



## Weekly Practice Plans

### Week 1

#### 1. Gather & Welcome Players – 3 Min

Review coaches' names and players' names. Review purpose for being at the field and show enthusiasm to start the very first practice.

#### 2. Ball Tag – 13 Min

Explain the game to players while they are still gathered from the welcome. While explaining, demonstrate how they will be tagged and how to freeze. Keep the explanation brief, players will learn by trying. Set out an area of about 30-50 sqft with the throw down bases or cones. Have players find a spot to stand in the field of play (personal space) and on "go" the players are to run around the area. Each coach will have a plastic ball in hand and tag players. If a player is tagged, they have to freeze. They can unfreeze and run again when they are tagged by a teammate. Repeat the game (adjust area if necessary based on how the first game went). This time, when tagged have them freeze by striking a pose of a ball player performing a skill (can be any skill catching, throwing, sliding, hitting, etc). Finally play once more having them move like a Gorilla when they are not frozen. Each game should last about 3 min with 1 min of explanation.

#### 3. Grip & Throw – 3 Min

Call players to the middle and have them make a circle. While kneeling inside of the circle, talk about holding a baseball/softball the correct way to make good throws. The coach should make sure players understand which hand to use to throw. It will be known as their "favorite hand" and is usually the one used to write or color. The coach should demonstrate the proper grip on the ball with fingers on top and the thumb underneath. The ball should be held in the fingers if possible and with the same pressure the players hold a tube of toothpaste. They should control the ball but not squeeze it.

#### 4. Throwing – 12 Min

Have each player take a ball and practice the grip while still in the circle. Check grips. Next demonstrate throwing overhand. Throw to another coach, while emphasizing holding the ball correctly in the favorite hand, and throwing overhand. Allow players to pick any spot they would like facing a fence. Have players turn around and take six giant steps away from the fence and then turn around. Practice throwing overhand to the fence. Use throwing cues. The players should start with the proper grip that was discussed. They must look at their target. It is a good idea to have them say "ready" once they have their eyes on their target as a reminder each time to look at the target first. The next move is to step directly to their target. The ball and hand should move in a circular motion. A good reminder is to tell players that when they take the ball out of their glove their thumb should go past their thigh and then the ball should continue to go up facing the sky – "thumb to thigh, show it to the sky." They should release the ball to the target and let their arm continue to move to finish the circular motion. Stressing this follow through will prevent them from stopping their arm as soon as they release the ball.

Stop players and call them back to the coach. Now review stepping with the correct foot. Demonstrate the grip, holding the ball in the favorite hand, and stepping with the other foot toward the target. Demonstrate to players by throwing the ball into the fence. Let players try throwing again, circulate and fix feet. While players are finishing up, set out the bases in correct order if you haven't already.

#### 5. Water Break – 2 Min

Be sure all your players have their water bottle at your location not with their parents or on a bench far away.

#### 6. Run The Bases – 8 Min

Call players in and collect balls (if not already done). Ask if anyone knows where home plate is? Call on a player and then ask that player to run to home plate (if they know). Once the player is there, ask the other players to follow. Create a line at home plate. Talk about the bases being in a giant square (1st, 2nd, 3rd, and home). Starting at home plate, everyone jogs to first, second, third and home in a line following the coach calling out the bases as they go. On round 2, start the line at home plate, on "go" the first player runs to first and stays on first. On the next "go", the player on first advances to second and the new runner goes to first. Repeat with all players running and all advancing until each player scores at home plate. Optional to have a coach on the field with a ball in hand, stressing that the base means SAFE and if they are off the base they could be tagged OUT. One coach needs to be at home plate letting players leave and keeping them aware (encouraging teammates), while another coach is in the field directing.



### 7. Conclusion – 4 Min

Gather players and have them give another player a high five. Talk about what they learned today and how it will help them be great Tee Ball players. Remind the parents of the next event.