

## Session #9 ► Focus: Base Running/ Sliding

~ Warm Up ~

### FOLLOW THE LEADER

**Learning Objective:** Fundamental movement skills

**Time:** 5 minutes

**Equipment:** n/a

#### How to:

Choose 1 player to be the Leader. The leader performs different actions such as clapping, crawling, dancing, jumping jacks or skipping. The other players follow the actions and path of the Leader. If a player doesn't follow the exact actions of the Leader, he is out. The last player in the game becomes the new Leader.

- Clap
- Crawl
- Walk
- Run
- Climb a hill
- Blow in the breeze like a tree
- Flap your arms like a chicken
- Hop
- Skip
- Jump
- Gallop
- March
- Spin
- Twist
- Walk on tiptoe
- Stomp
- Roll
- Fall like a leaf
- Wiggle
- Fly like an airplane
- Twirl like a helicopter blade
- Shake your hips from side-to-side
- Crawl sideways like a crab
- Kick
- Step-kick like a chorus line dancer
- Swim like a fish
- Swim like a person

#### Tips/Modifications:

Can use balls/gloves and examples of simple softball movements if desired.



**PARTNER SHUTTLE**

**Learning Objective:** Agility, quickness, teamwork, running, jumping, twisting, flexibility, power/endurance, balance, coordination, appropriate equipment, strength training, body weight

**Time:** 5 minutes

**Equipment:** N/A

**How to:**

- Players form partners and make 2 end lines with partners starting at the same end
- Partners, joined, move back and forth to end line using various combinations of body parts touching the ground (i.e. 3 legs; 2 legs; 4 legs + 2 hands; 2 hands + 2 legs; 1 hand + 3 feet, etc.)
- Can also be done as singles, using various movements (i.e. skip; shuffle step; grape vine; frog hop; duck walk)

~ Main Activities ~

**JAM**

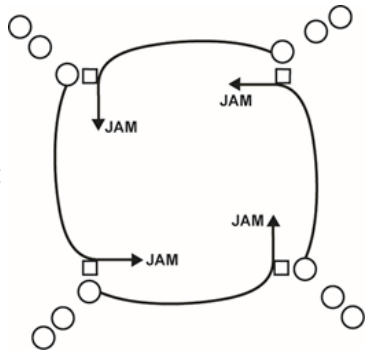
**Learning Objective:** Rounding base and jamming to stop

**Time:** 10 minutes

**Equipment:** 4 bases, 4 bats

**How to:**

- 4 groups of 3 with 3 at each base
- Bases are set up in diamond formation
- Each player takes a full swing at an imaginary ball, runs to the next base
- Use proper rounding technique taught earlier in this lesson
- After rounding the base, player “jams” to a stop



**Tips/Modifications:**

Coach will have to demonstrate proper ‘jam’ technique (on the balls of their feet and low). Ready to blast forward or back!

**HOT POTATO**

**Learning Objective:** Quick turn when relaying ball from one player to another, catching, throwing

**Time:** 5 minutes

**Equipment:** 1 ball for every 3 players

**How to:**

- 4 teams of 3 lined up
- In groups of 3, the ball is relayed from 1 to 2 to 3 and back
- Go slowly at first to concentrate on proper turn in center
- Rotate players in all 3 positions, so each gets experience as a relay player in the center
- It can be made into a relay competition if skill level is high enough

**Tips/Modifications:**

Real softballs do not have to be used – nerf balls, squishy balls, lite flights

**BEEP BEEP**

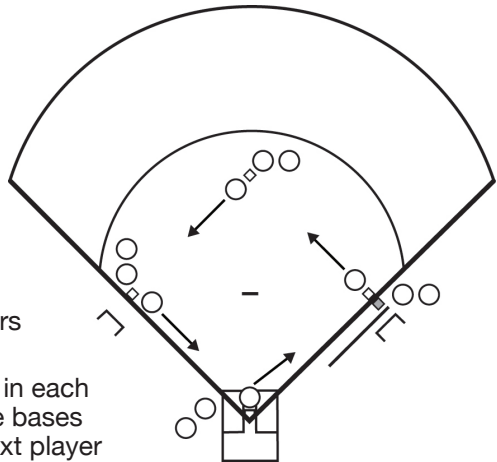
**Learning Objective:** Rounding the bases, speed development, conditioning

**Time:** 10 minutes

**Equipment:** 4 bases

**How to:**

- Put bases down in proper diamond location, with 3 players at each. One player starts in front of the base and extra players stand behind
- On “GO”, the first player in each group runs around all the bases and returns to tag the next player in line and then they run the bases
- Emphasize proper rounding techniques including stepping on the inside corner



**SLIP N SLIDE** (*Sliding Mechanics*)

**Learning Objective:** Bent leg slide

**Time:** 10 minutes

**Equipment:** helmets, players must be wearing pants, bases, sock or no shoes

**How to:**

- Players line up on a base line to start
- Then break into 3 groups of 4 with 2 adults per group
- **Determining the Sliding Leg**
  - Have players sit down cross-legged
  - Leg tucked under is usually sliding leg
- **Finish Position**
  - Sliding leg bent 90 degrees, tucked under other leg
  - Other leg extended, slightly bent
  - Extended leg foot is 4-6 inches off ground
  - Base is contacted with extended leg
  - Weight of slider is back
  - Chin is tucked into to the chest
  - Arms thrown above head
- **Distance**
  - Start slide about one and a half body lengths from base
- **General Tips**
  - Ensure players are wearing a helmet even in practice.
  - Build confidence by starting easy and progressing gradually
  - Use support people until slider is confident
  - Practice sliding on wet grass, in a sand pit or in a gymnasium
  - Use unfastened bases to start with
  - Teach sliding to players in socks or bare feet
  - To determine where a player should start their slide, have player put feet on the edge of the base and lay on their bellies stretched out as far from the base as possible. Using a marked cone have player place the cone on the ground where their fingers are stretched to. The cone will be a visual aid to help them understand the distance from the base where they should start the slide.

- **Sliding Teaching Progressions**

- Teach sliding progression in outfield with no shoes on
- Determine the bent or tucked leg
  - Have players form a circle around the Coach.
  - Have the players sit down cross legged
  - They will naturally tuck one leg underneath their body which will be the natural slide leg.
- Demonstrate the finish position
  - Slide leg straight but not locked
  - Bent leg tucked
  - Arms thrown above head
  - Chin tucked into chest.
- Finish position with movement
  - Have players move around in the crab walk position. Coaches use cue words “Hit It” and players get into finish position
  - Using a volunteer player who is lying in the finish position, the Coach will grasp their foot and pull them to simulate the movement of the slide.
- Standing in Finish position
  - While standing, get the players to get into the Finish Position.
  - Be sure they throw their hands back over their head and tuck their chin on their chest.
- Sliding with Support
  - With the aid of two strong coaches, have them hold the slider’s arms and gently lower them into the Finish Position
- Sliding with Support while Jogging
  - Same as above but do a slow jog first from about 10 meters.
  - Instead of two adults supporting slider, you can use two adults holding a broom stick or bat that the slider grabs to lower them to the ground.
- Sliding with Support while Sprinting
  - Same as above but from a sprint
- Bent Leg Slide while Jogging without aid
- Bent Leg Slide while Sprinting without aid

### Coaching Tip

- Have players slide without shoes
- Teach sliding on wet grass or a slippery surface (soapy tarp or a slip and slide)

### Relays

- The relay starts with a strong accurate throw from the outfielder
- The outfielder should try to throw the ball to the relay person's glove at about head height.
- The relay person:
  - Gives a big target with both arms in the air and calls for the ball.
  - Stands at a 45-degree angle to the glove side.
  - Pivots towards glove and throws quickly relaying the ball to the next target.
- **Teaching Progression**
  - Demonstrate proper throwing and receiving technique.
  - Practice movement with NO BALL, with players in a line pretending to receive a ball thrown by the Coach then turning to make throw behind them.

	x
	x
Coach	x
	x
	x

- Make groups of 3 positioned as shown. A pretends to throw to B, who mimics a catch and makes a proper relay turn, then pretends to throw to C.

A	B	C
A	B	C
A	B	C

- Rotate all 3 players through center position.
- Use a ball in the drill. Start slowly at first, making sure center player is turning in correct direction for a quick throw.
- If time permits and players are able, this can progress into a relay competition between teams of 3.

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~ Modified Game ~

**MODIFIED SOFTBALL GAME**

**Learning Objective:** All softball skills

**Time:** 45 minutes

**Equipment:** Ball, bat, bases

**How to:**

- Coach will pitch to their team
- 7 pitches are thrown to each batter to allow them to hit a fair ball. If the player does not hit a fair ball, they go to first base if a swing was taken on at least four pitches
- All players will play defense
- All players will bat each inning
- There will be no advances on overthrows

**Tips/Modifications:**

See U7 Introduction for more information.