



## Skills to Coach by Age Level

### **T-ball:**

- **Athletic Position: For all Activities**
- **Two Hands Always: Emphasized in Everything.**
- **Hand Eye Coordination:**
  - a) All drills should involve hand eye coordination basics – “watch ball – call ball” “ watch the ball – call ball”
- **Big Voices and Communication:**
  - a) We are talking to each other, we are talking to our coach and we are always talking to the ball – always make sure players are communicating – (per their age group of course!) Make Communication Fun.
- **Basic Positions on Field:**
  - a) Communication and running drills should always involve the bases.
- **Running Bases:**
  - a) When to run, when to stop,
  - b) Introduction to standing on a base properly.
  - c) Eye contact with coach.
- **Where to throw:**
  - a) Throwing to first and home (infield) – Throwing to second (outfield) – throwing to pitcher (all)



- **Working as a Team, Walking as a Team and Talking as a Team:**
  - a) Team Orientation in all practices and all discussions
  
- **Basic Stretching & Warm up Development:**
  - a) All players must be introduced and understand the athletic need and very basics of stretching and warm up.



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### **Rookies:**

- **Communication:** This is time to instill great communication and communication process:
  - a) Communicate before and after practice always – Circle Up.
  - b) Make communication mandatory by all in an equal, open and consistent setting.
- **Athletic Position Must be Mastered**
- **Basic Hitting Stance, Grip and Contact Must be Mastered**
  - a) Big muscle movements are emphasized only.
  - b) Introduce to Tee Drills and Hitting Homework outside of practice – age differs greatly for level of homework. Basic hitting homework should be giving. Stance, griping and swinging – keep it simple.
  - c) Introduction to Intermediate hitting drills for all: Awareness and introduction is required. Mastery is not required



- **Proper Throwing Fundamentals:**

- a) Proper throwing should be emphasized with proper warm up - on a knee, moving to the feet, moving to distance throwing – applicable by age.
  - i. Using the shoulder.
  - ii. Receiving the ball with two hands always.
  - iii. Communication when receiving.
  - iv. Calling the ball always.
  - v. Moving the body and throwing in a fluid motion should be emphasized.

- **Base Running Fundamentals:**

- a) Fundamental Mastery:

- i. Proper runner positioning on a base/bag, ready to run.
- ii. Making eye contact with coaches while on the base/bag.

- b) Optional Fundamental Introduction:

- i. Rounding
- ii. Sliding fundamentals – have fun and get dirty.

- **Basic Pitching & Basic to Intermediate Catching: High level of concentration in both. Provide parents with private pitching and catching coaches in the area.**

- a) Pitching Introduction:

- i. Mound stance,
- ii. Basic arm movement,
- iii. Foot plant and push,
- iv. Basic pitching drills and special pitching practices.



- b) Catching Introduction:
  - i. Equipment
  - ii. Basic stance
  - iii. Basic throwing with gear on
  - iv. Dropping to the knees and getting dirty
  
- **Basic outfield - All Players Must Participate In Outfield:**
  - a) Make outfield fun and mandatory!
  - b) Two hands,
  - c) Ball, ball, ball communication,
  - d) Throwing to infielders 2B & Pitcher.
  
- **Basic Infield:**
  - a) Fundamental Mastery:
    - i. Athletic Position - two hands,
    - ii. Basic Bag Approach – foot on bag,
    - iii. Communication, ball, ball, ball.
  
  - b) Optional Fundamental Introduction:
    - i. Lateral Movements,
    - ii. Back up from outfield or other infielders,
    - iii. Lead runner concepts.
  
- **Begin to enhance Warm Ups, Stretching and Conditioning before practice – toward end of season**



## Skills to Coach by Age Level

### **Minors:**

- **Warm Up and Conditioning:** – High level of stretching and warm up.
  - a) Begin to give independence and responsibility to the team for a set and consistent warm up routine.
- **Introduction of Basic “Signs” for Hitting and Base Running:**
- **Intermediate Hitting:** Provide resources to parents on private hitting coaches in the area.

Dedicated practices just for hitting and base running are mandatory by the coaches.

a) Fundamental Mastery:

- i. Strong stance.
- ii. Proper grip
- iii. Weight transfer.
- iv. Proper upper and lower body movement.
- v. Increase hitting homework and tee work for all.

b) Required Fundamental Introduction:

- i. Basic to Intermediate Short Game: Bunting and Slapping and hitting from the left (For those who want to).

Have an extra practice just for left side fun. Make bunting and learning from the left fun, beginner to intermediate instruction. All players must understand the basics of the short game after minors.



- c) Introduction to Advanced Hitting Drills for All – Mastery is not needed, awareness and introduction is required.

More advanced hitting practice and hitting homework is highly recommended for those who have aptitude. It is OK to give some kids hitting instruction or homework which is more advanced than others based on their skill level.

- **Intermediate Level Base Running Fundamentals**

a) Fundamental Mastery:

- i. Player positioning when on base/bag.
- ii. Running hard through 1B – eye contact with 1B coach
- iii. Basic level bag approach and basic rounding.
- iv. Achieving their individual top speed.
- v. Making eye contact with coaches while on base.
- vi. Basic sliding - everyone gets dirty.

b) Required Fundamental Introduction:

- i. Intermediate sliding fundamentals, dive backs, hook slides.
- ii. Making eye contact with coaches while running.

**Coaching Tips:**

Take time to work with kids who feel uncomfortable sliding.

Bring in older players to give examples at a practice.



- **Basic Pitching & Basic to Intermediate Catching** – high level of concentration in both. Provide parents with private pitching and catching coaches in the area.

a) Pitching Fundamental Emphasis and Introduction:

- i. Mound stance with ball and glove management.
- ii. Basic to intermediate arm movement.
- iii. Foot plant and push.
- iv. Pitching drills and special pitching practices for pitchers.

b) Catching Fundamental Emphasis and Introduction:

- i. Intermediate stance when receiving the ball.
- ii. Throwing to bases consistently.
- iii. Dropping to the knees and getting dirty.
- iv. Catching drills and homework.
- v. Basic pitching signs.
- vi. Adjusting with the batter.

- **Basic outfield - All Players Must Participate In Outfield:**

a) Fundamental Mastery:

- i. Receiving ball and glove side throwing.
- ii. Communication with cut off.
- iii. Outfield back up and all players to the ball.
- iv. Taking an angle on a ball in the gap.

b) Required Fundamental Emphasized:

- i. Getting the ball in to the cut off quickly.
- ii. Adjusting based on the batter.





- **Basic to Intermediate Infield:**

- a) Fundamental Mastery:

- i. Receiving the ball with two hands, athletic position and staying down on the ball when receiving grounder.
    - ii. Glove on the ground in all drills! The glove must stretch out and TOUCH the ground every time and always when practicing. Over-emphasize glove on the ground in practice.
    - iii. Bag approach.
    - iv. Receiving the ball and glove side throwing.
    - v. Glove Side Throwing Must be Mastered in ALL Drills.
    - vi. Communication when throwing

- b) Required Fundamental Emphasized:

- i. Load up on the pitch
    - ii. Lead runner.
    - iii. Back up.

- c) Required Fundamental Introduction:

- i. Foot work drills w/ receiving and throwing.
    - ii. Pickle and Run Down.
    - iii. Throw downs with catchers and fielders.



## 10U:

- **Warm Up and Conditioning:** – **High level of stretching and warm up.**
  - a) High level of independence and responsibility to the team for a set and consistent warm up routine. Coaches should not have to be directly involved.
  - b) Introduce new stretching and give instruction.
  - c) Identify warm leads on the team.
  - d) Have set conditioning days / practices w/ base running
- **Basic to Intermediate “Signs” for Hitting and Base Running:**
- **Intermediate Hitting:** Provide resources to parents on private hitting coaches in the area.

Dedicated practices just for hitting and base running are mandatory by the coaches.

- a) Fundamental Mastery:
  - i. Strong stance, proper grip, lower body weight transfer
  - ii. Proper upper and lower body connection.
  - iii. Hitting homework and tee work for all.
  - iv. Intermediate Short Game: Bunting, Drag Bunting (and Slapping and hitting from the left - for those who want to).

Have an extra part of practice just for the short game. Make bunting and learning from the left fun, beginner to intermediate instruction. All players must understand the Intermediate level of the short game after 10U.



b) Required Fundamental Introduction:

- i. All aspects of hitting drill work, tee, soft toss, machine work, short game work.
- ii. Advanced Hitting Drills & Homework for All – Mastery is not needed, awareness and introduction is required.

More advanced hitting practice and hitting homework is highly recommended for those who have aptitude. It is OK to give some kids hitting instruction or homework which is more advanced than others based on their skill level.

• **Intermediate Level Base Running Fundamentals**

a) Fundamental Mastery:

- i. Base positioning,
- ii. 1B run through and breakdown,
- iii. Intermediate level bag approach and rounding,
- iv. Their individual top speed,
- v. Making eye contact with coaches on base and while, running or rounding,
- vi. Sliding & dive backs,
- vii. Stealing & signs.

b) Required Fundamental Introduction:

- i. Advanced sliding fundamentals, hook slides, dive backs.
- ii. Stealing.
- iii. Drawing the play, no outs and runner on 3B.



### Coaching Tips:

Take time to work with kids who feel uncomfortable sliding.

Bring in older players to give examples at a practice for advanced base running.

- **Intermediate Pitching & Catching – High level of concentration in both. Provide parents with private pitching and catching coaches in the area.**

#### a) Pitching Fundamental Mastery:

- i. Mound stance with ball and glove management - Rules.
- ii. Intermediate arm & hip movement and connections.
- iii. Foot plant and push – strength development.
- iv. Pitching drills and special pitching warm ups for pitchers and catchers.

#### b) Required Pitching Fundamental Introduction:

- i. Command of the field and communication with catchers and fielders.
- ii. Emotional control.
- iii. Understanding the hitter's stance.

#### c) Catching Fundamental Mastery:

- i. Intermediate stance and body movement when receiving the ball and throwing in fluid motions.
- ii. Intermediate throwing to bases – 2B throw downs on the steal.
- iii. Dropping to the knees and getting dirty.
- iv. Pitching signs.
- v. Adjusting with the batter and the box.
- vi. Catching drills and homework.



d) Required Catching Fundamental Introduction:

- i. Advanced foot work.
- ii. Commanding the field.
- iii. Communication with the pitcher.
- iv. Umpire relationship and communication.
- v. Advanced pitching signs.
- vi. Runner awareness.
- vii. 3B and 1B back door throw downs

• **Basic outfield - All Players Must Participate In Outfield:**

a) Fundamental Mastery:

- i. Load up on the pitch
- ii. Receiving ball and glove side throwing.
- iii. Communication with cut off.
- iv. Getting the ball in to the cut off quickly.
- v. Outfield back up and all players to the ball.
- vi. Taking an angle on a ball in the gap.

b) Required Fundamental Emphasized:

- i. Back up of all infield play.
- ii. Adjusting based on the batter.

c) Required Fundamental Introduced:

- i. Crow hop throw.
- ii. Kneel and block.



- **Basic to Intermediate Infield:**

- a) Fundamental Mastery:

- i. Load up on the pitch
    - ii. Bag approach and communication.
    - iii. Lead runner awareness
    - iv. Back up on all plays
    - v. How to play the bunt with 3B, 1B and 2B rotation.
    - vi. How to rotate SS & 3B with runners on.

- b) Required Fundamental Emphasized:

- i. Pickle / run down back up.
    - ii. Foot work drills w/ receiving and throwing.
    - iii. Throw downs on the steal.

- c) Required Fundamental Introduction:

- i. Double Plays.
    - ii. Flips and tosses.
    - iii. Advanced short game rotations.