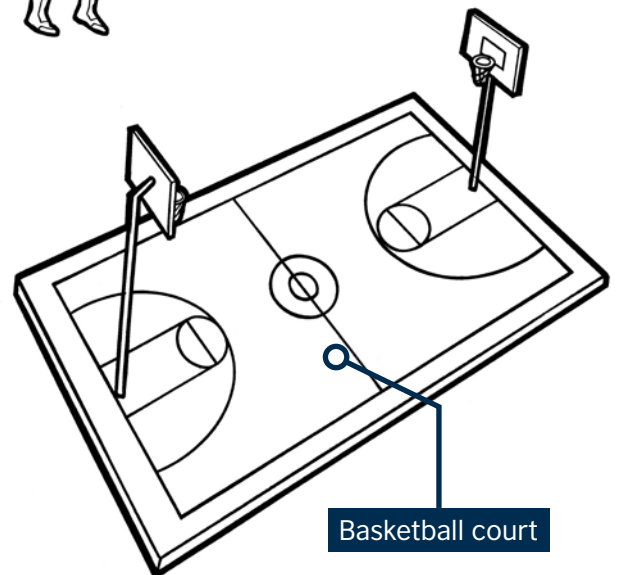
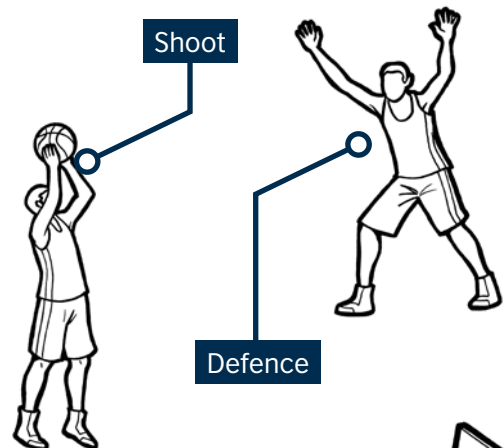
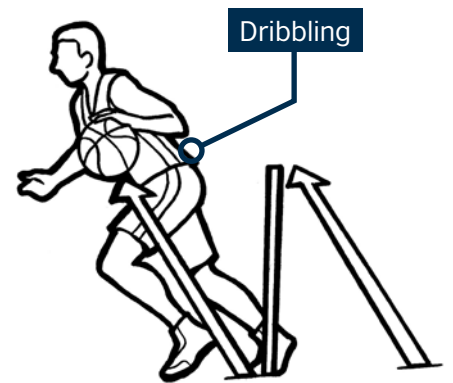
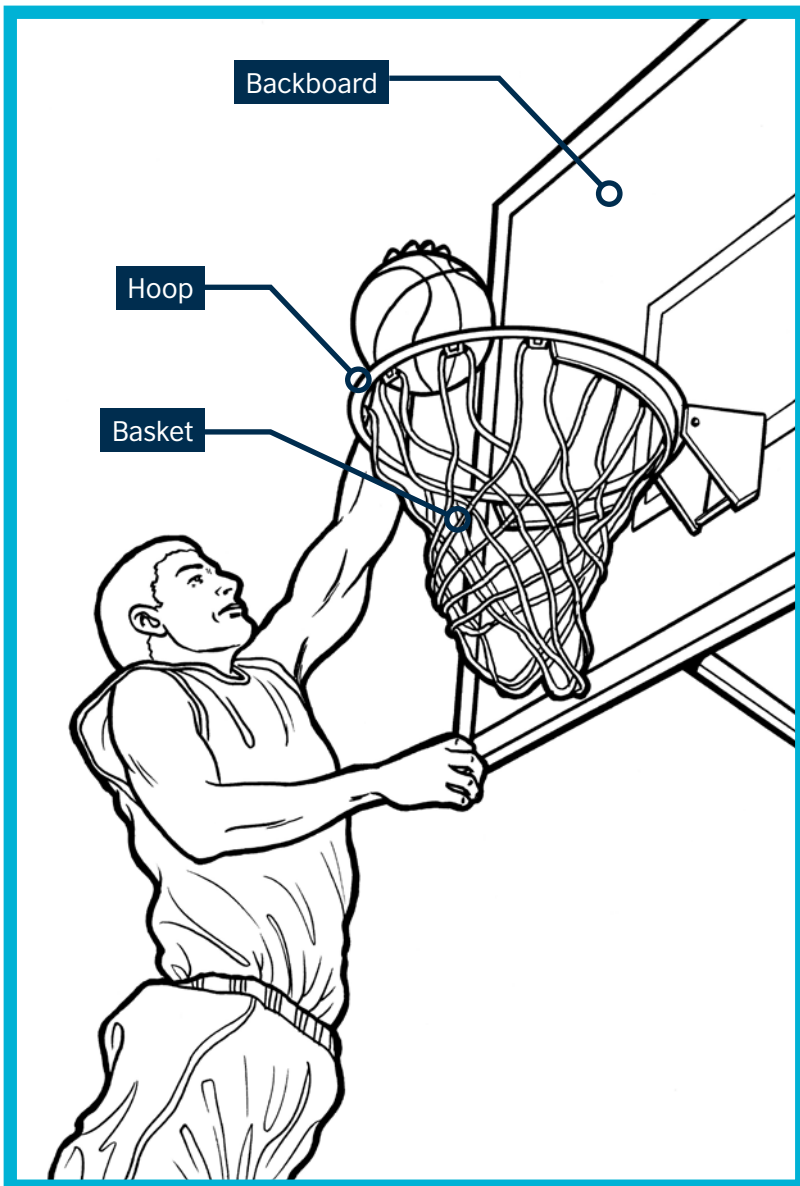


# Basketball

When athletes come together from around the world to compete in the Olympic and Paralympic Games, they are fulfilling their dreams and competing at the highest level. Billions of people across the globe join in; watching, listening to and reading about the greatest global celebration of sport. To celebrate the London 2012 Games, the British Council is making a wide range of classroom resources available for learners of English worldwide.

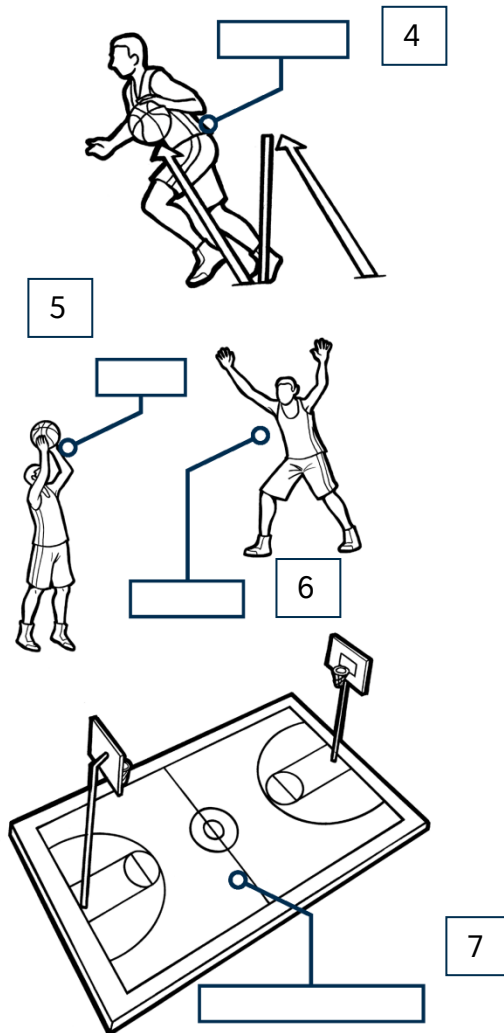
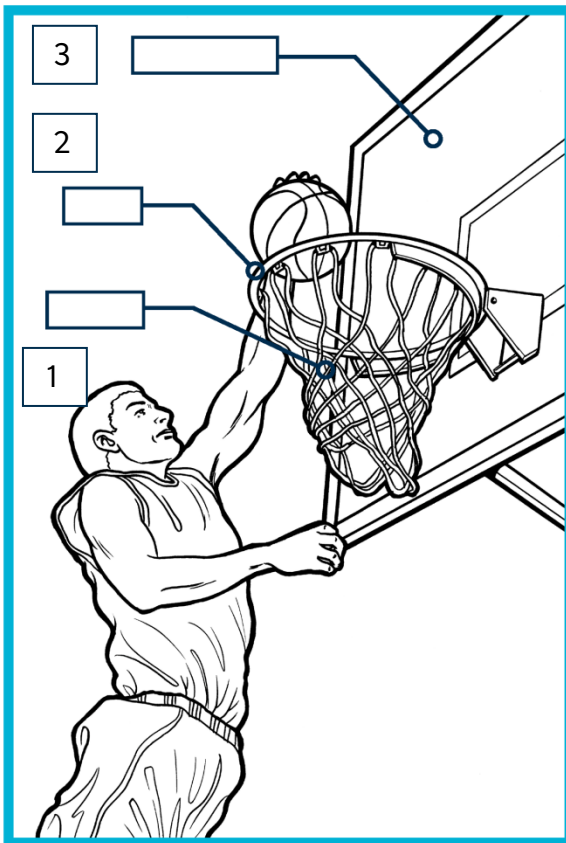
What do you know about basketball? Do you like this sport? Why / why not? Is basketball a popular sport in your country? Do you know where basketball is most popular? Do you know any famous basketball players?



1. Vocabulary

a. Write the correct words in the spaces provided.

a. dribbling	b. hoop	c. basket	d. defence
e. backboard	f. shoot	g. basketball court	



## 2. The rules of basketball

- Basketball is played on a court with a basket at each end which is made up of a metal hoop with a net hanging from it.
- The aim is to throw the ball through the basket of the other team and stop the other team from doing the same to you.
- When a player throws the ball toward the basket, it is called a “shot”. A shot can score between one and three points.
- Each team has five players on the court.
- Players cannot carry the ball across the court. Instead, they have to pass and dribble the ball towards the basket.
- If a player stops dribbling the ball and continues moving, he/she commits a violation called “travelling”.
- If the ball hits the backboard but does not enter the basket, the opposite team will try to “rebound”.
- If a player is too aggressive, the referee may call a “foul”. The opposite team gets a “free throw”.
- The game ends when time is up. The winner is the team with the most points.
- In the event of a draw, teams play extra time to decide the winner.

### a. Match the words in the table with their definitions below.

a. backboard	b. draw	c. dribble	d. foul
e. free throw	f. rebound	g. travelling	

1. A shot, worth one point, awarded to a player who has been fouled
2. A situation in which each team in a game has the same number of points
3. A violation by a player with the ball who moves both feet without dribbling
4. A violation of the rules
5. Control the basketball by bouncing it against the floor with your hand
6. Grab the ball in the air after a player has missed a shot
7. The rectangular board behind the basket

### 3. Questions & Answers

**Why is it called basketball? There aren't any real baskets, are there?**

True, but when the game was invented there were real baskets. People started by using peach baskets but it was too difficult to get the ball back so they changed.

**Any other fruity connections?**

The ball is orange! After the 1950s, anyway. Before that it was brown.

**And when was the game invented?**

In 1891, by a Canadian who was living in the US. Does that make it a Canadian or American invention?

**Not sure. But that can't be the first time anybody played a basketball sort of sport, can it?**

You're right! A similar game was played for thousands of years in North and Central America. Many Mayan pyramids have courts for it. You wouldn't want to lose one of those games. In some cases, the losing team members were ritually sacrificed!

**Ouch! So ... fast forward to modern basketball. When did it become an Olympic sport?**

It was first played at the 1936 Olympics. Women's basketball came later, in 1976.

**How long is a basketball game?**

It depends on how exciting the game is! Ha! Seriously, an Olympic basketball game has four 10-minute quarters.

**Do people only play basketball in the US?**

Well, some of the best players in the world play there. But there are great basketball teams all over the world! Spain, Russia, Yugoslavia, Serbia and Greece (to name a few) have all won medals in recent world championships.

**Don't I have to be really tall to play basketball?**

To play? No. You don't have to be really tall. But plenty of basketball players are. The tallest professional player in the world is 2.36 m tall! The shortest is 1.70 m. But both are successful, so if you love basketball, go for it!

**Glossary**

**ritually sacrifice:** to kill an animal or a person and offer them to a god or gods, as part of a ceremony

**fast forward:** to advance to a later time at an accelerated speed

**a. Decide if the following statements about the text are true or false.**

1. Real baskets were originally used in basketball.
2. Basketballs are made from oranges.
3. Basketball is a North American invention.
4. The Mayans would always kill losing team members.
5. An Olympic basketball game lasts for 40 minutes.
6. Shorter people can be good basketball players.

True	False

**b. Arrange the following events from the text into chronological order.**

1. Men's Olympic basketball began.
2. Modern basketball was invented.
3. Orange balls started to be used.
4. The Mayans played a game like basketball.
5. Women's Olympic basketball began.

**c. Complete the following questions using question tags from the table.**

didn't	wasn't	are	won't	doesn't	can
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1. There aren't any real baskets, (.....) there?
2. The game was invented in 1891, (.....) it?
3. That can't be the first time, (.....) it?
4. Basketball became an Olympic sport in 1936, (.....) it?
5. A basketball game lasts for 40 minutes, (.....) it?
6. Men and women will be playing basketball at London 2012, (.....) they?

## 4. Solution

### Exercise 1a

1. c; 2. b; 3. e; 4. a; 5. f; 6. d; 7. g

### Exercise 2a

1. e; 2. b; 3. g; 4. d; 5. c; 6. f; 7. a

### Exercise 3a

1. True (peach baskets)
2. False (they are orange in colour)
3. True (from Canada or the US)
4. False (only in some cases)
5. True (four 10-minute quarters)
6. False (some of the best players in the world play there)
7. True (both [tall and short players] are successful)

### Exercise 3b

4; 2; 1; 3; 5

### Exercise 3c

1. are; 2. wasn't; 3. can; 4. didn't; 5. doesn't; 6. won't