

# BASEBALL 101

Learn how to improve your game with a few simple steps brought to you by the Texas Rangers Youth Academy. Dash Johnson, manager of Youth Academy baseball and softball programming, uses his extensive knowledge of baseball as a former collegiate player and long-time coach to simplify key elements of the game.

In this lesson, Johnson focuses on how to successfully hit and bunt by relying on a few simple steps.

To learn more about the Texas Rangers Youth Academy, follow @RangersYA on Twitter and Instagram. To register your child for free baseball and softball programming, visit [texasrangers.com/academy](https://texasrangers.com/academy).



## HITTING



### GRIP

Before you prepare to swing, properly grip the bat by lining up your hands with your dominant hand on top. Your fingers should be wrapped around the bat with your "door knocking knuckles" facing out.



### STANCE

Position yourself in an athletic stance with your feet slightly wider than shoulder-width apart and knees slightly bent to establish a strong base. Keep your feet parallel with your toes pointing toward the plate.



### LOAD/STRIDE

Load your swing by pulling your hands back and shifting your weight to your back foot. As you load your hands behind your head, keep your elbow up and your eyes forward. Before you strike the ball, stride forward with your front foot to time your swing and build power.



### SWING/EXTENSION

As you watch the ball enter the strike zone, bring the knob of your bat toward the ball and swing the barrel through while keeping your head down and eyes on the ball. As you swing your barrel, extend your arms for a complete swing with increased power.

To avoid pop-ups, keep your bat level. To ensure your bat is level, your top hand should have its palm facing up, while the bottom hand should have its palm facing down.



### FOLLOW-THROUGH

Maintain your balance as you swing through the ball and finish with your bat high above your head. From start to finish, the alignment of your chin will transition from your front shoulder to back shoulder as your arms, shoulders, and hips complete the swing.

# ***BASEBALL 101***

## **BUNTING**



### **STANCE**

Position yourself in an athletic stance with your feet slightly wider than shoulder-width apart and knees slightly bent as if you were preparing to take a full swing. Be sure to position yourself towards the front of the batter's box to increase fair ball territory for your bunt.



### **SQUARING AROUND**

As the ball is being thrown, turn your feet and body to square up with your belly button facing the pitcher. Get into a low athletic stance while bringing your bat in front of your eyes to help you track the ball to your barrel.



### **GRIP**

Properly grip the bat by sliding your top hand toward the middle of the bat. Position it between your thumb and knuckles as if you were giving a thumb's up. This grip will help you control the bat while protecting your fingers from the pitch. Your bottom hand will stabilize the knob of the bat to help you aim your bunt to the left or right.



### **BUNT**

As you watch the ball enter the strike zone, let the ball travel the distance to your bat rather than reaching out to swing or stab at the pitch. Match the plane of the pitch by using your legs to move up and down, avoiding excessive movement of the barrel and preventing pop-ups. Hit the top third of the baseball and aim toward your desired location.