

# BOBCAT BASEBALL INDIVIDUAL SKILLS

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## INDIVIDUAL SKILLS---- PITCHING

<b>MENTAL ATTITUDE</b>	Throw strikes----shoot for 70% accuracy on your pitches Movement on ball over speed Make a batter hit the ball Let defense help you Show no emotion on the mound Various reasons for getting taken out	
<b>EQUIPMENT NEEDED</b>	Jacket & Long sleeve shirt (if outside) glove, hat, sweats, cleets, etc...	* Burmas or walking squats if they forget.
<b>STRETCHING AND RUNNING</b>	Team stretch Team running + Poles Chase popups, ladders, & pickups Baserunning	
<b>WARMUP THROWS</b>	Stay on rubber Catcher moves back Exaggerate pitching motion Explain pitching signals for different pitches	
<b>WINDUP</b>	Explain in parts	
<b>Sign</b>	Both feet on rubber Ball in glove, hide ball, glove fingers up, chin high	
<b>Rock</b>	Step back with non-pivot foot---chin over rubber Small shallow step---balance over speed Arms should stay set at stomach (K.I.S.S.)	
<b>Turn</b>	Set pivot foot parallel to rubber	
<b>Sit</b>	Lift front leg to comfortable position Slight bend in the rear leg---point foot down Show your butt to the catcher Hands together at the belly Don't rush the motion Drop back shoulder---lead with hips Let body fall forward and drop your throwing hand at the same time Ball out before diving to the plate	
<b>Drive</b>	Explode to the plate with the back leg and lead hip Circle the arm---extend the back Back of the throwing hand to the sky Open lead foot across the line from rubber to home plate Land on ball of foot Soft front leg---bend the leg	
<b>Stretch Position</b>	Take sign with ball in glove or bare hand---not both Pivot foot on rubber	

Check runners---don't dip shoulder to first base  
 Straighten to set position on one continuous motion  
 Hands are brought together and must come to a complete stop  
     in front of the body and below the chin  
 Check runners again

## **Holding Runners**

Stress this

### ***Right Hander Moves***

Use head fakes  
 Vary time of delivery  
 Step off  
 Step off and spin to 1B or 2B  
 No step spin to 2B  
 Step to 3B, then fake to 1B  
     be off rubber

### ***Left Hander Moves***

Use head fakes  
 Hang kick leg as long as possible  
 Step off  
 Quick throw to 1B--step back and flip throw  
 Don't vary normal delivery  
 Step throw to 1B  
 Leg kick to 1B---don't cross 45 angle  
 Step and spin to 2B  
 No step and spin to 2B

### ***Best Pickoff Times Are:***

1. Taking sign
2. On the way up in your stretch
3. Top of stretch
4. On the way down in your stretch
5. From the set position  
     ---use a sign from 3B if the runner has a big lead

## **Stretch Position (Continued)**

After checking runners, pitcher goes to turn and set positions just like in the windup  
 May have to shorten leg kick---slide step  
 Check delivery time with a stopwatch  
 Movement to catcher's mitt should be 1.5 seconds or less

### **Sign Pickoff to 2B**

Step back off rubber  
 Reverse pivot to 2B  
 Point lead shoulder to 2B  
 Throw only if you feel the play is there

### **Kick Turn**

When pitcher is bringing leg to the set position "throw" knee and fall towards  
     2B  
 Spin on pivot foot  
 Throw only if the play is there

## **Basic Pitches**

### ***Fastball***

Grip with the seams (ball tails)  
 Grip across the seams (ball rises)  
 Drive legs  
 Arm speed to increase speed of ball  
 Snap the wrist  
 Index and middle finger on top of the ball  
 Pull down on the ball  
 Release out in front

- Cut fastball/  
slider** Same as regular fastball except index and middle finger are together and on the outer side of the ball
- Split finger** Use same motion as fastball  
Grip ball outside narrow seams with index and middle finger  
Spread fingers wider with each pitch until pitcher feels he can not control his  
throws  
Thumb under ball  
Push with thumb  
Curl fingers and put more pressure on the thumb as pitchers get more  
experienced with the pitch  
Drill-bounce ball on the floor
- Curveball** Grip with thumb and middle finger on seams or middle and index finger on  
seams  
Same delivery as a fastball-----end snap is where it counts  
Think "fastball, fastball, fastball, curve"  
Turn hand in  
Elbow up  
Pull with fingers---push with thumb  
Snap down with hand and arm  
Spin over speed
- Other Pitches** These can be experimented with but a pitcher must show 70% accuracy to use it in a game
- Pitching drills** Throw to strings --- and chart as much as possible. Have a purpose!!  
Spot the glove in the strike zone  
Come to sit position and hold it. Flip the ball waist high to the pitcher and  
then he can deliver the ball  
Clap drill (steps of the windup and stretch)  
Throw live with different counts on hitters

## PROPER THROWING AND CATCHING TECHNIQUE

Glove selection----fit your hand and position  
Grip---index and middle finger on top  
Shoulder---point lead shoulder at target and circle the arm  
Feet---step in direction of throw  
Catching---move feet, catch everything in the middle of the body with two hands  
Play catch by positions, C-C, IF-IF, OF-OF  
Lengthen distance to 150-250' depending upon position  
Talk about basic defensive positions here (See page 29)

## FIELDING GROUNDBALLS

Get the glove to fit you  
Stance---weight on inside balls of feet  
glove below knees  
Stay low---glide, thumb up on glove  
Get in front of everything---open and go  
Glove out away from body



Back of glove on ground  
 Keep the knees loose----step to catch  
 Look ball in  
 Bring the ball in while bending the knees  
 Work from the ground up  
 Throw overhand (3/4) whenever possible  
 Outfielders must stop everything  
 4 and 3 stop the ball---its an out

## DRILLS

1. Four corner and reverse four corner
2. Tunnel drill
3. Paddles with short fungos
4. Circle drill
5. Short hops
6. Pickups
7. Rapid fire drill
8. Coaches feed
9. Do or die drill

## DOUBLE PLAYS (practice this live as much as possible)

### 5-4-3

- 5) Catch the ball first  
 Straighten to throw if possible  
 Chest high over the bag  
 Go to 1B on a bobble---get an out
- 4) Get behind base quickly  
 Circle if possible  
 Hang back until you see ball  
 Straddle and Step method  
 Keep the hands together  
 Open lead foot to 1B  
 Overhand throw---quick not hard---stop the ball, don't catch it
- 3) Hold runner with feet parallel to bag  
 Give pitcher a target with glove  
 Pickoff---go right to bag---no sweep  
 Break on pitch  
 Heels to bag  
 Step to ball  
 Foot opposite glove hand on bag  
 Knock everything down, get off base if necessary

### 6-4-3

- 6) Catch the ball first  
 Set back foot on ball in the hole  
 Overhand throw if possible  
 Chest high over the bag  
 Flip underhand if close to bag  
 Tag bag---if possible---drag the rt. foot  
 Get an out somewhere
- 4) Same as 5-4-3

- 3) Same as 5-4-3

**4-6-3**

- 4) Catch ball first  
Overhand throw if possible  
Drop inside knee or drop turn  
Chest high over the bag  
Flip or backhand if close  
Tag bag if possible  
Ball in hole, turn back, plant ft.  
Get an out somewhere
- 6) Get behind bag quickly  
Hang back until you see the throw---1 step back  
Step to bag with right foot---Left foot to the throw  
Keep hands together  
Overhand throw---Quick hands  
Front foot pointed to 1B

- 3) Same as 5-4-3, 6-4-3

**3-6-3**

4 should not cover bag, sometimes 1 has to cover.

- 3) Catch the ball first---Practice taking groundballs after holding the runner  
Clear to inside of baseline  
Overhand throw---chest high over bag  
Get back to bag  
Call "MINE"  
Find bag, then look for ball  
Tag 1B and throw to 2B if close to bag  
Yell "TAG"
- 6) Same as 4-6-3  
Make sure somebody is covering 1B before throwing to 1B  
Listen for call "MINE"

**1-6-3**

- 1) Catch ball first  
Pivot and pick up 6 covering base  
Throw the ball with something on it  
Hit shortstop as soon as possible  
You have more time than you think
- 6) Get moving as soon as ball is hit  
Breakdown before base  
Catch ball and then drag foot  
You have more time than you think  
Get an out
- 3) Same as 5-4-3, 6-4-3, 4-6-3

**INF-2-3**

INF is in where they can make the play on a medium groundball  
Catcher says behind the plate  
Mop turn toward 1B  
Throw chest high on inside of the bag

## **5 TAG 3B AND THROW TO 3**

Don't forget this one

## **FIELDING FLYBALLS AND POPUPS**

Check wind, sun, ground

Wt. on inside balls of feet

Watch general strike zone area

When ball is hit, get to where you think it will come down. Don't drift

Ball over your head, turn and go looking over your shoulder

Drop step

Catch ball above head with two hands

Don't get lazy

"BALL" call or "MINE---YOURS"

## **CATCHER'S POPUPS**

Take off mask

Find the ball

Ball will drift back toward diamond

Two hands above head

Work from fence in if necessary

## **OUTFIELDERS THROWING IN A DO OR DIE SITUATION**

Use late in the game with tying or winning run trying to score

Field glove on ball side

Foot on glove side up next to glove when fielding ball

Step with foot opposite glove

Hop on foot opposite glove (Crow Hop)----This will increase the distance of the throw

Come out throwing over the top

## **OUTFIELDERS PLAYING THE SUN**

Get glove up as a shield

Try to get angle with the sun

Off to the side

## **OUTFIELDERS PLAYING THE FENCE**

Get to fence and work in from there

Talk to each other

## **OUTFIELDERS FIELDING THE LINE DRIVE**

Turn feet parallel to the flight of the ball

Wait and break

## **OUTFIELDERS TAKING BALLS IN THE GAP**

Talk to each other "Mine---Yours" or "Ball"

Centerfielders take anything in doubt

Take an angle of pursuit to the ball, cut it off

## **CATCHER EQUIPMENT---Explain how to put on gear**

## **CATCHER GIVING SIGNS**

Heels together

Knees together---conceal from the base coaches

Glove in front of knee

Hand in crotch---check for too high or too low with fingers

Point to location  
Work with the pitcher  
Elbow tight to the body  
Vary w/ runner on 2B  
Don't turn on the umpire

#### **CATCHER RECEIVING PITCHES**

Comfortable stance  
Rt. Ft. slightly back----Heel to left foot  
Thighs parallel to the ground  
Head up----Butt up----Glove up  
Bare hand behind glove  
Move the glove----not body, stay down  
Soft hands----two hands----hands away from body  
Frame the strike zone----funnel the ball (curl) to the plate  
Use shadow drill to check stance, sign, etc...

**CATCHER THROWING TO BASES----**(Time the throws from glove to glove whenever possible)  
Stay down as long as possible

#### **STRIKE ZONE PITCH**

Catch ball with two hands  
**QUICK FEET**  
Hop turn----if arm is weak push off with right foot  
Throw for area above pitcher  
Follow through

#### **OUTSIDE ZONE PITCH**

Step out for ball  
Catch ball with two hands  
**QUICK FEET**  
Hop turn  
Throw for zone  
Follow through  
Step behind hitter if necessary  
Time throws with stopwatch

#### **COVERING BASE ON A STEAL**

Talk to each other  
Get to bag quickly  
Straddle bag in the rear  
Force a slide in front of you  
Get off the bag and go after a bad throw  
Be tough

#### **INFELDERS MAKING A TAG**

Straddle rear of base if possible  
Feet pointed in direction of runner  
Catch ball  
Back of glove directly to side of bag the runner is coming in  
Down and out  
No sweeps

#### **PITCHOUT**

Sign  
Pitcher must hold runner

Deliver ball chest high outside of zone  
Catcher step out as pitcher delivers  
Step to ball  
Catch ball with two hands  
QUICK FEET  
Hop turn  
Throw for zone

#### **CATCHER BLOCKING PITCHES**

Step out to ball if necessary  
QUICK FEET  
Drop forward to knees  
Hands in hole below crotch  
Block it----use the chest protector  
Push it out in front of plate with hands----snow shovel  
Keep it in front  
Ball in dirt drill

#### **CATCHER BLOCKING THE PLATE**

Get rid of mask  
Heels in front of plate  
Low stance  
Catch ball with two hands  
Hold ball in glove with bare hand  
Point left foot toward runner  
Tag with back of glove to runner  
Down and out

#### **CATCHER FIELDING BUNTS**

**Circle---Down 1B or in front of plate**  
Get rid of mask  
Loop to left of ball  
Feet parallel to 1B line  
Scoop with two hands  
Throw overhand or from below depending on time  
Drop step if ball is next to 1B line  
Chest high on inside of 1B

**Spin---Down 1B line**  
Get rid of mask  
Plant Rt. Ft. ahead of ball  
Scoop with two hands  
Reverse spin  
See target at 1B  
Left shoulder pointed at 1B  
Throw overhand  
Chest high inside 1B

#### **FIRST BASEMAN FOOTWORK**

Watch ball and drift towards 1B  
If there is a play----get to the bag----see the bag  
Heels touching the bag  
Step to the ball with foot opposite glove hand  
Keep foot on inside of bag  
Stop everything  
One hoppers are routine

Get off bag if necessary  
Tag runner if possible

#### **INFIELDBERS THROWING FROM THE HOLE**

Watch the ball into glove  
Set right foot  
Throw only if you have a play

### **TEAM SITUATIONS**

#### **CUTS AND RELAYS**

##### **Single --- No runners on or 3B**

- 7, 8, & 9)      Field Ball  
                    Back each other up  
                    Throw overhand  
                    Hit cutoff in the chin
- 6, 4)            Talk to each other  
                    Know the strength of the outfielder's arm  
                    One man is the cutoff  
                    Proper cut technique  
                    One man on the bag  
                    Ready for the tag---- anticipate a play  
                    Proper tag technique  
                    Line each other up----"left two" or "right two" etc...  
                    Call "cut", "cut 2", "let it come"
- 3)                Cover base----You are in charge of the play  
                    Check runner  
                    Look to back up throw
- 5)                Cover base  
                    Look to back up throw
- 1)                Back up throw  
                    Not too close to bag
- 2)                Back up if necessary

##### **Single---Runner on 1B**

- 7, 8, & 9)      Field ball  
                    Back each other up  
                    Back up 2B for second throw  
                    Throw overhand  
                    Hit 6 in the chin
- 6)                Cut man on ball hit anywhere  
                    Hands up  
                    Proper cut technique  
                    Listen for call  
                    Anticipate a play---- always decoy the runner
- 5)                Cover 3B----you are in charge of the play

Line up 6 "Left, Right 2" etc...  
Call "cut" "cut 3, 2, 1" or "Let it come"  
Anticipate a play  
Throw for outs

- 4) Cover 2B  
Be ready for a play  
Watch runner  
Might exchange w/ 3 on ball in the hole

- 3) Cover 1B  
Watch runner tag base  
Anticipate a play  
Might exchange w/ 4 on ball in the hole

- 1) Back up 3B  
Not too close

- 2) Look to help out----cover home

- Single to left or left center-----Runner on 2B  
7, 8, & 9) Field ball

Look to back up each other  
9 back up 2B for second throw  
Overhand throw  
Hit the cutoff in the chin

- 5) Move to cutoff position  
Get deep enough to see 3B and 2B  
Hands up  
Listen for the calls  
Proper cutoff technique  
Be ready for anything  
Automatic cut on a ball that hits in front of you

- 6) Cover 3B  
Watch runner hit third

- 4, 3) Cover 2B and 1B  
Check runners  
Be ready for a play

- 2) In charge of play  
Line up cut man "left 2" etc...  
Call "Cut" etc...  
Throw for outs

- 1) Backup home  
Get deep enough  
Be ready to backup 3B

**Single to Center, Right Center, or Right----Runner on 2B**

- 7, 8, & 9)      Field ball  
Back each other up  
7 back up 2B for second throw  
Overhand throw  
Hit cutoff man in the chin
- 5, 6, & 4)      Cover 3B, 2B, & 1B  
Be ready for a play
- 3)              Move to cutoff position  
Get deep enough to see 1B and 2B  
Hands up  
Listen for the calls  
Proper cutoff technique  
Behind mound on a throw from center  
Be ready for anything----always decoy the runner  
Automatic cut on ball that hits in front of you
- 2)              In charge of play  
Lineup cutoff man "left 2" etc...  
Call cuts "Cut 2" etc...  
Throw for outs
- 1)              Backup home  
Get deep enough  
Ready to backup 3B

**Extra Base Hit to Left, Left Center, or Center---Any combination of runners**

- 7, 8, & 9)      Field the ball  
Backup where needed  
Overhand throw  
HIT THE CUTOFF
- 6)              Move to cut position as soon as you see the backs of the outfielders  
Know the outfielders arms  
Get out as far as necessary  
Hands up  
Proper cutoff technique  
Listen for the call  
Cut the ball and be ready  
If running in the ball----call time out
- 4)              "Trail" 6 to cutoff position  
Stay deep enough (20' away) to back up poor throw from the outfield  
Help 6 with where to throw the ball
- 5)              Cover 3B  
Help yell out catcher's call
- 3)              Watch hitter round bag and follow him into 2B  
Be ready to pick him off if he rounds too wide  
If hitter is going for a triple then slide down between third base and the mound  
as a second cutoff.



- 2) In charge of play  
YELL out the base number for the relay man  
Throw ahead of the runner  
Line up 3 for the second relay if necessary
- 1) Slide as a backup between 3B and home  
Try to anticipate where the play is going and back it up

#### **Extra Base Hit to Right Center or Right---Any combination of runners**

Same as left, left center, & center except 4 and 6 exchange responsibilities

#### **Backing up Bases**

Check that in all situations everybody is involved somewhere

#### **Proper Cut Technique**

Get lined up with the thrower and receiver  
Listen to calls---"left 2, right 1" etc...  
Get hands up  
When ball is coming in turn shoulders parallel to the flight of the ball  
Slide with the throw  
Catch ball with two hands together if cut call is made

If no cut call, fake through a cut---hold the runner.  
Go through a cut motion no matter if you cut the ball or not.

#### **Throw Behind Runner on Single to Right**

- 9) *(Use with no one on base)*  
Field ball  
Fake throw to 2B  
Overhand throw to catcher at 1B
- 8 & 7) Backup 2B in case of a play there
- 6) Cover 2B and line up throw to 2nd as usual  
Be ready for a play there
- 3) Stay off the base
- 2) Trail runner  
Got to 1B with hands up
- 1) Back up 1B

#### **Bunt Coverage — Man on 1B (#3)**

Anticipate Bunt

- Call out play number  
Move as batter squares  
*GET AN OUT SOMEWHERE*
- 1) Hold runner  
Throw a high fastball in the strikezone  
Break under control ---- Put weight on throwing leg  
Take everything if possible  
Take 3B line unless 5 calls you off
  - 3) Hold runner  
Break to field bunt ---- Be under control  
Cover 1B if you can
  - 4) Break *HARD* to 1B  
Setup on inside of bag  
Look for the throw chest high  
Push off bag and check runners
  - 6) Cover 2B ---- anticipate bunt  
Take throw on a fake bunt and steal
  - 5) Cheat in before pitch  
Anticipate a bunt  
Break hard to ball, but under control  
Take whatever you can get to  
Field ball with glove and foot together  
Hop and throw overhand  
Barehand only if ball is dead  
Get back to 3B if you don't field the ball
  - 2) Get rid of mask  
Field anything close  
Scoop ball with two hands  
Circle on middle or 1B line or spin technique on 3B line  
If you don't field the ball call out "2" or "1" ---- Get an out someplace  
Cover 3B if 5 fields the ball
  - 7, 8, & 9) Back up a base  
Look to help out

**Bunt Coverage with 4 Breaking in (Holding the runner close) (#4)**

- Anticipate bunt  
Call out play number
- 1) If ball is bunted hard, there should be a play at 2B  
Hold runner close  
Look to pick off runner  
Pick runner as 4 crosses path to 1B  
Break under control  
Cover 3B if 5 fields the ball
  - 4) Break early as pitcher is in the stretch  
Under control
  - 5) Cheat in before pitch  
Be under control
  - 3) Hold runner  
Take throw at 1B, if there is a pickoff attempt
  - 6) Cover 2B

- 7, 8, & 9) Backup bases
- 2) Get rid of mask  
Field ball if close enough  
Scoop with two hands  
Circle or spin technique  
Call "2" or "1" ---- Look to get force out at 2B  
Cover 3B if 5 gets the ball

#### **Bunt Coverage With Man on 2B or 1B and 2B**

- 1) Hold runner ---- step off if necessary  
Cover left side on bunt  
Break under control
- 4) Hold runner if Rt. handed batter  
Cheat in to cut down distance  
Batter squares ---- SPRINT to 1B  
Setup at bag then find ball
- 3) Cheat in for bunt  
Cover 1B if possible  
Hold if runner is on 1B
- 2) Get rid of mask  
Take charge  
Call play of field ball  
Get the sure out
- 5) Cover 3B  
Get out at 1B if ball gets by 1
- 6) Cover 2B
- 7, 8 & 9) Backup bases

#### **Defensing the Suicide Squeeze (5#)**

- 5) Hold runner ---- Pick off if necessary  
Break as he breaks  
Beat runner down the line  
Field anything possible and flip to home if there is a play  
Be ready for batter swinging  
*GET AN OUT SOMEWHERE*
- 1) Hold runner close ---- pickoff if necessary  
Deliver as he breaks back to bag  
Don't panic  
Cheat to 1B line and charge hard after the pitch  
*GET AN OUT SOMEWHERE*
- 2) Cover home

Field ball if right in front  
Call "1" if no play at home

- 3) Cover 1B
- 4) Cover 2B
- 6) Cover 3B
- 7, 8, & 9) Backup bases

#### **Pitcher Covering 1B**

- 1) Look to cover the bag on anything hit to the right side  
Talk with first baseman  
Sprint to 1B line about 15 to 20' in front of bag  
Run parallel to 1B line and on inside, have your glove up for a target  
Catch ball and then find the bag  
Hit inside of bag  
Set up at 1B, if throw is not there yet be a first baseman
- 3) Talk to pitcher  
Take anything you can  
Tag 1B yourself if possible  
Don't cross baseline  
Toss underhand or overhand depending on the circumstance  
Chest high  
Lead pitcher with chest high throw  
Get ball to him as soon as possible
- 6, 5) Cover 2B, 3B
- 4, 2, 7, 8, & 9) Backup

#### **Pop-ups**

##### **COMMUNICATE "Ball" or "Mine or Yours"**

Don't call too soon  
Check wind, sun  
Man with ball on the glove side takes what he can

- 2) Take anything behind the plate until 1, 5, or 3 call you off  
Back to the infield. Play the backspin
- 3) Take anything on the right side that you can get to  
Call off 2 if possible  
Take anything behind 1B until 4 or 9 call you off
- 5) Take anything on the right side  
Call off 2 if possible  
Take anything behind 3B until 6 or 7 calls you off
- 1) Take any short popups on or in front of mound
- 6) Take charge on left side and middle  
**TALK**  
Call off 5, 4, or 1 on any balls you can get to, especially behind third  
Go after flyballs until outfielder calls you off

- 4) Talk with 6 and 3  
Take anything behind 1B or deep until outfielder calls you off
- 8) Take charge  
TALK  
Call anything you can get to  
Don't call for it unless you can get it
- 7, 9) Take anything you can get unless 8 calls you off  
Call off infielders on anything you can get

#### **Popups with Runners on Base**

Make sure bases are covered  
Pitcher should cover unoccupied base  
Back up bases  
Check runners after catch  
Run ball in or get ball in to pitcher  
Call time out  
If popup is in the outfield whoever catches the ball hit cutoff

#### **Holding Runners**

- At 1B) 3 holds or sneaks in from behind  
Vary head fakes and looks  
Vary length of set  
Step off  
Throw over at various speeds  
Vary hand breaks  
Quick return after first baseman throws back
- At 2B) 4 holds on Rt. handed hitter  
6 holds on Lt. handed hitter ---- unless switched up by coaches  
Man holding has to work the runner hard  
If runner doesn't come back to bag, go to bag and signal for the ball ----(glove up)  
4 should move in closer to baseline to cut down distance  
6 same as 4 when holding, get directly behind runner  
You don't have to throw to 2B  
Try to deliver ball to plate as runner is moving back to base
- At 3B) Third baseman should work the runner back  
Stretch with less than two outs  
Use same techniques as with runner on 1B  
Runners on 1B & 3B ---- Fake to 3B throw to 1B

#### **Pick offs**

- At 1B) Keep runner close  
No set Pickoff  
When 4 is breaking for bunt coverage (#4) throw to 1B when 4 crosses line of sight  
5 backup return throw to pitcher  
"9" Call ---- **Team Fake Pickoff** ---- Must step off rubber before attempting  
Runner must have a big lead ---- late innings only (once or twice per year)  
Fake pick ball stays in the pitchers glove ---- or goes back there  
First baseman dives then gets up to pursue phantom ball towards leftfield fence  
Second baseman runs towards ball

Rt. fielder runs also  
Pitcher & Bench make "Ball" call loud so runner can't hear the coach  
Pitcher points and jogs toward direction of ball (& Runner)  
Pitcher tags out runner  
**WORKS BEST TOWARDS YOUR BENCH!!!!**

**At 2B)** Count "#6" call  
4 doesn't hold runner close  
6 directly behind runner and in, *Break when the pitcher looks home*  
1 Check runner and then look to plate (This starts play)  
1 and 6 start count "Thousand 1", "Thousand 2", and at "Thousand 3" the ball and 6 should be at the bag  
1 should use Spin on Kickturn *as soon as he looks to plate*  
Throw should be knee high over bag  
You don't have to throw  
"#8" call ---- **Team Fake Pickoff to 2B** ---- same as 1B only different participants

**At 3B)** Keep runner close  
No set pickoff  
Best time to pick is when suicide is on  
3 backup return throw to pitcher  
"#7" call ---- **Team Fake Pickoff to 3B** ---- same as 1B & 2B only different participants.

#### **Rundowns**

This applies for a rundown between any pair of bases  
Man on each base, cover until you see rundown, base is 1st responsibility  
(on pickoff to 1B, 6 takes bag at 2B).  
Two men working rundown on same side of baseline, two other players covering the bases.  
Man with the ball should throw the ball directly to base if runner has big jump  
Hold ball up and no more than a few early pump fakes. *Run at the runner*  
Force the action  
Watch the runners bellybutton  
Make tag if at all possible  
Man coming toward the runner, call for the ball early. ("NOW" call)  
*Break toward the ball when you call for it.* This is very important.  
If you don't get the ball get out of the way and keep going to the base in front of you.  
No more than one throw ---- 90% of the time.

#### **Defensing First and Third Situations**

##### **(#0) Throw to 3B**

Hold runner at 1B close  
5 let runner at 3B get a lead  
Pitcher deliver ball and hold follow through  
Catcher come up throwing directly to 3B  
6 and 4 should move to 2B as if the throw was coming through  
Look to pick man at 3B  
5 must cover 3B  
Run must not score

##### **(#1) Throw through**

Hold runner close  
Catcher take pitch and glance at 3B, *This is important.*  
While glancing start throw to 2B

##### **(#2) Automatic Cut**

4 or 6 cut ball

Try to throw chest high over bag  
If man at 3B has big lead fake throw and go to 3B  
6 go to bag ---- be ready for throw at all times  
4 cuts in front of 2B about halfway between mound and 2B facing 3B  
4 must read the play, cut the ball if the runner breaks for home or fake the cut if the runner holds.  
6 must be ready to make the tag at 2B if 4 fakes the cut.  
Be quick but don't hurry  
Stop the run

**Pitcher Intercepts Throw**

"Oskie" Call ---- Used if the hitter is very weak and down in the count  
Catcher throws hard as if throwing through, but the pitcher intercepts and looks at 3B

**First and Third Sit --- Runner stops between 1B and 2B**

Pitcher (or man with the ball) must check the runner at 3B ---- Freeze him  
4 break to bag  
Get ball to 4 as soon as possible  
Hold ball up and go after runner  
5 must yell if runner breaks or slides more than 1/3 the way down the line  
4 set and throw to home  
Be quick but don't hurry  
Stop the run

**Delayed Double Steal**

Infield stay alert --- and never turn to face outfielders between pitches  
Catcher always checks runners  
Throw ball to mound after pitch with something on it  
Defense same as runner stopping between 1B and 2B

**Covering Home on a Wild Pitch**

1 cover home  
2 Get rid of mask  
Set back Ft. or knee to throw  
Throw knee high to plate  
3 back up throw behind mound  
5 cover 3B  
6 & 4 cover bag and backup 3

**Throwing Ball Around after a K**

2 - 5 - 4 - 6 - 5 - 1

**Throwing Ball Around after a Groundout**

3 - 4 - 6 - 5

**Catcher Backup First on Groundouts**

Only with noone on base  
Get as deep as possible behind second base  
Be ready for Overthrow

**Backing Pitcher with Men on Base**

This must always be done by 6 or 4  
Man not taking throw at 2B must move in behind pitcher

## Basic Defensive Locations

These will change depending upon various situations, arms of infielders, speed of runners, Rt. or Lt. handed batter, etc...

- 7 & 9) Left and Right fielders play 4 steps out from an imaginary line through the 1B ---- 2B and 2B ---- 3B lines.
- 8) Centerfielder directly in line with 2B --- home
- 3) First baseman 10' x 10' from first base
- 4 & 6) Second baseman and shortstop 25' x 25' from second base
- 5) Third baseman 5' x 5' from 3B

## Infield Depth

- #4) All infielders in the grass. Make the play at home. Do or Die
- #3) Half way. Take a look at home but be sure to get an out.
- #2) Double play depth. 1B (holding) and 3B even and SS & 2B button up (2 steps in and 2 steps closer to 2B).
- #1) All Deep. Cover as much ground as possible and get outs. (slow runner ---- big lead)

## Mental Defense

Infielders and outfielders pick up catcher's signals

Listen to bench and shift according to previous at bats

With lead late in the game guard the foul lines. No extra base hits.

With big lead late in the game 3 does not hold the runner. Tell the pitcher and fake in behind the runner if necessary.

Infield in to cut off winning or tying run. Where you can get runner on an easy grounder

Two up the middle in at the corners. (practice this)

Outfield in with winning run on 3B

Runners on 1B and 2B, Ball hit in the hole at short, go to third if possible

Runner on 1B and 2B, Ball hit up the middle, get two.

Get the easy out ---- Force play if possible ---- Use your head.

## Pregame Infield

Outfielders throw to 2B (2x) One on the ground ---- one in the air.

5 & 3 Take groundballs

Outfielders throw to 3B (2x) “ “

4 & 3 Take groundballs

Outfielders throw to Home (2X) “ “

Outfielders take flyballs

Catchers throw to each infielder

One --- no cover, One --- cover

Two ---- no cover

Two ---- cover

Home and first



**Baserunning** ---- Use two sets of runners at each base when practicing

<b>Dugout ----</b>	Check pitcher's control Check pitcher's pickoff moves ---- 1B dugout is best Try to steal signs
<b>On Deck ----</b>	Check outs, baserunners Check signs from 3B coach Get bats and helmets out of the way Help runners that are scoring. Up or down (sliding)
<b>Batters Box ----</b>	Check signs as the situation calls for it Call timeout by requesting it, don't just step out Help runners on a wild pitch If runner is on 2B look to see if he has the signs

<b>Home to first --- Run everything out.</b>	College times	H-1B	3.9-4.1 seconds
		H-2B	7.8 seconds

On groundballs run straight at bag  
Hit base with either foot ---- don't lunge  
Break down after hitting the bag and look to the fence (1B side)  
Look for bad throws  
Push off with Rt. leg and accelerate if you decide to go  
On balls behind you get on outside of baseline  
Hit orange part of bag unless ball is in 1B foul territory  
If 3 comes off the bag toward you then slide  
Runout every basehit as a double  
Dip out (banana out) 1/2 to 2/3 the way down the 1B line to round the bag  
Hit bag on inside corner with either foot and lean towards 2B, push off hard  
Listen to 1B coach and find baseball, ball on glove side go  
With 2 outs you can gamble

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Never make the third out at 3B ---- Best time to go is with one out

- Stealing ----** Check signs on bag ---- Don't have to go  
Take longer lead if possible ---- Get a long two way lead to draw a throw and check the pitcher's move vs. lefties  
Open Rt. Foot and drive left hand at 2B  
Go hard ---- Even if you get picked off  
If you hear contact look for the ball  
Look for delayed steal off of catcher and infield
- On 2B ----** Runner watch 1 and 4 ---- Don't lose sight of the ball  
Third base coach has 6  
Call "alright" or "back"  
Try to steal catcher's signals  
One arm out ---- fastball  
Two arms out ---- curveball  
Lead off straight at 3B unless there are 2 out, then lead off back toward SS, to have a better angle to come home on a hit  
Advance on a groundball (past 1) on the right side  
Ball must be through the infield in front of you  
Don't run into a tag  
Flyball to Rt. or Rt. Center maybe a tag  
Popup (Fly) to outfield ---- Lead off far enough that you can't be doubled off if it is dropped.  
Basehit ---- Dip out and watch 3B Coach  
Don't run a man off at 3B ---- make sure they go before you do
- On 3B ----** Check Depth of infield.  
CONTACT PLAY ---- Groundball past mound GO  
REGULAR ---- Groundball past mound, score if infield is back  
Read the downangle of the ball ---- Go on most choppers or slow rollers.  
If you are obviously out ---- get in a rundown  
Lead off outside baseline ---- 3 slides or as far as third baseman  
Secondary lead ---- 2 steps in the stretch & 4 steps if in the windup  
Weight going to the plate with pitch  
Come back by crossing Rt. over Lt. and inside the baseline  
Slide with pitch, weight going toward home  
Come back on inside of baseline  
Flyball ---- Get back to bag and listen to 3B coach  
Be ready for suicide ---- Acknowledge the sign (Touch Helmet)  
When scoring look for on deck hitter's signals  
On your own on a wild pitch of passed ball
- Sliding ----** When in doubt ---- slide 9-10 Ft. from the bag  
Slide opposite the tag  
Don't jump up
- Head First ----** Lay out  
Hands, chest, belly
- Bent Leg ----** Take off on most natural leg  
Curl leg under  
Hands up, feet up, lay back  
Stay low

Slide on calf and thigh  
Lead leg up and relax

**Pop Up ---** Same as bent leg except slide on calf more than thigh  
Hit bag and roll up over calf  
Lift up the arms

**Hook Slide ---** 93' slide

### **First and Third Double Steal**

Steal signal  
Man on 1B does same as regular steal  
Man on 3B slides with pitch  
Watch for fake throw to 2B  
Cutoff at mound  
Shortstop sliding in behind mound  
Try to get big picture  
Takeoff as ball clears pitcher  
Once you commit, go hard

### **First and Third Double Steal --- Delayed**

Delayed steal signal  
Man on 1B break as catcher catches or releases ball  
Go hard --- straight steal  
Man on 3B slide with 1  
Break for plate when 1 releases ball

### **Runners Moving with 3 - 2 Count and 2 Outs**

Slide with motion  
Make sure pitcher delivers ball to plate  
Look for ball if you hear contact

### **Runner on 1B --- 3B Tagging on a Popup**

Less than 2 outs  
If ball is deep enough behind 1B, 3B or the plate, runner on 1B should tag and go  
Runner on 3B tag and read play  
Go if there is a play at 2B

### **Wearing Your Uniform**

Hair tucked in under hat in front and sides  
Shirt tucked in and buttoned  
Red or black undershirt only  
Black sleeves if showing under uniform  
Pants buckled and zipped  
Black socks  
Black, red spikes only (varsity black)  
In Full Uniform **before** entering park and until **outside** of park

## HITTING BASICS

**Bat Selection** Light, light, light. Speed over weight. Pick a bat that you can swing easily with your bottom hand only.

**Stance** Everyone has their own style.

Feet Spread where you feel strong, relaxed, and on balance

Extend arms to make sure you have plate coverage with the bat

Bring hands back to a comfortable position

Loose hands and elbows

Eyes level



Bring hands back to a comfortable position by your back shoulder

Look at where the pitcher releases the ball

Loose hands and elbows

**While the stance is an individual thing, through stop action photography it has been determined that every good hitter uses the following three steps.**

## Three Step Approach

### #1. Hitting Position (Launch)

Step (Stride) to a strong base (Small step with weight still back)

Butt up and level

Relaxed hands back over rear leg

Top hand closer to head than bottom hand

Front elbow down and relaxed

Eyes level on ball

Relaxed hands back over rear leg

2. Hip Turn (Trigger) This step and step.

3. Swing(Drive) happen at almost the same time

Slight hip turn

Lift the back heel

Bend the front knee slightly Keep the hands back over the rear leg

Eyes level on the ball



**THE THREE STEPS MUST BE PRACTICED OVER AND OVER AGAIN SO THAT THEY COME NATURALLY IN A GAME.**

**DRILLS (practice-practice-practice)**

**Stations**

- (1) Karate Chop (on front knee---front (one) hand swing w/ wiffles)
- (2) Top of Ball (Standing---two handed swing hitting top of ball into fence w/ wiffles)
- (3) Whiffle Toss (Soft toss w/ whiffles into fence---2 types: fastball & offspeed)
- (4) Tee Drill #1 (Full Tee drill w/ baseballs ---- line drive focus)
- (5) Opposite Field (Tee Drill #2 w/ baseballs ---- Hit to the opposite field)
- (6) Short Toss (Put it all together---short distances for quickness)
- (7) Bunting station should be added after it has been covered.

**Mental Part of Hitting**

Hitting a baseball is the hardest skill in all of sports

Keep your confidence. Remember 3 hits in 10 at bats is a good hitter. Don't get down those other 7 times.

Be aggressive but only swing at strikes.

Try to hit line drives and ground balls. Flyballs are easy outs. In high school 1 out of every 4 plays is an error.

Be selective until two strikes. Then choke up and shorten your stride.

**Sacrifice Bunt**

Pivot on balls of feet or square up to pitcher when pitcher lifts his knee. Don't step on the plate.

Bat shoulder level with barrel at top of the strike zone and handle held lower.

Hands relaxed ---- Top hand pinch the trademark.

Arms extended, *Catch the ball with the bat.*

Philosophy ---- 4th inning on anybody might bunt.

Bunt toward 1B with runner on 1B.

Bunt toward 3B with runner on 2B.

Bunt the ball so the pitcher can't field it.

**BUNT STRIKES**

Runner watch for pickoff

Make sure all is down ---- Then go hard

Get back if bunt is missed.

**Bunting for a Base Hit**

Pivot ---- wait as long as possible, stay on balls of feet

Hands ---- slide top hand and pinch

Body ---- Lean forward as ball comes in  
Feet ---- Push off on front foot while making contact

Bunt down 3B line or the weakest fielder between 1B or 3B

### **Suicide Squeeze**

Batter and runner get sign  
Batter returns sign  
Batter must square around like a sacrifice bunt  
MAKE CONTACT  
Runner breaks as pitcher delivers to the plate ---- Go hard!!!

### **Suicide Squeeze with Runners on 1B and 3B**

Batter and runners get sign  
Batter returns sign  
Special sign for runner on 1B  
Batter and runner on 3B work regular suicide squeeze  
Try to bunt ball down the 3B line past pitcher  
Runner on 1B slide with pitch  
Go hard to 2B, hit bag and round  
- Go if there is a play at 1B

### **Suicide Squeeze with Runners on 2B and 3B**

Batter and runners get sign  
Batter returns sign  
Special sign for runner on 2B  
Batter and runner work regular suicide squeeze  
Runner on 2B break hard for 3B  
Try to follow runner on 3B ---- Be on his tail.

### **Bunt Runner from 1B to 3B**

Batter and runner get sign  
Special sign for runner on 1B  
Batter try to bunt ball down 3B line ---- Make 5 field the ball  
Runner slide with the pitch  
Go hard to 2B  
Round bag and go if there is a play at 1B

### **Bunt with Runner on 2B**

Get the sign  
Look to score  
Don't get picked ---- slide w/ pitch  
Bunt down first

### **Bunt with Runners on 1B and 2B**

Get the sign  
Look for score and third  
Watch pickoff ---- slide with pitch  
Ball must be down 3B line ---- if possible

## **PRACTICES**

*Success is a direct result of preparation and hard work*

### **DAILY PRACTICE**

Practice is always on unless scheduled off or unless the coach cancels. Inclement weather doesn't cancel practice. There is a number of things that can be accomplished in the gym  
Practice should start when everyone has arrived by jogging around the field to left field to stretch, run, and play catch (using mechanics).  
Off season pitching and catching practices are optional but strongly recommended. Off season weight lifting is strongly encouraged. (as well as participating in other sports)

### **ON FIELD PRACTICE TIME**

Sharing the practice field is necessary for the benefit of the program and the players. Before any changes in the practice schedule are made you must look over the master schedule and be sure there are no other teams using the field.

On field practice topics should focus on defense:

Fungos  
Bunt coverage  
Situations  
Pickoffs  
Throwing to bases  
Scrimmages  
Pre-game infield

### **OFF FIELD PRACTICE TIME**

Players can work on many skills off the field such as:

Hitting Drills/Stations (p. 36) (w/ whiffles/tennis balls only)  
Baserunning (p.27)  
Sliding (p.29)  
Stealing (p.28)  
Cut-off Technique (p.15)  
Bunting (p.36-38)  
Pitchers Drills (p.3)  
Rundowns (p.24) (staying in a rundown)



### **INDOOR PRACTICES (Due to inclement weather)**

Early season (when school is still in session) all indoor practices must be cleared by the head varsity coach so gym conflicts (Varsity, sophomore, freshman teams, track teams, soccer, etc...) can be checked over and arranged. If the gym is available during your scheduled practice time use it. Many things can be accomplished with a small group (pitchers only, catchers only, infielders or outfielders) such as:

- Hitting Drills/Stations
- Baserunning
- Stealing
- Fielding (Tunnel Drill, Pickups, Mechanical fielding, etc...)
- Bunting
- Bunt Coverage
- Cut-off Technique
- Rundowns & staying in a rundown
- Pitcher's Drills
- Pick offs
- Holding runners