

# Station Work

The best practices are efficient ones. Time is usually short especially if you are in a cold weather state and must practice inside a gym. If players are standing around, it becomes very boring for everyone and wastes practice time needed to improve. Plus, a player's focus tends to wander and they start to talk to others or goof around with them. That does not lead to a good atmosphere for learning.

Most teams do not have big gymnasiums so space is also limited. Coaches must use every foot of the gym to be productive but they also have to keep everyone safe. Station work works great within a gym. You can have at least six stations and maybe more if you are lucky to have a large gym. Choose skills you want to practice and have at a chosen number of players at each station. Set a given time and keep rotating when the time expires.

Example:

**Station 1-Hitting**-hopefully your gym will have a cage so you can use indoor balls with a pitching machine

**Station 2-Sliding station**-use a mat or wrestling with a sheet or blanket over it when starting to work on slides. Practice all types of slides, however, if you are teaching feet first sliding, remove the shoes. The shoe could stick on the mat or floor causing injuries. Personally, I prefer a head first slide when stealing but teach both. Also, teach all types of slides so the players learn options and times to use the best slide for the situation.

**Station 3-Ground ball station**-might be hard to hit the ball far away from the player in indoors but the player can start as far as they can be on the side and the ball can be hit away from them so they learn fielding at a distance. Also, have them in the middle of the area so they can learn side to side or having a ball hit right at them. Also, hit the over the head shots catching the ball with their back to the infield.

**Station 4-Long throw station**-working on catching the ball in the air or on the ground and hitting a target. Can use a bucket, plastic bowling pins, a target on a net, anything they can use to throw at.

## **Secord Round**

**Station 1-Quick hit station.** My favorite! If done correctly, quick hits can really develop more pop on the awing, hand/eye coordination, focus and more. Need a net, balls, bat and the secret to success is a tosser that is quick with the tosses and accurate with the placement. We liked a quick pace to the tosses.

**Station 2-Baserunning Station**-Pump those arms. Players can lose time but either not pumping the arms forcefully straight back and forth or by their arms going side to side. Running through first, first to second, all the way to third and all four bases. There is a art to baserunning, work on it along with rounding the bases and diving back into the previous base

**Station 3-Diving Station**-work on leadoffs and getting farther and farther off the base. The dense practices trying to pick the player off and the runner practices diving back and avoiding the tag.

**Bunting Station**-Speed kills and so does effective bunting. The key to putting a sacrifice bunt down is having the player know that they are making an out and advancing a runner. The key to bunting for a base hit is the position of the bottom hand. A lot of players are not using their bottom hand correctly. And if you are bunting for a hit, the player better be on the run when they contact the ball.

Teams can get a lot done with stations and then go on to working with the outfield, the infield and the whole team. Breaking down the skill and having the players doing it individually in a station really does save time during practice.

**The coaches have to teach and correct the players. Each player has to understand every little thing they do could**

**turn into an out or being safe. Some things are very small, the toes turned in versus turned out makes them faster and more agile, the bottom hand on the bat when bunting could make the ball fair or foul, diving the correct way into a base results in being safe versus out. Study coaches!!! Find the coaches that are teachers of the game and learn from them, most are more than willing to share.**