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LEARN TO PLAY



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STRETCH

WARM-UP / FORM RUNNING

- KNEE PULL TO CHEST
- ACTIVE HIGH KNEES / "A" SKIP
- QUAD PULL
- BUTT KICKERS
- WALKING LUNGES
- HURDLE WALKS FORWARD / BACKWARD
- LATERAL LUNGES
- ANKLE FLIPS
- FRANKENSTEINS
- SHUFFLE (20 YARDS)
- CARIOCA (20 YARDS)
- BACKPEDAL (30 YARDS)
- STRIDE IT OUT (30 YARDS)

UPPER BODY STRETCH

- ARM CIRCLES (FORWARD & BACKWARD)
- FORWARD SWINGS (UP & DOWN)

UPPER BODY STRETCH (CONT'D)

- SHOULDER SLAPS
- ARM ACROSS CHEST BILATERALLY
- TRICEPS BEHIND HEAD BILATERALLY
- FOREARM (FINGERS UP, FORWARD & DOWN)
- TRUNK TWISTS
- OBLIQUES

LOWER BODY STANDING

- FEET APART DOWN THE MIDDLE, RIGHT, LEFT
- STRADDLE STRETCH BILATERALLY

LOWER BODY GROUND

- HIP FLEXOR (LUNGE FORWARD AND BACK)
- CALF BILATERALLY
- SQUAT GROIN



BASEBALL ATHLETIC TRAINING



STATION 1:

Ladder Drills – These agility drills develop footwork skills for baseball players. Start slow and increase your speed progressively as you repeat the drills.



2S + FIELD AND THROW

In a running motion, step two feet in each square of the ladder. Finish by receiving a ground ball and make an accurate throw into the net. Try to keep your head up as you go through the ladder.

4S + FIELD AND THROW

Start from the beginning of the ladder, step through the ladder with an in-in – out-out pattern: the out-out step resulting in one foot on either side of the square you just stepped out of, the in-in step resulting in both feet inside the next square. Follow this pattern as you progress down the ladder. Finish by receiving a ground ball and make an accurate throw into the net.

LATERAL 4S + FIELD AND THROW

Start from the side of the ladder and step through

the ladder with an in-in and out-out pattern: step into the first square, and then out, with both feet. Progress down the side of the ladder and finish by receiving a ground ball and make an accurate throw into the net.

STATION 2:

Hurdle Drills – These drills develop balance and coordination as well as lower body power for baseball players. Start slow and increase your speed progressively as you repeat the drills.

HURDLE HOP

Starting at the first hurdle, hop sideways over the hurdle and land on one foot. Push hard off the



landing foot and leap back to the other side of the hurdle. Use one foot going one way through the hurdles; use the other foot coming back.

DOWN-UP TO LATERAL HURDLE SHUFFLE TO FIELDING POSITION

Start in a fielding position on the left side of the first hurdle; drop down to the push-up position and

bounce up quickly to the fielding position. Leap to the right over the hurdle and land in the fielding position. Walk to the next hurdle and drop down to the push-up position; bounce up quickly and leap to the left over this hurdle. Repeat throughout the row of hurdles.

4 POINT DRILL FOR SPEED

Position the hurdles to create a square; the player starts inside the square. From the athletic position, leap over the corner of the square and back into the square. Repeat on all four corners, making sure to face the same direction throughout the drill.

Variation: player can leap to the side and directly forward and backward out of the square.

STATION 3:

Cone Drills – These drills develop agility, balance, and coordination for baseball players.

15S PLANK/L PLANK/R PLANK/SUPERMAN

This drill develops core strength, an important foundation to generating rotational power and developing overall athletic ability in baseball players. **For 15 seconds each:** start in a plank position; raise your right arm and point to the sky, keeping your left hand on the ground; return to the plank position and do the same movement on the

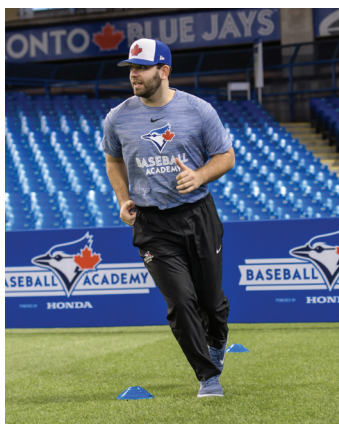
opposite side; return to the plank position and lower your body to the ground, raising your arms and legs off the ground in the Superman position.

DOWN-UP TO 45FT SPRINT

This acceleration drill is done half the distance between bases: 45ft on a full-size field. Start in an athletic position, drop down so the chest touches the ground; bounce up and sprint as fast as possible to the cone. Focus on being in an athletic position, staying low, and getting to your top running speed as quick as possible.

3 CONE DIAGONAL AGILITY DRILL INTO 3 MAX EFFORT BROAD JUMPS

The positioning of the cones in a triangle simulates tracking a fly ball in the outfield. Start on the left side of the base of the triangle formed by the cones. Sprint to the top of the triangle and immediately change direction tracking back to the far right side. This change in direction simulates tracking a fly ball (rather than back peddling), while still looking forward. The drill ends with the player doing 3, 2-ft leaps forward, to develop power in the legs.



1. FEET FIRST

When the ball is hit it is important to use your feet to get to the path of the baseball, as quickly as possible. Get to the spot where you meet the baseball, be sure to stay low and keep your hands in front. Field the baseball in front and then bring it into your body. Get ready to make the throw.

2. BACKHAND/FOREHAND

As you approach the baseball, you will either field it with your left foot forward or right foot forward, depending on when you get to it. Make sure you keep your glove in front of your body. Watch the ball all the way into your glove.

3. DOUBLE PLAY:

When the baseball is hit to second base, field it regularly and then pivot your upper body and feet toward second base. Step with your glove-side foot and feed the shortstop a smooth, underhanded toss. As a shortstop, slide over the base as you cross it. You should aim for the back corner of the base and then slide your foot over the base as you catch the ball and then deliver a throw to first base. When the baseball is hit to shortstop, you have two choices. You can finish the play by making a side-armed toss to the second baseman, or you can field the ball, square up with both feet and shoulders to second base, and then make a quick toss to the second baseman. As the second baseman, wait behind the base for the throw and then step to the base with your left foot as you receive the ball. Once you touch the base, cross your right foot behind

your left foot, and take a step forward with your left foot to make a throw. You will step away from the bag to avoid the runner.

4. TAKING A THROW AND APPLYING A TAG

You must first get to the back of the base and set your feet. When the throw is coming in, you must recognize where it will be, get your glove to the spot, catch the ball and apply the tag in front of the base.



1. DROP STEP

When the ball is hit over your head to the left or right, your first step will be a drop step. Your drop step foot is on the side in which the ball is hit. Run in a direct line to the baseball. When the ball is hit directly over your head, your first step will be a deep drop step on your throwing hand side.

2. 3-STEP THROW (CROW-HOP)

The crow-hop is a movement that gets the player best positioned to throw the ball. The forward momentum of the crow-hop also adds power and distance to the throw. After catching the ball, the fielder should push off the back foot and replace the front foot with the back foot. The best way to do this is to elevate off the ground, lift the back knee first, then the front knee, and put the back foot down approximately where the front foot started.

3. CROSSOVER STEP

The crossover step is important for an outfielder retrieving a ball hit into a gap. The proper crossover step is several movements at the same time. When the ball is hit to your right, you begin to cross over with your left leg, at the same time your right foot is turning in the direction you are going. It is very important to take the most direct line to the ball as possible.



4. CATCH AND THROW

For a right-handed throwing outfielder, you should make every effort to get at least two steps behind where the ball will land. With timing and momentum, the outfielder should receive the baseball with the right foot slightly forward, and catch the baseball above the right shoulder. After catching the baseball, the outfielder should turn the right foot so the instep is facing the target, execute a crow-hop and release the baseball.

BASERUNNING

1. RUNNING HOME TO FIRST

After hitting the baseball, you become a base runner. Run as fast as possible to first base and do not slow down until you have touched the base. Touch the front of the base and do not reach out on the last stride because this will slow you down. After touching the base, look to the right in foul territory to see if there is an overthrow.

2. WHEN YOU HIT A SINGLE

With an obvious single to the outfield, you should curl out halfway down the line. This is important in order to gain a good angle and a straight path toward second base. You should touch the inside corner of the bag with either foot. This allows the runner to not slow down. Round first while still sprinting hard, find the ball, and if it is fielded cleanly, put on the brakes, and return to first base.

3. REGULAR LEAD

It is important to determine how far you can

take a lead and still get back to first base safely with a dive. Get off the bag early enough to take your full lead. Take shuffle steps off the bag, but do not ever cross-over or you will increase your chances of being picked off. For a right-handed pitcher, it is also important to watch their right foot. Remember, the pitcher can't throw over to the base unless he steps off! For a left-handed pitcher, don't take a secondary lead until you are sure he/she is throwing home. If the pitcher's right leg crosses their left, they must throw home.

4. BENT-LEG SLIDE

To determine which way is most comfortable to slide, simply sit down cross-legged. The leg that goes underneath first is the same leg that goes underneath in the bent-leg slide. For example, the left leg would be bent underneath and perpendicular to the right leg which is pointing straight ahead (slightly bent) and with the foot in the air. The contact points of the runner are the left ankle, the left side of the buttocks, and the right heel, but try to keep your feet from getting jammed into the ground. You must know as a runner how long it takes to slide and correctly anticipate when to begin.



HITTING

1. GRIP ON THE BAT

Hitters should place their non-dominant hand on the bottom. If you're a right handed batter, your left hand goes at the bottom of the bat. Place your right hand on the top of the other hand. Grip the bat in your hands where your fingers meet your palm. If you're a left handed batter, do the opposite.

2. LOAD POSITION

The "load" portion of the baseball swing is comprised of: (1) hands and weight back, (2) front foot stride, and (3) pitch recognition. To begin the load, players want to bring their hands back toward the catcher. During this step, players will transfer a portion of their weight to their back side. The advantage of this as a hitter is that it will give you more time to recognize what pitch is being thrown.

3. SWING PLANE

To successfully hit the ball, your swing should match the path of the baseball thrown by the pitcher as closely as possible. This goes hand-in-hand with the load position, because when you load correctly, you can take your hands directly to the baseball.

4. ROTATION AND A GOOD SWING SEQUENCE

A good swing is powered by the rotation of the hips. Faster bat speed is important because it allows the hitter to generate additional power. The swing sequence goes from the back foot, to the back knee, to the back hip and finishes with the back shoulder.





BASEBALL ACADEMY

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