

Fantasy University: Basketball

Chapter 1

What is Fantasy Basketball?

Finally, fans get a chance to feel like a real general manager of their own franchise when they play Fantasy Basketball. How many times have you criticized the management of your favorite pro squad? Why did they trade that player? Why didn't they draft this obvious superstar-in-waiting over that broken down bust.

Fantasy Basketball gives you the keys to a franchise. Draft your own team from all NBA players, explore trades with fellow owners, drop the under-performing players and pick up the improving unknown players. By analyzing stats, assessing a player's talents and going with your hunches, you now have the ability to create a great squad. You can be the owner, general manager and coach of a championship franchise.

Why you should be playing Fantasy Basketball:

The real question should be, "Why haven't you been playing Fantasy Basketball before now?" The game is easy to learn and fun to play. Think of the emotions brought on when your last-round sleeper pick throws up 34 points and 11 rebounds to help you to a win. And manage your disappointment when your first-rounder has three consecutive games in which he can't break double-digits in scoring. You'll join millions of sports fans that have already discovered the thrills and excitement of Fantasy Basketball.

Chapter 2

Team & League

Team name: The first step to getting started is creating a name for your new team. The name can be just about anything you like but remember that this is how you and your team will be identified throughout the season. Here's your chance to get creative and have a little fun.

Some good examples of fun team names: Aggression Harm & Pain, No Moss, and Brilliant Mistakes

Join or create a league: Just like the pros, your team will compete in a league. Your competition will be made up of the other owners in your league. These are the people you will be competing against for bragging rights and the league championship. The number of teams in a Fantasy Basketball league can vary depending on what product you join but should always be an even number. You can play with as few as 6 teams or have as many as 20, or more in a Free or Premium game. In the Fantasy Basketball Commissioner product the average league size is about 12 teams. You have the ability to choose who the other team owners will be. One possibility is to recruit friends, family and co-workers to join your league. You can also join a league run by CBSsports.com and make new friends by competing against sports fans from around the nation

Team Rosters

Just like an NBA squad is limited to 12 players on their bench, your Fantasy Basketball team's roster is limited as well. This keeps owners from stockpiling players and ensures that some will always be available as free agents. While leagues differ in their roster size and limits, teams are typically allowed a set number of players. The number of players allowed is usually more than the total number of starters, so teams can have reserve players as well. For example, your Fantasy Basketball team might be allowed to have 14 players on your roster, but only nine can start each week. The other five are considered reserves on your roster, and since they aren't active, they can't score you points for that particular week.

Typical Fantasy Basketball roster requirements		
Position	Starting lineup	Draft
Guards (G)	4	5
Forwards (F)	4	6
Centers (C)	1	2
All Positions	9	13

The Fantasy Basketball Draft

Most experienced players consider this day to be the single most fun day of the Fantasy Basketball season. Draft day is where you begin the process of molding your championship-caliber team. Here's how it works: You and the other members of your league will take turns selecting from a pool of available players until all team's rosters are full.

There are three draft options to choose from:

Live draft (party) – The most popular way to draft is to gather all league members together in one location and hold a draft party. Of course, this is only possible if all of your league's team owners live in the same location. *Only available in Commissioner Leagues.

Live draft online – If the members of your league are spread around the country, it's probably not possible to get everyone together to hold a draft party. If you'd still like to experience the thrill of drafting live, you can draft online. This is possible using live draft software, provided in every league on CBS SportsLine.com.

Automated draft – This is a draft option that makes it possible to draft teams without having to physically attend a draft. This draft process is conducted by each team pre-ranking players in the order in which the owner would prefer they be drafted. Players are then assigned to teams in the league based on each team's draft rankings.

Basic Fantasy Basketball Scoring

Each week of the season, your squad will go head-to-head with another team in your league. The team that scores the most points will win that particular game. While not all leagues are the same, this is an example of how a "typical" Fantasy Football league might award points:

Statistic	Fantasy value
Points	1 point each
Rebounds	1 point
Assists	2 points
Steals	1 point
Blocks	1 point
Turnovers*	-1 point
Missed free throws*	-1 point
Double-doubles*	2 points
Triple-doubles*	3 points

*denotes optional scoring choices

Chapter 3 Games and Lineups

To prepare for a game, you'll need to set your lineup accordingly every week before the typical Monday 12 pm deadline. Some leagues prefer to run daily lineup leagues and have the option of changing their lineups seven days a week. One of the keys to winning in Fantasy Basketball is preparation. When setting your lineup, be aware of which players on your roster have favorable – and unfavorable- matchups.

Free Agents

Any player who is not currently on a team's roster is considered a free agent.

One key to improving your team throughout the season is monitoring available free agents and under-achieving players on your roster. As the NBA season progresses, some players are victimized by injuries or have their role with their team changed. It's imperative to keep an eye on player's minutes and statistics. Some players are Fantasy studs one year, and are Fantasy duds the next. Every year there are surprise players who come from nowhere to dominate the league. You must find and sign those players before your competition does. Make room for those new players on your roster by dropping the disappointing players who get hurt or fail to live up to preseason expectations. This process of adding new players and dropping current players is appropriately referred to as "add/drop."

There is no limit to the amount of add/drops you may make throughout the week you may claim free agents at any time during the week. With the exception of requests for players on waivers (discussed in the next class), free agent moves are on a first-come, first-served basis and are executed immediately.

Waivers

Fantasy Basketball Premium and Free leagues use a "waivers process" to allow all teams an equal opportunity to add players to their roster that are new to the free agent pool or who have recently been dropped by a team in the league. When a team drops a player from their roster, that player is placed on waivers until the next waiver process runs. Example: Owner requests Player A on waivers and drops Player B. During waiver process, owner is awarded Player A, and Player B is placed on waivers until the next waiver process. Waivers in a Fantasy Basketball Commissioner League can be set up differently.

Waiver Rank

When a waiver process runs, pending transactions are processed in an order determined by each team's waiver rank. The team with a waiver rank of 1, considered the highest, will get its first requested player. After the transaction is executed, the team's waiver rank is moved to the bottom of the list and all other teams move up one. In Fantasy Basketball, this is the only way to change the waiver rank list. If a team's highest pending transaction becomes invalid because another team received the requested player, the transaction gets deleted and the team's next waiver request, if one exists, becomes that team's highest. If a team doesn't have any pending transactions because all players requested were taken by other teams, or the owner simply didn't request any players, they will simply move up in the waiver ranking for the next waiver process above all other teams that did execute waiver claims.

Trading In Fantasy Basketball

One of the favorite features of Fantasy sports is the ability to pull off trades to help improve your personal teams. It's vital to continually keep tabs on your starters and reserves. Sometimes throughout the course of the season, you'll notice that you have tremendous depth at one specific position and are lacking at another position. For example, your team's four-highest scoring players are all guards and your league only allows three guards to start. You are lacking at the forward position and are even sometimes forced to start forwards that constantly put up minute Fantasy statistics. You'll want to pursue a trade that would ship away one of your stellar guards in exchange for a consistent forward to help increase your weekly Fantasy points totals.



There are some basic rules to trading in Fantasy Basketball Premium and Free leagues to prevent teams from making unfair deals.

Trade deadlines

Most leagues have a trading deadline towards the end of the season to keep the integrity of the league. This prevents a team that is already eliminated from playoff contention from trading away its best players. The NBA's trade deadline is usually in late February or mid March and a lot of Fantasy leagues use the same date as their deadline.

Trade approval process

In an effort to prevent collusion among owners, and to ensure fair competition, Fantasy Basketball leagues can and normally do use a trade approval process. Here is an example of how a trade approval process typically works: After two owners agree to a trade, the trade will be put in a pending status for at least 24 hours and presented to the other owners in the league for a vote. If a predetermined number of owners in your league object to the trade within the pending time period, the trade will not be executed, but will go to the league Commissioner for evaluation. The Commissioner then must decide if the trade is fair and should be approved or is unbalanced and should be rejected.

Fantasy Basketball Playoffs

The top teams in your league (those with the best regular season record) make the playoffs. Typically, the 4 or 6 teams with the best records in a Fantasy Basketball league go on to compete in the postseason. In most cases, 'total points' is the tiebreaker for playoff-contending teams that finish with identical records. The NBA season lasts about 24-to-25 weeks in duration, so the Fantasy playoffs frequently start in the 21st or 22nd period.

Chapter 4

Your Guide to Fantasy Basketball Options on CBSsports.com

The following guide will explain what you need to know about the various Fantasy Basketball games that are available on CBSsports.com and help you figure out exactly which one is right for you. We have specifically tailored our games to meet the needs of players of all experience levels; everyone from the Fantasy rookie to the experienced veteran will find the game that is right for them.

Your Choice

Once you've decided to play, you will have two "game formats" to choose from. Both are fun and exciting ways to enjoy Fantasy Basketball but there is one basic difference between the two: commissioner control.

Every league needs a commissioner. The commissioner is the person who is ultimately responsible for league issues: determining rules, approving trades and settling any disputes that might arise. Commissioner duties are relatively easy. Once a league is up and running there is usually not much need for the commissioner to be involved on a daily basis.

So do you want to run your own league (with a member of the league acting as commissioner) or do you want to play in a league where CBSsports.com acts as commissioner?

Fantasy Basketball Commissioner -- A unique and powerful "league manager" product that allows you to play with friends, while being able to run the league with your own rules and scoring. You or another team owner acts as commissioner and has total control over the league.

Fantasy Basketball Commissioner puts league control into your hands. It's a complete solution that makes running your fantasy league easy. Your league will have a private website which team owners can access from any computer with Internet access. You have control to customize rules, scoring, trade deadlines, waiver policies, playoff dates, etc. Once you've got your league set up, Fantasy Basketball Commissioner takes care of all the work. Team and player stats, game scores



and standings are compiled automatically.

Even if you are new to Fantasy Basketball and not sure you're prepared to set custom scoring options for your league, don't worry. By default, the league rules and scoring are set for the most popular options so you won't need to change a thing. Simply invite your friends, hold your draft and then enjoy the season!

Fantasy Basketball Premium and Free Leagues -- Same great game, but you and the other team owners will only have control of your own team. League rules and commissioner duties are handled by CBSsports.com.

Your Options

We have five products of Fantasy Basketball for you to choose from, so whether you are new to Fantasy or have been playing for years, CBSsports.com is sure to have the game that's right for you.

Free Fantasy Basketball – Your first time playing Fantasy Basketball? Why not try it for FREE!

Fantasy Basketball Premium Gold -- Enjoy highly competitive action at a great price with a chance to win a cash prize! Your first team is just \$29.95. Win your league championship and you'll be taking home the \$150 league prize.

Fantasy Basketball Premium Platinum -- Definitely a step above Gold, Platinum is the game for budding Fantasy geniuses. Your first team will be \$99.95 with a league championship prize of \$600.

Fantasy Basketball Premium Diamond -- If you're looking for the ultimate in highly competitive leagues, Diamond is the place to find it. Your first team is \$249.95 and the league champion takes home the huge \$1,600 cash prize.

Fantasy Basketball Commissioner – Enjoy the luxury of being the commissioner, customizing your own league, setting up your own rules, and inviting your friends to join by purchasing a Fantasy Basketball Commissioner product for \$149.95.

Ready to play: Go to <http://basketball.cbssports.com> to find your game.

Universal Features

No matter which option you select, here is a sample of the features you'll find in every league on CBSsports.com:

- **Live scoring** - Definitely one of the most popular features in Fantasy Basketball, live scoring allows you to watch your Fantasy team's scores and statistics update in real time on game days. When your players accumulate statistics on the court, you can watch them increase their Fantasy statistics immediately. If LeBron James buries a 3-pointer, the live-scoring feature will reflect it. If Dwayne Wade blocks a shot, live scoring will show it. For die-hard fans, this is a must!
- **News, analysis and expert advice** - Complete coverage of the latest player news, injury reports, rumors and developments from around the league to help you make informed roster decisions and player moves. Timely analysis from a veteran team of Fantasy experts will keep you informed of not only what happened, but why and how it will affect your Fantasy team.
- **Sortable stats** – Crunching those important numbers is easy with complete up-to-date statistical reports always just a click away. Search and sort player stats virtually any way you choose: by position, team, available free agents, timeframe, statistic, entire league and more!
- **Flexible statistical reports** - Get your stats, any way you want them. Save your favorite statistical searches for easy reference. Statistical reports can easily be printed, emailed, saved to your hard drive or opened in your spreadsheet software - all with a single click.

- **Individual detailed report for every player** - Get recent news, historical stats, key stats, fantasy trends, injury status, player rating, upcoming games, player-to-player comparisons and much more - all on each player's individual page.
- **Draft options** – You'll have the option to draft live online or fill rosters via an automated draft. In addition, Fantasy Basketball Commissioner leagues will also have the option to enter offline results or draft live over an extended period of days.
- **Draft help and cheat sheets** – Our team of Fantasy experts work hard compiling all the pre-draft info you need to build a competitive squad. In-depth player rankings, 2007 projections, draft cheat sheets, player outlooks, possible sleepers and busts to watch out for are provided in every league.
- **Message boards** – Each league has a private message board for team owners to chat, talk trash and discuss trades.
- **Post league news** – Post news and stories to the league homepage for all to read!
- **Logos** – Upload or create your own custom team logo.
- **Trade evaluator** - Get a statistical evaluation of trades before you offer them, and before trades are offered to you. Find out quickly how any proposed deals may improve or hurt your team.
- **Email updates** – Custom email reports delivered daily. You control what information you would like to receive: Standings, stats, roster warnings, player news, injuries, transactions, message board postings and more.
- **All essential league functions are handled automatically:** Standings, scoring, schedules, lineups, transactions, waivers, etc.

Appendix

Fantasy Basketball Glossary

Add/Drop - Process of dropping a player from your roster and adding a free agent to replace him.

Bust - A highly sought-after player in the pre-season who fails to live up to his expectations.

Cheat Sheets - Lists prepared by fantasy experts to aid owners in their draft. Players are ranked by position and desirability based on their expected performance.

Commissioner - The person who runs the league and is ultimately responsible for all league rules and decisions.

Draft - The process, held before the season starts, of taking turns selecting players until every team's roster is full.

- **Automated draft** - a draft option that makes it possible to draft teams without having to physically attend a draft. Each team in the league pre-ranks players who are then assigned to teams using an automated draft process.
- **Online draft** - The process of holding a league's draft live online, usually using a custom "draft room"
- **Offline draft** - Gathering together all team owners in a single location to draft.

Free Agents - Players who are available. Any player who is not currently on any team's roster or on waivers is considered a free agent.

Injured Reserve - A roster spot that is used to keep an injured player "reserved" from the rest of the league. Typically, a player on injured reserve is on a team's roster but not allowed to be placed in the active lineup.

Injury Report - During the season, NBA teams constantly send out injury reports on their players.



These reports are useful to fantasy team owners when determining who to start and who to reserve.

Keeper League - A type of Fantasy Basketball league that allows each team to "keep" a set number of players on their roster from year to year.

League - The group of owners whose teams compete against each other.

Mock Draft - Sample drafts, usually from fantasy Basketball experts, that fantasy team owners refer to. Mock drafts give team owners a good idea of where individual players are typically being drafted.

Owner - Refers to the person in charge of each individual fantasy team. A group of owners make up the league.

Player Ranking List - Fantasy Basketball term that describes an owner's draft preparation list of players, ranked in order of preference.

Projections - Expected statistical performances by players for the season. For example, to help owners with the draft preparations, experts "project" the statistics pro players are expected to accumulate over the course of the season.

Reserves - Players who are on an owner's roster but are not in the starting lineup. Reserves do not earn points.

Roster Limit - Teams are limited to a set number of "spots" on their roster.

Scoring System - The "system" your Fantasy Basketball league uses to determine how players earn points.

Serpentine Draft - The most commonly used draft order where teams that pick early in the odd rounds pick late in the even rounds. For example, in a ten team league, the team that has the first pick in the first round would pick tenth in the second round and first in the third round.

Sleeper - A player who can be selected late in the draft or picked up as a free agent who has the potential to have a "break out" season.

Starters - The lineup of players that an owner fields for the week's game. These are the "active" players that will earn points.

Trade - In Fantasy Basketball terms, considered the act of exchanging players and/or draft picks between teams.

Trade Deadline - A point towards the end of the season when trades are no longer allowed to be made.

Undroppable Players - A method of maintaining fairness and integrity in a Fantasy Basketball league. Some leagues maintain a set of "undroppable players" - a list consisting of the best players in the league that teams cannot drop from their roster for any reason. This is done to prevent teams out of contention from dropping stars from their roster and giving other teams an unfair advantage.

Waivers - Process used in some Fantasy Basketball leagues to make all free agents equally available to every team. Waivers generally work like this: when a player is dropped from one team, he does not immediately become available. Instead, the player is placed on waivers for a set amount of days. The team with the highest waiver order who puts in a claim for that player will



have the chance to add him to their roster.

Waiver Order - The ranking of teams with priority on waiver claims. Typically, from week to week, waiver order is reset to reflect team records.