



San Ramon Valley Girls Athletic League  
2010 Red / Blue Coaches Clinic  
1/31/2010

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# San Ramon Valley Girls Athletic League

## Red / Blue Coaches Clinic - Stompers Practice

1/31/2010

### Practice Session with Coaches Clinic

<i>Time</i>	<b>Team Activities</b>	<b>Coaches Activities</b>	<i>Time</i>
1:00	<b>Discussion with team</b>	<b>Coaches Arrive &amp; Check-in</b>	
1:15	<b>Jog and Stretch</b>	<b>Introduction and Overview</b>	1:15
1:30	<b>Offensive Stations</b>	<b>Stompers</b>	
	Bunt	<b>ACE Certification</b>	
	Tee	<b>Online Resources @ <a href="http://srvgal.org">srvgal.org</a></b>	
2:00	Uniform Fitting	<b>Practice Planning</b>	
	Cage	<b>Rules - IFR - Obstruction -Interference</b>	
	Bouncy	<b>Dugout Skills</b>	2:00
	Shag	<b>Offensive Skills</b>	
		2 Phases - Physics & Geometry	
		Bunting	
2:30	<b>Throwing</b>	<b>Throwing Mechanics</b>	2:30
2:45	<b>Defensive Group (split)</b>	3 B's - Player Positioning	2:45
	EDD - Doubles	Defensive Coverages	
3:00	<b>Defensive Team</b>		3:00
	Runner on 3rd	<b>Demonstration</b>	
	Bunt Coverages	<b>Observation</b>	3:30
3:30	1st & 3rd	<b>Discussion</b>	
	Cutoffs		
4:00	<b>Conditioning</b>	<b>Adjournment</b>	4:00
	Dive Backs - Relays		
4:15	<b>Coach's Comments</b>		4:15
4:30			

## ACE Coaching Certification

ASA/USA Softball is proud to introduce the ACE Coaching Certification Program. The ACE (Achieve, Certify, Educate) Coaching Certification Program is a brand new certification program, developed and designed to provide softball coaches of all levels – from beginning coaches to experienced veterans – an opportunity to certify as a coach with a national softball organization.

As the National Governing Body of Softball, it is the ASA's responsibility to ensure that our coaches achieve a certain level of understanding of what their duties are as coach of a youth softball team. The ACE Certification videos and the ACE Certification Manual are practical guides to the everyday situations you will encounter as a youth softball coach. After obtaining your ACE certification, you will be well prepared to coach a youth softball team.



### The guiding principles behind the ACE Coaching Certification Program are:

**A-chieve:** A certain level of knowledge.

**C-ertify:** To confirm that a coach has obtained a level of understanding over that which he/she has been tested on.

**E-ducate:** To assist with the gathering of knowledge and information.

There are now more ways to become an ACE Certified Coach. Certifying as an ACE Coach is a simple, straight forward process. You can now complete your ACE Coaching Certification online at [www.registerasa.com](http://www.registerasa.com). You will watch the ACE video that corresponds to your certification level and then be tested on the material in the video. The videos cover such topics as Principles of Coaching, Legal Issues in Sports, First Aid, Practice Organization, Coach/Umpire Relations, and Sport Specific Skills. Once you have passed the ACE Certification test you are an ACE Coach and receive full ACE Benefits. It is that easy!

Here is a quick run through of the ACE Coaching program and how one would become certified and achieve the highest level of ACE Certification.

The first step to complete for any coach who is attempting to become certified using the ACE Online System is a profile lookup. If you are an existing coach\* who is coming to the site to complete another level of certification your profile should be located and you should be able to continue from the position that you left off. For example if John Doe has completed ACE Levels 1 and 2 in an ACE Clinic through its local association, when he looks up his profile the system will recognize this and make ACE Level 3 available for purchase and completion. For the system to properly find your coaches profile, you must enter your information (i.e. first name, last name, email address, zip code) exactly how you did when you registered. If you have moved since you last registered, enter the previous zip code under which you registered and then edit your information in the ACE Online System. If you are a previously registered coach and the system does not find your profile properly, DO NOT create a new profile which you will do in Step 2 on the ACE Online Program. Instead, contact the ACE Administrator at the ASA National Office. The administrator's contact information can be located on the ACE Website under the Contact Us tab.

If you are a first time ACE Coach or you have not certified through a local association in the last year, you will have to create a new profile and begin ACE Online Certification at Level 1.

Once your profile has been found or you have created a new profile here is what you will have to do to become an ACE Certified Coach:

#### ACE Level 1 Coach Certification

1. Register with the ACE Online program and purchase Level 1 Certification Video and test.
2. Successfully complete the Level 1 ACE certification exam (questions will be taken directly from the ACE Level 1 video). That's It!

**Benefits: Insurance coverage, certificate and ID card**

#### ACE Level 2 Coach Certification

After your first year of certification, you do not need to watch the ACE video again to re-certify. To stay an ACE certified coach for a second year you must:

1. Log-on to the ACE Online Program, purchase the ACE Level 2 Video and certification exam.
2. Watch the ACE Level 2 Video and complete the ACE Level 2 Certification Exam as you watch the video. That's It!

**Benefits: Insurance coverage, certificate and ID Card 3**

**ACE Level 3 Coach Certification** To be eligible for this level of certification a coach must have completed the ACE Level 2 Certification

1. Log-on to the ACE Online Program, purchase the ACE Level 3 Video and certification exam.
2. Watch the ACE Level 3 Video and complete the ACE Level 3 Certification Exam as you watch the video. That's It!

**Benefits: Insurance coverage, certificate and ID Card 3**

If you have any questions or comments regarding the ACE Online Coaching Certification Program please contact Joe Callaway.

## Web Links for Mike Candrea Videos

Hitting Video :	<a href="http://www.sportskool.com/videos/hitting">http://www.sportskool.com/videos/hitting</a>
Defensive Video :	<a href="http://www.sportskool.com/videos/infield-and-outfield">http://www.sportskool.com/videos/infield-and-outfield</a>
Base Running Video :	<a href="http://www.sportskool.com/videos/baserunning">http://www.sportskool.com/videos/baserunning</a>
Catchers Video :	<a href="http://www.sportskool.com/videos/catching">http://www.sportskool.com/videos/catching</a>
Fly Ball Video :	<a href="http://www.sportskool.com/videos/fielding-flyballs">http://www.sportskool.com/videos/fielding-flyballs</a>
Ground Ball Video :	<a href="http://www.sportskool.com/videos/fielding-groundballs">http://www.sportskool.com/videos/fielding-groundballs</a>
Receiving Throws Video :	<a href="http://www.sportskool.com/videos/receiving-throws">http://www.sportskool.com/videos/receiving-throws</a>
Throwing Video :	<a href="http://www.sportskool.com/videos/throwing">http://www.sportskool.com/videos/throwing</a>
Hitting Video :	<a href="http://www.sportskool.com/videos/hitting">http://www.sportskool.com/videos/hitting</a>
Pitcher Video :	<a href="http://www.sportskool.com/videos/pitcher">http://www.sportskool.com/videos/pitcher</a>



# 2010 SRVGAL Rules Matrix

## Red and Blue Divisions

	3rd / 4th Grade		5th / 6th Grade		7th / 8th Grade		High School Division
	Blue	Red	Blue	Red	Blue	Red	
Regulation Game in minutes	120 minutes	120 minutes	120 minutes	120 minutes	120 minutes	120 minutes	120 minutes
Regulation Game in innings	6 innings	6 innings	7 innings	7 innings	7 innings	7 innings	7 innings
Extra Innings if time permits?	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Game Ball	11" incrediball	11" incrediball	12" Leather	12" Leather	12" Leather	12" Leather	12" Leather
Baseline Distance (ft)	55'	60'	60'	60'	60'	60'	60'
Pitch Distance (ft)	35'	35'	35'	40'	40'	40'	40'
15 ft. 'Fair but Foul' arc	no	no	no	no	no	no	no
15 Foot Commit Line	no	no	no	no	no	no	no
Defensive Players	9	9	9	9	9	9	9
Pitcher	player/adult	player	player	player	player	player	player
Pitcher's limit per game	3 Innings	3 Innings	4 innings	4 innings	4 innings	21 outs/week	4 innings
Five (5) run/inn rule	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	no	no
Ten (10) batter/inn rule	no	no	no	no	no	no	no
Batting limits (excl. fouls)	normal	normal	normal	normal	normal	normal	normal
Stike Zone	TOS:BOK	TOS:BOK	TOS:BOK	TOS:BOK	AP:TOK	AP:TOK	AP:TOK
Bunting	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Dropped Third Strike	no	no	no	yes	yes	yes	yes
Lead Off Base after ball...	..X's plate	..leaves hand	..X's plate	..leaves hand	..X's plate	..leaves hand	..leaves hand
Base Stealing	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Stealing Home Allowed	N/A	no	no	yes	no	yes	yes
Ball-on-Infield Limits Runner	yes	no	no	no	no	no	no
Infield play:innings/game	1	1	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	1
Minimum def. dist. to plate	35 ft.	35 ft.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Minimum outfielder rule	no	no	no	no	no	no	no
Infield Fly Rule	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes



# Valley Stomper 12U

## Practice Schedule

1/10/2010

Normal Session				
Begin	Duration	End	Segment	Assignments
1:00	0:10	1:10	Jog and Stretch	
1:10	0:20	1:30	Throwing	Every Day Drills
1:30	0:05	1:35	Water Break	
1:35	0:40	2:15	Individual Defense	Separate Infield and Outfield 5-3 / 6-4 & 4-6 6 / 4-3 5-4 / 6-3 / Doubles
2:15	0:05	2:20	Water Break	
2:20	0:30	2:50	Group Defense	Between innings / after an out / Cut-offs - 1st & 3rd - Pick Offs - Bunt Coverage
2:50	0:05	2:55	Water Break	
2:55	0:45	3:40	Hitting Circuit	6 Stations - 7 mins rotation 3 min each player Shag - Bunt-Cage 1 - Cage 2 - Tee - Soft Toss - Bouncey
3:40	0:05	3:45	Water Break	
3:45	0:30	4:15	Team Session	Situations
4:15	0:10	4:25	Conditioning	Dive Back Drill - Relay
4:25	3:25	<=Duration	End Practice	
Practice Notes:				



## Two Phases of Hitting

### **Two Phases of the At-Bat**

Before you are up  
Showtime

### **Two Phases of the Swing**

Getting Ready  
Showtime

### **Two Phases of the At-Bat**

Before you are up  
Know her 3 pitches  
First pitch  
Go to pitch (2-0 or 3-1)  
Strike Out pitch (1-2 or 2-2)  
Gloves Helmet and Bat – get ready early  
Time your toe touch (in the on deck circle)  
Know your situation (runners on base)  
Know your job (the signal)  
Showtime – once your turn to hit is here

### **Two Phases of the Swing**

Getting Ready to Hit – some personal style is OK  
Have a ritual – Control the tempo of the at-bat  
Grip  
Box position  
Toe Touch – everything at or after toe touch should be the same for every hitter every time  
5 things you must have at Toe Touch

1. Front shoulder down and in
2. Hands are back to, or behind the rear foot and up at the top of the strike zone. Elbow up
3. Knees are bent with weight equally balanced, do not keep you weight back
4. Head is in the center of the body.
5. Upper body is separated from the lower body.



## Hitting Mechanics

### Grip

- Line up the middle knuckles (your “door knocking” knuckles).
- Grip the bat in your fingers, not with your palms. Hold the bat where your fingers and palms meet.



### Stance

- Have your weight on the balls of your feet in a balanced position.
- Point your feet straight ahead.
- Position your knees between your feet and bend them slightly.
- Keep your hips level.
- Hold your head and eyes level and still.
- Position the front shoulder slightly down with your front arm bent at 90 degrees.
- Let your elbows hang with them pointed slightly out with your back arm at 45 degrees.
- Cock the front shoulder and hip slightly inward.
- Hold your hands even with your back shoulder about 4-6 inches from your body.
- Your bottom hand should be at the top of the strike zone.



Good Bat Angle



Bat Angle too Flat



Bat Angle too Steep

### Load and Stride to “Toe Touch”

- Use a short, soft glide and land on the inside ball of your foot (your big toe)
- The front toe opens slightly and the hip stays closed.
- Do not move your head.
- Cock the front shoulder, hip, and knee slightly toward the catcher.
- Keep your weight on the inside of the back foot.
- Move your hands back slightly to the launch position.
- Cock your wrists.
- Focus your eyes on the pitcher’s release point







Good – Elbows Down



Bad – Back Elbow up



Bad – Front Elbow up



Bad – Barred Arm

## Swing

- Your lower body rotation will initiate the swing.
- As you hip rotate toward the pitcher, the back foot rotates to “squish the bug” allowing your hips to rotate fully.
- Keep both elbows bent and pointed downward.
- Drive the knob of the bat directly to the ball.
- Keep your hands inside and above the ball.
- The barrel lags behind, always above your hands.
- Keep the top of the bat close to your neck as long as possible to avoid casting out.
- Keep the front shoulder down, closed, and pointed at the ball.
- Keep your eyes focused very tightly on the ball, hit with your eyes.
- As your arms extend forward toward to contact the ball, drive your top thumb through the top half of the ball.



## Contact

- Keep your head and eyes down and very focused on the ball.
- Drive the barrelhead through the ball with the top hand.
- Keep your front side rigid and Strong.
- Swing hard, just in case you hit the ball.
- Transfer your weight to the inside of the front foot and leg.
- Your belly button will rotate and point to the contact spot.
- Point the back foot and toe at the front knee in an L position.
- Imagine a straight vertical line passing from your back ear through the shoulder, hip, and back knee.
- Watch the ball hit your bat.



## Follow-Through

- Your back shoulder rotates so that it will almost touch your chin.
- Your front foot will opens to 45 degrees and your front leg should be straight and firm.
- The bat carries around behind your body.
- Maintain balanced position.
- Finish with you back ear, back shoulder, and back knee lined up in a straight vertical line with a straight, strong, firm front leg.





## Bunting

Types of bunts

- Sacrifice Bunt
- Squeeze Bunt
- Fake Bunt
- Drop Step Bunt (right handed)
- Drag Bunt (left handed)



### Sacrifice Bunt

The purpose of a sacrifice bunt is to advance the runner or runners to the next base with the expectation that the bunter will be out. Basically, the coach is making a decision that they are willing to take an out in order to move a runner into scoring position.

The sacrifice bunt is usually used with runners on first or second or both with less than two outs. When given the bunt sign, the batter should bunt the next strike. Do not attempt to sacrifice bunt a pitch that is not a strike.

The sacrifice bunt requires the least movement of any bunt. The basic position of the bunter is at the front of the box so that the possibility of bunting the ball into fair territory is maximized and so that the ball will not bounce off the plate. Because the defense is anticipating most sacrifice bunts, the batter does not need to worry about turning early and giving it away. The bunter turns as the pitcher separates her hands so that as she is not moving when she is actually attempting to bunt the ball. Generally speaking, the bunter should attempt to bunt the ball into the soft spot between the pitcher and first baseman. This placement will minimize the possibility that the defense will be able to make a play on the lead runner.

Sometimes the sacrifice bunt can be used in combination with the base runner(s) stealing. When used in the bunt-steal manner, the runner will be going on the pitch and the batter bunts the ball. The batter's goal is still just to advance the runner. The advantage is that the batter does not have to worry as much about where the bunt goes because the runner has a head start on the defense. The disadvantage is that the batter must protect the runner even if the pitch is bad. The bunt-steal combination should only be used when the batter is ahead in the count and there is a reasonable expectation that the batter will be thrown a good pitch to bunt.

### Stance

The batter must be sure to keep her feet in the batter's box when she pivots to bunt. The bunter should have her weight on the balls of the feet with the knees slightly bent and a slight bend at the waist. A good balanced position with her weight forward will give the bunter the ability adjust to the pitch and even to get out of the way of a wild pitch.



When the pitcher breaks her hands, the batter pivots on the balls of both feet turning her belly button toward the pitcher. The bunter's shoulders and hips are open to the pitcher. The feet stay in basic open hitting position (forward-back) with the back foot moving a couple of inches closer to the plate for better balance so that she can cover a strike over the outside part of the plate.

## Hand Position and Grip

As the bunter pivots, she has two options for holding the bat. Some players prefer to use the **“Hand’s Apart”** grip and some players believe they have more control with a **“Hands Together”** grip. Players should try both hand position methods and decide which is more comfortable for them. The more skilled players should be encouraged to become proficient with the **“Hands Together”** grip.

As players become more skilled, they should move their hands together and try the pivot stance. The most important thing is for players to be comfortable and find out what works best for them.

In the **“Hands Together”** grip, the hands are together at the top of the bat grip with the top hand holding the bat loosely. This is the preferred grip for more capable players because it will allow the bunt to adjust to a slug, slap, or push bunt.

In the **“Hands Apart”** grip, the bottom hand grips the bat mid way up the bat tape with the knuckles up and the palm toward the ground. The top hand moves up the barrel to grip the bat above the tape as if to be shaking hands with the bat. The top hand grips the bat in the fingertips, away from the palm of the hand. This should leave a V-shaped space between the thumb and forefinger. The top hand serves to deaden the impact as the ball hits the bat and the hand acts as a cushion. The bottom hand acts as the directional control for the bunter.



## Bat Angle

The most important thing about bunting is to keep the bat at an angle and to strike the top half of the ball with the bottom half of the bat. If the bat is kept at an angle, it is almost impossible to pop-up a bunt as balls miss-hit to the top part of the bat will foul off to the side and not up where a fielder or catcher can make the catch. The bat head is angled upward at about a 45-degree angle, and the bat head is pointed slightly toward the pitcher.



*Good Bat Angle*



*Poor Bat Angle*

## Body Position at Contact

The bat is held in front of the bunter's chest and out in front of home plate. The elbows are bent, pointed downward at an angle, and slightly outside the body. The arms and shoulders are relaxed and free of tension. The batter must be careful not to reach and strike at the ball. Her chest and head are directly facing the pitcher with her eyes level at the top of the strike zone. When sacrifice bunting, the batter must never try to attempt to bunt a ball that is above her eyes which are at the top of the strike zone. At contact, visualize catching the ball with the bat, giving slightly with the bat and arms to soften the impact. Make contact with the ball in a manner that will help to deaden the ball.

To bunt a low pitch (that is still in the strike zone), the batter sinks at the knees to lower the entire body while maintaining the same bat angle as much as possible. She uses her knees to move the bat, and her body, up and down. As she lowers her hands and the bat, she makes sure that the bat head never drops below the hands.

## Control the Bunt Direction

The position of the bat when the ball contacts the bat will determine where the ball goes. Generally speaking, we would prefer that the ball be put into play on the ground to the first base side of the pitcher. This bunt positioning helps to minimize the possibility that the defense will be able to make a play on the lead runner.

If the bat is square to the pitcher, the ball will rebound directly back to her. The bottom hand is the control hand. By pushing the bottom hand forward (right handed bunts) slightly the bunter can direct the ball to the soft spot between the pitcher and the first baseman. When a right-handed batter pulls the bottom hand back, the bunt will go to the third base side. When the bottom hand is pushed forward, the ball will go to first base side.

The adjustment of bat angle is not really that critical at the younger levels. Right-handed batters who are just learning to bunt will find it much easier to bunt an outside pitch toward first and an inside pitch toward third base. For the best chance of success, younger players who are just learning to bunt should bunt the ball where it is pitched.

## Key Points for successful Sacrifice Bunting

- The bunter should set up in the front of the batter's box
- Pivot on the balls of your feet pointing your belly button toward the pitcher while moving your back foot slightly toward the plate.
- Keep your shoulders and hips open to the pitcher.
- Bend your knees slightly so that your eyes are at the top of the strike zone.
- Stay relaxed with your elbows outside the body with the elbows bent and pointed slightly downward.
- Keep the bat at an angle lowering your body to get to low pitches.
- Never let the bat head drop below your hands.
- Only bunt strikes.
- Try to get the Sacrifice bunt down in the area between the pitcher and the first baseman.
- When you see that the bunt is down and that ball is out of your running path, then run!
- Don't drop your bat on the ball. Make sure your bat ends up well clear of the ball.
- If the first baseman fields the bunt in front of you and is waiting to tag you, stop and force her to come to you to apply the tag, giving the base runner more time to advance. **Do not back up!** If you back up, the umpire will call the ball dead, will call an automatic out, and the runner(s) have to return to the bases they occupied before the bunt.
- Focus on running in the running lane in foul territory to avoid an interference call.



# Basic Defensive Skills

## Throwing Mechanics

### Lower Body Technique

- The throwing motion is initiated by taking a small step (Jab Step) with the throwing side foot.  
Foot points slightly outward to allow body to rotate and should land on or very close to the power line.
- Glove hand foot strides forward, landing on/or just short of the power line, but not across the power line.  
Stride foot should land on a 45 degree angle to target
- As the stride occurs, the body rotates. Hips and shoulders are now in line with the target.  
Note: If you concentrate on the proper placement of the stride foot, the proper body rotation will be achieved.
- As the throwing arm comes forward, the hips and shoulders rotate back to their original position.

*Drill:* Hands on Hips / 1-2 back to square • 1-2 back to square --- Do this all the way across the diamond, making sure the jab step and stride step are at a proper 45 degree angle and are landing on or close to power line.

### Upper Body Techniques

#### GRIP

- Two or three finger grip
- Pads of fingers on seams
- Thumb is directly below index' finger (if possible)
- Small space between thumb web and ball ("sneak a peek")
- You should be able to see the palm of the hand at release

#### RELEASE

- at release, wrist snaps straight down. Fingers should point down
- Ball rotation should be 1-7

#### Drill: Encourage Proper Release

- Ball in Throwing Hand
- Feet at 45 degree angle to target
- Hips and shoulders square to target
- Ball held in throwing hand at approximate release point
- Opposite hand supports elbow of throwing hand
- Flip the ball to a partner using only the wrist. Feel the ball "peel" off the fingers at release
- Look for the 1-7 rotation

### ARM SWING – Hand Side

- Gather position: Ball in throwing hand, inside glove, out in front of chest
- From gather position, the throwing motion is initiated by swinging down both hands as you separate the ball from the glove and take your stride and show the ball down ("Thumb to Thigh").
- As the arm swings up toward the throwing position, the elbow is bent forming an "L" at the top.
- The ball and the throwing hand thumb should be pointing away from the body to the side, not backwards!
- Pull the arm through with the elbow leading
- Maintain a non-stop circular motion. Injuries can occur by pulling the arm back, stopping the motion and pulling through to throw. Think swing-pull, not push-pull. As the arm passes the ear, the elbow is bent at 90 degrees and upper arm is no lower than the shoulder.

### ARM SWING – Glove Side

The glove hand is very important in determining the direction of the throw. It can help you in guiding the ball, providing power, or it can create problems.

- As the stride is taken, the glove arm breaks from the ball and the glove palm is extended toward the target with the thumb down and the elbow slightly bent. As the body rotates to throw, the glove is pulled inward toward the body to facilitate the body turn.

### Coaching Points

- Footwork - Right hander, R-L throw --- Left hander, L-R throw
- Stride must stay on power line
- Throwing arm maintains a continuous circular motion
- Elbow is bent at the top
- The ball points away from body
- Shoulders remain level through throwing motion
- Arm goes by ear at 90 degree angle
- Wrist snaps downward at release to create 1-7 rotation
- At release, back leg is slightly bent, front leg is straight



# Basic Defensive Skills

## Catching the Ball

### Lower Body Mechanics

- Move to the ball. Move your feet. Get your body in front of the ball to enable you to catch the ball slightly to the throwing side of the center of your body.

### Upper Body Mechanics

- Play with two hands. Catch and cover to protect the ball and facilitate the transition of the ball from glove to throwing hand.
- Position hands “thumb to thumb” for balls above the waist and “pinky to pinky” for balls below the waist.

#### Drills:

- Just Play Catch - Thrower aims for receiver's nose. Receiver moves body to receive the ball of the throwing side whenever possible.
- Wiffle Catch - With glove off, play catch with a wiffle ball. They will instinctively use the proper catching mechanic.
- Weakest Link - Each girl has a partner. Each pair has a ball. Start all balls at one end. On “Go”, each girl picks the ball up off of the ground and throws to a partner. Partner returns the throw. Set a predetermined number of times each girl must throw (about 5). First team to finish wins and is excluded from the future rounds. Keep going until you only have one group left. For lesser skilled players, just recognize the winner of each round, switch partners and do it again.
- Four Corners – Put three players at each base. Throw the ball around the bases each player takes one throw. As they get better you can have two balls going at once and have them follow their ball to the next base.



# Basic Defensive Skills

## Fielding Grounders

Softball games are a series of concentration and relaxation intervals. Players must be able to focus on every pitch during the game. They have to anticipate that every pitch will be hit to them. To do this, we suggest techniques to assist the player in concentrating when they have to and relaxing when they can. Imagine that they have a focus Hula Hoop on the ground where they play. Between pitches they can move outside the hoop and relax. When the pitcher steps on the rubber they must get back in their Hula Hoop. They must be 100% focus whenever they are in the hoop. Expect the ball on every pitch.

### THE READY POSITION

1<sup>st</sup> base and 3<sup>rd</sup> base

- Set up low. Glove is out in front of you to protect the line drive. The closer your are to the plate, the lower you get in your stance.
- Keep your feet mobile with your weight on the balls of your feet.
- Elbows are slightly outside knees.
- Hand and glove tilted slightly inward.

2<sup>nd</sup> base and Shortstop

- Set up taller than the corner infielders.
- Keep your feet mobile with your weight on the balls of your feet. Keep balanced very much like a tennis player ready to return a serve.
- Elbows slightly outside hips.
- Hands held at about thigh height.
- Be ready to move in all directions.

### MAKING THE PLAY

- Move to the ball. Get your body in front of the ball and get square to the ball whenever possible.
- Be on balance and under control as you field the ball.
- Establish a triangle and field the ball between but out in front of your feet.
- If you must field the ball with your backhand across your body, make sure you take a strong crossover step.
- Bend the knees with your back at about 45 degrees.
- Keep your hips lower than shoulders.
- Play the ball out in front with your hands at point of triangle.
- Eliminate unnecessary glove movements as you approach the ball.
- Keep glove fingers down and get your glove knuckles dirty as you receive the ball.
- Throwing hand on top or at the side of the glove.
- Play with two hands while moving your throwing hand to ball (not glove to throwing hand).



- Use your footwork: 1-2 field 1-2 throw. Incorporate the crow hop when you are comfortable.
- Keep your hands soft as you cushion the ball into the "gather" position.

*Drills:*

- Fielding Progression
  - Without ball or glove – practice the movement 1-2 reach and hold (hands are out in front) 1-2 throw.
  - Without ball or glove - 1-2 clap and hold (hands are out in front) 1-2 throw.
  - Without glove but with ball - Coach rolls ball slowly from about 20 feet (2 hands).
  - With glove and ball - Coach rolls ball slowly from about 20 feet (2 hands).
  - Total throwing motion drill - Coach rolls ball to player
- Side to Side Movement Drill
  - Coach is about 40 feet away. Roll ball to one side or the other. Player tries to get in front and "square up" wherever possible.
- Side to Side Movement with the Opposite Direction Throw
  - Coach about 40 feet away. Player at between 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> with another player at 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>. Roll ball to force movement. If the ball is rolled toward 3<sup>rd</sup>, player throws to 2<sup>nd</sup>, if ball is rolled toward 2<sup>nd</sup>, the player throws to third.



# Basic Defensive Skills

## OUTFIELD STRATEGIES

- On ground balls hit, causing you to turn your back to the infield, always throw the ball to your relay: SS - 2B
- On ground, balls hit in front of you within your throwing range, return the ball 2 bases ahead of where the lead runner started. Hit the cutoff if you don't have a play to keep the trailing runner from advancing an extra base. All throws to home should be thrown through the cutoff (1<sup>st</sup> baseman – 3<sup>rd</sup> baseman).
- On fly balls hit within the outfielder's throwing range:
  - Throw the ball 1 base ahead of lead runner
  - If you have runners on 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> and they do not tag up, throw the ball to your relay immediately or run the ball into the infield while watching runners.

## FLY BALL MECHANICS

### Lower Body

- Circle around behind the ball so you can square shoulders and hips to the ball
- Knees are slightly bent
- Glove hand foot slightly ahead
- Try to move your feet to enable you to catch the ball slightly to the throwing side of your body

### Upper body

- Fingers of glove and hand pointing up
- Elbows slightly flexed
- Run with your arms. Your hands and arms do not extend toward the ball until catch is about to be made.

### *Drills:*

- Wiffle Ball: Catch wiffle ball flies without glove. Promotes two hand catching
- Spin Drill: Player faces coach. Balls are thrown or hit. Player spins 360 degrees and finds ball again to make catch.
- Blind Catch Drill: Player stands back to coach. Coach throws a fly ball and yells "ball". The player turns, finds the ball, make the catch.
- Two Player Blind: Two players stand with their back to coach 40-50 feet apart. Coach throws balls in direction of one of the players and yells "ball". Players find the ball. The player closest to the ball calls it and makes the catch. The other player moves into a backup position.
- Angle of Pursuit Drills: Throw or hit balls to right or left of player. Player must take the correct angle to cut the ball off.
- Line Relay Drill and Race: Use your whole team (three teams of four players). Players line up about 30 yards apart. Balls start at one end and go to the other. Last player runs the ball to front of the line. Other players move to next station. The first team to get all of their players back to their starting spot wins.

**SRVGAL  
Executive Board**

**President**

**President  
Emeritis**

**Advisors**

**Non-Board  
Paid Administrator**

**VP - Program  
Development**

**Secretary**

**VP - Finance**

**Umpire in Chief**

**VP - Support  
Services**

**League  
Commissioner**

**Training  
Assistant**

**Trophies-Pictures**  
May be handled by  
Administrator

**Registrar**  
Eliminated by  
Administrator

**Field Alliance**

**10 Red/Blue  
Coordinator**

**Assistant  
Commissioner**  
optional

**Stompers  
Committee**

**Uniforms**  
May be handled by  
Administrator

**Sponsors  
Manager**

**Fields - North**

**12 Red/Blue  
Coordinator**

**6 White  
Coordinator**

**Tournament  
Coordinator**

**Webmaster**

**Corp Sponsors  
Manager**

**Fields - South**

**14 Red/Blue  
Coordinator**

**7 White  
Coordinator**

**A-Ball  
Coordinator**

**Publicity**

**Umpire Manager**

**Equipment  
Manager**

**18 High School  
Coordinator**

**8 White North  
Coordinator**

**B-Ball  
Coordinator**

**Special Events**

**Umpire  
Coordinator 10s**

**Umpire  
Coordinator 12s**

**Assistant  
Equipment  
Manager**

**12 White North  
Coordinator**

**8 White South  
Coordinator**

**National  
Organizations**  
ASA-NSA-USSSA

**Information  
Technology  
Database**

**Umpire  
Coordinator 14s**

**Umpire  
Coordinator 18s**

**12 White South  
Coordinator**

**10 White North  
Coordinator**

**Player Rating  
Committee**

**Snack Shack  
Manager**  
Eliminated

**14 White  
Coordinator**

**10 White South  
Coordinator**