

Improving Speed:

First of all, you must realize that the game of softball is played entirely on the balls of your feet, regardless of what position you play. There are only 2 times when your heels should hit the ground.

1. In between pitches when you are relaxing
2. In the dugout in between innings.

To generate more speed you must realize the dynamics of running. If you are running with your heels hitting the ground first, you are actually pulling the ground toward you. This is not generating any speed. When you run on the balls of your feet and leaning forward, you are pushing the ground away from you and this generates power and speed.

One of the best drills I have ever seen to improve strength in your stride (running stride) is to do static jumps. This is done by stretching a length of rope between two chairs or people (hold the rope very loosely). Hold the rope about waist high and from a standing start, on the balls of your feet, jump over the rope. You may have to start out lower, but get to the point where you can jump over a rope at waist high, then add a second rope a couple of feet away from the first. Jump the first rope and when you hit the ground, immediately jump over the second. This will improve your speed the first day you do it. Every day after that, you will see more and more speed.

The first few steps toward first base should be short, choppy steps and you must be still in a bit of a crouch and leaning forward. After about 10 feet, begin to straighten up just a bit and lean forward. When you reach almost half way to first base, begin to pump your arms as fast as you can. This will make your legs move faster, and don't stop until you go past first base.

The key to faster times out of the box and to first base is to run on the balls of your feet. Do the drill and I am certain you will be a faster runner.