



# Basketball Coaches Packet

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Hey Coaches!

I want to start off by saying thank you for partnering with us. Naz Rec has been serving the community for over 40 years and you are a part of this history. Having been a coach myself, I know how challenging it can be, but also how rewarding this opportunity is.

Nazarene Recreation is truly an incredible community. We have the joy of using sports and activities to help each other grow in a variety of ways, all while encouraging each other in these moments together. We take pride in the fact that Naz Rec is a safe place where anyone is welcome.

As I've watched, and even found myself coaching too, I've been so impressed by your willingness to lead. So many parents and coaches step up in various ways to make your own respective sports go well by combining coachable moments with fun. It is my job, with the help of our staff, to make this enjoyable for you as well.

We've provided you a packet with some tools we think may be helpful for you throughout the course of this session. Feel free to use them as a guideline to help make your practice time and development go as smoothly as possible. If at any point you have any questions, please reach out to us and we would be happy to assist you.

At the end of each session, every participant receives a trophy. Naz Rec has an incredible history of some of the best awards ceremonies I have seen. We've recently brought on some additional help specifically for our awards ceremonies to create themes and environments that will make the time that much more enjoyable.

I am excited for you to join us for this session. The part you play in Naz Rec, is a vital role. Every moment you have leading these individuals makes a huge difference in so many ways. So once again, thank you for giving up your time to help others and continue the positive experience so many people have had while participating with us here at Nazarene Recreation.

Sincerely,

Pastor Ethan

# **Nazarene Recreation at a Glance**

## **History**

Nazarene Recreation has been serving the Southwest Suburbs for over 40 years. Originally started before any other sports programs in the area, Naz Rec continues to be a leader in youth sports today. Naz Rec offers programming for kids of all ages, specializing in sports leagues and classes for 3-10 year olds. If you want to play sports in a family-friendly environment where the focus is on developing your player, not just on winning, Naz Rec is the place to be.

## **Vision**

Nazarene Recreation exists to offer recreational programming that develops athletes to be healthy and active for life. We want to partner with parents to help them raise up healthy, active, fully developed children.

## **Session Goals**

As a coach, there are only a few goals that we have for you this session, but they are very important ones! As a coach, please focus on each of these goals:

- Every player improves
- Every player has fun
- Every player, parent, coach, and team feels safe and comfortable
- You have fun

## **What to Expect**

Each week you will have one hour to both practice and to play a game. All the games are non-competitive; we don't keep scores and the emphasis is on having fun, not winning. Please plan on practicing for the first 15-25 minutes each week. The remaining time is set aside for playing the game. When you arrive, all the equipment you need will already be set out for you. If you need additional materials, like cones or spot markers, just send our staff an email in advance requesting them. You will share the court/field with the team you are playing against that week for your practice.

## **The Nazarene Recreation Method**

At Naz Rec, we embrace the Long Term Athlete Development (LATD) model of sports programming. LATD combines Sports Science with Developmental Psychology and applies that to sports programming. The goal is for every player to be engaged in age-appropriate activities that help develop the entire body into a young athlete.

One way we apply this theory at Naz Rec is by having multiple sports sessions each year. It is far better for the health and development of your player for them to play multiple sports throughout the year up until about 12 years of age than it is for them to get really good at just one sport early on. If you specialize in one sport too soon, you run the risk of your player getting burned out and also of your player overdeveloping the muscles associated with that activity while under developing all of the supporting muscles and movements that aren't directly involved. Basically, you run a greater risk of injury later on if your child specializes in one sport too early in life. That's why we have short sessions that mix up the sports: We want each child to be able to play multiple sports throughout the year!

# Coach To-do List

## Before the Session Begins:

- Attend Coach's Meeting
- Send an email to your team introducing yourself
- Organize snack list
  - Please be mindful of allergies! Ask parents if there are any food allergies on your team

## First Day of the Session:

- Arrive at least 15 minutes early!
- When you arrive, please pick up your team's shirts, picture information, updated roster, and schedules from the Rec Office
- Players will come to you to get their t-shirts. Introduce yourself to all your players and their parents
- Please announce the weather policy to all parents (found on parent brochure)
- The first practice is reserved as a practice only day; you are not required to play a game if your team isn't ready for one. For sports like T-ball, there's a lot more teaching involved. Sports like Soccer, however, most kids will get right away and will be ready to play. The decision to play a game is up to you and the coach you are scheduled against: if both teams are ready to play, go for it!

## Each Week:

- Review your lesson plan in advance
- Communicate any additional needs or concerns with our staff
- Make any important announcements: Picture Day, Awards Ceremony coming up, etc.
- Run the drills for that week at the start of practice. Feel free to add your own drills or adjust the drills to better suit your team's needs. Practice lasts 15-25 minutes
- Play a game against another team. Coach: You become the referee/game manager at this point. Rotate your subs in often, encourage your players to keep playing, give lots of high fives, and shout out instructions when needed
- Have fun!

## Picture Day:

- Picture day is marked on your schedule
- Additional picture forms can be found in the Rec Office if someone needs one
- On picture day, please do your normal routine
- The photographers will come and get your team when they are ready for you. They will take you to get photos, and then return you to your court
- Then, just pick up where you left off!

## End of the Session:

- Make verbal announcements and send email reminders about the Awards Ceremony
- Encourage as many players as possible to attend the Award Ceremony
- Attend the Award Ceremony with your team

# Practice Lesson Plans

## Weekly Warmups:

Each week you should begin with a warmup. I recommend always doing something different for warm-ups. This will keep things interesting for your players and also add a great deal of fun. A good warm-up is simple: Get the kids moving, active, and energized at the start of your practice. Feel free to bring your own warm-up ideas if you want! Variety from week to week makes this a highlight for your players! Here is a list of suggested warm-ups you can choose from:

- ★ Jogging Laps

- ★ Jogging a lap is a great starter for any sport. It gets the kids moving and warms up their bodies quickly. I recommend jogging with them if you can!

- ★ Line drills

- ★ Make use of the colored lines on the gym floor! Have kids line up on one color, and then run to the next color line. Mix it up by having them sprint, then have them hop on two feet, then hop on one foot, then go backwards, etc. Have them go from one line to the next and then stop. This teaches full body control and also works on balance and stability.

- ★ Dynamic Stretches

- ★ Dynamic Stretches are stretches that involve moving. Static stretches are actually something you want to avoid... which means try not to line your kids up in a line and have them do 10 stretches in a row without moving. Static stretching actually does very little to aid flexibility. Dynamic stretches are much better for loosening players up. Dynamic stretches are things like running with "High Knees" or with "Kick Butts". Other examples are standing jumps (jump 10 times in a row or do 10 jumping jacks, etc), leg swings/kicks, arm circles, walking toe touch (keep your legs straight!), and walking lunges.

- ★ Follow-the-Leader

- ★ Follow-the-Leader type games help develop players in a variety of ways. Plus, it helps teach your players to listen and to follow your directions. Consider adding in change of direction (zig-zag), fun motions (fly like a plane), plyometrics (hop on one foot or take big jumps), and change of speed (sprint a little then slow way up then sprint again). This is a very fun game to play and will also get your kids loose and ready to play your sport!

- ★ Tag Games

- ★ Tag type games are really good for teaching body control and general movement. Tag gets kids running in multiple directions and also watching the "it" person, which helps them develop awareness of their surroundings.

# Practice Lesson Plans

## Week 1:

1. Line sprints
  1. The key here is to go FAST! Make a game of it by telling them to run when you say “go!”... and then try to trick them. :) Have them sprint from one side of the gym to the other. Mix it up by sprinting to specific places or lines.
2. Dribbling from line to line
  1. This builds off of the first drill... now you’re adding a ball to the mix. Start slow! When dribbling, the goal is to keep the ball really close to you.
  2. Do this drill in three layers: Slow, Medium, and Fast.
  3. Key is object control: You want to teach your players to be able to control the basketball with one hand at a time.
3. Passing basics
  1. Teach the basics of passing. There are two types of passes in basketball: bounce pass and chest pass. Both have the same mechanics. Start with the ball in the passers chest, with both hands on the ball and elbows sticking straight out. First, step with one leg towards the receiver. Second, “push” the ball away from your chest towards the receiver. The receiver should have his or her hands up and ready to catch the ball.
4. Partner passing
  1. Have players get a partner and line up across from their partner a medium distance to start (about 10 feet or so). Have players pass the ball (using bounce passes first!) to their partner and then back. When passing, teach them to step into the pass each time. The target should always be the receivers chest.
5. Defensive positions
  1. Teach your players to work together by splitting them into offensive and defensive positions for the game. The defense has to stay on your side of the court (don’t cross the half court line). The offense has to stay on the other side of the court (past the half court line). Alternate which squad is where and mix and match your squads so that everyone plays both positions.
    1. Splitting your team like this greatly increases the flow of the game. It allows players to have space to operate because it prevents every player from bunching up in one large clump. This will make the game much more enjoyable for both teams!

# Practice Lesson Plans

## Week 2:

1. Wall passing
  1. The key here is to teach kids to step into the pass... not just stand still and use only their arms. Have each kid (or as many as you have balls for) find a spot facing the wall. Have them stand 5-10 feet away from the wall. Start with the ball by their chest, both hands on the ball, elbows sticking straight out. Step with one foot forward while passing the ball to the wall. The point here is to get as many repetitions as possible. Make the drill harder by having kids take a step back each time their ball hits the wall. See how far back they can go!
2. Receiving skills
  1. Receiving the ball is all about hand-eye coordination. The key here is to teach kids to watch the ball all the way until they catch it. Most kids will get scared of the ball and will either flinch or close their eyes as it comes to them. To teach receiving skills, use a dodgeball! Have kids get a partner and line up across from each other, about 5-10 feet apart. Have them throw the ball, underhand, to their partner and back. If you see a player struggling, step in and toss the ball to him or her yourself, by getting on one knee in front of them. The key here is to teach them not to be afraid of the ball and to watch it all the way till it hits their hands. Increase difficulty by adding distance to the throws. See how far back they can go!
3. Partner passing
  1. Have players get a partner and line up across from their partner a medium distance to start (about 10 feet or so). Have players pass the ball (using bounce passes first!) to their partner and then back. When passing, teach them to step into the pass each time. The target should always be the receivers chest.
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    1. Splitting your team like this greatly increases the flow of the game. It allows players to have space to operate because it prevents every player from bunching up in one large clump. This will make the game much more enjoyable for both teams!

# Practice Lesson Plans

## Week 3:

1. Stationary dribbling
  1. There are multiple levels to this drill. The point of the drill is to increase ball control and to only use one hand. The goal is for players to be able to dribble continuously with one hand and while looking up at you.
    1. Starter Level: Have players bounce the ball with two hands. Teach them to “push” the ball, not “hit” it.
    2. Easy Level: have each player stand in a line in front of you. Start with the ball in their dominant hand. Try to get 5 dribbles in a row with only one hand. Increase the number gradually.
    3. Easy Level: Have each player use their off-hand. Start with 5 dribbles in a row and slowly increase the number.
    4. Medium Level: Have players switch hands while dribbling (called a “crossover”). Start with players dribbling the ball continuously. When you say “Switch!” they must crossover and keep dribbling.
    5. Medium Level: Have players alternate the height of their dribble. Start with the players dribbling the ball continuously. When you say “Kill it!”, they must squat down low and dribble really close to the ground. When you say “Bring it Back!” they can stand back up and dribble normal.
    6. Hard Level: Do all of the above... but make players look up at you and not look at the ball.
2. Dribbling in a straight line
  1. More than just dribbling, we are focusing on going straight. Have the kids line up on one side of the gym with their ball. Have them pick a target spot on the other side. Then have them dribble the ball, using only one hand, in a straight line to that spot. Then repeat the process with a new spot. You can get creative with this game by allowing players to pick whatever spot they want to go to themselves, or you can keep them all together and have them dribble to a spot you choose.
3. Dribbling in a square
  1. This is a hard drill for most younger players. Take it slow! This drill teaches change of direction with the ball, something you will have to demonstrate to most kids. Set up a square using cones. Players will dribble their ball from cone to cone, going on the outside of the cone, until they dribble in a full square. You can have more than one kid going at a time to help speed this up. Players can either stop moving at each cone and then change direction (easy level), or they can change direction while still moving (hard level). Try to dribble continuously! Add speed for an additional challenge.
4. Dribbling and then passing to a target
  1. This helps teach kids how to transition from dribbling to either passing or shooting in a fluid motion. Have the players all line up on one side of the gym with a ball. They will dribble their ball in a straight line until they get to a line you designate. Once they get to that line, they will immediately pass the ball towards a target. Encourage them to throw the ball hard in this drill!
5. Defensive positions
  1. Review the defensive positions and rules one more time before the game



# Practice Lesson Plans

## Week 4:

1. Sprints and running jumps
  1. The key here is to go FAST! Make a game of it by telling them to run when you say "go!"... and then try to trick them. :) Have them sprint from one side of the gym to the other. Mix it up by sprinting to specific places or lines.
  2. Add in another element: jumping on the run. This helps teach body control and coordination. Have them run to a specific line and then jump as far as they can.
2. Shooting skills
  1. Teach the basics:
    1. Both feet should be pointing their toes at the basket
    2. Feet should be pretty much square with each other (neither foot in front of the other)
    3. Both hands are on the ball. Younger players can shoot from their chest to get more power. Older players should shoot with the ball starting at their forehead.
    4. JUMP! Jumping gives more power to the shot.
3. Wall shots
  1. Have players line up about 5 feet away from a wall, facing the wall. Each player uses his or her own ball to take a shot at the wall. Remind them to pay attention to the correct form. Have them chase their rebounds and repeat the process.
4. Shooting from the spots
  1. This is a repeat of the wall shot drill, except now you are shooting at the basket. We want maximum participation, so rearrange the defensive spots into shooting spots. This enables multiple shooters to go at the same time. Once a player makes it from one spot, have them go to a new spot. Have everyone shoot at the same time... no waiting! Increase difficulty by moving the spots further away.
5. Rebounding drill
  1. Have the kids line up in their defensive positions (on the spots, in a 2-1-2 zone set-up). Throw the ball off of the backboard or rim at different angles, having kids run and jump to catch the rebound. This drill helps teach players to go after the rebound and not just stay in their defensive spot.

# Practice Lesson Plans

## Week 5:

6. Receiving skills
  1. Receiving the ball is all about hand-eye coordination. The key here is to teach kids to watch the ball all the way until they catch it. Most kids will get scared of the ball and will either flinch or close their eyes as it comes to them. To teach receiving skills, use a dodgeball! Have kids get a partner and line up across from each other, about 5-10 feet apart. Have them throw the ball, underhand, to their partner and back. If you see a player struggling, step in and toss the ball to him or her yourself, by getting on one knee in front of them. The key here is to teach them not to be afraid of the ball and to watch it all the way till it hits their hands. Increase difficulty by adding distance to the throws. See how far back they can go!
7. Partner passing
  1. Have players get a partner and line up across from their partner a medium distance to start (about 10 feet or so). Have players pass the ball (using bounce passes first!) to their partner and then back. When passing, teach them to step into the pass each time. The target should always be the receivers chest.
8. Moving partner passing
  1. This drill is more advanced: it's ok if you don't think your players will be able to do this one. Have players form two lines about ten feet apart on one side of the gym. The first two players in line will have one ball. Players will pass the ball IN FRONT of their partner, so that the partner receives the ball while moving forward. That partner will receive the ball and immediately pass it back to his or her partner, IN FRONT of them. Repeat the process with each pair.
9. Square passing
  1. Set up cones in a square (or another shape, depending on how many players you have). Have players pass the ball to other players in their shape. Initially, have them pass in the same rotation (i.e., clockwise). The next level would be to pass to any random person. If you want, you can help your players learn each other's names by making them call out who they are passing it to before they pass it.
10. Square passing with defense
  1. This builds off of the previous drill. Now we add in one or two players in the middle of the square to play defense. This is essentially the game, "keep-away". Make a rule that the defensive players can't steal the ball from the offense once the pass is received... the only steals allowed are during the actual pass itself. Don't let the defense get closer than 3 feet to any corner. Once the defense intercepts the ball, that player switches places with the person who passed it. This is a fun drill that teaches quick passing, control, and defensive spacing.

# Practice Lesson Plans

## Week 6:

1. Dribbling in a straight line
  1. More than just dribbling, we are focusing on going straight. Have the kids line up on one side of the gym with their ball. Have them pick a target spot on the other side. Then have them dribble the ball, using only one hand, in a straight line to that spot. Then repeat the process with a new spot. You can get creative with this game by allowing players to pick whatever spot they want to go to themselves, or you can keep them all together and have them dribble to a spot you choose.
2. Dribble and stop (Red Light, Green Light)
  1. This is a great game and drill combination. The game is simple: Have all players line up on one side of the gym with their ball. You stand on the far side of the gym. When you say "Green Light", players race towards you while dribbling their ball. When you say "Red Light", players must immediately stop running and freeze until you say "Green Light" again. Have fun with this by calling out random phrases like "Go" or "Purple Light", etc. If players move before you say, "Green Light", they must start over. If players don't stop immediately when you say, "Red Light", or if they lose control of their ball, they must start over. This teaches players to keep the ball under control.
3. Dribbling in a square
  1. This is a hard drill for most younger players. Take it slow! This drill teaches change of direction with the ball, something you will have to demonstrate to most kids. Set up a square using cones. Players will dribble their ball from cone to cone, going on the outside of the cone, until they dribble in a full square. You can have more than one kid going at a time to help speed this up. Players can either stop moving at each cone and then change direction (easy level), or they can change direction while still moving (hard level). Try to dribble continuously! Add speed for an additional challenge.
4. Dribble the minefield
  1. Set up a bunch of cones in a random formation in front of your players. Players will try to dribble through the "minefield" without touching a single cone with the ball OR their body. This teaches ball and body control in a fun way. Make the challenge harder or easier based on the number of cones you use and how far apart you space them.
5. Dribble follow the leader
  1. Play "Follow the Leader" with a basketball! Most kids can dribble fine in one direction. Having them try to follow you as you zig-zag, circle, and change speeds will stretch them in their skills! Plus, you are teaching them to watch two things at once: their ball AND the leader they are following.

# Practice Lesson Plans

## Week 7:

1. Dynamic movements
  1. Spend more time this week on the various dynamic movements so that your players are using their entire bodies, and not just the muscles needed for this sport. Examples to use are: Sprints, backwards jogging, sideways shuffle, two foot hops, one foot hops, high knees, butt-kicks, etc.
2. Passing Telephone game (Passing relay game)
  1. This is just like the game "Telephone", but instead of whispering in someone's ear, you are trying to pass the ball. You can set your players up in any shape you want: Straight line, circle, square, zig-zags, etc. Try out different shapes to make this more fun and/or challenging. You can either race against the clock (see if your players can beat their previous best time), or have two teams race each other. The idea is simple: The ball starts at one side of the line. The ball must be passed from one player to the next until it reaches the other end of the line.
3. Dribble and stop (Red Light, Green Light)
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4. Sharks and Minnows dribbling game
  1. Combine teams if possible so you can use the full court!
  2. This is a very fun game to play! Players all line up on one side of the gym with a ball. A couple of coaches stand in the center of the court. Players must dribble from one side of the court to the other when you yell "Go!", keeping control of their ball the whole time. If you steal their ball, they are frozen in place. Frozen players can help you steal other players balls next time you say, "Go"... but cannot move their spots. For safety reasons, make sure frozen people aren't moving around and that they don't touch offensive players! I recommend letting everyone successfully cross at least once before you begin stealing their ball. This teaches speed, awareness, and ball control.

# Practice Lesson Plans

## Week 8:

1. Dynamic movements
  1. Spend more time this week on the various dynamic movements so that your players are using their entire bodies, and not just the muscles needed for this sport. Examples to use are: Sprints, backwards jogging, sideways shuffle, two foot hops, one foot hops, high knees, butt-kicks, etc.
2. Passing Telephone game (Passing relay game)
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