



23 Simple Drills for Warmup, Mechanics,  
Velocity and Arm Conditioning

**Step By  
Step  
Workouts**

- Designed for Ages 8-18
- Quickly and Safely Develops Key Pitching Skills
- Perfect for Back Yard or Small Space Workouts
- Solo, Partner, or Team Training

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# **WARMUP DRILLS**

# 1.

## PARTNER CATCH DRILL

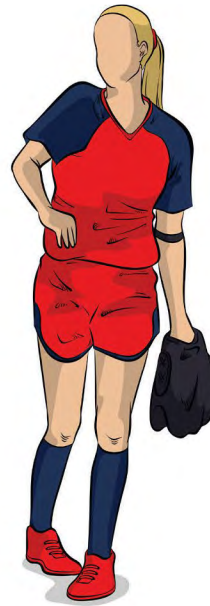
### SETUP:

Players partner up and play catch.  
Stand roughly 30 feet apart to start.

### PURPOSE:

Warmup.

Playing catch with a partner.



### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Players start by throwing overhand to each other.
2. After every third or fourth overhand throw, they go through their motion and throw a pitch.
3. Take 2 steps back and continue
4. Complete 20-25 throws.

### COACHING TIPS:

- Players should always make a target when receiving a throw, and catch with two hands.

## 2.

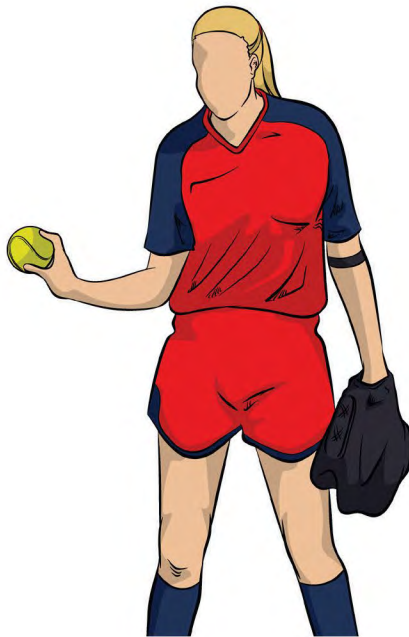
## WRIST SNAP DRILL

### SETUP:

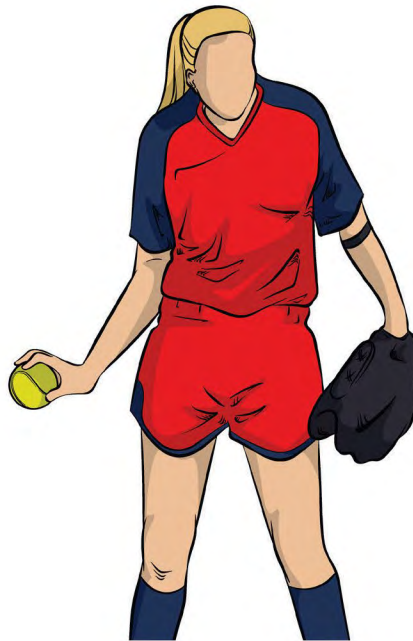
Pitcher stands with a ball and glove.

### PURPOSE:

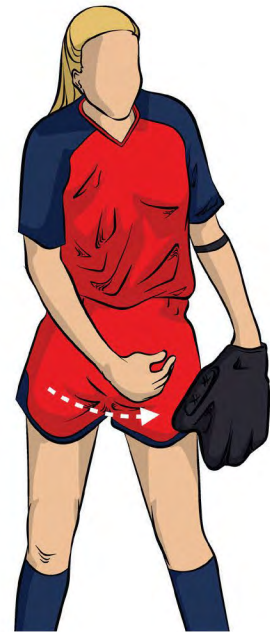
Helps pitcher develop a strong wrist snap.



Elbow against waist, wrist cocked.



Bring wrist down and through.



Snap the ball into the glove.

### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Pitcher starts with elbow against waist and wrist cocked.
2. Pitcher brings her wrist down and forward.
3. She then snaps her wrist and throws the ball into her glove.
4. Complete 3 sets of 10-15 wrist snaps

### COACHING TIPS:

- Keys for the pitcher include keeping the elbow tucked in at the waist and the wrist cocked to start. Cocking the wrist means it should be pulled back toward the forearm as much as possible.
- Pitcher should “shoot the gun” at the end of the snap – that means index finger should be pointed toward home and thumb should be on top of the ball.
- Ball hand should brush the hip.

# 3.

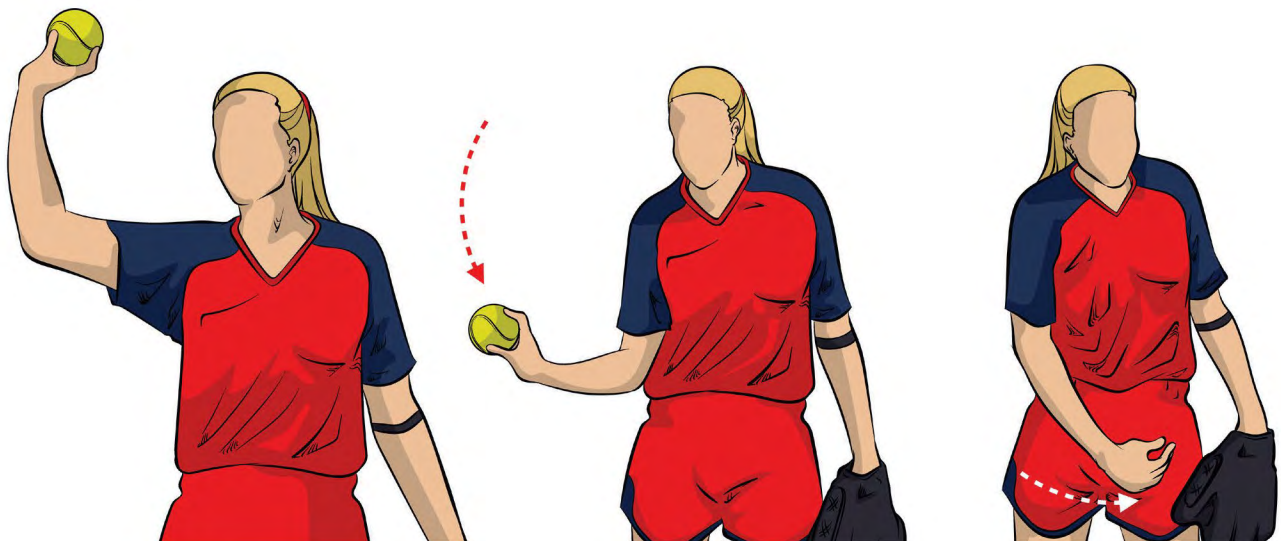
## MUSCLE DRILL

### SETUP:

Pitcher stands with a ball and glove.

### PURPOSE:

Helps pitcher develop a strong wrist snap.



Starting position.

Midpoint.

Wrist snap.

### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Pitcher starts with arm up in the air forming a 90 degree angle, like she is flexing her biceps muscle.
2. Wrist is cocked so ball is pointed toward the sky.
3. She then drops her arm so the elbow goes into waist and she executes a wrist snap sending the ball into her glove.
4. Complete 3 sets of 10-15 wrist snaps

### COACHING TIPS:

- Pitcher should not be pausing at the waist. She should bring her arm down and execute the wrist snap in one fluid motion.
- Wrist stays cocked until hand brushes hip, then the wrist is snapped.

# 4.

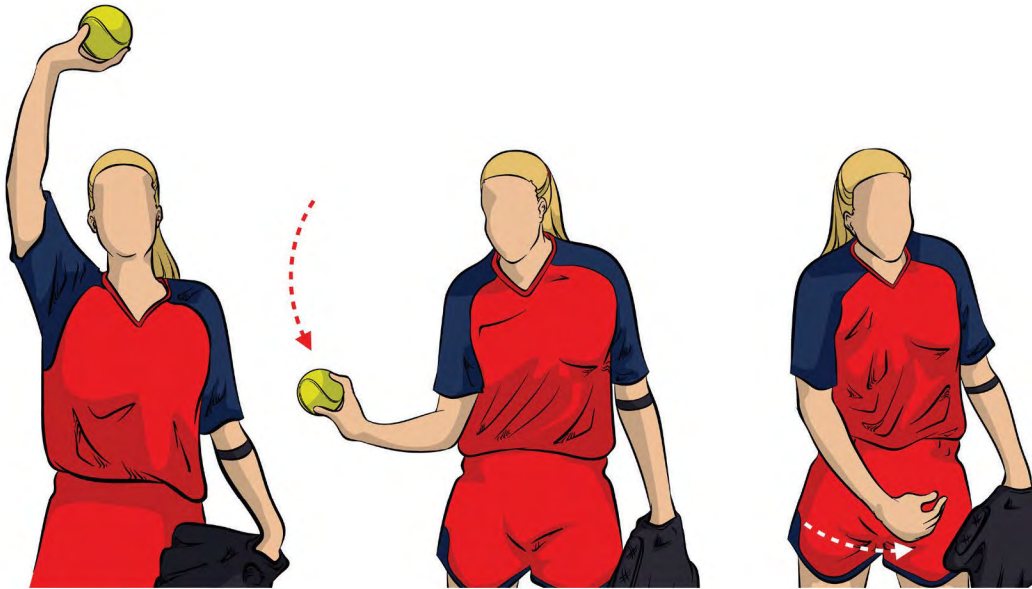
## HALF CIRCLE DRILL

### SETUP:

Pitcher stands anywhere on the field with a ball and glove.

### PURPOSE:

Teaches pitcher to keep her arm in front of her so she doesn't hurt her shoulder when she throws.



Starting position.

Midpoint.

Wrist snap.

### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Pitcher starts with arm up in the air at 12 o'clock. Ball should be toward the front of the head.
2. Arm is not locked. Elbow is bent and wrist is cocked.
3. Pitcher then drops her arm so the elbow goes into waist and she executes a wrist snap sending the ball into her glove.
4. Complete 3 sets of 10-15 wrist snaps

### COACHING TIPS:

- Remind pitcher that a whip produces more speed than a stick as a reminder to keep arm unlocked.
- When ball is above the head, pitcher should be able to look up with her eyes (without moving her head) and see it.
- If the pitcher is bringing the ball back too far when it's over her head, coach should stand behind her and put a hand on her shoulder so she is forced to keep the ball in front.
- Another thing you can do is have the pitcher stand with her back to a wall. If elbow hits the wall, she is bringing her arm back too far.

# 5.

## FULL CIRCLE DRILL

### SETUP:

Pitcher stands with a ball and glove.

### PURPOSE:

Teaches pitcher to complete a full arm circle when pitching.



Starting position.



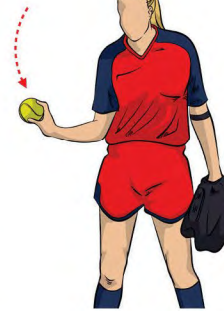
Swing back.



Swing forward to 3 o'clock.



Ball up to 12 o'clock.



Wrist cocked at 9 o'clock



Wrist snap.

### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Pitcher starts with arm down, wrist cocked, fingers pointed toward the catcher.
2. Arm swings back. Arm comes forward, wrist rotates so fingertips are toward the ground.
3. Ball goes up to the sky. Then it comes back down, elbow goes into waist and pitcher executes the wrist snap.
4. Complete 3 sets of 10-15 wrist snaps

### COACHING TIPS:

- Wrist should be cocked all the time to the wrist snap.
- Drill can be run into a wall as well as into the glove.
- Have beginning pitchers run this drill and the previous three for 3 to 4 weeks before they ever take the mound to prevent injury and keep them from developing bad habits.
- Tell pitchers to imagine a wall in front of them and the ball is the chalk and they are using it to draw a circle on the wall.



## **MECHANICAL DRILLS**

# 6.

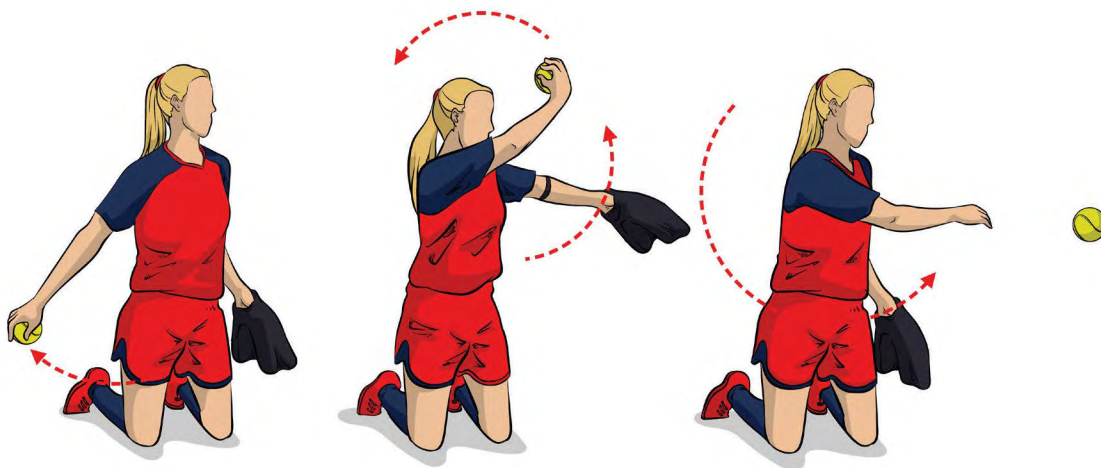
## KNEE DRILL

### SETUP:

Pitcher gets on knees in front of a wall, fence, net or catcher. Coach stands nearby.

### PURPOSE:

Teaches pitcher to stay in balance while executing the windmill arm motion.



Swing back.

Wind up.

Throw the ball with a wrist snap.

### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Pitcher, who is on her knees, starts in the open door position with a cocked wrist.
2. She swings back, then does a full windmill and throws the ball against the wall.
3. Complete 3 sets of 10-15 throws

### COACHING TIPS:

- Player should be straight up and down when throwing the ball. She should not be leaning forward or backward.

# 7.

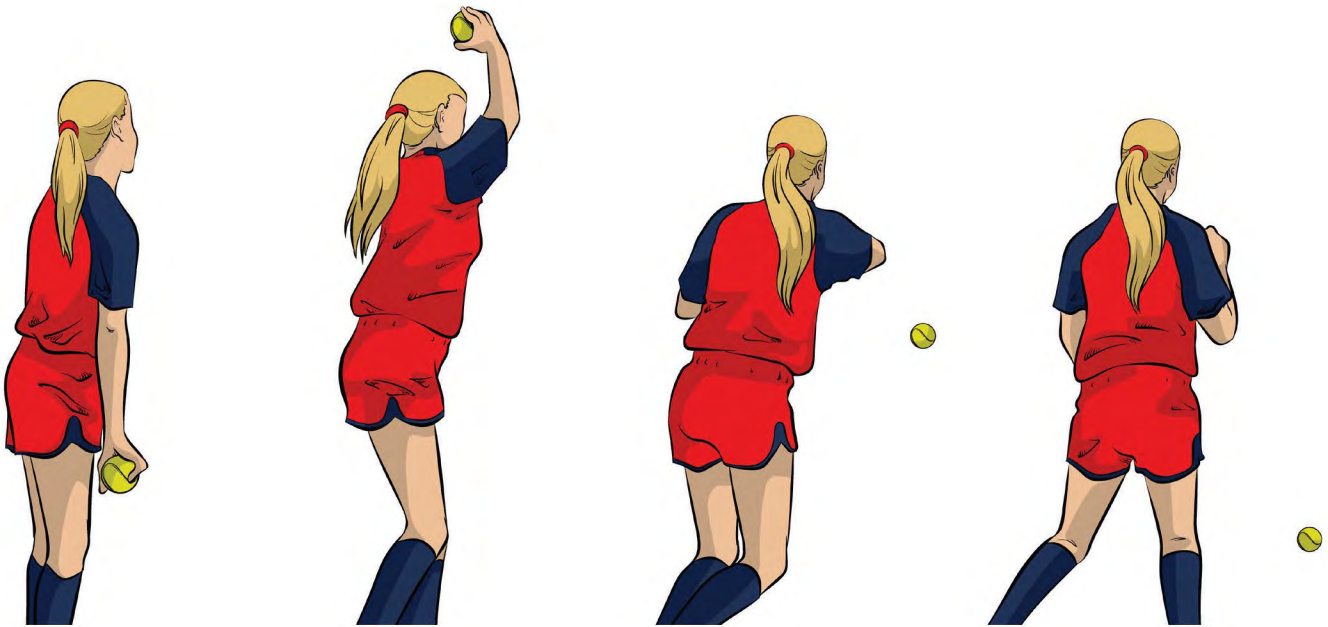
## OPEN DOOR DRILL

### SETUP:

Pitcher stands in front of wall (or net or fence or catcher).

### PURPOSE:

Pitcher works on bring hip forward and "slamming the door."



Open Door Position.

Circle wind up.

Throw the ball with a wrist snap.

Slamming the door by driving right hip forward.

### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Pitcher gets in open door position.
2. She throws the ball against the wall bringing her hip forward and "slamming the door."
3. She goes and gets the ball. She goes back to her original position and throws it again.
4. Complete 3 sets of 10-15 throws

### COACHING TIPS:

- Pitcher should be bringing her glove arm up and pointing toward the target.
- She should also be "shooting the gun" when she releases the ball – thumb and index finger form a gun.
- Pitcher's arm should be slightly "in the door" (in front of hip) before hip comes forward and slams the door. If pitcher is moving her hip too soon ball will go off to the side instead of straight to the wall.

# 8.

## FOOT PLACEMENT DRILL

### SETUP:

Pitcher stands on the rubber. Catcher is behind home plate. (35-40 feet away)

### PURPOSE:

Pitcher practices throwing from the mound, focusing on her footwork.



Right foot in front of left.



The wind up.



Pushing off and throwing to home.

### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Pitcher goes through motion and throws the ball to the catcher.
2. Catcher throws it back and pitcher repeats – going through her motion and throwing the ball to the plate.
3. Complete 3 sets of 10-15 pitches

### COACHING TIPS:

- Pitcher should start with both feet on the rubber. If right-handed, right foot is slightly in front of the left.
- Pitcher should push off the rubber to get more momentum behind pitch.
- Pitcher should “shoot the gun” (make a gun with index finger and thumb) when following through.
- Both pitcher and catcher should be making two-hand catches.
- Motion should be efficient as possible – that means no rocking back or leaning forward.
- If pitcher is not stepping straight forward, draw a line from front foot toward home and have them land on that line when throwing.

# 9.

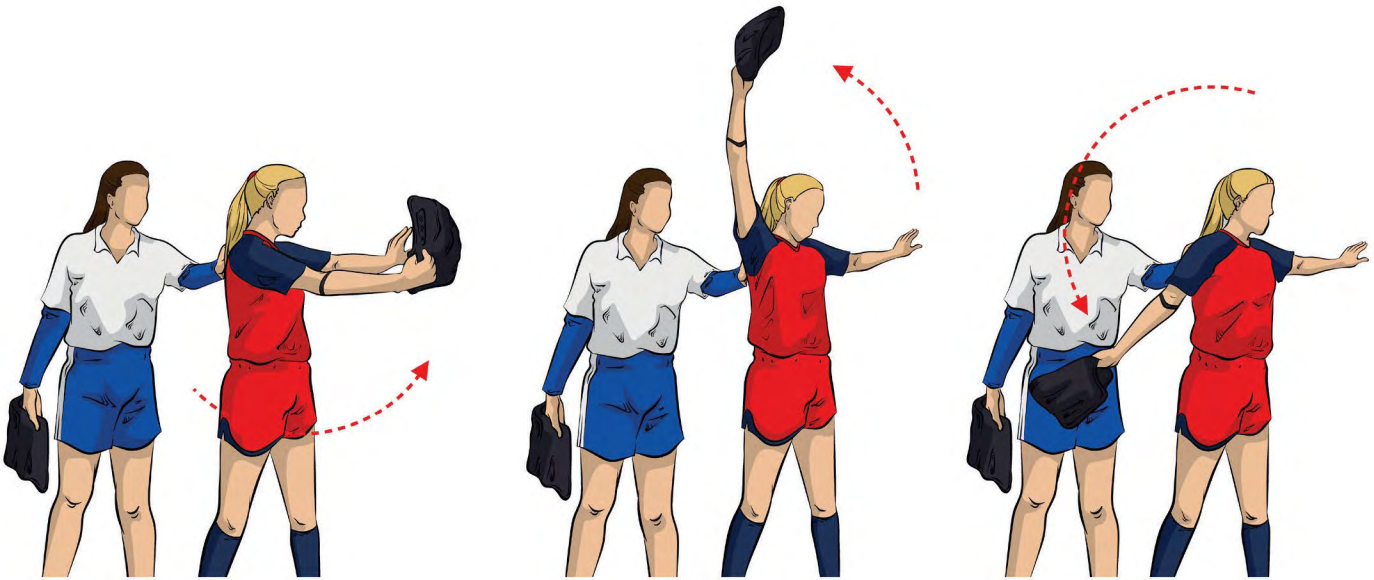
## SMOOTH MOTION DRILL

### SETUP:

Pitcher stands anywhere on the field.

### PURPOSE:

Helps prevent pitcher from pausing at the top of her delivery.



Holding the glove in your pitching hand, swing forward

At 12 o'clock

Finish the windmill motion with a wrist snap

### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Pitcher takes off glove and holds it with pitching hand.
2. Pitcher swings the glove around fast in a circle. Pause and re-set.
3. Complete 2 sets of 10-15 windmills

### COACHING TIPS:

- Coach can stand behind player and put hand on shoulder to ensure player doesn't let their arm get behind her.
- When glove gets to hip, pitcher should imagine she is snapping her wrist.

# 10.

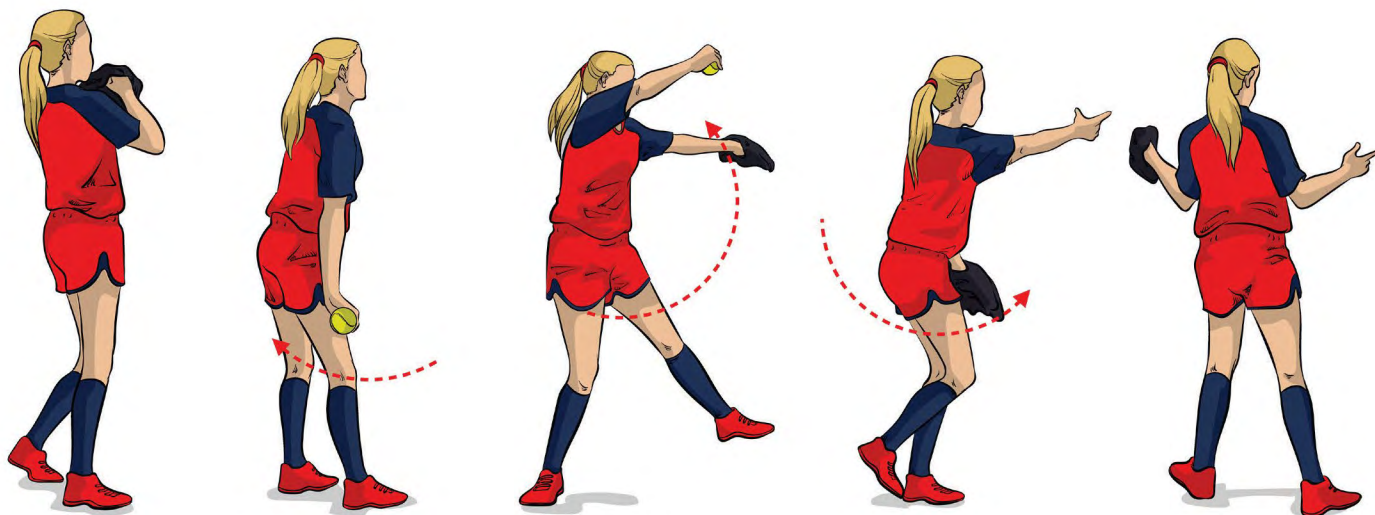
## FULL MOTION DRILL

### SETUP:

Pitcher stands in front of wall (or net or fence or catcher).

### PURPOSE:

Pitcher practices her full throwing motion.



Come together.

Drop and swing back.

Wind up.

Release the ball.

Slam the door.

### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Pitcher shows four dots (shoulder, shoulder, hip, hip) to the wall.
2. If right-handed, right foot is slightly in front of left.
3. Pitcher presents the ball, comes together (ball into glove) drops her arm and swings it back.
4. With weight on back foot, she goes into open door position, pointing glove arm at target.
5. She stride, completes her windup, releases the ball and follows through, slamming then the door shut with her back hip
6. Complete 3 sets of 10-15 wrist snaps

### COACHING TIPS:

- Make sure pitcher is NOT pausing at the top of the windup.
- On the drop and swing back, pitcher should not be leaning backward or forward. She should be in balance. Shoulders should be over hips.
- A lot of pitchers make the mistake of "aiming" the ball – signs of this include being way out on their front foot and having their arm behind them which causes them to pull the ball through. Make sure pitchers are relaxed and letting their momentum take the ball through.

# 11.

## CRITIQUE THE PITCH DRILL

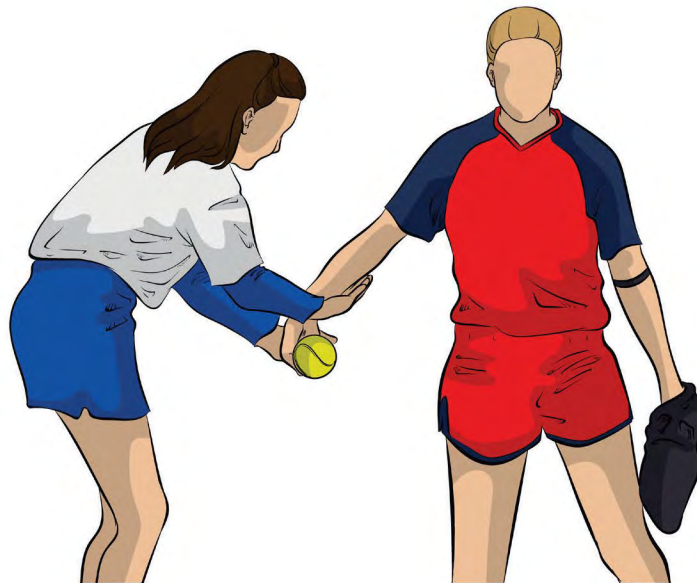
### SETUP:

Pitcher stands on the rubber. Catcher is behind home plate. (35-40 feet away)

### PURPOSE:

Helps pitcher correct flaws in delivery.

Coach offering pointers to pitcher.



### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Pitcher goes through normal motion and throws the ball to the catcher.
2. Coach critiques the motion and offers tips to correct any problems.
3. Complete 2 sets of 10-15 pitches

### COACHING TIPS:

- If ball is coming in too high or too low make sure pitcher is executing wrist snap at right time - when elbow brushes hip. If ball is high, pitcher is releasing the ball out in front of her body instead of at her hip.
- Another cause of a high pitch is taking too big of a lead step.
- If ball goes to the right side of the plate (from pitcher's perspective) she may be slamming the door (pulling hip through) too soon.
- If ball is going to the left side of the plate (from pitcher's perspective) she may not be opening all the way which then causes her to pull across her body.
- Causes of low balls include letting the ball go too soon (behind the body instead of at the hip) and leaning on the front foot (taking a short first step).



**VELOCITY DRILLS**

# 12.

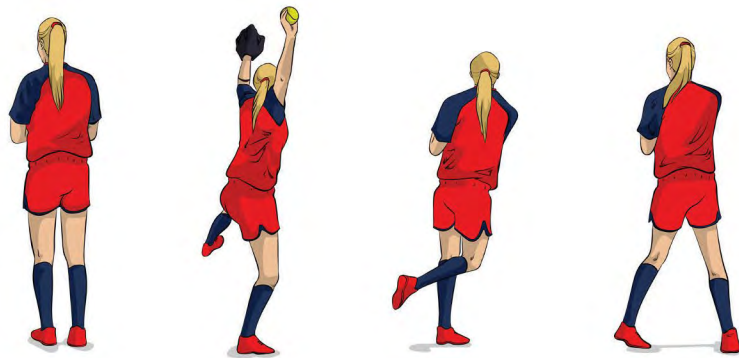
## HALF SWING WITH WEIGHTED BALL

### SETUP:

Pitchers stand about halfway from normal pitching distance (15-20 feet) holding a weighted ball. Catcher is standing up.

### PURPOSE:

Pitchers develop forearm and wrist strength. They also improve timing of lower body and upper body.



Start a half distance

Swing back to 11 o'clock

Release

Follow Through



### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Pitcher makes a half-swing, bringing the pitching arm to 11 o'clock (without the full windup)
2. Pitcher releases the ball and follows through
3. Catcher receives the pitch and throws the ball back
4. Complete 3 sets of 5-10 pitches

### COACHING TIPS:

- The weighted ball can be purchased from a sporting goods store. Or you can make your own by driving finishing nails into a softball.
- Look for good motion fundamentals, front leg up, arms even in the air, good plant, arm whips through. Pitcher should have a nice, short snap of the wrist and a good toe drag.
- Using a weighted ball is key as it will help the player strengthen their forearm, wrist and fingers which can lead to an increase in velocity.
- Pitchers should be pivoting on back toe to open hips – failure to open hips properly can decrease velocity.

# 13.

## FULL SWING WITH WEIGHTED BALL

### SETUP:

Pitchers stand at three-quarters of regular pitching distance (25-30 feet) holding a weighted ball. Catcher is standing up.

### PURPOSE:

Pitchers develop forearm and wrist strength. They also improve timing of lower body and upper body.



Start



Full windup



Release



Follow through



25-30 feet

### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Pitchers now take their full pitching wind-up and throw the weighted ball to the catcher.
2. Catcher throws the ball back and pitcher repeats the motion.
3. Complete 3 sets of 5-10 pitches

### COACHING TIPS:

- The weighted ball can be purchased from a sporting goods store. Or you can make your own by driving finishing nails into a softball.
- Watch pitcher's mechanics – good pivot, back leg up, good stride with front foot and good drag of back foot.
- Pitcher should be trying to keep the ball between the catcher's waistline and chest area.
- Also, pay attention to the rotation on the ball – the more rotation the better.
- Pitcher should be throwing at 70-75%.

# 14.

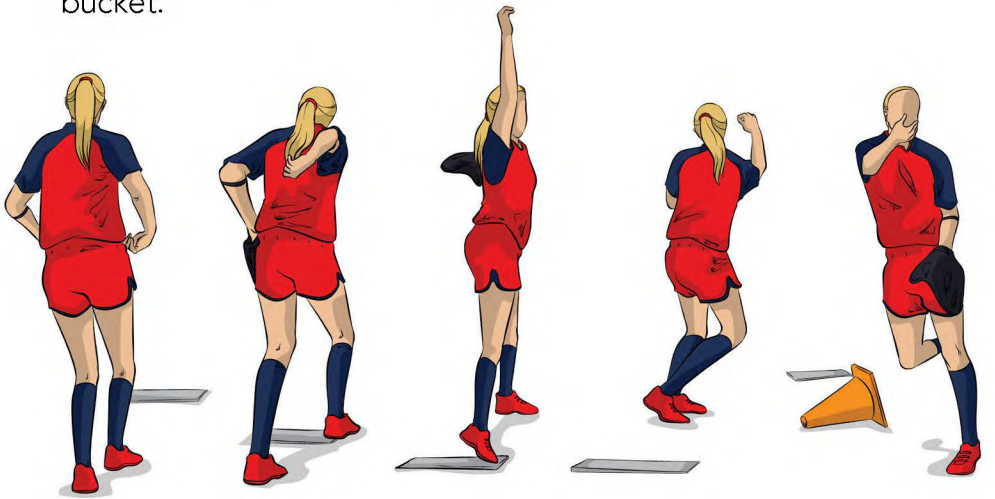
## WALK THROUGH DRILL

### SETUP:

Pitcher at regular pitching distance (35-40 feet) holding a weighted ball. Catcher is in stance or sitting on bucket.

### PURPOSE:

Pitchers work on both mechanics and developing strength



Start behind the mound

Step forward into back swing

Windup

Release and follow through

Stepping over the cone

### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Progression 1 – Player hops over the cone leading with the throwing side foot (right foot Pitcher starts behind the rubber and walks through the drill, meaning she takes a step forward toward the catcher onto the rubber and then goes through her pitching motion.
2. Pitcher throws the weighted ball to the catcher aiming for the chest area.
3. Complete 10 -15 pitches using the weighted ball
4. Next, pitcher switches to a regular ball and throws 10-15 pitches
5. Next, place a cone at the tip of the pitcher's drag so she is forced to get her leg up early. You can also place the cone out farther if you want the pitcher to work on lengthening her stride.

### COACHING TIPS:

- The weighted ball can be purchased from a sporting goods store. Or you can make your own by driving finishing nails into a softball.
- Pitcher should be throwing at 70-75%.
- Look for a loose arm, good timing between upper and lower body, getting front side down, good, short wrist snap at the bottom of the pitching motion and good kick with the back side.
- To ensure hips are opening properly draw line from rubber toward center of home plate and then make sure pitcher's lead foot is landing at a 45 degree angle to that line.
- When using cone at drag spot make sure pitcher doesn't use a crow hop to get over it.
- If trying to lengthen the stride make sure to stress to pitcher to bring her back leg through.

# 15.

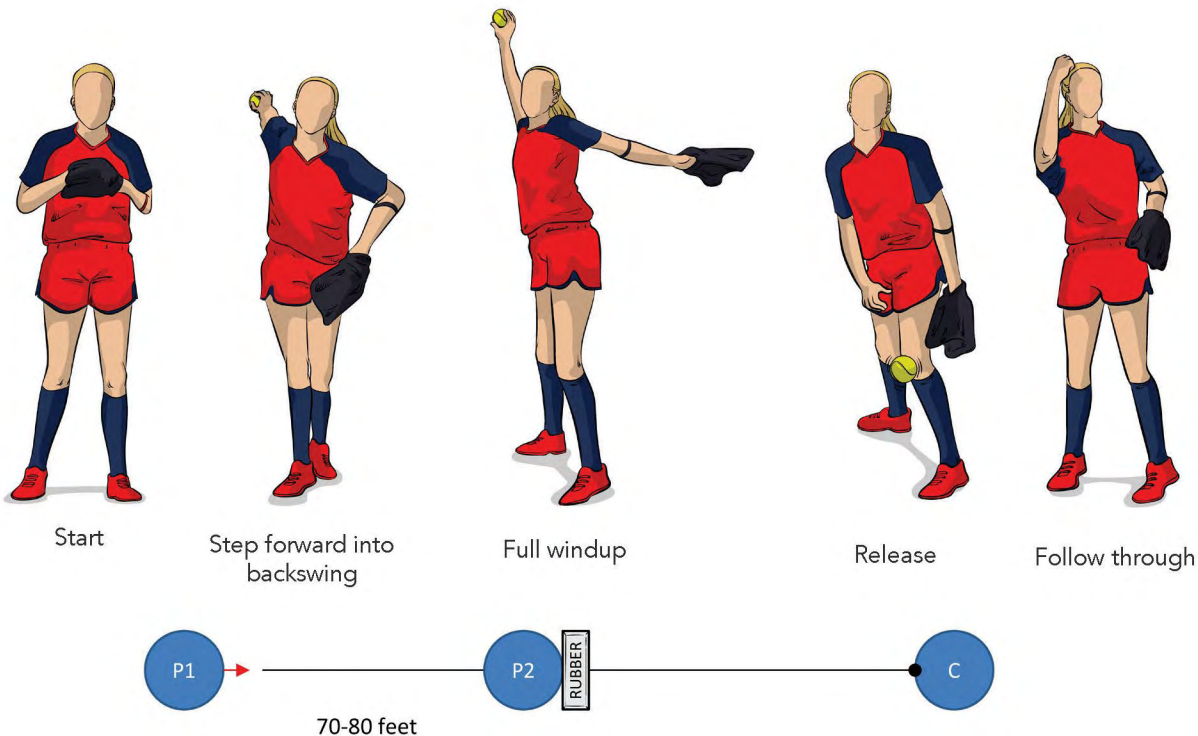
## WALK THROUGH FROM DISTANCE

### SETUP:

Pitcher stands roughly double the regular pitching distance away from the Catcher (70-80 feet)

### PURPOSE:

Helps pitchers develop arm and leg strength for greater velocity on pitches.



### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Pitcher walks through the drill, meaning she takes a step forward toward the catcher and then goes through her pitching motion.
2. Pitcher throws the ball to the catcher.
3. Pitcher throws five to 10 pitches and then walks in to the mound (35-40 feet) and throws five to 10 fastballs from the pitching rubber.
4. Pitcher should start on the rubber and go through normal pitching motion when on the mound.

### COACHING TIPS:

- Make sure pitcher's weight isn't falling backward on her throws, particularly after she moves onto the mound after throwing from distance.
- You can use this drill as a follow-up to the Pops Drill having the pitcher go into her walk-through from the last or max distance reached in the Pops Drill.

# 16.

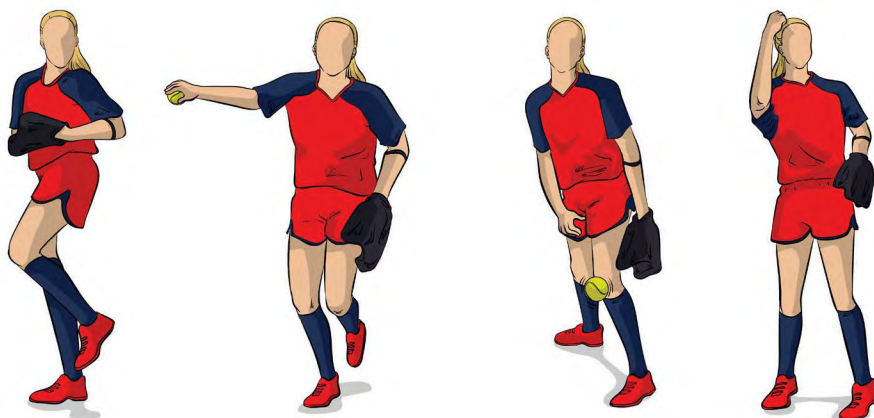
## SIDEWAYS DRIVE DRILL

### SETUP:

Pitcher stands at three-quarters of regular pitching distance (25-30 feet). Catcher is in stance or sitting on a bucket.

### PURPOSE:

Pitchers work on getting their back side driving, their front leg up and getting a long stride.

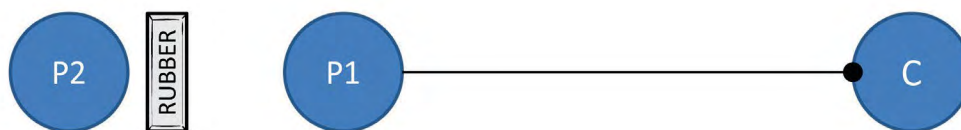


Shift weight back. Lift front knee up

Drive hard off back foot toward catcher

Release

Follow through



### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Pitcher stands with hips open.
2. She shifts weight onto her back leg and brings her front knee up into the air.
3. She then drives toward her catcher and throws the ball.
4. Complete 10-15 pitches from this distance
5. Pitcher then moves back to the mound and throws 10-20 more pitches.

### COACHING TIPS:

- You could also set a cone in front of the pitcher to remind her to get her leg up.
- On the mound, the pitcher should be using the rubber to get a good push toward home.
- Upper body should be coming forward on the throw.

# 17.

## LONG DISTANCE DRIVE

### SETUP:

Pitcher stands four or five big steps behind the pitching rubber. (45-50 feet) Catcher is behind home plate.

### PURPOSE:

Pitchers practice taking a good long stride toward home.



Shift weight back. Lift front knee up



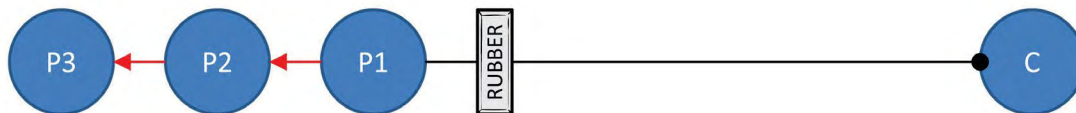
Drive hard off back foot toward catcher



Release



Follow through



### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Pitcher stands with hips open.
2. She shifts weight onto her back leg and brings her front knee up into the air.
3. She then drives toward her catcher and throws the ball.
4. Throw 5-10 pitches from this distance
5. Take three big steps back
6. Throw 5-10 pitches from this distance
7. Take three big steps back
8. Throw 5-10 pitches from this distance

### COACHING TIPS:

- Goal of this drill is to get the pitcher's legs moving as much as possible – the farther back she goes the more she has to drive her legs forward to reach the target so make sure the pitcher is really using her legs and generating power from them.
- The pitcher should be trying to throw the ball on a straight line – no arc. If you see the pitcher throwing with arc you may need to shorten the distance.
- Young players can start in front of the mound and work back to the rubber.

# 18.

## KNEE UP DRILL

### SETUP:

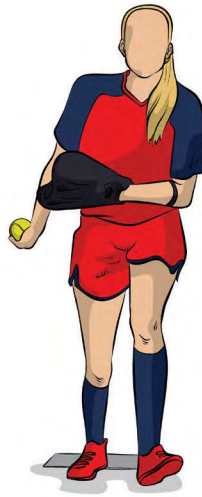
Pitcher stands on the mound (35-40 feet away) with a ball. Catcher is behind home plate.

### PURPOSE:

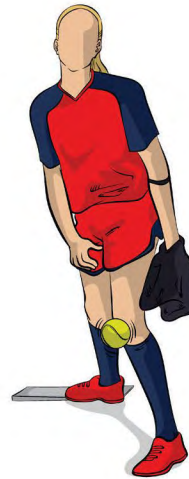
Pitchers work from the knee up position on driving and pivoting. Also, helps develop good balance.



Start with stride  
knee up



Full windup



Release



Follow through

### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Pitcher raises her stride knee up and holds it there for a second before going through the rest of her motion and throwing to home.
2. From the knee up position she drives toward home and throws the ball.
3. Complete 3 sets of 10-15 pitches

### COACHING TIPS:

- This drill can be run only from the mound, from in front of the mound or from distance. It can even be run by pushing off second base. Choose where you run the drill from based on your pitcher's age and ability.
- Make sure pitcher is staying in good balance in the knee up position. Having good balance is one of the keys to consistently being able to throw strikes.

# 19.

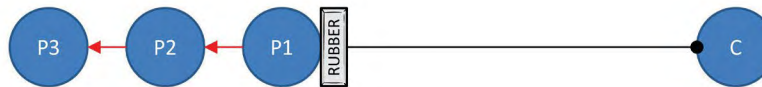
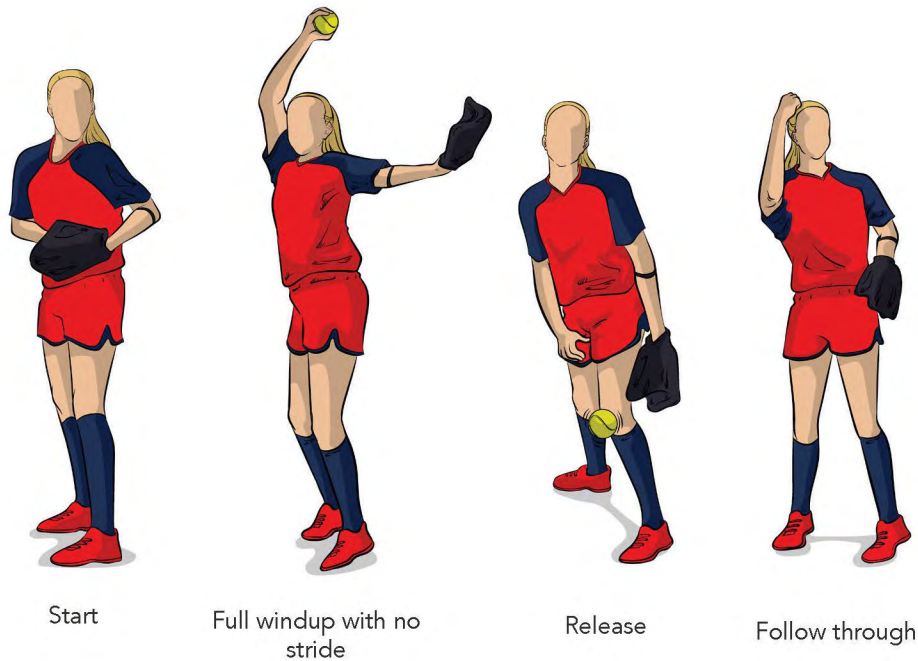
## POPS DRILL

### SETUP:

Pitcher stands on the mound (35-40 feet away) or just behind it to start. Catcher is behind home plate.

### PURPOSE:

Helps pitchers develop power by removing the stride



### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Pitcher winds up and throws the ball to home without taking a step with her front leg.
2. Pitcher throws 5-7 pitches from that spot and then moves back.
3. Continue moving back until pitcher hits the limit of her range.
4. Throw 5 to 7 pitches at each spot.

### COACHING TIPS:

- As the distance increases the pitcher can drag her back foot but she should not be stepping forward with her front foot.
- Pitcher needs to shift her weight front to back to front, use the bending of her knees and really push off the back foot to generate power on her throw in this drill.
- This drill could be run all the way into centerfield depending on the age and ability of the pitcher.

# 20.

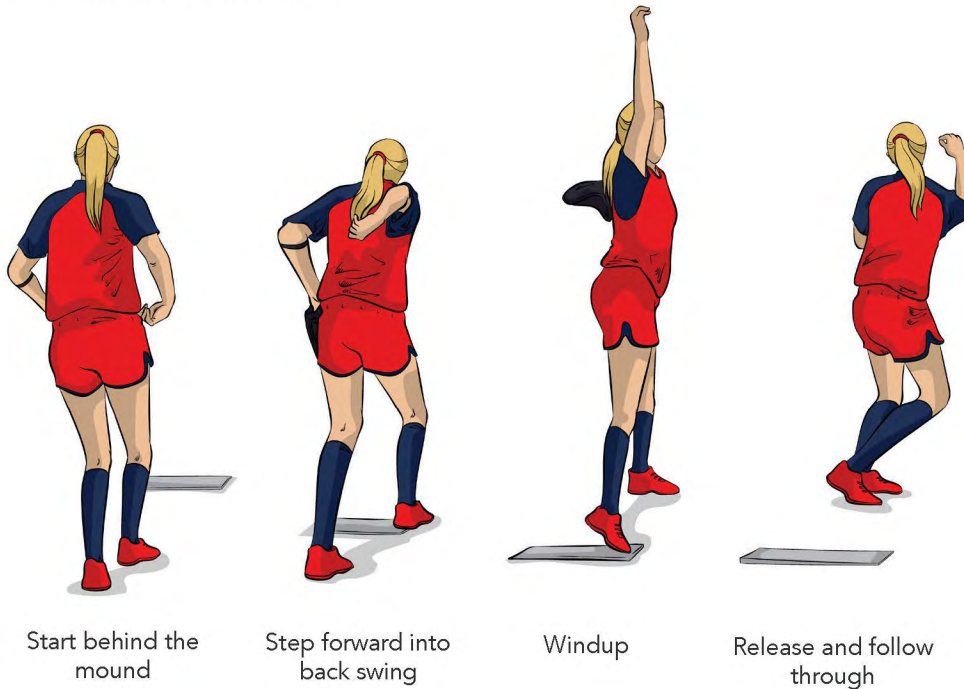
## ARM SPEED DRILL

### SETUP:

Pitcher stands on the mound (35-40 feet away). A coach or player stands beside the pitcher to feed her the balls. Catcher is behind home plate.

### PURPOSE:

Helps pitchers develop power and velocity



### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Pitcher alternates throwing a regular softball and a weighted ball. She can alternate every pitch or throw two regular balls, then two weighted balls, etc.
2. Pitcher walks through the delivery to home meaning she starts behind the rubber and takes a step forward onto it to begin her motion.
3. Complete 10-15 pitches with each ball

### COACHING TIPS:

- Player should be landing on the balls of her feet.
- The weighted ball should be thrown at 75% power
- The regular ball should be thrown at 100% power



## **ARM CONDITIONING DRILLS**

# 21.

## WRIST CURL DRILL

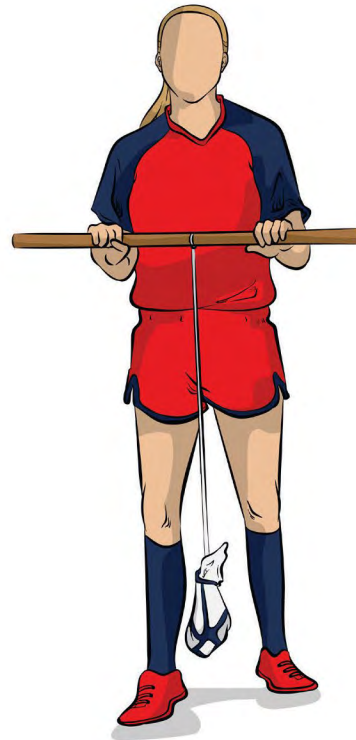
### SETUP:

Pitcher stands anywhere on the field.

### PURPOSE:

Strengthens the wrist.

Pitcher raises and lowers a weight.



### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Get a bar and tie a string to it. Tie the other end of the string to a weight.
2. Pitcher raises and lowers the weight by rotating the bar (rolling it up and then rolling it down).
3. Complete 3 sets of 10-15 reps (each rep is up and down once)

### COACHING TIPS:

- Make sure pitcher is lowering the weight under control. She shouldn't just let it fall.
- Start with a low weight and have the player work her way up.

# 22.

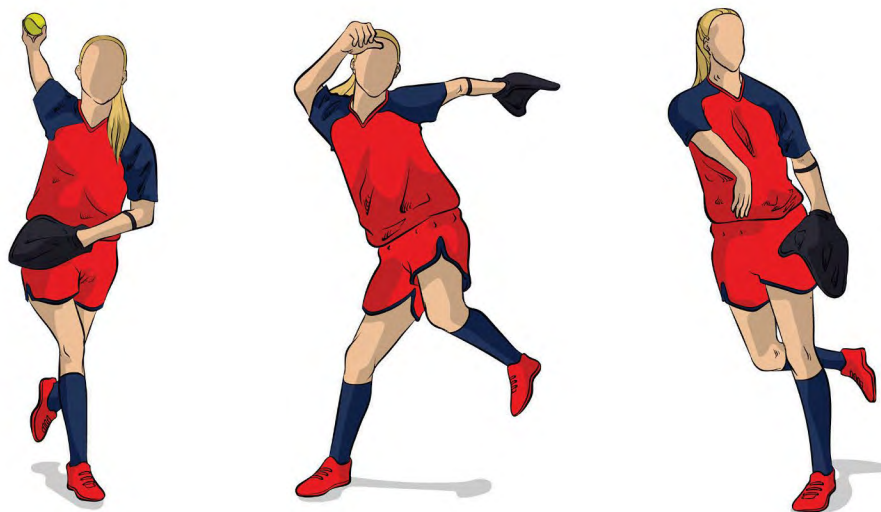
## RAPID FIRE DRILL

### SETUP:

Pitcher stands on the mound (35-40 feet away). A coach or player stands nearby with a bucket of 20 to 25 softballs. Catcher is behind home plate.

### PURPOSE:

Pitcher works on arm speed and arm conditioning.



Pitcher throws pitches one right after the other in this fast-paced drill.

### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Pitcher walks through her delivery and throws the ball to the catcher.
2. Catcher drops the ball to the ground.
3. Coach or player feeds the pitcher a new ball and pitcher throws it to the catcher.
4. Drill continues until the bucket of balls is empty (20-25 pitches)
5. Pitcher should be getting the next ball and throwing quickly.

### COACHING TIPS:

- Object of this drill is to go through it as fast as possible to fatigue the pitcher. If one bucket of balls doesn't do the trick you can use another bucket or two.
- Make sure pitcher is using her proper motion on each pitch – you don't want her to go so fast that she develops bad habits in her motion.
- This is a good drill for pitchers who think too much on the mound, it forces them to be quick and make physical adjustments on the fly.

# 23.

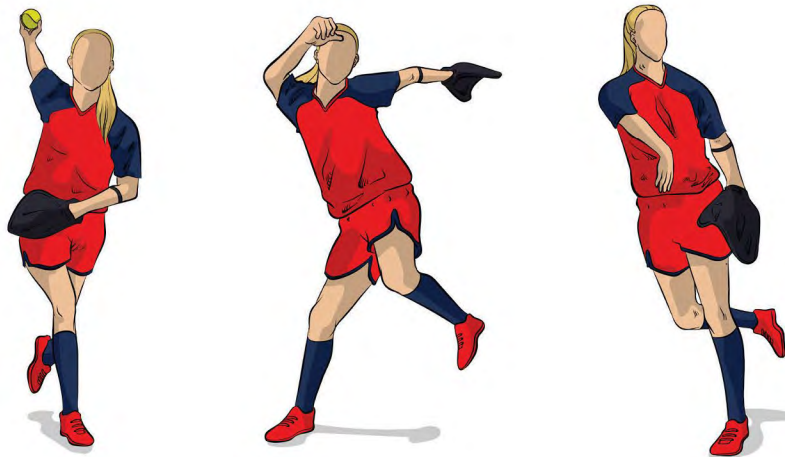
## 3 MINUTE DRILL

### SETUP:

Pitcher stands on the mound (35-40 feet away). A coach or player stands nearby with a bucket of 20 to 25 softballs. Catcher is behind home plate.

### PURPOSE:

Pitcher develops arm speed and endurance.



Pitcher throws as many pitches as she can in three one-minute intervals in this drill.

### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Just as in the Bucket Drill, the pitcher quickly throws balls to the catcher in this drill.
2. However, instead of having the pitcher throw a certain amount of balls, this drill is based on time.
3. The pitcher throws for one minute, rests one minute, throws for one minute, rests for another minute and throws for one more minute (that's 3 minutes total devoted to throwing, hence, the drill name).
4. Just as in the Bucket Drill, pitcher walks through her delivery and throws the ball to the catcher.
5. Coach or player feeds the pitcher a new ball and pitcher throws it to the catcher.
6. Pitcher should be getting the next ball and throwing at a fast pace.

### COACHING TIPS:

- Pitcher should be trying to throw as many pitches as she can in one minute. She should also be throwing as hard as she can.
- Make sure pitcher is using her proper motion on each pitch – you don't want her to go so fast that she develops bad habits in her motion.
- This is a good drill for pitchers who think too much on the mound, it forces them to be quick and make physical adjustments without spending a lot of time thinking.
- For pitchers with great stamina you can extend the throwing time to 1 minute 15 seconds or even 1 minute 30 seconds.