

INTRODUCTION – HOW TO USE THIS BOOK!

To be a successful Tee Ball coach, you need to mix skill development with fun. Since these are kids that are generally between the ages of 4 and 7 years old, they aren't necessarily looking for hard skill development.

This is a time to help them learn the fundamentals but also develop a sense of fun and enjoyment for the game of baseball.

This book is designed to help you with your Tee Ball practices by outlining 36 Tee Ball drills and games that will build fundamental skills, while also fostering the fun and excitement associated with playing the game.

To help use your field time more efficiently, we've also included 10 pre-designed practice plans, showing you - minute by minute - exactly what drills to run.

The drills will be divided into three main areas:

1. **Hitting Drills** - which will cover the basic fundamentals of the swing
2. **Throwing, Catching and Fielding Drills** - which will teach the basic fundamentals of defense
3. **Game Play Drills** - which will help teach the rules of the game and prepare your kids for live competition

In each section, the drills will progress from very basic to more advanced.

Each drill is broken down into four sections:

- a) **Purpose:** the goal of the drill and the skills we are trying to teach
- b) **What You Need:** the number of players, coaches, and equipment required
- c) **How The Drill Works:** step by step instructions to run the drill
- d) **Result:** what you should expect to accomplish by using the drill

When you get to the **Practice Plans**, feel free to use them exactly as designed. Or mix and match your own drills using the blank practice plan template provided.

NOTE: if you would like to see more drills, explained on video with step by step instructions, you can upgrade to the Platinum Video Package at a heavily discounted rate.

Go here now for more info:

www.tee-ball-drills.com/upgrade-tbss

Now let's get started!

PART 1: HITTING DRILLS

1.1 BELT BUCKLE BATTING

Purpose - Lining up the player in front of the tee so they are in the proper batting area.

What you need – You will need to set up a tee with the ball on it. Batters should have a bat and a helmet on.

How this drill works – Setting a young player up in the batting area might be one of the toughest things to get them to do when batting. They don't quite understand the concept of a batter's box, so you need to help them understand how to line up through a different method.

Explain to the player they must keep their belt buckle right across from the ball and show them how far away they should be (around 24 inches).

If a young player can understand they need to keep their belt buckle in front of the ball on the tee, then you will have much great success teaching them where to stand in order to hit the ball.

Result – Once players have learned the grip on the bat and how to stand, the next thing they need to learn is *where* to stand in order to ensure the highest success when swinging the bat and making contact.

1.2 INVISIBLE BAT DRILL

Purpose - Teaching the kids the proper swing is important to building a foundation for hitting the ball.

What you need – Line the kids up on the first and third baselines, and ask them to get into a batters stance.

How this drill works – This will be a fun drill for the kids, as they get to show off their swing without the bat as an impediment. When they line up, ask them to assume the batter's stance. They should have their arms up with their hands raised to their ears and their back elbow raised.

When you call out '**swing**', all of the kids will show you their swing with the invisible bat. At this stage, you (and assistant coaches) can view the swings of each player and you can make small adjustments to the swings.

Make it a fun time and a game to swing without a bat. Make sure the players don't swing too hard, and that they maintain the same fundamentals throughout.

Result – With coaches watching over their swing (and less risk of players accidentally hitting each other), better instruction can be given to help the players swing properly.

1.3 TEE COUNTER

Purpose - This is a basic batting drill to help a player work on the contact they make with the ball.

What you need – A player with a helmet and a bat at the tee. Make sure the tee is at the appropriate height (waist high, or just under). You can set up other stations with a few players at each, with another coach or parent helper.

The remaining players should be standing in the field in a ready position.

How this drill works – Once the player gets to the tee, they must get into their batter stance. The coach should help them set up properly so they can increase the chance of good contact.

The other players in the station are waiting, gloves in hand, to field the ball. The coach says, '**hit**', and the player swings. If the ball is hit the first time, the rest of the teams yells '**one**'. For each hit, they say the corresponding number. This provides encouragement to the player when they are hitting.

The coach should give each player five swings on the tee. On the final swing (and hit), the player should drop the bat and run to 'first' base.

Result – This drill helps players get used to making contact with the ball and using the encouragement of their teammates to help them along the way.

1.4 INVISIBLE BALL

Purpose - Similar to the invisible bat drill, this is a drill that puts the bat in the hands for a swing without the ball.

What you need – Give the player a bat, helmet and then line them up in front of the tee – without the ball.

How this drill works – With the player at the tee, the coach helps them get into the proper batter's stance to make good contact with the ball. The tee should be waist high (or slightly under) and the player needs to focus on the 'imaginary ball'.

The coach will back up, and the player will focus on the spot they are supposed to hit on the imaginary ball. While the other players in the station are waiting, they can pretend they are fielding the ball when the coach says **swing**, and the player takes a swing.

Result – Batters might swing too high, or swing too low, but this drill will help them focus on the spot they need to swing to make contact.

1.5 KISS AND SWING

Purpose - This will be a fun drill for the kids as they try to get the bat to kiss the ball

What you need – Place a ball upon the tee, and have a batter with a helmet and bat standing in the proper position to hit the ball. You can have two or more stations for this drill with a parent helper or assistant coach at each station.

How this drill works – Coaches will help the batter assume the correct stance in the batter's box. The rest of the drill is up to the batter. Sometimes, taking a swing in slow motion so a player can visualize where they want to hit the ball is valuable in building memory.

Before the batter takes a swing, they need to slowly go through the batting motion and stop the bat right where they want to hit the ball - right on the "sweet" spot. This is the 'kiss' the bat will give the ball. The player then brings the bat back up and then takes a normal swing at the ball.

Focusing on the spot they want to hit (the kiss) is a fun way for kids to learn what motion they need to hit the ball where they want.

Result – Your players will begin to develop the muscle memory and coordination to make consistent contact with the ball.

1.6 COACH SAYS

Purpose - This will help the players learn the different steps involved in a good swing.

What you need – Start off this drill the same as you would start off the drill with the invisible bat. Line up the kids on both the first and third baselines in their batting stances (without bats).

How this drill works – This is a batter's version of 'Simon Says' where the players must do what you say in order to demonstrate their understanding of a skill.

You will focus on three key areas: grip, stance and swing. When you say any one of those three words, the player must show you their best grip, stance or swing (after instruction, of course). As the coach, you can watch, and go to individual players to help them with different aspects of their swing.

Result – You will be able to help the players with each step of their swing, and sometimes that is more helpful than seeing the entire swing all at once.

1.7 DON'T MISS

Purpose - This is a game that can be played with the players to try and establish the desire to hit the ball.

What you need – Set up several stations each starting with one batter and three or four fielders. Set up one base that the hitter will run to.

How this drill works – With a batter at the plate and fielders in the field for each station, the batter will hit attempt to put the ball in play by hitting it. If they miss the ball or if they hit the tee without knocking the ball forward, then it will be considered a strike. This is a perfect opportunity to teach them about how three strikes means an out.

This will be one of the player's first introductions to an 'out'. The player needs to understand the importance of making contact with the ball in order to get to first base and to advance other runners.

Each time the player hits the ball, they must drop the bat and run to first base.

Result – This drill adds a step to the process, after hitting and then running to first base. Making contact within three strikes is the key.

1.8 A DROP IN THE BUCKET

Purpose - Sometimes young players have a tendency to throw the bat after they swing. This drill will show them how to safely place the bat aside after they hit.

What you need – Set up a batting station with a tee over home plate, a batter, bat, helmet and ball. Just behind the tee, place an old tire or a large bucket.

How this drill works – With the tire stationed just behind the tee, it should be in easy access for the batter so they can drop the bat once they make contact with the ball.

Once they do make contact, instruct the player to make sure the bat is nicely dropped into the tire or bucket before they keep running toward first base.

Repeated work with this drill will reinforce to the player the importance of having to drop the bat after hitting the ball.

Work on this drill until the batter naturally begins to place the bat into the tire or bucket.

Result – This may not necessarily be a skill development drill, however it is an important one to emphasize, in order to make sure that the safety of all players is at the forefront.

1.9 SPOT THE BALL

Purpose - Sometimes a visual mark will help a player understand where they need to make contact with the ball.

What you need – Set up a tee with a ball on top of it, and line up a batter in the batter's box. You can have fielders to field the ball if you want. The ball will have a black dot the size of a nickel marked on it (with a black marker).

How this drill works – This is a simple batting drill that once again helps the batter to focus on a spot they want to hit. Think of the saying, "aim small, miss small." With the black dot facing back toward the backstop, the player is able to locate and ultimately hit the spot on the ball.

The player will focus on striking the spot with the bat – not just the ball. If a player tries harder to focus on hitting the spot, it can decrease their overall margin of error and make it much easier to hit the ball.

Over time, you can reduce the size of the black mark on the ball, until eventually the black mark is gone and the player is just hitting the ball.

Result – More focus and consistency hitting the ball.

1.10 TARGET PRACTICE

Purpose - Once players get the hang of hitting, you can attempt to begin teaching them the art of hitting to a spot.

What you need – Set up a tee and when the batter addresses the ball, they are facing towards the backstop. The back stop should have a series of "target" squares set up, with each square being a number of points.

How this drill works – This is an advanced Tee Ball hitting drill, but some of your more adept hitters should be able to understand what they have to do to hit the ball to certain areas. This drill will help them work through the understanding awarding points for hitting the squares with point values.

Start by giving a hitter 5 chances to make 20 points (targets can be worth 10 points each). They have to hit selected targets as the coach chooses. As the player becomes more skilled at hitting the targets the coach suggests, then they can increase the number of points needed to succeed in the game.

Result – This drill helps the player become a more skilled hitter by teaching them to hit to certain chosen areas.

1.11 ONE KNEE BATTING

Purpose - Upper body position and movement is important for younger players to learn batting technique.

What you need – Get a light bat for the players, so they can hold it when they are on one knee. Each player needs a bat and a ball on a tee.

How this drill works – The batter needs to get down on one knee, with their front knee up, and the back knee down on the ground.

In order for the batter to actually make contact with the ball, they will have to hold the bat high. This teaches the player to keep the bat held high when they are batting normally.

The hands should be at ear level or higher and their trailing elbow should be up. All you want the batter to do is make contact with the ball and move through the swing with their upper body. A lighter bat usually makes this drill a little easier for the younger players.

Result – This drill builds many of the important fundamentals of sound hitting mechanics.

1.12 THREE TEE BATTING

Purpose - This is a good listening drill as much as it is a drill for the player to hit. Coaches need to watch the batters when they swing.

What you need – Set up three tees with balls on them and have three batters with helmets and bats. Allow adequate space between hitters to ensure safety.

How this drill works – This helps young players learn to listen to the coaches, and also for the coaches to see their players swing so they can help them with any problems.

Each batter lines up in their batting stance and gets ready to swing the bat. Make sure the players know which tee is number one, number two, and number three. When the players are all ready, the coach will call out one of the numbers and that batter must take a swing and hit the ball.

At this point, the coach is able to watch the individual player and help them with swing technique, but it also keeps the young players excited about hearing their number being called and having it be their turn to take a swing at the ball.

Result – The main result of this drill is for the players to improve their batting technique through the help of coaches. It is also a good drill for the players to learn to make sure they listen to the coaches when on the field.

PART 2: THROWING, CATCHING AND FIELDING DRILLS

2.1 SHOW THE BALL

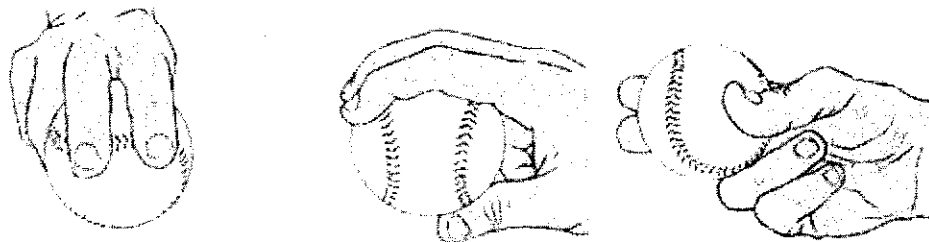
Purpose - Learning how to properly hold the ball is the first step to throwing it well.

What you need – Each player needs to have a ball and a glove in order to work in this drill.

How this drill works – Gripping the baseball is essential to throwing properly and accurately. At a young age, learning the proper grip is the best way to help them build the foundation for throwing.

Each player has the ball, and they must grasp the ball using a four seam or "horseshoe" grip - with the thumb on the underside, and the two top fingers spread slightly apart over the top.

The "horseshoe" of the ball should be facing sideways when viewed from the top.



When the coach says 'show me', each of the players gets into the proper throwing stance: legs apart (one in front of the other), foot on the throwing side is behind the body, and the arm is up, with the elbow raised to shoulder height and the forearm and bicep at a 90 degree angle (L-shape).

Result – Coaches will be able to watch how their players are gripping the ball as they show them the grip and the throwing stance. Problems can be corrected at this point.

2.2 ONE KNEE THROWING

Purpose - This helps players learn the upper body action of throwing, without using their legs. Also builds throwing strength.

What you need – Each player needs to have a ball to perform this drill. To start, you may want to give the players a softer ball, like a tennis ball.

How this drill works – This drill emphasizes the upper body action: right from the grip, to the raised arm and elbow, the L-shape between the forearm and bicep, and then turning the body and following through towards the intended target.

The player starts with the body facing the target and the ball raised. The player can throw at a target, a fellow player, or a coach. The proper throwing mechanics should be watched for as the player throws the ball toward the target. A good follow through toward the target is important.

Result – This drill helps the player learn to upper body action for throwing, along with building throwing strength and accuracy.

2.3 BOUNCE TO THE BUCKET

Purpose - It's good to learn throwing accuracy at an early age – this is a fun game to learn!

What you need – Set up a bucket or box at the first base. You can set up more than one station for this drill. Line up kids at each station about 10 feet away to start.

How this drill works – The first thrower steps up and tries to get the ball into the box or bucket – and they get 10 points. If they hit the side of the bucket they will get 5 points. The closest ball to the bucket will get 2 points.

You can increase the difficulty of the drill by increasing the distance that the players have to throw. But, don't sacrifice the distance for the accuracy. Once the kids gain the accuracy, then in time they will build the strength to throw the ball a greater distance.

Result – The players will begin to develop a sense of how to get the ball to their intended target by aiming at the box or bucket.

2.4 LEARNING THE CROW HOP

Purpose - The crow hop is a basic move that is taught at all levels to help a player gain a little bit of momentum on their throw.

What you need – Give each player a ball so they can throw it. Or, you can start this drill by using an 'imaginary' ball.

How this drill works – This technique helps younger players learn to generate power and momentum to get the ball a greater distance. Once a player has fielded the ball, they take a short step forward with the foot that is opposite the throwing arm and they shuffle and hop in the direction of the target.

Upon the follow through, the rear leg crosses over in front of the other leg and it lands at a right angle to the target. It would be a good idea to practice this yourself so you can understand how it works and then how you are going to show it to the kids.

Once you show them a couple of times, the kids will usually get the gist of how to do the crow hop.

Result – Once the kids are familiar with the technique, they will quite enjoy the ability to throw the ball further.

2.5 SOFT FLY BALL

Purpose - Sometimes younger baseball players have a fear of catching the ball because they are afraid it is too hard.

What you need – You will need enough softer balls (tennis balls, wiffle balls, puffy balls) for all of the players. The player should have their gloves.

How this drill works – It is tough for some young players to get over the fact that the ball is very hard and they may get hit. This prevents some players from making the effort to catch the ball.

Start off by showing the players that the ball is very soft, and even if it hits them in the head, they are not going to get hurt. Then, you can start off with the players in the lines and throw the ball to them one by one. Once the players get the hang of it, they can start throwing the ball to each other to try to catch it.

Result – Younger players will get over the fear of catching the ball by working with the soft ball and eventually moving up to the harder ball.

2.6 CATCH CONTEST

Purpose - This is a game that pits the throwing and catching skills of the players against one another. It should be a fun game for all of the kids to participate in.

What you need – Pair up the players on the team and give each pair a ball. Each should also have their gloves.

How this drill works – Once you have the players paired up, start them off a short distance apart from one another – probably between 8 and 10 feet. The players should throw the ball back and forth executing overhand throws and catches.

The players need to make good throws and good catches, as each time they miss or drop the ball, the pair has to stop in the game. The game ends when the last pair to keep throwing and catching the ball without dropping it is still in the game.

If the game lasts longer (with improved play), you can move the pairs back a step or two.

Result – The players will gradually build their throwing and catching skills and learn to work with the other players on their team in this manner.

2.7 BLOCK THE BALL

Purpose - This is the first step to getting kids to learn the prospect of fielding the ball.

What you need – Set up two or three lines of players so the kids can get maximum repetition. Have a coach or parent volunteer at each line with several balls.

How this drill works – With this drill coaches need to first instruct their players on how to move to get in front of the ball. Start the players off in the ready position (hands on the knees, slightly bent, and with their head up watching the play).

The coaches or volunteers should roll the ball directly at the players at first, but then to either side. The player needs to shuffle to get their body in front of the ball to knock it

down. For each ball that the player knocks down they get three points. If the player scoops the ball with their glove, they get five points.

The players will get excited about getting points for knocking the ball down.

To teach players how to use their gloves properly, try using plastic milk jugs with one side cut out to form a "scoop". Have the kids use the scoop to field the ball. This will help them learn to use their gloves to scoop up the ball, rather than trap it.

Result – Learning to knock the ball down and ultimately to try and scoop the ball is the first part of fielding the ball.

2.8 BASE RELAY DRILL

Purpose - Teaching the players to field the ball in an "around the horn" game

What you need – Put the bases out (shorter than normal if you like, to start), and then put a player at each base. You can have players in a line up behind each base.

How this drill works – You can start the drill by hitting a soft grounder, or rolling the ball to one of the players. First they must throw the ball to third base, to second base, then to first base – and finally back to the coach.

The players need to use all of the skills they have learned in order to make this drill work. They should work on throwing the ball properly and accurately and then make sure they stop the ball when it is thrown to them. Reward the team that is able to get the ball around the bases without many problems.

Result – This drill might be tough at first, however with time, the players will find it to be a particularly valuable drill.

2.9 ONE AND TWO

Purpose - Award points to the players for throwing and catching the ball at shoulder level or above.

What you need – Pair up the players and give them each a ball. (You can get a softer ball to start).

How this drill works – This drill helps players to understand the importance of accurate throws and catches that are at the shoulder level. It makes it easier for kids to throw and catch if they have something to aim for. It makes it especially better if it becomes a game and there are points at stake.

Each pair will start 10-15 feet apart and throw the ball back and forth. The receiving player should create a target with his glove at shoulder level, and the throwing player should aim for it.

If the pair throws and catches at shoulder height, then they get two points. If they throw the ball and then catch it at waist level, then they get one point. If it is lower than the waist they get no points.

This will help the players learn to keep the ball up where their teammates can catch it much easier.

Result – More accurate throws and players can compete against each other in a game-like setting.

2.10 FIELD AND BOUNCE TO THE BUCKET

Purpose - This puts together the basic idea of fielding a grounder and then throwing the ball to a spot on the field.

What you need – You can set up several stations for this drill in order to increase the amount of repetition. You have a line of fielders and a box or bucket at a base.

How this drill works – This puts the original drill of bouncing to the bucket together with fielding the ball. The coach will roll a grounder to the player and they pick it up and throw it to try to get it in the box.

The emphasis is for the player to knock down the ball, gain the proper grip, throwing motion and then aim it to the bucket. Players will get the same points as they would get in the bounce to the bucket drill.

Adding the extra element of fielding the ball may be difficult for some players, but it is an essential skill to master at this level.

Result – This is a step above the basic skill of throwing to a target, by adding the fielding aspect to this drill.

2.11 SLO MO THROW

Purpose - At an early age, coaches often combat players that cannot throw the ball without throwing it as hard as they can.

What you need – Set up a target (or a series of targets for several stations), that is about 10 to 15 feet away. It shouldn't be too far for the kids, otherwise they feel like they have to throw the ball hard. Line up the kids in single file in each station.

How this drill works – In order to get the player to throw the ball normally, you need to help them understand that the ball will go as far as they want with a slow motion throw. This drill works as a method to reinforce the basic throwing mechanics, but also to learn control.

Teach the players to learn control by asking them to throw in slow motion with just enough force to get the ball to the target. Once they can get the ball to the target with the slow motion throw, ask them to do the same thing with their normal throw.

Result – Younger players will learn to control their throws. This is important to make sure they have accuracy and that they aren't throwing the ball all over the place.

2.12 COUNT THE CATCHES

Purpose - This is a good drill to help players strive toward making good catches, and also a drill they can work on at home.

What you need – You can either do this as a group drill, or you can make it a drill that has players paired up with each other.

How this drill works – if you do this as a group, you can get two stations going in order to compete against each other, and have a coach or parent volunteer at each station.

With a group, the coach will underhand toss the ball to the player in the line and they must make the catch. Everyone yells out, “one!” Then, another toss and “two!” And so on.

Each side goes on until a player in the line drops the ball. Then they start at one again. You can run this drill in pairs, with the players trying to catch the ball between each other.

Result – This drill simply reinforces the skill of the catching the ball.

PART 3: GAME PLAY DRILLS

3.1 CALL THE BALL

Purpose - It is important for younger players to learn that communication on the field is essential.

What you need – Line up two single file lines that are about 10 yards apart. One coach will stand in the middle, just slightly away to the side of the players.

How this drill works – With the two players ready to catch the ball, the coach will throw a fly ball in between them. The players will converge on the ball and they will watch for the other player.

Teach the players to understand that the player closest to the ball is to call, “I’ve got it”. They can scream it, yell it, or just say it softly. They will have fun with that – but they must say it.

The player that calls the ball must try to get under it, and the other player should be their back up in case they miss the ball.

Result – This drill will help teach the players basic communication, along with working on their fly-ball catching skills.

3.2 BASE RUNNERS

Purpose - Players need to learn to listen to what their coaches say when they are running the bases.

What you need – You can have the tee set up, with a batter at the tee, but without a bat. The coach will be at first base.

How this drill works – The player will take an imaginary swing with the imaginary bat and then run as fast as they can to first base. As the runner approaches the base the coach will call out to the runner to either stay at the base, or to keep running.

Run each player through the drill differing each time what you are going to say to the player. They will begin to learn through the repetition to listen for their coaches voice when they are running the bases.

Result – Knowing the coach is going to help them will give some players confidence on the base paths. For others it is a lesson in listening to what the coach says on the field.

3.3 FAST FINGERS DRILL

Purpose - Charging the ball to get to it quickly is a great skill to learn in baseball.

What you need – Line the players up in four single file lines along the first or third baseline. The coach will stand out in front of them about 15 or 20 feet away.

How this drill works – All of the players will be in their lines and the coach will be in front of them. The coach will point to one of the lines and then roll or hit the ball to them with a slow grounder.

The player needs to run up to pick up the ball and then settle themselves down to throw back to the coach. The object for the kids is going to be to pick up the ball, remember their proper throwing action and make a nice throw back to the coach.

Once the coach tosses the ball, he or she counts out 1001, 1002, 1003... and then stops when the ball gets back to the coach. The object of the game is to have the players get the ball back to the coach as quickly and accurately as possible. The quickest pick up and throw is the fastest fingers player.

Result – The players will learn to get the ball to the coach quicker by charging it, picking it up, and then making a good throw.

3.4 FIRST BASE DRILL

Purpose - This is the most basic play in baseball and should be taught early

What you need – You can start with the players just in a couple of single file line in the infield, or you can put them at positions. You may want to start them in lines and have them closer to first base to build confidence. Have a coach or parent at first base to start.

How this drill works – This is a basic fielding drill for beginning players. The coach will softly hit or roll grounders to the players and they need to scoop the ball, set, and then make an accurate throw to the coach.

Coaches should focus on making sure the player gains good control of the ball, faces their target and then goes through a good throwing motion to get the ball to the coach or parent on first base.

You can make the drill more challenging by putting players at the infield positions.

Result – The players will learn the fundamentals of making an out.

3.5 COACH RUN AROUND (THEN PLAYERS)

Purpose - This is a base identification drill, and the coach gets a little exercise

What you need – Make sure all of the bases are intact and in their proper positions. The kids can watch from the middle of the diamond.

How this drill works – At first, get all of the kids attention and go over which bases are which on the field. Then, the coach will stand at home plate in front of the tee and take an imaginary swing at an imaginary ball and then go towards first base. Tell them to yell out which base you are heading to each time.

Once you get to first base, they yell 'first'. Once you round the bag and get to second, they yell 'second'. Etcetera.

After you do this a couple of times, then you can run each player through the bases and have them yell out which base they are on, along with all of the other kids.

Result – Base identification is important to learn at an early age. It is the fundamental for base running and should be something you work on regularly.

3.6 TAG OUT FROZEN TAG

Purpose - This helps players to learn the importance of tagging with the ball, and also promotes a whole lot of fun.

What you need – Mark off an area about 20 yards by 20 yards. The Tee Ball infield might work if you don't have too many players. Two players will need to have their gloves and a ball inside the glove.

How this drill works – This is a tag game that actually requires the taggers to tag the other players with the ball inside the glove. The two players that are 'it' will chase other players and they will have to tag those players with their gloves.

If the ball comes out of the glove, then the player tagged is NOT frozen. If they don't tag with the ball, then the player is NOT frozen. Players that are tagged must be frozen and they need to get unfrozen by their teammates by going underneath their legs or their arms.

Result – Players will quickly learn the importance of tagging others with the ball in their glove, and maintaining control of the ball when doing it.

3.7 TRIANGLE RELAY DRILL

Purpose - This throwing and fielding drill might be best for more advanced or older T-ballers

What you need – Match up two players and a coach, and if you have parent volunteers you can have several stations for this drill.

How this drill works – This drill works on a players ability to field the ball (in the outfield for example), and then get the ball back to the relay player and then back to the coach or the parent volunteer.

Start the players out about 30 feet away from each other, and the coach about another 15 feet from the 'relay' player. This drill begins with the coach rolling a grounder to the player that is furthest away. That player must stop the ball, control it, pick it up and make a good throw to the relay player.

The relay player must then grab the ball from the glove and then make a good throw to the coach. Repeat this drill and switch the players.

Result – This is the first chance kids will get to learn how to use teamwork (relay) to get the ball where they want it to go.

3.8 BATTER OUT!

Purpose - This is a good game that works on three critical areas: hitting, fielding and catching.

What you need – Divide the team into three groups: batters, fielders and first base. You will need a tee and a ball, with proper batting equipment.

How this drill works – The batters will try to hit the ball, and the fielders will be in the field and at first base. Give the fielders an 'area' they are to cover, so they are not all chasing after the same ball. The batters will hit the ball and then begin running to first base. The fielders must play their area and get the ball if it goes there. Then, they need to make the throw to first base before the runner gets there.

Coaches should award one point to the runner if he beats the throw and makes it to first base. They should award one point to the fielders for stopping the ball and making a good throw.

You can award the first base players one point if they make a good catch with two hands and do not drop the ball. Make it a competition to see which group gets more points. You can switch groups in the same practice or wait until the next one.

Result – A good competitive drill that works on three skill areas.

3.9 NEXT BASE DRILL

Purpose - Once a player is on first base, they may not always know where they need to go next.

What you need – You can set up a couple of stations if you have enough bases. Set up a diamond with the bases as they would normally be set up. Start with a player on first base and a lineup of batters.

How this drill works – This drill starts with a player on first base and one at the tee to bat. Instead of having a real ball, players will ‘show’ coach their great swing and then run to first.

You will also have to explain to the kids on first base, where they need to go next. Another coach, or a parent volunteer can be on second to help direct the players where to go next. Keep going so each player has a chance to bat and run around the bases.

Coaches should watch that the runner understands which base he or she is headed to, and also that they stop right on the base.

Result – This is a basic base running drill that helps kids learn where to go during the game.

3.10 CATCH THE PLAYERS

Purpose - Speedy base running is the key to this fun drill for the kids and lots of work for the coaches!

What you need – You can either set up a couple of stations with four bases, or have coaches and parent volunteers alternate. Groups of four runners at a time will go.

How this drill works – The coach will start the four runners, one at a time. Give each runner a five second head start and then send the next runner. After all four runners, then the coach heads around the basepath.

The object is for each player to catch the players ahead of them while they are running around the bases. Once it gets to the coach, then the coach needs to run fast to catch the players that are left. If any of the players run off the baseline, or if they go to the wrong base, they will be out of the game.

Result – This will probably be one of the most fun games you and the kids are playing. It teaches them they need to run around the bases as fast as they can, or coach will catch them. It translates well to a game situation.

3.11 PIZZA SLICE DEFENSE

Purpose - This helps the players learn to stay in their own area based on the position they are playing.

What you need – If you have a chalk liner this works well, or you can use pylons or other markers. Separate the field into ‘slices’ like pizza, and have it correspond with one of the positions on the field.

How this drill works – This drill is intended to teach younger players the importance of playing their position on the field – to prevent kids from fighting over the ball when it is hit.

Show the players that they each have a ‘slice’ of the pizza, but they can’t have a slice of anyone else’s pizza. When the ball is hit, or rolled to the players, they must stay on their own slice of pizza when the ball comes out. They cannot go to another player’s slice to steal the ball.

Players who go into the other players slice will have someone else come in and take their piece of pizza from them.

Result – Gradually, when players lose their slice of pizza, they will understand that they cannot go into other players’ areas to get the ball. This prevents five infielders from going after the same ball.

3.12 GO TO YOUR BASE

Purpose - Players need to learn to go to their base when another runner is on base.

What you need – You can run this as a two base drill to start, and then run it with three bases, and then all of the bases. Have a player playing second base and first base, with a runner on first base to start. You can have a fielder to shag the grounders.

How this drill works – This drill may take some time for fielders to understand, but it is important to advance the development of the fielding player. With a first and second baseman playing their position, and a runner on first, the coach must teach a player to recognize that they need to go to their bag and wait for a throw to put the runner out.

Help the fielder to understand by telling them they need to protect their base if they see another runner coming after it. They protect the base by catching the ball if it is thrown there.

Result – In time, fielders will understand they have to cover their base when there are runners.

PRACTICE PLAN #1

Time	Drill	Section	Coaching Points
0 to :07	Stretching arms, throwing with partners	-	This is a great chance to do some team building by stretching together
:07 to :15	Show the ball	2.1	Learn the fundamentals step by step
:16 to :25	One knee throwing	2.2	Using the proper upper body action is important
:26 to :30	Water Break	-	Keeping kids hydrated in hot weather is important
:31 to :40	Call the ball	3.1	Make sure one player backs up the other
:41 to :55	Spot the ball	1.9	Aim small, miss small
:55 to :60	End of practice talk	-	Reinforce terminology or other things kids are to try and remember

PRACTICE PLAN #2

Time	Drill	Section	Coaching Points
0 to :07	Stretching arms, throwing with partners	-	This is a great chance to do some team building by stretching together
:07 to :15	Bounce to the bucket	2.3	Encourage players to get the ball into the bucket
:16 to :25	Count the catches	2.12	Contest between players
:26 to :30	Water Break	-	Keeping kids hydrated in hot weather is important
:31 to :40	Fast fingers drill	3.3	Quickest player is the winner!
:41 to :55	Kiss and swing	1.5	This helps the batter line up the bat with the ball
:55 to :60	End of practice talk	-	Reinforce terminology or other things kids are to try and remember

PRACTICE PLAN #3

Time	Drill	Section	Coaching Points
0 to :07	Stretching arms, throwing with partners	-	This is a great chance to do some team building by stretching together
:07 to :15	Block the ball	2.7	Teach players to get the body in front of the ball
:16 to :25	Slow Mo Throw	2.11	Good chance for coaches to watch mechanics and control wild throws
:26 to :30	Water Break	-	Keeping kids hydrated in hot weather is important
:31 to :40	Triangle Relay	3.7	Players must learn that teamwork is important to get the ball to the infield
:41 to :55	Invisible Bat	1.2	After everyone shows the invisible swing, you can add a ball and real bat
:55 to :60	End of practice talk	-	Reinforce terminology or other things kids are to try and remember

PRACTICE PLAN #4

Time	Drill	Section	Coaching Points
0 to :07	Stretching arms, throwing with partners	-	This is a great chance to do some team building by stretching together
:07 to :15	Coach says	1.6	Shows coaches each batting point
:16 to :25	Drop in the bucket	1.8	Players need to learn to not throw bat on contact
:26 to :30	Water Break	-	Keeping kids hydrated in hot weather is important
:31 to :40	Soft Fly Ball	2.5	Kids can be scared, so show them the ball is soft
:41 to :55	Tag out Frozen Tag	3.6	Players must tag with ball or ball in glove
:55 to :60	End of practice talk	-	Reinforce terminology or other things kids are to try and remember

PRACTICE PLAN #5

Time	Drill	Section	Coaching Points
0 to :07	Stretching arms, throwing with partners	-	This is a great chance to do some team building by stretching together
:07 to :15	Coach run around	3.5	Gets you warmed up for the practice!
:16 to :25	First Base Drill	3.4	Stress the accurate throw to the coach or player at first
:26 to :30	Water Break	-	Keeping kids hydrated in hot weather is important
:31 to :40	Field – bounce to bucket	2.10	Control the ball, then make a good throw to bucket
:41 to :55	Target practice	1.10	Teach players to hit to different areas
:55 to :60	End of practice talk	-	Reinforce terminology or other things kids are to try and remember

PRACTICE PLAN #6

Time	Drill	Section	Coaching Points
0 to :07	Stretching arms, throwing with partners	-	This is a great chance to do some team building by stretching together
:07 to :15	Belt buckle batting	1.1	This will help players line up with the tee
:16 to :25	Three tee batting	1.11	Coaches can watch the individual players while batters wait for their number
:26 to :30	Water Break	-	Keeping kids hydrated in hot weather is important
:31 to :40	Base relay	2.8	Good throws to each base
:41 to :55	Catch the players	3.10	Stress running the bases as fast as players can
:55 to :60	End of practice talk	-	Reinforce terminology or other things kids are to try and remember

PRACTICE PLAN #7

Time	Drill	Section	Coaching Points
0 to :07	Stretching arms, throwing with partners	-	This is a great chance to do some team building by stretching together
:07 to :15	Next Base Drill	3.9	Teach kids where to go when ball is hit
:16 to :25	Pizza slice D	3.11	Helps players learn to play a position. Stay with their own slice of pizza!
:26 to :30	Water Break	-	Keeping kids hydrated in hot weather is important
:31 to :40	Tee counter	1.3	Players get hitting practice and fielder count the hits
:41 to :55	Catch contest	2.6	Great way to end practice – a competition!
:55 to :60	End of practice talk	-	Reinforce terminology or other things kids are to try and remember

PRACTICE PLAN #8

Time	Drill	Section	Coaching Points
0 to :07	Stretching arms, throwing with partners	-	This is a great chance to do some team building by stretching together
:07 to :15	Batter out!	3.8	Combines real hitting with real fielding
:16 to :25	Next base drill	3.9	Make sure kids know which base to go to next
:26 to :30	Water Break	-	Keeping kids hydrated in hot weather is important
:31 to :40	Invisible Ball	1.4	Chance to watch swing mechanics of all kids without the ball
:41 to :55	One and Two	2.9	Catch at shoulder height or above the waist
:55 to :60	End of practice talk	-	Reinforce terminology or other things kids are to try and remember

PRACTICE PLAN #9

Time	Drill	Section	Coaching Points
0 to :07	Stretching arms, throwing with partners	-	This is a great chance to do some team building by stretching together
:07 to :15	Don't Miss	1.7	Players don't want three strikes
:16 to :25	Kiss and swing	1.5	This will help players who had trouble with previous drill
:26 to :30	Water Break	-	Keeping kids hydrated in hot weather is important
:31 to :40	Baserunners	3.2	Baserunning is essential to learn
:41 to :55	Bounce in the bucket	2.3	Get the ball in for 10 points... winner gets a prize?
:55 to :60	End of practice talk	-	Reinforce terminology or other things kids are to try and remember

PRACTICE PLAN #10

Time	Drill	Section	Coaching Points
0 to :07	Stretching arms, throwing with partners	-	This is a great chance to do some team building by stretching together
:07 to :15	Learning the Crow Hop	2.4	Helps players build momentum behind throws
:16 to :25	One knee throwing	2.2	Upper body mechanics are watched here
:26 to :30	Water Break	-	Keeping kids hydrated in hot weather is important
:31 to :40	One Knee batting	1.11	Helps players learn to keep bat high so they can hit down on ball
:41 to :55	Catch the players	3.10	Great game for coaches to finish with!
:55 to :60	End of practice talk	-	Reinforce terminology or other things kids are to try and remember

PRACTICE PLAN TEMPLATE

Time	Drill	Section	Coaching Points

Thanks for reading this report!

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Hitting Fundamentals Checklist



The Stance

- ☐ Adjust the tee so the ball is set even to the hitter's waist
- ☐ Face the tee with your feet shoulder width apart and parallel to the plate
- ☐ Bend your knees into a balanced, athletic position
- ☐ Weight should be on the balls of your feet
- ☐ Grip the bat with the hands together above the knob
- ☐ Bring the bat up to the back shoulder
- ☐ Keep your shoulders level and the bat and head steady



The Swing

- ☐ Keep your head down and eyes on the ball throughout the swing
- ☐ Take a short step with the front foot
- ☐ Swing level and bring the sweet spot of the bat through the center of the ball
- ☐ Watch the bat make contact with the ball
- ☐ Shift your weight to the front foot. The back heel comes up while the back toes stay on the ground
- ☐ Extend the arms and follow through. Swing all the way around.
- ☐ Carefully drop the bat to the side of the batters box. Do not throw it.



Key Coaching Points

- ☐ Eyes on the ball
- ☐ No cross handed grip
- ☐ Feet parallel to the plate
- ☐ Use the stride to shift the weight forward
- ☐ Rotate the hips for more power

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Baserunning Fundamentals Checklist

Teach players to run **THROUGH**
the base, do not stop on the base

Running to First

- ☐ After the ball is hit, place the bat to the side carefully. Do not throw it.
- ☐ Right handed batters – run behind the tee to first
- ☐ Left handed batters – run directly to first
- ☐ Run on the balls of your feet.
- ☐ Pump your arms back and forth
- ☐ Look at first base, not where the ball has gone
- ☐ Run outside the foul line
- ☐ Run straight through first base – don't jump on it or slow down
- ☐ Watch and listen to the coach for instructions

On Base

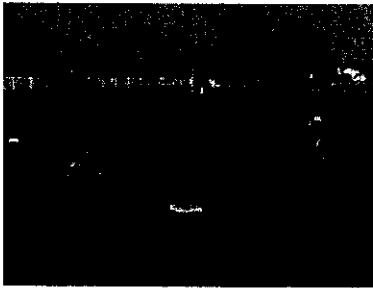
- ☐ Keep one foot touching the base until the next batter hits the ball
- ☐ Lean forward – when the ball is hit, push off the base for power
- ☐ Know where the ball is
- ☐ When passing a base, try to touch it with one foot on the side, without stopping

Sliding (Not Recommended For Youngest Players)

- ☐ Start about four or five feet from the base
- ☐ Keep your arms up, fingers bent, and chin down
- ☐ Bend one leg under the other to make a figure 4
- ☐ The bent leg hits the ground first, then the butt and back
- ☐ The top leg touches the base
- ☐ No head first sliding

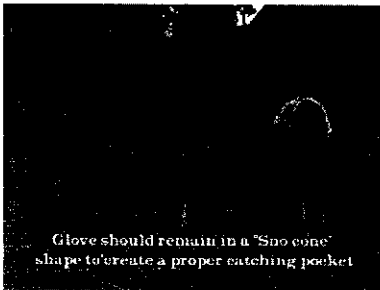
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Fielding Fundamentals Checklist



Ground Balls

- ☐ Stand with your legs apart, shoulder width or wider
- ☐ Bend your knees, get low, and lean forward
- ☐ Run to the ground ball, keeping your body in front of the ball
- ☐ Place the glove low to the ground
- ☐ Scoop or catch the ball with the glove and cover it with the bare hand



Fly Balls

- ☐ Run to where the ball is going.
- ☐ Call for the ball "I've got it"
- ☐ Stop and wait for the ball
- ☐ Put your glove up, shoulder high or over the head
- ☐ Watch the ball into the glove and cover it with the bare hand

Thrown Ball

- ☐ Bend your knees slightly and make a target for the thrower
- ☐ Watch the ball carefully
- ☐ If the ball is above the waist – place your hands in front of the body with the thumbs facing **up**. Catch with the glove and cover with the bare hand.
- ☐ If the ball is below the waist – place your hands in front of the body with the thumbs facing **down** and pinky fingers touching. Catch with the glove and cover with the bare hand.

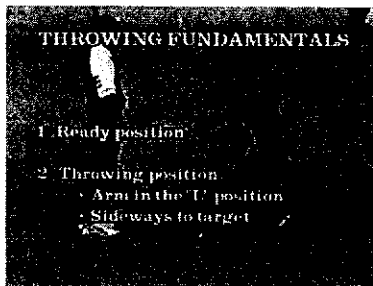
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Throwing Fundamentals Checklist



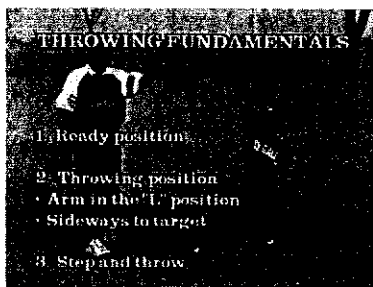
Ready Position

- ☐ Feet shoulder width apart, knees bent
- ☐ Slight bend at the waist, back flat
- ☐ Hands out in front of the body, head up with eyes on the play



Throwing Position

- ☐ Grip the ball with your thumb under it and two or three fingers on top. Don't worry about the seams for now.
- ☐ Turn body so you are sideways – the non-throwing shoulder points to the target.
- ☐ Tell kids to "jump on their skateboard" to turn sideways
- ☐ Throwing arm is in an "L" position with the elbow up at shoulder level or higher
- ☐ Eyes on the target



Step and Throw

- ☐ Step toward the target with the non-throwing side foot
- ☐ Push off the back foot to generate power, end with your weight on the forward foot
- ☐ Bring the throwing arm up over the top
- ☐ Release the ball in front of the body and follow through

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Parent Orientation Checklist

"The sum of all your thoughts comprises your overall attitude" (Maxwell, John C.)

This orientation will give the coach time to give a brief overview of his coaching philosophy, review team rules that may require disciplinary action, provide pre-season agreements and codes of conduct and answer any questions.

NOTE: *(Agreements and Codes of Conduct will need to be signed and returned at this meeting or at first practice before participation can begin – A signed copy of the Coaches Code of Conduct will need to be provided to each parent/guardian at the meeting).*

Maximum 90-Minute Agenda

"If you fail to plan, you plan to fail"

Introductions (5 minutes) _____ (check)

1. Introduce yourself and any assistant coaches. _____

(Give a little background about yourself, why you're coaching, your experience in the sport, what you do for a living. Let parents know what qualifies you to coach and why they should trust you in taking responsibility with their sons or daughters.)

Coaching Philosophy (20 minutes) _____

2. Present a brief overview of your coaching philosophy. _____

(Refer parents to Coaches Code of Conduct. Be sure to discuss at least the following:

- The benefits their athletes are likely to receive from participation in the sport.*
- The methods you use to teach skills and values. (Describe a typical practice)*
- The emphasis you give to sportsmanship vs. winning, having fun, and helping athletes develop physically, psychologically, and socially.*
- Have parent's review and sign pre-season agreements.*

Performance Demonstration (15 minutes) _____

3. Prepare a short demonstration or explain the skills, scoring, and rules to parents. _____

(Parents may not know much about the sport. Perhaps you can locate a good film or video [10 minutes], Emphasize safety when talking about necessary equipment and rules.)



Potential Risks (5 minutes)

4. Emphasize the potential risks of participation. _____

(It is your duty to inform parents of the inherent risks. They must make informed decisions about their child's participation. Be sure to be specific about the dangers of your sport. Keep discussion upbeat by telling parents about your precautions you will take to minimize the risk of injury.)

Sport Program Specifics (15 minutes) {1 minute per bullet}

5. Describe the program you will be conducting. _____

(Remind parents to review the coaches code of conduct regarding coaching philosophy, and "touch" on the following questions regarding the performance side of the program.

- How much time will their sons or daughters practice daily?*
- How often and when does the team practice?*
- How long is the season?*
- How many contests will there be? Are cancelled contests to weather, rescheduled?*
- How do you decide who plays?*
- Is there any team travel involved? If so, how are the expenses paid?*
- What equipment does each athlete need to purchase?*
- Where is equipment available, and how much does it cost?*
- Are there scholarships available for athletes that have limited financial support?*
- Are there any insurance requirements?*
- How do you want parents to communicate with the coaches?*
- Are physicals required for players to compete?*
- Who decides when an athlete is ready to play following an injury?*
- Are there special instructions for pre-game meals?*
- What can parents do at home to facilitate the child's physical development or learning of sport skills?*

Player and Parent Pre-Season Agreements (15 minutes)

6. Briefly review Agreements. Collect agreements. _____

In addition to agreements identified by the coach, the parents can provide the following:

- Be supportive of your child's participation on the team, but don't pressure your child.
- Keep winning in perspective, and help your child do the same.
- Help your child set realistic performance goals.
- Help your child meet his or her agreements, codes, and responsibilities to the team and the coach.
- Inform the coach of any medical or physical ailments that your child may have that may affect performance or health immediately.



Question and Answer / Closing Comments (15 minutes)

7. Answer questions that have not already been resolved. Thank the parents and players for attending and ask for their cooperation and commitment during the forthcoming season.





American Coaching Academy

94 Ways To Encourage Your Athletes!

1. You're on the right track now!
2. You've got it made.
3. SUPER!
4. That's right
5. That's good.
6. You're really working hard today.
7. You are very good at that.
8. That's coming along nicely.
9. GOOD WORK
10. I'm happy to see you working like that.
11. That's much, much better!
12. Exactly right.
13. I'm proud of the way you worked today.
14. You're doing that much better today.
15. You've just about got it.
16. That's the best you've ever done.
17. You're doing a good job.
18. THAT'S IT!
19. Now you've figured it out.
20. That's quite an improvement
21. GREAT!
22. I knew you could do it
23. Congratulations!
24. Not bad
25. Keep working on it.
26. You're improving.
27. Now you have it
28. You are learning fast.
29. Good for you!
30. Couldn't have done it better myself.
31. Aren't you proud of yourself?
32. One more time and you'll have it.
33. You really make my job fun.
34. That's the right way to do it.
35. You're getting better every day.
36. You did it that time!
37. That's not half bad.
38. Nice going
39. You haven't missed a thing!
40. WOW!
41. That's the way!
42. Keep up the good work.
43. TERRIFIC!
44. Nothing can stop you now.
45. That's the way to do it.
46. SENSATIONAL!
47. You've got your brain in gear today.
48. That's better.



94 Ways To Encourage Your Athletes!

- | | |
|--|--|
| 49. That was first class work. | 74. You certainly did well today. |
| 50. EXCELLENT! | 75. Keep it up! |
| 51. That's the best ever. | 76. Congratulations. You got it right! |
| 52. You've just about mastered it. | 77. You did a lot of work today. |
| 53. PERFECT! | 78. Well look at you go. |
| 54. That's better than ever. | 79. I'm very proud of you. |
| 55. Much better! | 80. MARVELOUS! |
| 56. WONDERFUL! | 81. I like that. |
| 57. You must have been practicing. | 82. Way to go! |
| 58. You did that very well. | 83. Now you have the hang of it |
| 59. FINE! | 84. You're doing fine! |
| 60. Nice going. | 85. Good thinking. |
| 61. You're really going to town. | 86. You are really learning a lot. |
| 62. OUTSTANDING! | 87. Good going. |
| 63. FANTASTIC! | 88. I've never seen anyone do it better. |
| 64. TREMENDOUS! | 89. Keep on trying |
| 65. That's how to handle that | 90. You outdid yourself today! |
| 66. Now that's what I call a fine job. | 91. Good for you! |
| 67. That's great. | 92. I think you've got it now. |
| 68. Right on! | 93. That's a good (boy/girl). |
| 69. You're really improving. | 94. Good job, (person's name). |
| 70. You're doing beautifully! | |
| 71. SUPERB! | |
| 72. Good remembering. | |
| 73. You've got that down pat. | |



5 Steps for Dealing with an Irate Parent

With no exaggeration, the single most important meeting you'll ever have as a coach is your pre-season parent-coach meeting.

This is your opportunity to set out your coaching philosophy (including your plans for the team as a whole and your approach to player development). This is also your chance to explain team rules in a non-confrontational setting (before any discipline is needed), and to recruit volunteers to help you with administrative tasks.

You'll also clearly establish the responsibilities of coaches, parents, and athletes, how you will decide playing time and any administrative issues that are important.

Establishing the roles and responsibilities of coaches, parents, and athletes up front will help you avoid the majority of the potential problems that could crop up throughout the season.

But even if you have an effective pre-season meeting and do your best to manage the expectations of your athletes' parents, it is not uncommon for a parent to approach you in an irate way at some point.

Below are 5 important steps for handling irate parent complaints and resolving these issues in a way that should preserve your credibility and leave the parent feeling satisfied with the interaction.

1) When first approached by an irate parent, try to set up a meeting for the next day in your office. This gives you time to prepare and provides a private location for discussion (dealing with an angry parent on the court or field is never advisable).

2) Prior to the meeting, take time to analyze why the parent might be upset (is their child not playing in games, was their an injury, etc) so that you can have a better understanding of the parent's viewpoint during the meeting.

It is also recommended that you try to find another individual (Athletic Director, Principle, another coach) who is available to sit in on the meeting.

3) During the meeting, allow the parent to voice their frustrations and concerns (be an attentive listener and do NOT interrupt them). When it is your time to speak, explain your point of view as clearly as possible as it relates to THEIR child.



Keep the conversation focused on addressing the parent's specific concern. Do not become involved in comparing their child to other athletes on the team.

4) Remain calm during the meeting. Do not feel the need to match a parent's increased voice level. Try to keep your comments framed in a positive light.

At the end of the meeting, thank the parent for their concern and caring for their child, remind them that you will take their feelings into consideration.

5) After the meeting, discuss the exchange with whoever sat in on the meeting. Was there anything you could have done differently?

Is there anything you've learned that you can call upon the next time you face an irate parent. Is there a new topic that you should add to the pre-season meeting?

Few coaches look forward to dealing with an irate parent; however, the above tips will help you feel more confident and prepared when facing this inevitable challenge.