



Trout Lake Little League

Minors Coaching Philosophy and Resource Page

Goal - Creating positive experiences and important life skills through baseball.

Why Baseball - Promote team concept through respect for coaches, teammates and successes both individual and team that are based on effort and the pursuit of skill and support the athletes with the skills to deal with failure in positive and proactive ways.

Resource Website - <https://www.baseball-tutorials.com>; youtube specific skills and here is a link to important skill development that can be printed out.

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B5ub8cnjJZ7fyjJOaDYwRnBjaWxvaGtiUmxoQ0RBVHVuYVlv/view?usp=sharing>

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/19qItDJI6O1Ufv2dVfJLZ4T23P5zrgM4C/view?usp=sharing>

Line-up and position sheet Link - It is Important to pre-plan positions and rotations of batting order and rotation into key playing positions

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1O_c-TrTCPoeMXFKVV-3fEEw6sMCKDp64Nx_aHRgTIDI/edit?usp=sharing

Example Practice Plan - It is super important to have a plan prior to practice and don't try to do too much (focus on 1 skill)

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ygTRK83ltvTec-9neHY7tGIXWeQ3iSJ1ReNmd0rpRKU/edit?usp=sharing>

Important factors and skills to prepare for:

1. **Fear of catching the ball** - provide confidence by using soft balls, work on blocking the ball with a bare-hand and fingers up to protect the face and move to using tennis balls and eventually glove with fingers up to help with confidence and ability to protect themselves.
2. **Use live hitting on the field as much as possible** - get the kids used to hitting on the field. Always have outfielders who take 3-5 hard steps toward wherever the ball is hit
3. **Hitting Vernacular** - Utilize and understand GATHER - GO - LAUNCH for hitting
4. **Running the bases** - Ability to use the coaches and signals, aggressive on the bases, sliding when stealing and understand how to disrupt defensive decisions by being a good baserunner.
5. **Pitching** - Continually work on pitching for all players

Key Skills Breakdown:

Hitting	Throwing	Catching
<p>Relax - Ready (bat upright, relaxed hands in athletic position) Set-up: Feet Parallel shoulder width Springs in knees Close to plate Grip bat loosely with middle knuckles of the top hand in the middle of the bottom hand knuckles. Hands are beside back shoulder (but can be where is comfortable for the hitter) and elbows relaxed</p>	<p>Break (Glove forward at target, throwing hand palm facing away in 4 seam grip with a slight bend to the elbow and higher than shoulder - Glove to body - Elbow up (shoulder level or higher) - over the top (make sure there is no side arm throwing which can lead to elbow issues) - follow through (all the way to the opposite knee) Grip: 4 seam fastball grip Feet: Set feet for accuracy (both feet should point to target) Break: Break glove and throwing hand with palm of throwing hand pointing away, slight bend to arm with elbow above shoulder</p>	<p>Ready Position - Super important to stress the ready position prior to each play (on balls of feet, knees bent, head up, a little hop just prior to swing) Key - Try to always catch the ball with both hands... leads to faster transition to throwing and fewer dropped balls. Talk to them about the alligator method. Hand comes in over top of the ball after it enters the glove.</p>
<p>Gather (energy): Minimal movement, essentially it is a slight rotation of the hips so the weight is concentrated over the back foot and a closing of the front side hip (the front side hip and knee slightly rotate toward the plate). The Gather occurs on the countdown or when the coach breaks to throw a wiffle. KEY - There is no hand movement, and limited movement, maintain balance and it's done early.</p>	<p>Weight Transfer: Load on the back foot and step towards target with front foot</p>	<p>Grounders: Try to get ball between feet, have glove on ground with butt down. Throwing hand guides ball into the glove and grabs the ball as the back foot is planted and the front foot steps towards the target and initiates the throw.</p>
<p>Go: A small step toward the machine when the coach indicates the pitch is coming if a player is late with the swing, if they are early then wait until they see the ball to take the small step. KEY - A small step towards the mound BUT the hips stay closed and weight stays over back foot</p> <p>Swing the bat: Keep front elbow in and drive the butt end of the bat down and towards the ball Hands stay inside the ball close to the body</p>	<p>Arm Action: Pull arm forward - long arm, high elbow (stay away from bent arm throwing) over the top of the shoulder (not to the side) and follow through to the opposite knee.</p>	<p>Catching Throws: If the ball is thrown and is above the waist of the person catching then the fingers should be facing upward. If the ball is below the waist then the fingers should be facing downward. Always try to catch the ball in the pocket.</p>
<p>Launch: Drive the back hip forward and up in the direction of the opposite middle infielder (lefty - finish with hips square to the shortstop and a righty - finish square to the second baseman).</p>	<p>Warm-up series for every practice (all throws should have 4 seam grip): 1. Cobra throws - Glove under elbow and throw using only wrists (3 m apart) 2. 1 knee throws - 6m apart on 1 glove knee practice the "break", DOUBLE CHECK THIS, throw to</p>	<p>Catching Fly-balls: Track ball in athletic position with glove down... ALWAYS MOVE WITH THE GLOVE DOWN... as soon as the glove comes up the player always straightens up and loses the athletic position. Teach kids that the first step is back until they can track the flight correctly then they</p>

	<p>partner OVER THE TOP and FOLLOW THROUGH with chest on knee and arm on the other side of knee</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Square throwing - standing square to partner 8 m apart, work on torso rotation and follow through 4. Long Toss - work to long toss where every 5 to 10 throws you move farther apart until you are at your maximum where you add a crow hop 	<p>can adjust. Try to catch ball above shoulder if possible (faster and more balanced to throw). Work on the ability to move backward at diagonals.</p> <p>Discourage basket catching (below the waist). Work on getting under the ball and catching with the glove foot forward. Ball should be caught at forehead level in order judge it.</p>
<p>Drills:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tees - Always place ball with 2 seams pointing back and try to hit the inside of the ball. 2. Work on set-up, GATHER - GO - LAUNCH and flat swings and after the hit run to a base to chain to the next skill. Hit 5 next batter before they switch roles 3. Soft Toss - Work on tracking and driving the ball by using hips not arms. 4. Live pitching machine or coach pitching - work on confidence and timing (get them to start swing earlier and where to focus to see the ball) 	<p>Drills:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Squirrels and nuts - Tennis balls piled in a central circle and have 2 kids paired in a "hole" and the objective is to get as many "nuts" - tennis balls - into their hole. 1 partner runs to the nuts, throws to partner in the hole - if caught the partners switch after a high 5 in the hole. If throw dropped then the thrower must go get ball and put it back into the pile of nuts and give partner a high-5 to switch roles. 2. Bucket Drill - split team into 2 even groups. Place group 1 between 1st and 2nd and group 2 between 2nd and 3rd. Place 2 buckets on top of each other. The objective is to field a groundball and hit the bucket (1 pt if it bounces and 3 pt if in air and 5pt if it was hit after coverage). Set up with 2 coaches and it is a competitive game with a goal of playing to 10 or 15 points. There is a line of fielders, 1 is active, the 2nd is coverage on the grass and the rest are waiting. 	<p>Drills:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Clock Drill - Practice blocking tennis balls using the catching hand at all the clock positions - teaching the kids where their fingers should face when catching balls. 2. Diagonal Catching - Throwing catchable balls at diagonals working on drop step, tracking and crossovers 3. Super High Ball Challenge - Get a bigger, softer ball and toss it as high as possible and try to get kids to catch with two hands. 4. Fly ball with cut-off - Coach hitting flyballs and having a cut-off and coverage.