



Drills: Around the Horn

Goal:

To improve throwing and catching skills

Description:

Players divide into four groups, with one group stationed at each of the four bases. The first player in line should stand slightly behind the base and the other players in line should stand at least 10 feet away and to the side. A catcher is at home and starts with a ball in his glove. On your command, the catcher throws to first base. The first player in line catches the ball, pivots and throws to second. After throwing the ball, the player goes to the end of his line and the next player in line assumes the lead spot. As the first player in line at second base receives the ball from the player at first, he pivots and throws to third, and so on. The throws continue around the horn, and players should count aloud in unison each time a catch is made. When the ball is either mishandled on the catch or thrown wildly, the ball goes back to the base where the error occurred and the count begins again. As an incentive, you can require that on wildly thrown or missed balls, all players at the station where it was thrown or mishandled run after and retrieve the ball.

Throws can be clockwise or counterclockwise around the bases. On clockwise throws around the bases, right-handed fielders pivot to their glove-hand side and execute proper footwork before making the next throw; left-handed fielders catch and cross the left foot over the right before throwing. On counterclockwise throws around the bases, the opposite occurs. Left-handed fielders pivot to their glove-hand side before throwing, but right-handers do not. This drill can be executed using several variations.

Variations:

1. You call out a base while the ball is in the air, and players must react and move their feet accordingly to be able to throw to that base. You can also simply say, "Diagonal," requiring the receiving player to throw to the opposite diagonal base (home to second, first to third, and so on). If you say, "Reverse," the player returns the ball to the previous base.
2. You can create a game by counting the number of throws and catches made before a miss and challenging players to exceed the total, or you can count how many throws and catches players make in one minute.

