

AA/U7/U8 League

Stretching and Warmups

- Players should get to the field 20 mins before game
- Introduce more complex stretches and warmups before doing any throwing or hitting
- After a few games, elect one player team captain for the games to help lead team in stretching/warmups (Note: encourage the captain to call outs and play, i.e., “2 outs and play is at 1st, etc.” when in the field during the game). This player can receive a game ball.

Throwing>Pitcher>Stretch Motion

- Demonstrate foot position on rubber along with shoulder alignment
- Demonstrate “set” with a varied count for 1,2,3 seconds
- Demonstrate closing the hip on the leg lift. Drill> balance exercise w/ bent back leg to drive
- Arm motion with full draw downward past hip pocket
- Landing leg; “soft” front; relaxed ankle w/toe point
- Follow through to other hip pocket

Throwing>Infield/Outfield>Arm Angles

- For AA, all throws with full “spear” arm motion; no short arm “archer”
- Emphasize front shoulder position; “gun sight”

Throwing>Infield/Outfield>Proper Footwork

- Demonstrate “crow hop”; step into spot vacated by lead foot with rear foot; overstep twists shoulder
- No “duck waddling” = no throwing with open shoulders

Fielding>Catcher >Body and Glove Position

- Body aligned to pitcher; no off axis
- Target low in zone; free hand tucked
- Primary vs. secondary position
- Blocking pitches in dirt (over plate)
 - Glove open; fills gap in legs—not trying to catch ball in glove
 - Chin is tucked
 - Chest protector blocks ball

Fielding>Hands>Soft Hands

- Demonstrate by imagining catching a baseball without a glove on
- “Octopus” vs. “robot” catching the ball
- Demonstrate how soft hands create a smooth transition to the throw

Fielding>Positioning>Fielder Priority

- Outfield
 - CF has priority and dictates position of other OF
 - Balls hit in gap CF> LF/RF. LF/RF responsible to call off CF. OF not catching backs up.
- Infield
 - SS has priority over 2nd and 3rd baseman, primary responsibility of baseman is the base on gap balls
 - Infield has priority over pitcher and catcher on infield (fair or foul) pop-ups
 - Pitcher has priority in front of mound
 - Catcher has priority on all short “bunts”

Fielding> Positioning>Footwork

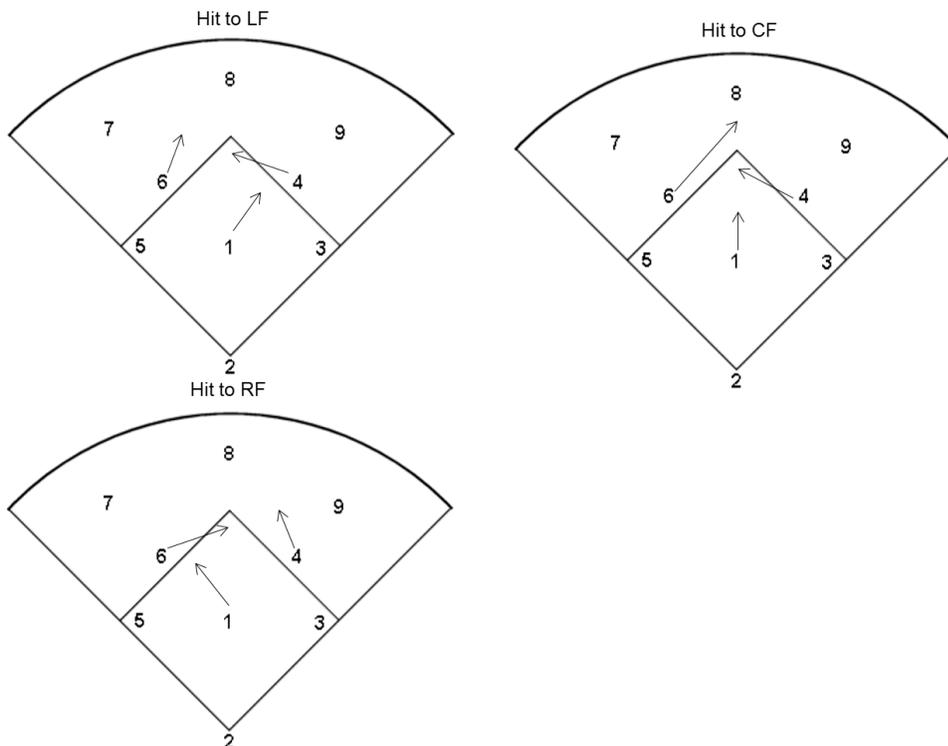
- No “duck waddling” to the ball. Run, plant, catch, throw.

Fielding> Positioning>Obstruction

- Fielder Obstructs Runner; IF stay out of base path; position in front, or back of base path--
Runner advances

Fielding>Positioning>Cutoffs I

- Simple cutoffs to 2nd base.
- Only the cut-off man has hands up – “X”



Hitting>Swing >Hands and Arms>Swoosh vs. Casting

- Demonstrate both. Swoosh = hands stay compact; casting = hands separate from body like fishing cast

Hitting>Stance>Weight shift

- Introduce front foot unweighting and stride

Running> Footwork>Intro to Sliding

- NO headfirst slides allowed
- Bent leg, do not slide with straight leg
- Hands and fingers

Running>Ball Awareness>Interference

- Runner Interferes with Fielder –Runner is out