



# SOFTBALL

## SUPER STATIONS

**ALL-AROUND SKILL DEVELOPMENT**

16 Skill-Building Drills for Hitting, Throwing,  
Catching, Fielding, and Baserunning



Includes 6  
Printable Practice  
Plans

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# INTRODUCTION

## **Welcome to the Softball Super Stations - All Around Skills Edition!**

Being a softball coach isn't easy. You're often working with a big group of energetic kids, and just a couple of assistant coaches or parent helpers to keep things under control.

Trying to keep all of your kids engaged and focused can be a real challenge. Especially if you use "traditional" drills that involve lots of lines, lectures, and standing-around time.

Thankfully, there is a simple solution to dealing with this problem – station based practice planning!

In a station based practice you will break your team up into 2-4 small groups, and have them rotate through a series of stations for a set amount of time. Each station is managed by an individual coach or helper, and focused on a specific fundamental skill. This allows your players to get more reps in a shorter amount of time. And allows the coaching staff to spend more time working with individual kids.

This ebook starts by breaking down 16 simple, fun and effective softball drills, covering hitting, baserunning, infield, outfield and game preparation. Many of the drills can be done in the infield, or, simply using a large patch of outfield grass. So you can make the best use of the field space you have available.

We've also included six pre-designed, station-based practice plans to help you run the most efficient, most effective, and most stress-free practice you can.

The plans typically start with a Warmup block, which includes some dynamic warmup exercises, usually baserunning and/or throwing drills. Followed by a Stations block which will split the team up into smaller groups and focus on fundamental skill development. Then we'll finish up with a Game Preparation block – usually some kind of modified scrimmage.

## **Here are a few quick tips before we get started:**

1. Print a copy of the practice plan and take it with you to the field. It will help you stay on track, and provide quick reminders for all of the drills you'll be running
2. Use your team's water breaks to set up for the next drill. So the kids can get right back to action as soon as you reconvene the practice
3. Take advantage of all the help you can get – if parents are willing to come in and help out, an extra pair of eyes while the players rotate through can be of huge help!
4. When running hitting drills, try to substitute whiffle balls where possible. Tees and hitting nets can be helpful, but are not mandatory. Coaches can soft-toss to players instead of using the batting tees. And you can hit into a backstop or fence instead of a net.

Ready to go? Let's get started!

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# HITTING

# 1.

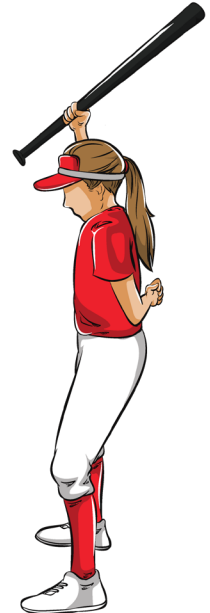
## ONE ARM SWING

### PURPOSE:

To emphasize proper swing technique by isolating each of the batter's hands.

### SETUP:

Players will grab a bat and a helmet, and spread out, so that they have enough space from the closest teammate to safely swing a bat.



### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. The player will begin by getting into their batting stance.
2. Next they will swing, but using only their bottom hand.
3. After about 30 seconds, have the player switch now to their top hand only.
4. Have each player set up in front of a tee and take live ball swings. Hit 10 balls with the bottom hand only. 10 balls with the top hand only. Then 10 balls using a both hands (normal swing)

### COACHING TIPS:

- For younger players, holding the bat down near the base using one hand may be too difficult. Have them choke up 2-4 inches on their bats if they are too heavy. Remember, the focus of the drill is the swinging motion, not hand placement.

## 2.

## BULLSEYE BUNTING

### PURPOSE:

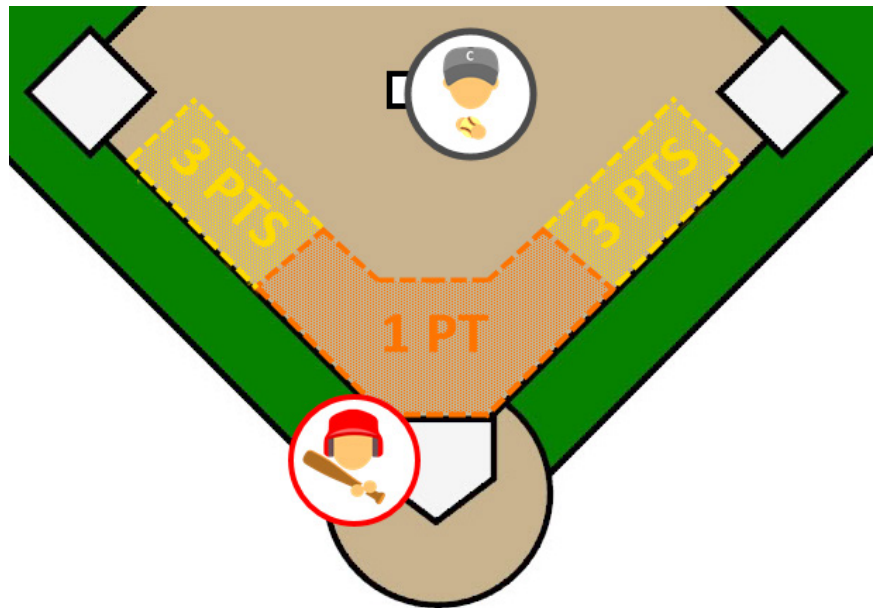
To improve bunt accuracy in a game-like situation.

### SETUP:

Draw lines on the field with chalk, marking out the zones as pictured in diagram.

Batter sets up in the box, with a coach holding a ball ready to pitch, standing halfway between the mound and the plate.

The remaining players spread out just beyond the bunt target zones.



### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Coach pitches a ball at halfspeed to the mound.
2. Batter bunts ball, aiming for one of the highlighted zones.
3. Anytime a bunt rolls to a stop in one of the three highlighted zones, the player is awarded the corresponding number of points.

### COACHING TIPS:

- If you're coaching younger players just learning to bunt, award 1 point for any bunt that lands in play and 2 pts for any bunt that stops in the middle zone.
- A great way to make this drill competitive and exciting for the players is to divide the players into two teams, with each player getting 3 turns, and that highest team score at the end of the game being the winner.

# 3.

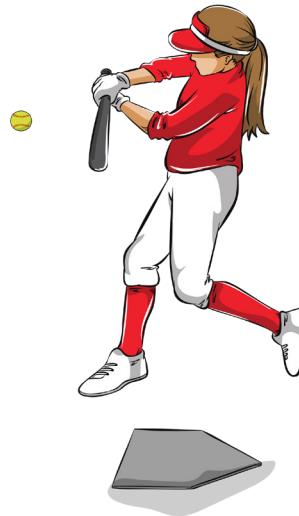
## FOCUS BATTING

### PURPOSE:

To teach players to keep their eyes on the ball all the way through their swing.

### SETUP:

With a red marker, make a dot – between the size of a dime and a quarter – on somewhere between a quarter and half your softballs. This drill can be done in the infield, or by soft-tossing whiffle balls in the outfield.



### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Have a coach throw 10 pitches to the batter.
2. After each pitch, ask the batter whether or not there was a red dot on the ball.
3. After 10 pitches, rotate a new batter through, continuing the drill until everyone has gotten a chance to hit.
4. Your champion is whoever correctly identified the most balls correctly on the team!

### COACHING TIPS:

- For younger players who may find identifying a small dot on a moving ball too difficult, place the ball on a tee with the dot lined up on the sweet spot of the ball, and have them swing through it – this is a great way to teach players where to aim the bat.





# **BASERUNNING**

# 4.

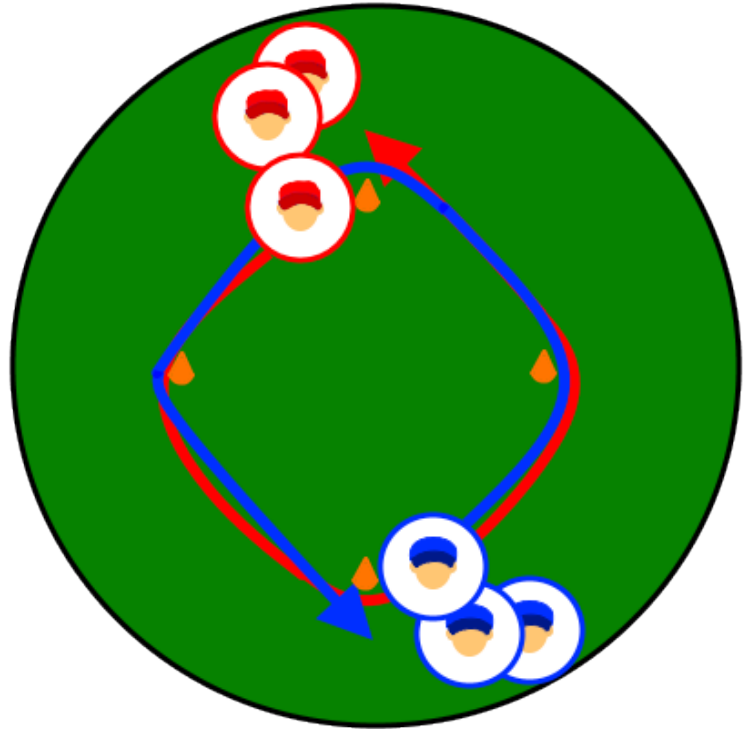
## DIAMOND RACE

### PURPOSE:

To work on baserunning speed, technique, and conditioning.

### SETUP:

Split your whole team into two groups, with one group lining up at home plate, and the other at 2nd base. Alternatively, you can just set this drill up out in the field, with 4 cones 60 feet apart to replicate a baserunning path.



### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. On the coach's signal, players will begin racing around the bases.
2. As soon as the player gets back to the base they started on, the next player in line begins running - that's right, it's a relay race!
3. The winner is the first team to have all their players run the full circuit
4. At the end of the race, the losing team has to do 10 pushups.

### COACHING TIPS:

- It's very important to take the time to divide the teams as equally as you can by speed.
- Teach your players the correct angle of approach for each base so they can hit the bag in stride and continue sprinting
- Encourage the players to yell and cheer each other on!

# 5.

## FORM SLIDING

### PURPOSE:

To teach players how to use the proper form when sliding.

### SETUP:

Have the players all spread out on the outfield grass. They don't need to wear helmets when first learning the technique, but it is good practice for them to get used to sliding while wearing one. Have the players lay down a mitt or hat to act as first base.



### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Starting around 10 feet away, the runner will sprint towards the 'base', sliding down on their rear end, with one knee bent and both their feet and hands off the ground.
2. The key is for players to tuck their chin into their chest and to make sure they keep their head behind their belly button.
3. For young/inexperienced players, you can have a coach stand on either side and hold their hands, easing them into the ground and allowing them to focus on form without worrying about impact.
4. As they become more comfortable with the technique, increase the distance by 10 feet for each repetition until they are running a full 60 feet into the slide.

### COACHING TIPS:

- To get the kids more invested in perfecting their form, have each player do their best slide in front of the team at the end of the drill, and vote for best slide to determine you're winner!

# 6.

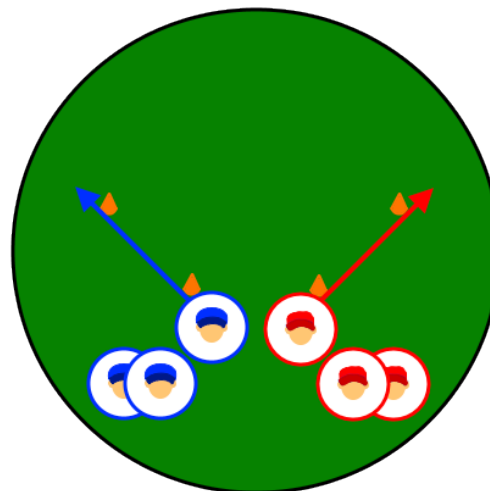
## 1ST BASE SPRINT

### PURPOSE:

To work on sprinting through first base at maximum speed

### SETUP:

If you don't have use of the infield, this drill works just as well with four cones - one for the start of each of the players lines, and the other 60 feet away at a diagonal, replicating first base. Split the two teams so that they are fair matches in terms of speed.



### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. The coach will yell 'Go!' and the players will take off looking to beat their matchup to their respective base.
2. The first player to tag her base wins the race!
3. Go through both teams at least twice, with the winning team being whichever one won the most races

### COACHING TIPS:

- It's important that players are overrunning the base in this drill - we want them to replicate a game situation and learn to maximize their speed on that sprint to 1st.
- Encourage younger kids to pump their arms and knees to increase their speed

# 7.

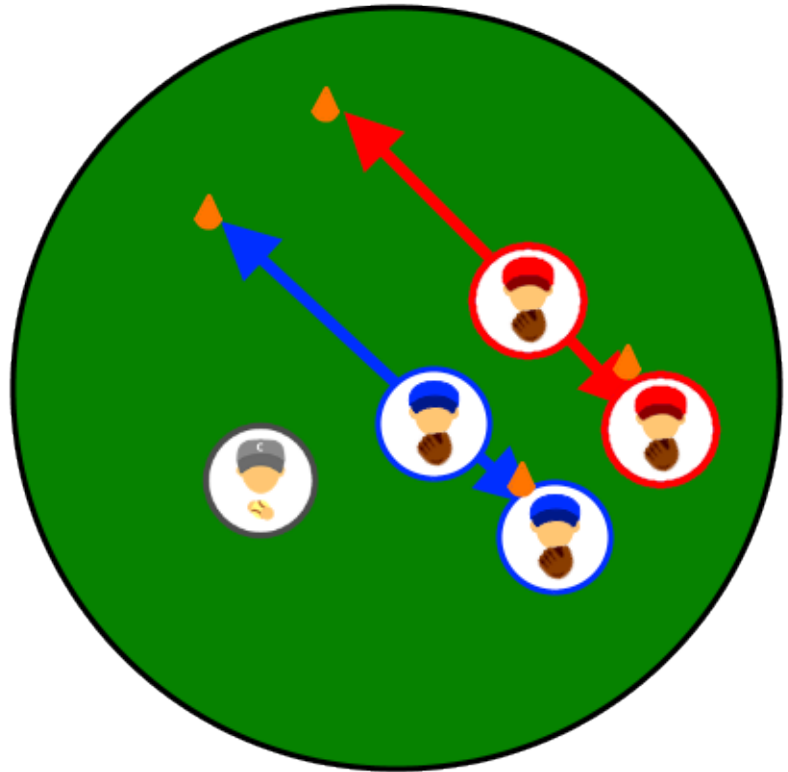
## DELAYED STEAL

### PURPOSE:

Teaches baserunners to perform the delayed steal.

### SETUP:

Set up one 2nd baseman, one pitcher, one catcher, and three lines of baserunner`s at 1st base. You can run this drill in the infield, or just place two cones 60 feet apart if you`re indoors or in the outfield.



### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. The baserunner at 1st base will start in a balanced athletic position. Her back foot is on the bag, front foot is forward, and arms are set in a running position.
2. As the pitcher releases the ball she will take a 3-step lead, then square up to the plate. The baserunner holds the lead and dares the catcher to throw the ball to first.
3. As soon as the catcher throws to first, the baserunner takes off and sprints to second.

### COACHING TIPS:

- You can also run this drill with just one baserunner (instead of three), and have the defense try to tag the baserunner out before she reaches 2nd
- Some teams have more success using a delayed steal than a “traditional” steal off the release of the pitch. To get the baserunner out, the defense needs to make two 60’ throws (catcher to 1st, first to 2nd) and a make a tag in less time than it takes the baserunner to reach 2nd. Advantage: baserunner!



# INFIELD

# 8.

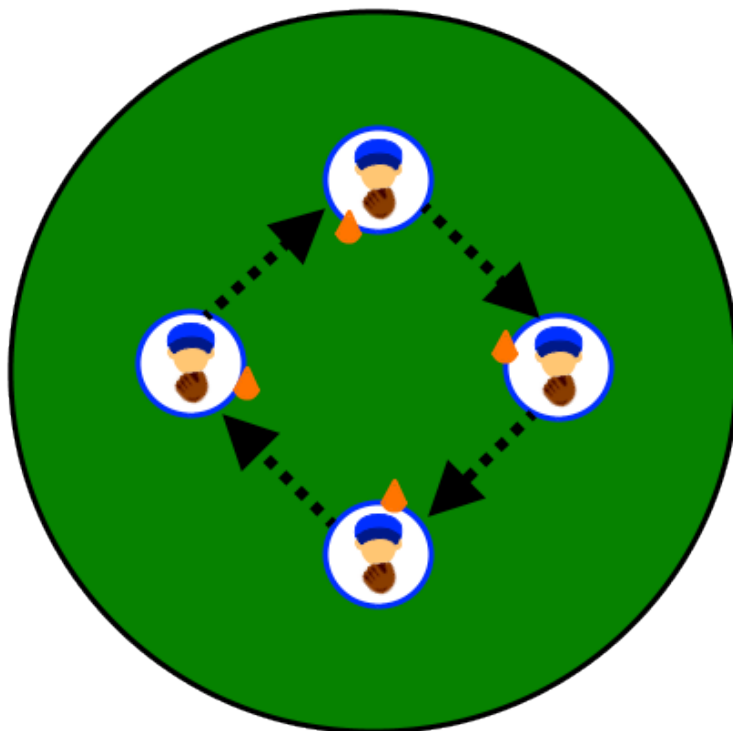
## AROUND THE HORN

### PURPOSE:

To give players reps throwing to base with power and accuracy.

### SETUP:

Divide players up so that there are an equal number in line at each base. You can also just set this drill up in the deep outfield, with 4 cones around 60 feet apart from each other, replicating a diamond. The first player in line at home plate will start with a softball in her hand.



### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. The player at home plate will throw the ball to 3rd.
2. The 3rd base player throws to 2nd
3. The 2nd base player throws to 1st
4. The 1st base player throws to home.
5. The throws continue in a counter-clockwise direction until Coach says to stop.

### COACHING TIPS:

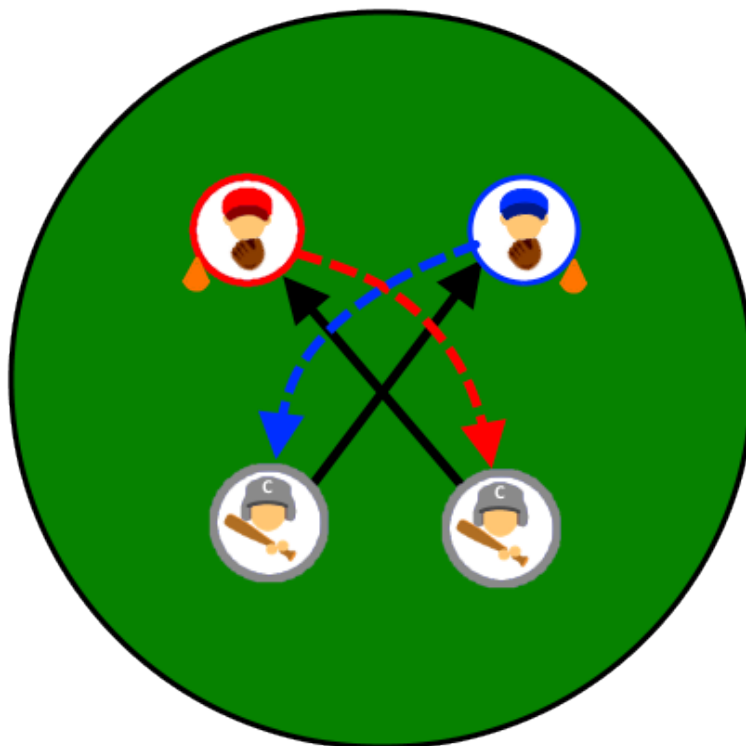
- If you have enough players, create a line at each base. After the player throws, she will immediately sprint to join the line at the next base (continuing in a counter-clockwise pattern), then step forward and receive the throw when it's her turn.
- To increase the difficulty, you can start to throw out extra commands after the ball has been moving around for a couple minutes: 'reverse' to change the direction, or you can call out base numbers and test their reaction skills!

**PURPOSE:**

To give batters a chance to work on hitting under pressure, while also getting fielders defensive reps.

**SETUP:**

Split the team into half, with one fielding line at shortstop and the other at 2nd base position. If you're running this drill in the outfield, simply put a cone down and set the players up the proper positions. You will also need 2 coaches on the field, standing roughly 50 feet away from the fielding lines. Each coach will have both a bat and glove.

**INSTRUCTIONS:**

1. The coach on the right side will start by hitting a soft ground ball across the infield to the short stop.
2. The short stop will field the ball and make the throw back to the coach.
3. As the shortstop is fielding the ball, the coach on the left side will hit the ball across the infield to the 2nd base position, who will field and throw back to her.
4. The drill will continue like so, with players returning to the end of their line after their turn.
5. After 5 minutes or every players has gotten a couple reps in, flip the lines, moving shortstop to 2nd and vice versa.

**COACHING TIPS:**

- Keep up the pace! This drill works at it's best when the balls are being hit rapidly, alternating back and forth from coach to coach.
- To make this a game, award each team 1 point for a successfully fielded ball, with the finish line being 30 points.



# 10.

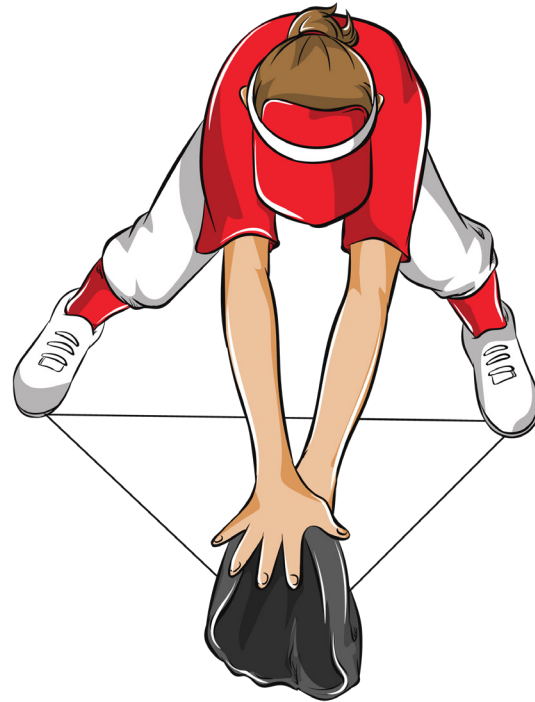
## TRIANGLE DRILL

### PURPOSE:

To teach fielders the proper foot and hand positioning for securing ground balls.

### SETUP:

Have players pair off and stand roughly 15 feet apart from their partner, facing each other.



### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Before beginning the drill, show players how to correctly field a ground ball using the triangle technique, with the feet spread apart, knees slightly bent, and the glove on the ground with a hand on top ready to secure the ball as it rolls in.
2. Then have players begin the drill. Players will roll each other grounders, which will be secured using the proper triangle technique.
3. After scooping the ball, players should get into an athletic stance, ready to throw.
4. They will then roll the ball back to their partner, who will also use the triangle position to safely scoop the ball.
5. After a couple reps, have players start rolling the ball slightly off to their partner's side – the fielder must slide over, get in front of the ball, and use the triangle to successfully complete the rep.

### COACHING TIPS:

- To make this into a challenge, have players quickly roll the ball back and forth to each other, getting one point for each ball fielded using the triangle technique – and only if they use it! – with the first team to rack up 20 points being the winner.



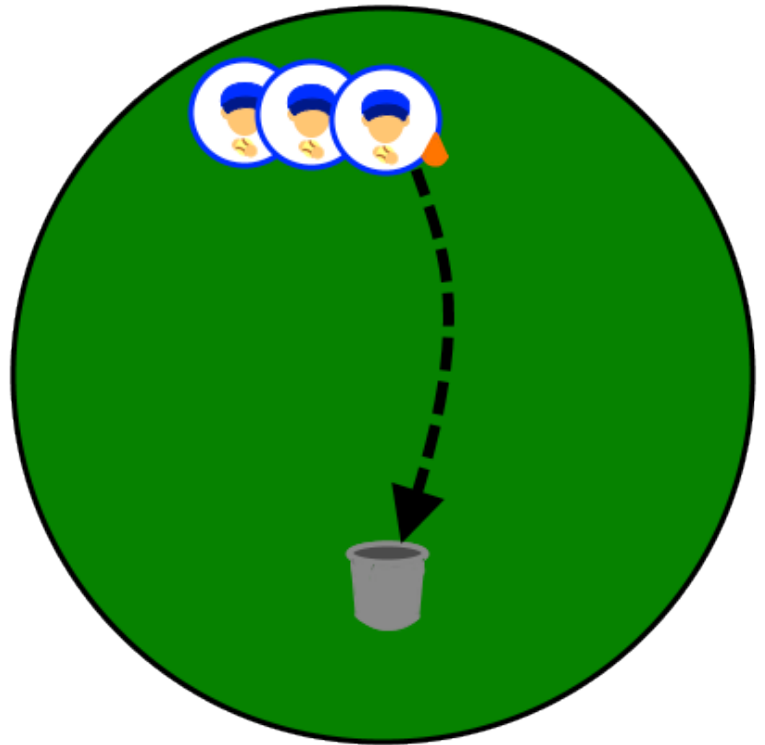
# OUTFIELD

**PURPOSE:**

To teach players how to throw the ball on a rope with accuracy.

**SETUP:**

You need a bucket to act as home plate - but if you can't find one, a bag works just fine. Have all players form one line about 100-200 feet away from the bucket, and each bring a couple softballs with them. Coach will stand beside the bucket to collect the thrown balls.

**INSTRUCTIONS:**

1. One at a time, players will attempt to throw a ball that hits the bucket.
2. After a couple cycles, make it a game.
3. Each player gets three throws, with the top four from the first round moving on to the semis, and continuing on through the finals until you've crowned a winner.

**COACHING TIPS:**

- Remind players that one or two hop throws count as well! They will quickly learn that these types of low, hard throws are easily the most effective way to hit the bucket.
- Offer a prize, like a Gatorade or pack of baseball cards, to the player who wins the drill

# 12.

## RECEIVER DRILL

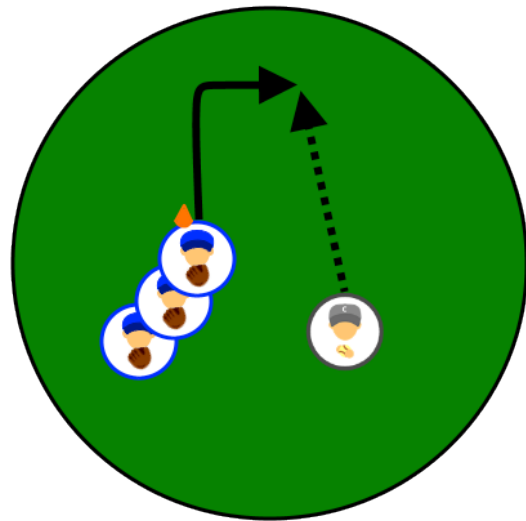
### PURPOSE:

To give players reps making catches on the run.



### SETUP:

Have the players grab a glove, and form a single file in the outfield. The coach will stand about halfway between the pitcher's mound and 2nd base with a half dozen or so softballs.



### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. The coach will signal the first player, and she will sprint into the outfield 10 yards, and then make a cut right - like a wide receiver running a route.
2. The coach will throw the ball, leading the player out into the running catch, like a quarterback hitting her man on the move.
3. The player will make the catch, and run the ball back over to the coach.
4. The next player in line should be taking off right after the coach has thrown the ball to the player in front of her - we want to keep the pace and intensity up in this drill!

### COACHING TIPS:

- After a couple cycles through, start to throw the balls out a little farther, shorter - anything to throw off the rhythm of the fielder and see if they can make the adjustment and the catch!

# 13.

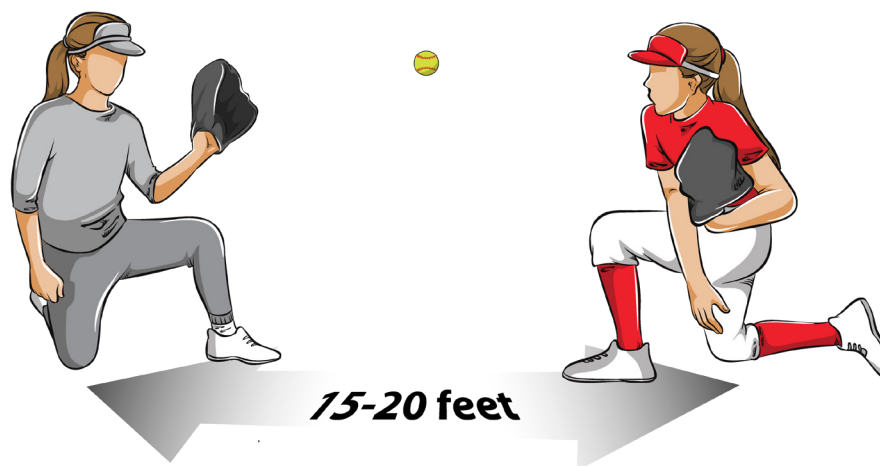
## KNEEL THROW

### PURPOSE:

To build up arm strength while reinforcing the proper fundamentals in the player's throwing motion.

### SETUP:

Have players pair of and spread out in the outfield, about 15-30 feet apart. They will all need their gloves and one ball per group.



### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Each player will take a knee, with their glove side knee up.
2. The player who starts with the ball will throw to her partner, with the partner making the catch using only the upper body.
3. Players will continue like this, counting the number of catches in a row they can hit.
4. After 4 consecutive catches, the partners can take a step back.
5. After about 5 minutes, whichever group has hit the highest number of throws in a row without a dropped ball is the winner!

### COACHING TIPS:

- The emphasis for players here is to really rotate their upper body through their throwing motion – it's the only way they will be able to throw with power and accuracy from down on one knee.
- Feel free to adjust the distance as you see fit based on your team's age and skill level.



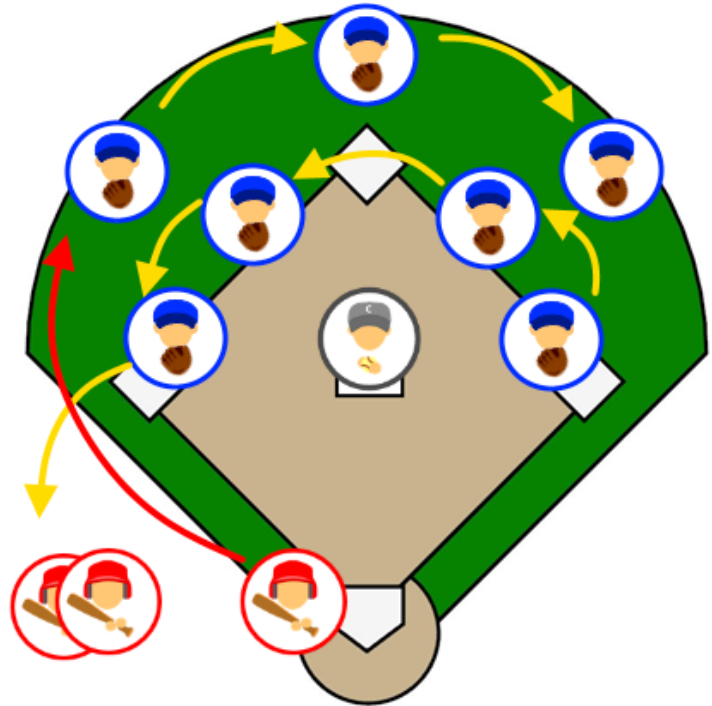
# **GAME PREP**

**PURPOSE:**

To give batters a chance to work on hitting under pressure, while also getting fielders defensive reps.

**SETUP:**

Players will line up at one each at each defensive position, with the exception of the pitching mound, which a coach will start on, with a softball. There will also be a batter in the batter's box.

**INSTRUCTIONS:**

1. Each batter will be working with a two strike count, so any player that misses or takes a strike is out.
2. The coach will pitch to the batter, who will attempt to put the ball in play and get safely to first while the defense tries to make the out.
3. Regardless of whether the batter makes it to first safe or not, they will hustle out to left field as depicted in the diagram above, with the rest of the players rotating accordingly and a new batter stepping in from the front of the line.

**COACHING TIPS:**

- To keep it fresh and interesting for the kids, you can create a 'Clutch Batting Champion'! After every kid has hit, have all the batter who safely made it to first go again. Keep going, eliminating batters who don't make it to first until your crown your champion!

# 15.

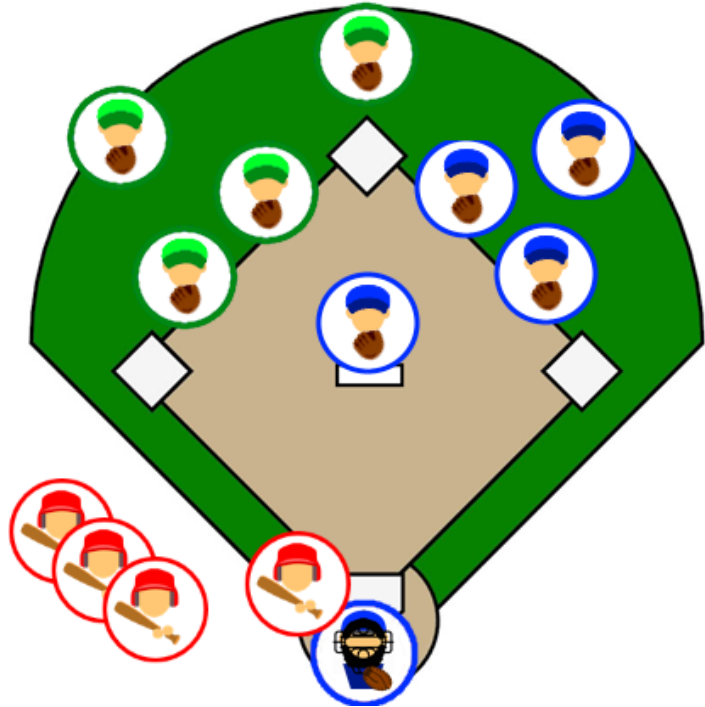
## THREE TEAM HITTING

### PURPOSE:

To give players reps hitting in a competitive game-like situation.

### SETUP:

Split the team up into 3 groups - one team will start batting, while the other two teams make up the defense. A coach can play catcher for the entire drill, or you can designate one player. A coach can also pitch, or you can have a player do it if she can consistently throw hittable strikes.



### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. The first team - red in the case of the above diagram - will bat until they have 3 outs, at which point the green team will rotate to bat, with the red and blue teams now playing defense.
2. The game will continue like this - each time a team has 3 outs, they will be rotate onto defense while another team rotates into the batter's box, with a coach keeping track of each times runs, just like a real game.
3. After each team has batted 3 times - the game is over! Tally up the scores and crown a champ!

### COACHING TIPS:

- Try to transition quickly after each "mini-inning" - make sure the kids are hustling to their next position and are immediately ready to play
- To keep the drill running smoothly, make it a point to emphasize to players to remember who made the last out, so that when the next inning starts there is no confusion about the batting order.

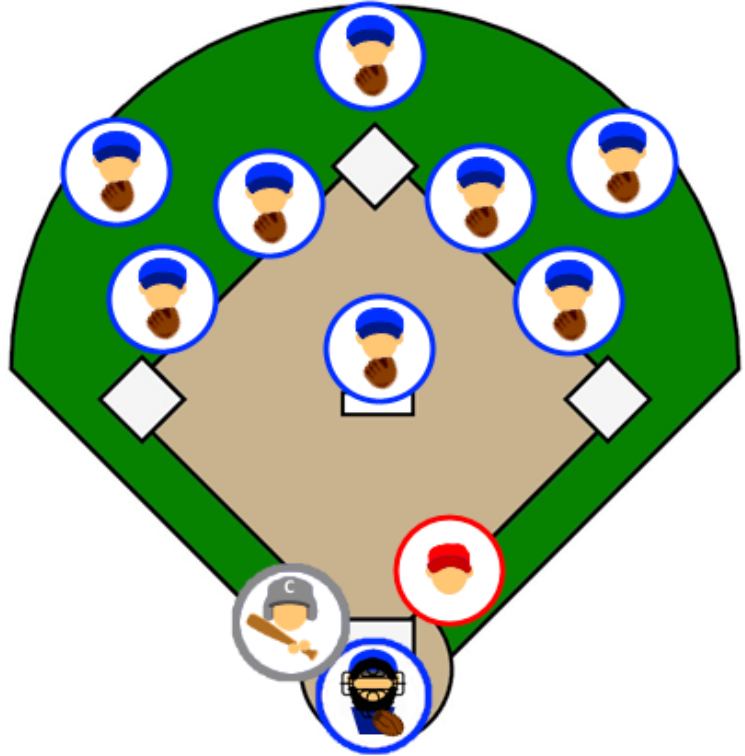


**PURPOSE:**

To give defensive players and baserunners live game experience.

**SETUP:**

Have a player line up at each defensive position, and a baserunner standing just outside the batters box, ready to run to 1st. You can also add more baserunners at 1st, 2nd or 3rd.

**INSTRUCTIONS:**

1. The coach will hit balls to different locations on the field, with the players reacting and playing as if it were a live game.
2. After each play, take the time to review. Did the fielders move/throw to the correct position? If so – let them know and congratulate them! If not, educate them so that they know for next time.
3. After a couple at bats, make sure to rotate runners into the defensive positions and the fielders onto baserunning duties, so that everyone gets a chance to work on their skills.

**COACHING TIPS:**

- Softball is a game where every situation drastically affects strategy and decision making – so give players a chance to practice situations! Before every hit, call out the current situation on the field – 2 outs, bases loaded for example.



# PRACTICE PLANS



# 60 MINUTE SOFTBALL PRACTICE (BEGINNER)

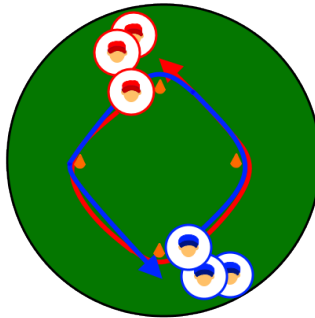
**Required:** 2 coaches, balls, bats, tees, helmets, cones

## Warmup: 15 Mins (Full Team)

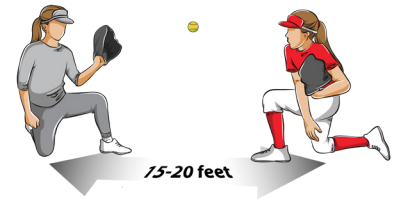
**Dynamic Warmup:** 5 mins

*Jog & Skip Forward & Backward, High Knee Runs, Carioca, Walking Lunge*

**Diamond Racing:** 5 mins

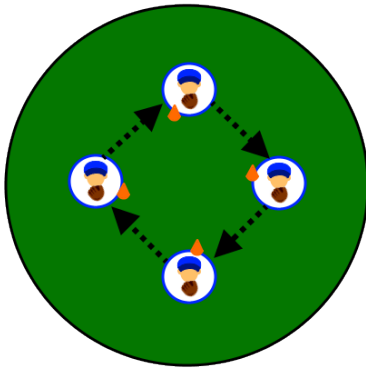


**Kneel Throw:** 5 mins



## Stations: 20 Mins (Split Team Into Two Groups and Rotate Through Each Drill For 10 Mins)

**Around the Horn - 10 mins (Infield)**



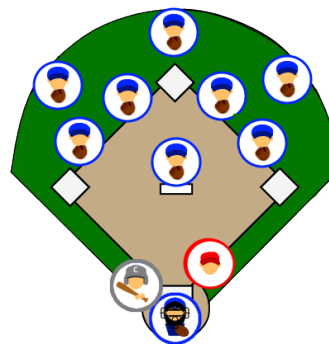
**Focus Batting: 10 mins (Outfield)**



## Game Preparation: 15 Mins (Full Team)

### Live Situations

*Set up a full defense and add baserunners. Coach will state the situation, then hit balls to different locations, with the players reacting as if it were a live game.*





# 60 MINUTE SOFTBALL PRACTICE (BEGINNER)

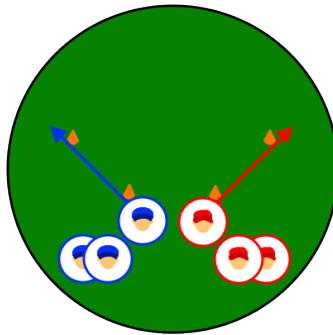
Required: 3 coaches, balls, bats, tees, helmets, cones

## Warmup: 15 Mins (Full Team)

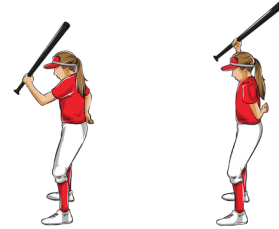
**Dynamic Warmup:** 5 mins

*Jog & Skip Forward & Backward, High Knee Runs, Carioca, Walking Lunge*

**1st Base Sprint:** 5 mins



**One Arm Swing:** 5 mins

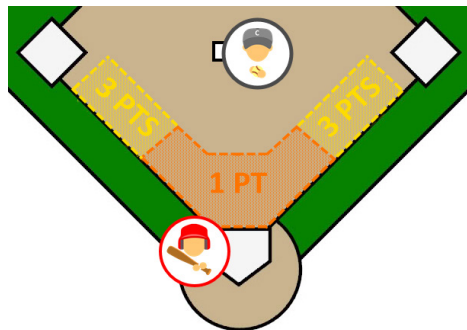


## Stations: 24 Mins (Split Team Into Three Groups and Rotate Through Each Drill For 8 Mins)

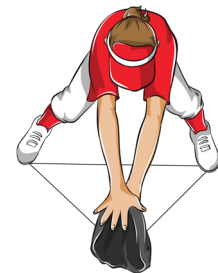
**Form Sliding**  
8 mins (Outfield)



**Bullseye Bunting**  
8 mins (Infield)



**Triangle Drill**  
8 mins (Outfield)



## Game Preparation: 15 Mins (Full Team)

### Three Team Hitting

*Split team into 3 groups: 1 hitting and 2 in the field. Each group bats up to 3 outs, then rotates into the field. Most runs wins.*





# 90 MINUTE SOFTBALL PRACTICE (MODERATE)

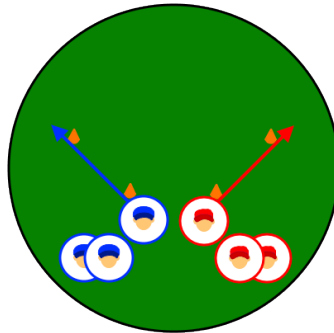
Required: 2 coaches, balls, bats, tees, helmets, cones

## Warmup: 20 Mins (Full Team)

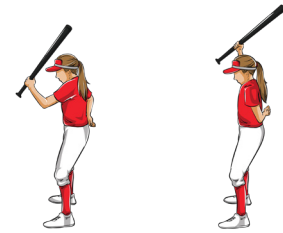
**Dynamic Warmup:** 5 mins

*Jog & Skip Forward & Backward, High Knee Runs, Carioca, Walking Lunge*

**1st Base Sprint:** 5 mins  
(Outfield)

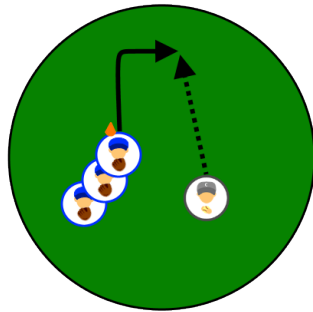


**One Arm Swing:** 10 mins  
(Outfield)

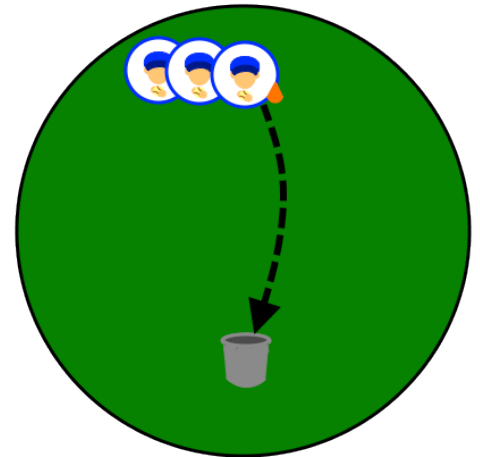


## Stations: 40 Mins (Split Team Into Two Groups and Rotate Through Each Drill For 20 Mins)

**Receiver Drill**  
20 mins (Infield)



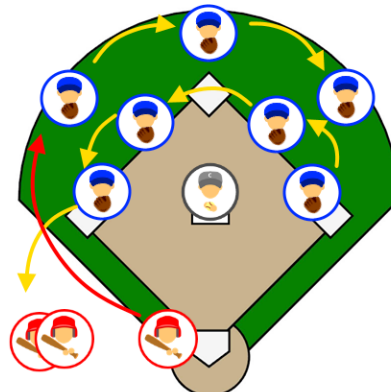
**Quarterback Drill**  
5 mins (Outfield)



## Game Preparation: 20 Mins (Full Team)

### Clutch Batching

*Set up a full defense and a team of batters. Each batter steps to the plate with 2 strikes and tries to reach base. After hitting, he rotates into the field and a new batter steps up.*





# 90 MINUTE SOFTBALL PRACTICE (MODERATE)

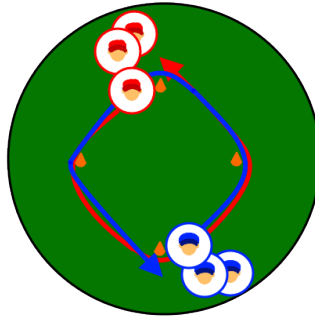
Required: 3 coaches, balls, bats, tees, helmets, cones

## Warmup: 15 Mins (Full Team)

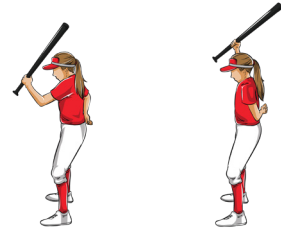
**Dynamic Warmup:** 5 mins

*Jog & Skip Forward & Backward, High Knee Runs, Carioca, Walking Lunge*

**Diamond Racing :** 5 mins

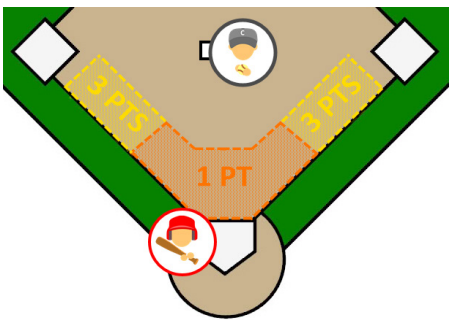


**One Arm Swing:** 10 mins

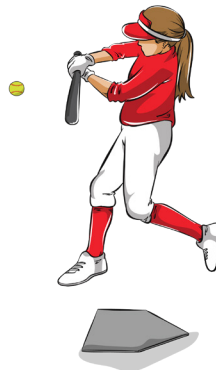


## Stations: 45 Mins (Split Team Into Three Groups and Rotate Through Each Drill For 15 Mins)

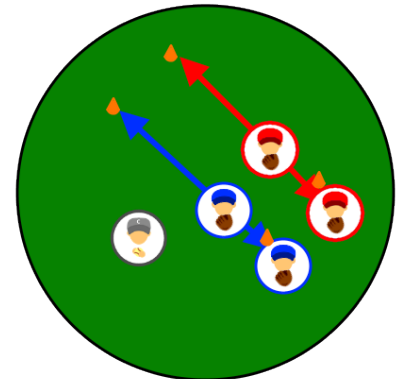
**Bullseye Bunting**  
15 mins (Infield)



**Focus Batting**  
15 mins (Outfield)



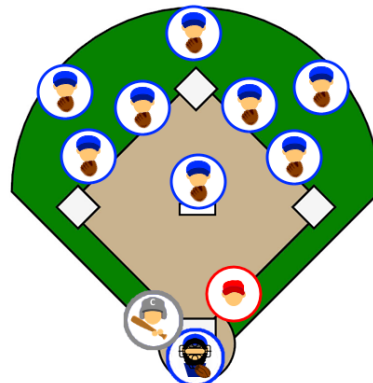
**Leadoff Drill**  
15 mins (Outfield)



## Game Preparation: 20 Mins (Full Team)

### Live Situations

*Set up a full defense and add baserunners. Coach will state the situation, then hit balls to different locations, with the players reacting as if it were a live game.*





# 120 MINUTE SOFTBALL PRACTICE (ADVANCED)

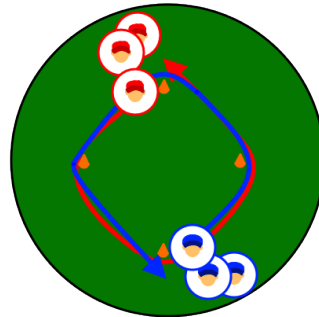
Required: 2 coaches, balls, bats, tees, helmets, cones

## Warmup: 15 Mins (Full Team)

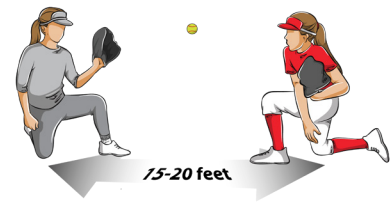
**Dynamic Warmup:** 5 mins

*Jog & Skip Forward & Backward, High Knee Runs, Carioca, Walking Lunge*

**Diamond Racing :** 5 mins

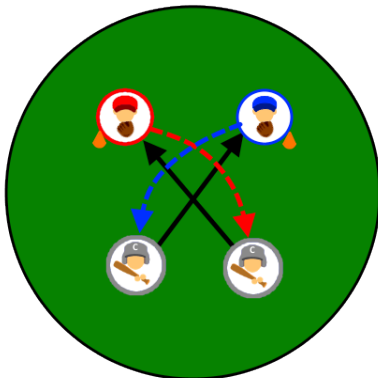


**Kneel Throw:** 5 mins

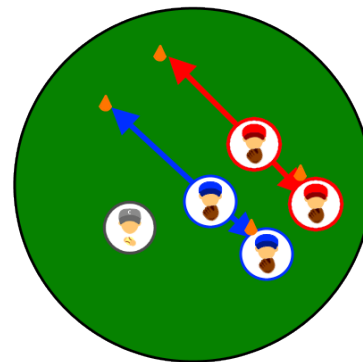


## Stations: 40 Mins (Split Team Into Two Groups and Rotate Through Each Drill For 15 Mins)

**Crossfire**  
20 mins (Infield)



**Leadoff Drill**  
20 mins (Outfield)



## Game Preparation: 60 Mins (Full Team)

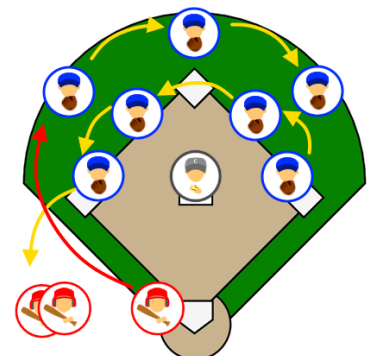
**Live Situations:** 30 Mins

*Set up a full defense and add baserunners. Coach will state the situation, then hit balls to different locations, with the players reacting as if it were a live game.*



**Clutch Batting:** 30 Mins

*Set up a full defense and a team of batters. Each batter steps to the plate with 2 strikes and tries to reach base. After hitting, he rotates into the field and a new batter steps up.*





# 120 MINUTE SOFTBALL PRACTICE (ADVANCED)

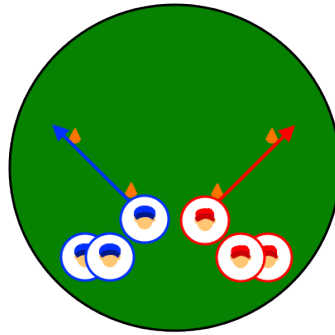
Required: 3 coaches, balls, bats, tees, helmets, cones

## Warmup: 15 Mins (Full Team)

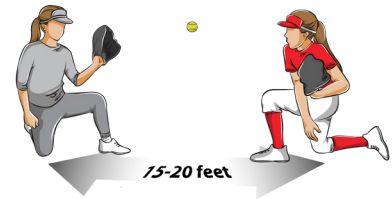
**Dynamic Warmup:** 5 mins

*Jog & Skip Forward & Backward, High Knee Runs, Carioca, Walking Lunge*

**1st Base Sprint:** 5 mins

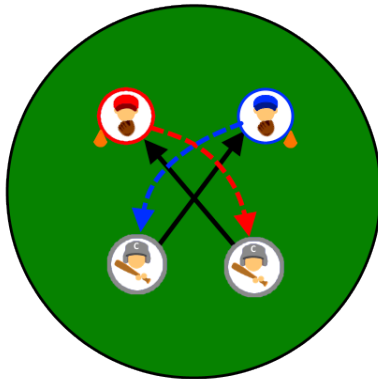


**Kneel Throw:** 5 mins

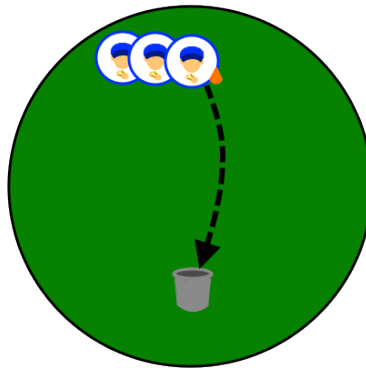


## Stations: 60 Mins (Split Team Into Three Groups and Rotate Through Each Drill For 15 Mins)

**Crossfire**  
20 mins (Infield)



**Quarterback Drill**  
20 mins (Outfield)



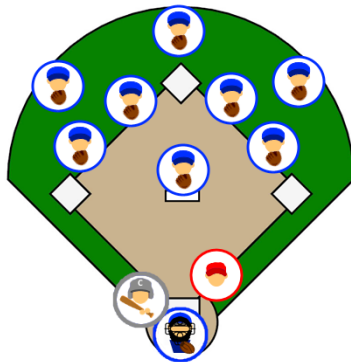
**Focus Batting**  
20 mins (Outfield)



## Game Preparation: 40 Mins (Full Team)

**Live Situations:** 20 Mins

*Set up a full defense and add baserunners. Coach will state the situation, then hit balls to different locations, with the players reacting as if it were a live game.*



**Clutch Batting:** 20 Mins

*Set up a full defense and a team of batters. Each batter steps to the plate with 2 strikes and tries to reach base. After hitting, he rotates into the field and a new batter steps up.*

