

## Nine Basic Components of Practice:

(From the Littleleaguecoach.org website with minor modifications)

- \* Warm-up and stretching
- \* On-field warm-up
- \* Review of previously learned skills
- \* Learn new skills
- \* Practice game situations
- \* Play game or modified game
- \* Conditioning
- \* Cool-down and stretching
- \* Evaluate practice

**Completing all the steps the first day of practice would be difficult to do. Teaching skills and drills should be about 70% of your practices in the beginning of the season and transition to 70% game play at the end of the season. As the skills and drills become part of your routine you can incorporate new skills into your practice.**

**Based on a two-hour practice, an appropriate practice time is listed below. Adjust as necessary. Head Coaches should bring the girls and assistant coaches together to explain each part of the drill to be executed before the drill is started. Showing and explaining the drills is important to accomplish first.**

1. Warm-up
  - a. This warm-up should include cardiovascular and stretching activities
  - b. 5 min

2. On-field Warm-up
  - a. Form running
  - b. Arm warm-up
  - c. Dry swings
  - d. 10 min

**Steps 1 and 2 are done consistently at each practice, after the first two weeks kids can run steps 1 and 2 with oversight. Coaches can walk through the warm up -talking to kids, showing kids the drills. This is also a time for coaches to review the practice for that day.**

3. Review Previously Learned Skills
  - a. Used for areas that were not completed last practice or need to be reviewed in order to make sure that the players properly learned the material
  - b. 15 min

**For step 3-Coaches will demonstrate the drill, not just talk about it. Team will repeat exercise if drill was complex.**

4. Specialty Period for Learning New Skills
  - a. This should be broken-down into small groups.
  - b. Each area of the game should be developed during this period
    - i. Pitchers
    - ii. Catchers
    - iii. Infielders
    - iv. Outfielders
    - v. Hitting
    - vi. Team Defense
    - vii. Base Running
  - c. 35 min

**For step 4-coaches will demonstrate in DETAIL how the drill is to be done. The Drill should be emphasized by the coaching staff after the first 15 minutes to refresh what is talked about.**

5. Practicing Game Situations using the specific drills taught in current practice.
  - a. This is done in a large group
  - b. Outfield/Infield
  - c. 15 min

6. Play Modified Game

- a. Example - start with a 2-2 count
- b. Example - start with a runner on second base
- c. Limit modified game to 2-3 innings
- d. 20 min

7. Conditioning

- a. Leave conditioning until the end of the workout to minimize fatigue during practice time
- b. Players learn better when they are not fatigued
- c. 10 min max

**Notes for step 7 – make this run, a race against teammates.**

8. Cool down and stretching

- a. 5 min

9. Evaluation – Coaches review of what drills were done.

- a. This should be positive, enforcing good work ethic and proper baseball fundamentals that were learned
- b. 5 min

Practice Plan:

It is important to have a practice plan in place. Knowing what is going to be done at practice will help your staff help you accomplish a successful and fruitful practice. As a suggestion, write down in advance what will be done for the current practice before or even right before the practice with the assistant coaches' input. Keep your notes for future use, having 5-6 practice plans that are different and interesting will help when everyone is running late and preparation didn't occur. Using a practice plan from a successful practice should be repeated often.

Alternate your practice skills:

Kids arrive at different times and may not attend every practice. Starting off with hitting followed by catching followed by throwing at each practice is helpful to establish a practice plan, but at times feel free to start off with a different skill for a week. But do accomplish all three skills each practice.