



Minor Practice Plan

Practice #1 (90-120 mins)

Parent Meeting [5 mins]

- Cover schedule, parent participation, objectives of year, and key dates. Cover that gear bags and snacks are to be kept on the bench, not in the stands with parents. To save time, can do parent meeting while assistants run warmups.

Player Meeting [5 mins]

- Fun introduction to learn names.
- Set expectations.

Warm up [10 mins]

- Active warm up – starting on foul line and jog out 30', stop and return; forwards, backwards, shuffle, crossovers.
- Progressions: High knees, butt kickers, trunk twists, sprint. Add dynamic stretches such as arm swings, leg stretches, arm circles.

Warm up to Throw (10 mins)

- review how to grip ball. Players this age will use 4-seam grip with minimum of two fingers across seams.
- Work on progressions to isolate mechanics
- Step and aim at target. Progressions: 1 knee, square and throw (chest to partner), isolate wrist, isolate elbow, isolate hips, stand and throw, step and throw. Focus on alignment, balance, and proper arm circles.

Water Break (2 mins)

National: Review/Introduction to Skills (10 minutes)

- Throwing
 - o Grip, body position, throw, follow through
- Fielding
 - o Ready position, fielding position, 'alligator', bring hand up to belly button, step and throw
- Catching
 - o Without ball - Catching ball above waist (hands high, thumbs together)
 - o Without ball - Catching ball below waist (hands low, pinkies together)

- With ball - Squeeze ball in glove with both hands
- With ball - On bounce, cradle ball; 'Soft Hands'
- Baserunning
 - Running through first base on ground ball
 - Rounding other bases by touching the inside corner
- Batting
 - Feet, hands, bat position
 - Dry swings with no bat

Canadian – Review positions and defensive responsibilities(10 mins)

- First base – 5 steps to side and 5 steps behind bag
- Second base – 6 steps beside and 6 steps behind base for lefties, 4x4 with righties
- Shortstop – 6 steps beside and 6 steps behind for righties, 4x4 with lefties
- Third base – 4 steps beside and 4 steps behind
- Ball hit to RF, second base is cutoff, SS covers second.
- Ball hit to CF, SS is cutoff, 2B covers second
- Ball hit to LF, SS is cutoff, 2B covers second
- Catcher relays what base to throw to.
- Outfielders need to talk to each other. CF can call off other OFs
- On shallow fly ball, OF coming in can call off infielder going back

Skill Stations (24 mins)

1. Partner drill

- Players work in teams of 2. Each stand by pylons about 80 feet apart
- Coach hits ball between them. They must communicate who fields the ball and who backs up.
- Player fielding ball throws to cutoff.
- Coach mixes up fly balls, grounders, pop flies.

2. Sliding

- Suggest using large unfolded cardboard box
- Teach Figure 4 slide with hands up
- Start with each player sitting on grass
- Move to run and slide onto cardboard box, head up while grabbing bat (like a limbo stick)

3. Goaltender drill

- Players line up beside pylon. Two pylons are placed 15-20 feet apart.
- Player must keep thrown or batted ball from 'scoring' between the pylons
- Player must block or field ball in front of them, then throw to cutoff.
- For fun, keep 'score'

Water Break (2 mins)

Skills Stations (24 mins)

1. Pitching Motion in bullpen

- Break down pitching motion into steps
 - i. Throw the dart
 - ii. Elbow up, arm straight up, look down the elbow
 - iii. Make the 'W'
 - iv. Rock back and forth
 - v. Lift up knee

2. Catching

- Proper position. National allows for one knee down. Canadian both feet on the ground and squat.
- Throwing arm either behind the back, or behind leg with no runners on base. Throwing hand behind glove with runners on base.
- Receiving the ball and throwing through the plate.
- Move to blocking pitches; chin down, glove open and between legs. Move from side to side by always face the plate. Can use tennis balls or practice balls.

3. Pitching and Catching

- Pitchers throw from mound to catchers.
- Pitchers throw to backstop and catchers retrieve and throw to pitchers covering plate.
- Pitchers throw to plate, catchers retrieve and throw to players or coaches at second and third base. Can use live runners and/or batters in the box to simulate game situations.

Water Break (2 mins)

Batting (20 mins)

- Review Etiquette. Set aside extra time for National as there may be players new to baseball.
 - Players must ALWAYS wear helmets when on the bench
 - Bats are kept by the on-deck position, not on the bench.
 - How to carry the bat on the field (one hand on the barrel)
 - Only one on-deck batter in on-deck area

- Introduce how to set feet, proper hand position on bat, keep eye on the ball.
- Players hit off tees (8 swings each). Depending on number of players, use multiple stations with remainder of players in the field, cycling in and out of stations.
- Suggested stations:
 1. Behind backstop, player with front knee up, coach/parent soft tosses wiffle balls (isolate hands)
 2. Behind backstop, player stands and hits wiffle off tee
 3. Behind backstop, player stands and takes soft toss
 4. On field, player hits tee balls off coach throwing from knees, players field the ball

If time remains, play quick game, i.e. Jackpot.

Practice Ends (2 mins)

- Thank everyone for coming.

- Reminder of next session, picture day, administrative tasks, etc.
- Can ask to come up with team cheer.

Practice #2 (90-120 mins)

Player Meeting [5 mins]

- Review what everyone learned last practice
- Expectations for the day

Warm up [10 mins]

- Active warm up – starting on foul line and jog out 30', stop and return; forwards, backwards, shuffle, crossovers.
- Progressions: High knees, butt kickers, trunk twists, sprint. Add dynamic stretches such as arm swings, leg stretches, arm circles.
- Can finish with running pole to pole to home plate.

Warm up to Throw (10 mins)

- review how to grip ball. Players this age will use 4-seam grip with minimum of three fingers across seams.
- Work on progressions to isolate mechanics
- Step and aim at target. Progressions: 1 knee, square and throw (chest to partner), isolate wrist, isolate elbow, isolate hips, stand and throw, step and throw. Focus on alignment, balance, and proper arm circles.

Water Break (2 mins)

Fielding and Catching the ball (15 mins)

- o Review fielding mechanics
 - Ready position, fielding position, alligator, field ball in the middle of the body
 - 2 stations
 - o Ground balls [7 minutes]
 - Players line up and ground balls are hit/rolled to them.
 - Progress into moving them left and right
 - Show how to catch a ball at 1B
 - o Fly balls [7 minutes]
 - Introduce how to catch a ball on the forehand (glove side) and the backhand (throwing side)
 - Option to use bean bags or soft balls and have them use bare hands to start. Start at a close distance so they learn how to react and turn their hand the right direction

Infield/outfield [15 minutes]

Focus on how to make outs (force play, tags, catch etc) and teach them the ways to get players out

- o Set up players in different positions in the infield and outfield
- o Rotate them them play at least 1 infield, and 1 outfield position
 - Depending on team numbers, you might have to do infield and baserunning first, and

then outfield and baserunning second.

o Have baserunners to learn how to base run and so the players have to make a decision about where to throw the ball.

Water Break (2 mins)

Hitting (15 mins)

- Review set feet, set hands, bat position and follow through
- Teach how to load to swing hard

3 hitting stations . Split up evenly to maximize amount of swings. (5 mins each)

- Tee work
 - o Focus on mechanics
- Under hand side toss
 - o Progression to hitting a moving ball
- Provincial and National: Overhand front toss (pitching)
 - o Coach pitches on one knee
- Canadian: coach loads pitching machine
 - o Focus on timing

Remaining time can be used to finish practice off with a game, i.e, race around the bases or run the gauntlet with wiffle balls.

Practice Ends (2 mins)

- Thank everyone for coming.
- Reminder of next session, picture day, administrative tasks, etc.
- Can ask to come up with team cheer.

Practice #3 – Prior to First Game (90-120 mins)

Player Meeting [5 mins]

- Review what everyone learned last practice
- Prepare for first game

Warm up [10 mins]

- Active warm up – starting on foul line and jog out 30', stop and return; forwards, backwards, shuffle, crossovers.
- Progressions: High knees, butt kickers, trunk twists, sprint. Add dynamic stretches such as arm swings, leg stretches, arm circles.
- Can finish with running pole to pole to home plate.

Warm up to Throw (10 mins)

- review how to grip ball. Players this age will use 4-seam grip with minimum of three fingers across seams.
- Work on progressions to isolate mechanics
- Step and aim at target. Progressions: 1 knee, square and throw (chest to partner), isolate wrist, isolate elbow, isolate hips, stand and throw, step and throw. Focus on alignment, balance, and proper arm circles.

Water Break (2 mins)

Stations (20 mins)

1. Provincial and National
 - o Batting wiffle balls off tees, soft toss, coach pitch from kneesCanadian
 - o Batting off tees, soft toss, pitching machine
2. Fielding ground balls
3. Fielding pop flies

Prepare for game (2 mins)

- Check batting order (can post in dugout)
- Emphasize importance of playing different positions
- To ensure fair playing time, expect to sit innings
- Cheer on teammates.

PLAY GAME

After game

- Congratulate everyone on a job well done
- Reminder of next session

Practice #4 – Prior to Second Game (90-120 mins)

Player Meeting [5 mins]

- Thoughts on the first game

Warm up (10 mins)

- Active warm up – starting on foul line and jog out 30', stop and return; forwards, backwards, shuffle, crossovers.
- Progressions: High knees, butt kickers, trunk twists, sprint
- Can use four corners drill or frozen tag with players freezing in throwing position

Warm up to Throw (10 mins)

- Work on progressions to isolate mechanics
- Step and aim at target. Progressions: 1 knee, square and throw (chest to partner), stand and throw, step and throw. Focus on alignment, balance, and proper arm circles.

Water Break (2 mins)

Stations (20 mins)

1. Provincial and National
 - o Batting wiffle balls off tees, soft toss, coach pitch from kneesCanadian
 - o Batting off tees, soft toss, pitching machine
2. Fielding ground balls. Switch from forehand to backhand.
3. Fielding pop flies. Switch from forehand to backhand. Have them run in various directions. Call for the ball: 'I got it'.

Prepare for game (2 mins)

- Check batting order (can post in dugout)
- Emphasize importance of playing different positions
- To ensure fair playing time, expect to sit innings
- Cheer on teammates.

PLAY GAME

After game

- Congratulate everyone on a job well done
- Reminder of next session

Subsequent Practices Format

- Begin each practice with Team Announcements & Warm Up (10 mins)
 - Running and dynamic stretching of upper and lower body
 - Run for Agility – i.e., High Knees, Power Skips, Shuffle, etc...
- Warm-Up To Throw (10 mins).
- Individual Skills (20 mins)
 - Set up 2-3 skills stations, depending on numbers
 - Work in pitching, catching and baserunning drills
- Fielding- (20 mins)
 - Controlled fielding of groundballs and flyballs.
- Batting – (20 mins)
 - Set-Up, Stride Position, Slow Motion Swings, Hit off Tees, Drills.
- Team Drills (20-mins)
 - Introduce game situations and what each position does and why.
 - Use live baserunners for fielding drills
 - Finish with fun game such as relay race

COMPLETED 1.5-2 HOUR PRACTICE