**GETTING STARTED**

1. Team meeting—can be held at a park, pizza restaurant or in your home—location does not matter. The important thing is to get to know your girls, their families and for the girls to get to know each other. Let parents know what to expect (time commitment). Find out if players have other commitments—dance, piano, etc. This will help you work out practice schedule.

**Recruit** a **team parent**, **scorekeeper**, **umpires**—get the family involved. If you feel you need additional help, urge parents to get involved but be sure they know the rules and will not confuse the players by requirements for training team assistants.

2. If girls do not know each other have them wear nametags for the first couple of practices—this will help players and coaches alike.

3. Encourage girls to get their own ball and mark it with their name. At home, their parents can work with them in the yard getting them accustomed to a ball coming at them and they can bring their ball to practice—you will probably need more than will be provided by your league.

4. REMEMBER—as you begin to work with your team—kickball is not a sport where the less skilled players are "cut." Everyone that signs up plays and you must develop each girl to her potential (whatever that may be) and place here where she performs best—for herself and the team. Watch your girls that are more naturally skilled or aggressive—they may get irritated at the less accomplished players—it is your job to make this a positive experience for every girl on your team.

**SETTING UP PRACTICE**

1. Get to practice early to mark field—very important.

2. First 2 or 3 practices have outline of drills you want to use and time to allot to each one so you accomplish goals for each practice—plan ahead.

3. As the girls arrive at practice have them stretch out, do a few exercises, run around the bases and as soon as you have enough present to use drills, get started. Stress being on time for practice.

4. Use the drills outlined to determine natural skills and coordination level. Divide your team into two groups for the drills so each girl gets more ball handling time. Use your assistant(s) coaches to participate in the while the head coach makes notes on the girls and moves between the groups observing. Make notes; don't trust your memory unless you know your girls well. These drills will help you to quickly determine your infield (short ball, quick reaction player) vs. your outfield (long ball, no fear of hard catch, good throwing arm) player.

5. First practice: Do drills for half of the practice. The last half go over kicking techniques with the players and demonstrate what you are saying and then allow each girl an opportunity to kick five or ten balls with the rest of the team spread out in the field to catch the balls. Do not position them at the first practice.

6. Second practice: Vary the drills from the first practice, for half of the practice. If you have positions in mind, put the girls in position and use your potential pitchers to pitch for the kickers. Keep it moving—they will get bored quickly particularly if they are not getting any balls to their position.

7. Each practice should contain a few drills just to get the girls loose but as you progress more and more time should be spent simulated game situations—refer to drills #6 and #7.

**MATERIALS NEEDED FOR PRACTICE**

1. Box or bag for balls—laundry bag from dime store is great.

2. Home plate—rubber cove base form hardware store—comes in 4' lengths—cut it to 3' for regulation plate.

3. Bases can be rubber dish drainers—light in color. Also can use carpet squares although they have a tendency to slip.

4. String or tape for marking field.

5. Flour for marking lines—can have each player provide a small bag of flour at beginning of season.

6. Rule book for field dimensions.

7. Clip board with practice notes (drill outlines) and attendance records—keep attendance in case you decide to bench a player that does not attend practice.

8. Water if you are providing it or girls can bring their own thermos.

9. Towels and first aid kit.

**KICKBALL COACHING TECHNIQUES**

INTRODUCTION:

 You have chosen to be a kickball Coach. Your league will sincerely appreciate your help. However, keep in mind this game was developed for the girls and whereas they have rules, so do you. As a coach, your main concern is not to see how many games you can win but to teach and coach **ALL** the girls whether good players or girls who may never develop into ball players. ***SPORTSMANSHIP*** and playing together is a strong objective to strive for. **EACH** girl has a right to play and it is your job to get every girl playing to the best of her ability. There are positions where you can put a weaker player without weakening your team and the girl will still feel she is contributing to her team. **REMEMBER**, some girls cannot judge and catch long fly balls and will not make good outfielders. Some cannot react fast enough to be infielders. It is your job to decide and place them accordingly. Each girl should have a position she does her best at. It is advisable to train a girl for a certain position and use her there each game. A person learns more by repetition and if you keep moving her around she will become more insecure and confused. There are times when, by necessity, you may have to move her but once a season begins and you have placed your girls, leave them there so you can go on and teach them more than the basic ball playing, but first, teach them the basics:

How to throw, catch, kick, and run bases and how to play their positions effectively.

 After the season begins. You should have team practice at least twice a week, preferably the day before a game. During the two weeks before the season begins, we have found that practice every day except Sunday, is very effective. No practice should be longer than two hours and at a reasonable hour.

 During a game if you have a doubt about a call, even an umpire's judgment, call a time out. On some calls, you may want him to confer with the other umpires. If, after conferring with the umpire, you feel there has been a misinterpretation of a rule, **DON'T ARGUE**, just tell the Official Scorekeeper you want to put a protest on the book.

PRACTICE :

 Emphasize punctuality. Girls must be on time for practice and games. Teach them to listen for your voice and the voice of your assistants. This way you will have control. Set up different drills.

DRILL #1

Make two large circles. Your assistant takes one, and you the other. The coach stands in the middle and throws a ball to a girl, having her return the throw. Pick girls at random and gradually increase the force of your throw. This teaches them to be alert and also to catch a thrown ball. Have them aim for your chest on their return throw and it will help develop an accurate throw.

DRILL #2

One coach take outfielders and kick fly balls. Take one girl at a time (others back her up) and make her work to catch it. Keep encouraging her to move for the ball. While the outfielders are working, set up your infield. You tell them where to place the ball, then you kick it

Example: "Plays at first." You kick the ball to left shortstop, she fields it, throws it to first, first throws it home to catcher.

Repeat using different fielders. Then tell them to play is at 2nd and start again until all basemen are used. This teaches them fielding and accurate throwing to a base. Also at this time, you can give them practice at backing up teammates.

 Example: The ball is kicked to 2nd base. Your left short should come in to back up a throw to the catcher. Really emphasize that even though you are not fielding a ball, you still have a job to do.

DRILL #3

Overrunning first base. First base coach, stand in box. Have girls lined up near home plate. One at a time have girl start, on signal, running to first base. She is to listen for the 1st base coach's instructions as to whether to overrun first base, turn to the right and come back or to continue to 2nd base.

 Another running drill, is to have them run base at full speed, touching the inside corners of the bases.

DRILL #4

Have your infield and outfield set up emphasizing the outfielders backing each other up and also backing up the basemen.

DRILL #5

Have each girl bunt a ball to the right and then to the left. Also practice kicking line drives.

DRILL #6

Place players in all field positions. Coach stands in kickers circle and drop kicks the ball and calls play i.e. first to third and then home or second to home or force to third. Coach kicking ball places her kicks for easy plays at first and gradually widens distance between placement of ball and base to be played to make girls respond more quickly and increase the force of their throws.

Always emphasize the need to get the ball back home as soon as play is made at the base you call—this gives your catcher practice too and gives the girls a target to throw to and teaches them to get rid of the ball.

DRILL #7

If you have more than 10 players at practice, place in all playing positions coach stands in circle and drop kicks ball and extra players run play out. Coach does not call play, the advancement of the runner dictates where the ball goes and give the girls real game situations. Best if you have a coach on 1st base holding or sending the runner on—gives base running experience too.

Variation on this is if you have less than 10 players you can position the girls in the infield positions and kick grounders and simulate short infield kicks and use base runners.

**DRILLS RECOMMENDED FOR GIRLS IN PEEWEES & JUNIORS**

1. Divide the girls into two groups, the head coach takes one groups and the assistant coach takes the other. Line the girls in your group up straight across form you (about 6 or 7 feet to begin with). The coach throws a ball to each girl (underhand)—aiming for the girl's chest. Have the girl throw the ball back in the same manner. Continue down the line until each girls has thrown the ball to you several times aiming at your chest. Back them up to a distance of about 10 to 12 feet. Go through the same drill again. Accuracy is very important and the girls must learn to throw straight and to the chest area.

As the girls become more alert to the drill, increase the force of your throw. Teach them that not all balls will come to them in an easy manner, some will be harder. Teach the girls to "give" with the catch and step out with their throw. ("give" means to "relax").

2. Use the same drill above except throw the ball up (not hard and a distance of about 6 feet in the air). Have each girl try to catch the ball and then have her return it to you with a straight underhand throw to your chest. After you have given each girl several high balls, have them increase the speed with which they return the ball to you. This teaches the girls to get rid of the ball quickly after they have made a catch.

3. Make a large circle of the girls with the coach in the middle. (You can use 2 circles with one coach in each circle). Throw the ball straight up and at the same time call a girl's name out loudly. Step back quickly to allow the girl to run to the middle of the circle to make the catch. Continue this until each girl has caught several ball. This drill develops quickness and teaches the girls to be alert for the ball.

4. Line the girls up in two's, straight across form you at a distance of about 25 feet or more. Have the girls stand about 6 feet behind their partners. The coach then throws a grounder to the first two girls. The girl in front runs in to field the ball. She should position her body right behind the ball with her legs together so as to block the ball if she misses it with her hands. Her partner should stay behind her to field the ball if she misses it. Tell the girls that this is called "backing each other up" and that this is an important thing to learn in a team sport.

5. Line the girls up in two's again. Have them stand a wide distance apart. Have the girls back up the other and kick them a short fly balls. The second girl should be a distance of at least 6 feet behind the other. If the girl in front misses the fly the second girl will field the ball, relay it to the first girl and she then returns it to the coach. This teaches the girls to depend on each other to get the ball back into the infield from a great distance. This is called relaying the ball.

6. Infield Drill. Have the girls split into two groups. Let the assistant coach take one group and drill them on catching the ball.

The head coach will take the other girls and place them in positions in the infield. Drill the girls in throwing the ball to bases. Example: The coach rolls the ball to the left Shortstop; she picks it up and throws it to the first base player, first throws it home to the catcher. The catcher hands the ball to the coach and she then rolls the ball out to a different player (right short). Pitch a ball up over your head and move out of the way to see if the catcher can catch it. Roll a ball to the first base, have the first base player come in for the ball, pick it up, turn around and run to the base for the out. Do the same thing with the second base player and third. Have each player throw the ball home to the catcher after the play.

7. While you have infielders in position, either throw or kick some high balls or pop flys to each girl. Remind each girl to play her position and if she misses the ball, someone will back her up.

8. Kick and run. Running is probably the most important thing that I can emphasize. Place girls in infield positions. Have the other girls line up to kick. Have each girl kick and run to first. Drill them on a fast take off. They should never watch their own kick but should run as fast as they can in the base path to first base. Teach them to hit first base running at full speed and continue past the base and turn out into foul territory. Tell them that the first base coach will instruct them when they should turn and run to second. "Always watch the coach at first base and they will know what to do."

9. Running the bases. This can be used as part of your conditioning drills. Have the girls run the full circle of bases, touching the inside corners of the bases which makes the smallest possible circle. Teach them to always hit the base—if they miss it they will have to quickly return and touch it again, delaying the runner behind them and possibly causing an out. If you have a stopwatch, time the girls. See if they can improve their time the next time you clock them.

**DEFENSIVE POSITIONS & RESPONSIBILITIES**

POSITIONS

 1 Pitcher Know the basic pitches. Cover 2nd and when 2nd baseman is fielding the kicked ball or going out for a relay. Cover 3rd if needed.

 2 Catcher Cover home. A catcher should try to stop all bunts before they cross the 3 foot line.

 3 1st base Play far enough infield to be useful as a defensive player. Cover 1st base. Be ready to back up any wild infield throw in her general direction.

 4 2nd base Play to the left of 2nd base. Go out for a relay from center field or left field.

 5 3rd base Play enough fair territory to be useful as a defensive player. Go out to left field for a relay.

 6 Left Short Play closer to the foul line than to the pitcher. Close for bunts or drop back for heavy kickers. Cover 3rd base when needed or back up catcher.

 7 Left Field Play fairly deep. Back up center field. Back up 3rd base if needed.

 8 Center Field Back up 2nd base and right field and left field.

 9 Right Field Back up 1st base and center field.

10 Right Short Play deep, cover 2nd if 2nd is going for the ball. Back up 1st base.

Infielders

 Good reaction

 Quick thinkers

 Good knowledge of plays/rules

 Good, accurate short ball throws

 Leaders

Outfielders

 Long ball catchers

 Can take a little longer to judge distance, speed of ball

 Good arm, accurate long throws

**PITCHING**

1. Let everyone try — size of pitcher is not critical. More important is the ability to withstand pressure, emotional stability and stamina. Look for a leader.

2. Pitching is like bowling. Take one or two steps, bend at waist and knees and release the ball. When right handers release the ball with a counter-clock wise motion, it should curve. With a clock wise motion it should back up. Flat handed pitch should be a straight ball.

3. Mix up deliveries—don't throw same ball over and over.

4. If a kicker is used to fast pitches, slow up on her – it will throw her timing off.

5. Pitch to kicker right will result in kick to right field (1st base side), a pitch to kickers left will result in kick to left field (3rd base side).

6. Watch the wind advantage.

7. Always try to have a back up pitcher. Use her in practice to keep skills up.

**PLAYING A BASE**

 1. Base player should be taught they are fielders as well as base players. A baseman must go for balls they can easily field and either quickly return to their base if a play is to be made there or make the play to another base.

 2. She should also learn to depend on her teammates to back her up if she is pulled off her base. Too much time is wasted by base players that think they must run back to their base to make the out instead of throwing to the teammate waiting on the base for the throw.

 3. They must stay out of the base runners path unless they are fielding a kicked ball. Many times, you will see, a base player standing watching a play develop and draw an interference call because they were in the way of the base runner.

 4. First base players must not be afraid of the ball or of runners coming at them. There is a lot of action at 1st and you want to look for a girl with some size, preferably tall with flexibility to stretch for under thrown balls while keeping her foot on the base.

 5. All basemen should watch the runners as they round the bases to be sure they touch the base. If the runner does not touch the base, the baseman must call for the ball once the play is over and stand on her base with the ball as an "appeal play." This must be done before the first pitch to the next kicker. If the umpire saw the runner miss the base, He/she will call the runner out. If the umpire sees the runner miss a base but an appeal is not made by the defensive player the umpire **cannot** call the runner out.

 6. Third base players are to be taught to play to their advantage. If they can make a good play, do not let the ball go foul if touching the ball in fair territory means a long throw, let it go. Example: no force to 3rd—long throw to 1st—let the ball go foul.

 7. All players must know when making plays on a base a "no force" situation requires a tag for an out. A force runner is out if the ball is held on the base, the runner must advance to. Big difference—and not an easy thing for the younger girls to remember. When in doubt—tag.

 8. When tagging go down to tag in anticipation of a slide. Hand is considered part of the ball when tagging.

 9. Second & third base players should watch for the runner over running the base for an easy tag out. Lost balance or momentum can cause a runner to lift her foot off the base.

10. Base players must give the runner access to the base unless she is receiving a thrown ball or fielding a kicked ball.

**FIELDING TIPS**

 1. Defensive players must know umpires will voice call foul balls but will hand signal only on fair balls. They must play the ball unless they **HEAR** "foul ball."

 2. Girls that are not afraid to go for high fly balls are good outfielders—players that will let the ball come into their bodies catching in a "basket." Giving or relaxing into a catch will take some of the sting out of it. Do not let fielders get into a habit of letting the ball bounce before going for it.

 3. No catching with arms extended over their heads or with fingertips—works some of the time—jams fingers most of the time. No "side ways" catching.

 4. Running into meet a ball is better than back peddling to get to a ball.

 5. "Call" all fly balls. A loud "got it" keeps from having collisions in the field.

 6. Always throw in front of the runner—never behind her. Anticipate base runner advancing and cut her off.

 7. Stress knowing what to do with the ball when you get it. Always be aware of number of outs and where runners are. One player needs to be responsible for calling each play—generally your pitcher or left shortstop.

 8. Throws to bases must be backed up by fielders. Watch during practice that back up positions always shift in the direction of the play.

 9. With every kick watch that the players are either alert, ready to play their position or are moving toward the kick to field or back up the fielding of the ball.

10. A base runner hit by a ball thrown at her (or in her direction) by a fielder is out if she is hit below the waist. This can be dangerous and is advised as a last ditch effort to make an out. Never throw from the infield toward the outfield—most girls do not have the aim or speed judgment to hit a moving target and the ball will no longer be under control of your fielders. Only safe way to "peg" a runner is a front to back throw.

11. Type of throw—underhand vs. overhand—is dictated by distance, situation and ability of player. Short throws should be easy underhand, long outfield to infield generally overhand or side arm. Watch "rainbow throws—take too much time to get to target. Work on Side arm...underhand is out dated.

12. Teach girls to "relay" the ball in from outfield. Younger girls are not going to have the arm strength to throw the ball to home plate from center field.

13. Players should call for ball or where to play a ball once fielded. Players going for a ball will lose track of where play is.

14. If a player is consistently dropping fly balls right through her arms one of two things is probably happening. She is taking her eyes off the ball before it is in her arms or she is not keeping her elbows pulled in against her body.

15. Girls near the foul lines should be taught when to touch a ball foul or fair. Balls that are fair can roll foul and back fair again so action should be taken quickly. (See #6 Base playing)

16. The left shortstop generally should field bunts to 1st—the catcher is responsible for stopping the bunt in foul territory before it gets to the 3-foot line. Once fair, the LSS should take it to avoid collisions or confusion.

17. If there are no outs or only one out and the play is not very close to 1st base, go for the lead runner. Do not overlook an easy out but do not throw from 3rd to 1st and overlook the runner on 3rd that is ready to run home.

18. If there are two outs, teach the players to take the "easy out" or easiest play do not worry about getting the lead runner just get any out.

19. Catchers have four major responsibilities—stop bunts before they roll fair, catching foul tips that go over the kickers head for an out, moving up to the plate on plays at home giving the fielders a target and watching for runners to touch home plate.

20. Before game remind players of their responsibilities while playing in the field and during game use key words to remind them to stay in the game.

**OFFENSE—KICKING/SUBSTITUTING**

Following is a suggestion for making up your kicking order:

 Kicker # 1 A good line drive kicker. One who usually gets on base.

 # 2 A good bunter or line drive kicker.

 # 3 A heavy outfield kicker.

 # 4 Good kicker

 # 5 Medium

 # 6 Heavy

 # 7 Weak

 # 8 Strong

 # 9 Medium

 #10 Weak

When substituting try to keep your kicking order strong. You sub the girl not the position.

Example:

 Roster You can sub this way

 Kicker # 1 Mary LS Mary LS

 # 2 Joan C Gail 1B

 # 3 Pat P Joyce C

 # 4 Lori 1B Julie P

 # 5 Anne 3B Anne 3B

 etc.

Notice in the example that Gail subs for Joan and will kick after Mary even though she is playing the position Lori played. Subs can be reported by giving the players uniform # and name—position does not have to be included.

Line-ups are kicking order only—field position can be changed any time without reporting it to the official scorekeeper or umpire. The only time you need to report to the official scorekeeper is when a girl is replacing a player in the kicking line up. It is best to give your subs in writing to the plate umpire and since everyone must play half a game subs must always be put in at the top of the 4th inning regardless if you are the home or the visiting team. i.e. If you are the home team, you kick at the bottom of the inning so your subs go in while you are playing defense in the field—you **DON'T** wait until you are at kick in the 4th inning to put subs in.

Statistically, your first 5 kickers will kick more often than the last 5 so you will probably not want to sub following the example given above. Generally you put your subs in lower in the order since your subs are your weaker players overall.

**KICKING TECHNIQUES**

 1. Use the circle standing in middle back to allow kicker to move quickly either left or right toward ball—a good pitcher will mix up her pitches. If your player is going to bunt she need to be careful not to stand up in the circle since that will alert the LSS and catcher to the fact she is going to bunt.

 2. Generally best to stand with feet slightly apart and fairly evenly aligned— taking one-step toward plate as ball approaches. Ideal to meet ball at the plate since it is the height of the ball as it crosses the plate that determines if it is a ball or strike. The kicker cannot step on the circle or the plate until contact has been made with the ball. If she does while striking at the ball or if her striking momentum carries her out of the circle and she has not tipped the ball, she is out.

 3. Kicker must not take eyes off the ball. Repeated strikes generally suggests she is looking up or keeping too much of the field in her view. Tell her to keep her chin down—this will direct vision more to ball.

 4. Swing should start from the hip with full leg swing—use entire body not just leg. The "bat" is the leg from the knee down. Should a kicked ball strike the kicker a second time, i.e. bouncing up and hitting her body after the kick a "double kick" will be called by the umpire, the ball is dead and she returns to the circle to kick again. Double kicks are generally called from sound since the ball hits the kicker in front and the umpire is not often in a position to see a double kick.

 5. Point foot down and lock the ankle—as much as possible foot and leg should be tight and one unit.

 6. Kick out not up—coming under ball will make it pop up.

 7. Jumping into the ball and meeting it in the middle will give you a line drive.

 8. A pitch to the right of the plate will most often result in the ball going into right field and vice versa.

 9. Watch for swing around on ball and short knee jerk kicks or bending leg at knee and kicker "slapping" at the ball.

10. Kickers must not watch their kick. Stress kick and run even on balls that may go foul or flys that may be easily caught.

11. Kickers should not touch the ball with their hands or pick up the ball in the circle to return it to the pitcher.

12. Teach your players to foul off pitches they do not like especially if they already have 2 strikes against them. Be sure the "foul off" motion does not look like an attempt at bunting.

13. Never strike at a pitch when a kicker has 3 balls and no strikes or only 1 strike against them. They need to "take" the pitch for the possibility of a walk.

14. A hazard of kicking practice is a player will kick pitch after pitch and never leave the circle, which encourages the girls to watch their kicks in a game instead of taking off for 1st base. In the beginning, you can have the girls run a few feet out of the circle with each fair kick just to get them accustomed to running when they kick.

15. Once you get into the season teach the girls to place their kicks—you do not want them to get into the habit of just worrying about getting themselves on base with no regard to forcing an out on your lead runner.

16. You can develop kicking signals—i.e. bunt, take, left or right field kicks. Usually the coach on 3rd base gives signals. They need to be simple for the younger girls and you will need to change them from time to time. For signals to be effective you must teach the girls to look at you each time they get into the circle i.e. between each pitch since each pitch changes the situation. Some coaches will use signals for the older more advanced players.

**BUNTING TECHNIQUES**

 1. Most effective bunt is to raise kicking leg and top the ball with the heel. No real forward motion is needed unless the pitch is really slow—object is for the ball to return into fair territory just past the 3 foot line and die in the dirt.

 2. Another less effective method is to hold leg with side of foot toward the ball and allow ball to hit foot and return into fair territory. Leg must be kept loose or reaction of ball will return it too fair territory and the shortstop will have any easy pick up and out at first.

 3. Kickers should not attempt a bunt with 2 strike—a foul bunt with 2 strikes is considered a strike for an out.

**BASERUNNING**

 1. There are several things players must do to get to 1st safe and possibly take advantage of advancing to 2nd. Run full speed **ALL THE WAY TO 1st**. Runner should run in foul territory and **OVER-RUN** 1st if the coach is holding her on 1st but at the same time she should know to turn quickly and be listening for the coach to send her on to 2nd if the situation changes.

 2. A turn toward 2nd with motion or "intent" to advance to 2nd puts the runner in jeopardy of being put out.

 3. Runners should stand facing the next base with their foot on or against the base in a stance for quick push off.

 4. Runners must always know if they are a "force" or not and how many outs have been made. Two outs, base runners run the second the ball crosses home plate.

 5. Base runners are released to advance the instant a fly ball is **touched** not caught.

 6. Runners must tag on caught flys so big lead offs are no advantage. Base runners in a "force" situation should take a few steps toward the next base if the ball is kicked in the direction of the next base. i.e. ball bounces toward 2nd, runner on first must vacate base for the kicker so if she has taken a few steps toward 2nd she has a better chance of making it to the base. Same situation but the ball is a fly and is caught near 2nd, she has plenty of time to get back to first without danger of being put out and may even draw a wild throw which will release her to go on to 2nd if the coach sends her.

 7. Runners should run bases in an arch touching inside corners of base—shortest distance between two points.

 8. If a runner crosses home plate and is not sure she touched the plate she should turn quickly and touch the plate. An alert catcher will see that she failed to touch the plate and will tag her. Once the runner has entered the dugout she cannot return to the field to touch the plate and the catcher can at that time appeal the play to the umpire.

 9. If the throw is behind the runner she should keep running to the next base or if throw is wild runners should take off i.e. wild throw to 2nd, ball goes into outfield the runner on 2nd should automatically take off for 3rd.

10. Remember, aggressive base running will win a close game.

**BASE COACHING**

 1. Use hand and voice signals.

 2. **NEVER** touch the girls as they are running. Only time you can touch them is after time is called if the girl has fallen or seems to have injured herself.

 3. Know the speed of your runners so you know when to send them in a tight situation. i.e. no force, runner on 3rd. Grounder is hit down 3rd base line; a fast runner can make it home before the fielders pick up the ball and make the play to home. Same situation, but the runner on 3rd is slow, you wait until the shortstop picks up the ball and makes a throw to 1st, then you release the runner on 3rd to go home.

 4. Look for "cheap" bases. i.e. runner on 3rd, short infield kick, generally, defensive players will not make the throw to first which releases the runner on 3rd so the kicker should watch but precede on to 2nd.

 5. Talk to the base runners between pitches. Be sure they know how many outs and to hold their base or run on anything. Signal runner on 2nd base to keep her aware—if two outs signal with "hook em" so she knows to run on anything—voice commands from box to 2nd get lost—they cannot hear you.

 6. Teach your players to do what you say—that if they run on your command and get put out that you will take the responsibility for the mistake and then do just that. Go in the dugout and say, "it’s my fault Susie got put out—I sent her." Take the blame—they will run for you much quicker if they do not worry about their teammates fussing at them.

**MISCELLANEOUS**

 1. Shoelaces tied before game

 2. Team yells

 3. Spirit yell before game and during time out

 4. Discuss how coach/daughter situations will be handled—who will do it.

 5. Ask questions—if umpire is missing line infractions, defensive interference, pitched balls coming in on the fly, etc. call time out and ask the plate umpire for permission to ask the umpire of the call if he will ask for a 2nd opinion. Sometimes they are not sure of what they saw and if another umpire is very sure, they will change their calls. One umpire cannot speak up and overrule another so the only way you can make it happen is to ask.

 6. Stress sportsmanship

 7. Discuss nutrition—pre-game snacks, meals

 8. Let the girls know what you expect of them as a team—do not play favorites, be impartial.

 9. Video scrimmage or games—good learning tool.

10. Time outs to talk to the umpires do not count against you—time outs to talk to the team do—2 per half inning, any more and you must remove your pitcher—**BE CAREFUL.**