

The logo for Baseball Softball UK is displayed in white text on a green grass background. The word "Baseball" is on the top line, followed by a small dot and a stylized white graphic of a baseball bat and ball. The word "Softball" is on the bottom line, and "UK" is written in a larger, bold font to the right of "Softball".

**Baseball • **  
**Softball UK**



**School Softball 2022**

**GIRLS FASTPITCH  
SOFTBALL CUP**

**COACHING  
RESOURCES**

# Welcome & About This Guide

Thank you for joining us for the inaugural Girls Fastpitch Softball Cup this year.

We hope this guide provides you with useful resources to provide your students with enjoyable, engaging and challenging sessions.

For further questions about the program structure, dates, or courses, please contact [Jayde Ellis](#).

For questions about the program content, activities, or coaching, please contact [Alyson Spinis-Valainis](#).



# ABOUT THE GAME

Softball and baseball are similar sports in many ways. The two sports, and the various formats within each, share the same structure and overall goal:

- The field of play is a diamond.
- A pitcher pitches the ball to a batter, who hits it and scores runs for their team.
- The overall aim is to score more “runs” than the opposition by having batter cross home plate
- A typical game consists of 9 players per team

This section provides further information on softball vs baseball, the overall game structure, and equipment needed.

# Game Structure

## Basic Game Rules and Format

The batting team is trying to hit the ball and advance around the bases, while the fielding team tries to prevent this. Teams switch roles throughout the game, with one full rotation being an “innings”. Games constitute multiple innings, depending on the age and level of competition.

### Batting (Offensive) team

**Goal:** Score points (“Runs”)

**How:** Batters hit the ball, advance around all 4 bases, **passing home plate equals one run**

- A “homerun” is when the ball is hit far enough they can pass all 4 bases and home plate without being out
- More commonly, teams work together to gradually progress their batters around the bases

### Fielding (Defensive) Team

**Goal:** Limit scoring of runs

**How:** By getting batters “out”, including:

- Strike out (3 strikes on the batter)
- Being caught off your hit
- Ball beating batter to a base

If they are get 3 batters out, they switch to offense and have their turn to try to score.

## Baseball

Olympic format for men.

### Pitching

- Overarm, looks like a throw
- Longest pitching distance
- Off a mound

### Field & Baserunning

- Largest distance between bases
- In higher levels, baserunners can get a head start to the net base before the pitcher releases

### Equipment

- Ball is smaller, and typically white
- Bats are typically wider, and metal type may differ

## Fastpitch Softball

Olympic format for women.

### Pitching

- Underhand “windmill”
- Longest pitching distance
- Off flat ground

### Field & Baserunning

- Shorter distance between bases
- Baserunners must stay touching the base before the pitcher releases the ball

### Equipment

- Ball is larger, and typically yellow
- Bats are typically more narrow, and metal type may differ

## Baseball5

“Street Style” baseball/softball, increasingly in popularity due to its simplicity & accessibility.

### Pitching

- No pitching
- The batter “serves” to themselves to commence play

### Field & Baserunning

- Same shape and progression around bases to home plate
- Fewer fielders (5 a side)

### Equipment

- A ball
- Something to mark “bases”



# Equipment

## Bat

In both baseball and softball, a bat is used to hit the ball into the field. The tape is where the bat is held and the barrel (where the design is) is where contact with the ball is made.



## Helmet

In both baseball and softball, helmets are used for the offensive team while hitting and baserunning. Some have a protective “grill” at the front, not not all (this is typically in more competitive junior levels).



## Glove

In both baseball and softball, gloves are used. It goes on the non-dominant hand (so that players can throw the ball with their dominant). The netting (pocket) goes between the thumb and pointer finger.



## Balls

Balls used are dependant on the format (e.g. baseball, softball or Baseball5), as well as the age of players



## Equipment Modifications

If you do not currently have the equipment listed, there are modifications that can be made to all sessions and games to suit your needs.

Examples include:

- Tennis balls and no gloves
- Cones or chalked marking instead of bases
- Practising hitting with tennis rackets

# FASTPITCH SOFTBALL SKILLS

There are a variety of skills required in Fastpitch Softball, many of which mirror other sports, or resemble a similar action, for example:

- Throwing, as in cricket and rounders
- Catching, as in netball and basketball (with different balls)
- Striking, as in cricket, tennis and hockey (with different ball and implement)

Fastpitch also has specialist positions, which require a unique application of other common skills, including:

- Pitcher, whose main job is to throw the ball underarm to the batter for them to hit
- Catcher, whose main job is to catch the pitched ball behind the batter, while in a squatting position

# Defence - Pitching & Fielding

## Goal

Prevent runs being scored by the offensive team, by restricting their ability to get a runner over home-plate.

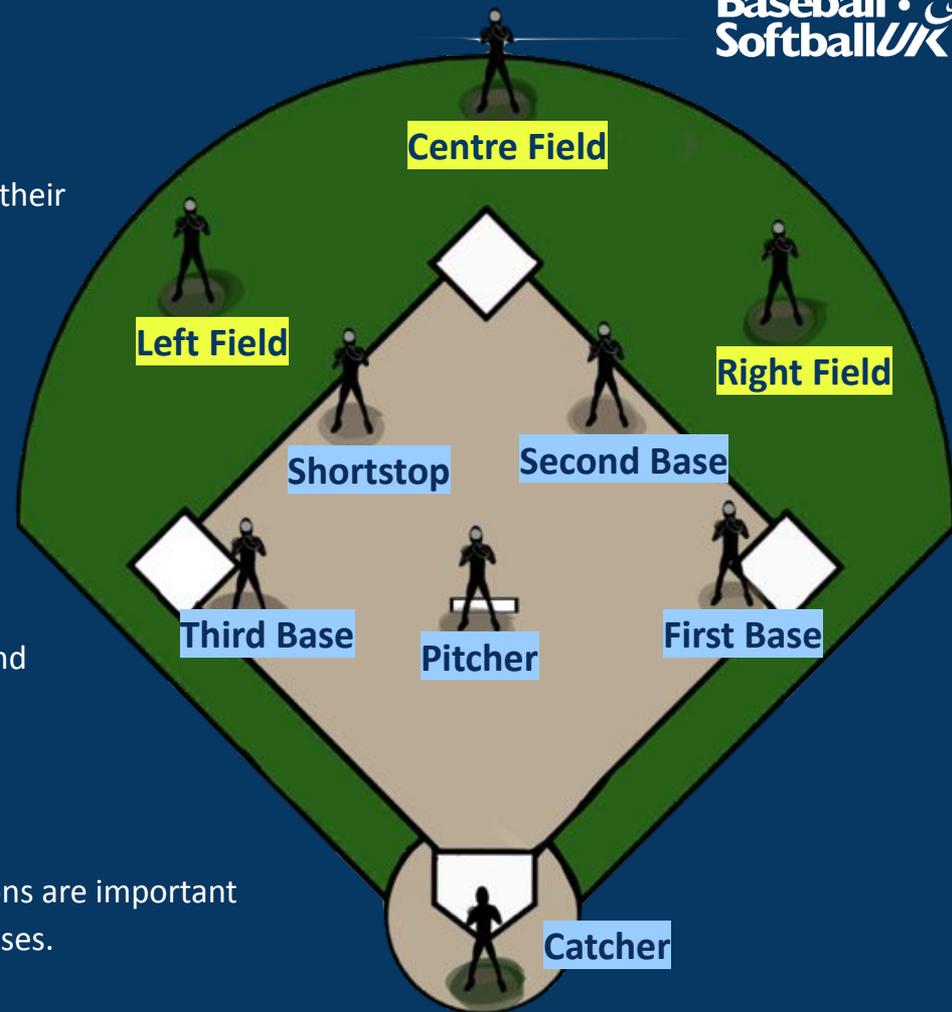
## Infield

The first line of defence; if the ball can be stopped by the infield, the chances of getting the hitter out is much higher.

Player coverage to bases are determined by their position; e.g. 1st base is covered by *First Base*. The exception is *Second Base* and *Shortstop*, who can cover either 1st or 2nd base, or 2nd or 3rd base, respectively.

## Outfield

The backup positions and furthest from the hitter, these positions are important for catching long hit balls and backing up infielders and their bases.



## When

The defensive team will need to coordinate to get the offensive team 'out'; this includes fielding the ball when it is hit, throwing it to each other, and securing the ball to bases.

## Coaching Points

The goal is to get players comfortable throwing and seeing a ball, any way to achieve this is encouraged!

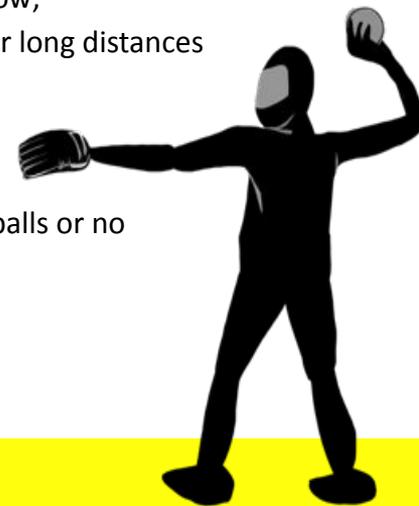
- Side-on to target, glove-hand pointed to target;
- Throwing arm back and in "muscle flex" position;
- Eyes on target.
- Take step with front foot towards target;
- Keep throwing arm up and high;
- Eyes remain on target.
- Release the ball in front to throw to the target.

## Important to Remember

- Letting the ball go too early → high throw;
- Letting the ball go too late → low throw;
- Encourage players to let the ball go for long distances to test their throws!

## Notes

If using modified equipment (such as tennis balls or no gloves), the mechanics are the same.



## Link to Skill

[Throw & Catch](#)

## Links to Skill Activities

[Shape Toss](#)

[Gate Guard](#)

[Tennis](#)

## When

The defensive team will need to coordinate to get the offensive team 'out'; this includes catching the ball when it is hit, catching the throws between positions, and catching at bases.

## Coaching Points

- Glove in front of chest;
- Eyes on the thrower;
- Second hand near to capture the ball in glove upon receiving;
- Knees bent and ready to move if the ball is not on target;
- Capture the ball in glove and secure with other hand.

## Keys to Remember

- If throw is above waist line → **Fingers pointed to the sky**
- If throw is below waist line → **Fingers pointed to the ground**
- A throw right to the glove will help players adjust to using both the glove and hand-eye coordination.
- Challenge them to try to use the glove for different results depending on where the ball is coming from.



## Link to Skill

[Throw & Catch](#)

## Links to Skill Activities

[Clap-Up](#)

[Egg-Toss](#)

[Cross Toss](#)

[Relay Throws](#)

## When

Any time the ball is hit into the field of play, a player will be responsible for trying to stop it - whether this is stopping it on the ground, or when hit in the air.

## Coaching Points

No matter what position fielders are in on the field, there are some common coaching points when fielding:

- We want players in an athletic, ready position;
- Their gloves are pointed down, with palm facing target;
- Second hand near, to snap the ball up in the glove ('crocodile hands');
- Backside lowered and chest up;
- Feet ready to move



## Link to Skill

[Grounders / Flies](#)

## Links to Skill Activities

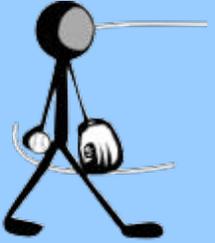
[Shape Toss](#)

[Gate Guard](#)

[Tennis](#)

# Defence Skills - Pitching

## I Drill



### Set Up

- Front foot - Pointed towards target
- Throwing hand- At waist
- Palm & eyes - Facing target

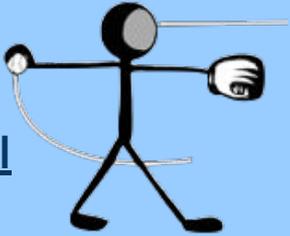
### Action

- Release the ball in a wrist flick at hip to partner
- *If ball is going high → release earlier*
- *If ball is too low → release later*

### Pitching Notes

Fastpitch Pitching is one of the most unique movements in any sport.

## T Drill



### Set Up

- Starting in a “T” position
- Glove pointed to partner
- Throwing hand back, even with glove
- Both arms straight
- Feet and eyes still pointed to target

### Action

- Arm swings down to release ball at waist
- Like I-Drill above, flick ball on release

You will find that there are some students that will be immediately drawn to it.

The pitching video guides will be particularly helpful for you when teaching your students.

## K Drill



### Set Up

- Set up in a “K” position
- Throwing hand is straight up at the ear
- Glove still pointed to partner
- Balancing on back foot, front foot raised off ground pointing to partner

### Action

- Front foot (raised foot) reaches forward in a step
- Throwing arm swings down to the waist and release the ball, as above

### As a Reminder

Our modified rules for The Cup will allow pitchers to use their K Drill or Full pitch.

# Offense - Batting & Baserunning

## Goal

Hit the ball through the defense and get onto the bases; from there, making your way all the way around the bases for one run.

## The Hitting Lineup

Each player is given their place in the 'lineup', and bat one by one in their order. If they do not get all the way through the lineup in one inning, they pick up where they left off next time they are on offense. For example, batting team gets to batter number 5 when the inning ends, so the 6th batter would be the first batter next innings.

## Keys to Remember

Hitting is both one of the most fun and scariest aspects of the sport; players are on their own and expected to hit the ball. This can be a lot of pressure for some players, so a lot of practice and support is useful!



## When

When it is a player's turn to bat, they are the **batter**. The only way to score points ('runs') is to hit the ball and make it around the bases and across Home Plate, without getting 'out.' This requires the batter to hit effectively through the defensive team.

## Coaching Points

- Hands together on the bat, with knuckles lined up;
- Bat on dominant shoulder, dominant hand on top;
- Side on to the pitcher;
- Knees bent and athletic;
- Eyes on the ball;
- Big step towards the pitcher and swinging from shoulder.



[Link to Skill](#)

[Hitting](#)

[Links to Skill Activities](#)

[Two-Up](#)

## When

Once a batter has hit the ball and stops on a base, they become a **baserunner**. Teams then work together to advance their baserunners around the bases, to score runs by crossing Home Plate.

## Important Points

- Upon hitting, batters do not have to run all the way around in one-go; they can stay on a Base if it is not safe to advance (e.g. if a fielder has the ball near them)
- Each player must touch the base with their foot as they run, as missed bases do not count
- If a batter stops on a base, they are only allowed to leave the base again when the pitcher releases the ball
- If there is another runner on the base immediately before, the runner at the front must run, otherwise they can choose to wait until it is safe

## Coaching Points

- For new players, focus on players running in order, touching the bases with their feet and knowing where they need to go.

