The Flex Offense

Transform your team into a hard to defend and high scoring machine! Over 100 diagrams with detailed instruction on this easy to teach and easy to execute motion offense.

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FLEX MOTION OFFENSE

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Introduction to the Flex Motion Offense

Over the better part of the last 40 years, one of the most popular offenses in the game of basketball has been the flex motion offense. Though considered the simplest motion offense by a great many coaches, the flex has been successfully used by countless middle school, high school, university, NBA, and international teams.

The flex is a 4-out, 1-in (four perimeter players with one inside man) motion type offense where all five players may become interchangeable throughout the possession. In order to run a successful flex motion, your players will need to be fundamentally sound in all areas of the game and have the ability to throw crisp passes, set solid screens, execute sharp cuts, and make mid-range jump shots. Along with these skills, it is also extremely beneficial to have versatile, inside-out type players who can both post-up inside and shoot the basketball on the perimeter. While the flex is generally considered to be a jump-shooting offense, there are many post-up opportunities available for the team that favors an inside-oriented game.

The flex is also a great offense for teams that are currently competing at the middle school and high school level. This is because the flex is extremely simple in its most basic form and can be taught and learned rather quickly. Many coaches also find that this offense offers them an opportunity to use basic motion concepts to teach their athletes the fundamentals of the game while still maintaining a level of offensive control.

Over the years, many coaches have mistakenly dismissed the flex based on its reputation of being an easy-to-scout, easy-to-defend offense that has no options beyond the initial sets. Since there are actually hundreds of options and counters available to any team that wants to delve deeply into the flex offense, those coaches have done themselves and their teams a great disservice. This book was created to debunk the myth that the flex is a remedial offense, while giving you everything you need to know to run this outstanding motion offense successfully!

In case you haven’t already noticed, this book is not your typical book on the flex offense. Though there are other books and articles out there, none go into the same amount of quality detail or provide the same quantity of information as this guide. In the next several chapters, we are going to discuss the basics movements of the flex, including how to combat switching defenses, clear-out options, ball-screen sets, how to disguise the flex, effective shooting drills, and much, much more!
Benefits of the Flex Motion Offense:

- Great offense for improving a player’s basic fundamental skills
- All five players are interchangeable, forcing the other team’s defensive players to guard all areas of the court and all offensive positions
- A true motion offense with only a few key principles, making it very easy to teach and learn
- Has a myriad of sets and counter plays, making it an extremely fun half-court offense to coach
- With its initial 4-out-1-in alignments, the flex transitions smoothly from any fast-breaking system.
- One of the few offenses that can be equally successful against a man-to-man or a zone defense
- Emphasis is on teaching rather than playing, which helps players improve more quickly
- Provides the offense with multiple scoring opportunities
- Excellent offense for teams lacking a true point guard or a true post player
- Can be used as a delay-game offense and/or to control tempo throughout a game
Basic Motion

The flex, though a simple motion offense, is designed to get one of two wide open shots.

- The first shot opportunity comes after the flex cut that occurs on the baseline. If this is executed properly, the defense will often get caught on the flex screen, giving the cutter a wide-open layup or an easy post up.

- The second shot opportunity is for the player coming off the down screen on the weakside. Because the screener’s defender will often be caught giving help to the flex cut defender, the player coming off the down screen has an opportunity to be wide open.

Diagrammed below are the basic movements in the flex motion offense:

Diagram 1A

1 passes the ball to 2. 3 cuts to the strong corner. Once 2 receives the pass, 5 steps out to the short corner to set a flex screen for 4. 4 makes a hard flex cut to the opposite block, looking for a layup or a post up.
Diagram 1B

After passing to 2, 1 now sets a firm downscreen for 5. 5 comes off the downscreen to the top of the key looking for hiss hot.

Diagram 1C

2 passes to 5. 1 fills to the strong corner after setting the downscreen. 4 steps out to the short corner, setting a flex screen for 3. 3 makes a hard flex cut to the opposite block, looking for a layup or a post-up.
After reversing the ball, 2 sets a downscreen for 4. 4 comes off the downscreen, looking for his shot at the top of the key.

5 reverses the ball to 4. Now, normal flex motion occurs.
Corner Options

Arguably the biggest drawback of the flex is its predictability. Most coaches believe that if you can deny the reversal pass at the top of the key, the offense will come to a halt. However, even if the reversal pass is being denied, you still have options. The next option of the flex is the pass to the corner. There are many options off this one pass, but for now we are going to show you the three most common.

*When passing to the corner, a great option is simply to post up and jam the ball inside!!

Single Screen:

2A: After 2 passes to 3 in the corner, 2 sets a crossoverseen for 1 at the top of the key. 1 is coming off the screen towards the wing looking to receive a pass from 3.

2B: 3 swings the ball to 1. After 2 screens for 1, 2 continues to set a downscreen for 4. 4 comes off the down-screen looking for his shot at the top of the key.

2C: 1 passes to 4 and now the normal flex action occurs. After setting the down screen, 2 pops in to fill the strong side corner. 5 steps out to the short corner and sets a flex screen along the baseline. 3 cuts off the screen to the opposite block looking for a quick post up or a layup.
Double Screen:

The double screen option is very similar to the single screen, where the passer is screening away. However, instead of just setting one crossscreen, both perimeter players on top will now set a staggered screen for the player in the opposite corner.

*This can also be a great quick hitter for a 3 at younger levels of competition.

3A: 1 is being denied at the top of the key and cannot receive the reversal pass from 2. 2dribbles over to the wing and passes the ball to 3 in the corner.

3B: 1 sets the first staggered screen and 2 sets the second one around the elbow area. 4 must be patient and wait for his screens to be set and then come off shoulder to shoulder. 3 passes to 4, who is looking for the shot at the top of the key. Coaching Tip: 2 must set a “head hunter” screen. He cannot simply screen an area, but instead must find a man and make contact.

3C: If 4 does not have the shot, then reverse the ball to 2 and now the normal flex action resumes. 5 steps out to the short corner and sets a flex screen along the baseline. 3 makes a hard flex cut looking for a wide open layup or a quick post on the opposite block. 4 sets a down-screen for 5, who then comes off the screen to the top looking for the shot or the reversal.
UCLA Pick:

This is another great option if you have a bigger guard who can post up or a post player who can step out and shoot out from the perimeter. This is also an effective way to get your best player two different shot opportunities in the same possession.

*Notice how 2 will get the chance for a quick post up AND a catch-and-shoot opportunity at the top of the key in just a matter of a few passes.

**Diagram 4A:**
1 is being denied and cannot receive a reversal pass. 2 must now dribble and pass to 3 in the corner. On the pass, 5 will post up hard for a count of two seconds, then set a UCLA pick at the high post for 2. 2 will fake the crosstown to 1 (just like the single screen option) and then cut off the UCLA pick and head for the block. 2 is now looking for a layup or a post up opportunity.

**Diagram 4B:** 5 now pops out to the top of the key and receives the pass from 3. 5 swings the ball to 1. 2 now steps out to the short corner and sets a flex screen for 3. 3 makes a hard flex cut looking for a wide open layup or a quick post up at the opposite block.

**Diagram 4C:** After making the pass, 5 sets a downscreen for 2. 2 comes off the screen to the top of the key looking for a catch-and-shoot on the 3-point line.
Flex Offense vs. Switching Defenses:

When coaches see their opponent running the flex, most of them will immediately go into a switching man-to-man defense. If you see this, don’t panic! Too many times, when coaches see the defense switching everything, they will immediately change offenses in hopes of preventing confusion for their players. However, through careful drilling and teaching your kids what to do in this situation, you will be able to use the switching defense to your favor.

There are three main reasons for why coaches change defenses to a switch-all scenario:

1. To keep their players from being affected by any of the flex screens or downscreens
2. By switching everything, defenders will be able to get out and more effectively deny the passing lanes
3. Defenders will be able to keep their post by defending block-to-block instead of coming out and defending the perimeter

Knowing this, it is our job as coaches to put our players in situations where they will be able to achieve maximum success. Knowing why the opposing team switches defenses, we are now able to recognize weaknesses and take advantage of them.

There are two ways we can turn this defensive adjustment into our advantage:

1. The defense will be looking to play the passing lanes even more than usual, making them more susceptible to backdoor cuts and slips on the screens
2. Because they are switching everything, you must find a way to get their weakest defender or smallest player defending and switching on the block
**Back Doors and Slips:**

The first advantage we are going to talk about is the back-door cuts and slips. When the defense starts to switch everything, they will be eagerly looking for an opportunity to get a deflection or steal and a dunk on the other end. Knowing this, we must make adjustments in what we are looking for out of the offense.

There are two prime areas where you can expose the defense and score cheap buckets.

**Weak Side:**

The first is on the weak side, where the downscreen is taking place. This is where the defense will be more aggressive in attacking the passing lanes. In order for the ball to be reversed, it has to go through the top, and the defense knows this.

Look for two options when they switch on this action:

- When the forward is coming off the downscreen, look for the defense to over-play and immediately send the offensive player backdoor
- Look for the screener to fake the screen and flash to the middle of the key

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**Diagram 5A: Back Door**

After the flex cut occurs on the baseline, 1 sets a downscreen for 4. 4 comes off the screen and X1 switches. X1 is now in the passing lane denying the pass, so 4 must cut backdoor. If 4 does not receive the pass on the back door, then he must fill the same corner. 1 would then pop up to the top to receive the reversal pass.

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**Diagram 5B: Slip**

After the flex cut occurs on the baseline, 1 sets a downscreen for 4. X1 and X4 switch. X4 is now in front of 1, who set the downscreen. 1, seeing this, fakes the screen and flashes to the basket. If 1 doesn’t get the ball on the flash, 4 fills the top spot and 1 fills the corner.
Diagram 5C: Corner Backdoor
3 has the ball in the corner. 1 and 2 continue to set a staggered screen for 4 in the opposite corner. 4 starts to come off the screen and X1 and X4 switch. 4 then cuts backdoor with X1 now on his back. 3 must dribble up to the wing to create a better passing angle.

Diagram 5D: Staggered Slip
3 has the ball in the corner. 1 and 2 continue to set a staggered screen for 4 in the opposite corner. 4 starts to come off the screen and X1 and X4 switch on the first screen. X1 and X2 switch on the second screen. 2 slips the screen and cuts to the basket. 3 must dribble up to the wing to create a better passing angle.

Posting Up Your Point Guard:

Generally speaking, point guards are the smallest players on the court. Therefore, sending your point guard to the block opens up more options against a switching defense. This is not true all the time, however, as there might be moments where you have a bigger wing slide over into the point spot because of foul trouble. When deciding who to initially send to the block, you simply determine who the other team’s smallest defender is guarding and post up that player first.

Typically, especially at the lower levels of play, most teams match up defensively according to the size of their players as compared to the size of yours. “Bigs” usually guard “bigs,” and “smalls” usually guard “smalls.”

By sending their smallest player to the block, you are ultimately forcing him to guard your post players on the switch. Since the smallest person is often the point guard, this offers multiple advantages: (1) Your bigs have a chance to post up a smaller defender and get cheap buckets; and (2) Most teams only have one gifted point guard on their roster and need him on the floor for the majority of the game. The combination
of posting him up more often and his lack of experience playing defense in the paint often results in him having foul trouble and getting sent to the bench. Playing lots of minutes against your opponent’s second string point guard gives your team an enormous advantage.

The other coach will be FORCED to make a decision. Do I continue to switch everything and get killed on the inside? Or do I go back to straight man-to-man and leave my team vulnerable to their sets and quick hitters?

The best way to do this is to simply have your point guard or your smallest player start inside on the offense, knowing that he will undoubtedly be guarded by the other team's smallest player. If the offense is patient with the ball, you will soon get a favorable mismatch and be able to dominate the paint.

**Diagram 6A**

Starting in a 5-out formation guarantees that there will be no switches. 1 passes to 2 on the wing and then cuts to the strong side block looking to post up.

**Diagram 6B**

2 dribbles up and reverses the ball to 3 at the top of the key. 1 steps out to the short corner and sets a flex screen for 5. X5 and X1 switch.

**Diagram 6C**

Now your 5 is posting up their 1. 2 continues the flex action and comes to the top of the key, setting a downscreen for 1. 3 reverses the ball to 1.

**Diagram 6D**

Now 5 steps out to the short corner and sets a flex screen for 4. X1 and X4 switch. 4 looks to post up X1 on the opposite block.
Disguising the Flex Offense

Because of the flex’s general 4-out-1-in set, disguising the offense is really easy. In disguising your offense, your main objective is to make the offense appear as though it is something entirely different. This unpredictability helps prevent your opponent from settling into a defensive rhythm. It is definitely one of the most underrated aspects of coaching the game of basketball.

It is important before you read this chapter that you first understand that disguising sets and disguising quick hitters are NOT the same thing. A disguising set is intended for just that: disguising a quick entry into your motion offense.

Because of the variety of quick hitters that one can run out of the flex (covered in later chapters), we will discuss five different formations you can use to disguise your offense:

1. 1-3-1
2. Double Stack
3. Box Entry
4. 1-4 Low
5. 1-4 High

It is important to realize that every team will respond differently when executing each of these sets. Therefore, it is a good idea to experiment with several of these before making up your mind about which ones to use.
**1-3-1 Entry**

6A: 1 passes to 2 on the wing and immediately fills the strong side corner. 4 steps out to the top of the key.

6B: 2 swings the ball to 4 at the top of the key. Now the play turns to normal flex action.

**Double Stack Entry**

7A: 1 veers off to one side while keeping the dribble alive. Depending on the side 1 chooses, the opposite guard (2) comes off a double screen to the corner. 3 now fills the opposite corner. 5 pops up to receive a pass.

7B: 1 reverses the ball to 5 at the top of the key. This triggers normal flex action.
Box Option Entry:

Diagram 8A: 2 pops out to the wing and receives a pass from 1. 1 now fills to the strong side corner.

Diagram 8B: 5 sets a downscreen for 3, who is looking to come up to the top of the key. Coaching Tip: 2 must be patient for 1 to get to the corner. 2’s first look should be inside at 4 posting up!!

Diagram 8C: After setting the screen, 5 pops to the corner. Now flex actions occurs (flex screen and downscreen).
**1-4 Low Entry**

**Diagram 9A:** 1 dribbles at 2, then quickly changes directions. 3, 4 and 5 set a triple staggered screen along the baseline. 2 comes off the screens to the wing. 4 and 5 continue and set a double screen for 3, who fills the corner. 1 passes to 2 on the wing.

**Diagram 9B:** 1 now sets a downscreen for 4, who comes to the top of the key. 2 reverses the ball to 4.

**Diagram 9C:** Once 4 receives the reversal pass, normal flex action occurs.
1-4 High Entry

Diagram 10A: 2 and 3 cross in the set, replacing each other on the wings.

Diagram 10B: 1 passes to 2 on the wing. The closest post, 5, fills the strong corner while the opposite high post fills the block. 1 then sets a cross-screen for 3.

Diagram 10C: 2’s first look is inside. 2 reverses to 3, and now the normal flex action occurs.
Jamming the Ball Inside:

One of the things that separates a good team from a great team is its ability to establish an inside game. Because so much of the flex offense is focused on the opportunity for all five players to be interchangeable, the inside game is often neglected. Although the offensive positions are interchangeable, and so the flex can be run with five smaller players, that doesn’t mean that the available opportunities to score in the low post should be ignored. As with any great half-court offense, there are multiple post-up options and opportunities when running the Flex. However, in most other half-court offenses, only 4’s and 5’s are allowed to occupy the block and post up, but when running the flex you have the option of posting up everyone.

Before we talk about the X’s and O’s, I want to briefly discuss the basic post moves needed to thrive on the block. There is no excuse for not being able to score with your back to the basket. We teach our kids that they only need to have two effective scoring moves along with the ability to adequately use both hands in order to be a force on the low block. Here are the two moves needed:

1. A drop step (either baseline or middle)
2. A counter (jump hook, up and under, or a dribble spin)

Of course, it takes multiple repetitions to master these low post scoring moves, but they can certainly be accomplished by anyone willing to put it in a little extra time.

When posting up in the flex, there are three areas of attack:

1. Block
2. Short Corner
3. High Post

We are going to include three plays run out of the flex that are designed primarily to get the ball inside.
Block:

There are many advantages to feeding the block, but perhaps the biggest is that it forces every one of your opponents to play post defense.

Diagram 11A

11A: 2 dribbles over to the wing and passes the ball to 3 in the corner.

11B: 1 and 2 continue to set a double staggered screen for 4 in the opposite corner. 3 dribbles to the wing and then jams the ball into the post.

Diagram 11B

Short Corner:

This is possibly the most underrated area of attack. Since this area is so close to the baseline, many coaches mistakenly ignore it, but with proper coaching this can be a deadly scoring area and can surely keep the defense on their heels.

12A: 1 reverses the ball to 2 at the top of the key. 4 steps out to the short corner and sets a flex screen for 3. 3 cuts to the opposite block.

Diagram 12A

12B: 1 fakes setting a downscreen and then pops back up to the top. 2 passes the ball to 1, who then feeds 4 in the short corner. 4 can shoot, drive middle, or drive baseline.

Diagram 12B
High Post:

The high post provides great scoring opportunities if your players are skilled and smart. It allows coaches to create and take advantage of mismatches even though size is not necessary to be effective in this area.

Diagram 13A: 2 dribbles to the wing and passes to 3 near the corner. 2 then fakes setting a cross-screen for 1. 5 comes up to the high post and sets a UCLA screen for 2. 2 cuts off the screen to the block and looks for a layup or a quick post up.

Diagram 13B: 3 passes the ball to 5, who is posting up at the high post. While the ball is in the air, 4 races up to set an on-ball screen for 5. After catching the pass from 3, 5 looks to rip through and attack the rim.
Quick Hitters

One of the greatest strengths of the flex, as noted before, is its spacing. This excellent spacing, along with the natural interchangeability of the players, presents an opportunity to incorporate multiple quick hitters into the basic offense. Based on the five disguising sets mentioned earlier, we are now going to talk about quick hitters out of each formation.

For each disguised set, we are going to give you quick hitters in four categories. These quick hitters will provide four different but precise scoring opportunities. They are:

1. Pick and Rolls
2. Double Screens for Shooters
3. Perimeter Clear-Outs
4. Give and Go’s

Obviously, your team’s personnel and their individual and collective skill sets will affect the types of plays that you run. It is your job as a coach to put each of your players in a situation where he can achieve maximum success. Therefore, while looking at each of these quick hitters, please keep in mind your team’s talents and make mental notes of where each player might make the greatest contribution.
1-4 Low Quick Hitters

Pick N Roll:

Diagram 11A
11A: 1 veers off to the wing. 4 sets a ball screen for 1 at the top of the key. 2 cuts off of 5’s flex screen.

Diagram 11B
11B: After 1 uses the screen, 4 pops to the top of the key. 1 reverses the ball to 4. 4 dribbles over to the wing to create a better passing angle and looks to pass the ball inside.

Diagram 11C
11C: If 5 does receive the ball, he continues to pop to the corner. Now normal flex action occurs.

Give n Go:

Diagram 12A
12A: 2 starts in the corner and breaks to the wing. 1 passes the ball to 2. On the pass, 4 sets a cross screen for 5.

Diagram 12B
12B: 1 fakes setting a cross and cuts to the basket. 3 rotates to the top of the key.

Diagram 12C
12C: If 1 does not receive the ball, he fills the corner. Now, normal flex action occurs.
Double Screens:

13A: 5, 4, and 2 set a triple screen for 3 along the baseline. 3 comes off the screens to the corner looking for the shot. If 3 isn’t open, 1 dribbles to the opposite wing.

13B: 5 and 4 then turn around and set a double screen for 2, who is going to the corner looking for his shot. After setting the screen, 4 pops to the top of the key.

13C: If 2 is not open, 1 reverses the ball to 4 and now normal flex action occurs.

Clear Outs:

14A: 5 and 4 set an outside cross screen for 2 and 3. 1 penetrates the middle looking to score.

14B: If 1 can’t get to the rim, 1 kicks it to 2, who pops to the wing. 4 fills the high post and 3 fills the opposite corner.

14C: 2 reverse the ball to 4 at the top and now normal flex action occurs.
Double Stack Quick Hitters

Ball Screen:

15A: 1 passes to 2 as he loops over the top of 4 to the wing. 3 runs along the baseline and fills the strong side corner. 1 then drifts to the opposite swing area.

15B: 4 comes up to the wing and sets an on-ball screen for 2. 2 is looking to attack the basket while 4 is rolling. As 2 comes off the pick, 1 sets a down-screen for 5 and then pops to the corner.

15C: If 2 can't score, 2 kicks it back out to 5 at the top of the key. Now normal flex action occurs.

Give n Go:

16A: 1 passes to 2, and they come off a double screen set by 3 and 5. 3 fills the opposite corner.
16B: 4 goes to the top. 2 swings the ball to 1, who swings the ball to 4. 5 sets a back pick for 1.

16C: If 4 doesn’t give it to 1, 1 fills the block and normal flex action occurs.

**Double Screen:**

16A: 3 goes over the top of 4 and 5. 1 passes to 3, then cuts to the basket.

16B: 4 and 5 set a double screen for 1 going to corner. 2 sets a screen for 4 going opposite, then pops to the top. 3 passes to 1, who is looking for shot.

16C: If 1 is not open, 3 reverses to 2 and then normal flex action occurs.

**Clear Out:**

17A: 2 pops out to the wing. 1 passes to 2, then fills the strong side corner. 5 pops out to the top.

17B: 5 now has the option of attacking the basket.

17C: If 5 does not attack, then normal flex action occurs.
1-3-1 Quick Hitters

Ball Screen:

18A: 4 steps out and sets an on-ball screen for 1. 1 dribbles off 4's screen. 4 rolls. As 4 rolls, 5 flashes up to the top of the key.

18B: If 4 is not open, 1 passes to 5. Now normal flex action occurs.

Give N Go:

19A: 1 passes to 5. 4 sets a screen for 2, who is going to come to the top. 1 fakes setting a screen for 2, then cuts hard to the basket.

19B: If 1 is not open, 3 reverses the ball to 2. Now normal flex action occurs.
Double Screens:

20A: 1 passes to 3. 1 and 4 come together to set a double screen for 2 at the top of the key. After the screen, 4 rolls hard to the block. 5 fills the corner.

20B: 3 reverses the ball to 2. 2 is looking for his shot, but if he doesn’t have it, normal flex action occurs.

Clear Out:

21A: 1 dribbles at 2. 2 cuts to the opposite corner.

21B: 4 can either post up at the elbow or pop out to the top. 4 is looking to attack!

21C: If 4 does not attack, then normal flex action occurs.
1-4 High Quick Hitters

Ball Screen:

**Diagram 22A**

22A: 1 passes to 3. 4 fills the strong side corner

**Diagram 22B**

22B: 1 sets an on-ball screen for 3 on the wing. 5 sets a down-screen for 2 on the opposite side. After the screen, 2 rolls hard to the basket. 3 can either attack or kick the ball out to 2.

**Diagram 22C**

22C: Once 2 has the ball at the top, normal flex action occurs.

Give n Go:

**Diagram 23A**

23A: 1 passes to 2. 5 fills the corner. 4 sets a down-screen for 2, who is coming to the top. 1 fakes setting a screen and slips. 2 hits 1 on the Give n Go.

**Diagram 23B**

23B: If 1 is not open, 1 fills the strong block. 2 reverses the ball to 3, then normal flex action occurs.
Double Screen:

**Diagram 24A**
1 passes to 3. 2 cuts to the middle of the key. 4 and 5 come together at the free-throw line to set a double screen for 2. 2 comes up through 4 and 5 to the top of the key.

**Diagram 24B**
3 passes to 2. If 2 doesn’t have a shot, he reverses it to 1. 5 fills he strong corner. 4 sets a flex screen for 3.

**Diagram 25B**
2 sets a down screen for 4, starting normal flex action.

Clear Out:

**Diagram 24A**
1 passes to 2. 5 fills to the corner and 1 cuts to the block.

**Diagram 25B**
4 pops out and 2 reverses the ball.

**Diagram 25C**
4 now looks to attack as the whole middle is cleared out. If 4 doesn’t attack, then normal flex action occurs.
Box Quick Hitters

Ball Screen:

26A: 2 cuts over 4 to the wing. 1 passes to 2, then fills opposite. 5 fills the strong corner.

26B: 4 and 3 come together to set an on-ball screen for 2. 4 rolls hard to the basket.

26C: 2 is looking to attack the basket. If 2 doesn’t have anything, he dribbles back out, then normal flex action occurs.

Give n Go:

27A: 1 passes to 2, who is popping out to the wing. 1 then fills the strong corner.

27B: 2 dribbles up and passes to 3. 2 then acts like he is setting a normal down screen as part of the flex offense and then cuts to the basket. If 2 doesn’t get the ball, he fills the block.

27C: 1 now fills to the top. 3 passes to 1, then normal flex action occurs.
Box Double Screen:

**28A:** It is important to put your two biggest players at the top of the box, your shooter on the block, and then a bigger guard who can also post up in the corner. 1 starts his dribble towards the box, then crosses over to change direction. On 1’s crossover, 2 is going to set a flex screen for 3, who is cutting to the corner. As 3 cuts off of 2, 4 and 5 are going to come and set a double screen for 2 coming to the top. 5 then pops to the opposite block.

**28B:** Once 1 passes the ball to 2, normal flex action occurs.

Clear Out:

**29A:** 1 dribbles to the empty side of the court, initiating the set. 3 steps out and sets a flex screen for 4, who proceeds to cut the block and then clears out to the corner. 3 then sets a back pick for 2, who is looking to cut to the opposite block.

**29B:** Once 4 and 2 have both cleared out, 5 sets a down pick for 3 on the wing. 1 passes to 3 in the swing area.

**29C:** Once 3 has the ball on the wing, he can look to attack the defense. If 3 doesn’t attack the defense, then normal flex action occurs.
Breakdown Shooting Drills

One of the things you will soon discover about this offense is the extreme importance of proper execution. One could argue that the potential of your team’s success relies solely on two things: the ability to execute fundamental movements and the capacity to knock down open shots.

By allotting time in practice to work on these breakdown shooting drills, you will give your team the confidence needed not only to execute to perfection but also to make wide-open shots. If you spend as little as 10-20 minutes a day running one or two of these drills, you will be amazed at how drastically and quickly your players will improve in each of these two areas.

Before we go into depth on the different types of breakdown drills, we are going to discuss possibly the biggest factor that will determine whether these drills are successful. Here is the secret: instead of having guards and posts work on separate drills, bring both groups together and have everyone work on the same drills at the same time. Because of the versatility of the flex, all five players on the court need to feel comfortable both posting up and shooting from the perimeter. If you only utilize separate perimeter drills and post drills, both groups of players will never get the opportunity to work on and develop the other aspects of their game.

Most shooting drills focus on form and foot work, but this next series of shooting drills places an emphasis on getting game-like shots from within the offense. To do this, we have targeted our drills to take advantage of the three main ways that your team will score the basketball.

1. Using the flex cut
2. Off the down screen
3. From the top of the key
1: Using the Flex Screen

The first breakdown shooting drill is one that emphasizes the use of the flex screen that is set on the baseline. This screen and the subsequent cutting action provide the primary scoring option in the offense and so it is crucial that it is executed correctly.

Position a coach, player, or manager on a wing and have an offensive player line up with a ball in the opposite corner. To emphasize the screen, add a chair on the block to simulate a person stepping out to set a screen. Have your players skip-pass the ball to the coach. After the skip pass, players will set up the defensive man and then cut off the screen towards the passer. To set up the defense, the offensive player should start slowly in one direction and then break hard in the opposite direction. The coach on the wing will then pass the ball to the cutting player.

This drill is great way to give players extra repetitions on their back-to-the-basket moves. Have your players do one of three moves after receiving the ball:

1. Drop step baseline
2. Jump hook middle
3. Up and under

*This is also a great drill to help younger players to increase their passing strength!

Alternate Option – Replace the cone or chair with another player and place a defensive player on the cutter in the corner. Now the drill can be run “live,” and a strong emphasis should be placed on setting solid screens. Rotate players from cutter to picker to defense and then back to the end of the cutter line.
2: Off the Down Screen

The second most common area of attack is coming off the down screen after the ball has been reversed. This down screen provides the opportunity for players to catch and shoot near the top of the key. How the defense is playing is going to determine the type of cut that the offensive player should execute. The purpose of this drill is to teach all players how to correctly read the defense so that it will be a quick and natural reaction when they get in live game situations!

Position a passer on the wing. Have players split up and form two lines; one line on the block and the other at the top of the key. Players at the top of the key will reverse the ball to the passer on the wing. After the ball is reversed, the player at the top will set a down screen for the player on the block. The bottom player will then come off the screen shoulder-to-shoulder with the screener, looking for a pass and a resulting jump shot.

To teach players the correct read, give them three cutting options for coming off the down screen.

1. Straight cut (if the defense plays straight-up)
2. Curl Cut (if the defense trails the shooter)
3. Flare Cut (if the defense tries to beat the screen to the inside of the key)

Teaching Point: Make sure the potential shooters wait for the down screen to be set solidly before moving!
3: From the Top

The third area of attack in the flex motion offense is the top spot. This spot is often the most overlooked and underused area of attack, since many teams only use this player as a passer and a screener. Turning this spot into a scoring position could easily be the difference between good and great. A legitimate scoring threat at the top of the flex will not only provide more direct scoring opportunities but will also open up more opportunities for the other spots.

Roll Back                  Basket Cut         Fake Basket Cut and Pop

Have a passer on the wing. Start each of the players in the drill with a ball at the top of the key just above the opposite elbow. Players will reverse the ball to the passer and then, instead of setting a down screen, will execute one of three options:

1. Fake the screen and basket cut
2. Fake a basket cut and pop back up to the top
3. Set the screen and then roll back towards the ball
Conclusion

In conclusion, the flex motion offense is so flexible and so versatile that it can be used with great success at every level of basketball. Because it offers a myriad of options, the flex can be as simple or as complex as necessary, which means that it can be run effectively year after year regardless of your personnel. Teams that find themselves without a true post player or a true point guard may find the flex to be the perfect answer to their problems.

Even if this isn’t your primary offense, there is a place for the flex in nearly every coach’s offensive arsenal. It can be used throughout the game to control tempo or to delay the game when you are protecting a lead.

Finally, the flex is the perfect canvas for the creative coach who wants to design his own set plays and quick hitters. No one knows your team as well as you do, so don’t be afraid to tweak or alter the original sets or any of the 30+ plays in this book to fit your own personnel. Not only will your team benefit from your study and preparation, but you will also benefit and grow as a coach!