

Mario Superstar Baseball Fielding

**Strategies in this guide assumes that superstar characters are turned OFF*

Basic Fielding

Pitching is arguably the second most important part of the game after batting. What most new players tend to get wrong is that they throw too many charge pitches and do not throw enough balls. To start with charge pitches, while it can be good to mix them in occasionally, since they have a fraction of the curve that normal curve balls do, they are much easier to read and react to for the batter. In most cases, batters mess up hitting a charge pitch because their timing is off, not because the pitch mixed them up. As a beginner, try to limit yourself to curve balls mostly. Following that is throwing balls. It might seem bad on paper to throw pitches that aren't strikes, but keep in mind that also means that the batter can't hit them. Try to mix in outside balls to try to squeeze strikes out of the batter. Inside balls are also important to mix in, but aren't as safe as the outside balls and risk hitting the batter accidentally. A good pitcher knows to find a balance of throwing outside and inside balls, and obviously strikes as well.

As far as the rest of fielding goes, there's only a few things to refine for new players. One being knowing when to dive for balls and when to let it drop. A common error new players make is diving for balls that they can't catch. This results in extra bases for the batter, and usually runs scored if there's runners on base. Gaining a sense of when a ball is catchable and when it's not is very important.

A lot of plays in the infield are made just with good A press timing. You can make a lot of dive catches with the middle infielders and a lot of jump catches with the corner basemen just by pressing A at the right moment. This is something that's not easy to teach over text, so it's something that should be practiced and learned on your own.

Cutoff throws are simple but should be mentioned. You can make a cutoff throw from an outfielder to the closest fielder that's not covering a base by holding L and pressing A. If you need to move the ball into the infield quickly, cutoff throws are usually best, especially when a character with laser is in the infield and a runner is threatening to score

Advanced Fielding

When pitching, we can take advantage of human reaction time and game mechanics to throw better pitches. Average visual reaction time is 13-15 frames, and the earliest a batter can make contact and land a fair ball is frame 3 of the swing. That means that at best, there's 16-18 frames (*0.25-0.33 seconds*) where the batter cannot react to the pitch and must make a read on the pitch. Consider this timeframe when pitching, and realise that the batter will not be able to react to anything you do 16 frames before the ball reaches the plate.

Sometimes when pitching, the pitcher should consider an intentional walk. Bowser is a good example; against high level players, Bowser is too great of a homerun threat, so most players opt to walk Bowser when he comes to the plate. There are other scenarios where walking makes sense. For example, captain Birdo with 4-5 stars, 2 outs, and a runner on 3rd. Here, Birdo has great potential to score the run from 3rd, but walking Birdo doesn't advance any runners, so it can make sense to walk Birdo and hope to end the inning by getting the next batter out. You'll need to factor in things like who the next character batting is, the number of outs, the score of the game, the innings, etc.

Jump Catching is a technique to bypass the rng chance to bobble a fly ball. Characters cannot bobble the ball when jumping, so when there's a chance, it is always better to input a jump before catching the ball. Be sure not to force it, as trying to jump too quickly can result in a dive instead.

Wall Jump is an ability which can be very useful for preventing homeruns, and sees frequent use in top level play. You activate it by jumping towards the wall just before the ball reaches the wall. Since most homeruns are hit over Right Field, wall jumpers should play that position. Learning the timing for Wall Jump may take some practice, but once it's learned it's a very useful skill.

You can utilize “Smash Stick Throws” to throw the ball slightly faster in the field. Input A and the control stick direction at the same time. You’ll know it succeeded if there’s a blue trail on the ball. Remember that the control stick can’t already be holding the throw direction – it must be input at the same time as your A press. Because smash stick throws are faster, there’s no known instance where you wouldn’t want to input it, so try to always use this tech (especially when throwing the ball as the catcher during a steal).

Learning the controls of Manual Fielder Select can be vital for preventing base hits and runs scored from fielder select errors. The important thing to know is that after a glitch bunt, pressing Y once gives you the pitcher, and pressing Y twice gives you the catcher. There are other uses for Manual Fielder Select, but they're not as important as preventing glitch bunts.