



# COACH PITCH

## WEEK TWO

### PRACTICE GOALS: What Your Team Should Learn

1. How to hold a ball with a four-seam grip
2. Successfully throw to a two-hand target using a four-seam grip
3. Attempt to catch the ball using two hands below the waist
4. Get into an athletic batting stance
5. Field and transition into a throwing position

### MATERIALS:

- Batting Helmets
- Bases
- Baseball Bats (various sizes)
- Baseballs (two buckets)
- Batting Tee
- Gloves
- "L" Screen



## POSITIVE COACHING ALLIANCE (PCA) | WEEKLY TIPS

### PRACTICE 1 TIP: Power of Positivity (Attitude is Contagious)

Having a positive attitude means that you see and express the good side and the potential of a situation.

Having a negative attitude means that you see and express the bad side of a situation and why "it won't work."

**Attitudes, either positive or negative, are contagious. That means they spread easily among a team.**

A positive attitude makes any situation better. A negative attitude makes any situation worse.

If you have a positive attitude, there will be more fun, more learning and the team will play better!

### PRACTICE 2 TIP : Filling Emotional Tanks (Winner's Circle)

To be the best team you can be, have your players help each other get better. One way to do that is to have them fill their teammates' Emotional Tanks.

The Emotional Tank is like a car's gas tank. When it's empty, you can't go far, but when it's full, you can go a long way. Teams with full Emotional Tanks usually do better than teams whose tanks are drained.

**Your athletes can fill each other's Emotional Tanks by noticing people who help them or the team and thanking them for it.**

They can also fill Emotional Tanks by cheering for their teammates, giving them high-fives, smiling at them, and telling them that they are glad they are on the team.

To fill each other's Emotional Tanks, you can get into a "Winners' Circle" after each game and give your players the chance to tell their teammates the good things they did during the game.

### PRACTICE 3 TIP : Nervous is Normal

**It helps to remind athletes that nervousness is normal before a game.**

Most professional players feel jitters before a game, but they've learned that there is nothing wrong with those feelings.

Remind your athletes that nervous energy can help you perform well. In fact, it is hard to perform your best without some nervous energy!



# QUICK PLAN

## 90 MINUTES

**3 MINUTES**

### INTRODUCTION

- Welcome players
- Review names (players and coaches)
- Focus on the reason for being there/PCA tip of the week

**7 MINUTES**

### STRETCHING AND WARM UPS

- Players run along the fence with the team
- Coach leads the team in a series of leg and arm stretches
- Finish with 20 Jumping Jacks
- (See full practice plan for complete instructions)

**10 MINUTES**

### BASEBALL GRIP

- Players gather in circle
- Review gripping the baseball with whole hand using fingertips
- Show players two-and three-finger grips
- Players demonstrate correct grip by grabbing balls out of bucket
- Toss/Catch/Grip

**25 MINUTES**

### CATCHING AND THROWING

- Review two-hand target
- Coaches show how to catch thumb-to-thumb
- Coaches show how to catch pinky-to-pinky
- No throwing until you see a two-hand target
- Focus catching the ball below the waist
- 5 Steps of Throwing
- Start in “launch” position
- Focus on two-hand target and four-seam grip
- Add steps one and two to the five steps

**3 MINUTES**

### BREAK

**17 MINUTES**

### HITTING

- Players will grip the bat with “knocking knuckles” lined up or shifted slightly
- “Athletic” Stance
- Bat should be able to “cover” the entire plate
- Dry Swings
- Coach will throw from knee (behind and “L” screen)
- (See full practice plan for complete instructions)

**15 MINUTES**

### BASE RUNNING

- Run from home through first base
- Run from home and round first base
- (See full practice plan for complete instructions)

**10 MINUTES**

### FIELDING

- Review 5 Steps of Fielding
- Alligator Hands

### CONCLUSION

- High fives
- Review what they learned/PCA Tip of the Week
- Remind of next event (practice/game)



# PRACTICE SEQUENCE

## INTRODUCTION (3 MINUTES)

- Review the names of the coaches and players, review purpose for being at the field and show enthusiasm to start practice. Break the team into three groups of players, with one coach per group.
- The coaches will start off by telling the group their name and who their favorite baseball team are and why. Go around and have the kids give their name and say their favorite baseball team.

## STRETCHING AND WARMUPS (7 MINUTES)

- **First have the team run along the outfield fence and gather in the opposite outfield from which you started.**
- Arm Circles: Short circles forward/backward, big circles forward/backward.
- Arm above the head and try to grab the middle of your back. Use the opposite arm to push arm down as far as you can reach.
- Right arm across the body, grab the elbow to stretch.
- Wrist Pull Downs. Extend your Right Arm / Left Arm out with the palm up, grab the finger tips with opposite arm and pull fingers down/back creating the stretch.
- Wrist Pull Ups. Extend your arm out with the palm down, grab the finger tips with opposite arm and pull fingers up/back creating the stretch.
- Touch your toes (standing)
- Touch your toes (sitting with both leg straight out, legs spread apart, grab toes with opposite hand, each leg once)
- Triangle seat: Seated pull feet together in to the body and use elbows to push the knees flat to the ground.
- Jumping Jacks: 20 times.

## BASEBALL GRIP (15 MINUTES)



### BASEBALL GRIP REVIEW

- Proper four-seam grip. Hold the baseball using a four-seam grip. (See Fig. 1.1)
- Show two-finger (Fig. 1.2) and three-finger grips (Fig. 1.3). Index finger on the top of the ball, thumb on the bottom of the ball, middle finger on the top of the ball. The spacing between fingers should be about the size of a finger.
- Each player grabs a ball off of the ground to show the coach the four-seam grip. Each player will do five balls.

### DRILL

#### Toss/Catch/Four-Seam Grip:

Each player will start with a ball. The player will throw the ball in the air, work on catching with two hands above the waist.

Once the ball is caught, the player will grip the ball with a four-seam grip and transition in to the “launch” position of throwing.

20 tosses each.



# PRACTICE SEQUENCE

## CATCHING AND THROWING (20 MINUTES)



### CATCHING REVIEW

- **Two-Hand Target (2HT)** When playing catch, the thrower should not deliver the ball until the receiver shows the thrower a two-hand target.

The 2HT is when the player receiving the ball has both arms extended straight out from their body with a little flex in the elbow. Hands straight up, with thumbs toward each other, once the thrower sees this, they may deliver the ball. This is the 2HT. (See Fig. 2.1)

- **Thumb-to-Thumb (T2T)** When receiving the ball above the waist the receiver should show a 2HT and catch the ball thumb-to-thumb.

This is important because it emphasizes using two hands to catch the ball. This will allow the receiver to quickly make the transition from their glove to their throwing hand, while using the four-seam grip. (see Fig. 2.2)

- **Pinky-to-Pinky (P2P)** When receiving the ball below the waist the receiver should show a 2HT and catch the ball pinky-to-pinky.

Just like T2T this is equally important because it stresses using two hands and teaches the proper way to catch a ball below the waist. (See Fig. 2.3 & 2.4)

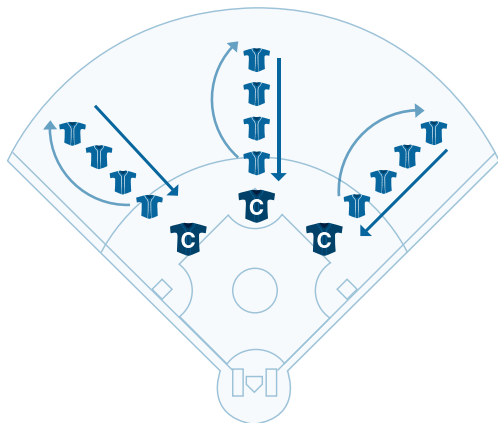


2.1

2.2

2.3

2.4



### DRILL

The coach will throw the ball to the players below the waist to work on the pinky-to-pinky, two-hand technique. Players will line up in three, single-file lines of four players each. One coach per line; 15 to 20 throws per player, rotate after each throw.

### GAME: CATCHING FOR POINTS

Award the player a point for each ball caught. The team with the most points wins.



# PRACTICE SEQUENCE

## THROWING REVIEW

- Do not throw until you see a Two-Hand Target (2HT)
- Use a four-seam grip.

## - FIVE STEPS OF THROWING

### Step One: Step

Start square to your partner, step towards your partner with the foot of your throwing hand. Plant your foot with the inside of the foot facing the receiver, this will align the glove shoulder to your partner. (Fig. 3.1, Pg. 5)

### Step Two: Shoulder-to-Partner

You will want to have your glove shoulder facing your partner. The thrower's hands are to move downward towards the center of their body until they separate. This will lead you to the launch, which is the next step. (Fig. 3.2, Pg. 5)

### Step Three: Launch

At this point the thrower will turn their thumbs in to get the elbows up putting the arms in the launch position. The ball will be in the throwing hand away from the receiver with a four-seam grip and the knuckles of the throwing hand facing the receiver. (Fig. 3.3 Pg. 5)

### Step Four: Delivery

The thrower should stay behind the ball when throwing and snap their wrist when throwing to the receiver. (Fig. 3.4)

### Step Five: Finish

The thrower's weight will continue towards the receiver and the arm will follow through to the 2HT. (Fig. 3.5)



3.1 Step



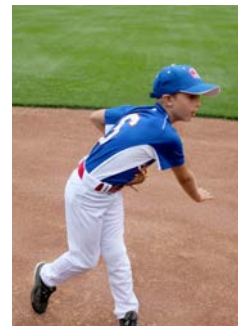
3.2 Shoulder-to- Partner



3.3 Launch



3.4 Delivery



3.5 Finish

## THROWING (REVIEW DRILL)

- Start in the launch position
- Focus on the 2HT
- Use four-seam grip

## DRILL

Add the Step and Shoulder to Partner to complete all five steps of the throwing sequence. Ten throws, really focusing on putting all five steps together.

## GAME: HULA HOOPS

Players will line up in three, single-file lines of four players each. Set up a hula hoop on the fence/back stop and have players see how many throws out of five throws go through the hula hoop.



# PRACTICE SEQUENCE

**BREAK (3 MINUTES)**

## HITTING



3.1

### HITTING REVIEW

– **One: Grip**

Each player will take a bat. Place both hands out flat and lay the bat at the base of the fingers. Lightly wrap your fingers around the bat. This grip will align the players knocking knuckles. The knuckles are to be in a straight line or slightly shifted either way.

– **Two: Stance**

Have the players get into an athletic position, with knees bent slightly and feet shoulder-width apart. There should be more weight on the back foot, the distribution should be about 40 percent on the front foot and 60 on the back foot.

– **Three: Coverage**

The barrel of the bat must be able to reach across the entire width of the plate once the player's arms are extended. Have the player get in their stance; place the bat at the opposite corner of the plate closest to the catcher. You want to make sure that your stance allows you to have complete plate coverage, so you can hit the outside pitch.



3.2

3.3

## DRILL

### Dry Swings

Each coach will have four players in their group. The players will be about 10 to 12 feet away from each other. They will place their fielding glove on the ground and use it as home plate. The coach will have each player take a swing on command and work with them to correct their swing. (10 Swings)

On one knee, a coach will throw from about 30 feet away from the plate. (The use of a protective "L" screen is highly recommended.) Each player will properly grip the bat, get into an athletic stance, and make sure to cover the plate. The coach will throw five pitches to each player. Split the team into three teams of four players. The other three players will be outside the fence waiting to hit. Once all players on Group A have hit, then Group B, who was in the infield, will hit, and group C, who was in the outfield, will move into the infield. Group A will move out to the outfield. Rotate through until all groups have had a chance to hit, play the infield, and play the outfield.



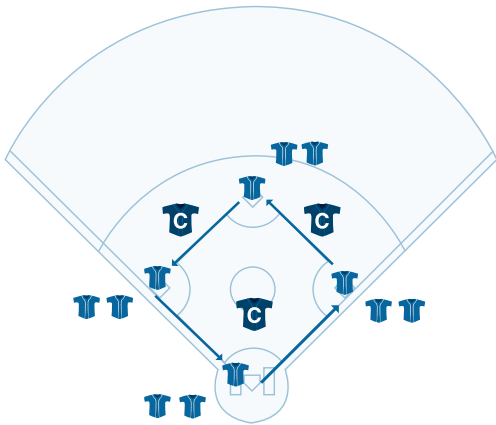
# PRACTICE SEQUENCE

## BASE RUNNING (15 MINUTES)



### BASE RUNNING REVIEW

- Purpose of base running and how to score.
- Running through first base (three times each)



### DRILL

#### Merry-Go-Round:

This is a fun drill that will allow the players to run the bases and get an understanding of how to run base to base. Start with an even number of players at each base, including home plate. One player will approach the plate with a bat with one player on each base.

They will get a proper grip on the bat. They will get in their stance and check to see their plate coverage. Once the coach says “go,” the player will swing the bat like they just hit the ball and will run toward first base. This will set the drill in motion. The player on first base will run to second base.

The player at second base will run to third base. The player on third bases will run to home plate. Each player will go to the end of the line at the next base. Continue this drill until each player has “hit” two-to-three times.

## FIELDING (15 MINUTES)



### FIVE STEPS OF FIELDING

- **Step One: Creeper Steps**  
Player will take two steps towards the hitter. First step is with the throwing hand, second step is with the glove hand. The glove foot will be slightly out front of the throwing foot. (Fig. 4.1)
- **Step Two: Bend Knees / Lower Torso Down**  
Player will have knees bent and will have their body lowered down so that their glove is touching the ground in a “ready” position. Imagine sitting down on a chair; now come off of that chair where you are barely standing above it. This will be the position that you need to be in. (Fig. 4.2)
- **Step Three: Glove Out Front**  
Player will be in ready position with their arms extended out in front of their body. The palm of the glove will be facing the hitter and low to the ground. The throwing hand should be above the glove forming the mouth of an alligator. (Fig. 4.3)
- **Step Four: Receive / Suck / Funnel / Move**  
Players will field the ball out in front of their body with “alligator hands” and bring the ball into their mid-section. At this time the player will use the throwing hand of the alligator hands to grip the ball in a four seam grip. At the same time the player should move their body, throwing foot then glove foot towards the direction where the throw will be made. When finished with this step, the shoulder of the glove hand should be pointed at the target. (Fig. 4.4)
- **Step Five: Throw to Target**  
The ball will be in the launch position. From this position the player will deliver the ball to the target. (Fig. 4.5)