



Building Elite
Catchers

Ranking the Catching Physical Skills

1. Receiving ability
2. Throwing ability
3. Blocking ability
4. Hitting ability



Great receivers don't move the ball post-catch.

Great receivers maneuver the glove, pre-catch, to reorient the perception of the pitch back to the zone.



Receiving Score

Receiving stance

Timing from target to break

Timing of receiving presentation

Glove movement

Body sway

Receiving Stance

Distance from
the batter

Creation of
visual window
for the umpire

Receiving Stance



Timing from Target to Break



Timing Reception

- Troubleshooting: If timing is early, there will be excessive glove movement
- Troubleshooting: If extended early, the catch will look weak
- Troubleshooting: If late to reception it will look like “snatching” the ball

Receiving Presentation

- Receiving presentation is about drawing the visual perception of the pitch back to the strike zone
- Receive all pitches out front and in the center of your body
 - Work through the side of the ball opposite the run of the pitch
 - Use force through the chest & shoulders but with soft hands
- Stick strike 3 a little different from strike 1 and 2

Timing of
Reception

Drop/Fastball



Timing of
Reception

Glove Side



Timing of Reception

Curve



Timing of Reception

Rise



Catcher's Bullpen Routine

- Stretch: “Glove Sways”**
- Pitcher Close Spins: Paddle Deflections** (*On a bucket or garden stool*)
- Pitcher half-distance: On bucket or garden stool**
 - Low pitches: **Exaggerate timing of reception from low to high**
 - Lateral/high pitches: **Exaggerated holds**
- Pitcher from mound: Receiving stance** (*game speed receiving*)
 - Drop balls, backdoor, change: **Challenge - exaggerated break holds**
 - Curve, Screw, Rise: **Challenge - exaggerated holds + stealing strikes**
- Last two of each pitch – Throwing stance: exchange mechanics**
 - High pitches – from feet (i.e., rise, curve, Off-speed curve)
 - Low pitches – from knee (i.e., fastball, drop, change)
- Blocking & Picking**
 - Picks: Drop & Fastball: last two – ask pitcher to bury in the dirt
 - Blocking: Change & off-speed: last two – ask pitcher to bury in dirt
 - Scenario 1: buried strike 3, keep ball in front & throw to 1b
 - Scenario 2: runner on 3b, pitch in dirt, keep ball in front

Catcher's Bullpen Routine (*Glove Sways*)



Catcher's Bullpen Routine (Deflections)



Throwing ability

- Most important throwing skill is ACCURACY
- Know with to stick the pitch & when to throw
- Steals to 2b
- Throws to the right side of infield
- Throws to the left side of infield
- Double-play footwork

Steals to Second

- ✓ Hip swivel / cheat step
- ✓ Get back foot in the ground ASAP
- ✓ Exchange
 - pocket down
 - out-front in the midline of the body
- ✓ Firm front side during the throw
- ✓ Bring chest to the glove during the finish

Steals to Second



Steals to Second



Throwing Plays – Right Side of Infield

- ✓ Pick-off to 1b (1st baseman cover)
- ✓ Pick-off to 1b (2nd baseman cover)
- ✓ Pick-off to 1b/LHH (1st or 2nd cover)
- ✓ Strike 3 – buried breaking pitch (1st cover)
- ✓ WP behind catcher – 1st cover
- ✓ Steal to 2b (2nd cover)

Throwing Plays – Right Side of Infield



Throwing Plays – Left Side of Infield

- ✓ Pick-off to 3b – batter back (*3rd baseman Cover*)
- ✓ Pick-off to 3b – batter up (*SS Cover*)
- ✓ Steal to 3b (*3rd cover*)
- ✓ Steal to 3b (*SS Cover*)
- ✓ Pick ball in the dirt – throw 2b (*SS Cover*)

Throwing Plays – Left Side of Infield



Double Play Footwork



1. When to block vs when to pick
2. Blocking mechanics
3. Picking mechanics

Blocking Ability

Picks vs Blocks



- ✓ Position to avoid obstruction
- ✓ Body position:
Knees face third base

Tag Plays

Tag Plays



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