

FIELDING BASICS

by Mike Gellinger, AZL Rookie Ball Manager and former ML Computer Scouting Analyst



INFIELD PLAY

90% of defensive is being ready, being prepared to have the ball hit to you. Good defensive players have the “HIT IT TO ME ATTITUDE”

A. Gathering information

1. Pitcher and pitch locations
2. Hitters style
3. Pitchers velocity
4. Field conditions, hard and fast, soft and slow?

B. Positioning – Anticipation

1. Educated idea of where ball might be hit.

C. Set-up and start (ready position)

1. Balance – weight on the balls of your feet.
2. Ready to break in any direction.
3. Hands and glove held out front with thumbs in up position.
4. Feet have a little movement in them when ball is in hitting zone.
5. Feet are square to hitter.

D. Reaction – First step quickness

1. Read hitters hands, and barrel of bat.
2. Watch first hop of ball (hard or soft).
3. Move to the ball aggressively and under control.
4. Create good angle on the ball and play to make easy throw.
5. Making sure our shoulders are not coming up or going down on first step.

E. Approach to ball

1. Acceleration – deceleration to catch ball.
2. Route and angle to ball very important, this will make the throw quicker and easier.
3. Breaking down to catch, lead with knees, head behind ball, butt down.

F. The Catch

1. Right – Left catch as often as you can, moving through the ball.
2. Left foot just in front of right if possible.
3. Catch long hop or short.
4. Eliminate extra glove movement. Keep glove relaxed but firm and ready to catch ball.
5. Head behind the ball, as apposed to over the ball (butt to high).
6. Ball is played middle of body to glove side.
7. Knees lead to the ball, keep from bending over at waist.
8. Soft feet, soft elbow, lead to soft hands.

G. The Throw

1. Take ball out of glove out in front of you.
2. Right – Left throw, shuffle feet directly toward target, staying down use legs.
3. Point shoulder, feet, front hip, and front arm at target.
4. Take ball out and find an across the seam grip. 4-seams.
5. Good arm swing with ball on top.
6. Finish throw through target.

H. The five basic areas all good infielders work on.

1. Start
2. First step quickness
3. Approach
4. The catch
5. The throw