



Buffalo Hanover Baseball Association

Coaching Guidelines

INTRODUCTION

This program would not exist without your support as a coach. Volunteer coaches are amazing people. They spend time, money and effort teaching and promoting a game. This comes with nothing in return other than the satisfaction of carrying a tradition to the next generation.

From the bottom of our hearts – Thank You!

WHO IS THE BHBA?

We are a nonprofit organization whose mission is to provide Buffalo area youth with an opportunity to play competitive baseball, learn fundamental skills, increase knowledge of the game, and have fun while promoting sportsmanship, respect, and character on and off the field.

WHAT DO WE EXPECT FROM OUR COACHES?

We expect our coaches to set a strong and positive example for our players. Players look to their coaches as role models and will often mirror your attitude, behavior, and communication—both on and off the field.

COMMUNICATION EXPECTATIONS

Effective and consistent communication with team parents is essential.

- Communication should occur weekly.
- We recommend using the CrossBar app.
- Consistency is key (for example, a regular update every Sunday evening).

COACHING PHILOSOPHY

Our primary goal is player growth, not just results.

When we focus on getting better each day, positive results will naturally follow.

HANDLING CHALLENGING SITUATIONS

Negative situations may occur—and that’s okay. How they are handled matters.

When a situation involves a player:

1. Start with a private conversation with the player, away from the team.
2. If the issue continues, have a follow-up conversation with the parents to reinforce expectations and solutions.
3. If the behavior persists and becomes disruptive, notify your assigned team liaison for further support.

Our goal is to support you and help make your job easier.

When a situation involves a parent or guardian:

1. Always wait 24 hours before responding.
2. If the issue is not resolved after the initial response, inform your team liaison so they are aware and can assist.

Again, we are here to support you so you can stay focused on coaching and developing your team.

TOP FOUR COACHING RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Setting up your practice schedule.
 - a. You will be receiving a link to a Google Doc to schedule both indoor and outdoor practices.
 - b. It is critical to go back into the Google Doc and remove your team from the spreadsheet if you end up canceling a practice. This will prevent the city from charging us the use of the field.
2. Setting up your season schedule
3. Ensure you and staff have completed the Trusted Coaches training
4. Contact your scheduled ump to confirm.
 - a. The Google Doc schedule will have the scheduled ump listed for your home game as well as a phone number for the ump.

BHBA POSITION/PLAYING GUIDELINES

Playing is qualified by a minimum of 8 innings at a said position with no less than a 2 consecutive innings per game and no less than 2 games to allow for game experience and development throughout the season.

All players will need to start at least 6 games during the season.

"Playing" a position (does not include pitching). Pitching "opportunities" are defined below.

POSITION GUIDELINE

AAA/AA

9/10/11U – At least 4 positions (OF is comprised of 2 positions – center and corners)

12/13U - At least 3 positions (OF is comprised of 2 positions – center and corners)

14U Plus – Coach’s discretion. Players will be given opportunity to play all positions in practice and be placed in the best position to succeed and help the team win games.

A

9/10/11U – At least 5 positions (OF is comprised of 3 positions)

12/13U - At least 4 positions (OF is comprised of 3 positions)

14U Plus – Coach’s discretion. Players will be given opportunity to play all positions in practice and be placed in the best position to succeed and help the team win games.

PITCHING GUIDELINE

AAA

9/10/11U – 6innings throughout the season. An inning is justified by getting 3 defensive outs or 20 pitches. These guidelines are for all players unless a player/parent notifies the head coach that they do not want to pitch.

12/13/14U – 4innings throughout the season. An inning is justified by getting 3 defensive outs or 25 pitches. These guidelines are for all players unless a player/parent notifies the head coach that they do not want to pitch.
15U Plus – Coach’s discretion. High school rules apply.

BHBA POSITION/PLAYING GUIDELINES

AA/A

9/10/11U – 4innings throughout the season. An inning is justified by getting 3 defensive outs or 20 pitches. These guidelines are for all players unless a player/parent notifies the head coach that they do not want to pitch.
12/13/14U – 3innings throughout the season. An inning is justified by getting 3 defensive outs or 25 pitches. These guidelines are for all players unless a player/parent notifies the head coach that they do not want to pitch.
15U Plus – Coach’s discretion. High school rules apply.

CATCHING GUIDELINE

AAA/AA/A

9/10/11U – 4innings (2-2 inning blocks) consecutively within the season. These guidelines are for all players unless a player/parent notifies the head coach that they do not want to pitch.
12U Plus – Coach discretion within guidelines for heat and player safety.

BATTING GUIDELINE

AAA/AA/A

9/10/11/12U – Team batting orders must rotate throughout the season using the guidelines below.

- Each player will be given the opportunity to bat leadoff during the season.
- Each player will be given the opportunity to bat 4th thru 6th during the season.
- Each player will be given the opportunity to bat 7th and lower during the season.

13U Plus – Coaches can build their lineups accordingly to : contact rate, on-base percentage, speed, power and baserunning IQ. Coaches can adjust the lineup throughout the season.

PRACTICE GUIDELINES

- We start our practices in mid-March and until fields are ready to play, these take place in gyms. You will be sent a Google doc to reserve gym space.
- For gym practices we suggest holding two practices per week to focus on the following.
- For batting cage, you can divide your team into two groups to keep the numbers low for the cage.
 - Group #1 – Focus on soft toss against the outside of the net.

- Group #2 – Focus on tee work on the outside of the net.
- Group #3 – Either coach pitch or pitting machine inside of the cage.
- For practice in gym space, we suggest to work on these specifics:
 - Pitching and catching is a great activity to start in the gym.
 - Basic groundball foot work and throwing.
 - Basic base running (home to 1st, stealing, etc...)
 - Practices in the gym can get boring so don't be afraid to throw in a wiffle ball game!
- When fields are ready to be used you will be notified and will have access to our online field schedule.
 - It is critical to remove your team from a field location if a game or practice gets cancelled. This will prevent us from getting charged by the city.
 - We suggest two practices each week lasting 1.5 hours in duration.
 - During the season when you have two games in one week we suggest to arrive 45 mins prior to the games for practice/warm-up.
 - During busy weeks it has also worked well to hold shorter practices on Sunday evenings to focus on just hitting. These can be optional in nature.
 - If you have a practice that is scheduled on the field schedule and it gets canceled it is important to remove it from the online schedule so the BHBA does not get charged.