

DETROIT  
ROOTS



## ROUTINES – DEFENSE



**Niko Goodrum**

### **Pre-Pitch Checklist**

While you're grooming the dirt you should be thinking about the next play. You are trying to understand the defensive situation. You need to be aware. To do this ask yourself these 3 questions:

- How many outs are there?
- What do I do if I get the ball?
- What do I do if I do not get the ball?

The more you do it, the more you get a feel for the game. When the ball is hit, you should just be able to react and not have to think about what to do.

### **Ready Position and Prep Step**

Now you're set. You're in position and the pitcher is about to deliver the next pitch. Our ready position should be athletic and balanced. As a middle infielder, you should stand a bit taller because you will need to reach to the ball more. As a corner infielder you should be set up lower because many plays are one or two steps left or right. As an outfielder, you can stand tall as it will take a while for the baseball to come your way. It is also very important to have your glove arm/hand extended out toward the batter. Your Prep Step should have 2 or 3 slow steps followed by a tiny "hop". The "hop" is to ensure both feet are facing forward, and you are prepared to react to any direction. Do not make the hop too aggressive as you will still be in the air once the ball is hit.

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**Zack Short** preparing for the next pitch defensively

### **Getting Your Mind Right**

This is the moment when you need to clear your head and re-focus. You have to move on and think about the next play. All too often) a player will dwell on the play before, and they are not ready for the next one. This compounds into making multiple errors or mental errors that can negatively affect the game and your teammates.

### **Groom the Dirt**

This is a good time to get rid of any divots cause by base runners to help prevent bad hops. Use your cleats with a swiping or side to side motion in your field area. There are a 3 positives to adding this to your routine:

- Gets you to re-focus
- Keeps you physically moving to stay loose
- You can move your position in the infield without alerting the base runner or hitter.