



# The Mental game !

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## *Mental Preparation*

Give or take a few percentage points, basketball is 80 percent mental preparation and 20 percent physical. Sure, God packs more ability into some player's 20 percent than others. But, from the mental preparation aspect of the game, the percentage is equal.

There are as many ways to prepare mentally for a basketball game as there are players. A few of these follow:

1. Some players go into a deep silence before a game, preferring to focus on the upcoming game.
2. Some enjoy jabbering to everyone in sight, listening to music, and staying loose.
3. Others choose somewhere between the first two.

As long as it helps you to play well is all that counts. Your mental preparation should be to your own taste. Use one that works for you.

After preparing yourself mentally for a game, the concentration needed for actual play is another matter. Basketball is such a fast paced, emotional game. Decisions are made in split seconds. A player can lose his concentration at anytime. To play the game effectively, you must block out everything around you, except the following:

1. The action on the court.
2. Your coach's plan for that particular game.

Once you have your game face, be all business on the floor. Never let an official or an opponent upset you. This breaks your concentration. This is often called, "Playing under control."

Stay cool and be a "team player." We have all seen teams with one dominant player who goes for the bucket every time he gets his hands on the ball. Oh, he may get his points in the game; but, his teammates won't. More likely, than not, the team, scorer included, loses.

The point is you can maintain a respectable scoring average. At the same time, you can help your teammates maintain theirs and win the game. Remember to play as part of the team. Stay cool! Stay calm and concentrate. You will get your points in the course of a game.

Things change over the years, as **shooting, passing, and dribbling** have become more sophisticated, offensive alignments have changed. They probably will continue. Rule changes often dictate this. For example, take the three-point shot. This has changed the philosophy of a lot of coaches. Previous to the three-point shot, big men dominated the game. Teams constantly looked for **only** a close-in shot. As a result, most defenses packed back in tight.