



MCAA Softball Skill Progression



** Skills at the younger ages should continue to be reinforced at all older ages

Age	Game Play	Hitting	Baserunning	Throwing	Fielding	Defensive Play	Pitching	Catching	Work Ethic	Attitude
7	3 outs per half inning	Balanced Stance	Basic Rules	Grip	Fingers up above belt	Get ball to 1B or P	Take throwing principles		Have Fun!	Positive expectation
	Top and Bottom of inning	Contact in front of plate	Run through first base on balls hit to infield	Throwing elbow up	Finger down below belt	Intro to best base	Add length to backswing	Where catcher should be positioned	Intro to learning	Fun to learn
	3 strikes = out;	Tracking	Round first on balls hit to outfield	Front shoulder closed (open to close)	Start charging grounders	Plays to best base	Intro 1,2,3,4	Protect non-glove hand		Hustle on and off field
	Strike zone; foul balls are strikes	Loading	Watch base coaches	Step to target	Fielding footwork	Cutoffs	(Post/Break/Release/Follow through)	Standing in front of plate when receiving a thrown ball not a pitch)		Good sportsmanship
	Force outs	Power V		Glove tuck (elbow high)	Transfer footwork					
	home & visitor teams	Short stride		Thumbs down and apart	Side to side fielding	Tag technique				
8	4 balls = walk	Chin shoulder to shoulder	When to run/stay	Introduce longer throws (shuffle throws or step, step throws)	Outfielders get the ball back to the infield	Backup positions on defense	Begin windmill	Blocking motion	Have Fun!	Positive expectation
		Bunting	Hold on pop flies		Fielding footwork		Extension		Start bearing down	
		Hands to ball; inside out swing	Leading off - reacting quickly to passed balls		Transfer footwork	Everyone moves on each play	Push off rubber			
9		Tuning reps	Anticipate where the play will be	Start developing arm strength (long toss)	Learn grounder rhythm	Double Play (on line drives/pop ups)	Develop Control		Have Fun!	Desire to improve
		Bunting	Stealing	Crow hop throws	Learn backhand	Rundowns	Continue developing windmill mechanics	Moving quickly to passed balls	Really learning	
		Increase bat speed	Sliding		Teach how to catch fly balls - use two hands	Cutoff technique		Trying to throw out runners attempting to steal - make the throw		
			Pick up 3rd base coach when approaching 2nd		Double play on line drives	Additional tag techniques				
10	Dropped 3rd strike				Learn forehand stepover	Backup positions on defense	Continue to develop control	Awareness of runners	Have Fun!	Desire to improve and compete
		Opposite Field Hitting	Pop-up slides	Arm strength dev't	Repetition and tuning	Steal defenses	Intro to strategy		Working hard	
		Count Awareness	Tagging up	Perfect Technique		Bunt defenses	Reading hitters			
			Stealing			Cutoff technique	Intro to work ethic			
			Aggressiveness				Tuning	Throwing out runners attempting to steal		
11		Situational bunting	Stealing Home		Outfielders throwing in front of the runner to prevent extra bases	Double Play	First pitch strikes	Reacting to dropped 3rd strike	Have Fun!	Goal Setting
					Fielding strategies based on game situations - count, score, etc			Reacting to bunts / hits in front of plate		
		Tuning Reps	Aggressive baserunning	Arm strength dev't	Mental toughness		Arm Strength Dev't	Blocking pitches in the dirt	Working hard on weaknesses	Compete to win
		Hitting changeups	Dropped 3rd strikes	Perfect Technique			Perfect Technique	Awareness of runners; when not to attempt to throw out a stealer	Practice with tempo	Team Leadership
12		Slap Hitting	Drawing throws to allow for extra bases				Tuning	Directing plays to the correct base		Compete to win
		Ability to hit to opposite field		Arm strength dev't			Off speed pitches	Turning double plays		
		Tuning Reps		Perfect Technique						
Overall objective for middle school players	A town with hitters that hit in front of the plate, generate power from the trunk, take their hands directly to the ball, have muscle memory in the strike zone, and load up and release power efficiently	Hitters that hit in front of the plate, generate power from the trunk, take their hands directly to the ball, have muscle memory in the strike zone, and load up and release power efficiently; hitters with ability to bunt, slap, and swing away	Aggressive, knowledgeable baserunners	Kids that use their trunk for power, have good footwork, throw with their elbows up. Accurate and strong throwers	Confident, fundamentally sound fielders. Aggressive fielders not afraid to fail.	Confident and solid defense. Strong sense of positional responsibilities.	Pitchers who throw efficiently, with better than avg. arm strength. Proper arm action. Whole body pitchers with finish. Kids with arm action allowing for curveball (extension).	Catchers able to handle a strong pitching staff and contribute to a strong defense	Kids who love the game and want to work hard to improve.	Confident, hungry, and positive can-do attitude players who enjoy the game of softball

What is power L