

DEVELOP YOUR WEAK HAND

97% of us are born with what we refer to as a "dominant (strong) hand". It's the hand/arm we feel most comfortable using to carry out every-day tasks such as eating, writing, throwing a ball, etc. For some reason we just feel more comfortable using one particular side of our body.

The game of basketball requires the non-dominant hand of a player to be equal to his or her dominant hand when it comes to dribbling as well as finishing at the basket. A player makes use of only half of their capabilities if they only feel comfortable using the strong hand.



You might be a super athlete with a great shot and the ability to get to the basket, but if you can only use one hand to dribble and shoot layups, you will be very predictable, and against good competition you will flounder. Any basketball player with a high IQ will quickly be able to determine your dominant hand and defensively drive you to your weaker side. If you have a weak hand you are operating at half capacity and you're cheating yourself if you really want to become the best you can be. You have to force the issue and be proactive about using your weak hand.

One of the most common things that stand in the way of a basketball player reaching their maximum potential with their weak hand is they become too content using their dominant hand. For elite players it is necessary to strengthen both hands and let them contribute equally to the game.

3 common areas I like to focus on when developing the weak hand.

1. Dribbling. Not just stationary with your head down. You need to be able to dribble with your head up on the run with both hands.
2. Passing. In developing your weak hand you must include weak hand passing.
3. Layups. You need to feel comfortable driving to the basket on the weak side and shooting a layup with your weak hand.

Here are some effective drills we use in our HOOPZONE camps that you can use to master your weak hand. Do these for at least 30 minutes a day.

2 BALL DRIBBLE:

Get two basketballs and put one in each hand. Bend your knees and get into a good dribble stance and do the following 6 drills.

1. Dribble both balls together at waist height.
2. Dribble both balls low to floor, below knees.
3. Dribble both ball shoulder height.
4. Dribble (pound) both balls very hard to waist level.
5. Dribble both balls like pistons in an engine; one ball is down while the other is up, and vice versa.
6. Dribble both balls, one as high as you can with the other low to the floor.

WEAK HAND TENNIS BALL JUGGLE:

Put a tennis ball in your strong hand and basketball in your weak hand. Start walking and dribble the basketball while you toss the tennis ball up and down to yourself. Keep your head and eyes up. As you become better begin tossing tennis ball higher. It's a little challenging at first, start slow and then speed up as you get better at it.

WEAK HAND V DRIBBLE DRILL:

To begin a Front V Dribble, the player stands straight and dribbles from the weak hand to the strong and back again, forming a V in front of them. Then dribble lower and faster for a machine gun V dribble. Next use the weak hand to do a one-handed front V dribble. The drill can also be performed behind the back or off to weak side going front to back.

DEVELOP YOUR WEAK HAND continued**WEAK HAND FULL-COURT DRILL:**

You must always include movement when developing your weak hand. In this drill the player dribbles up the court with their weak hand, stopping at free throw lines and half-court line making three hard dribbles with the weak hand at these 3 lines. Always finish the drill with a weak hand layup. Turn around and repeat back down the floor. Don't rush this drill the focus remains on strengthening the weak hand and not how fast you go. As you become more efficient then speed it up.

WEAK HAND PASSING DRILL:

Just like developing your weak hand drill you must develop your weak hand pass. You need 2 players, about 8' apart, for this drill. If you don't have 2 players, one player can perform this drill against a wall. Begin with players putting the strong hand behind their backs and pass the ball to each other's weak hand.

WEAK HAND LAYUP DRILL:

This is a great drill for development. This drill involves driving to the basket with your weak hand and making a layup. Perform this drill from both sides of the basket. I would advise you to practice this drill lots, with your weak hand until you are confident with driving to the basket with your off hand.

WEAK HAND LAYUP ATTACKS:

It's one thing to be able to dribble with the weak hand it's entirely another thing to be able to dribble hard and aggressive finish at the basket. Start at the point or wing position and develop your drive to the basket using your STRONG hand. Now you should be able to repeat this drive with your weak hand on other side. Do it until it feels just as natural as the strong hand.

Developing your weak hand takes time. It's not hard if you take it slow and be persistent and build. It will feel very strange at first if you're not use to it but if you stick with it and practice, practice, practice it will start to feel natural over time.

Bottom line is any drill you do with your strong hand you must begin doing with your weak.

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