

SKILLS AND DRILLS

FUNDAMENTALS: CATCHING

<p>Size of Glove</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For younger players, the glove should fit their hand comfortably but have a large enough pocket to fit the baseball. • An ideal glove size for youth players is around 11.5” but the glove should be light enough for the player to raise and handle throws at chest level or above. Older players typically use gloves that are somewhere between 11 and 12” based on position. Younger players should seek to use same but only if the glove is light enough to handle – weight and ability to ‘squeeze’ or close are important factors to be considered. • Most important is that the player should be able to close the glove enough to retain the ball once received – this is a function of the design of the glove (there are ‘easy close’ options available for younger kids) and how well the glove is worked in (this comes from ‘working it in’ via conditioning the glove and playing catch).
<p>Ready Position</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feet should be slightly more than shoulder width apart. • Weight on balls of feet, ready to shift if throw is off target. • Knees slightly bent but not more than 45 degrees. • Both hands out in front at chest level – thumbs next to each other. • When playing catch goal for thrower and received is to catch the ball above the waist out in front of the chest but receiver needs to be prepared to adjust if throw is off target (i.e. slightly bent knees will allow receiver to shift feet to adjust to where the ball is thrown). • Remember that the goal is to catch the ball in the pocket (i.e. where the webbing and palm of the glove meet), not either the webbing or palm and have ‘soft’ hands when catching, ‘giving’ slightly when the ball is received.
<p>Receiving – above waist</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feet should be slightly more than shoulder width apart. • Knees slightly bent. • Weight on balls of feet – adjust to where ball is thrown, try and centre the ball on the body if possible. • Eyes track the ball into the glove. • Thumbs together, hands out in front, ready to receive the ball in the glove. • Once ball has arrived, catching hand closes glove and throwing hand rotates to help ‘trap’ the ball. • Throwing hand stays in position to transition to throw the ball.
<p>Receiving – below waist</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feet should be slightly more than shoulder width apart. • Weight on balls of feet – adjust to where ball is thrown, try and centre the ball on the body if possible. • Eyes track the ball into the glove. • Pinkies together, hands out in front, ready to receive the ball in the glove. • Once ball has arrived, catching hand closes glove and throwing hand rotates to help ‘trap’ the ball. • Throwing hand stays in position to transition to throw the ball.

Adjusting to Where Ball is Thrown



- Glove works in a 'clock-like' motion based on where the ball will arrive and glove feet will need adjust accordingly.
- If time permits and the throw is slightly off target, shuffle feet to centre the ball on body.
- If to the forehand side, bring elbow into side of body, rotate hips and feet toward glove hand side... try to catch the ball to the side but out in front... throwing hand should try to move with the glove to make it easier to trap the ball once caught.
- If to the backhand side, rotate feet and hips to throwing hand side and take a 'cross-step' with the foot to the glove hand side... try to catch the ball to the side but out in front... throwing hand should try to move with the glove to make it easier to trap the ball once caught.
- MOST IMPORTANT: if reaction time is limited, instruct the players to get the glove in front of the ball... whenever possible, get player in the habit of moving their feet and positioning their body as much in front of the ball as possible.

VIDEOS:

CATCHING THE BASEBALL

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r2Ffcppwvfg>

This is a good guide to teach young ballplayers how to catch the baseball with confidence.