



Berlin Youth Baseball – Practice Agendas

Goal of this document: This document is meant to help you build out a practice agenda and come prepared to a practice. Just showing up without a plan most of the time ends up with a more chaotic practice that ends up unorganized and means your team didn't improve as much as they could've.

Have a game plan before you get there: Coming prepared, even with just a skeleton outline of what you're hoping to accomplish is important. A step above coming with an agenda, is making each practice agenda consistent to the youth in terms of having starting, middle, and ending activities that they find familiar. Try to hit on topics that your team is struggling with (e.g. if your team is great at hitting, but keeps losing by giving up tons of runs, then focus a good chunk of practice on defense).

Keep them guessing: While repetition is good, and key to success at the youth baseball levels, make sure your practices are boring, mundane, and the same exact thing over and over again. Your youth will notice and be less engaged if they think it's the same over and over. Even though you're hoping to do tee work to practice hitting, add different techniques into the tee work by googling or searching for different drills that switch it up so it feels like something new to the youth.

Set a timer: Time flies when you're having fun. If you outlined 4 activities you want to accomplish in your 1 hour practice, then you should set a timer on your phone for every 15 minutes to make sure you rotate and switch to the next activity. Otherwise it is very common to get carried away on one activity, lose track of time, and never get to the other items you needed to practice with them.

Word of the Day: It is always a good idea to have a topic or word of the day for your practice. For example, today you're focusing on "teamwork" or "intensity", or maybe you want to be more baseball centric and focus on "groundballs", "fielding", etc. By establishing this topic of focus it ensures that you yourself stay on task, and you also ensure that the youth are paying particular attention to what you're teaching.

Don't forget the fun: Remember to schedule into your agenda some type of fun activity, some baseball related game like a relay race, or a hit the target activity, or a throwing elimination game, some kind of reward for all the youth's hard work at practice. Remember that you can even make normal repetitive activities like throwing and tee work into a game ... by having them try to catch 100 in a row, or trying to hit the ball to the center of the net 20 times in a row.

Sample agenda with a single coach (no helpers):

- 5pm [Youth do warm-up throws until all players arrive]
- 5:10pm [Team huddle, phrase of the day is “never give up”, talk a little bit about the last game/practice and what we need to work on today]
- 5:15pm [Stretching and running routine]
- 5:20pm [Tee Work, players line up with tees & soft toss along the outfield fence, coaches walk around analyzing player swings, players are expected to keep swinging even when the coach isn't by them]
- 5:30pm [Pitcher/Catcher work, players line up in outfield in pairs, one player in crouching position and one as the pitcher, parallel to each other and take turns one side as the pitcher, coaches walk around analyzing pitching techniques]
- 5:40pm [Groundballs, players go into the infield, split into 2-3 players at each infield position, coach hits groundballs, throw to first for the out]
- 5:50pm [Closing Game, end with a fun relay race around the bases]
- 5:55pm [Closing Huddle, re-iterate the phrase of the today & topics learned]

Sample agenda with multiple coaches (e.g. Use Stations):

- 5pm [Youth do warm-up throws until all players arrive]
- 5:10pm [Team huddle, phrase of the day is “never give up”, talk a little bit about the last game/practice and what we need to work on today]
- 5:15pm [Stretching and running routine]
- 5:20pm [Start our station work, rotate every 10 minutes, today we have 3 stations
 - 1.) hitting off tees against the left field fence
 - 2.) pitcher/catcher practice along the right field fence
 - 3.) groundballs in the infield]
- 5:50pm [Closing Game, end with a fun relay race around the bases]
- 5:55pm [Closing Huddle, re-iterate the phrase of the today & topics learned]