



Coaching Majors: **Skills and Player Development**

1. Coaching The Players

- a. Little League is devoted to fostering Good Sportsmanship, Teamwork and Fostering a Love for baseball while developing the players' skills
- b. Teams are expected to practice
 - i. At least 2-3 times a week leading up to the start of games
 - 1. Weather permitting
 - 2. A Division and Tee Ball at least once a week, but more are encouraged
 - ii. At least once a week during regular; twice a week is preferred
 - 1. Sharing of fields and facilities may be required
- c. Managers and Coaches are expected to treat all players, coaches, umpires and officials with respect
- d. Coaches must focus on developing every player, not just their child or the best players
- e. Players' skills and development should progress as they move up through the divisions

2. Majors Skill Development

- i. Developmentally appropriate Competitive Division to hone skills
- ii. Playing IQ that must be developed
 - 1. Thinking a play ahead
 - 2. Bunt coverages
 - 3. 1st and 3rd situations
 - 4. Cutoff players and positioning
 - 5. Double play opportunities
 - 6. Taking an extra base
 - 7. In-game communication
 - 8. Where to throw balls in play vs runners on base
 - 9. Infield Fly Rule
- iii. Skills that must be developed in Majors
 - 1. Proper pre-game/pre-practice warm-up
 - 2. Proper pre-practice/pre-game throwing routine
 - 3. Pitching
 - a. Windup
 - b. Mechanics
 - c. Follow through
 - d. Strike zone

- e. Arm care/injury prevention
- f. Covering home on pass balls
- g. Covering bunts
- h. Backing up plays at 3rd and home
- 4. Catching
 - a. Putting on, taking off gear and bagging gear
 - b. Positioning and stance
 - c. Receiving and framing
 - d. Pitch location
 - e. Footwork used throwing to bases
 - f. Blocking
 - g. Throwing to pitcher on pass balls
 - h. Covering bunts
 - i. Positioning on pop up foul balls
 - j. Pre-pitch communication
 - k. Post hit communication
- 5. Infield
 - a. Backhand, forehand
 - b. Short hops
 - c. Charging the ball
 - d. Covering bases on all balls put in play
 - e. Reading throws to covered base
 - f. Rotation on ball put in play
 - g. Double cuts
 - h. Rundowns
- 6. Outfield
 - a. Footwork on flyballs
 - b. Cutting balls off down the line or in the gaps
 - c. Backing up partner outfielder
 - d. Backing up throws in the infield
 - e. Rotations on ball put in play
 - f. Hitting cut offs vs throwing through
 - g. Pre-pitch positioning
- 7. Base Running
 - a. Picking up signs from coach
 - b. Secondary lead on pitches
 - c. Stealing a base
 - d. Advancing on pass balls
 - e. Running through first vs not over running 2nd and 3rd
 - f. Rounding bases on extra base hits and scoring
 - g. Reading base coach when ball is put in play
 - h. Sliding
 - i. Rundowns
 - j. Taking an extra base

- k. Tagging up to 3rd and home
 - 8. Hitting
 - a. Batting mechanics
 - b. Bunting
 - c. Situational hitting
 - d. Identifying strikes vs balls
 - e. Positioning in batters box
 - f. Reaction to pass balls
 - 9. Communication
 - a. Defensive
 - i. Communicating outs
 - ii. Lining up cutoffs
 - iii. Calling out cuts and locations
 - b. Offensive
 - i. Getting signs from coach
 - ii. Batter assisting runner coming home
- iv. By the end of Majors, players should be able to
 - 1. Effectively lead and control a pre-practice/pre-game warm-up
 - a. Arrive to field 15 mins early and lead warm-ups before the start of session
 - 2. Consistently lead a pre-practice/pre-game throwing routine without prompting
 - 3. Pitching
 - a. Begin to fine tune pitching mechanics
 - i. Begin to feel when mechanics are off and able to make in game adjustments
 - b. Consistently use a full wind up
 - c. Able to mix up pitch location batter to batter, pitch to pitch
 - d. Consistently throws with finger tips, creating space between hand and ball
 - e. Able to throw multiple fast ball variations
 - i. Four seam
 - ii. Two seam
 - iii. Cutter
 - iv. Sinker
 - f. Able to throw at least one "Off Speed" pitch
 - i. Change up
 - ii. Knuckle ball
 - iii. Splitter
 - g. Correctly and safely throw a curve ball
 - h. Actively engages in proper arm care and injury prevention
 - i. Icing
 - ii. Strength and condition exercises
 - 1. Bands

- 2. Plyos
 - 3. Body weight exercises
 - 4. Safely utilize a weighted ball
 - iii. Establishes a throwing routine to incorporate
 - 1. Long toss
 - 2. Bull pen sessions
 - 3. Rest days
 - i. Always cover home plate on pass balls with runner on third
- 4. Catching
 - a. Put on, take off and bag gear with no assistance
 - b. Able to adjust fitting straps of gear
 - c. Incorporates multiple receiving positions based on game situation
 - i. Traditional
 - ii. Runners on
 - iii. Modified crouch
 - d. Adjusts set up positioning to work pitch location
 - e. Able to correctly receive a pitch
 - i. Works under the ball
 - ii. Extend after catch
 - iii. Work the triangle to frame pitches
 - f. Correctly reads when its appropriate to pick a short hop vs blocking
 - g. Regularly attempts to throw runners out
 - h. Attempts to throw behind/pick-off runners
 - i. Consistently positions themselves and adjusts to block wild pitches
 - j. Accurately throws ball to pitcher covering home vs pass balls with runner trying to advance
 - k. Consistently able to apply tag to runners trying to advance home
 - l. Consistently able to locate and and positions themselves to make play on foul ball pop up around home plate
 - i. Recognizes when to pop up and turn around on balls above to behind the plate
 - m. Consistently communicates with defense pre-pitch
 - i. Controls and refocusses defensive players
 - ii. Adjusts fielders' positioning when appropriate
 - iii. Number of outs and where ball is going
 - iv. Bunt defense
 - 1. Utilizes signals or codes
 - v. 1st and 3rd situations
 - 1. Utilizes signals or codes
 - vi. Signals pitch and location to pitcher

- n. Consistently communicates with defense post hit
 - i. Calling out where play needs to go
 - ii. Assist defense with correcting rotations and coverages

5. Infield

- a. Comfortably adjusts to and able to field various groundballs
 - i. Ball at
 - ii. Backhand
 - iii. Forehand
 - iv. Short hops
 - v. Long hops
- b. Able to work around the ball to get body in position to throw to first
- c. Charges slow rolling ground balls and able to barehand when appropriate
- d. Begins to read and reacts to bouncing balls
 - i. Playing the short hop vs long hop
 - ii. Footwork and positioning
- e. Consistently cover and back up appropriate bases on runner advancement attempts
- f. Consistently rotate to cover vacant bases on balls in play
 - i. Able to adjust positioning to set up double plays
- g. Consistently back-up teammates on batted balls and throws
- h. Knows the difference between force play and tag play and adjusts accordingly
- i. Able to position themselves to field throws at bags
- j. Able effectively make tag plays
- k. Consistently attempts plays vs lead runner when appropriate
- l. Correctly responds to rundown situations
 - i. Timing the throw
 - ii. Receiving the throw and attempting a tag
 - iii. Rotating through a rundown
- m. Communicates on fly balls on the infield
 - i. Calling for the ball: "I got it!," "Me, Me, Me!"
 - ii. Covers appropriate bag when teammate calls for ball
- n. Appropriately reacts to "Infield Fly Rule"
- o. Rotates to cutoff positioning and coverages
 - i. Identifying who is cutoff and who covers bags
 - ii. Consistently call out cutoff commands; lining up, and where ball is being cut

- iii. Begins to adjust cut command to throw behind runner
- iv. Sets up double cut situations

6. Outfield

- a. Consistently utilizes proper footwork on flyballs
 - i. First step back
 - ii. Drop and run
 - iii. Running through the catch to throw out runners tagging up
 - iv. Works around ground balls
 - v. Runs through fielding to attempt throwing out advancing runners
- b. Adjusts path to cut off balls down the line or in the gaps
 - i. Cutting down angles
 - ii. Consistently backing up partner outfielder in gaps
- c. Backing up throws in the infield
 - i. Correctly gets into back up position on groundballs
 - ii. In position to get into rundown rotation if needed
 - iii. Correctly positions themselves to back up throws to bases on runner advancement attempts
- d. Consistently communicates on Fly balls
 - i. "Me, Me, Me"
 - ii. Consistently backs up teammate that calls for fly ball
- e. Hitting cut offs
 - i. Recognizes when to hit cutoff vs when to throw through
 - ii. Demonstrates ability to throw through cutoff and straight to bag
 - iii. Anticipates play and where to throw
 - iv. Able to diagnose when to attempt a play at home vs when to keep batter from getting extra bases
- f. Able to vary positioning pre-pitch to adjust to game situation
 - i. Righty vs lefty
 - ii. Cutting down runs vs preserving lead

7. Base Running

- a. Consistently look for signs
- b. Consistently take secondary lead on pitches
- c. Utilizes base coaches while running bases
- d. Knows when they are allowed to leave bag to steal
- e. Avoids "Interference" to defender
- f. Correctly reads and reacts to Tag Up situations

- i. 3rd to home
 - ii. 2nd to 3rd
- g. Identifies when able to take an extra base vs defense trying to make a play on lead runner
- h. Advances on pass balls
- i. Consistently runs through first base on infield hits
- j. Begins to understand how to work out of a rundown
 - i. Additional runners able to read and react to rundowns
- k. Able to time up a squeeze bunt
- l. Consistently rounds first on singles to the outfield
- m. Does not run through 2nd and 3rd base bags
- n. Safely slides into bases and home
- o. Consistently slides into bags on steals and when the defense is setting up to make a play at a bag
 - i. Able to adjust path to avoid tag
 - ii. Understands they are able to dive back to bag on pick-off attempt
 - iii. Does not slide headfirst on advancement attempts

8. Hitting

- a. Utilizes the mechanics of a swing
 - i. Knob to ball
 - ii. Staying on top of and inside the pitch
 - iii. Knee bend and hip hinge
 - iv. Understands bat path and plane
 - v. Understands the different phases of the swing
 - 1. Load
 - 2. Separation
 - 3. Swing
 - 4. Finish
 - vi. Begins to attempt situational hitting
 - 1. Ahead of count
 - 2. Behind the count
 - 3. Runners on base
 - vii. Consistently able to hit from legs, hips and core
 - viii. Consistently balanced throughout swing
 - ix. Head/chest down over zone
- b. Consistently steps out to get signs from coach
- c. Commands strike zone
- d. Able to execute a bunt
 - i. Sacrifice
 - ii. Bunt for a hit
 - iii. Squeeze
- e. Consistently able to adjust stance and swing vs 2 strikes

- f. Leaves batters box and communicates with runner on third trying to advance home on pass ball
 - i. Positions self to communicate slide
- 9. Communication
 - a. Defensive
 - i. Communicates outs and situation
 - ii. Communicates where throws need to go pre-pitch
 - iii. Lines up cutoffs
 - iv. Calls out cuts and where throw needs to go
 - v. Able to adjust cut call to throw behind lead runner
 - vi. Takes charge of balls in air
 - b. Offensive
 - i. Receives signs from coach
 - ii. Correctly recognizes offensive signs and executes play