



Make the best use of the practice time you have with your players.

Players Should:

1. Be actively involved in planning practices together with a coach or teammate.
2. Practice the way they hope to play in a game using proper technique and skills with sound strategy.
3. Understand and use the nine basic components in the following sequence at every practice.

Nine Basic Components of Practice:

- * Warm-up and stretching
 - * On-field warm-up
 - * Review of previously learned skills
 - * Learn new skills
 - * Practice game situations
 - * Play game or modified game
 - * Conditioning
 - * Cool-down and stretching
 - * Evaluate practice
4. Learn new skills in the first half of practice and do hard physical training near the end of practice so as not to impair fine motor control due to fatigue.
 5. Practice with the same intensity as in a game.
 6. Develop one or two specific cues that help concentration and the ability to stay focused on the task at hand during each practice.

7. Use drills to isolate work on baseball skills and techniques. After the initial learning stages, emphasis should be on live game-like drills to insure maximum transfer to playing situations.

8. Be able to set specific performance goals for each practice.

Example: "During batting practice I will hit 10 hard balls or line-drives," rather than, "I will work on my hitting."

9. Devote a significant amount of practice time to develop strategies as well as time to improve weaknesses.

10. Organize practice sessions into short, intensive work periods of 15-45-minute durations followed by short breaks for relaxation, hydration and refocusing.

Below is a Sample Practice Schedule

Based on a two-hour practice, an appropriate practice time for this age group. Adjust as necessary.

1. Warm-up

a. This warm-up should include cardiovascular and stretching activities

b. 5 min

2. On-field Warm-up

a. Form Running

b. Arm warm-up

c. Dry swings

d. 10 min

3. Review Previously Learned Skills

a. Used for areas that were not completed last practice or need to be reviewed in order to make sure that the players properly learned the material

b. 15 min

4. Specialty Period for Learning New Skills

- a. This should be broken-down into small groups
- b. Each area of the game should be developed during this period
 - i. Pitchers
 - ii. Catchers
 - iii. Infielders
 - iv. Outfielders
 - v. Hitting
 - vi. Team Defense
 - vii. Base Running
- c. 35 min

5. Practicing Game Situations

- a. This is done in a large group
- b. Outfield/Infield
- c. 15 min

6. Play Modified Game

- a. Example - start with a 2-2 count
- b. Example - start with a runner on second base
- c. Limit modified game to 2-3 innings
- d. 20 min

7. Conditioning

- a. Leave conditioning until the end of the workout to minimize fatigue during practice time
- b. Players learn better when they are not fatigued
- c. 10 min max

8. Cool down and stretching

a. 5 min

9. Evaluation

a. This should be positive, enforcing good work ethic and proper baseball fundamentals that were learned

b. 5 min

