

This Document can be used by the
Managers and Coaches of Marlboro
Little League to assist with training
the Marlboro players.

Training Materials

Be Prepared for the Plays

Pre-game

- Imagine yourself making all kinds of plays in the game today. From an over the shoulder catch to throwing a runner out at the plate. See the pitch, the hit, your reaction, your success. Expect that you will have the opportunity to make those plays today.
- Check the field - are there any problem areas? Is there a warning track? How much space is there in foul territory?

Between Innings

- Who's coming up next inning and what have they done so far?
- What's the score of the game?
- What inning?

Before Each Batter

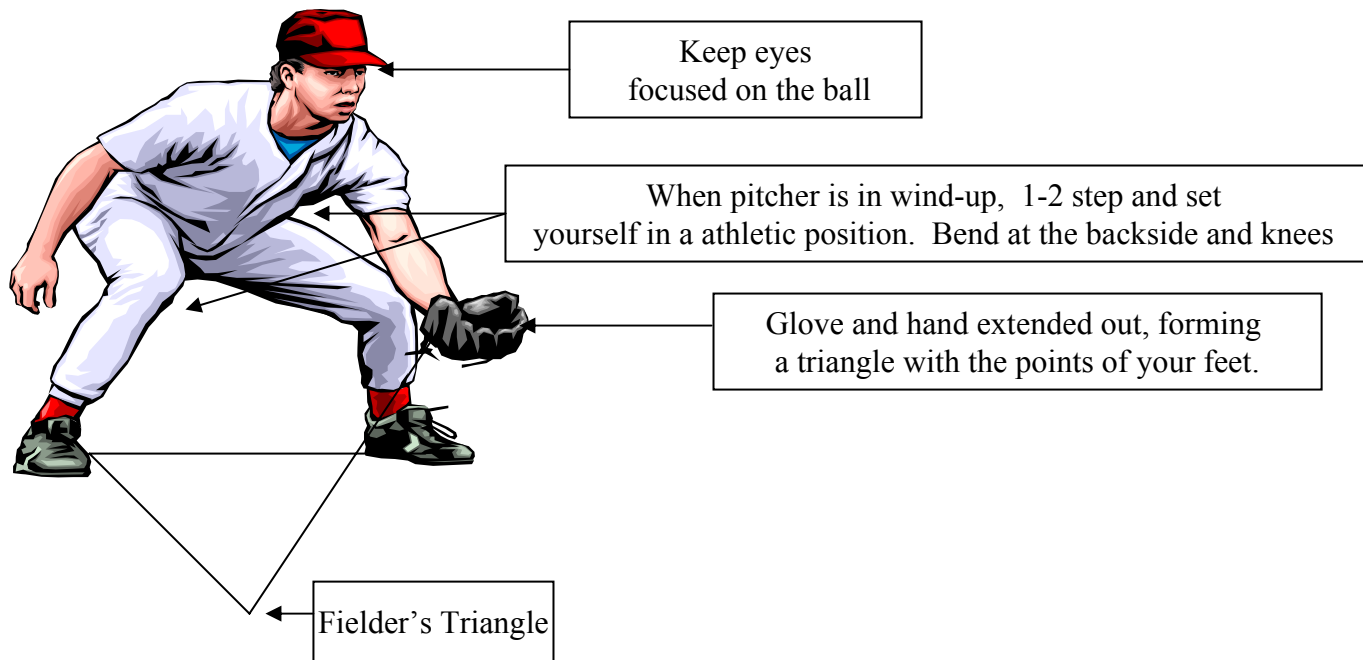
- What's the situation? Outs, runners on base, score.
- Who's the hitter?
- What's he done in the past?

Before Each Pitch

- What's the count?
- What might the other team attempt? Steal, hit and run, bunt.
- Where do I need to be in during each play?

Defensive Positioning (Infield)

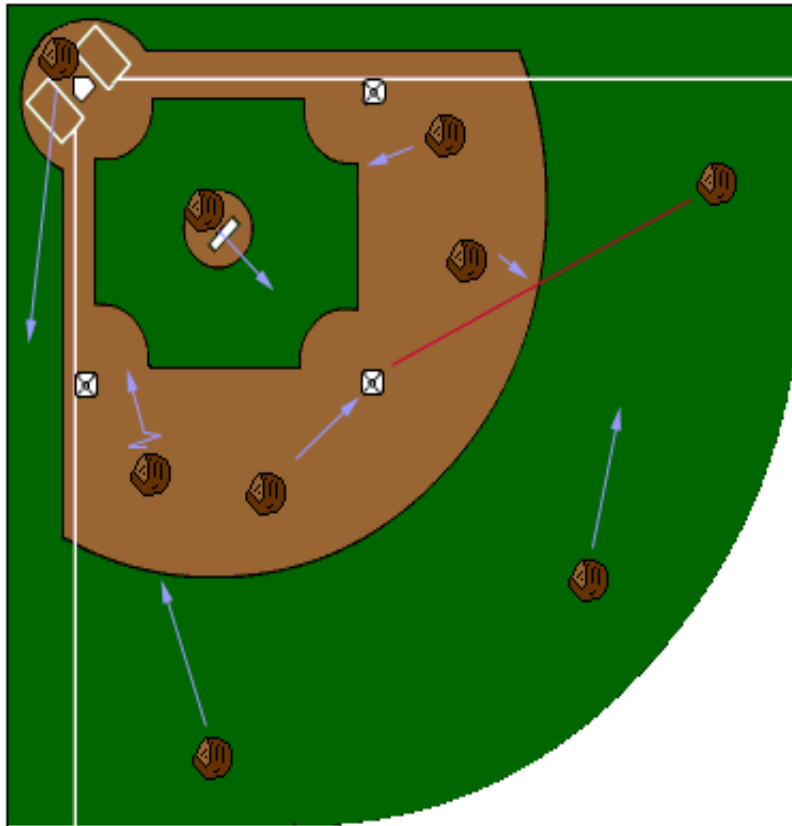
1. Your body needs to be square to the baseball, body in front of the ball
2. Stay in an athletic position – on the balls of your feet, bend backside and knees
3. Keep your eyes focused out in front of your body
4. Keep hands extended out in front of your body and hands down to make your fielders triangle with your feet
5. At all times avoid fielding the ball back handed
6. Be aggressive in fielding all ground balls
7. Balls not hit directly to you, charge the ball on an angle



Cut-off Plays

Cut-offs, No Runner On Base – *Single to Left Field*

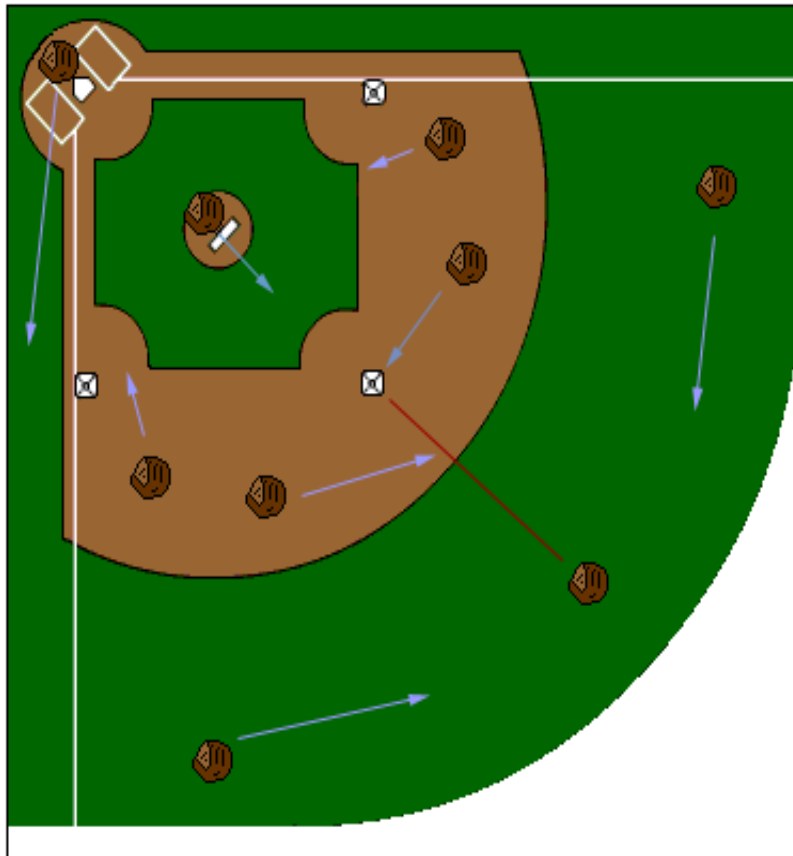
On a single to left field the shortstop will be the cutoff to second base. The second baseman will cover the bag. The first baseman should primarily back up the throw from left and then move towards first. This will put him into position to receive a throw at first in case the runner takes too large of a turn.



Position	Role in Play
Catcher	Back-up First
Pitcher	Back-up Second Base
First Base	Play First Base
Second Base	Cover Second Base
Short Stop	Cut-off Player
Third Base	Play Third, near grass
Left Field	Field Ball
Center Field	Back-up Left
Right Field	Back-up Cut-off

Cut-offs, No Runner On Base – *Single to Center Field*

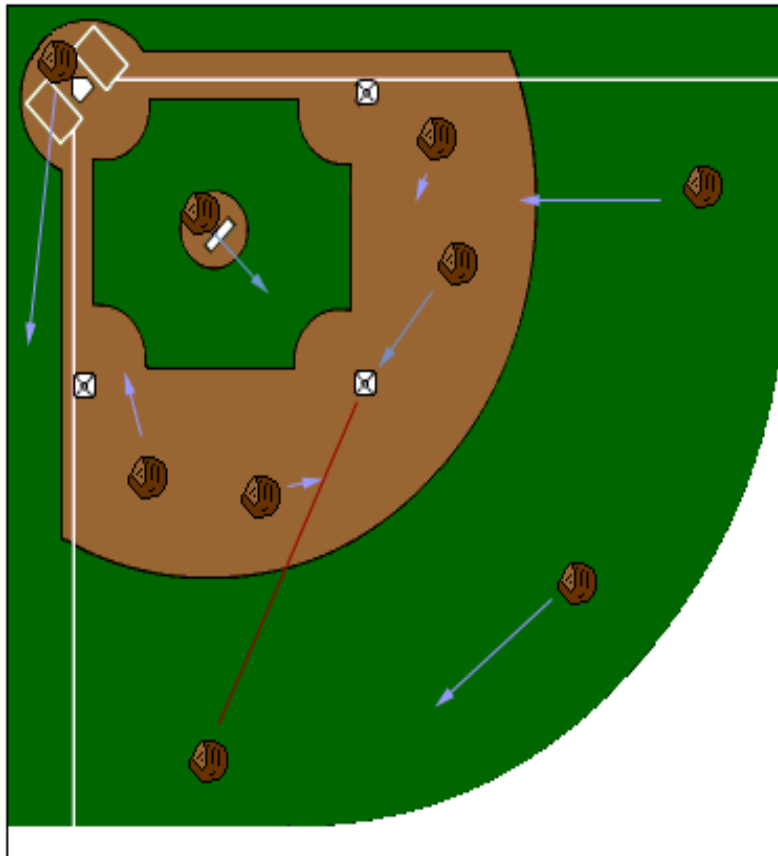
On a single to center field the second baseman will be the cutoff to second base. The shortstop will cover the bag. The pitcher must position himself to back up second base.



Position	Role in Play
Catcher	Back-up First Base
Pitcher	Back-up Second Base
First Base	Play First Base
Second Base	Cut-off Player
Short Stop	Cover Second Base
Third Base	Play Third, near grass
Left Field	Back-up Center Field
Center Field	Field Ball
Right Field	Back-up Center Field

Cut-offs, No Runner On Base – *Single to Right Field*

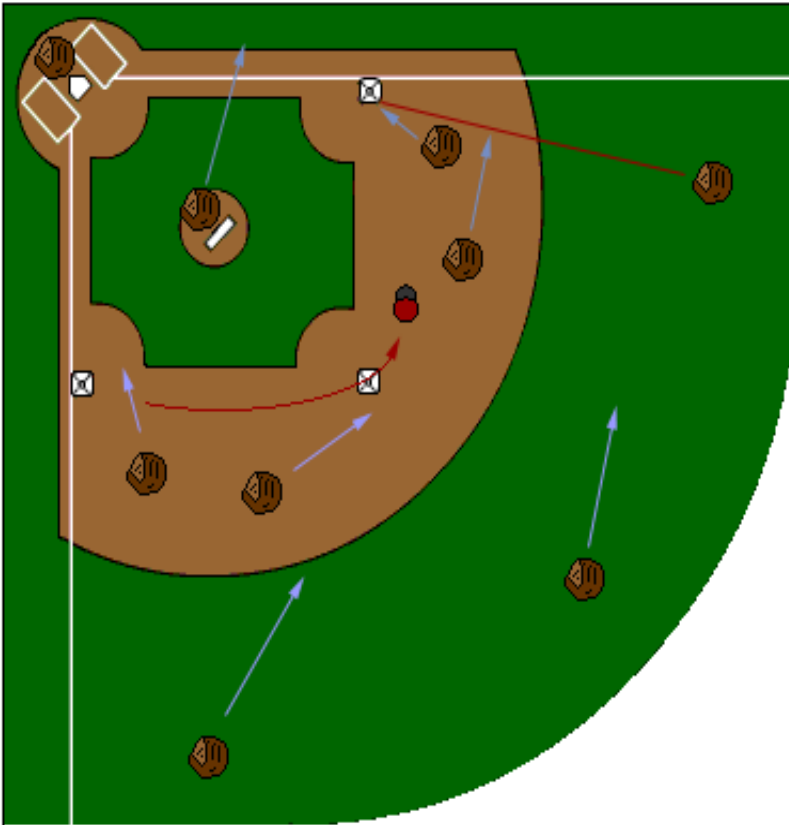
On a single to right field the second baseman will be the cutoff to second base. The shortstop will cover the bag. The left fielder and third baseman must back up second. First baseman must get close to first and be ready for a throw behind the runner.



Position	Role in Play
Catcher	Back-up First Base
Pitcher	Back-up Second Base
First Base	Play First Base
Second Base	Cut-off Player
Short Stop	Cover Second Base
Third Base	Back-up Second Base
Left Field	Back-up Second Base
Center Field	Back-up Right Field
Right Field	Field ball

Cut-offs, Runner on 1st Base – *Single to Left Field*

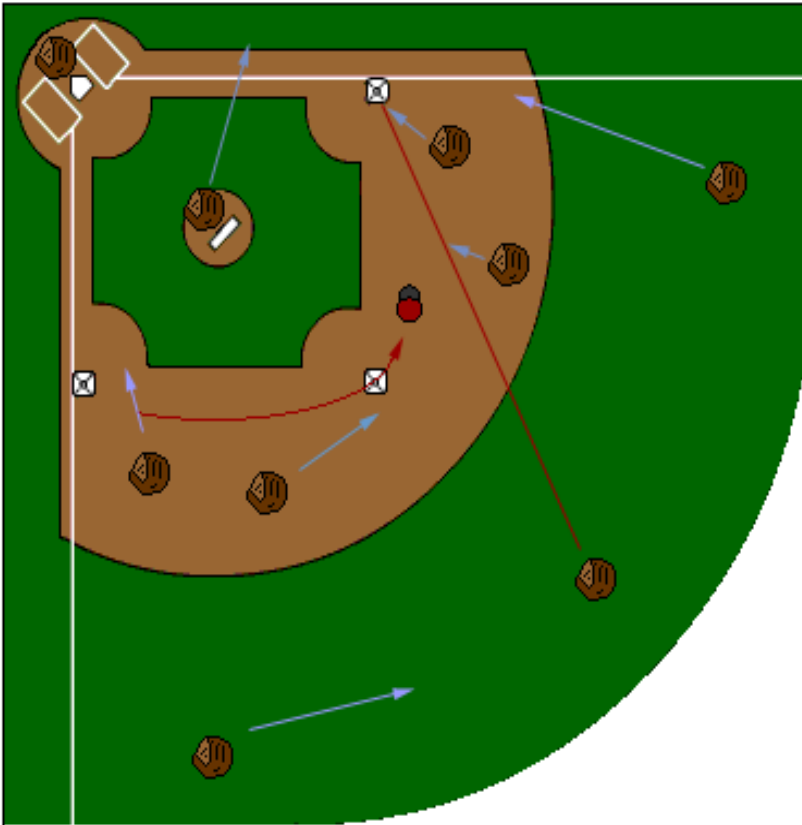
On a single to left field the shortstop will be the cutoff to third base. The second baseman will cover second base. The pitcher must hustle to get in position to back up third base. The catcher should also be in a position to back up the throw.



Position	Role in Play
Catcher	Stay in Position
Pitcher	Back-up Third Base
First Base	Play First Base
Second Base	Cover Second Base
Short Stop	Cut-off Player
Third Base	Play Third Base
Left Field	Field Ball
Center Field	Back-up Left Field
Right Field	Back-up Second Base

Cut-offs, Runner on 1st Base – *Single to Center Field*

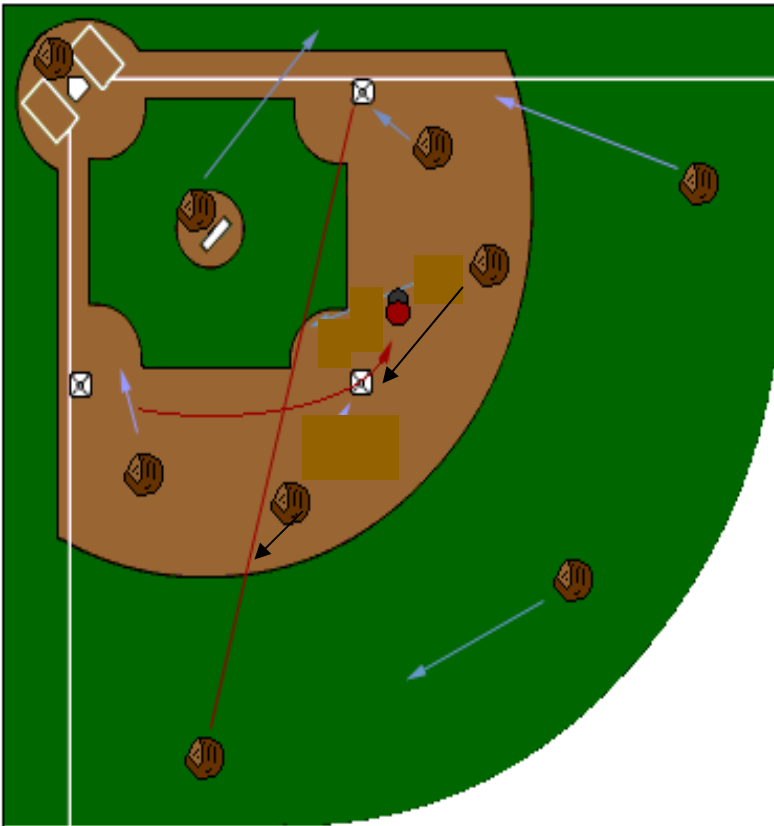
On a single to center field the shortstop will be the cutoff to third base. The second baseman will cover second base. The pitcher must hustle to get in position to back up third base. Unless the ball is hit to left center, the left fielder should move in to help back up third base.



Position	Role in Play
Catcher	Stay in Position
Pitcher	Back-up Third Base
First Base	Play First Base
Second Base	Cover Second Base
Short Stop	Cut-off Player
Third Base	Play Third Base
Left Field	Back-up Third Base
Center Field	Field Ball
Right Field	Back-up Center Field

Cut-offs, Runner on 1st Base – *Single to Right Field*

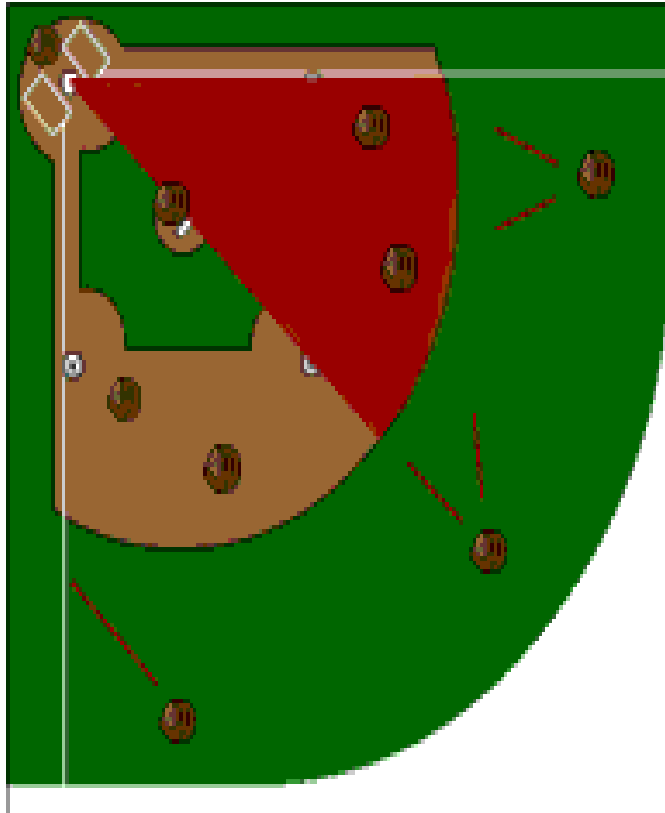
The second baseman will be the cut-off on this play. Shortstop will cover second base. Right field and Picture will back-up third.



Position	Role in Play
Catcher	Stay in position
Pitcher	Back-up Third Base
First Base	Play First Base
Second Base	Cut-off Player
Short Stop	Cover Second Base
Third Base	Play Third Base
Left Field	Back-up Third Base
Center Field	Back-up Right Field
Right Field	Field Ball

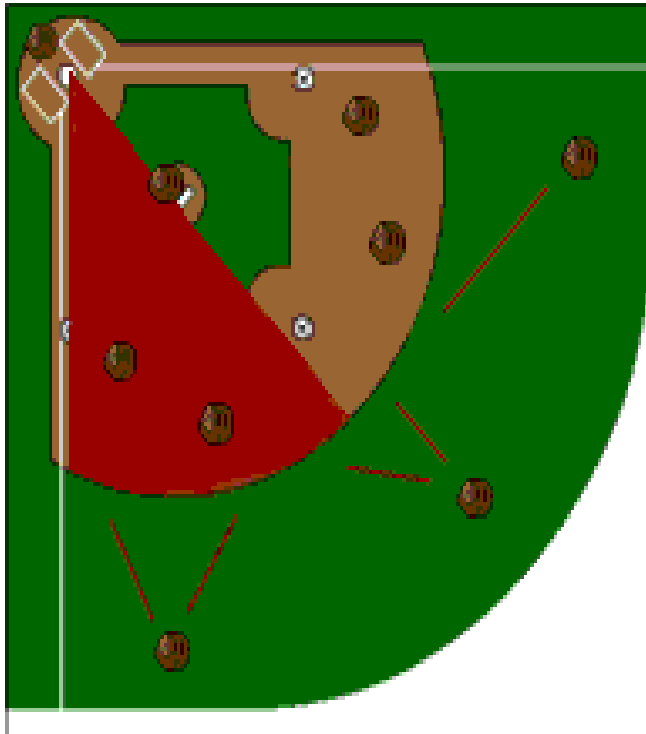
Backing-up Infield

Outfield – Ball Hit to Left Side of Infield



Position	Role in Play
Left Fielder	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Back up the infielder fielding the ball.• After the ball has been fielded, move into a position to backup up any play that may be made at second or third base depending on base runners.
Center Fielder	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Back up the infielder fielding the ball or second base if the ball is hit back to the pitcher and a double play will be attempted.• After the ball has been fielded, move into a position to backup up any play that may be made at second base.
Right Fielder	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Back up second base on double play ball and first base when there are no runners on.• If the ball gets through the infield, stop and back up second base.

Outfield – Ball Hit to Right Side of Infield



Position	Role in Play
Left Fielder	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Back back up second base or third base.
Center Fielder	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Back up the infielder fielding the ball or second base if the ball is hit back to the pitcher and a double play will be attempted.• After the ball has been fielded, move into a position to backup up any play that may be made at second base.
Right Fielder	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Back up the infielder fielding the ball.• After the ball has been fielded, center fielder should move into a position to backup up any play that may be made at second.

Outfield – Backing Up

One of the best ways to keep yourself in the game and to help the Dodgers is to back up on every play when the ball is not hit to you. By backing up you can keep a runner or runners from advancing on a bad throw. Here are a couple examples to give you an idea:

Position - Right Field

Situation: Runner on First, batter bunts the ball, ball is fielded and bad throw is made to first. If you are backing up first on the play, you may be able to keep the runner from going to third and you most likely will keep the batter on first.

Position - Center Field

Situation: Runner on First, ball is hit back to the pitcher, Ball is fielded and a bad throw is made to second. If you don't move, the runner will easily make it to third. If you are backing, the runner will most likely have to stay at second.

Position - Left Field

Situation: Runner on first, double play ball hit to the first baseman, first baseman overthrows the shortstop. If you are backing up second you will probably keep the lead runner from advancing to third base. If not, it's an easy extra base and maybe a run.

Situation: Runner on second, batter bunts the ball, ball is fielded by the pitcher who makes a bad throw trying to get the runner going to third. If you are backing up the play, you may keep the runner from advancing, saving a run, and the batter from going to second.

Fielding A Fly Ball

Outfield – Fly Balls

When the ball is hit, get a good jump. A good jump depends on your reaction time, which can improve through repetition. Watch the ball all the way to the plate; both the location of the pitch and your knowledge of a particular hitter helps you anticipate where the ball may go and give you a chance for a better jump.

Footwork

It's difficult if not impossible to get a good jump without good footwork.

When the ball is hit to your side, your first move will be a crossover step.

When the ball is hit over your head to the side your first step will be a drop step, followed by a crossover.

If you overrun the ball you can stop and take an inside step back to the direction you came from. You should face the ball as you change directions.

When the ball is hit directly over your head, your first step will be a deep drop step with your throwing hand side.

The reason to drop with your throwing hand is if you need to switch sides as your running back on the ball it's much easier to switch from your throwing hand side to your glove hand side and make the catch then the other way around.

Outfield – Fly Balls

Run Hard

Once you have determined approximately where the ball is going to land, start running hard to that spot. This will give you time to make adjustments if you misjudged the ball. If you coast toward the ball and you find out the ball is going to land farther away than anticipated, you may not have time to get to that spot.

Don't Run On Your Heels

If you run on your heels toward a fly ball, you will notice that the ball is bouncing. This often happens when you coast toward the ball. Run hard and try to keep more on the front part of your feet and the ball will stay steady in your vision.

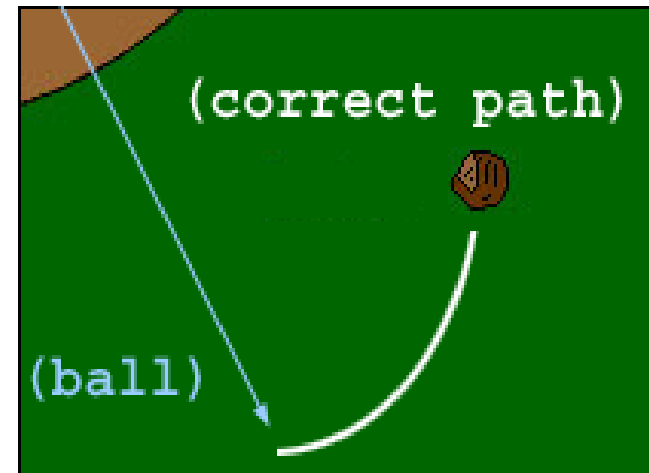
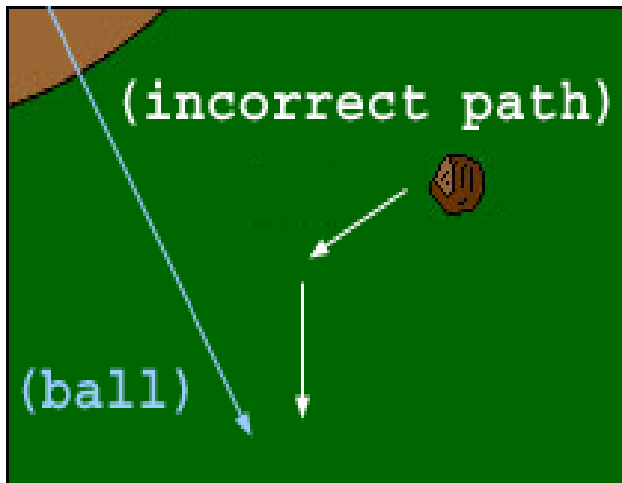
Get Behind The Ball

You will dramatically improve your speed and the time required to throw the ball if you get behind the ball as it comes down and start moving in the direction of your target as you catch the ball.



Outfield – Fly Balls

Sometimes you have to run as fast as you can just to have a chance to catch a ball. Other times the ball will be hit high enough that you will have extra time to get yourself in a good position to get behind the ball. One technique that will help you get in position is to circle the ball. With a ball hit to your side it's risky to try and take a direct angle to cut it off. If you miss judge the distance and speed at all, the ball may get by you. By taking an angle that is deeper you can circle behind the ball and catch it moving forward with the ball in front of you. While it might take slightly longer to get to the ball, you will be in a better position to not only catch it but make an accurate throw. The diagrams below show the incorrect angle and proper angle to take when running to the ball.



Outfield – Fly Balls

Turn Your Back

When dropping back on a ball hit directly over your head, it's important that you drop to your throwing hand side. If you drop straight back on your glove hand side, turning your back on a ball on the other side will require you to make a backhanded catch. This is a more difficult play. By dropping back on your throwing hand side, you are in position to turn your back quickly to the ball if it's curving toward the line. This is common for a right-handed right fielder or a left-handed left fielder. The turn should be made as quickly as possible.

Although it's a skill that isn't used very often it is one that takes a lot of practice to become good at. Of course a spectacular catch might be your reward.

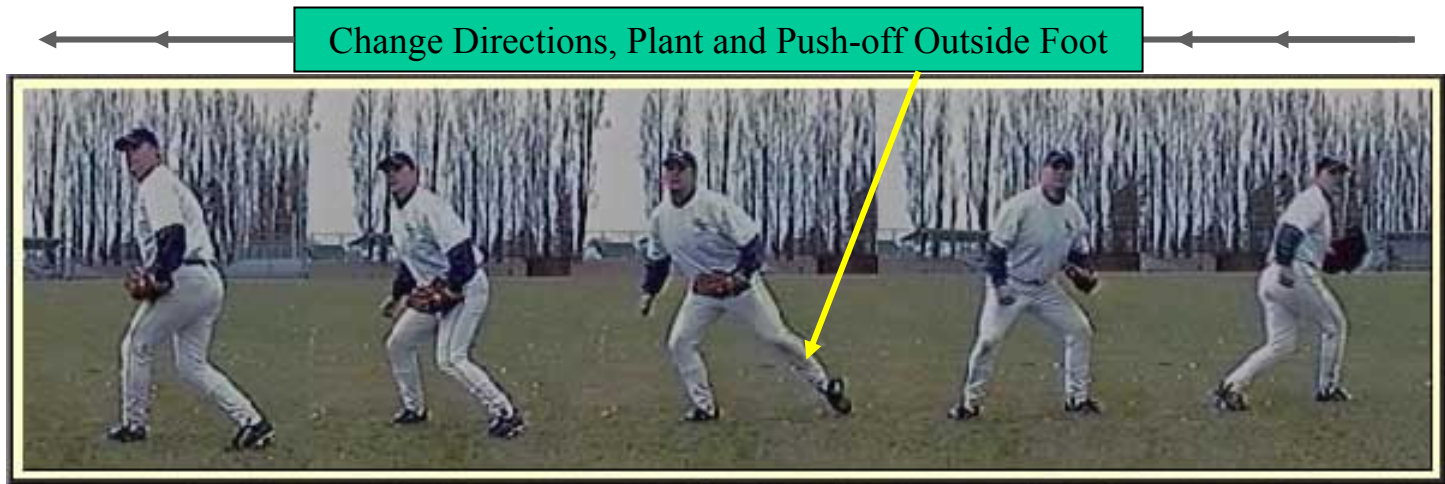
Turn Body to Throwing Side



Outfield – Fly Balls

Inside Turn

The inside turn is used when you are going after a fly ball at an angle and you need to change directions. You will plant and push off with your outside leg and open up with your trailing leg in order to change directions. The advantage to the inside turn is that you can keep your eye on the ball the entire time.



Outfield – Fly Balls

Playing the Fly Ball in the Sun

One of the most difficult plays in baseball is the fly ball or line drive that is hit directly into the sun.

The Jump

It's important to get a good jump on the ball and quickly anticipate where you think it will land. Often the ball is lost soon after being hit, which means your first analysis of where the ball is going to land is essential.

Listen

Once you have lost the ball in the sun, continue in the direction of where you believe it will land. Listen for other outfielders to tell you if you're going in the wrong direction.

Shielding Your Eyes

When you turn to find the ball, either while running or after reaching the spot you think it will land, use your glove to shield the sun from your eyes. It's important that you don't stare into the sun directly. If running at an angle that makes it difficult to get the glove up, use your throwing hand to shield the sun.

Fly Ball Above the Sun

As your running, if the ball is above the sun, shield your eyes by looking over the top of your glove towards the ball.

Fly Ball in the Sun

Once the ball has dropped into the sun, switch to shielding your eyes with the bottom of your glove. You will be looking under your glove for the ball to drop out of the sun. Many players make the mistake of continuing to look over the top of the glove for the ball. This is incorrect since the ball, as it is coming down, will be visible first below the glove. If you look over the top of the glove, you may never see it.

Sliding

Sliding

Checkpoints for each step:

- Hands should be above head not on the ground.
- Don't worry too much about how high the hands are.
- Keeping them above the head avoids the reaction to put them on the ground.
- Player should be sliding on his butt, not side.
- Front leg should be bent to allow for give when sliding into the base.

