

Danvers American



Little League

2006 Coaches Manual

Danvers American Little League

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Division Accomplishments

T-Ball

1. Grip of baseball
2. Over the top throwing with proper circle motion
3. Contact hitting
4. Catching the baseball
5. Position Play

Single A

1. Throwing
2. Catching the baseball/ fly balls
3. Contact Hitting
4. Hitting Pitched balls / Bunting
5. Position Play
6. Introduce Pitching/ Catching

Double AA

1. Throwing
2. Catching the baseball/ fly balls
3. Contact Hitting
4. Hitting Pitched balls
5. Position Play
6. Pitching
7. Catching

Triple AAA + Major League

1. Stress the basics
2. Add complex drills
3. Work on players weaknesses
4. Develop confidence at a position

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Throwing

Holding the Baseball

1. Hold ball with opening of the horse shoe facing left
2. Put index finger and middle finger across and on seams so four seams would rotate when ball is thrown
3. Thumb should be under the ball
4. Fingers should be split slightly apart with space between the ball and your palm. Fingers loose, wrist loose, don't choke ball.

Throwing the Baseball

5. PLANT POWER FOOT (throwing side foot), turn body and point shoulder at target (pointing the gun). Throwing hand should be holding ball inside glove; hands should be at chest level below chin.
6. Break hands moving the ball out of glove in downward motion (THUMB to THIGH) this starts the circle motion
7. Glove elbow should point at target with glove facing down as arm starts to rotate upward
8. Reach as far as your can keeping fingers on top continuing the circle motion (KNUCKLES to SKY)
9. Keep fingers on top of ball until the ball starts to pass the eye (RELEASE from EYE)
10. Elbow should tuck under arm and pull upper body towards target
11. Follow arm path forward completing circle (HAND OUTSIDE THIGH)
12. (BACK HEEL TO SKY), stay balanced

Throwing Drills

Statue Drill

- Hold glove out in front of chest slightly on throwing side
- Put throwing elbow in glove
- Hold ball straight up, check for proper grip (horse shoe)
- Toss ball to partner only using wrist keeping elbow in glove
- Look for good wrist snap proper rotation

Windmill Drill

- Sit on ground Indian style with ball in hand in glove
- Break hands drag throwing hand with ball straight back on ground making sure fingers stay on top of baseball with cross seam grip (horse shoe facing left)
- Upper body will turn as ball come up to sky, make sure glove elbow is facing target
- Reach for the sky with throwing hand making sure throwing elbow is at least as high as shoulder
- Throw over the top following through with throwing elbow over knee

One Knee Drill

- Kneel down on throwing knee side, front (glove foot) should be facing at 1'oclock
- Start with ball on ground next to throwing side knee
- With proper grip, drag ball on ground up to knuckles to the sky position.
- Turn upper body point glove shoulder at target
- Keep fingers on top for count of two and make over the top throw
- Following through with throwing elbow finishing outside of glove knee, chest on knee
- Take time stress circle

Goal Post Drill

- Feet spread apart little more than shoulder length
- Start with shoulder facing target
- Ball in hand reaching back with knuckles to the sky
- glove elbow bent pointing towards target
- complete circle with proper follow through with hand outside thigh
- back heel to sky

Play catch -with a purpose to work on the above mechanics, have partner show good target, try to hit target

Long toss to increase arm strength and accuracy, throw the ball with an arc. This will stretch out throwing arm.

Stress:

1. Proper grip

2. Plant Foot

3. Circle motion

**Thumb to Thigh, Knuckles to Sky, Release from eye, Hand outside Thigh, and Back Heel to Sky*

4. Good follow through

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Catching the Baseball

Use soft balls to prevent injury and gain confidence

1. Check glove for good movement
2. Feet parallel with shoulders
3. Both hands out in front with thumbs pointing together forming a (W) with hands
4. Elbows underneath glove and throwing hand in comfortable position
5. Once ball is thrown, step to ball with glove and power foot
6. Make catch with two hands, watch ball into glove
7. Square off to make throw
8. For low thrown ball turn glove over and form (M) with hands. After making the catch bring glove and ball in throwing hand up to chest and pivot ready to make a throw
9. Use feet and legs to shuffle left and right to catch ball out in front of body

Stress:

1. *Good Glove Movement*
2. *Form (W) with thumbs*
3. *Step to ball, Squeeze ball two hands*

ALWAYS CATCH BALL IN POCKET NOT IN WEB

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Fly Balls

1. Ready Position

1. Always anticipate the ball coming to you
2. Glove open and out ready for ball
3. Slow walk towards infield staying on the balls of feet

2. Fly Ball

4. Locate ball
5. Line drive- freeze and read
6. Ball to left or right- cross over and sprint
7. Over head- Turn and sprint keeping eye on ball
8. Always sprint to ball, keeping eye on ball, never drift
9. Set up on ball, glove foot slightly in front of throwing foot feet parallel with shoulders
10. Loudly call out ball "I got it, I got it" "take it, take it"
11. Glove and throwing hand out in front of face
12. Arms at 45 degree angle, elbows under glove in comfortable position
13. Little give when making catch
14. Squeeze glove use two hands
15. Watch ball into glove, make sure of catch
16. Be in the throwing position when catching the ball
17. Get the ball into the infield as quick as you can

Stress:

1. Ready position
2. Sprint to ball get underneath ball first!
3. Glove out front elbows under glove
4. Make catch with two hands trapping ball

Outfield Drills

- Throw baseballs instead of hitting baseballs to get more repetition
Left to right, overhead, low balls
- For tee-ball and single A- Use tennis racket and tennis balls to hit fly balls
- Triangle Drill (see drill in manual)

Ground Balls

1. Ready Position

1. Before pitcher starts windup, have glove folded on knee be in relaxed position
2. When pitcher starts wind up open glove so palm is facing out towards hitter and slightly extended out about belt level
3. Slow walk on balls of feet toward home plate
4. Always anticipate ball coming to you
5. Always keep eyes on ball

2. Breakdown

1. Charge ball
2. Glove down first (glove can come up quicker then down)
3. Glove elbow always in line with ball slightly bent
4. Palm out, fingers on ground facing ball, never flip glove
5. Elbows inside knees
6. Glove foot slightly in front of throwing foot
7. Head down (see button on cap)
8. Reach for ball with throwing hand on top of glove with palm facing down
9. Two hands scoop with throwing hand (Alligator)

3. Throw

10. Short cross over step leading with power foot
11. Point shoulder at target
12. Stay low
13. Full circle throwing motion
14. Over the top

Stress:

1. Ready Position
2. Charge Ball
3. Glove down first
4. Elbow inside knees
5. Alligator
6. Bring glove/ ball up to stomach
7. Good over the top throw

Ground Ball Drills

- **Bare hand pickups**- put ball in front of player have him show technique, pick up ball and motion into throwing position
- **Partner ground balls**- rolling back and forth (30 feet)
- **Paddle Ground Balls**- use flat paddle to emphasize alligator
- **Short hop**- stand 10 feet away and throw short hops at player
- **Cross Over**- stand 10 feet away roll groundballs left to right look for proper technique, take time, have player show throwing motion and toss back to coach
- **Square Drill**- (see drill pages on manual)

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HITTING

1. GRIP

1. Stay LOOSE and RELAXED
2. Check grip, hold bat in finger tips squeeze bat, all door knocking knuckles should be lined up
3. Bottom hand should be about two inches from bottom of bat

2. STANCE

4. Front foot should be just behind front corner of home plate
5. Feet parallel with shoulders on balls of feet
6. Knees slightly bent

3. BAT POSITION

7. Bat 4 inches from ear and 4 inches off shoulder (Answer Phone)
8. Bat angle, use butt end of the bat as a flashlight on opposite batters box
9. Elbows down (Show punch)
10. Weight slightly on back foot

4. TRIGGER & STRIDE

11. Before pitcher lets go of ball slightly curl shoulder (TRIGGER) back not moving hands or bat in a
12. Stride front foot 3 inches forward on ball of foot keeping balance slightly on back foot (STEP ON THIN ICE)

5. CONTACT

13. During swing keep hands inside body at a downward motion
14. Barrel off bat to ball (repeat this)
15. Hands must stay short to ball for quick bat, never long to ball
16. Power V at contact area top hand elbow against stomach pushing bat
17. Twist thighs and waist towards pitcher

6. FOLLOW THROUGH

18. Follow through up to shoulder so chin touches shoulder
19. Back foot turned towards pitcher (Squish the bug)
20. Always balanced (No leaning)
21. Swing through the ball

Pitching

A. Starting position

- a. Right hand pitcher starts on right side of rubber, left hand pitcher starts on left side of rubber
- b. When toeing the rubber make sure heels are on the rubber and toes are on the dirt, be balanced
- c. Feet should be inside your shoulders
- d. Both hands in glove
- e. Top of glove just below chin with back of glove facing target
- f. Elbows relaxed against stomach
- g. Slight bend in knees (comfortable position)

B. Full Wind Up (Right Hand Pitcher)

Step #1 position ROCKER

- Rock left foot straight back on ball of foot
- Keep chin over pivot foot

Step #2 position PIVOT

- Turn right pivot foot in front of rubber
- Turn upper body so front shoulder facing target
- Glove should be six inches off chest

Step #3 position BALANCE

- Lift Knee to belt with foot at 90 degree angle and toe down
- Weight should be even on back foot
- Stay up right don't sink on back foot

Step #4 position BREAK AND STRIDE

- Take ball out of glove break thumbs down and away from each other towards thighs
- Slightly collapse back leg to keep weight back
- Bring heel into body then out towards target (this keeps front hip closed)
- Stride towards home plate with heel, inside of big toe should hit ground first at 1 o'clock
- Hands should spread into POWER T position with glove down elbow pointing at target
- Ball in hand should come out of glove down with fingers on top (knuckles to sky) and rotate up giving high five to centerfield or reaching to the sky

Step 5 position TUCK AND THROW

- Front elbow drives down into hip
- Glove tucks
- Back hip rotates towards home plate
- Throwing elbow stays high
- Fingers stay on top
- At release body stays behind the ball pushing ball with body
- Wrist snaps down and through
- Arm continues to follow through until back of shoulder faces target
- Back heel goes up towards sky then rotates over and parallel to the stride leg
- Into ready fielding stance

C. Pitching from Stretch

- a. Stand with right foot against rubber feet about six inches apart
- b. Ball in glove against chest
- c. Throwing hand in glove
- d. When ready pick up left knee start at #3 position

Drills for pitchers

1. **One Knee drill**- start with hands in glove rotate shoulders, hand out of glove point elbow (power T), fingers to sky, lead with heel, tuck elbow/glove follow through thumb to thigh.
2. **Straddle Throw**- Feet parallel outside of shoulders, shoulder facing target, hands in glove, hand out of glove point elbow (power T), fingers to sky, lead with heel, tuck elbow/glove follow through thumb to thigh.
3. **Cement Throw**- Feet slightly outside shoulders, chest facing target, hands in glove rotate shoulders, hand out of glove point elbow (power T), fingers to sky, lead with heel, tuck elbow/glove follow through thumb to thigh. Keep feet planted
4. **Balance Position**- Start from balance position (#3) hands in glove shoulder facing target, hand out of glove point elbow (power T), fingers to sky, tuck elbow/glove follow through thumb to thigh.

- * Stay balanced and smooth
- * Don't rush delivery
- * Keep eye on target

Fast Ball- hold ball with two fingers with horseshoe facing first base side so four seams will rotate when ball is released.

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Helpful Hints!

1. Baseball is a game of skill and the skills must be taught properly
2. Have a developmental plan from the start of the season to the middle of the season to the end.
3. Make out a pre-season plan stressing the basics; get as many repetitions as possible by using stations.
4. Make out 2 practice plans at the start of the season and alternate each one.
5. Keep to the practice schedule even if things are going bad- move on, and pick it up next time.
6. Keep players moving, standing in one line becomes boring and creates problems.
7. Be creative, especially during batting practice...stations.
8. Utilize your staff- get parents involved.
9. Batting practice is not pitching practice for the coach. Pitch at close range and at a speed where the kid can hit the ball and develop confidence.
10. Practice as much as you can, create competition, and have fun with the kids
11. Remember: your players think you are "The Man" be patient and be positive

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Practice Example

Example based on 1 1/2 practice slot

-5 min	Warm Up
-10 min	Square Drill
-10 min	Triangle Drill

-15 min	<u>Stations</u> : Base running, Rundowns, Pitcher / Catcher drills

-30 min	<u>Hitting Stations</u> - soft toss station, bunt station, tee hitting, Live pitched hitting * can also include more Pitcher/ Catcher drills
-20 min	Team Defense (men on base, bunt coverage, backups)

- Set practice to team needs
- Extra coaches/ parents can help with hitting stations, pitchers, catchers
- Coordinate a practice on paper and follow it
- Set aside extra drills in case of extra time
- Get parents involved in practice