



# PRE-SEASON CONDITIONING

Craig Klass, PT

Preparation for the upcoming baseball season means more than grabbing your glove and heading outside to play catch. While participation in organized youth sports is at an all time high, hours spent outdoors with free play activity (playing tag, climbing, jumping rope, running) have rapidly declined. This increases the risk of injury for young athletes. In baseball, the overhead throwing motion, rotational forces of hitting, and the quick explosive movements of the game can all lead to potential injury. A pre-season workout regimen is vitally important in preventing a variety of injuries.

A comprehensive conditioning strategy should begin six to eight weeks before the start of the season. The plan should include cardiovascular training (running, biking, jumping rope), flexibility, total body strengthening, agility, specific shoulder conditioning exercises, and an interval throwing program. The importance of fitness for the legs and core muscles cannot be understated. The power generated by these muscle groups is crucial for effective athletic performance. Agility training should include shuttle running, change of direction drills, plyometrics, and baseball specific movements. Conditioning and stretching exercises for the shoulder should incorporate “the thrower’s ten”, developed by the American Sports Medicine Institute (ASMI). These exercises can be found online at the ASMI website. Throwing at incremental distances to build up a player’s arm strength and endurance is also a necessary pre-season activity. Typical interval throwing programs (see below, each Step = a single throwing session) involve proper warm-up and begin with shortened throws which progress to long toss activities. Four throwing days per week with three rest days is recommended.

## Little League Interval Throwing Program

<p><b>30' Phase</b></p> <p>Step 1: A) Warm-up Throwing          B) 30' (25 Throws)          C) Rest 15 min.          D) Warm-up Throwing          E) 30' (25 Throws)</p> <p>Step 2: A) Warm-up Throwing          B) 30' (25 Throws)          C) Rest 10 min.          D) Warm-up Throwing          E) 30' (25 Throws)          F) Rest 10 min.          G) Warm-up Throwing          H) 30' (25 Throws)</p>	<p><b>45' Phase</b></p> <p>Step 3: A) Warm-up Throwing          B) 45' (25 Throws)          C) Rest 15 min.          D) Warm-up Throwing          E) 45' (25Throws)</p> <p>Step 4: A) Warm-up Throwing          B) 45' (25 Throws)          C) Rest 10 min.          D) Warm-up Throwing          E) 45' (25 Throws)          F) Rest 10 min.          G) Warm-up Throwing          H) 45' (25 Throws)</p>
<p><b>60' Phase</b></p> <p>Step 5: A) Warm-up Throwing          B) 60' (25 Throws)          C) Rest 15 min.          D) Warm-up Throwing          E) 60' (25 Throws)</p> <p>Step 6: A) Warm-up Throwing          B) 60' (25 Throws)          C) Rest 10 min.          D) Warm-up Throwing          E) 60' (25 Throws)          F) Rest 10 min.          G) Warm-up Throwing          H) 60' (25 Throws)</p>	<p><b>90' Phase</b></p> <p>Step 7: A) Warm-up Throwing          B) 90' (25 Throws)          C) Rest 15 min.          D) Warm-up Throwing          E) 90' (25 Throws)</p> <p>Step 8: A) Warm-up Throwing          B) 90' (20 Throws)          C) Rest 10 min.          D) Warm-up Throwing          E) 60' (20 Throws)          F) Rest 10 min.          G) Warm-up Throwing          H) 45' (20 Throws)          I) Rest 10 min.          J) Warm-up Throwing          K) 45' (15 Throws)</p>

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Craig Klass, PT, graduated from University of the Pacific in 1996 with a masters degree in Physical Therapy. He specializes in sports medicine and orthopedic injury rehabilitation. Craig also has an extensive background in athletics, including competing for the USA Water Polo team in two Olympic Games.

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