

7 Drill for Throwing, Fielding and Hitting

7 Drill for Throwing, Fielding and Hitting

The purpose of this document is to describe a drill for throwing, fielding and hitting. It also includes some running. This drill works best with four to eight people. It is like a normal outfield drill where a coach hits balls to the outfielders and they throw the ball back to the coach. But, here the players do the hitting, fielding, throwing and running.

Running

There is a rotation between positions. It can be done after every hit ball or after a certain number of hit balls. Whenever moving to catch a ball or between positions practice running with the head down to start and after a few steps shift into second gear with the head up.

Fielding

Practice fielding grounders with your head down, coming down like an airplane, and not like a helicopter. Practice fielding flies without reaching, putting your chest in front of the ball, running with your head up to get into position. When fielding throws, place a target out there, something to represent second base. On fielding throws to the second base target, get your head down, your eyes in line with the target, and your hands under the ball to get used to catching it on a hop. The hop is easy to see from there. When the outfielder will be throwing off the back foot, run out to be his target and get closer than the distance between home and second base. In other words, make that throw to the relay easy, and you practice the longer throw off your front foot to the batter's base.

Throwing

If you catch or pick up the ball with your back to your target, then throw off your back foot. Otherwise throw on the run off the front foot. All the throws will be a little short of the distance between home plate and second base, so practice that distance. When throwing off the back foot, keep the head down; and when throwing off the front foot, keep the head up. Since these are long and hard throws, pull your thumb off the ball to make it sail, not tumble. Pitches that tumble come off the thumb and are used for throwing slowly with accuracy. For example: junk ball pitchers that throw with their thumbs on the ball are called thumbers, and they throw their arm at the target. Sailing off your stiff extended fingers, the ball will go faster, straighter and lower, staying down where it can be caught or intercepted.

Hitting

The main object of this hitting drill is to learn the short stroke. A second objective is to learn to hit both sides of the ball, making the ball draw left or face right. Another way to say that is to learn both the lefthander's hooking swing, and the right-hander's pushing swing. Both pushing and hooking are more powerful if done in a line away from the body. That is why hitters turn on inside pitches, to keep the swing moving away from the body like a basketball chest pass. We do a chest pass with the head

7 Drill for Throwing, Fielding and Hitting

down. Swinging with the head up can be powerful, but the ball is harder to see and it is harder to hit outside or inside the ball. Swinging with the head down is more powerful like a chest pass, covers more of the strike zone up down in and out, and is easier to get out of the way of the ball or even to transition into hitting with your head up (sitting on a pitch). When hitting in this drill, the hitter either turns or starts out like the fielder is standing in right field, and they are facing the pitcher, hitting the ball right out of the catcher's mitt. Speaking of mitt, place one down to represent home base and a target for the relay throw. Practice the Four Swing Types to Two Targets off Both Feet. First: try to hit second base with the ball using all four swing types (Hook, Sit, Golf and Tomahawk) off the back foot. Then do the same off the front foot (to practice hitting off-speed pitches). Then with a person standing on second base (a place or mitt representing second base) and an outfielder at normal outfield depth but directly in line with that baseman (not normal) try to hit the ball over that baseman's head on a line over the outfielder's head. Again, practice the four swing types to two targets off both feet.

Scoring

Like the game of 500, this game can be played with points. In the game to 500, the object for the fielders is to score points by catching flies for 100, one-hoppers for 75 and grounders for 25 points. First one to 500 wins. In this game there are also 50 points for throwing accuracy, negative points for bad hitting (-25 grounders and -75 unplayable hits) and 100 points for hitting it beyond the fielders.

Summary: Throwing, Fielding and Hitting Drill

The purpose of this document was to describe a drill for running, throwing, fielding and hitting. This drill works best with four to eight people. It is like a normal outfield drill where a coach hits balls to the outfielders and they throw the ball back to the coach. But, here the players do the hitting, fielding, throwing and running, while perfecting efficiency and effectiveness. It teaches when to have the head up and when to have it down when running, throwing, fielding and hitting. It teaches the inside out swing when hitting, and the inside out release when throwing. Like a chest-pass in both, it teaches the away from the body swing and the throw that sails. The outside-in swing and throw is for thumbers.