

BRHLL Player Development: Softball Throwing Program

The throwing progression is conducted with two players. The ball is held with the fingers across the laces. Solid and consistent mechanics result in accuracy. Emphasize this throughout.

1. Wrist Flips: The players stand about five feet apart. Elbow is raised to a height where the upper arm is parallel with the ground. Glove-hand is placed under the raised elbow. The ball is “flipped” using the wrist only. Look for backspin on the ball. (10 reps)
2. One-Knee: Players are on one knee about 15 feet apart. For a right-handed thrower the right knee is on the ground. The motion begins with the ball in the glove in the “ready position”. The hands separate in a semi-circular direction and the motion is completed with a follow-through of the chest to the raised knee. Stress a firm core and broad shoulders. Ensure the proper angle/height of the elbow and wrist/hand position. (10 reps)
3. Trunk Twist: Players stand facing each other about 20 feet apart. Feet are at shoulder’s width and knees are slightly bent – an athletic position. While the feet remain on the ground, the hands begin in the ready position and separate as the trunk twists and the follow-through ends with the trunk in a tilted position. The player can rise up on the toes while in motion. Stress proper separation of hands. Stress an athletic position where the power in the throw is produced by “pushing” feet into the ground with bent knees and rising up to the toes as the ball is released. (10 reps)
4. Power Position: Thrower stands with body perpendicular to the target about 30 feet away. The hands are in the ready position and the knees are bent, the body weight is focused on the front leg. As the hands separate, the weight shifts to the back leg. When the motion moves forward and the ball is released, the rear foot remains on the ground but twists to release the hip and torso to throw the ball. Stress the athletic position and that power is produced from the lower body through the torso to the arm and then to the hand. Stress the torso tilt on follow-through. (10 reps)
5. Crow-Hops: The players are positioned about 40 feet away from each other. The thrower “hops” into the throw. With the crow-hop, stress bent knees in an athletic position with one or two hops into the throw, releasing the rear foot on follow-through. The same type of weight shift as seen in the Power Position is used and the same type of push is used to generate power. Stress proper head position (eyes on target) and a full stride with the plant foot landing on a direct line to the target. (10 reps)

Long-Toss: Extend the progression into a long-toss session. Have the players step back two or three steps after each crow-hop. As the distance increases the player will have to arc the throws in order to reach the target. This is how arm strength is increased. The maximum distance will depend on the player. The maximum distance is the point at which the player can throw the ball on an arc in the air to the target. Once the maximum distance is reached, have the player take two or three steps forward after each throw. Move in till they’ve reached the 40 foot distance. The arc under the ball should dissipate as the distance between the players decreases. Long-toss should be a highly structured method of increasing arm strength, not just “having a long catch”. Emphasize solid/consistent mechanics.