# Catching On The “Z” Run

# Player runs in a “Z” motion. Player runs away from coach to catch an over the shoulder ball. Player drops ball and runs diagonally towards the coach to catch a fly ball on the fore hand. Player drops ball. Player runs diagonally the opposite way to catch a fly ball on the backhand from second coach.

# [Fastpitch Softball Drills – Backhand Drill](http://softballperformance.com/softball-drills/fastpitch-softball-drills-backhand-drill/)

Purpose: To develop the ability to catch a ground ball backhanded. This is a good defensive tool for midfielders. Read this for more [softball fielding tips](http://www.softballperformance.com/softball-fielding/developing-a-middle-infielder.html) for midfielders

Procedure: You will need a [bucket of softballs](http://softballperformance.com/softball-drills/category/fielding/page/2/) and gloves. Separate the team into two groups and send them to different parts of the field. One coach assists each group.

Players in each group line up behind one another. The coach stands approximately 15 feet in front of the players and throws a ground ball to the backhand side of the first player in line. A backhand catch is one in which a player crosses the body with the glove hand to catch the ball, either in the air or on the ground. The fielder starts in the ready position then runs in the direction of the thrown bail, keeping the glove open. After making the catch, the player throws the ball back to the coach then goes to the end of the other coach's line. Each player in line takes a turn making a backhand catch.

# [Fastpitch Softball Drills – Lead Drill](http://softballperformance.com/softball-drills/fastpitch-softball-drills-lead-drill/)

Purpose: To develop the ability to catch while onthe run. This is very helpful for outfielders. Here are other [Softball Fielding tips](http://www.softballperformance.com/softball-fielding/fielding-tips-for-outfielders.html) to remember in the outfield.

Procedure: Prepare a bucket of softballs, gloves, an empty bucket. The players line up in a single-file line. The coach, with a bucket of softballs, stands beside the first player. On the "go" command, the player runs away from the coach, looking over his shoulder at the coach. At the opportune time, the coach throws a softball, "leading" the runner with the throw like a quarterback leading a receiver. The player should not have to break stride to catch the ball. The player catches the ball, drops the ball in the bucket, and returns to the end of the line.

# [Face-To-Face Softball Drill](http://softballperformance.com/softball-drills/face-to-face-softball-drill/)

Purpose: To develop the basic mechanics for [softball fielding](http://www.softballperformance.com/softball-drills/category/fielding/) a ground ball and following it with an accurate throw.

Procedure:  
Equipments: One [softball](http://www.softballperformance.com/softball-drills), gloves, time 2 to 4 minutes. Divide the team into two groups. Line up each group in single-file lines 20 to 30 feet apart, facing each other. The first person in one line throws a grounder to the first person In the other line .After throwing the grounder, the player goes to the end of the line.The person who catches the ball throws a grounder back to the first person in the other line.

# [Softball Drills – Hop-Step Throw](http://softballperformance.com/softball-drills/softball-drills-hop-step-throw/)

Purpose: To improve the one hop-step throw for [softball fielding](http://www.softballperformance.com/softball-fielding/fielding-tips-for-outfielders.html).

Procedure: The outfielders are divided into partners, who are 100 feet apart. The partners move at the same to field an imaginary ball that's hit in front of them. After they field the ball, they do the one hop-step throw making sure to use a complete follow-through. Then the partners will exchange places, and the drill continues for as long as desired.

# [Softball Practice Drills – Forehand Flips](http://softballperformance.com/softball-drills/softball-practice-drills-forehand-flips/)

Purpose: To teach the flip used as a throw by the [infield](http://www.softballperformance.com/softball-fielding/developing-a-middle-infielder.html) when players are within close range of the target from the forehand side. Using this technique can cut down on overthrows. The forehand flip is mostly used by the shortstop when shoveling the ball to second base when within short range of second but not close enough to take the bag herself (farther than 5 feet away), and by the second baseman when shoveling the ball to first after fielding the ball in the gap.

# [Defensive Softball Drills – Fielding Bad Throws](http://softballperformance.com/softball-drills/defensive-softball-drills-fielding-bad-throws/)

Purpose: To develop skills for the [infield](http://www.softballperformance.com/softball-fielding/how-to-play-first-base.html) to catch bad throws at any time.

Procedure: A tosser sets up with a bucket of balls 10-15 feet away from a player at the base, and the fielder positions herself at the base with her body and feet facing the tosser , as if she was ready to make a force out. This drill can also be practiced with infielders at their respective bases with multiple throwing partners. The tosser throws balls that either hit the dirt or are wide to one side of the the bag. As the ball is thrown, the fielder shuffles her feet to catch the ball in the center of her body. Rotate players through 10 times each, allowing them to successfully field 8-10 bad throws.

[Drills to Catch a Softball – Explode Through the Ball](http://softballperformance.com/softball-drills/drills-to-catch-a-softball-explode-through-the-ball/)

Purpose: A drill for [fastpitch softball defense](http://www.softballperformance.com/softball-fielding/how-to-play-first-base.html) that lets them practice reaching and running through every ball.

Procedure: Fielders form a line about 10 feet from the tosser. One at a time they run laterally as the tosser tosses the ball low and in front of them so that they have to reach. Each player focuses on exploding through the ball as she catches it. The fielder must not stop and reach because doing so would limit her range. Each player returns the ball with a toss, waits, and forms a line that reverses the direction.

# Softball Throwing Drills – One-Knee Throwing

Purpose: To teach proper overhand [softball throwing mechanics](http://www.discussfastpitch.com/coaching-softball/520-throwing-mechanics-correct-hand-position.html) and to strengthen the arm.

Procedure: Form two lines of players directly across from each other, around 10 feet apart. The players should be down on one knee, with the glove-side knee up. The player with the ball grips the ball, and starts by bringing the ball down, brushing her thumb across her outer midthigh. At the same time, she points her glove hand toward the target while opening her shoulders. When she brings the ball up behind the body the thrower extends the throwing arm in a line that connects the glove hand (which is extended toward the target), the opened shoulders, and the ball in the throwing hand. Once the ball is behind the body in the straight line described above, the player cocks her wrist and points the ball in the opposite direction of where she is throwing. If the player turns her head to look at her throwing hand she should see the back of her hand. Then the player will bring her arm forward, leading with the elbow. After she releases the ball the player should follow through so that her wrist relaxes after snapping the ball and her arm falls to the opposite hip. Players throw for 2-3 minutes.

# [Fun Softball Drills – Steal The Bacon](http://softballperformance.com/softball-drills/fun-softball-drills-steal-the-bacon/)

Purpose: To Develop ball-handling skills and practice tagging runners. Several s[oftball coaching tips](http://www.softballperformance.com/coaching-softball/how-to-avoid-boredom.html) suggest to incorporate fun during training.

Procedure: This drill will need one baseball and gloves for each player. Divide the team into two groups, line them up across from each other, and number the players in each group from one to six. The coach puts a ball between the lines and yells out a number. Both players with this number run toward the ball and try to grab it, or steal the bacon. When one of the players picks up the ball, the other tries to tag him with the glove. The player who picks up the ball tries to run back to the line without getting tagged. Award one team a point if its player gets back to the line without being tagged. Award the other team a point if its player makes the tag before the runner reaches the line. Players can also run with the ball in their bare hands when trying to make a tag.

# [Fastpitch softball drills – Calling Time Out](http://softballperformance.com/softball-drills/fastpitch-softball-drillscalling-time-out/)

Purpose: To learn the proper way to call time-out during a game.

Procedure: Each player stands in the batter's box with a catcher. The coach is the umpire. Before the pitcher throws the ball, the player must call timeout. After everyone completes this half if the drill, the players move to second base. One at a timer they run and slide at third base. The placer calls time-cut after sliding. This drill is more important than you might think. Many young players are used to their backyard games and think that since they call time-out it is automatically given to them.Players must learn that when they are on the base they must ask for time from the umpire. They should not move until the umpire grants it.This [fastpitch softball drill](http://www.softballperformance.com/softball-coaching-who-should-call-pitches/) works best with a real umpire in uniform if you can find one willing to participate.  
The umpire should occasionally rot grant the players a time-out. See how they react.

# [Softball Infield drills -Team Infield Drills](http://softballperformance.com/softball-drills/softball-infield-drills-team-infield-drills/)

Purpose: Learn a series of fundamental drills to practice over and over. These [softball fielding tips](http://www.softballperformance.com/softball-fielding/developing-a-middle-infielder.html) must be done over to develop a habit.

Procedure: You will need the following equipment tennis balls and gloves, regulation balls for older players. Explain and demonstrate each of the disciplines. Work in groups of two. Start off bare-handed. Then add in gloves and infielder paddles if applicable. Include the following:

1. Glove Work: Roll balk to each other in the crouched stance with an open glove.

2. Grounders Straight On: Same as above except start standing up.

3. Circle: Same as above except circle balls to the left and right.

4. Forehand: Charge to the glove side, field the ball, and swing the back leg over (as if facing first base).

# [Softball Infield Drills – Bounder Drill](http://softballperformance.com/softball-drills/softball-infield-drills-bounder-drill/)

Softball Infield Drills – Bounder Drill

Purpose: To improve the infielder's ability to catch a softball that is hit hard into the ground and is bouncing slowly toward him. It is important to have fielders practice fielding ground balls, this is a good <a her="<http://www.softballperformance.com/softball-fielding/developing-a-middle-infielder.html>"> softball fielding tips</a> for beginners

Procedure: Have a crate of softball, a fungo bat, glove. The infielders assume their positions and ready themselves for play. The feeder uses a fungo bat to hit a slow, choppy ground ball toward a specific infielder. The fielding player should round his path to the ball so that his momentum is toward the direction in which he is throwing. The right-tranced fielder should field the ball on the left of his midline. After fielding the ball, the player should take an additional step with his right foot and simulate a throw to first base. When fielding a ball hit to the left of his midline, the right-handed player should make sure that the ball is fielded just outside his left foot. When using his barehanded to field the ball, the player should make sure that the ball is fielded just outside his right foot and throw on the run.

This drill may be initiated with the feeder throwing the ball to the infielder. The infielder should attempt to field all bounders with his glove-hand, unless the situation demands extraordinary speed in securing the ball and delivering it

to the specified base.

Purpose: To improve the infielder's ability to catch a softball that is hit hard into the ground and is bouncing slowly toward him. It is important to have fielders practice fielding ground balls, this is a good [softball fielding tips](http://www.softballperformance.com/softball-fielding/developing-a-middle-infielder.html) for beginners

# [Free Softball Drills – Diving Drill](http://softballperformance.com/softball-drills/free-softball-drills-diving-drill/)

Purpose: To develop confidence and comfort when diving for balls. It is important that the [outfield](http://www.softballperformance.com/softball-fielding/outfield-last-line-of-defense.html) practice on this more.

Procedure: The first player in line starts on her knees. The [coach](http://softballperformance.com/softball-drills/page/3/) will bounce the ball slightly to her. She will dive to stop or catch the ball, and try to get to her feet and throw the ball back to the coach. After four or five attempts, the next player takes a turn. Once each player is done catching to her left (glove side), switch it up and throw to the other side.

Players will only get comfortable when they try an activity. By making them dive in a controlled environment, they are more apt and ready for such a play during the game. Getting started on the drill will help eliminate the fear of injury. Teach feet to get to the throwing position.

# [Youth Softball Drills – Home-Run Derby](http://softballperformance.com/softball-drills/youth-softball-drills-home-run-derby/)

Purpose: To end practice on a high note and have fun during [softball hitting](http://www.softballperformance.com/softball-hitting/keys-to-power-hitting.html) drills.

Procedure: This drill will need four bases, a [bucket of softballs](http://softballperformance.com/softball-drills/page/4/), a fence or some cones. Place three bases (or four depending on the age of the participants) five to eight feet apart from one another in a straight line toward second base. Each base represents home plate. Older players use the base farthest from second as home plate, while younger hitters stand at the base closest to second. Players scatter around the field to field the balls. The coach pitches a predetermined number of balls for shallow center field. If a player hits the ball over the fence, it is a home. The batter gets an extra swing for every home run. If there is no fence, set up a boundary with cones.

[**Softball Practice Drills – Ground Ball Drill**](http://www.softball-spot.com/softball-practice-drills-ground-ball-drill/895/)

I have several favorite softball practice drills. This drill works well for us getting the girls warmed up and loose.  I call it the Ground Ball drill.

**Ground Ball Drill:**  
Girl is at First, Girl at Home, Remaining girls line up at third base.  
Coach hits a ground ball to the first girl at third base.  She fields the ball, throws to first.  First throws home.  Each girl follows her throw.  In other words, the third baseman fields the ground ball, throws to first, and goes to first to receive the throw from the next girl.  The girl at first goes home when she throws home.

Two rounds at third base, then the girls move to shortstop.  Same thing – two rounds, then move to second.  Two rounds of ground balls at second, throwing to first, first throwing home.  
Next, girls go to shortstop, a girl is at second base, and a girl at first and home.  
Coach hits ball to short, she feeds ball to second (for double play), second throws to first and first throws home.  Two rounds of this with girls following their throw to cover the next base.

When this is completed, the line moves to second and the coach hits the ball to second, girls feeding ball to shortstop to first (double play starting at second).  Then put the line of girls at second, one at first and one home.  Ground balls are hit between first and third working on communication between the first baseman and the second baseman.

The girls continue by following their throw.  After a couple of rounds to each girl, we finish with the line of girls at first receiving ground balls, throwing home and following their throw home.

We do this softball drill for about 15 – 20 minutes warming the girls up on grounders, throwing accurately, and hustling.

[**Softball Fielding Drills – Confidence Builder**](http://www.softball-spot.com/softball-fielding-drills-confidence-builder/725/)

I am involved with two softball teams at the 8U and 10U levels. I have found that the confidence in the glove work at this age is hard to get the girls to achieve so I came up with these softball fielding drills by accident.

We practice with a tennis ball so the comfort level is higher. They know that if they get hit with the ball it is not going to hurt too badly.

I have the players begin with their mitts under their noses out in front of them. I get them to do this because most of the time they are putting their gloves up above the shoulder that is the glove hand.  Be sure that they are able to look over the top of their gloves to see the ball.

I do all of the throwing so I can control the location and speed of the balls. You must emphasize that you need to see the ball and reach out a little bit to receive it.

Be sure the players aren’t snapping at the ball as this will create other problems, the biggest one being they will move their glove and often times will not catch the ball. This softball drill has helped both of my teams.

[**Softball Hitting Drills – Pitching Machine Drill**](http://www.softball-spot.com/softball-hitting-drills-pitching-machine-drill/868/)

We were having troubles with our girls “loading-up”, “going-negative”, etc. at the plate.  We put them on the pitching machine every day trying to get them to work on their per-swing timing.  These softball hitting drills really improved the girls “load-up” during their pre-hit which in turn greatly improved their contact percentages.

Here is the drill we came up with:  
When using a pitching machine during practice (indoor or outdoor) have the person loading the balls make a “ptiching arm swing” timed with the release of the softball into the machine.  The speed of the arm swing is not that important.  It’s more important to get the release of the ball into the machine correct.  
Here is another qick tip.  If your pitching machine is adjustable leave the head a little (just a very little) loose.  This will allow a little wiggle in the head and in turn send pitches to the batter more like a live pitcher. This does require more effort from the person loading the balls.  They have to watch the pitches and regularly adjust the aim to keep them in, or near, the strike zone. Combining these to tips really helped us out this year both in giving the batters realistic batting practice.

[**Softball Practice Drills – Square Up and Throw**](http://www.softball-spot.com/softball-practice-drills-square-up-and-throw/688/)

Here is one of our favorite softball practice drills I call “square up and throw”.  This softball drill will work your team AND the coaches!!

Have your softball team split up evenly and have the assistant softball coach take half the team.  
Have each half line up in single file about 30 yards in front of you.  
Have one player step about 10 yard in front of the others.  
The coaches will either roll a ground ball, throw a line drive or a pop up.

As the player fields the softball the coaches run to a different spot so that the player has to field the ball and square up to the coach, having to judge the distance to make a good throw.  The coach can run all around the player and even make the player have to adjust their throw by going further back or closer to the player.

Then just repeat the process for the rest of the team!!  It’s a great drill and is a lot of fun!!

[**Softball Throwing Drills – Stick It**](http://www.softball-spot.com/softball-throwing-drills-stick-it/684/)

One of my team’s favorite softball throwing drills is called “Stick It”.  We do it at the beginning of softball practice after we have warmed up and thrown. It is best to only do it once or twice a week because it can be taxing on the arm, but you’ll find your girls begging to do it everyday.

Whoever each girl threw with in warm ups is their partner for “Stick It”.  
The object of this is to make accurate, catchable throws.  
The balls start on one side, and all partner teams throw at the same time.  The softball must be thrown and caught by each partner.

The catch is, when you catch the ball, you have to have one foot stuck to the ground at all times.  The person catching can choose which foot. So, you can’t jump to catch the ball or move the foot that is stuck. If you do, your team is out.  After throws are made, one side of the girls moves back and you throw again.  That same side continues to move back until someone wins.

When throwing, you can move both feet, crow hop, etc, do whatever you need to do to make an accurate throw, but the receiver may not move that one foot when catching the ball.  If they don’t catch the ball, but it lands close enough for them to reach for it without moving that foot, we count that.  This softball drill makes for some funny times!

[**Basic Softball Drills–Throwing to Targets**](http://www.softball-spot.com/basic-softball-drills-throwing-to-targets/659/) **(pitchers)**

My softball drill is for tee-ball and is a simple but effective one. It is one of our players favorite basic softball drills and they ask for it frequently.

Take an old piece of carpet (or like a padded moving blanket) – 18″ x 36″.  
Punch two holes in the top two corners of the carpet and attach two clips.  
in the middle of the piece of carpet draw a target or a picture of a hand or glove  
(this would depend on if you are artistically inclined.)

Attach the carpet to a fence and predetermine a distance that the kids should throw from and give them a bucket of softballs (8-12 or so) and have them throw and hit the target as many times as possible.

This helps create accuracy. The softball coach can observe and instruct any changes to be made to technique and form.

[**Softball Practice Drills – The Bucket Drill**](http://www.softball-spot.com/softball-practice-drills-the-bucket-drill/611/)

These are great softball practice drills for keeping the competitive juices going and working on fielding and throwing accuracy. Obviously we call this the “Bucket Drill”.  Our girls love this softball drill and don’t want to stop!

Split the team into to equal groups with one group lined up at short stop and the other group at 2nd.  Stack two buckets one on top of the other on home plate.

Coach will start the competition on the left side hitting ground balls to each of the players one at a time.  The player then makes a throw home trying to hit the bucket.  The player gets 3 points for knocking the top bucket off, 2 points for hitting either bucket in the air, and one point for hitting either bucket on a bounce.

Go through all of the players at short stop and total points.  Follow the same for the players at second base.  Now players switch positions and continue the softball drill.

We usually say the first team to 15 points wins depending upon the time you want to spend on this drill.  As players develop throwing accuracy it actually goes pretty quick.

This softball throwing drill encourages the girls to charge the ball (shorter throw to home) and they figure that out pretty quick!  As they develop in their skills, we incorporate good fielding by subtracting 1 point for not fielding the ball properly.

[**Drills for Girls Softball – Competition Drill**](http://www.softball-spot.com/drills-for-girls-softball-competition-drill/605/)

Try these drills for girls softball to get your team ready for the season.  This one is a softball drill that my girls ask for repeatedly and is quite competitive!

Divide your group into 3 even teams.  
One group at home plate, one group between 1st base and the right field pole and the third group between 3rd base and the left field pole.

The softball coach picks up a ball and hits it to the outfield. That signals the girl at home plate to start running the bases while the first two girls in the outfield take off to pick up the softball that has been hit by the coach.

The first girl who reaches the ball picks it up so the other girls can touch the ball. (You can not move if you get the ball first.)  As soon as both girls have touched the ball, the girl on the bases gets a point for every base that she touches.

Competitive and if you have more softball coaches, they can pick a team to hit to as well.

[**Fun Softball Drills –Find the Ball**](http://www.softball-spot.com/fun-softball-drills-two-handed-catch-find-the-ball/1048/)

I feel it is important to keep our softball practices fun to maintain interest and motivation.  Here are two fun softball drills that my players love, and equally important–learn from!

**Find the Ball**  
This drill is to work on passed balls with a runner on 3rd base.

I have a catcher and pitcher and I place a ball somewhere against the back stop.

I yell “go” and the catcher has to find the ball and toss it to the pitcher who has to cover the plate.

We use live runners or we will find out how long it typically takes our runner to go third to home and practice sliding

I then count out those seconds to see if the pitcher gets the tag in front of the plate before that time limit.