Three-Point Shooting Faults

Front View – Full Body

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1

You are drifting left or right when you shoot. Balance is important. A perfect balance of the ball in the shooting hand before the wrist snap starts will result in a straight shot. If your body is moving to the left or right while shooting, the shot becomes much harder to make. Learn how to stop, turn and jump straight up without drifting left or right on any shot. Visualize jumping straight up, but the basket is moving left or right. You can see how hard that would be.

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2

You are not shooting the shot early enough in your jump. Shooting early in your jump maximizes the momentum created in the shooting motion because your body is moving upward the fastest against gravity when it first leaves the floor. Therefore, your shooting arm should be moving toward the basket as early as possible, so your legs will help propel the ball from the maximum distance. NBA players who effectively use this "one motion" shot are Stephen Curry, Damian Lillard, Trey Young, and James Harden. Caitlin Clark, the all-time scoring leader in men's and women's NCAA Division I history, shoots that way and was the number one pick in the 2024 WNBA draft. We believe the "one-motion" shot is the future of basketball. Studies have shown that creating maximum efficiency with the least amount of effort improves accuracy, so your goal should be to create the least-effort shot possible. Also, a quick release is harder to block.

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The ball should start on the shooting side of your body. Starting with the ball on the shooting side of your body enables you to balance the ball in your shooting hand quicker. This is so important it bears repeating. Balancing the ball in your shooting hand before the wrist snap starts is the key to straight shooting. Starting the ball on your shooting side also provides greater range – you will be able to generate force more efficiently. By bringing it up on the wrong side of your body, you are handicapping yourself by having to make a late "crossover" motion just before releasing the shot.

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The elbow on your shooting arm is too far from your body. The elbow on your shooting arm should be as close to your body as possible, which will help you shoot it straight because you will be able to balance the ball in your shooting hand better.

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The elbow on your guide arm is too high. The guide elbow should be angled down to about a 45-degree angle from the body. When the guide arm elbow is too high it makes it hard to put the guide hand on the ball in the right place on the side of the ball.

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Your shooting arm is not extending straight at the target. By swaying your arm off-line at the end of the shot, many shots won't go straight. Keeping your hand and fingers aligned with the center of the ball and in line to the rim as the ball is released is critical for straight shooting.

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Your wrist snap is not straight down. A straight down wrist snap provides the best opportunity for the ball to go straight and indicates that you are utilizing the natural pulling direction of your wrist muscles.

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Your guide hand shouldn’t be facing the target after your shot. When it is, your guide hand has twisted around and your guide hand thumb is involved with the shot, reducing the chance that it will go straight. The guide hand thumb should not be flat on the ball.

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Your shooting forearm is blocking your sight in one eye. You need a clear view of the target with both eyes for proper depth perception. Move your shooting arm over slightly, clearing up your view of the target.

Front View – Head

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Your eyes are picking up the target too late. You should lock your eyes on the target before beginning the shot.

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11

You are looking up at the ball. By keeping your eyes locked on the target, you have a better chance the ball will go straight and the right distance. This flaw is especially problematic with younger players during game situations, as the speed of the game is faster. They look up slightly quicker than in practice, and the shot will usually be short.

Side View

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Your toe is sometimes on the three-point line when you shoot. When attempting a three-point shot, if your toe is on the line, you are shooting the worst shot in basketball – the "longest-distance" two point shot. Be sure you are always behind the line. The best shot in basketball is the corner three because it is over a foot closer to the basket and defenders can approach from only one side.

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You are palming the ball. You should hold the ball on your finger-pads, with your shooting fingers spread comfortably to provide control over the basketball, with the ball leaving your fingertips at release. The shooting hand thumb should not be flat on the ball. Grip the ball with the side of the shooting hand thumb in contact with the ball.

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Your guide hand is in the wrong place on the ball. It should be on the side of the ball, then moving forward as the shot is made. Placing your guide hand there helps control the ball early, allowing the shooting hand to balance the ball prior to the wrist snap.

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You are taking the ball behind your head before your shot. This makes it too hard to judge the distance accurately, and by "slinging" it instead of shooting it, you lose power and accuracy. You should begin the shot from just in front of your head and the farther you are from the basket

the lower your starting point should be.

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16

You aren’t extending your shooting arm correctly. Your shooting arm should extend to its full length on every shot. You can’t repeat “pulling the string” the same way every time. At the end of the shot, your shooting elbow should be above the level of your eyes.

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Your guide arm should be extended toward the target as well. If it isn’t, the guide shoulder will pull back, affecting your ability to shoot it straight. Look at the picture of Mark Price shooting a three-point shot correctly on the home page of our www.basketballshooting.com website.

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You are shooting the shot at the top of your jump. At this point, gravity has slowed your body down and you have nothing more than an arm throw, with no power from the legs. On all three-point shots, you must have your legs involved because of the distance involved. Shooting as your toes leave the floor will incorporate the force provided by your legs.

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You aren’t holding the follow through long enough. Your shooting arm should be held extended after the shot until the ball is well under way.

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You are not landing in front of where you jumped. You want the power of your shot to flow into the arc of the shot and if you come down where you took off your power has gone straight up, not toward the target. Even worse is to come down behind where you took off, so try to never shoot a three-pointer while falling backwards.

Rear View

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Your shooting hand is on the wrong place on the ball. It should be directly behind the ball, facing the target as the ball is released. The middle of your hand should be centered in the middle of the ball. Otherwise, your wrist will have a twisting motion as you release the shot. If you balance the ball before the wrist snap starts and maintain a perfectly balanced ball through the release, the ball will go straight. If the ball becomes off-balance to the left or right during the wrist snap you will miss to the left or right.

Arc and Target Analysis

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Your arc is too flat. The ball needs to be approaching the rim from the peak of the arc at an angle of at least 45 degrees or slightly higher. This is one of the worst shooting faults, because the target size is too small. By increasing your arc, you increase the size of the target.

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Your arc is too high. It will be hard to repeatedly control the direction and exact distance effectively with an arc that is too high.

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Your shot should never hit the front rim. The ball needs to go in the basket just in front of the back rim because the ball is entering from an angle, not from straight up.