



# Baserunning and Sliding Mechanics/Fundamentals

Jack Parks – Wreckers Player Development



<b>Baserunning</b>	
Track Start	The player should begin with their non-dominant leg on the edge of the base facing the next base. Use the base to push off as a track runner would use a starting block.
Timing	The baserunner can safely leave a base when the ball has been released on a pitch. Recommended for baserunners to simulate and mirror the pitcher's arm rotation as a timing cue to leave the base.
Rules	<p><b>1) Dropped 3<sup>rd</sup> Strike</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) The batter becomes a base runner when the catcher does not catch 3<sup>rd</sup> strike (ball hits the ground) AND<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>i) 1<sup>st</sup> base is NOT occupied with 0 or 1 out</li><li>ii) There are 2 outs</li></ul></li></ul> <p><b>2) Infield Fly Rule</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) An infield fly is a fair fly which can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort and provided the hit is made before two are out and at a time when <b>first and second base or all bases are occupied.</b></li><li>b) Does not include a line drive or an attempted bunt.</li><li>c) Does not preclude outfielders from being allowed to make the catch. (outfielders can make the catch)</li><li>d) RESULT: Umpire automatically calls the batter out.</li></ul> <p><b>3) Base Running</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) Stealing is allowed except during a dead ball. Look-back rule is in effect.</li><li>b) <b>Look-Back Rule (16' pitching circle)</b> The rule is in effect when the ball is live, the batter-runner has touched first base or has been declared out, and the pitcher has possession of the ball (e.g. has the ball in their hand, glove, under arm or chin, between their legs) within the 16-foot circle.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>i) <b>Any runner(s) in motion may continue without stopping or may stop once.</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>(1) Any runner who is stopped or stops their motion must immediately move directly back to the last base touched or attempt to advance to the next base.</li><li>(2) Once the runner stops at a base for any reason, they may not move off that base.</li></ul></li><li>ii) A batter-runner who overruns first and does not without delay attempt to advance to second is committed to return to first and stop.</li><li>iii) <b>The runner, off base, may not stand motionless.</b></li><li>iv) There does not need to be any motion or recognition by the pitcher.</li><li>v) Failure of the runner to respond as indicated shall cause the Umpire to signal the runner out. The ball shall be declared dead.</li></ul></li></ul>



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	<p>vi) If the pitcher no longer has possession of the ball within the 16-foot circle, <b>the pitcher makes an attempt on any of the runners or a fake throw is made, this rule does not apply. (This section of the rule is not observed in the Mentor Girls Softball League)</b></p> <p>vii) Being in the 16-foot circle is defined as both feet within or partially within the line. The feet may touch the line and extend outside the line. When the pitcher is in the pitcher’s circle and a runner(s) is off the base, the pitcher is considered to be playing on the runner(s) when the throwing arm is raised or any forward movement of the body is made toward the runner. Movement of the head is not considered an attempted play. <b>(This section of the rule is not observed in the Mentor Girls Softball League)</b></p> <p>viii) <b>EFFECT: The ball becomes dead immediately. The runner is out.</b></p> <p>4) Head-first Sliding</p> <p>a) The rules may vary by rulebook (USSSA, ASA, NFHS, NCAA, etc) on head-first sliding to a base. All allow for head-first sliding BACK to a base. Use caution when head-first sliding where leading hands can often be cleated by fielder.</p>
Rounding Bases	<p>As the player rounds the bases, they should use their right foot to step on the corner of the base.</p> <p>When a batter hits the ball into the outfield and anticipates rounding 1<sup>st</sup> base, the runner should take a wide approach into foul territory when stepping on the corner of 1<sup>st</sup> base.</p>
Tag Up	<p>Ensure your players learn to tag up.</p> <p>When a ball is hit into the field of play (fair or FOUL!) and the ball is caught by the fielder, the baserunner may advance to the next base if they touch the base they last occupied at the time of the last pitch.</p>
2 Outs	<p>Baserunners should be advancing to the next base on bat contact regardless of a fly or ground ball.</p>
Aggressiveness	<p>Aggressive baserunning teams can win or lose a game based on the player’s baserunning savvy. Savvy baserunning will aggravate the defense and result in additional runs.</p> <p>Careful NOT to run your team out of an inning when being too aggressive and foolish on the base paths.</p> <p>General rule of thumb: Do not make the first or last out at 3<sup>rd</sup> or home base.</p>



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<b>Sliding</b>	
Momentum	<p>The most important aspect of the slide is for the runner to keep their momentum moving towards the base. The player does not want to lose momentum when sliding to the base.</p> <p>Depending on the speed and skill of the runner, the slide usually begins about 4 feet from the base.</p>
Strategy	<p>Purpose of the slide is to stay low to the ground and avoid the tag out.</p> <p>Players often slide past the base and use their hands to secure the base.</p>
Lead Slide Foot	<p>Players generally prefer to slide with their dominant foot extended.</p> <p>Lead foot should be extended with a slight knee bend and off the ground.</p> <p>The slight knee bend helps avoid knee injuries.</p>
Bottom Foot	<p>The inside ankle of the bottom leg should be positioned under the calf of the lead slide foot, forming a figure "4".</p>
Arms/Hands	<p>Hands should be placed shoulder level or above to prevent injury.</p>
Popup Slide	<p>An advanced technique is to pop up at the base when sliding. This is very effective when the ball is overthrown at the base.</p> <p>The player uses their forward momentum, hands up, torso core muscles, and bottom leg/foot to push forward and upward at the end of their slide.</p>

<b>Additional Resources</b>	
How to Run the Bases in Softball with Mike Candrea	<a href="https://youtu.be/awBfD3Fm-y4">https://youtu.be/awBfD3Fm-y4</a>
Baserunning: Learning To Slide	<a href="https://youtu.be/g_VnRRY5KYc">https://youtu.be/g_VnRRY5KYc</a>
How to Slide - ProSwing's Tip of the Week	<a href="https://youtu.be/8BIbkFkhAMA">https://youtu.be/8BIbkFkhAMA</a>