

# Throwing/Catching

Monday, April 20, 2015 6:30 PM

## Practice Drills

- **Catching:**
  - 2 Hands, No Gloves - with Tennis Balls, Wiffle Balls or Softies
    - Teaches proper technique, using 2 hands - **thumbs up, elbows under**
  - With Glove
    - 2 hands - regular
    - Advanced (2 hands - glove closed, hand traps ball against back side of glove)
- **Play catch with kids kneeling**
  - Down on one knee - throwing side knee down (R knee for R hand throw)
    - Catch with glove fingers up
    - Throw (close) have throwing elbow on glove, focusing only on wrist flick
  - Same drill, regular throw
    - start throw with arms in L
    - Glove points to target, arm comes forward/down to up knee (opposite knee)
- **Throwing/Catching**
  - One knee
    - throwing side knee on ground
    - opposite (glove side) knee up and down knee at 45 degree angle (i.e. not straight on)
  - Square Feet T Drill (standing)
    - Feet wide, toes pointed straight ahead at target, point glove
      - 1) Throw
      - 2) Rotate torso
      - 3) Follow through
    - Variation - reverse torso drill
  - 90 degree (sideway) L Drill
    - Start with torso at 90 degrees to target
    - L- Pick apple, point glove
      - 1) Point
      - 2) Step w/front foot (optional for instructional)
      - 3) Throw
      - 4) Rotate torso
      - 5) Follow through
    - Catch - always Glove fingers up
  - 2 Step + Drag (advanced)
    - 1st step with Power foot at 45 degree angle (throwing side - Right for RH throw)
    - Point to target with glove (T position)
    - Arm comes forward as opposite foot comes down
    - 3rd step helps complete follow through
    - R-L-R (for right hand throw, start with power foot)
  - Line Drill/Cut-off drill
    - 3 or 4 players in a line
    - Each player throws to next in line
    - Goal - down and back twice without dropping

# Infield Drills

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## Ground Ball Drills

- Gloveless Wiffle Balls
- Alligator Drill
  - Kids in semi-circle, coach rolls ball to kids
  - Ground ball fielding position
  - Hands together
    - Top (throwing) hand above glove, with wrist and fingers up
    - Palm facing palm (forms alligator jaws)
  - Field ball, and roll back without coming out of position
  - This drill also works well with tennis ball
  - good drill for kids to practice at home (tennis ball off garage door)
- Short Hop Drill
  - Extending glove forward to go get the ball
- Double barrel
  - Split into 2 groups
    - 1 group at 2nd base
    - 1 group at shortstop
  - 1. Regular (roll)
    - Coach rolls directly to fielder
      - Charge all balls
      - Glove down, field out in front
      - Throw ball back to coach
    - Variation - can use cones
      - start fielder at back cone
      - field at or in front of front cone
      - Throw ball back to coach
  - 2. Range Drill (roll)
    - Coach rolls ball to one side of fielder or the other
    - focus on angle to get in front of ball to field
    - Variation - incorporate back-hand
  - 3. Regular (hit)
    - Coach hits ground balls to each group
      - Charge all balls (use cones)
      - Glove down, field out in front
      - Throw to
        - 1) Coach
        - 2) First base

# Outfield Drills

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## Fly Ball Drills

- Individual Self Toss - players toss ball up in the air and catches themselves
  - with tennis ball or softie
  - Can do with or without glove
  - Can do at home
- Go-drill
  - Players start at line
  - Run away from coach
  - Coach tosses ball
- **Go-back drill (L or R)**
  - Fielding position
  - Throw pop up to either side
    - Forces player decision as to which way to turn with drop step
  - Variation - making adjustment to go other way
    - Rotating hips without spinning around backwards
- Coach tosses short fly balls
  - Have them throw to player acting as cut-off (arms up)
  - **Don't recommend hitting fly balls to 6U or 8U Division**
- **10U division**
  - Can start having coach throw long fly balls
  - Once comfortable with that, coach can start hitting pop ups
- Call it up Drill (12U and above)
  - Have 2 or more players spread out
  - Coach hits fly ball
  - Players have to communicate to call-up ball
  - Other player(s) position for backup
- Crow-Hop Drill (Advanced)
  - Use bucket as target
  - Coach tosses short fly ball to player
  - Player catches using proper technique and form
  - Player uses crow hop technique and makes throw to bucket
    - Lead with heel on throwing side
    - Hop into throwing motion to create momentum and using legs for stronger throw
  - Make it a game!

# Hitting Drills

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## Hitting stations (Drills)

1. Hitting Stick
  - Keep out in front
  - Watch for kids creeping
    - Can use sharpie marker to make different shapes on stick
    - ask which shape they just hit (keeps them focused on the stick)
2. Soft toss (into Net, or outfield)
  - Hitter 5 feet or so away from net/fence (if using net/fence)
  - Coach at 45 degree
  - Coach tosses ball out in front
  - Player hits ball
    - Focus on keep head down on ball throughout swing
    - Focus on all good swing mechanics
    - Helps build confidence
3. Fence/Wall drill
  - Can place tennis ball in fence
  - Line up with bat knob on belly, and barrel end extend to fence
  - Swing
    - If hitting fence, hand path needs to be shortened
    - "Short To, Long Through"
4. Wiffle balls
  - Coach on knee, pitches wiffle balls
  - Use small balls, mixed with some larger (golf ball size, regular, softball)
  - Make it a game
5. Tee drill
  - Regular - hit off tee (from home plate)
    - Important: place tee in front of home plate
    - 1) Hit ball out in front of front foot
    - 2) Watch for keep stride in-line (straight)
6. Coach pitch (Live BP)
  - Stride (front foot heel lift - up/down) on every pitch
    - Make sure stride is straight back to pitcher
  - Keeping head on ball throughout entire swing is key
  - Can use sharpie marker to write numbers on 5 or 6 balls
    - Ask hitter the number of the ball they just hit

# Base running drills

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## Base Running Drills

### Make sure all players wear helmets when doing base running drills

- Start at home plate and run through first
  - Sprint and accelerate through the first base bag
  - 1B Coach **behind** base to hold out hand for player to slap
  - glance off into foul territory, watching for overthrows (advanced)
  - Watch for:
    - stopping at base
    - Slowing down at or before base
    - Jumping the bag
  - To reinforce (if incorrect): have them keep running down to RF foul pole and run back to end of the line
- From home plate
  - Player Rolls Ball towards coach in fair territory and tries to run safely through first
  - Coach tries to throw them out (try to make plays close)
  - Variation (10U and above) - have players field
- Release Drill
  - Split players up to 3 base running groups at 1B, 2B, and 3B
  - Have Coach (or pitcher in older division) take position on rubber and throw pitch)
  - Coaches watch for kids exploding off base each pitch
- Multi-base (10U and above)
  - Practice running for doubles
    - Proper line towards first base coach
    - Inside corner of the bag
  - Same for triples
- Sliding (8U and above)
  - Easier to teach on grass when grass is wet
  - Use outfield grass or hill if possible
  - Have older girls come down to help teach if available
- Relay Race (good drill to close practice)
  - Split team into 2 groups (1 at 2B, 1 at Home Plate)
  - First player in each group starts on coaches signal to run all 4 bases
    - Focus touching on inside corner of bag
  - Once a player goes through the last base, next player goes



2015

WBSL Softball Coaching Progression Recommendations

	Hitting	Base running	Throwing	Fielding	Defensive Play	Pitching	Work Ethic	Attitude
6U	5	Feet Position/Aligned Balanced Stance Grip/Knocking Knuckles Nose on Ball	Basic Rules Run through First	Grip - 4 Seam Wrist Snap Glove Points to Target	Ready Position Fingers up above knees Fingers down below knees	Get ball to 1B or P	N/A	Have Fun!  Fun. Anything goes Making Friends Snack is Key! Fun to learn!
	6	All above Contact in front of front foot	All above Explode from base Ready Position	All above Step to target	All above	Get ball to 1B or P	N/A	Have Fun!
8U	7	All above Trunk Rotation - Power L Direct Hand Path to Ball Finish/Follow Through	All above Listen to Base Coaches Explode from base Rounding bases	All Above Step, Point, Throw "Ball to the Wall" Throwing elbow up Shoulder to Shoulder	All above Ready + Creep Step Charge all Grounders Soft Hands Field ball out in Front Lateral movement	All above Concept of Force Out  Easiest Base Get Ball to P Tag technique	Position on Rubber  Wrist flicks  Release Point Sling (no windmill) Focus on Target Basic drills only	Have Fun!  Intro to learning  All above Desire to Learn Positive expectation
	8	All above Front Heel Lift/Toe Tap  Timing	When to run/stay Circle Rule (P w/Ball)	All above Trunk Rotation	All above Drop Step  Short Pop Fly's	All above Lead Runner  Cutoff Technique	All above Push off rubber  Stride and Step to Target	Have Fun!  Continue Learning  All above Positive/Fun Team Cheers
10U	9	All above Timing - on Release Bunting	All above Explode on Release Sliding	All above Accuracy/Repetition Longer Throws	All above Learn grounder rhythm Learn backhand	All above Situational Defense Communication	All above Develop Control Begin Windmill	Have Fun!  Really learning Start bearing down Team Cheers
	10	All above Hit ball where it is pitched Hands Inside Ball  Count Awareness Bat on plane of pitch Tuning Reps	All above Tagging up Stealing  Freeze on Line Drive Proper Leads Aggressiveness	All above Perfect Technique Crow Hop (outfield throws)	All above Fly Balls Fielding footwork  Transfer footwork Repetition and tuning	All above Cutoffs/Relays Double Play  Rundowns	All above Stay Tall Intro to work ethic  Advanced Drills Good Mechanics Tuning	Have Fun!  Working hard  All above Desire to improve and Compete
	11	All above Hit ball where it is pitched Tuning Reps	All above More Aggressive	All above Accuracy/Strength Perfect Technique	All above Mental toughness Repetition and tuning	All above Steal defenses Bunt defenses	All above Leg Drive/Stride Perfect Technique	Have Fun!  Working hard on weaknesses  Goal Setting Mental toughness
12U	All above Tuning Reps	All above Advanced Leads	All above Arm Strength Perfect Technique	All above Aggressiveness	All above Communication	Concentration Control/Command Confidence	Have Fun!  Working hard on weaknesses  Compete to win Team Cheers	
Goals	Hitters that hit in front of the plate, generate power from the trunk, take their hands directly to the ball, have muscle memory in the strike zone, and load up and release power efficiently.	Aggressive, knowledgeable base runners	Kids that use their trunk for power, have good footwork, throw with their elbows up. Accurate and strong throwers	Confident, fundamentally sound fielders. Aggressive fielders not afraid to fail.	Confident, solid defense. Strong sense of communication and positional responsibilities.	Command and Technique are Key Foundational Elements. Once these are established new pitches can be taught/learned.	Kids who love the game and want to work hard to improve.	Confident, hungry, and positive can-do attitude

### Practice Plan

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Time:	Mins	Players	Drill	Goals	Notes

Debrief - To Do Next Practice: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

