

Coaches Drills

9 – 12 year olds

Skills

- How to grip a ball 4 seam (throw properly, hand up high)
- Grounders and pop flies
- How to run bases
- Responsibilities of each base or position (footwork, form)
- How to hold a bat (line up knuckles, grip, stance, load, swing,)
- Proper pitching form, when and how to pitch from the wind or the set
- Pick off moves
- Proper bunting technique
- New pitches (change up, knuckle, etc)

Warm-ups

- Pick captains, stretch out as a team
- Light base running to warm-up.
- Throw as a team. Make perfect lines and keep them in close, hold elbow, snap wrist. Coach asks both lines to take 1 or 2 steps back as they get their arms warmed up, eventually move into long toss (after weeks of throwing)
- If a kid misses a catch, he runs it back to the line before throwing back to his partner (avoids chaos)

Stations

- Tee work with 2 kids at a time
- Infield work (grounders, covering/back up bases)
- Outfield work (pops, alignment, gaps and cutoffs)
- Soft toss
- Pitching/catching station
- Relay drills
- Keep kids busy...break into stations...utilize dads/moms willing to help!!!

Scenarios

- Three runners, everyone else in field positions, coach yells out “How many outs?” “Where’s the play?” Coach hits the ball to various spots and teaches kids about proper coverage. Rotate positions and get fresh base runners after 3 outs.

Teach

- How to “tag up” and bunt defense
- How to spin out of the way of a wild pitch while pulling the bat down.
- Batting counts...balls and strikes.
- Straddle bases, slapping down a tag properly
- 1st and 3rd defensive plays
- Break down a few positions each practice and explain their responsibilities in detail while doing plays unique to that position. IE: First baseman chases down a weak dribbler and the 2nd baseman covers his base. Or ball is hit to RF so 2nd baseman goes out to cutoff leaving SS to cover the base, etc.
- Every position has more than one responsibility...teach them in detail and be visual.
- Start to teach basic signals (such as take on 3-0, etc.)
- How to defend a “hotbox” (follow your throw)

Fun

- Kids love simple contests.
- Who can throw the ball from shallow outfield and hit a bucket?
- Who can be the sole survivor of a grounder and throw to 1st contest?
- Do a lazy toss over their shoulder and have them track it down.
- 3 or 4 man scrimmages. They hit ‘til they get 3 outs.
- And to mix it up...throw 10 pitches to hit then send them “live” and they get BP in and have fun trying to get their teammates out
- 2 groups of 6, hit grounders to each group until last man standing, losing group has to run the bases
- Relays races, throw relays, 3 or 4 man scrimmages

Tips

- Keep the kids moving. They get bored easily. They love to run.
- Plan your practices ahead of time. And stick to a schedule.
- Use all the help you can get and break up into stations.
- Pay attention to bat sizes and gloves that are not properly broke in. Offer tips to parents who are not up to speed in the proper equipment areas.
- Hot Glove or oil products.
- Teach every player every position - regardless of their skill. It’s all about development.
- Kids love to play with the older ball players. Invite special guests to practice like older brothers of players and especially high school players.
- FYI: Youtube is a great resource for baseball drills. If you want to visually check something out – this is a great tool to use!
- Kids love when they have nick names and they love praise! Lay it on thick.