

**New Providence Recreation Coed Kindergarten
T-Ball Practice Guidelines (Reviewed 3/31/09)**

Suggested Practice Session

<u>Station/Activity</u>	<u>Amount of time to complete</u>
Batting and Running Bases	20 minutes
Throwing and Catching	20 minutes
Catching Pop Ups and Learn Rules/Facts	20 minutes
<u>Ground Ball Fielding</u>	<u>20 minutes</u>
Total Drill Time	80 minutes

Coaching Guidelines Supplement enclosed.

New Providence Recreation Coed Kindergarten

T-Ball Practice Guidelines (Reviewed 3/31/09)

**Below are effective drills for batting and running bases. Given the ages and attention spans of the participants, it is important that these activities have fun content.

Batting and Running Bases

Batting: Have three players hit as a group. One at the batting tee with the other two ready with helmet on and a bat near by. Rest of players should be in the field ready to catch the balls that are hit. Have each player take five swings at a ball on the tee. Three coaches are needed for this drill. One to manage the two waiting batters, one to set balls on the batting tee and adjust the height of the tee as necessary, and the other coach to be out in the field with the defensive players who are putting the batted balls into the ball bucket for future use.

Running the bases: A coach standing at home plate lines up the players behind home plate. The coach tells one player at a time to run around the bases starting with first base. The coach will wait until the runner touches first base before telling the next player to run. Have another coach stand near first base to encourage the players to run fast and to touch the inside of first base before proceeding to second base. Continue until all the players have run around the bases. Record the amount of time it takes the team to complete the run.

**Below are effective drills for throwing and catching. Given the ages and attention spans of the participants, it is important that these activities have fun content.

Throwing and Catching

Bounce to the Bucket: Place two ball buckets on the ground with the open ends facing the players about 20 feet away from each other. Have the players stand next to one of them. One at a time have them try to throw the ball into the open container. When all are done, have them run to the balls to pick them up. They will then do the same thing from that side's bucket. Make it a team game with 10 points for getting the ball in, 5 for hitting the bucket and 2 points if two or more balls are within 2 feet of the bucket. This drill/game teaches throwing from the outfield to a base or from one infielder to another. After each series of throws allow for instruction time for a coach to help players improve their throws for accuracy and/or distance. This talk time will also be a built in time to "rest". Repeat a few times and total the team points. Have team remember its point total

Catch: Players in groups of two play catch. Start the catch at about 8 feet apart, then move to 12 feet, and then finally to 15 feet. Keep score of the number of successful catches.

Catching Contest: Players are in pairs and throw the ball back and forth between each other. Last pair that has not dropped a ball wins.

New Providence Recreation Coed Kindergarten

T-Ball Practice Guidelines (Reviewed 3/31/09)

One and Two: Two players play catch. Thrower scores 2 points if ball is caught by the other player at or above the shoulders. 1 point is awarded if the player catches the ball between his or her waist and shoulders. No points are given out if the player caught the ball below the waist or misses it. First pair of players to score 10 points wins.

Catching Pop Ups: Two coaches share a diamond infield. Each coach stands about 20 feet away from home plate, one at the third base line and the other at the first base line. The coach on the third base side will have two players at 3B, two players at SS and two near him as catchers. The coach on the first base side will have two players at 2B, two players at 1B and two near him as catchers. Each coach throws pop ups to their set of players one at a time. Have players rotate to other positions with their same coach. Keep score of the number of successful catches

Ground Ball Fielding

Crab Drill: Player is in basic fielding set position stance, crouched forward with glove open and down. Player takes three or four steps forward or side to side as a coach rolls the ball towards him or her.

Scoop or Pick-up: Two players [or two rows of players] line up about 10 feet apart. From kneeling position, one player rolls the ball to the other. Repeat until coach says to stop.

Pepper Drill: 2 to 4 players line up with some space between them about 6 feet away from a coach. Players throw the ball to the coach who bats ground balls back to them. Coach tries to hit balls evenly to the group of players. Count how many balls the players' field before making an error. Repeat to try to increase the number of good catches.

Learn Rules/Facts

Learn About Rules/Facts: Coaches gather players together and have them sit down. This talk time will also be a built in time to "rest". Coaches go over basic baseball/softball rules and facts such as: fair/foul balls, when is a runner out, when is a runner safe, what is half inning/full inning, what is a single/double/triple/home run/grand slam home run/, what is a pop up, fly ball, ground ball, line drive, when is a team on offense, when is a team on defense, when does the home team bat, when does the visiting team bat, what is a run, how many outs in a half inning, how many outs are there in a full inning, what is a double play, what is a triple play, what is a no hitter, etc.

New Providence Recreation Coed Kindergarten

T-Ball Practice Guidelines (Reviewed 3/31/09)

Coaches should keep reinforcing these basic points during the t-ball season.

First base: Position player where to stand when no runner is on base and when one is on. Practice fielding plays with the ball thrown to 1B by the other infielders.

Second base: Position player halfway between 1B and 2B but not in the base path (to avoid collisions with runners leaving 1B). Practice fielding balls and tagging a runner out or throwing to 1B to get an out.

Shortstop: Position player halfway between 2B and 3B but not in the base path (to avoid collisions with runners leaving 2B). Practice fielding balls and throwing to 1B, 2B or 3B to get an out.

Third base: Position player about five feet to the left of 3B and slightly behind the base (to avoid collisions with runners coming from 2B). Practice fielding balls and throwing to 1B or 2B to get an out.

Pitcher: Position in pitcher's area as a fielder. Practice fielding a ball and throwing to 1B, 2B or 3B.

Catcher: Not a position in this T-Ball division.

Outfielders: Position players behind the infield with enough distance between each other. Practice catching fly balls in a crowd having them call out loudly - "I've got it". Practice throwing the ball back into the infield. Have an outfielder receive a relay throw from another outfielder before throwing the ball to an infielder.

Batter: Give basic hitting instructions. Practice hitting ball, then dropping bat properly and running to first. Have one coach adjust the batting tee for the size of the next batter and to place the ball on the tee. That coach will also provide guidance and encouragement to the batter.

Base Runners: Instruct runners how to run around the bases. Instruct that a "forced" runner on base must try to advance to the next base when the ball is hit on the ground. A non-forced runner can hold his or her position on base when the ball is hit. Runners on base watch the batter hit and advance accordingly. Instruct when a runner is called "out".

Coach talking to team, after a game/practice:

Summarize team's activity in simple terms with specifics. Recognize progress. Note humorous things that happened on the field. Do not provide public criticism; as necessary, take any player(s) aside. Next, let players (ask parents to move within hearing distance) know when and where the next game or practice is. Make any other comments, as appropriate.