

# Needham Baseball K - A Practice Plan #1

Time	Drill	Coaching Tips
:00 to :10	<b>Warm ups</b>	Have your team run through its standard warm up protocol.
:10: to :20	<p><b>Show the Ball.</b> Learning how to properly hold the ball is the first step to throwing it well.</p> <p><b>What you need</b> – Each player needs to have a ball and a glove in order to work in this drill.</p> <p><b>How this drill works</b> – Gripping the baseball is essential to throwing properly and accurately. At a young age, learning the proper grip is the best way to help them build the foundation for throwing.</p> <p>Each player has the ball, and they must grasp the ball with the thumb on the underside, and the two top finger spread slightly apart over the top. The ring finger and the pinky should be touching the side of the ball slightly on the outside.</p> <p>When the coach says ‘show me’, each of the players gets into the proper throwing stance: legs apart (one in front of the other), foot on the throwing side is behind the body, and the arm is up, with the elbow raised to shoulder height and the forearm and bicep at a 90 degree angle (L-shape).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Coaches watches how their players are gripping the ball as they show them the grip and the throwing stance.</li> <li>- Problems should be corrected at this point.</li> </ul>
:20 to :30	<p><b>One Knee Throwing.</b> This helps players learn the upper body action of throwing, without using their legs. Also builds throwing strength.</p> <p><b>What you need</b> – Each player needs to have a ball to perform this drill. To start, you may want to give the players a softer ball, like a tennis ball.</p> <p><b>How this drill works</b> – This drill emphasizes the upper body action: right from the grip, to the raised arm and elbow, the L-shape between the forearm and bicep, and then turning the body and following through towards the intended target.</p> <p>The player starts with the body facing the target and the ball raised. The player can throw at a target, a fellow player, or a coach. The proper throwing mechanics should be watched for as the player throws the ball toward the target. A good follow through toward the target is important.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Make sure the player learn to upper body action for throwing, along with building throwing strength and accuracy.</li> </ul>
:30 to :40	<p><b>Call the ball.</b> It is important for younger players to learn that communication on the field is essential.</p> <p><b>What you need</b> – Line up two single file lines that are about 10 yards apart. One coach will stand in the middle, just slightly away to the side of the players.</p> <p><b>How this drill works</b> – With the two players ready to catch the ball, the coach will throw a fly ball in between them. The players will converge on the ball and they will watch for the other player.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Teach the players to understand that the player closest to the ball is to call, “<b>I’ve got it</b>”. They can scream it, yell it, or just say it softly. They will have fun with that – but they must say it.</li> <li>- The player that calls the ball must try to get under it, and the other player should be their back up in case they miss the ball.</li> </ul>
:40 to :60	<p><b>Spot the ball.</b> Sometimes a visual mark will help a player understand where they need to make contact with the ball.</p> <p><b>What you need</b> – Set up a tee with a ball on top of it, and line up a batter in the batter’s box. You can have fielders to field the ball if you want. The ball will have a black dot the size of a nickel marked on it (with a black marker).</p> <p><b>How this drill works</b> – This is a simple batting drill that once again helps the batter to focus on a spot they want to hit. Think of the saying, “aim small, miss small.” With the black dot facing back toward the backstop, the player is able to locate and ultimately hit the spot on the ball.</p> <p>The player will focus on striking the spot with the bat – not just the ball. If a player tries harder to focus on hitting the spot, it can decrease their overall margin of error and make it much easier to hit the ball.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Try to get more focus and consistency hitting the ball.</li> <li>- Over time, you can reduce the size of the black mark on the ball, until eventually the black mark is gone and the player is just hitting the ball. Aim small, miss small.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Relay race.</b></p> <p>- Split the team into two equal groups with ½ team starts at second base other ½ starts at home plate</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Make this a competition and have losing team pick up equipment or run an additional lap around the bases.</li> </ul>

**Coach’s Notes:** \_\_\_\_\_

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