



Advanced Skills

Relay Throws

Throwing accurately to the cut-off person is vital for preventing too many runners from advancing/scoring. Proper positioning of the cut-off person is important so appropriate throwing distances of the fielders are gauged correctly. The cut-off person is the key for controlling the defense; proper positioning for receiving throws, deciding when and where to throw, or whether to hold the ball when no play can be made.

NOTE: When playing in the outfield, use the cut-off person for relaying the throw into the infield.

Skill Progression – Relay Throws

| Your Athlete Can | Never | Sometimes | Often |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| On balls hit to the outfield, the shortstop or second baseman will align themselves between the outfielder and second base | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| For balls hit to the 3 rd base side of 2 nd base, the shortstop is the cut-off person. For balls hit to the 1 st base side of 2 nd base, the second baseman is the cut-off person. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| The baseman covering the base must help align the cut-off man by shouting directions. In addition, the baseman covering the base is usually the player responsible for directing the play, should “cut,” if there is no play at the base | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| On short hits to the outfield, the cut-off man may still want to take the relay position, although the outfielder will probably throw directly to the base. The cut-off person will present a directional target and a possible option for the outfielder | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Throws from the outfielder are thrown to the cut-off person. Even when there will be a play at the base, the throw should be within reach of the cut-off person. However, the key to the play is for the outfielder to return the ball to the cut-off person immediately. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Totals | | | |

Teaching Points – Relay Throws

1. Diagram relay throws on paper or a blackboard. Discuss the reason for using relay throws: i.e., to get the ball back into the infield as quickly as possible.
2. If there is to be play at the base, no verbal direction is needed. Shouting any command other than “cut,” may be confusing and misinterpreted.
3. On a very short ball to the outfield, the cut-off person can back up the base. Positioned as a cut-off person, they may be in the way of the throw.
4. Have cut-off person offer a target, with their glove, to the outfielder.
5. On possible plays at home plate, the pitcher or first-baseman would serve as the cut-off person, and the catcher would be the baseman. Be sure to designate which player will be the cut-off person.
6. Note: if the shortstop has the stronger, more accurate throwing arm, he/she could take all outfield relays



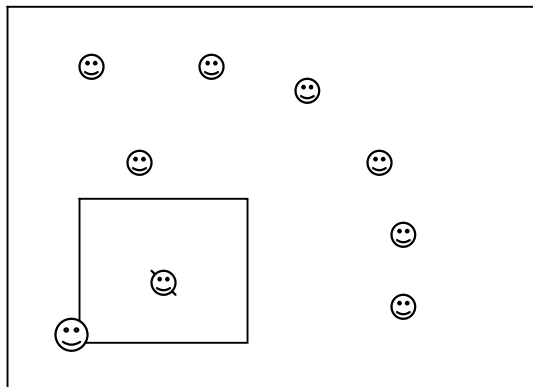
Faults & Fixes Chart – Relay Throws

| Error | Correction | Drill Reference |
|--|---|-------------------------|
| Outfielder throws over the cut-off person's head | Cut-off person adjusts distance for better throwing arms | Outfield Throwing Drill |
| Outfielder throws way short in front of the cut-off | Cut-off person adjusts distance for weaker throwing arms | Outfield Throwing Drill |
| Cut-Off person is hindering the throw coming into the base | Cut-off person goes behind base to back up throw when not needed for the play | Outfield Throwing Drill |





Relay Throws Drills



Outfield Throwing Drill

1. Hit Cut-Off

- Align several players equally across the outfield, each with a ball
- Have pitcher at their position, catcher at home plate, 3rd baseman, and Cut-off person
- The player closest to the foul line in left field, tosses the ball a short distance deeper into the outfield, runs to pick it up, turns and make the throw to the Cut-off person
- The Cut-off person is lining up the outfielder to the desired base (2nd, 3rd, or home)
- Pitcher instructs Cut-of person where to throw the incoming relay throw
- Alternate players around the outfield, which changes the angle of the Cut-off person
- Vary the distance they start at in order to allow the Cut-off person to adjust their distance

2. Throw Home

- Align several players equally across the outfield, each with a ball
- Have pitcher at their position, catcher at home plate, 2nd baseman
- The player closest to the foul line in left field, tosses the ball a short distance in front of themselves, runs to pick it up and makes the throw home (encourage a crow hop)
- The catcher judges the throw, if it is on line to the plate, they say nothing; letting the ball come home and makes the tag on the virtual runner. If the throw is off, the catcher yells “Cut 2”, the pitcher cuts off the ball and throws it to 2nd base.