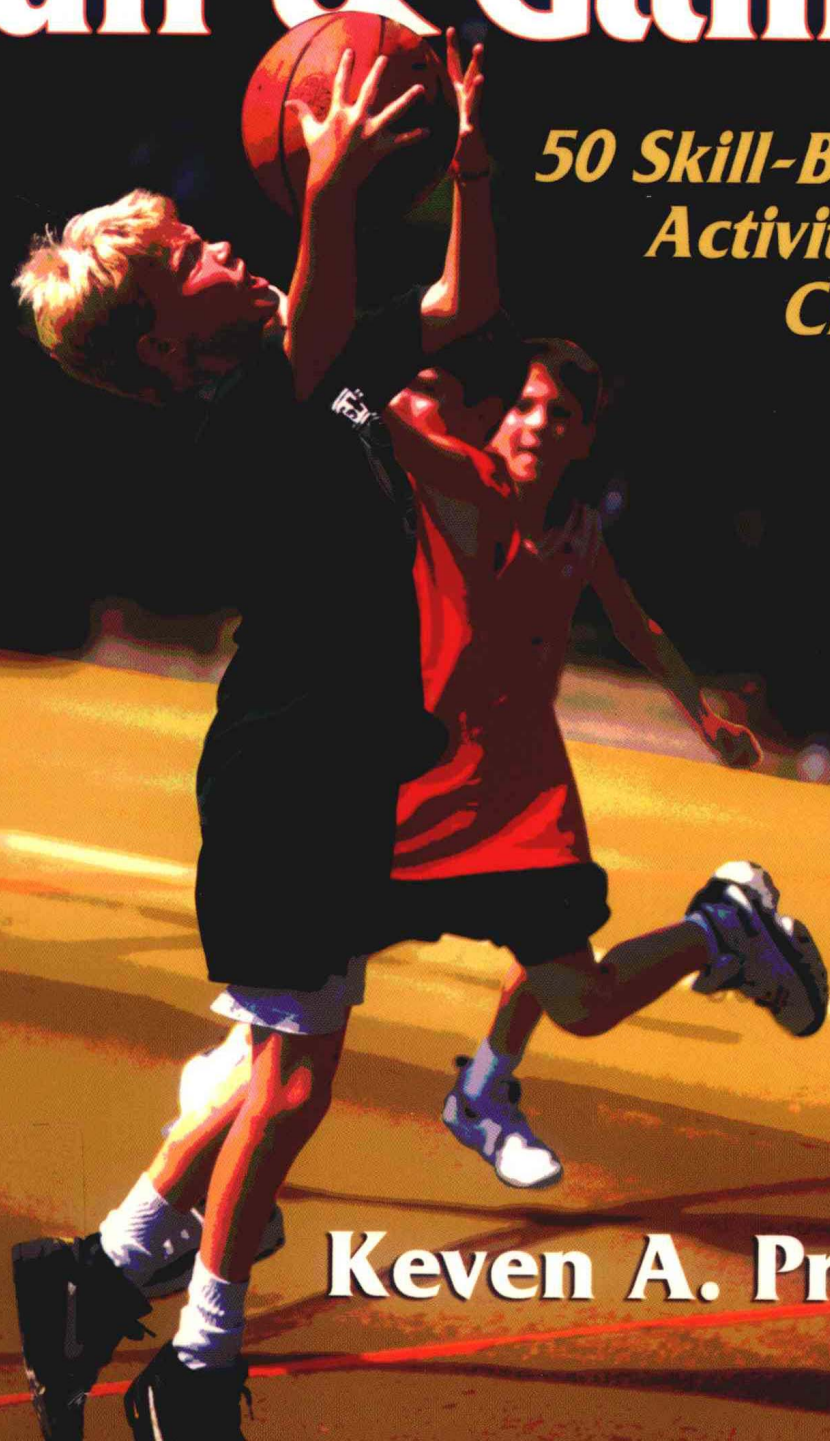


BASKETBALL Fun & Games

*50 Skill-Building
Activities for
Children*



Keven A. Prusak

BASKETBALL

Fun & Games

***50 Skill-Building Activities
for Children***

Keven A. Prusak



Human Kinetics

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ACTIVITY FINDER

The Activity Finder (page vi) will help you find the activities that suit your kids' age and abilities and teach the desired skills quickly and easily. All of the activities are arranged in the Activity Finder in the order that they appear in the chapters. If, for example, you need a warm-up activity, look through the first eight activities and choose the desired skills, grade level, and difficulty level that suits your situation. The page number of your chosen activity is in the last column.

Important note: Some activities develop multiple skills. Most of these activities are included in chapter 6, Multiskill Activities, but some are listed in the chapter that most represents its focus. For example, see the pass-and-duck relay activity in chapter 4. This activity is mainly built around passing skills, thus the activity is listed in the chapter that focuses on passing. However, the activity also uses a variety of dribbling skills.

Activity Finder Key

Skills Involved in the Activity

D	Defensive	S	Shooting
B	Ball handling, Dribbling	F	Footwork
P	Passing	R	Rebounding
T	Tactical, Teamwork, Strategies		

No.	Name	Skills	Grades	Page
1	Move and Freeze	F	K-6	8
2	Marking	F	5-6	11
3	Fugitive Tag	F, T	3-6	13
4	Fastest Dribble Tag	B, P, S	5-6	14
5	Rings of Fire	B, D, F	2-5	16
6	Dribble Tip Over	B, T	4-6	18
7	Ball-Handling Series	B	3-6	19
8	Disappearing Islands	B, F	K-6	22
9	Four-Call Dribbling	B, T	5-6	26
10	Dribble Dance	B, T	4-5	30
11	Sharks and Minnows	B, D, T	4-6	32
12	Two-Ball Dribbling	B, F	5-6	34
13	Blinking Game	B, T	3-5	36
14	Dribbling and Juggling	B	4-6	37
15	Dribbling Hoops	All	K-2	38
16	Triangle Footwork	F, B	3-6	42
17	Clone Dribbling	B, F	5-6	44
18	Five Passes	P, T, F	K-6	48
19	Partner Passing	P	3-6	50
20	Team Passing Challenge	P	5-6	53
21	Pass-and-Duck Relay	P	5-6	54
22	Cannon Shot	S, P	5-6	56
23	Partner Wall Passing	P	5-6	58
24	Twenty-One	S, T, P	4-6	62

No.	Name	Skills	Grades	Page
25	Basketball Golf	B, P, S	5-6	64
26	Basketball Triathlon	B, P, S	5-6	66
27	Speed	S, T	3-6	69
28	Walk the Plank	S	5-6	70
29	Layup Circuit	S, B	5-6	72
30	Shoot-Me-Across Relay	P, F, S	5-6	74
31	Hoops Bingo	All	4-6	78
32	Scavenger Hunt	All	3-6	81
33	Grab-Bag Basketball	All	5-6	83
34	Horse for the Course	All	5-6	85
35	Baton Relay	All	3-6	88
36	Pinwheel	P, S	5-6	90
37	Steeplechase Basketball	All	3-6	92
38	Racetrack	All	3-6	94
39	Fill the Post	P, S, F	5-6	96
40	Four Corners	All	6	98
41	Challenge Basketball	All	5-6	100
42	Sideline Basketball	All	4-6	102
43	Flag Basketball	D, B, T	3-6	106
44	Spider's Web	T	5-6	108
45	Logjam Relay	T	5-6	110
46	Blind Square	T	5-6	112
47	Freeze	D, R, B, S	2-5	114
48	Red Light, Green Light	All	5-6	116
49	Offense-Building Progression	All	5-6	118
50	We Got Numbers	All	5-6	121

PREFACE

“Oh, I hate basketball!”

So said a fifth-grade student in a physical education class I was guest teaching when I told them we would be playing basketball that day. But after playing several games that I’ve included in this book, she and several others asked if I could come back because they had never had so much fun playing basketball.

Isn’t this result exactly what we want as physical education practitioners—for kids to actually enjoy learning vital fitness, skills, and games? So often, the missing ingredient is fun. If we can make learning fun, we can increase the effectiveness of our teaching.

When I lead teacher training workshops across the country, I inevitably hear from teachers, “That was fun! Where can I get more activities like this one?” Teachers and youth coaches are hungry for new age- and developmentally appropriate activities. They don’t always have the time to create and test new activities. Some teachers feel that they are “just not that creative.” Some rely on activities from their own past experience that are poorly suited to the age of their students. Many are tired of old drills and are looking for a fun way to improve their students’ skills and fitness.

This book is a collection of favorite activities that I have shared over the years with physical educators and youth sport coaches across the United States. Twenty years of teaching physical education, coaching basketball, and conducting research in physical education has taught me a few things:

- **Kids just want to have fun.** Physical education is undergoing a remarkable transition from a sports-based curriculum to one of physical activity. Youth sports are ever more focused on providing a positive competitive experience and encouraging success for all participants, which in turn increases kids’ motivation. Parents, administrators, and recreational leaders are recognizing what children have always wanted from participating in physical education: to have fun. The activities in this book have been designed to provide quality learning experiences in a fun and engaging way. Teachers and coaches have the power to create

an environment that kids thrive in, gaining greater skill and fitness and loving every minute of it. This book can help you as you seek to fulfill that goal.

- **Competition doesn't always bring out the best in kids.** Basketball is a competitive activity, so it can be difficult to provide a positive experience for all students, particularly for those with less ability. Children and youth want to compare favorably to their peers, but to do so takes time and practice. Drills that place a child in front of his or her peers before the child's skills are proficient lead to a negative experience. That's why this book offers drills and activities that help students become skilled by maximizing the number of practice attempts while minimizing peer comparison. Later, as skills are more and more proficient, increasing and appropriate levels of competition are incorporated into the activities. This evolution promotes learning to be a capable competitor without feeling anxiety due to inappropriate emphasis on winning and losing as the sole indicator of success.

- **Conditioning and skill building can be accomplished simultaneously.** Sport conditioning is a critical aspect of successful competition, and fitness is a vital goal for physical educators. Typically, physical educators treat conditioning and skill building as separate activities, but it doesn't have to be this way. It's possible to develop skill and fitness simultaneously, and the activities in this book are designed to do exactly that. For example, while they do these activities, students can be increasing their cardiovascular endurance and becoming more accurate shooters. The bonus of skill-fitness activities is the increased motivation students have toward engaging in vigorous physical activity when a ball is placed in their hands.

It is my hope that this book will provide you with many useful activities for teaching and coaching children in basketball. Although each of these activities has been developed and used with kids in kindergarten through sixth grades, I suggest that you further refine the activity to suit your own circumstances. I further hope that the principles underlying the development of these activities, as explained in chapter 1, will help you refine your present drills, making them even better, more productive, and enjoyable for kids. Then I hope that you will share these activities with colleagues so that others will benefit from them as well.

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KEY TO DIAGRAMS

Offensive player	○
Defensive player	×
Different teams	A, B, C, D, and so on
Coach	C
Run or sprint	————→
Pass	- - - - -→
Shoot→
Dribble	~~~~~→
Screen	—————
Slide	=====>
Backpedal	\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\→
Poly spots	○ ○ ●
Cones	△
Hoops	○

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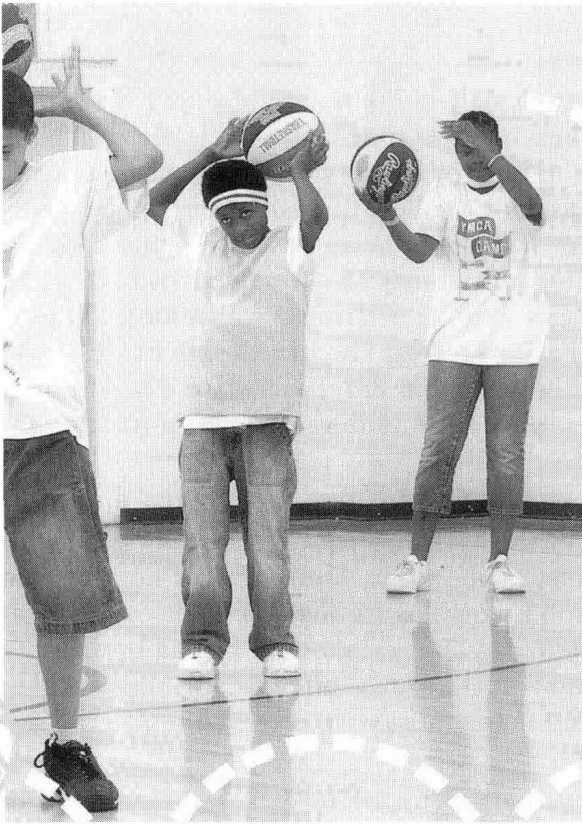
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INTRODUCTION

This book contains 50 age- and developmentally appropriate activities that can be incorporated into any educational or coaching setting. The activities are designed to help children accomplish three major goals: (1) be highly active, (2) be highly successful, and (3) have lots of fun all while learning the game of basketball. All three goals must be met in every activity for children to realize the maximum benefit. Let me elaborate.

1. **Children need to be highly active!** Kids should be moving. You want children in your classes to be breathing hard, with pink little cheeks and hearts that are pounding. High activity allows for the health and sports conditioning benefits to be realized. Equally important, you want kids to receive the

maximum number of skill-building repetitions. Kids should have the ball in their hands as much as possible. Avoid having the kids standing in lines or taking turns as much as you can. You will find in this book a collection of dynamic and engaging activities that allow all kids to be active at the same time. To help each child to gain the maximum benefits of fitness and skill acquisition, many of the activities in this book combine skill learning and fitness into a skill–fitness activity. Kids will enjoy a fitness activity much more if they have a ball in their hand while doing it. And, while they are getting fit, they are also becoming more skilled.

2. **Children want to feel highly successful!** Because these activities focus on the learning process they allow kids to succeed all or most of the time. The activities build within individual kids solid work habits that focus on working at something until you can do it rather than having to measure up to those around you. The pressure of performing a skill in front of others is, for the most part, reserved until skills are proficient.
3. **Children want to have a lot of fun!** The whole idea of this book centers on the idea that learning to play the game of basketball can be a really enjoyable experience. Drills do not have to be drudgery. In fact, just about any drill can be modified to meet the three goals of high activity, high success, and high enjoyment. If we provide a positive experience in which students have high incidences of practice and success they will have more fun learning the game. Indeed, the overwhelming reason that kids choose to participate fully in the first place is so they can have fun.

The activities in *Basketball Fun & Games* focus on building individual skills that lead to team success. The activities are generally grouped according to fundamental basketball and team-sports skills:

- Warming up
- Ball handling
- Passing
- Shooting
- Multiskill activities
- Tactics and teamwork

Each activity outlines the information you need to know to conduct it, including the following elements:

- **Time.** A suggested amount of time is indicated for each activity. Note that these activities are generally short and may be repeated or adjusted if time and circumstances allow.

- **National standards.** Each activity helps kids achieve one or more of the National Association for Sport & Physical Education (NASPE)'s national standards for physical education. The standards are shown here for your reference:

1. Demonstrates competency in motor skills and movement patterns needed to perform a variety of physical activities
2. Demonstrates understanding of movement concepts, principles, strategies, and tactics as they apply to the learning and performance of physical activities
3. Participates regularly in physical activity
4. Achieves and maintains a health-enhancing level of physical activity
5. Exhibits responsible personal and social behavior that respects self and others in physical activity settings
6. Values physical activity for health, enjoyment, challenge, self-expression, and/or social interaction

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- **Level.** Each activity is designed to be age- and developmentally appropriate for the level indicated. Although the word *level* in this book indicates grades kindergarten through six (K-6), age groups in K-6 are commonly divided into three developmental levels: K-2, 3-4, and 5-6. You may use the indicated level as a general guideline for both age and developmental levels. However, feel free to adjust the activities to suit your specific needs.

- **Objectives.** Each activity is designed with basketball-specific objectives and outcomes in mind. Consult the stated objectives and keep them in mind when selecting and implementing an activity.

- **Equipment.** Amount and type of equipment are listed next. Equipment should be well maintained and serviceable and selected to suit the age and developmental level of the students. It is always a good practice to survey the equipment and activity space before beginning instruction to ensure safety and the proper functioning of equipment.

It is more important that each student have a piece of equipment that is serviceable than it is to have the best, most up-to-date equipment available. Generally, buying greater quantities of less expensive basketballs is better than purchasing a smaller number of high-quality leather basketballs, particularly for younger students. Balls come in a variety of sizes to suit particular age and developmental needs. Other equipment mentioned, such as poly spots, hula hoops, and cones, are all commonly found at a variety of vendor sources. Choose those suited to your specific needs.

Modifying equipment size, spacing, and height is encouraged to result in greater student success. Remember that small-group or individual activities ought to be the norm, thus requiring more equipment; ideally, every student should have a ball or piece of equipment. These activities often involve creating station signs as a means to increase the type and frequency of information and feedback to students when the coach may be occupied elsewhere, resulting in more self-directed learning. Occasionally, the activity suggests the use of timed music, which increases the student enjoyment and helps to manage the activity. I recommend that you create, in advance, a variety of taped music or CDs. Generally, these drills do not require a great deal of equipment, but at times they do require a variety of equipment.

- **Description.** Step-by-step instructions are provided to help you manage and conduct each activity in a time-efficient and clear manner. Children, with their short attention spans, learn best in short, intermittent episodes. Therefore, give few but very clear instructions and begin the activity immediately, adding and clarifying as needed throughout. Keeping the directions concise avoids long, drawn-out instructions that students may not be able to remember and follow.

- **Variations.** Although each of the activities contains a suggested level, it is possible to modify almost all of them to suit any age level. Suggested modifications are often included in the activity, but I encourage you to make further changes to suit your teaching needs.

- **Teaching tips.** The success of any activity requires first and foremost that teachers and coaches be *effective managers of kids and the setting*. Learning objectives fall away when time is wasted due to poor management skills. The step-by-step descriptions also include specific language intended to help you manage more effectively. Keep in mind the following general management guidelines (specific teaching tips may also be listed with each activity):

- Set up your teaching station beforehand to be safe and facilitate the flow of the lesson.
- Meet the kids at the door with a short greeting and then hit the ground running.
- Use movement to manage kids, knowing that problems arise when children are standing around with nothing to do.
- Choose consistent starting and stopping signals and use them every time.
- Make quick transitions (either to move equipment or to establish groups and formations) in under 30 seconds.
- When giving instructions, always tell the students the *when* before the *what*. For example, you might say, “Class, when I say go, jog over to the wall, get a ball, return to your own space on the floor, and begin dribbling. Go!” This sequencing ensures that students hear all of the instructions.
- Give only enough instructions to get the activity going and then add on to the activity throughout the drill.

Now you’re ready to proceed with the activities. Best of luck, and above all . . . have fun!

