

# Skill Development and Drills

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## Beginner

## Advanced



Work with coach

No Glove

Softer ball

Short distance

Underhand throw



Overhand throw



Stationary



Move left, right, forward



Part of skill



Whole skill



Work with player

Glove

Baseball

Full distance

Full speed throw

Get around the ball, full speed

Transition to link 2 skills

## Skill Analysis

Check from more than one angle

Look for free – flowing motion

- Use all joints and in order
- Start bent, finish straight
- Check for direction in follow through

Analyze from the feet up

- Check base for balance, strength and direction

Be prepared to give meaningful feedback

## Throwing Drills

### Grip Search

- Flip ball in air and catch it
- Without looking, feel for the correct grip

### Throwing Mechanics Progression

- 2 knees (make a “C” throwing motion)
- 1 knee (goal posts, check finger position)
- Start at Goal post position (feet make a “T”, then “rock and throw”)

Arm keeps going forward until it “pulls” body to follow-through position

### **Accuracy Game**

- Partners play a game to a set number of points (5 pts, 10 pts, more when more accurate)
- head = 3 pts., torso = 2 pts., waist = 1 pt.

### **Short Arm Drills (for the player who is not using all 5 slings)**

- Reach back and take the ball off of the coaches hand, then get to goal post position

### **Touch the Ball To the Wall (players with incorrect throwing hand position in goal post check)**

- Put them near a wall or screen
- When they reach back, their wrist should be cocked and the ball should be able to touch the wall without their hand touching.
- You can also use the touch on the wall as the starting point.

### **Drills for Transition from Catching to Throwing**

#### **Crow Hop**

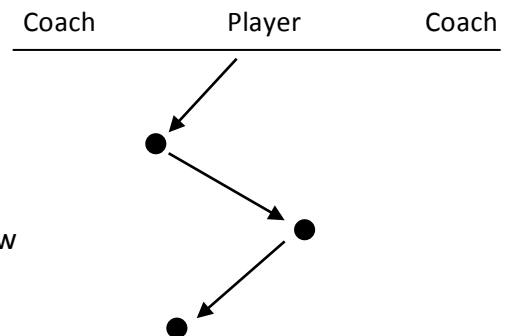
- start with “step – step – throw”
- advance to a hop, where both feet get into goal post position on the hop

#### **Get Around the Ball**

- Circle around the ball so that body is aligned with the target and moving towards the target before catching or fielding the ball

#### **Timed Fielding**

- Purpose: Get players to turn their heads to find target before starting to throw
- Two coaches or players as potential targets
- Player runs to closest ball and throws to the person with showing “eyes and hands”
- Player runs to second ball with same goal
- Third ball – same
- Total time includes 3 seconds for each errant throw



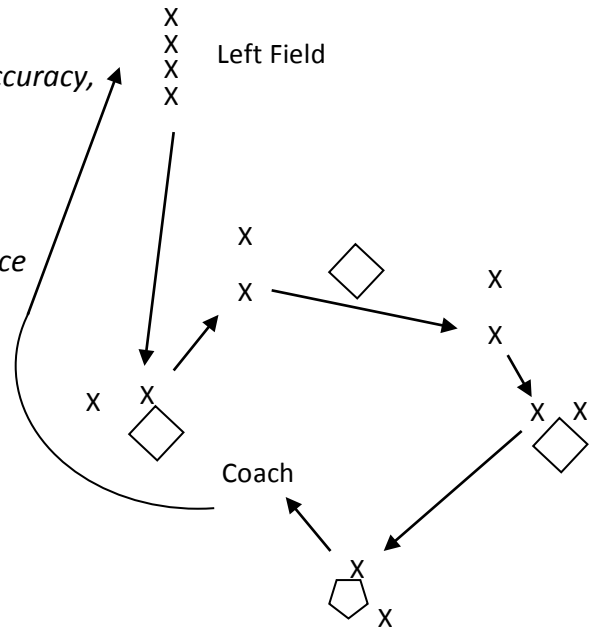
#### **Relay Drill**

- Two types of Relays both practiced in the same drill:
- Return ball to a target in front of you (done by end people)
  - Catch ball over throwing shoulder
  - Start the crow hop as ball is approaching you
  - Get to goal post position and throw to target
- Throw ball in the same direction it is already going (done by middle people)

- Drop step as ball approaches you
- Catch ball at midline of body so you are already aligned with target
- Get to goal post position and throw to target
- Can be done in groups of 3 or 4 (4 is better)
- Switch middle and end people so all do both types of relays

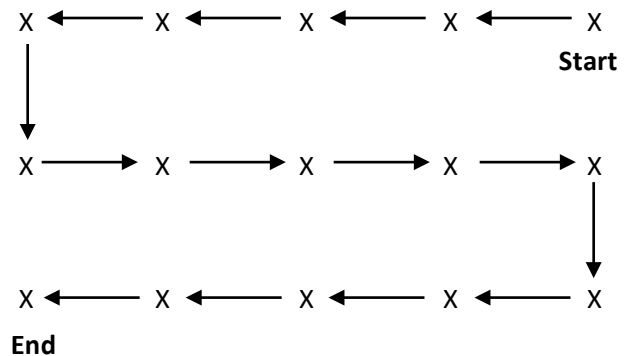
### Follow Your Throw

- Works on transition, “eyes and hands”, throwing accuracy, fielding fly balls or ground balls
- Two people at each infield position, rest in left field
- Make throws from LF to 3B, to SS, to 2B, to 1B, to C
- Throw to the person showing “eyes and hands”, since there are 2 people at each position
- Follow your throw
- From home plate, ball is ran out to the coach and then player goes to LF
- Start with one ball, progress when safe to two and maybe three balls
- Next ball is put in play by coach when previous ball reaches 2B



### Whole Team Relay Drill

- Whole team makes one relay line
- Each throw is about 40 to 60 feet long
- Length of time to have ball go from the start to the end of the line.



### Infielding Drills

#### “Think, Ready Field”

- Think about the situation while in relaxed position
- Ready position is an athletic position
- Fielding position means upright chest and bent at the knees
  - Sitting on the toilet or duck walk
  - Open glove throughout fielding action (not just at the end)

## Double Plays

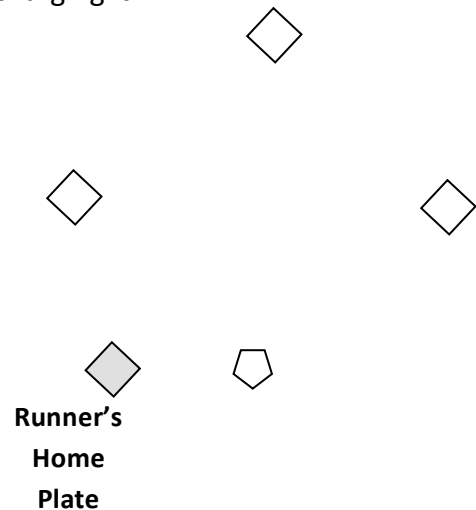
- 2B, SS and 3B practice proper path to bag to receive the ball
- Be in path of ball for longest possible time

## Backhand Drill

- Start with no glove and ball placed just outside of cross-over step
  - Throwing and knee almost to ground
  - Pick up ball and PLUCK it to chest height
  - Crow hop or step to goal post position
- Progress to moving ball
- Progress to transition by getting around the ball and charging it

## Around the Horn Drill (safety first!)

- A running team and a fielding team
- Running team must score before the fielding team completes around the horn throws
- Running home plate is not at normal home plate for safety reasons.
- Runners all wear helmets
- Fielded ball must come to home and then to 3B, SS, 2B 1B and back to C



## Red Dot, Blue Dot

- Purpose: make sure players watch ball all the way into the glove
- Coach has two balls to roll to player
- Player determines if it is the ball with the red dots or the blue dots

## Rapid Fire

- *Purpose: quick transition from catching to throwing. This involves quick transfer from glove to hand but ALSO quick feet to get into position for the throw. No lazy feet!!!*
- *Players stand about 30 feet apart and throw the ball back and forth as quick as possible. This does not mean as hard as possible!!*

## Fly Ball Drills

### Pop ups

- Players have their back to the ball
- When prompted, turn and find ball to catch it
- Good drill for dealing with the sun (can use pitching machine)

## **Quarterbackers**

- Players each have a ball and are lined up one behind the other at one foul line in the outfield
- Coach is 50 to 100 feet away
- Players run the ball to the coach and then run a “passing pattern”.
- The coach throws the ball to the “receiver”.
- Players stay at that end of the field and start a new line to repeat the process after everyone had had a turn.
- The coach controls the length of the run to hand the ball off and controls how far the ball is thrown.
- Players are working on catching balls to their left, to their right and over their heads
- Fun to do on a rainy day

## **Base Running Drills**

### ***Pop-Up slide***

- *Coach stand just behind base holding a bat horizontally over the back of the base*
- *Players slide and reach up to grab the bat*
- *Excellent drill on rainy days on the outfield grass*

### ***Group Lead off***

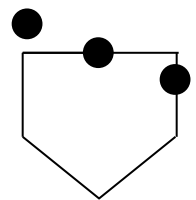
- *Front player is leading off of 1B with others leading off behind with the foul line as their base*
- *Coach or another player goes from the set position and either pretends to throw the ball home or makes a pick off move to 1B*
- *Rotate players so new player is at the front*
- *Practice length of lead and getting back to the base (head first, or standing up)*
- *Variation: Another coach can be in foul territory and somehow occasionally signals a passed ball, so players have to look for ball and advance to the next base*

## **Hitting Drills**

### ***Tee Drill***

- *The tee base is not home plate!!*
- *Players line up to where the pitcher would be and where the plate is*
- *Players always stride to the same place but adjust their “squash the bug” and driving back leg to hit the outside and inside pitches. Players have to work late to hit outside pitch do a big squash the bug to get to the inside pitch!*

Inside      middle      outside  
pitch      of plate      pitch



**Right handed hitter's  
points of contact**

### **Long Strider**

- *We step to swing, not step and swing. The longer the foot is in the air, the longer a hitter has to wait to begin swinging*
- *If they want to end with a wide stance, have them start off with a wider stance*

### **Wrapper (bat crosses body midline behind head)**

- *Bat on shoulder, lift and swing*

### **Upper Cutter**

- *Finish with bat hitting deltoids muscle*
- *High Tee work, trying to hit top of the ball*

### **Limited Follow Through**

- *Follow through until barrel touches the numbers*

### **G.O.L.F (Glide Open Lag Fire)**

- *Glide with the stride (weight stays back)*
- *Open with the hips*
- *Lag with the hands (Hand stay back)*
- *Fire the barrel*

### **Pitching Drills**

#### **Balance Drill**

- *Lift up leg and maintain balance while in good coil position (show hitter your butt)*
- *Dips while in balance position (Use wall or screen if necessary)*

#### **Simulate string attached to wrist and above knee (coordinate upper and lower body motion)**

- *Knee lifts with glove lift*
- *Upper and lower body work together (Leg and glove move towards goal post position at same time)*
- *Relaxed foot until in goal post position*

#### **Separation to Landing Drill**

- *Goal post as check point but make sure weight (centre of gravity) stays back.*

#### **Towel Snap Drill**

- *Goal Post to Follow Through*
- *Body follows the towel hand until back leg comes through.*