

Playing catch is the most important thing we do every day. Emphasize this to the players.

Players should play catch with a purpose, throwing to a target. A limited amount of talking should be allowed for concentration purposes. Throwing knowledge/skills should include:

- a. 4-seam grip at horseshoe - thumb underneath.
- b. Opening of back foot with middle of shoe point to target.
- c. Closing of front side with shoulder and lead elbow pointed at target as a "sight" on a gun.
- d. High elbow... shoulder high or higher.
- e. Proper arm action - down, back, up.
- f. Release of back foot.
- g. Good follow through allowing arm deceleration time.

We will use drills on a daily basis to develop the characteristics of good throwing mechanics. They will include:

- a. wrist snap... on a knee
- b. short lever... on a knee
- c. long lever... on a knee
- d. open, close, throw

Each player must also know crow hop and the importance of long catch in developing arm strength.

Throwing is the most important thing we do!

FUNDAMENTALS OF INFIELD PLAY

I. CHARACTERISTICS OF A GOOD DEFENSIVE PLAYER

A. A sound defensive player:

1. Expects/anticipates the ball hit to him every pitch.
2. Knows/analyzes the situation every pitch.
3. Fields the ball on the big hop, down hop, and short hop.
4. Knows the physical abilities of all opponents.
5. Uses sound fundamentals in execution of every play.
6. Makes the routine play every time.
7. Leaves his offensive game in the dugout.
8. Always looks for another play.
9. Always keeps his feet moving.

B. A sound defensive player NEVER:

1. Compounds one mistake by making another.
2. Makes a throw when he has no play.
3. Loses sight of the baseball.
4. Expects a good hop or a good throw.
5. Drops his head after making a mistake.
6. Gets back on his heels or stops moving his feet.
7. Leaves a base uncovered because of a lack of hustle.
8. Turns a routine play into a tough play.
9. Assumes anything.

II. READY POSITION

- A. Relaxed and loose body with hands out front.
- B. Soft center/fine center into hitting area.
- C. Three types of pre-pitch movement:
 1. Walk into position (creep).
 2. Jump into position (tennis start).
 3. Rock into position (Caminiti).
- D. The closer you are to the plate, the lower you set up.
- E. Hands are out front with elbow in, palm of glove to sky.
- F. Keep glove between your body and the hitter at all times.

III. FIELDING POSITION

A. Ground ball (routine)

1. Line up off of glove side shoulder on approach.
2. Keep hands out front with palm of glove to sky.

3. Glide to the ball keeping head level.
4. As you approach the ball, shorten your steps.
5. Last two steps before you field are right foot - left foot spreading to a heel - toe wide base taking the glove out to the ball as your feet spread.
6. Feet are outside the shoulder-width, butt is down, back is flat, glove is out front of toes, and eyes follow ball into the glove.
7. Set the ball in front with both hands, bring hands to waist and stay strong to throw. Have top hand fingers over glove and pointing to the sky until the ball enters the glove. Make the exchange as soon as possible and prepare to throw.
8. Field through the ball, use a two step shuffle pointing glove side to target and throw.

B. Ground ball (forehand)

1. First move is drop step, then crossover.
2. Angle back depending on the speed of the ball.
3. Keep head level at all times.
4. Sink to the ball the last few steps and lead with our glove. Bend your knees and take the glove out to get the ball.
5. Catch the ball outside/in front of your left foot.
6. Look the ball in to your glove, pivot on the back hip and point the glove side shoulder to the target and throw.

C. Ground ball (backhand)

1. First move is drop step, then crossover.
2. Angle back depending on the speed of the ball.
3. Keep head level at all times.
4. Sink to the ball the last few steps and lead with your glove. Bend your knees and go out and get the ball.
5. Right foot lead for set-up backhand. Out of this, simply turn and throw with a weight shift to your right foot.
6. Left foot lead for moving backhand. Your next step is big to stop momentum of your body. Catch the ball out front and give with the ball. Turn to the target and throw.

D. Ground ball (slow roller)

1. As you approach the ball, shorten your steps. Line up ball with left side.
2. If ball is rolling, use glove, if stopped, use bare hand.
3. Left foot leads when fielding the ball and throw when right foot hits the ground.
4. Throw from where you field the ball and to the outfield side of first base. The ball will tail back to the base.

IV. CATCHING THROWN BALL

- A. Catch the ball in front of your chest.
- B. Catch the ball with thumbs to the sky and fingers to the ball.
- C. Flex the knees and step to the ball with glove side foot.
- D. Move your feet; make a bad throw good.
- E. Don't catch the ball, change the direction of it.
- F. Expect a bad throw and adjust to the ball.

V. THROWING THE BALL

- A. See the ball into the glove and grip a seam.
- B. Thumb and seam fingers form a perfect triangle.
- C. Make exchange at same spot every time.
- D. Open, close, and throw.
- E. Point glove side shoulder to the target.
- F. Use short arm circle and keep eyes focused to the target.

VI. THE DOUBLE PLAY (FEEDS)

A. SECOND BASE FEEDS

- 1. Underhand Feed - on balls that make you move, hit at you, and to your right. Field, flip and follow the ball with a left foot crossover step, clear glove and feed with a stiff wrist not passing shoulder height.
- 2. Backhand Feed - on balls hit into the base line at you. Field, flip, and follow the ball with a left foot crossover step, and feed with elbow leading to the target and thumb pointing to the ground.
- 3. Standard - routine ball hit right at you that you set up for. Field and take left knee to the ground, turn shoulders to the target and throw. Keep head and shoulders steady throughout.
- 4. Jump switch - on balls within range hit to your left. Field and jump switch feet to get front shoulder to the target and throw. Keep your back foot under your back hip when throwing.
- 5. Backdoor - on balls hit way to your left. Field off of your left side, turn glove side with right foot and set the feet to throw to 2B. If you can't get your feet set, throw to 1B.

B. SHORTSTOP FEEDS

- 1. Underhand Feed - on balls that make you move, hit at you, and to your left. Field, flip, and follow the ball with a right foot crossover step, clear glove and feed with stiff wrist.
- 2. Backhand Feed - on balls hit way to your left behind the baseline and toward 2B. Field, flip, and follow the ball using a feed with the elbow leading to the target and the thumb to the ground.

3. Standard - routine ground ball hit right at you that you set up for. Field and take right knee to the ground, turn shoulders to target and throw. Keep head and shoulders steady throughout.
4. Opposite Foot - routine ground ball at you or to your right that you set up for. Field with right foot slightly forward, turn shoulders to the target and throw from where you field the ball. Feet should stay pointing to 1B at all times.
5. Backhands - tough play balls hit to your right, set up with right or left foot forward. Right foot forward - backhand, step with the left foot to target and throw. Left foot - backhand, step with right foot away from target and plant, then step left to target and throw.

C. FIRST BASE FEEDS

1. Jump Switch - use only when needed on balls into the baseline and toward 2B. Jump switch feet to get front shoulder to the target and throw to the 2B bag.
2. Backdoor - use on any ball that you feel comfortable fielding this way. Field ball off of left side and turn glove side to the target and throw.
3. Tag - use on balls hit within two steps of the 1B bag. Field and immediately step on 1B with your bag foot and throw to second base. Yell "tag" when ball is released.

D. THIRD BASE FEEDS

1. Standard - Use on all balls that you set up for. Field ball off of glove side shoulder and get two step shuffle momentum to the target and throw.
2. Opposite foot - Use on balls that you have to release quickly. Field with right foot slightly forward, turn shoulders to the target and throw from where you field the ball. Field with feet pointing to 1B at all times.

E. PITCHER FEEDS

1. Standard - field ball off of glove side shoulder and continue to turn glove side and throw to the target at 2B. Keep feet moving until release of the ball.
2. Great Play - step to the ball with your throwing side foot, then step and throw.

VII. THE DOUBLE PLAY (PIVOTS)

A. SECOND BASEMAN

1. Always start with left foot on bag and adjust to the ball.
2. Use the bag as a guard against the oncoming runner.
3. Get to bag as quickly as possible and set up for a good target (2.5 ft circle).

4. Expect the bad throw and adjust your pivot to where the ball takes you.
5. Set your chest to the receiving area and pivot after receiving the ball.
6. use one of the following pivots: front, side, back, or straddle.

B. SHORTSTOP

1. Always communicate where you want the ball.
2. Use the bag as a guard against the oncoming runner.
3. Get to the bag as quick as possible and set up for a good target (2.5 ft. circle).
4. Expect a bad throw and get momentum through the bag after the catch and point front shoulder/hip to the target.
5. Set your chest to the receiving area and move after receiving the ball.
6. Use one of the following pivots: drag, inside, or unassisted.

C. SECOND BASE/SHORTSTOP FROM PITCHER/CATCHER

1. Always use the inside pivot or front side pivot to shorten the distance for the DP.
2. Get to the bag as quickly as possible to give the P/C a good target.

VIII. FIELDING GROUND BALLS PROGRESSION

- A. Relax
- B. Ready
- C. Approach
- D. Field
- E. Throw

STANCES**A. SIGN STANCE**

1. Weight on balls of feet pointed directly toward pitcher.
2. Both knees closed, especially right knee, to keep runner on 1st, and base coaches from picking signs.
3. Glove hand hangs open on the outside of the left knee.
4. Sign arm elbow on your hip, hand high and aligned with the seam of pants in crotch. Signs should be given with a flat hand and a relaxed wrist. Keep your forearm and elbow still.
5. Back is straight.
6. Sit down, look at coach for sign, survey field, plan your pitch sequence, call the pitch and anticipate where it will go.

B. COMFORT STANCE

1. Immediately after giving sign, give the target.
2. Feet are turned out and spread with weight on your insteps - about shoulder width apart.
3. Start low with your knees and hips, but keep your back straight.
4. Glove hand arm rests on left knee with a knee high target and your hands relatively close to your body.

C. BLOCKING/THROWING STANCE (man on or 2 strikes)

1. Your butt is up 2-3 inches higher than your comfort stance.
2. Feet are a couple of inches wider than your comfort stance. Feet flat with weight on the balls of your feet and your toes pointed a little more toward the pitcher.
3. Your back is straight as you can get it without falling back on your heels.
4. Glove hand rests comfortably on left knee and right hand stays behind glove in a loose fit.

D. POSITIONING OF STANCE

1. Set up as close as possible to the plate. Should at least be close enough to reach up and touch the hitter's back elbow.
2. On pitches called to the outside of the plate, move quickly to the edges, centering your body on the corner called.

RECEIVING**A. BODY POSITIONS**

1. All baseballs should be caught in the middle of the chest, except balls on the extreme.

2. Head should stay behind the baseball and you should actually be on the outside of a caught ball. Watch the ball into the glove.
3. Glove should move smoothly to the ball, beating the ball to its destination. this movement is done with the lower body.
4. Glove hand (target position) is dictated by the type of pitch being thrown or type of pitcher throwing. For example, my target is going to be cheating more to the left (rotated more to the left) for a left-hander's breaking ball, or a right-handed slider.
5. Glove arm is extended according to position of the ball in relationship to catcher's chest. The more extreme the pitch is (up, down, left, or right), the more the glove arm is extended to greet the ball. The more the pitch gets to the extremes, the more aggressive you are towards the ball (attack the ball). The ball will be caught closer to the body, the closer it gets to your chest (never closer than 8-10 inches). Picture a cone extending from your chest out towards the pitcher.

LOCKING

A. ANTICIPATION

1. Know where your pitching staff misses with its pitches. Most pitchers miss in the same spot 95% of the time. Bullpens are your best indication where these spots are.
2. A blocked ball should happen before the pitch is ever thrown. For example, as soon as I put down the sign, I anticipate the ball being thrown in the dirt in the area this pitcher misses at most of the time. I then offset my weight (providing it's a movement pitch). So as you can see, anticipation must be not only mental, but also physical and educated by prior experience (bullpens).

B. WALK THROUGH TECHNIQUE (Extended "Drop Knee")

1. The walk through technique is the way by which a catcher "flows" through a block and puts himself in a position to throw out advancing runners. With runners trying to advance on balls in the dirt, this technique allows you to block the ball and move quickly enough to attempt to throw.
2. All the walk through technique is, is a glorified "off-set" or "drop-knee" approach. For example, if I am blocking a right-handed slider in the dirt, I'm already off-set on my left side and I am swaying with my lower body as the ball slides to my right. When I see I'll have to block the ball, drop the left knee (just like I would if the pitch were a strike) then the right knee and I flow through with my left leg. It is a 1-2-3 approach in which both knees only touch the ground together for a second.
3. Back is always straight and your chest stays squared to the direction of the ball (differs on fast balls, sliders, etc.). Weight always stays above the hips.
4. Head stays high until actual contact with the ball; watch the ball into your chest.

5. Attack the ball at an angle (follow the 1st and 3rd base lines). You must have an angle on the ball.
6. Using this technique you will have a large gap between the ground and your crotch. Because of this, your glove must stay down at all times. never try to catch the ball. The free hand is used for balance and does not stay behind your glove (when you block side to side).
7. Just like everything else, all balls should be blocked or "caught" in the middle of the chest. Center the ball.
8. A ball that needs to be blocked and a strike both warrant the same movement. Both require swaying with the lower body (in order to enable your chest to center the ball) and the drop knee approach. With proper anticipation and knowledge of a certain pitcher's miss area, a quality block should just be an aggressive flow.
9. The ball in the dirt right at you is just a modified walk through; moving aggressively forward through the ball instead of to the side.

THROWING

A. PRIORITIES

1. Accuracy first. Put the ball on the right side of the bag from knee high to the infielder's waist.
2. Quickness come second. A quick release and an average arm is better than a cannon and slow feet.
3. Velocity is last. Show off your arm in the infield. In the game, be quick and accurate - power is a bonus.

B. TECHNIQUES

1. No matter what you do with your feet (pivot, jump, turn, or replace your feet), your momentum should be going toward second. If on a jump turn move, you're ending up more than 6 inches to your left, you have a momentum problem.
2. Throwing is a turn. During your turn, you get tall and square your back foot shoulders. The turn puts your throwing arm in position. You don't need to jerk your arm back.
3. Foot work must be as short as possible and you let the ball come to you - never reach out. Have the ball move to you, not you to the ball.
4. No matter what footwork you use, your back leg always gets under your body and your balance stays over your hips. Be smooth and "quiet."
5. On a low and outside pitch to a right-handed hitter, use a "no step" or "pivot" method. Be sure to shift your weight back.
6. The preferred method of footwork is the "replace the feet" method. The right foot is moved slightly forward and to a position fairly directly behind the pitch. The left foot closes off and moves toward 2nd base. This method can be done as the pitch is on its way because you're not moving into the hitter very much.

OUTFIELD

- ✓ Type of glove
- ✓ Pretend you're the only players on the field
- ✓ Communicate
- ✓ Goal: Play as shallow as you can

READY POSITION

1. Feet - spread for strong base
2. Legs - flexed ready to run
3. Hands - off body, ready to run
4. Movement - slight movement to get rhythm for best jump

MOVE THROUGH ROUND BALL

1. Starting position - never raise up
2. Ball - get the ball between you and your target
3. Timing - slow down in plenty of time to field
4. Last 2 steps - take you into fielding position
5. Last 2 steps - are very controlled

FIELDING POSITION

1. Glove Hand - foot forward
2. Legs - both legs flexed
3. Back - flat or parallel to the ground
4. Glove- extended out in front for soft hands
5. Glove hand - field ball on glove hand side
6. Dead stop - never be at a dead stop when fielding

MOVE THROUGH FLY BALL

1. Drop step - use drop step when going back
2. Fly ball - get fly ball between you and your target
3. Set up - 6-10 feet behind fly ball when possible
4. Momentum - always have momentum through catch, never a dead stop

STEPS TO THROW

1. First step - with throwing side foot toward target, instep open
2. Crow hop - to target to create momentum and power
3. Front shoulder - on target

DROP STEP

1. First move - nearest foot to ball back
2. Raise up - never raise up from starting position
3. Pivot - and crossover step with farthest foot from ball

I. BASIC CONCEPTS

- A. We always get an out in a rundown situation.
- B. Use only one throw to get the runner.
- C. Between third base and home, run the runner back to third base, if possible.
- D. Infielder's first job is to get into the proper throwing angle.
 - 1. Don't throw across runner's body.
 - 2. Receiver takes one large step out to the throwing arm side of the man with the ball.
- E. Better to call for the ball too soon than too late.
- F. Determine if runner is committed or uncommitted.

II. MAN WITH THE BALL

- A. Get the runner running hard; if the runner is running under control, he controls the situation, not you.
- B. Run with your arm up, showing the ball, never faking a throw.
- C. Throw the ball when the tagger comes up hard toward you and/or when he says "now."
- D. Flick the ball with your wrist, not a full arm motion.
- E. Throw at the head of the tagger.

III. MAN RECEIVING THE BALL (TAGGER)

- A. Start in front of the bag and get in the proper throwing angle.
- B. Immediately shorten the gap by walking slowly up.
- C. When you want the ball:
 - 1. Come up hard toward the runner.
 - 2. Throw hands up and yell, "Now."
- D. Tag with both hands, ball in glove.

BASEBALL CUTS AND RELAYS

I. RULES

- A. Terminology 1, 2, 3, 4. Say nothing means let throw go through.
- B. Lead man on relay yells "Hit me."
- C. Anytime throw goes through, relay man fakes a snag catch, pivot and throw.
- D. Each "left" or "right" equals one step.
- E. "Cut" means catch and hold the ball.
- F. If throw is off line or weak, you always cut it.

II. RELAY MAN

- A. Square shoulders to man throwing ball.
- B. Keep your feet moving.
- C. Drop your hands once the OF throws.
- D. Move to ball so you catch it chest high or on the big hop.
- E. On short throws, i.e., SS to 2B or 3B to Home, your footwork is step to the ball with your right foot, turn and throw. When you catch the ball, your weight is on the right foot.
- F. On long throws, i.e., tandem throws, to the plate, you move with the ball, catch the ball with weight on your left side, crow-hop and throw.

III. OUTFIELDERS

- A. Get to the ball as quickly as possible and get it to an infielder as quickly as possible.
- B. Hit the relay man in the chest and throw the ball to his glove side.
- C. On a ball hit to the fence, over your head, if the ball is lying on the ground, simply pick it up (barehanded) and throw, no crow-hop.

IV. TANDEM RELAY

- A. Whenever there is a sure double or possible triple, we use a tandem relay.

V. LEAD MAN

- A. Go out slowly until outfielder picks up the ball.
- B. Yell "hit me" 2 or 3 times loudly.
- C. If the throw is going to short hop you or you have to jump to make the catch, let it go to backup man.

VI. TRAILER

- A. 15'-20' behind the lead man.
- B. Line up lead man.
- C. As you're running out, be checking the progress of the runner.
- D. Tell lead man where to throw.
- E. If lead man catches it, get down and out of the way.

TEAM DEFENSE SITUATION RECOGNITION SYSTEM

I. PRINCIPLES

- A. Think before the ball is hit, then react to the ball.
- B. All bases must be covered every time the ball is hit.
- C. You are in the wrong place, if you finish where you started the play.
- D. Everyone has a place to be on all plays.

II. CONCEPTS

- A. Possible double - might go for second base.
- B. Sure double - through the interior of the OF.
- C. Tandem Relay - middle infielder 2-man system on any ball through the interior of the outfield with sure double/possible triple.
- D. Opposite Outfielder Trail - when first base is occupied, the runner must be trailed to second base by the outfielder opposite the batted ball.
- E. Catcher Trail - no one on base, singles must be trailed to first base by the catcher with pitcher angled back up.

III. RESPONSIBILITIES

A. OUTFIELDERS

- 1. Get to the ball as quickly as possible and hit the relay man in the chest on his glove side.
- 2. If ball is dead, bare hand it and throw to relay man.
- 3. Line up behind all throws to the infield when not involved in the play.
- 4. Serve as trail man to second base if you are the opposite outfielder with first base occupied on sure double.

B. INFELDERS

- 1. Tandem relay between shortstop and second baseman must occur when there is a sure double or possible triple. Split the field in half from second base and the strong side infielder becomes the lead man.
- 2. Lead man must go out slowly until outfielder picks up the baseball. Yell 3 times loudly "ball-ball-ball" and if the throw is a short hop or a jump to catch, let it go by you to the trailer.
- 3. Trailer is 15'-20' behind the lead man and assists in lining him up to the correct base. You need to sneak a peek and check the progress of the runner. Throw must go to the base in front of the runner to complete the play. Tell lead man where to throw the ball and get down and out of the way if they catch the ball.
- 4. Relay/Cut man must square shoulders to the man throwing the ball, keep the feet moving and move to the ball and catch it glove side, chest high or on the big hop. On short throws (throws to bases/plate), your footwork is step to the ball with your right foot, turn and throw. On long throws (tandems/to plate), catch off left foot, crow-hop and throw.

5. Corner infielders serve as the cut off men to home plate. The first baseman also serves as a trail man to second base with first base not occupied on a sure double.

C. PITCHER

1. Serves back-up man and prevents runner from moving up another base.
2. Must have back-up against the wall on all throws to first base, third base, and home plate. Line up behind the throw on all plays to second base.
3. Back-up 1B on all ground balls caught by an infielder, especially with a runner on 2B. Do not interfere with the batter/base runner under any circumstances.

D. CATCHER

1. Must communicate with cut and relay men when possible for base to throw to. However, cut and relay men must anticipate where to throw.

IV. COMMUNICATION

- A. Terminology 1, 2, 3, 4. Say nothing means let the throw go through. Verbalize so everyone in the park can hear.
- B. Lead infielder yells "BALL, BALL, BALL."
- C. When throw goes through, relay men have to fake a catch, pivot and throw to runner occupied base.
- D. Catcher/baseman line up relay and cuts with "right" and "left" comments. Each left or right equals one step. However, basemen must be able to sneak a peak and adjust themselves.
- E. "Cut" means catch and hold.
- F. If throw is off line or weak, always cut it.
- G. On fly balls, wait for ball to reach highest point and then the closest fielder yells "ball" three times. Everyone must play the ball until called off.

V. SITUATION-RECOGNITION

A. Possible Double

1. Ball to the third base side of shortstop. Third baseman is cut man/shortstop can cover third base.
2. Ball to right field, second base can cover first base. First baseman is cut man to home plate.

B. Sure double - no one first base

1. Split the field to decide lead/trail infielder. Otherwise use the strongest thrower.
2. Line up lead base that is called by catcher or identified by trailer.
3. First baseman trails runner and opposite outfielder lines up behind the throw.

C. Sure double - first base occupied

1. Split field to decide lead/trail infielder or use the strongest thrower if possible.
2. Line up to home plate.
3. First baseman is cut off to the plate always with third baseman covering third base.
4. Opposite outfielder must trail to second base. On this play, attempt to beat the runner to the bag.

D. Outfielder base hit rules

1. Make the play like an infielder.
2. Right at you and in, look to throw to the lead base.
3. Right, left, back, throw to second base to keep the force out in play.
4. If the runner has already passed the lead base, throw should go to second base.

- C. While you're getting back to first base, keep your eyes on the catcher, and listen for signals from the first base coach.
- D. Beware of the "backdoor" play by the left-handed pitcher and the first baseman.

V. THE FIRST-AND-THIRD SITUATION

- A. A man is on first and there are less than two outs. The batter hits a line drive through the left side of the infield. Usually, you can only get to the next base unless the ball gets by the outfielder so do not be in a hurry and you won't get doubled off at first.
- B. The toughest line drive is the one hit at the second baseman.
- C. Two line drives that are impossible to get back on:
 - 1. The ball hit at the pitcher.
 - 2. The ball hit at the first baseman.

VI. THE DOUBLE PLAY

- A. The runner must slide in a direct line between the two bases unless he is avoiding contact or attempting not to alter the infielder's play.
- B. The runner must stay down and cannot pop up or use a rolling slide.
- C. The runner cannot slide beyond the base and make contact or alter the play of a fielder.
- D. The runner cannot slide with his lead leg higher than the fielder's knee or attempt to kick the fielder.
- E. If the runner on a force play makes an illegal slide at any base, interference is called.
- F. When interference is called, runners are not allowed to advance and must return to their bases.

The Second Base Runner

I. THE LEAD FROM THE BASE

- A. Go through your "base routine." Check the shortstop's position last because he will be directly behind you once you get your lead.
- B. You must be able to get back without any help from the base coach unless you are attempting to steal third base. If you are trying to steal, then watch the coach for further communication.
- C. Keep your eyes focused on the pitcher. He has the ball and is the only one that can pick you off.
- D. Whether you can run or not, your lead must start with four steps off the base plus one or two shuffles.
- E. If you are trying to steal third, a four-step lead plus two shuffles is a good starting point to have.
- F. If you cannot run, start with the four-step lead. Back away from the baseline two steps. This position will give you a good angle and a better turn at third base on a scoring play.

- G. Once you get comfortable with your lead, you can then start looking in at the catcher for signs or the location on pitches.

II. LEAD WITH TWO OUTS

- A. As the base runner, think more about getting a good angle on your turn at third to head for home then just about trying to steal third. Remember, you never want to make the last out, the out at third base. So, unless the pitcher is just giving you the base, think about trying to score.
- B. Start with a four-step lead from the base, then move back away from the baseline. This is your "run-it-deep" position.
- C. The runner should run to score on ALL BATTED BALLS WITH TWO OUTS.

III. THE TWO OUT/TWO STRIKES SITUATION

- A. The runner is on second base. There are two outs in the inning and two strikes on the hitter.
- B. Once the hitter starts swinging his bat downward into the contact zone, start your break for third base.
- C. Three things will happen on the pitch:
 - 1. The ball will be put into play.
 - 2. The hitter will foul the ball off. Return to the second base.
 - 3. Hitter swings through the pitch for strike three and makes the third out.

IV. READING THE BUNT

- A. Go through your "base routine." Check the shortstop last.
- B. Take your four-step lead from second base up in the baseline.
- C. Don't assume the hitter will make a good bunt. If he doesn't you're going to be out at third.
- D. Take a good secondary lead and always keep your shoulders squared to the infield.
- E. Don't make your cross-over and break for third until you see the ball down on the ground.
- F. If you cross-over early, and the hitter bunts through the ball, you're going to get picked-off at second base.

V. BALL IN THE DIRT

- A. This type of hit is much tougher to read than the one at first base.
- B. The ball that bounces straight down and out in front of the catcher is almost impossible to advance to third.
- C. The ball that bounces away to either the left or to the right of the catcher is a much easier read and the runner should take advantage of this situation.

VI. THE GROUND BALL PLAY TO THIRD

- A. You are a base runner at second base. Go through your "BASE ROUTINE."
- B. The KEY to this situation is to know where the shortstop and third baseman are before the ball is infielded and put into play.

- C. Shortstop positioning:
 - 1. If the ground ball is hit to his left, go to third base.
 - 2. If the ground ball is hit at him, or to his right, stay at second base.
 - 3. If the ground ball is a slow roller hit in front of him, go to third.
- D. Third baseman:
 - 1. If the ground ball is a slow roller, or bunt on the grass, go to third base.

Base Runner on Third

KEYS

- 1. Lead off foul - return in fair territory.
- 2. As pitch is being made, turn and walk down towards plate timing things so that right foot hits ground as ball crosses plate. That way you can push off and go back to third or push off and go.
- 3. Freeze on line drive. Tag on anything off ground. If it falls you'll score anyway.
- 4. You must watch ball on all tags. Coach will tell you if deep enough to score.

HITTER CHECKLIST

Part 1 - Bottom

I. STANCE

- A. Your feet should be 1 - 1/2 times **wider** than your shoulders. *You will have better balance, you will be in a more athletic position, and you will do less damage to your swing.*
- B. Your **knees** should be inside your feet. *You will be stronger if your weight is on the inside of each foot.*
- C. Your feet will be **parallel** and properly pointed. *Both feet will face the opposite batter's box. Do not point toward the catcher, or toward the mound.*
- D. **Bend** at your knees, not at your waist. *Your rear knee will just about cover your back foot. Hit like you walk.*

II. STRIDE

- A. Stride **straight** toward the pitcher. *To do otherwise will cause you to fly open, or lock up because you are too closed.*
- B. Stride **short**. *Too long of a stride will rob you of your power base.*
- C. Stride the **same** all the time. *Consistency is the key to success.*
- D. Stride **soft** and down to the baseball. *Don't loop up. Lead ankle and knee are closed, with heel slightly elevated. Toes are straight. At the end of the stride, the back foot will raise slightly on the back side.*
- E. Stride will be **separate** from the swing. *It is a timing device used to prepare to hit. It is not part of the swing. Start your stride when the pitcher drops his hand before delivery.*

III. SWING

- A. **Drive** the back knee down. *This initiates the swing. Your knee cap drives toward the front part of the plate.*
- B. Keep lead knee **closed**. *The rear knee starts the swing. Don't fly open.*
- C. **Lead** knee will point toward the second baseman. *The heel will be slightly elevated.*
- D. The **back** heel will point in the direction of the hit ball. *This determines where you "turned" on the ball, which should be where it was pitched.*
- E. Will be slightly **off balance** at the conclusion of the swing. *You should have a slight fall forward when the swing is completed.*

Watch out for these flaws:

- * Rising up on back knee robs the hitter of drive.
- * A rear-instep collapse will lock hips.
- * Flying open on lead side causes weakness.

Part 2 - Mid

I. GRIP

- A. **Three knocking knuckles** will be lined up.
This causes maximum blast from hands.
- B. **Index** finger is raised and indented.
The thumb works the same as a thrown ball.

II. BAT POSITION

- A. **Hands** are in.
Keep hands close to body for maximum impact.
- B. **Elbows** are down.
Elbows will be at shoulder width - not flared and not tight.
- C. Bat angle at **45 degrees**.
The knob of the bat will point across the batter's box. Start with the bat on your shoulder and naturally raise it up into hitting position.
- D. **Lead arm** will be at a 90 degree angle.
Do not "bar," and keep the elbow down.
- E. **Back arm** has forearm and bicep touch.
This should look like a "V," and not a "U."
- F. Hands go **back and up** slightly opposite the stride.
This loads you into a power position.
- G. **Chin** nears lead shoulder on stride.
This happens on the load.
- H. Keep hands in slight **motion**.
Make little circles with the knob of the bat.

III. ATTACK-FINISH

- A. **Hands** go to the ball.
Knob of bat is driven with lead hand. Keep hands inside the baseball.
- B. **Bat Barrel** stays above the hands.
The quickest path is a straight path - it is quicker to hit the top half of the ball than the bottom half.
- C. **Top hand** follows lead hand.
Stay inside the baseball.
- D. **Contact point** depends on pitch location.
The ball is hit according to where it is pitched - there is not a different swing for different locations.
- E. **Follow-through** is long and full.
Keep hands on the bat longer for inside pitches. The top hand will naturally fall off if the pitch is outside.

- F. Eyes are horizontal and level.
See the ball with two eyes. The pitcher should be able to see both of your ears. Enter the batter's box head first, not feet first.
- G. Detect the pitch early.
Focus by scanning, not staring, at the throwing side of the pitcher. Fast balls always come out of the pitcher's hand with his hand on top of the ball, while the curve ball will show the ball on top of his hand.
- H. See the ball longer.
Your chin will hit your rear shoulder and ear. Your eyes should be pointed at the upper outside corner of the plate. When working with a tee, your eyes should be focused on the empty tee after contact, not the path of the ball.

ADDITIONAL DETAILS ON HITTING MECHANICS

I. SET UP, PLATE POSITION AND STANCE

A. SET UP

1. Get sign, step in box with back foot and set your foot's position.
2. Step in with the front foot and square your eyes to the pitcher.
3. Start a large waggle, swinging, or rocking motion to stay loose.

B. PLATE POSITION

1. Closeness to the plate is determined by two things:
 - a. A pitch across the inside of the plate should be able to be hit fair when solid contact is made with the bat.
 - b. A pitch across the outside corner should be able to be hit without hitter having to reach or lean to make solid contact.

C. STANCE

1. Purpose of stance
 - a. Establish balance.
 - b. Allows you to see the ball.
 - c. Makes it easy to hit.
2. Lower body
 - a. Feet slightly wider than shoulders, weight balanced equally and toes pointing straight ahead or turned in slightly.
 - b. Bend knees enough so weight goes to the balls of your feet and keep knees inside of your feet.
 - c. Stance is square or slightly closed.
 - d. Body remains loose and in motion by wiggling of the hips, lifting of heels, or a similar movement.
3. Upper body
 - a. Front shoulder points at pitcher and is slightly lower than your back shoulder.
 - b. Hands are held at the top of the strike zone, off of the back shoulder, fairly close to the body.
 - c. Elbows are down and relaxed.

- d. Bend slightly at the waist for comfort.
- e. Your head is upright and near level, with both eyes taking a good look at the ball.
- 4. Grip
 - a. Bat is held out towards fingers in a loose, relaxed grip.
 - b. At contact, grip will be palm up, palm down.

II. TRIGGER, STRIDE AND WEIGHT SHIFT

A. TRIGGER

1. Definition: Anything that gets weight back and centered on the inside of your back foot, with your hands back and in a strong hitting position, is a trigger.
2. On your trigger, the bat slots to a 45 degree angle.
3. Common triggers are:
 - a. Hands go back and up on the stride, with a slight inward rotation on the front side.
 - b. The front knee initiates an inward rotation of the front side.
4. As you stride, your hands move slightly back - "walking away from your hands."
5. The angle of the front elbow changes very little, if at all.
6. Your head remains quiet, not turning off the ball.

B. STRIDE

1. Stride is slow, closed, and directly back at the pitcher.
2. Length of stride is determined by the individual. If your weight stays balanced, your stride is fine, but there should be very little movement of your head.
3. Hitter should land on the inside of the ball of the foot, with a firm, but bent, front knee.
4. During stride the decision to swing or not is made. If the hitter doesn't swing, he stays balanced on the balls of his feet. If he swings, this is initiated when the heel of his ground foot lands.
5. Hitter should keep his knees inside his feet on the stride.

C. WEIGHT SHIFT

1. On the trigger, weight is shifted to the inside of the back leg. Back leg is bent, but firm as it "catches" your weight shift.
2. On the stride, the weight stays slightly back but balanced. Excessive head movement or a breakdown of the front knee are indications of a bad weight shift.
3. Weight shift forward stops with the planting of the front heel and the beginning of the swing.

III. LAUNCHING POSITION

- A. The front shoulder is down and in slightly, with the hands near the back shoulder.

- B. The back elbow raises up slightly. The distance between the front and back elbow remains constant from the stance through to the launching position.
- C. As the front heel lands, the front knee firms up and provides a base for rotation of the hips.
- D. The bat has settled in a 45 degree position, with the hands high and near the back shoulder and close to the body (three to five inches).

IV. THE SWING

- A. The hips start the swing. Bring the hands down into the slot.
- B. The slot is a position near the sternum with the elbows close together and the bat head lagging behind.
- C. The bat knob is taken straight to the ball, with the ground elbow staying down. The bat head still lags behind.
- D. As the hands get closer to the ball, the wrist uncocks. The bat and hands rotate to contact with the barrel dropping below the knob, creating backspin on the ball.
- E. Hands extend through the ball and finish high after a full follow through.

V. DRILL RUN DRILLS (WITHOUT BASEBALLS)

- A. **STRIDE DRILL**
With group, hitter practices his stride. This can be done with bat on belly button for a visual reference.
- B. **TRIGGER DRILL**
With group, hitter practices just the trigger. This can be done with bat carried in elbows for a visual reference.
- C. **TRIGGER AND STRIDE DRILL**
With group, hitter practices trigger and stride at the same time.
- D. **RHYTHM DRILL**
With group, hitter practices preparatory movements. Big-to-little, big-to-stay loose. Come to a set and little movement is trigger.
- E. **HIP TURN DRILL**
With group, hitter places bat behind his back and pivots. Hitter can imagine pitches in different locations and visualize that his belly button is taking a picture of each pitch.
- F. **HIPS, HANDS AND WEIGHT SHIFT DRILL**
With group, hitter triggers, strides, and then back side (top hand and back hip) goes to the ball. Hitter practices just the initial movement, hands drop into the slot at midline of the body along with the hip turn. Weight shifts with hip turn and is caught by front leg.
- G. **HIGH-LOW DRILL**
With group, hitter's bat stops at a point of contact (waist-high pitch) and freezes, then drops to knee-high pitch, pulls back and swings at knee-high pitch.
- H. **SHOULDER-TO-SHOULDER DRILL**
With group, hitter's bat starts on one shoulder and ends up on the other. Bat is swung for speed.

- I. **ARROW DRILL**
With partner: Partner stands in front and points to spots in zone.
 - J. **ZONE ON THE WALL DRILL**
Put a strike zone on the wall with tape. Make X's in the zone to represent balls. Hitter swings at imaginary balls with lead bat.
 - K. **NET DRILL**
Hitter gets a bat-length away from a net (facing net sideways) and swings bat without hitting net.
 - L. **MIRROR DRILL**
Hitter swings in front of mirror and looks at his checkpoints.
 - M. **SHORT STROKE DRILL**
With partner, partner stands behind hitter and holds bat out behind hitter's bat. If batter's first move is to drop bat head, contact is made.
 - N. **SLAP HANDS DRILL**
Partner holds hand out in top of strike zone, hitter slaps hand, simulating a swing.
- VI. **SOFT TOSS/SHORT TOSS DRILLS**
- A. **SOFT TOSS**
Soft toss with a stride. Tosser shows the ball and when he brings it back, hitter triggers.
 - B. **HARD TOSS**
Tosser throws ball hard.
 - C. **HARD TOSS WITH CHANGE UP**
Tosser throws ball hard and occasionally loops one. Hitter must keep hands back.
 - D. **TRIGGER DRILL**
Hitter triggers three times and on third time, ball is tossed.
 - E. **OVER THE SHOULDER**
Ball is tossed over front shoulder going back into the strike zone. Hitter goes to opposite field.
 - F. **BEHIND TOSS**
Tosser kneels behind and underhands with velocity. Hitter must catch up.
 - G. **BOTTOM HAND**
Hitter on one knee, hits with bottom hand only.
 - H. **TOP HAND**
One knee, top hand only.
 - I. **ONE KNEE**
Hitter is on one knee, but uses both hands.
 - J. **FRONT TOSS--INSIDE/OUTSIDE**
Tosser alternates between inside and outside pitches.
 - K. **WEIGHT SHIFT THREE TIMES AND SWING**
Hitter does heel-up, heel-down action, getting on a firm front side.
 - L. **LAG BAT DRILL**
Hitter has post on side of him.

- M. FRONT TOSS LEFT/RIGHT
Hitter alternates between left field and right field.

VII. TEE DRILLS

- A. STANDARD
Hitter always looks out at a pitcher and tracks ball down to tee.
- B. OPPOSITE FIELD
Line up tee with inside of back foot and outside half of the plate.
- C. INSIDE/OUTSIDE DRILL
Balls on two tees, partner calls inside or outside just after trigger.
- D. TARGET DRILL
Hit a target to learn bat control.
- E. PULL DRILL
With a double tee, two tees are set up on the center outside row of tee. Tee with ball is set up low inside.
- F. EXTENSION DRILL
Using a double tee, two tees of same height are placed in line. Hitter tries to drive through both balls.
- G. EXTENSION
Single tee is set way out front. Stay flat and long out front.

VIII. BUNTING

- A. DRAG BUNTS
A very valuable offensive tool that most hitters overlook, both in youth and adult baseball, is the art of drag bunting. If one does not possess above-average running speed, drag bunting is still a good strategy. Even an unsuccessful attempted drag bunt can increase on-base percentage and batting average, if the proper method is applied.

If the bunt is to be a "foul line" attempt, the batter should aim within three feet of the foul line (a perfect location), or into foul ground. Using this method, the batter will bunt the ball perfectly or foul, making this a high-percentage play. The bunts that stay fair within three feet of the foul line have an excellent chance to become base hits, and the ones that are foul only count as a strike. But the bunted ball, fair or foul, will force the defense to shorten up, which will routine ground balls get through and give "off the hand" hits more room to drop in. Thus a player attempting to drag bunt can often succeed, even when the bunt fails.

- B. RIGHT-HANDED HITTER TECHNIQUE
If the hitter is back from the plate, he can begin by stepping towards first base with the front foot and simultaneously bringing the bat to the bunting position.

If the hitter is near the plate, he should begin by dropping the right foot back about ten inches into a sprinter's stance so both feet are in a straight line

towards first base. This movement must occur just before contact is made with the ball. If the right foot steps back and stays there for any length of time before the ball is bunted, it is too much of a tip-off to the defense. The back foot should step back and push off quickly. The hitter should not lean or rock back onto the back foot, simply step back and push off.

The movement can be practiced with or without a bat anytime a pitcher is throwing to a mitt (as in the bullpen). The bunter should work to get the *(missing rest of sentence)*.

For a push bunt past the pitcher, the batter should grip the bat tighter and start his forward movement a little earlier.

C. LEFT-HANDED HITTER TECHNIQUE

The back foot comes forward in a crossover step as the bat is brought to the bunting position. If the hitter has problems with the timing of this action, he can simply rotate the upper body towards the pitcher and shift the weight to the front foot as the bat comes forward to bunt the ball. After contact, the back foot moves into a crossover step towards first base.

Another technique is to bring the back foot up to the front foot and then step towards first base with the ground foot as the bunt is made. For a bunt down the third base line, the batter can start earlier on an inside pitch and contact the ball with the hands in close to the body.

For a bunt past the pitcher towards the second baseman, the batter should take a tighter grip on the bat and make harder contact to bunt the ball. To bunt past the pitcher, the hitter needs to get a pitch from the center of the late in. This bunt is especially effective against a left-hander who has a full follow-through towards third base.

We will also use the pivot method for sacrifice bunts. Keys are elevated barrel, look ball in *(missing rest of sentence)*.

I. PHILOSOPHY

- A. Most important player on the team.
- B. Must work the hardest - conditioning, etc.
- C. "Dry work" big part of development.
- D. Absolute keys: Throwing strikes and changing speeds.

II. MECHANICS

A. THOUGHTS

- 1. Proper mechanics and repetition with success equals confidence.
- 2. Practice makes permanent, not perfect.
- 3. Checkpoints only.
- 4. Goal is not to clone, but rather to create a solid fundamental base; be aware that some kids have made anatomical adjustments.
- 5. Some will digress before they progress.
- 6. Proves to player there is a solid reason for change.
- 7. Ability to teach others.
- 8. Can fine tune on mound not use gimmicks or "idiot" phrases.
- 9. Reduction of arm injury.
- 10. Implement as 9th graders.

B. BASIC UNDERSTANDING

- 1. "Balance" and "strong" critical terms to understand; they are not synonymous.
- 2. "Strong" position lowers center of gravity.
- 3. "Cause and effect relationship throughout motion; poor results at end of delivery usually caused by a poor preliminary movement."
- 4. Start with the feet and work up when looking for flaws in the delivery; everything starts with the feet.

III. SPECIFIC MECHANICAL BREAKDOWN

A. TAKING SIGNS

- 1. Comfortable upright stance.
- 2. Half of both feet over rubber.
- 3. Ball in glove, hand at side; can be flexible on this.
- 4. Set up on arm side of rubber.
 - a. More difficult line of sight for hitter.
 - b. Easier to get to "footstrike" properly.
- 5. Take a breath and visualize before step back.

B. STEP BACK AND PIVOT FOOT PLANT

Everything prior to footstrike is preliminary and momentum building.

- 1. Step should be short and straight back (to 45 degrees).
- 2. Two rules:
 - a. Stay on ball of foot.

- b. Keep head over rubber or pivot foot.
3. Step to side will encourage rotary movement and eventually throwing against body.
4. If he takes hands over his head:
 - a. Make sure he touches back of neck before he starts forward.
 - b. Don't let him flare his elbows.
5. Next movement is pivot foot opening up to plate and place in front of rubber.
6. Pivot foot should be against rubber with toe slightly below heel; this
 - a. Keeps him strong.
 - b. Keeps shoulders over pivot foot.
 - c. Allows for easier pivot foot drive and release.

C. BALANCE POSITION

1. Shoulders and hips move to this position together.
2. Lead leg should be picked up with thigh of lead leg; not kicked up with foot.
 - a. Thigh should be parallel to ground (pizza & pop).
 - b. Foot is under knee with toe hanging.
 - c. Knee should not pass behind rubber (have him push down on your hand in both positions to prove stronger position).
3. Pivot foot should be firm, but not stiff.
4. Shoulders level, over pivot foot, pointed directly at arm-side corner of plate.
 - a. May want to tighten abs slightly to keep over pivot foot.
 - b. Hitter should see part of jersey number and part of lead side back pocket.
5. Over rotation will cause:
 - a. Loss of power.
 - b. Loss of balance.
 - c. Cause most to throw against themselves since they won't have time to get lead foot to proper footstrike position.
 - d. Rotary rather than vertical arm/hip action.
6. Hands together and about collarbone high (top of glove).
7. Chin against inside of lead shoulders; eyes not fixed yet!
8. Failure to pause momentarily and in a balanced, strong position at this point will almost ensure rushing.
9. Can he "walk off" the back of mound from balance position?
10. Pressure point will move from knuckle of pivot foot, big toe, to inside of stride leg knee.

D. HAND BREAK AND STRIDE

1. Hand break should push lead leg down; lead leg should not pull hands down (stick analogy).
2. Hand break should occur at or slightly behind midline.
3. Both hands go down - out - up.

4. Lead leg must go down and out with toe closed; "lead with heel;" this is not a spasm.
5. Keep upper body behind hips.
6. Slight lowering of weight inside pivot foot; knee.
7. We want:
 - a. Power to develop through hip action, not the drive of the stride.
 - b. Pitcher to stay tall rather than drop and drive; this helps pitcher release over stride leg and also closer to plate; also eases follow through.
8. Hands should stay away from body and not outside knee.
9. Rushing concept easy to explain.
10. Lead with the hip out of balance position; not the shoulders.
11. Get it out - get it up.
12. *Bite your shoulder.*

E. FOOTSTRIKE

1. Foot lands flat like a plane landing; if he can't find flat after stride
 - a. heel - shorten
 - b. toe - lengthen
2. Toe should be in a direct line to plate and in the "lane" of pivot foot.
3. Lead leg should be strong, not stiff.
4. Proper footstrike:
 - a. Occurs after or at same time arm reaches cocked position.
 - b. Allows momentum to shift from lower 1/2 to upper 1/2; this allows hips to whip.
5. If stride is too long:
 - a. Release point is lowered which is an advantage to hitter.
 - b. Center of gravity is behind leg instead of over it; this will slow hips (skater analogy).
 - c. Will cause lead leg to collapse.
6. As footstrike occurs, pivot foot has at least begun to roll and on toe.
7. *Ground the foot before you turn the corner.*
8. Use landing leg as a shock absorber.
9. At footstrike, the ball should be head high and between long lever and short lever.

10. The next movement is trunk rotation.

Drills

- a. in/out
- b. bendovers
- c. bunny hop
- d. throw up slope

F. LEAD AND THROWING ARM ACTION

- 1. Both go down - out, up.
- 2. Throwing will go down and back to "cocked" position; fingers on top of ball the entire path; thumb will rotate out as hand moves back; path should be slightly off 2nd; arm should remain bent slightly; this helps relax arm.
- 3. "Cocked position" is where pitcher actually begins to accelerate; this is not a spasm, however, relax arm.
- 4. Lead arm from elbow to shoulder can be slightly above parallel to ground; don't emphasize this.
- 5. From "cocked position" hand moves to "short lever" (hit coach in the chin); the lead arm will drop elbow and pull it down to hip; this allows proper shoulder exchange.
- 6. Majority of hand speed generated from short lever to release; keep fingers behind ball.
- 7. Lead with highest elbow possible; dropping hand to short lever raises elbow.
- 8. If he accelerates immediately from hand break, it will cause premature deceleration.
- 9. Make sure arm angle matches up with "stroke" and foot position; watch them play long toss.
- 10. The arm angle is determined primarily by position of the trunk.

G. RELEASE AND FOLLOW THROUGH

- 1. Release point is approximately 15 inches in front of shoulder; it should be as close to perpendicular as possible.
- 2. Release point should, also, be as high as possible with a relaxed arm; wrist to shoulder.
- 3. Proper follow-through
 - a. Reduced arm injury.
 - b. Prolongs deceleration phase.
- 4. As he prepares to release, there should be
 - a. A whipping action of hips & trunk.
 - b. Firing of arm with elbow leading the way.
 - c. Lifting up of pivot foot "heel to sky" to completely release back side.
- 5. Throwing hand and pivot foot should end up 180 degrees apart.
- 6. Watch for recoil.
- 7. Falling off mound should be checked.

8. Keep knees close together
9. Throw over lead shoulder, not around it

Drills

- a. brick
- b. screen or stick
- c. throw up slope
- d. pick jersey or grass
- e. hit cap at 30 feet

PITCHING

Wind Up

I. THE STANCE

Ball in the glove, glove tucked in under our non-throwing arm and/or slightly in front of the body off chest, glove closed, throwing hand hanging relaxed at your side, weight 60-40 on pivot leg, feet apart no wider than the shoulders, good upright posture.

RHP work from the right side of the rubber.

LHP work from the left side of the rubber.

EXCEPTIONS to this would be sinker ball pitchers or guys who fall away from the target; however, most pitchers want the mechanical advantage of throwing the breaking ball from the "arm" side of the rubber.

II. TOES OVER THE RUBBER

III. HEAD OVER THE RUBBER

IV. STEP BACK THREE WAYS 6-8 INCHES

Remember to keep your head over the body, the body over the rubber throughout the windup. Keep back leg heel above toe.

- A. Straight back.
- B. 45 degree step back
- C. Side step

V. HANDS - THREE OPTIONS

- A. Pump over head - hands break straight through - rhythm and tempo option.
- B. Pump over head with pause at the belt.
- C. No wind-up, hands stay at the belt, easiest to maintain.

VI. BALANCE

- A. Tallest position possible on the rubber.
- B. Foot under knee on leg lift, leg lift under control.
- C. Level shoulders.
- D. Head on target and still throughout delivery, eyes level.

- E. Show a pocket to the hitter.
- F. Balance on the ball of your foot.

VII. STAY TALL

- A. Straight line through back.
- B. Tall to power position then initiate movement towards plate with lower body (lateral lead).

VIII. FALL

- A. Balance throughout the controlled fall to the plate.
- B. Exchange begins as body/knee starts to plate.
- C. Back leg maintains same posture/degree of flexion until release.
- D. Stay closed.

IX. EXCHANGE

- A. Hands quiet at the middle of the body, keep hands close to the body.
- B. Hands break as the knee starts to the plate.
- C. Thumb to the thigh (forward wrist), reach to the sky.
- D. Be strong in back, long out front.
- E. Fingers on top or behind the ball (same meaning), never have the fingers under the ball (between the ground and the ball).
- F. Smooth backside arm exchange.
- G. Extension away from the head, from the front shoulder through the fingers.
- H. At the top of the arm swing the ball is facing away from the hitter (towards the SS with a RHP, towards 2nd Baseman with a LHP) and the wrist is cocked.

X. FRONT SIDE - DIRECTIONAL SIDE

- A. Shoulder, elbow, hip, glove, knee and foot to the target.
- B. Front side block with lead arm and glove, keeping glove in front of the body to field and protect the pitcher.
- C. Front side stays in until after foot strike.

XI. FRONT FOOT LANDING

- A. Stay back, stay tall, stay closed with the front side.
- B. Leave the rubber from the toe, land toe-to-toe (actually ball of foot).
- C. Imaginary line goes from the toe of the pivot leg to the middle of the plate. The front foot should land on this line. The foot/toe should be closed on contact with the ground.
- D. Front leg is bent at contact, then remains firm or straightens out as the ball is released.

XII. FOLLOW THROUGH

- A. Stay on the pitch with your head until after the release.
- B. GET OFF THE RUBBER!
- C. Firm front leg relaxes.

- D. Back of the back shoulder on the plate.
- E. Overhand pitcher's hand finishes around the ankles.
3/4 arm pitcher's hand finishes around the knee.
Sidearm pitcher's hand finishes around the belt.
- F. Glove in front of the body ready to field.
- G. Eyes level on the target.

Strength

I. STANCE

- A. Good upright posture, ball in hand behind the back or at the side.
- B. Feet are shoulder width or wider.
- C. 70% of the weight is on the back leg
- D. Knees slightly bent.
- E. Hands break apart or down, RHP especially cannot bounce hands up and then break them if he wants to be quick to the plate.
- F. Front shoulder should be on the target.

II. TIPS

- A. To glide step, break the hands before you start to the plate.
- B. The quicker to the plate, the sooner the pitcher breaks his hands.
- C. RHP should be 1.3 or better to the plate.
- D. LHP should throw over to 1B the first time a base stealer is on 1B to discourage "first move" base stealers.
- E. LHP with men on 1st and 3rd should check runner's lead at 3rd before picking at 1st. Prevents LH play.
- F. Pitch outs cannot be glide steps.
- G. Look for picks with infielders after you get the ball back from the catcher.
- H. Vary your moves to the bases and your times to the plate.

Pitching Drills

I. STRIDE SERIES

- A. COORDINATES LOWER BODY MECHANICS WITH UPPER BODY.
Back foot stays behind but rotates so that laces of shoe face the ground.
- B. All throwing series mechanics
- C. Follow through drill
 - 1. Hips lead
 - 2. Arm straightens out and stops
 - 3. Arm leads body to follow through
 - 4. Back foot gets off the rubber
 - 5. Front foot stays planted

II. SHADOW SERIES

NEED A SMALL TOWEL, 6" BY 12".

- A. Cross arms - ball of foot to ball of foot.

- B. Goal post/power position - elbows slightly in front of shoulders.
- C. Towel drill from stride position.
- D. Stretch.

III. PITCHER CATCH
FLAT GROUND WORK

- A. Forty-five feet, pitcher-to-pitcher.
- B. Throw all pitches.
- C. Rotation.
- D. Location.
- E. Visualization.

IV. LONG TOSS
THROW BALL ON A LINE, BUT NOT HARD.

- A. Line up the shoulders.
- B. Open/close/throw.
- C. May crow hop.
- D. Head still/chin on target.
- E. Maximum distance 10-15 throws.
- F. Change ups at 60 feet immediately following long toss.