



24 Simple & Effective Drills for Throwing, Catching and Fielding

**Step By  
Step  
Workouts**

- Designed For Ages 8-18
- Quickly Builds Key Defensive Fundamentals
- Perfect for Back Yard or Small Space Workouts
- Solo, Partner, or Team Training

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## **THROWING & CATCHING DRILLS**

# 1.

## THROWING FOOTWORK PROGRESSION

### SETUP:

Set three cones in an open space, approximately 1 yard apart. Player begins facing the first cone.

### PURPOSE:

Outfielders learn proper footwork to gather themselves, plant, point the

#### Phase 1



Start



Hop and Run



Finish

#### Phase 2



Glove Down



Hop and Turn



Finish

#### Phase 3



Start



Hop and Turn



Finish

#### Phase 4



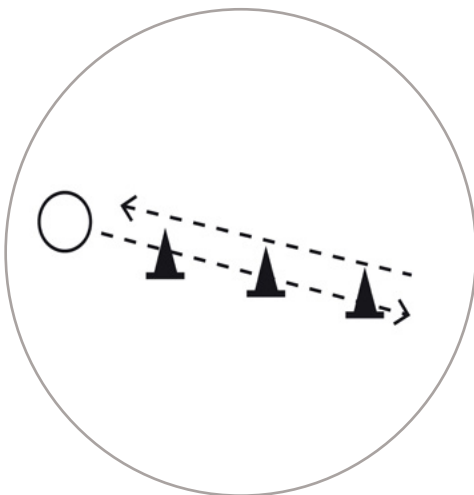
Glove Down



Hop and Turn



Finish



### INSTRUCTIONS:

- Progression 1** – Player hops over the cone leading with the throwing side foot (right foot for right handed players), then the glove side foot. Player lands with the body square to a target straight ahead. Repeat down and back.
- Progression 2** – Player hops over the cone leading with the throwing side foot. As he brings his glove foot through he turns his shoulders sideways. Repeat down and back.
- Progression 3** – Player continues the movement introduced in Progression 2 but now points his glove hand toward the target and raises his throwing hand up in the air into ready-to-throw position after turning sideways. Repeat down and back
- Progression 4** – Player lowers his glove to the ground prior to simulate fielding a ground ball, then goes through the complete motion introduced in Progression 3. Repeat down and back

### COACHING TIPS:

- Player should be landing on the balls of his feet.
- Have players go faster as they become more familiar with the drill.

## 2.

## TARGET DRILL

### SETUP:

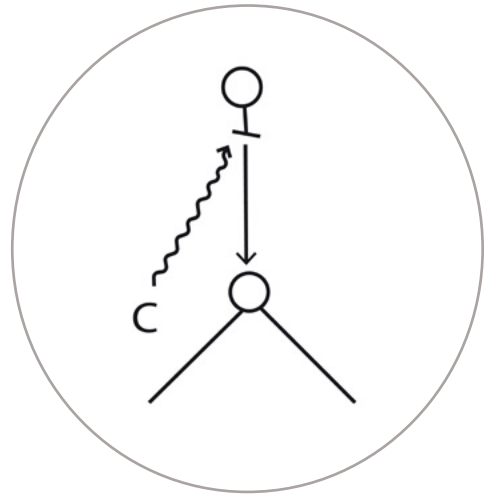
Player sets up in an open space or outfield. Another player sits on a stool roughly 20-30 yards away, standing beside a coach with a bat.

If you don't have an extra player, you can set up a target using a ball bucket or pop up net.



### PURPOSE:

Helps fielders make long, accurate throws to a target



Fielder plays the ball and throws it to the sitting target

### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Coach hits a ground ball or fly ball to the fielder who catches the ball and throws it to the player seated on the stool.
2. The throw must be within the square formed by the seated player's knees and shoulders or he lets it go by.

### COACHING TIPS:

- Outfielder should be getting behind the ball so that he is catching it with his momentum moving forward so that he can make a strong throw.
- Outfielder should be using his legs on the throw – planting with back foot and stepping forward. Also, watch for a good release point on the throw.

### 3.

## RUN THROUGH THE CATCH DRILL

### SETUP:

Set two cones approximately 3 yards apart, and a target 15-20 yards away. Coach and player stand behind the first cone.

### PURPOSE:

Outfielders learn to run through the catch to properly transfer to the throw.



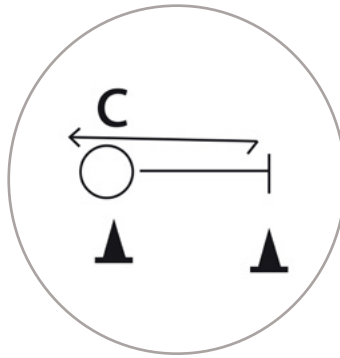
1. Player goes backward.



2. Player times the catch



3. Player makes the catch moving forward.



### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Player lines up at front cone.
2. Coach stands next to player with a softball in his hand.
3. Coach says, "Go."
4. Player goes backward to second cone.
5. Coach tosses softball into the air.
6. Player times his move forward so that he catches the ball as he is running, then makes an accurate throw to the target.

### COACHING TIPS:

- This drill is all about timing – player should keep his feet moving and explode forward through the ball so that he has momentum for the throw.
- After the catch the player should be bring his glove hand and throwing hand back like he is going to throw the ball.

# 4.

## HIGHLINER DRILL

### SETUP:

Player and partner stand roughly 10 yards apart. Adjust the distance for different skill levels.

### PURPOSE:

This drill helps players learn to make a leaping catch over their heads – useful for high line drives or bad throws for fellow fielders

Jumping to receive the catch



### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. The partner begins with the ball, and throws a soft line drive a few inches above the players head.
2. The player jumps up to catch the ball, then returns it to the partner
3. Repeat, increasing the height of the throw by a few inches each time, until the player needs to make a full jump and stretch to reach the ball with their glove.

### COACHING TIPS:

- You can also add in a base and practice coming down with your heels on the edge of the bag (especially useful for first basemen)





## **GROUND BALL & LINE DRIVE DRILLS**

# 5.

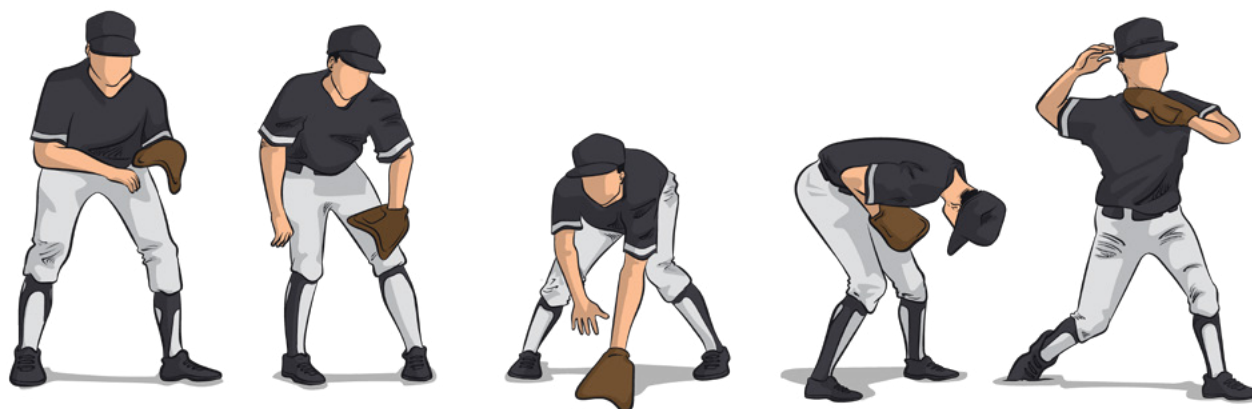
## FIVE STEP FIELDING DRILL

### SETUP:

Setup: This drill can be performed anywhere on the field with the coach standing near the player to call commands. This drill is performed without a ball, but a glove is needed.

### PURPOSE:

Purpose: This drill works on the skills needed to quickly and effectively field a ground ball. It breaks down five steps that help a player ensure controlled movements.



Creep Step

Charge

Breakdown

Field

Throw

### INSTRUCTIONS:

#### Part 1: Creep Step

- The coach calls "Creep" and the player steps into a creep position.
- Take a small step out with the right foot and then a small step out with the left foot. Feet are slightly wider than shoulder width apart. Keep hands open and ready.

#### Part 2: Charge

- The coach calls "Charge" and the player charges the ball by taking a few steps forward quickly and with control.

#### Part 3: Breakdown

- The coach calls "Breakdown" and the player moves into a position in which he begins to field the ball.
- Feet are wider than shoulder width apart. Keep head down. The glove hand rests on the ground while the non-glove hand is hovering above. The arms are extended to meet the ball.

#### Part 4: Field

- The coach calls "Field" and the player pulls into a fielding position.
- The player pulls the ball into his midsection, cradling the ball into his chest. Head stays down.

#### Part 5: Throw

- The coach calls "Throw" and the player stands up and throws.
- Steps with the right foot inside of the left. Squares shoulders, hips and knees toward target. Releases a strong throw.

### COACHING TIPS:

- Emphasize the importance of holding the non-glove hand above the glove during the Field Position (part 4).
- After the player masters the mechanics, move to a live drill with real balls

## 6.

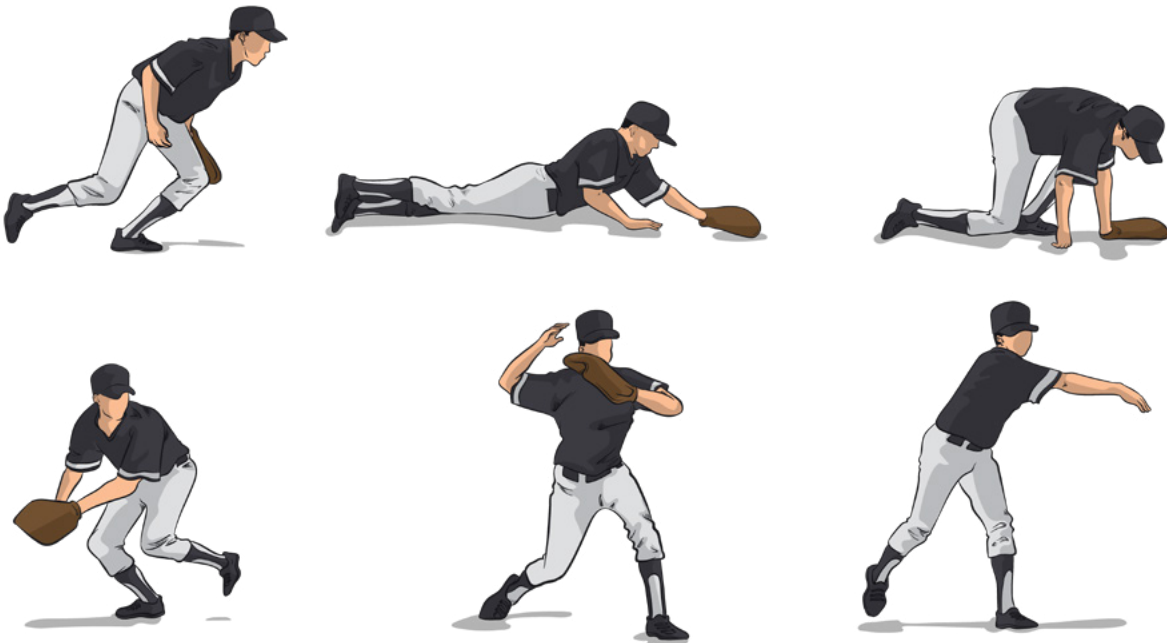
## DIVE PLAY DRILL

### SETUP:

This drill can be practiced anywhere on the field. The coach will be standing nearby to call commands. This drill can be done individually or with multiple players.

### PURPOSE:

This drill practices a situation in which a player must dive for the ball and **QUICKLY** return to his feet to make the throw. The focus of this drill is improving a player's reaction time.



### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. The player is waiting in the Ready Position.
2. The coach calls "Go."
3. The player takes one step to the side and makes the dive, stretching as far as possible.
4. He quickly pops up, squares his body to first base and simulates a throw.
5. Practice the dive play to both sides.

### COACHING TIPS:

- Practice without a ball until the technique is perfected.
- This is a good drill for players to practice individually to develop a quicker reaction time.

# 7.

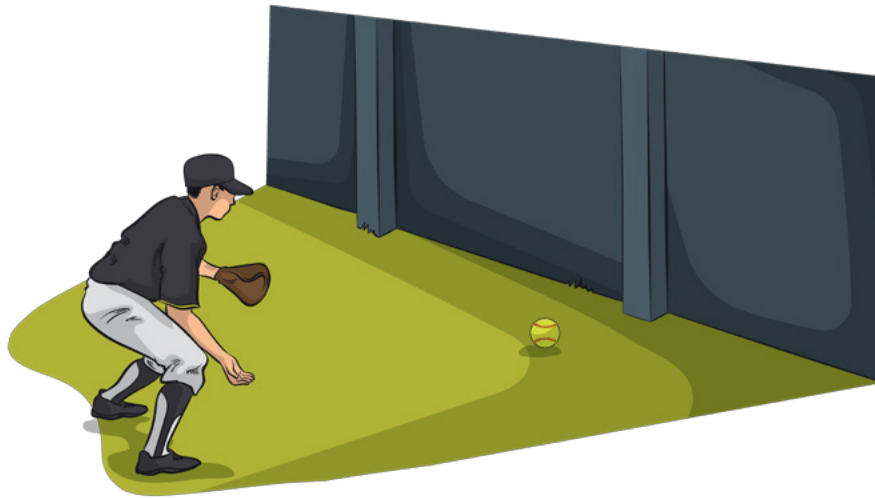
## WALL BALL DRILL

### SETUP:

This drill can be performed against any wall where it is safe to bounce a ball (back of the dugout, garage door, or concrete wall). A ball and glove are needed. A "bouncier" ball will come off the wall faster.

### PURPOSE:

This drill simulates fielding a short hop or a tough ground ball. It is an excellent drill for developing "hand quickness." Keep it fast-paced and fun by turning it into a competition between teammates.



### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. The player stands about 4 yards away from the wall in a low crouched position with his hands apart. (The closer the player is to the wall, the more quickly he will have to react.)
2. The player throws the ball against the wall and drops into fielding position.
3. The player slides to the right or the left to get in front of the ball and catch it. He cradles the ball into his body as he catches it.
4. If the ball goes to the right, the player must use a backhand catch. If the ball goes to his left, the player will use a forehand catch.

### COACHING TIPS:

- To increase difficulty, a partner or coach can throw the ball against the wall instead of the player
- Create short hops by throwing the ball high off the wall, so it bounces directly in front of you
- Create a line drive by throwing the ball off the ground first. It will bounce off the wall and come straight back on the fly.
- This drill can be set up as a team competition by lining up the entire team against the wall. If a player drops a ball he is out. Play until there is only one player left.

# 8.

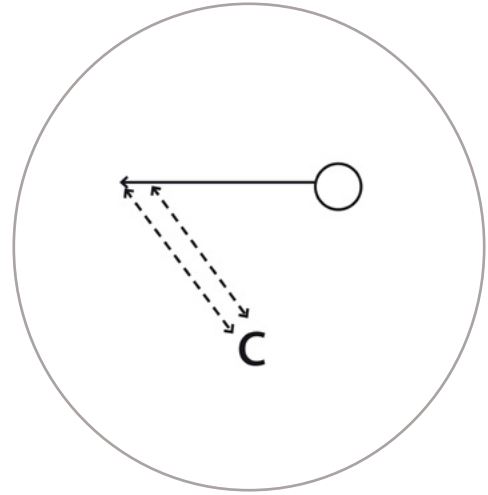
## LINE DRIVE DRILL

### SETUP:

Player and coach line up 5 to 10 yards apart.

### PURPOSE:

Outfielders work on catching the line drive and then transferring their weight toward the target.



Start



Sprint



Catch



Throw

### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Coach says, "Go."
2. Player takes off sprinting across the outfield.
3. Coach throws a line drive in front of the player.
4. Player catches the ball on the move, plants, turns and throws it either back to the coach or to another player stationed in the outfield.
5. Run the drill in both directions.

### COACHING TIPS:

- Outfielder should be planting hard and then shifting his feet toward the target and throwing.
- The stride foot, or glove foot, should be pointed straight toward the target.
- Outfielder must decelerate quickly and then throw his weight back in the direction he came (back toward the target).





**FLY BALL DRILLS**

# 9.

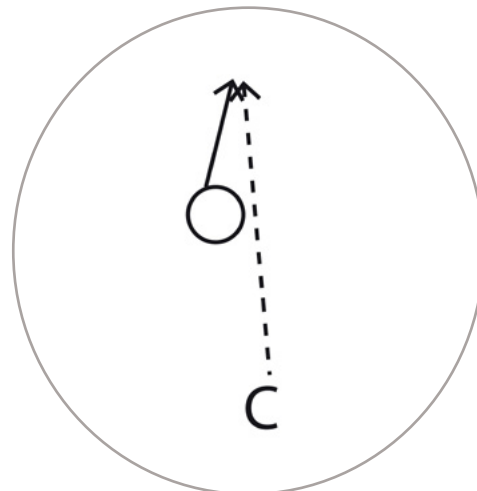
## BAREHAND DRILL WITH SOFTIEBALLS

### SETUP:

Player and coach stand roughly 10-15 yards apart in an open space.

### PURPOSE:

Outfielder works on seeing the ball into his glove (or glove hand in this case).



Start



Run Back



Barehand Catch

### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Coach throws a ball past the outfielder who must turn and run to catch it.
2. Outfielder catches the ball barehanded with their glove hand and brings it back.
3. Next player goes.

### COACHING TIPS:

- Throw the ball to both sides so the outfielders work on their over-the-shoulder skills in both directions.
- Players should only be using their glove hands to catch.
- Players should be watching the ball all the way into their hands.

# 10.

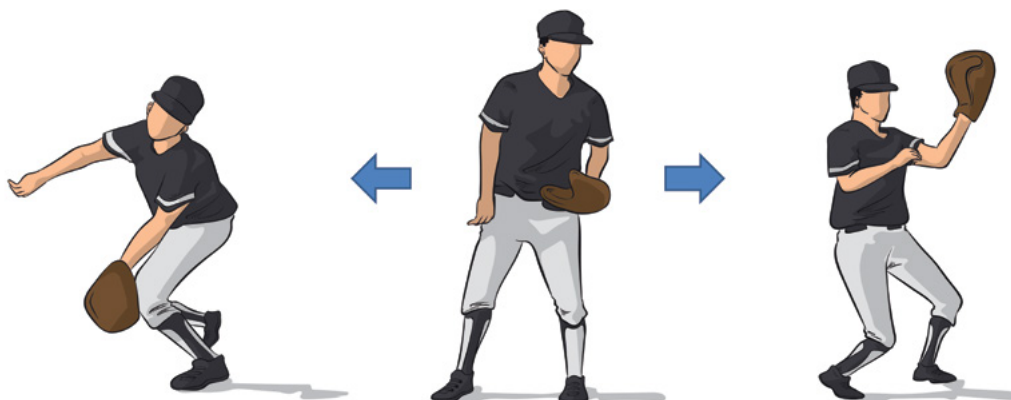
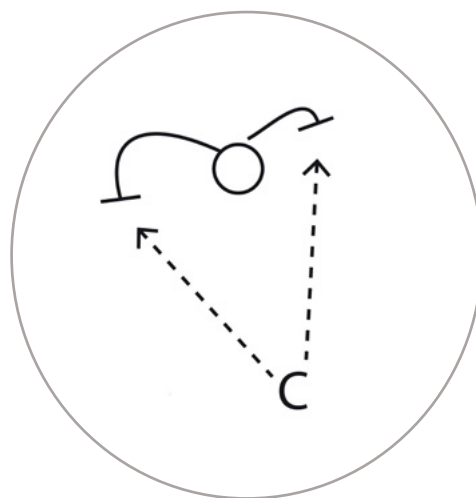
## TWO BALL DRILL

### SETUP:

Player and coach stand roughly 10-15 yards apart in an open space.

### PURPOSE:

Improves outfielder's reaction to the ball. Also, a good conditioning drill.



Outfielder runs from side to side catching the ball.

### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Coach throws a ball to the outfielder's left, he runs over, catches it and throws it back.
2. Now coach throws a ball to his right. He runs over, catches it and throws it back.
3. Drill continues with coach alternating which side of the outfielder he throws the ball to.

### COACHING TIPS:

- Coach should throw a mix of fly balls, line drives and ground balls.
- Outfielder should be getting behind the ball when possible and using good footwork to have momentum going forward with his throws.

# 11.

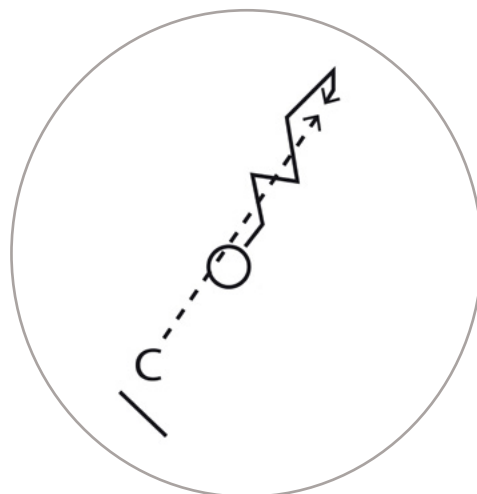
## CROSSOVER DRILL

### SETUP:

Player and coach stand roughly 10-15 yards apart in an open space.

### PURPOSE:

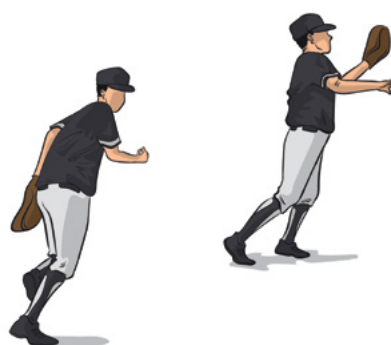
Outfielders practice making adjustments on a fly ball.



Drop Step



Crossover



Drop Step

Catch

### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Coach throws a fly ball over the fielder's head.
2. As fielder runs back to catch it he practices taking a drop step and crossing over.
3. Depending on the height of the ball he should execute this maneuver 1 to three times.
4. After that player catches the ball, the next player goes.

### COACHING TIPS:

- A common mistake outfielders make is crossing the path of the ball – this drill teaches them how to recover so that they are in perfect position to make the catch.
- When running back, players should be pumping their arms and keeping their legs driving.
- When going back on a ball the outfielders' toes, waist and chest should all be facing the outfield fence. Only their head should be turned so that they can look back at the ball.

# 12.

## SHORT POP DRILL

### SETUP:

Player and coach stand roughly 5 yards apart in an open space.

### PURPOSE:

This drill works on improving a player's "foot quickness" when a ball is hit behind him. Focus on avoiding unnecessary steps in order to reach the ball as quickly as possible.



Player fielding a throw over his left shoulder



### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. The first player in line jogs to a position a short distance in front of the coach.
2. The coach throws the ball behind the player either to the right or left.
3. The player calls for the ball ("MINE, MINE, MINE"), hesitates long enough to see which direction the ball is going and drop steps in that direction to make the catch.
4. If the ball is thrown over his left shoulder he should drop step to the left for the catch. If the ball is thrown over his right shoulder he should drop step to the right and go with a backhand catch (if he is right-handed).
5. The player throws the ball back to the coach and returns to the back of the line.
- 6.

### COACHING TIPS:

- Make sure every player is hesitating long enough to see which direction the ball is going before he takes a single step. This will help him get to the ball faster than if he accidentally starts to run the wrong way and has to correct his direction.
- As a player's skill increases, increase the distance of the thrown ball.



# 13.

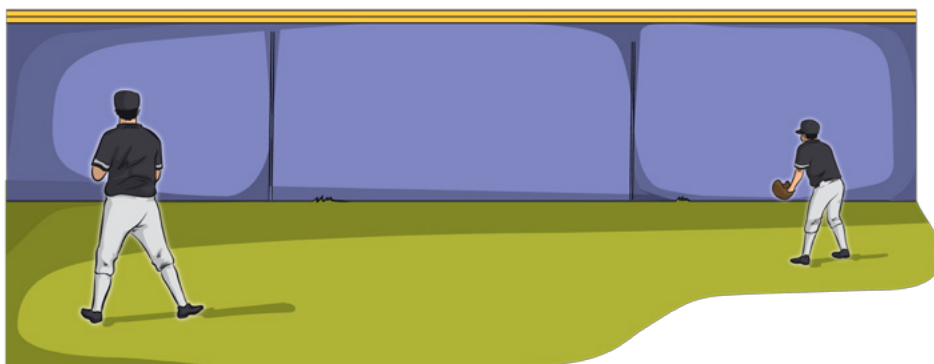
## BLIND DRILL

### SETUP:

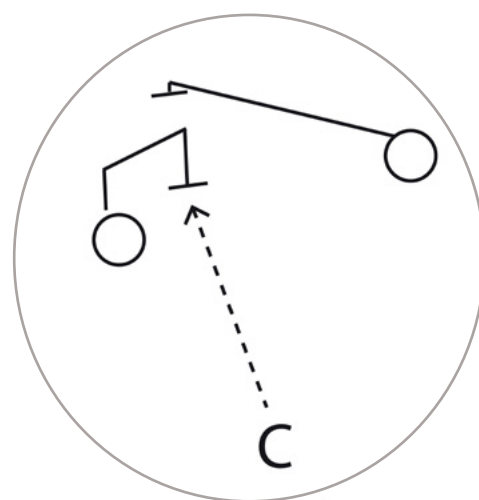
Player and coach stand roughly 20 yards apart in an open space. The player has his back to the coach.

### PURPOSE:

Helps fielders quickly locate a fly ball in the air and get a good jump on it. Stresses good communication among the outfielders.



Outfielders stand with backs to coach



Outfielder catches the ball with second outfielder backing the play up.

### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Coach says, "Go" and tosses a ball in the air.
2. The fielder turns and turn and finds the ball in the air, then runs to catch it before it hits the ground.
3. If you are running this drill with two players, they should first communicate with each other as to who is going to catch it. The outfielder who is not catching the ball should assume a backup position.
4. Outfielder catches the ball and throws it back to the coach.

### COACHING TIPS:

- Outfielders should be calling loudly for the ball – "ball, ball, ball" or "mine, mine, mine" or "I got it, I got it, I got it" or something similar.
- The centerfielder is "the king of the outfielders" and overrules the other two.
- Outfielders should be catching the ball with glove foot forward so they are positioned to make a good strong throw.

# 14.

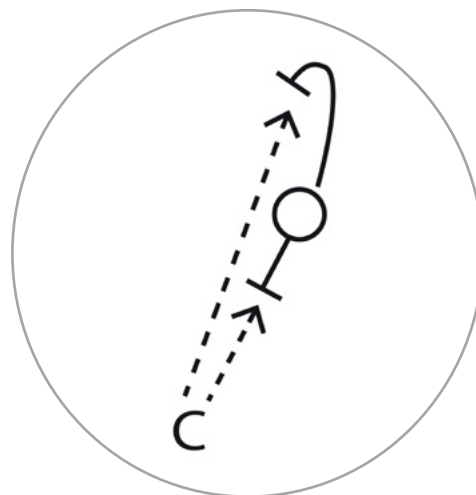
## CHARGE/DROP DRILL

### SETUP:

Player and coach stand roughly 10-15 yards apart in an open space.

### PURPOSE:

Outfielders work on catching both the ball hit in front of them and the ball hit behind them.



Start



Running in to make the catch



Dropping back to make the catch

### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Coach alternates between throwing the ball in front of the player so that he has to charge in and make the shoestring catch and throwing it deep so that he has to turn his shoulders and run back to catch it.
2. Drill continues until coach says, "Stop."

### COACHING TIPS:

- When going back on a ball the outfielders' toes, waist and chest should all be facing the outfield fence. Only their head should be turned so that they can look back at the ball.

# 15.

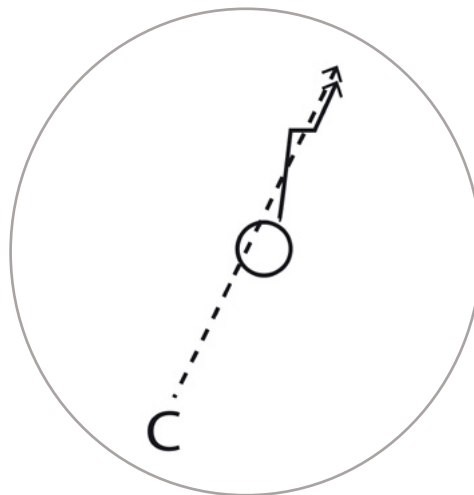
## BLIND PIVOT DRILL

### SETUP:

Player and coach stand roughly 10-15 yards apart in an open space.

### PURPOSE:

Outfielders practice taking their eyes off the ball and switching their view to the opposite shoulder.



Running Back



Blind Pivot



Find ball over opposite shoulder



Catch

### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Coach throws a high, deep fly ball.
2. As outfielder runs back he takes his eyes off the ball and switches his view to the opposite shoulder.
3. He then picks the ball back up with his eyes and gets into position to make the catch.

### COACHING TIPS:

- Remember, when outfielders are running back on a ball their toes, waist and chest should all be pointed toward the outfield fence.
- Outfielders should be making a quick turn of the head – from looking over one shoulder to looking over the other.

# 16.

## THE SLICE DRILL

### SETUP:

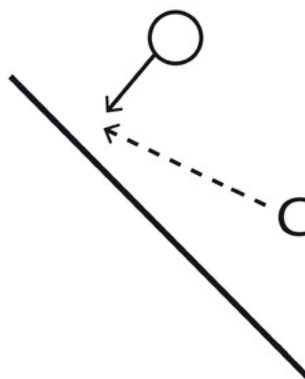
Player and coach stand roughly 10-15 yards apart in an open space.

### PURPOSE:

Outfielders work on fielding a ball that is slicing away from them.



Fielding a slice down the left-field line.



### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Coach throws a ball away from the outfielder.
2. If the outfielder is in right field the ball is thrown toward the right field foul line to simulate a slice hit by a right-hand batter.
3. If the outfielder is in left field the ball is thrown toward the left field foul line to simulate a ball hit by a left-hand batter that is tailing away.
4. Player runs and catches the ball.
5. After that player catches the ball, next player goes.

### COACHING TIPS:

- On this type of ball, the outfielder needs to run lateral and in to get to the ball before it hits the ground.
- Outfielders should really be pumping their arms and they must not ease up as the ball will be running down and away from them.

# 17.

## SHOESTRING CATCH DRILL

### SETUP:

Player and coach stand roughly 10-15 yards apart in an open space.

### PURPOSE:

Outfielders work on making the shoestring catch on balls hit in front of them.



Outfielder charges in to make the shoestring catch.



Outfielder works on charging in and catching balls in the air and balls that have hit the ground in this drill.

### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Coach throws a ball in front of the outfielder.
2. Outfielder charges in and tries to make the shoestring catch.
3. Once he catches the ball he rolls it back to the coach and then runs back out to his outfield position.

### COACHING TIPS:

- Outfielder should keep glove extended at knee height and have eyes on the ball. He should then shovel the glove out to catch the ball.
- Reassure outfielders that if the ball hits in front of them it won't bounce higher than knee height.
- Players should work on catching both balls in the air and that have bounced off the ground.



# 18.

## THE FENCE DRILL

### SETUP:

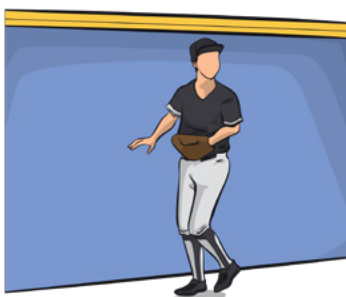
Outfielder sets up 5-10 yards from a fence or wall. If you don't have access to a fence, place a row of cones marking the location of the fence for the purpose of this drill.

### PURPOSE:

Outfielders work on playing the ball at the fence.



Running back



Finding the fence



Catch

### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Coach throws a ball high and deep.
2. Outfielder turns and runs back.
3. He finds the fence and then leaps (or comes forward) and makes the catch.
4. Next outfielder goes.
5. After the high and deep throws, outfielders work on catching the ball that "threads the needle" between the outfielder and the fence.

### COACHING TIPS:

- On the high and deep balls the outfielder should be feeling for the fence with an outstretched arm.
- When attempting to catch a "thread the needle" ball the outfielder should be using his peripheral vision to see the wall – it will get bigger as he gets closer to it.

# 19.

## THE SUN BALL DRILL

### SETUP:

This drill is best run on a clear, sunny day. Player and coach stand roughly 10-15 yards apart in an open space. The player should be facing the sun while the coach has his back to the sun.

### PURPOSE:

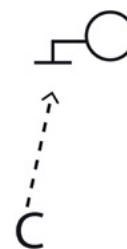
Outfielders learn to field a ball that has been hit into the sun.



Shielding his eyes from the sun.



Catching the ball



Players work on seeing the ball that's hit into the path of the sun.

### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Coach throws a ball up into the air so that the outfielder has to look in the direction of the sun to track it and catch it.
2. Player uses his glove as a visor to shield his eyes from the sunlight as he tracks the ball.
3. Player gets into position and makes the catch.

### COACHING TIPS:

- Most important thing for outfielders to remember is the ball is staying on a straight path as it goes up to its highest point and then descends. So outfielder should follow the path of the ball even when it goes up into the sun as it will come back out along that same line.
- Player should keep his eyes underneath his glove as he tracks the ball.



## **MULTIPLAYER FIELDING DRILLS**

# 20.

## BACKUP DRILL

### SETUP:

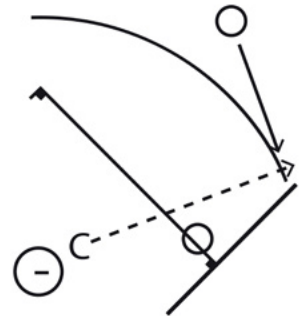
One player sets up in an outfield position and one player sets up in an infield position.

### PURPOSE:

Outfielders work on getting into proper backup position.



Outfielder backs up the overthrow.



Outfielder backs up the overthrow.

### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. When Coach says "Go" the outfielder runs to the backup position
2. Coach throws a ball over the infielder's head and the outfielder must be in position to back up the play.
3. Outfielder fields the ball and throws it quickly back to the infield

### COACHING TIPS:

- Outfielder should keep head up and be in a controlled sprint so that he can see the play developing in front of his.
- Drill can be run from a variety of positions, for example: first base and right field, third base and left field, second base and center field, etc.
- Right and left fielders should work on playing the ball off the side fence.

# 21.

## RELAY DRILL

### SETUP:

Outfielder lines up about 5 yards from the outfield fence. A coach stands on the edge of the infield.

An additional player stands in the infield, roughly 30-40 yards from the outfielder.

### PURPOSE:

Outfielders practice throwing to the relay person after a ball gets past them.



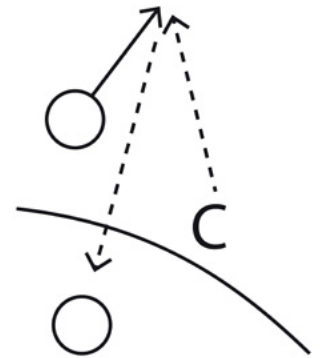
Chasing after the ball



Fielding the ball



Throwing to relay person



Outfielder gets the ball and throws it to the relay person.

### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Coach rolls the ball past the outfielder to the wall.
2. Outfielder turns and runs and gets the ball.
3. He makes an accurate throw to the relay person.

### COACHING TIPS:

- Outfielder should field the ball with his weight on his back foot.
- He should grab the ball with his glove and his throwing hand – he should never pick the ball up barehanded the margin for error is too high.
- Front shoulder is pointed directly at target when throwing.
- A good throw will come in chest or head high to the relay person.



## 22.

## CUTOFF DRILL

### SETUP:

One player or coach starts with the ball in the outfield. The other player is at one of the infield positions. A teammate or net can be placed at home plate to catch the ball.

### 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.



Receiving the throw



Catch and turn



Turn and throw

### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. The infielder 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.

### 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.

## 23.

## INFIELD/OUTFIELD COMMUNICATION

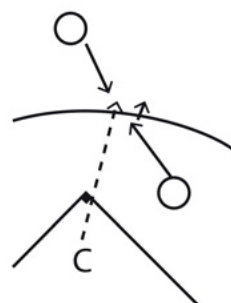
### SETUP:

One player sets up in outfield position and one player sets up in infield position. Coach stands near the pitchers mound.

### PURPOSE:

Players work on fielding a ball that's been hit into the "gray area" between the infield and outfield.

Players communicate to determine who is going to catch the ball.



Starting position.

### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Coach throws a ball into the area between the fielders
2. The fielders converge and the one with the best opportunity to field the ball calls for it and catches it.

### COACHING TIPS:

- Rule of thumb is the infielder goes back on the ball until he is called off by an outfielder.
- Drill can be run from a variety of positions, for example: first base and right field, third base and left field, second base and center field, etc.

# 24.

## GAP COMMUNICATION DRILL

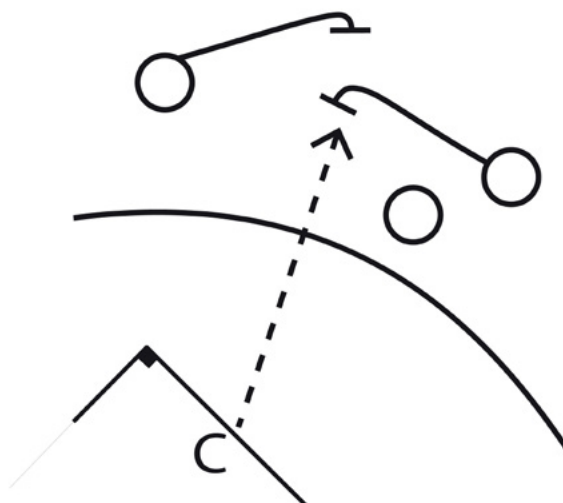
### SETUP:

Two outfielders set up in the outfield.  
Coach stands with a bat in the infield.

### PURPOSE:

Outfielders work on communicating on balls hit into the gap.

Outfielders work on communication in this drill.



### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Coach hits balls between the two outfielders who must communicate and field them.
2. Outfielder who is called off the ball goes into backup position.

### COACHING TIPS:

- In this drill you should designate a center fielder. Rule of thumb is if two players are calling for the ball it's the center fielder's ball.
- Outfielders should call the ball at deep flight and they should call it multiple times.
- Outfielders should pump their arms as they run to the ball for increased speed.
- Players should never call the ball for someone else, only for themselves.
- Backup outfielder must take care not to overrun the play.