



GMBA

Georgina Minor Baseball Association

Coaching 11U House League

Georgina Minor Baseball Association – 11U House League Program

Objectives:

- FUN is the emphasis

- High number of repetitions of the skills

- Progressions to suit the skill level of the player

- Drills that offer a high success rate

- Volunteers are required. Please make sure you have lots of parent helpers (Start from the first practice).

Getting Started

1. Who is the League Contact?
2. When are Practice Days / Game Nights?
3. Equipment – What is required?
4. What are the League rules?
5. Who are the Contacts – Team members and parents?
6. Who will assist? You need a lot of volunteers and parent helpers

Note:

- Encourage them often
- SMILE a lot
- Ask parents to help
- Break players into smaller groups, easier to teach drills, individual attention

How to Play

Practices

- Emphasize skills and drills in small groups of 3 – 4 players

Offence:

- Everyone in line up hits
- Have a number of volunteers
- Batting order – Every Player has opportunity to lead off
- Bungee cord and close pins with players names
- Parents / helpers required at 1st and 3rd

Defence

- Positions players in the 4 infield positions 1st, 2nd, SS, 3rd 1 Pitcher, Catcher, 3 Outfielders
- Organize fielding line up prior to game. (Sample Attached). Clip board to fence, have many volunteers to assist – Catcher gear
- Rotate all players through infield / outfield and by position

Effective Practices

1. Keep players active and moving
2. Design your practice
3. Ensure you have lots of helpers
4. Use Orange pylons to mark out areas / distances for drills
5. Communicate to players on their level
6. Break team into smaller groups of 3 – 4 players doing different drills
7. Drills should be no more than 10 – 20 minutes in length
8. Ensure you have a post practice talk to go over accomplishments and remind of next game / practice

Establish Practice Goals

Practice goals to include the following:

- Fielding and proper throwing mechanics
- Proper Hitting Techniques, bat grip, swinging the bat
- Pitching
- Catching with two hands
- Base Running – know where to run

Mosquito:

Every practice should place emphasis on the following:

- Pitching Mechanics
- Hitting Fundamentals
- Fielding & Catching

Keep the game moving, large strike zone, encourage and cheer players to swing the bat.

Starting the practice

1. Warm up and stretch (5 minutes)
 - Light jog
 - Stretches

Goals: Learning the Game

1. Throwing Mechanics

- Turn the body, front shoulder points at target
- Keep elbow above the shoulder – L shaped arm
- Step toward target with non-throwing side foot
- Release Ball

2. Fielding the Ball

- Ready Position
- Follow the ball with the eyes into the glove, Nose on the ball
- Throwing hand should be close to glove
- Catch the ball out in front of body

3. Hitting

- How to hold and grip the bat, Load & Stride
- How to swing the bat, Tee Hitting, Soft toss
- Learning the Strike Zone
- Stride toward the Pitcher
- Fear of being Hit (Stepping out)

4. Learning the Positions

- Where's the play
- Full fielding positions, Live Pitching

5. Pitching Mechanics

- Wind up versus Set position
- Balance is critical
- Stride toward home plate
- Glove, Shoulders, Arm, Feet are in line to home plate

6. Catcher

- Role of the Catcher
- Provide a target
- Block the Ball

Hitting

Young players may never have held a baseball bat. Have each player attempt swinging the bat both left-handed and right-handed – you should see a difference in the swing.

- Right-handed: The left hand is at the bottom of the bat and is facing the pitcher on the left side of home plate (the 3rd base side of home plate). Left-handed hitter, the right hand is on the bottom of the bat, and the opposite holds true (on the 1st base side of home plate).
- The proper grip - The handle of the bat is in the crease of the hand between the palm and the base of the fingers, (the bat is not squeezed hard, but held lightly, but firm enough to swing).
- The stance: The stance should be shoulder width apart, knees slightly bent, feet point forward.
- The bat is lifted and held about 6 inches from the back shoulder, at shoulder height. The top hand is in a position as if talking on a telephone by the ear.
- The hands should start to the ball on a downward plane, bottom hand pulls the bat down, the top hand swings the bat. Barrel stays above the hands. Arms should extend through the ball. Follow the ball with the nose.

Hitting Drills:

1. Stance Drill: Practice proper stance with no bat. Players get into proper stance with hands up as if holding a bat. Check stance. Most players do not form a wide enough base, and knees should be flexed.
2. Rotation Drill: Have players get into proper stance. They then place hands on hips. Have players turn hips so belly button or waist “eye” faces coach. Watch that back foot does not step out, but rotation occurs with hips.
3. Swing bat while coach tosses soft toss into back stop – 2 players.

6 Steps to a Perfect Swing



Step 1

Using a "Good Grip"

Using the proper grip allows the batter to achieve as much hand quickness and bat speed as possible. The key to a good grip is positioning the bat in the fingers and not the palms. The bat should be held firmly but not tight that the batter's hand speed is slowed. The batter can assure a great grip every time by lining up the "door knocking knuckles" as shown.

Step 2

Have a Super Stance

The batter should always be taught to use a balanced parallel stance with both feet about shoulder width apart with his toes even and slightly facing inward. He should assume his stance about 8-10 inches from the plate. The batter should slightly bend his knees with his weight on the balls of his feet. The batter's front shoulder, hip and knee should be slightly turned forward. A proper stance will allow the batter to react to the pitch with speed, quickness and power.



Step 3

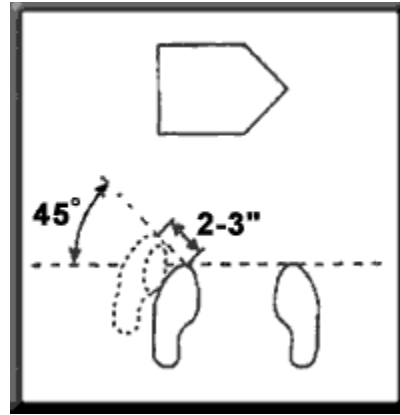
Correct Hand, Arms and Bat Angle

The bat is correctly held at a 45 degree angle. The hands should not be held too high or too low. A medium location is desired with the back elbow down and the hands located 3-6 inches from the body. The bottom of both elbows should be parallel. To assume the most comfortable stance the batter should position his arms and hands so that the upper edge of the top of the hands on the bat is even with the shoulder.

Step 4

Four Keys to a Correct Stride

1. The batter's stride should be short, no more than two or three inches.
2. The stride should be at a 45-degree angle towards home plate.
3. The batter should land softly on his front foot as if he were stepping on an egg.
4. The batter should stride and land on the big toe or inside of his front foot.



Step 5

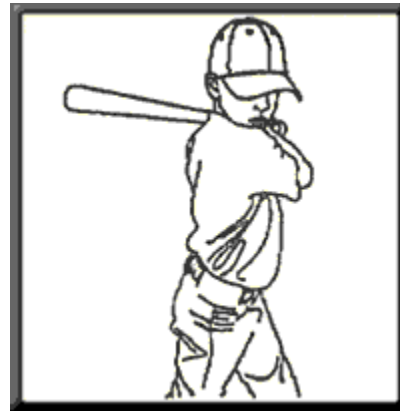
Head Action and Ball Tracking

The batter should turn his head enough that he can see the ball with both eyes. The "IKE to MIKE" method should be taught. The batter's front shoulder, toward the pitcher, is "IKE", and his back shoulder is "MIKE". The batter should start with his chin on "IKE". During the swing the head does not move. The body rotates and the shoulders switch places with the head finishing on "MIKE". The batter should keep his eyes on the ball and should be taught to "track" the ball from the pitcher's hand to the bat.

Step 6

Swing and Finish

The batter should take a good level swing or slightly downward. He should strive to keep his back foot in position while lifting his heel slightly and then turning his foot towards the pitcher as he starts his swing. He should concentrate on hitting the "top-half" of the baseball. When his front foot lands, he should thrust or turn his hips.



PERSONAL SWING ANALYSIS

EVALUATION KEY: E=Excellent G=Good S=Satisfactory NI=Needs Improvement

Positioning the Feet	E	G	S	NI	COMMENTS
Feet shoulder width apart					
Foot closest pitcher lined up near front of home plate					
Should be able to tap outside of plate with end of bat					
Feet parallel					
Feet pointing toward home plate					
Positioning the Body					
Knees slightly bent					
Waist slightly bent					
Positioning the Bat					
Handle of bat near back shoulder					
Barrel of bat above and behind head					
Gripping the Bat					
Middle knuckles lined up					
Bat held comfortably in hands / Not squeezed					
Striding	E	G	S	NI	COMMENTS
Front knee up / back around the time pitcher lifts knee					
Shifting weight forward when pitcher releases ball					
Stride / movement of front foot no more than 6 inches					
Front foot down before ball gets to home plate					
Positioning the Bat					
Handle of bat near back shoulder when front foot lands					
Barrel above and behind head when front foot lands					
Getting the Barrel to the Ball	E	G	S	NI	COMMENTS
Barrel of bat swung directly at ball					
Ball hit within "sweet spot" on the bat (2-6" from top)					
Arms extended right before contact with ball					
Bat on the same plane as baseball when contact made (No chopping up or down / swinging directly at ball)					
Turning the Hips					
Turning hips by pivoting on ball of back foot					
Keeping the Eyes on the Ball					
Eyes are on baseball until contact with ball is made					
Head is NOT following the body when it turns					
Following Through					
Bat has a smooth, slightly upward path					
Hands roll over at completion of swing					
Right-handed: Bat handle stops around left shoulder					
Left-handed: Bat handle stops around right shoulder					
Barrel wraps around upper back					
Chin over shoulder area at swing completion					

Pitching

Keys to effective pitching:

1. Fingers stay on top of ball throughout wind up.
2. Pitchers must be in a good balanced position
3. Movements are controlled and in rhythm
4. Elbow needs to stay at least even and or above shoulder
5. Stride foot lands on line towards home base with glove, throwing arm and shoulders in line toward target.

Drills:

One Knee Drill: (Pairs)

- Throwing knee on ground, other knee up. Use a Four seam grip to throw
- Take ball down, out and up. As hand breaks down, thumb should brush thigh, then take the ball to the sky, ball faces away from target at top point, just before arm comes forward.
- Player then points shoulder to target, rotate hips and throws. Elbow stays above shoulder. Players do not throw hard, work on mechanics.

Coach Behind Drill

- Coach stands behind player completing one knee drill with 5 balls
- At hand gets to top, player opens hand coach feeds ball into hand, throws ball

Power Position Drill

- Players create wide base with feet
- Elbow above shoulder in top of delivery, ball/fingers pointed away from target, weight stays back, front shoulder pointed toward target. (Check elbow, shoulders, feet)
- Player strides toward partner or home plate, stride foot lands on ball of foot at 45-degree angle, and throws ball and follows through

Long Toss

- Critical to develop arm strength, but caution needs to occur to ensure proper throwing fundamentals are being executed.
- Continually move players farther distances until they can no longer throw the ball on a line (Rainbow or looping throws are not the objective)

Base Running Drills

Goal to ensure the base runner knows where to run.

Base running Warm Up

1. Run with knees high
2. Through 1st base: The only base you can run through. Set up a coach 3 – 4 feet behind 1st base and have the players run through the base and give the coach a High 5. Make sure they turn into foul territory.
3. Relay Races: Players with ball in glove, ensure they are holding tightly race around the bases and hand ball off to next player who runs around the bases. Split the team into 2 groups one at home the other at 2nd, and start the relay with 2 groups.
4. Home to 2nd: Run from Home to 2nd, watch out for the wide turn at 1st, and make sure they stop on the bag.
5. Watch the Coach Drill: At 11U players should watch the coach at 3rd as they approach 2nd base. Players start at 1st base, ball is hit, players run toward 2nd and look at coach, who holds up hands to stop at 2nd, or waves hand to run to third. (Remember this is for FUN, while learning how to run the base paths is important, aggressive base running is discouraged and not the goal).

Catching

The most important element in catching is keeping the eye on the ball. Some say follow the ball with the nose.

For the young player focus on the following:

- Palm down for balls below the waist, or fingers down
- Palm up for balls above the waist, or fingers up, or thumbs together
- The palm always faces the thrower and moves the glove around. Think of a Clock Face and the glove moves around the face to catch the ball.
- Throwing hand stays beside the glove ready to trap and grab the ball.

Drills:

1. Catch the ball with no glove
2. Glove around the Clock: Have players put on a glove and begin the movement again.
3. Individual Soft Toss: Start the players with their own ball and do a soft toss in the air to get use to the glove and ball as well as hand-eye coordination.
4. Coach Toss: Coach and parents toss to players, allowing player only to move their glove to catch the ball
5. Coach Toss – Left / Right: Toss the ball left or right of the player forcing them to move
6. Partner Throwing:
7. Triangle Throwing

Fielding:

Always focus on the “Ready Position.”

- Feet more than shoulder width apart
- Knees Bent
- Butt down, (sit on the chair)
- Glove and hand low, pinkies down, glove on ground, palms up

Alligator Catch

- Field as if glove is the bottom of the alligator’s mouth and the throwing hand is the top. Field ground ball like an alligator closing its mouth, top hand closes on glove with ball.

Drills:

1. No Glove: Field rollers – Coach and helpers 10 feet away slow roller
2. Glove field rollers
3. Field bouncing balls
4. Roll balls left / right
5. Batted balls

Fielding Fly Balls

- Run to the spot where the ball will be caught, keep glove down use both arms to run
- Watch the ball into the glove, catching slightly above the head
- Keep your nose on the ball

Drills:

1. Coach soft toss from close distance
2. Player self-toss
3. Move for ball

Throwing

Break down throwing into the following small steps:

1. Face Target (Where you want to throw the ball)
2. Grip ball with 3 fingers, thumb underneath ball, lined up directly opposite fingers
3. Bring arm back in L – Shape, point ball away from target, fingers should stay on top of the ball
4. Step forward with opposite foot, shoulders in line with target
5. Move arm forward in throwing motion, (make sure elbow is above or even with the shoulder) as front foot lands, let go of the ball
6. Point hand to target

Drills:

1. Sitting Position Throw
2. On two knees throw
3. On one knee throw, make sure butt is up
4. Throw at a target, (pylon, pail) make a game of hitting the target

Catcher Skills – Stance

No runners on base and less than two strikes.

- The catcher will have his weight resting on his instep.
- The feet should be toes out and ninety degrees to each other
- For a right-handed catcher, the left foot should be slightly ahead of the right foot. Balance should be evenly distributed over both feet.
- The glove arm should assume a relaxed position. The fingers should be pointed up and be tension free.
- The elbow should rest under, or slightly angled away, of the hand so that the fingers are horizontal.
- The catcher's elbow should also rest slightly outside the knee.
- The throwing arm can either rest behind the back or the leg.



Runner on base or no runners on and two strikes

- There is no change in weight, feet placement or glove arm positioning.
- There are changes with the throwing arm position and mental preparations.
- The throwing arm should move to behind the glove. Place a closed fist behind the glove.
- Keep the target low and be prepared to block all balls in the dirt, retrieve all balls in the dirt, and throw all retrieved balls.



Drills:

1. Show Me Drill:

Have the players show they are holding the ball with thumb under the ball and three fingers on top of the ball. Each player quickly takes the throwing position with legs apart, throwing arm back and up, and the front shoulder turned toward the target. Player throws to a volunteer parent.

2. One Knee Throwing

Emphasize upper body, through grip, raised arm and elbow, L shape, turn body and throw

3. Use the L Drill:

Remind players to have throwing arm bent into L shape. Separate the team into groups of 2 and throw to volunteers. Loudly call out “L” just before they throw the ball.

5. Base Running Drill

Have players line up at Home Plate. Coach says start players run to first base. Repeat the drill to second, third and home.

6. High Five Drill

Players line up at home, and on the word “GO” one at a time run through first base and give the coach a “High Five”. Repeat drill to second base, coach stands at second base so players do not over run the base.

7. Invisible Bat Drill

Space the players widely in a row pretending to hold an imaginary bat and facing an imaginary Tee. All players get into their batting stance and the coach yells “Swing” and all players simulate their batting sequence, follow through, and drop the bat. Make sure they don’t swing too hard watching for proper swing, and instructing. Repeat 10 times.

8. Tee Drill

The coach works with each batter hitting into the screen (Groups of 3 players with volunteers). Comment after each swing, but only make very minor adjustments and focus on one thing. Repeat the drill 8 – 10 times per player.

9. Soft Toss Drill

Group of 2 or 3 players, 2 to 3 volunteers. Players hit into the backstop. Coach tosses waffle or game ball at a 45-degree angle to player. Toss should be in front of home plate waist high. Player loads bat, strides as coaches hand goes down. Player swings through the ball into screen.

10. Machine Hitting

Bring machine to Batting Cage. Players work in groups of 3. (10 - 15 Minutes). Have coach pitching and volunteers to work on soft toss with 1 player into screen, 3rd player practices swings waiting turn to hit.

11. Sky Ball

Have a volunteer throw balls to 2 players. Each ball caught; another is thrown a little higher. See how high the ball can get, and who can catch the highest ball.

13. Block the Ball

Group the players (2 – 3 per group). Start the first player in each group in the ready position, knees bent, head up, with an area marked out about 10' wide. Have volunteers ready to roll the ball to the players, right at them at first, then side to side. Have another set of volunteer's award points for knocking down the ball.

14. Call the Ball

Have the players grouped into two lines. Throw a ball into the air and have the players call Mine, Mine, Mine. Work with fly balls as well

15. Home Run Target

Set up a target, 2 buckets stacked on top of each other. Have players try to hit target from 4 distances. Award points for each target hit. Lines could represent single (1 point), double (2 points), triple (3 points), home run, farthest distance (4 points).

16. Goal Ball (in pairs)

Mark off goal with Pylons for each pair, players take turns trying to throw ball on ground to score a goal.

More Advanced Drills

1. Around the Bases

Players at each base, with catcher and pitcher. Pitcher throws to C, throws to 3rd, who throws to 2nd, who throws to 1st, throw to C, and back to P.

2. Desperation Drill

3 players in LF / 3 players in CF – Pitcher and Catcher. Coach rolls ball to LF. CF runs behind LF to cover in case LF misses ball. LGF retrieves ball and throws towards Catcher. The Pitcher faces the LF and follows the ball in case of bad throw. The Catcher stays behind home plate and blocks ball with body, retrieves and prepares to tag runner.

3. Tag the runner

Runners start at 1st or 1st and 2nd with normal infield. Coach hits ball to 3rd base who fields and steps on bag. (Force Out). Coach hits ball to P or SS who tries to tag the runner before they reach home.

4. Circle Drill

Players form a circle. One player has ball calls out name of player throws ball to the player. 2nd player continues drill. Excellent way for all players to learn players names. Make sure player is looking and throw the ball.

5. Line Drill

Form 2 lines of players space about 15 – 20 feet apart. Player 1 starts with the ball, throws to next player in line, who turns glove side, and throws to 3rd player in line. Go up and down the line.