

HOME-RUN DERBY

PURPOSE

To end practice on a high note

EQUIPMENT

Four bases, a bucket of baseballs, a fence or some cones

TIME

This game is so popular, it can be played anywhere from 10 to 20 minutes.

PROCEDURE

1. Place three bases (or four depending on the age of the participants) five to eight feet apart from one another in a straight line toward second base.
2. Each base represents home plate. Older players use the base farthest from second as home plate, while younger hitters stand at the base closest to second.
3. Players scatter around the field to field the balls.
4. The coach pitches a predetermined number of balls from shallow center field.
5. If a player hits the ball over the fence, it is a home run. The batter gets an extra swing for every home run.
6. If there is no fence, set up a boundary with cones.

KEY POINTS

1. Players having trouble hitting the ball over the fence may move up to the closest home plate.
2. This is the only drill where players are encouraged to hit home runs.
3. Coaches should not be concerned with the quality of a player's swing. This drill is primarily a fun exercise to break up or finish a practice.
4. Point out good fielding plays during this drill. Positive reinforcement is important because it emphasizes that, even in

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fun drills, mastering the fundamentals is the key to a successful baseball team.

5. If very few home runs are being hit, move the bases closer to the outfield grass.

Variations

Encourage every player to swing for the fences.

1. Players can also use a tennis racket to hit tennis balls.
2. The batters can swing with one or two hands.
3. The coach can move in closer and pitch underhand to improve the batters' chance of hitting home runs.

