

Shooting

More than any other skill, shooting takes lots and lots of practice. Fundamentals include form, timing and mental training.

Shots

"There are basically three types of shots (set shot, lay-up and jump-shot). The set shot is used for free throws and perimeter shots, or shots when the shooter is wide open. However, the shooting technique used with the set shot is the same basic technique employed by the jump shot. "

Stance :

Have your feet about shoulder width apart. If you shoot right-handed, your right foot should be slightly forward, and your weight should be on the balls of your feet (not the heels). Your shoulders and body should be square to the hoop. Your knees should be bent a little as your thigh muscles will provide power for your shot. Don't move sideways when shooting. Stay balanced.

Holding the ball :

Use both hands to hold the ball, but only your shooting hand will actually propel the ball forward. Don't shoot two-handed. Your shooting hand is the "platform" and should be underneath the ball with your wrist cocked back. Your other hand helps support or balance the ball, but does not enter into the actual shooting of the ball.

Set-point :

The set point is where you position the ball just prior to releasing the ball. If you are right-handed, have the ball to the right of your face, a little toward the right shoulder. Don't line the ball up in the centre of your face, as this may result in your shooting elbow flying away from your body, and could actually cause your wrist to turn sideways when you release the ball, imparting a side-spin.

Aiming the ball :

Pick out a spot to aim at... either the back of the rim, or just over the front of the rim, or the backboard (if you are shooting a bank shot). Concentrate on this spot, and don't look at the ball, or the flight of the ball.

Releasing the ball :

Use the shoulder as a "hinge". Your shooting arm extends forward toward the hoop (keep the elbow in), and then you release the ball with a snap of the wrist, with the ball rolling off your fingertips. This will impart a backspin, or "rotation" on the ball, that all good shooters have.

Follow-through :

This is important in getting the proper rotation (back spin) on the ball. Your fingers should be pointing toward the hoop, and your wrist bent forward, in a "goose neck" fashion. Another analogy is if you were "reaching into the cookie jar" high on the shelf. Hold this release after your shot until the ball hits the rim.

Start with shots only one foot from the basket, to develop a correct technique. This drill is called "form shooting". Move farther away as you get better, but do not sacrifice correct technique. Practice shooting from locations where you will likely shoot from in a game.