Zone Motion

Much like our motion offense, attacking a zone defense requires a team effort. You need to understand what the defense is trying to do to the offense. Five players must maintain floor balance, proper spacing, and move the ball in a manner in which the defense eventually breaks down. The ball moves the zone. Move the ball!

Teaching Points
The best attack versus a zone defense is to fastbreak – not allowing them to get back and get set. However, if that does not occur, start high and wide and "gap" the zone.
1. Overload more offensive players into an area than there are defensive players.
2. Fake a pass to make a pass! Use shot fakes too.
3. Use click and skip passes so the defense cannot keep up with the ball.
4. Understand the vacuum principle. Cut through the zone drawing the defense, and then fill the same area with another player.
5. Screen the danger for a teammate – center screens, high ball screens and flare screens.
6. Attack the seams attempting to "draw and kick". Make two guard you. Learn to also dribble off the baseline – drag dribble.
7. Utilize "Xing", bleeding and crack-down movements inside.
8. Keep at least one offensive player behind the defense to keep them honest.
9. When you flash high ("Xing") and catch, always look low for your buddy and then opposite (fling pass).
10. Make a conscious effort to always fill the rebounding triangle.

⇒ Make the zone defenders "work" by swinging the ball. The ball moves the zone!

Rules for Point Guard
The point guard is instrumental in recognizing the defense and "directing traffic". The following are all possible options from this position:
1. Pass and remain at the key area.
2. Pass and flare away to the wing for a potential skip pass and open shot.
3. Pass and cut to the weak side corner or ball side corner ("load the corner").
4. Dribble key to the wing. Your buddy then loops up into the key area or clears to the weak side.
5. Keep good spacing – high and wide around the arc.

Rules for Wings or Forwards
To play on the perimeter versus a solid zone defense, you have to have savvy. Zones present a different look and what you do with and without the ball is very important:
1. Pass and remain if the defense shifts too quickly. Be ready to catch and shoot.
2. To pass and overload is very effective due to the burden it places on the defense. Cut hard and be ready to shoot the short corner jumper.
3. Pass and screen the danger. For example, skip pass and set a flare screen for the point.
4. Drive the zone and make two guard you. When you draw the defense kick to an open teammate.
5. Beat two-fifths of the zone. If you are able to penetrate past the two defenders, the zone is beat.

⇒ If you are unable to distinguish between a man or zone defense, send a cutter through the lane and see how he is guarded.
Rules for Center or Posts
As an inside player, you must “score before you catch”. Constantly work to seal, screen, flash and/or dive. Note the following movements:
1. Flash from the weak side low post to the ball side high post position (“Xing”). On a skip pass, cut horizontally (“Bleeding”).
2. Screen in on the danger, release and then seal the middle man.
4. Dive from the high post to the low post. This is especially effective as a secondary cut (immediately after a wing cuts through).
5. Seal a defender out or in as the ball is reversed. Always be thinking one pass ahead.

One-Game
Our basic alignment to attack an even-front zone defense.
1. Each player “gaps” the zone: one point guard (#1), two wings (#2-#3), a power forward (#4) and a center (#5).
2. It is our objective to get the ball to the short-corner and/or high post.

Two-Game
Our basic alignment to attack an odd-front zone defense.
1. Each player “gaps” the zone: two guards (#1-#2), two forwards (#3-#4), and a center (#5).
2. It is our objective to attack the short-corner and/or high post.
3. We also encourage “diagonal out and down” ball reversal.

Offensive Board Coverage (OBC)
We must relentlessly attack the offensive boards and yet not give up easy baskets. Thus, we emphasize “OBC” which stands for “offensive board coverage”. It is our goal to send three to the glass (rebounding triangle), maintain one long rebounder (freethrow line) and keep one back. (#1) is usually responsible for protecting back and communicating this vital aspect of our game.
L-Game (Loper Continuity Offense)
This is a continuity based offense, however, all zone attack rules apply. Key teaching points:

1. Point guard (#1) enters the ball to the wing (#2).
2. Simultaneously, the weak side wing (#3) overloads to the short corner.
3. The low post (#4) screens the danger.
4. (#3) immediately looks inside to the low post (#4). If (#4) is not open, he (#3) passes back to (#2) and clears out to the opposite wing.
5. The weak side post (#5) flashes to the high post. If (#2) enters the ball to the high post, (#5) immediately looks “rim-post-fling”.
6. Finally, if (#2) swings the ball to (#1), the high post (#5) bumps (#4) and (#2) overloads to the short corner and the Loper continuity starts all over again.