



SHORT STOP



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INTRODUCTION

The shortstop must be the LEADER of the infield. He's the one that directs traffic and lets people know where they are supposed to be. He is the heart and soul of the defense.

The shortstop will handle 60-70% of all balls that are hit so he must be sure-handed and cannot be afraid to make the big play.

In this eBook, we'll go through 8 fun and effective shortstop 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>

SHORTSTOP 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.

Drill #1: Lead Throws Drill

Complete 5 repetitions of each variation

Purpose: This drill practices three different lead throws from the shortstop to the second baseman. The shortstop must understand how to get the ball to the second baseman quickly and effectively to turn the double play.

Setup: The player should be at the shortstop position. The coach will be half way between the mound and second base, throwing balls to the player. A partner or net should be set up at second base. This drill can be run through rotations with multiple players. Balls and gloves are required.

See these drills on video --> <http://baseball-practice-plans.com/p/upgrade-fielding>

Execution:**Lead Throw 1**

Swivel Throw— This technique should be used when a hard-hit ground ball goes directly to the shortstop.



Lead Throw 1 – Swivel Throw

1. *The shortstop fields the ball in the Breakdown Position.*
2. *After receiving the ball he swivels his feet, opens his body and drops his right knee.*
 - Do not pick your feet up when making the throw.
3. *He whips his arm to gain velocity and throws a slightly uphill ball, aiming for the second baseman's chest.*

Lead Throw 2

Flip Throw— This technique is used when the ball goes to the shortstop's LEFT, placing him a short distance from the second baseman.

1. *The shortstop fields the ball in the Breakdown Position.*
2. *He calls "Flip!" so the second baseman is aware that the ball is coming.*
3. *He flips the ball while taking steps toward the second baseman.*
 - Keep a stiff wrist and chest high feed.

Lead Throw 3

Backhand Throw – This technique is used when the ball goes to the shortstop's RIGHT. This is a difficult technique to execute so it requires extra practice.



Lead Throw 3 – Backhand Throw

1. *The shortstop keeps his right foot forward as he backhands the ball.*
 - He won't need to take any unnecessary steps if he can draw strength from that right leg.
2. *He will then swivel toward the second baseman.*
 - Do not stand up before throwing; stay in a semi-crouched position.
3. *With knees still bent, he throws the ball slightly uphill to the second baseman.*

Coaching Tips:

- Remind players not to rush the throw. A successful out is better than an error when trying for a double play.
- Always use proper fielding and throwing techniques with every drill.

Drill #2: Receiving Positions Drill

Complete 5 repetitions of each variation

Purpose: This drill covers three different footwork methods at or around the bag when receiving the ball either from the second baseman, first baseman or a ground ball.

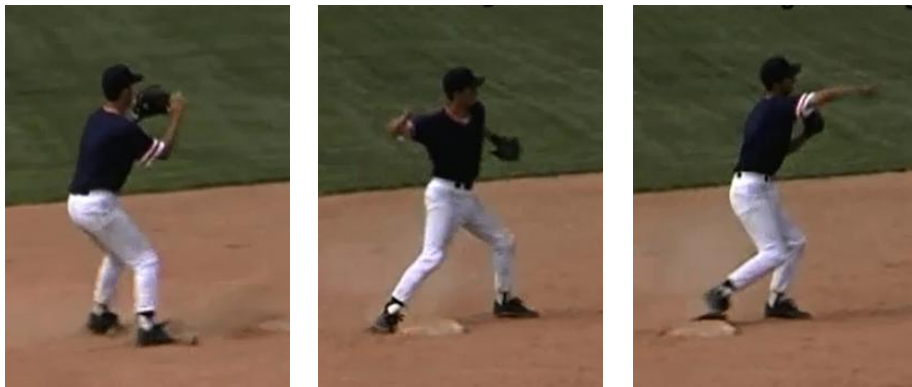
Setup: The shortstop player should be in his position. The coach will be standing nearby to direct the drill. This drill can be done individually or in a rotation of multiple players. This is a dry drill so no balls are used; gloves are required.

Execution:

Receiving Position 1

Outside of Bag - The player receives a throw from the second baseman.

1. *The coach calls "Go!"*
2. *The player runs to outside of the bag and keeps his feet moving with chop steps.*
 - Always hold hands up showing a target box.
3. *He then calls for the ball, "Two, two, two!"*
4. *The coach simulates a thrown ball to the player.*
5. *The player simulates a catch and tags the outside of the bag with his right foot right as he makes a simulated throw to first base.*



Receiving Positions 1 – Outside of Bag

Receiving Position 2

Inside of Bag - The player receives a throw from the first baseman that will take the shortstop to the inside of the field.

1. *The coach calls "Go!"*
2. *The player runs to the bag and keeps his feet moving with chop steps.*
 - Always hold hands up showing a target box.
3. *He then calls for the ball, "Two, inside!"*
4. *The coach simulates a thrown ball to the player.*

5. *The player simulates a catch and tags the inside of the bag with his left foot right as he makes a simulated throw to first base.*

Receiving Position 3

Take it Yourself – Used when the shortstop fields a high chopping ground ball down the center of the field.

1. *The coach calls “Go!”*
2. *The player gets into the Fielding Position close to second base.*
3. *The coach simulates a thrown ball to the player.*
4. *The player simulates a catch.*
5. *He takes the necessary steps to the plate and plants his left foot on the back of the plate.*
 - *Use the plate as protection from the baserunner.*
6. *He simulates a throw from behind the plate.*



Plant Left Foot to Throw

Coaching Tips:

- Remind players not to stand on the bag. Make contact with the bag just after receiving the ball and always avoid the baserunner.

Drill #3: Double Play Drill (with a ball)

Complete 10 repetitions of each variation

Purpose: This drill uses the three receiving positions, with a live ball, to replicate double play scenarios.

Setup: The shortstop player should be in his position. The coach will be standing nearby to throw balls to the player. This drill can be done individually or in a rotation of multiple players. A net or catcher should be near first base. Balls and gloves are required.

Execution:

1. Repeat all three parts of Drill #2, but use a live ball.

Coaching Tips:

- Players can perform this drill alone by holding a ball, instead of catching it, and throwing to a net.

Drill #4: Holding Runners on Second Base Drill

Complete 10 repetitions

Purpose: This drill practices the technique used to hold a runner on second base. The object of holding runners on base is to keep runners as close to the bag as possible. Do not allow him to get a good jump on third.

Setup: The player should be in his position at shortstop. A teammate will play the part of the runner. Gloves are required.

Execution:

1. The shortstop creeps closer to the runner and pops his glove.
 - Pop glove- hit your fist into your glove, making a loud noise, to force the runner to move back to the bag.
 - The natural reaction is for baserunner to move back to the bag when he hears footsteps.
2. Quickly scoot back into a Fielding Position.

Coaching Tips:

- The shortstop must be able to field his position while holding a runner on base.
- Be sure to designate which fielder will work primary coverage in specific batting situations. (Ex. Left-handed hitter, power hitter, etc.)

Holding Runners on Second Base Drill



Creep Close to Runner



Pop Glove



Return to Fielding Position

Drill #5: Covering Second Base on a Steal Drill

Complete 15 repetitions

Purpose: This drill practices the correct technique used to cover second base during a steal situation. There must be good communication between the second baseman and the shortstop.

Setup: The second baseman and shortstop should both be in position. The coach or catcher will be at home plate, throwing balls to the player. Balls and gloves are required.

Execution:

1. *The coach throws the ball to second base.*
2. *The shortstop breaks hard for the bag to receive the throw.*
 - Straddle the bag when receiving a throw, it allows for a quicker ball release.
 - Use the bag as a shield from the baserunner.
 - Do not step forward, in front of the bag. There is a tendency to run out to the ball and then bring it back. This is a much slower technique and will put the baseman in the line of the runner which will only result in injury.
3. *The player not receiving the throw (the second baseman in this drill) must quickly drop behind into the backup position behind the primary receiver in case of an overthrow.*
4. *The shortstop catches the ball and throws it back to the catcher or coach.*

Coaching Tips:

- Remind players to ALWAYS backup the player receiving the throw from the catcher. You never know when the ball might be overthrown or the receiving player may miss the ball.

Drill #6: Cutoff Responsibility and Technique Drill

Complete 10 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.

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

Execution:

1. *The shortstop 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 shortstop 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.

Drill #7: Decoying Runners Drill

Complete 15 repetitions

Purpose: This drill replicates a first and third situation in which the second baseman slides forward to decoy the runner on third while the shortstop makes the catch at second base.

The goal of this play is to get the runner on third to hesitate for just a split second so the shortstop can make the throw to home and double that runner up.

Setup: The second baseman and shortstop should both be in position. The coach will be on the mound throwing balls to the players. Balls and gloves are required.

Execution:

1. The coach says "Go!" and the second baseman breaks for the front of the bag while the shortstop goes to second base.
2. The coach throws the ball.
3. The throw passes the second baseman, but he pretends to catch the ball, pops his glove loudly and sets himself up like he's going to make the throw to third base.
 - He is trying to freeze the runner on third base long enough to make plays at second and home.
 - This works because it is difficult for the baserunner to see who has the ball.
4. The shortstop actually makes the catch and tags second base.

Decoying Runners Drill



Second and Shortstop in Position



Second "Pops" Glove While Shortstop Catches and Tags Base

Coaching Tips:

- This is a simple but very effective drill. Practice routine plays until they become habit.

Drill #8: Dive Play Drill

Complete 10 repetitions to each side

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.

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. Gloves are required.

Execution:

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.*



Dive Play Drill

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.

These eight drills will build the skills needed to be an effective and successful shortstop. The better your technique is in practice, the better your play will be come game time.

The shortstop must lead the outfielders. Remind them of the number of outs after each batter and keep up team morale.

Be a leader!

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