Could you walk a straight line heel-toe with your eyes closed and not fall off the line? Balance incorporates position sense (I can dribble a ball without looking at my hand) and how your body reacts to position changes (if I get pushed while shooting a lay-up do I sprain my ankle or do I keep control and score the winning basket).

How does Chris Paul score so many points? The quicker you can move your feet while under control in many directions will provide you with protection and performance. The less time your feet are planted the less risk for injury, the more your muscles are trained to accelerate and decelerate in multiple directions the more you are game ready.

In order to build strength you need to break down muscle fibers in order to build them up to handle the load you just asked them to perform. You don’t want to be just strong enough to make it through a game, you want to be stronger than the opponent making it through the game! So with correct form, exercise and resistance level you too can be “Sparty Strong”.

Most sports require a combination of muscle fibers which take care of quickness (fast twitch) and others which are more endurance fibers (slow twitch). Depending on your sport, training and in some instances position in the sport, your body will have a different combination than some one in another sport or position (marathoner vs. tennis player). Proper body positioning with running can improve your efficiency and lessen the stressors on your body as you improve your endurance.

A change in speed is the best way to get open for a pass or to jump in front of a lazy forward to steal the ball. Being able to recruit those fast twitch fibers at the right time requires training and alignment with your BURST of activity. Fast feet and PUSHING your body through space will keep you on track to quickness.
Are my bases covered?

Draw a star on each bar where you feel your performance falls on the scale.

**B**ALANCE

Teetering

Rock-Steady

**A**GILITY

Clutzy

Kobe-Like

**S**TRENGTH

Wimpy

Sparty

**E**NDURANCE

Around the Block

10K

**S**PEED

Three-Toed Sloth

Cheetah

DO YOUR STARS ALIGN?

When I stand on one leg and bend my knee...

1. My knee points straight
2. My gluteals are contracted
3. My one hip is higher than the other
4. My back is rounded
5. My muscles are sore
6. My joints are sore

Y | N

For optimal dynamic stance, your knees should be bent at 90°.

**DYNAMIC STANCE**

A “defensive posture” is a very active way to position your body for play and your workouts. Imagine a basketball player guarding their forward:

**SEMI-SQUAT**

Slight curve in lumbar spine

Navel in

Knees over toes

Sternum lifted

Don’ts: don’t lock your knees, don’t stand on the inside of your feet, don’t tilt pelvis backward and don’t slump shoulders.

In single limb stance the same do’s and don’ts apply but you have to try harder to make sure your gluteals are active and supporting your posture, lift OFF of your pelvis and control your core with your gluteals and abdominals.

**Yes!**

**No!**