

Basketball Motion Offense

A motion offense is a flexible offense that utilizes player movement, correct floor spacing, passing and cutting, and setting screens. The origin of "motion offense" is usually credited to coach Henry Iba at Oklahoma State. It was further developed and popularized by coach Bob Knight at Indiana, who utilized screening as a key part of the offense. Rather than running set plays (which can also be run in the motion offense), players move within a basic set of rules. This allows for greater flexibility than just running set plays, and will usually be effective against any kind of defense, whether man-to-man, zone or "junk" defenses. Players can move freely to open areas on the court. Once the basic concepts are learned, special patterns or plays can be designed by the coach to take advantage of his team's offensive strengths.

Motion offense can be run with almost any set. The 3-out, 2-in set described in this article features three perimeter players and two post players. This set provides good balance between the perimeter game and strong inside post play, with good offensive rebounding presence. Teams that are not blessed with true post players (and are more guard-oriented) would benefit by using either the 4-out, 1-in motion offense, or the 5-out open post motion offense. The now popular "dribble-drive motion offense" uses a 4-out set and very little screening. You can also use a 1-3-1 or a 1-4 set. For purposes of this discussion, I will use the 3 out, 2 in set which uses 3 perimeter players and 2 post players (see diagram A). Be sure to also take a look at our own mascot motion offense... a 3-out, 2-in motion offense that was key in our success in recent years, which included several trips to the state tournament (boys and girls).

If you have a very talented team with five players who can play any position, they can interchange or rotate into any of the five positions. If you have two dominant post players, or excellent perimeter players, then you will want to rotate a little differently. In the later case, have the two posts rotate with each other and the three perimeter players rotate in the three outside positions.

Always try to have your point guard O1 bring the ball up the floor and start the offense.

Make sure that whoever is at the O1 position when the shot is taken, stays back to prevent the opponent's fast break. The O3, O4, O5 positions go for the offensive rebound and the O2 position plays half-rebound and half-prevent mode.

Basic rules:

Spacing

Players should try to stay 12 to 15 feet apart. Avoid bunching up, which can result in double-teams, steals, interceptions, and turnovers.

