

USCAA SOFTBALL COACHES GUIDE





***USCAA Softball...
Inspiring girls
to dream more,
learn more,
do more, and
become more.***

USCAA Rec Softball Mission

The purpose of the USCAA Girls' Softball Program is to provide an opportunity for children of township residents to learn to play softball. The program's emphasis is to create a "recreational" yet competitive environment in which the participants can learn the sportsmanship and skills necessary to play at a more advanced level while enjoying the fun of a team sport.

The USCAA will make every effort to provide the opportunity to all girls in the USC community to participate in games and to improve their skills.



The Best Coaches...

- Get their players to believe in themselves
- Are great life teachers
- Build teams and emphasize teamwork and sportsmanship
- Keep the game in perspective. Do not let ego and self worth get tied up in the outcome of the game.
- Understand individual differences in their players. They coach the person, not just the player.
- Organized yet flexible
- Great communicators (Listen as well as teach)
- Take the time to listen to and educate their players' parents
- “WALK THE TALK” with players and parents
- Keep the learning environment emotionally safe
- Encourage and challenge their players to do better. Use positive reinforcement.
- Are passionate and continually challenge themselves. Continuous learners.
- Patient, approachable, empathetic and tuned into the feelings of their players
- Honest and conduct themselves with integrity
- Make sports fun for their players
- Not defensive with interactions with their players and parents
- Do not use embarrassment as a “teaching tool”. Instead use their players' mistakes as valuable teaching opportunities.



Coach's Responsibilities



- Communicate effectively (parents, athletes, league)
- Conduct practices and games in a safe physical environment
- Sensitivity to the health and well-being of athletes under a coach's care
- Create a positive and fun learning environment
- Act as role model for leadership and sportsmanship
- Use of current knowledge of proper skills and methods of instruction
- Use of safe and appropriate equipment
- Proper short- and long-term planning (practice plan and game line-ups)
- Proper matching of athletes in practices and games by experience and ability
- Provide adequate supervision of athletes
- Provide information to parents regarding expectations
- Take appropriate actions in emergency medical situations
- Adhere to league rules and expectations

USCHS Varsity Softball Philosophy



- Small Ball: All player need to know how to bunt and how to field a bunt
- Hitting: Proper technique (Need to know how to hit outside pitch)
- Run, Run, Run: Aggressive leads, stealing bases and taking extra bases
- Pitching: Hitting spots and learning a master a pitch before another
 - Fastball and change-up priorities

Catchers: Blocking and proper mechanics

Rec softball should align skill building with district philosophy.

Softball Skills Development Guide

To help achieve consistency in our program, for our players and coaches, we have established a skills development charts to indicate how the girls should be progressing. Naturally, the girls will develop their skills at different rates, but the chart will give the girls, coaches and parents an idea where the girls should be with their skills.

- Section 1: Batting
- Section 2: Base Running
- Section 3: Throwing
- Section 4: Fielding

Example

Skill	6U	8U	10U	12U
Catch Fly Balls	Intro	Intro	Dev	Comp
Field Ground Balls	Intro	Intro	Dev	Comp

Definitions

- **Intro** (Introduction) - This indicates that the skill should be introduced at that age group.
- **Dev** (Developmental) - At this stage the player should have already been introduced to this skill and is now working towards mastering the skill.
- **Comp** (Competent) - At this stage the player should have a solid understanding of this skill.
- **Dev/Comp** - For more advanced skills, players will grasp and understand the skill at different rates, so some girls will still be developing the skill while others may become quickly proficient.

Softball Skills Development - Batting

Batting	6U	8U	10U	12U
Batting Stance	Intro	Intro	Dev/Comp	Comp
Swing Technique	Intro	Intro	Intro/Dev	Dev/Comp
Bunting Base Hit		Intro	Intro/Dev	Dev/Comp
Bunting Sacrifice			Intro	Dev/Comp



7 Steps to the Major League Swing

1. **TRIGGER-** (On the pitchers first move) Bat should rest on shoulder with relaxed finger on grip. As pitcher goes into motion you should lift the bat close to face, ready to hit with a balanced stance. Bat angle should be at 45 degrees.
2. **STEP-** (You should step when the pitcher puts foot down: she has not released the ball yet) Feet and knees should be flexed and shoulder width apart or more, feet should be lined up with pitcher; as pitcher starts her step to place, you should commit to every pitch expecting to hit the ball; step and sta focused and relaxed. Short controlled step on big toe (first) and ready to hit. Keep front foot closed.
3. **HIPS:** Balanced, controlled, but explosive. Hips should start slow, but ready to explode when you recognize if the ball is a strike. Hands and arms need to stay close to the chest and stay back until the hips explode. Hip explosion provides needed power!
4. **KNOB:** Bring knob of bat to pitcher with barrel parallel with ground against back shoulder; keep arm tucked in.
5. **CONTACT ZONE:** This is the point of the swing when the hips and hands start committing to the ball; ready, recognize the pitch then release the hips shoulder, arms and hands inside the ball throwing the barrel thru the ball to the **Power V Position**.
6. **EXTENSION POWER V:** Shoulder and arm extension. Hands should stay up, elbows in upside down V; hands and arms should stay inside ball until contact. Head and eyes looking down arms to ball thru the barrel of the bat, hand thru ball while staying balanced with the lower body.
7. **FOLLOW-THROUGH:** Relaxed, tension free, but controlled. Head, eyes, and nose stay where the ball was and weight should be balanced, centered, of shoulder ready to run! Crush ball past the pitcher. Bat should finish high on top



Andrew McCutchen: POWER V POSITION



Mike Trout: POWER V POSITION





Ichiro: POWER V POSITION





Derek Jeter
POWER V POSITION
Head down at
extension





POWER V POSITION





POWER V POSITION



POWER V POSITION

Head down at extension





Hitting Technique

<https://youtu.be/pUa20Eo8HSI>

Hitting Drills

<https://youtu.be/leDfLWdAZQk>





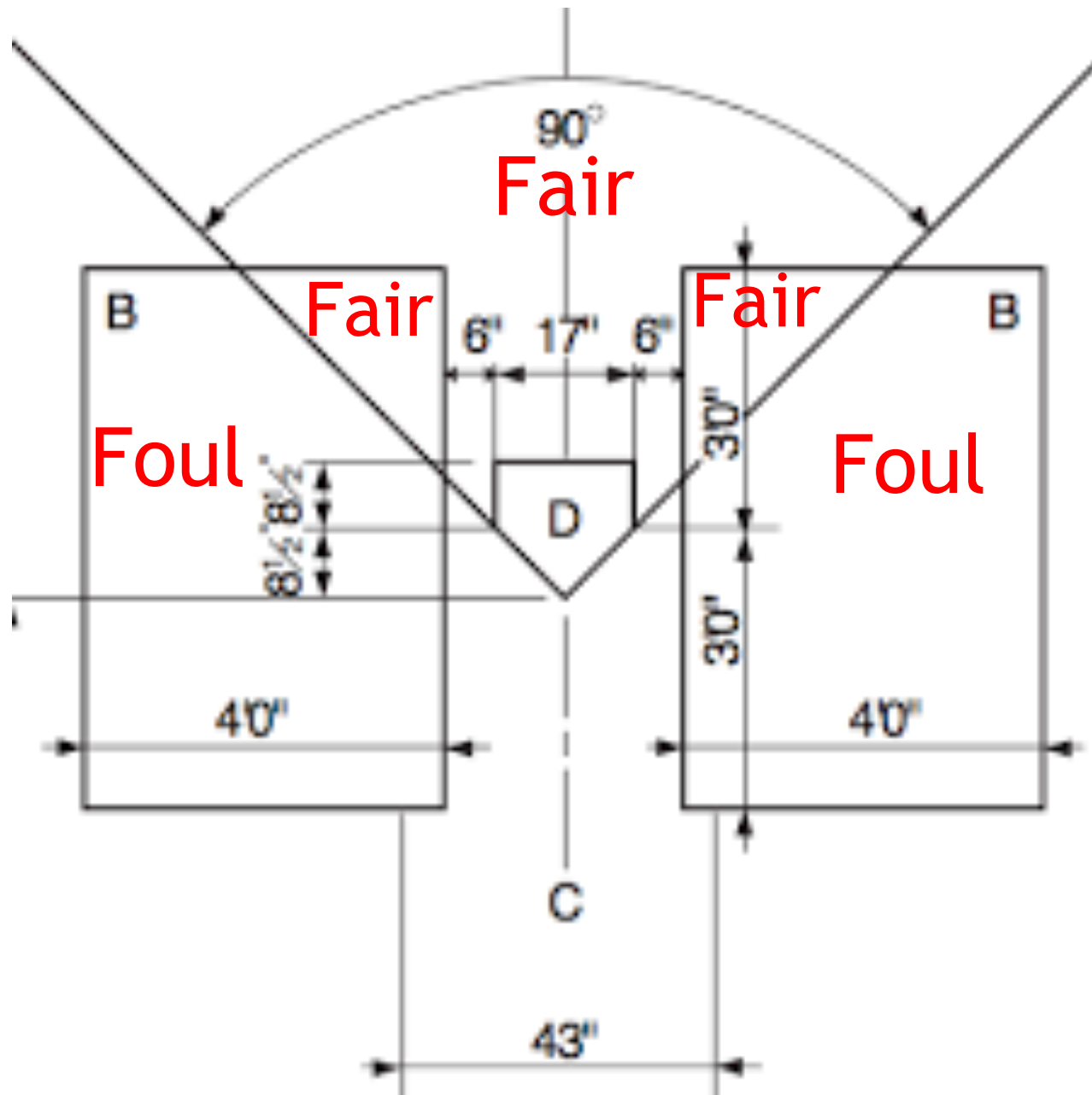
Sacrifice Bunt Technique

<https://youtu.be/CFzyq0CkTHc>

Bunt for Base Hit Technique

<https://youtu.be/8sFCx5Fe55M>





When bunting, **stand forward** in the batters box. You are more likely to hit it into fair territory.



Softball Skills Development – Base Running

Base Running	6U	8U	10U	12U
Running to 1 st Base	Intro	Intro	Dev	Comp
Base Running Basic		Intro	Dev	Comp
Taking a Lead		Intro	Dev	Comp
Base Running Advanced			Intro	Dev
Leading & Stealing			Intro	Dev

Base Running Basic: Covers the proper techniques on how to run to first, running through first and turning at first.

Base Running Advanced: Covers base running during fly balls and advancing during non-force situation.



Base Running Technique

<https://youtu.be/awBfD3Fm-y4>





Sliding Technique

<https://youtu.be/65GBpY6Cjno>

Sliding Drill

<https://youtu.be/J3oyOBgUbtQ>



Base Stealing Technique

<https://youtu.be/r4yNHZ1aCn8>



Softball Skills Development - Throwing

Throwing	6U	8U	10U	12U
Grip, Basic Motion	Intro	Intro	Dev	Comp
Throwing Motion	Intro	Intro	Dev	Comp
Crow Hop Throw			Intro	Dev





Throwing Technique

<https://youtu.be/fB6-rRxMVE>

Throwing Drills

<https://youtu.be/uqbF3nIMKAE>

Crow Hop Throwing Drills

<https://youtu.be/ia1ObJZmsk0>



Softball Skills Development – Fielding

Fielding	6U	8U	10U	12U
Positions	Intro	Intro	Dev	Comp
Catching a Ball	Intro	Intro	Dev	Comp
Fielding Grounders	Intro	Intro	Dev	Comp
Covering Bases Basic	Intro	Intro	Dev	Comp
Catching Pop Fly	Intro	Intro	Dev	Comp
Catching Outfield Fly		Intro	Dev	Comp
Force vs Tag Play		Intro	Dev	Comp
Making a Tag Play		Intro	Dev	Comp
Covering Bases Advanced			Intro	Dev
Cutoff Throws			Intro	Dev
Bunt Defense			Intro	Dev
Turning a Double-play				Intro
Rounding a Ball				Intro

Covering Bases Basic: Learn to safely cover a bag during a regular play

Covering Bases Advanced: Learning to covering bases during game situations such as bunts, run downs, and pick-off plays





Receiving Throws

<https://youtu.be/zKwgYM3Nzo8>

Receiving Throws Clock Drill

<https://youtu.be/uOwC9wmhd0Y>





Fielding Ground Balls Technique

<https://youtu.be/TM6hnPz8-uo>

Fielding Ground Balls Drills

<https://youtu.be/XDwFdR4gluQ>



Fielding Fly Balls Technique

<https://youtu.be/QZ4lrNN5Pv8>

Fielding Fly Balls Drills

https://youtu.be/eBC_yX6awNo





Catcher Position Technique

<https://youtu.be/qwdeRteH3es>

