

Mini-Basket



A youth competition model that is player centered and development focused



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CANADA
BASKETBALL

Who plays Mini-Basket?

Mini-Basket is broken into 2 programs:

1. Mini-Basket 3v3
(ages 9 & under)
2. Mini-Basket 4v4
(ages 11 & under)



What is Mini-Basket?

Mini-Basket is designed for school, community, or club basketball players and programs. The philosophy of Mini-Basket is to allow children to play a game that is better suited to the development of their physical, mental, and basketball skills by instituting long-term athlete development (LTAD) modifications to the adult game. With high repetitions and sharing of the ball, it is player-oriented with the emphasis on skill development, in combination with the teaching and loading of actions.

The aim of Mini-Basket is to provide a rich and high-quality experience for youth basketball players. In turn, a positive experience will help foster their passion as they grow with the sport. The emphasis of Mini-Basket is on the quality of the experience and its appropriateness to the age and ability of the participants.

The adult game of basketball is played with a large ball, a full court, and ten-foot hoops. In Mini-Basket, the size of the ball, court size, number of players, and the height of the hoop is reduced. There are fewer rules that are gradually introduced as the players progress in their skill development and understanding of the game, keeping it developmentally appropriate.



Why Mini-Basket?

BENEFIT 1: MORE TOUCHES

When youth play traditional 5-on-5 games, it is common for 1-2 players to rarely touch the ball. This is especially true when a team has 1-2 dominant ball handlers or early developers. Teammates tend to pass the ball to those players and those players tend to take the ball to the basket and sometimes coast to coast, failing to work on team and decision-making skills. This results in other players not developing their skills. The dominant player is only working on a few skills, and the team is not developing as a whole.

In Mini-Basket, everyone must be involved for a team to have success. All players get to handle the ball almost every possession, allowing for more skill repetition in competition environments, therefore providing the best opportunity for skill development to occur.

BENEFIT 2: BETTER SPACING

Even with the smaller bodies of youth players, 5-on-5 games are crowded. Youth basketball is not the right environment for players

to practice dribbling through double teams or passing through multiple types of coverage - their skill package is underdeveloped to be successful in those areas. Mini-Basket opens up the court and provides players with more room to operate. Youth can play in open space, allowing them the opportunity to better practice and load their skills without multiple defenders crowding the ball. The spacing also allows for players to practice individual (when to shoot/pass) and team decision-making.

BENEFIT 3: FOCUS ON BASKETBALL SKILLS AND ACTIONS

Mini-Basket emphasizes skills as well as 1-, 2-, and 3-player actions that are the foundation for successful 5-on-5 play. The focus is on concept development as opposed to being system and set oriented.

Defense for Mini-Basket is player-to-player, creating opportunity at the offensive end for freedom, decision-making, and creativity to develop.



LTAD FACT

"At the first 4 stages [Active Start, FUNdamentals, Learn to Train, Train to Train], our children are competing too often with over-zealous parents and coaches wanting them to win, robbing them of the opportunity to have fun and develop skills that will enable them to be successful."

Steve Norris, PhD.

BENEFIT 4: MORE DIRECTED COMPETITION

Games in Mini-Basket competitions are shorter in duration, but more frequent, allowing players to face multiple opponents in one competition day. The number of players is reduced, allowing for maximal competition experience and playing time during this developmental stage. Players can play in classifications (A, AA, AAA) based on their development and skill level to challenge the elite players, while keeping new and late developing players involved.



How do you play Mini-Basket?

3 v 3

- Youth play 3-versus-3 with a size 3 ball and an 8-foot hoop.
- The court is half-court with no 3-point shot awarded.
- Games are 10 minutes long with 4 players per team.
- Multiple games against different opponents are played over the course of the competition.



4 v 4

- Youth at this level play 4-versus-4 with a regulation size 5 ball and 9-foot hoop.
- The court is cross-court with a regulation 3-point line.
- Games are 12 minutes long with 6 players per team.
- Multiple games against different opponents are played over the course of the competition.

What is next for Mini-Basket?

- There are Mini-Basket pilots in Alberta and Ontario
- Exact rules such as point systems, proximity of the free throw line, and loading of the rules
- Competition models for schools and clubs to use



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