

# Baserunning

## Fundamentals

All baseball players need to learn how to properly run the bases. Each player differs in their ability to run, some run fast while others run a bit slower. However, good baserunning has a lot to do with knowing when to run and when not to run.

The 3 key rules of effective baserunning are:

- Check the coach for a signal - know the signal before you leave the base.
- Check for where the fielders are playing.
- Before you leave the base, know where the baseball is at all times.

## Running to First Base

### First Step

Getting a good jump out of the batter's box after hitting is the first step to good baserunning. A right handed hitter should step with his right foot toward first base after hitting the ball. A left handed hitter should cross-over with his left foot by opening up his right after hitting the ball.

### Quick Look

On the 3rd or 4th step, the batter should take a quick look to see if the ball is on the infield. If so, the runner should plan to run through first base. If the ball has gone to the outfield, the runner should plan to make a turn at first base toward second base. The runner should not watch the ball after the quick look, instead focus on running hard to first base.

### Straight Line

Run in a straight line toward first base. Runners need to stay within the restraining box that begins about halfway up the first baseline. You can be called out if you are hit with a ball while outside the restraining line.

- Do not leap for first base - run through first base.
- Attempt to touch the front of the base.
- Touch first base every time.
- Run full speed through first base.

### Rounding First

After taking a quick look, if the ball has gone into the outfield, plan to round first base. Begin a bending turn about halfway to first base. Touch the inside corner of the bag with the outside of the right foot. If reaching second base is not possible, keep an eye on the ball while returning to first base.

## **Running from First to Second**

### **Taking Signs**

If baserunning signals are used, be sure to 'take' a sign while standing on first base. Focus on what needs to happen before the ball is pitched. Guard against becoming distracted by other players, fans, etc.

### **Getting Back**

Be responsible for jumping back to first base if the batter doesn't hit the ball and catcher attempts to throw to first base. It is possible the catcher may make a bad throw allowing you to advance to second base.

### **Popups**

If the batter hits a popup or flyball, move toward second base depending upon where the ball is hit. Go about  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the way to second if the ball is hit in the air to right field,  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the way if the ball is hit to center, and about  $\frac{1}{2}$  way if the ball is hit to left field. If there are less than 2 outs and a line drive is hit, freeze on first base until it is known that the ball has been hit to outfield. This will help prevent a double play.