

BUNT BEFORE EVERY BATTING PRACTICE

Every player should bunt the first three pitches of batting practice. For every good bunt, the player can receive three extra swings during batting practice. This incentive will help players concentrate on their bunting fundamentals.

BUNTING DRILL (B01)

DRILL: POSTURE AND ROTATION

OBJECTIVE

- Practice the correct movement and posture for bunting.

EQUIPMENT

- Baseball bat

SET UP

- The players should stand in a line, more than arms'-length apart. They should all be able to see the coach.

EXECUTION

- The coach gives the verbal command "bunt" or "bunting position," and the players proceed to standard bunting position. The coach should make sure that each player is in the correct position.

BUNTING DRILL (B02)

EXERCISE: BUNTING HIGH AND LOW PITCHES

OBJECTIVE

- Practice the correct fundamentals to bunt high and low pitches.

EQUIPMENT

- Baseball bat
- Baseballs

SET UP

- The coach should stand approximately 40 feet away from the bunter.
- The players should be ready to bunt from the pivot position.

EXECUTION

- The coach should throw high and low pitches in the strike zone. The bunters should bend their knees in order to react to low pitches. If the pitch is not a strike, the bunter should pull the bat back.

*The coach should make sure that the players are displaying proper fundamentals.

BUNTING DRILL (B03)

EXERCISE: BUNT WITH A SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE

OBJECTIVE

- Practice bunting to different parts of the infield.

EQUIPMENT

- Baseball bat
- Extra bats or other markers (3)
- Baseballs

SET UP

- The coach should stand approximately 40 feet from the bunter.
- The bunter should stand at the plate, ready to bunt from the pivot position.
- The extra bats or other markers should delineate where the bunter should attempt to place the ball.

EXECUTION

- The coach pitches strikes to the bunter. Each bunter should bunt at least three balls per round. The bunter should aim for a specific area that is delineated with the bats or hats.
- *If the bunters begin in a regular batting stance, the bunter should enter the bunting position when the pitcher begins the throwing motion.
- *The coach should ensure that the players are displaying proper fundamentals.

Variation: To make the drill more fun and competitive, bunters can be divided into groups. Any time a bunt reaches its objective, points can be awarded. The group that wins can receive extra swings in batting practice.

BUNTING DRILL (B04)

EXERCISE: CHAIR DRILL

OBJECTIVE

- Teach players to get body low with bat and eyes close to the pitch.
- Teach better hand and eye coordination.

EQUIPMENT

- Baseball bat
- Chair
- Baseballs

SET UP

- Have the batter sit in the chair in bunting position, with the coach standing in front of him at an appropriate distance for soft toss behind the pitching screen.

EXECUTION

- Coach will toss the ball, batter has to bunt it executing appropriate actions. Sitting down will help the player develop a better feel to maintain his body down and have eyes near to the ball during bunting.

CATCHING DRILL (C01)

DRILL: FINGER CATCHES

OBJECTIVE

- Teach the catcher to receive the ball in the middle of the glove.

EQUIPMENT

- Baseballs.

SET UP

- The catcher is positioned in the basic fielding position, in a situation with no players on base

EXECUTION

- The coach is in front of the catcher and throws the ball at a slow speed; the catcher must catch the ball using only the index, thumb and middle finger in the form of a "C."



CATCHING DRILL (C02)

DRILL: RECEIVING WITH PLASTIC GOLF BALLS AND TENNIS BALLS

OBJECTIVE

- Develop soft, quick hands and teach the catcher to concentrate on receiving each ball properly.
- Improve reaction time.

EQUIPMENT

- Plastic golf balls
- Catcher's equipment
- Tennis balls and racquet

SET UP

- One catcher is positioned behind home plate in a normal receiving position.
- Coach at a distance of 8 to 10 feet from the catcher with the plastic balls (or tennis balls).

EXECUTION

- Coach repeatedly tosses plastic balls to the catcher, and the catcher catches them (10-15 times per catcher).

*Because the balls are smaller and plastic, the catcher has to concentrate to catch them properly and in the correct part of the mitt, so that they don't bounce back out.

- Coach can also do the same using a tennis ball and tennis racquet, adjusting distance as necessary.

* Because tennis balls are softer and much bouncier, the catcher has to concentrate to receive them properly and with soft hands.

* Tennis ball coming off a racquet also helps improve reaction time.



CATCHING DRILL (C03)

FRONT-TO-FRONT

OBJECTIVE

- Develop soft hands and practice the proper way to catch the ball.
- Develop proper form for catching the ball and establish comfort in the primary catching position.

EQUIPMENT

- One baseball.

SET UP

- 2 catchers.

EXECUTION

- Both catchers position themselves in the primary catching position, facing each other, with two meters between them. With a baseball in the right hand, they must toss the ball to each other, back and forth, for at least for 30 seconds non-stop. They should perform as many catches as possible in these 30 seconds.



CATCHING DRILL (C04)

DRILL: RECEIVING WITH BASEBALLS

OBJECTIVE

- Learn how to use the glove in different positions.
- Develop soft hands

EQUIPMENT

- 24 Baseballs
- Catcher's equipment

SET UP

- One catcher is behind home plate in normal receiving position
- Coach stands 10 feet away with baseballs

EXECUTION

- The coach will throw pitches to different parts of the strike zone, catcher should catch the ball while maintaining the location it was caught. (Glove should not go down after ball is caught).



CATCHING DRILL (C05)

DRILL: CATCHING BASEBALLS

OBJECTIVE

- Practice catching the baseball and develop the catcher's ability to not close their eyes at the moment of catching the ball.

EQUIPMENT

- Catcher's gear.
- Baseballs (12)

SET UP

- One catcher is behind home plate in normal receiving position
- Coach stands 6 feet away with baseballs

EXECUTION

- The coach throws to the catcher, directly to the mask, at a moderate speed. Make sure that the catcher keeps his eyes open.



CATCHING DRILL (C06)

DRILL: TRANSFER

OBJECTIVE

- Develop quick and soft hands while transferring the ball from the glove to the throwing hand.
- Improve transfer times.

EQUIPMENT

- Baseballs
- Catcher's gear (may be done with the knee pads only)

SET UP

- Catcher sets up with his right knee on the ground.
- Coach stands 8 to 10 feet in front of the catcher.

EXECUTION

- The coach throws the ball to the catcher at a moderate speed; the catcher must catch it in the center of his left hand while keeping the right hand close in order to perform a quick and effective transfer to the throwing hand.



DRILL: TRANSFER - 2

OBJECTIVE

- Develop quick and soft hands while transferring the ball from the glove to the throwing hand.
- Improve transfer times.

EQUIPMENT

- Baseballs.

SET UP

- The catcher is positioned in a 50/50 stance.
- The coach is positioned about 8 to 10 feet away from the catcher.

EXECUTION

- The coach throws the ball to the catcher at a moderate speed from the side. The catcher must then perform the transfer from the glove to the throwing hand while also doing the proper footwork for a throw to second base.



CATCHING DRILL (C07)

DRILL: INVERTED "T"

OBJECTIVE

- Teach catchers the proper footwork for a throw to second base.

EQUIPMENT

- Baseballs.
- Chalk.

SET UP

- Use the chalk to draw an inverted "T" on the ground where the drill is to be performed. The point where the lines of the "T" converge should be behind home plate (and the T should point to second base)
- The catcher's stance should be slightly wider than shoulder-width and on top of the horizontal part of the "T".
- The catcher should be in basic fielding position.

EXECUTION

- The coach will tell the player when to start the footwork with a verbal command, (if performing the drill without baseballs. The player must bring the right foot to the point where the horizontal and vertical lines meet, while the left foot steps on the vertical chalk line.
- Can also be performed standing up: Same feet motion, except the catcher won't have to exit the crouch to perform the drill, as the catcher will already be standing.



CATCHING DRILL (C08)

DRILL: HEARING

OBJECTIVE

- Improve the catcher's footwork.
- Improve the catcher's hearing agility.

EQUIPMENT

- Baseballs.
- Catcher's equipment.

SET UP

- The catcher is positioned at home plate, in catching position with runners on base.
- The coach is at a distance similar to that when throwing BP.

EXECUTION

- The coach throws the ball to the catcher at a moderate speed
- Once the ball is released and in the air, the coach must yell to which base the catcher should move his feet. If the coach yells "first," the catcher should throw the ball to first base, etc.



CATCHING DRILL (C09)

DRILL: QUICK BLOCKING

OBJECTIVE

- Develop the ability to block wild pitches.

EQUIPMENT

- Catcher's equipment
- Baseballs

SET UP

- The catcher should set up behind home plate in a secondary fielding position.
- The coach should be 15-20 feet in front of plate

EXECUTION

- The coach will throw wild throws towards the ground and the catcher must block them.

*The coach must make sure that the catcher is executing the proper movements.



CATCHING DRILL (C10)

DRILL: TORSO

OBJECTIVE

- Teach the catcher to properly move his torso while blocking.

EQUIPMENT

- Baseballs.
- Catcher's equipment.

SET UP

- The catcher is positioned behind home plate with both knees on the ground and both hands simulating blocking a pitch.

EXECUTION

- The coach throws the ball down to the ground at a moderate speed, simulating a wild pitch. The catcher should lean down slightly in order to use his torso to block the ball so that it stays in front of his body.



CATCHING DRILL (C11)

DRILL: BLOCKING - CONES

OBJECTIVE

- Develop the catcher's ability to block wild or errant pitches.

EQUIPMENT

- Catcher's equipment.
- 2 cones.
- Baseballs.

SET UP

- Place cones on both sides of the plate.

EXECUTION

- The coach attempts to throw wild pitches through the cones.
- The catcher attempts to block the baseball with the purpose of keeping the ball in between the cones.
- The number of repetitions is at the coach's discretion.



CATCHING DRILL (C12)

DRILL: THREE BALL BLOCKING DRILL

OBJECTIVE

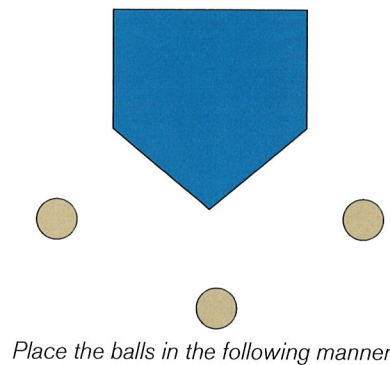
- Develop the catcher's quickness in blocking balls in different directions and angles.
- Practice the correct blocking form and technique

EQUIPMENT

- 3 baseballs
- Home plate
- Catcher's equipment

SET UP

- Configure home plate and the baseballs in the following manner
- The catcher should set up in an action stance, directly over the ball in the middle
- Place the balls in the following manner.
- The coach should be about 5 feet in front of the plate, so that the catcher can see the coach (and vice versa).



EXECUTION

- The coach points to one of the three balls (straight down, to the left, or to the right). The catcher moves into a blocking position (as quickly as possible) behind whichever ball the coach points to.
- After the catcher is in the blocking position, the catcher should freeze and hold the position, and the coach should correct form and technique
- The catcher then returns to secondary/action setup, over middle ball, and the coach points to another ball at random (repeat 5 times)
- During one of the five repetitions (at random), after the catcher has moved into the blocking position, the coach should yell "runner," and the catcher should bounce up quickly, grab the ball, and be in position to throw the runner out.
- It is important that the catcher pop up and get the ball as quickly as possible to best simulate a game situation.

C12



CATCHING DRILL (C13)

DRILL: 360 REACTION

OBJECTIVE

- Work on the catcher's reaction, catching, and blocking skills.

EQUIPMENT

- 50 baseballs
- Catcher's equipment

SET UP

- The catcher should start in the standard fielding position in the middle of a circle of coaches or players
- Four coaches or players should stand in a circle surrounding the catcher. As pictured below, each coach or player should stand at one of the specified angles: 90 degrees, 180 degrees, 270 degrees, and 360 degrees.

EXECUTION

- The person standing in front of the catcher begins the drill by throwing a ball at a moderate speed to the catcher.
- The catcher catches the ball and then turns to the next coach to the left who also throws a ball at a moderate speed.
- The drill continues, with the catcher receiving throws from each person until the catcher reaches the desired number of repetitions.
- In the first round, the catcher should be thrown balls at a moderate speed to different angles. In the next round, the throws can be mixed to include wild pitches, so that the catcher practices blocking. Other rounds can be added with specifications chosen by the coach.



CATCHING DRILL (C14)

DRILL: THROWING TO SECOND

OBJECTIVE

- Work on a catcher's footwork and pop time.

EQUIPMENT

- Baseballs
- Catcher's equipment

SET UP

- A catcher should be behind home plate in secondary position.
- The coach stand 25 feet away and throw the ball at the catcher.
- An extra catcher (or infielder, if available) should be at second base.

EXECUTION

- The coach throws the ball to the catcher down the middle (and also to different sides to work on angles).
- The catcher receives the ball and throws to second base.
- The coach watches for correct footwork and arm action and makes corrections as necessary.
- If the catcher is alone, he can place a screen at second and practice throws with just a bucket of balls. Alternatively, the towel drill can be used (see pitching section), with the catcher just working on his footwork.



CATCHING DRILL (C15)

DRILL: POP-UPS

OBJECTIVE

- Develop the catcher's ability to catch pop-ups at different angles.

EQUIPMENT

- Catcher's equipment.
- Baseballs (12).
- Fungo

SET UP

- The catcher must be positioned behind home plate in basic fielding position.
- The coach must stand right in front of the batter's box

EXECUTION

- The coach proceeds to hit a pop-up, and the catcher must quickly realize this and catch the ball while displaying all the proper fundamentals.

CATCHING DRILL (C16)

DRILL: FIELDING BUNTS

OBJECTIVE

- Learn to field bunts and make proper throws.

EQUIPMENT

- Baseballs.

SET UP

- The catcher stands in starting position, ready to receive pitches.
- The coach stands just behind the catcher.

EXECUTION

- The coach throws balls from behind the catcher in different directions onto the field.
- The catcher should react to the throw, moving towards the ball with total control. The catcher should field the ball with both hands and prepare to make a proper and accurate throw.

