

# SLAMDUNK

THE STORY OF BASKETBALL

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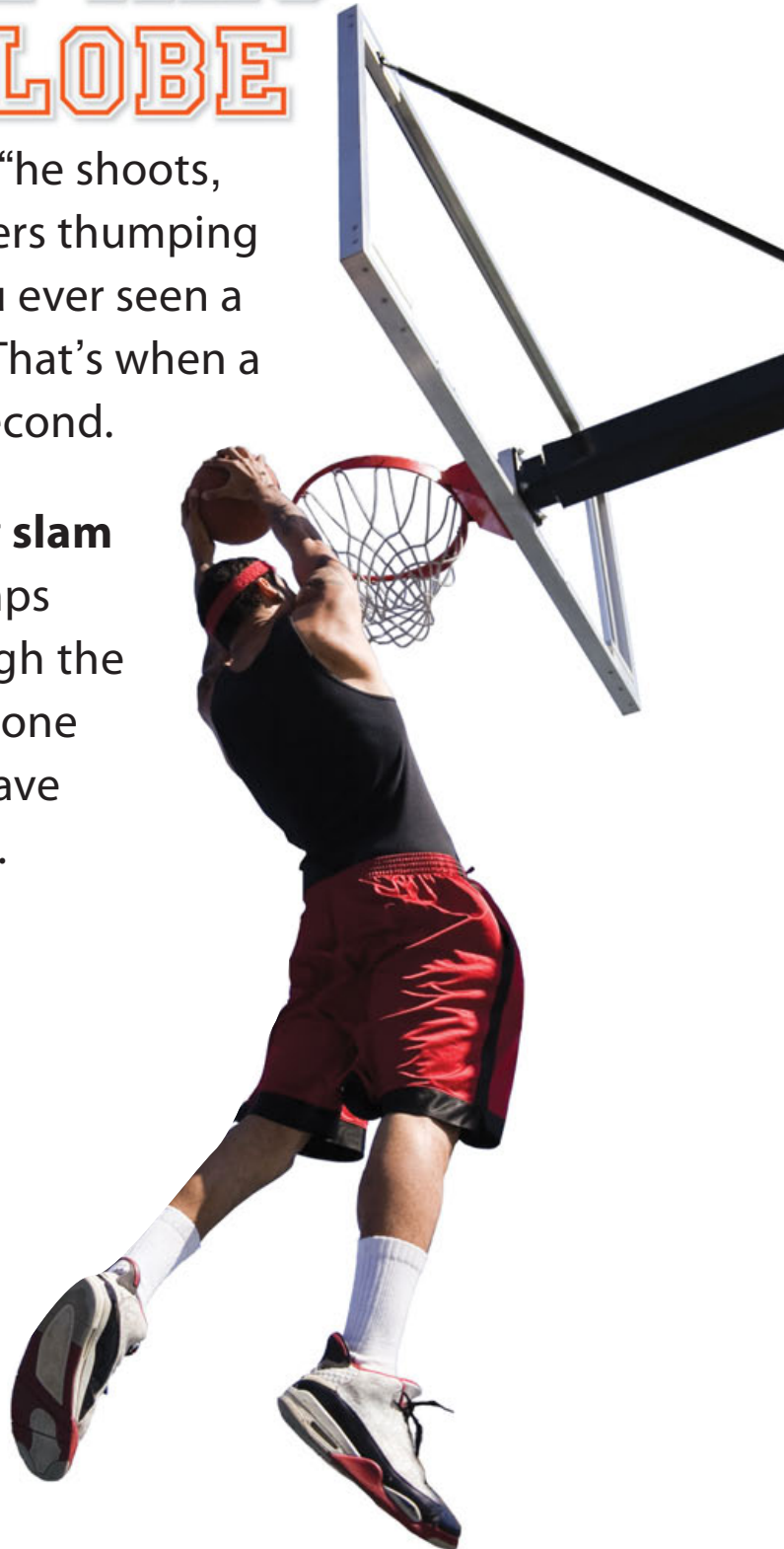
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# DRIBBLING AROUND THE GLOBE

Have you ever heard the words “he shoots, he scores”? Have you felt sneakers thumping across wooden floors? Have you ever seen a **buzzer**-beating winning shot? That’s when a team scores to win at the last second.

Have you ever watched a player **slam dunk**? That’s when a player jumps high and pushes the ball through the hoop. If you have, then you are one of the millions of people who have enjoyed the game of basketball.





Around the world, basketball has become a favorite sport for many. From the streets of London to the mountains of China, people practice slam dunks. From the city parks of New York to the plains of Africa, people dream of making a winning shot.

Even if you have never played or watched a basketball game, you may have some idea of what it's about. You need teams, a ball, and hoops that hang high on each side. Players **dribble** the ball across a **court** that is **rectangular**. You make points by getting the ball through the hoop.





Did you know that people have been playing basketball for a long time? Basketball began more than 115 years ago with just a few kids and their teacher.

Since then, it has grown into a game that's played by more than 300 million people. But who was that teacher? When was the first game? Let's take a step back in time to learn just how basketball was born.



# THE INVENTOR



If you ever visit the Basketball Hall of Fame in Massachusetts, you will find the name James Naismith written almost everywhere. James Naismith is the man who invented basketball. In his honor, the hall is known as the **Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame**.

James A. Naismith was born in a small town in Canada on November 6, 1861. As a child, Naismith loved sports. He won many medals for **gymnastics**. When he started **college**, Naismith studied everything about sports. He also played on the football team.

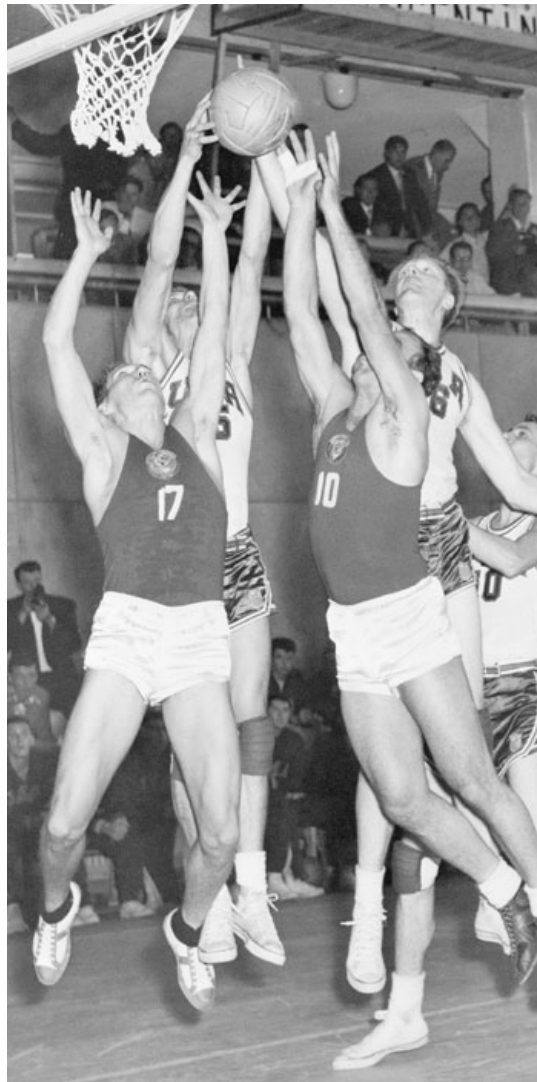




In 1891, Naismith began working as a teacher in Springfield, Massachusetts. Massachusetts had very cold winters. The students could not play outside, so Naismith was given a job. He had only 14 days to think of a sport to play indoors. The school was also small, so Naismith needed to come up with a game that didn't need a lot of space. He also wanted the game to be fun for students.

Naismith thought about the kinds of games he played as a kid. Soon, he came up with a game that would use a soccer ball and two empty peach baskets. The baskets would hang on a wall. Students would make points if they got the ball into the baskets. Naismith wrote 13 rules for the game. He taught his students how to play. They loved it! Soon other students came to watch them play.

# THE FIRST GAME



The first real basketball game was held on January 20, 1892, in Springfield, Massachusetts. The game had two teams and 18 players. There were nine players on each team. Since it was the first game, everyone was new at it. The game did not go on for long.

It lasted only 30 minutes. The final score was 1–0. Everyone loved watching the players try to get the ball into the peach basket. After the game was over, they could not think of a better name for this sport than “basket-ball.”

The first basketball games were

held in cities such as New York, Philadelphia, and Boston. Sometimes, teams would travel far to play another team. On November 7, 1896, two states played against each other for the first time. The game was between New Jersey’s



Trenton team and New York's Brooklyn team. Trenton won with a score of 15–1 in the first-ever state-to-state basketball game. The ticket price for even the best seats was only \$2 each. In those days, most players were paid only \$15. That year, Fred Cooper became the first highest-paid player when he made \$16.

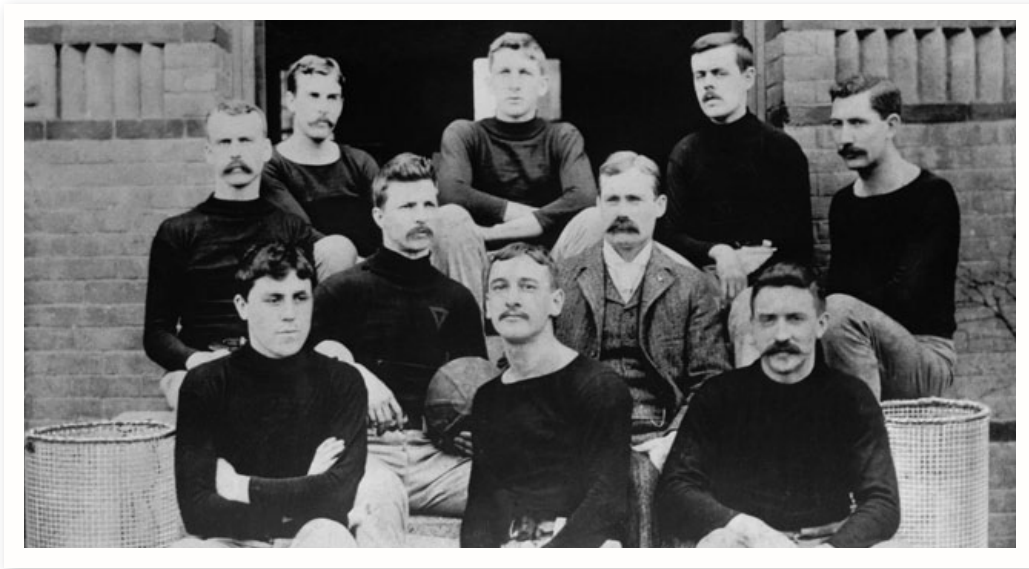
When Naismith was first asked to make a game for his class, he probably never thought others would someday play his game outside of his school. Over time, a game that started out with a fruit basket on a wall would become one of the most-loved sports in history.



## CHAPTER FOUR

# BASKETBALL BOUNCES ON!

Soon basketball began spreading to many other countries. More people wanted to watch it and play it. By 1936, basketball became one of the games at the Berlin **Olympics**. That must have been a very proud moment for this inventor!

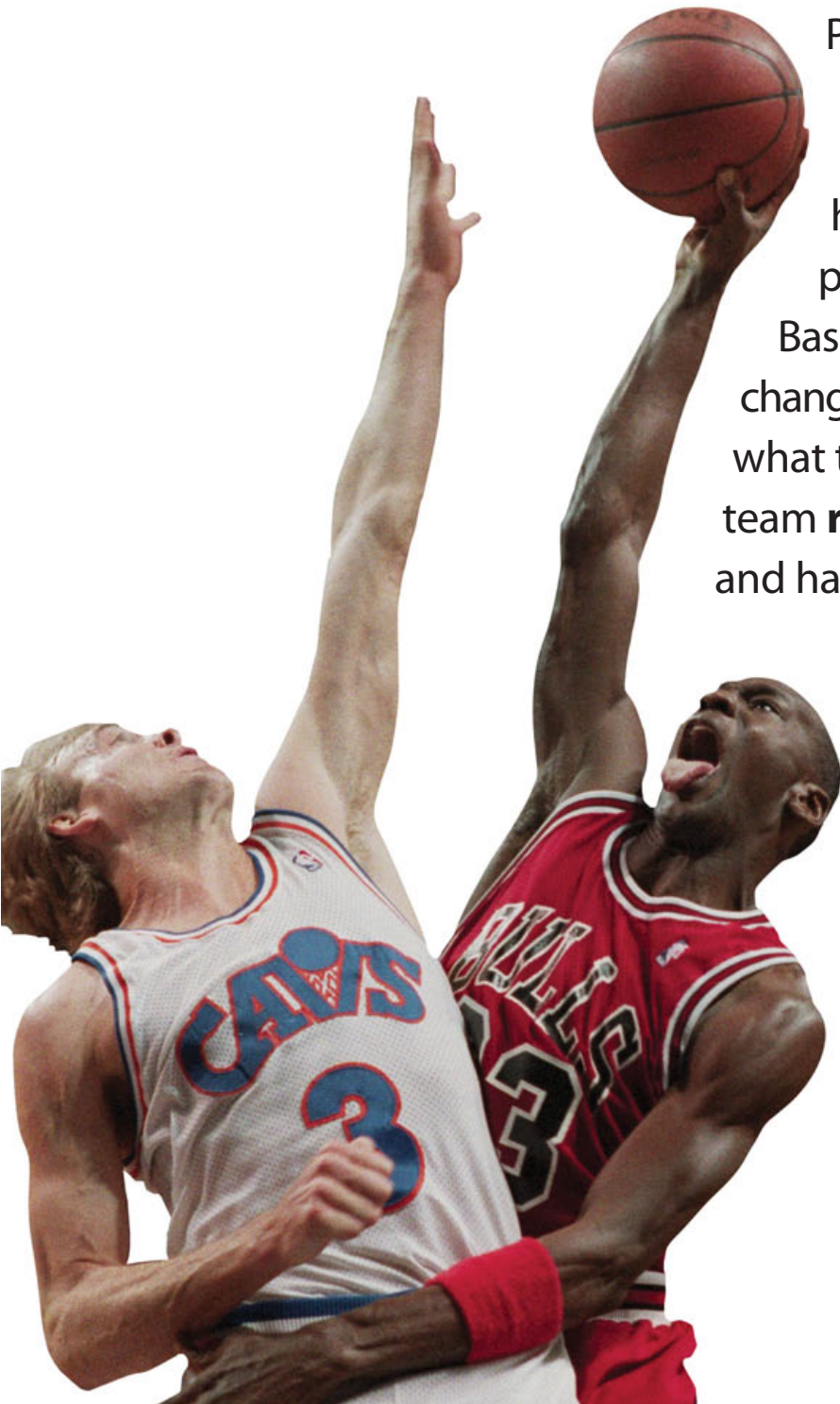


Naismith died in 1939, but will always be remembered. In 1959, his name was placed into the Basketball Hall of Fame. Thanks to Naismith's invention, basketball has grown into one of the world's most **popular** sports. There are even special postage stamps made in his honor. In fact, the National Basketball Association still uses many of Naismith's basketball rules.

The **National Basketball Association** (NBA) is a group that watches over basketball games in the United States. There are 30 teams in the NBA today. Though some things, like team size, are still the same, a lot about the game has changed.

Players do not use soccer balls or peach baskets. Instead, there are special balls and hoops with strong nets that players use on the court.

Basketball **uniforms** have also changed. They look different from what the first team wore. Each team **represents** a different city, and has its own special logo.





# NBA TEAMS

TEAM NAME	TEAM DETAILS		
	City	State/ Federal District	Logo
<b>Atlanta Hawks</b>	Atlanta	Georgia	A hawk with a basketball in its talons
<b>Boston Celtics</b>	Boston	Massachusetts	A leprechaun spinning a basketball
<b>Charlotte Bobcats</b>	Charlotte	North Carolina	A bobcat
<b>Chicago Bulls</b>	Chicago	Illinois	A red bull
<b>Cleveland Cavaliers</b>	Cleveland	Ohio	A sword on top of a basketball
<b>Dallas Mavericks</b>	Dallas	Texas	A horse
<b>Denver Nuggets</b>	Denver	Colorado	A snow-capped mountain
<b>Detroit Pistons</b>	Detroit	Michigan	A red basketball
<b>Golden State Warriors</b>	San Francisco	California	The Golden Gate Bridge
<b>Houston Rockets</b>	Houston	Texas	A big letter R in the shape of a rocket taking off
<b>Indiana Pacers</b>	Indianapolis	Indiana	A yellow ball going through a capital P
<b>Los Angeles Clippers</b>	Los Angeles	California	A red and white basketball
<b>Los Angeles Lakers</b>	Los Angeles	California	A yellow basketball
<b>Memphis Grizzlies</b>	Memphis	Tennessee	A grizzly bear
<b>Miami Heat</b>	Miami	Florida	A red basketball on fire going through a rim
<b>Milwaukee Bucks</b>	Milwaukee	Wisconsin	A buck, or male deer
<b>Minnesota Timberwolves</b>	Minneapolis	Minnesota	A wolf
<b>New Jersey Nets</b>	Newark	New Jersey	A basketball with a rim around it
<b>New Orleans Hornets</b>	New Orleans	Louisiana	A hornet
<b>New York Knicks</b>	New York	New York	An orange basketball
<b>Oklahoma City Thunder</b>	Oklahoma City	Oklahoma	Orange and blue thunderbolts
<b>Orlando Magic</b>	Orlando	Florida	A blue basketball with stars as the trails
<b>Philadelphia 76ers</b>	Philadelphia	Pennsylvania	A white basketball with the number 76 inside of it

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...NBA Teams (continued)

TEAM NAME	TEAM DETAILS		
	City	State/ Federal District	Logo
Phoenix Suns	Phoenix	Arizona	A basketball with flames in the shape of the phoenix behind it
Portland Trail Blazers	Portland	Oregon	Gray and red trails
Sacramento Kings	Sacramento	California	A crown and two lances
San Antonio Spurs	San Antonio	Texas	A spur that you wear on your boot when riding a horse
Utah Jazz	Salt Lake City	Utah	A musical note with a basketball as the base
Washington Wizards	Washington	District of Columbia	A wizard or magician

These days, when people can't make it to a live game, they can watch it on television or on the **Internet**. For some, nothing beats the feeling of grabbing the ball and going for that slam dunk! So if you're a fan, find those hoops and put on those sneakers. Let's keep the game of basketball bouncing on!

# GLOSSARY

**buzzer:** an electronic device that rings or buzzes; sometimes used to signal the start or end of games or classes

**college:** a school of higher learning that students attend after high school

**court:** a space for playing sports or games, such as basketball, baseball, and tennis

**dribble:** the act of bouncing a ball while moving forward or walking

**gymnastics:** a sport that uses special body movements and exercises to show strength and flexibility

**Internet:** a communications system that connects computers and computer networks all over the world

**Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame:** a special place in Springfield, Massachusetts, where great basketball players, coaches, and other important basketball people are remembered and honored



**National Basketball Association:** the basketball league and company that manages all professional basketball in the United States

**Olympics:** a series of international athletic contests held in a different country every four years during the summer and the winter

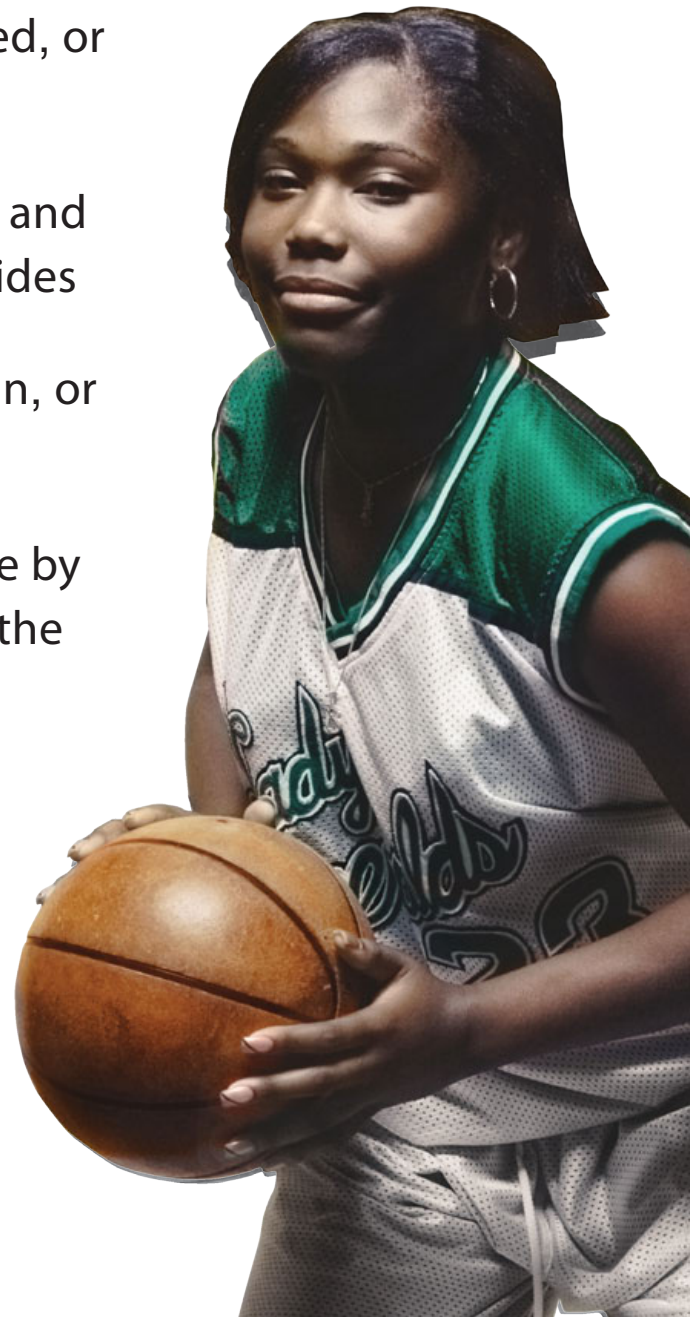
**popular:** well-known, commonly liked, or approved by many people

**rectangular:** shaped like a rectangle and has two long sides and two shorter sides

**represent:** to serve as a member, sign, or symbol of something

**slam dunk:** a shot in basketball made by jumping high in the air and pushing the ball through the hoop

**uniform:** the type of clothes worn by certain groups, such as students, workers, and sports players



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