



“The Hitting Small Ball Game” A Fundamental Checklist for Hitters

Hit and Run with a Runner on 1st Base

1. The hitter needs to make slight plate adjustments, 2” away from the plate and 2” back in the batter's box. This will give the batter a more effective angle to hit the ball to the opposite side of the infield.
2. The hitter must swing the bat, unless the pitch is uncatchable.
3. The hitter should think the pitch will be “in” then “away” with the pitch location, as it’s easier to hit the “away pitch.”
4. Stay inside the baseball.
5. Lead the arm action with the knob of the bat to the baseball.
6. Keep the bat level. Don’t drop the head of the bat.
7. Chop down on the ball to hit ground balls and keep the ball out of the air. The hitter needs to get on top of the ball to hit a ground ball. Hitting the ball up in the air could result in a double play.
8. Don’t hit the ball up the middle to eliminate a potential double play, as a middle infielder will be covering 2nd base.
9. Right-handed hitters should hit the ball in the 3-4 hole between the 1st and 2nd baseman.
10. Left-handed hitters should hit the ball in the 5-6 hole between the shortstop and 3rd baseman.
11. Really good contact hitters can wait to see what middle infielder is covering 2nd base and hit it to that empty hole.
12. Don’t step on or over plate, so you aren’t called for interference.
13. The barrel of the bat has to stay level. A common fault is to drop the barrel below the hands and pop up or foul off the ball.
14. If the runner gets a great jump the hitter shouldn’t swing at the pitch. This is easier for the hitter to see when hitting and running with runners on 2nd base, as the runner is right in his vision.
15. The runner(s) need to take a look after their third step to see the ball. If the runner can’t see the ball they need to look over to the 3rd base coach.
16. The hitter shouldn’t swing if the pitch is uncatchable.
17. If the pitch is high out of the strike zone the hitter still needs to swing to protect the runner, as this is an easier throw for the catcher. When doing this don’t step over the plate and make contact with the catcher, as interference will be called.
18. On an infield line drive, the runner should continue to run hard towards the base, unless you can make it back on a ball hit to the shortstops 5-6 hole. If the line drive is caught the runner won’t have time to return to 1st base, as they will be too far off the base.

Run and Hit Steal

1. The base runner has the same responsibilities, but the hitter doesn't have to swing at a ball out of the strike zone on the run and hit.
2. A great time to run and hit is on a full count to stay out of a ground ball double play.

Hit and Run with a Runners on 1st and 2nd Base

1. All of the same characteristics of a hit and run with just a runner on 1st base should be used.
2. The hitter doesn't need to hit the ball in either hole. They just need to make sure they hit the baseball on the ground and not up the middle or in the air.
3. This play should really only be put on with one out as a fly ball or line drive could very easily result in a triple play.
4. The runner on 2nd base needs to get a little bigger primary lead than normal.
5. The runner on 1st base shouldn't just coast into 2nd base, as many good catchers will throw the ball down to 2nd base if the hitter doesn't make contact.
6. The hitter should be aware of a great jump from the runner at 2nd base and not swing if he gets a jump.

Fake Bunt and Hit (Slash)

1. The batter should show the sacrifice bunt early to get the defense moving.
2. The hitter needs to make it look like they are sacrifice bunting to get the defense to move out of position.
3. If the defense doesn't rotate, bunt the baseball. If they rotate and are out of position, slash the baseball.
4. Squat down and bend your knees to create power.
5. Bring both hands together when bringing the bat back to the hitting position.
6. Choke up on the bat 2-3" when slashing.
7. Slash strikes only. Don't swing at pitches out of the strike zone.
8. With a runner on just 1st base usually slash to the right side of the infield as the 1st and 2nd baseman/.
9. With runner on 1st and 2nd base usually slash to the left side of the infield, as the 3rd baseman and shortstop will be out of position.
10. Both of the previous points can vary with different defensive movements.
11. Hit ground balls, as there will be big holes in the infield.
12. Because the runner isn't stealing it's not as important if the batter hits the ball in the air. However, a slash and steal would require the batter to hit the ball on the ground.
13. The runner(s) on base do not steal on this play, as it's more difficult to execute. However, with a well trained contact hitter the fake bunt/hit and run can be put on.

Fake Slash and Swing and Miss

1. All of the same actions of a regular slash should take place.
2. The hitter purposely swings and misses the pitch.
3. Make sure the pitch is a strike. If it's a ball, just let it go.
4. Swing over the top of the baseball.
5. The hitter must swing the same time the ball crosses the plate
6. The batter again can't cross over the plate.
7. The goal is to make it look like you are trying to slash and that contact just wasn't made. The hitter should make it look like he messed up by not making contact.
8. This puts added pressure on the defense.
9. Coaches should use this offensive tactic with players that aren't great at slashing or in times they don't want the hitter to actually slash.
10. The batter should get deeper in the batter's box, to try to get in the catcher's line of site. This is especially true on the fake bunt/swing and miss/steal.