

Softball Skills - Pepper, Umpiring, Infield Practice, Batting Practice

LESSON FOCUS

Outcomes:

I can catch a rolled softball demonstrating three of four cues.

I can strike a ball using a bat demonstrating two of four cues.

I can work safely in a small group.

Instructions:

Skills

Review skills previously learned:

1. Overhand Throw

2. Pitching

3. Fielding Grounders

4. Batting

Station (Small-Group) Instruction

Station 1 - Play Pepper (Hitting and Fielding)

A line of 3-4 players is about 10 yards in front of and facing a batter. The players toss the ball to the batter, who attempts to hit controlled grounders back to them. The batter stays at bat for a period of time and then rotates to the field.

Station 2 - Pitching and Umpiring

Students find a partner and pitch and catch with each other. Set out a number of bases at each station so pitchers can pitch and catch using a base as a target (home plate).

a. Pitch to another player over a plate.

b. Call balls and strikes. One player is the pitcher, the second is the catcher, and the third is the umpire. A fourth player can be a stationary batter to provide a more realistic pitching target.

Station 3 - Infield Practice

1. Throw around the bases clockwise and counterclockwise.

2. Roll ball to infielders and make the play at first. After each play, throw around the infield.

a. If enough skill, bat the ball to the infielders in turn.

Station 4 - Batting Practice

Each batter takes six swings and then rotates to the field. Catcher becomes batter and pitcher moves up to catcher.

Teaching Hints:

Whiffle balls and plastic bats are a much safer alternative for children this age. It is easier for them to swing plastic bats and the fear of getting hit by a softball or bat will not be an issue.

When umpiring, strikes are called by raising the right hand and balls require raising the left hand.

Have a number of balls at the stations so the pitching can continue when a ball is hit or not caught

Kick Softball

Outcomes:

I can work safely in a small group playing modified softball games.

Instructions:

Kick Softball

The batter stands in the kicking area, a 3-ft-square home plate. The batter kicks the ball rolled on the ground by the pitcher. The ball should be rolled at moderate speed. An umpire calls balls and strikes. A strike is a ball that rolls over the 3-ft square. A ball rolls outside this area. Strikeouts and walks are called the same as in regular softball. The number of foul balls allowed should be limited. No base stealing is permitted. Otherwise, the game is played like softball.

Variations:

1. The batter kicks a stationary ball. This saves time, since there is no pitching.

2. Punch Ball. The batter can hit the ball as in a volleyball serve or punch a ball pitched by the pitcher.