



SANDLOT ACTIVATION GUIDE





The PLAY BALL initiative is baseball's collective effort to encourage young people and communities to engage in baseball- or softball-related activities, including formal leagues, special events and casual forms of play. PLAY BALL events have become MLB's signature youth engagement activity during the professional and amateur baseball and softball calendar, especially on key dates throughout MLB's Championship Season and through the Postseason & World Series. PLAY BALL events demonstrate the positive way the game can serve as an outlet for physical activity, fun with friends and learning how to play the sport at its most basic levels.

PLAY BALL also serves as the League's youth umbrella in which all associated programs and events derive from the initiative's consistent, simple message: However You Play Ball, PLAY BALL! PlayBall.org is the PLAY BALL initiative's online home and is accessible via MLB.com, USABaseball.com, USASoftball.com and The United States Conference of Mayors. PlayBall.org also links to USABaseball.com, which provides players, parents and coaches with the information and resources to help with proper play and instruction, including education videos featuring Hall of Famer and MLB Network analyst John Smoltz, LA Angels of Anaheim Manager Joe Maddon, and Kansas City Royals Senior Vice President of Baseball Operations and General Manager Dayton Moore, among others. Health and safety information, including through the Pitch Smart program, also is available.



2021 Mayors PLAY BALL Sandlot Baseball Events

The COVID-19 Pandemic has been a turbulent time for cities and youth. When schools closed and parks and recreation programs were limited by stay at home orders, The United States Conference of Mayors PLAY BALL Program pivoted to becoming virtual. Virtual. Has become the new norm, and USCM has been offering unique ways to promote baseball and softball activities online. Next year, as we hopefully resume gathering, USCM will help lead the charge in bringing back baseball and softball to cities throughout the country with Sandlot Baseball Mayoral PLAY BALL events.

With the Mayors PLAY BALL Sandlot events, America's youth will be exposed to many new aspects of the game through informative drills, hands-on instruction and playing games. While Sandlot games are being played, the remaining participants will participate in drills that will offer the following:

- Skill Development
- Social Interaction with their peers
- Hands-On Instruction
- Team Building
- Exercise



What is a “Sandlot?”

- A sandlot is a piece of unoccupied land used by children for games. Mayoral events can be hosted in baseball stadiums, parks or vacant lots which allow for safe play. Baseball games featuring teams of 20 kids (10 infield/10 outfield). Each player will get a chance to bat and play defense. There will be a minimum of 50 youth, while the maximum number of participants can be determined by each city.
- We think the Mayors PLAY BALL Sandlot events will help reignite the passion for the game both youth and adults may have lost. Additionally, these events will help foster a greater sense of community spirit, as we begin the safe resumption of youth sports and PLAY BALL in 2021.



Stations / Activities

Sandlot Game

1. Instructions
2. Equipment
3. Play Guidelines

Activities Menu

1. Sandlot Game
2. Chase the Rabbit (Relay Race)
3. Relay Throws
4. Road Runner
5. Slugger / HR Derby
6. 500
7. Soft-toss
8. Infield-Outfield



1 Sandlot Game

1. Create a small diamond using throw-down bases spaced approximately 50-60 feet apart.

2. Kids use PLAY BALL-brand bat and ball set and foam or rubber ball which creates distance on hits (see appendix for equipment kit)

3. Coach pitches (under or overhand depending on ability of batter), and has opportunity to utilize a tee for younger or less-able participants.

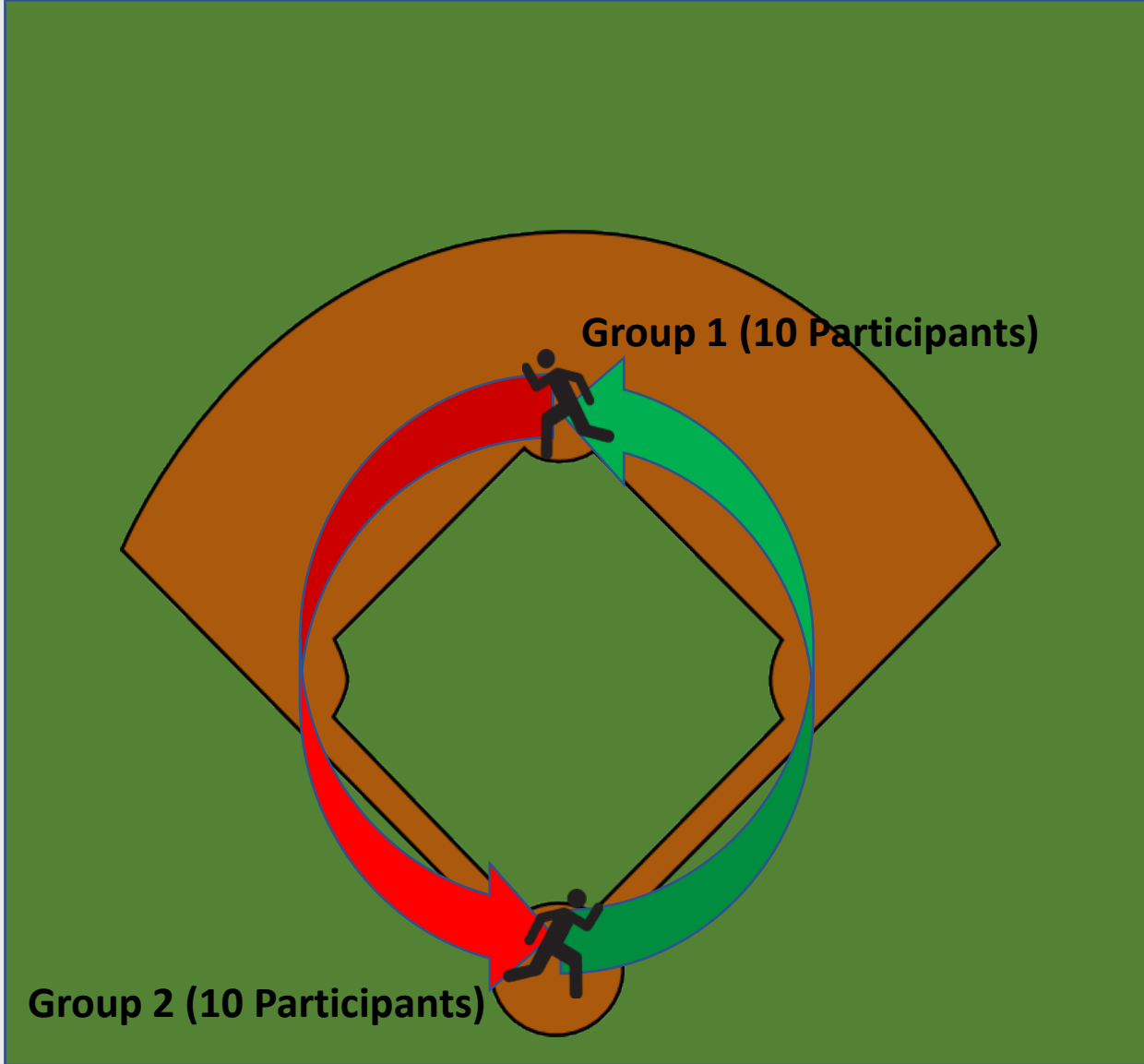
4. Divide two teams at 9/10 each. Each half inning consists of all hitters batting through. Teams score as many runs as possible in their 10 turns before switching sides. Games run 3-4 innings (depending on time).

5. Outs are recorded and runs scored, as a usual game, but sides do not switch until each player had hit, thereby creating more engagement for the kids while still teaching the basic mechanics of a baseball game.



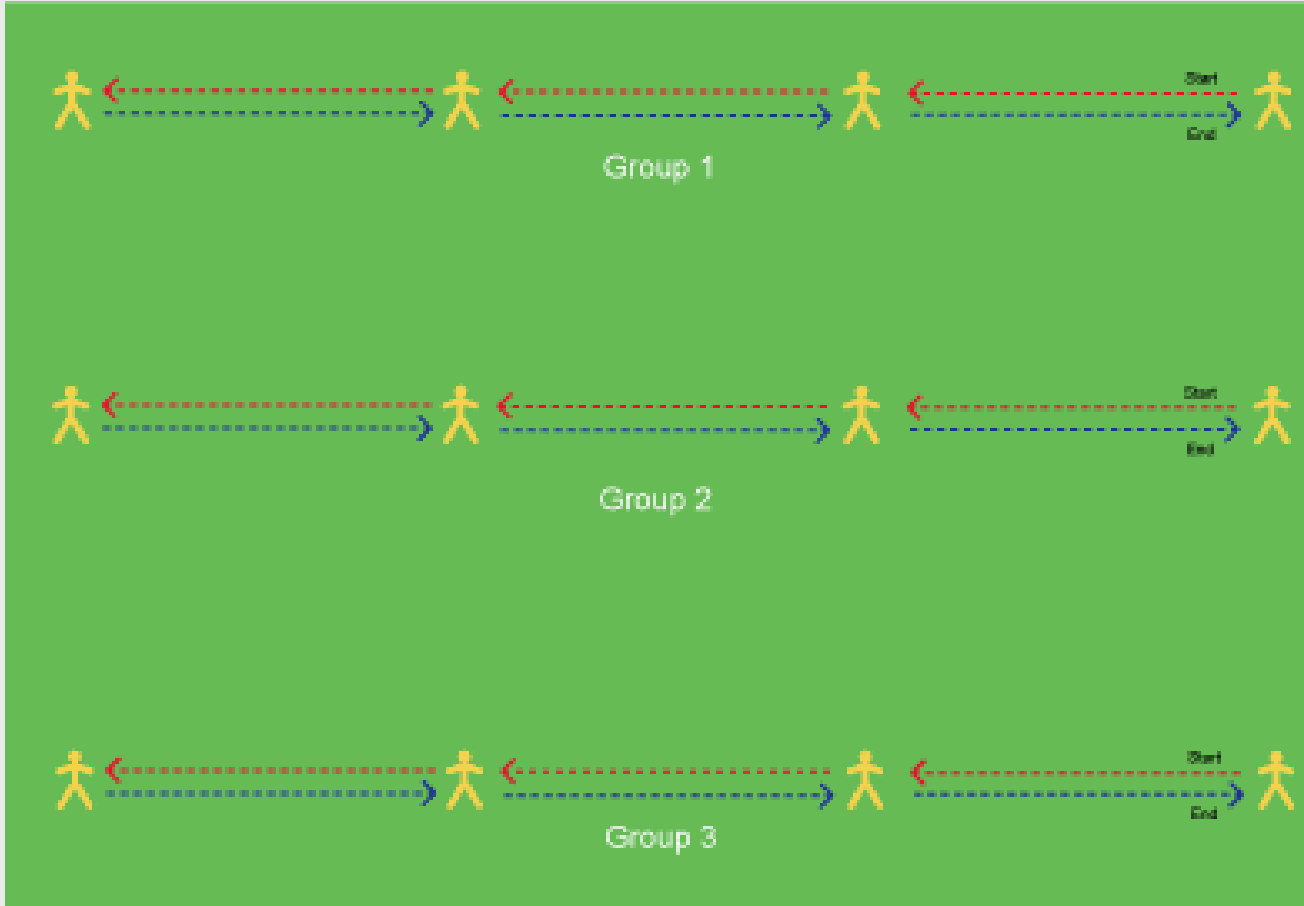
2

Chase the Rabbit Relay



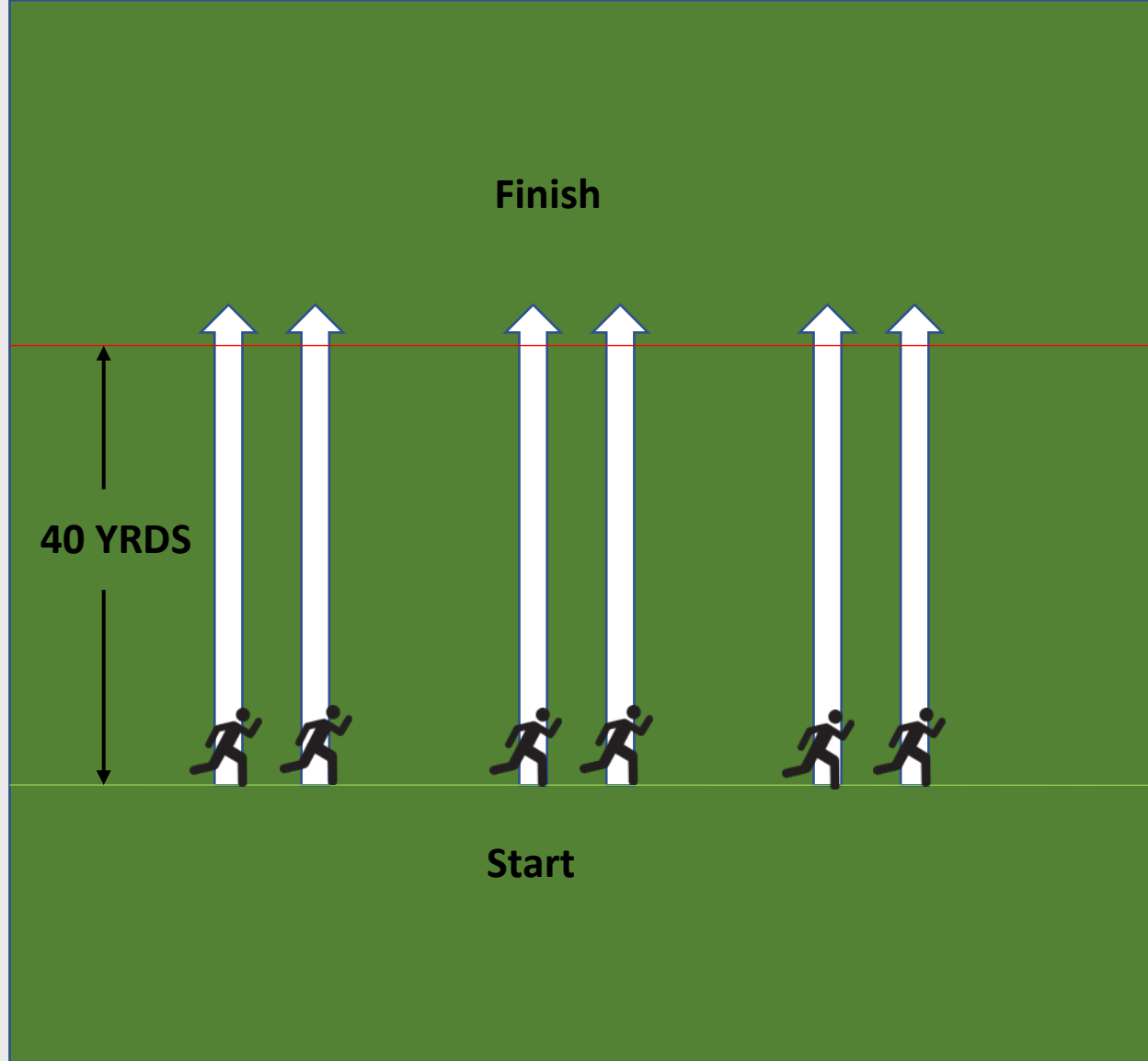
1. Split group in half, with half lining up behind Homeplate and the other half, behind second base.
2. On the clinician's whistle, the first runner in each group leaves his/her starting mark, racing around the bases to where he/she started.
3. The next runner may depart his/her mark when the previous runner touches Homeplate/second base.

3 Relay Throws



1. Groups of 4 or 5 line up 15 yards apart
2. On a clinician's whistle, the participants throw it to the other side and back the quickest
3. Practices proper throwing and quick hands in a fun competition

4 Road Runner



1. Map out a 40yrd racing strip
2. A team with 20 kids can pair up and race each other- 1v1
3. The winner moves on, the loser is done
4. Winners race until there is a champion on each team

5

Slugger / Home Run Derby



- 1. Arrange several tees and/or soft-toss stations and divide teams evenly**
- 2. Each participant gets an opportunity to take a predetermined (5 or 10) swings to hit the ball as far as possible**
- 3. The team with the ball hit the furthest wins**
- 4. Clinicians should have participants who are not hitting retrieving the batted balls.**



6

“500”

1. Split into groups of five
2. Coach hits/throws ball into the air and calls out a value
3. The player who catches the ball gets the called point value added to their score.
4. First player to 500 points wins, and the game resets.



7

Soft Toss

Using the Franklin plastic/foam balls and PLAY BALL bat, take turns practicing your swing while incorporating a moving ball, tossed by a partner, from one knee, facing you, slightly to the front of your lead batting

Make sure that the person tossing the ball does so softly, so that it would fall directly between themselves and the hitter if not struck. The toss should not be higher than the head of the batter at its peak.

Try hitting the ball at different levels of toss arc. Try having the ball tossed toward your back leg (mimicking an outside pitch), or front leg (inside pitch).



1. **Players split into two lines and practice fielding ground balls and pop-ups**
2. **Clinician can make it into a game, seeing how many consecutive flawless grounders/pop-ups can be caught.**
3. **Last participant in each line without an error is the winner**

Appendix

Equipment



E.

D.



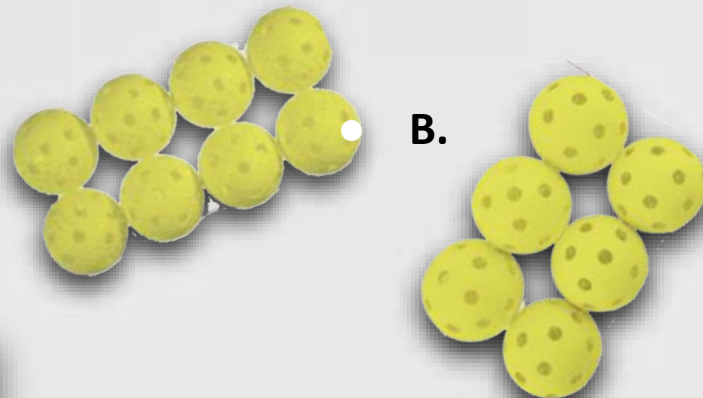
A.



C.



B.



- A. Franklin Vibe Ball (Sandlot Game)
- B. Franklin plastic softballs
- C. Franklin MLB Deluxe 4-Piece Throw-Down Rubber Base Set
- D. Franklin Foam Baseballs
- E. Franklin PLAY BALL bat & ball sets (30", 24")