

ABR COACHES CLINIC

A/AA

I. General Principles of a Practice (Sack 5 min)

- Safety
- Fun
- Lots of movement
- Mix in competition
- Cones, cones, cones
- [Minimize internal cues/Maximize external cues](#)
- Try to have several (4+) practice coaches
- [Six to one compliment to constructive critique ratio.](#)
- Have a plan

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

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

III. Practice Segments Explained

Pre-practice arrival 10 minutes early (Van Dyck – 2.5 minutes)

<p>Review safety rules</p> <p>Start warmups early if possible</p>	<p>Safety rules</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No helmet – No bat • Only pick up a bat when the coach tells you • Only throw the ball when you have eye contact with receiver. • Are you on your cone?
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Warm Up & Baserunning (Van Dyck – 10 minutes)

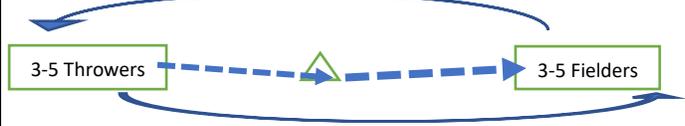
<p><u>Warm Up</u> Dynamic Not Static</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Fun ○ Improves coordination ○ Keeps them moving <p>● Mix up the Routine if kids are going through the motions</p>	<p><u>Examples</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Bear Crawls ● Jump reaches ● Power skips ● Jogging backwards ● Monkey shuffles ● Jump Sticks ● Butt kicks ● High knees ● Karaoke
<p><u>Baserunning</u> Why?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Fun ● Help them learn the rules ● Conditioning ● Improves mechanics <p>Make competitive Kids love stop watches</p>	<p><u>Running activities</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Timed runs through first <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Add .5 for not running through bag ● Add .5 for not breaking down 2. Run to second (time both) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Straight lines vs. curves 3. Bases loaded Ground ball/pop fly 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. 4. Runners vs Right Fielders Half the team lined up at home plate and half in deep right field. Put a player or coach at second base. 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. 5. Greenlight/Redlight 1st and 2nd Basehit Put runners on first and second base. Coach yells go, as they advance to the next base, they need to pick up the third base coach. Runners are either held at 2B and 3B or waved on to advance two bases. Teaches players to pick up base coaches early and learn what the signals are for – “keep running”, “slide”, “stop on this base”, “stop”.

Throwing & Receiving (Sacks – 15 minutes)

(One possibility, especially for A is to divide players into two groups. Half work on throwing while half work on receiving. Switch after six minutes)

<p><u>Throwing Principle</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Glove side shoulder pointed at target ● Separate with thumb down ● Big C ● Elbow shoulder high ● “aim small, miss small” ● Footwork is important when throwing ● Inseam to target or Right to Left/Left to target ● Look for backspin not sidespin 	<p><u>Throwing Drills</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Above/Below competition 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 above the coach’s waist or below. 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.
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2. Hit the Cone competition



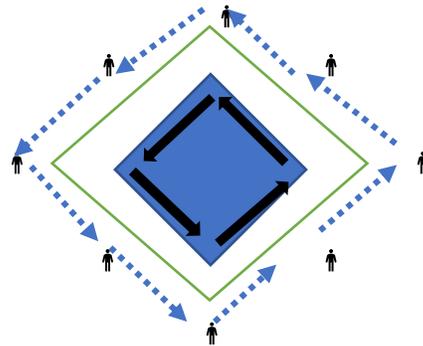
Two lines of players facing each other about 30 feet apart. One player at a time from the throwing side throws a baseball as hard as he/she can at the cone. Immediately after throwing, that player sprints to the back of the other line. At the same time the first player in the “Fielder” line fields or 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.

3. 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).

4. Around the horn Throw vs. Around the Horn Run

It is a race between one runner who is trying to run all the way around the bases as quickly as possible and about 8 players evenly distributed around the diamond trying to throw the ball all the way around the horn. Throwers need to make good throws and throw under pressure to beat the runner. Run it as many times as you want. Switch up runners often. Make sure throwers are well beyond the basepath so no runner gets hit by throws.



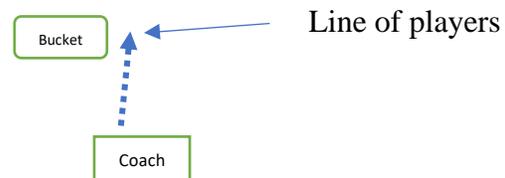
5. Box Drill (how many rounds in 60 seconds)

Receiving Principles

- Use feet to get in front of ball
- Throws waist and above-thumb down
- Throws below waist – fingers to the ground

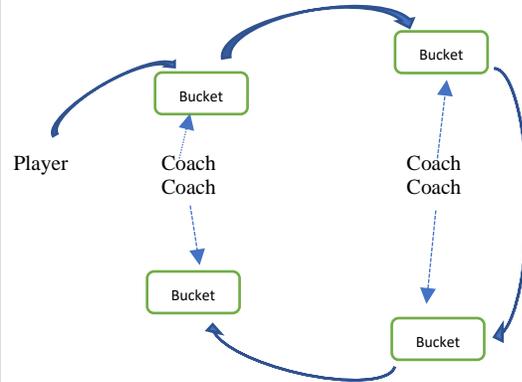
Receiving drills

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 the 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. Like 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. Bucket/Tag

Same as bucket ball but now the bucket is next to a base. When the player catches the ball, he/she needs to put a quick tag down right in front of the base before putting the ball in the bucket. In addition to receiving it gets players used to putting tags down properly rather than reaching out to tag a runner's body. You can run the gauntlet the same way.

4. Bare/one Handed Bean Bag Catch

Water Break

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

Double Stations (Donahue – 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
- Fly 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
- Head remains quiet
- Swings hard

When throwing BP, try to do it from lower arm slot than usual.

Fielding Fundamentals

Ready position

- Face batter
- Bent knees and waist
- Thumbs up
- Movement

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 (balance)**

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. **Front Toss Hold for 3 Seconds Drill(balance)**

3. **High Tee Drill (level swings)**

4. **Don't Hurt the Puppies (level swing)**

This is a hitting drill best done in the outfield. Player is trying to hit the ball past the cones in the air (how far away the cones are will depend on abilities of the hitters). 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. A coach can do this with front toss using whiffle balls or real baseballs if they have an L screen to stand behind. Good example of an external cue drill.



Ground Balls

1. **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.

2. **Moving Doorways**

Roll or hit a baseball toward a player from about 20 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.

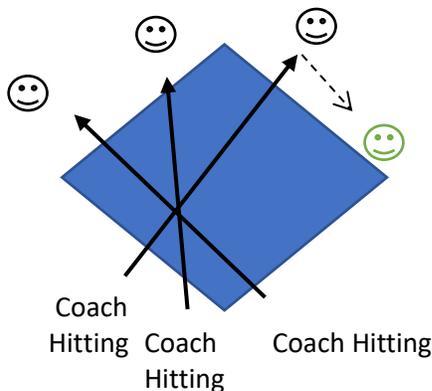
3. **Race to 1st Drill:**

Everyone has a glove. Half a start in a line at home, as runners, half in line at 1st, as a fielder. Coach hits a grounder to 1st. On contact, a runner from home sprints through 1st base. Fielder must field the ball and run to 1st without overrunning the bag (avoiding a collision). Safe/out call optional. Players rotate between 1st and home; fielder runs to home and returns ball into the bucket on the way in. Emphasis on running hard thru bag for runner, and basic fielding and hustle for 1st base.

4. **Flips at 2nd Drill.**

Everyone has a glove. 1/3 at SS position, 1/3 at 2nd, 1/3 as runners from 1st. Coach rolls/hits to either SS or 2nd. Runner leaves 1st when ball is in play - goal to get into 2nd standing/some of course slide (these are pretty young kids still). Fielders work on fielding ball and maybe making a flip, trying to record an out with other fielder covering the bag or solo. Players rotate to the next position on every rep.

5. **Max Reps**



Teamwork -(Van Dyck -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. Around the Horn (three times timed)

4. Scrimmage

When scrimmaging award points for extremely smart plays or great hustle on defense. Make a certain number of points worth a run. This way the defense is doubly invested in doing their best.

Fun Conclusion (Donahue- 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. 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. For an advanced team you can have the players throw the pass rather than