

# Munster Girls Softball

Manager's Guideline: "Practice Planning Guide" – Instructional

This document attempts to educate the manager on how to prepare for and conduct practices that teach and reinforce softball fundamentals. It is important to keep the players constantly active. Avoid drills where the players "line up" and go one at a time. This means a lot of standing around time – wasted and boring. Split the players up into small groups (requires more helpers) and do multiple drills simultaneously. Give players different assignments to keep them all active. Add a fun competitive edge to the practice.

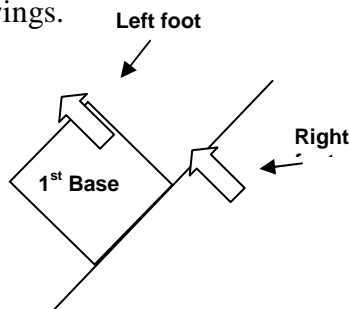
**Pre-Season Plan** – below outlines a good set of practices to start your season. The idea is to focus on basic skills development and reinforcement. Then, develop your fielders knowledge and understanding of game situations.

1. **Introductions & throwing and catching fundamentals** – *Basic introduction to throwing and catching using tennis balls. Establish eye contact, basic overhand throwing techniques, basic catching methods using proper mitt grip. Also, introduce ground balls. Introduce base layout and running the bases in order.*
2. **More throwing, catching and running** – *Reinforce throwing and catching using tennis balls. Introduce softballs and proper ball grip. Reinforce ground balls using softballs. Introduce concept of hitting from a tee and pretend hitting and running the bases.*
3. **Hitting Instruction** – *Repeat throwing, catching and grounders drills. Introduce catching a pop-up using tennis balls. Introduce hitting from a tee. Have players take turns hitting and running to first while fielders scoop and throw to first. Have first base throw to the pitcher and have the pitcher roll it to the coach at home.*
4. **More Hitting and Fielding** – *Introduce new drills for throwing and catching. Have players take turns hitting and running. Have fielders try to get the out at first. Have coaches at first and third directing the runners. Have one defensive coach in field directing fielders.*
5. **Reinforce through repetition** – *Come up with new ways of repeating the fundamental skills using fun drills.*

In subsequent practices you will want to cover the concept of force outs, tagging the runners (especially at home), etc.

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Base Running – Runners should put the left foot on the outer leading edge of the base, and their right foot behind the base as shown (1<sup>st</sup> base shown). The runner should start their jump off the base when the batter swings.



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Typical Practice – It is important to develop a "routine" to your practices. Players need to recognize that there is a purpose to practicing, that they are learning and benefiting, and that they are having fun. It is also important to break the practice up into short sessions of 10 minutes or less – any more and minds begin to wander.

Time	Activity	Coaching Instruction	Purpose
10 minutes	Throwing and Catching – line the girls up in two straight lines and have them throw back and forth to each other.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eye contact with recipient</li> <li>• Proper ball grip</li> <li>• Proper catching technique</li> <li>• Throw some grounders</li> <li>• Play game – first team of two to throw 10 back and forth without dropping the ball wins.</li> </ul>	Activity while you are waiting for the other players to show up. Important to warm up arms for more strenuous play.
5 minutes	Warm-up and Stretch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some coaches have the players run to the center field fence and back, at a jog – this is to warm up legs and cardiovascular system.</li> </ul>	Players need to stretch before vigorous exercise to avoid injury.
10,10,10 Total of 30 minutes	Mini Clinic Coach #1 – Hitting Coach #2 – Infield -or- Drills, Drill, Drills	This is the central part of the practice. You work to introduce or reinforce skills. In later practices you work to create game situations to provide experience on how to handle special situations.	
10 minutes	A fun or competitive activity	Choose a drill where the players can work independently or in teams to win an activity. Competition makes the drill exciting and fun.	
5 minutes	Run the bases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Players love to run bases and it ends the practice on a high note.</li> <li>• Have the players help collect equipment and their belongings.</li> <li>• Remind them when the next practice is.</li> <li>• Tell them they did a great job.</li> </ul>	