

# ABR COACHES CLINIC

## BLASTBALL/TBALL

### **I. General Principles of a Practice** (Sacks -5 minutes)

- Safety
- Fun
- Lots of movement
- Mix in competition
- Cones, cones, cones
- [Minimize internal cues/Maximize external cues](#)
- Pull parents into practices, particularly helpful with throwing drills
- [Five to one compliment to constructive critique ratio.](#)
- Have a plan

### **II. General 60-Minute Practice Template** (Sacks – 2.5 minutes)

<b>Pre-practice arrival 10 minutes early</b>	<b>10 minutes</b>
<b>Warm Up &amp; Baserunning</b>	<b>5 minutes</b> + <b>5 minutes</b>
<b>Throwing &amp; Catching</b>	<b>6 minutes</b> + <b>6 minutes</b>
<b>Water Break</b>	<b>4 minutes</b>
<b>Double Stations</b>	<b>6 minutes</b> + <b>6 minutes</b>
<b>Team Work</b>	<b>15 minutes</b>
<b>Fun Conclusion</b>	<b>5 minutes</b>

### **III. Practice Segments Explained**

#### **Pre-practice arrival 10 minutes early** (Groharing – 2.5 minutes)

Review safety rules	Safety rules
Start warmups early if possible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Only pick up a bat when the coach tells you</li> <li>• No helmet – No bat</li> <li>• Only throw the ball when you have eye contact with receiver.</li> <li>• Are you on your cone?</li> </ul>

## Warm Up & Baserunning (Groharing – 10 minutes)

<p><b><u>Warm Up</u></b> Dynamic Not Static</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Fun</li> <li>○ Improves coordination</li> <li>○ Keeps them moving</li> <li>● Mix up the Routine</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Examples</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Bear Crawls</li> <li>● <a href="#">Jump reaches</a></li> <li>● <a href="#">Power skips</a></li> <li>● Jogging backwards</li> <li>● <a href="#">Monkey shuffles</a></li> <li>● <a href="#">Jump Sticks</a></li> <li>● High knees</li> <li>● Butt Kicks</li> <li>● Running in Place (1<sup>st</sup> gear, 2<sup>nd</sup> gear, 3<sup>rd</sup>)</li> <li>● Little Arm circles to big/Forward then reverse</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>Baserunning</u></b> Why?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Fun</li> <li>● Help them learn the rules</li> <li>● Conditioning</li> <li>● Improves mechanics</li> </ul> <p>Make competitive Kids love stopwatches</p>	<p><b><u>Running activities</u></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Timed runs through first</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Add .5 for thrown bat</li> <li>● Add .5 for not running through bag</li> <li>● Add .5 for not breaking down</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. <b>Run to second (time both)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Straight lines vs. curves</li> </ul> </li> <li>3. <b>Bases loaded Ground ball/pop fly</b> Coach hits or throws a ground ball or pop up. Teach the runners how to react differently depending if the ball is on the ground or in the air. By having loaded bases, it allows three runners to work at once and enables you to teach force plays.</li> <li>4. <b>Runners vs Right Fielders</b> Half the team lined up at home plate and half in right field. Put a coach at second base. Throw or hit a ball to right field. The right fielder is to get the ball to second before the runner can make it to that base. Switch after all the runners have had a chance to run. Teaches outfielders to get the ball into the infield immediately. Teaches the runners to run hard and efficiently from home to second base.</li> </ol>

## Throwing & Receiving - (Benke – 15 minutes)

(Divide players into two groups. Half work on throwing while half work on receiving. Switch after six minutes)

<p><b><u>Throwing Principle</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Glove side shoulder pointed at target</li> <li>● Separate with thumb down</li> <li>● Big C</li> <li>● Elbow shoulder high</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Throwing Drills</u></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Above/Below competition</b> Three to five players line up. A coach is standing about 10-15 feet away. Coach says “above” or “below”. One at a time a player takes a baseball and throws to the coach trying to throw the ball <b>above</b> the coach’s waist or <b>below</b>. The line of players gets a point every time a player successfully completes a throw that matches the coaches “above” or “below” command. To make it competitive, you can see how many points the line can get in 60 seconds, or pit two different lines against each other. Kids learn to control vertical direction of their throws.</li> </ol>
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## 2. Hit the Coach

Just like it sounds. Line of players stand about 15 feet away from a coach. One at a time, they throw a soft baseball/tennis ball/spongy ball at the coach. Each player gets a point their throw hits the coach anywhere from his knees to his shoulders. Kids love this drill

## 3. Hit the Cone Competition



Two lines of players facing each other about 30 feet apart. One player at a time from the throwing side throws a baseball as hard as he/she can at the cone. Immediately after throwing, that player sprints to the back of the other line. At the same time the first player in the "Fielder" line fields or retrieves the thrown ball and immediately sprints to the end of the throwing line. Gets the kids to throw hard and downhill. Constant movement. Coaches, do not let a player throw until the runners are safely out of the throwing lane. Turn into a competition by awarding points for any contact with the cone.

## 4. Net Throw

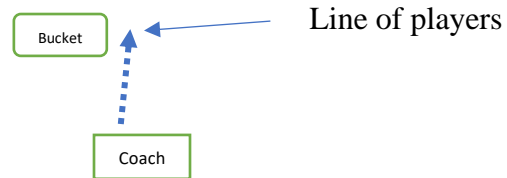
Set up a net and roll the ball to the kid and have them try to throw it in the net (approximating a short throw to 1st).

## Receiving Principles

- Use feet to get in front of ball
- Throws waist and above-fingers to the sky
- Throws below waist – fingers to the ground
- Introduce fingers to the sky with parents

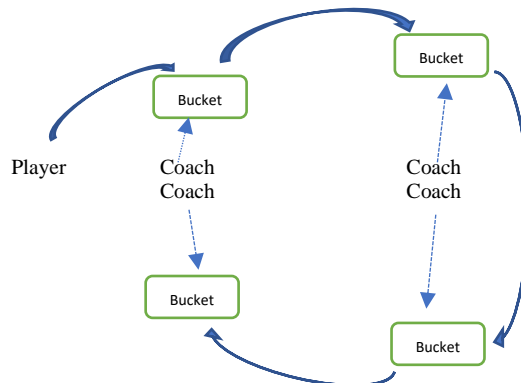
## Receiving drills

### 1. Bucket ball



Line of players about 10 feet from bucket. One at a time, players sprint to the bucket and the coach throws the ball to the player. If they catch the ball they put it in the bucket and sprint to the back of the line. If they miss or drop the ball, they run to the back of the line without any baseball going in the bucket. Numerous ways to gamify. See how many baseballs they can get in the bucket in 60 seconds. Rotate in another group and see if they can beat the number.

### 2. The Gauntlet



Need four coaches or adult throwers. Similar to bucket ball but this time one player runs to four buckets in a row. Each bucket is a different distance from a coach. The player wants to try to catch and place in the bucket as many as possible. See which players can get four out of four. Keep the circle going numerous times so players can try to improve their score out of four.

### 3. Short fly balls (tossed from 10-20 feet)

## Water Break (Benke 1 minute)

- This should be quick
- Kids jog to and from where they have water.
- Give them 60 seconds, count down out loud.

## Double Stations (Benke – 20 minutes)

This is when you split your team into two groups of six kids.

Early in the year you would likely have two of the following three stations

- Hitting
- Receiving
- Ground Balls

Even six is too many to have in one line- so make sure each station has been broken into two groups. Likely need four coaches to run two stations.

### Hitting Fundamentals

Stance

Balanced stance  
Feet wider than shoulder width  
Toes pointed toward plate  
Knees bent

Stride and Swing

Stride is directly toward the pitcher  
Swings hard  
Head remains quiet

Setting up a tee- How to.

Throwing BP – How to.

### Fielding Fundamentals

Ready position

Face batter  
Bent knees and waist  
Feet moving toward batter  
Thumbs up

Fielding

Get in front of ball  
Do not shuffle to the ball  
Wide Base  
Back flat  
Glove extended beyond nose

## Possible Drills for stations

### Hitting

#### 1. **Swing/hold for 3 seconds drill**

This checks for balance. If a player falls back it's usually because they didn't stride straight forward, or they pulled their head out.

- #### 2. **Don't hurt the puppies-**This is a hitting drill best done in the outfield. Player is trying to hit the ball past the cones in the air. If they imagine puppies between the tee and the cones it acts as an incentive not to swing down on the ball like so many young players do. External cue.



### Ground Balls

#### 1. **Line Drill**

Two lines of 3 kids each face each other from 10 ft away. They roll the ball to the opposite line, then run to the back of the opposite line.

#### 2. **Box Drill**

The video shows it with throws but for our purpose players are just rolling it to each other to work on fielding ground balls.

#### 3. **No glove/short throw into net**

#### 4. **Stand behind/Field in front**

Have players stand behind some type of line (lip of outfield grass is a natural line). Roll or hit the ball toward them to field. They must field the ball in front of the line. This forces them to move forward on ground balls rather than wait for it to come to them.

#### 5. **Moving Doorways**

Roll a baseball toward a player from about 15 feet away. Without a glove they are to run in front of it and spread their feet so the ball will pass through. They have created a doorway of sorts with their legs. Roll 2-4 balls in a row to the same players, forcing them to move to their left and right. It teaches them to move quickly toward the ball and to get wide with their feet. Essentials to fielding grounders.

## **Teamwork -(Groharing 15 minutes)**

During this phase, all players are involved in a full team activity. This could include, situations, intrasquad scrimmages, or full team drills

### **Full Team Drills**

**1. Ball/Base/Backup**

**2. Nine outs**

Set up a defense, extra players act as runners. Coach hits or throws ground balls to defense. Defense is trying to get outs anyway they can. Great opportunity to teach force outs. Drill comes to an end once 9 outs are recorded. Or 3, or 6. You pick the number.

**3. HR Derby** – pick any distance as a fence. Past the infield dirt is a good starting point. Get the kids to swing hard. The first rule of hitting. Don't do this with the whole team, a little too much standing around. Could be a station.

**4. Scrimmage (points for plays on both OF and DEF)**

## **Fun Conclusion – (Juza- 5 minutes)**

Leave them with a smile

### **End Drills**

**1. Relay Race around bases**

**2. Hit vs Chase**

Half the team at home plate and half at first base. One player at home plate hits the ball off the tee as far as he/she can and begins running the bases as fast as possible. One player on first base runs after the ball and touches it. Home plate team gets a point for every base the hitter reached before the ball was touched. Home plate team hits until all players have had an at bat. Add up points. Teams then switch roles. Team originally at first now hits at home plate. Tries to beat the other team's point total.

**3. ESPN Plays of the Day**

**4. Post Routes-** One player at a time runs the equivalent of a football post route while a coach throws a baseball or tennis ball toward the running player like a quarterback to a receiver. Player scores a point if they even touch the ball with their glove. They get 3 points if they catch it. Go two or three times through. Player with the most points wins.