

SHORT-HOP DRILL

PURPOSE

To develop proper technique for fielding short hops

EQUIPMENT

One baseball per player, gloves, caps

TIME

4 to 6 minutes

PROCEDURE

1. Divide the team into pairs.
2. Players form two lines 10 to 20 feet apart with pairs positioned across from each other.
3. Everyone kneels on two knees. There should be at least five feet between each player in line.
4. When the coach yells, "Throw," the players bounce their balls to their partners, who field them on one hop.
5. Repeat the drill until the predetermined time is up.
6. Next, each player puts his baseball cap approximately three feet in front of him.
7. On the "go" command the players try to hit their partners' baseball caps with the balls.
8. The ball should arrive after one hop.

KEY POINTS

Fielding short hops is one of the most difficult concepts for youth players to master. This drill accustoms players to the short hop. Practicing in the kneeling position forces players to focus on the bouncing ball. In the traditional upright set position, players tend to turn their heads before the ball reaches the glove.

1. Players should keep their eyes on the ball just as they would when practicing catching fly balls.

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2. The players must "look the ball" into their gloves.
3. The players should only raise their heads when they feel the baseball securely tucked in the pocket of their glove.

Variation

Two players stand facing each other and take turns throwing short hops to one another. Players earn points for throwing beyond the receiver's reach or for missing the ball. The first player to reach five points loses the game.

