

# Basketball Shooting Form

## Shooting Form

A shot can be a mysterious thing. What feels great one day feels terrible the next. Consistency comes with practice and solid shooting form. Shooting form is also one of the most poorly coached things in basketball. While you can be creative with form and become consistent through practice, keeping it simple is the best way to go. Here are the basics of the “pocket shooting system”.

Feet to follow through step by step guide.

### 1. Square Up



Your feet should be squared at the hoop and a comfortable distance apart, usually shoulder width.

Squared up means both feet pointing towards the basket and shoulders aligned with the feet. Kobe in this picture could be even more squared but it's pretty good. Kobe probably feels more comfortable with his left foot behind his right which is fine as long as you can keep everything pointed at the hoop.

*Tip- You can use the baseline three (like the picture) or the free throw or other line to see if your feet are square.*

## 2. Sit Down

In the picture above Kobe is beginning this process. When you sit down your knees should be bending directly over your feet. Not to the side, not both knees pointing in and not leaning forward- they need to be directly over your feet.

In sitting down you need to be on balance to be able to explode directly up and equally with both feet. Your tailbone should be sitting back towards your heels with your chest up. Make sure you do not twist or turn in sitting down. **SIT STRAIGHT DOWN.**

*Tip- Use a barbell to work on squatting and staying on balance. It's the same as sitting down in your shot.*

## 3. Ball in Your Pocket



Ball in your pocket means to put your hand under the ball with your elbow in and up with close to a 90 degree angle. This in our opinion is the most important aspect to your shot and where most problems occur.

Your offhand needs to be on the side of the ball and used only as a guide hand **ONLY**. As you release your shot your offhand should not push or be in the way of your shot in anyway. Watch out for offhand thumb, it loves to push off giving side spin.

*Tip- Practice shooting with one hand so you get use to not relying on your offhand.*

Your shooting hand needs to be under the ball, in the middle of the ball and on your fingertips. Your fingers should be a comfortable distance apart.

Your elbow needs to align with your knee which is aligned with your feet which are pointed at the hoop. Remember that from shoulder to your elbow to your hand should be close to 90 degrees.

#### 4. Release

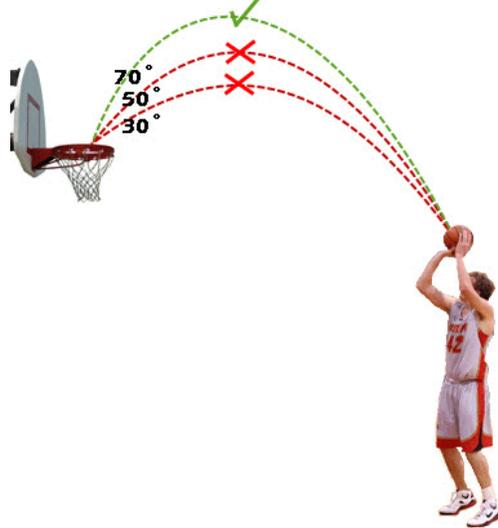


From your pocket everything should go straight up keeping your form nice and tight. Again make sure your offhand is flat and not pushing off, Michael Jordan gives a perfect example above. We don't want side spin. Do your best to stay square and not turn through the whole process. Don't become stiff like a robot but still maintain your form.

Hold your follow through. We've all heard that before but what does that mean? It means from your pocket the release needs to have a result like Ray Allen or Michael Jordan above. Elbow is fully

extended and you have a nice smooth flip of the wrist with the ball touching your fingertips last. You're essentially pointing your hand at the hoop or putting your hand in the hoop.

Make sure you extend your follow through **UP NOT OUT**. This puts arc on the ball which gives it the best opportunity to go in. Put the ball in the air.

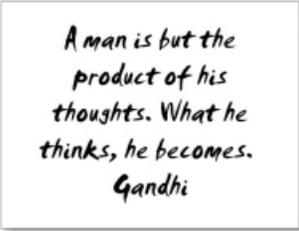


It's a fact that shooting the ball with arc will give you have a higher percentage for the ball to go in. A flat shot can miss 50% of the hoop and shooting is hard enough as is. You do not need to give yourself this disadvantage.

So now you have feet pointed at the hoop, knees over your feet, elbow over your knee and releasing and holding your follow through all at a straight line at the hoop. Simple. Michael Jordan's release above is a great example of following straight through.

## 5. Confidence

The most important aspect of shooting after you have practiced good form is shooting with confidence. If you don't believe the ball will go in, it won't. Every time you shoot the ball know it is going to go in, expect it to go in and you'll find yourself making more shots.



A man is but the  
product of his  
thoughts. What he  
thinks, he becomes.  
Gandhi

Practice allows confidence to grow, so get in the gym as much as possible. Get a rebounder use the shooting gun or grab a parent and head to the gym. It's no secret that practice makes perfect and it is the catalyst to success. Put your heart into it, it's addicting and your confidence will grow by leaps and bounds.

### **Tips**

- *The most common error in form is crooked feet not squared to the hoop, not putting the ball in a pocket- thus shooting from your belly and pushing off with your off hand. Players constantly make these mistakes.*
- *Look at the back of the rim when shooting. It gives the ball the best chance to go in. Looking at the front may leave the ball short giving the ball less of a chance.*
- *When you struggle get back to basics and practice. Start in close and work your way out. Think about keeping everything tight.*
- *Video tape your shot. It's hard to tell what you're doing if you can't see it yourself. Video tape it and find the mistakes your making for yourself.*
- *If you change your form it may not work right away. You have to develop muscle memory which can only be done through practice. Trust that your fixes will improve your shot and don't go back to your old ways, you'll want to.*
- *Get a basketball trainer who knows their stuff. They will see things you can't and help you progress as a player.*