

New Fairfield Baseball League Practice Plan

Tee Ball and Future Stars

It is very important to start team unity at a young age. All parts of the practice should be done as a team, make practice fun, always encourage the players, utilize the practice time. Additional drills are included in the second attachment.

1 -2 min. Team Run

-One lap around field.

3 -5 min. Team Stretch

5 -8 min. Throwing Drill

-Fielding Mechanics - playing catch. Make lines according to the amount of coaches.

-Ready position

- a) Feet (spread slightly wider than Shoulder width)
- b) Hands (fingers up and palms out) Critical Safety Tip
- c) Knees (bend to get weight on balls of feet)

-Move to the ball

- a) Be Aggressive (expect a bad throw and go get it)
- b) Eyes on ball

-Receive the ball

- a) Step forward with glove side foot
- b) Soft hands (hands give)
- c) Watch ball into the glove

-Throwing Mechanics

-Break

- a) Feet (step forward with throwing side foot then with glove side foot) Third eye (inside ankle of throwing side)
- b) Hands (separate ball from the glove; both elbows go up to about shoulder height or higher; the ball (palm of hand) is facing back and front elbow towards the target)

-Throw

- a) Grip (4 seam, for better accuracy and distance)
- b) Direction (front side points toward target)
- c) Rotate and throw (pull front side down and drive back side forward)
- d) Complete follow through (reach out and finish)
- e) Eyes (keep eyes on target)

-Ready throw (game speed no pause)

21 min. Defensive Drills

-Break up team into three groups. Set up three stations. Divide time evenly so each group gets the same amount at each station.

-Suggested time at each station is 7 min.

Group 1 – continue with throwing drills

Group 2 – infield drill. Players fielding grounders one at a time throwing the ball back to the coach or a 1st basemen.

-Ready Position three

- a) Feet (spread slightly wider than shoulder width, and glove side foot slightly forward)
- b) Knees (flexed with weight on balls of feet)
- c) Hands (start below the waist with the glove open to the ball as the pitch is thrown and throwing hand above the glove with palm facing out)

-Move to the ball

- a) Be aggressive (charge ball to receive a good hop and also set up a shorter throw)
 - b) Crossover step (on balls hit side to side)
 - c) Stay low (keeps hands below waist)
 - d) Eyes on the ball (read the hop)
- Receive the ball (Alligator)
- a) Butt down (field ball from the ground to up)
 - b) Hands out in front (soft hands - hands give when you receive the ball)
 - c) Triangle (with feet and hands - right foot, left foot and the glove out in front)
- Break and throw

Group 3 – outfield drill. Go get it drill – players run to a ball thrown behind or in front of them.

-Fielding Fly Balls

-Ready Position

- a) Feet (spread slightly wider than shoulder width)
- b) Knees (slightly flexed with upper body leaning forward)
- c) Hands (out in front with glove in front of hip)

-Move to the ball

- a) Drop step (half turn)
- b) Crossover step (helps fielder get a good jump on the ball)
- c) Run smoothly to the ball (not heel to toe)
- d) Eyes watch the ball to the glove

-Receive the ball

- a) Step forward with glove side foot
- b) Two hands (over the head)

-Break and throw

- a) Grip (4 seam to get better carry on the throw)
- b) Footwork (crow hop - fielder steps forward with the throwing side foot pivoting sideways to the target, than the glove side foot towards the target)

21 min. Offensive Drills

-Break up team into three groups. Set up three stations. Divide time evenly so each group gets the same amount at each station.

-Suggested time at each station is 7 min.

-Hitting Mechanics

-Ready position

- a) Grip (loose with hands relaxed and middle knuckles lined up and facing away from player)
- b) Stance
 - ✓ Feet (slightly wider than shoulder width)
 - ✓ Knees (bend slightly to improve balance)
 - ✓ Elbows (relaxed)
 - ✓ Hands (start hands about 6 to 8 inches away from chest at the top of the strike zone)
 - ✓ Shoulders (level)
 - ✓ Bat (45° angle, shine flashlight to the opposite batter's box)
 - ✓ Head (eyes level with focus on the pitcher)

-Load or Trigger

- a) Weight shift (on the pitcher's release the hitter shifts weight to back leg)
 - ✓ Front knee (begins weight shift with a slight movement in)
 - ✓ Front shoulder (tucks slightly down and back)
- b) Load hands and bat (hands move slightly up and back, and bat stays up and hitter maintains flashlight)
- c) Stride
 - ✓ Short (2 to 6 inches toward the pitcher)
 - ✓ Soft landing on big toe (like stepping on thin ice)

-Swing

- a) Weight Transfer
 - ✓ Back foot (squish the bug)
 - ✓ Back knee and hip (explode to the ball)
- b) Hands
 - ✓ Direction (move straight to the ball, forward and down)
 - ✓ Short and quick with hands, not long and slow with arms
- c) Head
 - ✓ Eyes (track the ball from release point to contact)
 - ✓ Shoulder to shoulder (head stays still throughout entire swing)
- d) Contact
 - ✓ Level (bat travels level on contact)
 - ✓ Through the ball (bat continues out towards the field, short to the ball and long through the ball)
- e) Follow Through
 - ✓ Bat (finish high, past front shoulder)
 - ✓ Head (practice keeping head shoulder to shoulder)

Group 1 – tee drills

- a) 1,2,3 drill
- b) one knee drill
- c) inside/outside/middle

Group 2 – soft toss drills

- a) 1,2 toss
- b) one arm swing
- c) toss from behind hitter

Group 3 – live hitting (coach or a machine)

- a) opposite field hitting
- b) locational hitting (hit ball based on where it is pitched)

3-5 min Base running Drills

- a) Home to first
 - ✓ First step is with the back foot
 - ✓ Hit the front side of the bag
 - ✓ Run through bag
 - ✓ Look over your right shoulder
- b) First to second
 - ✓ Hold onto the base
- c) Second to third
 - ✓ Hold onto the base
- d) Third to Home
 - ✓ Run through the base

Tee Ball and Future Star Games

Baseball can be very boring to a four, five or six year olds. Try to keep the players motivated and focused throughout the game. I understand that it is very hard to keep 12 to 14 four, five and six year old players focused at one time. The following is a suggestion on how to keep them focused and interested.

Tee Ball

- Divide your team into two groups for defense. (When it is your teams turn in the field)
 - Group one will play first, second, short stop, third, and the rest in will be in the so called outfield.
 - Group two will be working in the real outfield on one of the drills listed above. For example grounders/break and throw/outfield play.
 - The groups will switch at the half way point of the opponent's line up.
 - In group one you should switch the outfield group with the infield group every inning.

Future Stars

- With three teams you could set it up very similar to the tee ball suggestion.
 - Team one will hit.
 - Team two will play 1st, 2nd, short stop, 3rd, and the rest in will be in the so called outfield.
 - Team three will be working in the real outfield on one of the drills listed above. For example grounders/break and throw/outfield play.
 - The teams will switch at the end of the line up of who ever is hitting. (team one goes to the field, team two goes to hit, and team three goes to the defensive drill area)