

Throwing and Catching a Baseball

Most aspects of the game involve skills in throwing and receiving a baseball. Unfortunately, many coaches neglect to teach the basic fundamentals needed to achieve appropriate skill levels.

Throwing:

Throwing a baseball properly depends on grip, arm action and body motion.

Grip

- 1) Forefinger and middle finger are close, but not together, and across the seams
- 2) The thumb is underneath and between the two fingers providing support
- 3) There should be a slight space between the palm and ball with the remaining fingers bent slightly to the side and relaxed.

Arm and Body Action

- 1) Rotate shoulder and hips to point at the target - body weight is back
- 2) Throwing arm drops down as front leg begins stride (leg opposite throwing arm)
- 3) Throwing arm extends back - weight begins to transfer against the front leg
- 4) Shoulder levels - front leg lands on ball of foot - hips begin to open
- 5) Wrist is cocked - elbow bent
- 6) Eyes on target - hips open - weight transferred against front foot
- 7) Ball is released slightly above and in front of the head
- 8) Follow-through - bend the back

Catching:

When receiving, the position of the glove is usually determined by whether the ball is above or below the waist. Above the waist the fingers point up and below the waist the fingers point down.

For balls at belt level, the arms are extended slightly more to cushion the catch, and the fingers point outward.

The baseball is caught with arms relaxed and extended towards the oncoming ball. The ball should be received on the throwing side of the body, with the elbows bent. The hands draw back slightly to absorb the force of the throw. The throwing hand enters the glove as soon as possible and finds the correct grip on the ball in preparation for a quick throw. Coaches should stress that quickness with the feet is essential in getting the body into a good receiving position.