

NCLL Coaches' Book

2015



NCLL Objectives

The objectives for which NCLL is formed:

1. To promote and improve organized youth baseball within the Little League outlined boundaries of NCLL by providing competitive and instructional programs; and the opportunity for players to participate in a team concept at the appropriate competitive levels based on their skill and interest levels;
2. To develop and encourage sportsmanship between all players for the betterment of their physical and emotional health;
3. Heimple Park, Bethlehem, PA will be the designated Home Field for NCLL; and
4. To strive to perform any and all acts to further the above goals.

In order to achieve the above NCLL will:

1. Provide proper, qualified coaching in accordance with Little League Guidelines;
2. Provide competition at a level commensurate with an individual's and their team skill level;
3. Provide practice time and game time as scheduled; and
4. Adhere to and follow the Bylaws of Little League International and PA District 20.

Age Divisions

Age divisions will be determined as per the guidelines of Little League International each season.

In general, NCLL will participate in the following divisions:

TeeBall	Ages 5-6
Farm	Ages 7-8
Minors	Ages 9-10
Majors	Ages 11-12
Juniors	Ages 13-14
Seniors	Ages 15-16

Divisional Objectives

Tee-Ball (5-6 years) and Farm Division (7-8 years) Objectives:

The program objective for the NCLL Tee-Ball and Farm Divisions is to introduce the game of organized baseball to children (5-8 years) through practices, coach-assisted games, and eventually non-coach assisted games. Tee-Ball and Farm level practices and games develop basic fundamentals and teamwork skills in a friendly, non-competitive environment. The experience of different positions is encouraged at this level. The dimensions of Tee-Ball and Farm level baseball diamonds are smaller than those of regulation Little League baseball. The rules are simplified to accommodate young beginner players. The program emphasizes instruction, skill development, player safety and sportsmanship over winning. In-house tournament-type baseball is offered at the Farm Division at the conclusion of regular season play.

Player Development Objectives

- THE BIG 3 - have fun, try hard, be good sport
- Identify parts of baseball diamond/field (e.g. infield, outfield, foul territory, pitcher's mound, base names and locations, batter's box, etc.)
- Learn game concepts (basic rules, strike, ball, out, inning, run, hit, walk, etc.)
- Identify equipment

- Identify and locate fielding positions
- Grip baseball and throw overhand to target
- Catch baseball with two hands
- Assume athletic position
- Assume defensive ready position
- Call for ball before catching or fielding it
- Stay in assigned field position on defense
- Play defense founded on concept of being responsible for specific area of field
- Field ball (ground ball or pop-up flyball) and throw to correct player to attempt out
- Assume proper batting stance in batter's box
- Demonstrate basic understanding of strike zone
- Swing bat and successfully hit ball placed on a tee or pitched (Farm Division)
- Pitch from pitcher's mound (Farm Division)
- Play position of Catcher, equipped and crouched, throwing arm protected (Farm Division)
- Run bases and score runs
- Stay on task entire game
- Demonstrate sportsmanship
- Demonstrate proper field decorum and dugout etiquette
- Participate fully in pregame and postgame team activities/responsibilities (warm-ups, cleaning dugout, packing-up equipment, field preparations)

Minor Division (9-10 years) and Major Division (11-12 years) Objectives:

The program objective for the NCLL Minor and Major Divisions is to introduce the complete game of baseball to children ages 9-12 years through practices and unassisted games. Minor and Major Division practices and games develop individual player abilities and teamwork skills in a positive, fair and appropriately competitive environment. Players will experience and learn situational and strategic baseball (e.g. live pitching, stealing, winning and losing). The playing of different positions continues at this level, though some specialization occurs as players advance. Coaching styles may or may not dictate equal playing time; however mandatory playing requirements are strictly observed and enforced. Games are played according to the Rules and Regulations of Little League Baseball, Inc. Rules may be modified (local rules) for Minors Division as determined appropriate to accommodate younger players' abilities in the transitional/developmental process and to enhance the pace of the game. Little League Tournament baseball is offered for All Stars at both divisions at the conclusion of League Play.

Player Development Objectives

- THE BIG 3 - have fun, try hard, be good sport
- Advance knowledge of game concepts and rules (force out, tag-out, infield fly rule, dropped third strike)
- Advance development of defensive skills (in the field) and offensive skills (at plate, on bases)
- Learn value of pregame warm up regimen, calisthenics and skills (time to refine skills/technique in addition to simply loosening up)
- Advance understanding of situational baseball
- Play more aggressively, play more strategically
- Consistently execute routine defensive plays with success
- Execute plays based on coach's signal on offense and defense
- Execute three primary team objective on defensive

- Stop ball
- Stop runner
- Return ball to middle infield
- Execute three primary defensive responsibilities (3Ms), by position and situational variables, when ball put in play -every player, every play
 - Move to ball
 - Move to base
 - Move to backup
- Execute infield and outfield defensive hierarchies
- Execute bunt defensive responsibilities by position and situational variables
- Adjust defensive alignment with situational variables (e.g. infield shifts, base defense, prevent defense, bunt defense, no doubles, etc.)
- Integrate proper footwork into defensive play, infielders and outfielders
- Pitching
 - Pitch strikes consistently
 - Pitch from wind up or stretch
 - Pitch with greater command - location and intention
 - Pitch with increased velocity with improved arm strength and training
- Catching
 - Play position of Catcher as an on-field manager
 - Putout of base runner on steal attempt (Catcher)
 - Block ball on wild pitch (Catcher)
- Fielding
 - Execute rundown of base runner in jeopardy
 - Execute three methods for fielding groundball at outfield positions
 - Track and catch more challenging flyballs
 - Make more accurate and longer throws
 - Throw to cutoff/relay and/or appropriate base to attempt putout or halt advance of runner
 - Execute double plays at infield positions
- Execute small game defense (i.e. managing your opponents efforts with base runners to leverage defensive mistakes)
- Capitalize on opponent's mistakes on offense and defense (e.g. take extra base on error, attempt put out on opportunity target/runner in jeopardy)
- Leverage mistakes by opponent on offense and defense(as permitted by game rules and accepted standards of sportsmanship)
- Adjust hitting approach with situational variables
- Attempt bunt for both sacrifice and hit
- Consistently execute routine base running responsibilities (run hard when ball is in play, use eyes and ears in addition to legs; run through bag at first, make turn at first when ball leaves infield, etc.)
- Attempt stolen bases
- Execute slide safely
- Execute tag advance on flyball
- Demonstrate sportsmanship
- Demonstrate proper field decorum and dugout etiquette
- Participate fully in pregame and postgame team activities/responsibilities (warm-ups, cleaning dugout, packing-up equipment, field preparations)

Skills Development

Stretching

- Arms, Legs, Torso
- Begin each practice with a light jog, followed by a team stretch
- Accomplishes objective of stretching, teaching good habits and teamwork

Throwing Progression

- Mechanics basics
 - Start with ball in glove; hand on ball, glove shoulder facing your target
 - Separate hands and move feet into the ready position
 - Throwing arm like a field goal post with fingers toward head, ball away
 - Front arm with glove pointing at target
 - Weight shift and rotation are key
 - Step and rotate trunk
 - Shift weight from back leg to front while bringing elbow through, followed by the ball
 - Follow through to opposite knee
- Never throw to someone who doesn't have a target up!
- Grip ball with light yet sure grip, two or three fingers on top and across four seams, thumb under, pinky finger along side of the ball - check grip on the ball – 2 fingers across 4 seams
- Position feet, hips and shoulders in-line with target – shoulder facing target
- Grip ball in glove, keep eyes on target
- Separate hands, shift weight slightly to power leg (back leg). Hand separation should involve either a thumbs down circle motion or bow and arrow motion
- Step to target with glove-side foot while pushing off with power foot (younger levels – point glove at target at this point)
- Combine step with circular overhand motion. Front foot should have toe facing target.
- Point glove hand at target
- Open trunk, bring elbow through high (shoulder level or higher), followed by hand and ball
- Release ball out front, with fingertips on top and behind ball
- Follow through with elbow to opposite knee, swinging power leg forward into ready position

Catching Progression

- Mechanics basics
 - Always show a target
 - Hands in front of your body, you can't catch in line with your body
 - Catch the ball in the TV zone – move your body and bend your knees to make it possible
 - Palm of glove up for low balls, forward for chest high and up
 - Always two hands
 - Watch the ball into your glove
- If someone is scared, options include tossing a small “bouncy ball” or whiffle ball to build confidence
- Assume ready position - feet shoulder-width apart, knees bent, weight forward, hands out front
- Square-up, face thrower and give target with two hands
- Watch ball into glove
- Catch ball out front with two hands, gloved hand and throwing hand thumb-to-thumb
- Support web of glove lightly with throwing hand as ball is received, then cover, do not squeeze the web with throwing hand
- Catch ball chest high if possible. (This is commonly referred to as the TV zone)
- Step to ball, side-to-side, up-and-back, up-and-down bending knees
- Rotate glove, palm-up for low throws, palm-forward for chest high and above throws
- Absorb ball to body core

- Begin throwing progression with front foot, power foot, feet, hips and shoulders in-line with target

Infielding Progression

- Mechanics basics
 - Must teach the ready position – feet shoulder width apart, knees bent (nose, knees, toes) and hands out front, palms forward at a height about mid-thigh
 - To get to field a ball, for a right handed player, the step are right / left / right. They move lower on each step, and on step 2, the glove is at the ground and step 3 is a good, ready fielding position – back pretty straight, hands out front, glove down with free hand above it and head up watching the ball
 - Watch the ball into the glove and do the alligator with the hands
 - Bring the ball to the belly button – looking it in
 - Come up into the ready position and be ready to throw to a target
 - Back-handing a ball is a last resort – teach them to get around the ball!
- Assume ready position – feet shoulder-width apart, glove-side foot slightly forward, knees bent, weight forward yet balanced, hands out front and low. Proper position should have the player’s nose, knees and toes in a single plane. **Little difference in this – I believe infielders should have chest up, able to move quicker, not so low. Thoughts?**
- Move to ball - step left-right-left for ball hit to fielder’s left; step right, left, right for ball to fielder’s right
- Create angle to target - round ball hit straight-on or slightly to fielder’s right
- Receive ball glove-side of-of-center (for most, righties, this will be left-of-center) with head down, knees bent, chest between knees, glove out front and down, throwing hand above in the “alligator” position
- Watch ball into the glove, absorb (give a little), cover with free hand. Bring ball toward the belly button
- Begin throwing progression by stepping and moving feet toward target (hip facing target)
- Stay low, align feet, hips and shoulders with target
- Shuffle- step, release out front, follow throw to target
- **2B right foot steps on top bag receiving ball from left side of outfield**
- **SS left foot on top of bag when receiving throw from right side of infield**

Outfielding Progression

- Two golden rules of outfield play are:
 - Stop ball
 - Return ball to middle infield
- Start in the ready position – feet shoulder width apart, knees bent, weight forward yet balanced, hands out front and at mid-thigh
- Ground ball (block method)
 - Explode to ball but approach ball with control, come set to receive if possible, don’t run through ball
 - Keep ball out front with glove-side leg forward
 - Drop to knee of throwing-side/power foot
 - Receive ball palm-up, pinkie-to-pinkie, chest forward and over, head on ball
 - Watch ball into glove, absorb (give a little), cover with free hand
 - Pop-up, begin throwing progression by squaring off power foot
 - Stay low, align feet, hips and shoulders with target
 - Release out front, follow throw to target
- Ground Ball (play method)
 - Explode to ball, but approach ball with control, don’t run through ball
 - Create angle to target by rounding ball in direction of target
 - Receive ball slightly glove-side-of-center with head down, knees bent, chest forward and over, glove out front and down, throwing hand above, come set to receive if possible
 - Stay behind ball to block if bad hop

- Pop-up, begin throwing progression by squaring off power foot
- Stay low, align feet, hips and shoulders with target
- Release out front, follow throw to target
- Ground Ball (scoop method)
 - Explode to ball, create angle to target by rounding ball in direction of target
 - Approach ball aggressively, on a modified run
 - Receive ball low and outside glove-side with glove hand only, assumes a perfect hop
 - Transition to throwing progression while moving through the ball in direction of target, no break in momentum
 - Hop off power foot
 - Release out front, follow throw to target
- Flyball
 - Create path to ball with first step when ball is batted in air - step with right foot if ball to right, or with left foot if ball straight-on or to left. First step is lunge step if ball hit short, side-to-side, in front; drop step if ball hit overhead, side-to-side, behind
 - Run to ball under control, hands in and close (including glove), toe run to a spot
 - Turn back on ball on deep ball (like catching a football), peek over shoulder and get to spot
 - Don't float to ball, no back peddling
 - Settle under ball, catch ball at eye level with two hands, step into catch if possible
 - Bring hands down into body, begin throwing progression by squaring off power foot
 - Stay low, align feet, hips and shoulders with target
 - Release out front, follow throw to target

Cutoffs and Relay

- Cutoffs move between and in-line with outfielder receiving ball and target base
- In general, on balls to the outfield – ground balls go two bases ahead of the lead runner, fly balls go one base ahead of lead runner.
- Move to underthrown balls to eliminate short hop
- Outfielders throw to or through cutoff man
- Outfielders throw to cutoff positioned for relay to two bases in front of lead runner on ground balls, one base ahead of lead runner on fly balls
 - Bases empty
 - If ball is batted to LF or CF, SS is cutoff, 2B covers second, P backs up second, others stay home
 - If ball batted to RF, 2B is cutoff, SS covers second, P backs up SS, others stay home
 - Lead runner on first
 - If ball batted to LF, SS is cut off, 3B covers third, P backs up third, 2B covers second, others stay home
 - If ball batted to CF, SS is cut off, 3B covers third, P backs up third, 2B covers second, others stay home
 - If ball batted to RF, 1B is cutoff, 3B covers third, SS covers second, 2B covers first, catcher stays home
 - Lead runner of second
 - If ball batted to LF, 3B is cutoff, C covers plate, P backs up plate, SS covers third, 2B covers second, 1B covers first
 - If ball batted to RF, 1B is cutoff, C covers plate, P backs up plate, 3B covers third, SS covers second, 2B covers first
 - If ball batted to CF, 1B is cutoff, C covers plate, P backs up plate, 3B covers third, SS covers second, 2B covers first
 - First-and-third, second-and-third, or first-second-and-third
 - Revert to tailing runner (behind lead) for ground balls (unless prevent defense is on), lead runner for fly balls
- Or keep it simple
 - If ball batted to left side to center of field, SS is cutoff, 2B covers second, P backs up target base, all others stay home
 - If ball batted to right side of field, 2B is cutoff, SS covers second, P backs up target base, all others stay home

Pitching Progression

- Mechanics
 - 1-Step
 - 2-Turn foot
 - 3-Knee raise
 - 4-Break hands
 - 5-Step/weight shift/arm (elbow) up
 - 6-Rotate/toss/follow through
- “Just play catch” – do not aim the ball

- Windup (1 to 6 count for pitching positions)
 - Stand in
 - Relaxed stance with both feet on rubber, space between feet, toes slightly proud of rubber, shoulders parallel with plate
 - Hold ball in glove resting against waist or chest or out in front of the body
 - Should be on the glove side of the pitching rubber
 - Weight Transfer
 - Take small step, to the side with glove-side foot bearing weight
 - Keep unobstructed view of the target, eyes on mitt
 - Pivot Foot (Turn Step)
 - Square up (twist to align hips and shoulders with plate) off of pivot foot (power foot), place it in front of rubber, outer edge in contact
 - Instep of the pivot foot faces batter
 - Square shoulders to face third base (righties) or first base (lefties) with glove-side pointed to catcher
 - Knee Lift
 - Shift weight to pivot foot, bend and raise knee, bring thigh parallel to ground
 - Keep lift foot underneath knee and keep balance, don't kick out
 - At height of lift, bring knee slightly back toward rubber to ensure hips closed and weight fully on power leg
 - Balance leg should have knee bend to increase power
 - Stride
 - Length of the stride will vary, the goal is to take longest, comfortable stride
 - Maximum stride allow release of ball closer to plate, with higher velocity
 - Power leg (in contact with the pitching rubber) should have knee bend and upon stride, the knee extends to propel the pitcher toward the batter
 - Land stride on ball of foot, in-line with the target, slightly closed to plate
 - Launch
 - Separate hands during knee lift and stride to assume launch position
 - Turn thumbs toward body (down) and palms away when separating ball from glove
 - Separate ball and glove inside of lift knee
 - Bring glove-side elbow to shoulder height, point at target
 - Bring throwing elbow, slightly bent in an “L” shape, just above shoulder height
 - Drive off rubber with power leg
 - Arm Acceleration
 - Drive glove-side elbow down and vertically past hip and back to ensure throwing shoulder up, elbow at shoulder height, and torso snaps open
 - Bring elbow through, followed by hand and ball
 - Release ball out front, with fingertips on top and behind ball
 - Follow Through

- Bend at the waist, get head out over stride knee
- Continue arm motion past stride knee
- Bring power leg forward to ready position
- Stretch
 - Stretch
 - Wide spread stance, feet greater than shoulder-width, with pivot foot (power foot), place it in front of rubber, outer edge in contact
 - Instep of the pivot foot faces batter
 - Feet, hips and shoulders facing third (righties) or first base (lefties), glove-side pointed at plate
 - Glove on knee, grip ball behind hip (there are variations here)
 - Set
 - Bring glove-side foot to ready position
 - Join glove-hand and gripped ball at waist or in front of the chest
 - Knee Lift
 - Shift weight to pivot foot (power leg), bend and raise knee, bring thigh parallel to ground
 - Keep lift foot underneath knee and keep knee bend and balance, don't kick out
 - At height of lift, bring knee slightly back toward rubber to ensure hips closed and weight fully on power leg
 - Stride
 - Length of the stride will vary, the goal is to take longest, comfortable stride
 - Maximum stride allow release of ball closer to plate, with higher velocity
 - Land stride on ball of foot, in-line with the target, slightly closed to plate
 - Launch
 - Separate hands during lift and stride to assume launch position
 - Turn thumbs toward body (down) and palms away when separating ball from glove
 - Separate ball and glove inside of lift knee
 - Bring glove-side elbow to shoulder height, point at target
 - Bring throwing elbow, slightly bent in an "L" shape, just above shoulder height
 - Drive of rubber with power leg
 - Arm Acceleration
 - Drive glove-side elbow down and vertically past hip and back to ensure throwing shoulder up, elbow at shoulder height, and torso snaps open
 - Bring elbow through, followed by hand and ball
 - Release ball out front, with fingertips on top and behind ball
 - Follow Through
 - Bend at the waist, get head out over stride knee
 - Continue arm motion past stride knee
 - Bring power leg forward to ready position

Catcher Progression

- Basics to cover
 - Mechanics
 - Stance
 - Showing target
 - Moving glove to ball
 - Blocking the ball
 - Throwing the ball back to the pitcher
- Bases empty

- Singular focus on pitcher
- Set up in relaxed comfortable squat, feet shoulder-width apart, butt low but not lazy – primary stance
- Square hips and shoulders to face pitcher, feet straight across or slightly staggered with mitt-side foot slightly forward and power leg slightly back
- Move body inside-out with target location
- Relax receiving arm (mitt hand), give low target
- Glove hand elbow should be outside the knee to receive the ball wherever it goes
- Place throwing hand behind back or butt (or glove)
- Watch for ball, receive ball deep, don't reach or stab at ball
- Try to secure ball without moving mitt
- Runner(s) on base
 - Focus on pitcher and baserunner
 - Set up in a ready squat, feet slightly wider, in staggered position, raised rear end – secondary position
 - Square hips and shoulders to face pitcher, weight slightly more on balls of feet
 - Move body inside-out with target location
 - Raise elbow of receiving elbow slightly, push mitt out front slightly, place throwing hand behind mitt, ready to explode into throw to challenge a stealing runner, ready to explode to block wild pitch
 - Remember, face mask, chest protector and shin guards are tools for Catcher position. They are not simply player protection
 - Throw down
 - Catch and transfer ball with momentum exploding forward
 - Take first, small jab step to centerline of body and toward target to begin throwing progression
 - Split hands with snapping action (bow and arrow), and explode arm through and body to target
 - Leave mask on
 - Block
 - Explode to knees in front of ball using off foot opposite location of throw (off left foot for ball wide right, right foot for ball wide left), corral or slightly circle ball
 - Become a soft wall to smother ball
 - Keep head down, roll shoulders forward, chest down, stop ball with chest protector
 - Keep the ball down and in front
 - Mitt becomes secondary, a catch is not important
 - Do not attempt to scoop pitch
 - Leave mask on
 - Fielding bunt
 - Explode out of squat with jab step to circle or corral ball in direction of intended throw (with left foot first if throwing to right side, right foot is throwing to left side)
 - Get low, attack ball with throwing hand, grind ball into ground or into mitt (sweep motion with glove and throwing hand)
 - Begin throwing progression by squaring off power foot
 - Stay low, align feet, hips and shoulders with target
 - Release out front, follow throw to target
 - Passed ball
 - Create path to ball with first movement from squat
 - Do not remove mask
 - Approach ball with throwing-side towards ball, glove-side towards field
 - Place throwing-side foot close to ball

- Slide approach to ball on knees is okay, throwing-side towards ball, glove-side towards field
- Grind ball into ground or into mitt for grip
- Make strong underhanded toss to plate

Bunt Defense

- Bases empty
 - P, C, 1B and, 3B crash ball
 - 2B to first base
 - SS to second base
 - RF to first base as backup
- Lead runner on first base
 - P, C and 1B crash ball
 - 2B to first base
 - SS to second base
 - 3B stays home
 - OF backup closest base
- Lead runner on second base
 - Same as above
- Lead runner of third base
 - P, 1B and 3B crash ball
 - C to plate
 - 2B to first base
 - SS to third base
 - CF to second base
 - RF to first base
 - LF to third base

Batting Progression

- Basics of Swing Mechanics
 - Stance, hand position (holding bat), hand position (up and back), movement (rhythm), step with no weight shift, weight shift, throw hands forward @ the ball with hip rotation
- Grip the bat with loose yet firm grip between fingers and pads (not palms), dominant hand top, hands together, second knuckles in-line
- Stand in middle of batter's box, look at feet to create an awareness of location
- Assume balanced, athletic stance with feet slight greater than shoulder-width apart, knees lightly bent, toe-to-toe, feet and shoulders in-line with pitcher, head in, head level, both eyes on pitcher
- Keep hands high, bat up and back (don't wrap bat)
- Take a hitch step (raise heel) or short stride with side of ankle facing pitcher to load as pitch is delivered, keep hands high (don't drop), set stride foot down
- Follow hitch with combined weight shift (back to neutral, not too far forward) to power foot and hip rotation, throwing hands down, at, and through ball. Power foot will twist to toes with top of foot facing pitcher
- Keep head down (nose on the ball), watch ball hit bat
- **End swing releasing one hand over the lead shoulder – I typically like two hands on the bat on follow through, finishes the power and reduces thrown bats at under 12.**
- Swing should be compact with lead elbow slightly below wrists, back elbow tight to torso, bat should follow wrists through strike zone (hands out front)

Bunting Progression

- Stand in middle to front of batter's box
- Open stance with pivot or small backstep with front foot, combined with small jab step with back foot towards the plate when pitch delivery begins
- Rotate bat forward from back shoulder, like an ax, to get bat out in front of body at approximately the right angle
- Bunt with barrel of bat higher than grip
- Bend at knees and waist and place head of bat at eye level and at top of strike zone – any ball above the bat, the bat should be pulled back
- Grip the bat with the top hand by sliding hand up barrel, gripping bat between index finger and thumb (behind the barrel)
- Leave bottom hand at knob or slide up grip a few inches
- Bend elbows slightly with bat out front
- Adjust to the height of pitch by using knees, up-and-down
- To bunt ball to right side, bottom hand is pushed out
- To bunt ball to left side, bottom hand is pulled back

Base Running

- *Keys to base running*
 - When to look at the ball
 - Watching the person in front of you
 - Watching the coach for whether to run to the next base
- Home to First
 - Three methods – straight through, question mark and arc
 - Find ball with eyes (this will give idea of ball leaving infield or not), then forget about it.
 - Run hard out of box
 - Take three hard steps, and then glance at the ball to see where it is.
 - Use ears listening for the first base coach's instructions to either "run through", "make turn" or "go two"
 - If "run through", go hard through bag and turn into foul territory
 - If "make turn", round or arc turn, clip inside corner of bag, pull up at edge of first base cutout facing centerfield, looking for ball, with ears open for instruction from first base coach
 - Be aggressive in turn, put pressure on outfield to field ball cleanly and make good throw
 - Do not remove eyes from ball until pitcher returns to mounds
 - If "go two" go hard to second and slide, do not overrun base
 - If the ball is definitely through the infield, a "question mark" turn should be used where the player begins the turn about half way up the line and positions themselves for a straight line to second
 - If the ball is a "gapper" and definitely going for two bases, the turn should start immediately from the batter's box to get a straight line to second.
- First to -, and Second to -
 - Look at third base coach for sign while standing on the base
 - Assume ready position with left foot on bag, and do not remove eyes from the ball (likely in pitcher's hand but if not prepared to take advantage)
 - Take a safe but challenging lead after pitch is delivered and assume ready position, stay low
 - Runner must be ready to take advantage of mistake and pressure defense to attend to them
 - If moving with contact or on pitch, runner assumes slide at next base. Do not overrun base
 - Be aware of runners ahead
 - Pick up voice of and glance at third base coach during run, follow instruction
- Leads
 - Once the ball is past the catcher, you may leave the base for a lead

- From first base, a three shuffle lead is appropriate
 - Never take your eyes off the catcher in case of a throw behind the runner. Runners may dive back to the base
 - Maintain the lead until the pitcher has the ball in his possession. We must capitalize on bad throws back to the pitcher
- From second base, a 5-6 step lead is appropriate
 - Never take your eyes off the catcher in case of a throw behind the runner. Runners may dive back to the base
 - Maintain the lead until the pitcher has the ball in his possession. We must capitalize on bad throws back to the pitcher
- From third base, a 4 step lead is appropriate, and must be in foul territory.
 - Never take your eyes off the catcher in case of a throw behind the runner. Runners may dive back to the base
 - Maintain the lead until the pitcher has the ball in his possession. We must capitalize on bad throws back to the pitcher
- Sliding
 - No head first slides, no hook slides, straight leg slides only
 - Begin slide about 1-2 body lengths from base
 - Keep momentum going forward, jump into slide don't drop into slide
 - Bend right one leg at knee, bring up behind other/lead leg that will touch bag (figure 4 slide)
 - Slightly bend lead leg to allow give when sliding into based, keep lead leg cleat raised slightly from ground
 - Raise both hands over head, land on both buns with strong body core and head-up, don't flop back
 - Look for ball to get through
 - Call for time out if safe and fielder keeps tag applied
 - Pop-up slide will come with practice
 - Don't slide into first
 - Remember, first and home are the only bases you can overrun. Slide rather than overrun a base!

Batting practice

- 1 soft toss station before hitting to ensure proper mechanics
- Players scatter in infield and outfield (organized rotation for younger players ensures they play all positions during practice) and field balls and throw to a coach at 2nd base with a bucket to put ball in
- Each batter gets 20 or so swings.
- The focus is on hitting, time should not be taken to worry about fielding and throwing by the BP coach – other coaches can pull players aside to work with them during this time on those skills if needed

North Central Little League

WELCOME TO THE BASEBALL SEASON

**You and your child (children) are North Central Little League.
Your help is required to make this league successful.**

There are so many things that are needed to make a little league successful. Coaching is obvious; however there are many behind the scenes jobs that need to get done. Some of these are mandatory and some are voluntary. To help make North Central Little League a great experience for your child, we request your help in accepting some of these responsibilities.

Coaching

If you are interested, please let one of the officers know at sign-ups. All coaches and managers must have a background check in order to coach.

Umpires

Please speak to your child's manager if you are interested in umpiring.

Fields

There are usually two (2) work parties scheduled to get the fields in condition to play. All parents are urged to help at the work parties. Plus, all season long, fields need to be rakes after every game and practice. The coaches would surely appreciate any help in this area.

Grass cutting

This service is needed throughout the year. Tractors and lawn mowers are provided. If you have time to help out, please contact a Board Member.

Fundraiser (Mandatory)

Calendar Lottery – using the daily evening number (first one if multiple are drawn) for a 3 month period

Each family is required to sell 3 lottery calendars per child

Important – Fundraiser **MUST** be turned in for your child to receive their uniform.

Concession Stand (Mandatory)

Each player will be assigned two games that they will be required to have an adult (16 and older) work the concession stand. A schedule for this assignment will be made up by your team mom (or dad) and distributed prior to the start of your first scheduled game. Every time there is a game, two people from each home team will be assigned stand duty. Therefore, you will only be working the stand when your child is already at the field. If you cannot work your scheduled time, you are responsible for finding your replacement and communicating that to your team mom (or dad).

THANK YOU FOR HELPING SUPPORT NCLL!

NCLL Manager's Responsibilities – Regular Season

Little League Baseball Coaching Knowledge

- Must have and understand the Little League Rule Book.
- Must know all NCLL Rules regarding fields, buildings, grounds and equipment.
- Must know all NCLL Board Members, their responsibilities and maintain a list of their contact numbers and/or e-mail addresses.
- Must know all Division League Combination rules their team is playing in.
- Schedule a minimum of two (2) practices per week in the pre-season and one (1) practice per week during the season, weather permitting.
- Must ensure every player is being coached, regardless of their ability.
- Must commit to manage at least 75% of all regular season and league play-off games.
- Must make every effort to make sure each player meets or exceeds the minimum playing requirement of Little League Baseball. Must absolutely know substitution rules and pitcher eligibility rules and pitching requirement guidelines. No pitcher should be allowed to continue if they are showing signs of fatigue or injury, regardless of game situation.
- Give all players the chance to tryout for any defensive position they would like during the preseason. After assessing the player's abilities, then assign them to the defensive position you feel matches their desire and skill level in a safe and positive manner. Give every player the opportunity to play their position of choice by continuing to teach, evaluate and practice throughout the entire season.
- Manage every game and practice in accordance with Little League rules and guidelines, stressing Fair Play, Safety, Effort, Respect, Sportsmanship and Teamwork. Most importantly, make sure your players are learning, improving and have fun playing baseball.

Administrative Responsibilities

- Draft team in accordance with League rules and eligible players from your division approved by the NCLL Player Agent.
- After team is drafted, have potential coaches approved by the Board and ensure paperwork is filled out.
- Create roster with all player's contact information, as well as parents' / guardians' names and distribute.
- Provide each player with a game schedule and practice schedule.
- Administer all requests from NCLL regarding fundraising, league communications, and other requests to parents, players and volunteers.
- Communicate all incidents (injuries, absenteeism, quitting, discipline) to NCLL president, Player Agent, or available Board Member via proper forms.
- Any behavior problems not in accordance with our NCLL Code of Conduct by players, parents, volunteers or fans must be reported to the NCLL President.
- All roster changes and requests for Pool Players must be approved by NCLL Player Agent.
- All field and building related problems must be reported to the Fields and Building Officers of NCLL or to an available Board Member.
- Any player injury, regardless of its severity, while playing or practicing or under a Manager's supervision, must be reported to the NCLL President and the proper forms filled out within 24 hours. If you cannot get in touch with the President, please contact another Board Member.

Responsibilities for Coordinating Volunteers / Miscellaneous Field and Equipment Tasks

- No manager can do everything on their own. Delegating your tasks will be necessary. Assign a Team Mom/Dad to help facilitate volunteer requirements. Your responsibility will be to make sure your Coaches, Team Parent, Players, Volunteers and Parents are cooperating to help you complete all of your required tasks so you will have the most time available to coach your players.
- Make sure the Team Parent makes up a Concession Stand Duty schedule and works with parents to ensure coverage on all assigned days. This schedule should be given to the NCLL Concession Stand Coordinator. Also make sure the Team Parent monitors fundraising requirements and is up to date on these.
- The Manager is responsible for assigning a volunteer to umpire the games designated to your team and providing the list to the Umpire in Chief.
- The Manager is responsible for finding the volunteers to help cut grass if required.
- Prepare the field for play, including chalking lines and batter's boxes and ensuring the field is left in proper condition.
- Managers are responsible for evaluating field and weather conditions to make sure field is acceptable for a safe game. Prior to all game starts, the home team manager is responsible for cancellation of the game. Manager is responsible to coordinate with NCLL and their League Coordinator to reschedule the game according to field and team availability.
- Work with NCLL equipment and uniform officers to ensure you have the proper equipment, baseballs and uniforms. Any equipment or uniform problems or requests must be brought to the attention of the NCLL Equipment Manager.
- Managers should have first aid kits available for all home and away games.
- Managing a team takes a lot of dedication, time, effort and the ability to overcome many frustrations. It can also be very satisfying, rewarding and fun watching your players improve their skills through hard work and practice. Uncovering these positive qualities in our players is much more important than the actual score of their games. Our teams really belong to the players, not the managers. The manager's primary goals should be to instruct, inspire, encourage and create the best environment for our players to play Little League baseball.

Farm Baseball (7-8 year olds)

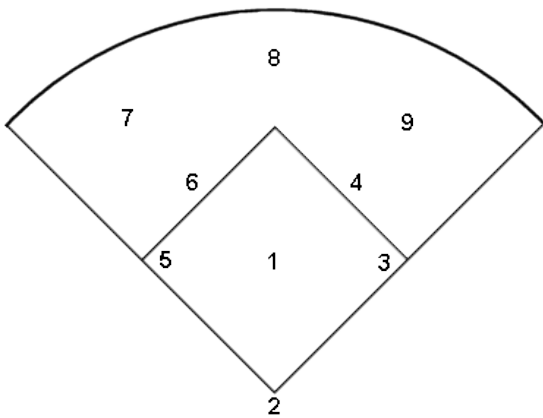
Official Rules of Play are in the Little League Rule Book. Amendments to Little League Rule Book are as follows:

- No score kept – no winners or losers, this is developmental.
- There will be a tournament at the end of the year where score is kept and a winner will be crowned.
- 6-year old players are allowed on a team with a maximum of 3 per team and they must be second year players.
- Weekday game time is 5:45 pm. Weekend game times are listed on the schedule.
 - Pre-game field times
 - Home team – ends 30 mins prior to game time
 - Away team – from 30 mins prior to game and ends 10 mins prior to game.
 - Field prep – last 10 mins before the game is reserved for field prep
- Home team supplies umpires, one new ball, and one back-up ball. If coaches are umpiring, the coach whose batters are batting shall be the umpire.
- Games are 6 innings; minimum game is 3 innings with playing time approximately 1-1.5 hours.
- No inning starts after 7:45 pm
- Postponement / Cancellation: Teams report to the field unless they get a call to cancel. To postpone a game due to weather conditions, the home team manager calls the away team manager at least 1.5 hours before game time. Managers agree to reschedule any postponed game for the next available rain date or within 7 days. Umpires, coordinator and concession stand must be notified of postponement and date/time of rescheduled game (this can be done through the NCLL Vice-President)
- Both teams must make every effort to get the field playable and play the game.
- The game may start and continue with any number of players with both managers' approval (no more than 10 on the field). Any player arriving late can immediately enter the game at the end of the batting order. Coaches may decide to equalize the number of players between both teams and continue play.
- Coaches should communicate to parents that they are going to be evaluating the kids and working with them throughout the year with the goal of putting them in set positions for the last 2 weeks of the season and the tournament.
- An evaluation for is available to use (report card) to give to the parents and kids at mid-season to show them their progression and what they can work on at home so achieve their goals.
- Batting
 - Batting order is continuous (everyone bats)
 - Each half inning is either 3 outs or one complete batting order rotation
 - The last batter must be announced. When the last batter is up, there are automatically 2 outs. Play is finished when an out is made, or after an attempted play on the ball it is in the possession of an infielder.
- Base running
 - No base stealing. The base runner remains on the base until the ball is hit or passes the batter (they can lead after it passes the batter).
 - Runners may not advance on overthrows to any base.
 - Batters may continue to run until the ball is secured in the glove of an infielder. If a batter is between bases, they shall retreat to the last base touched.
- Collision Rule
 - The base runner must avoid the collision by sliding (feet first) or stopping. If there is a collision, the runner is called out. If the collision is deliberate, the player may be ejected from the game.
 - A fielder that does not have the ball may not block the base runner and create a collision. In this case, the umpire awards the base runner the base they would have reached if they had not been interfered with.
- Defense

- Free substitution applies for all defensive fielding positions due to the continuous batting order.
- The defensive team, while in the field, can have up to 2 coaches in the field.
- Pitching
 - Pitching rubber is 40 feet from the back point of home plate
 - A defensive player may be in the pitching position when an adult is pitching
 - Strike zone extends from the middle of the shins to the top of the shoulders and to the inside edges of both batter's boxes.
 - Before each pitch and until the pitcher releases the ball, each fielder is in their assigned position. Infielders are not more than one step in front of the base paths. Outfielders are no less than 15 feet onto the outfield grass.
 - Have the catcher ready to take the field immediately following the third out. Maximum of 5 warm-up pitches are allowed between innings. Maximum of 8 warm-up pitches are allowed for a new pitcher.
 - First three weeks – coaches will pitch all innings
 - During these weeks, there are no walks and a player strikes out on four (4) strikes
 - For weeks 4-6, players will pitch with the following rules
 - Once players are pitching, a strikeout will be standard 3 strikes
 - There will continue to be no walks. After 5 balls to a batter, the coach will step in and pitch to that batter.
 - For weeks 7 through the end of the season, the following will apply
 - Players will be called out on strikes after three strikes
 - Players will advance to first base on 4 balls. The last batter of the inning cannot walk, they will stay in until a strikeout or contact
 - During the final phase and tournament, players will pitch with balls and strikes being called. After (4) balls to any one batter, a walk will be issued. After 4 walks per inning, the coach will pitch the remainder of the inning or the pitcher must be changed.
- Code of Conduct
 - Coaches sign a Code of Conduct, Umpires are asked to enforce it.
 - Any player, manager, or coach ejected from a game is suspended for the next 2 games. The NCLL President must be notified of any suspensions.
 - Fans on the playing field for any reason, other than injury, are ejected from the game.
 - No one is permitted behind the backstop.
 - No smoking.
 - Each team cleans their dugout after each game.
 - Players and fans may cheer for their team only, until a pitcher steps on the rubber and is ready to pitch. Badgering any player on the opposing team is not permitted.
 - Unsportsmanlike conduct, profanity, or abusive language from any player, coach or fan is not tolerated. Managers/coaches are responsible for the actions of their teams and fans and may be held accountable for their offenses.
 - First offense – manager gets written warning
 - Second offense – manager is suspended for this game and next 2 games
 - Third offense – manager is suspended for the rest of the season

Defensive Player Positions

Pitcher	1
Catcher	2
1 st Base	3
2 nd Base	4
3 rd Base	5
Shortstop	6
Left field	7
looking)	
Center field	8
Right field	9
Designated Hitter	DH



How to Score At Bats

Single	1B
Double	2B
Triple	3B
Home Run	HR
Sacrifice	SAC
Walk	BB
Strikeout	K (backward K for
Fly out	F
Bunt	B
Error	E
Fielders choice	FC
Line out	L
Hit by pitch	HBP
Wild pitch	WP
Pass ball	PB
Stolen base	SB
Force out	FO
Double play	DP
Sacrifice fly	SF

T-Ball Skills and Drills Plan

Station #1 – Hitting on T's

(5 coaches needed)

- 2-4 T's along fence of 7-8 field – spaced as shown
- Line of kids in the infield – plenty far back, but keep them on the grass
- With 4 hitters, we should only have 4-6 kids in line
- 8-10 swings and rotate, with the player hitting moving to the end of the line
- 1 coach at each T and one maintaining the line and sending kids to the next open T.

Focus:

- Stance – knees bent, weight on the back foot, hands back and up
- Swing – hands through the ball (not around), flatten bat through ball (not chopping)

Station #2 – Throwing and Catching

(4-5 coaches needed)

- One line along right field foul line (should be 5 kids)
- Partners about 10-15 feet away.
- To keep them in a spot, you can have them put their hats on the ground – they throw from their hat and catch at their hat.

Focus:

- Catching – targets up, two hands, catch ball in the TV zone (in front of the chest)
- Throwing – feet shoulder width apart or slightly closer, hip and shoulder facing target, point to target with the glove, throwing arm should be in almost an “L” position with the elbow high (bicep parallel to the ground) and ball facing away from the player. Step and bring elbow through high and release at the target.

Station #3 – Fielding with Throw to 1st

(3 coaches needed)

- 2 lines as shown in the diagram (about 3rd and SS)
- Coach at first
- Alternate lines fielding and throwing to coach at first.
- A coach must be between lines to maintain the lines and keep the kids focused. One coach can roll grounders and one catch at 1st.

Focus:

- Not being afraid of the rolling ball
- Getting used to throwing the ball somewhere after you field it
- Clean fielding is being taught at another station

Station #4 – Pop-ups

(2 coaches needed)

- 2 lines of about 5 kids each
- Coach should be 20-25 feet in front of the line
- First player steps forward and the coach tosses a ball to him, starting with low ones and moving into higher ones for different kids
- Could use tennis or whiffle balls as well

Focus:

- Catching arm in “L” in front of the body, not on the side
- Throwing hand up to “help” the glove

Station #5 – Fielding Fundamentals

(3 coaches needed)

- 2 lines of about 5 kids each
- Coach should be 20-25 feet in front of the line, with one coach between lines to maintain order and also instruct on fundamentals
- Roll the balls to the kids – first straight, then you can have them shuffle side to side as well once they get the basics of it

Focus:

- Feet apart, butt down (knees bent), glove out front with throwing hand over the top, and head up looking at the ball
- Very important to stress hands out front
- Some kids will want to squat – don’t let them. Get their butt higher – “potty position”
- As they field the ball, some of the more advanced can be taught to bring it into their belly button as well

Station #6 – Soft Toss

(5 coaches needed)

- In the batting cage, spread out into 4 places
- Coaches soft toss 8-10 balls from the side

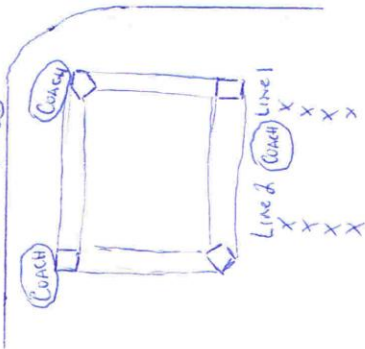
Focus:

- Shortening the swing to hit the soft toss
- Stance – knees bent, hands up and back, weight back
- This is a very hard station to do – kids will miss at first, it’s not a natural way to have a ball coming at you, however it promotes great hands as they grow.
- The only 4 in the cage are the 4 swinging! A coach should manage the others outside of the cage to watch – no fingers through the screen so they don’t get hit.

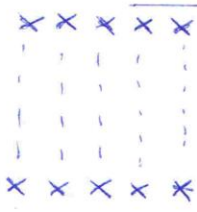
COORDINATOR

- Has a whistle or can whistle with fingers
- Stations kept to 10 minutes – 60 minutes for the practice.
- Kids run between stations
- Ensure that the coaches know the station rotation and they let the kids know where to go
- Kids should wear their team jerseys – easiest to keep a team together and leave the coaches to teach their skill. The kids will probably not do well the first time or two, but by the third time we do it, they will know what to do and where to go and it will become much easier – trust me!

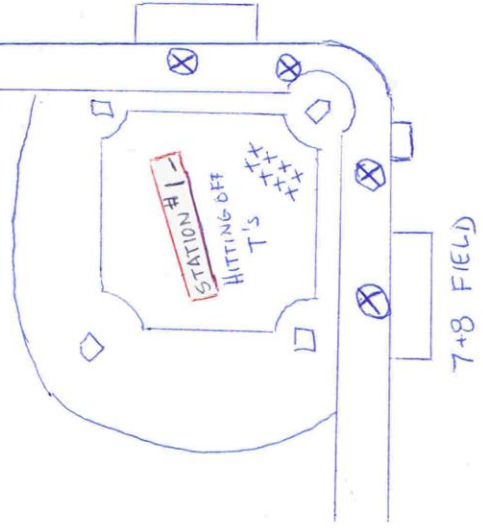
T-BALL FIELD



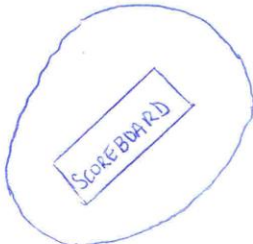
STATION # 3 - FIELD + THROW TO 1st



STATION # 2 - THROWING + CATCHING



7+8 FIELD



COACH

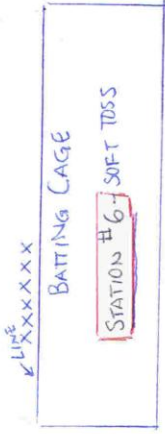
STATION # 4 - POP-UPS

COACH



STATION # 5 - FIELDING FUNDAMENTALS

COACH



LINE X X X X X X X



MAJORS FIELD

North Central Little League – Tee-Ball Division (5-6 yr olds)

Coordinators

Determine a coordinator each season to run the practices and coordinate game schedule

Season Timeline

Team Selection:	late February / early March
Contact Teams:	mid-March
Practice Starts:	mid to late March
Games Start:	League determined opening day
1 st three weeks:	All kids on Tee's to bat
Last 7 weeks:	Coaches pitch to the kids, Tee's used as needed

Game format

- Game time is 5:45 pm
- Players on the field
 - All players should be on the field – using a pitcher, 4 infielders and 4-5 outfielders
- Games are slated for 3-6 innings, but let common sense prevail early in the year with light
- Coach pitch: After 5 swings that miss, a coach will step in and place a ball on a Tee
- Everyone bats each inning – players only advance one base

Practice Times

Pre-Opening Day

Wednesdays: 5:45 – 7:00 pm – Skills Sessions that rotate through
Saturday (each team takes a slot)

10-12:

12-2:

2-4:

4-6:

Post Opening Day

Wednesdays: 5:45 -7:00 pm – Skills Sessions that rotate through
Saturdays: Games times determined by NCLL VP to coincide with older levels for snack stand purposes

Milestones

By Week 1

- Basics of base running
- Know what the positions are (infield versus outfield)
- Identify who can pitch catch to serve as the first basemen
- Basics of the game flow

By Week 4

- Fielding and throwing to first without hesitation
- Only one player chasing a ball and not holding onto it

By the last few weeks

- Have a general feel for game flow, know where to go for positions, know where to throw the ball when they get it
- Hitting pitching without using a T

Evaluations

- Coaches should communicate to parents that they are going to be evaluating the kids and working with them throughout the year but that just playing with them at home helps
- Put together an evaluation form to use (report card) to give to the parents and kids at mid-season to show them their progression and what they can work on at home so achieve their goals.

NCLL Evaluation Process

Station #1 – Hitting

(4-10 coaches needed)

- Depending on the # of players, this could be 2, 3 or even 4 stations.
- Each player will get 15 swings
- Coaches are evaluating based on the following:
 - Stance, including bat position
 - Knee bend
 - Swing mechanics
 - Contact
 - Balance
- Each area will get a 1-5 rating from each coach that is evaluating

Focus:

- Stance – knees bent, weight on the back foot, hands back and up
- Swing – hands through the ball (not around), flatten bat through ball (not chopping)
- Finishes swing in a balanced position

Station #2 – Throwing and Catching

(3-4 coaches needed)

- Each player will play catch for 10-20 throws with a coach
- The coach should throw the ball on a line to the player, utilizing both sides of the players body, with balls over their head and at their chest.
- Then each player will be tossed 5 pop-ups to catch
- Coaches are evaluating:
 - Throwing mechanics: elbow high coming through, glove out front, weight shift on legs
 - Catching mechanics: glove out front, body staying behind the ball, using two hands to catch and shift the ball to the throwing hand
 - Pop-ups: glove above the head, body moves under the ball

Focus:

- Catching – targets up, two hands, catch ball in the TV zone (in front of the chest)
- Throwing – feet shoulder width apart or slightly closer, hip and shoulder facing target, point to target with the glove, throwing arm should be in almost an “L” position with the elbow high (bicep parallel to the ground) and ball facing away from the player. Step and bring elbow through high and release at the target.

Station #3 – Fielding with Throw to 1st

(4-6 coaches needed)

- Players line up where the shortstop would play. Each player steps up when it is his/her turn.
- Coach at first
- Balls are hit to the player and they are fielded and thrown to first.
- Each player fields 10 balls
- Coaches evaluate on the following:
 - Fielding position: glove out front and down, throwing hand above the glove, knees bent, back flat
 - Movement to ball: getting the ball in the middle of the feet
 - Throw to first: did it make it and was it on a line, etc.

Focus:

- Not being afraid of the rolling ball

- Moving to the ball
- Fielding and throwing the ball

Station #4 – Running

(2 coaches needed)

- 1 line of players
- Time the player from home to first
- Time the player from home to second
- Time the player all the way around the bases

Focus:

- Just to give a quantitative measure of their speed (at this age, usually corresponds with athletic ability and cognitive development)

COORDINATOR

- Has a whistle or can whistle with fingers
- Maintains the flow
- Each station has a clip board for each coach evaluating (2-3 evaluators at each station is great) which has a list of the kids' names and the columns for the scores.
- Scores will be compiled and organized, then distributed to the coaches and teams selected
 - My thought is that each player, based on the scores, gets an A, B or C level and the teams have to have so many of a level

NCLL Practice Ideas

- I. Whiffle Ball Batting (Pre-Practice)
- II. Skill Building Warm-up
- III. Playing Catch Practice
- IV. Team Skills & Drills
- V. Batting Practice - 'A 12 Player Drill'
- VI. Scrimmage

Descriptions of Each Segment of the Practice Template

The practice templates in the Coaching Guide are based on the standard structure of a college baseball practice template; modified for the 12U environment.

At the college level teams have limits to how much time they can spend on the field each week. Their practices are designed to maximize each minute the players are 'on the clock'. The primary concern in the 12U environment is keeping the kids active and engaged throughout each practice. If we leave them standing and lose their attention and it is a challenge to re-engage them. Also, constant standing around (not having fun) is the primary reason kids leave the game.

I. Whiffle Ball Batting (Pre-Practice)

It is strongly recommended that kids who are early arrivals not play catch on their own. Don't put balls out prior to the start of practice.

The skills of throwing and receiving throw are the foundation of the game. The kids should always be supervised when executing these critical skills. Instead of allowing our kids to play catch when they arrive, set up a whiffle ball batting practice.

One coach can throw to two kids at once; two coaches can throw to four kids, and so on. A coach who has gained proficiency at pitching in this environment can pitch to three kids at once.

Have half the kids batting and half chasing balls (they love this!). Give each player 8 swings then switch. Note: No 'one mores'; doing this can eat up a lot of valuable time. If a player swings and misses on their eighth swing we tell them, "Good work. Switch to chasing balls." Suggestion: tell the batter when they have two or three more swings.

SAFETY:

Make it crystal clear to the kids that running through, the pitching/swinging lane of the activity is absolutely against the rules. They have to go around the outside. This is not as easy as simply telling them. It will take some time, and disciplinary action, to train them that there are no exceptions to this rule.

Make it a rule that there is to be no swinging of a bat except when at the 'plate' and when a coach is pitching. Kids will want to pick up balls and try to hit them back to the coaches when picking up balls during or at the end of the drill. Be ready to squash this activity the moment it starts. Make it clear this will not be tolerated in any circumstance.

The origination of Whiffle Ball Batting was to give the players something to do between their arrival at the ballpark and the official start of practice, so to not play catch unsupervised. However, since this is such a fun activity and is only available prior to the start of practice, it becomes an incentive for kids to arrive early. Ultimately this leads to practices starting on time with all or most kids ready to go.

II. Skill Building Warm-up

There are many activities that can warm up our players' bodies, which at the same time develop baseball skills. Instead of running the kids across the park and back, take them through a series of activities that develop baseball skills. Many of the suggested activities for this part of practice rarely make it into a practice routine for many teams. Many of the more common skill building activities that make up the core of many practices, once learned by the players (and coaches), can be inserted into the Skill Building Warm-up portion of practice. This frees up more time to work on Team Play activities in the core part of a practice.

A favorite game to play during this time is "flip". Very simply put, the players make a circle of 3, 4, 5, 6 players and have one baseball. Their objective is to pass the ball throughout the circle to each other with their hands and count how many hits they get. As players arrive, two or three groups develop. Ensure they are spread out properly. This will build the desire to go after the ball and get players moving before their stretch and game of catch.

III. Playing Catch Practice

The most important part of a practice is the Playing Catch Practice segment, traditionally referred to as 'Warming Up'. Unfortunately this has evolved into a lazy and sloppy activity. The ten minutes our kids spend playing catch should be the most focused, most intense and most disciplined part of the practice.

This is the time when we as coaches have to be at our best, making sure each player is using proper catching and throwing technique. When the team is playing catch there needs to be an adult or two (coaches and/or parent helpers) standing behind each group of kids with extra balls in hand ready to resupply kids when balls get past them.

One of the biggest time wasters in baseball practices is kids chasing after balls. We want every possible moment of practice to involve skill building activities. When thrown balls are missed by the receiving player an adult standing behind the row of players flips a new ball to the player that missed, so that player gets right back in to working on their skills

Playing Catch Practice has three parts:

- The first few minutes of this routine the kids throw from approximately 35' and work on pitching mechanics.
- The next few minutes throw from approximately 60' emphasizing the proper stance prior to receiving a throw, footwork in preparation to receive a throw and proper receiving position.
- Skill activity – ensuring they are throwing and catching with proper mechanics and extending their distance to strengthen arms

IV. Team Skills & Drills

Examples of activities include, Skill Station Rotation, Cuts-Relays, Fly Ball Communication, Rundowns, Positional Responsibility Drills, Base Running, Mass Ground Balls and Fly Balls, etc.

V. Batting Practice - 'A 12 Player Drill'

This activity is often characterized by one kid batting and eleven kids standing out in the field shagging. Those eleven other kids are often bored and losing interest in the sport minute by minute. Batting Practice is a '12 Player Drill' that is structured so that the entire team is engaged, active and developing skills throughout the activity. Engage all players and keep the pace of batting practice moving.

VI. Scrimmage

'Kids sign up to PLAY baseball, not to practice baseball'. Kids do understand that they need to practice to develop their skills, but they also have a strong desire to PLAY.

Our goal as coaches is to create a practice environment that is FUN as well as active, efficient and effective. It is strongly recommended that most every practice conclude with a scrimmage. A scrimmage is not a willy-nilly activity, however. This is a controlled activity where teaching takes place throughout.

While the kids are having FUN PLAYING, the scrimmage serves as a great teaching and learning tool. Following each play, the coaches acknowledge things kids did correctly and instruct as needed. These teaching periods should be brief, 10-20 seconds; keep the games moving!

Practice Plans

It is critical to prepare a written practice plan, with time designations for each activity, prior to every practice. Below are several practice plans that are examples of skills and timing that you can pull from.

These examples are based on you and your players understanding the foundational skills, concepts and pace of activities (which is a result of having run through an activity 2-3 times). After getting through your first 10 practices or so, these will be useful.

Right now they are helpful in painting a picture of what we are striving for in an efficient and productive practice. Note: 'parent helpers' can play a significant role in helping you develop their kids' skills. A key is to recognize that each practice follows the same pattern and flow.

Note: It will take a few practices before the coaches, adult assistants and kids get a feel for the flow of the schedule. It is suggested that Batting Practice not be in the schedule the first 3-4 practices. This allows extra time for the other segments of practice to run longer while everyone gets accustomed to those. Whiffle Ball Batting Practice, which starts each day, gets the kids some swings. They also get some swings during the scrimmage at the conclusion of practice.

Plan to set aside one practice, following those first few practices, and dedicate most of that day to teaching the batting practice routine to the kids and other adults. Explain the routine, set up the groups. Run through the rotations slowly; continue to check to see that everyone, including you, is correctly going through the task for their spot on the field. Take the time to stop and correct and give direction as needed, so at the conclusion of the day everyone has an idea of what all players and coaches are doing at each point on the field during batting practice.

First Practices of the Year

The practice plans below are set up and paced for a mid-level player pitch team. These are to serve as a guide. A coach can deviate based on the pace their players pick up on the content, the coach's personal style and the specific needs of their team.

These plans introduce content in a thoughtful sequence where each practice provides a foundation for the content taught in the next practice. Day 2 builds of Day 1; Day 3 builds of Day 2, etc. As practices progress into the season 'new' content will, in most cases, be a combination of concepts and actions the kids learned in earlier practices with one new aspect added.

The practice plans will alternate between a 90 minute schedule and a 2-hour schedule. Many younger teams only practice for 90 minutes; some older teams will go for two hours. There should not be any feeling that everything listed in a practice must be completed on that day. Just add the stuff you don't get to into the next day's plan. It's not a race to teach the kids everything. Over the course of the season every team will progress through the teaching content at a different pace.

Note: if we are successful in keeping our kids moving throughout our practices and recognize that the last 20-30 minutes of practice is a scrimmage, many kids (even young ones) will stay engaged for two hours AND want to practice for 2 hours. ...parents may have a different perspective and we need to keep that in mind when deciding to practice for 2 hours.

Batting Practice

Use whiffle balls and shorten up the bases to 40'. At that distance the defensive players will get a decent feel of the ball coming off the bat, will have the opportunity to work on their footwork and see some fly balls. Give the kids the option of using their glove, however it is difficult to catch a whiffle ball with a glove, so encourage them to try defense with no glove.

Split the team into two groups of six and set up two diamonds with two Batting practices going on at the same time. Four kids play defense. The other two kids bat and work on reacting to balls off the bat. After the batter completes their swings they switch with the base runner. After they both get their swings, switch them out with two of the kids on defense.

Scrimmage

Again play using whiffle balls on a 40' diamond. The primary skills the kids are working on is base coverage responsibilities and footwork involved with covering bases, receiving throws at a base and fielding ground balls.

On the smaller diamond we only play with six players (split the team into two groups and have two games going on at one time). Change the 'rules' slightly. Tell the players the TWO objectives on defense are:

1. Execute their base coverage responsibilities.
2. Stop the runner. This is done by throwing the ball ahead of the runner. If there is any question the ball will reach a base 4-5 steps ahead of the runner, they instead throw a full base ahead of the runner. When the runner reaches

their base and sees the ball being held by a defensive player at the next base there is no question the runner cannot run any further.

To emphasize this fact the coach calls, "Time; rotate"

We have one batter, four infielders and a catcher. After the batter hits and runs the bases, all players rotate. The infielders rotate from 3b to SS to 2b to 1b to C; the catcher is the next batter and the batter-runner moves to 3b.

Note: The catcher DOES NOT squat right behind home plate. Set a marker 10'-15' behind the plate where the catcher stands while the batter is swinging the bat. After the batter drops the bat, the catcher runs up to their 'position' a step in front of home plate. From there the Catcher works on their leadership and decision making skills by calling to the defense where to throw the ball.

The catcher MUST wear a helmet (to protect them from a flying bat).

On the first day, like the first day of any new activity, this scrimmage format will be a bit disorganized. Once the kids get the idea of 'get the runner out' out of their heads and grasp the concept of 'stop the runner', the drill starts running clean and fast. Expect to get 2-3 batters hitting and running the bases per minute.

This format of scrimmage also gets the kids in tune to the idea that "The runner is safe a lot" in any baseball game. But on each play we still must accomplish the goal of 'stopping the runner(s)'. Given this realization the kids begin to feel empowered by the act of stopping the runner. When it comes to real games, where the runner(s) is often safe, the players will recognize they have still accomplished something by 'stopping the runner(s)' and not giving away bases by making poor throwing decisions resulting in overthrows and runners advancing further than they should have.

Examples of Practice Plans

Practice #1

0:00 - 0:10	Introductions – learn everyone’s name and where they go to school
0:10 - 0:20	Teach: “Ready Position” prior to every throw and when each pitch is released in scrimmage Stance at a base prior to receiving a throw <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Not allowed to touch the base – “The base is for the runner, the ball is for the defense”- Stand on the side of the base; the same side the ball is coming from<ul style="list-style-type: none">--- First Baseman stands in front of the base, but does not touch the base- “Ready Position” – never stretch before the ball has been thrown (and only on a force) Receiving a Throw at a Base <ul style="list-style-type: none">- “Move Feet to Catch”- “Ball first, base second” – ‘The ball is the key to the base’- “Look for other runners” – immediately after making the play at the base
0:20 - 0:25	Underhand Toss (Skill building Warm-up page; found under 'Fielding')
0:25 - 0:45	Infield Base Coverage / Outfielders Backing up Bases – “Baseball/Softball is a Game of Movement” <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Two groups of six players - 10 minutes at each station
0:45 - 0:50	<Break>
0:50 - 1:15	Playing Catch Practice – “The Most Important Part of the Day” <ul style="list-style-type: none">- 5 min Receiving Throws<ul style="list-style-type: none">“Ready Position”“Move Feet to Catch”“Reach Forward to Catch”- 10 min Throwing Drills –<ul style="list-style-type: none">Basic Mechanics (Note: head and momentum in straight line)Turn and PullSnapPlay Catch from 30’ – 40’- 10 min Throwing Drills – Footwork<ul style="list-style-type: none">ShuffleShuffle, Pull, Snap, momentum (“Follow your head”)Play Catch from 60’ –<ul style="list-style-type: none">“Move your feet to catch; move your feet to throw”
1:15 – 1:35	Scrimmage <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Discipline/Correction Points:<ul style="list-style-type: none">--> 1. Infield Base Coverage,2. Backing up Bases – Outfield- Coach pitches from 20’-30’, pitcher plays from rubber.<ul style="list-style-type: none">One batter, runners at 1st & 2nd; nine position players- Each batter bats one time. After the first three bat, switch them to defense
1:35 – 1:40	Wrap-up: “Baseball/Softball is a Game of Movement”

Practice #2

Pre- Practice	Whiffle Ball Batting (or any activity except kids playing catch on their own)
0:10 - 0:20	Teach: "Ready Position" prior to every throw and when each pitch is released in scrimmage Not optional – 'football helmet' (review) Stance at a base prior to receiving a throw See Practice #1 (review) Receiving a Throw See Practice #1 (review) Three Rules for Individuals on Defense 1. Ball, 2. Base, Back up
0:20 - 0:25	Underhand Toss
0:25 - 0:35	Infield Base Coverage / Outfielders Backing up Bases – "Baseball/Softball is a Game of Movement" Two groups of six players - 5 minutes at each station
0:35 – 0:50	Receiving a Throw at a Base
0:50 - 0:55	<Break> (this is an opportunity for coaches to talk over the second half of practice)
0:55 - 1:15	Playing Catch Practice – "The Most Important Part of the Day" 5 min Receiving Throws See Practice #1 (review) 15 min Throwing Drills – Basic Mechanics (Note: head and momentum in straight line) See Practice #1 (review) Throwing Drills – Footwork See Practice #1 (review)
1:15 – 1:30	Pitcher's Fielding Practice ("PFP") – Teach: "Turn Glove Side" 1-3 Play – pitcher fielding; underhand toss to first base 1-6 Play – Pitcher fielding; overhand throw to second base
1:30 – 1:55	Scrimmage: Teach: Positioning: 1. Infielders: 15' from the base 2. LF/RF: half way between the bases in front of you Discipline/Correction Points: 1. Defense Positioning 2. Infield and Outfield Movement 3. Receiving a Throw at a Base Coach pitches from 20'-30', pitcher plays from rubber. One batter; runners at 1st & 2nd; nine position players Each batter bats 2x. After the first three players bat, switch them to defense Change all players' defensive position
1:55 – 2:00	Wrap-up: "Baseball/Softball is a Game of Movement"

Practice #3

Pre- Practice	Whiffle Ball Batting (or any activity except kids playing catch on their own)
0:00 - 0:10	Teach: Ground Ball Footwork
0:10 - 0:20	20' Ground Ball (3 min) Group 1: Balls to their LEFT (3 min) Group 2: 6-4 Play - shortstop to second baseman (3 min) Group 3: Balls to their RIGHT
0:20 - 0:30	Toss Drills (fly balls) - angling in
0:30 - 0:35	<Break>
0:35 - 0:40	Receiving Throws ("Move Feet to Catch) - review teaching and run the kids through the movement 1. "Ready Position" 2. "Move Feet to Catch" 3. "Reach Forward to Catch"
0:40 - 0:55	Throwing Mechanics (review) (7 min.) Playing Catch @ 30'-35' - step and throw Teaching/Focus Points: 1. Ready Position to Catch 2. Focus on glove elbow: glove elbow up (on stride) and pull (1 min.) TALK: "Playing Catch Practice – the most important part of the day" (7 min.) Throwing Drills (review) - "Move Feet to Throw" - Shuffle - Shuffle, Pull, Snap, Momentum ("Follow your head") Playing Catch @ 60' - RULE: You ARE NOT allowed to throw the ball if your partner is not in a "Ready Position" - Objectives/Focus: Footwork: "Move feet to catch, Move feet to throw" - Coach Mindset: Good throws and an increased percentage of caught balls, result good footwork (movement)
0:55 - 1:05	Defense Positional Movement (players switch groups after 5 minutes) Group 1: Infield Base Coverage Group 2: Outfield - Backing up Bases
1:15 - 1:35	Scrimmage --- each batter bats 1x Teach: --- LF/RF have two bases to back up (some throwing angles to second base go more toward the LF or RF than the CF --- Discipline/Correction Points: --> same as Practice #2 --- LF/RF be aware of when backing up second base is the priority

Practice #4

Pre- Practice	Whiffle Ball Batting
0:00 - 0:05	Underhand Toss / Throwing on the Run (Skill building Warm-up page; found under 'Fielding')
0:05 - 0:15	20' Ground Balls (Skill building Warm-up page; found under 'Fielding') (3 min) Group 1: balls to their LEFT (3 min) Group 2: balls to their RIGHT (3 min) Group 3: 4-6 underhand toss (Shortstop to the second baseman)
0:15 - 0:25	Receiving a Throw at a Base - "Cover the base with your eyes" Tag Play at Third Base
0:25 - 0:35	Pitcher Defensive Responsibilities, Balls hit to the infield 1. Ball 2. Base 3. Back-up (working in a straight line toward first/third base (L/R))
0:35 - 0:40	<Break>
0:40 - 1:15	Playing Catch Practice
1:15 - 1:25	Toss Drills (fly balls) - angling back
1:25 - 1:30	<Break>
1:30 - 1:55	Scrimmage (each batter bats 2x) Teach: - LF/RF have two bases to back up (some throwing angles to second base go more toward the LF or RF than the CF) Discipline/Correction Points: - same as Practice #2 - LF/RF be aware of when backing up second base is the priority
1:55 - 2:00	Wrap-up: "Baseball/Softball is a Game of Movement"

Practice #5

Teaching and Learning How Batting Practice is Structured
"Batting Practice is a 12 Player Drill"

Pre-practice	Whiffle Ball Batting
0:00 - 0:15	Skill Building Warm-up <ul style="list-style-type: none">- 20' Ground Balls- Toss Drills - angling in- Infield Base Coverage
0:15 - 0:25	Playing Catch Practice <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Pitching Using the Rocking action- Positional Player playing catch footwork – "Move feet to catch, move feet to throw"
0:25 - 0:30	<Break>
0:30 - 1:30	Introduce and teach the kids and coaches how batting practice is run

Practice #6

Pre- Practice	Whiffle Ball Batting
0:00 - 0:10	Teach running through first base and how the drill is run
0:10 - 0:20	Skill Building Warm-up <ul style="list-style-type: none">1.....Running Through First Base2.....Toss Drills - angling in
0:20 - 0:35	Playing Catch Practice <ul style="list-style-type: none">(5 min) Batting & Throwing Drills(5 min) Pitching using Rocking action – 'Rock, Turn and Pull'; 'Rock, Pull and Turn'(5 min) Position Player actions – "Move feet to throw, move feet to catch"
0:35 - 0:40	Teach: 'Catch, Tag, Power Position"
0:40 - 0:45	Drill: 'Catch, Tag, Power Position'
0:45 - 0:50	<Break>
0:50 – 1:10	Mass Ground Balls and Fly Balls
1:10 – 2:00	Batting Practice – "A 12 Player Drill"

Practice Plan, 90 Minute – Example #1

5:20 - 5:30	Whiffle Ball Batting as kids arrive		
5:30 – 5:40	Skill Building Warm-up		
	Base Running: Through First Base	<Coach A>	<Parent A helps with missed throws>
	Base Running: Touches and Turns	<Coach B>	
	Drop Step – pop flies	<Coach C>	
5:40 – 5:45	Batting & Throwing Drills		
5:45 – 5:55	Playing Catch Practice	<Parents A & B help with overthrows>	
	Position Player Throwing – “Move feet to catch and throw”		
	Replaying Balls – “Pick both sides of the ball”		
5:55 - 6:00	Water Break		
	(Coaches prep for next practice segment)		
6:00 - 6:30	Team Skills and Drills / Batting* - Rotation:		
	Group 1: Whiffle Ball Batting		
	Group 2: 20' Ground Balls & 4-6 Play		
	Group 3: Toss Drills Angling Back - fly balls		
	Group 4: Pitchers Fielding Drills		
6:30 - 6:55	Scrimmage*		
	<Coach A> Pitch	Manage Pitcher, and Corner Infielders	
	<Coach B>	Manage Catcher, Batter and Base Runners	
	<Coach C>	Manage Shortstop, Second Baseman and Center Fielder	
	<Parent A>	Manage Left Fielder	
	<Parent B>	Manage Right Fielder	
6:55 - 7:00	Wrap-up		

*Establish a routine where players get in the habit of bringing their water bottles to spot on the field, at the start of Batting Practice/Scrimmage, so water will be easily accessible and practice is not disrupted by players needing to run off to get a drink. Also it is important to keep them hydrated so they can perform at their best and stay focused on the task at hand.

Practice Plan, 90 Min – Example #2

5:20 - 5:30	Whiffle Ball Batting (as kids arrive)		
5:30 – 5:40	Skill Building Warm-up		
	1. Cover the Base with Your Eyes”	<Coach A>	<Parent A help with missed throws>
	2. Pitcher 1-6 Play using Underhand Toss	<Coach B>	
	3. Pitcher:1-5 Play using Underhand Toss	<Coach C>	
5:40 – 5:45	Batting & Throwing Drills		
5:45 – 6:00	Playing Catch Practice		<Parents A & B help with overthrows>
	1. Pitching Practice		
	2. Position Player Throwing – “Move feet to catch and throw”		
	3. Replaying Balls – “Pick both sides of the ball”		
6:00 – 6:05	Water Break		
	(Coaches prep for next practice segment)		
6:05 – 6:30	Team Skills and Drills/Batting* - Rotation:		
	Group 1: Whiffle Ball Batting		<Coach A>
	Group 2: 20’ Ground Balls (backhand) / 6-4 Play		<Parent A>
	Group 3: Toss Drills Angling Back - fly balls		<Coach B>
	Group 4: Base Running: Touches and Turns / Running Through First Base		<Coach C>
6:30 – 6:55	Scrimmage*		
	<Coach A>	Pitch	Manage Pitcher, and Corner Infielders
	<Coach B>		Manage Catcher, Batter and Base Runners
	<Coach C>		Manage Shortstop, Second Baseman and Center Fielder
	<Parent A>		Manage Left Fielder
	<Parent B>		Manage Right Fielder
6:55 – 7:00	Wrap-up		

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Practice Plan, 90 Min – Example #3

5:20 – 5:30	Whiffle Ball Batting (as kids arrive)		
5:30 – 5:40	Skill Building Warm-up		
	1. Catch, Tag & Throw, using underhand toss – Mini Diamond	<Coach A>	
	2. Wild Pitch/Passed Ball Communication	<Coach B>	
	3. Rollers	<Coach C>	
5:40 – 5:45	Batting & Throwing Drills		
5:45 – 5:55	Playing Catch Practice <Parents A & B help with overthrows>		
	1. Pitching Practice		
	2. Position Player Throwing – “Move feet to catch and throw”		
	3. Catch, Tag, Power Position – “Look for other runners”		
5:55 - 6:00	Water Break		
	(Coaches prep for next practice segment)		
6:00 – 6:35	Batting Practice* – ‘12 Player Drill’		
	Four Groups of Three:		
	1. Offense	<Coach A Pitch>	<Coach B: Base Runners and On-deck batter hitting off Tee>
	2. Defense	<Parent A taking throws at first base; keep defensive players focused on batter>	
	a) Playing balls off the bat (“Like it’s the last inning of the Championship Game”)		
	b) Shagging Balls	<Parents B ...plus any available siblings>	
	3. Pitcher’s Defense (deep center field)	<Parent C> ...this group helps pick up balls in the outfield before rotating	
	4. Whiffle Ball Batting* (right field corner)	<Coach C>	
6:35 – 6:55	Scrimmage*		
	<Coach A>	Pitch	Manage Pitcher, and Corner Infielders
	<Coach B>		Manage Catcher, Batter and Base Runners
	<Coach C>		Manage Shortstop, Second Baseman and Center Fielder
	<Parent A>		Manage Left Fielder
	<Parent B>		Manage Right Fielder
6:55 – 7:00	Wrap-up		

* Establish a routine where players get in the habit of bringing their water bottles to spot on the field, at the start of Batting Practice/Scrimmage, so water will be easily accessible and practice is not disrupted by players needing to run off to get a drink. Also it is important to keep them hydrated so they can perform at their best and stay focused on the task at hand.

Practice Plan, 2 hours - Example #1

5:20 - 5:30	Whiffle Ball Batting (as kids arrive)		
5:30 - 5:45	Skill Building Warm-up		
	1. Underhand Toss & Throwing on the Run - shuttle	<Coach A>	
	2. 20' Ground Balls - footwork	<Coach B>	
	3. Toss Drills Angling In - fly balls	<Coach C>	
5:45 - 5:50	Batting & Throwing Drills		
5:50 - 6:00	Playing Catch Practice <Parents A & B help with overthrows>		
	1. Position Player Throwing – “Move feet to catch and throw”		
	2. Replaying Balls – “Pick up both sides of the ball”		
6:00 - 6:05	Water Break (Coaches prep for next practice segment)		
6:05 - 6:30	Team Skills and Drills – Three station rotation		
	1. Infield base coverage responsibilities	<Coach A>	
	2. Outfield Backing up Bases	<Coach B>	
	3. Pitcher Base Coverage Responsibilities	<Coach C>	<Parents A & B help with overthrows>
6:30 - 6:35	Water Break (Coaches prep for next batting practice)		
6:35 - 7:00	Batting Practice* – ‘12 Player Drill’		
	Four Groups of Three:		
	1. Offense	<Coach A Pitch>	<Coach B: Base Runners and On-deck batter hitting off Tee>
	2. Defense	<Parent A taking throws at first base; keep defensive players focused on batter>	
	a) Playing balls off the bat (“Like it’s the last inning of the Championship Game”)		
	b) Shagging Balls <Parents B ...plus any available siblings>		
	3. Pitcher’s Defense (deep center field)	<Parent C>	...this group helps pick up balls in the outfield before rotating
	4. Whiffle Ball Batting* (right field corner)	<Coach C>	
7:00 - 7:25	Scrimmage*		
	<Coach A>	Pitch	Manage Pitcher, and Corner Infielders
	<Coach B>		Manage Catcher, Batter and Base Runners
	<Coach C>		Manage Shortstop, Second Baseman and Center Fielder
	<Parent A>		Manage Left Fielder
	<Parent B>		Manage Right Fielder
7:25 - 7:30	Wrap-up		

* Establish a routine where players get in the habit of bringing their water bottles to spot on the field, at the start of Batting Practice/Scrimmage, so water will be easily accessible and practice is not disrupted by players needing to run off to get a drink. Also it is important to keep them hydrated so they can perform at their best and stay focused on the task at hand.

Practice Plan, 2 hours - Example #2

5:20 - 5:30	Whiffle Ball Batting (as kids arrive)		
5:30 – 5:40	Skill Building Warm-up		
	1. Infield base coverage responsibilities	<Coach A>	
	2. Outfield Backing up Bases	<Coach B>	
	3. Pitcher Base Coverage Responsibilities	<Coach C>	<Parents A & B help with overthrows>
5:40 – 5:45	Batting & Throwing Drills		
5:45 – 6:00	Playing Catch Practice		<Parents A & B help with overthrows>
	1. Pitching Practice		
	2. Position Player Throwing – “Move feet to catch and throw”		
	3. Cut Player Footwork		
6:00 – 6:05	Water Break		
	(Coaches prep for next practice segment)		
6:05 – 6:25	Team Skills and Drills: Two Bases Relay Game - Cut-Relay Play to Home - Full Field		
	Group 1: Pitchers/Catchers	<Coach A>	
	Group 2: Base Runners Tosses Ground Ball	<Coach B>	
	Group 3: Outfielders	<Coach C>	
	(rotate groups throughout drill)		
6:25 - 6:30	Water Break		
	(Coaches prep for next batting practice)		
6:30 – 7:00	Batting Practice* – “12 Player Drill”		
	Three Groups of Four:		
	1. Offense	<Coach A Pitch>	<Coach B: Base Runners and On-deck batter hitting off Tee>
	2. Defense	<Parent A taking throws at first base; keep defensive players focused on batter>	
	a) Kids: Playing balls off the bat (“Like it’s the last inning of the Championship Game”)		
	b) Adults: Shagging Balls	<Parents B and C...plus any available siblings>	
	3. Whiffle Ball Batting* (right field corner)	<Coach C>	
7:00 – 7:25	Scrimmage*		
	<Coach A>	Pitch	Manage Pitcher, and Corner Infielders
	<Coach B>		Manage Catcher, Batter and Base Runners
	<Coach C>		Manage Shortstop, Second Baseman and Center Fielder
	<Parent A>		Manage Left Fielder
	<Parent B>		Manage Right Fielder
7:25 – 7:30	Wrap-up		

* Establish a routine where players get in the habit of bringing their water bottles to spot on the field, at the start of Batting Practice/Scrimmage, so water will be easily accessible and practice is not disrupted by players needing to run off to get a drink. Also it is important to keep them hydrated so they can per-form at their best and stay focused on the task at hand.

Practice Plan, 90 Min – Example #3

5:20 – 5:30	Whiffle Ball Batting (as kids arrive)	
5:30 – 5:40	Skill Building Warm-up	
	1. Catch, Tag & Throw, using underhand toss – Mini Diamond	<Coach A>
	2. Wild Pitch/Passed Ball Communication	<Coach B>
	3. Rollers	<Coach C>
5:40 – 5:45	Batting & Throwing Drills	
5:45 – 5:55	Playing Catch Practice	<Parents A & B help with overthrows>
	1. Pitching Practice	
	2. Position Player Throwing – “Move feet to catch and throw”	
	3. Catch, Tag, Power Position – “Look for other runners”	
5:55 – 6:00	Water Break (Coaches prep for next practice segment)	
6:00 – 6:35	Batting Practice* – ‘12 Player Drill’ Four Groups of Three:	
	1. Offense	<Coach A Pitch> <Coach B: Base Runners and On-deck batter hitting off Tee>
	2. Defense	<Parent A taking throws at first base; keep defensive players focused on batter>
	a) Playing balls off the bat (“Like it’s the last inning of the Championship Game”)	
	b) Shagging Balls	<Parents B ...plus any available siblings>
	3. Pitcher’s Defense (deep center field)	<Parent C> ...this group helps pick up balls in the outfield before rotating
	4. Whiffle Ball Batting* (right field corner)	<Coach C>
6:35 – 6:55	Scrimmage*	
	<Coach A> Pitch	Manage Pitcher, and Corner Infielders
	<Coach B>	Manage Catcher, Batter and Base Runners
	<Coach C>	Manage Shortstop, Second Baseman and Center Fielder
	<Parent A>	Manage Left Fielder
	<Parent B>	Manage Right Fielder
6:55 – 7:00	Wrap-up	

* Establish a routine where players get in the habit of bringing their water bottles to spot on the field, at the start of Batting Practice/Scrimmage, so water will be easily accessible and practice is not disrupted by players needing to run off to get a drink. Also it is important to keep them hydrated so they can perform at their best and stay focused on the task at hand.

