



TEE BALL COACH'S MASTER HANDBOOK

A Comprehensive Guide for Practices, Games, and Chaos Management

Welcome to the Dugout: A Note to Our Coaches

First of all, thank you for stepping up. Whether you are a baseball veteran or have never picked up a glove, your primary goal this season is simple: make sure these kids want to come back next year.

This guide is designed to be your "coaching shortcut." It replaces complex technical jargon with fun, visual cues that 5-year-olds actually understand. Don't feel pressured to master every drill in the first week; instead, use this manual as a flexible menu to keep practice moving.

The secret to a successful season isn't a perfect win-loss record—it's high energy, short explanations, and lots of high-fives. Don't overthink it. **If the kids are moving, laughing, and occasionally running toward the right base, you're doing a fantastic job.**

Tee Ball is Baseball... Simplified

**“This is a simple game. You throw the ball. You hit the ball.
You catch the ball. You got it?” – Skip, Bull Durham**

The Big Five: Core Skills Fundamentals

Tee Ball is just like baseball, no matter what your eyes may tell you. From Tee Ball to the Big Leagues, the game never changes. Focus on these five pillars to build a solid foundation.

Fielding: Beat the "Beehive"

Kids naturally swarm the ball. Teach them to stay in their "home" and use their body as a backstop.

- The Bridge: Feet wider than shoulders for a rock-solid base.
- The Pocket: Glove glued to the dirt—don't let the ball "tunnel" under.
- The Cover: Bare hand ready to "chomp" the ball once it hits the glove.

Throwing: Safety & Form

Prevent the "shot-put" push by building a "Long Arm" motion.

- The Look First Rule: Never throw until you see your partner's eyes.
- The Statue Rule: If you aren't throwing, stand still. No running through throwing lanes.
- The Glove House: The ball lives in the glove until the moment of the throw. No "windmilling."

Catching: Build Confidence

Eliminate the "scared turn." Use soft balls to teach them to track the ball into the mitt.

- The Window: Keep the glove open and facing the ball.
- The Fingers: "Fingers up" for high balls; "Fingers down" for low balls.
- The Squeeze: Wait for the "pop," then trap the ball.

Hitting: The Tee Checklist

Before every swing, check these three things:

- Feet: Wide, balanced, and "glued" to the ground.
- Hands: Up by the ear (like holding a phone).
- Eyes: Nose pointing at the ball throughout the entire swing.

Baserunning: Speed & Geometry

Tee ballers get lost. Teach them that the "Bases are the Map."

- The Direction: Ensure they know First Base is the only destination.
- The Bag: Direct contact—aim for the middle of the white bag.
- The Finish: Sprint through 1st Base and Home Plate. Don't slow down at the arrival.

Practice Makes Perfect, Even If Practice Isn't Perfect

Starting out as a tee ball coach is equal parts rewarding and chaotic. The goal isn't to build a Major Leaguer in one afternoon; it's to make sure they don't try to eat the dirt and that they know which way to run.

The 4 Pillars of a Great Practice

1. Keep 'em Moving: No lines longer than a few kids.
2. Keep it Visual: Use cues like the "Alligator," "Statue," and "Rocket Ship".
3. The "Safety Circle": No bats in hands unless they are at the tee.
4. End on a High: Always finish with a race or a "Home Run Derby."

To keep 5 and 6-year-olds engaged, you need a "**Consistency Sandwich**": Start and end every practice the same way, but swap the "filling" (the drills) to keep things fresh.

The "**small group station**" model is the holy grail of tee ball coaching. It cuts standing-around time by 50% and allows for more repetitions. That said, all our practices and drills can be run by a single coach if absolutely necessary.

But, do yourself a favor and walk up to a parent and directly ask if they will help with a specific task. You'll almost certainly get a "yes" from them. If you just ask the group of parents glued to their phones for help, you will not be so lucky.

Pro-Tip: At this age, brevity is your best friend. If an explanation takes longer than 30 seconds, you've lost them. Use "Go" words and physical demonstrations.

Coach's Golden Rule: If they are smiling at the end of the hour, you won the game. Keep talk time under 30 seconds and keep the energy high!





Tee Ball Practice Planner *(Single Station)*

Date: _____ | Practice #: _____ | Team: _____

🕒 0:00–0:10 | The Warm-Up

- **Activity:** _____
 - **Cues/Goals:** _____
-

🕒 0:10–0:25 | Skill Station A (Fielding, Throwing or Catching)

- **Drill Name:** _____
 - **Key Visual Cue:** _____
 - **Setup:** [] Balls [] Cones [] Gloves
-

🕒 0:25–0:40 | Skill Station B (Hitting or Baserunning)

- **Drill Name:** _____
 - **Key Visual Cue:** _____
 - **Setup:** [] Tee [] Bat [] Helmets
-

🕒 0:40–0:55 | Team Game (Fun or Competitive)

- **Game:** _____
 - **Rule:** _____
-

🕒 0:55–1:00 | The Wrap-Up

- **Cleanup:** 60 Seconds
- **Team Shoutout:** (Pick one kid who did a great job listening today)
- **Reminder:** (Next game or practice time/Location)
- **Team Cheer**



Tee Ball Practice Planner *(Multi-Station)*

Date: _____ | Practice #: _____ | Team: _____

0:00–0:10 | The Warm-Up

- **Activity:** _____
- **Cues/Goals:** _____

0:10–0:25	Skill Station A (Fielding, Throwing or Catching) Drill Name: _____ Key Visual Cue: _____ Setup: [] Balls [] Cones [] Gloves	Skill Station B (Hitting or Baserunning) Drill Name: _____ Key Visual Cue: _____ Setup: [] Tee [] Bat [] Helmets
0:25–0:40	Skill Station B (Hitting or Baserunning) Drill Name: _____ Key Visual Cue: _____ Setup: [] Tee [] Bat [] Helmets	Skill Station A (Fielding, Throwing or Catching) Drill Name: _____ Key Visual Cue: _____ Setup: [] Balls [] Cones [] Gloves

0:40–0:55 | Team Game (Fun or Competitive)

- **Game:** _____
- **Rule:** _____

0:55–1:00 | The Wrap-Up

- **Cleanup:** 60 Seconds
- **Team Shoutout:** (Pick one kid who did a great job listening today)
- **Reminder:** (Next game or practice time/Location)
- **Team Cheer**

Sample 12 Practice Rotation

Keep the first and last 10 minutes the same every week for consistency.

Using the selection of drills that follow at the end of this guide, select a drill from each competency as you populate a plan for each practice.

Note: When you get your schedule, make sure to modify your practice plan for the practice before your first game. You will want to play a mini-game of an inning or two so that players get a feeling for switching from the batting team to the fielding team, and vice versa.

Practice	Drill A	Drill B	Ending Game
1	Fielding	Throwing	Baserunning
2	Hitting	Catching	Relay Race
3	Fielding	Hitting	Home Run Derby
4	Throwing	Catching	Baserunning
5	Fielding	Throwing	Relay Race
6	Hitting	Catching	Home Run Derby
7	Fielding	Hitting	Baserunning
8	Throwing	Catching	Relay Race
9	Fielding	Throwing	Home Run Derby
10	Hitting	Catching	Baserunning
11	Fielding	Hitting	Relay Race
12	Throwing	Catching	Water Balloon Derby

Game Day Management

The "Bench Train" (Dugout)

- Assign every kid a numbered spot on the bench (1–12).
- When a batter leaves, everyone slides down one "seat."
- Rule: Only the batter currently hitting is allowed to touch a bat.

The "Magic Circles" (Fielding)

- Draw circles in the dirt at every position, or use the 'Pizza Slices' visualization.
- Kids are "Statues in a Museum" and must stay in their circle/slice until the ball is hit to prevent "The Beehive" (everyone chasing the same ball).

The "Switch"

- When the last batter hits, the coaches initiate the Batters for Fielders switch
- Practice this before game time - it's worth a trial run!
- Batters drop helmets in a designated "Garage" and grab gloves to sprint to their fielding spots immediately.

Pro-Tip: The "Last Batter" Rule

Most Tee Ball leagues end the inning when the last kid hits. Tell the kids the last batter is the "Grand Slam Hero." * When the last kid hits, everyone on base runs home.

- It's high energy and signals a clear end to the inning.

New coaches often struggle with where to place their game-day volunteers. Use this suggestion to ensure maximum coverage and safety:

Your best friend at the Tee Ball level will be a dugout helper! You don't need anyone with even a speck of baseball knowledge. A volunteer can keep the "Bench Train" moving to ensure hitters are ready, with helmets on while also ensuring no one grabs a bat early.



Tee Ball Parent "Starting Lineup" Guide

Welcome to the team! Our goal this season is to teach your child the basics of baseball while ensuring they have a blast. To help us keep things running smoothly, here are a few "Ground Rules" for our fans in the stands:



The Gear Bag

- **Velcro is King:** If your child can't tie their shoes yet, please use velcro cleats. We spend 15% of practice tying laces if we aren't careful!
- **The "Glove Fit":** Make sure your child's glove is broken in. A stiff, brand-new glove is like trying to catch a ball with a piece of wood. (Tip: Put a ball in it and wrap it with rubber bands overnight).
- **Label Everything:** Bats, gloves, and water bottles all look the same. Please write your child's name on their gear.



During the Game

- **The *One Voice* "Rule":** Coaches will be giving instructions like "Run to first!" or "Squish the bug!" If five different parents are yelling different instructions, the kids get "frozen." Please cheer loudly, but let the coaches do the directing.
- **The Safety Perimeter:** For safety, please stay behind the dugout or the out-of-play fences. We have a lot of "wild" bats and balls at this age!
- **Cheer for Everyone:** In Tee Ball, we're all on the same team. If a kid on the other team makes a great stop, give them a clap!



Logistics & Transitions

- **The 5-Minute Arrival:** Please try to have your child at the field 5 minutes before practice. It takes them a few minutes to get their "baseball brain" on.
- **For Games,** please try to arrive 15 minutes before our scheduled start time.



Tee Ball Coach's Drill Sheet

Fielding Drills

The "Alligator" (Fielding)

Goal: Teach kids to use two hands when catching ground balls.

- **The Setup:** Kids line up in "ready position" (feet wide, knees bent).
- **The Action:** As the ball rolls toward them, they make "Alligator Jaws" with their hands.
 - **Bottom Hand:** The glove (the bottom jaw).
 - **Top Hand:** The bare hand (the top jaw).
- **The Visual:** Tell them to "**Chomp the ball!**" when it hits their glove so it doesn't escape.

"Zombies in the Infield" (Fielding)

Goal: Transitioning from fielding to throwing quickly.

- **The Setup:** Coach stands at the pitcher's mound; kids are at SS or 2nd base.
- **The Action:** Coach rolls a "**zombie**" (the ball). The player must **Chomp it**, then immediately turn and throw it to a coach standing at 1st base.
- **The Visual:** If they hold the ball too long, the **Zombie wakes up!** They have to get rid of it fast.

"The Bucket Challenge" (Fielding)

Goal: Consistent throwing to a specific target.

- **The Setup:** Place a large ball bucket on first base.
- **The Action:** Line the kids up at Shortstop. Roll them a grounder. They have to "Chomp" it and try to throw the ball into or hit the bucket.
- **The Visual:** The bucket is a "**Hungry Monster.**" Feed the monster the baseball!

"No-Hands Fielding" (Fielding)

Goal: Getting their bodies in front of the ball instead of reaching with just their arms.

- **The Setup:** Players stand in a line. No gloves needed.
- **The Action:** Coach rolls a soft ball slowly toward the player. The player must move their feet so the ball rolls **right between their feet**.
- **The Visual:** Their legs are a "**Garage Door.**" They have to get the car (the ball) inside the garage.
 - This can also be a 'soccer goalie' drill, but with no hands. Move your feet slide-to-side to get in position to stop the ball.

"Find Your House" (Fielding)

Goal: Teaching kids where to stand on the field (and to stay there).

- **The Setup:** Use cones or trace "spots" into the dirt for every position (P, 1B, 2B, SS, 3B).
- **The Action:** On "Go!", the kids are "lost" in the outfield. When the coach yells "**Go Home!**", every kid must sprint to their assigned spot/marker.
- **The Visual:** The cone/circle is their "**Front Porch.**" They have to keep one foot on the porch to stay safe.

Catching Drills

"The Martian Hunt" (Catching)

Goal: Getting comfortable looking up and moving toward a ball.

- **The Setup:** Use soft foam balls or tennis balls. Coach tosses "pop-ups" (low arcs) to players.
- **The Action:** Players must get under the ball and try to catch it with "Two-Handed Jaws."
- **The Visual:** The balls are **falling Martians**. If they catch one, they save the field! If they can't catch it, they must "trap" it on the ground immediately.

"The Relay Race" (Catching)

Goal: Teaching the concept of "cutoff" throws and moving the ball across the field.

- **The Setup:** Two teams. Each team forms a long line with 10 feet between players.
- **The Action:** The player at the start of the line throws to the next, who turns and throws to the next.
- **The Visual:** The ball is a **"Hot Potato."** They want to get it to the end of the line as fast as possible without dropping it.

"Pop-Up Clouds" (Catching)

Goal: Overcoming the fear of a ball falling from the sky.

- **The Setup:** Use soft "squishy" balls.
- **The Action:** Toss the soft ball high. The child must move under it and catch it with "two hands like a basket."
- **The Visual:** The ball is a **"Falling Cloud."** Catch it gently so it doesn't "pop."

Throwing Drills

The "Statue of Liberty" (Throwing)

Goal: Correct the common "shot-put" throwing motion.

- **The Setup:** Players stand sideways to their target.
- **The Action:**
 - **Step 1:** Point the lead shoulder and "glove hand" at the target.
 - **Step 2:** Reach the ball hand back and up (like the Statue of Liberty's torch).
 - **Step 3:** Step with the front foot and throw.
- **The Visual:** Remind them to **"Show the ball the sky"** before they throw.

"Bowling for Cones" (Throwing)

Goal: Accuracy and stepping toward the target.

- **The Setup:** Set up 3–5 plastic cones in a row. Have the player stand 10 feet away.
- **The Action:** Using the **Statue of Liberty** form, they try to knock over the "pins."
- **The Visual:** Tell them their front foot is an **arrow**—it must point exactly at the cone they want to hit.

"The Muscle Man" (Throwing)

Goal: Stopping the "shot-put" push.

- **The Setup:** Kids stand sideways to their target (glove shoulder pointing at the target).
- **The Action:** They pull the ball back and hold it. The coach checks for an "L" shape with the arm.
- **The Visual:** Tell them to **"Show your muscles!"** Their throwing arm should look like a bodybuilder posing. If their hand is touching their ear, the "muscle" is broken.

"The Birdie" (Throwing)

Goal: Using the lead arm for balance and direction.

- **The Setup:** Normal throwing stance.
- **The Action:** Before throwing, the player points their glove hand straight at the target.
- **The Visual:** Their glove hand is a "**Laser Pointer**" or a "**Birdie**." The ball follows the bird. If the bird points at the ground, the ball goes in the dirt!

"Step on the Snake" (Throwing)

Goal: Getting the lower body involved.

- **The Setup:** Place a flat cone or a line in the dirt in front of their lead foot.
- **The Action:** As they throw, they must step over the line/cone with their front foot.
- **The Visual:** There is a "**Grumpy Snake**" in the dirt. They have to *step past the snake* to get power for their throw.

"Pocket Pick" (Throwing)

Goal: Preventing the "stiff arm" finish.

- **The Setup:** Players throw to a partner or a fence.
- **The Action:** After the ball leaves their hand, their throwing hand should cross their body and touch their opposite thigh.
- **The Visual:** Tell them to "**Put the money in your pocket**." Their hand should end up right where a pants pocket would be.

"Kneeling Knights" (Throwing)

Goal: Focusing entirely on the arm circle and flick.

- **The Setup:** Kids drop to one knee (the knee on the throwing side is down).
- **The Action:** They play catch from a very short distance (5–10 feet).
- **The Visual:** They are "**Knights in Armor**." Since they can't move their legs, they have to use a "Big Circle" with their arms to get the ball to the target.

Hitting Drills

"Squish the Bug" (Hitting)

Goal: Teach hip rotation and staying balanced at the tee.

- **The Setup:** Player at the tee in a batting stance.
- **The Action:** After they swing, their back foot should twist so the heel points up and the toe stays down.
- **The Visual:** Tell them there is a **giant literal bug** under their back foot. If they don't twist their foot to "squish" it, the bug gets away!

"Home Run Derby" (Hitting)

Goal: Full extension of the swing.

- **The Setup:** Hitting off the tee toward the open field.
- **The Action:** Focus purely on a "Big Finish." The bat should end up over their opposite shoulder.
- **The Visual:** Tell them to "**Swing for the Moon**." Even if they miss, they get points for a "Beautiful Finish."

"Belt Buckle Face-Off" (Hitting)

Goal: Teaching kids where to stand relative to the tee (the hardest part of coaching hitting).

- **The Setup:** Player at the tee with a bat.
- **The Action:** Have the player stand so their **belt buckle** is pointing directly at the ball on the tee.
- **The Visual:** Tell them the belt buckle is a "**Laser Beam**." If the laser isn't pointing at the ball, they'll miss the target!

"The Mean Face Swing" (Hitting)

Goal: Encouraging kids to swing hard instead of just "tapping" the ball.

- **The Setup:** Normal hitting off the tee.
- **The Action:** Before they swing, ask them to show you their "**Mean Face**" or "Grit their teeth."
- **The Visual:** Tell them to "**Attack the Ball**." Don't worry about where it goes; the goal is to make a "Big Sound" when the bat hits the ball.

"The Boulder Blast" (Hitting)

Goal: Teaching kids to swing through the ball rather than stopping at contact.

- **The Setup:** Use a light **kickball or beach ball** on a sturdy tee (or a traffic cone).
- **The Action:** The player tries to knock the "Boulder" into the outfield.
- **The Visual:** The ball is a **Giant Rock** blocking the path. They need a "Big, Strong Swing" to push it out of the way.

"Hit the Target" (Hitting)

Goal: Improving hand-eye coordination and intent.

- **The Setup:** Place "fun" targets in the field (a bucket, a hula hoop, or even a stuffed animal/toy).
- **The Action:** The hitter tries to hit the ball toward a specific target.
- **The Visual:** They are aiming for bullseyes! If they hit the hula hoop, the whole team gets to do a "Victory Dance."

"The Invisible Bat" (Hitting)

Goal: Teaching mechanics without the weight of the bat distracting them.

- **The Setup:** Kids line up on a foul line (no bats).
- **The Action:** Coach calls out "Stance!", "Load!", and "Swing!" Kids mimic the motion with their hands together.
- **The Visual:** They are "**Ninjas**" practicing their secret moves. This is also the safest way to correct "chopping" or "uppercutting" before they hold a heavy bat.

"The Balloon Splash" (Hitting)

Goal: Full extension of the arms.

- **The Setup:** (Hot day favorite) Place a water balloon on the tee.
- **The Action:** The player tries to pop the balloon with the bat.
- **The Visual:** Tell them to "**Splash the Coach**" (stand safely nearby). To pop it, they have to swing level and hard.

Baserunning Drills

"The Rocket Ship" (Baserunning)

Goal: Learning to run through first base rather than stopping on it.

- **The Setup:** Line at home plate.
- **The Action:** Player hits the ball (or a "ghost ball") and sprints to first.
- **The Visual:** First base is a **refueling station**, but they are a **Rocket Ship**. They shouldn't stop until they are well past the orange safety bag.

"Red Light, Green Light" (Baserunning)

Goal: Teaching kids to listen to the base coach and look for signs.

- **The Setup:** Kids line up on the first-base foul line.
- **The Action:** Coach stands at first base. "Green Light" means sprint. "Red Light" means stop on a dime.
- **The Visual:** If they over-run a "Red Light," they are **"Out of Gas"** and have to go back to the start.

"Follow the Leader" (Baserunning)

Goal: Understanding the diamond shape and the order of bases.

- **The Setup:** The coach is the "Caboose" and a high-energy kid is the "Engine."
- **The Action:** The whole team forms a "train" behind the leader. The leader runs from Home to 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and Home. Everyone must stay on the "track" (the chalk lines).
- **The Visual:** Tell them if they step off the dirt, the **"Train derails!"** They have to stay on the brown path to keep the train moving.

"The Base Is Lava" (Baserunning)

Goal: Learning to stop at 2nd or 3rd base without over-sliding.

- **The Setup:** Kids at 1st base. The coach stands at 2nd base.
- **The Action:** On "Go!", the player sprints to 2nd. However, the dirt around the base is "Hot Lava." Only the white bag is safe.
- **The Visual:** They have to **"Freeze on the Island"** (the base) as fast as they can. If they over-run it, their feet will get "hot!"

"The Traffic Light" (Baserunning)

Goal: Teaching kids to look at the 1st or 3rd base coach instead of the ball.

- **The Setup:** Player at Home. Coach #1 at 1st base, Coach #2 at 3rd base.
- **The Action:** The player hits and runs.
 - If Coach #1 holds up **Hands like a Stop Sign**, the kid stops at 1st.
 - If Coach #1 Whirls their arm like a Windmill, the kid keeps running to 2nd.
- **The Visual:** The coaches are **"Human Traffic Lights."** If you don't look at the light, you might get a "traffic ticket" (an out)!