

timbits® SOFTBALL



Session #1

— Warm Up —

BLOB TAG

Learning Objective: Running, dodging, agility, co-operation

Time: 5 minutes

Equipment: Pylons/markers for playing area

How to:

- Mark out boundaries of playing area desired
- One player is chosen to be the chaser (beginning Blob) and the rest scatter
- On “GO” the Blob chases, trying to tag others
- Tagged players link arms with the Blob
- When Blob becomes 3, only outside players can tag
- When Blob becomes 4, split to make 2 Mini-Blobs



OVER THE RAINBOW**Learning Objective:** Balls, helmets**Time:** 10 minutes**Equipment:** Grip and wrist/finger coordination**How to:**

- Line players up in lines with at least two BIG steps distance in between them facing the coach
- Have the players facing the instructor with the ball in hand and their arm stretched out in front of them parallel to the ground
- Have them spin the ball to themselves out in front of them, trying to get it at least three feet high
- Beginners can have a parent catch the ball for them or they may let it drop to the ground. A more advanced variation is to have players catch the ball themselves
- Once the player can catch their own ball – proceed to full “Over the Rainbow” and have the player start with their arms outstretched to the side (ball and glove in hand). Have them toss the ball over their head and catch it with their other outstretched hand. Consider helmets for inexperienced players

*— Main Activities —***GETTING TO KNOW YOU****Learning Objective:** Catching, throwing, getting to know teammates**Time:** 5 minutes**Equipment:** 1 ball for every 4 players**How to:**

- 3 groups of 4, with each group positioned in a square formation
- Distance apart will be according to ability
- As players throw the ball to a teammate in their square, they call out their own name
- On second or third round, they call their own name and the name of the player who is to receive the ball – or change the direction in which the ball is thrown
- Change 2 people in groups at a time, so they get to know players in other groups as well

CATCH THIS**Learning Objective:** Throwing**Time:** 5 minutes**Equipment:** Balls, or other items you can throw**How to:**

- Split into partners
- The player with the ball tosses to her partner
- Partner takes a step back and tosses ball back
- The receiving player tosses the ball back and if caught, the partner who caught the ball takes a step back.
- Process continues until someone drops the ball
- When the ball is dropped, the two players return to the starting position and see if they can improve on their previous best

Tips/Modifications:

Use fun equipment like water balloons or sponges or add a player in the middle who relays the ball to the partners on the ends. Progression would be to start with no gloves and fun items to throw to gloves and a softball.

Questions: Are the players using 2 hands to catch? Using soft fun items? Using softballs and gloves?

BALL OF FIRE**Learning Objective:** Catching, touching base, throwing**Time:** 10 minutes**Equipment:** 4 bases, 2 balls**How to:**

- 2 groups of 6
- Place bases a distance apart according to ability (30' – 60')
- Players line up in lines behind a base – 3 behind each base
- Player receiving the ball steps in front of the base to receive the ball, catches it, tags the base with one foot, then throws the ball to the opposite base, and then goes to end of line
- Process is repeated until each player has desired repetitions

Tips/Modifications:

- Have adult helpers with each base to retrieve the errant balls
- When less players – only use 2 bases

Questions: Where children turning the right way to tag and throw?

~~ *Modified Game* ~~

MODIFIED SOFTBALL GAME

Learning Objective: All softball skills

Time: 60 minutes

Equipment: Ball, bat, bases

How to:

- Coach will pitch to their team
- 7 pitches are thrown to each batter to allow them to hit a fair ball. If the player does not hit a fair ball, they go to first base if a swing was taken on at least four pitches
- All players will play defense
- All players will bat each inning
- There will be no advances on overthrows

Tips/Modifications:

Refer to the U9 introduction for scrimmage modifications that apply to the developmental stage of your players.

Session #2

— Warm Up —

SHARK IN THE TANK

Learning Objective: Running, dodging, body awareness, co-operation, agility, power/endurance, multi-directional speed

Time: 5 minutes

Equipment: Pylons for marking playing area

How to:

- 2 or 3 players are the “sharks”, the rest are the “fish”. Mark off a infield area to be used as the “tank”, so that young children can easily visualize
- “Fish” must stay in the tank
- “Sharks” are timed to see how long it takes them to tag all the “fish”. When they do, choose new “sharks”



OVER THE RAINBOW

Learning Objective: Balls, helmets

Time: 10 minutes

Equipment: Grip and wrist/finger coordination

How to:

- Line players up in lines with at least two BIG steps distance in between them facing the coach
- Have the players start facing the instructor with the ball in hand and their arm stretched out in front of them parallel to the ground
- Have them spin the ball to themselves out in front of them, trying to get it at least three feet high
- Beginners can have a parent catch the ball for them or they may let it drop to the ground. A more advanced variation is to have players catch the ball themselves
- Once the player can catch their own ball – proceed to full “Over the Rainbow” and have the player start with their arms outstretched to the side (ball and glove in hand). Have them toss the ball over their head and catch it with their other outstretched hand. Consider helmets for inexperienced players.

— Main Activities —

REACTION

Learning Objective: Agility, quickness, running

Time: 5 minutes

Equipment: Pylons to mark playing area

How to:

- Mark out 2 lines 50' – 60' apart
- Players' start on one line
- On "GO", they react and run to the other line
- Vary the body positions at the start. (i.e. all 4's, facing opposite direction, butt on ground, head touching ground, prone, supine, feet in opposite direction)

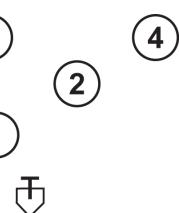
BATTER'S BONANZA

Learning Objective: Hitting, aiming for a target

Time: 10 minutes

Equipment: Hula hoops, batting tee, ball, bat

How to:

- Have players split into partners
- Teams will spread hula hoops out in front of the batting tee and assign a point value to each hula hoop
 - 3
 - 4
 - 2
 - 1
- Partners will play rock, paper, scissors for first bat
 
- Batters aim to hit the ball off the tee and into a hula hoop-if they get the ball in the hoop, they earn the points assigned to that hoop (even if it bounces out)
- Each batter gets three turns and then switch
- The non- batting partner retrieves the ball after each hit

Questions: Is the proper batting technique being used?

GOAL BALL

Learning Objective: Fielding grounders

Time: 10 minutes

Equipment: 1 ball for every 2 players

How to:

- Mark off a “goal” area for each player opposite a partner. The distance depends on skill level (up to 10’ wide)
- Each player tries to score a goal by throwing a grounder by their partner through the marked goal posts
- Defensive players will try to stop ball by fielding it
- You can use softer balls so you don’t need gloves
- Score a point for each goal
- Switch partners occasionally

— Modified Game —

MODIFIED SOFTBALL GAME

Learning Objective: All softball skills

Time: 60 minutes

Equipment: Ball, bat, bases

How to:

- Coach will pitch to their team
- 7 pitches are thrown to each batter to allow them to hit a fair ball. If the player does not hit a fair ball, they go to first base if a swing was taken on at least four pitches
- All players will play defense
- All players will bat each inning
- There will be no advances on overthrows

Tips/Modifications:

Refer to the U9 introduction for scrimmage modifications that apply to the developmental stage of your players.

Session #3

— Warm Up —

REACTION

Learning Objective: Agility, quickness, running

Time: 5 minutes

Equipment: Pylons to mark playing area

How to:

- Mark out 2 lines 50' – 60' apart
- Players' start on one line – side by side
- On "GO", they react and run to the other line
- Vary the body positions at the start. (i.e. all 4's, facing opposite direction, butt on ground, head touching ground, prone, supine, feet in opposite direction)



GRAB THE BACON

Learning Objective: Running, body awareness, quickness, agility

Time: 5 minutes

Equipment: 1 ball for every 2 players

How to:

- Partners each start on their own baseline, across from each other. A ball is placed at the mid-point between the partners
- On "GO" from the coach each partner runs out, tries to grab the ball (bacon) and get back to their baseline before their partner who didn't get the ball (bacon)
- If the partner without the ball gets to the baseline first the partner with the ball must hand it over
- If the partner with the ball gets back first, they get to keep the ball
- Change partners frequently

Tips/Modifications:

The coach can assign points and challenge the kids to be the first to 5 points

— Main Activities —

SKY BALL

Learning Objective: Proper use of glove and positioning when catching fly balls

Time: 15 minutes

Equipment: 1 ball and glove for each player

How to:

- 1 adult for every 2 players
- Coach will demonstrate fly ball progressions as in skill section
- Players will then practice catching high tosses from an adult
- Seeing if they can catch a higher one each time
- How many consecutive catches can they make?
- Throw somewhat away from the player so that they must move to get underneath

Tips/Modifications:

If players are afraid to catch over head- use softer items like bean bags/stuffies/ balloons. Start progression without a glove with soft items so that player feels confident with the skill technique.

HOT POTATO

Learning Objective: Quick turn when relaying ball from one player to another, catching, throwing

Time: 5 minutes

Equipment: 1 ball for every 3 players

How to:

- 4 teams of 3 lined up
- In groups of 3, the ball is relayed from 1 to 2 to 3 and back
- Go slowly at first to concentrate on proper turn in center
- Rotate players in all 3 positions, so each gets experience as a relay player in the center
- It can be made into a relay competition if skill level is high enough

Tips/Modifications:

Real softballs do not have to be used – nerf balls, squishy balls, lite flights

LEAD ME

Learning Objective: Catching and throwing while moving

Time: 5 minutes

Equipment: 1 ball for every 2 players

How to:

- Partners stand, parallel, facing same direction approximately 20ft apart
- Next set of partners is ready to go as soon as 1st set is out of the way. 2 lines can be going at once
- Partners lead each other with a throw so they both must be moving while throwing and catching

Tips/Modifications:

Players can move back and forward or side stepping while throwing.

— Modified Game —

MODIFIED SOFTBALL GAME

Learning Objective: All softball skills

Time: 60 minutes

Equipment: Ball, bat, bases

How to:

- Coach will pitch to their team
- 7 pitches are thrown to each batter to allow them to hit a fair ball. If the player does not hit a fair ball, they go to first base if a swing was taken on at least four pitches
- All players will play defense
- All players will bat each inning
- There will be no advances on overthrows

Tips/Modifications:

Refer to the U9 introduction for scrimmage modifications that apply to the developmental stage of your players.

Session #4

— Warm Up —

HOOK ON TAG

Learning Objective: Quickness, running, dodging, fair play

Time: 5 minutes

Equipment: Pylons to mark playing area

How to:

- Mark out a playing area
- 1 player is selected to be the runner, 1 player is selected to be the chaser
- All others find a partner, link elbows and find a space
- On “GO” everyone runs, with the chaser trying to tag the runner
- If the runner links elbows with a pair, then the outside member of that pair becomes the runner (they leave arms linked)
- If the chaser tags the runner, they exchange roles
- Change chaser periodically if the runner is not caught



KNEE CLAPS

Learning Objective: Bringing the knees together at the end of a pitch

Time: 5 minutes

Equipment: N/A

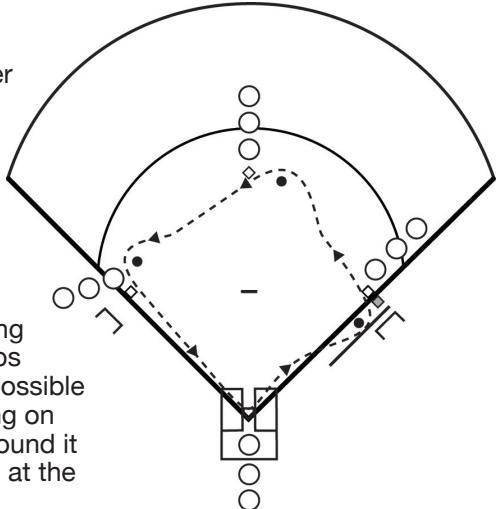
How to:

- Line players up in a line with at least two BIG steps distance in between them facing the instructor
- Have players start facing the instructor with their hands clasped behind their backs standing on one foot on the line
- Taking a big step sideways, have players step and slide their knees together finishing standing on their other leg
- Once players have mastered the lower body step-slide motion, add the upper body by having the pitcher clap as their legs come together. Say step-clap, step-clap as they go through the movement 10 times

— Main Activities —

KILL THE MOSQUITO**Learning Objective:** Rounding 1st base**Time:** 10 minutes**Equipment:** 4 bases, 4 markers, 4 bats**How to:**

- Put bases down in proper locations on diamond, with 3 players at each one
- Pretend there is a mosquito on the INSIDE corner of each base
- One player at each base concurrently takes a swing at an imaginary ball, drops the bat, runs as fast as possible to the next base, stepping on the “Mosquito” as they round it (4 players will be running at the same time)
- They then wait their turn at the base they just rounded
- Remind players it will be easier to step on the “Mosquito” if they run a little to the outside of the base line as they approach the base.
- It would be helpful to put some marks down for them to go around as shown in the diagram

**Tips/Modifications:**

Important to have a coach demonstrate this activity. Coaches can use stickers or a mark on the base in order to help players know where to step.

SLUGGER

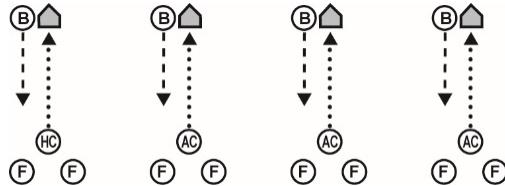
Learning Objective: Hitting, fielding

Time: 15 minutes

Equipment: 4 bats, 4 balls, 4 carpet (or throw down) home plates

How to:

- 4 groups of 3, with an adult with each group
- Adult pitches to the 3 players in their group – one at a time
- Batters hit the ball out to 2 fielders
- Fielders get 2 points for a fly ball and 1 point for a grounder
- Emphasize stride and hip action in batter's swing



Tips/Modifications:

Make sure areas are designated for each team.

— Modified Game —

MODIFIED SOFTBALL GAME

Learning Objective: All softball skills

Time: 60 minutes

Equipment: Ball, bat, bases

How to:

- Coach will pitch to their team
- 7 pitches are thrown to each batter to allow them to hit a fair ball. If the player does not hit a fair ball, they go to first base if a swing was taken on at least four pitches
- All players will play defense
- All players will bat each inning
- There will be no advances on overthrows

Tips/Modifications:

Refer to the U9 introduction for scrimmage modifications that apply to the developmental stage of your players.

Session #5

— Warm Up —

TAKE IT BACK

Learning Objective: Agility, quickness, teamwork, running, multi-directional speed

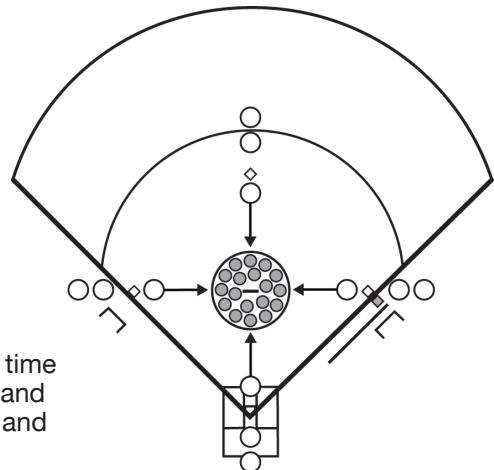
Time: 5 minutes

Equipment: 20 – 25 balls, bean bags or other small objects, 4 markers/pylons



How to:

- 4 teams of 3.
- One team at each of the 4 markers, which are placed in a diamond formation (bases could be used instead of markers).
- Objects are placed in center where pitcher's location would be
- On "GO", one player at a time from each team runs out and picks up 1 of the objects and returns
- After tagging the returning player's hand, the next player can leave
- Play continues until all objects are gone
- The team with the most objects wins



Tips/Modifications:

To keep all players actively engaged allow players to take balls from other groups as well as the center, so that players must guard their base. If a player takes a ball and is tagged before they get back to their group, they must return the ball and return to their base before grabbing another ball.

— Main Activities —

HOME RUN DERBY

Learning Objective: Hitting

Time: 10 minutes

Equipment: 4 bats, 4 balls

How to:

- 4 groups of 3
- Each group has a batter, 2 retrievers, and at least 1 adult leader
- Mark off a designated “home run” distance according to skill level of group
- Try to make the skill level of each group as even as possible.
- One player in each group bats (off a tee or adult pitch or soft toss)
- Score 1 point every time the ball is hit over designated home run distance
- Any other hit is counted as an out
- Rotate after 3 outs or 5 home runs (whichever comes first)

Questions: Are players using proper hitting mechanics? Are they transferring their weight properly for power?

BEAT THE BALL

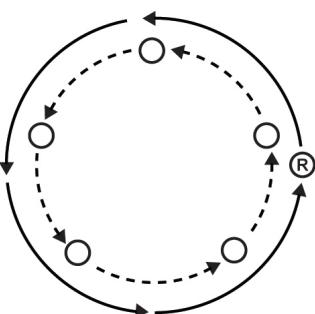
Learning Objective: Running, throwing, catching

Time: 5 minutes

Equipment: 2 balls

How to:

- 2 games are going on at the same time, with 6 players are involved in each game
- 5 players form a circle large enough for them to be able to throw the ball around to each other
- The 6th player is a runner starting beside the player with the ball



- On “Go” the ball is thrown around the circle, while the runner races around the outside trying to beat the ball back to the start
- Give one point to the runner for every player she passes before the ball gets back to the start point (max. 5 points)

Tips/Modifications:

- Make this activity harder or easier by making the players stand closer or further apart
- Have the children run, jump, skip, etc. around the outside of the circle
- Have the players run around the circle in both directions
- Make a square putting a base at each corner and have a defensive player at each corner. Players have to throw around the square while the runner runs the bases

Questions: Are players using proper footwork while pivoting to make a throw? Are the runners rounding at each base?

KNEE CLAPS

Learning Objective: Bringing the knees together at the end of a pitch

Time: 5 minutes

Equipment: N/A

How to:

- Line players up in a line with at least two BIG steps distance in between them facing the instructor
- Have players start facing the instructor with their hands clasped behind their backs standing on one foot on the line
- Taking a big step sideways, have players step and slide their knees together finishing standing on their other leg
- Once players have mastered the lower body step-slide motion, add the upper body by having the pitcher clap as their legs come together. Say step-clap, step-clap as they go through the movement 10 times

Tips/Modifications:

Players should follow the coach step by step through the progression.

- 1) Coach says, “lift” and players lift front leg and balance
- 2) Coach says, “pivot” and players pivot on back leg, so they are sideways to the coach

- 3) Coach says, “stride” and players take a large step sideways (towards the coach) with front foot and plant
- 4) Coach says, “toe to heel” and players bring back toe of back foot to heel of front foot

Questions: Are players keeping body aligned? (not leaning backwards or too far forwards) Are players landing front foot at a 45-degree angle? Are players strong on the front leg with a little bend in the knee when planting? Are players slamming the back leg into the front leg with heel to toe touch? Refer to the Pitching Skills section.

— *Modified Game* —

MODIFIED SOFTBALL GAME

Learning Objective: All softball skills

Time: 60 minutes

Equipment: Ball, bat, bases

How to:

- Coach will pitch to their team
- 7 pitches are thrown to each batter to allow them to hit a fair ball. If the player does not hit a fair ball, they go to first base if a swing was taken on at least four pitches
- All players will play defense
- All players will bat each inning
- There will be no advances on overthrows

Tips/Modifications:

Refer to the U9 introduction for scrimmage modifications that apply to the developmental stage of your players.

Session #6

— Warm Up —

BRONCO TAG

Learning Objective: Running, dodging, body awareness, co-operation, agility

Time: 5 minutes

Equipment: N/A

How to:

- 1 player is the “Outlaw” and another is the “Ranch Hand” while the rest of the players are “Partners”
- One “Partner” stands behind the other “Partner” holding onto the front “Partner’s” waist with their hands
- The two “Partners” form a pair of wild Broncos.
- The “Outlaw” tries to tag the “Ranch Hand”
- If the “Ranch Hand” can grab hold of the waist of the back “Broncos”, they are safe and can’t be tagged by the “Outlaw”
- The player who is on the front of that threesome now becomes the “Ranch Hand” and must run and be chased by the “Outlaw”
- If the “Outlaw” tags the “Ranch Hand”, the players switch roles
- The more the “Broncos” try to avoid the “Ranch Hand” linking on, the more action is involved

— Main Activities —

BEANBAG TO BALL ARM CIRCLES

Learning Objective: Releasing the beanbag inside the hip to get it to hit the target

Time: 10 minutes

Equipment: Beanbags, softballs, hula-hoops hung on the fence at a low height, mat to kneel on (if available)

How to:

- Start with beanbags instead of balls. Have players kneel on the mat facing sideways to their target wearing a glove on one hand and grasping a beanbag in the other
- Instruct the player to “step” toward the target remaining on their knees making an arm circle at the same time “pitching” the beanbag into the hula-hoop



- Focus on the importance of releasing the beanbag inside the back hip and staying sideways to the target
- Once pitchers are comfortable with their release point, give them a ball to experiment with (be aware of park rules regarding throwing balls into fences)

Tips/Modifications:

- Use Duct Tape to put flappers on the back thigh to indicate release point.
- Have players release before and after the thigh to get an understanding of control.
- Then put a low target, middle target and high target and have them practice hitting the various levels.

Questions: Do the players understand where the release point is and if the ball is going high or low, why?

SUPER SCOOTER

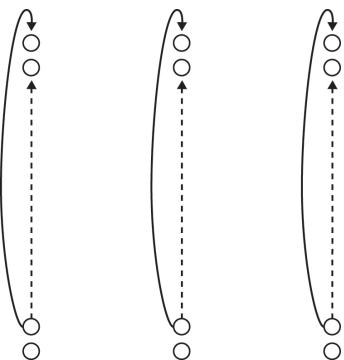
Learning Objective: Fielding ground balls, throwing

Time: 10 minutes

Equipment: 3 balls

How to:

- 3 teams of 4 in shuttle relay formation
- 1st player in each line throws a grounder to teammate on other side then goes to the end of the opposite line
- Player receiving it throws a grounder to the next player and follows throw to end of that line and so on until they get back to their original positions



Tips/Modifications:

Use a stopwatch and see how many well fielded balls and throws they can make in a set time. Repeat and try to beat their previous record. Count 21 fielded balls and 21 throws. The required number of outs in a regular game.

Questions: are the players fielding the ball correctly? Are they transferring the ball from the glove to the throwing position properly?

JAM & DIVE

Learning Objective: Rounding base and jamming to stop, diving back to base

Time: 10 minutes

Equipment: 4 bases, 4 bats

How to:

- 4 groups of 3 with 3 at each base
- Bases set up in diamond formation
- Each player takes a full swing at an imaginary ball, runs to the next base. Use proper rounding technique taught earlier
- After rounding the base, player “jams and dives” back to their base using correct technique as in Base Running Progressions in the Softball Skills section

Tips/Modifications:

Have a coach receive an imaginary throw and put a tag on as the player dives back

Questions: Is the player staying low to the ground? Do they understand the distance needed to reach the bag when diving back? Are they turning their head away from the throw?

— Modified Game —

MODIFIED SOFTBALL GAME

Learning Objective: All softball skills

Time: 60 minutes

Equipment: Ball, bat, bases

How to:

- Coach will pitch to their team
- 7 pitches are thrown to each batter to allow them to hit a fair ball. If the player does not hit a fair ball, they go to first base if a swing was taken on at least four pitches
- All players will play defense
- All players will bat each inning
- There will be no advances on overthrows

Tips/Modifications:

Refer to the U9 introduction for scrimmage modifications that apply to the developmental stage of your players.

Session #7

— Warm Up —

POISON BALL

Learning Objective: Throwing accuracy, catching, quickness, running

Time: 5 minutes

Equipment: 1 ball for every group of 6 (no gloves are required)

How to:

- 2 groups of 6: 2 games going on at the same time
- 4 players form a circle with the other 2 players outside the circle without a ball.
- One of the 4 players in the circle has the ball
- The ball is thrown from player to player or across to one another
- The 2 players on the outside try to tag one of the 4 players while they have the ball
- When the outside player is successful, they change places
- If the ball is dropped the player who dropped it becomes a tagger and the tagger who has been out the longest takes their place in the circle

Tips/Modifications:

If tags are made too easily use only 1 player as a tagger

— Main Activities —

HITTING STATIONS

Learning Objective: Proper grip on bat, stride and hip rotation

Time: 15 minutes

Equipment: 1 bat per player, 3 tee's, 3 whiffle balls on a rope, 6 carpet home plates

How to:

- 1 adult in charge of every 2 players
- 3 tee stations and 3 whiffle ball stations, with 2 players at each station



- Set tee's up IN FRONT of home plates.
- 6 players will practice hitting off a tee
- 6 players practice off a hanging whiffle ball which an adult can hold in FRONT of a home plate
- The partner awaiting their turn can be taking practice swings
- Groups switch when total time allotted to the hitting stations is half over. That will give each player an equal amount of time at both activities.

Tips/Modifications:

Make sure proper batting technique is used especially hip rotation, swinging through the ball and finishing with bat in middle of back.

SPELL YOUR NAME

Learning Objective: Throwing, catching

Time: 5 minutes

Equipment: 1 ball for every 2 players

How to:

- Partners should be selected by ability and spaced accordingly
- Line the players up, facing their partner or coach
- Remind everyone of the proper way to throw and to catch a ball
- Tell them that the name of the partnership is a combination of both players' names. Coach designates which line of partners gets to be the first name (i.e. players on the north side or south side)
- Have the players call out the name of their team (i.e. Jane Bobby)
- Partners throw the ball back and forth overhand
- They get a letter in their team name every time they make a catch
- When they complete their name, they move back 2 giant steps
- Continue the process to time limit

Tips/Modifications:

Adult may have to be the thrower if skill level is not advanced enough

— Modified Game —

MODIFIED SOFTBALL GAME

Learning Objective: All softball skills

Time: 60 minutes

Equipment: Ball, bat, bases

How to:

- Coach will pitch to their team
- 7 pitches are thrown to each batter to allow them to hit a fair ball. If the player does not hit a fair ball, they go to first base if a swing was taken on at least four pitches
- All players will play defense
- All players will bat each inning
- There will be no advances on overthrows

Tips/Modifications:

Refer to the U9 introduction for scrimmage modifications that apply to the developmental stage of your players.

Session #8

— Warm Up —

DUMPING GROUND

Learning Objective: Running, agility, co-operation

Time: 5 minutes

Equipment: 1 ball for each player

How to:

- 4 teams of 3 located at each of the 4 bases
- Each team will have 3 balls on the ground
- Stipulate a time for the game. (i.e. 2 to 3 minutes)
- On “Go”, each player runs with a ball and puts it in another teams’ corner
- They can also pick up a ball while there and put it in another teams’ corner
- Objective is to have the least number of balls in your teams’ corner when time is up
- Players can remove balls from their corner and place them in the other teams’ corner
- Each player can only move 1 ball at a time



BEANBAG TO BALL ARM CIRCLES

Learning Objective: Releasing the beanbag inside the hip to get it to hit the target

Time: 10 minutes

Equipment: Beanbags, softballs, hula-hoops hung on the fence at a low height, mat to kneel on (if available)

How to:

- Start with beanbags instead of balls. Have players kneel on the mat facing sideways to their target wearing a glove on one hand and grasping a beanbag in the other
- Instruct the player to “step” toward the target remaining on their knees making an arm circle at the same time “pitching” the beanbag into the hula-hoop

- Focus on the importance of releasing the beanbag inside the back hip and staying sideways to the target
- Once pitchers are comfortable with their release point, give them a ball to experiment with (be aware of park rules regarding throwing balls into fences)

Tips/Modifications:

- Use Duct Tape to put flappers on the back thigh to indicate release point.
- Have players release before and after the thigh to get an understanding of control.
- Then put a low target, middle target and high target and have them practice hitting the various levels.

Questions:

Do the players understand where the release point is and if the ball is going high or low, why?

— *Main Activities* —

CUT THE CORNER

Learning Objective: Rounding the bases, throwing, catching

Time: 10 minutes

Equipment: 3 balls, 3 helmets, 6 bases

How to:

- 3 groups of 4
- Set up each of the groups
- Runner runs from home around 1st base and on to 2nd base
- After the runner touches 1st base, the catcher throws to 1st, who throws to 2nd to try to get the ball to 2nd base before the runner gets there
- Rotate after each runner

Tips/Modifications:

Coach can put cones out in a C shape near 1st to reinforce rounding the base

PLANET PASS

Learning Objective: Catching, throwing, quick feet

Time: 10 minutes

Equipment: 1 ball, 4 bases, stopwatch

How to:

- 3 teams of 4
- 1 player from each team at a base
- The 4 bases are in diamond formation
- Set the distance between the bases according to ability of players
- The ball starts at one base
- On “Go” that team throws the ball around to their teammate at each base and back to where they started
- The coach times them to see how long it takes to complete
- Each team of 4 will get a turn in succession
- Competition between teams or each team can try to improve their last score

Tips/Modifications:

Throw in the other direction or see how many bases they can throw to in a set time (i.e. 20 sec.)

Questions: Are players pivoting correctly to throw in a different direction from where they received it?

— Modified Game —

MODIFIED SOFTBALL GAME

Learning Objective: All softball skills

Time: 60 minutes

Equipment: Ball, bat, bases

How to:

- Coach will pitch to their team
- 7 pitches are thrown to each batter to allow them to hit a fair ball. If the player does not hit a fair ball, they go to first base if a swing was taken on at least four pitches
- All players will play defense
- All players will bat each inning
- There will be no advances on overthrows

Tips/Modifications:

Refer to the U9 introduction for scrimmage modifications that apply to the developmental stage of your players.

Session #9

— Warm Up —

ROTTEN EGGS

Learning Objective: Running, catching

Time: 5 minutes

Equipment: 2 balls

How to:

- Make 2 groups of 6 with 1 player or coach from each group standing in the middle with a ball while the other 5 form a circle around that player or coach
- The player in the middle throws the ball high in the air and calls out the name of a player
- The player who is called runs into the circle to catch or retrieve the ball while the rest of the players scatter
- When the player gets the ball and calls “Stop” all the players must stand still
- The ball is then thrown to the one FARTHEST away
- Repeat the process as time allows

— Main Activities —

HITTING STATIONS 2

Learning Objective: Hitting off tee, hitting off soft toss, emphasis on stride and hip rotation

Time: 15 minutes

Equipment: 4 tee's, 12 bats, 12 bats, 5 whiffle balls on a rope (shoe-lace sticks), 12 carpet home plates or bases

How to:

- There will be 3 different stations set up with 4 players to perform the same drill at the same time:
 - Station 1 – 4 Soft Toss
 - Station 2 – 4 Batting tee's
 - Station 3 – 4 Whiffle Balls on a Rope stations



- 1 adult at each of the soft toss stations, 1 adult at each of the tee stations, and 1 adult at each of the whiffle ball on a rope stations
- Divide time you have left after setting up into three so that players get an equal amount of time at all 3 stations
- All four players rotate to a different station when time is up
- Emphasize stride and hip action
- Make sure ball is placed IN FRONT of plate
- Home plate or bases should be used for each player, so they get the proper feeling of a standing at a plate to hit

CHANGE OF DIRECTION

Learning Objective: Proper footwork for fielding fly balls

Time: 10 minutes

Equipment: 6 balls

How to:

- 4 groups of 3
- An adult leader is with each group
- One player at a time faces the adult leader who has a ball ready to throw
- The adult holds the ball over their head with their arm extended so the players can see it and moves their hand alternately left and right
- The player moves diagonally backward in the direction (left or right) as indicated by the adult
- After the player fielding the ball has made 2 or 3 direction changes, the adult throws a long fly
- Be sure that the player keeps their chest pointed at the adult and does not turn their back to the ball when changing directions

— Modified Game —

MODIFIED SOFTBALL GAME

Learning Objective: All softball skills

Time: 60 minutes

Equipment: Ball, bat, bases

How to:

- Coach will pitch to their team
- 7 pitches are thrown to each batter to allow them to hit a fair ball. If the player does not hit a fair ball, they go to first base if a swing was taken on at least four pitches
- All players will play defense
- All players will bat each inning
- There will be no advances on overthrows

Tips/Modifications:

Refer to the U9 introduction for scrimmage modifications that apply to the developmental stage of your players.

Session #10

— Warm Up —

FITNESS CHALLENGE

Learning Objective: Fitness, determination

Time: 5 minutes

Equipment: N/A

How to:

- See how many activities can be completed in 5 minutes:
 - 20 jumping jacks
 - 2 laps of bases
 - sprint home to 1st base
 - 20 hops
 - 10 push ups
 - 10 sit ups
 - duck walk 10ft
 - crab walk 10ft
 - skip home to 1st base

Tips/Modifications:

Use these results to compare again if you run achievement tests at your FUN day!



BEANBAG TO BALL ARM CIRCLES

Learning Objective: Releasing the beanbag inside the hip to get it to hit the target

Time: 10 minutes

Equipment: Beanbags, softballs, hula-hoops hung on the fence at a low height, mat to kneel on (if available)

How to:

- Start with beanbags instead of balls. Have players kneel on the mat facing sideways to their target wearing a glove on one hand and grasping a beanbag in the other
- Instruct the player to “step” toward the target remaining on their knees making an arm circle at the same time “pitching” the beanbag into the hula-hoop

- Focus on the importance of releasing the beanbag inside the back hip and staying sideways to the target
- Once pitchers are comfortable with their release point, give them a ball to experiment with (be aware of park rules regarding throwing balls into fences)

— *Main Activities* —

BOOM A RANG

Learning Objective: Throwing from positions in the infield

Time: 10 minutes

Equipment: 2 ball, 8 bases

How to:

- 2 groups of 6
- Set up bases to make 2 diamonds with 6 players at each
- 5 players in infield position including pitching and catching position
- Catcher throws a grounder to each player in succession
- They field it and throw it to 1st base, who throws it back to the catcher
- Rotate positions after each sequence so all players get a chance to throw from each position
- Score 1 point for each successful throw and catch
- See how many points can be scored per sequence

Tips/Modifications:

A variation could be to throw flies instead of grounders

SLIP N SLIDE (Sliding Mechanics)**Learning Objective:** Bent leg slide**Time:** 10 minutes**Equipment:** Helmets, players must be wearing pants, bases, sock or no shoes**How to:**

- Players line up on a base line to start
- Then break into 3 groups of 4 with 2 adults per group
- **Determining the Sliding Leg**
 - Have players sit down cross-legged
 - Leg tucked under is usually sliding leg
- **Finish Position**
 - Sliding leg bent 90 degrees, tucked under other leg
 - Other leg extended, slightly bent
 - Extended leg foot is 4-6 inches off ground
 - Base is contacted with extended leg
 - Weight of slider is back
 - Chin is tucked into to the chest
 - Arms thrown above head
- **Distance**
 - Start slide about one and a half body lengths from base
- **General Tips**
 - Ensure players are wearing a helmet even in practice.
 - Build confidence by starting easy and progressing gradually
 - Use support people until slider is confident
 - Practice sliding on wet grass, in a sand pit or in a gymnasium
 - Use unfastened bases to start with
 - Teach sliding to players in socks or bare feet
 - To determine where a player should start their slide, have player put feet on the edge of the base and lay on their bellies stretched out as far from the base as possible. Using a marked cone have player place the cone on the ground where their fingers are stretched to. The cone will be a visual aid to help them understand the distance from the base where they should start the slide.
- **Sliding Teaching Progressions**
 - Teach sliding progression in outfield with no shoes on
 - Determine the bent or tucked leg

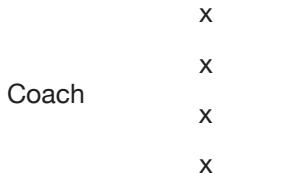
- Have players form a circle around the Coach.
- Have the players sit down cross legged
- They will naturally tuck one leg underneath their body which will be the natural slide leg.
- Demonstrate the finish position
 - Slide leg straight but not locked
 - Bent leg tucked
 - Arms thrown above head
 - Chin tucked into chest.
- Finish position with movement
 - Have players move around in the crab walk position. Coaches use cue words “Hit It” and players get into finish position
 - Using a volunteer player who is lying in the finish position, the Coach will grasp their foot and pull them to simulate the movement of the slide.
- Standing in Finish position
 - While standing, get the players to get into the Finish Position.
 - Be sure they throw their hands back over their head and tuck their chin on their chest.
- Sliding with Support
 - With the aid of two strong coaches, have them hold the slider’s arms and gently lower them into the Finish Position
- Sliding with Support while Jogging
 - Same as above but do a slow jog first from about 10 meters.
 - Instead of two adults supporting slider, you can use two adults holding a broom stick or bat that the slider grabs to lower them to the ground.
- Sliding with Support while Sprinting
 - Same as above but from a sprint
- Bent Leg Slide while Jogging without aid
- Bent Leg Slide while Sprinting without aid

Coaching Tip

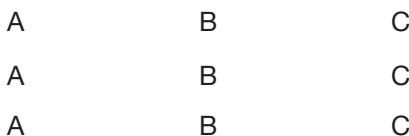
- Have players slide without shoes
- Teach sliding on wet grass or a slippery surface (soapy tarp or a slip and slide)

Relays

- The relay starts with a strong accurate throw from the outfielder
- The outfielder should try to throw the ball to the relay person's glove at about head height.
- The relay person:
 - Gives a big target with both arms in the air and calls for the ball.
 - Stands at a 45-degree angle to the glove side.
 - Pivots towards glove and throws quickly relaying the ball to the next target.
- **Teaching Progression**
 - Demonstrate proper throwing and receiving technique.
 - Practice movement with NO BALL, with players in a line pretending to receive a ball thrown by the Coach then turning to make throw behind them.



- Make groups of 3 positioned as shown. A pretends to throw to B, who mimics a catch and makes a proper relay turn, then pretends to throw to C.



- Rotate all 3 players through center position.
- Use a ball in the drill. Start slowly at first, making sure center player is turning in correct direction for a quick throw.
- If time permits and players are able, this can progress into a relay competition between teams of 3.

— Modified Game —

MODIFIED SOFTBALL GAME

Learning Objective: All softball skills

Time: 60 minutes

Equipment: Ball, bat, bases

How to:

- Coach will pitch to their team
- 7 pitches are thrown to each batter to allow them to hit a fair ball. If the player does not hit a fair ball, they go to first base if a swing was taken on at least four pitches
- All players will play defense
- All players will bat each inning
- There will be no advances on overthrows

Tips/Modifications:

Refer to the U9 introduction for scrimmage modifications that apply to the developmental stage of your players.

Session #11

— Warm Up —

PIP SQUEAK & WILBUR

Learning Objective: Base running, running, multi-directional speed

Time: 5 minutes

Equipment: 4 balls, 4 bases

How to:

- 4 groups of 3, one group at each base.
- Bases are set up in diamond formation.
- Players in each group are named PIP, SQUEAK or WILBUR.
- 4 balls placed at pitcher plate
- When the coach calls out a name (PIP, SQUEAK, or WILBUR), the player with that name runs around the bases.
- When (s)he touches the base they started at, (s)he runs to the center to pick up a ball and brings it back to the group
- Balls are returned to the center for the next person
- Score a point for the 1st person back to their starting base



WHIP IT

Learning Objective: Whipping the ball from the top of the arm circle to the bottom to release it

Time: 10 minutes

Equipment: Softballs in tube socks (6 for each player), hula hoop targets hung at strike zone height

How to:

- Start by showing players where to grip their “whip-it”. Hands should be placed 6-8 inches from the ball up the sock so the pitcher feels there is some control over the ball but can still appreciate a whipping motion with the sock
- Start the players facing sideways to their hula hoop target grasping the sock in their pitching hand and their glove on the other

- Instruct the player to step to the target while making an arm circle with their “whip-it”
- Use the key words of whipping the ball from the top of their arm circle to the bottom, letting it go at the bottom to go straight for the hula hoop
- Have them repeat these 6 times before all players collect their “whip-its” at the same time
- CAUTION: most inexperienced kids will throw the first couple behind them because they hang on to the sock too long. Encourage them to let go sooner and avoid standing directly behind them during the drill

— *Main Activities* —

BULLS EYE

Learning Objective: Throwing accuracy, fielding

Time: 10 minutes

Equipment: 2 targets, 12 balls

How to:

- 2 groups of 6, each group in a file in front of their target, which is placed on the backstop
- An adult will throw either a fly or a grounder to the 1st person in line, who fields it and throws it at the target
- After the throw, the player moves to the back of the line and the next player takes a turn
- Score 1 point for fielding cleanly and 1 point for hitting the target

Tips/Modifications:

Competition can be to see which team reaches 10-15 first OR which team scores the most points in a given time limit

SWING AWAY**Learning Objective:** Hitting, fielding**Time:** 10 minutes**Equipment:** 4 bats, 2-3 balls per group, 4 tee's if hitting off a tee**How to:**

- 4 groups of 3 with at least one adult per group
- In each group an adult will pitch to one batter while the other 2 player's field
- Fielding players get 2 points for catching a fly and 1 for a ground ball
- Offensive players get 3 points for a line drive, 2 points for a long fly ball or hard grounder, 1 point for pop fly or easy grounder
- See who can get 10 points first
- Rotate batters every 2 min., so that they all get a turn to bat

*— Modified Game —***MODIFIED SOFTBALL GAME****Learning Objective:** All softball skills**Time:** 60 minutes**Equipment:** Ball, bat, bases**How to:**

- Coach will pitch to their team
- 7 pitches are thrown to each batter to allow them to hit a fair ball. If the player does not hit a fair ball, they go to first base if a swing was taken on at least four pitches
- All players will play defense
- All players will bat each inning
- There will be no advances on overthrows

Tips/Modifications:

Refer to the U9 introduction for scrimmage modifications that apply to the developmental stage of your players.

Session #12

— Warm Up —

GRAB THE BACON

Learning Objective: Running, body awareness, quickness, agility

Time: 5 minutes

Equipment: 1 ball for every 2 players

How to:

- Partners each start on their own baseline. A ball is placed at the mid-point between the partners
- On “GO” from the coach each partner runs out, tries to grab the ball (bacon) and get back to their baseline before their partner who didn’t get the ball (bacon)
- If the partner without the ball gets to the baseline first, the partner with the ball must hand it over
- If the partner with the ball gets back first, they get to keep the ball
- Change partners frequently

Tips/Modifications:

The coach can assign points and challenge the kids to be the first to 5 points



OVER THE RAINBOW

Learning Objective: Balls, helmets

Time: 10 minutes

Equipment: Grip and wrist/finger coordination

How to:

- Line players up in lines with at least two BIG steps distance in between them facing the coach
- Have the players start facing the instructor with the ball in hand and their arm stretched out in front of them parallel to the ground
- Have them spin the ball to themselves out in front of them, trying to get it at least three feet high

- Beginners can have a parent catch the ball for them or they may let it drop to the ground. A more advanced variation is to have players catch the ball themselves
- Once the player can catch their own ball – proceed to full “Over the Rainbow” and have the player start with their arms outstretched to the side (ball and glove in hand). Have them toss the ball over their head and catch it with their other outstretched hand. Consider helmets for inexperienced players.

— *Main Activities* —

BATTLE BALL

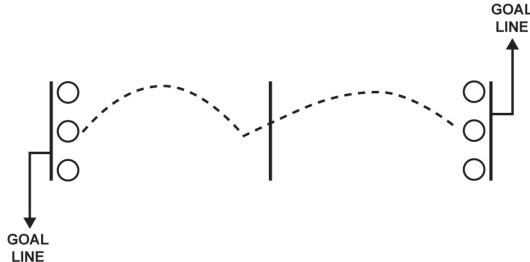
Learning Objective: Fielding ground balls

Time: 10 minutes

Equipment: 1 ball for every 6 players

How to:

- 3 players on each team
- Mark two goal lines at a distance apart that is appropriate for the players’ ability levels
- Mark a center line between each team’s goal line
- Spread the players along their goal
- One team throws grounders to another team trying to get it passed their goal line
- Ball must bounce at least once before crossing the center line
- Player receiving the ball tries to stop it before it crosses the goal line
- Whoever fields the ball will throw it back to the other team
- Score 1 point for each ball that crosses the other team’s goal line



Tips/Modifications:

If more action is required, make teams of 2 instead of 3

BEAT LIZZIE

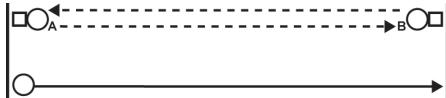
Learning Objective: Leaving a base, throwing, catching

Time: 10 minutes

Equipment: 8 bases, 4 balls

How to:

- 4 groups of 3 with each group set up as shown here
- Player A and B stand with their foot on their respective base
- Player B has the ball
- “Lizzie”, the runner, starts on a line that is even with the line that player A and B are on, at a safe distance
- On “Go”, “Lizzie”, the runner, tries to run to the other line before player B can throw the ball to player A who must then throw it back to player B
- Rotate players until they have had a turn at each position



— Modified Game —

MODIFIED SOFTBALL GAME

Learning Objective: All softball skills

Time: 60 minutes

Equipment: Ball, bat, bases

How to:

- Coach will pitch to their team
- 7 pitches are thrown to each batter to allow them to hit a fair ball. If the player does not hit a fair ball, they go to first base if a swing was taken on at least four pitches
- All players will play defense
- All players will bat each inning
- There will be no advances on overthrows

Tips/Modifications:

Refer to the U9 introduction for scrimmage modifications that apply to the developmental stage of your players.

Session #13

— Warm Up —

BEEP BEEP

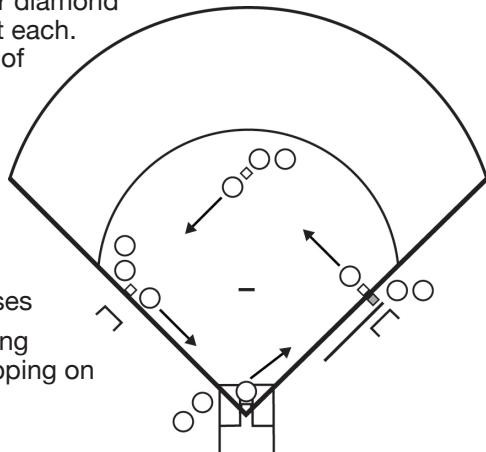
Learning Objective: Rounding the bases, speed development, conditioning

Time: 10 minutes

Equipment: 4 bases

How to:

- Put bases down in proper diamond location, with 3 players at each. One player starts in front of the base and extra players stand behind
- On “GO”, the first player in each group runs around all the bases and returns to tag the next player in line and then they run the bases
- Emphasize proper rounding techniques including stepping on the inside corner



WHIP IT

Learning Objective: Whipping the ball from the top of the arm circle to the bottom to release it

Time: 10 minutes

Equipment: Softballs in tube socks (6 for each player), hula hoop targets hung at strike zone height

How to:

- Start by showing players where to grip their “whip-it”. Hands should be placed 6-8 inches from the ball up the sock so the pitcher feels there is some control over the ball but can still appreciate a whipping motion with the sock
- Start the players facing sideways to their hula hoop target grasping the sock in their pitching hand and their glove on the other
- Instruct the player to step to the target while making an arm circle with their “whip-it”
- Use the key words of whipping the ball from the top of their arm circle to the bottom, letting it go at the bottom to go straight for the hula hoop
- Have them repeat these 6 times before all players collect their “whip-its” at the same time
- CAUTION: most inexperienced kids will throw the first couple behind them because they hang on to the sock too long. Encourage them to let go sooner and avoid standing directly behind them during the drill

— Main Activities —

SURE HAND LUKE

Learning Objective: Quick hands for underhand toss, throw to 1st base

Time: 10 minutes

Equipment: 4 balls, 4 bases

How to:

- 4 groups of 3 with an adult leader with each group
- Set up groups in a rectangle formation, with the adult standing 6 ft. from 1st base and player 3 at third base
- The leader throws a grounder to player 1 who fields it, gets it out of the glove quickly, and gives an underhand toss to player 2 who throws to player 3 at 1st base
- Rotate so every player gets a chance at all 3 positions
- Points can be scored every time a clean catch is made and if player 3 can catch the ball with their foot on the base

Tips/Modifications:

Move the distance of the bases closer or further to adjust for stronger/weaker groups

PEPPER

Learning Objective: Eye/hand co-ordination, teamwork, co-operation

Time: 10 minutes

Equipment: 1 bat, 1 whiffle ball and home plate for every 4 players

How to:

- 3 groups of 4 – 1 batter and 3 fielders in each group
- The ball is tossed to the batter by whoever has the ball
- Batter tries to chop it back on the ground
- This is NOT a complete swing, but a hand-eye co-ordination drill
- Batters should start in a very open stance, with feet in pivot bunt position

- Hands start back at shoulder and bat is gripped in extreme choke position or with split hands to make it easier to chop the ball down with bat control
- Batter stays at base if they hit the ball back on the ground, within reach of fielders
- Batter is out if ball is swung at and missed, or hits it over the fielder's head
- When batter is out, fielders rotate

— *Modified Game* —

MODIFIED SOFTBALL GAME

Learning Objective: All softball skills

Time: 60 minutes

Equipment: Ball, bat, bases

How to:

- Coach will pitch to their team
- 7 pitches are thrown to each batter to allow them to hit a fair ball. If the player does not hit a fair ball, they go to first base if a swing was taken on at least four pitches
- All players will play defense
- All players will bat each inning
- There will be no advances on overthrows

Tips/Modifications:

Refer to the U9 introduction for scrimmage modifications that apply to the developmental stage of your players.

Session #14

— Warm Up —

BEHIND ENEMY LINES

Learning Objective: Agility, quickness, running, co-operation

Time: 5 minutes

Equipment: All available balls and other appropriate objects

How to:

- Mark out 2 lines 50 to 60ft apart
- 2 teams of 6 line up behind their own line
- Place balls and other objects in “No Man’s Land” in center area
- On “Go”, objective is to place as many objects as possible over the OTHER TEAM’S line
- Only one object at a time can be taken
- Objects must be placed, not thrown, across the line
- If all the objects are gone from “No Man’s Land” they may be taken from own end and placed in opposite end
- When time is called the team with the LOWEST NUMBER of objects in their end wins



TARGET PITCHING

Learning Objective: Pitch the ball through the target rather than to it

Time: 10 minutes

Equipment: Softballs, pylons, playground balls (i.e. dodge ball, volleyball, soccer ball, beach ball)

How to:

- Divide players into partners
- Start by reminding players of the proper grip and have them sideways to the target (pylon with a light playground ball on it) placed 20 ft away with partner ready to retrieve the “big ball”

- At < 8 years old remaining sideways through the entire pitch progression is preferred
- Have players step to the target while performing an arm circle and throwing the ball with the intent to knock the bigger ball off the pylon. Have all players do this at the same time and tell them to freeze while their partner retrieves both balls and sets them up for the next pitch. Repeat 5 times, and then switch pitchers. Players score one point for each time a ball is knocked off the pylon

— *Main Activities* —

HOT STUFF

Learning Objective: Throwing, charging ground balls, quick feet

Time: 10 minutes

Equipment: 3 balls

How to:

- 3 teams of 4 in shuttle relay position
- P1 and P2 line up one behind the other facing P3 and P4
- P1 throws a grounder to P3 then goes to end of opposite line behind P4
- P3 moves forward and fields the grounder then turns and throws to P4
- P3 then goes to end of opposite line
- P4 catches the ball and throws a grounder to P2 who repeats the sequence
- P4 then goes to end of opposite line
- Player movement is always to follow throw

JACK RABBIT

Learning Objective: Running, throwing, catching

Time: 10 minutes

Equipment: 2 balls, 8 bases, 2 helmets

How to:

- Set up 2 sets of bases in diamond formation with one set of bases on the inside of the other set
- Form 2 groups-4 players will be the “Hunters” and 2 players will be the “Rabbit”
- Place 1 “Hunter” on each of the outside bases
- 1 player at a time will be the “Rabbit”
- The ball starts with the “Hunter” at home plate.
- The “Rabbit” starts at home and tries to run around their set of bases before the “Hunters” can throw the ball around the outside bases and back to home
- Score a point for the “Rabbits” if s/he makes it home before the ball reaches home
- Score 1 point for the “Hunters” if the ball gets there first
- Rotate “Hunters” around the bases so all “Hunters” get a chance at every base
- Alternate the “Rabbits” on each throw around the bases by the “Hunters”
- Once the “Hunters” have thrown from each base, choose 2 new “Rabbits”
- Make sure all runners are wearing a helmet

Tips/Modifications:

If the competition is not close, adjustments can be made by having the ball go around twice or counting bases touched.

— Modified Game —

MODIFIED SOFTBALL GAME

Learning Objective: All softball skills

Time: 60 minutes

Equipment: Ball, bat, bases

How to:

- Coach will pitch to their team
- 7 pitches are thrown to each batter to allow them to hit a fair ball. If the player does not hit a fair ball, they go to first base if a swing was taken on at least four pitches
- All players will play defense
- All players will bat each inning
- There will be no advances on overthrows

Tips/Modifications:

Refer to the U9 introduction for scrimmage modifications that apply to the developmental stage of your players.

Session #15

— Warm Up —

UP AND AT 'EM

Learning Objective: Quickness, running, power/endurance, multi-directional speed

Time: 5 minutes

Equipment: N/A

How to:

- Split into partners
- One partner (chaser) stands on the end line with hand out
- The other partner (runner) slaps (softly) the outreached hand and runs in the opposite direction to get safely across the other line without being tagged
- The partner, whose hand was slapped, tries to catch the runner before (s)he gets to the safe line



TARGET PITCHING

Learning Objective: Pitch the ball through the target rather than to it

Time: 10 minutes

Equipment: Softballs, pylons, playground balls (i.e. dodge ball, volleyball, soccer ball, beach ball)

How to:

- Divide players into partners
- Start by reminding players of the proper grip and have them sideways to the target (pylon with a light playground ball on it) placed 20 ft away with partner ready to retrieve the “big ball”
- At < 8 years old remaining sideways remaining sideways through the entire pitch progression is preferred
- Have players step to the target while performing an arm circle and throwing the ball with the intent to knock the bigger ball off the pylon. Have all players do this at the same time and tell them to freeze while their partner retrieves both balls and sets them up for the next pitch. Repeat 5 times, and then switch pitchers. Players score one point for each time a ball is knocked off the pylon

— Main Activities —

QUEEN/KING

Learning Objective: Eye-hand co-ordination, fungo hitting (self-toss)

Time: 10 minutes

Equipment: 6 bats, 6 balls (whiffle balls can be used if batter can't control their hits)

How to:

- 1 partner is a batter and the other is a fielder who stands an appropriate distance from the batter and a safe distance from other partners
- One partner fungo (self-toss) hits the ball directly to the other partner, (either grounders or fly balls)
- If the batter completes a hit within 3 tries, the batter gets a letter in “Queen/King”
- If the fielder catches the ball cleanly, the fielder gets a letter in “Queen/King”
- Whichever one of the partners spell “Queen/King” first is the DIAMOND QUEEN/KING
- Switch around so both get a chance to field and fungo hit

Tips/Modifications:

Use the entire diamond and have groups spread apart for safety reasons

Questions: How important is it to keep your eye on the ball?

ADD 'EM UP**Learning Objective:** Throwing**Time:** 10 minutes**Equipment:** 3 pylons, 1 ball, 1 bat**How to:**

- Divide the group into 2 teams
- One batter hits off a tee and then the batting team moves as a group between the base and home. One point is scored for each time the batting team touches the base.
- A fielder fields the ball and then the ball must be passed to each member of the team before it can be thrown home. Once the ball reaches home the batting team must stop running.
- Batting team and fielding team switch once all the batters have had a chance to hit.

Tips/Modifications:

Depending on skill level you may want to have the batting team hit off a pitch, or have them throw the ball out to the fielders

— *Modified Game* —

MODIFIED SOFTBALL GAME**Learning Objective:** All softball skills**Time:** 60 minutes**Equipment:** Ball, bat, bases**How to:**

- Pitchers pitch until there is 4 balls, then parent comes in to finish the bat; either a hit or strike out
- All players will play defense
- All players will bat each inning
- There will be no advances on overthrows

Tips/Modifications:

Refer to the U9 introduction for scrimmage modifications that apply to the developmental stage of your players.

Session #16

— Warm Up —

DEFEND

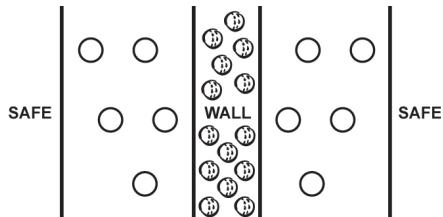
Learning Objective: Agility, quickness, running, teamwork

Time: 5 minutes

Equipment: Ball

How to:

- Mark out a “safe” area at both ends of the playing area and an area to be defended in between them.
- Place balls in the area to be defended (wall). Select 3-4 players to defend the “wall”. Rest of the players are scattered in the playing area.
- “Defenders” try to keep the others from grabbing a ball and getting it back to a “safe” area without being tagged
- If caught, they become a defender
- Game ends when all balls are in safe area OR all players are caught and are defenders



GAME PITCHING

Learning Objective: Review the game pitching sequence and rules

Time: 10 minutes

Equipment: softballs, pitching plates and a hula-hoop hung in a pop-up net or on a fence. Parents may volunteer as catchers if present.

How to:

- Tell pitchers they are to imagine they are pitching in a game
- Ask them to receive the ball in front of the pitcher's plate, then walk behind the pitcher's plate stopping to take a deep breath before stepping onto it with both feet. If a pitcher is right-handed the right foot is forward and left foot slightly behind and vice versa for the left-handed pitcher

- Instruct the pitchers to step onto the mound with their hands apart (ball should be in the glove and not in the pitcher's hand) and once on the mound they may bring their hands together and pause
- There are several starting styles and it is recommended pitchers either keep the hands together or swing the pitching arm backward in a rhythmic motion (see online drill description) to begin the pitching motion
- Once starting the pitching motion, the pitcher's step toward the catcher and arm circle are coordinated. The pitcher turns sideways to the target mid-motion. Instruct them to imagine stepping along an imaginary line straight to the target
- After landing, the ball is released inside the back hip at the bottom of the arm circle with the intent to throw on a straight line to the target
- Follow-through includes staying sideways to the target and bringing the pitching arm to the middle of the chest. See online descriptions for further details

— *Main Activities* —

THROW 'EM OUT

Learning Objective: Fielding ground balls, throwing, catching at 1st base

Time: 10 minutes

Equipment: 1 ball for every 3 players, 4 bases

How to:

- 4 groups of 3
- Set up in triangular formation with one player at a base
- P1 throws a grounder to P2 who fields it and throws to P3 who is playing 1st base
- P3 is practicing how to catch the ball with 1 foot on the base
- Give players 5 tries then rotate
- Set goals for each group (i.e. Team goal: how many out of 15 (5 each) can be fielded and thrown accurately Individual goal: each player keeps track of how many grounders are picked up cleanly and/or thrown accurately
- Player on the base (P3) can keep track of how many they caught correctly

HOT BOX

Learning Objective: Agility, stopping and starting, run-down skills

Time: 10 minutes

Equipment: 4 bases, 4 helmets, 4 balls

How to:

- 4 groups of 3
- 2 defensive players (DP) and 1 runner (R) wearing a helmet
- Defensive players stand 3 to 4ft in front of bases
- Defensive player has a ball and tries to tag runner with ball
- Runner tries to avoid being tagged by running away from whatever defensive player (DP) has it
- DP's throw the ball to their partner ahead of runner who again tries to avoid a tag
- The runner will switch with the person who tagged them
- If one player doesn't make a tag after 3 or 4 switches have occurred, let them be the runner

Tips/Modifications:

Coaches need to demonstrate the proper throw for the run down; hand is up with the ball out in front, player with the ball should be able to see the ball and the ball is delivered by snapping the elbow. It is never a full throw to a partner in a run down.

— Modified Game —

MODIFIED SOFTBALL GAME

Learning Objective: All softball skills

Time: 60 minutes

Equipment: Ball, bat, bases

How to:

- Coach will pitch to their team
- 7 pitches are thrown to each batter to allow them to hit a fair ball. If the player does not hit a fair ball, they go to first base if a swing was taken on at least four pitches
- All players will play defense
- All players will bat each inning
- There will be no advances on overthrows

Tips/Modifications:

Refer to the U9 introduction for scrimmage modifications that apply to the developmental stage of your players.

Session #17

— Warm Up —

BRONCO TAG

Learning Objective: Running, dodging, body awareness, co-operation, agility

Time: 5 minutes

Equipment: N/A

How to:

- 1 player is the “Outlaw” and another is the “Ranch Hand” while the rest of the players are “Partners”
- One “Partner” stands behind the other “Partner” holding onto the front “Partner’s” waist with their hands
- The two “Partners” form a pair of wild Broncos.
- The “Outlaw” tries to tag the “Ranch Hand”
- If the “Ranch Hand” can grab hold of the waist of the back “Broncos”, they are safe and can’t be tagged by the “Outlaw”
- The player who is on the front of that threesome now becomes the “Ranch Hand” and must run and be chased by the “Outlaw”
- If the “Outlaw” tags the “Ranch Hand”, the players switch roles
- The more the “Broncos” try to avoid the “Ranch Hand” linking on, the more action is involved



— Main Activities —

BATTER'S BONANZA

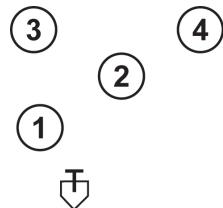
Learning Objective: Hitting, aiming for a target

Time: 10 minutes

Equipment: Hula hoops, batting tee, ball, bat

How to:

- Have players split into partners
- Teams will spread hula hoops out in front of the batting tee and assign a point value to each hula hoop
- Partners will play rock, paper, scissors for first bat
- Batters aim to hit the ball off the tee and into a hula hoop-if they get the ball in the hoop, they earn the points assigned to that hoop
- Each batter gets three turns and then switch
- The non- batting partner retrieves the ball after each hit



Tips/Modifications:

Coaches make sure the hula hoops are appropriate distances. This can be done with whiffle balls and progress to balls.

Questions: Was it hard to hit certain hula hoops? Why?

TRIPLE RIPPLE

Learning Objective: Catching, throwing, relaying ball to a teammate

Time: 10 minutes

Equipment: 1 ball for every 3 players

How to:

- 4 groups of 3
- Each group at a separate station
- 3 players line up on start line (distance apart according to ability)
- Put markers down approximately every 20 ft. to indicate next line

- 3 players on start line throw the ball back and forth (P1 throws to P2 who throws to P3 who throws back to P2 who throws to P1)
- When the ball is returned to starting player (P1), they move to the next line and repeat
- Teams of 3 move back and forth from start to finish and back again
- Score a point every time one of the end lines is reached
- See how many points can be scored in set time limit

Tips/Modifications:

Coaches watch players to make sure they are following their glove on the turn to throw to the next partner.

HOT POTATO

Learning Objective: Quick turn when relaying ball from one player to another, catching, throwing

Time: 5 minutes

Equipment: 1 ball for every 3 players

How to:

- 4 teams of 3 lined up
- In groups of 3, the ball is relayed from 1 to 2 to 3 and back
- Go slowly at first to concentrate on proper turn in center
- Rotate players in all 3 positions, so each gets experience as a relay player in the center
- It can be made into a relay competition if skill level is high enough

Tips/Modifications:

Real softballs do not have to be used – nerf balls, squishy balls, lite flights

— Modified Game —

MODIFIED SOFTBALL GAME

Learning Objective: All softball skills

Time: 60 minutes

Equipment: Ball, bat, bases

How to:

- Coach will pitch to their team
- 7 pitches are thrown to each batter to allow them to hit a fair ball. If the player does not hit a fair ball, they go to first base if a swing was taken on at least four pitches
- All players will play defense
- All players will bat each inning
- There will be no advances on overthrows

Tips/Modifications:

Refer to the U9 introduction for scrimmage modifications that apply to the developmental stage of your players.

Session #18

— Warm Up —

GOTCHA

Learning Objective: Base running, determination

Time: 5 minutes

Equipment: 4 bases

How to:

- Form groups of 3 with 3 players at each base
- Set up bases in diamond formation 20' – 30' apart
- On “GO”, one player from each group starts running around the bases
- Objective is to run past the person ahead of you
- Score 1 point for your team for every player passed
- Run for a set period (15-30 seconds)



GAME PITCHING

Learning Objective: Review the game pitching sequence and rules

Time: 10 minutes

Equipment: softballs, pitching plates and a hula-hoop hung in a pop-up net or on a fence. Parents may volunteer as catchers if present.

How to:

- Tell pitchers they are to imagine they are pitching in a game.
- Ask them to receive the ball in front of the pitcher's plate, then walk behind the pitcher's plate stopping to take a deep breath before stepping onto it with both feet. If a pitcher is right-handed the right foot is forward and left foot slightly behind and vice versa for the left-handed pitcher.
- Instruct the pitchers to step onto the mound with their hands apart (ball should be in the glove and not in the pitcher's hand) and once on the mound they may bring their hands together and pause.

- There are several starting styles and it is recommended pitchers either keep the hands together or swing the pitching arm backward in a rhythmic motion (see online drill description) to begin the pitching motion.
- Once starting the pitching motion, the pitcher's step toward the catcher and arm circle are coordinated. The pitcher turns sideways to the target mid-motion. Instruct them to imagine stepping along an imaginary line straight to the target.
- After landing, the ball is released inside the back hip at the bottom of the arm circle with the intent to throw on a straight line to the target.
- Follow-through includes staying sideways to the target and bringing the pitching arm to the middle of the chest. See online descriptions for further details.

— *Main Activities* —

PLAYERS CHOICE

Time: 10 minutes

How to:

- Allow the players to choose their favourite game/activity!

PLAYERS CHOICE

Time: 10 minutes

How to:

- Allow the players to choose their favourite game/activity!

— Modified Game —

MODIFIED SOFTBALL GAME

Learning Objective: All softball skills

Time: 60 minutes

Equipment: Ball, bat, bases

How to:

- Coach will pitch to their team
- 7 pitches are thrown to each batter to allow them to hit a fair ball. If the player does not hit a fair ball, they go to first base if a swing was taken on at least four pitches
- All players will play defense
- All players will bat each inning
- There will be no advances on overthrows

Tips/Modifications:

Refer to the U9 introduction for scrimmage modifications that apply to the developmental stage of your players.