



5.0 ZONE OFFENCE

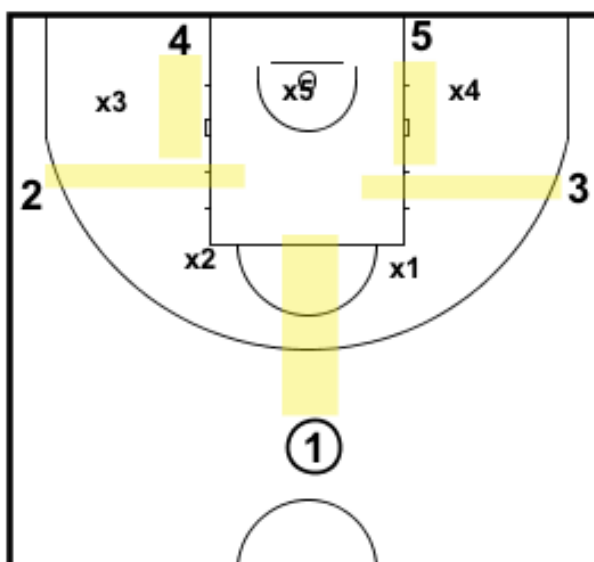
5.1 SPACING

Teaching Points:

- Zone defences are designed to guard a position on the court, not a designated opposition player. This blurs the lines of accountability for the defence – the weakness of any zone defence. Therefore, an important way to attack the zone is to create confusion as to who is guarding who.
- We do this by playing IN BETWEEN defensive players. This is the most important point for spacing in zone offence
- We can also exploit the defenders necessity to have to guard a set position in the zone, by overloading one side of the court. In this way we can create a numerical advantage (5 v 4).
- We do not 'post up' the zone. Post players should play in the following areas: Front rim, short corners, "dots" (the place in the keyway where there is a dotted semi circle to complete the jump ball circle), elbows, slots.

Cues:

- "GAPS"



Offensive players must play IN BETWEEN the defensive players in the zone.



5.2 CUTTING

Teaching Points

- Another way to create confusion is to cut in behind the defences' vision.
- Cuts, along with “dribble drag” action (shown in next section) are an excellent way to blur the lines of responsibility for zone defenders.
- Teams can also overload a zone by using cutting to outnumber defenders.
- Cuts with screening can seal zone defenders and create open shots
- Cuts from post players in behind defenders vision can create attacking passing ANGLES/play making opportunities.
- Perimeter players can cut within the three perimeter positions by ‘looping’ in behind defenders (“Loop Cut”). They can cut to the basket and then turn out to either corner (“Deep Cut”). They can also cut from corner to corner (“Corner Cut”)
- Post players can cut from weakside positions to strong side positions (“Flash Cut”), they can cut from one dunker position to another (“Dunker Cut”). They can also cut to the basket (“Basket Cut”)
- We will have some post cutting rules (mentioned in section 4.4) in regards to when post players receive the ball.

Cues:

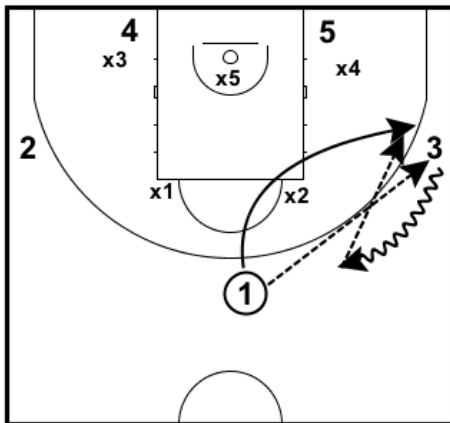
"DEEP"

"LOOP"

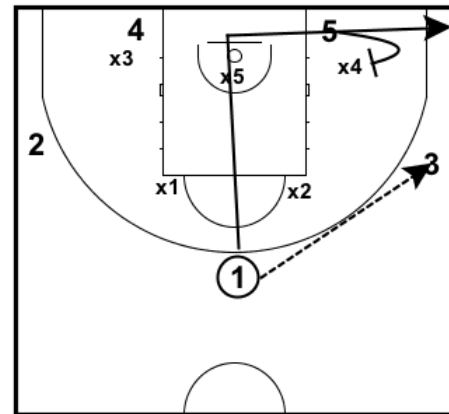
"FLASH"

"CORNER"

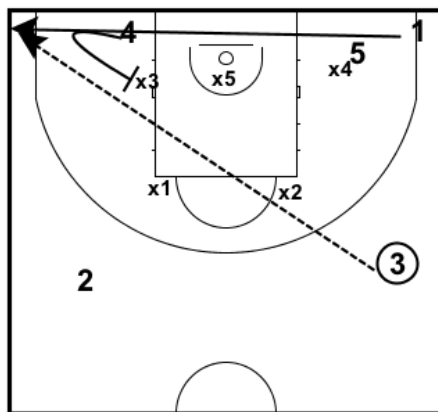
"DUNKER"



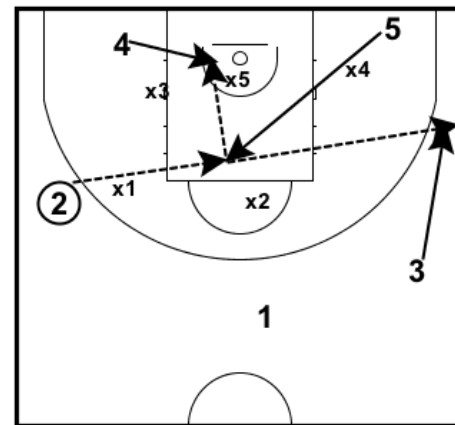
*Loop Cut + Drag Dribble
Creates open shot on wing by confusing D2*



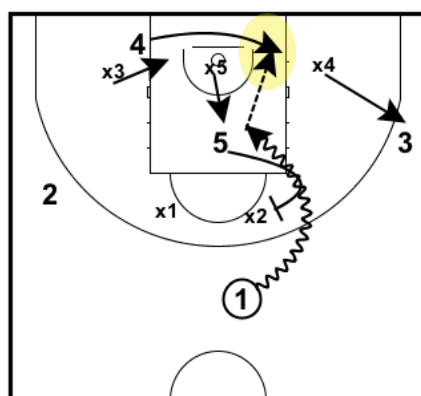
Deep Cut + edge Screen. Overloads the zone and creates an open shot in the corner for 1



*Corner Cut + Edge Screen + Skip Pass
Creates open shot on other side of zone*



Flash Cut – weakside big flashes behind the defences vision to create an opportunity for a shot, hi/lo action, or skip pass for 3pt shot



4 can use a Dunker cut to get behind the defences vision to find an open gap for a shot. In this example, 5 ball screens the top defender in the zone, 1 drives into the paint, 4 sees DS helping on the ball, so cuts behind for a layup



When 4 has the ball in the short corner, 5 can look to dive cut to the basket. 1 can also look to “basket cut” too into the space created by 5 cutting to the basket



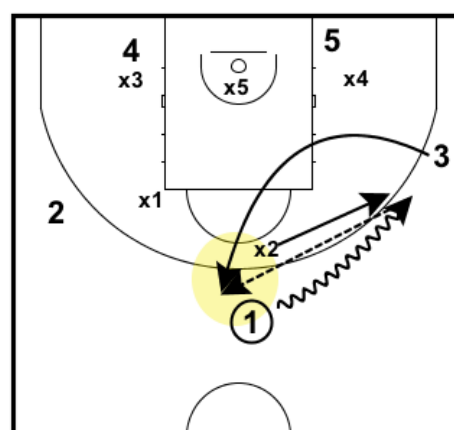
5.3 USE OF THE DRIBBLE

Teaching Points

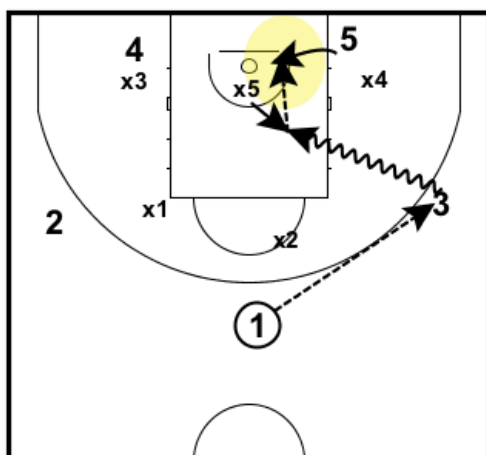
- The ability to penetrate the zone by driving into the paint is very important in zone offence. Teams make a zone much more successful if they only move the ball around the perimeter and shoot 3pters, instead of getting the ball penetrated and the defence collapsing.
- The nature of the zone defence offers up some different uses of the dribble – Dribble Drags, Split drives, Freeze drives.
- Dribble Drags are when a player dribbles out of their spot enticing the defender to follow them into another spot. This creates a space in the original spot for an offensive player to fill for an open shot. In this case, the dribbler would 'kick back' to the shooter.
- The Dribble Drag can also force the defence to switch onto the ball, which may create an open shot in front of the dribbler. The dribbler would then "kick on" to the open shooter.
- Split Drives are when an offensive player drives *between* defenders. In this case, the dribbler can get their feet in the paint for a shot or to draw defence (either on the perimeter or in the paint) to create a shot for a teammate.
- Freeze Drives are when an offensive player drives *at* defenders. This freezes the defender in their spot so that the dribbler can prevent them from moving to a more beneficial defensive location (e.g. running to the corner to stop a 3pt shot).

Cues:

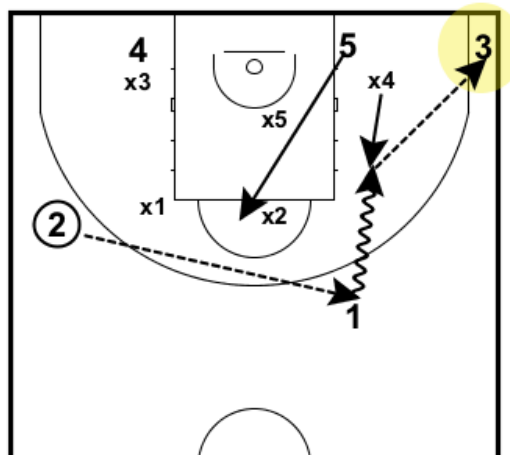
- "DRAG"
- "SPLIT"
- "FREEZE"



Dribble Drag – 1 dribble drags to wing position. X2 follows with 1. 3 Loop cuts to top to the open space for a shot



Split Drive – 3 uses a Split drive to get between x2 and x4. He draws X5 – creating an open layup for 5



Freeze Drive – With ball on wing with 2, defence has pushed across to cover the ball, high post and low post. When 2 passes to 1, 1 freeze drives at x4 to stop him from covering pass to corner. Then x4 commits to ball, 1 passes to 3 who is open in the corner

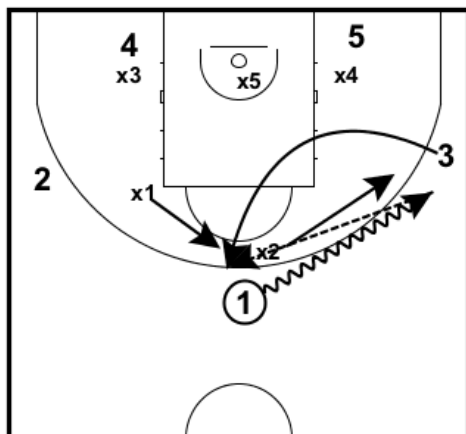
5.3 SCREENING

Teaching Points

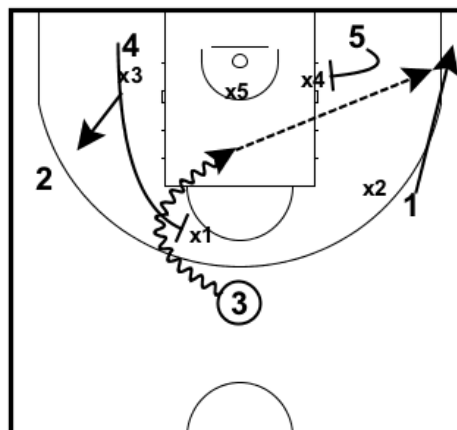
- Screening the zone can be very effective as it can ‘pin’ defenders in the zone and open up driving lanes or perimeter shots
- Various screens can be used against the zone. The two that we will focus on are Edge Screens and On Ball Screens.
- Edge Screens screen the outside of a zone to create an outside shot. They are particularly effective when used with skip passes. The screener’s back should be angled to the spot on the floor where the open shot is to be created.
- On Ball Screens are the same concept as vs man to man defence – a screen is set on the defender guarding the ball. In the case of zone defence, however, this action causes a 2v1 (as there is no defender on the screen) so the defender has to choose whether to chase the ball handler or stay with the screen.

Cues:

- "EDGE"
- "ON BALL"



1 starts the play with a dribble drag to the wing.
 X2 follows the ball, 3 loop cuts into 1s space. 1 passes back to 3. X1 reacts by racing up to guard 3



4 sprints up into an on ball screen. As 3 drives into the key, 5 sets an edge screen for 1. 3 passes out to 1 for an open shot

5.4 POST PLAY IN THE ZONE

Teaching Points

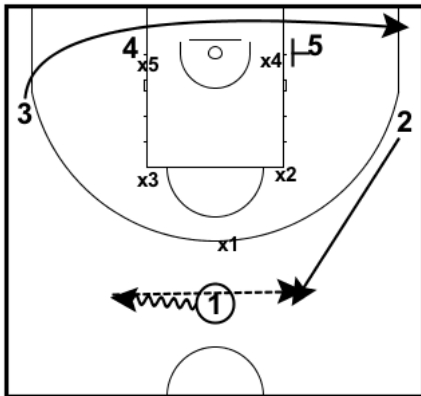
- As mentioned in point 4.1, 'posting up' in the zone is not an advantageous tactic. If an offensive player posted up in a traditional low post area, they would likely face a crowd of defenders who are all guarding locations in the zone around them.
- Therefore, we ask our post players to play in the gaps of the zone: Front rim, short corners, Dots, Elbows, Slots.
- When one player receives the ball, they should always first look to score, then look for their post 'buddy', and then other players. In this way, we can get Hi/lo action, and Lo/Hi action

Cues:

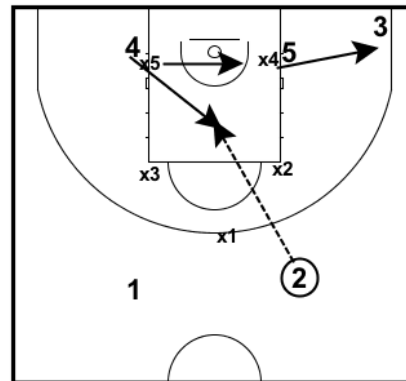
- "BUDDY"



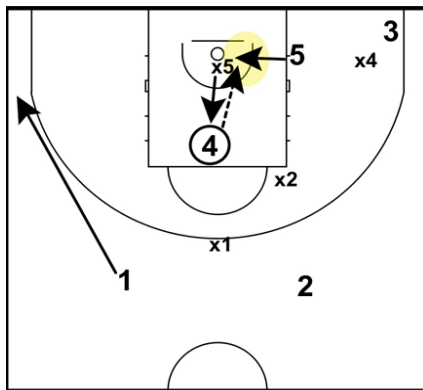
Example of Hi/Lo Action



1 starts the play with dribble drag action. 3 makes a corner cut. 5 sets an edge screen for 3.

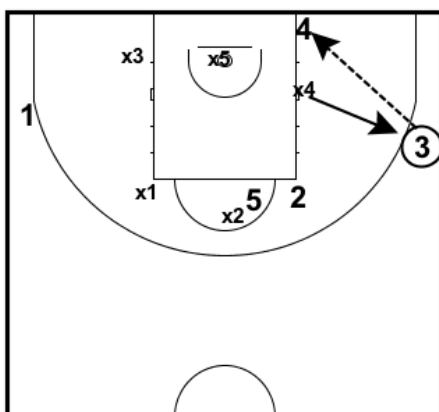


As the defence reacts to 3 & 5's actions, 4 flash cuts into a hole in the middle of the zone 2 passes to 4

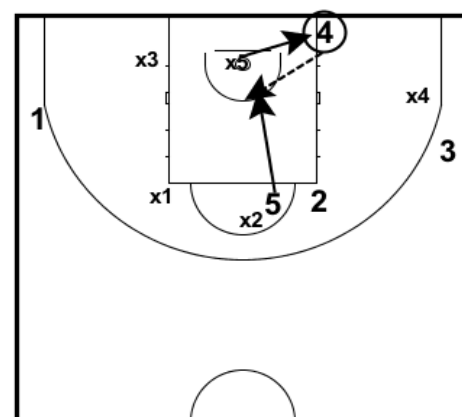


4 looks for own shot first, for a hi/lo look with 5 second and then the kick out pass 3rd

Example of Low/hi Action



X4 reacts to 2's pass by guarding 3. 3 then passes to open man - 4



4 looks for short corner finish first. If x5 reacts and guards 4, 4 then looks for his post buddy - 5 on a basket cut down the middle of the lane. 4 then looks for pass out to shooters