

FASTPITCH SOFTBALL - FIELDING TIPS

By Michele Smith

One of the most important skills in the game of Softball or Baseball is fielding. Many times good defensive fielding can mean the difference in the outcome of the game. Becoming a good defensive player starts with proper fielding technique. So let's talk fielding. It is important to have a good base. That means our feet should be shoulder width apart, and most of our weight should be on the balls of our feet. Starting in this position allows us to be able to move and react quickly when the ball is hit. Our knees should be bent with a slight lean forward at the waste, and our bottoms [rear ends!] should be low to the ground. Our upper body should have our arms extended out in front of our bodies, with our glove on the ground. We always want to field the ball out in front of our body, this helps us avoid letting the ball slip through the space between our legs.

When the ball is hit either to the left nor to the right of us, we need to move our feet and field the ball in front of our body. We only use our back hand when we have too. You always want to shuffle you feet and get to where you can field the ball in the center of your body. When moving to the ball, be careful not to crossover with your feet. You should always shuffle your feet, and keep low to the ground. This will get you to the ball quicker than if you stand up out of the starting position and then run to the ball and then again have to stoop down to field the ball.

Once the ball is in your glove, you want to have your throwing arm hand covering the ball, keeping it from popping out of the glove. Then you want to bring both arms up to your belly button, this gets you in the habit of having soft hands. Soft hands are very important when fielding, the softer the hands the better the fielder. Bringing your hands into your body will help keep your hands soft. After you have your hands near your belly, you want to then pivot into a throwing position and make a good throw to the target.

Remember, stay low, keep your head down, as well as your bottom, see the ball into the glove, soft hands to your belly, and then come up and make a good throw to the target.

Good luck and happy fielding!