



Rookie Practice Plan

Practice #1 (90 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 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)

Review/Introduction to Skills (15 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)
 - o 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

Stations 30 mins)

1. Throwing/Catching

- Ensure players practice catching ball above waist and below waist
- Catch and tap ball with two hands

2. Baserunning

- Players hit a wiffle ball and run through first base
- Coach can have them return to 1st base right after.
- Have players continue from base to base until they reach home
- Hit a wiffle ball, and round 1st base and go to second stopping on the base.
- Players continue from 2nd base, round 3rd base and score on the next hit.

3. Fielding/Catching

- Partner up & roll ground balls to each other, OR coach rolls to players lined up
- Progress to underhand toss
- Reinforce proper form

Water Break (2 mins)

Provincial and National Hitting (20 mins)

- Etiquette
 - 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 tee loaded by coach, players field the ball

Canadian Hitting with Pitching Machine

- Etiquette
 - 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 pitching machine (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 hard balls off pitching machine loaded by coach, players field the ball

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 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 (45 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 knees
 - Canadian
 - 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 (45 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 Prior to Games

- Always begin with warm up and warm up to throw
- Mix up different warm up drills but warm up to throw should be the same progression every time
- Water Break every 20-30 minutes especially on hot days!
- Rotate players through fielding, catching and batting stations until game begins
 - o Can mix up batting station with batting and baserunning station
- Reinforce proper throwing, fielding and batting form.
- Always encourage having fun while learning