

## Hi Coach! And welcome to Baseball Tutorials!

In this free PDF, we're going to check out 7 fundamental drills that will rapidly improve your player's skill level. There's enough here to run a practice from start to finish, including drills for hitting mechanics, baserunning, throwing, catching, fielding, and pitching.

All of these drills were developed by Coach Bob Bennett, one of the winningest Division I coaches of all time, and former president of the American Baseball Coaches Association. Coach Bennett has more than 40 years of experience, with 17 conference titles and two trips to the College World Series!

So you're definitely in good hands.

But before we get started with the drills, I want to address something just as important.

### Motivating Your Kids!

At Baseball Tutorials, our mission is to give coaches the tools and knowledge to engage their players, improve their skills, and create a positive baseball experience for the entire team.

And a big part of that is building your athletes' self confidence and motivation! So, on the following page, we've provided a "cheat sheet" with 94 ways to encourage your kids and build their self-esteem. Feel free to print the sheet out and put it in your coaching binder (or save this file to your mobile device for easy access).

One last thing – if you enjoy the drills and want to see more, you can download the complete set of 71 drills by visiting this page:

[www.BaseballTutorials.com/ybss](http://www.BaseballTutorials.com/ybss)

Okay... enough pre-amble... let's get started!

- Coach Kenny



## 94 Ways To Encourage Your Players and Build Their Self-Esteem

1. You're on the right track now!
2. You've got it made.
3. SUPER!
4. That's right
5. That's good.
6. You're really working hard today.
7. You are very good at that.
8. That's coming along nicely.
9. GOOD WORK
10. I'm happy to see you working like that.
11. That's much, much better!
12. Exactly right.
13. I'm proud of the way you worked today.
14. You're doing that much better today.
15. You've just about got it.
16. That's the best you've ever done.
17. You're doing a good job.
18. THAT'S IT!
19. Now you've figured it out.
20. That's quite an improvement
21. GREAT!
22. I knew you could do it
23. Congratulations!
24. Not bad
25. Keep working on it.
26. You're improving.
27. Now you have it
28. You are learning fast.
29. Good for you!
30. Couldn't have done it better myself.
31. Aren't you proud of yourself?
32. One more time and you'll have it.
33. You really make my job fun.
34. That's the right way to do it.
35. You're getting better every day.
36. You did it that time!
37. That's not half bad.
38. Nice going
39. You haven't missed a thing!
40. WOW!
41. That's the way!
42. Keep up the good work.
43. TERRIFIC!
44. Nothing can stop you now.
45. That's the way to do it.
46. SENSATIONAL!
47. You've got your brain in gear today.
48. That's better.
49. That was first class work.
50. EXCELLENT!
51. That's the best ever.
52. You've just about mastered it.
53. PERFECT!
54. That's better than ever.
55. Much better!
56. WONDERFUL!
57. You must have been practicing.
58. You did that very well.
59. FINE!
60. Nice going.
61. You're really going to town.
62. OUTSTANDING!
63. FANTASTIC!
64. TREMENDOUS!
65. That's how to handle that
66. Now that's what I call a fine job.
67. That's great.
68. Right on!
69. You're really improving.
70. You're doing beautifully!
71. SUPERB!
72. Good remembering.
73. You've got that down pat.
74. You certainly did well today.
75. Keep it up!
76. Congratulations. You got it right!
77. You did a lot of work today.
78. Well look at you go.
79. I'm very proud of you.
80. MARVELOUS!
81. I like that.
82. Way to go!
83. Now you have the hang of it
84. You're doing fine!
85. Good thinking.
86. You are really learning a lot.
87. Good going.
88. I've never seen anyone do it better.
89. Keep on trying
90. You outdid yourself today!
91. Good for you!
92. I think you've got it now.
93. That's a good (boy/girl).
94. Good job, (person's name).

# Bag Hitting Drill

## Setup

Take a large punching bag and position it at a height that approximates the strike zone for your hitter. Secure it against a fence or a pole with duct tape, velcro straps or rope. The hitter should set up in his normal stance facing the punching bag.

## Execution

The hitter will go through his normal swing sequence (relax - ready position - stride - swing) and make contact with swinging the bat into the punching bag.

Practice hitting the middle pitch by setting up with the front foot lined up with the middle of the bag. Practice hitting the outside pitch by moving forward, so the bat makes contact with the bag at back part of the hitting zone. Work on the inside pitch by moving backwards slightly, making contact with the bag in the front of the hitting zone. Also practice hitting high, middle, and low pitches by adjusting the hands to the pitch location. Take 5-10 swings for each type of pitch you are working on.

## Coaching Tips

- On contact, the bottom hand should be palm down while the top hand is palm down.
- Outside pitch: keep the hips slightly closed, try to make contact deeper in the hitting zone, and hit the ball to the opposite field. Middle pitch: open the hips slightly, try to make contact in the middle of the plate, and hit the ball to center field. Inside pitch: open the hips even more, try to make contact out in front of the plate, and pull the ball on contact
- The back hip always goes to the target. Practice placing one hand on the back hip, taking the stride and pointing the finger (and hip) in the direction you would hit the ball
- Always stride to the same spot regardless of the pitch location
- Use visualization to help players picture how they will swing on different types of pitches
- Low pitch: take the same stride and keep the hips at the same level. Adjust the hands lower to make contact. High pitch: take the same stride and keep the hips at the same level. Adjust the hands higher to make contact
- Keep the hands inside the ball to create a shorter, more compact swing. Avoid looping or casting the bat around the plate. Be short to the ball and long after you hit it to generate more power.



# Baserunning Sequence Drill

## Setup

Divide your team into 4 groups. Station each group at a point halfway down each baseline.

- Group 1 halfway between home and first
- Group 2 halfway between first and second
- Group 3 halfway between second and third
- Group 4 halfway between third and home

## Execution

The drill begins with the player at the front of each line proceeding to the next base, then executing a turn using the proper fundamentals. He then advances to the next line, going from first base, to second base, to third base to home.

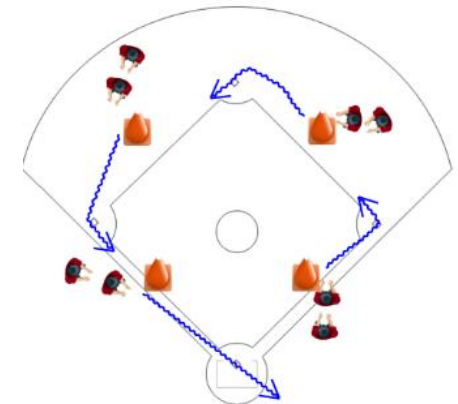
There are four phases to this drill:

1. Walk through
2. Jog through (approximately half speed)
3. Run through at three quarter speed
4. Run through at full speed

Note: start at phase 1 and do not proceed to the next phase until the players have demonstrated the proper fundamentals.

## Coaching Tips

- Try to tag the inside corner of the base with the left foot. But don't change your running rhythm in order to do this. (over time the left foot tag will become more natural)
- To make the turn, throw the left arm across the chest and turn the shoulders to the right, while the hips and feet turn to the left (the direction of the next base)
- To help your players remember to this, place a coach behind the bag, and have them reach across their bodies with the left arm and touch his chest as they make the turn
- Try to "run in a square" and cut towards each base on the sharpest possible angle



# Learning The Four Seam Grip

## Setup

Line your fielders up facing you, each one with a ball and a glove.

## Execution

A proper four seam grip generates backspin and allows the ball to fly straight and true, and is the preferred throwing grip for all fielders. Demonstrate the proper four seam grip as follows:

- Take the middle and index fingers of your throwing hand, and place them perpendicular to the horseshoe of the seams on the baseball. The "horseshoe seam" should face into your ring finger of your throwing hand.
- NOTE: It's called the horseshoe seam simply because the seam itself looks like the shape of a horseshoe.
- Next, place your thumb directly beneath the baseball, resting on the smooth leather. Ideally, you should rest your thumb in the center of the horseshoe seam on the bottom part of the baseball.
- Grip the ball softly, like an egg, in your fingertips. There should be a "gap" or space between the ball and your palm. This is the key to making a good, hard four-seam throw with maximal backspin and velocity. A loose grip minimizes "friction" between your hand and the baseball. The less friction, of course, the quicker the baseball can leave your hand.

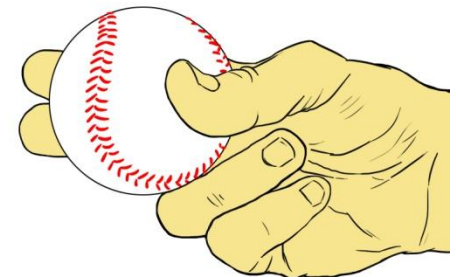
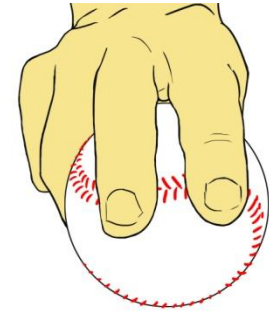
Have the players practice the grip with their eyes open, then with their eyes closed. Over time, they will develop a muscle memory and "feel" for the ball which will allow them to establish the proper four-seam grip in just a split second.

Once they have the grip down, separate them into pairs, facing each other, around 20-30 feet apart. Practice catching the ball, establishing the four seam grip, then throwing it back to your partner.

## Coaching Tips

Always establish the grip before pulling the ball out of the glove. Don't allow your players to fiddle with the grip as they cock back to throw, as this is a major cause of bobbled balls and costly errors.

FOUR SEAM GRIP



# Outfield Ground Ball Fielding Drill

## Setup

The outfielders will line up single file in the outfield facing home plate. A coach stands at home plate (or the edge of the infield) with a fungo bat and balls. An additional coach or player stands to the side to receive throws from the fielders.

## Execution

The coach will hit a ground ball to the first player in the outfielders line. The outfielder will charge hard at the ball, breakdown, field the ball using the Knee Method, Semi-Knee Method or Pro Method, then make an accurate throw back to home plate. The coach will then hit a ground ball to the next player, as the first player rotates to the back of the line.

## Coaching Tips

- The **Knee Method** is typically taught to young players as the safest and most reliable way to field a ground ball in the outfield. You can also use this technique when there are no runners on base, when the ground is very bumpy, or when there is no chance of throwing a runner out.
- The outfielder should charge the ball hard for the first 4 or 5 steps, then decrease his speed, get under control, and break down to field the ball.
- To field the ball, drop to the throwing side knee (the right knee for right handed players) and put the back of the glove flat on the ground between the legs. Watch the ball into the glove, trap it with the throwing hand, then rise up and step into the throw.
- The outfielder should center his body in front of the ball, so he can block it with his torso if it takes a bad hop.
- The **Semi-Knee Method** is a faster, but slightly riskier way to field a outfield grounder. The technique is the same as the Knee Method, except the outfielder will only drop the throwing-side knee halfway to the ground while fielding the ball. This will allow him to move into his throwing motion more quickly, and have a better chance at throwing out a runner.
- The **Pro Method** (or Scoop Method) is the riskiest way to field an outfield grounder and should be used only in situations where the game will be lost if the fielder doesn't get the ball in quickly. This technique is for a do-or-die situation in which the tying or winning run is attempting to score and the outfielder must make a quick throw to the infield. The outfielder runs at the ball and scoops it up while on the move, placing the glove to the outside of the glove-side leg (instead of between the legs).



KNEE METHOD



SEMI KNEE METHOD



PRO METHOD

# Game Situation Fielding - Pitchers and First Basemen

## Setup

Place a line of players at the pitcher's mound and a line of players behind first base. The coach stands at home plate with a fungo bat and balls. A catcher is in his stance behind the plate.

## Execution

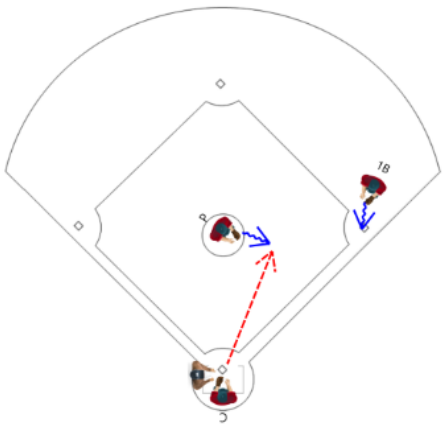
The first player in the pitcher's line will simulate throwing a pitch. The coach will then hit a slow ground ball to the area between the pitcher and first baseman.

If the pitcher fields the ball, the first baseman will cover first and the pitcher will make the throw to him. If the first baseman fields the ball, the pitcher will cover first. The players will rotate to the back of the line after each rep.

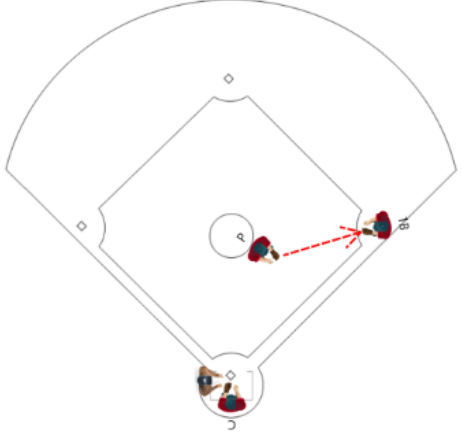
## Coaching Tips

- The player who is fielding the ball should always call "Ball" loud and clear
- The player who is covering first base will call "Bag"
- Ball should always be called first, and Bag called second
- If the pitcher takes 3 steps and does not call Ball, the first baseman calls Ball
- The first baseman is the captain - he gets the final decision on who will play the ball
- The pitcher should always tag first base with his right foot and stay inside the baseline, to avoid colliding with the runner
- Use an underhand toss for short range throws
- If you have several multi-position players, have them switch lines after every player has had a turn, so they can run the drill from multiple positions

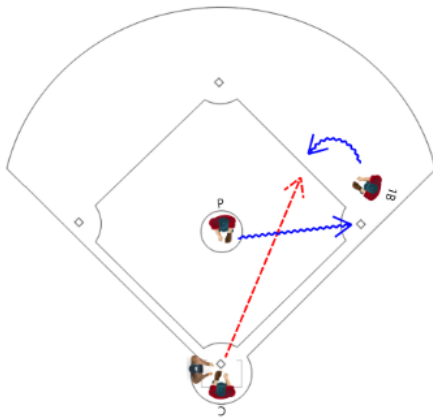
PITCHER FIELDS GROUND BALL



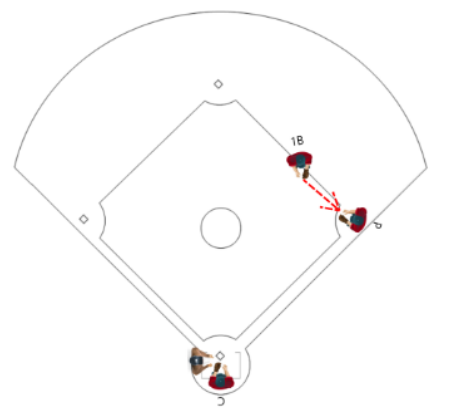
FIRST BASEMAN COVERS FIRST BASE



FIRST BASEMAN FIELDS GROUND BALL



PITCHER COVERS FIRST BASE



# Dry Run Pitching Drill

## Goal

To help pitchers understand and develop the phases of the pitching motion, in a slow, controlled manner that allows the coach to make adjustments and corrections.

## Setup

Line up your pitchers facing the coach with about 4-5 feet of space between them. They will wear gloves but do not need a ball for this drill.

## Execution

Take your pitchers through each phase of the pitching motion one by one, stopping at the end of each phase to make adjustments and corrections.

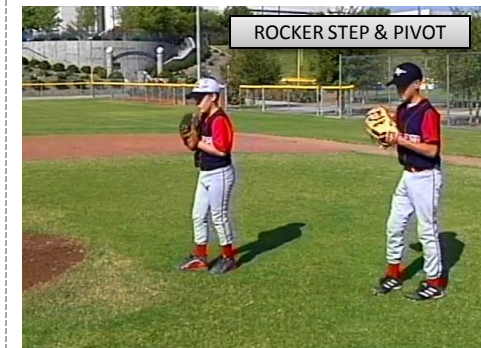
### Phase 1: Stance

- The pitcher's weight should be evenly distributed on both feet
- Eyes should be facing the target
- The glove should be palm up and the throwing hand palm down to conceal the ball

### Phase 2: Pivot and Balance

- Take a short "rocker step" with the stride foot (glove side foot) that goes backward, away from the rubber
- The step should be short, and compact so the pitcher's head remains over the ball side foot.
- Following the rocker step, the pivot foot (ball side foot) will square off parallel to the rubber
- Bring the stride leg up into a controlled motion to transfer the pitcher's weight into the pivot leg
- Hold the "balance" position with the stride leg up and balance until the coach says stop

*(cont'd on next page)*



## Dry Run Pitching Drill (continued)

### Phase 3: Separation and Stride

- After the stride leg reaches its highest point of elevation, the pitcher will separate his hands in a thumbs down position, while beginning his stride toward home plate
- Perform a controlled "fall" towards home plate, with the head, glove side knee, elbow and shoulder leading the way
- Make sure to keep a firm back pivot leg, rather than collapsing it down into a "drop and drive" motion. This will help pitchers keep the ball release point high, and develop pitches that travel on a downward plane toward the hitter
- Upon foot strike of the stride leg, the arms and body should form a "T" position. Minimize stress on the stride leg by landing with a bent knee.

### Phase 4: Release and follow through

- After achieving the "T" position, the throwing shoulder will accelerate explosively toward the plate for the release and follow through
- The pitcher's head should move to directly over the stride leg, while the throwing shoulder, arms and upper torso extend toward home plate
- As the throwing arm moves forward, the throwing elbow should be even or slightly higher than the throwing shoulder
- The elbow snaps to full extension
- The wrist should be straight and firm, while the fingers stay on top of the ball
- The pivot foot heel rotates up and out, then comes off the rubber to complete the weight transfer from the back foot to the front foot

Progress through each of the phases one by one, providing corrections and adjustments along the way. Once the player is comfortable, with phase 1, have them complete phase 1 and 2 together, then stop. Then add phase 3 and stop. Then add phase 4 to create the complete pitching delivery.



# Catchers - Ball in the Dirt Drill

## Setup

The catchers are in their stance, facing the coach with around 4-5 feet of space between them. You can practice this with gloves only or full equipment.

## Execution

From about 5-10 feet away, the coach will toss the ball softly into the dirt, directly in front of the catcher. With the ball in mid-air, the catcher will quickly lower himself to block it by first dropping the butt down, then softly lowering the knees to the ground

## Coaching Tips

Catchers must be in a stance that allows their first move to be down, rather than up when they begin to execute the block. The easiest way to accomplish this is to insure that their feet are far enough apart so their heel are in contact with the ground, toes are pointed up the baselines and their thighs are parallel to the ground.

If they are in a deep crouch then their hips will have to go up before they can begin to move towards the ground. A deep crouch will only add to the amount of time it takes to block a ball by making the athlete travel upward before they are able to drive to the ground.

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## Catchers - Ball in the Dirt Drill

Work on the following cues when teaching catchers to block balls in the dirt.

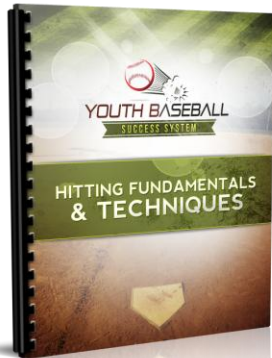
- Replace your feet with your knees in one, fluid motion: Drive your knees into the ground to where your feet were (about shoulder-width apart, with your upper body centered between them).
- Clear your feet: So that you can get to your knees easier, clear away your feet by sliding them out to the side of your body. Keep your shins on the ground and your toes pointed back and away from you to be in the best position to block the ball.
- Drop your mitt: As you see the ball approaching the dirt, drop your mitt between your legs. The web of your mitt should be in contact with the ground, and the palm of your glove should be squared towards the pitch. Your fingers will be below the ball.
- Tuck your arms: As you drop your glove, keep your throwing hand poised above the mitt or tight to your throwing-side. Your glove-side arm should be tight to your body, making a larger blocking area.
- Angle forward: Your upper body should be straightened and angled forward, over the ball. By doing this, you can knock down the ball and deflect it straight into the ground, rather than away from you.
- Keep your eyes down: Tuck your chin and always watch the ball.

Try mixing it up by throwing dirt balls to the left, right and middle of the catcher. As the catcher gets the technique down, put on full equipment and begin throwing dirt balls from a longer range and with more velocity

If you enjoyed those drills and want to see more, I'd highly recommend checking out the complete Youth Baseball Success System package. Inside, you get 71 unique, fun and effective drills for all ages 6 to 16.

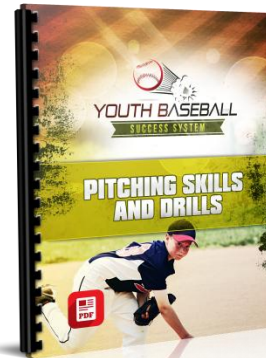
The package is split into seven downloadable reports, each one jam-packed with simple, proven drills you can take right to the field.

## Here's a quick summary of everything that's included...



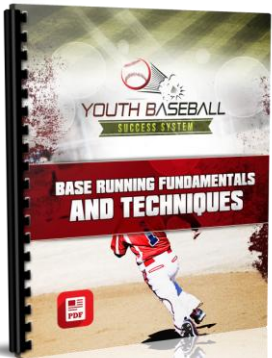
### Hitting Fundamentals and Techniques

- How to develop flawless hitting mechanics
- How to improve bat speed
- How to increase hitting power
- How to get more confident at the plate
- And much more...



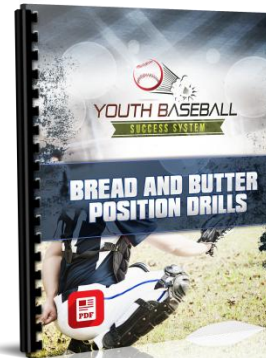
### Pitching Fundamentals and Techniques

- A simple A-B-C formula for developing proper pitching mechanics
- How to increase velocity
- How to improve accuracy and control
- How to pitch safely and effectively
- And much more...



### Baserunning Fundamentals and Techniques

- How to develop efficient running form
- How to take effective leads,
- How to take aggressive base turns
- How to execute safe, effective slides
- And much more...

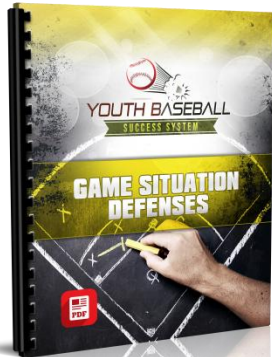


### Bread and Butter Position Drills

Discover 5 essential “daily development drills” for each of the 4 position groups

- Pitchers
- Catchers
- Infielders
- Outfielders

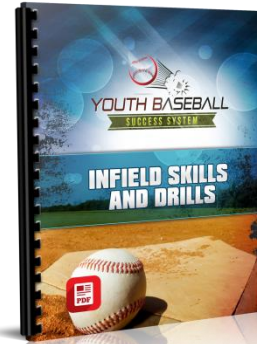
## Here's a quick summary of everything that's included (continued)...



### Game Situation Defenses

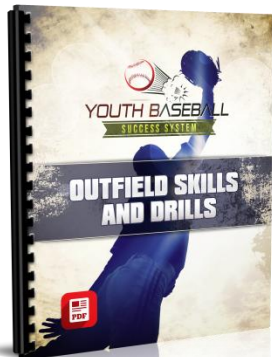
Learn 8 common fielding situations and how to practice them

- Bunts
- Relays
- Double Plays
- And more



### Infield Skills and Drills

- Throwing mechanics
- Catching mechanics
- Fielding mechanics
- Simple and fun drills to improve your infielding



### Outfield Skills and Drills

- Throwing drills to improve power and accuracy
- How to field fly balls, line drives and ground balls
- Outfield footwork and agility drills

## HOW TO ORDER

Click the link below to visit the Youth Baseball Success System info page. If you like what you see, simply click the Add to Cart button on that page, fill out your details, and you'll get instant access to the complete package in PDF format!

[www.BaseballTutorials.com/ybss](http://www.BaseballTutorials.com/ybss)