

SOUTH VANCOUVER LITTLE LEAGUE

BLASTBALL

Training Manual



INTRODUCTION

BlastBall will be your child's first introduction to baseball and team sports. Your child will be instructed in the fundamental skills required to play baseball, in the discipline and organization of team sports, and in respect for their coaches, their teammates and themselves. Above all, it is our intention to make BlastBall **FUN** and **EDUCATIONAL** so that each child will be inspired to adopt BlastBall and T-Ball as an active recreational activity on the way to participation in competitive baseball. To that end we have put together a 'Training Manual' to help you develop your team with baseball oriented warm-ups and drills. **REMEMBER** competitive games are fun, but winning is not the main focus. Promote good sportsmanship, stay enthusiastic and reward effort rather than success. There should be no negative comments about or to umpires, coaches and fellow team members.

Running a Session of BlastBall

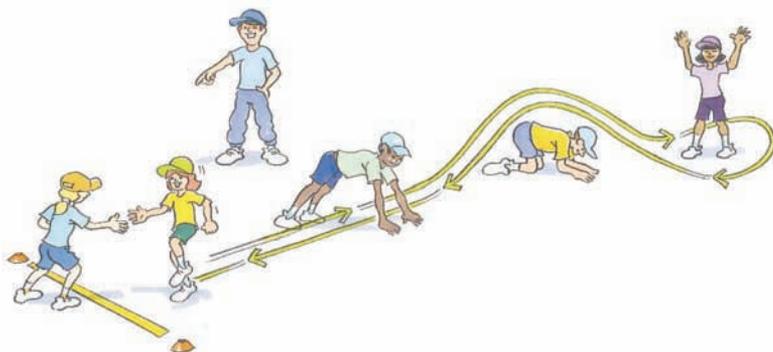
Each session of BlastBall should run for no longer than 1 hour. The hour should be split up - half an hour of activity stations culminating in a half hour game of BlastBall. You may like to run two sessions a week - this all depends on your team and the general interest of children.

BlastBall Session Plans and Set Up

- Set up the field into a variety of activity stations: throwing, fielding, hitting.
- It is recommended that all stations are set up before the commencement of each session. This will allow for a smoother transition between stations.
- Assign each team to an activity.
- Set a time limit for each drill. This may vary, however each activity should last for 5-10 minutes. Once the teams have completed their activities players are then encouraged to have a game of BlastBall.

WARM UP IDEAS

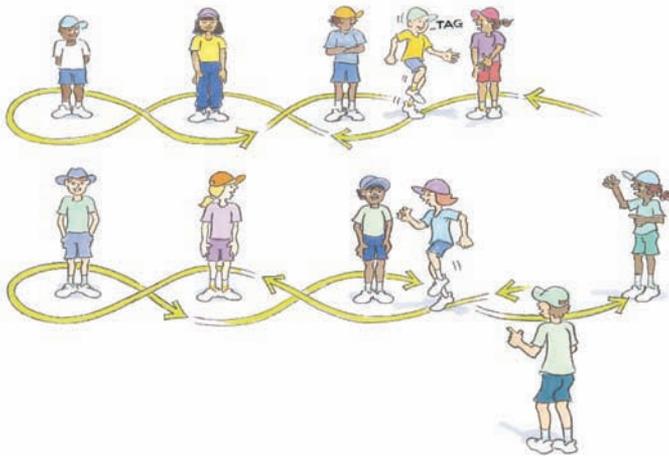
1. Bridge Stone Tree Relay



Teams of 6 line up behind a cone. The coach signals and first team member runs in front of team and makes a bridge; second person runs out, runs under bridge and makes a stone; third person runs out, under bridge, over the stone and makes a tree; fourth person runs out under bridge, over stone and around tree and repeats on the way back to tag fifth member, who repeats and tags sixth. When sixth (last) person runs around tree, the tree follows them back, when the tree jumps over the stone the stone follows back, the stone goes under bridge and the bridge follows back. First team back wins. Repeat 2-3 times then change bridge, stone and tree.

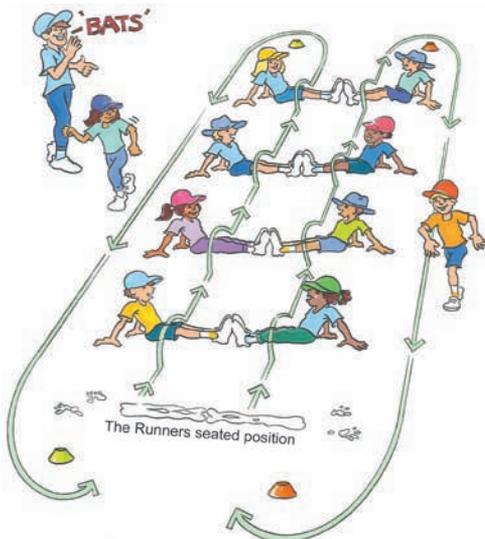
WARM UP IDEAS

2. Weave Relay



Teams of 5-6 players line up with 1-2 metres between each member of the team. On a signal from the coach the last person sprints down weaving between each member of their team. Players then go around front person, and weave back to tag next person in line. Second runner weaves down around front person and around back and tags third runner. Repeat until front runner weaves up around and back and weaves down to their position.

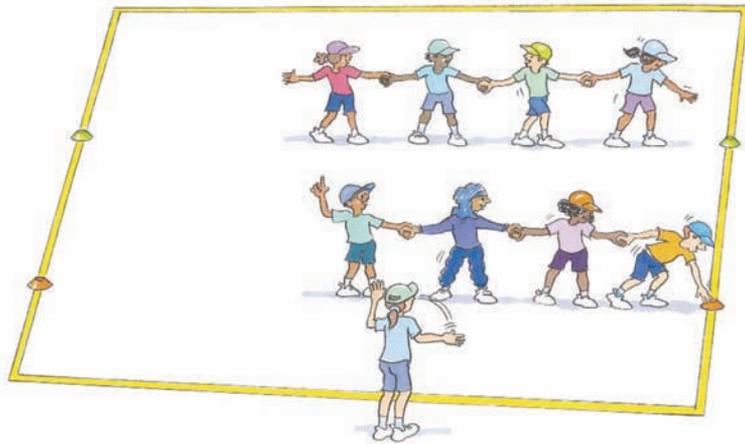
3. Baseball Ladder



Organise players in pairs, sitting in two lines facing each other so that feet are touching the person opposite (straight legs). Each pair sits two metres apart. The coach moves down the line giving each pair a name in baseball terms. The coach then calls out terms one at a time. Pairs named by that term, stand up and down the line, stepping over the other players legs, before running around cones placed 5 metres in front of the lines. Players then run back down the outside to cones placed at the back of the lines, before returning over other players legs back to their original position before sitting down again. The coach alternates baseball terms until all players have participated. If the coach calls out "Baseball Ladder", the first pair in the line run. Once they return to their original position, the 2nd pair run, and so on, until all have run.

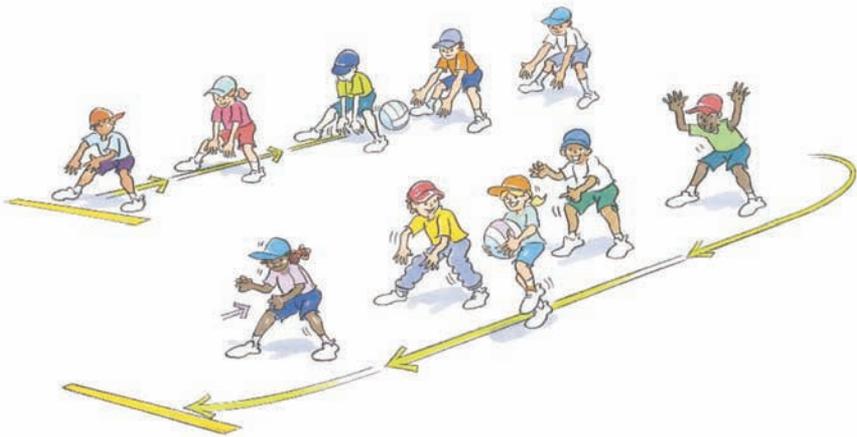
WARM UP IDEAS

4. Sideways race



Groups of four hold hands and face the coach. Each group lines up behind a group of 4 in front. The coach stands in front of the groups and gives a signal indicating a direction (e.g. left or right). The groups keep holding hands while they try to run to the side and the person nearest that side touches a line on the ground or cone marker. The group then runs back to the opposite side and then back to the middle, all the while holding hands.

5. Tunnel Ball Relay



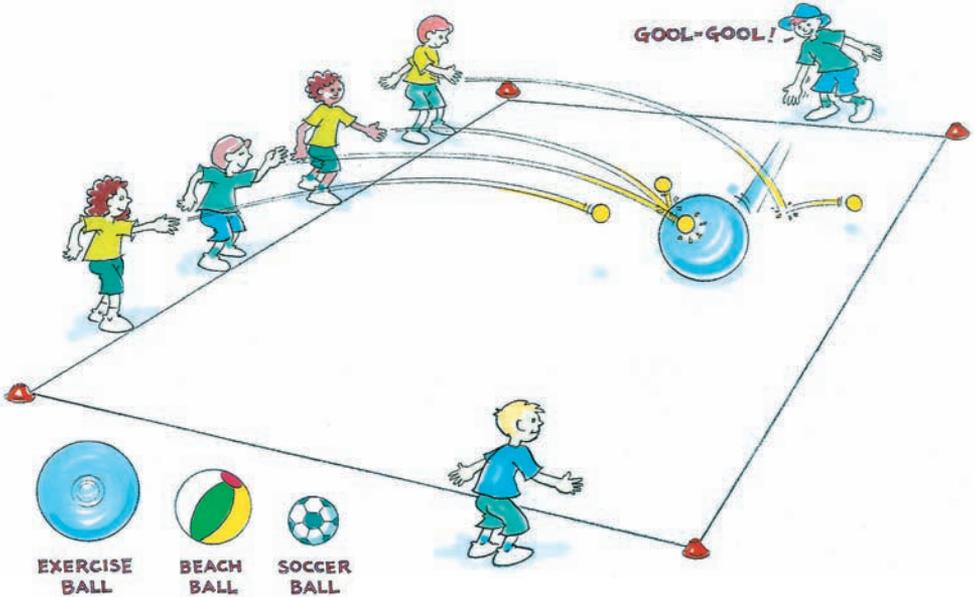
Teams of 5-6 players line up in a straight line with 1-2 metres between each team member. Front person has Blastball. On signal "Go", all jump with feet astride and front person rolls ball between legs. Last person in line collects ball and runs to front of team. As last person runs to front each team member moves back one place. Continue until original leader runs to front with ball.

THROWING

Activity 1: Going! Going!

Objective

A large ball is rolled and players try to hit it with a baseball.



What to do

- A coach is designated as the roller calls out 'going-going' and rolls the ball in front of the other players, who attempt to hit it with their baseballs (can choose between soft core, tennis or whiffle ball).

What you need

- Markers to define a rectangular playing area.
- 1 or 2 balls per player (to throw at the moving target)
- A variety of balls to be used as targets of different sizes

Skill focus

Improves throwing accuracy

Change it

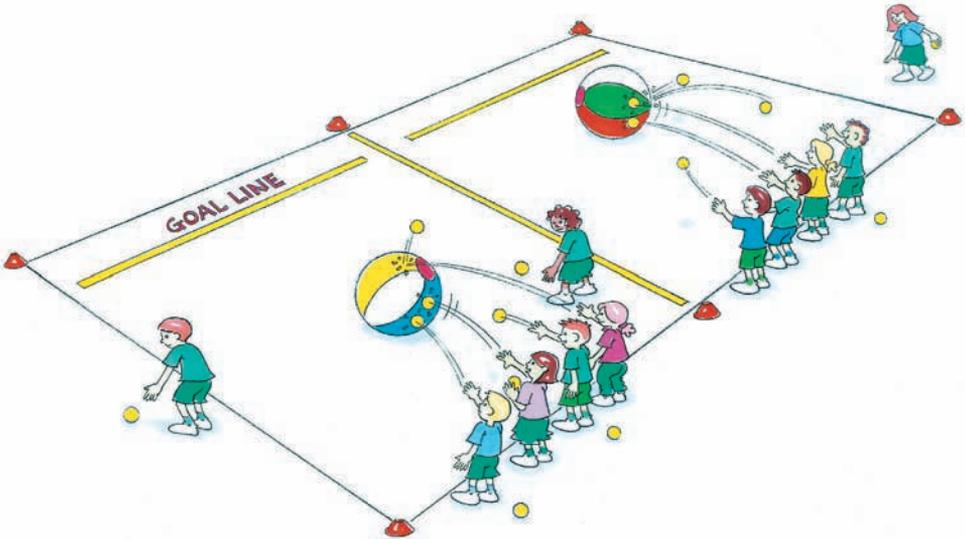
Vary the size of the target ball for varying abilities.

THROWING

Activity 2: Bombard

Objective

2 or more teams working in parallel throw tennis balls at a large target ball and try to move the target ball over a goal line. (4 or more players.)



What to do

- Mark out throwing line and goal line for both parallel teams.
- Each player is given two baseballs.
- Coach calls out PLAY BALL which is the sign that players are to throw baseballs at the large target ball.
- If necessary, call 'STOP!', allowing players to retrieve balls that are in their playing area - this may include some opposition balls. Restart play once all players have moved back out of the playing area.
- Allow time-outs to discuss tactics.
- First target ball to cross the goal line scores a point.

What you need

- Playing area around half the size of a volleyball court divided into separate areas.
- Markers to define playing area, throwing line and goal line.
- Two large target balls.
- 2 baseball per player.

Skill focus

Improves throwing accuracy, teamwork and communication.

Change it

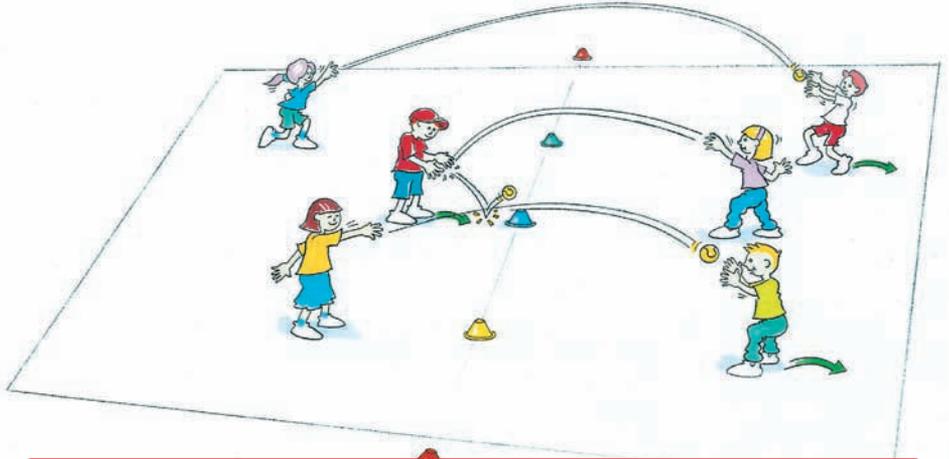
Vary the size of the target ball.

THROWING

Activity 3: Long Throw

Objective

Players are to throw a baseball and catch it in their glove without dropping it advancing further apart when the ball is caught on the full and not dropped.



What to do

- Split the group of players up into pairs.
- Distribute one ball per pair.
- Use markers to establish a 'gate' that the ball has to pass through.
- The ball is thrown between the two players. If the ball reaches the catcher on the full, both the catcher and thrower take one step back.
- If the ball is dropped by either the catcher or thrower both players take one step forward.

What you need

- Markers to define 'gate'.
- One baseball per pair
- Baseball glove (not essential).

Skill focus

- Improves throwing and catching ability.
- Builds team work.

Change it

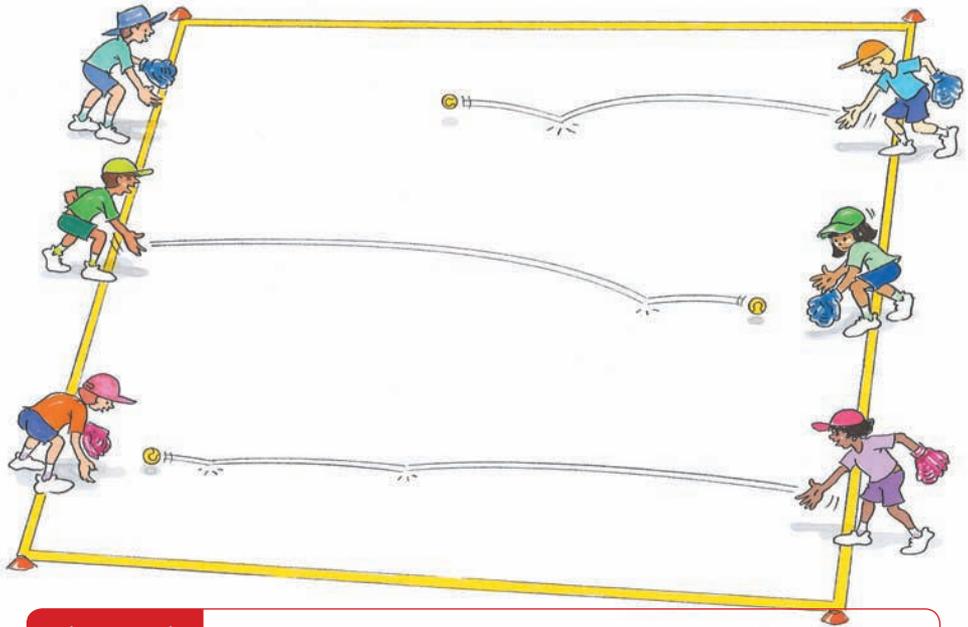
- **Cooperative circle challenge** - Step back if they catch the ball. If the ball is dropped the catcher stays on the circle or makes one step towards the circle if they are further out. After each round, the centre person changeplace with the next person in the rotation and goes to that person's position, either in the circle or further out.
- **Team size and field shape** - Team size and design different fields, i.e. triangle/three per side, square/four per side.
- **Other** - Vary the type of throw, left or right hand, vary the ball, vary the size of the circle.

FIELDING

Activity 1: Co-operative Rolls

Objective

Partners roll a ball to each other, striving for maximum number without a fumble.



What to do

- Mark out an appropriate distance for players to stand apart.
- Split players into pairs.
- Commence rolling with pairs striving for maximum number of rolls without a fumble.

What you need

- Marker cones to define distance between players.
- Balls for rolling.
- Baseball gloves.

Skill focus

- Fielding practice.
- Hand eye coordination.
- Team work and communication.

Change it

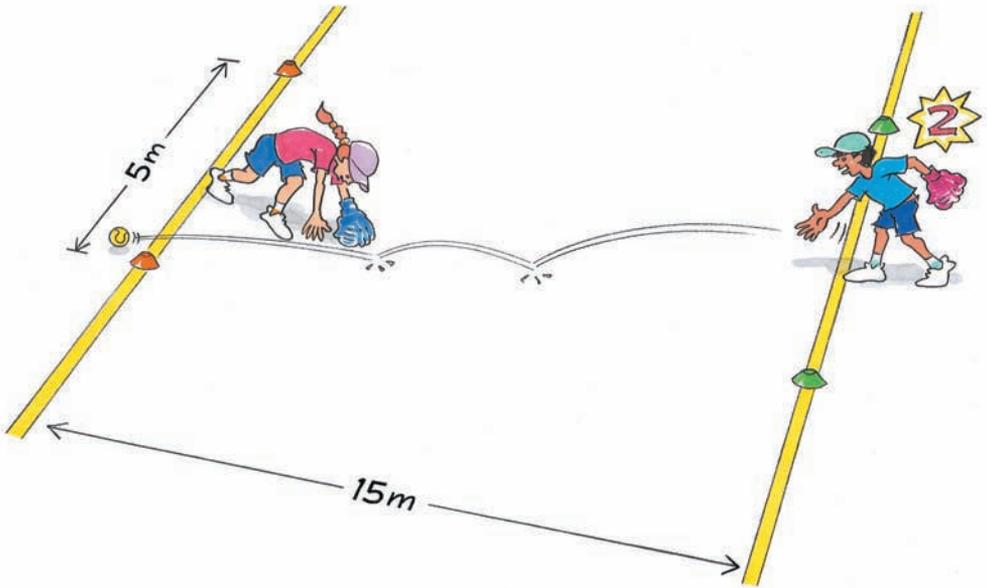
- **Co-operative ball hops** - Same setup but the ball bounces off the ground before being caught
- **Co-operative catch** - Same setup but the ball cannot touch the ground.

FIELDING

Activity 2: Competitive Rolls

Objective

Partners attempt to roll a ball past each other through a goal.



What to do

- Mark out a reasonable distance for players to stand apart (5-15m).
- Mark out goals of reasonable width (5-10m) at either end for each player.
- Ball must be rolled (must bounce at least twice).
- One point for a fumble, two points for allowing a goal, first to 10 points loses.
- If ball is caught on the full or one bounce takes then the score is taken back to zero.

What you need

- Marker cones to define distance between players and goals.
- Balls for rolling.

Skill focus

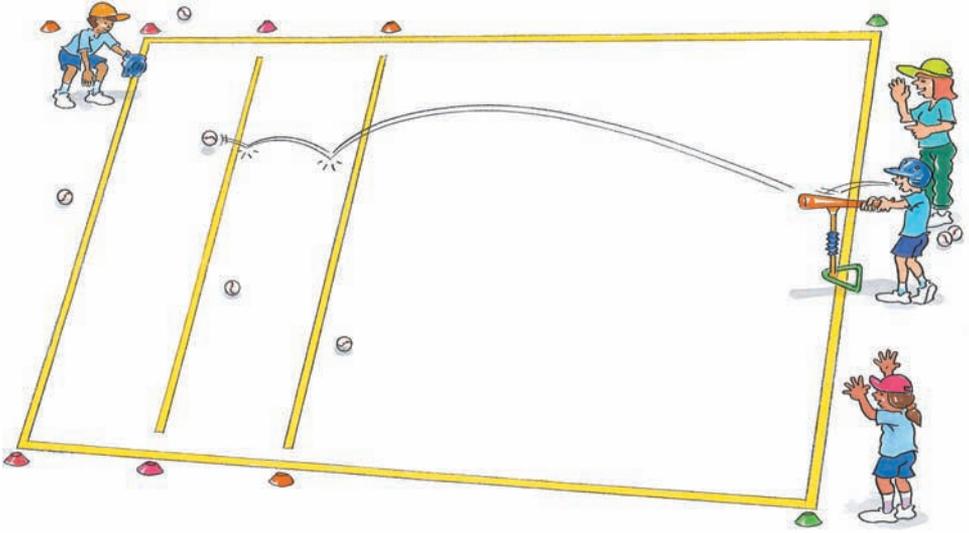
- Fielding, catching and throwing practice.
- Hand eye coordination.

HITTING

Activity 1: Long Ball

Objective

To hit a ball as far as possible to a designated area.



What to do

- Mark out a batting line with a batting tee.
- Mark out designated areas for the ball to be hit to: marked lines, cones, fence.
- Commence hitting.

What you need

- Marker cones to establish batting line and designated hitting area.
- Hitting tee's.
- Safety whiffle or tennis balls and bats.

Skill focus

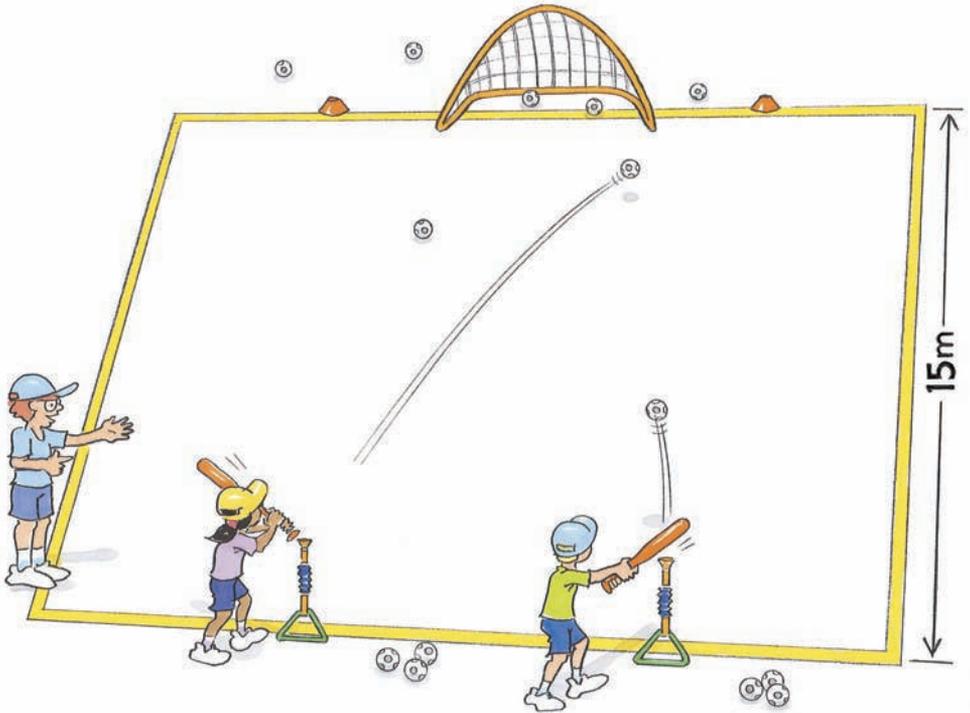
- Hitting practice.
- Hand eye coordination.
- Watching the ball.

HITTING

Activity 2: Target-Tee

Objective

For a batter to hit a ball off a hitting tee to a specific target area.



What to do

- Depending on team sizes, place enough hitting tee's along a straight line, every player should have their own tee.
- If possible, provide each player with around 10 whiffle balls. Whiffle balls are ideal as the player can still practice good technique whilst reduce safety concerns and time spent collecting balls.
- Place a chosen target approximately 15-20m from the hitting tee. This distance can be varied depending on mobility.
- Allow players to hit all balls and provide coaching where necessary.

What you need

- Hitting tee's.
- Safety whiffle or tennis balls and bats.
- Target (i.e. cones, specific target zones, fence)

Skill focus

- Hitting practice.
- Hand eye coordination.
- Watching the ball.

HOW TO PLAY THE GAME

The defensive players take an infield or outfield position. A BlastBall is placed on the BlastTee and the first batter hits the ball and runs to the BlastBase. If the batter reaches the Base (the only base used) before a defensive player either catches the BlastBall in the air (an automatic out) or fields it and yells "BLAST", he scores a run. If the ball is caught or fielded and "BLAST" is yelled before the runner gets to the BlastBase, then the runner is out. It's just that simple!

The (half) inning ends by batting once around the line-up.

The BlastBase is audible, emitting a loud "H O N K" that the kids love whenever the runner stomps on the base. When fielded, the defensive player can throw the BlastBall back to an adult positioned near home plate (safely away from the Tee).

Gloves are not needed because of the softness and size of the Ball. The fear factor of being hit is eliminated from the game all together. While batting helmets are not needed because the BlastBall is not being pitched or thrown to make the out, for optimum safety, helmets are recommended (bicycle helmets are OK).

Field Set-Up

Position your BlastTee so that hitting allows you a safe area of play. Like a regular ball diamond, from the Tee pace off 30 feet to the right and position your BlastBase. This establishes your fair/foul line to the right.

To the left of the Tee and perpendicular to your BlastBase line, pace off an equal distance and position your Cone. This establishes your fair/foul line to the left.

Now pace off 15 feet directly in front of the Tee and lay out your Line Marker running between the (hypothetical) first and third base lines. This becomes the fair/foul line for play. If a ball is hit inside of that line, it is foul and should be re-teed for another try. If it goes beyond the line, either in the air or on a roll, it is considered in play.

This equipment is kept in the equipment box at the T-Ball diamond. If a T-Ball coach has not opened the box, go to concession (if it's open) or find another coach to get the key.

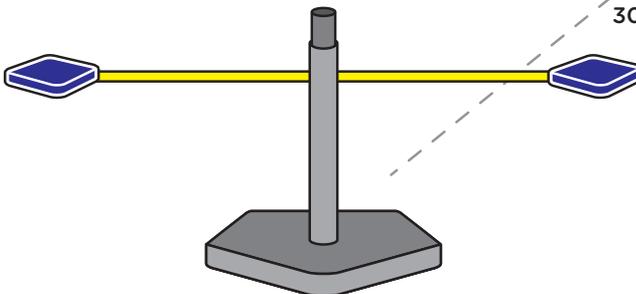
Field Cone



BlastBase



Line Marker
placed 15' in front of Tee



BlastTee