

Fielding Tip #7 - The Backhand

In youth baseball the backhand is a valuable defensive tool that often is overlooked. As players get older and faster, the ability to backhand a ball and make a quick throw can keep a fast runner off base and help win a ballgame. The most important thing to remember is that when backhanding a ball the same fundamentals that apply for a routine groundball should be followed. The fielder should create a wide base with the feet. The butt should be low to the ground and the glove should be out in front. This is a one-handed play that in which the ball should be fielded out in front of the body. Many young players attempt to field this ball behind them, which can cause the ball to bounce off the player's wrist or the heel of the glove.

Fielding Tip #8 - Ground Ball Drill: Hands Out in Front

Take your baseball cap and put the bill of the cap in your mouth. Get in a good defensive stance with your hands out front. The coach should then roll or hit ground balls to the player. With the bill of the cap in that position it will force you to field the ball out in front of your body if you want to be able to see the ball and the glove at the same time.

Fielding Tip #8a - Re: Ground Ball Drill: Hands Out in Front

This is an interesting way to force kids to field routine ground balls the way we teach: wide base, butt down, hands in front. Getting the butt down lower to the ground will automatically push the hands out in front, which is essential to execute this particular drill.

By Bill Ripken