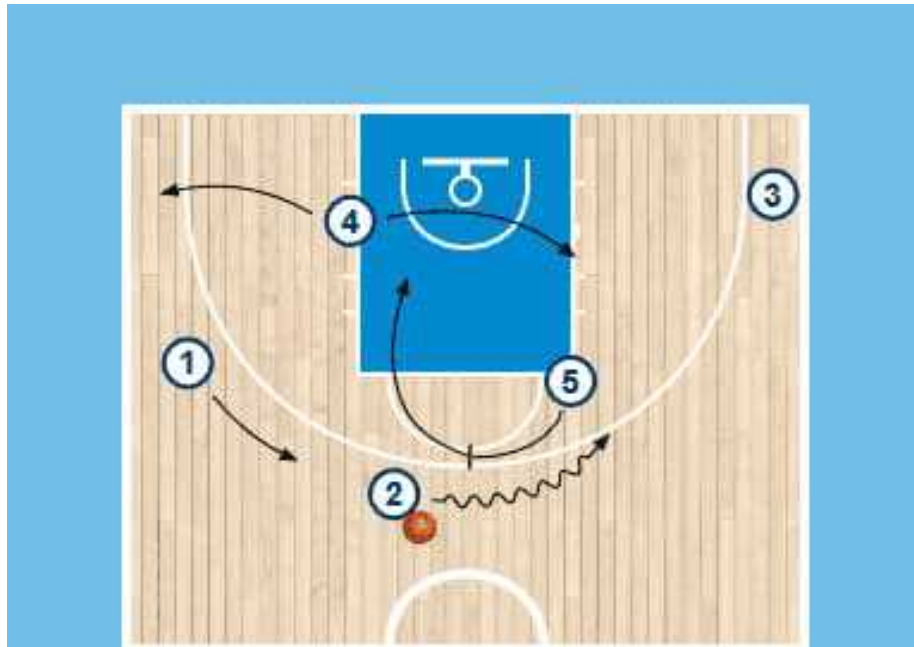


Diagram 135

While in motion, Player 2 must continue driving wide. Player 5 must have good timing when setting the screen. If he sets it too early or too late, it might not be effective. Depending on the defense, Players 2 and 5 have familiar options when playing the top pick, and Player 4 can cut to the weak-side corner or the opposite low post accordingly.

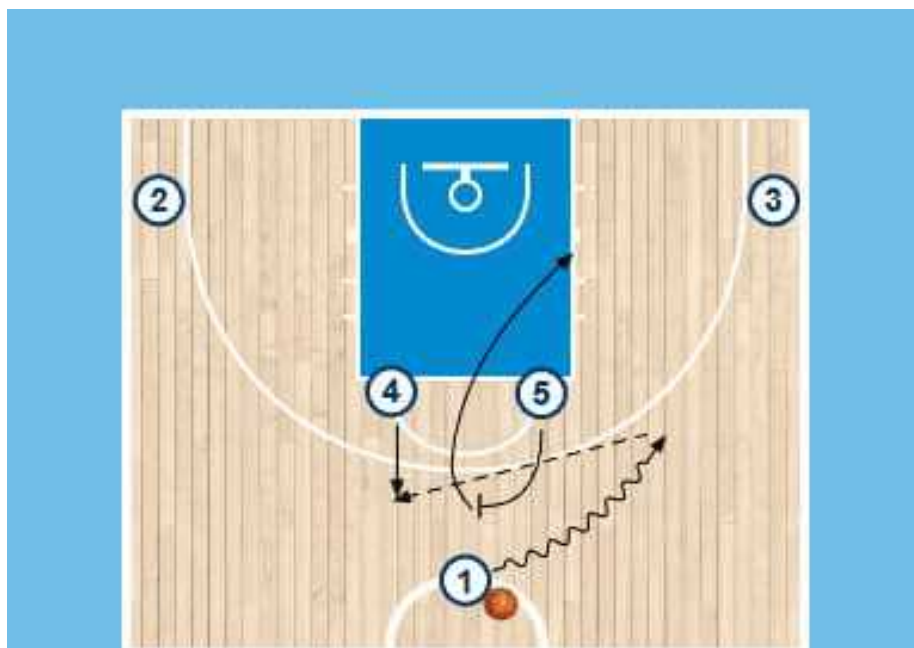


Diagram 136

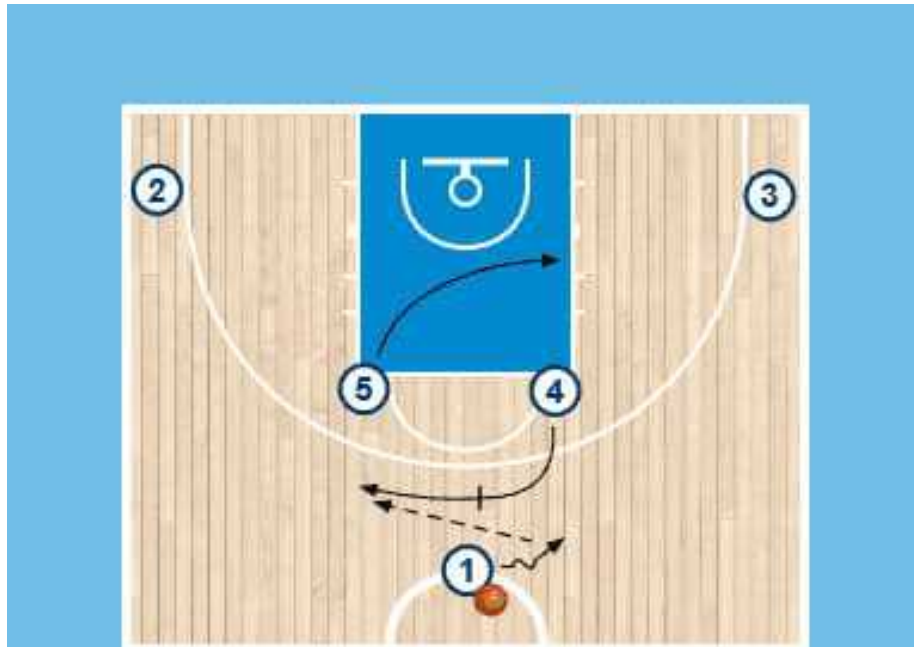


Diagram 137

"Horns" entry is another popular one. Coaches use it on all levels, from youth to professional, and they love it because it provides good spacing to start the offense. One of the vital parts of this entry is that the defense cannot deny the screen because there is a potential screen on each side. So even if the defender forces Player 1 one way, he can still utilize the screen. Regardless of the side Player 1 chooses, the purpose of playing this entry is to transfer the ball to Player 4, who will then advance the ball further. The horns screen is merely a fake move to misdirect the defense and get Player 4 open for a transfer pass. There are two possible scenarios. If X1 forces Player 1 towards Player 5, Player 5 must set the screen and roll diagonally to the ball-side low post, while Player 4 pops out and receives the pass. Alternatively, if X1 forces Player 1 towards Player 4, Player 4 must set the screen and pop out to receive the pass, while Player 5 cuts to the opposite low post.

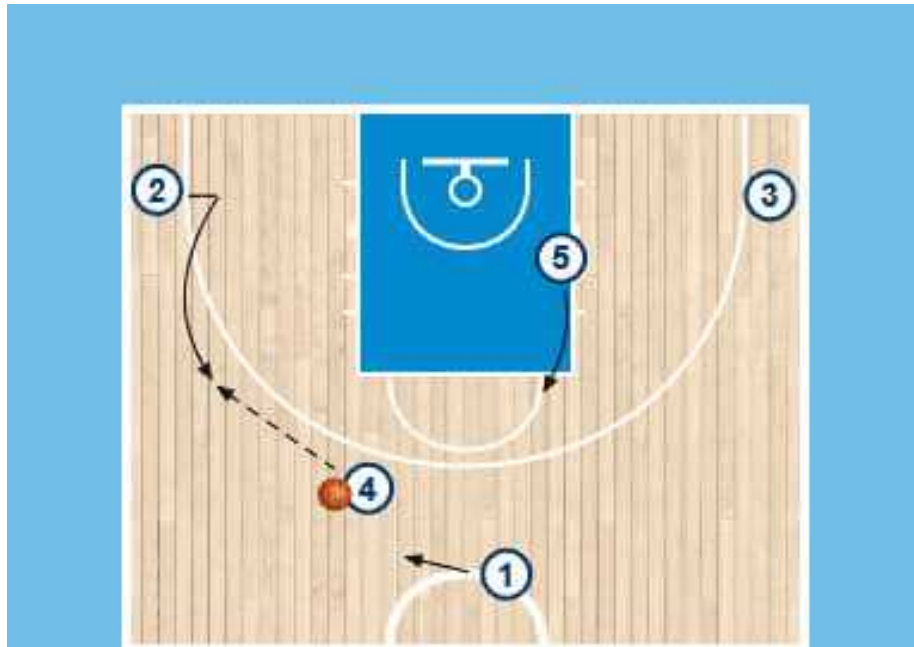


Diagram 138

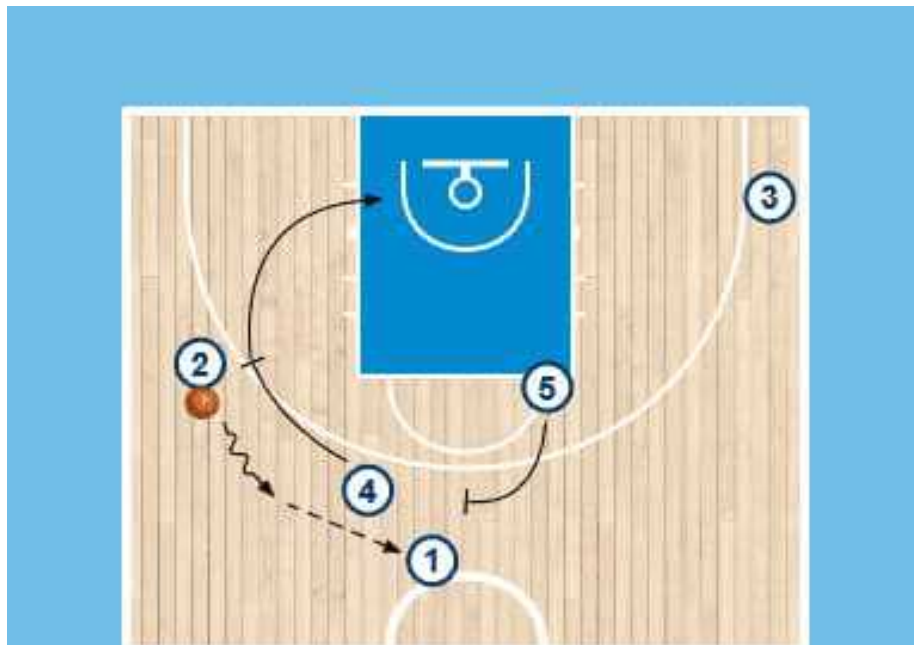


Diagram 139

After receiving the pass, Player 4 advances the ball to Player 2. Player 4 must advance the ball quickly to keep the advantage, especially if his defender helped or overextended during the horns screen. In that case, X4 should not be able to hedge the screen because he is late and out of position. Depending on the defense, Player 2 and Player 4 play the clear-side pick using different options,

and if there is no scoring opportunity, Player 2 can advance the ball to Player 5. Again, depending on the defense, Players 1 and 5 play the top pick accordingly. Player 4 can either move to the corner or cut to the opposite low post, the same as before.



Diagram 140

Another often used way to start the offense is the "Horns flare" entry. It is a variation of the horns entry coaches often use if they have a good stretch power forward. Usually, it starts with Player 1 passing to Player 4 and immediately sprinting to take the handoff. However, that is only one of the multiple ways to start the offense. For example, if Player 4 cannot simply pop out and receive the ball, Player 5 can screen for him. Alternatively, instead of using a pass and handoff, Player 4 can screen for Player 1 and pop out, or even slip the screen to use the flare immediately.

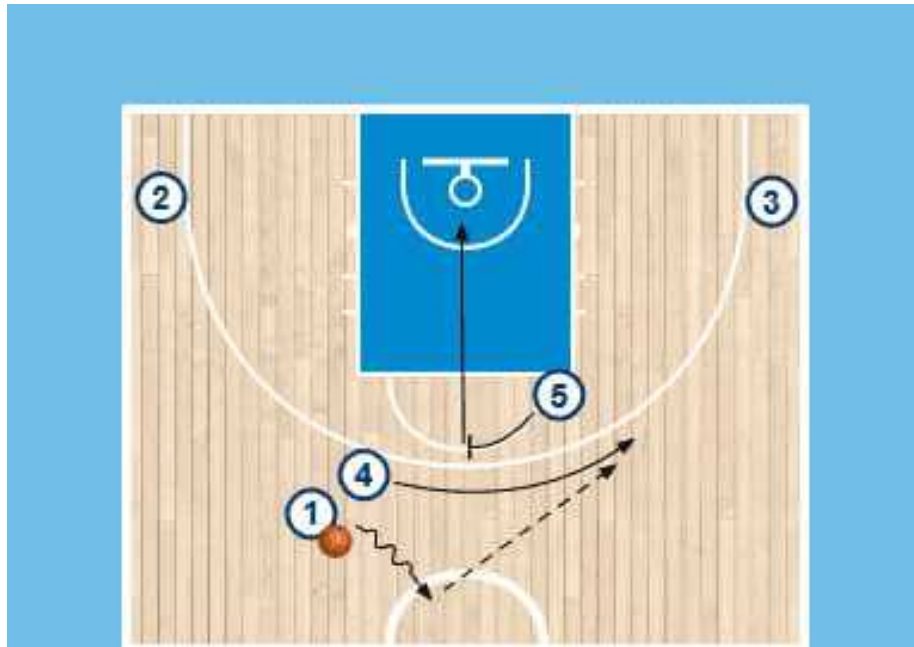


Diagram 141

In any case, after handoff or pick, Player 4 sprints wide and receives a flare screen from Player 5. Depending on how the defense chooses to guard the flare screen, Players 4 and 5 have multiple options. For example, if X4 and X5 switch, Player 5 can slip the switch early, receive the pass, and cut to the basket. Player 5 should dive after the flare screen in most cases. The only case in which he would not dive is if X4 trails and Player 4 decides to curl around the screen to the basket for an alley-oop pass. However, the defense will usually go under the flare screen. In that case, Player 1 must drive away from the basket to correct the angle and find Player 4, who cuts wide off the flare screen.

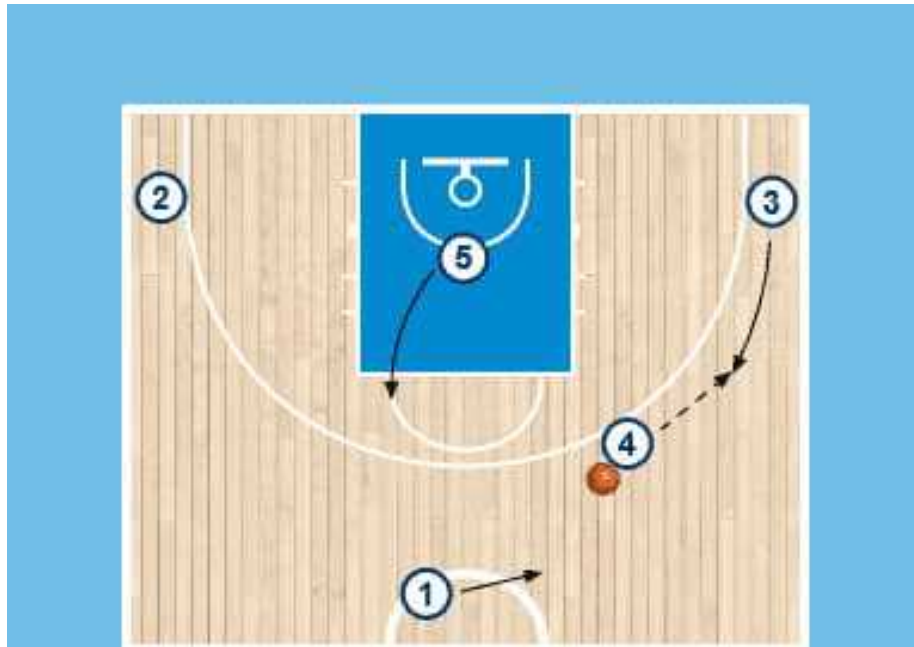


Diagram 142

Again, Player 4 must quickly advance the ball to keep the advantage after the flare screen while Players 5 and 1 position for a continuation.

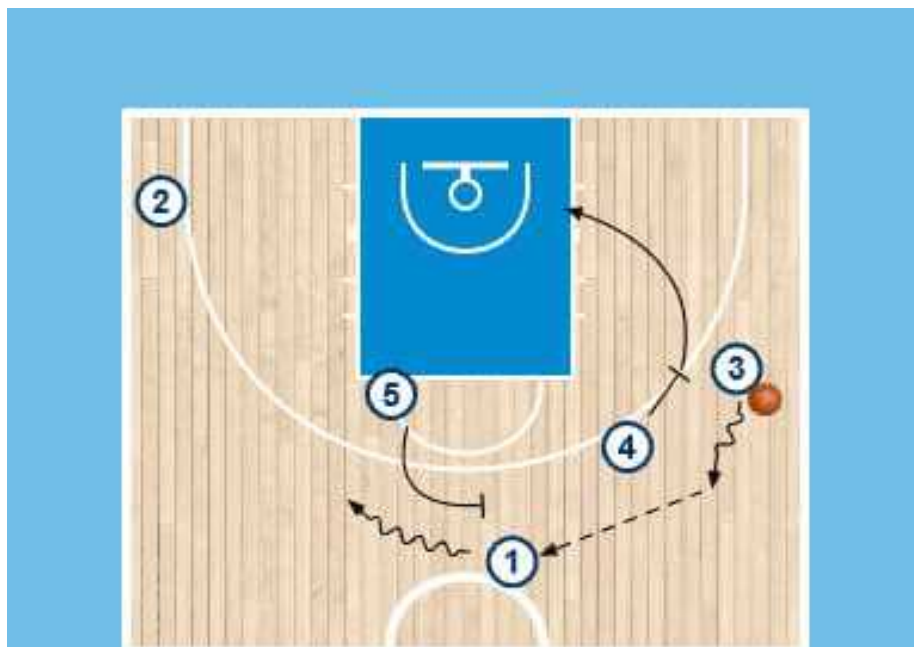


Diagram 143

If there is no scoring opportunity after playing the clear-side pick, Player 3 can pass to Player 1 for a continuation play. Again, Player 5

sets the top pick, and the players read the defense and apply the best option.

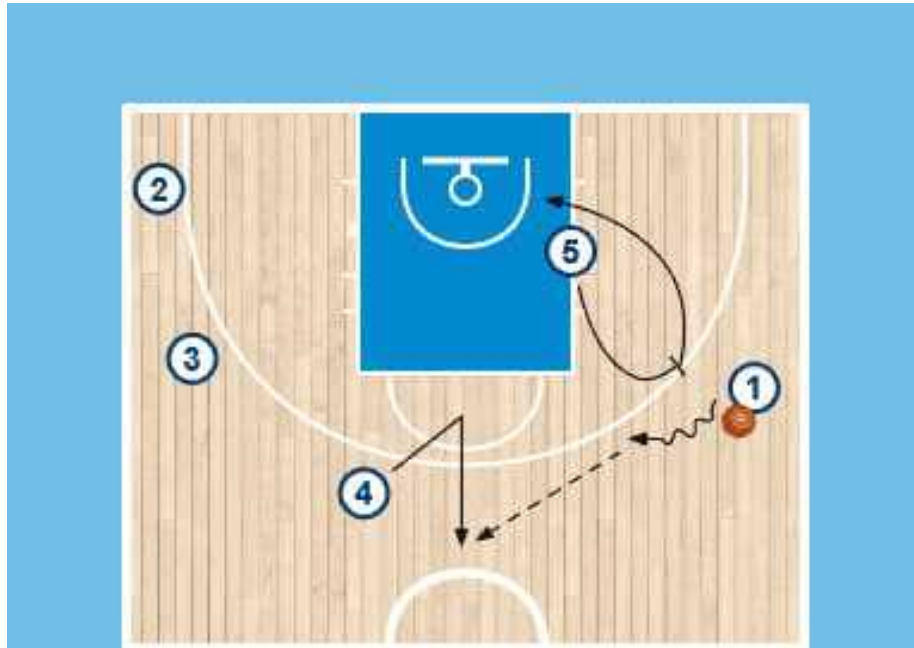


Diagram 144

Another popular entry often used by coaches starts with Player 5 setting a clear-side pick for Player 1. As always, it should be played below the free-throw line level. Player 4 is one pass away, while Players 2 and 3 are spacing out the opposite side of the court. A better ballhandler should be in the corner (in this case, Player 2), while a better cutter is at the free-throw line extended. During the pick, Player 4 must make contact with his defender and make sure he can receive the pass. If Player 1 does not have an opportunity to score or pass to Player 5, he must pass to Player 4 and continue the offensive flow.

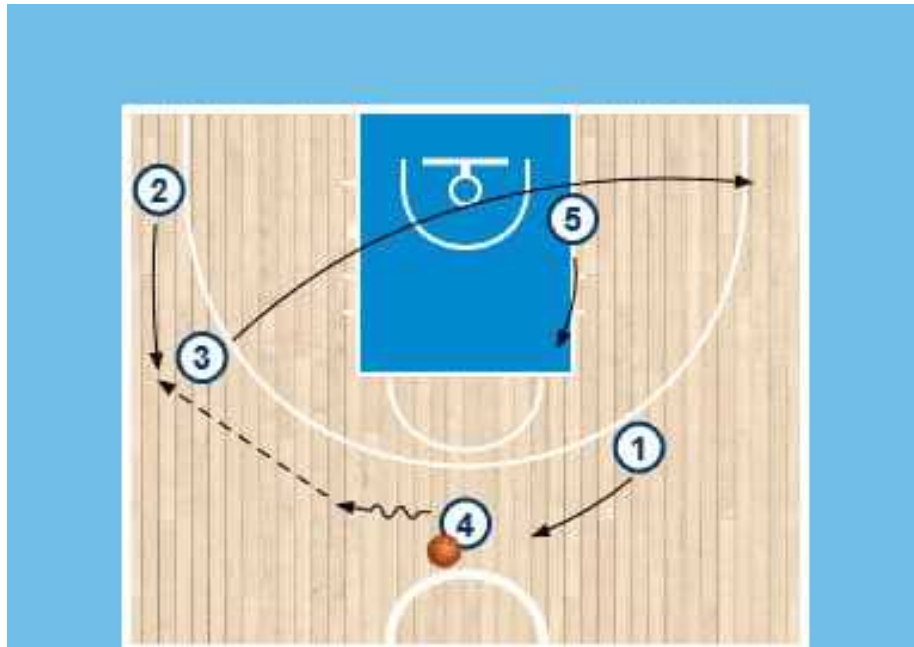


Diagram 145

To achieve the desired spacing, Player 3 must cut to the opposite corner. However, the timing is essential. He must first allow Player 4 to look for a potential high-low, or even an opportunity to attack the closeout, and remain in his spot. Once Player 4 decides to transfer the ball and drives towards Player 3, he must make a backdoor cut and sprint to the opposite corner without turning his back to the ball while cutting. Simultaneously, Player 2 lifts from the corner, fills the spot and receives the pass from Player 4 at the free-throw line extended. Players 1 and 5 move to their spots, as well. This is a setup for a familiar clear side pick situation.

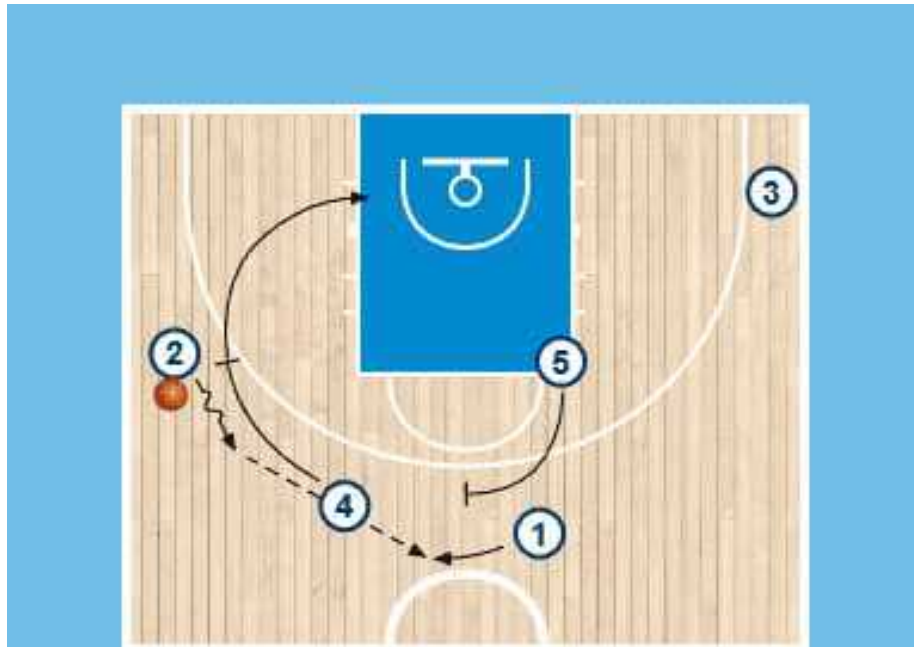


Diagram 146

If neither Player 2 nor Player 4 have an opportunity to score during or after the clear-side pick, players must continue the flow - Player 2 passes to Player 1, who then plays the top pick with Player 5.



Diagram 147

Coaches can be creative and use any entry as long as it leads to the default spacing used in this system. That allows the players to

always have a familiar situation on offense regardless of the entry.

CONCLUSION

The system in this book provides coaches with solutions for any type of defense. It covers playing against a man-to-man defense in the three most common pick and roll spacings - clear-side pick, side pick, and top pick - with a wide variety of solutions for each spacing depending on the pick and roll defense being used. The book also provides the adjustments that need to be made when playing against a zone defense or a full-court press. There is a counter-move for every situation imaginable, regardless of the defense. In addition, the previous chapter covers multiple alternative entries and teaches coaches how to be creative, implement their own ideas, and incorporate them into the system. Best of all, everything is written in a clear, logical progression, going step-by-step from basic 3v0 drills to the complete picture.

However, there is no "one-size-fits-all" offense. Nor is there a perfect system. Usually, implementing a system and teaching players to play successfully within it depends on a wide variety of factors. It is a coach's job to understand and handle those factors. They must choose players that are talented and skilled enough to play within the system, and then be skillful and creative in implementing the system. They must also have the patience to progress step-by-step through the system rather than rushing. This gives players time to learn while developing good habits.

Finally, I want to thank you, the reader, for taking the time to read this coaching guide. I hope this book helps you become a better basketball coach by providing the tools you need to equip your players with the knowledge they need to succeed. Now that you have all the tools, go out there and use them. Have fun, be creative,

and enjoy the process. If you enjoyed the book and have the time and inclination, please consider writing a review.

THANKS FOR READING

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dejan Ilic



Dejan Ilic is an author, experienced basketball coach, and former player with more than twenty-five years of his life invested in basketball. Armed with motivation, commitment, and passion for spending hours in the gym, Ilic has spent his long career studying from renowned basketball coaches as a player and transferring that knowledge to basketball players with a wide range of backgrounds. As an avid basketball player himself, Ilic has a proven track record of player communication, productivity, and a tireless drive to succeed. This has led him to play for numerous Serbian basketball and 3x3 teams with lots of accomplishments, including winning first place at more than ten Serbian and International 3x3 tournaments, second place in the Serbian national finals, and representing the Serbian

national team in the USA Red Bull 3x3 World Finals on two separate occasions. Coach Ilic has many coaching accomplishments as well, including winning the Regional League championship in the 2021/2022 season as a head coach of BC Veba Basket from Belgrade, Serbia.

Dejan Ilic is the author of the book, Transition Offense Against Any Defense, where he hopes to distill his decades of basketball experience into a concise, compelling handbook to help both aspiring and established basketball coaches and players excel in their sport. Ilic is licensed as a basketball coach by the Serbian Association Of Basketball Coaches. He has also worked as a basketball scout for many youth and professional basketball teams.