

A Drill To Get Your Infielders to Bend Their Knees

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Getting your infielders to bend their knees, or to get down under the ball, can be a relentless pursuit and hard to teach.

If you've ever struggled getting your infielders to bend their knees or to get below the ball then you'll want to check out this great self-bounce drill.

Fielding a ground ball requires the player get her glove down low so that it's below the ball, which means she's got to bend her knees AND keep her glove ahead of (or in front of) her chin. You can see this position in the CORRECT position to the right.



CORRECT – Knees Bent, Glove Ahead of Chin

You can also see the more common INCORRECT attempts where players will bend at the waist, keep their glove below their chin, or both.

I'll admit, I've struggled finding a good way to help players use their knees to bring their glove down to the ball instead of just using their arms or their waist to lower the glove. But, I tried something recently that totally worked! This simple little drill really requires players to actually bend their knees in order to lower their glove instead of simply bending at the waist, or using just their arms.



INCORRECT – (1) Knees Straight, (2) Glove Under Chin, (3) Knees Straight & Glove Under Chin

The drill involves all of your players, each with their glove on and a ball. Each player will go on her own and at her own pace. This drill has 3 simple steps:

1. Each player will close her glove so it's flat and the pocket is closed.
2. She will then drop the ball from her bare hand.
3. When the ball comes up from the bounce, she tries to field the ball by using the top of her closed glove. This requires her to really bend her knees, stay below the ball and concentrate.



1 – Close Glove **2 – Drop Ball** **3 – Field Ball on Top of Closed Ball**

Let your players try this for a while before helping them. You'll hear things like, "it's hard", or "I can't do it"- these are all normal things we say whenever we're working through challenges. Try to counter these statements with things like "do your best" or "keep going" and let them work through the challenge and frustration. Have the players work to see how close to the ground they can field the ball on top of their closed glove.

Ask them what they felt this drill helped them do regarding bending their knees or their fielding position. It's super important that we allow our players to tie what they do in a drill to what they need to do with that skill in a game, instead of us always doing the connection.

Once your players have had a chance to practice this drill pick up the difficulty a notch by putting your players in pairs and having them do the same drill by bouncing it to each other instead of to themselves. The bouncer needs to go soft and easy and do her best to bounce it straight to her partner. Make a contest out of this to see who can field the hardest hit balls using the top of their glove.



Field Ball as Close to Ground as Possible

For more fielding help check out the following:

