

COACHING PRIORITIES

OFF SEASON	PRESEASON
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Hitting 2. Fielding 3. Catchers receiving/blocking 4. Strength & Athleticism 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Throwing Routine 2. Hitting 3. Fielding 4. Catchers receiving/blocking 5. Pitching 6. Speed, Strength & Agility (<i>baserunning</i>)

1. HITTING

- ✦ **Swing Decisions:** Teach Plan A and Plan 2 approaches.
- ✦ **Timing:** Ensure hitters are consistently “on time.” [Video1](#). [Video2](#). Minimize “load”
- ✦ **Pre-Pitch Set-Up:** Athletic & balanced starting position with good posture.
- ✦ **Pre-Pitch Routine:** Big breath. Affirmation. Know the plan.
- ✦ **The Swing Technique** should be coached up with hitters with bad swings. With that said, here is a great resource. Prioritize coaching efficient swing paths.

2. FIELDING

- ✦ Reps! Reps! And more Reps!
- ✦ Follow the 20/40/40 ratio from the [DRILL DESIGN GUIDE](#).
- ✦ For extra-challenging reps, use tennis or foam-core balls.

3. CATCHERS RECEIVING/BLOCKING

- ✦ Reps! Reps! And more Reps!
- ✦ Randomize reps. For example, framing and blocking reps should be mixed/combined with pitches in the strike zone to mimic a real game.
- ✦ Pitching machines can be handy for getting higher-speed reps.

4. SPEED, STRENGTH & AGILITY

- ✦ Training **baserunning** works very well in this category. Train their speed on the basepaths by working on jumps on past balls/wild pitches. Getting out of the box: hard 60s, turning singles into doubles. Rounding the bases efficiently and quickly.
- ✦ **Single-leg exercises** are great. Body weight is usually more than enough to increase strength in kids, and unilateral exercises are great for improving balance.
- ✦ **Rotational** core exercises/movements are essential. Simple [windshield wipers](#) or [med-ball rotational throws](#) have sport-specific benefits.
- ✦ Move fast in all directions, not just forward and backward. Baseball is a 360° sport. Train accordingly.
- ✦ **Arm-circles:** forward and reverse, make for great shoulder conditioning without needing to make a throw. 25-50 reps forward and 25-50 reverse. Adding 1-2 pounds (plyoballs or dumbbells) to each hand while doing these arm circles can help build up shoulder and arm strength and conditioning. Holding 2-3 baseballs in each hand also adds shoulder strength and endurance.
- ✦ **Timed short sprints.** 10-20 yards. Make it into a competition with the clock. Start from a baserunning position or a fielder's "ready position".

5. THROWING

- ✦ 2-3 times per week should be enough at this point in the year.
- ✦ Accuracy is the focus.
- ✦ Mimic throwing motions that happen in games. Making throws from fielding positions, etc.
- ✦ Players' arms/shoulders and bodies should be warmed up before making their first throw.

6. PITCHING

- ✦ [Shadow Pitches](#) are a good way to rep the pitching delivery without throwing a ball.
 - ✦ 10-20 from wind-up (WU) and 10-20 from the stretch.
 - ✦ Use a mound/slope if possible, though certainly not required.
- ✦ **Bullpen sessions:** It's better to start bullpens earlier in the pre-season and build up the arm strength more gradually than to take extra time off and need to ramp up quickly. 2 weeks at each stage works very well for most players.
- ✦ [Flat-ground pitching](#) is a good way to rep the pitching delivery while typically putting less stress on the pitcher's arm.

COACHING PHILOSOPHY

Praise, Feedback & Connection. Praise players often while maintaining high standards of hustle and coachability. Feedback should be centered around the solution, not the mistake. Connect with the kids and see them as unique individuals.

Design & Create. Plan and facilitate training environments that maximize game-like reps while adding a competitive twist when possible. Focus on creating an optimal, efficient training environment so "the game" can be the ultimate teacher, while sprinkling in timely coaching pointers.

80/20 Principle. Prioritize the skills and plays that occur more frequently in games, and coach less of what doesn't. Match practice time allocation with game impact.

Systematize Routines. Coach up the routines and systems early and often. Phase out the coaches when possible, giving the players more ownership.

Eliminate unnecessary injury risks. Always be on the lookout to eliminate unnecessary injury risks, especially errant/random bat swings, and players standing behind other players catching or fielding balls.