



SOLD TO THE FINE
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30 Base Running Drills

The chart below contains 30 drills that can be used to improve various components of base running. When you read through them, keep in mind the following:

1. Most of the drills listed below are intended for individual or small group work and can be performed indoors or out.
2. Speed drills that focus on ways to increase running speed were not included. All drills listed are baseball specific.
3. All drills are not created equal. Some of the drills listed and explained below are better than others but all have some value depending on what skills, techniques, and/or mechanics you wish to focus on. Matching the drill to the specific area that needs improvement is key.
4. There are ways to perform these drills beyond what is described below. Issues of space, equipment, and time as well as the size and skill of the players may require you to adjust the drills as needed.
5. The drills listed below are in no particular order.
6. Be sure to consider the safety of players and property involved or nearby whenever performing drills. No drill is completely safe for player or property. Proper supervision and execution is recommended.
7. Be creative and think up your own drills! Be sure to share them!
8. A full-length video demonstrating these drills is coming soon. Stay tuned!

Be sure to check out the Baseball By The Yard YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter pages!

	Drill	Works on ...	How to
1	Lead Length Drill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proper lead length for each individual runner • Footwork of leading off the bag • Base awareness on the lead 	<p>The first step is to have a player lay down on ground with their hands on first base and their feet towards second base. They then mark the ground where their waist is. They then move towards second base so that their hands are now at the waist-line in the dirt. With one of their feet, they mark the dirt which now indicates 1 ½ body lengths from 1st base. The player then stands on the base and takes a lead (counting the steps as he goes) to that spot. The player now knows how many steps from 1st base to take on his lead and never has to look back to the bag in the process.</p>
2	Returns Drill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proper lead length for each individual runner • Base awareness on the lead • Proper diving location • Lead confidence 	<p>The player takes his appropriate lead off 1st base. Using a real pickoff throw to 1st or a partner/coach saying “back!”, the runner turns and dives to the back corner of the bag. Players should also use this drill to practice getting back to the bag standing up using the proper footwork to the bag.</p>
3	Basic Starts Drill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proper footwork of the jump • Upper body lean & running mechanics • Explosiveness and aggressiveness 	<p>Using one player at a time in his lead or multiple runners in lines, runners break towards 2nd as if they are stealing. Runners only take about five explosive</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stealing confidence 	steps before coasting to a stop and returning for more reps.
4	<i>Tennis Ball Drop Drill</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proper footwork of the jump Upper body lean & running mechanics Explosiveness and aggressiveness Stealing confidence 	A runner takes his lead. A partner/coach stands about 10-15 feet farther down the base line to 2 nd base with a tennis ball held about chest high. As soon as the coach releases the ball, the runner explodes towards second. The goal is for the runner to grab the ball on the way by before it bounces twice. The partner/coach can adjust the distance away and the height of the release based on the quickness of the players.
5	<i>Rope Drill</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staying low on the jump Upper body lean & running mechanics Proper footwork of the jump Explosiveness and aggressiveness Stealing confidence 	The runner takes his normal lead at first base. A rope is held or positioned about chest high over the baseline and about 5 feet towards 2 nd base. When the runner gets his jump to 2 nd on the steal, he should pass underneath the rope. This promotes the proper lean and staying low on the initial first few steps of the jump.
6	<i>Home to 1st Drill</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explosiveness out of the batter's box Straight line running Running mechanics Proper base touching technique Proper run-through and stopping procedure 	Basic drill where the batter swings and then runs to 1 st base. Emphasis should be placed on a balanced finish of the swing which will allow for a smooth transition for hitting to running. Other things to pay attention to is the running form, the line/direction of the run (should be a straight line), the proper touching of 1 st base (very front), and the

			proper running through the bag procedure to a stop.
7	Base Hit Drill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explosiveness out of the batter's box • Running mechanics • Proper turn/loop to the bag • Proper base touching technique 	All the things mentioned in the Home to 1 st Drill except the runner will properly loop on the way to 1 st , properly touch the inside corner of the bag, and aggressively make the turn around 1 st .
8	Double Drill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explosiveness out of the batter's box • Running mechanics • Proper turn/loop to the bag • Proper base touching technique • Efficient running line to 2nd base • Overall aggressiveness 	All the things mentioned in the Base Hit Drill except the runner will proceed on the correct line all the way to 2 nd base. A proper slide may be added to this drill.
9	Triple Drill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explosiveness out of the batter's box • Running mechanics • Proper turn/loop to the bag • Proper base touching technique • Efficient running lines and angles • Overall aggressiveness • Conditioning 	All the things mentioned in the Double Drill except the runner will proceed on the correct line all the way to 3 rd base. A proper slide may be added to this drill as well.
10	Inside the Park Drill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explosiveness out of the batter's box • Running mechanics • Proper turn/loop to the bag • Proper base touching technique • Efficient running lines and angles • Overall aggressiveness • Conditioning 	The runner correctly touches all the bases using consistent strides and proper angles and proceeds around the bases. A proper slide at home plate can be added.

11	Don't Get Tagged Drill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quick thinking as a runner • Adjusting to situations 	<p>A runner is put on 1st base. A soft ground ball is hit to the 2nd baseman where he would be field it near the baseline. The runner traveling to 2nd base will have to make the judgment as to whether he can continue past the fielder without being tagged or to stop. Stopping prevents the 2nd baseman from easily tagging the runner passing by and then throwing to 1st for a double play. If the runner stops and doesn't allow himself to be tagged, the 2nd baseman has to decide to chase him or throw to a bag. Either way, a double play will be tougher.</p>
12	Rundown Drill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quick thinking as a runner • Adjusting to situations • Technique to increase chances of being safe 	<p>In this drill using fielders and a runner stuck in between in a rundown, the runner works on staying in the rundown as long as possible. He also tries to turn to the right if possible and initiate contact with one of the fielders.</p>
13	Secondary Lead Drill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proper secondary lead length • Direction and timing of the footwork • Aggressiveness & confidence 	<p>A runner takes his proper lead off 1st or 2nd base. When the pitch is delivered, the runner properly takes his secondary lead and times in so his right foot lands at the same time the ball crosses the hitting area. If not hit, the runner takes two quick, low steps back towards the bag a watches the throw back to the pitcher.</p>
	Lead Off 2nd Base	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proper secondary lead length • Direction and timing of the 	<p>The drill has the runner focus on the proper direction of his lead with less</p>

14	(Less than 2 Outs)	<p>footwork</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aggressiveness & confidence • Relation to the base path with less than 2 outs 	<p>than 2 outs. In this situation (unless he is going to steal 3rd) his lead should be taken so as to position himself slightly more in-line with the base line on his primary and secondary leads. This will set him up for a better, straight-line angle to 3rd base for stealing attempts and moving up on passed balls/wild pitches.</p>
15	Lead off 2nd Base (2 outs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proper secondary lead length • Direction and timing of the footwork • Aggressiveness & confidence • Relation to the base path with 2 outs 	<p>The drill has the runner focus on the proper direction of his lead with 2 outs. In this situation (unless he is going to steal 3rd) his lead should be taken so as to position himself slightly behind the base line on his primary and secondary lead. This will set him up for a better angle to round third on a base hit which will make it more likely he will score.</p>
16	Walking Lead & Steal to 3rd Base	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proper secondary lead length • Direction and timing of the footwork on the jump to 3rd base • Aggressiveness and base stealing confidence 	<p>A runner takes his primary lead off 2nd base. When the pitcher comes set, the runner takes a step or two towards the pitcher to move into the baseline and attempts to time his jump to 3rd on the pitcher's start to his delivery. The runner tries to time it so he doesn't have to stop moving before breaking to 3rd.</p>
17	Rounding 3rd Base Drill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proper secondary lead length and direction off 2nd base • Correct angle to and around third base to maximize efficiency and speed 	<p>After taking a proper primary and secondary lead on the pitch, the runner breaks for an imaginary spot about 5 feet to the outfield side of 3rd base. When he gets closer to the line, he drops his shoulder and makes the turn at 3rd by</p>

			hitting the inside part of the bag and taking a good line to home plate.
18	Lead and returns at 3rd Base	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Correct primary lead off the bag • Proper secondary lead length and direction off 3rd base • Proper angles, footwork, and timing back to the bag • Game awareness 	A runner takes a proper primary and secondary lead off 3 rd base. The runner times his secondary lead so that his right foot lands close to the foul line (still in foul territory) with his right foot forward as the ball crosses the hitting zone. If the ball is caught, the runner takes two quick, low steps back to 3 rd in fair territory while watching the throw back to the pitcher.
19	Squeeze Play Drill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sign and situation awareness • Correct primary lead off the bag • Proper secondary lead length and direction off 3rd base on the squeeze • Proper timing of the lead to sprint transition 	Runners take their proper primary lead and walking secondary lead off 3 rd base and break into a sprint towards home plate when the pitcher separates his hands on the delivery.
20	Tag Up Drill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Correct primary lead off the bag • Proper secondary lead length and direction off 3rd base • Proper angles, footwork, and timing back to the bag • Correct "sprinters" position on the tag 	A runner takes a proper primary and secondary lead off 3 rd base. The runner times his secondary lead so that his right foot lands close to the foul line (still in foul territory) with his right foot forward as the ball crosses the hitting zone. When the ball is hit in the air, the runner hustles back to the bag and lines up in a low, sprinter's position completely squared up to home plate. The runner turns his head over the correct shoulder depending on where the ball is hit.

21	Sliding Drill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reducing injuries related to sliding • Proper footwork and timing of the foot-first slide • Proper footwork, handwork, and timing of the head-first slide 	<p>This drill can be done with individual runners or with several runners in lines. It is recommended that runners do this drill with no shoes to minimize the risk of injury. Another safety measure would be to do this drill on damp grass and have the runners run on a slight decline. The damp grass will allow for an easier slide as will the decline. Have the players bring old sweatpants to put over their practice pants. They can remove the dirty sweatpants after the drill and continue with practice. An extra pair of socks are helpful as well.</p>
22	Read & React Drill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-pitch gathering of information on the outfield positions • Game awareness • Proper direction, timing, and footwork on primary & secondary leads • Quick judgments & reactions 	<p>Runners take their primary and secondary lead off 1st and/or 2nd base. A coach hits a ball into the outfield. Without looking at the ball, the runner reacts (holds up or breaks to the next bag) based on if he thinks the ball will drop for a hit. This requires the runner to know before he takes his lead where all the outfielders are positioned.</p>
23	Ball In Front Drill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-pitch gathering of information on the infielders • Game awareness • Proper direction, timing, and footwork on primary & secondary leads • Quick judgments & reactions 	<p>A runner takes his primary lead and secondary lead off 2nd base on the pitch. A coach hits an infield ground ball. The runner either stays at 2nd or breaks to 3rd based on where the ball is hit. Generally speaking, if the ball is hit in front of him (to the 3rd base side of him) or back towards the pitcher, he holds to see if it goes through to the outfield before proceeding. If the ball is hit</p>

			behind him (to his left), he immediately breaks towards 3 rd base.
24	Contact Drill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-pitch gathering of information on the infielders • Game awareness • Proper direction, timing, and footwork on primary & secondary leads • Quick judgments & reactions 	A runner takes his proper primary and secondary lead off 3 rd base. As soon as contact is made and the runner sees the ball heading downward to the dirt, he breaks for home plate no matter where the ball is hit. A proper slide at home can be added to the drill as needed.
25	45 & Decide Drill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-pitch gathering of information on the infielders • Game awareness • Proper direction, timing, and footwork on primary & secondary leads • Quick judgments & reactions 	This is the same as the Contact drill except the runner watches where the ball is hit to as he sprints towards home plate. When he gets halfway home (45 feet), he either decides to continue home or stop and get into a rundown. His decision depends on where the ball was hit and how well it was fielded and thrown home.
26	Run and Read Drill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proper running technique • Game awareness • Correct lines and angles around the bases • Proper base touching technique 	This basic running drill can be done on the bases or during longer outfield, parking lot, or hallway sprints. After the runners get their proper explosive jump, they focus their eyes on an object (sign, poster, etc.) in the distance and try to keep the object still while they run. If they run properly on the front part of their feet, the object will stay relatively still in their view. If they run flat-footed or on their heels, the object will appear to bounce around.

27	Hit & Run Starts Drill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proper footwork of the jump • Upper body lean & running mechanics • Explosiveness and aggressiveness • Stealing confidence • Proper eye/head turn and timing 	<p>A runner gets a proper explosive jump on a steal to 2nd base. After a couple steps, the runner turns his head so that he can see what occurs on the pitch. The runner should time his glance in towards home plate to coincide with the ball crossing the hitting area. The runner stops or proceeds to 2nd depending on the outcome of the pitch.</p>
28	Delayed Steal Drill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proper primary and secondary leads for delayed steals • Correct timing of the break to second • Game awareness 	<p>A runner takes his proper primary lead. When the pitch is delivered, the runner shuffles off the bag on his secondary lead twice. His two shuffles should be longer than normal and be more “out” towards second than “up” as in a hop. He also should remain squared to home plate like normal on his shuffles. When the runner lands after the second shuffle, he turns and breaks towards 2nd base.</p>
29	Get the Sign Drill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proper footwork, length, and direction of primary leads • Game awareness • Acting on gathered information • Base running & base stealing confidence 	<p>A runner takes a proper primary lead off 2nd base and looks in at the catcher's signs. If an off-speed pitch is called for, the runner steals 3rd base using the proper footwork and timing. If the sign is for a fastball or pitchout, the runner stays at 2nd. This drill can also work with runners at 1st base who can often see the catcher's signs while in their primary lead off 1st base. To make these drill more challenging and game-like, the defense can mix in pick-off moves to</p>

			keep the runner honest and aware of multiple things at the same time.
30	<i>Dirt Ball Starts Drill</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proper footwork, length, and direction of primary leads • Game awareness • Base running confidence 	<p>Runners can take a proper primary and secondary lead off any base. A pitch is thrown home by a pitcher or coach. Runners are required to watch the flight of the pitch in order to anticipate pitches in the dirt. Runners who are doing this drill at 1st or 2nd can practice breaking towards the next base as soon as they see the pitch heading for the dirt. The runner on 3rd waits longer to see if the ball gets away from the catcher far enough to score. To keep runners honest, the coach/pitcher can mix in good pitches as well so runners can work on their proper returns to the base after the pitch.</p>