COACHES' PACKET

PRESEASON SCHEDULE / TO-DO LIST

- Attend evaluation day (Spring rec season only)
- Team formation/draft — do not contact your team until after rosters have been posted.
- Contact team to introduce yourself
- Setup GameChanger and add your team.
  - This will be your main source of communication with the whole team.
- Send choices for Practice Days and Times
- Coordinate equipment pickup with Equipment Manager
- Select assistant coaches (up to three per team)
- Select Team Mom and inform Team Mom Coordinator
- Complete Required Coaching/Team Parent Background Check and Certifications
  - Send contact information (including FULL NAME including FULL MIDDLE NAME) for all your Assistant Coaches and Team Parent to Registrar - ASAP
- Practices Begin
- Opening Day (Spring Season only)

PLAYER EQUIPMENT

Every player must have the following equipment at each practice and game:

1) Glove
2) Cleats
   - Baseball/softball cleats would be ideal.
     - Please make sure no Metal Cleats except for 14U
   - Soccer cleats are okay but are meant for grass and not dirt.
3) Bat
   - ASA approved bat recommended- non-ASA approved bats may be deemed ineligible by the umpire.
4) Helmet with facemask.
5) Fielding facemask
6) Water bottle labeled with player name
7) Equipment bag to hold all equipment.

IN-SEASON COACHING RESPONSIBILITIES

Coaches are expected to model the following standards throughout the season. Please know that ***you are not alone*** when it comes to any and all of these responsibilities. If you ever have a question, need practice plan ideas, or help with coaching items, do not hesitate to reach out to your division reps or any other board members.

LEAGUE REPRESENTATIVE

Be a positive role model by being polite and maintaining great sportsmanship. Correct issues through positive reinforcement and praise successes to build confidence. Do not become hostile with umpires, particularly youth umpires. If you need to discuss an issue, do so without making a scene. You are responsible for representing Rancho Trabuco Girls Softball well and take responsibility for your team's actions/conduct.

MODEL SPORTSMANLIKE BEHAVIOR

It is also your responsibility to ensure that Rancho Trabuco Girls Softball players, coaches, and parents behave appropriately at all practices and games. If you have a difficult individual that does not respond to your request to behave appropriately, please contact the Coaches Representative and your division representative.

MAINTAIN COMMUNICATION

Frequent and regular communication with parents and players is critical to a successful season. Work with your coaching staff and team manager to start a team group chat, email thread, etc. to facilitate communication with your team. At least one member of the coaching staff must have access to a phone during all team functions.

ENSURE PLAYER SAFETY

You are responsible for ensuring player safety and identifying any field hazards that exist and/or need to be mitigated. Promptly report dangerous conditions to the Field Manager or opposing team manager. Be particularly careful with player use of bats in the lower age divisions, including throwing bats after hitting. Bats should never be swung in the dugout or outside of the designated areas.

DISPUTES / ISSUES

While we have been fortunate to have a pool of players, coaches, and parents that are understanding and gracious, disputes/issues can arise. Should a dispute/issue arise that requires assistance or mediation, please report the issue to your Division Representative.

If your Division Representative is unable to resolve the situation, it will be relayed to the appropriate Board Member(s).

PRACTICE PREPARATION

- Ensure all equipment, including league issued equipment, fits and is in working order and remove any defective equipment from use.
- Set equipment up.
- Ensure players are healthy, rested, and alert.
- Prepare practice plan in advance and distribute to assistant coaches and any other parent volunteers.
- Do NOT leave the field until *every* team member has been picked up by a parent, guardian, or designated adult.
- If there was an injury, make sure an incident report was filled out and transmitted to the Board of Directors
- Ensure that any league field equipment, including bases, is returned to the appropriate storage facility at the end of that field's last game or practice of the day.

GAME PREPARATION

- Determine player absences and set line-up based on active player list.
- Ensure all equipment, including league issued equipment, fits and is in working order and remove any defective equipment from use.
- Set up equipment
- Ensure players are healthy, rested, and alert.
- Establish a pre-game warm-up schedule (e.g., throwing, team stretch, batting, pitching, etc.)

IN GAME COACHING

- Keep the girls focused with short meetings/pep talks.
- Praise great play — don't be negative about mistakes.
- Focus on being "Softball Ready"
- Keep players and substitutes sitting on the team's bench or in the dugout unless participating in the game or preparing to enter the game.
- Be sure to follow the appropriate division rules that will be provided to you from the league.

POST GAME RECAP

- Talk about how things went and praise any great play(s)
- Ask for input from the team on what they did well, and what they could improve upon
- Consider giving an incentive or team recognition (e.g., game ball, great play sticker, etc.)
- Do NOT leave the field until every team member has been picked up by a parent, guardian, or designated adult.
- If there was an injury, make sure an incident report was filled out and transmitted to the Board of Directors
- Ensure that any league field equipment, including bases, is returned to the appropriate storage facility at the end of that field's last game or practice of the day.

FIELD PREP AND MAINTENANCE

Each time you leave the field, you should leave it in the same, or better, condition than when you arrived. So, please ensure that:

- Trash is thrown away.
- Dugouts are clean.
- Bases are put away (if applicable)
- League equipment (e.g., pitching machines, practice softballs, field preparation supplies/materials, etc.) is put away (if applicable)
- Field facilities are locked (if applicable)

Your team is responsible for field preparation when you are the "home team." You should designate a field preparation parent who will handle this at every home game. If you are the first team of the day, this can take

45 minutes to an hour. Please be advised you are responsible for taking down the field if you are the home team for the last game of the day.

EMERGENCIES / FIRST AID

In the event of an emergency, medical or otherwise (e.g., fire, explosion, gas leak, vehicle collisions, etc.), please contact 911. The parents of any involved players should also be contacted as soon as possible.

After emergency services and parents have been contacted and once it is safe to do so, please contact the following individuals to report the incident:

- President
- Vice President
- Coaches Representative

First Aid: First aid kits will be furnished to each team at the beginning of the season and must be taken to all practices, games and any other league event where the players are present.

When administering first aid, you must have permission from the injured person if the person is conscious. DO NOT give care to a conscious victim who refuses your offer to give care. If the conscious victim is an infant or child, permission to give care should be obtained from a supervising adult (if available). If the condition is serious, permission is implied if a supervising adult is not present. Permission is also implied if a victim is unconscious or unable to respond.

ON SITE TREATMENT PLAN

- Assess the injury and determine what happened.
- Call emergency services (911) immediately for any serious injuries (e.g., unconscious, trouble breathing, chest pain/pressure, severe bleeding, seizure, poisoning, broken bones, etc.) and answer any questions/follow any instructions from emergency services to the best of your abilities. When in doubt, contact emergency services.
- Know your limitations and do NOT be afraid to ask for help.
- Do NOT administer medications or provide food/beverage (other than water) or transport an injured individual (except in extreme circumstances)

Special Considerations

- Asthma & Allergies — Many children suffer from asthma and/or allergies, including food allergies. Encourage parents to make the coaching staff aware of any asthma and/or allergy conditions that may manifest during the softball season and develop a proper action plan for dealing with such issues.
- Registration and Medical Release Forms — Should be in the possession of manager or other member of the coaching staff at all team activities.

APPENDIX A — SAMPLE PRACTICE PLANS

BEST FOR 8U / 10U / 12U / 14U

HITTING PRACTICE PLAN

Open the Basic Hitting Practice (see the following pages of this document).

FIELDING PRACTICE PLAN

Open the Defense-Focused Practice Plan (see the following pages of this document).

BASIC HITTING PRACTICE

60–90 MINUTE PRACTICE PLAN

GOAL
Build confident, powerful swings by slowing down mechanics first, then adding timing and game-like swings.

1. WARM-UP

Start off with warming up. Have the team go for a quick jog together, then stretch arms and legs.

2. STATION WORK

Divide the girls into 3–4 stations. Use the stations below based on your available equipment and practice time.

STATION 1 • TEE WORK

Tee work hitting into a net.
Coach focus: This station is very important. Slow down their full swing. Check feet placement/distance, bat position, loading position, and whether they are comfortable in their stance.

STATION 2 • PITCHING MACHINE

Pitching machine in the cage.

Coach focus: Have them focus on timing depending on the speed of the machine.

STATION 3 • HEAVY BALL / BASKETBALL FRONT TOSS

Heavy ball front toss or basketball front toss.

Why: This helps the hitter swing **THROUGH** the ball and really use their power. If you don't have weighted balls, a basketball is another great option.

STATION 4 • WIFFLE / REGULAR BALL FRONT TOSS

Wiffle ball or regular ball front toss.

Why: Another great drill for getting full swings and working on timing off the person who is front tossing.

STATION 5 • TENNIS BALL BOUNCES

Tennis ball bounces.

Why: This drill specifically helps hitters keep their weight back. A coach front tosses like normal but adds one bounce to the toss about 3 feet in front of the hitter.

3. FINISH WITH FUN

END PRACTICE WITH A FUN GAME!
Keep the final activity energetic and positive so players leave practice excited for the next one.

VIDEO REFERENCE • Tennis Ball Bounce Drill
https://youtube.com/shorts/v-akMIIEg7E?is=vO0fam-XWzlpMAIa

PRACTICE PLAN EXAMPLE

Defense Focused Practice Plan

A progressive session built around movement, fundamentals, game awareness, and fun.

Practice flow

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Warm up	Lead-offs	Throwing	Around the horn	Cross fire	Stations	Situations	Fun finish

1 Jog & Stretch

Begin with a light jog. Form a circle and invite one player to lead the stretch from the middle. Rotate the leader each practice to build confidence and ownership.

COACHING CUE Use dynamic movements and keep the group moving.

2 Lead-Offs & Straight Steals

Line players up along an outfield line. A coach performs a full windup while players practice rocking and taking their lead. After several repetitions, progress to straight steals.

COACHING CUE Players leave as the ball reaches the pitcher's hip and is being released.

3 Throwing Progression

Pair players for catch. Coaches circulate and reinforce sound throwing mechanics. Begin with short, controlled throws and gradually increase the distance.

COACHING CUE Turn the shoulders, step to the target, and follow through.

WATER BREAK | Hydrate, reset, and preview the next drill.

4 Around the Horn

Distribute players evenly at the bases. Move the ball from base to base, with every receiver calling for it. Rotate positions so everyone handles routine throws from different angles.

COACHING CUE Show a target, call loudly, catch first, then transfer.

WATER BREAK | Hydrate, reset, and preview the next drill.

Team defense

5 Ground Balls / Cross Fire

Split the team between shortstop and second base. One coach hits ground balls to second; another hits to shortstop. Each fielder makes the play and throws to first. Alternate groups and rotate several players through first base.

COACHING CUE Charge the ball, field out front, and make a strong, accurate throw.

WATER BREAK | Hydrate, reset, and preview the next drill.

Skill stations

STATION 1 | Pop Flies

SETUP

Start barehanded with a foam or tennis ball, using the player's catching hand. Toss the ball directly overhead. Once players are comfortable, progress to gloves and regulation balls.

FOCUS

Move directly under the ball, keep eyes up, and 'high-five the sky' at the catch point.

STATION 2 | Ground-Ball Shuffles

SETUP

Place two cones about 6 feet apart. Players begin at one cone and shuffle toward the second while a coach rolls the ball into their path.

FOCUS

Stay low with the bottom down. Shuffle without crossing the feet, then field the ball out front.

WATER BREAK | Hydrate, reset, and preview the next drill.

Game awareness

6 Situations

Use this segment to address patterns from recent games. Put the team in defensive positions and hit or describe balls to every player. Ask: Where is the play? Where should the ball go? What is each backup responsibility?

COACHING CUE Pause, ask the players first, then rehearse the correct decision at game speed.

WATER BREAK | Hydrate, reset, and preview the next drill.

7 Finish with Energy

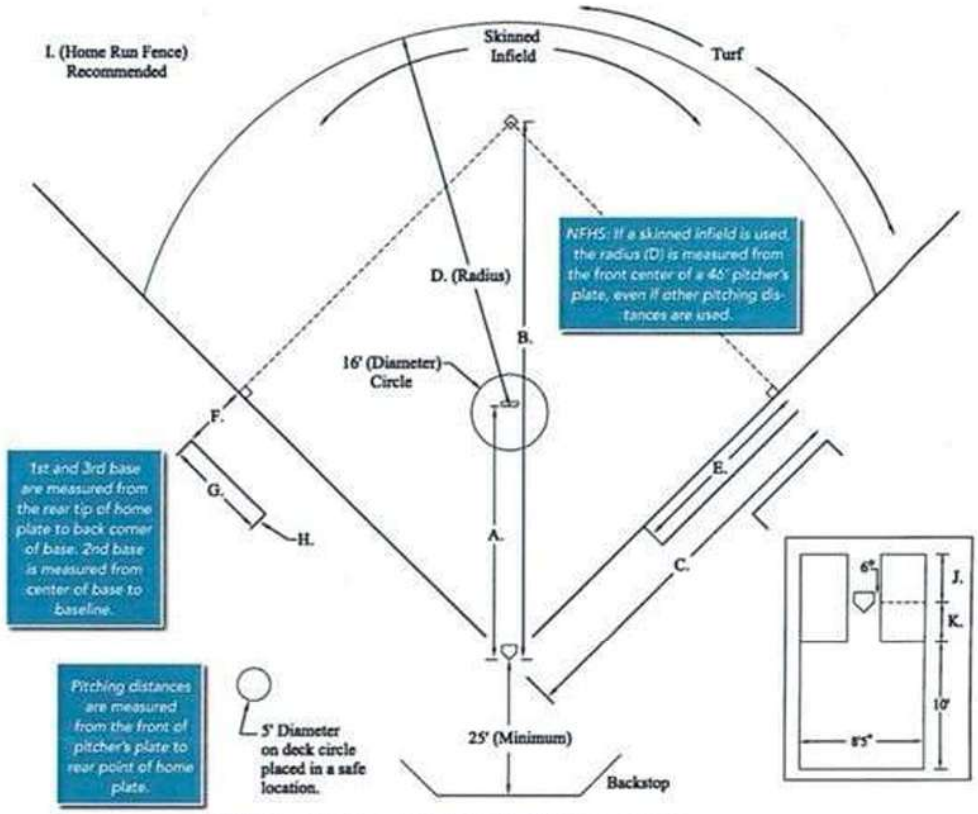
End practice with base running or a fun, competitive game. Keep the final activity active, positive, and connected to a skill from the session.

COACHING CUE Finish together: celebrate effort, name one win, and preview the next practice.

COACH'S REMINDER Keep instruction brief, repetitions high, and feedback specific. Rotate leaders and positions so every player stays involved.

APPENDIX B — FIELDING SET UP DIAGRAM

FIELDING SET-UP DIAGRAM



Official U.S.A. Softball Dimensions

A. Pitching Distance
B. Home to 2nd Base
C. Base Paths
D. Disregard already done.
E. Running Lane
F. – H. Coach's Box
I. Home Run Fence for Tournament Play
J. – K. Batter's Box 7'x3' inside line should be 6" from home plate
(Note: the front corner of box does not align with foul line.
The front corners of the batter's box should extend past foul line and into the field of play.)

***Pitcher's Circle (all ages) – 8' Diameter use rake to scribe circle.**
***On Deck Circle (all ages) – 5' Diameter away from dug out exits**

Division	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K
6U	30'	84' - 10"	60'	60'	30'	8'	15'	3'	150' - 175'	4'	3'
8U	30'	84' - 10"	60'	60'	30'	8'	15'	3'	150' - 175'	4'	3'
10U	35'	84' - 10"	60'	60'	30'	8'	15'	3'	175' - 225'	4'	3'
12U	40'	84' - 10"	60'	60'	30'	8'	15'	3'	200' - 225'	4'	3'