

2025-2026



COACHES TACKLEBOX

And he said to them, "Follow me, and I
will make you fishers of men."

Matthew 4:19

Table of Contents

Introduction	1
MCA Coaches Checklist	3
Intentional Scriptures	4
Intentional Insights	5
Intentional 5	7
Communication	9
Sample: Parent Meeting Agenda	10
Sample: Weekend Email	11
Sample: Calendar	12
Great Coaches	13
10 Practices of Master Teachers	15
Practice Plan	17
14 Legal Duties	21
Coaches Pre-Season Plans	23
Assistant Coach Evaluation	24



INTRODUCTION

This tool box is designed to help you succeed in your pursuit as a coach at Metrolina Christian Academy. There are a lot of tools you can use. Books, videos, workshops, etc. all help shape your coaching style, decisions, and behaviors. If you have coached before now, your toolbox may be full. Just as larger building projects require a more variety of tools, this box will assist in creating the culture we seek at Metrolina Christian.

Before you plan your first practice, I ask that you pray for God's wisdom to consume you. James records, "But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him" (James 1:5). You were prayed for before you came to Metrolina. The Athletic Department prays for coaches "we don't know but whom the Lord is going to bring" ...right now, that's you.

These scriptural tools inside have been developed and used over the years to ensure we intentionally share the Word of God with His children. We cannot simply hope that our genuine godly example, or quick prayer before a game, or passionate pursuit of a win will somehow transfer our athletes into the God-loving men and women we desire them to be. It is critical that you, the coach, bring God's Word into your practices with a love that changes you and your athletes. The idea of simply "forcing scripture on students" or "checking a verse off the list" is like that of the Pharisees. These verses should come alive to you and your athletes. They should be treated as precious pearls you want to share with others to encourage them in their personal journey with God.

Other tools inside this booklet include a checklist, various readings, and reflection opportunities that enhance your development as a coach. They should be used and referred to throughout your season. Your personal and professional growth will play a primary role in how well you lead your team in a godly manner. In addition, our goal is to equip you and provide direction in a world that can taint the joy athletics brings. Utilizing the tools inside should help you think godly and proactively thus limiting the negative noise that comes from the chaos of society.

Lastly, what is God doing in your life? This question doesn't necessarily need to be answered exhaustively every day, however it does merit serious reflection. Athletes must see that God is real in your life. Athletes must see that God shapes your decisions, actions, and reactions in your life. If God is not authentic in a relational way to you as a coach, your ability to lead athletes in a closer walk with God will be hindered. If we want to be fruitful and bear fruit as He's commanded, we must remain in the vine...attached to Him, through prayer, Bible readings, and His church.

If this is your first-year coaching, you probably have a vision of the type of coach you want to be...or you probably have no idea of where to start...this tool box will help you. You probably have an idea about what you believe is most important to share with the team on day one. You probably think about and have even rehearsed speeches to your team or the parents of your team. If you haven't, those rehearsals will probably come. **Our challenge to you is to intentionally develop a team culture that pleases Jesus Christ.** No one knows when His return is to be...it could be when you're with your team. Wouldn't you love to hear in that moment? ..." Well done coach, let's go".

MCA Coaches Checklist

Pre-Season Checklist

(Completed before first competition)

- ☐ Pre-Season Coaches Plan 2025-2026
- ☐ Consider the Purpose of Athletics
- ☐ Equipment Inventory
- ☐ Practice/game schedule complete
- ☐ Emergency Action Plan Review
- ☐ Student Athlete Registration & Physicals
- ☐ Parent/athlete meeting
- ☐ Bus schedule
- ☐ Eligibility and Consent forms submitted
- ☐ Family night eligibility
- ☐ Rosters submitted
- ☐ Handbook review

In-Season Checklist

(Continued within competition)

- ☐ Grade & conduct check
- ☐ Injury report documentation
- ☐ Area stewardship (gym, locker room, etc.)
- ☐ Report facility needs
- ☐ Report scores (varsity)
- ☐ Bus cleanliness stewardship
- ☐ Plan for post season celebration
- ☐ Award criteria
- ☐ Communication: early, often, accurate
- ☐ Weekly Email for Parents
- ☐ Review your pre-season plans/goals/scripture references



Post-Season Checklist

(Completed within 30 days of final competition)

- ☐ Post-Season celebration
- ☐ Award/Letters secured
- ☐ Schedule Evaluation with AD
- ☐ Equipment inventoried
- ☐ Uniforms inventoried
- ☐ Area stewardship (gym, fields, etc.)
- ☐ Evaluate assistants
- ☐ Team Needs
- ☐ Schedule/Game changes for next year
- ☐ Program improvement ideas
- ☐ Clinic/Conference attendance
- ☐ Off-season program
- ☐ Assistant coaches evaluation complete

INTENTIONAL

10 Scriptures

(Insights are on Next Page)

DATE
SHARED

VERSE

1. "Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might;" Ecclesiastes 9:10 NASB
2. "Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men." Colossians 3:23 NASB
3. "I can do all things through Him who strengthens me." Philippians 4:13 NASB
4. "For a righteous man falls seven times, and rises again, but the wicked stumble in time of calamity." Proverbs 24:16 NASB
5. "Therefore, our livestock too shall go with us; not a hoof shall be left behind, for we shall take some of them to serve the Lord our God. And until we arrive there, we ourselves do not know with what we shall serve the Lord." Exodus 10:26 NASB
6. "For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them." Ephesians 2:8-10 NASB
7. "If you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation." Romans 10:9-10 NASB
8. "Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win." 1 Corinthians 9:24 NASB
9. "For bodily discipline is only of little profit, but godliness is profitable for all things, since it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come." 1 Timothy 4:8 NASB
10. "Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God." Hebrews 12: 1-2 NASB

INTENTIONAL

(10 Insights to pair with scripture)

1. **Ecclesiastes 9:10**-Determination, Hard Work
Athletes should give their "ALL" at all times. Training and preparation will allow athletes to perform far greater if they continually do so at 100 percent. This verse hits this hard! If an athlete has decided to be part of a team, then they should always give their best. Truly, this is honoring to God.
2. **Colossians 3:23**-Honor to God, Obedience
As a coach, I'll motivate, encourage and push an athlete to be their best. However, if an athlete is a Christian, this verse reminds them that they should perform "heartily as unto the Lord"...He's the one to glorify...He's the one to please. Intrinsic motivation should take over knowing Christ is the audience.
3. **Philippians 4:13**-Confidence, Courage
I can do some things on my own, however I can do ALL things through Christ who strengthens me. HE is the source of my strength. When I feel weak, it's natural...but HE gives me strength. Too often we try to perform on our own. Too often we try to handle tough relationships on our own. This should not be so, as HE serves as a fountain of strength.
4. **Proverbs 24:16**-Persistence, Failure, Stick-tuative-ness
Failure is a part of life. No one has to like it, however everyone "should" learn from it. Until the Lord returns, not only will we fail but those around us will as well. The righteous rises seven times. This reminds us to get up when we fall rather than stay down. It's easy to stay down...one has to choose to get back up. When we get up, we can help others get up as well.
5. **Exodus 10:26**-Compromise, Leadership, Obedience
This was after the 9th plague and Pharaoh was going to let Moses lead the people out of Egypt, however Pharaoh asked to leave the cattle behind. Moses could have said, "Let's go", however he was not going to compromise what God had told him...which was to "Plunder the Egyptians...all livestock would go with them when they left."
6. **Ephesians 2:8-10**-Righteousness, Forgiveness, Grace
Good athletes often believe they can "control" everything. If I do "this" I can get "that". Athletes invest time and energy seeking dividends on their effort. God gives us eternal life simply through the grace he provided in His Son Jesus, therefore no man works for salvation or the love of God. Because He loves us, we have a way to be saved.

7. **Romans 10:9-10**-Belief, Action, Repentance

Salvation comes through faith. Faith takes place internally, however it's displayed through action. Abraham believed and it was counted unto him as righteousness, therefore the person that cannot talk can be saved. Roman's states "If we confess with our mouths" indicating that there is action after faith. True repentance leaves the sins of the past and moves forward in the righteousness of Christ. James also reminds us to be doers of the word not simply hearers.

8. **1 Corinthians 9:24**-Losing, Perspective, Effort

Making someone else better is a lost perspective in this world where "I'm trying to be the best". As part of a team, I have to do my part to make the team better. If I'm weak, then not only must I work hard, I must work harder to ensure my teammate is better! A true teammate runs not only to get better, but make others around them better. My effort will be measured by those around me and my teammates will feed off of that, therefore it's imperative that I always do my best, win or lose, because my best is making me and others around me, better.

9. **1 Timothy 4:8**-Eternity, Perspective, Discipline

It's important that we work out and train to be good. Without great effort in the preparation, our success may decay. However, as much training that we put into athletics, we should be mindful to train for eternal treasures. Godliness is profitable in all things. Measure your "godliness" of this day. Did your actions and attitudes reflect the holiness and righteousness of Christ? If not, change it! Now! I would change my training program if I thought I could be better athletically. Why would I hold back for my spiritual growth?

10. **Hebrews 12:1**-Patience, Endurance, Faith, Repentance

We have the Bible in our hands providing so many examples of godly leaders who did great works for the Lord (Hebrews 11). If we're holding on to a sin in our lives, it's as though we're a bug stuck in a spider's web unable to break free. We're not going to move forward until we put the sin behind us. We live our lives as a response to God. He desires that we cast the burden of sin on Him and run this race of life knowing that it's going to be tough, but He's at the finish line with an eternal trophy of victory to be delivered in Heaven.



Be Intentional

Here is an example of a coach devotional that you might share verbally with your team and or with your team's families in a weekend email.

1. **Genesis 1:27-** God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

Have you ever improvised as an athlete? You should! Coaches put athletes in game like situations attempting to ensure they're adequately prepared, however coaches cannot mimic everything that will happen...that's where you as an athlete can create. You make the pass that wasn't practiced, adjust the swing on the pitch, or even change your direction due to the defense. You create!

No wonder we continue to see new advancements in medicine, technology, communication...we were created in God's image, therefore we create. In regards to the field of athletics, we see new techniques of cross training, new sources in nutrition and cutting edge methods on injury recovery. These and many other discoveries continue to emerge at a rapid pace due to the research and science that man pursues to make things better.

As human beings, we must never forget that we have the attributes of God which in turn allow us to create. The source of all that is created is from the imagination of God...sadly we sometimes interpret wrong. Every species known to man builds...but humans CREATE! Beavers builds dams, birds build nests, but man can create and build a modern skyscraper, a suspension bridge, or a way cool treehouse. The possibilities are endless.

As we create for the glory of God, remember that the details matter. In "The Artisan Soul", by Erwin McManus, he reminds us that the more someone or something matters to us, the more the details relating to them matter to us. For example, God gave Noah details on the Ark, Solomon details on the temple, Moses details on the Ark of the Covenant. Not only were the jobs of these men important, but the details on how they completed these tasks also mattered. God made each of us with precise detail therefore demonstrating again His love for us. Be intentional to create something today!

2. **1st Samuel 12:24-** But be sure to fear the LORD and serve him faithfully with all your heart; consider what great things he has done for you.

Few people that I'm aware of have served as a player and coach at the same time. Michael Jordan with the Washington Bullets...yes the Bullets, Magic Johnson with the Los Angeles Lakers, and Ted Williams with the Washington Senators. I can't imagine the intense pressure serving in these dual roles, but Samuel did. He served as both a prophet and judge for the people of Israel.

As Samuel neared his death, he makes one last speech. He recounts all the things the Lord had done for the people beginning with the acts of Moses. He then makes a final statement ending his journey as a coach and player by saying, "be sure to fear the LORD and serve him faithfully with all your heart; consider what great things he has done for you."

Samuel sums up the best of his advice right there for the people of Israel and for us today. We seldom want to fear anything, however the One whose outstretched hands formed the Heavens and the earth is fearful, and loving. He expects our total devotion, for we were created to glorify Him. Secondly, we should always consider the great things He has done for us. Maybe you view your life with a

perspective that He has NOT done great things, however maybe that's because you're looking from a wrong perspective. A loss of a friend may be the best thing for you now. The tension in a relationship with your parent may mean that you need to humble yourself and say "I'm sorry". Those can sometimes be the two most difficult words to say. God has done great things for you! Simply look at the opportunity you have to be part of a team, part of a school that honors Him, part of a country that protects your freedom to worship. If you have food in your cabinet and clothes that fit, you're part of the richest 10% on this planet! Be intentional to fear God, serve God and consider the great things He has done!

Date Shared: _____

3. Isaiah 59:1- Behold, the LORD's hand is not so short that it cannot save; Nor is His ear so dull that it cannot hear.

As an athlete, we wonder if speaking to the coach about a problem, is going to make a difference. Words we say to authorities like coaches, teachers and parents can feel as though they fall on deaf ears. As a player I've even thought, "I may as well not say anything because I know the coach isn't going to listen...it's not going to make a difference." ---As a coach, I've thought; "Are my athletes even hearing me? We practiced this stuff and now we're not executing it in the game." Sometimes in life our words seem to fall upon deaf ears, however, this is NOT so with the Lord.

Have you ever looked to see who was calling on your phone and NOT answered? Ashamedly, I know I have. Aren't you glad God isn't like that. He knows you by name. The Creator of the universe who knows when a bird falls to the ground, is concerned about you. He is longing to hear your heart whether it be in words or even groaning when we don't have words to describe our hearts. He longs for us to simply reach out to him. He awaits for us to be still and seek him. Our delay simply delays the blessing that he yearns to give.

No matter what the circumstance, He still saves and He still hears. Be intentional to call upon the Lord today.

PARENT MEETING AND COMMUNICATION

- Early, often, and accurate are keys to successful communication. Each coach should demonstrate clear and consistent communication to parents and players at all times. Likewise, parents and players are expected to communicate with coaches positively and professionally.
- After your team has been established, parent pre-season meetings should occur. This is the coaches time to communicate to the parents his/her goals, policies and expectations for the upcoming season.
- The areas below should be addressed.

Communication Parents Can Expect from Coaches

1. **Philosophy of the Coach:** The how and why we coach. Parents should know how a coach prefers to teach, motivate and discipline. Parents should know how the sport fits into the world of education.
2. **Expectations of the athletes and teams:** Goals for your team. Example----Athletes will leave opposing locker room cleaner than what we found it. OR We will memorize 3 of the 10 Intentional verses, in this booklet.
3. **Location and times of all practices and games:** Time is a commodity that's highly valued and having a "structured or planned time" that families can count on is essential. Every parent wants to go to the correct location at the proper time. Give them a calendar and a weekly update to avoid miscommunication on these.
4. **Copy of team rules:** What you give to athletes in regards to rules should be given to parents. I like to use the phrase, "I treat everyone fair, but not equal". Circumstances are different for everyone and as coach, I have that discretion.

Communication Coaches Expect from Parents

1. **Concerns about your child's wellbeing.** If there's something going on that coaches should know about (good or bad), please let us know. We pray for your child! We pray for our teams! We coach to build champions, not for championships!
2. **Specific questions about a coach's expectations.** Our coaches are approachable. Some will ask a lot of you and other coaches will ask little. Let us know if you have questions.
3. **Notification of any injury or illness.** We do expect student athletes to give 100% therefore let us know if your child is battling something that may affect their performance.
4. **Prior notification of absences.** Coaches prepare as though everyone is going to be at games and practices. Notify the coach early and prior to ensuring the team is best prepared to pursue excellence in your child's absence.

Sample Parent Meeting Agenda

About Me

- Who is Coach? - my philosophy, expectations, values, locations of practices, etc.
- Parents, I expect you will....
 - Keep me informed of your child's well being.
 - Contact me if there is an injury.
 - Let me know of your child's absence. (This is the athlete's responsibility)
- Handouts
 - Schedule ○ Cheat Sheet
 - Apparel Sheet ○ NCISAA Sportsmanship
 - Wrestling 101 ○ RulesTakedown Flyer
 - Takedown Flyer ○ Uniform Care ○ Team Parent

Finance

- MCA Sports Fee's
 - \$175 if this is your 1st sport this year
 - \$75 if this is your 2nd sport this year
- Apparel Fee
 - \$44 for warm-ups
 - Team store order forms - Due Monday 10/7 by end of practice

Practice Schedule

- Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday - 3pm to 5pm
 - "Mat time" on non match days
- Wednesday - 3pm to 5pm
 - Weight Room and Conditioning
- Holiday Schedule - Morning - 8am to 10am (Nov 23rd, Dec 23rd - Jan 3rd)

Equipment

- Practice:
 - Shorts ○ T-Shirt
 - Sweatpants ○ Long Sleeve ○ Hoodie
 - Running Shoes ○ Wrestling Shoes ○ Headgear
 - *Mouthpiece (If you have braces - MUST) ○ *Glasses / Contact

PLEASE BRING SOMETHING WARM TO WEAR AFTER PRACTICE

Weekend email to families (sample)

Parents,

Another season is coming to a close with our final two (2) games and an End of the Season Party. This week on Wednesday, we will be doing a Devotion and having a discussion on **Matthew 25:14-30**, which is better known as **The Parable of the Talents**. I always like to discuss this with the teams I coach as I feel it is very relevant to these young men to pray to find and discover their talents. So many of us have talents beyond measure that the Lord has blessed us with, but we have ignored them and not shared them with the world. My hope is that each one of these young men find that within themselves.

See you at Hickory Grove tomorrow:

NOTE: We have our End of Season Party on Thursday from 5:30-6:30PM. We will be ordering Dominos Pizzas (half Cheese & half Pepperoni/Cheese) and have water/soft drinks (Coke, CokeZero, Sprites) for everyone. **Please bring \$5 for each person eating and that should provide for 3-4 pcs per person and give to the team mom.**

1/22/2022	Boys Middle School Basketball	Away	Hickory Grove Christian School	Facility: Hickory Grove	4:00 – 5:00 PM
1/23/2022	Boys Middle School Basketball	Home	(Practice)	Facility: JWAC	3:00 - 4:30 PM
1/24/2022	Boys Middle School Basketball	Home	(Practice)	Facility: JWAC	3:00 - 4:30 PM
1/24/2022	Boys Middle School Basketball		End of Season: Pizza Party	Mr. Summey's classroom	5:30 -6:30 PM
1/25/2022	Boys Middle School Basketball	Away	Westminster Catawba Christian	Facility: Westminster Catawba	4:00 – 5:00 PM

Sample Calendar you might want to create and share with families:

This is not highly recommended for fall and spring as inclement weather changes the calendar.

November 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<i>Ephesians 4:1- Therefore I, a prisoner of the Lord implore you to walk in a manner worthy of your calling to which you have been called.</i>	3:00-5:00 FLC 5:30 Parent meeting will be 30 minutes. Boys will remain Modular E for our meeting.	1 3:00-5:00 JWAC	2 3:00-4:15 FLC <i>Ecclesiastes 9:10- Whatever thy hands finds to do, do it with all thy might.</i>	3 8 th grade retreat No practice- Study!	4 8 th grade retreat No practice- Study!	5
6	7 3:00-4:30 JWAC 4:30-5:00 Mod. E	8 3:00-4:30 FLC 4:30-5:00 Mod. E	9 3:00-4:15 FLC 4:15-4:45 Mod. E	10 Middle School Mania 1:30 Gaston Christian AWAY	11 Veterans Day 3:00-4:00 JWAC	12
13	14 3:00-4:30 JWAC 4:30-5:00 Mod. E	15 5:15 Comenius AWAY	16 3:00-4:15 FLC 4:15-4:45 Mod. E	17 3:00-4:30 FLC-split 4:30-5:00 Mod. E	18 Middle School Mania 1:30 Gaston Christian HOME	19
20 <i>Psalm 133:1- Behold how good and how pleasant it is when brothers dwell together in unity</i>	21 5:15 Providence Day AWAY	22 3:00-4:30 JWAC 4:30-5:00 Mod. E	23 Thanksgiving break	24 Thanksgiving Day	25 Thanksgiving break <i>Proverbs 16:26- A worker's appetite works for him because his hunger urges him on.</i>	26
27	28 5:00 Greater Cabarrus HOME	29 3:00-4:00 JWAC 4:00-4:30 Mod. E	30 3:00-4:15 FLC 4:15-4:45 Mod. E		<i>Galatians 6:9-Let us not grow weary in doing good, for in due time, we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.</i>	

Great Coaches, Seek Excellence

As all of us seek excellence in coaching. Here is something you may find helpful as we take an introspective look into our coaching. Jeff Jansen and Greg Dale authored a book titled: *The Seven Secrets of Successful Coaches: How to Unlock and Unleash Your Team's Full Potential*.

The characteristics and a brief overview are below.

1. Coaches who are character-based -

- a. Focus on being honorable and “do the right thing”.
- b. Tell the truth avoiding “mind games” with kids.
- c. Take pride in representing the team athletes, and organization.
- d. Emphasize character building as it is more important long term than skill development.

2. Coaches who are competent -

- a. Possess a thorough understanding of the fundamentals and strategies of the sport.
- b. Realize the importance of being inquisitive despite knowledge of Xs and Os.
- c. Continually look for new and innovative ways to coach.
- d. Are able to admit limitations and strengths.
- e. Maintain a humble nature and keep success in perspective.

3. Coaches who are committed -

- a. Create successful visions for their teams.
- b. Have a true passion for the sport and coaching.
- c. Have incredible reserves of energy and resiliency.
- d. Enjoy competing without placing winning above all else.

4. Coaches who are caring -

- a. Care about their athletes as people.
- b. Sincerely want the best for their athlete.
- c. Invest the time to know each of their athletes on a personal level.
- d. Spend some time with injured athletes and those who receive little playing time.
- e. Serve as an advocate for their athletes at school and in the community.
- f. Help their athletes long after their eligibility is finished.

5. Coaches who are confidence builders -

- a. Plant seeds of success in the athlete's mind convincing them they can and will be successful
- b. Have a special knack for making people feel good about themselves.
- c. Demand and set high standards, yet are patient enough to develop athletes.
- d. Have the ability to motivate without embarrassing or belittling athletes.

6. Coaches who are great communicators -

- a. Strive to be open, honest and direct when communicating with individuals and team.
- b. Continually remind people of what they need to do to be successful.
- c. Involve their athletes as much as possible and value their input.
- d. Have the remarkable ability to truly listen to their athletes.
- e. Proactively address concerns and conflicts before they become distractions.

7. Coaches who are consistent -

- a. Develops a sound philosophy of coaching that remains stable over time yet flexible enough to adapt to changing situations and times.
- b. Bring a productive mood to practices and games regardless of winning or losing.
- c. Avoid allowing the highs to get too high or the lows to get too low.
- d. Have a few rules, but are consistent in how they apply them regardless of athlete.
- e. Take pride in the organization of their practice and game preparation.



10 Practices of Master Teachers...Coaches

Although the Bible does not contain the word “coach”, it is understood that coaches teach. Taking a closer look at the word “coach”, we see the origin comes from Europe when carriages were made over 500 years ago to transport goods from one place to another. The term was last used in the mid-18th century for tutors who helped their students pass exams.

Therefore a “coach” was used to help move and teach. That is precisely what we do. We move people from one place to another through the process of instruction. The Bible provides a great caution to anyone who instructs. “Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly” (James 3:1).

In an article citing 10 practices of master teachers, I took the liberty to provide some reflection and add biblical truth.

Take a few minutes to read and reflect on how you match up with the research regarding “Master Teachers”.

Upon reading these 10 practices, would you consider yourself a “Master Coach”?

10 Practices “Master Teachers” do

1. **Ask for help.** We have so many experienced and godly coaches...use them. It's humbling to ask for help...“the Lord gives grace to the humble” (James 4:6).
2. **Avoid negative people at all costs.** Our ability to lead is greatly determined by those you're around. “He who walks with the wise grows wise” (Proverbs 13:20).
3. **Have a classroom management plan and stick to it!** God created order and gave us dominion over creation. We must ensure our athletes understand the hierarchy of authority and we should consistently enforce our standards or expectations. “All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness” (Hebrews 12:11).
4. **Be the happiest-looking coach in the school.** Students respond more favorably to coaches who appear to love what they are doing. Make a concerted effort to appear happy every day. Fake it on your bad days. Make your practice a cheerful place to be. “A cheerful heart is good medicine” (Proverbs 17:22).
5. **Convince students you care.** Get to know your athletes. Stress that you care, that you are on their side, and that you will not give up on them, even when they are tempted to give up on themselves. “Love one another” (John 13:34).
6. **Make lessons fun, meaningful, and doable.** Create practices that are challenging, attainable, and engaging. Individuals can accomplish almost any task if they view it as important and attainable. It's also fun to succeed and feel like you accomplished something. Just as the individuals who were given talents, those who did well were given more and told “well done” (Matthew 25).
7. **Avoid power struggles with students.** They are futile and harmful, often breeding defiance and never leading to improved behavior. Keep this thought in mind: “I can't control what others do,

but I can always be in control of myself. Like a city that is broken down and without walls [leaving it unprotected] is a man who has no self-control over his spirit [and sets himself up for trouble] (Proverbs 25:28).

8. **Use social media appropriately.** Do not avoid using social media. It's a treasure trove of learning, connecting, and collaborating. But DO avoid abusing social media. Do not post anything on a social media site that you would feel uncomfortable posting with Jesus being your subscriber. (Remember, outside of performing miracles and sharing the gospel, he often escaped large crowds and was alone or with small groups.)
9. **Act like a professional.** Treat your reputation with the utmost care. Students, coworkers, parents of students, and the community will hold you to a very high standard. “Be ye holy for I am holy” (Leviticus 11:44, 1st Peter 1:16).
10. **Communicate with parents-** God made us to live life together...to communicate NOT simply transmit. Do send notes, weekly e-mails, or text messages when and if appropriate, but more importantly, shake hands after ballgames! Make an occasional phone call and leave a positive voice message if there's no answer. A parent who has received several positive communications from you is infinitely more likely to work with you to solve an occasional problem than a parent who has never heard from you or who only hears from you when trouble is brewing. –“Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight, O Lord, my rock and my redeemer” (Psalm 19:14).

Practice Plan

The best coaches invest their time by planning every minute of their practice sessions. Each practice has a logical sequence and flow based on the coach's observations of player performance and skill development needs. Coach of the 20th Century John Wooden created eight principles of practice plan design that he used as a guide when planning practices.

1. Fundamentals before creativity.
2. Use variety.
3. Teach new material at the start of practice.
4. Quick transitions between activities.
5. Increase complexity from practice to practice.
6. Conditioning for learning.
7. End on a positive note.
8. Avoid altering a plan during the lesson.

These principles have stood the test of time and are as valuable today as they were when Coach Wooden created them many decades ago. The principles are described in detail in the following section with supporting examples from other coaches and coaching research.

1. **Fundamentals before creativity.** Basic skills of the sport must be learned before complex skills and strategies can be practiced. Basic skills provide the foundation for athlete creativity. Repeatedly practicing fundamental skills helps athletes build what are referred to as general motor programs - a sort of mental blueprint that contains information about how to perform basic skills. For example, through quality practice athletes develop motor programs for basic skills such as shooting a basketball, catching a football pass, or hitting a pitched ball. Athletes rely on these general motor programs to perform quick and decisive actions that require them to improvise or adjust their movements while in action. Therefore, developing general motor programs will greatly increase an athlete's ability to perform successfully across various competitive situations. For this reason, regardless of the age or skill level of the athlete, some practice time should always be set aside for learning or reinforcing basic skills. For example, championship football coach Pete Carroll believes that disciplined, repetitive practice of fundamental skills is critical for performing at a championship level not only because it strengthens general motor programs but also because it builds athletes' confidence in their ability.
2. **Use variety.** Practice activities should be regularly changed to keep athletes' engagement and interest high, and new practice activities should be introduced frequently. Variety can also be accomplished by simply rearranging the order in which activities are practiced. Yet another option is to vary the sequence of skill attempts. This method is referred to as random or varied practice.¹⁶ For example, instead of having golf athletes practice blocks of 10 putts from a set distance, they could be required to attempt each of the 10 putts from a different spot on the green. Likewise, instead of hitting a block of shots with one specific

club, they could be required to hit the same number of shots with a random sequence of different clubs. This routine promotes what is known as perceptual attunement, which develops the ability to make adjustments based on changes in the performance environment. Although short-term gains in performance may not be evident with this approach, it appears to be more effective than blocked practice for long-term performance improvements. Another way to add variety to practices is to select a theme for each practice and design activities that all connect to the theme. Successful coaches often add an inspirational quotation to their practice plan, which they share with their athletes at the start of practice as a way to reinforce the practice theme. In addition to books such as *Inspirational Quotes for Sport Coaches* inspiring quotations can easily be found through a quick online search. Two websites that coaches may find particularly helpful are the sport quotations pages of the University of North Texas Center for Sport Psychology and Performance Excellence (<https://sportpsych.unt.edu/resources/athletes/31>) and Keepinspiring.me (www.keepinspiring.me/100-most-inspirational-sports-quotes-of-all-time/). Coaches who use social media will also find Twitter accounts such as @Sports_Greats (Sports Quotes) and @SportsMotto (Great Sports Quotes) to be valuable sources of inspirational quotations to use at practices.

3. **Teach new material at the start of practice.** Coaches can use the first part of the practice to introduce and teach new skills or strategies. After a proper warm-up that includes light movement and stretching, athletes are most receptive to learning new things because (a) they have had a chance to socialize with their teammates for a few minutes and (b) they are more physically and mentally ready to learn than later in the practice when they have less energy. An active warm-up that includes some type of aerobic activity such as a game of soccer on a small field, perhaps with multiple balls, primes the brain for learning. Aerobic exercise stimulates the release of chemicals in the brain, referred to as neurotransmitters, that increase focus and strengthen the learning of new concepts.
4. **Quick transitions between activities.** Coaches must also pay careful attention to the flow and sequence of practice activities to ensure that time spent moving from one activity to the next is minimized. Transition time can be minimized by thinking about how equipment will be set up and moved from one activity to the next and by sharing practice plans in advance with assistant coaches. Transition time can also be minimized by arriving early to practice and making sure that the required equipment is in place for each activity before practice starts. Coach Wooden required his athletes to sprint from one activity to the next, but this strategy works only if the next station or activity is set up in advance. A simple way to ensure quick transitions is to send athletes for water breaks individually or in small groups, rather than using the common practice of scheduling full-team water breaks at regular intervals throughout a practice. When large groups of athletes break for water at the same time, off-task behavior is more likely to occur and it takes more time to bring the athletes back on task for the next activity.

5. **Increase complexity from practice to practice.** Early season practices should be designed with an emphasis on fundamental skills, often practiced in repetitive blocks of time. Blocked practice is generally considered more effective when an athlete is first learning a new skill or concept.¹⁶ But after athletes become comfortable performing the skill, the complexity of the practice activities should be increased. For example, after athletes have learned the fundamentals of shooting a basketball, coaches can add complexity to shooting activities by varying the distance of the shots, adding a pass before the shot, or adding defenders. Soccer coach Tony DiCicco believes that this approach to practice design was instrumental in his leading teams to Olympic and World Cup titles. In his words, he layered the design of practices by continually adding small variations to the way they practiced set plays such as free kicks and corner kicks. After winning the 1999 World Cup of soccer, in which his team won many games with corner kicks, the media assumed that his team must have devoted massive blocks of practice time to repeating corner kicks. He explained that although they did practice corner kicks on a regular basis, "It was a continual layering to imprint the basic, subtle nuances of each free-kick opportunity. We imprinted layers rather than attempting to rush perfection."
6. **Conditioning for learning.** Coaches cannot expect athletes to show up to the first practice in top physical and mental condition. Just as each practice session should have a proper warm-up period, the first few weeks of practice each season should be approached as a time to warm up athletes for increasingly complex and high-intensity practice sessions. Contrary to what people might think, for Coach Wooden this guideline meant scheduling longer practices early in the year. The practice sessions for the first two weeks of the season were 30 minutes longer than normal, but the intensity of the practices was relatively low. Coach Wooden used the extra time to give longer explanations, more detailed demonstrations, and more frequent rest breaks to allow the athletes to get into practice condition. As the season progresses, practices should become shorter and more intense, requiring athletes to be in better mental and physical condition than they were for early season practices. After conditioning has been developed, coaches such as championship wrestling coach Dan Gable also recommend shortening late-season practices as a way to keep athletes fresh.⁴³ Shorter practices and extra rest between practices may be required to combat fatigue from a long season. Practice sessions still need to be run at high intensity so that conditioning can be maintained leading into the postseason.
7. **End on a positive note.** Although his former players describe his practices as electric and fast paced, Coach Wooden routinely set aside the last five minutes of practice for a fun or silly activity. Former player Swen Nater recalls one practice in particular when Coach Wooden let the players hold a dunk contest, even though dunking was normally forbidden in practices because it was not allowed in games at that time. Coaches must not lose sight of the fact that fun is one of the primary motives for participating in sport. Quality coaches

understand and nurture this basic need, regardless of their athletes' age and competitive level. Training to become a champion requires many thousands of hours of physically and mentally intense practice. Deliberate practice must be counterbalanced with fun and playful activities to sustain athletes' motivation and passion for the sport. One effective strategy for ensuring that athletes finish each practice on a positive note is to allow them to select the final activity at each practice. When given the choice, athletes will always select fun and competitive activities. Coaches should ensure that every athlete gets to select the fun activity at least once during the season. Coaches might also decide to award the selection of the fun activity to an athlete who exemplified a certain characteristic during the practice, such as hardest worker or best teammate. Two-time national high school football Coach of the Year Charles "Chuck" Kyle used a different kind of strategy to ensure that every practice ended on a positive note. He created a 10-second tradition whereby time was set aside at the end of every practice for each player to visualize himself correcting an error he made in practice that day. The goal was for each athlete to leave the practice with a positive image of himself performing successfully.

8. **Avoid altering a plan during the lesson.** Coaches often make changes in the midst of a practice based on things they are noticing. For example, if athletes are struggling with an activity, a coach may want to spend more time on the activity. But veering off the carefully prepared practice plan disrupts the intended flow of the practice and negatively affects remaining activities. For example, if a coach extends one activity by 10 minutes, then either the next activities will have to be shortened or the practice will have to be extended. Neither of these scenarios is desirable or conducive for effective learning and skill development. If subsequent practice activities are shortened or eliminated, then the athletes are losing the opportunity to practice things that the coach believed were critical for individual and team improvement. If the practice is simply extended, athletes may conserve energy or lose focus because they don't know how long they will be practicing. When practices are extended beyond the time initially deemed optimal and athletes tire and begin to lose focus, they become most susceptible to injury.

Gilbert, Wade. "Practice Plan." Coaches Insider. 9 March 2021.
<https://coachesinsider.com/wrestling/practice-plan-6/>.

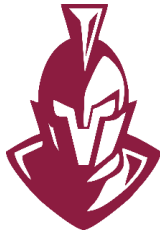


Fourteen Legal Duties of a Coach

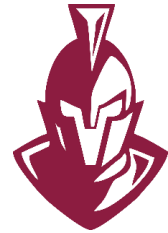
Several obligations or duties have been identified as absolute requirements for coaches and athletic administrators. These standards have evolved as a result of various case law proceedings and legal judgments against individuals and school districts. It is important that all coaches, including assistants and volunteers, know and understand the following duties. This summary is not all-inclusive but is generally accepted as the “Legal Duties of Coaches” by the NFHS (National Federation of High Schools) and NIAAA (National Interscholastic Athletic Administrator Association).

1. **Duty of Plan** – A coach must demonstrate awareness of the maturity, physical development and readiness of athletes with appropriate plans for instruction, conditioning and supervision.
2. **Duty to Supervise** – A coach must be physically present, provide competent instruction, structure practices that are appropriate for the age and maturity of players, prevent foreseeable injuries and respond to injury or trauma in an approved manner. This duty requires supervisors to make sure facilities are locked and that students are denied access when a competent staff member cannot be physically present to supervise. This duty may also require coaches to control reckless player behaviors. Supervision responsibility also pertains to athletic administrators who are expected to be able to supervise coaches competently.
3. **Duty to Assess Athletes Readiness for Practice and Competition** – Athletics administrators and coaches are required to assess the health and physical or maturational readiness skills and physical condition of athletes. A progression of skill development and conditioning improvement should be apparent from practice plans. Athletes must also be medically screened in accordance with state association regulations before participating in practice or competition.
4. **Duty to Maintain Safe Playing Conditions** – Coaches are considered trained professionals who possess a higher level of knowledge and skill that permits them to identify foreseeable causes of injury inherent in defective indoor and outdoor facilities or hazardous environments.
5. **Duty to Provide Safe Equipment** – Courts have held athletic supervisors responsible to improve unsafe environments, repair or remove defective equipment or disallow athlete access.

6. **Duty to Instruct Properly** – Athletic practices must be characterized by instruction that accounts for a logical sequence of fundamentals that lead to an enhanced progression of player knowledge, skill, and capability.
7. **Duty to Match Athletes** – Athletes should be matched with consideration for maturity skill, age, size, and speed. To the degree possible, mismatches should be avoided in all categories.
8. **Duty to Condition Properly** – Practices must account for a progression of cardiovascular and musculoskeletal conditioning regimens that prepare athletes sequentially for more challenging practices and competitive activities.
9. **Duty to Warn** – Coaches are required to warn parents and athletes of unsafe practices specific to a sport and the potential for injury or death. This warning should be issued in writing and both athletes and parents should be required to provide written certification of their comprehension.
10. **Duty to Ensure Athletes are Covered by Injury Insurance** – Athletics administrators and coaches must screen athletes to ensure that family and/or school insurance provides basic level of medical coverage. Athletes should not be allowed to participate without injury insurance.
11. **Duty to Provide Emergency Care** – Coaches are expected to be able to administer standard emergency care (first aid, CPR) in response to a range of traumatic injuries.
12. **Duty to Design a Proper Emergency Response Plan** – Coaches must design plans to ensure an expedited response by EMS and an effective transition to the care and supervision of emergency medical personnel.
13. **Duty to Provide Proper Transportation** – In general, bonded, commercial carriers should be used for out of town transportation. Self or family transportation for local competition may be allowed if parents have adequate insurance coverage for team members other than their family members. (follow school district guidelines)
14. **Duty to Select, Train, and Supervise Coaches** – Administrators have responsibility to ensure that appropriate skill and knowledge levels exist among members of the coaching staff to ensure appropriate levels of safety and well being among athletes.



**Metrolina Christian
Academy
2025-2026
Team Pre-Season Plan**



- What are 3 ways you're going to "Guard your heart with all diligence" this year?
- List 3 core values you desire to stress and instill in your team this year?
- When the season is over, what do you want your players to say about you?
- How will you develop a high accountability and high expectation culture?
- What can you and your coaching staff do this year to ensure your athletes bring glory to God?
- How can I pray for you as you enter this season? Please take a moment to think about your entire season as well as the immediate concerns of the day to day.



Assistant Coach Evaluation Form

1. Discuss specific examples of how you helped athletes grow in their relationship with the Lord.

2. Share ways you helped athletes increase their sports IQ.

3. Share at least four words or comments regarding the following:
 - a. What do you think athletes will say when asked what kind of coach you were?

4. Share some areas that you need to grow in and why.

5. How did you help care for the souls of our athletes?

Head Coach Signature

Assistant Coach Signature