



# Wasco Baseball Infield Play



## Drills to use for development and training

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### Pre-Pitch and stance

Two key elements; how and when do we get in good ready position and what should stance look like; most of the game is played in these two modes and the last is the reaction.

**Position:** athletic, which may look different for different players; corners have hands extended and lower; middle have hands in a bit closer and higher. Remember – where your hands go, you go. Fielders should get into ready position as the ball crosses the plate in the hitting zone; to practice this do

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**Ball Drop drill:** Toss ball in air and when the ball hits the ground, that is player’s cue to be in ready position; have them hold position and check for corrections; increase tempo as they have success; vary the toss to check for timing. Add a catch of the ball and a movement of the hand / arm to have them build in a first step and a reaction to the skill.

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When in the fielding position, a few key items to look for and emphasize; hands should be out in front and fingers curled down toward the ground; back should be slightly angled; we should be able to read logo on chest; eyes should be behind the ball; *always align eyes, glove, and ball.* Work from the low to high (“dirty glove”) and in to out; this leads to “funnel” vs. “press”. Which is best / right? Answer: do both – the ball will dictate which is best based on type of ball and lane

**Types** – important for fielders to “read” the hop, so let’s help them. Use the following terms to identify types of balls they will encounter.

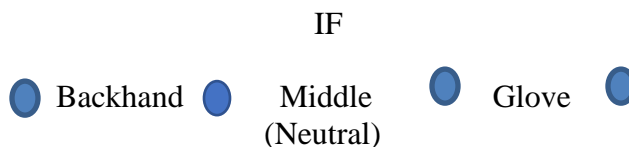
Snake – on ground and mostly rolls close to ground

Short hop – leaves the ground on bounces between the ankle and the bent knee

Long hop – leaves the ground on bounces higher than the knee and lower than the chest; this could also be a one or two hopper right at or near a fielder; this could require backhand and “stick”

Top shelf – this is a ball hit at chest level or above

**Lanes** – Think of the path of the ball as being in one of three lanes- middle (neutral), glove side, and backhand. If the ball is in the middle lane, it is to be fielded with two hands. If it ends up in the other lanes, it will be better fielded with one hand. The larger the middle lane for a player, the bigger his “range”. For a visual, it might look something like this:



That being said, to teach the read and the proper approach and footwork, do the following:

## **Drills**

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Align infielder and cones to represent lanes; give them commands to approach and catch all four types of balls in all the lanes; do this by mental reps where they fake a catch and throw; dry drill by placing a ball where you want them to field it and imitate a throw

### **Middle lane (Neutral)** – snake, short hop, and long hop

IF play is all about time and distance, so field the ball out in front, two hands, push through (unless caught by long hop) and attack the ball always in same pattern – Right / Left catch ; Right / Left to target and throw and follow. Top shelf here and hand side might require a drop step and then R/L to target and throw. Exception is ball hit slightly to hand side of middle lane; then Ifer will take first step as left (crossover) to get direction and angle to get behind ball and approach is the same after that.

### **Glove lane** – snake, short hop, long hop

Drop step and open to glove side to try to get behind ball; hand is extended and when catch is made, if ball is in front of body or even, curl the wrist toward the body to effective “turn” the arm, which will turn the shoulder and make the body turn in the direction you want to throw, which is toward first base generally. If it is behind the center line of the body, let the ball go back in the glove and the hand will allow the arm and shoulder to “spin” the body and allow you to plant on back foot and make a decent throw towards first base. Practice the dive and recover on this lane as well.

### **Backhand lane** – snake, short hop

For a snake to this lane, approach this with glove extended and “press” or push through with the glove. Be sure to get eyes behind ball and align ball, glove, and eyes. For a short hop, long hop, or top shelf, it will require a drop step and a “stick” of the glove, meaning I do not press through it, I simply stop the glove and raise the elbow to stop my momentum and get my weight on the back foot in a position to get off a good throw and not be rushed. This needs to be done with the glove hand / left leg extended and with the glove hand/ right leg extended; they will work both, especially the corners.

**Ladders** – used to teach footwork and add a ball at end to keep hands / feet working together

**Feeds w/ screens** – to get lots of reps with a throw attached. Throw into the screen or coach

**Lanes** – work one at time or use all three to work read; slow pace; pick up tempo as they progress; can be done with partner and one ball thrown to one place; fielder adjusts feet to make appropriate catch in the simulated lane called for by the partner or coach.

### **Picks in dirt**

**Knee drill** – fungo or toss

**Heel to toe** – left toe hits, they catch the baseball

**Step into** – same as above but add w step and or throw

**Rolled** – X # of times to R / M / L; standing

**Recovery** – hit off chest or drop and throw

**Blind** – w/ fungo but have the face away; w/ a mixed “bag” (football, reaction ball, etc.) field it

**Web Gem** – have them start with ball in glove and create a dive; get up and throw or simulate

## Summary

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Break fielding into 6 F's

Feet – prep step; rhythm to athletic position (do this with fungo as well)

Field – work from ground up; low to high and in front ;; eyes behind; align ball, eyes, glove

Funnel – bring to sternum (depending on hop) middle of body; thumbs down

Foot work - R/ L catch; R / L to target

Fire – stay athletic; “feed the ear” ;bring ball to the ear; elbow is less than 90 degrees

Follow – line up with ball and target

Scaffold your drills / movements; start w/ isolated specific movements and then add distance/ speed; end with live balls off a bat. Never start with hitting ground balls off of a bat.

No pats allowed; footwork is either two step – quicker runner / slower ball

Or 4 step – middle lane/ slow runner or off balance

Incorporate IF work in throwing at practice / pre-game

R/ L catch , R/L throw

Long hops

Throw on run

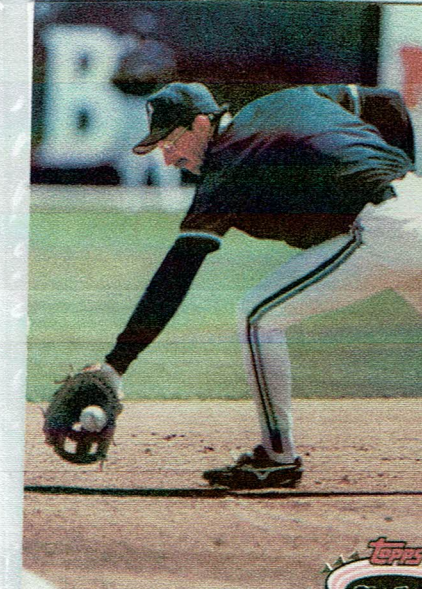
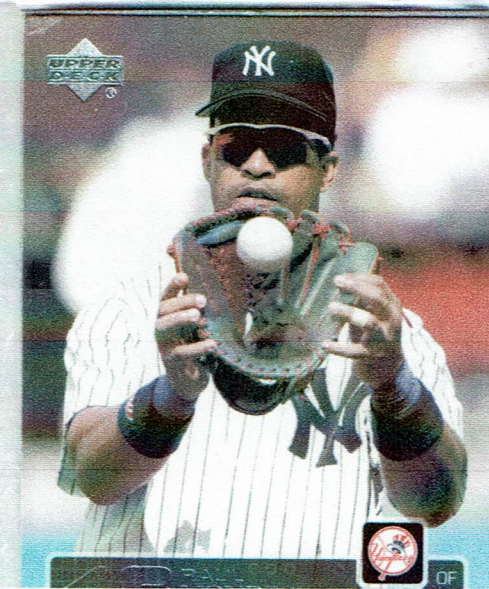
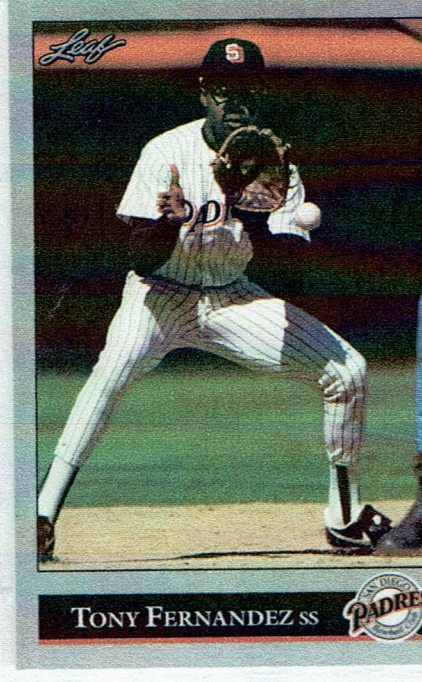
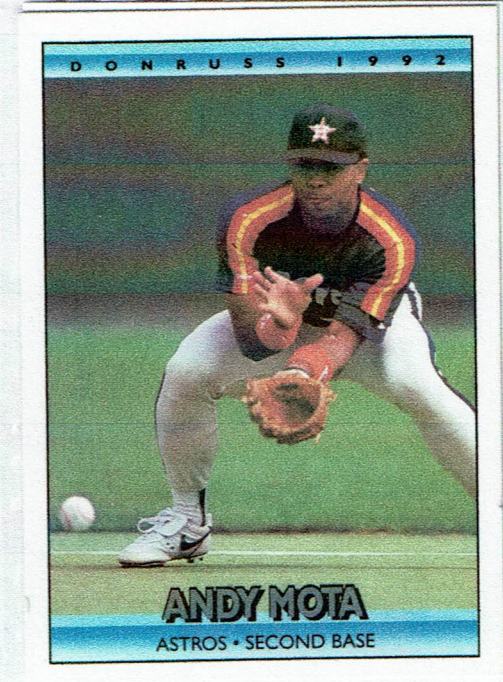
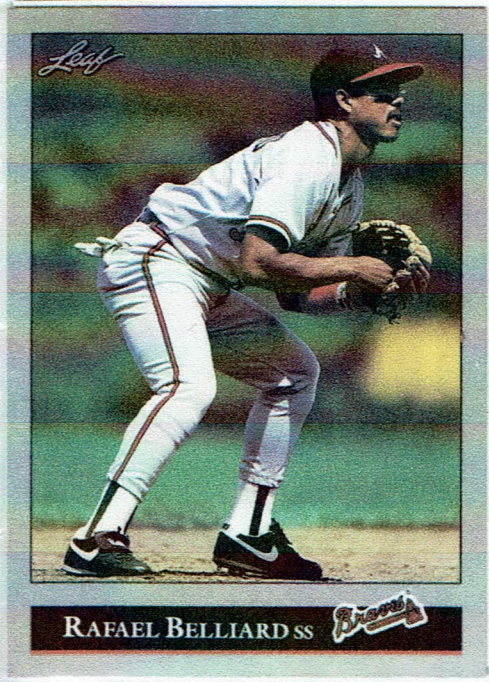
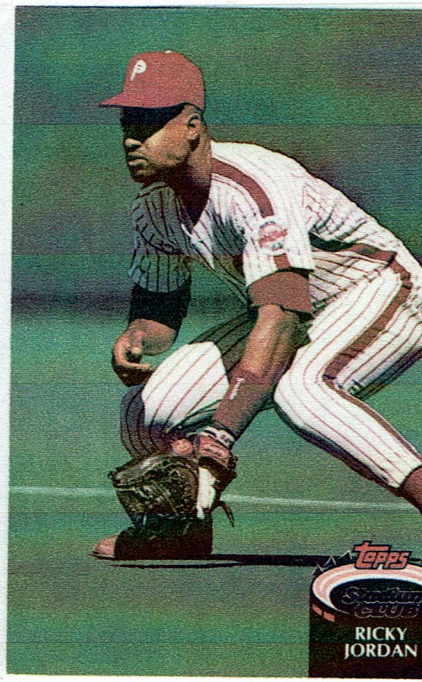
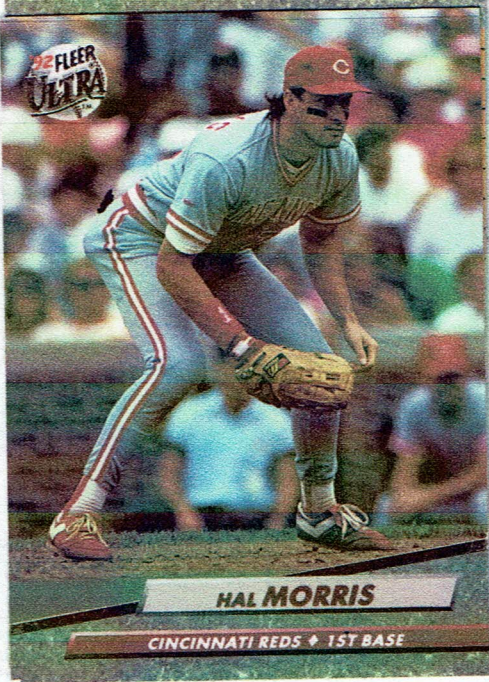
Shuffle , shuffle go

Tags

Relays

clock drill





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