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Is Softball Harder Than Baseball?

By Madison Hughes, Elk City

Many people often question if softball is harder than baseball or vice versa. These two sports seem the same with similar fields, same amount of players, and the same objective. People often conclude that baseball is harder due to pitching, hitting, and the distance of the field. However, it is scientifically proven that softball is harder than baseball. The speed of pitches, the reaction time for hitters and fielders, and the distance of the field indicates that softball is indeed harder than baseball.

In softball, a pitcher controls the ball with her fingertips on the seam, and she has the ability to cause the softball to change speeds dramatically. A pitcher has a motion of low to high and is only 43 feet away from the hitter, which is harder for a batter to react to the changing pitch. Left handed batters have an advantage. They are able to slap, which is running towards the ball and hitting it. This makes it harder for an infielder to react and throw her out. Reaction time is 50% less than a baseball player. While hitting, a softball player also has .350 seconds to react, and the visual of the ball is misleading. Finally, the distance also contributes as to why softball is harder. Softball fields are closer to the plate and half the size of a baseball field. The bases are 60 feet apart. This makes it hard for a person to steal or for the catcher to throw a girl out at second.

Baseball pitchers use fingertips to throw the ball like a softball

pitcher, but baseball pitchers are only 60 feet from the mound to home plate. Baseball pitchers throw with a high to low formation, therefore; a batter can react quicker to the changing pitch. A baseball reaches the plate at .38 seconds. It takes an infielder 4.3 seconds to react and get the runner out. A baseball runner has an advantage against the catcher because a runner has more time to steal and more time for the catcher to react. Baseball fields are shaped like a softball field but bigger with a grass infield and outfield. A baseball field is about 16,700 square foot. Therefore, a baseball player does react slower than a softball player.

Although these sports are very similar, they are very different. Softball is definitely harder than baseball due to differences in hitting, pitching, and the distance of the field. Think of it like this, softball is to baseball as tennis is to ping pong.

