

Youth Basketball Shooting: 3 Things Youth Coaches & Players Need to Adjust

Difference #1 - DON'T LET THEM "CHUCK" THE BALL.

When working with young players, always use a lower rim. ALL experts agree that it's a huge mistake to use a 10 ft. rim. In most cases, an 8 ft. or 9 ft. rim is the way to go.

The biggest problem with kids today is that they use a full-sized ball, 10 ft. rim, and they have to "chuck it" to get the ball there.

This is where many players establish wrong habits in their [basketball shooting form](#). These habits often linger and hamper players well after they are strong enough and big enough to shoot properly at a ten foot hoop.

You'll often find players that "chuck" the ball frequently miss to the left and right.

Getting rid of these habits takes a lot of time and effort, much more than is needed to establish correct habits in the first place.

So our advice is simple...

- USE 8 FT. RIMS FOR KIDS THAT ARE 8 YEARS OLD AND UNDER.
- USE 9 FT. RIMS FOR 9 AND 10 YEAR OLDS.
- USE REGULATION FOR 11 YEAR OLDS AND UP.

We also suggest that you use smaller basketballs. For kids 8 and under you can use mini-basketballs (7" in diameter). You'll notice that their shooting form makes an undeniable improvement with the smaller ball. For 9 and 10 year olds, you can use a junior ball (8.75" in diameter), and 11 year olds can use a youth ball until they get to high school.

Difference #2 - DON'T GO TOO FAST AND EASE INTO DIFFICULT SKILLS.

Some of the skills in [shooting workouts](#) will be too difficult. In fact, young players should spend A LOT of time just on form shooting and shooting away from the basket.

Players develop shooting habits at an early age, so you need to start with basic form shooting. If they get really good, you can start moving into shots off the dribble and so on.

Just to give you an idea, here's the progression for a young player:

Move onto the next progression when the player is VERY comfortable with each previous skill.

1. Form shooting with one hand (away from the basket)
2. Form shooting with two hands (away from the basket)
3. Form shooting with one hand (a few feet from the basket)
4. Form shooting with two hands (a few feet from the basket)
5. Catch and shoot up to 10 feet from the basket
6. Catch, pivot, and shoot up to 10 feet from the basket
7. Dribble, pivot, and shoot (both hands)

You'll obviously need to go at a slower pace with young kids.

Difference #3 - PERSISTENCE, PERSISTENCE, PERSISTENCE

When it comes to teaching youth players, you are going to have to constantly adjust their shots.

The trap that most youth coaches fall into is that you fix a kid's shot once, twice, three, four times, and by the fifth time, you let the kid start shooting with their old, bad habits. That's where you need to remain persistent and keep adjusting their shots. It could take hundreds and thousands of corrections before the player finally gets it.

Don't get frustrated or mad. It's just a process that takes time; have some fun with it!

It's also very rewarding when you see the kid nailing shot after shot at the varsity level a few years down the road.