

EURO STEP

The Euro step is a must know basketball move, we will teach the basics of this two-step, deadly move, and how to weaponize your own footwork with progressions to practice at home.

Euro Step

The Euro step also known as two-step, or long lateral the offensive player picks up their dribble, takes a step in one direction, and then quickly takes a second step in another direction. In this basketball move the offensive player gains the ability to fake out the defender to better attack the basket. The move is difficult to defend against and also limits the ability for the defender to take a charge as the attacker is driving the basket. The offensive player simply steps to the side of the defender to avoid the charge. Other advantages of the Euro step is the ability to throw off the timing of the defender anticipating to block a shot.

Background

Yes, you guessed it, the Euro step gets its name from the decades it was used in European basketball leagues. The move was brought to the NBA by Šarūnas Marčiulionis in 1989, and popularized in the 2000s by shooting guard great, Manu Ginóbili. Although, it was commonly seen in the early 2000's the move wasn't technically legal in the NBA until 2009. The previous rule was a player could only take one step after completing a dribble. In 2009 the rule was changed to "a player who receives the ball while he is progressing or upon completion of a dribble, may take two steps in coming to a stop, passing or shooting the ball".

More recent NBA players to champion the move are James Harden, Dwyane Wade, and of course reigning MVP, Giannis Antetokounmpo.

The move goes right to the edge of being a traveling violation some officials not familiar with the move may even call it as such. The 2009 two step rule was the first time any league, at any level has explicitly allowed two steps in basketball and it has been difficult for fans watching at home to fully understand it arguing the legitimacy of these athlete's explosive steps.

Explosive Footwork

A FiveThirtyEight study shows Antetokounmpo can cover 15 feet off a single dribble when driving the basket, given Antetokounmpo's 7-foot-3 wingspan the Greek Freak is able to start his Euro step from the 3-point line. Weaponizing footwork and stretching the rules to the very limit is changing the way the game is played. Can you imagine; what if Michael Jordan had been allowed to take two steps, how many more points would he have scored a game?

Each NBA player has put their own spin on the move; LeBron James completes it with his elbows high, Russell Westbrook goes in for the dunk, Kyrie Irving keeps the ball low and finishes with a layup, Harden extends his arm trying to catch a foul, and Wade was known for dropping his lethal floater.

When to Use the Euro Step

Any time you are going to the hoop with momentum.

- Dribble drive
- Off a screen and roll
- Fast break

Euro Step Progressions

A. Two Steps – No Dribble

Practice first by taking a jab step followed by a side step. Master long, explosive steps.

B. Two Euro Step – Add Dribble

Add your dribble to the jab step – side step combo. Starting inside the 3-point line.

C. Add Finishing Move

Add your shot, layup, reverse layup, finger roll, dunk, floater, fadeaway, quick shot etc.

D. Two Euro Step – Add Distance

Backup starting your Euro step from the 3-point line.

E. Two Euro Step – Add Angles

Start Euro step from different angles and distances on the court.

F. Dribble – Euro Step

Add more dribbles as if you are bringing the ball up the court. Place a cone, chair or chalk mark for an imaginary defender.

G. Add Defender

Practice against a friend, family member, coach, etc. trying the move from different angles, directions, and speeds.

Euro Step Tips

- Start slow, get your footwork down and maintain control before adding quickness
- Jab + explosive step. The first move is a jab, the second move should be long and explosive step in a different direction
- Pound the ball before you jab step - to give you momentum

- Rip ball or sweep the ball over or under the defenders hands as you side step, to protect the ball from getting striped
- Long steps – cover as much distance as you can separating yourself from the defender and gaining either a better look to shoot or a closer distance to the hoop making it easier to score
- Don't be predictable, switch up the direction, timing, speed, and angle
- Throw your shoulders in the direction of your jab step to sell the defender on your fake

Our Top 5 Euro Steppers

Study these top NBA players to improve your Euro.

1. Manu Ginobili 🐘
2. Dwyane Wade
3. Giannis Antetokounmpo
4. James Harden
5. Russell Westbrook

Now it's time to get to work, start practicing the Euro step to add to your scoring arsenal.