



Junior Farm - Best Practices & Rules Summary



"The objective of the HLL shall be to implant firmly in the children of the town, the ideals of good sportsmanship, honesty, loyalty, courage, respect for authority, baseball skills, and a love for the game so that they may be well adjusted, stronger, and happier citizens and will grow to be good, decent, healthy, and trustworthy citizens with an understanding of and interest in baseball."

Communication:

- Coaches should send out weekly email to parents to remind them of the week ahead and determine attendance for the week.
- Coaches should have contact information for an adult responsible for each player during all practices and games.

Pre-game Practice:

- There is no separate practice at the Jr. Farm level. Coaches should use the first 30-45 minutes of the allotted 1.5 hours of field time for practice. Typically, more practice time is appropriate at the beginning of the season. Managers of the respective teams should assess their teams and come to an agreement as to start time of the game.
- Routine is important: start each practice the same way (e.g., run, stretch, throw), before moving into stations such as fielding, batting, baserunning.
- Use multiple stations, with 1 coach at each station, to keep players engaged and active.
- Drills should focus on basic skills. For hitting, consider drills such as a side toss, soft toss, hitting into a net so that a coach can instruct on form. For fielding, teach proper footwork and positioning, as well as basic situational play.
- No players should be holding bats unless they are supervised and engaged in hitting drill
- Explain rules and strategy during practice so that players understand what they are practicing and why.

Pre-game:

- All lines up should be rotational. Please keep the same order but remember who made last out of game so the next kid who would have gotten up, leads off next game (best hitters do not get more at-bats than everyone else).
- Create positional roster for each inning prior to the game (need not be posted). Rotate kids through positions. Kids should switch between IF and OF.



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AS A COACH, YOU ARE A ROLE MODEL FOR ALL PLAYERS, COACHES, AND SPECTATORS. YOUR DUTY IS TO FOSTER A POSITIVE ENVIRONMENT FOR THE KIDS TO PLAY BASEBALL. HLL HAS A ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY FOR ANY BEHAVIOR WHICH UNDERMINES THIS OBJECTIVE OF HLL.

Batting

- Each team bats through their whole batting order each inning.
- Coaches pitch to their players. There are no strike-outs or walks.
- If a player cannot hit a coach-pitched ball after approximately 5 good pitches, then the coach should let the player hit from the tee. The goal for this level is for players to regularly hit coach pitching by the end of the season.

Fielding

- Fielders may make an out; however, at the beginning of the season, the player may remain on the base. As the season progresses, opposing coaches should assess their team and discuss whether players should leave the base if they are out. If coaches cannot come to an agreement, then players will remain on the base. All players bat each inning regardless.
- Infielders should play actual positions, to the extent possible. Any players not playing in the infield may play in the outfield.
- Don't allow outfielders to creep into infield and make sure players are spread out in field at actual positions (to the extent possible). In no event should more than one player play pitcher or at the same depth as the pitcher position.
- Instruct players to not throw the ball around. Throw the ball to pitcher and all runners must stop
- Once the ball is back to the pitcher, any runners on base are frozen and must return to the base from which they came unless they have reached the next successive base by the time the pitcher has the ball
- Base-runners may advance ONE base on an overthrow

Coaching

- Coaches are encouraged to be in the field (with team) to help alert kids regarding where they can make a force play, general positioning, and keeping them focused
- Both teams are collectively responsible for post-game field duties, including cleaning dugouts; raking, dragging, and watering pitcher's mound; raking infield; filling in any holes; other repairs.