



Coach's Notes

Appleton Little League

Rookie Baseball

Rookie Softball

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Welcome!

Philosophy/Getting Organized 10 minutes

Hitting
Throwing/Defense 40 minutes

Communicating 10 minutes

Q & A/Discussion 30 minutes

Rookie

Notes about this level:

6-8 year-olds generally have 6-8 minute attention spans. You will have to plan accordingly, or less you're going to end up with piles of kids wrestling in the infield. Most of these kids can handle 2 ideas at a time. Keep things simple and don't spend more than 2 minutes explaining anything.

Use the provided practice plans. They're age and level appropriate.

Most kids should be ready to play catch with teammates at this level. Kids should play a variety of positions, but you need to be smart about where you put kids defensively. Pitcher and first base are the most dangerous positions at this level and kids who can't catch thrown balls or pay attention yet should 'graduate' to playing these positions. If a kid is not a safety concern, they should get to play these positions. . .they might drop the ball or miss it, but they should get the opportunity too.

Parents who aren't going to help out at practice should not be hanging around the field at this level. These kids should be ready to go through practice without a parent's assistance and we want to build on that growing independence. If parents are around at practice, insist that they help out with something -- collect balls for batting practice, run a station, anything.

Philosophy

Ideas for Consideration

You are not competing.

If you haven't coached it, you can't expect it.

Being tough. . .

Why do we coach?

How do we measure success in Little League?

Mechanics

Never talk mechanics in-game

Teach with external focus - what does the outcome look like?

Teaching can really only happen at practice, where mistakes are OK

Control

Message about what is in the players' control -- effort, hustle, preparation

Post-game -- no one's listening (write down talking points to USE at practice)

So, you volunteered to be a coach for your kid's ball team? Good for you! You're going to have a blast working with the kids (and the parents will be helpful and fun too!)

First things first, let's get you organized. Before you do any communicating, make sure you know what you're going to communicate.

1. Create an email or texting contact list. It's up to you about what you want to use. Texting can be more immediate, but it will limit how long your messages can be. Emails can be longer, but folks who don't have smartphones won't see the message right away.
2. Figure out the practice schedule. You decide the time. Make sure it works for you and your family. The other members of the team will make it work. The commissioner should give you information about how to sign-up for practice times.
3. Gather equipment. The commissioner or equipment coordinator will let you know when it's available.
4. Make a spreadsheet with everyone's names. This will help you organize things later. You could use it to keep track of when people turn in forms, sign-up for snacks or even play certain positions. Or let your Team Business Manager take care of this!

It's time to get in contact! Here's an idea of some things that you'll want to communicate before the first practice. (Yes, you have permission to cut and paste whatever you find useful.) It's also a good idea to attach any forms that you need filled out, if that's necessary.

Hi Everyone!

My name is Bob Bartenstein and I'll be your child's coach with the Appleton Little League this summer.

Here's some of the more important 'stuff' that you'll probably want to know to start:

1a. Please reply to this email, so that I know that it was received. Please send me your cell number if you have one. . .it's easier to text if we need to cancel practice. Even if you respond with 'Got it, 479-4544', it saves us both the time of a phone call.

1b. Our first game will be during the evening of June 7th.

2. The first practice will be this Friday at 6:00 over at Horizons/Woodland Park. Practice will be one hour and will be followed by short parent meeting which all parents must attend.

3. Youth sports requires many assistants. . .some of them on the field, some behind the scenes. This will be something I talk about at the Parent Meeting. If you can help out at practice, please let me know. The more adults we have at practice, the more we can get done. It would be best if I knew the day before practice if you could be there or not.

On game days some of things that coaches/helpers would be asked to do would be to: stand in a base coach area, keeping track of the batting order and making sure that all batters have a helmet AND bat before hitting, do field prep (before and after the game), or run concessions.

We are looking for a Team Business Manager. The job is to make sure that all kids and volunteers have the correct forms and certificates in. They setup a schedule (maybe a shared Google Doc) that outlines who's responsible for field prep and concessions on game day and are generally in charge of non-sports related business for the team.

4. I encourage each child to bring a glove, hat and cleats to practice. Bats aren't necessary to be owned by the kids. The team will have some bats.

Truly, this is a community effort. Little League is run entirely by volunteers, and this team will only benefit from each family helping out to the best of their abilities. I see my job as the coach to be the role of facilitator to make sure this community has the best spring possible. Help out and encourage everyone involved. It's going to be great.

I hope that's all of the important stuff. If you have any questions please include them in your reply. Thanks.

Coach Bartenstein

Parent Meeting

My Background

Introductions - your names, your player, where you live (for carpooling help), and the family's youth sports experience

Philosophy of Coaching

I love baseball and want the kids to have fun and perhaps love the game as well. We'll keep kids active and engaged so that they have fun and learn. The kids will be taught foundational baseball skills that will help them develop their skill level. Youth sports is a community event. This team will succeed if we all pitch in.

Here's what you can expect from me

- I'll treat your son/daughter fairly
- I'll begin and end practices on time
- I'll do my best to make your son/daughter a better player
- I'll be respectful to you, officials, other players and coaches
- I'll play your son/daughter in more than one position

Here's what I expect from you

- Someone will call me or email me when a player will miss a *game*
- Come to and be on time for practices and games
- Respect boundaries (stay out of the dugout)
- Respectful behavior toward coaches, officials, other players and coaches
- Be positive and supportive of your son/daughter's efforts

Here's what I expect from each player

- Make new friends
- Your best effort each day
- Try new skills
- Respect boundaries (stay out of the stands)
- If you have any concerns, share them with me. I should not hear from your parents first.
- Be respectful toward coaches, umpires, other players and coaches

Practice Schedule

We will have 1 practice time available per week. Make what you can.
Friday 5-6 @ Woodland Park wherever there's room

Gameday Helpers

- Scorekeeper** - Keep the batting order, call out on-deck and in-the-hole, keep track of score
- Field Master** - update the fielder schedule each inning (tell or show to kids)
- Pitching Coach** - make sure new pitchers are ready
- 1st Base Coach** - high five machine, keep runners focused

Equipment

Each player should have a glove, grey baseball pants, and rubber cleats.
Recommended: a baseball bag, a bat they can swing comfortably, and water bottle

Wishlist:

extra tees, extra balls, a set of bases, empty cat litter buckets, wiffle balls, tennis balls

Questionnaire for Parents

Player's Name (please put the name that your child prefers) _____

Parent Names _____

Please list **best** emails and phone numbers: _____

What is your child's experience with playing baseball?

What would you like your child to get out of Little League this summer?

Does your child have any medical conditions that we should know about?

What would you like or be willing to do for the team? (Circle all that may apply)

ANYTHING!

Team Business Manager

Help carpool kids for games or practices

Scorekeeper

Field Prep periodically

Run concessions periodically

Help at Practice

Is there anything else that you or your child would like to tell me?

6-8 year olds

Balance, Consistency, Power

6-8 year old approach: Hit the ball as hard as you can.

Mental Process: Prepare to hit every pitch; Load.

Stance

1. Wide enough so they won't fall down; knees inside feet
2. Hands are just outside back shoulder, close to the armpit
3. Back eye fully at the pitcher

Swing

1. Load - hands move away from front foot
2. Front side pulls
3. Bottom half drives
4. Front arm stiff, back elbow stays against body

Load - Coil the Spring
Hop/Spread/Swing

Notes

Rock the Baby

Hip Separation - Stretch the band
Hips/Hands

Happy Gilmore

Bat Path - Attack!
Check Swing

*How to set up for tee

*How to side toss

*BP with a process goal -- back up middle

*Where to strike the ball for backspin

Common Problems:

Lunging toward pitcher - this usually comes from trying to use the hands to hit the ball. If that's the case, using a soccer ball off the tee, and trying to hit it in the air can force the hitter to stay back.
Swinging to just make contact (swinging slowly) - a focus of practice should be to hit the ball hard. Hitters need to practice at the speed that they'll be competing at.

Missing the ball - usually this happens because the eyes are moving (if they have enough experience where you'd expect them to be able to hit consistently). Eyes should stay aimed toward the pitcher at all times. The head doesn't ever move to track the pitch.

Not loading - this should be another focus of practice at this level. Every pitch, every swing should get loaded up.

Arms extending - this typically happens because it feels powerful mechanically to extend arms, then rotate, but it's incredibly slow. Use the Check swing drill

Around the bases

- Extending from base
- Moving to the base, from close
- Tags to bases
- Tags to runners
- Rundowns

Flyballs

- Catch on throwing shoulder
- Catch with the intent to continue
- Coming in
- Drop Angles - running on balls of feet
- Communication/Backup

Sliding

- Basic form
- Find the ball

Baserunning

- Run inside the bases
- Lead off the outside of the bases
- Reading groundballs in front/behind
- Picking up 3rd base coach
- Read getting looked back

Control space/Catchers (blocking)

- Catch with gear in front

Bunting

Pitchers/Catchers (fielding)

Pitchers

- Comebacker
- Covering home
- Backing up bases

Catchers

- Backing up 1st

Groundballs

- Long hop
- Short hop
- Moving to get the hop
- Backhand

Keys to Practice Organization

1. Use your volunteers
2. Have a pace. (1 rep every 10 seconds)
3. Keep the kids active. . . avoid lines.
4. Have a plan. Overplan. Kids can generally sustain focus 1 minute for each year old.
5. Coaches guide. Let kids feed each other. . . gives them a small break and makes them accountable to each other.

Practice Plan 1

12 6-8 year-olds, 3 coaches and a field, 90 minutes

10 min: active plyo and running form warm-up

10-15 min: longtoss

15 min: defensive position work (1st position)

Coach 1: Outfielders (in the grass) - pass patterns, diamond pattern, flyballs

Coach 2: Infielders (on the dirt) - partnered one-hops, underhand feeds, groundballs

Coach 3: Baserunning - leading off, timing pitches

15 min: defensive position work (2nd position)

Coach 1: Outfielders (in the grass) - pass patterns, diamond pattern, flyballs

Coach 2: Infielders (on the dirt) - partnered one-hops, underhand feeds, groundballs

Coach 3: Baserunning - leading off, timing pitches

30 min: offense

Coach 1: 2 tees and wiffles (behind 2nd base, facing toward the outfield fence) front knee tee, one-arm bottom arm

Coach 2: 2 toss stations with wiffles (centerfield fence pointing toward 2nd base) lag position, chin-to-shoulder

Coach 3: 2 toss stations with baseballs (at home plate) batting practice

5 min: workout; Tabata Squat Jumps (20 sec. on, 10 sec off x 8)

Practice Plan 2

12 8-10 year-olds, 4 coaches and a field, 90 minutes

10 min: active plyo and running form warm-up

10-15 min: longtoss

15 min: defensive position work (1st position)

Coach 1: Outfielders (in the grass) - diamond pattern, 2 line communication, flyballs

Coach 2: Infielders (on the dirt) - underhand feeds, glove to nose, groundballs

Coach 3: Baserunning - reading groundballs in front/behind

Coach 4: Catchers - getting gear on

15 min: defensive position work (2nd position)

Coach 1: Outfielders (in the grass) - diamond pattern, 2 line communication, flyballs

Coach 2: Infielders (on the dirt) - underhand feeds, glove to nose, groundballs

Coach 3: Coach 3: Baserunning - reading groundballs in front/behind

Coach 4: Catchers - getting gear on

30 min: Live Situations BP

Coach 1: Outfielders (backing up, communicating)

Coach 2: Left side of Infield

Coach 3: Right side of Infield

Coach 4: Pitchers and Catchers

5 min: workout; Tabata One-legged Hops: side-to-side, front-to-back (20 sec. on, 10 sec off x 8)

Practice Plan 3

12 11-12 year-olds, 3 coaches and a field, 90 minutes

10 min: active plyo and running form warm-up

10-15 min: longtoss

15 min: defensive position work (1st position)

Coach 1: Outfielders (in the grass) - pass patterns, diamond pattern, flyballs

Coach 2: Infielders (on the dirt) - partnered backhands, underhand feeds, groundballs

Coach 3: Sidling Form in grass

15 min: defensive position work (2nd position)

Coach 1: Outfielders (in the grass) - pass patterns, diamond pattern, flyballs

Coach 2: Infielders (on the dirt) - partnered backhands, underhand feeds, groundballs

Coach 3: Sidling Form in grass

30 min: offense

Coach 1: 2 tees and wiffles (behind 2nd base, facing toward the outfield fence) front knee tee, happy gilmore

Coach 2: 2 toss stations with wiffles (centerfield fence pointing toward 2nd base) lag position, bottom arm w/help

Coach 3: 2 toss stations with tennis balls (at home plate) fast toss (pitcher throws hard from knee)

5 min: workout; Tennis Ball Squeezes -- as many as you can in a minute/ rest 1 minute

Practice Plan 4

12 11-12 year-olds, 4 coaches and a field, 90 minutes

10 min: active plyo and running form warm-up

10-15 min: longtoss

15 min: defensive position work (1st position)

Coach 1: Outfielders (in the grass) - groundball throws, flyball throws, flyballs

Coach 2: Infielders (on the dirt) - barehand pickups, flyballs, groundballs

Coach 3: Baserunning - getting looked back

Coach 4: Catchers - backing up 1st

15 min: defensive position work (2nd position)

Coach 1: Outfielders (in the grass) - groundball throws, flyball throws, flyballs

Coach 2: Infielders (on the dirt) - barehand pickups, flyballs, groundballs

Coach 3: Baserunning - getting looked back

Coach 4: Catchers - backing up 1st

15 min: Team Defense

Coach 1: Cuts from outfield (right side) in charge of the OF

Coach 2: Cuts from outfield (left side) in charge of the INF

Coach 3: Run downs (between 3rd and home)

Coach 4: Catchers - backing up 1st

15 min: Live Situations BP

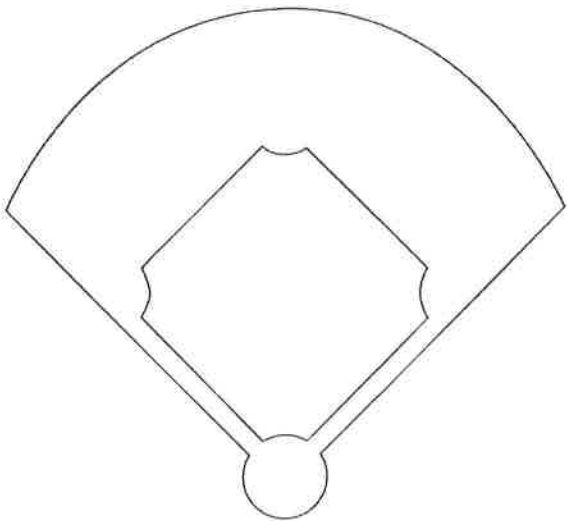
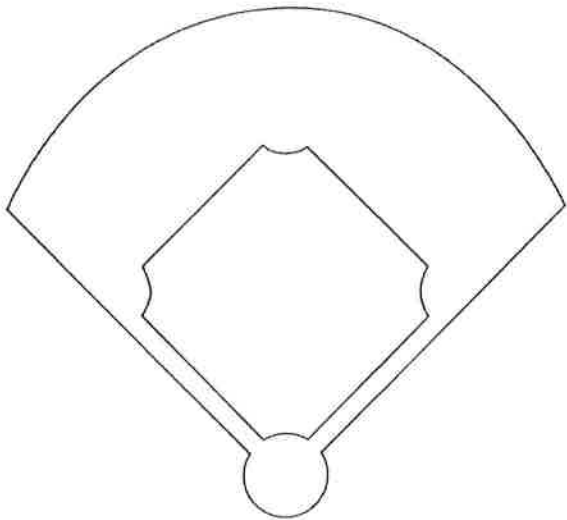
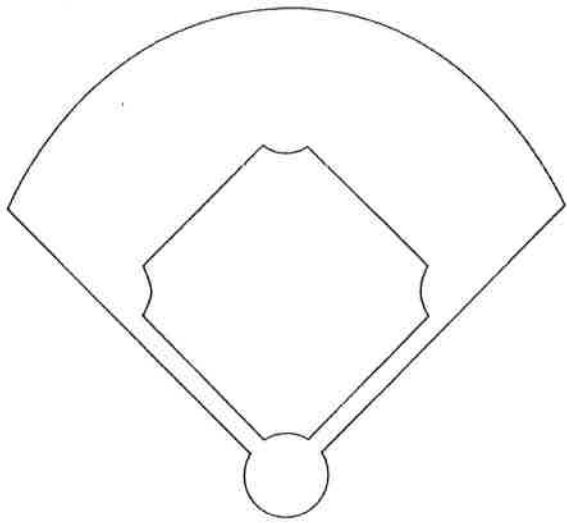
Coach 1: Outfielders (backing up, communicating)

Coach 2: Left side of Infield

Coach 3: Right side of Infield

Coach 4: Pitchers and Catchers

5 min: workout; 5 second sprints/15 sec rest x 15



1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____
11. _____
12. _____
13. _____

Throwing

External Control -- look for backspin

Grip

Throwing Progression

Use to build form, fluency and accuracy

(Level 1) Slot/Slap

(Level 2) Slot/Slap with Shoulder Turn

(Level 3) + 2 steps

(Level 4) + Hip Separation

(Level 5) Full, 2-Step Catch

Longtoss

Use to build arm strength.

Extension

Pulldown
