

BASE RUNNING DRILL

COACHES: Here's an interesting base running drill you might want to try. It can be used at Squirt level, but probably fits best at Pee Wee and Bantam.

The idea is to incorporate base running into batting practice.

This can be done very easily by dividing your players into groups of four to take batting practice. One group hits while the others play defense or work the batting tees.

HITTING GROUP

One player will hit. The next hitter will warm-up on deck. The 3rd and 4th players will run "circuits" on the bases. These circuits are designated by the coach. Players will always run after they hit. We normally hit three times with at least 10 swings each.

The circuits are:

Circuit #1:

At first base, fake steal and read the contact to get to second base. Once at second base, get a two-out lead and score on a base hit.

Circuit #2

At first base, hit & run. Stop at second base. Then take a regular lead and read contact to get to third base. At third base, call for a squeeze by the batter.

Circuit #3

At first base take a straight steal second base. At second base, fake steal and read contact. At third base, tag and score on a fly ball.

Coaching points:

Players should take their actions seriously. They should wear helmets. They must go back to the bag after each pitch to simulate getting the sign and taking a new lead. If they need to, they can skip a couple of "BP" throws to catch their breath and get ready for their next move.

The two players running the bases should make sure to "stagger" themselves so that they will not run up on the next runner. This is a great drill to teach base running savvy, awareness, and alertness. It is also a great way to condition. Make sure that each player stretches and warms up before doing this drill.

Another thing you might consider is those young players that need additional base running work may be ran extra during batting practice if they need it. Teach them to be aggressive.

Another great point is to teach them to anticipate the "pitch in the dirt." If they get a "dirt ball read," they should break. They should develop confidence in their own decision-making ability and learn to "trust their eyes."