



# YOUTH BASEBALL INSTRUCTION AND PRACTICE MANUAL

DEVELOPED BY THE HOUSTON ASTROS MLB YOUTH ACADEMY

THE ASTROS  
FOUNDATION





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# THE ASTROS FOUNDATION



The Houston Astros Foundation operates the Houston Astros MLB Youth Academy. The Academy provides free baseball and softball instruction, life skills training and academic support to all Houston area youth, with a focus on serving inner-city and at-risk children and teens.

The Academy aims to set the standard for instruction, teaching and education in America, as well as enhance the quality of life in the surrounding communities. The Academy shares its knowledge with youth baseball and softball leagues in the Greater Houston Area.

The Academy staff has combined their research, experiences and resources as players, coaches, and instructors to create an instructional guide to assist league coaches. This manual serves as a basic template for coaches who instruct at a beginner and advanced level for youth. We hope it will assist you in creating not only Future Astros players but Future Astros Fans as well.

Best Wishes,

Daryl W. Wade  
Academy Director





**PART 1: HOW TO RUN A PRACTICE**



# PRACTICE OUTLINES

90 MINUTE - 2 HOUR PRACTICE TIME

The “How to Run a Practice” is a template for practices. Each practice begins the same and can be tailored with drills and team/group workouts to fit the needs of the team.

Most practices should be broken down into four basic fundamental categories – each designed to teach and develop those skills necessary for more consistent execution of all phases of baseball play.

**1 - Throwing:** Proper grip, good arm angle, footwork. Warm up!

**2 - Fielding:** Position of feet, position of glove, footwork (fielding and around bag), reading ball off bat and hops.

**3 - Hitting:** Selection of bat, proper grip, stance and pitch selection. This is also a good time to teach other hitting skills such as bat control for situation hitting and bunting.

**4 - Running:** Probably the most overlooked part of practices by managers of most youth teams. Good base running produces more runs and more wins. Also, it conditions and teaches mental toughness and discipline to players.

## PRACTICE SCHEDULE TEMPLATE 1

<b>1 - Stretching and Running</b>	15 MIN
<b>2 - Get arms loose for throwing</b>	15 MIN
<b>3 - Group fielding exercise</b>	20 MIN
<b>4 - Infielders</b>	
a. SS-2B turning double plays	10 MIN
b. 2B-SS turning double plays	10 MIN
c. 3B fielding balls, throwing to 1B	10 MIN
d. 1B fielding balls, throwing to 2B	10 MIN
<b>5 - Outfielders</b>	20 MIN
Take fly balls	
Take ground balls	
Practice throwing to the cutoff man	



# PRACTICE OUTLINES

90 MINUTE - 2 HOUR PRACTICE TIME

## PRACTICE SCHEDULE TEMPLATE 2

- |  |        |
|--|--------|
| <b>1 - Catchers and Pitchers</b>   | 20 MIN |
| a. Catchers throwing through to 2B   |        |
| b. Pitchers covering 1B, fielding ground balls and throwing back to 2B   |        |
| <b>2 - Quick Infield and Outfield</b>  | 10 MIN |
| <b>3 - Hitting and Bunting Groups</b>  | 60 MIN |
| <b>a. First Round</b>  |        |
| • 2 bunts (1B and 3B lines)  |        |
| • 7 swings from the right hand batters hitting to right side of field.   |        |
| • 7 swings from the left hand batters hitting to left side of field.   |        |
| <b>b. Second Round</b>   |        |
| Double the amount of perfectly executed swings from the first round and continue hitting to the right side of the field for the rest of the round. |        |
| <b>c. Third Round</b>  |        |
| Double the amount of perfectly executed swings from the first two rounds for the last round of free swings.  |        |
| • Bunting in the cage  |        |
| • Player bunts 5 down to 1B  |        |
| • Player bunts 5 down to 3B  |        |
| <b>e. If time permits practice more free swings</b>  |        |
| • End of practice – base running   |        |
| • Single   |        |
| • Double   |        |
| • Triple   |        |
| • Home Run   |        |



# STRETCHING ROUTINE

## WARM-UP

- Jog around field or run foul pole to foul pole
- Alternative: jumping jacks or similar exercise

## STRETCHES

### Standing Stretches

- **Arm Circle Rotations** – Forward/backward (big circles, small circles).
- **Arm Stretch Across Chest** – Grab right elbow with left hand and pull opposite arm across chest; repeat with opposite arm and hand.
- **Arm Stretch Behind the Head** – Grab right elbow with left hand and pull right arm down behind head reaching for the middle of the back; repeat with opposite arm and hand.
- **Forearm Stretches** – Grab first 3 fingers of right hand with fingers facing upward and pull back on fingers stretching the wrist and forearm; repeat with opposite hand.
- **Oblique Stretches** - Stand with legs spread slightly past shoulder width, lift right arm straight in the air parallel to head and body, lean to the left taking your right hand over your head, and stretch the right side of your body; repeat with opposite side.
- **Torso/“Trunk” Twists** – Stand with legs spread slightly past shoulder width, bring arms up shoulder width high parallel to the ground, twist and rotate side to side warming up the hip and waist area.
- **Hamstring Stretches** – Bring feet together, bend over and touch toes; cross right foot over left, bend over and touch toes; cross left foot over right, bend over and touch toes.
- **Hamstring Stretches (2)** – Spread legs as far as possible, reach right hand down to left foot toe and stretch; repeat for opposite side.
- **Groin Stretches** – Spread legs as far as possible, lean to right side and stretch left leg groin; repeat on opposite side.
- **Hip Flexor Stretches** – Lean forward with right leg into lunge position with right knee bent at 90 degrees, stretch front side of left hip by straightening left leg; repeat for opposite side.





# STRETCHING ROUTINE

## Ground Stretches

- **Quad Stretches** – Sit on ground and pull right leg back into a bending position, lean back stretching the front of the thigh; repeat for opposite leg.
- **Hamstring and Lower Back Stretches** – Spread legs, bend right leg in toward left leg, touch left toe with right hand, stretch; repeat for opposite side.
- **Groin Stretches** – Bend both legs inward, place feet together, press knees down with both elbows, stretch groin in between legs.
- **Glute/Butt Stretches** – Bend right knee in toward chest, bend left knee outward placing left foot on top of right knee, pull both legs toward chest, stretching right butt cheek; repeat for opposite side.
- **Back Stretches** - Spread both legs forward putting feet together, pull right leg toward chest and place right foot over left knee, place left elbow over right knee, rotate back and upper body to the right, and look backwards, stretching the back; repeat for opposite side.



# STRETCHING ROUTINE

## SHOULDER EXERCISES

A proper exercise program can enhance an athlete's level of performance and can accelerate the body's recovery process. This shoulder exercise program is a simple series of exercises that prepares the body for overhead activities, including baseball, softball, tennis and swimming. Incorporating this 15-minute program into your training session can help decrease the chance of injury and should be an essential component of every shoulder workout routine.

### Standing Shoulder Exercise Series

**25 REPS**

Exercises 1 through 4 should be performed in a continuous series.

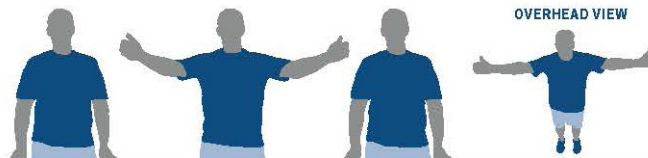
- **Exercise 1: Anterior Shoulder Raise**

Stand up straight, palms down. Raise arms up forward parallel to the ground. Slowly return arms to start position.



- **Exercise 2: Anterior Shoulder Raise at 45°**

Stand up straight, thumbs up. Raise arms up at 45° parallel to the ground. Slowly return arms to start position.



- **Exercise 3: Lateral Raise**

Stand up straight, palms down. Raise arms up to the side parallel to the ground. Slowly return arms to start position.



- **Exercise 4: Suitcase Lift**

Stand up straight, hands at side. Lift elbows back squeezing shoulder blades together. Slowly return arms to start position.



• **Exercise 5: Horizontal Adduction**

25 REPS

Stand up straight, arms out to the side parallel to the ground. Bring arms toward each other, crossing over elbows. Slowly return arms to start position, repeat alternating top arm.



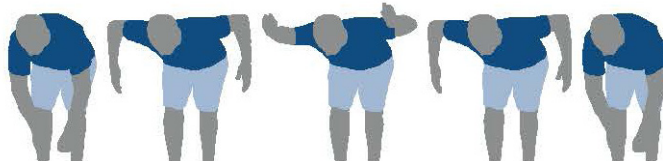
**Prone Shoulder Exercises**

Can be done while lying face down on a table, or while standing by bending forward at the waist 90° with a flat back.

• **Exercise 6: Prone Touchdown**

25 REPS

Bend forward at waist, lift elbow to 90° flexion. Thumbs up, raise hands parallel to ground, squeezing shoulder blades together. Slowly return arms to start position.



• **Exercise 7: Prone "T"**

25 REPS

Bend forward at waist, thumbs up. Lift hands out parallel to the ground, squeezing shoulder blades together. Slowly return arms to start position.



• **Exercise 8: Prone "Y"s**

25 REPS

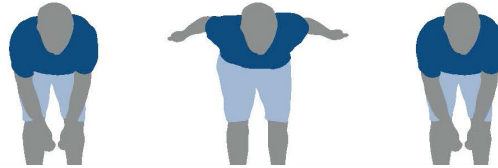
Bend forward at waist, thumbs up. Lift hands up at 120° parallel to the ground, squeezing shoulder blades together. Slowly return arms to start position.



• **Exercise 9: Ski Jumper**

25 REPS

Bend forward at waist, palms down. Lift hands back parallel to the ground, squeezing shoulder blades together. Slowly return arms to start position.



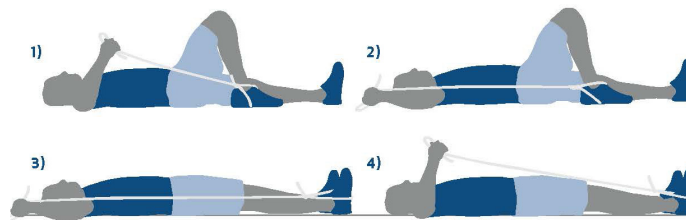
**Supine Exercises**

To be done while lying on back. Equipment needed: tubing and towels or bolsters.

• **Exercise 10: Load and Lower External Rotation With Tubing**

25 REPS

- 1 - Apply band to foot and grab other end with hand, lie on back with elbow and shoulder at 90°, knee bent.
- 2 - Externally rotate shoulder.
- 3 - Extend knee.
- 4 - Slowly lower the shoulder while maintaining elbow position over 3–5 seconds.



• **Exercise 11: Supine Bridges**

25 REPS

Lie on back, elbows bent at 90°, place towels under upper arms. Squeeze shoulder blades together, lift off the table. Slowly return to starting position.



• **Exercise 12: Supine Bridges (Arms Rotated)**

25 REPS

Lie on back, elbows bent at 90° and shoulders externally rotated, place towels under upper arms. Squeeze shoulder blades together, lift off the table. Slowly return to starting position.





# STRETCHING ROUTINE

## SHOULDER EXERCISES

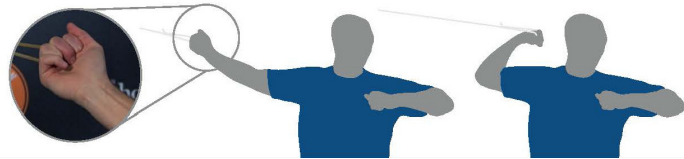
### Standing Biceps Curls With Tubing

Stand with feet in throwing position. Equipment needed: tubing.

- **Exercise 13: Supination Biceps Curl**

25 REPS

In throwing stance, grip band with palm facing toward you. Flex elbow. Slowly return to starting position.



- **Exercise 14: Pronation Biceps Curl**

25 REPS

In throwing stance, grip band with palm facing away from you. Flex elbow. Slowly return to starting position.



Video demonstrations of each exercise can be viewed at [houstonmethodist.org/overhead](http://houstonmethodist.org/overhead)



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# THROWING PROGRESSIONS

## BEGINNER

- **Position 1: ONE KNEE THROWING** – 3 Count steps (glove knee up)
  - 1 = Ball in glove at chest.
  - 2 = Ball four-seam grip, throwing elbow high above shoulder, wrist turned out with loose wrist, glove pointed towards target's chest.
  - 3 = Throw the ball, pull glove to chest, and follow through with throwing elbow over glove side knee.
- **Position 2: ONE KNEE THROWING** – No count; continue same technique has position one
  - 1 = Ball in glove at chest.
  - 2 = Ball four-seam grip, throwing elbow high above shoulder, wrist turned out with loose wrist, glove pointed towards target's chest.
  - 3 = Throw the ball, pull glove to chest, and follow through with throwing elbow over glove side knee.
- **Position 3: SQUARED THROWING** - Standing legs spread, feet/toes pointing towards target, no step
  - 1 = Ball in glove at chest.
  - 2 = Ball four-seam grip, throwing elbow high above shoulder, wrist turned out with loose wrist, glove pointed towards target's chest.
  - 3 = Throw the ball, pull glove to chest, and follow through with throwing elbow over glove side knee.
- **Position 4: POWER THROWING** - Standing, legs separated, feet/toes pointing inside with throwing arm behind you, no step
  - 1 = Ball in glove at chest.
  - 2 = Ball four-seam grip, throwing elbow high above shoulder, wrist turned out with loose wrist, glove pointed towards target's chest.
  - 3 = Throw the ball, pull glove to chest, and follow through with throwing elbow over glove side knee.
- **Position 5: CROSSOVER THROWING** – Regular throwing and catching with proper feet technique

Standing facing partner, take step forward with throwing arm foot, crossover with opposite foot. While stepping go through throwing technique with upper body: point at target, lift arm elbow above shoulder, four-seam grip, wrist turned out, throw while pulling glove to the chest, all one fluid/constant motion.
- **Position 6 LONG TOSS (optional)** – 90 feet or longer, no more than 120 feet

Two shuffle steps and throw to partner long distance while going through upper body throwing technique.  
Begin walking in after 15 – 20 throws.  
Stop at 60 feet and one hop throws to get arm angle back down from longer throws.  
End with 20 – 30 foot regular crossover throwing drill.



# THROWING PROGRESSIONS

## ADVANCED

- **Position 1: One Knee Throwing** – 3 Count steps (glove knee up)
  - 1 = Ball in glove at chest.
  - 2 = Ball four-seam grip, throwing elbow high above shoulder, wrist turned out with loose wrist, glove pointed towards target's chest.
  - 3 = Throw the ball, pull glove to chest, and follow through with throwing elbow over glove side knee.
- **Position 2: One Knee Throwing** – No count; continue same technique has position one
  - 1 = Ball in glove at chest.
  - 2 = Ball four-seam grip, throwing elbow high above shoulder, wrist turned out with loose wrist, glove pointed towards target's chest.
  - 3 = Throw the ball, pull glove to chest, and follow through with throwing elbow over glove side knee.
- **Position 3: Squared Throwing** – Standing legs spread, feet/toes pointing towards target, no step
  - 1 = Ball in glove at chest.
  - 2 = Ball four-seam grip, throwing elbow high above shoulder, wrist turned out with loose wrist, glove pointed towards target's chest.
  - 3 = Throw the ball, pull glove to chest, and follow through with throwing elbow over glove side knee.
- **Position 4: Power Throwing** - Standing, legs separated, feet/toes pointing inside with throwing arm behind you, no step
  - 1 = Ball in glove at chest.
  - 2 = Ball four-seam grip, throwing elbow high above shoulder, wrist turned out with loose wrist, glove pointed towards target's chest.
  - 3 = Throw the ball, pull glove to chest, and follow through with throwing elbow over glove side knee.
- **Position 5: Crossover Throwing** – Regular throwing and catching with proper feet technique  
Standing facing partner, take step forward with throwing arm foot, crossover with opposite foot. While stepping go through throwing technique with upper body: point at target, lift arm elbow above shoulder, four-seam grip, wrist turned out, throw while pulling glove to the chest, all one fluid/constant motion.



# THROWING PROGRESSIONS

## ADVANCED

- **Position 6: Fielding Position** – Players simulate throwing from the position they play
  - Outfielders throw from ground ball fielding position – glove leg forward, glove on ground in front of glove leg with ball in glove, bring ball to throwing hand while “crow hopping”/ crossing throwing arm leg forward and “hopping”/gaining momentum forward, throwing toward partner, and following through until ball reaches target.
  - Outfielders throw from fly ball position simulating outfield “working through” a fly ball and throwing to cut off man – same steps as ground position.
  - Infielders throw from ground ball fielding position – ball in glove and glove on ground in front simulating fielding a ground ball, player brings ball to throwing hand, crosses legs over moving toward partner, throws ball and follows through until ball reaches target.
- **Position 7: Long Toss (every other day)** – 90 Feet or longer, no more than 120 feet
  - Two shuffle steps and throw to partner long distance while going through upper body throwing technique.
  - Begin walking in after 15 – 20 throws.
  - Stop at 60 feet and one hop throws to get arm angle back down from longer throws.
  - End with 20 – 30 foot regular crossover throwing drill.





# BATTING PRACTICE

With batting practice the coach should want to incorporate everyone. In this segment you should have four stations going: Live, Tee, Bunt, and Shagging/Fielding.

- **Station 1: Live** – In the live station you will have 5 rounds.
  - **Round 1: Bunt Round**
    - In the bunt round coaches need to make sure the players bunt with a purpose.
    - Sacrifice bunt to 1st base side
    - Sacrifice bunt to 3rd base side
    - Squeeze
    - Drag down 3rd base side
    - Push to 1st base side
  - **Round 2: Situational Round** (2 pitches per situation)
    - Hit and Run – Batter must swing and make contact on any pitch thrown. Must protect the runner.
    - Hit behind the runner – Runner on 2nd. Hit the ball to the right side of the diamond to get him to third.
    - Sacrifice Fly – Runner on third. Batter needs to get a deep fly ball so the runner can score.
    - Base Hit
  - **Round 3: Opposite Field Hitting Round** (8 Pitches)
    - Teaching the players to control their bat head and pitch selection is a key in this round of batting practice.
  - **Round 4: 2 Strikes Round** (8 Pitches)
    - Teaching players to go down with a fight. Choke up on the bat for better bat control and take nothing close.
  - **Round 5: “Drive the Runner In” Round** (8 pitches)
    - This round is for the player to pick those pitches he can drive around the ball park for base hits and RBI’s
- **Station 2: Tee** - Tee station is where the players can hone in on their fundamentals to their swing.
  - High Tee – Work to keep their hands on top
  - Low Tee – Work on taking hands to the low pitch not dropping the back shoulder
  - Outside – Work on staying inside the baseball and driving it to opposite field
  - Back Leg Drive - As the player finishes his swing through, the back leg will then come up and through and driving that back side through.



# BATTING PRACTICE

- **Station 3: Bunting** – Bunt station is where the players focus on their bat angles and getting the ball down
  - Sacrifice bunt to 1st o Sacrifice bunt to 3rd o Drag bunt to 3rd
  - Push bunt to 1st
  - Squeeze
- **Station 4: Shagging/Fielding**
  - Players shagging and fielding while live station is going on should approach every pitch as if they are in a game setting. This is the best practice for getting ready for live game like action.



# PART 2: OFFENSE



# HITTING DRILLS

- **Drill 1: High Tee**

This drill is used to make the player keep his hands on top of the pitch. Set the tee inside, middle or away at its highest point. Player must hit the ball and not the tee. The flight of the ball should be a line drive.

- **Drill 2: Low Tee**

This drill is used to make the player stay down and through the low pitch. This drill is an imperative drill to a hitter's success. A pitcher's out pitch is usually going to be the low outside pitch. If a hitter can learn how to handle this pitch with success he could become a great hitter. Set the tee right at the knees or below the knee. On low pitches you have to let the ball travel a little deeper. Set the tee a little further back than usual. Player must hit the ball hard aiming not to roll over on the pitch.

- **Drill 3: Outside Pitch**

This drill is used to make the player stay on the baseball longer and drive it to the opposite field. Learning how to handle this pitch will increase the success of a hitter dramatically. Set the tee on the outer third closer to the catcher around the belt area. Player must drive the ball to the opposite field. Player must stay on and through the baseball (as if trying to reach the other side of the baseball) to hit the baseball to the opposite field with authority. Draw or mark a line and player needs to stay on or a little below that mark.

- **Drill 4: Leg Drive**

This drill is used to make the player drive his backside through the baseball. Set the tee up down the middle around belt high level. Player will hit the ball and bring his back leg up into a knee up position after his swing. This is a simultaneous motion. This will really emphasize driving that back hip through and using his legs in his swing.

- **Drill 5: Soft Toss**

This drill is used to increase focus on mechanics, hand and eye coordination. This will take a batter, partner or coach and bucket of balls (cage is recommended). Batter will set up in his stance on a plate and partner or coach will sit on the bucket next to batter. Coach/partner will toss the ball in different locations for the batter to hit. Batter must make adjustments to the pitch and hit the baseball. Batter should not look up for where the baseball was hit. His head should stay down at contact. Coach should stress this point, so the hitter will get in the habit of seeing the ball to contact.



# HITTING DRILLS

- **Drill 6: Front Toss**

This drill is used to start seeing the ball in flight coming at the batter. This drill will take a batter, a tosser, L screen and a bucket of balls. The front tosser will go in, out, up and down with the pitches. The ball should be tossed under hand and on a line. Batter should focus on hitting the ball back through the middle of the cage on a line drive. Batter should also focus on staying inside the baseball. Batter should really focus on his mechanics and what he learned from the tee drills and soft toss drills.

- **Drill 7: Back Toss**

This drill is used to help the batter stay behind the pitch. This drill will take a batter, tosser and a bucket of balls. The tosser will sit behind the batter and toss the pitch (same as front toss). Batter will have to stay back and behind the ball to drive the ball back through the middle of the cage. If player leans forward any, his back will lag and he will not hit the ball where he should. This will really force the player to stay behind the baseball.

- **Drill 8: Two Ball Toss** (advanced)

This drill is used to really increase the hand-eye coordination. Coach or partner will get two baseballs and stack them on top of each other. He will toss the baseballs at the same time (like a soft-toss). Batter will hit whatever baseball the coach or partner says hit. Batter will really have to concentrate on the baseballs while listening to the command from the coach or partner. To accomplish this drill the player must really concentrate on the task at hand.



# BASE RUNNING PROGRESSION

- **Drill 1: Hard 90 Feet Run**

Players will start at home plate. Players will take a dry swing (no bat) and run through the 1st base bag. As they hit the front of the bag, they will break down and look to the foul territory (right hand side) for an over thrown baseball.

- **Drill 2: Double**

Players will start at home plate. Players will take a dry swing (no bat) and run for a double. Players should make a wide enough bow approaching first so they will be inline (as best) with second. Players should stop on the bag, not over run 2nd base.

- **Drill 3: 2nd to Home**

Players will take their lead and then progress into their secondary lead and head home (focusing hitting the inside corner of the 3rd base bag).

- **Drill 4: Base Hit**

Players will start at home plate. Players will take a dry swing (no bat) and run towards first base, round the bag and go back to the bag under control. Players will then stay at 1st base.

- **Drill 5: 1st to 3rd**

Players will take their lead and then progress into their secondary lead and head towards 3rd base (looking up at their coach midway between 1st and 2nd and again after hitting 2nd base). As players approach the 3rd base, the coach can either tell them up or down/slide.

- **Drill 6: Tag from 3rd**

Players will take their lead. Coach will clap to signify a pop-up and the player will return back to 3rd base. Coach will then signify if the ball is hit in left, center, or right. Coach will then clap again signifying a caught ball and the player will then sprint towards home.



# BASE STEALING

Base stealing is all about reading the pitcher and getting the best jump on the pitcher as possible. In this segment you will have drills on the best way to steal that next base.

- **Drill 1: Reading the Pitcher** (Righty)

Read the pitchers front foot – When the pitchers front foot lifts, he has to go home.

Read the pitchers back foot – If the pitchers back foot lifts, he has to step off.

Read the pitchers front shoulder (advanced) – Many right handed pitchers stand a little open to see the runner at first. If this is so, once the pitcher begins to turn that shoulder inward, he has to deliver the pitch.

- **Drill 2: Reading the Pitcher** (Lefty)

First Move – The first movement you see from the pitcher you steal. If he picks and come over, player will go inside of baseline to disrupt the first basemen vision.

One Way – As the pitcher lifts his leg, player will do a slight jab back to first and steal once the pitcher is committed. This is usually used when the hit and run is on.

- **Drill 3: Stealing From Second**

Walking Lead (advanced) – Player will take two steps back towards outfield and three regular steps for their lead. As the pitcher begins their pitching progression the player will begin to walk (slowly/gradually) back towards the baseline while gaining (slowly/gradually) ground towards 3B. Pitch is delivered player steals.

- Straight Steal – Player will take a regular three to four step lead inside of the baseline. Player will keep moving at all times.

- **Drill 4: Leading Off From 1B**

Player will step off with the left the get into their base stealing position without crossing their feet over. When the player is set, they will take a two and half to three step lead (depending on the player). Once pitcher comes set, player may choose to take another half step. Player feet should not be lined up straight. The right foot should be offset behind the left foot. This will create an easier path for the hips to clear and clear path to the base.



# SPEED & AGILITY DRILLS

When it comes to speed and agility, it's all about sudden burst, engaging those fast twitch muscles and anticipation. These drills will enhance your ability to use your speed in the most efficient manner.

- **Drill 1: "Jimmy Rollins"**

The Jimmy Rollins drill is all about sudden burst. The player is to start on a marked starting place (foul line) in an athletic position. Jumping high as possible and bringing knees to the chest three times. On the third jump once the player touches the ground he/she will take off. The player should not wait until they touch the ground and settle. As soon as their feet come into contact with the ground, they should take off in a sprint about 45 to 60 feet out. This drill will engage vertical explosion to a linear explosion using those fast twitch muscles once engaged with the ground on the final jump.

- **Drill 2: Ladder Drills**

- **One Foot In**

The starting position will be facing the ladder. You will then step one foot in each square, similar to a running motion except you utilizing quick feet.

- **Two Feet In**

Face the ladder. You will then place one foot in the square, followed by your other foot in the same square. Repeat this pattern in each square.

- **Two Foot in Lateral**

On this exercise, you will start at the beginning of the ladder except your right or left side will be facing it. You will then step in the square with your lead foot, followed by the other foot in the same square. Continue this pattern in each square.

- **"Ickey Shuffle"** (front and backwards)

The player will begin by standing next to the ladder looking down to the end of it. The player will step into the first square with his lead foot, followed by the outside foot. He will then step to the outside of the second square with his lead foot. The player will follow by stepping into the second square with the trail foot. Step with the lead foot into square two. Continue this pattern all the way to the end of the ladder. Once the player masters doing this drill forward proceed to challenge them with doing it in reverse.

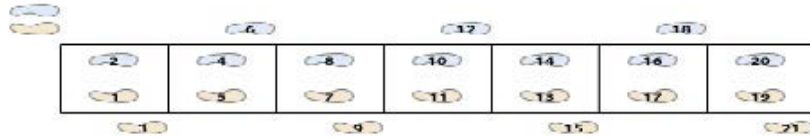




# SPEED & AGILITY DRILLS

## • In, In, Out, Out

The player will begin by facing the side of the ladder. Starting with whatever foot is closest to the beginning of the ladder, the player will step in the square followed by the other foot. He will then step back out with the lead foot, followed by the other. Repeat this motion all the way down, and back.



## • High Knees

The starting position will be looking down the ladder. Perform high knees with each foot going into each square. Work on speed and explosion.

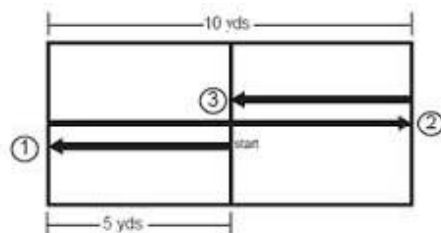
## • 1 Foot Hip Rotation

This is a great agility exercise for developing better hip rotation in baseball. The player will start by facing the side of the ladder. Step your right foot into the square while rotating your hips to the left. He will only use his right foot, in and out all the way down the ladder. Switch to your left on the way back. Really exaggerate rotating the hips.

## • Drill 3: Shuttle/Cone Drills

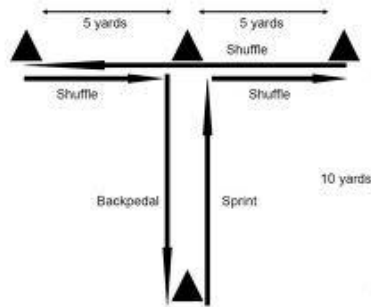
### • 10 Yard Shuttle

Set two cones 10 yards apart and a third cone in between the two cones at 5 yards. The player starts at the cone in the middle and gets in a base stealing position. The player can start by going either right or left. If the player starts to the left, they will run 5 yards to the left and touch the cone with their left hand. They then will run 10 yards to the right and touch the other cone with their right hand. They will finish by running back through the starting point. Time the player.



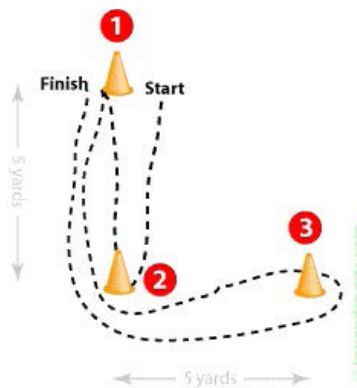
## • T-Cones

Players will start at the bottom tip of the tee. Sprint to the middle cone of the T and then shuffle either left or right to the proceeding cone touching with the outside hand. Player will then proceed to shuffle to the other cone on the end touching with the outside hand. Player will shuffle back to the middle cone and then backpedal to the beginning cone. Time the player.



## • 3-Cone Drill Shuttle Test

Three cones are placed to form an “L.” Place cones at the corner and at each end, 5 yards apart (see figure). The player will start by getting down in a base running position next to Cone 1. On the command “Go”, he sprints to Cone 2 and touches a line with his right hand. Then he turns around and runs back to Cone 1 and touches that line with his right hand. He then runs back to Cone 2 and around the outside of the cone, weaves inside Cone 3, then around the outside of Cones 3 and 2 before finishing at Cone 1.



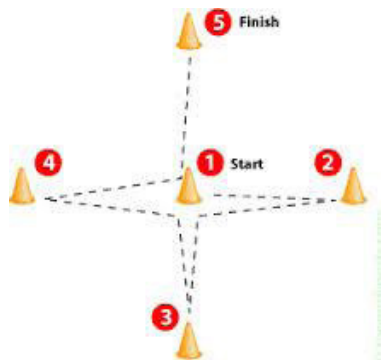
## • Snake Cones

Set two cones 20 yards apart (lateral) and placing 5 cones in between within the 20 yards. Players will start 5 yards behind the first cone and will sprint to the first cone and then sprint to the next cone that is diagonal to the cone. Player will then shuffle to the next cone. Player will continue this process to the last cone. Once at the last cone player will then sprint 10 yards out and jog back to the beginning.



## • Compass

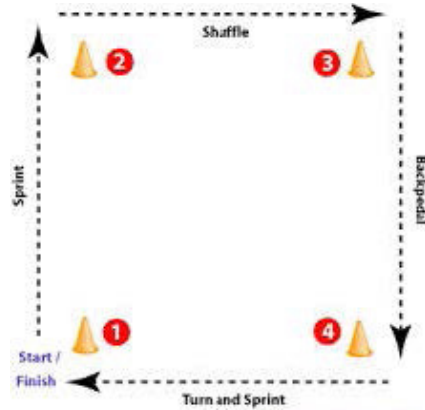
Start with four cones placed in a diamond shape, and one in the middle (see diagram). The outer cones are each placed 3 yards from the center. The player starts in a base stealing position behind and with their left hand on the middle cone, facing forwards (towards cone 5). The player will turn and run to the right and touching cone 2 with their hand. They will then turn back and run to the center cone, then out to the cone 3, back to the center, then out to the cone 4, back to the center and then finally turn and finish by running through the finish line at cone 5. Player must touch the cone with their hand at each turn. Coach should time the player when his hand comes off the center cone, and stops when the chest passes through the line of the final cone. Player should rest to catch his breath and do the drill again in the opposite direction. Player should record his times.



# SPEED & AGILITY DRILLS

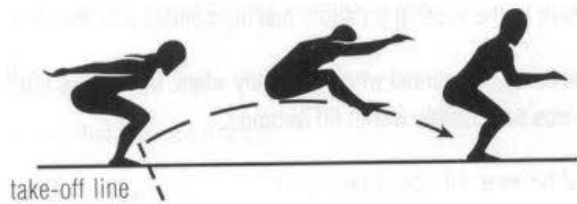
- **Box**

Start at one cone, sprint straight ahead. Turn right and side shuffle to the next cone. Change directions at the next cone and back pedal to the next cone. Change directions for one last time and sprint back to the starting cone to finish. Start at the fourth cone and go the opposite direction the next set so you're not always side shuffling in one direction.



- **Drill 4: Broad Jumps**

For maximum explosion, make sure players stay low and tight when they broad jump. Have player broad jump (under control) fifteen yards.



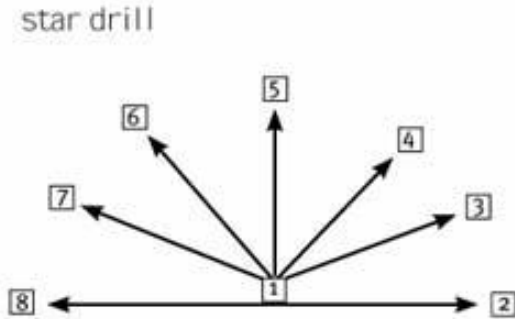
- **Drill 5: Split Squat Jump**

Start off in a lunge position with one foot in front of the other. Drop into a split squat so that your front thigh is parallel to the floor. Push up through the balls of your feet leading to jump up, jumping as high as you can and switching legs midair. Land in the opposite stance dropping back down into a lunge. Hands should be alternating as if you are running. Repeat.



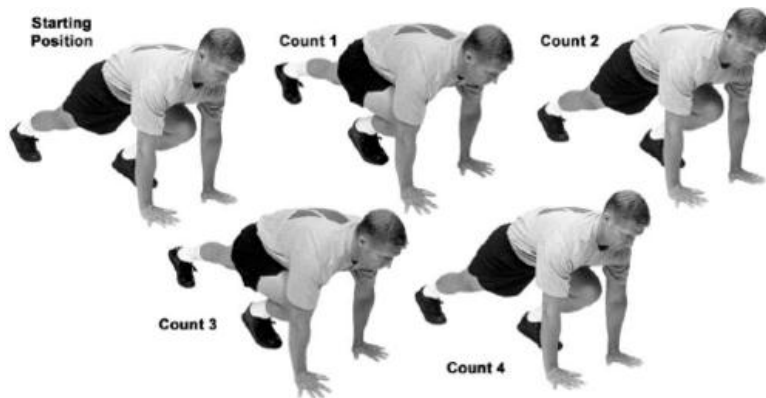
## • Drill 6: Star Cone Drill

Set up 6-8 cones in a half-star pattern 5-7 yards apart (see sketch). Start in an athletic position at cone 1. On command, sprint to cone 2; touch the cone with your hand; backpedal back to cone 1 under control. Sprint to cone 3; touch the cone with your hand; back pedal back to cone 1. Continue until you have touched every cone.



## • Drill 7: Mountain Climbers

Start in a running position (as if you are in a race on the track). Drive your back knee forward to your chest while alternating your front knee to the back. Players will perform the action of running at a very rapid and high intense rate. The knee and leg drive created by this plyometric will really increase the turnover in the player and explosiveness in the muscles.







# PART 3: DEFENSE

# INFIELD DRILLS

- **Drill 1: Standing Short-Hop Drill**

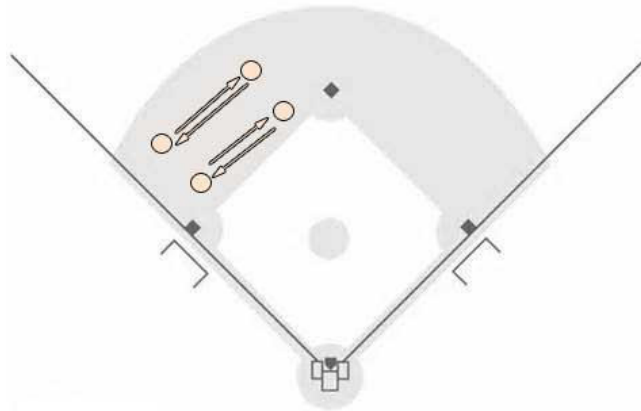
Coach throws short-hops to front, backhand and glove hand. Players can partner up and throw short-hops to one another also.

- **Drill 2: 2-Knee Short-Hop Drill**

Coach throws short-hops to front, backhand and glove hand while players are on both knees. Players can partner up and throw short-hops to one another also.

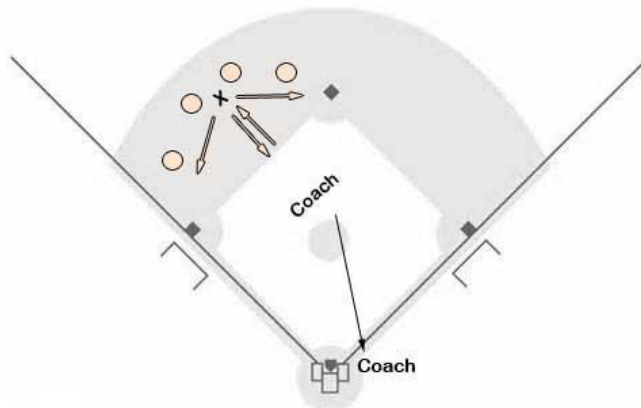
- **Drill 3: Shuffle Drill**

Set up four (4) cones between second and third. Players start opposite one another and roll a ball to each other while shuffling feet to field each ball. Key to drill is making sure players stay low to the ground with glove out in front and on ground.



- **Drill 4: Ground Balls**

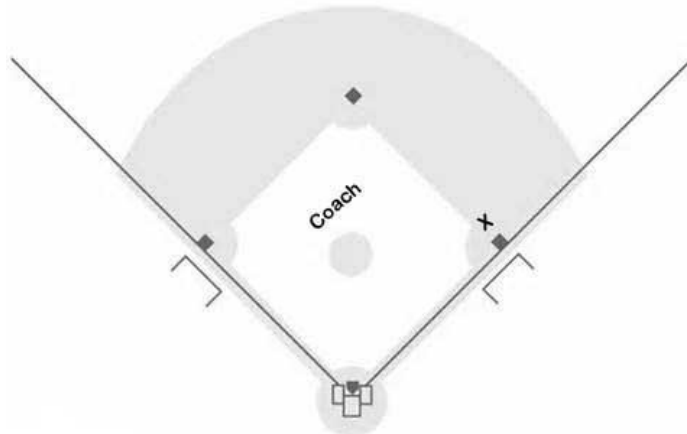
Start with players at Shortstop. Place 2-3 cones on left of player and 2-3 cones to right of player. Roll balls to fielders directly at them then to left then to right. This drill emphasizes making sure that fielders take proper angles to ground balls that are hit to left and to right. Balls can also be rolled slowly to simulate a slow ground ball. After starting this drill rolling balls to players a coach can then go into hitting ball from close to the pitcher's mound, then hitting balls from home plate.





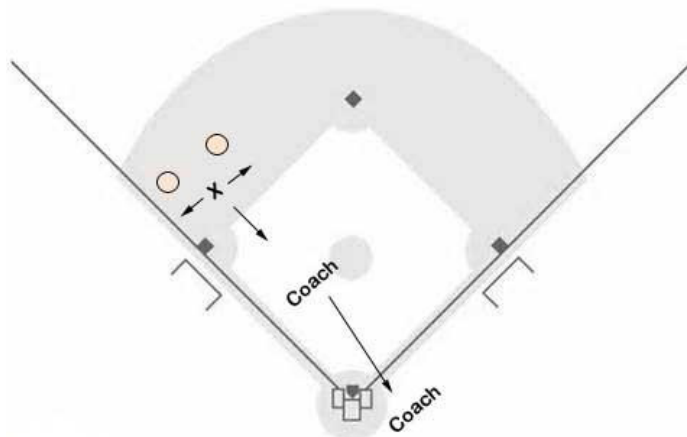
## • Drill 5: First Baseman Drills

Have first baseman stand on bag and coach throws balls from different angles on the infield simulating balls from different positions. First- baseman should adjust to angle. Mix in short-hops to first baseman also.



## • Drill 6: Third Baseman Drill

Start with players at Third Base. Place one (1) cone on left of player and one (1) cone to right of player. Roll balls to fielders directly at them then to left then to right. This drill emphasizes making sure that fielders take proper angles to the balls to left and to right. Balls can also be rolled slowly to simulate a slow ground ball. After rolling a coach can then go into hitting balls from third base line then hitting balls from home plate.

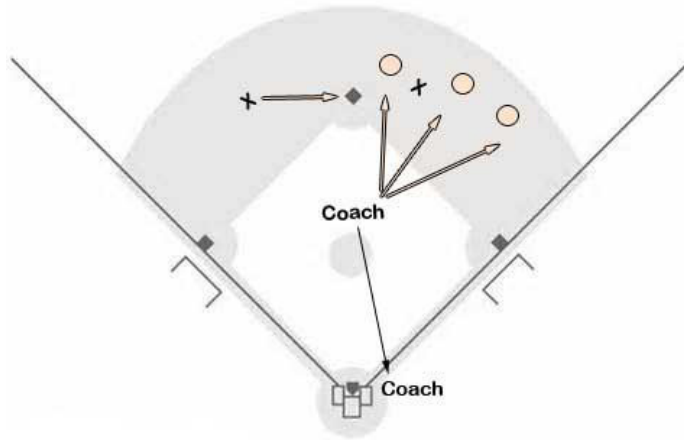


## • Drill 7: Middle Infielder Toss Drills

Players partner up and stand about 7 feet apart and practice 3 basic tosses used in middle infield – underhand, quarter-turn and backhand tosses to each other. Can be done during regular throwing or warmups. Can also be done as a stand-alone drill.

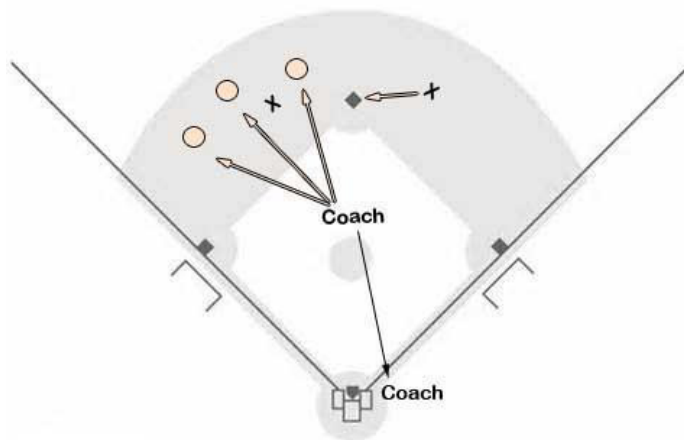
• **Drill 8: 4-6-3 Double Play (DP)**

To work on simulating a double play (DP) started by the second baseman coach can place cones to simulate ground ball areas for specific types of turns by second baseman. Rolling the ball to cone closest to bag would be underhand toss (flip). Next cone would be a quarter turn or backhand flip and furthest cone would be full turn. Coach can then move to home plate and hit ground balls.



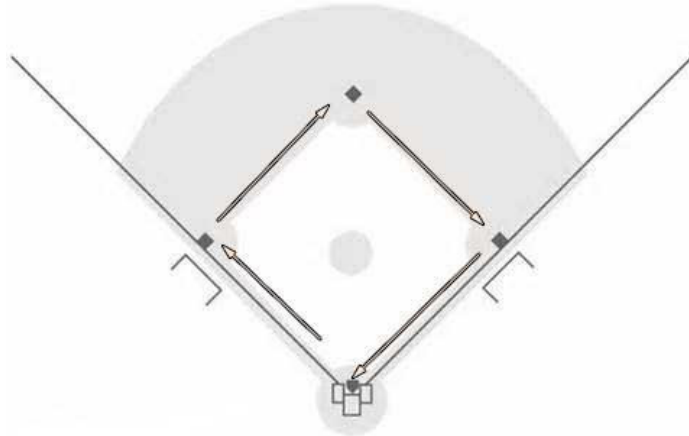
• **Drill 9: 6-4-3 Double Play (DP)**

To work on simulating a double play (DP) started by the shortstop coach can place cones to simulate ground ball areas for specific types of turns by shortstop. Rolling the ball to cone closest to bag would be underhand toss (flip). Next cone would be a drop-step pivot and furthest cone would be a full turn. Coach can then move to home plate and hit ground balls.



## • Drill 10: Team Drill

Place all players at each base. Example: 8 players...2 at each base. Work on throwing the ball from base to base. Example: Home to 3rd to 2nd to 1st back to home. Players should be moving their feet at each bag to throw to the next bag. After a player throws the ball next player will step up to the base. Drill will teach concentration and work on throwing mechanics and footwork. After going around several times reverse direction. This drill is not specific to position. Players can be at any base.





# OUTFIELD DRILLS

## • Drill 1: Approaching a Ground Ball

Outfielders are lined up laterally beside each other in the outfield. Coach will place three balls out in front of every outfielder. First ball about 15 feet in front of the player. Next ball is 10 feet from the first baseball. The third baseball is placed 10 feet from the second baseball. As the outfielder approaches each baseball, he will sprint and then break down as if they were fielding the baseball. He will do this for all three baseballs. He will simulate throwing the baseball into the infield after the third baseball. This will emphasize to the player to get low and go through the baseball.

## • Drill 2: Angles to Fly Ball

Outfielders will be lined up on the foul line. One outfielder at a time will go out and perform the drill. Every outfielder will have their own baseball. You will need 4 cones to perform this drill. One cone will be set out to indicate to the player where to start at. The other cones will be set up 45 degrees about 30 feet away from the outfielder on each side and one should be set up straight back behind the player about 30 feet. Player will sprint to the cone the coach calls out as fast as possible. While he is in sprint the coach will toss the ball to that cone. It's the player's job to get to the cone as fast as possible to set up under the ball. After he catches the ball, he will jog back in with the ball. Next outfielder will quickly hop out to the start point and do the drill. This will stress to the players to get to the spot, beat the ball not meet the ball.

## • Drill 3: Ball off the Wall

This drill can take place in left, center, or right field (highly suggested using all three fields). Outfielder will face the infield in the fielding position. Partner or coach will throw the baseball over the head of the fielder. Outfielder will turn and go retrieve the baseball. Outfielder should be reading the flight of the ball and which direction the balls come off the wall. Outfielder will get to the ball as fast as possible and throw it back to their partner/coach simulating throwing to the cut off guy. When using left and right field throw the ball in corners to see how the balls react.

## • Drill 4: Wall Drill

This drill can take place in left, center, or right field (highly suggested using all three fields). Outfielder will face the infield in a ready to field position. Coach will tell the outfielder to "GO". Whatever side the coach yells out, the outfielder will take off sprinting. Coach will throw it towards the wall. As the outfielder approaches the wall he will extend his throwing or glove hand (whichever hand is closest to the wall) to feel for the wall. This will give the fielder a guide of how far he has to go before the wall. This drill is imperative for getting to the spot and also having an opportunity to rob a homerun. Coach can throw it short to make them adjust or over the fence to work on robbing the baseball.



# OUTFIELD DRILLS

- **Drill 5: Anti-Drift**

Outfielder will be 100 to 200 feet in front of the coach. With a fungo, the coach will hit a pop over the outfielders head to make him drop step. The outfielder must get behind the ball to successfully complete this drill. As they begin to make their way in to make the catch, instead of making the catch at its highest point, the outfielder will be asked to make the catch between his legs keeping both feet on the ground. This will ensure that the outfielder gets behind the baseball to make the catch. If the player drifts he will not be able to make this catch.

- **Drill 6: Communication**

Coach will need to separate the outfielders into two lines and designate which line is the centerfielder. Centerfielder has priority over the outfield. Once the lines are designated and separated the coach should go to second base. The coach will need someone to catch the baseballs as they come in. A catcher or infielder would be ideal for catching the balls coming in. There should be a cut-off man (preferably an infielder) midway between the coach and the outfielders. With a fungo, the coach will hit a variation of fly balls and ground balls. The outfielders will have to communicate with each other ("I've Got It, I've Got It") on who takes the baseball. The outfielder that gets called off needs to back the other outfielder up on all plays. The catcher/infielder should be lining up the cut-off man so the throw can come in on a direct line. The outfielder who fields the fly or ground ball should get to the ball and get it to the cut-off man as quickly and accurately as possible. The outfielder should not over throw to the cut-off man. Outfielders should switch and rotate between the lines. This is beneficial so each player will learn how to do both positions.





# PART 4: PITCHING



# PITCHING DRILLS

- **Drill 1: High Knee Balance**

This drill can be performed on any flat surface, with or without a baseball, and with or without a partner. The pitcher will come to a set position with his eyes, head and shoulders pointed directly at the target. On his time, the pitcher will lift his lead leg to its highest point maintaining his balance on his back leg for three second count. After the three seconds, he should proceed to delivering the baseball, under control, towards his target.

- **Drill 2: Towel Drill**

This drill should be performed with two pitchers. One pitcher should hold a small towel in their throwing hand. He will spread out in a comfortable position, simulating where they land when they make a pitch. Hands should be spread apart, simulating throwing the baseball. His weight should be evenly distributed and front knee “inside the foot”. Elbows should be elevated shoulder height. From this position, the pitcher will pivot the back foot and completes their throwing motion with the towel. The other pitcher should be on one knee in front of him with his glove on and palm facing upwards. The pitcher will need to reach out and hit the glove with the towel. This will stress the pitcher getting out front and to maximum extension. Once pitchers master this movement, he can release the backside and finish in a balance position.

- **Drill 3: One-Knee Finish**

This drill can be performed with or without a partner and with or without a baseball. The pitcher will start with his back knee on the ground, front knee bent and his hands together at his chest. His shoulders pointed straight and head turn. He will turn his upper body, breaks his hands and go into his throwing progression. As he reaches the point of throwing the ball, he should press his lead knee into the ground causing his body to rise up and go into a finish position with his chest and glove overhisknee. This is great for helping pitchers who need to firm up their front side at the release point.

- **Drill 4: Screen Drill**

This drill can be performed with or without a partner, on flat ground or the mound, and will require a protective screen or another solid surface. The pitcher will start in a set position with hands together at their chest. There should be a protective screen or solid surface about an inch or two from the pitchers back. On command, the pitcher will go into his delivery and make the pitch without his arm touching the screen or surface. Proper use of this drill, will improve the young pitchers arm action. This will teach the pitcher how to self-correct those flaws he has in his delivery.





# PITCHING DRILLS

- **Drill 5: Long Toss**

This drill will improve the conditioning and strength of the pitchers arm. Two pitchers should start playing catch and gradually back up. As this throwing progression continues, the pitchers should only go as far as they can with throwing the ball on a line with some elevation. The ball should not be thrown on a “rainbow” type arch; it can have a little bow in it but not much. Pitchers should try and throw the baseball on a line to each other. If the ball begins to have too much elevation, the pitchers have gone back to far. Pitchers should add side straddle hop or a crow into their throwing as they go back further. This will teach the pitcher how to use their body. Coaches can mark their outfield, so pitchers can track their progress.



# PITCHING SITUATIONAL DRILLS

## PFP'S (PITCHER FIELDING PRACTICE)

### • **Drill 1: 1-3 Comebacker**

This drill will call for a coach with a fungo, pitchers and first basemen. A bucket of balls is recommended for this drill. Pitchers will line up on the third base foul line. First pitcher will go out to the mound and simulate throwing a pitch towards the plate. The coach will hit a ground ball to the pitcher. Pitcher will field the ground ball and make an accurate throw to first base. After the pitcher makes the throw he will flow off the field and the next pitcher will take the pitcher place on the mound. Repeat this drill at least twice.

### • **Drill 2: 3-1 Banana Route**

This drill will call for a coach with a fungo, pitchers and first basemen. A bucket of balls is recommended for this drill. Pitchers will line up on the third base foul line. First pitcher will go out to the mound and simulate throwing a pitch towards the plate. The coach will hit a ground ball to the first basemen either direction. Pitcher will fall off the mound and run to first base. The coach should stress to the pitcher not to take a direct v-line towards first base. The pitcher should run towards the baseline and then run up next to the baseline. This is the safest and most effective way to make this play. The first basemen will make the play and toss the ball at the base leading the pitcher to the base. This will ensure the pitcher gets to the base to make the play. The pitcher will catch the ball and tag the base. Coach should also stress to the pitcher not to cross over the baseline. He will be in risk of getting run over and injuring himself with the oncoming base runner. Repeat this drill at least twice.

### • **Drill 3: 1-6-3 Double Play**

This drill will call for a coach with a fungo, pitchers, shortstops, and first basemen. A bucket of balls is recommended for this drill. Pitchers will line up on the third base foul line. First pitcher will go out to the mound and simulate throwing a pitch towards the plate. The coach will hit a ground ball towards the pitcher. Pitcher will gather the ball, turn to second, make a step and throw at second base. The shortstop will come over hands up, catch the ball, tag second and make the throw to first base. Pitcher should lead the shortstop to second and not throw it at him. Repeat this drill at least twice.

### • **Drill 4: 3-6-1 Double Play**

This drill will call for a coach with a fungo, pitchers, shortstops, and first basemen. A bucket of balls is recommended for this drill. Pitchers will line up on the third base foul line. First pitcher will go out to the mound and simulate throwing a pitch towards the plate. The coach will hit a ground ball towards first base. The first basemen will field it and make a throw towards second base. The shortstop will come over, with his hands up, catch the ball, tag second and make a throw to first base. After making his pitch, the pitcher will run a direct V-line for first base. He will get to the bag as quick as he can, put his foot opposite of the glove hand on the bag and become the first baseman. He will make a play on the ball being thrown over by the shortstop. Be aware, it is ok in this situation for the pitcher to go straight to the bag. His job in this play is to become the first baseman and make a play. Repeat this drill at least twice.



# PITCHING SITUATIONAL DRILLS

## PFP'S (PITCHER FIELDING PRACTICE)

### • **Drill 5: 1-5 Force Play with Bunt**

This drill is for a man on second and first and the batter makes a bunt to get the runners over. This drill will call for a coach with a fungo, pitchers, and third basemen. A bucket of balls is recommended for this drill. Pitchers will line up on third base foul line. First pitcher will go out to the mound and simulate throwing a pitch towards the plate. The coach will square around, simulating the bunt, and roll the ball up the third base line. Pitcher needs to communicate with the third basemen that he has the third base line if the bunt goes that way. Once the bunt is laid down, the pitcher will get off the mound and make a play on the ball. He will (if a righty) field the ball and spin towards the foul line to square his body up with third and make a throw to third base. Third baseman will act like a first baseman and make a play on the throw. Repeat this drill at least twice.

### • **Drill 6: Squeeze Play**

This drill is for a man on third, in a pressure situation, and the offense put the squeeze play on. This drill will call for a coach with a fungo, pitchers, and catcher. A bucket of balls is recommended for this drill. Pitchers will line up on third base foul line. First pitcher will go out to the mound and simulate throwing a pitch towards the plate. The coach will square around late, simulating a squeeze bunt, and roll the ball out into the field of play. Pitcher will have to get off the mound and use his glove work to make the play. This is not a force out. The catcher will have to make a play on the "runner" coming in to home. Catcher will have to drop and block the plate to stop the runner from scoring. Repeat this drill at least twice.

*\*To make these drills more realistic and action packed, use actual base runners to simulate live game.*





**PART 5: CATCHING**



# CATCHER DRILLS

## • **Drill 1: Shadow Blocking**

Two catchers will be in full gear in front of each other about 6 to 8 feet apart. Each pair of catchers will have three baseballs about 2 feet spread apart from each other in the middle of the catchers. Catchers will start in the ready position (position to receive a pitch) on the middle ball. One catcher will lead the drill. The lead catcher will drive into a blocking position either to the left or the right baseball. The partner catcher will shadow the lead the catcher doing the same blocking motion. Catchers will pop up back into the ready position, and proceed to another baseball to block. We recommend 8 to 12 reps.

## • **Drill 2: No Hand Blocking**

This drill emphasizes blocking technique. In this drill you can use either two catchers or a catcher and a coach. The catcher will be in full gear with his hands behind his back. His body should be relaxed and ready to react. His partner or coach will be about 10 to 15 feet away with 12 baseballs in hand. The partner or coach will throw balls in the dirt, imitating a pitch in the dirt either right in front or to the side of the catcher. The catcher will react to the dirt pitch with a relaxed, “cupped” body position. The catcher will drop down blocking ball with the goal to keep the ball in front of him with his hands behind his back at all times. This drill is recommended to be performed in a dirt area.

## • **Drill 3: Soft Hands and Framing**

This drill can be performed with two catchers or a catcher and a coach. Catchers do not have to put on gear. One catcher will get in the receiving position and the other catcher/coach will be about 15 feet away from him. A moveable plate should be used. The catcher/coach should have about 15 tennis balls on hand for this drill. The partner/coach will do a short overhand toss. The catcher receiving should be relaxed and receive the pitch so the tennis ball does not pop out of his hand. Coach/partner should emphasize being relaxed and receive the ball. The coach/partner should work all 9 zones of the strike zone and the 4 inches of black.

## • **Drill 4: Rapid Fire Framing**

This drill can be performed with two catchers or a catcher and a coach. Catcher receiving the pitch should be in full catcher's gear. The coach/partner should be about 15 to 20 feet away with 12 to 15 baseballs on hand. The receiving catcher should be behind a plate with a target for the coach/partner to throw to. As soon as he receives the pitch, the catcher should drop it on the plate and set up another target. This should be done rapidly until the balls are all used.



# CATCHER DRILLS

- **Drill 5: Pop – Up**

This drill can be performed at home plate or in the outfield for more room. Catchers need to be in full gear for this drill. Catcher will get into receiving ready position. With a fungo, coach will simulate a pop – up from the batter. Catcher will come out of their crouch to field the pop – up. Catcher should de-mask and turn their back to the infield. Catcher should gauge the flight of the ball, and move quickly under the baseball to make the play. Catcher should catch the baseball with two hands and its highest point.

- **Drill 6: Bunt**

This drill should be performed with a 1st basemen, catcher and a coach. Catcher should be in full gear in a ready to receive position at home plate. The coach should be standing behind the catcher and the 1st basemen should be in regular fielding position. Coach will roll the baseball out from behind the catcher either to the left, right or right in front of the catcher. Catcher should come out his crouch to make a play on the “bunt”. A baseball that’s still rolling, the catcher should rake it into the glove with the glove and hand. If a baseball is at a standstill it may be picked up barehanded. Stress to your catcher to twist the ball into the ground to make sure the get a firm grip on the baseball. After gathering the baseball, the catcher should square their shoulders to the 1st basemen. This drill can have as many catchers as needed. After the first catcher finishes, the next catcher quickly gets into position for his rep.







# PART 6: EQUIPMENT SIZING CHART



# HELMET SIZE CONVERSION CHART

SIZE	CENTIMETER	HAT SIZE	INCHES
XXS	51 - 52	6 3/8 - 6 1/2	20-20 1/2
XS	53 - 54	6 5/8 - 6 3/4	20 7/8 - 21 1/4
SIZE	55 - 56	6 7/8 - 7	21 5/8 - 22
M	57 - 58	7 1/8 - 7 1/4	22 1/2 - 22 7/8
L	59 - 60	7 3/8 - 7 1/2	23 1/4 - 23 5/8
XL	61 - 62	7 5/8 - 7 3/4	24 - 24 3/8
XXL	63 - 64	7 7/8 - 8	24 3/4 - 25 1/4
XXXL	65 - 66	8 1/8 - 8 1/4	25 5/8 - 26
YOUTH S	49 - 50	6 1/8 - 6 1/4	19 1/4 - 19 3/4
YOUTH M	51 - 52	6 3/8 - 6 1/2	20 - 20 1/2
YOUTH L	53 - 54	6 5/8 - 6 3/4	20 7/8 - 21 1/4
YOUTH S/M	49 - 50	6 1/8 - 6 1/4	19 1/4 - 19 3/4
YOUTH L/XL	51 - 52	6 3/8 - 6 1/2	20 - 20 1/2



# BASEBALL FIELDING GLOVE SIZING CHART

Below are general guidelines for selecting a glove. Remember, player preferences may vary.

AGE	INFIELD	OUTFIELD
UNDER 8	9"	11"
9 -13	9" - 11.75"	11" - 12.5"
HIGH SCHOOL/ADULT	10.5" - 11.75"	11.75" - 12.5"

ADULT GLOVE BY POSITION	INFIELD	OUTFIELD	PITCHER
10.5" - 10.75"	2ND BASE		
11" - 11.25"	2ND BASE	SHORTSTOP	PITCHER
11.5" - 11.75"	SHORTSTOP	3RD BASE	PITCHER
12" - 13"	OUTFIELD		PITCHER

First Base and Catcher have special glove designs to consider.



# BASEBALL BAT SIZING CHART

WEIGHT OF PLAYER (LB)	36	36-40	41-44	45-48	49-52	53-56	57-60	61-64	65-68	69-72	73+
60	24-25"	26"	27"	28"	29"	29"					
60 - 70		27"	27"	28"	29"	30"	30"				
71 - 80			28"	28"	29"	30"	30"	31"			
81 - 90			28"	29"	29"	30"	30"	31"	32"		
91 - 100			28"	29"	30"	30"	31"	31"	32"		
101 - 110			29"	29"	30"	30"	31"	31"	32"		
111 - 120			29"	29"	30"	30"	31"	31"	32"		
121 - 130			29"	29"	30"	30"	31"	32"	33"	33"	
131 - 140			29"	30"	30"	31"	31"	32"	33"	33"	
141 - 150				30"	30"	31"	31"	32"	33"	33"	
151 - 160				30"	31"	31"	32"	32"	33"	33"	33"
161 - 170					31"	31"	32"	32"	33"	33"	34"
171 - 180							32"	33"	33"	34"	34"
180+								33"	33"	34"	34"



**PART 7: BASEBALL LINGO**



# BASEBALL LINGO

## A

- **Ace** - A team's best starting pitcher.
- **Alley** - The section of the outfield between the outfielders. Also "gap."
- **Around the Horn** - A double play going from third base to second to first.

## B

- **Backdoor Slider** - A pitch that appears to be out of the strike zone, but then breaks back over the plate.
- **Bag** - A base.
- **Baltimore Chop** - A ground ball that hits in front of home plate (or off of it) and takes a large hop over the infielder's head.
- **Bandbox** - A small ballpark that favors hitters.
- **Bang-Bang Play** - A play in which the baserunner hits the bag a split-second before the ball arrives or vice versa.
- **Basket Catches** - When a fielder catches a ball with his glove near belt level.
- **Bronx Cheer** - When the crowd boos.
- **Brushback** - A pitch that nearly hits a batter.
- **Bush** - Also "bush league." An amateur play or behavior.

## C

- **Can of Corn** - An easy catch by a fielder.
- **Caught Looking** - When a batter is called out on strikes.
- **Cellar** - Last place. Also "basement."
- **Cheese** - Also "good cheese." Refers to a good fastball.
- **Chin music** - A pitch that is high and inside.
- **Circus catch** - An outstanding catch by a fielder.
- **Closer** - A team's relief pitcher who finishes the game.
- **Cutter** - A cut fastball (one with a late break to it).
- **Cycle** - When a batter hits a single, double, triple and home run in the same game.

## D

- **Dinger** - A home run.
- **Dish** - Home plate.

## F

- **Fireman** - A team's closer or late-inning relief pitcher.
- **Fungo** - A ball hit to a fielder during practice. It's usually hit by a coach using a "fungo bat," which is longer and thinner than a normal bat.



# BASEBALL LINGO

## G

- **Gap** - See “alley.” A ball hit here is a “gapper.” Gopher ball -- A pitch hit for a home run, as in “go for.”

## H

- **Heat** - A good fastball. Also “heater.”
- **High and Tight** - Referring to a pitch that’s up in the strike zone and inside on a hitter. Also known as “up and in.”
- **Hill** - Pitcher’s mound.
- **Homer** - A home run. Other terms include: blast, dinger, dong, four-bagger, four-base knock, moon shot, tape-measure blast and tater.
- **Hot corner** - Third base.

## I

- **In the Hole** - The batter after the on-deck hitter.

## J

- **Jam** - When a hitter gets a pitch near his hands, he is “jammed.” Also when a pitcher gets himself in trouble, he is in a “jam.”

## L

- **Leather** - Refers to how good a player plays defensively or handles the glove. Ex: “He flashed some leather on that play.”

## M

- **Meatball** - An easy pitch to hit, usually right down the middle of the plate.
- **Mendoza Line** - A batting average of around .200.
- **Moon Shot** - A very long, high home run.

## N

- **Nail Down** - As in “nail down a victory.” Refers to a relief pitcher finishing off the game.

## O

- **On the Screws** - When a batter hits the ball hard. Also “on the button.”

## P

- **Painting the Black** - When a pitcher throws the ball over the edge of the plate.
- **Pea** - A ball traveling at high speed, either batted or thrown.



# BASEBALL LINGO

- **Pepper** - Pepper is a common pre-game exercise where one player bunts brisk grounders and line drives to a group of fielders who are standing about 20 feet away. The fielders try to throw it back as quickly as possible. The batter hits the return throw. (Some ballparks ban pepper games because wild pitches could land in the stands and injure spectators).
- **Pick** - A good defensive play by an infielder on a ground ball. Also a shortened version of "pick-off."
- **Pickle** - A rundown.
- **Punchout** - A strikeout.

## R

- **Rhubarb** - A fight or scuffle.
- **Ribbie** - Another way of saying RBI. Also "ribeye."
- **Rope** - A hard line drive hit by a batter. Also "frozen rope."
- **Rubber Game** - The deciding game of a series.
- **Run-Down** - When a baserunner gets caught between bases by the fielders.
- **Ruthian** - With great power.

## S

- **Seeing-Eye Single** - A soft ground ball that finds its way between infielders for a base hit.
- **Set-Up Man** - A relief pitcher who usually enters the game in the 7th or 8th inning.
- **Shoestring Catch** - A running catch made just above the fielder's shoetops.
- **Southpaw** - A left-handed pitcher.
- **Sweet Spot** - The part of the bat just a few inches from the barrel.

## T

- **Table Setter** - Batter whose job is to get on base for other hitters to drive him in. Usually a leadoff or No. 2 hitter.
- **Tape-Measure Blast** - An extremely long home run.
- **Tater** - A home run.
- **Texas Leaguer** - A bloop hit that drops between an infielder and outfielder.
- **Tools of Ignorance** - Catcher's equipment.
- **Touch 'Em All** - Hitting a home run (touching all the bases).
- **Twin Killing** - A double play.

## U

- **Uncle Charlie** - Curve ball.
- **Utility Player** - A player who fills in at many positions.





# BASEBALL LINGO

## W

- **Wheelhouse** - A hitter's power zone. Usually a pitch waist-high and over the heart of the plate.
- **Wheels** - A ballplayer's legs.
- **Whiff** - Strikeout.

## Y

- **Yakker** - Curve ball.



### **About the Houston Astros MLB Youth Academy**

The Academy is located at Sylvester Turner Park on Houston’s northwest side. The Academy has a show field with permanent seating for 500 fans — and space for an additional 1,800 fans, dugouts and lights. There’s also one auxiliary field, two Little League/softball fields, indoor batting cage named after Astros legend Jimmy “The Toy Cannon” Wynn, and 1,500 square feet of office space and other facilities.

The Houston Astros MLB Youth Academy offers free baseball and softball camps, clinics and other activities that are provided by experienced instructors, for free on a year round basis. The Academy staff also provides mentoring, leadership development and assistance with the college application process.

Instruction takes place on Monday – Thursday from 6:00pm – 8:45pm and Saturday mornings, 9:00am – 11:00am. To become a member please contact the Academy staff at [uya@astros.com](mailto:uya@astros.com) or call us at 281.260.9166. To become a member is free and only requires prospects to fill out an application and waiver.

#### **Academy Staff Includes:**

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Duane R. Stelly, Manager – [dstelly@astros.com](mailto:dstelly@astros.com)  
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