

BASEBALL KNOWLEDGE REQUIRED FOR COACH ACCREDITATION

Competency 1

Identify the safety issues and manage the risks of baseball.

Required Knowledge

1. When not using safety conscious modified equipment all hitters and base runners must wear an approved helmet.
2. On deck hitter must remain at least 10m back from hitter.
3. Bats and balls can be dangerous and may fly unexpectedly in any direction.
4. Encourage players to avoid unnecessary collisions.

Additional Explanation

Safety is a critical issue at all levels of the game. At all times take great care to avoid situations or practices which may lead to injury.

While the balls used in t-ball may be softer than a regulation ball, and are unlikely to cause injury, it is important to establish good habits among your players.

When your team is hitting, ensure that waiting players do not get too close to the action. Players on the bench and the on deck hitter must remain at least 10m back from hitter. Bats and balls can be dangerous and may fly unexpectedly in any direction.

Baseball and t-ball are non-contact sports, although players will accidentally bump into each other on occasion. You must, however, encourage players to avoid unnecessary collisions.

Competency 2

Demonstrate understanding of the value of a game based learning approach to develop skills, and to maximise fun and participation.

Required Knowledge

1. Kids will learn skills sub-consciously while participating in well-designed activities.
2. The idea is to have every kid doing something fun and skill-enhancing at all times.
3. Technical instruction is not appropriate at this level

Additional Explanation

Games-based learning is an approach where players are set tasks and games which are designed to lead them to develop their skills and greater understanding. Kids at this stage of development learn best by doing, and this creates more effective long term learning. They will learn skills "accidentally" while participating in well-designed activities, and they also have a lot more fun than when the traditional instructional methods are employed.

One valuable task for a coach is to accumulate an ever-expanding array of purposeful activities. The aim is to have every kid doing something fun and skill-enhancing at all times.

Young players are best developed by concentrating their efforts on what they are trying to do, not how they do it. Instruction on technique is not appropriate at this level.

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Competency 3

Identify the elements of a t-ball training session.

Required Knowledge

1. Fun activity, warm-up game or free play up to start time (consider safety)
2. Structured warm-up (5-8 min)
3. Throwing activity(ies) (5-10 min)
4. Running activity(ies) (5-15 min)
5. Fielding activity(ies) (5-15 min)
6. Hitting activity(ies) (5-15)
7. Aussie T-Ball game
8. De-brief (5min): feedback on session (two-way), relevant news, next game, next practice etc.

Additional Explanation

To ensure that the session covers important aspects of skill development, each training session should be planned beforehand. Try to include at least some of these in every session: running, throwing, fielding, and hitting.

The following is a good guide:

1. Organise some fun activity, warm-up game or free play for the time before the actual training session starts, for those who arrive early and are waiting for others to arrive (consider safety).
2. Structured warm-up (5-8 min). Eg, Bridge Stone Tree Relay, Weave Relay, and/or Baseball Ladder
3. Throwing activity(ies) (5-10 min). Eg, Gorri, Gulgul, and/or Team Distance.
4. Running activity(ies) (5-15 min). Eg, Sharks & Sardines, Chook-chase, and/or base-to-base relay
5. Fielding activity(ies) (10-20 min): Eg: Co-operative rolls, competitive rolls, and/or Roll-a-goal
6. Hitting activity(ies) (15-25 min): Eg: long-ball, target tee, and/or over-the-line
7. Game of Aussie T-Ball (20-30 min)
8. De-brief (5min): feedback on session (two-way), relevant news, next game, next practice etc

You can do more than one activity in each key area.

Start and finish on time – players and parents (and you) will appreciate it!

Competency 4

Use inclusive coaching principles to provide equal player opportunity throughout the game and season.

Required Knowledge

1. In all teams there will be varying levels of ability but, at this level, it is unacceptable to continually play the better players in key positions. It is essential that all receive equal opportunity and are encouraged to participate fully in all aspects of the game.
2. To ensure that all players get equal time in each position, players rotate their fielding positions every inning:
 - pitcher becomes catcher

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- catcher becomes 1st base
 - 1st base becomes 2nd base
 - 2nd base becomes 3rd base
 - 3rd base becomes shortstop
 - shortstop becomes pitcher
3. Batting: leadoff hitter in one inning becomes the last hitter in the next. In this way, everyone gets the chance to lead off an inning.
 4. All drills and activities can be adjusted to cater for varying individual ability by modifying equipment, playing area or task. The opportunities for modification can be remembered using the TREE acronym: Teaching (what you say to them; eg, using questions to make them work things out); Rules; Equipment; Environment.
 5. Philosophy: competitive games are fun, but winning is not the issue. Promote good sportsmanship, stay enthusiastic and reward effort rather than success. No negative comments about or to umpires.

Additional Explanation

Coaches at all levels are able to modify tasks to suit the ability level of various athletes. The TREE acronym reminds coaches of the ways in which an activity may be adapted:

- Teaching (what you tell them to do, and how)
- Rules (how do you score? How far are you allowed to run?)
- Equipment (softer ball, smaller bat)
- Environment (size of the playing area, surface, indoors etc).

At t-ball level, it is important to place the emphasis on equal participation, not the scoreboard. In all teams there will be varying levels of ability but, at this level, it is inappropriate to continually play the better players in key positions. It is essential that all receive equal opportunity, and are encouraged, to participate fully in all aspects of the game.

In Aussie T-Ball, there are specific strategies to help you ensure that this occurs. All fielders rotate in order each inning in the following manner:

That is, pitcher becomes catcher, catcher becomes 1st base, 1st base becomes 2nd base, 2nd base becomes 3rd base, 3rd base becomes shortstop, shortstop becomes pitcher. (This order is in keeping with the traditional manner of numbering the positions in baseball).

This enables each player to play each position and thus have an equitable part in the team, regardless of ability.

- a) Remember to always embrace an inclusive philosophy: everyone deserves equal opportunity. Competitive games are fun, but winning is not the main issue.
- b) Promote good sportsmanship, stay enthusiastic and reward effort rather than success.
- c) Don't tolerate excuse-makers who want to blame someone else: don't make or allow negative comments about or to umpires.

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