

**GENERAL CATCHING (ALL PLAYERS)****Two-Hand Catch Reinforcement**

4-5 min

**EQUIPMENT**

1 ball per pair, gloves

**SETUP & EXECUTION**

Partners 25-30 feet apart. Every throw must be caught with two hands - glove secures, bare hand covers immediately. No one-hand catches allowed. Coach watches for lazy hands and calls them out.

**COACHING POINTS**

- Glove-side catches: thumb down, pinky up (above waist)
- Glove-side catches: thumb up, pinky down (below waist)
- Bare hand covers immediately - "squeeze and secure"
- Move feet to get in front of the ball when possible
- Give a target before the throw

**PRO TIP**

*This is about building habits. At 9-10, lots of dropped balls happen because the bare hand isn't helping. Drill this until it's automatic.*

**Quick Hands (Catch & Transfer)**

4-5 min

**EQUIPMENT**

1 ball per pair, gloves

**SETUP & EXECUTION**

Partners 20 feet apart. Focus on the catch-to-throw transfer. Catch the ball, move it to throwing hand, and get to throwing position as fast as possible - but don't rush the actual throw. Emphasis on quick HANDS, not quick throws.

**COACHING POINTS**

- Catch the ball near your chest/belly - easier transfer zone
- Bare hand is already there to grab it
- Feet should be moving to throwing position during transfer
- Don't wind up - short arm action for quick release

**SKILLS FOCUS**Transfer speed  Footwork  Infield rhythm 

## Ball Tracking Drill

5-6 min

### EQUIPMENT

Tennis balls or baseballs, colored tape or markers (optional)

### SETUP & EXECUTION

Partners 25-30 feet apart. Thrower tosses ball, receiver must say "BALL-BALL-BALL" out loud while tracking it, then "CATCH" as they catch it. Forces eyes to stay on the ball. Variation: mark balls with colored dots - receiver calls out the color before catching.

### COACHING POINTS

- Eyes track the ball the WHOLE way - don't look away early
- Saying "ball-ball-ball" keeps focus on tracking
- Watch the ball INTO your glove - head stays still
- If they can't see the dot color, they're not watching closely enough
- Same skill applies to hitting - track the ball to the bat

### PRO TIP

*Many dropped balls and missed hits happen because kids look away too early. This simple drill builds the habit of tracking the ball all the way in - critical for both fielding AND hitting.*

## CATCHER POSITION SPECIFIC

### Catcher Stance - Sign & Receiving

5-6 min

### EQUIPMENT

Catcher's gear (at least mask), home plate

### SETUP & EXECUTION

Practice two stances: (1) Sign stance - squat deep, knees together to hide signs, glove blocks view from third base. (2) Receiving stance - more athletic, weight on balls of feet, butt up higher, ready to move. Transition between them on command.

### COACHING POINTS

- Sign stance: knees together, deep squat, give clear signs
- Receiving stance: feet wider, butt up, balanced and mobile
- Always give a good target - glove where you want the pitch
- Quiet body - don't bounce around
- Transition is quick when pitcher comes set

### PRO TIP

*At this age, don't overcomplicate signs. 1 = fastball, 2 = changeup (if they have one). Focus on mechanics over complex systems.*

### Framing Drill (Advanced/Optional)

5-6 min

### EQUIPMENT

Catcher's gear, bucket of balls, coach or pitcher

### SETUP & EXECUTION

Catcher in receiving stance. Coach throws pitches to different locations. Catcher catches and "sticks" the ball - hold it still for a beat, don't yank it toward the zone. At 9-10, focus on CATCHING the ball cleanly first - framing is secondary.

### COACHING POINTS

- Catch the ball with soft hands - absorb, don't stab
- Just hold it still - don't worry about turning the glove
- At this age, umpires call what they see anyway
- Prioritize: catch it cleanly → hold it still → everything else later

### PRO TIP

*This is a LOW PRIORITY drill for 9-10 year olds. Spend more time on blocking and throwing. Only use this if your catcher already catches consistently and you have extra time.*

## Blocking (Ball in Dirt)

8-10 min

### EQUIPMENT

Full catcher's gear, tennis balls or soft baseballs to start, regular balls later

### SETUP & EXECUTION

Catcher in stance. Coach bounces balls in the dirt from 20 feet. Catcher drops to knees, glove fills the "5 hole" (between legs), chest absorbs the ball, chin tucks. Progress from directly in front to left and right.

### COACHING POINTS

- Drop straight down - don't dive forward
- Glove goes to the ground between your knees
- Shoulders round forward - create a "wall"
- Chin down to chest - protect your throat
- Ball should stay in front of you - don't try to catch it

### VARIATION

For balls to the side: same technique, but angle your body toward the ball. Goal is to keep everything in front and toward the field.

## Throw Downs to Second

6-8 min

### EQUIPMENT

Full catcher's gear, second base, balls

### SETUP & EXECUTION

Catcher receives pitch from coach. Stand up, get balanced, and make an ACCURATE throw to second base. Shortstop or second baseman gives target. At 9-10, prioritize accuracy over speed - a good throw beats a fast bad one every time.

### COACHING POINTS

- Catch cleanly first - secure the ball before anything else
- Stand up, get balanced, THEN throw - don't rush
- Aim for chest-high at the bag - accuracy over velocity
- A throw that bounces or sails gives the runner extra bases
- It's okay to take an extra half-second if it means a good throw

### PRO TIP

*Forget "pop time" at this age. A 4-second throw on target beats a 2.5-second throw in the outfield. Build good mechanics first - speed comes with age and strength.*

## Fielding Bunts & Pop-Ups

5-6 min

### EQUIPMENT

Catcher's gear, balls, home plate area

### SETUP & EXECUTION

For bunts: catcher sprints out, fields the ball with two hands, turns toward first, throws. For pop-ups: locate the ball, tear off mask, find ball again, catch with two hands. Pop-ups drift back toward field - turn and face the infield to catch.

### COACHING POINTS

- Bunts: always circle to field ball facing your target
- Bunts: bare hand on top, scoop toward glove
- Pop-ups: mask off and AWAY from play (don't trip on it)
- Pop-ups: turn your back to the infield - ball curves that way
- Call for it loud! "I got it! I got it!"

### SKILLS FOCUS

Bunt defense Pop-up tracking Communication