

FUNDAMENTALS

A. Start in an athletic position, with the knees flexed and weight on the balls of the feet. The body is balanced and ready to react right or left or forward and backward. **(picture 3-1)**



3-1: Athletic receiving position



3-2: Arm position

B. Extend the arms out, slightly flexed in front of the chest. **(picture 3-2)**

C. Position the glove at vertical to 1 o'clock, using both hands by lining up the thumb of the throwing hand near the thumb of the glove hand. The glove should be just below eye level, so players can see the ball enter the glove.

D. Expect a bad throw by always being ready to move the feet in order to catch the ball with two hands near the center of the body when possible.

E. Receive the ball in the glove's pocket. As soon as the ball hits the pocket, reach in with the throwing hand,



3-3: Pocket catch



3-4: Secure ball



3-5: Find grip



3-6: Throwing position

readying the grip and exchange to throwing. **(pictures 3-3 to 3-6)**

F. Use one-handed catches on throws outside the body. **(picture 3-7)**

Once a one-handed catch is made, the glove and throwing hand



3-7: One-handed catch

G. For throws below the waist, turn the glove over, fingers down and



3-8: Low throw position

Expert Advice on Catching a Baseball

A player should anticipate the release of a thrown ball. Their eyes should shift to the release point of the thrower just like a hitter does when hitting off a pitcher. This will allow the player to pick up and judge the throw sooner and help in tracking the throw into their mitt.

should meet centered near the chest to grip the ball and transition into the throw.

Expert Advice on Helping Young Players

Fear of the ball is common for many 6 through 9 year olds. Utilize the Clock Drill and use softer balls at first if needed to build there confidence and catching skills. Pass this drill and your knowledge onto their parents and encourage them to play catch at home.



line up both hands in a pinkie-near-pinkie alignment. When catching low throws players should bend at the knees and waist. (picture 3-8)

DRILLS

1. **Receiving Position Dry Drill:** Line up all players. On the verbal command, *Target*, players get into the



3-9: Target position



3-10: Low throw position

receiving position. On verbal command “low throw” players get into a pinkie-near-pinkie alignment. Check each player’s position. Physically make adjustments where needed. (pictures 3-9 & 3-10)

Recommended are ages 6-10.

2. **Glove Position for High and Low Throws:** For more repetitions per player, divide players into as many lines as there are coaches. One at a time start a player in the receiving position. Coaches throw balls above waist, then below waist. Concentrate on proper glove position. **This drill will provide lots of repetitions in a short time.**

Recommended ages 6-12.

3. **Clock Drill:** Start player in an athletic position with the glove hand slightly raised and open to the coach. Throw balls to the player at the ten, eleven, one, two and three areas of a clock. The player should reach out one handed and catch the throws. This drill will teach the player how to receive throws in all those areas. **This is a great drill to use with players who have fear of the ball or are just learning to catch.**

Expert Advice on Utilizing These Drills

Drills 2 through 6.

The coach’s distance from player and the speed and difficulty of the throw depends on the age and ability of the player.

Remember to challenge the player while still allowing him to have success and perform the fundamental correctly. Having success will build confidence and reinforce the proper fundamental position. Besides, it’s just plain more fun to make the catch.

Recommended ages 6-10.

4. **Quick Feet:** Follow same set-up as Drill 2. Coaches throw balls slightly to players’ right, then left. Concentrate on foot movement to catch the ball in front of the body, with two hands.

Recommended ages 7-12.

5. **Reaction Drill:** Follow same set-up as Drills 2 and 4. Coaches throw balls in all directions heights and speeds. Encourage players to move their feet to try to get in front of throws and utilize a two-handed catch when possible. Encourage the one-handed catches outside the body when they cannot get in front of the throw. **This is a great drill to use before a game.**

Recommended ages 8-16.

6. **Football Drill:** Give each player a ball and line them up single file 10 feet from the coach. When the coach yells, *Go!* the first player jogs to the coach, tossing the ball to the coach and continuing to run away. The coach turns and throws the ball in a high arc, similar to a touchdown pass. The player runs under the ball, catches it and returns to the end of the line. Continue with the next player. The distance and difficulty of the throw depends on the age and ability of the player. Build confidence by challenging them while allowing them to have success. Players should work on catching with the glove hand extended and the more difficult across-the-body catch. Instruct the players to run with their arms down in a running position until they need to reach up to make the catch. Two-handed catches are recommended if the player is under the ball and waiting. One-handed catches are encouraged when the player is on the run. **This drill has numerous benefits. It teaches players to keep arms down in running form when chasing a fly ball. It also helps players learn to judge the ball and gives them**



3-11: Football drill

