



# Georgia Elite Baseball Academy










## (7) Factors That Matter More Than You Think in Baseball Tryouts

Tryouts for youth baseball — or any sport for that matter — are very stressful for both parents and players. Coaches analyze every move the players make, marking down notes that will determine if they are selected to make the team.

To be honest tryouts are imperfect. They typically consist of simple drills for speed, hitting, fielding and pitching. It's often very difficult to separate one player from another based on such a small sample size. Many parents will prepare their players for these drills. But what most parents don't realize is that coaches watch for far more than technical skills between the lines.

Coaches understand the value of players being good team members as well as having the ability to hit, throw and field. They also know the importance of good team parents. Therefore, coaches will chart the basics, but also keep notes on things that kids and parents do when they think the coach isn't looking. Parents and players should expect that coaches will be assessing the parents and other aspects of the player and prepare accordingly. Not understanding and preparing for these areas could be harming the player's opportunity.

Let's take a look at (7) factors that matter more than you think in baseball tryouts.

-  ***Warm-ups***
-  ***Appearance and Equipment***
-  ***Obnoxious Parents***
-  ***Goofing Off***
-  ***Ridiculing Others***
-  ***Showboating***
-  ***Showing Up and Leaving On Time***



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### **1. Warm-ups:**

Tryouts haven't yet begun, and your child is warming up with his friend. Coaches are watching closely to see if he has a good process? Does he warm-up well, or does he warm up lazily? Coaches often decide whether a player will be selected before tryouts even begin based on how he warms-up. Make sure your child takes this time seriously.

### **2. Appearance and Equipment:**

This sounds cruel, but appearances matter. Does your child actually look like a baseball player? Understand, this doesn't mean I'm downgrading the small kids versus the big kids. It doesn't mean they need to have all of the greatest, most expensive equipment. These things are not what I'm referring to. But I've seen kids show up to tryouts in jeans and no baseball cap. That tells me baseball just isn't that important to them. Also, if they think they are a catcher, do they have catcher's gear? Did they come properly equipped, or do they need to borrow a friend's gear to participate?

### **3. Obnoxious Parents:**

Parents, I know you mean well. But you are killing your kid's chances. When a coach adds a player to a team, he adds his parents, too. And while one bad kid can certainly make my life difficult, a bad parent may be even more damaging. Once the tryouts begin, give your child a comforting hug and wish them good luck. You've prepared them until now, but this is the time to let them show what they can do without you. If you are loud and critical during tryouts, I know you will be worse during games. Please keep quiet. Believe it or not, being too supportive can be an issue as well. They made a nice catch, that's great. But reserve your celebration during tryouts. The "that's my kid!" parent is also one who often doesn't see their child's flaws and will be first to get upset about playing time.



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### 4. Goofing Off:

Coaches expect kids will behave as kids. But I also want the players who take this seriously. Your player didn't notice, but when he was being loud and distracting while others were hitting, I checked out the number on his back and made a note of it not to draft him. I'd also include the ability to follow instructions here. If a player isn't well behaved and doesn't follow instructions well during a tryout, a coach can expect it will be infinitely worse during a practice or game situation. Coaching kids is a lot of work. That work multiplies with poorly behaved kids, and sometimes we can see these things during the tryouts and save ourselves some unnecessary stress.

### 5. Ridiculing Others:

If you want your child to be immediately removed from consideration, allow them to laugh at others who aren't performing well in their tryout. Coaches want nothing to do with this player on his team. Players with bad attitudes often out themselves. They can't help but make that rude or offensive remark. That just makes the coach's job of assembling a team easier. **DO SELECT THAT PLAYER!**

### 6. Showboating:

Coaches need your child to show that talent. But this can be taken too far. For instance...Coaches have removed kids from their list who at the age of nine felt it necessary — at an obnoxious parent's urging — to hit from both sides of the plate. You are not helping your player. Don't do this.

I'm sure your kid is an amazing hitter, and it sure is spectacular that they can already hit from both sides of the plate at the age of nine. But you know what? There is absolutely no advantage to that at a young age. Will your kid be seeing sliders at the age of nine? If so, that's when it helps to hit from the other side that is opposite of the pitcher. Otherwise, feel free to practice it, but this doesn't help you in tryouts.



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### **6. Showboating (Cont'd):**

Also, since it's highly unlikely your child hits equally well from both sides of the plate at a young age, you are only exposing a weakness. There is no benefit to hitting them from both sides until they get older, so why should I care if they can do it now? As a coach, I want you to hit as well from one side of the plate.

***NOTE: Obviously switch hitting can be a benefit for older kids, but make sure they are actually exceptional hitters from both sides before doing this in a tryout.***

### **7. Showing Up and Leaving on Time:**

This one isn't necessarily fair, but it sends a bad message if you show up late to tryouts or have to leave early. This tryout is an important part of your baseball future, and if you don't take it seriously why should a coach draft that player?

This is a commitment for everyone — the coaches, parents and players. I want the kid who shows up early and stays until the end. The kid who shows up late or leaves early is likely to be the same kid I can't count on to show up to games or practices.

### **In Summary:**

I'm actually a bit hesitant to share these secrets because it's helpful that most families ignore them. It makes separating the players coaches want to draft from those they don't much easier. But you and your child can also make well-meaning mistakes, giving a coach a bad impression of an otherwise good kid. And this is what I want to help prevent.