



# JERSEY BASKETBALL LEAGUE

## No Zone Defense – Full Version

### 4<sup>th</sup> Grade, all levels, 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Girls, all levels, & 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Boys Silver & Bronze Divisions -

#### **No Zone Defenses: Full Game:**

Teams also cannot blatantly double team and trap the ball. If players help & they are temporarily in a double team, they must play one man only as soon as possible. Players can help and recover from the weak side; however, coaches must avoid always keeping their better/bigger defensive players in the lane. No player can have more than 1 foot in the paint if the player they are guarding is outside the lane.

The defense does not have to extend beyond the arc at any time, except for the defensive player covering the offensive player with the ball.

Players can help but must recover to their man. Full court zone traps will be allowed during the pressing portion of the game but must return to man in the offensive front court.

**Please remember this is player development**

Defenses can only pick up their man, after they cross mid-court completely. The defense cannot stand at the division line to prevent access to the front court. The ball & the ball handler must have front court status before they can be defended.

- Once the defensive team gains possession of the ball either by a rebound, steal or turnover in what is now their backcourt (and was the offensive team's frontcourt); the team that was formerly on offense must get back on defense and can only defend in what is now the frontcourt for the offensive team. They may pick up and defend immediately after crossing the mid-court line.
- Should a player gain possession in the backcourt and the other team steals the ball back, the official must stop the game. The team with possession in the backcourt will get the ball on the side. A warning is given to the team and coach. We would encourage the coach to remind his players of the rule. Should a team continue to interfere with backcourt possessions, the official could award a two-shot technical foul on the coach. We do not want to get into this situation but will use the technical for teams and coaches who continue to defend in the backcourt.
- Simply put - help is when a player with the ball drives dribbles toward another opponent (not their primary defender) and the secondary defender pauses momentarily to "help" and then recovers back to the player they were initially guarding. A double team is when that help defender stays for a prolonged period/never recovers to initial player or leaves his/her primary guarding assignment even when the ball is not being driven toward them.
- The following two examples violate the intent of the rule. It is illegal for Coaches who either:
  1. Set up their offense in an "extreme" fashion to isolate their superstar offensive player while the other offense players are essentially statues' far away from the basket and the dribbling superstar. If help comes "too early", the offensive coach is yelling for a zone defense call.
  2. Have all their defensive players one foot in the paint no matter where the offensive players are. When a no zone call is made, the coach points to the literal reading of the rule.

**The objective of this is to give the young player opportunities to learn man to man defense, the basis for all other defenses.**

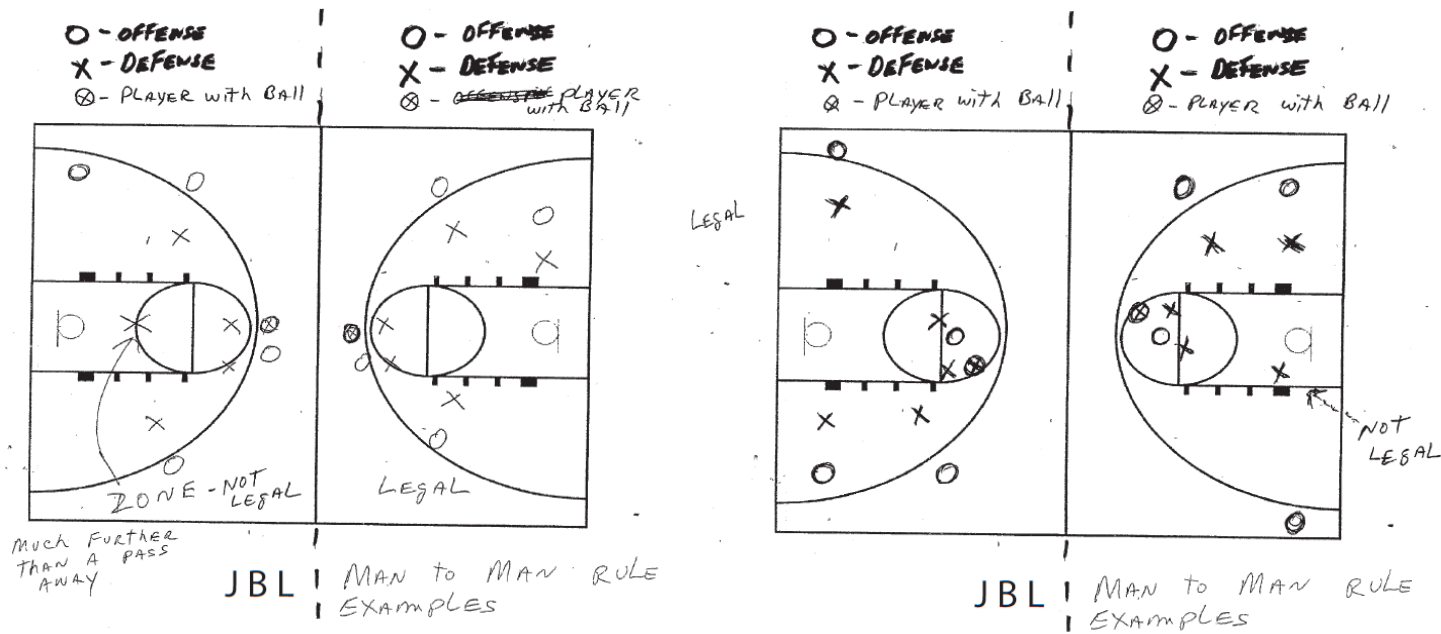
**It also helps negate size issues and opens the game up to all players. "Packing in the paint" teaches nothing.**

1st Offense - Coach warning.

2nd Offense - Technical foul if coach is not reacting. No Technicals will be issued due to a "novice player" not knowing what to do. Officials will be instructed to help. If players help & they are temporarily in a double team, trapping the ball, they must play one man only as soon as possible. Players can help and recover from the weak side; however, coaches must avoid keeping their better/bigger defensive players in the lane at all times. Player can help but must recover to their man.

Why do we have a no zone rule anyway? Because at this young age, for 4<sup>th</sup> Grade, all levels, 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Girls, all levels & 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Boys Silver & Bronze Divisions, we are a Developmental league trying to teach the kids the fundamentals of man-to-man defense.

Policing this rule can be tricky, and somewhat subjective. We've asked our refs to address the rule in the pregame discussion. Bottomline, the refs will be arbiters. To assist both coaches and refs, the following pictures provide examples of legal defensive positioning, and what is a zone.



**You cannot put in writing a perfect definition of a zone offense. It's one of those things, you know when you see it. While a coach can provide their opinion, politely, about a whether a no-zone infraction has occurred, the refs will be the arbiter.**

**HERE IT ALL BEGINS!**

