



The Ripken Glossary

Here are some of the most important terminologies in the game of baseball. We refer to them often, so if there is any confusion, you can always come back to this section.

Athletic Position

The athletic position is used in most sports and by everyone on the baseball field. It will vary slightly according to the individual and the position, but the common element that should be present in all athletic positions is a solid, balanced base.

First Step

The first step is the most important step in baseball for baserunners, outfielders, infielders, pitchers and catchers. If the first step is quick and efficient, the ensuing steps will follow suit. *All* good players have a quick first step.

Crossover Step

One leg crosses over the other by a simple pivot of the leading foot. It's used by all players on the field and is the quickest way to get a good jump as an outfielder, infielder, baserunner and catcher. Even pitchers use this step as they move to get a ball hit to either side of the mound.



Heads Up!

You can't play the game with your head down. The game is played on the ground, but not with it. The head must be up to see what is going on at all times on a baseball field.

Perfect Practice Makes Perfect

Practice does not make perfect. How is that possible? Because bad habits may be practiced, and practicing a flawed technique will get a player nowhere. The only way to do something is to do it right. Practicing good habits is what makes a better player. Habits are formed in practice and then become automatic in the game. You play like you practice; If you practice correctly, you will play correctly.

Communication

Verbal communication is a necessity on a baseball field. Players need to know what they are going to do in every situation. Communication helps ensure that everyone is in the right place at the right time. By communicating, an in-between flyball can be caught instead of dropping for a base hit. The more teammates talk, the more able everyone will be to make the right play.



Pick Up The Ball The First Time

This usually pertains to an outfielder retrieving a ball near the fence when he tries to pick it up, misses, then has to stab at it again, thus allowing the runner to take an extra base. This can also apply to infielders. For example, when a ground ball is booted, the tendency is to hurry and pick it up. Unfortunately, more often than not, the ball is dropped again because of the hurried attempt. The important thing is to take your time and make sure you pick it up the first time. A stationary ball should be picked up with the bare hand only. A ball that is rolling should be picked up with two hands. Whichever method is used, make sure the ball is picked up the first time.

Know What To Do When The Ball Is Hit To You

First of all, everyone on the field should want and expect the ball to be hit to them. In preparation, players should say to themselves, "What am I going to do with the ball when it is hit hard, or to my right, or to my left or slowly?" By doing so, players are prepared to make the correct play at all times. Physical errors are going to happen, but the mental errors must be kept to a bare minimum.

Adjust and Readjust

Let's use the example of a pitcher and the hitter. If the hitter is wearing out the pitcher, the pitcher makes an adjustment in order to get that hitter out. By the same token, the hitter must make an adjustment when this happens. If the batter



successfully adjusts, it necessitates a readjustment by the pitcher. The more you play, the more you will find the need to adjust and the more easily it will be done.

Terminology: A Very Important Concept

You can talk to someone about a skill or fundamental and that person may not be able to grasp what is being said. One person may say the same exact thing, but by wording this a bit differently, may have better success in getting the point across. Don't forget: We are all more susceptible to grasping certain concepts on certain days. Certain terminology may be different from the norm, but may get the point across more effectively to a particular player.

One-handed Play

In a perfect world, we like to use two hands. Sometimes this is not possible. Certain plays, such as the backhand or forehand, dictate that we use one hand. The use of one hand allows for greater reach than when you attempt to use two.

Center of the Body

Whenever a throw is needed, the center of the body is involved. If an outfielder catches a fly ball on the glove side, the transfer occurs at the center of the body. The pitcher uses the center of the body when breaking the hands before the delivery. The infielder brings the ball into the center of the body after catching a ground ball and before actually throwing.



Get There on Time

When receiving a throw at a base, it is much better to be there early rather than late. A stationary target is always a better option than a moving one. This term also can be used in pitching when discussing whether a pitcher's mechanics are sound, allowing rotation, delivery and follow through to happen with the proper timing.

Get to the Spot

Don't drift. Don't coast. Figure out where the ball is going and get to that spot as soon as possible. This allows the fielder extra time to adjust if a ball is misjudged or the ball takes a bad hop.

Rounding

This is a term that usually is used when there is a deficiency in a player's skills. The two common misuses are rounding a groundball and when the second baseman is covering the base on a double play ball. In both cases it is better to get to the spot directly from Point A to Point B.