

COACHING MANUAL

EAST TORRENS BASEBALL CLUB



ABOUT THIS COACHING MANUAL

The East Torrens Coaches Manual is a resource designed for use by coaches and players to gain a comprehensive understanding of the philosophies, skills and plays of the East Torrens Baseball Club. This manual should be used by teams from T-Ball right through to Division One and provides the guidance and support in order to develop the best possible baseball players and coaches we can.

The aim of this manual is not to create robots but sound baseball players and coaches who have a passion for the game and a desire to be the best baseball person they can. To achieve this, the East Torrens Coaching Manual provides information to coaches focusing on how athletes learn and develop, a breakdown of fundamental skills to help improve your players and detailed instruction on key elements on the mental aspect of baseball, so everyone can raise their baseball IQ.

The key to the manual is that every player and coach in the club needs to know the contents and have an understanding on how to apply it.

As a coach it is up to you to ensure all the players are able to execute all aspects of the manual and when in doubt regarding content please seek clarification from the senior coaching staff.

This manual however, will not enforce how you chose to run a game. This is up to you as a coach and your individual baseball philosophy. This manual hopefully is the bases for that philosophy and the attributes we want in all our players and coaches.

This manual will always be evolving just like the game of baseball itself. There are fundamental aspects of the game that have not changed in over a century, but like with many sports often there is a new, better or smarter way to achieve a desired outcome. This manual will always strive to be at the forefront of that knowledge and is open for discussion at any time. This is everyone's manual.

If you have any questions don't hesitate to contact any of the senior coaching staff or the executive management team.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 1. CLUB PHILOSOPHY**
- 2. COACHING PHILOSOPHY**
- 3. HELPING PLAYERS TO ACQUIRE SKILLS**
- 4. DEALING WITH PARENTS**
- 5. AGE LEVEL GOALS**
- 6. BASEBALL ESSENTIALS**
- 7. WARM UP**
- 8. THROWING**
- 9. PITCHING**
- 10. INFIELD**
- 11. OUTFIELD**
- 12. CATCHING**
- 13. HITTING**
- 14. BASERUNNING**
- 15. PLAYBOOK**

CLUB PHILOSOPHY

The East Torrens Baseball Club Player Pledge

Respect ETPBC; Respect your TEAM-MATES; Respect the GAME.
Be accountable, be responsible and be respectful on and off the field.
BASEBALL REVEALS CHARACTER, IT DOESN'T BUILD IT.

Anyone who begins to think they have the game mastered, that they are somehow bigger than the game, is in for a major shock. It has been played professionally for over 150 years, and has certain traditions which must be respected. At East Torrens, we respect these traditions and strive always to play the game right.

No matter what level you are involved with, play the game hard and take pride in what you represent, to do any less is an insult to all concerned.

We play with aggression, refusing to be intimidated and doing our utmost to execute as the situation requires. No individual lets their ego get in the way of doing the right thing, on or off the field.

We always hustle: into position, between innings and between pitches, when running the bases, when running an errand.

Respect your opposition: never ridicule them by word or action. For example, we don't steal when we have a big lead, nor start doing things you would not do in a close situation (e.g. try switch-hitting), nor laugh at the oppositions mistakes, nor start bullying an obviously inferior team.

We keep the game moving, so that those watching and those playing can truly experience the excitement that baseball can generate.

Individuals are accountable for improving themselves in baseball. Each works to improve physically, improve technique, master the numerous mental challenges the game holds and to maintain their spirit, despite the inevitable failures that the game will bring.

Be the best you can be, organise yourself: your attendance at training, your equipment, your extra work, your timetable, your annual plan, your game day routine.

With regard to coaches and umpires, we remain mindful that it is their position as much, or more than, the individual in that position that must be respected. Evidence of dissent, whether verbal or non-verbal, contradicts this philosophy, so we make an effort to know the rules, to communicate appropriately and find a way to work cooperatively.

Coaches will ensure players know what is expected of them and demand that they come up to scratch every day.

Educate each player to be a good team-mate: don't let egos hamper the team's performance.

Master body language: stay upright and alert when things are going bad. Never look beaten.

Encourage accountability.

COACHING PHILOSOPHY

Coaching can be both a rewarding and challenging experience. Your coaching philosophy should ensure your players have a positive baseball experience.

1. BE POSITIVE

Players need a patient, supportive coach that can teach and motivate in a positive way. Knowing how to be positive and having the ability to communicate with your players is more important to a successful season than knowing many aspects of the game.

2. SHOW THEM YOU CARE

Each player needs to know that you care for them as an individual and that you believe they are an important part of the team. Take time to talk to all players individually.

3. HAVE FUN

Fun is essential for all ages. Develop practices that let them do the things they enjoy. It's also important for you to have fun. Create an environment that is structured and varied enough for you to enjoy what you're doing. If you're having fun, chances are your players will be having fun also.

4. EMPHASIZE IMPROVEMENT / ENCOURAGE THEN CORRECT

Players want to improve and gain new skills. Failure is an integral part of baseball, encourage the effort of trying then correct the skill being tried. Make sure that you challenge all your players at an appropriate level to foster improvement.

5. ORGANISATION AND DISCIPLINE

Players quickly pick up on a coach that is unorganised and doesn't communicate their expectations. If you don't establish certain rules and don't follow up with an appropriate reprimand if the rules are broken, you will quickly lose control of your team.

6. PLAYERS LEARN BY DOING

Often coaches try to teach players a skill by talking about it. The younger the player the less effective it will be. Give a quick explanation while you show them the skill, then have them do it.

7. ATTITUDE AND EFFORT

Coaches that believe winning is everything have only one direction to take the team...down. Everyone wants to win, but when the main goal is winning a really good season can be lost. If on the other hand you emphasize attitude and effort, a successful season can be had without a championship. Prepare the team to play hard and always give their best effort, and winning games will take care of itself.

8. SPORTSMANSHIP

The idea of sportsmanship seems to be lost on many players. The fact is, sportsmanship must be taught. As a coach it's important that you teach the value of sportsmanship. Want your players to always show the other team respect. Your leadership is the best way to get this across to your players. Show your players that you appreciate the other team and the opportunity to play against them.

9. COMMUNICATION

Always look to communicate and have open dialogue with your players both as individuals and as a team. The goal is to have a mutual understanding of what everyone is trying to achieve. This should be done prior to the season by setting goals (individual and team) during the season to review the goals and after the season to prepare for the new season ahead. When talking to a player as an individual it's important that you understand their personality, and what motivates them. One approach to all won't work. It is about creating open discussion that can assist the player and you as a coach to gain a better understanding of where an individual and the team are at. This builds a strong culture within the team as the players have ownership in the process of their own development and the team goals that have been set.

HELPING PLAYERS TO ACQUIRE SKILLS

Consider how children learn to walk, talk even ride a bike. Very rarely it's because an adult sat them down and gave them detailed instructions or cajoled them into practicing things they didn't enjoy, criticised them when they didn't do it "properly".

Children learn skills best when they see others doing something they want to be able to do, so they try doing it themselves, and gradually make better and better approximations at it until they can do it. Parents and other adults may provide encouragement and support, but mostly, kids (and adults for that matter), learn skills by doing.

In the ideal learning situation, the skill acquisition takes place subconsciously while the participant is having fun. This type of learning is called **Implicit Learning**. To the untrained eye, our approach to tee ball and little league training may appear to lack structure, to be disorganised and lack instruction. However, there is actually a proven coaching technique at work. Simply stated, it means that since kids learn skills by doing, and active learning is more enjoyable, a coach who wants to be effective, and to establish a positive attitude towards physical activity in the players, should concentrate on arranging learning opportunities using interesting and varied activity.

What is implicit learning? Implicit learning is the learning that is built into the activity itself – it doesn't have to be explained or reviewed: just do the activity and learning will take place. One of the biggest mistakes the coaching community has made over the last decade or two is to think that if we can just figure out how the experts do things; we can somehow give that to novices. If, right from the beginning, we can just supervise them closely enough, tell them how to do things clearly enough, spell things out with perfect clarity, a youngster with potential cannot fail to "make it". It just doesn't work that way. In the real world, skill and expertise are acquired only through a lot of experience. Experimentation, creativity and "getting it wrong" are a big part of the learning process. Many "traditional" coaches use a form of explicit teaching: using verbal instruction to explain how to do things, often concentrating on "correct" technique rather than activity, to teach a student how to perform a skill. Explicit learning typically results in the student being able to verbalise how to perform the skill, without guaranteeing that he or she can physically do it (although of course people can learn to do things in this manner). Well-structured implicit learning activities, on the other hand, typically lack instruction about how to perform the skill. Instructions are usually limited to what the learner is trying to accomplish in this activity. The activities are shaped so that by attempting to accomplish the goal, the child is subconsciously acquiring a skill or group of skills. Implicit learning often results in a student being able to perform the skill without necessarily being able to say how they do it. Interestingly, this is a characteristic possessed by many champion athletes: they can "just do it", but they often can't tell someone else how they do it. This is also how children learn to walk, talk, and ride a bicycle.

What are the benefits of implicit learning? Several scientific studies have found that skills learned implicitly are: 1. more permanent 2. less likely to break down under pressure (On the other hand, it seems that skills which have been explicitly taught are more likely to falter under stress). Apparently, the learner is more likely to start thinking too much about how to do things ("paralysis by analysis"), rather than concentrating on getting on with the job. This can compound into unnecessary anxiety and have a negative long term effect on their confidence. Implicit learning strengthens subconscious processes (the brain subconsciously tries to work out the best way to achieve the desired result) and allows the body to make adjustments naturally without interruption from the conscious brain. Over time the body will find the most efficient way to do something; that is, it will acquire skills. Young athletes are then able to play, and learn as they play, which makes for a happy and healthy experience. Is there no place for explicit learning? Explicit instruction is most effective when the athletes have enough experience at trying something for themselves and are able to put things in context, relate to the explanation and understand its benefits. But first, players need to build their database of physical activity and challenging situations, so that they are equipped to get good value from a coach's suggestions and advice.

How does a coach design implicit learning activities? Evidence supports the use of an implicit learning approach with players of all ages, including young beginners. It is the basis of the games-based learning

approach, where skills are taught via a variety of mini-games and drills which are fun but challenging, continually testing not only physical skills, but decision-making and tactics as well. However, it is not realistic to simply remove instruction and expect learning to occur. The tasks and activities need to be structured with a particular purpose in mind.

The materials and activities in Aussie T-Ball are designed in such a way. The secret is to draw the student's attention away from thinking about the technique required to perform the task at hand. Learners will watch and learn from others who are better than themselves, and this is much more valuable than a coach trying to tell them how to do something. The coach's job is to ensure that safety issues are taken care of, make sure everyone knows what they have to do in this activity, and then let them try it.

Other implicit learning strategies include:

- Explain skill requirements by analogy or metaphor, so the need for explicit verbal information is minimised (e.g., "swing like you are chopping down a tree").
- Encourage experimentation by giving instructions which have nothing to do with achieving a particular result, but will lead them to discover things for themselves about the best way to do something (e.g., "try holding your glove in different positions"). They always remember things that they have taught themselves, and it's great for developing genuine self-esteem.
- "Let's see what happens if....." Using this phrase (or something similar) when you adjust a task reinforces a sense of fun and exploration in learning.
- Asking, "What do you think will happen if.....?" Or "What can we try to make this easier (or harder, or faster, or more consistent etc.)", helps develop their imagination and creativity, and their awareness of the link between actions and consequences.
- Get players to perform a secondary task while simultaneously performing a primary skill; (e.g., "hit only the balls with the red dot on them" – while looking for the red dots, they are actually developing the ability to track a moving ball)
- Design games using different scoring systems and/or court boundaries that require players to use strategies to win the game – simply tell the players the adjusted scoring system and/or boundaries and then just let them play. (e.g. "Ok, double points if you catch it with one hand, but you also lose two points if you drop it using only one hand") It is very important to allow young athletes the time they need to determine the most appropriate strategies and responses, rather than explicitly explaining the solution to them. (And of course, good coaches safeguard their players and consistently provide encouragement to their young athletes.) Many coaches use the T.R.E.E anagram to remind themselves to consider all sorts of adjustments:

Explicit instruction will always be a part of coaching, but coaches should remain aware of the fact that it is not very effective for players inexperienced in physical activity generally or baseball specifically. While you are providing that experience for your players, remember that you are utilising the most appropriate and effective learning strategy available: implicit learning. Young athletes develop best when given the opportunity to actively involved in a wide variety (and a large volume) of physical activity. They will not only be learning; they will be learning how to learn by learning to figure things out for themselves. Oftentimes, the best instruction for a young athlete is: "See if you can!"

DEALING WITH PARENTS

Dealing with parents might be the most difficult part of being a coach. Research suggests that it's the single biggest reason that coaches quit. It's a common problem, but one that can be difficult to solve. There are a number of common mistakes that coaches make that can bring on the wrath of a parent along with some ways to deal with a parent that is causing you grief.

1. COMMUNICATION - PARENT MEETING

Communication is the single biggest reason behind coach/parent problems. Many coaches don't take the time at the beginning of the season to advise parents how they are going to run the team. Be it through a team meeting or correspondence, communicate your philosophy with your parents. The topics should include the importance of winning; how you are going to distribute playing time; how are you going to determine who plays where; what skills and values you are going to emphasize. It's important that they are aware of team rules and expectations.

2. BE CONSISTENT

Stating your philosophy is one thing; implementing it consistently is another. Make sure you make rules for your team that you can follow up with. It is very frustrating for a parent to be told one thing and then see something else happen.

3. LISTEN TO PARENT CONCERNS

Don't have the "I'm the coach, don't question me" type of attitude. When dealing with difficult parents, it's important that you listen to their concerns and take a real interest in what they are saying. Don't feel like you have to defend yourself right away. Sometimes listening to the concern and telling the parent that you will think about the situation and get back to them is enough to diffuse the situation. Just by doing that you validate the concern and show that you're open to suggestions. Parents want to feel like their input is taken seriously and that they have a say in what's happening with their child. You then can take the time to analyze the comments and see if there's any validity to the concerns. When you call the parent or talk to them at the next practice they will most likely be much calmer. It will also give you a chance to calm down. Parent complaints at the end of a game can be infuriating. Remember that you are a role model to the kids. If you can't handle the situation without getting upset, then it's best to tell the parent that you have to go and you will call them later. If the parent is complaining and you don't like the attitude they have towards you, take them away from the crowd and the kids and let them know that you don't like the way they are talking to you. Let them know that you want to work out any concerns that they may have, but if they can't do so in a calm manner than maybe you should discuss it at another time.

4. GET PARENTS INVOLVED

Getting parents involved can really help in avoiding potential parent problems. If you think that a parent is going to be a problem, try to get that parent involved in some way. If that parent only shows up to games, have them prepare drinks, chart hitters, or assist in warming up the next pitcher. If they feel like they are part of the team, they will often be less likely to complain. They also will have less time to focus on how their child is being "treated unfairly". If the parent makes it to practices, have them help by working with some of the kids. They may soon find out that coaching is more difficult than it looks from the sideline.

5. DOCUMENT AND INFORM THE EXECUTIVE

If you think you're going to have a situation with a parent that you may not be able to resolve, document all the conversations that you have with that parent. Document the issue(s), feelings, your response, and any other pertinent information that can help resolve the situation.



**AGE LEVEL
GOALS**

T-BALL/COACH PITCH (Ages 4-7)

1) LEARNING THE BASIC RULES:

- The right direction to run when the ball is hit
- Where the bases are and that the runners must touch the bases
- How to record outs (catch the ball in the air, throw to first, or tag the runners etc.)
- Running past first base and stopping on second and third base
- Concepts of TEAM
- Three outs constitute a half an inning

2) THROWING MECHANICS: (Pages 28-29)

- Turn the body so the front shoulder points toward the target
- Keep the throwing elbow equal or slightly above the shoulder
- Step toward the target with the non-throwing foot and release the ball
- Look at the target

3) TRACKING:

- Follow the ball with the eyes into the glove
- Use two hands to catch and field
- Try to catch the ball out in front of the body

4) HITTING: (Pages 77-79)

- How to hold and swing a bat
- Batting safety! When not to swing bats and wearing batting helmets
- Hitting off a tee
- Hitting tossed pitches
- Watching the ball

5) LEARNING POSITION PLAY: (Page 45)

- If the ball is hit to a teammate let them field it
- Proper fielding position (down and ready)

UNDER 11 BASEBALL (Ages 8-10)

1) LEARNING THE BASIC RULES:

- Further develop the concept of TEAM
- Force outs
- Tagging up
- Double plays (Page 47-48)
- Base running - When you don't have to run, not running into or past teammates, keep running after ball is hit with two outs
- Balls and Strikes
- Baseball Etiquette and sportsmanship

2) THROWING MECHANICS: (Pages 28-29)

- Introduce the four-seam grip
- Point the front shoulder, step and throw
- Introduce the concept of generating momentum to the target and following the throw

3) CATCHING AND FIELDING:

- Fingers up versus fingers down
- See the ball into the glove
- Use of two hands
- Forehands and backhands (Page 46)
- Introduce the underhand flip
- Moving feet to field and catch the ball
- Glove control – Quiet glove
- 6 F's of fielding a baseball (Page 45)
- First-base fundamentals (Page 49)
- Cross over and drop steps (Page 56-57)

4) HITTING: (Page 77-79)

- Choosing the right bat
- Proper grip
- Hitting pitched balls
- Introduce drill work (tee, front toss etc.)

5) LEARNING POSITION PLAY:

- Learn the positions and the areas each player should cover
- Concepts of backing up (Page 61)
- Basics of cut-offs and relays (Page 51)

UNDER 13 BASEBALL (Ages 11-12)

1) LEARNING THE BASIC RULES:

- Infield fly

2) BASE RUNNING: (Page 83-93)

- Secondary leads
- Stealing
- Extra-base hits (Page 21)
- Tagging up or going half way
- Proper sliding techniques

3) PITCHING & THROWING MECHANICS:

- Wind-up versus stretch (Page 35)
- Improve footwork
- Momentum towards your target
- Pitcher covering first (Page 38)

4) HITTING:

- Repetitions
- Drill Work (Tee/Front Toss etc.)
- Bunting (Page 80-81)

5) LEARNING TEAM FUNDAMENTALS:

- Cut-offs and relays (Page 51 + Playbook Pages 105-125)
- Basic bunt defences (Playbook Pages 127-132)
- Basic first and third situations (playbook Pages 133-136)
- Double plays (Pages 47-48)
- Defending the steal (Page 46)
- Infield and outfield communication and priorities (Page 22)
- Backing up bases (Page 61 + Playbook)

UNDER 15 BASEBALL (Ages 13-14)

1) THROWING MECHANICS AND PITCHING:

- Emphasis on generating momentum toward the target and following the throw
- Curveballs
- Change-ups
- Pitching Mechanics and using the body effectively **(Pages 36-37)**
- Pick-off mechanics **(Page 39)**
- Introduction to long toss
- Understanding Balks

2) HITTING:

- Introduce situational hitting
- Hitting behind runners
- Hit and run **(Page 19)**
- Productive outs
- Sacrifice bunting versus bunting for a hit **(Pages 80-81)**
- Understanding the count (Hitters Counts) **(Page 19)**
- 2 Strike Approach **(Page 19)**

3) BASE RUNNING: (Pages 83-93)

- Primary and Secondary leads
- First and third situations
- Steal Breaks
- Running counts
- Delayed Steals
- Understanding/Reading situations and reacting to them

4) FIELDING:

- Generating Momentum back toward the target on throws when necessary
- Cross over and drop steps **(Pages 56-57)**
- Backhands and when to use them
- Double play depth
- Double play footwork
- Pitcher covering first **(Page 38)**
- Infield communication

5) LEARNING TEAM FUNDAMENTALS:

- Pick-offs
- Full bunt defences **(Playbook Pages 127-132)**
- Full first and third defences **(Playbook Pages 133-136)**
- Pop-up and fly ball priorities **(Page 22)**
- Double plays and flips **(Pages 47-48)**

UNDER 17-19 BASEBALL (Ages 15+)

1) THROWING MECHANICS AND PITCHING:

- Balance
- Continue mastering off speed pitches
- Throwing with command
- Generating momentum toward the target and following the throw
- Pickoff mechanics **(Page 39)**

2) HITTING:

- Mental aspects
- Hitter's count versus pitcher's count **(Page 19)**
- Two strike hitting **(Page 19)**
- Aggressive versus defensive swings, 2 strike approach **(Page 19)**
- Situational hitting
- Productive outs
- Advanced game situations and defences **(Pages 20-21)**

3) BASE RUNNING: (Pages 83-93)

- One-way leads
- Going on the first move
- Reacting to batted balls
- Tag-up situations
- Third-base rules
- No out, one out and two out rules

4) FIELDING:

- Crossover and drop steps **(Pages 56-57)**
- Do or die plays at the plate **(Page 60)**
- Preventing runners from taking extra bases **(Page 60)**
- Communicating between pitches

5) LEARNING TEAM FUNDAMENTALS:

- Cut-offs and relays **(Page 51 + Playbook Pages 105-125)**
- Double plays **(Pages 47-48)**
- Advanced game situations and defence **(Pages 20-21)**



**BASEBALL
ESSENTIALS**

FIVE TOOLS OF A BALLPLAYER

The “Five Tools” are:

1. Arm
2. Running Speed
3. Hitting Ability (for average)
4. Hitting Power
5. Defensive Ability

While it would be great to have players in every position with a full complement of outstanding tools, in reality individuals have particular strengths and weaknesses, which have a major influence on how they are used. Generally, the relative importance of these attributes varies according to position.

- Arm quality is by far the most important attribute of a pitcher.
- Defensive ability is critical “up the middle”: catcher, shortstop, centerfield and, to a lesser extent, second base.
- At second base, many teams now prefer a good hitter, even if their defence is moderate, over a weak hitting defensive specialist.
- Running speed is more important to a centerfielder than arm strength, a catcher needs arm strength but not speed, and a great shortstop will have both.
- The corner positions, in both the infield and outfield, are usually filled by someone capable of making a substantial offensive contribution.
- Left field and first base, both of whom have relatively straightforward defensive responsibilities, must hit, and often have good power.
- A right fielder with arm strength can prevent more runners from going 1B to 3B.

Other factors that coaches should be aiming for and encouraging in their players in are;

WORK ETHIC / HUSTLE – It takes no skill to hustle and have the drive to work harder than anyone else. This attribute is something that often stands out and puts those ahead.

CONCENTRATION / FOCUS - Baseball requires lightning reflexes and instant decisions. We want to see a pitch-by-pitch focus that’s off the charts.

COMPETITIVENESS / SELF-CONFIDENCE - For a player to succeed, they must be able to rise above the obstacles often created by self-doubt and occasional poor performances. When a player is underachieving, often the real problem is that their fear of failure exceeds their desire to succeed. Competitiveness requires constant resilience, and unshakable self-confidence, even in the face of setbacks.

STRESS MANAGEMENT / HUMILITY - Baseball is a game in which even the very best hitters fail more than 50% of the time. Failure rates this high requires that a player have a short memory and a certain sense of humour. Observing how a player reacts after a rough or unlucky play provides great insight into this quality.

“I want to see a hitter, when they flail at a pitch, when they take a big swing and to everyone it looks ridiculous, I like to look down and see a smile on their face. And then the next time—bam—four hundred feet!”

ADAPTIVENESS / LEARNING ABILITY – We want coachable players. What does this mean? Someone who is willing to listen, try and try and ask more questions to be the best they can be. When things fail, they continue to work on it and try new ways to get better always listening and focusing on the key tasks. Its more about what they can do for the team rather than what the team can do for them.

SETTING HITTING LINE UP

NUMBER 1 (Contact Hitter, Speedster)

The leadoff spot typically sees more plate appearances per game than anyone else in the line-up so you want a player with a high on-base percentage. Once the leadoff hitter gets on base, the need to be able to make some waves so speed in your leadoff spot is key to generating runs early in the game.

NUMBER 2 (Contact Hitter, Speedster, Sacrifice Specialist)

If your leadoff hitter reaches first base, you will undoubtedly be looking for a way to get them into scoring position. This is best done through a sacrifice bunt or hit and run. This is why the number 2 hitter should be a good bunter, good contact hitter and preferably a good right side hitter.

NUMBER 3 (Best Hitter)

They should be able to hit for power as well as average. This person also doesn't strike out much as you want the ball in play to hopefully score runs.

NUMBER 4 (Power Hitter, RBI Spot)

The Clean-Up Hitter, should be reserved for the hitter on your team with the most pop in their bat. It can get a little tricky determining if a player should hit in the 3 or 4 spot, but remember, clean-up hitters should be RBI machines and home run hitters, not much else. Save a more rounded hitter for the third spot in your batting order.

NUMBER 5 (Power Hitter, Contact Hitter, RBI Spot)

The fifth spot in the line-up can be just as important as the third or fourth, for one simple fact. The fifth spot in the line-up is there to provide protection for the power hitters in your line-up. A hitter in the fifth spot is there to basically say "hey, if you try to pitch around our clean-up hitter, I will be here to make sure they score."

NUMBER 6 – 8 (Contact Hitter, Speedster, Sacrifice Specialist)

Lumping the 6-8 spots in the batting order together, because their purpose is typically all the same: DON'T KILL RALLIES. The sixth hitter in your line-up begins what is referred to as "the bottom of the line-up" Your six through eight hitters probably won't have an outstanding batting average or on base percentage, but they need to be able to be effective enough to firstly not kill rallies, and secondly start off an inning strong if needed. Who and where you place 6-8 is solely up to you.

NUMBER 9 (Second Leadoff)

Try to put a better hitter in this spot in an effort to potentially have someone on base when the line-up flips around and your leadoff spot comes up. Being your leadoff hitter has speed ensure you don't put a slow runner here as it will only slow the leadoff down.

GIVING SIGNS

- To give signs, stand in a location where the hitter and all baserunners can clearly see you.
- Once you have given signs, move to best location to assist priority baserunner.
- Usually a runner on second base is the priority (even with loaded bases or runners on 2B and 3B); best location to assist the second base runner is 1/3 of way up the line closer to hitter – you can look back to see the middle infielders better from there and are already in a good location for the runner to see you as they turn third base. Note: for safety reasons, turn your head to pick up hitter as pitch is made.
- Runner on first base or third base only: down the line, away from hitter, so that the first base baserunner can find you as they round second base and you can let the third base runner know if third base is moving in for a pickoff.
- To avoid rash mistakes, stay calm and plan the moves you will make in a given situation before the situation actually occurs.
- Do not give any signs in a situation where there is clearly no offensive tactic to be implemented.
- Similarly, don't only give a sign when you want something to happen.

FIRST BASE COACHES ROLE

- Ensure that the 1B runner knows the situation, and that they are not surprised by any defensive tactics.
- Hold any items for the runner, such as batting gloves, shin guards etc.
- Between pitches, stand right beside the runner and, if needed prompt them with a review of the situation (BOSO: Base, Outs, Signs, Outfield).
- Once that is done, move to the best location to assist the 1B runner. If 1B is fielding behind the runner, you can move back there with them so that you can clearly see if they try to sneak in for a pickoff.
- Otherwise, there is no need to be out of the coach's box.

NON VERBAL WITH RUNNERS

Use non-verbal communication to remind runners of the task in the given situation.

- Palms facing one another, hands moving apart: extend your primary lead
- Palms facing one another, moving apart in a chopping fashion: extend your secondary lead
- Hand over mouth: indicates going quiet. This is used when a bunt play is likely so that the runner can react on the pitcher and not get fooled by any verbal which may not come from the coach

ADJUSTING AGGRESSION IN OFFENCE

At the beginning of a game, a team has a certain number of outs to utilise in scoring as many runs as they need to win, so the relative cost/benefit is small and it is worth taking extra chances in order to score. So; be aggressive at the plate, take extra bases, steal, bunt for base hits.

As the game goes on, and outs become more precious, a coach should minimise extra chances for outs or at least to ensure that each out is productive: So; Hitters should be more patient, use hit and runs, use more sac bunts, increased emphasis on moving a 2B runner over with 0 outs, less stealing: each attempt provides another chance to make an out.

With a critical run on base late in the game, any scoring chance may need to be taken (depending on outs, next hitter etc.): So; Score a 3B runner on any outfield fly ball or pass ball, score a 2B runner on any hit to outfield, score a 1B runner on any double.

USE OF BUNTS AND THE HIT & RUN

Bunts and Hit & Run plays diminish the chances of having a big inning, and are generally only used late in a game where the scores are close.

BUNTS ARE BEST USED:

- To get a runner into scoring position when a single run is critical
- To avoid a double-play at all costs

THE HIT & RUN IS USED:

- To minimise the chances of a double-play
- When the hitter has good bat control but little power
- When the pitcher is consistently throwing strikes

HITTING COUNTS

A hitter should understand that on certain counts, when the pitcher is behind, they are under increased pressure to throw a strike. A hitter can never be guaranteed that a particular pitch is coming, but this pressure makes it a bit easier to predict what the pitch will be (usually a fastball). That assists the hitter in timing and therefore hitting the pitch.

These counts are therefore referred to as “hitter’s counts”:

3-0, 3-1, 2-0 (count strongly in hitter’s favour)

1-0, 2-1, 3-2, 0-0 (in most situations, pitcher wants to throw a strike)

TWO STRIKE APPROACH

Many productive hitters will sacrifice aggression to ensure they put the ball in play when they have 2 strikes on them. These adjustments are designed to simplify the swing, improve plate coverage and give hitters more time to see the ball. They include:

- Focus on hitting ball deeper in the zone (as opposed to catching it way out in front)
- Shortening up on the bat – more control, quicker hands
- Widening the stance – less body movement
- Smaller step, no leg lift etc. – less body movement

THE BIG INNING

In just about every game, there's a bad inning. That one inning where the wheels start to fall off, your pitcher loses control, the team loses focus. Those teams that keep the damage of a bad inning to a minimum usually win. During this inning the defence seems to just "lose it", missing easy catches, throwing the ball away or all over the field, the pitcher is unable to get the ball over the plate, or they get hit around. Everything seems to fall apart. You started the inning with a lead and you come out way behind with a bunch of demoralised players. Make sure the entire team is aware that such a "bad" inning can occur...this alone can help. But let's also have a plan of action to cut-down on those nerve racking innings.

AIM TO GET THE FIRST OUT OF EVERY INNING. This is the number one offensive killer. With one out it is difficult for the offense to do much more than play station-to-station baseball. It cuts down the oppositions options. This is a priority for every defence.

ATTEMPT TO GET STRIKE 1 ON EVERY BATTER. This is the best thing a pitcher can do, to get ahead in the count. Batting averages drop almost 100 points or more when the batter is hitting behind the count. If the pitcher can get the first pitch across for strike one, they are in control and their chances of retiring that batter are improved. The worst that can happen is that the batter puts the ball in play...even then there is a 50 to 70% chance that the defence will get them out. So let the opposition hit the ball...this gives you a chance to make a play.

BASE ON BALLS...this is a no-no... don't give hitters a free pass.

STAY ALERT AFTER TWO OUTS. Lots of games have been lost with 2 outs and no one on base. A couple of things tend to happen...first, the pitcher has a tendency to "let down" after they have retired the first 2 batters. Secondly, the defence loses focus. Coaches need to remind their pitcher and defence to stay focused and close the deal.

KEEP PASSED BALLS TO A MINIMUM. We need to work with our catchers and teach them how to block the ball effectively. This alone will save tons of runs from scoring. Wild pitches and passed balls score and put many a base runner in scoring position.

DON'T LOSE THE GAME ON A BAD THROW. Sometimes in a close game, especially in the late innings it is better to hold the ball rather than throw it and possibly throw it away. Forget those pick-offs and trick plays in close games when runs are at a premium.

WITH A BIG LEAD don't play the infield "in" with a runner on third base. In that situation it is better to give up a run for an out.

IN 99% OF ALL BUNT SITUATIONS GET THE OUT AT FIRST BASE. The offense is giving you an out- so take it! Let them bunt and sacrifice one of their precious outs. Throw a strike. There are only three outs in an inning, if the opposition wants to give you one of their precious outs take it...with one less out the job of your defence becomes easier.

THE GAME OF BASEBALL IS PLAYED "ONE PITCH AT A TIME". Not one out at a time or one inning at a time or one game at a time but one pitch at a time. Players will develop concentration skills thinking this way.

INFIELD AND OUTFIELD COMMUNICATION IS A CRITICAL SKILL. Don't allow a routine out to become an adventure because the fielders failed to talk to each other. One player should be shouting "got it" and those surrounding them should yell-out "you take it".

IN A CLOSE GAME with the offense threatening to score a run or multiple runs it is imperative that the defence remain calm and focused on getting an out. Exercise "Damage Control." Don't panic with 2 on and none out. Take the outs as they present themselves. Play within what the game offers you. "Okay, we gave up 2 runs. Let's stop it right there." Failure to do so can lead to a big inning for the opposing team.

PLAY LIKE YOU EXPECT TO WIN, not like you're afraid to lose...hit like you expect to hit, not like you fear striking out...pitch like you expect to pitch and not like you are afraid to get hit...field your position like you expect to catch the ball and not afraid of dropping it...throw like you expect to throw and not fearful of throwing the ball away...and finally run like you expect to run and score and not afraid of being called out.

In most games, the winning team actually scores more runs in a single inning than the losing team scores in the entire game. This is known as the “big” inning. Conventional wisdom recommends, for the first two-thirds of the game or so, do what you can to make sure that it is your team that has the big inning, and not the opposition.

DEVELOPING DECISION MAKING

Decision making is a critical part of baseball, but takes deliberate practice and support over a long period to develop. By improving the capacity for players to make decision under pressure and have the confidence to make these decision, this will also help in reducing the big inning. Encourage players to develop this skill, rather than making all the decisions for them. They will make mistakes, and early on it could cost games, but through support and encouraging their learning it will make them better baseball players.

There are three ways to develop autonomous players.

1. BASERUNNERS MAKE THEIR OWN DECISIONS

- Runners decide to try for extra base or not: they must assess situation prior to the pitch (BOSO), then read the ball in play and react accordingly.
- The coach does not wave runners on or stop them when a runner can see ball and other information for themselves.
- Runners must attack the next base and stop only when someone forces them to: H-2B, 1B-3B, 2B-H etc.
- A coach may assist when the ball is behind runner

2. PITCHERS AND CATCHERS MAKE PITCH SELECTIONS

- This is critical for developing autonomous, knowledgeable players.
- Coaches don't call pitches. Offer advice during the game around optimising chances of getting players out in certain situations and then allow them to learn through trial and error.
- Ask first their thought process, before stating a wrong pitch was called. Allow them to understand the rationale for pitch sequencing.

3. COACHES REVIEW DEFENSIVE AND OFFENSIVE DECISIONS MADE BY PLAYERS DURING GAME

- In a manner which encourages experimentation and learning, discuss decisions made during the game and their consequences (important life lessons to be learnt).
- Always confirm thought process on decisions made, before discussing as to allow players to potentially see their own errors rather than having them pointed out.

POP FLY PRIORITIES

A collision or near-collision between two outfielders, two infielders, or an infielder and an outfielder can prove costly during a game. It usually occurs between a pair of determined, aggressive players, who fail to hear, see or take charge of an otherwise simple play. On the opposite side of the spectrum the overcautious and timid players who give right of way to each other, with the ball falling safely between them!

The solution to this is setting up a system covering all fly balls and pop-ups. The two or three players involved immediately know who has priority, whose call takes precedence, and who should back away.

THE PRIORITY SYSTEM

- The pitcher has priority over the catcher
- All infielders have priority over the pitcher and catcher
- The second baseman has priority over the first baseman
- The third baseman has priority over the first baseman
- The shortstop has priority over all the infielders
- All outfielders have priority over all the infielders.
- The center fielder has priority over the left and right fielders

It is easier for an outfielder to come forward to catch a fly ball than for an infielder to go back. This is because the ball is drifting into the outfielder while it is drifting away from the infielder. Also, the outfielder, by moving in, will end up in better throwing position in case a base runner is tagging up and trying to advance.

It is easier for a shortstop to circle behind a third baseman than a third baseman to go backward. This is because the shortstop is playing deeper to begin with and has a better angle on the ball. For the same reasons, it is easier for a second baseman to circle behind a first baseman than for a first baseman to go back.

It is easier for a first or third baseman to come in on a pop-up rather than for a catcher to go out since the ball is drifting into the infielder rather than away from the catcher.

It is easier for a pitcher to come in for a pop-up than for a catcher to go out for the same reason. Pitchers may have the best shot of all on shallow bloopers and bunts.

OTHER KEY POINTS TO REMEMBER ARE

- Players chase all fly balls they can reach until someone else calls them off it. They should not automatically assume that someone else “has it.”
- Wait until the ball reaches the peak of its climb before calling for it.
- Also be aware of the sun. A fielder may lose sight of a ball but if another player hustles to back them up, they may be able to come to the “rescue.”

ET

WARM UP

WARM UP

DYNAMIC STRETCHING FOR BASEBALL is the most effective way to properly warm up the muscles, joints, and ligaments prior to throwing or strenuous activity. The old fashion method of static stretching has proven to be ineffective as a warm up, and may even reduce explosiveness in athletes. Dynamic stretching can be defined as stretching through movement. Instead of hold a stretch for an allotted period of time.

Dynamic stretching will help you develop better overall flexibility, prevent injury during strenuous activity, and can greatly increase your range of motion which is vital for baseball. Remember, each of these dynamic stretches needs to be performed slow and under control to prevent any unnecessary injury. Do not push yourself too far, and make sure you perform each exercise with an appropriate level of comfort. These exercises are in no specific order or efficiency. Movement exercises should be over approximately 60 feet. Exercise is to be done up and back.

Before completing the dynamic stretchers ensure an adequate low intensity jog. The aim is to get the blood flowing. This jog should be conducted over several minutes and can be completed as a large run or multiple 60 feet runs.

DYNAMIC STRETCHES OVER 60 FEET

1. SINGLE LEG TOE TOUCHES

Step forward with one foot, Bring the opposite hand to your toe. Your other leg should be in the air, and your back should be flat. Switch back and forth.

2. WALKING QUAD PULL

Take one step forward, grab one foot and pull it towards your glutes. Other arm out in front. Hold for a couple seconds and release. Walk forward and switch legs.

3. BUTT KICKS

Proceed forward bring your heels to your glutes. Slow and controlled motion, don't forget to pump your arms!

4. STRAIGHT LEG KICK

Take one step forward, Kick your leg straight up, and with opposite hand touch toes. Lower it back down. Step forward and change legs.

5. OVER THE FENCE

Lift one leg straight up, Rotate the leg out and around as if you were stepping over a fence. Step forward and repeat with other leg. Exercise should be performed forwards out and backwards back.

6. HIGH KNEES

Identical to running form except you are lifting your knees much higher, aim for above your waist. Try to get explosion off the ground, and perform the exercise relatively fast but under control.

7. SKIP AND SWING

Skip forward whilst arms swing forward and back.

8. CARIOCA

Rotate out and back facing same way. Ensure shoulders remain square.

9. RUN THROUGHES

Complete three sprints to finish. First sprint should be at 50%, second at 75% and the third at 100%

DYNAMIC STRETCHES IN SINGLE POSITION

1. NECK ROTATIONS

While looking forward, move your head down into the flexion position, then rotate to your left shoulder, then rotate your head so that you are looking at the sky and the back of your head is almost touching your upper back, continue to the right shoulder, and back to starting position.

2. ARM CIRCLES

Simply rotate your arms forward in a circular motion beginning with small rotations, then medium, lastly large rotations. Immediately following the forward rotations, proceed with reverse rotations beginning with large rotations first, medium second, and small last. The first set of forward and reverse rotations will be with your thumbs facing the sky, the second set of rotations will be with your palms facing the ground and the third set will have your thumbs facing the ground.

3. ARM SWINGS

While standing straight up, you will then swing one arm up over your head with a controlled motion. Then repeat with the other arm. Perform ten repetitions on each arm. This will help warm-up the rotator cuff and upper back.

4. SCORPION

Lay on your stomach with your arms extended out at shoulder height. Slowly bring one leg over the top of your back toward your opposite hand. Slowly return back to starting position. Alternate each side back and forth. Try to keep your stomach and arm planted on the ground while performing the exercise.

5. SIDE BENDS

Simply bend to one side bring over the top of your head. You will feel a stretch in your lats, and lower back.

6. LEG SWINGS

Find something to place on like a wall. You will then bring one leg in front the other, and swing it sideways and then back across. This will warm-up the hips.

ET

THROWING

THROWING FUNDAMENTALS

1. THE 4 SEAM GRIP

This grip is achieved by taking your middle and index fingers of your throwing hand, and placing them perpendicular to the horseshoe of the seams on the baseball. The ball should be in your fingers and not back in your palm. After we field the ball and it is in our hand, we are holding it differently every time. We need to work on our feel of the baseball so we can take any hold we initially have and change it to a 4 seam grip every time.

2. KEEP BALL AT CHEST

To start the throw, our throwing hand, holding the ball in our glove should be in the middle of our body, around chest height.

3. LINE UP TO YOUR TARGET / FEET

Use your feet to line up your body toward the target you are trying to hit. Your feet can create momentum by using shuffle steps / crow hop toward your target. This momentum will help to get more on your throw and it will let your body work a little easier and in turn you will be more accurate. Your feet will go from in line with your target to your front foot pointing at your target right before you are ready to throw. Being in this position with your hand still back in its firing position is like pulling a rubber band back. The more you pull it back the more intensity you will have.

4. FRONT SIDE AND BACK SIDE WORKING TOGETHER

When starting your throwing motion and you separate your glove from the ball. If your glove elbow goes straight towards your target, your throwing hand will be going in the correct position back. If you close your body off, your throwing hand will be far behind your body making an accurate throw much more difficult. Your two sides work opposite of each other, so if one side is off, your other will be off also. Your body tries to stay in a strong position and to do that, your back side compensates by doing the extreme opposite of what your front side does. Stay in a straight line to your target so you don't fight against your body. Let it work for you, not against you.

5. WHEN TAKING THE BALL OUT OF THE GLOVE, KEEP IT FACING THE GROUND

Your glove hand should follow along with what your throwing hand is doing. It should feel like you are leading your glove to your target with the heel of your glove hand. This is a strong position to throw. The best way to describe this is to break your hands and drive your thumbs down. The first instinct for many people is to take the hand out of the glove and have the baseball facing toward where they are throwing. Their glove hand will follow what the throwing hand is doing and this will be a weak throwing position.

6. TAKE THE BALL FROM FACING THE GROUND TO FACING BEHIND YOU

Once your hand can't go back any more and it is time for your hand to be in the strongest position to throw the ball from. Keep thinking of taking the ball from facing down to the ground to facing the centerfielder (if you were pitching off the mound). This position will create as much torque as possible for your body. Your glove hand will continue out and a little upward and your glove will go in the direction of where you are throwing the ball. Some people will use their glove and some will use their glove elbow to line up where you want the ball to go.

7. WHEN THROWING THE BASEBALL, TAKE YOUR CHEST TO YOUR GLOVE

You will take your front elbow and bring it back into your body and keep your glove in front of you so that it will eventually touch and meet up with your chest. You want to keep everything tight. The tighter you are the quicker you will fire. This is similar to ice skaters that when they want to spin faster they start moving their limbs in closer to their body. This move will start some torque, at the same time your legs will start to fire and your hips will start to open up toward your target.

8. THROW THE BASEBALL

The last thing to fire is your throwing hand and the ball to come out. You will follow your body; the ball will go from facing the centerfielder to turning toward your target. Your elbow will stay at about 90 degrees and you will feel that you are pulling the ball down. You want to reach and get as much extension as possible as you throw toward your target. This is like a whip effect. The further down the whip the quicker it snaps.

9. USE YOUR FINGERS AND WRIST TO THROW

The big muscles set everything up for your little muscles to really fire and get the most out of your throw. Just working on using your wrist and fingers more you will really see a difference in the velocity of your throws.

10. FOLLOW

Continue to follow through and follow your throw. Don't cut it off until your arm has decelerated as much as possible and the ball is well on the way to your target.

THROWING PROGRAM (MODERATE)

While throwing, get accustomed to grabbing a *four seamed* grip, and **exaggerate** the mechanics of each phase. Players should warm-up by position, with everyone facing each other, perpendicular to the foul line. The number of throws required will vary as each player is different and their arm *might* need more.

PHASE 1

- Short flip catch for wrist warm-up.
- Each player kneels on throwing knee, 15 feet apart.
- With throwing arm supported by the glove hand at the elbow.
- Use flip motion, isolating the forearm to the finger tips.

PHASE 2

- Full range of motion, isolating the upper body and arm.
- Same position as Phase 1 but now 30 feet apart. Full range of motion of arm, exaggerating showing the ball to centerfield and bringing the chest to the glove.

PHASE 3

- Stand up 180-degree catch.
- Feet perpendicular to the player's partner (or foul line). 50 feet apart.
- Upper body movement same as Phase 2. Exaggerate hip rotation with back foot pivot only.

PHASE 4

- Regular catch, gradually spreading out. Start at 60 feet and continually move back with the ball path like a rainbow. Ensure it doesn't go too high but the throw should be aimed at lengthening the arm.
- Start with feet parallel to partner, stepping with glove foot, proper upper body and arm action, and following through.

PHASE 5

- Long catch. Arm strengthener.
- Once at maximum distance
- Distance apart is dictated by arm strength. One bounce is ok.
- Once completed and you begin to move to Phase 6, your arm should be warm and therefore all throws from here are to be flat and hard.

PHASE 6

- Functional catch. Simulate your position and start with ball in glove.
- Distance apart should be 120% of distance of throw in game situation.
- Position (i.e. outfielder will start with ball in glove, glove over throwing shoulder, simulate catch and throw; infielder will start with ball in glove, glove out in front of body in ground ball fielding position).

PHASE 7

- Quick catch. 30 feet apart.
- Get to the throwing side of ball, and try and grab a four-seam grip as quickly as possible.
- Quick hands.

TAKE CARE OF THE BASEBALL

THROWING PROGRAM (ADVANCED)

HAVE A TARGET – FINISH YOUR THROW TO THE EXTENSION SIDE

5 FEET WITH 5 FLIPS – 30-60 SECONDS

No glove: 4 seam grip, wrist flips “see and feel the rotation”

30 FEET – 30-60 SECONDS

Move their feet, have purpose with footwork. Done with some energy (get the blood flowing), ensure ball is thrown with an arc and is thrown from all arm angles

60 FEET – 1-2 MINUTES

From the stretch position, put weight on back side (some may use a step back for comfort, momentum) create proper footwork / be on line (have their ‘throwing foot’ inside their glove side foot), create a strong front side with angle and arc it out to partner. Finish the throw to their extension side

90 FEET – 2-3 MINUTES

Here we will replace our feet. Gain ground / distance towards your partner. Replace twice if necessary to promote going towards the target

120 FEET – 2-3 MINUTES

Just make sure they continue to arc the ball to their partner with accuracy. They need to continue gaining distance towards their partner.

BEYOND 120 FEET – 1-2 MINUTES

THIS MUST BE ARCHED OUT!!!

STRETCH THE ARM AWAKE, CREATE FEEL AND COMMAND

100 FEET - PULL DOWN PHASE – 30-60 SECONDS

Have a great front side here, work over it and pull down to build arm strength. These throws should be made belt high or lower.

GAME SKILLS

90 FEET – 30-60 SECONDS

Cuts and relays (relay and redirection for CINF)

Double play footwork and transfers

60 FEET – 30-60 SECONDS

Tag Plays

Chest Game

Footwork with Ball in Glove from All Positions & All Types of Plays

30 FEET – 30-60 SECONDS

Ball Drop Recover

Hot Potato

Start DP's & Glove Flip Plays

9-16 MINUTES TOTAL

TAKE CARE OF THE BASEBALL

NOTES

ET

PITCHING

PITCHING PHILOSOPHY

At every level as a pitcher you must avoid giving the hitters an advantage, you are in control, so it is important that as a pitcher, working with your catcher, together adhering to the following:

- **COMMAND AND COMMIT. Be Able to Throw (In The Zone)**

DOWN before OUT
OUT before IN
IN before UP

- **1ST PITCH STRIKES.** If the fastball is the only consistent pitch, then it must be used.
- **STAY AHEAD.** All pitch selections based on the intent to stay ahead in the count.
- **CHANGE SPEEDS.** Keeps hitters off balance and reduces their effectiveness. Develop the use of a Change-Up.
- **LOCATE FASTBALL.** Mastery of the fastball gives pitchers a lot of options. From the hitter's perspective, a fastball in a different location is actually a different pitch.
- **MAINTAIN GOOD TEMPO AND BODY LANGUAGE.** Maintain a good tempo. It keeps defensive players alert and active and reduces ability of the hitter to make between-pitch adjustments. Have confidence in your ability.

PITCHING

The complete pitching motion is a sequence of events, with a very clear start, specific critical moments along the way, and a finite end. It is only as good as the weakest link in the chain.

Before the pitcher even begins their pitching motion, they need to be mentally prepared.

Regardless of whether you're a pitcher or playing another position on the diamond, the throwing process involves an efficient transfer of energy during the throwing motion from the player's feet into the ball. A perfect throw is one in which all of the player's kinetic energy ends up being transferred to the ball. If any one part of that energy transfer system is less efficient than the others and velocity and accuracy suffer.

Learning the pitching motion is primarily about body control, not about the arm. Balance will determine accuracy. The goal is not velocity. It is accuracy. Nothing is as boring in sports as watching a youngster walk 5 batters in a row. Teaching to throw straight is where it begins. Whether you call it location or "command", there is a simple truth that pitchers under the pressure of competition: will never throw the ball as fast as possible if they don't know where it will end up.

Wind up or stretch? It makes no difference in velocity. Indeed, if anything, youngsters may end up throwing harder from the stretch because the better location they achieve by pitching from the stretch will give them the confidence they need to throw harder. Because the biomechanics of pitching from the windup are more complicated, there is less room for error in pitching from the stretch (more movement, more problems). ONLY throw from the stretch (less movement, less problems).

FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO ARM INJURIES

1. FATIGUE AND OVERUSE

The more they pitch, the more connective tissue is overloaded, and the greater the likelihood of injury. This is by far the most important factor, and must be carefully monitored.

2. THROWING VELOCITY

The harder they throw, even if they have "good mechanics", the more stress they put on key structures. All the force has to be transmitted through the shoulder and elbow at some stage. One problem is that a coach will often want to use the hard thrower more often, when in fact, they should be throwing less.

3. THROWING MECHANICS

A poor delivery can put even more stress on the arm.

4. CONDITIONING

If the arm or the body is not conditioned to do the work, chances of injury increase.

5. PITCH TYPE

Contrary to popular belief, the fastball places more stress on the arm than any other pitch type (assuming all are thrown with proper mechanics). The problem with the curve ball, for example, seems to be two-fold: Coaches overuse young pitchers who can throw one because they win a lot of games, so a fatigue and overuse issue. And young pitchers, because they have small hands or a lack of coordination and strength, often throw it with bad mechanics.

PITCHING FUNDAMENTALS

LIFTING STRIDE LEG

The first dynamic balance point begins as a pitcher lifts the stride leg. This is a recent change in philosophy. We used to teach pitchers that, to achieve a static balance point, they should "stop at the top." By that I mean, a slight pause at the balance point; similar to the position in the photo above. We now teach advanced pitchers a constant dynamic movement which is difficult to capture in a still photo.



If a pitcher is off balance at this point - by which I mean leaning in the direction of one of the three bases - the pitch location will most likely be a ball or at best will be a guess. The key teaching point: the bent leg and thigh up needs to be lifted to around 90 degrees from the body. Lower than 90 degrees may limit the motion, higher may throw off the balance.

For the moment let's put aside the slide step or other quick motions to the plate. But do remember this: if a pitcher is too quick to the plate because they are worried about a runner on first, and makes a bad pitch that the batter deposits off or over the outfield fence, few will care about how fast they were to the plate! A pitcher's number one priority when someone is on first is to make a good pitch (this is something that holds true at all levels of baseball, right up to the major leagues).

A right handed pitcher's knee should be pointing to third base (LHP to 1B) and in front of the navel, directly below the glove. The hands should be in the same relaxed and comfortable position as if they were applauding. The body should be bent as if in a batting stance.

TIMING

Timing begins when the hands separate and ends when all body parts are in the proper position to release the ball. Most mistakes in timing - late or early - happen during the hand separation phase. Early timing will most likely cause the ball to go low. Late timing generally makes the ball stay high.

From the pitching stance in the stretch position, the player pushes the hands down as if pushing down the thigh. The stride leg moves straight down and then out towards home plate. The leg must land on the ball of the foot in a straight line, slightly closed to the plate.



The pitcher's arms separate at the same time and move in opposite directions to an equal and opposite relationship. Elbows are 90 degrees from the torso. Raising the elbow higher than 90 degrees leads to significant arm impingement and increased risk of arm injury.



The shoulders are in a straight line towards the plate. Do not move either shoulder from that line and continue to move your elbows back and pinch your shoulder blades together. Extend your arms as if you were going to hug someone. This position, referred to as scapular loading, creates less superior rotator cuff muscle impingement, uses less energy and can make the ball go faster This is called the launch position.

POWER

Power, the kinetic chain, begins, when the stride foot lands on the slope of the mound. From that point energy flows in a constant direction (and hopefully a straight line) up the body. In many versions of the wind up, motion stops, then reverses its direction. The thought of developing more momentum in the wind up is silly when you think of how many re-directional changes a complicated wind up involves. This is why so many pitchers lose control (balance) early in the wind-up even before the ball leaves their hand! The chance for a timing problem dramatically increases as well. Stride length is easy to fix. Lay a pitcher on their back, with their heels touching



the front of the rubber and the head toward home and mark a line at the top of the shoulder. Typical stride length is 85% of height. That is the distance is measured from the front of the rubber to the tip of your landing foot shoe. Next the hips must fully rotate and open, prior to the shoulders. The navel should be pointing at the catcher's glove. This establishes torque. This is exactly the same power sequence as in hitting. Hip and shoulder separation are key to sustaining velocity late in the pitch count.

ELBOW POSITION

The arm throws the ball. The body creates a solid foundation, shares the load and facilitates endurance. Jumping or pushing off the mound will not make the ball go faster. It will likely disrupt timing and make the ball go slower. As the hips turn and arm follows, the body has created the foundation for the arm to move as quickly and efficiently as possible with the least amount of stress. This develops endurance with velocity and substantially reduces the probability of repetitive motion injury.

As the arm passes to the side of the body, the elbow should be no lower than 90 degrees from the shoulder and torso. Too high or too low is very harmful, leading to pain and poor performance. It is absolutely essential that all throwers' eyes be level with the horizon and the nose directly out and over the stride leg knee. This is the way all people walk straight.

CHEST TO GLOVE

Research proves that the (RHP) glove must stop over the knee and not fly or swing out towards first base. An accurate pitcher moves the chest to the glove. For many years' conventional wisdom said that speed was increased by pulling the glove to the chest. Players almost always pull their core and upper body off-balance and dramatically tilt their eyes when they pull their glove to their chest. The glove usually ends up far away and to the side of their body. This action accounts for the overwhelming majority of pitchers who cannot consistently throw strikes.

Extending the glove to home plate and taking your chest to your glove produces a late release, decreasing the distance the ball travels in the air. This makes it very difficult for the batter to see and hit the ball. The power goes into the ball rather than continuing to circulate outside and to the left of the body, dissipating energy.

The actual mathematical equation states that for every twelve inches you can extend the ball release, you will gain 3 MPH of perceived velocity. However, you will lose 2 inches of arm extension to the plate for every inch your head moves off the centre line between your nose and home plate.

FOLLOW-THROUGH

Deceleration is the biomechanical term for follow-through. It is the necessary process the body must engage to stop the arm from moving. Overhand arm action, specifically throwing, is the fastest motion the muscular system can produce. The problem is that there are many more muscles in the acceleration action than the deceleration action. Pitchers get posterior (back) shoulder pain from poor mechanics. They also get sore from a lack of posterior shoulder conditioning. The follow-through is like a see saw. The knee is the fulcrum. If the body has attained the correct position; nose over stride foot, chest to glove, navel to catcher's glove, the head will go down, allowing the trailing leg to go up and over, landing slightly in front of and to the side of the stride foot. The torso should be parallel to the ground with the back flat during this motion. The throwing arm on a RHP should be on the left side of the left knee.

IN ALL PITCHES

The hand should pronate (rotate counter clockwise for RHP) and thumb should point to the rear as the arm comes to rest.

Don't over grip the baseball.

The body must land in a defensive position to field a ball hit. The pitcher should stop in a position where the nose, navel and knees are all pointing directly toward home just as an infielder would.

PITCHER FIELDING (PFP)

Once a pitcher has completed their follow through they should be in a good athletic fielding position.

COMEBACKERS - THROW TO 1B

Pitchers become a fielder and the same principles apply. In the case of a pitcher who fields the balls on the mound, move the flat ground, step toward the target, releases the ball and follow the throw. You have time, so encourage good feet and a firm throw.

COMEBACKERS - THROW TO 2B

Stress to your pitchers that even when attempting to turn a double play on a comebacker they have plenty of time to relax and make an accurate throw. Make sure that they don't get lazy with their footwork and always move their feet in the direction of the intended target.

PITCHERS COVERING 1B

The pitcher runs hard to a point near the baseline about 10-12 feet from the bag and then turns and runs parallel to the line. When the pitcher feels they are under control they raise their glove to present to first base who flips the ball to the pitcher as they run down the line and before they get to the bag if possible. If first base fails to field the ball cleanly or has fielded and thrown the ball to second base to turn a double play, the pitcher should stop at the bag and make the play like first base. If receiving the ball on the move up the foul line, once the out has been made, the pitcher should aim to stop by chopping their steps, turn back into the field of play looking for the possible next play. At no time should the pitcher cross the foul line.

BUNTS

The pitcher fields the bunt properly, generates momentum toward the intended target, releases the ball and follows the throw. Stress footwork. On bunts to the first base side, a right-hander opens up to first base before fielding the ball, generating momentum toward the target and throwing. A left-hander places the left foot between the ball and the foul line and slowly turns the body toward the glove side to make the throw (don't open too far; still point the front shoulder and generate momentum toward the target).

Reverse the footwork on bunts to the third base side. Once you have rounded up the ball, planted your feet, get your grip, you need to rock and throw as you have less time than a bunt down the first base line.

BACKING UP

Overthrows will happen from the outfield and cut-offs. Expect an overthrow by backing up all bases to reduce the chance of runners advancing or scoring.

PITCHER PICK OFFS / HOLDING RUNNERS

The key to keeping the opposing team's running game under control is to keep the runners uncomfortable when they are on base. Many pitchers fall into a rhythm and make it easy on the runner to get a good jump. Or they do the same thing each time they are going home and something different when they are picking off.

Left-handed pitchers for example, often look at first when they are going home and look at home when they are coming to first. When you are on the mound, do what you can to keep the runner from knowing or having a good guess what you will do on any particular pitch.

You can accomplish this by:

- Vary the time you stay set before delivering the ball.
- Step off the mound occasionally.
- Throw over to the base using a variety of speeds. (i.e. Your intention should be not always to show your best move. Use your best move when you think you have a real chance to pick someone off.)
- Hold. (If you think the runner is going to steal and you have thrown over a couple of times) stay in the set position until time has been called (if the hitter doesn't call it your catcher will). It's hard to get a good jump when you're sitting still in the leadoff position for a long time.

RUNNER ON FIRST

RIGHT HANDED PITCHER - For the right-handed pitcher, you'll either have to step off the mound and then step and throw to first base or do a quick jump pivot move. The pivot move will be used the majority of the time, but the step off move should be used occasionally, even if you don't always complete it with a throw to first.

LEFT-HANDED PITCHER - The left-handed pitcher has a distinct advantage over a right-handed pitcher on a move to first. You can step off the mound and throw to first, and unlike the right-handed pitcher you can throw to first from your delivery. The key is to appear to the runner as if you are going home, but not stepping too much toward home as to have a balk called by the umpire. As you pick up your leg, you want to make sure you don't cross your leg or foot back over the rubber. This will be called a balk if you attempt to throw to first. It's a good idea to not crossover even when you are throwing home. This will keep the runner from getting a good jump as they will have to wait longer to determine whether you are going home or to first. Try to make your kick the same for both your move and throwing home. When your leg is at the top you will want to drive your shoulder at an angle toward the home plate side of first base. Your leg will come down in the same direction and you can make a quick throw to first.

The step off move also has an advantage over a right-handed pitcher in that you can develop a very quick step off and throw move since you are facing first base.

RUNNER ON SECOND

Stealing third base requires a great jump off the pitcher. Most good base runners look for pitchers that either don't pay much attention to them and/or fall into a certain pattern - come set, one-thousand-one, then deliver. This type of pitcher is inviting the runner to steal and a good baserunner will take advantage.

There are a few methods for making a pickoff move to second. One is to spin towards your glove hand side after you come set, or you can come set and then as you pick up your leg you simply let your leg continue back towards second, planting it and making a throw.

PITCHERS BULLPEN ROUTINE (SEASON)

Bullpens can be conducted on flat ground, or on a mound. As part of their leadership duties, the catcher should be trained to run the bullpens: they should have the authority to do so, know the routines, the rules etc.

- The pitcher must be warmed up and ready to start the bullpen. Do not allow them to warmup with the catcher.
- The purpose of a bullpen is to rehearse making pitches: focus on hitting the target, not how hard they can throw. Emphasis is on pitcher focusing on a small target; e.g., a spot in the catcher's glove, not the whole glove.
- Generally, the target should be in the bottom 1/3 of the strike zone: "the box".
- It is the pitchers job to know the purpose of the bullpen session and their routine.
- A pitcher should easily be able to throw 6 pitches per minute. Any longer, and they are throwing too many pitches or wasting time.

ROUTINE ONE (32 PITCHES) (5-6 MINUTES)

3 x Fastballs DOWN & AWAY

3 x Fastballs IN (lower third of zone)

2 x Fastball tilts to RHH (up & in, then down & away)

2 x Fastball tilts to LHH (up & in, then down & away)

3 x Change-Up DOWN & AWAY

3 x Change-Up DOWN & IN

3 x Curveballs for strike (DOWN in the zone)

2 x Curveball IN/OUTS (1 each to RHH and LHH) DOWN in the zone

5 x "tough pitches" (Full count on hitter, use Fastball, Change-up and Curveball? Last pitch always a fastball)

ROUTINE ONE (56 PITCHES) (9-10 MINUTES)

5 x Fastballs DOWN & AWAY

5 x Fastballs IN (lower third of zone)

2 x Fastball tilts to RHH (up & in, then down & away)

2 x Fastball tilts to LHH (up & in, then down & away)

5 x Change-Up DOWN & AWAY

5 x Change-Up DOWN & IN

2 x Fastball/Change-Up Tilts (up & in Fastball then down & away change-up)

4 x Curveballs for strike (DOWN in zone)

2 x Curveball IN/OUTS (1 each to RHH and LHH) DOWN in the zone

2 x Fastball/Curveball Tilts (up & in Fastball then down & away curveball)

12 x Game Pitches (3 Batters, catcher calls pitches and location. End with a strike)

NOTE: If the pitcher achieves a poor result when attempting a pitch, they do not "get another try". The catcher should keep count of how many times the pitcher "makes the pitch": pitches the ball to the intended location. This number becomes as assessment of the pitcher's success.

NOTES

NOTES

ET

INFIELD

INFIELD PHILOSOPHY

As an infielder, we are always ready for the ball and know exactly what we will do with it before the play happens. Through good communication we will ensure all other infielders and outfielders have the same information and are considering the same.

- **KNOW THE SITUATION - WANT THE BALL, TAKE CONTROL**
- **BE READY AND REACT ON EVERY BATTED BALL - MAKE ALL THE ROUTINE PLAYS**
- **GET IN PROPER READY, ATHLETIC POSITION BEFORE THE BALL IS HIT**
- **WORK BODY TO TARGET - USE GOOD ANGLES**
- **AGGRESSIVE - UNDER CONTROL, GO GET THE BALL**
- **TAKE CARE OF THE BASEBALL**

As an infielder we always aim to move to the ball, our feet never stop moving and attack the baseball with purpose every time as we have confidence in our ability to field and throw the baseball.

Whenever we are practicing our infield work, no matter what the drill, we ensure we move our feet. Even if we are doing glove work, it is important that we still move our feet (never as an infielder do we do a drill with stationary feet).

APPROACH TO FIELDING A GROUNDBALL

NOTE: the below techniques are for a right-handed thrower. Left-handers will use opposite leg and arm where appropriate.

“The 6 F’s” is an approach that provides an excellent framework for understanding the fundamentals of fielding a groundball.

1. FEET

- Develop a routine to ensure that your feet are ‘alive’ and your posture is athletic as the ball reaches the contact zone – every pitch. You must be ready to move immediately in any direction.
- Your feet carry you to the ball. Angle your approach the ball to get your body heading in the right direction and lower your body gradually into fielding posture, like a plane coming in to land.

2. FIELD

- Use a wide base: have your feet wide apart for stability and balance, so that your knees don’t get in the way, and so that you can bend down more easily.
- Move through the ball as you field it: do not be static. The left foot comes onto the ground just as the ball hits the glove.
- The hands should be out in front so that you can see the ball into the glove.

3. FUNNEL

- Bring the ball to your centre of gravity (belly-button) with two hands, before splitting the hands to make the throw.

4. FOOTWORK

- While funnelling the ball then splitting the hands, rhythmically take the right foot to the left and the left to the target, so as to land with the feet lined up to the target. (Your feet should never cross over).

5. FIRE

- Continuing in one smooth motion, fire the ball firmly and accurately to the target. The momentum of your footwork provides a substantial amount of the force for the throw.

6. FOLLOW

- Follow the ball after you throw it: you should be taking two or three steps directly toward the target after you release the ball. This ensures that you have momentum in the right direction.

NON ROUTINE GROUNDBALLS

FOREHAND

When the ball is too far to the left side, players need to move as far as they can and reach for ball with glove only, then replace feet (right to left, left to target) to come into a good throwing posture. Reverse pivot may be preferable, but player can still replace feet.

SLOW ROLLERS

Player runs hard towards the ball, gaining control as they get near the ball, with the glove low, field the ball in the glove, ideally with glove side foot in front, if bare hand non glove side foot in front and throw on the run.

BACKHAND

An infielder needs to develop confidence in their ability to field a ball hit too far to the right side to be able to use the routine approach. Many of the 6 F's still apply, but the fielding posture is necessarily different:

- The head and right foot are directly in line with the path of the ball,
- The glove is in a backhand position well on front of the eyes.
- The body is side on to the path of the ball, but still low with a wide base
- Replace feet to throw: once ball is caught, replace feet (right to left, left to target) to come into a good throwing posture with momentum.
- Power turn & drive (for when there is not much time): once ball is fielded, transfer it quickly to throwing hand, drive off right leg to make throw.

ENCOURAGE USE A VARIETY OF THROWS

Encourage players to experiment with the way they throw the ball to different bases in various situations and with various groundballs.

STEAL COVERAGE

For middle infielders, ensure they know who is covering: if both infielders break to the bag, there will be lots of gaps in the defence.

BEFORE THE PITCH: position so that they can get to the bag in time without having to break before the ball reaches the hitter.

When the runner steals, break and get to the bag in time to receive the throw

IF THE THROW IS ACCURATE: straddle the bag (which prevents the runners from sliding around you) and put the tag straight down in front of the base. The ball travels faster than your glove, so let the ball travel don't go out and catch the ball.

IF THE THROW IS DOWN THE LINE: try to catch it down the line so that you can still tag the runner.

IF THE THROW IS NOT ACCURATE: make sure the ball does not get by you and allow the runner to advance further. For third base this ensures the run doesn't score. Go get the ball if it's not accurate.

DOUBLE PLAY FOR SHORTSTOP

FEEDS

GLOVE SIDE

- Field the ball according to 6 F's fundamentals
- Clear the ball from the glove; give second base a good view of ball
- Little or no backswing (of throwing arm)
- Maintain momentum under control
- "Stiff-wristed" push-feed to face of second base
- Follow the ball after release; hand reaches out as if shaking hands with second base

STRAIGHT AT

- Field the ball according to 6 F's fundamentals
- Retain low position
- Keep body steady
- Throw face-high to second base

BACKHAND SIDE

- Field in front of right foot, as per 6 F's backhand fundamentals
- Open left leg to target
- Stay low
- Throw face-high to second base

URNS "right foot on the bag, left foot to the ball"

FEED FROM SECOND BASE

- Right toe on left-field corner of bag
- Athletic, lively posture
- Anticipate a bad throw
- Read second base throw, take large step with left foot toward the ball
- Replace the feet to create distance & direction
- Make a firm accurate throw to first base

FEED FROM FIRST BASE (INSIDE THE LINE)

- Left foot on base, give big target inside the base.
- feet well spread, good balance, chest to first base, athletic, lively posture
- Catch, step and throw

DOUBLE PLAY FOR SECOND BASE

FEEDS

BARE-HAND SIDE

- Field ball cleanly
- Maintain momentum toward base (under control)
- Throw face-high over the base to shortstop
- Follow the feed

STRAIGHT AT

Traditional Method:

- Field and funnel ball as per 6 F's
- Turn trunk toward shortstop, dropping left knee toward ground as throwing hand comes back over thigh, close to trunk
- Keeping elbow quite close to body, make a side-arm throw uphill to shortstop

Power Feed (PREFERRED):

- Approach ball on a curved path bending toward shortstop
- Field as per 6 F's
- With a strong lateral leg drive, throw the ball to the shortstop with a backhand motion.
NOTE: push the ball with the hand side-on to the target, and finish with the palm facing the target
- Follow the ball for at least two steps

FOREHAND SIDE

- Try to glove the ball as the left foot plants
- Replace feet with a reverse pivot
- Make a face-high throw to shortstop

URNS “Left foot on the bag right foot to the ball”

FEED FROM SHORT STOP

- Get to the base quickly
- Wide base and athletic posture with left foot on the centre of the base, feet aligned to first base
- Expect a bad throw and take the right foot to the ball once shortstop throws it, then step with left to first base and throw

FEED FROM THIRD BASE

- As above, but it is nearly always best to have the left foot on the bag and take the right foot to the ball (rather than rock & fire)

FUNDAMENTALS FOR FIRST BASE

RECEIVING AN INFIELD THROW

- Read the ball off the bat
- As soon as you know you cannot field it, hustle to the base and locate it with your throwing-side foot
- Retaining the feel of the base with the heel of that foot, turn to face the direction of the throw
- Be in an athletic position, ready to move in any direction
- Read the throw
- Turn back foot sideways
- Step to the ball with glove-side foot: this foot should come onto the ground as the ball hits the glove. This ensures that you do not “get out there” before you know where the throw is headed.
- Back foot, being sideways, provides more stability and is less likely to drag off
- Step off base once out is made.

TWO COMMON MISTAKES MADE:

1. Stretching towards the ball too soon - This puts you in a position of no return.

2. Trying to stretch as far as you can on every play - Stretching for the ball on a bang bang play or balls thrown off target can be the difference between out and safe. On plays that aren't close and the ball is thrown at you, stretching out only adds a level of difficulty that's not necessary to get the out.

POSITIONING WITH NO RUNNER ON BASE

Must be comfortable that they can get to the base in time to receive a throw from an infielder. Keeping that in mind, they should field as deep and as far off the foul line as possible. Their first job is to be an infielder: must be ready to field the ball that is hit in their vicinity. Their ability to do that will be restricted if they are worried about getting to the base in time. Adjustments can be made according to hitter.

POSITIONING WITH RUNNER ON 1B

Holding the runner on: right foot along-side home-plate side of base, left foot in fair territory, chest facing pitcher. Athletic posture, glove at the ready: must be ready to receive a pickoff throw, or to move into better fielding position if ball is pitched.

TAGGING

If the pickoff throw is accurate (knee-high over bag), allow ball to travel as far as possible, turn the trunk and lower the body (may go onto left knee) while catching ball and tag to centre-field corner of base. If the throw is inaccurate, or the runner is clearly back, no tag is required: just make sure the ball does not get past.

MOVING OFF THE BASE

Develop a set routine and master it. E.g. one big step with the right foot while squaring up to face home, then one big side shuffle. This will allow players to get a reasonable distance off the base and be in an athletic fielding stance when the pitch reaches the plate.

POSITIONING WITH RUNNER ON 1B & 2B (LESS THAN TWO OUT)

Stands at “double-play depth”: behind the runner (in their pocket), close enough to bag to make the runner think first base could get back for a pickoff.

INITIATING THE DOUBLE PLAY

Field the ball cleanly and make an accurate throw to the inside of second base bag. Use a reverse pivot on balls hit straight at them or to their left. Can often glove the ball using the backhand catch on ball hit to their right. As soon as the ball is thrown, get back to the base to receive throw from middle infielder (pitcher makes a loud call if they can cover the base for you).

RUNDOWN FUNDAMENTALS

A baseball rundown, sometimes called a 'pickle', is when you have a base runner caught in between two bases. KEYS are to;

USE THE FEWEST NUMBER OF THROWS POSSIBLE

The goal is to complete this play with two throws or less, because this cuts down on the potential for an errant throw. The key to doing this is to run hard at the baserunner, forcing them to commit, before making the throw to your partner.

DON'T LET THE RUNNER ADVANCE

If you have a base runner caught between bases and have a choice to run them toward any base, make it the smaller base. (If between 1B and 2B, run them to 1B, etc.)

There are 2 main reasons someone gets caught in a rundown. Firstly, they are picked off or secondly they are caught between bases on a ball hit. Either way the fundamentals are the same.

GET THE BASEBALL INTO YOUR THROWING HAND - You want this so you can tag or throw quickly.

CHOOSE YOUR THROWING PATH - Both infielders, whether throwing the ball or receiving it, should get to the same side of the base runner. This will prevent the throw hitting the runner, and gives both thrower and receiver a clear line of sight.

RUN TOWARD THE TARGET - If you have the baseball, it is your job to run hard at the runner so they make a decision. If you run hard, they have to run hard and it is more difficult to stop and change directions. Make them commit and either tag them or give the ball up to the receiving infielder. **If you are receiving the baseball**, you should close the gap between you and the person with the baseball. This makes it more difficult for the runner to stop and get going in the other direction before you can tag them. Also, this will keep the play in the middle of the bases and not close enough to where they can make an athletic slide and get in safely.

FOLLOW YOUR THROW - For example - If you are playing first base and you throw it to the shortstop, peel off and continue to second base. You will be in line behind second base who is waiting for the next throw, and if the shortstop gives the baseball up, they go to first base and gets in line. It is set up this way just in case it takes longer than two throws.

GET OFF THE BASELINE - After you make a throw to another infielder, make sure to peel off and never cross the baseline. Stay out of the way of the runner. If the runner makes contact with any player from your team that doesn't have the baseball, they are automatically safe. So stay off the baseline.

COMMUNICATE - The receiving infielder will use the command "now" and a visual of raising the glove when they want the ball. This will help when closing the gap and hopefully when you give it up they can catch and tag right away.

SECURE THE BALL FOR THE TAG - When making a tag, keep the ball in your throwing hand but wrap your glove around it. This is so the ball is secured and won't come out if there is a little collision. Remember you have to tag with the ball. You can't have the ball in your throwing hand not in your glove and tag with your glove.

NO FAKING! - NO pump fakes. This is tough because they usually work. The problem is that you don't only fake the runner - you usually fake out the receiving infielder. Make the runner commit by running hard at them.

CUT OFFS & RELAYS

COMMUNICATION DURING CUT OFFS & RELAYS

"LET IT GO" - Let the throw go on through

"CUT + BASE" (e.g. CUT TWO...means cut and throw to 2B)- Cut ball and make play to that base

"RELAY" - Cut the ball and relay it to the base you have lined up with

RELAY BASICS

1. GET INTO POSITION - As the cut-off work to move your feet so the throw you are receiving comes in at chest height. Try to play it to the left side of your chest and get your feet moving and inline to the direction you are going to throw. Turn to your glove side and throw (you create more momentum and have less movement). This ensures the quickest and strongest catch and release possible.

2. THROW LOW - When throws are made in baseball relays and cut-offs, **keep the ball down**. This will allow for someone else to cut the ball if needed to hold a runner and it also gets your target quicker with a hop or two than sailing a high rainbow.

3. GET IN LINE - It is important for the cut-off to be in a straight line from where the ball is being thrown from and where it is eventually going to go. The quickest path between two points is a straight line, also if the ball is overthrown the ball is going in the correct direction.

4. STAY IN FAIR TERRITORY - Even if the throw is coming from an outfielder in foul territory stay in fair territory. If coming down the left field line, this is important because you want your throw to home to be on the inside of the runner so it won't hit them in the back. From the right field line, the throw coming from fair territory cuts down the angle that the catcher has to take their eyes away from the runner and catch the ball. The further the ball comes from foul territory the more the catcher has to angle their body away from the base and the runner.

DOUBLE CUTS

WHAT IS A DOUBLE CUT? WHEN IS IT NEEDED? - A double cut is a type of baseball relay. Anytime a hitter hits an automatic double (a batted ball gets past the outfielder) protocol is to line up for the relay using two infielders – a lead and a trailer. Of the two infielders in position, the lead cut-off is expecting to make the throw. The trailer is standing 10 - 20 feet behind them, ready to give direction and to act as backup in case the ball is over thrown over the ball will short hop the cut-off.

RULE OF THUMB

The rule is to line up the throw 3 bases in front of where the runner starts. The double was automatic, but now you have to keep the hitter from turning their hit into extra base.

- With bases empty, the play is at third.
- If runner on 1B, the relay will line up to home plate.

Don't worry about runners at 2nd or 3rd base because they are scoring easily on a double.

NOTE: The hardest part of this play can be the trailers job, because they have to anticipate whether the play will be at second or third (or third or home).

NOTES

ET

OUTFIELD

OUTFIELD PHILOSOPHY

An outfielder's prime objective is to catch every fly ball, not let a ground ball get passed them and to get the ball back into the infield as quickly as possible.

Outfielders are generally well rounded athletes that possess good speed, agility and a strong arm. Along with these athletic traits an outfielder must have the ability to read the ball off the bat, make sound decisions and communicate effectively with the other outfielders.

When positioning themselves, an outfielder must play as shallow as possible knowing their ability to be able to get back to a ball that has been hit over their head. Have the utmost faith in their ability to go back on a baseball with fearless courage with the knowledge that the other outfielders will be there to support and back them up. An outfielder must run and work hard to get into the right position to take the ball and only slow down once they are in control to make the play.

An outfielder is always ready for the ball and knows exactly what to do with it before the play happens by: -

- **KNOWING THE GAME SITUATION**
- **COMMUNICATING WITH THE OTHER OUTFIELDERS AND INFIELERS**
- **WATCHING THE HITTER AND RUNNERS AND BEING READY TO REACT ON EVERY BATTED BALL**
- **GETTING IN THE CORRECT READY AND ATHLETIC POSITION BEFORE THE BALL IS HIT**
- **CATCHING EVERYTHING YOU CAN REACH**
- **THROWING TO THE CORRECT BASE AND PUSHING RUNNERS BACK, NO EXTRA BASES**

BE PREPARED

Even though you may not have to make a play for every hitter you need to go through all of the scenarios in your head so that you are prepared to make the correct play when the opportunity arises.

Between Innings: What's the score? What inning are we in? Knowing this lets you know how aggressive you can be in certain situations.

Before Each Hitter: What's the situation? How many out? Where are the runners on base? What is the score? Who is the hitter? Where do they hit for power and where they don't? Where should I be positioned and check with the coaching staff if not sure?

Before Each Pitch: What's the count? What might the opposition attempt, steal, hit and run, bunt? Where do I need to be in each situation? Where do I throw the ball?

OUTFIELD FUNDAMENTALS

READY POSITION

This is the position an outfielder should be in when the ball is being pitched and traveling through the hitting zone.

- Between pitches outfielders can be walking around and moving or doing whatever they feel is comfortable. Don't stand still between pitches, keep moving around and ensure your legs are light and ready to go.
- As the pitch is about to be delivered you need to be in an athletic position. This position would mirror a basketball player playing defence, or a tennis player about to return a serve.
- Your legs a little wider than shoulder width and you should be slowly moving forward.
- Your hands are off of your knees and you are anticipating the hitter making contact.
- React with what you see, let your eyes guide your body and get a good first step (jump) on the ball.

MOVEMENT OF BASEBALLS OFF THE BAT

Balls hit to leftfield or right field will be either hooking or slicing toward the foul line. The degree to which this occurs will depend on the hitter's swing, the type of pitch he has hit and the wind. Balls that are hit back up the middle towards the centerfielder can tail away from them but usually have more backspin and less sidespin. When a ball is hit high and short down the either line you may see the baseball work back the other way.

Left Fielder

- **Right handed batter:** If a right handed hitter hits a hard fly ball directly to leftfield the baseball may have some curve toward the foul line. The closer to the foul line the ball is hit the harder it will curve.
As the height of ball hit increases the curve or movement on the ball will decrease significantly.
A ball hit in the gap between leftfield and centerfield will tend to be straighter.
- **Left handed batter:** If a left handed hitter hits a hard fly ball directly to left field the ball will be curving toward the foul line more vigorously than a right handed hitter and will also tend to dip.
As the height of ball hit increases there will still be a significant amount of curve or movement on the ball.
A ball hit in the gap between leftfield and centerfield will still tend to tail back toward the leftfielder but will reduce as it is hit more directly at the centerfielder.

Right Fielder

- **Right handed batter:** If a right handed hitter hits a hard fly ball directly to right field the ball will be curving toward the foul line and will also tend to dip.
As the height of ball hit increases there will still be some curve or movement on the ball.
A ball hit in the gap between right field and centerfield will still tend to tail back toward the right fielder but will reduce as it is hit more directly at the centerfielder.
- **Left handed batter:** If a left handed hitter hits a hard fly ball directly to right field the baseball may have some curve toward the foul line. The closer to the foul line the ball is hit the harder it will curve.
As the height of ball hit increases the curve or movement on the ball will decrease significantly.
A ball hit in the gap between right field and centerfield will tend to be straighter.

COMMUNICATION

Besides being prepared for all situations as above, communication during a play being made is an important element of the outfield performing its function efficiently and effectively. When an outfielder is making a play they are concentrating on either fielding or taking the catch and cannot see what is happening with the runners. It is the job of the other outfielders to communicate effectively, to firstly give them assurance that they are in the correct position to take the ball and secondly to instruct them where they need to throw the ball. If the outfielder taking the ball is not in the correct position or the runner is pushing for an extra base your voice must become louder and more urgent so that they will respond accordingly.

OUTFIELD FLY BALLS

To track a fly ball, you need to get a good read of the baseball off the bat and then choose the best route to get into position to catch it. You must have good footwork to react quickly and be able to run in an efficient, balanced manner that allows you to be in control to first catch and then throw the ball.

REACT

- Watch the pitch all the way to the plate. The pitch location and your knowledge of the hitter will help you anticipate where the ball may go and to react accordingly.
- When the ball has been hit make sure you pick up the trajectory before you commit to your reactive movement.
- A good reaction time depends on how quickly you read the ball off the bat and using the correct footwork to get off the mark.

LINE DRIVES

One of the most difficult fly balls to judge is the ball hit directly at you. If you don't immediately recognize whether the ball is going over your head or going to drop in front of you, hold your position.

- Assume the correct drop step position (left or right hand side) which you should be able to pick up immediately and be ready to move forward or backward
- Try to determine where the ball is going to land
- Listen for instructions from the other outfielders
- When you are sure of the trajectory of the ball hustle to make the catch or field the ball

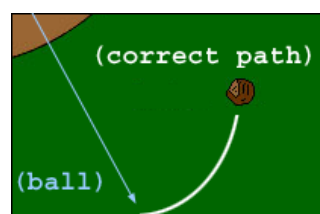
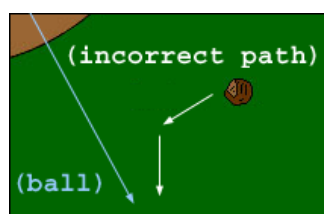
The worst decision you can make is to **guess** and run forward because the ball may either go over your head or you may get a short hop and the ball gets by you for extra bases.

ROUTINE FLY BALLS

This is a fly ball where if you sprint hard you will be able to get into a position behind the ball so that you will have forward momentum to take the catch and throw.

- Once you have determined approximately where the ball is going to land, sprint hard to a position behind that spot keeping your eyes on the ball.
- Run on your toes for a softer impact on the ground to stop your eyes from bouncing and pump your arms to help keep your balance. Do not run with your glove hand up.
- Listen for instructions from the other outfielders and when you get to the correct position behind the ball slow down and wait to take the catch.
- You should be in a position approximately one metre behind where the ball will land and facing in the direction that you want to throw the ball. Your arms should be relaxed about waist height and your eyes firmly fixed on the ball.
- When taking the catch, you step forward with your glove side leg and reach out to take the ball below your line of sight over the throwing shoulder. It is OK to keep your throwing hand down to maintain balance. Continue the momentum forward with your throwing side leg and throw the ball with your next step.

You will dramatically improve your velocity and the time required to throw the ball if you get in the correct position behind the ball. The diagrams below show the correct and incorrect angle paths to take when running to the ball.



FLY BALLS OVER YOUR HEAD

This is a fly ball where if you sprint hard you will not be able to get into a position behind the ball to catch it.

- If the ball is hit straight at you, you first need to determine which way you turn. This is more difficult for left fielders and right fielders because of the movement on the ball. If you turn the wrong way you will lose sight of the ball, become disorientated and it will be difficult to pick up the ball again.
- Once you have determined which way to turn, use the drop step to start your momentum. I.e. Turning right side – drop the right foot back and cross over with the left. Turning left side – drop the left foot back and cross over with the right.
- Sprint hard toward the position where you believe the ball is going to land. Do not watch the ball all the time as this will affect your running speed, only glancing back to ensure you are on track and keeping the ball away from your body and not going over your head.
- Run on your toes for a softer impact on the ground to stop your eyes from bouncing and pump your arms to help keep your balance and maintain speed. Do not run with your glove hand up.
- Listen for instructions from the other outfielders.
- When you get to a position where you can catch the ball, reach out at the last minute with your glove hand and keep your throwing hand down to maintain balance.
- Stop as quickly as you can and pick up the cut-off, who should be in a position for you to make a shorter throw.

SHORT FLYBALLS OR LINE DRIVES

These are fly balls when you need to take the catch at full pace.

- Once you have determined approximately where the ball is going to land, sprint hard in a direct line to that position keeping your eyes on the ball.
- Run on your toes for a softer impact on the ground to stop your eyes from bouncing and pump your arms to help keep your balance. Do not run with your glove hand up.
- Listen for instructions from the other outfielders and if the infielders are coming back call them out if you can take the ball
- Catch the ball with one hand and use your throwing hand to maintain balance.
- If you can take the catch from waist height or above, it is OK to catch the ball directly in front of you. If the ball is lower, you need to catch it on either side of your body so that your knees don't get in the way. Only slide or dive to catch the ball if it is completely necessary.

FLY BALLS IN THE SUN

There are times when the sun turns what would normally be routine fly ball into a difficult fly ball. The sun can have an effect on a fly ball throughout any stage of a game so you should always check and be prepared to know how you are going to address each situation as it occurs. The first rule is to never follow the flight of the ball directly through the sun because your eyes will be affected and not recover in time to take the catch.

In most cases the ball will travel through the sun and come out the other side but on occasions when the sun is low a line drive will stay in the sun for longer.

BLOCK THE SUN WITH YOUR GLOVE

- Pick up the trajectory of the ball to determine the flight path
- Raise your glove to block out the sun
- You can look above, below or either side of your glove to see the ball
- Listen for instructions from the other outfielders
- If the sun impacts your ability to see the ball until you can take the catch, leave your glove in position to block out the sun and reach out at the last minute to take the ball
- Catch the ball on either side of your body not in front of your eyes

USE YOUR ANGLES TO HELP FIGHT OFF THE SUN

- If the flight path of the ball is directly in line with you and the sun, try to create angle so that the ball comes out of the sun
- Even though you may be in the best position to take the catch sometimes allowing another outfielder with a better angle to take the catch is the best option. Early communication is important in this situation

DON'T PANIC

When the baseball goes into the sun it can be scary because you lose sight of it for just a split second. Understand that it has to come out at some stage and if you follow the instructions above you will be able to pick up the ball and make the catch. Trust your read off the bat to get you close to the fall of the ball and keep the ball away from you when you take the catch and all will be fine.

OUTFIELD GROUND BALLS

The method that you use to field a ground ball will depend on the situation and the position you are in to take the ball. In most situations you will always field the ball like an infielder. Your priority is to keep the ball in front of you, field it cleanly and throw to the base in front of the base runner to stop them from advancing. On occasions with a runner on base and you believe that you have a very good chance to throw the runner out, you will field the ball off your glove hand side so that you can maintain momentum to throw the ball.

FIELDING A BALL ON THE SIDE

When using this method, you must be certain of getting an out because it has its risks and may result in more bases being taken if you fumble or miss the ball.

- Charge the ball and slow down as you approach it so that you can time when you take the ball
- Read the bounce of the ball so that you take it either after it has reached its peak or smother it just after it has bounced. Taking it on the way up can result in being surprised by a bad bounce.
- While still moving forward field the ball one handed on the glove side of your body with the opposite side leg in front. If you take it with the glove side leg in front it will get in the way and will also prevent you getting lower to the ball.
- When you have fielded the ball continue your momentum and release the ball quickly by taking only two steps to throw. Remember the runner is in full stride so every extra step you take the runner will have advanced 2-3 metres.

CIRCLE THE BALL

This is similar to taking a routine fly ball where if you sprint hard you will be able to get into a position behind the ball so that you will have forward momentum to field it and throw.

- Sprint hard to a position behind where you believe you will field the ball.
- Keep your eyes on the ball and as you get closer start to arc in so that you will be moving forward in the direction that you want to throw the ball.
- Pump your arms and do not run with your glove hand up.
- Listen for instructions from the other outfielders.
- If done correctly, you should be in a position directly behind the ball to field it like an infielder or to take it on the side.

You will dramatically improve your velocity and the time required to throw the ball if you get in the correct position behind the ball. If you take the ball while moving across its path the base runner will take advantage of the extra time you will need to release it and will most likely advance to the next base.

BACKHAND AND FOREHAND

This is when you will not have the time to get behind the ball to field it.

BACKHAND

- Field the ball next to your glove side leg so that you can maintain your balance and get a further reach to take the ball
- Stop your momentum as quickly as possible to throw the ball to the cut off. Do not throw off balance

GLOVE SIDE

- Field the ball with your glove side leg forward so that you can maintain your balance and get a further reach to take the ball
- Stop your momentum as quickly as possible to throw the ball to the cut off. Do not throw off balance.
- If you need to throw to a base that is now behind you it is best to spin around so that your back is to the play to release the ball more quickly. I.E. Right hander – anti-clockwise, Left hander - clockwise

WHERE TO THROW THE BASEBALL

If you have prepared correctly by going through the different scenarios in your head you will already know where you need to throw the ball. Knowing if a runner is fast or slow, or if they are aggressive or just jog around the bases will also help your decision making process a lot easier.

ROUTINE PLAY

This is when the ball is hit straight toward you and there is no chance of throwing the runner out.

- Throw to the base in front of the base the runner is going for:
I.E. Runner going to first, throw to second. Runner going to second, throw to third. Runner going to third, throw to home.

BALL IN THE GAP

This is when the ball is hit to either side of you and there is more urgency because the runner may push to take two bases.

- In this situation you have conceded the base the runner was going for but are now trying to prevent them from proceeding to the next base and may also be throwing to get an out.
- Listen for instructions from the other outfielders who will be telling you what the runner is doing.

BALL GETS PAST YOU

This is when the ball is going to the fence and the runners are definitely going to take extra bases.

- Communication is paramount in this situation as you now don't know where you are going to throw the ball.
- Although you may anticipate where the lead runner may be, you must listen for instructions from the other outfielders because the cut-offs may have conceded the lead runner and set up for a different base.
- The cut-offs should be coming out to get you and be in a position where you only need to make a short throw. When you pick up the ball take a short crow hop and release it as quickly as possible to deter the runners from taking an extra base.

THROWING TO A CUT-OFF

It is very important to keep your throws low enough that a cut-off can make a play and re-direct the ball to another base if needed. Keeping your throws down will force other runners to be more cautious because they will not be sure if the cut-off is going to cut or let the ball go through to its intended base.

- Throws must be at head height or below so that the cut-off can make a play. A cut-off can move forward or backward to a ball that is going to bounce but they cannot make a play on a ball thrown over their head.
- Get in the correct position to throw the ball hard and flat. When the trajectory of the throw is looped or goes up, the runner will become aggressive and attempt to take the next base. Do not throw off balanced.
- If the cut-off has not come out far enough, throw a hard flat "one-hopper" to them.

Remember, a good throw to the cut-off will allow them to make plays on trailing base runners that may result in getting an out.

BACKING UP THROWS

Most of the time backing up bases will go unnoticed until there is an overthrow or a ball gets away from an infielder. This is the time that backing up will be important because being in the correct position will prevent runners from taking an extra base. If you prepare for all possible scenarios in your head before every pitch you will automatically react and go to the correct position to back up.

BACK UP POSITIONS

Left Field

- Third Base – All throws to third base
- Second base – Throws from second base and right field

Centre Field

- Second Base – All throws to second base

Right Field

- First Base – Throws from the catcher, pitcher and left side of the diamond
- Second base – Throws from the left side of the diamond

Remember you are the last resort and need to watch the play and react as it unfolds. You may first need to back up an infielder fielding the ball before breaking hard to back up a base. You are the safety valve and the ball can't get by you, so anticipate where you need to be and get there quickly.

RUN DOWNS / PICKLE

- With cut offs being made and runners everywhere, there is always a potential for a run down.
- Use the same strategy as for backing up bases and if you see a potential run down, start making your way toward the infield to back up.
- If the infielders get dragged away from a base during a run down and it is unoccupied, get to that bag quickly.
- Let the infielder be the first in line to participate in the run down.

NOTES

ET

CATCHING

CATCHING PHILOSOPHY

The catcher is the most important position and with it comes significant responsibility.

1. BE IN CONTROL OF THE GAME

Lead and direct your team, always identify the situation and advise of the right call. Be loud and clear, you're in charge of the defence.

2. CONTROL THE TEMP

Maintain good tempo with the pitcher. When they are on, keep it going, when they need a break, or need to refocus, call time, settle them down. Manage the game clock.

3. BUILD CONFIDENCE IN YOU PITCHER

Encourage and build confidence in your pitcher so you can call the game and play it on your terms. Show your pitcher you are a brick wall and anything close you work hard to get the strike call.

4. KNOW THE OPPOSITION

Understand the opposition hitters and team tendencies. This will help when playing your pitch sequences and when to pick, hold or pitch out. Who to work fine with and who to go after.

5. KNOW YOUR PITCHERS

Know your pitcher's strengths and weakness. By knowing what your pitchers can do and handle, this will help you call the game and make your life much easier behind the dish.

CATCHING FUNDAMENTALS

LEADERSHIP

Catchers must be strong leaders. Catchers must know how to calm a pitcher who is upset about a certain call, an error made in the field, or their performance. In short, you have to handle the pitcher. You make sure they stay focused on the situation and the pitch they are about to throw. You must keep them focused and in the game. Even though pitchers are unique and you handle them differently, always show them that you have confidence in their ability to get the job done. Along with the pitcher you must be on the leader of the other position players. Move them, guide them, reiterate the situation, act like a coach.

KNOWLEDGE

One of the first requirements as a catcher is learning as much about your pitching staff as possible. You need to know each pitcher's strengths and weaknesses. You must also learn how to call a game. Many times a coach may be calling the pitches from the bench, but you still must be in tune with the flow of the game and it's up to you to make sure the pitcher hits different locations by giving a good target. Learn as much information as you can about pitching, as you need to be on the same page as your pitchers. Along with knowing pitching, understand the game. Observe opposition runners, hitters & coaches. They all have flaws in their actions & attitudes, you just need to identify and then exploit them.

PITCHING STRATEGY

Catchers must understand pitching strategy in order for the pitcher to get the most out of their ability. No matter what level you are playing, the pitcher must avoid giving the hitters an advantage, so it is important that pitcher and catcher to work together on pitching strategy and strive to adhere to the following guidelines:

- 1st pitch strike. If the fastball is their only consistent pitch, then it must be used.
- Stay ahead. All pitch selections based on the intent to stay ahead in the count.
- Change speeds. Keeps hitters off balance and reduces their effectiveness.
- Locate fastball. Mastery of the fastball gives pitcher a lot of options. From the hitter's perspective, fastball in a different location is actually a different pitch.

These are the basics of pitching strategy. As they progress, catchers must come to understand a pitcher's strengths and weaknesses, and be able to make adjustments accordingly. Patience is required by coach: it takes time for a pitcher to be capable of doing these things.

COMMUNICATION

When communicating with the defence, command attention first, then move out in front of home plate. Use a loud, clear voice, sound authoritative, not panicky and ensure your body language is that of someone who is in control of the situation. Make signals very clear (ensure everyone's eye contact before beginning)

Also ensure you;

- Let pitcher know which base to throw to if they field a bunt
- Remind pitcher to cover 1B when a left handed hitter comes to plate
- Tell them to "Get over!" any time a groundball is hit to right side
- When appropriate, remind infielders to "be alive for delayed steal!"
- When a bunter comes to plate, tell 3B to be aware of the possible bunt
- On full count and two down with a force in place, remind infield that the play is at 1B
- With a runner on 2B and two down, remind infield to keep the ball in the infield at all costs, even if they can't make the out at 1B, it will save a run
- If a pitcher is throwing too many balls, and is not showing the ability or intent to make an adjustment on their own, go visit them, remind them to settle down and make the necessary adjustment, forget everything but hitting the glove etc.

CATCHING STANCE

GIVING SIGNALS

The preciseness of this catcher's stance is to keep the opposing team from stealing signs. It is important to keep signals between catcher and pitcher protected, concealed from the opposing team's eyes.

Before giving a signal observe the opposition coach and runner(s) for potential offensive signal giveaways. This may result in a pickoff or pitchout or help determine the type & location of the pitch.

When giving signs it is important for not only the pitcher to see them clearly, it is equally important for the shortstop and second base to see the signs as well. They need to take that information and pass it along to the corner infielders. Make sure to talk to your infielders and make sure the two middle guys can see your signs and the corner infielders can't. If they can't see the signs, then you know the 1st and 3rd base coaches can't see them either.

1. POINT YOUR KNEES TO THE MIDDLE INFELDERS

In your catcher's stance, your left knee will be facing the shortstop and your right knee will be facing second base. Keep your knees from swinging back and forth trying to block everyone from seeing the signs. Doing this may block the middle infielders from seeing the signs.

2. BALANCE ON YOUR TOES

Your toes should follow your knees and point to the middle infielders as well. Having your toes pointed out just a little will make your catchers squat a little more comfortable as well as put your knees in the right place. Your heels should be in the air just beneath your rear end.

3. USE THE CATCHER'S MITT SHIELD YOUR SIGNS FROM THE THIRD BASE COACH

Take your glove hand forearm and rest it on the outside of your left knee. From this position your glove should be under your left knee blocking the vision of the 3rd base coach from seeing your signs. Don't wrap your glove around your left knee, this will not allow your shortstop to see the signs being given.

4. HAND POSITION FOR GIVING SIGNS

A catcher should give signs as close to the body as possible. This allows the position of your legs to work for you concealing the signals. Take your right wrist and place it in the crease of your hip so your hand is hanging loosely in the right hand corner of your groin. Ensure your hand is not too low. By placing your hand in the right side, you will obscure any view a runner may have from first base.

5. ONLY USE YOUR FINGERS TO GIVE SIGNS

If your wrist or forearm moves as a result from giving signs, you are being too lazy. An experienced coach will look at your throwing wrist or forearm to see if you are giving away pitches or pickoffs etc.

CATCHING STANCE

NO ONE ON BASE AND LESS THAN 2 STRIKES

This stance focuses on giving the pitcher the best target as possible and not having to worry about blocking any pitches. This stance will give the umpire a great look at the pitch while giving your pitcher a great target. This stance happens after you give your signs to the pitcher and he is ready to pitch the ball home.

There are 6 steps to follow that will get you in the perfect catcher's stance for no one on base and less than 2 strikes.

1. FOLLOW YOUR GLOVE

Wherever you are trying to go with the pitch, take your glove there first. Your pitcher will get a visual of where to throw the baseball. Next, your body will follow your glove.

2. SLIDING INTO THE SLOT

As the pitcher starts their motion you want to use your body to follow your glove. If this happens too early the other team may be able to relay the pitch location, so wait until the pitcher starts their move home. Slide your body so that your glove is in the center of your body. This gives the pitcher a great target to throw towards.

3. THROWING HAND NEAR RIGHT ANKLE

This will keep your throwing hand protected from foul balls. It is important to keep all non-protected body parts as hidden as possible to limit the number of direct shots your exposed areas take. By placing your hand near your right ankle and not behind it stops you rotating your upper body and allow better positioning for receiving the ball.

4. POSITION YOUR GLOVE JUST OUT IN FRONT OF YOUR KNEES

You don't want your glove too far in front of your body, you want it in a position that can manoeuvre in between your knees. You should be able to catch pitches in a way that anything caught in between your knees is a strike. Even if you are set up a little off the plate. Having your glove near your body will help.

5. TURN YOUR TOES OUT

If you are having trouble getting low enough for the pitcher or the umpire, turn your toes out. This will open up your hips comfortably and will allow you to get lower in your stance. You don't need to separate your feet just turn your toes out.

6. CHEST UP

Having your chest up gives a great target to the pitcher. It makes your target look big and inviting to throw to. Even if you are a smaller catcher you can still give a big target by keeping your chest up. A big chest is an inviting background for the glove.

CATCHING STANCE

RUNNER ON BASE OR THERE IS 2 STRIKES ON THE HITTER

These are blocking situations and you need to be in the most athletic position possible to keep the ball in front of you.

Executing the fundamentals of the Catchers Ready Stance is similar to the no one on stance, except for a couple differences. In the ready stance we want to still concentrate on keeping your toes out, following your catcher's glove to the spot the pitch is thrown, and keep your chest up. Here we want to;

1. WIDEN YOUR FEET TO MAKE A MORE ATHLETIC BASE

With your toes still pointing outward to get the proper flex in your hips, you want to create just under a 90-degree angle from your upper leg to your lower leg. A wider and higher base allows for more athleticism when having to move left and right. It also makes it a lot easier to get off a good throw.

2. FEEL YOUR WEIGHT ON THE INSIDE PART OF YOUR FEET

Just like any athlete that is in a ready position, a catcher should have their weight on the inside part of their feet, the balls as it is normally termed.

3. EVEN THOUGH YOUR REAR END IS UP HIGHER, KEEP YOUR CHEST UP

Remember to keep your rear end up high enough to create just under a 90-degree angle with your legs. If you are sitting too deep you will not be as quick as you could be. Keeping your chest up gives your pitcher a better target, helps you to get in a blocking position easier on pitches left and right, and gets you to a strong throwing position quicker than if your chest was down.

4. PROTECT YOUR THROWING HAND

Instead of placing your right hand behind your right ankle, you will bring it up and rest it in the groove of your groin. Ensure you keep your hand loose, don't tense it as if a foul ball hits it, the hand will simply absorb the impact by moving freely and not creating a serious injury.

In conclusion, remember to be in your ready stance if there are runners on base, or if there are 2 strikes on the hitter.

RECEIVING

CATCHING THE BALL

The proper position of the body and glove is as important to a catcher as any other player on the field. The catcher must not only catch the ball cleanly, but if the pitch is a borderline strike or ball, must try to give the illusion that the pitch is a strike (a technique called framing). The goal is catch each pitch between your shoulders and to not move your glove quickly to the ball. One way to get set up to frame a pitch or to simply catch the ball is to shift your body smoothly toward the pitch as it comes toward you.

Let's say you set up to catch a ball over the center of the plate and the pitch is actually thrown on the outside corner. The umpire could call the pitch a strike or a ball, but your own actions can influence that call. If you stay in your position and flash your glove out quickly at the last second, the umpire will be inclined call the pitch a ball. On the other hand, if you slowly start to shift toward the location of the pitch as the pitch is delivered, the umpire will be more inclined to call it a strike.

The position of the glove is also important to promote the illusion that a pitch is a strike.

Slightly bend your elbow when you catch the ball. Catching the ball with your elbow locked often causes the ball to bounce out of your glove because there is no give. When you bend your elbow, you absorb the blow of the pitch and can hold on to the ball.

GIVING A TARGET

A catcher who places their glove thigh high in the middle of the plate for every pitch is doing nothing to help their pitcher. Help the pitcher be successful by positioning your glove as needed for each pitch. Because pitches, batters, and innings are unique, so too will be the position of your glove.

BODY POSITION

Move yourself, not just your glove. If you want the pitcher to hit the inside part of the plate, shift yourself over in that direction. Don't move too early and certainly don't move too late as it can be very distracting for a pitcher to be in the middle of their motion and then look to the plate to pick up the target, only to find the catcher moving their body and target into position. Many catchers want to wait to set up so the hitter cannot pick up the pitch location. This is fine, but there is no reason to wait until the last second. Get in position before the pitcher picks up the target.

SWAY

When receiving the ball and framing it's important to move your body along with your glove. By swaying slightly with your body, you reduce the amount of arm movement required to catch the ball. If you setup on the outer half of the plate and can sway a couple of more inches, you can give the impression that the pitch just off the plate was thrown right on target.

GLOVE POSITION

Pitchers, catchers, and coaches want the ball down in the strike zone. You can help the pitcher focus on this by giving them a low target with your fingers, facing forward toward the pitcher. This gives the pitcher a target at the bottom of the strike zone.

As the pitcher releases the ball, move your glove so it's in a vertical position.

FRAMING

The art of framing the baseball gives the illusion to the umpire that a ball just off the plate actually crossed the plate. Give the umpire a clear view of where you caught the ball. Catch the ball out in front of your body with a slightly bent elbow don't catch the ball close to your body as it doesn't matter what you do with your glove, the umpire will not see it. Once you have caught the ball, turn your glove towards the center of the plate.

INSIDE

If you have your glove in a vertical position, reach slightly to your left and as you catch the ball, turn your wrist toward the center of the plate. If you catch the ball on the outside portion of your glove, this turn of the wrist can give the umpire the impression that the pitch caught the corner. Hold the glove there for a second to give them a good look. A common mistake of young catchers is to move your entire arm towards the center of the plate. Remember you're trying to create an illusion, not trying to trick the umpire.

OUTSIDE

Unless your setup outside, you will need to catch the ball backhanded. As you reach across and backhand the ball, catch it and again turn your wrist in toward the center of the plate. Keep the motion smooth. If you setup outside and sway, you may be able to catch this pitch without having to reach much across your body. This will give the impression that the ball is closer to the plate than if you have to reach a long way. Of course, the first priority is to catch it cleanly, so don't try to be too fine, especially with runners on base.

HIGH

The high pitch can be difficult to frame since the umpire has a good view as it comes in. Minimize the movement to the wrist only when framing this pitch, we don't want the umpire to clearly see the catcher drop their arm 2 or 3 inches after catching the ball. We may not get this pitch to be called a strike, but we want the umpire to get the impression that the catcher is keeping the glove where they have caught the ball. This will hopefully help us out on other borderline pitches. To frame this pitch, move your wrist forward to drop the top of your glove down as you catch the ball.

LOW

This pitch is difficult to frame because even if you frame the pitch the umpire may not be able to see your glove. On this pitch, how you catch the ball is more important than how you frame it afterward. Anytime you catch the ball with your glove pointing straight down, you are giving the impression that the ball is low. Obviously this can't be avoided on some pitches, but on that borderline pitch just below the knee, try to catch the ball with your thumb under ball. If possible when you catch the ball a slight forward motion may be required. Don't push to far as this will look like you lifted the pitch, but by bringing your glove back and up the umpire may not be able to see it and call it a ball. The key on this pitch is to work hard to get your thumb under the ball and hold the pitch. This takes some forearm strength.

IT'S ALREADY A STRIKE

When catching a ball that is already a strike, simply turn your glove slightly in toward the middle of the plate as you catch it. Don't move your arm and your body movement shouldn't be extreme. The reason you frame the pitch is so you don't train the umpire that the only time you turn your glove is on a ball. Another reason to frame a strike is to increase the chance of a ball on the corner being called a strike rather than a ball.

IT'S DEFINITELY A BALL

Our aim is to show that the pitcher has control. Sometimes a pitch is not in the location you called, so we don't need to frame or sway, but simply catch and throw back. However, we want to create the idea the pitcher has good control, so on pitches outside the strike zone, give the impression with some sway that the pitch is exactly where you wanted it. Don't go overboard however, you want the umpire to give you those close pitches so you want to get them inside.

BLOCKING

Besides communication and receiving, one of the most important skills for a catcher is the ability to block pitches in the dirt. None of the physical skills of blocking a pitch matter however, if you are not willing to embrace a “brick wall” mentality and do whatever it takes to block the ball. Teams will take advantage of a catcher who is a poor blocker. Catchers who can block well keep base runners from advancing and instill confidence in their pitchers. A confident pitcher is a better pitcher as they have faith in throwing a pitch in any count and that if the ball goes in the dirt the catcher will block it. The key term when talking about blocking a pitch is **CONTROL**. You may be able to get in front of the ball with your body, but if that ball bounces too far away from you a good base runner will still advance. The following basic technique should be used when blocking and controlling pitches in the dirt.

BE AGGRESSIVE & BEAT THE BALL

Once you determine that the pitch will bounce in the dirt, aggressively go after the ball and try to shorten the distance between you and where it will bounce. The closer you get to the point where the ball is going to bounce, the better chance you have to block it. Remember not to be too aggressive moving forwards as this can put you in the path of the bat. In order to beat the ball to the spot, you need to get your glove and knees down as quickly as possible. If you break down blocking into slow motion, the glove should be down before anything else. The glove leads the way. Your knees should land a split second after and it should go without saying that the goal is to end up in the proper blocking position.

BLOCKING POSITION

Blocking a pitch requires quick reflexes. With runners in a position to steal a base you will naturally be in a ready stance that allows you to make a quick throw. This position is also important for blocking pitches.

- **YOUR HIPS AND SHOULDERS SHOULD BE SQUARE TO THE PITCHER.** Recognize the pitch and quickly get into your blocking position...**BEAT THE BALL**, aiming to always keep your chest facing towards home plate.
- **CLEAR YOUR FEET** by moving them back and to the side, with your toes pointed away from your body. Your knees should almost land where your feet were located and be spread apart just past shoulder width. Do not just fall forward to your knees, as this takes too long. You need to get down quickly. Clear your feet and thrust your knees down. For pitches to the side, use the opposite leg to where you want to go, to thrust you sideways getting into the blocking position as quickly as possible, again aiming to get your chest around facing towards home plate. This aids in controlling the ball to the side.
- **GLOVE BETWEEN LEGS WITH THROWING HAND BEHIND THE GLOVE.** Your glove should move from your target position to directly between your legs with your palm up, facing the pitcher and your throwing hand positioned behind the glove. The web of the glove should be against the ground. Most balls will bounce up and hit you in the chest, but you have to be prepared for the rare ball that skips and stays low.
- **ELBOWS TUCKED INTO SIDES, NOT IN FRONT.** In addition to the 5-hole, another potential way for the ball to get through is if your elbows are not tucked into your sides and you leave a gap between your elbow and the side of your body. You also want to make sure your arms are tucked into your sides, and not in front. The more your arms are in front, the easier it is for them to get hit with the ball.
- **UPPER BODY TILTED FORWARD SLIGHTLY.** You want to keep your back straight but angle your upper body so that it is tilted forward slightly. This will help you control the ball and keep it in front of you, and ideally, close enough to you so that you can retrieve the ball quickly after blocking it.
- **SHOULDERS ROUNDED.** For the same reasons that you want to tilt your body forward, you want to round your shoulders forward. If your shoulders are back, then your chest will be out and rounded and it will be more difficult to control the ball as you are blocking it.
- **CHIN DOWN.** It is essential that you keep your chin down. This protects your throat and helps you track the ball. By tracking the ball and watching it off your chest you are more likely to be able to make minor torso adjustments and hence control the ball better.

THROWING TO BASES

The most common misconception about catching is that the most important aspect of a catcher's throwing ability is their arm strength. While it is important for a catcher to have a strong arm, it is equally, if not more, important for a catcher to have good hands, agile feet and overall good athletic ability to be a good throwing catcher. Strong-armed catchers who fail to throw runners out often make errors in footwork or transfer at the beginning of the task. It is an athletic combination of quick feet, secure transfer, strong arm and accurate aim that leads to a successful throwing catcher.

FOOTWORK

- The most important part of a catcher's footwork is consistency.
- On throws to second base, there are two ways to utilise proper footwork.
- Pivot: As the ball approaches, the catcher pivots their right foot and throws to second base. A strong arm is required for this footwork.
- Jab Step: This is used by most catchers in baseball. The catcher jab steps with their right foot to an area on the ground just below their chin at the center of their body. It is crucial to keep the catcher's footwork confined to an imaginary circle around them. This enables short, compact footwork, which initiates quickness.
- Regardless of which footwork is used, the catcher must make their back foot become parallel to the front edge of the plate and keep their front toe pointed directly towards second base.
- On throws to third base, the catcher must always work to clear themselves if a right-handed hitter is at the plate.
- If positioned deep in the box correctly, the catcher should have somewhat of a straight line to third base. In extreme cases, a catcher may opt to go in front of the hitter on pitches low and away. Either way, the footwork should be confined and compact.

TRANSFER

- The exchange is a critical part of the throwing process. Many errant throws are a result of bobbled transfers or bad grips.
- The catcher should make a two-handed catch when receiving the ball.
- The transfer is made by picking the ball out of the glove, not flipping the ball to the bare hand.
- The transfer is made at the center of the body. Do not carry the glove side back to the throwing shoulder.
- The catcher should work on getting a strong first grip on the ball. Four seams are a plus.

UPPER/LOWER BODY

- The catcher needs to stay as low and compact as possible while throwing.
- Legs should stay flexed throughout the throw.
- The catcher's front shoulder must be pointed in the direction of the throw before the throw is made.
- The catcher must work to use and clear their front side.
- The final key for a catcher is to finish their throw over a bent front leg. It is critical that the catcher does not recoil. Recoiling severely limits velocity and carry on the throw.

ARM ACTION

- The catcher uses the shortest arm action on the field.
- The catcher's throwing hand never drops below the glove.
- Fingers should stay on top of the ball.

POP FLYS

1. STAND UP & REMOVE YOUR MASK - On any pop-up, whether it's short or high, you are going to immediately get up out of your stance. In the same motion, you are going to take your mask off. Keep it in your hands, though! Removing it does not mean throwing it, so don't toss it to the side quite yet.

2. SPIN - As you stand, you are also going to spin to turn your back to the infield. Spin towards your glove side - this will feel the most natural. You spin because most pop-ups will have backspin, causing the ball to drift back to the infield. Having your back to the infield will make catching these balls a lot easier. Make sure you have a strong base and stay light on your feet because you will be moving them.

3. CATCH IT - Don't raise your glove as you're moving to get underneath the ball - that will only slow you down. A high pop-up will likely be swayed by even the slightest breeze, so you don't want to set up your glove too early. Stay on the balls of your feet and keep the mask in your hand until you've set yourself right under the ball. Then you can toss your mask out to the side. You want to make sure you don't trip over it if you need to finish the play, so by tossing it to the side, you'll get the mask out of your way. (If you toss it too early, it's possible that you'll trip over it as you move to locate the ball.) As the ball is descending, raise your glove. Make the catch with two hands. If the ball is moving in the air, don't just reach for it with your glove - move your body. You want to get your whole body behind and underneath the ball, not just one arm. And remember, the ball is live if you catch it, so know where the runners are at all times!

4. GET UP & GET MOVING - An experienced catcher will be able to handle every pop-up the same - calm and collected. Don't let the excitement get the best of you. You won't be able to catch it if you can't see it, so your first priority should be to locate the ball in the air. You can't help that your vision is limited up behind the plate, but you can work hard to get your body up, spinning, and moving to locate the ball.

NOTES

ET

HITTING

HITTING PHILOSOPHY

No matter the time in the game, the score or situation as a hitter we are prepared to battle and make every at bat count. We do this by ensuring;

KEEP THE HEAD STILL. You can't hit what you can't see.

KNOW THE SITUATION. Identify the situation and execute situational hitting.

MULTIPLE AT BATS. Before we enter the batter's box, we have already had multiple at bats. Before we get on deck we watch, we talk to team mates and we take at bats. On deck we take more at bats, getting our timing right and watching the pitchers release. We take multiple at bats so we are not surprised when we enter the batter's box.

EVERY PITCH WE ARE READY TO HIT. No matter where we are in the game or what the count is, we have the mindset that we are ready to swing and decide not to swing. We do not have the mentality that we have already decided we will not swing before the pitch. Be ready and drive that fastball, be aggressive.

SWING HARD. Every time we swing the bat we swing hard, our aim is to drive the ball past fielders. Because we are prepared and ready to hit, this becomes natural as we are never fooled or decide too late to swing.

PUT THE BALL IN PLAY. Let's make the defence get us out, don't give the pitcher an easy out. We want to not only put the ball in play every at bat, but we want to hit it hard.

GOOD 2 STRIKE APPROACH. Be tough with 2. Give up the inside corner and look away. Get ready to hit early (minimise movement). Stay on the fastball. Use the opposite field (stay inside the ball) and aim for it to be either ball or barrel.

HITTING FUNDAMENTALS

The baseball swing is made up of a complex set of movements that must be timed correctly to generate bat speed & the power to drive through the ball at contact. As complex as the swing can be it can become automatic if the correct technique is taught from a young age & ingrained into muscle memory. Sound hitting technique is built from the ground up so this is why we will begin with the stance to ensure we have a solid foundation to generate the correct sequence of a good swing.

THE STANCE & SETUP

FEET

- The feet should be shoulder width or wider but not too wide that hitter becomes locked into that position & cannot transfer weight at launch.
- Weight should be evenly distributed on both feet, slightly off the heels & toward home plate.
- The position of the front foot should be level with the front of home plate & must not be open.
- The back foot may be turned in slightly but must not be open. The weight must be on the instep (under the big toe) to build up torque on the inside of the back knee.

KNEES

- The knees should be flexed to maintain balance & to keep the upper body upright & not bent over.
- The front knee may be turned in to help stop the front hip from opening up too early.
- Collapsing the back knee forward slightly helps to keep the weight on the instep of the back foot.

HIPS

- The back hip must be “up” & parallel with the front hip to prevent collapsing on the back knee, which in turn prevents driving the back hip at launch.
- The front hip should not be open & may be slightly closed at this point.

GRIP, SHOULDERS, HANDS & ARMS

- The handle of the bat should be held loosely in the fingers with the knocking knuckles lined up. No thumbs up & no white knuckles.
- Shoulders should remain parallel to the ground & with the front shoulder pointed at the pitcher.
- The height of the hands should be level with the back shoulder. The position of the hands should be pushed back past the back shoulder & be level with or just outside of the chest.
- The front arm must remain bent at the elbow & the elbow must be below the hands. The back elbow must be down & in a relaxed position.

BAT

- The size of the bat should be chosen to suit the hitter’s athletic ability to generate bat speed. A bat that is too heavy or too long will prevent the hitter from using the correct technique when swinging the bat.
- The bat should be approximately on a 45-degree angle with the barrel pointed back toward the head but must not be wrapped around behind the head.

HEAD & EYES

- The eyes must be parallel to the ground & face directly toward the pitcher. The angle of the head facing the pitcher will depend on which eye is more dominant.
- If the head/eyes are tilted over you lose perspective of the ball which makes it particularly difficult when judging breaking balls.

THE LOAD & STEP

The load & step is an important process that puts the hitter in a strong position to launch. The timing of the load & step is critical & starts prior to the pitcher releasing the ball & must be the same for every pitch delivered. The front foot must be in contact with the ground as the pitcher releases the ball. Remember that hitting is built from the ground up so you cannot launch with any power until the front foot is in contact with the ground.

THE LOAD - WEIGHT

- The load shifts approximately 60% of the hitters' weight to the back leg & must be done in a slow controlled motion. (Slow load – quick release at launch)
- The weight on the back leg must remain on the instep (under the big toe) of the back foot & on the inside of the back knee. If the weight shift goes past the back knee the power to launch will be lost.

THE LOAD - FEET, KNEES & HIPS

- To initiate the transfer of weight backward the front heel is lifted slightly off the ground & the front knee & hip are slightly turned in. This will create torque (like a coil) & also help prevent the front hip from opening up too early at launch.
- The back knee must maintain its position & not collapse. If it collapses the back hip will also drop which will result in not being able to drive at launch & an upward swing plane.
- It is not recommended that the front foot be lifted off the ground for the load as this will cause timing issues with the landing of the front foot & generating power at launch.

THE LOAD - SHOULDERS, ARMS & HANDS

- The front shoulder should be turned in slightly at the same time as the front knee & hip.
- The front arm is pushed back when the front shoulder is turned in but it must remain bent & in a relaxed position. There should be minimal backward movement & it must not be a wrapping motion as it will result in the hands being pushed around behind the chest & cause casting at launch.
- The hands must remain still & controlled. Any up or down movement (hitching) or bat head movement at the time of launch will have an adverse effect on the point of contact. If there is any backward movement the hands must remain on the same plane as the back shoulder & the bat must not be wrapped around behind the head.

THE LOAD - HEAD & EYES

- The head & eyes should maintain the same position as at the set up.
- The eyes start with a "Soft Focus" seeing the pitcher from the waste up. When the pitcher starts their motion the eyes will shift to a "Hard focus" to where the pitcher releases the ball. The launch cannot begin until the hitter identifies the rotation, speed & direction of the ball.

THE STEP

- The step is minimal (not a lunge more like putting your foot out) & is directly toward the pitcher.
- The landing should be soft & on the instep (under the big toe) with the heel off the ground. The angle of front foot will be open but only to the point that front hip can remain closed.
- There is a slight body movement forward to transfer some weight to the front foot so that balance can be maintained. This movement is slow & controlled so that the torque on the instep of the back foot & on the inside of the back knee can be maintained for launch
- At the same time of the step the front shoulder maintains its position & the front arm will be moved back to maintain the position of the hands. Elbow still bent but no wrapping.

THE LAUNCH & CONTACT

The launch is how we use the torque that has been built up through the load & step to get the bat head on the shortest possible plane to make contact with the ball. The launch must be separated from the load & step to ensure that the torque can be maintained when slower velocity pitches are delivered. If the hitter commits to the launch too early the whole process will be slowed so that contact can be made with the ball & all power will be lost. The following sequences of movements are important in generating bat speed & power.

- The back knee starts the launch by collapsing forward. The drive does not start until the hitter has identified the velocity & the path the ball will be tracking.
- The front foot is already in an open position & the heel drops so that the front hip can be opened when the back hip is driven. The front hip must remain closed for as long as possible before it flies open.
- The back foot starts to rotate & the tension stored on the instep of the foot & the inside the back knee starts to aggressively drive the back hip toward where contact is to be made. E.g. pitch inside – out in front of the plate, pitch down the middle – at the front of the plate, pitch outside – back on the plate
- The back elbow drops toward the back hip so that the top hand can be thrown & the bat head can stay close to the back shoulder.
- The hands will automatically tighten when the bottom hand starts to pull the knob of the bat through a plane that is “inside” & “short to the ball”. The front elbow must remain bent.
- During launch body weight is transferred from the back leg & is driven until the weight is against the front straight leg after the point of contact. The body weight must end up in a balanced position & if the front knee bends the weight will be too far forward.

CONTACT & EXTENSION

When contact is made the hips continue to drive & the hands need to continue through the plane of the ball before you “come off the swing. During launch the bat plane is described as being “Short to the ball” & after making contact it is described as being “Long through the ball”.

AT CONTACT

- The palm of the top hand should be facing up & the palm of the bottom hand should be facing down. The “knocking” knuckles should still be lined up.
- Both elbows should be slightly bent so they are not fully extended.
- The hips are still driving & are opened to the direction where the ball is being hit.
- Head & eyes down to the ball. It is important not to drop your head too vigorously, it is better to drop your eyes.
- Back foot has swiveled with the heel up & still driving the hips.

THROUGH CONTACT (EXTEND)

- Driving the hips continues until the weight has fully transferred firmly against a straight front leg.
- The hands continue through the plane of contact until the elbows become fully extended.
- Head & eyes remain down & positioned next to the back shoulder.

FINISH THE SWING (EXTEND AGAIN)

- The drive from the launch has been completed with the arms fully extended.
- The top hand rolls over & when completed may be released from the bat to maintain balance.
- Body weight should be over the plate
- The head & eyes start to track the ball.

BUNTING FUNDAMENTALS

There are typically 5 types of bunts that are used for offence.

SACRIFICE/ADVANCE BUNT

The objective of this bunt is to sacrifice the hitter to advance a runner to 2B or 3B. It is not a play that needs to be deceptive to the opposition as the pitcher must throw a strike so the hitter can come around early. Only bunt strikes.

- The batter moves to the front of the batting box to increase the angle which the ball can be bunted.
- The batter comes around early as the pitcher begins their motion.
- The back foot moves toward the plate so that the weight can be balanced & leaning over to cover plate.
- The hips are opened to about 45 degrees to face the pitcher.
- As the hands are dropped down into position the top hand slides up to balance the bat. The top hand makes a fist & the bat is held lightly between the thumb & the pointer finger. To check the correct position of the top hand, remove the bottom hand & the bat should be able to be balanced when held lightly. The bottom hand is only used to manoeuvre the angle of the bat to bunt down the 1B or 3B lines.
- The bat head should be angled slightly upward to prevent the ball from being popped up & be at the top of the strike zone.
- The arms are pushed out so that the bat is in front of the eyes but they must remain bent at the elbows so that they give at impact.
- The knees are bent & are dropped if the ball is lower in the strike zone. The arms & hands are not used to lower the bat.
- The preferred direction to bunt the ball is to 1B when moving a runner to 2B & to 3B when moving a runner to 3B. The main objective is to keep the ball away from the foul lines & the pitcher.
- If the pitch is a strike let the ball hit the bat so that it gives to soften the impact. Do not push at the ball or try to hit at it. If the pitch is a ball let it go.
- Do not attempt to move across the plate or run until the ball has been bunted.

SQUEEZE BUNT

The objective of this bunt is to sacrifice the hitter to bunt a run home & is generally used when a game is tight & runs are hard to generate. This play needs to be deceptive to the opposition so that they are caught off guard.

- The batter takes their normal stance in the box with no signs that he is going to bunt.
- The batter waits until the pitcher is just about to release the ball before coming around.
- All the steps to get into the position to bunt the ball are the same as the sacrifice/advance bunt but done more quickly.
- The ball just needs to be put in play but away from the pitcher.
- The batter must make contact with the ball whether it is a strike or a ball to protect the runner.
- Do not attempt to move across the plate or run until the ball has been bunted.

PUSH BUNT

This bunt can be used when executing a sacrifice/advance bunt if the opposition decide to “smother” the bunt to get the lead runner out. It can also be used when executing a running bunt.

- All the steps for executing a sacrifice/advance bunt or a running bunt are not changed.
- Instead of letting the ball hit the bat, both arms push evenly (extended to straighten the elbows) so that the bat moves through the point of contact. This is not a vigorous motion & only enough force to get the ball past the pitcher is required.
- For the sacrifice/advance bunt the ball needs to be bunted between the pitcher & third base or between the pitcher & first base for a sacrifice/advance bunt. The running bunt needs to be bunted past the pitcher towards second base.

RUNNING BUNT

The objective of this bunt is to bunt for a safe hit & is generally used by fast runners who have the skill to execute. This play needs to be deceptive to the opposition so that they are caught off guard.

- The batter takes their normal stance in the box with no sign that they are going to bunt.
- The batter waits until pitcher is just about to release the ball before coming around.
- It is similar to the sacrifice bunt but the batter drops their back foot away from the plate to make room so that they can be moving across the plate when making contact with the ball. This provides momentum to get out of the batter’s box quickly.
- Only bunt strikes, preferably on the middle to the outside of the plate.
- The preferred directions are to bunt the ball softly toward third base or pushed past the pitcher toward second base.

SLUG BUNT

This bunt is rarely used but is another option if the opposition decide to smother a sacrifice/advance bunt.

- The batter comes around early to show that he is bunting the same as a sacrifice/advance bunt.
- Just before the pitcher releases the ball, the batter moves back to a more compact hitting position with their hands up the bat. Use only about a 75% swing to ensure the bat head is controlled to hit the ball on the ground. Only hit strikes.
- Runner being advanced to second – hit the ball on the ground to third base side because as third base will be charging in & shortstop will go the second base.
- Runner being advanced to third – hit the ball up the middle because shortstop will be going to third base & second base will go to first base.

NOTES



BASERUNNING

BASERUNNING PHILOSOPHY

We don't rely on speed but rely on smarts. We strive to be the most fundamentally sound baserunners by ensuring we study baserunning and take well calculated risks to achieve our goal of putting pressure on the opposition's defence. We do this by: -

RUNNING HARD

From the first step you run hard. Whether it is home to first, or first to third, you run hard until you need to stop.

TAKING EXTRA BASES

You always want to take extra bases. If you are in the batter's box and hit the ball through the infield you believe that you can get to second base. If you are on first base you are always thinking of getting to third base on a ball in play. If you are at second base and the ball is in play you believe that you can score and when you are on third base you are always looking to score. **MAKE THE FIELDER PUSH YOU BACK.**

TAKING THE BASES GIVEN TO US

You are always prepared to take the next base when an opportunity is presented. You watch the pitched ball, track it into the dirt and react. You take the extra base when an outfield bobbles the ball or misses their cut off. Because you have run hard from the beginning you can take the bases that the opposition's defence has given us.

BEING AGGRESSIVE

You are aggressive but not foolish. Know the game situation, know the hitter and be prepared to run hard.

TAKING AGGRESSIVE LEADS

You always take aggressive leads whether we are stealing or not. Taking a one-way lead is aggressive because it keeps the opposition on their toes. Everyone on base must be a threat to the opposition and by taking an aggressive lead you can change the opposition's defensive setup and their defensive mindset.

BEING CONSISTENT

You do things the same way every time so that you don't show our hand. Whether you are stealing or not you set up your lead the same way so that the opposition cannot second guess what you are going to do. We give nothing away.

IF YOU ARE NOT CLEAR ON ANY OF THE ABOVE, CALL TIME AND CHECK WITH YOUR COACH

BASERUNNING FUNDAMENTALS

Base running is one of the most critical aspects of the game and each base presents its own challenges and key points to remember. As you are teaching your athletes the importance of base running make sure you cover the following key elements.

HITTER ON DECK

- Take note of how the defence is positioned.
- The on-deck batter is responsible for assisting runners with the decision to slide or stand up at home plate.
- The on-deck batter is also responsible for informing the current batter if the third strike is dropped by the catcher.

RUNNER OUT OF THE BATTER'S BOX

GROUND BALL TO THE INFIELD

- Hustle out of the box and after about 5 steps take a “sneaky” look to see if the ball has got through the infield.

IF THE BALL HAS BEEN FIELDLED

- Continue to run as hard as possible in a direct line to first base. (Do not run inside the line)
- Strike the front (side closest to home plate) outside half of the bag with either the foot without breaking stride and continue to run hard through the bag keeping in foul territory. (Do not slide into first base)
- Once through the bag, break down with fast choppy steps, look to the right to pick up the ball if it has been thrown past first base and listen for instructions from the first base coach.

IF THE BALL GETS THROUGH

- Start to arc out into foul territory straight away and follow the instructions as per “Base hit”.

BASE HIT

- When you see off the bat that the ball is through the infield think double and start your arc straight out of the batter’s box.
- Look to the first base coach who will be giving you verbal and visual instructions.
- Make an arc that should be sufficient enough so that when you round first base you touch the inside edge of the base with either foot and do not break stride. When you hit the base you use it like a “starter's block” to push off in a direct line to second base. (Use the same approach for rounding second and third base).
- After you have rounded the base pick up the ball and decide whether you should advance to second base or break down and return to first base.

TAKING A LEAD AT FIRST BASE

TAKING SIGNALS AND PREPARING TO RUN (Whilst standing on the base)

- Look for signals from the third base coach and have a clear understanding of your role.
- Know the game situation e.g. number of outs, score, and innings.
- Check where the other runners are in front of you.
- Check the positioning of the infielders and outfielders.
- Make sure you know who has the ball.

TAKING A PRIMARY LEAD

- Before you leave the base make sure the pitcher has the ball and don't take your eyes off of him.
- When the pitcher takes the mound start taking your lead. If you leave it too long you will have to move quickly to get to the required distance and may be caught off balance and get picked off.
- Start your lead by moving slowly out to a comfortable distance by sliding your feet sideways whilst maintaining contact with the ground to keep your balance. (Do not cross your feet over) Your lead should be in a direct line toward second base from the back of first base.
- While the pitcher is taking his signals extend your lead to approximately 4 steps from the base and remain set. At this distance you should be able to take one step and dive to the back of the base if the pitcher picks off.
- Your feet should be turned in slightly with the weight distributed evenly on the inside of the balls of both feet. Your knees and arms should be flexed and in a relaxed position so that you can move quickly in either direction.

TAKING A SECONDARY LEAD (NO SIGNAL OR BUNT)

- When you know that the pitcher is committed to throwing the ball to the catcher start your secondary lead of two or three lateral steps. The secondary lead should be a controlled shuffle of the feet. If you bound or bounce out to this position too quickly you may be picked off by the catcher because you are off balance or your decision to return to the base will be made prematurely.
- While taking the secondary lead always track the ball to the catcher.
- The last step of your secondary lead should land after the catcher catches the ball. If the ball has been caught retreat quickly back to the base.
- If the ball is tracking into the dirt or is wild be prepared to take an extra step because the catcher will be off balance and not in a position to pick you off. If the ball gets away, you will have the momentum to take second base.
- If the catcher catches the ball, take at least one hard step back to the bag. This hard step will stop any thoughts of catcher trying to pick you off.

TAKING A LEAD AT SECOND BASE

FORCED PLAY WITH LESS THAN 2 OUTS OR LOOKING TO STEAL 3RD

TAKING SIGNALS AND PREPARING TO RUN (Whilst standing on the base)

- Look for signals from the third base coach and have a clear understanding of your role.
- Know the game situation e.g. number of outs, score, and innings.
- Check the positioning of the outfielders and infielders.
- Make sure you know who has the ball

TAKING A PRIMARY LEAD

Take your lead using the same technique as your lead from first base.

- Before you leave the base make sure the pitcher has the ball and don't take your eyes off of him
- When the pitcher takes the mound start taking your lead. If you leave it too long you will have to move quickly to get to the required distance and may be caught off balance and get picked off.
- Start your lead by moving slowly out to a comfortable distance by sliding your feet sideways whilst maintaining contact with the ground to keep your balance. (Do not cross your feet over) Your lead should be in a direct line toward third base from the back of second base.
- Listen to the third base coach who will let you know what the middle infielders are doing and how comfortable your lead is. Trust the coach's instructions and do not move back toward the base unless the he tells you to.
- While the pitcher is taking his signals extend your lead to approximately 4+ steps from the base and remain set. You should be able to take a longer lead than that at first base because the pitcher will take longer to get the ball to second base. You should be at a comfortable distance where you will be able to take 2 steps and dive to the back of the base if the pitcher picks off.

TAKING A SECONDARY LEAD

- The secondary lead is exactly the same technique as on first base but you will be further off the base because the catcher will have a much longer throw. Make sure you are moving forward when the ball gets to the catcher so that you can take third on a fumble.

NO FORCED PLAY OR TWO OUTS AND YOU ARE COMMITTED TO SCORING

With no forced play or 2 outs you are not worried as much about just moving up to third base but being more aggressive about trying to score.

TAKING SIGNALS AND PREPARING TO RUN (Whilst standing on the base)

- Look for signals from the third base coach and have a clear understanding of your role.
- Know the game situation e.g. number of outs, score, and innings.
- Check the positioning of the outfielders and in particular the depth of infielders. Take particular note of where the short stop is fielding when there is no force so that if the ball is hit in the hole between third base or shallow you can get a good break to move over to third.
- Make sure you know who has the ball

TAKING A PRIMARY LEAD

- When taking your primary lead in this situation use the same technique but your lead will be 2-3 steps back off the line toward shortstop.
- Starting from this position will allow you to round third base at full speed and reduce the distance from third base to home plate because you will be running straight down the line.
- In the 2 outs situation the middle infielders are usually not holding us on because they don't want to create holes in their defensive positioning.

TAKING A SECONDARY LEAD

- The secondary lead is exactly the same.

TAKING A LEAD AT THIRD BASE

Your lead at third base should always be comfortable and relaxed because you want to be moving forward after the catcher takes the ball so that you can score on any opportunity. Your lead should not be aggressive.

TAKING SIGNALS AND PREPARING TO RUN (Whilst standing on the base)

- Look for signals from the third base coach and have a clear understanding of your role.
- Know the game situation e.g. number of outs, score, and innings.
- Check the positioning of the outfielders and in particular the depth of the infielders so that you can get a good jump on a ground ball.
- Make sure you know who has the ball

TAKING A PRIMARY LEAD

- Take your lead is relaxed and approximately 2 steps toward home plate and 2 steps off the line in foul territory

TAKING A SECONDARY LEAD

- As the pitcher starts to deliver the ball, walk in a controlled manner directly toward the catcher remaining in foul territory. Do not use shuffle steps.
- As the catcher catches the ball you should still be moving forward. This will allow you to continue your forward motion on a ground ball or passed ball.
- If the catcher catches the ball, turn inside the line with your back to the catcher and head back to third. This will put you between the ball and the third baseman if the catcher attempts to pick you off.

STEALING BASES

HOW TO STEAL SECOND BASE OFF A RIGHTY

Stealing 2nd base off a right hander is more of a reaction movement. Base runners have a couple different places they will look on a pitcher to get the best read possible.

PICK OFF INDICATORS TO WATCH FOR

1. LEFT HEEL

- If the pitchers left heel comes off the ground and their right foot is still in contact with the rubber, they are pitching the ball.
- If you are focused on their left heel and you see feet shifting or their right heel come off the ground, they are picking over to first base.
- This movement of their right heel is so they can get their feet in a good position to throw over to first. The movement of their feet does not start without their right heel coming up off the ground.

2. FRONT SHOULDER.

This along with the heel is the first body part that will move to start their motion towards home plate.

- If they turn their front shoulder in, they are pitching the ball.
- If their front shoulder opens up they are throwing over to first base.

3. BACK KNEE.

- This move is similar to the heel. If the back knee gets a little more bend in it once they start some movement they will be throwing home.
- This knee bend is made possible by weight shift that the pitcher is trying to complete before they deliver the ball home.
- If their back knee stays straight and starts to spin, they are coming to first base.

If a right handed pitcher is holding you on at first and their feet are close together, they probably don't have a very good move. If a right handed pitcher is holding you on at first and they come set with their hands at their belt, their pick off move will be a little slower. Starting in a low position means their arm has to come up to get to a throwing position which will take a fraction of a second longer.

PITCHER'S TENDENCIES

The following are tendencies to look for when trying to steal off of a righty.

1. PICKING FROM THE STRETCH

Some right handers only come to a set position when they are going to the plate but don't come to a set position when they pick off.

2. PICKING FROM THE SET POSITION

Some pitchers may come to a different set position when they are picking off to when they are pitching to home.

- A pitcher may have their feet a little wider apart when they are going to attempt a pick off.
- A pitcher may do something different with their head. i.e. Look down before they pick over to first or maybe have quick head movements when they are going to try to pick you off
- Some right handers will come to a set position with their hands in a different spot especially if a pitcher normally comes to a set position around their belt buckle. They may come to a set position a little higher if they are planning to pick off so that they can get rid of the ball more quickly.

3. RHYTHM

Some pitchers will keep the same rhythm for every pitch.

- A pitcher may come to a set position and wait a certain amount of time every pitch (i.e. One second).
- Once he comes to the set position start counting in your head and see if he pitches to home on the same number every time.
- If they do get in this rhythm use this as your advantage to get a good break.
- Some teams have pitchers pick over to first on certain counts so pay attention to what the pitcher is doing out on the mound.

STEALING BASES

HOW TO STEAL SECOND BASE OFF A LEFTY

When stealing second base off a lefty there are two types of moves to first base. The pitcher is either a reader or they are predetermined.

HOW TO STEAL SECOND BASE OFF READERS

If the pitcher is a reader, they will make a decision to pick or pitch after they start their motion. As they start their leg kick they will decide if they are going to throw over to first base or pitch. A pitcher that has this ability is good at reading the runner is very difficult to steal on.

THE ADVANTAGES THE RUNNER HAS AGAINST PITCHERS WHO READ THE RUNNER.

- The runner has the attention of the pitcher and can use this attention to take away the pitcher's concentration on the hitter.
- Pitchers who are thinking too much about the runner are more likely to make a mistake to the hitter.
- A pitcher may throw more fastballs if they want their catcher to have a better chance of throwing the runner out.

HOW TO STEAL SECOND BASE OFF A READER

When attempting to steal off of a pitcher that reads the runner, you have two options.

- **Option 1** – Wait until the pitcher is at their highest point of their leg lift before you take off to second base. At this point the pitcher has made their decision to throw home and they will not be able to throw over to first base.
- **Option 2** – If the pitcher is really slow to lift their leg you can take off on his first move. When you steal on the pitchers first move expect them to pick over to first base but you must still run hard to beat the throw to second base from the before first baseman.

HOW TO STEAL SECOND BASE OFF PRE -DETERMINED PITCHERS

The pitcher will have already made the decision to pick off will when they have come to a set position. On these types of pitchers, you need to look for any differences between their pick off move and when they pitch. There are a few basic differences many pitchers will have.

COMMON TENDANCIES

These are some of the most common tendencies a left handed pitcher would have.

- When the pitcher's right foot crosses behind the left knee they are committed to pitch and if they pick off it will be called for a balk. **NOTE** it must be the right foot not the right knee. If the right knee crosses the left knee but not their right foot, they are legally allowed to pick over to first base.
- Some pitchers will lean with their upper body toward first base when they are picking off. Sometimes this lean will make a pitcher's hands move in a way that is different from their normal movement and can be easily picked up by the runner.
- Some pitchers may look to home before they throw to first base and look to first base when they are going to throw home.
- Some pitchers will have a quicker leg kick when coming to first base and slow leg kick when pitching home.
- A pitcher may move their hands up and down in a different manner when picking over to first base than when pitching the ball.
- They may hold their hands a little further away from their body when picking to first base so they can move their lower half without any interference from their hands.
- Sometimes a pitcher's feet may tell you what they are thinking. Turned left foot a little to have a better angle to throw over to first base or may set up a little wider with their feet when they are picking off.

Sometimes differences will be more obvious and other times it will be more difficult to pick. You won't always be able to guess right, sometimes you have to be bold and take a chance.

STEALING BASES

STEALING THIRD BASE

STEALING 3RD BASE IS USUALLY EASIER THAN STEALING 2ND BASE

The following factors are why stealing third base is usually easier than stealing second base.

- The pitcher usually has slower times to home plate when there is a runner at second base compared to a runner at first base.
- Your lead will be bigger at second base and you are most likely to have some momentum going before you steal third base which allows you to get to top speed more quickly.
- Middle infielders may not be very comfortable or proficient at holding runners close to second base.

COMMON TENDENCIES

- Take note of the number of looks a pitcher makes toward the runner at second base.
- Pitchers fall into a rhythm. For example, a pitcher may look back at the runner once and then pitch the ball every time.
- A pitcher may hold the ball for the same amount of time before he pitches the ball.
- Is the pitcher looking at you or the middle infielders? When they are picking off they need to coordinate with the middle infielders.

MOMENTUM

It is almost impossible for a runner to steal third base from a standing start unless they are really fast. The catcher has a shorter throw to third base and they can get a lot of momentum going to make a really strong throw. Therefore, in order to steal third base, you need to do it on the pitcher and get a good jump.

USING SHUFFLE STEPS

When stealing third base you need to get a shuffle step going before the pitcher makes a move home. You need your right foot to be hitting the ground after completing one shuffle step and cross over when the pitcher starts making their pitch toward home. This momentum is used to give us a big advantage in stealing third base.

If your timing of the shuffle step is off (not getting a good jump) or you are getting too far away from the bag and not feeling comfortable, shut it down and try on the next pitch. You must be confident and not hesitant when stealing bases, so if you are not sure don't go. Be aggressive but smart and understand the game situation and how valuable you are as a runner in that stage in the game.

RUNNING SITUATIONS

While there are a wide variety of possibilities as a base runner below are a few common situations that every player must be able to execute. As with many aspects of the game, being a great base runner is not just about pure speed but also by having game awareness and taking pride in the way you hustle.

WILD PITCHES

Always be prepared to put pressure on the catcher by taking the correct secondary leads. Anticipate pitches being thrown in the dirt and take advantage when opportunities are presented to move up to the next base and into scoring position.

CATCHING THE CATCHER OFF BALANCE

- When the baseball hits the dirt, the catcher has to make sure they block it and they will not be in a position to make a good throw to second or third base. If a catcher goes down to their knees to block a ball and you get a good jump it is unlikely they will be able to throw you out.

SPOT IT EARLY

- The key to stealing a base on wild pitches or balls in the dirt is anticipating it (especially in off speed counts, bounced curve balls, etc.).
- When taking your secondary lead watch the trajectory of the pitch out of the pitcher's hand. Most times when you are looking for a bounced pitch you will see it early as it leaves the pitchers hand.

BE READY

- When you see it, react and run. It must be instinctive and if you have to think about it don't go because you will most likely be thrown out.
- Always be aggressive but also consider the game situation and the cost if you are thrown out.

BUNTS

ADVANCE BUNT

- On first and second base take your normal secondary lead but do not cross over and take off until you see that the ball is on the ground.

SQUEEZE BUNT

- The runner on third base takes his normal relaxed lead so he does not give anything away to the opposition. The runner waits until the pitcher has committed to throw home (as the pitcher drives toward home plate) before taking off. If the ball goes up off the bat be prepared to retreat as quickly as possible.
- The runners on first and second base run as if it is an advance bunt.

RUNNING SITUATIONS

HIT AND RUN

The base runner treats it as a steal but after a few steps glances toward the catcher to see whether or not the ball has been hit.

- If the hitter misses the ball, continue to run hard focusing on second base and being prepared to slide.
- If the ball is hit in the air, stop or slow down to evaluate the situation. You will need to stop on line drives through the infield to wait to see if they get through before advancing. On fly balls to the outfield you will only need to slow down to see if it has been caught as you will have time to retreat if necessary.
- If the ball is hit behind you, pick up the third base coach who will be giving you visual and verbal instructions.

RUN DOWNS

- If there are other runners on base, remain hung up as long as possible to allow them to advance to their next base.
- The runners behind the player in the rundown should move up to the next base. They should stand on the base and only retreat to their original base if the runner ahead of them comes back safely to that base.
- Force the defence to make as many throws as possible in hope of them making an error.

TAGGING UP

- All runners should tag up on a deep fly ball to the outfield. In this situation tagging up on first base when the ball is going to be caught can be an aggressive play as you may be able to take second base on the throw.
- On shallow balls to the outfield it is a judgment call. It is best to be a safe distance down the line so that you can retreat back to the base if the ball is caught. If the ball drops in, you should also be able to advance to the next base safely.
- On a routine fly ball, stay off the bag, wait for the catch and then tag up.
- Always listen for instructions from the nearest base coach.

FORCE SITUATIONS

- On forced plays avoid letting the basemen make an easy tag you.
- Hold up and even retreat toward your previous base so that the fielder will need to chase you to tag you out or make a throw to a base which gives other runners more time to reach their base.

NOTES



PLAYBOOK

EAST TORRENS BASEBALL CLUB PLAYBOOK

The East Torrens Baseball Club Playbook is a resource to guide player positioning and a general understanding of where all players should be on in a given situation.

There is a number of different fielding set ups that are required depending on the situation which takes into account the inning, the score, such things as how well the pitcher is going, are they throwing strikes, or the defensive mindset and who is up for the opposition. The playbook guides teams in what should be a coach's ability to make a routine call, such as normal bunt defence and everyone has the understanding of where they need to position themselves and what their role is.

Further to this, every time the ball is in play, every player has a responsibility to be somewhere and be prepared for the follow on actions such as an error or over throw. The playbook lays out all the possible plays and where everyone needs to be during that play.

If there are any questions regarding the playbook, consult with the senior coaching staff.

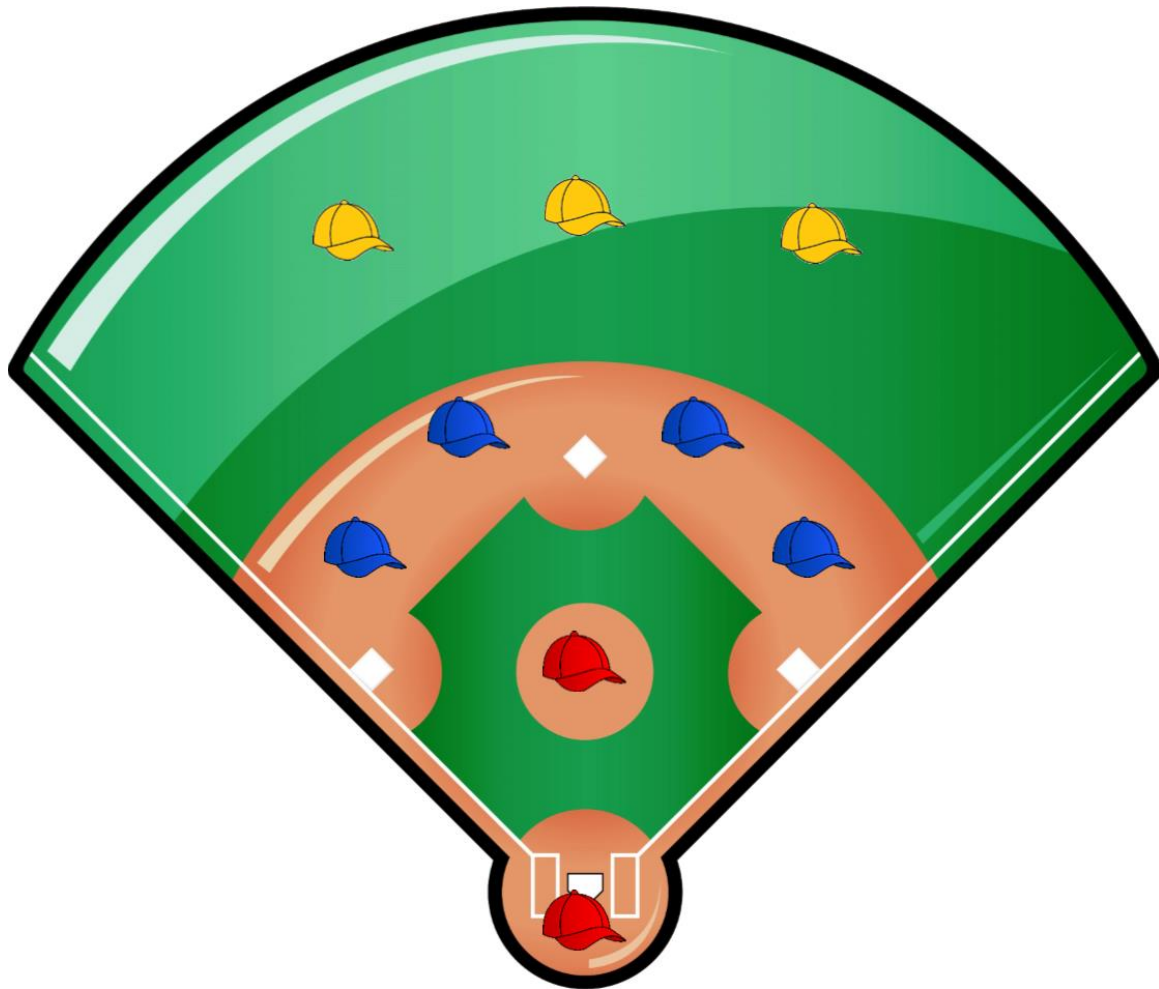
DEFENSIVE POSITIONING

INFIELD / OUTFIELD



STRAIGHT UP DEFENCE

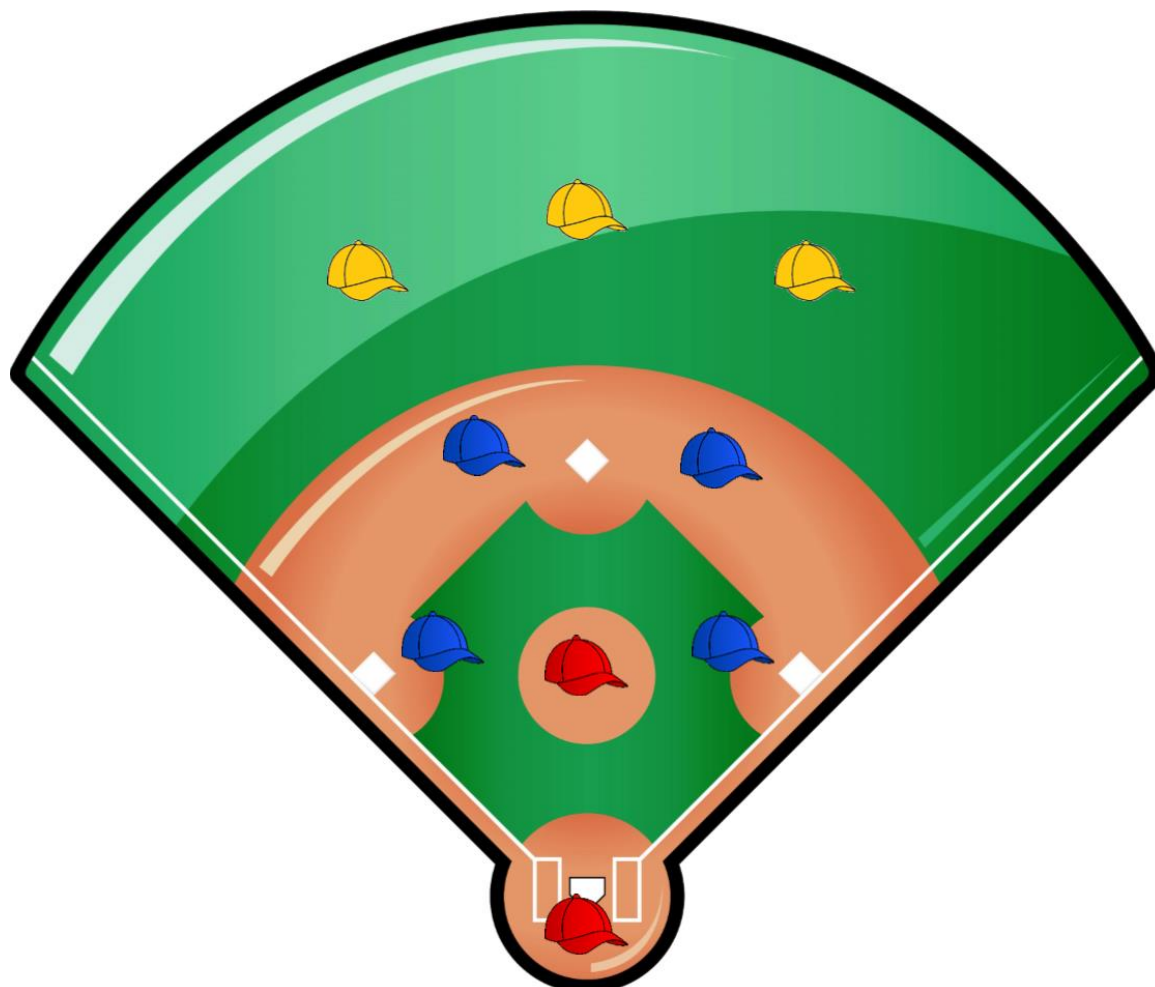
During regulation play, if no particular field placement is required, use the term straight up which ensures the field knows where they should position themselves.



BATTERY KEY POINTS		INFIELD KEY POINTS		OUTFIELD KEY POINTS	
P	Pitcher's mound	1B	Play off the line, ensuring adequate coverage	LF	Straight line from 1B to 2B.
C	Set basic depth. Ensure no lip at front of plate before every inning.	2B	Play deep allowing range to both glove side and back hand. Ideally shade closer to first base as the pitcher should be able to field anything directly up the middle.	CF	Straight line from home plate to 2B. May shade a step either side of 2B depending on hitter. Plays in slight over LF & RF as should catch any ball just over SS or 2B head.
		3B	Play behind the line, giving up the line, so shading more towards second base. Playing behind the line will increase range.	RF	Straight line from 3B to 2B.
		SS	Play deep allowing range to both glove side and back hand. Ideally shade closer to third base as the pitcher should be able to field anything directly up the middle.		

REGULATION BUNT DEFENCE

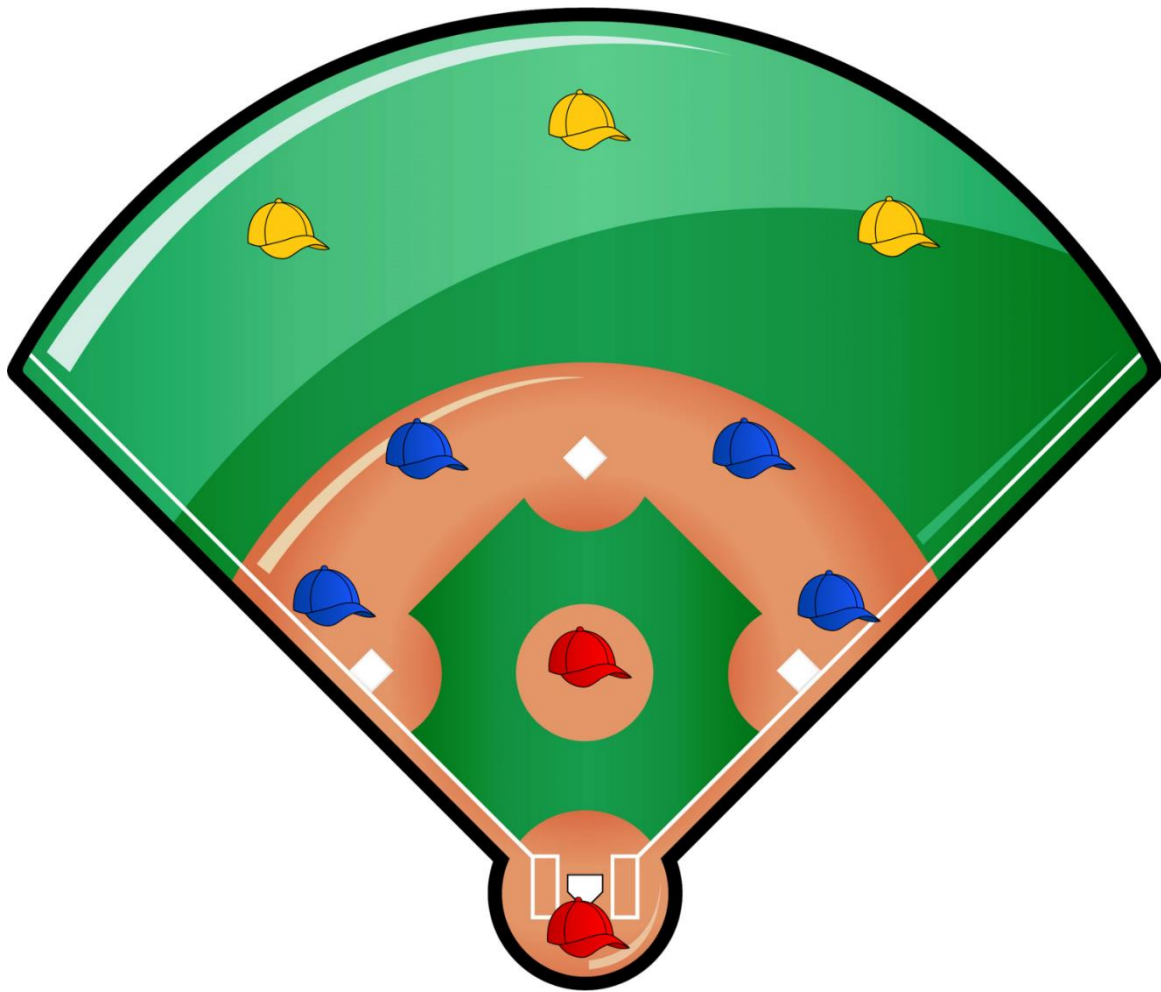
When there is a chance for a bunt, standard bunt defence positioning will help ensure you secure an out. Where the opportunity presents to get the lead runner the catcher should make this call otherwise the aim is to always get at least one out.



BATTERY KEY POINTS		INFIELD KEY POINTS		OUTFIELD KEY POINTS	
P	Communicate with third base identifying that the pitcher has the line and anything hard hit is third base's ball. Throw a strike, preferably up in the zone.	1B	Field inside the line prepared to charge in knowing second base will cover first base.	LF	Take a couple steps in from normal depth and be ready to back up the infield in case of an over throw.
C	Identify with all infielders their role in bunt defence. Be prepared to field a soft bunt in front of home plate.	2B	Take a few steps closer to first base in preparation for possible need to cover first base.	CF	Take a couple steps in from normal depth and be ready to back up the infield in case of an over throw.
		3B	Stand just inside the line. Communicate with the pitcher that the pitcher can field anything near the line and a hard bunt is third base's responsibility.	RF	Take a couple steps in from normal depth and be ready to back up the infield in case of an over throw.
		SS	Move in and slightly towards second base.		

LATE INNINGS DEFENCE

When in the late innings of a close ball game, late innings defence is designed to minimise damage and ensure to not allow a big inning.



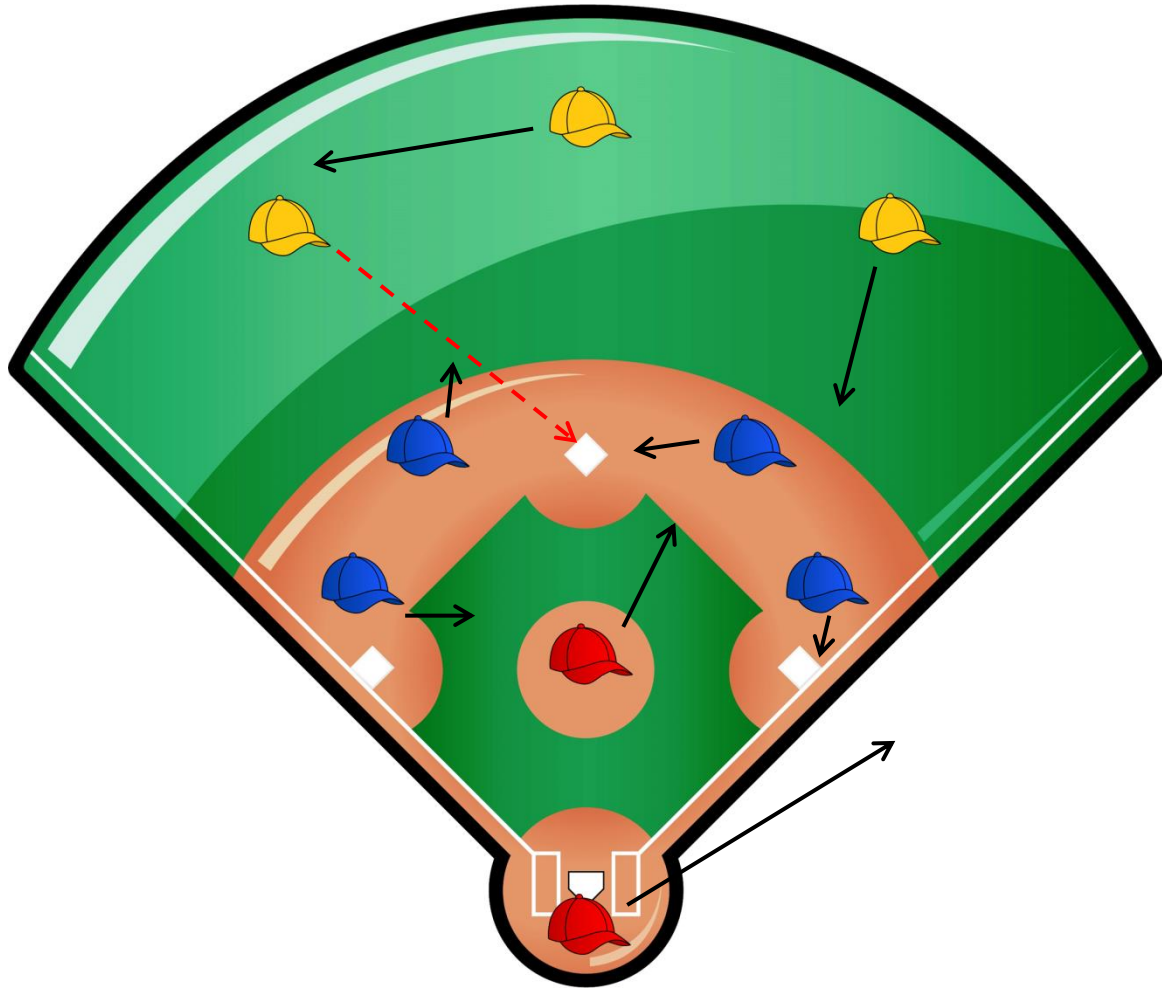
BATTERY KEY POINTS		INFIELD KEY POINTS		OUTFIELD KEY POINTS	
P	Pitcher's Mound	1B	Position yourself so no baseball can get between you and the foul line.	LF	Take a few steps back to ensure no baseball can go over your head for a double
C	Catcher's Box	2B	Regulation position.	CF	Take a few steps back to ensure no baseball can go over your head for a double
		3B	Position yourself so no baseball can get between you and the foul line.	RF	Take a few steps back to ensure no baseball can go over your head for a double
		SS	Regulation position.		

CUT OFF ASSIGNMENTS

NO RUNNERS ON BASE

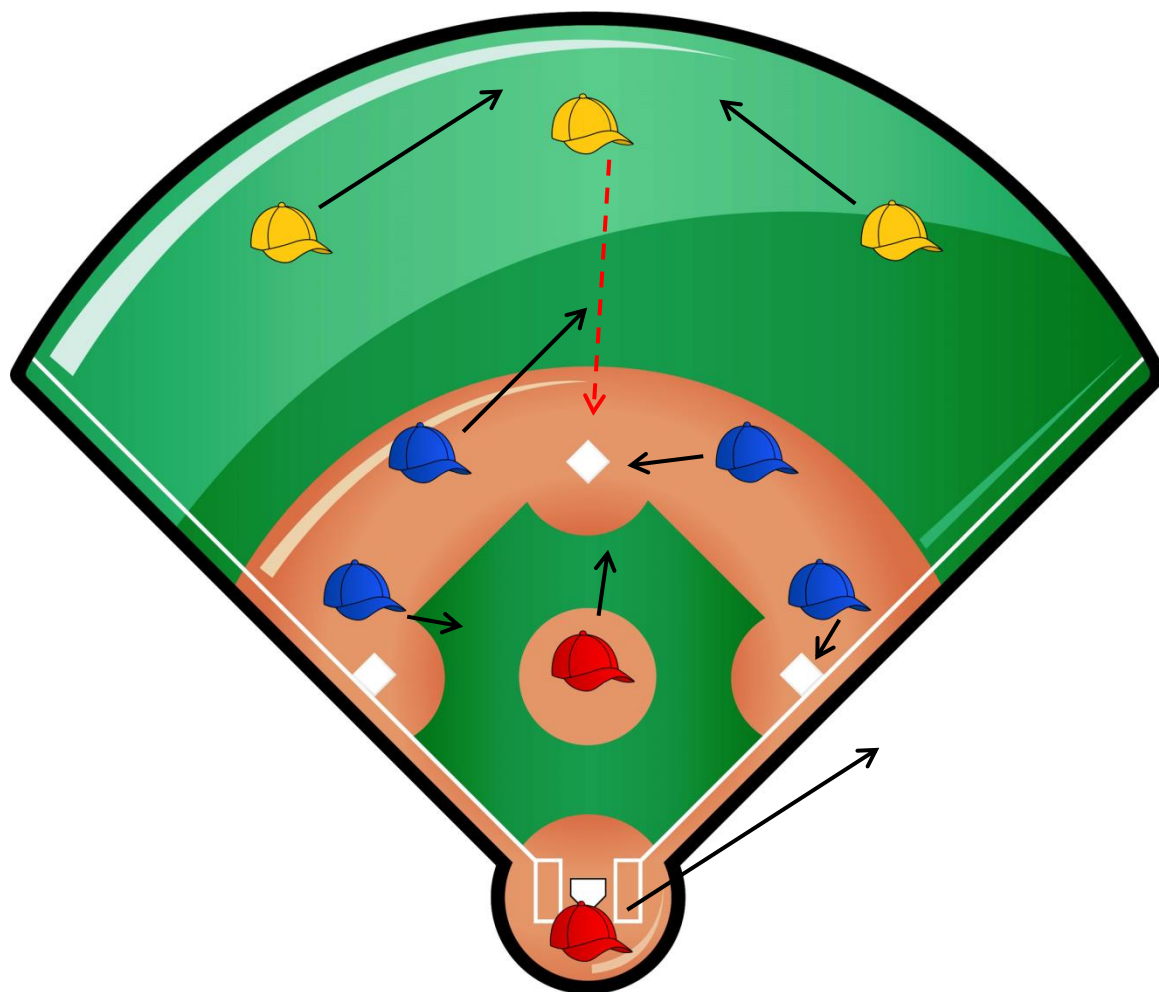


SINGLE IS HIT TO LEFT FIELD



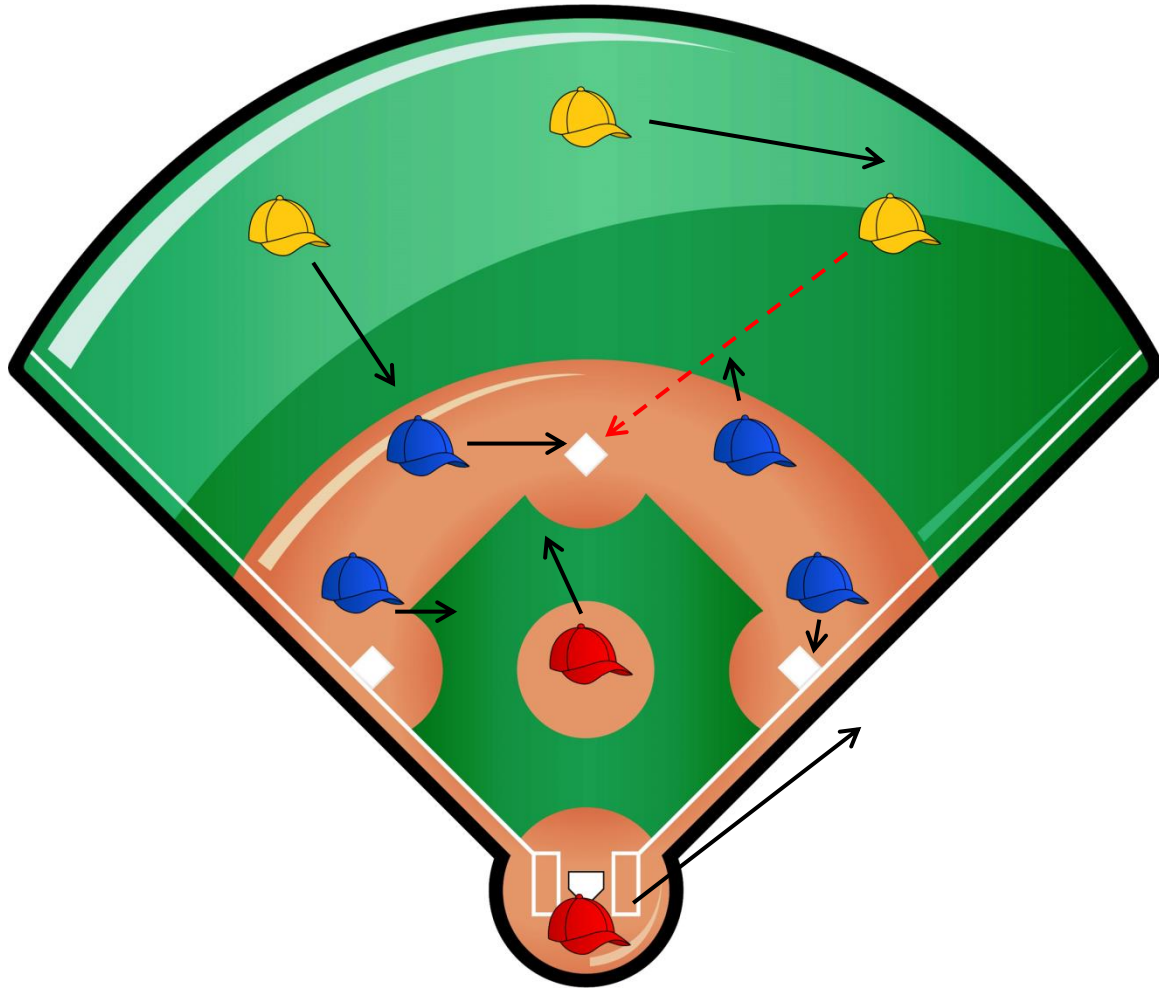
BATTERY KEY POINTS		INFIELD KEY POINTS		OUTFIELD KEY POINTS	
P	Move into a backup position behind second base.	1B	See base runner touch first base. Cover first, and be ready to field an overthrow by left fielder	LF	Get to the ball quickly. Field it cleanly, read the way the play is evolving and either get the ball to the cutoff or make a firm one-hop throw to second base.
C	Move into position to backup first baseman. Be ready to cover first if first base leaves the bag to back up an over throw.	2B	Cover second base.	CF	Backup left fielder
		3B	Remain in the area of third base. Be ready for possible deflection.	RF	Move into backup position behind second base. Give yourself enough room to field an overthrow.
		SS	Move into position to be the cutoff man to second base. Assume the base runner will attempt to go to second.		

SINGLE HIT TO CENTER



BATTERY KEY POINTS		INFIELD KEY POINTS		OUTFIELD KEY POINTS	
P	Move into a backup position behind second base.	1B	See base runner touch first base. Cover first, and be ready to field an overthrow by center fielder	LF	Backup center fielder
C	Move into position to backup first base. Be ready to cover first if first base leaves the bag to back up an over throw.	2B	Cover second base.	CF	Get to the ball quickly. Field it cleanly, read the way the play is evolving and either get the ball to the cutoff or make a firm one-hop throw to second base
		3B	Remain in the area of third base. Be ready for possible deflection.	RF	Backup center fielder
		SS	Move into position to be the cutoff man to second base. Assume the base runner will attempt to go to second.		

SINGLE HIT TO RIGHT



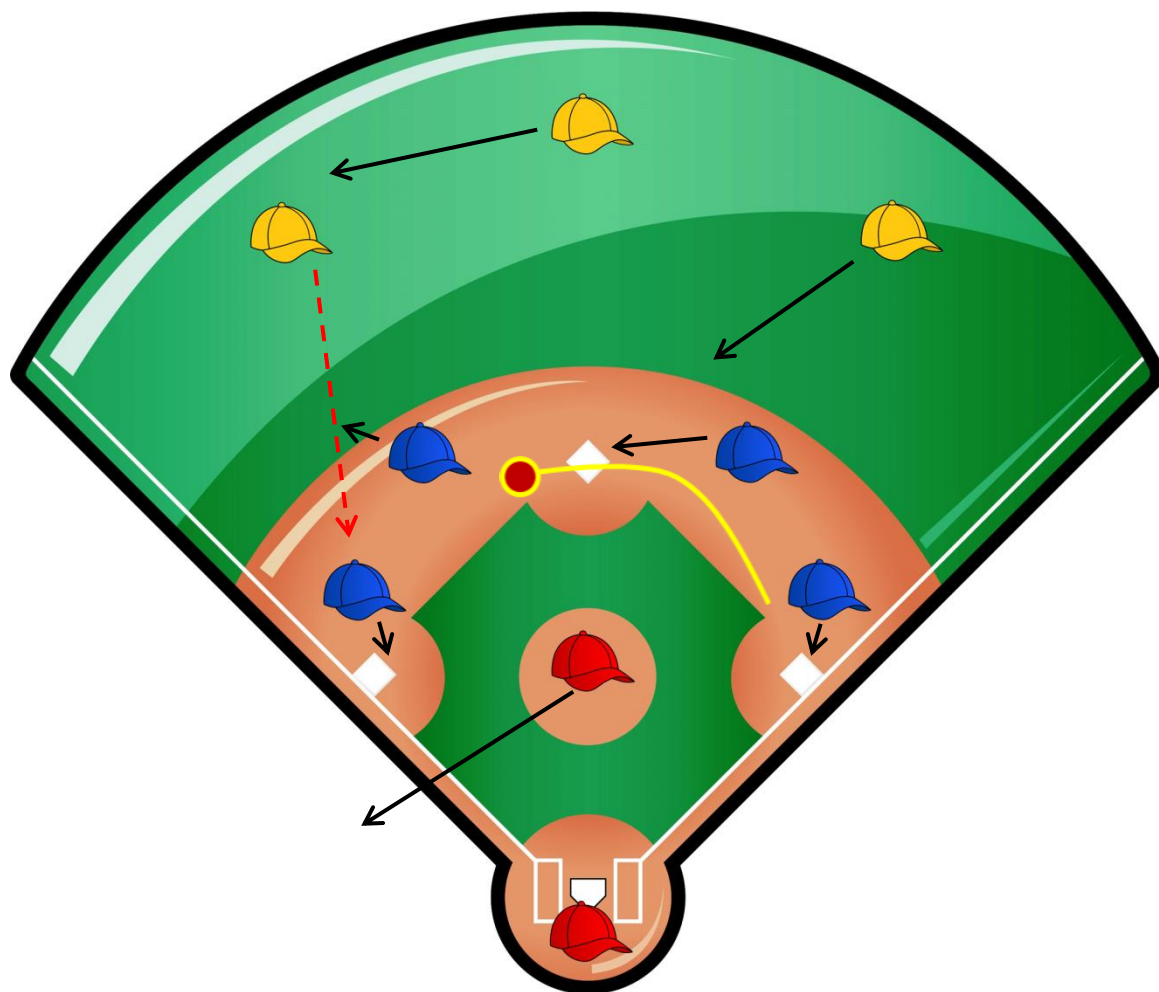
BATTERY KEY POINTS		INFIELD KEY POINTS		OUTFIELD KEY POINTS	
P	Move into a backup position behind second base.	1B	See base runner touch first base. Cover first, and be ready to field an overthrow by center fielder	LF	Move into possible backup position toward third base in line with throw.
C	Move into position to backup first baseman. Be ready to cover first if first base leaves the bag to back up an over throw.	2B	Move into position to be the cutoff man to second base. Assume the base runner will attempt to go to second base.	CF	Backup right fielder
		3B	Remain in the area of third base. Be ready for possible deflection.	RF	Get to the ball quickly. Field it cleanly, read the way the play is evolving and either get the ball to the cutoff or make a firm one-hop throw to second base.
		SS	Cover second base		

CUT OFF ASSIGNMENTS

RUNNER ON FIRST BASE

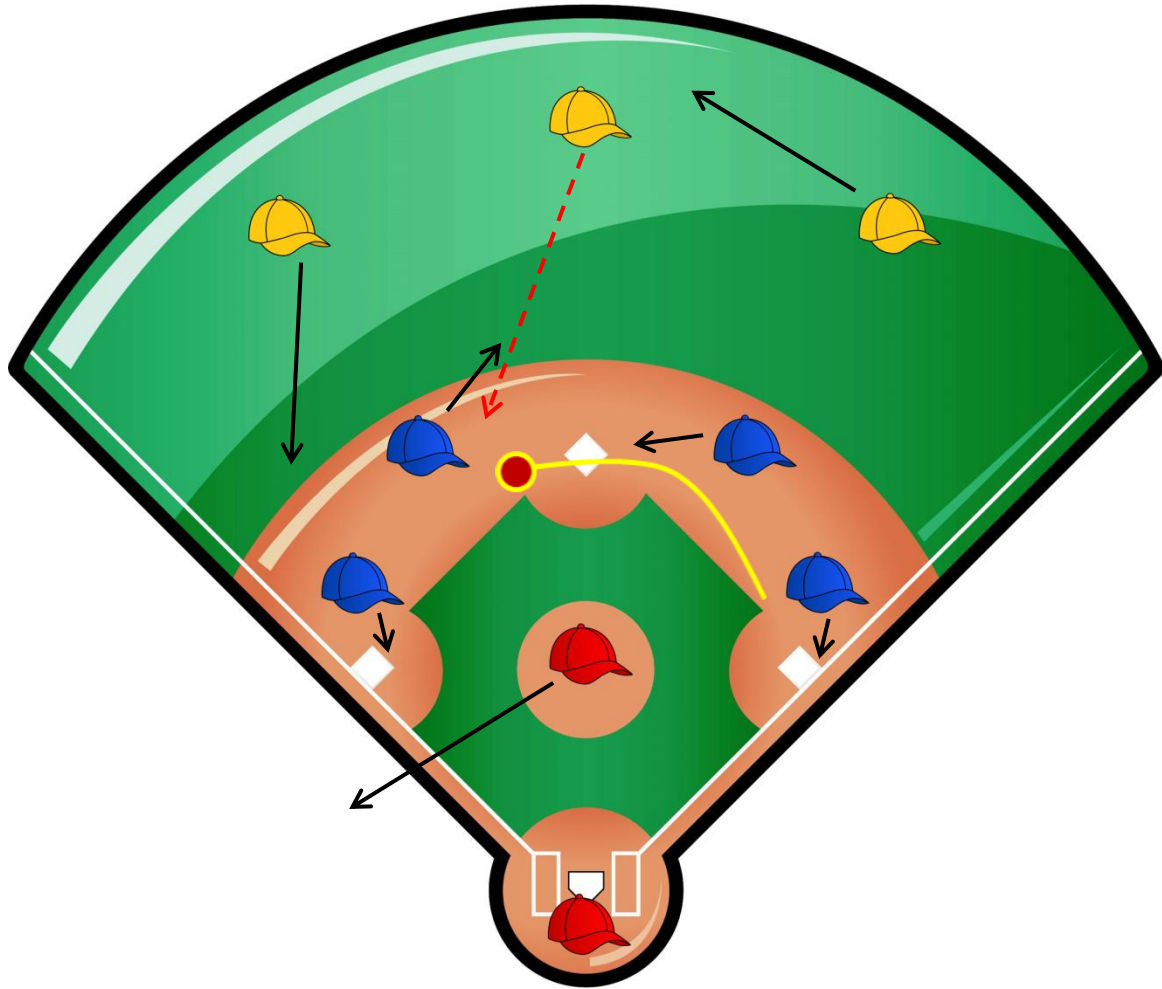


SINGLE HIT TO LEFT



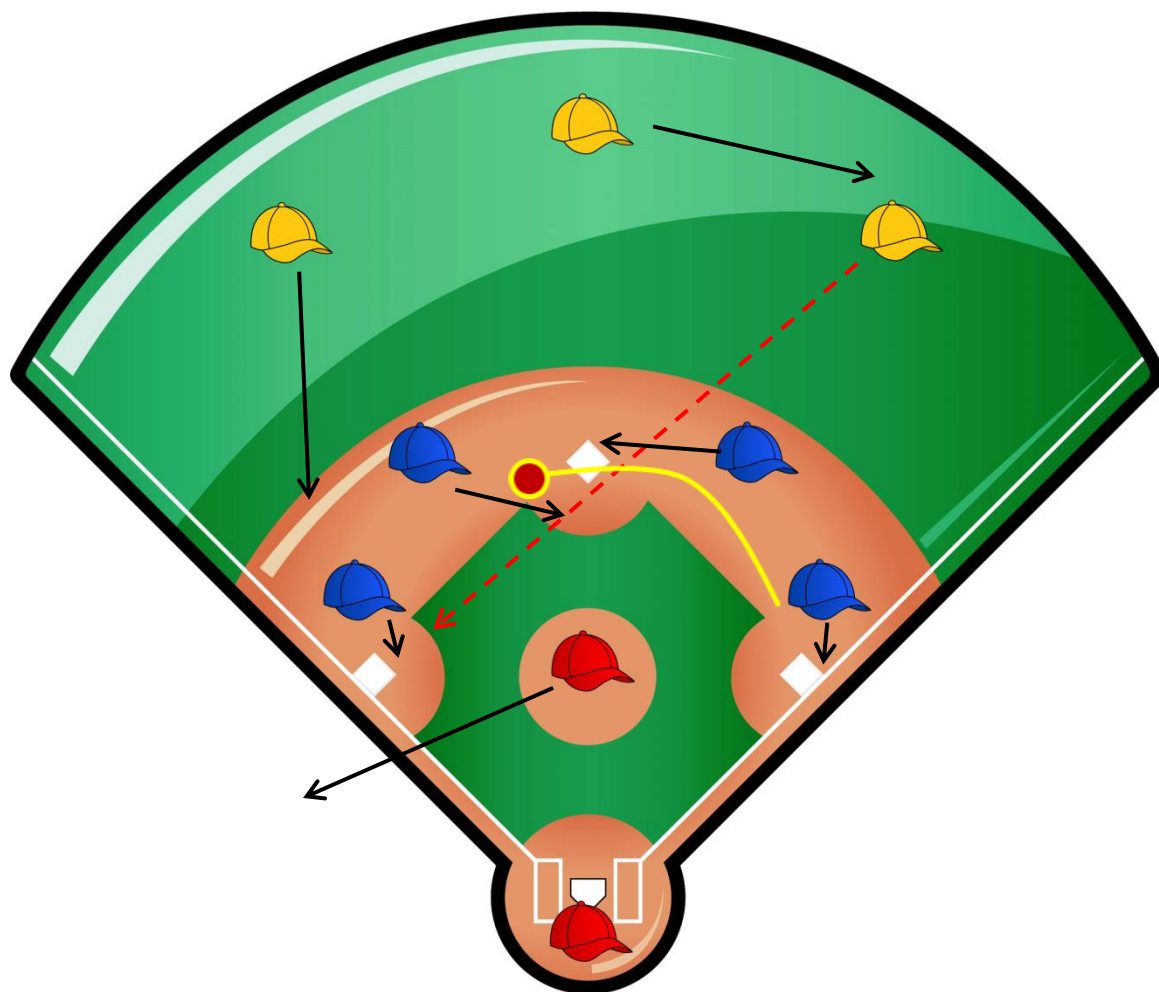
BATTERY KEY POINTS		INFIELD KEY POINTS		OUTFIELD KEY POINTS	
P	Move into a position to back up the throw from the left fielder to third base. Anticipate errant throw.	1B	See the base runner touch first base. Cover first in case of wide turn by batter base runner.	LF	Get to the ball quickly. Field it cleanly and make a flat one-hop throw all the way to third base.
C	Remain at home plate.	2B	Cover second base. Be prepared for a throw behind the base runner at second base from the left fielder or infielder.	CF	Backup left fielder
		3B	Covers third base.	RF	Move into possible back up position toward second base.
		SS	Move into a position to be the cutoff to third base. Assume the first base runner will attempt to go to third.		

SINGLE HIT TO CENTER



BATTERY KEY POINTS		INFIELD KEY POINTS		OUTFIELD KEY POINTS	
P	Move into a position to back up the throw from the center fielder to third base. Anticipate errant throw.	1B	See the base runner touch first base. Cover first in case of wide turn by batter base runner.	LF	Move into possible back up position behind third base.
C	Remain at home plate.	2B	Cover second base. Be prepared for a throw behind the base runner at second base from the center fielder or infielder.	CF	Get to the ball quickly. Field it cleanly and make a flat one-hop throw all the way to third base.
		3B	Covers third base.	RF	Backup center fielder.
		SS	Move into a position to be the cutoff man to third base. Assume the first base runner will attempt to go to third.		

SINGLE HIT TO RIGHT



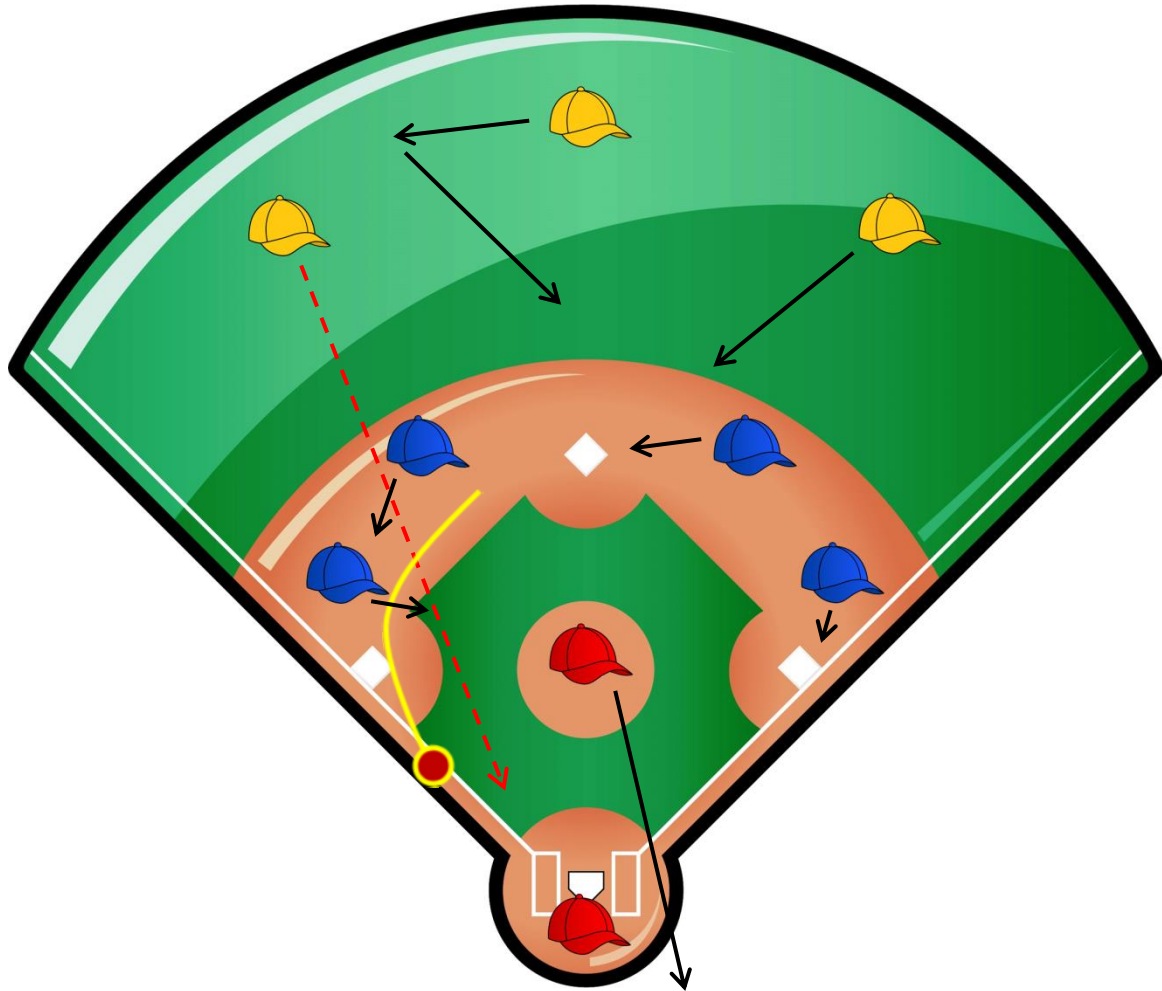
BATTERY KEY POINTS		INFIELD KEY POINTS		OUTFIELD KEY POINTS	
P	Move into a position to back up the throw from the right fielder to third base. Anticipate errant throw.	1B	See the base runner touch first base. Cover first in case of wide turn by batter base runner.	LF	Move into possible back up position behind third base.
C	Remain at home plate.	2B	Cover second base.	CF	Backup right fielder.
		3B	Covers third base.	RF	Get to the ball quickly. Field it cleanly and make a flat one-hop throw all the way to third base.
		SS	Move into a position to be the cutoff man to third base. Assume the first base runner will attempt to go to third.		

CUT OFF ASSIGNMENTS

RUNNER ON SECOND BASE

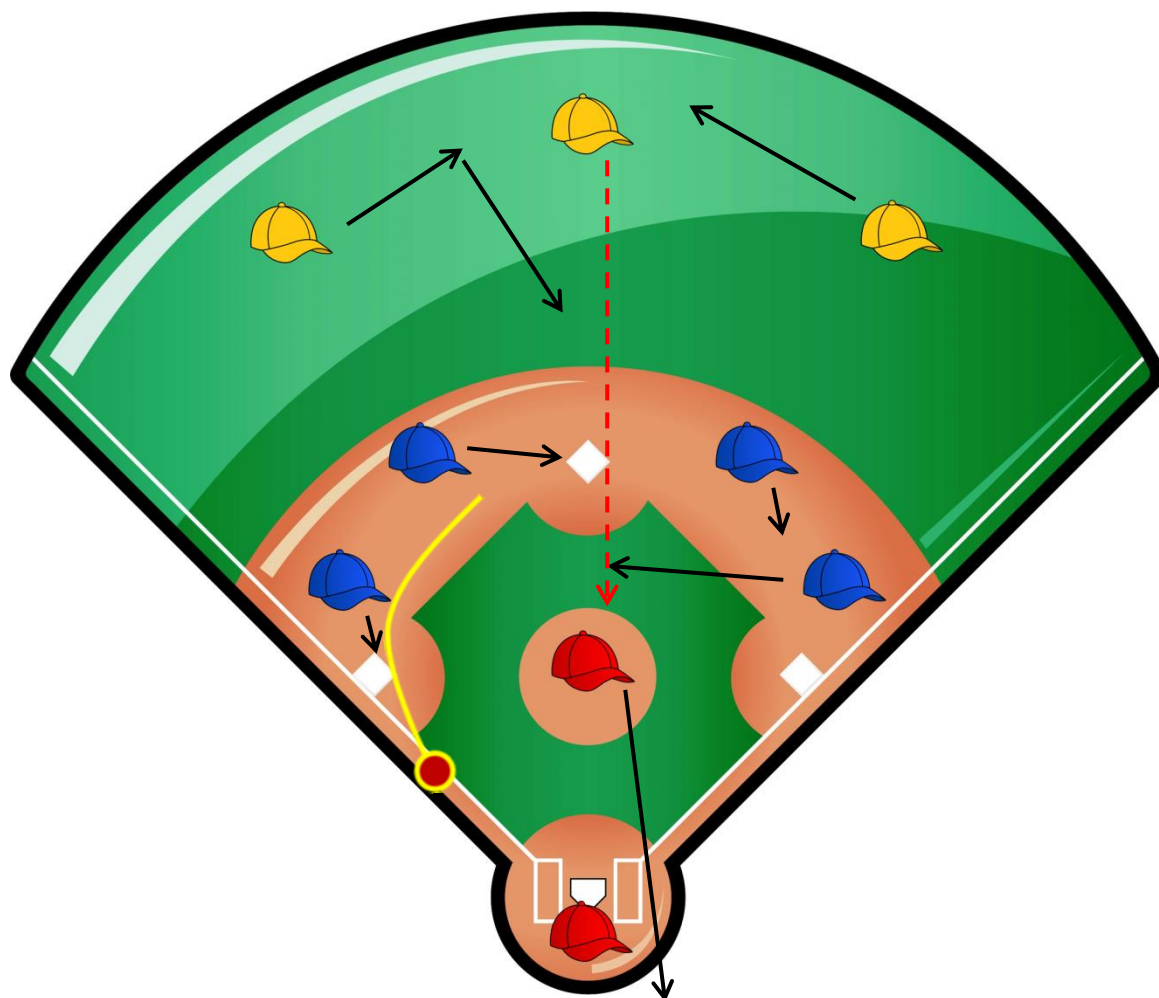


SINGLE HIT TO LEFT



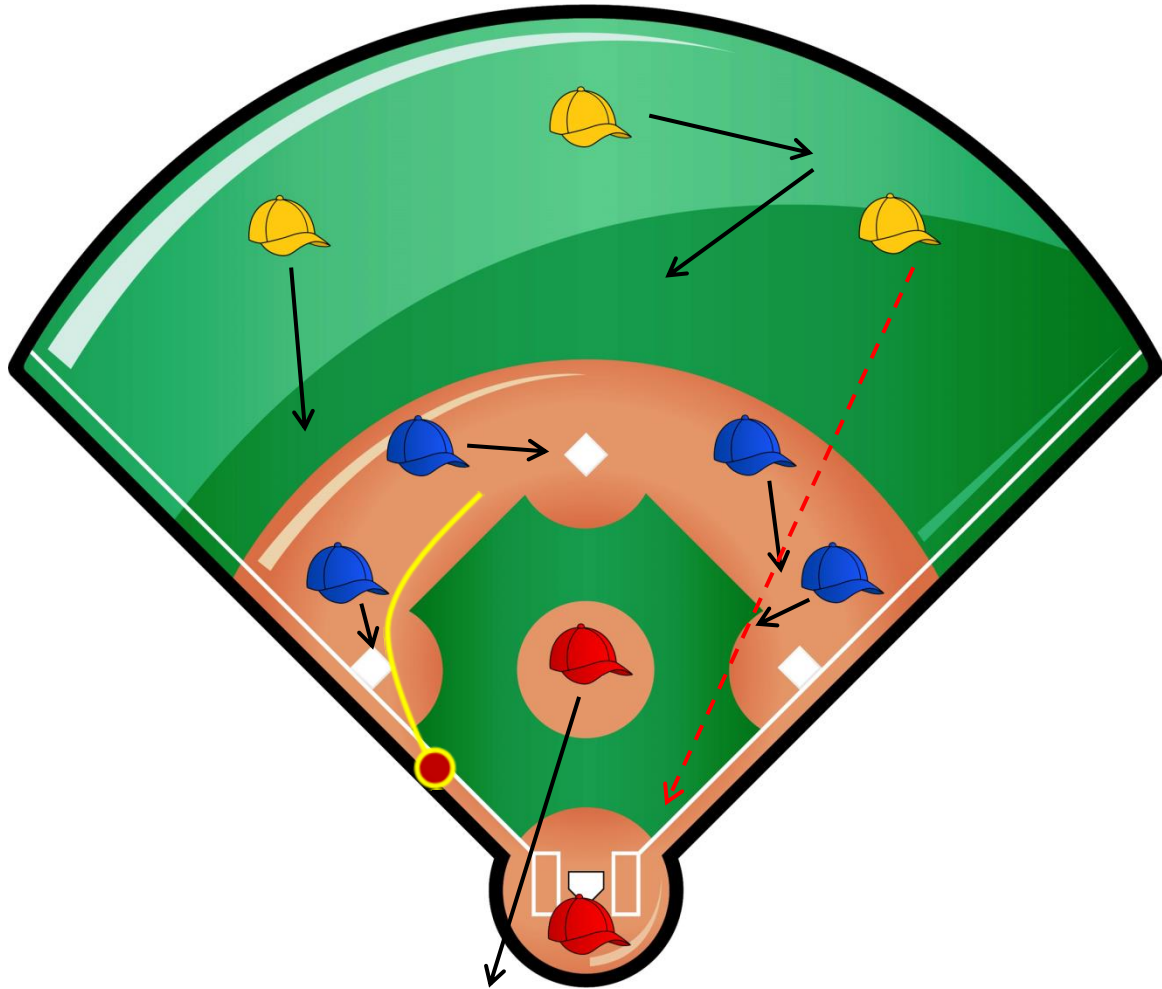
BATTERY KEY POINTS		INFIELD KEY POINTS		OUTFIELD KEY POINTS	
P	Move in to backup home plate through the first base side of home plate.	1B	See the base runner touch first base. Cover first in case of wide turn by batter base runner.	LF	Get to the ball quickly. Field it cleanly and make a flat one-hop throw all the way to home. If there is no play on the lead base runner, throw the ball to second base to keep the double play in order and the batter/ base runner out of scoring position.
C	Cover home plate.	2B	Cover second base. Be alert for a throw from the cutoff or catcher	CF	Back up the left fielder; once throw is made, move to back up possible throw to second base by catcher or cutoff.
		3B	Move into a position to be the cutoff.	RF	Move into a possible back up position behind second base. Read the play and be ready to back up second or first.
		SS	Cover third base. Be alert for a throw from the cutoff or catcher.		

SINGLE HIT TO CENTER



BATTERY KEY POINTS		INFIELD KEY POINTS		OUTFIELD KEY POINTS	
P	Move in to backup home plate through the first base side of home plate.	1B	Move into a position to be cut-off man to home plate.	LF	Backup center fielder; once throw is made, move to back up possible throw to second base by catcher or cutoff.
C	Cover home plate.	2B	Cover first base. Be alert for a throw from the cutoff or catcher.	CF	Get to the ball quickly. Field it cleanly and make a flat one-hop throw all the way to home. If there is no play on the lead base runner, throw the ball to second base to keep the double play in order and the batter/base runner out of scoring position
		3B	Cover third. Be prepared for a throw from cutoff or catcher.	RF	Backup center fielder. Communicate with center fielder where to throw.
		SS	Cover second base.		

SINGLE HIT TO RIGHT



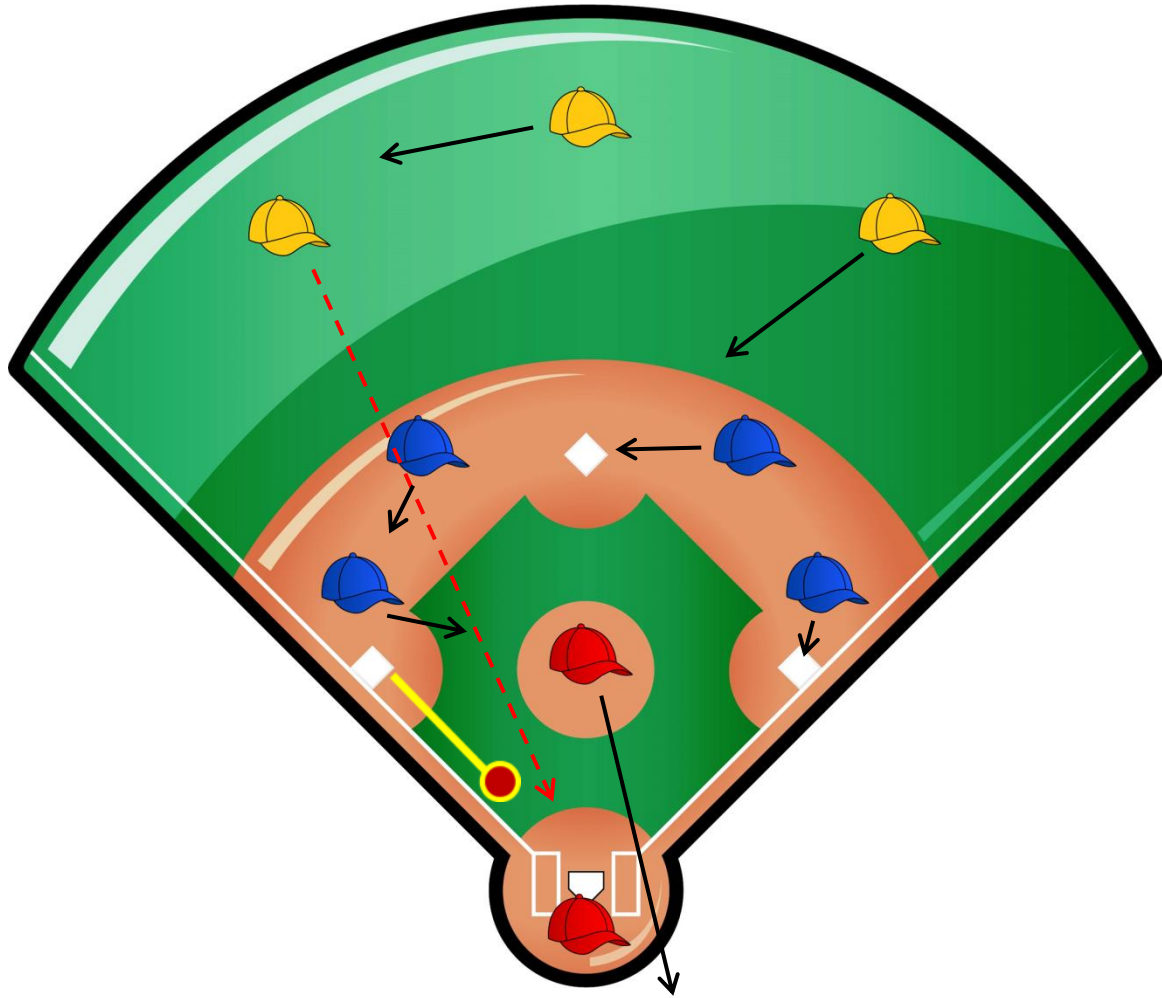
BATTERY KEY POINTS		INFIELD KEY POINTS		OUTFIELD KEY POINTS	
P	Move into a deep back up position behind home plate. Circle on the third base side of home plate.	1B	Move into a position to be cutoff man to home plate.	LF	Move into a possible back up position behind third base.
C	Remain at home plate.	2B	Cover first base. See base runner touch first base. Be alert for a throw from the cutoff or catcher.	CF	Backup right fielder; once throw is made, move to back up possible throw to second base by catcher or cutoff.
		3B	See the base runner touch third base. Cover third. Be prepared for a throw	RF	Get to the ball quickly. Field it cleanly and make a flat one-hop throw all the way to home. If there is no play on the lead base runner, throw the ball to second base to keep the double play in order and the batter/base runner out of scoring position.
		SS	Cover second base. Be alert for a throw from the cutoff or catcher.		

CUT OFF ASSIGNMENTS

RUNNER ON THIRD BASE

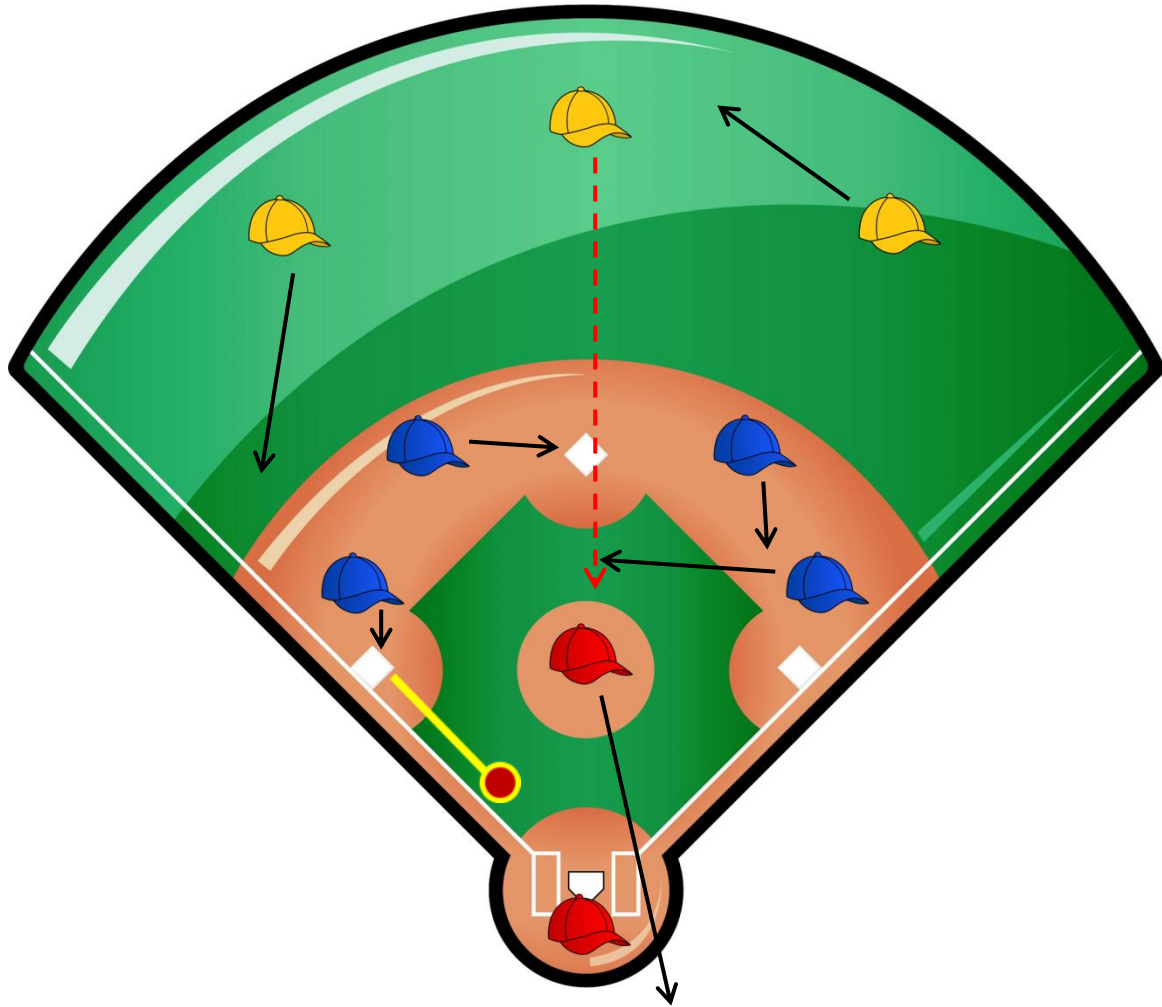


FLY BALL HIT TO LEFT



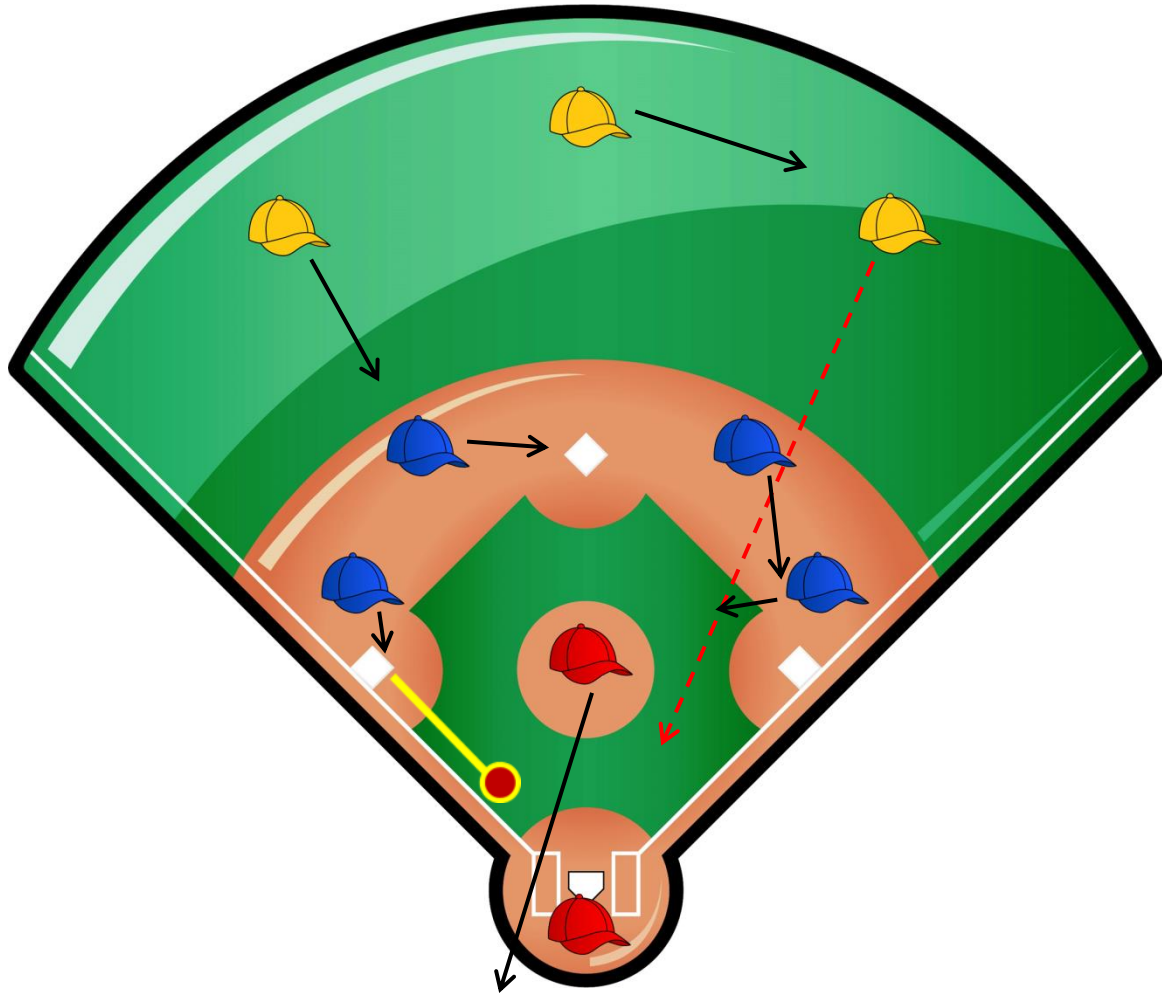
BATTERY KEY POINTS		INFIELD KEY POINTS		OUTFIELD KEY POINTS	
P	Move into a deep back up position behind home plate. Circle on the first base side of home plate.	1B	Covers first base.	LF	Get to the ball quickly. Catch it cleanly and make a flat one-hop throw all the way to home base.
C	Covers home plate.	2B	Cover second base.	CF	Backup left fielder.
		3B	Move into a position to be the cutoff to home plate.	RF	Move into a possible back up position behind second base. Read the play and be ready to back up second or first.
		SS	Cover third base.		

FLY BALL HIT TO CENTER



BATTERY KEY POINTS		INFIELD KEY POINTS		OUTFIELD KEY POINTS	
P	Move into a deep back up position behind home plate. Circle on the first base side of home plate.	1B	Move into a position to be cutoff to home plate.	LF	Move into possible back up position behind third base.
C	Covers home plate.	2B	Covers first base.	CF	Get to the ball quickly. Catch it cleanly and make a flat one-hop throw all the way to home base.
		3B	Covers third base. Watch runner to ensure they don't leave early.	RF	Move into a possible back up position behind second base. Read the play and be ready to back up second or first.
		SS	Covers second base.		

FLY BALL HIT TO RIGHT



BATTERY KEY POINTS		INFIELD KEY POINTS		OUTFIELD KEY POINTS	
P	Move into a deep back up position behind home plate. Circle on the third base side of home plate.	1B	Move into a position to be cutoff to home plate.	LF	Move into possible back up position behind third base.
C	Covers home plate.	2B	Covers first base.	CF	Backup right fielder.
		3B	Covers third base.	RF	Get to the ball quickly. Catch it cleanly and make a flat one-hop throw all the way to home base.
		SS	Covers second base.		

CUT OFF ASSIGNMENTS

SURE DOUBLE – NO RUNNERS ON

DOUBLE CUTS

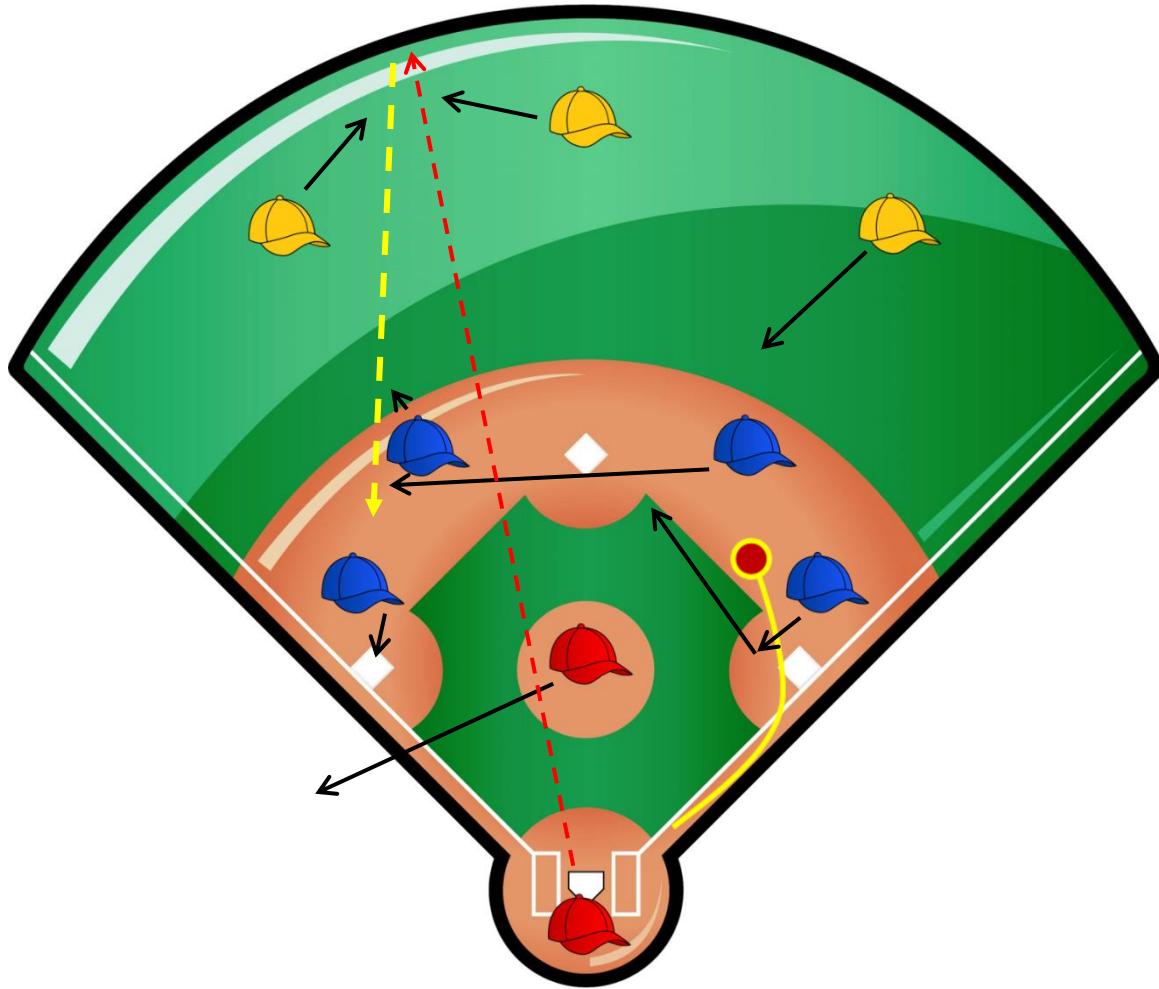


SURE DOUBLE FUNDAMENTALS

The purpose of the double cutoff is to provide an easier target for an outfielder on a long throw from the gap or down the line. On these hits the outfielder is in the deepest part of the field and is trying to throw the ball as hard as they can to get it in quickly. Since they are unable to come in on the ball and gain momentum, this throw will often not be as hard or accurate. By providing two infielders spaced apart, you will have a better opportunity of having a successful relay.

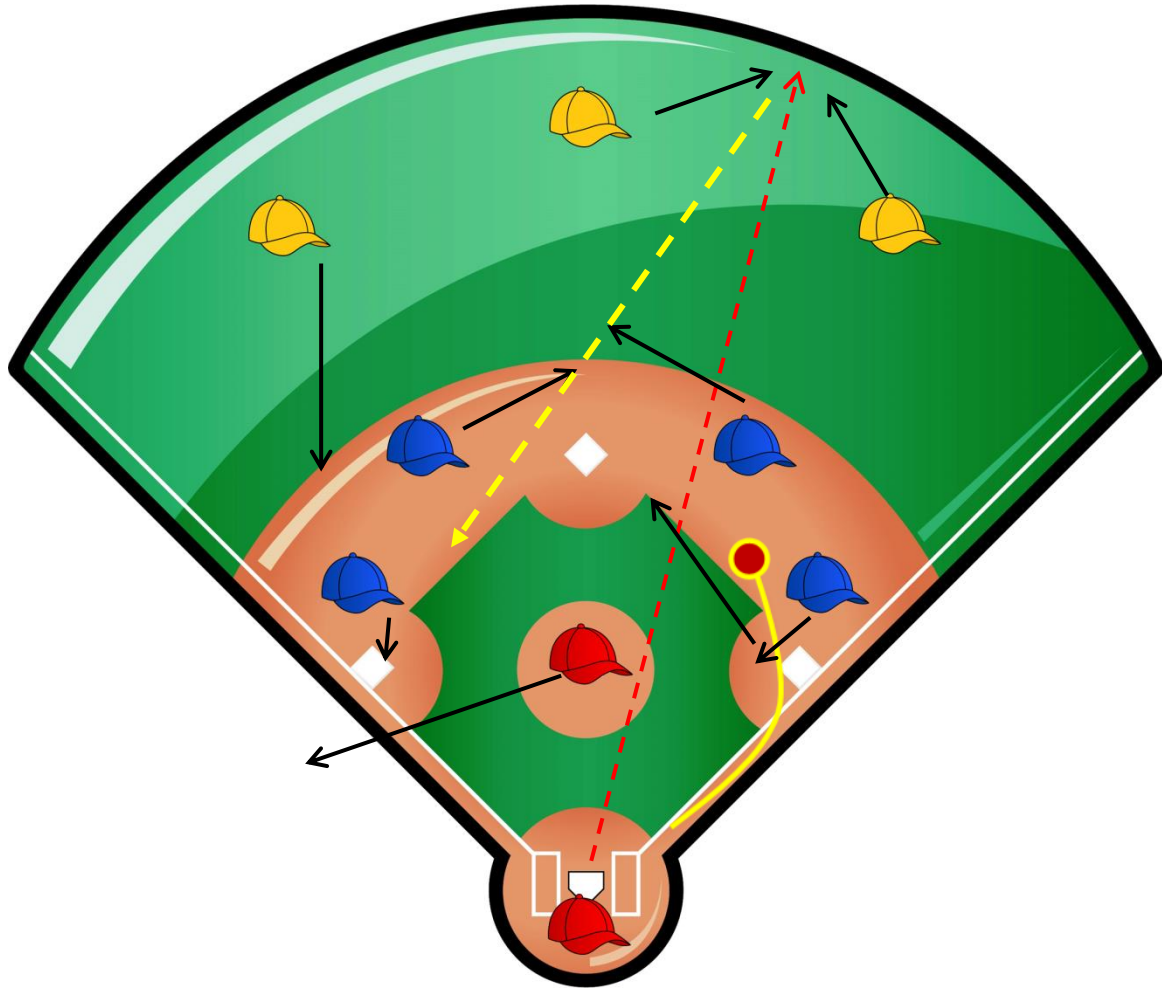
Remind your players that where they line up to, may not always be where the play will eventually happen, so be prepared to cut the ball and throw to a different base that expected.

DOUBLE TO LEFT CENTER



BATTERY KEY POINTS		INFIELD KEY POINTS		OUTFIELD KEY POINTS	
P	Backup third base.	1B	If possible break to inside of base, see runner touch first base. Trail runner to second base.	LF	Get to ball quickly. Communicate with center field. First person to reach ball fields cleanly and throws a firm accurate chest high ball.
C	Covers home plate.	2B	Hang at second base until ball clears outfielders. If sure double, trail 5-10m behind shortstop. Be ready to relay ball to third base if shortstop leaves ball to you.	CF	Get to ball quickly. Communicate with left field. First person to reach ball fields cleanly and throws a firm accurate chest high ball.
		3B	Covers third base.	RF	Move into possible backup position towards second base.
		SS	Move into relay position in line with third base. Judge the throw and decide whether to relay yourself or leave to the trailing second base.		

DOUBLE TO RIGHT CENTER



BATTERY KEY POINTS		INFIELD KEY POINTS		OUTFIELD KEY POINTS	
P	Backup third base.	1B	If possible break to inside of base, see runner touch first base. Trail runner to second base.	LF	Move into possible back up position behind third base.
C	Covers home plate.	2B	Move into relay position in line with third base. Judge the throw and decide whether to relay or leave for the trailing shortstop.	CF	Get to ball quickly. Communicate with right field. First person to reach ball fields cleanly and throws a firm accurate chest high ball.
		3B	Covers third base.	RF	Get to ball quickly. Communicate with center field. First person to reach ball fields cleanly and throws a firm accurate chest high ball.
		SS	Hang at second base until ball clears outfielders. If sure double, trail 5-10m behind second base. Be ready to relay ball to third base if shortstop leaves ball to you.		

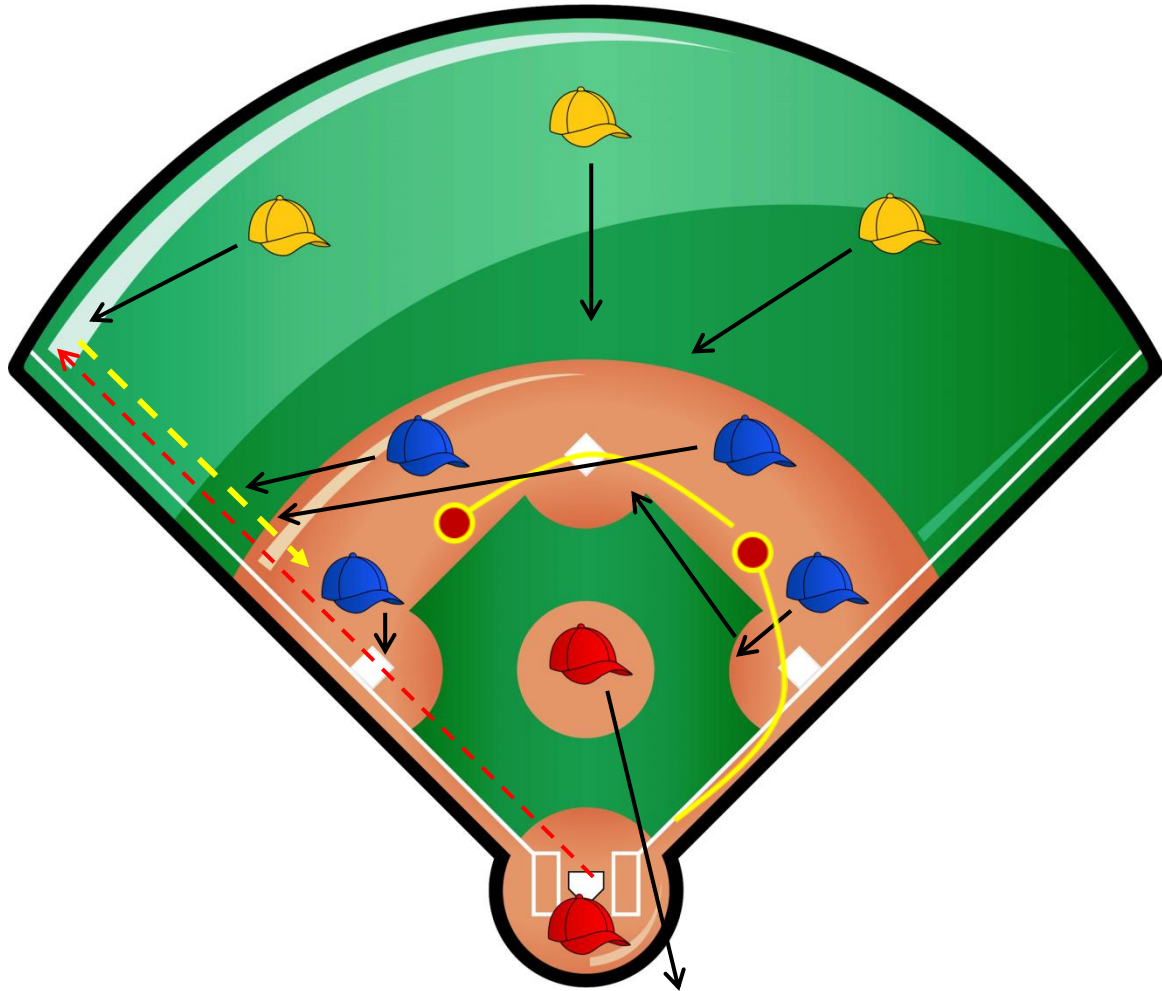
CUT OFF ASSIGNMENTS

SURE DOUBLE – RUNNER ON FIRST BASE

DOUBLE CUTS

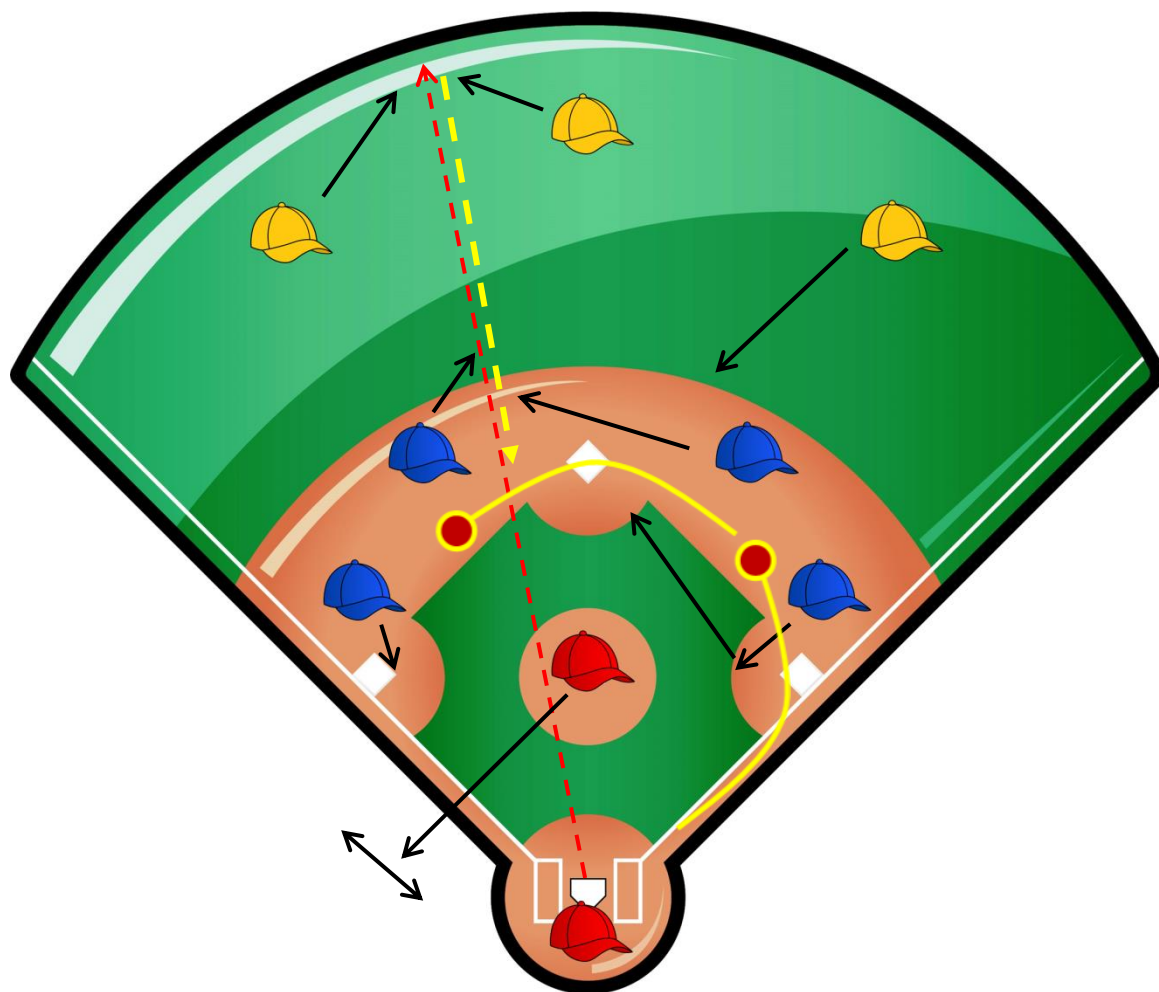


DOUBLE TO LEFT FIELD



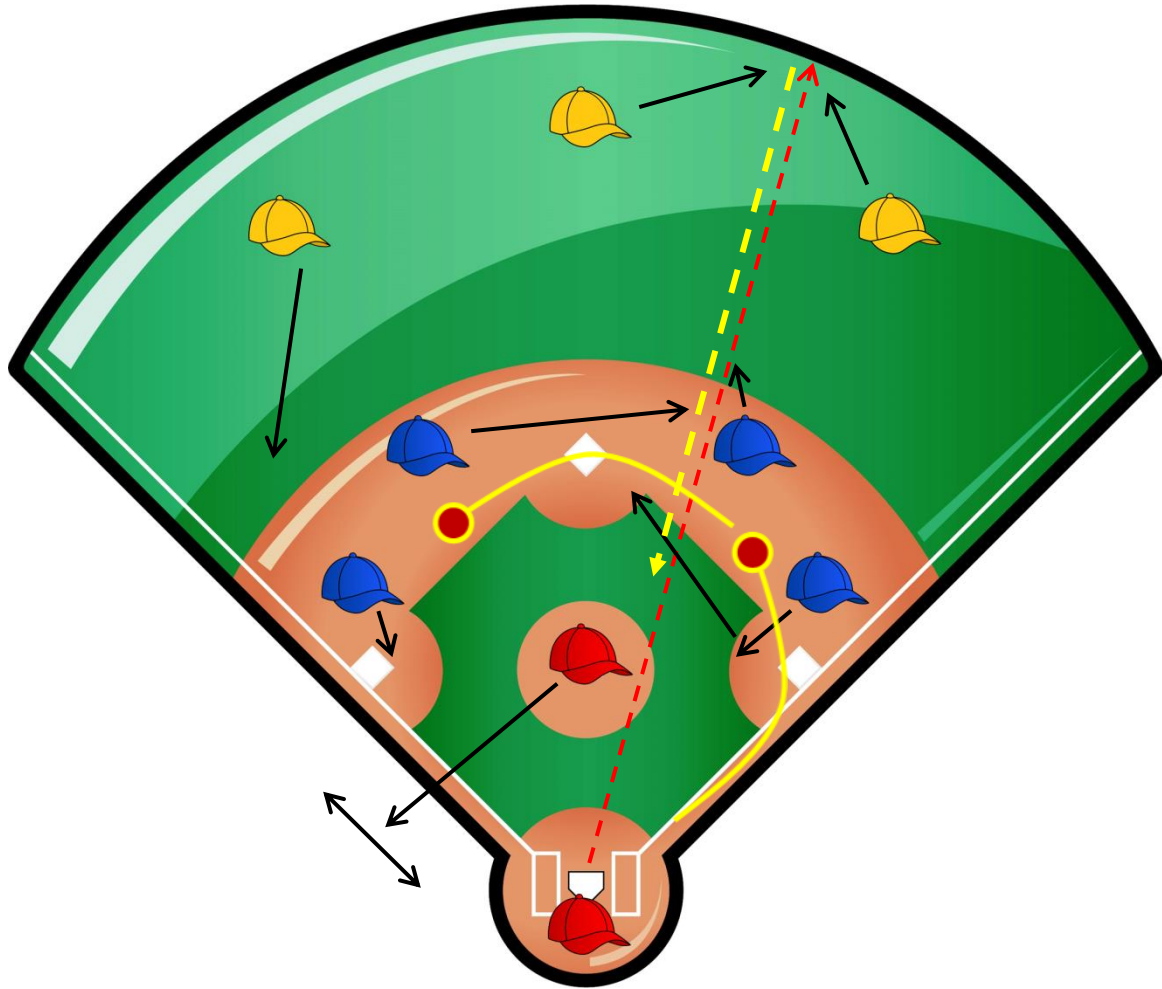
BATTERY KEY POINTS		INFIELD KEY POINTS		OUTFIELD KEY POINTS	
P	Backup home plate.	1B	See runner touch first base. Trail runner to second base.	LF	Get to ball quickly. Cleanly field the ball and throw a firm accurate chest high ball.
C	Covers home plate.	2B	Hang at second base until ball clears outfielders. If sure double, trail 5-10m behind shortstop. Be ready to relay ball.	CF	Backup left fielder.
		3B	Covers third base.	RF	Backup second base.
		SS	Move into relay position in line with home plate. Stay in fair territory. Judge the throw and decide whether to relay yourself or leave to the trailing second base.		

DOUBLE TO LEFT CENTER



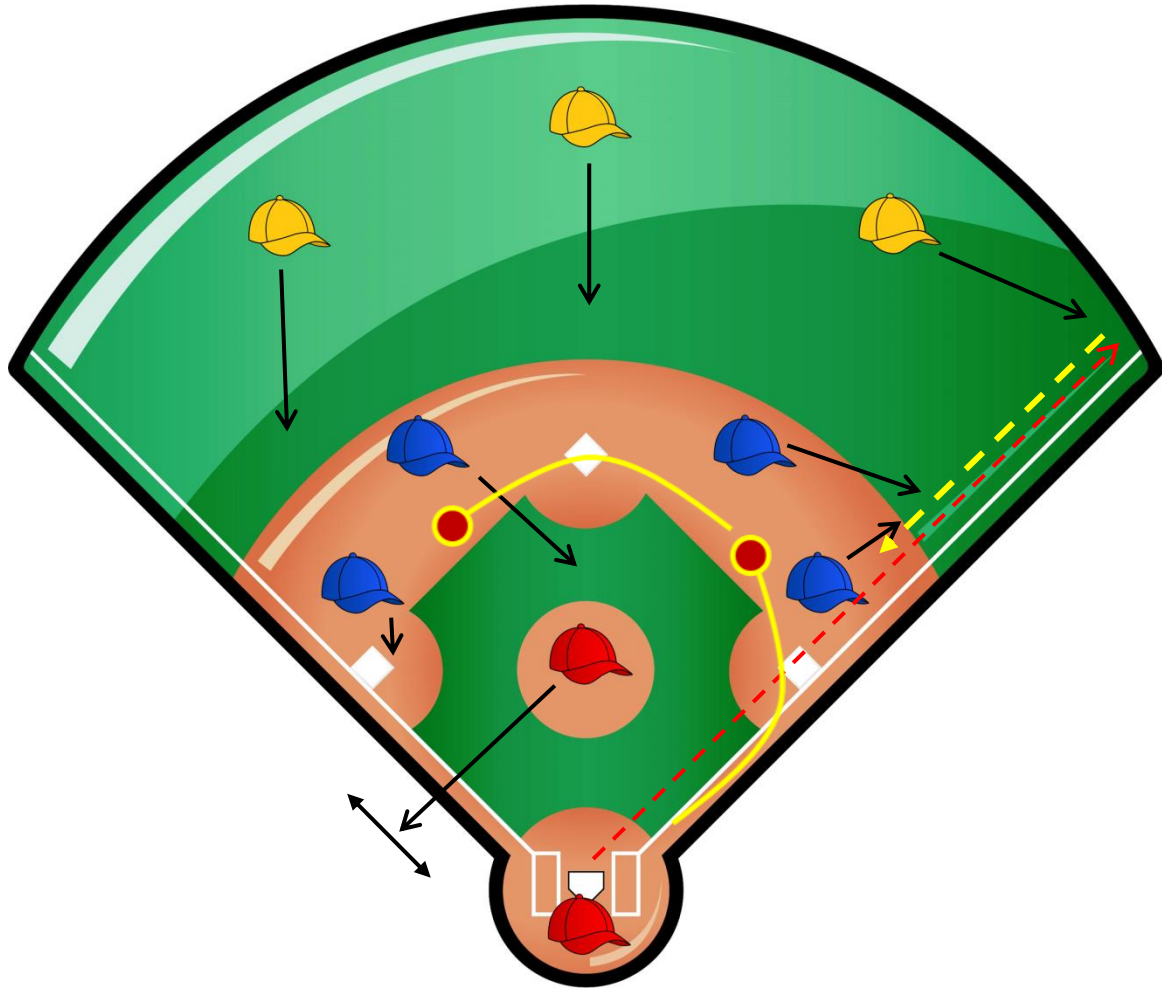
BATTERY KEY POINTS		INFIELD KEY POINTS		OUTFIELD KEY POINTS	
P	Move into a deep back up position behind home plate. Circle on the first base side of home plate. Be prepared to back up third base is play changes.	1B	See runner touch first base. Trail runner to second base.	LF	Get to ball quickly. Communicate with center field. First person to reach ball fields cleanly and throws a firm accurate chest high ball.
C	Covers home plate.	2B	Hang at second base until ball clears outfielders. If sure double, trail 5-10m behind shortstop. Observe baserunners and communicate with shortstop where to throw the ball.	CF	Get to ball quickly. Communicate with left field. First person to reach ball fields cleanly and throws a firm accurate chest high ball.
		3B	Covers third base.	RF	Cover second base.
		SS	Move into relay position to home plate and listen for call from second base.		

DOUBLE TO RIGHT CENTER



BATTERY KEY POINTS		INFIELD KEY POINTS		OUTFIELD KEY POINTS	
P	Move into position half way between third and home. Read play and back up where play develops.	1B	See runner touch first base. Trail runner to second base.	LF	Move into possible back up position behind third base.
C	Covers home plate.	2B	Move into relay position to home plate and listen for call from shortstop.	CF	Get to ball quickly. Communicate with right field. First person to reach ball fields cleanly and throws a firm accurate chest high ball.
		3B	Covers third base.	RF	Get to ball quickly. Communicate with center field. First person to reach ball fields cleanly and throws a firm accurate chest high ball.
		SS	Hang at second base until ball clears outfielders. If sure double, trail 5-10m behind second base. Observe baserunners and communicate with second base where to throw the ball.		

DOUBLE TO RIGHT FIELD



BATTERY KEY POINTS		INFIELD KEY POINTS		OUTFIELD KEY POINTS	
P	Move into position half way between third and home. Read play and back up where play develops.	1B	See runner touch first base. Trail runner to second base.	LF	Move into possible back up position behind third base.
C	Covers home plate.	2B	Move into relay position to home plate and listen for call from first base. Be prepared to redirect throw to third base.	CF	Backup right fielder.
		3B	Covers third base. Be prepared for play to be redirected from second base or catcher to third base.	RF	Get to the ball quickly. Field it cleanly and make a firm accurate chest high throw.
		SS	Read play and move into relay position to third base. If no play cover 2B.		

NOTES

DEFENCE

BUNT DEFENCE



BUNT DEFENCE FUNDAMENTALS

Except when there is a runner on third, the offensive is willing to give up an out in order to move a runner along. The overriding defensive strategy is to make sure you get that out. It's nice to get the lead runner and in certain situations you will try hard to get the lead runner, but if there is any doubt, you must get the out at first.

In all bunting situations, the catcher is in charge. They must take into account along with the speed of the runner and the direction of the bunt where the play must go. They have the play in front of them and can see the whole field. It's their responsibility to call out where the ball is to be thrown.

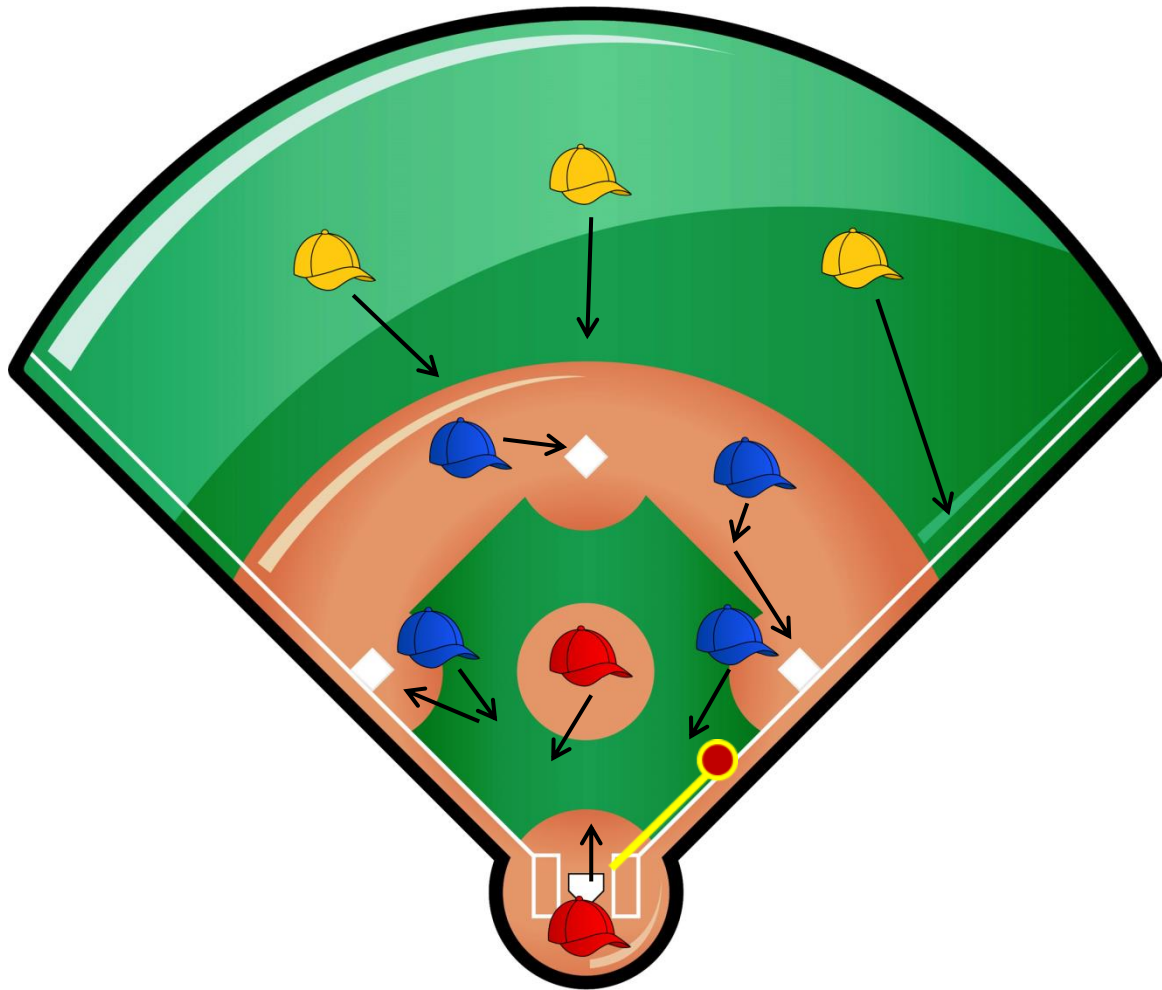
The catcher is the coach on the field and must enforce the team strategy to get an out.

The pitcher must focus on multiple tasks during any bunt defence.

- Keep the runner close. There will be no opportunity to get a lead runner in a bunt situation if the runner is not held on base.
- Make a good pitch. Many times the pitcher is too concerned with getting off the mound quickly instead of making a good pitch. The opposing team is willing to give you an out to advance the runner. Don't let them advance the runner for free by walking the hitter or making a wild pitch.
- Field your position. Once you have made a quality pitch, you must become a fielder. Remember your responsibility and don't be a spectator.

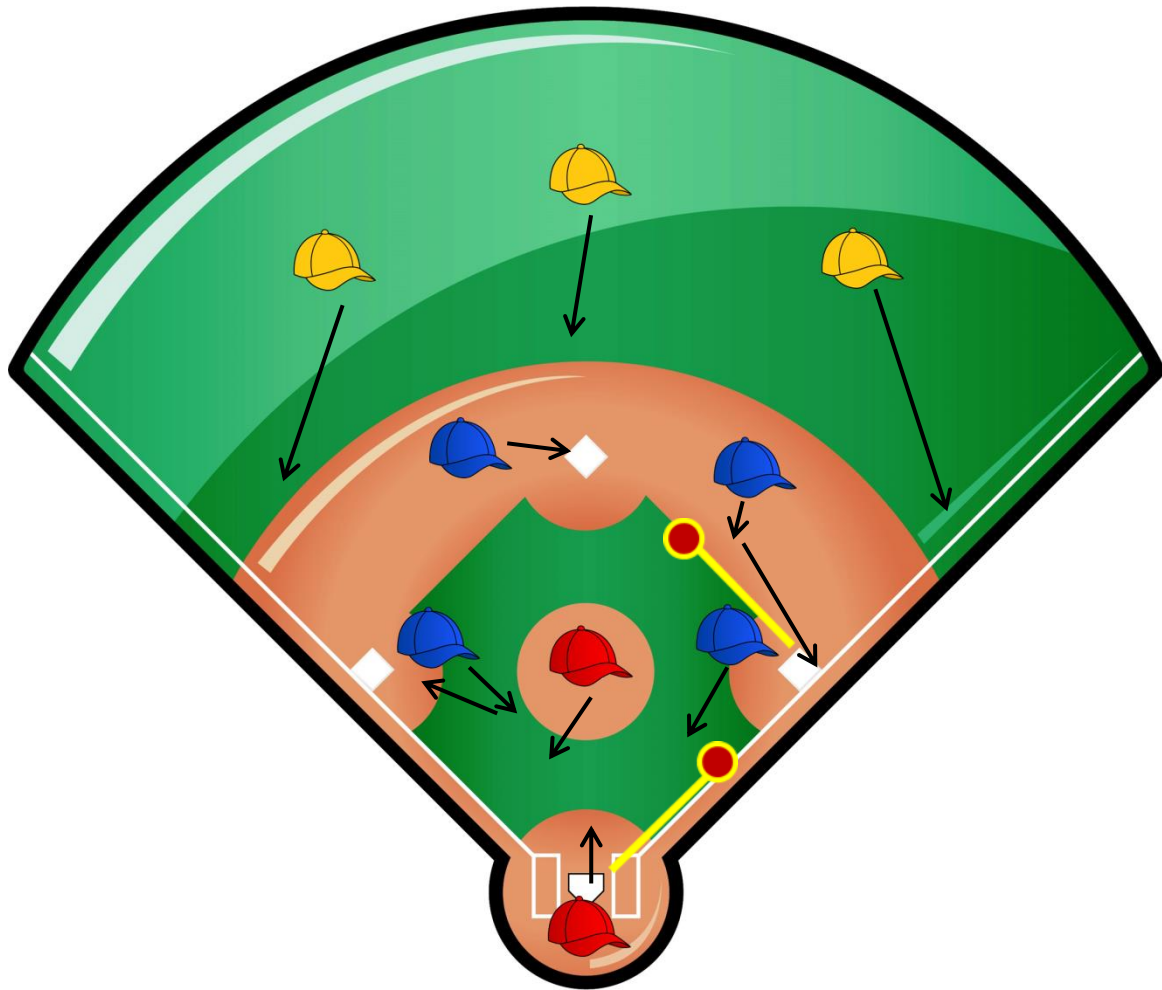
Where it is required to give a signal for bunt defence, third base will give the signals. They must get the attention of the field, give the signal whilst facing on an angle where everyone including the catcher and outfielders can see and then tell the pitcher discreetly what the play is.

NO RUNNERS ON BASE



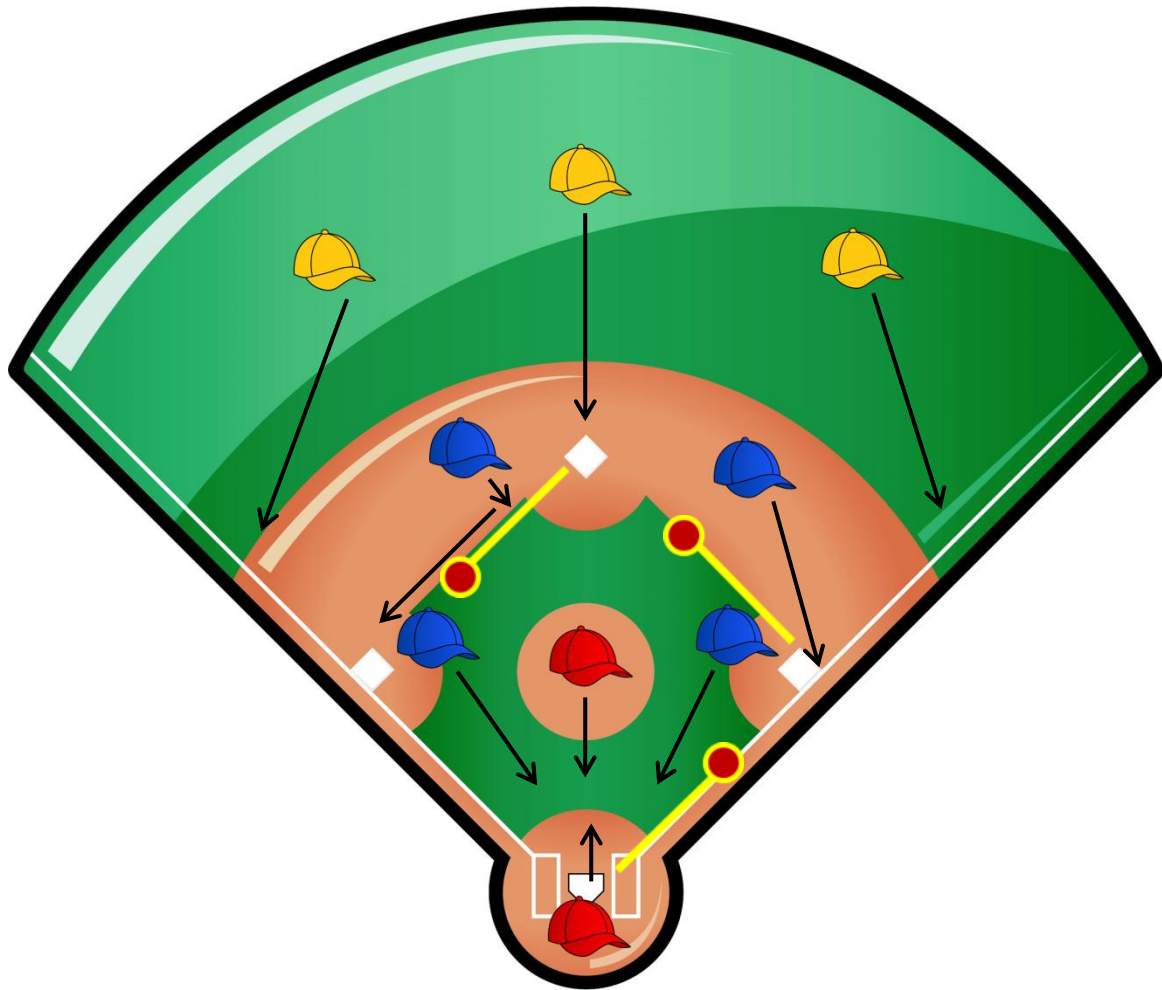
BATTERY KEY POINTS		INFIELD KEY POINTS		OUTFIELD KEY POINTS	
P	Cover third base line and short bunt in front of mound.	1B	Charge any bunt. If pitcher fields it, peel off into the middle of the field as not to obstruct the fielder or runner.	LF	Crash towards infield to cover over throws.
C	Field any bunt you can reach before fielders. Communicate to pitcher and fielders where the play is.	2B	Take a few steps in to ensure not a push bunt then cover first base.	CF	Crash towards infield to cover over throws.
		3B	Charge bunt, if bunt not hard and covered by pitcher, return to cover third base as soon as possible.	RF	Break to cover first base over throws.
		SS			

RUNNER ON FIRST BASE



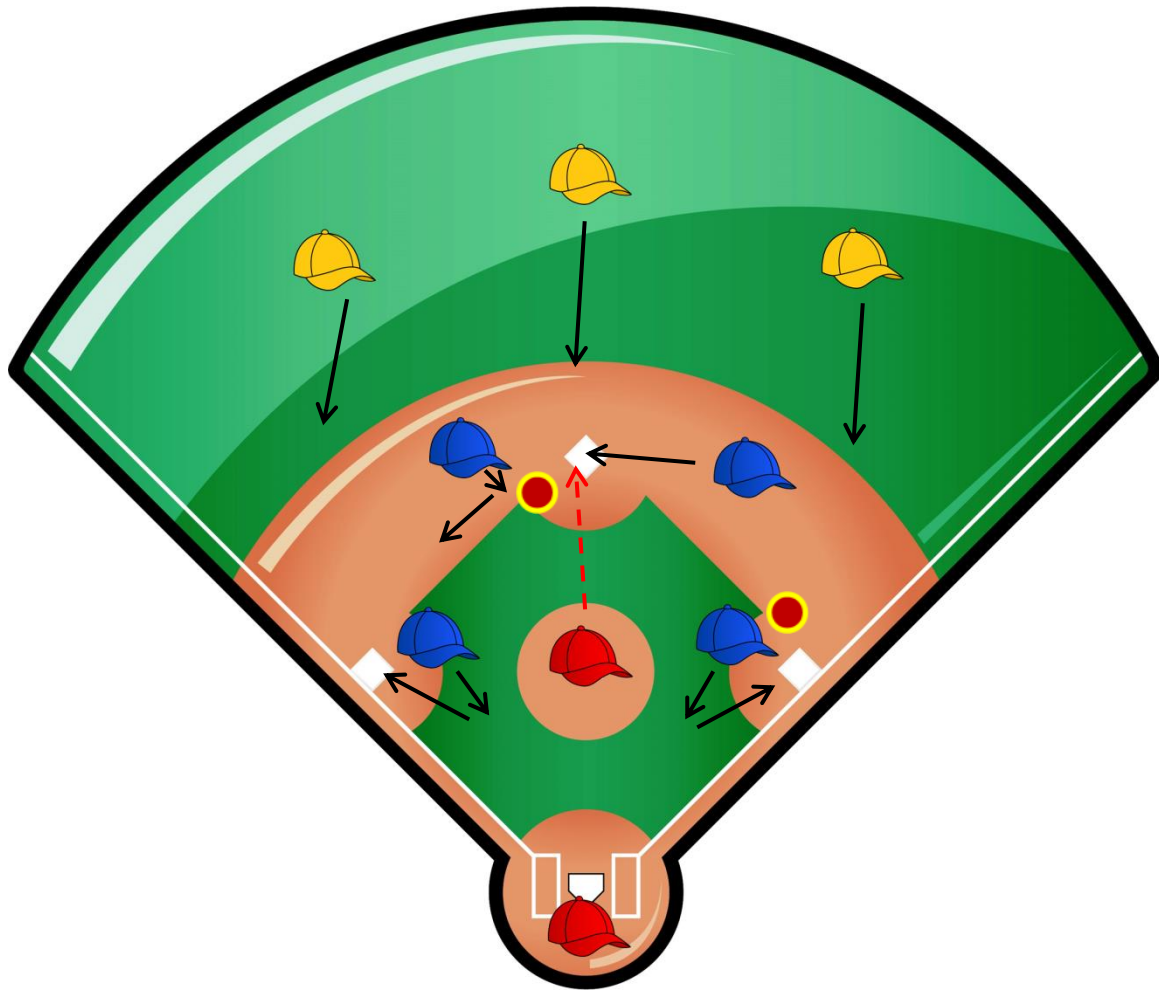
BATTERY KEY POINTS		INFIELD KEY POINTS		OUTFIELD KEY POINTS	
P	Cover third base line and short bunt in front of mound.	1B	Charge any bunt. If pitcher fields it, peel off into the middle of the field as not to obstruct the fielder or runner.	LF	Crash towards infield to cover over throws.
C	Field any bunt you can reach before fielders. Communicate to pitcher and fielders where the play is.	2B	Take a few steps in to ensure not a push bunt then cover first base.	CF	Crash towards infield to cover over throws.
		3B	Charge bunt, if bunt not hard and covered by pitcher, return to cover third base as soon as possible.	RF	Break to cover first base over throws.
		SS			

RUNNER ON FIRST & SECOND BASE (CRASH)



BATTERY KEY POINTS		INFIELD KEY POINTS		OUTFIELD KEY POINTS	
P	Pick up short stop, when there is daylight between short stop and runner turn and pitch a strike ready to charge and field bunt.	1B	Charge any bunt. If pitcher fields it, peel off into the middle of the field as not to obstruct the fielder or runner.	LF	Break to cover third base over throw.
C	Field any bunt you can reach before fielders. Communicate to pitcher and fielders where the play is.	2B	When short stop breaks to third base, break to cover first base.	CF	Crash towards infield to cover second base.
		3B	Break to home when short stop breaks to third base.	RF	Break to cover first base over throw.
		SS	When pitcher picks you up, come in behind runner then break to cover third base.		

RUNNER ON FIRST & SECOND BASE (PICKOFF)



BATTERY KEY POINTS		INFIELD KEY POINTS		OUTFIELD KEY POINTS	
P	Pick up short stop, when there is daylight between short stop and runner turn and pitch a strike ready to charge and field bunt.	1B	Charge any bunt. If pitcher fields it, peel off into the middle of the field as not to obstruct the fielder or runner.	LF	Break to cover third base just in case runner gets caught in a pickle.
C	Field any bunt you can reach before fielders. Communicate to pitcher and fielders where the play is.	2B	When short stop breaks to third base, break to cover first base.	CF	Crash towards infield to cover second base.
		3B	Break to home when short stop breaks to third base.	RF	Break to cover first base just in case runner gets caught in a pickle or over throws.
		SS	When pitcher picks you up, come in behind runner then break to cover third base.		

FIRST & THIRD

STEAL THROW OVER PRIORITIES



FIRST & THIRD FUNDAMENTALS

Where you decide to throw the baseball depends on a number of factors such as;

- **INNINGS**
- **SCORE**
- **SPEED ON THE BASE PATHS**
- **CATCHERS ARM STRENGTH**
- **QUALITY OF THE HITTER AND ON DECK HITTERS**

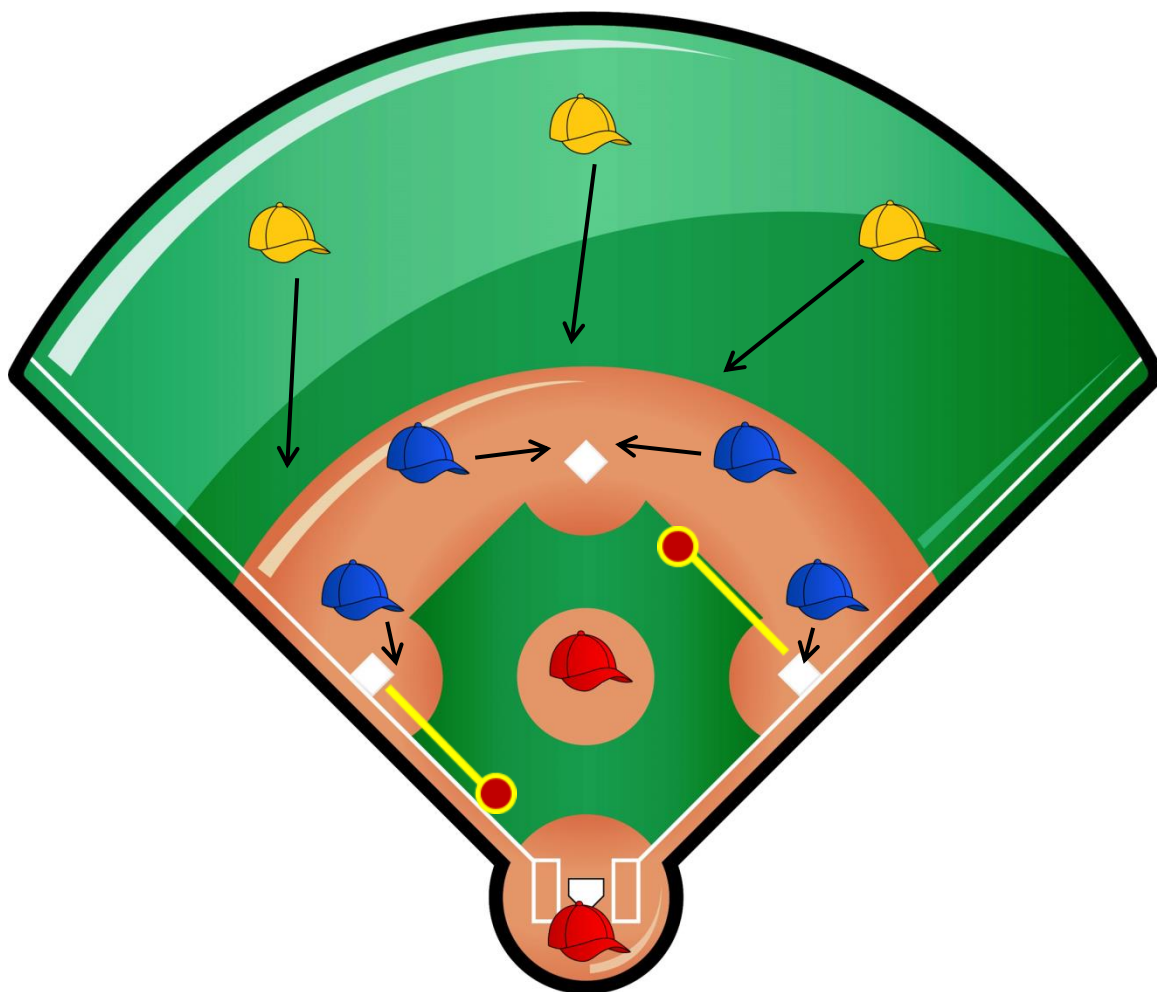
Early in the game if the opposition are going to give you an out by stealing second, it may pay to take it and allow a run to score. Later in the game depending on the situation, the same may be said, or it may pay to limit the possibility of scoring a run and allowing the runner to advance to second.

It is important however to remind your catchers that every time they must peak down the 3B line and see what that runner is doing.

Prior to the pitch outline who the priority is. If the priority is the 1B runner, then the team knows that they want to get the out if it present and are happy to allow the runner on 3B to score. The worst case here is that you don't get the out at second and the run also scores, but this is the gamble you take bases on your risk/benefit calculation.

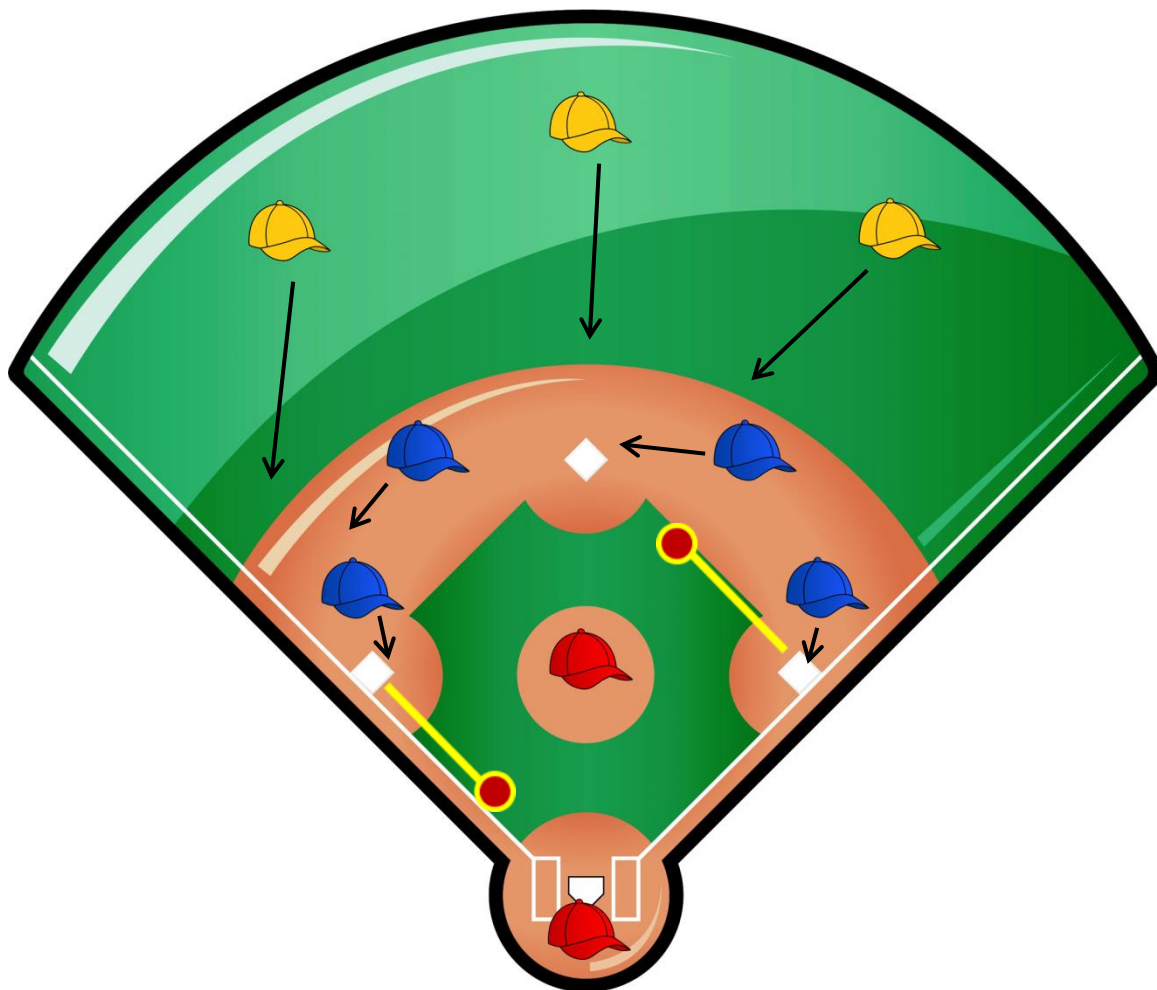
If your priority is the runner at 3B, then at no point should that runner score. The options here are to either hold the baseball and ensure no chance of an error on a throw, or to take a shot at the 3B runner with a quick throw down the line by the catcher. There is a risk it could deflect but again these are the risk v reward decisions you need to determine prior to making the call.

PRIORITY RUNNER AT 1B



BATTERY KEY POINTS		INFIELD KEY POINTS		OUTFIELD KEY POINTS	
P	Hold runner as normal. Throw a strike.	1B	Come in to 1B in case runner stops and returns.	LF	Back up 3B just in case ball is thrown there to field possible over throws.
C	Throw to 2B. Always look at 3B as if out is there take it, but cannot delay throw to 2B for out.	2B	Go to 2B for throw over. Receive throw or back up. This is determined prior to pitch.	CF	Crash in to field possible over throws.
		3B	Move to third base. Priority is 1B runner so only if a sure out can be made at 3B, catcher throws to 2B.	RF	Crash in to field possible over throws.
		SS	Go to 2B for throw over. Receive throw or back up. This is determined prior to pitch.		

PRIORITY RUNNER AT 3B



BATTERY KEY POINTS		INFIELD KEY POINTS		OUTFIELD KEY POINTS	
P	Hold runner as normal. Throw a strike.	1B	Come in to 1B in case runner stops and returns. And a play can be made at 1B.	LF	Crash in to field possible over throws.
C	Quick throw to 3B or hold. This is dependent on the situation and the runner.	2B	Go to 2B to cover base.	CF	Crash in to field possible over throws.
		3B	Move to third base. Priority is 3B runner so catcher may quick throw down the line. Ball doesn't get by. Stop ball at all costs. Catcher may also hold the ball and not throw.	RF	Crash in to field possible over throws.
		SS	Back up 3B.		

NOTES

NOTES

EAST TORRENS BASEBALL CLUB
EASTTORRENSBASEBALLCLUB.COM.AU
COACHING MANUAL VERSION 1.0.16