



# COACH PITCH

12 WEEK PROGRAM



4.1 Creeper St

LOOK FOR COACH'S SIGNAL



# COACH PITCH

## INTRODUCTION

The Little League® Coach-Pitch Program was created to provide volunteer managers and coaches in the Little League Minor Baseball Division with the appropriate direction to organize and efficiently operate practices throughout the season.

This 12-week program focuses on the fundamentals of baseball, and is designed to build a solid foundation for becoming a successful ballplayer, including the “emotional fuel tank,” as described by Positive Coaching Alliance (PCA). The program assumes that the volunteers who have accepted the responsibility of coaching children in this age group have a limited background in baseball and even less experience with the leadership and teaching acumen that is inherent with coaching Little Leaguers® at this level of the program.

The first two weeks follow a “spring training” format, featuring three practices per week. During the season, the practice plans are adjusted to accommodate a week of activity that includes two practices and two games. Each lesson provides direction and offers insight from PCA on how to communicate and connect with the members of your team.

You are encouraged to review the entire program and use it as a training tool and guide. Utilize both the full plan and quick courses to customize your practices, so that the players under your charge are improving their skill level, developing a positive work ethic, growing their confidence on and off the field, and having fun.

Each week’s lesson offers extensive review, while continuing to tout the importance of team-building and chemistry. Use the opportunities provided in this program to engage with the children on your team and grow their self-worth. Remember that Little League is a fun activity that has as its prime objective nurturing and growing well-rounded and productive people, not developing outstanding ballplayers.

Little League International thanks you for devoting your time and attention to the children in your community, and we trust that you will address your players, their parents and the local league with respect and pride.

**BEST OF LUCK TO YOU AND YOUR TEAM THIS SEASON!**





# COACH PITCH

## PROGRAM TIPS

### **PITCHING TO PLAYERS**

Throughout the 12-week Coach-Pitch program it is recommended that during a portion of batting practice, an “L” screen be placed approximately 25-30 feet in front of home plate. Coaches are to position themselves behind the “L” screen (for protection) and pitch from a kneeling position. Pitching from a knee allows the players to clearly see the ball as it is released from the coach’s hand, and improves their ability to track the ball as it reaches the hitting zone.

Later in the season, as coaches assess an improvement in the players’ batting proficiency, they may choose to throw from the pitcher’s mound. Again, using the “L” screen for protection, coaches assume a standing position on the mound, and from the pitcher’s plate deliver the pitches to the batters. The additional distance to home plate, and angle of the ball as it is thrown, will require the batters to make adjustments to the release point and trajectory of the pitch as it reaches the hitting zone.

### **BATTER SAFETY**

When conducting batting practice, or any type of hitting drill or activity that involves a bat, each player must wear a helmet. It is the coach’s responsibility to explain to the players how to properly hold a bat. Stress that the only time a player should be holding a bat is when he/she is batting. If a player is the next scheduled to hit, he/she is to carry the bat by the barrel into the batter’s box.

Bats must be Little League approved according to Rule 1.10 in the 2015 Little League Baseball rulebook.

### **MAXIMIZE TEACHING TIME**

When overseeing drills during practice, we recommend that one coach provide direction to no more than four players. This ratio will allow for optimal learning and increase the opportunity a fun experience for each player.

### **REMOVING THE FEAR FACTOR**

At this age, it is perfectly normal for players to be afraid of the ball. For batting practice and fielding drills, we recommend using plastic balls, soft-core Tee Balls or tennis balls until players are comfortable using a baseball.



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## PROGRAM OUTLINE

### WEEK ONE

#### PRACTICE GOALS

- Be able to hold a ball with a four seam grip
- How to throw to a two-hand target using a four-seam grip
- Run through first base
- Attempt to catch the ball using two hands
- Properly grip a bat

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### WEEK TWO

#### PRACTICE GOALS

- How to hold a ball with a four-seam grip
- Successfully throw to a two-hand target using a four-seam grip
- Attempt to catch the ball using two hands below the waist
- Get into an athletic batting stance
- Field and transition into a throwing position

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### WEEK THREE

#### PRACTICE GOALS

- How to hold a ball with a four-seam grip out of the glove
- Successfully throw from a knee to a two-hand target using a four-seam grip
- Round first base
- Attempt to catch the ball using two hands below the waist
- Properly grip a bat; hit the ball off a tee
- Field with two hands

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### WEEK FOUR

#### PRACTICE GOALS

- Run the bases
- Catching a ball using two hands above the waist
- Consistently hit the ball off a tee
- To see the ball from the coaches hand when hitting

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### WEEK FIVE

#### PRACTICE GOALS

- Successfully throw to a two hand target using a four-seam grip
- Attempt to catch a fly ball using two hands
- To separate their hands when throwing
- The last three steps of fielding a ground ball

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### WEEK SIX

#### PRACTICE GOALS

- Run from home plate to second base and run from second base to home plate
- How to hit a ball from the drill soft toss
- Play a game of 21



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## PROGRAM OUTLINE

### WEEK SEVEN

#### PRACTICE GOALS

- Successfully throw to a two hand target using a four-seam grip while playing a game of 21
- Run from first base to third base and from second base to home plate
- Take cues from the first base coach
- Field a ground ball while moving laterally

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### WEEK EIGHT

#### PRACTICE GOALS

- Catch a tennis ball above their head
- Quickly transition the ball from their glove hand to their throwing hand
- Play a simulated game of baseball while working on strengthening their fundamentals
- Develop hand eye coordination through the same side toss drill

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### WEEK NINE

#### PRACTICE GOALS

- Be able to quickly relay a ball from the outfield to the infield using a four-seam grip
- Field ground balls on their knees, demonstrating the proper two-hand technique

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### WEEK TEN

#### PRACTICE GOALS

- Use a cross/drop step to catch a fly ball using two hands (tennis ball)
- Be able to catch a fly ball (baseball)
- The way to play long toss

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### WEEK ELEVEN

#### PRACTICE GOALS

- Run the bases more proficiently
- Use a cross/drop step to catch a fly ball using two hands (baseball)

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### WEEK TWELVE

#### PRACTICE GOALS

- Enjoy the game of baseball and softball
- Reflect on the season and how they improved throughout the season



# COACH PITCH DRILL INDEX

## BASEBALL GRIP

Two-and-Three Finger Grips.....	Page 9
Four-Seam Relay Race.....	Page 9
Toss/Catch/Four-Seam Grip.....	Page 16
Toss/Catch/Four-Seam Grip Relay.....	Page 24
Player Toss.....	Page 37

## CATCHING

Two-Hand Target (2HT).....	Page 10
Thumb-to-Thumb (T2T).....	Page 10
Pinky-to-Pinky.....	Page 10
Below Waist Catching.....	Page 17
Above Waist Catching.....	Page 25
Plastic Ball Pop ups.....	Page 38
Knock Out Game.....	Page 45
Tennis Ball Pop Ups.....	Page 61
Drop Step and Crossover.....	Page 75

## THROWING

Five Steps of Throwing.....	Page 10
Hula Hoop Game.....	Page 18
Throwing from the Knee to Partner.....	Page 26
Hand Separation.....	Page 39
Game of 21.....	Page 47
Three-Man Relay.....	Page 62
Long Toss.....	Page 76

## HITTING

Grip/Stance/Coverage.....	Page 11
Dry Swings.....	Page 11
Coach Pitching from Knee.....	Page 26
Hitting from a Tee.....	Page 26
Pitch Recognition.....	Page 26
Game: Conditioning.....	Page 32
Soft Toss.....	Page 48
Coach Pitch 4x4x4.....	Page 63
Coach Pitch 6x6.....	Page 91

## BASE RUNNING

Purpose of Base Running.....	Page 12
Run Through First-Base.....	Page 12
Merry-Go-Round.....	Page 20
Rounding First-Base.....	Page 26
Home Plate Relay Race.....	Page 33
Base Running Cues.....	Page 48
First-to-Third.....	Page 56
Second-to-Home.....	Page 56
Home-to-First; First-to-Third; Second-to-Home.....	Page 63

## FIELDING

Five Steps of Fielding.....	Page 20
Alligator Hands.....	Page 21
Hat in Mouth Drill.....	Page 27
Dry Ground Ball Drill.....	Page 33
Pick Up Drill.....	Page 57
Game: Bare Hands.....	Page 64
Same Side Toss.....	Page 67
Knee Ground Ball.....	Page 71
Roll and Toss Drill.....	Page 79

