

Coaches Practice Guidelines

- **MAKE SURE ALL KIDS ARE HAVING FUN!!!**
- **MAKE SURE AS MANY KIDS ARE DOING BASEBALL ACTIVITIES AS POSSIBLE...NO LINING UP THE ENTIRE TEAM INTO ONE LINE AND HITTING GROUNDBALLS. Split into groups and run more drills. Rotate Stations.**
- Playing Catch
 - Most important part of practice for coaches to be actively working with kids on the proper way to throw a baseball.
 - Teach kids how to warm up with a throwing progression (see interval throwing in USA baseball App)...Fundamentals



Interval Throwing

Skill Set: Throwing, Infield, Outfield, Pitching, Catching

Difficulty Level: Easy

Number of Athletes and Coaches: 1-2 athletes and 1 coach, or 2 athletes as partners (all players)

Average Time to Complete: 12-15 minutes

Equipment Required: Gloves and balls

Goal: Prepare arm for pitching by going through a proper warm up routine

Description of the Drill:

- Players in partners spread out along the right or left field foul line
- The player on the foul line will stay in that spot as their partner moves back to each distance
- Partners go through the following throwing progression together:
 - One Knee (5-10 ft.)
 - Players down on their throwing side knee, glove side knee is up, shoulders square to their partner and throw back and forth, following through on each throw
 - Players each make 10 throws, then move back to next progression
 - Close Squared Throwing (10-15 ft.)
 - Players stand with shoulders square to their partner, feet shoulder width apart, starting with their hands together and throw back and forth, letting the elbows close on release
 - Players each make 10 throws, then move back to next progression
 - Squared Throwing (15-20 ft.)
 - Players stand with shoulders square to their partner, feet shoulder width apart, starting with their hands rotating together and throw back and forth, letting the elbows close on release
 - Players each make 10 throws, then move back to next progression
 - Standing Throwing Position (30-40 ft.)
 - Players stand in normal starting position of throwing, take a deep breath, and throw to their partner, rotating and following through
 - Players take their time throwing back and forth
 - Players each make 10 throws
 - Players 45 feet apart
 - Players throw the ball back and forth using good throwing mechanics
 - Players each make 10 throws, then move back to next progression
 - Players 60 feet apart
 - Players throw the ball back and forth using good throwing mechanics
 - Players each make 9 throws, then move back to next progression
 - Players 90 feet apart

- Hitting
 - Teach kids how to hit off a tee. Where to position the ball to hit inside pitches, down the middle, outside – See location Tee drill in USA baseball App.



Location Tee

Skill Set: Hitting

Difficulty Level: Easy

Number of Athletes and Coaches: 1-2 athletes and 1 coach, or 2 athletes as partners

Average Time to Complete: 5 minutes

Equipment Required: Tee, baseballs, net or screen to hit into

Goal: Hit the ball up the middle, pull side, and opposite field based on contact point

Description of the Drill:

- Tee set up in front of the middle of the plate
- Hitter sets up even with the plate, while partner places a ball on the tee
- Hitter hits the ball at the middle contact point for 3 swings, then moves the tee to the inside contact point
- Hitter hits the ball at the inside contact point for 3 swings, then moves the tee to the outside contact point
- Hitter hits the ball at the outside contact point for 3 swings, then the partners switch
- Focus should be on hitting the middle ball up the middle, the inside ball to the pull side, and the outside pitch to the opposite field
- Partners switch after 9 swings

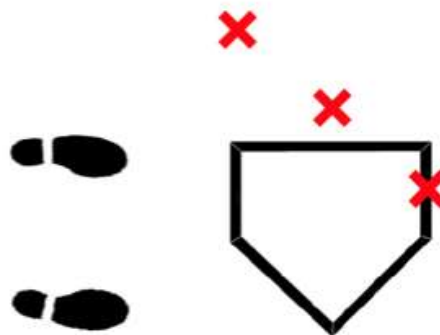
Add Difficulty:

- To add a degree of difficulty, the hitter can also move the tee to different contact point heights (low, middle, high)

Layout of Drill:



Contact Points for a Right Handed Hitter: (Flip for Left Handed Hitters)



- Watch for:
 - Is the kids “loading” before striding
 - Make sure they are not stepping in the bucket
 - When foot lands:
 - Hand placement when foot lands (should be up and bat pointing roughly at the catcher)
 - Should be balanced
 - Hips rotate with swing

- Whiffle Ball Hitting – Front toss with whiffle balls – Do this drill in outfield as other players are working in infield.



Whiffle Ball Toss

Skill Set: Hitting

Difficulty Level: Easy

Number of Athletes and Coaches: 1-2 athletes and 1 coach, or 2 athletes as partners

Average Time to Complete: 10 minutes

Equipment Required: Bat, bucket or bag of small whiffle balls or plastic golf balls

Goal: Focus on hand-eye coordination and hitting line drives back towards the coach

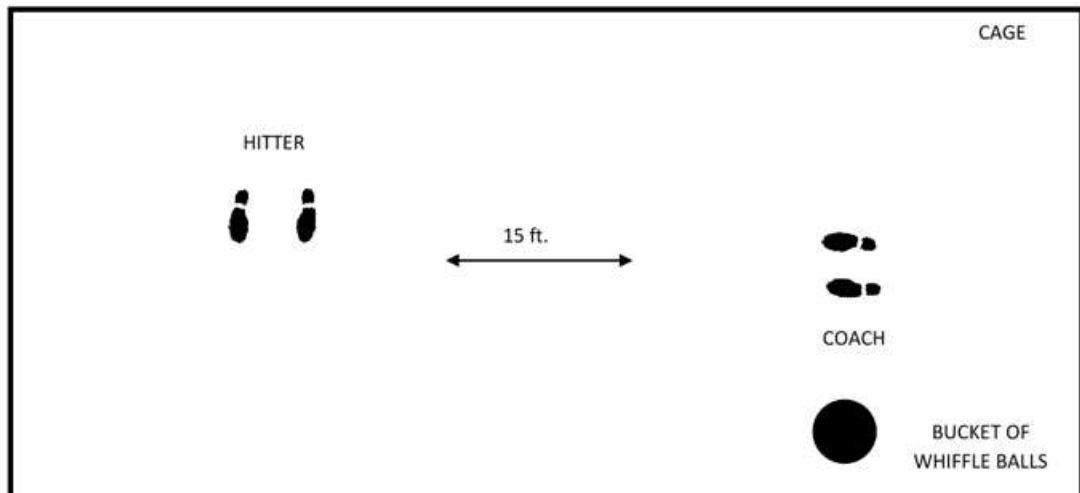
Description of the Drill:

- Hitter sets up in hitting stance in open area, coach 15 feet in front of them
- Coach underhand throws the whiffle ball or plastic golf ball down the middle of the plate on a line
- Hitter hits the whiffle ball or plastic golf ball
- Focus should be on hand-eye coordination and hitting line drives back towards the coach
- Partners switch after 10 swings
- If done in an open space, other players can pick up the whiffle balls while the coach tosses

Add Difficulty:

- To add a degree of difficulty, coaches can throw pitches inside and outside
- To add a degree of difficulty, hitters can use their top or bottom hands separately to hit

Layout of Drill (cage is optional, can be done on a field):



- Defense
 - Infield –



Infield Hands Routine

Skill Set: Infield

Difficulty Level: Easy

Number of Athletes and Coaches: 2 players as partners, or 1 player and 1 coach

Average Time to Complete: 10-15 minutes

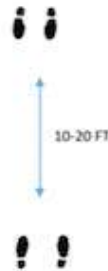
Equipment Required: Baseballs and gloves

Goal: Focus on the act of fielding the ball by gradually adding in the lower body

Description of the Drill:

- Infield is at all positions except pitcher and catcher
- Partners set up 10-20 feet apart and softly roll the ball underhand to each other as they work through the following progression, starting on their knees:
- **Knees:** Draw a triangle in the dirt; the infielder's knees are at its base and focus is on fielding the ball at the triangle's point. Glove should be angled fingers down, with the palm facing the direction where the ball is coming from. The hands "give" with the ball, and are funneled in towards the belly-button/chest.
- **Wide Base:** Repeat the sequence, this time with the infielders on their feet, which are planted in an athletic position. The knees will move over the feet, as the rear gets closer to the ground in a ready position.
- **Footwork:** Repeat the Wide Base drill and add footwork. The right foot gets the infielder low to the ball, and the left foot steps through the ball. From there, the feet are replaced, right-left setting up to throw, with the front shoulder closed and pointing directly at the target. Right-left-field... right-left-throw.
- Infielders should field 10 grounders before progressing to the next step.

Layout of Drill:



DRILLS	
ALL LEVELS	INFIELD
30 Second Backhand <small>Infield</small>	1m >
30 Second Backhand Cross <small>Infield</small>	1m >
30 Second Crow Hops <small>Infield</small>	1m >
30 Second Grounders <small>Infield</small>	1m >
30 Second Quick Toss <small>Infield</small>	1m >
30 Second Short Hops <small>Infield</small>	0m >

- Outfield – See drill library in for Outfield section. Many good drills.



Quarterback Angle Throw

Stage #2 of Ball Tracking

Skill Set: Outfield

Difficulty Level: Medium

Number of Athletes and Coaches: 1-6 athletes and 1 coach, or 2 athletes as partners

Average Time to Complete: 5 minutes

Equipment Required: Balls and gloves

Goal: Make a good drop step to run on an angle, keep eyes on the coach

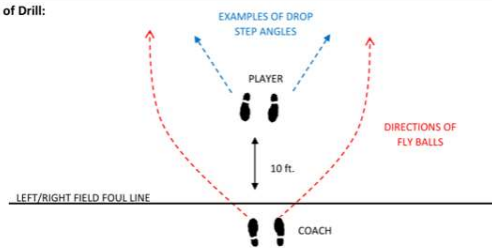
Description of the Drill:

- Coach stands on right/left field line, players each have a ball, in a line behind the coach
- Player tosses coach their ball and sets up 10 feet from the right/left field line facing the coach
- Coach points over the player's right or left shoulder to dictate direction of drop step
- Player takes a drop step in that direction, stepping back with the foot on the side the coach pointed to, and runs on a backwards angle in that direction
- Coach throws a fly ball out in front of the angle the player is running, player catches fly ball and runs to the back of the line with the ball in their glove
- Players should rotate through the line so that they each receive 10 repetitions, coach should alternate drop step directions

Add Difficulty:

- To add a degree of difficulty, the coach can throw fly balls further to challenge players

Layout of Drill:



Quarterback Adjustments

Stage #3 of Ball Tracking

Skill Set: Outfield

Difficulty Level: Medium

Number of Athletes and Coaches: 1-6 athletes and 1 coach, or 2 athletes as partners

Average Time to Complete: 5 minutes

Equipment Required: Balls and gloves

Goal: Make a good drop step to run on an angle, change directions quickly

Description of the Drill:

- Coach stands on right/left field line, players each have a ball, in a line behind the coach
- Player tosses coach their ball and sets up 10 feet from the right/left field line facing the coach
- Coach points over the player's right or left shoulder to dictate direction of drop step
- Player takes a drop step in that direction, stepping back with the foot on the side the coach pointed to, and runs on a backwards angle in that direction
- Coach points in the opposite direction as player is running, player plants outside foot and steps with inside foot (one closest to the coach) to change direction and run in the new angle (this simulates the player adjusting after taking an initial bad read on the ball)
- Coach throws a fly ball out in front of the angle the player is running, player catches fly ball and runs to the back of the line with the ball in their glove
- Players should rotate through the line so that they each receive 10 repetitions

Add Difficulty:

- To add a degree of difficulty, the coach can make players change direction several times before throwing them a fly ball

Layout of Drill:

