

# **Whitby Minor Baseball Association House League Coaching Manual**

**5u**

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# Whitby Minor Baseball Association

## House League Coaching Manual

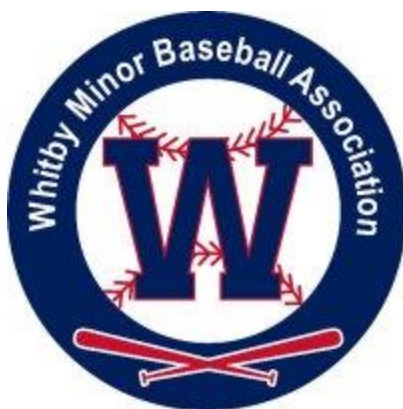
This manual is intended to provide information and assistance to help you in your goal of becoming a better baseball coach.

I am sure we all agree that our collective goal is to promote the growth of baseball in Whitby. By volunteering to coach you are helping us towards meeting this goal! By providing better coaching, our players will benefit that much more, and in turn will become better players.

Whether you are coaching for the first time, or you are a returning coach, the first step to becoming a better coach is to understand that no matter how long you have been coaching, you will never stop learning. Please use this manual, along with the knowledge you already possess, to promote a fun filled and educational program that each of your players will enjoy.

In addition to the resources provided here, if you would like help contact your convener to arrange for someone to visit at a practice and/or game as available.

Have a great season, and thank you to your commitment towards better baseball in Whitby!



## **Baseball Links**

Below, you will find links that will also provide information to help you become a better coach. Please use the information you find on any of these websites wisely, with the understanding that some of the information may be too advanced for your particular age group.

Whitby Minor Baseball Association  
<http://www.whitbyminorbaseball.ca>

Eastern Ontario Baseball Association  
<http://www.eoba.net/coach>

Ontario Baseball Association  
<http://www.ondeck.baseballontario.com>  
[www.playoba.ca](http://www.playoba.ca)

National Coaching Certification Program  
<http://nccp.baseball.ca>

Baseball Canada Rally Cap Initiation Program  
<https://baseball.ca/rally-cap-initiation-program>



## **Fair Play Code For Coaches**

1. I will teach my athletes to play fairly, demonstrate good sportsmanship and to respect the rules, the equipment and ball diamonds, officials and opponents.
2. I will remember that children play to have fun and must be encouraged to have confidence in themselves. I will also remember that young athletes have other interests and obligations.
3. I will remember that children need a coach they can respect. Therefore I will be generous with praise and also set an example of good sportsmanship.
4. I will ensure that all athletes get equal instruction and support as well as fair playing time.
5. I will not ridicule or yell at any baseball player for making mistakes or for performing poorly. I will show umpires the same respect.
6. I will make sure that equipment and facilities are safe and I will encourage a litter-free environment.
7. I recognize that coaching is a commitment and I will endeavor to improve my coaching skills.

Adapted from Fair Play - It's Your Call! A Resource Manual for Coaches

## Coaching Basics

Thank you for agreeing to coach a group of athletes who need a coach to enjoy everything that sport has to offer: fun, competition, friendship, and personal growth.

Thank you for taking the time from your personal schedule to devote to the development of young people who will benefit from your presence, your planning, your teaching, and your personal involvement in making sport a fun place to be.

Thank you for accepting the responsibility of helping young people become better athletes, for keeping them safe and helping them feel good about themselves and what they do.

Thank you for caring enough to seek some help in getting started. The first step is the hardest, but you'll find lots of help along the way. As you continue coaching, the 3M National Coaching Certification Program (NCCP) will help you develop your skills as a coach.

If you get the impression we're glad you're here, you're right - we are!

We've created this introductory course to help you take the first steps in coaching. Here you'll find the basics of coaching, especially coaching young athletes, as well as links to more detailed information sources, programs and courses. You'll also find links to Ontario's sport organizations, who will help you obtain more information on the technical aspects of coaching your specific sport. Please feel free to print and circulate this information!

Sports Alliance of Ontario

Coaching Basics

by Lorne Adams, February 2000

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## Your Role as Coach

People become coaches for many reasons: because they have a child in sport, because they were an athlete themselves, or because they want an opportunity to help in their community. Some coaches step forward; some are asked to help. No matter what the reasons, all coaches have the same roles. You will be a teacher, a leader, an organizer and sometimes will even act as a counselor.

Coach has a nice ring to it. It sounds important. It is important. Think back to some of the lessons your coaches taught you. Perhaps you remember the importance of trying your best all the time. Perhaps you remember how important team goals and sportsmanship were. Perhaps you were taught how to solve problems or you were excited about learning new things. That coach made a difference in your life. You too can make the sport experience meaningful, fun, and memorable. That's why you're here. When your reasons for coaching match the needs and development level of your athletes, everyone can win.

In your role as a teacher, you will be asked to share your knowledge of the sport and prepare athletes to play by improving fitness and developing skills specific to your sport.

In your role as leader, you will make many decisions, to motivate your athletes and help them set and attain goals.

In your role as an organizer, you will manage practice and game schedules for the team, plan and evaluate practices and evaluate athletes.

In your role as a counselor, you will listen to and provide guidance and support for your athletes.

It is important to understand that athletes, like coaches, participate for different reasons. Some enjoy the sensation of speed, power, or grace. Some athletes just want to be with their friends, or be a part of a team (social reasons). Some athletes want to win, to improve themselves or advance to high levels in their sport (achievement reasons).

Match your reasons for coaching with the reasons that athletes participate. A coach who is driven to win, coaching a team of 7 year olds who are there for fun and social reasons, can result in an unhappy coach and unhappy athletes.

## Make Sport a Fun Place to Be

In sport, we need to foster the willingness to try new things, to take risks, to test potential. This is best accomplished in a supportive, encouraging atmosphere that is characterized by praise not criticism, full of rewards not punishment. Rather than saying "That's the wrong way to do it...!" try saying "You've done this part well, now let's see if we can add ...". Try to catch your athletes doing something right not something wrong.

Sport should be fun. Fun doesn't mean that athletes need to laughing and giggling all the time. Part of the fun is challenge that is realistic and encouraging. Part of fun is playing - playing the game or playing at parts of the game. Fun is not standing in line waiting for your brief turn at an activity. Fun is being actively involved. Fun is being respected for yourself and your particular talents. Fun means freedom from negative criticism and harassment. Fun means that we all count as part of the team. Fun means that we play the game fairly, not to bend the rules or break them to gain an advantage. Fun means having a sense of satisfaction that what you are involved in is gratifying and worthwhile. Fun is what your athletes should expect from you. Fun is what you should expect now that you are involved in coaching.

As a coach, you are an equal partner in making sport fun - you should neither be overly authoritarian nor merely a passive observer.

## **Growth and Development**

While it may be stating the obvious, it helps to remember that children are not miniature adults. Kids develop in stages and have differing physical and mental capabilities at each stage.

The sport system divides athletes by age groups, but age is not the only measure of their maturity or readiness for a specific sport activity. Not all 10 year olds are alike. Some are more mature physically, mentally, and socially while others are less mature. You may have on your team two or three groups of athletes who are quite different emotionally or physically even though they are the same chronological age. You may have to create activities appropriate for the different groups on your team.

As the athlete grows, develops, and matures their approach to sport will change. In general, the following is true about the young athletes you coach:

Children under 7-8 are motivated by fun and often dislike competition.  
Cooperative games are very useful

Children 8-10 begin to understand the importance of rules. They identify with personal prestige and skill levels more than winning or losing. They become more self-centred.

Children over 12 become more competitive. Winning and losing become more important.

Physical abilities change dramatically with maturity level.  
The ability to translate commands into action changes dramatically with maturity.

Asking kids to do things that are beyond their developmental capacities frustrates both athletes and coaches. Contact your sport organization or the Sport Alliance of Ontario to access resources which will help you develop appropriate programs for your athletes.

## **Create a Strong Self-image**

How athletes feel about themselves (self-image) is important. If they don't feel good about themselves in a particular setting they avoid that environment – they quit sport, or do not perform to their potential. You play a large role in the development of an athlete's self-image. It's quite easy, really: do the things that others do to you to make you feel good.

Know their names and use them (first names) when addressing them

Establish eye contact - kneel don't bend

Smile - often and readily

Give approving nods, winks, thumbs up

Develop a list of 100 ways to say "Way to go!"

Applaud effort not just results

Be enthusiastic, energetic

Involve them in decisions

Let athletes assume leadership in an appropriate situation

Spend time with everyone

Give them responsibilities

Be their biggest fan/cheerleader - remind them of their achievements

Treat them like you'd like to be treated when you are learning or being evaluated on some new task or skill.

## **Organize a Great Practice**

World-class coaches have both annual and daily plans for their practices. They start with a script of what will be done, how it will be done, and why it is being done. Like them, you should have seasonal goals for what you want the team, the individual athletes, and yourself to accomplish.

You need a plan for your daily practices, too!

It is extremely important to have a plan when you coach beginning athletes. They don't have a lot of experience or skill to draw on and if this is your first time coaching, neither do you. If you know what you want to do, when you want to do it, how you want it done, and why you want it done, you will be much more confident and assured- and so will your athletes.

### Plan the Practice

To begin, break your practice down into five to ten minute segments following this order:

Introduction:

explain briefly what will happen today, what they will learn.

Warm-Up -

get athletes moving, get them ready for activity  
raise body temperature through vigorous activity  
start slowly then increase pace  
dynamic stretches  
basic warm-up for your sport

Review previously learned skills -

utilize drills that give them an opportunity to practice fundamental skills or skills that they learned recently

Learn new skills -

describe the new skill  
pick 2-3 teaching points to emphasize  
provide drills that utilize the new skill  
make sure everyone gets to participate (learn) - avoid long lines of standing around  
provide feedback - and encouragement  
Change or modify skills as athletes improve

Game-like Activities and/or Conditioning –  
simplified game situation – reduce area of play, number of players, rules  
incorporate fitness activities if appropriate

Cool down –  
decrease level (intensity) of activity gradually  
static stretches for the muscles most used in the activity

Wrap up –  
review practice and plan with athletes  
prepare them for next practice  
do your own personal evaluation – what could be better next time?

### Don't Just Practice – Practice Effectively!

An effective practice session has the following characteristics

#### High Activity Level:

Every athlete participates frequently. There is little standing in line, no waiting for equipment, minimal time listening to instruction.  
Drills and activities change frequently, athletes do something new every 5-10 minutes  
Drills have progression – easy to hard, simple to complex

#### High Variety Level:

Skills are practiced in different ways  
Fun activities are provided  
Novelty is introduced – play new position, change rules, use different equipment  
Work with different people, individually, pairs, small groups

#### High Organization Level:

Written practice plan  
Environment is organized – enough equipment in the right place before practice starts  
Start, stay, and finish on time

This may seem like a lot of work, but once you've tried it once or twice, it is quite simple and both you and your athletes will benefit.

### PLAN FOR GAME DAY

You should also have a plan for game days or competitions:

Warm up -  
prepare them for game activity as you would for practice

Establish what we want to do today –  
play fair  
good sportsmanship  
do our best  
tactics and skill reminders: good passing, good defense, etc.

Post-competition wrap up -  
Highlight the positive things that happened

Praise effort - be positive

Ready them for next practice

Evaluate the game

- make note of performance and accomplishments

- make note of things to be addressed at next practice. Highlight the positive things that happened

## Good Coaching Needs Good Communication

Communication is not merely giving instructions and having athletes carry them out. Effective communication is a two way street. You are both the sender and receiver of information. That means that not only do you need to be understood when you communicate, but you also need to listen to the people you communicate with. Listening skills are as important as speaking skills. Here are some helpful hints.

When speaking:

- Use words the athlete understands (remember growth and development needs)

- Don't speak too quickly

- Make sure that they are paying attention to you

- Get down to their eye level

- Make sure everyone can hear (speak loudly enough, face them when speaking)

- Make sure they understand (ask them to state what you've asked them to do)

- Repeat yourself if necessary

When listening:

- Establish eye contact

- Give signs that you are paying attention (uh huh, yes, I see)

- Have the rest of the group quiet

- Restate or rephrase what you've heard (you want to know what to when...)

- Be positive

- Thank them for asking the question or making a point

When you give feedback:

- Be prompt- give feedback while the athlete still remembers what they did

- Be positive- start by mentioning what they're doing well

- Be specific- explain exactly how to make the improvement

- Be sensible- don't ask for changes the athlete is not capable of

- Make sure the athlete understands- ask them to repeat or demonstrate

*"That was good! You've got the arm action. Now let's work on the step - you need to point your toe like this. OK? Ready to try it again?"*

## Help Your Athletes Get Fit

Even people who are new to coaching recognize the need for athletes to be fit in order to play the game. In fact, it may be one of the first things you try to do. However, getting athletes fit isn't just a matter of making them work until they drop from fatigue. Fitness development needs to be age (developmentally) appropriate, progressive and should not predispose the athlete to injury.

Here is a list of some basic do's and don'ts for getting your athletes fit.

- Do - Progress gradually over the season. Start with lower intensity, lower duration activities and work up over time.  
 Build endurance first before introducing higher intensity activities (run continuously before sprinting).  
 Put the fitness part of practice near the end after they have tried to learn new skills. It's more difficult to learn skills when fatigued.  
 Always include a warm-up (see above ).  
 Monitor athletes and reduce or stop activity as they become fatigued.  
 Provide plenty of cool water--particularly if the activity is intense or if it is hot and humid.  
 Scale back intensity in hot, humid weather.  
 Always have a 'cool-down' period at the end of practice (see the earlier section).
- Don't - Ask athletes to perform extreme stretches, hyperextensions or rotations, e.g., neck bridges, hurdle stretch.  
 Ask developing athletes to do strengthening activities that require them to lift or support more than their body weight.  
 Ask developing athletes to perform high intensity activities such as repeated wind sprints.  
 Don't deny your athletes water and rest breaks.  
 If you see your athletes only once or twice a week, don't sacrifice skill development for fitness training. You may be better off teaching technique and fundamentals of the game.

## How to Make Sport Safer

Every coach wants to minimize the risk of injury to athletes. We can't totally eliminate the risk of injury but we can reduce it drastically. Many risks are under your control- and you have a responsibility to take the necessary steps to protect your athletes. Once again, it helps to have a plan.

- If your athletes use equipment (sticks, bats, etc.) be sure to teach them how to handle the equipment safely.
- Always survey your practice/game facility. Hazards are often simply overlooked until an accident happens.
- Make sure they have proper, well-fitting athletic wear (shoes, helmets, shoulder pads, skates, etc.)
- Remove obstacles or hazards. Move benches back a safe distance from the playing area.
- Pad objects that athletes may run into (end walls of gym, basketball standards, volleyball support wires).
- Provide plenty of water (particularly in warm weather)
- Have a first aid kit on hand
- Have a medical information form for each your athletes' past injuries, allergies, conditions, that may affect their ability to participate.
- Know your athletes' fitness, illnesses, etc.
- Be cautious returning athletes to activity when they have been injured or ill.

### For You

It is beyond the scope of this project to teach you how to deal with injuries if they should occur. However, there are lots of places to go for help that will prepare you to deal with most of the sports injuries you will encounter. Red Cross, St. John's Ambulance, SIPAC (Sports Injury Prevention and Care), and the 3M NCCP Level I Theory manual are good sources of information and training.

### What to do When Things Go Wrong

When things go wrong and there is a major injury, you must have an EAP (Emergency Action Plan). Take time to create one before your next practice. The plan includes the following:

- Location of the nearest phone
- Phone numbers of ambulance, hospital, etc.
- Clear directions for emergency care people to get to where you are

Having a "call" person (the person who makes a call) to get help

Having a "charge" person (the person in charge) to stay with the athlete and be in charge at the scene.

## **Your Role With Parents**

As a coach, you'll often have to work with the parents of your athletes. The chances are that you are a parent yourself. If that is the case, ask yourself what kinds of things would you expect of a coach when they are dealing with your son or daughter. What would you like to know about their experience as a coach? What would you like to know about the interaction between your child and the coach? You probably had those kinds of questions as a parent, however, now that you are the coach, other parents are looking to you for answers. It helps to remember that "informed people are cooperative people."

How do people become informed? In the most simple and direct way. You talk to them, one on one or as a parent group. Tell them how you are going to conduct yourself, what expectations you have of the athletes and how you will treat them. Tell them what your expectations are of them as parents.

Another way to inform parents is to write them a letter, addressing the concerns that any parent would have. Tell them a little about your philosophy, your expectations, and create an avenue of communication. Good coach-parent relationships create a positive environment for the athlete, and everyone benefits.

## **In Closing**

Thank you once again for taking the time to review Coaching Basics. As you can see from the materials and references we have provided you with, there is a lot to learn. However, now that you have started, the most important thing is to use what you have learned to enjoy your athletes, your sport, the competition, and to have fun.

The real rewards for your efforts are not in the awarding of trophies or medals but in the words of an athlete who, at the end of the season, extends to you a heartfelt "Thanks Coach!"

Enjoy your season, your athletes, and everything coaching has to offer!

# RALLY CAP PROGRAM INFORMATION



# RALLY CAP

## Program as a starting point for long-term athlete development

The Rally Cap Program is one of the outcomes of the Long-Term Athlete Development (LTAD) Program developed by Sport Canada.

LTAD focuses on the general framework of athlete development with special reference to growth, maturation and development, trainability, and sport system alignment and integration. It incorporates information from several sources. It draws on the experiences of various athlete development projects that have been implemented by different sport organizations since the mid-1990s.

These sciences include pediatric exercise science, exercise physiology, sport psychology, psychomotor learning, sport sociology, and nutrition. An analysis of the literature on organizational development has also contributed significantly.

The health and well-being of Canadians and the medals won at major, multi-sport competitions are simply by-products of an effective sport system.

This document is based on and supported by the coaching and exercise science literature, but it is written particularly for coaches along with technical and administrative sport leaders. Baseball Canada is proud to offer this simple and detailed program to the Canadian baseball community.

Together, let's make sure this first baseball experience is a positive one for all young athletes in Canada.



# INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Baseball Canada's Rally Cap Program. This booklet provides the information necessary to run Baseball Canada's Official Initiation Program.

With the Federal Government's mandate for National Sport Organizations to develop a long-term athlete development model for each sport, the Rally Cap program was born with the purpose of making baseball more fun and engaging to young Canadians. Baseball Canada is confident that this program will satisfy young athletes, their parent/guardians and that it will be a useful tool for coaches involved in teaching baseball at the community level.





# GOALS

- 1** Create a fun environment in which children and adults are actively engaged together in the game of baseball.
- 2** Develop fundamental motor skills, teach baseball skills, and basic rules to our athletes.
- 3** Experience success with an emphasis on respect and fair play.
- 4** Promote increased self-esteem among Rally Cap participants.
- 5** Recruit new coaches, parent helpers and volunteers

## The Crucial Role of Coaches

The most important individual in the Rally Cap program is the coach. The coach is the person the athletes look at for instruction, encouragement, and inspiration. Assistant coaches, and/or parent helpers, take their cues from the coach. Therefore, success of the program is dependant on the coaches embracing our goals and working to achieve them.

Baseball Canada fully recognizes that the majority of coaches at this level are parents/guardians who are not only providing their children with their first experience in baseball, but they themselves, potentially, are experiencing coaching and/or baseball for the first time. Our Rally Cap practice plans are designed to provide coaches with all the necessary tools to give their athletes, and themselves, the best baseball experience possible.





The following are ways in which coaches can help achieve Rally Cap goals:

### GOAL #1

Create a fun environment where athletes and coaches are actively engaged together in the game of baseball.

1. Use fun games to make baseball learning positive and fun.
2. Encourage interaction between parents and athletes during Rally Cap sessions.

### GOAL #2

Develop fundamental motor skills, teach baseball skills and basic baseball rules to athletes.

1. Organize practices to maximize learning, minimize inactivity with the number of repetitions in the various skills being introduced.
2. Introduce fundamental motor skills for the all-round athlete.

### GOAL #3

Experience success with an emphasis on respect and fair play.

1. Recognize the ability of each athlete is individual and progression will occur at their own rate through experience and effort.
2. Recognize partial or total success through positive reinforcement.
3. Organize activities adapted to everyone's ability, proposing attainable challenges, and giving constructive feedback.



# GOALS (continued)

## GOAL #4

Promote increased self-esteem among Rally Cap athletes and coaches.

1. Encourage athletes to do their best!
2. Spend comparable teaching time with all athletes no matter their ability.
3. Embrace challenges as a pathway to success!

## GOAL #5

Recruit new coaches, parent helpers and volunteers.

1. Rally Cap provides an entry point to baseball for not only athletes but coaches and volunteers, too
2. We believe, that by developing coaches and volunteers, we are also developing positive role models for long-term growth in sport and life.



# STRUCTURE

The Rally Cap program was developed using baseball initiation programs, as well as adding new ideas to keep athletes engaged and interested.

In the Rally Cap program, each team consists of six athletes on the field compared to nine in traditional baseball. This allows for the formation of more teams, meaning athletes will have more skill repetitions at each session to maximize skill repetition and acquisition.

Each Rally Cap session lasts 60 minutes involving three teams. Two (2) teams will play a 6 versus 6 (6v6) baseball game while the third team will be participating in baseball activities in the outfield area. After an inning is played (both teams have batted) in the game, teams will rotate so at the end of the 60-minute session each team will have played two games (two full innings) and had a skill-based practice.

60 minutes

## EXAMPLE

Physical activity  
**10 minutes**

Baseball knowledge **5 minutes**

Game  
**15 minutes**

\*including 2 minutes for transition

Game  
**15 minutes**

\*including 2 minutes for transition

Practice  
**15 minutes**

\*including 2 minutes for transition



# THE GAME

All athletes will come to bat during their team's ½ inning. The ½ inning will end when all athletes have completed their turn.

Teams will score runs the same way they do during a traditional baseball game (i.e., touching home plate). Teams also can “score” runs while playing defense. A run can be earned by catching a fly ball or by throwing a runner out at a base. Therefore, up to six (6) defensive runs can be earned each inning.

**VARIATIONS:** *You can develop a different scoring system to reward different types of defensive plays (e.g., you can allow more points for fielding a ball followed by an accurate throw).*

To throw a runner out, the batted ball can be thrown or run to **any** base before the batter-runner reaches 1st base.

There are no walks, no strikeouts, no base stealing, and runners can only advance on batted balls.

With hitting being the most fun part of baseball, the Rally Cap program has been designed to help athletes hit the ball no matter what their skill level. Three different formats can be used:

BATTING TEE / COACH – PITCHER / PITCHING MACHINE

Each player can choose the format they wish to use, with coach discretion, depending on their development stage. All three formats can be used during a game.

Each batter will have a maximum of five (5) baseballs to hit during their at bat. If the ball is not hit, a coach will roll the ball to allow the batter to run the bases and to allow the defense to field the ball and make plays.

When the last batter of the inning hits the ball, the ball must be thrown to home plate to get the batter out.

The batting order will change each time a team comes to bat (first batter becomes last, etc.) Defensive positioning will also change each time a team comes to bat.

**VARIATIONS:** *Baseball Canada encourages Rally Cap programs to rotate defensive athletes after each at bat, so athletes stay engaged, learn the different positions, and move throughout the inning. A defensive rotation can be third base to shortstop, shortstop to second base, second base to first base, first base to pitcher and pitcher to third base. The catcher will remain in position for their team's defensive inning.*



# THE PRACTICE

In the outfield area, each team will practice different baseball activities with respect to the following **FUNdamentals**:

- 1** FUNDAMENTAL MOVEMENT SKILLS
- 2** THROWING
- 3** RECEIVING
- 4** HITTING
- 5** BASERUNNING

Baseball Canada has developed Rally Cap practice plans based on the different skill levels of the program so coaches can focus on teaching proper technique to maximize skill acquisition. To keep athletes engaged with an emphasis on multiple repetitions, Baseball Canada encourages the use of stations while teams are practicing with athletes rotating throughout.

We strongly recommend that you set up your equipment before the start of the session. The only equipment a Rally Cap athlete needs are a baseball glove and batting helmet.

## THE RALLY CAP SYSTEM

Baseball Canada recommends that Rally Cap programs conduct two “Rally Cap Days” during the season where athletes will have an opportunity to “level-up” based on the skills they have practiced and acquired during the season. The Rally Cap Days are designed to be fun and an event that athletes and coaches look forward to reward

success and progression through the program.

During the Rally Cap Day event, all athletes will go through stations where they will perform different baseball skills. When a player succeeds at each skill based on a particular level of the program, they will be recognized as having passed that specific skill level.

### “OFFICIAL RALLY CAP DAY”

You can have more or less of these events, but we caution to avoid progressing through the levels of the program on a daily basis. Rally Cap athletes should practice their skills throughout the season to perform on a truly unique day.

# SKILL LEVELS



## ON DECK

## HOME PLATE

## SINGLE

## DOUBLE

## TRIPLE

## HOME RUN

	Fundamental Movement Skills	Throwing	Receiving	Hitting	Baserunning
ON DECK	1. Agility – jump over a line for 10 reps using your own type of jump	7. Able to throw a ball 5 feet in distance with no bounce	13. Able to catch a ball thrown from 5 feet	19. Able to hit a ball off a tee	25. Able to run around the bases in the correct direction without stopping
HOME PLATE	2. Balance – Stay in the pitching balance position for 5 seconds on both sides	8. Able to throw at least 3 of 5 balls to a coach from 10 feet	14. Able to field at least 3 of 5 ground balls from 15 feet	20. Able to hit at least 3 of 5 fair balls off a tee	26. Able to hit off a tee and run through 1st base
SINGLE	3. Coordination – 10 Jumping Jacks without stopping	9. Able to throw the ball 25 feet in distance with no bounce	15. Able to catch at least 3 of 5 fly balls from 15 feet height	21. Able to hit at least 3 of 5 fair balls thrown from an underhand toss	27. Able to run 2 bases with a stop at the final base
DOUBLE	4. Agility – Able to touch 6 cones placed in a star shape while always looking forward	10. Able to throw at least 3 of 5 balls to a coach from 25 feet	16. Able to field at least 3 of 5 grounders to the right and 3 of 5 grounders to the left (game distance)	22. Ale to hit at least 3 of 5 underhand tossed balls passed the base paths rolling or in the air	28. Able to run 20' followed by a feet first slide (on grass, no bases)
TRIPLE	5. Balance – Squatting like a catcher, and squat jump to right, and then to left (5 times each)	11. Able to throw the ball 50 feet in distance with no bounce	17. Able to catch at least 3 of 5 fly balls to the right and 3 of 5 fly balls to the left (5-10 feet to the left and right) at 15 feet height	23. Able to hit at least 3 of 5 fair balls thrown underhand at least 75 feet in distance	29. Able to run to a base and slide at the base
HOME RUN	6. Coordination – Juggling 2 balls with 2 hands for 5 seconds using transfer or cross method	12. From fielding position, the athlete can throw at least 3 of 5 baseballs to 1st base from shortstop	18. Able to catch a total of at least 13 of 15 balls out of 5 grounders, 5 fly balls and 5 balls thrown by a partner from 15 feet	24. Able to hit at least 3 of 5 fair balls from a pitching machine (44' and 32-34 mph) or overhand*	30. Able to run 2 bases and slide at the base

\*Adjust angle by ensuring that the throw is coming from the appropriate height. Have the pitcher take a knee if needed.

# HOME PLATE



LEVEL: HOME PLATE

# HOME PLATE – FUNDAMENTAL MOVEMENT SKILLS

Balance – Stay in the pitching balanced position for 5 seconds, on both sides.

**ACTIVITY** UP AND DOWN (2)

[Click here](#) for video demonstration

**Goal:** Introduce athletes to the importance of balance for pitching.

**Description:** All athletes are lined up with no glove and a baseball in their dominant hand. On signal, all athletes put their weight on their dominant foot while having the other foot off the ground (they are now standing on one foot). Without losing balance, athletes must put the ball on the ground and come back up without their free foot touching the ground. Repeat up to three times.

**Equipment:** Baseballs

**VARIATIONS AND PROGRESSION:**

- A. Put the ball on the ground using different locations causing athlete to perform shorter or longer extensions
- B. After picking up the ball, ask athlete to pick it up again and then make two hops before doing it again
- C. Do a relay run on one foot



# HOME PLATE – THROWING

With a partner or a coach standing in front of the athlete at 10 feet, ask the athlete to throw the ball. Accuracy is not important at this stage. We want the athlete to be able to reach the distance.

Below is an activity that can be used to prepare for this skill:

## **ACTIVITY THE WHEEL (8)**

[Click here](#) for video demonstration

**Goal:** Teach the proper mechanics when throwing a ball.

**Description:** In pairs, the athletes play catch using proper throwing mechanics.

**Equipment:** One ball for each pair

## **VARIATIONS AND PROGRESSION:**

- A. Athletes simulate the mechanics without a ball
- B. Athlete sits with legs crossed.
- C. On both knees
- D. On one knee (arm side knee)
- E. Athletes execute on command:
  - a. throwing arm goes down
  - b. reach back
  - c. lift arm to shoulder height
- F. Execute three circles before throwing:
  - a. Small circle
  - b. Medium circle
  - c. Large circle
- G. Add one step with the glove side (giant step), just before throwing

## **KEY POINTS**

- Explain that the longer the arm circle, the faster the arm speed (small wheel vs big wheel)
- Make sure they hold the ball right, facing away
- Glove foot goes forward while throwing



# HOME PLATE – RECEIVING

With a coach located 15 feet in front of the athlete, one at a time, roll five balls towards them. To succeed, the athlete must field 3 of the 5 balls.

Below is an activity that can be used to prepare for this skill:

## **ACTIVITY** THE CROCODILE (14)

[Click here](#) for video demonstration

**Goal:** Teach and reinforce the proper way to receive a ground ball.

**Description:** Coach instructs the athletes to simulate the proper way to receive a ground ball. With a partner or a parent located in front of the athlete, roll the ball underhand to the athlete. Look for fielding the ball with two hands. It is recommended starting on two knees and bare handed in order to isolate the movement. For younger athletes, it is recommended to use a parent as a partner.

## **VARIATIONS AND PROGRESSION:**

- A. Simulate receiving the ball
- B. Coach rolls a ground ball
- C. In pairs, one athlete rolls the ball and the other receives it
- D. With and without gloves
- E. With different type of balls

**Equipment:** Several types of balls (minimum one per athlete) and bigger balls.

## **KEY POINTS**

- Always put hands out like a crocodile's mouth
- "Pet" the ball when receiving it

LEVEL: HOME PLATE

# HOME PLATE – HITTING

With a partner or a coach standing beside the athlete, simply ask the athlete to hit the ball off the tee. Contact with three of five balls (fair balls) is important, not distance. Ensure the tee is placed in front of home plate NOT directly on home plate.

Below is an activity that can be used to prepare for this skill:

## **ACTIVITY** "500" (20)

[Click here](#) for video demonstration

**Goal:** Introduce athletes to the perfect batting stance.

**Description:** Arrange one group of 4-6 athletes with one batter while the others are in the field.

- The batter will bat off a tee or via thrown pitch
- Each batter gets 10 swings or hits
- Fielders can get points by fielding the ball

**100 points**

FOR CAUGHT FLY

**50 points**

FOR ONE BOUNCER

**25 points**

FOR A GROUNDER



LEVEL: HOME PLATE

# HOME PLATE – BASERUNNING

Able to hit off a tee  
and run through  
1st base

Below is an activity that can be used to prepare for this skill:

## **ACTIVITY** THE TRANSITION (26)

[Click here](#) for video demonstration

**Goal:** To expose the athlete from transitioning from hitting to running.

**Description:** For safety reasons, and to avoid hitters from throwing their bats, ask all athletes to take the final hitting position (follow through). Starting from that position, ask athletes to a) drop the bat and b) initiate a run to 1st base. Emphasize the importance of the first three, quick steps only. Repeat again. Make sure all athletes execute at same time with no wait time.

**Equipment:** Bats and running base line

## **VARIATIONS AND PROGRESSION:**

- A. Repeat same exercise with athletes running until half distance to first base
- B. Repeat with full distance. Allow proper rest between repetitions



# PRACTICE PLANS

LEVEL – ON DECK / HOME PLATE



## PRACTICE PLAN #1 LEVEL – ON DECK/HOME PLATE

**Required equipment:** TVB balls, various bats, various balls (baseball, wiffle balls, tennis, softballs, foam balls, batting tee, set of bases (minimum four))

# WARM-UP

## RUNNING DRILLS:

**Description:** All athletes are side by side on a line. Athletes do the exercises with 45 feet of running distance in front of them. “There and back.”

### **VARIATIONS AND PROGRESSION:**

- A. Sitting, use only arms
- B. High knees
- C. Military walk

## WARM-UP:

**Description:** Warming up with various exercises giving opportunities to stretch the body and prepare itself for baseball practice.

## THROWING AND RECEIVING

### **ACTIVITY “HANDCUFFS” (7)**

[Click here](#) for video demonstration

**Description:** Athletes pair up with each other or with a coach. On signal, athletes take a proper grip on the ball.

**Equipment:** One ball for each pair

### **VARIATIONS AND PROGRESSION:**

- A. From a seated position, pick up the ball off the ground and throw it to a partner (or coach/parent helper)
- B. Make sure they’re using the appropriate grip on the ball

### **ACTIVITY THE WHEEL (8)**

[Click here](#) for video demonstration

**Description:** In pairs, the athletes play catch using proper throwing mechanics.

**Equipment:** One ball for each pair

### **VARIATIONS AND PROGRESSION:**

- A. On both knees
- B. Athletes are executing on command:

### **KEY POINTS**

- *Throwing arm goes down*
- *Reach back*
- *Lift arm to shoulder height*
- *Appropriate arm action*

# HITTING

## ACTIVITY “BETWEEN THE TWO” (19)

[Click here](#) for video demonstration

**Description:** Each athlete has a bat in their hands. They watch and copy each batting position that the coach assumes.

Every time the coach asks the athletes how to position themselves, they answer “Between the Two”. In all cases, you want “Between the Two” extremes as a better method for your batters to start from.

**Equipment:** One “bat” per athlete

### VARIATIONS AND PROGRESSION:

- A. Close feet (compact stance) VS Wide feet (wide stance)
- B. Straight legs VS Bent legs
- C. Complete swings without balls

### KEY POINTS

- Feet must be wider than shoulders
- Hands high and back
- Hands together on bat

## ACTIVITY “T-BALL”

**Description:** With a partner or a coach/parent helper located to the side of the athlete, ask the athlete to hit the ball off a tee. Ensure the tee is placed in front of home plate and NOT on it. Teammates pick up the baseballs.

**Equipment:** Batting tee, various bats and balls

### VARIATIONS AND PROGRESSION:

- A. Standard “t-ball”
- B. Hit the ball through a hoop

### KEY POINTS

- Feet must be wider than shoulders
- Hands high and back
- Hands together on bat



# RECEIVING

## **ACTIVITY** CATCH THE BALL LIKE AN EGG (13)

[Click here](#) for video demonstration

**Description:** With a partner or a coach located in front of the athlete at six feet, throw the ball underhand to the athlete. Encourage athletes to catch the ball with two hands.

Place athletes opposite each other at six feet apart. With athletes on two knees, and bare handed, have them play catch throwing the ball under hand. For younger athletes, it is a good idea to match them with coaches or parent helpers.

- A. On both knees, use foam balls
- B. On both knees, use tennis balls

### **KEY POINTS**

- Reach out for the ball
- Bring hands toward the body when catching the ball

## **ACTIVITY** “THE CROCODILE” (14)

[Click here](#) for video demonstration

**Description:** Coach/parent helper instructs the athletes to simulate the proper way to receive a ground ball.

**Equipment:** Several types of balls (minimum one per athlete).

### **VARIATIONS AND PROGRESSION:**

- A. Simulate receiving the ball
- B. Coach rolls a ground ball

\*Do exercise with and without gloves

### **KEY POINTS**

- Always put hands out to simulate crocodile's mouth
- “Pet” the ball when receiving it
- Feet and hands form a triangle



# BASERUNNING

## ACTIVITY “THE TRAIN” (25)

[Click here](#) for video demonstration

**Description:** Starting from home plate, athletes form a line and lightly jog around the bases, saying the name of the base as they touch it. Parent/guardians are encouraged to join in this activity!

**Equipment:** Set of bases (minimum of four)

### VARIATIONS AND PROGRESSION:

- A. Coach leads the line
- B. Individually, done while jogging
- C. Have athletes start at different bases
- D. Individually done by running, athlete goes around the bases (same as Hit, Run and Throw)

### KEY POINTS

- Athlete must learn to run the bases in the correct order
- Learn the name of each base

## ACTIVITY “THE MUSICAL BASE”

**Description:** All athletes are jogging in the infield. On signal, athletes can run towards a designated base as mentioned by the coach/parent helper.

**Equipment:** Set of bases (minimum of four)

### VARIATIONS AND PROGRESSION:

- A. Ask athletes to get to any base while having a maximum number of athletes at each base

### KEY POINTS

- Name the bases
- Ensure safety of the athletes
- Encourage teamwork



## PRACTICE PLAN #2 LEVEL – ON DECK/HOME PLATE

**Required equipment:** TVB balls, various bats, various balls (baseball, wiffle balls, tennis, softballs, foam balls, batting tee, set of bases (minimum of four), screen (net), cones (4 to 6), hoola hoops (2 or 3), target, badminton birdies.

# WARM-UP

## RUNNING DRILLS:

**Description:** All athletes are side by side on a line. Athletes do the exercises with 45 feet of running distance in front of them. “There and back.”

### **VARIATIONS AND PROGRESSION:**

- *Sitting, using only arms*
- *High knees*
- *Heel to back of legs*
- *Military walk*

**Description:** Warming up with various activities giving opportunities to stretch the body and prepare itself for baseball practice.

## THROWING AND RECEIVING

### **ACTIVITY “HANDCUFFS” (7)**

[Click here](#) for video demonstration

**Description:** Athletes pair up with each other or with a coach. On signal, athletes take a proper grip on the ball.

**Equipment:** One ball for each pair

### **VARIATIONS AND PROGRESSION:**

- A. From a seated position, pick up the ball off the ground and throw it to a partner (or coach/parent helper)
- B. Make sure they're using the appropriate grip on the ball

## PRACTICE PLAN #2 LEVEL – ON DECK/HOME PLATE (continued)

### THROWING AND RECEIVING (continued)

#### ACTIVITY THE WHEEL (8)

[Click here](#) for video demonstration

**Description:** In pairs, the athletes play catch using proper throwing mechanics.

**Equipment:** One ball for each pair

#### VARIATIONS AND PROGRESSION:

- A. On both knees
- B. Athletes are executing on command:

#### KEY POINTS

- Throwing arm goes down
- Reach back
- Lift arm to shoulder height
- Appropriate arm action



## HITTING

#### ACTIVITY "T-BALL"

**Description:** With a partner or a coach/parent helper located to the side of the athlete, ask the athlete to hit the ball off a tee. Ensure the tee is placed in front of home plate and NOT on it. Teammates pick up the baseballs.

**Equipment:** Batting tee, various bats and balls

#### VARIATIONS AND PROGRESSION:

- A. Standard "t-ball"
- B. Three swings and hit

#### KEY POINTS

- Feet must be wider than shoulders
- Hands high and back
- Hands together on bat

## HITTING (continued)

### **ACTIVITY** "LIGHT TOSS" (21)

[Click here](#) for video demonstration

**Description:** Athletes can do this in pairs or in groups of three (each group needs 6-10 baseballs). Have a partner or a coach/parent helper located at 45 degrees beside the batter, simply ask the athlete to hit the ball from an underhand toss.

Have one coach/parent helper kneel in front and to the side of the batter and toss a ball with little or no arc in front of them.

After the batter has had 10-15 quality swings, get the athletes to switch. The pitcher should keep the delivery consistent so that batters can find their timing.

**Equipment:** Various bats and balls

### **VARIATIONS AND PROGRESSION:**

A. Standard T-Ball

### **KEY POINTS**

- Feet must be wider than shoulders
- Hands high and back
- Hands together on bat



# THROWING

## **ACTIVITY “THE NET” (9)**

[Click here](#) for video demonstration

**Description:** Divide the athletes into two equal groups on each side of the net.

Using soft balls and wiffle balls, ask athletes to pick up a ball off the ground and to throw it over the net. Both teams are throwing and receiving balls over the net for one minute before taking a break and then repeating the activity.

### **Equipment:**

- A minimum of six soft balls or wiffle balls
- One screen, fence or net

### **VARIATIONS AND PROGRESSION:**

- A. Athletes are located farther from the screen/fence/net

### **KEY POINTS**

- *Make sure the grip is appropriate*
- *Glove side foot forward when throwing*

A competition can be created where the goal is to send all balls to the other side.

## **ACTIVITY “THE RELAY” (11)**

[Click here](#) for video demonstration

**Description:** Split athletes into two groups (depending on the number of athletes). Each team forms a line. A hoola hoop filled with balls of different kinds is located 30 feet in front of each team, with two cones placed at 15 and 30 feet from the hoop.

On signal, one athlete goes to the hoop and from there tries to throw a ball towards each cone. Two throws are allowed. The athlete then returns to the line and the next athlete attempts the task.

### **Equipment:**

- Several balls (2 minimum)
- Two cones per team (4-6)
- 2-3 hoops

### **VARIATIONS AND PROGRESSION:**

Adjust distance depending on ability

- A. If athlete hits 1st cone, 1 point is awarded  
2nd cone = 3 points awarded  
First team to finish = 2 additional points
- B. Add various challenges. Example: between line and hoop
- C. Without cones and hoops, teams are in line. Athletes throw to a partner. First team to go all the way and back gets the point

## RECEIVING

### **ACTIVITY** CATCH THE BALL LIKE AN EGG (13)

[Click here](#) for video demonstration

**Description:** With a partner or a coach located in front of the athlete at six feet, throw the ball underhand to the athlete. Encourage athletes to catch the ball with two hands.

Place athletes opposite each other at six feet apart. With athletes on two knees, and bare handed, have them play catch throwing the ball under hand. For younger athletes, it is a good idea to match them with coaches or parent helpers.

A. On both knees, use foam balls

B. On both knees, use tennis balls

### **KEY POINTS**

- Reach out for the ball
- Bring hands toward the body when catching the ball

### **ACTIVITY** “THE CROCODILE” (14)

[Click here](#) for video demonstration

**Description:** Coach/parent helper instructs the athletes to simulate the proper way to receive a ground ball.

**Equipment:** Several types of balls (minimum one per athlete).

### **VARIATIONS AND PROGRESSION:**

A. Simulate receiving the ball

B. Coach rolls a ground ball

\*Do exercise with and without gloves

### **KEY POINTS**

- Always put hands out to simulate crocodile's mouth
- “Pet” the ball when receiving it
- Feet and hands form a triangle



## PRACTICE PLAN #3 LEVEL – ON DECK/HOME PLATE

**Required equipment:** TVB BALLS, various bats, various balls (baseball, wiffle balls, tennis, softballs, foam balls, large), t-ball, set of bases (minimum of four), hoola hoops.

# WARM-UP

## RUNNING DRILLS:

**Description:** All athletes are side by side on a line. Athletes do the exercises with 45 feet of running distance in front of them. “There and back.”

### VARIATIONS AND PROGRESSION:

- *Sitting, using only arms*
- *High knees*
- *Heel to back of legs*
- *Military walk*

**Description:** Warming up with various activities giving opportunities to stretch the body and prepare itself for baseball practice.

## THROWING AND RECEIVING

### ACTIVITY “HANDCUFFS” (7)

[Click here](#) for video demonstration

**Description:** Athletes pair up with each other or with a coach. On signal, athletes take a proper grip on the ball.

**Equipment:** One ball for each pair

### VARIATIONS AND PROGRESSION:

- A. From a seated position, pick up the ball off the ground and throw it to a partner (or coach/parent helper)
- B. Make sure they're using the appropriate grip on the ball

### ACTIVITY THE WHEEL (8)

[Click here](#) for video demonstration

**Description:** In pairs, the athletes play catch using proper throwing mechanics.

**Equipment:** One ball for each pair

### VARIATIONS AND PROGRESSION:

- A. On both knees
- B. Athletes are executing on command:

### KEY POINTS

- *Throwing arm goes down*
- *Reach back*
- *Lift arm to shoulder height*
- *Appropriate arm action*

### ACTIVITY “T-BALL”

**Description:** With a partner or a coach/parent helper located to the side of the athlete, ask the athlete to hit the ball off a tee. Ensure the tee is placed in front of home plate and NOT on it. Teammates pick up the baseballs.

**Equipment:** Batting tee, various bats and balls

### VARIATIONS AND PROGRESSION:

- A. Standard “t-ball”
- B. Hit the ball through a hoop

### KEY POINTS

- *Feet must be wider than shoulders*
- *Hands high and back*
- *Hands together on bat*



## BASERUNNING

### ACTIVITY “THE CHALLENGE”

**Description:** All athletes are at home plate. On their turn (after athlete in front has reached 1st base), athletes round the bases. Between each base, there is a challenge to perform.

**Equipment:** Set of bases (minimum four), various items for challenges

### CHALLENGE EXAMPLES:

- A. Backpedal
- B. Rounding cones
- C. Roll
- D. Jump between bats
- E. Under a bat on two cones
- F. Jump over a partner
- G. Shuffle steps or other running drills
- H. Batting tee
- I. Field a ball, throw to a coach/parent helper
- J. Other creative ideas

### KEY POINTS

- *More than one skill/task can be incorporated.*  
**BE CREATIVE**

### ACTIVITY “GOTCHA”

**Description:** Place 2-4 groups of athletes at each base or at home plate and 2nd base depending on numbers. Set up bases in diamond formation 20-30 feet apart.

On the signal ‘GO’, one player from each group starts running around the bases. The objective is to run passed the person ahead of you.

Score one point for your team for every athlete passed

Run for a set period of time (15-30 seconds).

**Equipment:** Set of bases (minimum of four)

### VARIATIONS AND PROGRESSION:

- A. Use parent helpers so athletes can try to pass them
- B. Backpedal

### KEY POINTS

- *AT ALL TIMES, athletes must touch all bases*

## RECEIVING

### ACTIVITY “SKY BALL” (15)

[Click here](#) for video demonstration

**Description:** One coach/parent helper for every two athletes. Athletes will practice using high tosses from a coach/parent helper. Self-competition can be included by:

- 1 Catching a higher thrown ball each time
- 2 Number of consecutive catches

**Equipment:** One badminton birdie per athlete

### VARIATIONS AND PROGRESSION:

- A. Standing alone, athletes toss a badminton birdie and let it bounce on their head
- B. Standing alone, athletes toss a badminton birdie and catch it with their hat.

### KEY POINTS

- Hands together, placed slightly above forehead

## THROWING

### ACTIVITY “THE TARGET” (10)

[Click here](#) for video demonstration

**Description:** While using proper throwing technique (giant step, arm action, and grip), the athlete tries to successfully reach a target from an appropriate distance.

Athletes are placed in 2-3 lines and throw one after the other. A parent helper, located behind the fence, returns the balls to the next athlete in line.

**Equipment:** Balls, targets (examples: can filled with water, basketball hoop or bullseye)

### VARIATIONS AND PROGRESSION:

- A. Change distance in relation to ability

### KEY POINTS

- Proper grip
- Glove side foot forward when throwing



## PRACTICE PLAN #4 LEVEL – ON DECK/HOME PLATE

**Required equipment:** TVB balls, various bats, various balls (baseball, wiffle balls, tennis, softballs, foam balls, large) batting tee, set of bases (minimum four), hoola hoops, cones.

# WARM-UP

## RUNNING DRILLS:

**Description:** All athletes are side by side on a line. Athletes do the exercises with 45 feet of running distance in front of them. "There and back."

### VARIATIONS AND PROGRESSION:

- A. Sitting, use only arms
- B. High knees
- C. Military walk

## WARM-UP:

**Description:** Warming up with various exercises giving opportunities to stretch the body and prepare itself for baseball practice.

## THROWING AND RECEIVING

### ACTIVITY "HANDCUFFS" (7)

[Click here](#) for video demonstration

**Description:** Athletes pair up with each other or with a coach. On signal, athletes take a proper grip on the ball.

**Equipment:** One ball for each pair

### VARIATIONS AND PROGRESSION:

- A. From a seated position, pick up the ball off the ground and throw it to a partner (or coach/parent helper)
- B. Make sure they're using the appropriate grip on the ball



# HITTING

## **ACTIVITY** “T-BALL”

**Description:** With a partner or a coach/parent helper located to the side of the athlete, ask the athlete to hit the ball off a tee. Ensure the tee is placed in front of home plate and NOT on it. Teammates pick up the baseballs.

**Equipment:** Batting tee, various bats and balls

**Bats:** Baseball, plastic, cut hockey stick, small, large

**Balls:** Baseball, wiffles, tennis, softballs, foam balls, large

## **VARIATIONS AND PROGRESSION:**

- A. Standard “t-ball”
- B. Hit the ball through a hoop
- C. Three swings and a hit

## **KEY POINTS**

- *Feet must be wider than shoulders*
- *Hands high and back*
- *Hands together on bat*



# BASERUNNING

## ACTIVITY “THE TRAIN” (25)

[Click here](#) for video demonstration

**Description:** Starting from home plate, athletes form a line and lightly jog around the bases, saying the name of the base as they touch it. Parent/guardians are encouraged to join in this activity!

**Equipment:** Set of bases (minimum of four)

### CHALLENGE EXAMPLES:

- A. Coach leads the line
- B. Individually, done while jogging
- C. Have athletes start at different bases
- D. Individually done by running, athlete goes around the bases (same as Hit, Run and Throw)

### KEY POINTS

- Athlete must learn to run the bases in the correct order
- Learn the name of each base

## ACTIVITY “THE CHALLENGE”

**Description:** All athletes are at home plate. On their turn (after athlete in front has reached 1st base), athletes round the bases. Between each base, there is a challenge to perform.

**Equipment:** Set of bases (minimum four), various items for challenges

### CHALLENGE EXAMPLES:

- A. Backpedal
- B. Rounding cones
- C. Roll
- D. Jump between bats
- E. Under a bat on two cones
- F. Jump over a partner
- G. Shuffle steps or other running drills
- H. Batting tee
- I. Field a ball, throw to a coach/parent helper
- J. Other creative ideas

### KEY POINTS

- More than one skill/task can be incorporated.
- BE CREATIVE**

## RECEIVING

### **ACTIVITY** CATCH THE BALL LIKE AN EGG (13)

[Click here](#) for video demonstration

**Description:** With a partner or a coach located in front of the athlete at six feet, throw the ball underhand to the athlete. Encourage athletes to catch the ball with two hands.

Place athletes opposite each other at 6 feet apart. With athletes on two knees, and bare handed, have them play catch throwing the ball under hand. For younger athletes, it is a good idea to match them with coaches or parent helpers.

- A. On both knees, use foam balls
- B. On both knees, use tennis balls



### **KEY POINTS**

- *Reach out for the ball*
- *Bring hands toward the body when catching the ball*

## GENERAL KNOWLEDGE

### ACTIVITY “AROUND THE HORN”

**Description:** Have the athletes stand in a circle. Use an odd number of athletes if necessary. The coach gives a ball to one athlete. On signal, the athlete throws the ball underhand to their teammate on their right. While throwing the ball, they must say the name of the teammate catching the ball.

**Equipment:** Ball (baseball)

Once the athletes become comfortable with one ball, the coach can add a second, third and fourth ball. See how many balls the athletes can handle at the same time.



### ACTIVITY “NAMES AND NUMBERS”

**Description:** Name each position and their number. Give each athlete a position name and instruct them to go to that position.

**Equipment:** Ball (baseball), bag/bucket

### VARIATIONS AND PROGRESSION:

- A. Start off the pitching mound
- B. Write position numbers on balls, place the balls in a bag/bucket; athletes pick a ball from the bag/bucket and take it to the corresponding position.

- 1 pitcher
- 2 catcher
- 3 first base
- 4 second base
- 5 third base
- 6 shortstop
- 7 left field
- 8 centrefield
- 9 right field

## PRACTICE PLAN #5 LEVEL – ON DECK/HOME PLATE

**Required equipment:** TVB balls, various bats, various balls (baseball, wiffle balls, tennis, softballs, foam balls, large) batting tee, set of bases (minimum four), hoola hoops, cones.

# WARM-UP

## RUNNING DRILLS:

**Description:** All athletes are side by side on a line. Athletes do the exercises with 45 feet of running distance in front of them. “There and back.”

### VARIATIONS AND PROGRESSION:

- A. Sitting, use only arms
- B. High knees
- C. Military walk

## WARM-UP:

**Description:** Warming up with various exercises giving opportunities to stretch the body and prepare itself for baseball practice.



## THROWING AND RECEIVING

### ACTIVITY THE WHEEL (8)

[Click here](#) for video demonstration

**Description:** In pairs, the athletes play catch using proper throwing mechanics.

**Equipment:** One ball for each pair

### VARIATIONS AND PROGRESSION:

- A. On both knees
- B. Athletes are executing on command:

### KEY POINTS

- *Throwing arm goes down*
- *Reach back*
- *Lift arm to shoulder height*
- *Appropriate arm action*

### ACTIVITY “HANDCUFFS” (7)

[Click here](#) for video demonstration

**Description:** Athletes pair up with each other or with a coach. On signal, athletes take a proper grip on the ball.

**Equipment:** One ball for each pair

### VARIATIONS AND PROGRESSION:

- A. From a seated position, pick up the ball off the ground and throw it to a partner (or coach/parent helper)
- B. Make sure they’re using the appropriate grip on the ball

## HITTING

### ACTIVITY “T-BALL”

**Description:** With a partner or a coach/parent helper located to the side of the athlete, ask the athlete to hit the ball off a tee. Ensure the tee is placed in front of home plate and NOT on it. Teammates pick up the baseballs.

**Equipment:** Batting tee, various bats and balls

### VARIATIONS AND PROGRESSION:

- A. Standard “t-ball”
- B. Hit the ball through a hoop

### KEY POINTS

- Feet must be wider than shoulders
- Hands high and back
- Hands together on bat



### ACTIVITY “DRILL WITH PITCHER”

**Description:** With a coach/parent helper located at 20 feet in front of the batter, toss the ball with both knees on the ground while asking the batter to hit the ball.

**Equipment:** Bats and balls

### Athletes are usually set up as follows:

- Two athletes hitting
- Two athletes stationed well behind batters to retrieve balls
- One athlete feeding balls to the coach
- Rest of athletes in the field (gathering balls)
- Athletes rotate (in pairs) from the field, to catching behind the batters, to hitting, and finally back to the field.
- After the coach/parent helper has thrown a ball to one batter, they immediately throw the next pitch to the other batter.
- Athletes rotate after each group has had 10-15 quality swings

### VARIATIONS AND PROGRESSION:

- A. Baseball bats, small balls
- B. Baseball bats, wiffle balls

### KEY POINTS

- Feet must be wider than shoulders
- Hands high and back
- Hands together on bat

# THROWING

## **ACTIVITY** “THE RELAY” (11)

[Click here](#) for video demonstration

**Description:** Split athletes into two groups (depending on the number of athletes). Each team forms a line. A hoola hoop filled with balls of different kinds is located 30 feet in front of each team, with two cones placed at 15 and 30 feet from the hoop.

On signal, one athlete goes to the hoop and from there tries to throw a ball towards each cone. Two throws are allowed. The athlete then returns to the line and the next athlete attempts the task.

### **Equipment:**

- Several balls (2 minimum)
- Two cones per team (4-6)
- 2-3 hoops

### **VARIATIONS AND PROGRESSION:**

Adjust distance depending on ability

- A. If athlete hits 1st cone, 1 point is awarded  
2nd cone = 3 points awarded  
First team to finish = 2 additional points
- B. Add various challenges. Example: between line and hoop
- C. Without cones and hoops, teams are in line. Athletes throw to a partner. First team to go all the way and back gets the point

## **ACTIVITY** “HOME RUN”

**Description:** Hang targets on a backstop or fence. Place one group of three athletes at each target. The closest line to the target is considered a single, the next closest a double, the next closest a triple, with the farthest line from the target being a Home Run. Distances can be adjusted, according to the ability of the athletes.

**Target:** Single, Double, Triple, Home Run

Athletes choose which distance they throw from in order to hit the target. Points are awarded as follows:

- 1 point = Single
- 2 points = Double
- 3 points = Triple
- 4 points = HOME RUN

See if each athlete can increase their points with each consecutive throw or turn the activity into a competition based on the total number of points made in each group.

### **KEY POINTS**

- *Place 2-3 fingers on the ball, without paying attention to the seams.*
- *Hold the ball with fingers instead of palm of hand*
- *Step forward and towards target on each throw*



## RECEIVING

### ACTIVITY “SKY BALL” (15)

[Click here](#) for video demonstration

**Description:** One coach/parent helper for every two athletes. Athletes will practice using high tosses from a coach/parent helper. Self-competition can be included by:

**3** Catching a higher thrown ball each time

**4** Number of consecutive catches

**Equipment:** One badminton birdie per athlete

### VARIATIONS AND PROGRESSION:

- C. Standing alone, athletes toss a badminton birdie and let it bounce on their head
- D. Standing alone, athletes toss a badminton birdie and catch it with their hat.

### KEY POINTS

- Hands together, placed slightly above forehead

## THROWING

### ACTIVITY THE GUARDIAN (16)

[Click here](#) for video demonstration

**Goal:** Teach athletes a safe way to field a ground ball

**Description:** In pairs or with a coach/parent helper, athletes practice fielding the ball with one knee down

**Equipment:** Balls

### VARIATIONS AND PROGRESSION:

- A. The coach rolls a ball and the athletes field the ball
- B. The coach rolls the ball, the athletes field and throw the ball

### KEY POINTS

- Put one knee on the ground
- Upper body must be behind the ball
- Always face the ball



## PRACTICE PLAN #6 LEVEL – ON DECK/HOME PLATE

**Required equipment:** TVB balls, various bats, various balls (baseball, wiffle balls, tennis, softballs, foam balls, large), t-ball, set of bases (minimum of four)

# WARM-UP

## RUNNING DRILLS:

**Description:** All athletes are side by side on a line. Athletes do the exercises with 45 feet of running distance in front of them. “There and back.”

### **VARIATIONS AND PROGRESSION:**

- A. Military walk
- B. Shuffle steps
- C. Spring, baseball start
- D. Backpedal run

## WARM-UP:

**Description:** Warming up with various exercises giving opportunities to stretch the body and prepare itself for baseball practice.

## THROWING AND RECEIVING

### **ACTIVITY THE WHEEL (8)**

[Click here](#) for video demonstration

**Description:** In pairs, the athletes play catch using proper throwing mechanics.

**Equipment:** One ball for each pair

### **VARIATIONS AND PROGRESSION:**

- A. Athletes simulate the mechanics without a ball
- B. Athletes sit with legs crossed
- C. On both knees
- D. Athletes are executing on command:

### **KEY POINTS**

- *Throwing arm goes down*
- *Reach back*
- *Lift arm to shoulder height*
- *Appropriate arm action*



# HITTING

## **ACTIVITY “T-BALL”**

**Description:** With a partner or a coach/parent helper located to the side of the athlete, ask the athlete to hit the ball off a tee. Ensure the tee is placed in front of home plate and NOT on it. Teammates pick up the baseballs.

**Equipment:** Batting tee, various bats and balls

### **VARIATIONS AND PROGRESSION:**

- A. Standard “t-ball”
- B. Hit the ball through a hoop

### **KEY POINTS**

- Feet must be wider than shoulders
- Hands high and back
- Hands together on bat

## **ACTIVITY “DRILL WITH PITCHER”**

**Description:** With a coach/parent helper located at 20 feet in front of the batter, toss the ball with both knees on the ground while asking the batter to hit the ball.

**Equipment:** Bats and balls

### **Athletes are usually set up as follows:**

- Two athletes hitting
- Two athletes stationed well behind batters to retrieve balls
- One athlete feeding balls to the coach
- Rest of athletes in the field (gathering balls)
- Athletes rotate (in pairs) from the field, to catching behind the batters, to hitting, and finally back to the field.
- After the coach/parent helper has thrown a ball to one batter, they immediately throw the next pitch to the other batter.
- Athletes rotate after each group has had 10-15 quality swings

### **VARIATIONS AND PROGRESSION:**

- A. Baseball bats, small balls
- B. Baseball bats, wiffle balls

### **KEY POINTS**

- Feet must be wider than shoulders
- Hands high and back
- Hands together on bat

## BASERUNNING

### ACTIVITY “THE CHALLENGE”

**Description:** All athletes are at home plate. On their turn (after athlete in front has reached 1st base), athletes round the bases. Between each base, there is a challenge to perform.

**Equipment:** Set of bases (minimum four), various items for challenges

### CHALLENGE EXAMPLES:

- A. Backpedal
- B. Rounding cones
- C. Roll
- D. Jump between bats
- E. Under a bat on two cones
- F. Jump over a partner
- G. Shuffle steps or other running drills
- H. Batting tee
- I. Field a ball, throw to a coach/parent helper
- J. Other creative ideas

### KEY POINTS

- *More than one skill/task can be incorporated.*  
**BE CREATIVE**

### ACTIVITY “GOTCHA”

**Description:** Place 2-4 groups of athletes at each base or at home plate and 2nd base depending on numbers. Set up bases in diamond formation 20-30 feet apart.

On the signal ‘GO’, one player from each group starts running around the bases. The objective is to run passed the person ahead of you.

Score one point for your team for every athlete passed

Run for a set period of time (15-30 seconds).

**Equipment:** Set of bases (minimum of four)

### VARIATIONS AND PROGRESSION:

- A. Use parent helpers so athletes can try to pass them
- B. Backpedal

### KEY POINTS

- *AT ALL TIMES, athletes must touch all bases*



## RECEIVING

### **ACTIVITY** “THE CROCODILE” (14)

[Click here](#) for video demonstration

**Description:** Coach/parent helper instructs the athletes to simulate the proper way to receive a ground ball.

**Equipment:** Several types of balls (minimum one per athlete).

### **VARIATIONS AND PROGRESSION:**

- A. Simulate receiving the ball
- B. Coach rolls a ground ball

\*Do exercise with and without gloves

### **KEY POINTS**

- *Always put hands out to simulate crocodile's mouth*
- *“Pet” the ball when receiving it*
- *Feet and hands form a triangle*



## PRACTICE PLAN #7 LEVEL – ON DECK/HOME PLATE

**Required equipment:** TVB balls, various bats, various balls (baseball, wiffle balls, tennis, softballs, foam balls, large), t-ball, set of bases (minimum of four)

# WARM-UP

## RUNNING DRILLS:

**Description:** All athletes are side by side on a line. Athletes do the exercises with 45 feet of running distance in front of them. “There and back.”

### **VARIATIONS AND PROGRESSION:**

- D. Sitting, use only arms
- E. High knees
- F. Military walk

## WARM-UP:

**Description:** Warming up with various exercises giving opportunities to stretch the body and prepare itself for baseball practice.



## THROWING AND RECEIVING

### **ACTIVITY “HANDCUFFS” (7)**

[Click here](#) for video demonstration

**Description:** Athletes pair up with each other or with a coach. On signal, athletes take a proper grip on the ball.

**Equipment:** One ball for each pair

### **VARIATIONS AND PROGRESSION:**

- A. From a seated position, pick up the ball off the ground and throw it to a partner (or coach/parent helper)
- B. Make sure they’re using the appropriate grip on the ball

# THROWING

## **ACTIVITY** THE WHEEL (8)

[Click here](#) for video demonstration

**Description:** In pairs, the athletes play catch using proper throwing mechanics.

**Equipment:** One ball for each pair

## **VARIATIONS AND PROGRESSION:**

- A. On both knees
- B. Athletes are executing on command:



## **KEY POINTS**

- *Throwing arm goes down*
- *Reach back*
- *Lift arm to shoulder height*
- *Appropriate arm action*

# HITTING

## ACTIVITY “T-BALL”

**Description:** With a partner or a coach/parent helper located to the side of the athlete, ask the athlete to hit the ball off a tee. Ensure the tee is placed in front of home plate and NOT on it. Teammates pick up the baseballs.

**Equipment:** Batting tee, various bats and balls

### VARIATIONS AND PROGRESSION:

- A. Standard “t-ball”
- B. Hit the ball through a hoop

### KEY POINTS

- Feet must be wider than shoulders
- Hands high and back
- Hands together on bat



## ACTIVITY “PRACTICE WITH TENNIS RACQUET” (23)

[Click here](#) for video demonstration

**Description:** With a coach/parent helper standing in front of the athlete at 30 feet and throwing overhand, simply ask the athlete to hit the ball with a tennis racquet.

**Equipment:** Tennis racquet and tennis balls

### Athletes are usually set up as follows:

- Two athletes hitting
- Two athletes catching behind the batters from a safe distance
- One athlete feeding balls to the coach
- Rest of athletes in the field gathering balls
- Athletes rotate (in pairs) from the field, to catching behind the batters to hitting, and finally back to the field.

After the coach has thrown a ball to one batter, they immediately throw the next pitch to the other batter. Athletes rotate after each group has had 10-15 quality swings

## BASERUNNING

### **ACTIVITY** “BASEBALL TAG”

**Description:** Arrange hoops behind 1st base and home plate, and on 2nd and 3rd base. One or some athletes are “it”. Athletes have to reach the next base while following the basepaths. Athlete(s) who are “it” must leave the mound to tag teammates.

**Equipment:** Set of bases (4) and hoola hoops (4)

### **VARIATIONS AND PROGRESSION:**

- A. Ask parents/guardians to participate

### **KEY POINTS**

- *Explain the ability to run passed 1st base and home plate*
- *Make sure to avoid too many athletes at each base*



## THROWING

### **ACTIVITY “THE TARGET” (10)**

[Click here](#) for video demonstration

**Description:** While using proper throwing technique (giant step, arm action, and grip), the athlete tries to successfully reach a target from an appropriate distance.

Athletes are placed in 2-3 lines and throw one after the other. A parent helper, located behind the fence, returns the balls to the next athlete in line.

**Equipment:** Balls, targets (examples: can filled with water, basketball hoop or bullseye)

### **VARIATIONS AND PROGRESSION:**

- A. Change distance in relation to ability

### **KEY POINTS**

- Proper grip
- Glove side foot forward when throwing

### **ACTIVITY “THE RELAY” (11)**

[Click here](#) for video demonstration

**Description:** Split athletes into two groups (depending on the number of athletes). Each team forms a line. A hoola hoop filled with balls of different kinds is located 30 feet in front of each team, with two cones placed at 15 and 30 feet from the hoop.

On signal, one athlete goes to the hoop and from there tries to throw a ball towards each cone. Two throws are allowed. The athlete then returns to the line and the next athlete attempts the task.

### **Equipment:**

- Several balls (2 minimum)
- Two cones per team (4-6)
- 2-3 hoops

### **VARIATIONS AND PROGRESSION:**

Adjust distance depending on ability

- A. If athlete hits 1st cone, 1 point is awarded  
2nd cone = 3 points awarded  
First team to finish = 2 additional points
- B. Add various challenges. Example: between line and hoop
- C. Without cones and hoops, teams are in line. Athletes throw to a partner. First team to go all the way and back gets the point

## PRACTICE PLAN #8 LEVEL – ON DECK/HOME PLATE

**Required equipment:** TVB balls, various bats, various balls (baseball, wiffle balls, tennis, softballs, foam balls, large), t-ball, set of bases (minimum of four)

# WARM-UP

## RUNNING DRILLS:

**Description:** All athletes are side by side on a line. Athletes do the exercises with 45 feet of running distance in front of them. “There and back.”

### **VARIATIONS AND PROGRESSION:**

- A. Sitting, use only arms
- B. High knees
- C. Military walk

## WARM-UP:

**Description:** Warming up with various exercises giving opportunities to stretch the body and prepare itself for baseball practice.



## THROWING AND RECEIVING

### **ACTIVITY “HANDCUFFS” (7)**

[Click here](#) for video demonstration

**Description:** Athletes pair up with each other or with a coach. On signal, athletes take a proper grip on the ball.

**Equipment:** One ball for each pair

### **VARIATIONS AND PROGRESSION:**

- A. From a seated position, pick up the ball off the ground and throw it to a partner (or coach/parent helper)
- B. Make sure they’re using the appropriate grip on the ball

## THROWING AND RECEIVING (continued)

### ACTIVITY THE WHEEL (8)

[Click here](#) for video demonstration

**Description:** In pairs, the athletes play catch using proper throwing mechanics.

**Equipment:** One ball for each pair

### VARIATIONS AND PROGRESSION:

- A. On both knees
- B. Athletes are executing on command:

### KEY POINTS

- Throwing arm goes down
- Reach back
- Lift arm to shoulder height
- Appropriate arm action

## HITTING

### ACTIVITY "T-BALL"

**Description:** With a partner or a coach/parent helper located to the side of the athlete, ask the athlete to hit the ball off a tee. Ensure the tee is placed in front of home plate and NOT on it. Teammates pick up the baseballs.

**Equipment:** Batting tee, various bats and balls

### VARIATIONS AND PROGRESSION:

- A. Standard "t-ball"
- B. Hit the ball through a hoop

### KEY POINTS

- Feet must be wider than shoulders
- Hands high and back
- Hands together on bat

## HITTING (continued)

### ACTIVITY “DRILL WITH PITCHER”

**Description:** With a coach/parent helper located at 20 feet in front of the batter, toss the ball with both knees on the ground while asking the batter to hit the ball.

**Equipment:** Bats and balls

#### Athletes are usually set up as follows:

- Two athletes hitting
- Two athletes stationed well behind batters to retrieve balls
- One athlete feeding balls to the coach
- Rest of athletes in the field (gathering balls)
- Athletes rotate (in pairs) from the field, to catching behind the batters, to hitting, and finally back to the field.
- After the coach/parent helper has thrown a ball to one batter, they immediately throw the next pitch to the other batter.
- Athletes rotate after each group has had 10-15 quality swings

#### VARIATIONS AND PROGRESSION:

- A. Baseball bats, small balls
- B. Baseball bats, wiffle balls

#### KEY POINTS

- Feet must be wider than shoulders
- Hands high and back
- Hands together on bat



## THROWING

### ACTIVITY “THE NET” (9)

[Click here](#) for video demonstration

**Description:** Divide the athletes into two equal groups on each side of the net.

Using soft balls and wiffle balls, ask athletes to pick up a ball off the ground and to throw it over the net. Both teams are throwing and receiving balls over the net for one minute before taking a break and then repeating the activity.

#### Equipment:

- A minimum of six soft balls or wiffle balls
- One screen, fence or net

#### VARIATIONS AND PROGRESSION:

- A. Athletes are located farther from the screen/fence/net

#### KEY POINTS

- *Make sure the grip is appropriate*
- *Glove side foot forward when throwing*

*A competition can be created where the goal is to send all balls to the other side.*

## RECEIVING

### ACTIVITY “BIG FOOT”

**Description:** Partners start in lines, facing each other, approximately 10 feet apart. One coach/parent helper per pair. Athletes throw to each other (or coach/parent helper throws if skill level is too low for accurate throws). Each time a catch is made the partners move back one giant step.

The pair that ends up the farthest apart while still able to catch the ball is given the BIG FOOT AWARD.

**Equipment:** One ball for every two athletes

#### VARIATIONS AND PROGRESSION:

- A. Use different types of balls (tennis, incrediball, baseball, wiffle) depending on ability.



## GAME & GENERAL KNOWLEDGE

### **ACTIVITY** "OUT"

**Goal:** Explain to athletes how to make an out

**Description:** Play a mini game and instruct athletes to touch the runners to make an out

### **VARIATIONS AND PROGRESSION:**

- A. Make two teams and play mini-games using only one base
- B. Play a mini-game using four bases
- C. Rotate the teams to change the learning environment

### **KEY POINTS**

- *Touch the runner with the ball before the runner touches the base*



## PRACTICE PLAN #9 LEVEL – ON DECK/HOME PLATE

**Required equipment:** TVB balls, various bats, various balls \*baseball, wiffle balls, tennis, softballs, foam balls, batting tee, set of bases (minimum of four)

# WARM-UP

## RUNNING DRILLS:

**Description:** All athletes are side by side on a line. Athletes do the exercises with 45 feet of running distance in front of them. “There and back.”

### VARIATIONS AND PROGRESSION:

- D. Sitting, use only arms
- E. High knees
- F. Military walk

## WARM-UP:

**Description:** Warming up with various exercises giving opportunities to stretch the body and prepare itself for baseball practice.

## THROWING AND RECEIVING

### ACTIVITY “HANDCUFFS” (7)

[Click here](#) for video demonstration

**Description:** Athletes pair up with each other or with a coach. On signal, athletes take a proper grip on the ball.

**Equipment:** One ball for each pair

### VARIATIONS AND PROGRESSION:

- A. From a seated position, pick up the ball off the ground and throw it to a partner (or coach/parent helper)
- B. Make sure they’re using the appropriate grip on the ball

### ACTIVITY THE WHEEL (8)

[Click here](#) for video demonstration

**Description:** In pairs, the athletes play catch using proper throwing mechanics.

**Equipment:** One ball for each pair

### VARIATIONS AND PROGRESSION:

- A. On both knees
- B. Athletes are executing on command:

### KEY POINTS

- Throwing arm goes down
- Reach back
- Lift arm to shoulder height
- Appropriate arm action



## HITTING

### ACTIVITY “T-BALL”

**Description:** With a partner or a coach/parent helper located to the side of the athlete, ask the athlete to hit the ball off a tee. Ensure the tee is placed in front of home plate and NOT on it. Teammates pick up the baseballs.

**Equipment:** Batting tee, various bats and balls

### VARIATIONS AND PROGRESSION:

- A. Standard “t-ball”
- B. Hit the ball through a hoop

### KEY POINTS

- Feet must be wider than shoulders
- Hands high and back
- Hands together on bat



### ACTIVITY “WIFFLE BP” (22)

[Click here](#) for video demonstration

**Description:** With a coach/parent helper standing in front of the athlete at 20 feet and throwing, simply ask the athlete to hit the ball.

**Equipment:** Various bats and balls (wiffle balls)

### Athletes are usually set up as follows:

- Two athletes hitting
- Two athletes receiving behind the batters at a safe distance
- One athlete feeding balls to the coach
- Rest of the athletes in the field (gathering balls)

After the coach has thrown a ball to one batter, they immediately throw the next pitch to the other batter.

Athletes rotate after each group has had 10-15 quality swings.

### KEY POINTS

- Feet must be wider than shoulders
- Hands high and back
- Hands together on bat

## BASERUNNING

### **ACTIVITY** "GIMME 5"

**Description:** Arrange bases 30-40 feet from athletes; four groups of three. Athletes, in turn, take a swing at an imaginary ball, drop bat, run as fast as possible passed their base, give the coach a 'high five', and return to the base as if running to second.

**Equipment:** Set of four bases, two bats

### **VARIATIONS AND PROGRESSION:**

- A. Simulate a swing with a plastic or aluminum bat
- B. Hit a tossed wiffle ball

### **KEY POINTS**

- *Make sure athletes are running full speed across the bag, slowing down only after touching it*



## GENERAL KNOWLEDGE

### ACTIVITY “AROUND THE HORN”

**Description:** Have the athletes stand in a circle. Use an odd number of athletes if necessary. The coach gives a ball to one athlete. On signal, the athlete throws the ball underhand to their teammate on their right. While throwing the ball, they must say the name of the teammate catching the ball.

**Equipment:** Ball (baseball)

Once the athletes become comfortable with one ball, the coach can add a second, third and fourth ball. See how many balls the athletes can handle at the same time.



### ACTIVITY “NAMES AND NUMBERS”

**Description:** Name each position and their number. Give each athlete a position name and instruct them to go to that position.

**Equipment:** Ball (baseball), bag/bucket

### VARIATIONS AND PROGRESSION:

- A. Start off the pitching mound
- B. Write position numbers on balls, place the balls in a bag/bucket; athletes pick a ball from the bag/bucket and take it to the corresponding position.

- 1 pitcher
- 2 catcher
- 3 first base
- 4 second base
- 5 third base
- 6 shortstop
- 7 left field
- 8 centrefield
- 9 right field

## GENERAL KNOWLEDGE (continued)

### ACTIVITY “OUT”

**Goal:** Explain to athletes how to make an out

**Description:** Play a mini game and instruct athletes to touch the runners to make an out

### VARIATIONS AND PROGRESSION:

- A. Make two teams and play mini-games using only one base
- B. Play a mini-game using four bases
- C. Rotate the teams to change the learning environment



### KEY POINTS

- *Touch the runner with the ball before the runner touches the base*

## PRACTICE PLAN #10 LEVEL – ON DECK/HOME PLATE

**Required equipment:** TVB balls, various bats, various balls \*baseball, wiffle balls, tennis, softballs, foam balls, large), t-ball, set of bases (minimum of four)

# WARM-UP

## RUNNING DRILLS:

**Description:** All athletes are side by side on a line. Athletes do the exercises with 45 feet of running distance in front of them. “There and back.”

### VARIATIONS AND PROGRESSION:

- A. Shuffle steps
- B. Cross steps, front and back
- C. Football sprint
- D. Sprint, baseball start

## WARM-UP:

**Description:** Warming up with various exercises giving opportunities to stretch the body and prepare itself for baseball practice.

## THROWING AND RECEIVING

### ACTIVITY “HANDCUFFS” (7)

[Click here](#) for video demonstration

**Description:** Athletes pair up with each other or with a coach. On signal, athletes take a proper grip on the ball.

**Equipment:** One ball for each pair

### VARIATIONS AND PROGRESSION:

- A. From a seated position, pick up the ball off the ground and throw it to a partner (or coach/parent helper)
- B. Make sure they’re using the appropriate grip on the ball

### ACTIVITY THE WHEEL (8)

[Click here](#) for video demonstration

**Description:** In pairs, the athletes play catch using proper throwing mechanics.

**Equipment:** One ball for each pair

### VARIATIONS AND PROGRESSION:

- A. On both knees
- B. Athletes are executing on command:

### KEY POINTS

- Throwing arm goes down
- Reach back
- Lift arm to shoulder height
- Appropriate arm action

# HITTING

## **ACTIVITY** “DRILL WITH PITCHER”

**Description:** With a coach/parent helper located at 20 feet in front of the batter, toss the ball with both knees on the ground while asking the batter to hit the ball.

**Equipment:** Bats and balls

### **Athletes are usually set up as follows:**

- Two athletes hitting
- Two athletes stationed well behind batters to retrieve balls
- One athlete feeding balls to the coach
- Rest of athletes in the field (gathering balls)
- Athletes rotate (in pairs) from the field, to catching behind the batters, to hitting, and finally back to the field.
- After the coach/parent helper has thrown a ball to one batter, they immediately throw the next pitch to the other batter.
- Athletes rotate after each group has had 10-15 quality swings

### **VARIATIONS AND PROGRESSION:**

- A. Baseball bats, small balls
- B. Baseball bats, wiffle balls

### **KEY POINTS**

- *Feet must be wider than shoulders*
- *Hands high and back*
- *Hands together on bat*



## GAME & GENERAL KNOWLEDGE

### **ACTIVITY** “BUCKET BALL”

**Goal:** Throwing, fielding, BASE RUNNING, cooperation, and teamwork

**Equipment:** Two balls, Four bases, helmets, bucket or bag

**Description:** Two teams of six – one on offence – one on defense. The defensive team has a catcher at home plate and the other athletes at appropriate positions. The offensive team has one athlete throw from home plate and the other athletes awaiting their turn from a safe distance.

**Activity:** Offensive ‘batter’ throws out two balls at one time in quick succession and runs around the bases trying to make it home before the fielding team gets both balls in a bucket/bag.

If the ball is caught, the batter is out.

Fielders may NOT run with the ball. The ball must be thrown home. Relay the ball if necessary.

Remind athletes to make sure the catcher is looking; A coach/parent helper should be positioned in the home plate area.

### **VARIATIONS AND PROGRESSION:**

- A. Batter throws two balls
- B. Batter hits two balls

