

# Here Is Why Vision Training Is So Important In Game

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Special To Collegiate Baseball

TEXARKANA, Tex. — We are going to be embarking on a vision training journey, a series of articles that will be discussing why vision training is important in the success of baseball players.

We are going to delve into the physical and mental aspects of vision training and key drills that will enhance the athlete's vision ability.

We also will provide examples of how to incorporate a vision training program into your everyday practice and have your players embrace this exciting, innovative training.

What is Vision Training?

Physical prowess, agility, coordination and strength have always been the main criteria in judging athletic ability.

Most all athletic training programs have been designed with these criteria in mind, even though our body will only respond to what it can see.

Despite this fact, little attention has been paid to vision, which is now the last frontier for those athletes interested in greatly improving their performance on and off the field.

The last frontier, the optometric discipline known as sports vision,

fielding fly balls.

Most likely, the player has a problem with depth perception and with the proper drills; his ability to catch a ball can be improved with vision training.

Some key terms that are important to know and understand when speaking about baseball vision training are the following:

**Tracking:** The ability to follow a moving object smoothly and accurately with both eyes, such as a ball in flight.

A key point in teaching tracking skills is to always have your players follow the flight of the ball when hitting to the bat when swinging or to the catchers glove when taking a pitch.

**Focus Change:** The ability to quickly look from far to near and vice versa with-out momentary blur, such as looking at a "soft" area before beginning the swing and changing to a "hard" center when picking up the pitchers release point

**Peripheral Vision:** The ability to monitor and interpret what is happening in your side vision while attending to a specific central vision task. The ability to use visual information perceived from over a large area.

**Binocularity:** The ability to use both eyes together, smoothly, equally, simultaneously and

accurately.

**Maintaining Attention:** The ability to keep doing any particular skill or activity with ease and without interfering with the performance with of other skills — catching a ball at second base with a runner sliding into the bag.

**Near Vision Acuity:** The ability to clearly see, inspect, identify and understand objects at near distances, at arms length.

**Distance Acuity:** The ability to clearly see, inspect, identify and understand objects at a distance of 20 feet, those objects normally seen at 20 feet also called 20/20 sight. People with 20/20 distance acuity may still have visual problems.

**Eye Hand Coordination:** The ability to coordinate the hands and feet with the eyes and the brain. Making your hands do what the eyes tell it to do. Swinging a bat or catching a ball.

**Reaction Time:** The ability to see and respond to what is seen and how quickly this process is achieved.

**Visualization:** The ability to form mental images in your mind's eye and retain or store them for future recall, or for synthesis into new mental images beyond your current or past experiences.

We like to explain to our players that vision training can be looked at four parts.

1. Making sure that your eyes are functioning at optimal levels — the structural integrity and neurological function.

2. How the athletes depth perception, tracking, and dynamic visual acuity is working.

3. How the eyes process the information to the brain

4. How the brain processes the information to your hands.

We like to remind them that their brain is the world's most complex computer and can be taught and trained to become one of the most important parts in becoming a successful athlete.

In our next article we will discuss Basic Vision Drills for Hitters.

**(Editor's Note: Chris McKnight has been a collegiate and professional coach for over 19 years. He is currently a coach with the Texarkana Gunslingers Professional Baseball Team and advisor for Worldwide Baseball Prospects. He is the co-owner of the "Baseball Vision Program." He can be reached at [www.baseballvisionprogram.com](http://www.baseballvisionprogram.com) or at (240) 580-4012. Harvey Ratner is an nationally known expert in Vision training, who has worked with MLB teams, individual pro players and many top collegiate programs. He is the co-owner of the "Baseball Vision Program.")**

