

Granity Studios & ESPN+
presents
Kobe Detail

Notes by Jeff Steines

KOBE DETAIL

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KOBE DETAIL

<u>EPISODE NO.:</u>	<u>TITLE:</u>
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22.	<u>BREAKING DOWN KYRIE IRVING</u>
23.	<u>BREAKING DOWN GIANNIS ANTETOKOUNMPO</u>
24.	<u>BREAKING DOWN DAMIAN LILLARD</u>
25.	<u>BREAKING DOWN DRAYMOND GREEN</u>
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1. WESTERN CONFERENCE FINALS (2009) GAME #6 WITH KOBE BRYANT



- *The important part of the playoffs, when the series starts, is establishing how you plan to dominate the series. Against Denver, Kobe ran into the post early & often. Showed them this is my strategy & what are you going to do about it in Game #1.*
- *Denver's strategy was to pack it in & force Kobe to make plays to his teammates. Spacing was key to stretch them out. Laker's kept bigs on the backside to keep defenders from doubling/helping on Kobe. On the trap, Kobe had to be patient, not rush through, & search for the weak spot which was the middle.*
- *Kobe made an adjustment from Game #5 to Game #6 after watching film. He missed open teammate (Trevor Ariza) in Game #5. He really needed to get teammates involved especially in double team. In Game #6, dove top guy (Lamar Odom) to the basket & opened up opposite wing (Ariza) in the double team. His teammates came to practice early & stayed late on hitting these exact game shots.*
- *Kobe rushed some passes to his center (Pau Gasol). Realized after watching tape that if he let Gasol to set up, he really wasn't in a closet & Denver's defense would be in trouble based on the Laker's adjustments, counters, & spacing.*
- *In transition, Kobe talked about drifting Luke Walton to the deep corner when he attacked the paint so when Walton was on the weakside wing, he wasn't moving into where the defense was loading to (the paint). Kobe wanted to spread Denver out in transition. Again, after both watching film & talking w/ his teammates, Kobe had patience in Game #6 let Derek Fisher slide to deep corner in transition making it hard for Denver to contest the shot.*
- *Denver & Carmelo Anthony tried to wear Kobe's legs down & got physical with him in the post. Kobe enjoyed playing against Carmelo & thrived off this part of the playoffs. But being Anthony enjoyed this part too, Kobe had to make an adjustment. Kobe had to put in situations where he wasn't comfortable, couldn't grab him, & continue to move into different actions/counters (slice cuts & catch & shoot actions) to pull the defense away from rotating. Playoffs is all about positioning.*
- *Chauncey Billups did a great job of sitting on Kobe's arm in transition & result was stripping the ball. After watching film, Kobe made the adjustment by dipping his left shoulder so Billups could not do that anymore. Furthermore, when Denver denied Kobe the ball at the top of the key, the Laker's moved Gasol to mid-post, which allowed, Kobe to go back door (Blind Pig action). But must send the weakside corner through to ball side to open the back side up for his cut. Kobe has to attack the helper's feet & hips.*
- *Kobe remembered how Denver's Coach George Karl played Michael Jordan & the Bulls when he was Seattle's coach. Strategy was exactly the same with Kobe. Determination wins games, but detail wins championships!*

2. WIZARDS VS RAPTORS PLAYOFFS (2018) GAME #1 WITH DEMAR DEROZAN



- *In high pick & roll situation, need to consider the ball side corner option being his defender is responsible for two players (tagging the screener & guarding his corner opponent). Ball side corner can then either make the decision to shoot or pass the pass inside to the center. If the screener does receive the ball, then play inside out & have the center hit the weakside corner shooter. Cross court passes, in this situation, are easy to rotate to.*
- *Drag screen & rolls need to be set more on the wing than in the middle third. Help defender is plugging it up & doing exactly what Washington wants me to do because they do not have to rotate & make decisions.*
- *Screener must put bodies on guys. Cannot just go through the motions but instead must be a threat to score. Might have to cut guys through to put less eyes on the ball in screen & roll situations to open more space & free up a jump shot. Coming off screens need to be attacking movements.*
- *In playoff basketball, the more you have to handle the basketball, the easier it is for defenses to key in on you. The more you can catch & shoot, & make defenses make mistakes or realize they made one, the better off you are. Have to approach screens as threats.*
- *Slightly changing the angle of the pin down screen will drastically open up the jump shot. If weakside defender is worried about the shaking up corner shooter, & the defending big is engaged in the ball screen, throw the lob.*
- *Short action = after high ball screen, opposite big slides to mid-post area & receives ball. He in turn, drops a short pass to screening big, rolling to basket. Really helps if that mid-post big can shoot the basketball & draw is helping defender away from the basket. Keep the defense on chain reaction, always a step behind.*
- *As you drive to middle on pick & roll, keep your dribble alive & don't forget teammates in the corner or behind you as the game progresses.*
- *As a post defender in middle pick & roll, use your inside arm to push the screener up into the ball so the screener cannot make contact with on-ball defender. The offensive player can counter by not going so wide into the screen, but instead, take a tighter angle. It will force the screener's defender into the on-ball defender.*
- *On an Iverson cut, if the over cutting offensive player's defender goes under both post players/screens, the cutter just pop backs to the original wing for a jump shot.*
- *If you could go back & learn from one player, it would be Steve Nash. Watch how he was great in screen & rolls, occupying the paint, & keeping his dribble. Watch how he was also great at getting into the paint & finding baseline cutters or corner shooters, & his ability to attract double & triple teams.*

3. JAZZ VS ROCKETS PLAYOFFS (2018) GAME #1 WITH DONOVAN MITCHELL



- ***When teams are cross switching, rolling big needs to seal, punish the helping big, & hold his position. As cutter comes off pin down & receives the ball, keep defender on your back with a live dribble. Spacing of the other three offensive players is key so their defenders cannot plug things ups.***
- ***If defender has length on you, you must get physical & move into the defender's body to create separation. Then I must receive the ball in striking distance. Receiving the ball at half court does absolutely nothing.***
- ***Taking the ball at the rim vs. a good transition team creates fouls, stoppage of play & takes opponent's shooters out of rhythm. You must attack the rim protectors & not shy away.***
- ***If you have bigs w/ length, stay away from bounce passes out of pick & roll. Get the ball up high so helping guards cannot pick away or steal. Bigs have to keep it high. Responsibility of the big to make the reads on the weakside then.***
- ***Trailing defending bigs have to get below the ball & turned early or they simply become a screening defender in transition defense.***
- ***Two things to do early in the game: establish an inside presence & attack the basket.***
- ***When an offensive player is being denied hard or pressured, have that player set a solid screen for his teammate. There is then no room for help or forces defenders into tough decisions.***
- ***Against good transition offense teams, when you attack the basket offensively, stay on your feet. Otherwise they have advantage on the make or the miss with mismatches going the other direction. Also try to avoid corner shots because the ball tends to bounce to the elbow & allows for Fastbreak starters.***
- ***As leader of your team, cannot allow your opponent to get physical & just shove you around. Need to hold your ground & be a leader for your team.***
- ***If you could go back & learn from one player, it would be Dwyane Wade in 2006 vs. the Mavericks. Watch how he attacked from both deep in the key & corners & was able to draw fouls by initiating the contact.***

4. WARRIORS VS PELICANS PLAYOFFS (2018) GAME #3 WITH JRUE HOLIDAY



- *If defender is moving to his right, he should be pushing off w/ his left foot & not pulling w/ his right to gain defensive ground (Steph Curry seemed to be still favoring leg injury). As an offensive player, should be attacking that player all game.*
- *Rim runner should exit to strong side block so weakside wing can set a more threatening back screen for trailing big on the back side to the basket for a lob or corner 3pts on the fade. If screener sets it beneath the defender, it allows the screener to slip to the lane/elbow or pop to the 3pt line.*
- *Set a lot of screens off the ball on shot blocking bigs (JaVale McGee) which eventually leads to miss coverages. Movement leads to miscommunication.*
- *Move non-shooting guards (Rajon Rondo) to the strong or weakside dunker area when they are off the ball in middle third pick & roll situations. If you keep them on the wing, help defender (Draymond Green) can sag off, see both, & help on the penetration. When they are in the dunker spots, defender has to turn his head, flatten down more, & make a commitment to one or the other.*
- *Even little movements create defensive shifts which ultimately opens up gaps that the offense can take advantage of.*
- *Right hand shooters in the left corner might want to shot fake & dip right shoulder to attack a long defender on the perimeter to create a straight-line drive to the basket, especially if they have a poor angle on the closeout. Need to play inside of defenders' space: can draw foul, body defender off, slip under defender's arm, ect.*
- *Need to set more screens on bodies & more threatening cuts to make opponents (Golden State) make more decisions.*
- *Defensive player's feet should always be operating at a 45-degree angle so you aren't giving up direct lines to the basket.*
- *Live ball turnovers against defenders like Draymond Green are bad because he doesn't need to outlet the ball to get the break started. He can just take it & go, & teammates get out in space. Must take care of the ball on offense so it doesn't lead to easy baskets in transition on the other end.*
- *If you can get player movement behind the two-man ball screen, it will break teams apart. You can exploit your opponent's lack of communication.*
- *If you could go back & study a team it would be Golden State & how they move. Watch how they can use a pin down screen as a decoy. Watch how they move off the ball. Watch how they use the mid-post action as a decoy to create backscreens & flares on the weakside. Watch how they set picks & slips to get layups. Watch their constant movement that puts teams in constant duress & forces teams to communicate off the ball.*

5. EASTERN CONFERENCE FINALS (2018) PREVIEW WITH LEBRON JAMES



- *Defenses with youth, speed, & length can closeout & rotate on the perimeter, but the deeper you get the into the post, the further they have to go. Have to be able to mix things up on the defense so they do not get comfortable in their rotations. When defense does such a good job of helping & supporting, keep trying to enter the ball into the short corner or dunker spot so they have to detach from shooters/scorers. It'll give more space for the offense to operate in before the defense can get there. It also makes the flair screen more dangerous based on the defensive spacing & distance they must travel.*
- *Key is for the best player to dominate the game (Eastern Conference Finals) while still conserving enough energy for later (NBA Finals).*
- *Idea like the Dallas Mavericks is to use your best player as a screener in middle third ball screens. On ball dribbler attacks putting pressure on the defense hopefully freeing up the best player/screener for easy opportunities.*
- *Young players haven't been taught & don't have the experience or technique to defend in the post. If they double in the post, best 3pt in the game is from inside to outside.*
- *You can conserve more energy by getting deeper catches in the post. Instead of swimming in the post, just lower your shoulder into opponent's chest & anchor a leg down & hold that spot. (The further out I catch, the more they can spy & zone up). Make both the referee & defender concerned about calling fouls on deep catches. Then that "length" gets put on the bench w/ foul trouble.*
- *If you could go back & learn from some Magic Johnson & Larry Bird clips. Watch how Magic was the best in attack mode in the post. Watch how Larry Bird would not give up that post position in the block. Watch how both got the ball in the deep post & were able to do the most damage.*

6. CLEVELAND VS BOSTON EASTERN CONFERENCE FINALS (2018) GAME #2 WITH JAYSON TATUM



- ***On a catch from a teammate, receiver's toes need to be in the direction of the basket to attack the paint in a direct line drive. If the toe is pointed away, you are losing force.***
- ***If defender chases over the screen, keep curling to the basket for a lob.***
- ***On shot fake, need to be on your toe in attack position, not on your heel. Again, toes need to be pointed toward the hoop.***
- ***In transition, if the defense is packed in & have patience & "let the dust settle" forcing the defense into a mistake based on my teammates spacing.***
- ***On pin down, cutter cannot come off to wide. Instead come right behind the screen for an open opportunity.***
- ***Playoffs are all about sending messages. Finishing over/through contact, draw defenders & drop off/reward trailing big.***
- ***When the ball goes into the post, hard for teams to play & scramble out of it defensively.***
- ***Dribbles take time & allow for defensive rotations. When possible, move the ball w/ the pass.***
- ***If you could go back & learn from one player, it would be Richard Hamilton when he played for the Detroit Pistons. Watch how he used screens, his movement w/out the ball, how he got into pocket areas, how his defender was playing him & simplify the game by coming right into catch & shoot moments.***

7. WESTERN CONFERENCE FINALS (2018) GAME # 3 WITH STEPHEN CURRY



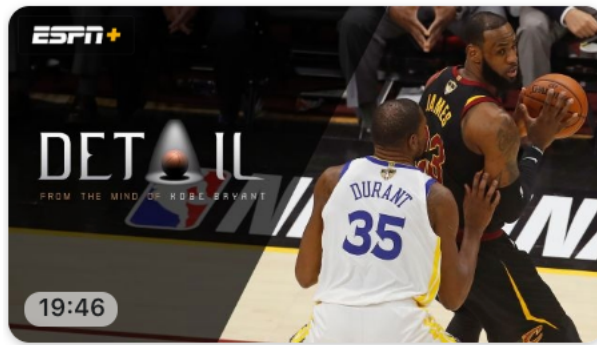
- *Coming out of a trap or switch, need to get a hand in passing lane & take a direct angle to opponent. Read the hands of the receiver to give indication where the ball's going to go & then should be able to pop the ball loose.*
- *Understand the secrets of the ball handler in middle pick & roll; what side do they like to score on & what side do they like to facilitate on. Good defensive players, like Scottie Pippen, are able to attack & dictate what the offense can do instead of the offense dictating what the defense can do by running at the player & making them think he was over-rotating or closeout short & attack late on the jump shot.*
- *After switching & trying to bump the driver w/ the ball, defender needs to drop & cushion the first bump & change their angle to force the driver away from its dominant hand's drive. When swiping at the ball, don't take your body out of the play. When defending on ball, keep your weight centered & distributed evenly. Cannot be back on your heels & back pedaling; must stay level to the ground. Angle your feet to force the ball wide to the elbows (& keep outside the paint) & must stay low in a stance (do not rise up on your slides) while sticking forearm into his back. Push the ball handler to the imaginary line to closest help defender.*
- *From a team spirit standpoint, you cannot let the ball handler dictate & knock you down off your feet. No direct line drives.*
- *If you could go back & learn from one player, it would be Maurice Cheeks. Watch how he understood how to pop the ball loose, how to use his length, & how to use his quickness.*

8. EASTERN CONFERENCE FINALS (2018) GAME # 5 WITH JAYLEN BROWN



- ***Even one bounce off the screen getting yourself into the pocket & you can hide from the defender.***
- ***Rim runners need to stay away from clogging up the ball, sprinting to the rim & getting into the short corner/dunker spots getting behind the defense forcing the rim protector into making decisions.***
- ***On a closeout, if shooter's right foot is behind his left on the catch, indicator he is not going to shoot the ball but instead is going to drive. On the closeout, first things to check for the positioning of the shooter's feet.***
- ***On a mid/low post seal, the offensive player needs to keep top leg up & over & fight for their whole body up forcing the defense to go to the low side. Almost like a defensive slide or box out drill keeping the defender on your back & sliding up the lane.***
- ***Spin moves to the baseline start w/ a low center of gravity & the angle of the spin is tight moving toward the basket & not wide to the baseline.***
- ***Because LeBron will always let the ball in front of him in transition to make the big block from behind, be sure to have spacers/wings stretch to the corners to improve spacing & get open looks. Drive has to have patience & bait the drive.***
- ***Offensive players have to do their work early to get touches in their sweet spots. To open up the game for yourself, you first must be willing to open up the game for others.***
- ***In offense transition, before I thrust & go to the rim, I must have my teammates spaced & ready.***
- ***If you could go back & learn from one player that did an amazing job putting pressure on the defense at all times, it would Allen Iverson. Watch his ability to get out in transition quick, his motor & energy he played with, ability get to the rim & draw fouls, ability to get to the rim & finish, & ability to get to the rim & draw plays for his shooters.***

9. DURANT AND LEBRON NBA FINALS (2018) PREVIEW



- *At the start of the game, best player as the set the tone early & be strong/structured/disciplined with the ball. The more I bounce the ball, the more the defense can load to the ball. I have to get buckets off simple, one dribble actions. I must be able to look of good defenders that anticipate (LeBron) or he will jump the passing lane & go.*
- *I must have patience & trust my teammates. The more I indicate what I want on offense, the more the defense is capable of reacting & taking actions away. Spacing is key on back door passes. Weakside corner needs to be filled for hammer pass especially when the defense is packing in the lane.*
- *If defender is shading on ball to left, don't bounce it to the left. You are minimizing your distance to go left & shrinking the amount of distance the help defenders need to cover. Instead, try to drag the ball to the right initially to create more space/distance going left & now can get inside the top of the key.*
- *Once I get the defense off balance, keep your dribble & continue to attack. Put the help defender into a decision-maker. My decision-making skill as an offensive player has to be quicker against length. Players fall because they are off balance; They are off balance because they are in mid-shift.*
- *Phil Jackson & the '91 Bulls made popular bringing defenders from the baseline to trap the wing instead of bringing defenders from the top (Both the Spurs & the Warriors have borrowed this concept being Steve Kerr has been on all three teams). When this occurs, the on-ball defender must get on the top side of the ball. As an offensive player, if they do not, should give you the ability to turn the corner to the middle of the floor.*
- *Rajon Rondo & Russell Westbrook get so many offensive rebounds because of all the long rebounds landing near the elbow areas. Good idea for long guards to get into the mid-post area & stay in there to pick up easy offensive rebounds. This allows for my teammates to shoot comfortably because they know I'm in a good position to get offensive rebounds.*
- *If you could go back & learn from one player, it would be Michael Jordan. In the '95-'96 season, he was double teamed often. Watch the way he escaped those & how he used one or two dribble pullups. Watch how he bodied defenders off himself & created separation. From that separation, he was able to elevate over the defense.*

10. CLEVELAND VS GOLDEN STATE NBA FINALS (2018) GAME #1 WITH KEVIN LOVE



- *To be fully engaged, I need to be able “to respond to the fire before the fire burns the house down.” The sooner I can recognize the ball handler has a step on my teammate defender, the quicker I can react & position myself to slide over & help. My angle to slide over & get in front of the charge circle will terrify players from driving to the basket all night; they do not want to pick up offensive foul calls from players sliding over from the weakside (Shane Battier was great at this). This slows down the momentum of attacking players.*
- *On closing out in pick & roll coverage, level the ball off & force the ball handler outside away from the basket. Keeping your feet lower to the ground speeds up your recovery time & allows the defender to change directions quicker. The defender wants to take the ball handler out of attacking position & do not allow holes for them to capitalize immediately.*
- *To be more active on defense, moving closer to the ball as a help defender & foot faking/stunting toward the driver while keeping a hand in the passing lane will bait the offense & keep them off balance. Having our hands up in the passing lane during pick & roll coverage makes the offense more uncomfortable while also allowing our backside coverage time to rotate if necessary.*
- *Good teams like the Warriors will feast on opponents displaying bad body language. Must keep a good disposition & fortitude about ourselves telling your opponent we are still coming at you.*
- *As soon as the driver picks the ball up, the defender should be reading his hands. My body position doesn’t change (still between the basket & the ball). But my hands need to be active & not at my sides. Contesting the shot with the closest hand (left hand on right hand shooter; right hand on left hand shooter) doesn’t allow the shooter space. It takes away their line of sight & makes them uncomfortable; it distorts the distance.*
- *If the defense is trying to squeeze a good player on penetration, have the screener screen the backside of the help defender (Draymond Green for Steph Curry.). Defense must get top leg over the screen.*
- *You can break teams apart by forcing your opponent into issues of communication. Defense has to take individual responsibility of defending your opponent.*
- *Stay attached to shooter’s shooting shoulder until they get inside the 3pt line. Then, again, take an angle where you can level them off & force them into tough pull jump shots.*
- *If you could go back & learn from one player, it would be Tim Duncan. Watch how he did a great job with his feet, great job staying low, great job contesting high, & did a great job playing the ball handler while at the same time taking away the passing lane to the rolling big.*

11. CLEVELAND VS GOLDEN STATE NBA FINALS (2018) WITH KEVIN DURRANT



- *When defender gets physical with you, the offensive player, get a lower base, gain leverage, & counter the defense by knocking them off balance. If defender is $\frac{3}{4}$ or full fronting in the post/mid-post, read early & try to spin away (especially on a good passing team). Try to clamp your elbow over there's & spin away. If the offensive player can become a great passer in the mid-post/mid-wing, it enhances their skill to dominate in the 4th quarter. Every action I'm in needs to be a dangerous one to the defense; defense has to fear me. Player like Kevin Durant needs to challenge the league by being the best passer in the NBA.*
- *On my catch, my teammates have to have confidence that I'm going to make a play & find them if they are open. On the other hand, my teammates have to continue to move on my catch. My teammates cannot be concerned about getting in my way.*
- *On ball defenders need to keep a low, wide base & continue to work on taking shorter, choppier steps to stay in front of the ball. Understanding angles & personnel will improve defensive efficiency as well. When defending a ball screen, I have to move into the ball, make myself thin, & slide between the ball & the screen (like a piece of paper sliding through a door). Great defensive players need more energy than their offensive opponent. But the ending goal is for the team to get better collectively. Studying film will give me a defensive idea of where I'm steering the offense early so when the action takes place, I'm not giving in to the offense. I'm sticking to the game plan & don't get caught out of position. If the ball screen is far from the three-point line & I want to go under, then I first make fake up forcing the screener higher, & then I can drop under the screen. Conversely, if I want to go over, I fake low, then go over the top.*
- *If you could go back & learn from offensively, it would be Vlade Divac, Chris Webber, & Arvydas Sabonis. Watch how they passed to their teammates & what their timing was like on these passes. If you could go back & learn from defensively, it would be Scottie Pippen. Watch his stance, his feet, & how his is always dictating action toward the offensive player. He has a strong base & fundamentally sound while pressuring the ball & using his length.*

12. DRAFT CLASS (2018): REQUIRED VIEWING WITH SCOTTIE PIPPEN



- ***Great defenders initiate the action when defending the basketball & dictate the tempo. Through watching film & understanding your opponent's offense, great defenders choke off the angle to initiate the play. Dropping & cutting off the angle of the driver is another example of the defensive player having great feet & sound defensive presence. Push the ball into areas where the driver cannot attack. On ball screens, make yourself thin & slide right through. Continue to work the ball handler & cut off vision; helps if you know your opponent's game plan so you can continue to cut off angles & choke off the play.***
- ***Great defenders cover ground, play with energy, & have active hands/feet. Can you get your hand in the line of where the ball is supposed to go & get a deflection toward his/her basket. Contesting shots w/ your left hand on a right-hand shooter. Dig into the post w/ one hand & use the other hand to deflect the pass coming back out.***

13. NBA SUMMER LEAGUE WITH TRAE YOUNG



- ***Dangerous for a guard in defensive transition to have an opposing big running through the center of the floor because the ball handler can use the big as a screener & play back & forth. Need to get thin (minimize the target for the screener), get over the screen, & pressure up into the ball handler or fake up toward the ball (forcing the screener to get higher), retreat back & get under the screen.***
- ***When defending one pass away from the ball, keep your feet on the ground, move back into an area where you can still dig in at the ball & not lose vision of the guy you are guarding. Staying on the ground will make you a more efficient defender. Put the ball in jeopardy & get your hands into the passing lane.***
- ***Coming off the middle/high ball screen, have patience while maintaining the dribble & see what the big is going to commit to. Make the defense make errors. Play the game in combinations & see the sequence of options. The more you can establish w/ the pass early, the more it's going to free me up to score later in the season.***
- ***Don't want happy feet when guarding the basketball. You need a core strategy where you are sending the ball handler instead.***
- ***It's better for a penetrating guard to over dribble through the lane, keeping the dribble alive, & passing out like Steve Nash, rather than picking the ball up & forcing a tough pass.***
- ***Anytime in the NBA a player w/ his dribble turns his back to the defender, I should put my forearm in their back because I know they are going to spin trying to create space. The forearm will deliver a blow & knock them off balance.***
- ***If you notice that it's a chase action & the offensive player will be coming off a pin down or stagger, the defender needs to stack & trail behind the cutter, shadowing his movements. I hide & mirror until he clears the screen, then I slide over & collect him all over again.***
- ***If you could go back & learn from offensively, it would be Kyrie Irving. Watch how he moves without the ball, how he creates space, how he opens up lanes that he can move through, how does he cut, how does he read back door actions, how does he read the weakside during screen & roll, when does he hit the roller, & when does he look off the roller & hit the corner 3pt. or wing 3pt. I really need to watch how he paces the game out & move the chess pieces of the game around.***

14. WNBA WITH JEWELL LOYD



- *As the first person back in defensive transition, stay away from being passive & settling on your heels. Instead, dictate the tempo & keep them off rhythm by foot faking at the ball handler.*
- *On offense, when the defense is icing/downing the wing ball screen, try to keep your dribble longer & stretch the defense by rejecting the screen & taking it to the corner. This allows more space for the screener shaking to pull behind the defense. This will lengthen the defense's rotations.*
- *Once the defense knows the set play, defenders need to do their work early & initiate contact w/ the offensive player.*
- *On offense, especially when you have the ball, it's better at times to look at the defense & not the offense. If the defense loses vision of the ball, then put the ball in open space for your teammate to catch & score.*
- *On a hard closeout to a shooter/scorer, when you get to the ball & they make a move, your first steps are not to slide side to side. Your first steps are retreating to a back pedal to change the angle allowing you to cut them off. Bluffing to a side also slows the offense down & keeps them out of rhythm & guessing.*
- *When closing the window on a trap, when the offensive player picks the ball up, read their hands & try playing the pass.*
- *Back screens need to be looked at as signs of art. Angle the screen so you can prohibit the defense to where it wants to go. On a back cut, right time to go back door is midstride of your opponent's gallop when their feet are not set.*
- *If you could go back & learn from one player, it would be Cynthia Cooper. Watch her physicality, her understanding how to use her shoulders, how she used her body to slip through cracks, her ability to read down screens & hide behind screens, & her ability to penetrate left & shoot runners, along with her ability to penetrate right & shoot runners.*

15. BREANNA STEWART/ELENA DELLE DONNE (WNBA)



- *Being most defenses want to fight over a flair/fade screens, the screener has to be sure to screen the top side of the defender on a flat angle & hold screen longer. If the screener sets the screen lower, then shake the corner up to the wing, & curl the cutter for a layup (no backside help should result in a layup).*
- *Don't telegraph the pass by looking where you want to pass the ball. Look off to the loaded/strong side as a decoy, & wait for the backdoor to happen (as I look off to the loaded/strong side, I should pull the help away from the basket to the shooter in the corner, which in turn, should open the backdoor pass).*
- *On a ball screen-rescreen w/ a loaded corner, great idea is to cut the corner player to the opposite corner on the rescreen, which allows the screener the whole side to either roll or slip to the corner after the rescreen has been set.*
- *Sit down early in the post, stay connected, eat space, & won't have to expend as much energy to make post moves to score. The more dribbles I take in the post, the more I have to facilitate to my teammates because you start playing in a crowd of defenders.*
- *On a flex cut from the corner, if the defender is already on the low side, counter her w/ a cut on the high side of the screen. It's a race to the spot near the basket where I can cut off the defender & seal her off.*
- *As a right-handed shooter shooting a fade-away, use your left leg & butt to initiate the contact with the defense & knock them off balance. If you have a mismatch on the perimeter with a guard defending a big, you do not need to run down in the post for a clean look; just go to the elbow or mid-post area which will prevent the tag off/switch.*
- *Being disciplined, having patience, & holding our spacing/position on the perimeter (deep corner, deep wing, & top) when passing inside to the post, makes the defense's rotations harder & opens windows.*
- *Don't read your teammates on offense, but instead read the defense. Look at the game holistically. If the defense is down-trapping, the screener shouldn't pop to the top (too easy for the help to slide over & steal the pass) but instead slide to the ball side corner area. It will force long closeouts from the weakside. Sue Bird is great at playing the action on defense much like John Stockton use to do. Best way on offense to counter that is to have patience & wait for the passing player to space to the opposite side corner & then read what how her defender plays it.*
- *Film is so vital, especially in the playoffs, so you understand how the defense/opponent is going to play you in different situations & actions.*
- *My posture on the drive & kick has to look like attack mode. If I am too upright, the defense knows I'm simply passing out of the drive.*
- *Breanna should go back & learn Kevin Durant. Watch how he moves off the ball w/ screen actions, how he hides behind the screens, how he uses his body to get quick seals around the rim. What he's excellent at is getting easy opportunities where he doesn't have to fuss w/ the ball until the end of the game. Elena should go back & learn from Dirk Nowitzki. Watch his ability to put the defense into situations where they have to make decisions, where they either have to come double him & leave shooters or stay w/ shooters & give him wide open shots over much smaller players.*

16. BREAKING DOWN JAMES HARDEN



- *Screens off the ball force defenses to communicate & that's where mistakes happen. Best thing for the ball handler to do off the ball screen is to probe & force the defense into decisions.*
- *Most deadly thing in offensive transition is a big running down the center of the court. It will put pressure on first defenders back to cover the rim & opens up shooters on the perimeter (That's why Houston is deadly in transition).*
- *By having patience & freezing the backside defender on a shake action, it opens things up for the rolling big. The shake defender has to make a decision to tag off on the big or cover the shaking up shooter.*
- *Tex Winters use to talk about passes out of motion. Those are passes that are easy for the defense to read, cut off the angle, & intercept the pass.*
- *Once you get into your defender leaning off your shift in penetration, continue to attack their body vs trying to go around them. This forces the defense to make a play because they are off balance. Those little freezes or shifts will open things up.*
- *Great half court action is a dribble exchange between guards & then swinging the ball to the big at the top of the key. The original guard (that handed off) slips to the basket on the reversal pass. Big passes to guard for a layup or diving guard can pass to weakside corner if the weakside defender pulls in. Weakside corner shoot or pass to the plus one shooter at the wing. If the guard that receives the handoff doesn't pass to the top of the key, that big ball screens & rolls. Driving guard has two shooters spaced on the wing & corner; weakside guard has to read the coverage on whether to hold in the corner or shake up. If roller's defender steps up & stops the ball, lob the ball to the rim to the rolling big.*
- *On any low post catch, if the defense is trying to gather their balance, punish them w/ a baseline move to the basket. The more time you give the defense in the low post, the more time you are giving them to settle in on you. If the defender has their top leg up & body is in line with their leg, there's not a cushion if the offensive player spins baseline creating an easy layup. On the post catch, the big needs to dive to the basket, one guard needs to come to the strong side slot, & opposite guards/forwards fill the weakside wing & weakside corner. With the defense being forced then the double the post, it'll create scoring reads. Michael Jordan & Gary Payton were excellent at posting up & creating double teams.*
- *Offensively, taking your most dangerous player & putting them behind the defense will force them to turn their head & see where he's at. Then off screen & roll movement, bringing that player back to the front side of the defense makes it really tough on them.*
- *If you could go back & learn from one player, it would be Manu Ginobili. Watch his movement off the ball, always circling around you & dribble-handoffs, down pick actions, back door cuts, & how he moved around keeping defenses guessing.*

17. BREAKING DOWN ARIKE OGUNBOWALE



- *From the guard position, if you cannot shoot the basketball, you cannot be a dominant offensive player. Shooting from the perimeter opens everything else up. If you can get into the paint & make plays, that makes you even more dangerous. Look for windows in transition.*
- *The timing & angle of a flair/fade screen is essential to its success. Screener needs to have the correct angle in relation to the defender, passer needs to bring the basketball away from where the screen is being set (to offset the defense & provide good space for the action to take place), & cutter needs to read the defense to see if the curl is available. Try to negate the defenses length on the pullup/fade-away shot.*
- *As the ball handler turns the corner on the wing ball screen, she wants to read the screener's defender. If they are sagging of in the lane, great time to rescreen back to the original side (Kobe did this in his last game vs. Utah).*
- *Being able to push the basketball in transition for a great scorer is a big key. In the half court, teams will be set defensively & will do whatever they can to not give the scorer easy looks. Pushing in transition puts pressure on the defense. With 10 eyes on the basketball, simple plays to your teammates will start to be open. Again, the defense is put in pressure situations where they have to start seeing the whole floor. As soon as the defender turns their head, allows windows for the scorer to slip into.*
- *Offensive rebounds are what really separates great scorers. It just continues to put pressure on the defense. Good scorers force the defense to defend in transition, defend moving off the ball, defend spotting up & shooting, defend cutting behind the defense, defend off the dribble, defend screen & rolls, & then deal w/ them on the offensive glass which is a lot to handle.*
- *If you could go back & learn from one player, it would be Kobe Bryant. Watching how he moved off the ball & understanding how to get into the gaps, understanding when to get into the mid-range game, when to draw the defense & go up into a shot, forcing the defense pay attention to you & then drop it off to a teammate for a layup, understanding when to side fade, importance offensive rebounds, & getting out into transition. Constantly putting pressure on the defense & that they have to worry about where you are.*

18. BREAKING DOWN KALANI BROWN



- *On a high post entry, the low post needs to seal into the defender & continue to move her up the lane. If the defense is stacking up the low post & the high post takes the shot, the low post will have offensive rebounding position & more space to operate with.*
- *Phil Jackson use to get upset trying to make an over the top pass from the wing into the post. Instead, he preferred the entry coming from the corner, as he believed it was a better angle.*
- *If you are going to make a backdoor pass, the ball shouldn't be on the passer's head. On a bounce pass, the ball needs to be below the passer's waist & you have to thread the needle underneath the defender's hands. Only time the ball would be on the passer's head is if you are throwing the ball over the top.*
- *When being doubled team in the post, do not try to escape dribble. Instead, absorb the defense & keep the ball high, then fire the ball out to the open teammate.*
- *When offensive rebounding, instead of watching the flight of the ball, run toward the closest defender, create the contact, & seal her under the basket. A. C. Green was the best at this.*
- *On a post move to the basket, the closets elbow to the basket is used to create space w/in the offensive player's working area on the turn. Shaq was the best at using this.*
- *If you could go back & learn from one player, it would be Shaquille O'Neal. Watch how fundamentally sound he was, how he got position in the post, how he understood how to seal, how he understood how to use his body in the post to create separation & get the defender off balance. I'd pay attention to the angles of how to seal players underneath the basket & how to dominate a certain area in the paint before you even catch the ball.*

19. BREAKING DOWN NAPHESSA COLLIER



- ***You see a lot of combinations in Barcelona soccer that make these little, short triangles & touch passes that are similar to UCONN's offense. In the low post, when you make your move & try to bump the defender, you want to use your lower body (hips) to bump & not your top. Check to see if the wrap around pass to your teammate is available. Great centers like Arveydas Sabonis & Vlade Divac made this pass effective. Don't get thin on a step-through to the basket; instead step-through & knock the defender back to create separation. Shots in the post only become realistic threats if the player can go w/ both shoulders.***
- ***On a defender's short closeout, once you get them leaning, change directions. The change of pace in this example is very important.***
- ***When rim running in offensive transition, the post player needs to meet the defensive player early, sits down on her, & seals. Try to keep your back to the defensive player; if defensive player slides low, she's able to square her up defensively. Because the bigs can push the ball, it makes UCONN's offense dangerous & becomes a matchup nightmare.***
- ***On an inside pivot in the post, take the non-pivoting leg to the outside of the defender to see how they react. If they do not move, easy rip through & go by. Then on a turn-around, the player needs to turn on their toes & not on their heels.***
- ***If you could go back & learn from one player, it would be Hakeem Olajuwon. Watch his versatility of running the floor, posting up deep in the post, turnaround jumpers with both shoulders, posting up mid-wing & using their footwork in a triple-threat position using jab steps & inside pivots. Look at how he handles the ball, handles those post ups, creates separation for fadeaways to the baseline & to the middle, as well as pump fakes & splitting the defense.***

20. BREAKING DOWN SABRINA IONESCU



- *When a great player is being overplayed/denied on the wing, you want your inside hand (hand closest to the basket) to be outside your defenders inside hand. This allows the offensive player to use their hands for leverage on the defender's elbow, dislodge the defender, & go backdoor.*
- *Great players are good at handling the ball, good at screen & rolls but the dangerous ones are great at moving off the ball into catch & shoot. The mid-range pullup going to the left, like Diana Taurasi, of which, people claim to be dead, can be a deadly tool.*
- *On a teammate's rescreen, get as deep as you can on the first screen, then come off the second screen & attack the big. The hedging/help defender becomes a screen on her own player.*
- *Understanding the angle of the defender's closeout will allow for the driver to cover ground, find the window, & pullup into the paint & use that midrange.*
- *Oregon does a great job of moving players on the weakside keeping the defense occupied, keeping them engaged, which allows the driver to hit the diver.*
- *Steve Nash was really good at walking defenders down below the level of the screen, misdirecting, & making them think he was going to attack one direction & gets tight going the other direction. Running the on-ball defender into the screen will force the helping defender into a decision.*
- *Driving off a middle ball screen away from a two-side is much like James Harden. You have a diving big, guard in the shake up, weakside corner is filled, & strong side wing is reading whether to stay or slide to the corner on the driver. This action forces the weakside help defenders into making decisions of who is going to help on the ball. Important for the screener to hold the screen a split second longer & force the defenders into decisions. Side two continues to move looks similar to Steve Nash, Shawn Marion, & the Phoenix Suns.*
- *Once the defense starts to anticipate an action & shift to take it away, reject the off-ball threat & take advantage of the situation (defense thinking DHO is taking place & the person with the ball sneaks it to the basket for a layup). Much like the Warriors w/ Steph Curry coming off screens & Draymond Green sneaks it.*
- *If you could go back & learn from one player, it would be Steve Nash. Watch his ability to use screens well, how he rubbed defenders off screens well, how he used his body & angles well, & how he forced bigs helping on the screen into decisions along w/ his ability to use both hands.*

21. BREAKING DOWN KAWHI LEONARD



- *In the playoffs, majority of teams first play/set involves a lot of movement & the ball changing sides. Kawhi does a great job of getting into the body of the defender, creating separation/space, & pulling the trigger.*
- *If the defense goes under on the dribble handoff, ball handler needs to hold the dribble a little longer & let the screener set a rescreen. If the defense traps the ball screen, screener needs to get right behind the screen, in an open window. On the screener's catch, you can manipulate the defense by cutting the weakside corner to the basket. This forces the top help defender into deciding whom to guard between the top of the key & weakside wing.*
- *On a low post catch, on any stunt from the top, the defender's hands cannot be down. Texas Tech lost the NCAA title because when they closed down on penetration, their hands were down in their pockets & Virginia was able to find a shooter in the corner. As an offensive player, you need to make a mental note they are doubling or stunting off the top. Then when you catch the ball in the low post, you need to back to ball down lower toward the baseline which is a longer distance for the defense to double/stunt & allows the top of the key shooter to shake over in front of you.*
- *If the defense full fronts/high-sides you in the mid-post, offense just needs to anchor down & stay low. The passer just needs to take the ball to the corner & enter from the corner. This will force the low post defender to square up. Weakside wing wants to drift below his defender's vision on a post entry to the strong side so, again, the help defender has to continue to turn his head & make a decision (either stay w/ his matchup or help on the ball).*
- *When you get a mismatch w/ a big defending a guard on the perimeter, try to off rhythm him with the dribble. Attacking the defender's top foot, forces him to shift his feet & try to stay in front of the ball. When they drop back in transitioning feet, they will drop back & great time to hit the pullup jumper.*
- *Most players on a pullup jumper don't lower their shoulder & do a vertical pullup. Kawhi can disassociate his movements & can continue to move his legs while dropping his shoulder down to keep the defense at bay. He has the leg strength to slide away from the defense on his pullup. That's the importance of lifting weights & having great leg strength.*
- *It's important to not only understand the team you are playing against, but also understand the players' history. Know who from the past wanted to hit the gaming winning shots & take the ball out of their hands. Get over any ball screen, keep your left hand on his right hand to take away any shot, & force him into traffic.*
- *At the end of clock/game situations, offensive players need to take their time. The defense has been programmed not to foul shooters. You have time to set your feet & shoot your shot or pump fake & shoot.*
- *If you could go back & learn from one player, it would be Michael Jordan. Watch how MJ battled for offensive rebounds which created a fight for his team. This adds a toughness & culture to your team, & it's value in the playoffs cannot be overestimated.*

22. BREAKING DOWN KYRIE IRVING



- *Game continues to change since now we have bigs running the floor spread. This opens up the whole middle of the court & makes rotating difficult for defensive teams because you have shooters on the perimeter.*
- *For right-handed players, pulling up coming off your right-hand dribble is not mechanically easy to do; it takes time, practice, & repetition.*
- *Phil Jackson use to get upset w/ turnovers & also blamed them on the passer. The passer has to read the defense. Make notations on any blitz coverages early so you can make adjustments late & simply flash the big. Bait them into actions like backdoor/blind pig actions.*
- *On step up screening actions, you have to see what's available. After watching film, you can understand how to take advantage of it. Look for things in sequence & then you are always prepared for a counter. As a leader, always prepare for the worst; understand that you are preparing for deep into the playoffs.*
- *When you have a chance to take a crack on a defender, you need to set hard, physical screens (like Larry Bird who use to set hard screens to get himself open). Phil Jackson & Tex Winter use to have us practice setting screens, popping our feet, putting our body on the defensive player, & practice how to set good screens. But the cutter must also set the screen up better & take a good angle into the screen putting the defense into duress. It's an art to set screens.*
- *The screener on the ball screen puts a body on the on-ball defender forces the defender on the screen into making decisions. Then the rolling big can put pressure on the backside of the defense.*
- *As a guard, never get buried under the basket on an offensive rebound. This makes for tough transition defense/balance for your team. Instead, try hanging around elbow areas.*
- *Using your inside hand on a cut to slightly push away from the defender along w/ using the defense's momentum can help create easy opportunities for yourself. Much like Michael Jordan vs. Brian Russell in MJ's last shot w/ the Bulls.*
- *The reason Kyrie is so tough to guard 1v1 is because he's always off rhythm. He plays w/ a broken rhythm. The minute you think he's slowing down, he lulls you asleep. Because he keeps his feet moving, he's able then to go right past you.*
- *The difference between Golden State & the rest of the league, on split post action, they are not just clearing space on the post entry. They are setting a screen for a shooter & the screener is slipping to the basket. Every opportunity you can get to take advantage of a potential defensive miscommunication you need to take.*
- *Once you get into the teeth of the defense, don't forget about the skip pass to the weakside corner. James Harden has gotten great at this. Watching film will help in seeing what we have available.*
- *If you could go back & learn from one player, it would be Isaiah Thomas. Watching him in those championship runs moving w/out the ball, watching him catch & shoot, watching him move systematically & being efficient.*

23. BREAKING DOWN GIANNIS ANTETOKOUNMPO



- *Try to catch the ball off pin downs where you can be an immediate threat. The further you catch from the basket, the easier it is for defenses to probe & plug in on the weakside. The key is to catch the ball closest to the basket whenever you can.*
- *When a post defender tries to use their knees & knock you off balance, the offensive player needs to sit down on that knee & force him to drop that knee back. On a drop step, don't let the defense knock you off balance. Offensive player needs to initiate the contact & put the defense on their heels.*
- *When the defense pulls in & plugs the middle, immediate pass to the open corner. If they rotate to the corner, plus one pass to the wing for a shot.*
- *Giannis is great at getting out in transition. On the Laker's first Three Peat, they got Shaq out in transition early. If you get out in transition early, before the defense loads & gets set, you can get easy baskets.*
- *Scottie Pippen did a great job covering the pick & roll on the weakside & mucked up the action w/ his length. When helping on the pick & roll action, as soon as your teammate gets back in front of the ball, closeout to your original matchup & cover as much ground as you can. This will save your team from having to rotate numerous times.*
- *On a cross screen, the cutter needs to get the top leg over his defender, cut right under the basket, catch, & shoot over. Further you get pushed out of the lane, the more defensive eyes & key on you.*
- *In transition, all teammates need to pick up the pace & run. Otherwise the defense, can load to the ball, cut off/plug the first runner, & set their defense. The first runner may need to slow down a little bit, but the other teammates need to sprint & space.*
- *Attacking the screener's defender in middle pick & roll will force the weakside defenders to activate & help on the screener. Be sure the ball handler takes the ball to the level of the screen first to initiate the screener's defender.*
- *On a drive to the basket, instead of the ball handler spinning to find space, need to spin to find the defender's body. Again, offense needs to initiate the contact.*
- *Al Horford does a great job of using his forearm to initiate contact on defense. He just wants the offense to feel him, delivers a blow, & wants them to be uncomfortable.*
- *Great thing to do if your teammate gets doubled team on a drive is to get out of the vision of your defender & cut to the basket. Through watching film together w/ your teammates, you can build a communication level where your teammate knows your open.*
- *On offense, if the defender gives you a blow w/ contact, take another dribble, put your body into them, & try finishing at the rim. Don't pick the dribble up on the defender's contact.*
- *On a pump fake where you get your defender off his feet, the ball should swing & passer simply goes back door. Mike Bibby & Vlade Divac were excellent at this.*
- *If you could go back & learn from one player, it would be Tracy McGrady. Watch his ability to operate in the mid-post well, watch how well he ran in transition, watch how he was able to take contact in the post, elevate, & shoot over the defense w/ both shoulders, watch how he used his footwork in close spaces to get to the rim before the defense was able to cut him off, watch how he was able to get into the paint & find open teammates on the opposite side of the floor.*

24. BREAKING DOWN DAMIAN LILLARD



- *John Stockton was the master at making the pass out of the Hawk Cut on time & on target. Have to be sure that the ball handler is low enough at the wing to have the angle to make the pass.*
- *The Phoenix Suns were the best at making the “eight” cut w/ Shawn Marion. He’d look like he was setting a screen & then would just slip to the basket. Anytime the defense trails off a brush screen where the cutter is going into a ball screen, it’s a great time to make the “eight” cut & slip to the basket.*
- *Bait the trap on the ball a little longer, handling the pressure while allowing the top offensive player dive to the basket will open shooters then on the weakside. If weakside corner defender rotates to the wing, plus one pass swung to the corner for open 3pt.*
- *Dame has the defense so afraid that he’s going to shoot it so deep that they actually go for his pump fakes from way out there. Denver does a great job of rotating on the drive. Paul Millsap is a great help defender. When he helps from the weakside corner, Jamal Murray helps the helper on the pass which allows Millsap to “X-Out” to the next player. Knowing this, the driver needs to get deeper into the teeth of the defense which allows time for the other four players to get proper spacing.*
- *On a hesitation move, the driver needs to eat up space, really create distance/separation by dragging the foot out in the direction their driving towards & keep their shoulder down. On a floater, because you have time to measure the shot, don’t over think it.*
- *If you are not head & shoulders behind the defense on a ball screen, try to hesitate more. Try to freeze them for a split second by looking off the screen to then attack & get into the paint. If the defender forces you to fade back further than you want to on a fade-away, you have to put more arc on the ball.*
- *If you could go back & learn from one player, it would be Rajon Rondo. Watch his ability to get all the way in the paint, pull the defense to you, & then find players from the paint area. Watch him getting into the paint, keeping his dribble & finding shooters behind him, across from him, or directly in front of him in the corner.*

25. BREAKING DOWN DRAYMOND GREEN



- *The “Golden Democracy” from the start of the game simply gets the defense changing sides of the floor. They use their two shooters (Klay & Steph) as threats to open things up for their teammates. On a post entry, because the shooter’s defenders are so tight, they have multiple options (split post actions, fade screens on the back side, dives to the basket, ect).*
- *In transition, you don’t always have to sprint the floor. Sometimes you can lull the defense asleep & then accelerate your pace especially with shooters spaced on the floor.*
- *Draymond’s head is always up trying to make a play for someone else. In Golden State’s offense, when you don’t have the ball is when you are most dangerous. When you know in advance that teams are switching, fake screen/slip immediately. The passer has to recognize that the cutter is open before they are really open by reading the defense.*
- *Scottie Pippen was really good at cutting off penetration & then closing out on shooters. When cutting off penetration, don’t land on your heel. It takes too much time to recover & closeout to the shooter. You are losing both seconds/time & power. Instead, stay on your toes when cutting off penetration so your able to get the feet turned toward the shooter & push out quicker on the closeout.*
- *The Warriors unselfishness & ability to sacrifice their own shot for a better shot separates them the rest of the league. The 3pt shot really isn’t the most important part of today’s game. Instead having four that can handle the ball is the most important. Looking back at the Bulls, Toni Kukoc was one of the first bigs that could play one through four positions. The Lakers had Lamar Odom who could push the ball in transition & his defender couldn’t keep up. Having Draymond being able to handle the ball creates so many problems on the defense. Draymond’s ability to be able to look off the window/opening for the screener on a pin down when it’s being set for a shooter like Klay Thompson creates opportunities for the screener to slip & score.*
- *Having the intelligence to use your teammates, their spacing, & their threat to score on fake a dribble handoff vs. using your own fakes to create the angle. Then after the fake, having the ability to put the pass right on target won’t allow the defense time to recover. Just a slight hesitation move from the offense might be enough to freeze the defense & create an opportunity for your teammates.*
- *Because of the rule of verticality, on any penetration to the basket w/ contact, you have to try to dunk the ball to draw the foul. The arms are exposed & easy for the referees to see the foul occurred.*
- *If you could go back & learn from one player, it would be Magic Johnson. Watch his ability to deliver passes on time & on target, watch his ability to make passes when the defense is unaware the pass is even being made, watch his ability to thread the ball w/ the bounce pass between defenders in transition, & watch his ability to post up in the mid-post & read the action behind him.*

26. DIANA TAURASI BREAKING DOWN KLAY THOMPSON



- ***Leveraging his shooting, changing his pace, & getting to the basket has evolved Klay Thompson's game into an overall threat. Definitely helps when you have teammates that are willing to get you open. Great players will put a defender into a dilemma & creates both time & space to give himself an opportunity to attack the basket.***
- ***When you have players like Draymond Green who has the ability to bring the all up the floor & survey the court along w/ a two-time MVP like Steph Curry that's willing to set a screen to get Klay Thompson open, good things will happen. Add in the fact that good shooters like Steph & Klay will empty out a side forcing the weakside help to stay attached.***
- ***With both his size & ability to stay in front of the ball, probably has made Klay one of the best on-ball defenders in the league. But his relentlessness of allowing his matchup to catch the ball on a back door cut along w/ getting over top the screen shows how disruptive Golden State can be on defense. He also does a create job on a switch of fighting around, getting around the screener, & getting steals for his team.***
- ***Golden State is the best team in basketball because once the defense commits, they do a great job of reading, cutting, screening, & making unselfish passes. How can you create space in your offense for someone to become a free screener, Jordan Bell sets a step-up screen for Steph Curry, which attracts two defenders. Because Jordan is now "free" he sets a top cross screen for Klay coming off the opposite wing. Allows for Klay to attack because the defense is trying take away the three-pointer.***
- ***Basketball is about time & space. On offense, you want to create time & space. When you are on defense, you want to take away time & space. You need second effort plays to win championships.***
- ***Whether it's a point guard or big wing, Klay typically gets the job of guarding the opponent's best player. His ability of reading personnel, reading game flow, & reading the rhythm of people throughout the game makes him one of the best defenders.***
- ***If you could go back & learn from one player, it would be Reggie Miller & Ray Allen. Watch how Reggie Miller moved w/out the ball to create time & space, & his ability to keep the defense on their heels. Also watch Ray Allen's ability to release the ball quick.***

27. BREAKING DOWN STEPH CURRY



- *Toronto was were aware of what Golden State wanted to do. Kawhi was in the passing lane denying Steph the ball. So Steph took diagonal angles off the DHO/screen so he could hide behind the screen & be hard to guard. Sometimes when Steph got open air space, he would rush his shot.*
- *Steph does a great job of moving w/out the ball & coming off screens. The dangerous part is when Klay Thompson is setting the screen for Steph. The screener's man has to decide to come off one shooter to close to another shooter or to simply stay on his match. This time w/in the air space, Steph is set to shoot.*
- *On the Corner Series w/ Steph in the pick & roll w/ Klay at the top of the key, the Warriors need to get creative due to Toronto's length. Idea would be to have Draymond set a flair screen for Klay as Steph is turning the corner off the ball screen; would have the option of Steph shooting, hitting Klay for an open 3pt, or Draymond slipping to the paint. As soon as Steph gives it up, he becomes even more dangerous because he never stops moving & finds open space.*
- *On the defensive end, Steph has improved & is willing to take on defensive challenges. He initiates the contact on the offensive players spin move & drops as soon as he sees the offensive player's back to take away the spin.*
- *Steph is able to lull the defensive asleep in transition because he is such a shooting threat & the other four Warrior players are able to capitalize on this because all 10 eyes on defense are locked in on Steph.*
- *When the screener's defender takes the ball on a ball screen, take him as low as you can while staying out of the middle. Coming to the middle brings over the help defenders. Stretch the floor & make that big chase you into space.*
- *As an offensive player, when the defensive player closes out & has a foot up inside your body frame, attack that exposed foot by taking an angle to the outside of that particular foot & the defender will be taken out of the play.*
- *Steph does a great job of not only reading the ball but more importantly reading what the defensive players are doing.*
- *Because Toronto is going to run Steph off the line, the mid-range game becomes even more important. One- two dribble pullups will then open up things for his teammates.*
- *When Steph comes off the screen, cannot have his teammates stacked up. They need to be spaced out so the defenders cannot load to Steph.*
- *If you could go back & learn from one player, it would be Allen Iverson. Watch his ability to play the mid-range game, watch his ability to shoot runners, floaters, & one-two dribble pullups. Important to understand the mid-range game because Toronto is going continue to run him off the 3pt line.*

28. BREAKING DOWN KYLE LOWRY



- *Kyle forces Golden State into decision-making mode in transition by probing the defense. Once you get deep inside the paint, you cannot panic but instead have the confidence to find passing angles.*
- *Steve Nash was excellent at shooting quick dribble one foot-one hand layups. Once again, if guards can get into the corners early in transition (& not plug things up by standing on the wing), that opens up the middle of the floor for the PG to attack.*
- *If the defender bites on a pass fake into the post, bounce pass the ball in from the wing into the post & cut baseline once the defender has left their feet.*
- *Nate Archibald had a nice baseline move where he attacked, hesitated & flipped his hips like he was going the other way, & then spun back baseline to attack the basket.*
- *Your next read is always where is the rotation pulling in from.*
- *Great action by Toronto called Short Action. This is where the baseline forward begins on the weakside & sneaks behind the defensive rotation & catches a short pass. Receiver can either score or pass to the opposite diving big.*
- *Once the driving guard dips his shoulder on penetration, this action allows him to turn the corner & get by the defense. It changes the angle & allows him to attack the defenders hip.*
- *Marc Gasol's skill set which allows him to catch & make a play off the bounce is an example great teaching by his European coaches. Important for everyone on offense to not ball watch but instead watch what the defenders are doing & search for great scoring opportunities.*
- *If the defender tries to push a leg out & put two hands on the offensive player in the low post, offensive player needs to stay low & cup the back of the knee that's up on your spin move w/ the hand that's not on the basketball.*
- *James Harden does a great job getting into the teeth of the defense & throwing lobbs to Clint Capela when the defense helps up.*
- *If the defender is overplaying the guard at the wing, instead of forcing the ball into him & turning it over, let the wing get high & flat. Then pass the ball into the post around the elbow area & let the wing go back door. The key is getting the wing higher & wider than the basketball to start.*
- *If you could go back & learn from one player, it would be Steph Curry. Watch his ability to use screens off the dribble & get into the paint, watch his ability to keep defensive players behind him, watch his ability to body off the defense & lay it up on the rim, watch his ability to get into the paint & make plays out to shooters, watch his ability to shoot off the catch, watch his ability to shoot off screens & pin downs.*

29. BREAKING DOWN PASCAL SIAKAM



- *When setting a slip screen, try to get higher than the person you are trying to screen on & have a little patience before you dive to the basket. This will put your teammate's defender in greater danger. Likewise, you cannot have your defender in perfect line w/ you, the screener, & your teammate, the cutter. You need the screener's defender to think he needs to help on the cutter because his teammate, the cutter's defender, cannot get over/through the screen.*
- *Euro-steps will sometimes force you into tough shots when there is a great distance between the defender & the ball. Instead maybe try to use your dribble more & try moves like a hesitation move, a stutter-step, a snake move, or even a pull-up jumper.*
- *Once the driver picks the ball up w/ one hand, you should be reading that & closing out to the shooter/your matchup. If the ball comes up to their shoulder, really only one thing they are going to do w/ the ball & that's pass. The angle to the closeout needs to be efficient w/ your feet/legs.*
- *In potential close out playoff or final's games, you need to send messages on drives. When you have the athleticism to do it, go straight through the defense & dunk on them.*
- *When you are a help defender & are responsible for two offensive players (coming out of a trap or tag off), you cannot attack the ball to simply give up a layup on the back side. Try to split them & force them into tough jump shots or floaters.*
- *Phil Jackson use to teach corner players run through the elbows when the shot goes up. Easy way to get offensive rebounds while still being in a position to help in defensive transition. Rajon Rondo & Russell Westbrook get a lot of offensive rebounds by running to the elbows.*
- *When you get behind the defense in transition, continue to work up the lane. Don't let the defense off the hook & get flat. Keep a solid base & should be able to turn around close to the rim.*
- *Game is simplified when players can knock down the pullup, midrange jump shot.*
- *If you could go back & learn from one player, it would be James Worthy. Watch his ability to play the midrange game, watch his ability to knock down the spot up jumper, watch how good he was in the mid-post area. Watch how quick & efficient he was w/ his moves in this area. Watch his jab step & when he got to the rim how he finished over the top w/ either a right or left-handed dunk. Watch how he was sneaky quick at spinning baseline & making those baseline athletic moves.*

30. BREAKING DOWN KIMBA WALKER (FIBA)



- ***Kimba does a great job of hesitating & looking the defender off in transition. The defender comes out of his stance for a split second, & Kimba attacks his top foot for a layup.***
- ***When you slow the game down, frame by frame watching film, you see so many options. Then, because you've watched it so many times in the slow-motion view, that when you are playing in real speed/real time, you can recognize the action as well.***
- ***On the pick & roll, it becomes the ball handler's job to occupy two defenders by holding the dribble longer. If you pull the ball out & center it back to half court, it's just more work to manufacture a basket. If there's a scoring opportunity, attack the opening & score.***
- ***Gary Payton told Kobe that when you keep getting hit w/ screen & roll actions as an on-ball defender, you need to move up into the ball handler more, make yourself thin like paper, & move your feet by sliding through the screen.***
- ***On side pick & roll, your job is to try to get in the paint to activate the three weakside defenders, pulling them in while also reading the screener's defender. The defense only wants to play the screen w/ the primary on-ball defender & the screener's defender. If the screener's defender is leaning on his stunt to stop the ball, keep your dribble & continue to attack the rim forcing the big to make a decision.***
- ***Dwyane Wade was the best at attacking the little gap, making himself thin, getting the big on his heels, & finishing at the rack. Steve Nash was the best at getting two to take him deep into the paint & threading the needle on the hammer pass to the corner. Hammer passes need to be made w/ outside hand.***
- ***Especially vs a high 2-3 zone, the PG needs to attack the top guard. This can create a 2 vs 1 opportunity w/ the wing & corner vs the bottom guy of the zone. Occupying the dunker spot/short corner is so important vs the zone because it forces the defense to communicate their bumping coverage.***

31. BREAKING DOWN CHELSEA GRAY



- ***Ball handler needs to have patience & wait a little long off the ball screen to allow teammates to space the floor & decongest the lane.***
- ***PG needs to stretch the defense & occupy two defenders. When this happens, the screener needs to dive to the middle of the lane so the backside defense cannot just stand there & guard three offensive players w/ just two defenders. PG has the hammer pass, shake pass, or the dive.***
- ***Look for opportunities putting the defender having to guard two offensive players into difficult, multiple closeout situations.***
- ***Understand when the defense's coverage is showing early on the ball screen & the weakside protection is not pulling over, pocket pass to the diving big is a great option.***
- ***Be able to make a cross court pass going to your left w/ your left-hand is as important as being able to make the right-hand cross court pass when going to your right. This will start pulling the defense out, which in turn, will open the big for a layup at the block.***
- ***On a baseline out of bounds entry, Ricky Rubio does a great job of getting the defender off his feet on a shot fake & bounce passing right back to the inbounder for a layup.***
- ***When the defense jumps out early on the ball screen & on ball defender goes underneath, great time for the screener to drop their bottom foot & rescreen/repick.***
- ***Metta World Peace was excellent at staying in a stance & contesting w/ the left on a right-hand shooter.***
- ***On a stagger screen for a shooter, the second screener needs to peek over her inside shoulder to see if there's a window to the basket due to her defender showing off the shooter's cut.***
- ***If you could go back & learn from one player, it would be James Harden. Watch his ability to play at a pace where he's never rushed or out of rhythm, watch his ability to read the backside defense, watch his ability to come off the dribble handoff, read the weakside help, & make passes accordingly, watch his ability to skip the ball to the opposite corner & find shooters, watch his ability to fake the skip to the corner & hit the lob. Watch his ability to keep the defense off balance with his dribble penetration.***

32. BREAKING DOWN COURTNEY WILLIAMS



- ***At the start of a game, when you have an advantage on a player, possibly due to an injury, instead of settling for a jump shot, look to attack that player, test things out early, & stretch the defense trying to get two defenders on one. Also, need to survey the floor in transition & look for windows where defenders have their head turned & are not seeing the ball.***
- ***In a pin down situation, the defender of the screener has multiple options:***
 - A) ***Step in front of the cutter & bump them while retreating back to their matchup.***
 - B) ***Stay connected to the screener allowing her teammate to go under the screen***
 - C) ***Body up (delivering contact to the screener) & then opening up to allow her teammate to slide through the screen******Key is weakside player cannot be hugging her matchup but instead being over in help-side position & active.***
- ***Right-hand shooters cannot have the left toe facing the baseline on a pullup jump shot. Need to get the toes turned & square to the paint/basket.***
- ***On defense, you do not want to lose vision & let offensive players get behind you. As an offensive player, need to recognize this early & try to slip these types of gaps. Leadership puts out fires early & covers up mistakes. Allen Iverson was great at playing passing lanes.***
- ***Occupying two defenders is good on offense but committing three defenders is great.***
- ***Once a defender splits her stance in transition defense, dribbler needs to change their pace as soon as she recognizes her out of her stance & push the ball through to go by her.***
- ***Little things like missed blockouts will cost you possessions & opportunities in the WNBA Finals.***
- ***Tex Winter use to get upset when players would make passes out of motion into the post & telegraph the pass. Instead, you need to extend the arms up to make that pass into the post. It's not a tricep pass but instead a flick of the wrist pass.***
- ***If you could go back & learn from one player, it would be Mike Bibby. Watch his ability to come off screens, his ability to catch & shoot, his back door cuts, his ability to create off dribble handoffs, his passes to teammates off slips & dives to the hoop, his ability to hit shooters off his penetration. He had great patience to get to his spots, being on balance, reading the floor, & recognizing when his windows were there & when they weren't there.***

33. BREAKING DOWN BEN SIMMONS



- *Teammates watch film & in order to set a championship culture, they need to see their best players setting a precedent that every second of the game is as if it's the last. Are you alert, are you down in a defensive stance, & do you have a sense of urgency? Are you setting the standard for your culture?*
- *Little things like building good habits of passing out of the post using the outside hand is big. Because late game deflections or steals can lead to easy buckets which can decide the outcome of games.*
- *As soon as you come & double the post w/ your hands up, as soon as the offensive player brings the ball up & looks to be passing out, the defender needs to fire out & recover immediately. If the offensive player leaves their feet to pass out of the trap, stay on your feet, be ready to recover quick & ready to blockout if a shot is taken.*
- *When setting screens, set a nice hard pick on the defender's body. Larry Bird was amazing at setting great screens. The present action w/in the play should be looked at as the most important action. You are looking for as many easy actions that result in a shot before having to move to the next action or manufacture an isolation w/in the play.*
- *Do not get discouraged if your teammates miss you when you are open. Instead, continue to move into gaps w/out the ball.*
- *Continue to find the levity of the situation throughout the game & find the humor in things. Pat each other on the backside when silly mistakes happen instead of showing poor body language.*
- *As much as you have a strategy as an offensive player, you need to have a strategy as a defensive player & where you want to influence him. Especially if you have length, continue to cut angles & space off.*
- *Ben puts so much pressure on the defense in transition because he's great at seeing & reading the floor.*
- *On a pin down or cross screen for a great player, don't try muscling up w/ the screener. Instead, try squeezing up into the cutter before deciding to force them over or under the screen. Eat up as much space as you can.*
- *Left-hand players are historically better defenders vs. right-hand players because they are able challenge the shot easily, stay on top w/ the left-hand, & doesn't allow the offense time to see the basket clearly.*
- *Scottie Pippen was always in a defensive posture all the time with his legs always activated & hands were always moving/ready. This attacking style of defense sets the table for your teammates. If it's predictable, it's preventable.*
- *If you could go back & learn from one player, it would be LeBron James. Watch his ability to be ready on the weakside, his ability to stay in a defensive stance, ability to talk to his teammates about rotations, ability to slide over for a block or a charge, & all the intangibles.*

34. BREAKING DOWN JOEL EMBIID



- ***Important to understand the defensive coverage & where the defense is doubling from when the ball is entered into the post. Throwing the ball out of the trap to the player right in front of you is a great escape pass but that makes for an easy defensive rotation. Instead, have patience in the trap, allowing your teammates to space while the top player dives to the basket.***
- ***Jimmy Butler does a great job of guarding the mid-post. He initiates the contact & uses both his lower & upper body to bump into offensive player attacking the middle of the paint.***
- ***Kobe liked to spin baseline but would wait until he could feel the defensive player's forearm. By bumping back hard, where the defensive player can no longer use their hand, would force them into bracing themselves w/ their forearm. Once they go to the forearm, you can just roll right off them & almost hook them w/ the opposite elbow.***
- ***As a defensive player trying to guard a driving situation, once you see the offensive player start to hesitate, cock back, & feet split, just sit down & retreat back because you know an attack move is coming or try to rush him. If you interrupt the offensive players rhythm, then you are the one dictating the tempo & the action. If they do get a step on you & you are trying to block it, use the opposite hand to block the shot (lef- hand on a righ- hand shooter). Saves time & you are not having to turn your body.***
- ***The backside spacing on a DHO is important. If the defense is chasing over the top & you do not hand the ball off, just have the cutter continue to curl to the basket for an over the top pass. But the floor has to have proper spacing or the weakside defenders will plug off this option. Chris Webber use to be great at throwing the pass in that curl type action to his Sacramento teammates.***
- ***Against a matchup zone, it's important to read the gaps or the windows. Cutting a post player behind the defense from the dunker spot to the middle of the paint along w/ sliding a perimeter player to the wing forces the defense to collapse. The ball can go from inside to the wing for a shot or from the post to the wing to the corner for a great 3pt look as well. Another option is cutting a wing into the center of the paint. The low post/dunker needs to read the next rotation, slide up into the crackdown defender, & seal him. That way it's easy to either post up for the high/low pass or to position yourself for the offensive rebound.***
- ***It's important to watch film so you know what you have before you even have it. You know where your teammates are going to be as the ball is coming to you. Just keep the zone defenders on your back vs settling for isolations.***
- ***If the double team is coming from the baseline cutter's defender, continue to have patience & your teammates have to immediately sprint to spacing positions. Stay calm, protect the ball, & read the defensive rotations. Reading this correctly will force defenses to reluctantly stop double teaming him.***
- ***If you could go back & learn from one player, it would be Arvydas Sabonis. Watch his ability to pass from the post & ability to pass from the mid-post.***