

adapted from Texas A&M and Rolling Plains Quail Research Ranch

You want to have escape cover roughly 50 -65ft apart (average distance a person can throw a softball). A good starting point is to have a shrub thicket where a defensive player would be located on the field or where they would roam.

> Shorter flight distance decreases the chances of being detected by aerial predators.

> > 46ft

Long flight distance for Northern Bobwhite.

275ft

The Softball Habitat Evaluation Technique was developed to help landowners and habitat managers easily evaluate the usability of their property for Northern Bobwhite (*Colinus virginianus*) Northern Bobwhite need ample escape cover (i.e., shrubby thickets) interspersed throughout quality nesting and brood rearing habitat. It is important that escape cover is a short flight away or the distance you can throw a softball.

Things to Consider:

- A good nesting clump of native bunchgrass (e.g., little bluestem) should be roughly the size of home plate.
- You should have 25-30 bunchgrass clumps (size of home plate) within a 60ft x 60ft area (size of the area of the basepath).That is roughly 300 bunchgrass clumps per acre.
- To determine if you have proper dispersion of escape cover for Northern Bobwhite, you should be able to throw a softball from one shrub thicket to another.
- If you throw a softball roughly 50ft (distance from pitcher's mound to homebase) and you still see the softball, you have insufficient cover.
- When the ball hits the ground and if it sticks (doesn't roll), the vegetation is too thick! Adult Northern Bobwhite will have issues maneuvering through the vegetation.
- If you are able to kick a golf ball around with your foot, chicks should be able to easily maneuver through the vegetation.

Zoom in of area within the basepaths (60ft x 60ft area)

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