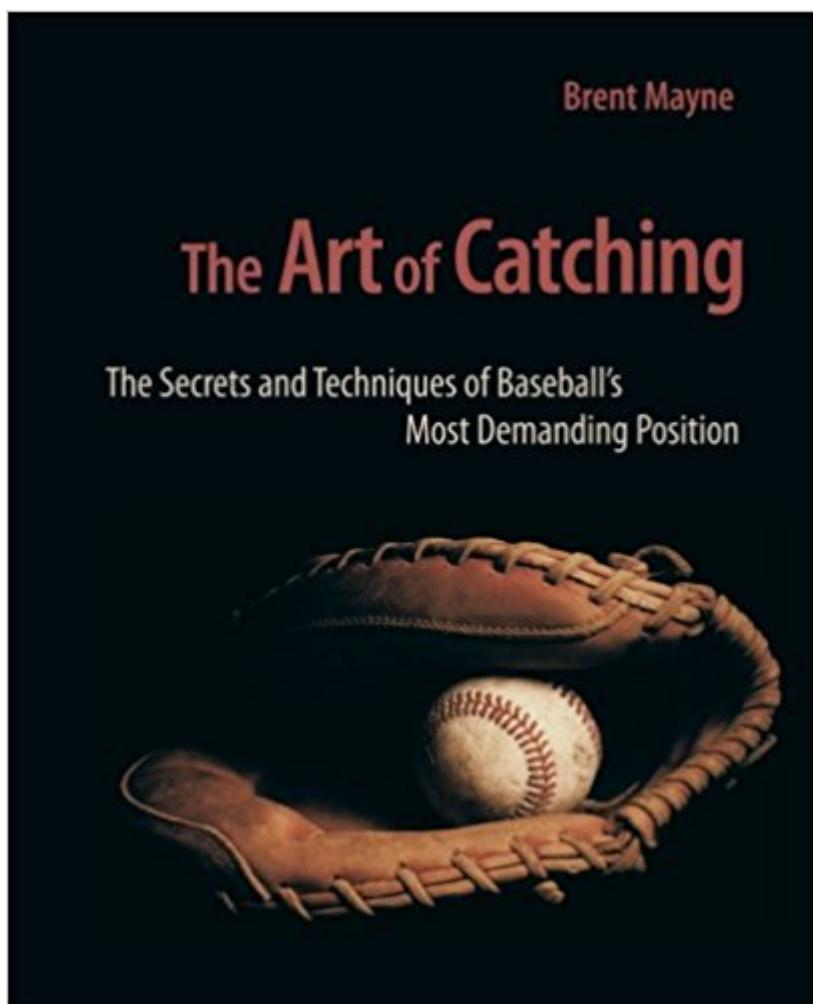


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# The Art Of Catching: The Secrets And Techniques Of Baseball's Most Demanding Position



## Synopsis

An aspiring baseball catcher could do himself no greater favor than acquiring this manual. Whereas the techniques of hitting, pitching, and other baseball positions are well covered by valuable instruction books, the techniques of catching arguably the most difficult and most crucial position of all have not been covered well at all. Brent Mayne's *The Art of Catching: The Secrets and Techniques of Baseball's Most Demanding Position* changes all that in a single stroke. The book's lucid, concise but comprehensive, and highly readable approach puts at your fingertips the wisdom and skills of a successful pro. Brent Mayne played major league ball for sixteen seasons (1989-2004), most of them with the Kansas City Royals. He earned a reputation for his handling of pitchers, effective plate blocking, and strong arm. Enjoying success both behind the plate and at it, he batted .301 in two consecutive seasons (1999-2000). Mayne caught a no-hitter pitched by Bret Saberhagen in 1991, and he also has the distinction of being the only catcher in the twentieth century to have won a game as a pitcher. A hard-working, consummate pro, Mayne knows his position like the back of his hand and has a gift for communicating his knowledge and experience enthusiastically. *The Art of Catching* begins by sketching a quick, informative evolution of the position and its all-important glove, along with offering some illuminating personal history. After these preliminaries, Mayne turns his attention to the heart of the matter: the fundamentals of catching. Stressing the absolute importance of posture, he covers a variety of stances and body positions. Important techniques such as glove mechanics, blocking, throwing to bases, back picking, and pitchouts are also covered in detail. Mayne offers concise summaries of proper methods, such as: Pitchout footwork with a right-handed batter is: jab with right foot (before pitcher releases the ball), step left, catch the ball, then right step, left step, throw. By practicing such mechanics until they become second nature, catchers will master their craft. Subsequent chapters of *The Art of Catching* cover crucial topics such as calling games, working with pitchers, handling pop flies, making plays at the plate (without injuring one's self!), and drills. For Mayne, it is practice and experience, above all, that distinguish professional-caliber players from wannabes. As he points out: One trait common to all the players at the top is that they've played a ton of baseball, more baseball in fact than about 99.9 percent of the population. For catchers, Mayne sees the bullpen as the best place for productive drills. Instead of viewing time there as tedious, catchers should use it productively to hone their skills and to assess the strengths and weaknesses of their pitching staff. Mayne's overview of drills does, however, come with some wise cautionary words that, again, place the emphasis on correct mechanics: Practice does not make perfect; practice makes permanent. In other words, if you have poor technique when you practice, that is what you will take out to the

game. Readers of this book will learn the right techniques. Each chapter of *The Art of Catching* concludes with a section of key points for handy reference. In addition, the book features numerous invaluable illustrations and photos, which clearly reinforce the teachings of the text, thought-provoking quotations, and a handy index. For coaches and those who want to distinguish themselves as baseball catchers, *The Art of Catching: The Secrets and Techniques of Baseball's Most Demanding Position* is an essential, self-recommending title.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

Brent Mayne was a major-league catcher from 1989 to 2004. He played most of his career for the Kansas City Royals but also spent time with the New York Mets, Oakland A's, San Francisco Giants, Colorado Rockies, Arizona Diamondbacks, and Los Angeles Dodgers. He caught 1,143 pro games and has the distinction of being the only catcher in the twentieth century to have won a game as a pitcher. An All-American in college, he was drafted in the first round and inducted into the Orange Coast College Hall of Fame in 2006 and the Cal State Fullerton Hall of Fame in 2010. In his retirement, Brent has gone on to serve on the board of directors for both the Braille Institute and the Center for Hope and Healing. He enjoys surfing, fly fishing, golf, yoga, and traveling. Brent lives in California with his wife Hillary; they have three children.

I bought this book as a gift for my 10 yr. old Little Leaguer. He had recently begun catching and was struggling. He was skeptical, to say the least, that a book would help him improve. He read it for a book report and slowly started implementing things that he had learned. He is now a believer! His catching skills grew exponentially and his confidence soared. This book not only covers skills and

tactics but also the history and theory behind them. I would definately recommend this to anyone looking to learn more about The Art of Catching. Our copy is torn, tattered and well loved.

I read an interview with the author in Rockies magazine. For some reason the way Brent Mayne explained the details and purpose of the book stuck with me. I am coach a team and have been fortunate to have two athleic kids who want to catch. I picked up the book during the middle of our fall ball season and used several of the techniques. I see the mistakes I was making in the instruction they were given. I purposely used it on one of our kids that has never caught before. The instructions were easy and straight forward and dead on. He was able to grasp the position (as much as can be grasped in a short season) and showed enthusiasm because of the success he had. The success was a direct result of the information given in this book. The instruction is dead on and put in ways that you can teach even youngsters. It is great to have some detailed and not over philosophical information about a position that is too often overlooked. This will be a catching bible I use with out other coaches. This is great stuff.

Great Book and an Easy Read. I am old school and taught my grandson how to catch. After reading this I agree the new ergonomic way of catching is much better. My grandson took a few lessons from a Pro Catcher and he catches in accordance with the principles of this book too.

My 13 year old son has been a catcher all through little league and reached the point were I couldn't teach him all the little secrets about catching. I stumbled across this book and purchased it on , it is an easy entertaining read and me and my son find ourselves going back to review certain sections that he feels he needs to work on in his game. Highly recommend this for any aspiring catcher.

Provides for an easy read and gives valuable information for the younger catches on our team that are just learning the position.

An excellent introduction to catching fundamentals. A well written book, excellent illustrations, and the book offers some history into the art of catching as well as the author's personal experiences from high school through his solid career in the major leagues. He explained and justified his style of catching so well that we are making many changes with our catchers. A good book for coaches and an outstanding book for catchers, especially those just starting out. I wish it offered more drills but it certainly covered the basics.

I got some good tips for coaching my 15U catchers. I wish it had a little more info on calling games, but the stuff about anticipation and athletic posture are key.

Very Happy!

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