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## Four Corners

What you need:

- ▶ Gloves
- ▶ Ball

Goal of the Drill:

- ▶ Throwing accuracy
- ▶ Smooth ball transfer from glove to hand

How to play:

- ▶ Divide the team into 4 groups (home plate, 1st base, 2nd base, 3rd base)
  - ▶ Ball starts at home and have them throw around the horn.
1. You can have the group 1 go until they drop/over throw the ball and then have group 2 go.
  2. Players can switch out after they throw the ball and move to the back of the line
  3. Have players follow their throw to the next base
  4. Change the direction of the throws: home plate to second base to first base to third base back to home
  5. Add a second ball: start at home and second base

### Make it competitive:

- ▶ Set a goal of how many catches in a row without an error
- ▶ Challenge the team to go around the horn X amount of time in X amount of time
- ▶ Challenge the team to throw until they miss - let them set their highest amount
- ▶ Change the direction: home - short, first, third to second back to home

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## Flips

Goal of the Drill:

- ▶ Quicker release than coming over top to try
- ▶ Used when we are close to where we want the play to be

How to play:

- ▶ When you bring your arm to flip-its like hand shake and a small pop of the ball
  - ▶ As you are fielding the ball, stay low in your posture
  - ▶ Follow your flip - your flip should be low and firm
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## Rolls and Flips infield drill

What you need:

- ▶ Gloves
- ▶ Balls
- ▶ Second base
- ▶ Cones - optional

Goal of the Drill:

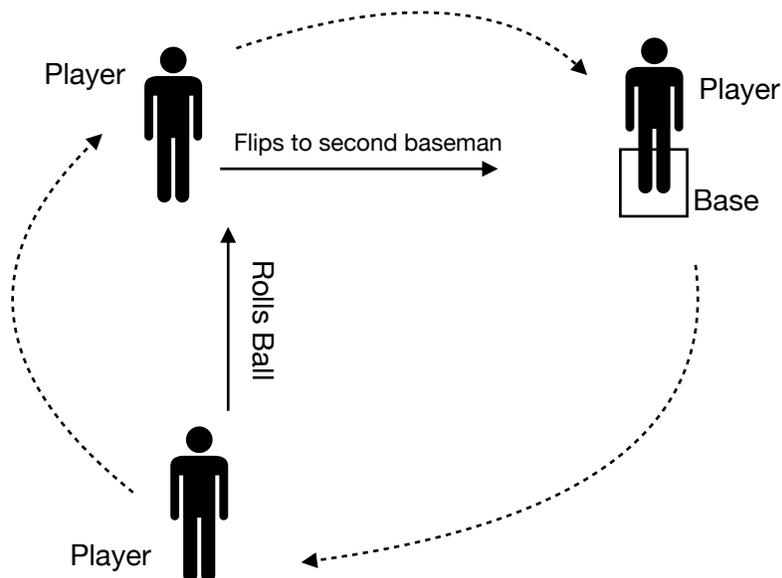
- ▶ Team rotation station drill
- ▶ Working on our flips / underhand toss to a base
- ▶ Working on flips / underhand toss to second base to turn a double

How to play:

- ▶ Break group into 3 groups:
  1. Players rolling the ball starts themselves around the pitchers mound. This is the starting station and each player at this station starts with a ball. Ball is rolled to the fielders at the shortstop position. Fielders (shortstop position) that are fielding the ball to flip to bag
  2. Players at the shortstop position, receive ground ball and flip it to the players covering second base.
  3. Players covering second base: After receiving the ball, players should come up in a throwing position (not actually throwing it) to mimic a throw to first base. Player along with the ball, should follow and now become the roller
- ▶ Players follow their roll/flip - continuous moving

**Progression:**

- Add another station at first base so players covering second base can throw to first



## Pop fly Progression

What you need:

- ▶ Gloves
- ▶ Balls

Goal of the Drill:

- ▶ Teaching glove position
- ▶ Teaching catching on the run - in front, right shoulder, left shoulder

### **Progression 1:**

- ▶ Have players on knees - this allows them to just focus on the glove position and not leg work
- ▶ Front Pop Fly:
  - ▶ Have them have gloves in the air with fingertips to the sky - put them in that pop fly glove position.
- ▶ Coaches - gently just toss low pop flies so players get comfortable with being under the ball and getting their mitt into the proper position.
- ▶ Over head flies:
- ▶ Have players continue to be on their knees - but back towards you, on a slight angle as if they are running back on a pop fly (running and extending)
- ▶ Work both glove side and hand side
- ▶ You can even have players pump their arms to mimic running to get that feeling of running and extending

### **Progression 2:**

- ▶ Players standing - no drop step
- ▶ Have players start next to coach and just run back - jog - 5 to 10 steps to get that feeling of a run and extend. Focusing on tucking the glove and not running with glove extending, getting that feeling of keeping you head tracking the ball.
- ▶ Coaches giving a gentle/light pop fly
- ▶ Do this for both glove and hand side

### **Progression 3:**

- ▶ Have players standing towards coach - face to face.
- ▶ Have players open hips / pivot open left or right and jog back 5-10 steps to catch pop up
- ▶ Keeping eye on ball and tracking it into glove.
- ▶ It's OK for players keep it slow and focus on the drop step.

As players progress and become comfortable with the drop step, coaches you may use the ball to point left and right and say go and speed up the drill, have the players run further back on the ball an throw it back to work on the quick release of the ball and getting it back into the infield.

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## Drop Step

What you need:

- ▶ Glove
- ▶ Ball
  
- ▶ Ball hit over **right** shoulder
  - ▶ Always want to have glove tucked - we never want to run with our glove out/extended
  - ▶ Quickly pivoting out with right foot and left foot cross over
  - ▶ Hip and shoulder are both driving while tracking ball
  
- ▶ Ball hit over **left** shoulder
  - ▶ Always want to have glove tucked - we never want to run with our glove out/extended
  - ▶ Quickly pivoting out with left foot and right foot cross over
  - ▶ Hip and shoulder are both driving while tracking ball
  
- ▶ Ball hit straight over your head
  - ▶ Always want to have glove tucked - we never want to run with our glove out/extended
  - ▶ **Pivot open on players glove side**
    - ▶ When you are reaching for a ball, you can reach/extend further if you drop step on glove side
  - ▶ Hip and shoulders are both driving while tracking ball

**“Beat the ball” to the spot:** We want players to drop step, run hard and beat the ball to where they think the ball is going to land - get under or behind the ball. If player can get behind the ball, players should be ready, fingertips to the sky ready to receive the ball.

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## **Diving Progression**

What you need:

- ▶ Glove
- ▶ Ball

### **Progression 1:**

- ▶ Both knees are down
- ▶ Extending both arms out
- ▶ Coaches tell your players its like sliding on a slip and slide

### **Progression 2:**

- ▶ Baby squat -
- ▶ Pushing off to the left or right side
- ▶ Make sure they are getting full extension

### **Progression 3:**

- ▶ Full 3 or 4 hard steps - we want them to hit that full speed to let them know how it feels to hit sprinting to dive

### **Progression 4:**

- ▶ Finish with 2 dives back to back - forward and backhand
- ▶ Have players run right, dive, get up and run left and dive, get up and throw ball back to coach

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## **No Glove Fielding**

What you need:

- ▶ No gloves
- ▶ Tennis ball or a softee

Goal of the Drill:

- ▶ By letting the players field barehanded, this forces the player to use both hands to secure the ball.
- ▶ If done correctly, it forces the dominate hand on top of the ball .

How to play:

- ▶ Have players catch a grounder from the coach barehanded.
  - ▶ Have players either toss the ball to the side of place into a bucket
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## Bucket Target Drill

What you need:

- ▶ Bucket laid on its side at home plate with opening towards the field
- ▶ Balls

Goal of the Drill:

- ▶ Train for accuracy
- ▶ Sometimes we need a “low” throw for plays at home plate.
- ▶ Teaching to throw on a line

How to play:

- ▶ Can be used for infield and outfield
- ▶ Have players line up and take turns at the short stop position.
- ▶ Taking balls hit by coach, players should field the ball and aim to either get it into or hit the bucket.

Outfielders:

- ▶ For plays at home and when we don't need to utilize our cutoffs, we are throwing to home plate.
- ▶ Some concept for the infielders, aim to hit or get into the bucket.
- ▶ Concentrating on our release to have ball on a line and not rainbow.

Cutoffs:

- ▶ Can use this same drill and have outfielders cut to their cutoff man and the cutoff man hit the bucket

**Make it a game:**

- ▶ For each ball that gets into the bucket - 2 points
  - ▶ Each ball that hits the bucket - 1 points
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# Hitting

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## Hovers

What you need:

- ▶ Bat
- ▶ Tee
- ▶ Ball

Goal of the Drill:

- ▶ To help players who are always lunging when they stride. Forces you to be strong in your back leg.
- ▶ Makes players have more awareness and control of their weight - they should feel that weight staying behind that ball on that back leg.

How to play:

- ▶ Hoover your front foot toes over your back foot toes and hold for 3 seconds
- ▶ Stretch and get into your launch position - coaches should see how player's balance and launch position
- ▶ Repeat this a couple of times without the swing

Progression:

- ▶ All the above but add a swing
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## Pause swings

What you need:

- ▶ Bat
- ▶ Tee
- ▶ Ball

Goal of the Drill:

- ▶ Makes you slow down, makes you think about your stance and your swing position.
- ▶ Break the swing down into parts.

How to play:

- ▶ Set up like you are going to hit regular off a tee, but you are going to pause after your stride
- ▶ Control load and stride into a solid launch position
- ▶ Feel the launch and hold it
- ▶ Explode from the launch into your swing

Load and stride into launch position + **PAUSE** + swing



# Base Running

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## Running Through First Base

What you need:

- ▶ Base

Goal of the Drill:

- ▶ Players run thru first base being fluid and breakdown / chop step after getting past first base

### **When we hit a ground ball to the infield:**

- ▶ Players should hit the front of the bag
- ▶ As players hit the bag - they should glance to the right - looking for an overthrow
- ▶ Remembering after running thru the bag, to keep weight centered and always listening for first base coach
  - ▶ Their could be a pass ball and coach may well take 2
  - ▶ Or coach may say get to back to bag - that's when we turn in towards the fence and return to the base

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## First Base and Turns:

What you need:

- ▶ Base

### **When we hit a ball to the outfield:**

- ▶ The key to this to making a good turn:
  - ▶ Players should run up the line - leading to their first base coach (banana/question mark)
- ▶ Touching the base on the inside corner (left side of first base) using either foot
- ▶ Making that turn - dropping that left shoulder while rounding the bag - making that good turn
- ▶ Get off that bag as far as we can - lowering the center of gravity so it allows us to transfer our weight back to first base.

### **Balls hit to left field and center field:**

- ▶ After you round first base and get off as far as we can and we open up to that position in the outfield - towards left/center
- ▶ Players may be able to get out a little further when the ball is hit to those positions

### **Balls hit to right field:**

- ▶ After you round first base and get off as far as we can and we open up to that position in the outfield - opening to the right field
  - ▶ Players may shorten that turn, plants and gets back to the bag
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## Lead Foot Position - Softball

### Two types of foot position leads:

1. Rocker lead - Left foot on the front side of the back corner of bag and right foot behind the bag
2. Front of bag lead or sprinters ready - right foot on back corner of bag in front of the bag



Rocker Lead



Front of bag

### When choosing between rocker vs. front of bag foot lead - it is determined by coaching and player preference.

- ▶ The timing coming off the bag is still the same - runners foot can not leave base until the pitcher releases the ball
- ▶ Utilize the bag to get a push off that bag
  - ▶ Coaches may in time a players best reaction time to leaving the bag when the pitcher releases the ball to declare which lead type is best

### Getting back to the bag:

- ▶ Always want to use the outside part of the bag
- ▶ We are going to peel back with left foot on bag and pivoting around to that starting lead ready position
- ▶ We “peel back” so if the to first base, the first baseman has to reach for that tag

**As baserunners - we always keep our eyes on the ball, we always want to know where the ball is**

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## Lead Offs - First Base

### Two types of leads:

3. One-way lead
  - ▶ Steals
  - ▶ Hit and runs
4. Two-way leads
  - ▶ Lead where we don't know what's going to happen
  - ▶ Going to second base or getting back to first

### What you need:

- ▶ Base
- ▶ Bucket

### Goal of the Drill:

- ▶ Practice a two-way lead: Keeping weight balance after taking your lead off

### How to play:

- ▶ When you take your lead off, you are going to take 3-4 hard steps
- ▶ When you turn your body to the catcher you are going to make sure your weight is centered to your body and not leading to the right.
- ▶ Staying in a athletic position and staying on the balls of your feet

### Using a bucket:

- ▶ A good visual is to use a bucket.
- ▶ Place the bucket where the player is going to end up after taking their 3-4 hard steps
- ▶ Players will take their lead off and be forced to keep that weight centered

### Progression Two-way lead:

- ▶ Have players take their 3-4 hard step lead off and dive or get back to the bag standing
- ▶ Have players take 3-4 hard step lead off and take second base





## Fun Games

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### Chain Tag

This game can be played at any level

How to Play:

- ▶ Just a fun game of tag.
- ▶ 1 person is the tagger and the rest of the team is trying to not get tagged.
- ▶ Once a player is tagged, you start to form a chain by holding hands and go after players who have not been tagged yet.

You can start out with a small perimeter to the infield only and as the chain begins to grow, you can make the area bigger.

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### Ultimate Frisbee

How to play:

- ▶ Frisbee
- ▶ Cones to establish end zones

How to play:

- ▶ Divide team in half
- ▶ Both teams start in their respective end zones
- ▶ The defense throws the frisbee to the offense as a “kick off”
- ▶ The offense then runs down the field to become open - if the frisbee is thrown to them and caught, the player in possession of the frisbee must stop and establish a pivot foot (similar to basketball) and has 10 seconds to throw the frisbee
- ▶ If the pass is incomplete, intercepted or goes out of bounds, the defense immediately takes possession
- ▶ A goal is scored when player catches the frisbee in their end zone.

Coaches can set a time limit for the game or the first team to score X amount of points wins

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## Base Running Game

What you need:

- ▶ Bases
- ▶ Balls

How to Play:

- ▶ Divide the team in half
  - ▶ Half the team starts at home plate and half starts at second base
  - ▶ The players have to run around all the bases and back to their starting base before the next runner to go
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## Base Running Game - Extreme

How to play:

- ▶ Bases

How to play:

- ▶ Divide team in half - if team is uneven, a player has to run twice
- ▶ Team A starts at home plate and team B starts at second
- ▶ On go and one player at a time:
  - ▶ Team A runs thru first base
  - ▶ Team B runs thru third base

the next player in line can not go until the player ahead of them touches that base.

After the last player crosses their respected bases, the first player in line takes 2 bases

- ▶ Team A is on first base - now runs to third base
- ▶ Team B is on third base - now runs to first base

After this cycle is completed, and the last player crosses their bases.- players are now taking 3 bases:

- ▶ Team A is on third base and now will run to second base
- ▶ Team B is now on first base and will run to home plate

After is cycle is completed-players will touch all 4 bases:

- ▶ Team A is on second base and will run to touch all four bases and end on second base
- ▶ Team B is on home plate and will run to touch all four bases and end at home plate

By the end of the game, the teams should have swapped places. Team A should finish at second base and team B should finish at home plate.