



Little League Softball®

Juniors 12-14 years



Little League Softball®

- Founded in 1974
- Offered for girls ages 4-16
- **NB: Softball NZ are offering the Junior Division (12-14 yrs.) in 2019**
- Age determination date of January 1
- Currently over 360,000 girls participate in Little League Softball - in over 25 countries worldwide





Goals of Little League

- To help participants develop citizenship, discipline, teamwork and physical well being through sport.
- To help participants learn their own strengths and weaknesses, the meanings of sportsmanship and cooperation, the essence of competition and the qualities that constitute effective leadership.





Little League Softball: Divisions of Play



Tee Ball 4-7

Minors 7-12

League Age 5 and 6-year-olds with one year of Tee Ball may participate in Coach Pitch or Machine Pitch.

Majors 9-12

Juniors 12-14

Seniors 13-16



What will it cost to affiliate with Little League?

Free, Softball NZ will cover team affiliation costs.





Benefits of Little League Softball

- World Series Championship games televised on ESPN family of networks
- Little League International provides travel to and from the different Little League Softball World Series tournaments for all international regional championship teams.
- Access to the only true International youth softball tournament
- Opportunities for financial and equipment assistance





- Free online training for everyone in your league
 - Little League University
 - Coaches and Managers
 - Umpires
 - League Administration
 - Parents
 - LittleLeagueU.org
- Additional educational resources and material provided by Positive Coaching Alliance
- ONE Softball Partnership
- Coaches Clinic opportunities – worked with Michele Smith (Olympic Gold Medalist) and Mark Cooke (Winthrop Univ. Head Coach)
- Coordinate and work with the WBSC





The Little League International Tournament

- “ Three Softball World Series tournaments: Little League, **Junior**, and Senior League
- “ All Little League Softball World Series games will be streamed or televised on ESPN family of Networks
- “ In all seven divisions, more than 30,000 games are played in less than two months to determine eight World Champions
- Little League International provides travel assistance to and from the different World Series tournaments for all international regional champions





Coaches and Manager Resource



LittleLeagueU.org

- Free to all Softball NZ Associations
- Features both video and text based articles as well as the latest Little League news
- Content specific for softball, describing skills, helpful drills and suggestions on how to structure practice
- SKLZ content
- Tee Ball Program



10-Week Tee Ball Program

LittleLeague.org/TeeBall

Tee Ball Full Practice Plan Week 2

Practice Goal: What the kids should know by the end of today!

The players should be able to throw overhand, stepping with opposite foot and swing a bat unassisted.

Materials and Equipment:

- wiffleballs (15), bucket for balls (1)
- tee, or large traffic cone (1)
- hula hoops (3 or 4), weave 3 to 4 large circles of ribbon into the fence
- string or zip ties (3 or 4)
- cones (5)
- bat (1)

Practice Sequence:

1. Gather and welcome players. Review coaches' names and players' names. Review purpose for being at the field and show enthusiasm to start the practice. Verbally review the cues for throwing and have players raise their throwing hand and touch their stepping foot with that hand. Discuss the PCA tip of the week. (3 minutes)

Positive Coaching Alliance Talking Points for Tee Ball Coaches

Week 2 - Rebounding from Mistakes (Mistake Ritual)

- All athletes, even great ones, make mistakes, but great athletes know how to bounce back from mistakes.
- On your team it should be okay to make a mistake. If your players fear mistakes, they won't try their hardest. Tell them to remember to just keep hustling and working hard, no matter what!
- Use a Mistake Ritual to help your athletes focus on the most important play—the next play. When someone on your team makes a mistake, they can flush it down the toilet by making a flushing motion with their hand.
- Also, tell that person, "That's okay. Flush It! Get ready for the next play!"

2. Statuses: explain the game to players while they are still gathered from the welcome. While explaining, demonstrate how they will be tagged and how to freeze like a statue. Keep explanation brief as players will learn by trying. Have players find a spot to stand in the dirt (personal space) and on "go" players run anywhere in the infield. When the coach says, "freeze like a statue," they must freeze like a statue of whatever the coach calls out. The coach then says, "go," and the players run again. Things to call out: like your favorite superhero, like an animal, like a race car driver, like you are throwing a ball, like you just hit a homerun... Repeat. This time play that the coach tags the players. They freeze like a statue whatever the coach calls. While a coach and players are playing, hang 3 to 4 hula hoops at player-throwing height on the fence. Space them about 10 feet apart.

3. Call players to the pitcher's mound and have them make a circle. While kneeling inside of the circle, review how to hold a ball the correct way to make good throws. Have a player demonstrate what they remember; use a few balls to circulate and take turns throughout the group. Use cues. The players should start with the proper grip: fingers on top with thumb underneath. Grip pressure should be like holding a tube of toothpaste. They must look at their

target. It is a good idea to have them say "ready" or their eyes on their target as a reminder each time to target first. The next move is to step directly to the ball and hand should move in a circular motion. A good cue to tell players that when they take the ball out of the thumb should go past their thigh and then the ball to go up facing the sky - "thumb to thigh, show it to should release the ball to the target and let their arm move to finish the circular motion. Stressing this cue prevent them from stopping their arm as soon as the ball. (4 minutes)

4. Stop players and call back to the coach. Have each stop their wiffleball in the bucket and give another team. (3 minutes)

BREAK (3 minutes)

5. Call players in and have them sit in the grass. Talk a bat. Before teaching, discuss safety rules. They must have two hands on the bat, never throw it and stay in the there are no accidents. Demonstrate a swing using your favorite hand/your throwing hand? That hand other below, bend knees, stand "sideswaps", eyes on that the bat should be held in the fingers and pads in their palms. Have them put their index finger of the palm of their other hand. They should close the finger as tight as possible. Once the hand is closed, try to get their index finger out. Do this again with it being placed where the fingers meet the hand the. Again have them grip down hard and try to take their hand. It should be much more difficult to free second time. This should demonstrate to the player fingers is a stronger grip than using the palms. Once proper grip, have players spread their feet slightly as shoulders in an athletic position with knees slightly feet and shoulders should be in line with the pitcher then take a swing trying to have the bat stay level! Encourage them to swing hard while staying balanced players that they must watch the ball that they are time. They should follow through by finishing with their lead shoulder and the laces on their bat facing the pitcher's mound.

6. Gather players and have them give another player about what they learned today and how it will help Tee Ball players. Give the PCA tip of the week. Item the next event. (4 minutes)

Dismiss

TEE BALL PRACTICE

#5 RUN THE BASES RELAY

- The players are divided into two teams. One team lines up at second base and the other team lines up at home plate. Each line should be out of the way of the base paths.
- On "go", the first player in line at second base runs around the bases back to second base while, at the same time, the player at home runs around the bases back to home plate. Once the players arrive back to their team's line they tag the next player to continue the race.
- The first team finish is the winning team.

Practice 2 - Quick Plan (45 minutes)

View the FULL PRACTICE PLAN for detailed instructions for every activity within each lesson

6:00 - 6:03 Introduction

- Welcome players
- Review names (players and coaches)
- Review how to throw/PCA tip of the week

6:03 - 6:10 Statuses

- Players are tagged and must freeze like whatever the coach says
- (See full practice plan for complete instructions)

6:10 - 6:15 Review Grip and Throwing

- Players gather in circle
- Grip wiffleball with whole hand using fingertips
- Demonstrate grip and throwing with opposite foot

6:15 - 6:30 Team Throwing

- Hula hoops need to be fastened to the fence
- Players are broken into even teams
- Players take turns throwing through the hoop against the fence
- Each throw that is made through the hoop counts as an "out" for that team. Players are working toward three outs
- Coaches monitor for grip and stepping with opposite foot
- (See full practice plan for complete instructions)

Break

6:35 - 6:40 Swinging

- Demonstrate a swing to players
- Have players practice swinging without a bat (a dry swing)
- Take each player, one at a time to practice with a tee while others are still dry swinging

6:40 - 6:45 Conclusion

- Have each player compliment another/PCA tip of the week
- Review what they learned
- Remind of next event (practice, game)

Week 2 - Rebounding from mistakes (Mistake Ritual)

On this team it's okay to make a mistake. If we fear mistakes, we won't try our hardest. Remember to just keep hustling and working hard, no matter what!





Little League Umpire Resources

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UMPIRE GEAR
AVAILABLE
ORDER TODAY

Sample Content

Welcome Video

- Free to all Softball NZ Associations
- Updated regularly
- Features both video and text based articles as well as the latest Little League news
- Content specific areas for softball; and plate and base umpires

LittleLeagueU.org



Partnership with **ONE Softball**



Jennie Finch, a two-time Olympic medalist for Team USA Softball, remembers a time when she was told that she would not be a successful pitcher.

To overcome the doubt and succeed on the international stage, she credits her parents for their support, motivation, and for allowing her to build her inner strength.



Partnership provides coaches, parents and players video and articles on character development and guidance through the softball journey to better the game and bring the softball community together with content from the best in softball.

[LittleLeagueU.org](https://www.LittleLeagueU.org)



Positive Coaching Alliance Partnership

- Since 2006, Little League has partnered with PCA to provide a framework and tools for local Little League volunteers to develop a culture of positive, character-building competition.
- Extended this partnership to include two additional FREE quick, online courses for coaches and parents.
- Provide a framework to develop a positive coach-parent partnership and to be a powerful sports parent from the stands.
 - [Coach Course](#)
 - [Parent Course](#)





Structure



Little League International

Kirkland, Washington, July/August, 2019

Asia-Pacific Region

venue, ?? June, 2019

Softball New Zealand Entry

Winner of the Softball NZ National U15 Girls Tournament
venue, ?? January, 2019





Little League® Graduates

A few Little League Softball graduates through the years:

” **Crystal Bustos:** USA Softball Team (Canyon Country LL)

” **Sue Enquist:** Former Head Coach at UCLA

” **Cat Osterman:** USA Olympian (Bear Creek LL)

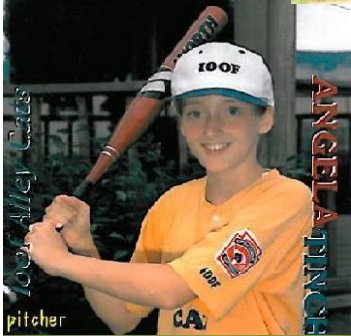
” **Heather Tarr:** Head Coach at the University of Washington

” **Angela Tincher:** VA Tech; No hitter against US Team (Clifton Forge LL)

Jackie Traina – University of Alabama and 2012 WCWS Champions (Naples LL)

Gatorade National Players of the Year

- Carly Hoover (SC), Alexis Bower (PA), Pauline Tufi (AK)
Sarah Ing (Washington DC), Carolyn Szymanski (DE)





Testimonials

"I was the player that wasn't the biggest, fastest or smartest, but still I learned through Little League that I have no limits."

- Sue Enquist, Former UCLA Player and Coach, 11 National Championships

"Little League not only provided me a place to play with friends and learn the game, it was where I developed my love for the game. I always dreamed of competing at the highest level, and was able to accomplish that goal thanks to my start in Little League. Even more, my Little League experiences taught me how to work as part of a team and the value of giving back."

- Crystl Bustos, Two-Time Olympic Gold Medalist

"Little League introduced me to the game of softball. Playing on our all-star team showed me the opportunities that softball could bring. I gained new friends, and learned that every season comes to an end – some earlier than you would like. Little League taught me to set and achieve goals and how to become passionate about something you love."

- Angela Tincher, All-American for Virginia Tech

"I think the way Little League rules are set up just go to show that being a good teammate is so much more important than being a good player. It forces you to grow up and cheer for your teammates while you have the chance to sit back for once and watch them light up because they get a chance to go on the field. Little League is about making dreams come true, and I love how everyone is included."

- Carly Hoover, Gatorade National POY, Stanford



Steps for Starting a Softball Program

If I am interested in my league offering the Little League Softball program what are the next steps?

1. **Discuss offering Little League Softball program with your local Little League board** – The first step to adding a softball program to your local Little League is to discuss the addition of the program with the board. The board should appoint a softball committee to head up the effort. The committee should consist of at least one board member, and may include other members of the league or members of the community interested in starting a Little League Softball program. Some members that you may choose to include on the committee include your local high school softball coach, or other members in the community involved with softball. This committee will oversee items such as promotion of the softball program, identifying potential managers and coaches, securing softball fields, recruiting players, etc. *Note: When securing fields, a softball program may use either a traditional softball field or may use an existing baseball field.*
2. **Let your District Administrator know that you are planning to offer Little League Softball** – Your District Administrator will be able to let you know what other leagues in the district are currently offering softball and what opportunities may exist for interleague play or combined teams. Additionally, your District Administrator may be able to put you in touch with other softball contacts in the district that may be able to help you in starting your own program.
3. **Begin promoting your softball program and gauge interest in the community** – When you first begin promoting your Little League Softball program, consider promoting the program for all ages 4-18. Based on the interest at each age level, you can determine which levels of play your league will offer. You may choose to have girls interested in participating complete an interest form, similar to a registration form. This will allow your league



Promoting and Operating a Successful Softball Program

Structuring the Board

Little League would recommend adding at least two positions to the local league board when starting or operating a softball program: a Softball Vice President and a Softball Player Agent.

Softball Vice President

Appointing a Softball Vice President to oversee the operations is an important task for any league managing a softball program. One of the primary goals of this position is to promote the program within the local softball community. The Softball Vice President acts as a liaison between the league board and those involved in the softball program.

LITTLE LEAGUE SOFTBALL®

WHERE THE WORLD COMES TO COMPETE

BECOME PART OF THE NEXT GENERATION OF FEMALE ATHLETES

WORLD SERIES TOURNAMENTS ON THE ESPN FAMILY OF NETWORKS

OUR PROGRAM
LittleLeagueSoftball.org

In addition to developing on-field fundamentals and providing a competitive outlet for girls, Little League Softball® helps strengthen the self-esteem of its participants and promotes teamwork and sportsmanship. Founded in 1974, Little League Softball includes divisions of play for girls ages 4 to 18, which culminates at four Softball World Series tournaments for international competition and camaraderie. Little League Softball proudly offers a number of different initiatives to support local leagues including free education

LITTLE LEAGUE INTERNATIONAL

"I WAS THE PLAYER THAT WASN'T THE BIGGEST, FASTEST OR SMARTEST, BUT STILL I LEARNED THROUGH LITTLE LEAGUE® THAT I HAVE NO LIMITS."

SUE ENQUIST
FORMER NCAA PLAYER & HEAD COACH
11 NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

360,000 PLAYERS,
4 WORLD SERIES TOURNAMENTS,
LIVE TELEVISION COVERAGE ON ESPN

**DREAMING,
LAUGHING, LEARNING,
AND COMPETING**

PLAYER REGISTRATION

XYZ Little League
General Pizza Place – January 11-12 – 10am-5pm
More Information: www.XYZLittleLeague.org



For more information, visit www.LittleLeagueSoftball.org
or www.Facebook.com/LittleLeagueSoftball