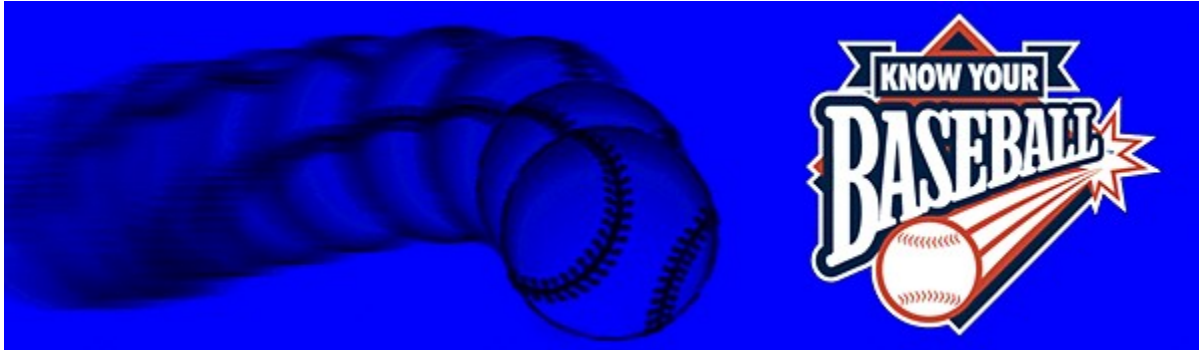


Know Your Baseball - Help Contents



Welcome to the **"Know Your Baseball"** Helpfile.

The following choices provide easy access to everything you need to know. So have fun and make your first selection now!

[How Does This Program Work](#)

[Basic Instruction Manual - Baseball Fundamentals](#)

[How About "AI" Little Background](#)

To learn how to customize this Help file, minimize this window and then press F1 . . .

How Does This Program Work

[What Do All Of The Buttons Mean](#)

[How Can You Reach Us](#)

[Having Trouble](#)

[Software License Agreement](#)

Basic Instruction Manual

What's In It For You

Baseball Skills To Practice

Especially For You Coaches

On The Way To Great Baseball

[Coaches Practice Drills](#)

[Practice Plans](#)

[Coaches Checklist](#)

Baseball Skills to Practice



Throwing



Catching



Fielding Ground Balls



Fielding Fly Balls



The Catcher



Pitching



Baserunning



Sliding



Hitting



Bunting

What Do All Of The Buttons Mean



Coach



Announcer



Red and Yellow Flags



Brown and White Bats



Home Plate



Exit

Throwing

Throwing is one of the three most important skills of defensive baseball. Many of the errors committed are the result of an incorrect grip, hurrying the throw, not looking and stepping at the target and not using the proper throwing motion.



The Grip



Find The Grip



Starter Step



Arm Down Position



Arm Back Position



Step and Throw



Follow Through

Catching

Catching is the second of the three important skills of defensive baseball. Selecting the proper fitting glove is extremely important when teaching a young player the correct catching techniques. Often, the glove is too small or too large and is not broken in properly.

Use the following progression to teach young ball players how to catch the ball.



[Wearing the Glove](#)

[Prepare for the Throw](#)

[Receiving a Throw at a Base](#)

[Catch Made Above the Waist](#)

[Catching the Ball](#)

[Catch Made Below the Waist](#)

[Cushion the Ball](#)

[Catch the Ball in the Palm](#)

Fielding Ground Balls

Fielding ground balls is the most difficult to master of the three defensive skills. Errors will always occur when fielding ground balls, but constant practice will reduce the number. It is absolutely necessary that all ball players wear a protective cup if they are to have the confidence to stay in front of a ball, especially if it is a hard hit ball.

Learning the following steps will enable the young player to field the ball under control and make the throw with minimum steps and maximum power.

Relaxed Position

Starter Step

Ready Position

Arm Down Position

Receiving the Ground Ball

Arm Back Position

Suck it Up

Follow Through

Fielding Fly Balls

The outfielder is as important to the team as any other player on the field. He is a part of the action regardless of the play. Each outfielder is responsible for making a play on the ball hit to his area, for backing up all other hit balls and for covering all throws in the infield.

The outfielder has to be mentally alert and ready to move at all times.

Outfielder's Ready Position

Outfielder's Ground Ball

Fielding a Fly Ball - Forehand

Forehand Catch

Fielding a Fly Ball - Backhand

Backhand Catch

The Catcher

The catcher is the leader of the defensive team. He must have confidence in his ability, be strong and quick, and most of all he must want to catch. A strong throwing arm, good hands and a flexible attitude are also important attributes.

In order to be a complete catcher, the following skills must be mastered: blocking low pitches, making a tag play at the plate, throwing to all bases, catching pop-ups, receiving the pitcher.

A good catcher makes sure the [equipment](#) fits and is properly adjusted.

[Ready Position "A"](#)

[Grip and Step](#)

[Ready Position "B"](#)

[The Throw](#)

[Relaxed Position](#)

[Follow Through](#)

[Above the Waist](#)

[Blocking a Ball](#)

[Catching Below The Waist](#)

[Making a play at the plate - Receiving the Throw](#)

[Catcher's Stance](#)

[Making a play at the plate - Making the Tag](#)

[Bat Clearance](#)

[Catching a Foul Ball](#)

[Catch The Ball](#)

[Little League Catcher's Equipment](#)

Pitching

The pitcher, more than any other player, has the ability to control the outcome of the game. When coaches select a pitcher they should look for a player who has confidence in his ability, has a flexible attitude, is competitive and wants to pitch. This player will often be your best athlete and will have a strong, accurate throwing arm.

If players have never pitched before, the following suggestions are offered:



Concentrate on throwing strikes. This requires constant practice at throwing to a target. Young players may have to sacrifice speed for control.



Make sure all players use the correct throwing progression

(Arm down - Back - Through Motion) See [Throwing](#).



Beginning pitchers might begin pitching in the pivot position with the foot in front of the rubber.



Once a player can throw strikes from the pivot position, he can be taught the starting position and shift of weight movement.

The following teaching progression will emphasize the importance of balance, control and using the whole body in the throw.

[Starting Position](#)

[Arm Back](#)

[Shift of Weight \(A\)](#)

[Delivery Step and Throw](#)

[Shift of Weight \(B\)](#)

[Pitching - Follow Through](#)

[The Pivot](#)

[Fielding Position](#)

[Arm Down](#)

Baserunning

Baserunning is not a natural skill for young ball players. It must be taught. Players are called out and games are lost because of poor baserunning techniques. With good baserunning, an aggressive, well-coached team can put tremendous pressure on the defense and force defensive mistakes.

Running Straight Through - Ground Balls to the Infield

Base Hit - Rounding First Base

Contact the Base

Face the Action

Ready for the Next Pitch

Bunting

There is not much emphasis placed on bunting with young ball players today. This is very unfortunate as one of the most successful ways of advancing runners into scoring position is by using a bunt.

"Know Your Baseball" is designed to teach the sacrifice bunt only. Using a sacrifice bunt means the batter is not attempting to get on base. He is attempting to advance a runner from first to second, or advance runners from first to second and second to third, respectively. Should the batter reach base safely through an infield error, this is a bonus - not the intent of the bunt.

Correct technique for the sacrifice bunt includes three important points. Because you are sacrificing, square around as soon as the pitcher starts the windup. You are not attempting to fool anyone, so square around early. Secondly, bunt only strikes. If the coach has flashed a bunt sign, he means "BUNT A STRIKE". Thirdly, attempt to bunt down the first or third base line away from the pitcher.

Bunting is not an easy skill to master. A good bunter is only successful about 30-35% of the time. In order to be a good bunter the player must use correct technique and practice regularly. Along with aggressive baserunning, a well placed bunt puts tremendous pressure on the defense in run scoring situations.

[Square Around Position](#)

[Body Ready Position](#)

[Front Foot Turn](#)

[Just Before Contact](#)

[Back Foot Turn](#)

[The Contact](#)

[Pivot Position](#)

[Bunting - A Low Strike](#)

[The Pivot](#)

[Bunt Strikes Only](#)

[Feet Ready Position](#)

Hitting

Hitting is the most difficult skill to learn in baseball or softball. It is impossible to completely master this skill. The best hitters on any team are only successful three or four out of every ten at bats.

Because both the bat and the ball are round, the point on the bat that ensures solid contact is only about the size of a dime. If you make contact above the dime, a fly ball results, and if you make contact below the dime, a ground ball results. Sometimes perfect contact occurs and still results in an out if hit directly at a fielder. Don't be discouraged.

Bat selection is extremely important for young ball players. The balance, length and weight of the bat should fit the needs of the hitter. If the bat selected is too long or heavy, choke up for better bat control. Do not let the bat swing you.

Many factors influence the technique of a balanced baseball swing. Do not lunge or over stride. Do not take your eyes off the ball. Try not to hitch, which means dropping the hands down before you start to swing. Know the strike zone and do not swing at bad pitches. Be an aggressive hitter and do not go to bat looking for a walk. Always step directly toward the pitcher.

Remember, every at bat is a new challenge. Don't let your last at bat discourage you. If you struck out or popped up, don't worry about it. Concentrate on the ball and develop a smooth, controlled swing. The following techniques will help you develop a swing that will give you confidence and make you a better hitter.

The Grip

Step and Cock

Choke Up

The Swing

Holding the Bat

Follow Through

Stance - Distance From the Plate

The Contact Point

Straight Away Stance

The Wrist Roll

Open Stance

Wrist Roll - Follow Through

The Stance

Sliding

A player should slide whenever a play is close at any base. Teaching sliding can be complicated by the fear of injury. The correct technique, as outlined in the topics below, should be taught and practiced on a grass field before it is practiced on the base paths.

Bent Leg Slide

The Tag

Coach

The Coach icon will let you hear the Coach's helpful hints on the skill being discussed. The Coaches offer you another positive way to achieve the proper skills of baseball.

Your coaches for **"Know Your Baseball"** are Al Herback and Al Price - we call them Little Al & Big Al.

Their specialty is in teaching the fundamental skills used by the pros to young ball players and their coaches. Using their techniques, they will teach you (whether you're a young player or a coach) the form the pros use and they'll show you how to learn and how to teach every fundamental.

They believe that everyone can learn to perform the motions of baseball exactly like the pros do and they show you how to do that in this program, without ever touching a baseball. There are [10 fundamentals](#) and they've broken each fundamental skill into easily learned (and taught) parts. Practice each skill without a ball until your form is perfect and then go out and practice with a ball. They expect that by the end of the course, with a little practice, each of you can have professional form.

Exit

The Exit icon will end the ***"Know Your Baseball"*** session and bring you back to the Windows operating system.

Announcer

The Announcer icon will let you hear the Announcer's helpful hints on the skill being discussed. The Announcer offers you a verbal overview to help you achieve the proper skills of baseball.

Home Plate

The Home Plate icon will bring you back to the beginning menu of ***"Know Your Baseball"***, from here you will have the option to end the session or to learn a new skill.

Red and Yellow Flags

Clicking the left mouse on the RED FLAG takes you to the [Skills Sequencer](#) segment of **"Know Your Baseball"**.

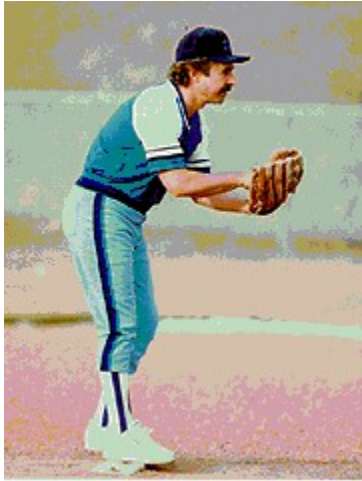
Clicking the left mouse on the YELLOW FLAG takes you to the [Skills Analyzer](#) segment of **"Know Your Baseball"**.

Brown and White Bats

Clicking the left mouse on the BROWN BAT takes you to the [Know The Game](#) segment of "***Know Your Baseball***".

Clicking the left mouse on the WHITE BAT takes you to the [Beyond The Game](#) segment of "***Know Your Baseball***".

Pitching - Starting Position



- ◆ Grip the ball and hold it in the glove
- ◆ Place the power foot slightly over the edge of the rubber and pointing to home plate.
- ◆ Place the non-power foot slightly back.
- ◆ Lock eyes on the target before any body movement.
- ◆ Assume a relaxed, comfortable body position.

Pitching - Shift of Weight (A)



- ◆ Lock eyes on the target.
- ◆ Transfer your weight from your power foot by taking a small step back and to the side with your non-power foot.
- ◆ At the same time, bring your hands up to the chest area.

Pitching - Shift of Weight (B)



- ◆ Keep your eyes on the target.
- ◆ Transfer your weight from your power foot to your non-power foot by taking a small step back and to the side.
- ◆ At the same time, bring your hands up behind the head.
- ◆ Quiet body.

Pitching - The Pivot



Slightly flexed back.



Head slightly in front of the shoulder.



Keep the eyes on the catcher's glove.



The power foot is placed in front and parallel with the rubber.



The power foot must touch the rubber.



Lift knee of non-power foot to L shape.



The hands remain together.



Glove shoulder faces the catcher.



A right hander's chest would face third base to allow a full pivot



of the body and cock the hips.

Pitching - Arm Down



Throwing hand comes out smooth.



The throwing hand is extended down.



Eyes remain on the catcher's glove.

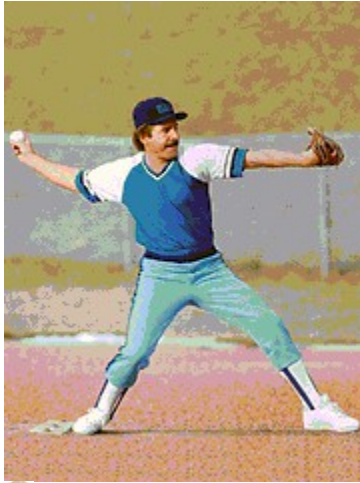


Flex the power leg.



Aim with lead shoulder.

Pitching - Arm Back



Throwing arm extended straight back for maximum power.



Glove hand extended out for balance.



Begin to drive power hip toward catcher.

Pitching - Delivery Step and Throw



Non-power foot whips around and plants pointing to the catcher.



Front knee bends.



The arm is brought through in overhand throwing position,



with the fingers on top of the ball.



Drop the glove and lead shoulder down.



Inside toe to inside toe.



Throwing arm is fully extended out front.



Ball is released with a snap of the wrist.

Pitching - Follow Through



The power leg drives off the rubber for maximum body power.



Arm follows through to the outside of the glove side knee.



Tuck in glove arm on release.



Throwing shoulder ends up over the glove knee.

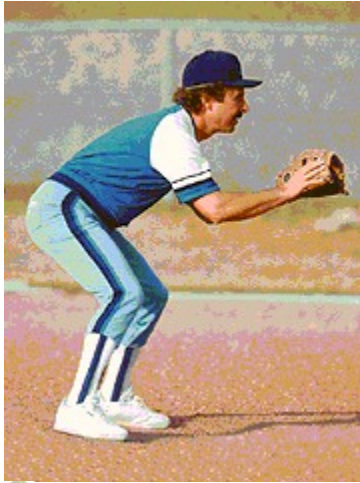


Top of the head points to the catcher on release, then comes up.



This may give the pitcher a more compact and controlled delivery.

Pitching - Fielding Position



After the pitch, the pitcher becomes another infielder.



The power leg ends up parallel or slightly in front of the bent leg.



The feet are approximately shoulder width apart.



The pitcher assumes the infielder's ready position to field



ground balls or bunts.

Throwing - The Grip



The pads of the first and second fingers are placed across any seam on the ball.



The fingers are about one finger width apart.



The thumb is underneath the ball directly below the fingers and does not



need to be on a seam.



The 3-finger grip should be used by baseball players with small hands and



definitely all players playing softball.



If possible, have a slight gap between the ball and the curve formed by the thumb



and index finger. This will allow for more wrist snap which will result



in a more powerful throw.



The grip should be firm but not tight.

Throwing - Find The Grip



Receive the ball in the palm NOT the webbing of the glove.



Find the grip immediately.

Throwing - Starter Step



Begin the throw by taking a small starter step with the power foot.



The power foot is the right foot for a right-handed thrower and is



the left for the left-handed thrower.



The power foot is turned to the outside (about a 30 - 45 degree angle)



in order for the hips to be used in the throw.



Keep your eyes on the target throughout the throw.

Throwing - Arm Down Position



The ball is taken from the glove with the throwing hand and brought straight down by the hip.



Loose and relaxed.

Throwing - Arm Back Position



At one point your throwing arm should be extended straight back.



As a right-handed thrower, your body should have turned so that



both your left hip and left shoulder point at the target.



Your weight is on the power foot and the non-power foot is off the ground.



Sight with lead shoulder and keep glove back.

Throwing - Step and Throw



At this point, step forward and plant the non-power foot toward the target.



The arm continues through with the elbow pointing out and with the



ball close to the head.



This ensures an overhand throw.



The rear hip and shoulder turn forward toward the target.



Pull lead shoulder down.



Fingers on top of the ball.

Throwing - Follow Through



Completely extend the arm forward.



Snap the wrist on releasing the ball.



The throwing arm should follow through toward the opposite hip.



Finish with a full shoulder turn so that the right shoulder ends



up pointing at the target.



Swing the power leg forward to complete the throw.

Catching - Wearing the Glove



Place each finger in a finger hole.



The index finger can be out to provide a space between the palm



of the glove and the base of the finger. This will lessen the impact



of the ball when it is caught in the palm.



Be sure the strap on the back of your hand is snug for maximum control.

Catching - Receiving a Throw at a Base



Stand near the back of the bag with the feet spread on each side.



The chest is over the bag.



Both hands are extended in front of the bag, awaiting the ball.



DO NOT attempt to stand in a position blocking the runner.



A ball is received in this manner for a tag play at second, third,



and occasionally first base.

Catching the Ball



Move your body so that it is in front of the ball.



Legs are shoulder width apart.



Both arms should be extended forward and slightly bent at the elbows.



Eyes are focused on the ball.



Be sure the throwing hand is next to the glove hand, not down at the side.

Catching - Cushion the Ball



Catch with two hands.



As the ball is caught, bend your elbows and bring your hands and glove



in toward the body. In this way, the force of the throw will be absorbed.



Catch the ball in the palm of the glove, not the webbing.

Catching - Prepare for the Throw



Watch the ball into the palm of the glove.



The throwing hand immediately covers the ball and gets the grip.



Proceed with the throw.

Catching - Above the Waist



The hands should be in a "thumbs together" or "palms down" position.



Catch with two hands so that the ball can be gripped



quickly for the throw.

Catching - Below the Waist



The hands should be in a "little fingers together" or "palms up" position.



This position is very similar to the position used when fielding a ground ball.

Catching - Catch the Ball in the Palm



Whenever possible, receive the ball in the palm of the glove.



If the ball is caught in the pocket there are times the player does not know he has caught the ball.



It is also difficult to take the ball out and get a grip quickly.

Ground Balls - Relaxed Position



This position is assumed before the pitch.



Face the batter with the glove leg slightly in front of the power leg.



The power foot is turned slightly out.



The glove leg points at the batter.



Weight is on the balls of the feet. (Padded area at the base of the toes).



The feet are shoulder width apart.



Knees are bent with the hands resting comfortably on the knees.

Ground Balls - Ready Position



This position is assumed as the pitcher is in motion.



The feet take a wider stance, with the power leg



dropping slightly further back.



The elbows should be between the knees.



The seat should be down and the head up.



The hands are extended out in front and carried low.

Ground Balls - Receiving the Ground Ball



Move quickly to a position behind the ball.



Extend both hands out in front with palms up.



Extend the glove leg forward.



The head is down and the seat is down.

Ground Balls - Suck it Up



Watch the ball into the palm of the glove.



Suck the ball up into the stomach area with both hands,



bringing the elbows past the waist.



Grip the ball and keep it in the glove.



Stay low.

Ground Balls - Starter Step



Move the power foot forward, taking your starter step.



Lift the head and locate the target.



The ball does not come out of the glove until this point.



This sequence is often called the "crow hop".

Ground Balls - Arm Down Position



The ball is taken from the glove with the throwing hand and brought straight down by the hip.



Loose and relaxed.



Ground Balls - Arm Back Position



The throwing arm is then extended straight back.



The non-power foot steps forward and points to the target.



The arm comes around with the elbow pointing out and with



the ball passing close to the head.

Ground Balls - Follow Through



The arm extends fully.



Wrist snaps.



Throwing arm follows through.



Throwing shoulder turns.



Power foot swings around and plants to complete the throw.

Fly Balls - Outfielder's Ready Position



The eyes are fixed on the ball.



The feet are shoulder width apart with weight on the balls of the feet.



This balanced stance allows quick movement in all directions.

Fly Balls - Outfielder's Ground Ball



When fielding a ground ball, keep the ball in front of the body.



The glove leg should be slightly forward.



Go down on the knee of the power leg with the hands



in the "palms up" position.



This position is used to make sure the ball will not get by



you on a bad hop.

Fielding a Fly Ball - Forehand



When moving toward a ball hit to the glove side,



use a cross-over step with the power foot.



Run quickly to the ball. Keep your arms down and do not run



with your hands up in the air.



Run on the balls of your feet and keep your eyes on the ball.

Fly Balls - Forehand Catch



When you get to the ball, reach up with both hands.



Keep your thumbs together and catch the ball in the palm of your hand.

Fielding a Fly Ball - Backhand



When moving to a ball hit to the throwing side, use a cross-over step



with the non-power foot.



Run to the ball with hands down in a running position.



Run on the balls of your feet and keep your eyes on the ball.

Fly Balls - Backhand Catch



When you get to the ball, reach up with both hands.



Keep your thumbs together and, whenever possible,



catch the ball in the palm of the glove.

The Catcher - Ready Position "A"



Provide a good target throughout the pitcher's windup and delivery.



The body should be square to the pitcher and behind the plate.



Hands and arms should be held out in front of the body.



The fist is held behind the webbing of the glove for protection.



The feet are shoulder width apart and shoulders are low.



The seat is off the heels, the glove foot is forward and the



power foot is back and pointing out.

The Catcher - Ready Position "B"



All of the information offered in Ready Position "A" applies



except the position of the throwing hand.



The thumb and index finger of the throwing hand are held lightly



on the heel of the foot for protection.



Weight should be on the balls of the feet.

The Catcher - Above the Waist



Catch the ball with the "thumbs together" position.



The hands and arms start out in front.



Cushion the ball as it is received.



Catch the ball in the palm of the glove.



Glove elbow clearly in front and pointing out from the knee.

The Catcher - Below the Waist



Turn your hands over into the "palms up" position.



The hands and arms start out and in front.



Cushion the ball as it is received.



Catch the ball in the palm of the glove.

The Catcher - Catcher's Stance



How Far From The Batter Is Safe?



Allow the batter to assume his position in the box.



Stay at least arm's length away from the batter's



back leg and hip.

The Catcher - Bat Clearance



This will give you room to catch the ball safely



even as the batter swings.



NOTE: A ball in the dirt or a low pitch are very difficult plays.



The further back a catcher takes his stance, the more often



these difficult plays will occur.

The Catcher - Relaxed Position



The body is balanced and is square behind the plate.



The weight is on the toes.



This is the catcher's position before the pitcher steps on the mound.



The ready position is then assumed.

The Catcher - Catch The Ball



Once the pitcher has used up the target (on release)



relax the glove hand.



Keep the seat up and the shoulders down.



The hands and arms are held out front.



Cushion the ball on contact.



Catch the ball in the palm.



When anticipating a throw to a base,



begin to shift your weight forward as you catch the ball.

The Catcher - Grip and Step



Get the correct grip for the throw.



The power leg steps toward the target.



Keep the body low and balanced to set up the quick release.

The Catcher - The Throw



Use the down-back throwing motion and keep the eyes



fixed on the target.



Step toward the target with the non-power foot.



Use an overhand throw.

The Catcher - Follow Through



Completely extend the arm forward.



Snap the wrist on the release.



Finish so that the right shoulder ends up pointing at the target.



The throwing arm should follow through to the opposite hip.

The Catcher - Blocking a Ball



Drop to your knees.



Stay behind the ball.



The glove and hand should cover the hole formed between the legs.



"Look" the ball into the body.



Keep the head down.



Do not try to catch the ball.



Rather, try to block it and keep it in front of the body.

The Catcher - Receiving the Throw



Making a Play at the Plate



The body faces the throw.



The heels of the feet are at the front of the plate.



Ready Position: Knees are bent, arms are out front and eyes are on the ball.



Do not stand on the baseline waiting for a ball.



You cannot block the runner when you do not have the ball.

The Catcher - Making the Tag



Making a Play at the Plate



Catch the ball, grip it and keep it in the glove.



Jab step into the baseline with the leg pad facing the runner.



Allow the runner to slide into the tag. Do not reach.



Clear out of the way.

The Catcher - Catching a Foul Ball



Almost every foul ball pop-up is to the open side away from the batter.



Turn and take off the mask and helmet and hold them.



Locate the ball, call for it and move to it.



Throw the mask and helmet to an open space away from the area of the catch.



Keep your back to the infield as the ball will curve back toward you.



If possible, catch the ball with both hands at shoulder height



With a RIGHT HANDED batter, the catcher turns to the right.



With a LEFT HANDED batter, the catcher turns to the left.

Baserunning - Running Straight Through



Ground Balls to the Infield



Once the ball is hit, run hard to first base.



- Touch the front of the base with either foot.



- After you cross over the base, look over your right shoulder for a possible bad throw.



- Do not stop running until you are well down the baseline.



Don't watch the ball. Don't leap at the base. Don't slide. Don't stutter step.



Baserunning - Base Hit



Rounding First Base



About 2/3 of the way down the baseline, begin to curve out.



This will allow you to get a good turn towards second base.

Baserunning - Contact the Base



Contact the base on the inside with either foot.



Do not step on top of the base.

Baserunning - Face the Action



Run 4 or 5 steps in as straight a line as possible



toward second base.



Keep your eyes on the ball.



Stop in a good ready position.



If the ball is fielded cleanly, return to first base.

Baserunning - Ready for the Next Pitch



Left foot touches the side of the bag, NOT on top.



First step towards second base is a cross-over step.

Bunting - Square Around Position



Use the straight away stance to begin the square



around bunt position.



Begin the foot movement on the wind up of the pitcher.

Bunting - Front Foot Turn - Square Around Bunt



The front foot steps first and turns, pointing to the pitcher.

Bunting - Back Foot Turn - Square Around Bunt



The back foot steps to replace the front foot.



Both feet now point toward the pitcher and are clearly in



the batter's box, even with the front of the plate.



NOTE: If a batter bunts the ball with a foot out



of the batter's box, he is out.

Bunting - Pivot Position



Start with an open stance.



The front foot is further away from the plate than the back foot.

Bunting - The Pivot



Begin your pivot on the pitcher's windup.



Turn towards the pitcher by pivoting on the balls of the feet.



By starting with the open stance,



you are ensured of ending up in a balanced wide position.

Bunting - Feet Ready Position - Pivot Bunt



After the pivot, you finish with a flat front foot.



You should be up on the toes of the back foot.

Bunting - Body Ready Position - Square Around Bunt



Use a loose, relaxed grip.



The bottom hand assumes its normal grip.



The other hand slides up the bat near the edge of the hitting zone.



The bat is held in the "V" formed by the thumb and the forefinger.



Lean slightly toward the plate.



The hitting zone of the bat is directly over the plate.

Bunting - Just Before Contact



In the square around stance, the toes are even with the front edge of the plate.



Knees are bent for balance.



Arms are extended out toward the pitcher.



The bat is parallel to the ground and is held at the top of the strike zone.



The eyes are fixed on the ball.

Bunting - The Contact



To bunt the ball down either baseline, change the angle of the bat



by extending or pulling back on the top hand.



The bottom hand is basically a pivot hand.



As the ball contacts the bat, both hands pull in towards the body



to cushion the blow.



A bunt is like catching the ball with the bat.

Bunting - A Low Strike



Get the bat in front of the ball by raising or lowering



the body with the knees.



Move the arms as little as possible.

Bunting - Bunt Strikes Only



If the pitch is not a strike, pull the bat clearly out of the strike zone.



Leaving the bat in the strike zone, even on a ball,



could result in a called strike.

Hitting - The Grip



The grip is loose with the second set of knuckles of each hand



lined up closely with one another

Hitting - Choke Up



Slide the hands up the handle for more bat control.



A shorter bat is preferable to a choke up, but if the



shortest bat is still too big, the choke up is required.

Hitting - Holding the Bat



The bat should be held with the fingers not the palm of the hands.

Hitting - Stance - Distance From the Plate



To ensure that the hitting zone of the bat covers the plate:



1. Assume your regular stance and hitting posture.



2. Extend the arms and the bat away from the body.



3. Realign yourself so that the hitting zone of the bat covers the plate.



4. Do not lead with high lead elbow. The knob of the bat should



never be seen by the pitcher.

Hitting - Straight Away Stance



This is the most common stance.



Both feet are the same distance from the plate.



The hips and shoulders are parallel to the plate.

Hitting - Open Stance



The foot closest to the pitcher opens up and is further from the plate.



Both feet, the hips and shoulders face the infield.



This position gives the batter less power but a better look at the ball.



A hitter in a slump or having trouble hitting, should assume this stance



as it allows a more compact swing.

Hitting - The Stance



Relaxed grip



Hands are back at shoulder level.



Arms away from body.



Rear elbow up slightly.



Head steady.



Eyes level and fixed on the ball.



Shoulders level.



Knees slightly bent.



Feet shoulder width apart.



Body balanced.

Hitting - Step and Cock



As the pitcher delivers the ball:



Shift weight to the rear foot and take a short gliding step



(no more than 12 inches) toward the pitcher.



At the same time pull your hands back.



This will cause the hips and shoulders to coil away from the pitcher.



Brace the front leg as it hits the ground.



Head steady.



Eyes on the ball.

Hitting - The Swing



To begin the swing, push off the back foot and brace your front leg.



Throw your hands and bat down through the ball to get a level swing.



Arms should be extended and away from the body.



The hitting zone of the bat should extend over the plate.



Weight will now be shifted to front foot. Do not bend your front leg.



Roll wrists on follow through.



Keep head and eyes down on the ball.

Hitting - Follow Through



Pivot on both feet to allow your body to uncoil.



Hips and upper body finish facing the pitcher.



Let arms take a natural full follow through.



Both hands stay on the bat.



Head and eyes stay down until contact is made.



Body should be under control and balanced at the finish.

Hitting - The Contact Point



The bat should contact the ball out in front of the plate.



At contact, the wrists roll over and the back hip snaps toward the pitcher.

Hitting - The Wrist Roll



On contacting the ball, the top hand on the bat is in a palm up position.



The wrist roll allows for maximum power.

Hitting - Wrist Roll - Follow Through



After contact is made, the wrists have rolled over



and the top hand is now in a palm down position.



Finish the swing with a natural follow through.

Sliding - Bent Leg Slide



Run aggressively and slide without hesitation.



Begin your slide early.



Kick one leg up and tuck the other leg under the knee
of the extended leg.



Throw both hands up into the air.



Slide on the seat and back.

Sliding - The Tag



Receive the ball at a base in a ready position.



Grip the ball with the throwing hand and keep it in the glove.



Place the glove down in front of the bag and let the runner



slide into the back of the glove.



Do not reach for the runner.



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There's more! Watch for further titles that are currently under development or in the planning stages.

Skills Sequencer

By clicking on the red flag on any screen in **"Know Your Baseball"**, you make the baseballs active. Each ball now has a label (written in red) that tells you which baseball fundamental you will learn to perform when you click that ball.

Clicking on any of the balls will take you, immediately, to the rehearsal area, where you can listen, watch and practice this skill.

Once you are in the Skills Sequencer section, click on any player at the bottom of the screen to see one step in an action sequence. Click the ring at the top of your screen to lower the movie screen and you will see a video as well as a written explanation of each step. Click the ring at the bottom of the screen (only after the movie screen is pulled down) to raise the screen again.

Click the play-ball logo to the right of this screen for an action video of the skill in use by AI & AI and their kids. Remember the button banner: Click the Coach icon for coaching tips and the Announcer's microphone for more detail on each step.

In Skills Sequencer you will learn the correct way to perform each of the fundamental skills of baseball. The player-figures at the bottom of the screen each represent one step in the entire action. The figure on the left is usually the first step in the action and the players to the right represent the following steps.

Listen to the Announcer for a clear definition of each step and study the position. When you have the screen pulled down, clicking the last player in the sequence (to the far right) will show the full range of motion and will recite the entire progression. This is the way we do it in our clinics. The words are to remind you of each step.

[Skills Analyzer](#)

By clicking on the yellow flag on any screen in **"Know Your Baseball"**, you make the baseballs active. Each ball now has a label (written in yellow) that tells you which baseball fundamental you will study when you click that ball.

Clicking on any of the balls will take you, immediately, to the rehearsal area, where you can listen, watch and practice this skill.

Each item has a number of aspects. The [aspect buttons](#), appear down the center of the screen. To see a particular aspect for the left window, click on the bar to the left of the aspect button. A red marker appears, determining the aspect that you have chosen. Likewise, the same applies to the right window, but use the right hand bar. To see the same aspect for both windows, click on the center of the aspect button itself.

The Two Window video display offers side and front views of each of the specific skills within a fundamental progression. Each window displays items. The list of items in a topic appear below each window. You can view the skills separately or you can "link" the videos together by pressing the chainlink button.

You can access the Announcer and Coach also in this segment. They will give you detailed descriptions of each skill, making it even easier for you to practice the motions. The Full Motion button will allow you to watch the entire progression for the topic you have chosen. If you should choose to only view the images and not hear the descriptions you can toggle the A+V button, it will allow you to play the videos and slides with or without sound.

Some of baseball's most common errors are also presented in this segment so that the young player can be made aware of the incorrect way he or she may have been performing a skill.

Reference Information



Baseball with Al Herback and Al Price, Basic Instructional Manual
Baseball with Al Herback and Al Price, Advanced Instruction Manual

Other Resource Materials

Al & Al Little League Baseball Clinics
c/o AXIA Multimedia Corporation



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Beyond The Game

By clicking on the BROWN BAT on the Home screen, you will enter "Beyond The Game". This section deals with AI & AI's lessons about life and baseball.

Click on any of the baseballs for a short story.

It takes more to being a coach than just knowing how to throw a baseball. Building courage, character and loyalty are also important fundamentals of baseball.

AI & AI have found that a lot of their teaching comes in the form of stories. These stories help to reinforce the learning of skills also helping coaches, parents and especially the kids to understand what it really means to play baseball. Baseball is more than just a game, and with these stories, AI & AI tell you why.

Know The Game

By clicking on the WHITE BAT on the Home screen, you will enter "Know The Game". Each of the five bats at the bottom of the screen represent a particular situation, each one will have instructions posted on the clipboard which you will find at the right-edge of the screen.

In each situation, imagine what you and the other players should do, then follow the instructions.

"Know the Game" introduces basic plays, and simple rules. This section sets up a few of the simple scenarios that you will discover in early baseball.

What's In It For You

Welcome! The purpose of the **"Know Your Baseball"** software package is to provide an interactive, informative explanation of the fundamentals of baseball as it would apply to young ball players up to the age of twelve years. We have purposefully presented each skill, in a simple, non-technical manner.

The fundamental skills that are presented in **"Know Your Baseball"** include: throwing, catching, fielding ground balls, fielding fly balls, the catcher, pitching, hitting, bunting, baserunning and sliding. Each of these skills require that the child perform a series of motions in an orderly progression.

These progressions are best represented in the [Skills Sequencer](#) segment of **"Know Your Baseball"**. By using the mouse to click on the players on the bottom of the screen, you can listen, watch and learn about each of the steps required to master the fundamentals of baseball. Pull down the movie screen to watch the step being performed using the proper technique and be sure to listen to the Announcer and the Coaches for detailed explanations.

Another excellent feature within **"Know Your Baseball"** is the [Skills Analyzer](#) segment. This segment offers you a discriminative learning environment where you are encouraged to participate in making decisions about each of the steps and their importance within a progression. Short video presentations of fundamental progressions can be seen from different angles.

[Know the Game](#) introduces young players to basic plays and simple rules. There are 5 different scenarios presented in this segment which include: FlyBall Coverage Areas, Sacrifice Bunt (Offense and Defense procedures), Base Hits to Left, Center and Right Fields and a scenario for the catcher "Making a Play at the Plate" after the ball has been hit. This segment encourages young players to determine the actions of all the player positions in order to achieve a successful play.

[Beyond the Game](#) is a segment which highlights lessons about life and baseball. This segment will teach players that there is more to the game, than just knowing how to throw a baseball. Building courage, character and loyalty are also important fundamentals of baseball. In this segment, the Coaches discuss the necessity of team spirit and positive reinforcement through stories of experience. Coaches as well as parents will find this segment quite refreshing.

This multimedia package is an instructional baseball presentation that is packed with important fundamentals to increase your baseball skills. So please, Have Fun, and **"Know Your Baseball"**

Aspect button

The aspect buttons are featured within the Skills Analyzer segment of ***"Know Your Baseball"***. When clicked, they offer item specific information within a progression. Buttons include the following: The Coach, The Announcer, Side view, Front view, Common Errors and Full motion completing the sequence.

How About "Al" Little Background



About the Authors

Al and Al have been conducting baseball/softball clinics for players and coaches since the early 70's. Their unique instructional program started in Calgary, Alberta and grew to include Husky Triple Play clinics throughout Canada, clinics in Florida, yearly clinics in the California Districts 39, 57, 54, 59, 44, and 35, District 9 in Seattle, District 6 in Wisconsin, Phoenix, the Soviet Union and Williamsport, Pennsylvania, home of the Little League World Series. District 44, Sunnyvale, California, has been involved with their clinics for the past 11 years. To date, Al and Al have presented their program to over 20,000 managers/coaches and 40,000 players.

Out of the clinical work came a local television series and instructional baseball tips for the Toronto Blue Jay and Montreal Expo telecasts. In 1985, the production of an instructional video led the two Al's to their involvement with former Expo stars Tim Lincecum, Andre Dawson, Mike Fitzgerald, Tim Wallach, and former Blue Jay stars Willie Upshaw, Ernie Whitt, Rance Mulliniks and coach Bobby Cox. Also included in the program were commentators Tony Kubek and Duke Snider.

During the spring of 1988, they conducted the managers/coaches clinic for the Eastern Regional Conference at Williamsport. This session included participants from 11 northeastern states. Again, in April, 1990, Al and Al were chosen by Little League U.S.A. to do the managers/coaches clinic at the grand opening of the Central Regional Headquarters in Indianapolis, Indiana. A repeat performance was made again in Indianapolis in 1991.

In July of 1988, a major highlight occurred in the baseball careers of Al and Al. They were chosen by the Society Union Baseball Federation to conduct player clinics in Moscow. The two instructors spent 14 days in the U.S.S.R. teaching the teams from Leningrad, Kiev, the Republic of Gorky and three teams from Moscow. A team was chosen from those 17 to 24 year old players to represent their country in the 1992 Olympics. For Al and Al, what an experience.

Their unique approach to teaching the skills of baseball and softball has been internationally recognized for its merit. Their methods along with their manual have been acclaimed as "unparalleled".

The two Al's educational background is evident in the sequential skills and creativity of the teaching techniques. It is easily understood by players and coaches alike.

Now having teamed up with AXIA Multimedia, they have created an interactive CD-ROM titled "Know Your Baseball". With this CD, their expertise can become your expertise all in the comfort of your own home.

About the Authors



Click on AI or AI !

Big Al

Al Price. Al was born in Acme, a small town in southern Alberta, where he began his baseball career at the age of nine. Al represented Alberta at several national championships and in 1976 was elected the All-Canadian catcher when playing for the National Champion Jimmies. He was a member of the Canadian National teams of 1977 and 1980 which competed in the World Championships in Nicaragua and Japan.

Al has been a professional educator with the Calgary Public School Board for 21 years at the high school level. He maintained his passion for sport in his role as a physical education teacher, coach and Athletic Director. He has taken on leadership roles as an Assistant Principal and recently has completed his second year as the Principal of the National Sports School in Calgary.

In 1993, Al completed his Masters in Educational Leadership at Northern Arizona University. At years end, he received the award for the outstanding student in the masters program and was honored by being selected to the national Dean's list.

Al, his wife Ginny, and children Scott, Torey, Josie and Allie reside in Calgary.

Little Al

Al Herback. Al was born in Kincaid, a small town in southern Saskatchewan. At age eleven, he moved to Regina where he began his playing career. He played through the minor system until 1964 when he became a member of the Regina senior team, the Red Sox.

In 1970, Al moved to Calgary. He played shortstop for the Jimmies, who, in 1976, won the Canadian National Baseball Championship. Two years later, he returned to the nationals as the coach of the Alberta provincial team.

He has been a professional educator with the Calgary Separate School Board for 26 years teaching physical education in the elementary and junior high levels. For the past six years, Al has played a dual role as a classroom teacher and a member of the school administrative leadership team. In 1991 and again in 1995, Al was nominated for excellence in teaching. This award recognizes commitment to students, to education and to achieving excellence. In 1982, Al was presented with a national award for Community Leadership at a special ceremony hosted by the Prime Minister of Canada and Queen Elizabeth II of England in Ottawa, the capital city of Canada.

Al, his wife Gail, and daughters Kellie and Erin reside in Calgary.

Practice Drills

Drills are tremendously important as a complement to any of the skills taught. The drills reinforce the correct techniques and enable the players to have fun while practicing skills.

In this section, the drills are illustrated and explained under each heading in the order the skills appear in the program. The drills are also presented in a logical teaching progression in each of the categories.

Many of the drills may be modified by the coach to suit the ability and age of the players. Grouping of players is usually necessary. Coaches may also use their imagination to invent their own drills as long as they reinforce correct technique and proper progression.

It is important to include interesting drills as a reinforcement within every practice. So often, time is not allotted for drills to practice the specific skills taught.



Throwing



Catching



Fielding Ground Balls



Fly Balls



The Catcher



Pitching



Baserunning



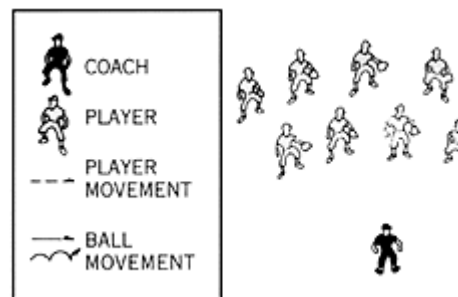
Hitting and Batting Practice Organization



Bunting

Drills - Throwing

SIMULATE THE THROWING MOTION (without a ball)



Call out the basic throwing progression:

Catch - Grip - Starter Step - Down - Back - Through

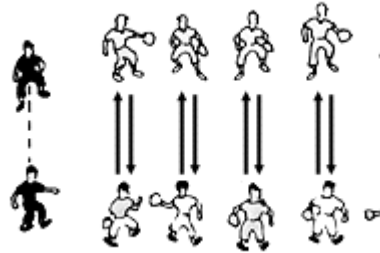
The players actively follow the progression called out.

GRIPPING THE BALL



One ball per player. Players toss the ball up to themselves, catch the ball and practice getting the grip as quickly as possible by adjusting the ball in their throwing hand.

THROWING WITH A PARTNER



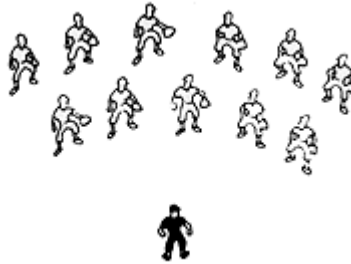
Players should face each other at a short distance. Concentrate on control and practice the correct throwing motion.

Coaches: Do not try to watch both lines at the same time. By standing at the end of one line, it is easy to pick out the errors that occur. Once satisfied watching one line, move to the end of the other line.

Target Drill - Have each player give a glove target and have the thrower concentrate on throwing to the target.

Drills - Catching

SIMULATE THE CATCH



Check to see if your players know how to position their hands for:



a two-handed catch

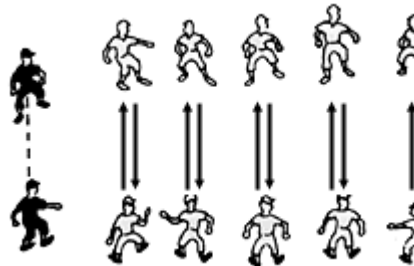


catching a ball above the waist



catching a ball below the waist

BAREHAND CATCHING WITH A PARTNER

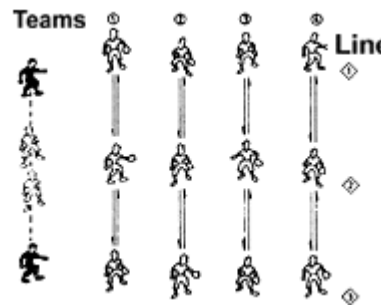


Players should face each other at a short distance with no gloves. This will force the players to catch with 2 hands and will encourage them to catch the ball in the palm of their glove hand.

Then have the 2 lines move further apart and put on their gloves, stressing catching with 2 hands.

Instruct the 2 lines to throw to their partners above and below the waist.

3 PLAYER RELAY (a combination throwing and catching drill)

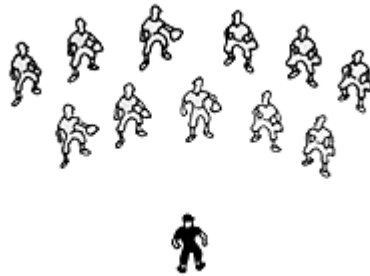


Organize the team into 3 lines, about the length of the baseline between each. 3 Players in line with each other, one in each line, form a team. Each player in Line 1 has a ball to start the relay throws. Each team of 3 completes throws from Line 1 to 2, Line 2 to 3. Line 3 back to 2 and finally 2 to 1. The team that completes this sequence of throws the fastest wins the race.

This drill keys on catching the ball with 2 hands, gripping and making strong accurate throws.

Drills - Fielding Ground Balls

SIMULATE THE GROUND BALL PROGRESSION

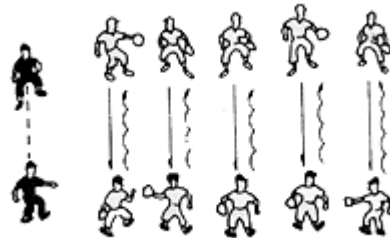


Have the players find a space where they can see the coach and yet have room to move forward.

Take the players through the progression.

Relaxed Position - Ready Position - Glove Leg Forward - Suck It Up - Starter Step - Grip - Break Hands - Down - Back - Step And Throw

CONTROLLED GROUND BALLS WITH A PARTNER



Before the ball is rolled to your partner, he must be in his ready position. The ball should be rolled underhand. Your partner moves to the ball, fields the ball properly and throws it back. Repeat the drill until the coach has the players switch roles.

Coaches: Remember, for best coaching results, watch only the fielding line.

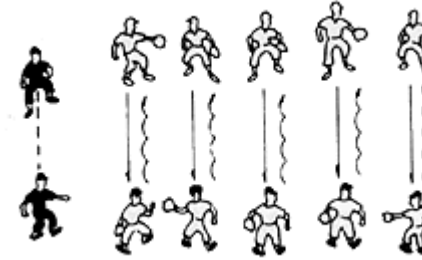
GROUND BALL SHUTTLE DRILL



The team divided into 2 lines, faces the coach and lines up one behind the other. The 1st player in each line assumes a ready position. The coach alternates throwing ground balls to each line. The player fields the ground ball and throws it back to the coach.

Coaches: This position allows you to challenge the players and correct mistakes immediately.

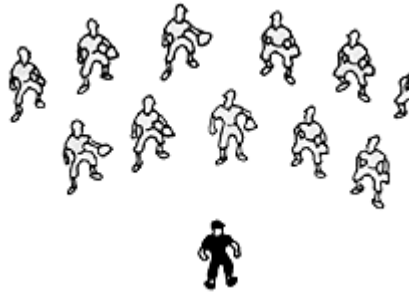
DONKEY - ONE ON ONE GAME



Two lines work with a partner. Each player watches for his partner's fielding mistakes. Each time your partner makes a fielding mistake (wrong foot forward, elbows outside the knees, 1 hand fielding, etc....) he is issued a letter. The 1st player to make a total of 6 fielding errors spelling DONKEY loses the game. The ground balls thrown must bounce at least 3 times before it gets to the fielder or the thrower gets a letter. No bad hop throws are allowed.

Drills - Fielding Fly Balls

SIMULATE BASIC CATCHING POSTIONS



Have the players demonstrate forehand and backhand catching positions as well as the cross-over steps to the left and to the right.

FLY BALL DRILL



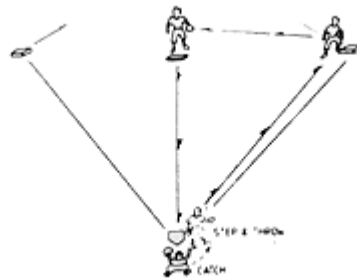
The coach throws (does not hit) the fly balls to each player's forehand and backhand side. In this way each player can be challenged at their own level by varying the height and distance the ball is thrown.

The players each have a ball and stand in line, one behind the other. The player at the front throws his ball to the coach, takes the cross-over step and moves to receive a fly ball thrown by the coach. The catch is made and player starts a new line. The drill continues with each player in the 1st line throwing their ball to the coach, making a catch to their right and moving to the new line. Once all of the players have moved to the new line, they follow the same sequence moving back to their original position. This drill could be used with any number of your team in the line. The drill allows you to practice the footwork and catching skills needed to make a play on a fly ball in any direction.

Competition - Award a point for a routine catch, 2 points for a catch made on a more difficult fly ball. The player scoring the most points in 10 fly ball chances wins.

Drills - The Catcher

THROWING TO A BASE



3 player drill (catcher, pitcher, infielder)

The catcher receives the pitch in a ready position and practices the steps and release of the ball to each infield base. The player acting as the infielder will catch several throws at each base. This drill could be done anywhere, not necessarily in the infield.

CATCHING A POP-UP



The coach takes a ball and stands directly behind the catcher. The catcher faces forward in a ready position directly in front of the coach (wearing full equipment).

The Coach - tells the catcher if the batter is right-handed or left-handed, then says "BALL" as he throws the ball up and back like a pop foul.

The Catcher - clears his mask, locates the ball, moves to the ball, releases the mask to an open area and makes the catch with his back to the infield.

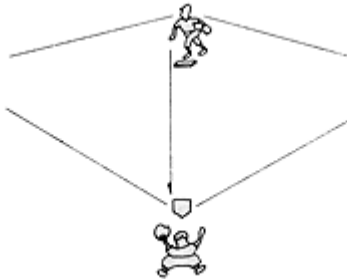
The coach can test the catcher's ability by varying the direction and height of the pop up.

BLOCKING LOW PITCHES



Catchers should practice the skill of blocking a ball while wearing full gear. The balls used should be soft and light, i.e. tennis, sponge balls. 1 player throws the ball in the dirt, the catcher practices the block.

CATCHING A PITCHER (Full Equipment)

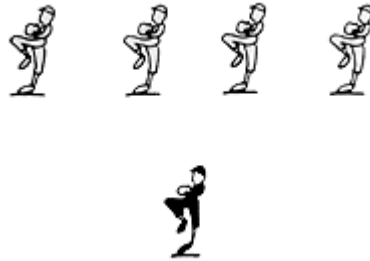


On a regular basis, catchers should practice all of the catching skills at a regular pitching distance.

Remember Coaches: Do not have your catchers catch hitting practice unless you are stressing game-like situations with your pitchers and hitters. The catcher will develop a fear of foul tips, start blinking, and pick up other bad habits if hitters continually swing at bad pitches and the pitcher is just serving the ball up to the hitter. The catcher's time is better spent practicing in other areas.

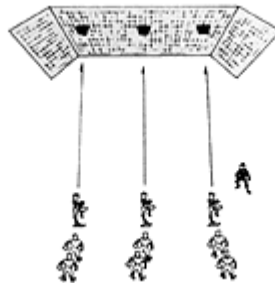
Drills - Pitching

SIMULATE THE PITCHING MOTION



Each of the players makes a line on the infield dirt for a pitcher's rubber. The coach leads all of the players through the shift of weight, pivot, arm down, arm back, step and throw pitching progression, calling out each step as the players go through the motion.

PITCH TO A TARGET



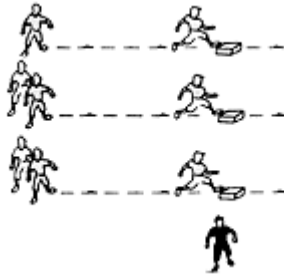
For a target, hang bases on the screen, low in the strike zone. Pace out the correct pitching distance from the targets. Each player has a ball. Four players at a time step up to the front of their line, go through the proper pitching motion and throw at the target.

Coaches: Stand at the side of the line just in front of the player and watch for problems in their technique. Do not let the players aim the ball for the sake of hitting the target. Proper technique must be stressed. Watch the pitcher's motion right through delivery - not the ball.

Team Pitching Competition - Each line is a team. Each player scores a point for his team each time he hits the target using the full and correct pitching motion.

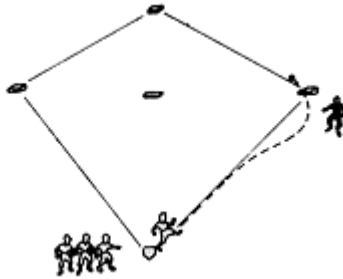
Drills - Baserunning

HOME THROUGH 1ST



If necessary, use your gloves for bases. Form 6 lines, lay the gloves down a baseline distance away. Six players run at a time, practicing stepping on the front of the base with either foot and continuing straight through.

HOME AROUND 1ST



The players line up at the plate and practice running down the line, veering out, hitting the inside of the base with either foot, taking 4 or 5 strides in a straight line toward 2nd, facing the ball and on the coach's call of:

GO - Advances to 2nd
BACK - Returns to 1st

* A glove can be placed 2/3 of the way down the line and 2 steps off the line to make the point the players should veer out around before getting to the base.

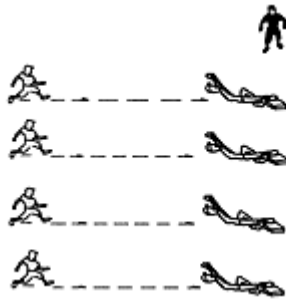
BASERUNNING RELAY



Divide the players into 2 teams. Team 1 attempts to have all players advance home to 2nd before team 2 advances from 2nd to home. The 2nd player from Team 1 cannot leave home until his teammate steps on 2nd. The same applies for Team 2 coming home. Again, place gloves down to force team players to veer out and circle the base. If a player does not go around the glove or touch the base, he disqualifies his team for that race.

Coaches: Be sure you stand behind home or 2nd with both home base and 2nd clearly in view at the finish.

SLIDING DRILL



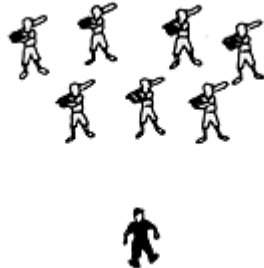
To practice the slide, the players lay their gloves down about 2 steps apart in a long line and in a well-grassed area. The players then move back as a group about the length of a baseline and each in line with their own glove. On the coaches call, all of the players sprint to their gloves and practice their slide. Have the players stay down at the end of the slide to allow the coach time to check the final position and the distance the player ends up from the bag or over the bag.

Note: Wet grass is great for sliding practice. Take a rained practice and practice your sliding technique.

Drills - Hitting

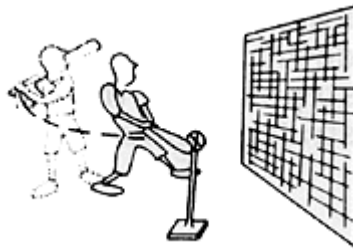
Batting Practice Organization

SIMULATE THE SWING



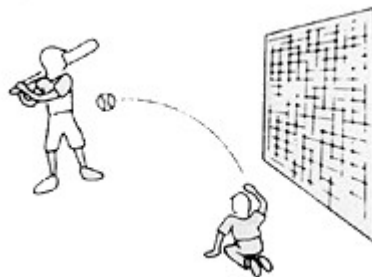
Arrange your team in an organized fashion, a safe distance apart, and practice the swing on the coach's command: Stance, Step & Cock, Swing, Follow Through.

HITTING OFF A "T" (Into A Screen)



Hitting the ball off a "T" into a screen is excellent practice as long as it is set up properly. Be sure the ball is set on the "T" in a position out in front of the hitter. Be sure contact is made with arms extended and on the roll of the wrists.

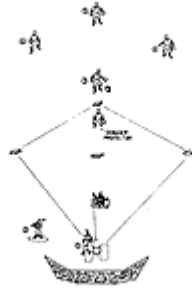
SCREEN DRILL (Toss From The Side)



Identical to the T-drill except the hitter's partner tosses the ball into the contact area. The balls are hit into the screen and are easily collected. The drill gives the hitter a lot of practice in a short period of time.

Note: A canvas could be hung on the screen to keep the balls from getting marked up.

FRONT TOSS HITTING DRILL



The coach kneels or sits behind a protective screen in front of the batter, about 1/3 of the distance from the mound, with a bag of balls. From this distance it is very easy to consistently throw to the strike zone. The direction and speed of the throw is very similar to a regular pitch. From this position it is easy to simulate the amount of time a batter has to react in a regular hitting situation. The coach's arm does not tire easily and the batter is less likely to make the mistakes in his swing attributed to fear of the pitch. This set-up gives the batter maximum confidence and provides a very efficient way of having batting practice at close to game situations, and best of all, reduces hitting practice time tremendously.

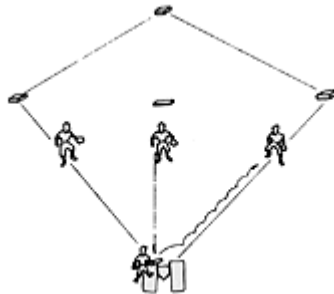
Drills - Bunting

SIMULATE FOOTWORK AND HAND POSITIONS



The coach goes through the pitching motion and each player with a bat, facing the pitcher, coordinates his timing, footwork and hand positions, and simulates bunting a ball. Do both square around and pivot positions.

4 PLAYER BUNTING DRILL



Four players set up in a mini diamond format 4 or 5 steps apart. Each assumes a position: pitcher, 1st base, batter, 3rd base.

The pitcher then winds up and lobs the ball underhand. The batter squares to bunt before the pitch is made and bunts 3 balls down each baseline. After 6 attempted bunts, rotate clockwise: pitcher to 1st, 1st to batter, batter to 3rd, 3rd to pitcher.

Players must concentrate on squaring around for each pitch and bunting only strikes. The correct hand, bat and body positions are needed to execute a good bunt down 1st and 3rd baselines.

Competition: Have the players at 1st and 3rd take a wide stance, at the desired distance from the batter. The batter then attempts to bunt the ball so that it rolls through their legs. A point is scored for each successful attempt.

Practice Plans

This section is as important as any other section in this program. Unless a coach has a plan for every practice, both players' and coaches' time is wasted. The four plans that follow are samples of organized practices. They are supplied as guidelines so that you can develop your own sequential practices. Each of the following four samples was organized to illustrate the following important aspects:



Every practice is planned and is 90 minutes maximum



Every practice begins with warm-up and exercise



Every practice includes throwing and catching drills



Every practice reviews the last practice and teaches a new skill



Every practice includes a game-type component



Every practice is different and includes at least 7 or 8 activities



Every practice should end with a "Test", either verbal or by demonstration



to see if the taught skill was understood

Each drill mentioned in the Practice Plan is explained in detail in the section on [Practice Drills](#). Coaches should modify or adjust any drill to suit the abilities and age of the players. Coaches should invent their own drills if they wish to work on a specific weakness. Good coaches understand the importance of repetition, demonstration, and positively reinforcing good effort and technique.

Good Practice Plans can be more effective if a team has one or two assistant coaches. In this way, each coach can work with a smaller group of players. In addition to teaching skills, practice time is the time to teach hustle. A team encouraged to hustle in practice will carry their hustle into games. Good hustle reflects good attitude and good coaching.

The following practice plans have been broken down into four days.

This was done in order for you to print each plan separately if you should choose to do so.



[Day One](#)



[Day Two](#)



[Day Three](#)



[Day Four](#)

Practice Plans - Day One

TIME IN MINUTES

AGENDA

0 - 10

Intro

Team Meeting - Expectations - Learn Names

10 - 20

Teach

Warm-up



Calisthenics.



Stretching.



Arm Strength.



To end warm-up, line up players from home to 1st, with



left foot on the line. 5 sprints to 2nd & 3rd baseline.

20 - 50

Teach & Drill Throwing



Grip - Grip Drill



Starter Step, Grip, Down-Back-Through. (no ball)



Two Line Partner Drill



- Begin throwing at a short distance.



- Watch one line at a time for controlled throws with proper technique.



- After both lines have been observed, move both lines back, but stress



control & technique.

50 - 60

Teach & Drill

Baserunning



Home through first.

60 - 80

Game

Scrub Baseball



3 batters.



Coach pitches and umpires.



Players rotate positions on outs and when they get to 1st base,



player moves to catcher, then to batter.



Batter who hits into a force play is out, not the runner.

80 - 90

Review & Teach

Pitching

Briefly teach the shift of weight, pivot, down back and follow through to all players (interested in pitching). Then end the practice with 3 baserunning relays (no instruction).

Practice Plans - Day Two

TIME IN MINUTES

AGENDA

0 - 10

Warm-up



Exercise Warm-up - Calisthenics - Base Running from 1st base line to 2nd - 5 times.



Practice Plan for this practice should be explained to the team.

10 - 20

Review Throwing



Grip.



Throwing Progression (no ball).



Catching with partner.

20 - 25

Review



Baserunning - Home through 1st.

25 - 30

Review



Pitching - Progression Only (no ball).

30 - 40

Teach Catching



Hand in the glove and a snug wrist strap.



Two hands.



- "Thumbs together" above the waist.



- "Little fingers together" below the waist.



Extend arms - cushion the ball - catch in the palm.

40 - 50

Practice Catching



At a short distance, throw and catch to a partner with no glove to reinforce



cushioning and catching with two hands.



After 5 minutes, use the gloves and back up the lines.

50 - 70

Game

Base Hit Competition



3 teams of equal ability.



1 team at bat, the other two in the infield & outfield positions.



Coach pitches and calculates.



Team at bat gets 4 swings each. When all players have hit,



base hit total is calculated and the teams rotate.

70 - 80

Teach & Drill

Home Around 1st Baserunning

80 - 90



Veer out - touch the base on the inside of the bag with either
foot - continue to second 4 or 5 steps - stop - return to 1st.



Review & Relay



Use players to demonstrate and review skills.



Give them test questions to answer verbally.



3 baserunning relay races. Proper technique can now be taught
to improve skill and time.



Practice Plans - Day Three

TIME IN MINUTES

AGENDA

0 - 10

Warm-up



Exercise Warm-up - Calisthenics - Base Running from 1st base line to 2nd - 5 times.



Practice Plan for this practice should be explained to the team.

10 - 15

Review

Catching - No Ball - Hand Positions

15 - 20

Review



Baserunning - Home through 1st - Home around 1st

20 - 30

Review

Throwing and catching from a short distance, then move back. Again the coach watches only one line at a time for corrections.

30 - 50

Teach & Drill

Pitching



Full pitching progression without a ball



Set up 4 or 5 targets on a fence or screen. Have players divided up into



equal groups and throw at the targets, stressing proper technique and follow through.

50 - 70

Game

Mini Game



Divide your players into two equal teams - ability and number if possible



Two innings



Coach pitches and umpires



No three outs. All players hit. When the last player of the team hits and



a play is made, teams switch.

70 - 80

Drill & Teach

Sliding



Why & when?



Have them try one or two in the grassed area ([Sliding Drill](#))

80 - 90

Review & Relay



Use players to demonstrate new skills.



Give them test questions to answer verbally.



Set teams should now be made for the three relay races and



weekly tallies should be kept.

Practice Plans - Day Four

TIME IN MINUTES

AGENDA

0 - 10

Warm-up



Exercise Warm-up - Calisthenics - Base Running from 1st base line to 2nd - 5 times.



Practice Plan for this practice should be explained to the team.



Conclude warm-up with throwing and catching today.

10 - 20

Review

Pitching



Full progression at the target



Use drill setup

20 - 30

Review & Teach

Sliding



Have them slide 6 or 7 times, using the [sliding drill](#) formation. When the slide



is complete, have them stay in position for observation by the coach.

30 - 45

Teach

Ground Balls



Relaxed and ready position.



Importance of the glove leg forward at the time of receiving the ball.



Briefly introduce the progression (no ball).

45 - 70

Game

Batting Practice - 3 Teams



Coach pitches.



Team No. 1 bats.



Team No. 2 in the infield.



Team No. 3 in the outfield.



Team 1 players get 5 swings each. They take the place of Team 3 in the



outfield. Team 3 takes over the infield, and Team 2 take to the batting area. Rotate.

70 - 80

Drill & Teach

Fly Balls



Introduce steps.



Forehand and backhand catches.



Run on the balls of your feet with glove down.

80 - 90

Review & Relay



Use players to demonstrate new skills taught.



Give them test questions to answer verbally.



3 baserunning relay races. Keep tally.

[Coaches Checklist](#)

[Throwing](#)

[Catching](#)

[Fielding Ground Balls](#)

[Fielding Fly Balls](#)

[The Catcher](#)

[Bunting](#)

[Hitting](#)

[Pitching](#)

[Baserunning](#)

[Sliding](#)

[Practice Sessions](#)

[Practice Drills](#)

Coaches Checklist - Throwing



Get the grip



Eyes on target



Take starter step



Bring hand down



Take arm back



Bring arm through



Snap the wrist



Arm follows through

Coaches Checklist - Catching



Eyes on ball



Extend both arms



Check hand position



Cushion the ball



Catch in pocket



Grip for throw

Coaches Checklist - Fielding Ground Balls



Relaxed position



Ready position



Move to the ball on the swing



Arms extended



Seat down



Glove leg forward



Suck ball to waist



Take starter step



Grip and break hands



Follow [Throwing](#) progression

Coaches Checklist - Fielding Fly Balls



Ready position



Eyes on batter



Use correct cross-over



Run on balls of feet.



Run with glove by side



Thumbs together - forehand



Thumbs together - backhand



Catch above shoulders

Coaches Checklist - The Catcher



Receiving the ball



- Relaxed and ready position



- Distance from batter



- Target and hand positions



- Cushion the ball



- Catch in palm



- Follow [Throwing](#) progression



Catching pop-ups



Blocking the ball



Throwing to a base



Tag play at the plate

Coaches Checklist - Bunting



Square around or pivot



Hand position on the bat



Extend arms should level



Eyes on ball



Angle bat toward baseline desired



"Catch" the ball on the bat



Bunt strikes only

Coaches Checklist - Hitting



Bat selection



Stance and grip



Step and cock



Level swing with arms extended



Wrist roll



Head down on contact



Follow through with pivot

Coaches Checklist - Pitching



Position on the mound



Eyes on target



Shift of weight



Pivot



Arm down



Arm back



Step to target



Arm through



Wrist snap



Follow through to fielding position

Coaches Checklist - Baserunning



Infield Hit



- Run straight down the line



- Touch front of base. Either foot



- Continue down the line



Base Hit



- Run 2/3 of way down line and veer out



- Round the base toward second base with 4 or 5 strides



- Face the fielder and return to first if not safe to advance

Coaches Checklist - Sliding



Run aggressively



Throw front leg up



Tuck second leg under



Throw hands high



Stay low



Slide on bent leg, seat and back

Coaches Checklist - Practice Sessions



Start on time



Be organized



Review skills from last practice



Teach a new skill



Keep all players active



90 minute practice maximum



Be patient, be positive



Use competitive, fun drills



Finish on time

Coaches Checklist - Practice Drills



Understand and try every drill before practice



Organize drills efficiently



Vary the drills



Modify drills according to a player's age and ability



Drills should reinforce skills taught



Each drill should be short and fun



Invent "Game Situation" drills

Batting Practice Organization



For efficient use of time, have all of your players number off.

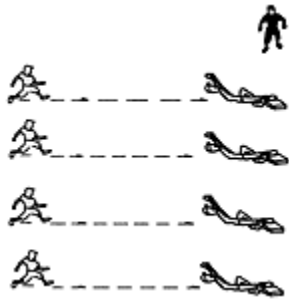
1 is the 1st batter, **2** is on deck, **3** is behind 2nd base with the ball bag, **4** is in left field, **5** in center, **6** in right field. Each fields balls to their area and throws them in to #3 in behind 2nd.

When the coach runs out of balls, every one rotates one position.

2 hits, **3** on deck, **4** takes the ball bag to the coach, empties it and moves in behind 2nd base, **5** moves to left field, **6** to center and **1** moves out to right.

This sequence continues until everyone has been at bat.

Sliding Drill



To practice the slide, the players lay their gloves down about 2 steps apart in a long line and in a well-grassed area. The players then move back as a group about the length of a baseline and each in line with their own glove. On the coach's call, all of the players sprint to their gloves and practice their slide. Have the players stay down at the end of the slide to allow the coach time to check the final position and the distance the player ends up from the bag or over the bag.

Order Form

The complete, Official Little

Other Resource Materials

The Official Little League Basic Instruction Manual for Coaches and Managers

60 pages, 8 1/2" x 11"

Al and Al's basic course for coaches, distills decades of advice and experience down to basic skills, drills and checklists. Over 200 photos illustrate key skill sequences. Whether you are an experienced coach, or new to the Little League, Al and Al's step by step approach will allow you to build a Little League team with a solid foundation of basic skills.

The Official Little League Player Instruction Passport

40 pages, 3 1/2" x 6"

A handy, pocket-sized reference to basic baseball skills, developed just for the little leaguer. Helps developing players improve "baseball fundamentals" between scheduled practices. Autograph page, space for player, and team photos ensure this booklet will become a prized souvenir of a player's years in Little League.

Complete "Know Your Baseball" team package

One Official Little League Basic Instruction Manual for managers and coaches, plus 14 Official Little League Player Instruction Passports. This forms the nucleus of a coordinated coaching program, as players can use their own handy reference to follow along as the coach teaches each basic skill. Al and Al have matched key sequences between the "big book" and the "little book", to keep coaches and players "on the same page"!

For More Information:



Contact Al Herback direct.



Phone: (403) 273-4656



FAX: (403) 272-6652

Little League Catcher's Equipment



Make sure that your equipment fits and is properly adjusted.



Be sure you wear your equipment whenever you are receiving throws from a pitcher.



It is mandatory to wear a protective cup for practices and games.



It is mandatory to have the neck protector and helmet attached to the mask and properly adjusted.



Your chest protector should fit and be adjusted to cover the neck and groin area.



Your leg pads should cover the area just above the knee cap and should be done up on the outside of your legs.

