

# How to Play “Hand Hit Ball”

<Instruction for the Instructors>

## Introduction

Baseball is one of the popular ball sport in Olympic Games, each players throw, hit, and run under elaborate rules. It is a peaceful but quite an exciting sport, every team compete on imagination and skills. However...all players need to prepare some equipments and learn complex rules a bit, to play this sport.

Although “Hand Hit Ball” is generally a mere game for kids, it allows you to experience the joy of baseball in an easy manner. A small ball is the only equipment required, and the rules are easy to learn. “Hand Hit Ball” is also a highly educative sport, every child is given equal chances to have a turn at bat and can acquire the spirit of cooperation.

With learning eight elements, every kid can enjoy the excitement and joy of this game, and this instruction sheet explains each element to details. We hope you to make use this sheet for introducing this game to children.

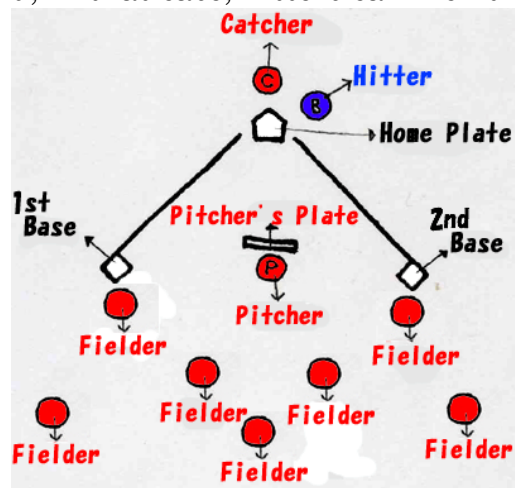
## Elements of the Game and Explanations

Following eight elements are required to play “Hand Hit Ball”. Please understand the explanations thoroughly.

### 1. Preparation

Find a ground with appropriate area and place “home plate”, “first base (on the right side)”, and “second base (on the left side)”, in a way those bases form a v-shape. Set a “pitch plate” between “first base” and “second base”. The only equipment needed, is a small ball.

- In baseball, four bases are used and the bases -- home plate, first base, second base, and third base -- are placed in a way that the bases make a “Diamond”. In Hand Hit Ball, however, we use only three bases to make it simple.
- Pitch plate is the place for a pitcher to throw a ball from.
- Generally, a fist-sized, and soft rubber ball is used for playing “Hand Hit Ball”. If you cannot find a rubber ball, roll and band a piece of newspaper to use it as a ball. You could also use a soccer ball and, in that case, hitters can kick the ball instead of hitting it.



## **2. Forming Teams, or Hit & Catch**

Divide players into two teams. Any number of players can be in each team. One is a **“Hit Team”** and the other one is a **“Catch Team”**. Each player on the “Hit Team” stands by the home plate, and attempts to hit the thrown ball, in turn. Players on the “Catch Team” take their positions in the V-shaped area, and try to catch the ball, hit by a hitter.

- Having four to six players on each team may be appropriate.
- Usually, having same number of players on each team is desirable. You can also balance the strengths of the teams by, for example, having four elder kids on one team and six younger kids on the other.
- In case of baseball, number of the players on each team is determined to be nine and defensive position for each player is set for them to defend effectively, and to cover each other. (Check the figure on the former page.) On positioning players, learning from baseball is advisable.

## **3. Pitching And Hitting**

One of the players from the Catch Team throws a ball from the pitch plate to the home plate **along the ground or with one hop**. A hitter stands by the home plate, and **hits the ball with a hand or a stick**. Exact rules on how to throw and hit, can be discussed with players. Have a hitter hit until the ball falls within the V-shaped area.

- It is important for a pitcher to throw an easy ball to hit.
- Adjust distance between the pitcher and a hitter depending on the situation.
- When the ball hit by a hitter falls outside the V-shaped area, it’s called “foul”. A batter who hit a foul keeps trying to hit until the ball falls within the V-shaped area.

## **4. Safe and Out**

When a hitter hits a ball within the V-shaped area, he runs toward the first base. A Catch Team player who caught the ball throws it quickly to the first base, while another Catch Team player near the first base receives it with his foot on the base. It’s the race between the ball and the hitter. If the ball gets to the first base before the hitter does, the hitter is **“out”** and the next person in the order is to hit. If the hitter gets to the first base before the ball arrives, the hitter is **“safe”**, and remains on the first base as a **“runner”**.

- When both the ball and the hitter get to the first base at the same time, or if its judgement is difficult for you, you judge it “SAFE”.
- A hitter who was put out must leave the home plate and wait until next turn for him to hit.
- A hitter who was safe remains on the base as a runner and waits until next hitter hits a ball within the V-shaped area.
- The runner is allowed to move from the base when a hitter hits a ball. (The

runner will then run toward the next base.)



- In baseball, runners are allowed to attempt to advance, or steal a base, while the pitcher is on throwing, but it is not the case in Hand Hit Ball.
- If the ball was caught and thrown by a Catch Team player, and it gets to the second base before the runner occupied the first base at the time of pitch, the runner is out.
- Sometimes a rule is adopted, a hitter or a runner is put out when they are hit by a ball thrown from Catch Team players.

### **5. Switching between Defense and Offense**

After three Hit Team players are put out, the Hit Team becomes a Catch Team, and the opposing team becomes a Hit Team. This exchange in roles comes in turn. The teams can discuss between them and decide how many times they continue this switch before completing the game.

- In baseball, the unit of this exchange in roles between two teams, is called an “inning”. Generally, one game of the baseball consists of nine innings, and the first half of an inning is called the “top” of an inning, while the later half is called “bottom” of the inning.
- To make a game simple and quick, the switch between the teams can be made after two outs, instead of three.
- Scores are kept in a table as shown below.

# Game A team(top) against B team(bottom), 6 innings

	1st inning	2nd inning	3rd inning	4th inning	5th inning	6th inning	TOTAL
	0	0	2	0	4	0	6
	1	0	0	1	2	3	7

In this case, B team wins in 7-6 score, against A team.

### **6. Runs and Determining a Winner**

Hitters hit balls in turn. When the ball is hit, runners on bases run toward subsequent bases, and when a runner gets to the home plate, the Hit Team gets a score. The hitter reached safely to the first base, can run further to the second, and even to the home plate, as long as the hitter can reach to the bases faster than the ball thrown by a Catch Team player. While the objective for the Hit Team is to earn as much scores, the opposite Catch Team tries to gets three outs to stop its action.

- Hit Team players keep hitting in turn to the order, set at the beginning of the game.
- On exchanging the inning, the first hitter of Hit Team is next to the last hitter of the same team in the previous inning.
- If a hitter or a runner outruns a previous runner, he is out.
- Only one runner can occupy one base. A runner on the base must advance to the next base when another runner or a hitter runs toward his base.
- When a hitter makes a complete circuit of the bases and scores all by himself, it is called a “Home Run”.

### **7. Exhortation to Direct Catching**

**If the Catch Team catches the hit ball before it fell to the ground, the hitter is “out”.** On this case, runners on bases cannot move to the next bases.

- When a ball is hit in the air, a fly ball, and caught by the Catch Team, runners must return, and touch the bases they occupied at the time of the pitch. If the runner fails to return before the ball arrives at the base, both him and the hitter is OUT.
- Therefore, when a ball flies in the air, runners need to mind the ball is caught directly, and they can be got OUT, if they are off the base.

### **8. Tip for Enjoying “Hand Hit Ball”**

Tip for enjoying Hit Ball is, for a Hit Team, to hit a ball to where no one can catch. For a Catch Team, the tips are to wait for a hit ball at where the ball is likely to come, and hopefully, catch it directly before it falls to the ground. When the ball comes along the ground toward you, you would want to catch it and throw it accurately at the first base.

- Hitting hard to get a “Home Run” is quite an exciting play, but hitting softly and attempt to get to the first base before the Catch team players reach it, is also very very good. Both plays may be the opposite style, but both of them describe the essence of excitement in baseball(hitting, running, and fielding).
- Sometimes, it is difficult for a Catch Team to get three outs, because of the small number of players or the gap in ability between two teams. In such cases, you can be flexible and, for example, switch the Catch Team and Hit Team after getting two outs, instead of three, or after six players of the Hit Team hit.
- Having a fixed number of players at bat in each inning, instead of switching the Hit Team and Catch Team every time the Hit Team gets three outs, has the advantages of letting both teams play Hit and Catch for about same amount of time and of giving everybody equal chances to be at bat.