

Passing for Pros

Basketball is a team sport, just like other team sports it's important to get all teammates involved in the game for on the court success. Passing is an under-emphasized, undertaught skill and should be practiced to make you the ultimate teammate on the court.

Basic Passes

Chest Pass

The ball travels between players without hitting the floor.

When to use: Chest passes are to be used when the defense isn't tightly guarding you and/or the teammate you are passing to.

Steps:

- Start by holding the ball at chest level, with one hand on each side
- As you take a step toward your target, push the ball by extending your arms from your chest using equal strength from each hand
- Flick your wrist so your fingers and thumbs finishing facing down to provide backspin
- The ball should travel in an imaginary line from your chest and finishing at your teammate's chest

Bounce Pass

The ball travels between players by bouncing on the floor.

When to use: Post entry pass, pass from the post back out to a teammate, if your opponent is closely guarding you or you are being double teamed.

Steps:

- Start by holding the ball at chest level, with one hand on each side
- As you take a step towards your target, push the ball down to the ground extending your arms from your chest using each strength from each hand
- Flick your wrist so your fingers and thumbs finishing facing down to provide backspin
- The ball should hit the ground about $\frac{3}{4}$ the way to the receiver and bounce up hitting their waist area

Overhead Pass (Skip Pass)

The ball travels from above your head to your teammate.

When to use: Outlet pass, moving ball from one side of the court to the other when you lack strength to do a chest pass, reversing the ball to the opposite side of the court.

Steps:

- Start by holding ball above your head or forehead with one hand on each side. Avoid bringing the ball back behind your head.
- As you take a step towards your teammate, push the ball forward using the strength from your triceps and snap your wrists.
- Aim at your teammate's head, chest or into a space that avoids the defense.

Wrap Around Pass

Using one hand or two, step around the defender, the ball will travel in the air or with a bounce to your teammate.

When to use: Defense is guarding you but you can take one step around them, passing the ball from the perimeter to perimeter in the air, passing the ball from perimeter to post with a bounce.

Steps:

- Start by holding the ball with your outside hand (right hand if passing to the right side of the court, left hand if passing to the left side of the court) or the outside of your body with both hands
- Take a big step around your defender to get your defender on your hip with your non-pivot foot
- As you take a big step towards your teammate, push the ball forward using one hand or two either through the air or with a bounce
- Aim at your teammate's head, chest or into a space that avoids the defense

Advanced Passes

Baseball Pass – One handed pass that uses the same motion as throwing a baseball. Used for making long passes.

Dribble Pass – Passing the ball off a dribble using one hand.

Behind the Back Pass – Player wraps the ball around back to throw the ball. Used to avoid the defender that is in front of the player.

Alley-oop – Player lofts the ball in to the air near the rim and the another player anticipates the pass jumps up and dunks it.

No Look Pass – The player passes the ball while facing or looking in a different direction. The no look pass is a great way to fake out your defender to increase your pass completion.

Outlet Pass – Most commonly an overhead pass, an outlet pass is what follows a rebound. The player gets a defensive rebound, pivots and turns to make an outlet pass to a teammate as their team transitions on offense.

Post Entry Pass – This pass focuses on getting the ball to the team's forward, center or anyone posted up close to the basket. Post entry pass has three options.

- **Through the Air** – Pass the ball through the air aiming above your post player's head where they can reach up and catch the ball with one or two hands. Be sure to throw the ball to the opposite side of where the defender is.
- **Bounce Pass** – Bounce pass the ball to the post player, aiming at waist height.
- **Fake and Make Pass** – Fake to pass either high to low and do the opposite pass.

Kick Pass – This pass happens when a player is driving the basket and passes (*kicks*) it out to a player on the perimeter.

Know the Rules - Passing Violations

Know these important rules to avoid a violation.

- Players must keep the ball inbounds
- You cannot pass the ball to yourself or be the first person to touch the ball
- Players cannot pass the ball from the frontcourt to the backcourt

Trainer Tips

- Avoid soft passes, which allows the defender extra time to intercept the ball
- Add in fakes
- Deliver on target passes, passes the receiver can easily catch and execute an offensive move
- Make sure your teammate is ready to receive the pass, or ready to catch the ball
- Use a weighted ball to get stronger
- Make the easy pass
- Use a dribble to create a passing lane
- See the defense and anticipate what they are going to do