

Youth Baseball Skills Matrix- Progress

Ages 12-14

Warm-up:

- Full Dynamic/Static combination

Fundamental Throwing:

- Proper glove position while throwing
- Proper upper body rotation
- Hitting a target while throwing
- Proper head stability and linear mvmt
- Following your throw to your target
- Back spin drills
- One-Knee drills
- Power position drills

Fundamental Catching the Baseball:

- Moving feet around ball when receiving

Fundamental Ground Ball and Infield Play:

- Attacking routine ground ball
- Approach/movement w. pitch
- Understanding angles on routine on GB
- Backhands
- Glove hand/forehand
- "V" cut ground ball
- Slow roller
- Short hops
- Dive and recover
- Double play pivots (SS & 2B)
- Double play positioning (SS & 2B)
- Double play feeds and flips (SS & 2B)
- First baseman footwork around bag
- Covering bases on steals and picks (3B, SS, 2B)
- Tagging runners
- Holding runners (1B, SS & 2B)

Fundamental Popup/flyball & OF Play:

- Fielding a GB in the OF
 - Keeping it in front
 - Do or die (off to the side)
- Hitting the cut-off

- Approach/movement w. pitch
- Drop stepping (fly balls to left & right)
- "Open Gate" Fly ball/line drive over head
- Catching the ball on the run
- Ground balls to the left & right of fielder
- Wheel throw on a ground ball
- Using the shuffle step to throw
- Getting behind a fly ball
- Playing the fence
- Throwing to bases/ Long hops
- Throwing to proper base
- Diving and/or sliding catches

Fundamental Hitting Concepts:

- Loading the swing
- Stride to swing (launch position)
- Balance when swinging
- Swing path
- Rhythm/timing
- Approach

Bat control skills & situations:

- Understanding contact points
- Sacrifice bunting
- Safety squeeze/suicide squeeze
- Bunting for hits (Drag/Push)
- Hit and Run
- Run and hit
- 2K approach
- Advancing a runner from 2nd w. 0 out
- Infield up w. runner on 3B
- Infield back w. runner on 3B
- Pitch recognition
- Strike zone management
- Hitting off a tee
- Front toss

Fundamental Baserunning Concepts:

- How to run through first base
- How to round first base
- Understanding infield fly rule
- Running 1st to 3rd and 2nd to home

- Understanding when to advance while at 2nd
- Proper straight leg slide
- Pop-up, hook, and fade slides
- Primary lead (all bases)
- Secondary leads (all bases)
- Reading pitched ball in dirt
- Taking the extra base/reading throw from OF
- Stealing bases (2nd and 3rd base)
- Delayed Steal
- Contact play at 3B

Fundamental Pitching Concepts:

- Understanding wind-up vs. stretch position
- Basic FB grips
- Off-speed pitch grips
- Basic Mechanics
 - Leg lift
 - Linear/inline head movement on stride
 - Proper follow through with backside
- Other
 - Holding runners
 - Pick moves (1st and 2nd base)
 - Slide step vs. leg lift
 - Pitch outs
 - Intentional walks

Fundamental Catching Concepts:

- Primary vs secondary stance
- Glove position
- Positioning with home plate and batter
- Receiving (basic)
- Receiving (advanced- one knee down)
- Blocking a ball straight at you
- Blocking a ball to the left and right
- Pop up technique
- Throwing footwork to 2nd and 3rd
- Back pick throws to 1st
- Receiving a pitch out
- Plays at the plate
- Fielding bunts
- Making a play at the plate on passed ball
- Giving signs

Team Situational Concepts:

- Understanding "ball, base or backup" concept
- Tandem cuts and relays (advanced)
- Backing up bases (specific to position)
- Fielding bunts (C/3B/1B)
- Bunt defense
- 1st and 3rd defense
- 1st and 3rd offense
- Pop-up communication
- Inf/OF fly ball communication
- Rundowns
- Pick plays

Basic Positioning:

- Standard
- Double play depth
- Infield up
- Corners up/middle back
- IF Halfway
- Shifts

Daily Practice Organization Outline (*indicates this should be completed at every practice):

2.5 - 3 hours of active work

- Full Dynamic/Static combination (*15 minutes*) *
- Base running fundamental concepts (*15-20 minutes*) *
- Throwing/Catching fundamentals (*10-15 minutes*) *
- OF/IF skill fundamentals (*30 minutes*) *
- Pitcher/Catcher skill fundamentals*
- Bullpens (as needed)
- Team situational concepts (C, P, OF, IF) (*20-25 minutes*) *
- Pitcher fielding practice (w. catcher & IF)
- Advanced team situational work w. runners
- Hitting/Tee work fundamentals (*include in BP groups*) *
- On-field batting practice (coach pitch)

TOTAL Batting Practice time: 45 min- 1 hour*

- Controlled coach pitch scrimmages/situations (*20 minutes*)

Fundamental Coaching Suggestions:

- Keep drills varied
- Drills should be kept at about 20-25 minutes