

Catchers' Blocking Drills

When we practice the correct way, we can all be better players. **PERFECT PRACTICE**. The only way to do anything is To Do It Right! The game of baseball is made up of so many little things, and if we do all the little things right we will never have a big thing to worry about.

By Cal Ripken, Sr.

Catchers should practice blocking balls in the dirt, and a good drill is to throw balls at a medium speed from a distance of about 50 feet in the dirt in front of the catcher. The catcher should draw a line across a path that connects where his feet are stationed. Then, when going down on both knees to block the ball, he will simply kick the feet out, and the knees should come down along the line at which the feet started. This will enable the catcher to see the ball well and also put the top of the body over the ball, allowing the ball to softly bounce off the body or the chest protector. The head will be out over the ball and the glove will be in between the knees to cover the hole there.

The ball can go over or around, but should never go through. Once the catcher is comfortable blocking balls in front, we can then work from side to side. Each individual should find out just how far he can go to each side and still be able to get in front of the ball. Again, a line can be drawn (indicating that distance on each side), and anything on the outside of that line the catcher can block with one hand. The catcher should learn to backhand any ball to the extreme right, and the ball to the extreme left should be blocked with the glove in a forehand manner. This is practice and sideline work and should be done in a correct manner, forming good habits. Remember, Perfect Practice

By Cal and Bill Ripken