

Session #15

~ Warm Up ~

UP AND AT 'EM

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

Time: 5 minutes

Equipment: N/A

How to:

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



TARGET PITCHING

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

Time: 10 minutes

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

How to:

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

~ Main Activities ~

QUEEN/KING

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

Time: 10 minutes

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

How to:

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

Tips/Modifications:

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

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

ADD 'EM UP

Learning Objective: Throwing

Time: 10 minutes

Equipment: 3 pylons, 1 ball, 1 bat

How to:

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

Tips/Modifications:

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

— *Modified Game* —

MODIFIED SOFTBALL GAME

Learning Objective: All softball skills

Time: 60 minutes

Equipment: Ball, bat, bases

How to:

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

Tips/Modifications:

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

Session #16

— Warm Up —

DEFEND

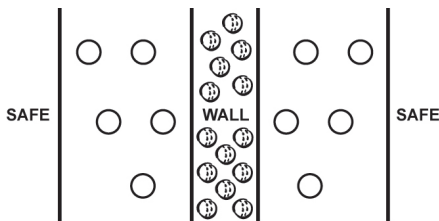
Learning Objective: Agility, quickness, running, teamwork

Time: 5 minutes

Equipment: Ball

How to:

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



GAME PITCHING

Learning Objective: Review the game pitching sequence and rules

Time: 10 minutes

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

How to:

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

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

— Main Activities —

THROW 'EM OUT

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

Time: 10 minutes

Equipment: 1 ball for every 3 players, 4 bases

How to:

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

HOT BOX

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

Time: 10 minutes

Equipment: 4 bases, 4 helmets, 4 balls

How to:

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

Tips/Modifications:

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

~ Modified Game ~

MODIFIED SOFTBALL GAME

Learning Objective: All softball skills

Time: 60 minutes

Equipment: Ball, bat, bases

How to:

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

Tips/Modifications:

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

Session #17

— Warm Up —

BRONCO TAG

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

Time: 5 minutes

Equipment: N/A

How to:

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



~ Main Activities ~

BATTER'S BONANZA

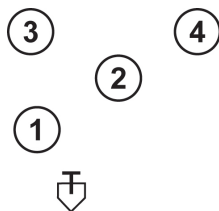
Learning Objective: Hitting, aiming for a target

Time: 10 minutes

Equipment: Hula hoops, batting tee, ball, bat

How to:

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



Tips/Modifications:

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

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

TRIPLE RIPPLE

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

Time: 10 minutes

Equipment: 1 ball for every 3 players

How to:

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

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

Tips/Modifications:

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

HOT POTATO

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

Time: 5 minutes

Equipment: 1 ball for every 3 players

How to:

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

Tips/Modifications:

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

~ Modified Game ~

MODIFIED SOFTBALL GAME

Learning Objective: All softball skills

Time: 60 minutes

Equipment: Ball, bat, bases

How to:

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

Tips/Modifications:

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

Session #18

— Warm Up —

GOTCHA

Learning Objective: Base running, determination

Time: 5 minutes

Equipment: 4 bases

How to:

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



GAME PITCHING

Learning Objective: Review the game pitching sequence and rules

Time: 10 minutes

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

How to:

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

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

— Main Activities —

PLAYERS CHOICE

Time: 10 minutes

How to:

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

PLAYERS CHOICE

Time: 10 minutes

How to:

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

*— Modified Game —***MODIFIED SOFTBALL GAME**

Learning Objective: All softball skills

Time: 60 minutes

Equipment: Ball, bat, bases

How to:

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

Tips/Modifications:

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