



Okay, I'm a Baseball Coach. Now What?

The things they don't teach you at Baseball Quebec

Baseball Development Committee
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- Gord grew up in Dollard and played in Dollard Baseball throughout the 1970's and early 1980's back when Dollard Baseball was part of Little League Baseball.
- He played four years of NCAA Division II baseball at Lynn University in Boca Raton, FL and graduated in 1988.
 - Pitcher, 2nd base and outfield.
- Played Junior Elite for the Lasalle Cardinals from 1984-1986.
 - Won Montreal Junior Championship in 1984.
- Played Junior AA for the North Shore Dodgers in 1987.
 - Won League and Play-off championships.
- Played Senior for the Dollard Dodgers 1989-1997
 - 6 championships in 9 seasons.
- Dollard Baseball Coach of the Year for 2014.
- Has been coaching in Dollard for 6 years and is currently the Pitching Coach with the Lac St. Louis Tigers Pee wee AA team.

Pat Haney – Director of Coach Development

- Pat has been a Minor baseball coach in the West Island for 34 years.
- Accredited coaching levels from Baseball Canada.
- Head Coach 1990 Lac St Louis Mosquito AA all-star team.
 - Won Silver at Kenko indoor Baseball Tournament (Hauppauge, NY)
- Head Coach 1991 Lac St Louis Mosquito AA all-star team .
 - Won silver at the Provincial Championship.
- Assistant Coach 2008 Lac St Louis Pee Wee AA all-star team.
 - Won Bronze at the Provincial Championship.
- Has been a coach of Pee Wee AA & Mosquito AA teams for, Dollard Baseball, Lac St Louis Cardinals, Lac St Louis Tigers, and Lakeshore Baseball.

Dan Nathan – Director of Player Development

- Grew up in Town of Mount Royal playing "AA" ball in T.M.R./St-Laurent in the 80's and 90's
- Played Midget "AAA" for the 1995 Lac St. Louis Cardinals and was the Shortstop for Team Quebec which won gold at the 1995 National Midget Championships that same year.
- Played Junior "AA" for the Lakeshore Braves from 1996-2001
- Played for the Concordia Stingers from 1999-2003
- Head Coach of the Bantam "AA" Lakeshore/3 Lacs Yankees from 2003-2006
- Head Coach of Lac St. Louis Provincial team which won gold at the 2006 Provincial Championships and went on to represent Quebec and finish 4th at Nationals
- 3rd Base Coach for Concordia Stingers from 2009-2011. Won the CIBA National Championship in 2009.
- Runs the Rally Cap (Initiation) program for Dollard Baseball.

Okay, I'm a Baseball Coach. Now What?

The things they don't teach you at Baseball Quebec

Introduction

The training and certification coaches receive from Baseball Quebec and Baseball Canada is excellent for teaching skills and introducing drills you can incorporate into your practices, but it doesn't cover what most "rookie" coaches need to know to run a team on a day to day basis. This is not a criticism of what these organizations offer. On the contrary, all coaches can benefit greatly from the various courses offered and you are strongly encouraged to improve your baseball knowledge and coaching abilities by attending these courses on an annual basis.

This goal of this course is to provide you with training on the real issues you are going to need to deal with in order to organize and operate a baseball team at virtually every age and skill level and fills in some of the holes not covered in other courses, such as:

- Setting up a team budget, schedule and establishing expectations.
 - Fair play philosophy
 - Fair vs. equal
 - Stress skill development over winning
 - Improved skills = more wins
 - Winning is a process
- Implementing a pre-game routine
 - Coaches
 - Infield practice
 - Batting practice
 - Line-up card
 - Players
 - Warm-up
 - Pitchers
- In-Game management
 - Base coaching
 - Bench coach
 - Defensive switches
 - Catchers
 - Bullpen
 - Defensive positioning
 - Holding runners
 - Covering 2nd base
 - Covering first

- It's a long season
 - Dealing with slumps and failures
- Knowing the rules and dealing with umpires
 - Asking questions vs. arguing
 - Baseball myths

The course will also briefly cover some basic drills and fundamental skills that can be used throughout the season to help the players improve their skills. Unlike other sports, there are no defensive systems or offensive plays to speak of in baseball. It's all about teaching and improving the skills of the players so they can be executed in game situations as naturally as possible. This course will provide you with a few key tips to pass on to the players in practices and games, such as:

- Fundamentals of throwing
- Catching a fly ball
- Fielding a ground ball
- Batting
- Pitching
- Catcher

Getting Started

I believe it is important to establish expectations and open lines of communication with the players and parents right out of the gate. A good way to do this is to hold a parents and players meeting (if age appropriate) before the season starts. I like to put my coaching philosophy in writing and establish the team rules, playing time policies, level of commitment expected and hand it out to everyone. This helps avoid any misunderstandings before they happen and opens up a dialogue, if needed, with all parties.

In some cases where there are open tryouts for competitive or elite levels, it is a good idea to convey these philosophies and expectations when announcing the tryouts. This will help a player and his or her family decide whether super-duper elite AAA really is for them.

Team Philosophy, Rules & Expectations

I like to communicate the following in writing:

- Schedule
 - How many games & practices per week
 - When we usually play/practice
 - Where we usually play/practice
 - Who are the other teams and where are they located
 - Number of tournaments planned (to be approved in a budget)
- Philosophy towards winning
 - Players should be trying to win at all times, coaches should not be.
 - Equal play versus Fair Play – it's not the same thing.
 - Defensive positions
 - Batting order
- Player Commitment & Communications Protocol
 - Vacations
 - Other sports & activities
 - Required notice of absences
- Team Budget
 - Fund raising & sponsors
 - Special events or purchases
 - T-shirts
 - Jackets
 - Parties

Coaching Staff

A coaching staff needs to have clearly defined roles for each member. The ideal coaching and management staff consists of 5 people:

1. Head Coach
2. 3rd Base Coach
3. 1st Base Coach
4. Bench Coach
5. Team Manager

There are numerous coaching tasks that need to be undertaken at practices and games and it is best that they remain consistent over the course of the season to avoid confusion and conflicting messages. These tasks include:

- Hitting coach
- Pitching coach
- Infield coach
- Outfield coach

In minor hockey, once the game starts, coaches basically open and close the doors, keep the water flowing and yell at the kids to come off the ice. In baseball, there is constant in-game coaching and organizing. Therefore, assigning the various in-game responsibilities to the coaches is very important as well.

It's Opening Day!

You have completed spring training, the teams are set, you've had your parents meeting, the coaching staff is ready and it's now Opening Day!

Pre-game Routine

All teams need an organized pre-game routine that gets them ready to play and depending on the age group, the players should be able to get started on their own without constant coach direction and supervision. Generally, it's best to get to the field 45-60 minutes before game time, but we all know that some players get there 5 minutes before game time. Therefore, set a rigid schedule for the various elements of your warm up and stick to it. If a player is late, they miss that segment and they join in where possible. All players should do the Individual warm-up at the very least.

Here is a good pre-game routine for a HOME game at 6:15 PM. Home teams have the field until 6:00, the visitors have it until 6:10 and then 5 minutes for the umpires and field maintenance.

- 5:30-5:40 – Individual warm-up
 - Jog from foul pole to foul pole
 - Stretch legs, shoulders & arms
 - Quick sprints (2)
- 5:40-5:45 – Throwing
 - Start off close and stretch it out gradually
- 5:45-6:05 – Whiffle Ball Batting Practice & Fly Balls
 - 2 coaches with groups of 3-4 players
 - 2 sets of 10 pitches each
 - Other players retrieve the balls
 - Do the starting infielders & catcher first
 - Do the starting outfielders second
 - Fill in with the rest of the players
- 5:55-6:05 – Infield Practice
 - This is really a bad name. It's actually infield warm up not practice.
 - Trying to get a rhythm and feel for the ball and field
 - Starters only
 - Have plenty of baseballs
 - Do not chase them into the outfield. Get them later.
 - Have a coach or player backing up behind 1B.
 - All balls come in from 3rd base to the catcher – always.
 - Always go around the diamond from left to right
 - Throw Home, twice per player, but not two in a row.
 - Cover your base for a throw from the catcher on the 2nd one.
 - 1st base throws to 2nd base, 2nd base throws to 3rd base, and 3rd base throws home.

- Throw to 1st base, twice per player; cover your base on the 2nd one.
- Double play, 2nd to 1st, twice per player, cover your base on the 2nd one.
- Home & 1st
 - Throw home and jog towards home plate for a 2nd ball from the catcher, throw to 1st and run to the bench.
- 6:05-6:10 – Coaches instructions
- 6:10-6:15 – Rest, relax, loosen-up & Umpires meeting

Coaches should also have a pregame routine that starts well before they arrive at the park.

1. Prepare line-up sheet at home (if possible)



2. Prepare a schedule of defensive changes & send it to all coaches
3. Post line up and defensive changes on a clip board in the bench area
 - a. Play catchers for at least two innings each.
4. Be aware of the rules that apply to your level and league

Pitcher's Warm-up

The pre-game warm up for the Starting Pitcher should start about 30 minutes before the game and lasts about 20 minutes leaving 10 minutes for rest prior to the first pitch.

- 5:45-5:55 – Short toss & Long toss with Pitching Coach or Catcher
- 5:55-6:05 – 20-25 pitches to the catcher in his crouch.
 - Take your time, get loose and get a feel for the ball and your delivery.

Play Ball!

Once the game starts it can be organized chaos on the bench, so having clearly defined roles for the coaches and players is important. Depending on the age group, you can assign some of the tasks to other players as well.

Bench Coach

The Bench Coach is tasked with keeping things organized on the bench. Here are his typical duties:

- Keeping track of the batting order
 - Always identify the first three batters at the beginning of the inning.
 - Make sure the on-deck (next) batter is in the on-deck circle.
 - Make sure it is in a safe location.
 - Make sure the hitter “in the hole” (3rd batter) is also ready.
- Cleaning up on-deck circle when inning ends.
- Announcing defensive positions each inning.
- Helping catcher with his equipment
 - Catcher should keep equipment on until he is the batter
- Giving the 1st baseman a ball for warm-up (can be a player)
- Giving the CF a ball for warm-up (can be a player)
- Chart the opponents hitters (can be a player)

1st Base Coach & 3rd Base Coach

Coaching the bases is a VISUAL thing. “No” and “Go” sound the same, especially with a batting helmet on and crazy parents and teammates screaming at you.

- Standard Visual Signals
 - Wave him to the next base



- Looks like a windmill using your right arm.

- Slide



- Palms to the ground, waving downward, direct him to one side of the base.

- Stand up & on the Bag



- One hand raised palm out, other hand pointing to the base.

- Stop!!!



- Two arms raised, palms out.

Base Running “Cardinal Rules”

1. Go until we stop you. Not the other way around.
2. Run through the bag at 1st base not to the bag.
3. Eye on the ball when it’s in front of you.
4. Don’t run into an out.
5. Freeze on a line drive.
6. Know how many outs there are. (Coach’s job too)
7. NEVER make the first or third out at 3rd base.
 - a. 0 Outs – you are already in scoring position (2nd base) and can score without the benefit of a hit.
 - b. 2 outs – you are already in scoring position (2nd base) and are likely to score on a ball through the infield any way. There is no real benefit to being on 3rd base.

Always run when...

1. There are two outs
2. Man on 2nd base, ball hit to right side
3. Man on 3rd base, ball hit to right side
4. Man on 3rd base, less than 2 outs, tag up on a fly ball

Never run when...

1. Fly ball, less than 2 outs
 - a. Go half way, watch the play and listen for the coach
2. Line Drives
 - a. Freeze and wait for it to go through
3. Man on 2nd base less than 2 outs, ball hit to SS, 3B or P.

Umpires

Umpires are to be treated with respect at all times. More often than not, umpires are kids learning the game along with us. Please always remember:

1. They are somebody's child.
 - a. Treat them how you would like your own child to be treated.
2. They are rookies.
 - a. If they were any good they wouldn't be doing our games.
3. Don't argue, ask questions.
 - a. This changes the tone of the discussion and allows you to determine if it was a judgement call or a misapplication of a rule.

Know the rules

Each league and/or level has rules that are specific to them. Most of them are intended to speed up play, keep games close and fun and to maintain sportsmanship. They can also be very confusing to adults who know standard baseball rules because they can be pretty quirky.

Hit by the ball

The only time where being hit by the ball does NOT result in a dead ball (play stops) is when a runner is struck by a ball thrown by a fielder. Here are the other situations that happen quite frequently and are also frequently ruled on incorrectly.

1. Runner hit by batted ball.
 - a. Dead Ball.
 - b. Runner is out.
 - c. Hitter is safe at first and credited with a hit on the score sheet.
2. Batter hit by batted ball.
 - a. Dead ball.
 - b. If hit in the batter's box – foul ball.
 - c. If hit outside the batter's box, he is no longer a batter, he's a runner and he is out. (see #1)
3. Batter struck by pitched ball.
 - a. Dead ball.
 - b. Go to first base.

Over-throws & Errors

This is one where every level seems to have a different rule and where endless misunderstandings take place. Here is the situation and how it should be ruled on at certain levels:

Man on 1st base, ground ball to SS and the throw goes over the first baseman's head and down the line. The batter reaches first and attempts to go to 2nd base on the over-throw. The first baseman gets the ball and throws to 2nd base, but throws it wild and into left field.

- Atom & Mosquito
 - Only 1 error per play and only 1 base per error.
 - Hitter stops at 2nd base.
 - Runner stops at 3rd base.
- Regular baseball
 - Ball is in play.
 - Runners keep running at their own risk.

Interference

There are a number of potential interference plays, but here are a few common ones.

1. Catcher's Interference (glove hit by bat on swing)
 - a. Dead Ball
 - b. Hitter is awarded 1st base
2. Runner Interference on fielder (SS and runner collide while trying to get to batted ball)
 - a. Dead ball
 - b. Runner is out.
 - c. The fielder must be provided with the opportunity to field the ball.
3. Fielder Interference on runner (3rd baseman blocks base and runner tries to reach the base)
 - a. Runner is safe and is awarded the base he was attempting to reach if the umpire judges he would have been safe if not for the interference.
 - b. Play continues to its natural conclusion.
 - i. Think Red Sox vs. Cardinals in the 2013 World Series.

Running with 5-run lead

At several levels they have a rule that you cannot run with a 5-run lead. The idea is to maintain a level of sportsmanship and to not run up the score on a weaker team. However on passed balls and wild pitches, sometimes players react instinctively and run to the next base. I have seen umpires rule incorrectly on this one.

- Runner advances at his own risk.
 - This means he can be thrown out.
- Runner returns to his base without penalty.
 - He is not out.
 - Atom & Mosquito
- Runner is called out.
 - Pee wee & above.

To Slide or not to Slide, that is the question

There is a myth out there that a runner must slide into all bases, especially home plate. This is simply not true and knowing this rule and teaching your players properly can help you win a game.

As a general rule of thumb, it makes perfect sense to slide most of the time into 2nd and 3rd base if you have no intention of moving on to the next base. It safely slows you down and prevents you from over-running the base. I always tell the kids to slide if there is a throw coming to the base. Otherwise, they can stand up easily.

Home plate is where the myth lies and it stems from **Rule 103.10 – Contact**.

a. Runners are instructed to **slide or attempt to avoid making contact** with a fielder. A player who **maliciously** runs into another player is to be declared out (unless he/she has already scored prior to committing the infraction) and is to be automatically ejected as described in article 55.1 (unsportsmanlike conduct) whether or not declared safe.

b. Contact shall be considered **malicious** if: the contact is the result of **intentional** excessive force, and/or there is **intent** to injure.

c. **Malicious** contact is to be penalized whether committed by an offensive or defensive player. The Umpire shall determine whether contact was avoidable or unavoidable whether the runner was trying to reach the base or attempting to dislodge the ball from the fielder.

If the runner:

- 1) Could have avoided the fielder and reached the base, or
- 2) Attempts to dislodge the ball, the runner is out even if the fielder loses the possession of the ball. The ball is dead and all other runners shall return to the last base legally occupied by them at the time of intent to contact.
- 3) If the fielder blocks the base path, the runner may slide into or collide with the fielder as long as the runner is making a legitimate attempt to reach the base. IF the collision is flagrant, the runner is called out and ejected. The ball is declared dead. If the defensive player blocks the base path clearly without possession of the ball, obstruction is called. The runner is safe and a delayed dead ball is signalled. If the runner collides flagrantly, he/she shall be declared safe due to obstruction but shall be ejected. The ball is dead.

I underlined the key phrase in 103.10 a) above. The runner must slide OR ATTEMPT to avoid contact at home plate. If the runner slides and there is contact, there are no consequences for the runner as a result of making contact with the catcher. However, this is where the misunderstanding comes in. The rule, as written, gives the runner the OPTION to ATTEMPT to avoid contact. That's what the word "or" is for. It gives him a choice. And, here is the next important word – ATTEMPT. The runner doesn't even need to be successful in avoiding contact with the catcher. He only has to ATTEMPT to avoid it. Be aware of this one and you may be able to appeal and win because it is not a judgement call, it's a misapplication of a rule.

Defensive Positioning

Standard defensive positions

It's always best to position your infielders and outfielders "straight away" unless you have some knowledge of where the batter typically hits the ball.

- First Baseman – 3-5 feet away from the line about 2 steps behind the bag.
- Second Baseman – Approximately equally distant from the First Baseman and the 2nd base bag about 2-3 steps behind the base line.
- Shortstop – Same idea as the Second Baseman, except that he should be equidistant from the Third Baseman and the 2nd base bag.
- Third Baseman – Even with the bag about 3-5 off the line.
- Centre Fielder – Directly behind 2nd base, slightly shaded to one side to get a better view of home plate.
- Left Fielder – Directly behind the Shortstop.
- Right Fielder – Directly behind the Second Baseman.

Shading one way or another

The Bench Coach should be taking notes on where each opposing hitter hits the ball each time at bat. After a while, you will develop knowledge of the hitter's tendencies, such as always pulling the ball or swinging late and you can reposition your fielders accordingly.

1st Base & 3rd Base

Unless you are at a level where the kids hit the ball very hard, I would rarely move the 1st or 3rd basemen closer to the line. All you are doing is eliminating their ability to reach a ground ball towards the middle of the field. If a fielder has to move more than 3-5 feet to get to a ball down the line, it's probably a foul ball. You may choose to play the fielder in a few steps to take away a bunt or softly hit ball. This is more likely to take place at 3rd base.

2nd Base & Shortstop

You may want to shade your middle infielders towards the middle or towards to hole depending on hitter's tendencies, but unless it's very obvious where the hitter hits the ball, straight away is always best.

Infield In

Infield In is used when you have to stop a runner scoring from 3rd base. This would likely be used when the game is tied in the last couple of innings and there is a runner on 3rd base with less than 2 outs. All infielders move in a few steps (3-5 steps) and the fielders' first choice after fielding the ball is to throw it home to get the runner trying to score from 3rd. Fielding the ball cleanly may cause the runner to remain at 3rd base, so the fielder then throws to first to get the hitter out.

In at the Corners

This is used earlier in the game when the game is not on the line, but cutting a run off at the plate is still important. There would be a runner on 3rd base with less than 2 outs and you have 1-3 run lead. Remember, moving your infielders in gives them less range, which means a ground ball is more likely to get by them into the outfield. You would only have your 1st baseman and 3rd baseman move in about 2-3 steps with the hope that a ground ball hit to them would keep the runner on 3rd from scoring. If he runs, you can throw him out at home plate. If he doesn't, you can throw to first.

Double Play Depth

This is generally used at the PeeWee level and older where the players are capable of turning a double play. You would move both the 2nd baseman and the Shortstop a couple of steps towards 2nd base and a couple of steps in towards the plate. The purpose for this is to allow the fielder covering 2nd base to get there quickly with enough time to record the out and to throw to 1st base to complete the double play.

Covering 2nd Base

For the middle infielders (2nd base & SS), deciding who covers second base on a ground ball comes down to two things – a simple rule & communication.

The Simple Rule

SS – If the ball is hit to the 1st baseman or 2nd baseman, I cover the bag.

2nd baseman – If the ball is hit to SS or 3rd base, I cover the bag.

Communication

What do we do if the ball is hit to the pitcher or is a dribbler in front of the plate? Depending on the level, you can keep it very simple – the SS always covers the base. REASON – he has the play in front of him. He can see the runner coming towards him and he is likely to be the better athlete, so let's give him more plays.

At higher levels, you may want to have the middle infielders identifying who is cover the bag before each pitch. It may change from batter to batter depending on whether they swing left-handed or right-handed or whether they pull the ball or go the other way a lot. You would also do this to decide who covers on an attempted steal. On a steal, whoever is NOT covering the base backs up the throw to prevent it from going into centre field.

Holding Runners

When deciding to hold a runner on base or not, please always be aware of this one factor – holding a runner on base creates larger holes for hitters to hit the ball through the infield. Only hold runners when you have to.



General Rules

1. The 1st baseman is the **ONLY** player who ever stands on his base to hold a runner.
2. The 3rd baseman, SS & 2nd baseman **NEVER** stand on their base to hold a runner.
3. Do **NOT** hold a runner on first base if there is a runner on 2nd base.
 - a. REASON – the runner can't steal, so there is no reason to hold him.
 - b. EXCEPTION – you are playing for a double play or are expecting a bunt.
4. Do **NOT** hold a runner on first base with 2 outs and a full count.
 - a. REASON – he's running on the pitch anyway.

The Cut-off Man

The cut-off man is important at all levels and making accurate throws consistently to the cut-off man saves runs and wins games.

The cut-off man needs to be seen and heard by the outfielder. He must raise his hands above his head and be shouting to the OF “hit me, hit me”.



Understanding who the cut-off man is in each situation is similar to knowing who is covering second base on plays in the infield. There are certain rules to follow that may be adapted to each age group.

Throws to 2nd base

This is the most common use of the cut-off man when balls are hit to the outfield and the throw is coming into 2nd base to prevent the runner from going to 2nd base.

1. Base hit to Right Field
 - a. 2nd baseman is the cut-off man, SS covers 2nd base
2. Base hit to Centre Field
 - a. SS is the cut-off man, 2nd baseman covers 2nd base
3. Base hit to Left Field
 - a. SS is the cut-off man, 2nd baseman covers 2nd base

Throws to 3rd base

At higher levels the SS may be able to handle all throws from the outfield, but it is mostly likely at the lower levels that the 2nd baseman will take the throws from RF, while the SS will handle CF & LF.

Throws to Home Plate

Once again, at higher levels, the 3rd baseman will likely be able to be the cut-off man for plays at home plates from LF & CF, while the 1st baseman will take the throws from RF. However, at the Atom and Mosquito level we may need the SS & 2nd baseman to take the throws as the outfielders may not be able to throw it far enough to reach the 3rd baseman or 1st baseman.

At all levels and in all situations, the outfielder's only job is to throw the ball accurately to the cut-off man and low is better than high. If an outfielder does not know where to throw, tell them to throw it literally anywhere towards the infield. Standing there holding the ball is never a good option.

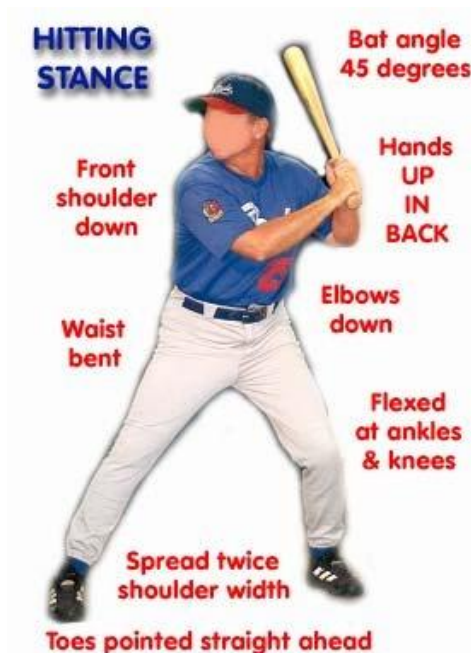
The cut-off man has to catch or at least block the throw and must get it in quickly to the infield.

Hitting

For most players, hitting is the one thing they like to do best, which leads to the 2nd thing they love to do – running the bases, so hitting is important for players to have fun. It's also critical to winning games.

Stance

The batter's stance needs to be their base or foundation of the swing. The hitter should have his feet slightly wider than shoulder width apart with their knees slightly bent. This is a relaxed, athletic position that allows for quick reflexes and balance.



The hands should be up a little at shoulder height with the bat held at a 45 degree angle. I liked to have my hands up near my ear, which allowed me to stay on top of the high fast ball. Please note – the back elbow should NOT be up. This is one of those age-old myths that probably started in the early days of Little League and has been repeated over and over to the point where people think it is correct. It is NOT.

The Swing

As you can see below, the swing begins with the “squishing of the bug” by the back foot. This allows the hitter to get his hips out of the way and allows him to stay “inside” the ball. At the same time the hitter is to lead with the knob of the bat, keeping the head of the bat lagging behind. This lag is what creates bat speed and power. The swing continues with the hitter making contact in front of the plate while maintaining excellent balance.



Pitching

Like hitting, fielding, throwing and most other actions in sports, pitching relies on balance and a strong foundation.

The Stretch

I always suggest that most young pitchers learn to pitch from the stretch. The wind-up can be troublesome, dealing with the pitching rubber and putting the pitcher off balance.

The first move a pitcher makes is a **knee lift**. Yes, a knee lift. It's not a leg kick. This allows the pitcher to maintain his balance while loading his weight on his back leg. At the same time, he raises his glove to chin or ear height.





The Drive

The next step is to begin the drive to the plate by reaching the ball as far back as possible, pushing off the rubber to drive the front hip, stepping forward with the front foot and glove side elbow or the glove itself.

The Delivery

The pitcher continues by driving off the rubber, pulling the glove to his chest and reaching for the target. Notice how the throwing elbow is at shoulder height.

The Follow Through

The pitcher finishes with his throwing arm over his left knee and back leg continuing to drive forward on the follow through and putting himself in a strong fielding position.

Drills

The Baseball Canada web site (www.baseball.ca) is a great resource for many different drills at all skill and age levels. These are a few of my favorites:

Throwing & Catching

- From the knee
 - Proper arm position above the shoulder, point the glove to target, follow through
- Static throw
 - Elbow above the shoulder, point the gloves to target, use torso to generate power
- Crow hop & side step
 - Helps with footwork and building momentum
- Relay race
 - Accuracy, catching with 2 hands, throwing sideways
- Fast hands race
 - Catching with two hands, quickness, fun

Ground Balls & Fly Balls

- Obstacle course shuffle
 - Improves footwork and balance
- Bare hands
 - Forces you to use to hands to field a ground ball
- Fly ball contests
 - Kids love it when we use the pitching machine
- QB & Wide Receiver
 - Shows them how to go back and sideways on a ball

Hitting

- Whiffle Ball BP
 - Great for pre-game
- Soft toss
 - Whiffle ball or regular ball
- Hitting off a tee
 - Fundamentals

Running the Bases

- Through the bag to first
 - Time them
- Banana turn
 - Proper turn to go around 1st base to 2nd base
- Wave them or Hold them
 - Base coaching signals

Helpful links & references



Baseball Canada – www.baseball.ca

- Coaches Corner



Canadian Baseball Network – www.canadianbaseballnetwork.com

- Excellent instructional videos



Baseball Québec – www.baseballquebec.com

- Tournaments, rules, coaching courses



Lac St-Louis Region – www.baseball-lac-st-louis.org

- League rules, schedules, parks, training
- The Myths section is good