



**Coach Steve's Softball Training Modules  
for  
Primary & Middle School Players**

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# Softball Training Modules for Primary & Middle School Players

## **3. Base Running**

Every Batter becomes a Base Runner as soon as he obtains a Walk, is Hit by a Pitch, hits a ball into Fair Territory or otherwise advances towards 1st Base as a result of Plays described in Section 1.8 of “**The Game**” module..

Base Running Skills fall into two broad categories

- Physical and athletic skills (running, sliding into Base)
- Mental and judgement skills that come from knowledge of the rules and playing experience

### **3.1 Running to 1<sup>st</sup> Base**

The baseball moves from Batter’s Box to 1st Base are:

- Drop Bat in the batter’s Box as Batter-Runner starts towards 1st base
- 3-4 steps into run - LOOK to where the ball is hit
  - If hit to an Infielder: Runner to “Run Through 1<sup>st</sup> Base”
  - If hit to the outfield: Runner to “Round towards 2<sup>nd</sup> Base”
- Run in the 1<sup>st</sup> Base Lane and touch 1st Base bag with toe
- On “Run Through 1<sup>st</sup> Base”, Turn towards Foul Territory and return to bag
- On Overthrows, Turn towards Fair Territory and advance to 2<sup>nd</sup> Base if overthrow is not covered and there is time to reach 2nd Base.

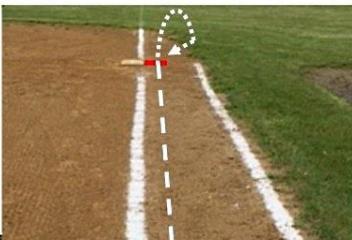
The following video link describes the baseball moves when running to 1<sup>st</sup> Base

[Running through 1st Base](#)

[Running to 1st Base](#)

### 3.1 Running to 1<sup>st</sup> Base (cont'd)

Straight Line Path



**Batter - Runner beats throw to 1<sup>st</sup> Base**

Notes:

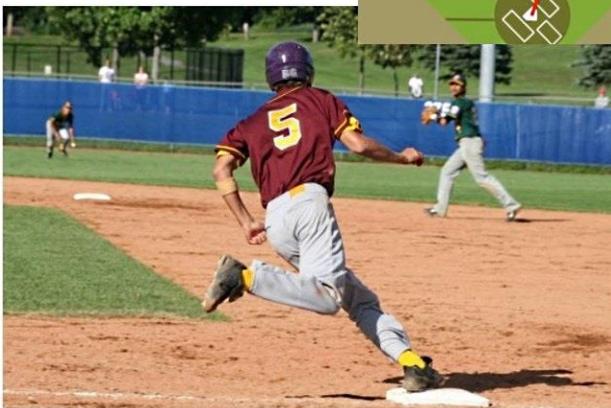
**Runner goes straight down 1<sup>st</sup> Base Path**

**Toe touches front of 1<sup>st</sup> Base bag**

**TURNS Body towards Foul Territory**

**Runner cannot be "Tagged-Out" while returning to 1<sup>st</sup> Base if he stays in Foul Territory**

Curved Line Path



**Runner Rounds 1<sup>st</sup> Base going for a two-base hit (Double)**

Notes:

**Runner used Curved Path to round 1<sup>st</sup> Base**

**Foot on white part of bag & Body TURNS into Fair Territory**

**LOOKS at Fielders DECIDES if he can reach 2<sup>nd</sup> base**

**Runner can be "Tagged-OUT" Unless he is "Safe on 2<sup>nd</sup> Base" or returns to be "Safe on 1<sup>st</sup>"**

### 3.2 Safe on Base

A Base Runner in contact with 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> Base is **“Safe on Base”**. A Runner:

- cannot be “Tagged-Out” while “Safe on Base”
- must return to a base at the end of a Play
- cannot leave the base on the next Play until the Ball has left the Pitcher’s hand on a Pitch towards Home Plate

Safe on Base



#### **Base Runner waits “Safe on Base”**

**Notes:**

- 1) **Foot on Base & Facing Infield**
- 2) **Foot on white part of double 1<sup>st</sup> Base bag**

**LOOKS at Pitcher & Catcher**

**Ready to MOVE into a “Lead” as soon as Pitcher releases the ball towards Home Plate**

**Runner cannot be “Tagged-Out” while “Safe on Base”**

### 3.3 Leading from a Base

A Runner should take a “**Lead**” from any base on every pitch to:

- Shorten the distance to the next base in the event;
  - the Batter hits the ball into Fair Territory
  - the Runner decides to “Steal” a base
- The Runner must wait until the ball is pitched before taking a “Lead”
- The Runner must return to his base or progress to the next base to be “Safe on Base” before he is “Tagged-Out” or “Forced-Out” by the Fielding Team

#### How to Take a Lead

Leading



#### Pitch delivered to Home Plate Runner takes a 3 - 4 step “Lead”

Notes:

#### Runner LOOKS at Home Plate

Ready to RUN to 2<sup>nd</sup> Base if ball is hit into Fair Territory

Ready to RETURN to 1<sup>st</sup> Base if Batter makes a Fly Ball or Line Drive “OUT”

Runner can be Tagged-Out”  
while “Leading”

Runner MUST RETURN to a “Safe on Base” position before the next pitch is Thrown

### **3.4 Running Between Bases & To Home Plate**

Base Runners must run straight towards the next Base along the “**Base Path**”.

- The Base Path is 1 metre wide on either side of the Runner
- A Fielder cannot Interfere with a Runner on the Base Path unless the Fielder has the Ball in Hand or Glove to make a Tag-Out
- The Base Path can be a curved shape where the Runner has “Rounded” a Base

### **Advanced Play for Senior School Players**

### **3.5 Stealing a Base**

A Runner is allowed to “**Steal**” a base on every Pitch (except Foul Balls)

- Best time to “Steal” - Wild Pitch and Passed Balls
- Next best: - Catcher drops the ball or has a weak throwing arm
- Shortstop has poor catching and sweep tag technique

The sequence of baseball moves when “Stealing” 2nd Base are:

- Left Foot either on or beside on Fair Territory part of the 1<sup>st</sup> base bag
  - Right Foot behind the Left Foot in a running crouch position
- Rocking Start - timed with the Pitcher’s Motion
- Explode (3 - 4 steps) to the “Lead” position & **DECIDE**: Steal or Return to 1<sup>st</sup>
- If Runner decides to “Steal”
  - Sprint to 2<sup>nd</sup> Base with arms pumping
  - Slide into 2<sup>nd</sup> Base (Senior School Players),
  - Standing Stop at 2<sup>nd</sup> (Middle School Players)
- If Runner decides NOT to “Steal”, **RETURN** to 1<sup>st</sup> Base
- If Ball is hit - **LOOK** - and
  - Return to 1<sup>st</sup> Base if it is a caught Fly Ball or Line Drive
  - Sprint to 2<sup>nd</sup> base if it is a Ground Ball hit to the Infield or
  - If it is a Fly Ball/Line Drive touches the ground before being caught

**When Stealing 3<sup>rd</sup> Base**, the same sequence of Baseball Moves apply as Stealing 2<sup>nd</sup> Base

**Stealing Bases**

### 3.5 Stealing a Base (cont'd)



#### Base Runner "Leading" from 1<sup>st</sup> Base

Notes:

Takes a "LOOK" at the Catcher to DECIDE to either:

- 1) STOP and RETURN to WAIT "Safe on 1<sup>st</sup> Base or
- 2) RUN & try to "Steal" 2<sup>nd</sup> Base

A Passed Ball or Wild Pitch behind the Catcher usually results in a successful advance to 2<sup>nd</sup> Base

#### Stealing Base & Calling Time-out



#### Base Runner Steals 2<sup>nd</sup> Base

Notes:

Runner uses "Head First Slide" to avoid the "Tag-Out" by ball in Glove

Base Runner raises hand to ask that "Time-out" be called by the Umpire

The Runner must maintain contact with the bag at all times to remain "Safe on Base"

Fielder can "Tag-Out" a Runner who loses contact with the base

Once "Time-out" is called by the Umpire, the Runner cannot be Tagged-Out until the Umpire calls "Play Ball" and Play resumes

### 3.6 Sliding into Base

There are 2 "Slides" in softball where the Runner runs straight at the bag or Home Plate:

- the "Straight Leg Slide" also known as the "Foot First" and the "Pop-up" Slide
- and the "Head First Slide"

A variation of both types are known as "Hooked Slides" where the Runner slides about one (1) metre to the side of the base and touches the base with his hand or foot.

<u>Straight Leg Slide</u>	<u>Hook Slide</u>
<u>Head First Slide</u>	

Head First Slide



**Base Runner scores from 3<sup>rd</sup> with Head First "Hooked" Slide**

**Notes:**

**Runner TOUCHES Home Plate with hand while avoiding a Tag-Out by the Catcher**

**Runner only needs to touch Home Plate to be "Safe at Home"**

**Once Home Plate is TOUCHED, the Base Runner cannot be "Tagged-out"**

### **3.7 Tagging-Up & Sacrifice Fly**

When a Runner takes his “Lead” on a Fly Ball or Line Drive:

- If the ball is caught, he must return and Tag-up” his base before advancing.
- The moment the ball is caught and the Runner has Tagged-up”;
  - he can try to advance to “Safe on the next Base”
  - before he is “Tagged-Out” by the Fielding Team
- If the Runner leaves his base before the ball is caught, the Fielding Team can
  - “TAG-OUT” the Runner as he tries to RETURN to his base

If the Runner is on 3<sup>rd</sup> base when a Fly Ball is hit to the Outfield

- He should remain on 3<sup>rd</sup> base until the ball is caught
- Then run to Home Plate to try and score a Run
- If a Run is scored on this Play, the Fly Ball out is called a “Sacrifice Fly”

#### **Tagging Up and Sacrifice Flies**

#### **Tagging-Up**



#### **Fly Ball Hit and Caught in Deep Right Field**

**Notes:**

**Runner DECIDES to RUN to 3<sup>rd</sup> Base after “Tagging-Up” at 2<sup>nd</sup> Base**

**Right Fielder starts his Throw to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Baseman (Cut-off Man)**

**Runner MUST REACH and be “Safe on Base” at 3<sup>rd</sup> ...**

**Before the Relay Throw from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Baseman arrives in time for a “Tag-Out” at 3<sup>rd</sup> Base**