

USE THE LAWS OF SUCCESS.....

*ALWAYS TAKE THE OPTIMISTIC OUTLOOK

*BANISH ALL GLOOM AND NEGATIVITY

*EXPRESS GRATITUDE FOR EVERYTHING

*STAY FOCUSED ON WHAT YOU WANT

*KEEP YOUR BELIEFS, THOUGHTS, FEELINGS, AND ACTIONS
POSITIVE

- I. DEVELOP A MISSION
 - A. YEAR/SEASON/MONTH/WEEK/TODAY
 - B. REVIEW IT OFTEN
 - C. MAKE CHANGES WHEN NEEDED

- II. CONSIDERATIONS
 - A. FACILITIES
 - B. WEATHER
 - C. EQUIPMENT
 - D. PERSONNEL
 - E. # OF PLAYERS
 - F. TIME

- III. GUIDELINES IN DEVELOPING A PLAN
 - A. AREAS OF CONCENTRATION
 - 1. STRENGTH AND CONDITIONING
 - 2. MENTAL TRAINING
 - 3. INDIVIDUAL FUNDAMENTAL SKILLS (INCLUDES P/C'S)
 - 4. TEAM STRATEGIES

 - B. HELPFUL HINTS
 - 1. PRE/POST/IN-SEASON: THIS WILL DETERMINE THE AMOUNT OF TIME DEVOTED TO EACH OF THE ABOVE AREAS.
 - 2. NEEDS OF YOUR TEAM: THIS CHANGES YEARLY/SEASONALLY/WEEKLY/DAILY CONTINUE TO EVALUATE/REVIEW MISSION AND GOALS. BE SURE TO MAKE ADJUSTMENTS WHEN NEEDED.
 - 3. ALLOW FOR OVERLAP FROM PRACTICE TO PRACTICE.
 - 4. COUNT TOTAL NUMBER OF PRACTICES BEFORE YOUR FIRST CONTEST. WORK BACKWARDS/DECIDE WHAT SKILLS WILL BE COVERED IN EACH PRACTICE.
 - 5. PRIORITIZE: IT WILL BE DIFFICULT TO GET EVERYTHING DONE
 - 6. FORM A ROUTINE: YOUR TEAM WILL NEED A COMFORT ZONE. IT IS ALSO OKAY TO BE CREATIVE AND MAKE "SPECIAL ADDITIONS" TO PRACTICE.
 - 7. WORK CONDITIONING INTO DRILLS AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE.
 - 8. QUALITY TIME FOR EACH PLAYER=QUALITY EFFORT FOR EACH PLAYER.
 - 9. DON'T ASK A PLAYER TO DO SOMETHING IN A GAME SHE HASN'T PRACTICED
 - 10. SET THE TONE AT THE BEGINNING AND END OF PRACTICE.

 - C. WAYS TO STRUCTURE INSTRUCTION
 - 1. STATION WORK
 - 2. SMALL GROUPS (I.E. MIDDLE INFIELD/CATCHERS)
 - 3. TEAM 1 ON DEFENSE/TEAM 2 ON OFFENSE (ROTATE)
 - 4. DEFENSIVE TEAM WORK DEFENSE STATIONS/REST ON OFFENSIVE STATIONS (ROTATE)

PRACTICE COMPOSITION

1. OFF-SEASON
 - A. STRENGTH AND CONDITIONING
 - 5 HOURS A WEEK
 - INCORPORATES THE FOLLOWING
 - NUTRITION
 - FLEXIBILITY
 - WEIGHT LIFTING
 - ENDURANCE
 - SPEED AND AGILITY
 - B. INDIVIDUAL INSTRUCTION
 - 2 HOURS A WEEK TOTAL FOR EACH PLAYER
 - INDIVIDUAL SOFTBALL FUNDAMENTAL TRAINING
 - POSITIONAL PLAY
2. PRE-SEASON
 - A. HIGH VOLUME OF INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT DRILLS
 - INCORPORATE CONDITIONING DRILLS
 - A LOT OF STATION WORK (6-8 MIN. ROTATION)
 - PARTNER DRILLS
 - IF THERE ARE MORE THAN 3 PEOPLE AT A STATION 3 BALLS THEN ROTATE
 - SHOULD ALWAYS HAVE SOMETHING TO DO!!! "10 BEST FRIENDS"
 - B. GAME SPEED
 - DRILLS DONE AT GAME SPEED
 - MAKE DRILLS COMPETITIVE
 - COUNT # OF REPETITIONS
 - C. 2 WEEKS BEFORE COMPETITION
 - MUST SPEND AT LEAST ½-45 MIN. OF PRACTICE ON GAME SITUATIONS
 - WORK CONTROLLED SCRIMMAGES
 - D. STRENGTH AND CONDITIONING PROGRAM
3. IN SEASON
 - A. INDIVIDUAL PLANS
 - WORK ON PLAYERS SPECIFIC NEEDS
 - B. SITUATIONAL PLAY
 - C. MAINTENANCE STRENGTH AND CONDITIONING PROGRAM

MAKING THE LINE-UP

Part of a coach's responsibility is to put the most effective line-up on the field. In order to generate a consistent offensive attack the line-up has to be a threat one through nine. This takes getting to know what each and every one of your players has to offer.

Practices should be set up so each player has the opportunity to show what she can offer to the line up. Station work is always a great way to have quality repetition, view a player's work ethic, ability to make adjustments quickly/effectively, and self-motivation.

After this a controlled scrimmage situation is ideal to view the players abilities during a game situation. Set it up where you can put runners on, bunt situations, hit and run, scoring from various bases and so on. If you can get a couple of real umpires to work the scrimmage it can make it even more realistic. If you are having difficulty figuring out where to hit someone in the line-up mix it up a bit and give them the opportunity (at game speed) to work out.

Things to consider when making your line-up:

- 1- leadoff:** person who gets on base the most; not worried about how she gets on, has above average speed, disciplined and good game sense
- 2- best at moving the runner:** person who has a good eye (discipline), can hit behind the runner, patient, ideally a lefty (slapper)
- 3- extra base hitter:** someone who is not afraid to swing a bat, consistent high batting average, aggressive and smart
- 4- power hitter:** good contact, power to all fields, not afraid to swing the bat
- 5- similar to #4:** this hitter should compliment the number 4 hitter, she needs to be a threat at the plates, to help #4 hitter get better pitches to hit
- 6- speed and contact:** good time for another lefty that know how to get on base
- 7- speed and contact:** same
- 8- weakest hitter:** find a way to make this hitter still be a productive part of your lineup

9- like a leadoff:

similar to #1, a triple threat; good speed, good bat, good sense, gets on anyway she can

With the above mention in mind it is a good idea to try and put together a consistent line-up through effective practices. Making a change every other game in the order does not help in the confidence level of the hitter. But, on the other hand if a player has been given opportunity to perform and is having difficulty getting the job done a change must be made.

Sometimes finding the winning combination is a challenging task, but once you find it there will be great rewards.

COACHING THE BASES:

Getting your players familiar with the signals and coaches begins at practice. It takes no extra time...just a little bit of structure. It is a good idea to go over signals and verbal cues at some point in practice. Make it a challenge for the team (a game) consequences if they are incorrect and rewards if they get it right. If you incorporate a controlled live situation at the end of your practice this will give you a “game speed” situation and make it more realistic for the players.

Players comfortable with the signals and verbal commands of the coaches will increase your scoring productivity and decrease your headaches! Hesitation usually comes with doubt or not knowing. So, time spent in practice working on these offensive and base running strategies is time well spent.

COMMON COMMANDS (WILL VARY DEPENDING ON COACHES STYLE)

Hit it -	hand and arm gesture to the ground
Round and look (hold) -	twirl one hand in circle and the other in a halt gesture
Run thru -	coach moves down the coaching box pointing through the base
Go -	coach pointing to the next base (go 2, go 3, go 4)
On the base -	coach point to base
Back -	means get back quickly
Pick -	pick means stay on the base (no lead)
Tag -	coach gesture to tag up at the base and tells player to go or fake it
Fake it -	player takes a good hard lead off the base to draw a throw

HELPFUL TIPS

First Base Coach:

1. If there isn't a full time assistant coach use the same player whenever possible (you might have 2)
2. This will help runners and first base coach be more comfortable
3. With nobody on stand towards the plate and guide the runner down the line
4. Use commands listed above
5. Verbal commands should be short and crisp/say them at least twice

6. Gestures should be obvious and clear (be big and visible)
7. TRY TO PICK UP CATCHERS SIGNALS
8. Make sure you get the sign from the 3b coach early – get the runner to be watching early as well
9. Make sure you communicate to the runner the number of outs and situation to runner

Third Base Coach:

1. Give signs to batter base runner in a clear manner
2. Must pick runner up at 2b (move up the coaching box towards the outfield)
3. Try to stay in front of the runner until released to home (visible)
4. Verbal commands should be short and crisp (say them at least twice)
5. Use commands listed above
6. Gestures should be obvious and clear (be big and visible)
7. Try to pick up catchers signs
8. Make sure you give signs early and often to batter and base runner
9. Make sure you communicate number of outs and situation to the batter and runner

On deck player (play at the plate):

1. Be paying attention
2. be visible to the runner coming home
3. Stay out of the way of the play
4. Use commands listed above
5. Gesture and verbal command for runner to slide or stay up

CHARACTERISTICS OF SUCCESSFUL PLAYERS

Courage

Dedication

Fun

Enjoyment

Focus

Composure

Pride

Relentlessness

Integrity

Desire to learn

Confidence

Commitment

Honesty

Sportsmanship

Unselfishness

Mental toughness

Leadership

Concentration

Tenacity

Consistency

Love of the game

Respect for the game

WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO ACCOMPLISH IN SOFTBALL?

To get clear on what you want to accomplish in softball, respond to the following series of questions. While writing, remember the following guidelines:

1. **HAVE A DREAM.** And think about it often! What you spend your time thinking about often happens.
2. **MAKE YOUR GOALS SPECIFIC AND MEASURABLE.** Specific goals create clearer images. Ask yourself HOW you'll know when you've reached a goal. If your goal is "to be dedicated" for the season, you would first have to define what dedication means to you and list some things that a dedicated player does. Throughout the season, rate yourself each week on a 1-to-10 scale to see how well you did those things.
3. **MAKE GOALS DIFFICULT BUT ATTAINABLE.** A goal that seems unreachable doesn't motivate!
4. **STATE YOUR GOALS IN A POSITIVE WAY.** Word your goal so it projects the outcome you want to achieve, not those you want to avoid.
5. **FOCUS ON THE PROCESS** of what it will take to be successful rather than the final outcome of success. "I will control my mental game at a 9 level throughout my at-bats this game" vs. "I will go 3 for 3.:"
6. **ADJUST YOUR GOALS WHEN NECESSARY.** Change a goal if you achieve it or it becomes clear you can't reach it.

Questions:

1. What is/are your dream goals for your softball career?
2. What is/are your more "realistic" goals for your career?
3. What are your foals for this season?
4. What are your goals for this week?
5. If you don't accomplish these goals, would you be able to like yourself as a person? Why?

SOFTBALL TERMS

- 1. APPEAL PLAY -** **PLAY UPON WHICH AN UMPIRE CANNOT MAKE A DECISION UNTIL REQUESTED BY A PLAYER OR COACH: THE APPEAL MUST BE MADE BEFORE THE NEXT PITCH.**

- 2. ASSIST -** **CREDIT GIVEN TO A FIELDER WHO HELPS MAKE A PLAY THAT PUTS A RUNNER OUT.**

- 3. BACKUP -** **MOVE IN BEHIND A BASE OR PLAY SO YOU CAN GET THE BALL IF IT GOES PASSED THE DEFENSIVE PLAYER IT WAS MEANT FOR.**

- 4. BASE PATH -** **AN IMAGINARY LINE THREE FEET TO EITHER SIDE OF A DIRECT LINE BETWEEN THE BASES.**

- 5. BLOCKED BALL -** **A “DEAD BALL” WHICH HAS BEEN TOUCHED BY A NON-PLAYER, OR WHICH HAS TOUCHED AN OBJECT NOT PART OF THE PLAYING AREA.**

- 6. CATCHER’S BOX -** **AREA WITHIN WHICH THE CATCHER MUST STAND WHILE AND UNTIL THE PITCHER RELEASES THE BALL.**

- 7. CHECK & THROW -** **LOOK AT THE RUNNER (WHO IS NOT FORCED) TO KEEP HER FROM ADVANCING TO THE NEXT BASE/BEFORE YOU THROW TO FIRST FOR THE OUT.**

- 8. COVER -** **WHEN A DEFENSIVE PLAYER MOVES TO AN EMPTY BASE TO KEEP A BASE RUNNER FROM ADVANCING.**

- 9. CUT OFF -** **INFIELDER WHO GETS INTO POSITION TO INTERCEPT A THROW FROM THE OUTFIELDER.**

- 10. DEAD BALL -** **A BALL IS DEAD WHEN (1) IT HAS GONE OUT OF PLAY (2) BECOMES BLOCKED (3) THE UMPIRE CALLED TIME.**

- 11. EIGHT FT. CIRCLE - AREA WHERE THE PITCHER PITCHES. WHEN THE DEFENSIVE TEAM HAS POSSESSION OF THE BALL IN THIS AREA THE RUNNERS MUST RETURN TO THEIR BASE OR ADVANCE TO THE NEXT BASE. IF THIS DOESN'T HAPPEN THEY WILL BE OUT.**
- 12. FAIR BALL - A BALL WHICH SETTLES ON FAIR TERRITORY OR WHICH STAYS ON FAIR TERRITORY UNTIL IT PASSES FIRST OR THIRD BASE.**
- 13. FAIR TERRITORY - PART OF THE PLAYING FIELD WITHIN AND INCLUDING THE FIRST AND THIRD BASE FOUL LINES AND HOME BASE.**
- 14. FORCE OUT - TO PUT OUT A RUNNER BY TOUCHING THE NEXT BASE WHEN THE RUNNER MUST RUN BECAUSE THERE ARE NO EMPTY BASES FOR THE RUNNERS BEHIND HIM/HER.**
- 15. FOUL TIP - GOES DIRECTLY FROM THE BAT, NOT HIGHER THAN THE BATTER'S HEAD, TO THE CATCHER'S HANDS AND IS CAUGHT. IT IS A STRIKE (EVEN IF IT IS THE THIRD STRIKE) AND THE BALL IS IN PLAY.**
- 16. FUNGO - SOFTBALL TERM USED TO DESCRIBE A GROUND BALL OR A FLY BALL WHICH IS USED FOR PRACTICE.**
- 17. "TURN TWO" - MAKE A DOUBLE PLAY.**
- 18. HIT AND RUN - OFFENSIVE STRATEGY IN WHICH THE RUNNER TAKES OFF FOR THE NEXT BASE ON THE PITCH AND THE BATTER MUST HIT THE NEXT PITCH ON THE GROUND.**
- 19. "HIT IT" - TERM USED TO TELL A PERSON TO SLIDE.**
- 20. INFIELD - PORTION OF THE FIELD COVERED BY INFIELERS PLAYING THEIR NORMAL POSITIONS. (SOFTBALL: THE INFIELD IS ALL DIRT OR "SKINNED")**

- 21. INFIELD FLY RULE - IF THERE ARE RUNNERS ON 1ST AND 2ND, 2ND AND 3RD AND THERE ARE LESS THAN 2 OUTS THIS RULE IS IN EFFECT. THE BATTER IS OUT IF SHE HITS A FAIR FLY BALL PLAYABLE BY THE INFIELDBERS.**
- 22. INTERFERENCE - AN ACT OF AN OFFENSIVE PLAYER WHICH IMPEDES, HINDERS OR CONFUSES A DEFENSIVE PLAYER EXCEPT CATCHER'S INTERFERENCE CATCHER HINDERS OR PREVENTS A BATTER FROM HITTING A PITCHED BALL.**
- 23. LEAD - TO MOVE OFF THE BASE BEFORE THE BALL IS PITCHED.**
- 24. OBSTRUCTION - WHEN A DEFENSIVE PLAYER WITHOUT THE BALL IMPEDES THE PROGRESS OF A BASE RUNNER.**
- 25. OVERTHROW - THE BALL GOES PAST THE PLAYER YOU WERE THROWING TO (USUALLY INTO FOUL TERRITORY).**
- 26. OUT OF THE BOX - BATTER'S FOOT IS COMPLETELY OUT OF THE BATTER'S BOX WHILE HITTING THE BALLS.**
- 27. "PEPPER" - A WARM-UP OR DRILL. ONE BATTER, AND 3 OR 4 FIELDBERS IN A SEMI-CIRCLE ABOUT 15 FEET AWAY. FIELDBERS TOSS A BALL UNDERHANDED TO BATTER. BATTER WITH A HALF SWING HITS OR CHOPS THE BALL TO THE FIELDBERS.**
- 28. R.B.I. - RUNS BATTED IN.**
- 29. QUICK PITCH - PITCH WHICH IS THROWN BEFORE THE BATTER IS READY.**
- 30. RUN DOWN (PICKLE) WHEN A BASE RUNNER GETS CAUGHT BETWEEN TWO BASES.**
- 31. SACRIFICE FLY - A LONG FLY BALL WHICH SCORES A RUNNER, EVEN THOUGH IT IS CAUGHT.**
- 32. STEAL - ADVANCING TO THE NEXT BASE DURING A PITCH.**

- 33. DELAY STEAL - ADVANCING TO THE NEXT BASE WHILE THE CATCHER IS THROWING THE BALL BACK TO THE PITCHER.**
- 34. SLIDE - GOING INTO A BASE, NOT STANDING UP, SO AS TO AVOID A TAG OR DISTRACT A FIELDER.**
- 35. SUICIDE SQUEEZE - THE RUNNER ON THIRD TAKES OFF FOR HOME AS THE PITCH IS DELIVERED. THE BATTER MUST BUNT THE BALL OR AT LEAST GET THE BAT ON THE BALL.**
- 36. TAG-UP - ON A FLY BALL THAT MIGHT BE CAUGHT THE RUNNER MUST RETURN TO THE BASE AND MAY RUN ONLY AFTER THE BALL HAS BEEN TOUCHED BY A FIELDER.**
- 37. "TAKE" - MEANS TAKE A PITCH – DO NOT SWING NO MATTER HOW GOOD THE PITCH IS.**
- 38. "TAKE INFIELD" - DRILL WHICH THE WHOLE STARTING TEAM GOES THROUGH ON THE FIELD BEFORE A GAME OR DURING A PRACTICE.**
- 39. THROW IT AROUND- AFTER AN OUT, IF THERE ARE NO RUNNERS ON BASE.**
- 40. TIME - "TIME OUT" TO SUSPEND PLAY CAN ONLY BE CALLED BY THE UMPIRE. PLAYERS MUST REQUEST TIME FROM THE UMPIRE.**
- 41. "TURN IT" - MAKE A DOUBLE PLAY.**

“10 SOFTBALL BEST FRIENDS”

1. FLY BALL/GROUND BALL VS. THE WALL
2. PROGRESSIVE EXERCISE: PUSHUP/SITUP/JUMPING JACK (START AT 15)
3. 3 SETS OF 2 MIN JUMP ROPES/ 3 SETS OF WRIST CURLS/5 minute ABS
4. 10 SPIN AND CALL
5. 10 CORRECT SWINGS
6. 10 CORRECT SACS
7. 10 CORRECT SLAPS
8. 10 SHORT HOPS
9. TOSS AND TAG
10. SLIDES
 - 3 FIGURE 4
 - 3 POP UP
 - 3 SLIDE BY
 - 3 ROLL OVER
 - 3 HEAD FIRST