

Accreditation Resource Manual

Basics of Catching

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Protective Equipment

<p>Leg Guards</p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure leg guards are correct size so that knees are correctly positioned in a comfortable and protected manner • Straps need to be firmly adjusted and fastened on the outside
<p>Chest Plate</p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure straps are adjusted to provide a snug, comfortable fit • Top part of the chest protector should protect the base of the throat • Additional shoulder guard (pictured) for throwing arm is recommended unless it unduly interferes with throwing
<p>Helmet & Mask</p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Snug, comfortable fit of helmet and mask (does not fly off in use, but enables free movement of jaw) • Fixed or hinged throat protector/extension is a necessity
<p>Protective Cup</p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As with other positions, mandatory at all times • 'Banana' style preferred (protects from underneath)

Basic Postures

No Runners On Base



- Priority is to be able to effectively receive any pitch around the strike zone
- Comfortable and balanced posture (several variations are illustrated); rear can be “down”
- Glove at bottom of strike zone, arm in relaxed position with elbow clear of knee
- Provide open glove as target for pitcher
- Throwing arm protected behind right leg (hung loosely to right heel)

Runners On Base



- Additional priorities are to be able to: a) prevent any wild pitch getting past (high, low or wide); and b) throw to bases when required
- More active posture (several variations are illustrated)
- Wider feet
- Butt up somewhat
- Throwing hand in a position to make a quick exchange
- Glove at bottom of strike zone, arm in relaxed position with elbow clear of knee
- Provide open glove as target for pitcher
- At an advanced level, posture may be varied according to situational probability. Eg. Slightly higher and wider stance in blocking situations, lower and slightly narrower stance for throwing situations

Receiving

Target



- Relaxed, open glove for target
- Target given at the bottom of the strike zone
- Develop a mechanism to relax hand as the ball is released (eg. Quarter turn as illustrated)

Pitch to centre of body



- Minimal body movement to catch ball
- Allow the umpire a chance to see where the ball was caught (with in reason)

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be soft with the hand but firm with the arm • Avoid squeezing the glove (allow impact of the ball to close it for you)
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Pitch to catchers right

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As above • Catch 'outside half' of ball • On a very wide pitch (obviously not a strike) priority is to catch ball (go out and get it as maintaining body position is irrelevant)
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Pitch to catchers left

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As above • Catch 'outside half' of ball • On a very wide pitch (obviously not a strike) priority is to catch ball (go out and get it as maintaining body position is irrelevant)
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Catching low pitch, possible strike

				<ul style="list-style-type: none">• As above• Where possible the pitch at the bottom of the strike zone should be caught with the back of the hand up
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Catching low ball (clearly not a strike)

			<ul style="list-style-type: none">• On a very low pitch it is necessary to turn the hand and get the fingers under the ball
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Throwing to bases

Second base



- Starting in 'runners on base' stance
- Movement commences prior to receiving the ball: slight weight shift forward and to the left
- Move right foot under centre of gravity
- Simultaneously transfer the ball to the throwing hand (from below the glove)
- Close front shoulder; step in direct line towards target
- Throwing arm needs to be in cocked position (with front elbow at shoulder height) as front foot touches the ground
- Throw overhand to maximise backspin and carry on ball
- Head should remain stable with eyes focused on target throughout delivery
- Full follow-through
- Each individual needs to find the best balance between a quick release and throwing velocity



Blocking Pitch in the Dirt

Blocking Posture



- Down on widely-spread knees
- Glove blocks gap in middle; other fist behind glove, elbows back by sides
- Thumbs turned out to expose fleshy part of forearms
- Trunk curled and leaning forward slightly
- Chin down toward chest
- Feet turned out may assist with stability or balance

Pitch in middle of plate



- Glove turns under (with throwing hand behind it) and goes to ground in front of body
- Knees spread and drop to ground
- Head and eyes follow ball down until it strikes trunk

Catching a Popup

(Viewed from pitcher)



- Turn (on the spot) in the direction of the ball (generally away from the hitter)
- Remove mask but do not discard yet
- Move into position to catch the ball with back to the infield (On a high pop-up, try to avoid staring up at the ball continuously: Quickly switching focus from ball to surroundings gives a better perspective and prevents disorientation)
- Allow adequate room for the drift of the ball back towards the infield
- Throw mask away to eliminate chance of tripping over it
- Raise hands just prior to receiving the ball (to eliminate undue tension). Ensure vision of ball is unobstructed
- Make catch in good athletic position



(Side view)

Bunt Plays

Bunt to 1B side, fielded using two hands



- Discard mask and stay low as you approach the ball quickly
- Round the ball to direct momentum towards target
- Use two handed scoop directly under eyes
- Replace feet and throw (if time is short throw from a low position)
- May be necessary to clear the runner (reposition yourself more towards the middle of the infield to achieve a clear line to first)



Fielding a stationary ball



- Stationary ball can be fielded with bare hand
- Bare hand is placed on top of the ball and firmly pressed into the ground to ensure a good grip

Tag plays at the plate

Accurate throw



- Wait behind the plate as long as possible to maximise field of vision enabling a better read on developing play
- Once ball is on the way assume position with left heel on third base corner of the plate, giving the runner a good view of the plate (encouraging him to slide to that portion of the plate)
- Drop back into the baseline to receive the ball in a 'side on' position (chest and leg guards facing the runner). This enables a quick tag as well as providing maximum protection for the catcher
- Keep the mask on throughout the play

