

Year 4 - Development of Invasion Games

Basketball & Football - Lesson Plan

PLAYING

EDSTART

Lesson Objective To develop dribbling the ball whilst under pressure from a defender in basketball. **Lesson 1/6**

Equipment Needed Basketball – enough for 1 each (minimum 1 between 2), cones, flat markers, bibs.

Success Criteria Children can:

- understand the terms of 'travelling' and 'double dribble'
- use their body / other arm to protect the ball whilst dribbling.

EDSTART KNOW

- I can explain the rules of travelling and double dribble.
- I can describe how to protect the ball with my body.
- I can understand why it's important to keep my head up when dribbling.

EDSTART GO

- I can dribble with control using both hands.
- I can change speed and direction while keeping possession.
- I can dribble past defenders in modified games.

EDSTART SHOW

- I can respect defenders and play fairly.
- I can encourage teammates when dribbling under pressure.
- I can celebrate effort as well as success.

Key Question :How can you keep control of the ball when a defender is trying to steal it? By keeping the ball low, using your body to shield it, changing hands quickly, and staying balanced and calm.

Warm Up

SHADOW SHUFFLE: In pairs, children face each other in a small marked area. One child leads while the other shadows, trying to stay directly behind their partner at all times without allowing roles to reverse. The leader uses quick changes of direction, sharp turns, accelerations, and speed variations to escape, while the shadow mirrors their movements using fast side-steps, backward shuffles, and low defensive stances. Emphasise staying light on the feet, keeping knees bent, chest upright, and eyes focused on the opponent's waist to react quickly. This activity develops defensive footwork, agility, balance, and spatial awareness that directly links to game situations in basketball. **PROGRESSION:** Add a ball for the leader to dribble while their partner shadows their movement, switching roles every 30 seconds to ensure equal practice.

Main Activity

DRIBBLE DUEL: Children work in pairs with one ball. The attacker begins by dribbling on the spot using their dominant hand for 20–30 seconds, focusing on soft fingertip control, low bounces below waist height, and keeping their head up. They then switch to their non-dominant hand before alternating hands using controlled crossover dribbles in front of the body. Coaches reinforce a strong athletic stance, relaxed shoulders, and keeping the ball close to the body for protection. After mastering control, a passive defender is introduced who applies light pressure by attempting quick, safe taps on the ball. Attackers learn to shield the ball using their body, reposition their feet, and use pivots to keep possession. Roles are rotated frequently so all pupils experience both attacking and defending. **PROGRESSION:** Increase defensive pressure to active stealing attempts and challenge attackers to complete five controlled dribbles before switching hands or direction.

COLOUR CHAOS: Children dribble freely around the court, keeping their ball under control while responding instantly to the coach's colour commands. On Green, they move at varying speeds and explore space using different dribbling heights. On Amber, they slow down and dribble on the spot with control while scanning the environment. On Red, they stop instantly, placing one foot forward in a strong balanced stance while maintaining control of the ball. Emphasise quick reactions, awareness of others, and controlled stopping. This activity links decision-making with ball control under changing conditions. **PROGRESSION:** Remove voice cues and use visual colour cards only to challenge awareness; add new colours such as Blue = crossover, Purple = change direction, or Yellow = pivot and protect for increased unpredictability.

COURT KING/QUEEN: Every child starts with a basketball and dribbles continuously within the designated playing area. The aim is to maintain control of their own ball while strategically attempting to knock other players' balls out of the court using controlled taps. Once a player loses their ball, they move to the outside and become a defender, working together to apply pressure on remaining players. The game promotes strong protective dribbling, scanning for space, quick reactions, and emotional control under pressure. The last remaining dribbler in the court is crowned Court King, celebrating both skill and resilience. **PROGRESSION:** Gradually shrink the playing area after each round to increase challenge or allow defenders to enter through designated zones to create tactical pressure.

Adapted Learning (Differentiation) (Challenge)

SPACE

Making the space larger gives more time to control the ball, while smaller spaces increase pressure and improve close-control dribbling.

TASK

Simple tasks build confidence first, while adding defenders, direction changes, and challenges increases decision-making and skill under pressure.

EQUIPMENT

Using larger or lighter balls supports early success, while standard basketballs increase realism and technical challenge.

PEOPLE

Working alone builds control, pairs add competition and support, and small groups develop teamwork and game understanding.

Key Technical Point Maintain a low athletic stance with knees bent and head up, use soft fingertip control to keep the dribble below waist height, switch hands smoothly through crossover actions, and use the body and pivots effectively to shield the ball from defenders.

Cooldown

BOUNCE AND BREATHE: Children slowly dribble around the space, reducing the height and speed of their bounce with each step until the ball eventually comes to a gentle stop. Once still, they either sit or stand comfortably with the ball resting on their lap or at their feet. Guide them through slow, controlled breathing — breathing in through the nose for three seconds and out through the mouth for three seconds. Encourage pupils to reflect quietly on their effort and emotions during the session. Ask a calming reflection question such as, "How did it feel when you had to protect the ball and stay calm under pressure?" **PROGRESSION:** Add simple stretching movements with the ball during the breathing phase to support relaxation and recovery.

Year 4 - Development of Invasion Games

Basketball & Football - Lesson Plan

PLAYING

EDSTART

Lesson Objective To develop the skill of passing in Basketball. **Lesson 2/6**

Equipment Needed Basketball – enough for 1 each (minimum 1 between 2), cones, flat markers, bibs.

Success Criteria Children can:

- know the technique for passing the ball from their chest to a partner.
- chest pass the ball to a partner over a variety of distances.
- cushion the ball into their chest when catching.

EDSTART KNOW

- I can explain how to chest pass.
- I can describe how to cushion the ball when catching.
- I can understand why quick passing helps my team.

EDSTART GO

- I can chest pass with control to a partner.
- I can receive and secure the ball safely.
- I can combine passing in keep-ball games.

EDSTART SHOW

- I can respect my partner during passing drills.
- I can encourage others in timed challenges.
- I can support my team in keep-ball games.

Key Question Why is the chest pass the best pass to use in many game situations? Because it is quick, accurate, difficult to intercept, and allows your team to keep possession under pressure.

Warm Up

COLOUR COMMAND CHAOS: Children dribble around the basketball court, listening carefully for the coach's commands while keeping close control of their own ball. On Green, they dribble freely, changing direction and speed to explore space and avoid collisions. On Amber, they slow down and dribble on the spot, alternating hands while staying alert. On Red, they must stop instantly with one hand resting on the ball, feet still, and eyes up. Emphasise keeping heads up to scan for space and other players, controlling the ball below waist height, and reacting quickly and safely to instructions. This activity develops reaction speed, body control, and decision-making under pressure. **PROGRESSION:** Use coloured cones or cards only (no voice commands) to make players react visually; add Blue = change direction or Purple = crossover dribble for extra challenge.

Main Activity

POWER PASS PRACTICE: Explain that today's focus is on the chest pass, one of the most important passes in basketball because it is quick, accurate, and difficult to intercept. Demonstrate correct technique clearly: hands placed on either side of the ball, elbows out, knees slightly bent, a strong push from the chest, and a full follow-through with fingers pointing at the target and thumbs down. Children stand approximately three metres apart in pairs and practise flat, direct chest passes (not looping). Reinforce good receiving technique — arms extended, soft hands, eyes on the ball, and absorbing the ball into the chest on contact. Encourage consistent rhythm and clear communication between partners. **PROGRESSION:** Children step one pace further back after every five successful passes, or complete moving chest passes while walking slowly forward together.

PASS & DASH: Children work in groups of four in a square formation marked by cones. One player begins with the ball, chest-passes to the next player and immediately follows their pass by running to the next cone. The receiving player repeats the pattern, ensuring the ball and players move continuously around the square. Encourage quick decision-making, accurate passing, and calling for the ball. Emphasise timing of movement after the pass and maintaining strong, balanced body positions on both passing and receiving. This activity links passing technique with off-the-ball movement and teamwork. **PROGRESSION:** Add a time challenge — record how many successful chest passes the group can complete in one minute; if the ball is dropped or a pass is inaccurate, the count restarts.



KEEP THE BALL ALIVE: In groups of four, three attackers work together inside a small marked area while one defender attempts to intercept passes. Attackers are not allowed to move while holding the ball, so they must pass quickly, create passing angles, and communicate constantly to maintain possession. The defender applies pressure by reading the play, reacting to body position, and attempting controlled interceptions. This game develops quick passing, off-the-ball movement, spatial awareness, and defensive anticipation. Rotate the defender regularly so all children experience attacking and defending roles. **PROGRESSION:** Make the area smaller to increase pressure, add a second defender, or introduce a scoring system such as 1 point for every 5 consecutive successful passes.



Adapted Learning (Differentiation) (Challenge)

SPACE

Increase or reduce the size of the playing area to control pressure on passing and decision-making.

TASK

Start with static passing and gradually add movement, defenders, and time challenges.

EQUIPMENT

Use softer or larger balls for confidence, progressing to match-size basketballs for realism.

PEOPLE

Move from partner work to small-sided games to develop cooperation and tactical awareness.

Key Technical Point For an effective chest pass, hold the ball with two hands at chest height, step forward, push strongly from the chest, extend both arms fully, snap the wrists, and finish with fingers pointing at the target to ensure speed and accuracy.

Cooldown

CIRCLE OF CONTROL: Children form a large circle and gently bounce or chest-pass the ball to one another at a slow, steady pace. The focus is on relaxed movement, soft hands, and steady breathing. After several controlled passes, children carefully place the ball on the floor, stand tall, and take three deep, slow breaths — in through the nose and out through the mouth. Use this time to bring heart rates down and encourage calm reflection. Ask reflective questions such as, "What helped your team make accurate passes today?" and "How did communication make you more successful?" **PROGRESSION:** Add gentle shoulder and arm stretches between breaths while holding or resting the ball.

Year 4 - Development of Invasion Games

Basketball & Football - Lesson Plan

PLAYING

EDSTART

Lesson Objective To develop the technique of shooting in basketball **Lesson 3/6**

Equipment Needed Basketball – enough for 1 each (minimum 1 between 2), cones, flat markers, bibs.

Success Criteria Children can:

- know how to stand and hold then ball before shooting.
- understand what a set shot is.
- understand the Acronym of BEEF (Balance, Elbow under the ball, Eyes on the target, Follow through).

EDSTART KNOW

- I can explain what a set shot is.
- I can describe the acronym BEEF (Balance, Elbow, Eyes, Follow-through).
- I can understand how stance and follow-through affect accuracy.

EDSTART GO

- I can perform a set shot using correct technique.
- I can score from different distances.
- I can apply shooting in small games and races.

EDSTART SHOW

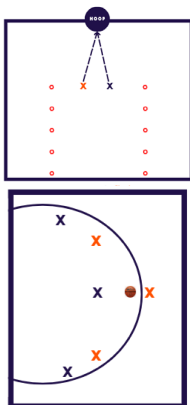
- I can respect teammates when they are shooting.
- I can encourage others to improve their technique.
- I can play fairly in team competitions.

Key Question What helps you shoot more accurately during a game? Balanced feet, bent knees, focused eyes on the target, and a smooth follow-through all help improve shooting accuracy.

Warm Up

COURT SHOWDOWN: On the basketball court, all players begin dribbling their own ball within the marked playing area. The aim is to protect your own ball at all times while attempting to knock other players' balls out of bounds using controlled taps with one hand. Players must continue dribbling while trying to displace others, reinforcing ball protection, scanning, and agility. Once a player's ball is knocked out, they move to the outside and become a defender, working cooperatively to apply pressure on the remaining dribblers. The last player left inside the playing area with control of their ball is crowned Court King, celebrating resilience, control, and decision-making under pressure. **PROGRESSION:** Gradually reduce the size of the playing area after each round to increase pressure, or introduce weaker-hand-only dribbling for added challenge.

Main Activity



SHOOT LIKE A PRO: Split the class into as many groups as there are basketball hoops available. Demonstrate correct shooting technique clearly: feet shoulder-width apart, knees bent, strong balance, eyes focused on the target, shooting elbow under the ball, and a smooth follow-through with a relaxed wrist flick. Pupils form single-file lines behind their assigned hoop and take turns to shoot, retrieving their own rebound and passing it back to the next shooter. Each pupil takes at least three consecutive shots before rotating, allowing time to adjust aim and develop muscle memory for consistent technique. Encourage peer feedback between turns using simple cues such as "bend your knees" or "hold your follow-through." **PROGRESSION:** Move pupils one step further back after each successful basket to gradually increase shooting distance and challenge accuracy.

BACKBOARD CHALLENGE: Using the same shooting groups, set out a straight line of cones that gradually move further away from the hoop. Each player begins at the closest cone and attempts a shot. After a successful basket, they move back to the next cone in the sequence. Missed shots require the player to return to the same cone for their next attempt. The challenge continues until one player successfully scores from the final cone and wins the race. This activity builds confidence, shooting accuracy under pressure, and perseverance. **PROGRESSION:** Add a passive defender at the final cone or require players to complete two controlled dribbles before each shot attempt.

EDSTART MINI MATCH MADNESS: Organise teams of three to play fast-paced, two-minute games to one basket. The winner remains on the court to face the next team, creating a rotation system that keeps intensity high and engagement strong. Emphasise teamwork, quick passing, communication, and purposeful movement into space. When possession is lost, the opposing team restarts play from the top of the 3-point area to encourage structured attacking play. Players are encouraged to combine dribbling, passing, and shooting skills developed earlier in the lesson. **PROGRESSION:** Introduce a scoring bonus such as 2 points for a successful pass-and-move sequence before shooting to reinforce tactical awareness.

Adapted Learning (Differentiation) (Challenge)

SPACE

Increase or decrease court size to control the level of pressure on dribbling, shooting, and decision-making.

TASK

Begin with closed shooting and control drills before introducing defenders, races, and match play.

EQUIPMENT

Use lower hoops or lighter balls to build confidence before progressing to regulation basketball equipment.

PEOPLE

Start with individual skill practice before moving into pairs, small groups, and 3v3 team games.

Key Technical Point For accurate shooting, stand with feet shoulder-width apart, bend the knees, align the shooting elbow under the ball, focus on the target, extend smoothly upward, and finish with a relaxed wrist flick and fingers pointing towards the basket.

Cooldown

SWISH AND STRETCH: Gather all pupils around a hoop and allow them to take turns making very gentle, relaxed shots while others complete light arm, shoulder, and wrist stretches between turns. Once finished, form a calm circle, place the basketball on the floor in front of them, and guide everyone through three slow, deep breaths — breathing in through the nose and out through the mouth. Use this time to lower heart rates and reflect on effort and teamwork. Ask reflective questions such as, "What made your shot more accurate today?" and "How did teamwork help during your matches?" **PROGRESSION:** Add simple static lower-body stretches while holding the ball to deepen recovery.

Year 4 - Development of Invasion Games

Basketball & Football - Lesson Plan

PLAYING

EDSTART

Lesson Objective To develop turning / changing direction whilst up against a defender.

Lesson 4/6

Equipment Needed Footballs (size 4 plus small / lighter for differentiation) cones, markers, bibs

Success Criteria Children can:

- change direction with the ball whilst moving.
- turn with the ball using different surfaces of the foot.
- understand to keep their knee bent when changing direction, to be able to push away with speed.
- start the turn slow then push away fast.

EDSTART KNOW

- I can explain why turning helps lose a defender.
- I can describe how to bend my knees to change direction quickly.
- I can understand how to shield the ball from defenders.

EDSTART GO

- I can dribble with control using different parts of my foot.
- I can turn quickly to beat a defender.
- I can apply turns in 1v1 and 2v2 games.

EDSTART SHOW

- I can respect defenders when playing 1v1.
- I can encourage my partner during turning challenges.
- I can celebrate team effort fairly.

Key Question

How can you escape a defender when dribbling with the ball? By changing speed and direction, using quick turns, keeping the ball close to your feet, and accelerating into space after the turn.

Warm Up

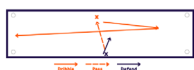
FOOTWORK FRENZY: Each child has their own ball and moves freely around the playing area using small, soft touches with both feet to maintain close control. The teacher calls out challenges such as inside taps, outside touches, and toe taps, encouraging pupils to keep the ball close while staying light on their feet. Emphasise balance, head-up awareness, and scanning for space to avoid collisions. Introduce simple turning techniques such as the drag back, inside hook, and Cruyff turn, allowing children to practise creatively without pressure. Encourage quick changes of direction, controlled speed, and confident exploration of movement. **PROGRESSION:** Call out commands such as "left foot only," "change direction," or "turn and go," and add a 30-second challenge to count how many controlled turns each child can complete.

Main Activity

ESCAPE THE DEFENDERS: All children begin on one side of the playing area with a ball at their feet. On the command "Go!", they must dribble across to the opposite side while avoiding the defenders positioned in the middle. Defenders attempt to stop attackers by placing a foot on their ball using controlled movements only. If a defender successfully stops a player, that child joins the defenders for the next round. The game continues until only a few attackers remain, building excitement, resilience, and repeated opportunities to practise dribbling under pressure. This activity develops close control, awareness of space, speed changes, and decision-making while moving at pace. **PROGRESSION:** Allow defenders to use controlled block tackles, or require attackers to perform at least one turn from the warm-up (drag back, Cruyff, or inside hook) before crossing the area safely.

"TRICKY TURNS: Children work in pairs, with one player acting as the attacker and the other as the defender. The attacker attempts to lose the defender using changes of speed, sharp direction changes, and a variety of turning skills. Key techniques include the Cruyff turn (fake pass then pull the ball behind the standing leg and turn), drag back (sole of the foot pulls the ball back and turns away), inside hook (inside of the foot hooks the ball across the body), and outside cut (outside of the foot pushes the ball away into space). Once confident, the attacker receives a pass from their partner and dribbles towards one of two mini goals while being closely shadowed. Initially, the defender can only apply pressure and block space without attempting to tackle. Emphasise quick shifts of body weight, low centre of gravity, shielding the ball with the body, scanning for space, and accelerating immediately after each successful turn. Rotate roles regularly so both pupils practise attacking and defending. **PROGRESSION:** Allow defenders to attempt to win the ball fairly and challenge attackers to combine two different turns in one attack before shooting for goal.

TEAM TAG MATCH: Set up multiple small 15 x 15 metre squares and organise pupils into pairs of similar ability to play 2v2 games. Teams aim to maintain possession by dribbling and passing while working together to move into space and evade defenders. Encourage communication, quick support play, and decision-making, can they beat a defender with a skill move or by working as a team? Reinforce positive teamwork, movement off the ball, and awareness of teammates and opponents. This activity develops both technical control and tactical understanding in a game-like environment. **PROGRESSION:** Add a small goal or target zone to encourage attacking play and introduce a scoring challenge such as 1 point for every 3 consecutive passes or for scoring a goal.



Adapted Learning (Differentiation) (Challenge)

SPACE

Increasing space allows more dribbling time and confidence, while smaller spaces increase pressure and close-control demands.

TASK

Begin with unopposed dribbling and gradually add defenders, turns, and decision-making challenges.

EQUIPMENT

Use size-appropriate footballs for control, with lighter balls supporting early learners.

PEOPLE

Progress from individual work to pairs and small teams to develop both independence and teamwork.

Key Technical Point

To dribble and turn effectively, keep the ball close using soft touches, stay on the balls of the feet with knees bent, use the inside and sole of the foot to turn sharply, and accelerate quickly into space after each turn.

Cooldown

MIRROR ME DRIBBLE: Children work in pairs facing each other, each with a ball. One player leads by performing slow dribbles, turns, and controlled stops while their partner mirrors every movement as closely as possible. After one minute, pupils switch roles. Finish with gentle static stretches for the calves, hamstrings, and shoulders while holding the ball, focusing on calm breathing and relaxation. Use reflective questioning to support learning and self-awareness. Ask: "Which turn helped you escape your defender best today?" and "How did working with a partner help you improve?" **PROGRESSION:** Add balance challenges such as holding one-footed control during mirror movements for increased coordination.

Year 4 - Development of Invasion Games

Basketball & Football - Lesson Plan

PLAYING

EDSTART

Lesson Objective To develop passing a football over a short distance..

Lesson 5/6

Equipment Needed Footballs (size 4 plus small / lighter for differentiation) cones, markers , bibs

Success Criteria Children can:

- understand where they need to contact the ball to pass it correctly.
- know how to stand and approach the ball to pass it.
- aim a pass at a partner over a short distance.

EDSTART KNOW

- I can explain how to use the inside of my foot to pass.
- I can describe how to stand and approach the ball.
- I can understand why accuracy matters more than power.

EDSTART GO

- I can pass to a partner over short distances.
- I can combine passing with movement through gates.
- I can pass in small-sided possession games.

EDSTART SHOW

- I can respect my teammates when passing.
- I can encourage my partner in challenges.
- I can share success fairly in team games.

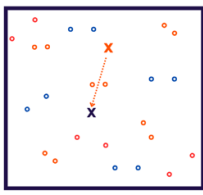
Key Question

What helps you pass the ball accurately to a teammate? Using the inside of your foot, looking at your target, planting your standing foot beside the ball, and following through in the direction of the pass.

Warm Up

FOOTWORK FACTORY: Each child has a football and begins moving freely around the playing area, taking small, controlled touches to keep the ball close to their feet. Encourage the use of both feet, the inside and outside of each foot, and regular head-up scanning to stay aware of others. Introduce and model simple turning techniques such as the drag back (pulling the ball back with the sole), inside hook (hooking the ball across the body), and the Cruyff turn (fake pass then pull and turn). Give pupils time to practise each turn in a relaxed, non-competitive environment. Reinforce staying light on the toes, knees slightly bent, and using gentle touches for close control. **PROGRESSION:** Add commands such as "change direction," "stop and turn," or "swap ball with a partner," and challenge children to complete as many clean, controlled turns as possible in 30 seconds.

Main Activity



GATE PASS CHALLENGE: Mark out a large square and place several coloured passing gates around the area (Red = large, Blue = medium, Orange = small). Children work in pairs, dribbling into space and passing their ball accurately through different gates to their partner. Emphasise correct passing technique: approach the ball at a slight angle, plant the non-kicking foot beside the ball pointing towards the target, lock the ankle, and strike cleanly through the centre of the ball with the inside of the foot. Encourage a smooth push pass rather than a powerful kick, with a controlled follow-through in the direction of the pass. On receiving, pupils should show soft hands/feet, get their body behind the ball, and take their first touch into space to prepare for the next action. Reinforce constant scanning, clear verbal communication (calling names), and visual signals (pointing to gates). Each successful gate pass scores a point, and pairs should move quickly to locate new gates to maintain tempo, decision-making speed, and engagement. This activity develops awareness, passing accuracy, first touch, movement off the ball, and teamwork under continuous movement. **PROGRESSION:** Add a 1-minute time challenge to see how many gates each pair can successfully pass through; reduce the size of the gates for greater precision or require moving passes on the run for increased technical and physical difficulty.

TARGET STRIKE: Children work in pairs with five cones — one as a passing marker and four as targets ("ships") placed behind each player. Each child stands behind their marker and takes turns to try to "sink" the opponent's ships by passing the ball accurately to knock over a cone. Each player has four lives, one for each ship. Encourage calm preparation, accurate inside-foot passing, and controlled power. The first player to sink all of their opponent's ships wins the round. This game improves passing accuracy, focus, competitive resilience, and decision-making under pressure. **PROGRESSION:** Increase the distance between players or introduce a target order (e.g., "Red first, then Blue") to test accuracy under cognitive pressure.

KEEP IT MOVING: Set up several 15 x 15 metre playing areas and group pupils by similar ability. In 2v2 games, pairs attempt to keep possession for as long as possible using a combination of dribbling and passing skills developed earlier in the lesson. Encourage players to spread out, support their teammate with width and depth, and communicate constantly. Emphasise quick decisions — should they dribble past a defender or pass to retain possession? This game develops teamwork, ball retention, spatial awareness, and tactical decision-making. **PROGRESSION:** Add small goals or end zones where a team can score after completing a set number of passes (e.g., 5 passes = 1 shot on goal).

Adapted Learning (Differentiation) (Challenge)

SPACE

Larger spaces support confidence and movement time, while smaller spaces increase pressure and promote close control.

TASK

Begin with unopposed skill practice before adding targets, time pressure, and defenders.

EQUIPMENT

Use size-appropriate balls and wider gates for early success, progressing to standard equipment

PEOPLE

Start individually, progress to pairs, and then into small-sided team games to build cooperation.

Key Technical Point

To pass and dribble effectively, keep the ball close using soft touches, plant the non-kicking foot beside the ball, strike through the centre with the inside of the foot, follow through towards the target, and scan regularly to make good decisions.

Cooldown

PASSING CIRCLE: Children form a large circle and gently pass the ball around using both feet, focusing on calm, accurate touches and steady pacing. Gradually reduce the speed of movement to bring heart rates down. Finish with light static stretches for the calves, quadriceps, hamstrings, and shoulders while controlling breathing. Encourage reflection with calm discussion. Ask: "What helped you make accurate passes today?" and "Which turn or pass was your favourite and why?" **PROGRESSION:** Add balance holds on one foot while passing for extra coordination.

Year 4 - Development of Invasion Games

Basketball & Football - Lesson Plan

PLAYING

EDSTART

Lesson Objective To develop shooting a football towards a target using the correct technique.

Lesson 6/6

Equipment Needed Footballs (size 4 plus small / lighter for differentiation) cones, markers, bibs

Success Criteria Children can:

- know how to stand and approach the ball to shoot correctly.
- understand the ABCs of shooting (Angle Balance Contact)
- understand how to hit the ball, and where to aim.

EDSTART KNOW

- I can explain the ABC of shooting (Angle, Balance, Contact).
- I can describe how to strike through the ball with my laces.
- I can understand where to aim when shooting at goal.

EDSTART GO

- I can shoot at targets with correct technique.
- I can combine passing and shooting in drills.
- I can apply shooting in mini matches.

EDSTART SHOW

- I can respect goalkeepers and defenders when shooting.
- I can encourage teammates during shooting challenges.
- I can show fairness in matches whether I win or lose.

Key Question

What helps you shoot accurately rather than just powerfully? Good balance, a strong plant foot, watching the ball closely, striking through the centre, and following through towards the target all improve shooting accuracy.

Warm Up

GOAL GETTER: Each child has a ball and moves freely around the playing area using small, soft touches to keep close control. Encourage pupils to use both feet, change direction and speed, and stay head-up to remain aware of others. Recap key turning skills including the drag back, inside hook, and Cruyff turn, modelling each before allowing free exploration. Reinforce staying balanced with knees bent, using gentle touches when travelling and slightly firmer touches when accelerating into space. Encourage creativity and confidence with the ball while maintaining safe spatial awareness. **PROGRESSION:** Add commands such as "turn," "accelerate," or "stop and shoot" — on "shoot," children perform a controlled side-foot finish at an empty goal or target cone to simulate realistic finishing under movement.

Main Activity

TARGET PRACTICE Children work in pairs, creating a target between them using cones or a small goal. Players take turns striking the ball using their laces, with the primary focus on accuracy before power. Reinforce the ABC technique in clear stages: Approach the ball at a slight diagonal angle with short, controlled steps; ensure Body shape is balanced with knees slightly bent, shoulders square to the target, and the non-kicking foot planted beside the ball pointing toward the target; make clean Contact through the centre of the ball with a locked ankle and toes pointing down, striking with the hard bone of the foot. Emphasise keeping the head steady and eyes on the ball at contact, then following through smoothly in the direction of the target so the kicking leg finishes high and forward. Encourage players to use controlled breathing, steady preparation, and visual focus on the target before striking. On receiving rebounds, pupils should reset quickly with a soft first touch and correct body position. Partners provide simple peer feedback such as "aim lower," "lock your ankle," "steady plant foot," or "follow through." **PROGRESSION:** Challenge players to hit different-sized targets or call out "top," "bottom," or "middle" to vary shooting angles; award 1 point per accurate strike to add pressure, competition, and realism.

PASS, SET, STRIKE: Groups of 4–5 line up facing the goal with a goalkeeper (if available). Player 1 begins as the passer, playing a firm, accurate pass to Player 2, who controls and sets the ball for a first-time strike on goal. After shooting, Player 2 collects the ball and joins the back of the line, while Player 1 rotates into the setter role. This continuous rotation ensures every pupil practises passing, setting, and shooting repeatedly. Emphasise timing of the pass, soft first touch on the set, and quick preparation for the shot. Encourage communication such as "set" and "shoot" to improve rhythm. **PROGRESSION:** Add a passive or active defender or introduce a time limit to shoot within three seconds; award bonus points for shots that are on target or beat the goalkeeper.

"MINI NATIONS CUP": Set up multiple mini-pitches and assign each team a country name for identity and motivation. Place a ball in the centre of each pitch and allocate each player a number. When the coach calls a number (e.g., "Number 3!"), both Number 3 players sprint to the ball and try to score in their opponent's goal as quickly as possible. The round ends when a goal is scored or the ball leaves play. This activity develops reaction speed, confidence in shooting, and transition play from defence to attack. Rotate numbers frequently to keep intensity high and ensure equal participation. **PROGRESSION:** Call two or three numbers for 2v2 or 3v3 matchups to test teamwork, passing, and quick decision-making; keep a scoreboard and crown an overall "World Cup Champion" team at the end of the festival.

Adapted Learning (Differentiation) (Challenge)

SPACE

Larger areas give more time to prepare shots, while smaller areas increase pressure and speed of decision-making.

TASK

Begin with static shooting before adding movement, passing combinations, and defenders.

EQUIPMENT

Use softer balls or larger goals for confidence, progressing to standard footballs and targets.

PEOPLE

Start with pairs for repetition and move into small-group and competitive games for realism.

Key Technical Point

For accurate shooting, approach the ball at a slight angle, plant the non-kicking foot beside the ball, keep the head steady, strike firmly with the laces through the centre of the ball, and follow through towards the target with balance.

Cooldown

SPOT THE STAR: Children dribble slowly around the area, alternating between walking and light jogging with the ball. On the coach's call, they stop and perform a slow "freeze shot" pose, holding balance and posture for three seconds. Gradually reduce movement and guide pupils through gentle static stretches for the hamstrings, calves, quadriceps, and shoulders, encouraging calm breathing. Use this time for reflection and emotional regulation. Ask: "What helped you score today?" and "What can you do next time to make your shot even better?" **PROGRESSION:** Add balance holds during the freeze poses for extra control and core engagement.