

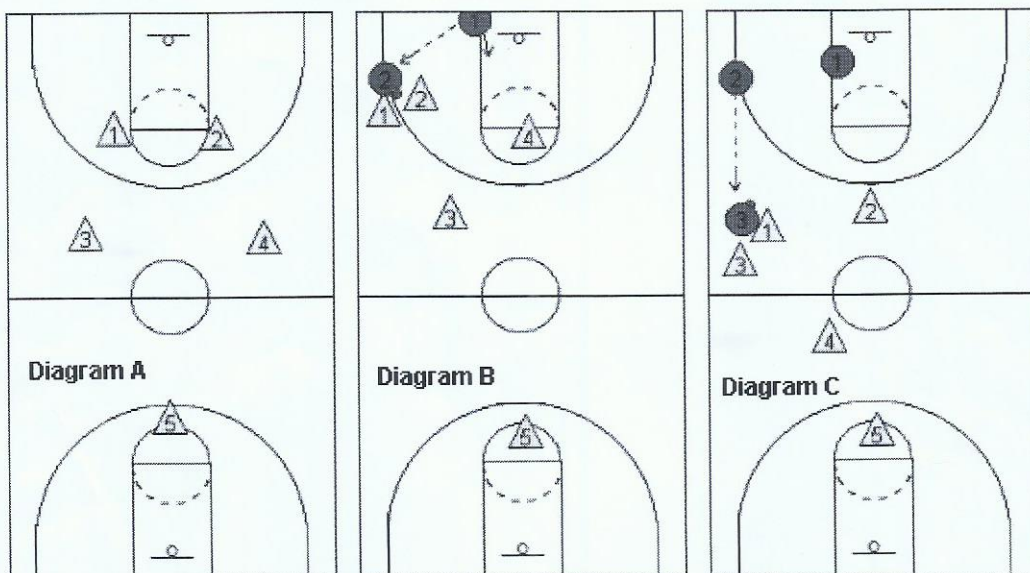
Basketball Defense - 2-2-1 Zone Press

Set up the 2-2-1 zone press like this (see Diagram A). Have two players set at both ends of the free throw line. Two other defenders should be positioned just inside the half-court line, and the fifth player plays "prevent".

The in-bounds pass is not contested or guarded. Do not allow a pass in the middle of the floor. The defenders X1 and X2 should allow the pass to a receiver near the corner. They should wait until the ball-handler commits and starts dribbling. Once the dribble is started, they should attack and trap him/her near the sideline (Diagram B). The other two defenders then position themselves in the passing lanes to other would-be receivers and look for the interception. The X5 defender should only come up if he/she has a clear-cut interception.

If the ball gets part way up the sideline, the mid-court defender (X3 or X4) should stop the penetration along the sideline, and trap the ball-handler along with the guard from that side (X1 or X2). Now the opposite guard and mid-court defenders play the passing lanes (see Diagram C).

Allow a backward, retreating pass, as the 10-second rule is in your favor. If the ball moves to the opposite side, the traps and zones are set on that side the same as described above, only with the opposite defenders positioned as above. The defenders should never let the ball get ahead of them on the court. If that happens, they must sprint down-court quickly to recover. Once the press is broken, or the offense crosses mid-court, all defenders not on the ball should sprint back to the paint to protect basket (unless there is an easy trap in the sideline, mid-court line corner). The on-ball defender should stay on the ball and stop dribble penetration.



There are variations and adjustments to this basic zone, depending on how the offense uses their point guard... i.e. whether he/she tries to receive the in-bounds pass, or make the in-bounds pass and then receive the ball right back.