

Infielder Drills

Infielder Progressive Series

Follow these drills, in order, so players learn proper fielding position, footwork, and gain confidence.

1. Player down on both knees, knees wide. Puts glove out front, in good fielding position (use glove only, not barehand for this series). Player bends at waist to get head/eyes as close to ball as possible. Coach, from 5 feet away and on one knee, underhand throws firm one-hoppers directly at player. Player fields ball out front and "works through ball".
2. Same set up but now coach tosses underhand one-hopper to player's glove side. Player gets head/eyes close to ball, fields out front, and works through the ball.
3. Same set up but now coach tosses underhand one-hoppers to player's hand side. Player can turn/rotate knees toward hand side to allow self to backhand ball. For backhand, work through ball, back toward where it came from.
4. Player now in fielding position: feet wide, 10 toes point straight ahead, knees bent, butt down, head down, back flat, glove and hand out front. Coach again tosses underhand firm one-hopper so player fields in proper position.
5. Player in fielding position for ball to glove side. For righty – turn body so feet point to left, left leg ahead of right, as if player is moving to his/her left. Glove down and head close to ball. Coach tosses as in above drill.
6. Player in fielding position for ball to backhand. For righty – turn body so feet point to right, left leg ahead of right, as if player is moving to his/her right. Glove down and open; head close to ball. Coach tosses as in above drill. Player works through ball, moving glove back toward where ball came from.
7. Player now in Ready Position – feet shoulder width, 10 toes point straight ahead, knees bent, balanced, hands out front with glove open to ball (note – player is not "down" in ground ball position, but balanced and ready to move left, right, forward, or back). Coach can be 12 feet away and rolls firm ground ball. Player approaches ball off glove eye, and fields with Right, Left, Field (for a righty) in proper position.
8. Same as above, but now coach rolls ground ball to player's glove side. Player makes hard crossover, either gets in front of ball (R, L, Field) or fields ball one-handed on glove side.
9. Same as above, but now coach rolls ground ball to player's backhand side. Player makes hard crossover, either gets in front of ball (R, L, Field) or fields ball one-handed, backhanded.
10. Same as drills 7-8-9 but now coach further back and fungoes ball to player, who starts in ready position. When coach tosses up ball, player should do a "prep move", breaking inertia and moving feet (think tennis player receiving serve).
11. Same as drill 10.
12. Same as drill 10.
13. Same as drills 10-11-12 but now player fields ball properly, uses legs and makes strong throw back to coach (or player next to coach).
14. Same as drill 13.
15. Same as drill 13.

* Prior to drill 8/9, teach players how to make an explosive crossover step. Start as dry drill – player faces coach, in balanced, ready position. Coach points either left or right and player makes one explosive crossover step. For example, for a righty player, to crossover to her/his left, player would step with right foot, across body so right foot lands well ahead (to left of) left foot. At same time, player turns hips and shoulder 90 degrees in direction s/he is moving. Next, when coach points left or right, player makes explosive crossover step and continues a few steps and simulates fielding the ball, in proper position.

More Drills

- **Little Gloves** – These are extra small (child's size) gloves that are great for teaching players to use hands (not big glove) to catch ball. Can use Little Gloves with any of the drills shown here.
- **Cone Drill** – Cone on ground, between player and coach, player 3 feet behind cone. Coach rolls ground ball directly at cone. Player goes around cone (righty goes to right of cone) so to approach ball on glove side eye. Allows player to see side of ball and read speed and hop more accurately. Plus creates momentum in direction of throwing target.
- **Cone II** – Same as Cone Drill but now player takes as many fast, short, choppy steps as possible to approach ball. Teaches player how to use feet effectively.
- **Flamingo I** – Player balances on throwing leg, with other leg held up off the ground (like a flamingo!). Coach rolls ground ball directly at player who times his/her step to the ball. So a righty would get his/her left foot down, on time, to field the ball in proper position.
- **Flamingo II** – Player balances on glove side leg with other leg held off the ground. Coach rolls ball directly at player who times his/her two steps (for a righty – right, left) to get into proper fielding position.
- **Slow Rollers** – 1) Dry Drill: Players get in proper position to field slow roller (hips, butt, head down, glove down and out in front of glove foot). 2) Player gets in proper position to field slow roller, but starts with ball in glove. Simulate fielding ball, then throw (steps are R, L, R – throw off right foot). Finish throw by running directly toward home plate. 3) Players start in ready position. Coach rolls slow roller. Player fields properly, throws to target. 4) Same as 3, but now coach fungoes slow roller.
- **V-Cut** – This is a technique for older players to learn how to field a ball to a player's hand side (right for righty thrower) for which he can't quite get in front of, but doesn't need to backhand. Player's action is to break hard to right, "beat ball to the spot" and field ball in proper position, with momentum toward target. So player's path is like a "V" lying on its side, or a check mark. Drill: place cone 6 feet to player's right. Coach rolls ball directly at cone. Player beats ball to the spot (cone) and fields with momentum toward 1b.
- **Short Hop Drill** – For players to learn that a short hop is a good hop on which to field ball (fielded properly, short hop ball has nowhere to go but into glove). Player gets on knees, glove out front, head down and coach from 3 feet away, underhands firm short-hoppers directly at glove. Player works through with glove to shorten the hop. Then repeat drill with player on feet, in fielding position.
- **Smash Drill** – For players to become confident in fielding hard hit balls. Do this with incrediballs, foam balls, wiffle balls only! Player starts in fielding position and coach from 12 feet away fungoes a hard hit ball. Players will learn that if they stay down, move into ball, and keep head down, they can make these plays!
- **Dive Drill** – Players love this drill! Player starts on his/her knees and faces coach. Coach throws ground ball or line drive to left or right so player has to dive. At first, work on making the catch, then have players catch, get up and throw to a base.

- **Infielders in Position** – Infielders take their positions on the diamond and coaches can roll or fungo ground balls (straight, left, right, slow rollers) so players get used to angles and perspective from their positions. No throws.
- **Forceouts at 2b** – For SS and 2nd baseman. Players take their position, coach stands behind mound and rolls ground ball to SS who makes feed to 2nd baseman (6-4). Then do 4-6. Key for making good feed is to field the ball low and stay low to make firm flip to 2nd base. Emphasize getting the forceout at 2nd every time; don't worry about double play.
- **Multiple Ground Ball Drill** – Infielders take their positions. Two coaches hit fungoes from home plate:
 - Round 1: Coach A hits ground ball to 3rd baseman who throws to 1st (5-3). Coach B hits ground balls to 2nd baseman and SS who practice double play feeds (6-4, 4-6), but NO throw to 1st.
 - Round 2: Coach A hits ground ball to SS who throws to 1st (6-3). Coach B hits ground ball to 3rd baseman who throws to 2nd base for forceout (5-4). Note: for this round, move 3rd base and 2nd base in closer to plate so that 5-4 throw does not hit SS.
 - Round 3: Coach A hits ground ball to SS who throws to 3rd base for forceout or tag (6-5). Coach B hits ground ball to 2nd baseman who throws to 1st (4-3).
 - Round 4: Coach A hits ground ball to 1st baseman who throws to SS covering 2nd base for forceout (3-6). Coach B hits ground balls to 2nd baseman and 3rd baseman who field balls but make NO throw.
- **Plays to 4** – All infielders in position, including catcher. Coach fungoes ground ball and all players field ball and throw home. Catchers work on forceouts and tag plays.
- **1-2-3-4** – Infielders in position with one infielder at each spot "up" at a time. Coach calls "1", hits a fungo, and players make play to 1st. Then coach calls "2" and players make play to 2nd base...continue with "3" and "4".
- **Infield Pop-Ups** – Infielders in positions. Coach hits pop-up (tennis racquet and Tuffy Balls or Incrediballs is best way to go in order to hit controlled pops in infield). Work on pop-up priority (who calls off whom, according to whatever system you desire). Can also do this in two groups/2 coaches. One group is SS-3b-P; other group is 2b, 1b, P. Catchers work on pop-up separately with their own coach (key – catcher finds ball, discards mask, and puts back to infield).
- **Situational Ground Ball Drill** – Full infield, including pitcher and catcher. Coach calls out situation, e.g., "Runner on 1st, 1 out", then hits ground ball, line drive, or pop-up. Players react accordingly to make play. This is essential practice for players to know what to do when ball is hit to them.