

# **FALL BASEBALL**

**At The Strike Zone**

## **COACHES PACKET**

Dear Coaches,

Another year of Strike Zone Fall Baseball is upon us! All of us at the Strike Zone are very excited to be starting another season of Fall Ball. Thank you for choosing Strike Zone as your place for Fall Baseball.

We would like to take this moment to remind you of some of the responsibilities you have as a Strike Zone Fall Coach. In order for this season to go as smoothly as possible, we ask that you make sure the following gets done:

- Make sure the included release form is completed at the first practice.
- Competitive Coaches—Have practice plans ready for your practice, we've included suggestions.
- Be on time for all practices and games.
- Distribute playing time and positions equally.
- Make sure your players/parents have a way to contact you, as well as you them.
- Competitive Coaches—Call in your scores shortly after the completion of both games.
- Competitive Coaches—Fill out your All Star Ballot each week.
- Keep a med kit including ice packs with you.
- Report any serious problems/injuries immediately to Joe Siwa
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Again, a majority of the success of Fall Ball is determined by you, the coach. Remember that when you are on the field, you are not only representing yourself, but you are representing your family, your organization, and the Strike Zone. Thank you again for your commitment to us. We appreciate all our coaches and what they do.



## **THE STRIKE ZONE FALL COACHES GAME PLAN**

1. The most important thing to remember is that you are not only teaching baseball, you are teaching children.
2. The players at your games and practices are not little Major Leaguers—THEY ARE KIDS.
3. Team Discipline—achieved by subtle control through organization.
4. Strive to make sure you are communicating with each player by using points of reference that they understand. Make it as simple as possible, it is easy to talk over their heads.
5. Fall Baseball is more than just another baseball season, it is a growing experience. In addition to baseball skills, players develop socialization skills, character, and confidence. We are investing in the player's future. The players want support and encouragement from the coaches.

### **YOUR MISSION AS A COACH**

1. To ensure that every player has FUN and enjoys every part of his experience in Fall Ball.
2. To communicate with each player so that the player understands so that you are on the same level.
3. To teach proper baseball fundamentals.
4. Build confidence in each and every player.
5. Always be encouraging, have a positive attitude, and be upbeat.
6. To act and conduct yourself as a role model to players. You are a role model to them and they will imitate you.
7. Demand Respect/Command Respect. Kids expect discipline; not physical discipline, but strict control and guidelines. They NEED to know what is expected of them and know that mean it. However, no discipline should be implemented without the approval of the site director or league manager.
8. The key word is awareness: be alert for player's unhappiness as well as opportunities to strengthen your bond with them.
9. BE RELENTLESS ABOUT SAFETY EVERYWHERE! Be conscious of everyone in every area. Be aware of any possible dangerous situations. If you are unsure, assume the worst. Every coach must personally accept the responsibility and take action as needed.
10. Assume the responsibility along with the other coaches to HELP the entire season run smoothly.
11. Have fun! If you are not having fun, the players are not having fun.



# Rules For Teaching

If you're a good coach, you're probably doing most if not all of these things instinctively.

1. Make everything into a game -Every drill; every exercise can be made into a game. If you tell a kid to go pick the equipment on the other side of the field, he'll moan and groan. Tell him, *I bet you can't get all that stuff together in thirty seconds* and he'll sprint to get it done. Even older players will respond when you turn a drill into a challenge. *You think you can hit that outside corner, four out of the next five pitches?*
2. Repeat yourself -Don't be afraid of saying something more than once. Supposedly, something has to be repeated at least seven times before it sinks into the human brain. Explain something, then explain it again in a different way and then explain it a third way. By doing this you're giving someone different ways to grasp the material being taught, and you're also buying a little time for those who are slower in processing information.
3. One idea at a time - A teacher's main job is to reduce information to the simplest most understandable level. Let your players go home each day focused on one important idea.
4. No bad questions - Dialogue is always valuable. Even if the questions are just repeats, that's okay, because dialogue is how some people learn. Never chide someone for asking a question.
5. Avoid sarcasm - While some players can handle a little joking, others are hypersensitive to anything resembling criticism. Don't dwell on mistakes; emphasis should always be on how to do something better the next time.
6. Peer models work best - You showing it a dozen times is not as valuable as teammates showing each other once.
7. People like structure - Even if they rebel against it, people for the most part appreciate structure. In our especially lax world, many crave it. Make your expectations clear and design a concrete plan for achieving them with each player.
8. Avoid no-win situations and setting up for failure - Don't put players into situations where they have no chance.
9. Be honest - Certainly accentuate the positive, but don't tell a player he did well when he did poorly: your credibility will be shot.
10. Fair and equal are two different things - Some people need more guidance than others, and they should receive it without any concerns about fairness.
11. Fundamentals, fundamentals, fundamentals - Basics are everything, but if you make their practice tedious, they won't get mastered.
12. Teach your players how to practice on their own - The one who learn the most, learn most of what they know on their own. Help your players develop the ability to think and problem solve on their own. Instill in them the attitude that they have to take charge of making themselves better. Make sure they know the difference between practice and practicing the *right things*.
13. Don't blame a player for his parents – Treat everyone as a blank slate; don't over-concern yourself with whatever tree the apple fell from.
14. Mistakes and discipline should be forgotten immediately – Any player that hangs onto his mistakes will surely make more of it. It may not be over until it's over, but when it's over, it has to be over. When offering criticism be sure to offer a solution as well.
15. Teach your players how to be teachers – Everyone learns best from his peers and teaching something is the best way to learn that thing inside out.

Respond to a player's needs rather than react to his behavior – When a player, especially a young one, exhibits a maladaptive behavior, chances are he isn't any happier about it than you are. Acting out behaviors are indicative of needs not being met. Rather than retaliate against a behavior, ask yourself *what is it that this person really needs?* Does he need more attention? Does he need to feel more productive? Make the person a partner in dealing with his behavior rather than setting yourself up in opposition.

**Shout Praise...  
Whisper Criticism.**



# COMPETITIVE LEAGUE Practice Plan

This plan is written for the first 2-hour practice. For any additional practices you choose to schedule, you can do something similar or build on what you've already covered. We've left space for you to fill in any additional points you would like to stress.

**12:00** Introduction To Parents and Players  
**15 Minutes**

**12:15** Jog & Stretch  
**15 Minutes**

**12:30** 5 Step Throwing  
**20 Minutes**

**12:50** Take Infield and Outfield how you want it done before a game. (8 Minutes) PFP's, Pop-Up Priority, Bunt Defenses  
**25 Minutes**

**1:15** Have pitchers throw flat ground work with catchers  
One team works on Ground Balls — then switch  
One team works on Fly Balls — then switch  
**30 Minutes**

**1:45** Go over signs and any team rules you may have  
**15 Minutes**

**2:00** Practice Ends

If there is anything else you want to add, feel free. Please remember that we ask that you do not do any live batting practice at the Strike Zone scheduled practice.

# Five Step Throwing

FROM THE COACHES AT THE STRIKE ZONE

## IMPORTANT POINTS TO REMEMBER

- Keep hand on top of the ball at all times
- Get throwing elbow as high as possible when throwing
- Point non-throwing shoulder at target every time
- Don't wrap throwing arm behind body
- Concentrate on throwing at partner's chest each time
- Don't drop throwing elbow when throwing
- Grip ball across fat seams – Four seams

## STEP 1: FLICK DRILL

- Down on throwing-side knee, glove-side knee extended
- Throwing elbow above shoulder, supported by glove
- Flick with wrist, encouraging good rotation of ball

## STEP 2: BACK KNEE, FRONT FOOT UP

- Front leg extended when foot flat on ground
- Keep front shoulder down – don't tilt up
- Back of hand toward partner
- Bring throwing shoulder forward to throw
- Chest over front knee – chin at target

## STEP 3: STRIDE LEG – POWER - THROW

- Point front foot directly at partner
- Back of hand toward partner while bringing ball back
- Open hips when throwing
- Turn back foot over on follow-through
- Follow-through low – take throwing shoulder to stride knee – pivot on back foot

### Check 5 key areas –

Front toe pointed in slightly  
Flat back  
Chin up  
Chicken wing front side  
Rotate laces on back foot

## STEP 4: SWING BALL UP TO THROWING POSITION

- Swing straight back and away from partner
- Starting power position
- Finish over front knee
- Check 5 key areas listed above

## STEP 5: STEP – CATCH – THROW

- Step with throwing foot first
- Catch with two hands
- Throw at target on partner
- Remember important points mentioned above



*Strive to be as good in the classroom as you are on the field*

**FOR MORE DETAILED INSTRUCTION,  
PURCHASE YOUR HANDBOOK/PLAYBOOK/DEVELOPMENT GUIDE  
AT THE STRIKE ZONE.**



## THROWING IMAGES



**FLICK**



**CATCH**



**DOWN**



**BACK**



**POWER**



**THROW**



**CATCH**



**DOWN**



**BACK**



**POWER**



**TURN**



**THROW**



**STEP TO CATCH**



**STEP TO POWER**



**POWER**

*Set high standards and know the steps to attain them.*

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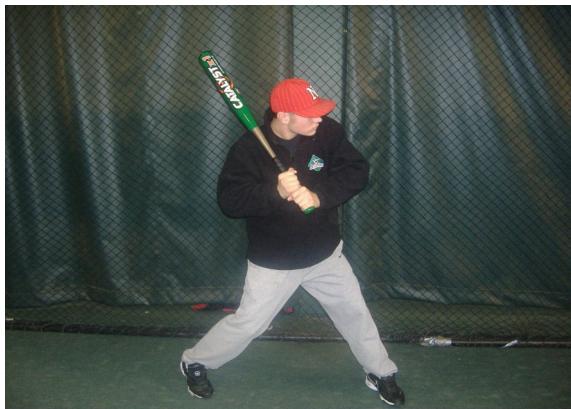
## Stance



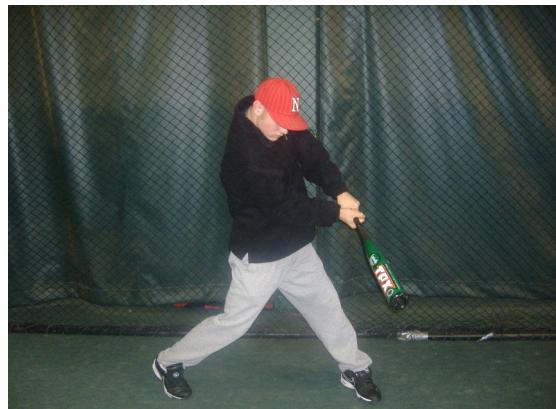
## Stride



## Knob to the Ball



## Contact



## Extension



## Follow Through



*Practice the way you play games... All go, no quit*

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## **FIELDING POSITION**



## **SLOW ROLLER**



## **POWER POSITION**



## **BACK-HANDER**



## **THROW-ON-RUN**



*Hard work beats talent when talent doesn't work hard.*

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## Wind up



## Stretch



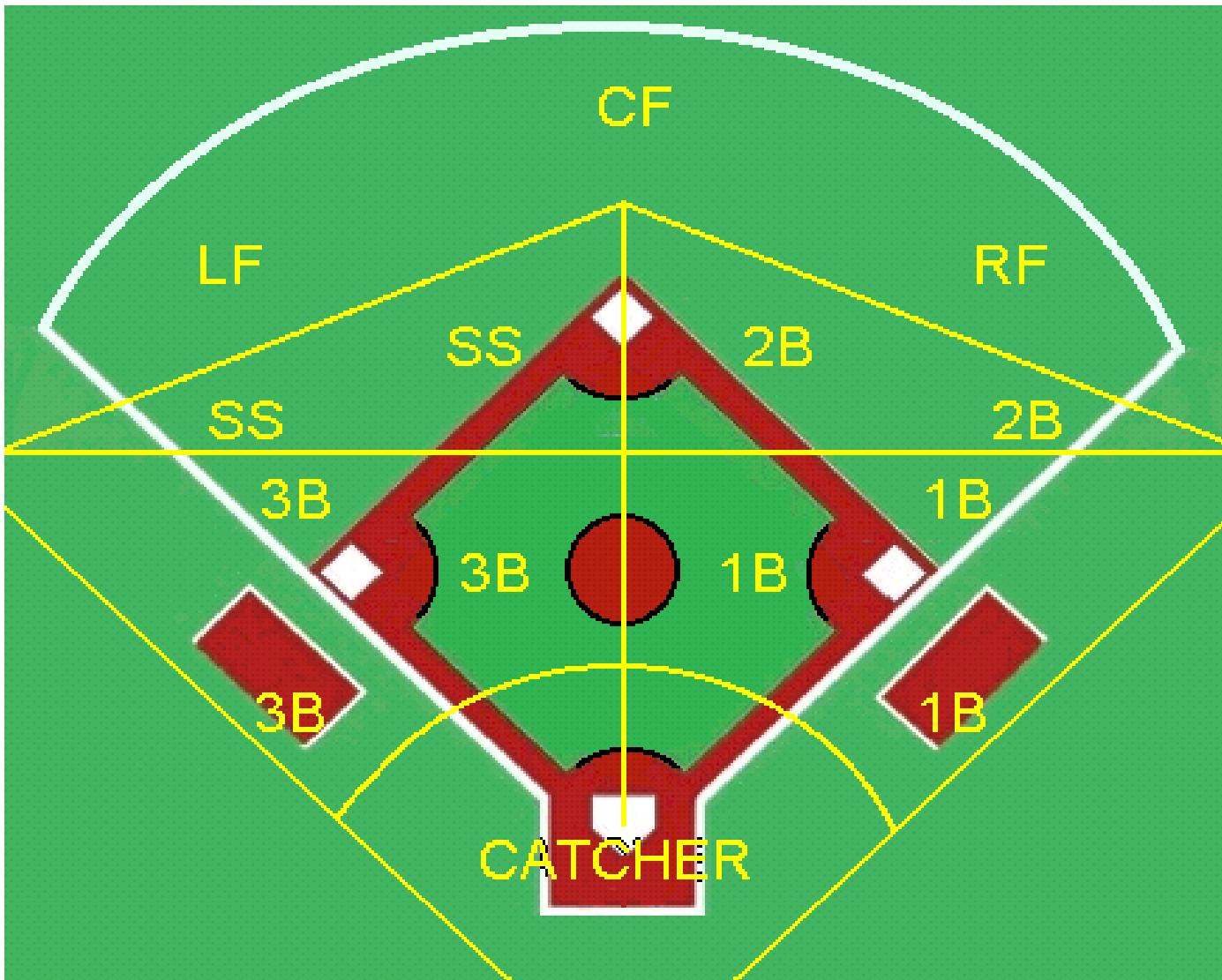
Life is not fair. You control your destiny.

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# Pop Fly Priority

FROM THE COACHES AT THE STRIKE ZONE

- All outfielders have priority over infielders.



- Shortstop has priority over 3B, 2B, and 1B.
- Second baseman has priority over first baseman.
- Third baseman has priority over the catcher.
- First baseman has priority over the catcher.
- Pitcher should only catch any short Popfly that no other infielder can get to.

*Love the game.*

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# 5 Step Throwing Program

This is the throwing program we use for all of our camps, clinics and lessons. We encourage that you promote this program for your players' pre-game catch routine. Please make sure your players are properly stretched and warm before they begin their throwing warm up.

## IMPORTANT POINTS TO REMEMBER

- Keep hand on top of the ball at all times
- Get throwing elbow above shoulder when throwing
- Point non-throwing shoulder at target every time
- Don't wrap throwing arm behind body
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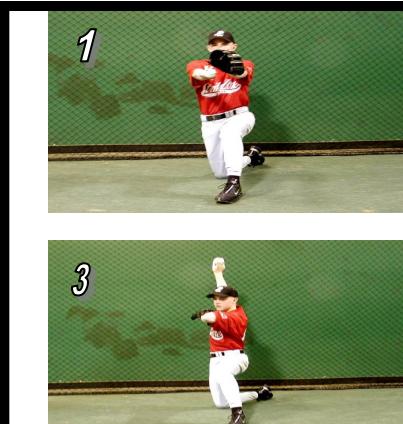


# Five Step Throwing

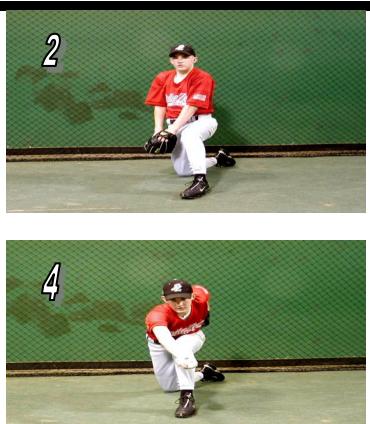
## 5 STEP THROWING



STEP 1



STEP 2



STEP



3



3



STEP



4



3



STEP



5



3



## Coaches,

All parents/guardians must sign this before the first practice. If a player's parent/guardian has not signed this, the player is not allowed to participate until a signature is obtained. After you have received all signatures, you are to make a copy and turn it into The Strike Zone before the first games. You are to keep the original.

Thank You,  
Strike Zone Management

**PARENT/GUARDIAN RELEASE STATEMENT:** We (I) hereby give our (my) permission to Strike Zone Fall Baseball League to provide medical attention to our (my) son/daughter in the event of injury or illness. We (I) hereby release The Strike Zone Fall Baseball League and all its employees from all claims (present or future) resulting from any injuries and/or illness which may be sustained by our (my) son/daughter while participating in Strike Zone Fall Baseball.

**Player's Name and Date (Print Clearly)**

**Parent/Guardian Signature**