



Become a Scoring Threat

Every team will have one or two main scorers, and not everyone will average 16 – 20 points per game. As a team player, you need to find a way that you can add value to your team and basketball program. Find a way that you can establish trust with your coach and this will earn you some crucial minutes in the game.

There is nothing worse with being subbed into a game and not being able to be a threat on the offensive end. This is a sure way you can find yourself back on the bench. You don't actually have to score to be a threat, but rather, you must effectively sell it to the defender and the opposition that you are constantly looking to score. Being a scoring threat allows you to add value to your team.

When you're not a scoring threat, your defender can sag off you and help in the lane. This clogs the lane up and only makes it more difficult for your teammates to score. However, as you become more of a threat, the defender now has to focus on you and keep adjusting to what you are doing. This opens up your teammates as they have one less help-side defender to deal with.

Imagine if you got better at this and engaged two players simultaneously, taking away two help-side defenders; your team will get some easy baskets from this. You don't actually need to score, but the value you bring to your team will really stand out. Your teammates and coaches will notice this and you'll end up *earning* more court time.

Here are a couple of things that any player can do to become a scoring threat and become a more valuable player.

1. As soon as your team gain possession of the ball, sprint as hard as you can, running your lanes to get down court. As you cross the half way line, open up and give your teammate a target to pass you the ball.
2. If you haven't received the ball, fill out to your spot within your offense, whether that is the wing or the post. Make eye contact with the ball handler and have your hands up presenting a target to your teammate.
3. Always stay low in an attacking stance; guards this means facing the basket and being in a triple threat stance. Stay low and on the balls of your feet to remain explosive. Signal for the ball whether it is my making eye contact or clapping your hands and showing a target.

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4. Post players should look to move between the short corners and low blocks, unless your offense dictates otherwise. Space the floor to bring your defense with you; this unclogs the lane, allowing drives and cuts to go through. Your defender will have to help on any cuts in the lane and any drives, leaving you wide open to move into an open spot with your hands up for an easy deuce.
5. If you don't receive the pass, don't just stand there doing nothing, understand the system that your team is running and play within that system. Cut to the basket if your defender is overplaying you. Your cut should be sharp and aggressive as opposed to just a casual cut. As you cut, give your teammate a target and call for the basketball. Post players have to also move. Screen away for a teammate or re-adjust and be assertive in your actions.
6. Screen your way out of a cut to engage two defenders. Make eye contact with your teammate and indicate that you're about to screen for them; initiate contact on the screen and immediately open up, whilst staying low and looking for the ball.
7. When you receive the ball, be aggressive with it. Rip the ball through keeping it low and look to make a jab step, or drive immediately. A lot of players receive the ball and just stand there with it, unsure of what to do next. This gives the opposition time to reset and adjust. Don't allow that.
8. If you're not a good driver, then catch the ball, rip it through, stay in your stance and throw a strong pass fake into the post and then pass back up top, or vice versa. Work on your pass fakes.
9. After making a pass, you have to move. Look to cut to the basket or screen away. All cuts have to be purposeful and sharp. Eliminate any casual movements within your game and you'll certainly have your defenders attention.
10. Give reminders and constantly talk to your teammates. Nothing gets the defenses attention more than this. If you cut to the basket, call for the ball. As you're filling out to an open spot, tell your teammate what to do. Remind your teammates to cut or flash. Give constant reminders and your teammates will play much better.
11. Finally, after any shot that is taken by your team, crash the boards. Go after the rebound with everything you've got. By paying attention and seeing where the shot is coming from, you'll have a good idea of where the rebound is going to fall. Coaches love hustle points, and offensive rebounds lead to the easiest hustle points you could get.

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Finally, you must understand the system that you are playing in and what your role on your current team is. If you are unsure of what your role is on your team, then ask your coach or assistant coach. You may be unhappy with your current role on your team, but if you immediately go outside of it, you'll find yourself quickly kicked on the curb. Understand your role, accept your role, work hard on being the best at your role, then expand on it and add new dimensions to it. Your coach will notice and appreciate the effort and reward you with a new role on the squad.

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