

The Complete 8U Baseball Practice Plan

A 90-minute, station-based session built to teach fundamentals and keep 6-to-8-year-olds engaged — drills, timing, and the exact coaching cues we use on the field.

8U

90 minutes

Coach Nick & the YSC Coaching Team

THE 90-MINUTE FRAMEWORK

Dynamic Warm-Up	10 min
Throwing & Catching	20 min
Hitting Progression	20 min
Fielding Games	25 min
Closing Game + Team Huddle	15 min
Total	90 min

1 · Dynamic Warm-Up

10 MIN

Jog & Activate

Jog the bases once forward, once backward. Follow with high knees, butt kicks, lateral shuffles, and arm circles. End with three "baseball ready position" holds: feet shoulder-width, knees bent, hands live.

Cue: "Show me your baseball stance — a grounder is coming right now. Freeze!"

2 · Throwing & Catching

20 MIN

Partner Throwing — The 3-Step Method (10 min)

Pair kids at 20–25 feet. Teach the sequence: (1) grip across four seams with two fingers, (2) step and point the glove shoulder at your partner, (3) throw and "shake hands with your partner" through the finish. Use reduced-compression training baseballs.

Cue: "Step to your partner first, then throw — feet before arm!"

Catching — Alligator Hands (10 min)

Top hand snaps down on the glove after contact to secure the ball. "Thumbs down" for balls below the waist, "thumbs together" for balls above. Start with underhand tosses up close, back up gradually.

Cue: "Alligator hands — chomp it when you catch it!"

3 · Hitting Progression

20 MIN

Tee Work — One Cue at a Time (10 min)

Three tees at different heights, groups of three rotating through. Commit to one mechanical cue per session — we favor "squish the bug" with the back foot to introduce hip rotation. An adjustable tee lets you dial in height for every hitter without stalling practice.

Cue: "Squish the bug, then turn your belly button toward the pitcher!"

Soft Toss — Timing & Tracking (10 min)

Feeder kneels at 45 degrees, tosses into the contact zone, 8 swings per turn. One focus only: watch the ball all the way to the bat. Don't correct swing mechanics here — just reinforce tracking.

Shark Attack (15 min)

Four kids line up across the infield dirt. Coach rolls or hits grounders; any player who fields cleanly and throws accurately to first earns a point. One "Shark" in the middle tries to intercept every ball. Kids rotate through the Shark role — fielding fundamentals wrapped in a game they're choosing to play.

Cue: "Get in front of the ball, make a triangle with your legs — don't let it through!"

Fly Ball Intro — Camp Under It (10 min)

Use a tennis ball or safety ball. Coach pops it 10–20 feet up. Kids call "mine!" first, then move their feet to get positioned before the ball arrives. Moving early is the habit to build; standing still and reaching is the habit to break.

Cue: "Call it, move your feet, then catch — in that order every time."

5 · Closing Game + Team Huddle

15 MIN

Baserunning Relay (10 min)

Two teams, progressive stages — first base only, then first-to-second, then a full circuit. First team to complete all stages wins. Builds running form, base awareness, and competitive energy where every kid gets reps and succeeds.

Cue: "Hit the inside corner of every base — cut the corners, run faster!"

Team Huddle (5 min)

Circle up and name one specific thing each player did well — not "good job," but something precise: "I saw you step toward your partner on every throw today." End with the team cheer. Every kid leaves feeling seen and successful.

Cue: Be specific — precise praise sticks; vague praise doesn't.

COACH'S NOTES

- Keep every drill short — 8U attention spans max out around 8–10 minutes. Rotate often.
- Reduced-compression baseballs are non-negotiable: when kids aren't afraid of the ball, they field aggressively.
- At this age, intrinsic motivation beats instruction — wrap fundamentals in games kids choose to play.
- Multi-sport is an advantage, not a conflict. Let 8U athletes play everything; the baseball improves because of it.