

Flat glove drills for infielders

“It’s not about catching the ball, its about moving your feet to get into a position to catch the ball.”

D 1

- Line up and play light catch / toss. Catch the ball out front.
 1. Move your feet and step to the ball.
 2. Catch the ball out front.
 - D 2 Doing the same thing but now catching with one hand.

D 3

- Short hop drill. 10 – 15’ away. Throw the ball in between the two feet. Catch the ball in an athletic position and throw from an athletic position. Don’t stand up. Move your feet if throw from partner requires you to. Catch with two hands. Short hops, not long hops. Get the butt down and catch the ball out front.
 - D 4 Once you get good, catch the ball out front with one hand, catch the ball on the glove side of the imaginary line; doing so gives your glove / arm freedom in case of a bad hop.

D 5

- Drop left foot back and make it the new target. Do the same thing as above. Don’t stand up. Staying low and throwing from an athletic position. Throw short hops toward left foot. Catch it out front.
 - D 6 Go to one hand. Catch it out front.

D 7

- Backhands. Drop right foot back. Purpose is to move your feet and catch the ball out front. Get your head down with it. Everything should be down to up. Just like in the game, this has to be done one handed. Hit the ball up and catch it with the bare hand.

D 8

- Hit ground balls with flat glove.

Lesson 1: Titan players must accept the responsibility for how our teams look on the field; appearance is one of the few factors you can control. As your coaches, we will pay attention to your appearance and to how you behave. We want our teams to be successful so we will all look and act successful at all times. Having a team that dresses in a certain way will go a long way in projecting a good image. Players must learn that they represent not only themselves, but also their teammates, their program, and their parents.

To get started:

- Shirt tucked in whether it's a "t-shirt and shorts day" or full uniform day.
- Hair tucked in underneath the brim of the hat, no bangs in front of the eyes.
- Full uniform includes a belt and baseball socks or stirrups.
- Tennis / running shoes instead of skateboarding shoes.
- Athletic supporter (cup) mandatory at all practices no matter what.

Lesson 2: There is an old saying "If you can't play catch, you can't play baseball." Show me a group of lazy throwers and I will show you a weak link in a baseball team. The fundamentals of baseball throwing and catching can be improved by playing catch. Known as the communication of baseball, playing catch is necessary to improve quality of play, to win, and to have fun. A team that loves to play catch and consistently practices catching will win games. It is a great feeling to know people respect your arm. The anticipation that your good throw will make a difference in a ballgame is almost as much fun as making the throw.

The way RSF Titans play catch is one in which they are always trying to get better, to build arm strength, and to work on the throwing and catching mechanics specific to the positions they play. Catching the ball is also important and is always "Rule # 1." When Titans play catch, they never do the minimum, they always focus on doing it the right way, and they always use it as an opportunity to improve.

- Find the right throwing partner.
 - Someone with similar arm strength as you.
 - Someone who plays a similar position as you (NOT just a "buddy").
- Start out with "easy catch."
 - One or two knee throwing.
 - Ten toes drill; regular or figure eight.
 - Rocker drill.
- Long Toss: Listen / feel / learn your body and move back as far as possible.
 - Hip drill.
- Make your way back in, keeping the same intensity, focus on your release point.
- 5 – 10 strong throws at 60 feet.
- Finish off with throws and catches specific to your position.
 - Catchers: T Drill, quick toss.
 - IF's: One hoppers, quick toss, back hands, slow rollers, back doors, etc.
 - OF's: Crow hops, fly balls, do or dies.

Rules for playing catch:

- No throwing allowed until the arm and body are loose.
- Four seam grip every throw.
- Each player grabs a ball (one in the pocket).
- Give yourself some room.
- 5-10 feet from the foul line.
- Talk only with your partner.
- Partner chases after third bad throw.

NC Cobras Practice Plan Friday September 11, 2009

- 3:30 - 4:00 Early Batting Practice
- 4:00 - 4:10 Stretch
- 4:10 - 4:20 Play Catch
- 4:20 – 5:20 Stations: Pitchers throw live BP, Live Hitting, Base Running

| | Pitch BP | Hit Live | Base Run |
|-------------|----------|----------|----------|
| 4:20 – 4:40 | Team 1 | Team 2 | Team 3 |
| 4:40 – 5:00 | Team 3 | Team 1 | Team 2 |
| 5:00 – 5:20 | Team 2 | Team 3 | Team 1 |

| Team 1 | Team 2 | Team 3 |
|--------|--------|--------|
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| | | |

- 5:20-5:45 PFP's (Pitcher's Fielding Practice)
 - Pitchers cover first
 - Double Plays
 - Pitchers field bunts on 3rd base side

5:45-6:00 Introduction to Bunt Coverage 1 and Bunt Coverage 2

Bunt Coverage 1

Situation: Runner on 1st base

- C Fields ball if possible, tells fielder where to throw
- P Covers pitchers mound to first base side
- 1B Stays home unless bunt is hard
- 2B Covers 2nd base
- SS Covers 3rd base
- 3B Charges hard, covers pitchers mound to 3rd base side

Bunt Coverage 2

Situation: Runner on 2nd, or runners on 1st and 2nd

- C Fields ball if possible, tells fielder where to throw
- P Covers pitchers mound to 3rd base side
- 1B Charges hard, covers pitchers mound to 1st base side
- 2B Sprints to cover 1st base
- SS Covers 2nd base
- 3B Stays home unless bunt is hard

NC Cobras Practice Plan Friday September 18, 2009

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|-------------|---|
| 3:30 - 4:00 | Early Batting Practice |
| 4:00 - 4:10 | Stretch |
| 4:10 - 4:20 | Play Catch |
| 4:20 – 5:20 | Catchers throw to bases / 1 st and 3 rd Offense and Defense |
| 5:20-5:50 | Soft Toss Scrimmage |
| 5:50-6:00 | Field Clean Up |

1st and 3rd Defensive Signals

- Catcher steps out, communicates number of outs, gives series of signs
 - Last sign given by the catcher is the ONE WE ARE GOING WITH
 - Arms crossed over head Fake to 2nd, throw to 3rd
 - Fingers down from neck to belt Throw through to 2nd base
 - Arms crossed below belt Throw through, cut low
 - Right hand on left shoulder Throw to third
 - Any other action by the catcher Nothing (fake signs)

** No matter what sign the catcher gives in a 1st and 3rd situation, the catcher will always automatically throw the ball to third base if he sees the 3rd baseman raise two hands in the air. For example, runners on 1st and 3rd and the catcher gives the sign for a throw through to 2nd base. The pitcher throws the pitch and while the catcher gets ready to throw to 2nd, he sees the third baseman raise his hands in the air because the runner from 3rd has gotten too big of a lead. Instead of going through with the original plan of throwing through to 2nd, the catcher would instead try to get the runner at 3rd.

** If you hear a coach, catcher, or teammate ever say “Fire” in a 1st and 3rd situation, we are at a point in the game where we CANNOT let the runner from third score. If this happens, do not get in a rundown or pay too much attention to the runner going from first to second. If you don’t hear “fire” in a 1st and 3rd situation, the goal is to get an out. It would be okay in non-fire situation to let the runner score. Again, if you hear “fire”, you should immediately understand we cannot let the runner from 3rd score.

** Forced Balk Defense

Situation: The other team has runners on 1st and 3rd and the runner at 1st breaks early while our pitcher is in the set position, is coming to the set position, or is looking at the catcher for a sign.

Responsibilities: Whole team yells “Step off!”

P Step off, look at (freeze) runner at 3rd, throw either to 3rd or 2nd baseman. Backs up home or 1st base.

C Protects home plate.

1B Ready for rundown between 1st and 2nd, ready to throw home if needed, does not run toward 2nd.

2B Comes up into the baseline 15 feet away from 2nd base. Receives ball from pitcher.

SS Covers 2nd base.

3B Covers 3rd base, ready for any play, has responsibility of yelling “Four!” if the runner breaks.

LF Backs up 3rd base.

CF Backs up 2nd base.

RF Breaks in toward 1st base

Titans 12U Blue Defensive Cutoff and Relay Principles

1. Whenever possible, bases should be covered where there is a possibility of a play.
2. The cutoff man must think quickly and anticipate the play instantly. He must know beforehand which runner is the important one to put out (I will help you during the game to let you know). The entire team must be well drilled in the movements that are required and all throws toward the cutoff man should be low enough for him to handle.
3. Communication is extremely important, not only between the cutoff man and the player covering the base, but especially among the outfielders on all plays when a ball is hit between them or over their heads.
4. Infielders should not interfere with the base runners, but should position themselves inside the base. This tends to make the runner take a wider turn at the base. The infielders should watch the runners to be sure they really tag the base. Many outs are recorded by this heads-up procedure.
5. Whenever possible, the outfielders should practice strong, low hard throws to second base. This can occur on all routine fly balls with no one on base. This practice will prepare the fielder to develop good habits so that he will be ready when it counts.
6. Practice will help to overcome weaknesses, but remember, "Perfect Practice Makes Perfect."
7. Here are the words our Titans Blue team will use for communication.
 - a. "Cut!" Cut this throw and be ready to throw to another base. Example "Cut two!"
 - b. Nothing Let the throw go through.
 - c. "Relay!" Cut the throw and relay the ball to the man calling "Relay!"

The "Double Relay" – Also known as a tandem or piggyback relay.

This is used by the shortstop and second baseman on a batted ball that is a sure double or possible triple. On a batted ball to left field, left-center field, or center field, the shortstop should be the lead man. On a batted ball to right-center field or right field, the second baseman should be the lead man. As you get older, your coach may switch this around and let the player with the stronger arm always be the lead man.

The lead man should sprint into the outfield in the direction of the batted ball. He should have his right hand raised straight above his head and his glove hand outstretched parallel to the ground. When the outfielder retrieves the ball, turns and looks for the relay man, he sees the relay man in this position and has a target to throw at. The outfielder should throw the ball to the relay man's glove side. As the ball is coming toward the relay man, he should turn toward his glove side and start drifting toward the infield. As he receives the ball he should have his momentum going in the direction he wants to throw and gets rid of the ball as quickly as possible.

The back man positions himself 15 to 20 feet behind the lead man. The back man has the responsibility of lining up the lead man and telling him where he is to throw the ball. He is also there to back up the lead man in case of an errant throw by the outfielder. If the throw is over the lead man's head or if he has to jump to catch it, he should let it go. The back man should be in a position so he can catch the ball on a fly or one bounce. Then he makes the throw to the infield. If the throw to the lead man is a short hop or an in-between hop, the lead man should step out of the way and let the ball go to the back man. He will then make the throw to the infield.

Basic Cutoffs and Relays:

Situation: Single to left field, no one on base. Part 1.

1. Takes a position halfway between the mound and second base (nose for ball).
2. Remains at home plate.
3. Observes the runner tagging the base when he makes his turn and covers the base.
4. Backs up the shortstop at second base.
5. Observes activity, protects third base area – be ready in case of a bad throw.
6. Takes the throw from left field at second base. *** We'll discuss Part 2 **
7. Throws strong long throw to second base.
8. Backs up the left fielder.
9. Advances in toward first base area – lining up with throw from left fielder in case of a bad throw.

Situation: Single to right field, runners on second base or runners on second and third bases.

1. Moves to back up home plate.
2. Protects home plate.
3. Becomes the cutoff man between right field and home plate. Takes position about 45 feet from home plate.
4. Moves to cover first base.
5. Protects third base – possible cut – third play.
6. Protects second base – possible cut – second play.
7. Moves in toward third base.
8. Backs up the right fielder.
9. makes strong throw through cutoff man to plate.

Situation: Single to center, runners on first and second or bases loaded.

1. Takes a position halfway between home plate and third. Will back up base where the play develops. Must observe action and throw.
2. Protects home plate.
3. Reacts to be cutoff man to home plate.
4. Covers second base.
5. Covers third base.
6. Observes action and becomes possible cutoff man with the throw to third base.
7. Backs up center fielder.
8. Makes a hard throw through either cutoff man. He reacts to what he sees and to what he hears from his teammates.
9. Moves in to infield.

Situation: No one on base, man on third base or second; or man on third and second bases, double, possible triple to right-center field.

1. Backs up third, gets deep.
2. Protects home plate.
3. Trails the runner (player who hit the ball) to second base; covers bag for possible play at that base.
4. Goes out to center field, lines up between third base and the player making the throw. He is the relay man.
5. Covers third base.
6. Becomes the trail about 30 feet behind the second baseman. Lines up with third base.
7. Moves in toward third base.
8. Gets to the ball and makes a strong throw to the relay man.
9. Backs up the center fielder.

EXAMPLE 30+ PITCH BULLPEN

BULLPEN STATS
10 FB
10 CB
10 CH
FINISH WITH ONE HITTER

- 2 FB MIDDLE DOWN (2)
- 1 FB AWAY (3)
- 1 FB IN (4)
- 3 CH MIDDLE DOWN (7)
- 1 FB IN (8)
- 3 CH MIDDLE (11)
- 1 FB IN (12)
- 3 CH MIDDLE (15)
- 1 FB AWAY (16)
- 3 CB MIDDLE (19)
- 1 FB IN (20)
- 3 CB AWAY (23)
- 1 FB MIDDLE UP (24)
- 1 CH MIDDLE (25)
- 2 CB MIDDLE (27)
- 1 FB MIDDLE DOWN (28)
- 2 CB MIDDLE (30)

4 seam and 2 seam grips photos



Successful Practice Planning

Safety first

From arrival

Whenever possible, allow time to set up beforehand

Being prepared for quick transitions allows maximization of allotted time

Screens and nets in proximity when needed

Players take active role in preparation

Enlist assistance

Utilize all available space

Dynamic Warm-Up

Glove on Hand

Time to start having fun with focus

Arm Warm-Up

Always throw from foul line to centerfield

Use the space

Start close then lengthen

Pre-Practice Talk

Review learning points from last game/practice

Praise effort, hustle, smarts

Describe plan for the day. How, Why, When

Make competitive by group (not individual) as fun way to add pressure and excitement

Winners get reward

Go out of your way to quietly praise the accomplishments of the less talented players

Every player has a special place on the team

Speed of Play is paramount to a successful practice

Fast-paced but not rushed

Never enough balls

Multiple buckets, full and empty

No unnecessary throws

Teach players to become good teammates

Help each other get better

Start with Defense

You have their full attention

Individual Defense

Repetition

Routine and Difficult

Team Defense

High Importance

Situations

Rundowns

Cuts & Relays

Communication

Establish consistency and priority

Hitting

Try to limit 4 per group
Maximum quality reps with a purpose
Short toss preferable to poor BP
Self-Evident Drills
Incorporate defense
Be a good teammate/partner

Situations & Game Simulations

Practice all phases of game simultaneously
Game Speed
Teaching lesson every play
Players learn to think the game
Speed of Play
Situations with fungo
3 team game

Signs

Simple
Explain how to watch

Post-Practice

Review the good and the bad
Praise effort
Preview next game/practice

Get together away from the field/baseball