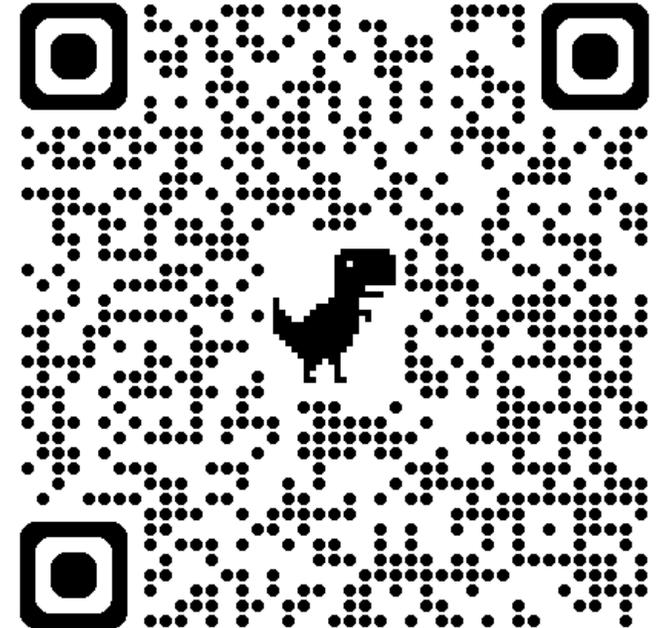
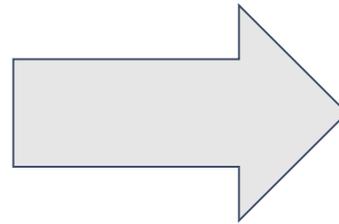


2026 Hot Stove Umpire Clinic: Baseball



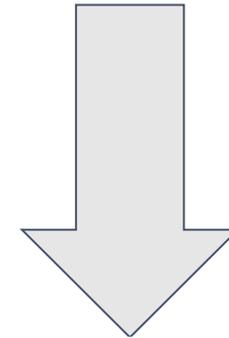
Digital Umpire Data
Sheet

please complete only one
(no school or work
emails, if possible)



Welcome!

- Thank you for attending!
- Ensure data sheets are completed – (1) paper & (1) digital (don't use school or work email address, if possible)
- Obtain Ohio Hot Stove Baseball rule book
 - PDF (searchable) rule books, rule sheets, & umpire clinic presentations are available on LorainCountyHotStove.com
- Obtain all handouts in packet
- Introduction of State and County Officials present
- Introduction of Community Head Umpires and officials
- Breakdown of schedule (break around halfway point)
- Please silence cell phones – there is a lot of important information to provide in a relatively short period of

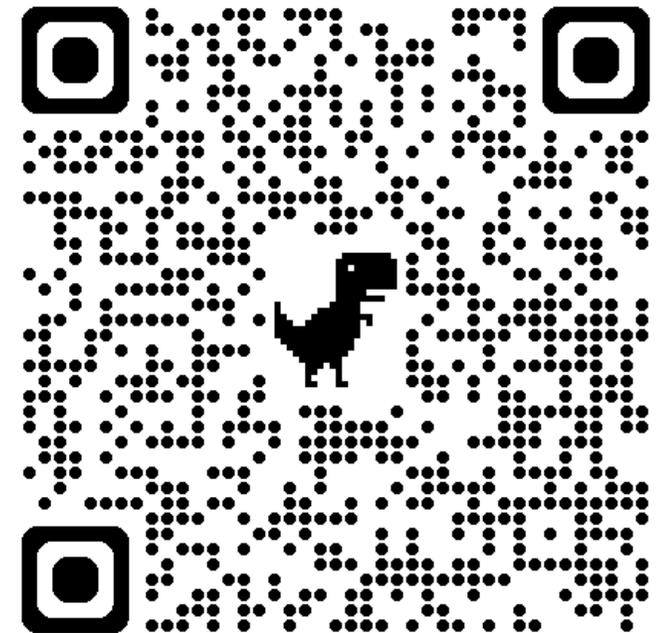


Digital Umpire

Data Sheet

please complete only
one

(no school or work
emails, if possible)



Important Hot Stove Dates to Note

- Remaining Umpire Clinic Dates:
 - Sunday, March 15, 2026, from 1:00 – 5:00 p.m. (Softball only)
 - Sunday, April 19, 2026, from 1:00 – 5:00 p.m. (Mechanics Clinic – Baseball & Softball)
 - Location TBD – likely @ North Ridgeville High School turf baseball or softball field
 - Beginner-level, outdoor, supplemental, *moving* clinic with on-field work
 - Highly recommended for new umpires & those with ~less than five years of experience
 - Location, registration, & details will be confirmed on LCHS website
- Baseball Regional Tournament (locations TBD):
 - **Mandatory umpire meeting:** Friday, June 26, 2026, from 6:00 – ~7:00 p.m.
 - Reservoir Park – Grafton (pavilion between fields A & B)
 - Saturday, June 27 & Sunday, June 28
 - Saturday, July 11 & Sunday, July 12
- Softball State Tournament (locations TBD):
 - **Mandatory umpire meeting:** Wednesday, July 1, 2026, from 6:30 – ~7:00 p.m.
 - Reservoir Park – Grafton (pavilion between fields A & B)
 - First week: July 6 – July 9, 2026
 - Second week: July 13 – July 16, 2026

About this Clinic...

This Clinic is designed to be *interactive*! Our outline has been tweaked and perfected (hopefully!) over the past 30+ years – from former State and County Head Umpire, the late Bob Feierabend, to current State President Lou Vasi, and Lorain County Hot Stove Umpire-In-Chief, Jerry Clapper. Input is garnered from the senior umpire staff. Please ask questions – we will be more than happy to answer any umpire questions.

Lastly, remember to have fun!

Rules Disclaimer – this clinic covers Hot Stove rules:

- Hot Stove Baseball: mostly based on OBR (i.e., MLB) rule set w/ modifications
 - Non-Hot Stove games you work may use other rule sets (e.g., NFHS, Little League)
 - Baseball rules are not 100% universal
 - Online & social media are useful, but be aware of what rule set is being discussed
 - Significant overlap between rule sets, but be aware of major differences when working between leagues, etc. (this clinic may address important differences, where applicable)

A Few Thoughts About Umpiring

- The quality of the game can never exceed the quality of the umpiring available.
- Every game is a new game, every pitch a big one.
- Let the umpire lose his temper, and he/she is through.
- Let the umpire get pushed around, and he/she is through.
- 6 words describe what an umpire should be: *Quick to think, Slow to anger.*
- Perhaps the most difficult part of being a successful umpire is the ability to ignore outside influences and internal pressures and to maintain absolute concentration on the game and only the game, including each individual play and pitch.
- There are no close plays: only Ball or Strike, Safe or Out.
- In the public mind, the umpire appears at best to be a necessary evil; at worst as a Neanderthal bent upon robbing the home team of its just desserts. How else to explain the singular propensity of umpires to blow calls obvious even to those sitting in the last row of the upper deck, and to misinterpret rules known even to those who have never read a rule book?
- The way to study the rule book is to read a rule and then out it in play in your mind, visualize it, make application of that rule to the play. In your mind you see the play in the field, and then, when it comes up, it's like it's been there before.
- In order to be a good umpire you have to have the desire to learn something every day. Every umpire feels that he/ she is the best umpire there is. But the best umpire is the one that feels that way and then learns something new the next day.
- The toughest call an umpire has to make is not the half swing; the toughest call is throwing a guy out of the game after you blew the hell out of the play.
- To be an umpire, you must have good judgement, good eyesight and confidence that you can do the job. You do not know or care to know who you are calling safe or out, and when the ball reaches home plate, you know only that it is either a ball or a strike. That's integrity; if an umpire loses that, he's lost everything. If players and managers know an umpire calls the play the way he sees it, they will respect him even if he might not be the best umpire.

State of Ohio Concussion Return-to-Play Law

- All Hot Stove managers, coaches & umpires must comply with this law!
- Use this site to get your **free** certification: [NHFS Free Concussion Course](#)
 1. Select “Ohio” from the drop-down. You will be prompted to log in or create an account.
 2. Under “Concussion in Sports,” select “Order Course” – then, “Start Learning” on next page.
 3. Select “Begin Course,” and proceed until the course is finished & a certificate is earned.
 4. If you want additional information on this law, visit [Ohio Department of Health](#) website.
- By law, the course must be taken every three years while officiating
- A community may be asked to provide proof of compliance
- Save a picture of your completion certificate on your phone and keep it with you, as needed
- The course is intended for awareness – umpires don’t diagnose concussion, but we should alert a coach, etc., if a potential issue arises



Coach Education
www.nfhslearn.com

Umpire Dress Code – Baseball

(OHSBL Rules 9.6 & 11.13)

- Umpire Hats (various lengths available) – required for male & female umps:
 - Black or Dark Blue
 - Hot Stove Baseball/Softball logo is the only logo permitted
 - 4-stitch (2” brim), 6-stitch (2.5” brim) recommended (“combo” – only need to buy one hat); 8-stitch (2.75” brim) is OK (normal ball cap); 3-stitch (1.5” brim) OK for plate umpire only
 - ALWAYS wear the brim forward, even when behind the plate – unless you are wearing a hockey style helmet (then no hat is required for the plate umpire)
 - *Hats should be clean, with no visible dirt or stains*
- Shirt: Hot Stove Baseball & Softball umpires wear **black MLB replica shirt w/ striped collar & striped sleeve cuffs** (pictured to the right) as official uniform shirt (required in tournaments)
 - Only Hot Stove patch(es) permitted, if any: (1) on left sleeve, or (1) one on left + (1) on right sleeve, two finger widths above cuff & centered (USA flag, number are OK)
 - Umpire shirts are *typically sized to fit over a chest protector* (order your normal shirt size)
 - Any color MLB, etc. replica umpire shirt may be worn during the regular season, provided *both umpires are dressed exactly alike*



Umpire Dress Code – Baseball

(OHSBL Rules 9.6 & 11.13.L)

- Red Undershirt (if an undershirt is worn): never wear a visible, red long sleeve undershirt under short sleeve umpire shirt (long sleeve that *matches* umpire shirt underneath is OK in cold)
- Coat:
 - Any black or dark blue coat
 - No hoodies or logos
 - Visible dark sweatshirt under umpire shirt OK for cold games
- Gray Pants – **DRESS SLACK-STYLE ONLY** (no jeans, capris, etc.); no shorts *ever*:
 - Charcoal gray most common & preferred, but different shade of gray is OK
 - “Umpire pants” available (fit nicely over plate gear), but normal dress pants may work
- Black Belt: **REQUIRED** – we never umpire without a belt on



Umpire Dress Code – Baseball

(OHSBL Rules 9.6 & 11.13.L)

- Ball Bag(s) – *only* worn by the PLATE umpire – never by a base umpire w/ one:
 - One bag: always on the right side
 - One bag on each side is optional
 - If you are left-handed & need the bag on your left, wear two ball bags
 - Gray, Black, or Navy Blue are acceptable; both bags must match if wearing two (typically match w/ hat)
- Clicker & Brush are a must (both base ump & plate ump):
 - Clickers come in three- or four-wheel varieties (always in left-hand during play)
 - Brushes also come in a variety of shapes and sizes
- Plate Gear: chest protector (fitted snug under your chin), leg guards, & personal protective gear are *always* worn UNDER the uniform shirt & pants
 - **ALWAYS BRING YOUR PLATE GEAR TO A GAME**



Umpire Dress Code – Baseball & Softball

(OHSBL Rules 9.6 & 11.13.L)

- Black or Dark Blue Socks: at least crew length (no ankle/no-show socks)
- Black Shoes: **shined (clean appearance)**, with black laces; some white trim, etc. is OK
 - “Plate shoes” (pictured) recommended for plate umpire
 - How to clean ideas: dish soap & water spray bottle w/ rag & brush, car interior wiper, leather shoe shiner



Where to buy umpire items:

- Purchase Officials Supplies (store in Akron + shop online)
- Final Score Sporting Goods (store in North Royalton + shop online)
- Play It Again Sports (closest store in North Olmsted + shop online)
 - Used sports gear only – availability varies
- Honig’s (online only)
- Ump Attire (online only – ump-attire.com)
- Flemings Referee and Sport (store in Columbus & shop online)
- Amazon (quality may vary)
- Used gear (e.g., Facebook Marketplace)

Umpire Dress Code – Baseball

(OHSBL Rules 9.6 & 11.13.L)

PERCEPTION IS REALITY WITH UMPIRE APPEARANCE

- All umpires should be clean and neat
- Jewelry: NO metallic items (e.g., visible chain); no/limited non-metallic wristbands; smart watch not advised; NO traditional watch; wedding band is OK
- Dress as an umpire to do a game, dress as a fan to watch a game – no umpire uniform in the stands
- NO smoking/vaping, chewing tobacco, or nicotine pouches during a game or near playing field (*OHSBL Rule 11.10.E*)
- NO cell phone use during a game (*OHSBL Rule 9.8*)
 - OK to use to keep track of time limit for games (umpire's responsibility) (*OHSBL Rule 4.10.E*)
 - If you have your cell phone, keep it in your pocket & only use it to call 9-1-1 for emergencies

Former North Olmsted and North Ridgeville Hot Stove Umpire and Current MLB Crew Chief, #92 James Hoye.



Pregame & Umpire Etiquette

- Ideally, find out who your partner is – if you have one – from your game assigner or from online, if your game is assigned online, before arriving at the game facility.
 - If working solo, never accept the offer of a non-certified spectator or coach to “help on the bases.” Only carded umpires may officiate games – & you’re probably better off working solo than someone random.
- Obtain your partner’s phone number, if possible, to text/call before arriving at the facility. Discuss, at a minimum, where you’ll park/meet up (game assigner may be able to assist if there’s designated umpire parking).
 - What vehicle to look for, uniform options, & who is doing plate/bases can also be discussed.
- Arrive at the game facility *at least* 30 minutes before the scheduled start – *especially* when working with a partner. *NEVER walk straight to the field* to wait! Umpires always walk to the field together.
 - Communicate with your partner if you are running late. Don’t leave them guessing where you are.
- If you don’t know who your partner is, ask! Don’t be shy. All umpires are willing to help the new ump.
- If not discussed already: (1) find out what umpire shirt you’re both wearing (if you only have one shirt, it should be the black MLB replica) & (2) discuss who is doing plate & bases. Do not plan to be a “base guy/girl” forever.
- Look at each other’s appearance. If the veteran is dressed wrong, tell them. Don’t allow them to go out dressed incorrectly, including jewelry. Tell them if their shirt collar is not flat & neat.
- Take advice from the “old guys” (i.e., veterans). If they say to clean your shoes, clean them. We’re only trying

Pregame & Umpire Etiquette

- If you have questions, ask. This is your time to get important things set in your head. Before & after games, feel free to discuss game situations or rules you're unsure of with veteran/other umpires. (But don't be late arriving at the field.)
- The Umpire-In-Chief (UIC)/Crew Chief is usually the plate umpire. The older/more experienced partner may be the UIC for the game and do the bases; this allows the newer umpire to get plate experience without the added pressure and responsibilities of being the UIC. (*OHSBL Rule 9.3.C*)
- Ensure both umpires are on the same page for class-specific rules (e.g., balks, uncaught third strike).
- Discuss partner signals (next slide) & essential partner mechanics (discussed later).
- *Do not carry a physical rulebook with you to the field in Hot Stove* (exception: Farm Minor rule sheet).
- Walk together to the field *10–15 minutes* before the scheduled start time.
 - Check equipment – including bats, helmets, & catcher's helmets (requirements discussed later & in sport-specific clinics).
- Go to the bathroom before the game. Typically, umpires do not take a bathroom break during a game; however, you may go if it is unavoidable.

Umpire Partner Signals

Work out a set of hand & arm signals for you & your partner to communicate nonverbally.

Examples (may vary slightly from partner to partner):

- Touching the top of the head: Plate umpire needs the count; partner should flash the number of balls on left hand, strikes on right against body (shirt)
- Right hand over heart, number of outs (0 or 1) in left hand: Infield fly rule is in effect
 - Right hand w/ fist (0 out) or one finger (1 out) on bill of cap also common
 - Infield fly rule discussed later
- Wipe hand down arm: Infield fly is no longer in effect
- Two closed fists tapping on top of one another: Good call / I agree with you
- Right Index & middle fingers together tapping wrist: A time play is possible with 2 outs
- Taking cap off/subtly tapping chest: on a coach's appeal, I have information about the play to share (e.g., pulled foot, trapped ball on ground)
- Base ump on uncaught 3rd strike: point to ground = no catch, fist straight down = catch

Check swing: Base umpire only rules if asked BY THE PLATE UMPIRE; return the signal same way – silent or verbal (OK for plate ump to appeal to base ump who is not on foul line, but base ump usually shouldn't overturn a no-swing call unless the plate ump's vision was blocked)

Mechanic Signals

These signals should not be altered much between games & with different partners



**Time Out / Foul Ball /
Dead Ball**



Play Ball



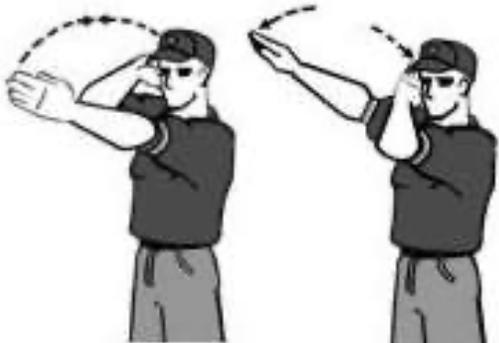
Delayed Dead Ball



Fair Ball



Strike / Out



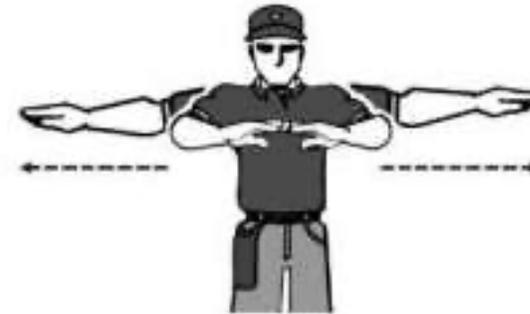
Foul Tip



Count



Infield Fly



Safe



Do Not Pitch

Hot Stove Age Classes – Baseball

(OHSBL Rule VI)

Playing age is determined by age on May 1 of current year:

- Farm Minor: 5–6-year-old boys
- Class I: 7–8-year-old boys
- Class HH: 9-year-old boys
- Class H: 9–10-year-old boys
- Class G: 11–12-year-old boys
- Class F: 13–14-year-old boys
- Class EE: 15–16-year-old boys
- Class E: 17–18-year-old boys
- Men’s Class D: 19 years & over men

Bat Rules – Baseball

(OHSBL Rules 1.10 & 10.2.P)

Drop: difference between a bat's length & weight (e.g., 32-inch, 29 ounce bat = drop of 3)

- Farm Minor: No bat drop restrictions; no composite, two-piece, or three-piece bats
- Classes I, HH, H, G, & F – no bat drop restrictions:
 - Wood, aluminum, or composite (including “Axe” handle)
 - Maximum diameter of 2¾ inches in diameter at the thickest part
 - **Must bear the “USA Baseball” bat stamp** (pictured)
 - One-piece wood bats won't have a USA stamp
- Classes F, EE & E: One, two- or three-piece or composite, with a maximum drop of 3.
 - BESR bats are illegal (retro certification)
 - Class F has two options: USA Baseball *or* BBCOR .50
- Men's Class D: Wood or wood composite bats only; bamboo bats are also legal
- Other Bat Information
 - Any bat that is altered and causes the manufacturer's specification to be changed shall be considered an illegal bat
 - Bat handles can be space taped or continuous; “lizard grip” is legal
 - Choke-up knobs are illegal (pictured)
 - Shock absorber knobs are legal (on end of bat, not above knob)
 - Illegal bat brought inside batter's box: dead ball, batter out, & head coach is verbally warned



Batting Helmets – Baseball

(OHSBL Rules 1.16 & 6.5.P)

- ALL batters must wear a NOCSAE-approved batting helmet. They must not be reflective or distracting & must be in a safe condition (judgement call).
- Farm Minor **are required to wear a chin strap.**
- Chin straps are optional to be worn in all classes. If worn, they must be worn properly & touching the underside of the chin.
- Facemask is optional & must be installed correctly if used. Facemask must also be NOCSAE approved.
- C-Flaps are legal as long as they are properly installed & pose no safety risk.



Batting & Catching Helmets – Baseball

(OHSBL Rules 1.17, 4.5.A, & 6.5.P)

- Umpires' responsibility to ensure a batter is wearing proper headgear. The game is stopped until corrected.
 - If a batter is discovered to not have proper headgear, correct the situation and warn the player & coach. (No bench restriction/ejection for first offense).
- Non-adult (under 18), player base coaches (excluding Men's D), & all bat boys/girls must wear a batting helmet while on the field.
- Catcher's helmets must also have a NOCSAE stamp. All hardware must be properly and securely attached with no screws missing.
 - **ONLY** Classes EE, E, & Men's D may use a skull cap (pictured) & mask combination if desired. These will NOT have a NOCSAE stamp.
- Any player anywhere (e.g., field, bullpen) warming up a pitcher by catching pitches must wear a catcher's helmet.

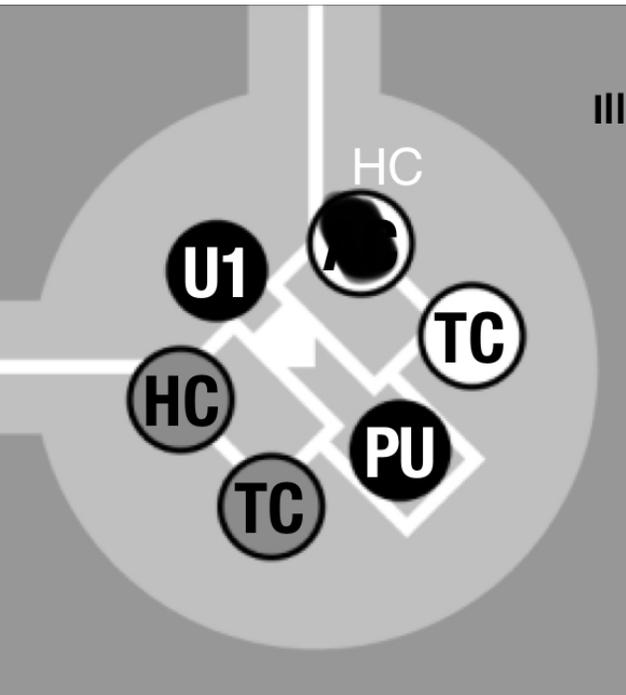


Other Equipment Rules – Baseball

- Jewelry: Jewelry is permissible unless an item is deemed unsafe, unsportsmanlike, or distracting by the umpire (*OHSBL Rule 1.18*)
 - Don't go looking for trouble with jewelry, including smart watches; times have changed!
- Playcard bands: Permitted, & must be worn on forearm or left in pocket (*OHSBL Rule 1.11.G*)
- Casts: All casts, splints & braces must be padded and shall not have any exposed metal (*OHSBL Rule 1.19*)
- Pitcher's Compression Sleeve / Sweat Bands: Pitchers may wear compression sleeves on throwing arm but may not be white or grey or be distracting to the batter (below elbow). This is a judgement call. (*OHSBL Rule 1.11.F*)
- Pitcher's Glove: May not be white or grey; batting glove is permitted under mitt (*OHSBL Rule 1.15*)
- First Baseman Glove: First baseman may use an approved baseball glove or a first baseman's mitt; a first baseman's mitt may not be used at any other position (*OHSBL Rules 1.13 & 1.14*)
- Cleats: Non-metal cleats *only* allowed to be worn in Farm Minor & Classes I–G; Classes F–Men's D may also wear metal spikes (*OHSBL 4.11.E*)

Ground Rules Preliminaries – Baseball

Umpires, Head Coaches, & Team Captains (if any) shall stand at the pregame plate meeting as shown below:



- Ground Rules are given at or around Home Plate (no infield practice at this time).
 - Usually given by the Crew Chief or UIC for the game, but may be done by either umpire. In tournament games, it is the Field Judge's responsibility (followed by anything the umpires want to add). (*OHSBL Rule 4.1*)
- Home team manager shall determine the fitness of the playing field before a game starts; after a game begins, the umpires are solely responsible for judging if a field is unfit to continue playing on. (*OHSBL Rule 3.13*)
- Home team manager may determine initial ground rules, but any disagreements will result in the Crew Chief establishing ground rules, including any special ones. (*OHSBL Rules 3.17 & 9.4.A.G*)
- Know the ground rules for the field you are on. If an area of the field may need clarification, the home head coach may be able to assist by offering the typical interpretation.
- A ground rule can never supersede a playing rule (e.g., no “ground rule triple”).
- NO warnings *ever* at the plate meeting (e.g., “someone is ejected if...”) – only reminders, as deemed necessary by the umpires.

Ground Rules Items to Discuss – Baseball & Softball

The pregame plate meeting should typically last one to three minutes:

- Both umpires should introduce themselves. Coaches and any team captains will do the same.
- Crew Chief shall discuss the ground rules of the field (home team manager may offer assistance, if needed). *Starting behind home plate, going around the whole field starting on the 3rd base side, & finishing at home plate. (Players shall raise their hands & not touch the ball if out of play, & the base umpire shall confirm.):*
 - **Backstop fence:** Mention holes or areas of concern & any entryways (typically pole to pole for out-of-play line). Are any field markings missing or incorrect (e.g., batter's boxes)?
 - **3rd base bench area/dugout:** Where equipment is & should be. Where the on-deck circle is (batter's switching sides is typically OK). Any fence openings. Is there a properly marked foul line?
 - **3rd base side fence (beyond dugout):** Is the fence the entire length of the field, or is there out of play area (is out of play marked with a line, if so)? Is there a properly marked foul line?
 - **Outfield:** Is there a fence? Any branches hanging over fence (fly ball hitting tree = home run)? Any holes in the fence? Temporary fence? If no fences, is there an out-of-play area (e.g., wooded area)?
 - **1st base side fence & bench area/dugout:** Same criteria as the 3rd base side. Is there a double first base present? (No rules for baseball, so typically treated as one big base.) Is there a properly marked foul line & runner's lane?
 - **Additionally:** Are there any excessively muddy areas of the field or ground under repair that we may consider establishing as dead ball territory? (Dead ball rules apply, if so.)

Ground Rules Items to Discuss – Baseball & Softball

- “One from the mound, two from the field” & “catch and carry” rules in relation to the ground rules.
- **Ask both managers if all of their players are properly equipped per the rules; a verbal “yes” is required.**
- What batting lineup each team is using (HH–Men’s D & A-D only): two-three options available (next slides).
 - No need to accept a lineup card in Hot Stove.
- Both sides must keep on foul balls & return them to the plate umpire.
- Players must always hustle on and off the field. Be sure a pitcher & catcher are always ready to warm up.
- Consider discussing age-/class-specific items (e.g., time limit, balk/illegal pitch warnings, how you’ll help during coach pitch in Class I/Farm Major).
- Ask if there are any emergency personnel who may need to use a cell phone during the game. (*OHSBL Rules 3.23 & 9.8*)
- Remind coaches that if they have a question on any play/call, they shall *call & be granted time after playing action concludes*; the calling umpire on the play shall then decide whether to confer with their partner or not. Judgement calls will not be appealed.
- Reiterate the importance of good sportsmanship.
- Ask if they have any questions. Answer only questions related to the ground rules. If they have a rules question, politely defer to a more appropriate time. *Do not discuss what “your strike zone is”* (if asked: “by the book, coach” or “my interpretation of the rule”).
- Wish both teams good luck, & the home team has a few minutes to take the field. Coaches must relay this message to players.

Batting Lineup – Baseball + Starting a Game

Each team shall declare which of the following batting lineup options they are choosing to use:

- Farm Minor & Class I: Required to use a continuous lineup – everyone bats (*OHSBL Rule 10.2*)
- Classes HH–Men’s D: – (3) lineup options (discussed separately in next slides):
 - Straight 9 batters
 - 9 batters + an EH
 - Continuous order
 - HH, H, & G shall use *matching* for a non-continuous order (playing time requirement for a certain number of players – next slides)

Required number of players to start a game:

- Farm Minor & Class I: Should have 9 players; if a team shows up with fewer than 9, play the game. There is no minimum to start a regular-season game.
 - May use up to 10 players on defense
- Classes HH–Men’s D: 9 players required to start a game
 - A team may drop to 8 players, if needed; if this happens, the team may not return to 9 players

Playing Time Rules – Baseball

- Farm Minor & Class I: Continuous batting order required & all players must play 6 defensive outs (*OHSBL Rule 10.2*)
- Classes HH, H, & G: All players must play a minimum of 12 outs (2 innings). SUBSTITUTES must play these 12 outs consecutively. (*OHSBL Rule 3.3.A*)
 - Matching: Coaches have to match players in this rule. Example: one team has 14 & the other has 11 – only 11 players *have* to play for the team with 14 players; the team with 14 must list which 11 players will be used to match the 11 from the other team (the other 3 players don't have required playing time).
 - Player matching may not be used by a team using a continuous batting order
 - Once the starters and subs have played 12 outs, free substitution rule may be used (i.e., players may enter & re-enter the game without restriction)
 - Subs should be in by the top of the 3rd inning; a game may be protested if sub rules aren't fulfilled
- Classes F-D & C-D: No substitution rules that require any minimum playing time

Straight 9 Batting Order – Baseball

A nine-player batting lineup – no more than (9) players in the game at a time

- Substitution rules to be aware of (*OHSBL Rule 3.6, LCHSS Rules 5.3 & 5.4*)
 - If a player becomes sick or injured and unable to continue in the game: a legal, available substitute may enter the game.
 - A player removed due to illness or injury is ineligible to return for the remainder of the game.
 - If no legal sub is available, the opposing coach may select a player to enter the lineup in the sick or injured player's spot. This is the only situation in which the batting order may change.
 - If a player is ejected and no legal sub is available, there shall be out declared in the ejected player's spot.
- If a team only has 9 players to start a game, & a player leaves the game, drop to 8 players and play on. An out is declared in the missing player's spot in the batting order.

Extra Hitter – Baseball

(OHSBL Rule 6.11)

- MUST be declared at ground rules
- Starting EH can play the field once he has recorded a time at bat & must play 12 outs (6 on offense & 6 on defense)
- If any player gets sick, injured, or ejected and there is no sub available, the EH can take the field; however, an out will be declared in the injured/ill/ejected player's spot
- If a player is ejected and no legal sub is available, there shall be out declared in the ejected player's spot
- A player must meet the 6 outs as a defensive player before player can assume the EH position

Continuous Batting Order – Baseball

(OHSBL Rules 6.13 & 10.2.C)

- Optional for Classes HH through Men's D
- If one team uses a continuous batting order, the other team is not required to use it
- Must be declared at ground rules
- All players present at game must be placed in batting order
 - Late-arriving players are placed at the bottom of the lineup
- If a player is ejected, the spot vacated in the batting order becomes an out for the remainder of the game
- All defensive substitution rules must still be met for Boys HH, H, & G
- If a player becomes sick or injured, no out is taken until the team drops below the required number of 9 players; a player who vacates their batting position may not return to the game (**NEW for 2026**)

Hot Stove Coach Expectations

- No muscle/cutoff shirts – we wear sleeves in this league!
- No cutoff shorts or tattered jeans
- No hats on backwards when on the field (in the dugout is OK)
- No sandals/open-toe shoes/Croc-like shoes
- No cursing when others may hear
- No smoking, vaping, or smokeless tobacco use permitted on field/bench area
- Cell phone may not be used on the field
 - Emergency personnel/first responders may have cell phone for emergency use only (must be identified at ground rules) (*OHSBL Rules 3.23 & 9.8*)
 - If a call is received, coach must leave field of play to complete call
 - May use cell phone/tablet for electronic scoring (i.e., GameChanger)

Any violation & refusal to comply with the items above can result in a verbal warning by the umpire & subsequent bench restriction or ejection, if deemed necessary (next slide)

Discipline – Warnings & Ejections

Steps below may be skipped, if necessary. Umpires never should want to eject, but use these tools.

- Ignore – Step 1 (players & coaches): Not everything requires a reaction. A brief glance at a coach may help.
- Verbal Warnings – Step 2 (players & coaches): Can be issued when warranted.
 - If a coach is being overly belligerent, try talking quieter; in turn, it may make them settle down to hear you.
 - Do not get into an argument with coaches. Maintain composure.
 - Try, “I won’t respond to that volume, coach.” The responsibility is now on them to calm down if they really want to discuss something.
 - If verbally warning a player, make it known to their head coach that further action by their player could result in further discipline (i.e., ejection).
- Bench restrictions – Step 3 (coaches only): An option in both baseball & softball. Coaches that are bench restricted may not leave the dugout and come into the field of play, or foul territory, for the remainder of the game. Use for conduct that isn’t overly egregious, but still deserves discipline.
- Ejections – Step 4 (players & coaches): Once you issue a warning, you must follow through if conduct warrants an ejection; if you don’t, you risk losing respect and control of the game. Ejections should be the ***absolute last*** option.
 - Try not to box yourself in, if possible, to where you have no choice but to eject due to something you said (e.g., “one more word, coach, & you’re gone”). However, coaches or players may do or say things that undoubtedly get themselves ejected.

Discipline – Warnings & Ejections

Any bench restriction or ejection issued in a game MUST be reported via email to the County Umpire-in-Chief within 24–48 hours for record keeping & for discipline to be administered, if needed. The assigner who assigned you that game may like to know, as well.

- General tips:

- Be firm but polite. Let **head** coaches have their say – they are only doing their job. Once you’ve heard them out, act on their request, and be done.
 - We have much less tolerance for the actions of *assistant* coaches. Head coaches must keep their entire team under control.
- Use preventive officiating when possible. There are times when you can stop something before it starts, & you don’t have to enforce an unfortunate for one team or the other (e.g., between innings).
- Use the rule book to back you up whenever possible. “By rule,…” is a powerful tool if you are confident in your rules knowledge.
- Use, “in my judgment” whenever possible. Your judgement can’t be continuously argued.

Umpire Game Management

- By knowing and enforcing the rules, the game will move at a good pace & be less argumentative.
 - If doing a younger level game, where three outs may not always be the end of the inning, make sure you know the rules and enforce them from **day one**.
 - Be firm, but polite. Make it clear that the rules will be followed. A question about a rule should be courteous and brief. Talk to your partner (if needed – discussed later), make a call, and move on.
- NO fraternization upon arrival at the field. If you aren't distracted by talking, you can more effectively do your job.
- If you need a drink, have it close – you can drink and still pay attention.
- **Keep your temper. No rabbit ears.**
 - We may hear mostly everything, but we don't act on anything unless necessary.
- **HUSTLE!** Umpiring is not a spectator sport. Move smartly to your next position. Don't walk – jog.
- If you're going to make a call: stop first, see it, let your mind process what your eyes just saw, and make a call (1-2 seconds to process – followed by your call). Our calls look & sound much better when we take our time compared to calling a play too quickly.
- When making a call, **angle** is more important than **distance**.

Umpire Game Management

Umpires have some control over the flow of the game – especially the plate umpire.

Between half-innings: Plate umpire stands to the defense side of the plate, near the foul line. Base umpire goes to short right field. Talking to your partner between innings should be kept to a **minimum** (only essential information/if training – & never after a controversial play the previous inning).

- Plate umpire should be watching the transition between innings, & asking teams to hustle up if they are taking too long.
- Request the pitcher and a catcher (or someone to warm up the pitcher). Fielders don't need the infield practice between innings.
 - This will allow the coach time to set the other players while the pitcher is warming up.
- Track warm-up pitches (next slide).

Umpire Game Management + Conferences

- Baseball Pitchers get (8) warm-up pitches for their first inning pitching, & (5) each successive inning they return to pitch.
 - If it is cold, the plate ump may allow more pitches.
- The plate ump should be counting pitches as well. Remind the catcher to throw the 5th / 8th pitch down. If he/she doesn't, don't allow him/her to waste more time. Allowing the ball to be thrown down is a *courtesy*.
- When the last warm-up pitch is done & the catcher has thrown it back, the plate ump should already have their brush out & be cleaning the plate off. By the time they're done, the pitcher will be ready.
- Coach conferences (plate ump should keep track &/or have scorekeeper record):
 - **Offense:** one conference per inning while batting
 - **Defense:** one visit to the pitcher/any defensive player without penalty
 - Second visit in the same inning: the pitcher is done pitching for the game
 - One visit per pitcher per inning is allowed without being required to change pitchers
 - Injury visits do not count against a pitcher so long as the coach does not talk baseball/situations, etc. – pitchers must pitch to at least one batter (*OHSBL Rule 3.8*)

Calling Time Outs & Putting the Ball in Play

Time Outs – use proper mechanic w/ verbal, “Time!”:

- Managers/Coaches/Players can request time out. It is up to the umpire to grant it. If you grant it, put both hands in the air & call time out.
- Offense is allowed one coach visit/conference per inning (*OHSBL Rule 5.10.F*)
- If a time out is requested after ball four, wait until the batter/runner has touched first base, and any other runners have advanced, & stopped, before calling a time out. Watch the coach to make sure they stay in the dugout area until time is granted.
- If the coach begins his way to the mound, remind him, politely, to please wait for time to be granted. (Or after a walk, say, “wait until he/she gets to first base, coach”).



Anytime the ball is dead, the umpire must put the ball back in play with the proper mechanic & a verbal, “Play!”, only when (all four conditions must be met):

- The pitcher has the ball & is properly engaged with the pitcher’s plate,
- The catcher is in position in the catcher’s box,
- All other fielders are in fair territory, &
- The batter is *ready* for a pitch while in the batter’s box (not *just* feet in the box)



Courtesy Runner – Baseball

(OHSBL Rules 3.7 & 10.2.C)

- ALL Classes: A courtesy runner may be used for the catcher at any time during the game that the catcher gets on base or is already on base
- This situation is NOT considered a substitution
- Must be a player not currently in the game (exception for only 9 or continuous order)
- Catcher has to play defense BEFORE they are entitled to a Courtesy runner, or be the catcher the next inning
 - Exception: Top of 1st inning, the visiting team has not yet played defense. They are still entitled to a CR. The individual identified on the lineup card as the catcher must play defense as the catcher in the bottom of the 1st inning (head coach is bench restricted if this doesn't happen).
- **This is a speed up rule.** Ensure the catcher is getting ready to play defense.

Slide or Give Up? – Baseball

Hot Stove Baseball DOES NOT have a “Slide or Give-up” rule

- (OHSBL *Rule 7.14*) Rule states to avoid injury, the runner SHOULD slide – but they are not required to.
- OHSBL allows jumping over or around the defensive player attempt to slide to avoid being tagged. Headfirst slides are legal.
- Currently no illegal slide rules in OHSBL (i.e., specific illegal actions a sliding runner can be called out for).
- If, in the umpire's judgement, *malicious contact* is witnessed, the runner is declared OUT and ejected from the game.

Interference

(OHSBL Rule 2; see index for additional rules)

- Interference: An act by a member of the **OFFENSE** to impede, hinder or confuse any fielder attempting to make a play. Batter/Batter runner or runner is out immediately. If the umpire declares the batter, batter runner or runner out for interference all other runners shall return to last base that was, in the judgment of the umpire, legally touched at the time of the interference.
- Umpire Interference: When the umpire hinders or impedes the catcher's throw to prevent a stolen base, or, when a fair ball touches an umpire before it passes another player, aside from the pitcher.
- *Ball is dead immediately on (most) interference calls in baseball.*

Interference

(OHSBL Rule 2; see index for additional rules)

The player who committed interference is sometimes – but not always – the one called out. There are many examples of interference (research for additional examples).

Examples:

- Runner on 3rd is stealing home on the pitch. Batter swings &, on the follow-through, lingers around the plate blocking the catcher from making the play at home. The umpire can call interference & call the runner out. *(OHSBL Rule 7.9.D)*
- Batted ball strikes a runner before passing a fielder other than the pitcher. Dead ball, runner is out, batter-runner to 1st base (other runners advance if forced).
 - Only one defensive player is protected when an initial play is made on a batted ball.
- Runner attempting to score on a play in which the batter interferes with the play at home base before two are out. The runner is out. With two out, the interference puts the batter out, & no score counts. *(OHSBL Rule 7.8.1)*
- A bat being released by a batter on a swing is not an out unless the bat interferes with a player making a play (no calling batters out for this in Hot Stove – make coach aware)

Interference

6 min 29 sec (NFHS rules referenced, but applications shown are used in Hot Stove)



https://youtu.be/y1_XWsORgH

Obstruction

(OHSBL Rules 2, 7.6, & 7.14)

Obstruction is the act of a fielder who, while not in possession of the ball, or, not in the act of fielding the ball, impedes the progress of any runner. A fake tag is considered Obstruction.

- **Type A/Type 1** – Play (attempt to put out) being made on runner, & obstruction occurs: *immediate dead ball*, affected runner awarded at least one base; all other runners advance to base(s) the umpire judges they would have reached had there been no obstruction
- **Type B/Type 2** – No play being made on runner, & obstruction occurs: *delayed dead ball*, ball dead after all playing action concludes; runner(s) awarded base(s) as judged by umpire
 - Runner(s) may still be called out if they run beyond the base they would've reached in the umpire's judgement
- If a fielder is awaiting the ball, or in act of receiving the ball, it may not be obstruction ("protected" fielder)
 - If initial play on the infield is "flubbed", the defensive player is protected if the ball stays within a "step & reach"
- Defensive/Catcher's Interference (a form of obstruction): The act by a fielder to impede, hinder or prevent a batter from hitting a pitch. (Example: batter contacts catcher's glove on swing.)
 - Ball not put in play: batter awarded 1st base, runners advance if forced
 - Ball put in play: offensive manager has option of penalty or result of the play unless all runners advance at least one base (OHSBL Rule 6.8.C)

Obstruction or Interference?

2 min 14 sec



<https://youtu.be/smAsg2lqE8c>

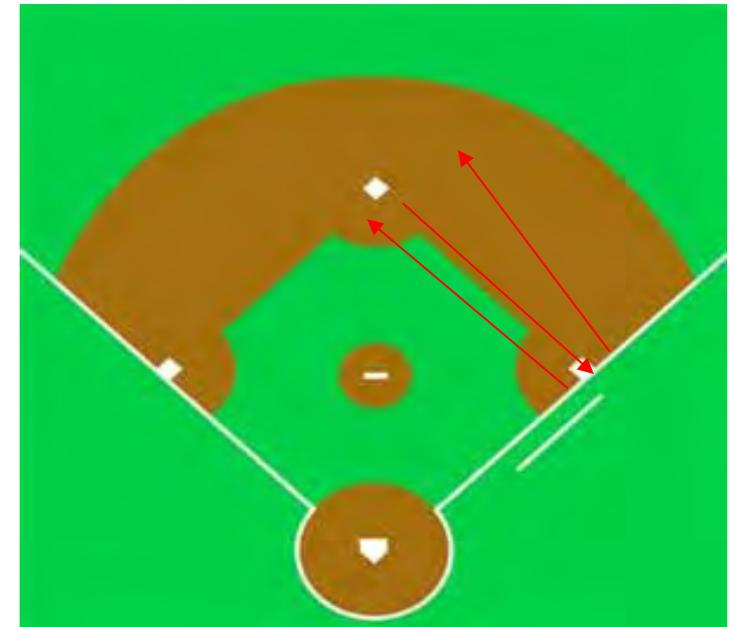
Courtesy / Runner's Lane

- When running to first base, halfway down the baseline there is a three-foot courtesy lane. The lines marking the lane appear to the right of the Fair/Foul line.
- The runner MUST run in this lane to avoid penalty, should, in the umpire's judgement, interference be a possibility.
 - Example: Batter bunts the ball, and runs inside fair territory. Fielder throws ball wild or hits runner. Because runner was not in the lane, the runner can be called out for interference. (*OHSBL Rule 6.5.L*)
- Throw MUST originate from behind runner (most likely home plate area.)
- IF the runner is in the three-foot lane, and gets hit with the ball, there is no penalty, as this is his/her lane. Outside of the lane = one or both feet completely outside the lane (the lines are considered inside the lane.)
- IF the field isn't marked with a line, it is still assumed to be there.
- Fielder doesn't have to throw the ball to have interference. If he/she hesitates because of assumed interference, you may still call it.
- He/she may run outside the three-foot line to avoid a fielder attempting to field a batted ball.



“Baseline”: Is the runner In or Out of It?

- The Fair/Foul lines down third and first are generally considered “baselines”.
- Runner makes his/her own base path.
- If the runner intentionally leaves their established base path by more than 3 feet to avoid a tag, they shall be called out. (*Rule 9.8 A, pg. 78*)
 - Base path becomes established when defensive play is being attempted on the runner (they can basically run wherever they want between the bases until that point).
 - Base path can constantly change on a rundown play.



Catch + Catch & Carry

Catch: (1) A fielder must gain *secure possession* in hand or glove of a ball in flight. (2) The fielder must hold the ball long enough to prove that he/she has complete control of the ball. Then, (3) when he/she *releases the ball it must be voluntary* and intentional.

- One of the most basic but important rules with lots of nuances to be aware of

Catch & Carry

- The ball becomes dead when an umpire calls “Time”. The umpire shall call “Time”:
(OHSBL Rule 5.10)
 - When a fielder, after catching a fly ball, *goes out of play, with either foot*, the ball shall become a dead ball play. As it pertains to runner(s), the provisions of Rule 7.4.C shall prevail. (OHSBL Rule 5.10.H)
- Each runner, other than the batter, may, without liability to be put out, *advance one base* when:
 - A fielder, after catching a fly ball, goes out of play with either foot. (OHSBL Rule 7.4.C)
- This rule is important to understand when covering ground rules.

Infield Fly Rule

(OHSBL Rule 2, LCHSS Rule 2.38)

- Is a fair fly ball, not including a line drive or attempted bunt, that:
 - Can be caught by an Infielder with ordinary effort (think young player vs. high schooler).
 - With runners on first and second; or runners on first, second, and third bases.
 - There are less than 2 outs (Zero or One).
- Pitcher, Catcher and any outfielders may also catch the ball.
- This is a **judgement call!** If not called at the time, it could still be an Infield Fly if criteria was clearly met.
- Call when it is at apex (top) of arc.
 - Yell out, “Infield Fly – Batter is Out!”
 - IF the ball is near the foul line: yell out, “Infield Fly – Batter is Out If Fair!”
- Ball is LIVE, and runners advance at their own risk. Remember this for younger age games where Infield Fly plays may become chaotic!
- Boys Class I & Farm Minor: No Infield Fly Rule (*OHSBL Rule 10.2.K*)

Class I/HH/H Special Situations

- There is no stealing in Class IClasses HH can steal once the ball passes the plate.
 - Penalty: If player leaves base early, it is an immediate dead ball, runner is out.

LOGICAL CONCLUSION: The play will be called dead when the lead runners progress has stopped. (A change of direction is considered stopping). *Applies to Classes I, HH, & H* (official rule interpretation).

- Inching forward to negate this rule will not be tolerated.
- This is a JUDGEMENT CALL by the UMPIRE.
- Umpire will place hand in the air to signify time is out.
- Runners will be returned to last base touched (NO “halfway” rule).

Class I/HH/H Special Situations

- In Classes HH and H, when a batter is walked, the runner can continue running to second base provided he does not stop at first.
 - This is a judgement call as to whether he rounds first properly and if play has come to a logical conclusion. (*Rule 6.12, pg. 39*)
- In Classes HH and H – 7 runs per inning. A team may score no more than 7 runs in their half an inning until the 6th or last inning. Continues in extra innings.
- In Class I – 5 runs per inning. A team may score no more than 5 runs in their half an inning until the 6th or extra innings.
- The inning is considered the “last inning” if the visitors are ahead by 10; if after 2 hours at any point in any inning a team is ahead by 10, or the umpire declares last inning due to impending darkness or weather. (*Rule 3.24.D, pg. 28*)
- Dropped third strike – Not applicable; Batter is out. (*Rule 6.5.1, pg. 35*)
 - Class I: this is a dead ball. (*Rule 10.2.L, pg. 52*)
 - In class HH & H: With less than 2 outs, baserunners on first, second and/or third base may advance at own risk.

Class I Special Situations

- For the coach pitch portion, each batter receives 5 pitches.
- The batter may foul off the 5th pitch and continue at bat.
 - They are still permitted to continue at-bat if they continue to foul off pitches after the 5th pitch.
 - If the batter swings and misses at 3 pitches, they are now out.
 - Must be a full swing – check swings are not counted.
- Review OHSBL Rule 10 before working a Class I game, if needed
- See mechanics guide handout for Farm Minor & Class I

Pitching

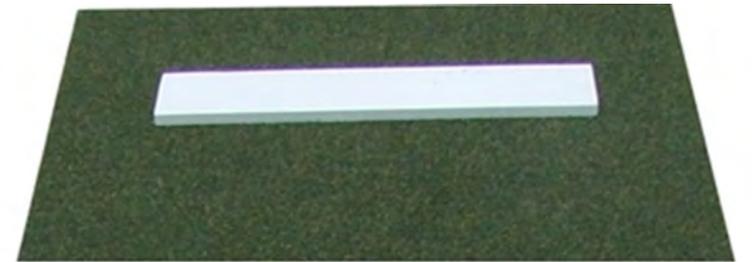
(Rule 8, pg. 45)

- Two legal positions: Wind Up or Set position. *(Rule 8.1, pg. 45)*
- Pitchers must take signs from catcher while in contact with the pitcher's plate (rubber).
- Wind up: Pitcher is facing batter with both feet pointed toward home plate. Any motion associated with pitching commits the pitcher to pitch without stopping. *(Rule 8.1.A, pg. 45)*
 - Can do 3 things from here: Pitch, Disengage, or throw to a base.
 - To disengage the pitcher must first step off with the pivot foot (Same foot as hand they throw with).
 - Must step and throw to base. *(Rule 8.1.C, pg. 45)*

Pitching

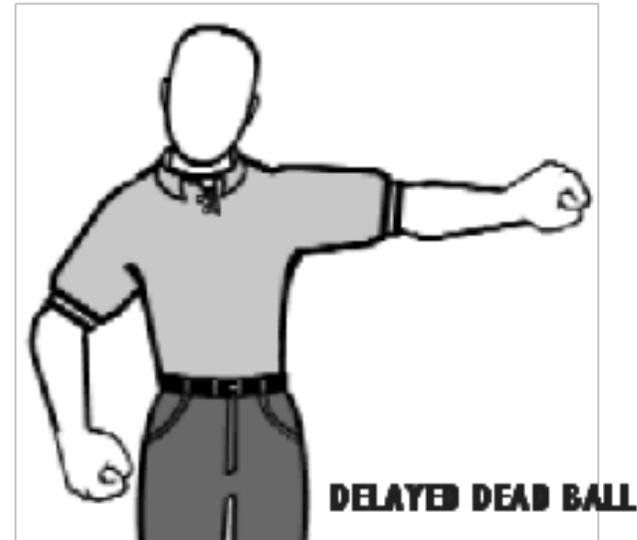
(Rule 8, pg. 45)

- Set Position: Entire pivot foot on, or in front of, and in contact with the pitcher's plate/rubber (Toes pointed to first or third).
- Whole foot inside the 24" Pitcher's plate (Judgement)
- Same three things: Pitch, disengage or throw to base.
- Disengaging is done by stepping pivot foot off BACK of Pitcher's plate.
- Must step and throw to a base
- Must come set (Stop or Pause) before throwing a pitch.
- No rubbing of dirt or any foreign substance on ball. If pitcher does this, call the pitch a ball, and warn him; if repeated this may lead to an ejection. *(Rule 8.2.A, pg. 46)*



Balk/Illegal Pitch

- If pitcher makes an illegal pitch with the bases unoccupied, it is a ball unless batter reaches first base on a hit, error, or the like.
- A ball that slips out of the pitcher's hand and crosses foul line is considered a ball; if it doesn't cross foul line, it is:
 - A) No Pitch with no runners on base
 - B) Balk with runners on
 - *(Rule 8.1.D, pg. 45)*
- A Balk is a delayed dead ball in Hot Stove.



Balk/Illegal Pitch

- If the batter hits the ball, and reaches first base, and all other runners advance one base, the balk is ignored, and the play stands.
- If the pitcher stops his motion when you call balk, the play is dead, and the penalty enforced. All runners on advance one base.
- Hot Stove Baseball calls the balks from day one.
 - Classes HH/H: Warnings are given in the first half of the season.
 - Classes HH/H: Enforce penalties starting June 1
 - Class G: One warning per pitcher for any infraction in the first half of season.
 - Class G: No warnings starting June 1
 - Class F and Up: NO Warnings

Appeal Plays

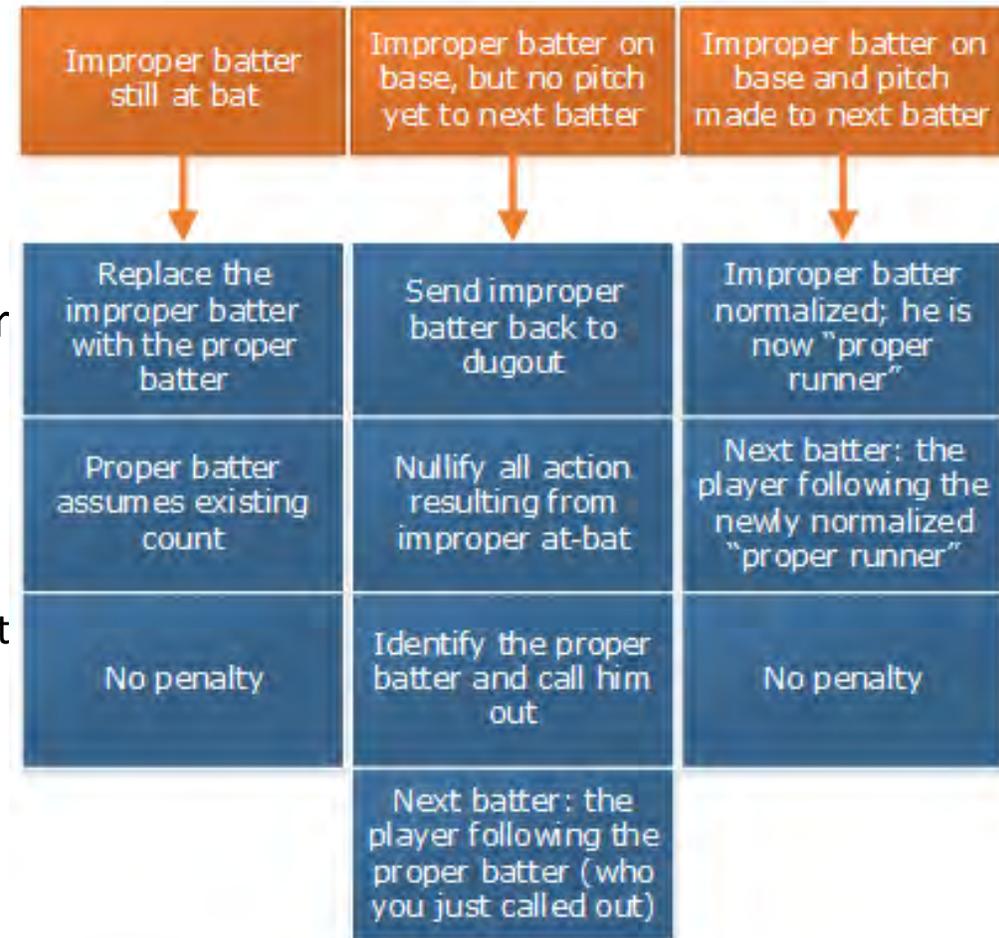
- Appeal: An act of a fielder in claiming violation of the rules by the offensive team.
- A play in which an umpire ***cannot decide until requested by a manager or coach, or player***. The appeal must be made before the next legal or illegal pitch, or before the defensive team has left the field. Umpires cannot verbalize/signal calls on these type of plays unless properly appealed to.
- *Live ball* appeals only for plays; intentional act by a fielder tagging a runner or base
- Common types:
 - Runner misses a base while running the bases
 - Batter-runner overruns 1st base & makes an attempt towards 2nd
 - A runner leaves a base too early on a tag up play (i.e., before the ball is touched)
 - Checked swings
 - Batting out of order (next slide) – offense or defense calls time to alert plate umpire
- If Coach Asks: Umpires are not required to grant judgement call or rule appeals, but they may consult with their partner if they desire to get their take/to discuss a rule.
- *There is no video review in Hot Stove! Don't EVER watch someone's video to make a decision!*

Batting Out of Order – Baseball & Softball

(OHSBL Rule 6.7, LCHSS Rule 8.2)

- Batting order is set once given to the scorekeepers, & umpire says, “play ball.” It may not change (unless illness/injury.)
- Should list all 9/10+ players in the starting lineup by name and number/position with matching substitutes, & all other subs available. Home scorebook is the official book.
- Proper batter: The correct batter at bat with respect to the official lineup (can only be one person at a time.)
- Improper batter: Any offensive player other than the proper batter who is up to bat.
- Once appealed, check scorebook(s) if needed & rule accordingly
- Three types of scenarios:

- Improper batter still at bat: Abel is up. Baker bats. 2-2 count. Offense calls time. Notices out of order. Abel takes his proper spot but keeps the 2-2 count
- Improper batter on base, but no pitch yet to next batter: Abel is up. Baker bats. Baker gets on first. Coach calls time out, informs you Baker was out of order. Check scorebook(s). If this is correct, Abel is out. Baker is up next.
- Improper batter on base & pitch made to next batter: Abel is up. Baker bats. Baker gets on first. Charlie comes up, takes a pitch. Coach calls time out, says batting out of order. Once another pitch or play has occurred, Baker is legalized as the correct batter. No one is out. Charlie stays hitting. Abel is skipped.



Batting Out of Order

2 min 23 sec

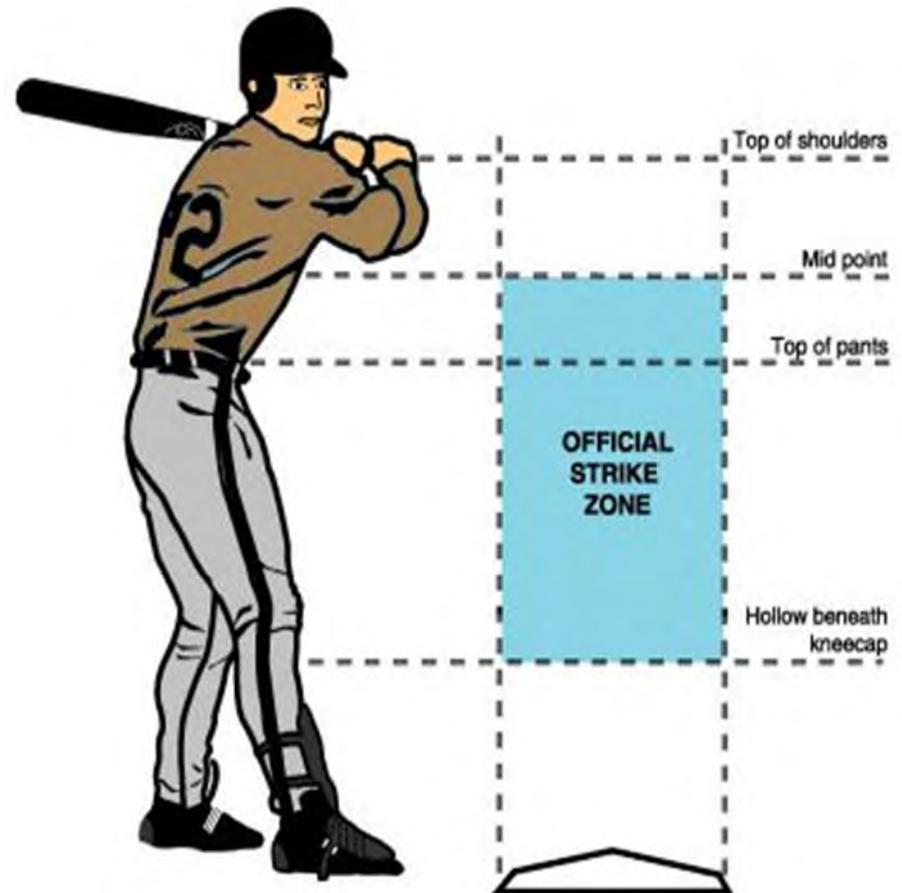


<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lZpXXymitvA>

Baseball Strike Zone

(Rule 2, Definitions, pg. 24)

- The Strike Zone is that space over home plate the upper limit of which is a horizontal line at the midpoint between the top of the shoulders and the top of the uniform pants, and the lower level is a horizontal line at the hollow beneath the kneecaps. The strike zone shall be determined from the batter's stance as he is prepared to swing at a pitched ball. *(See diagram, page 88.)*



Baseball Strike Zone

2 min 57 sec



<https://youtu.be/U4d9dfkGJjo?si=l-MpOeqqT-rffYRZ>

Baseball Plate Umpire Mechanics

- Any part of the ball crosses the front part of the plate is a strike.



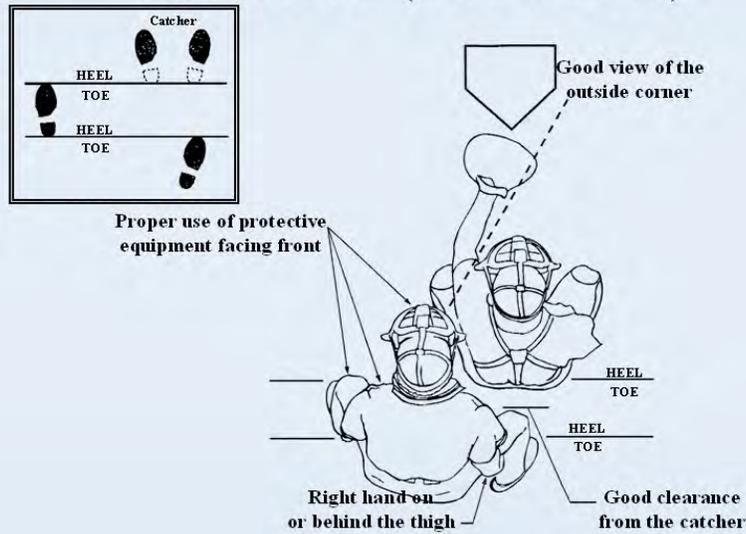
- The black edges are not considered part of the plate for ball/strike calls (realistically, it will be in most games)
 - Your strike zone will & typically should be bigger than the book definition younger-age games
- Swinging strikes - Motion only
- Called Strikes - Emphasize third strike but do not call out.



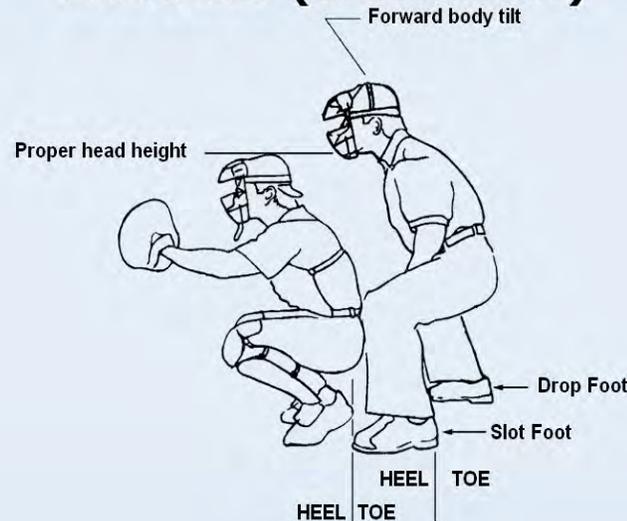
Baseball Plate Umpire Mechanics

- Positioning: Squared up behind the catcher, in the slot, within an arms reach of him. Bend at the knees up and down as needed (best way to adjust for moving catchers). You may put hands on knees, but watch for fouls and wild pitches.

THE SLOT (TOP VIEW)

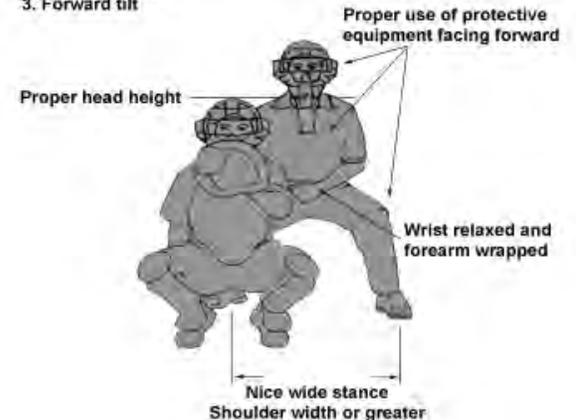


THE SLOT (SIDE VIEW)



The Slot (front view)

- Proper HEAD POSITION is controlled by:
1. Width of stance
 2. Amount of squat
 3. Forward tilt



Baseball Plate Umpire Mechanics

- Walks/Ball four: Point with LEFT hand toward first base, or no motion.



- Call Foul balls, Point fair balls
- OK to talk to catcher.
- DO NOT call location of pitch.
- If catcher says “outside, blue?” - agree with him. Do not offer information.

Baseball Plate Umpire Mechanics

- TIMING! – pitch, then to the catcher’s glove, then slight pause, then make ball/strike call (obvious balls don’t need a verbal call)
- Brushing Plate - Between pitcher and catcher, facing catcher, bend over and do this quickly, at a natural break in game if possible.
- Walk around batter and catcher, returning to your position.
- Foul tip-Indicate with hand/arm signal.
 - A Foul Tip is a pitched ball that tips off the bat and travels directly to the catcher's hands and is caught.
 - Unlike a foul ball, a foul tip can be a batter's third strike.
 - A Foul Tip is a LIVE BALL (runners may advance)
 - *NEVER verbalize* the words “foul tip” – only “foul ball!” or nothing at all if the ball is fair (with the hand signal pictured on a foul tip).



Baseball Plate Umpire Mechanics

- Positioning - if base umpire goes out.
- If a fly ball takes the base umpire out to the outfield, the plate umpire has the whole field
 - (Base Umpire: Once you're out you stay out, DO NOT come back in). You must immediately position yourself near the pitcher's mound, in anticipation of a play at any base.
 - Angle over distance.
 - Stop, see the play, replay in your mind, and make the call.
 - Keep your eye on the ball.
 - Once play has concluded, you may call time out, return to your position, and allow partner to do same.

Baseball Plate Umpire Mechanics

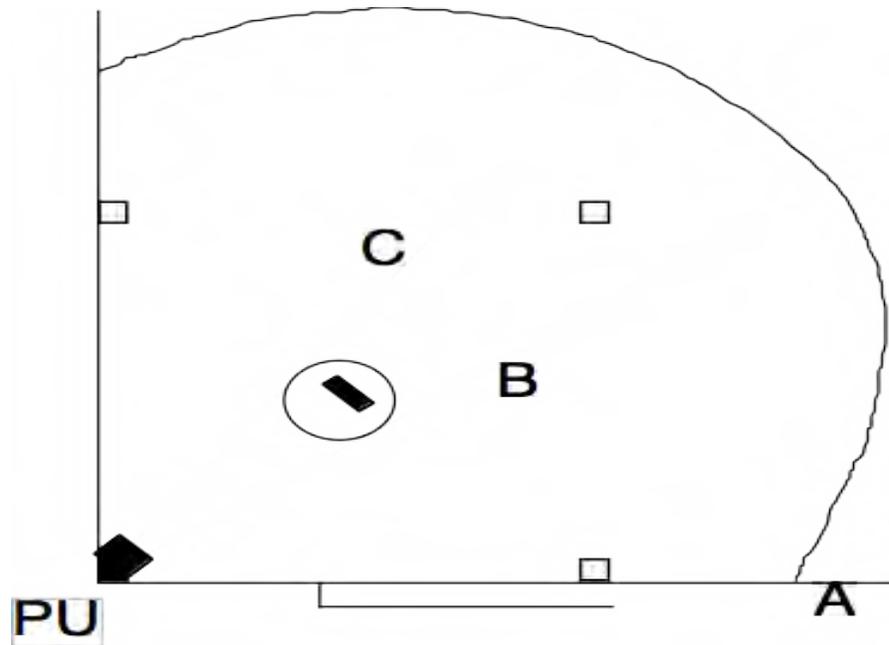
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<https://youtu.be/11rYQ2dt1r0>

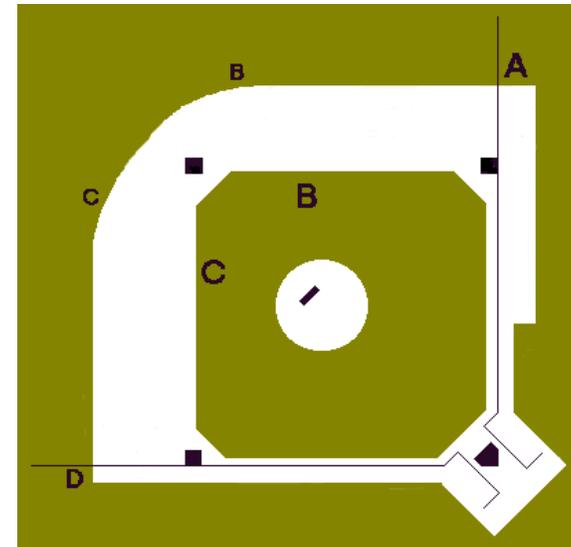
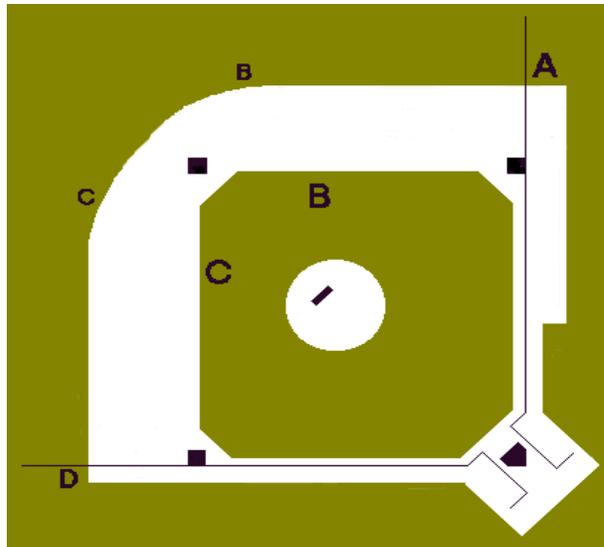
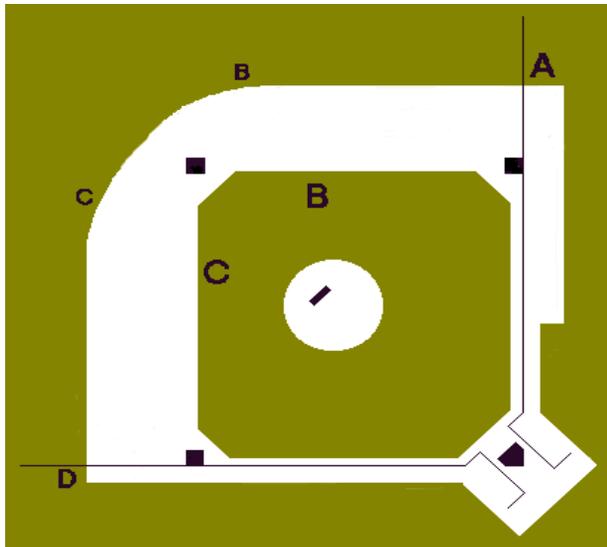
Baseball Base Umpire Mechanics

- Where you stand and how you move is essential in calling a good game.
- With no one on base position yourself in the A position. This is behind first base about 10 feet, with both feet in foul territory.



Baseball Base Umpire Mechanics

- With the pitch, begin a slow walk toward first base, keeping your eye on the ball.
- To make a call at first base, position yourself inside the first base line, at a 90-degree angle to the play (45-degree angle to the base).
- If runner only on first, position yourself in the B position, around where the second baseman plays, closer to the pitcher.
- Any other combination of baserunners is worked from the C position.
- Bases Loaded, Second and Third, First and Second, Third only.



Baseball Umpire Mechanics

- Base Umpire responsible to watch runners touch bags. Also in the lower levels, watch runners leaving early.
- Watch the ball into the glove, listen for foot to hit bag.
- Watch for runner turning toward second. Was there an attempt?
- Go out on fly balls that need a closer look. Trap? Fair/Foul?
- With runners on base, Hands on knees, or hands at side/behind back.
- Any umpire can call a balk. Base Ump typically watches feet. Plate ump upper body.
- If defensive player asks you to move, do so.
- Keep your eye everlasting on the ball. If you don't know where ball is, call time.

Baseball Umpire Mechanics

- Do not call plays too fast or too slow. See the play. Evaluate it (about 1 second). Call it.
- The closer the play, the louder the call.
- Don't get caught up on a close call. Keep your head in the game. If the coach wants an appeal, such as a pulled foot or if he left early on a tag-up, you may or may not grant it. If you do, take the advice of your partner. If you are sure, don't give it. (If you are new allow the question and talk to your partner about it).
- Bottom line is: Get the call right. (don't waste time discussing with your partner about a bang-bang judgment call – move on)

Baseball Two-Umpire Positioning Mechanics

12 min 14 sec



<https://youtu.be/caxU5XIZTh4?si=9N91V8YuGsavbtM8>

Two Runners, Same Base

4 min 24 sec



<https://youtu.be/tjQu-XgQE?si=SwdmpzbnYzfw0p9b>

Ending & Halting a Game – Baseball

(OHSBL Rules 4.10 – 4.18 & 4.21)

- Games end after:
 - 6 innings in Boys Farm Minor + Classes I, HH, & H (5 ½ innings if the home team is ahead)
 - 7 innings in Classes G, F, EE, E, & Men's D (6 ½ innings if the home team is ahead)
 - Tie score w/ extra inning(s) (except Farm Minor): last batter from previous inning/pinch runner placed on 2nd base
- Umpires have sole authority to determine (not *predetermine*) when a game shall be called, halted, or resumed on account of weather or the conditions of the playing field once a game has started. See Rules 4.10 & 4.11 for factors that determine if a halted game is complete or suspended.
 - **Lightning** (no thunder rule): game delayed 30 min. once spotted; time restarts each time lightning is observed (“heat lightning” at night may be OK)
- Run Rules (Mercy Rules) – home team must always complete their turn at bat if losing:
 - **10-run Mercy Rule after 4 ½ or 5 innings:** all classes (except Farm Minor)
 - **15-run Mercy Rule after 3 ½ or 4 innings** (in addition to 10-run rule): G, F, EE, E, & Men's D
 - **2-hour Mercy Rule** (all classes except Farm Minor): If home team is ahead by 10 or more runs after 2 hours have been played, the game ends immediately. The home team must complete their half of the inning if losing & the 2-hour limit is reached.
- Time Limits (time starts when umpire declares, “play”) – no new inning may begin after (games may end in a tie in LCHS):
 - **Boys Farm Minor:** 1 hour 30 minutes
 - **Classes I, HH & H:** 2 hours
 - **Classes G, F, EE, E, & Men's D:** 2 hours, 15 minutes
 - *The Crew Chief shall keep time & administer it, not a coach or scorekeeper; stop time if game is halted due to weather/field conditions*
- Sign the scorebook if asked (not required, but OK to do)
- Umpires must ALWAYS leave the field together; exit through winning team's/least contentious side's dugout

Protests – Baseball

(OHSBL Rule 4.19)

- Since Hot Stove allows protests in all Classes except Farm Minor, ***umpires shall not carry a physical copy of rule book on the field or use a digital copy during a game to aid in a decision.***
- Only (1) misinterpretation/incorrect application of playing rules/penalties by umpires & (2) ineligible players playing in a game may be protested – *never judgment-based calls.*
- If a *head coach* wants to protest a regular season game for (1) above, they must notify the plate ump *before the next pitch or play* (don't allow game to be protested if not notified in time); player eligibility may be protested after a game to the league.
- Regular season procedure:
 1. Manager of team protesting calls time & explains infraction to crew chief.
 2. If playing rule-based, both umpires meet & determine if ruling will be changed or upheld.
 3. If ruling is upheld, a manager may declare the game is being played under protest. Notify opposing manager, if so.
 - If ruling is changed, & opposing manager disagrees, they may protest changed ruling.
 4. If game is under protest: get both scorekeepers together, make sure the scorebooks match (score, batter, outs, count, baserunners, etc.), mark both books where the game is currently at as “under protest,” & umpire(s) initial books.
 5. Resume play (manager is responsible for sending written protest & \$200 fee to charter after game).
- Tournament games: (1) one, two, & three above for regular season, (2) if manager wishes to protest, stop the game & summon the Field Judge/Tournament Director (they handle it from there; coach has a few min. to write it up and pay \$200).

2026 Baseball Rule Changes/Edits

1. All legal bats must now bear either the USA Baseball or BBCOR stamps. Wood bats are exempt from this rule. No other bats are legal. See Rule [1.10](#) and Rule [10.2.P](#).
2. Manager penalties for illegal bats have been clarified. See Rule [1.10.I](#).
 - [1.10.I](#): If the umpire discovers that an illegal bat is used or detected in the batter's box, the batter will be declared out and all base runners will return to the base they occupied at the time of the pitch. This penalty will be applied regardless of if the batter makes contact or not.
 - 1. For the first infraction a team commits, a verbal warning will be issued to the manager. For the second infraction, the manager is bench restricted. For the third infraction, the manager is ejected. This penalty is per game.
3. Time limits will be in effect for preliminary rounds of State tournament. See Rule [4.10.E](#) and Rule [11.8.A.5.C](#).
 - [4.10.E](#) & [11.8.A.5.C](#): During regular season play and preliminary tournament rounds, from time the umpire declares "Play Ball" to begin the game, no new inning shall be started if the following time limits have been reached, which is the sole responsibility of the umpire crew chief to keep and enforce, not a coach or scorekeeper:
 - 1. Class I, Class HH and Class H may not start a new inning after 2 hours (120 minutes.)
 - 2. Class G, Class F, Class EE, Class E and Class D may not start a new inning after 2 hours 15 minutes (75 minutes.)
 - 3. For tournaments, the same time limits will be in effect for all preliminary games. A preliminary game is defined as any tournament game that is not a regional semi-final, regional final, state semi-final or state final.
4. Pitchers will be bound by the sixty (60) hour pitching rule. Pitch counts from the suspended game carry over to the resumed game. See Rule [8.10.A.5](#).
5. Tournament draw seeding points where more than one Charter is involved have been clarified. See Rule [11.4.F.7](#).

How To Get Games and Get Paid!

- Know who the Head Umpire / assigner is for the communities you wish to work in. The list is on the Lorain County Hot Stove (About → Community Head Umpires).
- **YOU are responsible** for reaching out to head umpires / assigners to get games. They will not look for you.
- *Be available as much as possible. The season is relatively short.*
- If you schedule a game, do the game. It is hard to get someone else at the last minute because you change your mind. The more reliable you are, the more games you'll get. Schedulers schedule first who they know want to work.
- Many games pay cash before or after a game, but pay procedure may differ between communities & assigners.
- If you want games but are not being assigned, contact the County Umpire-in-Chief, Jerry Clapper. There are always games available somewhere.

Test Prep – Baseball

True or False?

- All bases including home plate are in fair territory.
- A batted ball is ruled fair when it contacts the foul pole in flight.
- The batter swings and hits a ball over the fence in fair territory but has his left foot on the batter's box line when he makes contact with the ball. The umpire rules a home run. The umpire made the correct call.
- A balk is an immediate dead ball.
- A three-base award is granted to the batter if a fielder intentionally throws his glove at a fly ball and knocks it down.
- An ambidextrous pitcher in class H may throw 100 pitches left handed and 100 pitches right handed in the same game on the same day.
- A bunted ball hit by the batter is rolling down the 3rd base line in foul territory when the umpire calls "Foul Ball!" As the batted ball rolls further, it rolls into fair territory, when the 3rd baseman picks up the ball in fair territory, throws to 1st base before the batter/runner reaches first base. The ball is a fair ball.
- A batter swings at a pitched ball. In addition to hitting the baseball, the batter also hits the catcher's mitt. The baseball goes over the fence on a fly, fair and the catcher's mitt ends up near the mound. The umpire rules that the ball was immediately dead and the batter is awarded first base. The umpire made the correct ruling.
- In class G (11 and 12 year olds,) no more than two defensive coaches may be in the outfield while their team is on defense.
- When an incorrect pitching distance is discovered, wait to complete the inning to make the change so that both teams have a chance to use the incorrect dimension.

Test Prep – Baseball

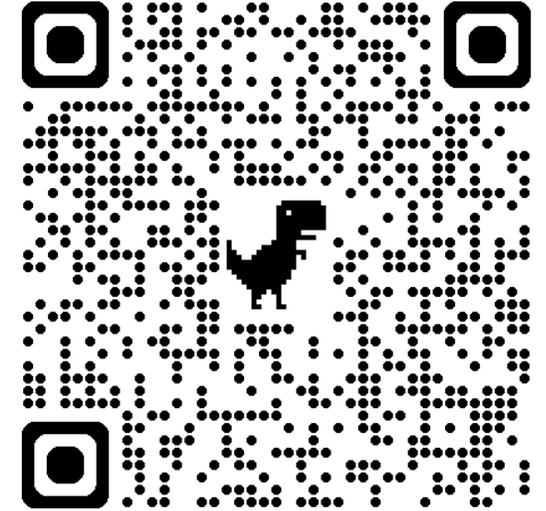
True or False?

- The game begins when the umpire declares “Play Ball.”
- The score of a forfeited game is 1-0.
- For a protest to be filed, the protesting manager must give the plate umpire \$200 once the game is declared to be under protest.
- A manager can protest a game for an incorrect judgment call.
- A batter is out when, with two strikes, he bunts the ball foul.
- On an intentional base on balls (intentional walk), the batter can be waived to first base without a pitch having to be being thrown.
- An umpire may wear shorts if the temperature at game time is over 90 degrees.
- A plate umpire may wear his hat backwards if he does not have a plate hat with him.
- In a class G game, only one umpire shows up. The umpire decides to call balls and strikes from behind the mound. This is permissible.
- If the plate umpire covers 3rd base on a call, the base umpire should:
 - a. Watch to make sure the plate umpire makes a good call at 3rd base
 - b. Return to 1st base position to get ready for the next batter
 - c. Head towards home plate to cover the plate umpire position

Baseball Test Time!

- The 2026 Hot Stove Baseball Umpire test is online only
- You may only take the test if you were present at a clinic
- This presentation & rule book are posted on the [Lorain County Hot Stove](#) website (Resources → For Officials)
- Please make sure phone number & email (no school or work address, if possible) are correct
- At least 60% required to become carded
- Cards will be emailed to you
- Contact Jerry Clapper with any questions
 - jerry@loraincountyhotstove.com

OHSBL Test



Digital Umpire Data Sheet

