



PERRY HILL INFIELD SYSTEM MANUAL



27 OUTS. NO MORE.



Perry Hill's Infield System

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Training Manual

by Perry 'Bone' Hill

The Perry Hill Infield System manual is a step-by-step training handbook designed to teach players the foundation of great fielding mechanics. Whether you are new to the game or have been playing for years, this will truly make your teams and players a force to be reckoned with.





Perry Hill's Infield System

Here you will discover a teaching philosophy and methodology that will hopefully enlighten your coaching experience and give your players a rock-solid foundation in fielding mechanics. The Perry Hill Infield System will only yield results based on your effort in learning it and your commitment to executing the fundamentals in a proper fashion. If you pay close attention to the information on the following pages, study the methodology, and follow the approach to teaching, you will experience a high level of success.



The Six Fs

Feet

One key to being a good infielder is proper footwork before the delivery of the pitch, as the pitch is being released, and as the ball enters the hitting zone. You want to get yourself in the best position possible to react and move side-to-side to field a batted ball as quickly as possible.



- Be in a relaxed position as the pitcher holds the ball.



- On the pitcher's first movement bend your back slightly.



- When the pitcher's arm is moving forward and reaches the ear, take a small step forward with either foot and then separate your feet into a ready position.
- The feet should be about shoulder-width apart with the knees slightly bent.



- Separating both feet at the same time ensures that your weight will be distributed on both feet evenly and slightly forward on the balls of your feet.
- Avoid laziness as the game progresses; always move your feet into the proper position to set up with a wide base, the butt down, and the hands out in front.

Follow this routine on each pitch and you'll always be prepared to react quickly to field the ball when it is hit.



Field

The second “F” of infield defense is “field.” Once you’ve established a good ready position that allows you to react quickly when the ball is hit, it is time to get to the ball and field it. You want to get to the ball as quickly as you can and set up by creating a wide base with your feet so that your butt can get down and your hands can be pushed out in front of your body. You always want to catch the ball out in front so that you can see the ball and the glove in the same view.



- As you get to the ball, you want to make sure that your feet are wide apart to create a wide base.
- This will allow you to get your butt down and your hands out in front so that you can see the ball and the glove in the same view.



- Seeing the ball and the glove in the same view from the time the ball leaves the bat will allow you to be a more consistent fielder and will make it easier to react to difficult hops.



- Creating a wide base with your feet also provides a good balance point so that you won't tip over.
- Some coaches ask you to get your hands out in front without emphasizing how important it is to create a wide base. Not creating a wide base will cause your glove to lift off the ground and may make you tip forward.
- A narrow stance can also make it difficult to see the ball and the glove in the same view from the time that it leaves the bat until it rolls into your glove.





Funnel

“Funnel” is the third of the six “Fs.” After you have established a good ready position, reacted to a batted ball, and set up in the proper position to receive the ball with a wide base (butt down and hands out in front), you should funnel the ball into your body with soft hands. After you catch the ball you want to bring it into the center of the body at chest level so that you can separate the hands and prepare to throw the ball to the appropriate teammate.

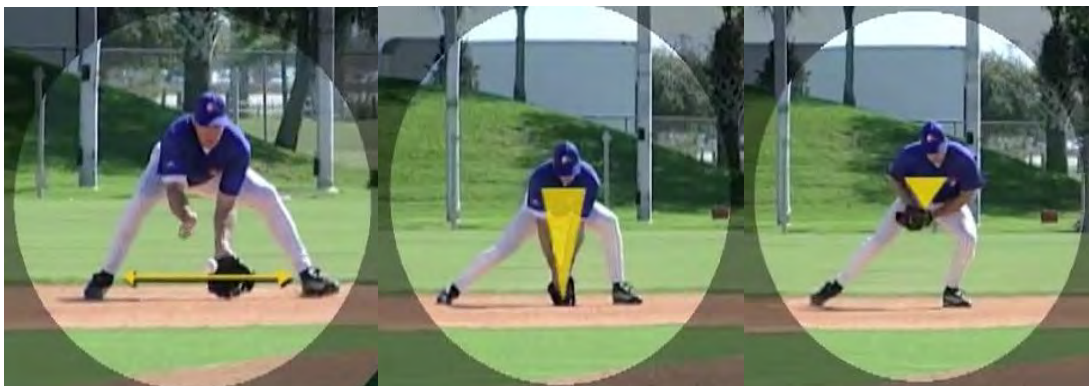


- After fielding the ball out in front of the body, you should funnel the ball back into your body with soft hands.
- Bring the ball to the center of the body at chest level so that you can separate the hands and prepare to throw.
- Separate the hands with the thumbs down.
- This gets you into a position of power, locking your front shoulder in on your target.
- It also ensures that the angle of your elbow will be correct with the hand above the ball as the hands come apart.
- Whenever you throw anything – a boxing punch or a bounce pass in basketball – having the thumbs down puts you in a position of power.
- If you funnel properly and separate with the thumbs down, you should automatically get to your release point with the hand directly behind the ball, which is the best way to assure a more powerful, accurate throw.



Footwork

Technically, the third and fourth “Fs” occur at the same time. The fourth “F” is the “footwork” that is necessary to throw the ball to your target. As you funnel the ball toward your body, your feet should begin moving. The goal is to generate momentum toward the target by moving your feet in that direction without crossing over.



- If you funnel the ball to the center of your body properly and separate your hands with your thumbs down, you should be in the proper position to throw the ball to your target. While funneling, the fourth “F” – footwork – should also be taking place.



- The formula for right-handed players is right foot to left foot and left foot to target. For lefties it is the opposite – left to right and right to target. Using the proper footwork is the best way for you to create the two “Ds”, distance and direction, in the proper angle toward the target.
- Move your feet in the direction of the target without crossing your feet.
- Right-handers take the right foot toward the left and then the left toward the target.
- Lefties take left to right and right to the target.
- If you cross over your feet before releasing the ball, your hand can get under the ball, which puts strain on the elbow and can make the ball move during its flight toward your teammate.



Fire

The fifth “F” of infield defense is “fire.” Once you have fielded the ball, funneled it to the center of your body, separated your hands into a position of power with your thumbs down and created direction and distance toward your target, it is time to release the ball.



- If the first four “Fs” have been completed to this point, you shouldn’t have to think about anything other than getting rid of the ball quickly.
- The separation of your hands with the thumbs down should have your front shoulder aligned properly and your elbow at the proper angle with the hand behind the ball.
- Release the ball once you’ve created the proper direction and distance by moving your feet toward the target without crossing over.
- Use a four-seam grip when throwing after the catch and always try to keep your elbow above the shoulder



Follow

The sixth “F” of infield defense is to “follow” the throw, which helps to ensure carry and accuracy. If the proper momentum has been created to establish distance and direction toward the target, the body should automatically take a few extra steps toward the target after the ball is released. If you find that you are peeling off of the throw or not following through the throw, that’s a good indication that you are not generating the momentum necessary to achieve maximum carry and accuracy.



- If the first five “Fs” have been completed to this point, your body should automatically follow the throw after the ball is released for several steps toward the intended target.
- A proper “follow,” which is the sixth “F,” ensures that you are achieving maximum carry and accuracy.
- If you find that you are not following the throw in the direction of the target or following through, this is an indication that one of the first five “Fs” might need to be fixed. Go back and make sure the first five “Fs” are being done correctly.



Put it All Together



Relax



Bend



Small Step



Separate





Separate

F

i



Move to the Ball

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i



Wide Base

d



Wide Base



Field the Ball



Funnel

F

U

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E

I



Footwork



Out Front



Right to Left



Left to Target



Thumbs Down



Short Arm Action



Fire

F i r e



Mechanics



Momentum



Follow

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Individual Work

First Baseman

Break to Base, Set-up, Receive Throw – Anchor at corner away from glove; See throw, drop foot, stretch foot to the ball.



See throw, drop foot, stretch foot to the ball.



Fungo Drill – Ground balls from various spots on the infield to first baseman. Designed to keep first baseman from stretching too early. Receive simulated low throws “inside” stretch foot whether forehand or backhand.

Right-handed first baseman: Backhand any ball at or outside left shoulder. Forehand any ball inside left shoulder.

Left-handed first baseman: Backhand any ball at or inside right shoulder. Forehand any ball outside right shoulder.

Decision-making drill – come off the bag on the outfield side to save an errant throw. Roll with the tag on a wide throw “up the line.” Simulate balls in front of the mound or home plate with left foot against inside part of the bag; receive good throws. Work on shifting feet into foul territory on errant throws outside (in foul territory) of that line.

Ground Balls: Rolled, fungo, or soft toss with throws to second. Emphasis on good fielding position, footwork, and throwing mechanics. Direction of ball determines fielding position and footwork.

- Right-handed first baseman—*At first baseman:* right foot to left, left to second base. Toward the line: field right foot to left, left foot to second base.
- Left-handed first baseman —*At or to the right of first baseman:* Left foot to right, right foot to second base. *Toward the line backhand – Routine:* using proper angle, left foot to ball, field in middle of body, left foot to right, right foot to second base or jab step with right foot to second base; *Extended:* using proper angle, field ball off right foot, gather balance as your left foot crosses over and plants, take a jab step with right foot to second base.

Ground Balls: Rolled, fungo, soft toss – pitcher covering. *At or medium speed away:* Field and follow “no spin” toss; *Hard to backhand – Routine:* Field in the middle of the body, in front of throwing side foot, stay low, throw uphill. *Extended:* Field off glove side foot, gather balance as throwing side foot crosses over. Stay low, throw uphill.



Bunts

Runner on first base – Set angle on “early break”.

- Right-handed first baseman: Must “get around” all bunts. *Forehand* – field mid-body to right foot, jab step with left foot to second or right foot to left, left to second or first (replace footwork)
- Left-handed first baseman: *Forehand* – field mid-body to left foot – jab step with right foot to second or left foot to right, right to second or first (replace footwork).

Runners on first and second:

- In on grass: charge in a straight line to home plate – direction of bunt determines fielding position – field with lead base in mind;
- Right-handed first baseman: *Ball left of body mid-line, Forehand*: field inside left foot, right foot to left foot; left foot (reverse pivot) to third base; Right foot to left foot, left to first (replace feet to first base); *Ball right of body mid-line, Backhand*: field ball inside left foot; right foot to left, left foot to first base, third base.
- Left-handed first baseman: *Ball left of body mid-line, Backhand*: field ball inside right foot, left foot to right, right foot (replace feet) to first base, second base, and third base; *Ball right of body mid-line; Forehand*: Left foot to right foot; right to first base, second base, and third base.

Tweeners: Read speed and direction of ball;

- *Soft*: Cover first
- *Hard*: 3-1



Proper set-up for Holding Runners – Right foot against the base, inside edge with toes extending beyond front inside corner (insures tag to be in front of base)



Left foot should be “open”



Left heel against foul line (stay in fair territory) Pointed to mound area

Receive pick-off throw and make hard, straight downward tag. Simulate runners on first-and-third; receive pick-off throw and make “blind” tag (keep head up, watch runner at third).

Break Off Bag with Pitch – Lead with right foot, shuffle. After pitch, shuffle back staying “square” to home plate for possible pickoff throw from catcher. Drop step (Right-hander—left foot; Left-hander—right foot); reverse tag; catch or block errant throws.

First Move with Left-Handed Pitcher – Proper footwork creates angle and distance to second base; When runner breaks, a right-handed first baseman should move right foot to left foot then left foot to second base – pick-off throw should be on the outside left shoulder of the fielder. Left-handed first baseman: right foot to pick-off throw, then left foot to right foot, right foot to second base.



Second Baseman

Positioning, Moving with the Count or Situation, Strategy

Routine Ground Balls – Rolled, fungo, soft toss with throws to first base – emphasis on a good fielding position, footwork (replace) and throwing mechanics.

Slow Rollers – Using proper angle, field ball slightly outside left foot – make change “in the middle” and throw off the right foot: field left, throw right (if ball is fielded on the grass, tuck glove into body to enable arm to get “back and through” to first baseman).

Backhand – *Routine*: Using proper angle, take right foot to the ball, extend glove in front of right foot in the middle of the body – left shoulder automatically at first base; use replace footwork; right to left, left to first or take a jab step toward first with left foot. *Extended* – Using proper angle, field ball off left foot, gather balance as your right foot crosses over and plants; take a jab step toward first base with left foot.

Ground Balls – Rolled, fungo, soft toss with throws to first base: Various speeds, angles and situations – player chooses correct approach and footwork.

- *Medium speed to right over mound area, below average base runner*: using proper angle, get around the ball and field slightly outside the left foot making the exchange “in the middle”, then use right, left, replace footwork.
- *Medium speed ground ball with average or above average runner*: using proper angle, get around the ball and slightly outside left foot, make the exchange “in the middle” and throw off right foot. Field left, throw right.
- *Hard ground ball to right: backhand*: routine and/or extended.
- *Hard or medium speed at or to the left*: using proper angle and when possible, field ball in the middle of the body, then use replace footwork.

NOTE: Double play balls make themselves – they are not made. Double plays are made by the way the ball is hit, its direction, and the speed of the runners. The double play pivot used depends on the throw received. It is very important to practice all pivots. The good middle infielder will move his feet and adapt to the throw in order to receive the ball “close in” to the middle of the body and in good position to make the relay throw.



Double Play Pivots from the shortstop/third baseman - The infielder approaches the base with hands up and in, shoulders parallel to third base line. His left foot is on or near the middle of the base with the right foot extended behind the bag ("middle back").

On a throw between shoulders: receive the throw; with left foot taking a jab step to first base, and make the relay throw.





On a slower hit ball to the shortstop/third baseman or to their backhand, step to the ball with right foot and as the left foot comes down make the relay throw.



On a throw behind the right shoulder

Step to the ball with right foot, dragging left across the bag, with the left foot taking a jab step to first base and make the relay throw.





On a throw in front of left shoulder: step to the ball with right foot as left foot comes down and make the relay throw.



On a double play pivot from the pitcher – with hands up and in, approach the bag with right foot slightly past the back corner of second base.

On a throw from the right shoulder in: left foot to the ball, then use right to left, left to first base footwork – make the relay throw.

On a throw from the right shoulder out: right foot to the ball, drag left foot across the bag, creating a jab step to first base – make the relay throw.

Practice—Closed Eye Pivots – Ball in hand, simulate receiving throws – close eyes, use appropriate pivot and make the relay throw (fundamentals check).

Double Play Feeds – Based on “straight up” DP depth: 1) Ground ball toward second baseman – no spin underhand toss; 2) Ground ball directly at the second baseman or straight up into baseline – no spin backhand toss, or break toward the base runner to make him stop/retreat, throw to first then pursue rundown or tag base runner then throw to first base; 3) Ground balls two, three, or four steps to the left can be fielded “square,” funnel to create uphill angle, turn both feet to second base, and make uphill throw to the back of second base (pivot feet); 4) With a below average runner at first base, medium speed ground balls toward first base can be fielded “square”, funnel, replace feet (automatically gives direction to back of second base) and make a strong throw to the back of second base; 5) On a hard ground ball towards the first base hole with a below average runner at first, if possible, field the ball off the left foot while gathering balance as your right foot crosses over and with back to infield, make a strong throw to the back of second base.



Shortstop

Double Play Pivots from the first baseman and second baseman - Ground ball to second baseman or first baseman playing behind the runner.

With hands up and in, approaching the bag with shoulders “square” to the infielder and right foot on or near the back inside corner of the base with left foot extending behind the bag.



From right shoulder out: with the left foot, take a jab step to the ball, then use right to left, left to first base footwork; make the relay throw.

Inside right shoulder: with right foot, take a jab step to the ball, drag left foot across the base creating a jab step to first base, make the relay throw.

Double Play Pivots from the first baseman: Ground ball to first baseman inside the baseline. With hands up and in, approach the bag with shoulders “square” to the first baseman, left foot on or near the back outside corner of the base with the right foot extending inside the baseline.

From left shoulder in: with right foot, take a jab step to the ball, drag left foot across the base creating a jab step to first base, make the relay throw.

Outside left shoulder: with left foot, take a jab step to the ball, begin with right to left, left to first base footwork, make the relay throw.

Double Play Pivot from Pitcher: with hands up and in, approach the bag with left foot slightly past back corner of second base.

From right shoulder in: left foot to the ball, then use right to left, left to first base footwork – make the relay throw.



From right shoulder out: right foot to the ball, drag left foot across the bag, creating a jab step to first base – make the relay throw.

Double Play Feeds – Based on “straight up” DP depth: 1) Ground ball toward second base or directly at shortstop – no spin underhand toss; 2) Ground ball fielded behind bag – no spin backhand toss; 3) Ground ball to right which can be fielded “in the middle” – left foot slightly open, clear glove – make firm uphill throw to back of second base; 4) Hard ground ball to right – routine or extended backhand – deliver a strong throw to back of second base; 5) Medium speed ground ball to right – below average runner at first – using the proper angle and taking the correct approach, “get around” the ball – field off left foot, make the exchange “in the middle” and as right foot hits the ground, throw back to second base to get lead runner. Keep DP in order or turn.



Closed Eye Pivots – Ball in hand, simulate receiving throws – close eyes, use appropriate pivot and make the relay throw (fundamental check).



Third Baseman

Routine Ground Balls – Rolled, fungo, soft toss with throws to first or second base – emphasis on a good fielding position, footwork (replace) and throwing mechanics.

Slow Rollers – Rolled, fungo, soft toss with throws to first base – using proper angle, field ball slightly outside left foot, make exchange “in the middle” and throw off right foot; Field left, throw right.

Backhand - Rolled, fungo, soft toss with throws to first or second base. Routine: Using proper angle, take right foot to the ball, extend glove in front of right foot in the middle of the body – left shoulder automatically at target; use replace footwork; right to left, left to first base or take a jab step forward first or second with left foot. Extended: Using proper angle, field ball off left foot, gather balance as your right foot crosses over and plants; take a jab step toward target with left foot.

Ground Balls - Rolled, fungo, soft toss with throws to first or second base. Various speeds, angles, and situations – player chooses correct approach and footwork. 1) Medium speed to right, below average runner; using proper angle, “get around” the ball and field slightly outside left foot, making the exchange “in the middle”; then use right, left, replace footwork. Same ground ball with average or above average runner – using proper angle “get around” the ball and field slightly outside the left foot, make the exchange “in the middle” and throw off right foot: field left, throw right; 2) Hard ground ball to right: backhand – routine and/or extended; 3) Medium speed at fielder or left of fielder: using proper angle and, when possible, field ball in the middle of the body then use replace footwork; 4) Hard ground ball directly at player in which he has no momentum or movement toward the ball – use left, replace footwork [1 ½ steps; leading with left gives distance and direction quickly – replace creates momentum. Leading with right necessitates three-step footwork]; 5) Situation: Runners on first-and-second, 0 or 1 out: Read ground ball, at or toward second base, 5-4-3; toward third base, 5U-3 (after fielding ball, get the ball “out” and ready to throw), with right foot touch inside front corner of third base, then replace feet and make the relay throw to first base.

Bunt Plays – Simulate: field bunt with lead base in mind, make adjustment to first base if called.

Read Bunts – Position even with bag or “in”. Read hitter’s hand as it slides up the bat or as he uses a drop step. The third baseman immediately takes a quick, aggressive first step to the middle of the line. His second step with the left foot is toward home plate. These two steps give the infielder the correct angle, distance, and momentum through the ball with minimal steps. The bunt should be fielded slightly outside the glove side foot making the exchange “in the middle” and throwing off the right foot; field left – throw right.



Bunt Defenses

It is important to expose the minor league players to all of the bunt defenses run in the system. Players must be able to successfully execute all bunt defenses in a game setting. Additionally, it is important to teach the players the correct way to relay the bunt signs to the defenders on the field (better decoys).

Situation: Runner on first—**No Set Play**

Objective: Primary objective is to get the out. Secondary objective is to get the lead runner.

Third baseman: Starting position is in on grass and creeping slightly forward; charges toward home plate when pitcher delivers ball and/or third baseman reads bunt. Hustles back to cover third base if he does not field bunt.

Shortstop: Starts at DP depth, covers second base.

Second baseman: Starts at DP depth, creeps in, reads bunt, then covers first base.

First baseman: Holds runner on and then charges when pitcher delivers ball. Covers area from foul line to the mound.

Pitcher: Delivers a strike then breaks toward home plate.

Catcher: Calls play (loud and clear, “1, 1, 1” or “2, 2, 2!”). Fields all bunts close to home plate. He also covers third base if the third baseman fields the ball.

Outfielder: Move toward infield to backup bases.

*Field bunts with lead base in mind.

*All players **MUST** recognize bad bunts and get the lead runner – otherwise get an out!



Relays

The infielder should get to the proper position as quickly as possible with his hands up and square to the outfielder. If the throw involves a relay, he must “get around the ball” to gain direction and momentum. The infielder receives the ball close in to the middle of the body and by using right to left, left to target footwork (opposite for left-handed throwers), fielder is in a good position to complete the relay.

The back – up relay infielder (double cut) positions himself approximately thirty feet behind the relay man and handles any throw over his head or one that bounces at his feet (primary relay man should never leave his feet to catch a throw or attempt to “pick” a short hop). Infielders not directly involved in the relay should position themselves inside a base and watch the runner(s) tag the base. Being slightly inside the bag has a tendency to cause the runner to make a wider turn. The infielder must be careful not to interfere with the base runner. An alert player can bluff on-line throws that will not be cut in hopes of stopping or slowing down other base runners. First basemen and third basemen who are lined up with home plate (after getting around the ball) may simply need a jab step with their lead foot to make the relay.

Double steal (runners on first and third)

After taking the play sign and pitch signal from the catcher, the middle infielders decide who will cover and who will back up second base. When the runner at first breaks for second, the designated infielder straddles second base and receives the throw. If the third baseman does not make a call, the second baseman or shortstop makes a hard, straight down tag, then checks the runner at third base. If the runner at third breaks for home, the third baseman yells “there he goes”. After the call, the designated infielder immediately “squares up” to home plate. Once he recognizes the path of the ball, he takes his left foot to the ball followed by right to left, left to home plate footwork and makes the relay throw.

Rundowns

The objective of any rundown is to get the out as quickly as possible and prevent other base runners from advancing an extra base. The initial player who begins the rundown gets the ball up into his bare hand and charges the runner hard, forcing him to commit (a base runner is committed when he is moving full speed with his shoulder square to the next base or looking back at the defensive player while running).

The tagger positions himself in front of the base on the same side of the baseline as the initial player and begins to narrow the gap. The tagger breaks hard and yells “now” when he is ready to receive the ball. Without any fakes, the thrower makes a firm chest-high throw. One throw is all that should be necessary. Players without the ball must be careful not to interfere with the base runner. After the thrower delivers the ball, he follows his throw, positioning himself for a multiple-throw rundown. On a ground ball to the third baseman with a runner on third, it is acceptable for the fielder to run the base runner toward home plate for a one-throw play.



Tags

The infielder should straddle the base and, when possible, let the ball come to him. **Tag hard, straight down!**

Pop-ups

If possible, the infielder should call for the ball when it reaches its peak. Stay behind the ball and leave no doubt that you want the ball by yelling, “I’ve got it! I’ve got it! I’ve got it!” Be sure you can make the catch if you make the call! Infielders should go hard on balls over their head into the outfield and say nothing unless they are camped under the ball. Also the infielder’s waving arms will tell the oncoming outfielder that he is under the ball and ready to make the play. If his initial turn is to the wrong side, he should continue in that direction and look over his opposite shoulder for the ball. The infielder always yields to the outfielder if he makes the call.

Pop Fly Priority—Order of Priority

Center Fielder: Has priority over all fielders. When he calls for the ball, everyone gives way.

Left Fielder: Has priority over all infielders, but must yield to the center fielder, if the center fielder calls for the ball. No exceptions.

Right Fielder: Has priority over all infielders, but must yield to the center fielder, if the center fielder calls for the ball. No exceptions.

Shortstop: First priority in the infield. Has priority over all other infielders.

Second baseman: Second priority in the infield. Has priority over the third baseman, first baseman, catcher, and pitcher.

Third baseman: Third priority in the infield. Has priority over first baseman, catcher, and pitcher.

First baseman: Fourth priority in the infield. Has priority over the catcher and pitcher.

Catcher: The catcher goes for all pop-ups in his area until he is called off.

Pitcher: He is the low man on the totem pole and only catches a fly ball in an emergency. He should point to the ball and direct traffic after the call has been made. If there is some confusion on the pop-up in the infield, he may help by yelling the name of the position that has the best angle.



COMMUNICATION

You do not have to be a cheerleader on the field but you should be enthusiastic and communicate with each other during the game. You should remind everyone of all possible situations and keep each other in the ball game. The game is not that tough to play, so have some fun together between the white lines.

CONFIDENCE-CONCENTRATION-CONSISTENCY

Once all the infielders are mentally and physically capable of playing in the Major Leagues, we want to polish them in three areas: Confidence, Concentration, and Consistency.

CONFIDENCE

You thoughts MUST BE, "I am mentally ready to play. I know I have the talent to play this game and I can handle any ground ball, pop fly, etc. that comes my way. I expect the ball to be coming at me every pitch. I WANT it coming my way because I KNOW I can make the play." Every infielder should have the above, positive thoughts and BELIEVE that he is the best at his position.

CONCENTRATION

Every game is between two and three hours long. If your goal is to be a Major League ballplayer, then two or three hours of total concentration is NOT ASKING TOO MUCH! On every pitch you should be ready to make any play. Generally, when the pitching is good, the defense is good and vice versa. When the pitcher is in command and throwing strikes, the defense is usually more alert and the concentration level is higher than when the pitcher is struggling and having control problems.

Major League infielders MUST HAVE total concentration and a high intensity level at all times REGARDLESS OF HOW THE GAME IS GOING. When the pitcher is struggling, it is of vital importance that you make the good play that will get him out of the inning. There cannot be a "let down" when playing defense. You also must not let your hitting affect your fielding. You can take an 0-for-4 and still win the game with a defensive gem or simply by making the routine play to end the game. Think a pitch ahead, not a pitch or inning behind.

CONSISTENCY

Most young infielders make between five and twenty "careless" errors per season. You must strive to make the routine play every time, day in and day out. If you make great, spectacular plays, that's an added bonus. THE ROUTINE PLAY IS A MUST!

THE ROAD TO THE MAJOR LEAGUES

Remember to play "within" yourself and your own capabilities. Do not try to do anything you are not physically capable of doing. The toughest opposition you will face all season is yourself. Quick feet, soft hands, and arm strength lead to talent. TALENT AND CONSISTENCY LEAD TO THE MAJOR LEAGUES.



Drills

Ready Position

Walking into the pitch; on the balls of feet, off the heels, with glove open in front of body. Work during BP off coaches and simulate off the fungo.

Short Hops

Reinforce good fielding position—wide base, knees and back bent, hands out front.

Routine short hops

Backhand short hops

Extended backhand short hops

On-Knees Hand Drill

Infielder on his knees, coach 20-25 feet away, hitting firm fungo to player's right and left. This is a reaction drill to improve hand quickness.

Wide Base Drill

Hard ground balls directly at player – demonstrates how a wide base enables the infielder to get his hands more in front where eyes are tracking the ball (narrow base pulls hands in, which creates a blind spot).

5-Error Drill

- 1 or 2 steps in front
- to the right
- to the left
- underneath and behind
- 5 or 6 steps in front

Toss, Feeds

Reinforce the importance of using the legs to keep infielder from “slinging” or “wristing” the ball.

Soft Toss Ground Balls

React to the ball off the bat creating game situations with emphasis on angles, approach, and footwork.

Off-Balance Throwing

Reinforce footwork and throwing mechanics (ball in glove, making exchange “in the middle” and throwing off the right foot). Field left, throw right. Hand behind ball, not under.

Action-Reaction, Decision-Making

Take simulated throws off fungo, from different areas of infield (first basemen). Concentrate on footwork and decision-making (when to come off the bag to save an errant throw). This drill can also be used to work on tags (all infielders).



Closed Eye Drill

- Reinforce proper fundamentals and throwing mechanics.
- Routine ground balls
- Routine backhand
- Extended backhand
- Slow rollers and bunts
- Double plays

Pop-Ups

Let the ball reach its peak, stay “behind” the ball then make the call: “I’ve got it” three times. Ball in outfield, no call unless player is “camped” underneath the ball. If infielder turns the wrong way he should continue in the same direction.

Tags

Simulate game situations. Straddle the base and, when possible, let the ball come to him. Tag hard, straight down!

Relays

After stretch, toward the end of the 10-minute throwing period during “long toss”, simulate: hands up, get around the ball while receiving the throw close in. Replace feet to create direction and momentum.

Rundowns

After stretch, toward the end of the 10-minute throwing period, simulate: ball up, run hard; receiving player breaks and yells “NOW” receiving the ball on the run – make tag.

Wall Drills

Player throws the ball off a wall and fields; emphasis is on the fielding position and proper footwork. Set up in a proper angle for throws. Additionally, a partner can stand behind the fielder and make the throw off the wall. This drill can simulate all infield plays.



Section 2 – The Bone Yard

EARLY WORK

Our early work approach will be one of quality, detail, and consistency. This approach will allow players to better develop their professional work ethic. This approach will be one that recognizes that if a player wants or needs to get extra work, we as a staff will be there to work with the player. There will be a designated period of time on the daily work schedule set aside for early work. This time will be reserved for coordinators when they are in town, but otherwise it is to be used at the manager's discretion. It is expected that early work of some kind will be done at all levels on a daily basis. In light of the importance of early work in the development of our players, it is vital that players and staff are on time.

TEAM STRETCH

We must emphasize the importance of stretching to reduce the possibility of an injury. Players must be taught the significance of team stretch through staff action and articulation. Training staff implements all calisthenics with a forceful professional method. A staff member (in addition to the trainer) will enforce the team stretch and throwing program.

THROWING PROGRAM

The throwing program is designed to maintain and develop arm strength and proper throwing mechanics for all players. Each Player Development staff members is responsible for ensuring that the throwing program is completed regularly in a disciplined and structured manner.

Position Players (4x3x3x2x1)

- Four minutes at 60'
- Three minutes at 90'
- Three minutes at 120'
- Two minutes at 150'
- One minute at 60'

NOTE: For the one minute at 60' (the last portion) – infielders work on quick hands and feet. Outfielders stay at 150' and work on accuracy, as well as the four-seam rotation.

Pitchers (4x3x3x1)

- Four minutes at 60'
- Three minutes at 90'
- Three minutes at 120'
- One minute at 60'
- Flat ground.



Routine

- Spring Training
- Every other day for all pitchers and position players
- Regular Season
- Pitchers:
 - Beginning of season through end of May – Mandatory Daily
 - June 1 through end of season – Every other day (pitching coach's discretion)

Key Points

- Use four-seam grip, creating 6-12 rotation.
- Get arm up and on top.
- Follow through.
- Infielders: from short distance, replace feet; from long distance, step with left foot, replace feet, and throw.
- Outfielders use correct footwork, as instructed.
- Catchers use proper footwork and arm action, as instructed.
- Catchers throw with catchers, pitchers with pitchers, infielders with infielders, outfielders with outfielders.

TEAM FUNDAMENTALS

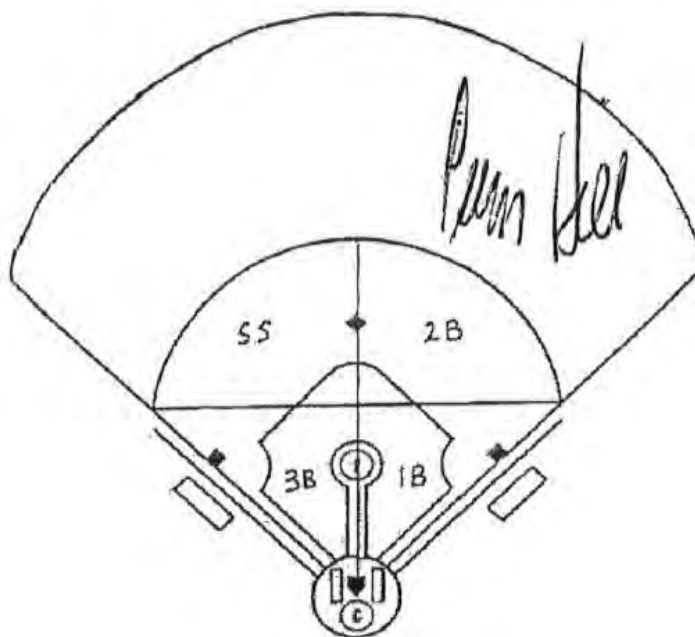
Rundown Fundamentals

- EXECUTE CORRECTLY – MAKE ONLY ONE THROW!!
- Immediately get the ball out of the glove and get it up into the bare hand.
- Charge the runner to get him running hard. Make him commit (a base runner is committed when he is moving at full speed with his shoulders square to the next base or looking back at the defensive player while running).
- The “tagger” positions himself in front of the base on the same side of the baseline as the initial player and begins to “narrow the gap”.
- The “tagger” breaks hard and yells “NOW” when he is ready to receive the ball.
- Without any fakes, the thrower makes a firm chest-high throw. One throw is all that should be necessary.
- Players without the ball must be careful not to interfere with the base runner.
- After giving up the ball, player follows his throw, positioning himself for a possible multiple-throw rundown.
- Tag the runner with the ball in the bare hand inside the glove (if possible).
- Look for other runners rounding bases after the tag (when there are multiple runners)
- Execute rundown as quickly as possible (regardless of direction) to limit non-involved runner advancement.
- On a ground ball to the third baseman with a runner on third, it is acceptable for the third baseman to run the base runner toward home plate for a one-throw play.



Pop Fly Priority

If possible, the player should call for the ball when it reaches its peak. Stay behind the ball and leave no doubt that you want the play by yelling, "I've got it! I've got it! I've got it!" Be sure you can make the catch if you make the call! Infielders should go hard on balls over their head into the outfield and say nothing unless they are "camped" under the ball. Also, the infielder's waving arms will tell the oncoming outfielder that he is under the ball and ready to make the play. If his initial turn is to the wrong side, he should continue in the same direction and look over his opposite shoulder for the ball. The infielder always yields to the outfielder if he makes the call.



Order of Priority

Center Fielder: Has priority over all fielders. When he calls the ball, everyone must give way.

Left Fielder: Has priority over all the infielders, but he must yield to the center fielder, if the center fielder calls for the ball. No exceptions.

Right Fielder: Has priority over all the infielders, but he must yield to the center fielder, if the center fielder calls for the ball. No exceptions.

Shortstop: First priority in the infield. Has priority over all other infielders.

Second baseman: Second priority in the infield. Has priority over 3B, 1B, catcher, and pitcher.

Third baseman: Third priority in the infield. Has priority over the 1B, catcher, and pitcher.

First baseman: Fourth priority in the infield. Has priority over the catcher and pitcher.

Catcher: The catcher goes for all pop-ups in his area until he is called off.

Pitcher: He is the low man on the totem pole and catches a fly ball only in an emergency. He should point to the ball and direct traffic after the call has been made. If there is some confusion on the pop-up in the infield, he may help by yelling the name of the position that has the best angle.

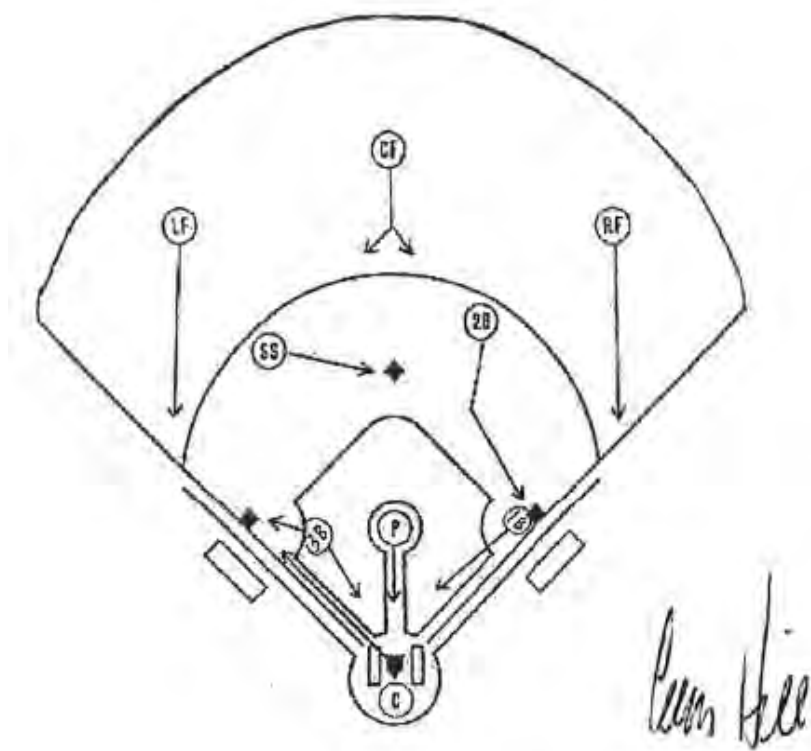


Bunt Defenses

It is important to expose the minor league players to all of the bunt defenses run in the system. Players must be able to successfully execute all bunt defenses in a game setting. Additionally, it is important to teach the players the correct way to relay the bunt signs to the defenders on the field (better decoys).

Situation: Runner on first—**No Set Play**

Objective: Primary objective is to get the out. Secondary objective is to get the lead runner.



3B: Starting position is in on grass and creeping; Charges toward home plate when pitcher delivers ball and/or third baseman reads the bunt. Hustles back to cover third base if he does not field bunt.

SS: Starts at DP depth, covers second base.

2B: Starts at DP depth, creeps in, reads bunt, and then covers first base.

1B: Holds runner on and then charges when pitcher delivers ball; Covers area from foul line to the mound.

Pitcher: Delivers strike then breaks toward home plate.

Catcher: Calls play (loud and clear, "1, 1, 1!" or "2, 2, 2!"). Fields all bunts close to home plate. He also covers third base if the third baseman fields the ball.

Outfielder: Move toward infield to back up bases.

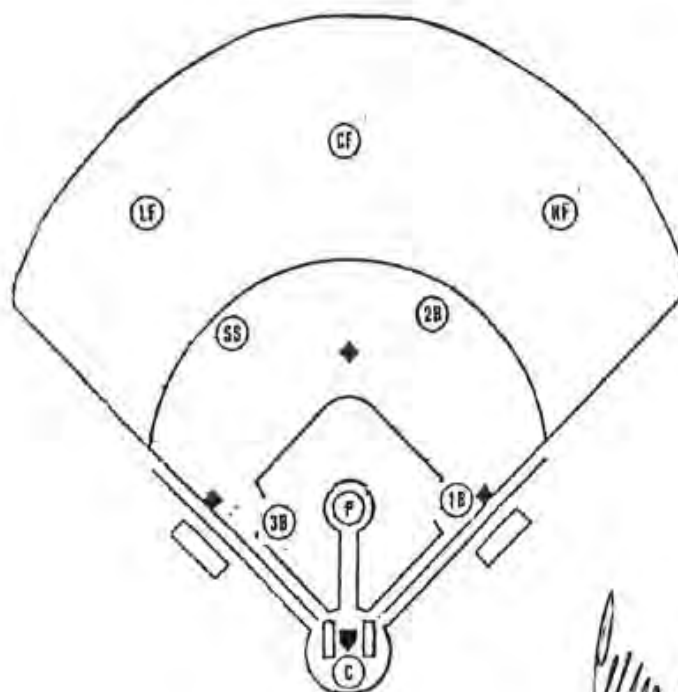
**Field bunts with lead base in mind.*

All players **MUST recognize bad bunts and get the lead runner – otherwise get an out!*



Situation: Runner on first—**Bunt Situation #1**

Objective: Primary objective is to set up play #2. Secondary objective is to keep the runner honest.



3B: Starting position is in on grass; holds position, backs up returning throw to pitcher from first baseman.

SS: Starts at DP depth; on pickoff throw to first breaks toward second.

2B: Starts at DP depth; breaks back at angle to protect against bad pickoff throw.

1B: Receives sign from manager, goes to mound and tells pitcher to throw over. Holding runner on, receives pickoff throw.

Pitcher: Verbally receives sign from first baseman, comes set and holds ball. Makes pickoff throw to first base

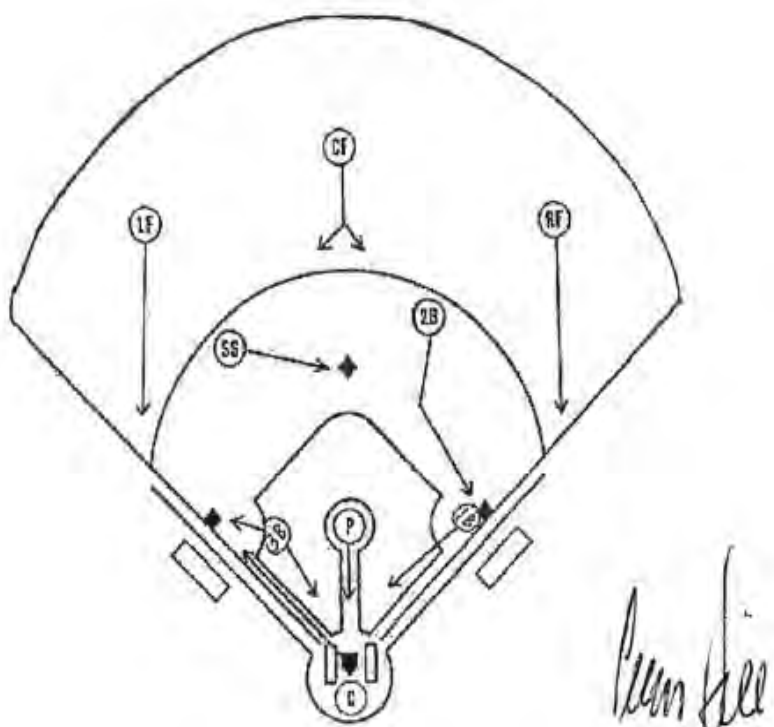
Catcher: Set up as usual.

OF: Move toward infield to backup bases.



Situation: Runner on first—**Bunt Situation #2**

Objective: Primary objective is to get out at second base.



3B: Starting position is in on grass and creeping. Charges toward home plate when the pitcher delivers ball and/or third baseman reads bunt. Hustles back to cover third base if he does not field the bunt.

SS: Starts at DP depth, covers second base.

2B: Starts at DP depth, creeps in and reads bunt, then covers first base.

1B: Receives sign from manager, goes to mound and tells pitcher "Do not throw over. When I break early, deliver a strike." Charges hard but under control, hopefully to field a poor bunt with the lead out at second base in mind. Perfect bunt – get the out at first base.

Pitcher: Delivers a strike then breaks towards home plate.

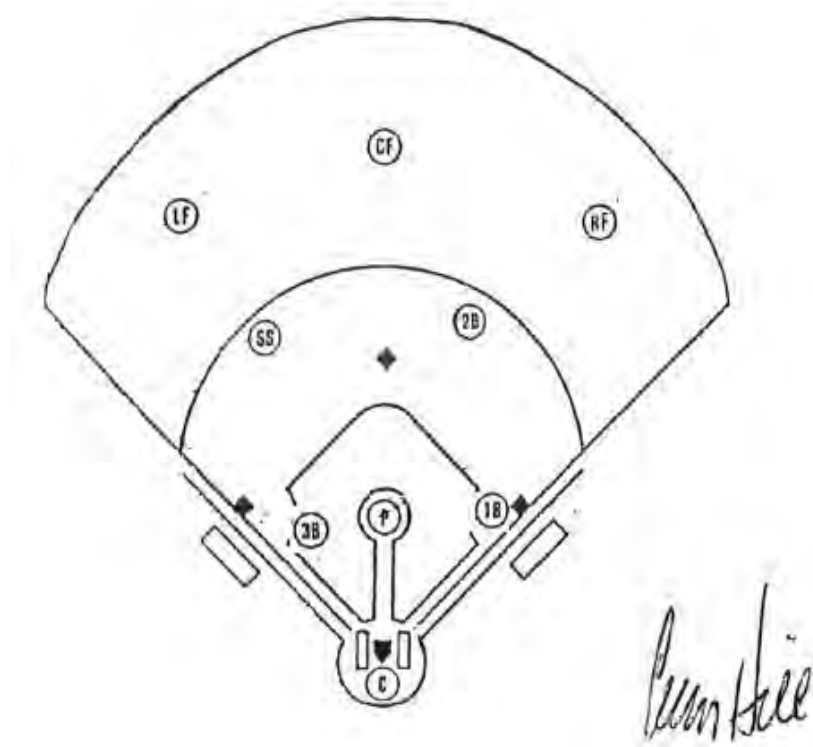
Catcher: Calls play (loud and clear, "2, 2, 2!" or "1, 1, 1!"). Fields all bunts close to home plate. He also covers third if the third baseman fields the ball.

OF: Move toward infield to backup bases.



Situation: Runner on first—**Bunt Situation #3**

Objective: Primary objective is to keep the runner honest.



3B: Starting position is in on grass, holds position, backs up returning throw to pitcher from first baseman.

SS: Starts at DP depth. On pickoff throw to first base, breaks toward second.

2B: Starts at DP depth. Breaks back at angle to protect against bad pickoff throw.

1B: Receives sign from manager, goes to mound and tells pitcher to wait for his false break. He takes two hard steps toward home plate, then retreats to first base and receives pickoff throw.

Pitcher: Verbally receives sign from first baseman, comes set as first baseman retreats, makes pickoff throw to first base.

Catcher: Set up as usual.

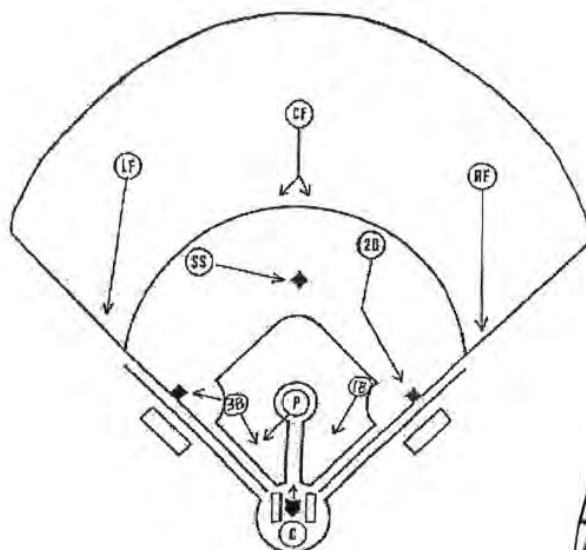
OF: Move toward infield to backup bases.



#1 – REGULAR

Situation: Runners on first-and-second, 0-out. Obvious or probable bunt in order.

Objective: Be ready for batted ball, however, play shallow enough to field a bunt. If the ball is bunted, the primary objective is to get an out. If the bunt is poorly directed, get the lead runner at third base, otherwise get the out at first base.



Alan Hill

Sign is given to the third baseman by the manager. Third baseman gets the attention of the pitcher, catcher, and infielders, and relays the sign.

3B: Receives and gives sign. Position is just inside line about 3 or 4 steps in front of bag. Has slight body angle facing pitcher, but will “square up” to home plate with the pitch (can also play even or 1-2 steps behind the bag at manager’s discretion). Retreats to cover bag on soft bunts. Takes charge on hard bunts toward him and calls off pitcher.

SS: Starts at DP depth. Keeps runner close to second base. “Daylight” pick-off play possible. Covers second base.

2B: Starts at DP depth. Reads bunt, breaks in, then over to cover first base.

1B: Starts on edge of grass (can also play slightly behind the runner at manager’s discretion). Reads bunt and charges to cover area between foul line and mound. Also has responsibility of taking bunts up the middle.

Pitcher: Holds base runner at second base (possible daylight play with shortstop). Delivers strike, reads bunt and breaks off mound to the third base side. He will yield to the third baseman if he calls for the ball.

Catcher: Calls play (loud and clear, “1,1,1! 3,3,3!” etc.). Fields all bunts close to home plate.

OF: Move toward infield to back up bases.

*Field bunt with lead base in mind.

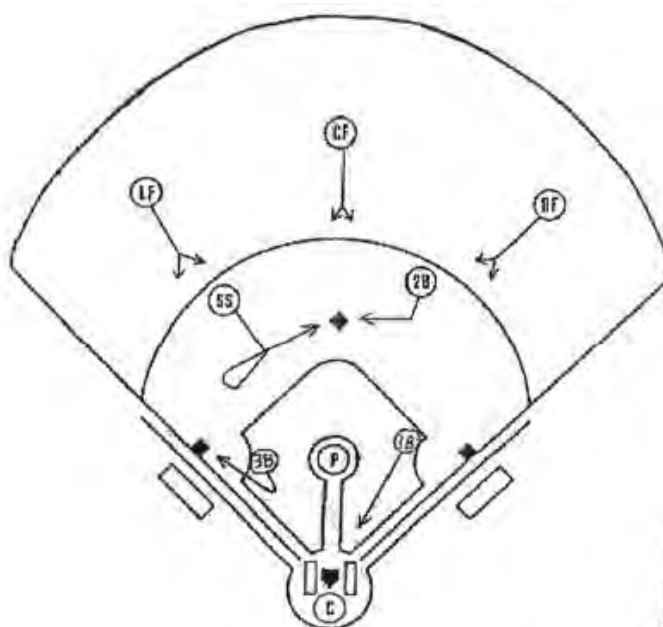
*All players must recognize bad bunts and get lead runner – otherwise get an out!



#2 – WHEEL PICK-OFF

Situation: Runners on first-and-second, 0-out. Obvious or probable bunt in order.

Objective: Pick-off plays are designed to keep base runners honest. An out is a bonus! The primary objective is to keep the runner close at second, allowing the defense a better chance to get the force out at third on the next play. The secondary objective is to pick-off the runner.



Sign is given to the third baseman by the manager. The third baseman gets the attention of the pitcher, catcher, and infielders, and relays the sign.

3B: Receives and gives sign. Position is just inside line about 3 or 4 steps in front of the bag. Has slight body angle, facing pitcher. As shortstop breaks toward third base, he takes one or two hard charge steps toward home plate, stops, and retreats to third base for a possible rundown.

SS: Starts at DP depth. As the pitcher begins his motion (after receiving catcher's sign), he begins to creep in, his left shoulder on the base runner's right shoulder. Making sure the pitcher is set and looking at him, he then breaks hard toward third. After seeing the pitcher turn to throw to second, he stops and circles to the outside back to second for a possible rundown.

2B: Starts at DP depth. Creeps in. As pitcher turns away from the breaking shortstop, second baseman keys the back of the pitcher's head and breaks to cover second base.

1B: Starts one or two steps in on grass. Acts as a decoy. As the shortstop approaches the base runner, he will charge hard in hopes of luring runner further off second base.

Pitcher: Keys the SHORTSTOP! (Does not vary head looks – once he looks back at second base, he stays there until shortstop breaks.) After shortstop breaks toward third, pitcher locks on home plate, then turns and delivers a firm chest high throw to second. Break toward third for a possible rundown.

Catcher: Set up as usual.

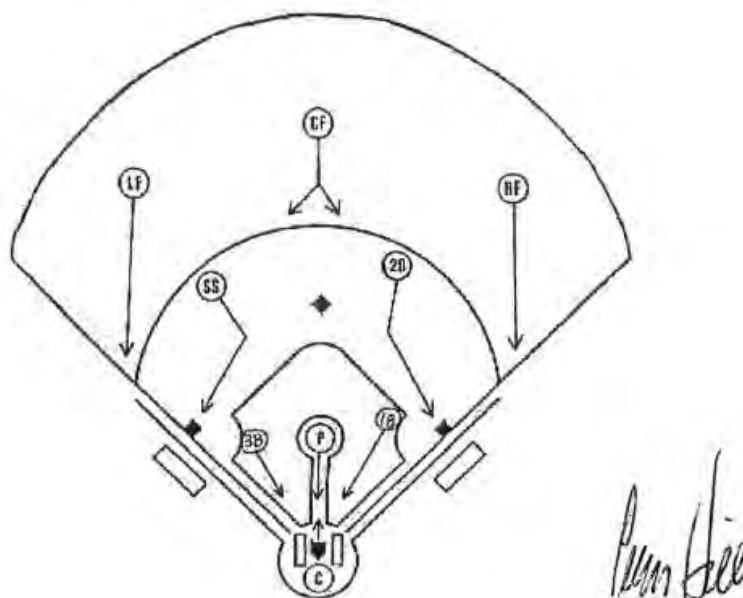
OF: Move toward infield to backup bases.



#3 – WHEEL

Situation: Runners on first-and-second, 0-out. Obvious/probable bunt in order.

Objective: The primary objective is to get the lead out at third base. The secondary objective is to get the out at first base.



Sign is given to third baseman by the manager. The third baseman gets the attention of the pitcher, catcher, and infielders, and relays the sign.

3B: Receives and gives sign. Position is just inside line about 3 or 4 steps in front of bag. Has slight body angle, facing pitcher, but will square up to home plate with the pitch (can also play even or 1-2 steps behind the bag at manager's discretion). Retreats to cover bag on soft bunts. Takes charge on hard bunts toward him and calls off pitcher.

SS: Starts at DP depth. Keeps runner close to second base. "Daylight" pick-off play possible. Covers second.

2B: Starts at DP depth. Reads bunt, breaks in, then over to cover first base.

1B: Starts on edge of grass (can also play slightly behind the runner at manager's discretion). Reads bunt and charges to cover area between foul line and mound. Also has responsibility of taking bunts up the middle.

Pitcher: Holds base runner at second base (possible daylight play with SS). Delivers strike, reads bunt and breaks off mound to third base side. Pitcher will yield to the third baseman if he calls for the ball.

Catcher: Calls play (loud and clear, "1,1,1! 3,3,3!" etc.). Fields all bunts close to home plate.

OF: Move toward infield to backup bases.

*Infielders should be in motion with their heads up. If hitter pulls bat back—FREEZE!

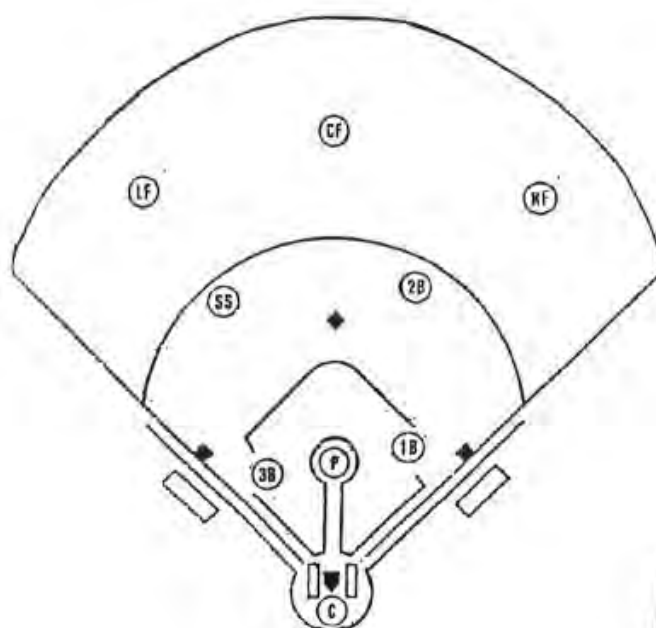
*All players must recognize bad bunts and get lead runner – otherwise get an out!



#4 – INSIDE MOVE

Situation: Runners on first-and-second, 0-out. Possible bunt/hit & run.

Objective: The primary objective is to reduce the aggression of the base runners.



Run Free

Sign is given to third baseman by the manager. The third baseman gets the attention of the pitcher, catcher, and infielders, then relays the sign.

3B: Receives and gives sign. Position is just inside line about 3 or 4 steps in front of bag. Has slight body angle, facing pitcher. Be ready for possible rundown or play at third base.

SS: Starts a little deeper than DP depth. At the peak of pitcher's leg lift, breaks to second base.

2B: Starts a little deeper than DP depth. Does not give play away. Creeps in as he would for normal bunt situations. Be ready to cover second for possible rundown.

1B: Starts one or two steps in on grass. Acts as a decoy. When pitcher's leg lifts, first baseman breaks hard toward home plate.

Pitcher: Will come set locked on home plate. At the peak of leg lift, he will pivot on post foot and deliver firm, chest-high throw to second base. Pitcher then breaks in a controlled jog toward third base for possible rundown if runner is hung up in the middle, circles the runner and forces him back to second base.

Catcher: Set up as usual.

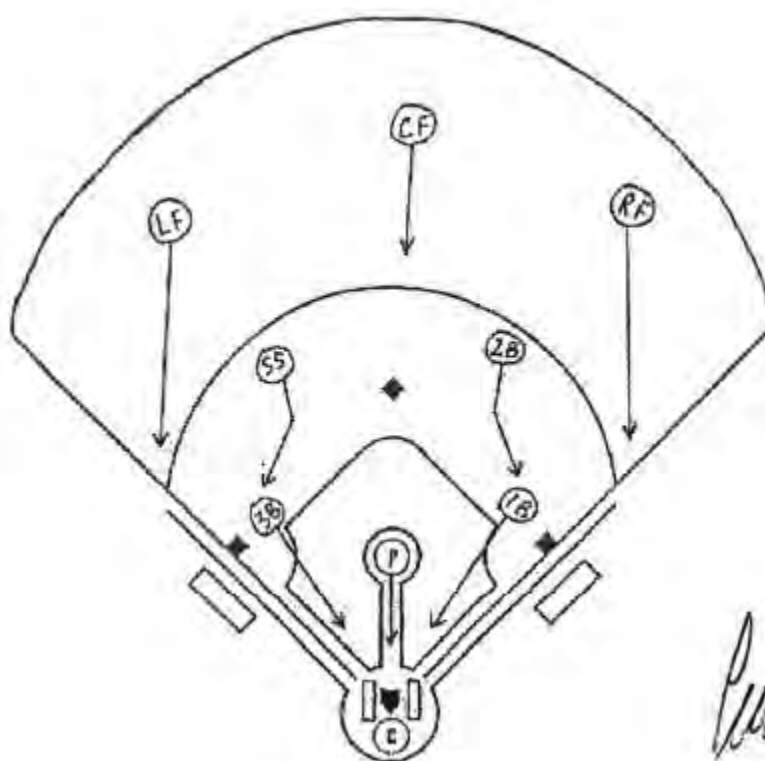
OF: Move toward infield to backup bases.



SQUEEZE PLAY

Situation: Runner on third.

Objective: The primary objective is to get the runner at home plate. The secondary objective is to get the out at first base.



Run Free

3B: As the runner at third breaks for home plate, third baseman breaks with him.

SS: Cover third base.

2B: Cover first base/Read first baseman or cover second base.

1B: As the hitter squares to bunt, breaks to home plate or cover first base.

Pitcher: Breaks straight to home plate.

Catcher: Protects home plate.

OF: Move toward infield to back up bases.



First and Third Defense

With Runners on first and third, the manager will flash the sign to the catcher. The catcher in turn will step out to the front of the plate, get the attention of the fielders, and give the sign.

- I. The focus is on the out at second. We are NOT concerned with the runner at third.
 - As runner breaks to second, catcher comes up throwing to second. He does not peek at the runner on third base.
 - As this is our priority out, we disregard the runner breaking from third to home and take the out at second base.
- II. The focus is the out at home plate. We are enticing the runner at third to break for the plate so that we can execute and get the out at home plate.
 - As runner breaks to second, catcher comes up throwing; peek at the runner on third.
 - The infielder taking the throw gets in position to make the tag at second.
 - As the runner breaks home, the infielder returns the throw to the catcher. Footwork to be taught – left to ball then right to left. Left to home.
 - On this play we disregard the runner stealing second and focus on the runner breaking home.
- III. Direct throw to third base.
 - Catcher throws directly to third base. (pump fake at manager's discretion)
 - Middle infielders hold their position.
 - As the ball gets by the hitter, the third baseman flows towards third.
- IV. Hold Ball or pump fake (manager's discretion)

Forced Balk

This is a situation where the runner from first breaks early with a runner also on third.

- The pitcher steps off.
- The pitcher checks the runner at third.
- After stopping the runner at third, the pitcher turns to his right (for RHP), and throws the ball to second (to either the shortstop or second baseman covering) and the shortstop or second baseman walks/jogs all the way back to first. First baseman may be 3-4 steps in front of the bag and shortstop/second baseman may give the ball to the first baseman after the runner passes him.
- Pitcher backs up home on the first base side.
- Pursue rundown between first and second if score dictates runner at third means nothing or at manager's discretion



Pick-offs

I. Catcher's Signs

- Thumb – throw over (do not roll wrist, thumb actually points to third for pick at first)
- Flap Extension – Hard step off and check runner
- Hand slide down thigh plus sign – quick step
- Same number three times (ex. 3 x “1”; x “2”) – pitch out
- Horn sign with runners on first and third – pitcher fakes to third, throws to first
- Horn sign with runner on second – inside move, infielder breaks from regular spot

Pick-offs

“No Look” Situation: Aggressive base runner at second base.

- Catcher receives sign from manager, relays sign to pitcher and infielders while assuming normal setup with glove up for target. When middle infielder breaks he then drops his glove.
- Pitcher receives sign from catcher, comes set “locked” on home plate. As catcher drops glove, turns and delivers a firm, chest high throw to second base.
- Shortstop receives sign from catcher, positions himself to break to second base.
- Second baseman receives sign from catcher, positions himself to break to second.

Note: Middle infielder taking pickoff throw will be based on game situation, hitter's tendencies, and the count.

“Daylight” Situation: Aggressive base runner at second – no sign – simply a “read” by either middle infielder.

- Shortstop extends glove and breaks hard to second base. Pitcher turns and makes a firm chest-high throw.
- Second baseman extends “open” hand and breaks hard to second base. Pitcher turns and makes a firm chest-high throw.
- Pitchers should break toward third base for a possible rundown.

Note: Sign can be used at manager's discretion.

“Inside Move” Situation: Runners on first and second – running situation.

- Sign given by the manager to catcher. Catcher relays it to pitcher and middle infielders. Pitcher will come “set” and, if he wishes, vary head looks to second. As his head “locks” on home plate, his leg will lift. (Head remains locked on home plate.) At the “peak of leg lift, the infielder will break hard to second. Pitcher will pivot on post foot and deliver a firm chest-high throw to second, then break toward third for a possible rundown.

Note: Middle infielder taking pickoff throw will be based on game situation, hitter's tendencies, and the count.



Relay Fundamentals

I. General Rules

- Balls down either line or in the gaps – double, possible triple. If first base is unoccupied, line-up to third base. If first base is occupied, line-up to home.
- Cut-off men should position themselves at the back of the mound (dirt and grass line) in a direct line with the outfielder or relay man and the proper base.
- Cut-off/relay men should remain “square” until the ball is in flight, then get around the ball and, by replacing your feet, create momentum for the throw.
- The primary relay man should never leave his feet to catch a throw or attempt to pick a short hop.
- On relays, the double cut man should make the call.
- The double cut man should hang at his base until the ball clears the outfielder(s).
- Infielders not directly involved in the relay should position themselves inside a base while watching the runners tag the base. Being slightly inside has a tendency to make the runner take wider turn. The infielder must be careful not to interfere with the base runner.
- Infielders should bluff cutting good throws in hopes of slowing down other base runners.
- Pitchers should get as deep as possible when backing-up any plays.

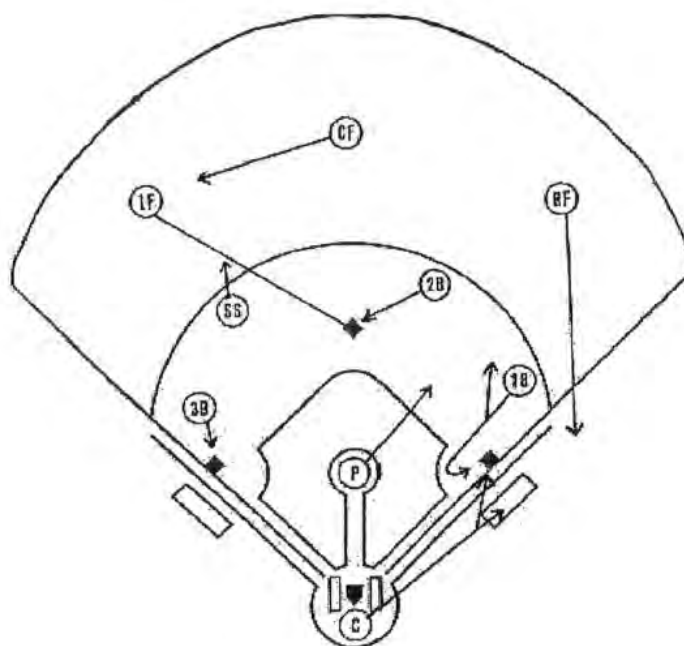
II. Calls

- Number of base means cut and throw to that base (ex. “4,4,4” means cut, throw to home plate).
- **CUT**—Cut throw and check for other possible plays.
- **NO SOUND**—Let throw go through

Each player should know his responsibilities on any given play or situation. Communication must be stressed. The following situations illustrate ideal cut-off and relay patterns. However, with baseball being as unpredictable as it is, certain plays develop that don’t always go by the book. With proper communication, these types of plays won’t be a problem and adjustment will be made as the play develops.



Single to left field (no one on base)



Pitcher: Move into a backup position between first and second.

Catcher: Follow hitter to first base. Be ready to cover first if the first baseman leaves the bag to back up an overthrow.

1B: If possible, break to an area inside base; make sure the hitter touches first in making the turn, then cover first. Be ready to field an overthrow by the leftfielder.

2B: Cover second base.

SS: Move into a relay position to second. Assume the runner will attempt to advance.

3B: Protect third base area.

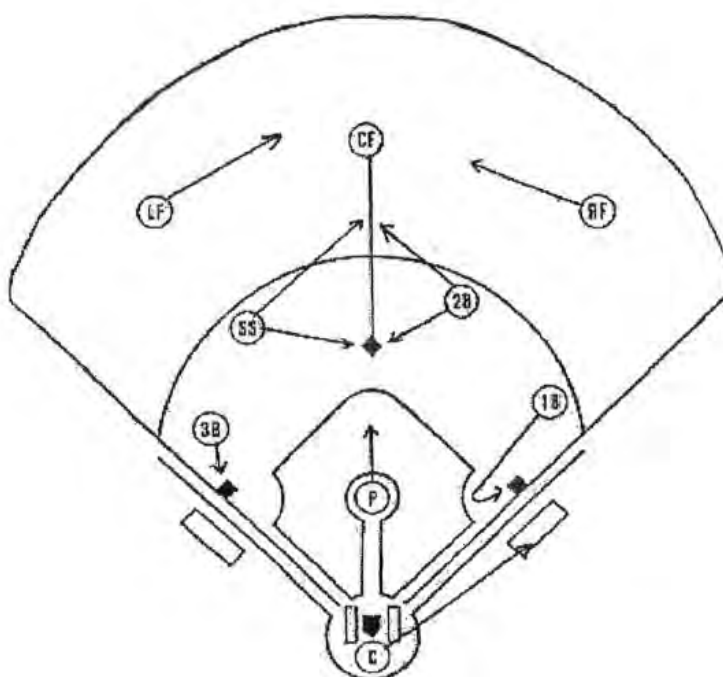
LF: Field ball and make throw to second base, no short hops.

CF: Back up leftfielder.

RF: Move into a possible backup position behind second base.



Single to center field (no one on base)



Pitcher: Move into a backup position between the mound and second base.

Catcher: Follow hitter to first base and back up the first baseman. Anticipate the second baseman or shortstop throwing behind the runner.

1B: If possible, break to an area inside base, make sure hitter touches first in making the turn, then cover first.

2B: Go for the ball, communicate with shortstop as to who will be the relay man and who will cover second. Assume the runner will attempt to advance.

SS: Go for the ball, communicate with second baseman as to who will be the relay man and who will cover second. Assume the runner will attempt to advance.

3B: Protect third base area.

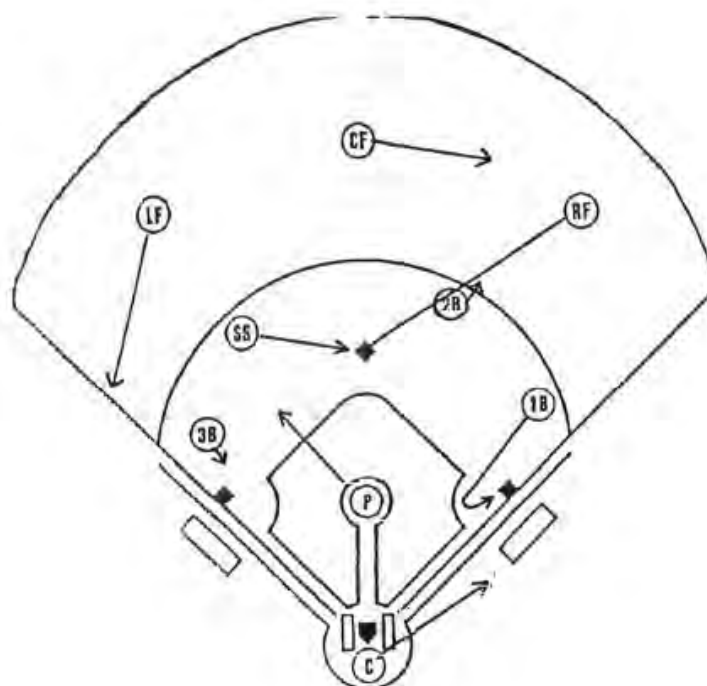
LF: Back up centerfielder.

CF: Field ball and make throw to second. No short hops.

RF: Back up centerfielder.



Single to right field (no one on base)



Pitcher: Move into a backup position between the second baseman and third baseman.

Catcher: Follow hitter to first base. Give yourself room to back up the first baseman if the right fielder throws behind the runner.

1B: If possible, break to an area inside base, make sure the hitter touches first in making the turn, then cover first base.

2B: Move into a relay position to second base. Assume the runner will attempt to advance.

SS: Cover second base.

3B: Protect third base area.

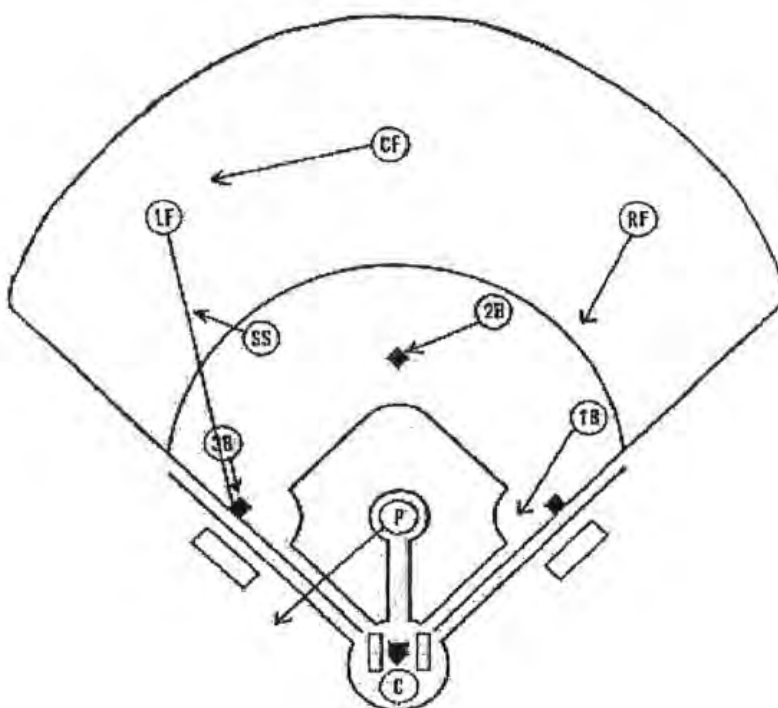
LF: Move into a possible backup position towards third base.

CF: Back up right fielder.

RF: Field ball and make throw to second base. No short hops.



Single to left field (runner on 1B)



Pitcher: Back up third base.

Catcher: Protect home plate.

1B: Make sure hitter touches first base, then cover.

2B: Cover second base.

SS: Move into a position to be the relay man. Assume the runner will attempt to advance.

3B: Cover third base.

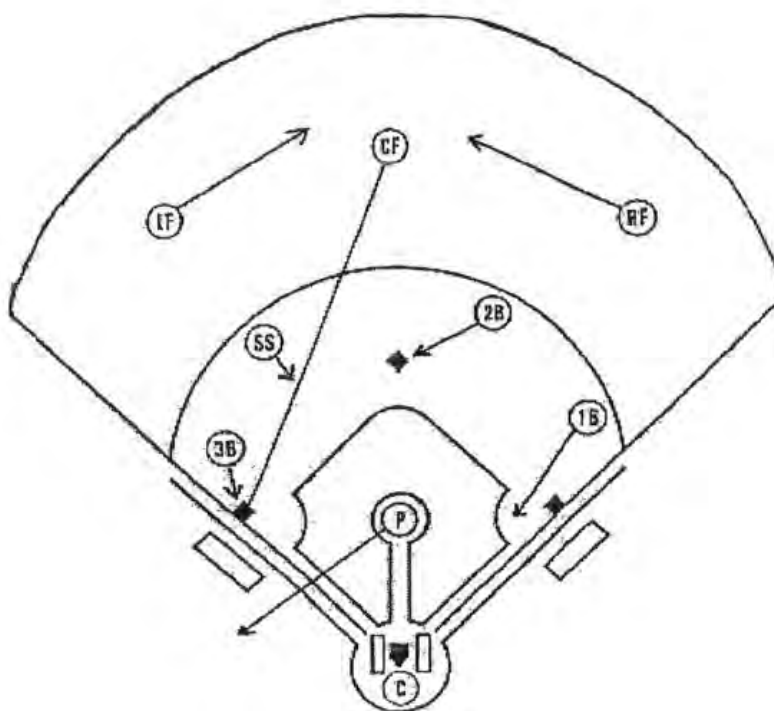
LF: Field ball and make a throw that can be cut-off by the shortstop.

CF: Back up leftfielder.

RF: Move into a possible backup position near second base.



Single to center field (runner on 1B)



Pitcher: Back up third base.

Catcher: Protect home plate.

2B: Cover second base.

SS: Move into a position to be the relay man. Assume the runner will attempt to advance.

3B: Cover third base.

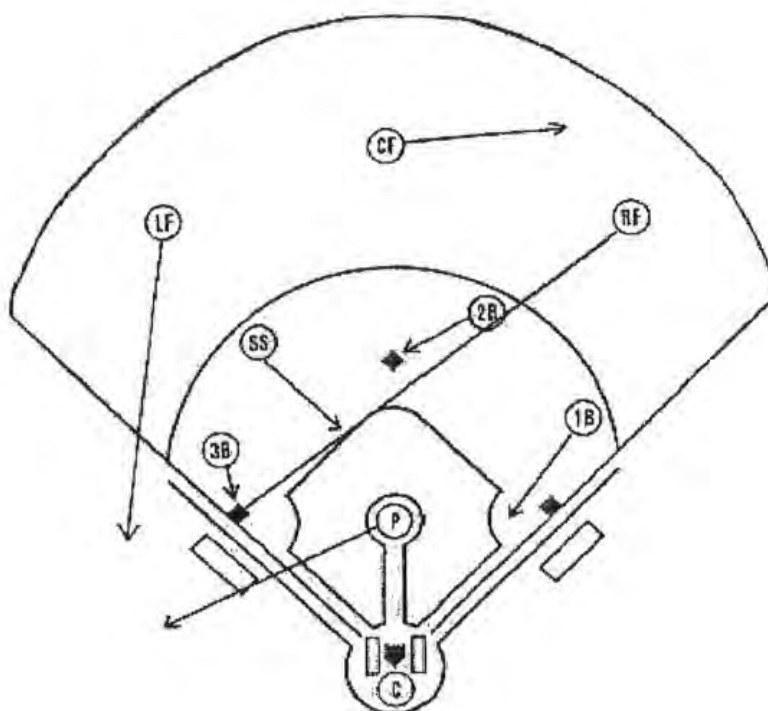
LF: Back up centerfield.

CF: Field ball and make a throw that can be cut-off by the shortstop.

RF: Back up centerfielder.



Single to right field (runner on 1B)



Pitcher: Back up third base.

Catcher: Protect home plate.

1B: Make sure hitter touches first base, then cover.

2B: Cover second base.

SS: Move into a position to be the relay man. Assume the runner will attempt to advance.

3B: Cover third base.

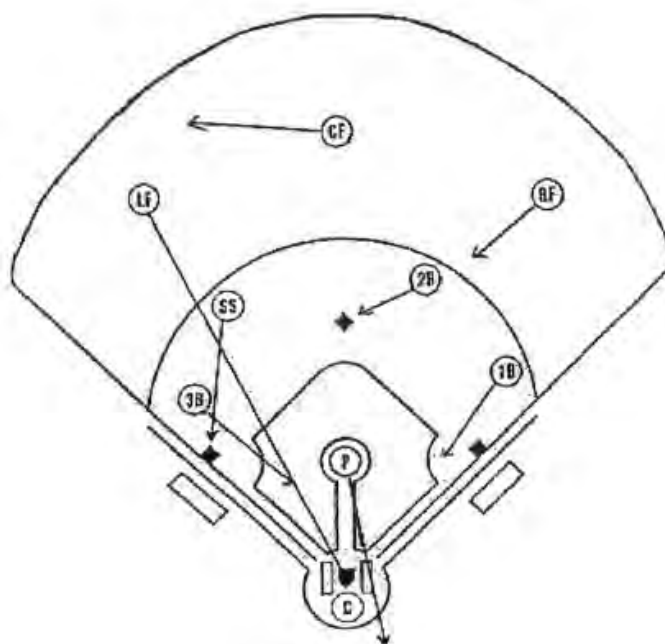
LF: Move into a possible backup position behind third base.

CF: Back up right fielder.

RF: Field ball and make a throw that can be cut-off by the shortstop.



Single to left field (runner on 2B, runners on 1B and 2B, or bases loaded)



Pitcher: Back up home plate.

Catcher: Cover home plate.

1B: Cover first base.

2B: Cover second base.

SS: Cover third base.

3B: Move into a position to be the cut-off man to home plate.

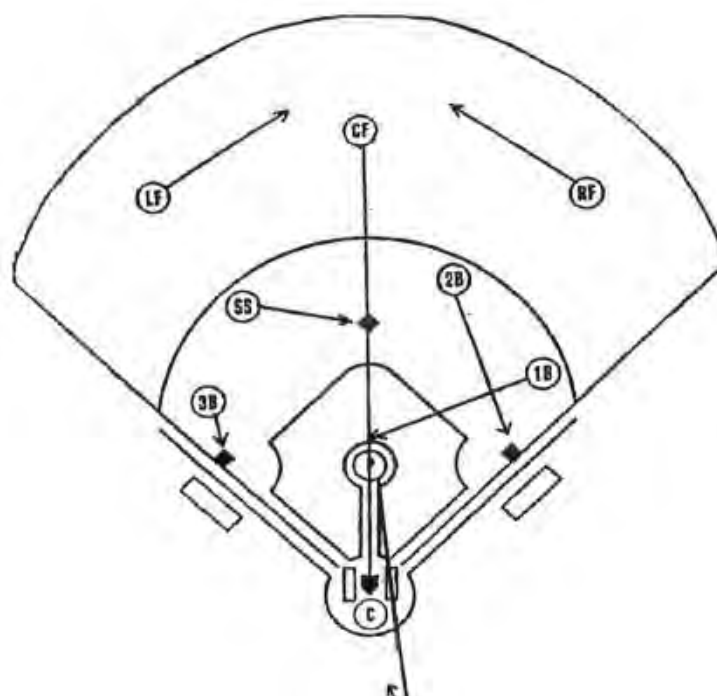
LF: Field ball and make a throw to home plate that can be cut-off.

CF: Back up leftfielder

RF: Move into a possible backup position near second base.



Single to center field (runner on 2B or runners on 2B and 3B)



Pitcher: Back up home plate.

Catcher: Cover home plate

1B: Move into a position to be the cut-off man to home plate.

2B: Cover first base.

SS: Cover second base.

3B: Cover third base.

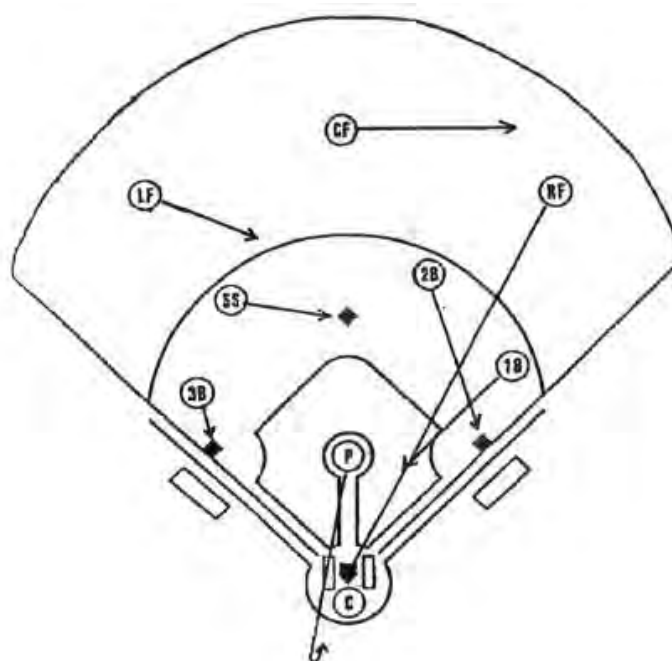
LF: Back up centerfielder

CF: Field ball and make a throw to home plate that can be cut-off.

RF: Back up centerfielder



Single to right field (runner on 2B or runners on 2B and 3B)



Pitcher: Back up home plate.

Catcher: Cover home plate.

1B: Move into a position to be the cut-off man to home plate.

2B: Cover first base.

SS: Cover second base.

3B: Cover third base.

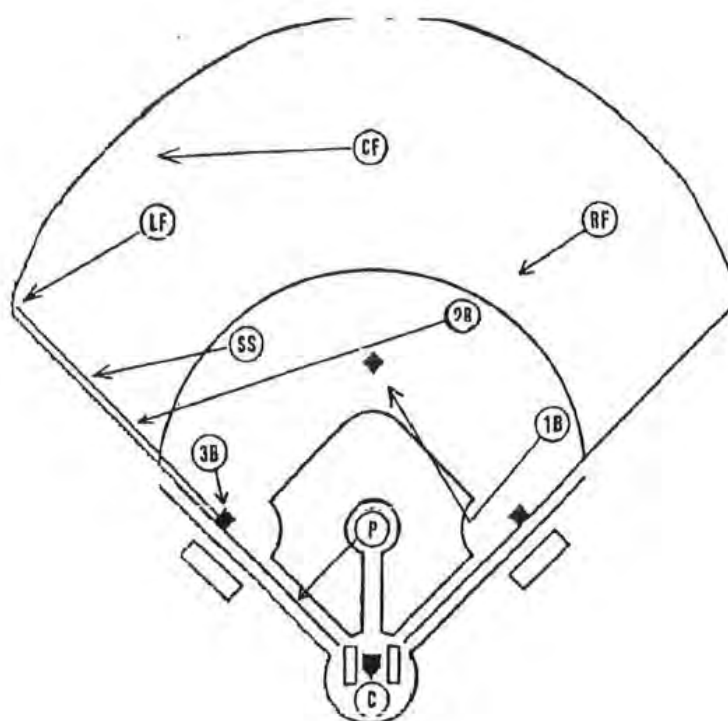
LF: Move into a possible backup position behind second base.

CF: Back up right fielder.

RF: Field ball and make a throw to home plate that can be cut-off.



Double, possible triple down left field line (no one on base, runner on second or third, or runners on second and third)



Pitcher: Back up third base.

Catcher: Protect home plate.

1B: If possible, break to an area inside of base, make sure hitter touches first base, then trail to second base.

2B: Hang at second base until the ball clears the leftfielder, then trail about 30 feet behind shortstop in line with third base and call the play.

SS: Move into a relay position in line with third base, listen for call.

3B: Cover third base.

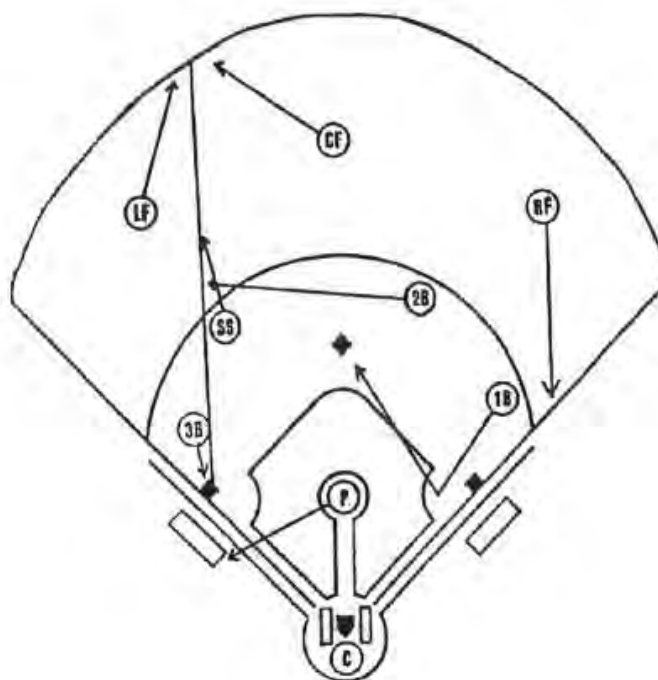
LF: Field ball and make a strong, accurate throw to the relay man

CF: Back up leftfielder.

RF: Move into a possible backup position behind second base.



Double, possible triple to left-center (no one on base, runner on second or third, or runners on second and third)



Pitcher: Back up third base.

Catcher: Protect home plate.

1B: If possible, break to an area inside of base, make sure hitter touches first base, then trail to second base.

2B: Hang at second base until the ball clears the outfielders, then trail about 30 feet behind shortstop in line with third base and call the play.

SS: Move into a relay position in line with third base, listen for call.

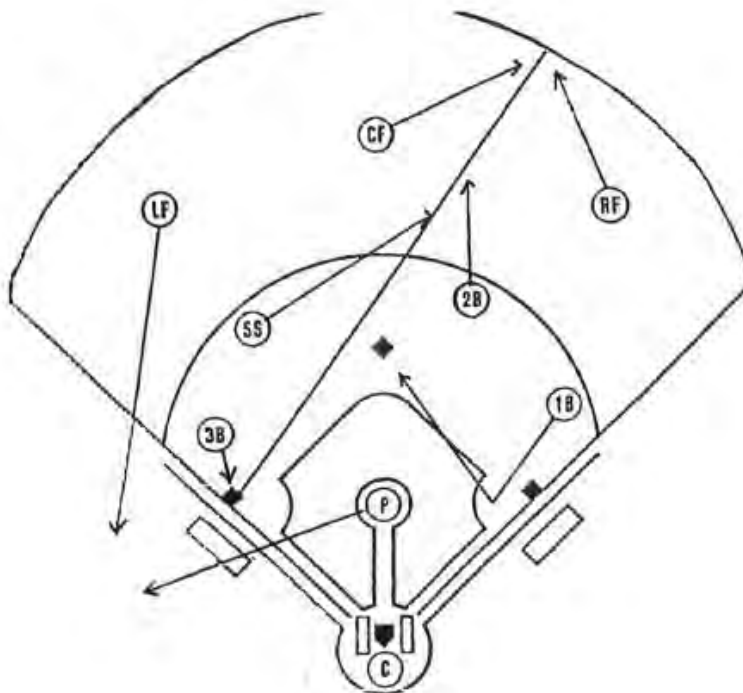
3B: Cover third base.

LF/CF: One man will field ball and make a strong accurate throw to the relay man, the other will back up.

RF: Move into a possible backup position toward first base.



Double, possible triple to right-center (no one on base, runner on second or third, or runners on second and third)



Pitcher: Back up third base.

Catcher: Protect home plate.

1B: If possible, break to an area inside of base, make sure hitter touches first base, then trail to second base.

2B: Move into a relay position in line with third base, listen for call.

SS: Hang at second base until the ball clears the outfielder, then trail about 30 feet behind second baseman in line with third base and call the play.

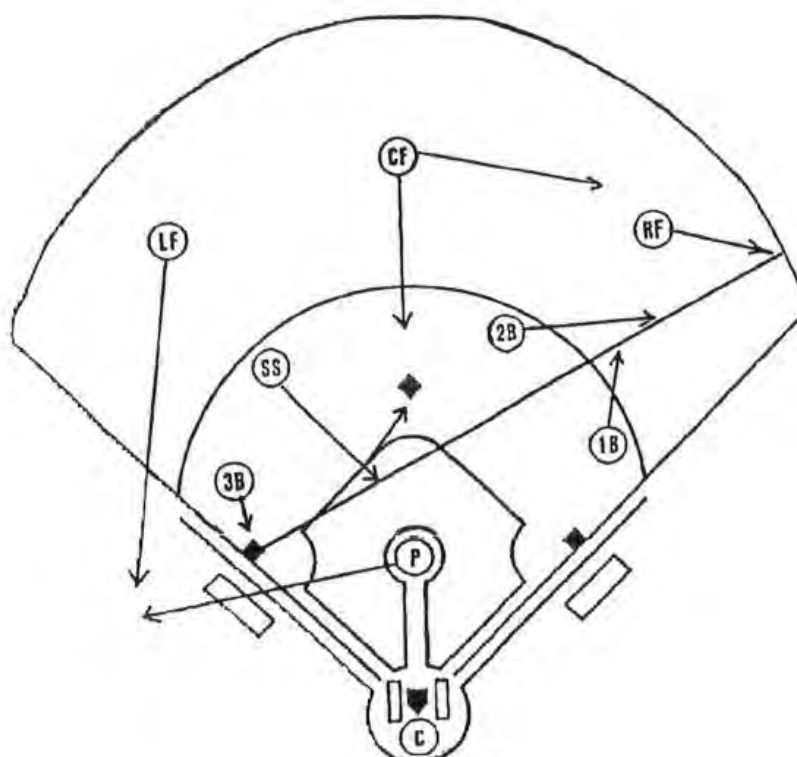
3B: Cover third base.

LF: Move into a possible backup position toward third base.

CF/RF: One man will field ball and make a strong accurate throw to the relay man, the other will back up.



Double, possible triple down right field line (no one on base, runner on second or third, or runners on second and third)



Pitcher: Back up third base.

Catcher: Protect home plate.

1B: Hang at first base until the ball clears the right fielder, then trail about 30 feet behind the second baseman in line with third base and call the play.

2B: Move into a relay position in line with third base, listen for call.

SS: Move into a second relay position to third base: "read" the play, cover second base if necessary.

3B: Cover third base.

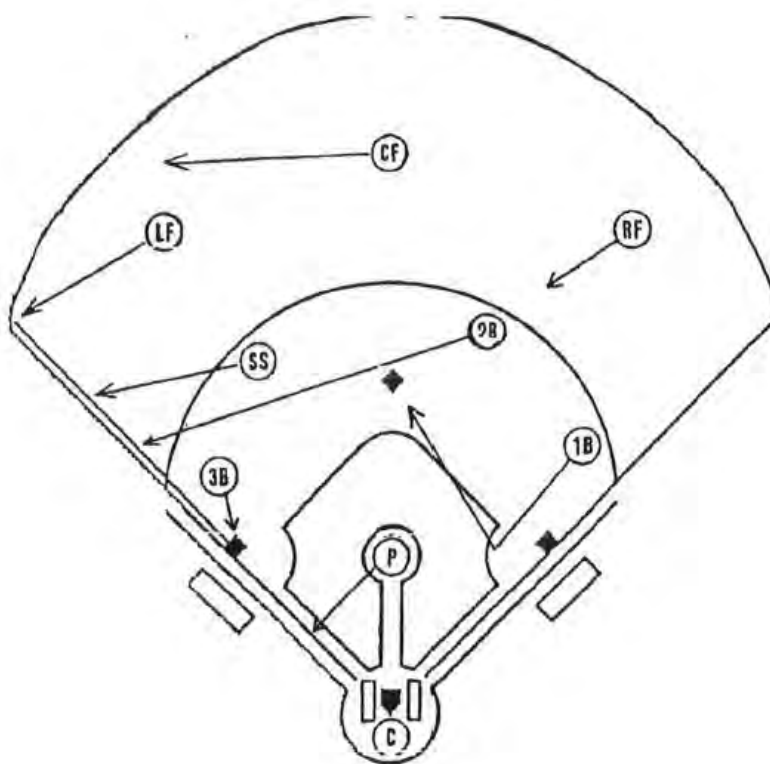
LF: Move into a possible backup position towards third base.

CF: Break toward infield, cover second base if shortstop remains in a cut-off position. Back up right fielder.

RF: Field ball and make a strong, accurate throw to the relay man.



Double, possible trip down left field line (runner on first, runners on first and second, or bases loaded)



Pitcher: Back up home plate.

Catcher: Cover home plate.

1B: When the second baseman leaves to back up the shortstop, move into the second relay position to home plate, then trail to second base, if necessary.

2B: Hang at second base until the ball clears the leftfielder, then trail about 30 feet behind the shortstop and call the play.

SS: Move into relay position, **in fair territory**, down the line and listen for call.

3B: Cover third base or move into cut-off position to home plate.

LF: Field ball and make a strong, accurate throw to the relay man.

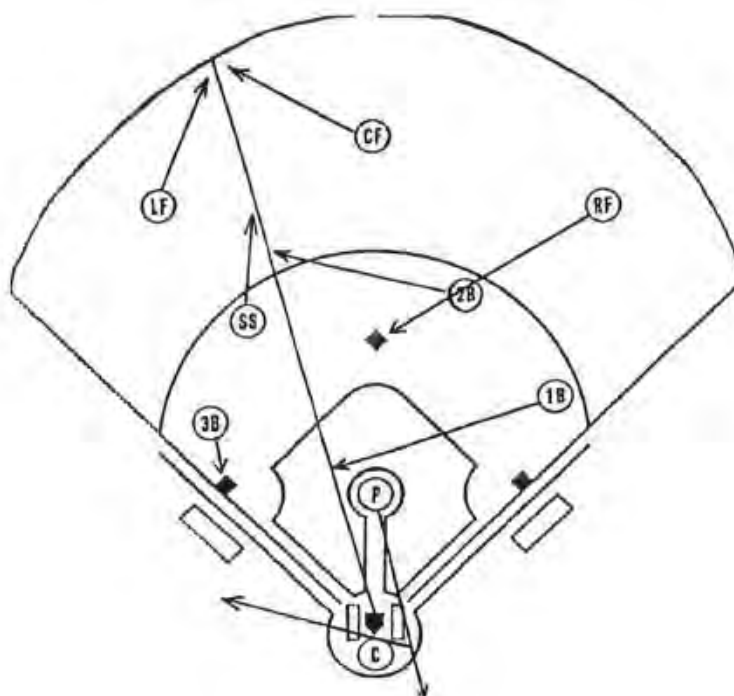
CF: Back up leftfielder.

RF: Cover or back up second base.

NOTE: Although the ball may be in foul territory, the shortstop, second baseman, and first baseman should remain in fair territory.



Double possible triple to left-center (runner on first, runners on first and second, or bases loaded)



Pitcher: Move into backup position behind home plate. Be prepared to back up third base if the play changes direction.

Catcher: Cover home plate.

1B: When the second baseman leaves to back up the shortstop, move into the second relay position to home plate.

2B: Hang at second base until the ball clears the outfielders, then trail about 30 feet behind shortstop and call the play.

SS: Move into relay position in line with home plate, listen for call.

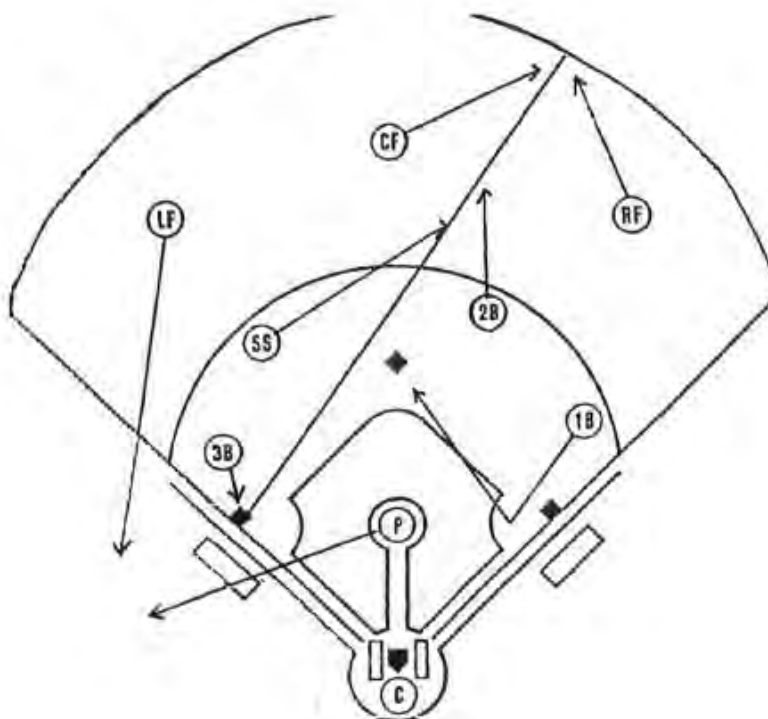
3B: Cover third base.

LF/CF: One man will field ball and make a strong and accurate throw to the relay man, the other will back up.

RF: Cover second base.



Double, possible triple to right-center (runner on first, runners on first and second, or bases loaded)



Pitcher: Go halfway between home plate and third base and read the play and back up the appropriate base.

Catcher: Cover home plate.

1B: When the shortstop leaves to back up the second baseman, move into the second relay position to home plate.

2B: Move into relay position in line with home plate, listen for call.

SS: Hang at second base until the ball clears the outfielders, then trail about 30 feet behind the second baseman and call the play. After seeing that the second baseman can handle the throw from the outfielder, break back to cover second base.

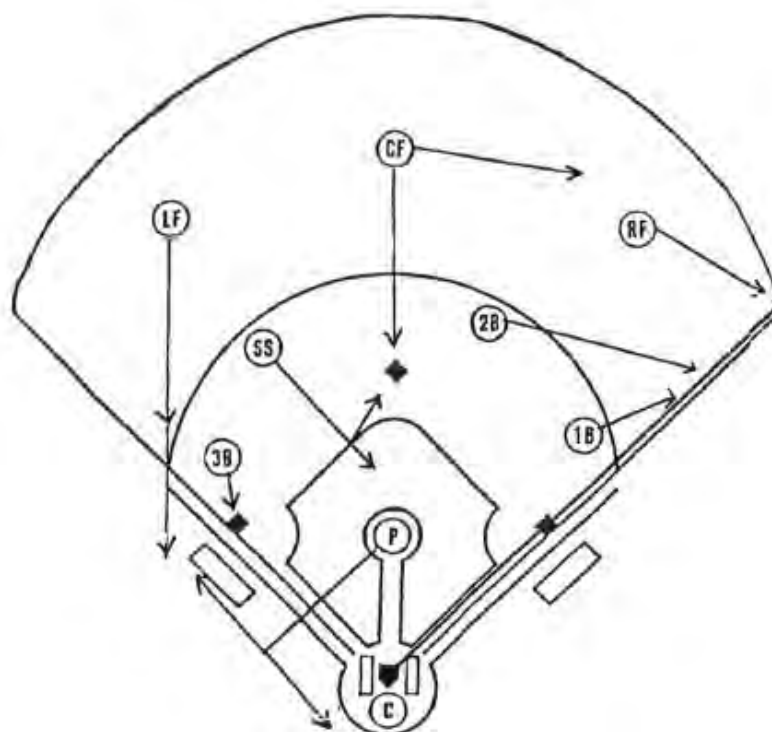
3B: Cover third base.

LF: Move into a possible backup position behind third base.

CF/RF: One man will field ball and make a strong accurate throw to the relay man, the other will back up.



Double, possible triple down right field line (runner on first, runners on first and second, or bases loaded)



Pitcher: Go halfway between home plate and third base and read the play and back up the appropriate base.

Catcher: Cover home plate.

1B: Hang at first base until the ball clears the right fielder, then trail about 30 feet behind the second baseman and call the play.

2B: Move into a relay position in line with home plate, listen for call.

SS: Move into a second relay position to third base and read the play, cover second base if necessary.

3B: Cover third base.

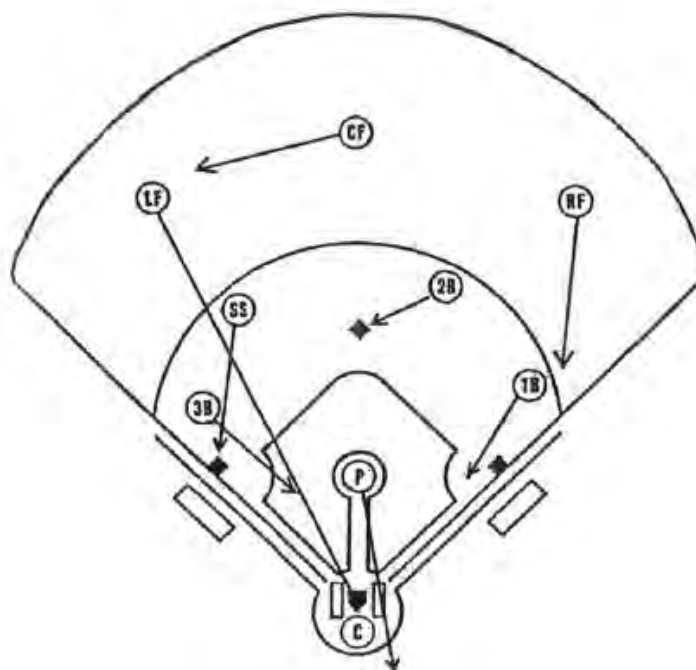
LF: Move into a position to back up third base or second base.

CF: Cover second base or back up right fielder.

RF: Field ball and make a strong and accurate throw to the relay man.



Fly ball to left field (runners on first and third)



Pitcher: Move into a backup position behind the catcher.

Catcher: Protect home plate.

1B: Cover first base.

2B: Cover second base.

SS: Cover third base.

3B: Move into a cut-off/relay position to home plate.

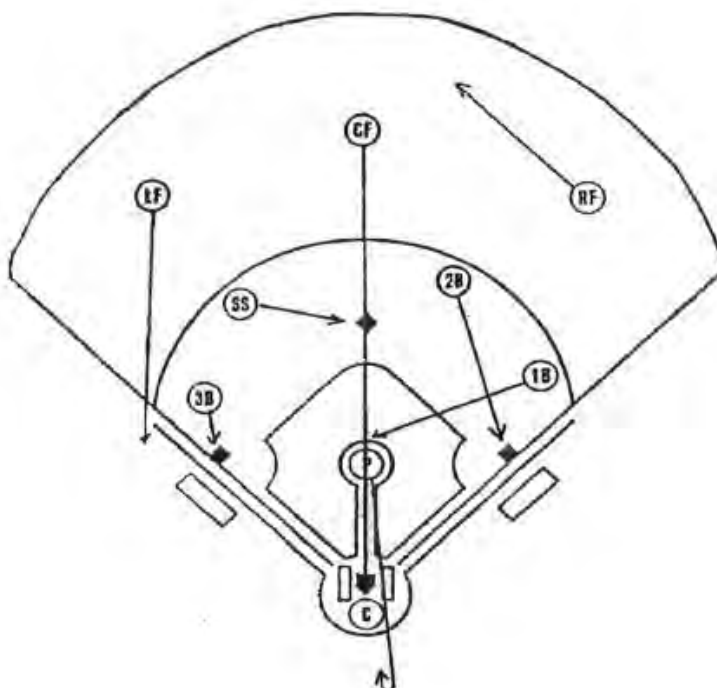
LF: Get behind the ball and give the catcher a good one-hop throw. No short hops. **NEVER allow the tying or winning run to advance to second base on this play.**

CF: Back up the leftfielder. Let him know which base to throw to and what the runners are doing. Communication is vital on this play.

RF: Move into a possible backup position toward first base.



Fly ball to center field (runners on first and third)



Pitcher: Move into a backup position behind the catcher.

Catcher: Protect home plate.

1B: Move into a cut-off/relay position to home plate

2B: Cover first base.

SS: Cover second base.

3B: Cover third base.

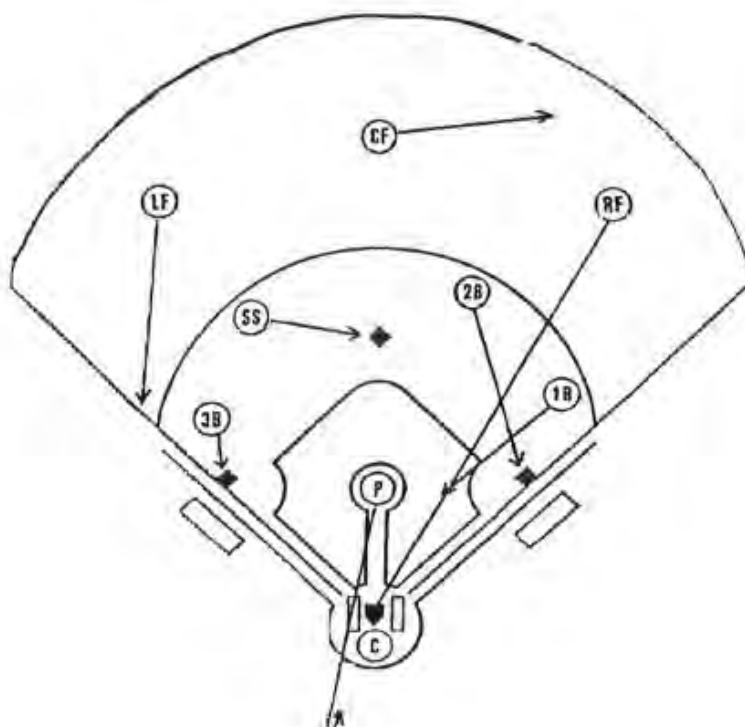
LF: Move into a possible backup position towards third base.

CF: Get behind the ball and give the catcher a good one-hop throw. No short hops. **Never allow the tying or winning run to advance to second base on this play.**

RF: Back up the centerfielder. Let him know which base to throw to and what the runners are doing. Communication is vital on this play.



Fly ball to right field (runners on first and third)



Pitcher: Move into a position to back up home plate.

Catcher: Protect home plate.

1B: Move into a cut-off/relay position to home plate.

2B: Cover first base.

SS: Cover second base.

3B: Cover third base.

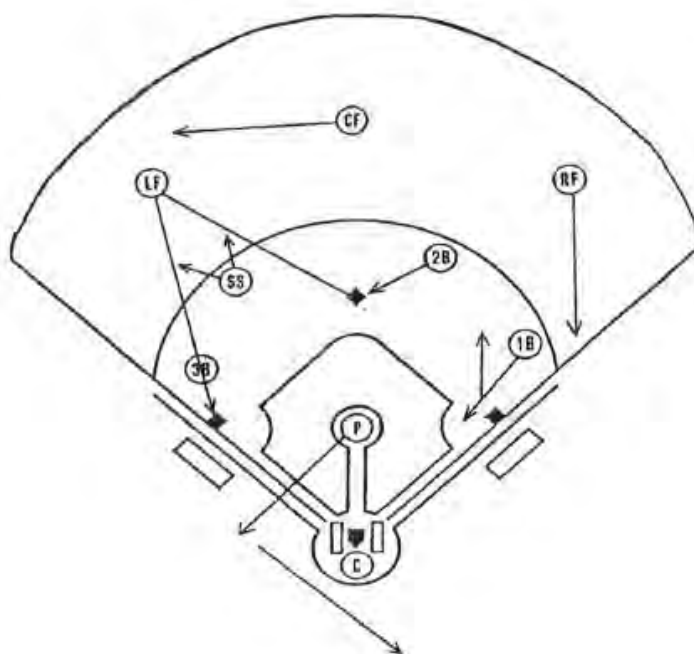
LF: Move into a possible backup position toward third base.

CF: Back up the right fielder. Let him know which base to throw to and what the runners are doing. Communication is vital on this play.

RF: Get behind the ball and give the catcher a good one-hop throw. No short hops. **NEVER allow the tying or winning run to advance to second base on this play.**



Fly ball to deep left field (runners on first and second)



Pitcher: Back up third base and be prepared to back up home plate if the runner going to third rounds the bag.

Catcher: Protect home plate. Be prepared to yell, “4, 4, 4” if, in his judgment, the runner rounding third is attempting to score.

1B: Cover first base and be prepared to back up the second baseman on a throw from the outfield.

2B: Cover second base.

SS: Judgment play. If the runners are tagging, read the outfielder and move into a relay position to second or third. On most deep fly balls, the play will be to second base. Be prepared for the runner going to third base to round the bag.

3B: Cover third base.

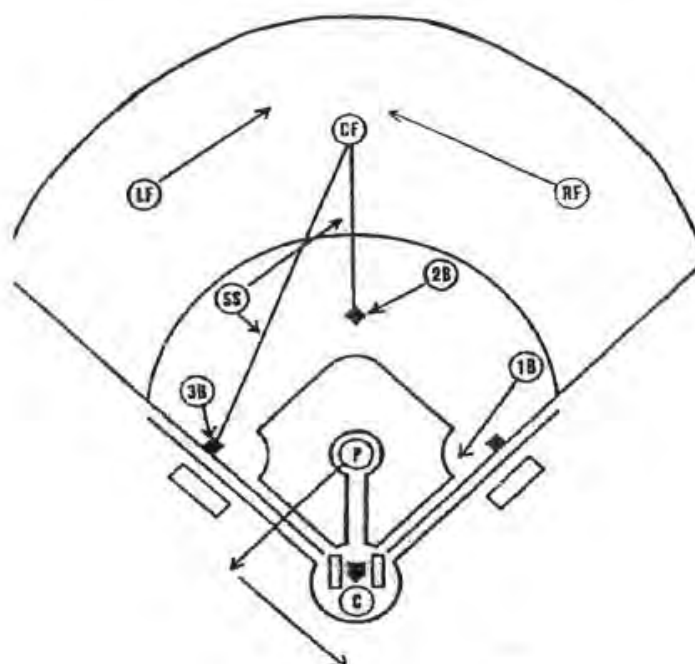
LF: Make a good throw to the base that the shortstop is lined up to.

CF: Watch the runners while approaching the leftfielder. Tell him which base the shortstop is lined up to. Communication is vital on this play.

RF: Move into a possible backup position toward first base.



Fly ball to deep center field (runners on first and second)



Pitcher: Move into a possible backup position behind third base. Be prepared to move to a possible backup position behind home plate if the play goes to second base.

Catcher: Protect home plate. Be prepared to yell "4,4,4" if, in his judgment, the runner rounding third is attempting to score.

1B: Cover first base. Be prepared to back up a throw to second base.

2B: Cover second base.

SS: Judgment play. If the runners are tagging, read the outfielder and move into relay position to second or third. On most deep fly balls, the play will be to second. Be prepared for the runner going to third to round the bag.

3B: Cover third base.

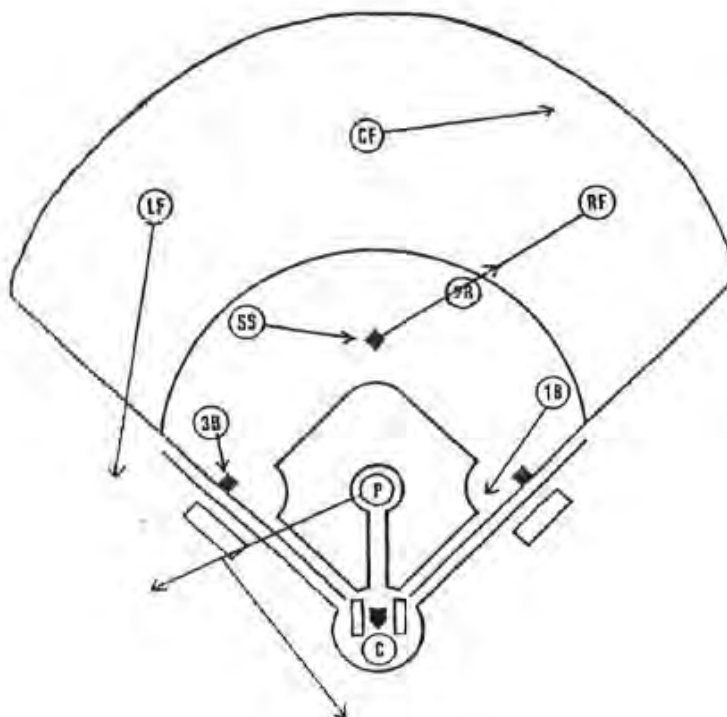
LF: Watch the runners while approaching the centerfielder. Tell him which base the shortstop is lined up to. Communication is vital on this play.

CF: Make a good throw to the base that the shortstop is lined up to.

RF: Back up the centerfielder and communicate.



Fly ball to deep right field (runners on first and second)



Pitcher: Back up third base and be prepared to back up home plate.

Catcher: Protect home plate. Be prepared to yell "4, 4, 4" if, in his judgment, the runner rounding third is attempting to score.

1B: Cover first base.

2B: Move into a relay position to second base. Be prepared for the runner going to third to round the bag.

SS: Cover second base.

3B: Cover third base.

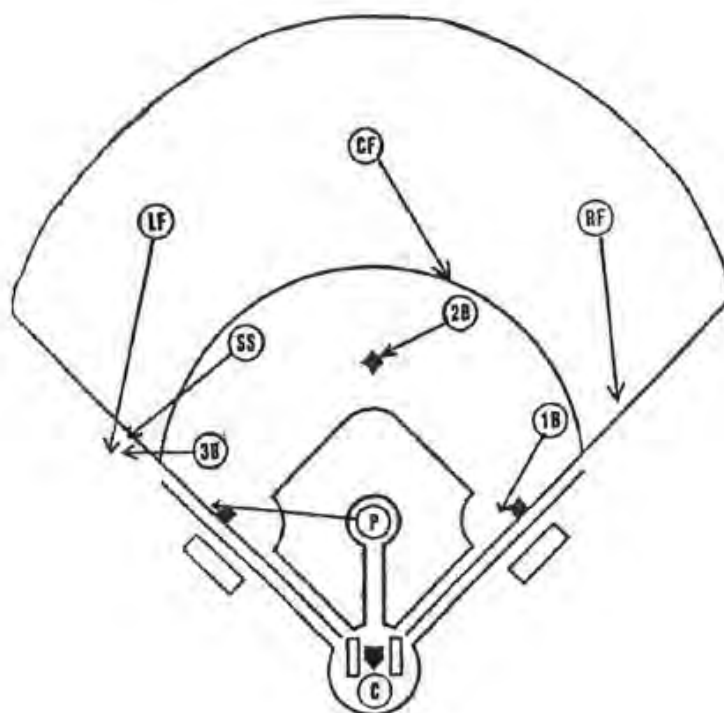
LF: Move into a possible backup position toward third base.

CF: Communicate to the right fielder what the runners are doing.

RF: Give the shortstop a good throw that the second baseman can cut-off and relay to home plate, if necessary.



Short fly ball down left field line (runners on first and third)



Pitcher: Move into a relay position to home plate on the backside of third base.

Catcher: Protect home plate.

1B: Cover first base.

2B: Cover second base.

SS: The priority is to catch the ball, then get the ball to the pitcher in the relay position as quickly as possible. Communication on the fly ball is vital.

3B: The priority is to catch the ball, then get the ball to the pitcher in relay position as quickly as possible. Communication on the fly ball is vital.

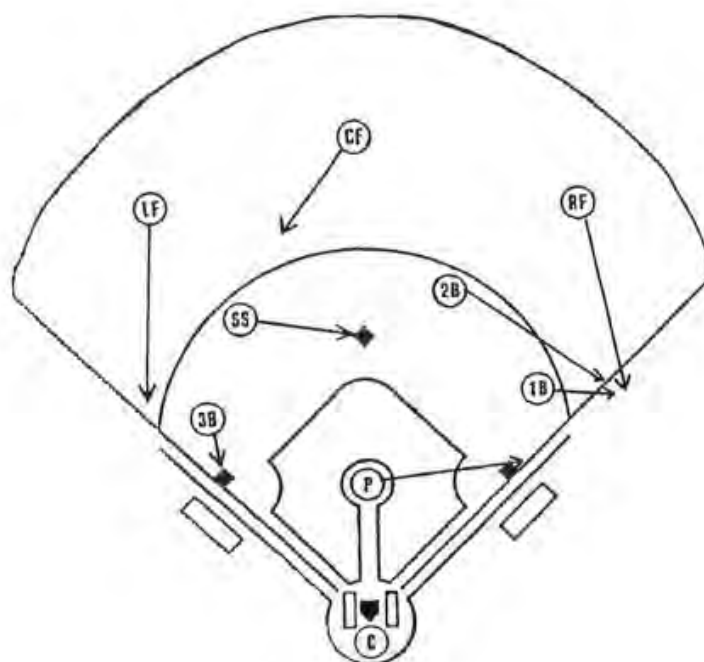
LF: The priority is to catch the ball, then get the ball to the pitcher in the relay position as quickly as possible. Communication on the fly ball is vital.

CF: Move into a backup position toward second base.

RF: Move into a backup position toward first base.



Short fly ball down right field line (runners on first and third)



Pitcher: Move into a relay position to home plate on the backside of first base.

Catcher: Protect home plate.

1B: The priority is to catch the ball, then get ball to the pitcher in the relay position as quickly as possible. Communication on the fly ball is vital.

2B: The priority is to catch the ball, then get the ball to the pitcher in the relay position as quickly as possible. Communication on the fly ball is vital.

SS: Cover second base.

3B: Cover third base.

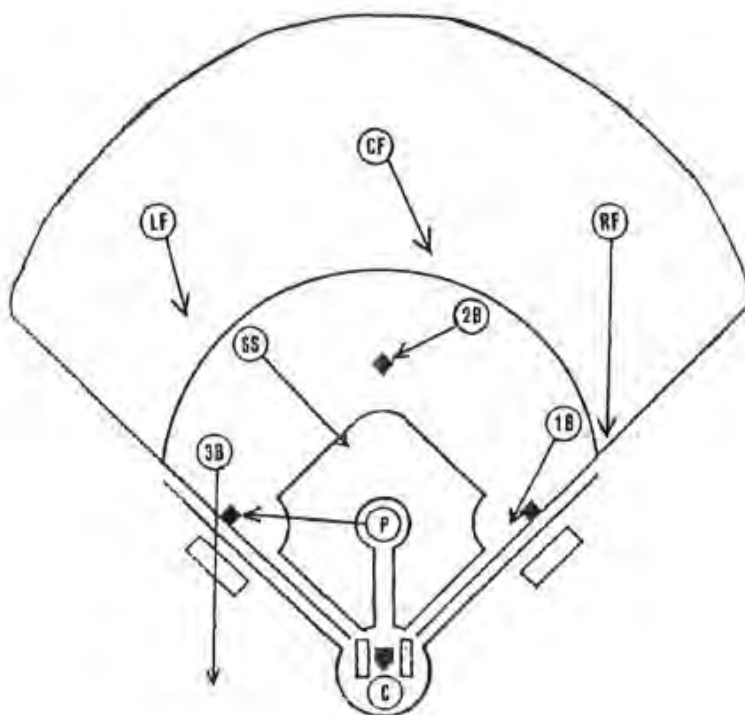
LF: Move into a backup position toward third base.

CF: Move into a backup position toward second base.

RF: The priority is to catch the ball, then get the ball to the pitcher in the relay position as quickly as possible. Communication on the fly ball is vital.



Foul fly in front of third base dugout (runners on first and third)



Pitcher: Cover third base.

Catcher: Audibly help the third baseman with his positioning and what the runners are doing. Protect home plate.

1B: Cover first base.

2B: Cover second base.

SS: Move into a relay position to second base. Be prepared for both runners to tag.

3B: Catch the ball and be prepared for both runners to tag. Give the shortstop a firm, chest-high throw.

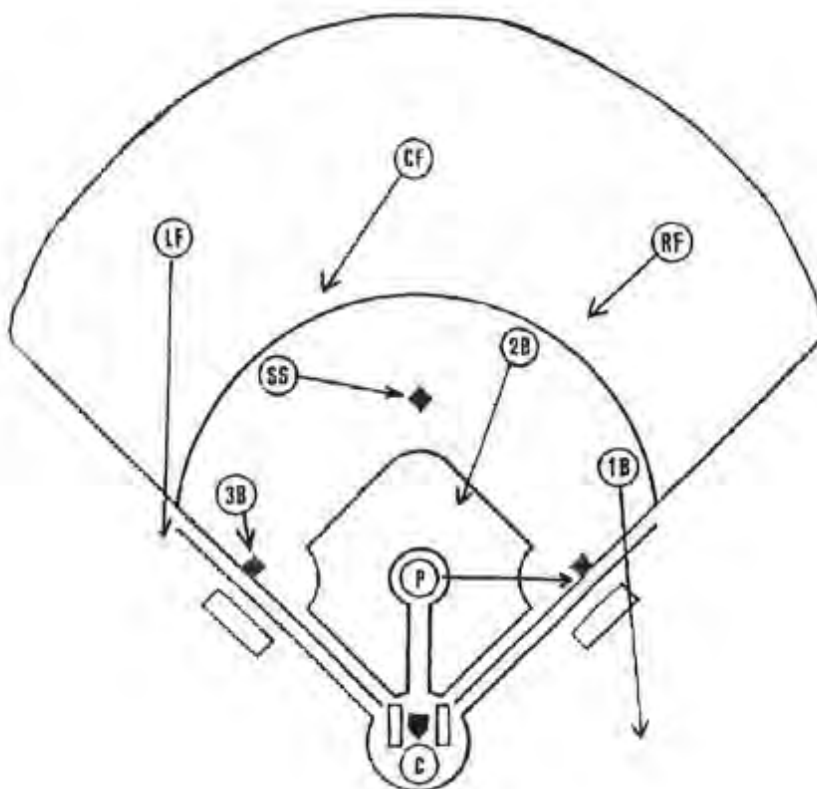
LF: Move into a backup position toward third base.

CF: Move into a backup position toward second base.

RF: Move into a backup position toward first base.



Foul fly ball in front of first base dugout (runners on first and third)



Pitcher: Cover first base.

Catcher: Audibly help the first baseman with his positioning and what runners are doing.

1B: Catch the ball and be prepared for both runners to tag. Give the second baseman a firm, chest-high throw.

2B: Move into a relay position to second base. Be prepared for both runners to tag.

SS: Cover second base.

3B: Cover third base.

LF: Move into a backup position behind third base.

CF: Move into a backup position behind second base.

RF: Move into a backup position behind first base.



INFIELD / OUTFIELD

INFIELD SHOULD BE TAKEN AT GAME SPEED.

Outfield – basic

LF: two throws to second base, two throws home

CF: two throws to third base, two throws home

RF: two throws to third base, two throws home

All outfielders to center field for pre-game ground balls and fly balls. Staff should emphasize the importance of ground ball work during this time period.

Notes: The manager has the discretion to change the number of throws to each base. It is important that the balls hit to the outfield are as realistic as possible. Also, emphasis must be placed on quality, accurate throws through the cut-off/relay man.

Infield

Round 1 – Getting One

- Groundball to third baseman (at him or to his left), throw to first base. Catcher returns throw. Ball goes around horn. Pivot at second base.
- Groundball to shortstop (at him or to his left), throw to first base. Catcher returns throw to second base. Shortstop throws to third base. Ball is returned to the off catcher.
- Ground ball to second baseman (at him or to his left), throw to first base. Catcher returns throw to second base. Second baseman throws to third base. Ball is returned to the off catcher.
- Ground ball to first baseman who is playing at normal depth (at him or to his right). Shortstop looks to return throw to first base if able to complete 3-6-3. The first baseman returns the ball to the off catcher. If unable to complete 3-6-3, the shortstop pump-fakes the throw to first, pivots and throws to third. Third baseman returns ball to the off catcher.
- Ball rolled to catcher for one. Throw to first base. First baseman throws to second. Ball comes home.

Round 2 – Getting One

Same as round 1, except ball is hit to right of third baseman, shortstop, and second baseman, and down the line for first baseman.



Round 3 – Double Plays

- Ground ball to third baseman (at him or to left). Catcher throws to third baseman. Third baseman goes across diamond to first base.
- Ground ball to shortstop (at him or to left). Catcher throws to second. Second baseman throws to third. Third baseman throws to off catcher.
- Ground ball to third baseman (at him or to right). Catcher throws to second. Shortstop throws to third. Third baseman throws to off catcher.
- Ground ball to first baseman who is working off the base (at him or to right). Shortstop looks to return throw to first base. If able to complete 3-6-3 the first baseman returns the ball to the off catcher. If unable to complete 3-6-3 the shortstop pump-fakes the throw to first, pivots and throws to third. Third baseman returns ball to the off catcher.
- Roll ball to catcher for two.

Round 4 – Double Plays

Same as round 3, except ball hit to the right of third baseman and shortstop, left of first baseman and second baseman. First baseman starts behind runner. All throws return to the plate.

On throws to infielder from catcher.

- Third baseman comes back home (third base stays at base)
- Shortstop and second baseman cut to front of base near grass for return throw home.

Roll ball to catcher for throw to third and it goes around the horn.

Round 5 - Long Round

- Ground ball to third baseman deep on the line. Shortstop is deep in the hole and second baseman is behind the bag. First baseman starts “in” and throws home.
- Slow Roller- Hit a slow roller to each infielder after the long round. First baseman throws to third base (simulate a bad bunt).

Round 6

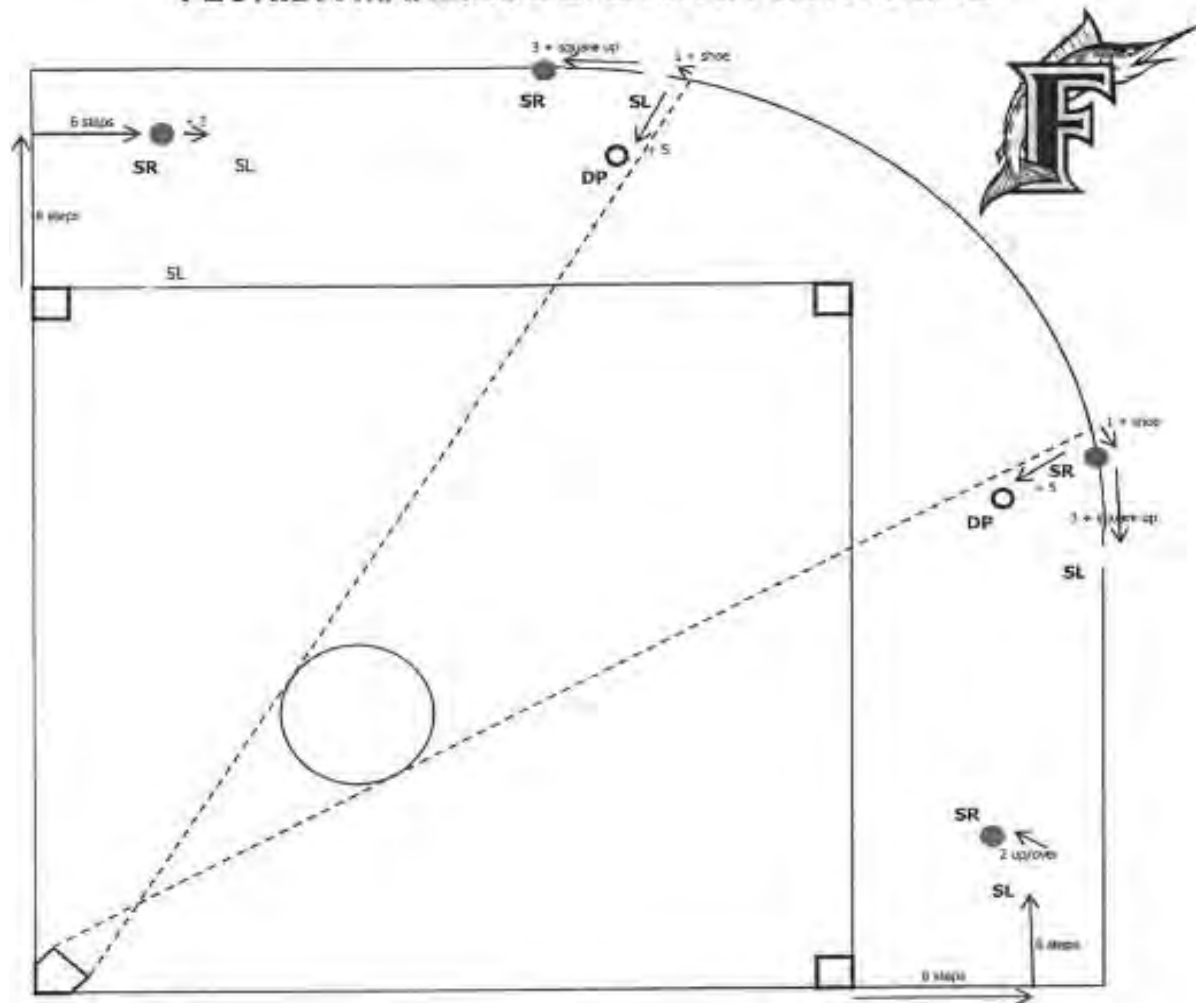
Pop Ups to Catcher

- Infielders stay in position for possible pop up. Run off the field after the last pop up.

Notes: Catchers are to wear catching gear thought the infield/outfield process.

Manager’s discretion: abbreviated infields will be used when time does not permit a full one Example: 1-1, 1-2, long, short, pop-ups).

FLORIDA MARLINS DEFENSIVE POSITIONING



2B Line from third base corner of the plate through edge of dirt on the mound (9' from center of rubber)

Straight Right (SR) - 1 step plus one shoe size from line to left towards first base

Straight Left (SL) - 3 steps to the left from SR and square up.

Double Play (DP) - 5 steps in on an angle to plate from SR.

Split Defense - Halfway between marks.

SS Line from first base corner of the plate through the edge of dirt on the mound (9' from center of rubber).

Straight Left (SL) - 1 step plus one shoe size from the line to the right towards third base.

Straight Right (SR) - 3 steps to the right from SL mark and square up.

Double Play (DP) - 5 steps in on an angle to plate from SL.

Split Defense - halfway between marks.



- 1B** Straight Left (SL) - 8 steps up the line and 6 steps to the left.
Straight Right (SR) – 2 steps over and 2 steps in.
- 3B** Straight Right (SR) – 8 steps up the line and 6 steps out (plus arm can use 10 steps up and 6 over).
Straight Left (SL) – 2 steps over from SR (for typical power LHH; need to play in on cut of the grass for hitters who slap/bunt).
Double Play – 2 steps in from SR.

MENTAL PREPARATION

Before a Major League infielders steps between the “white lines” and the first pitch is thrown, he **MUST** be mentally prepared. The following ideas and tips **WILL** make you a better infielder and help you be ready for each and every game.

Know your pitching staff:

Basic positioning will vary depending on the type of pitcher on the mound. An opposing hitter is not likely to get the bat head out on a 90 mph fastball as quickly as he would on fastballs in the low 80 mph range. Knowing your pitcher will allow you to shade or cheat a little either way and be more apt to reach a few more ground balls. Also, keeps tabs on your pitcher during the game by checking with the catcher from time to time. He may be losing his stuff! A pitcher’s stuff will vary from game to game, so make sure you know how he is throwing that night.

Knowing opposing hitters:

Infielders must make adjustments according to the type of hitter at the plate. Knowing the hitter’s running speed, bat control, bunting ability, bat speed, and bat arc can help you position yourself better. Also, have an idea how your pitcher is going to pitch to certain hitters, i.e. busting him in or keeping the ball away, etc. A good infielder is also aware of the count, since some hitters will not pull as much when behind in the count. Most hitters will just try and make contact or put the ball in play when the count is 1-2 or 0-2. Knowing this will allow you to make the necessary adjustments.

Knowing opposing clubs’ tendencies:

What do opposing clubs like to do in certain situations? Bunt, hit and run, steal, delayed steal, squeeze, etc. **DO NOT BE CAUGHT BY SURPRISE!** Make mental notes when situations occur and you will be able to anticipate what some clubs are going to do. **YOU WILL BE READY!**

Know field conditions and check wind:

While taking ground balls during batting practice, make sure you notice how the infield plays, especially on the first trip into any new park. Your positioning may vary due to extremely fast or slow infields. You must also check the wind conditions each and every inning. An unnoticed wind change has made many infielders look foolish on high pop-ups.

**Checking the foul lines (first and third baselines):**

Before each game, the first baseman and third baseman should roll baseballs down each base path (first and third) to see if the ball will stay fair or roll foul on slow hit or bunted balls.

Get quality work during batting practice:

During batting practice, take all types of grounds balls – to your left, to your right, routine balls, slow hit balls, double play feeds and pivots. Take them the way you would during the game. Do not get lazy or just go through the motions – this only develops bad habits.

Good pre-game infield:

The last step in preparation for the game is taking a good, lively infield. This is not the time to “style” or flip the ball around. Show some enthusiasm, concentrate, and get yourself ready for the game.