



T-Ball League: Practice Guide for Coaches

This guide is designed to support volunteer coaches of recreational T-Ball teams for children ages 4U and 6U. Participants will be grouped into teams and practice once per week for one hour over a three-week period, with an optional second day available. The goal is to introduce the fundamentals of baseball in a fun, engaging, and age-appropriate environment. This guide is not a required format, but a helpful resource. Like all recreational sports, parent involvement and the support of volunteer parent coaches is essential to a successful program. Please encourage parents to help coach bases, assist during drills, and help keep players focused during practices and games. Coaches who complete the NAYS (National Alliance for Youth Sports) Coach Training will gain access to additional age-appropriate practice plans and coaching tools.

Coaching Reminders

- Always start with a team huddle and warm-up.
- Focus on fun, safety, and positive reinforcement.
- Keep explanations short and demonstrate often.
- Rotate stations to keep attention and skill-building balanced.

T-Ball Fundamentals by Focus Area

- Throwing: Grip, step, and follow-through.
- Catching: Two-hand catches, glove positioning, fielding grounders.
- Hitting: Bat grip, stance, level swing, eyes on the ball.
- Running: Running through first base, correct base path direction.
- Fielding: Ready position, scooping grounders, calling time or throwing to bases (if ready).

League-Specific Batting Rules

- 4U Teams: All players bat off the tee. No pitching is used.
- 6U Teams: Players receive 3 pitches from the coach. If no contact, they hit off the tee.
- All players should be allowed to make contact each at-bat. Emphasize confidence over competition.

3-Week Practice Schedule

Second practice per week is optional and may be used for extra work, scrimmages, or skipped based on team availability.

Week 1 – Day 1: Intro & Throwing Basics

Team Huddle & Warm-up (5 min)
Positions & Safety Rules (5 min)
Throwing Mechanics Drill (10 min)
Partner Toss (10 min)
Tee Hitting & Base Running (20 min)
Remaining players field in position
Team Cheer & Wrap-Up (10 min)

Week 1 – Day 2: Catching & Fielding Intro (Optional)

Warm-up (5 min)
Glove Use & Catching (10 min)
Rolling Grounders (10 min)
Tee Hitting & Base Running (20 min)
Remaining players field in position
Water Break & Team Review (5 min)

Week 2 – Day 1: Hitting & Base Running

Warm-up & Review (5 min)
Swing Mechanics (10 min)
Coach Pitch (6U only) & Tee Hitting (20 min)
Base Running Relay (10 min)
Throwing to First Drill (10 min)
Cool Down & Team Talk (5 min)

Week 2 – Day 2: Fielding & Situational Play (Optional)

Warm-up (5 min)
Fielding to First Base (10 min)
Simulated Infield Situations (10 min)
Tee Hitting & Base Running (20 min)
Remaining players field in position
Wrap-up & Cheer (5 min)

Week 3 – Day 1: Mini-Game Prep

Warm-up (5 min)
Rotating Stations: Hitting, Throwing, Catching (20 min)
Group Base Running Drill (10 min)
Short Scrimmage (20 min)
Review & Water Break (5 min)

Week 3 – Day 2: Game Simulation & Parent Showcase (Optional)

Warm-up (5 min)
Field Positions & Base Paths Review (5 min)
Mini Scrimmage (30 min)
Parent Showcase & Team Cheer (15 min)
Snack & Awards (5 min)

Sample Station Cards

- Throwing Station:
 - Partners 5–10 ft apart

- Focus on step and follow-through
- Use tennis balls for beginners
- Tee Hitting Station:
 - One hitter at a time
 - Focus on stance and contact
 - Others field while waiting
- Ground Ball Fielding:
 - Coach rolls balls to players
 - Emphasize 'alligator hands' and wide stance
- Base Running Station:
 - Run through first base
 - Teach base direction
 - Add fun: relay style or chase the coach
- Catching Station:
 - Toss bean bags or soft balls
 - Two-hand catches with thumbs or pinkies together

Game Format

- Game Length: 2 innings.
- Start on Time: Being ready at your scheduled time is the most important thing.
- Teams:
 - - Home Team is listed on the right side of the schedule.
 - - Home Team sits on the 1st base dugout side.
 - - Visiting Team is listed on the left side and bats first each inning.
- Batting Order Tip: Easiest way is to bat in jersey number order.
- Inning Format:
 - - Each team bats all players in their lineup.
 - - Announce 'last batter' before the final child hits.
 - - Last batter runs all the way around the bases.
 - - Repeat the format once more to complete 2 innings.
- Post-Game:
 - - Shake hands with the other team.
 - - Quickly clear the dugout for the next team.
 - - Team meetings should be held outside the dugout area.

How to Shake Hands

- Line up both teams along the foul line.
- Coach stands in front holding out their right hand.

- Model how to walk and shake hands politely.
- Encourage saying 'Good game!' with a smile.