



COACH PRACTICE PLAN

SNAPSHOT

PRACTICE LENGTH: 1 hour & 30 minutes

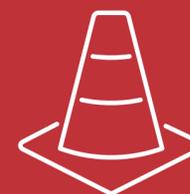
AGE GROUP:

9-18 years old

PRACTICE TYPE: **Balanced**

SPORT & LEVEL: **Softball - Intermediate**

RECOMMENDED EQUIPMENT:



PRACTICE OVERVIEW:

Warm-up (20 min)

Static & Dynamic Stretching

Partner Knee Throws

Four Square

Hitting Drills (20 min)

Rapid Fire Soft Toss

Two Ball Toss

Water Break (5 min)

Position Breakdown (20 min)

Outfield: Drop Step

Infield: Reaction Drill

Water Break (5 min)

Baserunning (15 min)

Running through First Base

Advanced 2 Bases

Recap (5 min)

COACHES BOX

PRACTICE GOALS:

COACH NOTES:

Equipment Needed:
(none)

WARM-UP



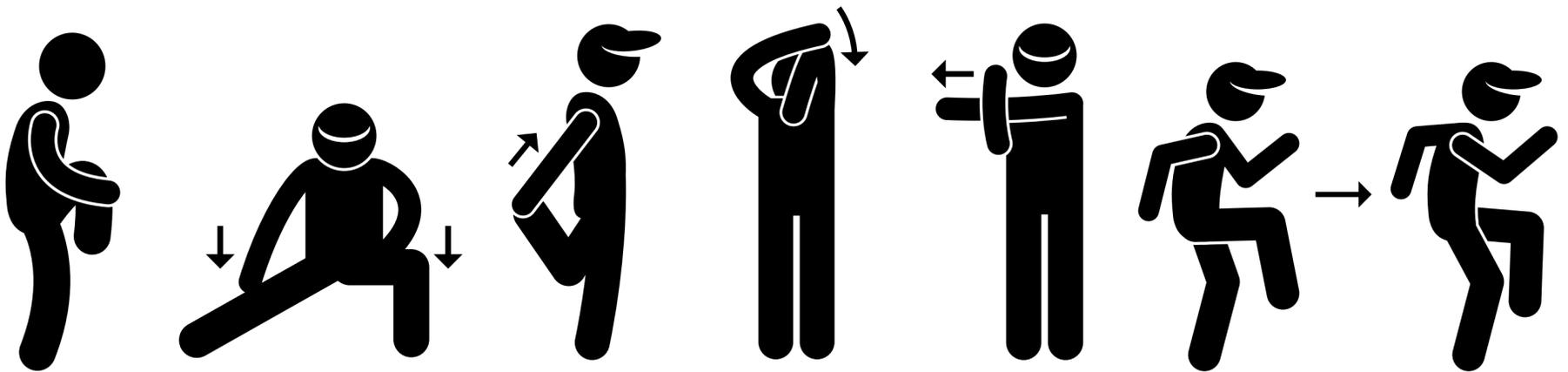
STATIC + DYNAMIC STRETCHING

Prior to any practice or activity, players should stretch and warm up. Stretching and warming up should be used at all levels and will vary depending on age group. Younger groups can use more active and moving activities while older groups should focus on fully stretching muscles.

POTENTIAL GROUP STRETCHES AND ACTIVITIES:

- Jumping jacks (count of 10-15)
- High Knees (5-10 seconds)
- Arm circles gradually increasing from small to large (forward and backward)
- Posterior Shoulder Stretch (10-15 seconds and switch arms)
- Reverse shoulder stretch (15-20 seconds)
- Assisted triceps stretch (10-15 seconds and switch arms)
- Trunk twists (5-10 seconds)
- Standing quad stretch (10-15 seconds and switch legs)
- Standing hamstring stretch (10-15 seconds)
- Leaning thigh stretch (10-15 seconds and switch legs)
- Sitting butterfly (5-10 seconds)
- Standing or laying down knee to chest (5-10 seconds and switch legs)

Warming up should also include some light throwing to warm up the player's arms.



FENWAY FUNDAMENTALS

Stretching is a fundamental part to any practice, activity, or game. Stretching is typically followed up with light throwing to ensure the player's throwing arm is loose. Stretching and throwing will change due to the age group but for younger groups, keep it upbeat and fun!



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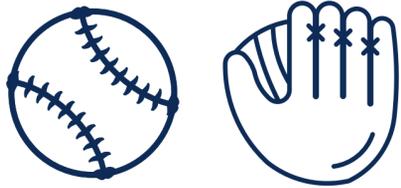


For More Resources

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Equipment Needed:

- Gloves
- Softballs



WARM-UP



PARTNER KNEE THROWS

Setup:

- Group players based on similar throwing/catching abilities. Create two lines with pairs facing each other 15 feet apart. One partner begins with the ball while both partners are kneeling on one knee.



Instructions:

- Players play catch with their partners from the kneeling position
- Players should focus on proper throwing mechanics
- Players catching the ball should keep their glove at shoulder height and throwing partner is aiming to hit their target

Fun Team Competition:

- Players increase the distance by taking a step back after each partner completes a catch - farthest pair wins!

FENWAY FUNDAMENTALS

Proper throwing mechanics will help players improve accuracy and reduce risk of injury.

In this drill, player's throwing side shoulder away from the target and bring their throwing hand to their ear before following through to the target.



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Equipment Needed:

- Softballs



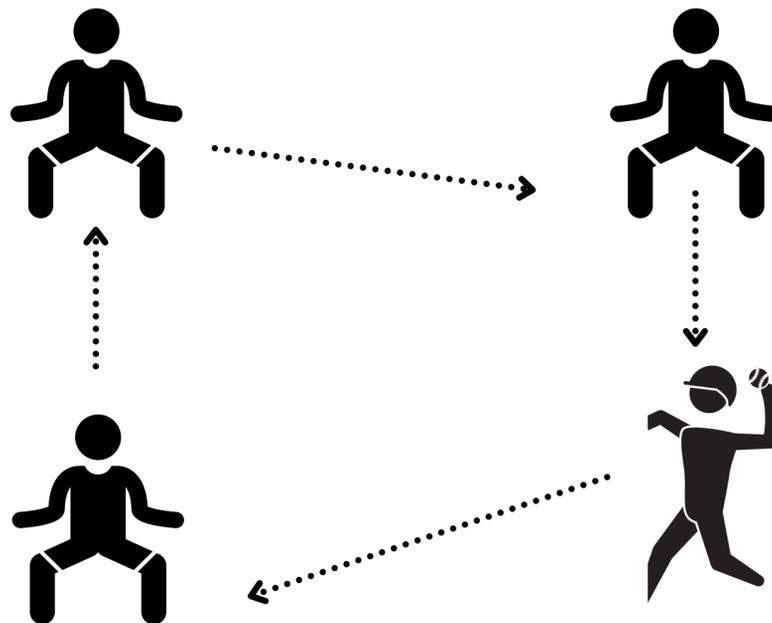
WARM-UP



FOUR SQUARE

Setup:

- With the team in groups of 4, without their glove, have the players create a square about 20 feet apart. One player in each group will start with the ball.



Instructions:

- To start, the player with the ball will roll a ground ball to a player "next" to them.
- The player with the ball does not need to throw the ball hard but should be able to get the ball to the player. Players should focus on being in a good fielding position and field with two hands.
- Upon fielding, the player should then roll the ball to the next person
- Add a second ball to increase the difficulty

Fun Team Competition:

- Add player's gloves, increase the size of the square and see how many times each group can create a complete square in a set amount of time. The team with the most, wins!

FENWAY FUNDAMENTALS

If a player is struggling with fielding groundballs, the coach can pull the player out of the square, have the remaining players form a triangle, and work individually with the player struggling.

Keep it positive and encourage youth to field with both hands!



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Equipment Needed:

- Softballs
- Bat



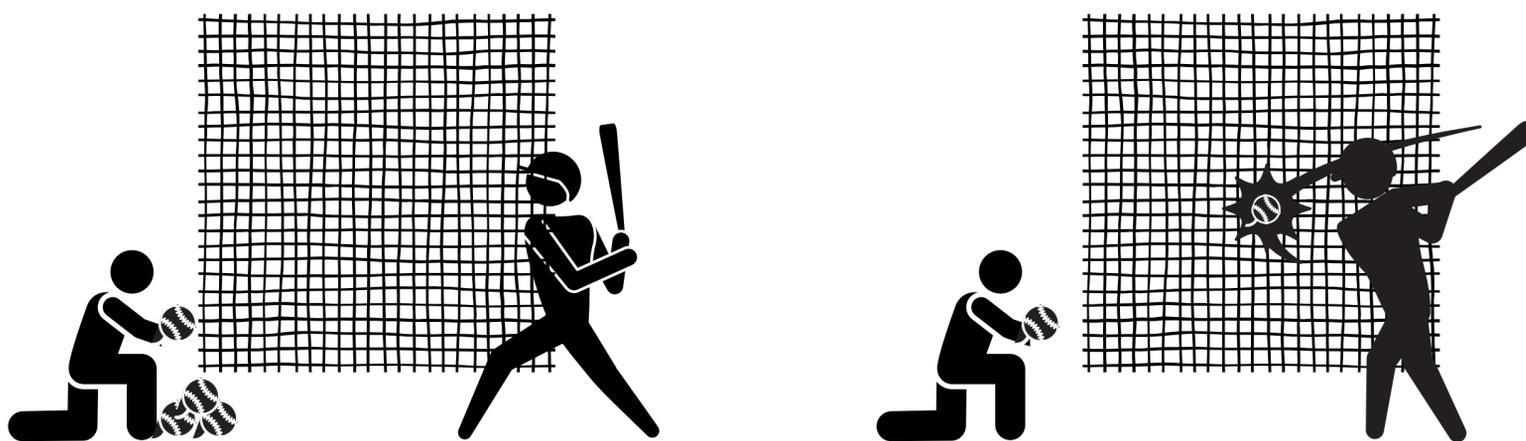
HITTING DRILLS



RAPID FIRE SOFT TOSS

Setup:

- Players partner up and kneel to the side or slightly in front of the hitter. The hitter is set up about 10 feet from a net, screen, or fence.
- Before getting into the Rapid Fire drill, begin with a round of 5-10 swings (or more) of normal soft-toss where the kneeling partner lightly tosses the ball to the hitter within the strike zone.



Instructions:

- The partner tossing the ball should have 5-7 balls ready to be thrown quickly. The partner tossing will begin by tossing the first ball into the strike zone
- As soon as the hitter has made contact and begins to reload her swing, the partner should toss the second ball into the strike zone
- Continue until all balls have been used. Rest, and repeat at least twice before switching places

FENWAY FUNDAMENTALS

Make sure players are still returning to a good batting stance and have good mechanics while swinging in-between tosses.

To challenge some of the better players, mix up the speed of the pitch to test the hitter's reaction time!



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Equipment Needed:

- Softballs
- Bat



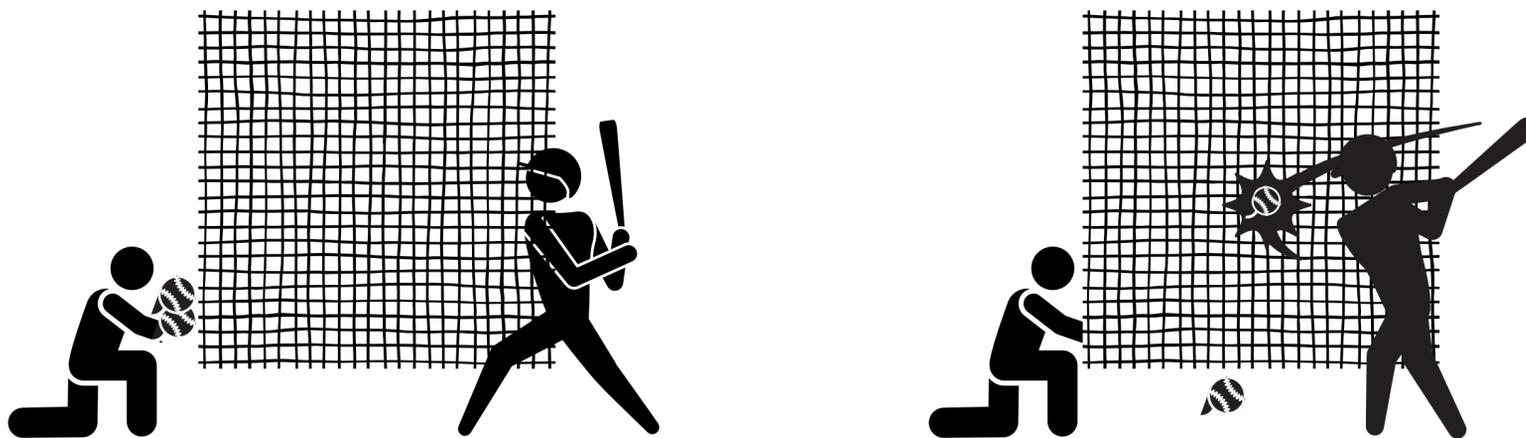
HITTING DRILLS



2-BALL TOSS

Setup:

- A coach and player or a pair of players set up to soft-toss into a net, screen, or fence. The batter should be in a ready position to hit the ball and the partner should be knelt down and prepared to toss 2 balls approximately 5-7 feet to the side.



Instructions:

- The partner will kneel, holding two balls stacked one on top of the other
- The partner tosses both balls into the strike zone and calls out "Top" or "Bottom" as the partner releases the balls
- The hitter will target the correct ball and swing with the aim of hitting a line drive

Fun Team Competition:

- Bring the team together and start with 2 players. Each step up to compete against each other. The first person to miss, hit the wrong ball, not hit a line drive, etc. goes to the back of the line. See how long a player can stay unbeaten!

FENWAY FUNDAMENTALS

Hitting can be challenging. By implementing this drill, youth can work on their hand-eye coordination, reaction time, bat speed, and more! Players may struggle but emphasize small wins of hitting the correct ball to boost confidence!



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Equipment Needed:

- Balls
- Gloves



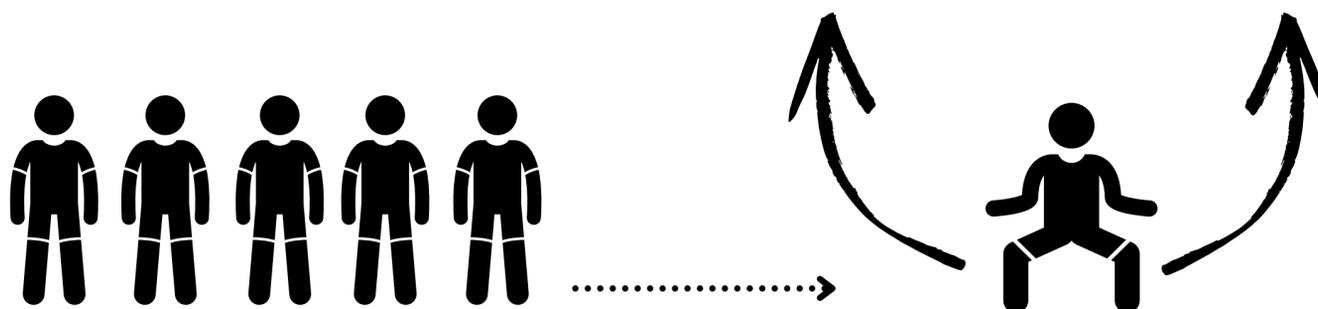
POSITION BREAKDOWN



OUTFIELDERS: DROP STEP

Setup:

- Players should line up in a single file order as one player will go at a time
- Athlete should start in an athletic and ready position



Instructions:

- Coach should hold a ball and instruct the athlete to be ready to react when the ball is raised above the coach's head, signifying the ball is pitched.
- The coach will then hold the ball out to the left or right as the player drop-steps in that direction (right or left based on the ball), turns, and runs diagonal while keeping an eye on the ball as the coach throws the ball into the air to simulate a fly ball
- Players read, react, and get to the spot of the ball to utilize proper catching fundamentals to cleanly secure the catch



FENWAY FUNDAMENTALS

An outfielder's first step should always be "back" meaning when they see a fly ball, they should dropstep and move backward before moving forward as it is easier to come in on a ball.

Players should run to the spot of the ball and not "drift" or time a catch on the run.



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Equipment Needed:

- Gloves
- Cones
- Balls (soft or tennis)



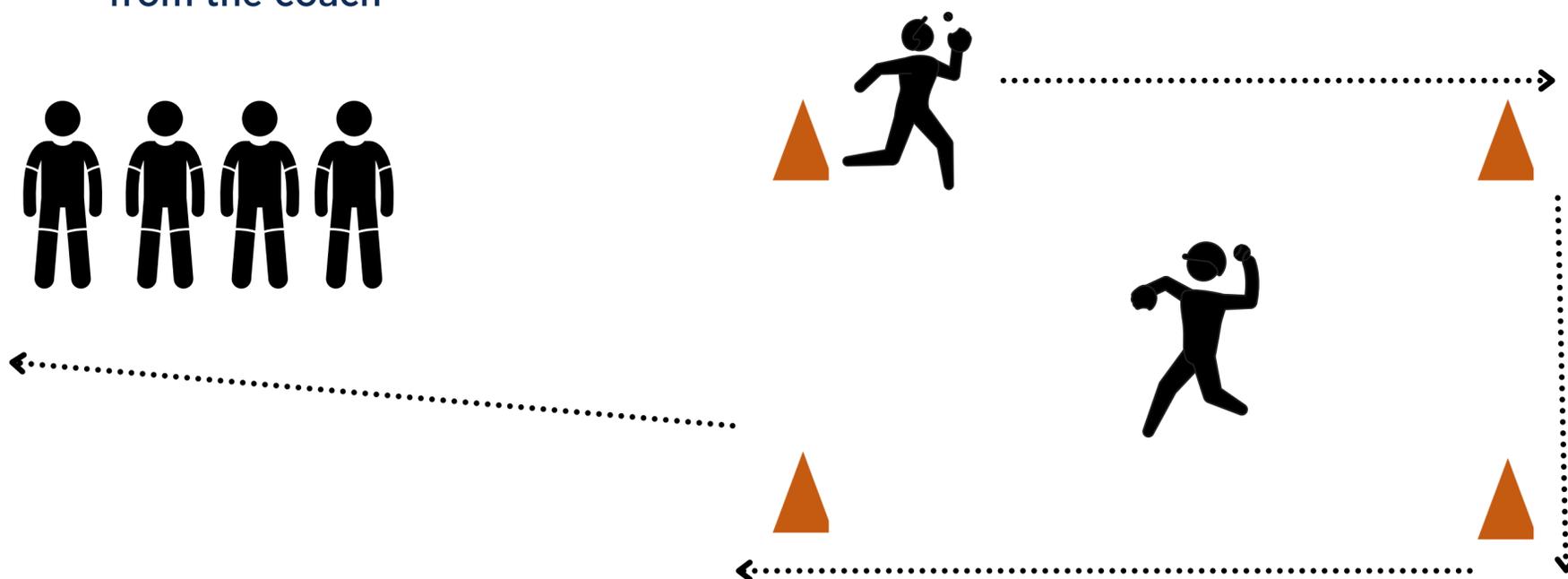
POSITION BREAKDOWN



INFIELDERS: REACTION DRILL

Setup:

- Make a square with 4 cones about 10-15 feet apart from each other
- Coach stands in the middle with 4 balls, first player begins at cone 1 facing away from the coach



Instructions:

- Coach throws a pop up with the first ball toward the first cone and yells "Ball" as soon as the ball is released
- When the fielder hears "Ball" they turn around to find and catch the pop up
- After catching the first ball, the fielder drops ball to the ground and runs to the second cone
- The coach throws the ball to the second cone as the player is rounding the cone, so they have to catch it as their body is turning
- Repeat at the third and fourth cone

FENWAY FUNDAMENTALS

Players should play multiple positions when they are younger. This not only helps them learn the game but also strengthens their ability for their primary position as they get older. Understanding where to go with the ball (or in this case, where to go next in the drill) helps improve awareness in game situations.



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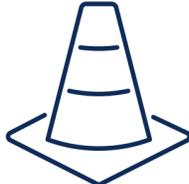


For More Resources

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Equipment Needed:

- Bat
- Cones
- Stop Watch



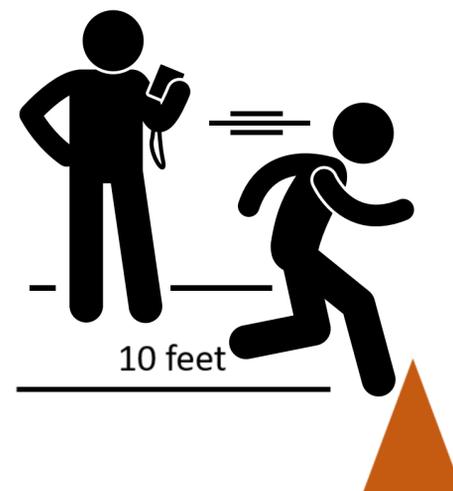
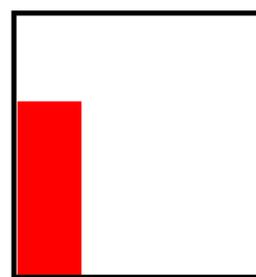
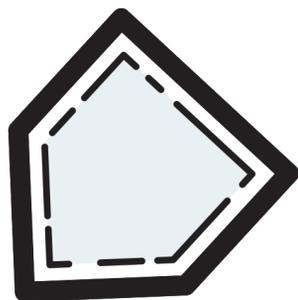
BASERUNNING



RUNNING THROUGH FIRST BASE

Setup:

- Players create a line behind home plate while the coach is at the pitchers mound
- First player to run will begin in the batters box with a bat while other players are in line at a safe distance behind



Instructions:

- Coach acting as pitcher, goes through wind-up without a ball
- Batter swings, drops bat, and runs through 1B ensuring the runner is striking the front, middle to right side, of the bag with their foot
- Runner slows down after crossing the bag, breaking down at the cone using wide, short choppy steps, and looking towards 1st base side fence to look for an overthrow
- Once runner comes to a stop, they jog back to the back of the line

FENWAY FUNDAMENTALS

To keep runners safe, ensure they do not extend or take a longer step to reach the bag. Youth should continue to run hard through the bag and gauge their strides as they get close to the bag.

In a two-bag system, youth should use this strategy on the bag the runners are supposed to use.



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Equipment Needed:

- Bases
- Cones



BASERUNNING



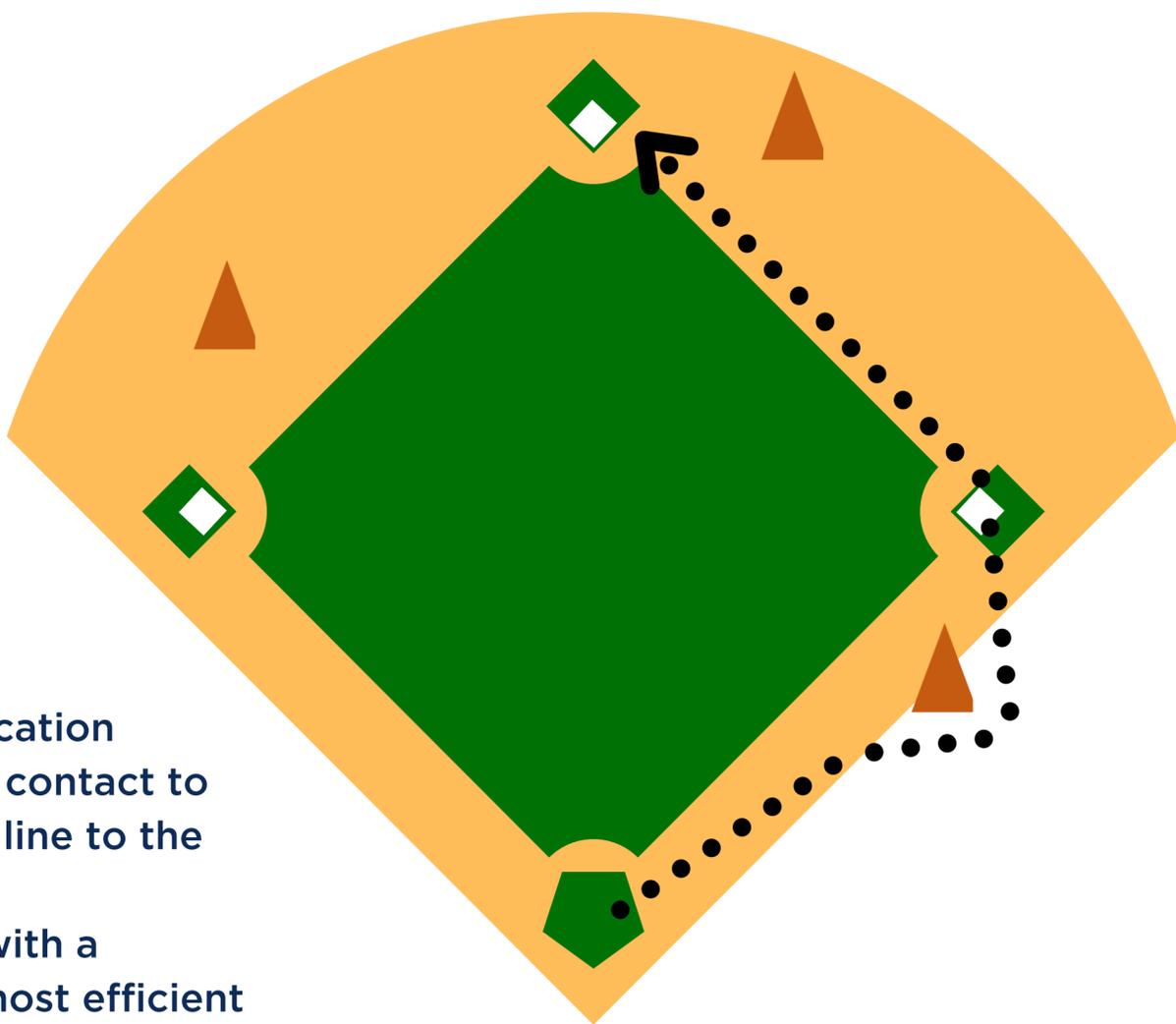
ADVANCING 2 BASES

Setup:

- Split the players into 2 or 3 groups starting a group at home plate, 1st base, and 2nd base (remove 1st base if only 2 groups)
- Coaches are located at each base, knelt down, watching, and pointing to the inside of the base where the runner should make contact

Instructions:

- With players lined up at bases, the coach yells “GO!” and players run 2 bases
- Players should keep their eyes on the specific spot on the base (in white on diagram)
- Runner keeps eye contact with location on base and pushes off, using the contact to assist in accelerating in a straight line to the next base
 - Emphasize rounding the bag with a “Banana Turn” to ensure the most efficient and safe route starting 8-10 feet before base.
- Players will cool down and walk to the next base that has a line.



FENWAY FUNDAMENTALS

Ending practices with baserunning helps fight mental fatigue and allows youth to stay focused during the earlier practice drills. Mental fatigue can cost runs and outs on the basepaths late in games. Keep it fun!



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