

## Advanced Infield Drills

### Hitting Ground Balls

#### Age Appropriate

Grouping 5, ages 10 to 15+

#### Objective

To get a more realistic sense of fielding ground balls coming off a bat

#### Setup

A bucket of baseballs, a fungo bat (or another type of bat), a coach to hit balls

#### Execution

At some point it becomes necessary to hit ground balls to your team. Before you do this—at any level—make sure you have introduced the players to the basic ground ball fundamentals and given them a chance to get comfortable fielding balls the proper way. Use common sense when hitting ground balls. If the field is not in good condition, take it easy. Adapt the speed of the balls to each player's skill level. Players getting beaten up with bad hops in practice are not getting better.

If you have more than one coach who can hit ground balls accurately, here's a way to maximize repetitions: One coach hits to the third basemen and shortstops from the first-base side while the other hits to second and first from the third-base side. After a few minutes, one coach goes "live," with the players fielding his or her balls throwing to first. The other players just lob the balls back to their coach on one hop or place the balls in a bucket. The first basemen take throws and stop fielding ground balls at this point. Each position gets to go "live" before the drill ends. As players get older, they can hit ground balls to each other if there aren't enough coaches. Having one person hit to each position is ideal but not always possible.

