

## Progressive Skills Development Checklist

Player's name: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Ratings</b>	<b>1 Novice</b> Covered in Training (date)	<b>2 Competent</b> Pre-Season	<b>3 Good</b> Mid-Season	<b>4 Excellent</b> End of Season
<b>Fielding</b>				
Ready Position				
Footwork				
Glove work				
Fly ball				
Line Drive				
Grounder				
<b>Throwing &amp; plays</b>				
Preparing to throw				
Overhand throw				
Tagging				
Receiving force outs				
<b>Base running</b>				
Out of the box				
Running basics				
Through 1st Base				
Leading off				
<b>Hitting</b>				
Stance				
Stride				
Hips				
Swing				
Follow through				

**Note:** Place a rating of 1 - 4 in each box

## **Procedure**

At the start of the pre-season print off enough checklist forms to cover all players within your team. Within the first two or three practise sessions, evaluate the fundamental skills for each player in your team and complete each form. This should help you to prioritise those skills that need attention at both the team and individual levels during future practice sessions. As you cover each skill component in training, record the date in the first column of the checklist – this will help you to document your coverage of all of the skill areas during the season.

At the midpoint of the competition you can then re-assess each player and record on the checklist. This will then allow you to compare with the pre-season ratings and highlight areas of improvement and those that still need attention. By sharing this information with each player you are also providing them with positive feedback in terms of their development. Remember, they can also practice on their own (in their own backyard) to further their development. Finally, at the end of the season, a final rating should prove valuable to the coach and the players.

## **Defence**

### **Fielding**

#### **Ready position (particularly infield)**

- Starting position
- Feet shoulder width apart or more
- Backside down, eyes facing the batter
- Glove and throwing hands close to the ground

#### **Footwork**

- Use small steps (sideways and/or forwards)
- Move to the ball if in front
- Use crossover step if ball to the side

#### **Glove work**

- Fingers in the glove to the side
- Hinge action (like a crab) index finger and thumb
- Catching a ball in the pocket instead of the fingers

#### **Fly ball**

- Get to the ball first
- Eye on the ball, glove fingers up
- Use two hands and catch above head

#### **Line drive**

- Glove hand works like a clock with fingers pointing like a 'hand' on the clock

#### **Grounder**

- Get behind the ball
- Fingers down, pocket facing ball
- Hands well out in front of body
- Sweeping the glove, two hands close together

## Throwing

### Preparing to throw

- Give with the ball and use both hands
- Take both glove and throwing hand up to above throwing shoulder
- Rotate glove into throwing hand and grip ball in fingers
- At the same time bring the body into the set position for throwing by using a crossover step or crow hop

### Overhand throw

- Pull fingers back and cock wrist
- High action with elbow leading at first
- Shoulders, elbows and hips in line with target
- Ball released in the 'high five' position
- Follow through with throwing shoulder at target and hand past the opposite knee

### Tagging

- Track ball into glove
- Secure ball with two hands
- Drop the knee and sweep the ball at runner
- Away from base, fielder places themselves to one side of the base runners path
- Tag can be made one handed or two handed

### Receiving force outs

- Get to base as quick as possible *if not fielding the ball*
- Place feet in front of base and present target *do not set until throw is made*
- Step towards throw and catch ball (chest and hips facing thrower)
- If close play step out further and elongate glove arm
- Get off base and get ready to make next play

## Offence

### Base running

#### Getting out of the box

- Back/pivot leg first
- Body leaning forward
- Short wide steps (accelerate)

### Running basic

- Run on balls of feet
- Good knee lift
- Use pumping action with arms

**Running through 1st Base**

- Hit the front of the safety base
- Don't slow down until after base
- Use shorter steps and lower centre of weight
- Turn head, not body towards second base

**Leading off a base**

- Lead off base when pitcher has released ball
- Rocking motion begins with pitchers arm at the top of the circle
- Maintain eyes on the ball to see what happens
- After two strides get side on into lead off position
- Keep backside down
- Throw arms in direction runner is going, next base or back to base

**Batting**

**Bat selection**

- Make sure bat isn't too heavy

**Grip**

- Natural grip with bat held in fingers
- Basically, first set of knuckles are lined up with finger joints of other hand
- Hands together with dominant hand closer to bat barrel

**Stance**

- Balanced with weight distributed on the inside balls of the feet
- Feet approximately shoulders width apart
- Hips and shoulders in line with batter's box
- Head turned towards the pitcher bat held at top of the strike zone
- Arms form an inverted 'V' in front of chest

**Stride**

- Soft step or glide with front foot towards pitcher (foot remains closed)
- Shoulder and hips remain in line with batter's box
- Head remains over the belly button

**Hips**

- Commences after stride
- Pivot on rear foot (squashing the bug)
- Knees remain flexed back leg forms an 'L' shape

## **Swing**

- Throw hands at ball
- Bat is extended so that arms are out in front
- Wrists snap the bat through the ball
- Continue drive through the back leg by transferring weight to front
- Head remains over the belly button

## **Follow through**

- Bat remains on one plain through the ball and entire swing
- Knees, hips and shoulders remain in line
- Hips and shoulders open to complete swing
- Head remains over belly button with eyes still focused on the contact point