

Lights Baseball

Well Prepared

Team Composition – every player has skills to contribute (not one “bad” player)

Fall / Winter Hitting – no team hit as much as we did, we’ll start strong

Practice – multiple coaches at practices = many reps and limited standing around

Team Scouting – every team will be scouted multiple times

Pre-game reports will be detailed, with hitting & pitching tendencies

Clean

We are gentlemen, and play with integrity. No cheap shots. No bush league tactics.

If an opposing player makes a great play (or gets lucky) congratulate him.

Responsible

Player performance (YOU) dictates where you play & how much you play.

No umpire call will ever (can ever) cost us a game.

We win on the field, not in an argument with an umpire.

(We actually win BEFORE the game starts, with hard work at practice, a well scouted game plan and YOUR commitment to full effort on the field.)

We will NEVER give up – on a play, an at-bat, a teammate, a game.

Confident

At the plate – no other team can hit like we can. Be aggressive at the plate.

On the mound – no team has our depth of pitching (every player can pitch)

With the glove – do not be timid ... every player can catch your strongest throw

Daring - WE WILL RUN.

We’ll steal 2nd when we want to, 3rd when we can & home if we have to.

“Ships are safe in harbor. But that’s not what ships are for.”

Standing on a base doesn’t win games, getting to the next base wins games.

Fun - We work during practice and scouting so we can play during games.

General Game Strategy – simple, score more runs.

Seriously – a high powered offense, and getting outs on defense

When in doubt – GET THE OUT (don’t worry about the run, we’ll get more)

In Game Strategy

(Manager / Coaches) - Adapt, Innovate, Overcome

(Players) – Never Give Up & Play As A Team

Hitting

In General – practice with heavier bat (100 swings / 25 bunts min. week)
get pitches to hit (work the count to your favor)
hit where ball is pitched
quick, compact swings - don't overswing

Before Stepping In

Read pitching scouting report
Watch pitchers during games – especially on deck and in hole
Understand umpire's strike zone
Weighted bat on deck

Stepping In

Tap outside corner of plate – be able to cover entire plate
Understand game situation – take signs
Open / close / deepen / shallow stance (slightly) as needed
Watch for defensive movement & gaps

During Wind Up - NO MORE THINKING

Solid foundation – stay balanced
React to pitch
Loose, fast arms, quick hands – swing (every swing) like you mean it
Stride into pitch, **turn hips, head level**, finish high / “rip” top hand off bat

Bunting

Move up in the batters box – bunt at front of plate
Angle bat, move lower body up / down, “catch” ball with bat

When Ahead In Count

Be aggressive & selective
Contract the strike zone - swing if in your zone

When Behind In Count

Compact swing – expand the strike zone, foul off close pitches

With Two Strikes

Expand strike zone 2”, foul off close pitches but don't chase obvious balls
Always better to put ball in play – or swing and miss - than strike out looking

Baserunning

In General – be daring unless told otherwise (especially trailing runner)
hit every inside base corner, pick up coaches on way to bases
faster to base if you are already in motion – ALWAYS be in motion during delivery

To First

Run out everything – one look out of box

If infield – hit front of base and 2 - 3 step breakdown to foul territory

If outfield – pick up coach, hit inside base corner and turn at full speed

On First

Body length + step = starting point (adjust for pitcher & game situation)

Step off from front of base (looks closer, dive back to back of base)

Right handed pitcher

Left heel moves = pitching = go (watch shoulder close)

Right heel moves = pickoff = back

Always look for sign, Always secondary lead, Always dive back to base

Always start with crossover step when stealing (right foot back slightly)

Use arms, stay low, one look at plate, slide and pop up

On Second

Third base coach watches SS & 2B

Watch catcher signs and location

Right hand fist = called fastball, left hand position = catchers set up

Always secondary lead

Walking in if stealing / out if not

Deeper in field if not only trying for third

Be ready to pop up and run home on bad throws / catches

On Third

Lead off in foul territory

Rough distance = distance third basemen from bag and half body length

Three step walking lead during delivery

Right foot hitting ground as catcher catches

Back in fair territory, watch ball

If stealing – WHOLLY COMMIT to steal – DO NOT watch pitcher's throw

Fielding

In General – get to ball quickly, field ball slowly, good footwork, strong throw

know where play is heading, athletic position during pitch, good jump

keep eye on ball until in mitt, field in front if possible

communicate with teammates, follow play

play (tags) in front of the base

if ball not hit to you – back up someone

when in doubt, throw ahead of (trailing) runner, ball back to the infield quickly

Before Taking Field Each Inning

know the batting order, hitting power, and hitting tendencies

Before Each Pitch

positioning, imagine ball hit to you & making play, mitt ready

During Pitch – everyone in motion (1B hold runner)

Cut Offs

SS = Left field and centerfield except for running to right center

2B = Right field and centerfield in right center

shallow or deep depending on outfield location / arm (rare 1B)

catcher aligns – glove or hand

Back Ups

back up every hit, every throw (including pickoffs)

back up ahead of runner first, behind runner secondarily

Rundowns

immediately throw in front of runner, run back to base, throw ?, 3 throws max

watch for lead runner to attempt to steal home if runner on 3rd

Bunts – Catcher Makes All Plays If Possible* & Calls Throws By Others

No Runners or Only Runner on 1st = 3rd Base Left Side, Pitcher Right Side

1st Base Stays Put, Shortstop Covers 3rd Base

Runner(s) On 2nd or 3rd = 3rd Base Stays Put

* “Wheel” Run Prevent Bunt Defense (runner on 3rd and the run matters)

When Batter Squares – 3rd, 1st Charge Home, Pitchers Charges after pitch

Catcher Blocks Home, Shortstop Covers 3rd, Second Covers 1st, CF takes 2nd

Coach / Catcher Sign = Finger Spin (like wheel)

1st Base - hold runner, be ready for pickoff, make every play to foul line, two quick steps to right or three to front generally (stop everything with runners on 2nd / 3rd), out = first priority, stop ball if bad throw, be ready to backup

2nd Base - positioning (shallow / deep) right for game situation, do not give up on position early, backup all throws from catcher to shortstop at second base, break to cover 1st on all balls hit to 1st basemen, take all outfield throws from right field, harass / be ready for pickoff on all runners on 2nd base

Shortstop - positioning (shallow / deep) right for game situation, do not give up on position early, take all throws from catcher to shortstop at second base, make play on every ball possible (except centerfield call offs), take all outfield throws from left and center field, be ready for pickoff on all runners on 2nd base

3rd Base – “own” third base (do not abandon third or give it up to runners), positioning for game situation

Right Field – positioning for game situation, communicate with other outfielders, backup centerfield, 2B and 1B, take balls from 1st and 2nd base if running in, be ready to throw runners out (at 1st!), backup pickoffs to 1st and pickoffs / steals to 2nd

Center Field - positioning for game situation, “captain” the outfield, backup left and right, take all balls if running in, be ready to throw runners out, backup pickoff throws and steal throws from catcher to 2nd

Left Field - positioning for game situation, communicate with other outfielders, backup centerfield, 3B and SS, take balls from 3B if running in, be ready to throw runners out, backup pickoffs to 3rd

Pitcher – watch runner / pitch = first responsibility, field immediately after pitch, field all balls beyond catcher in front of mound, break to 1st base on all balls hit to 1B / 2B (run up line), back up 3B and home as needed

Catcher – captain entire defense ... call plays, direct (shout) throws, etc.
play in front of (block) plate
backup 1B if no runners
listen for foul ball locations from coaches
always friendly to umpire
always mess with hitters & have fun