

# Basketball Study Guide

**About Basketball:** Basketball (commonly nicknamed "B-ball" or "hoops") is a team sport in which two teams of five players try to score points by throwing or "shooting" a ball through the top of a basketball hoop while following a set of rules. Basketball is one of the world's most popular and widely viewed sports.

A regulation basketball hoop consists of a rim 18 inches in diameter and 10 feet high mounted to a backboard. A team can score a field goal by shooting the ball through the hoop during regular play. A field goal scores two points for the shooting team if a player is touching or closer to the hoop than the three-point line, and three points (a "3 pointer") if the player is "outside" the three-point line. The team with more points at the end of the game wins, but additional time (overtime) may be issued when the game ends with a tie.

In early December 1891, Dr. James Naismith, a physical education professor and instructor at the International Young Men's Christian Association Training School (YMCA) (today, Springfield College) in Springfield, Massachusetts, USA, was trying to keep his gym class active on a rainy day. He sought a vigorous indoor game to keep his students occupied and at proper levels of fitness during the long New England winters. After rejecting other ideas as either too rough or poorly suited to walled-in gymnasiums, he wrote the basic rules and nailed a peach basket onto a 10-foot elevated track. In contrast with modern basketball nets, this peach basket retained its bottom, and balls had to be retrieved manually after each "basket" or point scored; this proved inefficient, however, so the bottom of the basket was removed, allowing the balls to be poked out with a long dowel each time.

The peach baskets were used until 1906 when they were finally replaced by metal hoops with backboards. A further change was soon made, so the ball merely passed through. Whenever a person got the ball in the basket, his team would gain a point. Whichever team got the most points won the game. The baskets were originally nailed to the mezzanine balcony of the playing court, but this proved impractical when spectators on the balcony began to interfere with shots. The backboard was introduced to prevent this interference; it had the additional effect of allowing rebound shots. Naismith's handwritten diaries, discovered by his granddaughter in early 2006, indicate that he was nervous about the new game he had invented, which incorporated rules from a children's game called "Duck on a Rock", as many had failed before it. Naismith called the new game "Basket Ball". The first official game was played in the YMCA gymnasium in Albany, New York on January 20, 1892 with nine players. The game ended at 1–0; the shot was made from 25 feet, on a court just half the size of a present-day Streetball or National Basketball Association (NBA) court. By 1897–1898 teams of five became standard.

## Fouls and Violations

- **Personal fouls:** Personal fouls include any type of illegal physical contact.
  - Hitting
  - Pushing
  - Slapping
  - Holding
  - Illegal pick/screen when an offensive player is moving. When an offensive player sticks out a limb and makes physical contact with a defender in an attempt to block the path of the defender.
- **Personal foul penalties:**
  - *Shooting:* If a player is shooting while being fouled, then he gets two free throws if his shot doesn't go in, but only one free throw if his shot does go in. Free throws are worth one point per shot.
    - Three free throws are awarded if the player is fouled while shooting for a three point goal and they miss their shot. If a player is fouled while shooting a three point shot and makes it anyway, he is awarded one free throw. Thus, he could score four points on the play.

- *Inbounds:* If fouled while not shooting, the ball is given to the team the foul was committed upon. They get the ball at the nearest side or baseline, out of bounds, and have 5 seconds to pass the ball onto the court.
- *One & one:* If the team committing the foul has seven or more fouls in the game, then the player who was fouled is awarded one free throw. If he makes his first shot, then he is awarded another free throw.
- *Team Fouls:* Ten or more fouls. If the team committing the foul has ten or more fouls, then the fouled player receives two free throws.
- *Personal Fouls:* Players are only allowed 5 fouls per game.
- **Charging:** An offensive foul that is committed when a player pushes or runs over a defensive player. The ball is given to the team that the foul was committed upon.
- **Blocking:** Blocking is illegal personal contact resulting from a defender not establishing position in time to prevent an opponent's drive to the basket.
- **Flagrant foul:** Violent contact with an opponent. This includes hitting, kicking, and punching. This type of foul results in free throws plus the offense retaining possession of the ball after the free throws.
- **Intentional foul:** When a player makes physical contact with another player with no reasonable effort to steal the ball. It is a judgment call for the officials.
- **Technical foul:** Technical foul. A player or a coach can commit this type of foul. It does not involve player contact or the ball but is instead about the 'manners' of the game. Foul language, obscenity, obscene gestures, and even arguing can be considered a technical foul, as can technical details regarding filling in the scorebook improperly or dunking during warm-ups.

## VIOLATIONS

- **Walking/Traveling.** Taking more than 'a step and a half' without dribbling the ball is traveling. Moving your pivot foot once you've stopped dribbling is traveling.
- **Carrying/palming.** When a player dribbles the ball with his hand too far to the side of or, sometimes, even under the ball.
- **Double Dribble.** Dribbling the ball with both hands on the ball at the same time or picking up the dribble and then dribbling again is a double dribble.
- **Held ball (jump ball).** Occasionally, two or more opposing players will gain possession of the ball at the same time. In order to avoid a prolonged and/or violent tussle, the referee stops the action and awards the ball to one team or the other on a rotating basis.
- **Goaltending.** If a defensive player interferes with a shot while it's on the way down toward the basket, while it's on the way up toward the basket after having touched the backboard, or while it's in the cylinder above the rim, it's goaltending and the shot counts. If committed by an offensive player, it's a violation and the ball is awarded to the opposing team for a throw in.
- **Backcourt violation.** Once the offense has brought the ball across the midcourt line, they cannot go back across the line during possession. If they do, the ball is awarded to the other team to pass inbounds.
- **Time restrictions.** A player passing the ball inbounds has five seconds to pass the ball. If he does not, then the ball is awarded to the other team. Other time restrictions include the rule that a player cannot have the ball for more than five seconds when being closely guarded and, in some states and levels, shot clock restrictions requiring a team to attempt a shot within a given time frame. Also, a player is only allowed to stand in the key/paint for 3 seconds at a time on both offense and defense.

## Sources:

- <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Basketball>
- The Breakthrough Basketball web sight