

Softball Positions

The diagram below shows you the different positions involved in fast pitch softball.

Let's look at the common characteristics of each position.

First Base (1B)

The first base position is one of the busiest defensive positions in softball. Thus, it involves more than being able to catch and hold a thrown ball. Either in a direct or assisting role, the first baseman is involved with almost every play. They must know when and how to throw the ball, how to back-up throws to home plate, how to take a relay from the outfield, when to hold the runner on first base, and so on.

Qualities Include:

- Good glove and quick hands
- Quick feet
- Good leadership abilities
- Tall, if possible
- Good arm, if possible
- Left handed, if possible (can throw to other bases more easily)
- Catches the ball with both hands, when possible

Second Base (2B)

Second base is a pivot position for double plays. A second baseman should be able to shift their feet quickly and throw accurately. The second baseman should be able to charge slowly hit ground balls and snap throws to first base. They will also be called upon to back-up their teammates and take relay throws from the outfielders. In addition, they will coordinate with the shortstop as to who will cover second base on a steal attempt.

Qualities Include:

- Good fielding ability
- Good range to their left and right
- Quick feet for double-plays
- Average arm

Third Base (3B)

Keeper of the infield's "hot corner." Must be able to handle everything from sharply hit line drives or one-hop shots to slowly rolling bunts. The third baseman's most important physical asset is their ability to field and throw to first base in one motion. They must also stay mentally in the game to be able to handle every situation.

Qualities Include:

- Mental toughness for hard hit balls
- Quick Reflexes
- Accurate arm
- Aggressive attitude

Shortstop (SS)

Because the shortstop must cover so much area and participate in a wide variety of plays, shortstop is considered the most demanding infield position. Without hesitation, the shortstop must react to any situation – run back quickly for pop flies, charge slowly hit grounders, make strong, and make accurate throws to first base from deep in the hole. The shortstop will also work with the second baseman on turning double plays, and with the outfielders on relay throws.

Qualities Include:

- Very good glove skills
- Very good range to their left and right
- Strong arm
- Very accurate arm
- Good sense about the game
- Recover quickly from mistakes
- Usually your strongest infielder

Outfielders

The outfielders must always be alert as to what to do with the ball, should the ball come to them. They should be mindful of game situations at all times. Outfielders should have strong throwing arms. They should keep the trajectory of the throw low to the ground. Outfielders should be taught to call for fly balls. They should also be taught to block ground balls to make sure the ball doesn't get through. As the last line of defense, outfielders should be taught to back up their teammates. The following are some of the individual qualities of the outfield positions:

Left Field (LF)

- Good foot speed
- Good ball judgment
- Strong arm because more long balls are hit to left field resulting in the need for longer throws
- Ability to catch ball on the run

Center Field (CF)

- Good leadership abilities
- Very good quickness
- Strong and accurate arm
- Very vocal, not afraid to talk to teammates
- Good decision-making abilities
- Ability to catch ball on the run
- Very good speed

Right Field (RF)

- Good speed and endurance for constantly backing up first base
- Good glove for sharply hit balls that tend to tail off in the outfield
- Accurate arm with quick release
- Usually have the weakest arm of all the outfielders

Pitcher (P)

A pitcher has an important role as a defensive infielder. Many games have been won through the pitcher's fielding ability as well as his/her pitching talent. To be successful, a pitcher must back up plays and cover bases when necessary.

Qualities Include:

- Very hard worker
- Intelligent
- Motivated and determined
- Good size and strength, if possible
- Natural ability is not a must, but it can help a lot
- Good fielder

Catcher (C)

The catcher is the leader of the team, and as such, should not be afraid to be vocal and to take charge. The catcher has to be aware of game situations at all times, and communicate plays and strategies to the infielders. The catcher must be able to handle pitchers, and keep the game under control.

Qualities Include:

- Good size and strength
- Intelligent
- Hard workers and tough individuals
- Good leaders
- Quick hands and a quick glove
- Should have quick feet, if possible
- Should have a strong arm and a quick release