

# Throwing & Catching the Baseball Basics

\*\* A large focus at EVERY practice should be playing throwing and playing catch. \*\*

## Grip

### 6U, 8U Age Groups

- 3 fingers, thumbs underneath – keep the ball out of the palm

### All other Age Groups

- 2 fingers, thumbs underneath - keep the ball out of the palm
- 4 seam grip - The four-seam grip will allow the ball to travel in the air longer and straighter-not to mention, it will add a little velocity as well.

## Throwing Progression

1. Focus on Grip
2. Direction – turn perpendicular to target and step toward target with opposite foot from throwing arm
3. Power Position
  - a. Eyes focused on the target
  - b. Front/glove-side elbow should be shoulder high and pointed at the target
  - c. The throwing side elbow should be shoulder high, in a backwards “L” position with the ball pointing away from player
  - d. Bottom half should be in a good athletic stance – feet slightly wider than shoulder width
4. Throw the ball
5. Follow Through – focus on following through all the way

## Throwing Drill Progression – Do we done at the start of Every Practice

Walk through each of these throwing progressions each practice. Do about 20-30 throws at each level or as player is fully warmed up. Focus on the 5 steps above in each one of these drills. Focus on hitting a target with the other player.

1. Wrist Flips on knee
2. Power Position on knee, then throw
3. (Optional) Kneeling Figure 8, throw
4. Stand up – start at Power Position, throw
5. (Optional) - Standing Figure 8, throw
6. (Optional) Jump back and throw
7. Playing normal catch
8. Long Toss – younger age groups might struggle here, but get as far as they can throw

## Throwing Drills

1. Younger age groups
  - a. Have player throw to the coach as hard as they can.
  - b. Takes thinking out of the throw
2. Game of 21
  - a. Assign points to different parts of the body and each time player hits that spot, gets that amount of points
  - b. If you drop the ball, that player goes back to zero
3. Relay Game

## Catching the Baseball

This is another focus for all age groups at every practice because catching the baseball is done at every position.

The following is the minimum skill progression needed to catch a ball thrown or hit to them. Move feet to catch every ball in the middle of the body if possible.

1. Above the Belt Catch
  - a. Catch ball with finger up towards the sky
2. Below the Belt Catch
  - a. Catch the ball with fingers down towards the ground
3. Glove Side catch
  - a. Similar to above the belt catch, just on your glove side
4. Backhand Catch (Advanced for this age group)
  - a. Direct the thumb toward the ground

### Catching the Baseball Drills

1. Stationary glove side catch – focus on confidence of catching the baseball
  - a. Have player stand with glove out to their side
  - b. Move close to them and gently toss the ball underhanded directly to the glove
2. Tennis Ball catch (Younger Age Groups)
  - a. Have player with NO glove
  - b. Coach underhand toss the ball to them at the 3 different positions above to focus on getting hand in the correct position to make the catch
3. Quick Feet, Quick Release
4. Relay position drills