

2025 Millers Coaches Training "Millers Way"

Group 1 - MM, 9U, 10U, 11A

Group 2 - 11AA-AAA, 12U, 13U, 14U, 15U

Overview

-Intro and Warmups - 10:00 - 10:05 am

-Throwing progression - 10:05 - 10:15 am

-Session 1 - 10:15 - 11:15 am

- Group 1: Pitching
- Group 2: Hitting/Infield/Outfield stations (20 minutes each)

-Session 2 - 11:30 am - 12:30 pm

- Group 1: Hitting/Infield/Outfield stations (20 minutes each)
- Group 2: Pitching

- Session 3 - 12:45 - 1:30 pm

- All: Catching

Intro - 2 mins

Stretch, Dynamics (Rob) - 3 mins

Stretch (basics): Arm Circles, Across Chest, Behind head, wrist, Legs, hip, groin, squat

Dynamics: Butt kickers, high knees, Frankensteins, Carioca, Base stealing (take your time to stretch, not a race)

Throwing progression (Mike) - 10 mins

Throwing progression & how to catch a ball (make sure your partner is ready to catch the ball):

- Baseball Grip
- On a knee progression: wrist flicks, ball on shoulder, arm to side at 90°, full extension back
- Stuck in the mud (Feet stationary and turning body)
- Weight back, front, back, throw
- T Throws, Step at target and throw (weight transfer)
- Full throw progression: short to long toss

Stations for Fundamentals – Hitting, infield, outfield - 60 mins

Hitting: (Joe) - 20 mins

- #1 rule, if you have a bat in your hand, make sure you know who is around you before swinging
- How to set up at plate
- Basic batting stance and positioning in box - distance from base
- [Swing sequence](#): load, launch, swing (hip then hands), contact (palm up/palm down), extension, follow-through
- Tendencies and drills to help
 - **Grip**: line up knocking knuckles
 - **Stepping out**: rotate stance so feet are closed (right foot is closer to the plate than left foot), put bucket behind front foot, mix in wiffle/tennis balls into front toss bucket and plunk player with wiffle balls; progressively increase speed (turn back to wiffle and drop bat if can't get out of way)
 - **Casting**
 - Put ball on tee with its vertical lines ("train tracks") going up/down and facing the catcher. Have player hit the inside track (ball should go to opposite field)
 - Start with bat on side of shoulder or corner of shoulder to have players feel their shoulders rotate to deliver the barrel
 - Put lightweight deflated ball between bat and shoulder during each swing (connection ball)

- **Pulling head:** eyes lock on circle on top of tee after contact, put something on the ground in front of tee, glove on head, have player slow motion their swing and keep face on contact thru follow through, swing with chin on front shoulder to back shoulder
- **Rolling over:** correct grip, freeze swing on extension (tee and front toss)—60% swing
- **Lunge:** line up with stride foot touching a fence (as if the fence is pitcher) and slow-motion swing to rotate behind the fence so the bat is flat/parallel to the fence—this creates the feeling of rotating behind the ball, Happy Gilmore swing
- **Drop shoulder/pop-ups:** Barry Bonds drill [Long version](#) and [Short version](#)
- [Tee drills](#)
- [Soft toss](#)
- Front toss (throw from appropriate age-level—underhand, sitting on bucket, overhand, etc.)

Infield: (Rob/Mike) - 20 mins

- Demo triangle
- Drill: Partner progression (3 feet apart):
 - Knees no glove, roll the ball to each other down the middle, 2 hands on ball, bring to chest x 10 each (do the same with backhand/forehand when they're ready)
 - Stand with glove on x 10 each
- Teach concept of momentum
 - Drill:
 - Set up cones in a line directed towards 1B
 - All players stand at shortstop in a line
 - One at a time:
 - #1: Roll balls, player fields, and sides steps along the cones to 1B
 - #2: #1 with throw 2 coach at 1B (recommend net behind 1B)
 - #3: When they're ready, set 3 cones at SS and roll BH, Middle, FH, then mix the 3
- Infielding grounders at rotating positions

Outfield: (Josh/Pete) - 20 mins

- No glove, players catch dodgeballs/soccer balls
- Tennis balls and helmet drill
 - Progression - helmet, barehand, glove (on to safety balls, then baseballs)
 - Turn and catches
 - Wide Receiver catches
 - Running with glove down / tuck ball under glove arm
 - Backside throws
- Footwork Drill:
 - Have players line up in 2 rows about 5 feet apart facing coach
 - Then point random directions
- Box drill (X-Drill) - 4-cones in a square, start with telling the location, then guess
- Angle Cut offs & Relay (Y - Drill)
- Lightning bolt (Z-Drill)
- 2-ball Drill:
 - Roll a grounder for player to charge, then throw a fly ball to the back right, left, middle
- Relay Race - Receiving cuts

Split team training – Pick two activities below and split the team in half

Baserunning & Sliding

Batting Practice (BP can be done OF)

- Throw BP from a knee (bring a pad for you knee)
- Kids on deck on tee, other kids in OF (rotate)

Infield

Outfield

Cut-offs / relay throwing

Pitchers & Catchers

End practice w/ Contest or Game

Scrimmage

T-ball

Kid pitch BP

Kick ball

Situations by teams of 3 (Coach hits, players run bases) fielders need to get 3 outs and switch to new group of 3.

Stick ball w/ tennis ball, wiffle balls

Tennis ball baseball (no gloves)

Target Toss at Ball on T (stuffed animal or fun target)

Golden Arm - Throw to the target at home base from a reasonable distance (scoring system - online rolling, in flight, etc..)

4-corners drill (Around the horn)

Hot Potato

Pickle

Counting catches

Obstacle Course

Relay Race

Knock out, fielders between home to 1st vs. 2B to 3B, throw balls across for errors AND to back-up

Common player issues: (Listen to your coaches)

Hitting: Spatial Awareness when swinging a bat, Bat throwing, Hit by pitch, Striding toward pitch, steady head, overswinging, 2-strike swing / not getting to launch, pulling head, stepping out

Fielding: not fielding in the center of body (fearful of ball), calling & catching pop-flies, knowing situations (outs, where the play is, etc...), Ball 1st (you can come off base to catch the ball)

Baserunning: Running through first base and don't watch the play, rounding bases, listening to your base coaches (watch 3rd base when getting to 2b), stealing

Suggestions & Tips

- Keep the practices fun and exciting - Less talk, more action
- Recommended Practice time 1.5 hr
- BE A LEADER IN A POSITIVE INTERACTION WITH UMPIRES! RESPECT THE UMPIRES AND ALLOW THEM TO MAKE MISTAKES and RESPOND RESPECTFULLY.
- Practice plan built to keep kids moving (minimize kids standing around and horseplay)
- Structured consistent practice plan shared with ACs
- Defining roles helps: hitting, fielding, outfielding, Pitch/catch instructors / Base & dugout coaches
- Throwing and Catch, have the kids that need work play with coach / coaches have balls on-hand to give to kids / back the kids up
- Coaches Write all players name/numbers on hat
- Reinforce proper baseball attire, wearing a cup, hat, cleats, pants, jersey
- Alphabetical line up (kids know who they bat after)
- Continuous batting order
- Rotate players in to infield/outfield for safety, but also challenge them
- Have a pitching and catching rotation (especially for those hot days)
- Prep catchers on the base paths, pull them off bases when necessary to allow them time to gear up

- Infield captain for calling out the # of outs and where the play is
- Practice throwback to pitcher (Catcher walk it to throw and Pitcher walk to catch)
- Steal bases
- End practice with a team meet and cheer (Millers on 3, 123 Millers)

Resources:

Director of Mini-Millers: Parvati & Noah

MYBA Coaching/Training Coordinators: Joe Larson joe.larson@mplsmillers.org and Josh Larson josh.larson@mplsmillers.org

Millers Drills and Sample Practice Plan (with videos)

<https://usabdevelops.com/page/1363/drills> / USA Baseball mobile coach
www.littleleague.org