



**Thornhill Baseball Club  
Practice Plan #1**

Division	Skills	Duration
Sr. Rookie	Ready Position and Throwing	75-90 minutes

Objectives	Equipment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Learn standard athletic/ready position</li> <li>✓ Learn how to throw a baseball (basics)</li> <li>✓ Learn proper body positioning and arm motion to throw a ball</li> <li>✓ Learn how to properly run to first base</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Baseballs</li> <li>✓ Helmets</li> <li>✓ Bases</li> <li>✓ Minimum 2 coaches</li> </ul>

Time	Activity / Drill
10 min	<p><b>Warm Up</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Run around the field where the grass and dirt meet (infield and outfield meet)</li> <li>▪ Run a second time through telling the players to do different things as they are running (a coach should be leading or demonstrating):               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ High knees</li> <li>○ Butt kicks</li> <li>○ Side shuffles</li> <li>○ Skipping</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Do 2-3 sprints in the outfield starting at the foul line, moving into the outfield area, where they pretend to be on a base and are running to the next base. When you say “go” or clap your hands, they must sprint as fast as they can. Keeping head down.</li> <li>▪ Stretch in a circle, coach in the middle of the circle:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Arm over the shoulder and hold; arm across chest and hold, reach down and touch toes and hold; quad/balance stretch, jumping jacks</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
5 min	<b>WATER BREAK</b>
3 min	Explain the purpose of the practice and what the players are going to learn and do: Learn how to get into ready position, how to properly throw a baseball and how to run to first base!
5 min	<p>Talk about the “athletic stance” or ready position – you can call it “GAME FACE” to have fun with the kids</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Feet shoulder width apart, knees bent, glove off the knee (open facing forward) head forward and eyes forward</li> <li>▪ Tell the kids to find a spot in the area not too far away and put on their “game face”, go around to each of them to check and see that they are in the proper athletic stance (use this lingo for all games, practices etc.</li> </ul>

	Every time you want to see the kids “ready” and athletic, tell them to “put on their game face!!”
5 min	<p>Demonstrate and teach how to throw</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Front shoulder/glove shoulder facing target</li> <li>▪ Athletic stance (feet shoulder width apart, knees bent)</li> <li>▪ Both shoulders in a straight line facing target (body should be turned)</li> <li>▪ Glove elbow or glove pointing at target</li> </ul> <p>Have the kids line up in the proper throwing stance following you, as you explain</p>
5 min	<p>Teach the proper arm motion (arm circle down and up, hold in an L shape, then throw) Key words to use: THUMBS TO THIGH, FINGERS TO THE SKY to prevent side arm throwing, teach proper break of ball out of glove (fingers down on throwing and glove hand to force a circular break and arm motion), and increase good arm movement and mechanics</p> <p>Have the kids practice this for a few minutes after you have demonstrated and explained, one coach will be giving instructions, while the rest go around once again and correct the arm motion. Sometimes it helps to hold on to the players arm and show them what the arm motion feels and looks like by doing it for them. The coach giving instruction should be directing them as a group:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ “Thumbs to thigh”</li> <li>▪ “Arm circle and fingers to the sky”</li> <li>▪ “Hold arm in L shape”</li> <li>▪ “come over the top of your head and straight down”</li> </ul>
5 min	<b>WATER BREAK</b>
5 min	<p>Line the players up into 2 lines, across from two coaches. You can put a pylon for where each line should start the line up. If there is another coach, he/she can walk around and help the players while they are participating</p> <p><i>Many times at this level when players are throwing or playing catch, they are much too far apart and unable to hit their target, which results in really long waits to get the ball as well there is no feeling of success or accomplishment, make sure when players are throwing that they are close enough to the coach that they can be successful!</i></p> <p>The first player in line takes a ball from the bucket that is between the two lines, and practices the proper arm motion for throwing. Before he or she throws, they must line up their bodies properly as taught earlier in the practice (front shoulder/glove shoulder facing target, athletic stance, glove elbow pointed to target). After they throw, go to the back of the line. Do this for a few minutes.</p>
20 min	<i>Now introduce the next step of throwing, incorporating the step and/or the shuffle for further distance throws. This is now utilizing two different parts of the body at the same time (feet and arms)</i>

	<p>“We are going to step and throw now, everything else we just learned stays the same. We step with our opposite foot, as our fingers are moving to the sky” (mid arm circle).</p> <p>Emphasize to step with the OPPOSITE FOOT – before you start you can have them hold up their throwing hand, and hold up their opposite foot so they know which parts are moving</p> <p>Demonstrate how to put it all together – proper position and stance, arm circle, hold, step and throw (can also do a shuffle to the target as your step where your body is taking one shuffle toward the target while throwing. Demonstrate both and have the players try both</p> <p>Then show them when a throw is further away, they have to use their bodies, and put their legs into their throw, as a shuffle. They will start with their glove shoulder facing the target, and opposite leg out, bend their knees / get low to activate power from their legs and lower half, and take a shuffle with both feet before throwing. Ensure when they are doing this that they stop their feet and are balanced before throwing. Demonstrate this</p> <p>They are still throwing to their coaches in a line – one throw and go to the back of the line. To make it more exciting you can keep track as a group how many times they can make it to the coach. After each bucket of throws have the kids gradually move back until they are shuffling and using their bodies into their throws</p>
5 min	<b>WATER BREAK AND SET UP FOR NEXT DRILL</b>
25 min	<p><b>Base Running and Throwing Drill / Game</b></p> <p>Transition tip: One coach explains while the other is setting up</p> <p>Teach them when they are running to first base to run right through the bag as fast as they can without slowing down! This is the only base we can run through and not get tagged out (right after we hit the ball only). Demonstrate once and then have the kids go through once or twice. Add a pylon or marker about 3-5 feet after the base to help teach the players that once they touch first base not to stop, to keep running straight through to the pylon!</p> <p><b>BASERUNNING GAME</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Divide the team into 2 teams, one team will be the “base runners” while the other team is the “throwers”</li> <li>▪ Ensure you have a coach at first base</li> <li>▪ The team that is base running starts at home plate and is wearing a helmet, the team that is throwing starts at third base.</li> <li>▪ When the coach blows his/her whistle or yells “go” the first person in line at the plate will run as fast as they can to first base and try to beat the ball there. While the runner is running to first, the player at third base is</li> </ul>

running a few feet toward the pitching mound to pick up the baseball that is on the ground and then throws it to first base. If the runner beats the ball to the base they are safe and the team gets a point.

- Both players go to the back of the line. Once everyone has gone, the teams switch. Which ever team has the most points at the end wins. Can go through multiple “innings” or just go through once (depending on time)

Kids love games and competitions, any time you can turn something simple into a competition or a game they will have a blast while working on the skills they were just taught!



**Thornhill Baseball Club  
Practice Plan #2**

Division	Skills	Duration
Sr. Rookie	Fielding, throwing and base-running a	75-90 min

Objectives	Equipment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Proper stance and ready position before fielding and while fielding</li> <li>✓ How to approach a ground ball properly</li> <li>✓ How to field a ground ball properly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Baseballs</li> <li>✓ Helmets</li> <li>✓ Bases</li> <li>✓ Minimum 2 coaches</li> </ul>

Time	Activity / Drill
10 min	<b>Warm Up – see Lesson 1 (make sure warm ups before practices and games are consistent so that they players have a set routine)</b>
5 min	<b>WATER BREAK</b>
5 min	<p>RECAP OF LAST PRACTICE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ask the team who remembers what their game face is? Who can demonstrate this? Then get all the players to show you their “game face”</li> <li>▪ Ask the team who remember what their throwing hand is and their throwing leg and non-throwing leg. What does their non-throwing / glove hand do when they are throwing</li> </ul> <p>Explain the purpose of today’s practice to the team: “Today we are going to learn how to properly field a ground ball and how to round first base after we hit a single!”</p>

10 min	<p>Demonstrate the proper way to move from the “game face” to the fielding position: knees bent, butt out and down, head and eyes forward on the hitter, hands down in the middle of the body and glove open. Glove should be on the ground when fielding so that the ball can not go under it!</p> <p>Make one big circle, and two coaches are in the middle, one coach is facing one side of the circle, the other coach is facing the other side (coaches are back to back). Then tell the team to get into their “Fielding position”</p> <p>Pilot/ Co Pilot checklist for “fielding position” <i>(This co-pilot drill teaching and instructional activity can be incorporated into ANY drill you do with your team, or any skill you teach your players and it is great for them as they get to fix what they are doing incorrectly!)</i></p> <p>We are the pilot asking the team / co-pilots to check their stance, for everything the coach calls out, each player must check to make sure they are doing it, and yell CHECK. If they are not doing it, they need to fix their body and then yell CHECK</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Feet a little wider than shoulder width apart</li> <li>✓ Knees Bent</li> <li>✓ Glove and hands down</li> <li>✓ Throwing hand above the glove</li> <li>✓ Glove open and facing forward</li> <li>✓ Hands in the middle of body</li> <li>✓ Head and eyes forward</li> </ul> <p>Go through this a few times until the team is in excellent fielding position!</p>
5 min	<p>After you go through the pilot checklist, coaches will roll the players balls, staying in the circle where one coach is facing one side, and the other coach is facing the other side. Roll balls one at a time and each player keeps the ball behind him/her after they field. Once all the balls are out have the players refill the bucket and go back to their spot in the circle /semi circle</p> <p>Coaches are back to back, one is rolling to one side of the circle, the other is rolling to the other side of the circle. Coaches are taking balls from a bucket in the middle of both of them</p>
5 min	<b>WATER BREAK</b>
15 min	<p>Now, based on what you saw for the first 5 minutes of fielding ground balls, talk to the team about a few common mistakes (see below, plus any other mistakes you may have seen, try to keep it to a minimum so they have less to focus on), and then go back to their lines and roll or lightly hit more ground balls and keep pointing out the common mistakes:</p> <p><b>1) Not low enough</b></p>

	<p>Need to be low to the ground, knees bet and glove should be touching the ground. Ask the players “when snow falls where does it usually land?” Looking for “the ground” as the answer. A key term you can use which is cute for little kids and catchy is to remind them to be <b>LOW TO THE SNOW</b> (it rhymes and is something they will remember especially if you use it during fielding drills and games)</p> <p><b>2) Only one hand when fielding</b>  Another very common mistake, the throwing hand does not help guide and keep the ball in the glove. When fielding we need to use two hands, you can call it the <b>ALLIGATOR CHOMP</b>. Ask the team, “can someone demonstrate with their hands how an alligator or crocodile would eat?” Have all the players do the alligator chomp with their hands</p> <p>Then have a player or coach demonstrate this properly to the team what it should look like versus some of what they have seen which is what it shouldn’t look like</p>
30 min	<p><b>BASERUNNING AND FIELDING GAME (to reinforce all skills learned and to end off in a fun way)</b></p> <p><b>BASERUNNING GAME</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Divide the team into 2 teams, one team will be the “base runners” while the other team is the “fielders”</li> <li>▪ Ensure you have a coach at first base</li> <li>▪ The team that is base running starts at home plate and is wearing a helmet, the team that is fielding and throwing starts at short stop in a line.</li> <li>▪ When the coach blows his/her whistle or yells “go” the first person in line at the plate will run as fast as they can to first base and try to beat the ball there. While the runner is running to first, the player at shortstop is fielding a ground ball rolled to them by a coach at home plate, and then throwing to the other coach who is at first base. If the runner beats the ball to the base they are safe and the team gets a point. The object for the fielding team is to field the ground ball properly and throw it to first base to get the runner out</li> <li>▪ Both players go to the back of the line. Once everyone has gone, the teams switch (do this a few times). Which ever team has the most points at the end wins.</li> </ul>





**Thornhill Baseball Club  
Practice Plan #3**


Division	Skills	Duration
Sr. Rookie	Hitting	75-90 minutes

Objectives	Equipment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Teach the proper hitting stance (and have the swing, but less of a focus on this until next practice)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Baseballs</li> <li>✓ Wiffle balls </li> <li>✓ Batting Tees </li> <li>✓ Helmets</li> <li>✓ Pylons</li> <li>✓ Minimum 2 coaches</li> </ul>

Time	Activity / Drill
10 min	<b>Warm Up – see Lesson 1 (make sure warm ups before practices and games are consistent so that they players have a set routine)</b>
5 min	<b>WATER BREAK</b>
3 min	<p>RECAP OF LAST PRACTICE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ask the team to show you their ready position / game face, and how they would field a ground ball</li> <li>▪ Ask them to spread out and show you how they would throw with stepping, and then how they would throw with shuffling</li> </ul> <p>TODAYS PRACTICE “Today we will be learning and practicing how to hit, starting with and focusing on our stance!”</p>
6 min	<p>Everyone in a circle watching the coaches</p> <p>Coaches will demonstrate how to go from GAME FACE (athletic position) to batting stance. The ATHLETIC POSITION is the base position of every baseball fundamental and skill. The base of our athletic position is the same of all our skills (catching, fielding, hitting, throwing, etc). Emphasize the similar key points – feet a little wider than shoulder width apart, knees bent, hands up, eyes and head on target (pitcher or pitching machine, looking straight at the ball)</p> <p>STANCE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Feet a little wider than shoulder width apart</li> <li>✓ Feet in a straight line with each other</li> <li>✓ Knees bent</li> <li>✓ Hands together on the bat (no space between the hands)</li> <li>✓ Hands up by ear (tell them they are talking on the phone with their bat)</li> <li>✓ Eyes and head on the pitching/ball</li> </ul>



6 min	<p>Have the kids stand up and get in the proper batting stance, watching the coaches as if they were the pitcher or pitching machine. Then you will tell them they are your co-pilots of a plane and go through the “check list” of a proper batting stance. This is similar to what a pilot and co-pilot will do before take off to make sure they are ready!</p> <p>If they are doing it right they should yell CHECK after you call out the part of the stance. If they are not doing it right they should fix their stance and then yell CHECK. Wait until everyone has fixed their stances. Coaches should be walking around helping players fix their stance, while one coach is at the front visually demonstrating everything while going through the check list. If at any point they are not doing it properly a coach can go around and help correct them. A very common mistake for hitting at this age is that the kids have trouble lining their feet up straight</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ “Feet shoulder width apart” “CHECK”</li> <li>✓ “Feet in a straight line” “CHECK”</li> <li>✓ “Hands together on the bat” “CHECK”</li> <li>✓ “Hands are up by our ear” “CHECK”</li> <li>✓ “Knees bent” “CHECK”</li> <li>✓ “Eyes and head on the pitching/ball” “CHECK”</li> </ul> <p>Okay we are ready for take off!!</p>
5 min	<b>WATER BREAK</b>
30 min	<p>Divide the team into 2 groups while one coach sets up</p> <p>For this practice our focus in the STANCE not so much the swing, that will be for the next practice. It is too much to tackle more than one big thing at a time. Focus on stance today and the swing the next practice. Always try to layer on skills. If by the end of the practice all players have a comfortable and proper stance that they can do on their own without being asked or constantly reminded to fix certain parts of it, then it was a very successful practice. Keep reminding them in between every pitch during batting practice to RESET their stance. Many kids after they hit start from where they just finished their last swing, instead of re-setting. The key is that they don’t need reminders, or minimal reminders for their stance by the end of the practice.</p> <p><b>15 minutes per station and then switch</b></p> <p>STATION 1 / GROUP  (OUTFIELD): Two kids are hitting  of wiffle balls into the field. The coach is in the middle and tossing one to the first player, then turns and tosses the second to the other player giving both kids time to RESET their stance in between. Those that are not hitting are fielding the balls (wiffle balls so they will not get hurt). Each kid has about 6-8 hits and then switch. Should have time to go through each player twice.</p>

	<p>STATION 2 / GROUP 2 Tee work (INFIELD):  Two kids are hitting at the same time, spread out around the home plate area so that they do not hit each other. The rest of the players are fielding. You can use tballs/baseballs or wiffle balls for this. Player one swings and hits the ball, after it is caught or fielded, player 2 swings. Then back to player one, etc. Each player has 6 swings in total. Having 2 hit at a time (alternating) allows it move quicker, and allows each player a few seconds to reset their stance!</p>
<p>15-25 min</p>	<p><b>BATTING PRACTICE GAME WITH WHOLE TEAM (FOCUS IS ON THROWING, FIELDING, AND BATTING STANCE. This means to enforce everything that you have been teaching them thus far, and not so much on things that have not yet been covered, ie: catching, the swing part, etc.</b></p> <p>Divide the team into 2 teams, one starts in the field in set positions, one is up to bat. Every player on the hitting team gets one at bat (you will have to make a batting order). The coach will side toss the baseball from home plate. The player will hit it and run like he/she would in a game (ie: if it is a double they will run home to first  if there is an error they will take the next base, etc). The defensive team is playing as they would in a game. Coaches are helping with where to throw the ball. If you are out, you join your team back in the dugout, if you are safe you stay on the base you made it to safely while the next person on the team hits, and so on (just like a real game)</p> <p>Keep track of how many runs score. After everyone on the first team gets an at bat, they now play the field and the other team hits. Play as many innings as the time allows for. The team with the most runs at the end wins!</p>




**Thornhill Baseball Club  
Practice Plan #4**

Division	Skills	Duration
Sr. Rookie	Catching regular balls, catching fly balls, and rounding first base	75-90 minutes

Objectives	Equipment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ How to properly catch a baseball</li> <li>✓ How to round first base when hitting a single</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Baseballs</li> <li>✓ Tennis balls (or softer balls)</li> <li>✓ Bases</li> <li>✓ Pylons</li> <li>✓ Minimum 2 coaches</li> </ul>

Time	Activity / Drill
10 min	<b>Warm Up – see Lesson 1 (make sure warm ups before practices and games are consistent so that they players have a set routine)</b>
5 min	<b>WATER BREAK</b>
3 min	<p><b>RECAP OF LAST PRACTICE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ask the team to pretend they are holding a bat, and get into their “batting stance” trying to remember all the parts of the checklist</li> <li>▪ Ask the team to show you their “fielding position” ask them if they remember the two key things (LOW TO THE SNOW, aka staying low, and ALLIGATOR CHOMP, aka using two hands when fielding)</li> </ul> <p><b>TODAYS PRACTICE</b>            Explain the purpose of today’s practice to the team: “Today we are going to be catching balls, starting with no gloves to teach you how important it is to use two hands, to not be scared of the ball .”</p> <p><i>To coaches: catching with no glove improves hand eye coordinate, gross and fine motor skills as well many kids have trouble squeezing their glove and often move away from the ball, without a glove they are forced to catch it close to their body as they do not have the ability to rely on sticking out their glove and maybe catching it</i></p>
5 min	<p>Partner the kids up and spread them apart, half start on the foul line in the outfield and the other half about 10 feet across</p> <p>Players will just underhand toss the ball back and forth to each other emphasizing a few key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Catching using TWO hands</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Catching in the middle of your body, if the ball is not right at you, move your feet to make sure you are catching it in the centre of your body / near your chest</li> </ul>
10 min	<p>Break the players up into a group of 4 and set up three pylons for each group in a triangle, each about 15 feet apart. Transition tip, one coach sets up while the others explain and demonstrate</p> <p>The player who starts with the ball will underhand it to the player on their right hand side who will catch the ball and throw it to the player to their right and so on (ball is going counter-clockwise). After the person throws the ball to their target, they must run as fast as they can to the pylon where they just threw it to practice following their throws which is also really important in baseball. The player that starts with the ball will have the fourth player behind them so that when they leave to run to the other pylon the third player has a target to throw to. This is a drill to get the kids moving around and also working on catching (again with no gloves)</p>
5 min	<b>WATER BREAK</b>
10 min	<p>Have the players get their gloves now and break them off into as many groups as there are coaches. The players will line up in front of their coach, and first person in line will catch a ball and throw back to their coach and then go to the back of the line. Encourage them to now throw over hand, make sure they are not too far away. To take their time on their throws, line up their shoulders with their target, glove elbow to target, stepping to target, etc.</p> <p><b>KEYS TO EXPLAIN AND DEMONSTRATE TO THE PLAYERS WITH THEIR GLOVES BEFORE YOU START...</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ When catching we want to see players trying to catch the ball in the centre of their body, and using their other hand to keep the ball in.</li> <li>✓ Always be emphasizing two hands!</li> <li>✓ Finger tips / hands up. We do not want to see kids catching with their fingers down, they will get hurt! Above the waist finger tips up, below the waist, finger tips down</li> <li>✓ Always show a target / give a target to the person throwing to them. Both hands should be up in front of your body</li> </ul>
2 min	<b>QUICK WATER BREAK</b>
10 min	<p><b>Fly Ball Drop Steps</b> </p> <p>Fly balls happen at all positions, not just outfield, so it is important that all players learning how to “properly” catch and track fly balls. This starts with the first movement, also called the “drop step”</p> <p>Very simply put, if the ball is hit to the right side of the player, their <i>right</i> foot will drop back first, if the ball is hit to the left side of the player, their <i>left</i> foot will drop back first. This is very important that they learn the first major movement to catch a fly ball, as this will allow them to get to the ball the quickest and give them the easiest route and greatest chance to catch the ball</p>

	<p>If the ball is hit directly over their head, they can drop back with any foot. The key with drop steps is to drop the correct foot back, and open Up to allow for diagonal / side step movement to the baseball. <b>PLAYERS SHOULD NEVER RUN BACKWARDS OR BACKPEDDLE TO THE BALL</b></p> <p>Explain and demonstrate drop steps, versus backsteps and why we do the former over the latter: get to the ball quicker, not get our feet crossed up, be balanced, allow us to be able to sprint to a ball</p> <p>Now line the players up and have them work on drop steps, they should only be a few steps in front of the coach. The coach will point which way he/she is going to underhand the ball, which is the foot that the player will have to use to drop back first. The idea is to start by throwing them easy balls that are just one step back, and then make it a little bit harder</p> <p>Keys for catching fly balls</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Get to the space where the ball is going to start to land as fast as you can, do not try to time it. Get there and wait</li> <li>✓ Drop back with the correct foot</li> <li>✓ It is easier to do a few steps back and then come in, rather than do a few steps in and then realize the ball is over their head and have to go back to the baseball. It will almost always be an extra base. So teach players that their first movement should always be back</li> <li>✓ Catch over head with two hands</li> </ul>
5-10 min	<p>Now throw them balls that are a little harder to get to, where they may have to take 5+ steps back to it. Encourage them to sprint to the spot and wait for it, and catch it with 2 hands over their head</p> <p>Can end with a little competition, whoever makes the nicest catch will be announced at the end of the practice.</p>
10 min	<p>Cool Down / Teach rounding first base</p> <p>Put pylons down from home plate to first base to teach players the “banana turn” / how to properly round first base on a sure single that they are not trying to beat out, this is a for sure base hit. Pylons for the turn will help guide the players as they will have to run along the path</p> <p>Keys for rounding first base</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Touching the inside corner of the base (not the middle of it)</li> <li>✓ Not slowing down (just like running straight through first base)</li> <li>✓ Banana turn or running to the base where we turn about half way up the base line so that when we touch first base we are on proper route to second base and not running into the outfield</li> <li>✓ Take a few hard steps to second base and come back to first base</li> <li>✓ Explain, demonstrate and then have the players practice one at a time rounding first base from home plate as if they just got a hit!</li> </ul>



Thornhill Baseball Club  
Practice Plan #5



Division	Skills	Duration
Sr. Rookie	Hitting and base running	75-90 minutes

Objectives	Equipment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Teach the proper way to swing</li> <li>✓ Teach how to run from home plate to second base</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Baseballs</li> <li>✓ Wiffle balls</li> <li>✓ Batting Tees</li> <li>✓ Helmets</li> <li>✓ Bases</li> <li>✓ pylons</li> <li>✓ Minimum 2 coaches</li> </ul>

Time	Activity / Drill
10 min	<b>Warm Up – see Lesson 1 (make sure warm ups before practices and games are consistent so that they players have a set routine)</b>
5 min	<b>WATER BREAK</b>
3 min	<p>RECAP OF LAST PRACTICE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ask the team to show you their batting stance. Ask some players for specific parts of the stance that they remember</li> </ul> <p>TODAYS PRACTICE</p> <p>“Today we will be learning the proper swing!” Last hitting practice we worked on our stance and now we are adding in the swing part</p>
10 min	<p>Everyone in a circle watching the coaches</p> <p>Coaches will demonstrate how to go from our stance to our swing. A few terms to use or key points to emphasize.</p> <p><i>See hitting checklist attached for more details</i></p> <p>SWING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <b>Shoulder to shoulder</b> - (start with bat above the back shoulder, finish with bat over the front shoulder. Many kids stop their swings and do not swing through the baseball!)</li> <li>✓ <b>Squishing the bug</b> – Back foot should turn so that the heel is up and toes have moved so that they are facing the front foot. Really important to always encourage squishing the bug. Turning the back foot allows the</li> </ul>

	<p>hips to rotate, all of our power comes from our hips and legs not our arms!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <b>Swing quickly, as fast as you can</b> – encourage the kids to move their hands quickly through the zone from  houlder to shoulder.</li> <li>✓ <b>Step to the pitcher</b> – Step straight  pitcher, not away from the pitcher. Feet should be in a straight line just like our stance!</li> <li>✓ <b>Order: Step, swing and squish the bug, finish</b></li> </ul>
2 min	<b>WATER BREAK (and set up for next drill)</b>
30 min	<p>Divide the team into 2 groups while one coach sets up</p> <p>Remind them of their stance they learned and worked on in the previous hitting practice, and watch their swing to correct where needed using the checklist as your guide for what to look for.</p> <p><i>Remember ALL kids are different, do not try to get them to have the “same” stance and swing, they will all be slightly different, and that is okay. What works for one may not work for the other. This is not meant to be a cookie cutter, one size fits all instruction, it is merely a guideline to follow.</i></p> <p><b>12 minutes per station and then switch (30 min including clean up and set up for next drill)</b></p> <p><b>STATION 1 / GROUP 1 (OUTFIELD):</b> Two kids are hitting sot toss of wiffle balls into the field. The coach is in the middle and tossing one to the first player, then turns and tosses the second to the other player giving both kids time to RESET their stance in between. Those that are not hitting are fielding the balls (wiffle balls so they will not get hurt). Each kid has about 5-6 hits. Each player should get at least two times up to bat, so there should be a few rounds.</p> <p><b>STATION 2 / GROUP 2 Tee work (INFIELD):</b> Two kids are hitting at the same time, spread out around the home plate area so that they do not hit each other. The rest of the players are fielding. You can use tballs/baseballs or wiffle balls for this. Player one swings and hits the ball, after it is caught or fielded, when the defense is ready, they swing again. Each player has 5-6 swings in total. The waiting a few seconds in between each swing for safety for the defense also allows each player a few seconds to reset their stance!</p>
20 min	<p><b>BASERUNNING</b></p> <p>Teach how to run from home to second on a double! You want to get to second base as quickly as you can and on the shortest possible route, so we have to make a good turn before first base. See if the kids remember what we call that turn (Banana turn). Set up pylons for the path that you want the players to run from home to first and then have them run and practice it twice</p>

### BASE RUNNING RELAY RACE

Put one at second base and one at home plate and do a base running relay race! The first person in line goes and runs all 4 of the bases, when they get back to their starting point (either home plate or second base), the next person in line goes. The team to finish first wins. The team at home plate runs from home to first to second to third and back home. The team at second base runs from second base to third base, to home plate, to first base and back to second base. Encourage them to take proper routes by doing banana turns at each base! This will save them time!







**Thornhill Baseball Club  
Practice Plan #6**

Division	Skills	Duration
Sr. Rookie	Fielding and base running	90 minutes

Objectives	Equipment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ To reinforce and build on previous fielding skills already learned</li> <li>✓ Work on/remind how to run from home plate to second base</li> <li>✓ Recap of fly balls</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Baseballs</li> <li>✓ Bases</li> <li>✓ Pylons</li> <li>✓ Minimum 2 coaches</li> <li>✓ Tennis balls or wiffle balls</li> </ul>

Time	Activity / Drill
10 min	<b>Warm Up – see Lesson 1 (make sure warm ups before practices and games are consistent so that they players have a set routine)</b>
5 min	<b>WATER BREAK</b>
5 min	<p><b>RECAP OF FIELDING</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ask the team to show you their game face! Ask them to show you their fielding position: (glove down, knees bent, glove in the middle of body, throwing hand ready for alligator chomp)</li> </ul> <p><b>TODAYS PRACTICE</b></p> <p>“Today we will be working on fielding balls that are not right at us, that we have to move for.”</p> <p>Explain that most of the time in baseball the ball will not be hit or thrown right to them, and so we have to move our feet! We always want to catch and field in the middle of our body, so if it is not at us, we have to shuffle or sprint to the ball so that we can field or catch it in the centre of our bodies. Demonstrate what it looks like to shuffle over and field a ball that is a few steps away, and one that you will have to run to. Important to emphasize that no matter how far we have to move for the ball we <b>MUST</b> get into our proper fielding position before we field.</p>
10 min	<p>Divide the players into as many groups as there are coaches/volunteers</p> <p>Set out two pylons about 10-15 feet apart. Each player goes  at a time, the coach is about 5 feet in front. The coach or volunteer will roll a ball to one pylon where the player will have to shuffle to get there and field in the middle of their body (proper fielding position) they will stay low and underhand it back to the coach and then shuffle to the other pylon to field another ball moving the other way. Then go to the back of the line. Each player gets to field 2 baseballs, one at each pylon</p>

10 min	<p>Now set up a drill and divide the team into 2 groups - one side at short stop and one at second base</p> <p>Set two cones, one cone where the players will start and be in ready position, the second cone should be several feet away to emphasize a ball hit far away from them that they have to sprint to (not shuffle to). They will start at the starting pylon and when they coach says go, they will sprint to the second pylon as quickly as they can, and the coach will roll a ground ball in that direction. The player will have to stop their feet and get into a good fielding position to field the ground ball and throw it back to the coach.</p>
5 min	<b>WATER BREAK and set up for next drill</b>
15 min	<p><b>Ground ball game in teams</b></p> <p>Break the team up into two teams and give them a fielding order. They should line up in that order, both team are lined up at Short Stop. A coach will roll a ball to the first player on the first team, who must shuffle, field and throw it to first base (coach is at first base). If the player makes the play the team gets a point. Then the next team comes up, the first player will make the play and then go to the back of the line. The coach alternates rolling from one team to the next. The first team to get to 10 points first wins. (If 10 is too easy or too hard then change the number accordingly)</p>
2 min	<b>WATER BREAK</b>
10 min	<p><b>FLY BALL RECAP – refer to practice #4 for how to catch a fly ball and reiterate the important points (Drop steps, not backpeddling, two hands, catching over the head, etc)</b></p> <p>Divide the team into 2 groups, or as many groups as there are coaches. This is a fun way to get kids at this age used to getting UNDER the baseball for fly balls – because they have the cage on their helmet. They MUST wear their helmets for this drill</p> <p>Many s tend to want to catch the ball away from their body and not over their head for fly balls. This drill teaches them how to properly get under the fly ball. The group will line up in a single file line. One player at a time, the coach will throw a fly ball in the air with a wiffle ball or tennis ball, not a baseball, (not too high, just high enough for the player to have time to move to it and get under it). Make sure the throw is not right at them, it should be behind them a few steps so that they also can practice reading it and moving to it. The objective of this drill is NOT for them to catch it, but rather let the ball hit their cage on their helmet. Players who can successfully do this are getting UNDER the baseball as required.</p> <p>After several rounds of that, you can throw fly balls the same way and actually have the players catch it and focus on catching it right above their head. Continue to use the wiffle balls or tennis balls for ease of mind.</p>

10 min	<p><b>BASE RUNNING</b></p> <p>Have everyone line up at home plate. They have to run from home to first, and then go to the back of the line. Go through twice. Emphasize running hard through the base and pretending like there is a second base a few feet after the first one so that they do not slow down</p> <p>Then have everyone round first base (we did this a few practices ago with pylons to indicate the route, see if they can do it without the pylons). From home plate one at a time they will run to first and round the base</p> <p>Then have everyone run home to second base, and once again see if they can do it without the pylons down for the route.</p> <p>You can make it fun by timing the players and see who gets the fastest time!</p>
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**Thornhill Baseball Club  
Practice Plan #7**

Division	Skills	Duration
Senior Rookie	Catching, throwing and fielding, and hitting	90 minutes

Objectives	Equipment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ To reinforce and build on previous fielding, catching and throwing skills already learned</li> <li>✓ To work on different scenarios to improve baseball IQ and understanding and practice in-game situations</li> <li>✓ To practice hitting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Baseballs</li> <li>✓ Bases</li> <li>✓ Minimum 2 coaches</li> <li>✓ Bats</li> <li>✓ Helmets</li> <li>✓ bases</li> </ul>

Time	Activity / Drill
10 min	<b>Warm Up – see Lesson 1 (make sure warm ups before practices and games are consistent so that they players have a set routine)</b>
2 min	<b>WATER BREAK</b>
5 min	<p>RECAP OF THROWING AND CATCHING. Explain and demonstrate, then ask the players to demonstrate as a group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Target</li> <li>✓ Catch with two hands, finger tips up</li> <li>✓ Turn our body when we go to throw so that our front shoulder / glove shoulder is pointed to our target and our throwing shoulder, and stepping toward our target.</li> <li>✓ Thumbs to the thigh, fingers to the sky, half arm circle, L shape and hold</li> </ul>
10 min	Partner up the players to throw to each other back and forth. Encourage them to make good throws by making sure they are close enough together to be successful. Match the players up so that hard throwers are not throwing with someone who is scared of the bal, etc. One line starts on the foul line in the outfield, and the other line is across from them about 15 feet away. Move the players further apart accordingly. Make sure they are all spread out before they start throwing. As they back up remind them they need to take a step to the target, and then as they get even further back they should be taking their shuffle step
15 min	<p>THROWING RELAY RACE</p> <p>Put the players into 4 teams and put pylons out from the outfield foul line to the middle of the field about 20 feet apart. You should put as many pylons as there</p>

	<p>are players (3 pylons x 4 teams/groups is for a team of 12). This plan will have 3 pylons/players per team, but you can adapt them to your team as needed</p> <p>The person at the first pylon at the foul line starts with the ball, and when the coach says GO, the player throws it to the second person, who then throws it to the third person at the end (and then that person throws to the fourth person if there is one). Then the ball goes back down the line to the starting player, each player throwing to the one in front of them. When the first person who started with the ball gets it back, he/she drops it and everyone runs/rotates and starts again (Player 1 runs to the second pylon, player 2 runs to the third pylon, player 3 runs all the way to the first pylon, picks up the ball and starts again). The relay race ends when everyone ends back at the position they started in and sits down. The team that finishes first wins. If there is an over throw/wild throw, the person must get the ball and go back to their pylon before they throw it</p> <p>Repeat a few times. Change teams around if you wish</p>
5 min	<b>WATER BREAK AND SET UP FOR NEXT DRILL</b>
30 min	<p><b>SCENARIOS</b></p> <p>Put players into positions and roll / hit balls (depending on the skill level of your team), to different positions calling out plays and scenarios. Have plays to first base, second base, third base, home plate</p> <p>Switch the players around to play different positions, and repeat</p> <p>It is very important when doing scenarios that one coach is hitting or rolling, and the other coaches/volunteers are walking around the fielding helping the players. It is also very important to stop the play as soon as there is a mistake (by way of loud voice, whistle or horn), to explain to the team what they did wrong and how to correct it, and then give them the same scenario again in hopes they will remember and be able to correct it.</p>
20 min	<p><b>BATTING PRACTICE GAME WITH WHOLE TEAM</b></p> <p>Divide the team into 2 teams, one starts in the field, one is up to bat. Every player gets one at bat. The coach will side toss the baseball from home plate. The player will hit it and run like he/she would in a game (ie: if it is a double they will run home to first, if there is an error they will take the next base, etc). Keep track of how many runs score. After everyone on the first team gets an at bat, they now play the field and the other team hits. The team with the most runs at the end wins!</p> <p>Remind the players with their stances and help correct their swings where necessary</p>



**Thornhill Baseball Club  
Practice Plan #8**

Division	Skills	Duration
Senior Rookie	Fielding, Catching, Throwing, Baseball IQ/Understanding	85-90 minutes

Objectives	Equipment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ To reinforce and build on previous fielding, catching and throwing skills already learned (game scenarios)</li> <li>✓ To work on different scenarios to improve baseball IQ and understanding and practice in-game situations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Baseballs</li> <li>✓ Bases</li> <li>✓ Minimum 2 coaches</li> </ul>

Time	Activity / Drill
10 min	<b>Warm Up – see Lesson 1 (make sure warm ups before practices and games are consistent so that they players have a set routine)</b>
2 min	<b>WATER BREAK</b>
2 min	<b>RECAP OF THROWING AND CATCHING</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Target</li> <li>✓ Catch with two hands, finger tips up</li> <li>✓ Turn our body when we go to throw so that our front shoulder / glove shoulder is pointed to our target and our throwing shoulder, and stepping toward our target.</li> <li>✓ Thumbs to the thigh, fingers to the sky, half arm circle, L shape and hold</li> </ul>
10 min	Partner up the players to throw to each other back and forth. Encourage them to make good throws by making sure they are close enough together to be successful. Match the players up so that hard throwers are not throwing with someone who is scared of the bal, etc. One line starts on the foul line in the outfield, and the other line is across from them about 15 feet away. Move the players further apart accordingly. Make sure they are all spread out before they start throwing. As they back up remind them they need to take a step to the target, and then as they get even further back they should be taking their shuffle step

5 min	<p><b>RECAP OF FIELDING</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Fielding position, alligator chomp (two hand), low to the snow (low to the ground)</li> </ul> <p>Today we are going to practice game situations and plays to improve our understanding of baseball</p>
10 min	<p>Explain the ABC's of Baseball – this is crucial for the “game situation” drills as well to encourage them from this point on during games to always be thinking about this and moving</p> <p>ABCs of baseball - Players should be moving somewhere on EVERY pitch / hit, especially when there are runners on base. Everyone must be moving somewhere on every hit!</p> <p>ABCs of baseball:</p> <p><b>A - ATTACK</b> the baseball. If the ball is hit to you, go get it!!</p> <p>B and C are if the ball is NOT hit to you. if it is not hit to you:</p> <p><b>B-</b> Go to your <b>BASE</b> (ie: first base, second base/SS and third base). If the ball is not hit to you, and you have a base, go to your base!</p> <p><b>C- COVER.</b> If the ball is not hit to you, and you do not have a base to go, cover behind a player (centre field cover second base, left field cover third base, right field cover first base, shortstop cover third base or second base depending on where the ball is going, etc.</p> <p><b>EVERYONE SHOULD BE MOVING SOMEWHERE ON EVERY HIT!</b></p> <p>Go over scenarios as a group – Ie: If the ball is hit to Right Field with no one on base where should everyone be going (correct answer – CF going to back up RF. LF coming behind second base as the Rfer will be throwing to the cut off so they will be backing up. Each player moving to a base. Pitcher backing up first base, etc). Come up with various similar situations and as the players as a group to tell you where they think everyone should be moving to.</p>
20 min	<p>After describing the ABCs of baseball and explaining that everyone has somewhere to go or be on every hit, put the kids into positions and practice scenarios</p>

	<p>Every time a coach hits or rolls a ball and calls out a play, everyone, at every position should be moving someone. For the younger kids it helps for coaches and volunteers to be spread out over the field and help the players move depending on where it is hit and where they need to go. Stop the plays frequently and make sure everyone has moved from the initial position / ready position</p> <p>Make sure before you hit the balls out that everyone is in “ready position” or has their “Game face on!”</p> <p>You can also get players to run the bases so that the fielders can physically see the plays unfolding with runners</p>
5 min	WATER BREAK
20 min	<p>GROUND BALL GAME IN TEAMS</p> <p>Break the team up into two teams and give them a fielding order. They should line up in that order, both team are lined up at Short Stop. A coach will roll a ball to the first player on the first team, who must shuffle, field and throw it to first base (coach is at first base). If the player makes the play the team gets a point. Then the next team comes up, the first player will make the play and then go to the back of the line. The coach alternates rolling from one team to the next. The first team to get to 10 points first wins. (If 10 is too easy or too hard then change the number accordingly)</p>
5 min	<p>BASE RUNNING RELAY RACE</p> <p>Divide the team into 2 teams, put one at second base and one at home plate and do a base running relay race! The first person in line goes and runs all 4 of the bases, when they get back to their starting point (either home plate or second base), the next person in line goes. The team to finish first wins. The team at home plate runs from home to first to second to third and back home. The team at second base runs from second base to third base, to home plate, to first base and back to second base</p> <p>Encourage them to take proper routes by doing banana turns at each base! This will save them time!</p>