



Fielding

Field a ground ball, Catch a fly ball, Perform the “sure-stop” technique of fielding a ground ball, Learn fielding strategy, Learn fielders’ positions and learn positional strategy.

Fielding is the ability to stop a hit/batted ball by receiving the ball into the glove, which is traveling on the ground or in the air.

Assume the correct ready-to-field position,

Ready Position:

- Feet shoulder-width apart with knees slightly bent,
- Weight on balls of feet, with balance slightly forward
- Shoulders, hips, and knees are square to the ball
- Bend at knees, not at waist, to lower the body into good fielding position



Ready-to-Field Position

Skill Progression – Assume the correct ready-to-field position

Your Athlete Can	Never	Sometimes	Often
Take an assigned spot on field	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Position legs shoulder-width apart	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bend knees slightly	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Place hands on knees or in front of body	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Keep weight forward and even on both feet	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Keep head up, and eyes on batter and ball	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Totals			

Teaching Points – Assume the correct ready-to-field position

1. Demonstrate correct position.
2. Point out the key body joints.
3. Have athlete assume correct ready-to-field position from a relaxed standing position repeatedly.



Faults & Fixes Chart – Assume the correct ready-to-field position

Error	Correction	Drill Reference
Standing upright, knees locked	Review ready- position	Getting ready for the pepper drill
Feet too wide apart	Review ready- position	Getting ready for the pepper drill
Weight back on heels	Review ready- position	Getting ready for the pepper drill



Field a Hit Ground Ball

- Assume ready position
- Hands start in “neutral position” – approximately waist high, thumbs up, palms facing each other
- Just before to receiving the ball into the glove, make sure the tip of the glove is touching the ground. (It’s quicker to have glove on ground and come up with the ball, rather than trying to go down for the ball)
- Field the ball with hands in front of the body, palms facing the ball, elbows in front of knees, with elbows slightly bent.
- Field the ball on glove hand side of body.
- Gather the ball using “soft” hands (arms/hands need to be pliant and “give” a little as ball comes into glove). Gather the ball through the middle of your body to the throwing side as you move your feet to a throwing position, stepping toward the target.

Skill Progression – Field a hit ground ball

Your Athlete Can	Never	Sometimes	Often
Assume correct fielding position	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Watch ball as it makes contact with bat	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Move sideways to get body in line with the path of ball	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Keep glove open, palm up, and fingers on the ground	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Watch the ball into glove, “giving” slightly to bring ball in close to body	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Smother ball in glove with bare hand	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Totals			

Teaching Points – Field a hit ground ball

1. Demonstrate the correct fielding technique.
2. If necessary, physically assist the athlete by standing behind and over him/her.
3. Run drills to make athlete practice moving sideways with glove down.
4. Have athletes practice fielding by playing Pepper drill.
5. Emphasize fielding is like landing an airplane-not a helicopter. We want to stay low as we go for the ball, not plop down on it like a helicopter.



Special Olympics Softball Coaching Guide Teaching Softball Skills



Faults & Fixes Chart – Field a hit ground ball

Error	Correction	Drill Reference
Ball goes under glove	Have athlete keep glove tip touching the ground before receiving the ball. Use safety balls, tennis balls, or whiffle balls	Pepper drill
Ball goes past on the glove side	Practice moving to the left	Pepper drill
Ball goes past on the hand side	Practice moving to the right	Pepper drill