

Millbrae Lions Baseball



Spring 2021 Tee Ball Coaching Guide

Philosophy

The primary goal of Tee Ball is to develop the joy of the game- Period. Fundamental baseball skills are a real bonus. Remember, these are young players who may be getting introduced to the game for the very first time. Capture their imagination! Your measure of success as a coach is whether the players express interest in continuing to explore the game after the end of the season because of all the fun that they had with you and your team! Having fun is the primary, and perhaps most important goal. It is a special moment in the lives of these young athletes, and you are a key part of making fun memories that last.

How to run a practice

Practices are key for harnessing the energy of your players towards advancing their skills and growing together as a team unit. Consistency and organization are absolute necessities.

As the coach, having learning goals and a plan are important in advance of each practice. Same goes for games to a more limited and less controlled extent. And, at this age, your players will have limited attention spans.

During practices, having stations where bite-sized learning of various skills can be learned is the recommended way of organizing your practice and of making it fun. In the following sections, the basic fundamental skills that players should be learning at this level will be discussed.

Sample drills effective for teaching the skills will also be discussed. Consider having multiple stations at each practice, with between 2 – 4 players rotating per station at a time. This will maximize personalized attention and repetition of the desired skills. It will also get the most out of the players' attention and focus.

Getting parent participation to help at each of the stations is key so that you can monitor progress across the entire field and assist where needed. Explain the learning lesson(s) for each station so that your parents are communicating the correct points.

A pro tip is to consider grouping the players into groups of similar skill levels. This allows each station to be adapted to the skill level of the group rotating through the station. Set the expectation at your first parent's meeting that you will need on-field help from all of the parents in order to make the season most successful.

Overview of Skills



Warm-ups:

- Stretching of the major muscle groups of arms and legs is recommended. While young athletes are nimble, stretching sets good habits that will be more important later in life.
- Short toss to loosen the arm. The shoulder and elbow are the most vulnerable in baseball players. Quick drills to loosen the arm are a good idea for all age groups. It also allows you as the coach to see progression of skill sets and determine how to group your players for the station drills that will follow.

Fielding:

- Fielding is a complicated skill requiring proper position/stance, footwork, balance, and hand-eye coordination. Breaking down the act of fielding into component parts can help young players learn the fundamentals of how to perform each piece of this skill. And, similar to hitting, it is important that the player watch the ball go all the way into the glove before initiating any other baseball play.
- Potential Drills:
 1. Baseball ready position (bent knees with weight on the balls of the feet to allow quick motion, with glove out in front of the body where the eyes can see the ball enter the glove)
 2. From baseball ready position, shuffling left and right (to teach how to get in front of a ball)
 3. Alligator chomps (concept of receiving the ball with two hands to get control of the ball)
 4. Glove work drills (how to catch a grounder right at you, to your left and to your right)
 5. Judging fly balls (tossing a sponge ball up and having player get under it so that the ball hits the brim of their cap)

Catching:

- Receiving the ball from a teammate is a key part of the game, and at the Tee ball level a critical component for player safety. Stressing keeping the eye on the ball at all times, keeping your hands in front of your body, and principles of glove work for balls that are thrown high/low or left/right are all important skills that can be worked on in drills.
- Potential Drills:
 1. Showing your “ten”  
 2. Glove work for balls thrown to the chest (above the waist is considered the high throw zone)
 3. Glove work for balls thrown below the waist (low throw zone)
 4. Glove work for balls thrown to the left and right in the high zone “Wind shield wiper”
 5. Glove work for balls thrown to the left and right in the low zone
- We have seen some coaches perform the glove work drills with players kneeling onto isolate the glove work from the footwork components.

Throwing:

- 1st Keeping your eye on the target, aligning your shoulders (“point”),
- 2nd Gathering momentum and using the legs to add power (“step”),
- 3rd Completing the arm motion (“throw”)

These are the key pieces for strong and accurate throws. Getting these fundamentals right at this age will build strong habits that can be built upon in more advanced throwing skills in later age groups.

Important at this age is to teach the responsibility of not throwing to a teammate who has lost attention and is no longer keeping their eye on the ball. This can help eliminate unintentional injuries in situations where player focus may be lost. It also teaches the fundamental concepts of teamwork and working together.

Potential Drills:

1. Throwing to a partner while on a knee to isolate the arm motion (short throws to ensure arm at the elbow forms an “L” shape)
2. Cement legs (short throws with legs shoulder-width apart, done without moving the legs, to reinforce the same arm concept motion as above)
3. Point-step-throw at progressively larger distances
4. Advanced skills only for players that have progressed through the fundamental skills: Advanced skills aimed to link Throwing skills with Footwork
 - a) Shuffle step or Crow-hop once body is “pointed” in the right direction (shoulders lined up in the direction of the desired target) for gathering momentum for longer distance throws
 - b) Shuffle hop to transition from catching to throwing more quickly (helping to align shoulders)

Hitting:

- One of the most fun aspects of the game, but perhaps one of the most complicated. At its most basic level, hitting is comprised of positioning in the batter’s box so that the hitter can cover the plate/tee with their swing, a batting stance that is relaxed and allows the player to keep both eyes on the ball, a loading motion that consists of a small step towards the pitching mound while keeping hands back, followed by a triggering of the lower half of the body consisting of turning/pivoting of feet and hips, followed by the swing of the hands and arms consisting of leading with the knob of the bat resulting in a short efficient path of the barrel of the bat through the ball, and finally the follow-through to ensure the swing is completed and all energy has been transferred from the player into the ball.
- The hitter’s grip of the bat is also very important. Teaching to hold the bat in the fingers more so than in the palms allows more control of the bat as well as allows a much smoother bat swing. Holding the bat too far into the palms or with hands over-rotated ends up locking the wrists and prevents a smooth and quick swing.
- Working on bat grip and then hitting off a tee, coaching staff can focus on each element of the swing.

Running the bases:

- Being able to get out of the batter’s box quickly, learning to run through the first base bag on an infield groundball, learning to round the first base bag in a hit into the outfield are some of the basic skills to start to teach at this level. But, even more importantly, building up the running muscles and player endurance are perhaps more important.
- Practice Drills:
 - 1) Running to first base, learning to run through the bag on the right side of the bag (away from the first baseman in order to reduce collisions)
 - 2) Rounding a base (using the inside corner of the bag as the most efficient place to step)
 - 3) Sliding (doing this on cardboard on the outfield grass is always a super fun activity)
 - 4) Relay race (have half the team on second base and half the team at home plate, give a ball to the first player in each line, and see which team can get through their half of the line-up the fastest in a relay race where as the first player returns to their starting base they must hand the ball off to the next teammate in line)

Game Rules

Detailed Tee ball game rules are in a separate document.

General Field Rules

1. **Please be mindful to keep our fields clean.** Due to covid-19, Food and personal snacks are not allowed on our fields. including gum, sunflower seeds, and any shelled nuts, which are also, strictly prohibited. **We ask for your cooperation in discarding all of your team's trash in the appropriate receptacles.**
2. No amplified music or noisemakers are allowed.
3. No dogs or other pets allowed.
4. Shelled Nuts, seeds, gum glass containers, alcohol, smoking and use of any tobacco products are not permitted.
5. BBQ and cooking equipment are not allowed.
6. Camping, RVs, and overnight parking are not allowed.
7. No stakes of any kind may be placed on any of the fields, at risk of damaging irrigation systems.
8. Please remember that these baseball games are played for the enjoyment and growth of our children. As such, please maintain a positive atmosphere that supports this goal.
9. Each head coach is responsible for the conduct of his team and its supporters.
10. Any player, coach, or spectator who acts in an unsportsmanlike manner may be ejected from the playing field by Division Commissioners. There will be a zero-tolerance policy regarding abusive, profane or otherwise inappropriate conduct directed toward coaches, spectators, or players.
11. Any player, coach, or spectator ejected from a game may also be suspended for the remainder of the season, subject again to the discretion of Millbrae Lions Baseball leadership.
12. Tee balls will be supplied by Millbrae Lions Baseball.
13. Positive cheers and chants are allowed and encouraged. Appropriate sportsmanship is expected from all participants. The goal is to create a fun and festive learning environment at all practices and games.

Playing Fields and Their Information

The 2021 Millbrae Lions Baseball Spring Tee-Ball Season will be held at the Spring Valley Elementary.

Spring Valley Elementary:

Address: 817 Murchison Dr, Millbrae, CA 94030

Google Map Location: [Spring Valley Elementary School - Google Maps](#)

Notes: Due to covid-19, games will be scrimmages with in your team

Water: Players should bring water/back up water.

Restrooms: There are restrooms at all of our sites ,bt will be closed due to covid-19

Dugouts and Spectator Stands: Our bleachers are mostly in full sun. Please bring hats. If you are seeking shade, you can watch the games from various spots on the perimeter of the field.

Snack stands: Due to Covid-19, snack stands will be closed

MLB Coordinators and Commissioners

League Coordinators:

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Tee-Ball Division Commissioners:

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2) Ramiro Hernandez

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Important Information about Millbrae

Nearby Hospitals:

CPMC Mills Peninsula Hospital (1.5 miles)

1501 Trousdale Drive

Burlingame, CA 94010

650-696-5400

[Google Map to Medical Center](#)

CPMC Mills San Mateo Campus (6.5 miles)

100 S. San Mateo Drive

San Mateo, CA 94010

[Google Map to Mills-Peninsula Medical Center - San Mateo Campus](#)

Kaiser Permanente Medical Center (7.5 miles)

1200 El Camino Drive

South San Francisco, CA 94080

[Google Map to Kaiser Permanente Medical Center](#)

Sponsors

There are multiple local stores, restaurants and other proud sponsors of Millbrae Lions Baseball! Without our sponsors, running this league is not possible. Please encourage our families to support all of our sponsors