

DEFENSIVE PRINCIPLES

COACHES:

When players understand these basic principles of defence, they will appreciate the game more and tend to adapt more readily to the strategic plays when they are introduced.

1. PRINCIPLE OF COVERAGE

For best results, players should be located in such a way as to cover the greatest area of the field possible. The standard defensive positions address this principle.

2. PRINCIPLE OF LOCATION

Defensive play is more effective if players locate themselves as close as possible to where the batter is most likely to hit the ball. This suggests that players must study the batter's habits, know the next pitch and anticipate the most likely results.

3. PRINCIPLE OF ADJUSTMENT

Players must be taught to move within an acceptable range, at their positions, and not try to play every batter and every situation from exactly the same location. Factors, such as the runners' and batters' speed, the likelihood of a bunt or steal, or even the wind direction, are just some of the considerations.

4. PRINCIPLE OF READINESS

Coaches must train their players to be completely *ready* on every pitch. This means they must assume the "*set position*" as soon as the pitcher steps onto the mound. Most defensive lapses occur because the player or players were not ready and prepared for the play.

5. PRINCIPLE OF SUPPORT

This principle has two connotations. First, players must back each other up. If one player makes a mistake, it is up to the closest team mate to compensate to ensure the position is covered. It is important to practice these support roles.

Every defensive player has a role on every batter ball situation. Team play demands that *every player* carry out their assignment on every play. This is the key to success and the sign of a well drilled team. Players need to know they can count on their team mate to be where they are supposed to be, in all situations.