

Softball Try-It

Softball is a great team sport that young girls can begin to become familiar with and continue playing as they get older. The purpose of this try-it program is to introduce girls to softball and develop an appreciation for the game.

Complete four activities, including number 1.

1. To play softball you need certain pieces of equipment: a bat, a glove and a softball. Discuss the differences between a softball and a hardball with your leader or coach. Learn the rules of softball and identify field positions. With the help of your coach or another adult, practice fielding ground balls and throwing and catching with your teammates.
2. Sportsmanship is important in every game. Discuss with your teammates or your troop what traits are necessary to be a good winner and to be a good loser. How do these traits relate to the Girl Scout promise and law? Always demonstrate good sportsmanship.
3. Good “warm-ups” help prevent injuries. Your muscles stretch as they get warmer. Start each practice or game with some gentle warm up exercises and stretches. Practice three of the following warm-up exercises
 - a. Standing tall, stretch your arms up over your head reaching high into the sky. Slowly reach to your right and then to your left.
 - b. Bend your body at the waist, forward, to the right, to the back and to the left.
 - c. Loosen up your arms. Hold your arms straight out from your sides and begin making ten small circles forward with each arm. Repeat going backward for ten small circles. Repeat making large circles, forward then backward.
 - d. Sit on the ground with your legs spread apart. Lean over your left leg and reach for your toes. Hold for 5 seconds. Reach to the center and hold for 5 seconds. Lean over your right leg and reach for your toes. Hold for 5 seconds.
 - e. Sit on the ground and bend your knees. Put your feet together and slowly push your knees to the ground.
4. Injuries occur in all sports. Become familiar with what you should do if you or a teammate is injured. Become familiar with following.
 - a. Certain equipment helps prevent softball injuries. To protect your head when you are up at bat, always wear a batting helmet. Catchers must wear shin guards, a catchers mask and a chest protector. Discuss with your leader or coach the importance of such equipment.
 - b. Discuss what to do for yourself if you are injured during practice or a game. Pretend you have a scraped knee or you have been accidentally hit with a ball during a game or practice. What is the first thing that you do?

- c. How can softball related injuries be prevented? Discuss preventive measures with your coach or other softball consultant.
5. After practicing some of the softball skills you have learned, participate in a softball game.
6. Watch a college or high school softball game live or on television.
7. Keep your eye on the ball. Whether you are up at bat or on the field, pay attention to what is going on around you. While it will help you be a better hitter and fielder, keeping your eye on the ball and staying aware of your surroundings will also help prevent certain injuries. For example, never stand behind someone swinging a bat. Never swing a bat without making sure no one is standing nearby. Always pay attention when you are on the field and listen to your coaches on the field.