

## Softball sliding

Why slide? To not be tagged out when there is a close play at a base. When going to 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> base, it also keeps you from over-running the base on a close play and being tagged out. Finally, this will prevent a possible collision with the defensive player, especially at home plate. In an all-star game, a runner can be called out at a close play at home if they don't slide, even if they otherwise were safe.

### Basics:

Run at full speed toward the base; slowing down makes sliding harder and defeats the purpose of getting to the base as fast as possible on a close play.

Start your slide when you are about 4 long steps from the base; this will vary somewhat by player.

Pick a leg you are most comfortable with as the leg that will be extended, going out straight for the base. Don't drag this foot; keep it up in the air slightly, so your cleats don't get caught in the dirt before you hit the base.

The other leg will form a figure-four, knee bent, foot and ankle under the knee of the extended leg.

Lean back some as you finish your slide; don't end in a full sitting position (less effective slide and it will hurt more with that weight distribution); can shift weight more toward the side of the body toward your bent leg.

Your hands should be in the air, not on the ground; don't try to cushion yourself with your hands; could sprain your wrists that way.

You are sliding out and down toward the base, not up—don't jump up to start your slide—it is more likely to hurt.

### Learning the basics:

Players can sit in place to ensure they understand the correct form:

- Bent leg under the extended leg
- Keep hands up and lean weight back off the legs slightly
- Practice at 2/3 speed to full speed; going too slow makes it harder
- Can slide in the grass, use a large piece of cardboard or a wet slip and slide (there are tarps in our field boxes for this)
- Can have a coach on either side of the sliding path, where the player can grab their hands and then do the slide
- When sliding on dirt, always wear long pants and long socks so you don't get scraped up. You can purchase sliding pants for extra cushion.

Some short videos:

[https://www.google.com/search?q=softball+sliding&rlz=1C1UEAD\\_enUS1014US1014&oq=softball+sliding&aqs=chrome.O.69i59j69i64j35i39j0i20i131i263i433i512j46i199i433i465i512j0i433i512j69i60l2.1806j0j4&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8#fpstate=ive&vld=cid:ad51d2ee,vid:7-ZjEtdogco](https://www.google.com/search?q=softball+sliding&rlz=1C1UEAD_enUS1014US1014&oq=softball+sliding&aqs=chrome.O.69i59j69i64j35i39j0i20i131i263i433i512j46i199i433i465i512j0i433i512j69i60l2.1806j0j4&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8#fpstate=ive&vld=cid:ad51d2ee,vid:7-ZjEtdogco)

<https://www.teamsnap.com/community/skills-drills/softball/softball-baserunning/151-sliding-technique>  
<https://www.softball-spot.com/baserunning-learning-to-slide/2893/>

More advanced:

Pop-up slide: This is to slide into a base, pop up quickly on an overthrow (or a no-throw) and be ready to run to the next base.

- At the end of your normal slide, immediately lean forward and push yourself up with the extended leg foot that just hit the base and your bent leg that's on the ground.
- To help learn this, a coach can be behind the base; grab your hand and help pull you up.
- If you slide with your right leg extended and left leg bent, you will have a slight advantage because when you pop up, you will be facing the next base.

Slide by grab / hook slide: This is to avoid a tag when you are pretty sure you will get tagged out doing a normal slide.

- Start your slide later than a normal slide; about 2 – 3 long steps from the base.
- Aim for the outside of the base and away from the defensive player; you are trying to slide past the base to help avoid the tag.
- Grab the base with your hand as you slide past. If it's home plate, drag or tap your hand on the plate as you slide past.

Head-first slide: Main purpose; you are already on base, you have taken a lead, and the catcher is trying to throw you out; you need to get back to your base as fast as possible. You should practice this before doing it in a game; batting gloves will help with not getting your hands scraped up.

- Lean forward toward the base.
- Step to the base, get low, dive to the base (don't jump up or it's more likely to hurt).
- Step and dive so that you don't touch the ground until you have touched the base also.