



COACHES MANUAL

2025 Edition

www.cactusathletics.com

Dear Coach,

Thank you for choosing us as a partner in baseball this year. I believe that the information we provide you with, will help prepare you for the upcoming season and be a stepping stone to bringing your team to the next level!

I am always learning more about the game and like always I am picking other coaches and current player's brains about what works for them. I have added more information and drills to this year's manual, and I am sure it will benefit you.

On our website we offer a wide variety of information and tools to empower you in your coaching. Our coaches have decades of baseball experience and we understand it is our responsibility to share our wisdom with others. We offer hundreds of videos and articles covering baseball, strength training, speed and agility as well as leadership methods.

It is truly a pleasure to have the opportunity to be involved with the community and to work with you. Together we will give the players a better chance to succeed on the field. This will breed more self confidence and assist in reaching the eventual goal of helping mold them into better citizens.

You have an opportunity to make a great impact on these players, and they will remember you for a very long time. Take advantage of this situation and be a positive influence on them always!

Please feel free to contact us at any time with questions or to check on our upcoming events. We are dedicated to serving others through the game of baseball.

Sincerely,



Billy Horton
President/Founder



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PRACTICE PLANNING

ORGANIZATION

1.) Main goals

- Have fun!!!
- Give them information in small amounts.
- Communicate with coaches as well as players.
- Correct with positive reinforcement.

2.) Station work

- Break practice up into individual stations.
- Have a good distance between stations to keep players focused.
- Make stations competitive so each one feels like a game.
- Each practice station should be 10-15 minutes long.
- Review what you just taught them.
- Answer questions- this shows they are learning!

MANAGEMENT

Listed below are some examples when you are setting up practices.

<u>1 hour</u>	5 min	Warm-up: Dynamic stretch/Form running
	15 min	Throwing/Receiving
	2 min	Water break/Review practice plan
	35 min	Stations (3): hitting, infield, outfield
	3 min	Wrap and review
 <u>1.5 hours</u>	 5 min	 Warm-up: Dynamic stretch/Form running
	15 min	Throwing/Receiving
	2 min	Water break/Review practice plan
	35 min	Stations (3): infield, outfield, pitching/catching
	2 min	Water break/Review practice plan
	30 min	Hitting Stations (3): soft toss, tees, BP
	2 min	Wrap and review

<u>2 hours</u>	5 min	Warm-up: Dynamic stretch/Form running
	15 min	Throwing/Receiving
	2 min	Water break/Review practice plan
	35 min	Stations (3): infield, outfield, pitching/catching
	3 min	Water break/Review practice plan
	35 min	Hitting Stations (3): soft toss, tees, BP
	2 min	Water break/Review practice plan
	20 min	Game situations with base runners
	3 min	Wrap and review

HELPFUL HINTS

- 1.) Use a point system during stations so they are fun and competitive.
 - This will help the players stay engaged and work harder.
- 2.) Make sure to stretch out at the beginning of practice.
 - Playing catch is not “getting loose”, that is when you focus on throwing mechanics & accuracy.
 - Instead of a formal stretch have them jog a lap around the field and then work on base running before you start throwing.
- 3.) Focus on the fundamentals
 - Spend a lot of time playing catch.
 - Roll grounders & throw fly balls before you start hitting them.
 - Treat every part of the game as a skill set and use them as stations during practice. This includes base running.
- 4.) Use exercise as a positive, not a negative
 - If player is being a distraction, have them go sit in the dugout.
 - Lean away from group punishment. This can sew seeds of discontent in your team towards teammates and coaching staff.
- 5.) End practice with a review session
 - Take 2-3 minutes to reinforce the things you taught that day.
 - Ask them questions and allow them time to answer.
 - Have a player show the rest of the team how to do a drill correctly.



UPPER BODY DYNAMIC FLEXIBILITY

1.) FORWARD ROCK

Purpose: To stretch the chest, back and shoulders.

Performance:

1. There are 3 hand positions- thumbs up, palms up & palms down.
2. Elbows in at sides- rock arms in forward motion; hands go from hips to shoulders.
3. Start with thumbs up, then palms up and finish with palms down.
4. Do 5 repetitions per hand position.

2.) ARM CIRCLES

Purpose: To stretch the chest, back and shoulders.

Performance:

1. There are 2 hand positions- palms up & palms down.
2. Raise arms shoulder high and out to each side of your body.
3. Place hands in the palms up position first. Start with 5 small circles, move on to 5 medium circles and finish with 5 large circles.
4. Rest for a moment and then repeat these motions with your hands now in the palms down position.

3.) ARM PRESSES

Purpose: To stretch the chest, back and shoulders.

Performance:

1. Bring your elbows chest high.
2. Press your elbows, forearms and palms together. Hold for 10 seconds.
3. Continue pressing them together and move your arms in an upward motion to the point where your elbows reach your temples.
4. Return your arms back to the starting position and repeat 5 times.

4.) FOREARM STRETCHES

Purpose: To stretch the forearm muscles.

Performance:

1. Raise one arm shoulder high and out in front of your body. Point the fingers of that hand to the sky with the palm facing away from your body.
2. Take your other hand and pull back on the fingers and thumb of the hand with the raised arm. Hold for 10 seconds.
3. Keep the same arm raised and now point your fingers down. Use your other hand to pull the fingers towards your body to stretch the other side of your forearm. Hold for 10 seconds.
4. Switch arms and repeat the process.

5.) ARM PULLS AND PUSHES

Purpose: To stretch the chest, back and shoulders.

Performance:

1. Raise your arms chest high and interlock your fingers. Have your throwing hand palm pointing out and glove hand palm pointing towards your chest.
2. Pull your fingers apart and then move your arms from side to side so the palm of your glove hand moves from each side of your chest. Do this for 10 seconds.
3. Rest for a moment and then perform the same exercise, only this time instead of pulling your fingers apart, push your hands together.

6.) SWIMMERS

Purpose: To stretch the chest, back and shoulders.

Performance:

1. This is similar to the “arm pulls and pushes” exercise.
2. Raise your arms chest high and interlock your fingers. Have your throwing hand palm pointing out and glove hand palm pointing towards your chest.
3. Pull your fingers apart and then move your arms forward in a swimming motion for 5 seconds and then in a swimming motion backwards for 5 more seconds.
4. Rest for a moment and then perform the same exercise, only this time instead of pulling your fingers apart, push your hands together.

7.) RIGHT ANGLE PASSES

Purpose: To stretch the shoulders.

Performance:

1. There are 3 hand positions- palms down, thumbs up and thumbs down.
2. Raise one arm shoulder high and out to the side of your body. Then create a right angle by bending your elbow and pointing your fingers straight. Your palm should be facing the ground.
3. Reach your other arm over and create resistance by pressing down on the top of your fingers. Hold for 5 seconds.
4. Continue with the resistance and now rotate your hand so your thumb is now pointing up. You will be pressing down on the top of your index finger. Hold this for 5 seconds.
5. Continue with the resistance and now rotate your hand so your thumb is now pointing down. You will be pressing down on the top of your pinkie finger. Hold this for 5 seconds.
6. Switch arms and repeat the process.

NOTES



LOWER BODY DYNAMIC FLEXIBILITY

1.) WALKING HIGH KNEE HUGS

Purpose: To stretch the hip flexors, glutes, lower back and shoulders.

Performance:

1. Take a long stride and drive the knee as high as possible.
2. Grab the knee with both hands and pull it up and in.
3. Repeat on opposite side.

2.) WALKING THIGH STRETCH

Purpose: To stretch the 4 major muscles in your thigh (quadriceps).

Performance:

1. Step out with a short stride with one foot while flexing the knee of the opposite foot bringing your heel towards your buttocks.
2. Grab the instep of the bent leg with the same side arm and pull the foot into your buttocks.
3. Repeat on the opposite side.

3.) ANKLE TO WAIST

Purpose: To stretch the glutes and hip flexors.

Performance:

1. Step out with a short stride with one foot while bringing the opposite foot up and across the body.
2. Grab the foot with both hands and pull up and in.
3. Repeat on the opposite side.

4.) FRANKENSTIEN WALK also known as PUNTERS

Purpose: To stretch the hamstrings and lower back.

Performance:

1. With arms extended straight out in front of your body, step forward with one leg keeping the back leg straight.
2. Kick the back leg up and touch the palm of your hand with the toes of your foot.
3. Repeat on the opposite side.

5.) LUNGE- ELBOW TO INSTEP

Purpose: To stretch the hip flexors, quads, groin, ankles and low back.

Performance:

1. Take a deep stride flexing your front knee to 90°.
2. Bring the elbow on the same side of the leg you lunged forward with, over and down attempting to touch the instep of your lead foot.
3. Repeat on the opposite side.
4. Remember to look forward to avoid rounding your back excessively.

6.) LUNGE W/ 180 DEGREE TWIST

Purpose: To stretch the hip flexors, hamstrings and glutes.

Performance:

1. With the elbows bent at 90° and held parallel to the ground, take a deep stride flexing your front knee to 90°.
2. Avoid touching the ground with the trailing knee.
3. While looking straight ahead, rotate the torso to the left and right 3 times.
4. Step through and repeat on the opposite side.

7.) POWER SKIP

Purpose: Preparatory movement to introduce the body to full speed drills (sprints and jumps).

Performance:

1. Execute an explosive and exaggerated skip utilizing an explosive knee lift with a simultaneous big arm swing.
2. Emphasize height (getting up), not distance (going out).

8.) SIDE SHUFFLE

Purpose: To stretch the abductors, adductors, glutes, ankles and hips.

Performance:

1. Stay on the balls of your feet with your hips in a low semi-squat position.
2. Shuffle laterally while maintaining the low squat position.
3. Repeat on the opposite side.

9.) CARIOCA

Purpose: To stretch the abductors, adductors, glutes, ankles and hips.

Performance:

1. Stay on the balls of your feet with your knees slightly bent in an athletic position.
2. Begin by twisting the hips and crossing one leg in front of the other, bring the trailing leg through, then cross the lead leg behind the trailing leg.
3. Keep your shoulders square so they are not swiveling with your hips.

10.) LUNGE JUMPS INTO A SPRINT

Purpose: To stretch the hamstrings, glutes, hip flexors and calves and improve acceleration.

Performance:

1. Take three bounding steps using a long stride on each.
2. Following the third step, accelerate into a sprint for ten yards.

11.) FORWARD RUN INTO A BACKWARD RUN

Purpose: Improve running form with directional changes.

Performance:

1. Run forward for five yards.
2. Make a quick 180° rotation while maintaining running speed.
3. Run backward an additional five yards.

12.) FORWARD RUN WITH A SPIN

Purpose: Improve running form with directional changes.

Performance:

1. Run forward for five yards.
2. Make a quick 360° rotation while maintaining running speed.
3. Run forward an additional five yards.