



**YMCA of Greater Spartanburg  
Coach's Manual and Practice Planning Workbook**

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## **Overview of YMCA Youth Sports Coaching**

Dear Coaches,

Welcome to the YMCA of Greater Spartanburg's Youth Sports Program. Whether you are a returning coach or brand new this year, we appreciate your commitment to your YMCA and hope you enjoy being a part of our league.

This will be one of the most rewarding and fun experiences you will have! As a coach, you will have the opportunity to make a positive difference in a child's life and your community – a difference that will last a lifetime.

At the YMCA of Greater Spartanburg, we are committed to building healthy spirit, mind and body in all of our programs. As a Youth Sports Coach, we are entrusting this awesome responsibility to you. The YMCA is a volunteer-led organization dedicated to building relationships and enhancing the lives of our community members – you are at the heart of our organization.

Our goal is to provide you with all the resources you will need to effectively lead a team of young athletes through a successful sports season. A successful season, however, is not a winning season. Success for youth athletes consists of far more than having the highest score at the end of the game. At the end of a successful sports season, your athletes should have learned the following:

- The value of hard work
- The importance of teamwork
- New skills to enhance their game play
- Strong sportsmanship
- The importance of the YMCA's 4 Character Traits – Caring, Honesty, Respect and Responsibility

The goal of the YMCA Youth Sports is to develop OUR children and we will only be successful if we are focused more on their development than on winning or losing games.

Our sports staff at the YMCA has the responsibility of making sure you have all the tools you need to have a successful season. Please communicate openly and frequently with our staff if you should need additional information or resources.

Have a great season! Thanks for all you do!

## THE YMCA SPORTS PHILOSOPHY

### **Everyone Plays**

We do not use tryouts to select the best player, nor do we cut kids from YMCA Youth Sports. Everyone who registers to play is assigned to a team. Remember, we are more interested in developing children's character through sports than in developing a few highly skilled players.



As a coach, you must ensure that all players receive equal playing time and every player plays at least half of every game.

### **Fair Play**

Fair play is about more than playing by the rules. It's about you, your players and your player's parents showing respect for all who are involved in YMCA Youth Sports. It's about you being a role model of good sportsmanship and guiding your players and their parents to do the same.



As a coach, set the example of good sportsmanship and reward players and parents for showing respect to all involved in YMCA Youth Sports. Do not tolerate disrespect by your players or parents.

### **Positive Competition**

We believe competition is a positive process when the pursuit of victory is kept in the right perspective. The right perspective means adults make decisions that put the best interest of the children above winning the contest. Learning to compete is important for children and learning to cooperate in a competitive world is an essential lesson in life. Learning to win is just as important as learning to lose.



As a coach, help your players set goals that are not about winning or losing. This way, no matter what the score of the game, your players learn that no matter what the score is, there is value in playing the game.

### **Family Involvement**

We encourage parents to be involved appropriately along with their child's participation in sports. In addition to parents being helpful as volunteer coaches, officials and timekeepers, we encourage them to be present at practices and games to support their player.



As a coach, give parents responsibilities that will benefit the team – like leading devotions, making banners and signs for games or bringing healthy snacks and water.

### **Sport for All.**

YMCA Youth Sports an inclusive program, meaning that children who differ in various characteristics, including physical ability, race, gender, religion or ability are included in participation.



As a coach, support and appreciate the diversity of children in your community and encourage your players and parents to do the same.

### **Sport for Fun**

Sport is naturally fun for most children. They love the challenge of mastering skills, playing with their friends and competing with their peers. Sometimes, when adults become involved in children's sports, they over-organize and dominate the activity to the point of spoiling the children's enjoyment of the sport. If we take the fun out of sports, we are in danger of our children taking themselves out of sports.



As a coach, emphasize the importance of having fun to both players and parents, reminding them that the benefits of physical activity in childhood are long-lasting.

### **Safety First**

Although some children may get hurt playing sports, we do all we can to prevent injuries. We have modified each sport to make it safer and more enjoyable to play.



As a coach, teach the sports as we've prescribed so that skills are taught as appropriate for children's developmental levels; develop your player's fitness levels gradually so they are conditioned for the sport; constantly supervise your young players so that you can stop unsafe activities.

## YMCA of Greater Spartanburg's Role of a Coach

YMCA Youth Sports Coaches have the potential to influence a great number of people. We want you to be a positive role model for youth by maintaining an attitude of **RESPECT, RESPONSIBILITY, HONESTY, CARING & FAITH.**

### Please Remember;

1. Your **attitude** and actions are on display for your team, your team's parents, plus opposing teams. You are a **role model**—volunteer coaches should appear clean, neat, and appropriately attired.
2. You should treat all children equally—regardless of sex, race, religion, or culture.
3. Coaches must use **positive techniques** of guidance, including redirection, positive reinforcement, and encouragement—rather than competition, comparison, and criticism.
4. **YMCA Coaches should be involved for the kids:**
  1. To teach skills & knowledge about the game
  2. To teach sportsmanship, teamwork, and character
  3. To provide a fun, low-key environment for all
  4. To promote friendships and family togetherness
5. Coaches should give high priority to the **objectives** above—focusing on winning & recognition can destroy positive outcomes.
6. Y Leagues **focus on skill development, team building, and personal growth.** The YMCA of Greater Spartanburg encourages children to participate in sports at the highest level their ability will allow. Higher competitive leagues are available in the area and the YMCA will be happy to make recommendations based on players ability.

**Thank YOU for  
Coaching Youth Sports  
at the YMCA of Greater  
Spartanburg!**

### Specific Guidelines;

1. Harassment & verbal criticism of officials is not allowed. Site supervisors are available for constructive comments during or at the end of games.
2. In order to protect YMCA volunteers and participants, at NO time during a YMCA program should a volunteer leave a child unsupervised or be alone with a single child where they cannot be observed by others.
3. Never touch a child in a manner that could be interpreted as abusive or would make them feel uncomfortable.
4. Accepting and adhering to all league rules and policies related to the participation of adults & youth. Please refer all disputes at halftime and/or timeouts.
5. Treat each child on your team and opposing teams as individuals and be sensitive to their own personal feelings. Profanity, inappropriate jokes, sharing intimate details of ones personal life, and any kind of harassment in the presence of children or parents is inappropriate.
6. Effective coaching experts agree that instructions should be given at practice. An over-abundance of instruction at game time only serves to confuse players.
7. Mannerisms can be just as offensive as foul language, i.e. throwing things, flailing movements, foot stomping, and tone of voice. This behavior is not allowed.



### **Policy Enforcement:**

1. Individual may be given a warning for inappropriate behavior.
2. Individual may be asked to leave the game(s). Game(s) may be terminated and/or individual may be asked not to return for other Youth Sports activities.
3. Other sanctions as deemed necessary may be enforced.

8. Smoking or use of tobacco, as well as possessing or being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs on YMCA property or during YMCA sponsored programs or events are prohibited.
9. Volunteers shall not abuse children including:
  - Physical abuse—strike, spank, shake, slap
  - Verbal abuse—humiliate, degrade, threaten
  - Sexual abuse—inappropriate touch or verbal exchange
  - Mental abuse—shaming, withholding praise, cruelty
10. Volunteers should not transport children in their personal vehicles
11. Under no circumstances should volunteers release children to anyone other than the authorized parent, guardian, or other adult authorized by the parent or guardian.

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**Coach's Signature**

**Date**

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**Coach's Printed Name**

# The 7 Components of a Practice

Take the time each week to plan out your practices!

## Opening Circle

Take a few minutes to welcome your players to practice. Be sure to do the following:

- Devotion or Thought for the day
- Review of last game – what we learned and how we can grow
- Goal for today's practice – what skills will we be working on
- Overview of the flow of today's practice – roadmap of the next hour

## Warm-up and Stretch

Spend at least 5 minutes exercising to raise your players' heart rates and warm their muscles. Warm-up can be anything from a quick game of tag to running a few laps to conditioning exercises. Never skip the warm-up and stretch section of practice!

## Individual Skill Drills

This is a time for players to work on a skill and develop it as an individual player. You will find individual skill drills to incorporate into your practices in the next section. Allow your players adequate time in learning any new skill before asking them to apply it as a team.

## Team Skill Games

This is a time for your players to learn to come together and develop their skills as a functioning group of players. The team skill drills should build on the individual skill drills, providing natural progression from individually mastering a new skill to applying it as a team. You will find team skill drills to incorporate into your practices in the next section.

## Scrimmage

There is no better way to prepare for a game and to apply the skills learned throughout practice than to put them to action in a game-type situation. Always include a scrimmage in every practice – it gives your players a chance to develop their teamwork and will enhance their comfort in game situations.

## Closing Huddle

Take just a few minutes at the end of practice to review the skills you worked on and to evaluate the goals set at the beginning of practice. Encourage your players to continue to practice throughout the week with their friends and parents. Review all the necessary information for the upcoming game, including:

- Location
- What time to arrive
- Who is bringing snack

## Water Breaks

Whether it is hot or cold, be sure to allow your players to get water at any point during practice. Staying hydrated helps your players focus on the skills they're learning.

## **Blank Practice Plans**

## PRACTICE PLAN

Practice Date \_\_\_\_\_

Time	Activity	The Plan for Today
:00	Opening Circle -overview of practice -set goals for practice -devotion	
:05	Warm-Up and Stretch	
:10	Individual Skill Drill	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
:20	Water Break	
:25	Team Skill Games	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
:40	Water Break	
:45	Scrimmage	
:60	Closing Huddle -review of practice -prepare for game	Next Game Date: _____ Location: _____ Snack: _____

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## **Team Skills/Drills Activities**

## TEAM SKILL GAMES

On the following pages, you will find individual skill drills to help your players learn the key skills of the sport.

Here is your key to understanding how to read and use the individual skill drills in this section:

Skill	Ages
<b>This box will tell you exactly which skill you will be working on</b>	<b>Age groups that are best for this drill</b>

Difficulty

Beginner       Intermediate       Advanced

Physical Intensity

1    2    3    4    5    6    7    8    9    10

Time Needed

**How much of practice do you need to set aside for this drill?**

Materials Needed

**What equipment will you need to run this drill?**

Field Set-up

**If there is a specific way the playing area needs to be set up in order to run this drill, you will find instructions and diagrams in this section**

Instructions

**Step-by-step how to run this drill**

Modifications

**Ideas for how to make this drill easier or harder or adjust it for different age groups or practice locations.**

This activity emphasizes the following character value:

Caring    Honesty    Respect    Responsibility    Faith    Teamwork    Sportsmanship    Fair Play  
 Healthy Habits    Hard Work

YMCA of Greater Spartanburg Practice Plan Activity  
**T-Ball/Baseball**

Individual Skill Building Drill

Team Skill Building Drill

Skill	Defensive Scenarios	Ages
Double Plays (Runner on first)		7 and up

Difficulty

Beginner       Intermediate       Advanced

Physical Intensity

1    2    3    4    5    6    7    8    9    10

Time Needed

10-15 minutes

Materials Needed

Bases, gloves, bat, ball

Field Set-up

Bases set at regular depths and defense set in correct positions.

Instructions

With the team on the field in their defensive positions, announce that there is a runner on the first and no outs. Hit the ball to each position in the infield.

Hit to 3B– 3B throws to 2B, SS backs up 3B, 2B covers second and then throws to 1B, C backs up 1B.

Hit to SS– SS throws to 2B, 2B covers second and throws to 1B, C backs up 1B.

Hit to 2B– 2B throws to SS, SS covers second and throws to 1B, C backs up 1B.

Hit to 1B near base– 1B tags first and throws to second; SS covers second and must tag the runner.

Hit to 1B away from base– 1B throws to SS, SS covers second and throws back to first, 1B or P (closest) covers first.

Hit to P– P throws to SS, SS covers second, SS throws to 1B, C backs up 1B.

Remind fielders that it is extremely important to get the lead runner if at all possible. By getting the lead runner you keep base runners farther from home and you can still possibly get a double play on the next play.

This activity emphasizes the following character value:

Caring    Honesty    Respect    Responsibility    Faith    Teamwork  
 Sportsmanship    Fair Play    Healthy Habits    Hard Work

YMCA of Greater Spartanburg Practice Plan Activity  
**T-Ball/Baseball**

Individual Skill Building Drill

Team Skill Building Drill

Skill	Defensive Scenarios	Ages
	Cut-offs with Runner on Second (Single to Left)	10 and up

Difficulty

Beginner

Intermediate

Advanced

Physical Intensity

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

Time Needed

10-15 minutes

Materials Needed

Bases, gloves, bat, ball

Field Set-up

Bases set at regular depths and defense set in correct positions.

Instructions

On a single to left field the third baseman will be the cutoff to home. The shortstop will cover third base. The pitcher will backup home. The catcher will make the call if a cut is needed and to what base. The center fielder should start toward left and once the ball has been fielded cleanly, he/she should go to back up second in case a throw is made there either from the cutoff or the catcher.

This activity emphasizes the following character value:

Caring  Honesty  Respect  Responsibility  Faith  Teamwork

Sportsmanship  Fair Play  Healthy Habits  Hard Work

YMCA of Greater Spartanburg Practice Plan Activity  
**T-Ball/Baseball**

Individual Skill Building Drill

Team Skill Building Drill

Skill	Defensive Scenarios	Ages
	Cut-offs with Runner on First (Single to Right)	10 and up

Difficulty

Beginner

Intermediate

Advanced

Physical Intensity

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

Time Needed

10 - 15 minutes

Materials Needed

Bases, gloves, bat, ball

Field Set-up

Bases set at regular depths and defense set in correct positions.

Instructions

On a single to right field the shortstop will be the cutoff to third base. The second baseman will cover second base. The pitcher must hustle to get in position to back up third base. The left fielder should move in to help back up third base. With younger players you may want to have the second baseman be the cut on this play. It depends on the arm strength of the right fielder. In general you want to have the second baseman be the cutoff person if the shortstop would have to go on the second base side to be in proper position.

This activity emphasizes the following character value:

Caring  Honesty  Respect  Responsibility  Faith  Teamwork

Sportsmanship  Fair Play  Healthy Habits  Hard Work

YMCA of Greater Spartanburg Practice Plan Activity  
**T-Ball/Baseball**

Individual Skill Building Drill

Team Skill Building Drill

Skill	Ages
Cut-offs with No Runners (Single to right)	10 and up

Difficulty

Beginner

Intermediate

Advanced

Physical Intensity

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

Time Needed

10 - 15 minutes

Materials Needed

Bases, gloves, bat, ball

Field Set-up

Bases set at regular depths and defense set in correct positions.

Instructions

On a single to right field the second baseman will be the cutoff to second base. The shortstop will cover the bag. The left fielder and third baseman must back up second. First baseman must get close to first and be ready for a throw behind the runner.

This activity emphasizes the following character value:

Caring  Honesty  Respect  Responsibility  Faith  Teamwork

Sportsmanship  Fair Play  Healthy Habits  Hard Work

YMCA of Greater Spartanburg Practice Plan Activity  
**T-Ball/Baseball**

Individual Skill Building Drill

Team Skill Building Drill

Skill	Ages
Cut-offs with No Runners (Single to left)	10 and up

Difficulty

Beginner

Intermediate

Advanced

Physical Intensity

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

Time Needed

10 - 15 minutes

Materials Needed

Bases, gloves, bat, ball

Field Set-up

Bases set at regular depths and defense set in correct positions.

Instructions

On a single to left field the shortstop will be the cutoff to second base. The second baseman will cover the bag. The first baseman should primarily back up the throw from left and then move towards first. This will put him/her into position to receive a throw at first in case the runner takes too large of a turn.

This activity emphasizes the following character value:

Caring  Honesty  Respect  Responsibility  Faith  Teamwork

Sportsmanship  Fair Play  Healthy Habits  Hard Work

YMCA of Greater Spartanburg Practice Plan Activity  
T-Ball/Baseball

Individual Skill Building Drill

Team Skill Building Drill

Skill	Ages
Workup throwing competition	7-10

Difficulty

Beginner

Intermediate

Advanced

Physical Intensity

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

Time Needed

10-15 minutes

Materials Needed

Glove and ball

Field Set-up

Open field

Instructions

This is a throwing accuracy competition. Each pair will make the same amount of throws as every other pair. You don't want this to be a race. With the players in position as described above have them wait for you to say 'go' or blow a whistle. They will throw to their partner with just their wrist and the partner will throw the ball back. If they can do this without dropping the ball, they can move back a few feet and then use elbow and wrist to throw.

They will workup through the throwing series stages. If a ball is dropped they have to keep at that stage until they are successful. First pair to complete will win. You can do a number of variations depending on age and skill.

This activity emphasizes the following character value:

- Caring  Honesty  Respect  Responsibility  Faith  Teamwork  
 Sportsmanship  Fair Play  Healthy Habits  Hard Work

YMCA of Greater Spartanburg Practice Plan Activity  
**T-Ball/Baseball**

Individual Skill Building Drill

Team Skill Building Drill

Skill	Base running	Ages
The Challenge		All ages

Difficulty

Beginner

Intermediate

Advanced

Physical Intensity

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

Time Needed

5 minutes at the beginning and 5 minutes at the end of practice

Materials Needed

Bases

Field Set-up

Bases set at regular game day depth.

Instructions

At the beginning of practice, inform the team that they will be running a relay as a team. You are going to time them and they need to run it as fast as they can. Time them and record their time.

At the end of practice, propose a challenge to the team. They are now tired from an hour of practice. The challenge is to see if they can beat their time from the beginning of practice. Kids love a tough challenge such as this and their final times may surprise you.

Don't mention the second race at the beginning of practice.

This activity emphasizes the following character value:

Caring  Honesty  Respect  Responsibility  Faith  Teamwork

Sportsmanship  Fair Play  Healthy Habits  Hard Work

YMCA of Greater Spartanburg Practice Plan Activity  
**T-Ball/Baseball**

Individual Skill Building Drill

Team Skill Building Drill

Skill	Base running	Ages
No Defense		8 and up

Difficulty

Beginner

Intermediate

Advanced

Physical Intensity

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

Time Needed

15 minutes

Materials Needed

Bases, bat, balls, helmets

Field Set-up

Set up the bases as they would be for an actual game.

Instructions

Start with runners on first and second and a runner in the batter's box. All other runners are waiting their turn behind home. The coach will hit a pop up or a ground ball. All balls are assumed to be hits and the runners must advance to the next base accordingly. Coaches are to instruct the base runners as to where they should go depending on where the ball is hit. They should instruct on whether or not to slide or stay on their feet as they run to a base. Scenarios should be switched up and kids should receive multiple opportunities.

This activity emphasizes the following character value:

Caring  Honesty  Respect  Responsibility  Faith  Teamwork

Sportsmanship  Fair Play  Healthy Habits  Hard Work

YMCA of Greater Spartanburg Practice Plan Activity  
**T-Ball/Baseball**

Skill Building Drill

Team Skill Building Drill

Skill	Base running	Ages
Relay Races		All ages

Difficulty

Beginner

Intermediate

Advanced

Physical Intensity

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

Time Needed

5 minutes

Materials Needed

Home plate and bases

Field Set-up

Set up the bases and home plate as they would be in a regular game.

Instructions

Split the group into two teams. One team lines up behind home plate while the other lines up behind second base. The first kid in each line will be given a ball which will be the baton used for the relay. Say "Go!" and the first kid from each side begins running the bases. Each kid has to run all of the bases (back to their respective team) and hand the baseball off to the next runner in line to continue the relay. The first team to finish is the winner. This is a great way to finish practice. (Kids will often ask for a rematch!)

This activity emphasizes the following character value:

Caring  Honesty  Respect  Responsibility  Faith  Teamwork

Sportsmanship  Fair Play  Healthy Habits  Hard Work

YMCA of Greater Spartanburg Practice Plan Activity  
**T-Ball/Baseball**

Skill Building Drill

Team Skill Building Drill

Skill	Base running	Ages
Base Running Warm Up		Youngest – 6 yrs

Difficulty

Beginner

Intermediate

Advanced

Physical Intensity

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

Time Needed

3-5 minutes

Materials Needed

Bases

Field Set-up

Set up the bases and home plate as they would be in an actual game.

Instructions

Have the players jog around the bases together in a line. They should call out the name of each base as they step on it. Let the players go around the bases a few times and increase their speed each time. They should not be trying to pass each other though. This will teach them direction and the names of the bases. Once runners increase their speed, encourage them to step only on the inside corner of the base.

This activity emphasizes the following character value:

Caring  Honesty  Respect  Responsibility  Faith  Teamwork

Sportsmanship  Fair Play  Healthy Habits  Hard Work

YMCA of Greater Spartanburg Practice Plan Activity  
**T-Ball/Baseball**

Individual Skill Building Drill

Team Skill Building Drill

Skill	Ages
Team cut offs	8-10

Difficulty

Beginner

Intermediate

Advanced

Physical Intensity

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

Time Needed

10-15 minutes

Materials Needed

Glove, ball

Field Set-up

Have players get into position

Instructions

Start with a runner at home and hit fly balls and line drives into the outfield. Have a third base coach and all players should act like it's a game situation. After each ball is thrown in, have the defense hustle back to their positions; call out the number of outs and the situation. This should take just a few seconds and then you're ready to hit the next ball.

After a few minutes have the groups rotate, giving each group a chance at each spot.

This activity emphasizes the following character value:

Caring  Honesty  Respect  Responsibility  Faith  Teamwork

Sportsmanship  Fair Play  Healthy Habits  Hard Work

YMCA of Greater Spartanburg Practice Plan Activity  
**T-Ball/Baseball**

Individual Skill Building Drill

Team Skill Building Drill

Skill	Ages
Bare hand double plays	9-10

Difficulty

Beginner

Intermediate

Advanced

Physical Intensity

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

Time Needed

10-15 minutes

Materials Needed

Glove and ball

Field Set-up

Infield with bases

Instructions

Coach will roll ground balls from close to second base to the infielders as they work on fielding and turning double plays.

Players will work on fielding ground balls with both hands and then making a good accurate underhand toss to the other player covering the bag.

Player receiving the throw will work on catching the ball with both hands and then complete the double play with a throw to first.

This activity emphasizes the following character value:

Caring  Honesty  Respect  Responsibility  Faith  Teamwork

Sportsmanship  Fair Play  Healthy Habits  Hard Work

YMCA of Greater Spartanburg Practice Plan Activity  
T-Ball/Baseball

Individual Skill Building Drill

Team Skill Building Drill

Skill	Ages
Fence Drill	7-10

Difficulty

Beginner

Intermediate

Advanced

Physical Intensity

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

Time Needed

15 minutes

Materials Needed

Fence, glove, and ball

Field Set-up

Fence

Instructions

This drill is designed to quicken reaction time to grounders and line drives using lateral movement. The entire team competes in a contest to see which player can keep the most out of 10 balls from hitting a fence or wall behind him.

Mark an area of a fence or wall about 20 feet wide and 6 feet high. One at a time, fielders stand in front of the fence. A hitter stands about 40 feet away, and hit balls to him/her. The hits should be to different spots within the fence markings (left, right, grounders, line drives). The fielder has to prevent the balls from hitting the fence behind him/her. Each fielder gets 10 balls hit to him/her. The fielder with the most stops of the 10 balls wins the round.

This activity emphasizes the following character value:

Caring  Honesty  Respect  Responsibility  Faith  Teamwork

Sportsmanship  Fair Play  Healthy Habits  Hard Work

YMCA of Greater Spartanburg Practice Plan Activity  
**T-Ball/Baseball**

Skill Building Drill

Team Skill Building Drill

Skill	Hitting	Ages
In, Out, Middle		10 and up

Difficulty

Beginner

Intermediate

Advanced

Physical Intensity

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

Time Needed

30 minutes

Materials Needed

Bat, balls, bases, helmet

Field Set-up

Set up bases at normal depth and have defense to retrieve balls.

Instructions

The coach should throw batting practice as usual allowing each player the same amount of hittable pitches. This time the batter must call where they are hitting the ball after the pitch is thrown. The batter will call "in", "out", or "middle" depending on where they plan to hit it. For a pitch thrown inside they should yell "in" and pull the ball. A pitch thrown outside they should yell "out" and hit it to the opposite field. And for a pitch down the middle they should call "middle".

Modifications

You can modify this into a game where score is kept. You could receive points for each correctly called hit.

This activity emphasizes the following character value:

Caring  Honesty  Respect  Responsibility  Faith  Teamwork

Sportsmanship  Fair Play  Healthy Habits  Hard Work

YMCA of Greater Spartanburg Practice Plan Activity  
**T-Ball/Baseball**

Skill Building Drill

Team Skill Building Drill

Skill	Hitting	Ages
Basic stride		Youngest-6 yrs

Difficulty

Beginner

Intermediate

Advanced

Physical Intensity

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

Time Needed

5 minutes

Materials Needed

Bat, helmet, glove

Field Set-up

Have players use their glove as home plate.

Instructions

The coach will throw an imaginary pitch to the group of batters. Batters should coil back, stride through their swing, and then freeze, after their follow through. Coaches should repeat until they have watched and instructed each batter. Watch for the following:

- Is the most of the weight still back? Make sure they are not lunging forward.
- Are the hands still back?
- Have the hands dropped?
- Is the body still in the same basic alignment? Sometimes players will bend their knees or bend over during the stride.
- Is the head still at the same height?

This activity emphasizes the following character value:

Caring  Honesty  Respect  Responsibility  Faith  Teamwork

Sportsmanship  Fair Play  Healthy Habits  Hard Work

YMCA of Greater Spartanburg Practice Plan Activity  
**T-Ball/Baseball**

Skill Building Drill

Team Skill Building Drill

Skill	Hitting	Ages
Pepper		8 and up

Difficulty

Beginner

Intermediate

Advanced

Physical Intensity

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

Time Needed

10 minutes

Materials Needed

Gloves for each player, helmet, ball (wiffle ball), fence, and bat

Field Set-up

No set up required. Just position yourself so that there is a fence for a backstop.

Instructions

The purpose of this game is to practice laying down bunts. One player will take a bat (suggest that this is first done with a wiffle ball bat and ball until players are used to it) and face the fielders. All the fielders (no more than 3-4) stand between the batter and the fence. A fielder tosses the ball to the batter and the batter attempts to lay down a bunt. If the bunt hits the ground and rolls to a fielder, then the batter is allowed to continue. If a fielder catches the ball in the air, then he/she switches places with the batter.

Modifications

Once players get the hang of it, they often like to keep a tally or score.

This activity emphasizes the following character value:

Caring  Honesty  Respect  Responsibility  Faith  Teamwork

Sportsmanship  Fair Play  Healthy Habits  Hard Work

## **Individual Skill Drill Activities**

## INDIVIDUAL SKILL GAMES

On the following pages, you will find individual skill drills to help your players learn the key skills of the sport.

Here is your key to understanding how to read and use the individual skill drills in this section:

Skill	Ages
This box will tell you exactly which skill you will be working on	Age groups that are best for this drill

### Difficulty

Beginner       Intermediate       Advanced

### Physical Intensity

1    2    3    4    5    6    7    8    9    10

### Time Needed

How much of practice do you need to set aside for this drill?

### Materials Needed

What equipment will you need to run this drill?

### Field Set-up

If there is a specific way the playing area needs to be set up in order to run this drill, you will find instructions and diagrams in this section

### Instructions

Step-by-step how to run this drill

### Modifications

Ideas for how to make this drill easier or harder or adjust it for different age groups or practice locations.

This activity emphasizes the following character value:

- Caring    Honesty    Respect    Responsibility    Faith    Teamwork  
 Sportsmanship    Fair Play    Healthy Habits    Hard Work

YMCA of Greater Spartanburg Practice Plan Activity  
**T-Ball/Baseball**

Individual Skill Building Drill

Team Skill Building Drill

Skill	Ages
Chicken Wing	3-6

Difficulty

Beginner

Intermediate

Advanced

Physical Intensity

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

Time Needed

5-10 minutes

Materials Needed

Glove and ball

Field Set-up

Open field

Instructions

Have the kids pretend they are a chicken. When they throw they should step straight to their target with their front foot. Their front arm (with the glove) should act as a "wing" on a chicken. Have them point their glove at the target and then tuck it into their arm-pit like a "wing" where their elbow is pointing at the target. They can then throw the ball accurately. The biggest thing kids do is try to throw it too hard, they often open up their shoulders and hips as they throw so that the ball goes flying and no one knows where it's headed. If they think about the wing and pointing their elbow to the target, the ball will stay on line and go where they want it to. Suggest starting this drill off without a ball, have the kids go through the motion of it first and then give them a ball to play catch with a partner.

This activity emphasizes the following character value:

Caring

Honesty

Respect

Responsibility

Faith

Teamwork

Sportsmanship

Fair Play

Healthy Habits

Hard Work

YMCA of Greater Spartanburg Practice Plan Activity  
**T-Ball/Baseball**

Individual Skill Building Drill

Team Skill Building Drill

Skill	Ages
Grip and Motion	3-6

Difficulty

Beginner

Intermediate

Advanced

Physical Intensity

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

Time Needed

10 minutes

Materials Needed

Glove and ball

Field Set-up

Open field

Instructions

Thumb under the ball. Two or three fingers on top. Don't worry about the seams. Eyes on the target. Legs apart; foot on throwing arm side behind body. Arm back and up, front shoulder turned toward target. Step toward target with foot opposite the throwing arm. Right-hander with left foot; left-hander with right foot. Push off on back foot as throw begins; end with weight on forward foot. Release the ball in front of body and follow through.

This activity emphasizes the following character value:

Caring  Honesty  Respect  Responsibility  Faith  Teamwork

Sportsmanship  Fair Play  Healthy Habits  Hard Work

YMCA of Greater Spartanburg Practice Plan Activity  
**T-Ball/Baseball**

Individual Skill Building Drill

Team Skill Building Drill

Skill	Ages
One and two	5-7

Difficulty

Beginner

Intermediate

Advanced

Physical Intensity

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

Time Needed

10 minutes

Materials Needed

Glove and ball

Field Set-up

Open field

Instructions

Two players play catch. Thrower scores 2 points if ball is caught at or above the shoulders. 1 point if caught between waist and shoulders. No points if caught below the waist or not caught. First player to score 10 points wins.

This activity emphasizes the following character value:

- Caring  Honesty  Respect  Responsibility  Faith  Teamwork  
 Sportsmanship  Fair Play  Healthy Habits  Hard Work

YMCA of Greater Spartanburg Practice Plan Activity  
**T-Ball/Baseball**

Individual Skill Building Drill

Team Skill Building Drill

Skill	Ages
Throw and Go	5-6

Difficulty

Beginner

Intermediate

Advanced

Physical Intensity

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

Time Needed

5-10 minutes

Materials Needed

Glove and ball

Field Set-up

Open field

Instructions

This drill teaches young players to follow their throw in the right direction.

Have two single file lines of players (one behind the other) facing at a comfortable throwing distance.

A1 A2 A3 A4 A5 >> << B1 B2 B3 B4 B5

The player at the head of line one throws to the player at the head of line two. After the throw, player continues a forward motion (as one should) in the direction of the throw by running to the back of the opposite line.

The drill is especially effective for Tee Ballers as it encourages players to follow their throws instead of allowing them to 'cheat backward' as they tend to do when going to the back of the same line.

This activity emphasizes the following character value:

Caring  Honesty  Respect  Responsibility  Faith  Teamwork

Sportsmanship  Fair Play  Healthy Habits  Hard Work

YMCA of Greater Spartanburg Practice Plan Activity  
**T-Ball/Baseball**

Individual Skill Building Drill

Team Skill Building Drill

Skill	Ages
Shuffle Throws	3-6

Difficulty

Beginner

Intermediate

Advanced

Physical Intensity

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

Time Needed

5-10 minutes

Materials Needed

Glove and ball

Field Set-up

Open field

Instructions

Have the player with the ball place it on the ground in front of him/her. He/she will then simulate fielding a ground ball. Once he/she has fielded the ball he/she will take a couple shuffle steps toward the target getting his/her body in good throwing position as he/she does so. After a couple shuffle steps he/she will step and throw.

Make sure the player is getting his/her body lined up as he/she performs the shuffle steps. His/her lead shoulder and hip should be pointing towards the target. As he/she gets lined up his/her back foot should land perpendicular to the target.

This activity emphasizes the following character value:

Caring  Honesty  Respect  Responsibility  Faith  Teamwork

Sportsmanship  Fair Play  Healthy Habits  Hard Work

YMCA of Greater Spartanburg Practice Plan Activity  
T-Ball/Baseball

Individual Skill Building Drill

Team Skill Building Drill

Skill	Ages
Stationary throwing drill	6-8

Difficulty

Beginner

Intermediate

Advanced

Physical Intensity

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

Time Needed

10 minutes

Materials Needed

Glove and baseball

Field Set-up

Open field

Instructions

One player will get in the proper position to catch the ball and give the other player a target. Player with the ball will place his/her back foot facing perpendicular to the target. Make sure he/she has lined up his/her body in the direction of the throw. He/she will then step and throw to the other player. Remind the players that this is a continuation of the other throwing drills.

This drill shows them how to place their back foot and close their front side before making the throw. Check the position of the back foot and whether they are pointing their front shoulder and hip toward the target.

Check to make sure they are following through on their throw. The throwing hand should end up down by the knee of the front leg.

This activity emphasizes the following character value:

Caring  Honesty  Respect  Responsibility  Faith  Teamwork

Sportsmanship  Fair Play  Healthy Habits  Hard Work

YMCA of Greater Spartanburg Practice Plan Activity  
T-Ball/Baseball

Individual Skill Building Drill

Team Skill Building Drill

Skill	Ages
Wrist/Elbow	5-10

Difficulty

Beginner

Intermediate

Advanced

Physical Intensity

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

Time Needed

10 minutes

Materials Needed

baseballs

Field Set-up

Open field

Instructions

Players get on one knee about 6 feet from their partner. Have each player place their glove on the ground in front of them.

Start by showing the players the proper 4 seam grip on the baseball.

The player with the ball will get the proper grip on the baseball. The player will then bend his/her elbow and hold his forearm with his other hand.

The player will then bend his/her wrist back and flick the ball to his/her partner using only the wrist to throw the ball. Emphasize that the wrist will be used during all throws.

Have players aim for the others player's glove as a target.

Have the players back up to about 15 feet.

This time the player throwing the ball will place his/her other hand under his/her arm holding his/her triceps.

The player will then throw the ball using just his/her elbow and wrist.

This activity emphasizes the following character value:

Caring  Honesty  Respect  Responsibility  Faith  Teamwork

Sportsmanship  Fair Play  Healthy Habits  Hard Work

YMCA of Greater Spartanburg Practice Plan Activity  
T-Ball/Baseball

Individual Skill Building Drill

Team Skill Building Drill

Skill	Ages
Step and Throw	3-6

Difficulty

Beginner

Intermediate

Advanced

Physical Intensity

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

Time Needed

10 minutes

Materials Needed

Glove

Field Set-up

Open field

Instructions

Both players will get in the proper position to catch the ball. Player with the ball will step forward with his/her throwing side leg placing down in front of him/her perpendicular to the target. As he/she places his/her foot down he/she brings his/her back leg forward, swiveling his/her body as he/she does this, to get lined up in the correct throwing position. As he/she completes the step with his/her back leg, he/she will throw the ball. Remind the players that this is a continuation of the other throwing drills.

This added step will often result in younger players not getting their back foot positioned perpendicular to the target. Make sure you watch the placement of the foot and they still close the body and point it toward the target.

This activity emphasizes the following character value:

Caring  Honesty  Respect  Responsibility  Faith  Teamwork

Sportsmanship  Fair Play  Healthy Habits  Hard Work

YMCA of Greater Spartanburg Practice Plan Activity  
**T-Ball/Baseball**

Individual Skill Building Drill

Team Skill Building Drill

Skill	Ages
Throwing from one knee	7-10

Difficulty

Beginner

Intermediate

Advanced

Physical Intensity

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

Time Needed

10 minutes

Materials Needed

Glove

Field Set-up

Open field

Instructions

Have players partner up and across from each other about 20 feet away. Players will get on one knee that is on their throwing hand side. This drill will help to develop accuracy and arm speed.

This activity emphasizes the following character value:

Caring  Honesty  Respect  Responsibility  Faith  Teamwork

Sportsmanship  Fair Play  Healthy Habits  Hard Work

YMCA of Greater Spartanburg Practice Plan Activity  
**T-Ball/Baseball**

Individual Skill Building Drill

Team Skill Building Drill

Skill	Ages
Long toss	All ages

Difficulty

Beginner

Intermediate

Advanced

Physical Intensity

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

Time Needed

10 minutes

Materials Needed

Ball and glove

Field Set-up

Open field

Instructions

Players will partner up. After players get their arms loose one player will begin to back up. The players should take about five throws each and then back up 10 feet every time until they reach their range. The object is not to launch the ball in the air. They should be trying to throw the ball in a line to their partner.

This activity emphasizes the following character value:

Caring  Honesty  Respect  Responsibility  Faith  Teamwork

Sportsmanship  Fair Play  Healthy Habits  Hard Work

YMCA of Greater Spartanburg Practice Plan Activity  
**T-Ball/Baseball**

Skill Building Drill

Team Skill Building Drill

Skill	Base running	Ages
Bent leg sliding-running		9 and up

Difficulty

Beginner

Intermediate

Advanced

Physical Intensity

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

Time Needed

15 minutes

Materials Needed

Bases, helmets

Field Set-up

Bases set up at normal depth

Instructions

1. Start by finding out which leg is going to be bent during the bent leg slide. With the player standing have him/her stand on one leg and bend the other leg at the knee, bringing it behind the other leg.
2. Have the player raise both hands over his/her head.
3. Have the player start to squat, while he/she keeps his/her bent leg up, then sit down. The player will naturally roll back on his/her back and his/her feet will come up in the air. Although this won't happen when he/she slides, it will during this stage. When he/she has rolled back to a seated position, he/she should still have their hands up and his/her front leg should be bent not straight.
4. Once comfortable with this, have him/her take a couple steps and slide (always practice sliding on grass). Then have them jog and slide and finally run full speed and slide.

This activity emphasizes the following character value:

- Caring  Honesty  Respect  Responsibility  Faith  Teamwork  
 Sportsmanship  Fair Play  Healthy Habits  Hard Work

YMCA of Greater Spartanburg Practice Plan Activity  
**T-Ball/Baseball**

Skill Building Drill

Team Skill Building Drill

Skill	Base running	Ages
Speed (legs)-running		9 and up

Difficulty

Beginner

Intermediate

Advanced

Physical Intensity

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

Time Needed

10-15 minutes

Materials Needed

Bases

Field Set-up

Set up home plate and first base.

Instructions

Start off by having players run from home to first base. Time them if you would like. Notice if any of the runners are not using their legs or if they are dragging their feet. Have players stand and pretend to answer a phone that is attached to their hip. As they answer the phone, ask them to raise the opposite leg the same amount as the hand that is answering the phone. Now have them alternate hands and feet until they have mastered raising their hands and feet high. This may seem awkward at first as a running method for the players, but it will improve their speed. Let them practice by running in place at first. Then have them line up at home once again to see if they can now improve upon their time with their new method.

This activity emphasizes the following character value:

Caring  Honesty  Respect  Responsibility  Faith  Teamwork

Sportsmanship  Fair Play  Healthy Habits  Hard Work

YMCA of Greater Spartanburg Practice Plan Activity  
**T-Ball/Baseball**

Skill Building Drill

Team Skill Building Drill

Skill	Base running	Ages
Conditioning-Running		9 and up

Difficulty

Beginner

Intermediate

Advanced

Physical Intensity

1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10

Time Needed

10-15 minutes

Materials Needed

Bases

Field Set-up

Bases set up at normal depth

Instructions

This drill is to be done at full speed. Players will line up at home plate and the path listed below:

1. Run hard and round 1B, dive back into bag.
2. Get up, steal and round 2B, dive back into bag.
3. Get up, run hard, round 3B, continue and slide home.

This activity emphasizes the following character value:

- Caring  Honesty  Respect  Responsibility  Faith  Teamwork  
 Sportsmanship  Fair Play  Healthy Habits  Hard Work

YMCA of Greater Spartanburg Practice Plan Activity  
**T-Ball/Baseball**

Skill Building Drill

Team Skill Building Drill

Skill

Ages

Speed skills (arms)-running	9 and up
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Difficulty

Beginner

Intermediate

Advanced

Physical Intensity

1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10

Time Needed

10-15 minutes

Materials Needed

Bases and home plate

Field Set-up

Home plate and first base set up

Instructions

Have all the players run from home to first base and pay careful attention to their arm motions as they run. You can time them if you would like. Take notice of whether their arms are crossing their body, not swinging at all, or flapping away. If so, have them run again using a new method. Have the players imagine that there is a telephone on their hip and have them answer it. This motion causes them to reach down with their hands to their hips and take hands back up to their ear. This will increase momentum of the arms in the correct manner while increasing their speed. Have each player run until they have perfected the technique. You can time them again and see if they have improved.

This activity emphasizes the following character value:

Caring  Honesty  Respect  Responsibility  Faith  Teamwork

Sportsmanship  Fair Play  Healthy Habits  Hard Work

YMCA of Greater Spartanburg Practice Plan Activity  
**T-Ball/Baseball**

Skill Building Drill

Team Skill Building Drill

Skill	Ages
Safe Sliding	5 and up

Difficulty

Beginner

Intermediate

Advanced

Physical Intensity

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

Time Needed

10 minutes

Materials Needed

Base, large piece of cardboard, yard stick

Field Set-up

Set up a base with cardboard laying on the ground near it.

Instructions

Place a piece of cardboard on a grassy area with a base near it. Have the players run to the base and slide on the piece of cardboard. The cardboard will slide on the grass. You can use the yard stick as a limbo stick so that kids can practice sliding under it. Remind kids to slide on their bottom and back and not their side. Also, keep hands up to reduce the risk of jamming their wrists.

This activity emphasizes the following character value:

Caring  Honesty  Respect  Responsibility  Faith  Teamwork

Sportsmanship  Fair Play  Healthy Habits  Hard Work

YMCA of Greater Spartanburg Practice Plan Activity  
T-Ball/Baseball

Skill Building Drill

Team Skill Building Drill

Skill

Ages

Running through first base

Youngest – 8 yrs

Difficulty

Beginner

Intermediate

Advanced

Physical Intensity

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

Time Needed

5 minutes

Materials Needed

Base

Field Set-up

Lay out home plate and first base as they would be used in a regular game for that age group. Continue down the right field line and place another base about 15 feet beyond first base.

Instructions

The majority of younger players will run down the first base line and stop when they get to first base. They have to slow down before they get to first base in order to stop directly on it. This causes them to reach first base slower and increases their chance of being thrown out. Have players line up at home plate in order to practice running through first base. Each player is to run one at a time as fast as they can to first base. However, they cannot stop until they reach the second base 15 feet beyond first. This teaches them to run through first base every time.

This activity emphasizes the following character value:

Caring  Honesty  Respect  Responsibility  Faith  Teamwork

Sportsmanship  Fair Play  Healthy Habits  Hard Work

YMCA of Greater Spartanburg Practice Plan Activity  
**T-Ball/Baseball**

Skill Building Drill

Team Skill Building Drill

Skill

Ages

Running through first and staying in foul territory

Youngest-10

Difficulty

Beginner

Intermediate

Advanced

Physical Intensity

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

Time Needed

5-10 minutes

Materials Needed

Home plate, two bases, and a cone (another base can be used instead of a cone)

Field Set-up

Set out home plate and first base at the distance they will be in a regular game. Place another base about 10-15 beyond first base down the right field line. Place the cone to the right of the additional base. The cone should be in foul territory.

Instructions

After a player runs past first base, they often turn into fair territory as they are returning to first base. If they step towards the field then they can be tagged out as they return. Have players line up at home plate and practice one by one running to first base. Players should run through first all the way to the next base down the line. After reaching the next base they must turn to the right and jog around the cone on their way back to first base.

This activity emphasizes the following character value:

Caring  Honesty  Respect  Responsibility  Faith  Teamwork

Sportsmanship  Fair Play  Healthy Habits  Hard Work

YMCA of Greater Spartanburg Practice Plan Activity  
T-Ball/Baseball

Skill Building Drill

Team Skill Building Drill

Skill	Ages
Rounding the bases	All ages

Difficulty

Beginner

Intermediate

Advanced

Physical Intensity

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

Time Needed

5 minutes

Materials Needed

Home plate, bases, and four extra bases or markers

Field Set-up

Set up home plate, first base, second base, and third base as they would be in a regular game. Place an additional base/marker about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the way between home and first and about 5 feet foul. Place another base/marker halfway between first and second but about 5-8 feet toward right field. Place a marker halfway between second and third about 5-8 feet toward left field. Place the final marker halfway between third and home and about 5-8 feet foul. This should create a rounded base path.

Instructions

The shortest distance between two points is a straight line. However, if you need to run to multiple bases you can run faster by rounding off edges. Therefore, runners need to swing wide when they are running around bases instead of running straight lines from base to base. With this exercise runners get a feel for how to run a circle around the bases instead of a square.

Modifications

Have everyone run the bases a few times. Then use a stopwatch to time everyone.

This activity emphasizes the following character value:

Caring  Honesty  Respect  Responsibility  Faith  Teamwork

Sportsmanship  Fair Play  Healthy Habits  Hard Work

YMCA of Greater Spartanburg Practice Plan Activity  
**T-Ball/Baseball**

Individual Skill Building Drill

Team Skill Building Drill

Skill	Ages
Get it out	3-6

Difficulty

Beginner

Intermediate

Advanced

Physical Intensity

1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10

Time Needed

10 minutes

Materials Needed

Glove and ball

Field Set-up

Infield

Instructions

Too often, young players make the mistake of fielding ground balls with their mitt on the ground, directly below them, rather than extended out in front of them. This drill helps ensure proper extension.

Lay a bat on the ground perpendicular to a line of players. The first player in line should be 6-8 feet from the bat in a ready position. Coach is 8-10 feet from the bat, opposite the players. Coach rolls ball toward the bat. Player must approach the ground ball and assume a good fielding position right at the bat, without his/her feet touching or going over it. In order to prevent the ball from rolling into the bat the player must have his/her glove extended, rather than hanging directly down below his/her body. Once player secures the ball he/she sprints forward and places the ball at the feet of the coach who is already rolling a ball to the next player. Continue until all players have had sufficient reps.

This activity emphasizes the following character value:

Caring  Honesty  Respect  Responsibility  Faith  Teamwork

Sportsmanship  Fair Play  Healthy Habits  Hard Work

YMCA of Greater Spartanburg Practice Plan Activity  
**T-Ball/Baseball**

Individual Skill Building Drill

Team Skill Building Drill

Skill	Ages
Play 500 (fielding game)	7-10
Difficulty	
<input type="checkbox"/> Beginner <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Intermediate <input type="checkbox"/> Advanced	
Physical Intensity	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input type="checkbox"/> 6 <input type="checkbox"/> 7 <input type="checkbox"/> 8 <input type="checkbox"/> 9 <input type="checkbox"/> 10	
Time Needed	Materials Needed
20 minutes	Glove and ball

**Field Set-up**

Cones and open field
----------------------

**Instructions**

<p>During midseason when all your offense and defenses are installed and your practices are basic maintenance, a good competitive drill for the outfielders is called "500". It combines as many skills as you want as well as being fun for the players. Break it down into 2 days so the drill itself doesn't get too repetitive.</p> <p>On day 1 the four skills are ground balls to the left and right around cones, line drives and fly balls against the fence. On day 2 it is deep fly ball to the left and right, do-or- dies and sliding catches. If the player does the skill correctly and completes the play then they get 25 points. If they don't do the skill correctly or don't complete the play then they get -25 points. If a player makes a spectacular play on the sliding catch, for instance, then the coach can give them an extra 5 to 10 points.</p> <p>You can obviously use any combination of skills that you want for any of the positions. I suggest that you include at least one skill that is fun for the players like the sliding catch drill. We usually let the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> place winners choose their field cleanup chore. When we do this drill the other position players can also be "playing" this drill.</p>
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This activity emphasizes the following character value:

- Caring    Honesty    Respect    Responsibility    Faith    Teamwork  
 Sportsmanship    Fair Play    Healthy Habits    Hard Work

YMCA of Greater Spartanburg Practice Plan Activity  
**T-Ball/Baseball**

Individual Skill Building Drill

Team Skill Building Drill

Skill	Ages
Outfield Drill	7-10

Difficulty

Beginner

Intermediate

Advanced

Physical Intensity

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

Time Needed

5-10 minutes

Materials Needed

Glove and ball

Field Set-up

Open field

Instructions

Have players stand 10-15 feet away from each other with one ball. Have player 1 throw to player 2 a med high fly ball. The purpose for the out fielder catching the ball is:

1. Catch the ball with 2 hands
2. Catch the ball on the throwing side in outstanding throwing position
3. Most important is have the fielder already ½ way through his/her hop in the air as he/she catches the ball so the time it takes to get the ball in is extremely fast.

This activity emphasizes the following character value:

- Caring  Honesty  Respect  Responsibility  Faith  Teamwork  
 Sportsmanship  Fair Play  Healthy Habits  Hard Work

YMCA of Greater Spartanburg Practice Plan Activity  
**T-Ball/Baseball**

Individual Skill Building Drill

Team Skill Building Drill

Skill	Ages
Drop step – inside turn	5-10

Difficulty

Beginner

Intermediate

Advanced

Physical Intensity

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

Time Needed

5 minutes

Materials Needed

Glove and ball

Field Set-up

Have outfielder start about 10 feet in front of you. Have a line of outfielder a few feet away.

Instructions

With the ball in your hand, point in one direction, player should take a drop step to that side and continue back at an angle. After he/she has taken a few steps, move the ball to the other side. The player should plant with outside leg and take an inside step to change directions. He/she should be able to keep his/her eyes on you the entire time. Change directions one more time, then throw the ball at about the same angle he/she is heading for him to catch.

To add difficulty, make the throw in the opposite direction to force one more inside step.

Notes: This drill will help a player adjust to the ball that is hit very high, or has a slice to it, but not way over his/her head. As with all outfield play make sure your players don't drift to the ball.

This activity emphasizes the following character value:

Caring  Honesty  Respect  Responsibility  Faith  Teamwork

Sportsmanship  Fair Play  Healthy Habits  Hard Work

YMCA of Greater Spartanburg Practice Plan Activity  
T-Ball/Baseball

Individual Skill Building Drill

Team Skill Building Drill

Skill	Ages
Drop step-turn your back	8-10

Difficulty

Beginner

Intermediate

Advanced

Physical Intensity

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

Time Needed

5 minutes

Materials Needed

Glove and ball

Field Set-up

Have outfielder start about 10 feet in front of you. Have a line of outfielder a few feet away.

Instructions

With the ball in your hand, point in one direction, player should take a deep drop step to that side and continue back at a deep angle, but not so deep that he/she cant look over his/her shoulder and see you. After he/she has taken a few steps, move the ball to the other side. The player should turn his/her head and change his/her angle to the other direction picking you up as soon as possible. Change directions one more time, then throw over the other shoulder to force one more turn.

To add difficulty, make the throw over the other shoulder to force one more turn.

Notes: On a ball that is hit deep over an outfielder's head, the wind, the slice of the ball, or an incorrect angle can put an outfielder in a position where the ball is going to land over the opposite shoulder of where he/she is looking. This drill will help an outfielder gain confidence in what is a very difficult catch.

This activity emphasizes the following character value:

Caring

Honesty

Respect

Responsibility

Faith

Teamwork

Sportsmanship

Fair Play

Healthy Habits

Hard Work

YMCA of Greater Spartanburg Practice Plan Activity  
**T-Ball/Baseball**

Individual Skill Building Drill

Team Skill Building Drill

Skill	Ages
Get the angle	5-10

Difficulty

Beginner

Intermediate

Advanced

Physical Intensity

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

Time Needed

5 minutes

Materials Needed

Glove and ball

Field Set-up

Have outfielder start about 50 feet in front of you. Have a line of outfielders a few feet away.

Instructions

This drill has the coach throw balls on the ground and in the air to simulate different balls that are hit in the outfield gaps. If you have difficulty throwing a tennis racket can be used. This will help you have better control over where the ball goes.

Have the players work on taking the proper angle to the ball making sure they error on the side of getting behind the ball and not letting it get by. Emphasize to the players that by getting behind the ball they will be in a good position to make a throw.

This activity emphasizes the following character value:

Caring  Honesty  Respect  Responsibility  Faith  Teamwork

Sportsmanship  Fair Play  Healthy Habits  Hard Work

YMCA of Greater Spartanburg Practice Plan Activity  
**T-Ball/Baseball**

Individual Skill Building Drill

Team Skill Building Drill

Skill	Ages
Short hops	7-10

Difficulty

Beginner

Intermediate

Advanced

Physical Intensity

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

Time Needed

10-15 minutes

Materials Needed

Glove and ball

Field Set-up

Infield

Instructions

Players will take turns throwing short-hops to one another. As the ball is in the air the player fielding the ball will need to adjust his/her position to either get closer to the ball and catch it right at the bounce or back up slightly to catch the ball at a higher point to make the play easier.

The ball should be thrown right at the player not to the side. The players should be working on getting the correct depth and learning when to charge the ball, when to stay put, and when to back up slightly.

Players should vary the distance and arc on the ball to help the other player work on many different types of short-hops.

This activity emphasizes the following character value:

Caring  Honesty  Respect  Responsibility  Faith  Teamwork

Sportsmanship  Fair Play  Healthy Habits  Hard Work

YMCA of Greater Spartanburg Practice Plan Activity  
**T-Ball/Baseball**

Individual Skill Building Drill

Team Skill Building Drill

Skill	Ages
Ground Ball- Back hand/round	7-10

Difficulty

Beginner

Intermediate

Advanced

Physical Intensity

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

Time Needed

5-10 minutes

Materials Needed

Glove, ball, cone

Field Set-up

infield

Instructions

Player gets in ready position. Coach rolls a ground ball either close to the cone or farther to the right of the player.

If the ground ball is rolled close to the cone the player should hustle to get around the ball, plant his/her right foot and field the ball as he/she begins moving toward the target. Try to roll it at a speed that allows them to move around the cone. This helps emphasize the change in direction.

If the ground ball is rolled farther away the player should hustle over to get into position to backhand the ball.

After fielding the ball, the fielder should make a good throw.

This activity emphasizes the following character value:

Caring  Honesty  Respect  Responsibility  Faith  Teamwork

Sportsmanship  Fair Play  Healthy Habits  Hard Work

YMCA of Greater Spartanburg Practice Plan Activity  
**T-Ball/Baseball**

Individual Skill Building Drill

Team Skill Building Drill

Skill	Ages
Recovering from bad throws	7-10

Difficulty

Beginner

Intermediate

Advanced

Physical Intensity

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

Time Needed

5-10 minutes

Materials Needed

Glove and ball

Field Set-up

First base

Instructions

Coach will stand midway between first and second.

Coach will throw the ball in the dirt to the first baseman. Ball should be thrown on all sides to allow first basemen to work on fielding balls in the dirt on different sides and angles.

Once a player has caught the ball he/she will throw it back to the coach and go to the end of the line.

For younger players use softer baseballs to allow them to gain confidence. Don't use tennis balls as they won't give a true enough hop.

This activity emphasizes the following character value:

Caring  Honesty  Respect  Responsibility  Faith  Teamwork

Sportsmanship  Fair Play  Healthy Habits  Hard Work

YMCA of Greater Spartanburg Practice Plan Activity  
**T-Ball/Baseball**

Individual Skill Building Drill

Team Skill Building Drill

Skill	Ages
Covering First	7-10

Difficulty

Beginner

Intermediate

Advanced

Physical Intensity

1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10

Time Needed

5-10 minutes

Materials Needed

Glove and ball

Field Set-up

Have first basemen in a line at their position.

Instructions

Coach will stand midway between first and second.

First player in line will run and get in position to receive the catch. Coach will deliver a throw trying to alternate the location of the throw so players can work on footwork in all directions.

Once a player has caught the ball he/she will throw it back to the coach and go to the end of the line. As players go through the line, coach should move to stimulate throws coming from other positions.

This activity emphasizes the following character value:

Caring  Honesty  Respect  Responsibility  Faith  Teamwork

Sportsmanship  Fair Play  Healthy Habits  Hard Work

YMCA of Greater Spartanburg Practice Plan Activity  
**T-Ball/Baseball**

Individual Skill Building Drill

Team Skill Building Drill

Skill	Ages
Glove Extension Drill	5-8

Difficulty

Beginner

Intermediate

Advanced

Physical Intensity

1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10

Time Needed

10 minutes

Materials Needed

Bat, glove, balls

Field Set-up

Open field

Instructions

Young players often make the mistake of fielding ground balls with their glove directly beneath them, rather than extended out in front. This drill helps ensure proper extension.

Lay a bat on the ground perpendicular to a line of players. The first player in line should be 6 feet from the bat in a ready position. The coach stands about 10 feet away opposite the players, and rolls a ball toward the bat. The Player must approach the ground ball and assume a good fielding position right behind the bat, without his feet touching or going over it. In order to prevent the ball from rolling into the bat the player must have his glove extended in front of the bat. Once the player secures the ball, he sprints forward, places it at the feet of the coach, and runs to the end of the line. The coach keeps rolling a ball to the next player each time a ball is placed at his/her feet.

This activity emphasizes the following character value:

Caring  Honesty  Respect  Responsibility  Faith  Teamwork

Sportsmanship  Fair Play  Healthy Habits  Hard Work

YMCA of Greater Spartanburg Practice Plan Activity  
**T-Ball/Baseball**

Individual Skill Building Drill

Team Skill Building Drill

Skill	Ages
Countdown Drill	7-10

Difficulty

Beginner

Intermediate

Advanced

Physical Intensity

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

Time Needed

1 minute

Materials Needed

Glove and ball

Field Set-up

Open field

Instructions

Have the player's line up across from a partner about 20 feet apart. They are to make good throws back and forth as many times as they can while the coach counts down from 30 to zero. The player who does not have the ball at zero wins. (You should see the kids scramble for a dropped or loose ball.)

This activity emphasizes the following character value:

Caring  Honesty  Respect  Responsibility  Faith  Teamwork

Sportsmanship  Fair Play  Healthy Habits  Hard Work

YMCA of Greater Spartanburg Practice Plan Activity  
T-Ball/Baseball

Individual Skill Building Drill

Team Skill Building Drill

Skill	Ages
Ready Position with Side to Side Movement	3-6

Difficulty

Beginner

Intermediate

Advanced

Physical Intensity

1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10

Time Needed

5 Minutes

Materials Needed

Glove

Field Set-up

Open Space

Instructions

Line your players in a straight line across the field facing you in a ready position. Make sure they have enough room to move left and right without hitting each other. Ready position is legs slightly more than shoulder width apart, bend at the knees, and have the glove and hand out. Pinkies should be facing the ground. On the coach's command, players will get in ready position. The coach then points left or right, players will move in that direction by shuffling their feet. While doing this, they should stay in ready position and not cross their feet.

Modifications

After a couple of times have players partner up and roll the ball to the left and right.

This activity emphasizes the following character value:

- Caring  Honesty  Respect  Responsibility  Faith  Teamwork  
 Sportsmanship  Fair Play  Healthy Habits  Hard Work

YMCA of Greater Spartanburg Practice Plan Activity  
**T-Ball/Baseball**

Skill Building Drill

Team Skill Building Drill

Skill	Hitting	Ages
Batting	1-2-3	3-6

Difficulty

Beginner

Intermediate

Advanced

Physical Intensity

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

Time Needed

About 4-5 minutes per child

Materials Needed

Tee, bat, helmet, balls

Field Set-up

Set up a tee for batter(s) to use. Could place it next to a backstop if fielders are not available to retrieve balls.

Instructions

The batter should take his/her stance. The coach then calls out "1...2...3". Try not to rush through the 1, 2, 3. By not rushing the swing can be deliberate and slowed down so that the batter's position at each point of the swing can be monitored. Player will take his/her stance with a ball on the tee.

1. Player will coil and hold.
2. Player will stride keeping weight back and pause.
3. Player will complete his/her swing.

This activity emphasizes the following character value:

- Caring  Honesty  Respect  Responsibility  Faith  Teamwork  
 Sportsmanship  Fair Play  Healthy Habits  Hard Work

YMCA of Greater Spartanburg Practice Plan Activity  
**T-Ball/Baseball**

Skill Building Drill

Team Skill Building Drill

Skill	Hitting	Ages
Inside/Outside Tee Hitting		5-10

Difficulty

Beginner

Intermediate

Advanced

Physical Intensity

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

Time Needed

15-30 minutes depending on number of batters

Materials Needed

Tee, bat, balls, helmet

Field Set-up

Set up tee on home plate. Have defense to retrieve balls.

Instructions

Place ball on the center of the tee with batter in the middle of the box, normal stance. Let them hit a few and take notice of where the go. Then place the shaft of the tee on the inside of the plate and let the batter hit a few. They should not adjust their stance or how close they are to the plate. Take notice of the new area the ball tends to go toward. Now place the shaft on the outside of the tee and let the batter hit again. Inform batters that they should open up or constrict their swing to help the natural tendency to hit the ball where it's pitched. This should inform batters of how to swing depending on the pitch.

This activity emphasizes the following character value:

Caring  Honesty  Respect  Responsibility  Faith  Teamwork

Sportsmanship  Fair Play  Healthy Habits  Hard Work

YMCA of Greater Spartanburg Practice Plan Activity  
**T-Ball/Baseball**

Skill Building Drill

Team Skill Building Drill

Skill	Ages
Fear of being hit	All ages

Difficulty

Beginner

Intermediate

Advanced

Physical Intensity

1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10

Time Needed

5-10 minutes per batter (individual basis)

Materials Needed

Bat, helmet, a tennis ball or wiffle ball

Field Set-up

Next to a fence or backstop.

Instructions

Many players step away from home plate exposing their face and chest when they are afraid of being hit. This teaches players the proper way to dodge a bad pitch so that they are safer and more likely to dig in and swing because they will feel more comfortable. Take players that have been hit or are afraid of being hit to the side and pitch to them one at a time. Begin with normal pitches and then start bringing them closer and closer. The batter should turn his back to the pitcher and bend his/her head and back down toward his feet. This protects his face and chest and makes his/her back more likely to receive a glancing blow than a direct hit. Also, it will help the batter feel more comfortable in the box. Do not use this drill unless a batter shows fear of being hit because it could inflict fear instead of decreasing it.

This activity emphasizes the following character value:

- Caring  Honesty  Respect  Responsibility  Faith  Teamwork  
 Sportsmanship  Fair Play  Healthy Habits  Hard Work

YMCA of Greater Spartanburg Practice Plan Activity  
**T-Ball/Baseball**

Skill Building Drill

Team Skill Building Drill

Skill	Hitting	Ages
Chair Hitting		9 and up

Difficulty

Beginner

Intermediate

Advanced

Physical Intensity

1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10

Time Needed

15-20 minutes depending on number of players

Materials Needed

Balls, bat, helmet, gloves, and either a chair or a bucket

Field Set-up

Have the defense set up to practice fielding. One coach will be the pitcher. Place an old chair or a bucket in the batters box for the batter to sit on instead of standing to hit.

Instructions

Have a batter sit in an old plastic chair or a bucket with a lid. They should lock their ankle around the legs of the chair or base of the bucket. This is to anchor them into the chair. We want to eliminate the lower body action in this drill. The only thing moving will be from the waist up. They should take their bat and get in the hitting position. This works on getting your hands to the ball when hitting and strengthens the upper body. Remind players that this is a difficult drill and that they will not be able to hit the ball as far during this drill.

This activity emphasizes the following character value:

Caring  Honesty  Respect  Responsibility  Faith  Teamwork

Sportsmanship  Fair Play  Healthy Habits  Hard Work

YMCA of Greater Spartanburg Practice Plan Activity  
**T-Ball/Baseball**

Skill Building Drill

Team Skill Building Drill

Skill	Ages
Inside/Outside Hitting	7 and up

Difficulty

Beginner

Intermediate

Advanced

Physical Intensity

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

Time Needed

15-20 minutes depending on the number of batters

Materials Needed

Inside/outside tee, balls, bat, helmet

Field Set-up

Set up a tee at home plate.

Instructions

Have a batter stand at their normal distance from home plate. The tee is placed on home plate with two shafts in it; one on the inside and one on the outside. The inside shaft should be a few inches higher than the outside. Place a ball on each tee. The batter should get into a pre-stride stance with their bat up in preparation to swing. The coach should then say "inside" or "outside" and the batter must hit the appropriate ball. By their stance and by adjusting their hands, they should be able to pull the inside ball and hit the outside ball to the opposite field. This works on hitting the ball regardless of where it is pitched.

This activity emphasizes the following character value:

Caring  Honesty  Respect  Responsibility  Faith  Teamwork

Sportsmanship  Fair Play  Healthy Habits  Hard Work

YMCA of Greater Spartanburg Practice Plan Activity  
**T-Ball/Baseball**

Skill Building Drill

Team Skill Building Drill

Skill	Hitting	Ages
Weight Back Hitting		All ages

Difficulty

Beginner

Intermediate

Advanced

Physical Intensity

1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10

Time Needed

15-20 minutes depending on the number of batters

Materials Needed

Tennis ball, bat, helmet, glove, and bases

Field Set-up

Set up the bases like you would for a typical game. Have defense retrieve balls.

Instructions

Hitters tend to lean forward too soon during the delivery of a pitch. This throws off their balance. Have the pitcher stand about 20 feet from the batter and pitch a tennis ball. The pitcher should bounce the tennis ball so that after one bounce it passes through the strike zone. By bouncing the ball it will come in much slower and teach the batter to keep his/her weight back and explode on the ball once it is in the strike zone.

This activity emphasizes the following character value:

Caring  Honesty  Respect  Responsibility  Faith  Teamwork

Sportsmanship  Fair Play  Healthy Habits  Hard Work

YMCA of Greater Spartanburg Practice Plan Activity  
**T-Ball/Baseball**

Skill Building Drill

Team Skill Building Drill

Skill	Hitting	Ages
Soft Tap		7 and up

Difficulty

Beginner

Intermediate

Advanced

Physical Intensity

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

Time Needed

5-10 minutes

Materials Needed

Wiffle ball, bat, glove, fence, helmet

Field Set-up

No set up needed. Just position yourself next to a fence so that you have a backstop.

Instructions

This will work best with a 1:1 coach to player ratio (but one coach with 2-3 players would work). One player takes a bat and will attempt to hit the ball at the fence. The coach will stand at a 45 degree angle so that he/she can toss the ball toward the batter without being in the direction that it will be hit. The object for the batter is to tap the ball toward the fence and the knob of the bat. They should hold the bat with a regular grip and maintain a regular stance. By swinging slow and focusing on contact with the knob (lower handle), batters improve their eye-hand coordination and their ability to get their hands inside of the ball.

This activity emphasizes the following character value:

Caring

Honesty

Respect

Responsibility

Faith

Teamwork

Sportsmanship

Fair Play

Healthy Habits

Hard Work

YMCA of Greater Spartanburg Practice Plan Activity  
**T-Ball/Baseball**

Individual Skill Building Drill

Team Skill Building Drill

Skill	Hitting	Ages
Grip		All ages

Difficulty

Beginner

Intermediate

Advanced

Physical Intensity

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

Time Needed

2-3 minutes

Materials Needed

Bat, helmets

Field Set-up

Any open area

Instructions

Many young players are not familiar with the proper way to grip a bat. A right-handed batter should place their left hand at the bottom of the bat by the handle and their right hand should be above it. A left-handed hitter would be the opposite. Some players may be too small for the bat and therefore have difficulty holding the bat. Advise these players to "choke up" on the bat (slide their hands further up the bat towards the fat (barrel) end.

This activity emphasizes the following character value:

Caring  Honesty  Respect  Responsibility  Faith  Teamwork

Sportsmanship  Fair Play  Healthy Habits  Hard Work