

# **FOLEY PARKS AND RECREATION SOFTBALL COACHING MANUAL**



## **DISCLAIMER**

**This manual is intended as a resource for new or returning coaches in the City of Foley with a primary emphasis on players under the age of 15. This document is not intended for duplication as the information provided has been taken from many other manual websites, books, and other coaches.**

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## INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this manual is to be an overview of the rules, regulations, and procedures for the City of Foley Parks & Recreation Department's Sports programs. We hope that by reviewing this manual, you will have a better understanding of our programs, policies, and procedures.

## CONTACT INFORMATION

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Monday - Friday: 8:00am - 5:00pm

## IMPORTANT LINKS

Parks and Recreation Website Home Page: [www.foleyrecreation.com](http://www.foleyrecreation.com)

Rec Desk: <https://foleyrecreation.recdesk.com/Community/Home>

Coach Safely: <https://www.coachsafely.org>

MOJO: <https://www.mojo.sport/coachs-corner?search=>

Rookie Road: <https://www.rookieroad.com/softball/>

<https://www.littleleague.org/downloads/tee-ball-program-week-6/>



## OUR MISSION

The City of Foley Parks & Recreation Department's Mission is to offer the widest range of recreation opportunities at an affordable cost to our diverse population. In addition, we want to improve the quality of life for our residents while providing a safe environment and facilities.

## PROGRAM PURPOSE

The purpose of **recreational sports** is to provide an opportunity for the participants to have fun, learn the sport and develop life skills including a lifelong love of the game. To ensure competitive equality, players 7 years of age and older are required to attend assessments in order to be drafted to teams. The purpose of drafting teams is to ensure fairness in the league by creating teams that are as equal in ability as possible. The draft process allows for greater league parity by evenly distributing the better players in the league across all teams.

## PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

To have fun of course! It is critical that players involved in youth sport enjoy the game in which they are playing. This also relates very closely to how players perceive their coach(es) and their interaction with them.

### *Main Objectives:*

1. To instill a passion and enjoyment in the game.
2. Develop skills that are transferable throughout life (i.e. physical, psychological, and social skills).
3. Create positive, safe, and encouraging learning environments.

### *Coaching Objectives:*

1. Be a positive role model
  - Demonstrate respect for team members, opponents, referees, parents, spectators, and opposing coaches
2. Understand who you are coaching
  - All children/athletes are different and learn differently
  - Children are not defined by chronological age alone
  - Each child matures and develops at his/her own pace
  - Treat each child as an individual
  - Not all children participate for the same reasons
  - Children are humans with feelings- be patient, kind, and understanding
  - Find ways for your players to have fun and learn



## Thanks for Coaching!

First let us thank you for volunteering this season! We know that it is a significant commitment of your time and energy. By coaching you are helping to provide an exciting athletic experience for the youth in our community.

Our hope is that each player is allowed to achieve their personal best while having fun. This manual will hopefully give you some ideas and resources that will prepare you to be able to create a friendly and encouraging environment for all your players that will allow them to achieve their personal best all while having fun.

### **A Friendly Reminder:**

You do not need to be the “best” coach or even know that much about the techniques of a sport to be considered the “greatest coach in the world” by your players. By creating a fun and safe environment for your players (of ALL ages) you will give them the room to fall in love with the sport. Teaching sport related skills are not the most important task you have while coaching your players. In fact, the younger or inexperienced players must first learn how to run, jump, stop, move, fall, etc. without a ball before they will be physically ready to do all of those movements with a ball. In U.S Soccer's “Best Practices” Guidelines they state that for these age groups “Training sessions should be treated more as physical education than specifically as sport training.” One of the biggest mistake coaches make during these ages is thinking that this age’s performance levels should look like “real sport” and that they should be trying to get the little people to play like that as soon as possible.

This manual is designed on the principle of **player-centered** and not **coach-centered**. In other words, practices should “fit the activity to the child....not the child to the activity or what’s easier for the coach”. This is why we have given you insight into the developmental stage that you are coaching. The hope is that by understanding the age appropriate skills and activities that you are coaching helps to decrease frustrations and increase individual and team successes. We have given you activities that are developmentally appropriate and will teach the appropriate skills in a progressive way. These practices focus on activities (drills) aimed at teaching and reinforcing physical movement skills, as well as individual softball skills such as; throwing, catching, tagging, hitting, running bases, and pitching. Activity difficulties will increase with the older age groups.





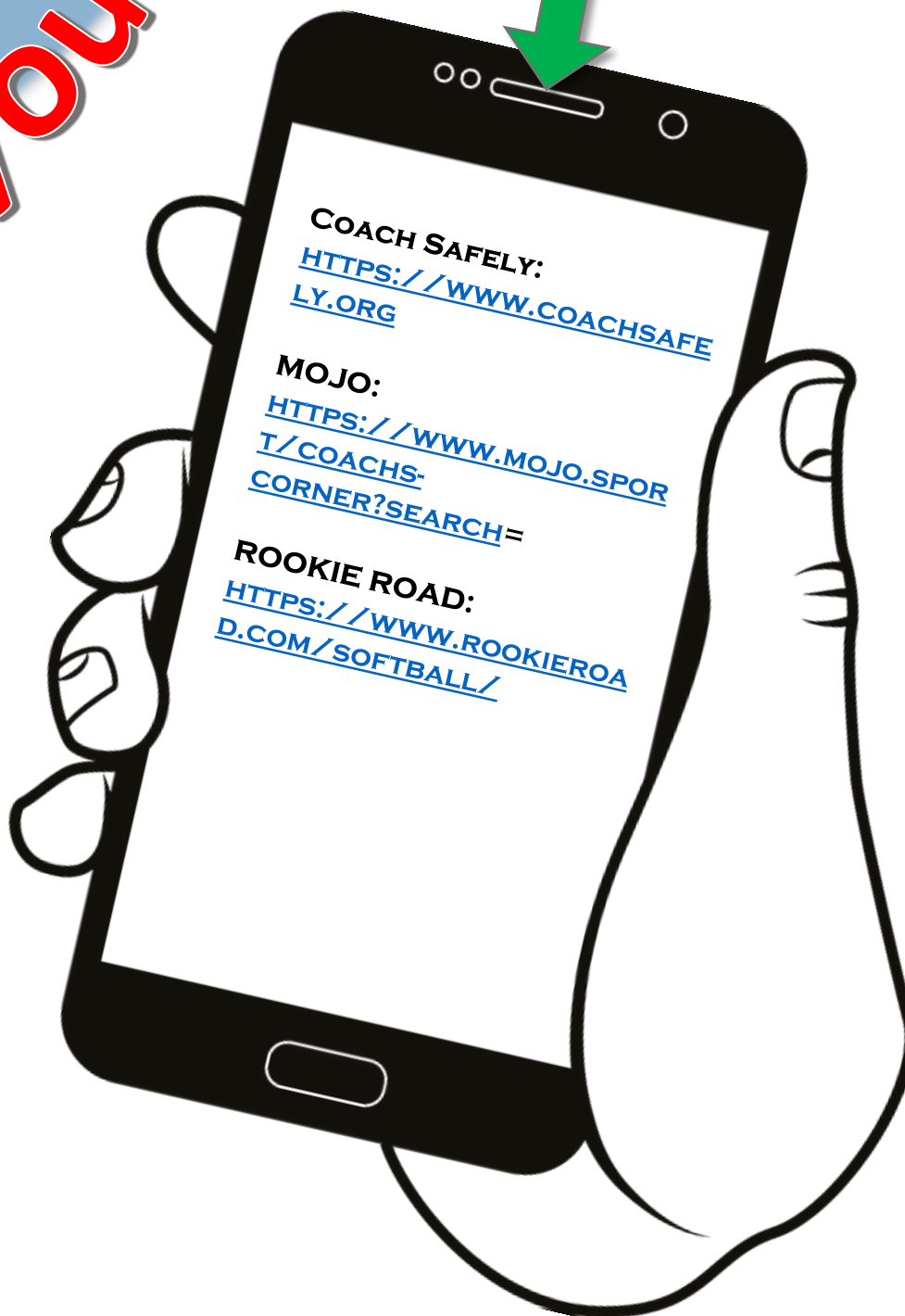
# Is this you?!

## WE GET IT!

Try these videos from our favorite websites and apps!

These are perfect for visual learners and those who hate or don't have the time to read!

# Try these!



**COACH SAFELY:**  
[HTTPS://WWW.COACHSAFE  
LY.ORG](https://www.coachsafely.org)

**MOJO:**  
[HTTPS://WWW.MOJO.SPOR  
T/COACHS-  
CORNER?SEARCH=](https://www.mojo.sport/coachscorner?search=)

**ROOKIE ROAD:**  
[HTTPS://WWW.ROOKIEROA  
D.COM/SOFTBALL/](https://www.rookieroad.com/softball/)



## ROLES OF THE COACH

The main goal for both coaches' is to work together to balance each other to create a positive learning environment for the players.

### *Roles of the Head Coach:*

#### **1. The leader of the entire program/team:**

- a. Teach/model character
- b. Teach discipline
- c. Teach work ethic
- d. Teach Sportsmanship
- e. Teach commitment to the team

#### **2. Decision Maker:**

- a. Make major decisions
- b. "Bad Cop"- decide discipline and rules.
- c. Create practices and game line-ups.

#### **3. Head Voice of the Team:**

- a. Play maker- make the calls during practice and games, corrects mistakes as they see fit.
- b. Create the environment for practice and create game plans.

#### **4. Create Roles for Assistant:**

- a. The Head Coach is the role model for how they want things done.
- b. Teach expected roles for the Assistant Coach and explain to them their responsibilities and privileges. Don't assume that the Assistant Coach already knows what to do.
- c. Never criticize your assistants- this hurts you and the program and causes players to lose respect for their coaches.
- d. Set plans and responsibilities for your assistant. Explain to them what you would like for them to do before, during, and after practices and games.
- e. Be open for Assistant Coach's input and work with them.





## ***Roles of the Assistant Coach:***

### **1. Main Role:**

- a. Implement and support the Head Coach's philosophy, instructions, decisions, and things that they may need assistance with. Don't just assume what to do or do something other than what the Head Coach is asking.
  - Ask the Head Coach on what they may need help with or to clarify something that you do not understand.
- b. Support and encourage players while boosting their attitudes.
- c. The Assistant is not a second head coach- the responsibilities and privileges differ.
  - The assistant enforces the Head Coach's instructions and expectations.
- d. Help with little things such as:
  - Make sure that a player understands and performs a technique correctly.
  - Make sure that an activity continues if the Head Coach has to step away and handle a situation.
  - Help to set up and break down practices and warm-ups.
- e. Act as dugout manager.

### **2. Decision Enforcer:**

- a. Not the decision maker- the Head Coach makes the major decisions.
  - Assistant is meant to help support the Head Coach's program/team.
  - Assistant Coach does not make calls during practices or games unless stated otherwise by the Head Coach.
- b. "Good Cop"- support, encourage, and ensure that players understand the instructions/rules without contradicting things that the Head Coach's has stated. (Even if you do not agree).
- c. Head Coach determines the discipline, the Assistant Coach relays the information to the Head Coach for them to decide what discipline is necessary.

### **3. Head Ear of the Team:**

- a. Listen for things that need to be addressed to the Head Coach.
- b. Provide players with a positive support system on the bench during games, boost attitudes, and monitor injuries and report progress to the Head Coach.
- c. Allow the Head Coach to speak for themselves.
  - Try to refrain from interrupting while the Head Coach is talking. Allow them to extend an invitation for comments/input.
    - Interruptions could increase player confusion, decrease time during breaks, and/or decrease flow of practice or the activity. Instead of interrupting, simply ask, "Coach may I add something?"
      - This will encourage respect on both sides.
- d. Offer suggestions and inputs to the Head Coach; Head Coach will use info as they see necessary.

## EQUIPMENT

### Coaches' Equipment

At your first practice, you will receive a gear bag with the items listed below:

1. Bucket of Balls
2. Cones
3. 2-4 Bats
4. 1-2 Batting Helmets
5. 2-3 Fielders Gloves
6. Catcher's equipment; Helmet, Mit/Glove, Chest Plate, and Leg Guards (8U-16U only)
7. 6U will receive Tee
8. Line-up Cards

Suggested but not required:

1. *Medical Kit*- A simple kit for games and practices is a good idea for every coach. A kit should include: **Ice Packs, Band aids, Antibiotic ointment**. If you use chemical cold packs, be careful about applying them directly to skin; some types are exceedingly cold!
2. *WHISTLE and a CLIPBOARD*- (for practice plans, contact forms, substitution schedules) are helpful items.

### Players' Equipment

1. **BAT & GLOVES**- Encourage each player to bring their own bat and fielders glove and to use it often, not just during team practice. Have the players write their name on their personal equipment.
2. **CLEATS**- All cleats must be rubber or molded plastic (no metal cleats). 6U may wear tennis shoes. No open toe shoes.
3. **WATER BOTTLE** (with player's name on it)
4. **JERSEY, PANTS, SOCKS, BELTS**- Uniforms must be matching during the games. No alterations, including add player names to jerseys, will be allowed.



## TEAM MANAGEMENT

### PARENT ORIENTATION MEETING:

The parent meeting is very important. It is an opportunity to get to know your families better and let them get to know you. This will allow you to set the stage for open communication, share your philosophies and goals, and give season and team information.

#### In This Meeting You Should:

- Briefly introduce yourself.
- Tell them what your focus is for the players and team. ( i.e. Have fun, teach appropriate skills, have them want to play again)
- Tell them what they can expect from you: to be on time, be prepared, be positive, be fair, no coaching from the sidelines, etc.
- Tell them what expectations you have of them: get child to practice, communicate if they will be absent or late, be positive, pick-up on time etc.
- Make sure you cover how you will communicate all information about games and practices with them (email, text, group me, team sports apps, etc.)
- Make sure you have all the correct emails and phone numbers.
- Make sure everyone is aware of practice and game schedules.
- You are responsible for your parents and spectators behaviors. Make sure everyone understands the code of conduct.
- Get parent volunteers for assisting or help with snacks, carpools, etc.

### TEAM ORIENTATION MEETING:

It is also a good idea to take a few minutes to have a team meeting with your players. Keep this brief and simple. Remember the more you talk, the less they listen. Just introduce yourself and have each player introduce themselves. You can also have them answer a simple question such as “what is your favorite food” or “what is your favorite animal”? This is a simple icebreaker that will help the players get to know each other. You also will want to let them know what your coaching will focus on, but in a way they will be able to understand.

#### For Example You Could Say:

“We are going to have a great time this season! We are going to learn all the ways we can move our bodies and learn how to play softball. You all are going to be learning lots of new things and even if things are hard to begin with, I am going to want you to keep giving your best effort. That is how we will know if we are winning our games....if we are giving our best effort and learning new things. Not by the score of the game but how hard you tried. OK?! Now let’s get started!”



## PLAYER DISCIPLINE

It is also important to discuss your own team rules. Your rules will all be slightly different depending on your own personal style, but keep it short and easy to remember.

At the first practice, it is valuable to establish team rules concerning attendance, listening carefully, respecting teammates, *etc.* You will be most successful if you do this with the cooperation and consent of the players themselves. Make it clear to all what the penalty will be for breaking team rules (*e.g.* time out from practice or a scrimmage). This is also a good time to set realistic team goals for the season (*e.g.* to have fun, to work together as a team, to practice good sportsmanship).

### Some other ideas on team discipline:

- Keep your players busy so they don't have time to misbehave. If you have kids standing in line all the time, you are inviting disaster.
- Be positive: say "Please walk" instead of "Don't run".
- Try to deal with problems before they get worse.
- *Speak* with the culprit first, before resorting to other disciplinary measures.
- If time outs don't work, then talk to the parents; ask them to attend practice, if necessary.

Work on your communication skills. Many coaches can speak clearly, use appropriate words well enough and have content that is appropriate to young players. *However, most coaches need a great deal of work on listening to young players, controlling and reading non-verbal cues, and understanding the emotional responses of different athletes to what they say.* The better you understand your players, the less trouble you are likely to have with misbehavior.

### Some Examples Of Team Rules Are:


- 1) No talking when the coach is talking.
- 2) Give your best effort.
- 3) No negative comments to others.
- 4) Have fun!






## TEAM COMMUNICATION

Make sure to establish a way to communicate with your teams. The apps below are commonly used on all smart phone platforms, iPads, tablets, and computers.



1. Download the app shown above.
2. Create Account.
3. In the Chats tab, select the **New chat**  icon.

**Note:** If you don't have the **New chat**  icon on your iPad, select **Chat** at the top of the screen.

4. Select **Start Group** , then enter the new group name and group avatar.
5. To add members, type their name, phone number, or email, or scroll through your current GroupMe contacts.
6. Select **Done** (or the **checkmark**)  to create your group.



1. Download the app shown above.
2. Click **Sign Up** and enter email address.
3. Choose **Coach or Manager**. All parents should choose **Parent or Fan**.
4. Enter your **First and Last Name**. Click to agree for the **Terms of Service**. Click **Create Account**.
5. Click **Create a New Team**.
6. Enter **Team Name and Sport** and **Save**.
7. Add your **Roster manually** or add from existing contacts. (Parent's information)
8. Add your schedules (Games and Events/Practices). This information, along with reminders, will be shared with all members of the group.
9. Group or private messages, posts, emails, and alerts can be sent using the message tab along the bottom of the screen.

## SUGGESTIONS ON DEALING WITH PARENTS

Coaching is exciting and rewarding, but occasionally you may experience difficulty with parents. Some parents may want their child to play more, others may question your judgment as a coach. Whatever the concern, a parent is generally just looking out for their child, often at your expense. Don't be discouraged. There are some things you can do to open up communication and make dealing with parents a positive aspect of your coaching duties.

1. Have a parent meeting before the first practice to discuss your plans and expectations for the season. See the section: "Parent Meeting" for tips on how to do this well. Encourage questions from the parents and let them know that you have given a lot of thought to the upcoming season.
2. Express appreciation for their interest and concern. This will make them more open and at ease with you.
3. Always listen to their ideas and feelings. Remember, they are interested and concerned because it is their children that are involved. Encourage parental involvement. (If you have a preference for a certain time to voice these concerns, such as after practice, make this clear at the Parent Orientation Meeting.) Ask for solutions and not just problems. Implement the 24-hour rule. Wait 24 hours before discussing the situation.
4. Know what your objectives are and do what you believe to be of value to the team, not to the parents. No coach can please everyone!
5. Know the league and game rules. Be prepared to abide by them and to explain them to parents.
6. Handle any confrontation one-on-one and not in a crowd situation. Try not to be defensive. Let the parent talk while you listen. Often a parent will vent their frustrations just by talking. Listen to their viewpoint, then thank them for it.
7. Resist unfair pressure. It is your responsibility as coach to make the final decision. This doesn't mean that you can't still listen to parents.
8. Don't discuss individual players with other parents. The grapevine will hang you every time. Show the same respect for each player on the team that you want the parents to show toward you.
9. Ask the parents not to criticize their children during practice or a game. Don't let your players be humiliated, even by their own parents.



10. Don't blame the players for their parents' actions.

11. Be consistent! If you change a rule or philosophy during the season, you may be in for trouble. At the very least, inform players and parents of any change as soon as possible.

12. Most importantly, be fair! If you treat all players equally and with respect, you will gain their respect, and that of their parents as well.

\*\*\* Remember that you will be dealing with all types of children, and with parents having different backgrounds and ideals. The challenge for you as a coach is to address these differences in a positive manner so the season will be enjoyable for everyone involved.



## PRACTICES

### Practice Guidelines

Be realistic in selecting your objectives! Consider the age and experience of your players. Decide on your priorities - what are the most important things you want to cover before the games begin?

Identify one or more assistant coaches. Assistant coaches are extremely valuable. They make it possible to divide players into smaller groups so that each player gets individual attention. Parents who would like to help but feel they lack the necessary skills should be encouraged to attend practice to help collect balls and direct traffic. The preseason Parent Meeting is an excellent time to solicit help! Any person 18 or older must successfully complete and pass the background check.

### Practice Planning

Have a *written* or drawn-out plan for each practice. You cannot have a good practice if you do not have an idea of what you want to accomplish during that practice. The plan should be written out in detail on a practice planning form or it may just be notes jotted on note card, etc. Writing down your plan will help you think through the equipment and the setup that you will need for the topics to be covered. Save these plans as a record of performance and to help develop a progressive program for the season.

As you plan your practices, remember these tips to keep players' interested and avoid boredom:

- Minimize the amount of talking that you do.
- Get all of the players involved.
- Turn "drills" into games.
- Give players many touches on the ball.
- Break team into small groups to work on specific skills.
- Give players many chances to bat, run bases, and catch in game-like situations.
- Let the kids PLAY!
- Ask guided questions to increase their softball knowledge. Don't just tell them what they are doing.

Keep the practice focused. If you are trying to teach new skills, your practice should concentrate on a single major topic (*e.g.* passing), rather than on many different topics. Make sure to let practice the learned skill in a scrimmage.

Practices should follow a progression: warm-up, drills, scrimmage, and cool down.





## Practice Planner

Plan warm-ups so that each player uses balls, bats, gloves and works on specific softball motions before practices and games. If possible, use or create conditioning exercises that require the players to work with a ball rather than just running or standing in lines; the kids will have more fun and they will learn more softball skills!

Be sure to include dynamic stretching (moving) throughout warm-ups. Younger players don't need a lot of stretching, but you should start the habit early. Avoid static stretching (standing still or holding poses and counting)

Drills should be appropriate for the skills you are teaching. Limit the number of drills in a given practice, and don't spend too long on any one drill. Remember that a child's attention span is limited! Be ready to switch things up if the drills aren't going as planned.

Keep it varied and interesting with a minimum of oral instruction (don't lecture!). Demonstrate as much as possible. If you feel uncomfortable demonstrating techniques, don't hesitate to ask your more skillful players, or perhaps older softball players, to help you. MAXIMIZE the number of touches for each player by running drills with several small groups at the same time; no child likes to stand in line waiting!

Drills should be organized to progress into controlled scrimmages. Follow up a controlled scrimmage with an open scrimmage. Remember, the kids signed up to *play* softball! Let defense scrimmage offense or another Foley Parks and Recreation Softball team.

Be prepared to change your plans. Weather, field conditions, the number of players who come to practice, can all affect your plans. Be flexible and adjust to conditions. You may also need to extend the time spent on a particular drill if the players are having difficulty acquiring a particular skill. If it is especially hot, allow for more frequent water breaks.

After the season starts, it is helpful to take a few minutes of practice to discuss the previous game, emphasizing what your team did well, what can be improved upon, and what the goals should be for the coming week. Ask and encourage your players to answer and ask questions!



***The MAIN POINTS to remember for a successful practice are:***

1. BE PREPARED. Have a plan for what you will cover during the practice.
2. Keep it SIMPLE. Give a short demonstration with a minimum of talk, then have the players work on the drill. MAXIMIZE touches for each player.
3. Make it FUN. Sometimes the drills in books, websites, or videos just don't work for you and/or your players. Be prepared to switch to something you know they can handle.
4. Strive for a PROGRESSIVE acquisition of basic skills. Begin with relatively simple drills. Add movement and then opposition to simulate game conditions. Always consider the age and skill level of your players. The percentage of time spent on practice without opposition should decrease as players become older and more skillful. Restricting or adding space and number of touches are other ways to make drills more demanding.
5. Always have time when the players JUST PLAY.
6. Always BE SAFETY CONSCIOUS with your players.
7. **Avoid the "4 Evil L's"**
  - Laps: warm-up with fun games with the ball instead.
  - Lectures: Don't speak for more than 30 seconds.
  - Lines: No standing waiting for turn. Have them all with a ball participating
  - Language: Watch what you say and how you say it. Don't be inappropriate.



## SESSION OUTLINE

**Session Length:** Times differ with each age group; make sure to include water breaks

### Practice Session Structure:

- **Warm up:** 5-8 min for 6U; 8 min for 8U-10U, 10-15 min for 14U/16U
  - Dynamic stretching- make them move with softball specific movement. NO starting with static stretching! (ex. standing still in circle and counting).
  - Get the blood pumping!
  - 2-3 fun games to get the excited and ready to play.
    - Simon Says
    - Throwing and Catching- progress to competitions
    - Relays- Base Running- add throwing/catching, phantom swinging
    - Freeze Tag Up- Base Running
- **Physical:** 10 min (with and without a ball)
  - 1-2 activities to help develop physical abilities:
    - Running and stopping
    - Changing direction- forward, backward, left, right
    - Jumping and balance
- **Technical:** 15-20 min (main activities to introduce/refine skills)
  - 4-5 fun game activities approximately 5min each for this age they would cover:
    - Throwing
    - Catching
    - Fielding
    - Hitting
- **Game/Scrimmages:** 15-25 min
  - Small game/scrimmage activities such as Defense vs. Offense.
- **Warm-down (cool-down):** 5min
  - Slow dynamic stretching; stretch what you need to stretch
- **Reflection:** 1-3 min
  - If time allows, have a brief meeting to discuss what they learned. Ask them questions and let them respond. Don't just tell them what they did.



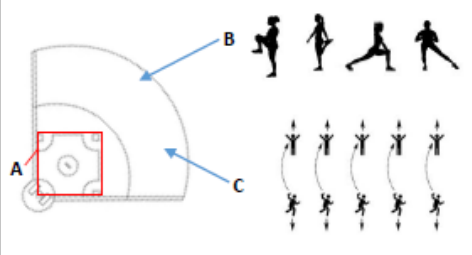
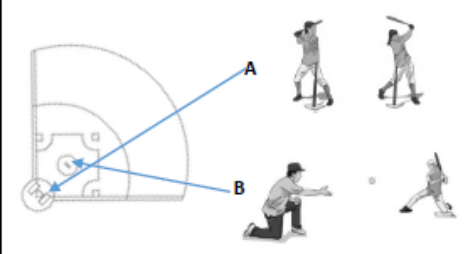

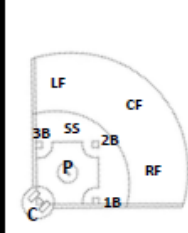
## PRACTICE FIELD SET-UP EXAMPLE

The image below shows and explains a practice field set-up and progressions. In the image, the coach illustrates how each activity will be set up at the beginning of the practice and how the activities will flow to the next.

### SOFTBALL PRACTICE SESSION PLAN

Topic: Hitting & Fielding

Date: 1/1/2023

<p><b>Activity 1: Warm-Up (10 minutes)</b></p> <p>-A: Lap around bases as a team</p> <p>-B: Dynamic Stretching- high knees, walking toe touch, walking lunges, butt kicks, karaoke</p> <p>-C: Throwing Warm-Ups (split into partners and throw slowly progressing in to harder throws; Set up balls for quick transitions)</p>	
<p><b>Activity 2: Hitting (20 minutes)</b></p> <p>-A: T-Work (10 minutes): stance, keeping eyes on the ball, making contact with the ball and following through</p> <p>-B: Soft Toss @ Home plate (10 minutes)- Coach underhand tosses to player, players should practice getting into the batter's box</p>	
<p><b>Activity 3: Fielding (20 minutes)</b></p> <p>-Infield (10 minutes): Ground balls- 5 rolls and switch, players shuffling back and forth/left and right, base throwing</p> <p>- Outfield (10 minutes)- Pop-Ups- 5 throws, drop steps (to left and right), distance throws</p>	
<p><b>Activity 4: Live-Play/Scrimmage (25 minutes)</b></p> <p>-Game Simulation (5-10 minutes), every player gets to hit once (time permitted), coaches hit balls while players run bases</p> <p>- Scrimmage (10 minutes)- Whole team plays</p> <p>- Reflection (5 minutes): Ask guided questions, give positive and constructive feedback</p>	<p><u>Starting Line Up</u></p> <p><b>Team 1 (Defense):</b> Pitcher, Catcher, 1<sup>st</sup> Base, 2<sup>nd</sup> Base, Shortstop, 3<sup>rd</sup> Base, Right Field, Center Field, Left Field</p> <p><b>Team 2 (Offense):</b> Batters</p> 

Practice session set-ups should be simple and will allow more touches on the ball and movement. Make sure to incorporate water breaks in your planning. Remember the more you talk, the less they listen. Keep your coaching points short, relatable, and remember to just let them play!

## SKILL DEVELOPMENT

### Teaching Softball Techniques

Young athletes do not automatically know how to execute the various techniques (skills) associated with the game. Even after learning the basic skills, players need instruction on how and when to use the techniques they have learned in a game situation. Remember that everyone learns and comprehends differently. Some may need instructions more simplified than others.

Our job as coaches is to teach our players the basic techniques and give them the knowledge of the game and confidence in themselves that will help them reach their full potential as softball players. Here are some tips to help you teach the fundamentals to your players:

1. Explain the importance of the technique. Keep it short and relatable!
  - The players are more willing to want to learn if you tell them how and when the technique fits into a game setting.
2. Give 3 or 4 key points to help the players perform the technique.
  - See Key Points for Teaching Softball Techniques below for some guidelines.
3. Demonstrate the technique.
  - If you are unable to do it, ask one of your more experienced or eager players to do it for you. Correct technique if needed.
4. Organize the team into small groups.
  - The smaller the better, depending upon the technique and the amount of help you have.
5. Practice the technique.
  - Observe the players trying to do the technique. Make sure to explain to them when they would use this technique in an actual game.
6. Make corrections as necessary.
  - Be POSITIVE and try to point out when the technique is being done well; however, you must correct technique that is being done wrong. You can do this without directing your corrections at any particular player. If none of your players can perform the technique, you need to reconsider whether it is appropriate for their age and experience level.
  - Make sure to acknowledge their attempts!



7. Practice game-like situations and conditions.
  - In order to tell if the players can do the technique in a game-like situation, increase the difficulty by adding a defender, making their space smaller, or by speeding up the pace of the activity. Scrimmages will show whether a technique has been learned.

### Teach Using Progressions

The basic idea in teaching softball techniques is to start simple and increase the level of difficulty.

1. Start with the simplest elements of the technique. Let the players learn initially without any pressure.
2. Gradually add more elements of the skill.
3. Gradually increase the difficulty level of the activity. Increase difficulty (pressure) by:
  - a. increasing the number of players executing the skill in a limited area
  - b. reducing the space available for executing the drill
  - c. specifying the direction the player must move
  - d. adding a passive defender/s ("shadow defense")- No contact
  - e. adding an active defender/s
  - f. Finally, perform the skill in the way it would be used in a game.

**Note:** You can keep practice/field layouts the exact same but add challenges.

Keeping the same layouts helps player development, encourages initiative (players already know what to do when they arrive to practice and games), reduces anxiety and confusion, helps create smooth sessions, and makes planning easier.



## COACHING THE 6U/TEEBALL PLAYER

The 6U/Teeball division may be a player's first exposure to a team sport. Coaches of this age group want to ensure that the player has such an enjoyable experience that they return the following season. The focus should always be to have fun, while also creating and developing those fundamental skills necessary for softball. "Coaching" should be kept to a minimum; teach through enjoyable games and exercises. Be patient and encouraging!

Listed below are some developmental, coaching, and technique considerations which you can reasonably expect to introduce to kids during the season.

### DEVELOPMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS:

- **Psychological/Cognitive:**
  - Individually oriented (egocentric); often thinks about "self" first.
  - Short attention span.
  - Easily bruised psychologically; negative comments carry heavy weight.
  - Perform tasks one at a time.
  - "That's mine!" is a commonly used phrase.
  - Limited tactical abilities.
  - Biggest concern is which way to go when they have ball or hit the ball.
  
- **Physical/Motor:**
  - No sense of pace...will often run until they drop.
  - Running, jumping, skipping, hopping and maintaining balance are not fully developed at this age.
  - Will often fall when changing direction because of high center of gravity.
  - Need multiple breaks during practice and games.
  
- **Psycho- Social:**
  - Typically this is first exposure to team sport.
  - Need to feel secure in practice and games.
  - Social development is limited.
  - Low interest in team activities.
  
- **Coaching Consideration:**
  - Give brief directions.
  - Use several short activities.
  - Lots of water breaks.
  - Emphasize confidence and familiarity with the ball (throwing and catching).
  - Give plenty of encouragement and very little criticism or correction.
  - Primary focus is making the seasons so enjoyable that when the child has choices in activities, they continue to choose to play sports.
  - Encourage decision making.

## TECHNIQUE CONSIDERATIONS

### *Throwing-*

#### *A. Proper Grip*

- Be sure you are teaching the proper way to hold the softball. Draw attention to fingers and thumb on the seam for better grip and control.
  - “See the C” is a good way for players to position the softball in order to properly grip it.
- If your team’s throwing and catching skills are not yet fully developed, have the players catch with Velcro catch paddles or even throw into the backstop or net.
- Don’t worry about form at this point. The goal is to get their shoulders warmed up.
- As the season progresses and skills develop, having the players warm up their arms by playing catch is ideal.
  - You can set this up by having half of the players stand on the third base line, an arm’s length away from the players next to them. The other half of the players will be placed about 7-8 feet across from those on the third base line, distanced in the same way.

#### *B. Proper Throwing Motion*

- Run through proper throwing motion without a ball as a group before actually throwing.
  - This drill can be done with individuals throwing into the backstop of the fence or with partners if your players are able to catch with confidence.
- Feet and shoulders are square standing perpendicular to target (glove foot in front), this is the ‘I’ position.
- When throwing, the player should point their glove or elbow at their target (the fence, net, or their partner) and the throwing arm should move to a “T” position with eyes on target. The ball should be facing away from the target, wrist slightly bent.
- Then bend the throwing arm into “L” position with elbow and shoulder in line and throw at the target, while stepping forward with the front foot and following through across your body with your throwing arm. The back foot should move on the follow-through.





## ***Catching***

### ***A. Proper Catching Position***

- Players start by facing the target.
- The foot of the glove hand should be closer to the target (in front) with the foot of the throwing hand back in the stance.
- The glove hand should be eye level and out in front of the body.
- Fingers up and palm facing the target (partner should be able to see the pocket of your glove)
- Other hand should also up and close to the glove to close the glove once caught
- In these earlier stages of softball, the player will want to catch the ball with the palm up and fingers down - this is ok as they develop.
- The goal is to practice with the palm facing the target.
- As the players progress, they should know when to use which glove orientation.
- Balls thrown to players above the belly should be caught with fingers up, below the belly fingers down.

## ***Hitting***

### ***A. Proper Tee Placement***

- The batting tee should be placed in front of the plate. The point of contact - where the bat meets the ball - should be in front of the plate. By setting the tee up in front of the plate, you are simulating the correct point of contact.
- The height of the tee should be about level with the player's belt.
- Keep eyes on the ball.
- Swing hard making contact with the ball and follow through.

### ***B. Proper Hitting Stance***

- Have the player step up to the plate and hold the bat with their knuckles aligned with 'calm' hands (not gripping the bat too tightly).
- Shoulders should be square and feet should be approximately shoulder width apart and knees bent in athletic position.
- Weight should be evenly distributed between both the front and back feet.
- Player should then distribute weight approximately 60% back and 40% front when starting their swing; this is called "loading."
- Hands should be approximately level with shoulder and ear. Butt of the bat pointing at the catcher.
- Players should be stepping towards the ball while swinging to hit it. This is called the "stride."
- Players' hands should be leading their swing towards the ball. Their back foot should be turning (naturally) during the swing. Players should always follow through after contact.



- A lot of kids at this age stop their swing once contact is made. To encourage follow through you can have them hit deflated soccer or basketballs off the tee. This will force them to push through their swing.
- Make sure they have batting helmets on as they can follow through too strong and come back and hit their heads.

### ***Base Running***

#### ***A. Running***

- Proper Position
  - Head down, body low to the ground, dig in, pump arms, longer stride as you move.
- Always think about where you are going next
- Run through first base
- Look to your right to see if there was an overthrow
- Stop at second and third base (can't run through these bases)

### **BY THE END OF THE SEASON, THE PLAYER SHOULD BE CAPABLE OF:**

1. Throw the ball with some accuracy (15-20 feet).
2. Catch the ball, using their glove, with two hands.
3. Run the bases in the correct order.
4. Properly swing to hit the ball off the tee about 80% of the time.



## COACHING THE 8U PLAYER

The 8U division may be a player's first exposure to a team sport. Coaches of this age group want to ensure that the player has such an enjoyable experience that they return the following season. The focus should always be to have fun, while also creating and developing those fundamental skills necessary for softball. "Coaching" should be kept to a minimum; teach through enjoyable games and exercises. Be patient and encouraging!

Listed below are some developmental, coaching, and technique considerations which you can reasonably expect to introduce to kids during the season.

### DEVELOPMENTAL CONSIDERATION: "ME AND MY PARTNER"

- **Psychological/Cognitive:**
  - Attention span a bit longer than U-6 but still limited
  - Developing an ability to form a rule structure.
  - Still has limited ability to concentrate on more than one task at a time.
  - Beginning to understand the relation between time and space
  - Effort is synonymous with performance for them; if they feel they tried hard, they feel they have performed well.
  
- **Physical/Motor:**
  - Bones still growing; growth plates are near joints. (Be aware of possible injuries to those areas)
  - Still lack sense of pace; will run till they drop
  - Improved coordination from U-6, but physical immaturity is still obvious.
  - Boys and girls are still similar in physical development
  - Beginning to develop physical confidence
  
- **Psycho-Social:**
  - Beginning to understand cooperative play and are more inclined towards group activities.
  - High need for approval from adults
  - Easily bruised psychologically; negative comments carry great weight.
  - Intrinsically motivated; play because it is "fun" and for their own enjoyment.
  - Increased desire for social acceptance.
  - Beginning to develop a team identity.
  
- **Coaching Consideration:**
  - Mixture of individual and partner activities; more activities designed for one ball and 2 players.
  - Introduce target games and maze-type games
  - Conclude each session with small sided games 3v3 or 4v4
  - Introduce easy/simple tactics or team concepts
  - Coach should focus on players relationship with the ball...to want it, how to find it, how to deal with it, feel comfortable with it, keep it close, etc.



## TECHNIQUE CONSIDERATIONS

### *Throwing-*

#### *C. Proper Grip*

- Be sure you are teaching the proper way to hold the softball. Draw attention to fingers and thumb on the seam for better grip and control.
  - “See the C” is a good way for players to position the softball in order to properly grip it.
- If your team’s throwing and catching skills are not yet fully developed, have the players catch with Velcro catch paddles or even throw into the backstop or net.
- Don’t worry about form at this point. The goal is to get their shoulders warmed up.
- As the season progresses and skills develop, having the players warm up their arms by playing catch is ideal.
  - You can set this up by having half of the players stand on the third base line, an arm’s length away from the players next to them. The other half of the players will be placed about 7-8 feet across from those on the third base line, distanced in the same way.

#### *D. Proper Throwing Motion*

- Run through proper throwing motion without a ball as a group before actually throwing.
  - This drill can be done with individuals throwing into the backstop of the fence or with partners if your players are able to catch with confidence.
- Feet and shoulders are square standing perpendicular to target (glove foot in front), this is the ‘I’ position.
- When throwing, the player should point their glove or elbow at their target (the fence, net, or their partner) and the throwing arm should move to a “T” position with eyes on target. The ball should be facing away from the target, wrist slightly bent.
- Then bend the throwing arm into “L” position with elbow and shoulder in line and throw at the target, while stepping forward with the front foot and following through across your body with your throwing arm. The back foot should move on the follow-through.



## ***Catching***

### ***B. Proper Catching Position***

- Players start by facing the target.
- The foot of the glove hand should be closer to the target (in front) with the foot of the throwing hand back in the stance.
- The glove hand should be eye level and out in front of the body.
- Fingers up and palm facing the target (partner should be able to see the pocket of your glove)
- Other hand should also up and close to the glove to close the glove once caught
- In these earlier stages of softball, the player will want to catch the ball with the palm up and fingers down - this is ok as they develop.
- The goal is to practice with the palm facing the target.
- As the players progress, they should know when to use which glove orientation.
- Balls thrown to players above the belly should be caught with fingers up, below the belly fingers down.

## ***Hitting***

### ***C. Proper Tee Placement***

- The batting tee should be placed in front of the plate. The point of contact - where the bat meets the ball - should be in front of the plate. By setting the tee up in front of the plate, you are simulating the correct point of contact.
- The height of the tee should be about level with the player's belt.
- Keep eyes on the ball.
- Swing hard making contact with the ball and follow through.

### ***D. Proper Hitting Stance***

- Have the player step up to the plate and hold the bat with their knuckles aligned with 'calm' hands (not gripping the bat too tightly).
- Shoulders should be square and feet should be approximately shoulder width apart and knees bent in athletic position.
- Weight should be evenly distributed between both the front and back feet.
- Player should then distribute weight approximately 60% back and 40% front when starting their swing; this is called "loading."
- Hands should be approximately level with shoulder and ear. Butt of the bat pointing at the catcher.
- Players should be stepping towards the ball while swinging to hit it. This is called the "stride."
- Players' hands should be leading their swing towards the ball. Their back foot should be turning (naturally) during the swing. Players should always follow through after contact.



- A lot of kids at this age stop their swing once contact is made. To encourage follow through you can have them hit deflated soccer or basketballs off the tee. This will force them to push through their swing.
- Make sure they have batting helmets on as they can follow through too strong and come back and hit their heads.

### ***Base Running***

#### ***B. Running***

- Proper Position
  - Head down, body low to the ground, dig in, pump arms, longer stride as you move.
- Always think about where you are going next.
- Run through first base.
- Look to your right to see if there was an overthrow.
- Stop at second and third base (can't run through these bases).
- Incorporate timing runs.

#### ***C. Sliding***

- Proper Position
  - Legs in a figure four, slide on both "cheeks" (not on one side!), arms bent and up above the head (next to the ears/helmet) to protect the head.
  - Teach players to run hard into the slide - if a player hesitates, that could create a greater opportunity for injuries to occur.

### **BY THE END OF THE SEASON, THE PLAYER SHOULD BE CAPABLE OF:**

1. Throw the ball with some accuracy (20-25 feet).
2. Catch a ball thrown to them, using their glove, with two hands.
3. Be able to hit from coach-pitch 50% of the time and off a tee 90-100% of the time.
4. Understand the basics of what to do on defense when the ball is put into play.
  - a. How to make an out.
  - b. How to back up a teammate.



## COACHING THE 10U PLAYER

The 10U player should continue to have fun and develop an appreciation for the game of softball while building on skills learned at the 6U and 8U levels. Keep challenges fun and relatable.

### DEVELOPMENTAL CONSIDERATION: “THE START OF US”

- **Psychological/Cognitive:**
  - Ability to remember and follow more complex instructions.
  - Ability to focus longer and stay on task.
  - Beginning to think in advance of or anticipate, the ball.
  - Better understanding of moving both with the ball and without the ball.
  - Developing a sense of pace.
  
- **Physical/Motor:**
  - Making huge gains in strength, endurance, balance and power.
  - Can be large differences in size as some children grow much faster.
  - Increased coordination and ability to perform more difficult task.
  - Skills as pitcher and catcher being to be developed.
  
- **Psycho– Social:**
  - Increased peer attachment and need to belong.
  - Some becoming more serious about playing and with whom they play.
  - Pressure generated by peers is significant.
  - Association with team becomes more important.
  - The coach takes on increased significance.
  - Egos are sensitive.
  
- **Coaching Consideration:**
  - Mixture of individual, partner and small group activities.
  - Encourage players to be creative and take risks.
  - Ask their input----They will tell you how things are going.
  - End each practice with scrimmage.
  - Take great care in maintaining a positive team culture.
  - Keep the focus on process and performance rather than outcome of games.
  - Although winning is not the main focus, keep in mind it is easier to “win games” at this age group with teams that are “organized” but lack skill....the skillful approach can result in losing games in the short term but creates creative, skillful players in the long run.
  - Work to ensure that the players understand the “why” of a drill. Be sure to give more clarifications if needed.



## **TECHNIQUE CONSIDERATIONS**

### ***General***

- A. See 6U & 8U for basic skill technique development.
- B. Play ALL positions. Teaching players in play in all positions, increases their overall understanding of the sport.

### ***Stealing***

- A. See 8U.

### ***Introducing Kid/Player Pitch***

- A. See “Coaching the Pitcher”

## **BY THE END OF SEASON, THE PLAYER SHOULD BE ABLE TO:**

1. Throw the ball with some accuracy, about 15-20 ft.
2. Catch the ball with a glove, using two hands.
3. To properly swing in order to make contact with a ball thrown by a pitcher.
4. Players should start playing cooperatively with the entire team.
5. If players do not know something or need further explanation of a drill, they would be expected to ask their coaches for help/more information.





## COACHING THE 12U & 16U PLAYER

Coaching the 12U and 16U groups are similar. While the 12U still needs more help with learning and development, the 16U should practice and understand all aspects of the game. Please see sections regarding 6U-10U for technique considerations.

### DEVELOPMENTAL CONSIDERATION: THE DAWN OF TACTICS: “US”

- **Psychological/Cognitive:**
  - Able to perform more complex tasks.
  - Players able to use abstract thought to solve problems in the game.
  - Usually eager to learn.
  - Should be able to think while running with the ball.
  - Internally motivated.
  
- **Physical/Motor:**
  - Coordination improves.
  - Strength and power become significant part of their performance.
  - Has the ability to strike the ball a good distance with confidence in its direction.
  - Skills as pitcher and catcher being to be developed.
  - Players need to properly warm-up and stretch---strains and muscle pulls are common otherwise.
  
- **Psycho– Social:**
  - Acceptance by teammates is critical.
  - How they feel about themselves effects how they relate to their teammates.
  - Playing too much and feeling like they don’t have a choice in the matter can lead to burn out and drop out.
  - Rules and agreements created within the team group can help maintain a positive and effective learning environment.
  - Try to hand over leadership and ownership of the team to them.
  - Egos are sensitive.
  
- **Coaching Consideration:**
  - Players need opportunity for individual, partner, small group and whole team practice.
  - More activities that allow tactical concepts to be practiced. Situational drills are essential.
  - Allow 20 minutes at end of practice for unstructured play (scrimmages).



**BY THE END OF SEASON, THE PLAYER SHOULD BE ABLE TO:**

1. Players should start focusing on both building their skills and mastering their competency in 1-2 positions.
2. Aside from working on their physical skills, players would also be expected to work on their knowledge of the game, their confidence, and their attitude.
3. If players do not know something or need further explanation of a drill, they would be expected to ask their coaches for help/more information



## COACHING THE PITCHER

**\*\*\*\*This section is still in working progress. We are currently working with the local high school to ensure quality information. All updated information will be posted on [Foleyrecreation.com](http://Foleyrecreation.com).**



## COACHING THE CATCHER

**\*\*\*\*This section is still in working progress. We are currently working with the local high school to ensure quality information. All updated information will be posted on [Foleyrecreation.com](http://Foleyrecreation.com).**



## GAMES

Game time should be a fun exciting experience that allows the players to freely play and practice all the things they have been learning. For some players who have never played or are playing against kids they don't know, they may be a bit nervous before the first game. Be patient, kind, and reassuring.

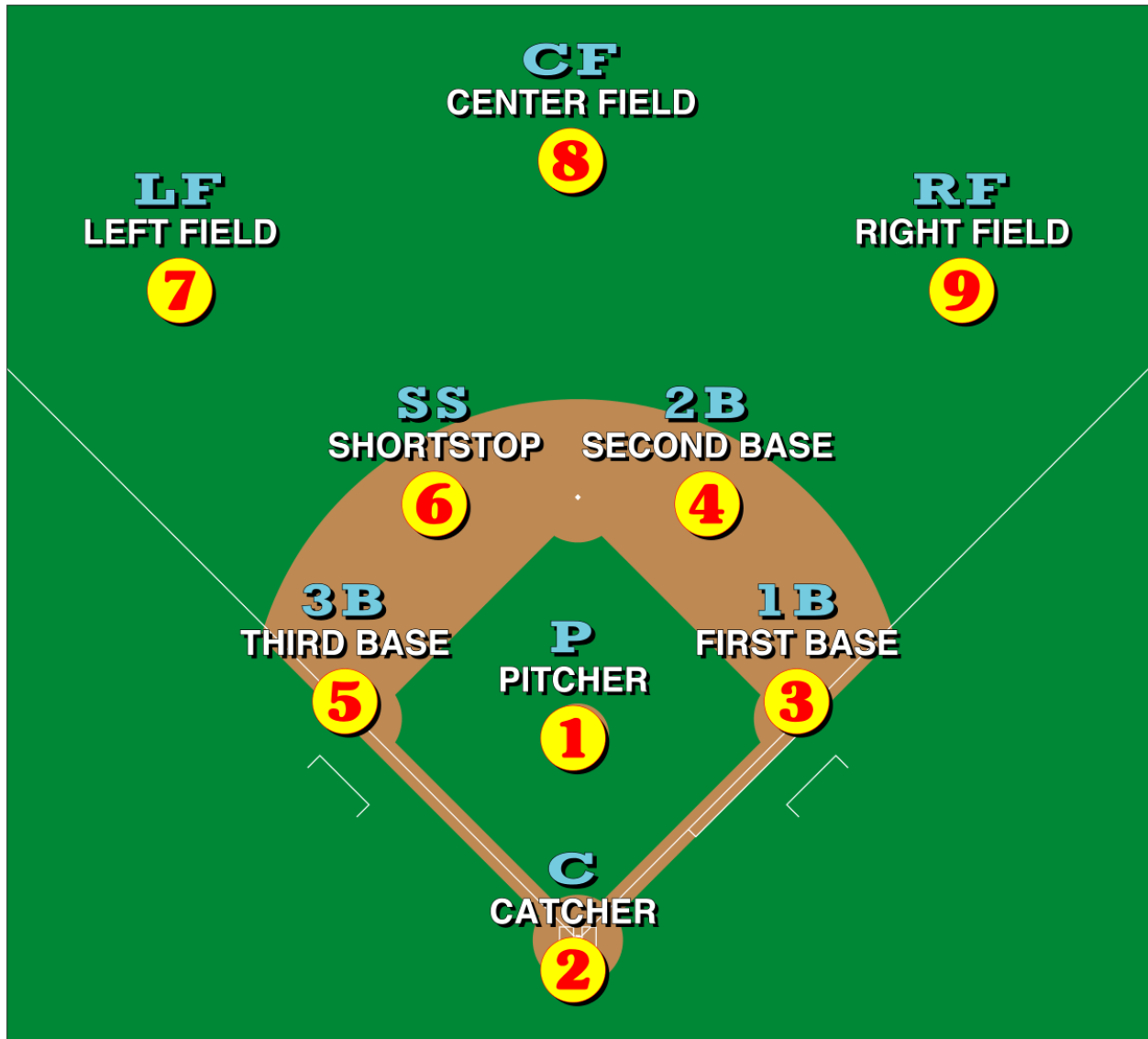
### Other important things to consider for game time are:

- Letting families know how early to show up for a game...30 min prior? 15 min prior?
- What warm-up activities will you have your team do before a game? You will want them to get moving and ready to play, especially if the weather is chilly or wet.
- Making sure families and players know what behaviors are acceptable on the sidelines and in the game: cheering for both teams, no negative comments, no coaching from the sidelines, good sportsmanship. Understand that the players and families will follow your example of behavior.
- Make sure to let your players know to listen to yours and their teammates' instructions. Remind parents that coaching from the sides lines causes too much confusion and frustration for the players.
- Remind your team about the purpose of the game? Winning isn't the most important part of the game....learning and having fun is.
- Have a plan for keeping track of player play time and rotation.
- Remember the developmental stage your players are in. Don't get angry or visibly frustrated when players are struggling with skills, instead guide and support them in a positive tone.
- Don't get frustrated when they don't listen or understand. Stay positive and keep instructions short and simple.
- Make sure all players are allowed to play in all areas of the field. No player should be labeled an "infielder" or "outfielder" player at this level. Players benefit more from understand all positions on the field.
- Set a post-game routine be. A brief meeting/reflection about what they did well on and what they can improve on. Ask them individually as well as a team.
- Try to be consistent; your players will look forward to whatever you do. The goal is to end the day with a positive message.
- LET THEM PLAY! Keep instructions short and let them figure things out as a team. Players must learn to think for themselves. Too many instructions takes away from the players ability to express themselves and doesn't allow the opportunity for team cohesion.



## PLAYER POSITIONS

A game of softball involves team members taking turns as batters to play against the other team of fielders, with the latter side made up of a pitcher, a catcher, three basemen, a shortstop, and three outfielders.



**Infield Positions:** Pitcher, Catcher, First Base, Second Base, Shortstop, and Third Base.

**Outfield Positions:** Left Fielder, Center Fielder, and Right Fielder

## POSITION ROLES



**BATTER:** One member from the opposing team competes against the entire opposing team. The batter's goal is to hit the ball into fair territory and run the bases in an attempt to score.

**1 PITCHER:** This position underhand throws the ball from the pitcher's mound to the opposing team's batter.

**2 CATCHER:** This player is positioned in a crouch behind home plate and attempts to stop runs from being scored and throwing balls ahead of the batter before she reaches the bases.

**3 FIRST BASE:** This player is positioned at the first base, to the right of the pitcher, and attempts to catch throws at first base in order to prevent the runner from advancing. Those who play first base need to cover their base from grounders, pop-ups, and be quick on their feet. They also need to have good glove skills since they'll be catching throws from various parts of the field often.

**4 SECOND BASE:** This player is positioned at the second base, opposite of the home plate, and attempts to catch balls at second base, help first base if needed, or even throw balls to the pitcher to help eliminate the opponent, depending on where the ball ends up. Second basemen must cover their base, field ground balls, and catch pop-ups. They need to have fast reflexes and good glove skills and need to be good throwers.

**5 THIRD BASE:** This player is positioned at the third base, to the right of the pitcher, and attempts to throw the ball to the catcher before the opponent reaches home plate. Third basemen covers the third base, must field any and all balls hit into their area, and catch throws from their teammates. They need to have incredibly strong and accurate throwing arms to throw the ball across the diamond, is quick on their feet and fearless of line drives.

**6 SHORTSTOP:** This player is positioned between the second and third bases, and is responsible for balls that end up in that area. The shortstop has many responsibilities, including catching and fielding, and are very versatile players. They cover the area that's left open between second and third base and are positioned in the middle of the two, which gives them a unique view of the field. The position calls for a player that has a versatile and dynamic set of skills.

**7 LEFT FIELD:** The left fielder is in charge of catching fly balls, fielding ground balls, and catching line drives. They're positioned closest to the third base and act as a backup to the third baseman and the center fielder.

**8 CENTER FIELD:** Center is also usually the one telling the outfield when to shift in the field or go deeper based on the opposing batter. The center fielder is the hardest and most demanding of the outfield positions. They patrol the center of the field, which is an extensive amount of area to cover, so they need to be fast and incredibly athletic and able to locate and read balls really well. They also need to catch fly balls, have a strong arm for throwing infield, and be a strong hitter when at the plate.

**9 RIGHT FIELDER:** Right fielders are positioned nearest to first base and tend to be on the taller side with the strongest throwing arm of all the outfielders. They also are responsible for catching or chasing down balls hit down the right foul line and catching fly balls overhead. There's a lot of running involved, so right fielders should be fast runners.



## BASIC RULES FOR 6U SOFTBALL

These rules are not all-inclusive, but they do provide most of the basic rules per age group specifics. Please refer to the official Foley Parks and Recreation rules book or coordinators for any questions regarding rules.

### 6U Teeball/Coach Pitch Specific Rules

1. Teams may play all players on Defense. No maximum limit. All extra players must play in the outfield.
2. Each team will bat entire roster before changing innings (no matter the amount of outs made).
3. Only 2 defensive coaches are allowed to be on the field stationed behind the infielders.
4. The game shall be 3 innings or 60-minute time limit.
5. **No stealing-** automatic out if player leaves bases too early.
6. Each batter shall have the option to choose to either receive 3 pitches or to only use the tee. Pitches may be thrown from any distance preferably inside the pitcher's circle. If after 3 pitches the ball has not been put in play, the ball shall be placed on the tee and the batter shall bat until the ball is put in to play.
7. Time shall be called on any attempted throw towards the pitcher's circle.
8. Size 10' or Safe-T-Core balls.
9. The pitcher must be stationed inside the pitcher's circle prior to the batter hitting the ball.
10. If the batted ball hits the adult pitcher, the ball is dead (the result is a no pitch). An adult pitcher must make an effort to keep from being hit by the batted ball.
11. The batted ball must travel past the batter's circle to be considered a live ball. The pitcher may not run down the batter from the right side of the pitcher's circle to the third base area. She must throw the ball to the 1st baseman or the runner shall be declared safe. The pitcher may run and tag the batter from the right side of the circle towards the first base area only.
12. Pitching coaches must make every effort not to interfere with the defensive team.
11. No bunting.
13. Play shall stop when any defensive player has possession AND control of the ball in front of the lead runner AND time is awarded by the umpire, OR if the pitcher has full control of ball in the circle (it can be either).
14. Score is not kept.
14. Coaches can stand down the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> base lines.





## BASIC RULES FOR 8U SOFTBALL

These rules are not all-inclusive, but they do provide most of the basic rules per age group specifics. Please refer to the official Foley Parks and Recreation rules book or coordinators for any questions regarding rules.

### 8U Coach Pitch Specific Rules

1. Maximum of 10 players on Defense.
2. Maximum of 10 batters that may bat per half inning or until the defense records 3 outs- whichever occurs first. 6 runs max per half inning, then swap.
3. Revolving batting order consisting of 10 or bat entire roster.
4. The game shall be 6 innings or 60-minute time limit.
5. **No stealing**- automatic out if player leaves bases too early.
6. Each batter will get 5 pitches or 3 strikes. If 5<sup>th</sup> pitch is fouled, pitches will continue until ball is hit into fair territory.
7. Coach Pitchers will pitch from 35 ft. with one foot in contact with the rubber.
8. Size 11' balls.
9. The Coach Pitcher may talk to the batter until he/she releases the ball. A strike will be called if the coach talks to the batter after release of the ball.
10. Pitching coaches must make every effort not to interfere with the defensive team. They should leave the field when the ball is in play if they can do so without interfering with play.
11. No bunting.
12. Play shall stop when any defensive player has possession AND control of the ball in front of the lead runner AND time is awarded by the umpire, OR if the pitcher has full control of ball in the circle (it can be either).
13. Mercy Rule "Run Rule"- 12 after 3<sup>rd</sup> inning, 10 after 4<sup>th</sup> inning, 8 after 5<sup>th</sup> inning.
14. Coaches can stand down the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> base lines.
15. Runners can be awarded one base on a pass ball or overthrow.



## BASIC RULES FOR 10U SOFTBALL

These rules are not all-inclusive, but they do provide most of the basic rules per age group specifics. Please refer to the official Foley Parks and Recreation rules book or coordinators for any questions regarding rules.

### **10U Kid Pitch Specific Rules**

10U in all divisions would be unrestricted play except for the following rules listed below:

1. Maximum of 9 players on Defense.
2. Bat entire roster. 6 runs per inning, 10 batters, or 3 outs and swap.
3. The game shall be 6 innings or 60-minute time limit (finish the inning).
4. 10U can only go home on a pass ball (not a full on steal or delay steal).
5. Dropped 3<sup>rd</sup> strike is in effect. Runner can only advance one base if they over throw first.
6. **Stealing-** Cannot steal home or delay stealing home.
7. Each batter will get 5 pitches or 3 strikes. If 5<sup>th</sup> pitch is fouled, pitches will continue until ball is hit into fair territory.
8. Pitcher's mound is 35' with 11" balls.
9. No bunting.
10. Play shall stop when any defensive player has possession AND control of the ball in front of the lead runner AND time is awarded by the umpire.
11. Mercy Rule "Run Rule"- 12 after 3<sup>rd</sup> inning, 10 after 4<sup>th</sup> inning, 8 after 5<sup>th</sup> inning.



## **BASIC RULES FOR 12U & 16U SOFTBALL**

These rules are not all-inclusive, but they do provide most of the basic rules per age group specifics. If please refer to the official Foley Parks and Recreation rules book or coordinators for any questions regarding rules.

### **12U/16U Specific Rules**

12U/16U in all divisions would be unrestricted play except for the following rules listed below:

1. Maximum of 9 players on Defense.
2. Bat entire roster. 6 runs per inning, 10 batters, or 3 outs and swap.
3. The game shall be 6 innings or 60-minute time limit (finish the inning).
4. Dropped 3<sup>rd</sup> strike is in effect. Runner can only advance one base if they over throw first.
5. Each batter will get 5 pitches or 3 strikes. If 5<sup>th</sup> pitch is fouled, pitches will continue until ball is hit into fair territory.
6. Pitcher's mound is 40 ' with 12" balls. Check 16U
7. Play shall stop when any defensive player has possession AND control of the ball in front of the lead runner AND time is awarded by the umpire.
8. Mercy Rule "Run Rule"- 12 after 3<sup>rd</sup> inning, 10 after 4<sup>th</sup> inning, 8 after 5<sup>th</sup> inning.



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## SEASON REMINDERS

1. Address officials with respect after innings, if possible.
2. Request that your parents don't coach their kids or address the officials.
3. 24 hour Rule – if someone has a question about a playing time or with the officials, please wait until the next day instead of when tensions are high immediately following a game.
4. Be consistent with handling discipline.
5. Organize practices and games.
6. We have insurance coverage for all kids above and beyond whatever their current insurance does not cover. If someone gets hurt, please contact a coordinator and complete an incident report.
7. Lightning – we will suspend practice and games in the event of nearby lighting.
8. Clean-up after yourself (have the players do it).
9. First aid kits in concessions stand.
10. Have a team Mom or assign parents to get drinks following each game once you have your schedule.
11. Always carry a list of parents' contact info and please make certain all kids are gone before you leave or let one of us know so we can make sure they are safe.
12. Check the website [www.foleyrecreation.com](http://www.foleyrecreation.com) or our Facebook page for weather updates. We will not cancel games before 4 pm, but will contact you short after that time if there are weather questions.
13. Train players in multiple positions if possible, regular season games do not count.
14. Ask for help!



## COACHES LETTER TO PARENTS

Coach Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell: \_\_\_\_\_

- Coaching philosophy (Fun, Learning/Skills, Game Outcomes)
  - Teamwork and sportsmanship are our top priorities.
  - Please only give encouraging or positive words and not instruction to the kids during practice and/or games.
  - Everyone will have the opportunity to play every position during the season.
  - All players will have the same amount of playing time during the season.
  - We may lose some games during the season, but we will learn from our losses.
  - We will play a lot of games that encourage skill development during practice. It may not look like it, but the kids will be learning while having fun.
  - Please practice with and encourage your child to practice at home.
  - Please be on time to practice and games. Let me know if you will be running late or won't be there.
  
- Practice requirements – Cleats, fielding glove, fielders mask, and a water bottle or drink. Depending on the weather, we will take at least one or more water breaks during practice, so please make sure your child has something healthy to drink.
  
- Inclement weather procedures – You will receive a message in the group chat for any cancellations or delays. Most calls are made after 4:00pm. You can also check the [www.foleyrecreation.com](http://www.foleyrecreation.com) web site or Foley Parks & Recreation Facebook page.
  
- Rules (see [foleyrecreation.com](http://foleyrecreation.com))
  
- Uniforms will be distributed before the first games. In the event of shipment delays, we will wear matching colors until they are distributed.

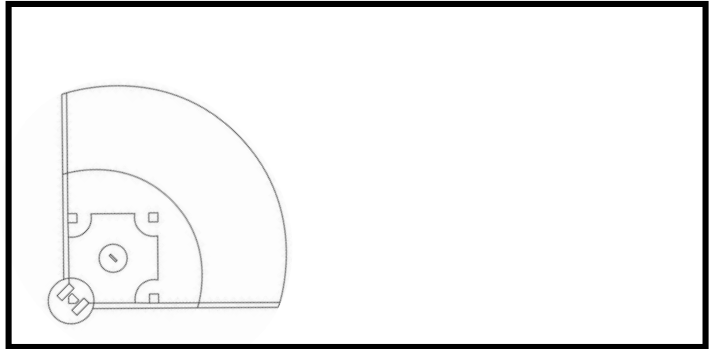


# SOFTBALL PRACTICE SESSION PLAN

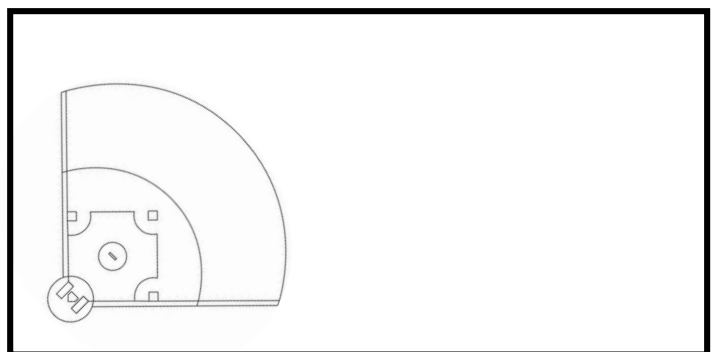
Topic: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

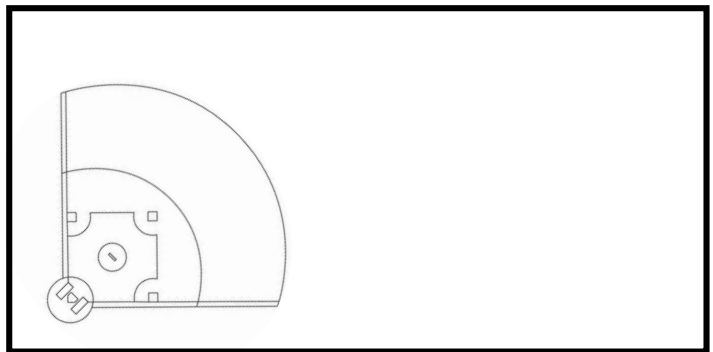
**Activity 1:** \_\_\_\_\_  
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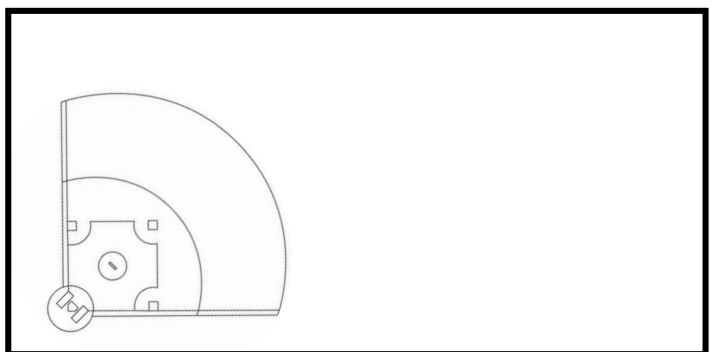
**Activity 2:** \_\_\_\_\_  
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**Activity 3:** \_\_\_\_\_  
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**Activity 4:** \_\_\_\_\_  
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\_\_\_\_\_



## REQUIRED COACHES DOCUMENTS

All Foley Parks and Recreation coaches are required by law to complete all documents and training certifications listed below. At the start of each season, all coaches and other volunteers will be required to complete the following documents via online registration or from a printed version. All printed versions must be signed and returned to the athletic coordinators.

### **Coordinators:**

***Sam Blanquist:*** [shavel@cityoffoley.org](mailto:shavel@cityoffoley.org)

***Rick Lazauskas:*** [rlazauskas@cityoffoley.org](mailto:rlazauskas@cityoffoley.org)

- Code of Conduct & Discipline Policy
- Background Check Instructions
- Communicable Disease Waiver
- Practice Policy
- Travel/Recreational League Interaction Policy
- Concussion Training
- Coach Safely Training





## Foley Parks and Recreation Coaches Code of Conduct

I will remember that I am a youth sports coach and that the game is for the children and not the adults.

I will place the emotional and physical wellbeing of my players ahead of a personal desire to win. In doing so, I will refrain from communicating negative comments or threats to my players.

I will refrain from all manner of personal abuse and harassment of others, whether verbal, physical, emotional or sexual and shall oppose such abuse and harassment.

I will treat all coaches, players, officials, and fans with respect regardless of race, sex, creed, or abilities and I will expect to be treated accordingly.

I will do my best to provide safe playing conditions for my players during all games and practices.

I will be knowledgeable of basic first aid principles needed to treat injuries of my players.

I will do my best to organize practices that are fun and challenging for all my players.

I will use positive coaching techniques that are age appropriate.

I will lead by example in demonstrating fair play and sportsmanship to all my players.

I will provide an environment for my team that is free of drugs, tobacco, and alcohol and I will refrain from their use at all youth sports events.

I will be knowledgeable in the rules of each sport that I coach and I will teach these rules to my players.

I understand that alterations to uniforms will not be permitted including adding names to jerseys.

I will not seek an advantage by circumvention or exploitation of the rules.

I will exhibit good sportsmanship following each game and exchange a cordial greeting with the opposing team and coaches.

I will not violate the amount of practices allowed in a given week and/or the duration of each practice set forth by the Foley Parks & Recreation departments practice policy.

I will complete the mandatory concussion training online and will provide proof of training by making a copy of my certificate and submitting it to the Foley Parks & Recreation Department to hold on file.

I will complete a satisfactory background check and I understand that if I receive a red-light or failed background, I will remove myself from coaching or volunteering with City of Foley recreation programs.

I understand that if I violate this code of conduct or any part hereinabove, I am subject to being reprimanded as set forth in the discipline policy below.



## Discipline Policy

### Inappropriate Coaching Behavior

Situations involving inappropriate coaching behavior will be handled as follows:

**Immediate removal from the ball park/facilities and further suspension depending on the severity of the actions:**

1. Cursing, inappropriate language, or inappropriate gestures directed at officials, coaches, players, athletes, or fans.
2. Failure to leave park area or arguing with an official after being ejected from the game.
3. Throwing objects at an official or onto the field.
4. Being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs.

**Immediate removal from the ball park/facilities and suspension from coaching for at least one year:**

1. Striking or pushing an official, coach, athlete, or fan.
2. Fighting with other fans or throwing objects at other fans.
3. Verbal threats of bodily harm, injury or death towards an official, coach, athlete, fan.
4. Inappropriate touching or verbal exchange of a sexual nature.
5. Disclosing privileged information exchanges during preseason draft or all-star selection meetings.
6. Providing false witness or information about coaches, players or parents.

*Extreme behavior or multiple incident reports of a serious nature will result in permanent dismissal from the Foley Parks & Recreation program. This will also include any violation of the Coaches Code of Conduct.*

### Inappropriate Fan Behavior

Situations involving inappropriate fan behaviors will be handled as follows:

1. Coaches will be asked for assistance and warned that fan behavior may result in penalty to the team.
2. Officials may request assistance of site supervisor if fan needs to be removed.
3. If the situation persists, the police will be contacted.

Entry fees and admission fees are non-refundable in the event of inappropriate behavior. The offender may or may NOT receive a warning, depending upon the severity of the behavior before required to leave the park/facility.

*Extreme behavior or multiple incident reports of a serious nature will result in permanent dismissal from the Foley Parks & Recreation events. This will also include any violation of the Parent Code of Conduct.*

**I have read, understand, and agree to comply with the FOLEY PARKS & RECREATION COACHES CODE OF CONDUCT & DISCIPLINE POLICY as outlined above.**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Printed Name**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Date**





## Updated Instructions for Applying for a Background Check 9/8/20

In order to apply for your background check you must come to the website and enter your information through the self-Registration portion of the website. Through this process you will be asked to provide personal information as well as authorization and consent to the background check therefore it is important that you submit the information yourself.

Follow instructions on each screen to activate account. Enter any all information requested and click to box to agree to all consents and screenings.

<https://city-of-foley.sportngin.com/register/form/489762303>

Once complete, the coordinators will be notified. No additional tasks need to be taken.

**I have read and understand that I am responsible for completing the mandatory background check outlined above and agree to comply with the MANDATORY BACKGROUND CHECK POLICY as outlined above.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Printed Name**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**



## Communicable Disease Waiver

We are monitoring any developments regarding communicable diseases including but not limited to the coronavirus and are preparing for any changes that will need to be made during each sport's season. We reserve the right to change or modify any of the terms and conditions contained in the **Communicable Disease Waiver** to better protect the health and safety of our community and surrounding cities.

In consideration of participating in any way with Foley Parks & Recreation Programs, I hereby acknowledge for myself and my family members that:

1. Participation includes possible exposure to and illness from infectious and/or communicable diseases including but not limited to MRSA, influenza, and COVID-19. While particular rules and personal discipline may reduce this risk, the risk of serious illness and death does exist, and it is impossible to eliminate the risk that my family and I could be exposed to and/or become infected through contact with or close proximity with an individual with a communicable disease;
2. I KNOWINGLY AND FREELY ASSUME ALL SUCH RISKS, both known and unknown, and assume full responsibility for my and my family's participation;
3. I agree to abide by all current and future communicable and infectious disease guidelines set by the Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH) and local government during Foley Parks & Recreation events;
4. I agree to screen myself and my family for infectious symptoms such as excessive runny nose, coughing, fever, and shortness of breathe before coming to ANY AND ALL practices or games. If, however, I observe any unusual or significant hazards during my and my family's presence or participation, I will remove myself and my family from participation and bring such to the attention of the nearest official immediately; and,
5. I, for myself and on behalf of my family members, hereby release and hold harmless Foley Parks & Recreation, with respect to any and all injury, illness, disability, death, or loss or damage to person or property, whether arising from the negligence of the releases or otherwise;
6. By clicking "I accept Waiver," I confirm that I have read the terms and conditions, that I understand them, and that I agree to be bound by them.

**I have read, understand, and agree to comply with the COMMUNICABLE DISEASE WAIVER as outlined above.**

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Printed Name

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Signature

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Date



## Foley Parks & Recreation Practice Policy

1. Teams have a limit of three meetings per week. The week is Sunday to Saturday.
  - 3 games = 0 practices
  - 2 games = 1 practice
  - 1 game = 2 practices
  - 0 games = 3 practices
2. The following are restrictions on the practice times:
  - Tee Ball, 5U, 6U – 1 hour maximum
  - 7U, 8U, 9U – 1 hour and 15 minutes maximum
  - 11U, 12U – 1 hour and 30 minutes maximum
  - 14U, 15U, 16U – 1 hour and 30 minutes maximum
3. Kids cannot be punished for missing rec scheduled practices.
4. Kids may NOT be punished for missing an excessive amount of practices without a legitimate excuse. It is the responsibility of the coach to make his/her best effort to contact the player's parents. Any punishment should be reported to the recreation coordinator and to the parents and player involved. Punishments should not invoke physical, emotional, or mental damages. Punishments should be used to address the behavior and not the person. Punishments should not be used to embarrass, berate, or belittle players in front of their teammates.
5. All practices must end by 8:30 pm.
6. All after-game breakdowns and chats should be done before practice time limit has been reached.
7. Practices or scrimmages cannot be conducted at any location not approved by the coordinators.

All practices will be scheduled through the recreation coordinators and you will be provided with a schedule every week. Please let the coordinators know by Tuesday evenings if you will have any schedule conflicts. Please respect your other coaches and do not make them or a coordinator remove you from the field.

Any coach or team that violates the amount of practices allowed in a given week and/or the duration of each practice set forth by the Foley Parks & Recreation department will be subject to disciplinary action determined necessary by the Foley Parks & Recreation department.

**I have read, understand, and agree to comply with the FOLEY PARKS & RECREATION PRACTICE POLICY as outlined above.**

---

Printed Name

---

Signature

---

Date



## Travel/Recreational League Interaction Policy

Foley Parks & Recreation wants all participants to understand the potential dangers of allowing a child to participate in programs in which limited rules and regulations may exist – while recognizing our program’s rules are designed to protect players from mental, emotional, and physical injury.

We love competition. However, Foley Parks & Recreation is not the place for competitive teams to play. We have established and run this league for the benefit of the recreational player, and it is unfair for them to compete against “travel” teams. Our divisions do not have standings because, while everyone likes to win, winning the division is not what the league is about. When we talk about trying to make our games more competitive, we are referring to the balance of the run of play, not an expectation that the teams will be more competitive. The City of Foley’s goal is to provide a recreational sports experience – with the emphasis on “recreation” and fun.

**OUTSIDE PARTICIPATION RULE.** An athlete who is registered for any Foley Parks & Recreation sports and plans to participate (includes practice) in a non-rec league/outside sports activity in the same sport during the same season must notify the recreation department.

If a player is rostered on a travel ball team in the same sport, the Foley Parks & Recreation league shall take priority. No outside league participation may interfere with the Foley Parks & Recreation league activities, including practices, games, and team activities.

Private individual instruction is not considered an outside sports activity. Private individual instruction is one-on-one instruction between one athlete and one instructor and cannot be instruction with another player or groups of players.

All Foley Parks & Recreation teams cannot participate in any travel ball games or tournaments. In addition, no Foley Parks & Recreation teams may be entered in any tournament without the administration’s permission.

All Recreation teams are only allowed 3 travel ball players that are rostered on the same travel ball teams. All players must be drafted and are not guaranteed.

**I have read, understand, and agree to comply with the FOLEY PARKS & RECREATION TRAVEL/RECREATIONAL LEAGUE INTERACTION POLICY as outlined above.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date





Free #ReturnToPlaySafely resources:  
[www.coachsafely.org/covid19](http://www.coachsafely.org/covid19)



## Coach Safely Training

1. Visit: <https://www.coachsafely.org> for important information regarding volunteer coaching.
2. I understand that I am responsible for understanding and preventing the following:
  - Concussions
  - Heat and Exertion Illnesses
  - Trauma and Overuse
  - Sudden Cardiac Arrest
  - Emergency Action Plan
  - Physical Conditioning- Age-appropriate activities
  - Equipment Usage
3. You are responsible for reading, understanding, and applying the information given in the Coach Safely Training material provided by the Foley Parks & Recreation department.

I understand that the Coach Safely Act is meant to help in the prevention of mental and physical injuries of youth athletes in high risk activities. I promise, to the best of my abilities, to create the most positive and safest learning environments for all athletes. I understand that if I violate any topics mentioned in this law that I may be subject to limited coaching time and/or other disciplinary action determined by the league coordinator.

**I have read and understand that I am responsible for completing the coach safely training outlined above and agree to comply with the MANDATORY COACH SAFELY TRAINING POLICY as outlined above.**

---

Printed Name

---

Signature

---

Date



## TERMINOLOGY

**LEAGUE/REC TEAM:** A team consisting of a group of players who are all registered at their local park and were drafted to make the team.

**COURTESY RUNNER:** A player not in the game, a substitute, may be used to run for the pitcher of record or catcher. This courtesy runner may be used at any time. If a substitute is not available, the player who last completed at bat, not on base (may run.) The pitcher or catcher of record may not be used as a courtesy runner. **\*\*Note:** 8U only can use a courtesy runner for catcher if a catcher is being utilized.

**ABSENT PLAYER:** the absent player is the position that is created in the batting order when a player is withdrawn, and no substitutes are available to replace her. The absent player is also the ninth, unfilled position in the batting order when a team begins the game with only eight players. A team who has an absent player is playing short-handed.

**BALL:** The ball is one of the playing implements. The term is also used to designate a pitch, which is not touched by the bat and is not a strike.

**BASELINE:** A baseline is an imaginary direct line between the bases.

**BASE ON BALLS:** If a batter receives four balls, the batter is awarded a base on balls (often referred to as a “walk”) and shall go immediately to first base before time-out can be called. The defense may not notify the Umpire nor cause illegal pitch(es) to intentionally walk a batter. A team may intentionally walk a batter. They can simply declare to put the batter on base.

**BASE PATH:** A base path is a direct line between a base and the runner’s position at the time a defensive player is attempting (or about to attempt) to tag a runner.

**BAT, ILLEGAL:** An illegal bat is one that does not meet the requirements of for the league.

**BATTER’S BOX:** The batter’s box is the area including the lines in which the batter is positioned while at-bat.

**BATTING ORDER:** batting order is the official listing of offensive players by first and last name, in the order in which they are to bat. Uniform numbers and the defensive positions shall be listed on the lineup sheet.

**BLOCKED BALL:** A blocked ball is a live ball, pitched, batted or thrown, which is touched, stopped or handled by a person not engaged in the game; or touches any object which is not part of the official equipment or official playing area; or touches loose equipment.





**BUNT:** A bunt is a legally batted ball, which occurs when the batter does not swing to hit the ball but holds the bat in the path of the ball to tap it slowly to the infield **BUNT, ATTEMPTED.** An attempted bunt (“offer”) is any movement of the bat toward the ball when the ball is over or near the plate area. Holding the bat in the strike zone is considered an attempt to bunt. In order to take a pitch, the bat must be pulled back away from the ball. If an attempted bunt results in a foul ball, it is treated as any other foul ball, if the batter has two strikes and this happens, the batter is out.

**BUNT, DRAG:** A drag bunt is a bunt where the batter attempts to bunt the ball by running forward in the batter box, carrying the bat with her. The movement of the bat is in conjunction with the batters’ forward movement.

**CATCH:** A catch is the act of a fielder getting secure possession in a hand or glove of a live ball in flight and firmly holding it. In establishing a valid catch, the fielder shall hold the ball long enough to prove complete control of it and that the release of the ball is voluntary and intentional.

21.1) If a player drops the ball after reaching into the glove to remove it or while in the act of throwing, it is a valid catch.

21.2) It is considered a catch if a fielder catches the ball before leaving live-ball area by stepping or falling into a bench, dugout, stand, bleachers or over any boundary or barrier, such as a fence, rope, chalk line, or a pre-game determined imaginary boundary line of the field of play. Falling into does not include merely running against such an object.

21.3) A fielder who is out of play may come back to live-ball territory and make a valid play.

21.4) A collapsible fence is considered in play.

**\*\*Note:** A Catch shall not be credited when:

a) The fielder traps the ball.

b) A fielder catches a batted, pitched or thrown ball with anything other than the hand(s) or properly worn glove. A cap, protector, mask, pocket or other part of the uniform may not be used to catch the ball. A ball prevented from hitting the ground by a player’s equipment (providing it is in its proper place) or body shall not be ruled caught until the ball is securely held in the player’s hand(s) or glove/mitt.

c) The fielder uses any equipment or part of their uniform that is placed from its proper position to play on a batted ball.

d) A fielder is out of play while one foot is entirely touching out of play.

**\*\*Note:**

- 1) An out of play line is in play.
- 2) Any other part of the body is touching out of play.
- 3) In the air after being out of play.
- 4) The fielder is standing on the fence as it is lying on the ground beyond the original plane of the home-run fence when they contact the ball.
- 5) The ball strikes anything or anyone other than another defensive player while it is in flight even though it's caught by a defensive player.
- 6) Immediately after a catch, the fielder collides with another player, Umpire or fence, or falls to the ground and fails to maintain possession of the ball.

**CATCHER'S BOX:** The catcher's box is an area in which the catcher must remain from the time the pitcher steps on the pitcher's plate until the pitch is released. The catcher's body and equipment are considered within the box unless touching the ground outside the box.

**COACH'S BOX:** The coach's box is the area to which the two base coaches (one per box) are restricted prior to the release of the pitch.

**CONFERENCE CHARGED:** A charged conference takes place when a coach or bench personnel requests time-out to meet with offensive or defensive personnel.

**CONFERENCE, PRE-GAME:** A pre-game conference is a meeting involving the Umpires and the coaches near home plate. Team captains may also attend.

**CONFINES OF THE PLAYING FIELD:** The confines of the playing field include the field of play, the designated dugout/bench area, and any enclosed or clearly marked area that is designated as a warm-up area that is adjacent to the field and within the view of the umpire(s).

**CROW HOP:** A crow hop is an act in which the pitcher's pivot foot leaves the pitcher's plate and replants prior to delivery of the pitch.

**DEAD BALL:** It is a dead ball when the ball is not in play. The ball is not considered in play again until the pitcher is in possession of the ball and is stationed within the 16-foot circle and the Plate Umpire calls "Play Ball."



**DEAD BALL AREA:** The dead-ball area is beyond any real boundary, such as a fence, rope, chalk line, any stands, bleachers, dugouts, players' bench or designated media area; or any imaginary boundary line as determined in the pregame conference. If a ball becomes lodged in a fence or backstop, it is considered to be in dead-ball area.

**DUGOUT:** An out-of-play area reserved for rostered players, coaches, and official representatives of the team only.

**EJECTED:** A player or coach removed from the game by the umpires, usually for an unsportsmanlike act or conduct. A flagrant act will require the player or coach to leave the grounds for the remainder of the game. Any ejected player or coach discovered participating in the game would constitute a forfeit.

**FAIR TERRITORY:** Fair territory is that part of the playing field within, and including, the foul lines from home plate to the bottom of the playing field fence and perpendicularly upwards.

**FIELDER:** A fielder is any player of the team in the field.

**FORCE PLAY:** A force play is a play on the batter-runner at first base or any other runner who loses the right to the base occupied and is forced to advance because the batter became a batter-runner. For a given runner, a force play ends as soon as the batter-runner reaches first base or any other runner reaches the next base or a following runner is put out. When a forced runner, after touching the next base, retreats for any reason toward the base they last occupied, the force play is reinstated.

**FORFEIT:** A forfeited game is awarded to the opponent of the offending team. The score shall be recorded as 7 to 0.

**FOUL BALL:** A foul ball is a batted ball which:

- A.) Settles or is touched on or over foul on foul territory between Home and first base, or between home and third base.
- B.) Bounds past first or third base on or over foul territory.
- C.) First falls on foul territory beyond first or third base.
- D.) While on or over foul territory touches the person of an Umpire, a player or any object foreign to the natural ground or contacts the batter in the batter's box.
- E.) It is in foul territory when a base runner in foul territory interferes with a defensive player's attempt to field a batted ball.

F.) Touches the batter or the bat in the batter's hand(s) a second time while the batter is still within the batter's box.

**FOUL TERRITORY:** Foul territory is that part of the playing field outside the foul lines and perpendicularly upwards.

**FOUL TIP:** A foul-tip is a batted ball, which goes directly and speedily from the bat to the catcher's mitt or hand and is legally caught by the catcher, the ball remains live. **\*\*Note:** Any batted ball that travels directly from the bat to any part of the catcher's body or equipment other than the hand(s) or glove/mitt, is a foul ball and dead. It is not a foul tip.

**IN-FLIGHT:** A batted/thrown ball is in flight until it has touched the ground or some object on fair/foul ground, or it has touched a person other than a fielder.

**INFIELD:** The infield is that portion of the field in fair territory that is normally skinned and covered by infielders.

**INFIELD FLY:** An infield fly is a fair fly (not including a line drive or an attempted bunt) which can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort (rule does not preclude outfielders from being allowed to make the catch); and provided the hit is made before two are out and at a time when first and second base or all bases are occupied.

**INFIELDER:** An infielder is a fielder who defends the skinned area of the field around first, second, third or shortstop areas. They usually are the first baseman, second baseman, third baseman, shortstop, pitcher, and catcher.

**INITIAL PLAY:** A fielder is considered to be making an initial play on a fair batted ball, a ball which could become fair or a foul fly ball when the fielder has a reasonable chance to gain control of a ground ball that no other fielder (except the pitcher) has touched or a reasonable chance to catch the ball in flight after it touches another fielder. The fielder is still considered to be making an initial play if the fielder fails to gain control of the batted ground ball and is within a step and a reach (in any direction) of the spot of the initial play.

**INTERFERENCE:** Interference is an act which interferes with, obstructs, impedes, hinders or confuses any fielder attempting to make a play.

A.) Offensive interference is interference (physical or verbal) by the team at bat, or when a runner creates malicious contact with any fielder with or without the ball, in or out of the baseline; or when a coach physically assists a runner during playing action.



B.) Umpire interference is when the Umpire inadvertently moves so as to hinder a catcher's attempt to throw or when a fair, untouched ball touches an Umpire before the closest infielder has a reasonable opportunity to field the ball.

C.) Spectator interference is any action by a spectator, which impedes the progress of the game.

**JEWELRY (Youth only – 18 & under and younger):** Players in the game are prohibited from wearing jewelry such as rings, watches, earrings whether covered with tape or not, bracelets, necklaces (Including cloth and string type), or other hard decorative items. Unadorned devices with no sharp edges or points, such as bobby pins, barrettes and hair clips, no longer than 2 inches, or worn to control a player's hair are permitted. Medical alert bracelets or necklaces are not considered jewelry. If worn they must be taped to the body, so as to remain visible. If jewelry is not removed, that player will not be able to play until the jewelry is removed.

**LEAP:** A leap is when both feet are airborne.

**OBSTRUCTION:** Obstruction is the act of a defensive team member that hinders a runner or changes the pattern of play or when a catcher or fielder hinders a batter unless the fielder is in possession of the ball or making an initial play on a batted ball. The act may be intentional or unintentional, physical or verbal.

A.) It is catcher obstruction when a catcher hinders or prevents a batter from swinging at a pitch.

B.) A fake tag is an act by a defensive player that simulates an attempt to tag a runner. Faking a tag is considered obstruction.

**ON-DECK BATTER:** The on-deck batter is the offensive player who follows the batter in the batting order.

**ON-DECK CIRCLE:** An on-deck circle for each team is a circle 5 feet in diameter located a safe distance to the side and away from home plate, at least 30 feet if space allows.

**PASSED BALL:** A passed ball is a pitch that the catcher fails to stop or control with ordinary effort and which enables a runner to advance.

**PIVOT FOOT:** The pitcher's pivot foot is that foot that is in contact with the ground, as opposed to the non-pivot foot, which the pitcher uses to step toward home plate.



**PLAY BALL:** Play ball is the term used by the Plate Umpire to indicate that play shall start and shall not be declared until all defensive players are in fair territory except the catcher, who must be in the catcher's box, and all runners are properly on base.

**QUICK PITCH:** A quick pitch is a pitch made by the pitcher with the obvious attempt to catch the batter off balance. This would be before the batter takes the desired position in the batter's box or while the batter is still off-balance as a result of the previous pitch.

**RESTRICTED TO THE BENCH:** A player or coach who has been confined to the dugout/bench area for the remainder of the game. It is generally as a result of an infraction of a playing rule (not an unsportsmanlike act or conduct).

**RUNNER:** A runner is an offensive player who has reached first base and has not yet been put out.

**SACRIFICE:** A sacrifice is a bunt which enables any runner to advance or a fly ball which enables a runner to score; but, in either case, results in the batter runner being put out before reaching first base or would have resulted in the batter-runner being put out if the hit had been fielded without error and provided two were not out when the ball was hit. A sacrifice is not listed as a "time-at-bat."

**SHORT-HANDED:** Short-handed refers to a team's status when batting:

A. fewer batters than listed on the original lineup card presented at the pregame conference, or less than 9 batters.

**SLAP HIT:** A slap hit occurs when the batter gives the appearance of bunting, using a modified swing or slap at the ball as it approaches home plate. If an attempt to "SLAP" is a foul ball, it is treated the same as any other foul ball including an attempt by the batter with two strikes.

**SLIDE:** A legal slide can be either feet first or head first. If a runner slides feet first, at least one leg and buttock shall be on the ground. If a runner slides, the runner shall be within reach of the base with either a hand or a foot when the slide is completed. A slide is illegal if:

A.) The runner uses a rolling, cross-body or pop-up slide into the fielder.

B.) The runner's raised leg is higher than the fielder's knee when the fielder is in a standing position.

C.) The runner goes beyond the base and makes contact with or alters the play of the fielder.

D.) The runner slashes or kicks the fielder with either leg.

E.) The runner tries to injure the fielder.

**OVER SLIDE:** An over slide is the act of an offensive player when, as a runner, over slides a base the player is attempting to reach. It is usually caused when the player's momentum causes the player to lose contact with the base leaving the player in jeopardy. The batter-runner may over slide first base without being in jeopardy.

**STARTING PLAYER:** A starting player is anyone in the starting batting line-up.

**STRIKE ZONE:** The strike zone is that space over home plate, which is between the batters forward armpit and the top of the knees when the batter assumes a natural batting stance. Any part of the ball passing through the strike zone in flight shall be considered a strike; the Umpire shall determine the batter's strike zone according to the batter's usual stance.

**STRIKE OUT:** A strikeout is a result of the pitcher getting a third strike charged to a batter. In Fastpitch, this usually results in the batter being out. Anytime first base is unoccupied, or there are two outs, and the third strike is not caught before the ball touches the ground, the batter-runner is entitled to advance.

**SUBSTITUTE:** Any member of a team's roster who is not listed as a starting player, or a starting player who re-enters the game.

**TAG OUT:** A tag out is the putting out of a runner (including the batter-runner), who is not touching a base, by touching the runner with a live ball or with the glove or hand when the live ball is securely held therein by a fielder. The ball is not considered as having been held securely if it is juggled or dropped after the touching unless the runner deliberately knocks the ball from the hand of the fielder.

**TIME - "Time":** is the command of the umpires to suspend play. The ball becomes dead when it is given.

**TRAP:** A batted fly ball or line drive is considered trapped if it hits the ground or a fence on a short hop before being caught. A thrown ball is considered trapped if it is caught but the ball is on the ground and the glove/mitt/hand is over, rather than under it and the fielder does not have secure possession. A pitched ball is considered trapped if it is a strike but touches the ground on a short hop before being caught by the catcher.

**WILD PITCH:** A wild pitch is a pitch that cannot be handled by the catcher with ordinary effort.

## **Thank you for choosing to volunteer!**

Foley Parks & Recreation's mission is to enhance the quality of life for our diverse population by providing a wide range of recreational opportunities at an affordable cost while also providing safe, welcoming, and inclusive parks and facilities.

Coaching is an excellent opportunity for community members to support our youth at the recreational level. As our programs continue to grow, our need for volunteer coaches is too. Whether your reason to coach is to volunteer for your child's team or simply because you love the experience of coaching, the Foley Parks & Recreation Coaching Manuals will help your team make the most of its season. These manuals cover the most essential foundations for coaching at the recreational level. We have worked hard to gather all materials to assist you in your coaching journey. All manuals include information on team warm-ups, skill-specific activities, game formations, and more!

Visit [foleyrecreation.com](http://foleyrecreation.com) for coaching manuals for softball, baseball, and basketball.



# FOLEY PARKS AND RECREATION

