

Switch!

Basketball with Dual Identity

The same 12 kids, the same jerseys, two game formats that alternate regularly: on “Switch!”, teammates and opponents change because the grouping criterion changes. The game keeps running the whole time and is never stopped. That is exactly what trains cognitive flexibility.

One Player, Three Identities



COLOR
Pink ·
Turquoise ·
Yellow

LOGO
Circle · Square

NUMBER
1 to 6 in the
logo team

Wristband, number written with a marker, or just remembered. The striped jerseys stay in the box that day.

Defending: In both games, every player knows their direct opponent and marks them.

Distribution of the 12 Jerseys

COLOR	 CIRCLE	 SQUARE	TOTAL
Pink	 	 	4
Turquoise	 	 	4
Yellow	 	 	4
Logo Total	6	6	12

Every color team always has 2 Circles and 2 Squares. That way both groupings stay balanced at the same time, with no adjustment needed between phases.

1 Color Introduction
3 teams of 4 · 3 to 4 min



2 Logo Introduction
5 vs 5, 2 teams of 6 · 3 to 4 min



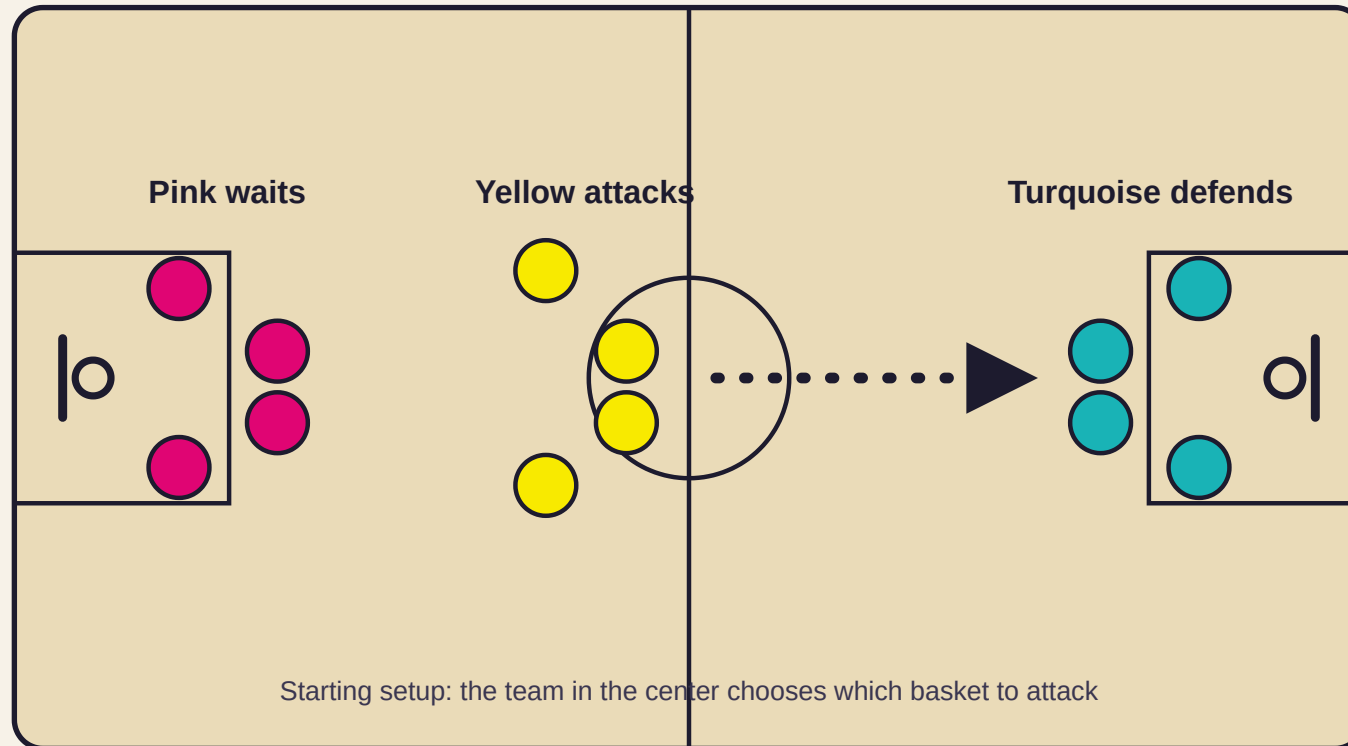
Switch Phase, 12 to 15 min

The coach calls “Switch!”, the group changes immediately and keeps playing without stopping, every 2 to 3 min with varying intervals.

1

Continuous Game with 3 Teams

4 vs 4, one team per color · 3 to 4 minute introduction, then alternating with Phase 2



At every moment one team attacks, one defends, and the third waits under the other basket, still on the field. The game never stops.

✓ Basket Scored

The team keeps the ball and immediately attacks the opposite basket. The team that was defending that basket now takes over the defending role.

✗ Basket Missed

The defending team grabs the rebound and attacks the other basket, which the third, waiting team must now defend.

Harder Version (Part 2)

The two teams keep playing 4 vs 4 until the half-court line is crossed. The roles stay the same; the third team waits under the basket.

No announcement, no stoppage: every team must constantly ask itself whether it is attacking or defending right now. Every player knows their direct opponent and marks them.

Cognitive Flexibility

The team's role changes with every action.

Working Memory

Keeping track of your own score, with no scoreboard.

Planning

Immediately reorganizing to attack in the other direction.

Sustained Attention

Constant alertness: you might be attacking the very next moment.

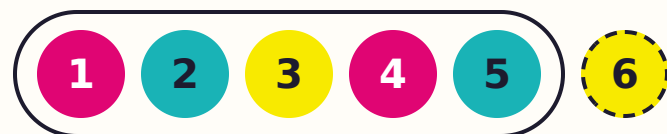
2

5 vs 5 Game

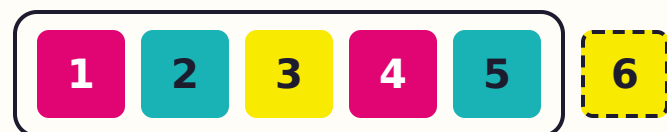
Team Circle vs Team Square, 5 on the field + 1 substitute · 3 to 4 minute introduction, then alternating with Phase 1

Rotation on the “Switch!” Signal

 TEAM CIRCLE



 TEAM SQUARE



1 → 2 → 3 → 4 → 5 → 6 → 1
...

On the signal, one player from each team comes out and the substitute comes in. The number is never called out again: the 6 teammates must remember the order together. Here too there is no scoreboard — each team keeps its own score in its head.

THE HIDDEN TRAP

Inhibit the Color, Follow the Logo



Square · Turquoise
Same color, but opponent



You · Circle · Turquoise
You pass to the Circle logo



Circle · Pink
Different color, but teammate

Color, reinforced for a long time in Phase 1, now conflicts with the logo, the only rule that counts here. It is similar to the Stroop test: the distractor is genuine, fresh information.

Knowing Your Opponent

Everyone marks a direct opponent. The conflict is strongest when Square-Pink marks Circle-Pink.

Debrief

“How many times did you almost pass to your color?”

Step-by-Step Variant

1st half with no hint, 2nd half with the trap named: compare mispasses.

Harder Variant

Random number on every signal: “Number 4 is out!”

Summary and Tips

EXECUTIVE FUNCTION	WHERE IT IS REQUIRED
Cognitive Flexibility	Constant role switching between attack, defense, and waiting (Phase 1)
Working Memory	Remembering an unposted score (Phases 1 and 2) and the rotation order (Phase 2)
Inhibition, Leaving the Field	Not stepping out outside your own turn (Phase 2)
Inhibition, Color/Logo Interference	Resisting the urge to pass to an opponent of your own color instead of a teammate with the same logo (Phase 2) . The most demanding mechanism of the session.
Planning	Immediate reorganization after losing the ball (Phase 1)
Sustained and Divided Attention	Constant alertness (Phase 1) ; tracking the game, score, and rotation at the same time (Phase 2)

Tips for the Coach

- 1 Debrief the Score**
Each team states its score from memory before you reveal the real one. The gap shows the cognitive load and opens the conversation about memory strategies.
- 2 Rotation Feels Hard?**
Keep the fixed order at first. Pure memorization needs to be solid before inhibition is added.
- 3 With All 3 Logos**
Scale up to 16 or 18 players. Example with 18: 3 color teams of 6 in Phase 1, then a mini-tournament with 3 logo teams in Phase 2.
- 4 Switch Rhythm**
First introduce each format for 3 to 4 minutes, then call “Switch!” every 2 to 3 minutes, varying the intervals. Each format keeps its own score.