

Training FUNdamentals skill checklist

Key Points to Skills in Checklist

This is a brief summary of some of the key points of the fundamental skills outlined in the “FUNdamentals of Softball” and “Training to Train” participant’s manuals and CD and DVD ROM packs. You may wish to add your own notes. Use the charts at the end of this booklet to record your ratings on the skills for each player. This way you can track player’s levels of improvements throughout the season as well as ensure you have covered the basic skills in your training program.

Procedure

At the start of the pre-season print off this document with enough checklist forms to cover all players within your team. Within the first two or three practice sessions evaluate the fundamental skills for each player in your team and complete each form. This should help you to prioritise those skills that need attention at both the team and individual levels during future practice sessions. As you cover each skill component in training record the date in the first column of the checklist – this will help you to document your coverage of all of the skill areas during the season.

At the midpoint of the competition you can then re-assess each player and record on the checklist. This will then allow you to compare with the pre-season ratings and highlight areas of improvement and those that still need attention. By sharing this information with each player you are also providing them with positive feedback in terms of their development. Remember, they can also practice on their own (in their own backyard) to further their development. Finally at the end of the season a final rating should prove valuable to the coach and the players.

Defence

Fielding

Ready position (particularly infield)

- Starting position
- Feet shoulder width apart or more
- Backside down, eyes facing the batter
- Glove and throwing hands close to the ground

Footwork

- Use small steps (sideways and/or forwards)
- Move to the ball if in front
- Use crossover step if ball to the side

Glove Work

- Fingers in the glove to the side
- Hinge action (like a crab) index finger and thumb
- Catching a ball in the pocket instead of the fingers



Fly Ball

- Get to the ball first
- Eye on the ball, glove fingers up
- Use two hands and catch above head

Line Drive

- Glove hand works like a clock with fingers pointing like a “hand” on the clock

Grounder

- Get behind the ball
- Fingers down, pocket facing ball
- Hands well out in front of body
- Sweeping the glove, two hands close together

Throwing

Preparing to throw

- Give with the ball and use both hands
- Take both glove and throwing hand up to above throwing shoulder
- Rotate glove into throwing hand and grip ball in fingers
- At the same time bring the body into the set position for throwing by using a crossover step or crow hop

Overhand throw

- Pull fingers back and cock wrist
- High action with elbow leading at first
- Shoulders, elbows and hips in line with target
- Ball released in the “high five” position
- Follow through with throwing shoulder at target and hand past the opposite knee

Tagging

- Track ball into glove
- Secure ball with two hands
- Drop the knee and sweep the ball at runner
- Away from base, fielder places themselves to one side of the base runners path
- Tag can be made one handed or two handed

Receiving Force Outs

- Get to base as quick as possible *if not fielding the ball*
- Place feet in front of base and present target *do not set until throw is made*
- Step towards throw and catch ball (chest and hips facing thrower)
- If close play step out further and elongate glove arm
- Get off base and get ready to make next play



Offence

Base running

Getting out of the box

- Back/pivot leg first
- Body leaning forward
- Short wide steps (accelerate)

Running basics

- Run on balls of feet
- Good knee lift
- Use pumping action with arms

Running through first base

- Hit the front of the safety base
- Don't slow down until after base
- Use shorter steps and lower center of weight
- Turn head, not body towards second base

Leading off a base

- Lead off base when pitcher has released ball
- Rocking motion begins with pitchers arm at the top of the circle
- Maintain eyes on the ball to see what happens
- After two strides get side on into lead off position
- Keep backside down
- Throw arms in direction runner is going, next base or back to base

Sliding

- Start slide a few meters from base (varies with each runner, conditions *etc*)
- Bend knees and lower body onto side of thigh and throw arms up
- Weight back on the side of the sliding leg
- Extended leg is slightly bent chin tucked to the chest
- **Do not "Jump" into slide – you will hit the ground too hard**

Batting

Bat Selection

- Make sure bat isn't too heavy

Grip

- Natural grip with bat held in fingers
- Basically, first set of knuckles are lined up with finger joints of other hand
- Hands together with dominant hand closer to bat barrel

Stance

- Balanced with weight distributed on the inside balls of the feet
- Feet approximately shoulders width apart
- Hips and shoulders in line with batter's box
- Head turned towards the pitcher bat held at top of the strike zone
- Arms form an inverted "vee" in front of chest

Stride

- Soft step or glide with front foot towards pitcher (foot remains closed)
- Shoulder and hips remain in line with batter's box
- Head remains over the belly button

Hips

- Commences after stride
- Pivot on rear foot (squashing the bug)
- Knees remain flexed back leg forms an "L" shape

Swing

- Throw hands at ball
- Bat is extended so that arms are out in front
- Wrists snap the bat through the ball
- Continue drive through the back leg by transferring weight to front
- Head remains over the belly button

Follow through

- Bat remains on one plain through the ball and entire swing
- Knees, hips and shoulders remain in line
- Hips and shoulders open to complete swing
- Head remains over belly button with eyes still focused on the contact point

Sacrifice Bunt

- Pivot early so chest faces pitcher
- Bat at the top of strike zone
- Dominant hand on balance point of bat (start of the barrel)
- Use pinch and thumb grip on barrel and handle
- Catch and contact the top half of the ball
- Bend knees not arms to get to the ball below the bat (above the bat is not a strike)



Progressive Skills Development List

Player's name _____

Ratings	1 Novice	2 Competent	3 Good	4 Excellent
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	Covered in Training (date)	Pre-Season	Mid Season	End of Season
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Fielding				
Ready Position				
Footwork				
Glove work				
Fly ball				
Line Drive				
Grounder				

Throwing & Plays				
Preparing to throw				
Overhand throw				
Tagging				
Receiving force outs				

Base running				
Out of the box				
Running basics				
Through first base				
Leading off				
Sliding				

Hitting				
Stance				
Stride				
Hips				
Swing				
Follow through				
Sacrifice Bunt				
Stance				
Contact				