



# COACHING

R E S O U R C E S

2026



# THANK YOU!

# PRIMARY WINTER

Pioneer's Primary Winter Competition introduces many young athletes to the game of basketball. Many of our young players have never played organised sport or team sports before. By putting your hand up to be a coach of a team you are ensuring our tamariki get to experience the best sport ever!

The time and effort that volunteer coaches from schools and Pioneer is invaluable and without you Pioneer would not be able to offer PWC.

## WHY?

In this booklet you will find plenty of resources aimed at helping you be the best coach you can be and enhance the experience of your players at the same time.

We know that it can be a daunting task taking on a sports team for a season. Especially if you know very little about the game! Coaching tamariki is less about game knowledge and more about knowing how to develop people and provide a quality and safe environment for your team.

This document has plenty of resources to support you on your coaching journey, no matter how long you've been coaching for. Everything we have collated in here is age and stage appropriate for our PWC competition and supports the latest themes for youth sport.

We also want you as coaches to feel supported and confident enough to develop your skills. We value the effort and time that you put into developing young tamariki. If there is every anything we can do to support you as a club please let us know!

Alice - [clubmanager@pioneer.nz.basketball](mailto:clubmanager@pioneer.nz.basketball)

Ollie - [clubdev@pioneer.nz.basketball](mailto:clubdev@pioneer.nz.basketball)



# PIONEER BASKETBALL

## CLUB VALUES

How can you SHOW  
Pioneer values  
through your  
actions and words?

Even if you are coaching for a school, we ask that you reflect on Pioneers values when coaching in our programs. Do you know what your school values are??



### **Whanaungatanga -**

Relationships built through shared experience, whānau connections and kinship. Pioneer members develop a sense of belonging and connection with each other. Togetherness strengthens each member of our whānau.

**Respect / Manaakitanga** - Pioneer members treat all people with respect, we value and treat all individuals with dignity. Respect builds relationships of trust, safety and wellbeing.

**Integrity / Pono** - Pioneer members act with integrity. Honesty and strong morals influence all actions and words

**Excellence / Hiranga** - Pioneer members seek to better their own skills and performance through pathways and education.

# SIMPLE QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF



## Before each coaching session

What is my ROLE today?

What is the focus of today's session and how can I ensure I'm coaching that focus?

Am I looking professional and do I take pride in my appearance?



## During each coaching session

Am I enforcing today's focus and keeping tamariki engaged?

Does my body language portray interest and energy?

Have I used the names of the tamariki in my group when possible?

Am I using high fives or smiles when appropriate to connect?

Am I allowing learning by challenging the players in my group?

Am I rewarding hard work and effort over results?

## After each coaching session

Did my players enjoy themselves and learn something?

Was I on task and focused?

Is there anything I can do to improve next session?

Do I need to ask for help or do I have any questions for staff or my peers?



# YOUR COACHING PHILOSOPHY

A coaching philosophy provides a foundation for coaching practice and enables the coach to explain and justify WHY they are coaching in the way they do. Having to write down or explain to others why you do what you do also challenges you to be clear where your coaching approach has come from.

If you don't have a coaching philosophy yet, the following questions may help you to write one. It does not need to be long.

-Why do you coach?

-What do you value in the way you coach?

-What would your players say are your strengths as a coach?

-What sort of players do you want to develop?

-What qualities would you like to hear, if someone described a player you coached?

# GOOD SPORTS<sup>®</sup>



*“Hey coach, here are 5 simple tips to help me have a great season”.*

- 1 Keep it FUN**
- 2 Keep it SAFE & SUPPORTIVE**
- 3 Reward MY EFFORT & IMPROVEMENT**
- 4 Let ME PLAY**
- 5 Remember, ALL OF US MATTER**

 [facebook.com/GoodSportsNZ](https://facebook.com/GoodSportsNZ)



# BASKETBALL NEW ZEALANDS APPROACH FOR TAMARIKI

- Keep a Climate of Development vs a Climate of Performance (Good Sports)
- Give all players equal game time and play positionless
- Encourage ALL tamariki to experience all aspects of the game on the court and on the bench
- Allow tamariki the space to become problem solvers and work through challenges
- Use game and constraints based learning and decision-making activities
- Encourage tamariki to be involved in a range of sports and activities
- Tamariki should not be doing more hours of organized sport than their age, or a maximum of 10 hours per week. Tamariki should have a minimum of one full day of rest from organized activities.

## 3 KEY AREAS WHEN COACHING U14 BASKETBALL



### WHY

- Why do you coach?
- What outcome do you want for you and the tamariki ?
- Kids at this age play for a variety of reasons. Fun, friends, competition...Why do these kids play?
- What does the club or school expect of you?

### HOW

- Lots of mini games that involve shooting, passing, catching, defending, dribbling, and decision making
- Lots of 1v1 , 2v2 and 3x3
- Lots of live game play
- Be positive, encouraging and approachable

### WHAT

- Movement- being strong , moving quickly in many directions, and being able to stop on 1 and 2 feet with and without the ball
- Basic Decisions and Ball skills: shoot, pass, drive, 1v1 defence
- Positive competitive behaviours
- Being in a team



# A ONE PAGER FOR COACHES

## COACHING KIDS NEW TO BASKETBALL?

**Check out the resources for Yr 5 and 6s.**

**They may be more appropriate for your team!**

### AT PRACTICE

- Connect with the kids before you coach them
- Play lots of activities with multiple skills and decisions
- The kids should be moving more than listening
- Use the Coachmate app

### IN GAME

- Keep it fun
- Give all players equal time
- Play positionless
- Focus on advancing the ball, shooting when open, and guarding 1 person on defence
- Keep your messages simple
- The ball should be a 5 for girls and a 6 for boys

### COACHMATE A BBNZ FREE APP

Scan this code with your phone or [click here](#) to download this free app that has session plans, activities, and can be used as a communication device with your team



### COACHING GIRLS?

Scan this QR Code or [Click on this link](#) learn more



### CHECK YOURSELF

1. Are the kids having fun?
2. Are they smiling?
3. Do they keep coming back?
4. Are they learning?

*Ka Pai!*

# COACHING TO EXTEND THE SKILLS AND CONCEPTS OF TAMARIKI



## THINGS TO FOCUS ON

- Explore and develop the love of sport and have fun while participating
- Explore being part of a team
- Explore and develop guarding one player on defence, staying between their player and the hoop.
- Explore help defence one pass away and in transition
- Explore shooting at the hoop when they are not defended
- Explore and develop advancing the ball towards their hoop on offence by passing and/or dribbling around defenders

## KIDS HAVE FUN WHEN

- They are with their friends
- They feel safe
- They feel included
- They are engaged and active
- They are learning and improving

## TIPS FOR COACHES

- Good coaches develop trust and care with their players to help them improve and enjoy the experience
- Connect with them before you coach them
- The less time you have with your team, the more like a game the activities at training should be
- Include multiple skills and decision making in your activities (game based learning)
- Break up your team into smaller groups with multiple balls to allow for high repetitions and touches of the ball
- Ask players questions and allow them the space and time to problem solve
- Players should be moving more than standing/sitting and listening (time on task)

# AGE AND STAGE APPROPRIATE SKILLS AND CONCEPTS

\*FOR PLAYERS/TEAMS NEW TO BASKETBALL CHECK OUT THE YR 5&6 RESOURCE



## INDIVIDUAL SKILLS

### Primary Focus for U14

- Jumping and landing safely using one or both feet
- Sprinting
- Stopping safely using one or both feet
- Changing direction
- Changing speed
- Catching and footwork
  1. To shoot in range and in rhythm
  2. To rip and attack the hoop
  3. Pivots
- Ball handling on both sides of the body
- Passing on both sides of the body
- Introduction to shooting form
- Cutting to the hoop and creating a lead

**May be introduced at a regional level but should be limited and involve all players:**

- Dribble hand offs (DHO)
- Down or away screens
- On-ball screen use

## TEAM CONCEPTS

### Primary Focus for U14

- Lane running responsibilities on offence
- Half court offensive spacing
- Moving without the ball on offence
- When should you shoot?
- 1v1 containment defence
- Basic help defensive principles
- Quick transitions from offence to defence

**May be introduced at a Regional or Secondary School level:**

- 4 Phases of the game: transition O and D, 1/2 court O and D
- Tactical Timeouts
- Team defensive help principles
- Out of bounds plays
- After time out play

**Limited use of the following should be seen at this age:**

- Defensive change ups - pressing
- Constant on ball screens with the same two players

## A FEW HELPFUL COACHING CUES

- **Shooting:** Feel balanced, shoot straight, shoot up/arc, ball on the pads of your fingers, can you repeat it
- **Dribbling:** Hand on top of the ball, drive it into the ground, eyes scan the court
- **Passing:** Put the ball through a window (around defence), hit the target
- **Foot work:** Feel balanced, controlled, and strong, create space
- **Catching:** Give a verbal and visual target, catch to be a threat (strong and balanced with eyes on the hoop), move to the ball
- **1v1 defending:** Feel balanced, big first step, chest in front, hands out/H shape
- **One pass away help:** See your player and the ball, make a triangle
- **Spacing:** Push and pull- someone moves, cuts or drives towards you- pushes you away, someone cuts or drives away from- pulls you behind,, social distance
- **Cutting:** Sprint in , sprint out, show a target
- **Jumping and Landing:** Balanced, low stance, knees in line with toes
- **Stopping:** knees in line with toes, head behind knees, control

## AT PRACTICE

- Ensure that everyone is included and encouraged to develop
- Use small sided games (1v1, 2v2, 3v3) and game play to facilitate learning and development of skills and concepts
- Tamariki should be active more than watching or listening
- Encourage them to become problem solvers by presenting them with challenges and allowing them time to find solutions
- Try to incorporate challenge and success for all the tamariki at some point in the practice
- Encourage bigger, faster, stronger tamariki to use their non-dominant hand to pass, dribble, and finish at the rim
- Praise effort and growth in the process over outcomes

## IN GAME

- Development, enjoyment and process are the primary focuses at this age
- All players should spend equal time on the court with the opportunity to use their developing skills AND time on the bench learning how to be a good teammate
- Offence should focus on transition and ball movement
- Defence should focus on guarding the ball 1v1 and learning not to foul
- Coaches should be facilitating not directing
- Players should be discouraged from engaging with the referees
- Coaches should have limited engagement with referees at this age, any engagement should be respectful and positive

## RESOURCE LINKS

- [FIBA Level 1 Coaching Documents](#) Resource from FIBA that focuses on the next step for coaches and players
- [Balance is Better Sport](#) New Zealand website with information about youth sport
- [WABC](#) World Association of Basketball Coaches





# GAMES BASED APPROACH

Engaging players with a Games Based Approach

## WHAT IS GAMES BASED?

Teaching through the use of game like activities rather than drills

Teaches concepts during play and game like scenarios

Encourages hands on learning and experience

## EXAMPLES

Small sided games, 1v1, 2v2, 3v3, 4v4

Team games

Game like drills with modified rules e.g. no dribbling or shooting

Competitions or challenges



## WHY USE GAMES BASED APPROACHES IN YOUR TRAINING?

Enjoyable activities keep players active and engaged in sport specific ways

Encourages creative thinking and understanding

Through games, athletes share success and failure, they learn how to trust each other



## IMPORTANT THINGS TO REMEMBER

Use language suitable for your teams age and stage

Start simple, you can always add rules and modifications as they get the hang of the game

There will be chaos, allow your players time to think, problem solve and make decisions themselves.

The less standing around and waiting, the more effective your activity

Games Based is more effective if a coach allows their players to experience failure and challenges regularly. Avoid stepping in and offering 'help' too often

'Off the ball' skill development is just as important as ball skill development

# SESSION PLANNING TIPS

## Session Focus/What

- Having 2-3 key focus areas can help you shape your session
- What are the most relevant things to the team at this point?
- Have 2-3 things to focus on in each activity
- Does your plan represent the game?

## Connect and Prime

- Spend a few minutes connecting with the team before the session starts
- Prepare them for what will be covered in the session
- Use a small connection game. e. g Ultimate Frisbee to loosen the players up and get them communicating

## Questions to guide your sessions

- Are the activities the players are doing **relevant** and appropriate for their development and needs? Do they get **repetitions**, and do your activities **represent** the game of basketball?
- Are they enjoying the sessions? How do you know?
- Are the players moving and doing more than listening and watching?
- Have you designated time or activities where your voice is minimal and/or player led problem solving/coaching is encouraged?
- Don't forget to touch on the "why" when you start an activity- context aides learning

## Movement

Quality movement sits at the heart of all sport and fundamental skill development. We need our players to move well to complete tasks on court. e.g lanes cannot be run without learning how to sprint. To rebound, players need to be explosive and land safely. To help develop good movement patterns, this is an age that we want to introduce appropriate pre exercise movements. ACC provide a comprehensive warm up that you can use elements of:

<https://www.accsportsmart.co.nz/>  
Jumping, landing and running are particularly important skills

## Skill Development

**(Repetition, Relevance, Represent)**

Most teams will have limited time each week to train together. To maximize the time you have, you can incorporate skill development into practices the following ways:

- Use activities in your sessions that require multiple skills. e.g passing, dribbling and finishing
- Where possible, use activities that require decision making as well as skill development

## Game Play

To allow players to maximize their learning, they need to put their skill into game play. Here are some ways to do that in a session:

- Include small sided games such as 1v1, 2v2, 3v3 as part of skill development
- Conclude sessions with live game play
- Add bonus points in live game play for certain tasks that you focused on earlier in the session. e.g offence gets a bonus point if they score in the first 6 seconds or defence gets a point for 3 stops in a row

## Reset, Recap, Reflect

- Allow a few minutes for the players to cool down and reset their brains and body
- Recap what was covered in the session and how it will apply to the next game
- Post session reflection for coaches: did the players enjoy it?

# Practice Plan Example

## Connect and Prime 5 mins

- Touch base with each player as they arrive
- Focus points: Shoot when you are open, keep our hands out on defence
- Open shots: you are not defended or pressured
- Paper, Scissors, Rock

## Movement Up 5-10 mins

- Jumping back and forth over a court line, one and both legs, forwards/backwards, sideways
- Walk, jog, sprint, jog, stop
- Zig zag sprints
- Back pedal

## Chaos Layups 5-10 mins

**Purpose:** Get up a variety of layups while navigating traffic and chaos

**Focus points:** Drive to score with your eyes up, take controlled shots, make good passes

- Split the group into pairs with a ball between them on the 3pt line
- Player 1 attacks the hoop and lays the ball up, gets own rebound and passes out to their partner
- Partner catches, attacks and scores
- Progress- increase the number of balls or remove partners
- Regress- coach tells the players to finish how they want

## 1v1 Plus Passer 10 mins

**Purpose:** Improve 1v1 offence and defensive skills

**Focus:** Make good decisions on when to shoot or pass, play defence without reaching in with hands

- Player 1 attacks and can score if it is open. If the shot was taken away they could pass. \*Defender can start beside offence
- Player 2 moves left or right around the three point line to be visible for a pass if the attacking player does not have an open shot
- If the ball is passed, they must shoot (in range)
- If the ball was passed, the player who was originally on offense had to rebound and the defender boxed out.

**Regress:** Move defender to give offence advantage

**Progress:** Player must use non dominant hand

## Small Sided Game Play 10-15 mins

**Purpose:** Put skills into a controlled game setting

- 3x3 half court 4 min games at both ends
- Scoring: bonus points for:
  1. Taking an open shot
  2. Scoring off a drive and kick out shot
  3. Playing two clean defensive possessions in a row

## 3v2 +1 10 mins

**Purpose:** Help offence to learn when to take an open shot, encourage no fouling

- The coach has a ball, three offence outside 3pt line, three defenders match up with them
- The drill starts when the coach passes the ball to 1, 2, or 3 and it is live
- The player guarding the player with the ball must get two feet outside the 3pt arc before they can defend
- If defence fouls, automatic point for the offence

**Regress:** The 1st defender must high 5 the coach

**Progress:** The defender only needs to get one foot outside the 3 pt line

## Game Play

**Purpose:** Put skills into a live game setting to finish the time remaining

- 5v5 Full court games first to 6
- Scoring bonus points for:
  1. Scoring an in range, open shot
  2. Getting two clean defensive stops in a row

Play the last few minutes as live play.

## Reset, Recap, Reflect

- Reset physically by cooling down
- Recap what went well
- Reflect on how much the players enjoyed it

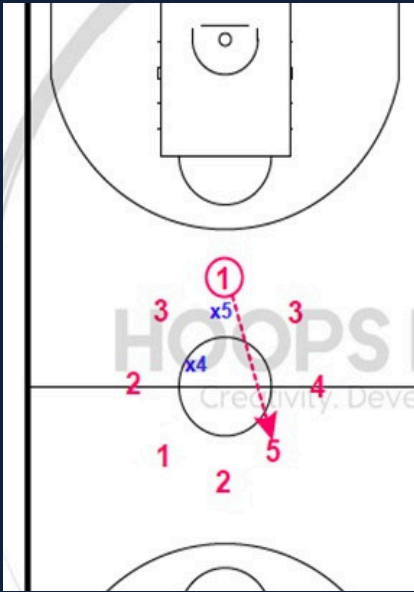
## Communicate

- When and where is the next game
- What are the expectations for the game
- Answer any questions

# Sample Activities



## Passing Activity



This Positive Climate exercise involved the players passing the ball amongst themselves, keeping the ball from the two defenders.

If a player on the perimeter of the circle got tagged by a defender whilst they had the ball, they switched roles.

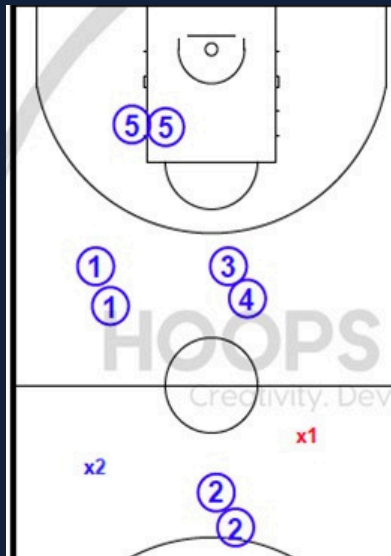
If a defender could steal the ball or if they could get any touch on the ball, this meant they got to switch with the player who made the pass.

Successful passes were quick and untouched by defenders.

Players were encouraged to practice:

- No look passes
- Touch passes
- Passes through the defenders legs

## Dribbling and Movement Activity



I have heard on the grapevine that this exercise is common across mainland Europe for testing the basketball IQ of young players. The exercise was organised as follows:

All players had a ball, including X1 and X2.

X1 had to chase X2, if X2 was tagged, they switched roles.

If X2 could avoid X1 and join hips with a pair that were stuck in the mud, the person on the other side of the pair was released and they would now be chased.

All players had to pound the ball as hard as possible for the full exercise.

Continued on the next page...

## 1v1

Players had to play 1v1 from the three point line, but there was a three dribble maximum.

It was common for the coach to put in simple rules like this to get the players thinking. This was difficult for the U10s early in the season with three dribbles appearing to be very limiting, however, as the season progressed, the players were much more efficient with their dribble.

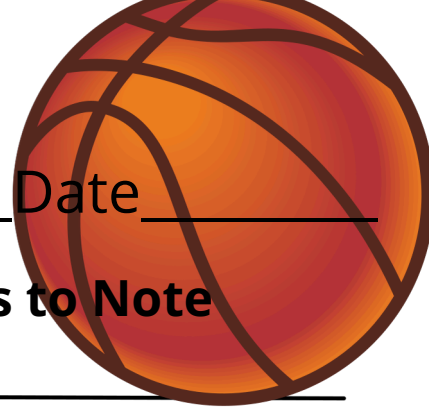
**Key Point:**

- The coach gave the players a key point that helped the players early on in the season. To get free, the coach suggested players use one good fake, be this before dribbling, during or after.



## 1v1 Chaos Game

# Practice Plan



Team Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Focus Points for the Day

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## Things to Note

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## Connection Time and Icebreaker

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## Movement/Warm up Activity

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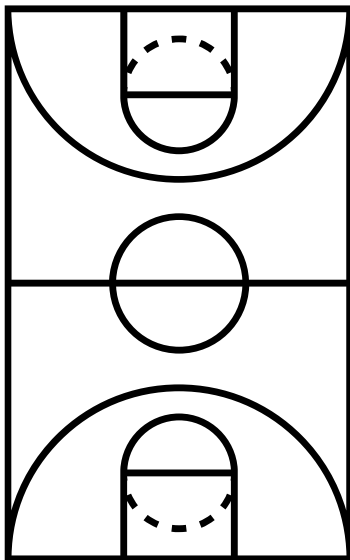
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## Skill Activity 1



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## Skill Activity 2

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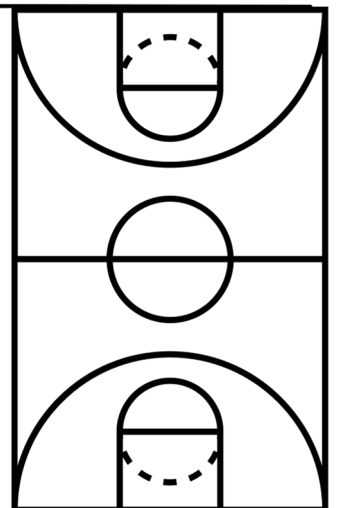
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## Game

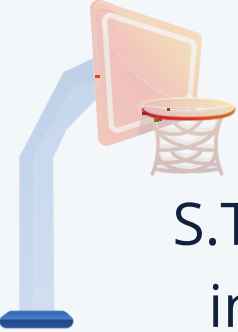
## Recap

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# Step Framework

S.T.E.P. is a model used to remind you to think inclusively and adapt activities to suit all the participants

## SPACE

- Height of the hoop
- Size of the playing area
- Distance to cover

More space gives more reaction time.

Allowing children to make a decision and execute a skill.

Less Space demands a higher skill level to react quicker

If the playing area is too big for the skill set, success will be limited

e.g. to regress a live game and make it easier, allow the play to be live in the entire half court. To progress it, only allow them to play in a quarter of the court

## TASK

**Regress**- simplify the rules

**Progress**- introduce more rules or make them more complex

- Time, allow more or less time
- Adapt rules to allow more inclusion
- Create new ways to be involved - seated, sideline, 1 hand

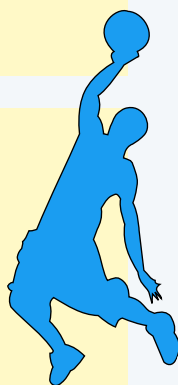
e.g. to progress an activity that focuses on passing, add a rule that the players can now only pass with their non dominant hand. To regress it, make defence play with their hands grabbing onto their own collars

## ENVIRONMENT

- Inclusive environment
- Safe environment
- Age and stage appropriate equipment

The safer and happier a child feels within an environment the quicker they develop.

e.g. if a child feels safe to try new things and isn't overwhelmed by huge balls or tall hoops then they will choose to engage and participate.



## PEOPLE

- Less defenders gives the offence more success
- Large numbers in a group or a line mean less active engagement - split the group up whenever possible
- Smaller Groups allow for more engagement

e.g progress a live game by adding more defenders than there are offence (3v4). Regress a live game by removing a defender (3v2)

This STEP framework has been modified from the original BBNZ to suit your needs as a coach. You will find other STEP frameworks online and around other sports.

The suggestions in this page are for you to consider if you are running a training session. How can you modify the activity to suit the tamariki in your group?

## Ask?

- Ollie Wilkinson, Club Development officer - [clubdev@pioneer.nz.basketball](mailto:clubdev@pioneer.nz.basketball)
- Alice Clarkson, Club Manager - [clubmanager@pioneer.nz.basketball](mailto:clubmanager@pioneer.nz.basketball)

Or ask Alice, Ollie or Paula at Pioneer!

## Feedback

- Alice is a coach developer, she has training to help support coaches. Ollie is also very experienced with working with coaches and would be more than happy to assist.
- We can get in someone from BBNZ or CBA to do some observing of your coaching

# MORE RESOURCES

## More resources

- Pioneer has a huge database of resources for coaches so ask Alice for anything specific you'd like help with
- Sport New Zealand - Balance is better ([balanceisbetter.org.nz](http://balanceisbetter.org.nz))
- Basketball New Zealand - coaches resources ([nz.basketball/get-involved/coaches/](http://nz.basketball/get-involved/coaches/))
- YouTube!
- Coachmate - download BBNZ's Coachmate app!

Download the free app now

