Batters hit a pitched ball from a team-mate and try to direct the ball over a marked area called the ‘pit’. Fielders try to catch the ball. (Play 4 v 4.)

What you need

- Ball suitable for striking with the hand or a paddle bat
- 8 markers to define a playing area and a ‘pit’

What to do

**SETTING UP**

- Batters and fielders move to positions as shown.
- Fielders stand behind the front line of the pit. A batter and pitcher from the batting team stand in place.

**BATTERS**

- One of the batting team lobs a ball to the batter – change pitchers for each new batter. Alternatively, the batter bounces a ball and hits it.
- The batter hits the ball with a hand or paddle bat – this will depend on the ability of the group. It’s easier with a bat.

**FIELDERS**

- Attempt to catch the ball.
- A fielded ball is passed back to the pitcher via other fielders. The ball is rolled to the pitcher.

**Scoring**

- Batters score a point if the ball goes over the pit and into the playing area without being caught.
- **Extra point** – the ball crosses the pit and the ball continues to run through or past fielders.
- Tally points for the innings.

**Change it**

**Rapid fire over the pit** – the batters have 5 balls and the batter is fed balls as quickly as can be hit. Fielders return balls by rolling them down one side through a gate to a collector from the batting team.

If the ball misses the gate, the batters get an extra point. Fielders are not allowed to hold on to balls.

**LESSON LINK**

*Over the pit* is a fielding and striking game that emphasises accurate ball placement. A variation provides a rolling challenge for fielders.
Over the pit

Skills > Striking a lobbed ball · Fielding including positioning · Teamwork · Rolling through a target

change it…

Coaching

> After some initial play use role models to highlight effective striking actions, e.g. swing of arm and what part of hand is used to hit the ball.
> Conduct remedial batting practice on the side if required.

Game rules

> Change the number of fielders, e.g. more fielders than strikers.
> Fielders – all fielders must touch the ball before it goes back to the batters.
> Fielders – in the rapid fire variation, a fielder might be placed close to the gate.

Equipment

Use a variety of balls:
> Easier for fielders – slower ball
> Harder for fielders – strikers use a paddle bat and tennis ball to hit a lobbed ball
> Use a tee and softball bat/ball.

Playing area

> Strikers – a second special pit close to the batter may be set out.
> Establish a variety of pits with different scoring values.

> Make the playing area bigger/smaller.

Safety

> Select appropriate balls and bat (if used) to match the ability of the players.
> Ensure that the fielder who sends the ball back to the hitting area rolls the ball.
> Give fielders space awareness reminders. Fielders should call out ‘mine!’ when fielding a ball.
> Ensure sufficient space between groups.

ASK THE PLAYERS

Fielders
> ‘How can you cover the most area/stop the batters scoring points?’

Batters
> ‘How can you score the most points?’