Coaching Wheelchair Basketball
Acknowledgements ............................................................................................................. 1

PART 1 – The Game of Wheelchair Basketball ........................................................................ 1

History of the Game ............................................................................................................. 1
Wheelchair Basketball in Australia ....................................................................................... 2

Part 2 - Wheelchair Basketball Rules .................................................................................... 4

Applying the Basketball Rules to a wheelchair ................................................................. 4

Court dimensions ................................................................................................................ 4
Out of Bounds ...................................................................................................................... 4
Contact on the Chair .......................................................................................................... 4

Modifications to the rules of Basketball .............................................................................. 4
Double Dribble .................................................................................................................... 4
Travel .................................................................................................................................... 4
Foul Shots and Three Point Shots ....................................................................................... 5
Lifting .................................................................................................................................... 5
Sideline and Baseline Out of Bounds .................................................................................. 5
Cutting out of bounds ......................................................................................................... 5

Principles of Contact in Wheelchair Basketball ................................................................. 5
Defending the Player Who Has The Ball ............................................................................. 5

If both players are MOVING: ........................................................................................... 5
When the player with the ball is STATIONARY: ............................................................... 5

Defending A Player Who Does Not Have The Ball ............................................................. 6

When both players are MOVING: .................................................................................... 6
When the player being guarded is STATIONARY: ........................................................... 6
When the defender MOVES after being STATIONARY: .................................................. 6

Screening: Basic position .................................................................................................... 6
Screening A Stationary Opponent ....................................................................................... 6
Screening A Moving Opponent .......................................................................................... 6

Classification in Wheelchair Basketball ............................................................................ 7

THE PROCESS OF CLASSIFICATION – HOW DO WE CLASSIFY? .................................... 7
FACTORS DETERMINING CLASSIFICATION .................................................................... 8

Volume of Action ................................................................................................................ 8
The Minimal Disability ....................................................................................................... 9
Do all competitions use classification?................................................................. 10
Points System and Game Style ........................................................................... 10
1: 1: 3: 4.5: 4.5 ................................................................................................. 10
1: 1.5: 3: 4.0: 4.5 ............................................................................................. 10
1: 2: 2: 4.5: 4.5 ............................................................................................... 11
1: 2: 3: 4.0: 4.0 ............................................................................................... 11
2: 2: 2: 4.0: 4.0 ............................................................................................... 11
1: 1: 4.0: 4.0: 4.0 ........................................................................................... 11
1: 2: 3: 3: 4.5 ................................................................................................. 11
Classification Cards .......................................................................................... 12
Part 3 - Chair Movement ..................................................................................... 13
Wheelchair Positioning ...................................................................................... 13
Forward Push .................................................................................................... 13
Backward Push .................................................................................................. 14
Stopping ............................................................................................................. 14
Turning ............................................................................................................... 14
Picking up the Ball ............................................................................................. 15
Bounce Stop ....................................................................................................... 16
Part 4 – Individual Skills - Shooting ................................................................. 17
The One Handed Shot: ..................................................................................... 17
Correcting Common Faults ............................................................................... 19
The One Handed Shot – ‘Jump Hook’ ............................................................... 19
The Two Handed Shot ....................................................................................... 20
The Keys to Successful Shooting ..................................................................... 21
Using the Backboard ......................................................................................... 21
Rhythm ............................................................................................................... 21
Psychological Factors ....................................................................................... 22
Concentration .................................................................................................. 22
Shot Selection .................................................................................................. 22
Confidence ........................................................................................................ 22
Adaptations for Smaller Players ...................................................................... 23
Part 5 – Individual Skills – Passing/Catching ................................................... 24
The Triple-Threat Position .............................................................................................................. 24
Passing ........................................................................................................................................... 25
The One Handed Push Pass ............................................................................................................ 26
The Two handed Chest Pass ........................................................................................................... 26
The Moving Chest Pass .................................................................................................................. 26
Baseball Pass .................................................................................................................................. 27
Hook Pass ....................................................................................................................................... 27
Two Handed Bounce Pass ............................................................................................................... 28
Catching ......................................................................................................................................... 28
Basic Techniques: .......................................................................................................................... 29
Part 6 – Individual Skills - Fakes .................................................................................................... 30
Part 7 – Individual Skills - The Layup ............................................................................................... 32
Overhand Layup ............................................................................................................................... 32
Underhand Layup ............................................................................................................................ 32
Part 8 - Team Offence ...................................................................................................................... 34
Transition Offence .......................................................................................................................... 34
Transition Offence After A Score ................................................................................................... 34
Half Court Offence .......................................................................................................................... 35
Traditional Half Court Alignments ................................................................................................. 36
3 Out, 2 In ....................................................................................................................................... 36
Part 9 – Defence ............................................................................................................................. 38
The Defensive Ready Position ......................................................................................................... 38
One on One Defence ....................................................................................................................... 38
Team Defence ................................................................................................................................... 38
Rebounding .................................................................................................................................... 39
Chair Position (Blocking Out) ......................................................................................................... 40
Part 10 – Fundamental Skills Checklist ........................................................................................... 41
Part 11 – Drills ................................................................................................................................ 48
Chair Movement Drills .................................................................................................................... 48
  • Hopscotch Drill ............................................................................................................................ 48
  • Explosive Pushing, .................................................................................................................... 48
• Relay Races .................................................................................................................. 48
• Line Drill .......................................................................................................................... 48
• Whistle drill ..................................................................................................................... 48
• Collision Drill .................................................................................................................. 48
• Go Stop Drill .................................................................................................................... 48
• Stop and Start Drill .......................................................................................................... 48

Passing Drills .................................................................................................................... 49

Ball Handling Drills ........................................................................................................... 52
• Ball Wraps ....................................................................................................................... 52
• Ball Familiarisation ......................................................................................................... 52
• Front Seesaw Drill .......................................................................................................... 52
• Arm Pretzel Drill ............................................................................................................. 52
• Spot Drill .......................................................................................................................... 52
• Dribble Knockout ............................................................................................................ 52
• Static Dribble Drill .......................................................................................................... 52
• Typewriter Drill ............................................................................................................... 52
• Two Ball Drill .................................................................................................................. 52
• Partner Drill ..................................................................................................................... 52
• Dribble Tag ...................................................................................................................... 52
• Dribble Knockout ............................................................................................................ 53
• Collision Drill .................................................................................................................. 53
• Speed-Control Dribble ................................................................................................... 53
• Relay Race ....................................................................................................................... 53
• Side to side Drill ............................................................................................................... 53
• Stationary Alternate Hands Drill .................................................................................... 53
• Pivot Drive Drill .............................................................................................................. 53

Team Offence Drills .......................................................................................................... 55

Basic 3 on 0 Spacing ......................................................................................................... 55
Pass and Replace ............................................................................................................... 55
Dribble Entry ..................................................................................................................... 56

Ball Screens ....................................................................................................................... 56
Wing Ball Screen.................................................................................................................. 56
Point Ball Screen.................................................................................................................. 57
Transition Drills.................................................................................................................... 57
  2 on 1 Full Court .............................................................................................................. 57
  2 Person Fast Break Drill .................................................................................................. 59
  2 Person Tag Drill ............................................................................................................ 59
Shooting Drills....................................................................................................................... 60
  X out Lay-up Drill .......................................................................................................... 60
Beat the Pro.......................................................................................................................... 61
Fives..................................................................................................................................... 61
Partner shooting series........................................................................................................ 62
In/Out Dribbling.................................................................................................................... 62
Dribble v Shooting relay ..................................................................................................... 62
Tennessee Drill ..................................................................................................................... 63
Defence Drills ...................................................................................................................... 64
  1 on 1 Shadow ............................................................................................................... 64
  2 on 2 Full Court .......................................................................................................... 64
  2 on 2 Full Court Variation.............................................................................................. 65
Rebounding .......................................................................................................................... 66
  1 on 1 Rebounding ........................................................................................................ 66
  1 on 1 Box Out ................................................................................................................ 66
Part 12 – Considerations Specific to Wheelchair Athletes ............................................. 67
  Accessibility ...................................................................................................................... 67
    • Transport .................................................................................................................. 67
    • Venues ....................................................................................................................... 67
    • Accommodation ........................................................................................................ 67
    • Eating places ............................................................................................................. 67
Time ....................................................................................................................................... 67
Athlete Recovery: .................................................................................................................. 67
  Some Do’s and Don’t’s ..................................................................................................... 67
Part 13 - Equipment ............................................................................................................. 69
Why do you need a Basketball Wheelchair? ................................................................. 69
Types of Basketball Wheelchairs ............................................................................. 69
  How Many Wheels - Three or Four? ................................................................. 69
  Frame Composition ............................................................................................... 70
  Rear Wheel Size .................................................................................................. 70
  Rear Wheel Mounts ............................................................................................... 70
  Wheelchair Dimensions ....................................................................................... 71
Choosing a Basketball Wheelchair ................................................................. 71
  Wheelchair Maintenance ....................................................................................... 71
Part 14 – What Do Words Mean? ................................................................. 73
Part 15 – Getting More Information ................................................................. 75
Acknowledgements

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Part 1 – The Game of Wheelchair Basketball

History of the Game
Wheelchair basketball was first played in 1945 in the USA at Veterans Hospitals. Wheelchair basketball was also played on an ad hoc basis in Veterans Hospitals in England. The game was seen as an opportunity to get veterans active and to provide positive physical and psychological experiences through sport.

In 1948, sixteen World War II veterans started a netball tournament at Stoke Mandeville Hospital in England. In 1949, the first National USA Tournament was held in Galesburg, Illinois. This was the beginning of the formation of the National Wheelchair Basketball Association (USA). The first International Stokes Mandeville Games (ISMG) were held in 1952 at the Stoke Mandeville hospital in England between a group of English and four Dutch war veterans.

In 1958, draft rules were established and wheelchair netball became wheelchair basketball and a form of dribbling was allowed. The ISMG were held in Rome immediately following the Olympics in 1960 and were to become known as the Paralympic Games (from “Parallel Olympics”). There were two divisions – complete and incomplete paraplegics.

Australia sent a team of five players including Hall of Fame member, Kevin Coombes, who went on to represent Australia at five Paralympics. He was inducted to the Basketball Australia Hall of Fame in 2007 and also holds the distinction of being the first indigenous athlete to represent Australia at an Olympic or Paralympic Games. The USA won both divisions in the first competition.

The basic FIBA basketball rules were accepted for Paralympic competition and in 1966, the two divisions – complete and incomplete – were merged into a single competition. Athletes were classified into three classes and each classification was assessed a number of points. The team could have 12 points on the court at the one time.

A women’s division was introduced at the 1968 Paralympics and the two divisions of complete and incomplete paraplegics for men was reintroduced.

The first European Championship was held for women in 1974. In 1980, there was a petition to the International Stokes Mandeville Wheelchair Sports Federation to allow amputees to play, which was adopted.
The ‘Strohkendl System of Functional Classification’ was introduced in 1982 and approved in 1983. The competition then returned to only one division with the 4–point classification system (which is detailed in section 2) ensuring that all athletes are provided a fair opportunity to participate.

**Wheelchair Basketball in Australia**

Wheelchair Sports Australia is the peak body responsible for the administration, promotion and coordination of sporting opportunities for Wheelchair athletes within Australia. Basketball Australia has partnerships with both Wheelchair Sports Australia and the Australian Paralympic Committee and has run the national senior wheelchair teams (Gliders and Rollers) since 2001.

Basketball Australia and Wheelchair Sports Australia work closely in the administration of junior teams and development, which also involves the network of state associations.

The Australian wheelchair men’s team (“the Rollers”) have competed in the Paralympics since 1960, only missing the 1964 Paralympics. The Rollers have two gold medals at Paralympic level (1996 and 2008) and to date is the only, Australian basketball team to win an Olympic or Paralympics gold medal.

The Australian wheelchair women’s team (“the Gliders”) first competed in the 1992 Paralympic Barcelona games and have quickly become a powerhouse in international wheelchair basketball. They have won medals at the 2004 (silver) and 2008 (bronze) Paralympics.

One of the keys to the international success of Australian teams are the national leagues. The National Wheelchair Basketball League (NWBL) was established in 1988 and in 2000 the Women’s National Wheelchair Basketball League (WNWBL) was introduced.

The mens national league currently has seven teams that play a “home and away” season whilst the womens national league has five teams and is played over 4 weekends.

Australian players also regularly compete in semi–professional leagues in Europe and players like Troy Sachs, Leisl Tesch, Justin Eveson and Brad Ness have made a real impact in those leagues. Many junior athletes play in the USA college system on
student athlete scholarships including Darren Skuse, Kathleen Okelley–Kennedy and Shelley Chaplin.
Part 2 – Wheelchair Basketball Rules

Wheelchair basketball is played in accordance with the rules of the International Stokes Mandeville Wheelchair Basketball Federation (ISMWBF) and those of the International Basketball Federation (FIBA). The ISMWBF is the international governing body for wheelchair sports. It formulates the rules, classification systems and policies in relation to wheelchair sports.

Applying the Basketball Rules to a wheelchair

A majority of the rules of wheelchair basketball are the same as FIBA rules.

Rule modifications are kept to a minimum and are only introduced to enable maximum participation and enjoyment.

Court dimensions
The dimensions of the court are the same.

Out of Bounds
All four wheels are used to determine if a player is in the front or back court, in or out of the key and in or out of bounds. For example, a player is only out of bounds if all four wheels are outside the line.

Contact on the Chair
The chair is considered as part of the body in respect of charging, pushing and blocking fouls.

Modifications to the rules of Basketball
The following modifications to the rules of basketball apply to wheelchair basketball:

Double Dribble
Double dribble does not exist in wheelchair basketball. A player may dribble, stop and dribble again as many times as they wish but a player cannot wedge or hold the ball between their legs.

Travel
A player that has the may push the chair twice without needing to dribble. If they take a third push without a dribble is called a travel violation.

Players can glide as much as they want between pushes. However each time the push bar is touched it is considered a push. If the push with one hand, this is counted as one push.
It is legal to push twice, dribble once, push twice, dribble once etc. This is not a travel violation or a double dribble. However, if a player caught the ball, pushed twice, dribbled once and then pushed three times, it would be a travel violation.

Foul Shots and Three Point Shots
The front wheels of the chair may be in front of the foul line or three point line when taking these shots. The point of reference for a violation is the main wheelchair axle, which must be behind the relevant line.

Lifting
Players must not lift both back wheels of the chair off the ground simultaneously. Players are also not permitted to lift their bottom from the seat of the wheelchair or take their feet off the footplates

Sideline and Baseline Out of Bounds
No offensive player may be in the key until after the ball has been passed inbounds. It must have been caught by a player that is on court, before they can enter the keyway.

Cutting out of bounds
No player from the offensive or defensive teams may cut out of bounds at any stage that the ball is in play.

Principles of Contact in Wheelchair Basketball
There is a lot of contact between players in a game of wheelchair basketball. Most of the contact is one chair hitting another chair. The chair is regarded as part of the “body”, and the general principles on contact are the same as basketball. However, movement and contact patterns certainly look different in a chair!

Defending the Player Who Has The Ball
When contact occurs when a defender attempted to establish legal position in the path of an opponent with the ball, the official must consider the following principles:

If both players are MOVING:
(a) Did defender cover the path of the ball carrier before contact occurred?

or

(b) Was the ball carrier given time and distance to avoid contact?

Decision: If the answer to either (a) or (b) is YES, then the defender Player A has legal position.
When the player with the ball is STATIONARY:
The defender Player A can take a position as close as possible to opponent Player B, short of contact, without invading the space occupied by Player B.

*Defending A Player Who Does Not Have The Ball*

When defender Player A attempts to establish a legal position in front of an opponent Player B who does not have the ball, the official must consider the following principles:

When both players are MOVING:
Did Player A establish a legal position first by reaching the position before opponent Player B?

Decision: If the answer is YES, then Player A has legal position.

When the player being guarded is STATIONARY:
Player A can take a position as close as possible to opponent Player B, short of contact, without invading the space occupied by Player B.

When the defender MOVES after being STATIONARY:
If a stationary defender suddenly moves from within a chair length into the braking area of a moving opponent who does not have the ball, he must allow that opponent time to avoid contact.

*Screening: Basic position*
The player who sets a screen must be stationary.

*Screening A Stationary Opponent*
The screener can set the screen anywhere as close as possible short of contact.

*Screening A Moving Opponent*
The screener must either:

(a) Cover the path of the opponent being screened, or

(b) Allow the opponent time and distance to avoid contact.
Classification in Wheelchair Basketball

Wheelchair basketball classification groups players into categories (classes), based on their physical capability to execute fundamental basketball movements – e.g. – pushing the wheelchair, dribbling, shooting, passing, rebounding and reaction to contact.

The purpose of player classification in wheelchair basketball is to ensure that all eligible players have an equal right and opportunity to be an integral member of a team.

Players are assigned a classification from 1.0 (being the player with least physical function) through to 4.5 (being the player with most physical function, including the player with minimal disability). This classification is the players’ ‘playing points’ and at any given time in a game the five players on court must not exceed a total of 14 playing points. Teams can play with less than 14 points on the court.

THE PROCESS OF CLASSIFICATION – HOW DO WE CLASSIFY?

A player must be formerly assessed by an IWBF Classification Panel. Players may be informally classified by coaches or other classifiers.

The IWBF Classification Panel, will discuss with the player their proposed classification and if necessary may discuss the players’ disability and functional capacity from the players’ point of view. Any strapping, prostheses or other aids the player may be using are noted at this time, and marked on the playing card.

Players are then observed in a competitive training situation before the tournament commences. From this initial observation, and following further discussion with the player and/or coach, a player is assigned a class to begin the tournament. The player is then observed in an actual competition game, at which time their classification will be confirmed or modified if the classification panel believes it is necessary.

Only a new player who has not been previously internationally classified or a player appealing their classification need undergo this process. Players holding an IWBF classification card do not require re-classification at each tournament they attend. Often a new player may not be observed sufficiently to make a final decision in the first game the team plays at a tournament. The player will remain at their initial classification until such time as the Panel has seen them play enough for a final decision.

This must be done before the end of the preliminary round of the tournament. If the panel has seen very little of a player at their first tournament, and there is still some uncertainty, a card may not be issued for the player. When the final tournament report is

7 everyone’s game
written it should list the player as “insufficient observation – no card issued”. Basketball Australia may request a re-classification assessment on either an Australian player’s classification or an opponent’s classification.

**FACTORS DETERMINING CLASSIFICATION**
The main factors which determine a player’s class are:

1. Trunk function
2. Lower limb function
3. Upper limb function
4. Hand function

The range, strength and co-ordination of all factors are taken into consideration both as individual components and then as inter-related functions during actual basketball situations to arrive at a classification.

Each class has distinct characteristics unique to that category, which the classifier looks for when making decisions. These characteristics are evident when performing the basketball skills that are observed as part of the classification process. In particular, trunk movement and stability form the basis for player classification.

The most commonly used terminology when discussing classification is the player ‘volume of action’ which is clearly defined for each class.

**Volume of Action**
The Volume of Action of a player is described as:

\[
\text{The extent to which a player can move voluntarily in any direction with control and return to the upright seated position, without holding the wheelchair for support or to aid the movement. The volume of action includes all directions, and describes the position of the ball when held with both hands.}
\]

In the seated position, there are several ‘planes of movement’ available. Whilst these planes have biomechanical names, in order to simplify the definition, they will be referred to as follows.

- The **vertical plane**: rotating the trunk to face left or right while maintaining an upright position (Diagram 1)
• The **forward plane**: bending the trunk forwards, reaching the hands towards the feet and returning to the upright (Diagram 2)

• The **sideways plane**: leaning the trunk to the left or right without movement in the forward plane and returning to the upright (Diagram 3)

Players in each class have different volumes of action, and this is what determines the final classification. In brief, the classes are as follows:

• **1 point player**: Little or no controlled trunk movement in all planes. Balance in both forward and sideways directions significantly impaired and players rely on their arms to return them to the upright position when unbalanced. No active trunk rotation.

• **2 point player**: Some partially controlled trunk movement in the forward direction, but no controlled sideways movement, has upper trunk rotation but poor lower trunk rotation.

• **3 point player**: Good trunk movement in the forward direction to the floor and up again without arm support. Has good trunk rotation but no controlled sideways movement.

• **4 point player**: Normal trunk movement, but usually due to limitations in one lower limb they have difficulty with controlled sideways movement to one side.

• **4.5 point player**: Normal trunk movement in all directions, able to reach side to side with no limitations.

There are also situations where a player does not seem to fit exactly into one class, exhibiting characteristics of two or more categories. In this instance the classifier may assign the player a half point, thus creating 1.5, 2.5 or 3.5 point players. This is usually done only when the player cannot be assigned a defined class, and should not be regarded as the first option for the classifier.

*The Minimal Disability*

In order to play wheelchair basketball under the auspices of the IWBF, a player must have at least the ‘minimal disability’ to be eligible to play wheelchair basketball.

The minimal disability criteria is that a wheelchair basketball player:

a) is unable to run, pivot or jump at a speed and with the control, safety, stability and endurance of an able-bodied player.

b) has a permanent physical disability in the lower limb/s which can be objectively verified by acknowledged medical and/or paramedical investigations such as measurement, x-ray, CT, MRI, etc.
For the purpose of IWBF Classification, degrees of pain are not considered as measurable and permanent disabilities.

A player who has only the minimal disability, and is deemed eligible to play at IWBF events, will be classified as 4.5 points.

Players wishing to be classified under the Minimal Classification Regulation must apply to IWBF for this approval. Classification for a Minimal Disability does not take place at a tournament.

Insert Classification Table Here

Do all competitions use classification?

Some competitions do not apply a classification points system to encourage participation and this includes the national leagues in a number of countries. Indeed there are some associations that have access to wheelchairs and play competitions for anyone to play in.

Points System and Game Style

Knowledge of your athlete’s strengths is essential and team selection is critical to the type of game any basketball team can execute. The Functional Classification system, and the limit of 14 points on court, is a significant factor in game style.

There are obviously a number of combinations that can be used to make up the 14 points, and indeed a team does not have to utilise 14 points all the time.

The nature of the points system means that different combinations will have different strengths (and weaknesses).

Australian Rollers head coach Ben Etteridge describes the strengths and weaknesses of some of the points combinations that he uses:

1: 1: 3: 4.5: 4.5
Total points: 14

This is a traditional power game: Two bigger players (often the 4.5 pointers) and a fast ball carrier (often the 3 pointer).

1: 1.5: 3: 4.0: 4.5
Total points: 13
Another example of a power game. This is particularly good to use if you have a quick 1.5 player to do ball handling duties, rather than a 3 point player. This can exploit the lesser capabilities of the 1.5 defender!

1: 2: 2: 4.5: 4.5  
Total points: 14

The Rollers have 2 pointers that can carry the ball and shoot well which makes this combination successful. Two bigger players in with this combination works well.

1: 2: 3: 4.0: 4.0  
Total points: 14

The same as above- 2 bigger players playing with the mid pointers.

2: 2: 2: 4.0: 4.0  
Total points: 14

If you have a big 2 pointer, you will have mismatches in the low spots here

1: 1: 4.0: 4.0: 4.0  
Total points: 14

Very few teams run this as the 4.5’s are usually the dominant big men, so teams rarely carry 3 x 4.0s, opting instead for the 3rd 4.5.

1: 2: 3: 3: 4.5  
Total points: 13.5

Good combination if you want to press and play an ‘up tempo’ style of play.

It is important to remember that your team’s most successful combination may be less than the 14 points allowed. When coaching players new to the game coaches must develop substitution patterns that give all players substantial time on court during a game to enable players to improve and have fun.
Classification Cards
All player classification cards must be presented to the score bench prior to each match. The score bench notes each player's entry to the court and identifies to the referee if a team has more than 14 points on the court which will result in an immediate technical foul charged against the coach.

Prior to any major competition the equipment will be checked by a technical panel. This will usually occur prior to the first game and will normally be scheduled just prior to your warm up time.

The technical committee will check the chair setup with your classification card to ensure it is the same as the picture on the back of your classification card.

Things that will be checked by the technical committee include straps, cushion flexibility and height.
Part 3 – Chair Movement

Before introducing other skills it is important that players are able to manoeuvre the chair efficiently around the court. Following are the teaching points for basic chair movement.

Wheelchair Positioning

The prerequisites of correct wheelchair positioning are quickness, balance, agility and technique. Players need speed to deceive and beat an opponent, balance to maintain control of their body, agility to change speed and body position quickly, and technique to make optimal use of quickness, balance and agility.

It is recommended that players execute wheelchair positioning as follows:

- Maintain a balanced position.
- Move along straight lines whenever possible.
- Change direction sharply.
- Execute combinations of wheelchair maneuvering patterns and fakes with and without the ball.

When introducing players to the fundamentals of wheelchair positioning, start without the ball - it distracts beginning players and should be introduced only once players can correctly perform fundamentals without it. In addition, emphasise the importance of using chair position appropriate for the situation as it develops.

Forward Push

The three keys to the forward push are:

- Hand Position, start with both hands at the top of the wheels (12:00) and push forward until hands reach 3:00
- Trunk Position, is at 45 degrees
- Players eyes and head must remain up
**Backward Push**
Use the same technique as the forward push but hands starts at 3:00 and finish at 12:00. A player should constantly look over both shoulders whilst pushing backwards to look for other players.

**Stopping**
When stopping the chair the trunk leans back to approximately 45 degrees and hands are placed on the wheels at the same time. Arms remain straight and locked, and the head stays upright.

**Turning**
When turning the chair to the left the left hand starts at 3:00 and the right hand starts at 12:00. Pull the left hand to 12:00 and push the right hand to 3:00. The trunk remains at 45 degrees and head remains up. The opposite applies when making a right turn.
Picking up the Ball
The keys to picking up the ball are balance and ball position. Use the wheel to create balance grab the back of the chair with your off hand as you lean forward. Approach the ball at the side of your chair and press the ball against the wheel in front of the axel.

Continue to press the ball against the wheel and allow forward momentum to bring the ball to the top of the wheel. Rotate the hand underneath the ball and then take the ball away from the wheel. This technique will be used when a player has a clear path to the ball.

The ball can also be picked up from in front of the wheelchair using the footplates and one or both hands. The wheelchair should be angled slightly with the ball positioned just ahead of the castor or footplates.

The player bends over and picks up the ball with one or two hands or rolls it up onto the footplates and up his legs. Balance can be maintained by holding onto the opposite side of the wheelchair with the other hand. This technique will generally be used when a player is under defensive pressure.
**Bounce Stop**

The bounce stop is a useful technique when a player needs to stop the chair whilst under defensive pressure.

When performing the bounce stop, hold the ball in the hand away from the defender. Bounce the ball to the side of the chair, stop the chair ensuring to keep both arms locked and trunk position back. Catch the ball after the bounce with the same hand used to bounce the ball.
Part 4 – Individual Skills – Shooting

Kevin Coombes is one of Australia’s most successful wheelchair basketball players, having participated in five Paralympics he is also our most experienced. Kevin had exceptional shooting ability, utilising a two handed shot, which was the common way of shooting when he came into the game.

In recent years Wheelchair Basketball has attracted many coaches from the able body game of Basketball and this has seen many wheelchair basketball players using a one handed shooting technique, which is commonly used in able bodied basketball.

The one handed shot has a higher release point, making it harder to block, however there still remains a place for the two handed shot in wheelchair basketball, particularly for players that don’t have the strength for the one handed shot or for those players wanting to increase their shooting range.

The One Handed Shot:
The one handed shot consists of four steps which can be easily remembered by the acronym B.E.E.F, which stands for the following.

- **Balance:** A successful shot requires a player to have good balance. When shooting the ball a player should have their shoulders square to the target (basket or board depending on floor position) and the wheel of their shooting hand slightly in front of the other. The shooters chair should be moving slightly in the direction of the non shooting hand. The shooter’s body should be in a comfortable upright position with their head placed in the middle of their body.
• **Eyes:** A shooter’s eyes should remain directly on the intended target and should not leave the target until after the ball has reached the target. Players should avoid watching the ball in flight or turning the eyes to any defensive pressure.

• **Elbow:** The shooting hand (left or right depending on the individual player’s strength) should start in a comfortable position just below chest height and slightly to the side of the shooting hand (a player who shoots from the middle of the body will have a slightly bent elbow). The shooting arm should be cocked in an ‘L’ shape and be directly underneath the basketball. The ball should be placed evenly across all fingers and the ball should not sit on the palm. The other hand will be placed on the side of the ball and is for support only.

• **Follow Through:** The follow through is the most important part of shooting as it will directly influence the direction and flight of the ball. The shooting hand is taken from the starting position and should be extended directly towards the target. The shooting arm should be snapped and the elbow locked. The fingers finish evenly spread towards the ground. A good follow through will result in the ball spinning backwards.

A common mistake is to ‘squeeze’ the ball out, resulting in the thumb and fingers coming together as the shot are released. The fingers and thumb should be spread at the end of the shot the same as they were at the start of the shot. The movement is in the wrist!
A player learning to shoot should be encouraged to keep their follow through up until after the ball has reached the target (when a player has a sound shooting technique they may be required to return their hands to the chair to avoid an offensive foul). The support hand should finish in a comfortable position around forehead height.

Correcting Common Faults
A common fault in the one handed shot is to pause during the shot – usually bringing the ball to the forehead (stopping) and then shooting. This may be the result of practicing ‘concept shooting’, which starts at the point where the player is stopping their shot. When coaching players to shoot, it is important for them to practice the ‘form’ of the shot from the start.

Also, the shot should not come to the forehead as in this position the elbow is not underneath the ball and the player is likely to propel the ball forward rather than up (‘throwing a dart’ rather than getting height into the shot).

Another common fault is to watch the ball in flight, rather than keeping focus on the target. It is generally easy to spot an athlete doing this as their head will lift backwards, which can result in the shot falling short. If your athlete is doing this, ask them to say out loud where they are focusing (eg “ring”, “board”) as they shoot – this can reinforce where they are looking.

The One Handed Shot – ‘Jump Hook’
Sometimes in ‘traffic’ around the keyway, a player will not be able to turn their chair to face the basket before shooting. If they can turn their body to face the basket they may still be able to shoot effectively, however another option is to shoot the ‘jump hook’.

The ‘Jump Hook’ is a shot taken while side on to the basket. It is used by post players in the able bodied game, to protect the ball better from defenders. The key elements of the shot are:

- Start side on to the basket, with the ball under the hand the shoulder away from the basket
- Hold the ball with elbows out on either side of the ball
**Coaching Wheelchair Basketball**

**Individual Skills - Shooting**

- To shoot, lift the ball up so that the shooting hand is underneath the ball (wrist cocked). Arm position is in the same ‘L’ as for the normal one handed shot, but the hands are on the sides of the ball.

- To shoot, both arms push up and you shoot over the non-shooting hand (this helps give it some height). If the player is shooting right handed the shot goes to their left, not in front.

- At release of the shot, the shooting elbow should be directly underneath the ball. This type of release will also help shooting lay-ups when there is some defensive pressure.

**The Two Handed Shot**

The two handed shot is similar to the chest pass but following are some points of emphasis.

- **Starting Position:** The shooter should start the shot with their chair and body square to (facing) the target, and the body in a comfortable upright position, with the head in the middle of the body. The shooter’s chair should be moving slowly towards the target and ideally slightly in the direction of the non shooting hand. The ball should be held in a comfortable position in front of the chest. Hold the ball with both hands evenly spread across the ball ensuring to keep the palms off the ball. Both thumbs are placed behind the ball forming a ‘W’.
• **Eyes:** A shooters eyes should remain directly on the intended target and should not leave the target until after the ball has reached the target. Players should avoid watching the ball in flight or turning their eyes to see any defensive pressure

• **Follow Through:** Extend both arms evenly towards the target and lock the arms and snap the fingers. The palms will go from facing inwards at the start of the shot to facing outwards at the end of the shot. The fingers should remain evenly spread and the thumbs pointing towards the ground. As per the one handed shot beginners should be encouraged to keep the follow through up until the ball has hit the target. A good follow through will result in the ball spinning backwards.

## The Keys to Successful Shooting

Following are some additional points of emphasis:

*Using the Backboard*

If a player is within a comfortable shooting range and has a good angle to use the board they should be encouraged to do so (even if they are directly in front of the basket). The most commonly missed shot in wheelchair basketball is a shot that falls short – off the front of the basket, which usually results in a defensive rebound.

If a shot is intended for the board and it falls short it still has an opportunity to go in. Additionally a missed shot intended for the board may also result in a longer rebound that will result in more offensive rebounds.

*Rhythm*

Rhythm is an under rated aspect of shooting. A player may have less than ideal shooting technique but still be an effective shooter if they have good rhythm. A good shooter will shoot in one motion resulting in a nice relaxed, consistent motion. Players should avoid pausing once the shot has commenced or any jerky movements.
Psychological Factors
Shooting is a fine motor skill and is therefore can be greatly influenced by several psychological factors, including concentration, shot selection and confidence. As a result, it is essential that these factors be taken into consideration when players are learning to shoot.

Once a player has a sound shooting technique, shooting drills that involve making a specific number of baskets in a period of time will simulate game conditions and improve shooting accordingly.

Concentration
Shooters must concentrate completely on the target once they have decided to shoot. Players therefore need to develop such concentration as they work on their technique.

Once a player's technique is sound, introduce distractions – pressure, noise or fatigue – so that players learn to concentrate under difficult conditions. Players may also be encouraged to say out loud key words to assist them to remember points of emphasis eg. 'snap', for snap the wrists.

Shot Selection
In many cases, the best way to improve shooting percentage is to take better shots. Players should know their own abilities and should know not to shoot in the following situations:

- When a teammate is in a better shooting position.
- Where there are no offensive rebounders.
- When they are off balance.
- When they are outside their effective shooting range.

You can help individual players define their shooting range. Players should know before they get the ball if they are in range or not. Situations involving 24 second clock or end of the period can also influence shot selection.

Confidence
Confidence may well be the most important factor in shooting. Once a player decides to shoot, they must have complete confidence that the ball will go in. Help players develop this confidence by structuring shooting drills so that success is attainable. For example, have players work close to the basket in the beginning, and gradually move further out.
Players who want to develop confidence should do as follows:

- Visualise all shots going into the basket
- Take shots within their shooting range
- Extend their shooting range in stages
- Practice shooting regularly
- Forget missed shots immediately

Help players develop confidence by doing the following:

- Emphasise the size of the target by demonstrating that two regulation balls will fit through a regulation hoop simultaneously
- Not criticising players who miss a shot from within their shooting range
- Setting realistic shooting goals for players

**Adaptations for Smaller Players**
Some adjustments to technique may be necessary for smaller players. Such adjustments include the following:

- Using a smaller ball
- Using a lower basket or garbage bin
- Use bright colourful targets on the backboard
- Not lifting the ball as high before pushing it with the arms motion (younger players may lift the ball to shoulder height instead of above the forehead)
Part 5 – Individual Skills – Passing/Catching

A number of fundamental offensive skills are essential in basketball. Most passing and receiving skills performed in wheelchair basketball are done with one hand because the other hand is controlling the wheelchair.

- Passing
- Receiving
- Faking

It is important to emphasise passing and receiving in all activities at training. A good passing team will always pass the ball according to the receiver’s strengths taking into account the player’s physical ability, wheelchair manoeuvrability and wheelchair control.

A good passing team will find receivers in positions that they have the ability to make a good play. For example, a low point player will generally not want to receive the ball under defensive pressure close to the basket.

The Triple- Threat Position

The triple threat position in wheelchair basketball occurs when the player is moving. The triple threat position occurs when the player is stationary. Players who receive the ball within their shooting range should immediately assume the triple threat position – position the wheelchair square to the basket, and be a threat to attack the defence with a pass, a dribble or a shot.

Recommended form for the Triple threat position is as follows;

- The head is upright; and the back is slightly flexed
- The shooting hand is behind the ball, and the offhand is on the side of the ball
- The shooting wrist is cocked
- The ball is held in comfortable position in front of your chest
Players should practice assuming the triple threat position every time they receive the ball. Even if the player is not confident from shooting at this range (and in that sense are only a double threat) they should still assume the triple threat position because they need to learn to continually pressure the defence by keeping open the threat of more than one option.

**Passing**
Passing promotes team play and is therefore one of the most important fundamentals of offensive basketball. Passing also contributes to the excitement of the game, because the pass is a much quicker way to move the ball than the dribble.

The purposes of passing are as follows:

- To advance the ball up the court as quickly as possible
- To achieve better court position
- To improve shooting position

A successful pass requires two players: the passer and the receiver. The passer has the following responsibilities:

- To maintain balanced position so that a pass can be made quickly
- To anticipate the movement of teammates
- To use peripheral vision to keep at least two potential pass receivers in view at all times
- To throw the pass as the receiver breaks to an open area of the floor
- To use pass fakes to keep defenders out of passing lanes
- To use good technique to throw crisp, accurate passes

There are six types of pass that players should be familiar with:

- The one handed push pass
- The two hand chest pass
- The moving chest pass
- The baseball pass
- The hook pass
- The two handed Bounce pass.
The One Handed Push Pass
The one handed chest pass is a straight, quick pass that should go from the passer to the receiver’s chest in the same plane. The ball is released with only one hand, the snap of the wrist and fingers of one hand. Follow through with the hand used for the pass with the hand pointing directly towards the target.

The Two handed Chest Pass
The two handed chest pass is a straight, quick pass that should go from the passers chest to the receiver’s chest on the same plane. This pass is often the best method to advance the ball up the court or around the perimeter.

Recommended technique for the Chest Pass is as follows:

- Hold the ball close to the chest, with two hands, and with the thumbs pointing up
- Generate force by extending the upper body forward, elbows, wrists and fingers
- Push the ball towards the receiver to add force to the pass (players at higher levels are stronger and may not have to add force in this way)
- Release the ball with a quick snap of the wrist and fingers
- Follow through so that the palms face outwards, the fingers point in the direction of the receiver, and the thumbs are pointing to the ground. The ball has backspin
- Restore balance by bringing the upper body back to its base of support

The Moving Chest Pass
The moving chest pass requires basically the same technique as the two handed chest pass. However, the moving chest pass is easier to execute because of the momentum of the person in their wheelchair.

To throw a moving chest pass, the player:
Coaching Wheelchair Basketball  

**Individual Skills – Passing/Catching**

- Pushes the wheelchair straight ahead with a normal rhythm
- Picks up the ball and turns in the direction of the intended pass
- Throws the pass using the same technique used for the chest pass

Players should first practice throwing passes in the direction of their movement, then progress to passes requiring rotation of the trunk at the moment of the pass.

**Baseball Pass**

The baseball pass is thrown by holding the ball on the pads of the hand, positioning above and behind the shoulder of the passing arm. The forearm should be close to a perpendicular angle to the upper arm. The elbow should be slightly in front of the ball. The wrist should be underneath the ball and the back of the passing hand should be parallel to the floor. The upper body should be rotated towards the passing side. Increased truck rotation is required for long passes.

At the same time the passing arm begins to extend, with the elbow leading. The arm should continue forward and the ball is released with a snap of the wrist. Upon completion, the arm should point at the target and the fingers should point at the floor. The other arm should be used for support by holding the wheel or part of the wheelchair frame.

**Hook Pass**

To throw a hook pass the ball should be held to the side with the forearm nearly parallel to the floor. The inside shoulder should be pointing at the target. The arm is raised to shoulder level and the elbow is extended. The player should have the passing arm come across to the side of the head, just behind the ear on the follow through. On the follow through the fingers should be pointing down and the forearm should be pointing in the direction of the target.
Two Handed Bounce Pass
The two handed bounce pass is like a chest pass, but the arms follow through towards the ground. The ball should bounce once two-thirds of the distance between the passer and the receiver. Recommended technique for the bounce pass is as follows:

- Hold the ball close to the chest with two hands and with the thumbs on top of the ball
- Generate force by extending forward the upper body, the elbows, wrist and fingers
- Push the ball towards the receiver to add force to the pass
- Release the ball with a quick snap of the wrist and fingers
- Follow through with the arms towards the ground, so that the palms face outwards, the fingers point outwards and the ball has backspin
- The ball should bounce two-thirds of the distance between passer and receiver
- Always throw at an angle
- Restore balance by bringing the upper back to its base support

Catching
Because the pass is considered one of the most important fundaments of offensive basketball, being able to catch is essential to overall success in the game. All players must be ready to receive a pass at all times.

Catching the ball in wheelchair basketball is specific to the individual’s skill level, balance in the wheelchair and their flexibility. Basketball passes to low pointers may need to be closer to their body due to the player’s balance control, so an appropriate target should be given. High passes can also be difficult for some low pointers to control.

Some players may have to hold onto the wheelchair to maintain balance, while receiving the ball with the opposite hand. Catch the ball with the fingertips, securely cup the ball in your hand and bring it to your triple threat position.

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A player that is good at catching:

- See the ball at all times
- Time their moves to get open so that the ball handler will be able to pass them the ball as they get open
- Anticipate passes directed towards them
- Use good receiving technique so that they can dribble, shoot or pass without significantly changing their grip on the ball
- Square up to the basket upon receipt of the pass
- Anticipate their offensive maneuver in advance of receiving the ball
- Provide a passing lane and target

Basic Techniques:
Whether players are stationary or moving, they can use the same technique for catching the ball, either funneling or blocking and trapping. It is recommended funneling be taught before blocking and trapping.

In both techniques, players catching the ball must:

- Give the passer a target with both hands. The hands are relatively close together, the fingers are spread, and the thumbs are close together
- The arms and shoulders should be relaxed enough to let the hands cushion the ball
- The fingers must be well spread
- The hands should be kept in a position where they can be seen
- Focus attention on the flight of the ball
- Move to the ball in all situations
- The ball must be secured as soon as it reaches the receiver
- Square to the basket and assume the triple threat position immediately after receiving the ball

Beginning players often fear the ball when first learning to receive passes. This fear can be alleviated by having players begin with foam balls, utility balls and use soft, underhand passes. Emphasise seeing the ball into the hands and ensure the passer hits the target given by the receiver. Emphasising that their fingers should point up is also a very good tip (if the fingers point at the ball they will often get hit).
Part 6 – Individual Skills – Fakes

A fake is pretending to do something, to get the defender to commit to an action in response to that. After they make their commitment, they the offensive player then makes their “real move” to beat the defender.

It is suggested to teach fakes after Players have learnt the basic offensive movements of passing, shooting and driving.

An effective fake does the following:

- Increases the probability that passes will succeed
- Opens up driving lanes to the basketball
- Creates shooting opportunities
- Makes it more difficult for defenders to help each other

A good fake must be executed precisely and beginners will tend to rush them, which actually doesn’t give the defender time to react! Encourage them to take their time and execute it precisely. Players should not try faking if there is a clear opportunity for passing, shooting or dribbling.

Players can also make fakes much more effective by squaring to the basket in a triple threat position every time they get the ball. This move puts immediate pressure on the defensive player, who may overreact and make a fake unnecessary.

Good fakes have the following characteristics:

- They are short and sharp.
- They look real, as if the player is about to do that (pass, shoot or whatever)
- Players keep their balance.
- They are directed in a logical direction (towards the basket or a potential receiver).
- They are realistic. A good shot fake should look exactly like the beginning of a shot and a good pass fake should look exactly like the beginning of the passing motion.
- Should include facial expressions similar to a shot or pass.
- They mislead about direction; the player fakes in one direction but passes in another.
- They are followed immediately by the intended move.
Fakes may involve one or more of the following moves:

- A head fake
- A shoulder fake
- A body fake
- A ball fake (shot, pass or dribble)
- A wheelchair fake

Players should work at ‘selling’ the fake to the defender. For selling to succeed, the fake must look just like the intended movement. Players can achieve this realism by working on detail, such as the movement of the eyes or shoulders. One of the most successful methods in accomplishing good fakes is the mastering of different types of chair pivots.
Part 7 – Individual Skills – The Layup

The lay–up is an important part of wheelchair basketball. The objective of the offensive team is to get the highest percentage shot possible, which is the lay–up.

There are two types of shooting styles that can be used in a lay–up. An “overhand” layup, is effectively the same as normal shot technique and is good for use in a defended situation. The underhand lay–up is used on a fast break, when no defence is present.

Overhand Layup
When performing the overhand lay–up you must consider the following.

- **Angle:** A player’s chair should approach the basket with both wheels straddling the block (the two close hash marks on the side of the key), at approximately a 45 degree angle.
- **Chair Speed:** A player will be moving at high speed to enable them to get open for the lay–up but should slow the chair slightly to ensure good balance for the shot.
- **Shooting Hand:** Each player should be able to do a right hand lay–up on the right side and a left hand lay–up on the left side. This will protect the ball from the defender who will generally be approaching from the inside position. If the defender does cause contact to the arm or body, using the appropriate hand will protect the ball and may result in a 3 point play.
- **Eyes:** Players should remain keep their eyes focused on the target until the chair has passed the board
- **Use the Board:** A player should always use the board when doing a layup as the board will absorb a lot of the speed generated when approaching the layup and give the shot some softness.

Underhand Layup
The chair should approach the basket in the same manner as the overhand lay–up. When the player reaches the side of the key, the ball is taken to the side of the chair at
approximately knee height and placed in the outside hand with the palm facing to the ceiling.

The inside hand remains on the side of the ball for support. The shooting hand then shoots the ball to the top corner of the black square allowing the ball to roll off the fingertips. The fingers follow through and will finish pointing towards the player’s forehead.

- **Eyes:** Players should remain keep their eyes focused on the target until the chair has passed the board.
- **Use the Board:** A player should always use the board when doing a layup as the board will absorb a lot of the speed generated when approaching the layup and give the shot some softness.
Part 8 – Team Offence

There are a number of elements to team offence.

Transition Offence
The transition from Defence to Offence when a team gets the ball can provide a good opportunity to get a high percentage shot. In “transition” the offensive team is trying to generate an advantage in numbers (eg 2v1, 3v2) close to the basket at the offensive end.

Transition offence can occur whenever the defensive team gets the ball, whether that is after:

- the offence score;
- a shot is missed and the defence get the rebound
- the defence steal the ball
- the offence commit a foul or violation.

The hardest situation to create transition offence is after a foul or violation because the referee must handle the ball prior to it being thrown in.

Effective offensive transition will have the following characteristics:

- **Look Ahead**: A player with possession of the ball should always be looking to pass to an open player closer to their basket. The ball will be advanced quicker with passes than dribbling. The person receiving the ball should always be open and heading towards their basket.

- **Crossing**: Players without the ball should be looking to cross from one side of the court to the other (in the backcourt and at midcourt). This will create a good passing angle to receive the ball and may also result in an opportunity to block the opposition from getting back on Defence.

- **Spacing**: A good transition team will have a good spread of players across the court. Encourage players to move to the open spots away from other offensive players.

*Transition Offence After A Score*
Many teams look to fast break after the other team score. Perhaps the most famous team that played with this style was the Los Angeles Lakers in the 1980s.

Below is a suggested structure to create a fast break opportunity:
Coaching Wheelchair Basketball

Team Offence

- 3 takes the ball out of bounds
- 1 gets to sideline and cuts to middle.
- 2 cuts from sideline to middle after 1
- 3 passes to 1 or 2

- When 2 receives the ball, 4 and 5 cut cross court looking for the ball
- 1 cuts cross court
- 3 fills behind the ball to opposite side of ball
- The ball is advanced down court with passing looking for high percentage scoring opportunities
- Players who do not receive the ball look to cut cross court again until the ball is in the Half Court where they will move to half court offensive positions

Half Court Offence

Coaches of beginners should talk more about offensive concepts rather than specific set plays. A successful half court Offence will have similar characteristics including:

- **Spacing:** Players should be evenly spread across the floor with a mix of high and low pointers on each side of the floor. Teams will generally want a high pointer on each block, a mid/low on each wing and a mid/low at the point.


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Combinations will vary but a good coach will recognise players that work well together and position them on the same side of the floor.

- **Screening**: The traditional wheelchair basketball Offence will consist of the low pointers working to set screens to get the high pointers free for high percentage shots. A modern wheelchair basketball team will operate very similarly but the low pointers are becoming a greater scoring threat.

- **Ball Movement**: A good half court offensive team will reverse the ball early (move the ball from one side of the court to the other). This will make the Defence move with the ball and create more space for the offensive players to operate.

- **Shot Selection**: Successful half court offensive teams will understand what the objective of the Offence is. Players should be told what a good shot is and what is not and will usually have a plan for what happens when the shot clock is winding down.

- **Cover the Backcourt**: Players should be made aware that part of the half court Offence is to be aware that when the shot is released someone should be responsible for covering the backcourt to make sure the opposition cannot get a sneaky fast break uncontested layup. This should be the person furthest from the offensive rebound and they should communicate with the other team mates that they have the backcourt covered.

*Traditional Half Court Alignments*
There are a number of common half court alignments that teams use.

**3 Out, 2 In**
A 3 Out, 2 In offence, starts with two players at the key way and the other 3 on the perimeter.
1 usually a good ball handler (mid to low pointer)
2 and 3 usually mid to low pointers
4 and 5 usually mid to high pointers
With this set up 2 and 4 will work together to get open and 3 and 4 will work together to get open
1 will look to do a basket cut for a shot or ball reversal if defender helps on other players
Part 9 – Defence

Half of the game is defence! There are a number of principles that are different in the wheelchair game than in basketball.

The Defensive Ready Position
The defensive ready position is a position approximately one meter from the offensive player in between that player and the basket. A player in the defensive ready position is side on to the offensive player and has their hands on wheels ready to retreat in the direction the offensive player moves.

Defenders will constantly look over their shoulders in the direction of the offensive player to anticipate their moves and where possible the defender should have vision on the offensive player's hands as it will be their hands that initiate chair movement.

One on One Defence
When defending a player with or without the ball a defender should be in the ready position at all times. If the offensive player makes a movement the defender should make a quarter turn away from the player in the direction of their movement. The defender will read the Offence and re-establish wheel position to stop the Offence. The defender will then return to the ready position anticipating another movement.

Team Defence
As in any team sport, coordination between team mates is an essential ingredient to a successful team defence.

The Triple Switch

Triple Switching is the key to nearly all half court Defence in Wheelchair Basketball.

This drill works on the basic movements and principles in the rotation of the Triple Switch. To successfully execute the Triple Switch all players must communicate all movements.
A. Ball starts with Offence at the top of the key.

Defence is in close out position, ready to move on the pass.

On pass to the low post, Defence banana cuts to close out the low post player, denying base line.

Once in position, Defence must u-turn to be in the best position to jump to the next pass.

B. On the pass from the low post to the wing spot, the defender must jump using a banana cut to close out position.

C. The defender then must u-turn again to get back to the top position.

While moving between the spots, the defender is calling help, jump and triple switch, depending on their respective position.

Rebounding
By its nature, basketball is designed for each team to have effectively the same number of possessions and each possession is an opportunity to score. After a score the other team gets the ball.

Rebounding is a key to getting more possessions than the other team, at both the offensive and defensive ends of the court. Every time you get an offensive rebound, it is an extra possession. Similarly, every defensive rebound you take minimises the number of possessions that the other team has.
Chair Position (Blocking Out)
When the shot is released all five players should initiate contact on their opposition player positioning the chair side on to both the offensive player and the basket. When contact and position is achieved the player then calls ‘box’ and holds position until after the shot has missed.

After the shot has missed the rebounder then releases contact and moves towards the ball. If the rebound is uncontested the defender releases the hand closest to the ball to secure the rebound and take the ball to the triple threat position. If the rebound is contested the rebounder must attack the rebound with both hands reaching as high as possible. Bring the rebound to the triple threat position looking for an outlet pass to a player moving towards the basket.
Part 10 – Fundamental Skills Checklist

Following is a table to be used as a guide for measuring a player’s ability and approximately what level a player may be able to compete at. Basketball Australia thanks Evan Bennett, for his assistance in preparing this checklist.

E – Exposed  Skill to be demonstrated and understood when to be used but not practised repeatedly.

P – Proficient  Skill to be familiar to player, practised extensively and recognised in game situation the majority of the time.

M – Mastered  Skill to be mastered to near perfection.

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<tr>
<th>WHEELCHAIR MOVEMENT</th>
<th>Beginner</th>
<th>Region</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Australian</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
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### PASSING AND RECEIVING

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### BALL HANDLING

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### DRIBBLING

**Strong and Weak Hands**

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# Coaching Wheelchair Basketball

## Fundamental Skills Checklist

### REBOUNDING

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### Coaching Wheelchair Basketball

**Fundamental Skills Checklist**

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Part 11 – Drills

Many, and probably most, drills that are used in basketball, can be used in wheelchair basketball. Below are some specific drills used by coaches in wheelchair basketball.

Chair Movement Drills

- **Hopscotch Drill.** Players will turn their wheelchairs a 180-degree turn, and return back to start position. Players maintain proper form and repeat this sequence as many times as possible in 10 seconds.

- **Explosive Pushing.** Players assume the offensive ready position. On the whistle, players accelerate, taking five explosive pushes of the wheels, and gradually decelerate to a stationary position. The focus of the drill is on the explosiveness, body lean, hand placement and arm action.

- **Relay Races.** Players divide into groups of three or four, and line up at the base line. The first player in each line wheels backwards from the base line to the centre, forward from the centre to the opposite end line, backwards from the opposite end line to the centre, and forward from the centre to the original end line. The next player then begins, and the sequence is repeated. The winner is the first group of players to finish.

- **Line Drill.** Players follow a zigzag pattern between two lines on the floor. Using three corridors allows all players to practice at the same time. Players move slowly, at first increasing speed only once they have mastered the change of direction technique.

- **Whistle drill.** In this drill, players react to a whistle. On the first single whistle, players start wheeling from the offensive ready position. At each single whistle thereafter, players change direction. In the first double whistle the drill ends.

- **Collision Drill.** Players react to the movement of other players in a congested area – one quarter or one half of the court, depending on the number of players. Players start and stay within the prescribed boundaries by moving in straight lines in any direction and at varying speeds. When confronted by another player, a player must stop and pivot before starting to wheel again. Once players have mastered stopping and pivoting, they may simply change direction when confronted by another player.

- **Go Stop Drill.** Players stop and start on a signal from the coach. Emphasize heads up wheeling and stopping with balance and control. Keep the drill short and vary the signals to keep players alert.

- **Stop and Start Drill.** Players dribble down the floor; on a signal, they stop and pivot several times; on the next signal they continue down the floor. This drill also provides opportunities to practice other skills, for example, changes of direction, changes of speed, stopping and starting.
Passing Drills

- **Dribble Stop and Pass Drill.** Players line up in all four corners of the half court. One player dribbles to the centre of the court, stops, pivots towards the next line and passes then goes to that line. The next ball handler repeats the same sequence. As players become more skilled, add more balls.

- **Pass Knockout.** Players simultaneously pass and play tag in a confined area eg., Inside the key. Start the game with two players who are ‘it’ who must pass to each other until they are in a position to tag the other players. When a player is tagged, they are then out of the game. The game continues until all players are tagged.

- **Wall Drill.** This drill is designed for one player with a ball. The player sits in his wheelchair six meters from the wall and throws chest passes at the wall; the player aims at a target at about chest height and concentrates on technique, especially proper back-spin. The player begins the drill close to the wall, but moves farther away as the skill increases: use this drill to practice all passing techniques.

- **Name Drill.** This drill is not a separate drill; rather it is potentially part of any passing drill. Ask players performing the drill to say the name of the player to whom they are passing as they make the pass. This drill helps players focus on the receiver.

- **Stationary Passing Drill.** Two players use one ball, sit two meters apart, and practice proper technique for the chest pass. Players must assume the triple threat position when receiving the ball before they make the return pass. An adaptation to this can be for players to progressively move further apart after each successful pass until they reach the limit of their passing ability. All passing techniques can be used for this drill.

- **Turn and Catch Drill:** Passer and Receiver should be about 3 meters apart. The receiver stands in the offensive ready position with his back to the passer. As the passer says the receiver’s name, he passes to the receiver, and the receiver does a 180 pivot to face the passer. The receiver concentrates on turning their head as early as possible to get their eyes on the flight of the ball for the catch. Alternate between passer and receiver.

- **Triangle Passing Drill.** Players begin with one ball and form three lines in a triangle formation. Passers pass to the first player in one of the other lines, and follow their pass. The drill runs continuously; more balls are added as player’s skill increases until players are keeping three balls in motion.

- **Two Line Passing Drill.** Players divide into two groups and form two single file lines; these lines should face each other and should be approximately three meters apart. One player begins with the ball and throws a pass to the first player in the opposite line, who moves forward to meet the pass. The passer
Coaching Wheelchair Basketball

Passing Drills

goes to the end of the opposite line, and the player with the ball passes to the first player in the opposite line without dribbling. Continuous.

- **Three Lane Passing Drill**: Players from three lines at one end of the court, and players in the centre line have the basketballs. Players leave in groups of three and move straight down the court, passing the ball back and forth among them without dribbling. When the group reaches the centre line the next group leaves. Players switch lines at the end of the court so that everyone has a turn in the centre line. Vary this drill with two balls and then three balls (when three balls are introduced one of the passers will need to do chest passes and the other bounce passes to avoid the balls colliding.

- **Pig in the Middle Drill**: Players divide into groups of three; each group has one ball and designates one player as the pig. The pig is positioned between the other two players who are approximately the width of the keyway apart. The drill proceeds as follows:

  - The pig must assume a defensive ready position against the player with the ball.
  - The player with the ball has three seconds to release the ball.
  - If the passer is unsuccessful because the ball is deflected or intercepted or because the player hesitated then that player becomes the pig.
  - Players may not throw high lob passes, nor are receivers permitted to move from their position to catch the ball.

You can vary this drill by assigning specific positions (guard to forward or guard to guard).
• **Three Man Weave:** This drill is designed to improve both passing and receiving skills. The first part of the drill is as follows:

- Players form three lines on the baseline
- The player in the middle has the basketball and slaps the ball as a signal for the first player in each line to start pushing. Below is a diagram of the pattern for the drill.

A. • Players in the centre pass to either the left or the right and follow the pass.
   • Players receiving the pass catch the ball and pass to the player in the opposite outside lane who moves towards the ball.

B. • The player moving toward the ball then passes to the player who was originally in the middle who is now cutting back towards the ball.
   • Players repeat this pattern until they reach the other end of the court

C. • When a player catches the ball they do a lay-up when within range of the basket.

D. • The shooter continues through to the outside lane.
   • The player who threw the last pass continues to the foul line extended and waits for the outlet pass.
   • The third player continues to the basket, gets the rebound, and throws the outlet pass. All three players then repeat the pattern back to other basket making a lay-up at the other end.
Ball Handling Drills

- **Ball Wraps**: Players assume the offensive ready position and pass the ball from one hand to another around the head, the chest and the circumference of the chair. Players pass the ball both clockwise and anticlockwise, strive for speed and keep the head up at all times.

- **Ball Familiarisation**: Players need to familiarize themselves with the ball learning specific types of dribbling when placing the basketball on the legs, to ensure that it is not wedged between the legs as this would constitute a violation. Start by holding the ball with one hand and wheel with the other, then progress to maintaining the ball on the lap and just straight wheeling. Practice turning and changing speed and direction in the wheelchair.

- **Front Seesaw Drill**: Pass the ball from side to side in front of a chair, bouncing only once.

- **Arm Pretzel Drill**: Players hold the ball over their lap, with both hands opposite (top–bottom). Players keep the ball in, toss ball slightly and switch hand position.

- **Spot Drill**: Players dribble the ball below the height of the wheelchair in a stationary position. Vary the drill by moving in a restricted area while dribbling the ball. In all versions of this drill, players alternate between left and right hands.

- **Dribble Knockout**: Same as pass knockout but players must dribble the ball to get in a position to tag the other players within a confined area.

- **Static Dribble Drill**: Players perform the static dribble while practicing dribbles of different height and direction. Mirroring a leader discourages players from watching the ball.

- **Typewriter Drill**: Players dribble the ball below top of the wheel rim with one finger. After using five fingers on one hand, switch to the other hand.

- **Two Ball Drill**: Players dribble two balls at the same time on the opposite sides of the wheelchair. Players may even use a basketball and a tennis ball; dribble the basketball with one hand and using the other hand to play catch with a partner with the tennis ball.

- **Partner Drill**: Two players dribble within an area of the floor bounded by lines, and try to steal each other’s ball while maintaining the opportunity to dribble.

- **Dribble Tag**: Players simultaneously dribble and play tag in a confined area while dribbling. When players skill improves the player who are tagged then team up with the chasing team to help tag the remaining players. Only the player with the ball can tag the opponents but players can pass the ball to a player in a
better position to tag. Players must work together to catch the remaining players.

- **In one variation on dribble age, one or two players are ‘it’ and they dribble and knock away other player’s balls; when players are ‘out’ they form a line boundary around the playing area and continue to dribble. The line moves in to make the playing area smaller and smaller as fewer and fewer players are left inside the boundary.**

- **Dribble Knockout:** In a second variation of dribble knockout, everyone is ‘it’ and each player tries to knock away every other player’s ball.

- **Collision Drill:** Players dribble continuously in a small, restricted area (half court or quarter court, depending on the number of players). Players stay within the boundaries continually moving to avoid other players.

  **Variation:** players dribble with their weak hand. In a second variation, players start the drill on one boundary line of the playing area and dribble to the opposite boundary line on a signal.

- **Speed–Control Dribble:** Players gather behind the base line of the court and divide into groups of three or four; every player in every group has a ball. On a signal, each player in the first group starts to speed dribble; on the next signal, each switches to a control dribble. Players also change hands while they are dribbling and stop and start without traveling. The second group begins when the first group has passed the foul line.

- **Relay Race:** Players gather behind the baseline of the court and divide into teams of three or four. On a signal, the first player on each team speed dribbles to the other end and returns with speed dribble of the other hand, and passes to the next player on their team. The winning team is first to have all its members finish dribbling.

- **Side to side Drill:** Players dribble the ball in front of their body and wheelchair, pushing the ball from side to side, using only one hand. Players may move around the court while dribbling once they have mastered side to side movement.

- **Stationary Alternate Hands Drill:** Players assume the position for the control dribble, dribble three times with the right hand, switch the ball to the opposite hand, perform three control dribbles, and so on.

- **Pivot Drive Drill:** Players form pairs, and each pair has a ball. Players stand about five meters apart (players may use lines on the court to position themselves). Players pass to their partner, and follow their pass. Receivers drive towards their
partner's original position using a stopping technique, pivot to pass to their partner. The rotation continues in this manner.
**Team Offence Drills**

A good way to teach many aspects of team Offence including spacing, communication and playing as a team is to teach players how to play 3 on 0. Following are a series of drills that should be practiced regularly. All plays should be executed from both sides of the court.

**Basic 3 on 0 Spacing**

- 1 passes to 2
- 1 exchanges (not a screen) with 3 (person at point cuts on basket side)
- 2 reverse the ball to 1 with skip pass or via 3 depending on passes strength.
- 1 shoots the ball from wing (range depends on player)
- 3 and 2 fight for offensive rebound and finish missed shots

**Pass and Replace**

- 1 dribbles to foul line
- 2 and 3 cut to basket
- 1 passes to either player for lay-up

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55 everyone’s game
**Dribble Entry**

- 1 dribble ball to wing
- 2 cuts basket side to point
- 1 reverses ball to 3 with skip pass or via 2
- 3 dribbles in and shoots from comfortable range
- 2 and 1 fight from offensive rebound on any missed shot and finish basket

**Ball Screens**

*Wing Ball Screen*

- 1 passes to 2
- 1 cuts on basket side to set ball screen on 2's defender
- 2 sets defender up by dribbling away from screener then rubs off ball screen
- 2 comes off screen looking for shot or pass.
- 2 and 3 cut to open spots reading the Defence
When players become familiar with these plays you can instruct them to link 2 or more of them together, using communication with each other as the glue to pull the plays together. For Example: dribble entry, ball reversal, followed by wing ball screen.

**Transition Drills**

*2 on 1 Full Court*

'2 on 1 full court' is a fun simple drill that teaches players how get up the floor quickly to get an advantage of numbers in transition after a defensive play. Points of emphasis should be

- push the ball up the floor quickly,
- spread the Defence with spacing, and
- to shoot the early high percentage shot without over passing.

The emphasis on Defence is to try to slow the Offence to allow team mates time to get back into defensive transition or force a perimeter shot. The drill can be expanded 3 on 2, meaning 3 offensive players against 2 defensive players. The drill is as follows.
Players 1 and 2 attack defender 1 looking to score a basket.
Offensive players 3, 4, 5 and 6 are waiting to come into drill on next play phase.
After players 1 and 2 finish play they then go to end of line on side of court waiting to come in as new Defence or Offence.

When defender 1 gets ball after a defensive stop or made basket they outlet the ball to player 3 who is cutting to middle of court from the sideline.
Player 1 then cuts behind the ball towards the sideline.
Player 3 dribbles the ball down court on the opposite side of the floor to player 1.
Player 3 and 1 attack defender 2.
Drill then repeats with defender 2 and player 5 coming in from sideline.
2 Person Fast Break Drill

- Player 1 tosses the ball off backboard and throws an outlet pass to player 2 at extended foul line
- Player 2 dribbles to the middle of court to other end
- Player 1 cuts behind player 2 and continues down the side line
- Player 2 makes a pass to player 1 at extended foul line
- Player 1 does a lay up
- Players swap positions and repeat in other direction
- Variations: player making pass from foul line can contest player making the lay-up. Drill should be run from right and left hand side

2 Person Tag Drill

- Player 1 tosses the ball off backboard and rebounds ball
- Player 1 passes ball to player 2 who is foul line extended
- Player 2 dribbles the ball to middle of court and tries to make a lay-up
- Player 1 chases the dribbler and tries to make an early tag before player 2 can make a lay-up
- Swap positions and come back other side
Shooting Drills

*X out Lay-up Drill*

- Player starts with ball on elbow
- Executes lay-up with one dribble
- Player gets own rebound and dribbles to opposite elbow

- Player executes a one dribble lay-up from other elbow
- Gets own rebound and dribbles back to starting position
- Repeat for 1 min. and count made baskets
- Can have 2 players doing at same time to simulate game conditions
- Variations: Do hook shots, reverse lay-ups, power lay-ups and straight over front of rim.
Beat the Pro.

- 3 lines on the foul line
- Elbow shots are worth 1 point
- Free throw shots are worth 2 points
- Each player shoots a shot, gets own rebound and passes to next person in line (players shoot from comfortable range if can't make distance from foul line
- After each shot go to the end of a different line
- Count how many points the team can make in 2 minutes, try to improve on previous result each time the drill is completed

Fives

- Teams start at one of the positions.
- Each player shoots the ball, gets own rebound and passes to next player in line and goes to the end of the line
- Once the team has made 7 shots they go to next spot until they have made 7 shots at all five positions
- Variation: split into two teams at each end and compete to see which team can finish all the stations first.
Partner shooting series

- 3 positions: point, wing, wing.
- Player starts at 3 point line
- Player cuts right and receives pass for shot within range
- Player returns to starting position and cuts left for shot in range
- Partner rebounds for 1 minute and counts made baskets. After 1 minute rebounder will become shooter and shooter will become rebounder
- Each player completes 1 minute at all 3 positions trying to better their previous score

Variations: Players can do 1 dribble shots from each position.

In/Out Dribbling

- Players start on baseline with a ball
- Players weave in and out of cones or chairs dribbling the ball
- After rounding last cone player heads towards basket and shoots shot from range
- Player gets own rebound and goes to end of line waiting to come back down other side of court
- After each player has executed skill change direction eg. right hand side to left hand side

Dribble v Shooting relay
Coaching Wheelchair Basketball

**Shooting Drills**

- Players are divided into two teams, a dribbling and a shooting team.
- Each player in the dribbling team must bounce the ball to the opposite baseline and back twice.
- At the same time the shooting team must make as many layups as they can.
- Reverse roles, winning team has the most baskets.
- Variations: The shooting team can shoot mid range shots instead of layups. The dribbling team can weave in and out of cones.

**Tennessee Drill**

- Players 1, 2 and 3 move down court passing the ball
- 1 does a lay-up when near basket
- Players 2 and 3 cross court and catch pass from 3 red and 4 red for a shot on the block.
- 6 red (who was on baseline) gets the rebound from lay-up and heads down court with 3 and 4 red

Notes: Each made basket is worth one point. Team counts how many baskets in 3 minutes.
Defence Drills

1 on 1 Shadow

- Offensive player starts on the side line and must try to get the ball to the other side of the court whilst staying within the confines of the foul line and base line.
- Defensive player must stay in front of offensive player and try to make them change direction as many times as possible.
- Players swap from Offence to Defence at the other side of court and return.
- For the sake of the drill if offensive player gets past defensive player they should wait until Defence can get back in position.

2 on 2 Full Court

- Offence try to get ball to the other end of the court using passes and dribbling.
- Offence without the ball cannot receive a pass ahead of the ball or cross paths with other offence.
- Defence not on the ball stays slightly in front of the ball in a 'help' position in case the player with the ball gets past defender.
- Player Defending the ball maintains ball pressure.
- If offensive players get past defensive players they slow to allow Defence to get back in position then play live again.
- Players swap Offence to Defence at other end and return.
2 on 2 Full Court Variation

Variation: Offensive players can cross forcing the defenders to 'switch' the players they are Defending, maintaining the same defensive principles.

- Defender 1 is now Defending player 2 and visa-versa.
Rebounding

1 on 1 Rebounding

- Coach stands with a ball on the foul line and purposely misses shot off the basket
- When the ball leaves the coach's hand players 1 and 2 leave foul line to get in position to rebound.
- Player who gets rebound tries to score basket and other player plays Defence
- Continue until a player scores or violation occurs.
- Player 3 and 4 are next and 1 and 2 go to the end of the line

Scoring: Players can keep score of baskets they make and when they get x number of baskets they are winner.

1 on 1 Box Out

- Player 1 starts on the base line with ball
- Player 1 passes ball to player 2 on foul line
- Player 1 closes out on player 2 to contest shot and box out once shot is released
- Player 1 and 2 then contest rebound
- Player 1 will rotate to foul line for next shot and player 2 will go to baseline and repeat drill

Variation: Drill can be expanded to 2 on 2 and up with 2 defenders starting on base line and 2 offensive players on foul line. Ball is passed to one player for shot and both players close out for box out. All players then compete for rebound.
Part 12 – Considerations Specific to Wheelchair Athletes

Compared with coaching able-bodied athletes, there are a number of factors that impact on the performance of wheelchair basketball players. These include:

Accessibility
Following is a list of things to consider when coaching Wheelchair Basketball Athletes:

- **Transport** – for athletes and transport. Consider storage for game/day chairs
- **Venues** – What is the entry like? Does it have ramps? How far away is the parking? Are there self opening doors? How are the showers and toilets? What is the height of the water fountains bubblers? Is there room for team meetings? How far away from accommodation is the venue?
- **Accommodation** – What is the entry like? How many lifts are there? Do doors need to come off the showers and toilets? Is there a large area for team meetings?
- **Eating places** – Is there the ability to take chairs away? Room to move with wheelchairs? Accessible entry to Toilets?

Time
It is important to note that travel to and from training and games increases dramatically with a wheelchair basketball team. Loading and unloading athletes and equipment (playing chairs and day chairs) adds time to the day and impacts the athlete’s available recovery.

Athlete Recovery:
Consider the following:

- Time between games and training sessions
- Routines of stretching, massage, spa and pool
- Routine of hot and cold showers
- Routines of strength and conditioning workout
- Hydrating – water intake and toileting
- Nutrition – dietician monitoring
- Good balance between home work or school and sport

Some Do’s and Dont’s
Communicating with people with disabilities is no different to communicating with able-bodied people and coaching athletes with disabilities is no different to coaching able-bodied athletes.
Don’t assume:

- People with disabilities are deaf
- People with disabilities are hearing or learning impaired
- Every person who uses a wheelchair is unable to use their legs

Do

- Ask questions – people are generally willing to answer questions about their disability
- Treat people with disabilities with respect
- If you are talking to someone in a chair at length, crouch next to the chair to maintain eye contact at the same level

Don’t

- Lean on someone’s wheelchair
- Help someone unless they ask for it
- Push someone’s wheelchair unless they ask you to

Finally, as the coach you are responsible for the safety of your athletes and you have the same responsibilities as a coach including and need to be aware of your legal and public liability responsibilities.
Part 13 – Equipment

Why do you need a Basketball Wheelchair?
Twenty years ago it would have been hard to pick the difference between a basketball chair and chair used by someone on a daily basis. However, the last two decades have seen enormous developments in sports and recreation products for wheelchair users and the basketball wheelchair has been at the forefront of this evolution. Today even relative newcomers to the sport are generally using some sort of dedicated basketball wheelchair designed to maximise their playing potential.

Basketball wheelchairs involve a different design philosophy compared with day use wheelchairs. Sometimes comfort is sacrificed for performance; radical sitting positions and extreme rear wheel camber which make the wheelchair move better also make it totally impractical for regular daily living. In short, it is very difficult to be competitive playing basketball in a day chair and basketball is a highly competitive sport – no one wants to start the game with a disadvantage.

Modern playing rules include strict definitions of what equipment can and cannot be used on the basketball court. Maximum and minimum wheel sizes, seat height restrictions and the need for a fixed height and approved padded front bumper are just a few examples. Players with wheelchairs must match these definitions otherwise they will not be permitted to enter the game.

Types of Basketball Wheelchairs
It is not easy to categorise basketball wheelchairs into a few basic types or styles as some of the most critical attributes effecting wheelchair performance are very subtly contained within the overall design. However, a few of the different types are highlighted below:

How Many Wheels – Three or Four?
Wheelchair tennis was the first court sport to adopt the 3-wheel sports wheelchair, however, in recent times a number of manufacturers have begun promoting 3-wheelers as the new wave of basketball wheelchairs. The fundamental behind the move to 3-wheelers is an increase in manoeuvrability. However, stability is often the compromise. The wheelchair manufacturers are happy to advise you of the relative advantages and disadvantages.
Frame Composition
Wheelchair frames are made from a variety of materials including aluminium, chrome-molly, Reynella steel, titanium and even mild steel. The wheelchair manufacturers are best placed to advocate the benefits of each frame type; however, weight and maintenance are also to be considered.

A sports wheelchair cannot be too light, as long as it is strong. It is simple to add weight (a sand bag or lump of lead) but you generally cannot reduce weight. Some of the more exotic frame types (ie titanium) can be difficult to get repaired, particularly when on tour in a small town.

Rear Wheel Size
The most common wheel size for wheelchair basketball is 24", 25" or 26". The choice of rear wheel is critical to the performance of the wheelchair and has to be carefully considered.

In general, smaller rear wheels give a faster take off whilst larger wheels provide for higher top end speed. Remember that most of basketball is played in 5 meter spurts and the speed off the mark is the most important. Players who sit very high in the wheelchair almost always will need 26" wheels so that they have enough wheel to push on. When deciding on a rear wheel size, it is important to also find out what range of tires are readily available to suit. It is generally best to stay with the standard sizes of 24" or 26".

Rear Wheel Mounts
Rear wheels are typically mounted to the chair either by a moveable rear block allowing multiple axle positions or by a straight through axle/camber bar. Each system has its advantages and disadvantages particularly in relation to performance, adjustability and maintenance.
Wheelchair Dimensions
The maximum size for wheelchair dimensions are below:

Choosing a Basketball Wheelchair
Basketball Wheelchairs can cost up to $10,000 so players should carefully consider which chair to purchase. Wheelchair sports organisations within each state often have chairs for hire which is advisable for new players.

When a player is sure that they want to invest in their own chair they should seek advice from other players and officials on which chair is appropriate for them. It is important that the chair suits the individual; a chair that allows a player to sit higher is not always advisable as smaller players in large chairs will lose mobility.

Wheelchair Maintenance
It is advisable that players and coaches acquire basic wheelchair maintenance skills. Players and coaches should learn to be able to change a tube, pump up tires and change a broken spoke.

This will limit ongoing chair expenses and will be more convenient than taking your chair to a mechanic each time something basic happens to a chair. Most bicycle repair shops are able to conduct wheelchair maintenance but it is advisable that if the

everyone's game
manufacturer of your wheelchair has after sales maintenance that you maintain the relationship with them.
Part 14 – What Do Words Mean?

We have included some definitions of common terms in wheelchair basketball

**Defence:** Period of play when the opposition has the ball. Object of defence is to stop the opponents from scoring a basket.

**Offence:** Period of play when your team has the ball. Object is to score a basket when on offence.

**Transition:** Transition is when a team is changing from offense to defense and visa versa.

**Classification:** The system used in Wheelchair Basketball to categorise players according to their physical ability.

**Rebound:** After a missed shot the ball will bounce off the basket for a player to rebound.

**Seal:** A cut to the basket by an offensive player which results in a path to the basket for another offensive player.

**Ball Reversal:** To move the ball from one side of the court to the other with pass or dribble.

**Backcourt:** The opposition teams offensive end
**Box Out:** To position your chair between an opponent and the basket to stop them from securing the rebound.

**Post Up:** When an offensive player uses a height advantage or superior position to receive the ball. This play is often used close to the basket for a high percentage shot.

**Hoop:** Another term for the basket

**Low:** Players classified 1 or 1.5

**Mid:** Players classified 2 to 3.5

**High:** Players classified 4 and 4.5

**AB:** Able Body. Used to describe Able Bodied Basketball
Part 15 – Getting More Information

There are many organisations that can provide useful information for athletes, their families, and their coaches. Below are some.

Australian National Wheelchair Basketball League
www.nwbl.com.au

Australian Women’s National Wheelchair Basketball League
www.wnwbl.com.au

Australian Paralympic Committee
www.paralympic.org.au

International Wheelchair Basketball Federation
www.iwbf.com.au

Canadian Level 1, 2, 3 Wheelchair Basketball Coaching Course
www.cwba.ca

IWBF Asia Oceania Zone
www.iwbf/asiaoceania.com.au

International Paralympic Committee
www.ipc.com

Basketball NSW
www.nswbasketball.com.au

Canadian Wheelchair Basketball Association
www.cwba.org.au

NSW Wheelchair Sports Association
www.nswwwsa.org.au

Disability Sport
www.disabilitysport.com

Basketball Australia
Level 3/256 Coward St,
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<td>Mascott, NSW, 2020</td>
<td></td>
<td>(02) 9469 7200</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.basketball.net.au">www.basketball.net.au</a></td>
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<td>National Wheelchair Basketball League (NWBL)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wheelchair Sports Victoria</td>
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<td>(03) 9473 0133</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.wsv.org.au">www.wsv.org.au</a></td>
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<td>Women's National Wheelchair Basketball League</td>
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Wheelchair Sports WA
Unit 6, 443 Scarborough Beach Road,
Osborne Park, WA,
Phone (08) 9443 4833
Fax: (08) 9443 4252
www.wheelchairsportswa.org.au

Sydney Academy of Sport

Wheelchair Suppliers

Mogo Wheelchairs Pty. Ltd.
Address: 5/42 Canterbury Road,
Bankstown NSW 2200
Phone: 02 9708 5255
Fax: 02 9796 2479
Email: info@mogowheelchairs.com.au

RGK Wheelchairs
218 Finch St,
Ballarat, Vic, 3350
Phone (03) 5331 6830
Email: info@rgklife.com.au
Wicked Wheelchairs

Phone (03) 5331 6830
PO Box 680,
Oxenford, Qld, 4210

Mobility Plus Wheelchairs

1/23 Bell St
Preston, Victoria, 3072
Phone: 0406 771 265
Fax: (03) 9480 3177
Website: www.mobilityplus.com.au
1 point player, 9
2 Point Player, 9
3 Point Player, 9
4 Point Player, 9
4.5 Point Player, 9, 10
Backward Push, 14
Ball Handling Drill
Two Ball Drill, 54
Ball Handling Drills
Arm Pretzel, 54
Ball familiarisation, 54
Ball Wraps, 54
Collision Drill, 55
Dribble Knockout, 54, 55
Dribble Tag, 55
Front See-saw, 54
Partner Drill, 55
Pivot Drive Drill, 56
Relay Race, 55
Side to Side Drill, 55
Speed Control Dribble, 55
Spot Drill, 54
Static Dribbling, 54
Stationary Alternate Hands Drill, 56
Typewriter Drill, 54
Ball Screen Drills
Point Ball Screen, 59
Ball Screens Drill
Wing Ball Screen, 58
Baseball Pass, 27
Basketball Australia Hall of Fame, 1
Blocking Out, 41
Brad Ness, 2
Catching
basic techniques, 29
fundamentals, 29
what good players do, 29
Chair Movement Drills
Collision Drill, 49
Explosive Pushing, 49
Go Stop Drill, 50
Hopscotch Drills, 49
Line Drill, 49
Relay Races, 49
Whistle Drill, 49
Chest pass, 26
Chest Pass
moving chest pass, 26
Classification, 7
1 point player, 9
2 point player, 9
3 point player, 9
4 point player, 9
4.5 point player, 9, 10
assessment process, 7
Assigning half points, 9
Competitions that don't use it, 10
Determining Factors, 8
Minimal disability, 9
Planes of Movement, 8
Volume of Action, 8
Classification Cards, 12
equipment check, 12
Collision Drill, 49
Contact, 5
Both players moving, 5
Player without the ball, 6
screening situations, 6
Stationary player with ball, 6
Defence
1 v 1 defence, 39
Defence Drills
1 v 1 Shadow, 66
2 v 2 Full Court, 66
2 v 2 Full Court (Variation), 67
Defensive Ready Position, 39
Disability
pain not a disability, 10
Dribble Stop and Pass Drill, 51
Explosive Pushing Drill, 49
Fakes, 31
key characteristics, 31
Forward push, 13
Gliders, 2

everyone's game
Coaching Wheelchair Basketball

Getting More Information

Go Stop Drill, 50
Half Court Offence
  3 Out, 2 In, 38
  ball reversal, 37
  characteristics, 37
  defensive balance, 37
  screening, 37
  spacing, 37
Hook Pass, 27
Hopscotch Drill, 49
Individual Defence, 39
  Defensive Ready Position, 39
Justin Eveson, 2
Kevin Coombes, 1, 17
Lay-up
  high percentage shot, 33
  Overhand lay-up, 33
  technique, 33
  underhand, 33
  underhand technique, 34
Leisl Tesch, 2
Line Drill, 49
Minimal Disability, 9
NWBL, 2
Offence
  Transition Offence, 35
Offensive Transition
  spacing, 35
Paralympic Games, 1
Paralympics, 17
Pass Knockout Drill, 51
Passing
  2 handed bounce pass, 28
  2 handed chest pass, 26
  Baseball Pass, 27
  Hook Pass, 27
  moving chest pass, 26
  promote team play, 25
  responsibility of passer, 25
  types of pass, 25
Passing Drill
Wall Drill, 51
Passing Drills
  3 Lane Passing, 52
  3 man weave, 53
  Dribble, Stop and Pass Drill, 51
  Name Drill, 51
  Pass Knockout, 51
  Pig in the Middle, 52
  Stationary Passing Drill, 51
  Triangle Passing, 51
  Turn and Catch Drill, 51
  Two Line Passing, 52
Picking up the ball, 15
Planes of movement, 8
Points System
  1
    1
      3
        4.5
          4.5, 11
    4
      4
        4.5, 11
  1.5
    3
      4
        4.5, 11
  2
    2
      4.5
        4.5, 11
    3
      3
        4.5, 12
      4
        4, 11
  2
    2
      4
        4, 11
exceeding 14 points, 12
Game Style, 10
Power game, 11
substitution patterns, 12
Up tempo, 12

everyone’s game
Possessions
   how to get more possessions, 40

Rebounding, 40
   Blocking out, 41

Rebounding Drills
   1 on 1 Box Out, 68
   1 v 1 Rebounding, 68

Relay Races Drill, 49

Rollers, 2

Rules
   Court Dimensions, 4
   Double Dribble, 4
   Lifting, 5
   Modifications, 4
   Out of Bounds, 4
   Travel, 4

Shooting
   "Jump" hook, 19
   adjusting technique, 23
   concentration, 22
   confidence, 22
   correcting common faults, 19
   one handed shot, 17
   psychological, 22
   rhythm, 21
   shot selection, 22
   smaller players, 23
   two handed shot, 17
   Two handed shot, 20
   using the backboard, 21

Shooting Drills
   Beat The Pro, 63
   Dribble v Shooting, 65
   Fives, 63
   In/Out Dribbling, 64
   Partner Shooting, 64
   Tennessee, 65
   X Out Lay-ups, 62

Shot Selection
   Half court offence, 37

Spacing
   Half court offence, 37
   Transition Offence, 35

Stop and Start Drill, 50

Stopping, 14

bounce stop, 16
under defensive pressure, 16

Team Defence
   Triple Switching, 39

Team Offence Drills, 57
   3v0 Spacing, 57
   Dribble Entry, 58
   Pass and Replace, 57

Three Lane Passing Drill, 52

Three Man Weave Drill, 53

Transition Drills
   2 person fast break, 61
   2 person tag, 61
   2 v 1 Full Court, 59

Transition Offence
   After a score, 36
   characteristics, 35
   crossing the court, 35
   When is the opportunity, 35

Triangle Passing Drill, 51

Triple Switch Defence, 39
   teaching, 39

Triple Threat, 24

Troy Sachs, 2

Turn and Catch Drill, 51

Turning, 14

Two handed Bounce Pass, 28

Two Line Passing Drill, 52

Volume of Action, 8

Wall Drill, 51

Wheelchair Movement
   Backward push, 14
   bounce stop, 16
   Forward push, 13
   Picking up the ball, 15
   Stopping, 14
   Turning, 14

Wheelchair Movement Drills
   Stop and Start Drill, 50

Wheelchair Positioning, 13
   without the ball, 13

Wheelchairs
   3 or 4 wheels, 71
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Basketball Specific, 71</th>
<th>Rear Wheel size, 72</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Choosing one, 73</td>
<td>Whistle Drill, 49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dimensions, 73</td>
<td>WNWBL, 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance, 73</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rear Wheel Mounts, 72</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>