

This is a guide to help coaches set up a practice, it is by no means definitive. Our goal is to aid the new coach and give direction to the experienced coach. This guide is very basic, if you have ideas or methods you want to use, well it's your team. We do want you to teach basic baseball, catch, throw, run, hit, and think baseball. We plan on having someone available to coaches that will help with practice set ups and drills. Check our web site for info. We, the board, love baseball and know the best way to advance baseball is thru you the coaches. You are the teachers of baseball, the great American pass time. Have a good season and have fun!

A Practice

Always come to practice with a game plan, things you saw in the last game that need work, things you want to strengthen, etc. Work each station you choose 5-15 minutes then move on to another station. You can always come back later and hit a station a second time. Five to fifteen minutes is about as long as kids will stay attentive. Keep an eye on the groups and move them from station to station to keep their interest up. Stay away from spending time on trick plays and specialty plays. Stick to the basics first, catching, throwing, and running.

For head coaches with adult help, asst. coaches and parent help, put an adult in charge of each station. If you're working alone select a leader for each group and have the leader help run the station. This second method is not as efficient as adult supervision, so it should be closely monitored by the coach.

Start the practice with a short warm-up lap to get the blood flowing. Then go to soft throwing, working just the wrist and elbow. Slowly work farther apart and use the arm and body. End the warm-up with long toss, have them throwing as far as they can.

It's now time to break them up into groups and put them at the practice stations.

THE STATIONS

1. Infield

Hit ground balls and have them throw to first base

2. Infield techniques

Line up players and practice the cross over step both left and right.

The ready position

How to step back for pop ups and to catch the ball over the throwing shoulder.

How to charge the ball and why

Practice the proper methods for run downs.

NOTE

It's always a good practice to explain why you are teaching a certain method for example "We use a cross over step because it gives us a half step greater distance towards the ball".

3. Infield plays

The double play, how and where each player should go

Getting the ball to the pivot mans throwing shoulder

How the pivot man should approach the bag and what foot to use

How and why the pivot man needs to stay out of the base path.

Why the first base man should wait until the ball is thrown before stretching

4 Pop ups

Throw or hit pop ups.

Work on , [the step back steps, to run under the ball, to get set, to try and catch the ball over the throwing shoulder, and to check the runner after the catch.

NOTE

This one you can give as home work. The player can throw his own pop ups in the back yard.

Work on calling for the ball, "I've got it".

5 Fly balls

Hit fly balls, practice getting under the ball, catching the ball over the throwing shoulder, the crows hop throw, calling for it, and how outfielders can help each other locate and get under the ball.

Point out and walk through the back up positions for outfielders. [No player is spectator during a game, back up someone]

6 Base running

Run straight thru first base, How to make a loop before first base if the ball goes thru, How to hit the inside corners of the bases, What to look for on an outfield hit,

and how to determine if and which slide to use by watching the location of the defending baseman.

Practice sliding, [a good rainy day activity on grass]

Practice the cross over step and short sprints [the first five steps are the most important]

Teach how to lead off if your level of play allows it

How to get back to the bag on pickoffs and how to spot a pickoff

7 Hitting

Practice swinging the bat, work on form, swing at imaginary pitches. Practice swinging the bat and getting out of the batters box. Practice wrist snaps

8 Hitting

Whiffel balls [golf ball size] a short pitch to hitter, work on making contact, see the bat hit the ball.

9 Hitting

Use a T-stand, practice hitting ball to specific locations, practice hitting inside an outside locations

10 Hitting

Soft toss- throw from the side and work on inside and outside pitches and high and low pitches. DO NOT HIT INTO FENCES

11 Hitting

Live pitching, limit swings to move quicker thru the groups A combined activity with other groups, take 5 swings making the last one live and have the hitter run and the infield outfield make the play.

12 Bunting

Work on techniques and reasons, practice laying down bunts on both first and third baselines

13 Pitching

A book could be written on pitching but for our purposes, work from the proper distance using both the windup and the stretch. Practice location , stay with a location until they can hit the glove say three or four times in row then move to a new location

Work on fielding and base coverage and backing up plays on the infield.

14 Catching

Put on equipment and teach how to block pitches in the dirt and how move the whole body not just the glove.

How to locate and catch pop ups, practice pulling off the mask locating the ball, throwing mask away from the play and catching the ball.

15 Skull practice

Whole or small group. Discuss why and the reasons for the skills we learn, the advantages of backing each other up, why we should be watching the other team, why we need to always hustle. And anything about baseball.

16 The game

Keep notes during the game and have a short after the game meeting. Recognize good plays and players and where your team needs work It's also a good time to pass along any info you have concerning the team.