

SOFTBALL STRENGTH & CONDITIONING



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Strength & Conditioning Program for Softball Coaches

All coaches know that practice alone cannot make their team strong enough to become a truly successful team, but many coaches do not know how to lead their teams in strengthening exercises that will increase strength in the crucial areas for their sports. This guide helps softball and softball coaches target the muscles most important for their sports-the arms, back, chest, and legs. With these exercises, your team will become physically stronger, more heart-healthy, and able to endure more intense practices and games.

The best part about this work-out routine is that it is complete, simple, and it does not require expensive gym machines or personal trainers. These exercises can be done in order, in isolation, or in any combination that you feel will best improve your team. If you feel that your team needs more of a challenge than what you see here, increase the number of repetitions or sets in each exercise. You can also have your athletes increase the resistance of the moves by having them hold inexpensive hand weights or ordinary household objects that have some weight, such as cans of vegetables.

As with all strengthening programs, if your athletes feel any pain, they should stop the exercise immediately. Pain is a sign of over-working a muscle or a tendon, so they should rest the muscle for at least several days before engaging in physical activity again. Also, athletes should go through a short warm-up and stretching period before starting strengthening activities. This will help wake up the muscles and get them ready to work. It will also loosen up the tendons and joints surrounding the muscles and help prevent injury. After each exercise, athletes should stretch the muscles used to reduce soreness and help relax the muscles after a work-out. All stretches should be held for 15-20 seconds to allow time for the body to sink into the stretch and for it to take effect.

With these easy tips and simple exercises, your athletes will see an improvement in power, endurance, and overall fitness. You will see faster movements, more powerful throws and swings, and decreased fatigue in your athletes. Try these moves and watch your team improve today!

Push-ups

Push-ups are a great way for coaches to help their athletes improve strength in pitching, throwing, and batting. All of these moves require tremendous upper body strength, and push-ups help with several large muscle groups-the back, chest, and arms. A comparable exercise in a weight room would be the bench press, because it also works the chest and arms, so if you have a chance to supplement your non-weight work-outs with drills in a weight room, you can focus on bench press as a way to get the same results as push-ups.

Push-ups are one of the easiest non-weight drills for a team to perform, but they are also one of the most important. There are three types of push-up drills outlined below for you to choose between. All will work the basic muscles used in push-ups, the pectorals, biceps, triceps, and dorsals, but in different ways. Using the same muscles in new ways is a great technique for increasing strength without spending a lot of time doing repetitions and adding weight.

As with all push-ups, coaches should ensure that athletes take their arms out far enough to the sides that when they lower themselves all the way down, the arms make a 90 degree angle. The ideal arm position is different for each athlete, so work with each to teach them their target position. Coaches should watch that during exercises, athletes do not let their lower backs drop down too far. This takes the weight off the arms and puts it on the legs, giving an improper workout to the arms. Athletes also often let their bottoms raise up, creating an arched look. This also engages the leg muscles and takes pressure off the arms. Both of these mistakes lower the productivity of the exercises. It is the coach's job to remind athletes to keep a good position during the push-ups.

Traditional push-ups are done with the athletes facing the ground, raised up on their toes and the palms of their hands. The weight should be centered over the body, not too far back on the feet nor too far forward on the hands. The body should be kept in one line, not letting the back push up or down. To keep this position, athletes must engage their abdominal muscles. A good number of repetitions is 10-15, depending on the strength of your team. They should do 3 sets of these repetitions to get a full work-out. Athletes should rest no more than 30 seconds between each set.

A different exercise for push-ups is called Across the Floor Push-Ups. To do this, athletes should get into the standard position. They lower their bodies like normal, but instead of just pushing back into the starting position, they should propel themselves off the floor and jump slightly to one side. This can be done to the right and to the left. Ideally, if the athlete is going across the floor to the right, the left hand will replace the right hand. Whichever way the athletes are going, that side will get a better work-out, so make sure that athletes do the activity to the left and to the right. This drill will take several attempts to master, because it takes rhythm and coordination of the hands and feet. It is also very difficult, so athletes should not be expected to do more than 10-15 on the right and 10-15 on the left the first few times. Coaches should only expect athletes to do one set of these repetitions.

The third push-up exercise is a short routine of arm exercises. It starts with 30 seconds held in the plank position. The plank position is done like a modified basic push-up. Athletes balance on their toes with their backs straight, like a push-up. Instead of normal push-up arms, athletes balance on their elbows. The point of this exercise is to work the arm and abdominal muscles by keeping the body straight and not allowing the back to arch up or dip down.

After 30 seconds of the plank, athletes should move into Up and Down Push-Ups. To do Up and Down Push-Ups, athletes should begin in the basic push-up position. They then sink down onto their elbows, one at a time. For example, to do this on the right, athletes should begin in the basic push-up position and lower their right elbow to the ground. This should be followed by the left elbow, so that the athlete is in the plank position. From the plank position, athletes push back up onto the right palm. This is followed by the left palm, so that the athlete is back in the basic push-up position. Athletes should do 10 of these, 5 on each side. As athletes get stronger, they should progress to doing 10 each on the left and right sides.

After the Up and Down Push-Ups, athletes should hold the plank for another 30 seconds. Then, they should do 10 regular push-ups. If you feel that your athletes need to increase tricep strength as well, after the second plank position, have athletes lay on their stomachs with their palms on the ground near their armpits. They should push up slightly, so that their bodies are in a straight line, but only a few inches off the floor. They should do tricep push-ups in this position. Make sure your athletes keep their bodies in a straight line and let their triceps do the work.

When athletes are finished with these drills, they should stretch out the muscles used. They should clasp their hands behind their backs and gently pull them away from the body to open up the chest and stretch the pectoral muscles. After this stretch, athletes should take one arm across the body and gently hold it with the other arm. This stretches the shoulder and the triceps. After one arm is done, have your athletes switch to the other arm. Finally, athletes can raise one arm overhead and bend it backward at the elbow. The other arm should come up and gently press down on the elbow, deepening the stretch of the triceps muscles. Each arm should be done individually, so that the stretch is as long and as good as it needs to be.

Abdominal Strength

Having strong abdominal muscles are essential to almost every move in almost every sport, so it is no surprise that it is also important to softball and softball. Having a strong core balances the body during a swing, helps a pitcher throw faster, and keeps a baseman on his/her feet when stretching out to catch a ball. Nearly every move involves the abdominal muscles. It is easy to keep them strong and in shape without using high-priced machinery.

There are several different abdominal work-outs. The moves listed below can be done in isolation or combined to create an ab routine. Regardless, the important things to remember with all abdominal

work-outs is that slow is better than fast, and that keeping the muscles tight throughout the entire work-out gets much better results than contracting and releasing.

As a coach, you must remind your athletes to keep their abdominals as flat as possible during drills. This means that during abdominal crunches, if their hands are behind their heads, they must keep their elbows out straight to the side and their heads facing the ceiling. This helps them keep their backs straight and avoid curling their abdominals. Instead of rolling their backs inward, they will keep the back straight and work on just lifting the shoulders off the ground.

The first abdominal exercise is the basic abdominal crunch. This is done with athletes lying on their backs with their legs bent to the point that their feet are flat on the ground. Their hands should be behind their heads with their elbows out straight. Their heads should be relaxed and flat. Athletes should use their abdominal muscles to lift their shoulders off the ground, pausing at the top to work the muscles just a little bit more. When athletes lower themselves back to the ground, they should keep the muscles engaged just a bit. This exercise works the upper abdominals, the ones just below the ribs.

To make this exercise more difficult, tell your athletes to curl their hips up while lying on the ground. This will make the space between the small of their backs and the ground disappear. This engages the lower abdominal muscles and makes the core work twice as hard. Athletes should perform 3 sets of no less than 15 repetitions, although there is no real set number of crunches. If you are combining regular crunches with other abdominal work-outs, you should limit your athletes to 2 sets of 15.

To work the lower abdominal muscles, teach your athletes to do reverse crunches. This is where your athletes lie on their backs with their hands behind their heads. They lift their legs in the air, bent at a 90 degree angle. The ankles can be crossed or uncrossed. Instead of lifting the shoulders off the ground, athletes lift their hips off the floor. As a coach, you need to watch that athletes' shoulders stay on the ground. Tell them that they need to use only their abdominal muscles instead of helping with their leg muscles. This move should be slow and controlled. It is easy to let it get out of control and turn the move into a swinging motion. This reduces the work put on the muscles and makes it more a movement of momentum instead of strength. Athletes should do 3 sets of 15 of these moves.

To get a true work-out of both the upper and lower abdominals, athletes should do a double crunch. This is done when athletes curl both their shoulders and their hips off the floor at the same time. Coaches should watch that athletes do not curl their backs in an effort to touch their elbows to their

knees. The movement should be controlled, stopping at the top to hold the muscles contracted for an extra moment. Again, athletes should do 3 sets of 15 of this move.

Another way to work the abdominal muscles is to concentrate on the obliques. These are the muscles on the side of the abdomen that aid in twisting and stretching motions. These are especially important for hitting, since the athletes make a twisting motion during the follow-through of a swing. Strengthening these muscles will help athletes make a more powerful swing and help them stay balanced during the follow-through.

To work the obliques, athletes should lie on the ground and tilt their knees to one side, so that their torso faces the sky but their knees face the side. Athletes should then do regular crunches. Instead of working the top of the muscles, like normal crunches, this works the oblique muscles. It is especially hard to keep the head and arms from curving inward on this exercise because it is much more difficult than traditional crunches, so coaches need to watch for athletes whose bodies droop down. This shortens the oblique muscle and gives it less of a chance to lengthen and contract.

The last abdominal exercise is called the bridge crunch. Athletes should begin with their legs in the normal crunch position. They should push up, so that their shoulders are on the ground but their hips and knees are in the air. From this position, athletes should attempt to lift their shoulders like a normal crunch. This is very hard to do, because the weight is down near the shoulders, so athletes should not be expected to do more than 1 set of 15.

These moves can be changed and modified as necessary or as desired to change the amount of work the muscles do. As a coach, you can put together different programs. Sample programs are outlined below (sets and repetitions are described as sets x repetitions):

1. basic crunches (2x15), reverse crunches (2x15), double crunches (2x15)
2. basic crunches in half time (taking 2 counts to raise up and 2 counts to lower) (3x15), reverse crunches in half time (3x15)
3. basic crunches (2x15), bridge crunches (1x15), basic crunches (2x15), reverse crunches (2x15)
4. reverse crunches (3x15), double crunches (3x15)
5. reverse crunches in half time (2x15), bridge crunches (2x15), obliques (2x15 on each side)
6. basic crunches (2x15), obliques (2x15 on each side), reverse crunches (2x15)

To stretch the abdominal muscles after a work-out, athletes should lie on their backs with their arms and legs outstretched. They should clasp their hands and pull upward, lengthening the body as

much as possible. This helps elongate the muscles and reduce future soreness. After this stretch, athletes should roll over to their backs and arch the back up, using the hands to support the body. This stretches the entire front of the stomach.

Running Drills

Because softball and softball players run short distances at very fast speeds, running drills are good practice for games. They build endurance and fast-twitch muscles, which allow athletes to burst off in a sprint. Before beginning running drills, coaches should lead their athletes in a warm-up and light stretching routine to make sure that they do not injure themselves by sprinting on cold muscles and ligaments. Coaches should have athletes stretch relevant muscles lightly for 6-10 seconds before running. Athletes should also wake up their joints and ligaments by rolling their ankles from side to side and flexing their feet and their knees.

Running drills are good for legs and for cardiovascular health. It pushes the heart to work hard, which improves endurance. This drill focuses on heart health, so your athletes will probably need another drill to increase leg strength. Such an exercise is listed below under Leaping Lunges.

There are two main running drills all coaches should lead their athletes in. The first is called Mountains. To do this drill, there need to be lines drawn on the ground, such as those on a basketball court, or landmarks outside for athletes to follow. These distances should be relatively regular in intervals, and there should be no more than 5 of them. Athletes should start at a designated starting point behind the first line. When you tell them to, athletes should sprint from the starting line to the first line. From the first line they should sprint back to the starting line. Now that athletes are back at the starting line, they should sprint to the second line, touch it, and sprint back to the start. They should continue these movements, sprinting to the next line each time. Basically, athletes run from start to line 1, back to start, to line 2, back to start, to line 3, back to start, and so on. This drill should be done without stopping, so that athletes work their muscles and do not give themselves a chance to recover between each “mountain.”

Mountains should be run a maximum of two times, with rest time in between. This is a fairly tiring drill, so you may want to wait until the end of a normal practice to lead your athletes in this. If you choose to do it at the beginning of a practice, avoid too many other running drills to avoid fatigue. As a coach, watch that your athletes do not lose their form as they progress through the mountains. It is common for athletes to begin to hunch over, use their arms too much, and slow significantly during the last 2 mountains. Encourage them to maintain their form and posture, even if they run slower. A good drill for Mountains is to have athletes run the bases as mountains, starting at home

and progressing through the bases. Because this is a much longer distance than normal Mountain drills would be, do not expect your athletes to be able to do more than one set of these Mountains.

The second important running drill is simple sprints. Athletes should start at a designated point and run as fast as they can to another designated point. Coaches should watch the way athletes begin the sprint, making sure they keep their backs straight and their bodies compact, instead of letting their arms fly out to the side and letting their posture get low to the ground. Athletes should be able to do 10 short sprints with 30 seconds in between. A good length for the sprints is the distance between the bases. Have athletes practice sprinting between the bases.

Because these sprinting drills are quick but intense, your athletes are going to need your encouragement more than anything during these drills. You need to time them and keep track of their improvement, pushing them to increase their speed and the power in their starts. Encourage your athletes to push through to the end of the sprint. It is customary for athletes to slow near the end of the sprint, especially when they know where the end line is. Train your athletes to keep up their power until after they cross the line. Those extra tenths of seconds can be the difference between wins and losses in an actual competition.

To stretch out the muscles after running, athletes should put their legs together and hang down, reaching their fingers to their toes. This stretches the back of the legs. After this stretch, they should stretch the quadriceps by bending one leg behind them at the knee and grabbing the foot with the hand, gently pulling the foot as close to the buttocks as possible.

Leaping Lunges

For softball and softball players to jump high enough to catch flying balls and run fast enough to beat a baseman, they need strong leg muscles. While the running drills will help with this, drills based just on leg strength are also important. This drill does that, placing an emphasis on the quadriceps and the glutes.

To do Leaping Lunges, athletes should start with their legs apart, farther than shoulder width. They should bend their knees until their legs make a 90 degree angle, with their knees over their feet. Their arms should be clasped behind their backs. From the lunged position, athletes should push into the air, jumping until their legs are straight. They land back in the lunged position.

Coaches should tell athletes to focus on doing the move safely for their knees and feet. When they land, they need to roll through the foot, starting at the ball of the foot. From the ball of the foot,

athletes should press down through the foot, ending with the heel on the ground. This prevents damage to the foot, since there is not so much pressure put on the foot joint.

Coaches also need to inform athletes of the importance of keeping their knees over their feet. If an athlete lets their knees bend too far over the feet, so that their knees extend over the ankles, they risk injuring their knees. Also, if athletes keep their knees from overextending, they will use their gluteal muscles and not just their quadriceps muscles.

A variation on the Leaping Lunges is when the athletes bring their legs together in the air. During the jump up, athletes can touch their legs together for an added little work-out, before opening them back up for the landing. If this is not enough of an exercise, athletes can bring the legs together, cross them, and open them back up. All of these moves add extra elements that push the legs to work harder. When athletes bring their legs together, it uses the muscles in the inner thighs, helping stabilize the athlete in other aspects of the sport, especially running.

As a coach, you need to remind your players to always keep their backs straight and upright. They are two different things, both of which negate the benefits of the exercise. Athletes must not collapse when they land, because much of the benefit of the exercise comes in stabilizing the body during the landing. As for repetitions, athletes can be expected to do 3 sets of 10 lunges. To increase the resistance of the Leaping Lunges, athletes can hold aluminum cans of food in their hands or dumbbells. They can also put on ankle weights if they have them instead of putting weights on the hands.

To stretch the muscles used in Leaping Lunges, athletes should do the same stretches as they do for running drills, including the hanging stretch and the quadriceps stretch.

Walking Lunges

Walking Lunges work several of the same muscles as Leaping Lunges, but different ones as well. Walking Lunges work the quadriceps, hamstrings, gluteals, calves, and inner thighs; basically, Walking Lunges work the entire leg. This is a great exercise to target the entire leg in a short time. If done right, these lunges will produce quick results in strengthening and toning the entire leg.

To do Walking Lunges, athletes should begin by standing with their feet together. They take one leg forward and step on it, sinking into a lunge position. This should be a forward lunge, with the body facing the front leg. Legs should both be in a 90 degree angle position. It is the coach's responsibility to remind athletes to never let their knees extend over their ankles during the exercise.

Once the athlete has lowered himself/herself into the lunge position, he/she should push up with the back leg and return to a standing position. The back leg should come forward to meet the front leg. This motion uses the hamstring, calf, and glute muscles, while the initial step into the lunge uses the quadriceps. Both motions use the inner thighs to maintain balance and keep the athlete from falling to one side. During the entire exercise, athletes should keep their hands on their waists or down to their sides.

After the back leg comes forward to meet the front leg, the athlete should take that same leg and lunge it forward. Basically, this means that the athlete alternates which leg steps forward. This exercise can be done in 3 sets of 10. If you feel that your athletes need a bigger work-out from this exercise, have them hold weights in their hands when they lunge. Even a few pounds will make a big difference in the work that the legs perform.

During this exercise, coaches need to ensure that their athletes keep their backs upright the entire time. It is easy to let the back hinge forward, so that more weight is over the front leg, but if athletes keep their backs straight, they will keep their weight even over the front and back legs. This gives an even work-out to all the muscles, instead of favoring one leg over the other.

To stretch the muscles used in Walking Lunges, use the same stretches as used in the Leaping Lunges and the running drills. In addition, athletes should stretch the calf muscles by flexing one foot up to the sky and placing it against a wall or some other vertical surface. This elongates the calf muscle and helps relax it after a work-out. Also, athletes should spread their legs farther than shoulder-width and reach downward, attempting to touch the ground with their hands. This stretches the hamstring muscles. They can also lean to one side or the other, stretching one leg at a time before hanging in the middle position.

Lower Back Exercises

There are several lower back exercises that strengthen the back and help softball and softball players in their throwing and hitting. The lower back is important to exercise because it balances the core abdominal muscles, which often are stronger than the lower back muscles. It is the coach's responsibility to remind athletes of the importance of maintaining a balance between the back and the abdominals. If there is a vast difference in strength, athletes can easily injure the lower back, because there is such an extreme difference between the two muscle groups.

The first lower back exercise is the Swim. To do this exercise, athletes should lie on the ground on their stomachs, with their arms and legs outstretched. Their heads should be straight or looking forward. Athletes should move their legs and arms in opposition, so that when the left arm is up, the right leg is up. This will help balance the athletes and make the exercise seem less awkward. The point of this move is to tighten the muscles in the lower back when the leg and arm are raised, so remind athletes to contract those muscles during the moves. Athletes can do 1 45 second set or 2 30 second sets with a short break in between.

The second move is the lower back raise. This move is done by lying on the stomach with the palms flat on the ground near the armpits. Athletes should begin by rolling their shoulders back. This is the most important part of this move, because it engages the back muscles from the beginning of the exercise all the way through. After the shoulders are rolled back, athletes should use the lower back muscles to lift the shoulders and chest off the floor. They should pause at the top, tightening the muscles more than before to reach the highest point possible. Athletes should then lower themselves back down to the starting point and repeat the move. Athletes can do 3 sets of 15 and work up to more repetitions each time, or they can do 1 set of 45 seconds.

The lower back raise can be modified in several ways. Instead of having the hands on the ground next to the body, athletes can clasp them behind the back, near the waist. They can also hold them out to the side, or put them behind their head, such as the position usually used during a sit-up. Finally, athletes can put the hands out straight in front of them. These positions vary in difficulty, starting with behind the back as easiest and in front of the body as hardest. Coaches can have players rotate through these motions, doing 15 in each position and not stopping between positions.

Another lower back exercise is similar to the lower back raise, but it involves raising the legs as well. At the same time, athletes should engage the lower back muscles to lift the shoulders and the legs off the ground. Athletes should stay in this balanced position on their stomachs for 5 second intervals before lowering the shoulders and the legs back down to the ground. Athletes should do 10 sets of these 5 second intervals. During this exercise, the arms can either be kept behind the back of the athlete or out in front for added difficulty.

The final back exercise begins the same way the lower back raise begins, with the athlete on the stomach with the palms flat on the floor near the armpits. Athletes should again roll the shoulders back to engage the lower muscles and should raise the shoulders and chest off the floor. Instead of raising and lowering the body, however, this exercise focuses on a long contraction of the muscle. Athletes should hold this position as long as possible, usually around 10 seconds. Athletes should do no more than 3 sets of these 10 second intervals. Although athletes may not think they have given themselves a sufficient work-out, they will certainly feel the effects the next day!

The lower back exercises should always be done by isolating the muscles in the back and not pushing off with the palms of the hands to help the shoulders leave the ground. Coaches should encourage athletes to let their back do the work instead of the hands, even though it is tempting. Coaches should also check to see that athletes tighten the muscles in the front of the thighs, so that their knees do not touch the ground. This makes it slightly harder to balance, which puts more work on the back muscles and increases strength faster.

To stretch the lower back, athletes should kneel on the ground, sitting back on their knees. They should lean forward and stretch their arms out in front, so that their foreheads are almost touching the ground. They can lean backward to try to stretch the back more. Also, athletes can walk their hands to the right and to the left to stretch each side individually. When athletes do this, they should lean their body away from their hands to deepen the stretch. For example, if an athlete's arms are leaning to the right, their weight should be pushed over to the left to help stretch the left side of the back.

Conclusion

Even though your team is fit mentally and physically, there is always room for improvement. With these drills, you will find a stronger, more capable team waiting for you at every practice. Your athletes will feel improved control over their motions if they work on the lower back and abdominal exercises, because control and balance comes almost entirely from a strong core. They will also see benefits in everyday life, from improved posture to more alertness in school to increased self esteem.

Remember, as a coach it is your job to watch the technique of your team and to know when to increase the difficulty of your team's work-out. Help them exercise safely by warming up and stretching before and after each work-out. Keep working, keep encouraging, and good luck!

Recommended Resources

The Coaching Essentials:

Softball Drills & Practice Plans - Would you like to have 25 pre-designed practice plans at your fingertips? My ebook, "Softball Drills & Practice Plans" is jam packed with over 50 unique, fun and effective softball drills. The drills are fully organized into clipboard-ready practice plans... so you can prepare for practice in just 5 short minutes. Includes softball tryout plans and my own "Team Selection Matrix". Perfect for the beginner coach looking to get organized, or for the experienced coach looking for fun, innovative ways to teach fundamental softball skills. (\$34.68)

For more information visit:

<http://www.softballspot.com>

Softball Blueprint - Designing your own animated plays and drills can be as easy as 1-2-3. Softball Blueprint software allows you to create stunningly effective animated drills and plays and share them with your team in 3 super easy steps. (from \$49.95)

For more information visit:

<http://www.softballblueprint.com>

Online Clinics:

Underground Hitting Secrets Clinic - Every book, magazine article, and instructional video is just dead wrong about hitting- this clinic reveals 7 simple secrets that will improve your players' skills forever. The focus is on hitting mechanics... the specific "underground" secrets of stance, spine angle, head tilt, hand position and swing path that nobody seems to get right... and nobody ever teaches. Discover the 6 biggest mistakes hitters make and find out how to quickly correct even the most difficult-to-cure bad habits. (\$49.95)

For more information visit:

<http://www.coachkennybuford.com/ar/hitting.html>

Signs and Signals Clinic - Discover the secrets to a mega-effective on-field communication system that will give your team a massive mental edge on the competition. Find out how to make use of verbal, touch, and descriptive hand signals that are simple enough for your team to memorize and recall easily, yet deceptive enough to prevent other teams from "cracking your code". (\$29.95)

For more information visit:

<http://www.coachkennybuford.com/signs/fullstory.html>

Must-Have DVD Packages:

Sue Enquist's Hitting Bootcamp - Discover Sue Enquist's softball coaching secrets that will boost your hitting game to the next level FAST...World's most natural Softball Hitting System will have your players crushing the ball with lightning quick bat speed and titanic power - without even trying! You'll see how she kept her UCLA team on top of the rankings year in and year out. (\$239.99 + S/H)

For more information visit:

<http://www.softballspot.com/sp/hittingbootcamp.html>

Pitching Mastery Program (Featuring Dee Dee Weiman and Sue Enquist) - Discover the best kept coaching secrets behind softballs greatest pitchers. NCAA pitching guru and former All-American Dee Dee Weiman pulls back the curtain on her stunningly effective system for coaching softball pitchers. This is a complete system for coaching your pitchers, including mechanics, drills, mental training and more. (\$159.99 + S/H)

For more information visit:

<http://www.softballspot.com/sp/pitchingmastery.html>

Slap Hitting Mastery (Featuring Darren Mueller, North Dakota State University Head Softball Coach) - Slap Hitting Mastery presents a detailed overview of how to effectively put the ball in play and exert maximum pressure on the defense using slap hitting techniques. All key factors involved in sound slap hitting are covered including footwork, developmental drills, drag bunting, and more (designed for coaches working with beginning and experienced slap hitters). (\$39.99 +S/H)

For more information visit:

<http://www.softballspot.com/sp/slaphitting.html>

Softball Coaching Aids:

Solo Hitting Machine - This is the world's first "Self Contained" hitting machine that allows your batter to swing full speed at a moving target (just like real batting practice)...then get instant feedback on swing accuracy and power. You're batters will get a massive number of swing reps in only 5 minutes. Can be set up inside or outside. (\$249 + S/H)

For more information visit:

<http://www.coachkennybuford.com/ar/solohitting.html>

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