

# BATTING DRILLS

## **Self Toss Drill**

This is a partner drill using whiffle balls. One batter one fielder, the batter self tosses the ball and hits it to the fielder. Distance between the partners depends on how far the batter can hit the whiffle. Give each girl about 5-10 wiffles, then switch.

## **Machine hitting:**

Spray paint some balls blue and some red. Hide the balls when you drop them in the machine. Batters must: Bunt the blue; Take the red; Hit away on the white balls.\

## **Hit whiffle**

Golf balls with broom sticks. Use left hand only, then right hand only, and both hands with full swing. Also put the broom stick behind your back and swing with the hips and the elbows are holding the stick.

## **60 seconds**

What you do is, get someone to time the player for 60 seconds and make them swing as many times correctly as possible. While you are timing the player make sure each swing is done correctly.

## **Front Barrier Drill:**

Have the batter stand one bat length from a barrier (I prefer a net to prevent damage to the bat, but you can use a fence). Have her take her normal swing. If she hits the barrier, she is unlocking her elbows before her shoulders and getting wide on the swing.

## **Rear Barrier Drill:**

Place a barrier directly behind the batter and have her take her normal swing. If the bat hits the barrier, she is dropping her hands. You can use this barrier even when you are using a pitching machine or live pitching for instant feedback to the batter that she is dropping her hands.

## **Basketball Drill**

This is a great drill for teaching follow-through. Get a couple of old basketballs and take most of the air out of them. Place them on one of those orange cones you see at construction sites. Have the batter take her normal swing and follow-through right through the basketball. **HAVE THEM WEAR HELMETS!!!** Use regular sized bats for this drill.

### **Batting Beam**

Here's a drill you may find useful. Construct a batting beam with pieces of 2" x 4"s. The main piece should be about 4' long. Two cross pieces about 18" should be nailed about 16" from each end of main piece. Have player stand on this during soft toss. The player should remain on beam throughout swing. The beam encourages the batter to be on the balls of her feet and to maintain a balanced swing. It also helps the batter to take their timing step straight to the pitcher. The players don't like this beam at first, but it does help.

### **Knee hitting drill**

Set up a net with a mat in front of it. Place a medium size orange cone on the mat. Have the hitter kneel on their back knee. The front leg should be straight out in front towards the net. Place a ball on the cone and have them hit. This allows them to concentrate on the proper hand and arm movement without worrying about the legs. I have one player hit and the other feed the balls. This allows me to concentrate on the hitter and keeps the players involved.

### **TWO-BALL SOFT TOSS:**

Get two different color whiffle balls (say red & white), mark half of the balls with a different color dot, or you can ask them to hit top ball or bottom ball. Use smaller whiffle balls. It's easier to toss smaller balls plus helps hitters in focus and coordination. Toss the two balls at the same time (from same hand) and ask the player to hit one of them, either red or white.

### **For the Dad's**

I have many fathers that think baseball swings and softball swings are the same. I had a clinic and we had the fathers do this drill. I took nerf footballs and cut them in half, we had the fathers place them under their shirts. We then had the fathers put their elbows up and their hands high. The classic baseball type swing. We then had the dads swing at wiffle balls on the tee. Most fathers knocked out the right half of the football. Their elbows hit it every time. We showed the fathers that their girls have to swing around their own body and it is useless to have a girl place her hands, elbows, and shoulders above her center of gravity and power zone. We have the babies, so all of our power is in our hips and down. The fathers finally realized there is an anatomical difference to hitting a fast pitch softball.

# BUNTING DRILLS

## **3-man bunt** drill ...

2 tossers, each with a ball, 1 batter. Alternate who pitches and bunter must bunt back to the one that pitched the ball.

## **Bunting Game**

Draw sections in the dirt in front of home plate. In each section, write a number representing a point value base. For example, a two-foot diameter circle in that no-man's area between the pitcher, catcher can be worth 1 point and ball bunted to either 1st or 3rd base can be worth 2 points. Divide the girls up into teams. Each girl takes her turn bunting. She is awarded the point value of the section that the ball stops in (not lands in).

## **Slap Bunting/Hitting**

This is a great weapon for left-hand batters. By positioning yourself towards the back of the batters box, you approach the pitcher during delivery with many choices. Dink a little bunt in front of the plate or towards third-base, drag bunt the ball towards first base, or even slap it through the charging defensive infielders. Another great weapon is to slash hard at the ball with an inside-out swing. Being careful to reach an outside pitch, this slash bunt will usually produce a soft tailing hit over the third-basemen's head falling near the grass and heading towards foul territory. Most quick lefties can get a double out of this type hit. Also, when this movement produces a ground ball, a left hand batter gets a great jump towards beating out the play.

# Throwing Drills

## **MECHANICS SERIES DRILL**

This throwing drill is used for warm ups and is done in a series. It allows the players to focus on the "mechanics" of proper throwing techniques, using certain isolation drills.

- 1.) Indian style: have the players start across from their partners sitting Indian style. Players should use only the wrist, no arm motion—this is the wrist snap.
- 2.) One Knee: Have the players proceed to the one knee position, stride leg in front pointing glove towards their partners. The players should move back to approx. 15-20 yards. This focuses on upper body mechanics and accuracy. Again, the players should follow through with their throwing elbows outside their knee.
- 3.) Standing: From the standing position. Again, emphasize using the glove hand to point at the target as well as proper follow through (throwing wrist should brush the outside of the knee).
- 4.) Crane: Players begin in the "crane" position. That is, with their stride leg raised in the air (knee bent), their glove hand pointing at their target, their throwing hand in the launch position (ball outside ear), players hold in this position for 2-3 seconds before releasing the ball. To ensure proper follow through, the players then take one full step towards their partner after releasing the throw. This helps the players focus on properly using their glove hand for emphasis on shoulder hip and knee rotation. What I tell the girls is that (if righty), their left shoulder, hip and knee point at their target and when they are done, their right shoulder hip and knee should be pointing at their target.
- 5.) Tags: While partners are working their "Crane" positioning, the receivers set up in the straddle position. When the throw comes in, they perform sweep tags. This allows the receivers to train as well as the throwers.
- 6.) Throwing for distance: Once the series has gone through, continue to have the players back up until they are able to make accurate, strong throws **DIRECTLY** to the receiver. No lob throws. This allows arm strengthening.

## **WARM-UP DRILL**

We use this drill to warm up before games and practices. Start with 10 wrist snaps (see above), 10 throws on one knee (see above), 10 standing throws (see above), 10 grounders, 10 pop-ups. This is not a race—girls need to use the proper form or you should go back to the Mechanics Series Drill above.

## **HIT THE BUCKET**

Regardless of the name of this game you won't go broke. At the end of practice is the best time to do this drill. Place a large container on its side (a 30-gallon trash can is perfect but a ball bucket will work) at home plate with the open end facing centerfield. Have fielders line up in centerfield (age of players are a factor in how deep you go to centerfield). Players should be lined up to receive a hit ball. The first player fields an outfield hit from the coach and attempts to throw the ball on target and one-hop it into the bucket. We offer \$1.00 or a treat to each player who is successful within three tries.

## **Diamond drill**

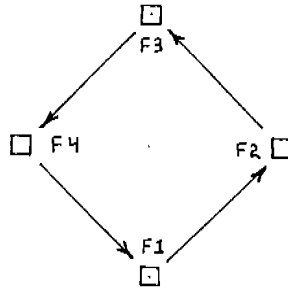
Place 4 balls between each base, have 4 girls at the pitchers mound, on GO all girls run and pick up one ball and throw it the next base. They then run to the center, touch the pitchers mound and run to the next set of balls. Example for one girl: At the mound, I run to the balls between home & 1st, pick one up and throw it to 1st; run back to the mound then on to the balls between 1st & 2nd; pick one up and throw it to 2nd; run back to the mound then on to the balls between 2nd & 3rd; pick one up and throw it to 3rd; run back to the mound then on to the balls between 3rd & home; pick one up and throw it to home and run to the mound to finish 1st. The fielders at each base are now the runners and the runners have a break while a new crew fields balls at the bases.

## **Wrap around drill**

- 1) Have two players stand 10-20 feet apart.
- 2) Player one throws a ground ball to player two. Player Two fields and throws back to player One.
- 3) Player Two then runs toward Player one. She will circle player one, returning to her spot. Player one will throw fly ball as a quarterback to a receiver. We also throw short and long and to right and left.
- 4) Then after player two gets the ball she throws it back to player one. Then player one throws back to player two. Then player two gives the ground ball to player one repeating the process

### SQUARE DRILL

(Teaches quick hands/feet work and throwing & catching.)



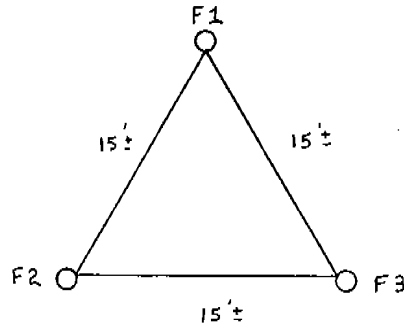
**FIELDER 1** throws to Fielder 2 to Fielder 3 to Fielder 4 to Fielder 1. (Clockwise and counter clockwise).

#### VARIATIONS:

- 3 Players at each position alternating.
- 3 Players alternating after their throw they sprint to the end of the line they just threw to.
- Time the team at different stages during the year to show their progress.

### TRIANGLE DRILL

(Teaches front and backhand flips, quickness and coordination.)



Start with a bucket of balls dumped at F1's feet - give bucket to F3. F1 rolls ball to F2 who then tosses a backhand to F3 who puts the ball in the bucket. Hint roll balls only as fast as players can field the ball and toss correctly. As soon as all balls and tossed have F3 roll to F1, etc. There are many variations of this drill - use your imagination.

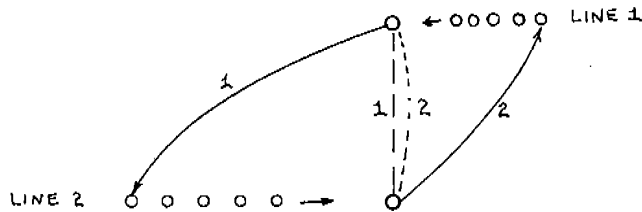
# BLOOMINGTON GIRLS FASTPITCH SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION

## Basic Drills

### LINE DRILL

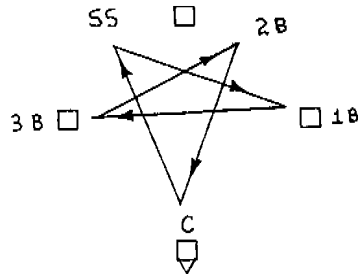
(Teaches catching and throwing also used as the basic warm-up drill prior to games.)

First player in Line 1 throws 1st player in Line 2 then runs to the end of Line 2 then the first player in Line 2 throws to the next player in Line 1 and runs to the end of Line 1. Continues until 100 throws and catches have been made. Variations are to have ground balls thrown, run and catch at the same time - pop-ups. There are many variations of this drill - use your imagination.



### STAR DRILL

(Teaches players to catch & throw under game-like conditions.)



Catcher starts throws to SS then throws to 1B who throws to 3B who throws to 2B who throws back to C or Catchers throws to 2B who throws to 3B who throws to 1B who throws to home.  
to SS who throws

# Infielding Drills

## **Four Corners**

**Purpose:** To work on conditioning and on making accurate throws to first and third.

**Procedure:** A hitter hits to an infielder at second base, who is first in a line that players have formed there. One fielder is at first base. The fielder fields the ball, throws to first, and sprints to third base to receive a return throw from the player at first. The fielder must be at third in proper receiving position (left foot against home-plate side of third), where she catches the ball and applies a tag. The fielder then sprints home to give the ball to the hitter and runs behind the hitter on the way to first, getting there in time to catch the throw to first on the next hit ball. The fielder catches the ball at first base, throws back to the next fielder at third base, and goes to the end of the line at second base to wait for her next turn. Use no more than five players so that there is not a lot of standing around. Have an extra bucket of balls at home and first in case of errant throws.

## **BreakDown Drill**

On their knees they role each other the ball. While fielding with bare hands (enforce soft hands, paddles can be good for this) they lift their feet off the ground behind them. This forces them to see the ball all the way in. After they have done about twenty have them to put their gloves on. Do about twenty that way. Then have them work forehand and back hands the same way. When they are done with that tell them to stand up and do the same things while standing. Start with their gloves off and go back through the rotation. When they do backhands and forehands make them start with their feet already in the position they would be in when fielding the ball and make them concentrate on soft hands.

## **Cone Drill**

Set out some small cones in an arc in the outfield and then hit grounders to the outfielders. They must round the cones before reaching the ball. This teaches them to go to the path of the ball and not directly at the ball.

## **Paddle Drill**

For this drill we made paddles with straps out of ping pong paddles and stapled a strap on to the back of the paddle. Have the players strap on the paddles and hit them tennis balls on the ground. This teaches them to go to the ball with both hands and also to have soft hands. It also teaches them to watch the ball all the way to the glove.

## **Line Drill**

Take the fielders and line them up in a straight line. With plenty of space in between each one, line them up one behind the other away from the coach. Number each player such that the first person is number one, second is number two, and so on. To execute the drill, the coach hits a hard grounder and calls one of the numbers at the same time. That number must field it, while the others step out of the way. The coach should randomly vary the numbers, so that each fielder has a chance to field a grounder and none can predict whose turn it is. This drill teaches quick reflexes and clear thinking under pressure.



### **Coach Marty's Drill**

Using Marty's Special Ball (a spherical bunch of balls randomly put together like a bunch of molecules. It bounces every which way and very good for eye hand coordination and reaction), get the athletes in a small circle and they call the ball and must catch it on the 2nd bounce (it bounces funnier on the 2nd bounce). Very good for those rainy day practices indoors.

### **Flip Drill**

Each player has their glove and a ball. Place the ball in a snow cone position in the glove. Player 1 flips the ball to player 2. Player 2 catches the ball and immediately flips it back to player 1. This drill helps young players control their glove.

### **2-glove drill**

Have a player get into ready position with their feet spread just wider than shoulder width. Place a glove next to each foot inside the player's stance. Roll a ball directly at the player and they will learn to field the ball with their feet spread. The fielder will field the ball without her glove, this helps her to focus on the ball.

### **Bat-in-front drill**

Player starts in ready position, place a bat about 6 inches in front of the player on the ground. The coach rolls a ball at the player who must field the ball in front of the bat. This helps the player field the ball in front of their bodies for balance and vision. Can be done with or without a glove.

### **Chicken Drill**

Players face each other about 4 feet apart, each with a glove and softie. They get into ready position and try to quickly throw the ball through their opponent's legs while trying to keep the ball from going between their own legs. This helps develop a player's quickness.

### **Stationary ball drill**

When fielding a ground ball, approach it like an airplane landing on a runway. The fielder should get lower as the ball gets closer. Balls are positioned on the ground around the infield, the player approaches each ball working on lining up their belly button with the ball. By eliminating ball movement, the player has a greater chance of executing the drill for fielding the ball correctly.

### **The Backhand Technique.**

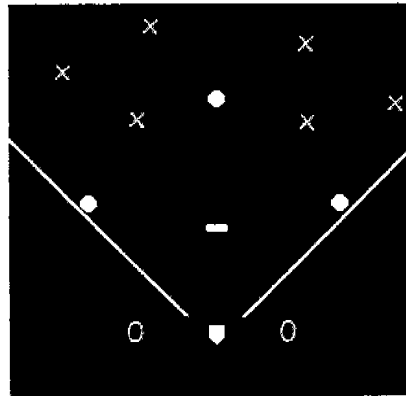
Only backhand what you can't get around in front of

Use the cross over step, point the glove elbow at the target, bend both knees, field the ball close to the ground and out in front of the front foot.

Using a tennis ball/whiffle—have the fielder face a wall about 4 feet away without a glove. Someone stands behind her and throws a ball to the far right of the wall (if she's a righty) so that it bounces just out of reach—enforce the backhand technique to field the ball. Once they get the technique down, you can try it with gloves.

## Cross - Fire Drill

- Work on three skills and keeps 10 players busy.
- Hitting, Hands and Eyes Coordination.
- Fielding Technique, Throwing.
- Receiving Thrown ball.



There is a hitter and catcher, and one or usually more fielders. I use 10 player when I do this drill.

Place both hitters and Catchers one set half way between 1st base and Home, the others between 3rd and Home

Place your fielders one at Short Stop the other at second base. Have the other girls flank the fielders about 10 feet back.

The hitter between 1st base and home will hit to Short Stop and the hitter between 3rd and home will hit to 2nd base.

Once the Fielders have fielded and thrown the ball back to the Catcher that girl will Rotate Clockwise and the next player will be ready to field hit.

I have the Hitters hit about 15 times then Rotate with the Catchers, after they have both hit 15 each. The hitters and catchers will rotate to the field and 4 fielders will come in to hit and catch.

# **OUTFIELD DRILLS**

## **RELAY THROW DRILL**

Have the player's line up in a line stretching to the outfield. Have the first player throw the ball to the glove side of the second player in the line. Do the same for the rest of the players. Once they get the drill, you can form teams and do a relay race.

This teaches the proper location for the relay throw and also teaches quick turn and release of the throw.

## **STAR DRILL**

The fielder stands about 20 yards away from the thrower. The fielder runs to the right and makes the catch, then drops the ball and hauls it over to the far left, makes the catch, drops the ball, then runs away from the thrower for the long ball, catches it, drops it, and runs straight towards the thrower for the shallow ball and that's it.

## **THE BACK-UP DRILL**

Place half the team in left field and the rest in center. The coach hits a fly ball in between the first two outfielders. They both go for the ball with one catching it and the other properly backing up the fielder. If the ball happens to get by both fielders then they will use a relay throw to get the ball back to the coach. This drill has helped greatly in backing up on all balls, and easy to do before games.

## **CLOCK WORK DRILL**

A cutoff-approx. 50 ft. from the catcher. And 5 or 6 outfielders-each spread out from right to left, approx. 50 ft. from cutoff. Start by hitting a ball to the girl farthest left, she throws to cutoff, cutoff throws home. After throwing to cut off the fielder then runs to take her spot, the cutoff after throwing home, runs home to become catcher, and the catcher is to run to the open spot in the outfield. In a short amount of time fielders get to field in all outfield positions, work on throws, and get some conditioning.

## **OUTFIELD HUSTLE DRILL**

Using the batting machine at home plate. All balls are fly balls because of the rapid action and because there is an infielder at each base. Everyone else is lined up in the left field out of bounds area ... 1 gal in left field. With the machine, drop a fly ball to left; let her throw the ball to 3rd and start running to center and drop a ball to center and another one to a new girl in left; let the 1st girl throw the ball to 2nd and start running to right and drop a ball to right, center, and left; keep dropping balls right, center, & left; until everyone is in the right field foul territory until everyone is over there and we do the same thing coming back.

## **SELF TOSS DRILL**

Player uses a softie and tosses the ball into the air themselves and practices catching the ball. It is a very basic drill but it creates a safe and controlled environment for the player.

## **1,2,3 DRILL**

This is a line drive and pop up fielding drill which teaches players to catch three types of fly balls.

- 1) a line drive right at them,
- 2) a line drive that they must stretch for,
- 3) and last a fly ball that they must sprint to catch.

Line your players up in a single file line, players should start on the fair line just behind first base at the edge of the outfield grass. The coach will be in right-center field with a bucket of balls. The players will be running in a straight line about 50 to 60 feet away from the coach. (Running from first towards second.) One player at a time and they need their gloves.

The coach starts by throwing a line drive right at the players, the player catches it and while still running the coach throws the second ball in front of the player making her reach to catch it, while the player is still running the coach throws the third ball, which is a high pop fly out away from the player that she must track down and catch it. After player one has completed her turn, she gathers the balls, returns them to the coach sprints to the back of the line.

Key points:

- 1) Once the player starts running (she never stops nor hesitates) she sprints all the way, catching all the balls on the run.
- 2) Once the player catches a ball she quickly throws it down and looks for the next ball.
- 3) After the player has finished she retreats and picks up the three balls and gets in the back of the line.
- 4) The coach needs to be quick and accurate with his/her throws. A line drive right at them starts it off, then the second throw must be where they reach out for, and the last throw is a fly ball out away from the player which they must hustle down and catch.

## **INFIELD-OUTFIELD RELAY**

Divide the team into 2 groups. One group lines up behind third-base. The other group lines up in deep right-center. I have an assistant coach acting as my catcher as I hit hard grounders to the first in line at third-base. She fields the ball and quickly makes a sharp throw to home-plate. I then hit a deep fly ball to the first in line at right-center. As this player sprints to catch the ball, the fielder that was at third-base sprints to a relay position for home-plate. The outfielder hits the now relay fielder who should be properly positioned to receive and relay the throw to home-plate.

The cycle repeats as the infielder that was the relay joins the rear of the line of outfielders. The outfielder that caught and threw the ball to the relay then joins the rear of the line of infielders.

## **Volleyball Drill**

High to the sky, down to the ground. This drill helps players determine whether to hold the glove up or down while fielding a fly ball. You need two players standing opposite each other, no gloves. The tosser has a volleyball and will toss the ball above the waist and below the waist. If it is above the waist the player must catch the ball with finger tips high to the sky, if the ball is thrown below the waist, the player must catch the ball with fingers down to the ground. (Catching a ball right at the waist should be caught with fingers high to the sky—knees bent!!). transition into using a glove and softball.

# Speed, Agility, Strength Training Drills

**High Knees** - Pick up your knees as high as you can *and* as fast as you can! You don't have to go far ~ 10 yards will do. REMEMBER the goal is *not* to get from start to finish as quickly as possible. The goal is to pick up your knees as many times as you can in the 10 yards that you do the drill. This is a *speed* drill ~ Don't be lazy! Pick up those knees as fast as you can!

**Butt Kicks** - Like High Knees, 10 yards is enough for this speed drill. Instead of picking up your knees, kick your butt with your heel. Again, going the 10 yards quickly isn't the goal. To increase speed, "Kick your butt" as many times as you can in the 10 yards that you do this drill.

## **Base running**

Time all your players from home plate to first base. Do this twice. Average each player's time. Pair up two closest times, placing one player at plate and one about ten feet behind. Have them race around all four bases. Do this for the entire team. We always go twice with the pairs switching their starting spots the second time.

## **Windshield wipers:**

Have the hitter take a weighted bat or the heaviest one you have on the team and hold it in both her hands with the barrel pointing straight up toward the sky. Now using only the wrists, have her lower the barrel of the bat to her left to about waist high, then to her right and back to her left, etc. Do about 5-25 of these depending on the age of your players.

## **Chopping wood:**

Take the heavy bat again and have the hitter hold it directly over her head with the barrel pointing up toward the sky. Now, in a chopping motion, have her bring the barrel of the bat first backward until it is pointing down at the ground behind her and the bat has touched her back lightly. Now bring the barrel back up to the start position and continue forward and downward down to lightly touch the ground in front of her (this motion is like chopping wood). Have her raise the bat slowly to about waist high and have her bring it slowly to the ground again, then back up to the start position. This constitutes one rep. Have the player at this station do 5-20 reps depending on the age of your players.

## **Strike zone:**

This drill again uses a heavy bat. Have the hitter take a normal batting stance and have her swing into the contact zone. As she reaches the far limits of the contact zone, have her use her wrists to wiggle the barrel of the bat back and forth as she counts the wiggles to 5. Then bring the bat back to the normal batting position. This is one rep. Have the hitter do 5-20 reps depending on the age of your players.

## **Circles:**

The final drill again uses the heavy bat. Have the hitter hold the bat out in front of her with the barrel pointing straight away from her body. Her arms should be straight out with maybe just a slight break in her elbows (I mean very slight break). Now the hitter

makes small circles with the barrel of the bat by moving her wrists in a kind of circle. First, have the hitters do 5-15 circles clockwise and then the same number of circles counter clockwise. This will strengthen the wrists and make them quicker. I use these weight-training drills in practice at stations. Most of the time, you may have a couple of players waiting to get into the batting cage or go on live pitching. Since I feel "standing around time" is wasted time, I have these players do these drills instead of talking to their team-mates about class yesterday (yes I do know what they are really talking about and it is not softball or class).

### **Leap Frog**

Have your players lay on the ground in a circle with their heads toward the middle of the circle. Designate a player to start the action. When she starts, she gets up and runs over every player in the circle until she gets to an open spot (vacated by the first player she has run over) and then she lays down on the ground (usually falls down). After the starter has run over the FIRST player on the ground, SHE gets up and runs over every player until she finds an open spot (vacated by the FIRST player SHE has run over) and then lays down. When played right, you will have 3 or 4 girls running over players and falling down at all times. The players love this game and it is a good warm-up exercise.

### **Speed and Agility Drill**

This is a competitive drill. Form 2 equal lines of girls, one line starts at SS the other at 2<sup>nd</sup> Base (position—not the actual base). On go—the first player in each line does the grapevine to the pitcher's mound, once they reach the mound, they shuffle (facing each other) around home plate, then back pedal to the pitcher's mound. Once they hit the pitcher's mound—they turn and sprint back to their line and tag the next girl. The first team to finish the drill and sit down wins—the losing team has to run the bases.

### **Indian Drill**

Have your team form a line at home plate. Have them start jogging around the field at a reasonable pace. The player in front starts with a ball and passes it to the teammate behind them until the ball reaches the last person. When the last person receives the ball, she sprints along the outside of her teammates into 1<sup>st</sup> position and passes the ball behind her—until the ball is in the hands of the last girl. Do this until each girl has had a chance to sprint to the front of the line.

### **Tennis ball drill**

Squeeze a tennis ball with each hand. Sets of ten. Start with one set, build up to ten sets with one minute rest between sets.

### **Explode Drill**

Get in ready position on a base. Explode off the base. Drive strongly for at least five steps. Repeat 5-10 times.

### **Swing Drill**

Swing a bat at an imaginary pitch and sprint twenty yards as if you were running to first base. Repeat 5-10 times

**Line Hops**

Do fifteen line-hops. Begin with both feet together on one side of a line. Then hop over the line with both feet and back over the line to the starting position. Do this as fast as possible.

**Push-ups**

Do ten regular full body push-ups.

**Sit-ups**

Do ten stomach crunches.

**Infield Hustle Game**

Drill with the machine at home plate. Equal lines of athletes at 3rd, SS, 2nd, and 1st. everyone throws to 1st base. With the machine, drop to 3rd, she throws and goes to the back of the SS line; immediately drop a ball to a new girl at SS, she throws and goes to the back of the line at 2nd; immediately drop a ball to a new girl at 2nd, she throws and goes to the back of the line at 1st; make sure the girl at 1st has fielded the ball from the 2nd baseman before dropping the ball out of the machine to her. As they leave 1st, they run around behind me at the plate, and tell me how many errors they have. When they get three errors, they are out of the game and it gets interesting.

**Barney Bop**

Take a stool or high chair and place it straddling first base with a net or fence behind it to stop any errant throws. Place a stuffed animal on top of the chair (I use a Barney Doll, hence the name). Divide your team into two equal teams or as equal as possible. Both teams stand out by the shortstop position, with one member of the first team ready to field a ball. The other members of her team are awaiting their turn in line, as well as the members of the other team.

Hit a grounder to the first member of the first team. She must field the ball cleanly and make a throw to first base attempting to knock "Barney" off the chair. If she does, her team gets one point. Then do the same to the first member of the second team. Alternate teams until every player of each team has had at least one throw at "Barney". The team with the most points wins!!

I also like to have the players also do this drill from center field with "Barney" at second base and also from second base throwing to first base. I have found this game to be a great way to involve competition with efforts to improve throwing accuracy.

**That Game**

You split your team into 3 teams it works well with 12 players and 2 coaches. One team goes to the outfield, one team plays the infield and the other team is up to bat. One coach pitches and one catches, you can also use the tee if you only have one coach, he/she needs to play catcher, or you can play pitcher and catcher after the ball has been hit. The pitcher pitches 3 pitches and the batter hits the ball and has to run all the bases, the team who touches the ball first has to field the ball and pass the ball under their legs until the

ball has been passed to every girls on their team and the last girl has to throw the ball to the catcher before the batter/runner makes it home. The throw home has to be a good throw and the coach receiving the throw home can stand on home plate and can stretch to catch the ball but can't leave the plate. Oh yah, the batter only gets 3 pitches, if she doesn't hit a fair ball after 3 she is out. And no bunting.

### **Guts**

Simply divide the girls into two teams. Have the teams form two lines about 40 to 60 feet apart, with players shoulder to shoulder three feet apart. Place something two feet from each girl at either end of both lines. These are the goal posts. The goal posts can be buckets, cones, balls, or the parents. Hand a ball to one of the players. To play the game, the girls take turns trying to throw grounders through the opposing line. They can throw as hard as they want (make sure they're spaced far enough apart).

The rules are fairly simple: The player who fails to prevent the ball from going past the imaginary line between goal post is out of the game. The team who loses all its players first loses. The ball must bounce in front of the players to count. If a player's ball is caught on the fly without bouncing she is out - if it is dropped, she stays in. If a ball goes through the line without bouncing, it has no effect. Any throw outside the goal posts has no effect.

As players are eliminated move the goal posts in until the last player has a goal roughly six feet wide. Hint: if the girls learn to charge the ball, it gives one of their teammates an opportunity to back them up. If there is a question as to which girl allowed the ball to get through the line, the opposing team decides.

### **Infield Star Game**

you get your infielder's at their position (except the pitcher). The ball starts at the catcher, she throws to the second baseman, she throws to the third baseman, she throws to the first baseman, she throws to the shortstop, and she throws back to the catcher. The whole time this is going on you have a runner run the bases. They leave at the same time as the catcher starts the cycle.

It starts out easy for the fielders because they tend to start in kind of close and creep in. I let them do that for a while, till it get to easy, then I make them start backing up. After they get a few steps in the grass the faster runners start making it close. (The runners like to see a dropped or missed ball)

This really helps on the infielder's learning to get rid of the ball quickly. I hope that it's helpful.

### **3-2-1**

Place 3 balls on the ground evenly spaced, about 3/4 of the way from third base to home. Three teams are formed a third baseman team, a second baseman team and a batting team (no bats). When the coach yells, "Go", the batter (runner) runs as fast as she can to first base and on to second. The fielder at third base runs to the first ball and makes a throw to



a teammate at second base, then goes to the second ball and makes a throw to the same fielder at second base and does the same thing with the third ball. The object of this game is to make 3 good throws from third base (third base line) to second base before the runner gets to second base. If the runner gets there first, or if the fielder makes a bad throw or bad catch, the batters get 1 point. If the fielders get all 3 balls to second base before the runner gets there, no points are awarded.

### **Contact Drill**

This drill only takes 7-10 minutes. All players line up next to the dugout with their bat and helmet ready to hit. Each batter gets 1 pitch, regardless if it is a strike or not, and must make contact. A foul ball is good; a bunted ball must stay in fair territory. Each player that swings and misses, grabs his/her glove and shags balls. The players that make contact return to the end of the line for their next chance. Keep going until you have 1 player left. I use a pitching machine and usually have to crank the speed up towards the end. After all balls have been picked up, I usually have all the players except the winner of the contact drill sprint to the outfield fence and back. The 2nd place finisher only has to run half the distance.

### **Dizzy Lizzy/thunder ball**

Have one team at bat and one team in the field with a fielder on third base and one at first base. The batter must take a bat and place the knob to her forehead and the other end on the ground. She now spins around 5-7 times, then hits (or tries to hit) a ball off a tee and runs the bases until both the fielders have touched the ball in the outfield (or where ever it has gone). If the batter gets to 1<sup>st</sup> base before all the fielders have touched the ball—it is 1 point, 2<sup>nd</sup> base is 2 points, and so on.

### **Get Ball and Throw Competition**

Work on getting quickly to a ball stopped behind an outfielder: Proper pick up and throwing technique, field the ball in the middle of the body, straddle the ball with the glove hand towards the infield. Place a ball on a line 20' away from a player, on "Go" the player sprints to the ball, picks it up and throws to a Cut-off standing 80' behind where the player just started. Time each player from "Go" until the ball is caught by the cut-off. The fastest time is the best.

### **Outfield to home**

Field a fly ball thrown from the pitching machine at home plate. Throw to a target at home plate or 2<sup>nd</sup> base. Each player gets four (4) balls. Direct hit on the target = 5 points, in the target zone = 3 points, outside the target zone = - 1 point.

### **TEE HIT FOR DISTANCE:**

Hit a ball off a tee placed at home plate. The distance is measured to the landing point. Each player gets four (4) hits. Longest hit = 30 points, Next longest = 20 points, Next longest = 10 points, Next longest = 5 points.