Beat the bucket

A base runner and up to 6 fielders. A base runner throws 3 balls into the field and then attempts to run around 4 markers before fielders place all 3 balls in a bucket and call ‘STOP!’ 6–8 per group.

**What you need**
- Indoor or outdoor playing area
- 3 small to medium-sized balls depending on the skills of the group
- 4 markers to define a playing diamond
- A plastic bucket in the middle of the diamond (or use a hoop)
- Harder variation: use a bat to hit the ball off a tee

**What to do**
**Setting up**
- Players to their positions as shown; no fielders in the in-field

**Base runner**
- Throws 3 balls to either the out-field or in-field.
- Runs to first base as soon as the third ball is thrown and continues to the next base until a fielder calls ‘STOP!’
- Changes places with someone in the field when ‘STOP!’ is called. The new runner starts at home base.

**Fielders**
- Gather balls and throw them to one of the fielders on the bases.
- Base-fielders run the ball to bucket in the centre of the diamond.
- When all 3 balls have been returned to the bucket, a fielder calls ‘STOP!’

**Scoring**
- Each base = 1 point before a fielder calls ‘STOP!’
- Runners keep track of their own score.
- Player who finishes with the most points wins.

**Change it**
- Place 2 fielders near the bucket and the other fielders in any suitable fielding position.

**LEARNING INTENTION**
*Beat the bucket* is a fielding game that develops teamwork. *Runners* are challenged to place balls tactically and *fielders* to position themselves effectively and to return the balls in the shortest possible time. The game links to softball and baseball.
**Beat the bucket**

**Coaching**
- Players with less developed throwing/catching/fielding skills can be coached on the side.
- Ask the players how they can ensure everyone is included.

**Game rules**
- **Fielders** – allow a player to be positioned in the in-field and require at least one ball to be thrown to the in-field area; require at least one ball to be touched by a player with restricted coordination or mobility, or require all fielders to touch at least one ball.
- 2 players work in tandem (e.g. the ball must be relayed to the bucket using at least 2 players).
- **Scoring** – provide bonus points for 2nd, 3rd and home base (e.g. 2nd base = 2 points, 3rd base = 3 points, home base = 4 points).

**Equipment**
- Use different balls:
  - **Harder for runner** – use a bat to hit the ball off a tee.
  - **Easier for runner** – increase the number of balls thrown into the field.

**Playing area**
- **Harder for runner** – increase the distance between bases.
- **Harder for fielders** – decrease the distance between bases.

**Safety**
- All fielders should keep an eye out for the balls as well as other running fielders.
- Players should communicate when retrieving a ball or throwing a ball.
- If only one fielder is located at the bucket, consider the alternative of fielders rolling the ball or using an agreed signalling procedure.
- Players should have done space/player awareness activities before playing.
- Ensure sufficient space between different games.

**Ask the players**

**Runner**
- Where is the best place to throw?

**Fielders**
- Where will you position yourself?
- How can you work as a team to return the ball to the base-fielders who will run the balls to the bucket?