

MYERSVILLE



Myersville Junior Baseball League

COACHES
HANDBOOK

Last Updated: March 2009

1. MJBL Contacts

President..... Thomas Truitt

Vice-President..... Chad Tasker

Secretary..... Jeanne Bartoli

Treasurer..... Diane Zepp

U6 Coordinator.....Keith Mullican

U8 Coordinator..... Sonya Whitbred

U10 Coordinator..... Diane Zepp

U12 Coordinator..... Thomas Truitt

U15 Coordinator.....Matt Arney

U18 Coordinator.....Scot Hopkins

Babe Ruth Rep.....Matt Arney

Tri-County Rep.....Thomas Truitt

Equipment Manager..... Keith Mullican

Field Manager..... Scot Hopkins

Fund Raising..... Diane Zepp

Opening Day..... Tiffany Zimmerman

Concessions..... Tiffany Zimmerman

Umpires..... Keith Mullican

Field Scheduling Thomas Truitt/Matt Arney

2. Important Dates

Feb 22nd – U6/U8/U10/U12 Draft (Myersville Town Hall)

March 8th – Spring Coaches Meeting (Myersville Town Hall)

March XXth (Sun) - Uno's Fundraiser

April 4th – Tri-County Season Begins for U8, U10 & U12

3. League Affiliations

U12 and below – TriCounty/Western Frederick County Cal Ripken –

(<http://www.leaguelineup.com/welcome.asp?url=tcbaseball>)

U13 and Above – Frederick County Babe Ruth (<http://eteamz.active.com/FBR/index.cfm>)

1. Field Maintenance

- Make sure that the fields get raked or dragged after each use. Please be considerate of the team that will need to use the field next.
- When raking/dragging, stay a foot away from the grass borders
- Puddles – push all puddles into the dirt infield (NOT INTO THE OUTFIELD GRASS)
- Base paths – Rake with the base paths, not across (avoid creating a lip)
- Last team on the field - pick up bases and store in closet – help keep them from getting rained on.

2. Concessions:

- After the concession stand has closed, count the money in the cash box. Keep about \$30.00 (MOSTLY ONES) in cash plus the change in the cash box for the next day.
- Count the remaining money and place it in the MIDDLETOWN VALLEY BANK envelope. There is a deposit slip in the envelope. Record on the deposit slip, the amount of money you are depositing. Place the money and deposit slip in the envelope and seal the envelope.
- Sign your name on the concession stand log sheet and the amount of money you are depositing.
- Take the envelope (or give envelope to your coach) to the **MIDDLETOWN VALLEY BANK** in Myersville (just past I-70) on Route 17. The Night Depository is located at the rear of the building in the first drive thru.
- NEED CHANGE? Call Diane Zepp at 240-367-6698.

3. Game Day Protocol

A. Home Game

- 1) Coaches should arrive at field 1 hour 15 minutes before game; players at least 1 hour in order to stretch and loosen up.
- 2) Prepare field
 - a. Drag field if conditions allow; push off any excess water (push toward the infield, not towards the outfield) and rake. Keep rakes and drags at least 12” from grass edges to avoid creation of a “lip”.
 - b. Line field using line marker, string and batter’s box frame (specifications are in the equipment sheds at each field)
- 3) 1 hour before game, home team takes the field for fielding practice.
- 4) ½ hour before game, away team takes the field for fielding practice.
- 5) Home team can use the batting cage for soft toss and/or batting practice while away team is on the field practicing.
- 6) At the conclusion of game; parents, coaches, and players are responsible to pick up garbage in/around the dugouts and rake the fields.
- 7) Home Team is responsible for the scheduling of concession stand workers
- 8) In the event of a game cancellation at a home field, call the visiting coach in advance of travel if at all possible (minimum of 90 minutes prior to game time). Then, call your players on your team to notify them of the cancellation.

B. Away Game

- 1) Coaches and players should arrive at field 1 hour before game to stretch, loosen up and take batting practice (if cage is available)
- 2) ½ hour before game, away team takes field for fielding practice.

C. Routine after Practice and Games:

- Remove the bases and cover the base anchor sleeves

- Drag or rake dirt areas and baselines
- keep rakes and drags at least 6" from edges to avoid creation of lip
- Rake base paths parallel to the foul line, not perpendicular to avoid creation of a lip
- Rake the mound and home plate area and cover areas with tarps
- Replace and tamp any loose divots in turf areas
- Dispose of trash in and around field and bleacher areas

U-6 – Tee Ball

Goal - keep the kids interested in the game by keeping it fun and interesting and to teach basic skills (see below)

Recommended pre-season practice schedule is twice a week for between 60 - 90 minutes. Also recommended to be quick to cancel if the weather is not nice and sunny (above 60). Once games start – recommendation is one practice per week. Baseball twice a week between games and practices.

Basic Skill Development :

<p>Game knowledge:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Three Outs an inning○ Three strikes out○ Introduce Positions○ Bench Behavior <p>Hitting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Proper bat size○ Holding the bat○ Basic Stance○ Position at the plate○ Basic swing○ Dropping the bat	<p>Fielding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Glove Position○ Introduce Creep○ Alligator○ Skateboard○ Fielding Ground Balls○ Introduce Ready Position○ Introduce fielding Pop ups○ Introduce Sliding <p>Base Running:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Running to first base○ Running through the bag○ Listening to base coaches○ Advancing on a hit ball
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U8 – Machine Pitch

Goal - keep the kids in the game by keeping it fun and interesting and to teach the game of baseball (see below)

Recommended pre-season practice schedule is three a week for between for 1 ½ - 2 hours. Also recommended to be quick to cancel if the weather is not nice and sunny (above 55). Recommendation is baseball three times a week between games and practices.

<p>Game Knowledge:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Positions ○ Bench behavior ○ Batting order – being ready ○ Bag Coverage – everyone moves ○ Bench Behavior <p>Hitting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Pitch selection – hitting strikes ○ Introduce bunting ○ Avoid being hit – turn to the umpire/catcher <p>Catchers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Introduce blocking ○ Getting ball back to pitcher ○ Keep knees up so that shin guards will work ○ Introduce removing mask ○ Hustle after passed balls 	<p>Fielding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ready position ○ Pops up ○ Outfield Flys ○ Crow hop ○ Cut-offs ○ Outfield- Throwing ahead of the runner ○ Backing up bags ○ Introduce run-downs ○ Introduce double play ○ Communications – SS or catcher ○ Footwork – First, second & Thirdbase ○ Underhand toss ○ On a hit ball, either field it, backup the fielder, or cover a base. <p>Base Running:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Making the turn, Through the bag, first - third ○ Introduce tagging up ○ Sliding – (jeans practice) ○ Listening to base coaches ○ Run on anything when there
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	<p>are two outs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Whenever there are less than two outs and you are forced, run on ground balls, but hold up on fly balls. ○
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Basic Skill Development :

○ **Throwing**

- **Drills:** Footwork and coiling action for speed and distance; accuracy, crow hop

○ **Catchers**

- **Skills:** Types of stances, getting ball back to pitcher, hustle after passed balls
- **Drills:** Bull-Pen Drills, Batting Practice and Situations

○ **Fielding**

- **Skills:** Creeping on every play, Infield and Outfield positioning; fielding ground balls and fly balls; introduce cut-offs; back-ups; run-downs; turning double plays; fielder communication (shortstop/catcher)

Fly Balls:

- Never "back peddle" to catch a ball that is hit over your shoulder. Always use the drop step and run!
- Once the fly ball is descending the ball must be called by one of the defensive players.
- On balls that are hit softly between the outfield and infield, the outfield has priority. Therefore the infield should go after the ball and try to make the catch until the outfielder calls the infielder off. This method will avoid the ugly collision between the outfield and infield.
- The outfielder always has priority over the infielder on fly balls

- Fielding By Position

- Skills: Defend against the bunt; footwork for double plays; foot work for covering the bag, backing up bases; glove position by infielders; ready position for infielders and outfielders; develop pitchers/catchers
- Drills:
 - *Pitcher* - Ground Balls, Fielding Bunt, Pitcher Back Up
 - *Catcher* - Ready Position, Wild Pitch, Foul Pop, Catcher Bunt, Catcher Throw to First Base, Force at Home
 - *First-Base* - Footwork, Ground Balls and Bunt
 - *Second-Base/Shortstop* - Ground Balls, Double-Play Pivot, Double Play Feeding, Second-Base Positioning, Bunt, Backing Up
 - *Third-Base* - Ground Balls, Bunt, Double Play
 - *Outfield* - Body-In-Motion Technique, Tracking Fly Balls, Fielding Ground balls, Communication, Infield-Outfield Communication, Outfield Throwing, Outfield Relay

2. Offense

- Hitting

- Skills: Proper swing technique; transfer of weight; avoiding being hit by a pitch; strike zone; bunting; taking signs from base coach
- Drills: Batting Tee, Soft Toss, Turn Away, Plate Position, Stationary Target, Stride to Spot, Batting Practice, Pepper

- Bunting

- Skills: Types of bunts - bunt and run, sacrifice, suicide, fake bunt and run; footwork; square-up; hand and finger placement; deadening the ball
- Drills: Pivoting for a Bunt; Zone Bunting; Bunting for a Base Hit, Safety Squeeze, Suicide Bunt, Bunt and Run, Fake Bunt and Run

- Base Running

- Skills: Running through first base; making the turn; listening to base coaches; taking signs from base coach; sliding; tagging on a fly ball; advancing on passed balls; situations
- Drills: Running to first base and listening to base coach; Advancing on hit ball, First-to-Third Running, Third-Base Tagging, Running with Bases Loaded, Advancing on Passed Balls and Situations

U10 – Kid Pitch

Goal - keep kids in the game of baseball and starting develop individual skills. By this level, all kids show know the basic game.

Recommended pre-season practice schedule is three - four a week for approx. 2 hours. Also recommended to be quick to cancel if the weather is not nice and sunny (above 50). Recommendation is baseball three - four times a week between games and practices.

<p>Game Knowledge:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Bench behavior○ Batting order – being ready○ Bag Coverage – everyone moves○ Bench Behavior <p>Hitting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Pitch selection – hitting strikes○ Bunting - Sacrifice○ Avoid being hit – turn to the umpire/catcher <p>Catchers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Introduce blocking○ Getting ball back to pitcher○ Keep knees up so that shin guards will work○ Introduce removing mask○ Hustle after passed balls	<p>Fielding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Bunting Defense○ Double Plays○ Require Catchers to wear cups <p>Base Running:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Making the turn, Through the bag, first - third○ Introduce tagging up○ Sliding – Pop up○ Listening to base coaches○ Run on anything when there are two outs.○ Whenever there are less than two outs and you are forced, run on ground balls, but hold up on fly balls.○ When the pitcher walks you, run to first base and take a turn.○ When in doubt, always slide.○ Tag up whenever a fair or foul ball is caught.
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1. Defense

○Throwing

- Skills: Coiling action for speed and distance; accuracy
- Drills: Partner Throwing, One-Knee Throwing, Standing with Nondominant Foot in Front Throwing, and Star Throwing

○Pitchers

- Skills: Proper grip; initial stance; balance point; break phase; release; follow-through; pitcher back-up situations
- Drills: Dry Drill, Knee Drill, Power Drill, Balance Drill, Situations and Bull Pen Pitching

○Catchers

- Skills: Types of stances; blocking low pitches; hustle after passed balls; throwing out runners; backing up first
- Drills: Bull-Pen Drills, Batting Practice and Situations

○Fielding

- Skills: fielding by position; cut-offs; back-ups; double plays; throwing out runners when stealing; fielder communication
- Drills: Getting an Out, Ready Position, Glove Positioning, Crossing Mid-line, Personal Space, Spacing Game, Slide Step, Crossover, Partner Ground Ball Game, Fly Ball Circle

○ Fielding By Position

- Skills: Defend against the bunt; defend against the steal; footwork for double plays; backing up bases; glove position by infielders; ready position for infielders and outfielders; develop pitchers and catchers
Drills:
- *Pitcher* - Fielding Bunt, Pitcher to Shortstop Double Play, Pitcher Back Up, Covering First base
- *Catcher* - Ready Position, Catcher Backhand, Catcher Backup, Wild Pitch, Blocking Low Pitches, Foul Pop, Catcher Bunt, Catcher Throw to First Base, Stealing, Double Play, Force at Home
- *First-Base* - Footwork, Bunt
- *Second-Base* - Double-Play Pivot, Double Play Feeding, Second-Baseman Positioning, Bunt, Steal Response
- *Shortstop* - Bunt, Steal Response, Double-Play Pivot ○ *Third-Base* - Bunt, Double Play

- *Outfield* - Body-In-Motion Technique, Tracking Fly Balls, Fielding Ground balls, Communication, Infield-Outfield Communication, Outfield Throwing, Outfield Relay

2. Offense

○Hitting

- **Skills:** Stance; hand position; load position; weight transfer; launch; hip rotation; loading position; taking signs from base coach; strike zone; making contact; bunting
- **Drills:** Batting Tee, Soft Toss, Soft Toss with Two Balls, Plate Position, Stationary Target, Stride to Spot, Batting Practice, Pepper

○Bunting

- **Skills:** Types of bunts - bunt and run, sacrifice, suicide, fake bunt and run; footwork; stance; square-up; hand and finger placement; deadening the ball
- **Drills:** Pivoting for a Bunt; Zone Bunting; Bunting for a Base Hit, Safety Squeeze, Suicide Bunt, Bunt and Run, Fake Bunt and Run

○Base Running

- **Skills:** Running through first base; making the turn; watching and listening to base coaches; taking signs from base coach; crack of the bat; tagging on a fly ball; stealing; delayed steal; sliding; situations - ball hit to the infield/outfield, shuffle off the bag after pitch, advancing on passed balls
- **Drills:** Running to first base and listening to base coach; Advancing on hit ball, First-to-Third Running, Third-Base Tagging, Running with Bases Loaded, Stealing and Situations

REFERENCES

Leagues:

Tri County (U6 – U12) - <http://www.leaguelineup.com/welcome.asp?url=tcbaseball>

Frederick County Babe Ruth (U13 – U18) - <http://eteamz.active.com/FBR/>

Babe Ruth Baseball - <http://www.baberuthleague.org/>

Cal Ripken Baseball - <http://www.baberuthleague.org/side-indexes/cal-ripken-jr.html>

Drills:

<http://www.beabetterhitter.com/index.html>

<http://www.qcbaseball.com/index.html>

http://www.thecompletepitcher.com/pitching_drills.htm#q1

<http://coachbaseball.blogspot.com/>

Practice Tips

- Often players run from station to station during practice where they have a few minutes to work on a certain drill. Emphasize the goal is quality not quantity or speed.
- The kids should already know how to perform the drill before the rotation begins. First – bring the kids together as a group and demonstrate the drill and emphasize the skill they are to be working on. The coaching involved at this stage should be identifying problems and helping fix those problems, not teaching the kids how to perform each drill.
- If you have parents helping you out at different stations, have them look for 1 or 2 common flaws and help the player correct that flaw. Don't assume the parent understands what those flaws are, you may need to show them exactly what to look for.
- While the kids are stretching and warming up, take each parent to the station they will be helping with. Explain what they will be doing and what to look for.
- Depending on how much help you have – break the kids up into groups of 3 -5 . This keeps the kids occupied and involved. Less opportunity for the kids in back of line to get “distracted”.

Emphasize quality over quantity by:

- Being flexible with time given to the rotation. The rotation will usually take longer than you expect. The younger the kids the more difficult it will be to meet a time restraint.
- If your behind, don't rush through to finish. Have kids and parents remember where everyone is and finish it off at the next practice.
- Don't have stations set up where they need to perform a skill x number of times. Always have them perform the skill for the duration of the time. They will then feel no need to rush through the drill in an attempt to complete it.
- Communicate with the kids that you want them to hustle to each station, but at the station they need to take their time and work hard on improving.
- If you can get enough help, don't run any of the stations yourself. Oversee the rotation and help out where needed. You will then be able to evaluate the rotation as a whole instead of your one station.
- Get a parent on the side to keep time for you. This will allow you to help and coach without have to worry about when to yell "rotate".

Hitting Drills:

Grip:

Lay the handle of the bat across the lower base of the fingers of each hand. Then, simply close your hands around the handle.

Do not squeeze the bat. Hold it lightly in your fingers. Pretend as though you are holding a small bird in your hands. You want to hold the bird firmly enough to prevent it from flying away, yet not so tightly that you harm the bird.



Chair Drill



Chair Drill - Drill to emphasize the importance of the hands to the ball. This drill can be incorporated with a soft toss or a short screen. It is very effective even without the luxury of hitting a ball during the drill. Find yourself an old plastic chair, or a bucket with a lid and sit on it. **Lock your ankles around the legs of the chair or base of the bucket;** This is to anchor yourself into the chair. We want to eliminate the lower body action in this drill. The only thing moving will be from the waist up. Take your bat and get in the hitting position. Toss a ball up into the hitting zone.

Soft Toss - Pulling the ball/Hitting to Opposite Field

The soft-toss may be used to work on pulling the ball, it can also be used for hitting the opposite way. The "tossler" must be a safe distance to the rear of the hitter. The hitter must not peak. The "tossler" tosses the ball from the inside of the plate diagonally across to the outside. The hitter picks up the ball with his peripheral vision and "tracks" the ball with both his body and his eyes to the hitting zone. As soon as the hitter sees the ball come into his view, he follows it with his body by taking a stride slightly toward the path of the ball. He pushes off with his rear foot but does not squash the bug (Photo to the Left). When the ball reaches the hitting zone, he swings with a quick bat and "strokes" or "paints" the ball the other way. Throw your hands at the ball. On the follow through the hitter may want to drop to his back knee to emphasize the



importance of hitting through the ball with balance and following the hands with the back hip.

Power Bat

- Place a plunger handle into the batting tee.
- Place a flat soccer ball (different sizes for different age groups)
- or flat basketball (high school and above) onto the plunger.
- Execute your normal swing repeatedly

Colored Baseballs – Soft toss or live pitching

Use 2-3 colored baseballs:

Red = Take White = Hit Away Green = Bunt

Weight Back

The batter stands about 20 feet away from the pitcher. The pitcher takes a tennis ball and bounces the ball so that the ball ends up in the strike zone. With bouncing the balls the hitter will tend to jump out on his or her front foot. This drill will allow the hitter to stay back and keep his or her weight back so that they can explode on the ball.

Other Fundamentals

Avoiding the Pitch

- 1.) Immediately turn his upperbody (from the waist up) away from the pitch.
- 2.) The head and shoulders act as one unit turning away.
- 3.) The shoulder nearest the ball should rise up a little to protect the face.
- 4.) The elbows drop in close to the sides to protect the ribs.
- 5.) The chin dips down to the chest to protect the neck from a direct impact.
- 6.) The bat lowers directly in front of the players upper body.

All of the above actions take place in one simultaneous motion as the player is rotating away from the pitch.

Have coach sit on a bucket or chair about 20 feet from the player. With a tennis ball (or other soft ball) begin softly tossing the ball into the strike zone. Let the player know before hand that he may be hit by a pitch, albeit a soft one. Instruct him to turn away from the pitch, in the manner he has been taught, the moment he identifies the pitch as being one that may hit him. Conversely, have the player yell out "NOW!" when he recognizes the pitch as being a strike (this is a great tactic to help a player recognize a pitch he can hit). Throw a few soft strikes and then progressively move the pitches closer and closer to the player until you finally strike him (aim for the buttocks). Praise the player for every pitch he properly turns away from (or properly calls a strike - purposefully throw a few outside pitches to see if he mislabels them as strikes).



If at any time during the instruction the player reverts to the age old "jumping back with the hands in the air" technique of avoiding a pitch, immediately stop and have the player freeze in that awkward position. Then walk the pitch up to him and show him how vulnerable he is to injury in that position.



Choosing a bat:

When shopping for a bat, have your child hold it out to his side with the top hand (right hand for right-handed batter). If he cannot hold it straight out for 20 seconds or so without the arm starting to shake and the bat dropping, it's too heavy

From study by Worth, Inc:

Youth 8-10 Years Old

Player Height / Best Bat Weight:

48 in. 16 oz.
50 in. 16.5 oz.
52 in. 17 oz.
54 in. 17.5 oz.
56 in. 18 oz.
58 in. 18.5 oz.
60 in. 19 oz.

Formula = (Height/4) + 4

Youth 11-12 Years Old

Player Weight / Best Bat Weight:

70 lbs. 18 oz.
80 lbs. 19 oz.
90 lbs. 19.5 oz.
100 lbs. 20 oz.
110 lbs. 20.5 oz.
120 lbs. 21 oz.
130 lbs. 21.5 oz.
140 lbs. 22 oz.
150 lbs. 23 oz.

Formula = (Weight/18) + 14

Team Oriented Practice (U12 & up):

Split the team in half (coaches parents fill in the outfield) and compete against each other in a timed game. (Timed or number of innings.) Coach throws. Teams coach themselves. Coaches back off. Players try to win the game and complete all ingredients to success that are used that particular day. For example, today during the course of the game you must have each of the following:

- 1) An attempted sacrifice
- 2) An attempted hit and run
- 3) Bunt for base hit
- 4) An attempted squeeze
- 6) A first and third play
- 7) Score a runner from third with less than two out.

Coach decides the situations to work on and let them play.

Fielding Drills

Quarterback Drill

Outfielder is 10 feet away from the coach with both feet pointing toward the coach. The coach uses the words “drop step and go” and points in the direction to where he wants his player to drop step and go.

As soon as the outfielder hears the coach’s command the player uses the drop step and cross over in order to turn his body and sprint in the direction to where the coach has pointed. If the coach points to the player’s right – the player will drop step with his right foot and cross over with his left. If the coach points to the player’s left – the outfielder will drop step with his left and cross over with his right.

Once the player has sprinted approximately 20-40 yards (depending on skill and age) the coach will throw a high fly ball, and the outfielder who is sprinting must try to get under the ball in order to make the catch on the run. Once players get comfortable with the drill and make several catches you can increase the difficulty by throwing the ball further in order to make outfielders run harder and possibly make a diving catch.

To make the drill easier and work the players harder, have each player line up with a ball in their glove. When it is their turn they will toss you the ball and wait for your command. Once they have caught the ball they will jog back to the line up with the ball in their glove.

Tennis Racquet Fly Balls

Using a tennis racquet and tennis balls, hit fly balls to your outfielders but add a communication element to the drill. Have half of your outfielders line up in center and the other half in right (or left field). Hit tennis balls with the racquet in places where the two outfielders will have to communicate in order to catch the ball. Hit balls that are over their shoulder and in front of them.

This drill also works well if you add your middle infield and work on communication with the outfielders and infielders on fly balls that are hit softly between the outfield and infield.

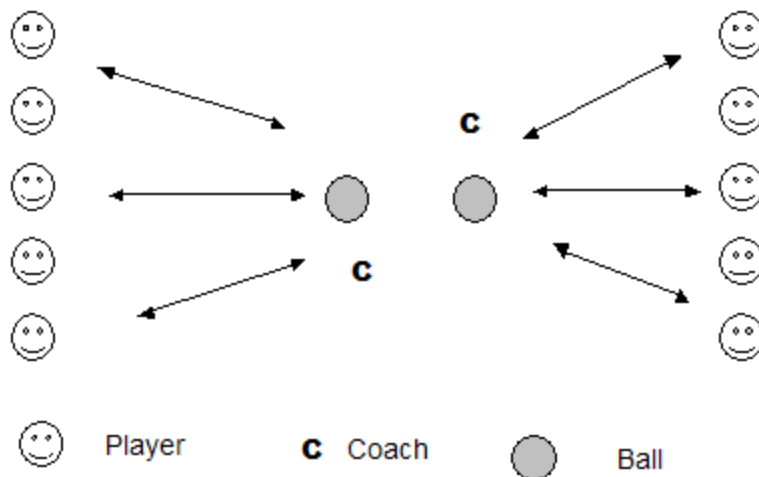
King of the hill - Using Two Hands:

Divide the team into two groups. A coach goes with each group and serves as the “hitter.” Players do not use gloves in this game. The reason that gloves are not used is to force players to field the ball with two hands, rather than just using the glove and fielding the ball with one hand.

The game is basically “pepper”. The coach “hits” a ball towards the fielders and one fielder tries to field the ball. A successful fielder stays in place; a fielder making an error moves to the LEFT end of the line. After the ball is fielded or retrieved a player tosses it softly underhand to the coach to hit, just as in pepper.

The game goes on for a minute or two. When time is up the player on the RIGHT end of the line is the “King of the Hill,” or winner. The coach should make an attempt to hit towards every player both for practice and to keep the contest fair.

To make the game more interesting, play one contest for a couple of minutes. Then take the half of the players from the RIGHT end of each line into a “winners” game and the players from the LEFT half of each group into a “consolation” game. Then play another round and the winner of the “winners” game will be the undisputed “King of the Hill” for the practice.



County Fair Drill (U12 & Up):

The drill starts with 6 players:

- Catcher
- Third Base
- Shortstop
- Second Base
- First Base
- Center Field

The 5-6 remaining players feed into the center field position from left field. We usually station a coach in left field to keep the non-participants busy working on ground ball technique or turning to run down fly balls.

The drill begins with a coach at home plate hitting a ground ball to the shortstop.

- Shortstop fields the grounder and throws to 1st base
- 1st base throws 3rd base
- 3rd base fields the throw on the bag then fires to 2nd base to start a 5-4-3 double play (second baseman after throwing to first becomes a baserunner at second)
- 1st baseman then throws to the catcher in his stance behind home plate
- Catcher comes up and fires to second base as if a runner is stealing from first to second (no one is covering second)
- As the catcher fields the throw, the second baseman takes off as if he is trying to score from second on a single to center (as he rounds 3rd he flips his glove toward the dugout)
- Since no one is covering second, the ball bounds into the outfield where the center fielder make a "do-or-die" scoop and then fires the ball to home on a long hop to the catcher who blocks the plate and tries to tag the second baseman who is sliding into home.

The coach then blows a whistle and the players rotate as follows:

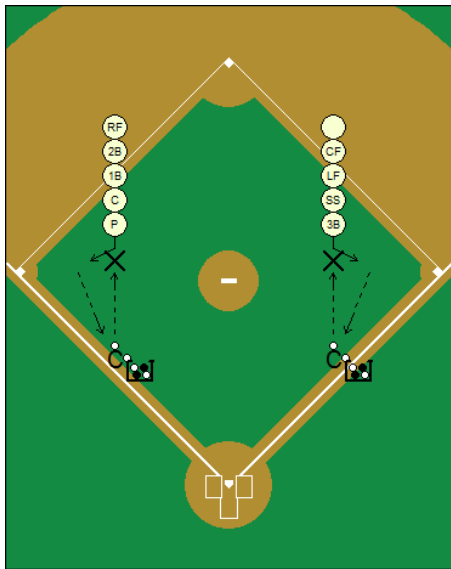
- Second baseman/runner to left field to the end of the feeder line
- Catcher to 3rd base
- 3rd base to SS
- SS to Second base/baserunner
- First base to catcher
- 1st in line in LF becomes the center fielder
- CF sprints to first base

As the centerfielder arrives at 1st base, the coach hits another groundball to the shortstop and the sequence begins again.

Bat Drill (U6/U8)

1. Lay a bat on the ground with the players lined up behind the bat.
2. The coach roles a ground ball towards the bat.
3. The players move up to the bat and field the ball by reaching out over the bat.
4. They must not let the ball hit the bat

This forces them to get low with their arms extended.

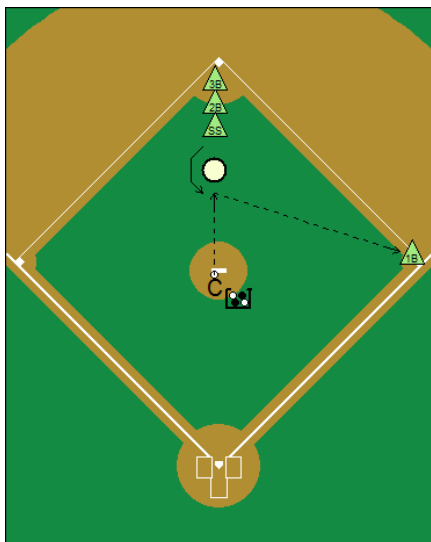


Bucket Drill (U8 & up)

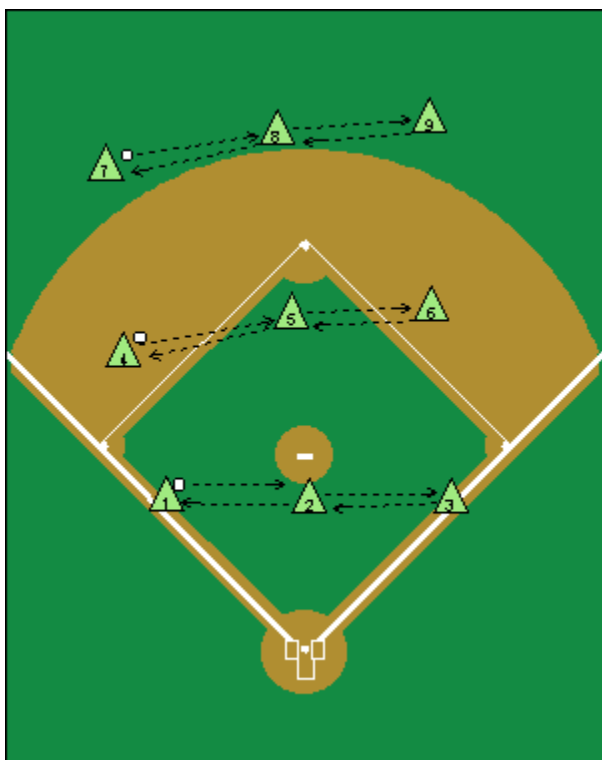
Place a 5 gallon bucket on the ground. Have the players lined up behind the bucket facing back towards the coach.

The coach roles a ball towards the bucket. The players must field the ball by moving around and in front of the bucket.

This trains them to come around the ball, on balls hit right at them. It trains them to get their momentum going to 1b on throws across the infield.



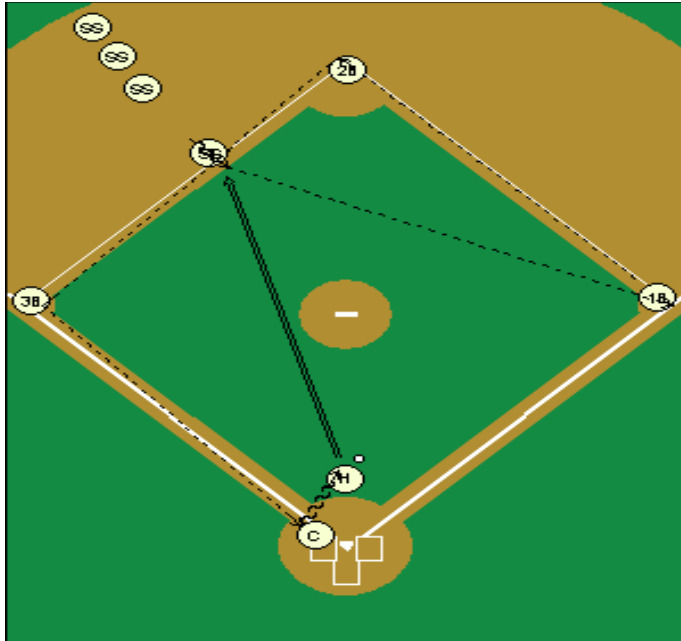
Outfield Cutoffs – Footwork and lining up– Player 1 throws to cut-off (player 2) who then throws to Player 3. Reverse.



Warm ups - Around the Horn (U8 & Above) Around the horn is a warm up drill that enforces hustle and accurate throwing. The drill starts with the coach (H) hitting the ball to the first shortstop.

The shortstop fields the ball and throws to first. Shortstop then runs to first base while first baseman is throwing to 2nd base. 1st base then follows his/her throw to second and keeps going around the horn in the same manner.

Catcher tosses ball to coach and then runs to the end of the SS line. The drill continues with the same rotation. Once the kids get good at it, you can introduce a second ball



Base Running

Sliding - Intro

Line up your player in a single line, space arm length apart. Talk to them about the cadence of the slide. Left, right, left sit. Then have the player's start walking left leg first, right leg, left leg and then have them fall to their butts with the right leg extended and the left leg folder underneath in a figure four. Once the players get better and cadence then begin having them slowly run the three steps, left, right, left sit.

Passed Ball (U10 and up):

Station a base runner at each base - first, second, and third. Runners should be independent of one another, since the responsibilities for each base differ slightly. Have a coach on the mound, pitching a variety of pitches - mix in balls and strikes, as well as pitches that will bounce.

Any time a pitch is about to bounce, the entire team must yell "**Dirt!**" This lets you know if everyone is paying attention, and players tend to like the excuse to yell.

Baserunners on first should automatically go if they know the ball is going to bounce - if they wait to see if the catcher has blocked the pitch, they are too late.

Runners on second should read the pitch and decide whether it is safe to go - if the ball gets away from the catcher, they should go, whereas if the catcher blocks the ball, they should stay put.

Similarly, the runner on third should read and react. Take a lead, get a good crow hop as the ball nears the plate, then react to the bounce of the ball.

Emphasize that each base is independent of one another; **this is not a game situation** in which a runner going from first automatically forces the runner from second. This is a drill to teach the different reactions needed from each base to a pitch in the dirt.

It's also a good idea to keep two catchers for this drill, to avoid tiring one out too much.

Running to First base (U6/U8):

Have all your players line up behind home plate, and put the first kid into the batter's box, as if he is hitting. On your signal, he runs down the first base line as hard as possible. The first base coach either yells "**Go! Go! Go!**" indicating that he should advance to second base, or "**Dugout! Dugout!**" indicating that the player must overrun first base by two or three steps, then tail off to the right as if he is going to the dugout. Make them turn back to their right, then race quickly back to first base, ready to advance.

Pitching

One Knee Drill



Isolate the lower body to focus on developing proper arm action.

Setup:

Pitchers pair up and kneel on their posting leg (right knee for right-handers, left knee for left handers).

How to perform drill:

Players get on one knee about 45 to 55 feet from each other. The pitcher with the ball will rotate his shoulder toward his throwing partner, bring his arm back with his hand on top of the baseball, use a good circular arm motion, and throw the ball, making sure the pitcher bends his elbow and finishes throwing elbow past the opposite knee.

Bucket Drill



Purpose::

Learn how to brace up over front leg once pitch is made, to encourage a correct follow through.

Setup:

Pitchers pair up and kneel on their posting leg (right knee for right-handers, left knee for left handers) while placing their kneeling foot on an upside-down 10 gallon bucket.

How to perform drill:

Players get on one knee about 45 to 55 feet from each other, kneeling foot on upside-down 10-gallon bucket. The pitcher with the ball will rotate his shoulder toward his throwing partner, bring his arm back with his hand on top of the baseball, use a good circular arm motion, and throw the ball, and popping up and over the bent stride leg, making sure the pitcher bends his elbow and finishes throwing elbow past the opposite knee.

The High-Cock Position Drill



The High-Cock Position Drill is used by youth, college, and professional pitchers looking to specifically address the release of the baseball from a high-³/₄ arm angle. This drill teaches pitchers to "get on top" of the ball.

To get the lower body ready to begin, the pitcher will spread his feet into a permanent throwing-position, slightly wider than shoulder-width apart with the toes of the lead leg pointing to the target.

The back foot, whose only movement during the drill is to turn over to onto the toes when the baseball is released, stays in contact with the ground at all times.

The elbow of the throwing arm should be level with the shoulders which brings the entire arm into the high-cock position.

Remember, in the high-cock position, the right-handed pitcher shows the ball to the shortstop; lefty's show the baseball to the second baseman. The elbow of the glove arm side should also be level with the shoulders and the glove arm elbow itself should point directly to the target like a "rifle site."

From this starting position, simply "pull" the glove arm back into the body while rotating the hips and pivoting on the back foot to release the baseball. Follow the motion all the way through after the ball is thrown to ease the stress on the arm.

The Quick Hands Drill



Pictured is a youth pitcher performing The Complete Pitcher's quick hands drill.

The Quick Hands Drill is for the development of pitching velocity through muscle-memory.

Think about this: the actual mechanical act of pitching a baseball takes place in the subconscious mind. When on the mound, a pitcher is not literally thinking, "OK, now I have to lift my leg and speed up my arm" — it just happens because of the body's muscle-memory from hours and hours of practice.

This drill attempts to address that muscle-memory "imprint" by teaching the body to have quick hands. Quick hands directly correlate into increased pitching velocity.

Start with the hands together, ball in the glove. The legs are positioned in the exact same manner as the high-cock drill, toes of the lead leg facing the target. The legs remain in this permanent, shoulder-width-apart position throughout the drill. However, the back foot will pivot onto its toes when the ball is released (like when you pivot your back foot during a golf swing or baseball bat swing). However, the distance of the two feet remain the same.

The key here is not to step.

As fast, and controlled, as possible, the pitcher will break the hands, turn the hips, throw the baseball from a high- $\frac{3}{4}$ arm slot and follow-through by bringing the elbow of the throwing arm to the opposite knee.

The Pause And Balance Drill



Pictured is former pro Steven Ellis, left, and a youth pitcher, right, performing The Complete Pitcher's pause and balance drill.

The Pause and Balance Drill is the single most effective drill to get a pitcher into a controlled and balanced balance position.

This drill is particularly effective for pitchers who "rush" their motion, fall forward too soon, have trouble getting "on top" of the baseball into a high-¾ arm slot, or are imbalanced in the balance position.

A coach or another player is needed for this drill.

To begin, a pitcher will go through his full wind-up without the baseball. When he gets to the balance position, the pitcher will stop, hold, turn his head and wait for the coach to hand him the baseball.

The coach should vary how quickly he hands his pitcher the ball from three- to five-seconds.

Once the pitcher has received the ball from his coach from the balance position, he will turn his head again and throw to his target emphasizing a good follow-through.

The Shadow To Balance Drill



Pictured is a youth pitcher performing The Complete Pitcher's shadow to balance drill.

The Shadow to Balance Drill is highly effective in getting pitchers to "learn" the all-important first stages of the pitching motion — getting from the stance to the balance position in a controlled and balanced manner. Because no baseball is used in this drill, a pitcher can practice this beneficial exercise on a daily basis, regardless of when he is pitching during a particular week.

Many professional pitchers perform this drill 25 times, five to six times a week prior to throwing.

To start, righties should take their sign from their catcher from the right side of the rubber, lefties from the left (No. 1). Take a controlled, small step back keeping the weight of the upper body over the pivot leg (No. 2). Turn your hips to the catcher and lift your lead leg from the knee into the balance position (No. 3). Do not swing the lead leg into the balance position, it's simply a "lift."

Pause in the balance position for five seconds or more and repeat.

The Leverage Drill

"drop and drive" is not a correct pitching mechanic because your pitcher will lose out on the all-important attributes of pitching leverage by dropping (and thus lowering his release-point).

Drop and drive guys typically have flat fastballs. (Of course, there are always exceptions like Sandy Koufax and Tom Seaver, but typically, the hardest throwers all stay tall to take advantage of the leverage on their fastball.)

Here's a baseball pitching drill, called **The Leverage Drill**, that may be helpful:

Get your baseball pitcher into his balance position, have the pitcher post on a slightly bent back leg and have him bring his knee to the height you'd like to see it during his pitching delivery. Measure the height by placing your hand palm-facing down.

Next, without a baseball, have your baseball pitcher go through his pitching delivery (as a coach, you should stand to the side out, of your pitcher's way, but in a spot where you can easily put your hand out to the spot where you initially measured your pitcher's high-knee to be in the balance position).

Have your pitcher go through his pitching delivery and have the top of his knee touch the bottom of your extended hand. This will force your pitcher to stay tall on the back leg. If he collapses, your pitcher won't be able to bring his front knee to the same height that you had previously measured when he was in the balance position.

After a few sessions without a baseball, have your 10-year-old pitcher perform the drill throwing the baseball 35-feet, and then move the catcher back to 45-feet.

The Stride Drill

The Stride Drill is designed to train a pitcher's body to get into the proper throwing position enabling him to maximize velocity while minimizing the risk of injury during game situations. This drill can be performed without a baseball and can be done individually by a pitcher if a throwing partner is not available.

First, let's take a closer look at the stride phase of the pitching motion.

A pitcher's should stride **at a minimum 80% his height** towards home plate during his fastball delivery. On the curveball and change-up, his stride should be six to eight inches less than his height. For example, if a pitcher is 5 feet, 10 inches tall, then his stride toward home plate on the release of the baseball should be 5 feet, 2 inches (or thereabouts).

In the stride phase of the pitching motion, a pitcher should be able to draw an imaginary line from the heel of his back foot, through the ball of his stride foot, and onward to the target. Keeping the lower body aligned in a straight line closes a pitcher's hips, directs the shoulders, and allows the throwing arm to reach the "high cock phase" of its arm path in the back of the pitcher's body. Additionally, if a pitcher lands too far to the glove-side of his body, he will open the shoulder too soon. This causes the pitch to be low and outside while creating stress on the arm and reducing velocity. If a pitcher lands too far to the throwing-side, he will inevitably have to throw across his body making the outside part of the strike zone difficult to hit. Plus, if a pitcher throws across his body, he creates an increased amount of stress on the arm.

Let's begin. A pitcher will stand perpendicular to a straight line (like a foul line in the outfield grass or line on a gym floor). If the pitcher is on the pitching mound itself, he can use his spikes to drag out a straight line in the dirt 8-feet long and perpendicular to the rubber (i.e. directly in line with home plate). Then, he simply marks out the distance of his height and drags out a second line in the dirt--only this one is parallel to the pitcher's rubber. If the pitcher is not on a mound, he will simply place a second object like his hat on the ground. This will mark the distance he should be striding toward his target.

Soft Toss Scrimmage

Purpose:

Fun quick paced game that allows players the opportunity to play many different positions.

Equipment:

Game equipment

Setup:

Split your team into 2 squads. One will play offense, one defense, just like a regular game. Since each team will be short of a full defensive team, let the defensive players determine how they will set up their defense. We usually go without a pitcher and catcher. No bunting or stealing allowed.

Execution:

The name of the game is movement. We play 6 outs per half inning.

The coach will soft toss each pitch to the hitter from the side. The hitter must swing at each pitch.

After each hitter, the defense will rotate one position. We rotate around the infield from 1st to 3rd, then to left field and around to right. The right fielder will then move to first.

MJBL COACHES CODE OF CONDUCT

Objective: The goal of MJBL is to assure that its players and coaches maintain the highest standard of sportsmanship and ethical behavior at all times. In order to achieve this goal, a Code of Conduct has been adopted by the Board of Directors of the League.

Coaches shall refrain from the following conduct:

- Indecent gestures
- Foul or Obscene Language
- Physical altercations of any kind
- Umpire abuse
- Harassment of or discourtesy to opposing players, coaches or parents
- Intentionally lying to or misleading a game official to gain an advantage
- Instructing a player to hit a batter or base runner with a thrown ball
- Instructing a player to spike or otherwise attempt to injure another player
- Use of alcohol or tobacco products in the presence of players
- Throwing any object in a show of temper or disgust
- Arguing with or verbal abuse of opposing players coaches or parents
- Belittling or intentionally embarrassing opposing players, coaches or spectators

After review by a majority of the MJBL board, consequences for violations are as follows:

First violation – Warning

Second violation – 1 game suspension

Third Violation - Termination of coaching responsibilities for the remainder of the season.

PARENT CODE OF CONDUCT

Objective: The goal of MJBL is to assure that its members -players, coaches, parents and officials maintain the highest standard of sportsmanship and ethical behavior at all times. In order to achieve this goal, a Code of Conduct has been adopted by the Board of Directors of the League.

As a parent or spectator:

1. Notify the coach ahead of time if your child will not make a practice or game.
2. As needed, assist the coach with field maintenance before and after games.
3. Show appreciation and respect for your team's opponents. Without them, there would not be a game.
4. Resist shouting out instructions or coaching from the stands. That is the coach's job.
5. Leave the umpires out of it. They do not care who wins. Any mistakes are honest ones, and your children need to know that you believe this. Being an umpire is a difficult job, please respect this.
6. Remember – It is a game played by kids.
7. Maintain self-control. Refrain from disrespectful conduct of any sort, including profanity, obscene gestures, offensive remarks, taunting or other actions that demean any individual. The Board of Directors have adopted a "ZERO TOLERANCE" stance on these points.
8. Condemn the use of threat of violence in any form.
9. Absolutely no use of alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs is permitted nor will it be tolerated at any game. Smoking is not permitted on or near the fields, dugouts or spectator areas

WARNINGS AND EJECTIONS

Any spectator engaged in profane or rude speech, gestures or actions or the use of alcoholic beverages or drugs are subject to ejection by the umpires, coach or a member of the Board of Directors. The game may be suspended until or terminated unless, the violator ceases his or her conduct or leaves following an ejection.

Practice #1

Date: _____ **Time:** _____

Team Roster: _____

**to : entire team - warmup exercises (jumping jacks, leg stretches, arm circles)
(8 minutes)**

**to : Stations - Round One
(10 minutes)**

Hitting Throwing Fielding

**to : Stations - Round Two
(10 minutes)**

Hitting Throwing Fielding

**to : Stations - Round Three
(10 minutes)**

Hitting Throwing Fielding

**to : entire team lesson - base running, home to 1st base
(10 minutes)**

**to : entire team - wrap up: reenforce lesson learned, acknowledge "hard work"
(4 minutes)**

****NOTE: plan allows 2 minutes to rotate players from one station to the next**

Practice #1 Details:

**Warm up exercises: while you are stretching, explain the importance of warming up properly;
Major League**

players always stretch their muscles before practice or games

**Hitting Station: set up a Tee for each player, hitting into a fence; make sure there is adequate
separation**

between the players

Work on proper batting stance:

- feet should be about shoulder width apart, with weight on inside balls of feet
- feet should be square to home plate
- knees should be bent to comfort level
- grip on bat should be relaxed, in the fingers, not palm of hand
- elbows should be bent, relaxed
- shoulders square, eyes level, chin on or above front shoulder

Work on proper Swing:

- begin swing with short, soft stride with front foot remaining closed
- throw hands toward the ball, bringing bat through the hitting zone to strike the top half of the ball
- "whip" the bat head, turning hips at the same time (turn on the ball of back foot - squash the bug)

- keep eyes and head on the ball until contact

- balance is important throughout the swing and finish

Throwing Station: players should preferably throw to an adult, but can throw to a target

- start with player facing target, feet shoulder width apart, glove side foot ahead of throwing side foot
 - pivot on ball of throwing side foot and step with glove side foot toward target (point little toe at target)
 - "scarecrow" position - reach back with throwing hand, elbow bent, wrist straight up with ball away from body; elbow on glove side pointing toward the target
 - start throwing motion by pulling glove side elbow down as throwing arm moves forward (elbow still bent)
 - throwing arm does not extend fully until ball reaches release point in front of body, wrist "snaps" as ball is released
 - proper follow-through includes throwing hand continuing down to outside of glove side knee, bending forward at waist, and throwing side foot stepping toward the target
- **NOTE: make sure players reach back correctly "scarecrow"; watch for "pushing" the ball and correct**

Fielding Station: Ground Balls - work with players on infield dirt

- first, show players the proper position to field a ground ball: knees bent, weight forward on balls of feet, fingers of glove on ground at 45 degree angle, throwing hand ready to "trap" ball in glove
- second, show players how to "slide step" to get in front of ground ball, before getting into fielding position; let them practice "slide step" and "fielding position"
- third, roll ground balls to player, making sure they move in front of ball and field it correctly; do three to player and then rotate to next player; continue until time runs out

Team Lesson: Base running, home to 1st base

- explain the order of the bases: 1st base, 2nd base, 3rd base, home plate
- have the players line up behind home plate, and one at a time, take a pretend swing and then run to 1st base

- make sure the players run all the way through the bag at first base, break down, and turn right

Practice Plan - T-Ball: (1 hour practice)

Practice #2

Date: _____ Time: _____

Team Roster: _____

to : entire team - warmup exercises (jumping jacks, leg stretches, arm circles) (8 minutes)

to : Stations - Round One (10 minutes)

Hitting Throwing Fielding

to : Stations - Round Two (10 minutes)

Hitting Throwing Fielding

**to : Stations - Round Three
(10 minutes)
Hitting Throwing Fielding**

**to : entire team lesson - base running, from 1st to 3rd base
(10 minutes)**

**to : entire team - wrap up: reenforce lesson learned, acknowledge "hard work"
(4 minutes)**

****NOTE: plan allows 2 minutes to rotate players from one station to the next**

Practice #2 Details:

**Warm up exercises: while you are stretching, explain the importance of warming up properly;
Major League**

players always stretch their muscles before practice or games

**Hitting Station: set up a Tee for each player, hitting into a fence; make sure there is adequate
separation**

between the players

Work on proper batting stance:

- feet should be about shoulder width apart, with weight on inside balls of feet
- feet should be square to home plate
- knees should be bent to comfort level
- grip on bat should be relaxed, in the fingers, not palm of hand
- elbows should be bent, relaxed
- shoulders square, eyes level, chin on or above front shoulder

Work on proper Swing:

- begin swing with short, soft stride with front foot remaining closed
- throw hands toward the ball, bringing bat through the hitting zone to strike the top half of the ball
- "whip" the bat head, turning hips at the same time (turn on the ball of back foot - squash the bug)
- keep eyes and head on the ball until contact
- balance is important throughout the swing and finish

Throwing Station: players should preferably throw to an adult, but can throw to a target

**- start with player facing target, feet shoulder width apart, glove side foot ahead of throwing side
foot**

**- pivot on ball of throwing side foot and step with glove side foot toward target (point little toe at
target)**

**- "scarecrow" position - reach back with throwing hand, elbow bent, wrist straight up with ball
away**

from body; elbow on glove side pointing toward the target

**- start throwing motion by pulling glove side elbow down as throwing arm moves forward (elbow
still
bent)**

**- throwing arm does not extend fully until ball reaches release point in front of body, wrist "snaps"
as**

ball is released

**- proper follow-through includes throwing hand continuing down to outside of glove side knee,
bending**

forward at waist, and throwing side foot stepping toward the target

****NOTE: make sure players reach back correctly "scarecrow"; watch for "pushing" the ball and
correct**

Fielding Station: Fly Balls - work with players on infield dirt or grass, use tennis balls

**- first, show players the proper glove position to field a fly ball: if the ball is below mid-thigh, then
"thumbs down"; if the ball is above mid-thigh, then "thumbs up"**

- second, show players fielding position for fly balls - glove side foot forward, glove up and to throwing hand side, always use two hands to catch ball
- third, toss fly balls to player, making sure they move in front of ball and field it correctly; do three

to player and then rotate to next player; continue until time runs out

Team Lesson: Base running, 1st base to 3rd base

- explain the role of base coaches; show the sign for "stop" and the sign for "go"
- have the players line up behind first base, and one at a time, take a base runner position on 1st base;
- explain that they cannot leave the base until the ball is hit by the batter
- have the players run to 2nd base, and 3rd base coach give "stop" or "go" sign to continue to 3rd base

Practice Plan - T-Ball: (1 hour practice)

Practice #3

Date: _____ **Time:** _____

Team Roster: _____

to : entire team - warmup exercises (jumping jacks, leg stretches, arm circles)
(8 minutes)

to : entire team lesson - explain how to get "outs" on defense; infield / outfield play
(15 minutes)

- explain 3 outs per half inning; a ball caught in the air is an out; a ground ball that is fielded and thrown to 1st base before the batter reaches 1st base is an out
- explain concept of "force play"
- place players at defensive positions, and hit balls to them; have infielders throw the ball to 1st base; have outfielders throw the ball to 2nd base

Team 1 Team 2

to : entire team lesson - practice game
(25 minutes)

- divide the team into 2 teams (decide breakdown in advance)
- put one team in the field, and one team batting
- each player on the batting team bats once, and then they go into the field
- each player on the this team bats once, and then they switch again; continue until time is up
- stop play as necessary to teach rules, but keep things moving
- remind players to use the skills they have practiced during the hitting, throwing, and fielding stations

to : entire team - wrap up: reenforce lessons learned, acknowledge "hard work"
(6 minutes)

****NOTE: plan allows 2 minutes to rotate players from one station to the next**

List of "Team Lessons" to teach at T-Ball practices:

Base Running:

1) Home to 1st Base

- explain the order of the bases: 1st base, 2nd base, 3rd base, home plate
- have the players line up behind home plate, and one at a time, take a pretend swing and then run to 1st base
- make sure the players run all the way through the bag at 1st base, break down, and turn right

2) From 1st to 3rd Base

- explain the role of base coaches; show the sign for "stop" and the sign for "go"
- have the players line up behind 1st base, and one at a time, take a base runner position on 1st base;

explain that they cannot leave the base until the ball is hit by the batter

- have the player run to 2nd base, and 3rd base coach give the "stop" sign, or the "go" sign to continue on to 3rd base

3) Concept of "Force Play"

- explain that you cannot have more than one runner on any base
- there is a "force play" any time the base runner must run because there is another base runner coming to the base he/she is on
- if there is a "force play" at a base, you get the out by throwing the ball to that base before the runner reaches the base
- if there is a runner on 1st base and the batter hits a ground ball, the runner on 1st base must run because the batter is running to 1st base; this means there is a "force play" at 2nd base
- if there are runners at 1st base and 2nd base, then there is a "force play" at 2nd base and 3rd base
- if there are runners at 1st base, 2nd base and 3rd base, then there is a "force play" at home plate, 3rd base and 2nd base
- there is always a "force play" at 1st base
- if there is a runner on 2nd base, but not at 1st base, then there is no "force play" because the runner at 2nd base does not have to run

4) Fly Ball with less than two outs

- a base runner must "tag up" before he/she can advance to the next base after a fly ball is caught in the air; this means the runner must go back to the base they were on and touch it with their foot after the ball is caught
 - if the defensive player that catches the ball in the air can throw the ball to the base the runner was on before the runner "tags up", then the runner is out
 - this means if there are less than two outs and the batter hits a fly ball, the base runner must stay close enough to the base he/she is on so that they can get back to the base safely if the ball is caught in the air
 - if there are less than two outs and a runner on 3rd base and the batter hits a fly ball, the runner should stay on the base until the ball is caught or dropped; the runner can run to home plate as soon as the ball is touched by the fielder, and usually get there before the fielder can throw the ball to home plate
 - if there are two outs and the batter hits a fly ball, the base runner can run because if the ball is caught in the air, that makes three outs and the inning is over
- Defensive Play:

1) Always check to see if you can get the lead runner

- if there is a runner on 1st base and the batter hits a ground ball, it is better to get the runner out at 2nd base than to get the batter out at 1st base
- if possible, you want to get the runner closest to home plate because this makes it more difficult for the team batting to score a run

- if you are not sure you can get the lead runner, then take the sure out
- 2) Take the force play
- it is easier to make a force play than to tag a runner out, so if there are two outs it is better to throw the batter out at 1st base than to try to tag out a runner a 3rd base

