

SWITCHING DEFENSE

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We are using switching defense in different moments of the game. We can have a team which is suited to run this defense or we can use it for a few possessions to receive some advantage. If we don't have a player in position five who can contain the ball well, the coach has to reduce the goals the player has to focus on. That focus has to be on the ball and to slow it down.

There is a difference between using the switching and abusing. It is not for saving energy, it is for attacking and making trouble for the offense. To achieve that, there has to be a rule. For example, four switches when 10 seconds left from the shot clock or five switches when 5 seconds left from the shot clock. It puts responsibility on all the players and they can not blame poor communication.

Principles are necessary to achieve a good defense. For example, when we know that we are closing to a switch, the on ball defender cannot allow a reject. The screen defender has to be up and ready for the switch but must maintain contact to prevent a slip action. Timing of the communication is the key, because we don't want our defenders to loosen up and forget about their full responsibility for the ball and the screener. Switching over or switching under always depends on offensive personnel and the results of individual scouting. The first rule of defending the mismatch is to keep the ball player outside the three-point line. The main concern is to know the ball player's individual skills, then considering our defending rules about the shooting spectrum. Simply the most effective shots we cannot give up. The more we will force our opponent to take contested pull ups, the better our defense will look. Coaches have to decide which shot is acceptable for their philosophy and which shot is considered an easy shot.

For the rotation, communication is the key. Players have to be ready to listen to their teammates and to preserve the

principle of keeping the best possible alignment as a team. Whatever we do on defense it can work or go wrong, but the idea is to have all the players on the same page with a top level of communication, with an exceptional level of reading the body language of our teammates. This is a main task coaches should work on with specific drills and specific demands.

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