

## Softball – infield positions – playing 2<sup>nd</sup> base

- Starting position is generally halfway between 1<sup>st</sup> base and 2<sup>nd</sup> base and one step inside the baseline (toward home plate). This can depend on the batter though; for a hard-hitting batter, you may want to play a couple of steps behind the baseline (toward the outfield vs. toward home).
- Area of coverage includes from 2<sup>nd</sup> base to about halfway between 1<sup>st</sup> base person's starting position and 2<sup>nd</sup> base person's starting position.
- If 1<sup>st</sup> base has to move well away from 1<sup>st</sup>, then 2<sup>nd</sup> base person will generally run and cover 1<sup>st</sup>.
- If a ball is hit between 1<sup>st</sup> base position and 2<sup>nd</sup> base position, 2<sup>nd</sup> base is either fielding the ball and throwing to 1<sup>st</sup> or running to cover 1<sup>st</sup> if the 1<sup>st</sup> base has already cut off and fielded the ball.
- If the batter shows a bunt is coming, 1<sup>st</sup> base should charge in close to halfway between 1<sup>st</sup> and home and 2<sup>nd</sup> base needs to run and cover 1<sup>st</sup>.
- Priority #1 is getting to the ball in their area they are defending before worrying about covering any base (except when the batter shows bunt).
- If there is a runner already at 1<sup>st</sup> and the ball is hit to you:
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> base person fields the ball fairly quickly; can look to tag the runner coming to you and then throw to 1<sup>st</sup> or throw to the shortstop (who should be covering 2<sup>nd</sup> base).
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> base person is not able to field the ball quickly, then just try to get the out at 1<sup>st</sup> base.
- If there is a runner already at 1<sup>st</sup> and the ball is not hit: Run and back up the potential steal by the runner to 2<sup>nd</sup> base. Almost always, the shortstop will be covering the steal and 2<sup>nd</sup> base (and the center fielder) will back up the throw. If you field the ball and can tag, be ready to tag low—assume the runner will be sliding.
- If there is a runner already at 1<sup>st</sup> and the ball is hit toward the 3<sup>rd</sup> base person or shortstop, run and cover 2<sup>nd</sup> base. Stretch toward the ball once the ball is thrown to you. For righties, your right foot will be on the base and you will stretch toward the ball with your left foot and glove. Only have your heel touching the base so you don't get stepped on.
- If you are covering 2<sup>nd</sup> base and it turns out there is no play there, don't get in the runner's way or it is obstruction and the umpire can potentially award the runner an extra base.
- Slow rolling ball toward 2<sup>nd</sup> base position that the pitcher can't get to; run to this ball and look for the out at either 1<sup>st</sup> base or another base possibly, depending on other base runners.
- Know the situation in the game and where the ideal play is before the ball is hit. If the bases are loaded and less than two outs in a close game, your coach may want you to play in a few steps toward home and try to get the out at home plate. If the ball is hit to you and you aren't sure what to do, just get the out at 1<sup>st</sup> base.
- If the ball is hit out to right field, you are the cutoff person; take several steps out toward right field and either in line with 2<sup>nd</sup> base (short stop will cover), 3<sup>rd</sup> base, or home plate, depending on where you think the best play will be.
- Be ready to back up the pitcher in case there is a bad throw back from the catcher.
- If there is a runner already on 2<sup>nd</sup> base and the ball is not hit: Run to 2<sup>nd</sup> base in case the pitcher gets the ball from the catcher quickly and there is a play at 2<sup>nd</sup> to tag the runner that was taking a lead. But also be ready to back up the pitcher, if it is a bad throw from the catcher.
- When throwing to 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> from a short distance: Can use a quick, low underhand throw with no wind-up instead of overhand, to get the ball out quickly and more catchable for your teammate.

6-minute video on playing 2<sup>nd</sup> base; start at 13 minute mark and go to 19:15:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yV0Cljuiz4o>