



GMBA

Georgina Minor Baseball Association

Coaching 7U House League

Georgina Minor Baseball Association – 7U 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:

- Form circles with you in the Center down at the player's level. Kids are focused on you when explaining drill.
- Encourage them often
- SMILE a lot
- Ask parents to help
- Break players into smaller groups, easier to teach drills, individual attention
- End of game drinks

How to Play

Practices

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

Games:

- Games will run about 1.5 hours in length,
- Score is to be kept
- Outs recorded

Offence:

- Everyone in line up hits
- Have a number of volunteers – helmets, order kids on bench
- Batting order – By player number, # 1 through 12 / 13, rotate every game # 1 moves to bottom, # 2 becomes lead off
- Bungee cord and close pins with players names
- Last batter rule – Throw home
- Parents / helpers required at 1st and 3rd – Coaches assist in field

Defence

- Positions players in the 4 infield positions 1st, 2nd, SS, 3rd 2 Pitchers, Catcher, remainder in the Outfield
- Organize fielding line up prior to game. Clip board to fence, have many volunteers to assist – Catcher gear
- Rotate all players through infield / outfield and by position
- Encourage all balls fielded to be thrown to 1st base, when none on base, tag runners, and force outs
- Force out at a base

Using the Pitching Machine

- Pitching machine provides relatively consistency with baseball.
- Recognize the machine will need adjustment during game as height of ball may change due to machine vibration.
- Set up machine so ball crosses plate mid-thigh to waist high.
- When pitching to batter. Ensure batter focused and looking at Pitching Machine Coach. Coach shows ball to player holding arm above machine. Pitching Machine coach slowly lowers ball into machine.

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 2 – 4 players doing different drills
7. Drills should be no more than 10 – 15 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:

- Base Running – know where to run
- Run through first base
- Know the positions on the field
- Who has the ball – infield positioning
- Catching with two hands
- Fielding the ball
- Throws to first
- Proper bat grip
- Swinging the bat

Starting the practice

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

Goals: Learning the Game

1. Learning the Basic Rules

- The right direction to run on the bases
- Touching the bases
- How to record outs
- Running through first base, Scoring a run
- Last Batter Rule (Everyone hits)

2. 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

3. Tracking the Ball

- Follow the ball with the eyes into the glove
- Nose on the ball
- Use two hands to catch – no glove
- Catch the ball out in front of body

4. Hitting

- How to hold and grip the bat
- How to swing the bat, Tee Hitting, Soft toss
- Knees, belt buckle face plate
- Pitching Machine, what to look for

5. Learning the Positions

- Let the players field the ball
- Where's the play – Throw to first
- Last batter – Throw Home
- Full fielding positions (2 pitchers)
- Where to play

Basic Skills Checklist

Catching The Ball	
1	Above the Waist – thumbs together
2	Below the waist – thumbs apart
3	Watch ball into glove
4	Reach to ball
Throwing the Ball	
1	Elbow up to shoulder or higher
2	“L” shape
3	Stride to target with glove side foot
4	Point glove to target
Base Running	
1	Drive Arms
2	Knees High, slight lean forward
3	Run through 1 st base
4	Know where to go
Hitting	
1	Grip – Bat in base of fingers
2	Stance – face plate, feet shoulder width apart, hands by back shoulder, elbows bent and relaxed
3	Hip rotation – Belly Button faces pitcher, back foot turn
4	Follow Through – Arms extended
Fielding	
1	Ready Position – like a monkey
2	Move to get body in front of ball
3	Get butt low
4	Field in front of body, nose on ball, alligator mouth (Top / bottom hand action)

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 if 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: Have your players make 3 eyes with string to tie around their knees and waist. Ties the eyes so they face forward, just above the knees and at the belt level or waist. The stance should be shoulder width apart, knees slightly bent, feet point forward and all 3 eyes looking at the plate.
- 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 swing is level and the arms should be fully extended 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.

STANCE: BRING A PIECE OF CARDBOARD FOR EACH PLAYER, DRAW OUT FEET POSITION. HAVE EACH PLAYER TRACE ON MAT WITH DUCT TAPE AT HOME, BRING TO PRACTICE / GAMES

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

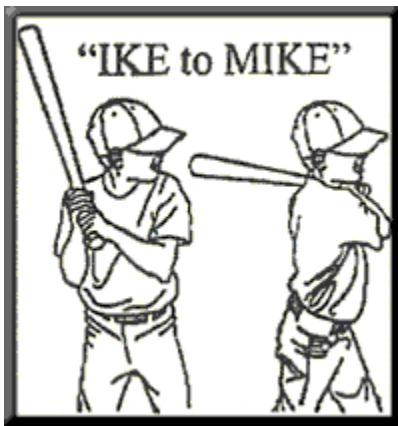
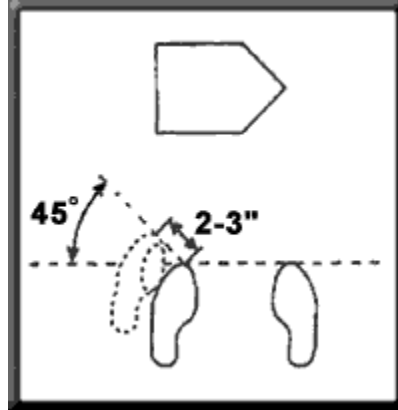
Correct Hand, Arms and Bat Angle

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

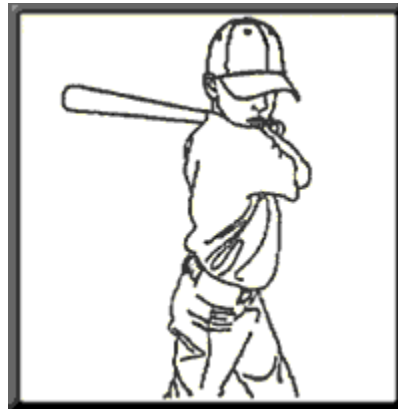
Head Action and Ball Tracking

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.



Base Running Drills

Goal to ensure the base runner knows where to run.

Base running Warm Up

1. Run with knees high
2. Call the Base: Have your team run around the bases and call out each base as they hit the bag. This can be done at the start of each practice and as they become more comfortable have them speed up and only hit the corner of the bag.
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. 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, touching the orange part of the base and give the coach a High 5. Make sure they turn into foul territory.
5. Home to 2nd: Run from Home to 2nd, watch the wide turn at 1st, and make sure they stop on the bag.
6. Last Batter Drill: Have players on each base, last batter called out, ball is hit, all players run around bases for home.
7. Watch the Coach Drill: At 7U players should watch the coach at 3rd as they approach 2nd base. Players start at first 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 level is for FUN, aggressive base running is not the goal).

Catching

Catching a baseball is difficult for the young player. Fear of the ball is a concern and the use of the soft orange ATEC balls will help with this problem.

Make sure the glove is open, and the easiest way is to press down on the top of the glove at the webbing. This will help open the glove and make it easier to catch.

The most important element in catching is keeping the eye on the ball.

For the young player focus on the following:

- Palm down for balls below the waist, or fingers down or thumbs apart
- 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. No Glove: Start with no glove and practice moving the hands around the clock face. Follow the fingers up, thumbs together, fingers down thumbs apart.
2. Catch the ball with no glove
3. Glove around the Clock: Have players put on a glove and begin the movement again.
4. 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.
5. Coach Toss: Coach and parents toss to players, allowing player only to move their glove to catch the ball
6. Coach Toss – Left / Right: Toss the ball left or right of the player forcing them to move
7. Partner Throwing:
8. 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

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.

9. 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.

10. 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.

11. 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.

12. Machine Hitting

Bring machine to outfield. Have coach pitching and volunteer to catch balls missed in the swing. Work with 2 / 3 players and rotate. Hitting in outfield leaves infield available for other groups.

13. Champ

Catching, throwing drill for two players who have the skill to catch and throw. With a volunteer have the players throw and catch back and forth with the volunteer. For every catch and good throw, they receive a letter. Let the players choose the word.

14. 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.

15. Coach Says

A version of Simon Says: Have the players line up and do what you say to demonstrate their understanding of a skill. Focus on words Grip, bat up, stance, swing.

16. 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 volunteers award points for knocking down the ball.

17. Call the Ball

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

18. Know where to go

Start a player on first base, have the other players line up to bat. Hit the ball, and have the batter run through first base (high five drill), and teach the first base runner to run to second, and so on...

19. Alligator Catch

Form 2 groups of 3 players. Have players in ready position. Two volunteers roll the ball to the players who catch like an alligator and throw the ball back. Players can roll the ball between each other and work on drill.

Coach and other volunteer can work with another group on hitting.

20. Fox and Rabbit

Form two lines. Have the ball in the field just in front of home plate. Line 1 runs to first base on "Go", second line picks up the ball and chases player trying to tag before they reach the base.

Players can also pick up the ball and throw to the Coach at first

21. 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).

23. Hot Potato

Have 4 players line up in a row, side by side. Player 1 has the ball and runs to player 2, drops ball in glove. Player 2 uses alligator to capture ball, pulls out of glove with one hand, and runs to player 3. and so on up and down the line.

24. 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 too 3rd, who throws to 2nd, who throws to 1st, throw to C, and back to P.

2. Desparation Drill – Last Batter

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 steps on home plate.

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.

Practice Plan # 1

Time	Drill	Coaching Points
5 Min.	Team Jog, Arm and leg stretch	Coach leads, team building
5 Min.	Player Introductions	Form Circle – player introductions Big Hello’s form the Coaches / Volunteers
5 Min.	Introduce the Game	Focus on fun, pitching machine, bases
7 Min	High Five Drill	Players line up and run through first base, High Five the coach / volunteer
5 Min	Water Break	
21 Min (7 minute Rotation)	Group 1: Show Me Drill Group 2: Partner Throwing Group 3: No Glove Drill	Proper grip of the ball Partners throw to each other, or in groups of 3 with a coach / volunteer Catch ball with no glove
20 Min.	Group 1 – Fence Soft Toss Group 2 – Pitching Machine	6 players – 2 / 3 volunteers – 3 players in each group – soft toss ball, player hits. Set machine at 2 nd base, players hit to outfield, 4 players chase balls, back to bucket.
10 Min	Around the Base / Call the Base	Players run through 1 st , players run from first touching 2 nd and stop at 3 rd , Head Home call out each base loud.

Practice Plan # 2

Time	Drill	Coaching Points
5 Min.	Team Jog, Arm and leg stretch	Coach leads, team building
5 Min	Catching Drill	No Glove – work with players moving hands – Thumbs together (above the waist, Thumbs apart – below the waist
10 Min	Catch Drill	3 Volunteers – 3 groups of 4, soft toss ball to player, thumbs together, thumbs apart
5 Min	Simon Says / Coach Says	Throwing technique – Athletic stance Coach / Volunteer leads players through throwing mechanics
5 Min	Water Break	
5 Min	Fielding Mechanics	Walk kids through “Ready Position”
15 Min	2 Groups	2 Lines - Slow rollers, No Glove Players field and move to opposite line
30 Min	Hitting Practice (Group Work)	1. Invisible Bat - Mechanics 2. Soft Toss 3. Machine Hitting
5 Min.	End of Practice Talk	

Practice Plan # 3

Time	Drill	Coaching Points
5 Min.	Team Jog, Arm and leg stretch	Coach leads, team building
5 Min	Throwing Mechanics	Simon Says Throwing Mechanics
15 Min	Pair Up	Sitting Position Throw One Knee Throw Standing Throw
10 Min	Target Practice	Throw to Target – Pylon / Pail
5 Min.	Water Break	
5 Min	Ready Position	Work on ready Position
15 min	Line 1: Field rollers Line 2: Roll balls left / right Line 3: Block the Ball Drill	Focus on “Ready Position”
30 Min	Batting Practice	Machine & Soft Toss Practice, Warm up Swings
5 Min	End Practice Talk	

Practice Plan # 4

Time	Drill	Coaching Points
5 Min.	Team Jog, Arm and leg stretch	Coach leads, team building
10 Min	Catching Mechanics	Work on Catching Mechanics
10 Min	2 Groups - Champ Drill	2 Groups pair up players, Catch and Throw, Player chooses name to spell
15 Min.	4 Groups – Sky Ball Drill	3 players each – Volunteers throw ball up in air each catch ball is thrown higher. Count the catches
5 Min.	Water Break	
20 Min.	Game Situation	Running the bases – Players pretend hit Making an out – Players in the Field Teach them what to do. Throw to 1st
15 Min.	Last Batter	Catcher / Pitcher players in outfield – coach tosses ball player throws home. Pitcher backs up catcher
5 Min	End of Practice Talk	

Practice Plan # _____

Time	Drill	Coaching Points
5 Min.	Team Jog, Arm and leg stretch	Coach leads, team building

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Time	Drill	Coaching Points
5 Min.	Team Jog, Arm and leg stretch	Coach leads, team building