

## Tip Sheet for your Players

Players can keep this in their ball bags for quick reference during the games.

### Bunting Techniques

You have to be on the run to first base when bunting for a base hit — you have got to get out of the box on the run to be safe.

#### RIGHT-HANDERS

Do not turn toward the pitcher.

Keep your left side closed and stay facing first base.

All of your weight is on your front foot, and your body is in motion.

The bat is chin-high and straight, not angled.

The bat is out in front of the plate.

Your hands are split, with your bottom hand and elbow pointed down (very important).

The sequence is: Your weight is on your front foot and in motion, the bat is out in front of the plate, you bunt the ball, and you step across the plate towards first with your back foot. (You are not out since you have already bunted the ball.)

Bunt the ball right, by the foul line or on it. (Bunt it from on the foul line to one-foot-in from the foul line.) Bunt it no further in toward infield or your chances of being safe go down.

Get the bat out in front of the plate with both arms and have the bat chin-high to start. To go to third, push your top hand to third, and pull your bottom hand in to your chest. For the first base foul line, your top hand goes to first, then push your bottom hand out so your arm is straight.

**LEFTIES** Start to run to first but make sure your bat still covers the plate.

It is easier to bunt with one hand when bunting down first, your back arm is straight out and the bat lies against it at a high strike (straight out from your shoulder).

Pull the bat with the ball down the first-base line with you as you run to first (the cue is "take it with you").

Make sure the ball comes right down the line with you.

When bunting to third, keep the bat high, pushing your front arm straight out so that the ball goes down the third-base foul line.

**SACRIFICE BUNTS** Get the bat out in front of the plate with your hands split, your bottom wrist and elbow down, your top hand behind the bat, not under, bat is as high as your chin. Let the ball rebound from the bat. (Do not let the bat rotate backwards — only let it rotate forward and down toward the ground in front of the bat.)

**SQUEEZE BUNTS** Get the bat high, and show the bunt at the last possible second — so as to not tip it off that it is a squeeze bunt. Just keep the bat high and put it anywhere on the ground.

### Hitting Techniques

YOU HAVE TO ADJUST TO THE DIFFERENT SPEEDS AND STYLES OF PITCHERS. YOU CANNOT HIT EVERY PITCHER THE SAME WAY.

When your hands are on the bat, you need to line up your middle knuckles — if the bat is jammed into the area between your thumb and first finger, your elbow and shoulder will drop, leading to pop-ups or fly balls. If you have a death-grip on the bat with your top hand, the same result will happen. That grip could give a lift to the ball for HR's — but those are few and far between and will result in more strikeouts, pop-ups, flies or weak grounders to the opposite side than HR's.

Holding the bat down at the end may generate more power on the swing, but if the pitcher is too fast for your bat speed, you will strike out and not be able to catch up to the pitched ball. If she is faster than your bat speed, choke up a little and align your knuckles.

If your stance is even or closed (your front foot is up toward the plate more than your back foot) and the pitcher is faster than your bat speed, open your stance a little. Open means your front foot is farther back away from the plate than your back foot. Your hips have to be opened toward the pitcher also, or your body will be fighting you as you swing. In doing this, if pitchers throw you an outside pitch, you have to step to the pitch.

Stand up more – crouching makes it harder to hit fast pitching, it takes time to get out of the crouch and then hit. Stand up with just a slight flex (not locked) in your knees.

Too many try to pull every pitch. Why do you think a pitcher throws you outside??? Because most hitters try to pull the ball instead of hitting the ball to the opposite field. If the ball is pitched to the outside, take it that way – especially if the pitcher is fast. If the pitcher is slow, take it up the middle. Trying to pull a slow outside pitch too much may work sometimes, but a lot of times the hitter pulls away and hits a weak grounder to the opposite field.

With the pitcher being faster than your bat speed, with a runner in scoring position or when you are trying to just get on base somehow, shorten your stroke, open your stance and look for a high pitch or a high and outside pitch. Meet it with a short stroke and you will have a base hit. Try to pound it over the fence, try to pull it and take a long swing, and you will be out. Just try to get it out of the infield. A high outside pitch is great for doing this even if it is a ball, it is the best pitch to hit for this . . . look for it and hit it.

With a fast pitcher, wrapping the bat around your head will lead to an out. It may generate more power but if you cannot hit the ball, power doesn't matter. Lay the tip of the bat back toward the pitcher a little so that it is easier to bring the bat head through the hitting zone.

IF YOU CANNOT HIT THE PITCHER WITH YOUR HITTING STANCE OR THE WAY THAT YOU HOLD THE BAT, CHANGE IT SO THAT YOU CAN HIT THE PITCHER. I HAVEN'T SEEN A PITCHER YET THAT CANNOT BE HIT.

If the pitcher is too slow for you to hit, trying to "jack" the ball over the fence is not the answer. It is easy to say to wait on the pitch, but that is hard to do during a game without jerking at the ball.

Stay loose, keep doing dry swings until the pitcher is ready to deliver the ball, then get set.

Using a slap bunt is very effective but it has to be done correctly. Pivot forward with the bat out in front of the plate, held high, by the chin, with your hands split just like on a bunt, and with your weight on the front foot. Pull straight back, with the bat staying on the same plane as if it were rolling back on a table (the bat should not go into a hitting position, it should be flat and parallel to the ground) while shifting your weight to the back foot. Attack the ball by forcefully shifting your weight back to the front foot and attacking the ball. YOUR OBJECTIVE IS TO SHOOT THE BALL OUT OF THE INFIELD OR THROUGH THE PITCHER, THIRD BASE OR FIRST BASE. THEY SHOULD BE AFRAID OF YOU DOING IT. You are actually not on the back foot when you hit it. Trying to stay on the back foot will cut the force on the ball.

GOING INTO A HITTING POSITION WILL CAUSE YOU TO BE LATE ON YOUR SWING, PRODUCING A POP-UP OR WEAK GROUNDER.

You might be able to stand up, relaxed with the bat against the tip of your back shoulder. This might work if you do not jerk the bat at the ball.

The key to hitting is to be flexible in your stance and to be confident at the plate. You should go up to the plate wanting the pitcher to throw you the ball. Attack the pitch. Never, never, never be intimidated by any pitcher – look the pitcher straight in the eyes with confidence.

For practices: **Sunny:** Get good sunglasses (not fashion ones) and a visor. Learn to use your glove to shade your eyes.

Do form swings with a wooden broomstick cut off to 33 inches. They must be quick and with good form (100 a day).

Hit, hit, and hit some more. **Move the machine inside, outside, high and low, to be able to cover all pitches.**

Defensively, you know the strength of your arm – so you should know the speed of the hitter and the runners on base before the pitch is ever thrown. That way, you will know exactly which base to go to for the out. Think ahead!!

Always know the weather conditions – **Wind:** Know which way it is blowing and how hard. Don't forget the wind may be higher than the field.

NEVER, NEVER, NEVER GIVE UP. AND ALWAYS SUPPORT YOUR TEAMMATES. GETTING THE SACRIFICE BUNT DOWN.  
TAKING THE EXTRA BASE.

IT'S GREAT TO GET A HOME RUN, BUT THAT DOESN'T HAPPEN VERY OFTEN. IT'S GREAT TO HIT IN THE WINNING RUN  
OR STRIKE OUT THE SIDE. BUT THERE IS A LOT MORE TO WINNING AS A TEAM — LIKE:

KEEPING THE BALL IN FRONT OF YOU.

BLOCKING A PITCH.

HITTING TO THE RIGHT SIDE SO THAT THE RUN SCORES.

READING THE HITTER.

HITTING YOUR SPOTS.

HITTING YOUR CUT OFF.

MAKING THE QUICK TAG.

KEEPING YOUR ATTITUDE POSITIVE.

SUPPORTING A TEAMMATE THAT HAS MADE AN ERROR.

BEING WILLING TO SACRIFICE WHEN YOU REALLY WANT TO HIT A HOME RUN.

DIVING FOR THE BALL UP THE MIDDLE TO KEEP THE RUNNER FROM SCORING FROM SECOND.

GETTING IN THE PERFECT POSITION TO THROW THE RUNNER OUT ON A FLY BALL.

MAKING SURE THAT YOU DO NOT MISS A SIGNAL.

KEEPING YOUR HEAD IN THE GAME AND PLAYING PITCH BY INNING BY INNING, OUT BY OUT, PITCH BY PITCH.

LEARNING TO THROW ON THE RUN.

GETTING THAT LEAD RUNNER.

EVERYTHING THAT YOU DO WILL EITHER BE QUICK ENOUGH OR TOO SLOW, AT THE RIGHT ANGLE OR NOT. IT IS UP  
TO YOU TO MAKE SURE THAT YOU HAVE LEARNED HOW TO CUT SECONDS OFF OF EVERYTHING THAT YOU DO  
DURING THE GAME. IT IS UP TO YOU TO FIND A WAY TO HIT EVERY PITCHER THAT YOU FACE.