

Catchers Receiving Progression **Submitted by Chris Untereiner**

A catcher's primary physical responsibility is to receive the ball. The more pitches they can make into strikes, the more outs our pitchers will get... The more outs, the more innings... the more wins.

The series of drills I really liked was a set of partner wall drills using coloured tennis balls.
* NO glove used during the drills.

Progression #1: Partner Toss

Set up in comfortable receiving stance, both catchers simply toss the ball back and forth across from each other. Working on smooth movement patterns to stick pitches in various locations of the strike zone.

Progression #2: Partner Wall Bounce Backs

Having Partner #1 (first receiver) about 4-5 feet away from the wall, set up in catchers crouch facing wall. Partner #2 will stand behind partner #1 so they cannot see them. Bouncing the tennis ball off the wall (varying difficulty), the receiving catcher will work on reaction time tracking the ball from behind their ear, off the wall, and into their bare hand.

* Progression can increase tempo and location of bounce back tennis ball.

Progression #3: Partner Wall Bounce Backs - 2 Colour

Setting up the same as Progression #2, we will now bring in 2 coloured balls. Designate one colour for the right hand, and one colour for the left.

Example: Red Ball = Right Hand / Yellow Ball = Left Hand

Mixing up the colours of the ball, our receiving catcher will be forced to trust their vision and react to the colour of the ball coming in. Depending on the ball colour, that will vary the hand that they catch with.

*Note, this is not a specific receiving drill, but a reaction based drill to help TRUST catchers quick twitch instincts.

Progression #4: Partner Wall Bounce Backs - Reaction Line

Again, set up as we have done in the prior two progressions.

This time we will use a horizontal line on the wall (tape or brick line). Designate the following:

ABOVE line = RECEIVING

BELOW line = BLOCKING

The tossing partner will bounce the ball off the wall, either above or below the line. Based on the location of the bounce, catchers will receive with their bare hand, or drop into a block position.