

## CATCHING THE BALL

(Emf)

### IT ALL STARTS WITH YOUR GLOVE

Your glove can help you make great plays, but only if it fits properly. Your fingers should slide easily into your glove and rest there. Don't jam them in, and make sure you don't have so much room you can wiggle your fingers around inside. You want to be able to control the entire glove. The heel of your hand should be just outside the heel of the glove. Many gloves have an opening in the back, if it feels more comfortable, it's okay to keep your index finger outside.

Always keep your hand cupped, so that the leather inside the glove stays away from the palm of your hand. If your palm is pressed close to the glove, when you catch the ball it may feel as if you're not wearing a glove at all.

### THE CATCH



Stand in a comfortable, relaxed position.

Your knees should be bent and your feet spread about shoulder-width apart, with your throwing hand foot a little behind your body.

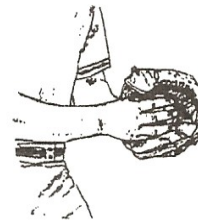
Extend both your hands in front of you, with your glove hand turned sideways as if you're going to shake someone's hand. You should be ready for the ball before it gets to you.

If the ball is below your waist, catch it with your glove fingers pointed down. If it's above your waist, the glove fingers should be pointed up.

Keep your eyes on the ball all the way into your glove.

As the ball hits your glove, cover it with your throwing hand, bend your elbows, and bring your hands and ball back toward your body to cushion the impact. Don't stab at the ball or swipe at it.

Quickly get the proper grip. You're ready to throw the ball and nail the runner.



### FLY BALLS AND POP-UPS

Handling fly balls and pop-ups is just like playing catch; you do all the same things. Square with the flight of the ball, settle and then keep your throwing foot back a little behind your body, sight the ball, and catch it with both hands, if you can, just over your forehead. Then bring it down toward your shoulder on your throwing-arm side to absorb the shock and so you can make your throw with as little motion as possible.