

# Baseball Drills

## All Around Drill

**Purpose:** Great drill for working the infield quickly and warming up. Great for teaching players how to back up the throw. "If you can't see the player who is making the throw to the position you are backing up, you are too close"

**Procedure:** Position a player at each infield position excluding pitcher and shortstop. Each base excluding the catcher has a backup who is positioned behind the base. Begin the drill with the catcher throwing to first, first throws to second, second throws to third, third throws to home. After a few minutes, reverse the drill home to third, etc. The players playing behind the bases should be lining themselves up to back up the throw. If there is an errant throw the back-ups should be ready to retrieve the ball and make the throw to the next base.

## All Drill

**Purpose:** Works on the outfield stopping the ball and making the throw into the infield. Works on base-running and sliding.

**Procedure:** Line-up three, four or five players at the following positions. Right field, first base and third base. The player's at first base take turns as base-runners and try to make it safely to third base. On the coaches signal, the player from first takes off heading for third base. Every time the runner gets to third base they need to go in sliding. The coach hits the ball behind the runner to the right fielder, the right fielder makes the stop and try's to throw the runner out a third. The third baseman needs to stop the ball and make a low tag. Rotate the players through after each turn. Player plays the same position -runner, right field or third base, through two rotations, before moving to another position.

## Batting Stance Drill

**Purpose:** To improve the hitter's batting stance thus improving the ability to hit.

**Procedure:** The hitter assumes the regular batting stance with the coach checking the placement of the feet, knees, hips, shoulders, head and eyes.

## Beginning Slide Drill

**Purpose:** Great sliding drill for teaching beginners how to slide.

**Procedure:** Line up your players in a single line, space arm length apart. Talk to them about the cadence of the slide. Left, right, left, sit. Then have the player's start walking left leg first, right leg, left leg and then have them fall to their butts with the right leg extended and the left leg folded underneath in a figure four. Once the players get better then begin having them slowly run the three steps, left, right, left, sit.

### Deadball Drill

**Purpose:** To reinforce the mechanics of throwing and to teach players to pick up a dead ball with their bear hand.

**Procedure:** Place players in single file at third base, shortstop, second base and home. Place a coach at first base. Place balls at each infield position and in front of home plate. Place balls in normal fielding positions. The third baseman starts the drill by picking up a "dead ball", crow hopping and throwing to first base, the shortstop follows the third baseman, then the second baseman, followed by home plate. (All throws are made to first base). The coach at first base receiving the throws should roll the ball back to the thrower the thrower will place the ball in its proper position and go to the back of the line. Rotate player groups from position to position after each player has thrown two or three times.

### Drop Drill Hitting

**Purpose:** To increase bat speed.

**Procedure:** The hitter takes his/her normal batting stance facing a fence or net that is about 6-8 feet away. The coach stands about 1-1/2 steps in front of the hitter so that the ball will drop directly in the contact zone out in front of the hitter. The coach simply drops the ball in the contact zone, the hitter must see the ball and hit it before it hits the ground with a level swing and proper stride. Begin dropping the ball from over the head and slowly begins dropping the ball from lower heights.

### Fence Drill

**Purpose:** Helps develop quicker bat swing by not extending .

**Procedure:** Setup your players against a solid surface, such as a chain link fence, that is at least six feet tall. A backstop, concrete wall, or brick wall will work, but a freestanding net will not. Position your players with their feet in a parallel stance a foot to a foot and a half away from the fence or wall. To check for proper distance, have the player reach out with their back arm and touch the fence. If they are in the correct position, their arm will be slightly bent. The object of the drill is to take as normal a cut as possible without making contact with the fence. It is important to go through the drill as slowly as possible the first few times. Have the players take a slow motion cut the first few times. The player should take a stride parallel to the fence.

### Ground Belly Load Drill

**Purpose:** Develops good mechanics for throwing.

**Procedure:** Players start from a distance of the normal base setting. I.e. (60 feet for little league, 90 feet for high school baseball). Infielders start with the glove on the ground with the ball in the glove and their throwing hand next to the glove. This helps the players learn to find the seams for throwing. On the coaches' command of belly the infielder brings the ball to their belly.

Skip step, load, and throw. Outfielders follow the same except they start with the ball in their glove above their head. (T-drill) Go hand in hand with this drill. Set-up two bats in the shape of a T. Throw starts with the pushoff leg on top of the T. Rhythm up to the ball using baby steps either 123 or 12. The receiver is in position when the throwing leg is below the top of the t and on the opposite side of the T from non throwing leg. Then the receiver will skip step and load up to throw. Instep should be shown to target..

### Hip Rotation Drill

**Purpose:** Helps the development of quicker hips and the relationship of hip speed to the entire swing.

**Procedure:** Place a bat behind the waist, horizontal to the ground, and use a glove as home plate. While holding the ends of the bat in the hands, assume a normal batting stance and watch an imaginary pitch being delivered. Execute a stride and quick turn using the bat to help turn the hips faster. Finish in the proper contact position.

### In The Dirt Drill

**Purpose:** To help base runners learn to read the trajectory of a pitched ball.

**Procedure:** Set players up at all three bases. They are independent of each other because each base has different rules for a ball in the dirt. A coach pitches from the mound and mixes in good and bad pitches to the catcher. Any time a ball is about to bounce the whole team yells "Dirt". This helps you make sure everyone is paying attention. Base runners on first should automatically go when the ball is in the dirt. Runners on second should react to the ball in the dirt by getting a good lead and deciding if they can make it safely to third. If the ball gets away from the catcher they should go, if the catcher digs the ball out of the dirt, they should return to second. Runners at third should follow the same principles as the runner at second, get a good lead, and then react to whether the catcher digs the ball out of the dirt or not.

### Lead and Follow Drill

**Purpose:** The lead hand swing allows a hitter to establish proper timing and power with the lead side of the body, giving the hitter proper contact with the ball. The follow hand swing establishes the feeling of throwing the bat at the ball.

**Procedure:** Setup a tee for hitting (soft-toss can also be used). When executing swings, the lead hand, you should concentrate on keeping the hand above the plane of the ball. If the lead hand drops under, a pop up, strike out or fly out will usually occur. The hitter must also turn the hips quickly for proper timing and power. The lead elbow should not extend fully before contact with the ball, since that will slow down the bat swing.

### Line Relay Drill

**Purpose:** To simulate throwing under game conditions. Works on proper execution of throwing and relay mechanics.

**Procedure:** Divide the team into groups of four. Place members of each group between 60 and 90 feet apart depending on age. Place first person on the first base foul line and spread the balance of players towards left field. Infielders should be in the middle two relay positions so they can practice relay moves. Player at the beginning of the line has the ball. On coaches command the players throw down and back a predetermined number of times. If an overthrow occurs or a ball is missed, the ball must return to the start of the line and the throw made accurately before the ball can be advanced.

### Load Fire Drill

**Purpose:** Helps develop and reinforce basic throwing fundamentals.

**Procedure:** Have players pair up for throwing at a distance of between 10 - 20 feet apart depending on age. This is just a simple throwing drill from one knee. When kids catch the ball the load up immediately and hold it. On command from the coach, the player will throw the ball to the partner. Emphasize high elbow up above the shoulder, front shoulder pointed at their partner, palm down. Players must load up for throwing and catch with both hands. Don't let players get lazy or this drill is a waste of time.

After a period of time, have the players stand and the thrower stands sideways to the receiver. Non-throwing shoulder in front. Emphasize loading up quickly. Hold until the coach gives the command. Knees bent slightly, feet slightly wider than shoulders. They are not stepping on the throw. On fire the thrower will pivot on feet and throw the ball with their shoulders changing places. Receiver needs to surround the ball so that they are catching on the throwing shoulder side. Receiver needs to move their feet to get into position.

### Long Ball Throwing Drill

**Purpose:** This helps develop arm strength and reinforces correct mechanics for making longer throws.

**Procedure:** Players partner up and line up about 10 feet apart to warm-up the arms while throwing. Gradually increase distance until they can no longer reach the receiver in the air without one hopping the ball. Emphasize loading up, using legs, crow hop, step in front on crow hop. Good mechanics, high elbow above the shoulder, palm down, snap wrist on follow through.

### One Knee Low Elbow Drill

**Purpose:** Helps develop and reinforce basic throwing fundamentals.

**Procedure:** Have players pair up for throwing at a distance of between 10 feet apart. This is just a simple throwing drill from one knee. This emphasizes the finish. Player does not load up on this drill but keeps the elbow in front of the body and snaps the wrist on the throw. Focus on grip (4 seams) and staying on top of the ball.

### Outfield Throwing Drill

**Purpose:** To develop the outfielders throwing accuracy and emphasize the importance of throwing the ball low and on the line. This drill also works on helping the players understand alignment.

**Procedure:** Make sure you work all fields; left, center and right. Start off with all outfielders in left field in a single line. Infield and catcher are in their normal positions. Start off by hitting a grounder down the left field line, outfielder fields the ball and throws to second base, then goes to the back of the line. After all fielders have gone through once, hit grounder to left center, outfielder fields the ball and throws to second base, once group has completed a cycle hit grounder directly to left fielder who will now throw home. Finally, hit a routine fly ball to the left fielder, who will again throw home. After the group has completed this cycle rotate to center field and repeat drill. During this time have the infielders play their normal back-up positions for an outfield hit. On throws to second, the second baseman should cover the bag, make the tag and then throw to third base. Third base will make the tag and then throw to first base. First base will cover the bag, catch the ball and throw to the shortstop. On throws to home, catcher should catch the ball, make the tag and then throw to the shortstop covering third base, who will make the tag and throw to first, first throws to second and second back to third.

### Pick-up Drills

**Purpose:** Works on good fundamental fielding.

**Procedure:** Have players partner up, one guy on knee no glove ball in hand. 10 feet apart. Partner has glove. Guy on his knee rolls the ball out about 10 feet to the side of the thrower. The receiver gets to the ball and fields it keeping shoulders somewhat squared to the roller. Then pick's up the ball brings it to the belly and then underhand tosses it back. Then they need to crossover and head in the other direction keeping their shoulders somewhat square to the roller. Emphasizing that they don't hop and they don't standup straight, keeping low. First step is important.

### Quick Hit Drill

**Purpose:** Helps to increase the strength and quickness of the hands for hitting. Great drill for getting a lot of cuts in.

**Procedure:** The hitter stands 12-15 feet from a screen or fence. The tosser kneels on one knee, 12 feet in front and to the side of the hitter and tosses the ball underhanded at a fast rate into the hitter's strike zone, so the hitter can take a full swing. The hitter swings hard at the ball, after each swing, the bat is rapidly returned to the ready position.

### Rocking Drill

**Purpose:** Helps plays develop an inward turn for more hitting power.

**Procedure:** Breakdown your players stance and inward turn, into a four step process. Position the hitters in their stance and have them begin rocking back and forth between the catcher and the pitcher, lifting each heel off the ground in a rhythm. The four steps are rock towards the pitcher, rock towards the catcher, rock towards the pitcher, rock towards the catcher. The motion is not exaggerated but very slight. As the players rock back and forth call out 1, 2, 3, 4 to help develop a rhythm.

### Star Drill Game

**Purpose:** Teaches the infield to concentrate on their throws and allows the coach to stress the importance of team work. If one player doesn't make a good throw, the outfielders need to be in a position to back up the bases.

**Procedure:** Position a complete infield, except for the pitcher, and a complete outfield. The drill starts with the coach hitting to the second baseman, the second baseman throws to third base, the third baseman throws to first base, the first baseman throws to the shortstop and the shortstop throws to the catcher. The whole time this is going on you have a runner run the bases. They leave at the same time as the coach hits the ball, Make sure that your infielders stay in their normal positions and do not start moving closer together. The runner is racing to get around all of the bases before the ball gets to the catcher. As your players will quickly learn, if they make good throws and catches they will easily beat the runner.

### Stride Drill

**Purpose:** Helps the player learn to automatically step to the ball, instead of stepping out of the box while hitting. After enough practice this will become a natural instinct.

**Procedure:** Have a coach lay face down (with a batters helmet on) and hold both ankles of the batter. The coach will control the batter's step and prevent the batter from stepping out of the box/ This will be uncomfortable for the batter, but a few reps every practice for awhile will payoff for those players who tend to bail out of the box.

### Top Hand/Bottom Hand Drill

**Purpose:** Works on releasing the hands to the ball.

**Procedure:** The top hand is the "power hand" in the swing. It starts out on top, trails the bat and lower hand as the hands go to the ball and eventually becomes the lower hand.

Take a light bat and hold it with the top hand only in the proper hitting position. Place your other hand across your chest. Take your bat directly down to the ball on the T without rolling over your wrist. Keeping your fingers visible, flip your wrist slightly to bring the barrel of the bat down at the point of impact.

The bottom hand is sometime referred to as the guide hand or action hand. It leads the way and provides the action in your swing.

Take a light bat and hold it with your bottom hand only in the proper hitting position. Take the knob of the bat directly to the ball on the T, you should be looking at your thumb knuckle. To complete the motion simply roll the wrist and forearm and continue the follow through up and over the shoulder.

### Watch The Ball Through Drill

**Purpose:** Teach players to watch the ball through as baserunners, before taking the next base.

**Procedure:** Line up a player at first base, shortstop, second base and in shallow left, center and right fields. Line-up remaining players in foul territory at first base. Start off the drill with a runner on first base. The coach hits to one of the fielders. If it's a fly ball to left field the runner at first should go half way between first and second and watch the ball to see if the fielder catches it. If the fielder catches it, then the runner should return to first. If the fielder misses it then the runner needs to continue to second base. Have the fielders play the ball live. Continue the drill with different base running situations and hitting to different areas of the field.

### Wrist Roll Drill

**Purpose:** To enhance bat speed and control by facilitating the maximum efficiency in "throwing" the bat at the ball.

**Procedure:** Players place themselves in the contact position, and then roll the bat forwards and backwards causing the bat to touch each shoulder as it completes a full arc. Players should only use their wrists and forearms to rotate the bat. You should be able to do about 60-80 wrist rollers in 1 minute.