



## Throwing Fundamentals



### The Fundamentals of the overhand throw

- Break hands with thumbs down
- Elbow should point to target
- Throwing arm should be in "L" position
- Step to target with front shoulder initially moving to target
- Follow through to opposite knee and finish with back hip
- Practice throwing to a target

### Transition Break Down Drill from Fielding Ball into proper throwing technique

- Hands extended but not locked in front of body
- Give with elbows upon receiving ball
- Proper foot work – step with throwing foot slightly turned, pivot body to get shoulder lined up to the target
- Rotate Hips: While taking first step ("right – left")
- As feet are moving into throwing position, hands are breaking apart with thumbs down to get ball up into throwing position
- Both elbows should get to shoulder height before throwing arm starts forward
- Remember : "*L position*" for throwing elbow

### Types of Throws

- Catcher: Shortest Arm Circle
- Infielder : Varied Throws and arm slots
- Outfielder: Longest Arm Circle/ crow hop

### Ground Ball Mechanics

- Ready Position
- Move to the ball and stay on balls of feet
- Break down with glove in front of feet
- Back of glove on ground
- Use soft hands with flexed knees
- Two hands when receiving ball with bare hand above glove
- Funnel in toward belly button
- Charging Ground balls -
  - Field slightly to glove foot and then transition into throwing position
  - Small choppy steps when approaching ball / head down when receiving the ball

### Fly Ball Mechanics

- Run to the ball pump the arms, don't try to catch until last minute
- Get to the spot – do not drift with the ball
- Always go back before in – create a drop step when batter swings

- Use two hands & glove fingers point up
- Keep body in front of the ball
- Drop step (pivot & run DON'T back peddle!)
- Going Back on ball
  - Drop step; pivot and turn body, run to spot, then extend glove to catch the ball

### **How to Teach Diving**

- Coaches standing in front of players & rolling ground balls at players
- Player diving on their belly
- Not landing on elbow or hands
  1. Players on their Knees
  2. Players in Catchers squat position
  3. Player standing stationary
  4. Players moving and diving

### **How to Teach Players to throw after a dive – Practice “ESPN” plays**

Rule #1: Get up first before throwing

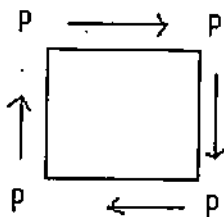
Rule #2: If close to base i.e. 2<sup>nd</sup> base you can throw from knees

1. Start players on stomach like they just made diving play
2. Push – up position, lift body up

### **Throwing & Fielding Drills**

1. Wrist Snaps
2. Towel Drill
3. Knee Drill – thumb down, elbows up equally
4. Shuffle – Shuffle drill
  - Works on Fundamental
  - “Shuffle- shuffle shoulder to target, break thumbs down, elbows work together, arm back to L, and throw”
5. Football drill
6. 4 Corner Throwing Drill

- Technique
- Game – In teams of 4, see the number of times without throwing the ball away for one



7. On the knees Drill – w / tennis ball / light flights

8. Partner Soft hand Drills - Bare Hands / Paddles / Glove between legs

9. 2 Coach Line Drill

Options: Charge – glove only

2. Forearm
3. Backhand
4. One - hoppers

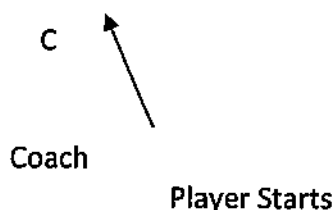
PPP ← C

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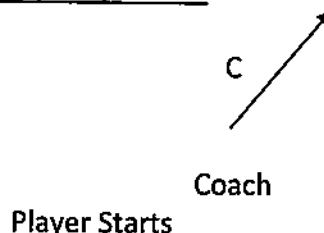
—————→  
Players run to other line after fielding ground ball or pop up

10. Drop Step Drill w/Cones (start with Tennis/light flights)

B) Drop Steps to Right



C) Drop Step to Left



11. 3 Ball Drill Outfield Drill

- Line Drive, Drop step run thru, and do or die

### Fundamental Every Day Drills for Infield

- a) Glove between legs drill
- b) Side to side shuffle with rolled ball – do not cross feet
- c) Ground balls on knees
- d) Short hops – from a knee and backhand

- e) Ground balls – coach roll ball to players with no glove
- f) Tag plays – with coach toss
- g) Drop step – pop up drill

**Positional Drills – Middle Infield**

- a) Ground balls to SS – underhand flip to 2<sup>nd</sup> & turn 2
- b) Move SS deep & close to 3<sup>rd</sup> – throws to 2<sup>nd</sup> & turn 2
- c) Ground Balls to 2<sup>nd</sup> (close) back flips to SS & turn 2
- d) Ground Balls to 2<sup>nd</sup> (further) throws to SS & turn 2

**Corners (1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup>)**

- a) Reaction drill: in ready position, throw ball at them from close distance and have them react to ball. (Start with tennis balls at first). This will work on glove control.
- b) Fielding Bunts
- c) Ground Balls close distance

**Every Days for Fly balls**

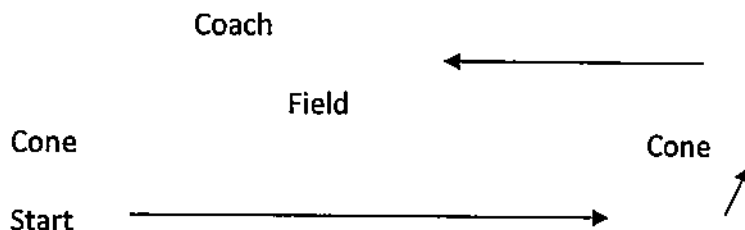
4 Angle of Fly ball Drill ( footwork only, no throws, lots of running)

- a) Run through the ball (stand on side)
- b) Drop step to right
- c) Drop step to left
- e) Charge the ball do or dies(stand in front)

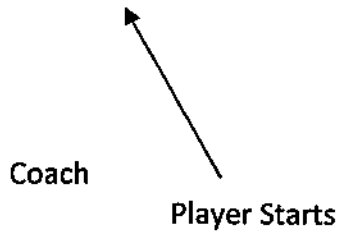
\*\*\*Variation use tennis balls / no gloves for soft hands

\*\*\* Variation use football to teach player to run first & then catch

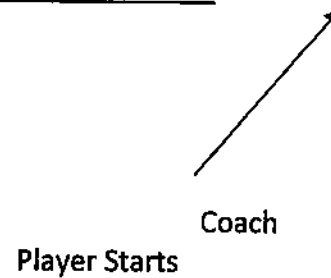
**A) Run Through the Ball**



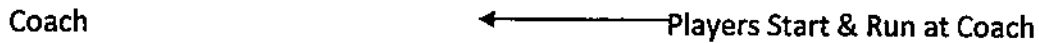
B) Drop Steps to Right



C) Drop Step to Left



d) Charge /short hops



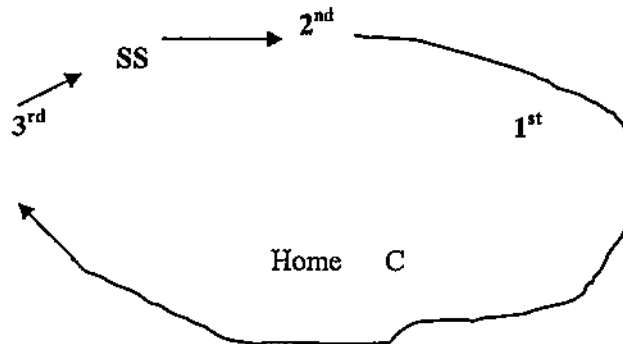
**Full Field – advanced team drills**

1. *Full Infield Rapid Fire*

**Focus:** Conditioning and working on accurate throws to 1<sup>st</sup> base

**Key Point:** Catcher and first baseman stay stationary

- Split team at each infield position of 3<sup>rd</sup>, ss, 2<sup>nd</sup>
- Coach hits ball to 3<sup>rd</sup>, player fields and throws to first and then sprints SS position
- First baseman throws to catcher (Catcher & 1<sup>st</sup> Base are stationary)  
Variation: First baseman just throws ball into bucket
- Coach then hits ball to SS, player fields and throws to 1<sup>st</sup> and sprints to 2<sup>nd</sup> base position
- Coach hits ball to 2<sup>nd</sup>, player fields and throws to 1<sup>st</sup> and sprints to 3<sup>rd</sup> behind the catcher and coach



2. *Full Field Pop – Up Communication Drill ( need 4 Coaches)*

- C – coach works blocking / framing drills
- 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> - infield pop-up / mine / yours communication
- 3<sup>rd</sup> & SS - infield pop-up / mine / yours communication
- OF – routine fly balls with mine/ your and backup coverage  
\*\*Also work in CF/RF to 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> and SS/3<sup>rd</sup> with LF/CF

3. *Full Field Bunt Defense Drill:*

Sequence#1

- P/2<sup>nd</sup>/1<sup>st</sup> throws to 1<sup>st</sup> – 2<sup>nd</sup> covers
- C/3<sup>rd</sup>/SS – throws to 3<sup>rd</sup> – SS covers

Sequence #2

- P/C/SS – throws to 2<sup>nd</sup> – SS covers
- 3<sup>rd</sup>/1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> – throws to 1<sup>st</sup> – 2<sup>nd</sup> covers ( have 1<sup>st</sup> return throw to 3<sup>rd</sup>)

Sequence #3

- C/2<sup>nd</sup>/1<sup>st</sup> – throws to 1 second covers
- P/SS/3<sup>rd</sup> – throws to 3<sup>rd</sup> ( SS covers)

4. *Tag – Up Plays (Defensive & Running Drill)*

Situation #1

- Runner on 3<sup>rd</sup> (Coaches teach players on voice command or they watch?)
- LF /CF - hit between for communication
- SS/1st – Cutoff

Situation #2

- Add Runner at 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup>: Player must now decide where to throw the ball depending on where ball is hit. Use full outfield

Notes:

## **The Drills – Live Demo by USA Elite Pitching Student**

### **Wrist Snap**

1. No thumb drill
2. Wrist Snaps: spinner, baby ball, weighted Ball

### **Arm Circle**

1. Knee Drill – variations wiffle ball, weighted ball
2. Long Ball knee drill

### **Power Phase**

1. Kiss the Wall
2. Wall Drill
3. 2 hop

### **Initial Drive**

1. 4 pt Pillow drill – pause drill

### **Full Motion**

1. Balance Beam 1-2-3
2. Pause Drill -4 step
3. Ball on the floor
4. Long Distance ( 50 -65 feet depending on the age)





## Hitting Mechanics



**Why you should not teach players to “squash the bug”**

### HITTING MECHANICS

**The difference between a softball and baseball swing**

- 1) The trajectory of the pitch – in baseball always a downward trajectory so an upper cut is a benefit.
- 2) Strength issues – male vs. female, size of the ball
- 3) Distance to the plate

**Summary: The softball swing must be even more efficient than a baseball swing.**

**The difference between mechanics and style**

Mechanics are the things all good hitters do

Style is the way unique to body size, strength and flexibility that the player uses to get to the proper mechanics

**Rule 1 – See the ball**

Head starts on front shoulder and ends on back shoulder. Head should be down at contact!

**Rule 2- Hit through a Big Zone**

Create a swing that does not have to be perfectly on time

#### Stance

1. Balanced, relaxed, athletic position
2. Weight on inside of the feet
3. Grip the bat properly – a quick trick

#### Trigger & Step (stride to balance)

1. A good hitter starts early and slow and maintains a fluid motion
2. Batter will shift weight back to center and get into launch position
3. Front foot should be down by the time the ball is half way to the plate

#### Launch Position – when front foot touches down

1. Bat at 45 degree angle with hands by back shoulder
2. Front shoulder to the pitcher
3. Back heel slightly up

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### Upper Body

1. Back elbow moves before the hands
2. Bat lag – staying “inside the ball” – What does that actually mean?
3. When a hitter’s hands and bat are in front of her body and first to commit, she is locked into a certain bat path and will have to stay in that path – getting fooled often

### Contact

1. Hands should be palm up/ palm down at contact

### Follow Thru

1. Push and extend thru ball
2. Follow through should be high and you should finish through the ball

### **How to help your hitters with the VSA Gold app**

#### What to watch for

1. Stride to balance
2. Stride foot lands on ball of foot first then heel
3. Bat and body position when front foot hits the ground – VERY Important!
4. Back heel comes up slightly when stride foot comes down
5. Body square to plate when front foot lands
6. Head stays over the center of gravity throughout the swing
7. Firm front leg on contact
9. Elbows NOT extended at contact
10. No “T-rex” arms at follow through

### DRILLS

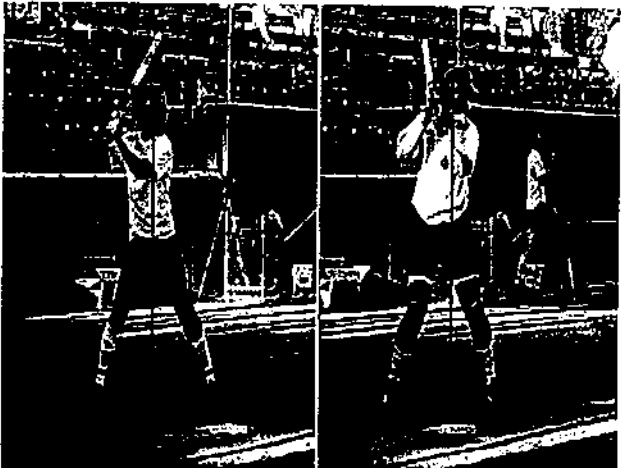
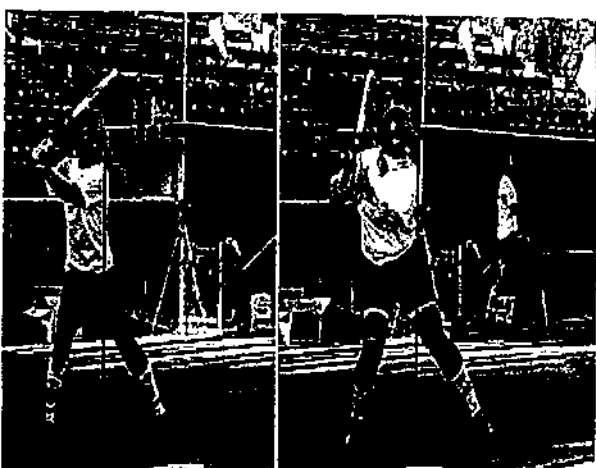


Philosophy – Have drills that reward proper mechanics and create a reward system

1. Fence or Wall drill – hands on fence practice lower half
2. Chuck it – 2 hands and 1 hands
3. Throw Ball under arm drill
4. Red Bat -
  - a) One handed Tee
  - b) Two Hands Tee
  - c) Front Toss
5. Crossover Drill - Weight transfer drills
6. Target hitting – set T up for outside or inside pitch in relation to home plate, set up a target (such as a screen) about 20 feet away either up the middle for inside or opposite field for
7. Front Toss – Inside/ Outside  
Variations with Insider Bat, Total Control Balls,

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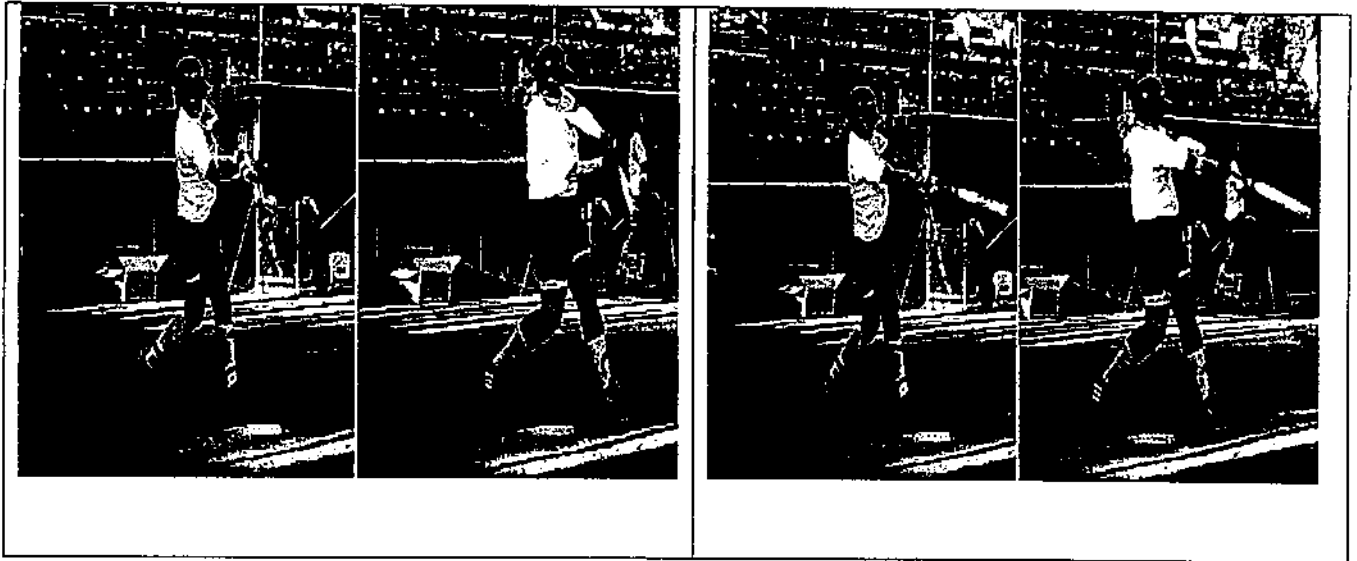
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8. Machine / Live – situational work

<p>1) Stance</p> 	<p>2) Negative Move</p> 
<p>3) Heel Plant</p> 	<p>4) Elbow in slot</p> 
<p>5) Contact</p>	<p>6) Extension</p>

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### Planning a Practice

1. Keep all the players active
2. Have a Fun but productive & learning practice
3. Must plan & prepare the practice
4. Write the Plan out
5. Have a series of "every day" drills that emphasize the proper mechanics
6. Create a reward system when proper outcome is achieved
7. Players must understand the basics before the advanced skills
8. Get the coaches on the same page: consistent terms
9. Use the entire field during practice
10. Use stations to keep practice interesting and fun
11. Communicate to the players the plan
12. Take notes for what needs to be worked on next practice
13. Must be a cruise director – keep it fun and moving

### Coaching Youth Players Tips

- ☺ Always be Positive
- ☺ Remember not everyone will get it
- ☺ Have more energy than the kids
- ☺ Keep it Simple and Fun
- ☺ Must Command the Player
- ☺ This is not the World Series....
- ☺ We Learn From Mistakes, so teach the players what they did incorrect
- ☺ Don't predetermine a players position
- ☺ You will have a great influence on the players - and you will be a role model for them – know the image you want to portray and stick to it.



Practice Outline for 2 hour practice

0-10 Minutes	Warm-ups 1. Jogging around field 2. Players stretch
20 Minutes  Focus: <b>Overhand</b>	<b>Throwing Drills</b>  Drills: <u>Location on Field: Infield</u> 1. Towel Drill 2. Shuffle – shuffle 3. Wrist Snaps  Last 5 minute full throwing with each other
	Break players into two groups. Working infield and outfield drills. Each group will do same drill. One group in the infield and the other in the outfield area.
20 Minutes  Focus: <b>Ground balls</b>	<b>Infield Drills</b> Drills: <u>Location on Field: Infield</u> 1. Knee Drill 2. Infield every days 3. Full Field Rapid fire
10 Minutes	Water Break
20 Minutes  Focus: <b>Outfield</b>	<b>Outfield</b> Drills: <u>Location on Field: Outfield</u> 1. Throwing Drill – Crow hop 2. Cone Drill – Drop step with football 3. 3 ball Drill
30 Minutes  Focus: <b>Hitting</b>	<b>Hitting Drills</b>  Drills: <u>Location on Field:</u> <b>Warm-up: Wall Drill / dry swing entire team</b>  1. Full Swing Tee Drill with Soccer ball b/w knees 2. 1-2-3 Drill off elevated beam 3. Front toss ( wiffles/ light lights in outfield) 4. Middle tee drill ( use cones to show middle zone)
1:50-2:00	Team Game / Wrap UP