



## **ATTENTION ALL COACHES AND PARENTS!**

**The following pages contain outlines of player development goals for each division through Bronco (age 11 & 12). As you review these goals, keep in mind that this document is designed to help improve our player and coach development.**

**We are teaching young athletes in our league and it is important to note that every child develops differently. These player development goals should be used strictly as a guideline, not as a hard set of standards. These target goals are the level of knowledge and understanding players should have by the time they complete that particular division.**

**This document is a work in progress. There is certainly room for refinement and I hope to receive feedback from both parents and coaches as you use it and compare it to your child's/player's progress.**

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Clinics Director  
Murrieta Valley Pony Baseball**

**Murrieta Valley Pony Baseball  
Spring Season player development goals**

**Shetland Division**

**Our Shetland division is made up of 5 and 6 year-old children. Since this will be their first experience in any kind of organized baseball, safety must be your top priority. To ensure their safety and achieve a fun and productive season, your primary focus should be the basic fundamentals of how to catch, throw, hit and run the bases.**

**Shetland Player Development Goals**

- **Fundamentals of catching (Should be the first priority for safety)**
  - **How to hold glove (Rotating left to right, above and below the belt line)**
  - **Two hand catch (alligator)**
- **Fundamentals of throwing**
  - **Step toward target**
  - **Point front shoulder**
  - **Throw across body**
  - **Elbow even with shoulder forming the letter "L"**
  - **Follow through**
- **Basic fundamentals of hitting**
  - **Batting stance (proper footwork)**
  - **Hands**
  - **Eyes on the ball**
  - **Turning away from an inside pitch, not stepping out of the box**
- **Fundamental base running**
  - **Running through first base**
  - **Touching all of the bases**

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**Pinto Division**

**Our Pinto Division is 7 and 8 year-old children. Some will have played in the Shetland Division, however you should also expect to have players that are playing organized baseball for the first time. Your primary focus should continue to be the fundamentals of catching, throwing, hitting and base running. Some advanced skills development should be introduced and are outlined below. The goal is to introduce and practice these skills throughout the season giving the players a better understanding of how the game is played and preparing them for a successful transition to the Mustang division.**

**Pinto Player Development Goals**

- **Fundamentals of catching**
  - **How to hold glove (Rotating left to right, above and below the belt line)**
  - **Two hand catch (alligator)**
- **Fundamentals of throwing**
  - **Introduce proper grip on ball (best grip is across the 4 seams with finger tips on seams)**
  - **Step toward target**
  - **Point front shoulder**
  - **Throw across body**
  - **Elbow even with shoulder forming the letter "L"**
  - **Hand on top of the ball**
  - **Follow through**
  - **When thrown correctly, ball should have straight back spin**
- **Hitting**
  - **Batting stance (proper footwork)**
  - **Gripping the bat**
  - **Eyes on the ball**
  - **Turning away from an inside pitch**
  - **Step toward pitcher**
  - **Front foot closed (about 45°)**
  - **Front shoulder closed**
  - **Level swings**
- **Pitching**
  - **Wind up and stretch (Find the motion that works best for each pitcher)**
  - **Front foot (plant foot) directly toward home plate**
  - **Front shoulder closed**

- **Elbow even with shoulder forming the letter “L”**
- **Infield**
  - **Proper ready position**
  - **Ability to properly field ground balls (Knees bent, butt down, hands in front with top hand on heel of glove)**
  - **Soft hands (Bringing the hands into the gut once the ball has been fielded cleanly)**
  - **Backhand basics (Proper foot work, planting and throwing)**
  - **Successfully throwing to first base**
- **Outfield**
  - **Proper ready position**
  - **Keeping the ball in front of you**
  - **Throwing the ball back in to the infield**
  - **Low straight throws, not arching rainbows**
  - **Backing up other outfielders**
  - **Backing up infielders**
    - **Ground ball plays**
    - **Attempts to throw a runner out at a base**
- **Base running**
  - **Running through first base**
  - **Secondary leads**
  - **Rounding a base**
  - **Pinto base running rules**
- **Sliding technique**

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**Mustang Division**

**Our Mustang division is 9 and 10 year-olds. Beginning with our Mustang division, the game is played under the same rules as Major League Baseball. This includes bunting, base stealing and pitching from a stretch with runners on base. Most players have previous organized baseball experience in this division. We continue to introduce more advanced skills in this division. The goal is for Mustang players to have a basic understanding of these skills and begin executing on their own by the end of the season. Developmental goals for Mustang division are outlined below.**

**Mustang Player Development Goals**

- **Fundamentals of catching**
  - **How to hold glove (Rotating left to right)**
  - **Two hand catch (alligator)**
- **Fundamentals of throwing**
  - **Finding the seams on the ball without looking**
  - **Step toward target**
  - **Point front shoulder**
  - **Throw across body**
  - **Elbow even with shoulder forming the letter "L"**
  - **Follow through**
  - **Ball should have proper back spin when thrown correctly**
- **Hitting**
  - **Batting stance (proper footwork, positioning of hands and head)**
  - **Gripping the bat**
  - **Eyes on the ball - Seeing the ball out of "The Window"**
  - **Turning away from an inside pitch**
  - **Step toward pitcher**
  - **Front foot and shoulder closed**
  - **Level swings**
  - **Introduction of hitting to the opposite field**
  - **Fundamentals of bunting**
- **Pitching**
  - **Wind up - Proper balance and delivery**
  - **Stretch - What constitutes a legal pitch**
  - **Basic pick-off moves to all bases**
  - **Front foot (plant foot) directly toward home plate**

- **Front shoulder closed**
- **Elbow even with shoulder forming the letter “L”**
- **Minimum of 50% of pitches should be strikes**
- **Knowledge of what a balk is**
- **Pitch location – Pitchers should begin to work on hitting a specific location in the strike zone (Low, high, inside corner, outside corner)**
- **Introduction to a change up or off speed pitch. This should be done by teaching pitchers to throw straight pitches, but with alternative grips. (DO NOT TEACH OR ENCOURAGE PITCHERS TO THROW CURVE BALLS!)**

➤ **Infield**

- **Proper ready position**
- **Ability to properly field ground balls (Knees bent, butt down, hands in front with top hand on heel of glove)**
- **Soft hands (Bringing the hands into the gut once the ball has been fielded cleanly)**
- **Backhand basics (Proper foot work, planting and throwing)**
- **Successfully throwing to first base**
- **Middle infielders turning a double play**
- **Run downs**
- **Situational defense (Back-up plays, runners on base with less than 2 outs)**
- **Cut-off position when balls are hit to the outfield**

➤ **Outfield**

- **Proper ready position**
- **How to catch a fly ball**
- **Coming in on a short fly ball**
- **Going back on a long fly ball**
- **Proper angles**
- **Keeping the ball in front of you**
- **Throwing the ball back in to the infield**
- **Hitting the cut-off man**
- **Low straight throws, not arching rainbows**
- **Backing up other outfielders**
- **Backing up infielders**
  - **Ground ball plays**
  - **Attempts to throw a runner out at a base**
  - **Pick-off plays by the pitcher**
  - **Attempts to throw a runner out on a steal**

➤ **Base running**

- **Running through first base**
- **Secondary leads**
- **Rounding a base**

- **Taking a lead**
- **Getting back to the base on a pick-off play**
- **Sliding technique**
- **Catcher position**
  - **Blocking techniques**
  - **Framing pitches**
  - **Throwing to bases on attempted steal plays**
  - **Properly receiving throws from fielders on plays at the plate**
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**Murrieta Valley Pony Baseball  
Spring Season player development goals**

**Bronco Division**

**Our Bronco division is 11 and 12 year-olds. Most players in this division will have substantial playing experience and should have a strong command of the basic fundamentals of the game, however they are still kids and will need to be reminded of some of the most basic fundamentals. The developmental goals for Bronco players are the same as the Mustang division. Mustang goals were to ensure players had a basic understanding of these skills. In Bronco, the goal is to ensure the players have a stronger command of these skills and can execute consistently by the end of the season. Bronco player development goals are outlined below.**

**Bronco Player Development Goals**

- **Fundamentals of catching**
  - **How to hold glove (Rotating left to right)**
  - **Two hand catch (alligator)**
- **Fundamentals of throwing**
  - **Finding the seams on the ball without looking**
  - **Step toward target**
  - **Point front shoulder**
  - **Throw across body**
  - **Elbow even with shoulder forming the letter "L"**
  - **Follow through**
  - **Ball should have proper back spin when thrown correctly**
- **Hitting**
  - **Batting stance (proper footwork, positioning of hands and head)**
  - **Gripping the bat**
  - **Eyes on the ball - Seeing the ball out of "The Window"**
  - **Turning away from an inside pitch**
  - **Step toward pitcher**
  - **Front foot and shoulder closed**
  - **Level swings**
  - **Introduction of hitting to the opposite field**
  - **Fundamentals of bunting**
- **Pitching**
  - **Wind up - Proper balance and delivery**
  - **Stretch - What constitutes a legal pitch**
  - **Basic pick-off moves to all bases**



- **Front foot (plant foot) directly toward home plate**
- **Front shoulder closed**
- **Elbow even with shoulder forming the letter “L”**
- **Goal of at least 60% of pitches should be strikes**
- **Knowledge of what a balk is**
- **Pitch location – Pitchers should continue to work on hitting a specific location in the strike zone (Low, high, inside corner, outside corner)**
- **Introduction to a change up or off speed pitch. This should be done by teaching pitchers to throw straight pitches, but with alternative grips. (DO NOT TEACH OR ENCOURAGE PITCHERS TO THROW CURVE BALLS!)**

➤ **Infield**

- **Proper ready position**
- **Ability to properly field ground balls (Knees bent, butt down, hands in front with top hand on heel of glove)**
- **Soft hands (Bringing the hands into the gut once the ball has been fielded cleanly)**
- **Backhand basics (Proper foot work, planting and throwing)**
- **Successfully throwing to first base**
- **Middle infielders turning a double play**
- **Run downs**
- **Situational defense (Back-up plays, runners on base with less than 2 outs)**
- **Cut-off position when balls are hit to the outfield**

➤ **Outfield**

- **Proper ready position**
- **How to catch a fly ball**
- **Coming in on a short fly ball**
- **Going back on a long fly ball**
- **Proper angles**
- **Keeping the ball in front of you**
- **Throwing the ball back in to the infield**
- **Hitting the cut-off man**
- **Low straight throws, not arching rainbows**
- **Backing up other outfielders**
- **Backing up infielders**
  - **Ground ball plays**
  - **Attempts to throw a runner out at a base**
  - **Pick-off plays by the pitcher**
  - **Attempts to throw a runner out on a steal**

➤ **Base running**

- **Running through first base**
- **Secondary leads**

- **Rounding a base**
- **Taking a lead**
- **Getting back to the base on a pick-off play**
- **Sliding technique**
- **Catcher position**
  - **Blocking techniques**
  - **Framing pitches**
  - **Throwing to bases on attempted steal plays**
  - **Properly receiving throws from fielders on plays at the plate**
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