

# Baseball and Softball Fundamentals and Drills



# Defensive Drills

## Throwing Mechanics

4 seam rotation

- Middle finger and thumb are directly opposite from each other on the seams

## Drill

Basketball spin – shoot up in the air

## Throwing

**Ride the skateboard:** (this is Ready Position)

- have the kids turn body and feet so that their body is perpendicular to their target, basically as if they are on a skateboard
- Glove and throwing hand are together (touching their chest)

**Make T (with muscle):** (this is Break Position)

- Kids point their glove to the target
- Point the ball hand behind – make a muscle –they should be able to turn and look at their hand with the ball and see where a ring would be on the finger

**Throw:** (this is Throw Position)

- Lead with the elbow
- Come over the top
- Finish at the opposite knee

**Ready-Break-Throw:**

- Ready position – ball in glove – touching the chest, on the skateboard
- Break position – Make the T, throwing hand - bend the elbow and see the ring on their finger
- Throw – Lead with the elbow, finish at the opposite knee

## Drills

- **Coach Says:** like Simon says – show me ready, show me break, show me throw, show me make a muscle, show me ride a skateboard
- **Pretend throws:** no balls – everyone on a line – coach says ready – Kids say ready– check kids, Coach says Break – Kids say break - check kids, Coach says throw –Kids say throw - check kids
- **Slo Mo Throw:** Have the kids throw against the fence. Teach the players to learn control by asking them to throw in slow motion with just enough force to get the ball to the target. Once they can get the ball to the target with the slow motion throw, ask them to do the same
  - thing with their normal throw.

- **Kids throw to coach:** Run around and grab the ball, go to the end of the line.  
Repeat
- Darts – have them stand 10 feet apart and just throw darts with the ball to each other
- One knee throwing – 20 feet apart
- Ready – Break – Throw  
Ready – hands together, body is turned  
Break – point glove to target, perpendicular – see the ring  
Throw – stress coming over the top – finish at the opposite knee
- Spot throwing – give a target with the glove – they hit the target

## Catching

- **Give a target:** Both hands should be up to give a target to their partner
- Move to receive the ball
- Catch with 2 hands - **Fingers up:** If the ball is above the chest – have them catch with their fingers up  
**Fingers down:** Ball is below the waist – fingers down
- Step to catch the ball
- Body turned as ball comes in

## Drills

- **Toss up:\*** Without a glove, kids will just toss the ball up in the air and practice catching it with two hands. After about 10 tosses, have them toss it up, then get on their skateboard in ready position
- **Kid catch:** Coach throws to each kid – first round all fingers up – kids get a point for each catch – have kids call out scores. Second round – all fingers down – still get points. 3<sup>rd</sup> round – either one
- **1<sup>st</sup> base throws:** 2 kids at 1<sup>st</sup>, group at 2<sup>nd</sup> base. 2 kids at 2<sup>nd</sup> base position, group at short/3<sup>rd</sup>. Roll ball to fielders. They throw to the base (short throws to 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> throws to first). Follow the throw – thrower becomes the next one in line at the base.
- Partner throws
- Quick release with partner
- Quick release with tags – cover the ball with hand, tag the ground, jump pivot and throw
- Star drill – quick release, follow the ball
- Star drill with tags

## Fielding Techniques

### Ready position:

#### Ride a horse:

- Feet shoulder width apart, should be on the balls of their feet.
- Butt down – bend the knees and act as if you are sitting on the horse

#### Hold the beach ball:

- Arms are holding a giant beach ball
- Rotate it so the glove is on the bottom of the ball

#### Fielding the ball:

##### Be an alligator:

- Glove is the bottom of the jaw, throwing hand is the top of the jaw,
- Field in front of the body – middle of the stance
- Ball comes in, gobble up the ball

#### Show the button:

- We should see the button on the top of the hat when they get the ball – watch the ball into the glove

#### Throwing position

- Jump onto skateboard – ready break throw

## Fielding Drills

- **Coach says:** Simon says – show me ready, show me alligator, show me the button,
- **No glove roll:** Roll the ball to the player, they field it and run it to the bucket, go the end of the line
- **With Glove:** Same as above
- **With glove /throw:** Roll ball to player, they jump on their skateboard and throw back to you.
  
- 2 knee fielding – on two knees – roll back and forth
- Without glove, with glove
- Stand up – grounders to middle, right, left – just one or two steps
- One hop fielding – focus on staying low, watch ball into the glove – jump pivot into throwing position
- Taking Throws – straddle bag
- Take away ½ the bag – stay on the infield
- Turning outs – 1, double, 1-3, home and one, home and cover, 1<sup>st</sup> and cover

## Fielding bunts

Stress – down with two hands (scoop), body is turned as you field the ball

No crow hop – stand and quick fire

### Drills

From 1<sup>st</sup> base –

- In the hole bunts
- Down the line bunts
- Fielding for a sac bunt (lot of time)
- Fielding for a drag bunt (quick release of ball)
- Fielding to throw to 2, throw to 3

From the mound –

- Right off the mound
- 1<sup>st</sup> base side
- 3<sup>rd</sup> base side
- Fielding for sac bunt
- Fielding for drag bunt
- Fielding to throw to 2

From 3<sup>rd</sup> base –

- In the hole – on the run
- Sac bunt – set feet and throw
- Drag bunt – throw off one foot

# Outfield Drills

## Things to stress

### Communication with each other

- Calling the ball – talking to each other about whose ball
- Hitter position and where they hit the ball last
- Know the outs
- Hitting the cut
- Backing up all infielders – you are the last line of defense
- Being involved in the play – covering bases, rundowns
- Knowing where to go with the ball – baserunners, # of outs, how important is this run, etc.
- Knowing the environmental factors – sunlight, wind, ground condition, etc.

### Drills:

#### Outfield Patterns

- Catching the ball in front of the body – body slightly turned, glove off one of eyes, catch with two hands- quick release
- Forehand – run with glove down, doesn't have to be two hands
- Backhand – run with glove down, don't run backwards, catch with two hands
- Over the head – look over one shoulder, head is on a swivel, RUN FAST, cradle the ball – cover with other hand
- Basket – RUN FAST, one hand – watch the ball into the glove
- Diving – forehand, backhand, basket – NO FEAR, one handed, two if possible, Getting up – volleyballish, slide into basket
- Blocking ground balls – leg down – no glove knee – leg out to side, shoulders square, two hand smother, don't wait until the last minute to drop down, jump pivot
- Scoop and stride – field the ball off to side, run through the ball, glove pick up dirt/grass, crow hop-jump pivot
- Crow hops – Body turned in throwing position, catch with two hands, get behind the ball – move forward, start crow hop as catching (NOT AFTER)

#### Communication Drills

- The smash into each other drill – fly balls and grounders  
Two lines – circle around each other
- Throw and replace – crow hops and cut-offs
- Throw and replace – grounder – quick jump pivot – hit cut-offs
- Long distance throwing – throw and replace

#### Running fun

- Drop step head turns (zig zags)
- Quick sprints – line sprints – explosion drop steps (R/L/forward)

#### Now you must use a bat

- 2 lines – partner...back up each other
- Cut-off – hit over head and throw to cut-off person
- All of the above but with a bat

## **Hitting: Simplified**

### **Ride the horse:** (hitting position)

- Feet about shoulder width apart – make sure their feet are parallel and not like a duck

### **Bat on shoulder:** (hitting position)

- Rest the bat on the shoulder and just lift it about 2 inches
- Think hands high, don't focus so much on the back elbow – but keep the hands high

### **Load:**

- Shift wait back a little
- Show the number
- Pick bat up about 2 inches

### **Squash the bug:**

- Imagine a bug under the back foot, they twist and squash the bug that is under. This will cause them to open their hips. Front leg should be straight, back leg is bent.

### **Swing/wrap around:**

- Start with the chin on one shoulder and finish with it on the other shoulder
- Lead with knob of bat
- Extend arms and wrap bat around the entire body

Go through 3 basis points: Call out numbers –

1. Ride and load
2. Squash the bug – start the swing
3. Shoulder to shoulder - wrap bat around body

## **In depth**

Bat Selection

If 5'6" or more – maximum length 34 inches

If 5'6" or less – 33 inches or less

### **The Grip**

In fingers -good wrist snap – we must have strong fingers

- Reach out – contact zone should be at extension
- Rest bat on ground in fingers – that is the grip

## **The batter's box**

- Back foot is even with the back corner of the plate
- Feet are shoulder width apart
- Toes are slightly turned in
- Weight is on the inside ball of the feet – on your big toes

## **The footwork**

### **Stride**

- Knees are slightly bent
- Stride is 4-6 inches – straight ahead (keep the weight back – avoid lunging)
- Drive the front heel down – about a 45 degree angle
- Pivot – squash the bug under the back foot – 90 degree angle with knee, front leg should be close to straight

### **No stride**

- Knees are slightly bent
- Feet are already 4-6 inches ahead of “normal”

## **The swing**

- Loading – Twist the body slightly (coiling) onto the front toe (show the number)
- Body should uncoil from the bottom to the top – uncoil shoulder, elbow, wrist
- Drive front heel down

## **Upper body**

- Lay bat flat on shoulder (or just below the shoulder)
- Pick bat up 2 inches when ready to hit

## **Ready position**

- Load – show the number
- Wrist stay cocked until contact – pull the knob of the bat
- Top hand is behind the bat – backhand to forehand

## **The head**

- Both eyes are looking at the pitcher – head stays still
- Chin should start on one shoulder and end on the other shoulder

## **Possible drills**

- **Coach Says:** Simon says – Ride the horse, Load, squash the bug, swing
- **Squash the bug:** Just do this without a bat, just to get the feel of the body – do this together
- **Invisible Bat Drill:** Line the kids up on the first and third baselines, and ask them to get into a **hitting position**. Go through each point –
  1. Ride the horse and load
  2. Start the swing (squash the bug)
  3. Swing (shoulder to shoulder)



- Hitting without bats – backhand, forehand, both – from knees – soft toss or T’s – use wiffles or lite flite balls
- Perfect swing - Power swings
- Line swings – have a line on the ground – make sure you are staying “above the line”
- Wiffle balls – golf ball size balls
- Soft toss – hit 9 different spots – low, mid, high and inside, middle, outside
- With a bat, with hands – forehand, back hand, both
  
- T work
  - 2 T’s
  - 1 T – set up different pitches
  
- Drop toss
- Bounce toss
- Basketball toss (make sure it is deflated)
- Fence swing
- Two ball toss
- Rotating Ball
- Bunts - with wiffles
- Tennis ball bounce

## **The bunt**

**This should be worked on EVERY single day. If only for 5 minutes – they should practice each day**

### **Sacrifice bunt**

- Move up in the box
- Pivot on the balls of the feet
- Bat is close to parallel with the ground
- Bat is at top of the strike zone
- Arms are bent and away from the body
- Hands are at the knob of the bat and near the middle of the bat – resting on the index finger
- Arms are loose – “catch the ball”
- Bunt only strikes – bunt the top half of the ball
- Pivot the bat on the index finger to determine if toward 1<sup>st</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup>
- YOU DO NOT MATTER – We are sacrificing you to move the runner

### **Slap bunt (regular)**

- Move up in the box
- Show bunt early
- Pull bat back  $\frac{1}{2}$  to  $\frac{3}{4}$  of your natural swing
- Hands together at near the middle of the bat
- Slap at the ball (not a full swing) and hit toward short stop – get it on the ground
- Slap only strikes – top half of the ball

## **Drag bunt**

- Move back in the box
- Run at the pitcher
- Pull the knob of the bat to the inside hip
- Watch the ball hit the bat

## **Running Slap**

- Move back in the box
- Run at the pitcher
- Running swing – top half

Drills: (Do this every day – 10 minutes maximum)

- Partner bunting – wiffle balls, tennis balls, softballs  
Work on top half, direction bunting
- Partner bunting – slap and drag – wiffle balls, tennis balls, softballs

## **Position Work**

The corners – pick off tags, bunts, cover and go one

Middle infield – footwork on turning two, flips and shuffles throws

Catching – glove slams, kick slides, blocking the plate, framing, bunt coverage, pass balls, pick-offs

Pitchers – pitching, bunt coverage, plate coverage

Outfield – diving, blocking, crow hops, base coverage

## **Base-running**

### **Dropping the bat:**

- Kids get so excited about hitting the ball, they just throw the bat as far as they can, and then try and get to the base. You can have them carry it a couple of steps and then drop it or give them a spot to put the bat into before they run.

### **Run through bag:**

- Make sure they run through the entire base path – do not have them stop on 1<sup>st</sup> base. In fact, the best thing is to have them stop when they reach the grass, curve away from the infield, then back to the bag

### **Rounding:**

- Run outside of the baseline. Focus on getting outside the baseline and then hit the inside corner of the bag

## Possible drills

- **High Fives:** Have a coach stand on the grass, past 1<sup>st</sup> base. Kids start at home plate and then run to 1<sup>st</sup> base. They can't stop running until they high five the coach's hand.
- **Circle it up:** Sometimes young players have a tendency to throw the bat after they swing. Draw a circle in the dirt. Have the kids swing the bat, drop it in the circle and run to first base.
- **Double races:** Half the line at home, half the line at 2<sup>nd</sup> – say go, kids race to the next line. Stress hitting the inside corner of the bag

## Sliding

- Feet first – be able to slide with both legs – avoiding a tag
- Feet first – pop up slide
- Head first – avoiding a tag

## Softball Pitching:

- Spinning – Wrist spins – lot's of wrist snap
  - Stress – 4 seam rotation
  - Faster the spin, more the ball will move
  - Speed of the spin will help more with the speed of the pitch
- Knee pitching –  $\frac{1}{4}$ ,  $\frac{1}{2}$ ,  $\frac{3}{4}$ , full
  - Stress – see the ring, glass of water, make a muscle
    - Snap at the hip
- Standing up – From the X position
  - $\frac{1}{4}$  circle – make a muscle – get the ball the spinning
    - See the ring, snap at the hip – don't worry about
    - Strikes – worry about speed – JUST THROW HARD
  - $\frac{1}{2}$  circle – same as above
  - $\frac{3}{4}$  circle – full
- Long distance on a line – make sure stepping on the line – start close, move back

### *Drop ball*

- Body position: Shorter stride – head is slightly more in front of hips at the release
  - Follow through is low
  - Drop is somewhat slower than the fastball
- Peel off method – 1. Ball rolls off ends of fingers
- Fingers on across the seams – 4 seam rotation – in between 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> knuckle.
- Thumb off first, fingers off second – lot's of wrist flick
  - Roll over method:
    1. Ball is snapped downward
    2. Fingers on the sides of the seams
    3. Rotate hand and wrist over the top of the ball

### *Rise ball*

- Body position: Longer stride – head is more behind the hips
  - Follow through is near the ear and elbow to side of the body
  - LOTS OF WRIST SNAP – FASTER BALL
- The rise: Fingers on the sides of the seams, spin upward
  - Turn the doorknob

### *Change up*

- Do not grip the seams
- Can do two different types of change up pitches –
- The circle change – make a circle with the thumb and forefinger. Nestle the ball into the palm of the hand and pop the ball out of the hand. Do not slow down the arm circle, just no snap and pop it.
- Slip change – hold the ball with all four fingers. As you circle the arm, flip the hand over and release as if you are pitching slow pitch. Think of trying to land the ball in a bucket behind the plate

## Baseball : Practice #1

(When introducing these skills explain in group demo and use small groups for lots of repetitions)

### 1) 1. Intro Meeting with Parents and Kids

Medical Release, Snack Sign-up, Phone #'s & email additions

Caps for players. What is appropriate dress (cup)

Coaches Background

Philosophy: teach basics, develop teamwork, hustle, discipline and coachability, have fun!

2) Show kids proper grip of a baseball and how to pick up a ball on the ground- pushing down and using 3-4 finger grip

3) **Ball Pick up Race:** Divide players into 2 teams-each team has a bucket. Scatter balls around diamond and see which team can pick up the most balls. Players can only use their throwing hand to pick up the ball and get one ball at a time.

4) **Intro catching technique-** coaches throw to kids so focus is on catching

	<p>Coaching Points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Get behind ball- Move feet to get into position, balanced, athletic position</li><li>• Reach out with glove and throwing hand next to mitt to keep ball in- two hands</li><li>• Soft hands, bring hands together to start throw back</li><li>• Ball above waist= fingers up, ball below waist=fingers down.</li><li>• <b>Give a target with both hands - stresses two hands – stress catching in the middle of the body if possible.</b></li></ul> <p>Drill: Coach stands 10yds from short line of players. Coach throws to 1<sup>st</sup> player in line, player catches and runs ball back to coach and continues to the back of other line. Set up lines in pairs to keep things moving.</p>
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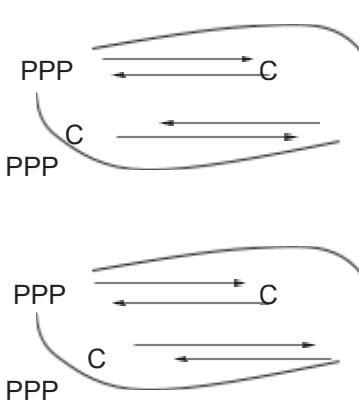
5) **Stretching-** explain why this is important for arms  
Arm circles, chicken wing, pull across

6) **Intro throwing technique**

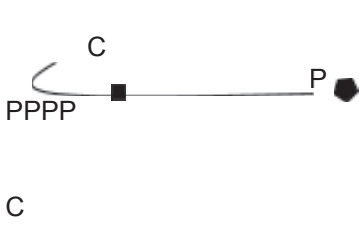
	<p>Coaching Points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>I always like the use of ready, break throw. Do this together – really break it down</b></li><li>• Glove shoulder pointed at target- (Skateboard) (<b>ready</b>) Stand like they were riding a skateboard at the target</li><li>• Separate hands, (Thumbs down and around) (<b>break</b>) This enables them to come up into an overhand motion.</li><li>• Knuckles to the sky, elbow up high They should see the back of their hand, not the baseball. It is this position that allows them to keep their elbow up high, which takes the pressure off of their elbow when throwing.</li><li>• <b>point their glove to their target</b></li><li>• Step on line If a player does not step on a line directly at their target, it causes their front side shoulder to pull off, which in turn drops their throwing elbow. The baseball is then rotated so that it comes out of the side of their hand. Over a distance, the ball will slice and drop, resulting in a loss of accuracy and</li></ul>
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	<p>velocity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Let it fly Release ball slightly in front of shoulder. Wrist snaps to add velocity</li> <li>• Take a bow Taking a bow or follow through, helps with accuracy, imparts increased velocity and helps to decelerate the throwing arm, preventing injuries. <b>Follow through to the opposite knee – touch the knee when done</b></li> </ul> <p>Drill: Coach stands 10yds from short line of players. Coach throws to 1<sup>st</sup> player in line. Player catches ball, “skateboards”, and throws the ball back. Player follows throw and runs to the back of other line. Set up lines in pairs to keep things moving.</p>
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## 7) Intro fielding technique

	<p>Coaching Points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Get behind ball. Use feet and shuffle steps to line up belly button with the ball</li> <li>• Bend at hips and knees to lower glove to ground- butt down</li> <li>• Reach out in front of body with glove- other hand is next to glove.</li> <li>• Watch ball into glove (Alligator chomp)</li> <li>• Bring both hands and ball together into belly</li> <li>• Get on “skateboard” with glove shoulder pointed at target.</li> <li>• Get momentum moving toward target by placing back foot in front of front foot and then taking another step. Right-left-right.</li> </ul> <p>Drill:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) <b>Ball Pick up Race:</b> do this again – but this time have them go down with two hands and pick up the ball.</li> <li>2) Coach stands 10yds from short line of players. Coach throws a grounder to 1<sup>st</sup> player in line. Player fields it, “skateboards”, and throws the ball back to coach. Player follows throw and runs to the back of other line. Set up lines in pairs to keep things moving.</li> </ol>
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## 2) Base running- Run through first base

	<p>Coaching Points: Sprint Hard through first base then decelerate and make turn away from field</p> <p>Drill: Players stand at plate, one coach is at 1<sup>st</sup> base another is pitcher on mound. When pitcher pretends to throw a baseball, player swings bat and runs to 1<sup>st</sup>. Coach yells “dig it out”</p>
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**Baseball : Practice #2**

1) Tag Game in area

2) Demo Hitting: Full group- each with a bat

3) Group pitching - against the fence

4) Stations (10-15 min)

Group 1 at 1<sup>st</sup> base: Hip rotation work with tennis racquet. Hitting tennis balls

Group 2 at 1<sup>st</sup>base: Front foot step drill. 1 hits 5 whiffle balls. Rest are fielding. Rotate

Group 2 at 3<sup>rd</sup>base: Front foot step drill. 1 hits 5 whiffle balls. Rest are fielding. Rotate

5) Stations (10 min)

Group 1 in outfield: Catching and Throwing- work on technique. Stretch-10yds apart-15 yds apart

Group 2 infield: Shag balls. Start to throw to 1<sup>st</sup> base.

Group 3 at home: Hitting. Coach pitch. Players get 3 hits, run out last one. Stay at 1<sup>st</sup> base. On deck batter with coach hitting off tee.

6) Base running- Making the turn at first base

	<p>Coaching Points:</p> <p>Sprint Hard to first base. Looking at 1<sup>st</sup> base coach.</p> <p>When hear "make the turn", veer to the right a little to begin to round path around first. <b>(I have always just said round the base – either will work)</b></p> <p>Look for ball <b>hit the inside corner – doesn't matter which foot to use</b></p> <p>Take a couple of steps to 2<sup>nd</sup>, cautiously</p> <p>Listen to coaches direction</p> <p>Drill:</p> <p>Players stand a plate, one coach is at 1<sup>st</sup> base another is pitcher on mound.</p> <p>When pitcher pretends to throw a baseball, player swings bat and runs to 1<sup>st</sup>.</p> <p>As 1<sup>st</sup> base coach says "make the turn", players round 1<sup>st</sup>. If coach says "back to bag", player returns to 1<sup>st</sup> with head down. If coach says "go to second", player sprints to second and stops on bag.</p>
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### Baseball : Practice #3

- 1) Tag Game with 3 bases (as safe spots) (5 -10 minutes)
- 2) Stretch Arms (5 minutes)
- 3) Group pitching - pitch to the fence (15 minutes)
- 4) Throw and Catch (work on technique). With coaches in lines. (10 minutes)
- 5) Ground ball drill: 2 players at 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, SS, 3<sup>rd</sup>, Home. Coaches hit or throw to players.  
**(A great one is cross hitting – put them at short/2<sup>nd</sup> – two coaches hit – they throw to you)**
- 6) Stations (10 min)

Group 1 outfield: Catching Fly balls (Tennis balls hit w/Racquet)

Group 2 infield: Shag balls. Throw to 1st base.

Group 3 Hitting. Coach pitch. Players get 3 hits, run out last one. Stay at 1st base. On deck batter with coach hitting off of tee.

- 7) Base running- Watch the coach for signal to either run through 1<sup>st</sup> base or make the turn



## Baseball : Practice #4

- 1) Stretch Arms
- 2) Throw and Catch (work on technique) + grounders. Start with ball on ground, players two steps behind it. Thrower must run to ball, pick it up barehanded, keep his momentum going forward and throw to partner. Repeat.
- 3) Outfield work: 2 players in LF, LC RC, RF and 2 at 2<sup>nd</sup> base with coach. Coaches throw to outfielders who throw to 2<sup>nd</sup>. No cut offs yet (or use a cut off if appropriate).  
**(outfield patterns – this is great just for footwork – forehand, backhand, basket, over the shoulder – all they worry about is the ball – no throws yet)**
- 4) Catchers work: Demo positioning behind plate, how to catch the ball and how to protect throwing hand.
- 5) Pitching work - throwing to the catchers - with a partner, then switch
- 6) Stations (10 min)  
Group 1 outfield: Relay throwing.  
Group 2 infield: Shag balls. Throw to 1st base.  
Group 3 Hitting. Machine pitch w/catcher. Players get 3 hits, run out last one. Stay at 1st base. On deck batter with coach hitting off of tee.
- 7) Base running- Watch the coach for signal to either run through 1<sup>st</sup> base or make the turn

## Baseball : Practice – Day 5

Warm up arms

Cross field grounders – two lines at short/3<sup>rd</sup>  
Two lines at 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup>

(15 min) 3 groups – hitting/infield/outfield

Hitting group – live, T work, soft toss, perfect swings  
Focus on load, watching ball hit the bat

Balls hit to infield

Infield – throwing to 1<sup>st</sup> base

Focus on – calling who has the ball, calling where to throw, field in the middle of stance, watching ball into the glove

Outfield – back up throws, back up hit balls

Focus on – getting behind the ball – throw to infield, RF – back up 1<sup>st</sup> base, LF – back up 3<sup>rd</sup> base

Balls hit to outfield

Outfield – get in front of the ball, watch it into the glove, get the ball into the infield – throw to 2<sup>nd</sup> or throw to cut off

Infield – cut offs - Short stop – takes left side  
2<sup>nd</sup> base takes right side

**Baseball : Practice Day 6**

( 15 minutes)

Stretch and throw  
dart throws - 5 feet apart  
knee throws  
stand up throw

(5 minutes) partner grounders - middle, forehand, backhand

(10 minutes) partner bunts - use wiffle balls - focus on "catching the ball" and top half

stations

(15 minutes)

group 1: hitting - live group, T group, bunt group

group 2: outfield - patterns - have the kids start with the coach - run out and turn - throw the ball where they have to run through the ball - catch forehand, backhand, over the shoulder and basket catch

group 3: fielding - throw 1, turn 2

(10 minutes) Baserunning - infield, single, homerun, double races (partner races)

**Baseball : Practice Day 7**

(5 minutes) Stretch and Run

Warm up arms - groups of 3 - cut off

(10 minutes) partner grounders

(10 minutes) partner soft toss

(rest of practice) 4 vs 4 vs 4 - team in the outfield, team in the infield, team up to bat

## Baseball : Practice Day 8

Hitting Day

Stretch and Run

Hitting stations: 10 minutes each station

- Bunting
- soft toss
- perfect swing/power swing
- fence swings
- T work
- Live

Base running - single, double, homerun, double races

**Baseball** : Practice Day 9

(5 minutes) Stretch and Run

(10 minutes) Warm up arms - hit 4 spots - throw to a spot - forehand, back hand, top/bottom

(10 minutes) partner grounders - middle, forehand, back hand

(15 minutes) grounders in infield - 1st/2nd/3rd/SS/P - rotate to different spots

15 min for each Stations - put baserunners at different bases - have kids make decisions where to go with ball

Infield

Hitting

(5 minutes) Baserunning

## Softball 1st/2nd : Practice #1

(When introducing these skills explain in group demo and use small groups for lots of repetitions)

### Intro Meeting with Parents and Kids

- Medical Release, Snack Sign-up, Phone #'s & email additions
- Caps for players. What is appropriate dress (cup)
- Coaches Background
- Philosophy: teach basics, develop teamwork, hustle, discipline and coachability, have fun!

Show kids proper grip of a baseball and how to pick up a ball on the ground- pushing down and using 3-4 finger grip

**Ball Pick up Race:** Divide players into 2 teams-each team has a bucket. Scatter balls around diamond and see which team can pick up the most balls. Players can only use their throwing hand to pick up the ball and get one ball at a time.

### Intro catching technique- coaches throw to kids so focus is on catching

	<p>Coaching Points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Get behind ball- Move feet to get into position, balanced, athletic position</li><li>• Reach out with glove and throwing hand next to mitt to keep ball in- two hands</li><li>• Soft hands, bring hands together to start throw back</li><li>• Ball above waist= fingers up, ball below waist=fingers down.</li><li>• <b>Give a target with both hands - stresses two hands – stress catching in the middle of the body if possible.</b></li></ul> <p>Drill: Coach stands 10yds from short line of players. Coach throws to 1<sup>st</sup> player in line, player catches and runs ball back to coach and continues to the back of other line. Set up lines in pairs to keep things moving.</p>
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### Stretching- explain why this is important for arms

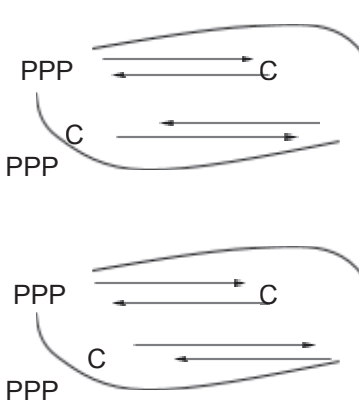
Arm circles, chicken wing, pull across

### Intro throwing technique

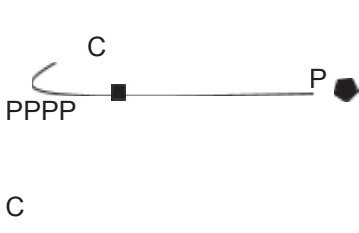
	<p>Coaching Points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>I always like the use of ready, break throw. Do this together – really break it down</b></li><li>• Glove shoulder pointed at target- (Skateboard) (<b>ready</b>) Stand like they were riding a skateboard at the target</li><li>• Separate hands, (Thumbs down and around) (<b>break</b>) This enables them to come up into an overhand motion.</li><li>• Knuckles to the sky, elbow up high They should see the back of their hand, not the baseball. It is this position that allows them to keep their elbow up high, which takes the pressure off of their elbow when throwing.</li><li>• <b>point their glove to their target</b></li><li>• Step on line If a player does not step on a line directly at their target, it causes their front side shoulder to pull off, which in turn drops their throwing elbow. The baseball is then rotated so that it comes out of the side of their hand. Over a distance, the ball will slice and drop, resulting in a loss of accuracy and</li></ul>
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	<p>velocity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Let it fly Release ball slightly in front of shoulder. Wrist snaps to add velocity</li> <li>• Take a bow Taking a bow or follow through, helps with accuracy, imparts increased velocity and helps to decelerate the throwing arm, preventing injuries. <b>Follow through to the opposite knee – touch the knee when done</b></li> </ul> <p>Drill: Coach stands 10yds from short line of players. Coach throws to 1<sup>st</sup> player in line. Player catches ball, “skateboards”, and throws the ball back. Player follows throw and runs to the back of other line. Set up lines in pairs to keep things moving.</p>
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### Intro fielding technique

	<p>Coaching Points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Get behind ball. Use feet and shuffle steps to line up belly button with the ball</li> <li>• Bend at hips and knees to lower glove to ground- butt down</li> <li>• Reach out in front of body with glove- other hand is next to glove.</li> <li>• Watch ball into glove (Alligator chomp)</li> <li>• Bring both hands and ball together into belly</li> <li>• Get on “skateboard” with glove shoulder pointed at target.</li> <li>• Get momentum moving toward target by placing back foot in front of front foot and then taking another step. Right-left-right.</li> </ul> <p>Drill: <b>3) Ball Pick up Race:</b> do this again – but this time have them go down with two hands and pick up the ball.</p> <p>2) Coach stands 10yds from short line of players. Coach throws a grounder to 1<sup>st</sup> player in line. Player fields it, “skateboards”, and throws the ball back to coach. Player follows throw and runs to the back of other line. Set up lines in pairs to keep things moving.</p>
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### Base running- Run through first base

	<p>Coaching Points: Sprint Hard through first base then decelerate and make turn away from field</p> <p>Drill: Players stand at plate, one coach is at 1<sup>st</sup> base another is pitcher on mound. When pitcher pretends to throw a baseball, player swings bat and runs to 1<sup>st</sup>. Coach yells “dig it out”</p>
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## Softball (1st/2nd) Practice Day 2:

### Tag Game in area (5 minutes)

Stress tagging with two hands - ball in glove, cover the ball with other hand

### Demo Hitting: Full group- each with a bat (10 minutes)

Talk about riding a horse, feet shoulder width apart, hands and arms relaxed, back elbow relaxed (not “up”)

Perfect swings, power swings

### Stations (10-15 min)

Group 1 at 1<sup>st</sup> base: Hip rotation work with tennis racquet. Hitting tennis balls

Group 2 at 1<sup>st</sup>base: Front foot step drill. 1 hits 5 whiffle balls. Rest are fielding. Rotate

Group 2 at 3<sup>rd</sup>base: Front foot step drill. 1 hits 5 whiffle balls. Rest are fielding. Rotate

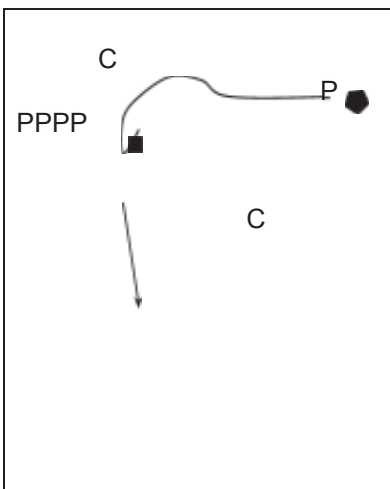
### Stations (10 min)

Group 1 in outfield: Catching and Throwing- work on technique. Stretch-10yds apart-15 yds apart

Group 2 infield: Shag balls. Start to throw to 1<sup>st</sup> base.

Group 3 at home: Hitting. Coach pitch. Players get 3 hits, run out last one. Stay at 1<sup>st</sup> base. On deck batter with coach hitting off tee.

### 8) Base running- Making the turn at first base

	<p>Coaching Points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Sprint Hard to first base. Looking at 1<sup>st</sup> base coach.</li><li>When hear “make the turn”, veer to the right a little to begin to round path around first. <b>(I have always just said round the base – either will work)</b></li><li>Look for ball <b>hit the inside corner – doesn’t matter which foot to use</b></li><li>Take a couple of steps to 2<sup>nd</sup>, cautiously</li><li>Listen to coaches direction</li></ul> <p>Drill:</p> <p>Players stand a plate, one coach is at 1<sup>st</sup> base another is pitcher on mound. When pitcher pretends to throw a baseball, player swings bat and runs to 1<sup>st</sup>. As 1<sup>st</sup> base coach says “make the turn”, players round 1<sup>st</sup>. If coach says “back to bag”, player returns to 1<sup>st</sup> with head down. If coach says “go to second”, player sprints to second and stops on bag.</p>
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Softball (1st/2nd) Day 3:

- |            |   |
|------------|---|
| 10 minutes | Throw - ready break throw   |
| 10 minutes | Grounders with a coach - pop to throwing position<br>make sure they call the ball<br>Correct fielding position - call out ready, break, throw |
| 20 minutes | Stations<br>grounders - throw to first base - at 2nd - kid at 1st<br>Flies - work on patterns   |
| 30 minutes | Stations<br>Hitting - off T<br>Hitting live   |
| 5 minutes  | Baserunning - through the bag and singles - listen to coach - go to 2 or back to bag  |

Softball (1st/2nd) Day 4:

5 minutes	Ladder
15 minutes	Warm up arms Baserunning - how to get a lead off
20 minutes	Stations: Grounders - at bases - throw to 1st base, outfield patterns
20 minutes	Stations: T group batting - hit 3 and then run
15 minutes	Scrimmage - 3 v 3 v 3

Softball (1st/2nd) Day 5:

5 minutes

Ladder

10 minutes

Throwing - Knees - short distance - darts  
Standing - ready break throw

10 minutes

Knees - short distance - grounders

20 minutes

Stations:

Grounders - from coach - up to throwing

Outfield patterns

25 minutes

Scrimmage 3 v 3 v 3

5 minutes

Baserunning

Softball (1st/2nd) Day 6:

10 minutes

Ladder  
Warm up throws

15 minutes

Throw and Catch (work on technique) + grounders. Start with ball on ground, players two steps behind it. Thrower must run to ball, pick it up barehanded, keep momentum going forward and throw to partner.

Repeat - using the glove this time

Repeat - rolling the ball to the line

Coach rolls - partner set up across the field - when throw, switch

25 minutes

Stations  
T work  
Live work

5 minutes

Baserunning

5 minutes

Partner races

Softball (1st/2nd) Day 7:

5 minutes	Ladder
10 minutes	Intro to sliding on mat
10 minutes	warm up arms
15 minutes	Grounders - throw to 1st base
30 minutes	3 v 3 v 3
5 minutes	Baserunning

## Softball 3rd/4th : Practice #1

(When introducing these skills explain in group demo and use small groups for lots of repetitions)

### 1. Intro Meeting with Parents and Kids

Medical Release, Snack Sign-up, Phone #'s & email additions

Caps for players. What is appropriate dress (cup)

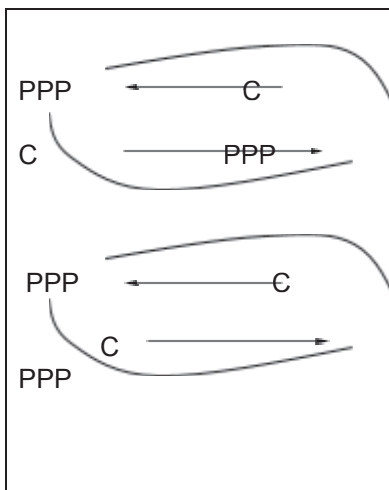
Coaches Background

Philosophy: teach basics, develop teamwork, hustle, discipline and coachability, have fun!

2. Show kids proper grip of a baseball and how to pick up a ball on the ground- pushing down and using 3-4 finger grip

**Ball Pick up Race:** Divide players into 2 teams-each team has a bucket. Scatter balls around diamond and see which team can pick up the most balls. Players can only use their throwing hand to pick up the ball and get one ball at a time.

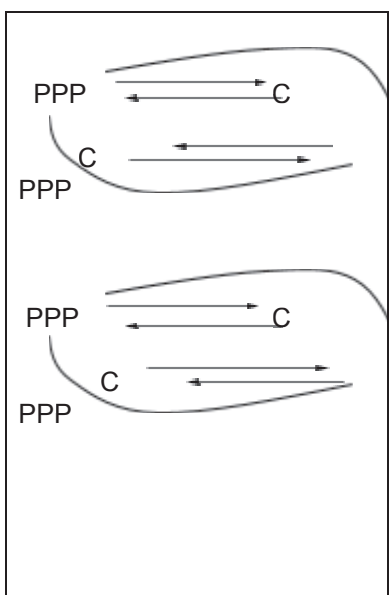
**Intro catching technique-** coaches throw to kids so focus is on catching

	<p>Coaching Points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Get behind ball- Move feet to get into position, balanced, athletic position</li><li>• Reach out with glove and throwing hand next to mitt to keep ball in- two hands</li><li>• Soft hands, bring hands together to start throw back</li><li>• Ball above waist= fingers up, ball below waist=fingers down.</li><li>• <b>Give a target with both hands - stresses two hands – stress catching in the middle of the body if possible.</b></li></ul> <p>Drill: Coach stands 10yds from short line of players. Coach throws to 1<sup>st</sup> player in line, player catches and runs ball back to coach and continues to the back of other line. Set up lines in pairs to keep things moving.</p>
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**Stretching-** explain why this is important for arms

Arm circles, chicken wing, pull across

**Intro throwing technique**

	<p>Coaching Points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>I always like the use of ready, break throw. Do this together – really break it down</b></li><li>• Glove shoulder pointed at target- (Skateboard) (<b>ready</b>) Stand like they were riding a skateboard at the target</li><li>• Separate hands, (Thumbs down and around) (<b>break</b>) This enables them to come up into an overhand motion.</li><li>• Knuckles to the sky, elbow up high They should see the back of their hand, not the baseball. It is this position that allows them to keep their elbow up high, which takes the pressure off of their elbow when throwing.</li><li>• <b>point their glove to their target</b></li><li>• Step on line If a player does not step on a line directly at their target, it causes their front side shoulder to pull off, which in turn drops their throwing elbow. The baseball is then rotated so that it comes out of the side of their hand. Over</li></ul>
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	<p>a distance, the ball will slice and drop, resulting in a loss of accuracy and velocity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Let it fly Release ball slightly in front of shoulder. Wrist snaps to add velocity</li> <li>• Take a bow Taking a bow or follow through, helps with accuracy, imparts increased velocity and helps to decelerate the throwing arm, preventing injuries. <b>Follow through to the opposite knee – touch the knee when done</b></li> </ul> <p>Drill: Coach stands 10yds from short line of players. Coach throws to 1<sup>st</sup> player in line. Player catches ball, “skateboards”, and throws the ball back. Player follows throw and runs to the back of other line. Set up lines in pairs to keep things moving.</p>
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### Intro fielding technique

	<p>Coaching Points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Get behind ball. Use feet and shuffle steps to line up belly button with the ball</li> <li>• Bend at hips and knees to lower glove to ground- butt down</li> <li>• Reach out in front of body with glove- other hand is next to glove.</li> <li>• Watch ball into glove (Alligator chomp)</li> <li>• Bring both hands and ball together into belly</li> <li>• Get on “skateboard” with glove shoulder pointed at target.</li> <li>• Get momentum moving toward target by placing back foot in front of front foot and then taking another step. Right-left-right.</li> </ul> <p>Drill: 4) <b>Ball Pick up Race:</b> do this again – but this time have them go down with two hands and pick up the ball.</p> <p>2) Coach stands 10yds from short line of players. Coach throws a grounder to 1<sup>st</sup> player in line. Player fields it, “skateboards”, and throws the ball back to coach. Player follows throw and runs to the back of other line. Set up lines in pairs to keep things moving.</p>
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### Base running- Run through first base

	<p>Coaching Points: Sprint Hard through first base then decelerate and make turn away from field</p> <p>Drill: Players stand at plate, one coach is at 1<sup>st</sup> base another is pitcher on mound. When pitcher pretends to throw a baseball, player swings bat and runs to 1<sup>st</sup>. Coach yells “dig it out”</p>
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## Softball 3rd/4th Practice Day 2:

5 minutes	Ladder
10 minutes	Throwing with correct fundamentals
20 minutes	Intro to pitching - $\frac{1}{4}$ , $\frac{1}{2}$ , $\frac{3}{4}$ , Full Talk about seeing the ring  On the fence and then with partners
20 minutes	Hitting basics - perfect swing, power swing Off T work Live
20 minutes	Grounders - making plays Base running - infield, round, partner races

### Softball 3rd/4th Practice 3:

- |            |                                       |
|------------|---------------------------------------|
| 10 minutes | Warm up arms/grounders                |
| 15 minutes | Pitching - into fence, with a partner |
| 20 minutes | Stations<br>T work - 3 Ts<br>Live     |
| 10 minutes | Grounders - throw home, 1st, 2nd      |
| 20 minutes | 4 v 4<br>I pitch - make the throws    |

## Softball 3rd/4th Day 5:

10 minutes

ladder

15 minutes

Throwing - darts - rundown

Throwing - knees, long distance

15 minutes

Bunts - sacrifice and drag

Together, with partners - use wiffles

30 minutes

Stations - partners

T work - into the fence

bunts

Live

Fielding

Pitching - into fence

## Softball 3rd/4th Day 7:

5 minutes                  Ladder

20 minutes                Sliding Mat - feet first, head first

10 minutes                Ball on ground with partner - momentum forward, pick up  
and throw

                                No glove

                                With glove

                                Ball rolling

15 minutes                Grounders - throw 1st, 2nd

30 minutes                Stations (10 minutes)

                                T work

                                Live work

                                Pitching