



Session #3

Equipment: Agility ladder, medicine balls, batting cage, L-Screens, four hitting stations w/tees, three buckets of baseballs

Minutes after start of practice	LESSON PLAN FOCUS - Double Plays, 1st and 3rd Defense, 2 Strike Approach, Weight Transfer		
	Name of Activity	Description	Key Teaching Points
0:00	Warm - Up	Cornerstone Warm-Up*	1.) Movement Prep 2.) Improve Agility 3.) Rotational Explosive Movement
0:15	Baserunning	2nd and 3rd base running	Knowing situations, learning to react in real time
0:25	Throwing Program	Cornerstone Throwing Program* Pitcher's Daily Dozen*	Coaches stay with each group, ensure technique and focus
0:35	Pitchers/Infielders Outfielders Water Break	2 base picks Pre-Pitch Routine	Picks at first base: Short arm, quick feet. Picks at second: Turn glove side Positioning, individual routine, 7, 8, 9 +/- positioning
0:50	Outfield Individual Time Catchers/Infielders Individual Hitting	Ground ball and throwing to target work Read step and go get it Introduce sun balls 1.) 1-2-Fire 2.) Outside tee 3.) Helmet Drill 4.) Outside/Inside w/ Hit/Take 5.) 2 strike approach in cage	Difference between low urgency play (routine) and do or die play Proper drop step mechanics, sprint to a spot Glove up first to block sun 1.) Start swing w/lower half 2.) Drive, don't guide ball oppo field 3.) Don't hook foul, hands inside 4.) Adjusting to each pitch 5.) Put the ball in play
1:05	Infield/Catcher Individual Time Outfield Individual Hitting	3 minute segments: Catcher Throw/ Infielder DP Rotation 8 minute segment - Infield pop ups 1.) 1-2-Fire 2.) Outside tee 3.) Helmet drill 4.) Outside/Inside w/ Hit/Take 5.) 2 strike approach in cage	Time catchers, make sure of first out on double play Communication, 3 players after each pop-up 1.) Start swing w/lower half 2.) Drive, don't guide ball oppo field 3.) Don't hook foul, hands inside 4.) Adjusting to each pitch 5.) Put the ball in play

1:25	1st and 3rd Defense	Outfielders as baserunners, or in OF to back up bases Cover: Straight steal, delayed steal, hit and run, bunt and run, walk off	Always give situation and have players determine out vs. run importance
1:50	Team Challenge	Straight Steal Challenge	Must get under allowed time, use live pitchers or have coach simulate pitchers

END OF PRACTICE ANNOUNCEMENTS:

PRACTICE NOTES:

Practice Resources:

2nd and 3rd Base Running

The way that we run this drill takes a little bit for players to get used to. We operate in two different modes. In “Mode 1” the base runners operate independently. So the runner on 2nd pretends he is the only runner on, and the runner on 3rd pretends he is the only runner on. In “Mode 2” they operate together as they would in a game if there were runners on 2nd and 3rd.

The fungo hitter sits with a bucket of balls at home plate, set up a full infield (rotate the infielders so they get a chance run as well) to field, but don't let the infielder throw since they haven't warmed up yet.

The runners take their leadoffs, and practice a secondary lead when the fungo hitter tosses the ball in the air. When he hits the ball, they react as they would with 0 or 1 out (I wouldn't use 2 outs since there isn't much for them to read).

Here are a few different situations to work on:

- 1.) Ground ball on the infield to both sides.
 - a.) Runner on 2nd reads at me to their left go, stay to their right.
 - b.) Runner on 3rd needs to know where the defense is lined up (in or back) and react.
- 2.) Line dives
 - a.) Both runners must see the line drive through/down.
- 3.) Fly balls
 - a.) Runner on 3rd need to tag, then listen to their coach at third if they should go, stay , or draw a throw (take 2 or 3 hard steps trying to cause an errant throw to the plate).
 - b.) With 0 outs the runner at second will try to tag on anything deep to center or right field.
- 4.) Slow rollers/choppers in front of the plate
 - a.) The runner on 2nd should go on a slow roller/chopper that is not directly back to the pitcher.
 - b.) The runner on 3rd should go (treat it like a safety squeeze) if they get a good jump.

Two Base Picks

Divide your pitchers in half. One set of them is working on picks to first base, the other one is working on picks to second base. You will also need to set up a first baseman and two middle

infielders to work with the pitchers. This is a great time to put in or practice any timing picks you have.

OF Pre-Pitch Routine

Pre-pitch footwork- Must be moving, feet on the ground as the ball crosses the plate, shift eyes to the hitting zone as pitcher lifts his leg, do not follow the ball.

Description of out field shifting:

Call	Positioning Description
7	Shaded toward left field, average depth
7 Minus	Shaded toward left field, shallow depth
7 Plus	Shaded toward left field, deeper depth
8	Straight up positioning and depth
8 Minus	Straight up, shallow depth
8 Plus	Straight up, deeper depth
9	Shaded toward right field, average depth
9 Minus	Shaded toward right field, shallow depth
9 Plus	Shaded toward right fields, deeper depth

Outfielders Ground Ball and Throw To Target

Set up two lines of outfielders and a “cut off” man or a net at an age appropriate distance. Hit ground balls between the two lines and have one player from each go after it. They have to communicate who will catch field it, and throw to the cutoff man or target using a long step.

Read Step and Go Get It

Purpose: To introduce the read step and get players used to moving in or back.

Equipment: Two Baseballs

Set up: A coach (or player with a baseball) stands several yards (depending on age and ability level). If you are using multiple coaches (or player/coaches) for this drill, make sure there is plenty of room between the outfielders to allow for them to run forward, backward, and sideways to catch the ball without colliding with another player doing this drill.

P

P

P

C

C

C

Procedure:

- 1.) The coach holds up one of their arms, the player performs a read step to that side.
- 2.) The coach throws a fly ball on that same side, either behind them, or in front of them.
- 3.) Begin with throws that are close to the player, then begin to challenge them to run farther to catch the ball.

Coaching Cues:

- 1.) Players should keep the same read step as they had during the previous two drills.
- 2.) Players should sprint to the ball, and try to get behind the ball and catch it coming forward.

Introduce Sun Balls

Have players partner up so that one partner (the feeder with the ball) is between the sun and the other player. The distance they are apart will depend on their age and how comfortable they are with fielding sun balls.

The feeder will toss or throw a fly ball to their partner who will shield the sun with their glove before looking up to find the ball. They will keep their glove up as long as the sun is in their eyes until they need to catch the ball.

1-2-3 Fire

Purpose: Adding the swing to the Stride, Load, Separate sequence. This drill teaches hitters to swing with their mid-sections.

Copyright 2015 © Cornerstone Coaching Academy

Progression: This drill can be done after the “Stance, Stride/Load, Separate” drill has been mastered.

Equipment: Bat, Baseballs, Tee, Hitting Net

Procedure:

- 1.) Set up a tee simulating the ball down the middle and a net to hit into.
- 2.) The coach says “one.” On this cue, the hitter will get in his stance.
- 3.) The coach says “two.” On this cue, the hitter will stride and load.
- 4.) The coach says “three.” On this cue, the hitter will begin the swing with the lower half, keeping the upper half still.
- 5.) The coach says “fire!” On this cue, the hitter will fire their mid section to swing and hit the ball off the tee.

Teaching Cues:

- 1.) Coaches should emphasize the separation between the upper and lower half on “three”
- 2.) Do not allow them to move their upper half on “three.”
- 3.) Emphasize they should be swinging the bat with their core, not their arms.
- 4.) Make sure the hitter knows, they will not be able to create as much force with this swing because you are stopping the progression.

Outside Tee

Miss the Helmet

Ages: 10 and older

Purpose: To learn to transfer weight during the swing and to correct a hitter who is leaning back on his swing.

Progression: This drill can be done by a hitter who has a good understanding of the basic fundamental swing, but is struggling with weight transfer. The hitter may be “spinning” on the swing instead of driving the weight forward during the swing.

Equipment: Bat, Ball, Tee, Batting Helmet, Hitting Net

Procedure:

- 1.) Set a ball on a tee simulating a pitch down the middle.
- 2.) Set a helmet on the ground outside of the back foot
- 3.) Have the hitter swing and hit the ball off the tee

4.) The hitter's back foot should miss the helmet sitting on the ground

Coaching Cues:

1.) If the hitter hits the helmet on his swing, it means his weight is not transferring forward during the swing.

[Inside/Outside w/Hit/Take](#)

Purpose: To work on hitting inside an outside pitches while still maintaining proper balance and getting to a proper hitting position.

Progression: After they are able to successfully complete the "Inside/Outside" drill and have mastery of getting into proper hitting position.

Equipment: Bat, Two Tees, Net, Baseballs

Procedure:

This drill is an extension of the "Inside/Outside" drill. It combines it with the "Hit/Take" drill.

- 1.) Set up one tee on the inside corner out in front of the plate, and one tee on the outside corner toward the middle of the hitter's body.
- 2.) On the hitter's stride, the coach says either "inside," "outside," or "take."
- 3.) The hitter hits the ball indicated by the coach, or if the coach says "take," the hitter freezes in hitting position.

Coaching Cues:

In addition to the cues for the "Inside/Outside" drill, the coach needs to ensure that the hitter is freezing in a good hitting position on "take."

Two Strike Approach

Every pitch in the cage will be with a two strike approach. Coaches can should throw outside fastballs, curveballs, and sliders. Start the at bat at 0-2 or 1-2 and finish an at bat in the cage.

The player is done after their at bat.

Catcher Throw/IF DP Rotation (3 minute rotations)

Rotation #1

Catchers throw to 3rd

Coach hits 4-6-3 and 6-4-3 DP

Rotation #2 - Staggered

Catchers throw to 2nd

Coach hits 5-4-3 DP

Rotation #3 - Staggered

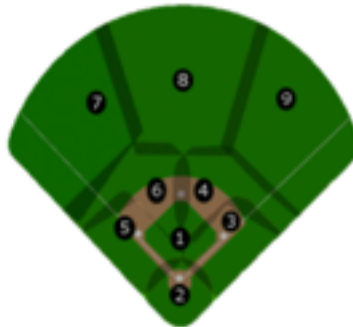
Catchers picks and bunts to 1st

Coach hits 5-4-3, 6-4-3, 4-6-3, or 3-6-3 DP

Rotation #4 - Bases loaded

Hit ball anywhere with the corners in, and middle infield back. The players have to choose the best way to turn a DP based on where the ball is hit. Include catchers and pitchers.

Infield Pop-Up Segment and Priority



- 1.) 3 players go after every ball in the infield and between infield and outfield.
 - 2.) 2 players go after every fly ball (even fly balls down the line).
 - 3.) Call the ball at its apex (highest point), even later on windy days.
 - 4.) All calls need to be loud, and repeated by the fielder calling the ball.
 - 5.) Infielders call "I got it," outfielders call "Ball, Ball, Ball." This is so players know if an infielder or outfielder are calling the ball.
 - 6.) **This is the most important component of the communication plan!** After the player calls the ball, every player on the field, every coach, and every player in the dugout, will echo
- Copyright 2015 © Cornerstone Coaching Academy

(loudly the player's name). This gives the player the confidence they need to go hard after the ball. The players closest to him needs to call the ball the loudest to ensure the fielder knows they are not in danger of a collision. This point is the key to your communication system.

One coach will be hitting/throwing pop-ups to the left side (LF, CF, 3B, SS, P, C) and one coach will be hitting/throwing pop-ups to the right side (RF, CF, 2B, 1B, P, C). It may be necessary to have two CF, P, and C so that one can work with each side of the diamond. The coach to the right side will be responsible for hitting balls between the SS, 2B, CF triangle.

1st and 3rd Defense Philosophy

There are a number of 1st and 3rd defenses that work at a variety of levels. During this segment, it is best to let players make mistakes, discuss the mistakes, then correct them. Ultimately, your 1st and 3rd defense will depend on what the inning, outs, and score situation dictates.

- 1.) Early in the game, close game, get an out.
- 2.) Early in the game, down multiple runs, save the run.
- 3.) Early in the game, up my multiple runs, get the out.
- 4.) Late and up by 2 or more, get the out.
- 5.) Late and up by 1, tied, or save the run.
- 6.) Any time there are two outs, remember, if you can get the out *before* the run scores, the inning is over.

1st and 3rd Defense

Here is our basic 1st and 3rd defense. There are many others that people use and this one puts a lot of pressure on our 2nd baseman and catcher. Plus it requires players to know and execute the above score, inning, out situations.

- 1.) Catcher throws the ball right to second base
- 2.) The SS covers the bag
- 3.) The 2nd baseman comes in from his position until the ball crosses the hitting zone (defending against hit and run), then he breaks over in front of 2nd base.
- 4.) The 2nd baseman reads the baserunner at third. If he breaks for home, and the out, score, innings combination dictate, the 2nd baseman cuts the ball and throws to the plate. If the runner at third holds, the 2nd baseman lets the ball go through.
- 5.) The SS must expect the ball to come through EVERY TIME.

Defending a Walk-off

The ultimate goal of a 1st and 3rd walk off is to have the players analyze the inning, out, and score situation prior to it happening, and have them react in accordance to that analysis.

The same rules apply as for the 1st and 3rd defense.

To defend a walk off with a right handed pitcher on the mound (this is unlikely to occur with a left handed pitcher on the mound):

- 1.) Everyone on the field yells “STEP OFF!” to the pitcher.
- 2.) The pitcher steps off the back of the rubber.
- 3.) The pitcher freezes the runner on third by making eye contact and showing the ball.
- 4.) The pitcher turns and looks to the second baseman who has come straight into the baseline from his position.
- 5a.) If the runner has either walked off or is jogging, the pitcher will throw to the second baseman in the baseline making it approximately a 60 foot rundown.
- 5b.) If the runner is sprinting, the second baseman will cross his arms in front of his chest as he runs to the baseline staying out of the way of the runner. If this happens, the pitcher will throw the ball to the shortstop at second base.
- 6.) The pitcher will go to first base after the throw to get in the rundown if necessary.
- 7.) Regardless of where the ball goes, the goal will be to execute a rundown keeping the score, inning, and out situation in mind (see 1st and 3rd defense).

Straight Steal Challenge

Start with a runner at first base, a pitcher on the mound, a catcher behind the plate, and two middle infielders. Each group could have a short line (2 or 3 players) because this drill can be very intense on arms.

The pitcher delivers the pitch, and the baserunner tries to get a jump and steal. The catcher tries to throw the runner out.

To make this as game like as possible, allow pitchers to deliver home or pick off, allow baserunners to straight steal, delayed steal, or just get a normal secondary lead, chart the pitcher’s pitches (location and velocity if possible) so he doesn’t cheat, and put a hitter in the box so the catcher doesn’t jump out too soon.

To have runners get more reps, have one runner at the base who goes all the way in to second, and two runners behind him who get jumps, then peel off to the outfield side about 1/2 way to second base.