

Stealing Bases Tidbits



Straight Steal of 2nd Base

- Get a regular primary lead and then just a little farther, but don't get an obviously bigger lead.
- Have a little bit of movement in the primary lead to give momentum.
- The base runner should be leading off at a height he will be running at. They shouldn't be squatting down because the first move will be an upward move, which will slow the runner.
- Stay on the same plane, running at the same height as your primary lead
- Slide aggressively to the base, but not dirty keeping the spikes down.
- To reduce sliding scrapes to the lower body, also know as "strawberries," the player should think about gliding on the ground, and not landing on just one area of the body.
- To reduce shoulder injuries when sliding head first, the base runner should extend his arms outwards to not jam the shoulders. Again, to reduce "strawberries," land on a big surface of the body.
- To reduce finger injuries when sliding, the base runner should either hold his batting gloves in his hands or pick up a small handful of infield dirt to keep his hands fisted limiting any potential for jammed fingers.
- The hands should also be raised to the sides when sliding feet first to eliminate any hand scrapes, unless they are using their hand in a feet first hand slide that is many times used at home plate
- If the ball beats the runner he should slide into glove trying to knock the baseball out of the glove.
- Coaches should think about giving their top base stealers the "green light" to steal when they get a good jump. This will build confidence in the base runners. A "red light" or stop stealing signal can always be used.
- Many teams steal on 3-2 counts to stay out of the double play, so be aware of being the pick off with a full count as well.
- A base runner should never get picked off when they are not stealing 2nd base

Straight Steal of 3rd Base

- The base runner has to have some speed to steal 2nd base and he needs a good primary lead.
- If the 3rd base coach signals to the base runner that a middle infielder is creeping in the steal should be taken off, as the element of surprise is gone.
- If the base runner gets picked off 2nd base when he is stealing it is many times also the 3rd base coach's fault for not communicating with him.
- Teams should chart the opponent's pitcher on the number of looks he makes to 2nd base, as many times pitchers get in the same routine.

Straight Steal of Home Base.

- When stealing home plate the base runner needs to get a huge walking lead and “time” his break the exact time the pitcher makes his first move.
- Obviously, this has to be done when the pitcher is only in the wind up position, slow to home plate, isn’t paying attention and the 3rd baseman is playing off the base.
- If the pitcher looks over to 3rd base the runner shouldn’t attempt to steal
- If the 3rd baseman creeps closer to the base the runner shouldn’t attempt to steal.

1st and 3rd Base Steal and Double Steal

- This steal is especially effective with fast base runners, especially the runner at 3rd base.
- The runner at 1st base does a regular steal of 2nd base, unless there are two outs. In this situation he should never run into the 3rd out right at the base, but rather get in a rundown to try to allow the runner on 3rd base to score.
- The runner on 3rd base should break towards home plate on a high throw to 2nd from the catcher. He should be aware of a fake throw or throw back to the pitcher, as well.
- If the base runners get in a run down situation the runner on 3rd base should “creep off the base” looking to break to home plate if a fielder is running out of control to attempt to tag the other base runner or the first time a throw is made from the 1st base side to 2nd base, which will make it a longer throw for the defense to make.

Fake Steals at 1st, 2nd and 3rd Base

- Have a shorter primary lead on a fake steal.
- Make it look like you’ll be stealing by taking small “inch off” fakes when the pitcher is set. Coaches can tell their players to act like they have “ants in their pants” to get them to show this extra movement. This will call attention to the base runner.
- When the pitcher releases the ball the base runner should take a few hard running steps. The number of steps depends on the size of the steps and the speed/quickness of the runner. No runner should get off more than 15 feet.
- Make a grunting noise when you fake. Effectively, this will alert the catcher and middle infielders.
- The main goal is to make the middle infielders “close up to 2nd base” opening up hitting holes. This will also indicate which middle infielder will be covering 2nd base on a steal, which will help determine if you will hit and run and to what side of the infield.
- The fake steal also puts more attention from the pitcher to the base runner.
- The primary lead at 2nd base on a fake steal can be farther than 1st base because there is nobody holding the runner directly on the base and it’s a longer throw back for the catcher.
- Put “ants in your pants,” so the catcher sees you are moving and thinks you’re stealing.
- At 2nd base the base runner should take five to six steps depending on foot speed, and again make a grunting noise.
- The base runner can also fake steal when they hear an “alright,” verbal signal from the 3rd base coach and the steal isn’t on. Take two steps off the base and then move back one-step. They should be ready for the coach to yell “back,” which signals the base runner back to the base.

- This can also be done at 3rd base to try to get the pitcher's attention off of the hitter and also try to have the pitcher balk. When the pitcher is coming set or looking over at 3rd base, the runner can fake steal.
- Base runners should never get picked off when only fake stealing.

Delay Steal of 2nd Base

- A regular primary lead should be taken or even a little shorter lead off 1st base
- When the pitcher delivers the baseball the runner takes quiet shuffle steps.
- The shuffle steps are similar to a regular secondary lead.
- The shoulders need to stay level, so the runner is not hopping up and down.
- Don't cross over the feet or break early
- Get your upper body working with your lower body
- The runner needs to get as much distance to 2nd base before the catcher catches the baseball.
- The runner breaks hard to 2nd base right after the catcher receives the ball. The runner can't start sprinting to 2nd base before that, as the middle infielders will then cover 2nd base.
- The pop-up slide should be used every time, as many times the ball will beat the runner to the base but there won't be a middle infielder covering the base. This way the runner can get up quicker and possibly advance to 3rd base.
- The fake bunt/delay steal should never be put on with only a runner on 1st base. The shortstop will be covering 2nd base and the runner will be thrown out easily.
- A 1st and 3rd fake suicide bunt/delay steal can be put on. The fake suicide bunt takes the attention off of the delay steal runner.
- On a 1st and 3rd delay steal with two outs and fake bunt is on, the runner should get into a rundown if the ball beats them to the base
- A properly executed delay steal is when the ball beats you to 2nd base, but the middle infield isn't there and the ball goes into center field.

Delay Steal of 3rd Base

- A speedy base runner on 2nd base that sees a lazy catcher that is throwing the ball back to the pitcher off his knees can steal 3rd base on his throw back.
- The base runner should casually get a bigger secondary lead and time his move the same time the catcher is lobbing the ball back to the pitcher. Even if he sees you breaking you will have enough time to get back to 2nd base, as he is on his knees.

