

# A Defensive Checklist of Things to Teach in Youth Baseball

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Once the decision is made to coach a team, where do you start? Here are some things that must be addressed. Organizing ways to communicate about practices and games with players and parents. Getting equipment and uniforms for your players. Determining where you are going to practice. Determining what happens when rain delays or cancels a game. Transporting players to practice or games. How many assistant coaches will you have and who are they? A lot needs to be organized. Eventually, it is time to plan a practice. What needs to be covered so kids are prepared for games? What things need to be done daily? Once a week? How long will the practice last? How will it be organized? Defense or Offense First?

The game of baseball requires a lot of teaching. So many defensive skills. So many base running skills. So many hitting skills. Defensive situational awareness. Base running instincts to train. Offensive baseball understanding. And every player at times is a defender, a baserunner, or a hitter. In football you are trained to be a specialist. A defensive lineman has a few things to learn. So does a running back. Coaches of baseball need to cover all aspects of the game to get players ready to play.

Here is a checklist of defensive skills. It will be accompanied with a training video so you can see and understand exactly what the specific skill is and get some ideas about what the terms really look like in action. This checklist will help you develop your own child's skill development as a player. It will also give you an idea of the things that you need to cover in a baseball practice. The video will show you what an organized practice could look like.

## DEFENSIVE CHECKLIST

### Playing Catch:

1. Receiving: Thrown balls and fly balls
2. Throwing: Grip and Sight the elbows on target and Eyes on target and Finish

### Ground Balls:

1. Moving Into Position: Feet /Glove / Eyes
2. Routers: Crab Steps / Get your hop / Glove position / R/L catch, R/L throw / eyes
3. Left: Drop step vs Crossover/ Glove position / Make up Ground / R/L throw / eyes
4. Right: Drop vs Cross / Glove / Round vs Sitter / RL/RL or Plant / eyes
5. Slow rollers: Catch on move / throw of glove foot step / eyes

**Force Plays:**

1. Set up position / to catch throw foot on bag / Glove Foot step and catch

**Tag Plays:**

1. Set up position / up the line throw sweep tag / Good throw step back tag

**Double Plays Shortstop:**

1. Feeds: Knee sit / Stiff wrist behind the bag / flip moving toward bag
2. Turn: Set up / Step with glove foot / drag tag throw foot / sight & throw

**Double Plays Second Base:**

1. Feeds: Inside knee sit / Stiff wrist thumb down / flip moving to toward bag
2. Turn: Free right foot: beat release ready/ catch before landing / land-sight-throw

**Outfield Play:**

1. Routiners: Get behind ball / Glove foot step / Crow hop and Throw
2. Liner at you: Drop step read / react back or in or sit down
3. Ball hit Left: Drop Step on Deep Ball / Crossover others / Crowhop Throw
4. Ball Hit Left: Drop Step on Deep Ball / Crossover others / Crowhop Throw

**Catcher:**

1. Framing
2. Blocking
3. Throwing Feet: At you / off glove foot/ off throw foot / Pick 1 - Steal 2 - Steal 3
4. Fielding Bunts: Dead ball vs Rolling ball / Rounding vs Turn the back inside turn
5. Pop Ups: (as players get older) Turn back to pitcher / Eject Mask / Palm up Catch

**Pitcher:**

1. Grips and Movement
2. Position on the Mound: Windup and Stretch
3. Pivot (on windup)

4. Balance: Foot under knee / toe relaxed / hip coil / nose over back foot balance
5. Break: as foot is coming down break hands and get elbows equal and opposite
6. Landing Position: Sighted shoulders and elbows at the target
7. Throw: Elbows at 180 - eyes targeted - chest on target - back foot rotate outside
8. Finish: Nose over lead leg - glove to armpit - let the back leg get up - pronate

**Situations Bunts:**

1. Runner on 1B and 2B and Squeeze
2. Outfield Cut off and Relays: Throws to every base and double cuts
3. First and 3rd Defenses (as players get older)
4. Runners on 1B, 2B, 1st and 2nd, 3B, 1st and 3rd, 2nd and 3rd, loaded.
  - React to grounders and flys and hits of every kind.
  - Use Tee or Toss Machine or Coach Throw with teams of 4. 2 teams on D

Baseball requires that players are skilled in all essential fundamentals in order to play the game well. They must also be situationally aware of what to do when the ball is hit to them. That way they can confidently catch and throw smoothly without having to stop and think about what they are going to do with the ball. The defensive game of baseball changes depending on the score and the inning and how many people are on base and which bases they occupy. We cannot make the game easier for our players. We need to prepare them as best we can. Hopefully, this checklist helps you do just that.