



Bears Baseball

Jerry's Bears

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How To Run the Bases

By Frank Hadley - <http://www.howtothings.com/sports-recreation/how-to-run-the-bases>

Running the bases is a key part to winning baseball games. In order to be successful on the base path, lots of practice is required. You must understand that being a successful base runner does not just mean being fast; it takes knowledge of the bases and how to effectively move your way forward 90 feet at a time. These tips will help you better understand the art of running the bases.

1. Don't run in straight lines. If you try to run straight to first from home, then straight to second from first, you will have to slow down at the base to turn your body. Running at a rounded angle will help you keep all your momentum. This will drastically reduce the time it takes for you between bases.
2. Step with your inside foot on the inside corner of the bag. This is the shortest path around the bases, and stepping with the inside foot will help you turn your body more quickly towards the next bag.
3. Watch your coaches. Your first and third base coaches are there for a reason. They are watching the play unfold and know your abilities, and will tell you to stop or keep going. There is no reason to ignore their direction; if you do you'll probably just end up on the bench.
4. Take a smart lead. On first base, the longest lead you should take is equivalent to one step added to your body length. This way, if the pitcher attempts to pick you off, it will take you one step to slide into first base safely. On second base, you can take a lead as long as the second baseman and shortstop let you have. It's generally harder for the pitcher to pick off runners at second base, as they have to pivot 180 degrees before throwing the ball, but you should still be careful. Watch the second basemen and shortstop to make sure they aren't about to make a move towards the bag. At third base, you should take a conservative lead; it won't help your team at all to get thrown out 90 feet away from home.
5. Learn how to slide. Sliding is important for many reasons. It can break up a double play, or it can help you avoid the tag and score at home safely. When running towards the bag, lay your body down on the ground and slide away from the side of the bag the ball is being thrown to. This forces the player to reach further in order to tag you. I recommend sliding feet first, as sliding headfirst is dangerous and should only be used by experienced players.
6. Practice, practice, practice. It's very important to be a smart base runner, but being fast helps too. The best way to become an effective base runner is to just run the bases, working on your leg strength and speed. Remember that it doesn't matter if you reach base 5 times in a game if you never reach home.

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