

# Throwing/Catching

Monday, April 7, 2014 6:30 PM

## Practice Drills

- **Catching:**
  - 2 Hands, No Gloves - with Tennis Balls, Wiffle Balls or Softies
    - Teaches proper technique, using 2 hands - thumbs up, elbows under
  - With Glove
    - 2 hands - regular
    - Advanced (2 hands - glove closed, hand traps ball against back side of glove)
- **Play catch with kids kneeling**
  - Down on one knee - throwing side knee down (R knee for R hand throw)
    - Catch with glove fingers up
    - Throw (close) have throwing elbow on glove, focusing only on wrist flick
  - Same drill, regular throw
    - start throw with arms in L
    - Glove points to target, arm comes forward/down to up knee (opposite knee)
- **Throwing/Catching**
  - One knee
    - throwing side knee on ground
    - opposite (glove side) knee up and down knee at 45 degree angle (i.e. not straight on)
  - Straight on T Drill (standing)
    - Feet wide, pointed straight ahead at target, point glove
      - 1) Throw
      - 2) Rotate torso
      - 3) Follow through
    - Variation - reverse torso drill
  - 90 degree (sideway) L Drill
    - Start with torso at 90 degrees to target
    - L- Pick apple, point glove
      - 1) Point
      - 2) Step w/front foot (optional for instructional)
      - 3) Throw
      - 4) Rotate torso
      - 5) Follow through
    - Catch - always Glove fingers up
  - 2 Step + Drag (advanced)
    - 1st step with Power foot at 45 degree angle (throwing side - Right for RH throw)
    - Point to target with glove (T position)
    - Arm comes forward as opposite foot comes down
    - 3rd step helps complete follow through
    - R-L-R (for right hand throw, start with power foot)
  - Line Drill/Cut-off drill
    - 3 or 4 players in a line
    - Each player throws to next in line
    - Goal - down and back twice without dropping

# Infield Drills

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## Ground Ball Drills

- Alligator Drill
  - Kids in semi-circle, coach rolls ball to kids
  - Ground ball fielding position
  - Hands together
    - Top (throwing) hand above glove, with wrist and fingers up
    - Palm facing palm (forms alligator jaws)
  - Field ball, and roll back without coming out of position
  - This drill also works well with tennis ball
  - good drill for kids to practice at home (tennis ball off garage door)
- Short Hop Drill
  - Extending glove forward to go get the ball
- Double barrel
  - Split into 2 groups
    - 1 group at 2nd base
    - 1 group at shortstop
  - 1. Regular (roll)
    - Coach rolls directly to fielder
      - Charge all balls
      - Glove down, field out in front
      - Throw ball back to coach
    - Variation - can use cones
      - start fielder at back cone
      - field at or in front of front cone
      - Throw ball back to coach
  - 2. Range Drill (roll)
    - Coach rolls ball to one side of fielder or the other
    - focus on angle to get in front of ball to field
    - Variation - incorporate back-hand
  - 3. Regular (hit)
    - Coach hits ground balls to each group
      - Charge all balls (use cones)
      - Glove down, field out in front
      - Throw to
        - 1) Coach
        - 2) First base

# Outfield Drills

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## Fly Ball Drills

- Individual - players toss ball up in the air and catches themselves
  - with tennis ball or softie
  - Can do with or without glove
  - Can do at home
- Go-drill
  - Players start at line
  - Run away from coach
  - Coach tosses ball
- **Go-back drill (L or R)**
  - Fielding position
  - Throw pop up to either side
    - Forces player decision as to which way to turn with drop step
  - Variation - making adjustment to go other way
    - Rotating hips without spinning around backwards
- Coach tosses short fly balls
  - Have them throw to player acting as cut-off (arms up)
  - **Don't recommend hitting fly balls to 6U or 8U Division**
- **10U division**
  - Can start having coach throw long fly balls
  - Once comfortable with that, coach can start hitting pop ups
- Call it up Drill (12U and above)
  - Have 2 or more players spread out
  - Coach hits fly ball
  - Players have to communicate to call-up ball
  - Other player(s) position for backup
- Crow-Hop Drill (Advanced)
  - Use bucket as target
  - Coach tosses short fly ball to player
  - Player catches using proper technique and form
  - Player uses crow hop technique and makes throw to bucket
    - Lead with heel on throwing side
    - Hop into throwing motion to create momentum and using legs for stronger throw
  - Make it a game!

# Hitting Drills

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## Hitting stations (Drills)

1. Hitting Stick
  - Keep out in front
  - Watch for kids creeping
    - Can use sharpie to make different shapes on stick
    - ask which shape they just hit (keeps them focused on the stick)
2. Soft toss (into Net, or outfield)
  - Hitter 5 feet or so away from net/fence (if using net/fence)
  - Coach at 45 degree
  - Coach tosses ball out in front
  - Player hits ball
    - Focus on keep head down on ball throughout swing
    - Focus on all good swing mechanics
    - Helps build confidence
3. Fence/Wall drill
  - Can place tennis ball in fence
  - Line up with bat knob on belly, and barrel end extend to fence
  - Swing
    - If hitting fence, hand path needs to be shortened
    - "Short To, Long Through"
4. Wiffle balls
  - Coach on knee, pitches wiffle balls
  - Use small balls, mixed with some larger (golf ball size, regular, softball)
  - Make it a game
5. Tee drill
  - Regular - hit off tee (from home plate)
    - Important: place tee in front of home plate
    - 1) Hit ball out in front of front foot
    - 2) Watch for keep stride in-line (straight)
6. Coach pitch (Live BP)
  - Stride (front foot heel lift - up/down) on every pitch
    - Make sure stride is straight back to pitcher
  - Keeping head on ball throughout entire swing is key
  - Can use sharpie to write numbers on 5 or 6 balls
    - Ask hitter the number of the ball they just hit

# Base running drills

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## Base Running Drills

### Make sure all players wear helmets when doing base running drills

- Start at home plate and run through first
  - Sprint and accelerate through the first base bag
  - 1B Coach **behind** base to hold out hand for player to slap
  - glance off into foul territory, watching for overthrows (advanced)
  - Watch for:
    - stopping at base
    - Slowing down at or before base
    - Jumping the bag
  - To reinforce (if incorrect): have them keep running down to RF foul pole and run back to end of the line
- From home plate
  - Player Rolls Ball towards coach in fair territory and tries to run safely through first
  - Coach tries to throw them out (try to make plays close)
  - Variation (10U and above) - have players field
- Release Drill
  - Split players up to 3 base running groups at 1B, 2B, and 3B
  - Have Coach (or pitcher in older division) take position on rubber and throw pitch)
  - Coaches watch for kids exploding off base each pitch
- Multi-base (10U and above)
  - Practice running for doubles
    - Proper line towards first base coach
    - Inside corner of the bag
  - Same for triples
- Sliding (8U and above)
  - Easier to teach on grass when grass is wet
  - Use outfield grass or hill if possible (e.g. GBS)
  - Have older girls come down to help teach if available
- Relay Race (good drill to close practice)
  - Split team into 2 groups (1 at 2B, 1 at Home Plate)
  - First player in each group starts on coaches signal to run all 4 bases
    - Focus touching on inside corner of bag
  - Once a player goes through the last base, next player goes