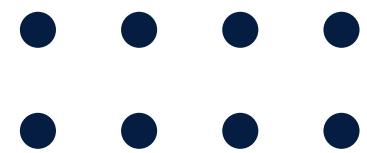




# TOP DOG SOFTBALL OFF SEASON

#BeTheTopDog

10u & 12u ACADEMY



## OFF-SEASON OVERVIEW

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## **AUGUST**

### **EXPECTATION MEETING**

Before any team activities/practice sessions take place all Top Dog teams will have player and parent meetings to review all expectations, the scheduling of the year, and individual team budgets. We want everyone to be on the same page and clearly understand expectations, events on the schedule, and why we schedule events in the manner that we do. We also want all families to understand the progression in our schedule and how the 11-month year is broken up to help guide each individual athlete's progression.

At this meeting is also important we have accurate contact information for all athletes and families, as well as all required paperwork signed and returned.

### **UNIFORM SIZING & ORDERING**

By the end of August, every athlete should have been sized for uniforms and have had their uniforms ordered. Once parents submit their uniform order, no size changes will be made. Also at the parent meeting Top Dog will work to have equipment, bags, footwear, helmets, and accessories available for parents to look at and purchase.

### **BASELINE ASSESSMENTS**

Before any team practices take place all Top Dog athletes will go through a baseline assessment. This allows Top Dog coaches and staff to see where players stand before completing the planning process for the upcoming year. We don't know where we are going or what growth looks like if we don't know where we are starting.

## **SEPTEMBER**

### **CULTURE & EXPECTATIONS**

Culture is not a series of postures, banners, slogans, or hype videos used to promote a certain way of thinking. Culture is the series of actions, attitudes, efforts, and intentions that go into everything we do. Going through the **OFF-SEASON** it is a major point of emphasis to educate Top Dog athletes and families on the history of the Top Dog program and continue building on our success through our expectations, beliefs, and the standards that drive behaviors. The better our athletes and families understand the Top Dog culture and expectations the better support we can give one another and the more we can all rise together.

### **CREATE WEEKLY ROUTINES**

All Top Dog athletes will be required to have a weekly routine. Top Dog families have to know growth and development of each individual athlete happens at practice, and on the athlete's own time. Growth and development will only move as fast as the time and quality of work put in on individual time. The more an athlete's work can support the work being put in at practice the faster skill can be acquired and favorable outcomes can be created more consistently.

## **INTRODUCE THROWING ROUTINES**

All Top Dog athletes will go through a throwing and arm care program that focuses on teaching proper throwing mechanics and strengthen their arms. We want to make sure all of our athletes are throwing the ball correctly. Throwing is a main component to defense and we must be able to do so at an elite without compromising the integrity of the body.

### **PRACTICE FOCUS/SCHEDULE**

**OFF-SEASON** practices are centered around building fundamentals and establishing a foundation for skills to be built that translate throughout the duration of an athlete's playing career. **OFF-SEASON** practices are all about building skill. Top Dog athletes have to be able to execute fundamental skills on a consistent basis in order find elite levels of success when it comes to learning the tactical side of the game.

## **OCTOBER & NOVEMBER**

During the months of October and November Top Dog athletes will continue building on the foundation established from September. Top Dog athletes will be expected to continue growing their understanding of Top Dog history and culture while progressing through their throwing program and continue building their fundamental skillsets.

### **PRACTICE FOCUS/SCHEDULE**

During the months of October and November practices will progress from being 100% focused on building skill into introducing segments of practice that work on implementing fundamental skills into the game through a small group setting. It is important to know we cannot progress into this structure of practice unless we have established a strong fundamental base.

## **DECEMBER**

December is a month where Top Dog coaches get to assess progress Top Dog athletes have made through the **OFF-SEASON**. December is also a month where we give our athletes an opportunity to rest, recover, and recharge their batteries before preparing for a competitive **IN-SEASON** schedule.

### **MINI GAMES/COMPETITIVE PRACTICES**

The goal of practices during the month of December is to create environments that limit the athletes ability to think about what they are doing and instead act freely. This gives Top Dog coaches the opportunity to get a true assessment and evaluation for what athletes have been able to build and retain through the **OFF-SEASON** programming.

### **CHECK-IN ASSESSMENTS**

Check-in assessments are the formative way to gather data and assess the growth of our athletes by comparing their assessment results to their results from their baseline assessments.

## WINTER BREAK

All Top Dog athletes will get a 2-week break. During this break all practices/workouts are optional. This is a time for athletes to spend time with their families, during the Holidays. All Too Dog athletes will return back to start preparation for the **IN-SEASON** phase of our year the first full week of January.

## OFF-SEASON GAME SCHEDULE

Games during the **OFF-SEASON** are used to assess where athletes stand, how well they are retaining information, how much they are progressing, and to help evaluate practice progressions. Wins and Losses are **NOT** the focus. Top Dog teams need to get each athlete an appropriate amount of reps that allows coaches to make true and detailed assessments for where the athlete stands and what steps need to be taken for them to continue progressing.

## EVENT SCHEDULING

October: 2 Tournaments or 12 games MAX (whichever comes first)

November: 1 Tournament or 6 games MAX (whichever comes first)

**TOTAL: 3 TOURNAMENTS or 18 games MAX (whichever comes first)**

## THROWING PROGRAM

There are 6 phases to the **OFF-SEASON** throwing program; each phase is 4-weeks in duration. The throwing program is designed to be performed 2 to 4 days per week. Drill progressions are designed to be completed as skill development, meaning Top Dog athletes will be going through these drills throwing into a BowNet or Throwing Wall **NOT** to a partner. Video demonstration of drills can be found in the Top Dog digital libraries found in The Futures App and The Dog House ([topdogperformancecenter.com](http://topdogperformancecenter.com)).

### PHASE 1 (WEEKS 1, 2, 3)

DRILL	REPS	DISTANCE	EFFORT %	NOTE
<b>THROWING ASSESSMENT</b>				
2 Knee	5 - 8	10 FEET	50%	Focus On The Movement
1 Knee	5 - 8	10 FEET	50%	Focus On The Movement
Staggered Stance	5 - 8	15 FEET	75%	Focus On The Movement
Play Catch   Step & Throw	10 - 15	30 FEET	75 - 100%	Blend It Together

## PHASE 1 RECOVERY (WEEK 4)

DRILL	REPS	DISTANCE	EFFORT %	NOTE
Play Catch   Step & Throw	20 - 25	30 FEET	75 - 100%	Blend It Together

Top Dog athletes should be able to hit their target with 75% success from 30 feet.

## PHASE 1 LONG TOSS (Do 1-2 TIMES PER WEEK)

DRILL	REPS	DISTANCE	EFFORT %	NOTE
Play Catch   Step & Throw	20 - 25	60 - 75 FEET	100%	Movement & Pace

Throw on an arc to a Coach. The distance is far enough for the athlete to make the throw, with a high arc, on **ONE HOP**. Long toss helps the athlete focus on release point, maintaining direction, and increasing arm strength.

## PHASES 2 & 3 (WEEKS 5, 6, 7 & WEEKS 9, 10, 11)

DRILL	REPS	DISTANCE	EFFORT %	NOTE
<b>THROWING ASSESSMENT</b>				
Staggered Stance	5 - 8	15 FEET	50%	Focus On The Movement
Pivot Throws	5 - 8	15 FEET	50%	Focus On The Movement
Load Throws	5 - 8	15 FEET	75%	Focus On The Movement
1 Knee Turn & Throw	5 - 8	25 FEET	80%	Movement & Pace
Play Catch   Step & Throw	10 - 15	40 FEET	75 - 100%	Blend It Together

## PHASES 2 & 3 RECOVERY (WEEKS 8 & 12)

DRILL	REPS	DISTANCE	EFFORT %	NOTE
Play Catch   Step & Throw	20 - 25	40 FEET	75 - 100%	Movement & Pace

Top Dog athletes should be able to hit their target with 75% success from 40 feet.

## PHASES 2 & 3 LONG TOSS (Do 1-2 TIMES PER WEEK)

DRILL	REPS	DISTANCE	EFFORT %	NOTE
Play Catch   Step & Throw	20 - 25	60 - 75 FEET	100%	Blend It Together

Throw on an arc to a Coach. The distance is far enough for the athlete to make the throw, with a high arc, on **ONE HOP**. Long toss helps the athlete focus on release point, maintaining direction, and increasing arm strength.

## PHASES 4 & 5 (WEEKS 13, 14, 15 & WEEKS 17, 18, 19)

DRILL	REPS	DISTANCE	EFFORT %	NOTE
<b>THROWING ASSESSMENT</b>				
Staggered Stance	5 - 8	20 FEET	50%	Focus On The Movement
Pivot Throws	5 - 8	20 FEET	50%	Focus On The Movement
Play Catch   Step & Throw	10 - 15	40 FEET	75 - 100%	Blend It Together
Long Toss	10 - 15	60 - 75 FEET	100%	Movement & Pace
1 Knee Turn & Throw	10 - 15	50 FEET	100%	Movement & Pace

## PHASES 4 & 5 RECOVERY (WEEKS 16 & 20)

DRILL	REPS	DISTANCE	EFFORT %	NOTE
Play Catch   Step & Throw	20 - 25	50 FEET	75 - 100%	Blend It Together

Top Dog athletes should be able to hit their target with 75% success from 50 feet.

## PHASE 6 (WEEKS 21, 22, 23)

DRILL	REPS	DISTANCE	EFFORT %	NOTE
<b>THROWING ASSESSMENT</b>				
Staggered Stance	5 - 8	20 FEET	50%	Focus On The Movement
Pivot Throws	5 - 8	20 FEET	50%	Focus On The Movement
Load Throws	5 - 8	30 FEET	75%	Focus On The Movement
Play Catch   Step & Throw	10 - 15	40 FEET	75 - 100%	Blend It Together
2 Hop To Throw	10 - 15	40 FEET	100%	Focus On The Movement
Rock & Throw	10 - 15	50 FEET	100%	Focus On The Movement

## PHASE 6 RECOVERY (WEEK 24)

DRILL	REPS	DISTANCE	EFFORT %	NOTE
Play Catch   Step & Throw	20 - 25	60 FEET	75 - 100%	Blend It Together

Top Dog athletes should be able to hit their target with 75% success from 60 feet.

This throwing program should take Top Dog Athletes from September to the end of February.