



# Sliding Fundamentals

## Objective

To learn how to slide in order to increase your chances of being “Safe” during the game and to avoid injury to both yourself and the other player(s).

## Do I have to Slide?

1. The **TEAM** in a game situation with an opportunity to **WIN**, expects every player to provide their best effort towards doing so.
2. It is expected by the **Rules** of the Game and the Umpires that enforce them. You must slide in certain situations to avoid injury to yourself and especially the Defensive player. For example, with a runner on 1<sup>st</sup> on a ground ball infield hit, if the base runner on a play at 2<sup>nd</sup> base does not slide (umpire’s discretion) when you should have, the umpire may call the base runner and the hitter both OUT.

## How do you learn or become better at sliding?

**Practice, Practice, Practice!** We as a TEAM will incorporate sliding drills during our season practices, but the more you practice on your own, the better and faster you will learn.

## Ensure for Proper Equipment at all Practices and Games

Make sure your cleats fit you properly and comfortable. Make sure your shoe laces are tied properly. Wear long socks that come up to your knees and make sure the socks fit snug, not too loose. Wear sliders or knee pads. Make sure that these also fit snug and within their proper position, not too loose. Always wear sliding shorts under your softball shorts.

## About Head First Slides

1. Never use a Head First Slide when advancing to the next base.
2. Only use a Head First slide for returning to a base after a lead off to increase your chances of being SAFE on a pick off throw.
3. On a Head First Slide, always dive back with your right hand targeting to touch the left hand corner of the bag and always face your head away from the plate

## The Two Big Secrets about Sliding

1. Once you truly believe that Sliding is **FUN**, it will become easy and comfortable for you to do so. Until you enjoy sliding, keep working on it.
2. When running and preparing to slide, **DO NOT SLOW DOWN!** The faster you run, the more momentum you carry making it easier for your body to slide horizontally.

## The Basic Sliding Mechanics

Once again, taking one of the main two secrets above, run fast and do not slow down.

Get low to the ground as you begin to slide, do not be in a complete upright position.

Figure 4 body position. Upon sliding, position your right leg to go underneath your left leg and your arms spread apart, hands up. Your arms are used to balance your body's weight accordingly.

Keep your head up and your eyes focused on the target base.

After you slide, it's not over, remain in contact with the bag at all times. Always keep your hand in contact with the bag as you stand up.

### Advanced: Pop Up Slide

1. If the defensive player is not in your way, you can slide straight into the base, with the intention of popping up to consider advancing to the next base.
2. Your left foot and leg is targeting to come into contact with the bag, while your right leg takes the sliding impact.
3. You want to time the slide so that when the left foot makes contact with the bag, you can pop up.

### Advanced: Hook Slide

1. On a Steal to Second Base with the Short Stop covering and blocking the base, if possible you may want to slide to the right hand side of the base, away from the player and the potential tag and use your left hand to touch the base, and not your foot or leg.
2. Be sure to keep your left hand on the bag once contact is made.

## Sliding at Home

1. Standard rule of thumb is to slide towards the right hand side of Home Plate.
2. Always anticipate making physical contact with the catcher!
3. In General, if the catcher is blocking Home Plate, try to slide away from the catcher in either direction.

## Listen to your Coaches for Guidance

1. Your coaches will either yell "YOUR UP" or "GET DOWN"!
2. When we yell "YOUR UP", this obviously means you do not have to slide and you can safely run into the bag.
3. When we yell "GET DOWN", this obviously means you must slide into the base because we anticipate a throw and a play.
4. If you do NOT hear anything from your base coach, then always assume and slide just in case.