

Fun Tee Ball Drills

Fun Drills For Tee Ball Practice

Tee Ball is a great and exciting way to introduce young athletes to team sports. The practices should be structured in a way that is fun for the kids that are on the team.

Teaching Tee Ball Batting Techniques

This technique will teach young players to step up to the box and think about what they are going to do. It also helps them to learn how to judge the correct distance away from the tee and too swing level.

Put the ball on the Tee, place the height of the ball level with the player's belly button or just slightly below. At This point the batter should be in a batters stance with hands at ear level and the back elbow up. Have the player extend their arms fully without making ball contact. Use a code word with the kids like "line up", "practice swing", "measure up" or "batters position". Once the player has done this tell them to bring the bat back, keep your eye on the ball and swing away.

Teaching Proper Swing

Tee ball players that learn the proper swinging motion will become better hitters. Having the mechanics of a proper swing is important for building a foundation for hitting.

Keeping tee ball practice alive and fun for the players is sometimes a challenge. Try this drill will get there imagination involved. It is called the Invisible Bat Drill. Have the players asume the batters stance without a bat. Tell them to swing as though they were hitting a real ball. You can joke and tease them by asking who hit a homerun.

Teaching Tee Ball Players to Watch The Ball as They Swing

Place the ball on the tee, place a mark on the ball. Tell the batter to swing level and watch the mark as they swing and to try and watch the bat hit the ball.

Teaching young Tee Ballplayers to Stop Grounders

The most important aspect when teaching young players about fielding and catching is having them use both hands. A simple drill that will enforce this skill is to have the players practice ground balls without using a baseball glove. Have the players stand at their positions and roll them the ball. This almost forces them to use both hands.

Show Me the Ball

Teaching how to grip and hold the ball is the first step to learning how to throw.

Have each team member get a ball and a glove. Teach them the proper grip by having the thumb on the underside of the ball and the two top fingers slightly spread apart on the top of the ball. They should have the pinky and ring finger on the side of the ball.

Start this drill off by saying to the players "show me the ball." When the players here show me the ball they should grip the ball as they were taught, and get into the proper stance for throwing. They should have legs shoulder width apart with one foot in front of the other. The players should have the throwing arm up raised to shoulder height with the elbow at 90 degree.

At this point the coaches can look at the mechanics of the stance and make adjustments.



Tee Ball Coaching Tips

Top Ten Things to Remember When Coaching Tee Ball

1. All the Players and Coaches Should Have FUN!
2. Be Organized
3. Have a Plan
4. Be Flexible Enough to Change the Plan If It's Not Working
5. Enlist the Help of Other Parents
6. Remember the "Compliment Sandwich"
7. Keep The Players and The Action Moving
8. Break Down Concepts/Drills into SMALL Manageable Portions
9. Keep Your Sense of Humor
10. Keep Your Sanity - It's Only a Game!
11. ****Bonus Item - Order the Coaching Tee Ball and Tee Ball Drills & Sample Practices Books to Make Your Life Easier!!**



Choosing the Right Bat

First things first. A great bat will not turn a poor hitter into a great hitter. If the player's hitting mechanics are all wrong, no bat will help.

While a good bat will not make a player better, a poor bat (or a bat that is not suitable for the player) will be another roadblock to a player's hitting success.

When choosing a bat, a number of factors must be taken into account. These are the size/strength of the player, the level of skill, the type of bat (material), the bat weight, bat length, barrel size, etc. Today you will find bats designed specifically for Tee Ball, Junior, Little League, Senior League, High School, and College.

According to CoachTeeBall.com, for young players, especially T-Ball players, we advise that the lighter the bat the better. Player's need to be able to generate enough bat speed to effectively hit the ball. When facing a fastball pitcher, professional players are known to go to a lighter bat to maintain bat speed and get in front of the pitch. So it's that much more important that a young, less experienced player have a light enough bat to swing with enough bat speed to hit the ball.

As a rule of thumb, aluminum bats are lighter than wooden. Additionally, aluminum bats can provide more "pop" of the baseball off the bat, and are much more durable (therefore cost effective) than wooden bats. Keep in mind that bats today are becoming increasingly high tech and expensive - with youth bats reaching \$200+ price levels. Remember the most expensive bat is not necessarily the best bat; especially with young players. You don't have to spend a lot of money for a good bat.

When shopping for a bat, have your child hold the bat straight and to their side out (parallel to the ground) with their "hitting" hand (right hand for right-handed hitters, left of left-handed hitters). If the player cannot hold the bat straight out for 20 seconds or so without the arm starting to shake and the bat dropping, it's too heavy.

Unfortunately your player will not get a good feel for the bat by simply holding it and taking a few practice swings. The best way to get the feel for a bat is to swing at live pitches. As your players get older and the importance of the bat grows, take them to the batting cages and have them hit with a wide range of batting cage bats that are available. You should be able to see right away which bat is too small, too big, or too heavy.

Worth Sports conducted a study in which they determined the best bat weights for hitters, based on their height.

The table below summarizes their findings.

Bat Weight Guidelines:

A. High School & College Baseball		B. Youth League Baseball (11-12 yrs)		C. Youth League Baseball (8-10 yr. olds)	
Player Height (in.)	Best Bat Wt (oz.)	Player Weight (lbs.)	Best Bat Wt (oz.)	Player Height (in.)	Best Bat Wt (oz.)
66	27	70	18	48	16
68	27.5	80	19	50	16.5
70	28	90	19.5	52	17
72	29	100	20	54	17.5
74	30	110	20.5	56	18
76	30.5	120	21	58	18.5
Formula: Height/3 + 5		130	21.5	60	19
		140	22	Formula: Height/4 + 4	
		150	23		
		Formula: Weight/18 + 14			



Choosing the Right Glove

In Tee Ball, the most important piece of equipment is the glove. A glove can have a big effect on a player's performance. In baseball glove selection, the number of choices is staggering! Not only are there gloves for specific positions (Catchers glove, 1st Baseman's glove, Infielder's, and Outfielder's glove), gloves come in all types of qualities, sizes and colors.

According to CoachTeeBall.com, the key to a glove is control. The Tee Ball player should be able to move the glove quickly to the ball, which requires a glove that's not too big and heavy for him or her. And even more importantly, the player must also be able to close the glove with his hand, so that the ball does not fall out. This requires a glove that is soft and "broken in" enough so that the player can close the glove and 'squeeze' the ball.

It is recommended that a glove be in proportion to the player's size. There are many "professional" gloves in the market today that are more suitable for catching bowling balls than baseballs. You want to avoid having a young Tee Ball player lugging around huge 13-inch outfielder's gloves. A bigger glove is not a bigger target and will not make it easier for a Tee Ball player to catch. Actually a glove that is too big will have an adverse effect on performance. The player will have no glove control at all.

Tee Ball glove sizes begin around the 9-inch range, the measurement is usually listed on the glove itself. The new, pre-oiled gloves are usually excellent for Tee Ballers, as they are soft and require little or no break-in. For a very small child, or one with less strength than his peers, there are vinyl, or combination vinyl-and-leather models. These are very inexpensive and, while they will not last as long as higher quality gloves, they bend easily and allow the player to catch the ball from day one. There are also full leather gloves in the under-11 inch size, which cost more, last longer, and might require some break-in. Some new models even have a notch designed into the heel of the glove to allow easy and immediate flexing of the pocket.

As much as you want to buy the best for your kid, avoid the expensive, stiff gloves for players under 10 or so. They'd have to play eight hours a day, seven days a week, for six months before it gets broken in. And in that time, they'd make so many errors that they'd be shopping for soccer cleats by then!

As the player gets older, they will naturally progress into larger gloves. Most players, regardless of position will find gloves ranging from 11-12 inches appropriate. High School players that play the outfield may find a larger glove (12-12 1/2 inches) more appropriate.



Breaking-in The Glove

There are as many different methods to breaking-in a glove. Some ideas that we at CoachTeeBall.com have heard of are quite outlandish. However, the easiest and most effect method we have come across is from Rawlings.

Rawlings' "master glove designer" recommends:

1. Press a small amount of shaving cream with lanoline on a clean, dry cloth and carefully work the cream around the outer shell, palm, and back. A light coating is all that is necessary. This will lubricate the leather fibers.
2. Allow the cream to dry thoroughly for 12 to 24 hours.
3. Wipe off the glove and play catch for 10-15 minutes, or 50 to 70 throws. This stretches and conforms the glove to your hand and speeds the break-in process
4. Position a ball in the pocket and tie the glove closed for a few days with a string or rubber band around the outer perimeter. An option is to use the new Rawlings "Mit Kit", which is designed to quickly form the 'ideal' pocket. It includes a double-ended pocket form with a large sphere on one end and a smaller sphere on the other, to form the pocket and the web area simultaneously, and a wide elastic 'figure 8' to hold the glove firmly around the form.
5. As the glove starts to break in, pour a small amount of 'Glovolium' on a clean, dry cloth, and carefully work the oil around the outer shell, palm, and back. A light coating is all that's needed.
6. Allow the glove to dry thoroughly for 24 hours so the oil has time to penetrate and condition the leather.
7. Store the glove in a cool, dry place with a ball in the pocket, or a Mit Kit when not in use.
8. Laces will stretch with use. Keep laces taut but do not overtighten. Check for replacement if necessary after each season.
9. Do not over oil your glove! Twice a season is sufficient!