

# Wheelchair Basketball Skills: Beginner

The basic skills of wheelchair basketball are almost identical to those of the running game of basketball. The major skills differences between the two sports include:

## MASTERY OF THE WHEELCHAIR (HANDLING)

Because there is no lateral movement possible in wheelchair basketball, there is an emphasis on learning to pivot in the wheelchair and to accelerate quickly.

### Chair Skills:

- Balance position
- Pushing Forward
- 1<sup>st</sup> Two Pushes
- Next 3 pushes
- Turning
- Backwards pushing
- 45 degree angles

### Chair Skills/Movement:

- How to push a Wheelchair (Hands, head, shoulders, body)
- Push the D
- Forward 2 - 5 powers 5 & up quickness
- Backward wheeling
- Turning - Push right left
- Angle 45 90 60
- Fitness - How long you keep your speed
- The inside wheel
- Change of direction to 45
- Control

## DRIBBLING

Because the dribble is combined with pushing the chair in wheelchair basketball, there is sometimes a need to focus on mobility while holding the ball on the lap, rather than on mobility while dribbling the ball as in the running game. In wheelchair basketball there is no double dribble ruling. Instead a player may be assessed a violation if the player take 3 pushes of the wheelchair without dribbling, passing or shooting the ball. The distance a player coasts between pushes is not restricted.

## PICKING UP A LOOSE BALL

Because the ball falls to the floor often in wheelchair basketball, players must learn a technique for picking up a loose ball from the floor. The player wheels up beside the ball and leans toward the ball. The player then presses the ball against the wheel or rim of the chair and allows the forward motion of the wheel to lift the ball up and toward his/her lap, where it is easy to grasp and take possession.

**The following skills are fundamental to play wheelchair basketball:**

## INDIVIDUAL SKILLS WITHOUT THE BALL

In wheelchair basketball starting and stopping in the wheelchair, pivoting the chair and wheeling straight and in curved paths are key skills to be learned by all players.

## INDIVIDUAL SKILLS WITH THE BALL

Passing and catching – a hook pass is very effective in the game of wheelchair basketball  
Dribbling - combining the dribble with putting the ball on the lap and pushing the wheelchair  
Picking up the ball off the floor as described above  
Shooting (set shot and lay-up)

### Lay up progressions:

- In the key; two pushes; use a 45 angle, grab an angle and square your shoulders to the hoop

### Tips for High Speed Lay-ups:

- The faster you can make a lay-up in practice, the more game-like it is
- You will be moving at a high speed with most lay-ups
- Grab your angle as early as you can
- Put the ball up as high and as softly as you can on the back board
- If off balance and you can't shoot a quality lay-up, try to pass the ball off to another player
- When receiving a pass late, you will often use an underhand lay-up – these should be done with both a left and a right hand and from all angles

### Range – Shooting:

- Always shoot within your range
- Begin in close and move out
- Work to improve your range – it provides you with more shooting opportunities
- Shots inside the key (“9”), should often be shot using the back board
- Put it high up on the back board and try to make it swish through the hoop – this gives you more chance for success
- Most shots can be taken 15 ft and closer

## **BASIC OFFENSIVE SKILLS**

**Setting and using picks and screens - A screen or "pick" occurs when an offensive player attempts to block, or "screen", a defensive player away from the man he is guarding with their wheelchair, thereby freeing up that offensive player for an open shot or pass.**

**Give and Go: An offensive maneuver in which a player passes to a teammate, then moves quickly past his or her defender to receive a return pass and shoot a lay-up.**

### **Getting open to receive a pass - Work Early:**

This is a strategy that can be very useful in wheelchair basketball. If you work before your position is ready, you can create advantages that they can't recover from.

### **Be Ready to Shoot (Be Set):**

If you can square yourself to the hoop (ie shoulders facing the basket), and be ready to shoot before you receive a pass, it gives you a better change of success on your shot attempt as this: allows you to get the shot away quicker; allows you to adjust to a bad pass; eliminates the need to square up after receiving the pass; allows you to focus on the shooting target.

## **BASIC DEFENSIVE SKILLS**

### **Basic Defending**

- Keep chair at an angle when playing defence (45 degrees is often the best angle)
- Do not reach on defence until in great defensive position

### **Defending against the set shot and lay-up**

- Box a player out by using your chair to make contact with the opposition chair and hold your position while the ball is in the air
- “Box Out” and get a hand up on the shooter; Keep your hands on the wheels until a pass or a shot is taken; steal the ball when they try to pass the ball and get a hand on it

### **Defending against picks and screens**

- Move under all picks, not over top and spine back in (communication is key)

Players can attempt to steal the ball of an opponents lap as long as there is not contact made with the player.