



Learn to Play **BASEBALL!**

The roar of the crowd • Hot dogs and snow cones • The crack of the bat • Home runs

What's your favorite thing about a baseball game?

Baseball has been called "America's pastime." That's because it's so popular in the United States, both to watch and to play. Baseball is popular in other countries, too, such as Japan and many countries in Central America. Both kids and adults like baseball.

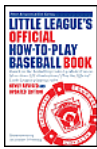
Would you like to learn how to PLAY baseball, or learn ways to improve your game if you already know the basics? Then take a look at the guide below. It will help you find information in the library, on the Internet, and in the community about **PLAYING BASEBALL!**

You'll find that many of the resources below are "electronic," such as the DVDs. That's because it's easiest to learn something like baseball by seeing it, instead of just reading about it.

The materials below were chosen for their quality content and for being authoritative, visually appealing, well-organized, and well-reviewed.

BOOKS

- **Little League Official How-To-Play Baseball Book.**



By Peter Kreutzer and Ted Kerley. Main Street Books, 1990.

The basics of baseball, brought to you by the Little League organization. Learn the correct way to throw and bat, and the essentials of playing each position. Also includes an abridged version of the official Little League rules.

- **The Chicago Tribune** says this is "the clearest way to teach your youngster baseball fundamentals."

- **Baseball Just for Kids: Skills, Strategies & Stories to Make You a Better Ballplayer.**



By Jerry Kasoff. Grand Slam PR Inc., 1996.

Covers the basics of the game: base running, batting, fielding, catching and pitching. The author gives pointers and offers historical trivia, jokes, and famous bloopers. The black-and-white photos illustrate the differences between techniques.

- **USA Today** says this is "a rarity: an instruction manual written specifically for children, not the adults who coach them."

- **Play Ball Like the Hall of Famers: The Inside Scoop from 19 Baseball Greats.**



By Steven Krasner and Keith Neely. Peachtree Jr, 2005.

Discusses the fundamentals of baseball, both offense and defense, with tips from baseball greats such as Johnny Bench, Tom Seaver, Rod Carew, Ozzie Smith and Carl Yastrzemski. Includes interviews, anecdotes, advice for putting the tips into action, and a glossary of key terms.

- **Booklist** says this book is "Fun to read and really useful for anyone who wants to play ball."

- **Kids Baseball Workout: A Fun Way to Get in Shape and Improve Your Game.**



By Jeffrey B. Fuerst. Millbrook Press, 2002.

Train to become a better ballplayer. Includes warm up, cool down, and stretching exercises, then proceeds to exercises and practices focusing on different baseball skills. Quizzes, tips and celebrity profiles are interspersed throughout the book.

- **School Library Journal** says the book's "drawings contribute to the spirit of enjoyment in training."

To find more books about baseball, browse the shelves in the 796.357 area. That's the Dewey Decimal number for baseball.

VIDEOS / DVDs

- **Play Ball! Basic Fielding.** DVD. Peter Pan, 2003.



Teaches basic fielding techniques and strategies. Includes tips, practice drills, and safety advice. Hosted by Ray Romano from TV's "Everybody Loves Raymond" and features baseball great Reggie Smith.

- **Librarian's comment:** One in a great series of DVDs for young ballplayers wanting to learn the basics and improve their game!

- **Play Ball! Basic Pitching.** DVD. Peter Pan, 2003.



Teaches basic pitching techniques and strategies. Includes tips, practice drills and safety advice. Hosted by Ray Romano from TV's "Everybody Loves Raymond" and features baseball great Reggie Smith.

- **Librarian's comment:** One in a great series of DVDs for young ballplayers wanting to learn the basics and improve their game!

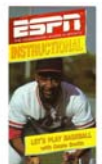
- **Play Ball! Basic Hitting.** DVD. Peter Pan, 2003.



Teaches basic hitting techniques and strategies. Includes tips, practice drills and safety advice. Hosted by Ray Romano from TV's "Everybody Loves Raymond" and features baseball great Reggie Smith.

- **Librarian's comment:** One in a great series of DVDs for young ballplayers wanting to learn the basics and improve their game!

- **Let's Play Baseball with Ozzie Smith.** VHS. ESPN Video/Disney, 1997.



Former All-Star shortstop Ozzie Smith teaches baseball's fundamentals with the help of Little League players. Includes warm-up and stretching exercises, then moves into individual lessons such as base running, reading the pitcher, holding the runner, hitting the cut-off man, and turning a double play. Designed to help you become a better ballplayer.

- **Amazon.com** says the video "is professionally done and well organized" and "attractive to young ballplayers who want to better their game."

- **Baseball: A Film by Ken Burns.** Available VHS or DVD. PBS Home Video, 1994.



Documentary. Relates the history of baseball with topics including player/team/owner relations, African American players, and the resilience of the game. Key figures speak in their own words, and broadcasters and sports writers offer commentary. Includes old time photos and illustrations, and more recent newsreels and video clips. The DVD includes several extra features.

- **Kirkus Reviews** says Burns' work is "A magnificent, exhaustively researched chronicle in words and pictures of our nation's pastime, and how it came to be what it is."

INSTRUCTIONAL SOFTWARE

- **The Ripken Way Instructional CD-ROM**

Produced jointly with Ripken Baseball and Babe Ruth League, Inc.

** For PC. Requires Windows 98 or newer version to operate. **



The "Ripken Way" was developed by Cal Ripken Jr. and his father. Revolves around four principles: (1) Keep It Simple, (2) Explain the "Why," (3) Keep It Fun, and (4) Celebrate the Individual. Offers instruction from former major league players: Cal Ripken Jr. (hitting), Bill Ripken (infield), John Habyan (pitching) and Joe Orsulak (outfield). Includes 1.5 hours of instructional material, 50 pages of printable lessons to take to team practice, and an easily navigable menu.

- **Librarian's comment:** Learn baseball techniques from some of the best in the business! The "Ripken Way" is rippin' its way through Little League baseball. Check out this CD-ROM and see what it's all about!

AUDIO/VIDEO CLIPS

- **Speeches and Video from The History Channel @**

<http://www.historychannel.com/broadband/home/>

Enter keyword "baseball" to access audio and video clips about baseball and/or by the players.

- **Librarian's comment:** Hear Babe Ruth, Hank Aaron and more b-ball greats speak in their own words!

INTERNET SITES

----- "Starting Points" -----

- **Little League Baseball @ <http://www.littleleague.com>**



Information for players, parents and coaches. Learn about upcoming baseball camps, the Little League museum, and the Little League World Series.

- **Librarian's comment:** A must-visit site for all Little Leaguers and possible future ballplayers. In the "Players" section, check out some cool features like "What if Little League was played on Mars?" and "Dugout's Trivia Contest."

- **Babe Ruth League @ <http://www.baberuthleague.com>**



The starting point for anyone playing or interested in playing in the league. Site includes press releases, rosters, hall of fame, graduates, scholarship info, and more.

- **Librarian's comment:** Provides the history and highlights of the league, information on the divisions, and a way to request more information.

- **Major League Baseball @ <http://www.mlb.com>**



Keep track of your favorite team's and players' progress, find the start time of an upcoming game, read all the current Major League news, and more. Read the bios and current stats for any current player.

- **Librarian's comment:** Be sure to check out the Kids Club page at <http://www.mlb.com/NASApp/mlb/mlb/kids/basics.jsp>

----- Baseball "Science" -----

- **Science of Baseball @ <http://www.exploratorium.edu/baseball/>**



Exploring the science behind the game of baseball. From Exploratorium, the museum of science, art and human perception. Includes features such as "how far can you hit one?" and "putting something on the ball." Includes articles such as "biological baseball" and exhibits such as "fastball reaction time" and "scientific slugger."

- **Librarian's comment:** This site is informative, educational AND interesting! If you're a pitcher, you'll love "Thrown For a Curve." It illustrates how to throw a fastball, curveball, screwball and slider, and the "secret" behind a curveball.

- **Baseball: The Game and Beyond @ <http://library.thinkquest.org/11902/>**



Learn how to calculate ERA, the difference between wood and aluminum bats, what the umpire's job is like, and much more. Includes many examples of the physics behind baseball. Topics are organized "around the field": announcer's booth, batting cage, behind the plate, and bullpen.

- **Librarian's comment:** Lessons are rated by complexity, i.e. how much physics is involved in the descriptions. Also, if you don't mind frames, the "trivia ticker" feature, which updates with a new interesting baseball fact or important date every 30 seconds, is kind of cool.

----- Baseball "Fundamentals" -----

- **The Baseball Mechanic @ <http://www.thebaseballmechanic.com/>**



Mechanics in this case is another word for movements. Good mechanics yield maximum good results and serve to avoid injury. This site includes lessons to educate players, coaches and parents about good baseball mechanics. Also includes baseball links, cool baseball facts, and information on personal instruction opportunities.

- **Librarian's comment:** Combines text with pictures in easy to follow lessons.

- **Free Baseball Instructional Articles @ <http://www.baseballtips.com/instruction.html>**



Almost 150 free articles on a variety of baseball topics: hitting and offense, pitching, defense, catching, health/strength training, coaching, and more.

- **Librarian's comment:** The articles are well-written, and there are no pop-ups or other ads. The topics covered are the topics youth players want to read about: playing well under pressure, how to break in a glove, the secret of hitting the curve ball, and much more.

- **Competitive Youth Baseball @ <http://goodswing.com/>**



Includes many articles under the headings of "hitting tips" and "pitching tips." Also includes a message board and a short list of recommended websites for youth ballplayers.

- **Librarian's comment:** Very well-organized with a short list of menu choices. Although the number of articles offered isn't extensive, the topics are appropriate and covered well.

INTERNET SITES (cont.)

----- Baseball "Fundamentals" (cont.) -----

- **eteamz.com: The Team Sports Web Site Leader @**
<http://eteamz.active.com/baseball/instruction/tips/>



Partnered with ESPN. Full of useful practice drills, tips, games and more. Great for players, coaches and parents. In addition to the helpful articles, also includes community announcements and message board, and links to further resources.

- **Librarian's comment:** An extensive list of article categories. Recommended to use the "baseball tip finder" search function to look for just the articles you want. It can search the article title only or all the words in the articles.

----- "For Fun" -----

- **Kids Domain: Baseball Fun @** <http://www.kidsdomain.com/sports/baseball/>



Includes baseball-related web links, a baseball timeline, baseball quotes, and baseball clip art. Then have some fun with online games, coloring activities and puzzles, trivia and a word scramble.

- **Librarian's comment:** Offers some online fun, all with a baseball theme, for when you just need a break!

DATABASE

- **Biography Resource Center @** <http://www.inspire.net>

Reading biographies about professional baseball players is a great way to learn about the game of baseball. Read how players got their start, how they've improved their skills, their recommendation to young players, and much more.

- **Library Journal** says this is "an extremely rich and valuable database" and that "the interface is easy to use but also includes a high level of search options."

Quick Instructions:

1. At the list of Inspire database choices, click on "Biographies."
2. If you know the name of the person you'd like to read about, enter it here and click "Search."
3. If you're not sure which biography you want to read, choose the Biographical Facts Search. You can fill in the "occupation" space with several choices from the provided list, such as "baseball player," "baseball pitcher" or "baseball coach." You can limit your results by choosing a nationality, gender, place of birth or death, and/or date range of birth or death.
4. The Advanced Search is a good option if you want to limit your results by date of publication, or to do a Boolean search.

The **1st screen shot** below shows the Biographic Facts Search with these definitions:

- Occupation: baseball player - Gender: male - Birthdate: after 1975

The **2nd screen shot** shows the first screen of results from this search. There were 38 total results on this search.

The first screenshot shows the Biography Resource Center's Biographical Facts Search interface. The search criteria are: Name (empty), Occupation (baseball player), Nationality (American), Gender (Male), Birth Year (is after 1975), and Death Year (is empty). The second screenshot shows the search results page, displaying a list of 10 baseball players, including Ray, James (1913), Beckwith, Joshua (American baseball player, 1981), Beckwith, Cedric (African American baseball player, 1922), Beckwith, Lancia (African American baseball player, 1928), Bradley, Milton (African American baseball player, 1928), Brown, Eric (African American legislator, 1928), Brown, Ernest (1928), Brown, A. J. (1927), and Charnick, Eric (African American baseball player, 1927).

KEYWORDS & PHRASES FOR SEARCHING

Need more information? Try a search in the library online catalog, a database, or the Internet.

A KEYWORD SEARCH looks for your specified words anywhere in the catalog, database, or Internet record. Keyword searches are good to use when you don't know a specific subject, title or author.

Keywords can be searched as **phrases** of two or more words together. Examples:

- baseball rules
- baseball drills
- play baseball
- learn baseball
- baseball camp
- Little League
- T-ball
- baseball fielding (or hitting, or pitching, etc.)

Keywords can also be searched as **words**, either single words OR two or more words combined with Boolean operators (AND and NOT are the two commonly used operator).

Examples:

- learn AND play AND baseball
- improve AND baseball AND game

COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Still not finding the information you need? Give a call to one of these organizations and ask for some advice. We're sure they'd love to help you!

Little League Baseball HQ
9802 Little League Dr
Indianapolis, IN 46235
317.897.6127

Midwest Baseball Academy
10423 Worthington Lane
Prospect, KY 40059
800.669.6323

Indianapolis Indians
501 W Maryland St
Indianapolis, IN 46225
317.269.3542

EXTENSION IDEAS

For Kids:

Use the information found in these resources to learn to play baseball or improve your game! Get a jump on the baseball season before it begins, or supplement team practice with work on your own.

Ideas...

- Practice on your own
- Practice with a friend
- Practice with the whole team, or show your teammates what you've learned and recommend they check out the resources for themselves!
- Share any great tips you learn with your coach
- Use the resources to help you make a list of the equipment you need and take it to the sporting goods store with you

Even more ideas...

- Have a baseball-themed overnight party and watch Ken Burns' [Baseball](#) video or DVD, or as much as you can get through before your parents make you to go to bed (it's LONG)!
- Got a report coming up for school? How about choosing a baseball theme?

Suggested topics:

- How I learned to play baseball
- How I've improved my baseball game
- Why I like to play baseball
- Teamwork
- My favorite baseball player
- Choose your own topic. Be creative!

For Teachers and School Media Specialists:

Kids love baseball, and many baseball topics have great applicability for school lessons. So how about using some of the resources above in your classroom or school media center?

Provide this resource list to students, and/or share some of the resources in class. Ideas:

- In math class, use baseball to talk about averages and statistics
- In physics class, use baseball to talk about trajectory and aerodynamics

- continued on next page

EXTENSION IDEAS (cont.)

Ideas For Teachers and School Media Specialists cont.:

- In composition/English class, suggest students write reports with baseball themes
- In history class, listen to some of the baseball-related audio found at <http://www.historychannel.com/broadband/home/> and study how baseball techniques have changed throughout the years
- In physical education class, use the resources above in units on baseball

For Public Librarians:

- Promote baseball resources, by posting recommended reading lists and creating book displays, for example, from the early spring (when kids are gearing up for T-ball and Little League) through the summer.
 - Have a summer baseball program. The possibilities are endless, but some ideas might include:
 - Invite a major or minor league player (former or current) to speak
 - Invite local Little League players (former or current) to speak
 - Play baseball trivia, where all the questions are about baseball
 - Play a trivia game where the questions are coded either "single," "double," "triple," or "home run" based on their difficulty. The questions don't have to be about baseball, but the game is played like baseball. Teams are created and questions earn teams hits and runs. Wrong answers are "outs."
 - Have a book discussion group and discuss a biography of a Major League player
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