

## Coaching Tips:

1. Prepare for practice before you arrive to the baseball field. Once you arrive at the practice location, you will be bombarded with kids, parents, other coaches, along with the task of setting up. Once you arrive, you will not have time to prepare activities, drills, etc.
2. Be clear of the goals and expectations of the day and season. Coaches quite often will assume that every player understands what they are supposed to do, and how they're supposed to act. Be sure to state the plans for the day and expectations as practice starts. This is also important to address at the beginning of the season when addressing the coaches, players and parents.
3. Ask for help. Be sure to invite others to be assistant coaches. This will be valuable for practices and games. The players will enjoy their experience and will get better instruction, if they can split up into small groups to run the drills. I recommend having a total of 4 coaches. One head coach and 3 committed assistant coaches.
4. Keep the practice moving. Many coaches like to talk (too much). Depending upon the age group kids typically have a short attention span and will lose interest. Be prepared to quickly explain the drill and then get it started. The more the kids are moving to various stations, the less likely you'll have to deal with other issues.
5. Focus on the fundamentals. Always keep player development at the top of the priority list. If each player leaves the season better than when they arrived, you have succeeded.
6. Encourage effort. Practice is practice. The kids are going to make many mistakes, some more than others. The players will be trying new things and advancing in their development at different paces. The one thing they can all be good at is EFFORT. This will instill confidence in the players and provide them with a base for getting better.
7. Set basic guidelines for behavior expectations with a focus on safety, and reinforce as necessary. Every moment can be a teachable moment.
8. Coaches are there for the kids, the kids aren't there for the coaches. If you missed your chance to play pro ball, coaching youth baseball is not the replacement.
9. Coaches are role models. Remember to always talk positive about players, parents, other teams, and coaches. Kids look up to the coach, so it's important to provide them with a positive image. What we say, how we say it, and how we act can leave a lasting impression on a young player. Always be positive, even on those days that seem most challenging.
10. Have Fun! Coaching kids should be enjoyable. Try to have fun, and keep the season in perspective.

## **Season Objectives: (Player Goals)**

Have fun playing on an organized ball club  
Develop basic bat handling and hitting skills  
Develop a mechanically sound throwing motion  
Learn to catch a thrown or batted ball  
Develop basic base running knowledge and skill  
Implement the practice of good sportsmanship  
Experience the thrill of sport participation and competition

## **Skills & Knowledge: There are four main areas of focus for Tee Ball instruction**

1. Throwing
2. Bat handling & hitting
3. Catching the ball & fielding
4. Base to base running fundamentals

### **Throwing**

<https://www.littleleague.org/videos/tee-ball-drills-week-2-team-throwing/>

#### *1. How to grip the ball*

- Grip the ball with their fingertips rather than with their palms.
- Thumb under the ball
- Middle fingers over the ball with little finger off to the side

#### *2. How to throw overarm in proper position*

- Focus on the target
- Hand and arm back and up (make an L with elbow up as high as your ear-Show me your muscle)
- Front shoulder turned toward the target
- Point glove at target
- Big step towards the target with opposite foot
- Release the ball in front of the body
- Follow-through with arm and leg

### **Catching and Fielding**

<https://www.littleleague.org/videos/tee-ball-drills-week-4-fielding/>

FIELDING Essentials-1. Eyes on the ball 2. Watch the ball go into the glove 3. Cover the ball with the bare hand(Alligator)

#### Baseball Ready Position! –

- Legs shoulder-width apart
- Bend knees and stay low
- Glove just off the ground, out in front, open toward hitter
- Eyes up and focus on the hitter

#### *Ground Balls*

Stay off heels, keep body in front of the ball, Scoop or catch the ball, squeeze and cover it with the throwing hand (Alligator)

### *Fly Balls*

- Run to where the ball is going
- Call for the ball, "I got it!"
- Hands together, fingers up, shoulder high
- Watch the ball into the glove, squeeze and cover

### *Thrown Balls*

- Ball thrown above the waist: Hands together, facing out, thumbs up
- Ball thrown below the waist: Hands together, facing down, little fingers of both hands touching

### **Base Running Fundamentals**

<https://www.littleleague.org/videos/tee-ball-drills-week-1-run-the-bases/>

- Stepping on all bases
- How to run from home plate to first base (run through the bag) Encourage sprinting to each base
- Running through home plate
- Not running through 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> (unlike 1<sup>st</sup> base or home plate)
- What to do if the ball is caught on the fly
- Teach baserunners about the base coaches' role
- Teach baserunners to be aware of what the runner ahead of them is doing
- Run on the balls of feet
- Pump (swing) arms back and forth
- Look forward

### **Bat Handling and Hitting**

<https://www.littleleague.org/videos/tee-ball-drills-week-6-tee-hitting/>

#### *1. Grip and hand position*

- Dominant hand on top
- Hands together, above the knob of the bat
- Hold bat firmly; don't squeeze
- Bat in finger tips
- Line up knuckles
- Not in palm
- Teach (choke up grip) for faster swings if necessary

#### *2. Stance and Position in box*

- Adjust tee so ball is set even or slightly above the batter's waist
- Feet shoulder width apart (athletic position),
- square stance- straight line from toes of both feet
- Balanced position with light bend in knees
- Stand facing the tee, about 3 baseball widths away from plate,
- Front foot even with the tee
- Bring bat up and away from body, over back shoulder
- Eyes on the ball
- Chin comfortable on front shoulder

### 3. *Load, Stride, Swing (back pocket, belly button, swing)*

#### *Load*

-shift weight slightly back, hands go back, show pitcher your “back pocket”

#### *Stride*

-Front foot glides towards pitcher with a short step

-Stay Straight, head & eyes level

-Transfer weight – hands go straight to ball

- Keep shoulder down on ball (chin to shoulder)

-Show pitcher your belly button to rotate hips to lead hands through the baseball and start swing.

#### *Swing*

- Swing level so that the bat hits the center of the ball)

- Watch bat hit the ball and keep head down

- Head Down.

- Follow-Through- Hit through the ball, chin finishes on back shoulder (chin shoulder to shoulder) Drop (don't throw) the bat