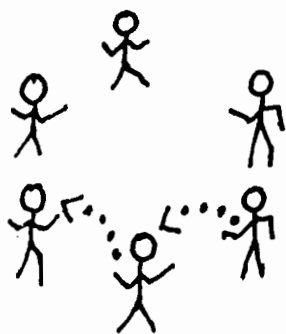
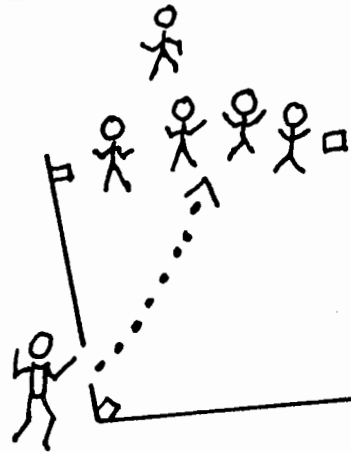


Mini Drills – I

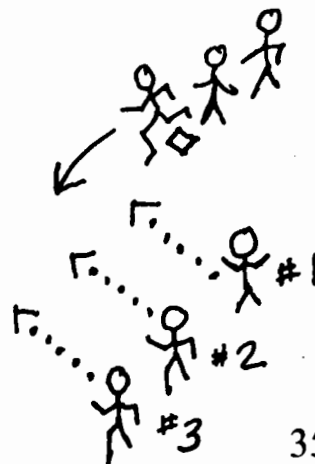
Defensive Skills

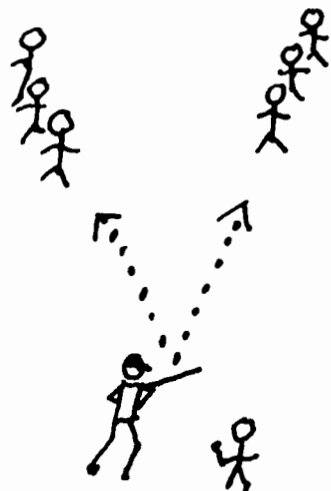
1. **Top Banana**—Players form a line between second and third base to field balls hit (or thrown) by the coach. The player closest to third is the “Top Banana.” When a player makes an error he goes to the backup position behind the line.



2. **Underhand Circle Toss**— Two or three groups of players lob the ball around a circle underhanded. Players should be 8 to 10 feet apart. Options include having one group race the other (relay style) and also using backhanded throws.

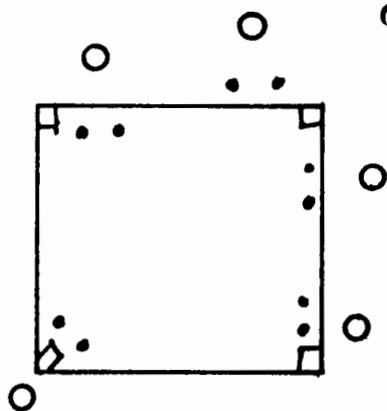
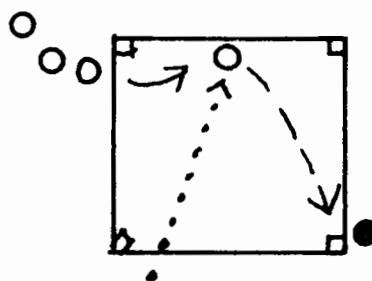
3. **Run The Gauntlet**— Players run a line between two bases, fielding a series of rolled balls. Player fields ball rolled by #1 and throws it to #2, fields ball rolled by #2 and throws it to #3, fields ball rolled by #3 and returns it to coach behind #1, #2, #3. Players should run the gauntlet several times in each direction.





4. **Double Line**— Players form two single file lines (parallel to each other) about 15 to 20 feet apart. A coach (with a shagger on each side) hits ground balls to them. Keep it moving quickly and make players chase their own bad throws. An option would be doing it with the out-fielders.

5. **Range Drill**— Line up players (usually just infielders) at third facing second base. One at a time they break towards second as a ground ball is hit to them. Players field ball and throw it to first base. A new line is formed at second and the direction is reversed.



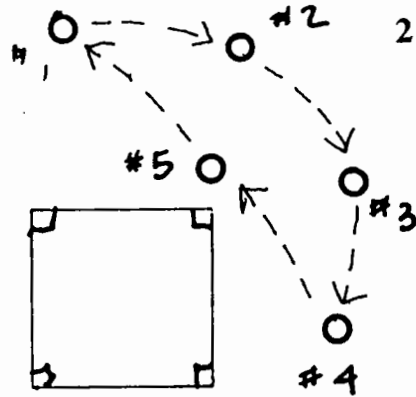
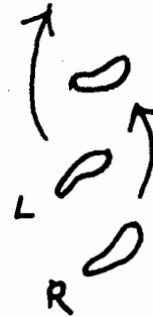
6. **Dead Ball**— Position infielders (including catcher) at their positions. Place two balls (5 feet apart) and 5 feet in front of each player. The coach will yell out plays, *SS to 1B*, *3B to 2B*, *1B to C*, etc. and the player will throw to that base. After catching a throw that player returns the ball to the coach. Keep it moving quickly, however, allow them time to get back to their position between plays.

Make your players look good when you hit the field. Use practice or practice drills.
— Walt Kott

Mini Drills - II

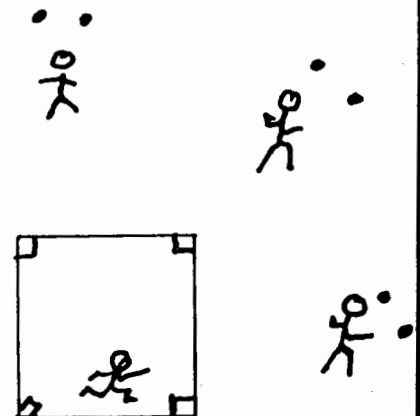
Defensive Skills

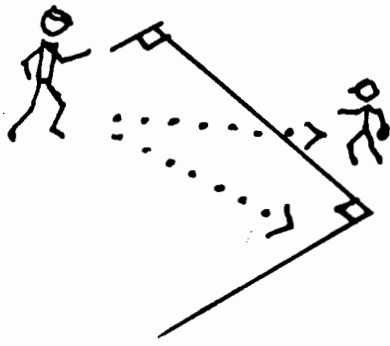
1. **Crow Hop**—Coach hits a series of easy-to-catch fly balls to outfielders. They catch the ball and use a crow-hop step to gain momentum for their throw. Outfielders should be lined up single file and work on their footwork when throwing.



2. **One Bouncers**— Outfielders throw single bounce throws. Position a player at each station (see diagram) and begin by hitting a fly or grounder to player #1. He fields it and throws a single bounce throw to #2. Player #2 single bounces it to #3 and so on. Rotate players forward after two or three rounds.

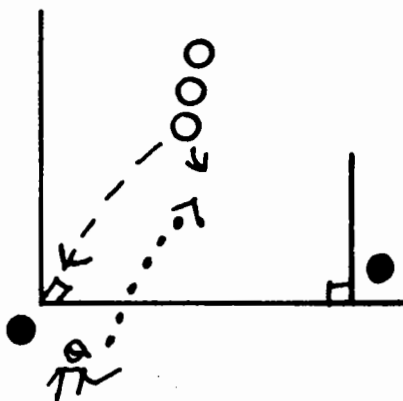
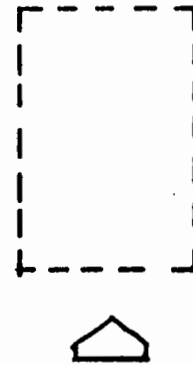
3. **Three Blind Mice**—Position outfielders facing away from the infield. Place two balls 5 feet beyond each player. Coach starts a runner circling the bases and at his timing calls the outfielder (LF, CF, RF) to retrieve ball, turn and locate the runner and throw to the base in front of the runner. An option is — while returning the balls to the outfield hit ground balls and have outfielders practice going to one knee to field.





4. Bad Throws — Work 1st baseman with a series of throws. Make some good and some wide of the bag. 1st baseman (and other infielders) must learn to move off the bag to catch bad throws. Also put your catcher in full gear and hit him ground balls. Have him go down on both knees and block it like he should a wild pitch.

5. Call The Pitch— Have your pitcher pitch to the catcher with balls and strikes called by the catcher. Start out with one inning and work up to three or four. Once the pitcher has mastered throwing strikes down the middle, have the catcher move the target around. An option is to include a batter who calls the balls and strikes with the catcher confirming. The batter soon learns the strike zone.



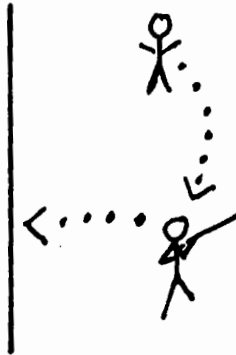
6. Fifth Infielder— Pitchers throw to catcher using full motion and follow through. Right after the pitcher releases the ball the coach (from the batters box) throws a ground ball towards the mound. The pitcher fields it and throws to first base. Pitchers soon learn to be in proper fielding position after delivering the pitch.

"Players don't improve their skills by standing idle watching other players being active."
Wes Stock

Mini Drills-III

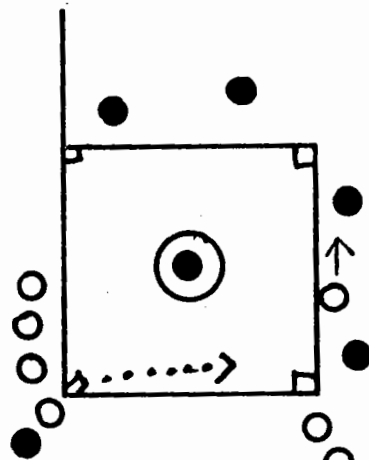
Offensive Skills

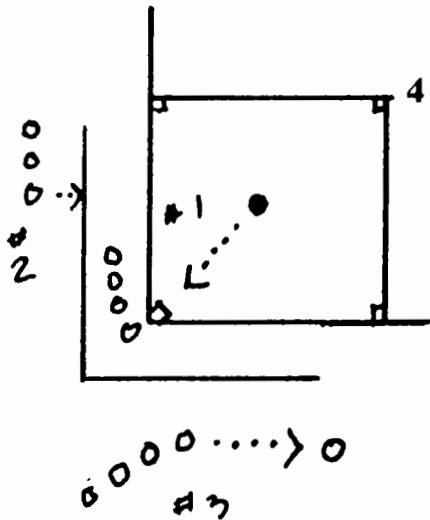
- 1. Tee Swings**—Use a batting tee for players to hit the ball off of into a screen. They should strive to hit line drives. If you don't have a batting tee, another player can throw to the batter. He would be positioned facing the batter from the side (5 ft. or so) and loft up soft tosses to be hit.



- 2. Glove Bunting**— Good for players having trouble bunting. Player goes to the plate with a fielder's glove (on his *throwing* hand) instead of a bat. He turns to bunt only he places the glove over the plate and catches the pitch. The glove should only be moved up and down or in and out.

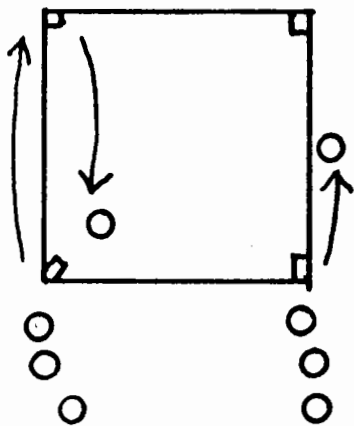
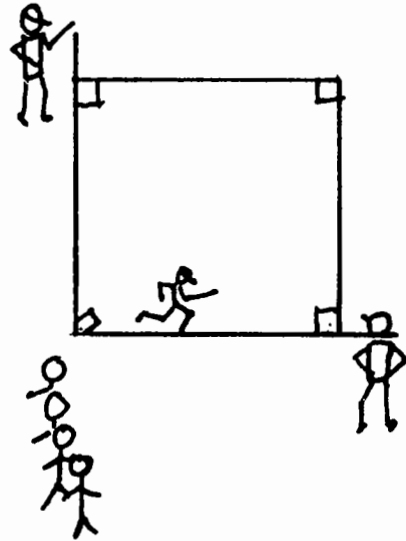
- 3. Spot Bunting**—Position your full infield including a pitcher and catcher. Players line up to bunt with an equal number of runners at first base. Batting group cycles through with three bunts down first as runners advance to second. Then three bunts down third as runners advance to third. Then have runners and batters switch roles.





4. **Three Station Batting Practice**— Divide your team into three groups. Set up three stations, #1 for hitting off a pitcher, #2 for hitting off a tee into a screen (or soft toss), #3 bunting. This keeps everybody active — improving offensive skills.

5. **Circle the Bases**— Start the players at home and have a coach at first and third base. As the players circle they must watch the coach for signals whether to slow up, or hold, or keep going hard. It teaches the players to watch the coaches.



6. **Sliding Relay**— Divide players into two groups for a relay race. One group goes from first to second and back while the other goes from home to third and back. They must slide at each base. Make sure the next player in line doesn't leave early.

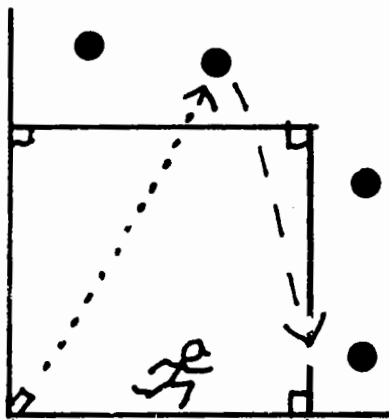
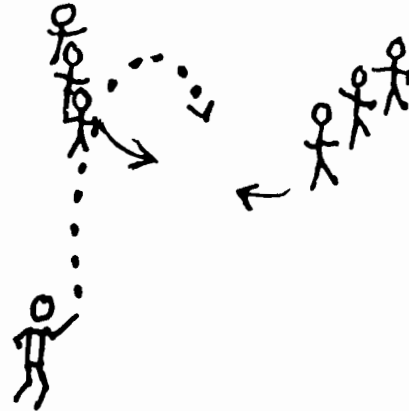
"Don't let the more aggressive player always take the play and thus destroy teamwork."

Wes Stock

Mini Drills-IV

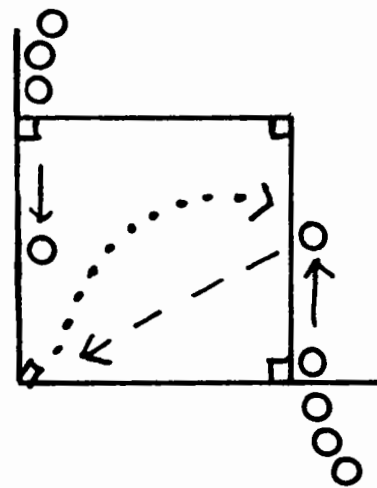
Game Situations

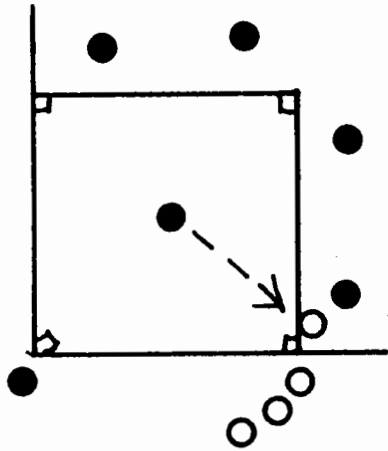
1. **"Call For It"**—Two players go for fly balls (or pop-ups) hit between them. Have 40 or 50 feet between the groups. Hit or throw a fly ball and the player closest to it calls, "I've got it..." "I've got it!" The other player says "Take it." and backs him up.



2. **Three In A Row**—Position your infield and have base runners at home. Hit an infielder a series of three ground balls in a row. He throws the balls to first, second and third — trying to beat the runner to each base. Make your hits easy to field and time and place them so the plays will be close at each base.

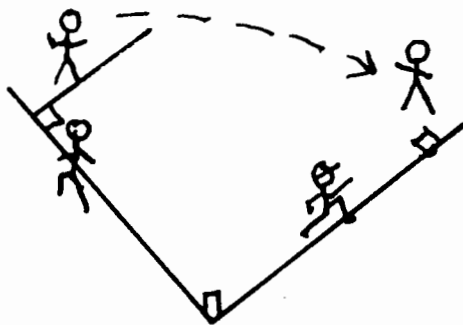
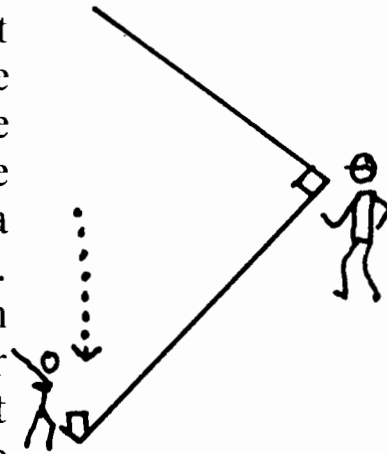
3. **"He's Going"**—Line up infielders (single file) at first or third. Position runners at third base and hit a pop fly the infielder goes after and catches. After the catch, the runner at third tags and tries to score. An option would be placing runners at first which would mean if the pop-up is dropped there's a force-out at second.





4. **Lead Off/Pick Off**— Set up your full infield on defense. The pitcher will pitch to the catcher from a stretch position to hold the runner on first. Position runners at first base to work on lead-offs and stealing second. Repeat the same procedure from second and third. An option would be to use a batter and give “hit and run” signals to him.

5. **Bunt or Punch**— Put your infielders in the field. Then rotate batters through to punch or bunt. Have a coach at first base. Give the batters signals to bunt or punch. Don't let the defense steal them. Batters are out if the ball goes foul or they miss the sign. You can play sides with a point for every successful play. Also let the baserunners stay on base until they are put-out or score. Keep the drill moving fast and allow the batters only one strike to do their job. An option is to call pitch-outs and work on pick-off plays at third and first.



6. **“Look Him Back”**— With a runner at third and home hit ground balls to infielders at third base. The fielder is to “look” the runner back and then throw the batter out at first. After the throw to first the runner on third is “on his own” to try and score from third. This helps both your offense and defense.