The AhaBulb Party Game

STUFF EVERY BASKETBALL PLAYER SHOULD KNOW

How to play (30 seconds)

1. The reader reads a card and its three answers out loud.
2. Everyone says "One, two, three, Goldilocks!" and holds up 1, 2, or 3 fingers.
3. The reader flips the card and reads the answer and the Why.
4. Everyone who was right takes a point.
5. The reader reads the joke with a straight face. Anyone laughs or groans? The reader takes a point. Nobody got it right? The reader takes a point.
6. Pass the deck left. Most points when the points run out wins.

What you need

These cards and the point tokens on the last two pages. No tokens? Use coins, buttons, pebbles, or marshmallows. 3 to 10 players, ages 8 and up.

Expert rule: Bet It

Before the reader flips the card, you may put one of your points on your answer. Right: take your normal point plus one extra. Wrong: your bet goes back to the pile. That's it.

Printing

Print single-sided, on cardstock if you have it. Cut on the dashed lines. Each card is a 3.5 x 5 inch index card. The answer half is upside down on purpose, so the table can't peek.

Cards 1 to 50 of 63. More cards and the free daily online game at sesk.info. Built 2026-10-14.

SPORTS & FITNESS

When starting a dribble from a standstill, when must the ball leave your hand?

- **A** Before your pivot foot lifts off the floor
- **B** Any time within two steps
- **C** Before you take three steps

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

A Before your pivot foot lifts off the floor

WHY Your pivot foot is the one that stays planted. To start a dribble, the ball must be out of your hand before that foot comes up, or it is traveling.

STRAIGHT FACE
Why did the basketball player become a dancer?
She already had a great pivot.

SESK.INFO #10093

SPORTS & FITNESS

In the NBA, after you gather the ball while dribbling, how many steps may you take?

- **A** One step
- **B** Two steps
- **C** Three steps

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

B Two steps

WHY NBA rules let a player who gathers the ball while dribbling take two steps to stop, pass or shoot. A third step with the ball is traveling.

STRAIGHT FACE
Why did the basketball player bring a suitcase to the game? The ref kept calling him for traveling.

SESK.INFO #10092

SPORTS & FITNESS

What violation is it to put your hand under the ball and pause it while dribbling?

- **A** Carrying
- **B** Goaltending
- **C** Backcourt

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

A Carrying

WHY A dribbler may not put a hand under the ball and carry it or bring it to a pause, then keep dribbling. It costs your team the ball.

STRAIGHT FACE
Why did the waiter get called for carrying? He kept serving the ball on a tray.

SESK.INFO #10095

SPORTS & FITNESS

You dribble, catch the ball with both hands, then dribble again. What is that called?

- **A** Carrying
- **B** Traveling
- **C** Double dribble

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

C Double dribble

WHY Once you end your dribble on purpose, you may not start a second one. The other team gets the ball.

STRAIGHT FACE
Why are basketball players messy eaters? They are always dribbling.

SESK.INFO #10094

SPORTS & FITNESS

How many seconds does the NBA shot clock start with?

- **A** 24 seconds
- **B** 30 seconds
- **C** 35 seconds

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

A 24 seconds

WHY An NBA team must try a shot before the 24-second shot clock runs out. The clock shows tenths of a second once it gets under 5 seconds.

STRAIGHT FACE
Why did the shot clock go to therapy? It felt like everyone was counting down on it.

SESK.INFO #10096

SPORTS & FITNESS

How long is the shot clock in NCAA college basketball?

- **A** 24 seconds
- **B** 30 seconds
- **C** 35 seconds

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

B 30 seconds

WHY NCAA rules call for a 30-second shot clock. That is 6 seconds longer than the NBA's 24.

STRAIGHT FACE
Why did the college shot clock skip class? It only had 30 seconds of attention.

SESK.INFO #10097

SPORTS & FITNESS

In high school basketball, how long is the shot clock in states that use one?

- **A** 24 seconds
- **B** 30 seconds
- **C** 35 seconds

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

C 35 seconds

WHY NFHS rules let each state association decide whether to use a shot clock. States that adopt it use 35 seconds, allowed since the 2022-23 season.

STRAIGHT FACE
Why did the high school shot clock get a hall pass? It needed 35 more seconds.

SESK.INFO #10098

SPORTS & FITNESS

In the NBA, an offensive rebound off the rim resets the shot clock to what?

- **A** 24 seconds
- **B** 20 seconds
- **C** 14 seconds

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

C 14 seconds

WHY If the offense gets the ball back after a missed shot hits the rim, the NBA shot clock resets to 14, not a full 24.

STRAIGHT FACE
Why did the rebound feel shortchanged? It only got 14 seconds of fame.

SESK.INFO #10099

SPORTS & FITNESS

In the NBA, how long do you have to get the ball past half court?

- **A** 5 seconds
- **B** 8 seconds
- **C** 10 seconds

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

B 8 seconds

WHY An NBA team may not keep the ball in its backcourt for more than 8 seconds in a row. If it does, the other team gets the ball at midcourt.

STRAIGHT FACE
Why did the point guard rush across half court? He did not want to be late for the frontcourt.

SESK.INFO #10100

SPORTS & FITNESS

In NCAA college basketball, how long does a team have to get the ball out of its backcourt?

- **A** 8 seconds
- **B** 10 seconds
- **C** 12 seconds

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

B 10 seconds

WHY NCAA rules give a team 10 seconds to move the ball into the frontcourt. The NBA and FIBA give only 8.

STRAIGHT FACE
Why did the college guard count to ten? Her coach said she had time to think it over.

SESK.INFO #10101

SPORTS & FITNESS

How long may an offensive player stay in the free throw lane while their team has the ball?

- **A** 3 seconds
- **B** 5 seconds
- **C** 10 seconds

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

A 3 seconds

WHY An offensive player may not stay in the lane, also called the paint, for more than 3 seconds while their team controls the ball in the frontcourt. Breaking it gives the other team the ball.

STRAIGHT FACE
Why did the center bring a stopwatch into the paint? He kept losing track after three seconds.

SESK.INFO #10102

SPORTS & FITNESS

In the NBA, what is the penalty for a defensive three-second violation?

- **A** Loss of the next possession
- **B** A jump ball
- **C** A technical foul

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

C A technical foul

WHY A defensive three-second violation is a technical foul. A defender in the lane generally must actively guard an opponent, with a special exception for the ballhandler's defender.

STRAIGHT FACE
Why did the defender get a technical? He was camping in the paint without a permit.

SESK.INFO #10103

SPORTS & FITNESS

Under FIBA rules, a closely guarded player holding the ball must pass, shoot or dribble within how long?

- **A** 3 seconds
- **B** 5 seconds
- **C** 8 seconds

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

B 5 seconds

WHY In FIBA international play, a player holding the ball with a defender within 1 meter must pass, shoot or dribble within 5 seconds. Otherwise the other team gets the ball.

STRAIGHT FACE
Why did the closely guarded player start counting? He did not want to be a five-second wonder.

SESK.INFO #10104

SPORTS & FITNESS

In the NBA, how long may a player dribble with their back to the basket below the free throw line?

- **A** 3 seconds
- **B** 5 seconds
- **C** 8 seconds

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

B 5 seconds

WHY The NBA does not let a player back down a defender forever. Below the free throw line extended, dribbling with your back or side to the basket is limited to 5 seconds.

STRAIGHT FACE
Why did the post player turn around? He finally wanted to face his problems.

SESK.INFO #10105

SPORTS & FITNESS

Your team controls the ball past half court, sends it back, then touches it first. What is that?

- **A** Backcourt violation
- **B** Traveling
- **C** Goaltending

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

A Backcourt violation

WHY Once your team controls the ball in the frontcourt, it may not send the ball into the backcourt and be the first team to touch it there. The other team gets the ball at midcourt.

STRAIGHT FACE
Why did the ball keep crossing half court? It could not decide which side it was on.

SESK.INFO #10106

SPORTS & FITNESS

A defender blocks a shot that is already coming down toward the hoop. What is that?

- **A** A clean block
- **B** A jump ball
- **C** Goaltending

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

C Goaltending

WHY You may not touch a shot on its downward flight when it has a chance to score. The shooting team gets the points as if the shot went in.

STRAIGHT FACE
Why did the goalie switch to basketball? He heard there was goaltending.

SESK.INFO #10107

SPORTS & FITNESS

When the ball goes out of bounds, which team gets it?

- **A** The team that did not touch it last
- **B** The team that touched it last
- **C** The team on defense, always

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

A The team that did not touch it last

WHY A player may not be the last to touch the ball before it goes out. The other team gets a throw-in near the spot where it went out.

STRAIGHT FACE
Why did the basketball go out of bounds? It needed some personal space.

SESK.INFO #10108

SPORTS & FITNESS

How long does the player inbounding the ball have to release it?

- **A** 3 seconds
- **B** 5 seconds
- **C** 10 seconds

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

B 5 seconds

WHY On a throw-in, the passer has 5 seconds to release the ball. Taking longer is a violation, and the other team gets it.

STRAIGHT FACE
Why did the inbounder hurry? He had five seconds to make a good first impression.

SESK.INFO #10109

SPORTS & FITNESS

In the NBA, how does the game start?

- **A** A coin toss
- **B** A throw-in at midcourt
- **C** A jump ball in the center circle

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

C A jump ball in the center circle

WHY An official tosses the ball up between two opposing players in the center circle. NBA overtime periods start the same way.

STRAIGHT FACE
Why was the referee great at jump balls? He always had a lot of ups.

SESK.INFO #10110

SPORTS & FITNESS

In college and FIBA games, what shows which team gets the ball on the next jump ball situation?

- **A** The possession arrow
- **B** The shot clock
- **C** The team foul marker

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

A The possession arrow

WHY For held balls and most other jump ball situations, college and FIBA games use alternating-possession throw-ins. The arrow shows whose turn it is. NCAA overtime still begins with a jump ball.

STRAIGHT FACE
Why did the possession arrow never get lost? It always knew which way to go.

SESK.INFO #10111

SPORTS & FITNESS

In the NBA, how long does a shooter have to attempt a free throw?

A 5 seconds
B 10 seconds
C 24 seconds

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

B 10 seconds

WHY Once the official hands over the ball, an NBA free throw shooter has 10 seconds to shoot. The shot must enter the basket or touch the ring.

STRAIGHT FACE
Why are free throws the best deal in basketball?
They are free.

SESK.INFO #10112

SPORTS & FITNESS

How far is the NBA free throw line from the face of the backboard?

A 10 feet
B 12 feet
C 15 feet

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

C 15 feet

WHY The NBA free throw line is 15 feet from the front of the backboard. Each made free throw counts one point.

STRAIGHT FACE
Why did the free throw line never move? It was set in its ways.

SESK.INFO #10113

SPORTS & FITNESS

How far is the NBA three-point arc from the middle of the basket?

A 19 feet 9 inches
B 22 feet 1.75 inches
C 23 feet 9 inches

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

C 23 feet 9 inches

WHY The NBA arc is 23 feet 9 inches from the middle of the basket. Near the corners, straight lines run 3 feet in from the sidelines, so the corner three is shorter.

STRAIGHT FACE
Why did the shooter love math class? He was great with threes.

SESK.INFO #10114

SPORTS & FITNESS

How far is the NCAA college three-point line from the center of the basket?

A 19 feet 9 inches
B 22 feet 1.75 inches
C 23 feet 9 inches

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

B 22 feet 1.75 inches

WHY NCAA men and women use the same arc, 22 feet 1.75 inches from the center of the basket. That is shorter than the NBA arc.

STRAIGHT FACE
Why did the college shooter bring a ruler? He wanted to measure up from deep.

SESK.INFO #10115

SPORTS & FITNESS

How long is each quarter in an NBA game?

A 8 minutes

B 10 minutes

C 12 minutes

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

C 12 minutes

WHY An NBA game has four periods of 12 minutes each, 48 minutes in all. Halftime lasts 15 minutes.

STRAIGHT FACE
Why was the NBA game so punctual? Every quarter ran like clockwork.

SESK.INFO #10117

SPORTS & FITNESS

In FIBA international basketball, how far is the three-point arc from the spot under the basket?

A 6.25 meters

B 6.75 meters

C 7.24 meters

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

B 6.75 meters

WHY FIBA measures in meters. Its arc is 6.75 m from the point on the floor beneath the center of the basket, very close to the NCAA distance.

STRAIGHT FACE
Why did the metric shooter never miss? He had it down to the last centimeter.

SESK.INFO #10116

SPORTS & FITNESS

How long is each quarter in a varsity high school (NFHS) basketball game?

A 8 minutes

B 10 minutes

C 12 minutes

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

A 8 minutes

WHY NFHS high school rules use four 8-minute quarters, 32 minutes in all. That is shorter than college or pro games.

STRAIGHT FACE
Why did the high schooler love basketball quarters? They were shorter than class periods.

SESK.INFO #10119

SPORTS & FITNESS

NCAA men's college basketball is played in what?

A Two 20-minute halves

B Four 10-minute quarters

C Four 12-minute quarters

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

A Two 20-minute halves

WHY NCAA men's games use two halves of 20 minutes each, with a 15-minute halftime. Most other levels play quarters.

STRAIGHT FACE
Why did the college team only play two halves? They did not want to be quartered.

SESK.INFO #10118

SPORTS & FITNESS

How high is the top of a regulation basketball rim above the floor?

- **A** 8 feet
- **B** 9 feet
- **C** 10 feet

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

C 10 feet

WHY The upper edge of the rim is 10 feet above the floor in the NBA and in college. FIBA uses 3.05 meters, which is the same height.

STRAIGHT FACE
Why did the basketball hoop never get lonely? It always had a net-work.

SESK.INFO #10121

SPORTS & FITNESS

When an NBA game is tied after four quarters, how long is each overtime?

- **A** 3 minutes
- **B** 4 minutes
- **C** 5 minutes

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

C 5 minutes

WHY Every NBA overtime period is 5 minutes. Teams keep playing overtimes until one team leads at the end.

STRAIGHT FACE
Why did the tied teams keep playing? They just could not leave things even.

SESK.INFO #10120

SPORTS & FITNESS

Under FIBA international rules, how big is the court?

- **A** 28 by 15 meters
- **B** 24 by 12 meters
- **C** 30 by 18 meters

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

A 28 by 15 meters

WHY FIBA courts are 28 m long and 15 m wide, measured from the inner edge of the boundary lines. That is a bit smaller than the 94 by 50 foot NCAA court.

STRAIGHT FACE
Why did the FIBA court sign up for metric class? It wanted to go the extra meter.

SESK.INFO #10123

SPORTS & FITNESS

How big is an NCAA college basketball court?

- **A** 84 by 50 feet
- **B** 90 by 48 feet
- **C** 94 by 50 feet

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

C 94 by 50 feet

WHY NCAA rules set the court at 94 feet along the sidelines and 50 feet along the end lines, measured from the inside edges. NCAA men and women use the same size.

STRAIGHT FACE
Why did the basketball court go on a diet? It wanted to trim a few feet.

SESK.INFO #10122

SPORTS & FITNESS

What is a personal foul in basketball?

- **A** Illegal contact with an opponent
- **B** Any contact inside the paint
- **C** A missed shot attempt

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

A Illegal contact with an opponent

WHY A personal foul is illegal contact with an opponent, such as holding, pushing or charging into them. Not all contact is a foul.

STRAIGHT FACE
Why did the basketball player hold his opponent?
He wanted to stay close.

SESK.INFO #10124

SPORTS & FITNESS

A player is fouled while shooting a two and misses. How many free throws do they get?

- **A** One free throw
- **B** Two free throws
- **C** Three free throws

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

B Two free throws

WHY A foul on a shooter whose two-point shot misses gives two free throws. If the shot goes in, the basket counts and the shooter gets one free throw.

STRAIGHT FACE
Why are free throws so relaxing? Nobody is guarding you.

SESK.INFO #10125

SPORTS & FITNESS

What is a technical foul usually called for?

- **A** Excessive contact on a layup
- **B** Missing a shot badly
- **C** Unsportsmanlike conduct or procedural violations

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

C Unsportsmanlike conduct or procedural violations

WHY Technical fouls usually cover noncontact conduct or procedural violations, such as disrespecting an official, delay of game or hanging on the rim.

STRAIGHT FACE
The ref gave me a technical for hanging on the rim. I thought it was off the hook.

SESK.INFO #10126

SPORTS & FITNESS

What makes a foul flagrant in basketball?

- **A** Unnecessary or excessive contact
- **B** Any foul by a guard
- **C** A foul called after a timeout

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

A Unnecessary or excessive contact

WHY Flagrant fouls involve contact that goes beyond normal basketball play. Unnecessary contact is a flagrant 1; unnecessary and excessive contact is a flagrant 2.

STRAIGHT FACE
A flagrant foul is not a good flag to plant.

SESK.INFO #10127

SPORTS & FITNESS

In the NBA, what happens to a player called for a flagrant 2 foul?

- **A** A free throw only
- **B** The player is ejected
- **C** One team timeout

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

B The player is ejected

WHY A flagrant 2 is unnecessary and excessive contact. The player is ejected, and the other team gets two free throws and the ball.

STRAIGHT FACE
Why did the flagrant 2 player bring a suitcase? He knew he was getting sent packing.

SESK.INFO #10128

SPORTS & FITNESS

How many personal fouls disqualify an NBA player?

- **A** 4
- **B** 5
- **C** 6

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

C 6

WHY NBA players foul out on their sixth personal foul. College and high school players foul out after five.

STRAIGHT FACE
He did not foul out; he just wanted to sit with the coaches.

SESK.INFO #10129

SPORTS & FITNESS

How many fouls disqualify a player in high school and NCAA college basketball?

- **A** 5
- **B** 6
- **C** 4

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

A 5

WHY High school (NFHS) and NCAA rules disqualify a player on the fifth foul. NBA players get six.

STRAIGHT FACE
Fifth foul? That is like a limit on a breakfast buffet.

SESK.INFO #10130

SPORTS & FITNESS

In an NBA quarter, after how many team fouls do common defensive fouls start giving free throws?

- **A** After the third team foul
- **B** After the fourth team foul
- **C** After the fifth team foul

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

B After the fourth team foul

WHY Each NBA team gets four team fouls per quarter without extra penalty. The fifth common defensive foul and later such fouls give the opponent two free throws.

STRAIGHT FACE
My team went over its foul budget.

SESK.INFO #10131

SPORTS & FITNESS

In basketball, what is a charging foul?

- **A** A defensive player blocking a shot
- **B** An offensive player running into a defender in legal guarding position
- **C** A coach entering the court

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

B An offensive player running into a defender in legal guarding position

WHY A dribbler may not charge into a defender who has established legal guarding position. A defender who gets there too late may be called for blocking instead.

STRAIGHT FACE
I tried to pay with a card at the basketball game. The ref said that was a charge.

SESK.INFO #10132

SPORTS & FITNESS

A player is fouled shooting a three-pointer and misses. How many free throws do they get?

- **A** Two free throws
- **B** Three free throws
- **C** One free throw

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

B Three free throws

WHY A shooter fouled on a missed three-point try gets three free throws. If the three goes in, it counts and one free throw is added.

STRAIGHT FACE
Three free throws are more than my average in a whole game.

SESK.INFO #10133

SPORTS & FITNESS

Which position runs the offense and is usually the team's best dribbler and passer?

- **A** Center
- **B** Point guard
- **C** Power forward

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

B Point guard

WHY The point guard brings the ball up and runs the offense. They are usually the team's best dribbler and passer.

STRAIGHT FACE
Point guards pass on good shots? That is the point.

SESK.INFO #10134

SPORTS & FITNESS

Which position is usually the team's best shooter?

- **A** Center
- **B** Power forward
- **C** Shooting guard

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

C Shooting guard

WHY The shooting guard is usually the team's best shooter and can make shots from long distance.

STRAIGHT FACE
Shooting guards shoot a lot. It is in the job description.

SESK.INFO #10135

SPORTS & FITNESS

Which position roams all over the court and scores from both long and close range?

- **A** Small forward
- **B** Center
- **C** Point guard

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

A Small forward

WHY The small forward plays against both small and large players and roams all over the court. Small forwards can score from long shots and close ones.

STRAIGHT FACE
Small forward? The name is small, the role is not.

SESK.INFO #10136

SPORTS & FITNESS

Which position plays near the basket like a center but also takes longer shots?

- **A** Point guard
- **B** Power forward
- **C** Shooting guard

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

B Power forward

WHY The power forward does many of the things a center does: plays near the basket, rebounds and guards taller players. But power forwards also take longer shots.

STRAIGHT FACE
Power forward means forward with extra power.

SESK.INFO #10137

SPORTS & FITNESS

Which position is usually the tallest player and plays near the basket?

- **A** Point guard
- **B** Shooting guard
- **C** Center

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

C Center

WHY The center is the tallest player on each team and plays near the basket. On offense they score close shots and rebound; on defense they block shots.

STRAIGHT FACE
Playing center is a tall order.

SESK.INFO #10138

SPORTS & FITNESS

In a pick and roll, what does the screener do after setting the pick?

- **A** Runs back on defense
- **B** Runs to the corner and stops
- **C** Rolls toward the basket

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

C Rolls toward the basket

WHY One player sets a pick, or screen, for the ball handler. The screener then rolls toward the basket to take a pass for an open shot.

STRAIGHT FACE
Pick and roll is also my deli order.

SESK.INFO #10139

SPORTS & FITNESS

Where and when was basketball invented?

A Boston in 1910

B Chicago in 1920

C Springfield, Massachusetts in 1891

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

C Springfield, Massachusetts in 1891

WHY James Naismith invented basketball in 1891 at Springfield College in Springfield, Massachusetts. Restless students needed a new indoor game for winter.

STRAIGHT FACE
Naismith invented basketball so winter had a hoop-portunity.

SPORTS & FITNESS

What is the goal of a box out in basketball?

A Stay between an opponent and the basket

B Block the shooter's view

C Set a screen for a three-pointer

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

A Stay between an opponent and the basket

WHY A player boxes out by using the body to stay between an opponent and the basket. That puts them in better position to grab the rebound.

STRAIGHT FACE
My box out is not about moving boxes.

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AhaBulb POINT

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AhaBulb POINT