

HIT AND RUN***PURPOSE***

This simple play represents an extension of the straight steal. Its purpose is to advance a runner two bases on a single, while avoiding hitting into a double play. The key to the play is the ability of the batter to make contact with the ball.

WHEN TO USE

The Hit and Run is normally executed with a runner on 1st and a good contact hitter at bat. Because the batter ***MUST*** swing at the pitch, it should be called when the pitcher is most likely to throw a strike, on a count of 2-0, 3-0, or 3-1. With a control pitcher on the mound, the play also works well on the first pitch to the batter, or on a 3-2 pitch.

EXECUTION

BATTER: After receiving the Hit and Run signal, the batter ***must swing*** to contact with the next pitch and ideally, hit the ball on the ground behind the runner. The ideal is rarely achieved however and simply making good contact satisfies most coaches. Because this is a contact play, the batter must make any swing adjustments necessary to contact the ball.

1ST BASE RUNNER: Must get a good jump on the pitch, then execute a straight steal of 2nd base. The runner is then committed to 3rd base and, when rounding 2nd, should look for instructions from the 3rd base coach.

N.B. THIS IS ALSO AN EXCELLENT PLAY, WITH A RUNNER ON 2ND AND A GOOD SLAP HITTER AT BAT. WITH THE RUNNER GOING, THE SHORTSTOP MUST MOVE TO COVER 3RD, LEAVING A HOLE FOR THE SLAPPER TO PLACE THE BALL. IF THE BATTER EXECUTES, THE RUNNER SHOULD SCORE EASILY.