

Defensive Baseball – The Finer Details (by position)

Shortstop

- Yells out, while signaling, the number of outs to these teammates and in this order – center fielder, left fielder, second baseman, third baseman, and pitcher
- Likes to be the engineer of the double play (6-4-3) and takes pride in accurate throws to the second baseman
- Wants every ground ball hit to him
- Helps to “manage” the pitcher (motions to him to slow down or calm down, or directly tells him to do certain things, “hey, roll us a pair,” etc.)
- Likes to read the ground ball up the middle with a runner on first, attack it, and initiate the (6U-3) double play
- Takes great pride in his ability to cover the left-side of the infield from the third base hole to behind second base
- Lives for the tag play at second on potential doubles to right or right-center, and the steal attempt with a left-handed hitter, and the daylight pick from the pitcher when the runner on second has taken too much of a lead
- Understands and executes his role as the relay man on balls hit to deep left, left-center, and center field, making his presence known (giving a target with two hands up) and then always opens up to the glove side
- Is vocal in taking the piggy-back trailer behind the second baseman on balls hit deep to right and right-center
- Works on jumping to catch the high throw, coming off the bag, or diving to block an errant throw to prevent the overthrow from the second baseman, first baseman, pitcher or the catcher on a throw to second base
- Asks for timeout and initiates a mound visit in situations where the pitcher or the defense need conferring with to save the coach a charged visit
- Breaks to cover second on a ball hit back to the pitcher with a runner on first base
- Breaks to back-up second on all throws back to the pitcher with runners on
- Thoroughly communicates with the defense prior to bunt defenses and first and third steal defenses and alerts them to it as soon as the situation occurs
- Works on drop steps on soft liners, on balls hit to shallow center and left field and wants the ball on pops up in the infield or on balls down the left-field foul line beyond the third baseman’s range
- Takes pride in being a “low” fielding infielder with range, a quick release and a strong arm
- Works hard on his communication and execution of either taking the ground ball in the hole and getting the force at third with runners on first and second
- Finishes the play on a bobbled ground ball by either keeping his cool or faking a throw to first, then looking to see if other runners have taken too big of a turn around a bag
- Recognizes when a the double play can not be finished and works the fake throw to first, spin, and back to throw to third with runners on first and second
- Has a close rapport with his second baseman and third baseman and is the calming force in times of adversity
- Develops the “drop-step and go” range to take away the bloop single to left, left-center, or center field
- Understands angles to develop his range and practices creativity to stretch his abilities
- Is the self-proclaimed captain of the infield