

Regular Infield Drills

Rolled Ground Balls

Age Appropriate

Grouping 1, all ages

Objective

To help infielders become comfortable with the proper mechanics of fielding a ground ball

Setup

A bucket of balls and a coach to roll them

Execution

This drill is simple and appropriate for all ages. Balls can be rolled as soft or as hard as necessary; the type of hop the ball takes can be controlled. Players assume the ground ball position with a wide base, butt down, and hands out in front (the glove-hand wrist is relaxed so the coach can see inside the glove and the fingers are pointing down). Use a flat surface to prevent bad hops, and bad habits. At first, the ball should be rolled directly into a player's glove from about 10 feet away. Have players hold the ground ball position for five reps so that they can feel a little burn in their thighs. As players get comfortable fielding ground balls properly, the coach can move back and roll balls harder. For conditioning, older players can be asked to hold the position for more reps. The ball must be caught out in front so that the eyes can follow the ball into the glove.





Coaching Keys

If the ball doesn't stay in a player's glove or if the player seems to be getting handcuffed quite a bit by bad hops, check the player's glove positioning and angle. The glove should be out in front of the body with the wrist relaxed to the point that the fingers of the glove are pointing almost straight down. If a player is having trouble getting the glove into the proper position, have him or her reach back between the legs and scrape dirt forward with the glove until it's in the proper position in front of the body. If the glove is out in front and the wrist is relaxed, a player is more likely to see the bad hop early and move the glove to a position in which the ball can still be caught.