

OBJECTIVES BY DIVISION

HGSL seeks to ensure the game of softball is coached in a manner that provides athletes a seamless transition from one level of competition to the next. This requires the coaches of each division to focus on teaching the athlete the fundamentals necessary to transition to the next level. Each athlete is unique and will develop at their own pace. As girls advance, practices may appear to be the same, but the level of demand will and should increase. HGSL offers the following guidelines to assist in the construction of effective practice plans to develop the athlete for the next level of competition.

6U:

The 6U division focuses on instruction and development for beginner players. At this level players will learn the basic mechanics of throwing, catching, fielding and hitting in a fun and dynamic environment. Players will learn defensive positioning, how to run the bases, where to throw the ball and how to stand when up to bat with a focus on having LOTS of FUN. Typically the season starts with all players hitting off the tee with the goal of progressing to coach pitch by the end of the season.

Throwing – how to hold the softball, basic throwing mechanics

Fielding – how to catch the ball, how to field the ball (alligator chomp), body positioning & footwork, where to throw the ball

Hitting – How to hold a bat, basic stance, know the areas of the batter's box, keep terminology simple, lots of tee work & stations

The 6U division generally meets 1 time per week, typically on Saturdays. The season usually starts with 1 hour practices and progresses to a practice/game (30min practice/1 hr game max).

8U:

The 8U division begins with reinforcing the skills learned in 6U. Players will build on the mechanics of throwing, catching, fielding and hitting in a fun and dynamic environment. There is an emphasis on learning the strategy and rules of the game (what to do and when) while building CONFIDENCE and having FUN. Runs are counted, outs are recorded and the education around the strike zone begins. The season begins with coach pitch.

Throwing – how to hold the softball, basic throwing mechanics, footwork

Fielding – how to catch the ball, how to field the ball (alligator chomp), body positioning & footwork, where to throw the ball, how to catch a fly ball, situational play (basic concepts)

Hitting – How to hold a bat, stance review, batters box education, keep terminology simple, working on the live pitch, tee work, soft toss, stations

Base Running – where to go and when, running through the base, rounding the base, leading (basic concept), sliding

The 8U division generally meets 1 time per week for practice and 1 time per week for games. Games and practices typically run 1hr 30 mins.

10U:

The 10U division is designed to continue to build upon skills learned in 8U. Continued work on fundamentals. There is a continued emphasis on learning the strategy and rules of the game (what to do and when) while building CONFIDENCE and having FUN. Players are introduced to new skills such as leading from bases, stealing bases, a “live ball”, bunting and kid pitching. Players begin to understand the importance of the mental game. Upon graduating to 12U, players should know what constitutes a force play, which base is the correct base to make the play, how to round and run the bases, how to lead and steal a base and be able to catch a pop fly.

Throwing –throwing mechanics, footwork, throwing toward/through to target, cutoffs

Fielding –body positioning & footwork, game situational play, bunt defense, fly balls, stealing- throw downs & covering home, live ball concept

Hitting – stance review, batters box education, strike zone awareness, working on the live pitch, tee work, soft toss, tennis ball drills, stations, mindset awareness, bunting

Base Running – where to go and when, running through the base, rounding the base, leading, stealing, sliding

Pitcher/Catchers work – basic mechanics, lots of repetition & game like situations, live hitting

The 10U division generally meets approx. 2 times per week for practice and 1-2 times per week for games. (Total of 3 times per week unless game rescheduling occurs)

12U:

The 12U division is designed to reinforce and build upon skills learned in 10U. Continued work on fundamentals. Strong emphasis on understanding the strategy and rules of the game (what to do and when) and a strong mental game (Focus in the NOW, “Reset” as needed, Belief in yourself, Bouncing back from errors, Motivation). Level of play is more competitive at this age level. 12” ball is introduced and pitching from 40’.

Throwing –throwing mechanics, footwork, throwing toward/through to target, cutoffs

Fielding –body positioning & footwork, quick hands & release, game situational play, bunt defense, fly balls, stealing- throw downs & covering home, live ball concept

Hitting – stance review, working on live pitch, tee work, stations, mindset awareness, bunting, strike zone awareness

Base Running – where to go and when, running through the base, rounding the base, leading, stealing, sliding

Pitcher/Catchers work – mechanics, repetition, live hitting, working on their own away from the team

The 12U division generally meets approx. 2-3 times per week for practice and 1-2 times per week for games. (Total of 3 times per week unless game rescheduling occurs)

14U:

The 14U division is an extension of 12U designed to continue the reinforcement of skills. This division should prep players for play on middle and high school softball teams and/or travel (club) teams. All rules and standards are the same as 12U.

The 14U division generally meets approx. 2-3 times per week for practice and 1-2 times per week for games. (Total of 3 times per week unless game rescheduling occurs)