

Teaching the fundamentals

Bunting Fundamentals

1. Place thumb on top of bat with forefinger and middle finger on the bottom and only hold the barrel of the bat with your fingertips - don't hold the top hand too tightly because a looser grip will absorb the ball striking the bat and cause the ball to slow down quicker once it hits the ground.
2. Get the bat out early in front of the plate at the top of the strike zone - if the bat isn't in front of the plate when it strikes the ball the chances are the ball will go foul or straight back to the pitcher for an easy play.
3. The barrel of the bat should be slightly higher than the knob - at the same time bring the hands and bat back a bit to further cushion the ball striking the wood and guide the bat so the ball will go toward either first or third base.



Sliding Fundamentals

1. Tuck bent leg under - as the slide begins the takeoff leg bends under the lead leg which simultaneously extends to the base with the foot slightly elevated above the ground.
2. Use hands for balance - as the leg action occurs the arms move upward to help the runner quickly reach a horizontal position.
3. Lead leg has slight bend - the foot of the extended leg makes the initial contact with the base. The extended leg gives as the base is contacted to absorb the momentum of the body.

Base Stealing Fundamentals

1. Feet apart (weight should be on balls of feet) - hands should be down and relaxed.
2. Do not cross feet - take a good lead, pivot and cross over and run.
3. Run hard - about 10-15 feet prior to the next base prepare to slide.

Fielding Fundamentals

1. Get low with the body - Knees should be bent, legs apart, glove hand foot usually a bit in front, butt down.
2. Hands and glove down - Hands move up faster than they go down. Cushion ball upon receiving it.
3. Glove first to ball - Follow glove with feet; the foot of glove hand leads. Grip the ball across the seams and throw over the top with the entire body involved in the follow through.

Hitting Fundamentals

1. Take a comfortable stance - the width of the stance should be so that they can comfortably swing without striding too far with the front foot and without finding they are so spread out that when they do stride not much occurs.
2. Keep your eyes on the ball and your head still - if you lift your head the eyes can't see the ball all the way.
3. Make a smooth swing - focus on keeping the bat level through the swing, whether it's reaching up or down for a pitch.

