

DELAYED STEAL***PURPOSE***

This play is intended to get an extra base on a physical or mental mistake by the defence. Occasionally, players get careless in handling or throwing the ball, which provides a steal opportunity for an alert runner.

WHEN TO USE

Delayed steals can be used any time during a game. Following are some of the most common, but not the only opportunities for this play to work.

1. ***WHEN THE CATCHER LOBS THE BALL BACK TO THE PITCHER.***
2. ***WHEN THE PITCHER TURNS AWAY FROM THE RUNNER, OUTSIDE THE PITCHING CIRCLE.***
3. ***WHEN THE CATCHER THROWS BEHIND THE 1ST BASE RUNNER.***
4. ***WHEN AN INFIELDER FAILS TO COVER 2ND OR 3RD BASE ON A PITCH.***

EXECUTION

In all delayed steals, the baserunner takes an appropriate lead, then delays while watching the defensive reaction. Any mental or physical lapse is the cue to steal. Runners must learn to watch for these lapses and take advantage of them.

BEHIND RUNNER

EXAMPLE 1. The runner at 1st takes a good lead, the catcher throws behind the runner for a pick-off at 1st base. The 1st base player will usually turn to the left, losing sight of the runner momentarily and providing an opportunity to advance on the throw.

LAZY THROW

EXAMPLE 2. Another opportunity is when the catcher makes a careless lob throw back to the pitcher. An alert runner will take a long lead, then advance when the soft throw is in the air. By the time the pitcher receives the ball, it is too late for the defence to make a play on the runner.