

# HB Cal Ripken T-Ball League Games & Practices

**NOTE:** Target one game and one practice/week

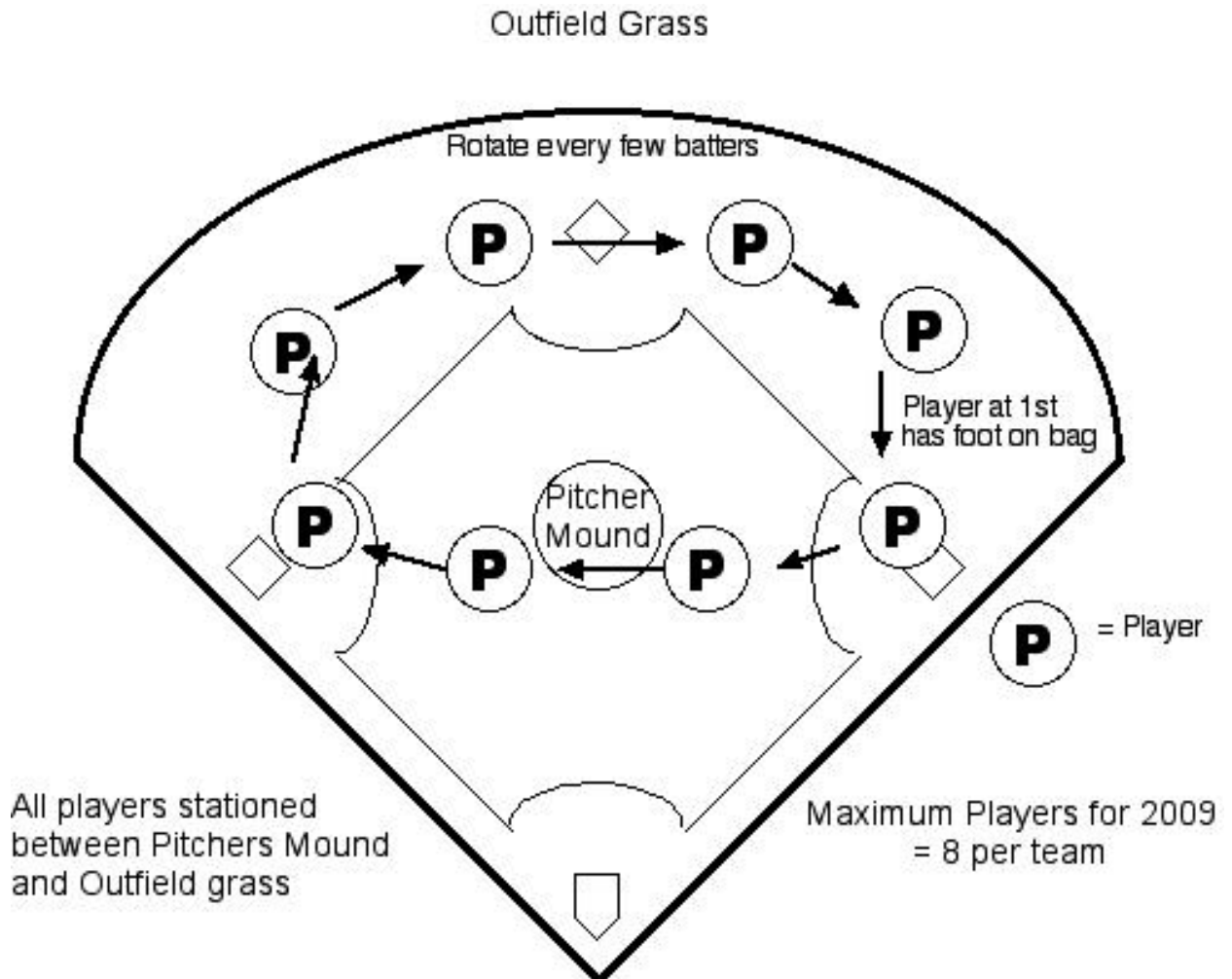
## Practice Guidelines:

- Practices will last approximately 45 to 60 minutes
- A portion of each practice shall include “clinic-style” drills to develop good baseball mechanics.
  - Example: break up your team into smaller groups (i.e. 4 groups of 3 for a 12-player team). Each group should constitute a “station” which develops a different mechanic – i.e. fielding ground ball, throwing, catching, and proper grip and swing of the bat.
  - 5 to 10 repetitions per player for each drill is suggested.
  - Several drills can take place at one time, splitting the players up amongst the coaches. Encourage parents to take part in the drills as you likely will not have enough coaches.
  - Head coach oversees the drills after demonstration of skill.
  - The suggested group size for drills is 3 to no more than 4 players, this will keep them all involved and attentive.
- **DO NOT** teach situational awareness to T-Ballers – i.e. man on first, 1 out, where do you throw the ball?
  - All balls fielded by players are to be thrown to first base, no double plays.
  - Teach fielders how to “beat the runner” to first base – i.e. fielder must get ball to first baseman before runner touches the bag. This becomes a fun game for the kids and builds limited rules awareness. Runner sits down if ball is caught by first baseman before he gets to the bag.
- Have players run the bases after practice.
- Give plenty of water breaks.
- Have FUN!

## Games:

- Length of games will be approximately 45 to 60 minutes in length with a 15 minute warm-up/practice prior – at the Head Coach discretion towards last games of the season.
- Innings will end after all players have batted.
  - The last batter hits home run! Have a different last batter the next inning.
- There will be no walks or strikeouts.
- The ball is hit off a batting tee; there is no pitching. The last week of the season may be used to introduce “Coach Pitch” but the ball is to be under handed.
- Ball must travel at least 10 feet, or it is foul
- Player that fields the ball always throws to first base. There is no situational awareness being taught at the T-Ball level. However, you may instruct fielders on how to “beat the runner” to first base by getting them to throw ball to the first baseman before the runner gets there (see also Practice guidelines below). The runner sits down if the ball is caught by first baseman before they get to the base.
- No stealing. Player stays on base until ball is hit.
- All batters (and runners) wear helmets.
- To avoid “boredom-factor”, rotate fielder positions every other batter as shown in Figure 1 below.
- Batters will not be able to take extra bases (i.e.: doubles, triples, etc...)
  - Batter must run through first base to an orange cone.
- No double plays
- Scoring will not be kept.
- There will be no sliding.
- Field of play will be limited to traditional infield (Figure 1).
- Outfield will be the outermost portion of traditional infield (Figure 1).

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**Figure 1: T-Ball Field of Play Based on 8 Player Team (2009)**

Note: extra players are placed in outfield

## Suggestions/Guidelines :

- Emphasize building NEW friendships!
- Line up the players before each game or practice and lead them in stretching exercises (i.e.: touch their toes, jumping jacks, running in place, etc...)
- ALWAYS BE POSITIVE. If a player makes a nice throw, tell them; "NICE THROW" or if they make a not so good throw, say "NICE TRY"
- MAKE IT FUN!
- Give plenty of water breaks.
- Help your opposing team's coaches if you see something that they may not or lend a coach to their team if they are short-handed.
- Emphasize the "TEAM" concept and that no one player is more important than another.
- Keep their interest in the game while on the bench. No horse play!
- There should NEVER be more than two bats being swung at the same time (i.e.: player at the plate, player on deck). Always have a coach working with the player on deck. **Do not allow on-deck batter to swing on his/her own.**
- No player, other than the one at the plate and the one on deck, should be outside of the bench area during a game.
- Player on deck must be wearing a helmet.
- Have players run through the first base bag to orange cone.
- If a ball gets by the player, make sure they hustle after it and throw it in to coach.