



2018 COACHING MANUAL

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INTRODUCTION

The 2018 Pewaukee Youth Baseball season began, believe it or not, in the fall of 2016. Over twenty coaches, parents and community members make up the 2018 PYB Leadership Team. One of our priorities has been to create a document (or manual) that will assist all of our coaches, both new and experienced, and at any age level in further developing our Pewaukee youth baseball players throughout the season. This manual is intended to serve this purpose.

In addition, we set five major player development goals for each age division along with defining different skills and drills necessary to help reach these goals. We also updated our league rules to support our desire to build a more competitive program. Combined with input from over ten coaches in PYB, Pewaukee Pirates Varsity Head Baseball Coach Adam Dobberstein and notes from Cal Ripken's book "Coaching Youth Baseball the Ripken Way", comes the first edition of the PYB Coaches Manual.

We hope that you find this manual useful in developing our youth baseball players. We look forward to hearing any suggestions you have on how to improve the information in the coaches manual, or anything else in regard to Pewaukee Youth Baseball.

Play ball!!!

Thank you,

2018 PYB Player/Coach Development Committee



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COACH'S ROLE

The Pewaukee Youth Baseball Association is most appreciative that people volunteer their time and effort to be a coach. Good coaches are always needed as they serve such an important role in our baseball program. There is more to it than passing out schedules and making out line-up cards, and we would like to point out some of the things we consider to be important.

Coaches often set the tone of their players' approach to the program. Success as a coach should not be measured by wins and losses. If players complete the season having enjoyed their coach, teammates and themselves, as well as having improved their skills and look ahead to their next sports involvement, then a coach has been successful.

Actions speak louder than words. Players see their coaches as leaders. The manner in which coaches deal with the players, frustrations, umpires and other teams is very important. How can coaches expect good sportsmanship from players if they fail to display it themselves? Players remember what coaches did longer than they remember what coaches said.

Coaches should be positive in their approach to coaching a team. A positive approach motivates kids to perform in a desirable way while a negative approach, based on fear, does not. Rewards are a key to motivation. Rewards can range from verbal praise to a simple smile. Look for the little things that are positive and reward your players. This will encourage them and improve performance and behavior. An immediate reward upon completion of a positive act is more meaningful than a passing mention many minutes later. Remember, reward effort as much as results because children can completely control their effort.

Encouragement is also an important part of a positive approach. Encourage effort, do not demand results. Encouraging players to attempt a new skill may result in some mistakes. Most kids feel embarrassed when they try a new skill and make a mistake, but the most useful thing a coach can do is encourage them immediately after such mistakes occur. Be patient!

A coach should allow players to assist in formulating team rules. When rules have been determined, explain them thoroughly to the team. Be consistent in your interpretation at all times. Be firm with those who violate the rules and be sure they understand what they did to cause the violation. Remind your players that rules will be enforced based on the principle that everyone is equal. Praise publicly, redirect privately.

Teach players to respect the rights of others, to encourage teammates, and to not harass opponents. Help players accept defeat gracefully and learn from the experience. We hope such leadership carries over to the parents of the players. The conduct and values of coaches and parents play vital roles in creating a wholesome environment in which players learn the game.

THANK YOU FOR FACING THE CHALLENGE. WE APPRECIATE YOUR HELP!



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DEALING WITH PARENTS

Coaching a youth league team is exciting and rewarding. But from time to time, you may experience difficulty with parents. Some may want their children to play more or they might question your judgment as a coach. This is normal, so don't feel that you're alone if this happens. Here are a few thoughts to remember when dealing with parents:

- Know what your objectives are and do what you believe to be of most value to the team, not the parents.
- Encourage parental involvement. Always *listen* to their ideas and feelings. Remember, they're interested and concerned because it's their children who are involved.
- Express appreciation for their interest and concern. This will make them more open and at ease with you.
- No coach can please everyone. Don't try.
- Most importantly, be fair. If you treat all players as equals, you will gain their respect.
- Resist unfair pressure. You are the coach and it's your responsibility to make the final decision.
- Don't blame the players for their parent's actions. Try to maintain a fair attitude.
- Make certain all parents know *your* ground rules. Have your rules, regulations, philosophy, practice dates and times, etc., printed and distributed to *all* parents. If necessary, have a parent meeting before the season begins to discuss your operating procedures.
- Be consistent! If you change a rule or philosophy during the season, you may be in for trouble. If you *do* change something, make *sure* the parents are informed as soon as possible.
- Handle any confrontation one-on-one and not in a crowd situation. Don't be defensive. Don't argue with parents. Listen to their views and be thankful.
- Don't discuss individual players with *other* parents. The grapevine will hang you every time.
- Ask parents *not* to criticize their children during a practice or game. Don't let your players be humiliated, even by their own parents. Explain that you as the coach must be given *complete* control of your team when they are on your "turf."
- Parents must accept the fact that umpires, coaches and other league officials are *volunteers* and should not be subjected to public criticism.
- Communication throughout the season or even weekly is recommended. Let the parents know what is being worked on in practice and what can be worked on at home.

Always remember that you will be dealing with children and parents with different backgrounds and ideals. One of your main challenges as a coach is to deal with these differences in a positive manner so the team's season will be an exciting and enjoyable experience for all.



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SAMPLE LETTER TO PARENTS

Dear Parents:

Here are some hints on how to make this a fun season, with lots of positive memories for your kids and your family.

1. Make sure your kids know that, win or lose, you love them. Be the person in their life they can always look to for support.
2. Try to be completely honest with yourself about your kids' athletic capability, their competitive attitude, their sportsmanship, and their skill level.
3. Be helpful, but don't coach your kids on the way to the game or at the breakfast table. Think how tough it must be on them to be continually inundated with advice, pep talks and criticism.
4. Teach your kids to enjoy the thrill of competition, to be out there trying to be constantly working to improve their skills, to take physical bumps and come back for more. Don't tell them that winning doesn't count because it does and they know it. Instead, help them develop a healthy competitive attitude, a "feel" for competing, for trying hard, for having a good time.
5. Try not to live your life through your kids. You've lost as well as won, you've been frightened and you've backed off at times. Sure, they're an extension of you, but don't assume they feel the same way you did, want the same things, or have the same attitude.
6. Don't push them in the direction that gives you the most satisfaction. Don't compete with your kids' coaches. A coach may become a hero to your kids for a while, someone who can do no wrong, and you may find that hard to take. Conversely, don't automatically side with your kids against their coaches. Try to help them understand the necessity for discipline, rules and regulations.
7. Don't compare your kids with other players on their team – at least not within their hearing. Don't lie to them about their capabilities as a player. If you are overly protective, you will perpetuate the problem.
8. Get to know your kids' coaches. Make sure you approve of each coach's attitude and ethics. Coaches can be influential, and you should know the values of each coach so that you can decide whether or not you want them passed on to your kids.
9. Remember that children tend to exaggerate. Temper your reactions to stories they bring home from practice, or the game, about how they were praised or criticized. Don't criticize them for exaggerating, but don't overreact to the stories they tell you.
10. Teach your kids the meaning of courage. Some of us climb mountains, but turn into jelly at the sight of a bee. Everyone is frightened about something. Courage is learning to perform in spite of fear. Courage isn't getting rid of fear - it's overcoming it.
11. Winning is an important goal. Winning at all costs is stupidity.
12. Remember that officials are necessary. Don't overreact to their calls. They have rules and guidelines to follow representing authority on the field. Teach your kids to respect authority and to play by the rules.
13. Finally, remember if the kids aren't having fun, we're missing the whole point of youth sports.

Sincerely, The Coach



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SAMPLE PARENT MEETING AGENDA

1. Introduce yourself and assistants. (Mention what you would like to have the players call you).
2. Explain coaching philosophy and expectations
2. Explain when practices will be and how long. Where will they be held? What the players should bring; glove, own marked bats, WATER, etc.
3. Help Needed: Practices
Games
Team Parent
4. Team Rules
5. Every player plays, but only if you see the commitment. Please call if not able to make a practice or game.
6. Please don't badger son/daughter about playing a position. All players will get a chance to try different positions.
7. Hand out uniforms. Uniforms are to be worn to every game.
8. **RAINOUTS:**
Inclement weather may force postponement of games. Field information will be posted on the PYB Web Site by 4:00 p.m. ***PLEASE DO NOT CALL THE COACHES TO SEE IF A GAME IS CANCELLED - WE WILL POST IT AS SOON AS WE KNOW.***
9. Hand out Schedules, parent code of conduct forms and information letters.
10. Questions



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SAMPLE INTRODUCTORY EMAIL TO PARENTS

2016 PEWAUKEE YOUTH BASEBALL
TEAM NAME _____

COACHES:

Head Coach: name, phone number, email
Assistant Coach: name (Home phone)
Assistant Coach: name (Home phone)

TEAM OBJECTIVES:

- To have **fun** learning to play and practice baseball.
- Learn how to exhibit good sportsmanship, the importance of teamwork and respect.
- Skill development
 - How to swing and hit
 - How to play the field and get outs
 - Learning the rules of baseball

COMMUNICATION:

Please feel free to contact any of the coaches throughout the season regarding any problems, questions or comments you may have regarding your child. To keep a high level of communication, PYB and I will communicate mostly through email. Please let us know of any address, phone or email changes throughout the season.

PRACTICES:

Attached is a practice schedule for May.

Saturdays: 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m., Springdale Park **EXCEPT** May 5th & May 12th when practice will be from 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. at Springdale Park.

Thursdays: 5:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m., South Park, East Diamond

We ask that all players attend practice, as they are as important as games. If you cannot attend a practice, please notify me.

EQUIPMENT:

A cap, socks, and jersey are provided with your PYB fee. A player must supply his own white baseball pants, available at most area sporting goods stores. A comfortable pair of baseball shoes is also recommended. Also, it is important to have a glove, which is “broken in.” Players may also bring their Little League approved bats. **PLEASE PLACE YOUR NAME ON ALL ITEMS, INCLUDING INSIDE THE BOTTOM BILL OF THE CAP.** Uniforms should be distributed before the first game.

RULES:

I have copies of the key minor league rules. Please ask if you would like a copy, otherwise they are available on the web site.



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SAMPLE INTRODUCTORY EMAIL TO PARENTS (con't)

GAMES:

We may play two or more games each week. Most of our games are on weekdays. ***If your child cannot attend a game, please notify the head coach as soon as possible.*** After the season has begun, we will hold our practice/warm-up 30 minutes prior to each game. Please bring a water bottle to each game.

PARENT PARTICIPATION:

The coaches will always welcome additional help for practices and games. If you are available, please let us know, and we will assign you a role. We will need a parent umpire for each game. It is helpful if every family takes at least one turn at this. When we are the home team, we need to supply the home plate umpire.

PARENT CODE OF CONDUCT:

PYB has established a parent code of conduct. Please sign a copy and familiarize yourself with this policy.

TEAM PARENT:

We need a volunteer to develop and coordinate a snack and umpire schedule.

RAINOUTS:

Inclement weather may force postponement of games. Field information will be posted at [the PYB Web Site](#) by 4:00 p.m. ***ALL GAMES SHOULD BE CONSIDERED ON UNLESS YOU RECEIVE A CALL FROM A COACH TELLING YOU IT IS CANCELLED OR IT HAS BEEN POSTPONED. PLEASE DO NOT CALL THE COACHES TO SEE IF A GAME IS CANCELLED. WE WILL NOTIFY YOU AS SOON AS WE KNOW.***

WEBSITE:

The best way to keep up to date on practice and game schedules as well as standings and other PYB news is the website www.pewaukeeyouthbaseball.org.

PYB TOURNAMENT OF CHAMPIONS:

Following the regular season we will have our year ending PYB Tournament of Champions.

SPONSORSHIP LOYALTY CARD:

Each player will receive four loyalty cards to distribute to family, friends and neighbors. Please patronize our sponsors and thank them for their support.

PYB is a recreational league that stresses fun, teamwork and sportsmanship. We are teaching how to be humble in victory & gracious in defeat while learning America's greatest game – baseball!



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PLAYER DEVELOPMENT GOALS FOR A (AGES 7 - 8)

1. Learn the basic rules of baseball
 - a. Correct direction to run when the ball is hit
 - b. How is an out made (catch the ball in the air, throw to first, tag a runner)
 - c. Running past first
 - d. Scoring a run
 - e. Three outs in an inning in regular baseball
2. Mechanics of Throwing
 - a. Front shoulder points towards the target
 - b. Keep the elbow above the shoulder
 - c. Step towards the target with the non-throwing foot
 - d. Release the ball
3. Following the Ball
 - a. Follow the ball into the glove either on the ground or in the air
 - b. Use two hands to catch the ball
 - c. Catch the ball out in front of your body
4. Hitting
 - a. Proper way to hold the bat
 - b. Proper way to swing the bat
 - c. Batting safety (never swing when others are around, wear a batting helmet)
 - d. Hitting off a tee
 - e. Hitting soft toss
5. Playing Positions – learn when the ball is yours and when to let someone else field it



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PLAYER DEVELOPMENT GOALS FOR AA (AGES 9 - 10)

1. Learn the basic rules of baseball
 - a. What is a force out?
 - b. Tagging up
 - c. Baserunning (when you don't have to run, not passing teammate on the basepaths)
 - d. Balls & Strikes

2. Mechanics of Throwing
 - a. Four seam grip
 - b. Point the front shoulder, step and throw
 - c. Introduce concept of generating momentum towards the target and following the throw

3. Catching and Fielding
 - a. How to field thrown and hit balls
 - b. Fingers up versus fingers down
 - c. See the ball and the glove
 - d. Use two hands
 - e. Forehand and backhand fielding
 - f. Underhand flip
 - g. Crossover and drop steps

4. Hitting
 - a. Proper bat selection
 - b. Proper grip
 - c. Introduce drills for hitting off a tee, soft toss and short toss
 - d. Emphasize Tee drills

5. Playing Positions
 - a. Learn the positions and the areas each position covers
 - b. Where to cover when the ball is not hit to you
 - c. Cutoff and relay basics



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PLAYER DEVELOPMENT GOALS FOR AAA (AGES 11 – 12)

1. Learn the basic rules of baseball
 - a. Infield fly rule
 - b. Balks
2. Base running
 - a. Leads
 - b. Steals
 - c. Extra-base hits
3. Pitching and Throwing Mechanics
 - a. Wind-up versus stretch
 - b. Four-seam grip
 - c. Shuffle, throw and follow
 - d. Pitcher covering first
4. Hitting
 - a. Drill Work (tee, soft toss, short toss, stickball, lob toss, one-arm drill)
 - b. Bunting
 - c. Emphasize Tee drills
5. Learning Team Fundamentals
 - a. Cutoffs and relays
 - b. Bunt defenses
 - c. First and third situations
 - d. Underhand flip and double plays
 - e. Defending the steal
 - f. Communication between infield and outfield



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PLAYER DEVELOPMENT GOALS FOR MAJORS (AGES 13 – 14)

1. Pitching and Throwing Mechanics
 - a. Emphasis on momentum towards the target and follow through
 - b. Breaking balls and change-ups
 - c. Pitching mechanics and proper body usage
 - d. Pickoffs
 - e. Drills
 - f. Introduce long toss
2. Hitting
 - a. Teach situational hitting (inside-out swing, hitting behind runners, hit and run)
 - b. Sacrifice bunting versus bunting for a hit
 - c. Understanding the count
 - d. Emphasize Tee drills
3. Base running
 - a. First and third situations
 - b. Stealing and delayed steals
 - c. Recognizing and reacting to situations
4. Fielding
 - a. Crossover and drop steps
 - b. Backhands and when to use them
 - c. Double-play depth
 - d. Pitcher covering first
 - e. Infield communication
5. Learning Team Fundamentals
 - a. Pick-off plays
 - b. Full bunt defenses
 - c. Full first and third situations
 - d. Pop-up and fly ball priorities
 - e. Double plays and underhand flips



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CONDUCTING A PRACTICE

When conducting a practice, it is important to use your time efficiently. Keep your practice simple and use drills that involve all players. The following are points to consider when planning a practice schedule:

1. It is helpful if you can secure a staff of at least two assistant coaches. The basic philosophy of the team should be established and agreed upon by all the coaches.
2. It's important to have enough balls, bats, helmets, etc., on hand for practice and games.
3. Try to secure a field that is properly maintained. It's difficult to teach proper fielding techniques on a poor field.
4. Know the attitudes of the players and parents. Hold a general meeting prior to the season to let both the players and parents know your philosophy and expectations.
5. Try not to get in a rut as you set up your practice schedule - add new drills and change procedures to keep practice interesting.
6. Require all your players to obey instructions.
7. Practice means work, but it should also be enjoyable.
8. Require your players to always give their best effort. Hard work and hustle should be expected and rewarded.
9. Teach your players to encourage their teammates at all times. Make it clear that one player criticizing another will not be tolerated.
10. Understand the difference between correction and criticism. Correction deals with the problem. Criticism is directed at the player and almost always has a negative effect.
11. Remember that each player is someone's son or daughter and develop a caring relationship with each one.
12. Most importantly - **STAY POSITIVE AND HAVE FUN!**



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SUGGESTED PRACTICE SCHEDULE

The time and order of each activity will be dictated by the length of practice.

1. WARM UP

- a. Run. A slow jog stimulates blood flow to the muscles and joints.
- b. Stretch. Stretching exercises should include upper and lower body muscle groups.
- c. Throw. Begin with short throws to get loose and slowly progress to long throws, which will stretch and strengthen players' arms.

2. DRILLS/STATIONS – Work on fundamentals (See Chapters 5,6 and 7)

3. BATTING PRACTICE

Only one player at a time can hit live pitching, so it's important to incorporate a number of hitting drills to ensure everyone gets plenty of swings. The three-station approach will allow hitters to rotate from the tee station to the soft toss station to live batting practice. Fielders should also be getting in quality work during batting practice. They can either play the ball live off the bat or take fungoes between pitches.

4. SIMULATED GAME

The simulated game pulls together everything worked on in practice. Players practice reacting to game situations and learn about the value of thinking before every pitch. Start with one player at each position and have the remaining players be base runners. The coach first gives a situation and then hits a ball in play. The fielders and base runners react accordingly.

5. CONDITIONING

The last part of practice should be devoted to conditioning. This is a great opportunity to combine a base running drill with conditioning. Have players take turns simulating a swing and running out a single. After a short rest, continue with a simulated double, triple and home run.



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PRACTICE GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES

1. Schedule fields through the Pewaukee Youth Baseball.
2. Be at a practice if you call one.
3. Check field for safety. Also, carry first aid supplies, washcloth, ICE.
4. Have a plan for each practice. Copy of Drills.
5. Player must be excused or attend practice to play in games. Coaches must use their own judgment, but take attendance at every practice to back up any action you may have to take. Remember, this is a RECREATION League. Every player seated on the bench during the game must play.
6. ONE-ON-ONE, Get to know your team. Try to have one-on-one time with every player during the season. Ask:
 - a. What they like to be called
 - b. Family - are they oldest, youngest (this affects performance)
 - c. Find out what type of encouragement works for each person (verbal, pat on the back, etc.)
 - d. Do they have fear of getting hit or missing a catch.
7. THE TEAM - Develop the team. Each individual is important to the whole group. They back up each other. End every practice with a review of what you did that session. Recognize who especially helped out the "team".
8. Give positive reinforcement at the exact time the behavior occurs. Do not wait until the end of the practice to compliment or correct something. This should be at the top of your motivational list.
9. PYB encourages practice during the regular game season. Be cautious not to coach too much during a game. Keep those teaching opportunities from games in the back of your mind or on paper. Practices are the best time to reinforce the goals and skills you are trying to teach. Let the players have fun and play the game.
10. Make sure every player has a way home. You are not a taxi service, but you are responsible for that player during practice time.
11. Do not leave practice or a game until every player has been picked up. **Coaches are the last ones to leave.**



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EARLY SEASON PRACTICE

Spring is just around the corner and with spring, comes a new Baseball season. The new season brings hope, optimism, and many long afternoons in the sun. Sounds pretty good doesn't it?

After a long winter rest, your players will need to get into condition slowly and carefully. Here are a couple of tips for those first few practices:

1. Be sure to spend plenty of time stretching and performing light calisthenics. Many players may not be ready to play at first and will need time to get back to game shape.
 - a) Start with an easy run.
 - b) Spend some time on stretching – Start with neck, working down through the other muscles.
 - c) Spend 10 minutes easy throwing – First short (30-40 feet) working outwards to 100 feet. Be sure to start with slow speeds and work upwards from there.
2. The first set of drills should focus on skill development. Make sure to spend adequate amounts of time working on basic throwing, catching, fielding and base running skills.
 - a) Divide your team into groups: Create stations for pitchers, catchers, infielders and outfielders.
 - b) Pitchers can begin to work on their delivery throwing at $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ speed.
 - c) Catchers should work on fielding wild pitches, proper stance, fielding bunts, and basic throwing mechanics.
 - d) The infield team should work on fielding ground balls, double play pivots and placements, and moving the ball around the infield.
 - e) The outfield team should work on fielding ground balls, hitting their cutoff man, and learning how to judge and cover the gap.
 - f) Have all the groups rotate through the stations
3. The next priority will be to get your players to begin to play together as a team. Your success will be based on how the team reacts (as a group) to the ball when it is in play, so look for drills which focus on group participation.
 - a) Try to simulate real game situations.
 - b) Work on getting the runner out with a minimum amount of throws.
 - c) Cover special situation plays like steals, double plays and pick-offs when appropriate.

The seeds of a successful season are sown early. Get off to the right start and you will experience a greater amount of success and make the season more enjoyable for everyone.



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SAMPLE PRACTICE PLANNING GUIDE

DATE: _____

PRACTICE GOALS/OBJECTIVES: 1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

<u>TIME</u>	<u>ACTIVITY</u>	<u>KEY TEACHING POINTS</u>	<u>DRILLS</u>
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SKILLS BY AGE DIVISIONS

Cal Ripken, Sr. always said, "Baseball is a simple game played with bats, balls, and people". No matter what level at which you play, the team that throws, catches, and hits best wins. Consider this and use caution when reviewing the following spreadsheet of skills. Refer back to Orange Tab for the separate division goals when setting practices and working on player skills. Shaded areas have drills in the Purple Tab.

TEAM OFFENSE

Hitting:

Stance & Stride	A	AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Weight Shift and Pivot	A	AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Swing Mechanics	A	AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Bunting:					
Drag or Push			AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Sac to 1st/3rd			AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Squeeze				Majors	Jr Pirates
Hit and Run/Run and Hit				Majors	Jr Pirates
Runner on 3rd: Infield Up			AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Runner on 3rd: Infield Back			AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Moving Runner to 3rd, No Outs				Majors	Jr Pirates
Fake Bunt and Slash				Majors	Jr Pirates
Working the count				Majors	Jr Pirates

Baserunning:

Leads: 1st base/rules				Majors	Jr Pirates
Leads: 2nd base/rules				Majors	Jr Pirates
Leads: 3rd base/rules				Majors	Jr Pirates
Home to 1st rules	A	AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Home to 2nd rules		AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Home to 3rd rules		AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Tagging-up from 1st			AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Tagging-up from 2nd			AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Tagging-up from 3rd		AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Straight Steal			AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Delay steal				Majors	Jr Pirates
Hit and Run/Slash			AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Squeeze			AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Rundowns		AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Picked off 1st				Majors	Jr Pirates



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Runner picked behind you		AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Runner picked in front of you		AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Tipping Pitches				Majors	Jr Pirates

Sliding:

Head First					Jr Pirates
Feet First			AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Switch Hands					Jr Pirates
Batting Practice Routine	A	AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Signals from 3B Coach		AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Signals from 1B Coach			AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates

TEAM DEFENSE

Hustle to Positions	A	AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Between Inning Responsibilities	A	AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates

Bunts: (Signal System)

Standard-Man on First			AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Standard-1st and 2nd			AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Special Play			AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Special Play Pick-Off			AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Squeeze			AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates

First and Third Steal (Signal System)

Straight Steal			AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Delay steal			AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Early Break 1st/3rd			AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Fake Bunt/Steal			AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates

Pickoff System (Signal System)

From Catcher to Base			AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
From Pitcher to Base			AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Intentional Walk Positioning			AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Defensive Positioning Signal		AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Pitch Calling System			AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Tandem Relay System		AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Sacrifice Fly Relay		AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Groundball Base Hit Relay		AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates

Game Administration

Pre-game Schedule		AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Game Administration Policies				Majors	Jr Pirates



2018 COACHING MANUAL

Charts					Jr Pirates
Defensive Practice Checklist					
Pitchers:					
Bunt Defense					
First Base Only			AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
First and Second Base			AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Squeeze Bunt			AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Double Steals:					
Early Break 1st			AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Straight Double Steal			AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Delay steal			AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Pick Offs:					
1st Base				Majors	Jr Pirates
2nd Base/Spin				Majors	Jr Pirates
3rd Base				Majors	Jr Pirates
Daylight				Majors	Jr Pirates
Double Plays:					
Pitcher-Shortstop-First Base		AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Pitcher-Second Base-First Base		AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
First Base-Shortstop-Pitcher		AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Pitcher-Catcher-First Base		AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Holding runners on base				Majors	Jr Pirates
Backing up bases	A	AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Covering Home Plate		AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Fielding Grounders	A	AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Communication on Bunts/Groundballs	A	AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Rundowns		AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Intentional Walks				Majors	Jr Pirates
Pitchouts				Majors	Jr Pirates
Outfielders					
Using Cut-off Men		AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Throwing to Bases:					
Ground Balls	A	AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Fly Balls	A	AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Wheel Spin and Throw			AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates



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Throwing to Plate:					
Ground Balls	A	AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Fly Balls	A	AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Playing the Fence			AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Fence Communication			AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Fly balls Communication/Priority	A	AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Fly balls Responsibility	A	AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Backing up bases	A	AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Rundown Responsibility	A	AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Pick Off Responsibility				Majors	Jr Pirates
Bunt Responsibility			AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Throwing Behind Runner			AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Ball on Ground at Fence			AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Using Sunglasses			AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Pitch Signals from Infielders				Majors	Jr Pirates

Infielders

Relaxed Stance between pitches	A	AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Perfect Fielding position	A	AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Ready Position	A	AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Approach to Ball (routine grounder)	A	AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Footwork to arrive	A	AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Glove Technique During Play	A	AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Throwing Technique	A	AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Exchanges (Ball out of glove)	A	AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Bobbled Ground Ball (bare hand)	A	AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Shading Sun		AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Pop-Ups/coverage/over shoulder		AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Relays		AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates

Bunts Defense

Standard			AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Special Play			AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Special Play Pick			AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Pop-up drop throw to first			AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates

First and Third Steal Defense

Home or Tag			AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Throw to 3rd			AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
No Throw			AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates



2018 COACHING MANUAL

Force Play Rules	A	AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Tag Rules	A	AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Depths of Play		AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Watching Runners Touch Base		AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Position during intentional walk				Majors	Jr Pirates
Third Base					
Holding runners on base				Majors	Jr Pirates
Backing up throws from first		AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Covering 3b on steals			AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Cut-off Responsibilities	A	AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Bunt Defense Responsibility		AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Pick offs from catcher		AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Double Plays					
Third Base-Second Base-First Base	A	AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Third Base-Second Base	A	AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Third Base-First Base	A	AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Third Base-Catcher-First Base	A	AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Fly Ball Fence Drill			AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Tag Ups	A	AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Decoys				Majors	Jr Pirates
Back Door Double Plays			AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Pop-Ups	A	AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
First Base					
Positioning Depth	A	AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Fielding Low Throws	A	AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Holding Runners on Base/Tags				Majors	Jr Pirates
Cut-off Responsibilities	A	AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Run Downs	A	AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Fielding Bunts w/throws		AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Double Plays					
First Base-Shortstop-First Base	A	AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
First Base-Catcher-First Base	A	AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Playing Fence on Fly ball		AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Throwing Back to Pitcher		AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Following Runners		AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Back Up Responsibility	A	AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Ground Ball Communication	A	AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates



2018 COACHING MANUAL

Shifting On First Base		AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
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Decoying on Cutoffs			AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Feeds to Pitcher Covering First	A	AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Shortstops					
Holding Runners on Base				Majors	Jr Pirates
Preventing Delay Steal			AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Backing up throws from Plate	A	AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Covering 2B on Steals			AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Cut-off Responsibilities	A	AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Bunt Defense Responsibility			AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Pick offs from catcher			AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Tags	A	AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Tandem Relay	A	AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Decoying Runners (Hit & Run)				Majors	Jr Pirates
Rundowns	A	AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Fly ball Communication	A	AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Throwing Behind Runner		AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Double Plays					
Second Base-Shortstop-First Base	A	AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Shortstop-Second Base-First Base	A	AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Catcher-Shortstop-First Base	A	AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
First Base-Shortstop-First Base	A	AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Pitcher-Shortstop-First Base	A	AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Shortstop-Catcher-First Base	A	AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Catchers					
Signal Stance			AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Equipment Check		AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Blocking		AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Pop-Ups		AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Tag Plays		AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Force Plays		AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Bunts Defense		AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Home-First Base Double Plays		AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Backing Up Bases		AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Pitchouts				Majors	Jr Pirates
Intentional Walks				Majors	Jr Pirates
Framing		AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates



2018 COACHING MANUAL

Squeeze Bunt			AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Pick-offs			AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates

Decoying Runners			AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Throwing to Second		AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Throwing to Third		AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Using Cut-off Man		AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Wild Pitches			AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Rundowns		AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Signal System-Pitches				Majors	Jr Pirates
Signal System-Pick Offs				Majors	Jr Pirates
Second Base					
Holding Runners on Base				Majors	Jr Pirates
Preventing Delay Steal			AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Backing up throws from Plate	A	AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Covering 2B on Steals-Signals to SS			AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Cut-Off Responsibilities	A	AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Tags	A	AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Decoying Runners				Majors	Jr Pirates
Rundowns	A	AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Fly ball Communication	A	AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Pick-offs from Catcher			AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Ground Ball Communication	A	AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Double Plays					
Second Base-Shortstop-First Base	A	AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Shortstop-Second Base-First Base	A	AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Third Base-Second Base-First Base	A	AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Pitcher-Second Base-First Base	A	AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Second Base-Catcher-First Base	A	AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Bunt Defense Responsibility		AA	AAA	Majors	Jr Pirates
Daylight Pick Off				Majors	Jr Pirates



2018 COACHING MANUAL

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2018 COACHING MANUAL

HITTING AND BASE RUNNING DRILLS

Key Teaching Points

1. Stance – starting point; need vision, balance, and plate coverage.
2. Grip – loose grip in the fingers with the “door knocking” knuckles lined up to unlock the wrists and allow for greater bat speed.
3. Stride – short and soft, toward the pitcher
4. Follow-through – one or two hands; takes care of itself if all other elements of swing are in place.



2018 COACHING MANUAL

FREE HITTING

Drill 5.1

Group: 1

Divisions: All

Purpose: To let the player hit free from coaching or instruction, allowing them to put all of the pieces of the swing together after drill work.

Preparation: Bucket of balls, coach or pitcher to throw or feed a pitching machine.

Implementation: This is what we call regular batting practice or live hitting in the cage. Let players hit and have fun. Resist the urge to coach. Coaching and tinkering are for drill work. As players get older it's okay to have them work on bunting, hit and runs, and moving runners over during free hitting or batting practice. Hitting is supposed to be fun; so let the kids have fun. Note what corrections are needed and work on them during drill sessions.



2018 COACHING MANUAL

GOALIE GAME

Drill 5.2

Group: 2

Divisions: Rookie and Minor

Purpose: To work on hitting the ball where it's pitched, developing bat control, and creating a shorter swing to improve contact.

Preparation: Home plate in front of a hockey or lacrosse goal, pitching machine or tennis ball machine, bucket of balls.

Implementation: Set up a hockey or lacrosse goal as a backstop with a home plate in front of the net. Use a pitching machine that throws softer balls or use a tennis ball machine to throw balls toward the goal. The batter tries to keep balls from going into the goal by swinging at the pitches. The coach can throw harder than normal if machines are not available.



2018 COACHING MANUAL

HITTING CONTESTS

Drill 5.3

Group: 2

Divisions: All

Purpose: To add a competitive angle to regular hitting drills to make them seem less like work.

Implementation: Almost any hitting drill can be turned into a contest using a point system. Award a point for a hard ground ball up the middle, 2 points for a line drive up the middle and 5 points for a line drive up the middle that reaches the back wall of a cage or the outfield grass (depending on where you're hitting). Develop your own point systems for whatever concept you're teaching. Stress proper hitting mechanics at all times. The scoring sheet included here is designed to help you track individual and group totals for two rounds as well as the team total. Keep a record and compare results over the season to see how your team is progressing.

<u>Player/group</u>	<u>Round 1</u>	<u>Round 2</u>	<u>Total</u>
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
Group 1 Total _____		Group 3 Total _____	
Group 2 Total _____		Team Total _____	



2018 COACHING MANUAL

KNOCK OUT THE COACH

Drill 5.4

Group: 2

Divisions: A

Purpose: To work on hitting the ball up the middle by keeping the front shoulder in and striding toward the pitcher.

Preparation: A coach, catcher's gear, a bucket of soft or sponge rubber balls, a bucket to sit on.

Implementation: A coach dresses in full catcher's gear and sits on a bucket 10 to 15 feet from home plate. The coach tosses the ball and tells the hitter to knock him off the bucket. Without really knowing it, players are working on hitting the ball hard up the middle.

Coaching Points: Because this drill is intended for younger players, you don't want to get too technical here. However, if players are really struggling to hit the ball up the middle and are pulling weak ground balls, they are probably "pulling off the ball". This means that they are likely stepping and taking the front shoulder away from the pitcher. To correct this, you can toss the ball more to the outside part of the plate and force the stride and shoulder to come more toward the pitcher.



2018 COACHING MANUAL

TEE HITTING FOR DISTANCE

Drill 5.6

Group: 1

Divisions: All

Purpose: To show how a good weight shift can generate power and that a level or slightly downward swing is best for driving the ball farther.

Preparation: Players use proper fundamentals to see how far they can hit a ball off of a tee from home plate. Use weight shift (“go back to go forward”), winding up almost like a pitcher to take the weight to the back side before exploding forward. The head should stay on the ball. The front shoulder and stride should go directly toward the pitcher until contact is made. Batters who drop the back shoulder and try to intentionally hit the ball high are eliminated. Line drives are best, but hard ground balls count. Have players run out and stand next to their best hits or mark them with stakes.

Implementation: Any time young players hit off a tee, especially if you tell them that they’re hitting for distance, they’ll tend to drop the back shoulder and swing with a visible uppercut. If players are hitting under the ball and getting a chunk of the tee with their swings or topping ground balls, the back shoulder dropping is likely the cause. Explain to them that the high fly balls they hit by doing this are really just pop-ups, not home runs, and that by swinging down and taking the barrel of the bat straight to the ball they will hit harder line drives and fly balls that will turn into home runs as they get bigger and stronger.



2018 COACHING MANUAL

SOFT TOSS

Drill 5.7

Group: 1

Divisions: All

Purpose: To use a proper grip and understand how that helps improve bat speed; verbal cue: “Loose hands, quick bat”.

Preparation: Bucket of balls, coach, net, screen, or fence to hit into.

Implementation: This is a standard hitting drill that can be done virtually anywhere. Teammates can toss to one another, or a coach can toss to a player. The batter takes his or her stance; the tosser kneels across from the hitter, slightly in front of home plate in foul ground, not in the direction that the ball will be hit. The ball is tossed underhand so the batter can hit it out in front of the plate. The hitter wants to concentrate on having a loose grip in the fingers with the “door knocking” knuckles lined up. This will allow the wrists to unlock, promoting a quicker swing using the hands, wrists, and forearms. Batters should think *loose hands, quick bat*. This drill works best if done into a screen with a target, but it can also be done into a fence if plastic balls, tennis balls, or rubber balls are used. Never hit baseballs into a fence.

Coaching Points: If players seem to be getting jammed quite a bit, take a look at where the tosses are coming from and being hit. A lot of coaches try to soft toss from a position directly across from the batter. When the ball is coming directly at the batter, he or she actually has to drag the bat to the ball, hitting it at a location that’s not in front of home plate. The toss should come from an angle slightly in front of home plate and be struck slightly in front of the plate. This allows the wrists to unlock and the barrel of the bat to get to the ball.



2018 COACHING MANUAL

TEE WORK

Drill 5.8

Group: 1

Divisions: All

Purpose: To develop proper weight shift; verbal cue: “You have to go back to go forward”.

Preparation: Batting tee, bucket of balls, net, screen, or fence to hit into.

Implementation: Players adjust the batting tee to a height that makes them swing down slightly to get the barrel of the bat to the ball. Players hit into the screen or a net with a target. Work strictly on weight shift (“Go back to go forward”). Take all the weight to the back side before exploding forward. Keep the head down and eyes on the ball. Take the front foot and front shoulder directly toward the pitcher. Try to hit the ball at the target each time. Avoid an uppercut swing. If you don’t have a net, plastic balls, tennis balls, or soft rubber balls can be hit into a fence. Never hit baseballs into a fence.

Coaching Points: To help players from dropping the front shoulder, tell them to focus on hitting the ball into a target directly in front of the tee. If they are pulling the ball weakly, remind them to go straight back first before striding straight forward toward the pitcher (“Go straight back, then straight forward”). If they hit the tee, top ground balls, or swing and miss often, have them pick a spot on the ball and focus on that spot until they make contact.



2018 COACHING MANUAL

SHORT TOSS FROM THE FRONT

Drill 5.9

Group: 1

Divisions: All

Purpose: To use the big part of the field by keeping the front shoulder in long enough to hit balls tossed to the outside part of the plate up the middle or opposite way.

Preparation: L-screen or protective net, stool, bucket or bench for coach to sit on, coach to toss, bucket of balls.

Implementation: This drill stresses to use the big part of the field for the hitter. Coach sits behind the screen 10 to 12 feet out in front of home plate and tosses pitches firmly underhand to the outside part of the plate. The batter tries to keep the front shoulder in and drive the ball up the middle or to the opposite field. Some batters will naturally pull the ball. That is okay if that is their natural swing and they hit line drives. The purpose is to avoid weakly hit ground balls.



2018 COACHING MANUAL

STICKBALL DRILL

Drill 5.10

Group: 4

Divisions: AA, AAA and Majors

Purpose: To develop a quick swing to allow the hitter to maintain balance throughout.

Preparation: Small plastic balls, coach or player to toss, thin stickball bat, net or screen to hit into.

Implementation: This drill uses small plastic balls and a shaved-down stickball bat. Have the batter take a natural stride and stop without starting the swing. This is the starting point. Take the bottom half of the body out of the drill. The tosser flips the ball to the batter just like in regular soft toss. Batters swing as hard as they can, maintaining balance without striding, and reload quickly. As soon as they reload, the next ball is tossed. Each hitter takes 5 – 10 swings. The drill is best done into a net or a screen. Balls might be too small to hit into a fence. Batters should try to hit every ball into the target. The drill stresses balance. If hitters can't reload quickly or they stumble, they are not balanced throughout their swing.

Coaching Points: If the batter is swinging late and can't seem to get ready for the next pitch, slow down the pace. Let the batter set the pace, not the tosser. If the reason that the batter can't get loaded in time is because he or she is off balance, try having the hitter use a wider or narrower stance until they are comfortable.



2018 COACHING MANUAL

BUNTING DRILL

Drill 5.11

Group: 1

Divisions: AAA and Majors

Purpose: To work on keeping sacrifice bunts away from the pitcher.

Preparation: Four cones, bucket of balls, coach or player to pitch.

Implementation: Set up two cones down the first base line about halfway between home plate and the mound. One should be about 3 feet inside of the baseline and the other should be 8 to 10 feet inside the line toward the mound. The same should be done down the third base line. The coach can throw from a shortened distance with players taking turns bunting. The idea is to stop or push the ball between the cones. Make the pitcher come off the mound to field the ball. Stress that players' pivot both feet instead of squaring to bunt. Have them start with the bat at the top of the strike zone and the barrel of the bat above the hands at an angle, bending the knees for lower pitches and leaving the pitches above the hands alone. Players should give with the pitch to deaden the ball and use the bottom hand to guide the bat and push the ball in the desired direction. Give the players five tries each. See how many each can get between the cones.

Coaching Points: If the ball is being popped up quite a bit the barrel of the bat probably is below the hands when contact is made. The player may be either bunting a pitch that's too high, starting the bat too low and then bringing it up to meet the ball, or not bending his or her knees to get to lower pitches. If the ball is being bunted consistently back to the pitcher, the batter is not using the lower hand to angle the bat correctly. If the batter is bunting a lot of foul balls, he or she is most likely not placing the bat in front of home plate.



2018 COACHING MANUAL

ONE-ARM DRILL

Drill 5.12

Group: 5

Divisions: AAA and Majors

Purpose: To develop a short, quick swing that takes the bat head on a direct path to the ball.

Preparation: L-screen, coach to pitch, bucket, stool or bench to sit on, bucket of balls.

Implementation: This drill can be done by players of most any age once they can consistently make contact with pitches. Coach stands or sits about 8 to 10 feet in front of the batter behind a screen. Coach tosses pitches overhand or underhand. Batter hits first five pitches with both hands, and then takes the top hand off the bat for the next five pitches. Use a regular bat. Try not to choke up. Hitters can tuck the elbow into their side for more leverage, if needed. After hitting five with one hand, hitter finishes up by hitting five more with two hands. One-hand reps should be difficult. This drill should help hitters take the bat on a more direct path to the ball. They should feel a difference when hitting the final set of five.

Coaching Points: Let batters choke up if they can't control the bat or allow them to tuck the elbow into their side if they are struggling to take the barrel of the bat directly to the ball.



2018 COACHING MANUAL

LOB TOSS

Drill 5.13

Group: 5

Divisions: AAA and Majors

Purpose: To keep the weight loaded on the back foot as long as possible before shifting the weight forward to hit; verbal cue: "Let it get deep."

Preparation: L-screen or protective net, coach to pitch, bucket, stool or bench to sit on, bucket of balls.

Implementation: Coach sits or stands behind a screen about 20 to 40 feet in front of home plate, depending on the player's ability and the ability of the coach to throw the ball with accuracy. The coach tosses balls with a high arc (like slow-pitch softball). The batter lets the ball travel as far as possible (verbal cue: "Let it get deep") before trying to drive the ball. This is designed to help hitters be patient and avoid shifting their weight to the front foot too soon.

Coaching Points: If players can't stay back and shift their weight forward too soon, have them widen their stance and cut down on the length of their stride.



2018 COACHING MANUAL

BASE RUNNING RELAYS

Drill 5.14

Group: 1

Divisions: All

Purpose: To learn how proper turns at each base can help players get to their destination faster.

Preparation: Field with bases (preferably pegged bases), stopwatch.

Implementation: Have groups of two or four players compete by running around the bases to see who can finish with the fastest combined time. One player circles the bases and then as soon as he or she touches home plate the next player in the group starts. You will find that groups that run the bases the best fundamentally can and will beat the groups with the faster players. You can use cones to show the path for the proper turns at each base.



2018 COACHING MANUAL

BIG LEAGUE BASE RUNNING

Drill 5.15

Group: 1

Divisions: All

Purpose: To work on various base-running situations and conditioning.

Preparation: Field with bases (preferably pegged bases).

Implementation: Players line up at home plate and run home to first, all the way through the bag. Then they shuffle off of first, take a crossover step and run first to third before jogging to home plate. Next players line up at home plate again and run out a double. They then simulate scoring from second on a hit. Then have them run out a triple or a home run. Emphasis should be on making a proper turn at each base as well as stepping on the inside of each base and using the bag to push off of (like starting block) toward the next base.

Coaching Points: If players are having trouble make correct turns and taking a proper route to the next base, set up cones to mark the proper path. Players will take a path to the outside of the cones.



2018 COACHING MANUAL

HEAD TO HEAD

Drill 5.16

Group: 1

Divisions: All

Purpose: To demonstrate that the fastest player isn't always the best base runner; to understand how to make a proper turn when going from home to second and second to home.

Preparation: Field with bases (preferably pegged bases).

Implementation: One player starts at second and the other starts at home. The coach stands on the pitcher's mound and yells, "Go!" Player from second is simulating scoring on a hit. Player at home simulates running out a double. Whoever gets to his or her destination first, wins. Point out players who adhere to proper fundamentals when running the bases well.



2018 COACHING MANUAL

SLIP AND SLIDE

Drill 5.17

Group: 3

Divisions: A, AA & AAA

Purpose: To develop proper sliding fundamentals in a safe, fun environment.

Preparation: Slip-and Slide, hose, base to slide into or blanket on gym floor.

Implementation: Use and slip-and-Slide on a soft grassy surface or a blanket on a gym floor to illustrate the proper sliding techniques. This is a fun way to show players how to slide without risking cuts and bruises. Place a base at the end of the slip-and-slide or simply have them slide onto a blanket. This is a great way to end practice.

Coaching Points: Although you should avoid teaching the head-first slide, it can be fun to let players go head first at the end of the drill. If players tend to roll over on their sides when attempting to slide properly, remind them that they must slide on their butts, not on their hips. This will keep their toes pointed up instead of sideways and lower the risk of knee injury. Their weight can be more on one buttock than the other, but the butt should be in contact with the ground. Have them focus on bent-leg or pop-up slide and hook slides.



2018 COACHING MANUAL

THROWING DRILLS

Key Teaching Points

1. Use a four-seam grip.
2. Take the ball down, out, and up out of the glove (circular motion).
3. Hand above the ball at first, shifting to behind the ball as a release point approaches.
4. Elbow above the shoulder.
5. Point front shoulder toward the target.
6. Step toward the target.
7. Release ball. Follow throw (or follow through).



2018 COACHING MANUAL

CUTOFF RELAY RACE

Drill 5.18

Group: 1

Divisions: All

Purpose: To work on catching with two hands, making a quick transfer, and proper footwork when receiving and making throws.

Preparation: Bucket of balls, small groups of players

Implementation: Create groups of three, four, or five players to race. Players stand in a straight line with the others in their group, beginning at the spot where the ball is picked up, spaced evenly. All groups go at the same time. An outfielder picks up a ball lying on the warning track next to the fence and throws to his first teammate. That teammate turns his body, catches, generates momentum, and throws to the next teammate. This continues until the ball reaches the last player. The team that finishes first wins.

Coaching Points: The most common problems you'll find when executing relay throws are with kids who turn the wrong way before throwing (they turn toward the throwing side instead of the glove side) and kids who catch the ball flat-footed. Remind these players to turn toward the glove side as the ball approaches and to start moving toward the next target as they receive the ball. When they receive the throw, they'll already be moving in the right direction, so all they'll have to do is throw the ball and follow the throw.



2018 COACHING MANUAL

LONG TOSS GOLF

Drill 5.19

Group: 3

Divisions: A, AA, & AAA

Purpose: To work on proper long-tossing technique, building arm strength, and throwing accuracy.

Preparation: Cones (or some other target), balls, paint, or tape

Implementation: Place a cone or some other target in the outfield, far enough away to challenge the players' arm strength. Draw, paint, or tape a circle around the target, to represent a golf green. Each player tosses a ball toward the target. Points are awarded for landing on the green or hitting the pin. The player coming closest to the pin each round can be awarded bonus points. You can use the same target over and over, make new targets, or set up a course. Limit this drill to between 25 and 50 tosses per player. Perform once per week for younger players.

Coaching Points: This is a long-toss drill designed to build arm strength, so players should work on throwing the ball with an arc and getting the ball to carry. Young players might tend to throw the ball really high, almost like a pop-up, which won't help their throwing mechanics. All players should use proper throwing mechanics. All players' shoulders should remain almost on the same plane throughout the throwing motion. If the back shoulder is dropping too much, demonstrate the proper technique. Remind players that an accurate one- or two-hop throw is better than a longer throw that's off target.



2018 COACHING MANUAL

SHOOT AND SCORE

Drill 5.20

Group: 3

Divisions: A, AA, & AAA

Purpose: To improve throwing accuracy

Preparation: Two goals, a bucket of balls, target (optional)

Implementation: After players warm up their arms, set up two goals across from each other at a distance at which they can throw the ball into the goals in the air and on a line. One player stands to the side of each goal. Players take turns trying to throw the ball into the other's goals. Award 1 point for each ball that rolls into the goal and 2 points for a ball that enters the goal in the air. Another variation is to hang, tape, or paint a target onto the goal. Then 1 point is awarded for scoring a goal and 2 points for hitting the target. Targets also can be hung on fences, soccer goals, or walls. Hold a team competition to see who throws most accurately.

Coaching Points: Players who miss the target usually aren't stepping toward the target or aren't pointing the front shoulder toward the target.



2018 COACHING MANUAL

THROW FOR DISTANCE

Drill 5.21

Group: 2

Divisions: A, AA

Purpose: To learn how using the body's momentum can help you throw the ball farther.

Preparation: Football field (or other marked field); a bucket of balls; cones, stakes, or other markers (optional).

Implementation: If you practice near a football field, have players line up at the goal line one at a time. Stress proper mechanics and have each player throw a ball (or several balls) to see who can set the "world record." After a few rounds, have players shuffle their feet and follow their throws so they can see the results of generating momentum toward their target. You can disqualify players who don't use proper mechanics. Celebrate world records as well as throws made using proper mechanics. This drill is a fun way to build arm strength through long tossing and to emphasize the importance of mechanics and footwork. This drill should be done only once a week. Have younger players line up on a line (foul line or goal line) and throw at the same time. They can then run to their ball, see whose ball went farthest, pick it up, and run back.

Coaching Points: This is a long-toss drill that's also used to help players learn to use their bodies to throw the ball farther. Remember that the shoulders should remain on almost the same plane throughout the throwing motion and that players should not throw pop-ups. Try to limit the number of shuffles a player takes to simulate how quickly they should get rid of the ball in a game situation. Usually, no more than two shuffle-steps should be taken.



2018 COACHING MANUAL

TWENTY-ONE

Drill 5.22

Group: 1

Divisions: All

Purpose: To improve throwing accuracy

Preparation: Two players and a baseball

Implementation: This is a game played by baseball players at all levels. As players play catch, 1 point is awarded to the thrower for each ball caught at chest level. Two points are awarded for a ball caught at head level. Points can be deducted for uncatchable throws. If a throw is accurate but the receiver misses it, points are still awarded to the thrower. The first player to 21 wins. Stress proper mechanics. Set up a team competition in which winners move on and losers are eliminated. To speed things up, play to 15 instead to 21.



2018 COACHING MANUAL

OTHER THROWING GAMES

Drill 5.23

Group: 1

Divisions: All

Purpose: To make basic throwing drills more fun

Preparation: A bucket of balls and a target

Implementation: Just about any throwing drill can be turned into a contest by adding a target. Players can throw at a painted, taped, or drawn target on a fence, wall, or screen. Or they can try to knock a ball off a batting tee. Try anything that makes players concentrate and attempt to throw with accuracy. Stress proper mechanics at all times: four-seam grip; get the ball down, out, and up; elbow above the shoulder; point the front shoulder; step toward the target; follow the throw.

Coaching Points: When players are struggling with their accuracy, check for a proper four-seam grip, that the front shoulder points toward the target, that the step is toward the target, and that the elbow is staying above the shoulder. Remind players to follow their throws toward the target after releasing the ball.



2018 COACHING MANUAL

PITCHING DRILLS

Key Teaching Points

Focus on the five key links in the pitching chain:

1. Feet – take a small step back with non throwing-side foot, keeping the weight over the stationary foot, which is turned parallel and touching the rubber.
2. Balance position – non throwing-side leg comes up, glove is at waist level, torso is slightly forward so that the weight is centered over the pivot foot.
3. Power position – hand above the ball, take the ball down out of the glove and up (circular motion) as the front foot strides toward home plate.
4. Rotation – hand goes from above the ball to behind it as the release point is approached; elbow is above the shoulder.
5. Follow through – end up in a good fielding position; the follow-through takes care of itself if the mechanics are correct; don't be too picky about a perfect follow-through if the results are consistent.



2018 COACHING MANUAL

ONE-KNEE DRILL

Drill 5.24

Group: 1

Divisions: All

Purpose: To introduce players to proper throwing mechanics, particularly arm action (getting the ball down, out, and up)

Preparation: Two players (or a player and a coach) and a baseball

Implementation: This drill breaks down the player's arm action and works on keeping the elbow at the proper level. Players drop their throwing-side knee to the ground with the opposite knee up and play catch at a short distance using a four-seam grip to throw. Concentrate on taking the ball down, out, and up from the glove and keeping the elbow above the shoulder. The hand is on top of the ball as it's taken out of the glove, shifting to behind the ball as the arm comes forward. Players don't throw hard. Have them check their grip, hand, and elbow position after bringing the ball down out and up. Hand should be on top of the ball with fingers pointing away from the target just before the arm comes forward. From there, the player points the front shoulder toward the target, rotates the hips, brings the arm forward, and releases the ball, keeping the elbow above the shoulder. Younger players can use soft baseballs or do this drill with their coaches.

Coaching Points: Many young players turn their hand so that it's under the ball before they bring the arm forward. Some people call this "pie throwing." Think of how you have to hold a pie to throw it at someone; the palm is facing up so that you don't drop the pie. This is the opposite of how you should throw a baseball. For players who do this, have them stop their motion just before they bring the arm forward and check to see that the hand is on top of the ball and that the ball is pointing straight back. Other players will let their elbows drop below shoulder level at the release point. To fix this problem, try the Tee Drill (next).



2018 COACHING MANUAL

TEE DRILL

Drill 5.25

Group: 4

Divisions: AA, AAA, Majors

Purpose: To help players learn to keep the elbow above the shoulder when throwing

Preparation: Two players (or a player and a coach), batting tee, a baseball

Implementation: This drill helps prevent players from dropping their elbow when throwing. Players assume a one-knee position, as described in the One-Knee Drill. A batting tee is placed on the throwing side, close enough so that if the elbow drops it hits the tee. Players take the ball down, out, and up – checking their grip as necessary before rotating forward and releasing the ball. The presence of the tee will force players to consciously think about not dropping the elbow below shoulder level. Over time this will develop muscle memory that leads to proper throwing mechanics,



2018 COACHING MANUAL

POWER POSITION DRILL

Drill 5.26

Group: 1

Division: All

Purpose: To develop a proper grip and arm action

Preparation: Two players, baseballs, a pitching mound (optional)

Implementation: Variations of this drill can be done at all levels. This drill can be simplified for the youngest age groups to stress which direction to face when throwing; the proper four-seam grip; getting the ball down, out, and up; keeping the hand above the shoulder; pointing the front shoulder toward the target; stepping toward the target; and following through. For older and more advanced players, the drill can help troubleshoot mechanical problems often experienced by pitchers. Players create a wide base with their feet and hold the ball with the four-seam grip. Weight shifts to the backside before moving forward. Hands break, and the weight goes back. Power position is assumed (check as necessary); hand above ball with fingers pointed away from the target. Weight is back; elbow is above the shoulder. Front shoulder points toward the target. Hand shifts from above the ball to behind the ball as the arm moves forward through rotation. Ball is released (does not have to be thrown hard). Follow-through takes place with the trail foot staying in contact with the rubber. Players rotate on the back foot so the hip turns. Front toe points forward.

Coaching Points: The power position Drill can be used to troubleshoot the following mechanical flaws:

Short-arming: Start in the finish position with the throwing arm extended forward as if following through. Take weight all the way back through the power position before finishing the stretch out the throwing motion.

Getting pitches up: Have the catcher shorten up with the pitcher throwing from the mound. To throw downhill from the power position, the pitcher must get the elbow up and stay on top of the ball.

Long-striders: Again, have the catcher shorten up with the pitcher throwing from the mound. If the stride is too long the pitcher won't be able to compensate to get downhill in time to throw a strike.

Breaking ball or off-speed pitches: Between starts, pitchers struggling with their grips, mechanics, or control can practice their breaking balls and off-speed pitches from the power position on or off the mound from a shortened distance to get a better feel and make corrections.



2018 COACHING MANUAL

LONG TOSS

Drill 5.27

Group: 4

Division: All

Purpose: To develop arm strength and lengthen the throwing motion

Preparation: Two players and a baseball

Implementation: This drill helps improve any player's arm strength and is not just for pitchers. Warm up playing catch. Once the arm is warm, move back a few steps with each throw. Get far enough apart that it is a challenge to get the ball to the partner. Take a long step forward, concentrating on keeping the elbow way above the shoulder, and throw the ball with a slight arc. Shoulders should remain on or about the same plane throughout the delivery; we're not trying to throw pop-ups. It is okay if the ball arrives on one hop. Throw until arms start to fatigue, then move closer to finish up. Pitchers should do this drill between starts. Younger players shouldn't try the drill more than once a week. Older players can do it several times a week.



2018 COACHING MANUAL

BALANCE POSITION DRILL

Drill 5.28

Group: 4

Division: All

Purpose: To help players understand how to gather energy at balance position before exploding toward the plate.

Preparation: Pitcher, catcher, pitching mound (optional), a baseball.

Implementation: Pitcher throws from a mound to a catcher at a shortened distance. Start motion from the stretch, lifting the leg and pausing for a 3-count (one, one-thousand, two one-thousand, three one-thousand) at balance position (upper and lower body come together, leg slightly closed, with butt cheek pointing toward catcher, glove slightly above knee, upper body not leaning back). On the count of 3, pitcher strides forward and releases the ball. This drill makes pitchers gather their energy at the balance position so that the body and arm can come forward together toward home plate.



2018 COACHING MANUAL

TOE TAP DRILL (1-2-3 DRILL)

Drill 5.29

Group: 5

Division: AA, AAA & Majors

Purpose: To develop an understanding of the importance of staying back, using a soft landing, and not rushing the delivery.

Preparation: Pitcher, catcher, pitching mound (optional), a baseball

Implementation: Pitcher throws from a mound (or not) to a catcher at a shortened distance. Lifts leg and puts down (counts 1), lifts leg and puts it down again (counts 2), lifts leg and throws on a count of 3. This drill teaches balance and coordination and builds strength in the back leg. The pitcher stays under control and avoids landing too hard, which can make throwing strikes difficult. Shoulders should stay fairly level without changing planes abruptly when the foot finally lands.



2018 COACHING MANUAL

PITCHER COVERING FIRST BASE DRILL

Drill 5.30

Group: 5

Division: AAA & Majors

Purpose: To get pitchers in the habit of covering first base on balls hit to the right side and to work on the mechanics and communication involved with this play.

Preparation: Baseball field, pitching mound (optional), baseballs, pitchers, coach to hit or roll ground balls, catcher, first basemen, second basemen (optional).

Implementation: Pitchers line up behind the mound with first basemen lined up at first. First pitcher throws a pitch from the mound to the catcher. Coach is at home plate with a fungo bat and a ball. After the ball crossed the plate, the coach hits or rolls a ball to the first baseman. Pitcher runs hard to a point near the baseline about 10 to 12 feet from the bag, the turns and runs parallel to the line, holding the glove at chest level as a target. First baseman flips to the pitcher as he runs down the line and before he gets to the bag. The ball should be tossed with an underhand flip as early as possible so the pitcher can catch the ball first and then find the bag. Pitcher should stop at the bag and make the play like a first baseman if the first baseman fails to field the ball cleanly. Coach can mix things up and hit comebackers to the pitchers to keep them honest. Second basemen can be involved as well to work on communication between them and the first basemen.

Coaching Points: Young pitchers tend to jog all the way through this drill and take a path directly toward first base. Use cones to illustrate the proper path, if necessary. Make sure the pitcher sprints to the first cone, then gets under control and runs parallel to the first baseline, presenting a target for the first baseman.



2018 COACHING MANUAL

COMEBACKER DRILL

Drill 5.31

Group: 5

Division: AA, AAA & Majors

Purpose: To allow pitchers to develop a feel for following through in fielding position, catching ground balls, moving feet toward first base, and making an accurate throw.

Preparation: Baseball field, pitching mound (optional), baseballs, pitchers, coach to hit or roll balls, catcher, first basemen.

Implementation: Pitchers line up behind the mound with first basemen lined up at first. First pitcher throws a pitch from the mound to the catcher. Coach is at home plate with a fungo bat and a ball. After the ball crossed the plate, the coach hits or rolls a ball back to the pitcher, who fields it, steps toward the target, and follows the throw (not as exaggerated as an infielder). Also use this drill to practice double plays started by the pitcher.



2018 COACHING MANUAL

BUNT DRILL

Drill 5.32

Group: 5

Division: AAA & Majors

Purpose: To teach pitchers the mechanics of fielding bunts to various locations.

Preparation: Baseball field, pitching mound (optional), baseballs, pitchers, first basemen, coach to roll balls, catcher.

Implementation: Pitchers line up behind the mound with the first basemen lined up at first. First Pitcher throws a pitch to the catcher. Coach is at home plate with a ball. After the pitch crosses the plate, the coach rolls a ball to simulate a bunt. Pitcher fields the bunt properly, generates momentum toward the target, and follows the throw. Stress footwork. On bunts to the first base side, a right-hander opens up to the first base before fielding the ball, generating momentum toward the target and throwing. A left-hander places the left foot between the ball and foul line and slowly turns the body to the glove side before fielding and making the throw (don't open too far; point the shoulder and generate momentum toward the target). Reverse the footwork on bunts to the third-base side. Add batters to make the bunts more realistic and allow players to practice bunting. This drill can be combined with bunting drills by placing cones on the infield to illustrate where bunts should be placed.



2018 COACHING MANUAL

FIELDING FLY BALLS

Key Teaching Points

1. Get to the spot where the ball will land quickly, do not drift.
2. Watch the ball into the glove and catch the ball above the head using two hands whenever possible.
3. Try to move forward slightly as the catch is made.



2018 COACHING MANUAL

LITE FLITE ELIMINATION

Drill 5.33

Group: 1

Divisions: All

Purpose: To develop the proper technique for catching fly balls in a fun, competitive setting.

Preparation: Soft or sponge rubber balls, pitching machine (optional), coach to throw fly balls or to feed machine.

Implementation: Use soft or sponge rubber balls. Each player is thrown a fly ball (or fed a fly ball through a pitching machine). Younger players can use their gloves. Balls are so light that players have to catch the ball with two hands over the head. Older players and more advanced younger players can use bare hands. If players catch the ball, they stay in, but if they miss, they're out of the drill. This competition can also be done using the pass-pattern drill that follows or with real baseballs (when appropriate). When not using gloves, players should attempt to catch the ball with the glove hand only over the head. This makes them focus on proper hand positioning and watching the ball into the hand.

Coaching Points: Players who miss fly balls regularly usually aren't using proper technique and are likely taking their eyes off the ball. Make sure they catch the ball above their heads so that they can watch the ball travel all the way into the glove or hand.



2018 COACHING MANUAL

PASS PATTERNS

Drill 5.34

Group: 1

Divisions: All

Purpose: To develop proper crossover steps and drop steps and learn to catch fly balls on the run.

Preparation: A bucket of balls, a coach to throw “passes”.

Implementation: A coach or player (this can be long toss for pitchers) serves as quarterback. The fielding player tosses the ball to the quarterback and then uses a crossover or drop step in the appropriate direction before running a “pass pattern.” The quarterback throws the ball high enough for the “receiver” to run under the ball and make a one-handed, over-the-shoulder catch. Have the player start over if the initial step is not executed correctly.

Coaching Points: The crossover step is the most efficient method of moving laterally on a baseball field. The crossover should be used by baserunners, infielders, and outfielders. To execute the step, a player pivots the foot nearest to where the ball is traveling while at the same time crossing the other foot over the first foot in the direction of the ball. If players are picking up the foot nearest the ball first and then crossing over, stop them immediately without throwing the pass and start over.

The drop step is a combination of a step back toward a ball hit over a player’s head followed by a crossover in the direction of the ball. Again, stop the drill immediately and begin again if a player does not execute the initial step properly.



2018 COACHING MANUAL

THROWN FLY BALLS

Drill 5.35

Group: 1

Divisions: All

Purpose: To learn to catch fly balls with two hands above the head in a controlled environment.

Preparation: A bucket of balls and a coach to throw balls to players; soft or sponge rubber balls for younger players.

Implementation: To prevent injury and embarrassment, players must be comfortable catching fly balls properly before fly balls are hit to them. The proper way to catch a fly ball is with two hands above the head so that eyes can follow the ball into the glove. The simplest way to teach proper execution is to throw fly balls to players and force them to do it correctly. Start with short, easy tosses and then adjust the height of throws to the skill and comfort level of players. You can start younger players out with soft baseballs or sponge rubber balls to avoid injury and build confidence. You can turn this drill into an elimination contest for the youngest players. Stress getting to the spot where the ball is coming down and catching with two hands above the head.

Coaching Points: Players who regularly miss fly balls, most likely, are not watching the ball, and should perform the drill again and again, attempting to catch the ball with two hands above the head, so that they can see the ball travel all the way into the glove. Many players catch fly balls while backpedaling or moving away from the infield. Try to get them to learn to catch the ball while moving slightly forward when executing this drill.



2018 COACHING MANUAL

THROWN OR MACHINE GROUND BALLS

Drill 5.36

Group: 1

Divisions: All

Purpose: To learn how to field ground balls properly in a controlled environment.

Preparation: A bucket of balls, a pitching machine (optional), a coach to feed machine or throw balls.

Implementation: Like infielders, outfielders should field a ground ball with a wide base, the butt down, and the hands out in front of the body. Get wide by stepping toward home with glove-side leg forward and glove in front of that foot. Player should get comfortable with proper fundamentals before fielding hit balls. It's okay to use a pitching machine for outfield ground balls right from the start. Roll or feed players ground balls one at a time. Have them get to the spot quickly, get under control, field properly, generate momentum toward the coach, and throw. Don't allow players to walk or run through ground balls. They need to slow down and get under control to field properly.

Coaching Points: Young outfielders have a tendency to "run through" ground balls. That is, they try to get to the spot quickly and then try to field the ball while still running at or near full speed. Remember that their main goal is to field the ball quickly and throw it to the proper cutoff or relay person to prevent baserunners from advancing. Thus, fielding the ball cleanly is the most important responsibility. Players should come to almost a complete stop if they have to do so that they can be sure to field the ball cleanly.



2018 COACHING MANUAL

COMMUNICATION DRILL

Drill 5.37

Group: 4

Divisions: AA, AAA, Majors

Purpose: To understand the importance and mechanics of proper communication in the outfield.

Preparation: A bucket of baseballs, a coach to throw fly balls, soft or sponge rubber balls for younger players (optional), pitching machines (optional), a player to serve as a cutoff for throws (optional)

Implementation: Outfielders form two lines at least 20 feet apart. The first players in each line step forward. The coach throws fly balls in between the two fielders, who must communicate and make the play. The player fielding the ball yells "I got it!" at least three times. The other player then backs up the other player. The player who catches the ball should deliver a strong, accurate throw to the coach or cutoff player (a player who rotates out of the drill). For younger players, use soft baseballs, sponge rubber balls or tennis balls. Use pitching machines to throw higher fly balls to more advanced players, ensuring the ball will reach about the same height and distance each time.

Coaching Points: The age-old outfield communication problem arises when two players call for the ball at the same time. Teach players that if there's any uncertainty as to who will make the catch, they should continue to call for the ball. If two players call for the ball the same time and then one continues to call for it, that player should make the play. As players get older, this drill can be done by designating one player as the centerfielder, who has priority over any ball that he or she calls. In this format a third player can be added to simulate a game situation in which there are three outfielders. Again, the centerfielder is the quarterback and should call for any ball that he or she can easily get to.



2018 COACHING MANUAL

CROSSOVER STEP DRILL

Drill 5.38

Group: 4

Divisions: AA, AAA, Majors

Purpose: To develop a fundamentally sound crossover step.

Preparation: A bucket of balls and a coach to throw them

Implementation: The crossover step (pivot one foot while crossing the other one over in the direction of the ball or the next base) is the most efficient way to move laterally on the baseball field. The crossover is an important technique for all fielders and baserunners. Outfielders line up, each with a ball. The first outfielder steps forward, tosses the ball to the coach, and assumes a ready position. The coach tells the player which way to go ahead of time. The player crosses over in that direction, then the coach tosses the ball so it can be caught with two hands over the head. The player should concentrate on crossing over correctly until comfortable doing so. The coach should tell players which direction they'll be going ahead of time until they master the step. Then mix it up at will.

Coaching Points: As with Pass Patterns, stop this drill and start over if the player performs the crossover step incorrectly. The goal of this drill is to force the player to get to the spot quickly and catch the ball with two hands over the head. More difficult over-the-shoulder catches are practiced using the Pass Pattern Drill.



2018 COACHING MANUAL

DROP STEP DRILL

Drill 5.39

Group: 5

Divisions: AA, AAA, Majors

Purpose: To develop a fundamentally sound drop step

Preparation: A bucket of balls and a coach to throw them

Implementation: This drill is much like the drill for the crossover step but a bit more advanced. Players line up. The first player steps forward, tosses the ball to the coach, and assumes ready position. The coach says "Go!" and the player performs a drop step (drop one foot back, turn body, and cross the other foot over in the direction of the ball). The coach throws the ball directly over the player's head, high and close enough that he or she can catch it with two hands above the head.

Coaching Points: Have players take time to get footwork correct before tossing. As with Pass Patterns, stop this drill and start over if players do the drop step incorrectly. The goal of this drill is to force the player to get to the spot quickly and catch the ball with two hands over the head. More difficult over-the-shoulder catches are practiced using Pass Patterns.



2018 COACHING MANUAL

MACHINE FLY BALLS

Drill 5.40

Group: 5

Divisions: AA, AAA, Majors

Purpose: To allow players to work on catching more difficult fly balls.

Preparation: A bucket of balls, a pitching machine, a coach to feed the machine

Implementation: A pitching machine can be a great asset to coaches who aren't comfortable hitting fly balls. Pitching machines can throw fly balls virtually as high as you want and to almost the same spot every time. Just be sure that your players are confident enough and capable enough to catch these balls. If you're unsure, use soft balls or tennis balls instead of baseballs. Don't ruin a player's confidence or create a potential injury situation because you want to make your practices more exciting.

Coaching Points: In general, fly balls fed through a machine have a slightly different spin on them than do batted balls. The spin causes the balls to fall almost straight down to the ground once they reach their highest point. This can be tricky for young outfielders who are accustomed to trying to move back to the spot where the ball is going to land, so it's important that players have developed their skills enough to be able to perform this drill safely. One benefit of catching fly balls fed through a pitching machine is that players are usually forced to learn to catch the ball while moving forward, which is not an easy skill to teach or master.



2018 COACHING MANUAL

FENCE DRILL

Drill 5.41

Group: 5

Divisions: AAA, Majors

Purpose: To learn the importance of field awareness and how to pursue fly balls hit near the outfield fence

Preparation: A bucket of balls and a coach to throw them

Implementation: This drill teaches outfielders to be aware of their surroundings. The activity is not intended to practice robbing home runs, but that element can be added for fun. Each player gets in line with a ball. The first player tosses the ball to the coach, who throws a fly ball that will land on the warning track. The player races back, feels for the fence with his or her bare hand, and then catches the ball with two hands over the head.

Coaching Points: Young players often miss fly balls because they take their eyes off the ball to find the fence. They should first glance back to where they are running and then pick up the ball without looking at the fence again. Once they get to the warning track, have them start feeling for the fence with their throwing hand. At this point they should remain focused on the flight of the ball.



2018 COACHING MANUAL

HITTING BALLS TO OUTFIELDERS

Drill 5.42

Group: 5

Divisions: AA, AAA, Majors

Purpose: To give outfielders a more realistic look at balls coming off a bat

Preparation: A bucket of balls, a fungo bat (or any bat), a coach to hit, a player or coach to catch throws

Implementation: Just as is true for infielders, it's important to hit balls of all kinds to your outfielders. Most of the drills and skills mentioned here for outfielders can be performed with coaches hitting balls. Again, it's important that the coach understands the skill level of the players he is hitting to and to adapt accordingly, sometimes even from one player to the next. Don't hit balls too high or too hard or use hard baseballs until players are confident catching ground balls and fly balls the right way. Once they're comfortable, repetitions are the best way for outfielders to improve.



2018 COACHING MANUAL

FIELDING GROUND BALLS

Key Teaching Points

1. Create a wide base with the feet.
2. Butt stays down; don't bend only at waist.
3. Hands are out in front; see the ball into the glove.
4. Relax wrists; fingers point down and barely touch the ground.



2018 COACHING MANUAL

ROLLED GROUND BALLS

Drill 5.43

Group: 1

Divisions: All

Purpose: Allows players to become comfortable with the proper mechanics when fielding ground balls.

Preparation: Bucket of balls, a coach to roll them.

Implementation: Balls can be rolled as hard or soft as needed; keep in mind any type of hop the ball takes can be controlled. All players must assume the proper positioning to make this drill effective, butt down, wide base and the hands out in front with the glove pointing down (this will allow the coach to see the inside of the glove with the fingers pointing down). Have all players hold the ground ball position for 5 (five) consecutive throws this should cause a slight thigh burn. As the players get comfortable fielding balls move further away from them and throw the balls harder. The ball must be caught out in front to assure the eyes follow the ball into the glove.

Coaching Points: If the player is having issues holding the ball check glove positioning. Remember the glove must be in front of the body.



2018 COACHING MANUAL

THROWING AFTER THE CATCH DRILL

Drill 5.44

Group: 1

Divisions: All

Purpose: Teaches players to understand the use of the body's momentum to make strong and accurate throws.

Preparation: Bucket of balls, a coach or player to take the throws, a coach or player to roll ground balls, a target, cones or markers.

Implementation: The purpose of this drill is to reinforce the proper mechanics of fielding a ground ball first, generating momentum toward your target, throwing the ball and following through. Set up the three (3) cones or markers a few feet apart in a line toward your target. The distance of the throw should be age appropriate to allow for the intended results. A player sets up with the right or left foot next to the first marker and assumes the proper infield position. A ball is rolled to the player, who fields it. The player then shuffles or hops to the second marker and throws the ball to the target while following the throw past the third marker. Always reinforce the four (4) seam grip. Players should stay low and not stand straight up after fielding the ball. Each player should make at least five (5) throws.

Coaching Points: If player's throws are off target they are likely dropping their elbow below the shoulder or not staying true to the follow through. Players who are throwing the ball high or low are probably standing up before they are making their throw.



2018 COACHING MANUAL

THROWING-SIDE FOOT BACKHAND DRILL

Drill 5.45

Group: 4

Divisions: AA, AAA, & Majors

Purpose: Teaches players the proper technique for backhanding ground balls to the throwing hand side.

Preparation: Bucket of balls, a coach to roll ground balls.

Implementation: This drill is used for balls that are hit hard and slightly to the player's backhand side. Just like a regular ground ball the backhand is caught in front of the body to allow the eyes to follow the ball into the glove and to keep the forearm and wrist out of the way. Players must assume the correct infield position. The player lines up in front of the coach with the right leg extended. The player then pivots the right foot so the instep is facing the coach and drops the left knee to the ground (opposite for lefties). This creates the wide base and helps keep the butt down, the glove is placed in front of the right foot and toward the coach. The coach should be close enough to the player to allow the player to get the feel of catching the ball with one hand, squeezing the glove and bringing it back to the center of the body. The glove hand should be relaxed which will allow the coach to see into the glove. Remind the players to avoid twisting the glove so they don't close it too soon. Use five (5) repetitions for each player. Added repetitions will help with conditioning.



2018 COACHING MANUAL

GLOVE-SIDE FOOT BACKHAND DRILL

Drill 5.46

Group: 4

Divisions: AA, AAA, & Majors

Purpose: Teaches players to understand the use of the body's momentum to make strong and accurate throws.

Preparation: Bucket of balls, a coach to roll balls

Implementation: This drill provides more reach for players ranging farther to their backhand side. Just like all ground balls the backhand is caught in front of the body so the eyes can follow the ball into the glove and the forearm and wrist stay out of the way. Players must assume the proper infield position. Line up in front of the coach and crosses the glove side leg over the other leg as if getting ready to walk. The throwing knee drops to the ground. The player creates a wide base to help keep the butt down and the glove in front of the body. The ball is caught off the front foot, slightly ahead of the body. The coach stays close enough to allow the player to get used to catching the ball with one hand and bringing it back to the center of the body. The glove hand should be relaxed enough so that the coach can see into it. Remind the players to avoid twisting their gloves too soon. Use five (5) repetitions. Additional repetitions will help with conditioning.

Coaching Points: If a player is having trouble fielding the ball and it's bouncing off of the wrist the player in all probability has the glove too far back and instead of the glove being in front of their foot the wrist is in front.



2018 COACHING MANUAL

HIGH FIVE DRILL (UNDERHAND FLIP)

Drill 5.47

Group: 4

Divisions: AA, AAA, & Majors

Purpose: Understand and apply the concept of generating momentum toward a target executing an underhand flip and learn to keep the hand at face level after the flip.

Preparation: Bucket of balls, a coach to roll balls

Implementation: This basic infield toss is used by all infielders at some point so it should be introduced and practiced at a young age. Have the players line up opposite the coach 10 to 15 feet away. One at a time the players assume the infield position. The coach rolls the ball to the first player. The player catches the ball and generates momentum toward the target, uses an underhand flip and finishes by following the flip toward the coach with the hand held at head level. When the player gets to the coach he gives him a high five. The players hand should never drop lower than head level until the high five has taken place.

Coaching Points: Keeping the hand held high allows for true flips to occur. Failure to do this will result in the flip not being true to the target.



2018 COACHING MANUAL

FIRST BASE DRILL

Drill 5.48

Group: 4

Divisions: All

Purpose: To Develop proper mechanics when receiving throws at first base.

Preparation: A bucket of balls, a player or coach to throw, first baseman, an empty bucket.

Implementation: Players line up in foul territory near first base. The coach sets up anywhere in the infield with a bucket of balls. An empty bucket is placed near first base. The first player comes to first base and puts the heel of the throwing side foot on the base. The coach throws the ball to this player. The player sees the ball coming across the diamond and takes his or her glove and glove-side foot directly toward the ball together. The ball should hit the glove at the same time the foot lands. This prevents stretching too soon. Stress that the first baseman get to the bag quickly, stand tall, square shoulders to the infielder making the throw, and take the glove and glove-side foot toward the ball together. Remind them not to stretch prematurely. You can also have players work on receiving errant throws and short hops.

Coaching Points: If players are stretching too soon, make them exaggerate the step with the glove foot so that the foot lands on the ground at the exact same time the ball enters the glove.



2018 COACHING MANUAL

BACKHAND THROWING DRILL

Drill 5.49

Group: 5

Divisions: AAA & Majors

Purpose: To practice generating momentum back toward the target after backhanding ground balls.

Preparation: A bucket of balls, a coach or player to roll balls, cones or markers, a player or coach to receive throws.

Implementation: This drill is very similar to a regular throwing drill. Two cones are set up. A player sets up in ready position to the right of the first cone. The coach rolls a ball to the player's backhand. The player fields the ball using either backhand method, stops his or her momentum, shuffles back to the first cone, throws, and follows the throw past the second cone. This player then goes to the end of the line. Stopping momentum going away from the target and then shuffling back toward the target is a difficult concept for young players to understand and should be stressed. No off-balance throws.



2018 COACHING MANUAL

MACHINE BACKHANDS AND FOREHANDS

Drill 5.50

Group: 5

Divisions: AAA - Majors

Purpose: To work on getting to a spot quickly and catching the ball in front of the body on backhands and forehands.

Preparation: A bucket of balls, a pitching machine aimed at the same spot, cones or markers.

Implementation: Set up a cone in one spot; position a pitching machine to roll hard ground balls straight at the cone. Have players line up to the right or left of the cone so if they break when the ball is fed, they'll have to backhand or forehand the ball without getting in front of it. Players should break as the ball is fed through the machine, focusing on catching the ball out in front of their body at the cone. Alternate from one side to the other so players get both backhands and forehands. This drill can easily be turned into an elimination contest. Players should switch lines after catching a ground ball.

Coaching Points: If players struggle to field balls cleanly because they are still on the move, allow them to break before the ball is fed and to set up in the backhand position before the ball arrives. Once they get comfortable making the play correctly with their gloves out in front of their bodies, have them break as the ball is fed to make play more difficult.



2018 COACHING MANUAL

MACHINE SHORT HOPS

Drill 5.51

Group: 5

Divisions: AAA - Majors

Purpose: To develop soft hands and a proper glove angle; to work on catching the ball out in front of the body.

Preparation: A bucket of balls (soft or sponge balls or real baseballs) and a pitching machine.

Implementation: This drill can be done outdoors or indoors. You can make the drill even more challenging by having players field soft or sponge rubber balls with their bare hands. Set pitching machines so that players must field fast-moving balls on short hops. Make sure players assume and maintain a good fielding position (wide base, butt down, hands out in front). If using gloves and real baseballs, they'll need to relax their wrists and catch the ball out in front. Have them try to catch the ball with only one hand to promote proper glove angle and softer hands. (This is especially important when using softer balls and no gloves.) See who can catch the most short hops out of 5 or 10 attempts.

Coaching Points: Players who have trouble fielding these balls cleanly are probably not getting their gloves or hands far enough out in front, and their wrists might not be relaxed. Have them assume the proper hand and wrist position before the balls are fed to force them to watch the ball travel all the way into their hands. The relaxed wrist makes their hands "softer" and allows them to field the balls cleaner.



2018 COACHING MANUAL

HITTING GROUND BALLS

Drill 5.52

Group: 5

Divisions: AAA - Majors

Purpose: To get a more realistic sense of fielding ground balls coming off a bat.

Preparation: A bucket of baseballs, a fungo bat (or another type of bat), a coach to hit balls.

Implementation: At some point it becomes necessary to hit ground balls to your team. Before you do this – at any level – make sure you have introduced the players to the basic ground ball fundamentals and given them a chance to get comfortable fielding ground balls the proper way. Use common sense when hitting ground balls. If the field is not in good condition, take it easy. Adapt the speed of the balls to each player's skill level. Players getting beaten up with bad hops in practice are not getting better.

If you have more than one coach who can hit ground balls accurately, here's a way to maximize repetitions: One coach hits to the third basemen and shortstops from the first-base side while the other coach hits to the second and first basemen from the third base side. After a few minutes, one coach goes "live" with the players fielding his or her balls throwing to first. The other players just lob the balls back to their coach on one hop or place the balls in a bucket. The first basemen take throws and stop fielding ground balls at this point. Each position gets to go "live" before the drill ends. As players get older, they can hit ground balls to each other if there aren't enough coaches. Having one person hit to each position is ideal but not always possible.



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2018 COACHING MANUAL

DRILL GROUPINGS

A major goal of this manual is to provide coaches with a format for running effective practices. There are thousands of baseball drills that have been developed over the years; the following are a few that we recommend. We advise you to mix things up and use different drills from the same groupings on different days to keep things interesting for you and your players.

Grouping 1

All Ages

Drill title	Drill number	Category
Free Hitting	5.1	Fun hitting drill
Hitting Contests	5.3	Fun hitting drill
Tee and Hitting for Distance	5.6	Fun hitting drill
Soft Toss	5.7	Regular hitting drill
Tee Work	5.8	Regular hitting drill
Short Toss form the Front	5.9	Regular hitting drill
Bunting Drill	5.11	Regular hitting drill
Baserunning Relays	5.14	Fun baserunning drill
Big League Baserunning	5.15	Fun baserunning drill
Head to Head	5.16	Fun baserunning drill
Cutoff Relay Race	5.18	Fun throwing drill
Twenty-one	5.22	Fun throwing drill
Other Throwing Games	5.23	Fun throwing drill
One-Knee Drill	5.24	Throwing / pitching drill
Power Position Drill	5.26	Throwing / pitching drill
Lite Flite Elimination	5.33	Fun outfield drill
Pass Patterns	5.34	Fun outfield drill
Thrown Fly Balls	5.35	Regular outfield drill
Thrown or Machine Ground Balls	5.36	Regular outfield drill
Rolled Ground Balls	5.43	Regular infield drill
Thrown After the Catch Drill	5.44	Regular infield drill

Grouping 2

Ages 4 to 9

Goalie Game	5.2	Fun hitting drill
Knock Out the Catcher	5.4	Fun hitting drill
Throw for Distance	5.21	Fun throwing drill

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Grouping 3

Ages 4 to 12

Drill title	Drill number	Category
Line Drive Home Run Derby	5.5	Fun hitting drill
Slip and Slide	5.17	Fun baserunning drill
Long-Toss Golf	5.19	Fun throwing drill
Shoot and Score!	5.20	Fun throwing drill

Grouping 4

Ages 7 to 15+

Stickball Drill	5.10	Regular hitting drill
Tee Drill	5.25	Throwing / pitching drill
Long Toss	5.27	Throwing / pitching drill
Balance Position Drill	5.28	Pitching Drill
Communication Drill	5.37	Regular outfield drill
Crossover Step Drill	5.38	Regular outfield drill
Throwing-Side Foot Backhand Drill	5.45	Regular infield drill
Glove-Side Foot Backhand Drill	5.46	Regular infield drill
High Five Drill (Underhand Flip)	5.47	Regular infield drill
First Base Drill	5.48	Regular infield drill

Grouping 5

Ages 10 to 15+

One-Arm Drill	5.12	Advanced hitting drill
Lob Toss	5.13	Advanced hitting drill
Toe Tap Drill (1-2-3 Drill)	5.29	Pitching drill
Pitcher Covering First Base Drill	5.30	Pitching drill
Comebacker Drill	5.31	Pitching drill
Bunt Drill	5.32	Pitching drill
Drop Step Drill	5.39	Advanced outfield drill
Machine Fly Balls	5.40	Advanced outfield drill
Fence Drill	5.41	Advanced outfield drill
Hitting Balls to Outfielders	5.42	Advanced outfield drill
Backhand Throwing Drills	5.49	Advanced infield drill
Machine Backhands and Forehands	5.50	Advanced infield drill
Machine Short Hops	5.51	Advanced infield drill



2018 COACHING MANUAL

Hitting Ground Balls

5.52

Advanced infield drill

PRACTICE OUTLINE FOR PRE-PYB AGES

- 5 min. Run the Bases**
- Explain that first is the only base you can run past.
 - Explain that you must touch the bases or be called out.
 - Play follow the leader
- 5 min. Stretch**
- Stretch in a circle around the pitcher's mound. The routine should be quick and simple.
 - Lay out the day's practice plan.
- 30 min. Practice in stations, 10 min. per station and then rotate**
- Hitting off the tee and tossed balls
 - Fielding and catching
 - Throwing
- 15 min. Play a scrimmage or other instructional game**
- 5 min. Run the bases and review**
- Sprint around the bases. Incorporate races or chases.
 - Let kids slide into home to finish.

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2018 COACHING MANUAL

PRACTICE OUTLINE FOR A (AGES 7 – 8)

Three-Day Sample Practice Guide

Practice Plan Day 1

- 5 min. Dynamic Warm-up**
- Skipping, high-knee skipping, high-knee jogging, bounding, backward running, jogging
- 5 min. Baserunning**
- Big League Baserunning (controlled, follow the leader)
- 5 min. Stretching**
- Hamstrings, quads, groin, back, shoulders, triceps
- 10 min. Throwing**
- Power Position Drill with coaches (5 min.); with teammates after a few sessions
 - One-Knee Drill with coaches (5 min.); with teammates after a few sessions
 - As season progresses, you can replace these drills with playing catch and any of the fun throwing drills from groupings 1, 2 or 3. Pitchers can do drills from grouping 4.
- 30 min. Stations (3 groups, 10 min. each station)**
- Hitting (Tee Work, Soft Toss); as the season progresses, you can substitute any fun or regular hitting drill from groupings 1, 2, 3 or 4
 - Infield and throwing (Rolled Ground Balls, Throwing After the Catch Drill); as the season progresses, you can substitute any fun or regular infield or throwing drills from groupings 1, 2, 3 or 4.
 - Outfield (Thrown Fly Balls; use sponge balls or soft baseballs until skills are developed); as the season progresses, you can substitute any fun or regular outfield drills from groupings 1 to 4.
- 10 min. Basic rules session or any fun drill from groupings 1, 2 or 3**
- 5 min. Baserunning**
- Big League Baserunning or any fun baserunning drills from grouping 1 (run hard)

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2018 COACHING MANUAL

PRACTICE OUTLINE FOR A (AGES 7 – 8)

Three-Day Sample Practice Guide

Practice Plan Day 2

- 5 min. Dynamic Warm-up (same as day 1)**
- Skipping, high-knee skipping, high-knee jogging, bounding, backward running
- 5 min. Baserunning (same as day 1)**
- Big League Baserunning (controlled, follow the leader)
- 5 min. Stretching (same as day 1)**
- Hamstrings, quads, groin, back, shoulders, triceps
- 15 min. Throwing and Catching**
- Power Position Drill with coaches (5 min.); with teammates after a few sessions
 - One-Knee Drill with coaches (5 min.); with teammates after a few sessions
 - Catch coach's throws with two hands in front (5 min.); use bigger balls, Lite Flite balls or soft baseballs.
 - As season progresses, you can replace these drills with playing catch and any of the fun throwing drills from groupings 1, 2 or 3. Pitchers can do drills from grouping 4.
- 30 min. Stations (3 groups, 10 min. each station)**
- Hitting (Short toss from the front); as the season progresses, you can substitute any fun or regular hitting drill from groupings 1, 2, 3 or 4
 - Infield and throwing (review fielding ground balls and throwing after the catch; include backhand drills); as the season progresses, you can substitute any fun or regular infield or throwing drills from groupings 1, 2, 3 or 4.
 - Outfield (Thrown Fly Balls, Thrown or Machine Ground Balls); as the season progresses, you can substitute any fun or regular outfield drills from groupings 1 to 4.
- 15 min. Controlled game, game situations, or rules session**

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2018 COACHING MANUAL

PRACTICE OUTLINE FOR A (AGES 7 – 8)

Three-Day Sample Practice Guide

Practice Plan Day 3

- 5 min. Dynamic Warm-up (same as day 1)**
- Skipping, high-knee skipping, high-knee jogging, bounding, backward running
- 5 min. Baserunning (same as day 1)**
- Big League Baserunning (controlled, follow the leader)
- 5 min. Stretching (same as day 1)**
- Hamstrings, quads, groin, back, shoulders, triceps
- 10 min. Throwing and Catching**
- Players play catch; stress mechanics and catching with two hands in front of body.
 - Play Twenty-One
 - As season progresses, you can replace these drills with regular or fun throwing drills from groupings 1, 2 or 3. Pitchers can do drills from grouping 4.
- 30 min. Stations (3 groups, 10 min. each station)**
- Hitting (Free Hitting or Line Drive Home Run Derby); as the season progresses, you can substitute any fun or regular hitting drill from groupings 1, 2, 3 or 4
 - Infield and throwing (review backhands, High Five Drill); as the season progresses, you can substitute any fun or regular infield or throwing drills from groupings 1, 2, 3 or 4.
 - Outfield (Crossover Step Drill, Pass Patterns); as the season progresses, you can substitute any fun or regular outfield drills from groupings 1 to 4.
- 15 min. Controlled game or any combination of fun drills from groupings 1, 2 or 3**

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2018 COACHING MANUAL

PRACTICE OUTLINE FOR AA (AGES 9 – 10)

Three-Day Sample Practice Guide

Practice Plan Day 1

- 5 min. Dynamic Warm-up**
- Skipping, high-knee skipping, high-knee jogging, bounding, backward running, jogging
 - Big League Baserunning or general baserunning can be done as jogging.
- 5 min. Stretching**
- Hamstrings, quads, groin, back, shoulders, triceps
- 10 min. Throwing and catching**
- One-Knee Drill with teammates (4 min.)
 - Power Position Drill with teammates (4 min.)
 - Play catch or play Twenty-One with teammates (2 min.)
 - Emphasize proper mechanics and accuracy on each throw; focus on catching the ball out in front with two hands.
- 20 min. Team fundamentals**
- Choose from cutoffs and relays, first-and-third offense and defense, defending the steal (if your league permits stealing), infield and outfield communication and priorities.
- 30 min. Stations (3 groups, 10 min. each station)**
- Hitting (Tee Work, Soft Toss); any hitting drill from groupings 1, 3, 4 or 5 can be substituted as the season progresses.
 - Infield and throwing (Rolled Ground Balls, Throwing After the Catch Drill); any infield or throwing drills from groupings 1, 3, 4 or 5 can be substituted as the season progresses.
 - Outfield (Thrown Fly Balls; use soft baseballs until skills are developed); any outfield drills from groupings 1, 4 or 5 can be substituted as the season progresses.
- 5 min. Baserunning**
- Big League Baserunning (full speed) or another baserunning drill from grouping 1.

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2018 COACHING MANUAL

PRACTICE OUTLINE FOR AA (AGES 9 – 10)

Three-Day Sample Practice Guide

Practice Plan Day 2

- 5 min. Dynamic Warm-up (Same as day 1)**
- Skipping, high-knee skipping, high-knee jogging, bounding, backward running, jogging
 - Big League Baserunning or general baserunning can be done as jogging.
- 5 min. Stretching (Same as day 1)**
- Hamstrings, quads, groin, back, shoulders, triceps
- 10 min. Throwing and catching**
- Review One-Knee Drill and Power Position Drill (5 min.)
 - Play catch or play Twenty-One with teammates (5 min.)
 - Emphasize proper mechanics and accuracy on each throw; focus on catching the ball out in front with two hands.
 - Any throwing drill from groupings 1, 3, 4 or 5 can be substituted as the season progresses.
 - Pitchers can work on throwing and pitching drills from groupings 4 or 5.
- 20 min. Team fundamentals**
- Choose from cutoffs and relays, first-and-third offense and defense, defending the steal (if your league permits stealing), infield and outfield communication and priorities.
- 30 min. Stations (3 groups, 10 min. each station)**
- Hitting (Short Toss From the Front); any hitting drill from groupings 1, 3, 4 or 5 can be substituted as the season progresses.
 - Infield and throwing (review; backhand drills; High Five Drill); any infield or throwing drills from groupings 1, 3, 4 or 5 can be substituted as the season progresses.
 - Outfield (review; Thrown or Machine Ground Balls; Communication Drill); any outfield drills from groupings 1, 4 or 5 can be substituted as the season progresses.
- 5 min. Baserunning**
- Big League Baserunning (full speed) or another baserunning drill from grouping 1.

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2018 COACHING MANUAL

PRACTICE OUTLINE FOR AA (AGES 9 – 10)

Three-Day Sample Practice Guide

Practice Plan Day 3

- 5 min. Dynamic Warm-up (Same as day 1)**
- Skipping, high-knee skipping, high-knee jogging, bounding, backward running, jogging
 - Big League Baserunning or general baserunning can be done as jogging.
- 5 min. Stretching (Same as day 1)**
- Hamstrings, quads, groin, back, shoulders, triceps
- 10 min. Throwing and catching**
- Other throwing games
 - Emphasize proper mechanics and accuracy on each throw; focus on catching the ball out in front with two hands.
 - Any throwing drill from groupings 1, 3, 4 or 5 can be substituted as the season progresses.
 - Pitchers can work on throwing and pitching drills from groupings 4 or 5.
- 30 min. Stations (3 groups, 10 min. each station)**
- Hitting (Free Hitting); any hitting drill from groupings 1, 3, 4 or 5 can be substituted as the season progresses.
 - Infield and throwing (Box Drill or 4-6/6-4 Drill with First Base Drill); any infield or throwing drills from groupings 1, 3, 4 or 5 can be substituted as the season progresses.
 - Outfield (Crossover Step Drill, Pass Patterns); any outfield drills from groupings 1, 4 or 5 can be substituted as the season progresses.
- 30 min. Controlled game, soft toss game or T-ball game, or game situations**
- 5 min. Baserunning**
- Big League Baserunning (full speed) or another baserunning drill from grouping 1.

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2018 COACHING MANUAL

PRACTICE OUTLINE FOR AAA (AGES 11 – 12)

Three-Day Sample Practice Guide

Practice Plan Day 1

- 5 min. Dynamic Warm-up**
- Skipping, high-knee skipping, high-knee jogging, bounding, backward running, jogging
- 5 min. Stretching**
- Hamstrings, quads, groin, back, shoulders, triceps
- 10 min. Throwing**
- One Knee Drill with teammates (early in season)
 - Power Position Drill with teammates (early in season)
 - Play catch or play Twenty-One with teammates.
 - Any throwing or pitching drills from groupings 1, 4 or 5 can be substituted as the season progresses.
 - Emphasize long tossing throughout the season.
- 20 min. Infield and outfield work**
- Rolled Ground Balls, Throwing After the Catch Drill, Hitting Ground Balls, Thrown Fly Balls, Rolled or Machine Ground Balls, Hit Fly Balls or Machine Fly Balls
- 20 min. Team Fundamentals**
- Choose from cutoffs and relays, pickoff plays, first-and-third offense and defense, full bunt defenses, pop-up and fly ball priorities, and defending steals.
- 60 min. Hitting stations, 15 min. per station**
- Soft Toss, Tee Work, Short Toss From the Front, Free Hitting
 - Any hitting drills from groupings 1, 4 or 5 can be substituted as the season progresses
 - Infielders and outfielders can take more ground balls and fly balls during this time slot. Pitchers can get in bullpen throwing or do flatwork (pitching and throwing drills from groupings 4 or 5).
- 10 min. Pitcher's fielding practice (PFP) and Big League Baserunning**
- Pitcher Covering First Base Drill, Comebacker Drill, Bunt Drill

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2018 COACHING MANUAL

PRACTICE OUTLINE FOR AAA (AGES 11 – 12)

Three-Day Sample Practice Guide

Practice Plan Day 2

- 5 min. Dynamic Warm-up (same as day 1)**
- Skipping, high-knee skipping, high-knee jogging, bounding, backward running, jogging
- 5 min. Stretching (same as day 1)**
- Hamstrings, quads, groin, back, shoulders, triceps
- 10 min. Throwing**
- One Knee Drill with teammates (early in season)
 - Power Position Drill with teammates (early in season)
 - Play catch, play Twenty-One, or long toss with teammates.
 - Any throwing or pitching drills from groupings 1, 4 or 5 can be substituted as the season progresses.
 - Emphasize long tossing throughout the season.
- 20 min. Infield and outfield work**
- Backhand Throwing Drill, 4-6/6-4 Drill, First Base Drill, Hitting Ground Balls, Thrown Fly Balls, Rolled or Machine Ground Balls, Hit Fly Balls or Machine Fly Balls, Communication Drill, Crossover Step Drill
 - Any infield drill from groupings 1, 4 or 5 can be substituted as the season progresses.
- 20 min. Team Fundamentals**
- Choose from cutoffs and relays, pickoff plays, first-and-third offense and defense, full bunt defenses, pop-up and fly ball priorities, and defending steals.
- 60 min. Hitting stations, 15 min. per station**
- Short Toss From the Front, One-Arm Drill, Lob Toss, Stickball, Free Hitting
 - Any hitting drills from groupings 1, 4 or 5 can be substituted as the season progresses
 - Infielders and outfielders can take more ground balls and fly balls during this time slot. Pitchers can get in bullpen throwing or do flatwork (pitching and throwing drills from groupings 4 or 5).
- 10 min. Pitcher's fielding practice (PFP) and Big League Baserunning**
- Pitcher Covering First Base Drill, Comebacker Drill, Bunt Drill

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2018 COACHING MANUAL

PRACTICE OUTLINE FOR AAA (AGES 11 – 12)

Three-Day Sample Practice Guide

Practice Plan Day 3

- 5 min. Dynamic Warm-up (same as day 1)**
- Skipping, high-knee skipping, high-knee jogging, bounding, backward running, jogging
- 5 min. Stretching (same as day 1)**
- Hamstrings, quads, groin, back, shoulders, triceps
- 10 min. Throwing**
- Play catch, play Twenty-One, or long toss with teammates.
 - Other throwing games (optional)
 - Any throwing or pitching drills from groupings 1, 4 or 5 can be substituted as the season progresses.
 - Emphasize long tossing throughout the season.
- 20 min. Infield and outfield work**
- Box Drill, backhand drills, Hitting Ground Balls, Backhand Throwing Drill, Crossover Step Drill, Drop Step Drill, Pass Patterns, Fence Drill
 - Any infield drill from groupings 1, 4 or 5 can be substituted as the season progresses.
 - Drills can be turned into contests on the third or final day of a week.
- 20 min. Team Fundamentals**
- Choose from cutoffs and relays, pickoff plays, first-and-third offense and defense, full bunt defenses, pop-up and fly ball priorities, and defending steals.
- 60 min. Game situations, controlled scrimmage, soft toss game, or T-ball game**
- 10 min. Big League Baserunning**

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2018 COACHING MANUAL

PRACTICE OUTLINE FOR MAJORS (AGES 13 – 14)

Three-Day Sample Practice Guide

Practice Plan Day 1

- 5 min. Dynamic Warm-up**
- Skipping, high-knee skipping, high-knee jogging, bounding, backward running, jogging
- 5 min. Stretching**
- Hamstrings, quads, groin, back, shoulders, triceps
- 10 min. Throwing**
- One Knee Drill with teammates (early in season)
 - Power Position Drill with teammates (early in season)
 - Play catch or play Twenty-One with teammates.
 - Any throwing or pitching drills from groupings 1, 4 or 5 can be substituted as the season progresses.
 - Emphasize long tossing throughout the season.
- 20 min. Infield and outfield work**
- Rolled Ground Balls, Throwing After the Catch Drill, Hitting Ground Balls, Thrown Fly Balls, Rolled or Machine Ground Balls, Hit Fly Balls or Machine Fly Balls
- 20 min. Team Fundamentals**
- Choose from cutoffs and relays (introduce trailer), advanced pickoff plays (daylight plays, plays put on by fielders) and situations, advanced game situations (throwing to proper base in certain situations, decoys, and so on), full bunt defenses, pop-up and fly ball priorities, first-and-third offense and defense, and defending steals.
- 60 min. Hitting stations, 15 min. each**
- Soft Toss, Tee Work, Short Toss From the Front, Free Hitting
 - Any hitting drills from groupings 1, 4 or 5 can be substituted as the season progresses
 - Infielders and outfielders can take more ground balls and fly balls during this time slot. Pitchers can get in bullpen throwing or do flatwork (pitching and throwing drills from groupings 4 or 5).
- 10 min. Pitcher's fielding practice (PFP) and Big League Baserunning**
- Pitcher Covering First Base Drill, Comebacker Drill, Bunt Drill

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2018 COACHING MANUAL

PRACTICE OUTLINE FOR MAJORS (AGES 13 – 14)

Three-Day Sample Practice Guide

Practice Plan Day 2

- 5 min. Dynamic Warm-up (same as day 1)**
- Skipping, high-knee skipping, high-knee jogging, bounding, backward running, jogging
- 5 min. Stretching (same as day 1)**
- Hamstrings, quads, groin, back, shoulders, triceps
- 10 min. Throwing**
- One Knee Drill with teammates (early in season)
 - Power Position Drill with teammates (early in season)
 - Play catch, play Twenty-One, or long toss with teammates.
 - Any throwing or pitching drills from groupings 1, 4 or 5 can be substituted as the season progresses.
 - Emphasize long tossing throughout the season.
- 20 min. Infield and outfield work**
- Backhand drills, 4-6/6-4 Drill, First Base Drill, Hitting Ground Balls, Backhand Throwing Drill, Thrown Fly Balls, Rolled or Machine Ground Balls, Hit Fly Balls or Machine Fly Balls, Communication Drill, Crossover Step Drill
 - Substitute infield drills from groupings 1, 4 or 5 as the season progresses.
- 20 min. Team Fundamentals (same as day 1)**
- Choose from cutoffs and relays (introduce trailer), advanced pickoff plays (daylight plays, plays put on by fielders) and situations, advanced game situations (throwing to proper base in certain situations, decoys, and so on), full bunt defenses, pop-up and fly ball priorities, first-and-third offense and defense, and defending steals.
- 60 min. Hitting stations, 15 min. per station**
- Short Toss From the Front, One-Arm Drill, Lob Toss, Stickball, Free Hitting
 - Substitute hitting drills from groupings 1, 4 or 5 as the season progresses
 - Infielders and outfielders can take more ground balls and fly balls during this time slot. Pitchers can get in bullpen throwing or do flatwork (pitching and throwing drills from groupings 4 or 5).
- 10 min. Pitcher's fielding practice (PFP) and Big League Baserunning**
- Pitcher Covering First Base Drill, Comebacker Drill, Bunt Drill

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2018 COACHING MANUAL

PRACTICE OUTLINE FOR MAJORS (AGES 13 – 14)

Three-Day Sample Practice Guide

Practice Plan Day 3

- 5 min. Dynamic Warm-up (same as day 1)**
- Skipping, high-knee skipping, high-knee jogging, bounding, backward running, jogging
- 5 min. Stretching (same as day 1)**
- Hamstrings, quads, groin, back, shoulders, triceps
- 10 min. Throwing**
- Play catch, play Twenty-One, or long toss with teammates.
 - Other throwing games (optional)
 - Any throwing or pitching drills from groupings 1, 4 or 5 can be substituted as the season progresses.
 - Emphasize long tossing throughout the season.
- 20 min. Infield and outfield work**
- Box Drill, backhand drills, Hitting Ground Balls, Backhand Throwing Drill, Crossover Step Drill, Drop Step Drill, Pass Patterns, Fence Drill
 - Any infield drill from groupings 1, 4 or 5 can be substituted as the season progresses.
 - Drills can be turned into contests on the third or final day of a week.
- 20 min. Team Fundamentals (same as day 1)**
- Choose from cutoffs and relays (introduce trailer), advanced pickoff plays (daylight plays, plays put on by fielders) and situations, advanced game situations (throwing to proper base in certain situations, decoys, and so on), full bunt defenses, pop-up and fly ball priorities, first-and-third offense and defense, and defending steals.
- 60 min. Game situations, controlled scrimmage, soft toss game, or T-ball game**
- 10 min. Big League Baserunning**

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2018 COACHING MANUAL

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2018 COACHING MANUAL



PYB COACHES CODE OF CONDUCT

I understand that as a coach within the Pewaukee Youth Baseball Association, I am responsible for the conduct of my fellow coaches, my players, and the parents of those players.

I hereby pledge to provide the highest possible standards in regard to the support, care and encouragement of the children that have been assigned to the team that I coach. I will, at all times, place the emotional and physical well being of the children in my charge ahead of any personal desire to win.

I will insure that, at no time, will the harassment of any umpire, player, opposing player, manager, coach, or league official, be tolerated.

I will insure that a drug, tobacco, and alcohol free sports environment is present at all times (including all practices as well as games).

I will do my best to make the sport fun for the children.

I will not openly question an official's judgment and honesty. If I do not agree with an official's decision, I will control my emotions and avoid arguments and confrontations at all costs.

I will observe all Pewaukee Youth Baseball Association rules.

I understand that failure to comply with this code may result in disciplinary actions that are deemed necessary by the Division Coordinator and/or the Pewaukee Youth Baseball Association Board of Directors.

Coach's Signature: _____

Date: _____

Manager's Signature: _____

Date: _____



2018 COACHING MANUAL



Pewaukee Youth Baseball Parents Code of Ethics



I Hereby Pledge to Provide Positive Support, Care and Encouragement for My Child while Participating in the Pewaukee Youth Baseball League by Following This Code of Ethics

- I will encourage good sportsmanship by demonstrating positive support for all players, coaches and officials at every game practice or other youth sports event
- I will place the emotional and physical well being of my child ahead of any personal desire to win
- I will insist that my child play in a safe and healthy environment
- I will provide support for coaches and officials working with my child to provide a positive, enjoyable experience for all
- I will demand a drug, alcohol and tobacco-free sports environment for my child and agree to assist by refraining from their use at all youth sports events
- I will remember that the game is for the children, not for the adults
- I will do my best to make youth sports fun for my child
- I will ask my child to treat other players, coaches, fans and officials with respect regardless of race, sex, creed or ability
- I will promise to help my child enjoy the youth sports experience within my personal constraints by assisting with coaching, being a respectful fan, providing transportation or whatever I am capable of doing
- I will remember that:
 - Children have more need of example than criticism
 - A child is easily affected by outside influences (Attempt to relieve the pressure of competition, not increase it)
 - Be kind to your child's coaches and officials. The coaches are volunteers, giving of personal time and money to provide a recreational activity for your child.
 - The opponents are necessary friends. Without them your child could not participate.
 - Applaud good plays by both your team and members of the opposing team.
 - Do not openly question an official's judgement and honesty. Officials are symbols of fair play, integrity and sportsmanship,
 - Accept the results of each game. Encourage your child to be gracious in victory and to turn defeat into victory by working towards improvement.

Parent Signature: _____

Date: _____

Parent Signature: _____

Date: _____



2018 COACHING MANUAL

PYB COACHES MANUAL – ABUSE: SIGNS AND PREVENTION

PYB requires that there be two un-related adults at all activities involving kids. This means all practices, warm ups prior to games, etc. This rule is in effect to protect the coaches and organization from unfounded allegations of improper conduct or activities. **THIS RULE IS NOT SUBJECT TO DISCRETION OR INTREPATATION.**

This means that an individual coach should not give the player a ride to or from an activity unless the coach had an existing relationship with the player's family **prior to** that player being on the coach's team. Coaches should also not wait individually with a player for his or her parent to arrive to pick the player up after an activity. There must be two un-related adults waiting with the child for the tardy parent. The second adult can be another parent from the team, a coach from a different team, or another responsible adult known to the coach. Once again this rule is in effect to protect the coaches and the organization from unfounded allegations of improper conduct or activities. **THIS RULE IS NOT SUBJECT TO DISCRETION OR INTREPATATION.**

Coaches should never negatively single out a player for his or her behavior. Coaching is teaching, correcting and praising good efforts and results. Profanity by coaches is not acceptable to PYB and will not be tolerated. Player discipline should not involve yelling, screaming or swearing. There can NEVER be physical punishment of a player. If a coach is unable to effectively deal with player discipline, the coach should seek assistance from the PYB Board.

Coaches should also be alert to the signs or signals that a player is being abused. If a coach suspects a player is the victim of abuse, the coach should contact the PYB Board.

POTENTIAL SIGNS OF CHILD ABUSE INCLUDE:

- Shows sudden change in behavior or school performance
- Is always watchful as though preparing for something bad to happen
- Lacks adult supervision
- Is overly compliant, passive or withdrawn
- Comes to activities early, stays late, and does not want to go home

POTENTIAL SIGNS OF PHYSICAL ABUSE INCLUDE:

- Has unexplained burns, bites, bruises, broken bones or black eyes
- Has fading bruises or other marks noticeable after an absence from activities
- Seems frightened of the parents and protests or cries when it is time to go home
- Wears inappropriate clothing to cover up injuries, such as long-sleeved shirts on hot days

POTENTIAL SIGNS OF NEGLECT INCLUDE:

- Is frequently absent from school or activities
- Begs or steals food or money
- Lacks needed medical or dental care, immunizations or glasses
- Is consistently dirty or has severe body odor
- Abuses alcohol or other drugs
- States the is no one at home to provide care

Please be aware of these signs and report your suspicions to the PYB Board.



2018 COACHING MANUAL

DETERMINE WHICH BAT FITS YOUR BODY – MLB.com

There are some standard rules of thumb in selecting the appropriate bat length. The charts below offer some guidelines based on age and weight and height.

Determine Your Bat Length by Age	
Age	Bat length
5-7 years old	24"-26"
8-9 years old	26"-28"
10 years old	28"-29"
11-12 years old	30"-31"
13-14 years old	31"-32"
15-16 years old	32"-33"
17+ years old	34"

Determine Your Bat Length by Weight and Height										
	Your height (inches)									
Your weight (pounds)	36-40	41-44	45-48	49-52	53-56	57-60	61-64	65-68	69-72	73+
	Bat length									
less than 60	26"	27"	28"	29"	29"					
61-70	27"	27"	28"	29"	30"	30"				
71-80		28"	28"	29"	30"	30"	31"			
81-90		28"	29"	29"	30"	30"	31"	32"		
91-100		28"	29"	30"	30"	31"	31"	32"		
101-110		29"	29"	30"	30"	31"	31"	32"		
111-120		29"	29"	30"	30"	31"	31"	32"		
121-130		29"	29"	30"	30"	31"	32"	33"	33"	
131-140		29"	30"	30"	31"	31"	32"	33"	33"	
141-150			30"	30"	31"	31"	32"	33"	33"	
151-160			30"	31"	31"	32"	32"	33"	33"	33"
161-170				31"	31"	32"	32"	33"	33"	34"
171-180						32"	33"	33"	34"	34"
180+							33"	33"	34"	34"



2018 COACHING MANUAL

*** Baseball Bat Sizing Charts ***

Use the charts below as a general guideline for determining **BAT LENGTH**.

BATTER'S HEIGHT	3'-34"	35"-38"	39"-4'	41"-44"	45"-48"	49"-5'	51"-54"	55"-58"	59"-6'	61"-over
under 60lbs	26"	26"	28"	29"	29"	-	-	-	-	-
61-70	27"	27"	28"	29"	30"	30"	-	-	-	-
71-80	-	28"	28"	29"	30"	30"	31"	-	-	-
81-90	-	28"	29"	29"	30"	30"	31"	32"	-	-
91-100	-	28"	29"	30"	30"	31"	31"	32"	-	-
101-110	-	29"	29"	30"	30"	31"	31"	32"	-	-
111-120	-	29"	29"	30"	30"	31"	31"	32"	-	-
121-130	-	29"	30"	30"	30"	31"	32"	33"	33"	-
131-140	-	29"	30"	30"	31"	31"	32"	33"	33"	-
141-150	-	-	30"	30"	31"	31"	32"	33"	33"	-
151-160	-	-	30"	31"	31"	32"	32"	33"	33"	33"
161-170	-	-	-	31"	31"	32"	32"	33"	33"	34"
171-180	-	-	-	-	-	32"	33"	33"	34"	34"
over 180	-	-	-	-	-	-	33"	33"	34"	34"

Age	Length
5-7	24"-28"
8-9	27"-29"
10	28"-30"
11-12	30"-31"
13-14	31"-32"
15-16	32"-33"

Use the charts below as a general guideline for determining **BAT WEIGHT**.

Little League (8-10 yrs)	
Player Height	Bat Weight
48-50"	16-17 oz.
51-54"	17-18 oz.
55-59"	18-19 oz.
60+"	19-20 oz.

Youth League (11-12 yrs)	
Player Weight	Bat Weight
70-80 lbs.	18-19 oz.
81-100 lbs.	19-20 oz.
101-120 lbs.	20-21 oz.
121-140 lbs.	21-22 oz.
141+ lbs.	22-23 oz.

High School & College	
Player Height	Bat Weight
66-68"	27-28 oz.
69-72"	28-29 oz.
73-76"	29-30 oz.
77+"	30-31 oz.