



PLAYBALL

#MLBATHOME



As we all eagerly wait for baseball's return, the most important thing is that everyone does their best to protect their health, as well as the health of their family, friends and communities.

To that end, here is a breakdown of what you need to know about coronavirus and recommendations for staying safe during this time, via the experts at both the World Health Organization (WHO) and CDC.

How to protect yourself

There are several things you can do, and encourage others to do, to avoid infection.

- 1) Keep your hands clean: Wash your hands often, especially after spending time in a public place, and before eating. Soap and water work well, but make sure to wash for at least 20 seconds and to cover all areas of your hands, including thumbs and between fingers. If soap and water are not available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60 percent alcohol.
- 2) Avoid touching your face: As much as possible, try not to touch your eyes, nose and mouth, especially if you have not washed your hands recently.
- 3) Keep surfaces and objects clean: This applies particularly to things you touch all the time, such as doorknobs, countertops, faucets, and even phones. Use water and detergent or soap to clean, and disinfect with EPA-registered household disinfectants.
- 4) Keep your distance: Practice social distancing. Avoid close contact with anyone who is sick, or who is coughing or sneezing, and refrain from gathering with large groups.
- 5) Stay home: Work from home, if it is possible to do so, and avoid spending unnecessary time in crowded public locations, for example by ordering takeout or delivery instead of eating in a restaurant. In fact, many areas have closed or put restrictions on businesses such as restaurants and bars, or even taken more dramatic steps.

How to protect the people around you

Remember that we all are responsible for helping keep the people in our communities safe, using these measures.

- 1) Cover your mouth: If you cough or sneeze, cover your mouth with a tissue, if one is handy, and immediately dispose of it and wash your hands thoroughly. If you do not have a tissue, cover your mouth with the inside of your elbow rather than your bare hand.
- 2) Limit close contact: The more people stay in, avoid public settings and refrain from gathering in large groups, the better the chances of limiting the spread of COVID-19, and protecting the people who are most vulnerable. That applies even if you feel fine.
- 3) If you're sick, take extra precautions: Anyone with symptoms, even mild ones, should stay home, unless you are required to leave to get medical care (before visiting your doctor, call ahead). As much as possible, limit contact with others in your household, and avoid sharing items. You also can wear a face mask when around other people.

Recognizing the symptoms

It is believed that a person may develop symptoms anytime from 2-14 days after being exposed to the virus. The most common are:

- Fever
- Fatigue
- Cough
- Shortness of breath

TEE TIME



Utilizing the Franklin Batting Tee, plastic/foam baseballs, and PLAY BALL bat, take turns practicing your swing by hitting the ball off of the tee. Work on keeping your eye on the ball, and your hands close to your body before you make contact ("inside" the ball) so that the barrel of the bat makes solid contact with the ball.

PRO TIP

Take turns setting up the balls on the tee for your partner and hitting. Additional members of your household can rotate as well, serving as fielders.

CHALLENGE

See how many consecutive line drives you can hit in a row.

MAKE IT A GAME!

Pick a target (on a wall or in your yard) at which you can attempt to hit the ball off of the tee. Each person gets five swings. If you don't hit a target in those five swings, the next batter hits. For every target hit, you get another swing.

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 leg (see video [here](#) for an example).

PRO TIP

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.

CHALLENGE

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).

STUCK INSIDE?

Do this drill using balled-up socks instead of balls, hitting them into a wall, back of a sofa, or a sheet strung up as a catch net. As always, make sure that you are doing so safely and not near anything breakable! get another swing.

FRONT TOSS

Similar to soft toss, front toss changes the angle of the pitch to more closely mimic the feeling of hitting against a real pitcher. The tosser and batter should stand 10-15 feet apart, with each pitch being thrown underhand with as little arc as possible.

PRO TIP

Focus on keeping your head still and eye on the ball as it approaches you. Similar to your work on the tee, be sure that you are keeping your hands "inside" of the ball, allowing the barrel of the bat to make contact with the ball.

CHALLENGE

Try hitting five tosses to the right of the person throwing, and five to the left of them. Award points for each time a hit goes to the designated side. Each batter gets 10 swings before switching.

LOOK OUT!

Hitting the ball straight back in the direction of the pitcher is a good indication that the hitter's swing is well-timed. Always be prepared for batted balls coming back in your direction.



HOME RUN DERBY

STEP 1: ESTABLISH A HOME RUN BOUNDARY

In a backyard or large room, pick a boundary that will serve as your home run "fence." Remember, this doesn't have to be an actual fence; it could be a garden fence, landscape wall, a line drawn on the ground with spray paint, a line of chairs set up with the backs facing the hitter, or even arrange members of your household in an arc with an imaginary line connecting to them.

Remember, if you're playing indoors, be sure to do so clear of anything breakable, and with the hitter safely distanced from other members of the household. Consider substituting rolled up socks for balls, or using only the Franklin plastic balls when indoors to minimize the potential for damage.

STEP 2: SET THE BATTING ORDER

Among your household, set a batting order for the first round of the home run derby. The person hitting may choose their pitcher.

STEP 3: SWING FOR THE FENCES!

Each person tries to hit as many home runs as possible with 20 swings. The two individuals with the highest home run total advance to the finals and compete head-to-head in a 10-swing battle for household domination! For tiebreakers, use a head-to-head, five-swing playoff until there is a winner.



MINI GAME

YOUR HOUSE, YOUR RULES

There are many ways to play ball. With your PLAY BALL set and a little creativity, you can organize household ball games to help pass the time. Here are a few game concepts to help you tailor your own for your own space.

USING BOUNDARIES - Similar to Home Run Derby, set specific boundaries for types of hits (single, double, triple, home run). If the ball is caught in the air, fielded cleanly, or doesn't pass a delineated boundary, it is an out. You may use imaginary runners or simply tally runs based on the type of hit (ie, one run for a single, two for a double).

ONE BASE - Another modification that allows game play with a smaller group is by using one base (generally at the pitcher's mound), to play a mini game. When the ball is hit, the batter runs to the base. If they beat the throw, they are safe and may stay at the base until they are driven in by a teammate. If they have hit the ball far enough to run to the base and back home, their team gets a run. Each time a person crosses the plate (whether by running to the base and back or by being driven in by a teammate's hit), their team gets a run. Each team gets three outs before changing sides.

TEAM DERBY - Instead of head-to-head Home Run Derby, choose teams. Each batter in the order gets three swings with which to hit a home run. If they do not, it is recorded as an out. Each team gets three outs per half inning. The team with the most home runs after 9.0 innings is the winner!



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