

EXTRA LEAD-UP GAMES

INTRODUCTION

The Lead-Up games in this section were created to give the children an opportunity to use the skills they have learned in the lesson plans in a **FUN** environment. The Lead-Up games allow young children to experience success in low competitive situations. The skills needed to be successful in a game of Softball are very complex and take time to learn. The Lead-Up games simulate the real game and allow the children the opportunity to develop a base of skills necessary to successfully play the game. It will take time for the children to develop enough of a skill base to play the game of Softball successfully.

WHACK - O

SKILLS

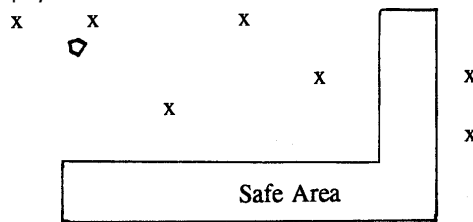
hitting, fielding, running, catching

EQUIPMENT

1 bat, 1 whiffle ball or safety ball, 1 Home plate, markers

ORGANIZATION

2 teams of 6: 1 on offence and 1 on defence. Mark off playing area as shown in diagram. Each defensive team has a catcher and the rest of the players are fielders.



ACTIVITY

- ▶ batter can hit off a T or adult pitch
- ▶ batter hits and runs to safety area. If possible, the player returns Home before a fielder retrieves the ball and tags them or hits them with the ball
- ▶ if tagged, the batter is out. If they reach Home without being tagged or hit, the batting team gets a run. If it is not safe to return Home, they can remain in the safety area
- ▶ the batter may hit the ball in ANY direction. If the ball is missed 3 times or a hit fly ball is caught, the batter is out. They are also out if the bat is thrown
- ▶ as soon as there are 3 in the safety area, the 1st runner there MUST run Home. Others may run or stay. Runners can run only after the ball is hit, but not on a caught fly
- ▶ switch offence and defence after every player has a bat

PARMALAT LEARN TO PLAY

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BERSERK

- SKILLS** hitting, fielding, catching, throwing, baserunning
- EQUIPMENT** 1 bat, 1 ball, 1 Home plate, 1 base, helmet, catcher gear
- ORGANIZATION** 2 teams of 6. A base is placed a distance from Home plate according to ability (30' - 55'). Players not batting stand safely in dugout area or outside corner of backstop.
- ACTIVITY**
- ▶ one batter at a time bats off a T, or adult pitcher
 - ▶ there is NO out of bounds so the batter will run to 1B as soon as the bat touches the ball. It is fair no matter where it is hit, even behind the batter
 - ▶ the batter can stay at 1B until the next batter hits if (s)he can't make it Home
 - ▶ batters get only 1 swing (remember there are no foul balls)
 - ▶ fielding team plays wherever they think the ball might be hit, except for the 1st Baseman and Catcher
 - *Outs can be made:
 - by missed swing
 - caught fly ball
 - force at Home
 - being tagged by fielder
 - ▶ all players bat before switching to defence
 - ▶ score points by counting runs at Home

SKIP BALL

- SKILLS** hitting, fielding, catching, throwing, skipping for quick feet development
- EQUIPMENT** 1 bat, 1 ball, 1 Home plate, 1 base, helmet, catcher's equipment
- ORGANIZATION** 2 teams of 6: one on defence and one on offence. 1st base placed a distance from Home according to ability 30' - 55'.
- ACTIVITY**
- ▶ one batter at a time bats off a T or adult pitch
 - ▶ after hitting the ball, the batter runs to 1B and **SKIPS** around it **5 times**, then runs Home
 - ▶ the fielding team retrieves the ball and makes 8 throws before either running or throwing the ball Home
 - ▶ fielding team **MUST** throw to all 6 players and can't make consecutive throws to the same player
 - ▶ runs score if the batter touches Home before the ball gets there
 - ▶ all 6 players bat before switching to defence

Note: The number of **throws** and **skips** can be adjusted to make the competition close.

DIZZY IZZY

SKILLS hitting, fielding, catching, throwing
EQUIPMENT 1 bat, 1 ball
ORGANIZATION 2 teams of 6: one on defence and one on offence



- ACTIVITY**
- ▶ one batter at a time bats off a T or adult pitch
 - ▶ after hitting the ball, they run around and around their OWN TEAM, which is lined up a short, but safe distance away
 - ▶ every lap they do around their own team, before the ball gets back Home, scores 1 run. The count should be loud as the batter circles teammates
 - ▶ fielding team MUST throw to all 6 players before the ball goes Home, either by running it or throwing it
 - ▶ when the ball gets Home, "STOP" is yelled. The number of laps around the team at this point will be the number of runs scored
 - ▶ switch offence and defence when all 6 players have had a turn at bat

CRAZY BALL

SKILLS hitting, fielding, catching, throwing, running
EQUIPMENT 3 bats, 3 balls, 3 bases, 3 Home plates, 3 helmets
ORGANIZATION 3 teams of 4: 1 batter and 3 fielders. There will be 3 separate groups doing this drill at the same time so they should be spaced a safe distance from each other. Set up a base 30' - 55' from where the batter is standing.

- ACTIVITY**
- ▶ one batter at a time bats off a T or adult pitch
 - ▶ after hitting, the batter tries to run to the base and back before the fielders can get the ball to Home
 - ▶ fielders can either retrieve the ball and run and touch Home themselves or one can retrieve the ball while another runs to Home to receive the throw

5 extra lead-up games

HELP

- SKILLS** hitting, fielding, catching, throwing, baserunning, co-operation
- EQUIPMENT** 1 bat, 1 ball, 4 bases, helmet
- ORGANIZATION** 3 teams of 4. 2 teams are on defence and 1 team is on offence. Set up bases in diamond formation. Defensive players take positions in a location most likely to catch a hit ball.
- ACTIVITY**
- ▶ objective is for the fielding team to HELP the batting team collect 8 runs (which is the equivalent to each batter batting twice). If this takes too long, then reduce to 4 runs
 - ▶ each batter hits the ball off a T or adult pitcher. If after 3 pitches they fail to hit, move to another batter. That player rotates to the back and will receive another turn
 - ▶ fielding teams make every effort to catch the ball because that will mean they get to bat sooner. Catching the ball HELPS the runners move.
 - ▶ Runners move around the bases as follows:
 - Catch an OUTFIELD FLY - batter gets 3 extra bases
 - Catch an INFIELD FLY - batter gets 2 extra bases
 - Catch a GROUNDER - batter gets 1 extra base
 - BASE HIT - batter gets 1 base
 - ▶ Runs score when a runner reaches Home

TWENTY-ONE

- SKILLS** hitting, fielding, catching, throwing
- EQUIPMENT** 1 bat, 1 ball, 4 bases
- ORGANIZATION** 2 groups of 6: 1 on defence and 1 on offence. Set up bases in diamond formation. Defensive team is set up with a player close to each base and extras at appropriate positions.
- ACTIVITY**
- ▶ batters can bat off T or adult pitcher
 - ▶ when the ball is hit, the batter runs around the bases until put out
 - ▶ after fielding the ball, it is thrown to a base IN FRONT of the runner
 - ▶ ball must arrive ahead of the runner for an out

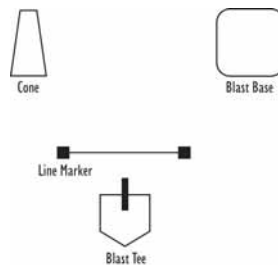
- ▶ sides change after every player has batted
- ▶ score 1 point for each base touched
- ▶ first team to score 21 points wins (or has most points when time is up)

BLASTBALL

Note: BlastBall is a game with equipment that can be purchased from a retail sporting goods store. The BlastBase is audible, emitting a loud “HONK” whenever the runner stomps on the base. The kids love it! Additional BlastBall equipment is also available for purchase.

For more information contact Home Run Sports at 204.255.7687 (local), 800.565.2025 (toll free), or visit www.homerunsports.com (see their ad on the back inside cover of this manual).

- SKILLS** hitting, fielding, catching, throwing
- EQUIPMENT** BlastBase, Blast Tee, BlastBall (2-Pac), BlastBat, Cone, Line Marker
- ORGANIZATION** 2 teams of 6: one team on defence and one team on offence. However, a lower number of players per team is also acceptable. Like a regular Softball diamond, place a BlastBase 30-40 feet to the right of the batting T. This establishes your fair/foul line to the right. To the left of the batting T and perpendicular to your BlastBase, place a cone also 30-40 feet from the batting T. This establishes your fair/foul line to the left. Now place a line marker 10 feet directly in front of the batting T running between the imaginary first and third base foul lines. This becomes the fair/foul line for play.



- ACTIVITY**
- ▶ The defensive players take an infield or outfield position.
 - ▶ The Offensive team hits off the batting T. If a ball is hit inside of that line, it is foul and should be re-teed for another try. If it goes beyond the line, either in the air or on a roll it is considered in play and the batter runs to the BlastBase.

5 extra lead-up games

- ▶ If the batter reaches the BlastBase (the only base used) before the defensive team either catches the BlastBall in the air (an automatic out) or fields it and yells “**BLAST**”, a run is scored. If the ball is caught or fielded and “**BLAST**” is yelled before the runner gets to the BlastBase, then the runner does not score a run.
- ▶ Everyone on the Offensive teams bats every inning. After every player on the Offensive team bats, the teams switch (Offensive team becomes Defensive team and vice versa).
- ▶ When the ball is fielded by the Defensive team, the player can throw the ball back to an Adult or another player (depending on skill level) who is positioned near Home plate (but safely away from the batting T).

VARIATION Add a 2nd and/or a 3rd base.

BUCKET BALL

- SKILLS** throwing, fielding, baserunning, co-operation, teamwork
- EQUIPMENT** 2 balls, 4 bases, helmet, pail or bag
- ORGANIZATION** 2 teams of 6: one on offence and one on defence. Defensive team has a catcher at Home plate with the other players at appropriate locations. Offensive team has 1 player to THROW from Home plate and others waiting their turn from a safe distance.
- ACTIVITY**
- ▶ offensive “batter” throws out 2 balls in quick succession and runs around the bases trying to make it Home before the fielding team gets both balls in pail
 - ▶ if the ball is caught the “batter” is out
 - ▶ fielders may NOT run with the ball. It must be thrown Home. Relay the ball if necessary
 - ▶ remind players to make sure Catcher is looking. Adult may have to help at Home

FAR BASE

- SKILLS** all Softball skills except baserunning
- EQUIPMENT** 1 bat, 1 ball, 1 base, catcher’s equipment, helmets, Home plate, 1 batting T
- ORGANIZATION** place a base at least 60 feet straight out from Home plate (i.e. where 2B would be or further). 2 teams: one team on defence with a catcher and the other team on offence.

ACTIVITY

- ▶ the members of the team at bat take turns hitting. A fair ball is any ball hit in front of Home plate. On a fair hit, the batter runs to the far base. He may either stay there or return Home immediately. When the next batter hits, the first runner is not required to leave the far base. As many players as desired may occupy the far base and may return Home in any order, or all at once
- ▶ a runner may be put out only by being tagged with the ball. He need not go in a straight line, but it is permissible to dodge or run anywhere in the field to avoid being tagged. A batter is out on 2 strikes, or if a ball is caught. Three balls (if pitched) or 3 misses off the batting T permit the batter to advance to the far base
- ▶ each side bats until all players have had a turn at bat, then the other team bats. Play may go on for as many innings as the Coach wishes

PROGRESSIONS

- ▶ hit off a batting T
- ▶ Coach soft toss (Coach to the side of the hitter but in front of them)
- ▶ Coach pitch

MINNIE BALL

Note: Similar to “10 Minute Softball”

SKILLS

all softball skills

EQUIPMENT

bats, balls, catcher’s equipment, 4 bases

ORGANIZATION

divide players into 3 teams of 4.

ACTIVITY

- ▶ 1 team at a time will be on offence, while the other 2 are on defence
- ▶ each team will bat for 7 min. regardless of whether they have 3 outs (time saver)
- ▶ can use adult pitch or off a T. If T is used make sure it is set up IN FRONT of the plate
- ▶ Team 1 on offence — Teams 2 and 3 on defence
- ▶ Team 2 on offence — Teams 1 and 3 on defence
- ▶ Team 3 on offence — Teams 1 and 2 on defence

ROADRUNNER

SKILLS hitting off a T, throwing, catching, baserunning, co-operation, teamwork

EQUIPMENT 1 ball, 4 bases, helmet, batting T

ORGANIZATION 2 teams of 6: 1 on offence (Roadrunners) and 1 on defence (Coyotes). Coyotes have a catcher at Home plate and the others at appropriate locations. Roadrunners have 1 player to hit the ball off a T from Home plate and others waiting their turn from a safe distance.

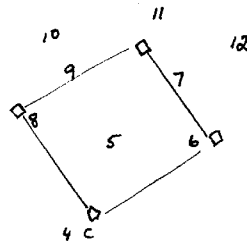
- ACTIVITY**
- ▶ the Roadrunner hits the ball off the T at Home plate and runs around the bases trying to make it Home before the Coyotes get the ball back to the catcher at Home plate
 - ▶ if the ball is caught, the “batter” is out
 - ▶ fielders may NOT run with the ball – it must be thrown home
 - ▶ the adult may have to help at Home
 - ▶ count how many bases each Coyote touches before the ball gets Hom

SCRUB

SKILLS all softball skills

EQUIPMENT bats, balls, catcher’s equipment, 4 bases

ORGANIZATION 12 players –9 on the field –3 batting. Each position is numbered as shown:



2 - on deck
3 - on deck

- ACTIVITY**
- ▶ one batter at a time bats off an adult pitcher, with a catcher in catching equipment
 - ▶ use regular softball rules with the following modifications:
 - when a batter is put out, all players rotate one position with B (#1) going to RF (#12), RF to CF (#11), CF to LF (#10), LF to SS (#9), SS to 3B (#8), 3B to 2B (#7), 2B to 1B (#6), 1B to P (#5), P to C (#4), C to on deck (#3), on deck (#3) to on deck (#2), on deck (#2) to B

- if after the 3rd batter hits, the other 2 players are still on base, then the lead runner comes home but no run scores.
- NO WALKS are given (3 - 6 strikes depending on skill level)
- if hitting skill level is very low, allow a maximum of 6 balls pitched, then have player go to 1B anyway (as long as 3 balls were swung at)
- if a fielder catches a fly ball, they exchange with the batter
- maximum 2 times at bat, if not put out, then rotate anyway

SEMI-CIRCLE SOFTBALL

SKILLS	throwing, catching, co-operation, teamwork
EQUIPMENT	1 ball, 4 bases, markers
ORGANIZATION	2 teams of 6: 1 team on defence and 1 team on offence.
ACTIVITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ place a semi-circle of markers approximately at the edge of the infield ▶ defensive team has 1 player at Home and the rest position themselves around the infield at approximately same distance. Both markers and players can be adjusted according to skill level ▶ offensive team tries to throw the ball over or through the markers and then runs through 1B ▶ player gets 1 point if ball goes through markers or 2 points if ball goes over markers ▶ no point is awarded if the ball is caught or stopped at the markers ▶ defence throws the ball Home as quickly as possible ▶ change sides after each offensive player throws

TEN MINUTE SOFTBALL

SKILLS	hitting, fielding, catching, throwing, running, hustle
EQUIPMENT	1 bat, 1 ball, 4 bases, helmets, catcher equipment
ORGANIZATION	2 teams of 6 - one on defence and 1 on offence. Defensive team has a catcher, 1B, and players in positions where offence are likely to hit. Set up bases on the diamond as for a regular game.

5 extra lead-up games

ACTIVITY

- ▶ one batter at a time bats off a T (or adult pitch)
- ▶ each team will get 10 min. each to score as many runs as possible
- ▶ players must hustle in order to get in the maximum number of bats
- ▶ score 1 point for each base touched
- ▶ fielding team gets an out for caught fly balls or if they put out a runner on base as in a regular softball game
- ▶ after 3 outs, bases are cleared, but the team remains at bat till time is up

Note: Adults should be stationed in the field to help direct the play. Players should be moved around to give them a chance to play a variety of positions.