



Coach's Notes

Appleton Little League

Teeball Beginner Baseball

Teeball Softball

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Welcome!

Philosophy/Getting Organized/
Developmental Level 10 minutes

The Baseball Part 40 minutes
Hitting
Fielding
Baserunning

Communicating 10 minutes

A typical practice 10 minutes

A typical game 10 minutes

Q&A 10 minutes

Beginner Teeball

Notes about this level:

4-5 year-olds generally have 4-5 minute attention spans. You will have to plan accordingly, or less you're going to end up with piles of kids wandering off. They can only handle one idea at a time. Keep things simple and don't spend more than 1 minute explaining anything.

Parents should attend and help kids at practice and games at this level. Once a kid has shown that they can be responsible for themselves and keep people safe, talk with the parents about being less involved. Most kids at the end of the season will still have parents with them at the end of the season, and that's completely fine and normal. Hopefully by the end of the season, you'll be able to coach from the dugout, not the field.

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

Most kids aren't ready to catch thrown balls at this level. Until they're ready, kids should play catch with parents. A simple way to check for safety is to stand directly in front of the kid toss them a ball that travels over their head. If they track it with their eyes, they might be ready. . .if not, keep an adult by them anytime a ball might be flying toward them.

Use the parents. They're your buddies at this level. You're just the leader of the club.

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.

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. . .at this level, we're all assistants. I will filter information to the kids through you. The kids will need a responsible, older person to attend practice and help them out. At games, we hope to eventually let kids take care of things themselves, but for now, we'll need someone to take the field with them.

On game days we'll need to rake the fields and stay with the kids most of the time.

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, 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
- Respectful behavior toward coaches, 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
- Cheer for your team

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

- Everyone stays by their child on the field
- On offense, we'll be base coaches, prepping batters and dugout helpers

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

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?

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

4-5 year olds

Balance, Body awareness

4-5 year old approach: Hit the ball as hard as you can.

Mental Process: yeah right

Stance

1. Hop, spread
2. Hands away from the tee

Swing

1. Load - hands move away from front foot
2. Head stays over back knee
3. Hard, in case you hit it

Super Happy Fun Drills

Stance

Hop/Spread/Swing

Notes

Load

Knob Back

Hip Separation

Stride

*How to set up for tee

Common Teeball Hitting 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 ball.

Not loading - this should be another focus of practice at this level. Every pitch, every swing should get loaded up. In a game, pull the knob back for them.

Infielding

- Moving to the base, from close
- Force outs
- Covering bases

Flyballs

- Track balls above eyes

Sliding

Baserunning

- Run through home and first
- When to run
- Where to run
- Stop on 2nd and 3rd
- Listen to coaches

Control space/Catchers (blocking)

Bunting

Pitchers/Catchers (fielding)

Pitchers

Catchers

Groundballs

- Position
- Covering your area
- Make a ramp

Field Sense

- Knows positions
- Understands responsibilities (space)

Practice #1

Objectives

Running bases- players will be quick/run hard, learn the direction and order of bases

Throwing- players will step with the opposite leg, point with glove and throw from the near the ear

Catching- players will keep their feet still and hold the glove sideways

Batting- player will learn how to hold a bat and learn to hop/spread into a comfortable stance

Activities

1. Running Bases Warmup

Kids split up at all four bases. Run base-to-base. Run past first and home.

2. Instruct Throwing

Turn sideways, step, point with glove, ball near ear
Throwing into fence

3. Instruct Catching

Facing throwers, glove sideways, clap hands
Coaches underhanding balls to players progress to kneeling overhand

4. Instruct Getting Out of Box Quickly

Split up to four bases. Run base-to-base after pantomime swing.

5. 4 on 4 game

Hitter hits, runs. 3 throws made before runner gets around.

Stop Points:

Holding bat – hands together, choking up

Hitting- Jump spread swing

Homework

Jump/Spread Swing 10 times in a row without falling

Play Catch

Practice #2

Objectives

Running bases- players will learn how to run two bases at a time (a double)

Throwing- players will step with the opposite leg, point with glove and throw from the near the ear

Catching- players will keep their feet still and hold the glove sideways
players will create a ramp for groundballs (by using their glove) to run up

Batting- players will practice how to hold a bat and to hop/spread into a comfortable stance
players will twist the back leg while swinging

Field Sense – players will learn the difference between infield and outfield

Activities

1. Running Bases Warmup

Running doubles by looping bases. Coach stands and directs traffic.

2. Playing Catch Review

With a coach - Point and throw, glove sideways, feet still when catching

3. Instruct Groundball Fielding

Hop/Spread, butt down and head down

Make your glove a ramp that the ball wants to run up.

Use the throwing hand to trap the ball.

Practice with a coach - roll ground balls (Advanced step: move to pick up groundballs)

Kids roll balls to each other to let the balls run up their gloves.

4. Instruct Field Sense

Show them four places- dugout, batter's box, infield and outfield (discuss the differences)

Put a coach in each location with a couple of kids

Each coach calls out a location for the kids to run to, they run to the new location

5. 2nd Base Game

Hitter hits, runs bases to second base. Fielders try to get the ball to second before the runner does. They'll want to run the ball, point out that throwing is quicker.

Homework

Jump/Spread Swing 10 times in a row without falling

Play Catch with groundballs

Plan 3

7 Stations (1 for each kid and parent-coach)

Materials: teeballs, a dodgeball (or similar), cones or something else to use as field markers, a tee, targets to throw at, lots of 'coaches'

1. Ball Toss -- play catch with a dodgeball-sized ball, but don't let it hit your chest! Move on to smaller and smaller balls.
2. Race to First, Hitting! -- player hits the ball off the tee, coach fields it, race to first!
3. Race to First, Fielding! -- coach hits the ball off the tee, player fields it, race to first! Keep the hits near the base.
4. Race to First, Passing! (2 coaches and a player, really 3 coaches because one can organize kids taking turns)-- coach hits the ball off the tee, player fields it, tosses it to another coach at the base.
5. Defend the Cones -- player can't let the ball past the cones as a coach rolls the ball. Gradually space the cones farther apart
6. Target Toss -- setup simple targets for kids to throw at, make a point system. Coach counts points. Kids can compete to beat their own high scores (not the scores of other kids)
7. Tee Hitting -- hop, spread, swing! Cream the ball! Repeat.

Emphasis:

1. Hands working together to catch. Careful about throwing balls that are higher than kids' eyes. Not all kids will track objects over their eye level
2. If they want to win the races and defend the cones they need to stay on their feet. Maybe tell them that teeball players should have clean knees!
3. When throwing, get them to point their glove at where they're throwing. If they are able to, get them to turn sideways to throw and point.
4. Before swinging, have them hop and spread their feet to a comfortable place. Then they swing! This will help with balance, bat control and will lead to more power eventually.

Practice #4 -- Almost Game Ready 1

Objectives

Running bases- players will be quick/run hard, learn the direction and order of bases

Throwing- players will step with the opposite leg, point with glove and throw from the near the ear

Catching- players will keep their feet still and hold the glove sideways

Batting- player will learn how to hold a bat and learn to hop/spread into a comfortable stance

Field Sense - players will learn where to position on defense

Activities

1. Running Bases Warmup

Kids split up at all four bases. Run base-to-base. Run past first and home.

2. Instruct Throwing

Turn sideways, step, point with glove, ball near ear

Throwing into fence

3. Instruct Catching

Facing throwers, glove sideways, clap hands

Coaches underhanding balls to players progress to kneeling overhand

4. Instruct Getting Out of Box Quickly

Split up to four bases. Run base-to-base after pantomime swing.

5. Getting in Position

Quickly show them where each of the infielders begins play.

1B -- 3 steps from first 2B -- $\frac{1}{3}$ of the way from 2nd, between 1st and second

SS -- $\frac{1}{3}$ of the way from 2nd, between 2nd and 3rd 3B -- 3 steps from 3rd

P -- on the rubber C -- 3 steps behind the tee

Everyone starts by the dugout (on the field), gloves off, catchers' helmet on the ground.

Parent/Coaches might start on the field at the positions to help orient the kids, but you'll want to eliminate this when the kids are ready.

Assign kids a position, they are to grab their glove and run out to the correct position.

Repeat. A lot.

6. Play a game

Homework: Jump/Spread Swing 10 times in a row without falling Play Catch

Practice #5 -- Almost Game Ready 2

7 Stations (1 for each kid and parent-coach)

Materials: teeballs, a dodgeball (or similar), cones or something else to use as field markers, a tee, targets to throw at, lots of 'coaches'

1. Ball Toss -- play catch with a dodgeball-sized ball, but don't let it hit your chest! Move on to smaller and smaller balls.
2. Race to First, Hitting! -- player hits the ball off the tee, coach fields it, race to first!
3. Race to First, Fielding! -- coach hits the ball off the tee, player fields it, race to first! Keep the hits near the base.
4. Race to First, Passing! (2 coaches and a player, really 3 coaches because one can organize kids taking turns)-- coach hits the ball off the tee, player fields it, tosses it to another coach at the base.
5. Defend the Cones -- player can't let the ball past the cones as a coach rolls the ball. Gradually space the cones farther apart
6. Target Toss -- setup simple targets for kids to throw at, make a point system. Coach counts points. Kids can compete to beat their own high scores (not the scores of other kids)
7. Tee Hitting -- hop, spread, swing! Cream the ball! Repeat.

8. . Getting in Position

Assign kids a position, they are to grab their glove and run out to the correct position.

9. Drag a bat in across the field to draw lines like this:

Play a game. Players must stay in their zone.

Pitchers may not go behind the mound.

Catchers should get everything they can.

It is recommended to drag the line like this for games too.

Homework: Jump/Spread Swing 10 times in a row without falling

Practice #6 -- Game Ready

7 Stations (1 for each kid and parent-coach)

Materials: teeballs, a dodgeball (or similar), cones or something else to use as field markers, a tee, targets to throw at, lots of 'coaches'

1. Ball Toss -- play catch with a dodgeball-sized ball, but don't let it hit your chest! Move on to smaller and smaller balls.
2. Race to First, Hitting! -- player hits the ball off the tee, coach fields it, race to first!
3. Race to First, Fielding! -- coach hits the ball off the tee, player fields it, race to first! Keep the hits near the base.
4. Race to First, Passing! (2 coaches and a player, really 3 coaches because one can organize kids taking turns)-- coach hits the ball off the tee, player fields it, tosses it to another coach at the base.
5. Defend the Cones -- player can't let the ball past the cones as a coach rolls the ball. Gradually space the cones farther apart
6. Target Toss -- setup simple targets for kids to throw at, make a point system. Coach counts points. Kids can compete to beat their own high scores (not the scores of other kids)
7. Tee Hitting -- hop, spread, swing! Cream the ball! Repeat.
8. Drag a bat in across the field to draw lines like this:

Play a game. Players must stay in their zone.
Pitchers may not go behind the mound.
Catchers should get everything they can.

It is recommended to drag the line like this for games too.

New element: As the ball is hit, everyone (except the pitcher) has a base to cover if the ball is not hit to them. Players should first see if the ball is hit into their zone, then run to their base and look for the ball.

Homework: Jump/Spread Swing 10 times in a row without falling
 Play catch.

Use these to make a plan for where each player will play and bat each inning.

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____
- 4. _____
- 5. _____
- 6. _____
- 7. _____
- 8. _____
- 9. _____
- 10. _____

