



## ROOKIE JR & SR PRACTICE PLAN

**TODAY'S SKILL FOCUS:** **HITTING/CATCHING/GROUND BALLS** **60-90 Mins**

### Warmup/Calisthenics:

Time to complete: **10 mins**

Jog, High Knees, butt kicks, shuffles, karaoke foot work, Frankenstein kicks, arm circles forwards and backwards, stretch the legs, stretch the arms

### Throwing/Catching Routine:

Time to complete: **10 mins**

1 Knee drill: \_\_\_\_\_ throws for each knee down  
45 Degree stationary feet drill: \_\_\_\_\_ throws  
Step and Throw \_\_\_\_\_ throws  
Partner underhand toss barehand \_\_\_\_\_ tosses  
Partner underhand toss glove on \_\_\_\_\_ tosses  
Partner underhand toss forehand/backhand

Decide how many throws is good for your warmups. 5 throws each drill is a good starting point. Increase gradually.

\*\*\*For this practice plan we will be splitting up the kids into 3 groups so this plan should have 3 coaches, 1 to run each station. Depending on how many kids will determine the numbers in each group but for this purpose we will split into 3 groups of 4

### **Station 1: Hitting – Whiffle ball station**

Time: **15 mins**

1 coach will take their group into the field somewhere and set up the bucket that they will sit on to throw from, or they can throw from a knee. We do this because it is a more realistic height from where the ball will be coming from. The C is for coach, baseballs are the players





- Players should have enough space in between them to swing freely. Players will use their gloves as their home plate. The goal of this station should be for the coach to get the players to get set in their batting position from feet all the way up to their hand position. Once players are ready coach will lightly toss the whiffle balls in as a pitch 1 at a time and move from player to player.
  - We really want to focus on the players getting set up properly before the pitch is thrown and then work on the timing of the pitch. Front foot small step towards the coach and landing that foot which triggers the swing. We can get lots of swings in doing this drill and the whiffle balls are forgiving.
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## **Station 2: Ground ball Agility drills**

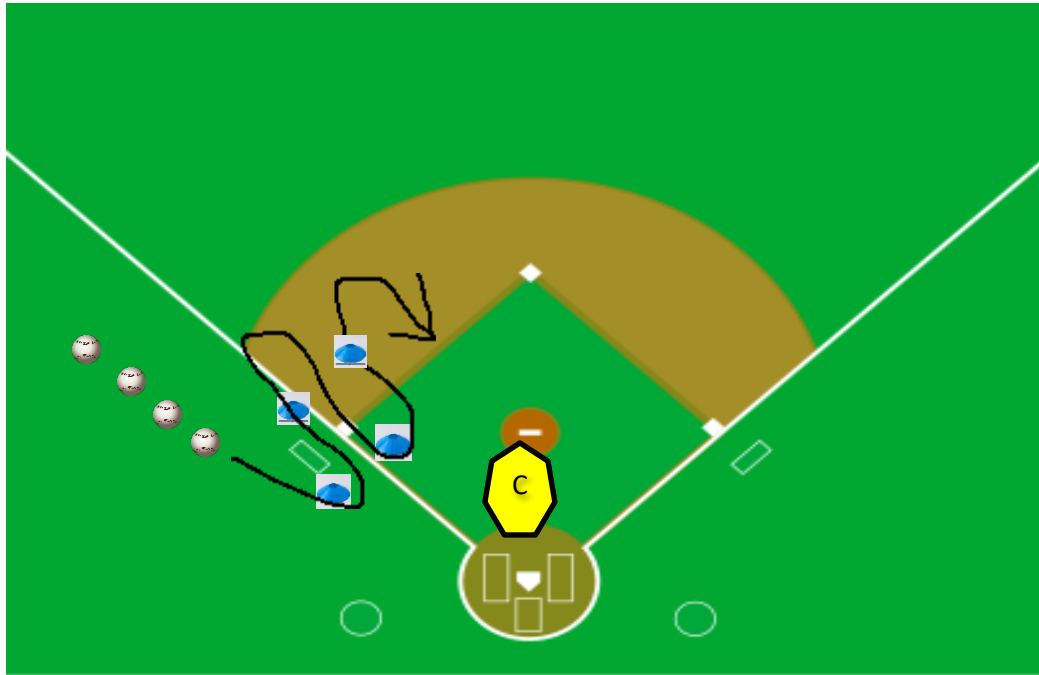
**Time: 15 mins**

### **Drill 1 – Foul Line 2 step approach drill**

- Place 5 baseballs 4-5 steps apart starting from 3<sup>rd</sup> base going towards home plate on the 3<sup>rd</sup> base foul line
- Players start just behind 3<sup>rd</sup> base
- The objective of this drill is to get the players to move to their right of the baseballs with little steps and approach the first baseball from the right with these small steps until they get to the baseball and they do their 2 foot plant (Right foot then left foot for a right handed thrower) (Left foot then right foot for a left handed thrower)
- The players will then do the same thing for the next baseball all the way down the line
- Once done come back in line and do it again
- Should run through this drill 3 or 4 times to understand the approach of a ground ball not from straight on

### **Drill 2 – 4 Cone agility ground ball drill**

- Starting from behind 3<sup>rd</sup> base on the outfield line (approximate) we will place cones in a M shape towards short stop. Players are the baseballs and they follow the arrowed line.



- Players will follow the drawn line pattern above by using small steps forwards to cone 1 then small steps back peddling to the next one, forwards to the 3<sup>rd</sup> one and backwards to the last one
  - Once players get around last cone coach will roll a ground ball to them and they will do the small steps approach and then the 2-step foot plant when they are about to pick up the ground ball.
  - Once the players pick up the ground ball they get into a throwing position with their feet and arms towards 1<sup>st</sup> base but do not throw the ball
  - They will then run to where coach is a place the ball in the bucket or down beside them and run to get back in line to repeat
  - We should allow some room in between players so next player should not enter the agility cones until player ahead of them gets to the 3<sup>rd</sup> cone
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### **Station 3: 2 Drill Catching & Throwing station**

**Time: 15 mins**

#### **Drill 1 – 1 cone catching drill**

- Coach will take this group out to the outfield opposite where the hitting station is
- Set up 1 cone where the players will start from and coach will be 15 – 20 ft in front of them
- Players will all have 1 ball
- First player will throw their ball to coach; coach will then put the ball in the air so that it is easily catchable but so that the player will have to move a few steps towards it straight on to catch it. Player will then go to the back of the line
- Once player 1 catches the ball player 2 will throw their ball to coach and so on.
- Do straight on to the players for 3 rounds, then place the ball more to their forehand for 3 rounds, and then to their backhand for 3 rounds

#### **Drill 2 – 3 cone catching drill**

- Same set up as above except coach will also place a second cone 15 ft to their right and another cone 20 ft away from that cone in line with the starting cone so that the cones form a triangle.
  - One player from the group will start at the 3<sup>rd</sup> cone with no ball and the other players will start from the first cone
  - This is the same drill as above but adding a throwing and catching element between the players
  - When player 1 catches the ball, they will go to the cone that is set up next to the coach and proceed to throw the ball to the player at the 3<sup>rd</sup> cone. Player at the 3<sup>rd</sup> cone will catch the ball and get into the line up. Player one, after they have thrown, the ball will run to the 3<sup>rd</sup> cone and be the receiver of the next ball.
  - Same drill just adding a layer of complexity and an additional skill of receiving a throw from their teammate.
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**Game at end of Practice:** Playing a game of football is a great way to end this practice if you have time

Pair the kids up equally with skill level and possibly running speed. Coaches are the quarterbacks and the players get to play receivers and defenders. If 2 coaches want to quarterback, then split the team into half as the kids will get more reps this way. Switch the kids up so that they can play both receiver and defender

**Extra Information:** These stations usually go pretty fast and time slips away, but it keeps the kids moving and working on the foundational details without it being boring. Keep an eye on the time and when it is ready to switch have the kids switch and be prepared as to what station they will be going to next. Understanding that this age group is young but can still understand doing these drills even if they might have some complexity to them, is a key ingredient.