

Outfield Fundamentals

GENERAL

- **BE AGGRESSIVE!**
- **ELIMINATE ERRORS!** (Mental and Physical)
- Know your pitcher.
- Know and read the batter.
- Know the situation/where to throw ball. ALWAYS THINK AHEAD!
- Know the baserunners.
- Positioning.
- Awareness of your location. Find the fence when going back. Know where your other OFers are.
- Back up all IFers, OFers, and throws in ALL situations.
- Be the best conditioned athletes on the field.

FOOTWORK

- Running speed—head turned toward where you are running, pump your arms, reach late.
- Good athletic stance.
- Pre-pitch movement.
- Quick first step.
- Gain ground with drop step.
- Develop the cross-over step.

COMMUNICATION

- Communication.
 - Before and during plays.
 - With other OFers and IFers.
 - OFers take precedence over IFers on balls.
 - Work in triangles

THROWING

- Long arm throwing mechanics – thumb to thigh, arm up high. Ball out to side.
- Throwing accuracy, not velocity.
- Gripping the ball correctly—across the big seams.
- Throw through the cut-off, not to the cut-off.

FIELDING

- Circle the ball and get behind it – shoulders squared to target.
- Sprint to a spot, don't drift.
- Field the difficult ball.
 - Fly balls over your head.
 - Short fly balls.
 - Fly balls and grounders to the side & in-between OFers.
 - Line drive at you

GROUND BALLS

- Fielding ground balls.
 - When no throw has to be made.
 - When throw is necessary – “do or die” footwork
- Circle the ball and get behind it – shoulders squared to target.
- Keep all balls in front and eliminate bobbles.

FLY BALLS

- Be relaxed and confident when catching fly balls.
- Catch the ball with a high glove.
- Catch the ball at eye level.
- Catch the ball over throwing shoulder.
- Transferring the ball from glove to throwing hand—remove unnecessary movements.
- Get rid of the ball quickly. (Know where you're throwing!)
- Lay out and dive when necessary.
- Chop your feet to stay behind fly balls then work thru the ball with good crow hop.
- Keep the glove high on fly balls over your head—keep it in your line of vision.
- Catch the ball low to side or in front.

Characteristics of a good outfielder

- Does not hesitate when making a play on the ball
- Good perception of the field
- Works well with other outfielders around them
- Moves with the other outfielders as a unit
- Good communication skills
- Vocal leader
- Aggressive, agile, athletic, quick reactions, smart
- Strong accurate throws to all parts of the field
- Getting behind the ball, both on ground balls and fly balls
- Reads the ball off the bat well
- Good foot work and powerful first step
- Good hand-eye coordination

Game goals

- No ground balls under the glove, keep everything in front
- No routine fly balls off the glove
- Strong accurate throws to bases and cuts
- Limit total bases by opponent.
- Well hit balls do not turn into anything more than a double- take good angles to cut off ground balls and good jumps off fly balls/line drives.
- Dive for the ball when needed
- No misread balls (false steps)
- Catching all balls in the air
- Constant communication before and during plays
- Knowing where we are going with the ball prior to each play
- Back each other up on every play

Season goals

- Limit runners to zero extra bases
- Limit errors on the year
- Good communication between all outfielders
- Improve number of assists
- Least amount of outfield errors in the conference
- Highest fielding percentage in conference.
- Lead the conference in assists
- Limit errors (mental and physical)
- Don't allow triples

In your drills, focus on the following:

- Communication, loud, 3x – mine/you
- Pre-pitch movement - Chop the feet, creep, pop, to start
- Ball grip across the big seams every time
- Throwing mechanics - Thumb to thigh, arm up high
- Stay on top, good follow thru down and across
- Deep drop on first step
- First step/crossover
- Good angles
- Eyes at the start
- Sprint to GB, work thru into crow hop
- Sprint to fly balls-no drift-head down and go
- 2 types of long toss—flat foot, crow hop
- Foot work on crow hop (show the instep to turn the shoulders)
- Work shoulders toward the target
- Plant step vs reverse pivot
- Catch over throwing shoulder
- Glove up high—fingers up
- Run with glove tucked
- Backhand catch when running toward throwing side
- Catch with one hand when on the run

DRILLS

Pre-game routine

In middle of OF so you can work all directions

Everyone else out of the way

No side conversations with fielder

No back pedals

No 1 foot throws

Get back and work thru-don't be lazy

No lazy throws

No one knee fielding

Charge all balls

2 and in – stay deep for both

Headfirst dives

Throwing progression

- Sideways – Glove shoulder toward target
- Trunk rotation – feet stationary
- Slowly back up with regular throw
- Flat footed long toss
- Crow hop long toss
- 3 hop, emphasis on:
 - *driving off back foot*
 - *using glove side to pull the backside thru*
 - *good follow thru down and across*
- Finishers – do or die throws with partner, GB & FB

** When long tossing, throws should be long and HIGH.

Also work on receiving the ball into a throwing position!

Karate kid drills – work on developing an explosive crow hop

DRILLS

Everyday's for fly balls

****Mix up your eye contact with the ball and the distance.**

- Zig zag warmup
- Straight back R/L/mix
- 45 degree R/L
- Hip turn R/L deep/short
- Head turn R/L
- Post pattern R/L
- Sprint in High/Low
- Sprint in feet first slide/head first dive

Tennis Ball

- Random – high, low, right, left
- 45 degree – R/L foot, pump arms
- Straight back – R/L foot, pump arms
- Straight back, no look
- Straight back, wrong shoulder head turn
- Do everyday's with tennis ball
- Field do or die GB's with no glove

Footwork for GB's & FB's

- Straight-on do or die
 - sprint/chop/sprint – field in front of body
- Angle and square shoulders with a throw – R/L
 - Drop step, sprint, drop the inside shoulder, chop, sprint, throw
- Angle and cut the ball off with a throw – R/L
 - Drop step, sprint, field low with a forehand or back hand
 - cold cut footwork with a drive step or reverse pivot
 - Drive toward target, don't take an open step with glove side foot

DRILLS

Other drills

- 10 ball drill
- 3 ball drill
- 2 line cut drill
- Star drill – do middle cones with both R/L first step
- Point to spot reaction drill
- Line drives
- Tape tunnel
- Pull downs after long toss
- Dive over noodle
- 2 ball drill, 20 yards

Special situations

- Finding the fence drill
- Fence drill with dots to work different angle drop steps
- Diving R/L
 - One ball left, 2nd ball right and vice versa.
 - Can start on knees and then transition to feet.
- Misdirection off the bat

Star Drill

R/L first step on middle cones

