

BREAKOUT BASKETBALL

MIDDLE SCHOOL PLAYER HOMEWORK

THE DOWNHILL ADVANTAGE

7 DAYS • 45 MINUTES PER DAY

This week's focus: Going fast downhill • Fast dribbling • Fast combos • Getting the defender on your hip • Bumping • Keeping the advantage

THE BIG IDEA

Getting past your defender is only step one. The goal is to create an advantage, get downhill FAST, protect that advantage, and turn it into a quality finish or decision.

Every day has 45 minutes. Work at game speed. Film study should be real possessions—not just highlights.

WEEKLY STANDARD

- Go fast downhill. Speed is a skill—not just something you use when you race.
- Practice both straight-line speed dribbling and fast combos that lead directly downhill.
- Get your shoulder past the defender's hip.
- Keep your body between the defender and the ball.
- Use controlled contact—not wild or unnecessary contact.
- Don't give the advantage back by slowing down for no reason.

MONDAY — CREATE THE ADVANTAGE

Film Study Player: Jalen Brunson

10 MIN — BALL HANDLING

- 2 min: Pound dribbles — right hand
- 2 min: Pound dribbles — left hand
- 2 min: Cross → attack
- 2 min: Between → attack
- 2 min: Retreat → re-attack

15 MIN — DOWNHILL ATTACK

- 5 min: Wing attack — 5 reps each side. First 2 steps must be explosive.
- 5 min: Change of direction → downhill. Attack the defender's outside hip.
- 5 min: Start slow → burst. Practice changing speeds before getting downhill.

10 MIN — ADVANTAGE CHALLENGE

- Imagine a defender is square. Your job is to get one shoulder past them.
- Once your shoulder is past the defender, keep your body between them and the ball.
- Do 10 right-side attacks and 10 left-side attacks.

10 MIN — FILM STUDY

- Watch 3–5 Brunson possessions where he attacks off the dribble.
- What does he do before he gets downhill?
- How does he get the defender leaning or moving?
- When does he change speeds?
- Find one possession where he creates the advantage. Explain what caused it.

Notes:

TODAY'S TAKEAWAY:

TUESDAY — GET ON THE HIP

Film Study Player: Shai Gilgeous-Alexander

10 MIN — BALL HANDLING

- 2 min: Low pounds
- 2 min: Crossovers with a burst
- 2 min: In-and-out → burst
- 2 min: Hesitation → burst
- 2 min: Combo of your choice → downhill

15 MIN — HIP ATTACK

- 5 min: Attack from the wing and imagine the defender is sliding with you.
- Your goal: get your shoulder next to the defender's hip.
- 5 min: Attack → shoulder past hip → two more hard dribbles.
- 5 min: Repeat on both sides while keeping your chest and eyes toward the rim.

10 MIN — KEEP THE LINE

- 10 reps each side: Once you get on the hip, imagine the defender trying to cut you off.
- Stay on your driving line without drifting away from the basket.
- Finish with your inside/outside hand depending on the imagined defender.

10 MIN — FILM STUDY

- Watch 3–5 SGA downhill possessions.
- How does he get the defender on his hip?
- What does his body look like once he has the advantage?
- How does he prevent the defender from getting back in front?
- Find one possession where he stayed patient while keeping the advantage.

Notes:

TODAY'S TAKEAWAY:

WEDNESDAY — USE YOUR BODY

Film Study Player: De'Aaron Fox

10 MIN — BALL HANDLING

- 2 min: Right-hand speed dribble
- 2 min: Left-hand speed dribble
- 2 min: Cross → speed
- 2 min: Between → speed
- 2 min: Hesitation → speed

15 MIN — BUMP & GO

- 5 min: Attack downhill and imagine the defender is on your hip.
- Give a controlled shoulder/hip bump, then continue toward the rim.

- Do not stop your feet after contact.
- Alternate sides every rep.

10 MIN — CONTACT FINISHES

- 5 reps each side: Attack → controlled bump → finish.
- 5 reps each side: Attack → bump → gather → finish.
- Focus on balance. Contact should not knock you off your line.

10 MIN — FILM STUDY

- Watch 3–5 Fox downhill possessions.
- When does he use contact?
- How does he keep his speed after contact?
- What does he do when the defender is beside him?
- What can you copy about his pace without simply trying to run faster?

Notes:

TODAY'S TAKEAWAY:

THURSDAY — KEEP THE ADVANTAGE

Film Study Player: Jayson Tatum

10 MIN — BALL HANDLING

- 2 min: Pound → cross
- 2 min: Pound → between
- 2 min: In-and-out → cross
- 2 min: Hesitation → cross
- 2 min: Combo → downhill

15 MIN — DEFENDER RECOVERY

- Imagine you beat the defender but they are still on your hip.
- 5 min: Attack → get ahead → protect the ball.
- 5 min: Attack → defender recovers → counter without stopping.
- 5 min: Attack → defender reaches → keep the advantage and finish.

10 MIN — DON'T GIVE IT BACK

- Do 10 reps each side.
- After beating the imaginary defender, take away their path back to the ball.
- Your challenge: no unnecessary retreat dribble after you gain the advantage.

10 MIN — FILM STUDY

- Watch 3–5 Tatum drives.
- When he gets past the defender, what prevents the defender from recovering?
- How does he use his size and body?
- When does he slow down without actually losing the advantage?
- Find one possession where he kept control instead of forcing the finish.

Notes:

TODAY'S TAKEAWAY:

FRIDAY — SPEED + CHANGE OF PACE

Film Study Player: Anthony Edwards

10 MIN — BALL HANDLING

- 2 min: Fast pound
- 2 min: Slow-to-fast crossover
- 2 min: Slow-to-fast between
- 2 min: Hesitation → burst
- 2 min: Retreat → explosive re-attack

15 MIN — CHANGE OF SPEED

- 5 min: Walk/slow dribble → explosive first two steps.
- 5 min: Attack fast → brief change of pace → burst again.
- 5 min: Start slow enough to make the imaginary defender relax, then explode.

10 MIN — ADVANTAGE RACE

- 10 reps each side.
- Pretend the defender is beside you.
- Your first goal is to win the hip. Your second goal is to stay ahead.
- Finish every rep with a decisive action.

10 MIN — FILM STUDY

- Watch 3–5 Edwards drives.
- Where does he use speed?
- Where does he change pace?
- How does he use his body when the defender is beside him?
- Does he always attack at maximum speed? Give one example.

Notes:

TODAY'S TAKEAWAY:

SATURDAY — READ THE HELP

Film Study Player: Luka Dončić

10 MIN — BALL HANDLING

- 2 min: Controlled pounds
- 2 min: Hesitation
- 2 min: Cross → hesitation
- 2 min: Between → hesitation
- 2 min: Retreat → re-attack

15 MIN — DRIVE + READ

- 5 min: Attack downhill and imagine one defender on your hip.
- 5 min: Imagine a second defender stepping over. Decide: finish or pass.
- 5 min: Attack → keep the hip advantage → make your imagined read.

10 MIN — 3-DECISION GAME

- Complete 15 reps each side.

- Before each rep, randomly choose: FINISH, COUNTER, or PASS.
- The goal is to make the decision while keeping your advantage.

10 MIN — FILM STUDY

- Watch 3–5 Luka downhill possessions.
- When does he attack the defender's hip instead of the rim?
- How does he react when help comes?
- How does he use pace to keep defenders from recovering?
- Find one possession where the advantage led to a pass instead of a shot.

Notes:

TODAY'S TAKEAWAY:

SUNDAY — PLAYER'S CHOICE — SHOW WHAT YOU LEARNED

Film Study Player: Choose one player you want to study

10 MIN — BALL HANDLING TEST

- 2 min: Your favorite right-hand combo
- 2 min: Your favorite left-hand combo
- 2 min: Cross → downhill
- 2 min: Hesitation → downhill
- 2 min: Free choice
- SPEED TEST: 5 straight-line right-hand attacks + 5 left-hand attacks. Try to cover ground while keeping the ball under control.

15 MIN — DOWNHILL TEST

- 5 min: Create the advantage — 5 reps each side.
- 5 min: Get on the hip and keep it — 5 reps each side.
- 5 min: Bump → keep going → finish — 5 reps each side.

10 MIN — ADVANTAGE DECISION TEST

- Complete 10 reps each side.
- Each rep must include one decision: FINISH, COUNTER, or PASS.
- You don't get credit for simply getting past the defender. You must keep the advantage.

10 MIN — FINAL FILM STUDY

- Choose a player who is excellent at attacking downhill.
- Find 5 possessions.
- Write down the ONE thing you want to steal from their game.
- Explain how you will use it in your next Breakout session.

Notes:

END-OF-WEEK REFLECTION

Answer these after completing all 7 days.

1. What is the biggest difference between getting past a defender and keeping the advantage?

2. What do you personally do that gives the advantage back to the defender?

3. Which player's downhill game taught you the most? Why?

4. What is one thing you are going to apply in your next Breakout session?

PLAYER CHECKLIST

- ☐ Monday completed
- ☐ Tuesday completed
- ☐ Wednesday completed
- ☐ Thursday completed
- ☐ Friday completed
- ☐ Saturday completed
- ☐ Sunday completed
- ☐ I watched real possessions—not just highlights.
- ☐ I worked at game speed.
- ☐ I can explain how to create AND keep a downhill advantage.