



## THIRD BASE



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## INTRODUCTION

The third baseman can be one of your big, strong hitters. He must have a strong throwing arm to get the ball to first base accurately. He will be involved in many different situations like steals from second and bunts so he needs to be quick on his feet.

A dedicated and determined third baseman is willing to put in the effort to perfect his fielding skills. In this eBook, we'll go through 8 fun and effective third base drills that you can perform as part of a team practice, for individual or small group workouts, or in the back yard at home.

If you'd like to see all these drills performed live with step by step video instructions, you can upgrade to include the Ultimate Fielding Drills Online Video Clinic by going here:

<http://baseball-practice-plans.com/p/upgrade-fielding>

## THIRD BASE POSITIONING

There are three primary positions for specific situations that a third baseman must know.

### Position 1 or "IN" Position

This position is used for a lead-off hitter in an inning, a fast runner or a bunt situation.

- Position yourself even with the grass, approximately 6-8 feet in front of the bag.



Position 1 or "IN" Position

### Position 2 or "Double Play" Position

This position is used when the player needs to get the ball to second base as quickly as possible.

- Position yourself even with the back of the bag.



Position 2 or "Double Play" Position

**Position 3 or “Deep” Position**

This position is used with a slow runner, if a batter has two strikes, or any other situation where the baseman needs more room or needs to cover more area.

- Position yourself behind the bag 6-8 feet.
- The player can get back as far as his strength will allow. He must be able to make a strong, accurate throw from this position.



Position 3 or “Deep” Position

**Tight to the line, late in the game**

Additionally, with a tight lead late in the game, the player should be no further than one step and a dive from the line.

- Protect the line late in the game.
- Do not allow the runner to reach scoring position.

## THIRD BASE DRILLS

Drills are an excellent way to break down the basic fundamentals of fielding. They help build game skills and hone a player’s technique. Drills also help set a good tempo for the rest of practice or an upcoming game.

### Drills #1-6: Fielding Techniques for Third Base

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*Complete 10 repetitions of each drill*

**Purpose:** These drills practice six different fielding techniques that a third baseman will need to master to eliminate extra steps and get rid of the ball as quickly as possible.

**Setup:** The third baseman will be in position. A first baseman or net should be set at first. The coach will be at home either throwing or hitting balls to the third baseman. Ball, bats and gloves are required.

## Fielding Technique 1 - Slow Roller with a Slow Runner

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In this situation the player has a little extra time to get to the ball and get it to first base.

1. *The third baseman is holding the Ready Position at third.*
2. *The coach throws the slow rolling ball to the player.*
3. *The player charges and “rounds off” the ball by moving slightly to his right to get a better throwing angle on first base.*
  - Rounding off the ball forces the fielder’s momentum towards first base.
  - When his momentum is moving towards the first base, the fielder will make a stronger, more accurate throw.
4. *He fields it with two hands and momentarily holds the Breakdown Position, pulling the ball into the middle of his body.*
5. *He then makes the throw to first base.*



Fielding Technique 1 - Slow Roller with a Slow Runner

## Fielding Technique 2 - Slow Roller with a Fast Runner

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This scenario requires the third baseman to make a rapid throw to first base.

1. *The third baseman is holding the Ready Position at third.*
  2. *The coach throws the slow rolling ball to the player.*
  3. *The player charges and “runs through” the ball instead of pausing in the breakdown position.*
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- Field the ball on the outside of the left foot.

4. *He plants on right foot and throws on the run for a quicker release to first.*



Fielding Technique 2 – Slow Roller with a Fast Runner

### Fielding Technique 3 - Barehanded

This technique can be used when dealing with either a fast runner or a slow roller.

1. *The third baseman is holding the Ready Position at third.*
2. *The coach throws the slow rolling ball to the player.*
3. *The player charges and fields the ball with his bare hand.*
  - Eliminates the transfer of the ball from the glove to the throwing hand.
4. *He runs through the ball and throws off of his right foot for a quick delivery to first.*



Fielding Technique 3 - Barehanded

## Fielding Technique 4 - Backhand

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This technique involves making a quick, long, accurate throw to first base after fielding a ball to the third baseman's right.

1. *The third baseman is holding the Ready Position at third.*
2. *The coach hits a ball to the player's right.*
3. *The player fields the ball on the ground with a backhand catch.*
4. *He stays low while switching the ball to his throwing arm and makes a strong throw to first.*



Fielding Technique 4 - Backhand

## Fielding Technique 5 - Ball to Your Left

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The third baseman should take any ball he can to his left, a slow roller or a high chopper is a very difficult play for the shortstop.

1. *The third baseman is holding the Ready Position at third.*
2. *The coach hits a ball to the player's left.*
3. *The player slide steps to the left and fields the ball on the ground with both hands.*
4. *He sets his feet and makes the throw to first.*
5. *The shortstop backs up the third baseman.*

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## Fielding Technique 6 - Lead Throw on the Double Play

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This technique gets the ball to second as quickly as possible so that the second baseman can then get it to first.

1. *The third baseman is holding the Ready Position at third, even with the bag.*
2. *The coach hits a ball to the player.*
3. *The player fields the ball with both hands.*
4. *He jab steps with his left foot and squares his shoulders to the target before making the throw to second.*

### Coaching Tips:

- The infield will handle about 80% of the balls that are hit in a game. It is important for them to concentrate on the fundamentals of catching and throwing.

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## Drill #7: Bunt Responsibilities for Third Base

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### *Complete 15 repetitions*

**Purpose:** This drill focuses on bunt responsibilities. There will be times when the third baseman can charge the ball and some when he cannot so he must be able to read specific game situations.

**Setup:** The third baseman will be in position. The coach is nearby to direct. This drill does not need a live ball. Gloves are required.

### Execution:

#### Situation 1

Charging the Ball – Use this technique with no runners on base or a runner on first.

1. *The third baseman is holding the Ready Position at third.*
  2. *The coach calls “Go.”*
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3. *The player charges the ball hard and uses the Breakdown Position to simulate fielding the ball.*
  - Angle the approach to the ball by going to the right just a little bit.
  - This will allow you to throw to first immediately after fielding the ball.
4. *The player quickly simulates a throw to first.*
  - He must be ready to throw as soon as the ball is fielded.

### Situation 2

Runner on Second – Use this technique when there is a runner on second base.

- Third baseman must let the pitcher know when it's his responsibility to cover the line.
- In this situation the third baseman needs to cover the bag to protect it from the runner on second.
- The third baseman is only responsible for bunts that are out of the pitcher's reach (past the pitcher) in this situation.

### **Coaching Tips:**

- Remind players that it's never a mistake to get an out so don't ever let a ball just sit there because you think someone else is going to get it.
- Baseball is a game of communication so players MUST talk to each other.

## **Drill #8: Cutoff Responsibility and Technique Drill**

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*Complete 20 repetitions*

**Purpose:** This drill covers the proper footwork and body rotation needed to perform a fast cutoff and eliminate any unnecessary steps while turning and throwing the ball.

The third baseman is responsible for the cutoff of any ball hit directly to the outfielder or between the outfielder and the third baseline.

**Setup:** One throwing player should be set up in the outfield and the third baseman in his position. A teammate or net can be placed at home plate to catch the ball. Balls and gloves are required.

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**Execution:**

1. *The third baseman faces the player who is throwing to him and raises his hands to show a target to the throwing player.*
2. *The outfielder throws the ball.*
3. *The baseman begins to turn his body as the ball approaches.*
4. *He catches the ball and continues to turn his body in one fluid motion so he is facing his target.*

**Cutoff Responsibility and Technique Drill****Target Box****Catch and Turn****Turn and Throw****Coaching Tips:**

- Remind players that if their body is not turned while catching, the baserunner will gain two extra steps (six feet) while the baseman is repositioning himself to make the throw.
- This drill can be performed individually by holding a ball, practicing the turning technique and throwing to a net.

The third baseman must be constantly aware of the game situation and where the runners are so that he knows where the throw from the outfield needs to be played. Concentration is critical in this position.

These eight drills will help a third baseman perfect his skills so that he can successfully execute game-time plays flawlessly.

**Perfect practice makes perfect play!**

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