

Greenie League Baseball Coaching Manual







I volunteered to coach...now what?

Listed below are some tips to help coaches for the upcoming season:

- Learn the league specific rules and policies. As the coach, it is essential you attend pre-season organizational meetings and make sure you read and understand the league rules. Be sure your assistant coach understands the rules as well. Pre-season meetings are a great time to get clarification on rules and policies you may not fully understand.
- **Understand the value of your assistant.** Assistants not only help run practice, but they can also serve as a sounding board for you and for the players as well. Be sure to maintain an open line of communication between you and your assistant.
- Have a parent from the team volunteer to be the team parent. Designating someone for this position lets them feel like they're a greater part of the team. The team parent takes on the duties of organizing who will provide snack for each game, plan team activities and so forth. Having another parent focus on these things will allow you to concentrate on coaching.
- Hold a team meeting at/before the very first practice. Use this time to introduce yourself and your assistant. It is also the perfect time for parents of the team to meet and get to know each other. During this meeting you should make the parents aware of the league rules and policies so they will understand your coaching philosophy. At this time you should also let them know your expectations of the players and the parents. Be sure to explain the importance of players and parents exhibiting good sportsmanship. Make sure to find out from parents if their child has any medical conditions you should be aware of in the event of an emergency during a practice or game. Address any potential scheduling conflicts. Do this by finding out what other activities the players are involved in and find out from parents ahead of time what days could potentially be problematic for them regarding practices or games. Make it known to parents it is expected for all players to attend all practices and games, and if they are unable to, you should be notified in advance. Take the time to go over GRPD's Parent's Code of Ethics (located on the following page).



- Build a solid rapport with each player. This is easily accomplished by getting to know everyone's name as quickly as possible. During practice, spend a few minutes with each child. Address them by their name and compliment them when they do something well. Name tags for players during the first few practices can help everyone get acquainted more easily if they are not familiar with one another.
- Coach by walking around. This provides a greater opportunity to bond with each player; the more you do it, the more comfortable they will begin to feel. Also in doing this, you are more likely to better understand the differences between each child and find specific ways to motivate them.

Greenville Recreation & Parks Department Parent's Code of Ethics

- I will encourage good sportsmanship by demonstrating positive support for all players, coaches and officials at every game, practice or other youth sports events.
- I will place the emotional and physical well-being of each child ahead of a personal desire to win.
- I will support the coaches and officials working with my child in order to encourage a positive and enjoyable experience for all.
- I will demand a sports environment for my child that is free from drugs, tobacco and alcohol and will refrain from their use at all Greenville Recreation & Parks Department's youth sports events.
- I will remember the game is for youth—not adults.
- I will do my best to make the youth sports experience fun for my child.
- I will help my child enjoy the youth sports experience by doing whatever I can, such as being a respectful fan, assisting with coaching or character development or providing transportation.
- I will treat other players, coaches, fans and officials with respect.

I hereby pledge to provide positive support, care and encouragement for my child participating in Greenville Recreation & Parks Department's youth sports by following the Parent's Code of Ethics. I understand failure to comply could result in my suspension from youth sports events.

Team Management

Discipline

o It's not necessary to have an extensive set of rules for the team; instead, have a few rules stand out that you will emphasize throughout the course of the season.

Examples

- Having players show up at a specified time before practices and games.
- Letting you know ahead of time if a player will not be able to make a practice/game.
- Players and parents are expected to exhibit sportsmanlike behavior at all times.

Rotating Players / Playing Time

o It's beneficial to learning the game of baseball and skill development if all players play different positions throughout the season. Regardless of skill level, all players should have the opportunity to play each position in the field. Players at this age should not solely be focused on learning one position. Each player should also be given the chance to play at least 2 innings in the field.

• Running Up the Score

 There are times when games can become one-sided and one team scores a much more significant amount of runs than the other. In this instance, do not allow your team to continue to run up the score.
 Rather than continuously sending runners, let players just take one base at a time.

Parents

As a coach you will have to deal with various issues and concerns from parents, ranging from playing time to game strategies. How you handle these things as they come up can affect the course of the season. During your first team meeting, let it be known to parents the best times to approach you. When they do come to you with a concern, let them say their piece – uninterrupted – and tell them you'll think about their suggestions and figure out a way to best address their concerns. Always respond in a positive, non-confrontational manner and make sure things do not get out of hand.

Losing Games

Enduring a losing season is one of the greater challenges a coach faces. Rather than dwell on the
negativity associated with losing, it is your job as the coach to remain upbeat and positive. Find
something the team did well and focus on that. Praise them for the effort they put forth in spite of the
loss.

Have Fun

 One of the most important elements in youth sports is to have fun. Keeping players engaged while they're learning and not taking yourself too seriously will lead to a more fun experience for everyone.

Sportsmanship

 Teaching players the value of good sportsmanship is one of the most important aspects of coaching youth sports. Good sportsmanship should be shown to all player, coaches and officials.



Running an Efficient Practice

An organized and efficiently run practice allows you to get more accomplished than expected. Some tips for running an efficient practice are below:

- Be organized and have a plan.
 - Have a back-up plan just in case some drills are not being picked up as easily by the players.
- Break down the practice hour into 15 or 20 minute blocks.
 - Start and stop each block with a summary of skills learned.
 - Include water and bathroom breaks.
- Keep things moving so the players are engaged and on the go.
 - Lessen the number of drills involving players just standing around. This decreases the likelihood of players getting bored and losing focus.
- If you have to stop practice to teach a fundamental, put yourself on the clock.
 - Make your point, keep it short, and keep the action moving.
- Keep practice interesting and fun.

Practice Plans

Below are sample practice plans for 4-6 year olds and 7-8 year olds. Practice material resources can be found using www.littleleaguecoach.org. You must register to use this free service.

4-6 Year Olds

- 1. Introduction (3 minutes)
 - a. Welcome Players
 - b. Review names (players and coaches)
 - c. Focus on the reason for being there
- 2. Wiffleball Tag (10-12 minutes) (warm-up/fun activity)
 - a. Players run in the infield while coach tries to tag them frozen with a wiffleball, repeat in outfield
- 3. Water Break (2-3 minutes)
- 4. Grip (10 minutes)
 - a. Players gather in circle
 - b. Grip wiffleball with whole hand using fingertips
 - c. Have players demonstrate correct grip before going to spots to throw
- 5. Throwing (10-15 minutes)
 - a. Players find a spot and throw at the fence
 - b. Coaches focus on grip
 - c. Call players back to coach and teach stepping with opposite foot (demonstrate)
 - d. Send players back to spots to throw against fence
 - e. Coaches monitor for grip and stepping with opposition
- 6. Water Break (2-3 minutes)
- 7. Run the Bases (5 minutes)
 - a. Players line up at home plate to begin
 - b. Call out the bases as the runners go one at a time
- 8. Conclusion
 - a. Review what they learned
 - b. Reminder of next practice/game

7-8 Year Olds Practice Drills (will be demonstrated at the coaching clinic)

- 1. Throwing Drills
 - a. During warm-ups, make sure players:
 - i. Keep their elbow up; no side arm throws
 - ii. "paint the ceiling" (throwing over the top)
 - iii. Throwing with 4 seams (2 or 3 fingers)
 - iv. Aim for the other players chest
 - v. Catching with two hands
- 2. Fielding Drills (5-10 minutes before each practice)
 - a. While kneeling, have players work on fielding the ball out front without a glove.
 - i. Have players kneel down with a partner, about 5-8 feet away and toss easy "short hops" to each other. Players should have their throwing hand behind their back, catching the ball with their glove hand. (10-15 tosses)
 - ii. Have players repeat this, but now using both hands (alligator) to catch the ball. (10-15 tosses)
 - b. While kneeing, have players work on fielding the ball out front with a glove.
 - i. Repeat steps i and ii above.
 - c. While standing, have players work on fielding the ball out front with or without their glove.
 - i. Repeat steps i and ii above.
 - ii. Make sure players are in ready position; glove out, on their toes.
- 3. Hitting Drills Telling players "elbow up" is not a proper mechanic.
 - a. Go over batting stance and grip with each player (possibly in a station of 3-4 players).
 - i. Feet shoulder width apart with a slight bend in their knees.
 - ii. Grip bat should be in their fingers, not hand; "knocking" knuckles should be aligned.
 - iii. Have players get in a good hitting stance and have them grip the bat and place it on their right (right handed batters) shoulder. Have them lift the bat up into proper position (bat at 45 deg. angle) with their hands a few inches from their body.
 - b. Hitting off a tee and Soft Toss
 - i. Work on player hitting the "inside" part of the baseball.
 - ii. Keep eyes on the ball through contact.
 - c. Watch for the following during any hitting drill:
 - i. No leaning over the plate while in their stance.
 - ii. Hands or shoulder drop (looking for A to C swing); no "wrapping" around their heads.
 - iii. Head pulling out; not keeping their eye on the ball or closing their eyes.
 - iv. Stepping toward the pitcher.

4. Base Running

- a. Run bases at the end of each practice (5-8 minutes)
 - i. Home to first running through the bag and looking to the right as runners cross the base.
 - ii. First to second starting with correct foot on base (left) leave when the ball crosses the plate; make sure runners stop on 2nd and not run through.
 - iii. Second to Third look for third base coach halfway. Same as above (ii).
 - iv. Third to home running through and making sure runner touches home plate.
 - v. Home to second player rounding 1st, touching inside of bag.
 - vi. Second to home player touching inside corner of 3rd base and making sure runner touches home plate.
- b. What to look for when players are running:
 - i. Eyes up and looking ahead; listening to coaches
 - ii. Players should be hitting the inside corner of the bag; TOUCHING EACH BASE
- c. To make the above more advanced, use base coaches and have players learn to pick up the coach and listen to them.

Baseball Terms

Below are baseball terms all players in this age group should be learning. Throughout your practices, try to use this terminology so they are familiar with it during games and as they move on to the next level.

Back in the box – move toward the umpire

Back up – when a defensive player not directly involved in a play moves into a position to help if the ball gets by another defender

The Box - batter's box

Choke up – move the hands (grip) up the bat handle

Force – when a runner has to advance to the next base because of a runner moving to his spot

Force out – when a runner is forced to a base, the defense can tag the base for an out

Lead runner – runner on base closest to home

Pick up your coach – As a base runner, make sure you look and listen for your coach

Tag – when a defensive player with the ball has to touch a runner in order to get them out

Up in the box – move toward the pitching machine

Youth Baseball Rules

Each team (Small & Big Fry) is allowed one Manager and one assistant coach, for a total of two coaches. One coach must remain in the dugout at all times. During a team's at-bat, a base coach will be allowed at first and third base, with a volunteer parent in the dugout to assist with the batting line up.

International Little League rules will be followed along with the following modifications.

Equipment:

- A. Athletic shoes must be worn by all participants and must have a one-piece molded bottom. Shoes with metal cleats or hard nylon cleats will not be permitted. Shoes with cleats screwing into the shoe will not be permitted.
- B. No jewelry allowed.
- C. All defensive players must be equipped with a baseball glove.
- D. Bats must be approved by Little League. For a list of approved bats, please visit www.gllbaseball.com.
- E. Proper batting helmets must be worn when batting and running bases.

Mini Fry Division (Age 4)

League Format:

Mini Fry t-ball will begin Saturday, April 26 and continue weekly through Saturday, June 14. Each scheduled meeting will last one (1) hour. The following timeline will be followed:

0	Thursday, April 17	Coaches' Meeting – Drew Steele Center at 7:00pm
0	Saturday, April 26	Practice
0	Saturday, May 3	Practice
0	Saturday, May 10	Practice
0	Saturday, May 17	Scrimmages
0	Saturday, May 24	Program will not meet due to Memorial Day holiday
0	Saturday, May 31	Scrimmages
0	Saturday, June 7	Scrimmages
0	Saturday, June 14	Scrimmages

Base length: 45'

Type of baseball: Safe-T-Soft Level 3

Batting:

- A. All hitters will hit from a batting tee throughout the season. The tee should be adjusted as needed for each batter.
- B. All players present will bat each inning and the order will be reversed every inning.
- C. Bunting is not allowed.
- D. The player in the pitcher's position should be in contact with the rubber. If there is not a rubber available then an imaginary line will be used to represent the rubber.
- E. An inning is over when all batters have batted. The last batter of an inning must continue to run the bases until they score or they are forced out.
- F. There are no strikeouts.
- G. No stealing or leading off.
- H. Thrown bats will not be allowed. Coaches are responsible for ensuring players do not throw bats.
- I. On-deck batters will not be allowed on the field nor are they allowed to swing in or near the dugout.

Fielding:

A. All players present may play in the field during defense. The defensive coaches are allowed on the field. A defensive coach must remain near the pitcher's mound while the play is in progress. Once the ball reaches the defensive coach near the pitcher's mound, the play will be dead.

Game:

- A. A regulation game is 4 innings or 60 minutes, whichever comes first. A new inning cannot begin after 55 minutes of play. It is the responsibility of coaches to monitor the time.
- B. In the event of inclement weather, a game is complete after 2 innings or 30 minutes.

Small Fry Division (Ages 5-6)

League Format:

Small Fry baseball will begin the week of April 14 and continue through mid-June. The following timeline will be used for the season:

Tuesday, April 8	Coaches' Meeting – Drew Steele Center at 7:00pm
Sunday, April 13	Coaching Clinic / Equipment Pick-up – Sports Connection at 5:00pm
Week of April 14	Practice
Week of April 21	No scheduled practices due to Pitt Co. Schools Spring Break
Week of April 28	Practice
Weekend of May 3	Games begin
Week of May 5	Games
Week of May 12	Games
Week of May 19	Games
May 24 – May 26	Program will not meet due to Memorial Day holiday
Week of May 27	Games
	Sunday, April 13 Week of April 14 Week of April 21 Week of April 28 Weekend of May 3 Week of May 5 Week of May 12 Week of May 19 May 24 – May 26

Games, Conclusion of season

Base length: 60' bases

Type of baseball: Safe-T-Soft Level 3

Week of June 2

o Week of June 9

Batting:

A. All batters will face live pitching from a pitching machine.

Games

- a. Each child will be allowed three strikes or five pitches before the ball is placed on the tee. The tee will be adjusted as needed for each batter. *If a foul ball is hit on the third strike, the tee will be used for that at-hat*
- b. An umpire will operate the pitching machine and will also be responsible for receiving the ball from the defensive team. Play will end once the **umpire** receives the ball inside the marked circle.
- c. In the event only one umpire is available for the game, coaches will pitch to their own team.
- B. All players will be placed in the batting lineup whether playing defensively or not. Coaches are encouraged to mix up the batting order each game to allow an equal amount of at-bats throughout the season.
 - a. If a team has less than six players, the two teams will then scrimmage. Teams will have a grace period of 10 minutes. If at the end of the grace period a team has five or fewer players, the game will be considered a forfeit.
 - i. Line-ups must be turned in 10 minutes prior to the start of the game with each player's first and last names as well as their jersey number.
 - ii. Players showing up after the game starts, will be placed at the end of the batting line-up.
- C. If a batted ball hits the pitching machine, the ball will be called dead; the batter will then be awarded first base, and only forced runners may advance one base.
- D. Bunting is not allowed.

- E. The player in the pitcher's position should be in contact with the rubber until the ball is released. The pitcher must stay behind the machine until the ball is hit. If there is not a rubber available, then an imaginary line will be used to represent the rubber.
- F. An inning will consist of three outs or five runs, whichever comes first. Once five runs have been scored, the inning is considered complete. Teams **cannot** score more than five runs per inning.
- G. A batted ball must go at least 25' when hit, which is shown by an arc drawn from foul line to foul line. If the ball does not go past the 25' arc, it is considered a foul ball.
- H. There are no strikeouts. If a batter hits part of the ball and part of the tee, it is a fair ball if it goes past the 25' arc.
- I. Two team warnings will be issued for thrown bats by the umpire. If a player throws a bat after the two warnings, they will then be called out.
- J. On-deck batters are not allowed on the field nor are they allowed to swing in or near the dugout.

Base Running:

- A. No stealing or leading off.
- B. Players are only allowed to take one extra base on a ball thrown out of play or on an over throw. For example, a ball thrown over the 1st baseman's head will result in the runner advancing to 2nd base, if they choose. Only forced runners will be allowed to advance one extra base, the play will then be called dead by the umpire.
- C. Head first slides are not allowed while advancing to the next base. Head first slides are only allowed when going back to a base.
- D. Runners must remain on base until the pitch reaches the batter.
- E. Runners must stop once time has been called by the umpire. If a team has a runner sent back to the previous base more than twice in the inning, that team must run "base to base" for the remainder of the inning. (See "Fielding" section B)

Fielding:

- A. Nine players are on the field at any one time, five infielders and four outfielders. If nine players are not available at the start of the game then play as many as you have available. (See "Batting" section B-a)
- B. Time will be called by the umpire when he/she receives the ball from the defensive team. The umpire operating the pitching machine must receive the ball inside the marked circle for the play to be ruled dead. Once the play is completed, the umpire will make a judgment call on where the base runners should be.
 - a. If a base runner is more than half way, they will advance to the next base.
 - b. If a base runner is not half way, then they will return to their original base.
- C. Each player must play a minimum of 2 innings defensively.
- D. One coach will be allowed on the playing field during defense. They must be along the outfield line and not interfere with game play.

Game:

- A. A regulation game is 6 innings or 55 minutes. A new inning cannot begin after 55 minutes of play. It is the score keeper's responsibility to monitor the time. If time elapses in the middle of an inning, the inning must be complete before time is called.
- B. If the home team is ahead after 5 ½ innings, the game is complete.
- C. In the event of inclement weather, a game is complete after 3 innings or 30 minutes.
- D. Rained out games will be made up the first available Sunday or at the end of the season. Recreation and Parks Staff will notify coaches of the time, date and location of rescheduled games.

Big Fry Division (Ages 7-8)

League Format:

Big Fry baseball will begin Saturday, April 12 and continue through late June. The following timeline will be used for the season:

Tuesday, April 8 Coaches' Meeting – Drew Steele Center at 7:00pm

Saturday, April 12
 Skills Assessments – Jaycee Park

Sunday, April 13
 Coaching Clinic / Equipment Pick-up – Sports Connection at 5:00pm

Monday, April 14
 Draft – Drew Steele Center at 6:30pm

Wednesday, April 16 Practice begins

Week of April 21
 No scheduled practices due to Pitt Co. Schools Spring Break

Weekend of May 3 Games begin

Week of May 5
 Week of May 12
 Week of May 19
 Games
 Games

May 24 – May 26
 Program will not meet due to Memorial Day holiday

Week of May 27 GamesWeek of June 2 Games

Week of June 9 Conclusion of regular season
 Week of June 16 Post season tournament begins

Base length: 60' bases

Type of baseball: Regulation baseball

Batting:

- A. All players will be pitched to by the umpire operating the pitching machine. Balls and strikes will be called. A batter will be called out after three strikes; there will not be any walks. If a batter is hit by a pitch, they will be awarded first base, and only forced runners may advance one base.
- B. If at the discretion of the umpire the pitching machine has thrown a poor pitch, the pitch will be deemed illegal and will not count against the batter.
- C. All batters will be placed in the batting line-up.
 - a. If a team has less than six players, the two teams will then scrimmage. Teams will have a grace period of 10 minutes. If at the end of the grace period, a team has five or fewer players, the game will be considered a forfeit.
 - i. Line-ups must be turned in 10 minutes prior to the start of the game with each player's first and last names as well as their jersey number.
 - ii. Players showing up after the game starts, will be placed at the end of the batting line-up.
- D. In the event a batted ball hits the pitching machine, the ball will be called dead; the batter will be awarded first base, and only forced runners may advance one base.
- E. An inning will consist of three outs or five runs, whichever comes first. Once five runs have been scored, the inning is considered complete. Teams **cannot** score more than five runs per inning.
- F. Bunting is allowed. One batter per team is allowed a bunt attempt each inning. If at the discretion of the umpire there was a bunt attempt, it will be considered the team's attempt for the inning. A successful bunt attempt by a second batter in the inning will result in an out and all base runners must return to the last base occupied.
- G. **Jaycee Park only:** If a batted ball bounces over the outfield fence, it will result in a ground rule double; runners may not advance more than two bases.

- H. The player in the pitcher's position should be in contact with the rubber until the ball is released. The pitcher must stay behind the machine until the ball is hit. If there is not a rubber available, then an imaginary line will be used to represent the rubber.
- I. The 25' arc will not be used for the Big Fry Division.
- J. Two team warnings will be issued for thrown bats by the umpire. After the two warnings, if a player throws a bat they will be called out.
- K. On-deck batters will not be allowed on the field nor are they allowed to swing in or near the dugout.

Base Running:

- A. No stealing or leading off.
- B. Head first slides are not allowed while advancing to the next base. Head first slides are only allowed when going back to a base.
- C. Runners must remain on base until the pitch reaches the batter.
- D. Runners must stop once time has been called by the umpire. If a team has a runner sent back to the previous base more than twice in the inning, that team must run "base to base" for the remainder of the inning. Please see "Fielding, C," for when time will be called.

Fielding:

- A. An umpire will operate the pitching machine.
- B. Nine players are on the field at any one time. If nine players are not available at the start of the game then play as many as you have available. A minimum of six (6) players will be allowed to play. (See "Batting" section C-a)
 - a. Catchers are required to be properly equipped with the following: catcher's mask with tangling throat guard, chest protector, shin guards and protective cup. It is the coaches' responsibility to ensure the catcher wears the required equipment. Catcher's equipment, excluding a protective cup, will be provided for each team by GRPD.
- C. Time will be called by the umpire when the defensive team returns the ball to the player occupying the pitcher's position or when the play comes to a natural end. This can include when an infielder has the ball, depending on the particular play. Once the play is completed, the umpire will make a judgment call on where the base runners should be.
 - a. If a base runner is more than half way, they will advance to the next base.
 - b. If a base runner is not half way, then they will return to their original base.
 - i. Please see "Base Running, D" for rules on teams over running the bases
- D. Bunting Defense Players cannot start moving in on a bunt when a player squares around. **Players must play** their normal positions until the ball has been pitched.
- E. Each player must play a minimum of 2 innings defensively.
- F. Coaches are **not** allowed on the field during defense.

Game:

- A. A regulation game is 6 innings or 70 minutes. A new inning cannot begin after 70 minutes of play. It is the score keeper's responsibility to monitor the time. If time elapses in the middle of an inning, the inning must be completed before time is called.
 - a. During the regular season, ties will stand.
- B. If the home team is ahead after 5 ½ innings, the game is complete.
- C. In the event of inclement weather, a game is complete after 3 innings or 30 minutes.
- D. Rained out games will be made up the first available Sunday. GRPD Staff will notify coaches of the time, date and location of rescheduled games.

- E. A single elimination post season tournament will be held at the conclusion of the regular season.
 - a. The same rules from the regular season will apply, with the following exception:
 - i. Extra innings will only be played in the event a game is tied at the end of the sixth inning.

Miscellaneous Information

League / Division Standings (Big Fry Only)

- A. League / division standings will be updated weekly and automatically post to webtrac.greenvillenc.gov. Please check the standings to make sure scores have been entered correctly.
- B. In the event of ties, the following tie breakers will be used:
 - a. Head to head
 - b. Runs allowed
 - c. Runs scored
- C. Brackets and finalized standings will be provided to coaches before the start of the tournament.

Inclement Weather

- A. Rainedout.com will be used to update those who sign up to receive game cancellations via text message. Steps to sign up are below:
 - a. Go to www.rainedout.com
 - b. In the search bar type in "GRPD"
 - c. Click on "GRPD Athletics"
 - d. Click on "Sign up now for mobile alerts"
 - e. Enter your information. Select all of the programs you would like to receive updates for. Agree to the terms of use and click "create account"
 - f. Validate your phone number or e-mail address by typing in the verification code sent to you as a text message or reply to your e-mail notification.
- B. GRPD Weather Hotline: 252.329.4299
- C. Coaches will be contacted as soon as possible by email only in the event of game cancellations.

Pitching Machine Settings (subject to change)

- D. Small Fry
 - a. Distance from plate: Approx. 30'
 - b. Pull Handle: 3
 - c. Speed: 3
 - d. Throwing Arm: 3
- E. Big Fry
 - a. Distance from plate: Approx. 34'
 - b. Pull Handle: 3
 - c. Speed: 6
 - d. Throwing Arm: 4

Practice / Game Field Locations

- A. Elm Street Park 1058 S. Elm Street
- B. Evans Park 625 W. Arlington Boulevard
- C. First Christian Church 2810 E. 14th Street
- D. H. Boyd Lee Park 5184 Corey Road
- E. Jaycee Park 2000 Cedar Lane
- F. Perkins Complex 1703 E. 14th Street