



Age Group Skills Guide

Summer Season 2025-2026

OCEAN GROVE BREAKERS COACH USER GUIDE

How Coaches Should Use This Guide

This guide is designed to support coaches in developing well-rounded players across all age groups within the Ocean Grove Breakers program. It is not intended to be followed rigidly, but rather used as a flexible framework to guide training, decision-making, and player development.

Coaching Philosophy

At Ocean Grove Breakers, we prioritise long-term player development over short-term results.

Coaches are expected to:

- Develop players before systems
- Teach decision-making, not just drills
- Prioritise effort, teamwork, and communication
- Create a positive, supportive learning environment
- Use guided questioning over constant instruction
- Focus on confidence, not fear of mistakes

Skill Priority by Age Group

U9-10: Fun, confidence, engagement, basic dribbling/passing, layups

U12: Decision-making, weak hand, passing on the move, defense

U14: Playing under pressure, finishing, reading the game, spacing

U16-18: Tactical understanding, leadership, communication, roles

Expectation vs Exposure

Core Skills - Must teach

Exposure Skills - Introduce when ready

Advanced Concepts - Optional for stronger teams

What "Good" Looks Like

- Eyes up dribbling
- Controlled pivot + pass
- Correct layup footwork
- Jump stops without travelling
- Defensive stance + movement
- Communication

Coaching Different Ability Levels

Developing: repetition, simple games

Intermediate: decision-making + pressure

Advanced: game speed + tactics

Session Design Principles

- Maximise touches
- Avoid long lines
- Add decision-making
- Keep players moving
- Finish with game play

Game Day Coaching

- 1-2 teaching points only
- Reward decisions, not just scoring
- Track effort (talk, hustle, rebounds)

Using Team Concepts

Introduce simply. Do not over-coach. Never replace skill development.

Communication with Players & Parents

- Development includes mistakes
- Players develop at different rates
- Effort and growth matter most

Coach Reflection (Every 4 Weeks)

- What improved?
- What needs work?
- Who needs support?
- What's next?

Bottom Line

Keep it simple. Keep it fun. Keep it game-relevant. Focus on development.

***If you have any questions, please reach out to us-
development@oceangrovebreakers.com.au***

Age Group: Under 9-10

Objective: Introduce fundamental skills and basic game understanding with a focus on fun and participation.

Expected Skills:

1. Ball Handling:

- Basic dribbling with both hands.
- Introduction to change of direction and control under minimal pressure.
- Stationary ball-handling drills focusing on coordination.

2. Passing:

- Chest pass and bounce pass with an emphasis on accuracy.
- Understanding the importance of passing to a teammate's chest area.
- Introduction to catching passes and pivoting.

3. Shooting:

- Proper shooting technique (grip, stance, follow-through).
- Introduction to layups with a focus on the dominant hand and footwork.
- Shooting close to the basket with an emphasis on form.

4. Defense:

- Basic defensive stance (low, balanced, and on the balls of feet).
- Staying in front of the offensive player.
- Understanding the concept of man-to-man defense.

5. Footwork:

- Pivoting and stopping with control (jump stops).
- Basic movement drills to improve coordination and balance.
- Introduction to running without the ball (off-ball movement).

6. Game Understanding:

- Basic rules of the game (double dribbling, traveling).
- Understanding court layout and positions.
- Emphasis on teamwork and sportsmanship.

OG Breakers - 4-Week Progressive Training Plans (45-Minute Sessions)

Under 9-10 – 4-Week Progressive Plan (45 mins)

Goal: Build enjoyment, confidence, and coordination through fun, simple activities.

Session Structure: Warm-up & Games (5 mins) → Skill Focus 1 (10 mins) → Skill Focus 2 (10 mins) → Mini Game (10 mins) → Scrimmage / Cool-down (10 mins)

Block	Focus	Key Drills	Notes
1 (2-4 weeks)	Ball Control & Confidence	Dribble races (cones + zig-zag) “Freeze Dribble” game Partner passing (chest & bounce)	Keep everyone moving – short turns, lots of reps.
2 (2-4 weeks)	Footwork & Shooting Basics	Jump stops & pivots Layup lines (dominant hand) Spot shooting close to ring	Emphasize correct form, not power or distance.
3 (2-4 weeks)	Team Play & Spacing	Pass & move in pairs “3-pass before shoot” Defensive stance races	Introduce teamwork through simple repetition.
4 (2-4 weeks)	Mini Games & Celebration	King/Queen of the Court Knockout 3-on-3 scrimmage	End with fun, teamwork, and celebration.

Coach Key Points:

- Keep energy high and instructions simple.
- Prioritise fun, fairness, and friendship.
- Praise effort, not results – celebrate small wins.
- Encourage eyes up and basic teamwork every session.
- Keep transitions quick – no one stands still for long.

Age Group: Under 12

Objective: Build on fundamental skills with more game-related practice, introducing teamwork and basic strategies.

Expected Skills:

- 1. Ball Handling:**
 - Dribbling with head up and under light defensive pressure.
 - Introduction to basic crossover and hesitation moves.
 - Dribbling with both hands in transition.
- 2. Passing:**
 - Passing while moving, with a focus on timing and accuracy.
 - Introduction to the overhead pass.
 - Receiving passes and pivoting into a triple-threat position.
- 3. Shooting:**
 - Layups with both dominant and non-dominant hands.
 - Shooting from short distance with proper form.
 - Understanding of shot selection and positioning for rebounds.
- 4. Defense:**
 - Improved on-ball defense, focusing on staying in front of the offensive player.
 - Introduction to help defense principles.
 - Basic understanding of defensive spacing.
- 5. Footwork:**
 - Advanced pivoting (front and reverse pivots).
 - Basic agility and quickness drills.
 - Introduction to using footwork for defense (defensive slides).
- 6. Game Understanding:**
 - Understanding team roles and basic offensive spacing.
 - Introduction to simple plays (give-and-go, basic pick-and-roll).
 - Emphasis on communication and teamwork on the court.
 - Full court press & Press breaking
 - Introduction to sideline out of bounds (SLOB) plays and baseline out of bounds (BLOB) plays

Under 12 – 4-Week Progressive Plan (45 mins)

Goal: Strengthen fundamentals while adding teamwork and basic decision-making.

Session Structure: Dynamic Warm-up (5 mins) → Skill Block 1 (10 mins) → Skill Block 2 (10 mins) → Applied Game Drill (10 mins) → Scrimmage / Review (10 mins)

Block	Focus	Key Drills	Notes
1 (2-4 weeks)	Dribbling Under Light Pressure	Cone weave with crossover Red light/green light 1-on-1 control games	Emphasize composure and body control.
2 (2-4 weeks)	Passing & Spacing	3-man weave Give-and-go Pass-and-cut drill	Build habits of communication and spacing.
3 (2-4 weeks)	Finishing & Weak-Hand Use	Weak-hand layups Pad contact finishes 2-on-1 transition	Track left-hand finishes — reward improvement.
4 (2-4 weeks)	Defense & Team Play	4-on-4 shell defense Closeout + slide Controlled scrimmage	Reinforce stance, talk, and rotation.

Coach Key Points:

- Begin encouraging game awareness and self-correction.
- Reward players who communicate and hustle.
- Keep games small-sided to maximize touches.
- Balance teaching moments with fast, game-like tempo.
- Introduce personal goal setting ('one thing I'll improve this week').

Age Group: Under 14

Objective: Develop intermediate skills with a focus on competitive play and understanding game strategies.

Expected Skills:

1. Ball Handling:

- Mastery of basic dribbling moves under pressure.
- Introduction to combination moves (crossover to between the legs).
- Ability to handle the ball in game situations, including full-court pressure.

2. Passing:

- Advanced passing techniques, including bounce passes and overhead passes in game situations.
- Introduction to passing out of traps and double teams.
- Improved understanding of passing angles.

3. Shooting:

- Consistent shooting form from mid-range.
- Shooting off the dribble and in catch-and-shoot scenarios.
- Focus on layups in traffic and finishing through contact.

4. Defense:

- Understanding and applying defensive principles, including help-side defense.
- Introduction to basic zone defense concepts.
- Improved rebounding techniques, including boxing out.

5. Footwork:

- Advanced footwork drills, including jab steps and rip-throughs.
- Defensive footwork for closing out and staying with faster players.
- Introduction to post moves for taller players.

6. Game Understanding:

- Understanding of team offense and defense, including set plays.
- Emphasis on basketball IQ, including reading the defense and making quick decisions.
- Introduction to game tactics, including time management and clock awareness.
- Full court press & Press breaking
- Sideline out of bounds (SLOB) plays and baseline out of bounds (BLOB) plays

Under 14 – 4-Week Progressive Plan (45 mins)

Goal: Develop adaptable players who can read the game and make smart decisions.

Session Structure: Dynamic Warm-up (5 mins) → Skill Focus (10 mins) → Tactical Focus (10 mins) → Applied Drill (10 mins) → Scrimmage (10 mins)

Block	Focus	Key Drills	Notes
1 (2-4 weeks)	Ball Control & Combinations	Crossover → between-legs combos Pressure dribbling Drive & kick pairs	Push tempo with timed challenges.
2 (2-4 weeks)	Passing Under Pressure	Pass out of traps Fast-break 3-lane Outlet to layup	Emphasize communication and angles.
3 (2-4 weeks)	Shooting Consistency	Catch & shoot (5 spots) Shot-fake & pull-up Game-speed layups	Focus on footwork + quick balance reset.
4 (2-4 weeks)	Team Systems & IQ	Motion principles Pick-and-roll reads Situational scrimmage	Teach through guided questioning, not correction.

Coach Key Points:

- Encourage 'next play' mindset – no dwelling on mistakes.
- Reinforce spacing, timing, and teamwork over isolation.
- Teach cause and effect ('why did that pass work?').
- Introduce leadership roles – captains lead warm-up.
- Keep games competitive, not punitive.

Age Group: Under 16

Objective: Refine skills with an emphasis on preparing for higher levels of competition.

Expected Skills:

- 1. Ball Handling:**
 - Advanced ball-handling skills, including moves to create space.
 - Ability to handle full-court pressure and break down defenses.
 - Understanding of change of pace and tempo control.
- 2. Passing:**
 - High-level passing accuracy, including no-look and one-handed passes.
 - Ability to pass in various situations (off the dribble, out of traps).
 - Understanding of passing to create scoring opportunities.
- 3. Shooting:**
 - Consistent shooting from mid-range and three-point range.
 - Ability to shoot in various situations (off screens, step-backs).
 - Focus on free-throw shooting and scoring under pressure.
- 4. Defense:**
 - Ability to guard multiple positions with focus on team defense.
 - Advanced understanding of defensive schemes (switching, trapping).
 - Strong rebounding and boxing out techniques.
- 5. Footwork:**
 - Mastery of all footwork aspects, including advanced post moves.
 - Ability to use footwork to create offensive opportunities.
 - Defensive footwork for staying with quick guards and big men.
- 6. Game Understanding:**
 - Deep understanding of offensive and defensive strategies.
 - Ability to execute complex plays and adapt to different opponents.
 - Leadership and communication on the court.

Under 16 – 4-Week Progressive Plan (45 mins)

Goal: Prepare players for representative and senior-level competition.

Session Structure: Warm-up (5 mins) → Skill Block 1 (10 mins) → Skill Block 2 (10 mins) → Tactical Concept (10 mins) → Scrimmage / Reflection (10 mins)

Block	Focus	Key Drills	Notes
1 (2-4 weeks)	Pressure & Tempo Control	Full-court dribble pressure Trap escape & outlet Controlled 2-on-2 transition	Develop calmness under pressure.
2 (2-4 weeks)	Scoring Variety	Finishing through contact Step-backs & pull-ups Free-throws under fatigue	Reinforce shot selection, not volume.
3 (2-4 weeks)	Defensive Systems	5-on-5 shell rotation Closeout + recover Rebound to fast break	Demand communication and trust.
4 (2-4 weeks)	Leadership & Game IQ	Scenario play ('up 1, 20 sec') Player-led scrimmage Team debrief	Encourage self-led reflection and feedback.

Coach Key Points:

- Promote accountability – 'we, not me.'
- Integrate quick decision-making drills every session.
- Reinforce communication as a skill, not a request.
- Encourage peer feedback – player-to-player coaching.
- Track progress (FG%, turnovers, stops) visually.

Age Group: Under 18

Objective: Prepare players for senior basketball or representative competition with a focus on high-level skills and decision-making.

Expected Skills:

1. Ball Handling:

- Elite-level ball-handling under intense defensive pressure.
- Ability to create scoring opportunities for self and teammates.
- Mastery of change of pace and tempo control in games.

2. Passing:

- Precision passing in all game situations.
- Ability to lead a team as a primary playmaker.
- Understanding of passing angles and timing to beat defenses.

3. Shooting:

- High-level shooting accuracy from all areas of the court.
- Ability to score in isolation and under defensive pressure.
- Clutch shooting in late-game situations.

4. Defense:

- Versatility to guard any position effectively.
- Mastery of team defensive concepts, including rotations and closeouts.
- Strong leadership in organizing team defense.

5. Footwork:

- Elite footwork in all aspects, including offensive and defensive maneuvers.
- Ability to use footwork to gain and maintain positional advantage.
- Proficiency in advanced post and perimeter moves.

6. Game Understanding:

- Comprehensive understanding of the game, including advanced tactics and strategies.
- Ability to lead a team with strong decision-making and communication.
- Adaptability to different styles of play and game situations.

Under 18 – 4-Week Progressive Plan (45 mins)

Goal: Transition players to senior basketball with tactical understanding and leadership.

Session Structure: Warm-up (5 mins) → Skill Refinement (10 mins) → Advanced Concept (10 mins) → Situational Play (10 mins) → Scrimmage / Review (10 mins)

Block	Focus	Key Drills	Notes
1 (2-4 weeks)	Elite Ball Handling & Creation	Read & react drill Tight-space handling 1-on-1 creation	Record clips for self-review.
2 (2-4 weeks)	Spacing & Offensive Flow	Drive & dish Screen-read options 4-out 1-in motion	Focus on decision speed, not pace.
3 (2-4 weeks)	Defensive Identity	Switch & communicate Scramble recoveries Transition defense	Identify vocal leaders in every drill.
4 (2-4 weeks)	Execution & Leadership	Late-game scenarios Player-coach scrimmage Team-led reflection	Players lead post-game review.

Coach Key Points:

- Coach less, facilitate more – empower leaders.
- Focus on game reads and collective problem-solving.
- Demand high effort every rep – model senior expectations.
- Use video or stat feedback weekly.
- Finish each session with leadership reflection ('Who led today?').

