

Championship Indoor Drills

Section 1: **Hitting Drills**

Section 2: **Fielding Drills**

Section 3: **Pitching Drills**

Section 4: **Catcher Drills**

Hitting Drills

Stride / Transfer Drill

Athletes will assume a batting stance while standing over the top of a line or obstacle and then stride and separate.

The purpose of the drill is for the athlete to see that they have transferred at least 51% of their body weight beyond where they've started. Any athlete who has taken their stride and their nose goes behind the line or object have failed to appropriately transfer.

Wall Drills

A couple of swing drills can be done in conjunction with the wall. Standing parallel to and facing the wall – athletes will find the appropriate distance from the wall by holding the bat handle on the belly button and extending it until the end of the bat reaches the wall. Once the distance is determined, players will maintain a good stance, now holding the bat in a hitting position and begin to swing. If the athlete does a good job with the swing path her bat will avoid the wall– if the swing gets long and the hands go out, there will be instant feedback!

Another good wall drill is to have hitters stand perpendicular to a wall with their back foot parallel against it. For reference here – it's as if they were in their normal batting stance and the wall is relevant to where the catcher would be. This drill encourages that the angle of the bat isn't dropping behind the hitter's body. If the athlete does a good job of controlling the angle – the bat will not hit the wall – if the angle falls first, there will get instant feedback!

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Tennis Ball Drills

Throwing a tennis ball from a side-armed position – or in a “skipping a rock motion” is a great method for working on swing mechanics. Many athletes will do a better job with the ball – as they naturally understand it better – than they will with a bat in their hands.

One Hand

Using the dominant hand – throw a tennis ball using a full hitting motion against a wall or to a partner.

Two Hands

Interlock (hook together) the top-hand pinky with the bottom hand thumb. Place the ball in the top hand, keep the hands together, and toss, using a full swing motion and finishing high, as the ball is thrown to a partner or against a wall.

One Hand Under

Hold the lead arm perpendicular from the body – leave it in place – use a full swing motion and throw the tennis ball under the outstretched arm.

Tee Drills

Team Walk Up Drill

Athletes love this drill. We do this drill in the cage and at times make a contest to see who can hit the most balls up the middle – hitting a target we've placed on the backstop.

Place the tee approximately 6 feet in front of a line of players. A coach or manager may set on a bucket close to the tee to keep the drill moving by always having a ball placed on top of the tee. Athletes alternate approaching the tee using a walk-up drill.

Inside / Outside

Place two tees in the zone. One is set to an inside contact while the other is placed slightly deeper on the outer third of the plate. An athlete should be able to hit either without hitting the other. Alternate which one you want hit.

High

Set the tee to a higher position, reflecting the highest point in a hitter's zone. Anything above that is teaching poor swing mechanics to a pitch location we are never wanting to hit.

The bat angle at contact to the highest pitch in the zone will be nearly flat.

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Low

Set the tee to a low position, reflecting the lowest point in a hitter's zone. The bat angle at contact will reflect a steep angle.

Extend and Freeze (Up the Middle)

Stop the swing at full extension – working to create independent hands and proper swing path.

Two keys: Make sure the back elbow clears past the belly button and avoid rolling over in the finish.

If the athlete is struggling, change the approach and ask that they extend and freeze to the opposite field.

Bounce Drills

Self

Using a tennis ball or any other ball that bounces well – the athlete will bounce the ball in front of the lead foot – stride forward and catch it in a swing motion.

Partner

Bounce the tennis ball into the hitting zone of a partner to be caught with a swinging motion of the dominant hand.

FRONT TOSS

Bunt / Swing

This drill requires that the hitter will alternate between bunting and swinging.

Take / Swing

This drill requires that the hitter alternates between taking a pitch – watching it all the way to the backstop – then swinging. Again, this is another drill to help your hitters **track** the ball.

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Scoring Zone Challenge

Using athletic tape or paint, create scoring zones with appropriate point values on the netting of your cage. Our scoring zones are as follows:

Line Drive up the middle: 5 points

Line Drive in the left or right gap: 4 points

Line Drive left or right: 3 points

Ground Balls: 1 point

Pop Ups: -3

You can set the point values with whatever your hitting philosophy reflects. This drill is intended to be **competitive**.

Bunt Challenge

This is a similar drill to the above-mentioned drill, as a scoring zone is mapped out on the floor in front of the hitter. We have ours painted directly onto the floor with point values displayed within each area.

All Crossed Up!

This is a drill that is done merely for fun. We sometimes offer an opposite-hand challenge. In this drill we simply give 10 pitches to each hitter – who bats from the **opposite side**. We generate a batting average for each kid, with the winner gaining recognition.

Fielding Drills

Wall Hops

Athletes spread out facing any flat surfaced wall. This drill can be done with or without a glove. We often use tennis balls to do this drill. Athletes are encouraged to throw the ball at **varying speeds and angles** and work on fielding the ball cleanly.

Short Hops

Using the wall or a partner, the athlete will work on catching short hops. We remind our team to be aggressive at catching the shortest hop and always work the glove from the **ground up and forward. (Think Scoop)**

Reaction Drill

Again, using a wall or a partner, an athlete will be challenged to catch the ball quickly either from partner toss or a rebound from the wall. The athlete should start in a good athletic position, both thumbs up, within 10 feet from a wall or a partner. The drill should be done as a challenge.

Knee Fielding

Fielders use a pad or a glove to rest their knees on. This drill can be done with a coach or with a partner. With a partner, the drill can go back and forth, as each athlete will roll ground balls between them. Start the drill without a glove and eventually, include the glove.

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No Glove Fielding

This drill is done with a coach or with a partner. With a partner, the drill can go back and forth, as each player will roll ground balls between them. Allow athletes to move **laterally** as much as they want. The drill is done without a glove and helps develop soft hands.

Tennis Ball Challenge

Use a tennis racket and hit ground balls at different angles. Use your own discretion as to how hard you hit the tennis ball – it really comes off the racket. The drill promotes **soft hands**, as the fast-moving tennis ball can be difficult to catch in the glove.

Partner Fundamentals

Partners will roll a ball between them. Each fielder will take a right foot – left foot approach to fielding the ball. We emphasize that this drill be done at a slower pace to help ingrain the proper fundamentals into muscle memory.

- *Right Foot – Left Foot approach*
- *Land an airplane down to the ball – as opposed to a helicopter (Squatting)*
- *Catch the ball in front, off the inside of the glove-hand foot – Glove-hand fingers down – covering with the throwing-hand fingers up.*
- *Scoop with soft hands and bring it to the body.*
- *Follow the ball with the eyes all the way into the glove.*

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Drop Steps

For outfielders and it's simply designed to work on proper footwork. This drill can be done with a partner or a coach. Player 1 stands within 10 feet of Player 2 (or coach. Player 2 tosses a ball over either of Player 1's shoulders. Player 1 must **drop step** and retreat back to catch the ball. The drill can also be done as a team drill with opposite lines moving in a clocklike fashion.

Ladder Challenge (Ground Ball, Fly Ball, Throw)

This is a drill that can be done with a coach or partner. The fielder will **charge** a ground ball and flip it to a partner – who will then toss a fly ball – the fielding player will immediately **drop stop** and sprint to catch the fly and upon catching it, will then fire a **throw** back to a partner.

Pepper

Partners will toss ground balls between them and **decrease the distance** during the duration of the drill. Distances will vary between partner groups. The more skilled players can really get this drill going at a rapid pace.

Paddle Fielding

Using a fielding paddle or a ping-pong paddle attached to the glove-hand, the fielder will have to use **soft hands and use both hands** to successfully catch the ball.

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Golf Ball Fielding

Using golf balls, fielders will attempt to catch the smaller ball. This can be a difficult drill as it requires good **hand and eye coordination** and a lot of concentration.

Ping-Pong

To help create better hand and eye coordination we allow our fielders to play ping-pong against a wall. We ask that they always allow the ball to **bounce** before hitting it against the wall again. This drill can be done with a racquet ball or tennis ball as well.

Field and Toss

To work on tosses, feed a number of balls at a fielder whose job is to field the ball and then appropriately **toss** it to a receiver. We always emphasize stepping through the toss to eliminate lifting it over the receiver's head. Do the drill at various angles and speeds.

Pitching

3 Ball

This is a great way to get a lot of snap throws in for two pitchers. Standing about 40 feet apart, two pitchers will use three balls to continually **snap** back and forth to one another. This drill is fast-moving and a great way to get a lot of reps in a short amount of time.

Quick Snaps

Working with a catcher, using two balls, the pitcher stands 30 feet away in a side-straddled position. The pitcher will only work on quickly **transferring her weight and snapping** to the target. The drill moves fast because of the shortened distance and the use of two balls.

30 Second Challenge

The drill is done exactly as the drill above except now it is **timed** by a coach. The goal is to get in as many snaps as possible in 30 seconds.

60 Second Challenge

The drill is done exactly as the drill above except now it is timed by a coach. The goal is to get in as many snaps as possible in **60 seconds**.

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Walk-throughs

The pitcher will start approximately 50 feet away from the catcher. She will **walk into her throwing motion** as she moves forward to her pitching mark.

Zone Throwing (No Catcher)

Using a bucket of balls a pitcher throws into a **tarp** – which we've painted different colored squares within a target area.

For Speed: Throw "all-out" without regard for accuracy. (Minimal Daily Reps)

For Accuracy: Throw to specific painted squares.

U Throwing (With Catcher)

This is another accuracy drill in which we instruct our catcher to give five different target areas following a **"U" shape**. If the pitcher fails to hit the spot, she has to go back to the first target area. We can start at any time on either side of the "U."

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Real World

Create predetermined game **scenarios**, mix them up in a bag, and have your pitcher pull out her scenario. For example, her card may read: 3-2 Count, bases loaded, tie game, bottom of the 7th.

Obviously, create as many scenarios as you want to help simulate situations and pressure. Then you have to umpire!

Powerline Throwing

This is a fundamental drill that we do regularly. It's nothing more than putting down a piece of athletic tape in a straight line in front of the pitcher. On that line we put one intersecting line that indicates her stride mark. As the pitcher throws, we use the tape to see if she is staying on or near her powerline.

Spins

Pitch a roll of duct tape with various spins, specific to the pitcher's arsenal.

Pitch a Peanut Butter Jar Lid with spin from short distances.

Use Striped-Balls to See Spin

Pitch over and/or around lines or obstacles to see movement.

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Catcher Drills

Receiving Drill

This drill is done with a partner or a coach, who will stand before the catcher and receive with a bare hand. Catch it softly with proper framing mechanics.

Framing

This drill can be done in-conjunction with the receiving drill or separate. The goal of the catcher is to frame each catch by always catching the ball with the back of the glove or hand facing **away** from the plate

Block Drill

The catcher is in full gear. A coach throws balls right and left of the catcher, mostly on the bounce. The catcher has to fully move in front of the ball and attempt to **center** the ball in front of her body. The catcher will collapse in front of the ball; the head should be down, shoulders square, and the glove protecting the area between the legs.

This drill can also be done with the catcher moving forward, dropping to her block position, standing and moving forward, repeating with several attempts.

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Quick Feet Drill

A coach feeds balls from in front of the catcher, who works on getting her feet set quickly to throw. Two methods to explore – a pivot and throw and a jump-stance and throw.

Transfer and Throw

Emphasize getting the ball out of the glove as quickly as possible and then throwing in a downhill fashion to a target or receiver, approximating the proper distance from home to second.