Coach Steve'sSoftball Training Modules
for

Primary & Middle School Players

February 2018

Softball Training Modules for Primary & Middle School Players

7.2   Situational Play – Ground Balls

This Module 7.2 describes Play Situation Knowledge and Decision Making Skills Senior 1st Team Players should master to become effective Fielders at that level. Module 4, which describes Fielding & Throwing techniques used in the game of Softball, should be reviewed in conjunction with this Module 7.2.

Ground Ball Fielding Plays happen very quickly in Softball. Typically, at the Senior 1st Team Level, the Fielding Team has less than 4 to 5 seconds to make an "**OUT**" from the time the ball is initially hit into play by the opposing team. The best fielding is done instinctively. This module provides the knowledge framework for fielders to consistently perform at a high level.

The Fielding's team objective is to put Batters and Base Runners "**OUT**". A Ground Ball Fielding Play typically only involves 2 Players, sometimes 3. The balance of the Fielding Team is responsible for backing up these Fielders or covering areas of Fair Territory vacated by their teammates who are making the Fielding Play.

On every Ground Ball Play, every Fielder has a specific task to either:
- To move to a Back-up or Cover position when a Teammate fields the ball
  - Tasks vary depending on which Teammate is Fielding

    - or -

- Field the Ground Ball and
  - **Throw** or **Toss** the ball to a Teammate or make a Play for the "**OUT**"
  - The tasks vary depending on the number of Runners who are on base and their location at either 1st , 2nd or 3rd base

The pages that follow describe the tasks for each of the 9 Players on the Fielding Team for Ground Ball Plays. The role of the Centre Fielder is such that the tasks differ somewhat depending on whether he fields the ball on the left or right hand side of the Outfield and his Teammates' Back-up and Cover tasks vary accordingly.

Senior 1st Team Players should demonstrate a high degree of knowledge in respect to the tasks associated with their Playing Position when Ground Balls are hit by the opposing team. Intermediate goals can be developed for 2nd team and Middle School Players so that over a 2 to 3 year period, they can also achieve 1st Team knowledge standards.

> *Goals: (to be developed)*

1   Pitcher - Fielding Plays on Ground Balls
Hit in Fair Territory *(Includes dropped Fly Balls)*

Pitcher's Field Position on Teammate's Fielding Plays			
Ball Fielded By:	**0 Out**	**1 Out**	**2 Out**
Catcher	Cover Home Plate		
1st Baseman	Cover 1st Base *(See Special Note 5)*		
2nd Baseman	Back-Up 1st Base		
3rd Baseman			
Shortstop			
Left Fielder	Back-Up 3rd Base or Home Plate		
Centre Fielder (Left)			
Centre Fielder (Right)	Back-Up Home Plate		
Right Fielder			

Base Runner Situation	Pitcher's Ground Ball Fielding Plays		
	0 Out	**1 Out**	**2 Out**
No Runners on Base	Field & **Toss** to 1st Base for **Force-Out** *Note (1)*		**Field & Toss to 1st to end Inning in all Base Runner Situations**
Runner on 1st Base	Field & **Throw** to 2nd Base for **Force-Out** *Note (2)*		
Runners on 1st & 2nd	Field & **Throw** to 3rd, 2nd or 1st for **Force-Out** *Note (3)*		
Runners on 1st, 2nd, 3rd (Bases Full)	Field & **Toss/Throw** to Home or any Base the **Force-Out** *Note (3)*		
Runners on 1st & 3rd	Field, **LOOK** to Check Runner at 3rd Base & **Toss/Throw** to 2nd or 1st for the **Force-Out** *Note (4)*		
Runner on 2nd	Field, **LOOK** to Check Runners at 2nd & 3rd Base **Toss/Throw** to 1st Base for the **Force-Out** *Note (4)*		
Runner on 3rd			
Runners on 2nd & 3rd			

Notes: (1) If "**OUT**" cannot be made, hold the ball and return the Pitcher's Rubber

(2) Best Play: **Throw** to 2nd Base covered by the Shortstop for **Force-Out** at 2nd

(3) **Force-Out** at Home Plate (preferred) or any Base (2nd Choice) if Bases are Full

(4) **LOOK** Runners back to 3rd or 2nd Base for a Run-Down opportunity before **Throwing** to 1st or 2nd Base for the **Force-Out**

Special Note: (5) **In all cases when the Pitcher** makes the 1st or 2nd **OUT** in an inning at 1st Base, he should immediately run to Home or 3rd Base with ball in hand to prevent other runners from advancing and proceed to stand on the Pitcher's Rubber

2   Catcher - Fielding Plays on Ground Balls
Hit in Fair Territory *(Includes dropped Fly Balls)*

Catcher's Field Position on Teammate's Fielding Plays			
Ball Fielded By:	**0 Out**	**1 Out**	**2 Out**
Pitcher			
1st Baseman			
2nd Baseman			
3rd Baseman		**Cover Home Plate**	
Shortstop		**In all Situations where**	
Left Fielder		**A Teammate Fields a Ground Ball**	
Centre Fielder (Left)			
Centre Fielder (Right)			
Right Fielder			

Base Runner Situation	Catcher's Ground Ball Fielding Plays		
	0 Out	**1 Out**	**2 Out**
Force-Out & Tag-Out Situations At Home Plate	Three Options for an "**OUT**" at Home Plate; Field & 1) **TAG** the Runner, 2) **Step** on Home Plate or 3) **Toss/Throw** to the Pitcher covering Home for the **Force-Out**		
No Runners on Base	Field & **Toss** to 1st Base for **Force-Out** *Notes (1, 2)*		**Options 1, 2 or 3 at Home Plate if Bases are Full**
Runner on 1st Base	Field & **Throw** to 1st, 2nd or 3rd Base for a **Force-Out** *Notes (2, 3)*		
Runners on 1st & 2nd			
Runners on 1st, 2nd, 3rd (Bases Full)	Field & Make Play at Home Plate		**or**
Runners on 1st & 3rd	Field, **LOOK** to Check Runners at 2nd & 3rd Base, **Toss/Throw** to 1st for the **Force-Out** *Note (4)*		**Field & Throw to 1st Base to end Inning in all Base Runner Situations**
Runner on 2nd			
Runner on 3rd			
Runners on 2nd & 3rd			
Dropped 3rd Strike; 1st Base Occupied	Batter is "**OUT**"		
Dropped 3rd Strike 1st Base is Unoccupied	Field & **Toss** to 1st Base for **Force-Out** *Notes (1, 2)*		

Notes:

(1) Take 1-2 steps towards Pitcher's Rubber before **Throwing** to 1st Base

(2) If "**OUT**" cannot be made, hold the ball with Runner on Base & Give it to the Pitcher or Toss it to him after he has reached the Pitching Rubber

(3) Best Plays: **Throw** to **Force-Out** the lead Runners at 2nd or 3rd Bases

(4) **LOOK** Runners back to 3rd or 2nd Base for a Run-Down opportunity before **Throwing** to 1st Base for the **Force-Out**

3 First Baseman - Fielding Plays on Ground Balls
Hit in Fair Territory *(Includes dropped Fly Balls)*

1st Baseman's Field Position on Teammate's Ground Ball Plays			
Ball Fielded By:	**0 Out**	**1 Out**	**2 Outs**
Pitcher			
Catcher			
2nd Baseman			
3rd Baseman	Cover 1st Base		
Shortstop	In all Situations where		
Left Fielder	A Teammate Fields a Ground Ball		
Centre Fielder (Left)			
Centre Fielder (Right)	*(See Special Note 5)*		
Right Fielder			

Base Runner Situation	1st Baseman's Ground Ball Fielding Plays		
	0 Out	**1 Out**	**2 Outs**
Force-Out & Tag-Out Situations At 1st Base	Three Options for an "**OUT**" at 1st Base: Field & 1) Tag the Runner, 2) Step on 1st or 3) **Toss/Throw** to the Pitcher or 2nd Baseman covering 1st Base for the **Force-Out** *(Special Note 5)*		
No Runners on Base	Field & **Toss** to Pitcher or 2nd Baseman at 1st Base for **Force-Out** *Note (1)*		**Options 1, 2 or 3 At 1st Base to End Inning**
Runner on 1st Base	Field & **Toss/Throw** to 1st, 2nd or 3rd Base for the **Force-Out** *Notes (2 & 3)*		
Runners on 1st & 2nd			
Runners on 1st, 2nd, 3rd (Bases Full)	Field & **Toss/Throw** to Home or any Base for the **Force-Out** *Note (3)*		
Runners on 1st & 3rd	Field, Look to Check Runners at 2nd & 3rd Base, **Toss/Throw** to 1st for the **Force-Out** *Note (4)*		
Runner on 2nd			
Runner on 3rd			
Runners on 2nd & 3rd			

Notes:
(1) If an "**OUT**" cannot be made, hold the ball with Runner on Base & Give it to the Pitcher or **Toss** it to him after he has reached the Pitching Rubber

(2) Best Plays: **Throw** to **Force-Out** the lead Runners at 2nd , 3rd Bases or Home Plate

(3) **Force-Out** at any Base (or Home if Bases are Full)

(4) **LOOK** Runners back to 3rd or 2nd Base for a Run-Down opportunity before **Throwing** to 1st Base for the **Force-Out**

Special Note:
(5) **In all cases when the 1st Baseman** makes the 1st or 2nd **OUT** in an inning at 1st Base, he should immediately run to Home or 3rd Base with ball in hand to prevent other runners from advancing and give or **Toss** the ball to the Pitcher at the Pitcher Plate

4   Second Baseman - Fielding Plays on Ground Balls
Hit in Fair Territory *(Includes dropped Fly Balls)*

2nd Baseman's Field Position on Teammate's Ground Ball Plays			
Ball Fielded By:	**0 Out**	**1 Out**	**2 Out**
Pitcher	**Cover 2nd Base**		
Catcher			
1st Baseman	**Back-Up or Cover 1st Base** *(See Special Note 5)*		
3rd Baseman	**Cover 2nd Base**		
Shortstop			
Left Fielder			
Centre Fielder (Left)			
Centre Fielder (Right)	**Move to: Right Field "Cut-Off Man" Position**		
Right Fielder			

Base Runner Situation	2nd Baseman's Ground Ball Fielding Plays		
	0 Out	**1 Out**	**2 Out**
Force-Out & Tag-Out Situations At 2nd Base	Three Options for an **"OUT"** at 2nd Base; Field & 1) **Tag** the Runner between 1st & 2nd Base, 2) **Step** on 2nd or 3) **Toss/Throw** to Shortstop covering 2nd Base for the **Force-Out**		
No Runners on Base	Field & **Throw** to 1st Base for **Force-Out** *Note (1)*		**Options 1, 2 or 3 at 2nd Base** or **Field & Throw to 1st Base to end Inning in all Base Runner Situations**
Runner on 1st Base	Field & **Toss/Throw** to 2nd, 3rd or 1st Base for the **Force-Out** *Note (2)*		
Runners on 1st & 2nd			
Runners on 1st, 2nd, 3rd (Bases Full)	Field & **Toss/Throw** to Home or any Base for the **Force-Out** *Notes (2&3)*		
Runners on 1st & 3rd	Field, **LOOK** to Check Runners at 2nd & 3rd Base, **Toss/Throw** to 1st for the **Force-Out** *Note (4)*		
Runner on 2nd			
Runner on 3rd			
Runners on 2nd & 3rd			

Notes: (1) If an "**OUT**" cannot be made, hold the ball with Runner on Base & Give it to the Pitcher or **Toss** it to him after he has reached the Pitching Rubber

(2) Best Plays: **Throw** to **Force-Out** the lead Runners at 2nd, 3rd Bases or Home

(3) **Force-Out** at any Base (or Home if Bases are Full)

(4) **LOOK** Runners back to 3rd or 2nd Base for a Run-Down opportunity before **Throwing** to 1st Base for the **Force-Out**

Special Note: (5) **In all cases when the 2nd Baseman** makes the 1st or 2nd **OUT** in an inning at 1st or 2nd Base, he should immediately **RUN** towards Home with ball in hand to prevent other runners from advancing and give or **Toss** the ball to the Pitcher at the Pitcher Plate

5   Third Baseman - Fielding Plays on Ground Balls
Hit in Fair Territory *(Includes dropped Fly Balls)*

3rd Baseman's Field Position on Teammate's Ground Ball Plays			
Ball Fielded By:	**0 Out**	**1 Out**	**2 Out**
Pitcher			
Catcher			
1st Baseman			
2nd Baseman			
Shortstop	Cover 3rd Base		
Left Fielder			
Centre Fielder (Left)			
Centre Fielder (Right)			
Right Fielder			

Base Runner Situation	3rd Baseman's Ground Ball Fielding Plays		
	0 Out	**1 Out**	**2 Out**
Force-Out & Tag-Out Situations At 3rd Base	Three Options for an "**OUT**" at 3rd Base; Field & 1) **Tag** the Runner between 3rd and Home Plate or 2nd & 3rd Base, 2) **Step** on 3rd or 3) **Toss/Throw** to Shortstop covering 3rd Base for a **Force-Out**		
No Runners on Base	Field & **Throw** to 1st Base for **Force-Out** *Note (1)*		**Options 1, 2 or 3 at 3rd Base** or **Field & Throw to 1st Base to end Inning in all Base Runner Situations**
Runner on 1st Base	Field & **Toss/Throw** to 2nd, 3rd or 1st Base for the **Force-Out** *Notes (2)*		
Runners on 1st & 2nd			
Runners on 1st, 2nd, 3rd (Bases Full)	Field & **Toss/Throw** to Home or any Base for the **Force-Out** *Note (3)*		
Runners on 1st & 3rd	Field, **LOOK** to Check Runners at 2nd & 3rd Base, **Toss/Throw** to 1st for the **Force-Out** *Note (4)*		
Runner on 2nd			
Runner on 3rd			
Runners on 2nd & 3rd			

Notes: (1) If an "**OUT**" cannot be made, hold the ball with Runner on Base & Give it to the Pitcher or **Toss** it to him after he has reached the Pitching Rubber

(2) Best Plays: **Throw** to **Force-Out** the lead Runners at 2nd, 3rd Bases or Home

(3) **Force-Out** at any Base (or Home if Bases are Full)

(4) **LOOK** Runners back to 3rd or 2nd Base for a Run-Down opportunity before **Throwing** to 1st Base for the **Force-Out**

Special Note: (5) **In all cases when the 3rd Baseman** makes the 1st or 2nd **OUT** in an inning at 3rd Base, he should immediately **RUN** towards 2nd Base with ball in hand to prevent other runners from advancing and give or **Toss** the ball to the Pitcher at the Pitcher Plate

6   Shortstop - Fielding Plays on Ground Balls
Hit in Fair Territory *(Includes dropped Fly Balls)*

Shortstop's Field Position on Teammate's Ground Ball Plays			
Ball Fielded By:	**0 Out**	**1 Out**	**2 Out**
Pitcher	**Back-Up Pitcher**		
Catcher	**Back-Up 3rd Base**		
1st Baseman	**Cover 2nd Base**		
2nd Baseman			
3rd Baseman	**Cover 3rd Base**		
Left Fielder	**Move to: Left Field "Cut-Off Man" Position**		
Centre Fielder (Left)			
Centre Fielder (Right)	**Cover 2nd Base**		
Right Fielder			

Base Runner Situation	Shortstop's Ground Ball Fielding Plays		
	0 Out	**1 Out**	**2 Out**
Force-Out & Tag-Out Situations At 2nd & 3rd Base	Three Options for an "**OUT**" at 2nd or 3rd Base; Field & 1) **Tag** the Runner between 2nd and 3rd Base, 2) **Step** on 2nd or 3rd or 3) **Toss/Throw** to 2nd or 3rd for a **Force-Out**		
No Runners on Base	Field & **Throw** to 1st Base for **Force-Out** *Note (1)*		Field & **Throw** to 1st Base to end Inning
Runner on 1st Base	Field & **Toss/Throw** to 2nd, 3rd or 1st Base for the **Force-Out** *Note (2)*		Field & **Throw** to 2nd or 1st end Inning
Runners on 1st & 2nd			
Runners on 1st, 2nd, 3rd (Bases Full)	Field & **Toss/Throw** to Home or any Base *Note (3)*		
Runners on 1st & 3rd	Field, **LOOK** to Check Runners at 2nd & 3rd Base, **Toss/Throw** to 1st for the **Force-Out** *Note (4)*		Field & **Throw** to 1st Base to end Inning
Runner on 2nd			
Runner on 3rd			
Runners on 2nd & 3rd			

Notes:

(1) If an "**OUT**" cannot be made, hold the ball with Runner on Base & Give it to the Pitcher or **Toss** it to him after he has reached the Pitching Rubber

(2) Best Plays: **Throw** to **Force-Out** the lead Runners at 2nd or 3rd Bases

(3) **Force-Out** at any Base (or Home if Bases are Full)

(4) **LOOK** Runners back to 3rd or 2nd Base for a Run-Down opportunity before **Throwing** to 1st Base for the **Force-Out**

Special Note: (5) **In all cases when the Shortstop** makes the 1st or 2nd **OUT** in an inning at 2nd Base he should immediately **RUN** towards Home with ball in hand to prevent other runners from advancing and give or **Toss** the ball to the Pitcher at the Pitcher Plate

7   Left Fielder -   Fielding Plays on Ground Balls
Hit in Fair Territory *(Includes dropped Fly Balls)*

Left Fielder's Field Position on Teammate's Ground Ball Plays			
Ball Fielded By:	**0 Out**	**1 Out**	**2 Out**
Pitcher			
Catcher			
1st Baseman		**Back-Up 3rd Base**	
2nd Baseman			
3rd Baseman			
Shortstop		**Back-Up Shortstop**	
Centre Fielder (Left)		**Back-Up Centre Fielder**	
Centre Fielder (Right)		**Back-Up 3rd Base**	
Right Fielder			
Base Runner Situation	**Left Fielder's Ground Ball Fielding Plays**		
	0 Out	**1 Out**	**2 Out**
No Runners on Base	Field & **Throw** to "Cut-Off Man" or 2nd Base		
Runner on 1st Base	Field & **Throw** to "Cut-Off Man" or 3rd Base		
Runners on 1st & 2nd	On Short Ground Balls, **Field & Throw** to 3rd Base for **Force-Out** at 3rd, Otherwise, **Throw** to "Cut-Off Man" or to Home Plate (Note 1)		
Runners on 1st, 2nd, 3rd (Bases Full)			
Runners on 1st & 3rd	Field & **Throw** to "Cut-Off Man" or to 3rd Base		
Runner on 2nd	**Throw** to "Cut-Off Man" or to Home Plate		
Runner on 3rd			
Runners on 2nd & 3rd			

Notes: (1) On shallow Ground Balls, **LOOK and Throw** to 3rd Base if **Force-Out** is possible

8   Centre Fielder -   Fielding Plays on Ground Balls
Hit in Fair Territory *(Includes dropped Fly Balls)*

Centre Fielder's Field Position on Teammate's Ground Ball Plays			
Ball Fielded By:	**0 Out**	**1 Out**	**2 Out**
Pitcher	Back-Up 2nd Base		
Catcher			
1st Baseman			
2nd Baseman			
3rd Baseman			
Shortstop			
Left Fielder	Back-Up Left Fielder		
Right Fielder	Back-Up Right Fielder		

Base Runner Situation	Centre Fielder's Ground Ball Fielding Plays		
	0 Out	**1 Out**	**2 Out**
No Runners on Base	Field & **Throw** to "Cut-Off Man" or 2nd Base		
Runner on 1st Base	Field & **Throw** to "Cut-Off Man" or 3rd Base		
Runners on 1st & 2nd	On Shallow Ground Balls, Field & **Throw** to 2nd Base for **Force-Out** at 2nd, Otherwise, **Throw** to "Cut-Off Man" or to Home Plate *Note (1)*		
Runners on 1st, 2nd, 3rd (Bases Full)			
Runners on 1st & 3rd	Field & **Throw** to "Cut-Off Man" or to 3rd Base *Note (1)*		
Runner on 2nd	**Throw** to "Cut-Off Man" or to Home Plate		
Runner on 3rd			
Runners on 2nd & 3rd			

Notes: (1) On shallow Ground Balls, **LOOK and Throw** to 2nd Base if **Force-Out** is possible

9   Right Fielder -   Fielding Plays on Ground Balls
Hit in Fair Territory *(Includes dropped Fly Balls)*

Right Fielder's Field Position on Teammate's Ground Ball Plays			
Ball Fielded By:	**0 Out**	**1 Out**	**2 Out**
Pitcher	Back-Up 1st Base		
Catcher			
1st Baseman			
2nd Baseman	Back-Up 2nd Base		
3rd Baseman	Back-up 1st Base		
Shortstop			
Left Fielder	Back-Up 2nd Base		
Centre Fielder (Left)			
Centre Fielder (Right)	Back-up Centre Fielder		

Base Runner Situation	**Right Fielder's Ground Ball Fielding Plays**		
	0 Out	**1 Out**	**2 Out**
No Runners on Base	On Short Ground Balls, Field & **Throw** to 1st Base for **Force-Out** at 1st, Otherwise, **Throw** to "Cut-Off Man" or 2nd Base *(Note 1)*		
Runner on 1st Base			
Runners on 1st & 2nd	On Short Ground Balls, Field & **Throw** to 1st Base for **Force-Out** at 1st, Otherwise, **Throw** to "Cut-Off Man" or to Home Plate *(Note 1)*		
Runners on 1st, 2nd, 3rd (Bases Full)			
Runners on 1st & 3rd			
Runner on 2nd	**Throw** to "Cut-Off Man" or to Home Plate		
Runner on 3rd			
Runners on 2nd & 3rd			

Notes: (1) On shallow Ground Balls, **LOOK and Throw** to 1st Base if **Force-Out** is possible