

KIMBERTON YOUTH ATHLETIC LEAGUE

Fundamental Skills Sheet: Softball

LEGEND

I = The skill should be introduced at this level

R = The skill should be reinforced at this level

M = The skill should be mastered at this level

Infield Skills	A	AA	AAA	Majors
Know where the play is before the pitch	R	R	M	
Creep steps, glove out in front of body, athletic stance, as the pitcher is delivering the ball	I	R	M	
Understanding the chain of command for fly balls	I	R	M	
Calling for a ball in the air	I	R	M	
Knowledge of whose responsibility it is to cover bases	I	R	M	
Knowledge of back up responsibilities		I	M	
Knowledge of bunt rotation responsibilities		I	M	
How to locate the fence when running to catch a foul ball		I	M	
Circling around ground balls when appropriate		I	M	
The underhand flip		I	M	
Proper footwork fielding a groundball				
○ Right at the fielder	R	M		
○ Forehand		I	M	
○ Backhand		I	M	
○ Slow roller or chopper		I	M	
Proper footwork around bags				
○ Force plays	R	M		
○ On Steals		I	M	
○ Double Plays		I	M	
○ Pickoffs			I	M
Run downs				
○ Knowledge of who should be involved in rundowns		I	M	
○ Run back to the bag the runner came from		I	M	
○ Call for inside or outside target		I	M	
○ Ball held high in throwing hand		I	M	
○ Limit pump fakes		I	M	
○ Follow throw		I	M	
○ Tag with two hands		I	M	
Cutoffs				
○ Knowledge of cutoff man responsibilities	I	R	M	
○ Lining up the cutoff man		I	M	
○ Hands up yelling for the cut		I	M	
○ Move your feet to get into a good throwing position as you catch the ball		I	M	

Outfield Skills	A	AA	AAA	Majors
Know where the play is before the pitch	I	R	M	
Ready Position	I	R	M	
Calling for a ball in the air	I	R	M	
Judging a routine fly ball	I	R	M	
Catching a fly ball off the side of their nose with 2 hands	I	R	M	
First step back on a fly ball you can't read		I	M	
How to crow hop		I	M	
Throwing to the cutoff man		I	M	
Knowledge of back up responsibilities		I	M	
Knowledge of bunt rotation responsibilities		I	M	
Getting behind a ball when possible		I	M	
Running back on a ball with your glove down		I	M	
Taking good angles to balls in the gap		I	M	
Blocking a hard hit groundball		I	R	M
How to shield the sun		I	R	M
Understanding line drives will slice towards the foul lines		I	R	M
How to locate the fence		I	R	M
Adjust where they stand based on the batter		I	R	M
Adjust where they stand based on the game situation		I	R	M
Catching Skills	A	AA	AAA	Majors
How to quickly put on equipment	I	R	M	
Setting up big target for the pitcher	I	R	M	
Receiving a ball without baserunners	I	R	M	
Hustle for passed balls with a runners on base	I	R	M	
Passed balls with runner on 3B	I	R	M	
How to receive a ball with a play at the plate		I	M	
How to field a bunt		I	M	
Taking signs from a coach		I	M	
Relaying signs to the pitcher		I	M	
Blocking the base coaches from picking up signs		I	M	
Receiving a ball with baserunners		I	M	
Footwork and quick release when a player is stealing		I	M	
Framing pitches		I	M	
Blocking the plate		I	M	
Knowledge of 1 st and 3 rd plays		I	M	
Taking the ball out to the pitcher when the umpire gets hit			M	
Controlling the pitchers pace			I	M
Pitch outs			I	M
Blocking balls in the dirt				
○ Dropping to knees or sliding to side		I	R	M
○ Glove down		I	R	M
○ Chin down		I	R	M

Pitching Skills	A	AA	AAA	Majors
Controlling emotions on the mound		I	R	M
Taking signs from the catcher		I	R	M
Develop a pre-game routine that works for you		I	R	M
How to make slight adjustments to pitch location		I	R	M
Develop a bullpen routine for days between games		I	R	M
Bunt responsibilities		I	R	M
Responsibilities on fly balls in the infield		I	R	M
Back up responsibilities		I	R	M
Covering home on a passed ball		I	R	M
Start to think about and discuss how to attack an opposing lineups hitters			I	M
Covering 1B on a ball to the right side of the field			I	M
Types of pitches & grip				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 4 seam fastball: There are four "C's" on the ball—two forward and two backward. Find one "C" and place fingers on the top part with the opening facing to the side. Stretch thumb back so it is in line with the middle finger. Pinky finger can be lightly resting on the side but not actually gripping the ball. The pads of the fingers are placed on the seam for a secure grip. Fingers should be curled slightly so they are not fully touching the ball. The "curl" is a major factor in generating spin on the ball. 		I	R	M
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 2 seam fastball 			I	M
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Changeup : Start with the 4 seam fastball grip and smash the ball into the palm of the hand (beginner grip) 			I	M
Proper pitching form				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Legal foot placement on the pitching rubber: Feet should be about shoulder-width apart, slightly staggered, with the forward foot on the throwing arm side. Place front foot in the center of the rubber with heel in contact with rubber. The glove-side toes should be in contact with the rubber but not extend beyond it. 		I	R	M
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Understanding the power line: The power line starts in the middle of the mound and ends at the point of home plate. The stride leg should always land on the power line with the toe pointed at a 45- to 90-degree angle in relation to the power line. 		I	R	M
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Stride length: Stride length should be as far as the pitcher is tall. To determine approximate distance have the pitcher walk heel to toe and try to land between their fifth and sixth step. 		I	R	M

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Power position: From the pitcher's feet up, land on the power line with toe pointed between 90 to 45 degrees. Glove hand and shoulders are also on top of the power line. The palm of the throwing hand is pointed away from the body, the arm circle is on top of the toes, and the pitching arm is long but not locked. There will be a noticeable bend in the arm, and the body is upright with head facing the target. 		I	R	M
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Arm whip and release point: The slight bend in the elbow in the power position is the starting point of the arm whip. The arm whip is simply the overhand throwing motion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start with the throwing arm relaxed. • Extend toward the target. • Completely extend on release. • Relax through the finish. <p>The release point is the place where you let go of the ball to throw a strike. The arm whip increases the release point range and allows more time to release the ball and throw a strike. The best way to feel the arm whip is from the power position. Pull down from the elbow and push the hand toward the target, reach toward the target, and completely relax the arm on release.</p>		I	R	M
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Proper finish: staying sideways or turning to face the catcher <p>Sideways finish—no rotation on the stride leg, knees pinched together, and arms finishing in a scissor motion (opposite directions but both along the power line)</p> <p>Finishing facing the catcher requires a pivot on the stride leg and the arms finishing in a helicopter motion.</p>		I	R	M
Holding Runners				
○ Pickoffs to 1B			I	M
○ Pickoffs to 2B			I	M
○ Pickoffs to 3B			I	M
○ Varying moves			I	M
○ Pitchout			I	M
Hitting Skills	A	AA	AAA	Majors
Dropping the bat and running to 1st; not throwing the bat	R	R	M	
Basic positioning in the batter's box	R	R	M	
Use appropriate bat weight and length	I	R	M	
Understand the strike zone	I	R	M	
How to protect yourself from a ball coming at you	I	R	M	
Adjusting where you stand in the batter's box based on the situation		I	M	
How to take a sign from your 3B coach		I	M	
Study pitcher for patterns		I	R	M
Identify the types of pitches the pitcher throws		I	R	M

Develop a stance				
○ Feet little wider than shoulder width apart	R	R	M	
○ Knees slightly bent	R	R	M	
○ Hands near level with shoulder	I	R	M	
○ Bat at an appropriate angle	I	R	M	
Bat Grip				
○ Proper hand on top	R	R	M	
○ Hands together	R	R	M	
○ Held loosely in fingertips	R	R	M	
Load and Stride				
○ Load hands straight back, without bat wrap	I	R	M	
○ Stride on front foot keeping weight slightly on back foot	I	R	M	
○ Front knee should remain inside front foot		I	R	M
The Swing				
○ Keep head still and eyes on the ball	R	R	M	
○ Keep both hands on the bat through contact	R	R	M	
○ Knob to ball; keeping bat head above hands	I	R	M	
○ Back knee to front knee; turning hips	I	R	M	
○ Keep swing level (palm up, palm down)	I	R	M	
○ Keep hands inside the ball	I	R	M	
○ Front leg should be straight with weight fairly balanced	I	R	M	
Understand how to approach hitting based on the count				
○ Early in the count	I	R	M	
○ 2 strike approach	I	R	M	
○ Up in the count		I	R	M
○ Down in the count		I	R	M
Understand how to approach hitting based on the game situation				
○ Score			I	M
○ Baserunners			I	M
○ Role in the lineup			I	M
Bunting				
○ Teach pivot technique		I	M	
○ Top hand slides 2/3 up barrel and grip like “holding a key.”		I	M	
○ Bat on 45 degree angle		I	M	
○ Bat starts at highest point of strike zone covering the whole plate		I	M	
○ Bend knees don’t drop the bat head to bunt ball		I	M	
○ Use bottom hand to direct ball in a certain direction		I	M	
○ Be able to lay down a sacrifice bunt		I	M	
○ Be able to bunt down the lines			I	M

Baserunning Skills	A	AA	AAA	Majors
Understand when there is a force play and you must run	R	R	M	
Understand when there is not a force play and you don't have to run	I	R	M	
Tagging up		I	M	
Drawing throws to the plate from the OF		I	R	M
Recognizing a bad throw to the cutoff and taking the extra base		I	R	M
When to advance from 2B to 3B on a ball hit to SS and no one on 1B		I	M	
Know how to execute a delayed steal			I	M
Know how to execute a fake steal			I	M
Know your responsibilities as a runner on 1 st and 3 rd situations		I	M	
Know your responsibilities when caught in a rundown		I	M	
Running to 1B on a ball hit to the IF				
o Run through the base	R	M		
o Hit front outside corner	I	R	M	
o Breakdown shortly after the base ready to advance if there is a bad throw		I	R	M
Running to 1B on a ball hit to the OF				
o Pickup your 1B coach	I	R	M	
o Start making your turn about halfway down the 1B line	I	R	M	M
o Hit the inside front left corner of the bag	I	R	M	M
o Turn should put you in a straight line with 2B		I	R	M
o Know how big of a turn to take based on where the ball was hit		I	R	M
o Give your coach a chance to send you to 2B		I	R	M
o Return to 1B with your head up watching the ball		I	R	M
o Know how to spin off preventing a tag from pushing you off the bag		I	R	M
Leads from 1B				
o Taking signs from the 3B coach		I	R	M
o Know how to take a lead on release		I	R	M
o Know the various pickoff moves a pitcher can perform		I	R	M
Know how to slide back head first				
o Step and a dive		I	R	M
o Protect fingers		I	R	M
o Head looking away from bag		I	R	M
o Head looking away from bag		I	R	M
Leads at 2B				
o Taking signs from your 3B coach		I	M	
o Understand pickoffs moves to 2B		I	M	
o Know which coach will aid you with SS location		I	M	
o Take lead deep so you can see the second baseman		I	M	
o Upon pitchers delivery take secondary lead creeping back into the normal base path		I	M	

Leads from 3B				
○ Take lead in foul territory		I	M	
○ Return to 3B in fair territory with head up		I	M	
○ Anticipate scoring on a passed ball			M	
○ Understand pickoff moves to 3B			M	
Sliding				
○ Straight into a bag		I	M	
○ Must slide when there is a play at the plate		I	M	
○ Hook Slide		I	R	M
○ Pop up slide		I	R	M
○ Reading where to slide based on opponents position around bag		I	R	M
Basic Catching and Throwing Skills	A	AA	AAA	Majors
Catch with 2 hands when possible	R	R	M	
Ball above waist; catch with fingers up	R	R	M	
Ball below waist; catch with fingers down	R	R	M	
Catch pop ups above head; fingers up	I	R	M	
4 seam grip	I	R	M	
Proper footwork to square up towards target getting momentum moving forward	I	R	M	
Throwing elbow above shoulder; fingers pointing away from target	I	R	M	
Step towards target or crow hop when needed	I	R	M	
Rules	A	AA	AAA	Majors
Understand the Infield Fly Rule	I	R	M	
Understand Obstruction		I	R	M
Understand Interference		I	R	M
Know a foul tip caught is a live ball		I	R	M
Understand catch and carry rules		I	R	M
Know when you must slide		I	R	M
Understand how to run an appeal play		I	R	M
Understand dropped 3 rd strike			I	M
Know the balk rules			I	M

