

## Session #5

~ Warm Up ~

### TAKE IT BACK

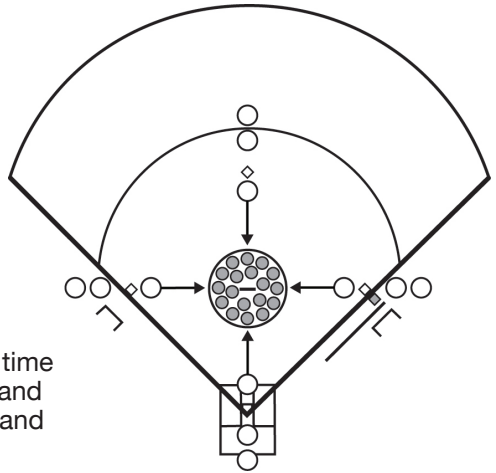
**Learning Objective:** Agility, quickness, teamwork, running, multi-directional speed

**Time:** 5 minutes

**Equipment:** 20 – 25 balls, bean bags or other small objects, 4 markers/pylons

### How to:

- 4 teams of 3.
- One team at each of the 4 markers, which are placed in a diamond formation (bases could be used instead of markers).
- Objects are placed in center where pitcher's location would be
- On "GO", one player at a time from each team runs out and picks up 1 of the objects and returns
- After tagging the returning player's hand, the next player can leave
- Play continues until all objects are gone
- The team with the most objects wins



### Tips/Modifications:

To keep all players actively engaged allow players to take balls from other groups as well as the center, so that players must guard their base. If a player takes a ball and is tagged before they get back to their group, they must return the ball and return to their base before grabbing another ball.

~ Main Activities ~

### HOME RUN DERBY

**Learning Objective:** Hitting

**Time:** 10 minutes

**Equipment:** 4 bats, 4 balls

**How to:**

- 4 groups of 3
- Each group has a batter, 2 retrievers, and at least 1 adult leader
- Mark off a designated “home run” distance according to skill level of group
- Try to make the skill level of each group as even as possible.
- One player in each group bats (off a tee or adult pitch or soft toss)
- Score 1 point every time the ball is hit over designated home run distance
- Any other hit is counted as an out
- Rotate after 3 outs or 5 home runs (whichever comes first)

**Questions:** Are players using proper hitting mechanics? Are they transferring their weight properly for power?

### BEAT THE BALL

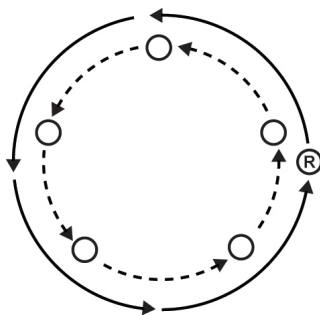
**Learning Objective:** Running, throwing, catching

**Time:** 5 minutes

**Equipment:** 2 balls

**How to:**

- 2 games are going on at the same time, with 6 players are involved in each game
- 5 players form a circle large enough for them to be able to throw the ball around to each other
- The 6th player is a runner starting beside the player with the ball



- On “Go” the ball is thrown around the circle, while the runner races around the outside trying to beat the ball back to the start
- Give one point to the runner for every player she passes before the ball gets back to the start point (max. 5 points)

**Tips/Modifications:**

- Make this activity harder or easier by making the players stand closer or further apart
- Have the children run, jump, skip, etc. around the outside of the circle
- Have the players and run around the circle in both directions
- Make a square putting a base at each corner and have a defensive player at each corner. Players have to throw around the square while the runner runs the bases

**Questions:** Are players using proper footwork while pivoting to make a throw? Are the runners rounding at each base?

**KNEE CLAPS**

**Learning Objective:** Bringing the knees together at the end of a pitch

**Time:** 5 minutes

**Equipment:** N/A

**How to:**

- Line players up in a line with at least two BIG steps distance in between them facing the instructor
- Have players start facing the instructor with their hands clasped behind their backs standing on one foot on the line
- Taking a big step sideways, have players step and slide their knees together finishing standing on their other leg
- Once players have mastered the lower body step-slide motion, add the upper body by having the pitcher clap as their legs come together. Say step-clap, step-clap as they go through the movement 10 times

**Tips/Modifications:**

Players should follow the coach step by step through the progression.

- 1) Coach says, “lift” and players lift front leg and balance
- 2) Coach says, “pivot” and players pivot on back leg, so they are sideways to the coach

- 3) Coach says, “stride” and players take a large step sideways (towards the coach) with front foot and plant
- 4) Coach says, “toe to heel” and players bring back toe of back foot to heel of front foot

**Questions:** Are players keeping body aligned? (not leaning backwards or too far forwards) Are players landing front foot at a 45-degree angle? Are players strong on the front leg with a little bend in the knee when planting? Are players slamming the back leg into the front leg with heel to toe touch? Refer to the Pitching Skills section.

### ~ Modified Game ~

#### MODIFIED SOFTBALL GAME

**Learning Objective:** All softball skills

**Time:** 60 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:**

Refer to the U9 introduction for scrimmage modifications that apply to the developmental stage of your players.