



**SIMSBURY LITTLE LEAGUE
SOFTBALL COACH MANUAL**

TBALL



TBall Skills

Please remember that Tball is the player's introduction to the sport of softball. Instruction must begin at the beginning. Practice and games must be fast moving and fun. SLL Softball will use the Little League 10 week Tball practice plans. However, it's always a good idea to over plan for tball practices.

1. Basic softball rules
 - how many outs per inning
 - how many balls and strikes
 - Identify the defensive positions.
 - correct direction to run when ball is hit
 - how to get a runner out (catch the ball in the air, throw ball to first or tag runner)
 - Run through 1st base
 - 3 outs make an inning
2. Throwing
 - Properly Grip the Ball
 - Throw the ball overhand – mechanics
 - Teach throwing with three steps - point to target, step toward target, throw overhand
3. Fielding Skills
 - Get in ready position (feet apart, throwing side foot slightly back, knees bent, butt down, glove on the ground) when the ball is placed on the T
 - Field ground balls with two hands. Watch ball in to glove.
 - Only go after the ball if it is close to your position
 - How to get a runner out
4. Batting Skills
 - Stand at the plate in proper position
 - Properly Grip the bat
 - Hold the bat and swing level
 - Hit off tee
 - Hitting softly tossed pitches
5. Baserunning
 - Getting of the box and what to do with bat after the ball is hit
 - Running the bases
 - Introduce Rounding the bases
6. General Skills
 - Dynamic Warm-up stretches
 - Learn to Call for the Ball
 - Sportsmanship, encouraging team mates
 - Be able to throw and catch with a partner

Practice & Game Warm-Ups/Cool Downs

Warm-Ups

For younger players, 10 minutes total of blood-pumping, body-moving activity can help raise the body's core temperature and loosen up muscles for the practice or game. These are not static stretching exercises, but active dynamic warm-ups.

- Start by having players run from foul pole to foul pole, then do some agility exercises:
 - High knees
 - Butt kicks
 - Karaoke run<
 - Jumping jacks
 - Arm windmills
 - Neck circles

- Throwing
 - All players begin on one knee (throwing hand side), facing their partner, about 10 feet apart. Throwing elbow is extended in the direction of the partner, ball in hand, glove hand under, and supporting throwing elbow at a 90 degree angle. With a flick of the wrist, player throws ball to the partner, focusing on correct 12 to 6 o'clock ball rotation. This is a wrist throw only, no arm. 15-20 reps.
 - Still Kneeling, players move 10 yards apart and begin a full-motion throw. Fingers on the throwing hand begin at the hip (fingers by the thigh). Arm rotates back, bringing ball over the head (elbow up high). Player brings the arm straight over the top of the shoulder (fingers to the sky). Finally, player pulls down through the ball, focusing on 12 to 6 o'clock rotation (wave bye-bye). Wrist is straight and follow through continues down through the body. 20-30 reps.
 - Players should make all catches with 2 hands, concentrating on the exchange between glove hand and throwing hand.
 - Players should now stand up and begin throwing from a standing position. Key to the continued development of players is encouraging them to focus on every throw.

Cool Down

After a practice or game, don't just send your kids home. Muscles need to be worked to get new oxygen in and remove the waste by-products of exercising.

- Have players run a lap around the field, then sit in a circle and stretch muscles
 - arm windmills
 - neck circles
 - hurdler's stretches for the quads and glutes
 - Twisting exercises that stretch the side muscles and back also are good. As an example, sit on the ground, placing the foot of a bent leg on the opposite side of an outstretched leg's knee, and twist your torso across the upright knee. Then switch legs and twist the other way.