

# AIRDRIE GIRLS SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION:

AIRDRIE **ANGELS** FASTPITCH  
U8 & U6 (LTP) – HANDBOOK



AIRDRIE GIRLS SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION:

[www.airdriegirlssoftball.com](http://www.airdriegirlssoftball.com)



# AGSA U8 & U6 (LTP) HANDBOOK

Welcome to the coaching team! ASGA wants to thank you for choosing to coach. This booklet was developed to help guide you through the next 8 weeks with your team.

## Sessions

Sessions will be two times per week, running 60 minutes in length.

Session 1 through 3 will include a warmup game, 4 skill sessions, and a closing game.

Session 4 through 17 will be broken into 2 parts. The first 30 minutes will include a warmup game, followed by 3 skill sessions. The 30 minutes will be a mini game against own team members.

Session 18 will include a warmup game, warm up drills for throwing, fielding, and hitting, followed by a game.

## Skills

Skills sessions in weeks 1 through 7 will focus on developing skills of throwing, fielding, base running, and batting. After week 8, skills for pitching and catching will be introduced.

See table below for outline of each session.

## Scrimmage Games

-- Games will consist of the team being split into two groups

-- One team will be fielding, and the other team will be batting. Teams switch after every player on the batting team has hit one time

Session	Warm up Activity	Throwing	Fielding	Hitting/Base Running	Pitch/Catch
1	British Bulldog	-- Proper "C" grip -- Throwing stance and throwing		Base Running: -- Base positions -- Base Running -- Around the World Hitting: -- Proper grip on bat -- Proper batting stance -- Tee ball stand hitting	
2	Simon Says	-- Partner knee throws	-- Intro to field position	-- Review batter's stance -- Tee ball stand hitting	
3	Freeze Tag	-- Partner knee throws; progress to standing	-- Everyday drill	-- Review batter's stance -- Toe touch and swing	
4	Position Call	-- Partner knee throws, progress to standing	-- Shuffling over ball	-- First base dash	
5	Position Call	-- Fire into fence	-- Grounder goalie	-- One handed hitting (bottom hand)	
6	British bulldog	-- Fire into fence	-- Fly ball catching	-- One handed hitting (top hand)	
7	Simon Says	-- Catch, Step, Throw	-- Fly ball catching	-- Base running, 1 <sup>st</sup> to 3 <sup>rd</sup> base	
8	Freeze Tag			-- Toe touch, swing, and hop	-- Intro to catch position -- Catch ready position -- Catching as a catcher
9	Position Call	Ages 5 and 6 -- Knockdown	Ages 5 and 6 -- Everyday drill	Ages 5 and 6 -- Tee Derby	Ages 7 and 8 -- Intro to pitching position -- Teaching pitch progression
10	Simon Says	-- Around the horn	-- Outside of glove catching	-- Front soft toss	
11	British Bulldog	Ages 5 and 6 -- One step back partner throws	-- Fly ball catching	-- Front soft toss	Ages 7 and 8 -- Pitching progression
12	Freeze Tag	-- Catch, Pivot, Throw Relay		-- First base decision	-- Catcher's shuffle
13	Position Call	Ages 5 and 6 -- One knee partner throws	-- Grounder goalie	-- Toe touch, swing, and hop	Ages 7 and 8 -- Pitching progression
14	Head, shoulders, knees, back, ball	-- One step back partner throwing	-- Backhand drill	-- One handed hitting (bottom hand)	
15	Simon Says	Ages 5 and 6 -- Catch, Pivot, Throw Relay	-- Fly ball catching	-- Second base Decision	Ages 7 and 8 -- Pitching progression
16	Position Call	-- Knockdown	-- Infield grounders	-- Front soft toss	
17	Head, shoulders, knees, back, ball	Ages 5 and 6 -- Around the horn	-- Grounder Goalie	-- Line drive contest	Ages 7 and 8 -- Pitching progression
18	Freeze Tag	-- One step back partner throws	-- Grounders	-- Tee stand hitting	

## HOW TO PLAY:

### ❖ Set up:

- Divide players into 2 teams
- One team starts hitting and the others start in the field
- Team batting: all players should have helmets on and lined up sitting on the bench waiting for their turn to bat
- Team fielding: players chose a position on the field and get into ready positions
- Cones should be placed in outfield to indicate home run hit
- Batters can choose to hit off the tee stand or have coach pitch. Coaches should use their discretion on whether a batter is ready or not for coach pitch
- For coach pitch, players get 3 pitches. If they do not hit one of these 3 pitches, the tee stand is set up and the player hits off this to finish their bat.
- Players aged 7 and 8, should be coach pitched by mid season in preparation for U10

### ❖ How to:

- Teams take turns batting and playing field
- All players on batting team take a turn hitting and running bases
- If player hits ball past cones, it is considered a home run and runs around all the bases
- When setting up to run to next base, player should have the outside of the left foot touching the edge of the base, with toes pointing towards target base. Right foot is a stride behind. Player is now ready to run as soon as ball is hit
- On the last batter's turn, all runners run full bases in home run fashion
- Fielding team tries to stop the ball and make throws to appropriate bases for the outs. If fielders complete throw successfully for the out, runner remains on base and continues to run bases to home plate

### ❖ Coaches Tips:

- For players up to bat:
  - Watch that players are using the proper grip on the bat
  - Players should take their time to get set up properly in batter's box before swinging the bat
    - Feet should be shoulder width apart, with toes facing the plate
    - Weight is balanced between both legs with knees slightly bent
    - Hands should start close to the body, about 3-4 inches away from the body
  - While swinging, players should:
    - keep their eyes on the target throughout swing
    - lead with their hands on the swing
    - follow through with the bat after they have made contact with the ball
    - players should try to hit balls in the "strike zone"

- a. is the area over home plate from midpoint between the player's shoulders and the top of the uniform pants to the point just below the knee cap, when the batter is in their ready position for hitting
  - b. the strike zone changes for each player depending on height
- While running, players should:
  - Take quick strides out of the batter's box
  - Run right through first base, turning to the right (towards foul territory) to stop within a few steps of the base
  - If player is continuing to next base (as in a home run situation), players are encouraged to touch the inside corner of the base
- For players in the field:
  - Encourage players to get set in "ready position" while player is setting up in the batter's box
    - Feet should be slightly wider than shoulder width apart
    - Knees should be bent, like sitting in a chair
    - Hands should be out in front with finger pointing to the ground at about waist height
    - Head should be kept up, with eyes focused on the target/batter
  - Encourage players to "call out" plan for out
    - To begin, have players focus on the throw to 1<sup>st</sup> base. Once players are more comfortable in the field, they can begin to play strategized outs (i.e., if runner is on first, throw can go to 2<sup>nd</sup> base for the out)
  - Encourage players to get in front of the ball if hit to them
  - Make sure fielders are setting up in proper place on the field for each position, for example, first base player should be about 3 feet before the base and 3 feet inside the base line. (see session 2 for details of positions)
    - Once coach pitch is started, position of the playing pitcher is just to the a) right of the pitcher's mound for right-handed batters, and b) left of the pitcher's mound for left-handed batters
  - Encourage players in the field to try different positions with each new turn in field
  - Coach can take a second ball out to the field to toss to players between hitters

# INTRODUCTION TO COACHING

## Introduction

Welcome to the Airdrie Girls Softball Association and Thank you for volunteering your time to coach.

Whether you have played baseball or softball before or even if you've coached before this handbook contains fundamental skills along with examples of drills you can run to create a practice scheme or plan. These videos and drill sheets will not only prepare you to teach and correct your team's fundamental skills but also keep them engaged in the practice and prepared for every aspect of the game.

**Section one** of this handbook is dedicated to educating new coaches about proper fundamental skill techniques. They also lay the foundation of a player's skill set. The Airdrie Angels Fastpitch program strives for every coach to be teaching their players, at every level, the proper techniques. Not only will this keep a consistent message to all our players throughout their club membership, it also will improve the overall safety for our players and eliminate injuries related to improper fundamental skill techniques. At the end of section one there is a parent umpire quick reference guide which includes tips for umpires as well as softball rules for regular play and modified play.

**Section two** of this handbook is printable reminders of Drills that can be run for all the different Skills that are used in Fastpitch; Fielding, Hitting, Base Running, Pitching and Catching,

- Airdrie Girls Softball Association

## Player Position Descriptions

### Pitcher:

Throws the softball from the pitcher's mound to the catcher. The pitcher uses an underarm motion to pitch the ball toward the "strike zone". After making a pitch, the pitcher gets ready to field balls hit up the middle and be prepared to cover the other bases. When a runner is on 3<sup>rd</sup> and the catcher has missed the ball, the pitcher follows their pitch to home plate, so they are ready to help get the runner out.

### Catcher:

Plays in a semi-crouched position behind home plate and receives pitches thrown by the pitcher. The catcher uses their glove and body to block pitches. When runners are on base the catcher is ready to throw to 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> base to get the runner out. The catcher also receives throws from fielders attempting to make outs at home plate.

**1<sup>st</sup> Base:**

Positioned just to the left of the first base. Her main role is to make fielding plays on balls hit towards 1<sup>st</sup> base. If the ball is not coming in the direction of 1<sup>st</sup> base, the player gets in position on the base, ready to receive the ball. For safety of both players, the player can only touch the white part of the base.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Base:**

Plays in the gap between the bag at second and the first baseman. She fields "grounders" and "pop ups" hit to this side of the infield. When the ball is not hit in her directions, she goes to the base ready to receive throws from fielders attempting to make outs at 2<sup>nd</sup> base. When there is a runner on 1<sup>st</sup> the player is ready to get to her base between pitches to stop a steal at 2<sup>nd</sup>.

**Short Stop:**

Fields the balls hit to the infield between second and third base. She covers 2<sup>nd</sup> base (along with the second baseman) and is often involved in force plays and "double plays" with the second baseman. Also covers 3<sup>rd</sup> base when 2<sup>nd</sup> base is fielding the ball.

**3<sup>rd</sup> Base:**

Plays to the left of third base and covers any plays there. Receives throws from other fielders attempting to make outs at 3<sup>rd</sup> base. When there is a runner on 2<sup>nd</sup> the player is ready to get to her base between pitches to stop a steal at 3<sup>rd</sup>. When there is a runner on 3<sup>rd</sup>, player is always ready to make and receive throws from the catcher, especially between pitches.

**Outfielder:**

Positioned beyond the infield in Left, Right or centre, they catch and field "fly balls," line drives, and ground balls hit into the outfield. The players also throw the balls in to make a play.

**Batter:**

Positioned in the batter's box at home plate. Between pitches they must move out of the batter's box for safety and to get out the field of play. If the batter hits the ball into the field of play, they run to 1<sup>st</sup> base. The batter then becomes the runner. At 1<sup>st</sup> base the runner must decide to run through or make a turn to 2<sup>nd</sup> base. If they run through the MUST touch the orange half of 1<sup>st</sup> base only. If a runner wants to steal a base they can run as soon as the pitch leaves the pitchers hand, or they can wait and decide once the ball is not caught by the catcher.



## Diamond Set-up (Layout Drawing)

This section reviews the Diamond Set-up for all age groups from U6-U19, including base placement, mound placement and line placement. AGSA will mark the diamonds with base markers at the start of the season, however, these may get pulled out, buried or lost through the course of the year. If you find markers missing, please use the measuring tapes found in the equipment box to set that base as per the layout, then be sure to let the Equipment Manager or President know about the missing marker so it can be replaced.

### Diamond Set-up:

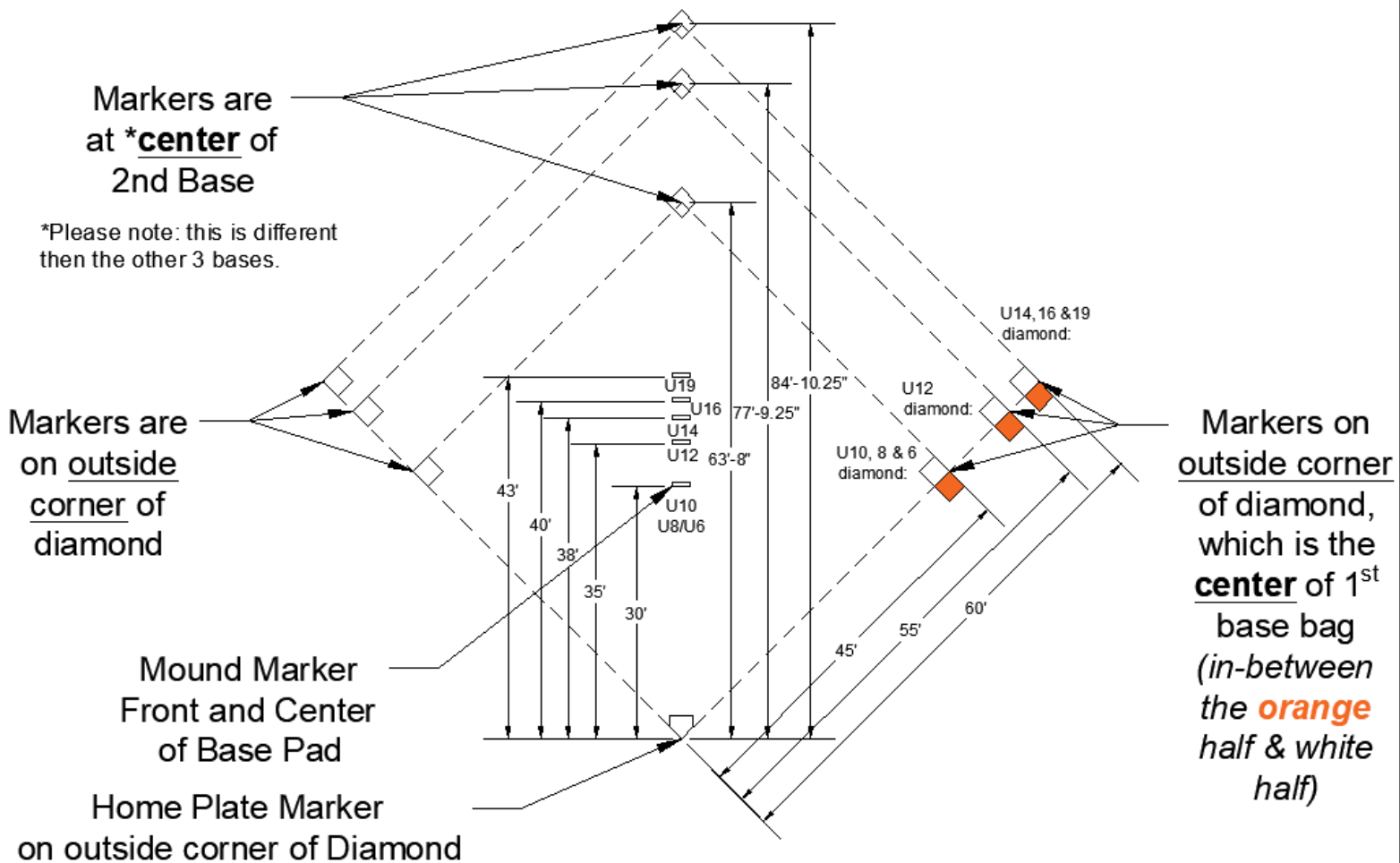
#### Layout:

Each coach should have a scheduled diamond set-up crew to complete the base installations ahead of a game or practice.

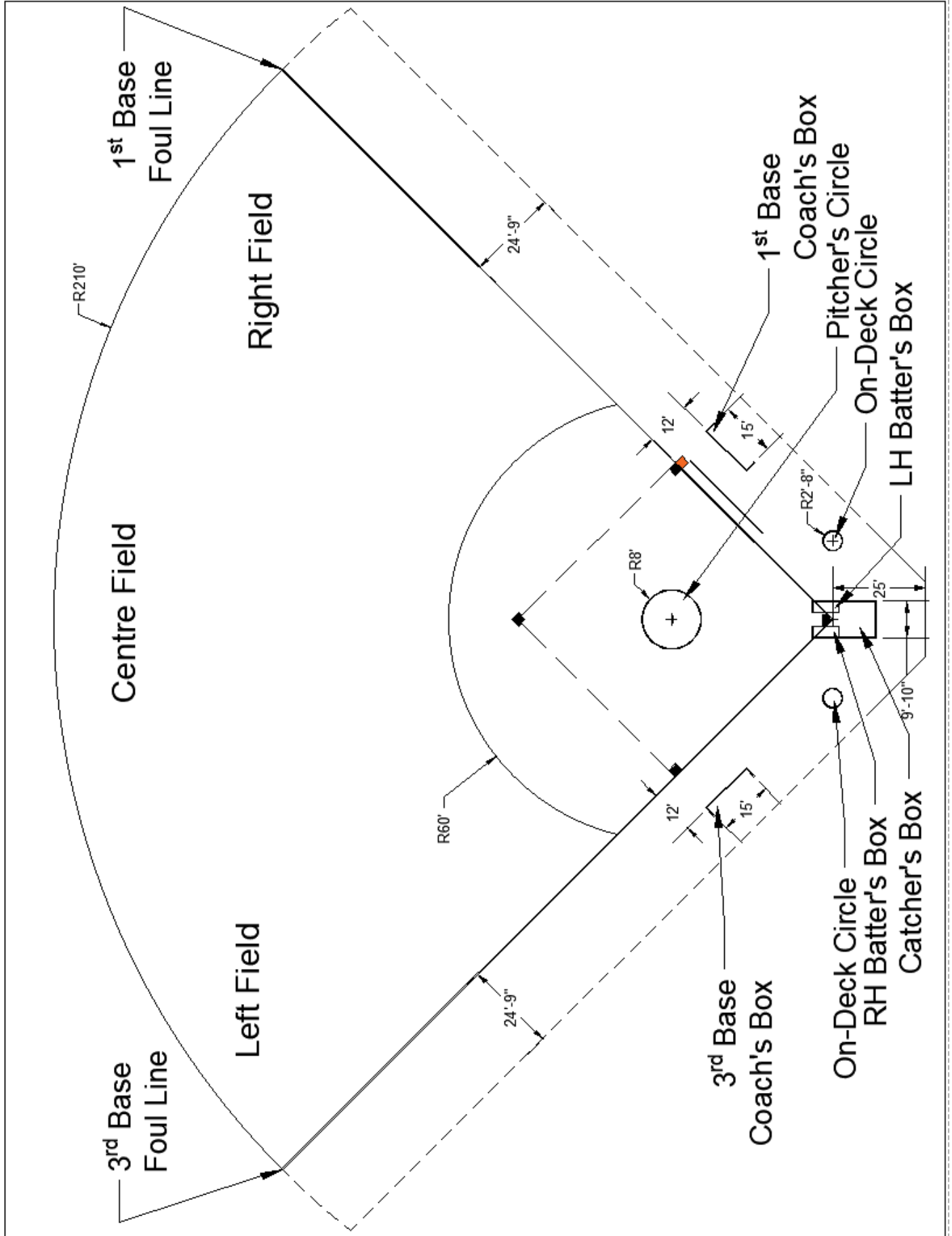
[https://airdriegirlssoftball.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/BASE-DIMENSIONS-rev\\_3.pdf](https://airdriegirlssoftball.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/BASE-DIMENSIONS-rev_3.pdf)



## Airdrie Angels



## Field of Play:



## Fundamental and Position Training (How to Videos)

This section is going to include brief descriptions of the major fundamental skills that are required for players to be a well-rounded Fastpitch player. These may be a little too in depth for beginner players, but these skills are something our program should be striving for as the players' progress.

### Fielding:

#### **Throwing:**

Coaches should be focussing on proper throwing techniques at all ages and skill levels. Ensuring proper technique will not only promote faster and more accurate throws but will also prevent injury.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fB6-rRxMVE>

#### **Catching (Receiving):**

Coaches should also pay close attention to players in their ready position for catching and fielding. Ready position basics are a building block of many of the Fielding skills and promote faster reaction times and thereby reduce the likelihood of being struck by the ball or missing it completely.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zKwgYM3Nzo8>

#### **Fielding (Infield and Outfield):**

Fielding techniques for both infield and outfield.

<https://youtu.be/yV0Cljuiz4o?t=1s>

#### **Ground Balls:**

Ground Ball fundamentals.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TM6hnPz8-uo>

#### **Fly Balls:**

Fly Ball Fundamentals.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QZ4lrNN5Pv8>

## Hitting:

### How to Hit a Softball:

Teaching the proper Fastpitch swing is imperative at all ages and skill level of players. Breaking down the swing and being able to diagnose swing problems will be key in your teams hitting success.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pUa2OEo8HSI>

## Throughout Practice:

There are several items that need to be stressed throughout the entire practice and through any drills of any kind. These should be enforced in every situation:

### Calling for the Ball:

One of the simplest things a player can do is calling for the ball. Shouting, "mine" when fielding prevents:

- a) No-one going for the ball – because they all thought someone else was going for it.
- b) Kids running into each other.

### Two-Hand Catching:

Proper catching technique while fielding is so important. It allows the player to:

- a) Ensures the ball is secured in your glove

Reduces transfer time from glove to throw

## VIDEO LINKS

### Introduction

In the introduction to coaching section there were some links on throwing and catching, fielding and hitting. These are included in this list of Video Links, but we have added many more links for many aspects of the game.

### Basic Drills (Intro to Coaching)

Throwing:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fB6-rRxMVE>

Catching:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zKwgYM3Nzo8>

Fielding:

<https://youtu.be/yV0Cljuiz4o?t=1s>

Ground Balls:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TM6hnPz8-uo>

Fly Balls:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QZ4lrNN5Pv8>

Hitting a Softball:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pUa2OEo8HSI>

## Hitting Drills

Player keeping their head and eyes in the hitting zone through contact:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8Re0wqzVPk4>

Player dipping during their swing:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wWifRMGH2-o>

Swing Mechanics:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9Jqyx8mDwkY>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l73XZlQeyAA>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HFXIONfyjek>

Preparing to hit at each at bat:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ON-hx6SuiEU>

One Arm Drill:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9xJVg9hXI6I>

Inside Pitch Drill off tee:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6ntloXM7f5A>

Sacrifice Bunt:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uAEMboJHKkY>

Bunting to specific areas:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pWsaNbPU2LI>

Slap Hitting (Left-Handed Hitter):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S1Ka4pfZqTM>

## Infield Drills

Good infield drills back-to-back:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XDwFdR4gluQ>

Catcher Position:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qwdeRteH3es>

Quick Hands Drill:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wjzrSDYzd2Q>

Soft Hands Drill:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-BgiappeTZk>

Ready Position to picking up grounder:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ccta-HWnXis>

## Base Running

How to Slide:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=65GBpY6Cjno>

Running to First Base:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EqcDG9\\_oni0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EqcDG9_oni0)

Rounding a base:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hy5eE4Ac2mk>

More Base Running:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=awBfD3Fm-y4>

Leadoffs:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fDGW8yymfiE>

## Other Resources

AGSA – Coaches Handbook can be found on our website.

<https://gw.itsportsnet.com/league.php?scriptName=LEAGUEINFO&leagueID=13188&leagueInfoID=91872>

Youtube.com – search for specific drills or position specific drills or training.

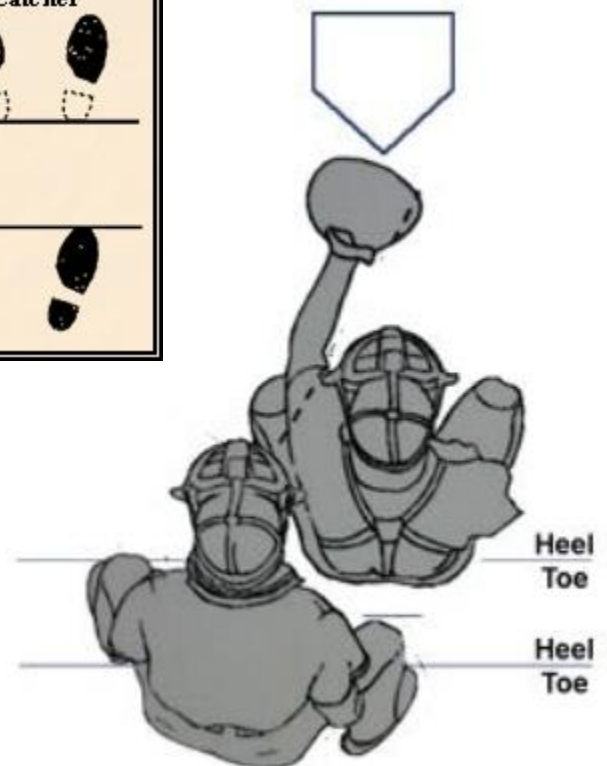
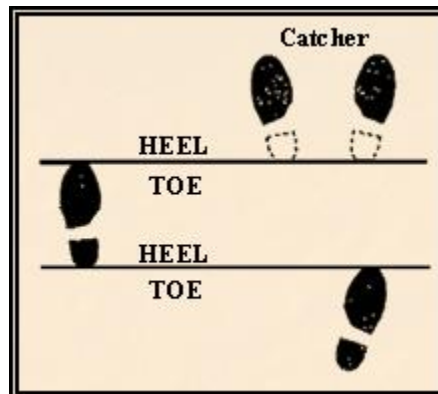
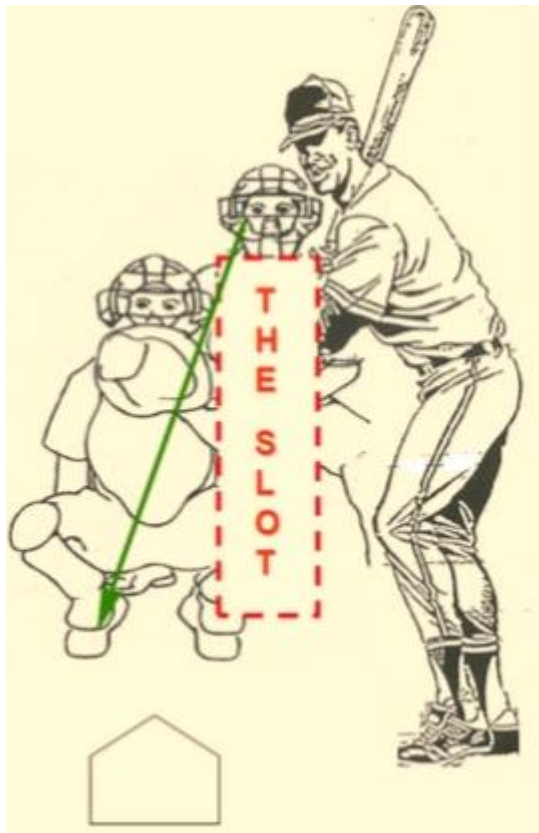
## AGSA PARENT UMPIRES QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

### Introduction

AGSA requires Parent Umpires at the U10, U12 and U14 levels. Umpiring is can be a fun way to get involved in your child's game, with the best view of the game!

### Umpire Basics: Where to Stand

Just like anything else there are many different options and opinions on where an umpire should stand, however, AGSA endorses "The SLOT" positioning for our Parent Umpires. The illustrations below show the slot as seen for a righthanded batter, so a lefthanded batter would be the reverse. The umpires head should be above the catchers, so you are positioned at the top – inside position of the strike zone.



### Umpire Basics: How to be Consistent

In order to see the balls and strikes and call them consistently, please DO NOT move your head after you set up with your chin just above the top of the catcher's head. **Keep your head still and track the ball with your eyes.** This, along with **tracking the ball all the way into the catcher's glove**, are the two easiest ways to become a fair and consistent Parent Umpire.

Please see <https://www.umpirebible.com/index.php/mechanics/working-the-plate> for more information on the many aspects of being an umpire.



## Rules for Softball (Fastpitch)

Softball share many rules with baseball, like;

- 1) Strikes – the pitcher must get 3 strikes to get the batter “Out”.
- 2) Balls – if the pitcher throws 4 balls the player walks or the coach pitches (see modified rules)
- 3) Strike Zone – The strike zone goes the width of the plate and extends from the batter’s knees to their armpits.
- 4) First base – Orange is for the runner to tag on the way from home base, defense must only play the white bag.
  - a. After the initial run to 1<sup>st</sup> from home the white base is the base for both offence and defence.
- 5) Foul balls – A ball hit outside the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> base line and before it exits the infield is a “foul” ball
  - a. A foul ball can only count for a 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> strike (can’t strike out on a foul ball)
- 6) Fielding outs – A ball hit in the air (doesn’t bounce or hit the backstop) that is caught by the defence put the batter “out”
- 7) Defensive outs –
  - a. Forced Outs, when a batter hits and runs to first any runners that must take a base due to the shift can be put “out” by a fielder touching the base that they must take while in possession of the ball.
  - b. Tagged Outs, when an offensive player attempts to steal a base or decides to run when unforced they must be tagged out by a player in possession of the ball.
- 8) Tagging Up – On a caught fly ball any runner in possession of a base must “tag up” on that base before attempting to steal the next. Failure to do this opens the runner up to a force out at the base that they failed to return to or “tag up” to.
- 9) Illegal Pitches - The pitcher MUST start with BOTH feet touching the pitcher’s mound. Normally the lead foot (throwing hand side) starts hanging over the mound and the back foot touches the back of the mound. The lead foot MUST not leave the ground at any time during the pitch but can drag forward off the base. The back foot steps forward from the base during the pitch. An illegal pitch results in a dead ball and an automatic ball.
- 10) Batting Out of Order – When the incorrect batter is up to bat.
  - a. Batting out of order is an appeal play that may only be made by the manager, coach, or player of the defensive team
  - b. The defensive team forfeits its right to appeal for batting out of order when all fielders have clearly vacated their normal fielding positions and have left fair territory on their way back to the bench or dugout
  - c. If the error is determined while incorrect batter is at bat, the correct batter may legally take his place and assume the ball and strike count of the incorrect batter. Any runs scored, or bases ran while the incorrect batter is at bat shall be legal.
  - d. If the error is determined after the incorrect batter has completed their turn at bat and before the next pitch (legal or illegal pitch), the player who should have batted is out. Any advance or score made as a result of the improper batter becoming a batter-runner shall be nullified. Any out that is made prior to discovering the error remains an out. The next batter is the player whose name follows that of the player called out for failing to bat

## Modified CMSA Rules

- 1) Runs Per Inning - There is a maximum of 4 runs per inning for all regular season games.
- 2) Pitching - Pitchers can only pitch a maximum of 4 innings per game. 1 pitch thrown by a pitcher is considered a complete inning pitched (excluding warm-up pitches).
- 3) City Championships - During playoff games, the final inning is an open inning, the sole exception is U10 modified who will have a 4-run maximum.
- 4) Game Time Limits – no new inning to start after the allotted time limit has passed. The game start time is recorded on the home team score sheet, as determined by the umpire.
  - a. U10 - 1 hour & 30 minutes, U12 - 1 hour & 45 minutes, U14 - 1 hour & 45 minutes. Double Headers - 1 hour 30 minutes

## Rules for Modified U10 Jr

Special Rules for Modified 6 player U10 Jr.

- 1) 6 players as listed; Pitcher (1), Catcher (2), 1<sup>st</sup> Base (3), 2<sup>nd</sup> Base (4), 3<sup>rd</sup> Base (5) & Shortstop (6)
- 2) Pitchers – Pitchers can only pitch a maximum of 3 innings per game.
- 3) Home run line – as part of 6 player play there is no out fielders and, in their place, there is a home run line.
  - a. Any fairly hit ball that touches the ground past the home run line results in a home run.
  - b. The ball can roll over the line, bounce or fly over it.
  - c. If at any time a defensive player catches the ball before it hits the ground, even if it is past the homerun line or in foul territory, the result of the play is the batter being out.
  - d. If a ball is hit fair over 1<sup>st</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> but rolls into foul territory but it is past the extension of the home run line, it is a hit but **NOT** a home run.
- 5) Coach Pitch - if a batter reaches 4 balls, the offensive teams coach comes in to pitch to the batter.
  - a. The coach pitches the number of pitches that remained as strikes (4-0, 3 pitches, 4-1, 2 pitches, 4-2, 1 pitch)
  - b. Every coach pitch counts as a strike.
  - c. There is no stealing of any kind permitted during the coach pitch.
  - d. Batters are not be permitted to bunt when the coach comes into pitch.
  - e. The coach cannot interfere with the play, whether intentionally or not, a ball that comes into contact with the coach pitcher is a dead ball and treated like a foul.
- 6) Hit by pitch – If the batter is hit by a pitch, they can take 1<sup>st</sup> base.
- 7) Scoring – Runners cannot advance to home except on a hit ball.
- 8) Innings – Make note of the time at the beginning of play and after 90 minutes has passed, there should be no new innings played. A full game would conclude after 7 innings. However, at 90 minutes you will normally only get 3 or 4 innings in.

## Rules for Modified U10 Traditional

Special Rules for Modified 6 player U10 Traditional.

- 1) Pitchers – Pitchers can only pitch a maximum of 3 innings per game.
- 2) Coach Pitch - After Two walked batters in any inning, coach pitch rules come into effect, this resets each inning (see U10 Modified rules for the coach pitch rule).
  - a. Bunting is not permitted when the coach is pitching.
- 3) Only one base can be stolen at a time. (So, catchers can throw the ball risk free to try to tag them out). The sole exception to this would be an overthrown ball that leaves the field of play. In this case the standard 2-base award would apply.

## Rules for U14

Special Rules for U14 Players.

- 1) Dropped 3<sup>rd</sup> Strike rule – occurs when the catcher does not legally catch the thrown pitch
  - a. Can occur on either a called 3<sup>rd</sup> strike or a swinging 3<sup>rd</sup> strike.
  - b. Cannot occur when there is a baserunner on 1<sup>st</sup> base at the time the pitch is released and there are less than 2 outs.
  - c. The umpire should verbalize the strike 3 call but not that the ball is dropped.
  - d. The batter is out if they leave the field of play or if they break their established base-path.
  - e. It is up to the catcher to realize that the dropped 3<sup>rd</sup> strike rule is not in effect and decide whether or not to try and throw out any baserunner who may be stealing. When the batter is out because 1<sup>st</sup> base is occupied but continues to run to 1<sup>st</sup> base, the batter may be called out for interference. The Umpire should signal dead ball on the play since the batter is already out. The base-runner closest to home is called out, any other runners will be returned to their original bases.

- 2) Infield Fly Rule – This rule exists to prevent the defense from executing a double or triple play by deliberately failing to catch a fly ball that can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort (it does not include a line drive or a bunt).
  - a. The umpire will call out “INFIELD FLY, IF FAIR THE BATTER IS OUT” when 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> or 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> are occupied with less than two outs.
  - b. If the hit becomes a foul ball, it is treated the same as any foul.
  - c. The ball is live, and runners may advance at the risk of the ball being caught or retouch the base and advance after the ball is touched, the same as on any fly ball.
- 3) Charged Conference Rule – The Charged Conference Rule limits conferences between coaches, managers or other team representatives between pitchers, batters and runners.
  - a. There is only 5 charged defensive conferences allowed in a 7-inning game.

# LESSON PLAN - SESSION 1

<p><b>INTRODUCTION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Introduce yourself and the coaches to the players and parents and welcome them to the team</li> <li>❖ Ask the kids: “Who has played Softball or Baseball”?</li> <li>❖ Have the players introduced themselves?             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Set up                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have all players and coaches stand in a circle</li> <li>• One coach has a ball</li> <li>• Players do not need gloves</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ How to                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The coach lightly tosses the ball to each player. Player holding the ball, says their name and then lightly tosses the ball to another player</li> <li>• Continue this until each player has introduced themselves</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>❖ You can have name tags prepared prior to the practise to use for the first 1 or 2 sessions to help learn each player’s name</li> </ul>	5 minutes
<p><b>WARM UP</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ British Bulldog             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Set up                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set up 2 lines using cones in the outfield, about 40 feet apart</li> <li>• 2 coaches or players stand in the middle of the field</li> <li>• The rest of the players line up on the first baseline</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ How to                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The players in the middle yell “bulldog”</li> <li>• When the players in the middle yell “bulldog”, the other players run across the field to the other line</li> <li>• Players that are tagged become “bulldogs” and join the players in the middle</li> <li>• Game continues until all players are tagged</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>❖ Stretch</li> </ul>	5 minutes
<p><b>SKILLS</b></p> <p><b>BASE RUNNING</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Base positions             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Introduce base names                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Walk the diamond with your team starting at Home Plate (batter’s box)</li> <li>• Then walk to 1<sup>st</sup> base; explain the safety base and why they must touch the orange base when running to 1<sup>st</sup> base</li> <li>• Walk to 2<sup>nd</sup> base</li> <li>• Walk to 3<sup>rd</sup> base</li> <li>• Walk to Home plate</li> <li>• Walk to the Pitcher Mound</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>❖ Activity: Base running (home plate to 1<sup>st</sup> base)             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Focus:                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To teach players to run through 1<sup>st</sup> base, touching only the orange bag</li> <li>• To have players practise turning to the right when returning to 1<sup>st</sup> base</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Set up:                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have a parent or coach stand about 5 feet behind 1<sup>st</sup> base with the hand out to give a HIGH FIVE</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	15 minutes

- Line up players at home plate
- How to:
  - Starting from home plate, have each player run through 1<sup>st</sup> base, giving a high five to the coach before turning to the right returning to the home plate
- Coaches' Tips:
  - Make sure the player only tags the orange bag when running through
  - Encourage players to not stop running until they have given the "high five", thus teaching them to charge first base

❖ Activity: Around the World

- Focus:
  - To teach players direction of run on the bases
  - To have players tag the inside corner of each bag. This is achieved by rounding out or looping out before approaching the base.
- Set up:
  - Place a sticker on the inside corner of the bag
  - Place pylons on base path about 2/3rds of the way to the base
  - Line up players at home plate
- How to:
  - Starting at home plate, first player runs from 1<sup>st</sup> >2<sup>nd</sup>>3<sup>rd</sup>> home plate. Next player follows in same sequence when player touches 1<sup>st</sup> base.
- Coaches' Tips:
  - Players are encouraged to run around the outside of the pylons, aiming to touch the sticker on each base with their foot
  - At home plate, players practise running through the base to finish

## THROWING

❖ Introduce proper grip on the ball

- Focus:
  - To hold the softball using a "C" or four seam grips
- Set up:
  - Standing in a semicircle, give each player a ball
- How to:
  - Have the players locate the "C" or horseshoe shape in the seam by turning the ball
  - Have each player place the index, middle, ring, pinky finger along the top seam of the "C". Thumb rests underneath.
  - Repeat having the players drop the ball on the ground and then find proper grip on the ball
- Coaches' Tips:
  - Players should be holding the ball in the tips of the fingers
  - Check the grip, making sure that there is space between the palm of the hand and the ball. This will ensure players are not palming the ball
  - Depending on the size of the player's hand, the player may use 3 or 4 fingers to hold onto the ball.

15 minutes

❖ Activity: Throwing Stance and Throwing

- Focus:
  - To introduce proper starting stance and arm position for throwing
  - To teach players the "thumb to thigh, show it to the sky, let it fly"

- Set up:
  - With gloves on, have players line up on the first base line.
  - Right hand throwers should be facing first base, left hand throwers should be facing home plate.
  - Each player should have a ball
  - Set up a target using a coach or pails for players to focus on
- How to: INSTRUCT PLAYERS TO NOT THROW THE BALL
  - Players should start with their body perpendicular to their target. Feet should be shoulder width apart. Toes of front foot should be pointing towards the target and the toes of the back foot should be pointing same direction as the upper body
  - Glove hand should then be lifted to point at the target
  - The throwing hand should start at the thigh on the same side as the throwing hand, “Thumb to thigh”
  - The ball should then be brought back into an “L” position. Arm is held with elbow at shoulder height, forearm perpendicular to the ground, with finger tips pointing up and palm away, “show it to the sky”
  - Players should then continue the arm circle to finish the throw, ending with the throwing hand by the thigh/knee of the non throwing side, “let it fly”
  - After a couple of full repetitions, stop players at each step to ensure correct positions. Example: Thumb to thigh-Stop-Show it to the sky-Stop-let it fly-stop
- Coaches’ Tips:
  - Have players keep eyes on the target
  - Make sure front leg is pointing towards the target
  - Ensure the throwing arm is being brought to shoulder height, finger should be about 2-3 inches above ear height

## BATTING

### ❖ Introduce proper grip on the bat

- Focus:
  - To teach players how to grip the bat
- Set up:
  - Each player needs a bat
  - Players stand in semi-circle, with over an arms length away from other players
  - Have players stand with feet shoulder width apart
- How to:
  - Have players hold onto the bat in their non-dominant hand; rest the bat on its tip just forward of the players toes and in midline of the body, (right-handed hitters will hold bat in the left hand, and left-handed batters will hold bat in right hand)
  - Players then open the grip of their non-dominant hand so that the bat is resting on the middle part of the fingers
  - Then have players place dominant hand right above the non-dominant hand on the handle, lining up the fingers
  - Players then lightly close their hands to hold onto the bat. The example of holding onto a baby chicken can be used to help teach players how hard to hold onto the bat
  - If gripping the bat correctly, when they lift the bat up towards their back shoulder, the “door-knocking” knuckles (middle knuckles) of both hands should be in a straight line
  - Repeat having players drop the bat and pick it back up again placing the hands into proper grip on the handle
- Coaches’ Tips:

15 minutes

- Bat should be in the fingers not the palm of the hand. This position allows for easier and faster wrist movements

❖ Introduce proper batting stance

- Focus:
  - To teach players how to set up in the batter's box
  - To teach players how to hold bat to prepare for pitch
- Set up:
  - Each player needs a bat and "home plate"
  - Player should be in a line, about 2-3 arm lengths apart
- How to:
  - Have players stand on the side of home plate with toes and bodies pointing towards the plate
  - Player places the toes of throwing side to touch the top corner of the plate, (the corner further away from pointed end of the plate). For right-handed batters, the player would be using the right foot and vice versa for left-handed batters
  - Then have the player place the other foot behind placed foot in a heel to toe fashion
  - The player will then lift the foot on the throwing side and place it beside the front foot about shoulder width apart
  - Once in this position, have players bring the bat up so that the hands are held at shoulder height, almost in line with the back shoulder. Arms are relaxed. Both elbows are down and arms should form an upside down "v"
  - Repeat having players practise getting into the ready position for batting
- Coaches' Tips:
  - Feet should shoulder width apart, with toes facing the plate
  - Weight is balanced between both legs with knees slightly bent
  - Hands should start close to the body, about 3-4 inches away from the body

❖ Activity: Tee ball stand hitting

- Focus:
  - To get players comfortable swinging the bat, while focusing on a target
- Set up:
  - Each player needs a bat, 5-10 balls, and a tee ball stand or pylon
  - Set up tee ball stands in a line, about 2-3 arm lengths apart
  - Have player set up in the batter's box as described above
- How to:
  - Before players start hitting balls, the coach should explain that once a batter has hit all of her balls, she is to place the bat down and wait to hear coach yell "all done". At that point, the player can move to the field to retrieve balls. Players can begin hitting again only when they hear coach yell "begin hitting"
  - Have players practise hitting balls off the stand
- Coaches Tips:
  - Players are encouraged to:
    - keep eyes on the target throughout their swing
    - lead with their hands into the swing
    - follow through after they have made contact with the ball
  - Watch that players are not bringing their hands in a back motion at the beginning of the swing. Hands should move towards ball from starting position

❖ Base race

- Set up:
  - Split group into 2 teams
  - Have one group line up at 1<sup>st</sup> base and the other at 3<sup>rd</sup> base
- How to:
  - Each player runs around the bases as fast as she can.
  - When player running returns to starting base, the next player runs around the bases as fast as she can. Repeat this until all players have run
  - Have a coach or helper at 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> base keeping the girls waiting to run safely off of the base while the other team's players are running past and getting each girl ready to run as their team member is getting close.
- Goal is to be the first team for all the players to finish running. If teams are uneven, some players may have to run twice for the team with less players

3 minutes



## LESSON PLAN – SESSION 2

<p><b>WARM UP</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Simon Says <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Set up <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have players spread out about arm length apart facing coach in front</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ How to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coach calls out different movements (see below for details)</li> <li>• If Coach says “Simon Says” players are to begin doing the movement called out</li> <li>• If Coach does not say “Simon Says” players do not change the movement</li> <li>• Examples of movements to call out (taken from the AGSA coaches manual; Fastpitch warm up) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Butt kicks, high knees, mini skips, power skips, jumping jacks</li> <li>• Arm circles, lateral arm swings, trunk rotations, leg swings</li> <li>• Knee hug to front lunge and twist</li> <li>• Quad stretch and toe touch</li> <li>• Lateral shuffles, lateral cross-overs, jump with sprint</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>3 minutes</p>
<p><b>SKILLS (divide players into 2 groups; rotate through stations)</b></p>	
<p><b>THROWING</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Review proper “C” grip on ball</li> <li>❖ Activity: Partner Knee Throws <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Focus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To help improve throwing speed and backspin on ball</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Set up: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Group players into pairs</li> <li>• Players have gloves and one ball between pair</li> <li>• Make 2 lines, with pairs facing each other about 5 feet apart</li> <li>• Players start in a one knee up position (knee up should be the opposite side of throwing hand)</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ How to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have players hold the throwing arm just below the wrist with non throwing hand in an “L” position. Elbow should be pointing towards the target. Snap the wrist to release the ball, rolling the ball off the finger tips. Repeat 5 to 10 times</li> <li>• Have players move back 5 more feet and return to starting position. Elbow of throwing arm is now resting on the glove hand. Repeat wrist snaps, adding a follow through (elbow moves to full straight position). Shoulder should not move. Repeat 5-10 times</li> <li>• Have players move back 5 more feet and return to starting position. Practise the full range of motion for throwing, starting throwing arm movement at the thigh. Practise “thumb to thigh, show it to the sky, and let it fly”.</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Coaches’ Tips: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage players to use “C” grip on ball</li> <li>• If doing wrist snap correctly, ball will have backspin</li> <li>• Hand should finish in the down position (fingers pointing towards the ground) by the outside of leg with knee up</li> <li>• With full throw motion, gloved hand should be pointing towards target when beginning throw</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>15 minutes</p>

## FIELDING

### ❖ Activity: Introduction of field positions

- Focus:
  - To have players become familiar with infield position names and where positions are located on the field
  - To begin to teach the roles of each position on the field
  - To teach players the infielder's ready position
- Set up:
  - All players have gloves on
  - Coach/parent at 1<sup>st</sup> base to receive throws, as needed
- How to:
  - First explain "ready position" to the players and have them practise getting into it.
    - Feet should be slightly wider than shoulder width apart
    - Knees should be bent, like sitting in a chair
    - Hands should be out in front with fingers pointing to the ground at about waist height
    - Head should be kept up, with eyes focused on the target/batter
  - **1<sup>st</sup> base:** demonstrate where player would stand for this position (i.e., about 3 feet before the base and 3 feet inside of base line). Explain that 1<sup>st</sup> base players have two roles:
    - If the ball is hit to them, the player is to first field the ball and then tag the white bag before the runner touches the orange bag.
    - If the ball is not hit to them, the player is to get to the white bag as quick as possible, getting ready to catch the throw from another player
  - Practise having each player get into the ready position for 1<sup>st</sup> base. Roll a grounder to player and have them tag the white bag. Remind them that the player is safe if they touch the orange bag.
  - Practise having each player get into the ready position for 1<sup>st</sup> base and then moving to 1<sup>st</sup> base to receive the throw. Ready position for the throw is to have the foot of the throwing hand on the inside corner, with other foot out front pointing in direction of where throw is coming from. Glove hand should be held out front in line with the front foot, just below shoulder height.
  - **2<sup>nd</sup> base:** demonstrate where player would stand for this position (i.e., about 1/3 to 1/2 way towards 1<sup>st</sup> base, about 3 feet in front of the base line). Explain that 2<sup>nd</sup> base players have 3 roles:
    - If the ball is hit towards them, the player is to first field the ball and then throw to appropriate base
    - If the ball is not hit to them the player is to go 2<sup>nd</sup> base, getting ready for a possible play at their base
    - If the ball is hit to 1<sup>st</sup> base, the 2<sup>nd</sup> base player covers 1<sup>st</sup> for the throw if needed
  - Practise having each player get into ready position for 2<sup>nd</sup> base. Roll a grounder to the player and have them throw to first base
  - Practise having each player get into ready position for 2<sup>nd</sup> base and then moving to 2<sup>nd</sup> base getting ready for possible play (i.e., player should set up in ready position, just forward of the base, facing the direction of possible base runner play). For this drill, direction of play is runner coming from first base.

25 minutes

- **Short Stop:** demonstrate where the player would stand for this position (i.e., about half way between 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> base, about 3 feet in front of the base line). Explain that the short stop player has 3 roles:
  - if the ball is hit towards them, the player is to field the ball, throwing it to the appropriate base
  - If the ball is hit to the right side of the field, the player is to cover 2<sup>nd</sup> base
  - If the ball is hit to left side of the field, the player is to cover 3<sup>rd</sup> base
- Practise having each player get into ready position for short stop. Roll a grounder to the player and have them throw to first base.
- Practise having each player get into ready position for short stop and then moving into position to cover 2<sup>nd</sup> base. Stance for cover is same as 2<sup>nd</sup> base drill.
- Practise having each player get into ready position for short stop and then moving into position to cover 3<sup>rd</sup> base. Player should set up in a ready position, just forward of the base facing the direction of possible base runner play. For this drill, direction of play is runner coming from 2<sup>nd</sup> base.
- **3<sup>rd</sup> base:** demonstrate where player would stand for this position (i.e., about 3 feet before the base and 3 feet inside of base line). Explain that the 3<sup>rd</sup> base players have 2 roles:
  - If the ball is hit towards them, the player is to first field the ball and then throw to appropriate base
  - If the ball is not hit to them, the player is to go 3<sup>rd</sup> base, getting ready for a possible play at their base
- Practise having each player get into ready position for 3<sup>rd</sup> base. Roll a grounder to the player and have them throw to 1<sup>st</sup> base
- Practise having each player get into ready position for 3<sup>rd</sup> base and then moving to 3<sup>rd</sup> base getting ready for possible play (i.e., player should set up in ready position, just forward of the base, facing the direction of possible base runner play). For this drill, direction of play is runner coming from 2<sup>nd</sup> base.
- **Catcher:** demonstrate where player would stand for this position. Explain that catcher has 2 roles:
  - To catch thrown pitches, keeping the balls in front of them if not caught in the glove
  - If the ball is hit short in front of them, the player is to field the ball and throw it to the appropriate base
  - **Players will practise this position in later sessions therefore will not be practised today**
- **Pitcher:** demonstrate where pitcher stands for play. Explain that the pitcher has 3 roles:
  - to throw pitches for batters
  - if ball is hit towards them, the player is to field the ball and throw it to the appropriate base
  - if the ball is hit to the 1<sup>st</sup> base player, the pitcher covers 1<sup>st</sup> base for the throw if needed
- Practise having each player in ready position for pitcher. Roll grounder towards the player. Have player field the ball and throw to 1<sup>st</sup> base

## BATTING

- ❖ Review stance in batter's box
  - Focus:
    - To teach players how to set up in the batter's box

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To teach players hold bat to prepare for pitch</li> <li>○ Set up:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Each player needs a bat and “home plate”</li> <li>• Player should be in a line, about 2-3 arm lengths apart</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ How to:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have players stand on the side of home plate with toes and bodies pointing towards the plate</li> <li>• Player places the toes of throwing side to touch the top corner of the plate, (the corner further away from pointed end of the plate). For right-handed batters, the player would be using the right foot and vice versa for left-handed batters</li> <li>• Then have the player place the other foot behind placed foot in a heel to toe fashion</li> <li>• The player will then lift the foot on the throwing side and place it beside the front foot about shoulder width apart</li> <li>• Once in this position, have players bring the bat up so that the hands are held at shoulder height, almost in line with the back shoulder. Arms are relaxed. Both elbows are down and arms should form an upside down “v”</li> <li>• Repeat having players practise getting into the ready position for batting</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Coaches’ Tips:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feet should shoulder width apart, with toes facing the plate</li> <li>• Weight is balanced between both legs with knees slightly bent</li> <li>• Hands should start close to the body, about 3-4 inches away from the body</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>❖ Activity: Tee ball stand hitting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Focus:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To get players comfortable swinging the bat, while focusing on a target</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Set up:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Each player needs a bat, 5-10 balls, and a tee ball stand or pylon</li> <li>• Set up tee ball stands in a line, about 2-3 arm lengths apart</li> <li>• Have player set up in the batter’s box as described above</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ How to:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Before players start hitting balls, the coach should explain that once a batter has hit all of her balls, she is to place the bat down and wait to hear coach yell “all done”. At that point, the player can move to the field to retrieve balls. Players can begin hitting again only when they hear coach yell “begin hitting”</li> <li>• Have players practise hitting balls off the stand</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Coaches’ Tips:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Players are encouraged to:                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• keep eyes on the target throughout their swing</li> <li>• lead with their hands into the swing</li> <li>• follow through after they have made contact with the ball</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Watch that players are not bringing their hands in a back motion at the beginning of the swing. Hands should move towards ball from starting position</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	15 minutes
<b>CLOSING GAME</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Base race             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Set up:                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Split group into 2 teams</li> <li>• Have one group line up at 1<sup>st</sup> base and the other at 3<sup>rd</sup> base</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ How to:</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	2 minutes

- Each player runs around the bases as fast as she can.
  - When player running returns to starting base, the next player runs around the bases as fast as she can. Repeat this until all players have run
  - Have a coach or helper at 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> base keeping the girls waiting to run safely off of the base while the other team's players are running past and getting each girl ready to run as their team member is getting close.
- Goal is to be the first team for all the players to finish running. If teams are uneven, some players may have to run twice for the team with less players.

## LESSON PLAN – SESSION 3

WARM UP	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Freeze Tag               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Set up                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Using cones, set up a playing area in the outfield</li> <li>● Have players spread out in playing area. Coach or parent can be “it”</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ How to:                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Coach quickly explains that for a “ready position in ball” we want <b>wide feet</b>. (demonstrate same- feet should be should be wider than shoulders, wide enough that another player can crawl through</li> <li>● “It” chases players around the field. When tagged the players freeze and complete the following:                       <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● First game: when child is tagged, the player freezes in a wide feet position. Other players need to crawl between legs to thaw frozen players</li> <li>● Second game: when child is tagged, the frozen player must do 5 jumping jacks before they are thawed and can return to play</li> <li>● Third game: when child is tagged, the player must balance on one foot for 5 counts to thaw and return to play</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	5 minutes
SKILLS (divide players into 2 groups; rotate through stations)	
<p>THROWING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Review proper “C” grip on ball</li> <li>❖ Activity: Partner Knee Throws               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Focus:                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● To help improve throwing speed and backspin on ball</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Set up:                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Group players into pairs</li> <li>● Players have gloves on and one ball between pair</li> <li>● Make 2 lines, with pairs facing each other about 5 feet apart</li> <li>● Players start in a one knee up position (knee up should be the opposite side of throwing hand)</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ How to:                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Have players hold the throwing arm just below the wrist with non throwing hand in an “L” position. Elbow should be pointing towards the target. Snap the wrist to release the ball, rolling the ball off the finger tips. Repeat 10-15 times</li> <li>● Have players move back 5 more feet and return to starting position. Elbow of throwing arm is now resting on the glove hand. Repeat wrist snaps, adding a follow through (elbow moves to full straight position). Shoulder should not move. Repeat 10-15 times</li> <li>● Have players move back 5 more feet and return to starting position. Practise the full range of motion for throwing, starting movement at the thigh. Practise “thumb to thigh, show it to the sky, and let it fly”. Repeat 10-15 times</li> <li>● Have players move to standing position. Glove leg should be out front, with toes pointing towards target. Body should start perpendicular to target, with glove arm extended pointing towards to target. Practise full range of motion for throwing, starting throwing arm movement at the thigh. Practise “thumb to thigh, show it to the sky, and let it fly”</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Coaches’ Tips:                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Encourage players to use “C” grip on ball</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	15 minutes

- If doing wrist snap correctly, ball will have backspin
- Hand should finish in the down position (fingers pointing towards the ground) by the outside of leg with knee up. In standing should finish by the outside of the leg of the non throwing hand.
- With full throw motion, gloved hand should be pointing towards target to begin movement

## FIELDING

### ❖ Activity: Everyday Drill

- Focus:
  - To increase players eye-hand co-ordination and focus on the ball
  - To promote proper glove position for catching
- Set up:
  - All players should have gloves off
  - Players make a semi-circle around coach
  - Players should be kneeling with knees slightly wider than hips; hands should be out in front close to the ground (to simulate ready position)
  - Use tennis balls for this drill
- How to:
  - Coach gently rolls the ball to the center of each player. Players work on catching the ball out front of their bodies
  - As players get comfortable with two handed catches, begin to work on glove hand (one handed) catches
- Coaches' Tips:
  - Encourage players to
    - keep forward on the knees with head over hands
    - keep eyes on the ball, before it leaves coaches hand and follow it through to complete catch
  - Position of hands in catch should be that the "glove hand fingers point down to ground with wrist back". If wrist is bent up, ball will roll up the forearm. Throwing hand should be beside and just above the glove hand, with palm facing the glove hand and finger pointing forward. The throwing hand is now ready to cover ball when it hits the glove hand
  - As player catches the ball, they should bring hands in towards their body slightly, cradling the ball as if they were catching an egg without breaking it

15 minutes

## BATTING

### ❖ Review stance in batter's box

- Focus:
  - To teach players how to set up in the batter's box
  - To teach players hold bat to prepare for pitch
- Set up:
  - Each player needs a bat and "home plate"
  - Player should be in a line, about 2-3 arm lengths apart
- How to:
  - Have players stand on the side of home plate with toes and bodies pointing towards the plate

3 minutes

- Player places the toes of throwing side to touch the top corner of the plate, (the corner further away from pointed end of the plate). For right-handed batters, the player would be using the right foot and vice versa for left-handed batters
- Then have the player place the other foot behind placed foot in a heel to toe fashion
- The player will then lift the foot on the throwing side and place it beside the front foot about shoulder width apart
- Once in this position, have players bring the bat up so that the hands are held at shoulder height, almost in line with the back shoulder. Arms are relaxed. Both elbows are down and arms should form an upside down “v”
- Repeat having players practise getting into the ready position for batting
- Coaches’ Tips:
  - Feet should shoulder width apart, with toes facing the plate
  - Weight is balanced between both legs with knees slightly bent
  - Hands should start close to the body, about 3-4 inches away from the body
- ❖ Activity: Toe touch and Swing
  - Focus:
    - To get players comfortable swinging the bat, while focusing on a target
    - To help players weight shift in swing
  - Set up:
    - Split players into pairs. One player bats and one player retrieves balls
    - Each pair needs a bat, 5-10 balls, and a tee ball stand or pylon
    - Set up tee ball stands in a line, about 2-3 arm lengths apart
    - Have player set up in batter’s box as described above
  - How to:
    - Before players start hitting balls, the coach should explain that once a batter has hit all of her balls, she is to place the bat down and wait to hear coach yell “all done”. At that point, the player batting can move to the field and the other player can come in to bat
    - Batter lifts, tapping the toe of the front foot 3 times. On the third tap, batter swings to hit the ball
  - Coaches’ Tips:
    - Players are encouraged to:
      - keep eyes on the target throughout their swing
      - lead with their hands on the swing
      - follow through after they have made contact with the ball. Bat should finish in the middle of the back
    - Toe tap is a small lift of ground to just clear the toes
    - Encourage players to “squish the bug” with back foot on swing through. This helps to rotate the hips, giving the swing more power

12 minutes



<b>CLOSING GAME</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❖ Base race<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Set up:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Split group into 2 teams</li><li>• Have one group line up at 1<sup>st</sup> base and the other at 3<sup>rd</sup> base</li></ul></li><li>○ How to:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Each player runs around the bases as fast as she can.</li><li>• When player running returns to starting base, the next player runs around the bases as fast as she can. Repeat this until all players have run</li><li>• Have a coach or helper at 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> base keeping the girls waiting to run safely off of the base while the other team's players are running past and getting each girl ready to run as their team member is getting close.</li></ul></li><li>○ Goal is to be the first team for all the players to finish running. If teams are uneven, some players may have to run twice for the team with less players.</li></ul></li></ul>	2 minutes

## LESSON PLAN – SESSION 4

<p><b>WARM UP</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Position Call <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Set up <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have players stand at home base</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ How to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coach calls out different positions on the field. Players run to that position</li> <li>• When all players arrive to the position, coach calls out a movement or stretch that players do <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Examples, see Airdrie Girls Softball Association Manual for more examples of dynamic stretches <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ At first base do stretches up, down, and side to side</li> <li>○ At second base, do shuffles between the bases</li> <li>○ At third base, do squats into ready position</li> <li>○ At pitcher mound, do arm circles</li> <li>○ At short stop, do quick feet</li> <li>○ Home plate, do upper body twists</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>5 minutes</p>
<p><b>SKILLS</b> (divide players into 2 groups; rotate through stations)</p>	
<p><b>THROWING</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Activity: Partner Knee Throws <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Focus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To help improve throwing speed and backspin on ball</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Set up: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Group players into pairs</li> <li>• Players have gloves and one ball between pair</li> <li>• Make 2 lines, with pairs facing each other about 5 feet apart</li> <li>• Players start in a one knee up position (knee up should be the opposite side of throwing hand)</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ How to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have players hold the throwing arm just below the wrist with non throwing hand in an “L” position. Elbow should be pointing towards the target. Snap the wrist to release the ball, rolling the ball off the finger tips. Repeat 10-15 times</li> <li>• Have players move back 5 more feet and return to starting position. Elbow of throwing arm is now resting on the glove hand. Repeat wrist snaps, adding a follow through (elbow moves to full straight position. Shoulder should not move. Repeat 10-15 times.</li> <li>• Have players move back 5 more feet and return to starting position. Practise the full range of motion for throwing, starting throwing arm movement at the thigh. Practise “thumb to thigh, show it to the sky, and let it fly”. Repeat 10-15 times</li> <li>• Have players move to standing position. Glove leg should be out front, with toes pointing towards target. Body should start perpendicular to target, with glove arm extended pointing towards to target. Practise full range of motion for throwing, starting throwing arm movement at the thigh. Practise “thumb to thigh, show it to the sky, and let it fly”.</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Coaches’ Tips: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage players to use “C” grip on ball</li> <li>• If doing wrist snap correctly, ball will have backspin</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>8 minutes</p>

- Hand should finish in the down position (fingers pointing towards the ground) by the outside of leg with knee up. In standing should finish by the outside of the leg of the non throwing hand.
- With full throw motion, gloved hand should be pointing towards target to begin movement

## FIELDING

### ❖ Activity: Shuffling over ball

- Focus:
  - To have the player move their body in front of ball to make play
- Set up:
  - All players should have gloves off
  - Line up in single line with about 3 feet between each player
  - Use tennis balls for this drill
- How to:
  - Review “ready position” with players and have them practise getting into it
    - Feet should be slightly wider than shoulder width apart
    - Knees should be bent, like sitting in a chair
    - Hands should be out in front with finger pointing to the ground at about waist height
    - Head should be kept up, with eyes focused on the target/batter
  - First player in line gets into ready position. Coach then rolls the ball to the left or right of the player. Player shuffles to line up with the ball letting the ball roll through the legs
  - As players become comfortable with position over the ball, the players can then begin to try and catch ball with bare hands
- Coaches’ Tips:
  - Encourage players:
    - that when in line with the ball to get set into ready position with hands out front and down closer to the ground
    - to keep weight forward on the balls of their feet
    - to keep head down and eyes on ball the entire time

8 minutes

## BASE RUNNING

### ❖ Activity: First Base Dash

- Focus:
  - To teach players how to get out of the batter’s box quickly after swinging
  - To teach players to drop bat after swing
  - To teach players to run through the first base, safety base
- Set up:
  - Tee ball stand is set up in batter’s box at home plate
  - Players line up in single line beside fence
  - Players have helmets on
  - NO BALLS ARE USED ON THE TEE STAND, players are doing practise swings
- How to:
  - Players sets up in batter’s box as if getting ready to hit the ball
  - Once set, the player swings the bat, drops it and runs through orange bag at 1<sup>st</sup> base

8 minutes

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have a coach or parent stand about 5 feet behind the first base, giving players high fives as they run through the base. This coach/parent reminds players to turn to the right (away from the field), to return to the base</li> <li>○ Coaches' Tips:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make sure players are setting up properly in batter's box for hitting even though they are not hitting a ball. We don't want them learning bad habits</li> <li>• Players should take quick strides out of the box to get up to speed</li> <li>• Encourage players to:                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ pump arms while running</li> <li>▪ run as fast they can through first base, not slowing down at all or lunging at the base to touch it</li> <li>▪ "break the tape" as they cross first base. This is tucking the chin and pressing chest out</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Players should stop within a few steps of crossing the base, facing the foul line</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
<p><b>GAME PLAY</b> (divide players into 2 teams; see handbook intro for details of play)</p>	28 minutes
<p><b>CLOSING GAME</b></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Base race             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Set up:                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Split group into 2 teams</li> <li>• Have one group line up at 1<sup>st</sup> base and the other at 3<sup>rd</sup> base</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ How to:                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Each player runs around the bases as fast as she can.</li> <li>• When player running returns to starting base, the next player runs around the bases as fast as she can. Repeat this until all players have run</li> <li>• Have a coach or helper at 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> base keeping the girls waiting to run safely off of the base while the other team's players are running past and getting each girl ready to run as their team member is getting close.</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Goal is to be the first team for all the players to finish running. If teams are uneven, some players may have to run twice for the team with less players.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	2 minutes

## LESSON PLAN – SESSION 5

<p><b>WARM UP</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Position Call <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Set up <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have players stand at home base</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ How to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coach calls out different positions on the field. Players run to that position.</li> <li>• When all players arrive to position, coach calls out a movement or stretch that players do <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Examples, see Airdrie Girls Softball Association Manual for more examples of dynamic stretches <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ At first base do stretches up, down, and side to side</li> <li>○ At second base, do shuffles between the bases</li> <li>○ At third base, do squats into ready position</li> <li>○ At pitcher mound, do arm circles</li> <li>○ At short stop, do quick feet</li> <li>○ Home plate, do upper body twists</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>5 minutes</p>
<p><b>SKILLS</b> (divide players into 2 groups; rotate through stations)</p>	
<p><b>THROWING</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Activity: Fire into Fence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Focus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To work on accuracy of throw</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Set up: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hula hoops are tied to fence as targets</li> <li>• Players have gloves on</li> <li>• Buckets of balls are placed at front of each line (about 10 feet from target)</li> <li>• Players set up in single file lines behind each bucket</li> <li>• Starting position: player’s front foot (leg opposite to throwing hand) should be pointing towards the target, the glove hand should be up pointing towards the target, and the upper body and hips should be perpendicular to the target.</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ How to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On each player’s turn, player sets up with front foot pointing towards target and glove hand up pointing towards target</li> <li>• Practise the full range of motion for throwing, starting movement at the thigh. Practise “thumb to thigh, show it to the sky, and let it fly”.</li> <li>• As throwing hand moves to front of the body, have players drop the gloved hand to thigh and bring throwing hand to outside of front leg</li> <li>• Each player throws 3 balls then goes to the back of the line</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Coaches’ Tips: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage players to use “C” grip on ball</li> <li>• If doing wrist snap correctly, ball will have backspin</li> <li>• Hand should finish in the down position (fingers pointing towards the ground) by the outside of leg</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>FIELDING</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Activity: Grounder goalie</li> </ul>	<p>8 minutes</p>

- Focus:
  - To help players learn to move their body in front of the ball
  - To help players learn to stop the ball and keep it in front of them
- Set up:
  - Create a “goal” using 2 cones spaced about 5 feet apart (can increase distance as players ability improves)
  - Players have gloves on
  - One player stands between the cones, acting as the “goalie” and remainder of players make a single file line about 5 feet away from cones
  - Coach stands in front of goal, about 10 feet away, with bucket of balls
- How to:
  - Coach throws grounders toward the goal
  - Goalie must stop the ball with glove before it passes them
  - Each player should try to stop 3 balls before moving to the back of the line
  - Progression: Start with only forehand ground balls. Then only backhands. Then mix it up.
- Coaches’ Tips:
  - Encourage players to be the “ready position” while waiting for the coach’s throw
  - Encourage players to:
    - keep weight forward on the balls of their feet
    - keep head down and eyes on ball the entire time

8 minutes

#### BATTING

##### ❖ Activity: One handed hitting (bottom hand)

- Focus:
  - To teach players to keep hands in correct position for hitting
- Set up:
  - Set up tee ball stands/cones along outfield foul line
  - Small hits at each batting station and a bucket of balls (5-10)
  - Players have helmets on
  - Players are paired off. One player bats and one player retrieves balls
- How to:
  - Before players start hitting balls, the coach should explain that once a batter has hit all of her balls, she is to place the bat down and wait to hear coach yell “all done”. At that point, the player batting can move to the field and the other player can come in to bat
  - Player will position themselves in the batter’s box on one knee (back leg) with forward leg out straight. The ball will be slightly forward of the raised knee on the lowered tee
  - Using just their bottom hand, player hits the ball
- Coaches’ Tips:
  - With bottom hand swings, have the player stop at full extension after they hit the ball, their palm should be face down
  - Encourage the players to aim the knob of the bat at ball when bringing hand towards ball

8 minutes

<b>GAME PLAY</b> (divide players into 2 teams; see handbook intro for details of play)	28 minutes
<b>CLOSING GAME</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Base race           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Set up:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Split group into 2 teams</li> <li>• Have one group line up at 1<sup>st</sup> base and the other at 3<sup>rd</sup> base</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ How to:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Each player runs around the bases as fast as she can.</li> <li>• When player running returns to starting base, the next player runs around the bases as fast as she can. Repeat this until all players have run</li> <li>• Have a coach or helper at 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> base keeping the girls waiting to run safely off of the base while the other team's players are running past and getting each girl ready to run as their team member is getting close.</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Goal is to be the first team for all the players to finish running. If teams are uneven, some players may have to run twice for the team with less players.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	2 minutes

## LESSON PLAN – SESSION 6

<b>WARM UP</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ British Bulldog <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Set up <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Set up 2 lines using cones in the outfield, about 40 feet apart</li> <li>● 2 coaches or players stand in the middle of the field</li> <li>● The rest of the players line up on the first baseline</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ How to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The players in the middle yell “bulldog”</li> <li>● When the players in the middle yell “bulldog”, the other players run across the field to the other line</li> <li>● Players that are tagged become “bulldogs” and join the players in the middle</li> <li>● Game continues until all players are tagged</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>❖ Stretch</li> </ul>	5 minutes
<b>SKILLS</b> (divide players into 2 groups; rotate through stations)	
<p><b>THROWING</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Activity: Fire into Fence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Focus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● To work on accuracy of throw</li> <li>● To help learn to step and throw</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Set up: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Hula hoops are tied to fence as targets</li> <li>● Players have gloves on</li> <li>● Buckets of balls are placed at front of each line (about 10 feet from target)</li> <li>● Players set up in single file lines behind each bucket</li> <li>● Starting position: players start facing the target</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ How to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● On each player’s turn, player starts the throw. As the player brings the ball, “thumb to thigh”, she begins to step forward with the glove side leg and bring the glove hand up to point towards the target.</li> <li>● As the players continues to “show it to the sky” she plants the front foot with toes pointing towards the target</li> <li>● Follows through with “let it fly”, glove hand moves down and back and the throwing hand moves across to outside of the front leg</li> <li>● Each player throws 3 balls then goes to the back of the line</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Coaches’ Tips: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Encourage players to use “C” grip on ball</li> <li>● If doing wrist snap correctly, ball will have backspin</li> <li>● Foot and glove hand should point toward the target</li> <li>● Hand should finish in the down position (fingers pointing towards the ground) by the outside of leg</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>FIELDING</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Activity: Fly ball Catching <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Focus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● To teach the proper technique for catching above the head</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	8 minutes



- To increase players confidence with catching high balls
- Set up:
  - Players have gloves off
  - Line up in semi circle facing coach
  - Coach stands about 5 feet away from players
  - Players stand in ready position, except hands are up above shoulders at ear level, with fingers pointing towards the sky and thumbs pointing back. Hands should be on either side of the face as to not block vision
  - Use whiffle ball or soft tennis ball
- How to:
  - Coach lightly tosses the ball just above the player’s head
  - Players tries to catch the ball using 2 hands
  - As players become comfortable with catching, the coach can begin to toss the ball higher
- Coach Tips:
  - Encourage players to be the “ready position” while waiting for the coach’s toss, keeping elbow in a relaxed bent position
  - Encourage players to keep their eyes on ball the entire time
  - Players should try to catch the ball in front of their head, not above or behind the head. This allows them to track the ball right to their hands
  - Players should be calling “mine” when going for the catch

**BATTING**

- ❖ Activity: One handed hitting (top hand)
  - Focus:
    - To teach players to keep hands in correct position for hitting
  - Set up:
    - Set up tee ball stands/cones along outfield foul line
    - Small hits at each batting station and a bucket of balls (5-10)
    - Players have helmets on
    - Players are paired off. One player bats and one player retrieves balls
  - How to:
    - Before players start hitting balls, the coach should explain that once a batter has hit all of her balls, she is to place the bat down and wait to hear coach yell “all done”. At that point, the player batting can move to the field and the other player can come in to bat
    - Player will position themselves in the batter’s box on one knee (back leg) with forward leg out straight. The ball will be slightly forward of the raised knee on the lowered tee
    - Using just their top hand, player hits the ball
  - Coaches’ Tips:
    - With top hand swings, have the player stop the bat just after contact. Palm of the hand should be facing upwards when they hit the ball
    - If the player is not making good contact, break down the swing having player move through this progression:
      - First move arm, pointing the elbow at the ball
      - Knob of the bat at the ball
      - Swing

8 minutes

**GAME PLAY** (divide players into 2 teams; see handbook intro for details of play)

28 minutes

<b>CLOSING GAME</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❖ Base race<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Set up:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Split group into 2 teams</li><li>• Have one group line up at 1<sup>st</sup> base and the other at 3<sup>rd</sup> base</li></ul></li><li>○ How to:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Each player runs around the bases as fast as she can.</li><li>• When player running returns to starting base, the next player runs around the bases as fast as she can. Repeat this until all players have run</li><li>• Have a coach or helper at 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> base keeping the girls waiting to run safely off of the base while the other team's players are running past and getting each girl ready to run as their team member is getting close.</li></ul></li><li>○ Goal is to be the first team for all the players to finish running. If teams are uneven, some players may have to run twice for the team with less players.</li></ul></li></ul>	2 minutes

## LESSON PLAN – SESSION 7

<p><b>WARM UP</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Simon Says <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Set up <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have players spread out about arm length apart facing coach in front</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ How to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coach calls out different movements (see below for details)</li> <li>• If Coach says “Simon Says” players are to begin doing the movement called out</li> <li>• If Coach does not say “Simon Says” players do not change the movement</li> <li>• Examples of movements to call out (taken from the AGSA coaches manual; Fastpitch warm up) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Butt kicks, high knees, mini skips, power skips, jumping jacks</li> <li>• Arm circles, lateral arm swings, trunk rotations, leg swings</li> <li>• Knee hug to front lunge and twist</li> <li>• Quad stretch and toe touch</li> <li>• Lateral shuffles, lateral cross-overs, jump with sprint</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>5 minutes</p>
<p><b>SKILLS</b> (divide players into 2 groups; rotate through stations)</p>	
<p><b>THROWING</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Activity: Catch, Step, Throw <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Focus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To work on transition of ball in the glove to the throwing hand</li> <li>• To improve accuracy of throw</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Set up: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Group players into pairs</li> <li>• Players have gloves on and 1 ball per pair</li> <li>• Players set up facing each other, about 10 feet apart</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ How to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One player starts with the ball and the other gets set into the “ready position”</li> <li>• Player with ball throws the ball at the partner. Partner catches the ball and then as quick as possible, moves the ball from the glove and throws it back to the partner</li> <li>• Goal is to try and throw the ball back and forth as fast as possible without dropping the ball or missing the throw</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Coaches Tips: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage players to always catch with 2 hands. Having the second hand by the glove helps secure the catch and allows for a quicker transition of the ball from the glove to the throwing hand</li> <li>• For accurate throws, remind players to step at their target with the non throwing side leg and point the glove hand at the target</li> <li>• Encourage players to remember “thumb to thigh, show the sky, let it fly” for proper arm sequence</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>FIELDING</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Activity: Fly ball Catching <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Focus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To teach the proper technique for catching above the head</li> <li>• To increase players confidence with catching high balls</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>8 minutes</p>

- Set up:
  - Players have gloves on
  - Line up in semi circle facing coach
  - Coach stands about 5 feet away from players
  - Players stand in ready position, except hands are up above shoulders at ear level, with fingers pointing towards the sky and thumbs pointing back. Hands should be on either side of the face as to not block vision
  - Use whiffle ball or soft tennis ball
- How to:
  - Coach lightly tosses the ball just above the player's head
  - Players tries to catch the ball using 2 hands
  - As players become comfortable with catching, the coach can begin to toss the ball higher
- Coach Tips:
  - Encourage players to be the "ready position" while waiting for the coach's toss, keeping elbow in a relaxed bent position
  - Encourage players to keep their eyes on ball the entire time
  - Players should try to catch the ball in front of their head, not above or behind the head. This allows them to track the ball right to their hands

8 minutes

#### RUNNING

- ❖ Activity: Base running, 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> base
  - Focus:
    - To teach players the ready position for base running
    - To teach players to tag the inside corner of the bag when rounding bases.
  - Set up:
    - Place a sticker on the inside corner of the 2<sup>nd</sup> base bag
    - Place pylons on base path about 2/3rds of the way to the base
    - Players line up in single file at 1<sup>st</sup> base
    - First player sets up at first base, getting ready to run to 2<sup>nd</sup> base
    - Proper foot placement on base when looking to advance bases:
      - The outside of the left foot is against the bag, with toes pointing towards the base the player is trying to advance to. The right foot is about one stride back, with toes dug into the shale and heel up. Bend the knees and lean forward from the waist, in a sprint position. Arms are bent the elbow, with left arm forward and the right arm extended back.
  - How to:
    - Starting at 1<sup>st</sup> base, the player runs from 1<sup>st</sup>>2<sup>nd</sup>>3<sup>rd</sup> base. Next player follows in same sequence when player touches 2<sup>nd</sup> base
  - Coaches' Tips:
    - Players are encouraged to run around the outside of the pylons, aiming to tag the sticker on second base when stepping on the base

8 minutes

**GAME PLAY** (divide players into 2 teams; see handbook intro for details of play)

28 minutes

<b>CLOSING GAME</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❖ Base race<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Set up:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Split group into 2 teams</li><li>● Have one group line up at 1<sup>st</sup> base and the other at 3<sup>rd</sup> base</li></ul></li><li>○ How to:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Each player runs around the bases as fast as she can.</li><li>● When player running returns to starting base, the next player runs around the bases as fast as she can. Repeat this until all players have run</li><li>● Have a coach or helper at 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> base keeping the girls waiting to run safely off of the base while the other team's players are running past and getting each girl ready to run as their team member is getting close.</li></ul></li><li>○ Goal is to be the first team for all the players to finish running. If teams are uneven, some players may have to run twice for the team with less players.</li></ul></li></ul>	2 minutes

## LESSON PLAN – SESSION 8

<b>WARM UP</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Freeze Tag <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Set up <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Using cones, set up a playing area in the outfield</li> <li>● Have players spread out in playing area. Coach or parent can be “it”</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ How to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Coach quickly explains that for a “ready position in ball” we want <b>wide feet</b>. (demonstrate same- feet should be wider than shoulders, wide enough that another player can crawl through”</li> <li>● “It” chases players around the field. When tagged the players freeze and complete the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● First game: when child is tagged, the player freezes in wide feet position. Other players need to crawl between legs to allow thaw frozen players</li> <li>● Second game: when child is tagged, the frozen player must do 5 jumping jacks before they are thawed and can return to play</li> <li>● Third game: when child is tagged, the player must balance on one foot for 5 counts to thaw and return to play</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	5 minutes
<b>SKILLS (divide players into 2 groups; rotate through stations)</b>	
<b>CATCH POSITION</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Introduce required equipment to play catch <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Focus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● To teach players how to don catcher’s equipment</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Set up: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Need full protective equipment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Face mask</li> <li>▪ Chest protector</li> <li>▪ Shin Protectors</li> <li>▪ Helmet</li> <li>▪ Throat protector</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Players line up along the outfield foul line</li> <li>● Female coach or bench mom to assist with putting equipment on and off</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ How to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Coach has one volunteer from the team to put equipment on</li> <li>● Start with demonstrating the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ shin protectors- Clasps should do up on the outside of the legs.</li> <li>▪ Chest protector- straps Velcro to both sides of the torso</li> <li>▪ Helmet</li> <li>▪ Facemask and throat protector</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Coach should explain that a player is required to wear this equipment if playing catcher on the field or if warming a pitcher up off the field</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>❖ Activity: Introduce ready position for catcher <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Focus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● To teach players proper set up behind the plate</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	16 minutes

- Set up:
  - Players are lined up on the outfield foul line
  - Players have glove on
- How to:
  - First explain that for the catcher to get set up at home plate, the catcher would wait for the batter to set up and then set up about one bat lengths behind the back foot of the batter directly behind home plate. **FOR THIS DRILL, PLAYERS ARE GOING TO SET UP ON THE FOUL LINE**
  - Explain “ready position” to the players and have them practise getting into it
    - Squat like a frog
    - Trunk is forward
    - Weight in on the inside of part of the balls of their feet
    - Glove is in front of the body, with fingers pointing up to the sky
    - Throwing hand is hidden behind the back, with thumb tucked. This is to protect the hand from being hit and injured by a missed pitch
- ❖ Activity: Catching as a catcher
  - Focus:
    - To teach players how to receive a ball
  - Set up:
    - Players line up in single line along foul line
    - Using tennis balls
    - Players have gloves on
    - Players are in catcher “ready position”
  - How to:
    - Gently toss the ball to each player having them practise catching the ball out in front of the body, while staying in a crouch position
  - Coaches’ tips:
    - In ready position, the bum should not be resting on the heels
    - Players should have their knees and shoulders square to the pitcher (coach in this drill)
    - Players should not reach for the ball and arms should “give” on impact
    - Players should watch the ball into the glove

## BATTING

- ❖ Activity: Toe touch, Swing, and Hop
  - Focus:
    - To get players comfortable swinging the bat, while focusing on a target
    - To help players weight shift in swing
    - To help players learn how to push off after hitting, allowing for quicker exit out of the batter’s box
  - Set up:
    - Group players into pairs. One player bats and one player retrieves balls
    - Each pair needs a bat, 5-10 balls, and a tee ball stand or pylon
    - Set up tee ball stands in a line, about 2-3 arm lengths apart
  - How to:

8 minutes

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Before players start hitting balls, the coach should explain that once a batter has hit all of her balls, she is to place the bat down and wait to hear coach yell “all done”. At that point, the player batting can move to the field and the other player can come in to bat</li> <li>• Batter lifts, tapping the toe of the front foot 3 times. On the third tap, batter swings to hit the ball, at end of swing does a hop straight up in the air</li> <li>○ Coaches’ Tips:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Players are encouraged to:                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ keep eyes on the target throughout their swing</li> <li>▪ lead with their hands on the swing</li> <li>▪ follow through after they have made contact with the ball. Bat should finish in the middle of the back</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Toe tap is a small lift of ground to just clear the toes.</li> <li>• Encourage players to “squish the bug” with back foot on swing through. This helps to rotate the hips, giving the swing more power.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
<b>GAME PLAY</b> (divide players into 2 teams; see handbook intro for details of play)	28 minutes
<b>CLOSING GAME</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Base race             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Set up:                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Split group into 2 teams</li> <li>• Have one group line up at 1<sup>st</sup> base and the other at 3<sup>rd</sup> base</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ How to:                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Each player runs around the bases as fast as she can.</li> <li>• When player running returns to starting base, the next player runs around the bases as fast as she can. Repeat this until all players have run</li> <li>• Have a coach or helper at 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> base keeping the girls waiting to run safely off of the base while the other team’s players are running past and getting each girl ready to run as their team member is getting close.</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Goal is to be the first team for all the players to finish running. If teams are uneven, some players may have to run twice for the team with less players.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	2 minutes



## LESSON PLAN – SESSION 9

<b>WARM UP</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Position Call               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Set up                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have players stand at home base</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ How to:                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coach calls out different positions on the field. Players run to that position</li> <li>• When all players arrive to position, coach calls out a movement or stretch that players do                       <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Examples, see Airdrie Girls Softball Association Manual for more examples of dynamic stretches                           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ At first base do stretches up, down, and side to side</li> <li>○ At second base, do shuffles between the bases</li> <li>○ At third base, do squats into ready position</li> <li>○ At pitcher mound, do arm circles</li> <li>○ At short stop, do quick feet</li> <li>○ Home plate, do upper body twists</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	5 minutes
<b>SKILLS</b> (players aged 5 and 6 divide into 2 groups; players aged 7 remain in one group)	
<p><b>THROWING</b> (for players aged 5 and 6)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Activity: Knockdown               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Focus:                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To improve accuracy of throw</li> <li>• To improve arm strength</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Set up:                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set up batting tee about 20 feet from start of player line (mark same with a cone)</li> <li>• Place a large ball on the tee (i.e., soccer ball, volleyball, beachball)</li> <li>• Players have gloves on and one ball each</li> <li>• Players are lined up in single file at cone</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ How to:                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Goal of the drill is for players to try and hit the ball off the tee with a square throw</li> <li>• First player in line throws the ball at the target</li> <li>• If they hit the target, they need to run out and reset the batting tee with the ball for next player in line, then return to the end of the line</li> <li>• If they do not hit the target, they should return to the end of the line and wait for their turn again</li> <li>• Players shag their own ball</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Coaches' Tips:                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For accurate throws, remind players to step at their target with the non throwing side leg and point the glove hand at the target.</li> <li>• Encourage players to remember “thumb to thigh, show the sky, let it fly” for proper arm sequence</li> <li>• To make the drill easier, have players move closer to the target</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>FIELDING</b> (for players aged 5 and 6)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Activity: Everyday Drill</li> </ul>	8 minutes

- Focus:
  - To increase players eye-hand co-ordination and focus on the ball
  - To promote proper glove position for catching
- Set up:
  - All players should have gloves off
  - Players make a semi-circle around coach
  - Players should be kneeling with knees slightly wider than hips; hands should be out in front close to the ground (to simulate ready position)
  - Use tennis balls for this drill
- How to:
  - Coach gently rolls the ball to the center of each player. Players work on catching the ball out front of their bodies
  - As players get comfortable with two handed catches, begin to work on glove hand (one handed) catches
- Coaches' Tips:
  - Encourage players to
    - keep forward on the knees with head over hands
    - keep eyes on the ball, before it leaves coaches hand and follow it through to complete catch
  - Position of hands in catch should be that the "glove hand fingers point down to ground with wrist back". If wrist is bent up, ball will roll up the forearm. Throwing hand should be beside and just above the glove hand, with palm facing the glove hand and finger pointing forward. The throwing hand is now ready to cover ball when it hits the glove hand
  - As player catches the ball, they should bring hands in towards their body slightly, cradling the ball as if they were catching an egg without breaking it

8 minutes

#### BATTING (for players aged 5 and 6)

##### ❖ Activity: Tee Derby

- Focus:
  - To help kids understand the importance of weight shift for generating power
- Set up:
  - Set up a tee at home base
  - One player is at bat. Remaining players help shag balls
  - Cones are placed in the infield and outfield to mark out a series of distances, similar to a track and field throwing event
    - Example- pitcher's mound is 1 point, bases are 2 points, grass is 3 points
- How to:
  - Place ball on tee for first batter
  - On coach's signal, the player will load up her swing by shifting the weight backward and lifting the front leg to 90 degrees
  - Player will then place the front foot and swing, trying to hit the ball as hard as she can
  - Each player gets 5 balls
  - Track the distance of the ball until it stops rolling. Assign points depending on where it stops
- Coaches' Tips:
  - Make sure the front foot is being placed straight toward the pitcher and is under control

8 minutes

- The batter's head and eyes should stay locked on the ball through the point of contact. Try to focus on a specific seam or scuff to increase concentration

## PITCHING (for players aged 7)

### ❖ Pitching position

- Introduce the role of pitcher
  - Coach explains the role of pitcher is to:
    - Throw the softball from pitcher's mound to the catcher
    - Pitcher uses an underarm motion to pitch the ball toward the "strike zone"
    - After making a pitch, the pitcher gets ready to field balls hit up the middle and to cover the other bases
    - When a runner is on 3<sup>rd</sup> and the catcher misses the ball, the pitcher follows their pitch to home plate to cover
    - Coach demonstrates full pitch motion

### ❖ Activity: Pitcher mound, foot position on mound block

- Focus:
  - To teach players proper foot position on the plate for pitching
- Set up:
  - Players form a semi circle around the front of the mound. Coach is at the plate on the pitcher's mound
  - Each player draws a straight line in the shale about 1 foot in length to simulate the "pitcher's plate". Coach can help with this if necessary
- How to:
  - Players place foot of throwing hand with heel resting on the plate, and the toes of the glove hand resting on the plate. To begin pitch, both feet need to be contacting the plate
  - Feet should be shoulder width apart
  - Have players practise stepping "onto the plate"

24 min

## THE FOLLOWING SEQUENCE TEACHES PITCHERS THE PROGRESSION OF A PITCH STARTING FROM THE RELEASE WORKING TO FULL WIND UP (typical pitching warm up)

### ❖ Activity: Wrist flicks

- Focus:
  - To teach players proper release of ball at end of pitch
- Set up:
  - Pair up players
  - Players need glove on and 1 ball per pair
  - Players stand about 5 feet away from each other
  - Players stand with the non-throwing side pointing towards the other player. Feet should be shoulder width apart, in line with each other
  - Players should grip ball using the "C" grip (same grip as overhand throwing)
- How to:
  - Starting player has ball in hand, arm hanging straight down from shoulder, just in front of throwing leg. Elbow should be relaxed. Glove hand rests on upper arm to help remind player not to move it during the throw
  - Player throws ball to the other player using a "flick of the wrist"
  - Elbow should stay in close to the body
  - Each player repeats drill 20 times
- Coaches' tips:

- Ball should have top spin if released correctly
- Encourage players to keep shoulder and elbow still, focusing on moving wrist only
- Wrist should end in a full bend position

❖ Activity: 9 o'clock position, with no step or "T" position throws

- Focus:
  - To teach proper throwing motion with release of ball
  - To teach open position of body with pitch
- Set up:
  - Pair up players
  - Players need glove on and 1 ball per pair
  - Players stand about 10 feet away from each other
  - Players stand with the non-throwing side pointing towards the other player. Feet should be shoulder width apart, in line with each other
  - Starting position, arms are held at shoulder height, glove hand is pointing towards target and throwing hand is pointing back, with ball facing the ground (i.e., "T" position)
- How to:
  - Player with the ball, brings throwing arm straight down and across the body, flicking the wrist to release ball when coming in front of the throwing leg
  - As throwing hand is brought down and forward, glove hand is brought down towards the non-throwing side leg
  - Each player repeats drill 20 times
- Coaches' tips:
  - Players should be using the "C" grip on ball
  - If releasing correctly, ball should have topspin
  - Feet should stay still so players maintain an open position at hips and the upper body perpendicular to the target

❖ Activity: 9 o'clock position, with step or "K" position throws

- Focus:
  - To teach proper throwing motion with release of ball
  - To teach co-ordination of throw and step in pitch
- Set up:
  - Pair up players
  - Players need glove on and 1 ball per pair
  - Players stand about 15 feet away from each other
  - Players stand with the non-throwing side pointing towards the other player. Feet should be shoulder width apart, in line with each other
  - Starting position, arms are held at shoulder height, glove hand is pointing towards target and throwing hand is pointing back, with ball facing the ground (i.e., "T" position)
- How to:
  - Player with ball, starts motion by bringing the throwing hand up towards the sky while at same time lifting the front foot off the ground (i.e., "K" position)
  - At the same time,
    - throwing hand is brought down across the body
    - glove hand is brought towards non-throwing side leg

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ front foot is planted as weight shifts from back leg to front leg as throwing arm is brought down and forward.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Each player repeats drill 20 times</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Coaches' tips:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Players should be using the "C" grip on ball</li> <li>• If releasing correctly, ball should have topspin</li> <li>• Front foot should be lifted straight forward using the hip and then planted back in starting place</li> <li>• Players body should remain perpendicular to target throughout motion</li> </ul> </li> <li>❖ Activity: Full Windmill             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Focus:                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To teach complete motion for pitching</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Set up:                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Players need glove on and 5 balls each</li> <li>• Players line up facing fence, about 20 feet away</li> <li>• Coach can draw a line in the shale to simulate pitcher's plate</li> <li>• Starting position,                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Throwing side foot heel and non throwing side toes are touching the pitcher's plate</li> <li>▪ Arms are resting beside the body (pitchers are required to present the ball before pitching)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Before players begin throwing, the coach should explain that once a player has thrown her 5 balls, she is to stand and wait to hear coach yell "all done". At that point, the players can move to collect thrown balls and reset in pitching stance. Players can start pitching again once coach yells "start pitching".</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ How to:                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Players brings hands together in midline at chest height, weight shifts to load the back foot</li> <li>• Arms are then brought to the sides and back behind the body, knees bend and upper body moves forward keeping chest in upright position, shifting weight to load the front foot</li> <li>• At the same time,                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Arms are brought forward</li> <li>▪ Back foot steps forward bringing body into the "K" position</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Then, at same time                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Throwing arm continues to move through windmill motion with wrist flick release</li> <li>▪ Glove hand comes down to non throwing side leg</li> <li>▪ Throwing side foot drags forward with throwing arm motion</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Each player repeats drill 20 times</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Coaches' tips:                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Players should be using the "C" grip on ball</li> <li>• If releasing correctly, ball should have topspin</li> <li>• End position of pitch should have the body facing the target with the toes of the throwing leg just behind and beside the non throwing leg</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
<p><b>GAME PLAY</b> (divide players into 2 teams; see handbook intro for details of play)</p>	28 minutes
<p><b>CLOSING GAME</b></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Base race</li> </ul>	2 minutes

- Set up:
  - Split group into 2 teams
  - Have one group line up at 1<sup>st</sup> base and the other at 3<sup>rd</sup> base
- How to:
  - Each player runs around the bases as fast as she can.
  - When player running returns to starting base, the next player runs around the bases as fast as she can. Repeat this until all players have run
  - Have a coach or helper at 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> base keeping the girls waiting to run safely off of the base while the other team's players are running past and getting each girl ready to run as their team member is getting close.
- Goal is to be the first team for all the players to finish running. If teams are uneven, some players may have to run twice for the team with less players.

## LESSON PLAN – SESSION 10

<p><b>WARM UP</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Simon Says <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Set up <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have players spread out about arm length apart facing coach in front</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ How to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coach calls out different movements (see below for details)</li> <li>• If Coach says “Simon Says” players are to begin doing the movement called out</li> <li>• If Coach does not say “Simon Says” players do not change the movement</li> <li>• Examples of movements to call out (taken from the AGSA coaches manual; Fastpitch warm up) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Butt kicks, high knees, mini skips, power skips, jumping jacks</li> <li>• Arm circles, lateral arm swings, trunk rotations, leg swings</li> <li>• Knee hug to front lunge and twist</li> <li>• Quad stretch and toe touch</li> <li>• Lateral shuffles, lateral cross-overs, jump with sprint</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>5 minutes</p>
<p><b>SKILLS</b> (divide players into 2 groups; rotate through stations)</p>	
<p><b>THROWING</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Activity: Around the Horn <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Focus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To improve accuracy of throw</li> <li>• To improve arm strength</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Set up: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Players have gloves on</li> <li>• Place one player at each base and at home plate. If there are more than 4 players in the group, have extra players pair up at a base or home plate</li> <li>• Player at home plate starts with the ball</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ How to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Player at home plate throws the ball to first base</li> <li>• First baseman catches the ball, pivots and throws to second base</li> <li>• Second baseman catches the ball, pivots and throws to third base</li> <li>• Third baseman catches the ball, pivots and throws to home plate</li> <li>• Repeat the above</li> <li>• If there are extra players at a base, players alternate taking turns receiving the ball and throwing it to the next base</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Coaches’ Tips: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For accurate throws, remind players to step at their target with the non throwing side leg and point the glove hand at the target</li> <li>• Encourage players to remember “thumb to thigh, show the sky, let it fly” for proper arm sequence</li> <li>• Remind players to use two hand when catching the ball</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>8 minutes</p>
<p><b>FIELDING</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Activity: Outside of glove catching <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Focus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To increase players eye-hand co-ordination and focus on the ball</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To promote two handed catching</li> <li>○ Set up:           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Players need gloves on</li> <li>• Players line up in single file, about 15-20 feet away from coach</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ How to:           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First player moves a few feet in front on line and gets into “ready position”</li> <li>• Coach gently rolls ball towards the player</li> <li>• Player tries to catch the ball between the outside of the back of the glove and the throwing hand</li> <li>• Player throws ball back to coach and moves to the back of the line</li> <li>• Repeat the above with each player</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Coach Tips:           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage players to keep eyes on the ball, before it leaves coaches hand and follow it through to complete catch</li> <li>• Remind players to move body in front of the ball when catching</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	8 minutes
<b>BATTING</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Activity: Front Soft Toss Drill           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Focus:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To improve eye hand co-ordination</li> <li>• To improve hitting mechanics while adjusting to different pitches through strike zone</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Set up:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set up home plate in outfield</li> <li>• Batter needs helmet and bat. Fielders need gloves on.</li> <li>• One player is at bat. One player is “on deck” ready with helmet on. Remaining players are in field to help shag balls</li> <li>• Tosser stands about 20 feet in front of the hitter with bucket of balls</li> <li>• IF YOU HAVE A PARENT VOLUNTEER TO HELP, YOU CAN SET UP 2-3 BATTING STATIONS</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ How to:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tosser lobs ball into the strike zone</li> <li>• Hitter swings and tries to hit a line drive</li> <li>• Each player hits 10-15 balls</li> <li>• After each player’s turn, she moves to the field to shag balls and another player from the field comes in to get ready for her turn at bat</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Coaches’ Tips:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Players should set up in proper starting position with the hands before ball is tossed. Be watchful that batter does not pull hands back at start of swing. First movement of bat should be hands and end of bat towards the ball</li> <li>• The batter’s head and eyes should stay locked on the ball through the point of contact</li> <li>• Encourage players to hit the middle of the ball, “cut the ball in half” with the bat</li> <li>• Encourage players to follow through with swing and not stop bat movement at ball contact</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	8 minutes
<b>GAME PLAY</b> (divide players into 2 teams; see handbook intro for details of play)	28 minutes
<b>CLOSING GAME</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Base race           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Set up:</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	2 minutes



- Split group into 2 teams
- Have one group line up at 1<sup>st</sup> base and the other at 3<sup>rd</sup> base
- How to:
  - Each player runs around the bases as fast as she can.
  - When player running returns to starting base, the next player runs around the bases as fast as she can. Repeat this until all players have run
  - Have a coach or helper at 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> base keeping the girls waiting to run safely off of the base while the other team's players are running past and getting each girl ready to run as their team member is getting close.
- Goal is to be the first team for all the players to finish running. If teams are uneven, some players may have to run twice for the team with less players.

# LESSON PLAN – SESSION 11

<p><b>WARM UP</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Activity: Head, shoulders, knees, back, ball             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Set up                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Group players into pairs</li> <li>• Players stand facing each other about 5 feet, with ball on the ground between them</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ How to:                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coach calls out the following:                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Head</li> <li>• Shoulders</li> <li>• Knees</li> <li>• Back</li> <li>• Ball</li> </ul> </li> <li>• When coach calls “ball”, players try to be the first to grab the ball</li> <li>• Player who does not get the ball does 2 burpees                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How to do a burpee:                         <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Start in standing</li> <li>○ Jump straight up, reaching hands to sky</li> <li>○ Squat down, placing hands onto ground</li> <li>○ Kick feet back into push up position</li> <li>○ Do push up</li> <li>○ Bring feet back in</li> <li>○ Return to starting position</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>❖ Stretch</li> </ul>	<p>5 minutes</p>
<p><b>SKILLS</b> (divide players into 2 groups; rotate through stations)</p> <p><b>THROWING</b> (for players aged 5 and 6)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Activity: One Step Back Partner Throwing             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Focus:                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To improve throwing technique</li> <li>• To improve arm strength</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Set up:                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Group players into pairs</li> <li>• Players have gloves on and 1 ball per pair</li> <li>• Players form two lines, facing each other about 10 feet apart to begin</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ How to:                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To begin, player with the ball throws the ball to their partner</li> <li>• Partner catches the ball and throws the ball back</li> <li>• If both players complete the throw and catch, both players take one step back and begin the drill again</li> <li>• Every time the players complete a throw and catch sequence successfully, they take a step backwards</li> <li>• If a poor throw or catch happens, players remain at that distance until they complete a good catch and throw by each player</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Coaches’ Tips:                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• After each catch, remind players to take a moment to grip the ball using the “C” grip</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>8 minutes</p>

- For accurate throws, remind players to step at their target with the non throwing side leg and point the glove hand at the target.
- Encourage players to remember “thumb to thigh, show the sky, let it fly” for proper arm sequence
- Remind players to use two hand when catching the ball

#### PITCHING (for players aged 7 and 8)

##### ❖ Activity: Pitching Progression

- Focus:
  - To improve pitching technique
- Set up:
  - Group players into pairs for steps 1-3, players pitch into fence for step 4
  - Players have gloves on and 1 ball per pair for steps 1-3. For step 4, each player should have 5-10 balls
  - Players form 2 lines with pairs facing each other, starting about 5 feet apart
- How to: (see session 9 for details of each progression)
  - Complete the following in order: Repeat each step 10 times
    - “wrist flicks”
    - 9 o’clock position, with no step or “T” position throws
    - 9 o’clock position, with step or “K” position throws
    - Full windmill (make sure players are pitching into fence for this step)
  - Before players begin full windmill, the coach should explain that once a player has thrown her 5 balls, she is to stand and wait to hear coach yell “all done”. At that point, the players can move to collect thrown balls and reset in pitching stance. Players can start pitching again once coach yells “start pitching”
- Coaches’ tips:
  - Make sure players are using correct “C” grip on ball to begin
  - Ensure players are setting up feet correctly on “pitcher’s plate”
  - Encourage players to remain in an “open position” or keep body perpendicular to target when moving through the “K” and “T” positions. If a player keeps pitching to the left or right of the strike zone, she is likely not moving into the open position and is bringing the arm around the hips instead of straight through
  - If a player keeps throwing pitches either into the ground or high into the air, look at point of release. Wrist flick and release should occur as throwing arm moves across the front of the throwing leg. If the player is releasing too early, the ball will hit the ground consistently and if releasing too late, will be throwing high pitches consistently

8 minutes

#### FIELDING

##### ❖ Activity: Fly ball Catching

- Focus:
  - To teach the proper technique for catching above the head
  - To increase players confidence with catching high balls
- Set up:
  - Players have gloves on
  - Line up in semi circle facing coach
  - Coach stands about 5 feet away from players
  - Players stand in ready position, except hands are up above shoulders at ear level, with fingers pointing towards the sky and thumbs pointing back. Hands should be on either side of the face as to not block vision

8 minutes

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use whiffle ball or soft tennis ball. If players are comfortable with catching above head, can begin using softball for this drill</li> <li>○ How to:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coach lightly tosses the ball just above the player’s head</li> <li>• Players tries to catch the ball using 2 hands</li> <li>• As players become comfortable with catching, the coach can begin to toss the ball higher</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Coaches’ Tips:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage players to be the “ready position” while waiting for the coach’s toss, keeping elbow in a relaxed bent position</li> <li>• Encourage players to keep their eyes on ball the entire time</li> <li>• Players should try to catch the ball in front of their head, not above or behind the head. This allows them to track the ball right to their hands</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
<p><b>BATTING</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Activity: Front Soft Toss Drill             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Focus:                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To improve eye hand co-ordination</li> <li>• To improve hitting mechanics while adjusting to different pitches through strike zone</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Set up:                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set up home plate in outfield</li> <li>• Batter needs helmet and bat. Fielders need gloves on.</li> <li>• One player is at bat. One player is “on deck” ready with helmet on. Remaining players are in field to help shag balls</li> <li>• Tossers stands about 20 feet in front of the hitter with bucket of balls</li> <li>• IF YOU HAVE A PARENT VOLUNTEER TO HELP, YOU CAN SET UP 2-3 BATTING STATIONS</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ How to:                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tossers lobs ball into the strike zone</li> <li>• Hitter swings and tries to hit a line drive</li> <li>• Each player hits 10-15 balls</li> <li>• After each player’s turn, she moves to the field to shag balls and another player from the field comes in to get ready for her turn at bat</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Coaches’ Tips:                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Players should set up in proper starting position with the hands before ball is tossed. Be watchful that batter does not pull hands back at start of swing. First movement of bat should be hands and end of bat towards the ball</li> <li>• The batter’s head and eyes should stay locked on the ball through the point of contact</li> <li>• Encourage players to:                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ hit the middle of the ball, “cut the ball in half” with the bat</li> <li>▪ follow through with swing and not stop bat movement at ball contact</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	8 minutes
<p><b>GAME PLAY</b> (divide players into 2 teams; see handbook intro for details of play)</p>	28 minutes
<p><b>CLOSING GAME</b></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Base race             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Set up:                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Split group into 2 teams</li> <li>• Have one group line up at 1<sup>st</sup> base and the other at 3<sup>rd</sup> base</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	2 minutes

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ How to:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Each player runs around the bases as fast as she can.</li><li>● When player running returns to starting base, the next player runs around the bases as fast as she can. Repeat this until all players have run</li><li>● Have a coach or helper at 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> base keeping the girls waiting to run safely off of the base while the other team's players are running past and getting each girl ready to run as their team member is getting close.</li></ul></li><li>○ Goal is to be the first team for all the players to finish running. If teams are uneven, some players may have to run twice for the team with less players.</li></ul> |  |
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## LESSON PLAN – SESSION 12

WARM UP	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Freeze Tag               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Set up                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Using cones, set up a playing area in the outfield</li> <li>● Have players spread out in playing area. Coach or parent can be “it”</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ How to:                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Coach quickly explains that for a “ready position in ball” we want <b>wide feet</b>. (demonstrate same- feet should be should be wider than shoulders, wide enough that another player can crawl through”</li> <li>● “It” chases players around the field. When tagged the players freeze and complete the following:                       <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● First game: when child is tagged, the player freezes in wide feet position. Other players need to crawl between legs to allow thaw frozen players</li> <li>● Second game: when child is tagged, the frozen player must do 5 jumping jacks before they are thawed and can return to play</li> <li>● Third game: when child is tagged, the player must balance on one foot for 5 counts to thaw and return to play</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>❖ Stretch</li> </ul>	5 minutes
SKILLS (divide players into 2 groups; rotate through stations)	
<p>THROWING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Activity: Catch- Pivot-Throw Relay               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Focus:                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● To practise a catch, quick pivot, and then a throw as quickly and accurately as possible</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Set up:                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Players have gloves on</li> <li>● Players line up in one line, each player is about 20 feet apart</li> <li>● Player at one end has a ball</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ How to:                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Begin having the players practise a slow-motion pivot to get into their throwing position. This will help players learn which direction they should be turning.</li> <li>● On coach’s signal, the first player in line throws the ball to the next player</li> <li>● The second player catches the ball, and then quickly pivots in order to throw the ball to the next player in line</li> <li>● Drill continues until the ball makes it all the way down the line to the last player and then back to the first player who threw the ball</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Coaches’ Tips:                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● After each round, rotate players so that players on the ends get a chance to practise their pivots in the middle of the line</li> <li>● Players should pivot so that the non throwing leg lifts and moves toward direction of target and player pivots on the throwing leg</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>FIELDING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Activity: Catcher’s shuffle               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Focus:</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	8 minutes

- To teach quick transition from catchers' ready position into blocking position
- Set up:
  - Players have gloves on
  - Set up 3 cones along outfield foul line
  - Players line up in single file by first cone
  - Players start in "ready position"
- How to:
  - Before starting drill, review catcher's "ready position" and have them practise getting into it
    - Squat like a frog
    - Trunk is forward
    - Weight in on the inside of part of the balls of their feet
    - Glove is in front of the body, with fingers pointing up to the sky
    - Throwing hand is hidden behind the back, with thumb tucked. This is to protect the hand from being hit and injured by a missed pitch
  - First player in line begins by shuffling side ways to first cone
  - At first cone, player stops and gets set into catcher's "ready position"
  - Coach gently rolls ball to player. Player shuffles if needs to get body in front of the ball. Once in position, player practises dropping to knees to block ball from rolling past and catches the ball
  - 
  - Player throws the ball back to coach then shuffles sideways to second cone
  - Above is repeated at the second and third cones
  - After the third cone, player returns to the back of the line and the next player goes
- Coaches' Tips:
  - In ready position, the bum should not be resting on the heels
  - Players should have their knees and shoulders square to the pitcher (coach in this drill)
  - Players should not reach for the ball and arms should "give" on impact
  - Players should watch the ball into the glove
  - To begin, coach should roll the ball at the player. As they become more comfortable, try rolling ball to the sides encouraging the players to get in front of the ball for the catch

8 minutes

## BASE RUNNING

### ❖ Activity: First base Decisions

- Focus:
  - To help players learn the technique of rounding first base
- Set up:
  - Players form a single line behind home plate
  - Cone is placed 15 feet in front of first base, about a foot outside of the first base line. Another cone is placed about 5 feet past first base, going towards second base
  - A sticker can be placed on the inside corner of the white bag at 1<sup>st</sup> base as a target for where to tag the base
  - Coach is standing beside 1<sup>st</sup> base in coach's circle
- How to:
  - Coach explains that a player would round first when the ball is hit to outfield and there is the potential of advancing to second base

8 minutes

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To begin, on coach's signal the first player in line will pretend to swing at a pitch, then sprint to 1<sup>st</sup> base</li> <li>• Before she reaches the cone, the coach will say "round it" to signal the potential for an extra base</li> <li>• The player will run wide around the cone and round the first base touching the inside corner of the white bag, coming to a stop in an athletic position at the second cone</li> <li>• Repeat with the next player in line</li> <li>○ Coaches' tips:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Once players have mastered the rounding technique, you can tell them to "go" to second base or "come back" to first</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
<b>GAME PLAY</b> (divide players into 2 teams; see handbook intro for details of play)	28 minutes
<b>CLOSING GAME</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Base race             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Set up:                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Split group into 2 teams</li> <li>• Have one group line up at 1<sup>st</sup> base and the other at 3<sup>rd</sup> base</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ How to:                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Each player runs around the bases as fast as she can.</li> <li>• When player running returns to starting base, the next player runs around the bases as fast as she can. Repeat this until all players have run</li> <li>• Have a coach or helper at 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> base keeping the girls waiting to run safely off of the base while the other team's players are running past and getting each girl ready to run as their team member is getting close.</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Goal is to be the first team for all the players to finish running. If teams are uneven, some players may have to run twice for the team with less players.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	2 minutes



## LESSON PLAN – SESSION 13

<b>WARM UP</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Position Call <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Set up <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have players stand at home base</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ How to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coach calls out different positions on the field. Players run to that position</li> <li>• When all players arrive to position, coach calls out a movement or stretch that players do <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Examples, see Airdrie Girls Softball Association Manual for more examples of dynamic stretches <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ At first base do stretches up, down, and side to side</li> <li>○ At second base, do shuffles between the bases</li> <li>○ At third base, do squats into ready position</li> <li>○ At pitcher mound, do arm circles</li> <li>○ At short stop, do quick feet</li> <li>○ Home plate, do upper body twists</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	5 minutes
<b>SKILLS (divide players into 2 groups; rotate through stations)</b>	
<p>THROWING (for players aged 5 and 6)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Activity: One Step Back Partner Throwing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Focus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To improve throwing technique</li> <li>• To improve arm strength</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Set up: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Group players into pairs</li> <li>• Players have gloves on and 1 ball per pair</li> <li>• Players form two lines, facing each other about 10 feet apart to begin</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ How to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To begin, player with the ball throws the ball to their partner</li> <li>• Partner catches the ball and throws the ball back</li> <li>• If both players complete the throw and catch, both players take one step back and begin the drill again</li> <li>• Every time the players complete a throw and catch sequence successfully, they take a step backwards</li> <li>• If a poor throw or catch happens, players remain at that distance until they complete a good catch and throw by each player</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Coaches Tips: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• After each catch, remind players to take a moment to grip the ball using the “C” grip</li> <li>• For accurate throws, remind players to step at their target with the non throwing side leg and point the glove hand at the target.</li> <li>• Encourage players to remember “thumb to thigh, show the sky, let it fly” for proper arm sequence</li> <li>• Remind players to use two hand when catching the ball</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>PITCHING (for players aged 7 and 8)</p>	8 minutes

❖ Activity: Pitching Progression

- Focus:
  - To improve pitching technique
- Set up:
  - Group players into pairs for steps 1-3, players pitch into fence for step 4
  - Players have gloves on and 1 ball per pair for steps 1-3. For step 4, each player should have 5-10 balls
  - Players form 2 lines with pairs facing each other, starting about 5 feet apart
- How to: (see session 9 for details of each progression)
  - Complete the following in order: Repeat each step 10 times
    - “wrist flicks”
    - 9 o’clock position, with no step or “T” position throws
    - 9 o’clock position, with step or “K” position throws
    - Full windmill (make sure players are pitching into fence for this step)
  - Before players begin full windmill, the coach should explain that once a player has thrown her 5 balls, she is to stand and wait to hear coach yell “all done”. At that point, the players can move to collect thrown balls and reset in pitching stance. Players can start pitching again once coach yells “start pitching”
- Coaches’ tips:
  - Make sure players are using correct “C” grip on ball to begin
  - Ensure players are setting up feet correctly on “pitcher’s plate”
  - Encourage players to remain in an “open position” or keep body perpendicular to target when moving through the “K” and “T” positions. If a player keeps pitching to the left or right of the strike zone, she is likely not moving into the open position and is bringing the arm around the hips instead of straight through
  - If a player keeps throwing pitches either into the ground or high into the air, look at point of release. Wrist flick and release should occur as throwing arm moves across the front of the throwing leg. If the player is releasing too early, the ball will hit the ground consistently and if releasing too late, will be throwing high pitches consistently

8 minutes

FIELDING

❖ Activity: Grounder goalie

- Focus:
  - To help players learn to move body in front of ball
  - To help players learn to catch ground balls
- Set up:
  - Create a “goal” using 2 cones spaced about 5-10 feet apart (can increase distance as players ability improves)
  - Players have gloves on
  - One player stands between the cones, acting as the “goalie”, second player stands about 5 feet behind the “goalie” as backup. Remainder of players make a single file line about 5 feet away from cones
  - Coach stands in front of goal, about 10 feet away, with bucket of balls
- How to:
  - Coach throws grounders toward the goal
  - “Goalie” must catch the ball with glove before it passes them
  - After “goalie” catches the ball, she throws it back to coach as quick as possible

8 minutes

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If ball passes the goalie, the back up player tries to catch the ball and throws it back to coach</li> <li>• After each grounder, the “goalie” moves to the back of the line, the “back up” player becomes “goalie” and the next player in line moves into “back up” position</li> <li>• Progression: Start with only forehand ground balls. Then only backhands. Then mix it up.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Coaches’ Tips: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage players to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Be in the “ready position” while waiting for the coach’s throw</li> <li>▪ shuffle side to side to get body in front of the ball for catching</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Players should use two hands to catch ball in glove</li> <li>• Encourage players to take their time to make an accurate throw back to coach</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
<p><b>BATTING</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Activity: Toe touch, Swing, and Hop <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Focus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To get players comfortable swinging the bat, while focusing on a target</li> <li>• To help players weight shift in swing</li> <li>• To help players learn how to push off after hitting, allowing for quicker exit out of the batter’s box</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Set up: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Group players into pairs. One player bats and one player retrieves balls</li> <li>• Each pair needs a bat, 5-10 balls, and a tee ball stand or pylon</li> <li>• Set up tee ball stands in a line, about 2-3 arm lengths apart</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ How to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Before players start hitting balls, the coach should explain that once a batter has hit all of her balls, she is to place the bat down and wait to hear coach yell “all done”. At that point, the player batting can move to the field and the other player can come in to bat</li> <li>• Batter lifts, tapping the toe of the front foot 3 times. On the third tap, batter swings to hit the ball, at end of swing does a hop straight up in the air</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Coaches’ Tips: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Players are encouraged to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ keep eyes on the target throughout their swing</li> <li>▪ lead with their hands on the swing</li> <li>▪ follow through after they have made contact with the ball. Bat should finish in the middle of the back</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Toe tap is a small lift of ground to just clear the toes.</li> <li>• Encourage players to “squish the bug” with back foot on swing through. This helps to rotate the hips, giving the swing more power.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	8 minutes
<p><b>GAME PLAY</b> (divide players into 2 teams; see handbook intro for details of play)</p>	28 minutes
<p><b>CLOSING GAME</b></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Base race <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Set up: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Split group into 2 teams</li> <li>• Have one group line up at 1<sup>st</sup> base and the other at 3<sup>rd</sup> base</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ How to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Each player runs around the bases as fast as she can.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	2 minutes

- When player running returns to starting base, the next player runs around the bases as fast as she can. Repeat this until all players have run
  - Have a coach or helper at 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> base keeping the girls waiting to run safely off of the base while the other team's players are running past and getting each girl ready to run as their team member is getting close.
- Goal is to be the first team for all the players to finish running. If teams are uneven, some players may have to run twice for the team with less players.

## LESSON PLAN – SESSION 14

<p><b>WARM UP</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Activity: Head, shoulders, knees, back, ball             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Set up                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Group players into pairs</li> <li>• Players stand facing each other about 5 feet, with ball on the ground between them</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ How to:                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coach calls out the following:                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Head</li> <li>• Shoulders</li> <li>• Knees</li> <li>• Back</li> <li>• Ball</li> </ul> </li> <li>• When coach calls “ball”, players try to be the first to grab the ball</li> <li>• Player who does not get the ball does 2 burpees                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How to do a burpee:                         <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Start in standing</li> <li>○ Jump straight up, reaching hands to sky</li> <li>○ Squat down, placing hands onto ground</li> <li>○ Kick feet back into push up position</li> <li>○ Do push up</li> <li>○ Bring feet back in</li> <li>○ Return to starting position</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>❖ Stretch</li> </ul>	<p>5 minutes</p>
<p><b>SKILLS</b> (divide players into 2 groups; rotate through stations)</p> <p><b>THROWING</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Activity: One Step Back Partner Throwing             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Focus:                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To improve throwing technique</li> <li>• To improve arm strength</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Set up:                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Group players into pairs</li> <li>• Players have gloves on and 1 ball per pair</li> <li>• Players form two lines, facing each other about 10 feet apart to begin</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ How to:                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To begin, player with the ball throws the ball to their partner</li> <li>• Partner catches the ball and throws the ball back</li> <li>• If both players complete the throw and catch, both players take one step back and begin the drill again</li> <li>• Every time the players complete a throw and catch sequence successfully, they take a step backwards</li> <li>• If a poor throw or catch happens, players remain at that distance until they complete a good catch and throw by each player</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Coaches’ Tips:                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• After each catch, remind players to take a moment to grip the ball using the “C” grip</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>8 minutes</p>

- For accurate throws, remind players to step at their target with the non throwing side leg and point the glove hand at the target.
- Encourage players to remember “thumb to thigh, show the sky, let it fly” for proper arm sequence
- Remind players to use two hand when catching the ball

## FIELDING

### ❖ Activity: Backhand Drill

- Focus:
  - To practise fielding the ball with a backhanded catch
    - Backhanded catch is when the player has to reach across their body with the glove hand in order to catch the ball
- Set up:
  - Players have gloves on
  - Players line up in single file
  - Coach stands about 10-15 feet in front of the line
  - Backhand catch position: Players stands in lunge position with the non throwing leg ahead and the glove hand reaching across the body. Glove is turned so that pocket is facing the coach
- How to:
  - First player in line gets into “backhand catch position” stated above
  - Coach throws a ground ball to backhand side of the player
  - Player catches the ball and throws ball back to coach
  - Each player takes 3 balls then returns to end of line
  - Progression: Player can start in fielders “ready position” and step into lunge position to make catch
- Coaches’ Tips:
  - Encourage players to keep eyes on the ball from when the ball leaves coaches’ hand right to the glove
  - As player catches the ball, encourage the player to move the gloved hand up towards throwing hand getting ready for the throw. With the movement, the player will step forward with throwing side leg

8 minutes

## BATTING

### ❖ Activity: One handed hitting (bottom hand)

- Focus:
  - To teach players to keep hands in correct position for hitting
- Set up:
  - Set up tee ball stands/cones along outfield foul line
  - Small hits at each batting station and a bucket of balls (5-10)
  - Players have helmets on
  - Players are paired off. One player bats and one player retrieves balls
- How to:
  - Before players start hitting balls, the coach should explain that once a batter has hit all of her balls, she is to place the bat down and wait to hear coach yell “all done”. At that point, the player batting can move to the field and the other player can come in to bat

8 minutes

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Player will position themselves in the batter's box on one knee (back leg) with forward leg out straight. The ball will be slightly forward of the raised knee on the lowered tee</li> <li>• Using just their bottom hand, player hits the ball</li> <li>○ Coaches' Tips:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• With bottom hand swings, have the player stop at full extension after they hit the ball, their palm should be face down</li> <li>• Encourage the players to aim the knob of the bat at ball when bringing hand towards ball</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
<b>GAME PLAY</b> (divide players into 2 teams; see handbook intro for details of play)	28 minutes
<b>CLOSING GAME</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Base race             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Set up:                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Split group into 2 teams</li> <li>• Have one group line up at 1<sup>st</sup> base and the other at 3<sup>rd</sup> base</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ How to:                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Each player runs around the bases as fast as she can.</li> <li>• When player running returns to starting base, the next player runs around the bases as fast as she can. Repeat this until all players have run</li> <li>• Have a coach or helper at 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> base keeping the girls waiting to run safely off of the base while the other team's players are running past and getting each girl ready to run as their team member is getting close.</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Goal is to be the first team for all the players to finish running. If teams are uneven, some players may have to run twice for the team with less players.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	2 minutes

## LESSON PLAN – SESSION 15

<b>WARM UP</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Simon Says <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Set up <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Have players spread out about arm length apart facing coach in front</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ How to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Coach calls out different movements (see below for details)</li> <li>● If Coach says “Simon Says” players are to begin doing the movement called out</li> <li>● If Coach does not say “Simon Says” players do not change the movement</li> <li>● Examples of movements to call out (taken from the AGSA coaches manual; Fastpitch warm up) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Butt kicks, high knees, mini skips, power skips, jumping jacks</li> <li>● Arm circles, lateral arm swings, trunk rotations, leg swings</li> <li>● Knee hug to front lunge and twist</li> <li>● Quad stretch and toe touch</li> <li>● Lateral shuffles, lateral cross-overs, jump with sprint</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	5 minutes
<b>SKILLS</b> (divide players into 2 groups; rotate through stations)	
<p>THROWING (for players aged 5 and 6)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Activity: Catch- Pivot-Throw Relay <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Focus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● To practise a catch, quick pivot, and then a throw as quickly and accurately as possible</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Set up: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Players have gloves on</li> <li>● Players line up in one line, each player is about 20 feet apart</li> <li>● Player at one end has a ball</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ How to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Begin having the players practise a slow-motion pivot to get into their throwing position. This will help players learn which direction they should be turning.</li> <li>● On coach’s signal, the first player in line throws the ball to the next player</li> <li>● The second player catches the ball, and then quickly pivots in order to throw the ball to the next player in line</li> <li>● Drill continues until the ball makes it all the way down the line to the last player and then back to the first player who threw the ball</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Coaches’ Tips: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● After each round, rotate players so that players on the ends get a change to practise their pivots in the middle of the line</li> <li>● Players should pivot so that the non throwing leg lifts and moves toward direction of target and player pivots on the throwing leg</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>PITCHING (for players aged 7 and 8)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Activity: Pitching Progression <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Focus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● To improve pitching technique</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Set up:</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	8 minutes



- Group players into pairs for steps 1-3, players pitch into fence for step 4
- Players have gloves on and 1 ball per pair for steps 1-3. For step 4, each player should have 5-10 balls
- Players form 2 lines with pairs facing each other, starting about 5 feet apart
- How to: (see session 9 for details of each progression)
  - Complete the following in order: Repeat each step 10 times
    - “wrist flicks”
    - 9 o’clock position, with no step or “T” position throws
    - 9 o’clock position, with step or “K” position throws
    - Full windmill (make sure players are pitching into fence for this step)
  - Before players begin full windmill, the coach should explain that once a player has thrown her 5 balls, she is to stand and wait to hear coach yell “all done”. At that point, the players can move to collect thrown balls and reset in pitching stance. Players can start pitching again once coach yells “start pitching”
- Coaches’ tips:
  - Make sure players are using correct “C” grip on ball to begin
  - Ensure players are setting up feet correctly on “pitcher’s plate”
  - Encourage players to remain in an “open position” or keep body perpendicular to target when moving through the “K” and “T” positions. If a player keeps pitching to the left or right of the strike zone, she is likely not moving into the open position and is bringing the arm around the hips instead of straight through
  - If a player keeps throwing pitches either into the ground or high into the air, look at point of release. Wrist flick and release should occur as throwing arm moves across the front of the throwing leg. If the player is releasing too early, the ball will hit the ground consistently and if releasing too late, will be throwing high pitches consistently

8 minutes

## FIELDING

### ❖ Activity: Fly ball Catching

- Focus:
  - To teach the proper technique for catching above the head
  - To increase players confidence with catching high balls
- Set up:
  - Players have gloves on
  - Players line up in single file
  - Coach stands about 10 feet away from players
  - Players stand in ready position, except hands are up above shoulders at ear level, with fingers pointing towards the sky and thumbs pointing back. Hands should be on either side of the face as to not block vision
  - Use tennis ball or softball (depending on players ability)
- How to:
  - First player in line, stands in ready position
  - Coach lightly tosses the ball in the air
  - Player moves to get under the ball and catches the ball using two hands
  - After catch, player throws ball back to coach and returns to the end of the line
- Coaches’ Tips:
  - Encourage players to be the “ready position” while waiting for the coach’s toss, keeping elbow in a relaxed bent position
  - Encourage players to keep their eyes on ball the entire time

8 minutes

- When moving to get under the ball, players can keep the glove beside them and then when in place bring hands into ready position to catch fly ball
- Players should try to catch the ball in front of their head, not above or behind the head. This allows them to track the ball right to their hands

## BASE RUNNING

### ❖ Activity: Second Base Decision

- Focus:
  - To teach players how to run from first to second and read base coach on advancing to third
- Set up:
  - Players line up in single file beside first base
  - Set up a cone 10 feet in front of second base and another cone 5 feet past second base, going towards third
  - Place sticker on the inside corner of the second base bag
  - Coach is standing at third base in coach's circle
- How to
  - Coach reviews hand signals with players
    - Stop: hands up, palms facing runner
    - Keep going: moving arm in windmill
  - First player sets up at first base, as if a batter was hitting
  - On coach's signal the player sprints to second
  - As player is running towards second base, she looks to coach for direction
  - If coach is signalling stop, the base runner stops at second base
  - If coach is signalling to keep going, she rounds second base and runs, stopping at third base
  - Runner at third returns to end of the line
  - Repeat with next player in line
- Coaches' Tips:
  - Encourage players to use proper running form, i.e., lean slightly forward, run on the balls of the feet, and pump arms
  - Encourage players to watch the third base coach and not the ball

8 minutes

### **GAME PLAY** (divide players into 2 teams; see handbook intro for details of play)

28 minutes

### **CLOSING GAME**

#### ❖ Base race

- Set up:
  - Split group into 2 teams
  - Have one group line up at 1<sup>st</sup> base and the other at 3<sup>rd</sup> base
- How to:
  - Each player runs around the bases as fast as she can.
  - When player running returns to starting base, the next player runs around the bases as fast as she can. Repeat this until all players have run
  - Have a coach or helper at 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> base keeping the girls waiting to run safely off of the base while the other team's players are running past and getting each girl ready to run as their team member is getting close.
- Goal is to be the first team for all the players to finish running. If teams are uneven, some players may have to run twice for the team with less players.

2 minutes

## LESSON PLAN – SESSION 16

<p><b>WARM UP</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Position Call             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Set up                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have players stand at home base</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ How to:                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coach calls out different positions on the field. Players run to that position.</li> <li>• When all players arrive to position, coach calls out a movement or stretch that players do                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Examples, see Airdrie Girls Softball Association Manual for more examples of dynamic stretches                         <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ At first base do stretches up, down, and side to side</li> <li>○ At second base, do shuffles between the bases</li> <li>○ At third base, do squats into ready position</li> <li>○ At pitcher mound, do arm circles</li> <li>○ At short stop, do quick feet</li> <li>○ Home plate, do upper body twists</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>5 minutes</p>
<p><b>SKILLS</b> (divide players into 2 groups; rotate through stations)</p>	
<p><b>THROWING</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Activity: Knockdown             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Focus:                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To improve accuracy of throw</li> <li>• To improve arm strength</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Set up:                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set up batting tee about 20 feet from start of player line (mark same with a cone)</li> <li>• Players have gloves on and one ball each</li> <li>• Place a ball on the tee (i.e., soccer ball, volleyball, beachball). For more advanced players, you can use a smaller ball (i.e., softball or mini soccer ball) on the tee to make it more difficult</li> <li>• Players are lined up in single file at cone</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ How to:                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Goal of the drill is for players to try and hit the ball off the tee with a square throw</li> <li>• First player in line throws the ball at the target</li> <li>• If player hits the target, she needs to run out and reset the batting tee with the ball for next player in line. Then returns to the end of the line</li> <li>• If the player does not hit the target, she should return to the end of the line and wait for their turn again</li> <li>• Players shag their own ball</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Coaches' Tips:                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For accurate throws, remind players to step at their target with the non throwing side leg and point the glove hand at the target.</li> <li>• Encourage players to remember “thumb to thigh, show the sky, let it fly” for proper arm sequence</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>8 minutes</p>

- To make the drill easier, have players move closer to the target

## FIELDING

### ❖ Activity: Infield Grounders

- Focus:
  - To practise fielding a grounder and throwing to first base
- Set up:
  - Players have gloves on
  - Place one player at each base, short stop, and at pitcher. If you have more than 5 players, pair up players at a position
  - Coach stands at home plate with bucket of ball
- How to:
  - Coach rolls grounder ball to pitcher
  - Pitcher fields ball and then throws to first base
  - After first base catches the ball, she throws it back to coach
  - Coach repeats this sequence throwing to second base, short stop, and third base
  - Last, coach rolls grounder to first base, who fields the ball. Second base runs to cover first base and receives the throw
  - After each player has had a turn, players rotate one position (i.e., first to second, second to short stop, short stop to third, third to pitcher, pitcher to first base)
  - Repeat the above
- Coaches' Tips:
  - Encourage players to move in front of the ball for fielding and to make complete catch before thinking about throwing the ball
  - Encourage players to take their time to make an accurate throw
  - Second base can practise covering first on all throws. To do this, second base runs to the outside of the foul line behind first base, and lines up with direction that throw is coming from

8 minutes

## BATTING

### ❖ Activity: Front Soft Toss Drill

- Focus:
  - To improve eye hand co-ordination
  - To improve hitting mechanics while adjusting to different pitches through strike zone
- Set up:
  - Set up home plate in outfield
  - Batter needs helmet and bat. Fielders need gloves on.
  - One player is at bat. One player is "on deck" ready with helmet on. Remaining players are in field to help shag balls
  - Tosser stands about 20 feet in front of the hitter with bucket of balls
  - IF YOU HAVE A PARENT VOLUNTEER TO HELP, YOU CAN SET UP 2-3 BATTING STATIONS
- How to:
  - Tosser lobs ball into the strike zone
  - Hitter swings and tries to hit a line drive
  - Each player hits 10-15 balls

8 minutes

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• After each player's turn, she moves to the field to shag balls and another player from the field comes in to get ready for her turn at bat</li> <li>○ Coaches' Tips:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Players should set up in proper starting position with the hands before ball is tossed. Be watchful that batter does not pull hands back at start of swing. First movement of bat should be hands and end of bat towards the ball</li> <li>• The batter's head and eyes should stay locked on the ball through the point of contact</li> <li>• Encourage players to hit the middle of the ball, "cut the ball in half" with the bat</li> <li>• Encourage players to follow through with swing and not stop bat movement at ball contact</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
<b>GAME PLAY</b> (divide players into 2 teams; see handbook intro for details of play)	28 minutes
<b>CLOSING GAME</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Base race             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Set up:                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Split group into 2 teams</li> <li>• Have one group line up at 1<sup>st</sup> base and the other at 3<sup>rd</sup> base</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ How to:                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Each player runs around the bases as fast as she can.</li> <li>• When player running returns to starting base, the next player runs around the bases as fast as she can. Repeat this until all players have run</li> <li>• Have a coach or helper at 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> base keeping the girls waiting to run safely off of the base while the other team's players are running past and getting each girl ready to run as their team member is getting close.</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Goal is to be the first team for all the players to finish running. If teams are uneven, some players may have to run twice for the team with less players.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	2 minutes

## LESSON PLAN – SESSION 17

WARM UP	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Activity: Head, shoulders, knees, back, ball               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Set up                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Group players into pairs</li> <li>• Players stand facing each other about 5 feet, with ball on the ground between them</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ How to:                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coach calls out the following:                       <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Head</li> <li>• Shoulders</li> <li>• Knees</li> <li>• Back</li> <li>• Ball</li> </ul> </li> <li>• When coach calls “ball”, players try to be the first to grab the ball</li> <li>• Player who does not get the ball does 2 burpees                       <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How to do a burpee:                           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Start in standing</li> <li>○ Jump straight up, reaching hands to sky</li> <li>○ Squat down, placing hands onto ground</li> <li>○ Kick feet back into push up position</li> <li>○ Do push up</li> <li>○ Bring feet back in</li> <li>○ Return to starting position</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>❖ Stretch</li> </ul>	5 minutes
<b>SKILLS</b> (divide players into 2 groups; rotate through stations)	
<p>THROWING (for players aged 5 and 6)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Activity: Around the Horn               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Focus:                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To improve accuracy of throw</li> <li>• To improve arm strength</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Set up:                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Players have gloves on</li> <li>• Place one player at each base and at home plate. If there are more than 4 players in the group, have extra players pair up at a base or home plate</li> <li>• Player at home plate starts with the ball</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ How to:                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Player at home plate throws the ball to first base</li> <li>• First baseman catches the ball, pivots and throws to second base</li> <li>• Second baseman catches the ball, pivots and throws to third base</li> <li>• Third baseman catches the ball, pivots and throws to home plate</li> <li>• Repeat the above</li> <li>• If there are extra players at a base, players alternate taking turns receiving the ball and throwing it to the next base</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Coaches’ Tips:                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For accurate throws, remind players to step at their target with the non throwing side leg and point the glove hand at the target.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	8 minutes

- Encourage players to remember “thumb to thigh, show the sky, let it fly” for proper arm sequence
- Remind players to use two hand when catching the ball

## PITCHING (for players aged 7 and 8)

### ❖ Activity: Pitching Progression

- Focus:
  - To improve pitching technique
- Set up:
  - Group players into pairs for steps 1-3, players pitch into fence for step 4
  - Players have gloves on and 1 ball per pair for steps 1-3. For step 4, each player should have 5-10 balls
  - Players form 2 lines with pairs facing each other, starting about 5 feet apart
- How to: (see session 9 for details of each progression)
  - Complete the following in order: Repeat each step 10 times
    - “wrist flicks”
    - 9 o’clock position, with no step or “T” position throws
    - 9 o’clock position, with step or “K” position throws
    - Full windmill (make sure players are pitching into fence for this step)
  - Before players begin full windmill, the coach should explain that once a player has thrown her 5 balls, she is to stand and wait to hear coach yell “all done”. At that point, the players can move to collect thrown balls and reset in pitching stance. Players can start pitching again once coach yells “start pitching”
- Coaches’ tips:
  - Make sure players are using correct “C” grip on ball to begin
  - Ensure players are setting up feet correctly on “pitcher’s plate”
  - Encourage players to remain in an “open position” or keep body perpendicular to target when moving through the “K” and “T” positions. If a player keeps pitching to the left or right of the strike zone, she is likely not moving into the open position and is bringing the arm around the hips instead of straight through
  - If a player keeps throwing pitches either into the ground or high into the air, look at point of release. Wrist flick and release should occur as throwing arm moves across the front of the throwing leg. If the player is releasing too early, the ball will hit the ground consistently and if releasing too late, will be throwing high pitches consistently

8 minutes

## FIELDING

### ❖ Activity: Grounder goalie

- Focus:
  - To help players learn to move body in front of ball
  - To help players learn to catch ground balls
- Set up:
  - Create a “goal” using 2 cones spaced about 5-10 feet apart (can increase distance as players ability improves)
  - Players have gloves on
  - One player stands between the cones, acting as the “goalie”, second player stands about 5 feet behind the “goalie” as backup. Remainder of players make a single file line about 5 feet away from cones
  - Coach stands in front of goal, about 10 feet away, with bucket of balls
- How to:

8 minutes

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coach throws grounders toward the goal</li> <li>• “Goalie” must catch the ball with glove before it passes them</li> <li>• After “goalie” catches the ball, she throws it back to coach as quick as possible</li> <li>• If ball passes the goalie, the back up player tries to catch the ball and throws it back to coach</li> <li>• After each grounder, the “goalie” moves to the back of the line, the “back up” player becomes “goalie” and the next player in line moves into “back up” position</li> <li>• Progression: Start with only forehand ground balls. Then only backhands. Then mix it up.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Coaches’ Tips: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage players to be the “ready position” while waiting for the coach’s throw</li> <li>• Encourage players to shuffles side to side to get body in front of the ball for catching</li> <li>• Players should use two hands to catch ball in glove</li> <li>• Encourage players to take their time to make an accurate throw back to coach</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
<p><b>BATTING</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Activity: Line Drive Contest <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Focus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To help teach players to swing with a line drive swing path</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Set up: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Divide players into two teams</li> <li>• One team is at bat, other team is shagging balls</li> <li>• Players batting have a bat and helmets on. Team in outfield has gloves on</li> <li>• Using cones, mark distances of about 20 feet, 30 feet,40 feet, and 50 feet from batter</li> <li>• Coach stands at pitcher’s mound</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ How to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Object of the game is to hit line drives into the scoring zone marked by cones</li> <li>• Each player gets 5-10 tosses</li> <li>• Every hit that lands in the scoring zone counts as a point</li> <li>• After both teams have batted, the team with the most combined points wins</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Coaches’ Tips: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Younger players can use tee stand to hit off</li> <li>• To make it easier to hit the ball, coach can stand closer to the batter for toss</li> <li>• Players should set up in proper starting position with the hands before ball is tossed. Be watchful that batter does not pull hands back at start of swing. First movement of bat should be hands and end of bat towards the ball</li> <li>• The batter’s head and eyes should stay locked on the ball through the point of contact.</li> <li>• Encourage players to hit the middle of the ball, “cut the ball in half” with the bat</li> <li>• Encourage players to follow through with swing and not stop bat movement at ball contact</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	8 minutes
<p><b>GAME PLAY</b> (divide players into 2 teams; see handbook intro for details of play)</p>	28 minutes
<p><b>CLOSING GAME</b></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Base race <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Set up: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Split group into 2 teams</li> <li>• Have one group line up at 1<sup>st</sup> base and the other at 3<sup>rd</sup> base</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ How to:</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	2 minutes



- Each player runs around the bases as fast as she can.
  - When player running returns to starting base, the next player runs around the bases as fast as she can. Repeat this until all players have run
  - Have a coach or helper at 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> base keeping the girls waiting to run safely off of the base while the other team's players are running past and getting each girl ready to run as their team member is getting close.
- Goal is to be the first team for all the players to finish running. If teams are uneven, some players may have to run twice for the team with less players.

## LESSON PLAN – SESSION 18

WARM UP	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Freeze Tag               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Set up                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Using cones, set up a playing area in the outfield</li> <li>● Have players spread out in playing area. Coach or parent can be “it”</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ How to:                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Coach quickly explains that for a “ready position in ball” we want <b>wide feet</b>. (demonstrate same- feet should be wider than shoulders, wide enough that another player can crawl through”</li> <li>● “It” chases players around field. When tagged the players freeze and complete the following:                       <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● First game: when child is tagged, the player freezes in wide feet position. Other players need to crawl between legs to allow thaw frozen players</li> <li>● Second game: when child is tagged, the frozen player must do 5 jumping jacks before they are thawed and can return to play</li> <li>● Third game: when child is tagged, the player must balance on one foot for 5 counts to thaw and return to play</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>❖ Stretch</li> </ul>	5 minutes
SKILLS WARM UP	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>one coach takes 2 players to the hitting station</b></li> <li>● <b>second coach runs through throwing and fielding drills with remaining players</b></li> <li>● <b>all players should take a turn hitting</b></li> </ul> <p>THROWING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Activity: One Step Back Partner Throwing               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Focus:                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● To improve throwing technique</li> <li>● To improve arm strength</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Set up:                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Group players into pairs</li> <li>● Players have gloves on and 1 ball per pair</li> <li>● Players form two lines, facing each other about 10 feet apart to begin</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ How to:                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● To begin, player with the ball throws the ball to their partner</li> <li>● Partner catches the ball and throws the ball back</li> <li>● If both players complete the throw and catch, both players take one step back and begin the drill again</li> <li>● Every time the players complete a throw and catch sequence successfully, the take a step backwards</li> <li>● If a poor throw or catch happens, players remain at that distance until they complete a good catch and throw by each player</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>FIELDING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Activity: Grounders               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Set up:</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	5 minutes

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Players have gloves on</li> <li>• Players line up in single file</li> <li>• Coach stands in front of line, about 10 feet away, with bucket of balls</li> <li>○ How to:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coach throws grounders toward the player at front of line</li> <li>• Player tries to catch ball and throws ball back to coach. Player then returns to the end of the line</li> <li>• Repeat with each player</li> <li>• Progression: Start with only forehand ground balls. Then only backhands. Then mix it up.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>BATTING</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Activity: Tee ball batting             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Set up:                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set up bow net and tee stand behind back stop</li> <li>• Players need a bat and helmets on</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ How to:                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One player sets up at tee stand and practises swinging, hitting the ball</li> <li>• Player hit 10-15 balls</li> <li>• After hitting, player returns to drills and sends another player to prepare for hitting</li> <li>• Player waiting then takes turn hitting, repeating the above</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	5 minutes
<b>GAME PLAY</b>	38 minutes
<b>CLOSING GAME</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Base race             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Set up:                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Split group into 2 teams</li> <li>• Have one group line up at 1<sup>st</sup> base and the other at 3<sup>rd</sup> base</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ How to:                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Each player runs around the bases as fast as she can.</li> <li>• When player running returns to starting base, the next player runs around the bases as fast as she can. Repeat this until all players have run</li> <li>• Have a coach or helper at 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> base keeping the girls waiting to run safely off of the base while the other team's players are running past and getting each girl ready to run as their team member is getting close.</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Goal is to be the first team for all the players to finish running. If teams are uneven, some players may have to run twice for the team with less players.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	2 minutes

Airdrie Girls Softball Association:

Airdrie **Angels** Fastpitch program

**March 2021**