

## Basketball Player Position Breakdown

The game of basketball includes a five-player team, which consist of the following basketball positions: two guards, two forwards, and one center scores points. The team gains point by getting the ball through the hoop. Each basketball player has a specific position with set responsibilities and each call for different physical requirements and skills.

### Point Guard

PG, One or Point

The point guard's job is to push the ball up-court and start the offensive. The point guard has the most specialized role out of all other positions and must have degree of passing and ball handling skills. The point guard is an extension of the coach on the floor, they must understand and accept their coach's game plan but also be able to adapt and react to what the defense is doing on the court. Typically the smallest player on the court.

**Qualities to Master:** speed, quickness, ball handling skills, vocal, leader, court vision, passing skills, team first attitude, high basketball IQ, knowing the plays and positions, knowing team-mates strengths and weaknesses, separation moves, defense, physical shape, mentally toughness, ability to make open shots and three pointers, and clock management.

**NBA Players to Study:** Magic Johnson, Stephen Curry, Chris Paul, John Stockton, Jason Kidd

### Shooting Guard

SG, Two, Off Guard

A shooting guard's primary role is to score points. Known as the team's best perimeter shooter and must be able to score in various ways, and be a good free throw shooter. Shooting guards are good at handling the basketball and can pass reasonably well. Many shooting guards are strong, athletic can get inside the paint and score and are great at stealing the ball on defense. A shooting guard uses screens set by teammates prepared to shoot, pass, or drive to the basket. Typically larger than the point guard, smaller than the small forward.

**Qualities to Master:** perimeter shooting, scoring from anywhere on the court, ball handling, made free throw percentage, 3-pointers, and defensive skills.

**NBA Players to Study:** Michael Jordan, Kobe Bryant, Dwayne Wade, James Harden, Clyde Drexler

## **Small Forward**

SF, Three, Swingman

The all-purpose player and most versatile of all positions on the court is responsible for scoring points and defending. Small forwards are also secondary rebounders behind power forward and center. Small forwards are known to be aggressive and strong; tall enough work in the paint but poised enough to handle the ball and shoot well. Small forwards must have the ability to score both from the perimeter and from inside the paint. Typically larger than the shooting guard, smaller than the power forward.

**Qualities to Master:** strength, ball handling, shooting, passing, creating space, post-up game, defense, pick and roll, finishing, setting screens, aggressive inside, and rebounding

**NBA Players to Study:** LeBron James, Larry Bird, Kevin Durant, Julius Erving, Elgin Baylor

## **Power Forward**

PF, Four, Swingman

The enforcer. Must be able to catch passes and hit shots near the basket. Aggressive rebounder, shot blocker, and possess athletic quickness to move around the lane on offense and defense. Typically playing with back towards basket they are expected to score when given the opportunity in the paint, much like a center, but also are known for having a great mid-range jumper; 12 - 18 feet. Most are taller than small forward but smaller than the center.

**Qualities to Master:** post moves, rebounding, aggressive with basketball on offense and aggressive defender, boxing out, ability to jump high, shot blocking, mid-range shooting, physical strength and conditioning.

**NBA Players to Study:** Kevin Garnett, Dirk Nowitzki, Charles Barkley, Karl Malone, Tim Duncan

## **Center**

C, Five, Big Man

Typically the tallest player on the team. With a great deal of strength and body mass center possess the ability to post up offensively — receive the ball with his/her back to the basket and use pivot moves to hit a variety of short jumpers, hook shots, bank shots and dunks. Centers are known for protecting their own goal while scoring with high effectiveness. Also must grab rebounds and pass out to open player.

**Qualities to Master:** physical strength, rebounding, aggressive defender, strong with basketball, boxing out, shot blocking, posting up, passing.

**NBA Players to Study:** Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, Bill Russell, Wilt Chamberlain, Hakeem Olajuwon, Shaquille O’Neal

### Basketball Court Positioning

Guards	1	Floor General	Point Guard (PG)
			Combo Guard (PG/SG)
2	Wing		Shooting Guard
			Guard – Forward Swingman – Wing (SG/SF)
Forwards	3	Wing	Small Forward (SF)
			Point Forward (PG/SF or PG/PF)
	4	Post	Power Forward (PF) Combo Forward – Stretch Four (SF/PF)
Center	5	Pivot	Center (C)
			Forward-Center / Big Man / Big (PF/C)

