

1-2-1-1 Diamond Full Press (from Coach Mac)

The 1-2-1-1 full court press is an aggressive full court press with many different variations that can be made to suit your team and/or to give you an advantage over the opponent you're playing against.

Similar starting formation to a 3-1-1 press, except that in the 1-2-1-1 press the front middle player starts close to the baseline pressuring the inbounder instead of starting around the free-throw line.

Goal of the Press

The main goal of the press is to force the ball to be inbounded to the strong-side corner and then immediately trap the offensive player that catches the basketball using the inbounder and the closest wing player.

This is the main trap of the press and the goal is to force the trapped offensive player to throw a lob pass over top of the trap and have it picked off by one of the defensive interceptors.

While this is the main goal, there are many other opportunities for steals in other areas of the press.

Advantages of the 1-2-1-1 Diamond Press

1. Lots of time to recover

Since the main trap is being made so close to the oppositions baseline, if the press breaks down the defensive team will have the entire length of the court to recover and stop the basketball.

2. Speeds up the tempo

If you're running a full-court press you must be a team that loves playing fast basketball. Great half-court offensive teams hate presses because it forces them to play faster than they would like to. A full-court press is a great strategy to disrupt tempo.

3. It's exciting basketball!

Let's be honest... Everyone loves an uptempo, high-paced basketball game. The players love playing in it, the parents and fans love watching it, and we all love coaching it!

4. Fatigue your opponent

If your team runs a full-court press they must be fit enough and have the stamina to do so. When you come up against opponents this aren't used to the up-tempo style of play, they will undoubtedly get worn out very quickly and start making more and more mistakes.

5. Force the ball out of a dominant guards hands

Instead of allowing a dominant guard to bring the ball up the court and set up the offense, running a full court press will force them to pass and use their teammates to bring the ball up the court. Once the ball is out of their hands, you have the opportunity to deny them receiving the basketball back.

6. Improves team chemistry

If your players are putting in 100% effort on every possession (they should be), then you will have to use more of the bench to keep everyone fresh. More court time for the bench often means a happier team.

7. Turnovers close to the basket

There's no better time to get a steal than close to your opponent's basket. Since the trap location is made in their corners, any steal will be incredibly difficult for the opposition to recover and defend.

Disadvantages of the 1-2-1-1 Diamond Press

1. It's very aggressive

There can be consequences to running a high risk, high reward press like the 1-2-1-1 diamond press. If the offensive team is to break the press, the defense will usually now find themselves with one less player until they front line catches up. This can result in easy scores for the offensive team. If you're running a full court press like this one, you must be able to handle giving away easy scores occasionally.

2. Must have full commitment from the team

The thing about presses is that they require the entire team to work together in sync. If a single player on the court doesn't fulfil their required role, the entire press breaks down and gaps will open up everywhere.

3. It takes time to learn

The 1-2-1-1 diamond press is a fairly advanced full-court press. It's not something your team will learn in a couple of practices. This means the time you devote in practice to learning the 1-2-1-1 takes away from the time your team could be learning and practicing other skills. This isn't a trade all coaches are willing to make.

1-2-1-1 Diamond Press Rules

1. No dribbling down the sideline

The wing players on the front line must not allow the player receiving the basketball to beat them down the sideline. As soon as they do, the press is broken and it will often lead to an easy score.

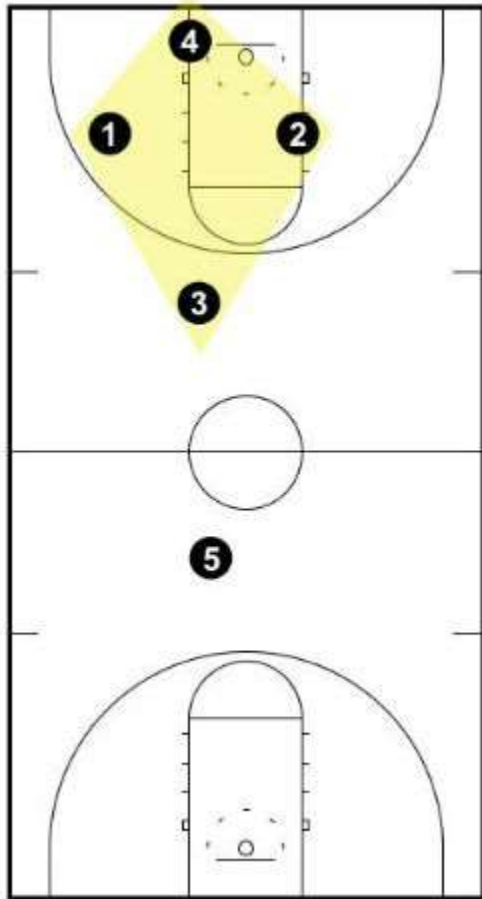
2. No passes to the middle of the floor

The 1-2-1-1 diamond press is often broken as soon as the ball is passed to the middle of the floor. This is because from the middle of the floor the offensive team will have loose players sprinting down the sidelines while the front line is trying to recover.

3. No fouling on the trap

Be sure to remind your players that the steal shouldn't be made by the players setting the trap. The objective of the trappers is to force the trapped player to make a lob pass that can be intercepted. The trappers must keep their arms out and use their lower body to take up space.

Setup, Roles, and Responsibilities



1-2-1-1 Diamond Press Formation

As you can see in the diagram, the name ‘diamond press’ comes from its formation. If you were to get a birds-eye view of the press on the initial setup, you would see the first four players are set up very similar to a diamond shape while one fifth player is positioned at the back playing safety.

Let’s discuss the roles and responsibilities of each position and then we’ll discuss how you should determine which players fill each position and which are the most important to the press.

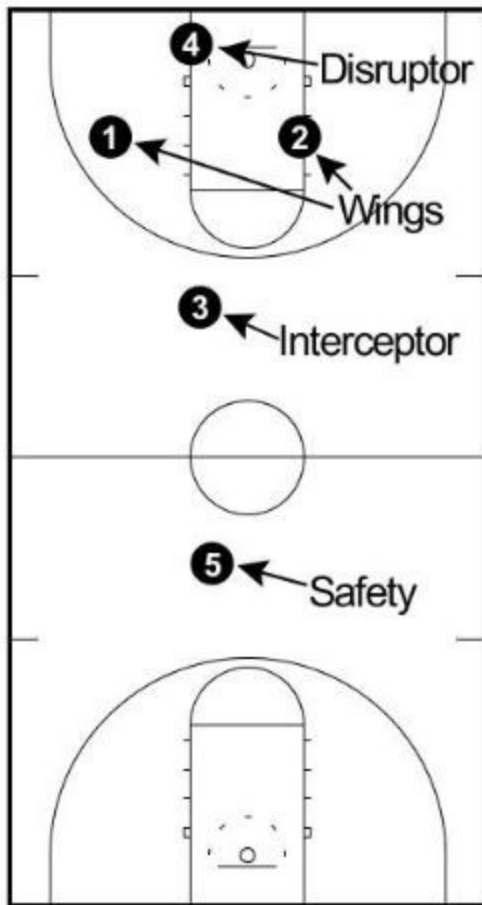
Disruptor

The disruptor starts on the basketball and should be one of the tallest players on your team.

In a perfect world this player is tall, has long arms, and is athletic enough to quickly get to traps and recover.

They have two main roles in the 1-2-1-1 diamond press:

1. Force the pass to be made to the strong-side corner
2. Trap the first pass receiver with either wing player.



1-2-1-1 Diamond Press Positions

Wings

The wing players have two different roles they must fill determined by which side of the court the basketball is inbounded to:

1. Strong-side wing player – Their role is to immediately trap the basketball with the disruptor on the inbounds pass.

2. Weak-side wing player – Their role is to become an interceptor in the middle of the floor.

The weak-side wing player's role is super important in the 1-2-1-1 diamond press since this is the position where a lot of variation will occur and because they're protecting and preventing the pass to a very important part of the floor... the middle of the press.

These players will each start on their respective sides behind the closest player to the ball in their zone.

Interceptor

The interceptor's main role is to anticipate where the pass will be made over the trap and intercept the basketball while in flight.

They will also be required to stop the dribbler if they do break through the initial trap. If they can't stop them completely, the interceptor must at least influence them to the sideline. Don't allow them to blow past! *This player must have a high basketball IQ!*

They will set up in line with the player inbounding the basketball, and about half way between the three-point line and half court.

Safety

The safety has two key roles:

1. They must anticipate and intercept long passes.

2. They must be great 2-on-1 defenders since they will find themselves in this situation often.

They will set up as far back as the last offensive player. If the last player is at half way, set up there. If the last player is under the basket, set up at the distance you can cheat up the court while still being able to recover and intercept the lob pass.

It's easier to cheat up the court as safety in youth basketball since the players simply aren't strong enough to make the full-court pass to an offensive player close to the basket.