

# Catchers Receiving Drills

The most important position on the baseball field is the catching position. Cal State Fullerton has won many league championships and college world series and it all starts with the catcher. Catchers need to possess many skills, but none more important than receiving/catching the baseball. Catchers catch the ball more than any skill required in their game and this starts with the proper receiving stance. Yes, they have to block and throw out runners too, but the receiving is what happens most in a baseball game. Here is one of our favorite drills used on a daily basis. We prefer to do the drills off the JUGS pitching machine, as it allows you to control the speed of the pitch depending on the age or skill level of the player. The Jugs also throws various types of pitches (fastballs, curve balls from LH & RH pitchers and split finger fastballs).

## Catchers have three stances:

1. Sign stance—used to hide your signs from opposing base coaches.
2. No runner on stance—toe pointed out in a duck like position and your bottom as low as possible, even touching your heels.
3. Runner on stance—toes pointed towards the pitcher, with the left foot slightly in front of the right foot.

## Receiving Drill:

Set the Jugs machine the proper distance from home plate and make the distance as game like as possible. Little league distance is 46 feet and High School and college is 60 feet 6 inches from home plate to the pitching rubber. Set the machine so it's throwing down the middle of the plate.

## No Runner On

1. Have the catcher give a sign with his forearm on his thigh and his elbow against his side. This prevents giving your signs too low and keeps them out of view from the base coaches.
2. The catcher sits down the middle of home plate as the ball is being fed into the machine. Catching and holding each pitch for two seconds, presenting the ball to the umpire. The ball is then placed in an empty bucket or rolled to the side.
3. The catcher would sit inside to the right-handed hitter while giving a sign. Then shift to his right simulating a pitch thrown on the outside corner of the plate. Catching and holding the ball for two seconds, presenting the ball to the umpire. You are trying to isolate the pitch in a certain area or part of the plate.
4. The catcher would sit inside to the left-handed hitter while giving a sign, then shift to his left simulating a pitch on the outside corner to a left-handed hitter. Again hold the ball for two seconds, presenting the ball to the umpire.
5. Have the catcher take two steps toward towards the machine and repeat the above sequence. Cutting down the catcher's reaction time will quicken his hands and allow him to beat the ball to the receiving spot. After receiving six-eight pitches, take another two steps forward. When done advancing towards the machine, have the catcher move back behind the plate. The ball should seem a lot slower and much easier to catch

## Runner On Base

1. Set up in your runner on stance with your toes pointing more toward the pitch and your butt a little higher.
2. Just before the ball is fed into the machine, the machine feeder would yell runner! The catcher would react like the runner is trying to steal 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> base. Alternate between runner calls and no call at all. This helps the catcher mix in throwing footwork into the drill.

Happy training!