

In-house Team Practice Plans

(Could use this plan for the first two practices – modify/shorten for the third practice and finish with scrimmage with other team for that third practice)

6:00 – meet the players and parents on your team; hand out caps, T-shirts, Dine & Discount Card, and any other necessary info (schedules/expectations – parents should let coaches know when their child is not going to be at practice – could include game/intro letter/contact info)

- Have players introduce themselves and their parent/family + what school they go to/grade, when is their birthday, favorite food, nicknames, etc./whatever in team circle – get to know them a bit – have some fun interaction

6:15-7:00: “Visiting” team has infield and “Home” team has the outfield space (see Infield 45-minute Practice below)

(Could have water break in-between!)

7:00-7:45: “Home” team has infield and “Visiting” team has the outfield space (see Outfield 45-minute Practice below)

7:45-7:55: Play “pickle in the middle” – set up groups of 3 (or 4 = 2 runners) – use softie balls if you can – and/or be sure the runners have helmets on . . . encourage them to play this game at home!

7:55: Circle up/announcements = “1-2-3 SABERS!” and all give high 5’s to each other!

Outfield 45-minute Practice:

5 minutes – **Form running:** jog, high knees, butt kickers, shuffles, drop step and run looking over shoulder for “fly ball”, “steal” a base (leave at crack of the bat = clap hands)

15 minutes – Throwing Mechanics

- Wrist flicks (on throwing knee) – check grip of the ball in hand
- L’s (on throwing knee)
- T’s (on throwing knee)
- Stride out (stand up and be sure their feet are set)
- Catch (throw inside the diamond = top of head, both shoulders, belly-button)
- Hat drill (“long toss” – put their hat down 5 feet in front of them and throw trying to hit their partner’s cap) – they should be at least 60 feet apart . . . test their arms
- Hot potato (close range = 10-15 feet apart, in and out of their glove to partner as quick as they can)
- V-tags (still a hot potato but add tagging the runner)

(Outfield 45-minute Practice continued)

Three Stations with three coaches (about 10 minutes each)

- **Outfield Drills (assign coach)**
 - Normal pop up = two hands, above the shoulders, throwing hand side, moving forward (ideal technique) crow hop and throw to coach/cut off man!
 - Pop up to their left (emphasize running normal to the location and THEN raise the glove to catch it)
 - Pop up to their right (ditto)
 - Post patterns (QB/WR) and/or three-ball drill (zig-zag back = left – right – left = catch ball and drop at the spot with partner following to pick up balls – drop step and work your way back = each catch about 10-15 feet over the next shoulder)
- **Hitting/soft toss (assign coach)**
 - “Athletic” stance – widen feet, bend hinges, be athletic – see Hitting Power Point on Coaches’ Corner for techniques
 - Trigger, stride, power position (hands and hips! = squash the bug with back foot), balance/ “Mike to Ike” = chin to shoulder = head down – this is the vocabulary we use
- **Pitching Mechanics/Catching stance – catch pitchers (assign coach)**
 - Proper wind-up technique
 - Deep breath, focus on target, feet just in front of pitcher’s plate, small step back with opposite foot of throwing hand/side hands together go up just under eyes
 - Slide foot IN FRONT of pitcher’s plate (could use cap/extra equipment/whatever) and balance – turn front shoulder to catcher – front knee up to waist, toe pointed down under knee, hands under chin
 - Separate hands down, back, and up (T position – all in straight line to catcher)
 - Push off back foot and extend to home plate on throw
 - Follow through in ready position to field
 - Throw sets of 10 pitches to partner and keep track of total strikes – technique over velocity = throw strikes!!!

Infield 45-minute Practice:

Three stations with three coaches (about 5-10 minutes each)

- **Baserunning**
 - Running from home to 1B on IF ground ball = run through the base!
 - Running from home to 1B on single = round the base and look for ball to be thrown to cutoff
- **Infield Fielding (foul territory between home and 3B)**
 - Perfect fielding position
 - Top Hand Alligator
 - 1-2 field, 1-2 throwing position/balls to left – right
- **Fungos (shortstop area)**
 - Coach hits grounders to players at SS – could flip to 2B

Last 15-20 minutes of infield time: Situation Fungos

- Half the players play the IF positions plus pitcher and catcher; the other half put on helmets and run the bases (live) – they work on running the bases while fielders make the plays at bases.
- Coach hits grounders to IF – runners run live - IF make the plays – keep track of outs (once they have 3 outs – or 6 outs if quick, switch hitters and defense) – other coaches help with the outs/situations/runners/fielders/chatter –where they go with the ball; kids involved in chatter!