

PHILOSOPHY

The goal of the Grade 2 League is to improve basic skills, introduce a more realistic softball game environment, and continue to have fun. Emphasis must be given to practicing skills the correct way so as the players improve, we will be able to play more meaningful games. Coaches should continue to focus on the following key fundamentals:

1. Teaching players to catch the ball properly (e.g., using 2 hands),
2. Teaching proper throwing form (making a “T” figure before throwing, stepping directly toward the target),
3. Holding the bat properly (e.g., hands together, front-side hand on the bottom, hands and forearms in inverted “V” formation),
4. Running the bases, and
5. Reinforce how to think about force-plays
6. Introduce the concept of cut-off plays

We are asking ALL COACHES, whether they are running a private practice or sharing the field with another team, to create at least 3 different SKILLS STATIONS during each session. The objective is to coach ~25 minutes of skills and drills at these stations, and then end the session with a 3-4 inning game. A good template for these stations would be the following:

- **Station #1.** 4-5 players working on grounders and force plays (in the infield),
- **Station #2.** 4-5 players working on catching regular tosses and pop-ups (in left field), and
- **Station #3.** 4-5 players hitting against coach-pitched balls (soft toss, in right field.....one batter, 1 on deck batter, 3 fielders chasing the balls)

You will need to find “creative” ways to keep them interested: How many can we catch in a row? Who can hit the bucket on a throw after a fielded ground ball? Who can hit the most balls in a row? You should always end your skill sessions with the girls “running the bases”. Provided that players arrive on time, your combined skill sessions/games should end no later than 1 hour 15 minutes. Good luck and keep it fun.

BASIC GAME RULES

1. All players who appear for the game will be included in the batting order. If a player arrives late, that player will be inserted into the lineup as the last batter.
2. There will be no stealing, no leading, and no infield fly rule.
3. It is the responsibility of the base runner to avoid contact with a fielder who is making or about to make a play. A runner must not collide with or run into a fielder in any situation. The runner must slide or attempt to avoid contact by running around the fielder.
4. The pitching will be done by coaches. Pitching will be done underhand from a distance of approximately 25 feet.
5. A half inning will end when three outs are made or when the team at bat has batted around (regardless of the number of outs). Coaches must announce the last batter when a team bats around. Both teams will bat around to the number of players of the team which has the

MOST players (i.e. if team #1 has 7 players and team #2 has 5 players, a bat around inning would be 7 players for each team).

6. A runner cannot advance on an overthrow. They can only go to the base that they were running to.
7. A game will consist of 3-4 innings and your combined session should end no later than 1 hour 15 minutes.
8. Any player who does not start in the field may not sit a second inning until all players who appear for the game have sat out one inning.
9. Fielding positions will be 1st base, 2nd base, 3rd base, shortstop, and pitcher (please make sure the pitcher is a safe distance from the batter and not blocked by the “pitching coach”). All other players should be spread out in the outfield (please do not place an extra infielder “on” 2nd base). No one will field the catcher’s position. All players should be rotated to give them the chance to play all positions.
10. Bat throwing is extremely dangerous and must be controlled. A player will receive one warning for throwing a bat and will be called out for a second offense.
11. Coaches must coach players to be aggressive at bat. **We need to have the players swing at all good pitches and attempt to put the ball in play.**