



CITY OF LOVELAND
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www.TeamSideline.com/Loveland



Youth Baseball & T-Ball Summer 2024

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Program Philosophy

It is the goal of Loveland Parks & Recreation to provide quality Youth Athletics programs that promote skill development, equal participation, sportsmanship, fun, and friendly competition in a positive, safe, and recreational setting.

Overview

Thank you for volunteering as a baseball coach. Baseball has been a long time popular recreational pastime. There is a high need for qualified coaches to instruct our youth on the fundamentals of a sport that they will most likely play for many years to come.

This coaching manual will teach you the basics of baseball and you will learn enough to run a productive practice and manage your team during a game.

Baseball is a game of speed, strength, coordination, and skill. Players must be able to catch, field, hit and throw as well as have a good sense of what is going on around them.

Game Rules

- **Field** dimensions are 60 feet around the bases for baseball and 50 feet around the bases for t-ball.
- **Class times** are as follows: Baseball will meet for 90 minutes and T-Ball will meet for 75 minutes.
 - **On game days:**
 - **Baseball** will have 30 minutes of warm-up/practice followed by a 60 minute game.
 - **T-Ball** will have 15 minutes of warm-up/practice followed by a 60 minute game.
- No new innings shall start with less than 10 minutes in the session.
- **Pitching:** The Coach or the machine pitches for all ages of baseball. T-Ball is always played from the batting tee.
- **Batting:**
- Batting helmets must be worn at all times by both the batter up, runners and on deck batters. Teams can loan out equipment, but need to make sure they get it all back.
- Be sure to keep players a safe distance from anyone swinging a bat (batter, on deck, in the hole, drills, etc.)
 - **Lineup:**
 - **Baseball** will bat through the lineup through week 5, then play 3 outs or until once through the lineup (whichever occurs first) for weeks 6, 7 and 8
 - **T-Ball** bats through the lineup all season.

- Batting order may be adjusted so that the last batter in the inning can be a different player each inning.
- The batter may have 5 attempts to get a hit-If not successful after 5 attempts, the batter is out. (Baseball=5 pitches, T-Ball=5 swings)
- No bunting allowed
- Maximum bases allowed for an outfield hit is two bases.
- Last batter in inning/lineup is allowed to run all the bases or coaches may agree on the following optional rule: The half inning ends when a fielder with the ball touches a base ahead of any runner. Tagging a runner is not required in this case.
- **Base running:** No advancing of bases on overthrows or errors.
- Two steps off the base allowed for lead-offs (Baseball only)
- All runners who have been put out must leave the base
- No leading or stealing bases allowed
- No sliding allowed
- **Fielding:**
 - **Baseball** – Nine players in the field at a time. Ten players if both coaches agree in pre-game.
 - **T-Ball** – All players play in the field at a time. Any extra players beyond nine play in the outfield.
- Players must play their designated position at the correct location. For example, outfielders are not allowed to move in and play the infield.
- With each new inning, all players must play a different position than the previous inning.
- Catchers must wear full protective gear.
- **Other:** Teams who are short players may borrow players from another team or the other team may drop down players.
- Tobacco use is not allowed by coaches – we need to set a good example.



Practice and Game Information

Practice Do's and Don'ts

DO...

- Show up to practice early
- Have a lesson plan prepared
- Introduce yourself to your players' parents and make them aware of your practice rules, facility rules, and make sure they arrange for their children to be picked up on time
- Make your practices fun and challenging while maintaining a level of control
- Remember to keep track of equipment at all times. Return equipment properly at the end of each day's practice or game
- Leave the field in as good or better shape than when you entered it
- Always act in a prudent and responsible manner

DON'T...

- Allow players to run around uncontrolled
- Leave practice until all the players have been picked up
- Let anyone practice who is not officially on your roster
- Use running laps or exercise as a punishment for misconduct. Time-outs are more appropriate.
- Take kids home in your personal vehicle unless accompanied by another child or adult



Organizing Practice Sessions

1 Warm-up Time

Begin each practice with some simple warm-up exercises. These can include easy paced skills and drills followed by a short period of stretching

2 Drills for Development of Baseball Skills

To capture the interest of young players, emphasize fun and skill development. Concentrate on developing the basic skills of throwing, catching and hitting at every practice session and plan simple drills to reinforce these skills.

Build on the foundation of skills with more advanced techniques as the season progresses. Give your players something new to practice each session.

Work with your players in small groups – 4's or 5's – so that nobody gets bored or slighted. If you have a team by yourself, set up two or three "learning stations" and work with two or three small groups one at a time while the other groups drill themselves.

3 Scrimmage Time

All athletes love games and competition. Tie these competitive activities (often a modified game) into what you are teaching about skills and team work. Set a goal or focus for each scrimmage and help your players see the relationship between the skills and the game as a whole.

4 Evaluation

Conclude your practice by reviewing what was learned in practice. Ask yourself, your assistants and your players: Was the practice effective? Use this information in planning your next practice session.



Warm-up Exercises

Healthy young players are always ready to play the game and rarely look forward to any preliminary “EXERCISES”. It is important to avoid making the warm-up drudgery. The warm-up drills you use, and your attitude about them will strongly influence your player’s lifetime attitude about exercise.

Circulatory Exercises

- 1 Run at half speed – coach sets the pace (THIS IS NOT A RACE)
- 2 Ball toss – run/jog in a single file line, toss the baseball behind you to the next person. When the ball gets to the end the person runs to the front.
- 3 Jumping jacks – Ask players to do 30 jumping jacks at half speed and then 30 at full speed.
- 4 Relays – There are a variety of simple running relays that can be used with or without a ball. Have players run forward, backward, side shuffle, or around obstacles.

Stretching Exercises

1. Slow Arm Circles – forward, backward
2. Side benders
3. Trunk Twisters
4. Toe touching with feet together
5. Toe touching with feet crossed
6. Shoulder stretch
 - ✓ Cross one arm across the chest and with the opposite hand, pull the elbow towards the body. Repeat with other arm
7. Triceps stretch
 - ✓ Raise one arm overhead and let it rest behind the head. Grasp elbow with other hand and pull elbow behind head.
8. Ankle stretch
 - ✓ Sit upright on the ground, cross one leg over the opposite knee. Grab the heel with one hand and the top outside with the other. Gently turn the ankle inward. Repeat with both legs.
9. Achilles tendon stretch
 - ✓ Stand 4 or 5 steps away from a wall or backstop. Place one leg in front and bend it, keeping the other leg straight,

lean towards the wall. Keep the back foot flat on the ground, switch legs and repeat.

10. Hip flexor stretch
 - ✓ Stand upright, bend one knee and lunge forward over the bent front leg. Put hands on hips, keep chest up and push hips to the ground. Switch and repeat.
11. Hamstring stretch
 - ✓ Sit down and bring one leg toward your body so your foot is on the inner thigh of the other leg. Reach for the toe of the straight leg. Switch and repeat
12. Quadriceps stretch
 - ✓ Lie on your stomach, bend one leg at the knee, grab the ankle with your hand and pull the foot towards the back of the leg. Switch and repeat.



Baseball Drills

Drills for Throwing

Throwing basics:

- Grip the ball with the index and middle finger spaced slightly apart, the thumb should be on the laces directly under and between the fingers
- Bring the arm back, point the shoulder and glove at the target with weight on the back leg
- Pick up the front foot and bring the arm forward as you set down the front foot
- Keep your eyes on the target
- Follow through with the arm and swing the back leg around

Throw and Step Back Drill

Pair up players, have 1 ball for each pair. Have the partners stand reasonably close to each other. Players should throw the ball back and forth. Each time a ball is thrown and caught the player who threw the ball takes a step back, when it caught the player takes a step forward.

Drills for Fielding/Catching

Fielding basics:

- Stand in your position with your feet hip's width apart
- Knees should be bent
- Weight over the ball of the foot
- Hand should be held low between the legs with the glove open
- Keep your eye on the ball at all times
- Have both hands ready with the arms relaxed and extend them towards the ball
- Bend the elbows to absorb the throw
- Watch the ball go into the glove and squeeze it closed



Pickup Drill

Have the players pair off with a ball and stand about 9 feet apart. One player roles one ball at a time, changing the place the ball is rolled to each time. The other person fields the ball and throws it back to their partner. Have players switch sides after 10 grounders

Go-Look Drill

Divide the team into 2 lines. The lines should be 20 yards apart with the coach in between them. Alternating lines, the player yells out "GO" and the coach throws a pop fly and calls out "LOOK" and the player runs and tries to catch the ball.

Pointers for catching fly balls

Teach players these tips for catching fly balls properly once they have run to them:

- Maintain eye contact with the ball at all times
 - Whenever possible, position yourself behind the ball
 - Run with the glove down, in a typical sprinting position
 - Communicate by shouting "Mine!" or "I've got it!" at least twice
 - Keeps hands down until in position to make the catch
 - Catch the ball in front of the head-using two hands if possible-with the arms almost fully extended
 - As the catch is made, give with the impact by bringing the glove down and in toward the chest
 - Always get back quickly on a ball hit over your head. Keep the ball in front of you
-

Drills for Hitting

Hitting Basics:

Grip – Hold the bat loosely until the ball comes toward the plate or you're ready to swing

Stance – Comfort is the key. Keep the feet about as wide as the shoulders. Keep the knees bent with 60% of weight on the back leg. Keep elbows out from the body, but still pointing at the ground

Stride – If a player does stride it should be small and before contact with the ball

Swing – Shift weight forward, rotate hips, bring the hand down and through keeping the barrel of the bat above the hands.

Soft-Toss Drill

Set up the hitter with a coach or partner kneeling about 10 feet away, just off the hitter's front knee. The partner tosses the ball and the hitter must drive the ball into the net or fence.

Golf Ball Drill

Get several golf ball sized wiffle balls and toss them to the batter. Make sure they follow the ball with their eyes all of the way to the bat.

Drills for Baserunning

Baserunning Basics:

Running to first:

- Run at an all out sprint
- Run past first base
- Do NOT lung or jump at the bag

Running to third base or home plate:

- Make sure players stopped at the bases are listening to the base coaches all of the time as well as knowing where the ball is

Running the Bases Drill

Have each player start in the batter's box and simulate a swing then run to first base. The coach stands at first base and yells "Run through the bag," or "Take a turn", or "Second", loudly enough for the runner to hear. Once players get to a base, have them practice watching teammates simulate swings, then running the bases till they come to home plate.



From the Volunteer Office

Youth Athletic Coaches

The City of Loveland Human Resources department will conduct background investigations on coaches each season they agree to coach. Please refer to the Disclosure Form & Statement of Criminal History you completed as part of your application or you may contact the Volunteer Program Coordinator at 970-962-2675 if you have any questions or concerns.

These investigations are needed in order to protect our youth however we also ask that you, as a coach adhere to the following suggestions in order to protect yourself from accusations or inappropriate conduct:

1. Avoid being alone with players in non-public settings.

- "Never Alone" – The coach (or supervising adult) should never be alone with a player – there should always be 1 or more additional players (or adults) with the coach.
- "Plain Sight Rule" – If a situation arises where the coach is left alone with a player (parents are late to pick up player after practice or game), the coach (supervising adult) and player are to wait in plain public sight in a designated waiting area. This includes the parking lots of the facilities we utilize and well lit curb/sidewalk areas adjacent to parking areas.

2. Document unusual situations and forward the documentation to the Program Coordinator at 970-962-2450 and/or the Volunteer Program Coordinator at 970-962-2675.

3. Do not buy gifts or give money to team members.

4. Do not take kids home in your personal vehicle unless accompanied by another child or adult

5. Let your language set the tone. Avoid profanity, even in conversations that you think are private – these conversations may actually be in earshot of players.

6. Never verbally demean, negatively label or ridicule a child based on appearance, gender, weight, sexual orientation, race or any other identifying characteristic.



Practice Session Worksheet

Date _____

Warm-up

Skill Training (specific skill, teaching plan, drills to be used)

Scrimmage Time (specific game and goals/focus)

Evaluation