

Fifty Ways to Win a Baseball Game

by

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Pitchers

1. Pitcher's ability to field his own position
2. Pitcher not walking the # 9 hitter
3. Pitcher not walking weak hitters, with power coming up
4. When there are runners on base in a position to steal, do not run the count to 3-2, ensure your double play option.
5. Pitcher's not becoming spectators--back up third and home
6. Pitcher's not becoming careless with two strikes and no balls on the hitter (avoid "meatballs").
7. Pitchers not going to the full wind-up with a 3-2 count, bases loaded, and two out.
8. With a runner on first base, Pitcher turns to the middle infielder and gestures that he will be working with them on a come-backer to the mound to get the double-play
9. Pitcher has to dig in with a runner on third to avoid throwing wild pitch--throw something the catcher can handle.

Catchers

10. Catchers blocking pitches out of the strike zone
11. Catchers calling plays for pitchers, first basemen, and third basemen on batted balls and first and third situations
12. Catchers turning their back toward the playing field on foul pop-ups and look for the ball to come back towards them.

Outfielders

13. Outfielders running infielders off fly balls; infielders going back on a fly ball until called off.
14. Outfielders throwing to proper bases--not allowing runners to advance into scoring position.
15. Outfielders calling loudly for fly balls.
16. Outfielders hitting the cut-off man.
17. Outfielders backing up each other.
18. Outfielders charging in behind infielders on ground balls, anticipating a possible error.
19. Center fielder backing up second base on attempted steals and left fielder backing up third base for same reason.

Infielders

20. Infielders charging ground balls, not allowing the ball to play them.
21. Infielders not making unnecessary wild throws after a misplayed ball on which they have no play.
22. Always making sure of one on a possible double-play situation.
23. Strong effort given to force out the lead runner on attempted sacrifice.
24. Infield up with a runner on third base in a tight ball game with less than two outs--bring corners up and have middle infielders play at DP depth when the situation calls.
25. As infielders, hold your spots on a full count with two outs and a base runner stealing.
26. With a runner on second: infielders should make an all-out effort to knock a batted ball down and keep it in the infield.
27. When late in the game and you are trying to protect the lead, shift the first and third basemen over toward the lines to take away any potential extra-base hit.

Runners

28. Run the bases with the intent to score.
29. Watch the base-runner ahead of you while attempting to advance to the next base.
30. Look at base coaches when a batted ball is hit behind the runner.
31. Look for help from the third-base coach when the batted ball is in front of the runner.
32. Do not go from second to third on a ball hit to the right side of the runner.
33. After hitting a ball, do not watch it while running to first base.
34. When tagging from third base, make eye contact with the third base coach, do not look for the ball, and watch the coach tell you to tag up.
35. When leading from third base, do it in foul territory, and after the pitch has been thrown, come back to third in fair territory.
36. When on second base, advance to third on a ground ball hit to the right side of the infield. Also on a fly ball hit to the outfield on the right side of second base.
37. Remember to take a secondary lead off the base after the pitcher has committed to go to the plate.
38. When running out an infield ground ball, run through the base, do not lunge. After you touch the base, look over your right shoulder to see if the ball has gotten away from the first basemen.
39. Remember to run on a 3-2 count when the situation calls for it.
40. Make sure that the on-deck batter is on the first-base side of home plate to clean away the bat and mask and also to tell the base runner whether to slide or stay up while attempting to score.

Batters

41. Batter's ability to sacrifice bunt.
42. Hitter running hard to first and making a good turn on singles to the outfield, then finding out where the ball is.
43. Not hitting the first pitch following a base on balls.
44. Batters NOT guessing with the pitcher--especially with two outs
45. The ability to hit the ball to the right side with runners on first, or second, or first and second, with no outs.
46. Not swinging for the fence, especially when just a fly ball may win the game.
47. When bases are loaded, be looking for a first pitch fast ball so that the pitcher does not fall behind in the count.
48. If it is a close game and you set up to bat in the last inning
49. When bunting, get the bat out in front of the plate, keep the barrel head up and let the ball meet the bat, do not wave the bat at the ball.
50. Remember, 70% of all ground balls will get you on base, 80% of line drives are hits, and 90% of all fly balls result in an out.