

Cal Ripken, Sr. Foundation Coaching Clinic

Guiding Principles of the Foundation

- **Keep it Simple**
 - Lessons on the field and in life are best learned when presented in a simple manner
 - Teach the basics and keep standards high
- **Explain the why**
 - By helping kids understand the connections between everyday decisions and real-life outcomes
 - We can help them make smarter choices for brighter futures
- **Celebrate the Individual**
 - When kids are encouraged to be themselves, respected for their opinion and are encouraged to share it, they are more likely to have a higher self-esteem and feelings of self-worth.
 - Find a way for each kid in your group/team to succeed and celebrate that
- **Make it fun**
 - If kids aren't paying attention or participating, how much are they learning? Whether it's using a game to teach a concept or motivating with a little friendly competition, keeping kids engaged is essential.
 - Teach the fundamentals, play a game or have a contest

PITCHING

Object: Use *Five Links of the Chain* and knock the softballs off the tee.

Equipment Needed: Tee's, Dot Cones, Softballs, Baseballs

Set Up: 1. Set up 4 tees wide enough apart so wild pitches do not hit the next tee (Roughly 8 ft.)

2. Place softball on every tee with logo facing out

3. Walk 6 paces back from tee and place down a cone for kids to pitch from (Adjust distance based on age and ability of players)

4. Take 3 steps from pitching cone and place cone for kids to line up behind

Group Discussion- Once you have explained the drill and fundamentals, have the kids go through each fundamental with you. Utilize call and repeat techniques.

- **Grip**
 - Four Seam – keeps the ball flying straighter longer (2 fingers across the “c” or “horseshoe” of the baseball)
 - Grip must be used every pitch
- **Pitching mechanics – *Five links of the chain***
 - **Feet**
 - Start with heels on rubber (next to cone) – Baby step straight back with glove side foot



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- Pivot (turn the throwing arm foot clockwise) so that it becomes parallel with rubber
- **Balance Position**
 - Controlled leg lift, lift glove side leg until you create a 90-degree angle with your thigh and calf
 - Slight bend in back leg
 - Hands together slightly above belt and away from body
 - Front shoulder pointing towards target
- **Power Position**
 - Get ball out and up, with hand above ball
 - Strong front side, no limp front arm
 - Keep weight back slightly to allow for generation of torque
- **Rotation**
 - Make sure elbow is above or parallel to shoulder
 - Both feet on ground as you release ball to generate torque
- **Follow through**
 - Allow follow through to happen naturally
- **Summary of 5 Points**
 1. Baby step
 2. Pivot
 3. Balance position
 4. Power position
 5. Throw

THROWING

Object: Kids learn the proper grip and throwing technique. Also, learn to be a good partner.

Equipment Needed: Dot Cones, Baseballs, Softballs

Set Up: Create one straight line of dot cones roughly 5-6 feet apart (Allowing room for kids to throw safely)

Group Discussion- Once you have explained the drill and fundamentals, have the kids go through each fundamental with you. Utilize call and repeat techniques.

- ★ Kids will get into pairs; one partner will line up on the cones the other will line up across from them about 5-6 ft. away
- ★ Do not hand out baseballs/softballs until everyone has a partner
- ★ Have everyone begin throwing at the same time, on your command
- **Maintain order** – throwing can get out of control quickly (Line up one partner from each pair along the cones, this group will stay on the line of cones the entire time. Take the other partner from every pair and line them up in a straight line across from their partners at an appropriate distance, kids may not move back, all moving will be done as a group in unison and led by the coach)



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- **Grip**
 - Four Seam – keeps the ball flying straighter longer (two fingers across “c” or “horseshoe” of the baseball)
 - Grip must be used on every throw
- **Teaching kids how to play catch**
 - Stress fundamentals (Thrower gets into power position, step towards partner, throw and follow through...receiver two hands up creating a big target for the thrower)
 - Safe lines, teamwork, partners
- **Progression**
 - **One Knee Drill**- Throwing on one knee (Throwing arm knee down, follow through over the glove hand knee)
 - **Stand up throwing**- Person with the ball is perpendicular from target, throws and follows through, while receiver gives good 2-handed target for the thrower to aim for
 - **Play a game – “21”**
 - Partners play catch with each other
 - You get 2 points if a partner’s throw is caught in the head area by the other partner
 - You get 1 point if a partner’s throw is caught in the chest area by the other partner
 - The point is to focus on making good throws to your partner
 - First team to get to 21 points wins

INFIELD

Object: Learn proper fielding technique. Also, learn how to throw and flip after fielding the ball.

Equipment Needed: Dot Cones, Baseballs, Softballs

- Set Up:**
1. Place 4 cones in straight line (roughly 5-6 ft. apart) for the coaches to throw from
 2. Walk 7 paces and place 3 cones in triangle shape
 3. Players who are up, line up between the cones at the bottom of the triangle (closest to the coach)
 4. Players who are not up, line up behind cones at top of triangle

Group Discussion- Once you have explained the drill and fundamentals, have the kids go through each fundamental with you. Utilize call and repeat techniques.

- **Ready-Position**
 - Athletic position used in almost every sport
 - Feet and shoulders square to home
 - Balance - weight distributed evenly on balls of feet
 - Be comfortable
- **Basic Groundballs - *Wide base, butt down, hands out front***
 - Wide base - balance
 - Butt down - butt goes down, eyes come up



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- Hands out front - everything happens in front of you, adjust to a bad hop easier
- Basic Groundball Drill
- **Underhand flip**
 - Use your momentum, move towards your target
 - Teamwork - helping your teammate, higher chance for success
 - Where your hand goes, the ball goes
 - High Five Drill
 - Box Drill
- **Backhands**
 - Use same principles, wide base, butt down, hands out front
 - Start on your knee, build strength/balance and progress to off the knee
 - Two types of backhands
 - Regular backhand
 - Crossover backhand
 - Backhand Drill
- **Throwing After the Catch**
 - Four seam grip when possible
 - Create momentum toward target
 - Point shoulder toward target
 - Follow the throw
 - Shuffle, Throw, Follow Drill
- **Infield Drills**
 - Basic Groundballs Drill – *wide base, butt down, hands out front*
 - High Five Drill
 - Backhand Drill
 - Shuffle, Throw, Follow Drill
 - Box Drill

OUTFIELD

Object: Learn proper outfield technique and use of good communication.

Equipment Needed: Dot Cones, Footballs, Baseballs, Softballs

- Set Up:**
1. Place 4 cones in straight line (Roughly 5-6 ft. apart) for the coaches to throw from
 2. Walk 7 paces and place 3 cones in triangle shape, same as the infield station
 3. Players who are up, line up between the cones at the bottom of the triangle (closest to the coach)
 4. Players not up, line up behind cone at top of triangle

Group Discussion- Once you have explained the drill and fundamentals, have the kids go through each fundamental with you. Utilize call and repeat techniques.



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Outfielders Job Description

- Catch the routine ball, last line of defense
- Keep runners from taking extra bases
- Always be in the ready position for every pitch
- **Fly Balls – Ball, Glove, Eye**
 - Locate the ball and get to the spot early if possible
 - Position glove directly under ball; don't block your own line of vision
 - Follow ball into glove and move forward as you catch it
 - Fly Ball Drill with or without gloves
- **Crossover/Drop Step**
 - Most efficient ways to get to ball hit to your side/over your head
 - Pivot 45 degrees with outside foot
 - If ball is hit to your right, drop step 45 degrees with your right foot, crossover step with your left foot
 - If ball is hit to your left, drop step 45 degrees with your left foot, crossover step with your right foot
 - Crossover with inside foot in direction of ball (Stay low, turn the hips through to not waste movement)
 - Puts you in position to quickly change direction and run after the ball
- **Communication**
 - CF has priority over other outfielders; generally, OF has priority over INF
 - Be loud and be clear – “I got it! I got it! I got it!”
 - Other outfielder backs up the play
- **Outfield Drills**
 - Fly Ball Drill (with or without gloves)
 - Crossover/Drop Step Drill
 - Communication Drill

HITTING

Object: Learn proper hitting fundamentals.

Equipment Needed: Tee's, Helmets, Bats, Dot Cones, Baseballs, Softballs

Set Up: 1. Set up 4 tees wide enough apart so batters can safely swing (Roughly 8-10 ft. or enough so that a left-handed hitter at one station can't possibly hit a right-handed batter at the next station or vice versa)

2. Line up baseballs/softballs on ground in front of tee's #1 and #3 (All logo's facing out)

4. Walk 6 paces back from tee and place down a cone for the kids to line up behind. Place 2 helmets behind each cone

5. Kids stay behind each cone until their turn to hit, one-person hits at a time, only the batter has a bat in their hands



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Group Discussion- Once you have explained the drill and fundamentals, have the kids go through each fundamental with you. Utilize call and repeat techniques.

- ★ Set up a full set of all bat sizes (Bat Fans) in between tees. Tees 1 and 2 will share and tees 3 and 4 will share
 - Kids to choose bat that is not too heavy and ideal for short and compact swing
- **The Stance**
 - Just a starting position that is comfortable and has good balance
 - Athletic position - can look different for all players – *Celebrate the individual*
- **The Grip**
 - Line up knuckles – door knocking knuckles
 - Keep your hands loose, they tighten automatically as you swing through the zone
 - *Loose hands, quick bat*
- **Weight Shift**
 - Body and swing must work together
 - Start in balanced position
 - *“Go back to go forward”* – like a snake or a boxer throwing a punch
- **Contact and follow through**
 - Short and quick swing – don’t get too technical teaching hitting, focus on stance and grip
 - Contact made out in front of home plate – everything in baseball happens in front of you
 - Want maximum bat speed at point of contact
 - Swing through the baseball
- **The Stride**
 - Varies for each individual
 - Shorter vs. longer – balance
 - Stride toward the pitcher
 - Short, soft stride is preferable
- **The swing**
 - Hands in ready position near top of back shoulder
 - Short, quick swing using hands, wrists, forearms
 - Let the natural swing take over
- **Hitting Drills**
 - Tee Drill – go back to go forward
 - Soft toss – loose hands, quick bat
 - Short toss from the front
 - One Arm Drill – Lead arm
 - Lob Toss Drill – working on staying back

