

Fundamentals of Pee Wee Baseball
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Introduction

This guide is designed to help young players develop fundamental baseball skills in a fun and structured environment. The key areas of focus include hitting, throwing/pitching, fielding, and base running. Each section outlines proper techniques, common mistakes, and drills to reinforce learning.

Hitting

Key Principles:

- Batting tees help all hitters improve, regardless of skill level.
- Professional players use hitting tees regularly to refine their swings.
- Developing a complete swing eliminates weaknesses pitchers can exploit.
- Practice hitting to different areas of the field.

Steps for a Proper Swing:

1. **Stance:** Feet shoulder-width apart, knees slightly bent, hold the bat loosely.
2. **Step/load up:** Take a small stride while keeping weight on the back foot. Avoid lunging at pitches. “Load up” refers to the hands moving in an upward/back motion roughly 3-5”
3. **Pivot:** Rotate the back foot (“squish the bug”), engaging hips for power.
4. **Extension:** Keep the head down and drive the bat through the ball.
5. **Follow-Through:** Finish with the bat on the opposite shoulder, belly button facing the pitcher.

Common Swing Flaws & Fixes:

- Dropping back shoulder/elbow (causing pop-ups): Keep back elbow slightly up and drive the ball on a level plain.
- Weak contact (slow velocity): Emphasize quick hip rotation and full-body engagement.

Drills:

- Soft Toss: Players hit balls tossed from the side into a net or fence.
- Number Recognition Drill: Flash numbers at contact to encourage head stability.

Throwing & Pitching

Pre-Throwing Warm-ups:

- Stretch arms (triceps, forearms, shoulder rotations).
- Windmill arm circles to prevent injuries.

Proper Throwing Mechanics:

1. **Grip:** Hold two fingers across the seams, with a loose wrist for better velocity.
2. **Stance:** Right-handed throwers should have their left shoulder facing the target.
3. **Balance Point:** Front leg lifts while maintaining balance, glove pointing at target.
4. **Throw:** Rotate hips, shoulders, and arm over the top (avoid sidearm throws).
5. **Follow-Through:** Extend the arm fully and finish in a balanced fielding position.

Drills:

- Use stationary targets to emphasize accuracy over speed.
- Focus on proper mechanics before increasing throwing velocity.

Fielding

Fundamentals:

- Fielding is often overlooked but is crucial for overall performance.
- Proper stance: Knees bent, hands in front, glove open.
- Work on foot shuffling without crossing legs.

Steps for Fielding a Ground Ball:

1. **Approach:** Stay low and controlled when moving to the ball.
2. **Fielding Position:** Knees bent, arms extended, field ball in the center of the body.
3. **Secure the Ball:** Bring the ball up toward the chest with two hands.
4. **Transition ("POP"):** Move into a throwing stance immediately after securing the ball.

Drills:

- Straight-on ground balls.
- Side-to-side shuffle (heel clicks but no crossing over).
- Backhand and forehand fielding drills.
- Pop flies and basic catching with a partner.

Base Running

Key Principles:

- Teach kids to run bases one at a time.
- Discourage unnecessary rounding of bases (kids tend to keep running, regardless of where the ball is) unless working on speed drills.
- Finish sessions with base-running races to make it fun.

Base Running Mechanics:

- First Base: Run through the base, touching the front edge. Look to the right to check for an overthrow. Turn toward foul territory after reaching first base.
- Second & Third Base: Players must stay in contact with the base. Teach the importance of not getting tagged while off base.
- Doubles & Triples: Encourage only after players understand taking one base at a time.
- Home Runs: Ensure kids understand they must touch all bases.

Advanced Base Running Concepts:

- Force Plays: Introduce once basic base running is mastered.
- Tagging Up: Teach as players develop more understanding.
- Proper Footwork: Emphasize touching the corners of bases to minimize time lost.

Final Thoughts

Baseball fundamentals are best learned through repetition and encouragement. By focusing on proper mechanics and keeping drills fun and engaging, players will develop confidence and essential skills for the game.

Remember: Keep it fun while learning!