

LONG TOSS

PURPOSE

To develop arm strength and accuracy

EQUIPMENT

One ball for each pair of players, gloves

TIME

6 to 8 minutes

PROCEDURE

1. Divide the team into pairs. Partners should be of similar age and skill level.
2. Players stand facing each other approximately 30 feet apart. Increase the distance as the season progresses.
3. Each pair has a baseball. On the "go" command, one partner throws to the other, and when the coach yells, "Go" a second time the partners throw the ball back.
4. Players move back 5 to 10 steps after each pair of throws.
5. Coaches should move up and down the line to make sure players are using correct throwing form, specifically the follow-through.
6. When the players are 80 to 100 feet apart or more, encourage smaller players or those who are not as strong to get the ball to their partner on one bounce.
7. A variation is for everyone to try to reach their partners on one bounce. Then try two bounces.

KEY POINTS

This drill is now recognized as one of the best methods for strengthening a player's throwing arm.

1. Players should "crow hop" before throwing the ball to gain extra power for the throw. The crow hop is a small hop that a fielder makes just before throwing, in order to gain momentum.

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2. Coaches should monitor this drill closely and ask if anyone's arm hurts. Players with sore arms should stop the drill. When they've recovered, they can build up strength more gradually.
3. Increase the distance and number of throws as the season progresses.

Variation

Players throw to their partners, as in the standard drill, but if a pair makes a bad throw, that team sits down. The drill continues until just one pair is left.

