

Alliance Hot Stove Baseball League

Basic Umpire Guidelines



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General Umpire Mechanics

- Have a clean, wrinkle free uniform and clean shoes for **EVERY** game.
- Once you enter the confines of the field, never lay your mask down, hang on the fence or put it on a bench.
- When there is a pop up that the catcher is fielding, the plate umpire should keep his mask on until the catcher throws his/hers.
- The plate umpire should clean the plate off with a brush before each half inning with their butt toward the pitching mound.
- Plate protective gear (chest protector, shin guards, protective cup) is to be worn under your uniform.
- Always take your mask off with your left hand
- Carry your indicator in your left hand.
- Appeal check swings as the plate umpire with your left hand. Point to partner and say, "Did he/she go?"
- Never wear your hat backwards
- Base umpire **WILL** carry a brush.
- Base umpire **WILL NOT** wear ball bags.
- During defensive conferences, the base umpire shall move away from pitching mound toward outfield grass.
- During pitching changes, the base umpire shall count the pitches and tell the plate umpire (non-verbally) when they have thrown 5 pitches.
- Partners shall meet during a game if it is **EXTREMELY** important and never right after a controversial call.
- **ALWAYS** walk to and from the field with your partner. After the games, we leave the field together and quickly. Don't seek out coaches or players.
- **ALWAYS** put the ball back in play after it has been declared dead.
- Keep track of offensive and defensive conferences.
- Do not point to 1st base with your right hand to award a base.
- Signal with your partner before the pitch as a situation dictates. Never assume you and your partner are on the same page.
- **HUSTLE** to your position anytime you are moving.

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 is a big one.
- Let the umpire lose his/her temper, and he/she is through.
- Let the umpire get pushed around, and he/she is through.
- Six words to describe an umpire: **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 maintain absolute concentration on the game and only the game, including each individual pitch and play.
- There are no close plays, only balls or strikes, safe or out.
- In public mind, the umpire appears at best as a necessary evil, at worst as a neanderthal bent on robbing the home team of its desserts. How else to explain the singular propensity of umpires to blow calls obvious 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 read the rule book is to read the rule and then put it in play in your mind, visualize it, and make application of the rule to the play. In your mind, see the play on the field, and then, when it comes up again, it's like it's been there before.
- 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 there is. But the best umpire is the one who feels that way then learns something 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 a call.
- To be a good 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 whether it is a ball or strike. That is integrity. If he/she loses it, he/she loses everything. If players and managers know an umpire calls the play the way he/she sees it, they will respect him/her even if he/she is not the best umpire.

UMPIRE UNIFORM AND INFORMATION

- Black shoes, **SHINED** with black laces.
- Black socks
- Heather or Charcoal Grey dress pants with a black belt
- ALL UMPIRES IN A GAME **MUST** BE DRESSED ALIKE
- Black MLB replica polo is to be used for tournaments.
- All umpires, their uniforms and equipment, **MUST** be clean and neat.
- Chest protector, mask, shin guards, indicator, protective cup and brush are a must for the plate umpire.
- Umpire hat, black or dark blue **MUST** be worn by ALL umpires, with the bill of the hat **ALWAYS** facing forward,
- Ball bag is **ONLY WORN BY PLATE UMPIRE**
Either worn on right side only or bag on either side
- Shin guards are **ONLY** worn under pants.
- Chest protector **ONLY** worn under polo.
- No jewelry shall be worn that can cause a reflection on the field.

NO WATCHES MAY BE WORN

- Be dressed either **as an umpire to work a game** or **as a spectator to watch the game.**
- Be at your game **AT LEAST** ½ hour prior to the start of game.
- Umpires **SHALL NOT** fraternize with coaches, managers, players, spectators or other field personnel.
- Be firm, but polite. Make it clear from the outset that abuse of the umpire will not be tolerated. The rules clearly state that no protests are allowed on a judgement call. A question on a rule interpretation should be courteous but brief. The only consultation should be with your fellow umpires and the rule book. Make the ruling and continue with the game.
- Keep your everlasting eye on the ball while it is in play.
- Each umpire should work out a simple set of signals.
- Umpires should attend umpire clinics each year as they become available to obtain refresher training and rule change data.

IT IS A MUST THAT UMPIRES KNOW BASEBALL RULES

GAME DAY PROCEDURES

- Coordinate with your partner where to meet. If dressing in the parking lot, try to do so away from other cars.
- Arrive **AT LEAST** 30 minutes prior to the start of the game.
- Determine which umpire is working which position, go through a pre-game so that you are on the same page. Make note of any issues the field might present.
- Walk to the field together and arrive at the plate approximately 10 minutes prior to game start time.
- Examine the playing field closely, making sure that it is properly marked, the pitcher's plate is legal and familiarize yourself with the boundaries.

Pregame

- Five minutes prior to the game, we meet with both head coaches at the plate.
- Plate umpire at point of the plate.
- Base umpire across from plate umpire facing the backstop.
- Both umpires introduce themselves to both coaches
- Ask both coaches if all players are **legally and properly** equipped and all equipment is legal. Both coaches must verbally answer "yes."
- Share your expectations about exhibiting good sportsmanship. During the game, if they have a question, you are more than willing to answer them.
- Starting with the backstop, explain any local rules and boundaries that need to apply to the field.
- At the conclusion of the meeting, the base umpire is to jog down the baseline into the outfield.

During the Game

- The crew chief is generally the most veteran umpire.
- Plate umpire is responsible for announcing "play" giving the hand signal to start the game or resume play.
- With no runners on base, the base umpire shall position him/herself 10-12 feet behind the 1st baseman with both feet in foul territory.
- Base umpire shall go out on "trouble ball" to rule on catch/no catch and fair/foul.

- Trouble ball
 - Fair/foul decision down the right field line
 - Home runs
 - Balls off the wall.
 - Diving catches by the outfielder
 - Catches with the fielder running toward the wall.
 - Catches below the waist.
 - Players converging on a fly ball.
- Base umpire will communicate “I’m going out” and plate umpire now has the batter-runner.
 - **NOTE: Pause, Read and React-then BE DECISIVE! Decide to go out or come in and stick to it. Indecision puts both umpires at a disadvantage. Suddenly nobody gets a good look at a ball/play that can require the most attention.**
- The base umpire will get the best angle and be completely stopped when there is a play made or fair/foul decision.
- The plate umpire will take all bounding balls up to 1st and 3rd base. If the base umpire is at that base, he/she will have the ruling on fair/foul once it passes the front edge of the base.
- Any umpire can call a balk and/or signal delayed dead ball or call time.
- Be completely stopped prior to any play being made. Your head is like a camera; if the camera moves, so does the lens.
- Always strive to get the best angle when making a call. If you’re too close, everything blends together and distorts your vision. Too far and you won’t seem credible.
- If you have proper angle and distance, then your eyes will lead to proper timing and judgement.
- **Get the call right:** A call needs to be made on every play. When a coach asks if the calling umpire can get help, you need to get together (no coaches or players around) and discuss what you have. The emphasis is put on getting together and discussing. It is still up to the calling umpire to make the final decision. Once you have made the decision, the calling umpire makes the call. If the coach wants to discuss, politely tell him/her what you have, and the discussion is over.

BASIC UMPIRE RESPONSIBILITIES

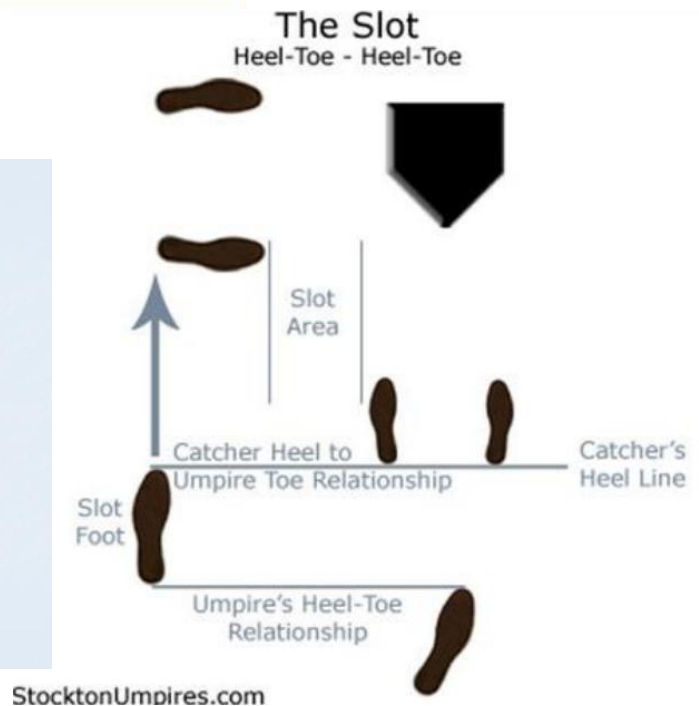
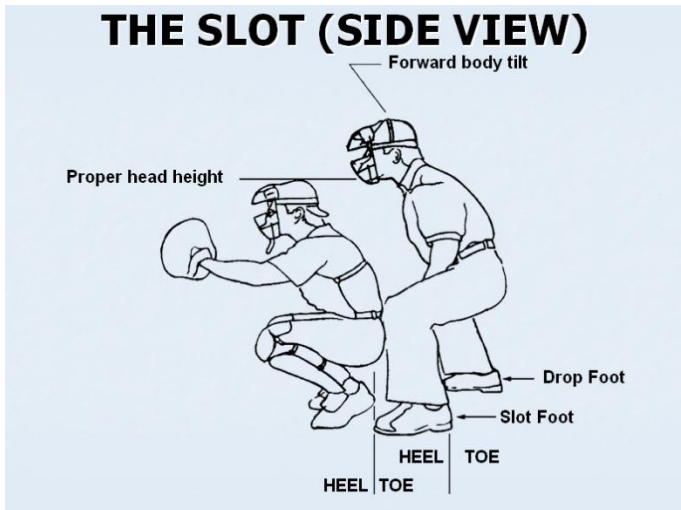
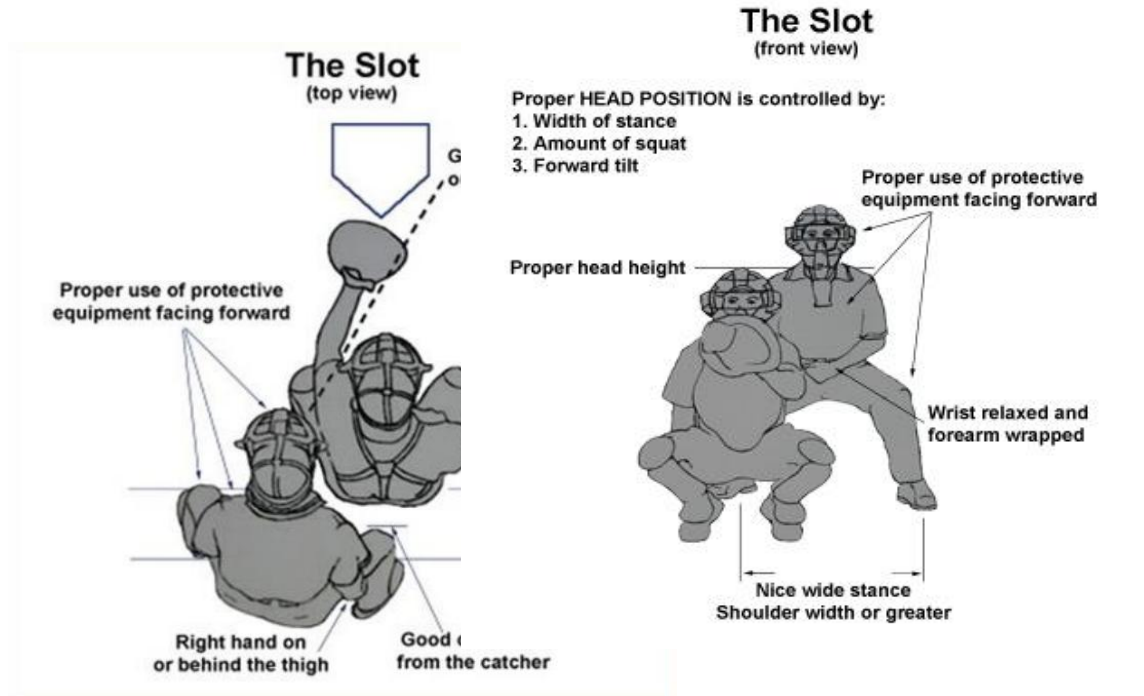
PLATE UMPIRE

- Pre-game conference with the coaches
- Call balls and strikes.
- Call fair and foul balls.
- Watch the pitcher's upper body.
- Cover 3rd base on a 2nd play in the infield.
- Keep record of conferences
- Tag up of lead runner with multiple runners.
- Watch for interference and obstruction.
- Watch runners touch 3rd base and home plate.
- Make all decisions on the batter.
- Watch for running lane infractions.
- Put a dead ball back in play.

BASE UMPIRE

- Help count warm up pitches.
- Watch pitcher's feet.
- Watch for a checked swing. If asked you need to have seen it
- Make calls on plays at 1st and 2nd base and batter/runner at 3rd.
- **TALK**
- Tag ups if only one runner and the trailing runner(s) with multiple runners.
- Watch for obstruction and interference.
- Watch runners touch 1st and 2nd base.

BASIC PLATE MECHANICS



GAME DAY MEETING

ARRIVAL AT THE GAME SITE:

- Arrive at least 30 minutes early.

PREGAME WITH PARTNER: DISCUSSION TOPICS (2-MAN)

- Fair/Foul
 - Bases Empty-PU has left field line and right field line up to 1st base.
 - With Runners On-All fair/foul calls
- Outfield Fly Balls
 - Bases Empty-PU takes all routine fly balls.
 - With Runners On -PU has both lines and the left/right fielder to line
-BU has all fly balls in the “V”
- Infield Flies/ Line Drives
 - Bases Empty- Split the field.
 - With Runners On- BU takes all except down the lines
- Tag ups/ Base Touches
 - PU takes home and 3rd (Help at 1st)
 - BU takes 1st and 2nd.
 - Communicate if there is going to be an appeal.
- Call at 3rd Base-**BIGGEST POTENTIAL FOR SCREW UPS-**
 - Bases empty-Batter/Runner goes for Triple.
 - Runner on 2nd try for 3rd after a throw to 1st on Batter/Runner
 - Runner Tags at 2nd
 - Runner from 1st goes to 3rd on a base hit.
 - Pitcher’s pick-off throw at 2nd goes into center field.
- Check Swing
 - PU asks- “Did he/she go?” and point to BU with **LEFT** hand.
 - BU answers- “Yes he/she did!” with an out signal or “No he/she didn’t!” with the safe signal
 - Potential check swing/dropped 3rd strike.
- Dropped 3rd Strike.
 - BU-clenched fist- catch.
 - BU-Open hand-no catch (trap)
- Batted Ball Hits the Batter
 - 1st thing is to kill the play- “Dead Ball!”
 - 2nd was the batter hit in the box (foul) or out of the box (out)
- Getting Help
 - On what plays-Check Swing, Possible Pulled Foot/ Swipe Tag
 - When? Ask after you make the call.

- Signals
 - Infield Fly
 - Timing Play
 - Outs/Count
 - Rotations
 - Umpire Going Out
- Positioning
 - PU ensures proper positioning of BU prior to pitch.
- Arguments
 - When to get involved as a partner
 - Keep it one-on-one.
- Rundowns
 - Who is going to be where?
 - Need Both Ends of the Play Covered
- Interference/Obstruction-how to handle.
- General
 - After Dead Ball-verbally put the ball back in play and point to pitcher
 - **COMMUNICATE, COMMUNICATE, COMMUNICATE**
 - “I’ve got the ball.”
 - “I’m at third”
 - Mirror your partner on infield fly, time, balks.

ARRIVAL AT THE FIELD-10 MINUTES BEFORE GAME

- The Umpire jurisdiction begins.
- Examine the playing field as a crew for potential dead ball obstacles, safety concerns, etc..

PREGAME W/COACHES AND/OR TEAM CAPTAINS-5 MIN BEFORE GAME

- Meet at home plate and discuss ground rules.
- Discuss any other matters pertinent to the game.
 - DH, time limit, run-rule, speed-up rules etc.
- Ask coaches if all their players are legally and properly equipped.

GAME TIME

- PU check to make sure BU is ready.
- Game Begins when PU calls **“PLAY!”**

HAND SIGNALS

RUNNERS	POSITION	OUTS	HAND SIGNALS
None	A	0,1,2	None
1 st	B	0,1,2	Number of Outs Normal Rotation
1 st and 3 rd	B	0,1,2	Number of Outs Normal Rotation
1 st and 2 nd	C	0,1	Number of Outs Infield Fly Caught Fly to OF-PU has play at 3rd
1 st and 2 nd	C	2	Number of Outs Timing Play Plate Umpire Staying Home
2 nd and 3 rd	C	0,1	Number of Outs Plate Umpire Staying Home
2 nd and 3 rd	C	2	Number of Outs Timing Play Plate Umpire Staying Home
1 st , 2 nd , 3 rd	C	0,1	Number of Outs Infield Fly Plate Umpire Staying Home
1 st , 2 nd , 3 rd	C	2	Number of Outs Timing Play2 Plate Umpire Staying Home
2 nd Only	C	0,1	Number of Outs Plate Umpire Staying Home
2 nd Only	C	2	Number of Outs Timing Play Plate Umpire Staying Home
3 rd Only	C	0,1,2	Number of Outs Plate Umpire Staying Home

Number of outs-Given with either right or left hand out to side for partner to see.

Normal Rotation-Hand Ten/Loose Sign, thumb and pinkie extended, move wrist back and forth.

Infield Fly-Give the number of outs at the front bill of the cap

Timing Play-Index finger of right hand pointing to wrist of the left.

PU Staying at Home-point with both hands straight down.

SIGNALS CHART



Play

Point with the right hand towards pitcher and say “play.” The ball is now live.

Do Not Pitch

Hold **RIGHT** hand in front of your body with palm facing out. Ball is dead and must be put back in play.



Foul Ball, Time Out, Dead Ball

Both hands open above your head.
Ball is dead immediately.

Strike

Strand straight up, bring **RIGHT** hand up in front of your body, make a fist and say “strike.”





Foul Tip

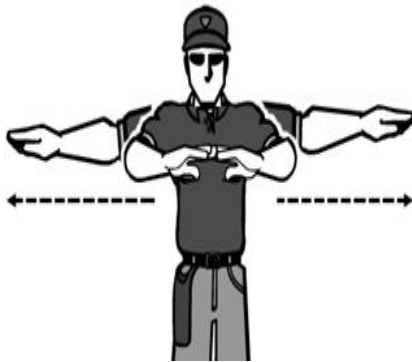
Straight upright and pass **RIGHT** hand over the left hand signifying a foul tip.

BALL IS STILL LIVE

Count

LEFT hand is **BALLS**, **RIGHT** hand is **STRIKES**

Hold both hands up in front of your body at or above shoulders. Signal forward towards pitcher and verbalize loud enough for batter, pitcher and catcher to hear.



Safe, Uncaught 3rd Strike

Start with arms extended in front of your body and swing them open at shoulder height

Appeal on Check Swing

Step out from behind the catcher, extend your **LEFT** arm, palm up and ask the base umpire, "did he/she go?"





Out

Bring your **RIGHT** arm up, make a 90-degree angle, make a fist and with a hammering action call, “he/she’s out.”



Infield Fly

NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION (PRE-PITCH)

RIGHT hand to the bill of the hat, number f out may be given here as well.



Infield Fly

Once the ball reaches its apex, and you determine it is an infield fly, point your **RIGHT** hand toward the ball and say, “Infield Fly, Batter is out.” If it is close to the foul line, say “Infield Fly, if Fair.”



Timing Play

Place two fingers of the **RIGHT** hand on the **LEFT** wrist. This signal will only be used in two out situations where a time of the play involving a potential run is likely.



Standard Rotation

Thumb and pinkie fingers extended, arms down at side, rotate hands forward and back

Plate Covers 3rd on Caught Fly Ball to Outfield

Make a fist with the **RIGHT** hand, cover fist with **LEFT** hand pointing to 3rd base.



Staying Home

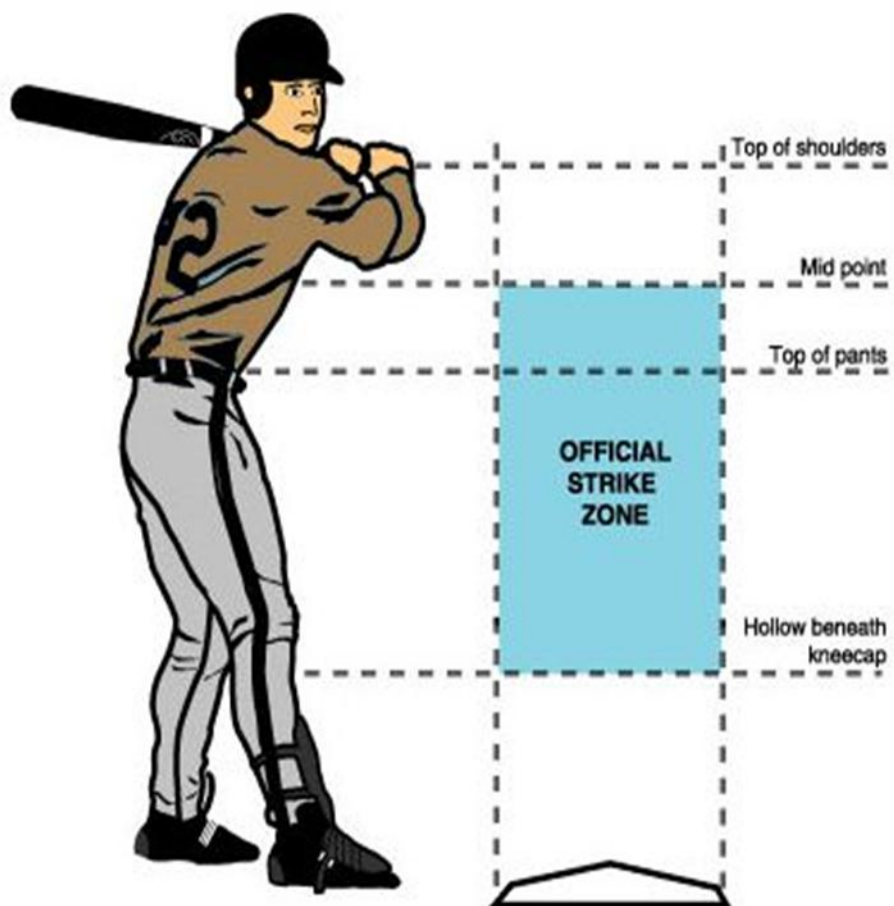
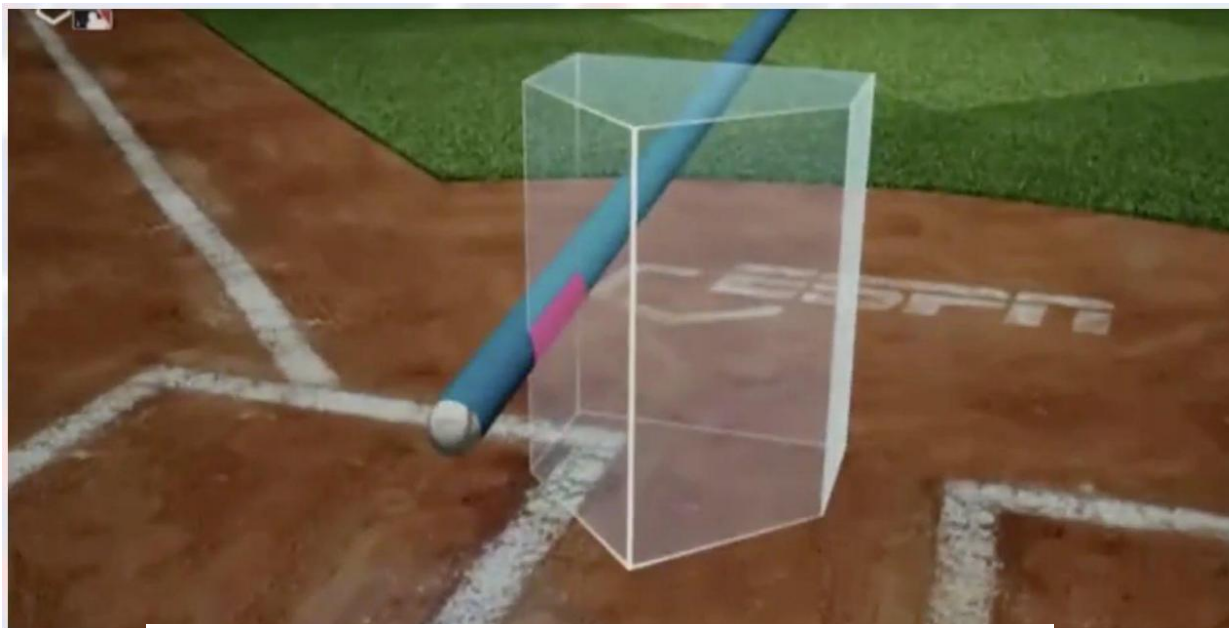
Point both arms straight down. This is used when the plate umpire should stay home.

Obstruction or Delayed Dead Ball

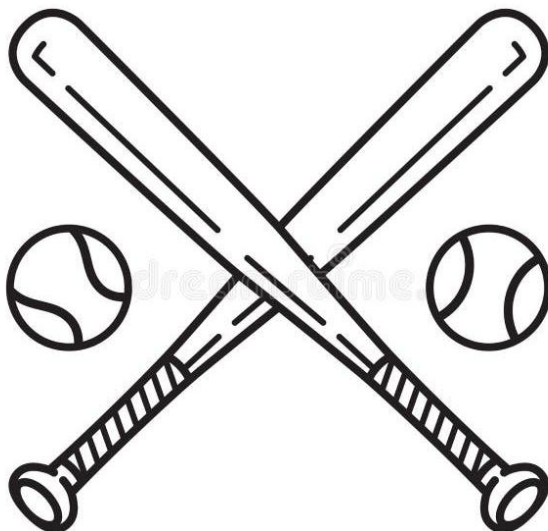
Hold out your **LEFT** arm while making a fist.



STRIKE ZONE



2 Umpire Mechanics



U1 IN POSITION A

Fair/Foul Responsibilities

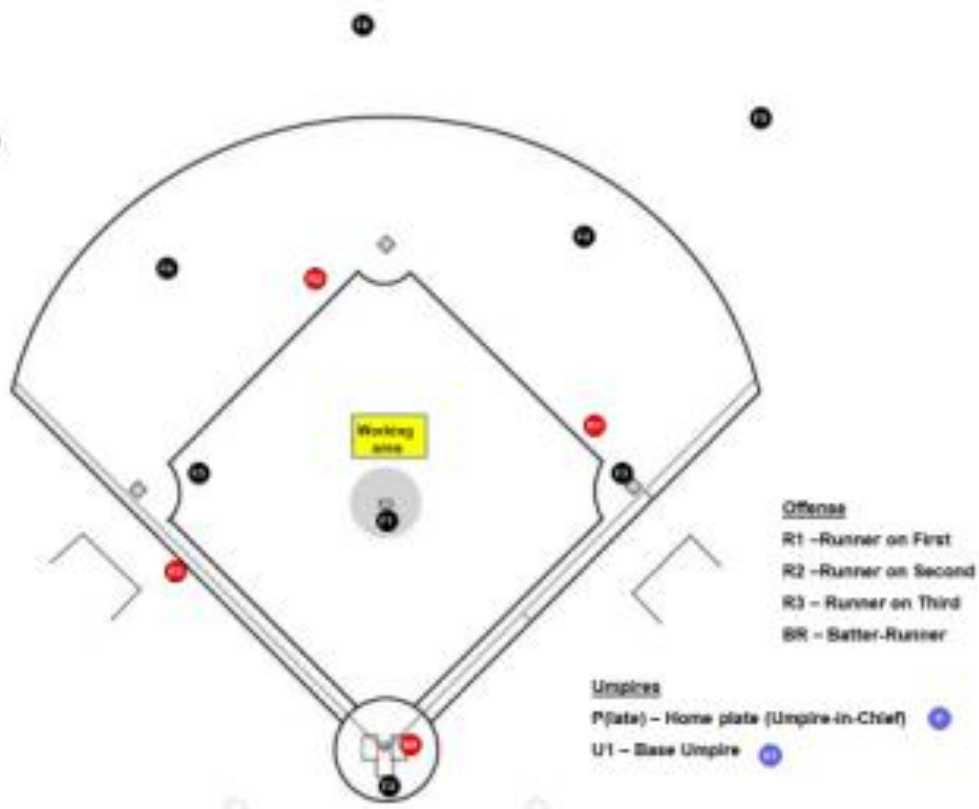
- **Plate** – Up to the front edge of 1st base bag, and all the way to the foul pole up the 3rd baseline.
- **U1** – Passed the front edge of 1st base bag to the foul pole.



ABBREVIATIONS

Defense

- F1 – Pitcher
- F2 – Catcher
- F3 – 1st Baseman
- F4 – 2nd Baseman
- F5 – 3rd Baseman
- F6 – Shortstop
- F7 – Left Fielder
- F8 – Center Fielder
- F9 – Right Fielder



Positive Read Result

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- **Pause**- open up toward the ball
- **Reset**- focus on fielder(s)
- **Reset**- If you see trouble, go out

- Always clear catcher to the left.
- Move in direction between the mound and first base;
- Read U/I as to whether you have the ball or the runner.

1. P8 or P9 are running hard in towards the infield as if to make the catch on the dead run or dive to make the catch;
2. P8 or P9 turn their back to the infield and move towards the outfield wall;
3. P8, P9, and a infielder are converging on the ball;
4. P8 is running toward the foul line and a infielder's decision may be needed;
5. Infielders are going back on the ball and it could possibly be a diving catch.

The diagram shows a baseball diamond with home plate at the bottom. A dashed vertical line extends from home plate through the center of the field. Player 'L' is positioned in the center field area. Player 'P' is located near first base, and player 'U1' is near third base. Arrows indicate movement: one arrow points left from the top of the dashed line, another points right, and a third points down along the dashed line. There are also arrows pointing towards the bases from the outfield.

- F3 to his right toward the left field line;
- F7 in all cases;
- When U1 does not go out, has all the calls in the outfield;
- All pop-ups in the infield;
- All line-drives in the infield, except for F3 and F4 straight in or diving to their left.

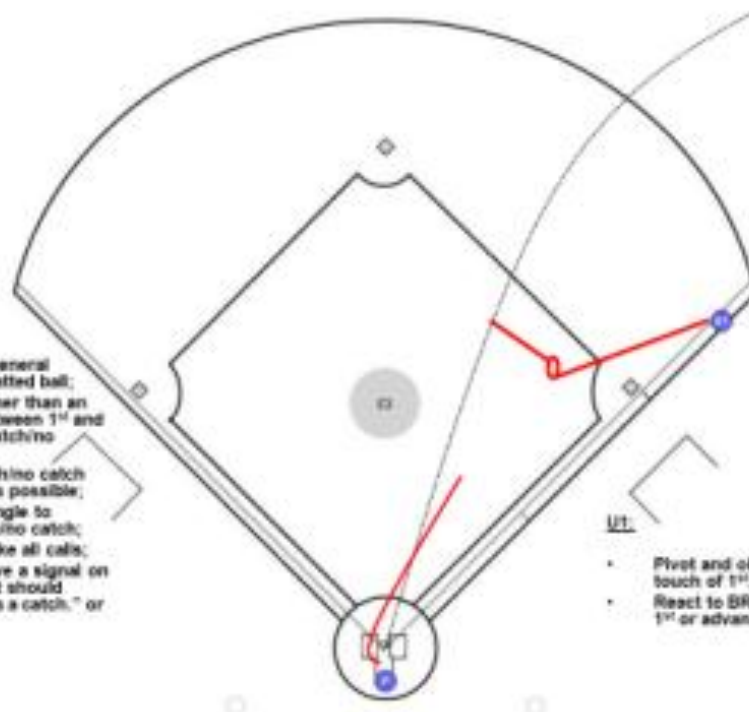
- F8 coming in, going back, and going toward the right field line;
- F9 in all cases;
- Quick line drives to F3 and F4 straight in or diving to their left.

———— INITIAL MOVEMENT
 - - - - - SECONDARY MOVEMENT
 ●●●●● BALL FLIGHT

FLY BALL OR LINE DRIVE TO RIGHT FIELD U1 DOES NOT GO OUT

PLATE:

- Come out in the general direction of the batted ball;
- Come out no further than an imaginary line between 1st and 3rd on a routine catch/no catch;
- On a difficult catch/no catch move out as far as possible;
- Obtain the best angle to observe the catch/no catch;
- Be stopped to make all calls;
- Do not need to give a signal on a routine play, but should inform U1, "That's a catch," or "Ball's down,"



U1:

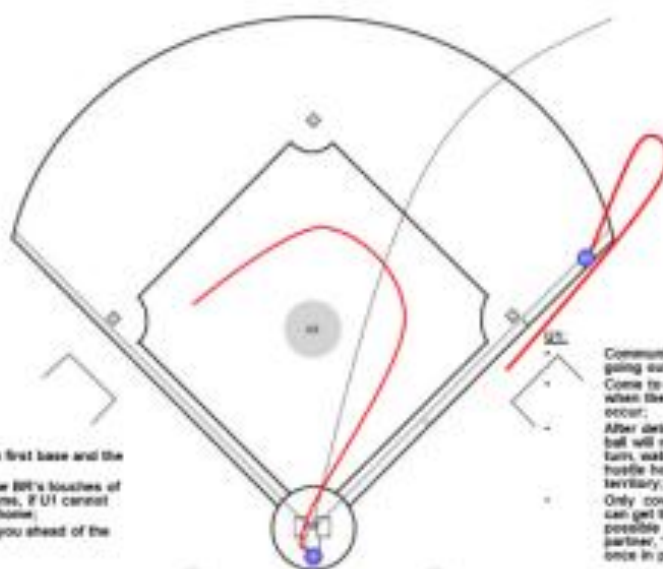
- Pivot and observe the BR's touch of 1st;
- React to BR going back into 1st or advancing to 2nd.

———— INITIAL MOVEMENT
 - - - - - SECONDARY MOVEMENT
 ●●●●● BALL FLIGHT

FLY BALL OR LINE DRIVE TO RIGHT FIELD U1 DOES OUT

PLATE:

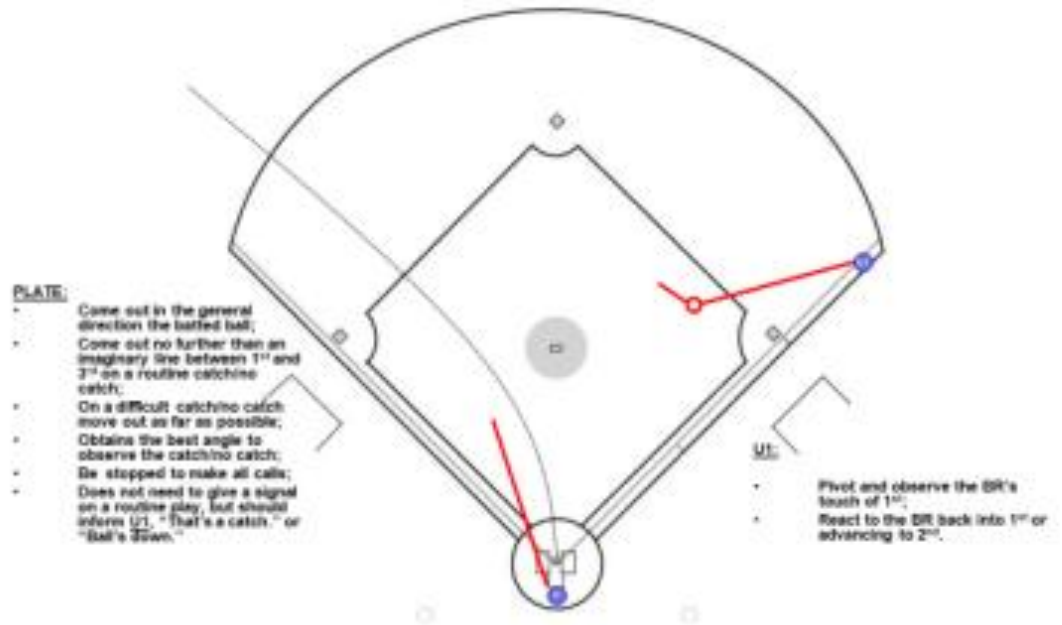
- Come out between first base and the mound;
- Responsible for the BR's touches of 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and home, if U1 cannot get back to cover home;
- Path should keep you ahead of the BR.



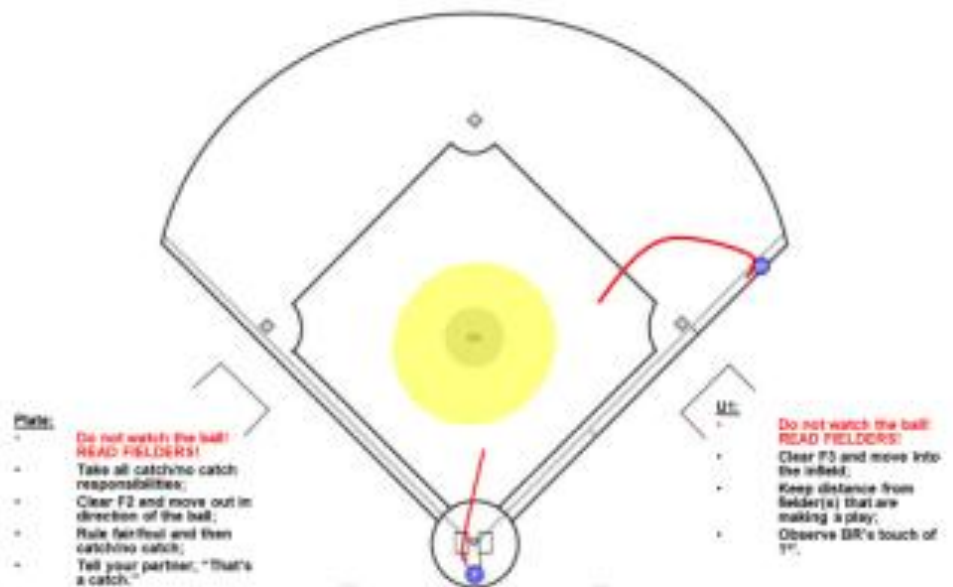
- Communicate that you're going out.
- Come to a **COMPLETE** stop when the catch is about to occur;
- After determining that the ball will not go out-of-play, turn, watching the ball, and hustle home in foul territory;
- Only cover the plate if you can get there prior to a possible play. Inform your partner, "I've got home!" once in position.



FLY BALL OR LINE DRIVE TO LEFT FIELD



POPUP ON THE INFIELD

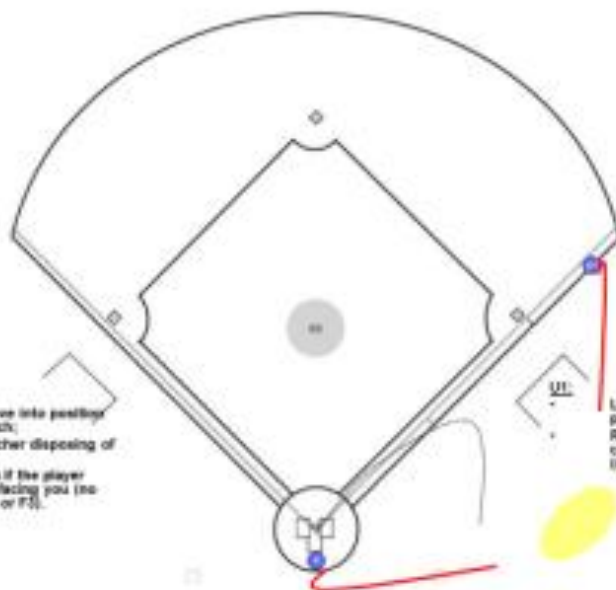




FOUL POP-UP BETWEEN HOME AND 1ST BOTH F2 AND F3 GO FOR THE BALL

PLATE

- Let F2 clear and move into position to rule catch/no catch;
- Be aware of the catcher disposing of his mask;
- Rule catch/no catch if the player catching the ball is facing you (no matter if it is the F2 or F3).



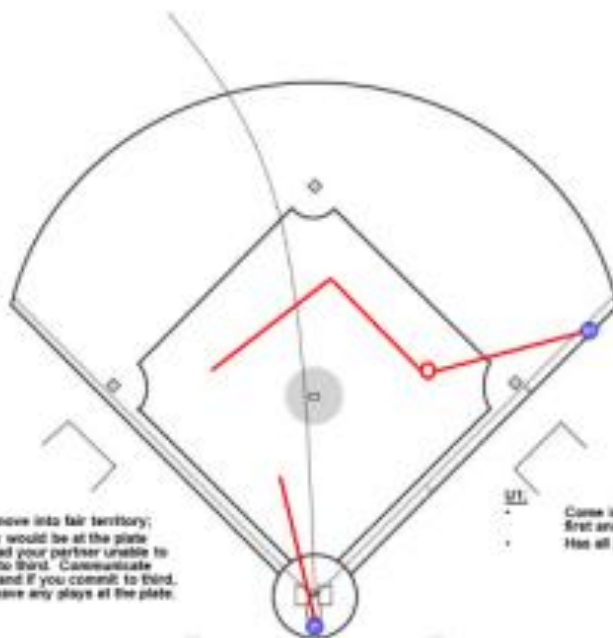
- Let F3 clear and move into position to rule catch/no catch;
- Rule catch/no catch if the player catching the ball is facing you (no matter if it is the F2 or F3).



BASE HIT POSSIBLE TRIPLE

PLATE

- Clear F3 and move into fair territory;
- Your next play would be at the plate unless you read your partner unable to take runner into third. Communicate your location and if you commit to third, you will also have any plays at the plate.

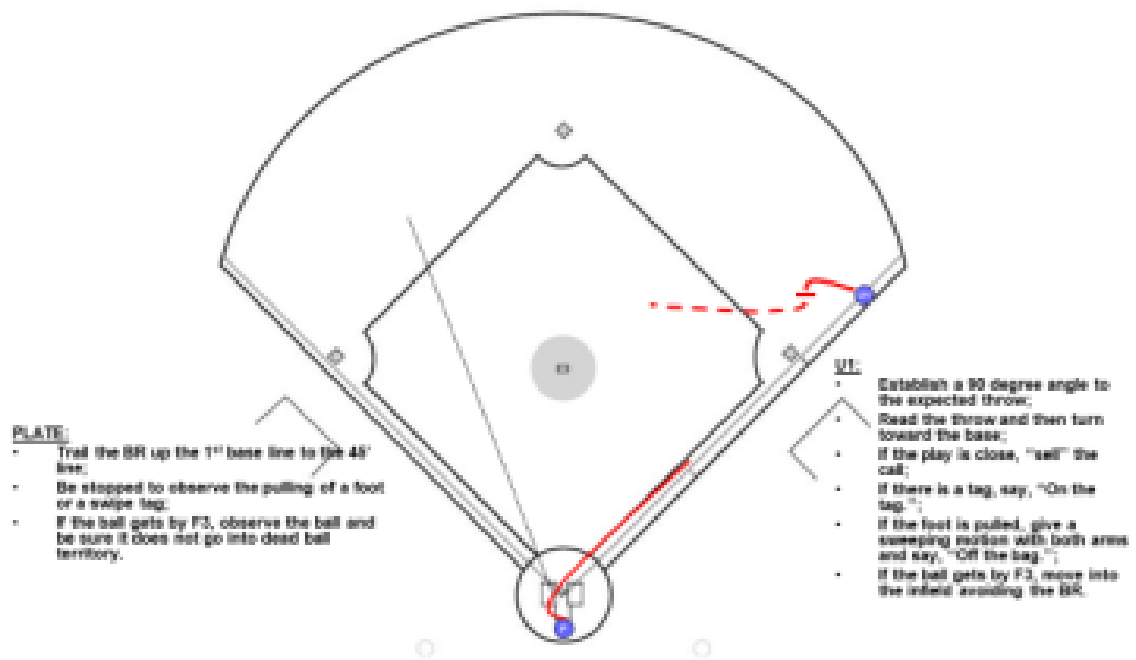


1ST

- Come in and pivot, watch touch of first and stay ahead of runner;
- Has all plays at 1st, 2nd and 3rd.



GROUND BALL

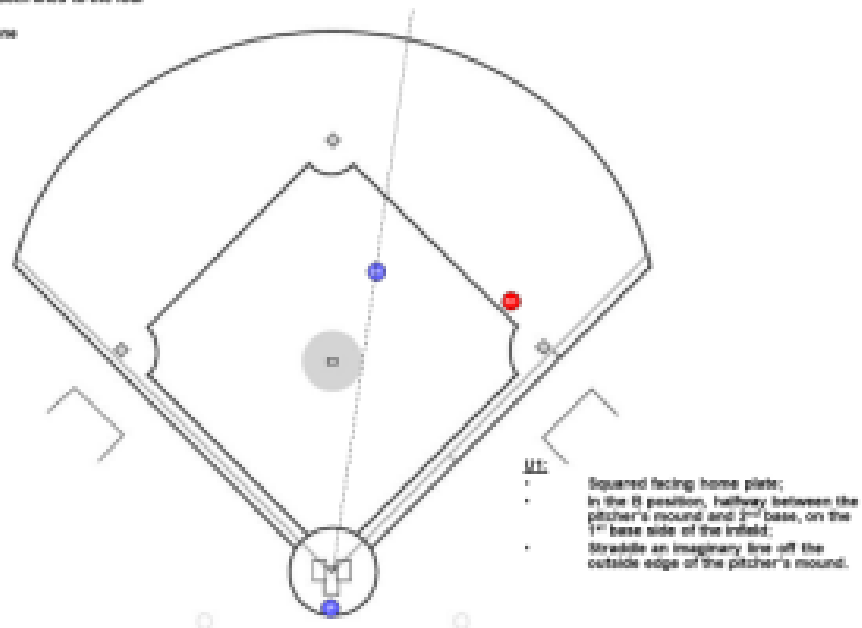


RUNNER ON FIRST

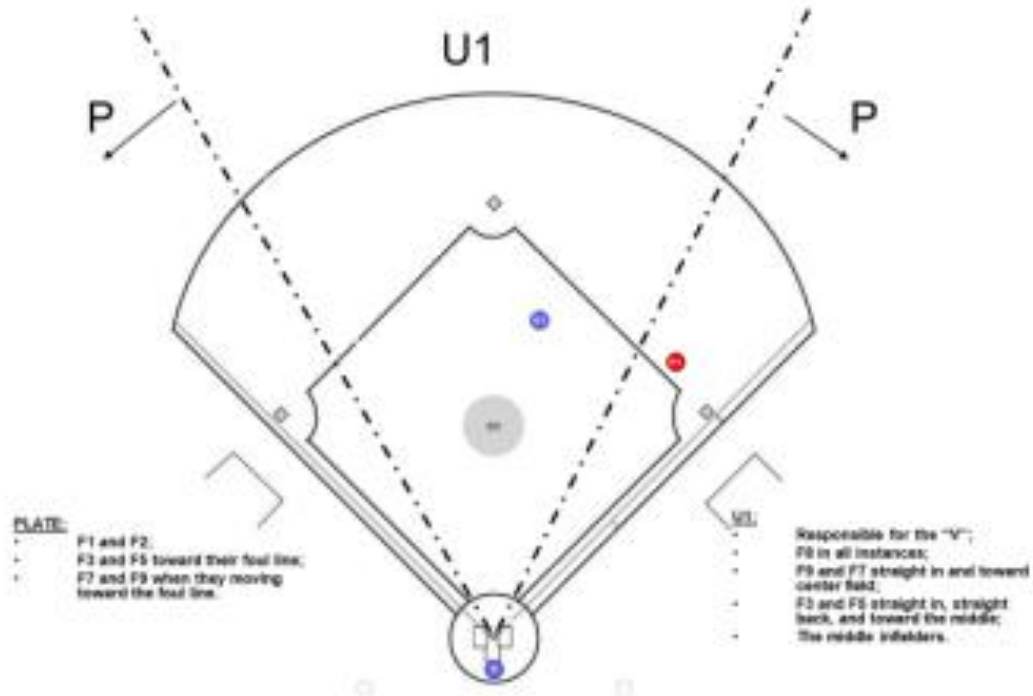
Communication:
Standard Rotation (S14)

Fair/Foul Responsibilities

- Plate - both lines to the foul poles.
- U1 - None

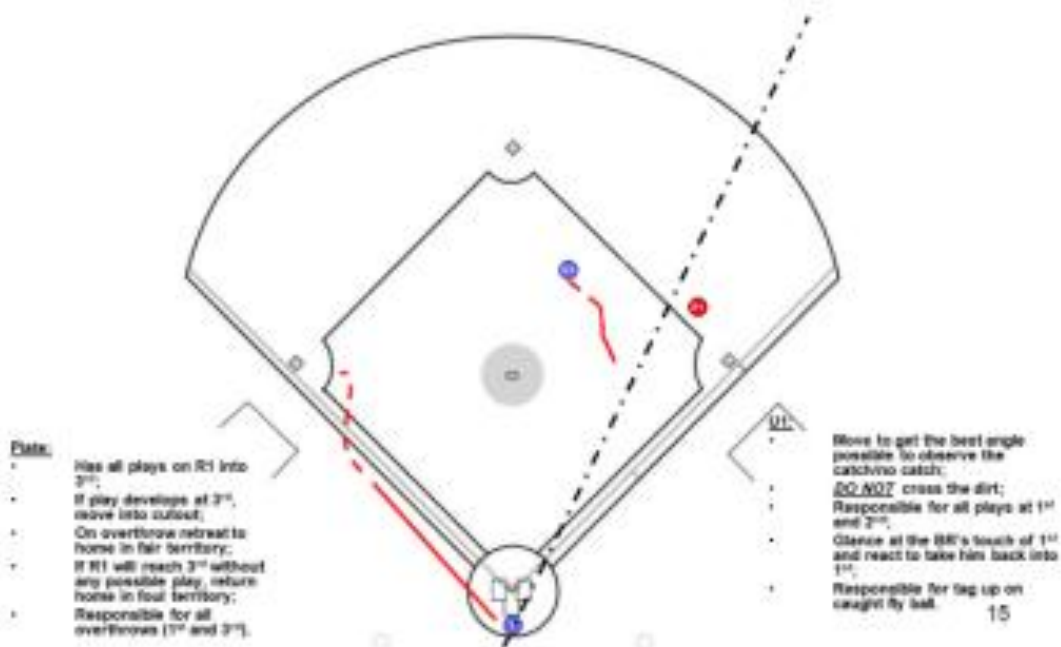


FLY BALL/LINE DRIVE RESPONSIBILITIES (Same for all situations with U1 inside)



FLY BALL TO RF U1 HAS THE CATCHING CATCH

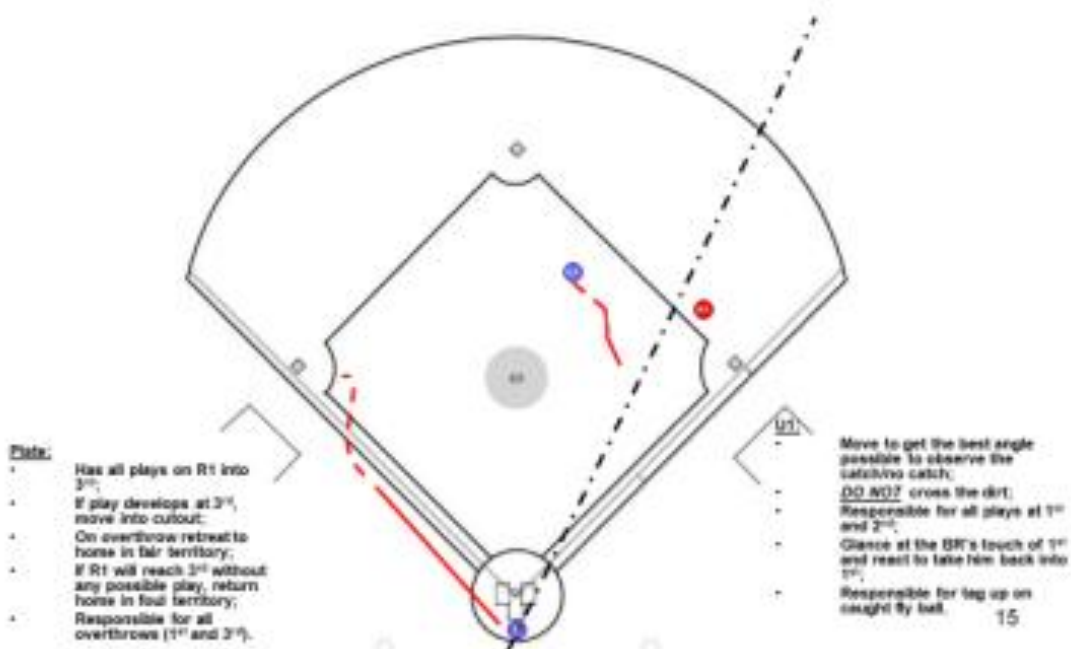
Communication:
Plate, tell partner you're at 3rd if he comes.



 PRIMARY MOVEMENT
 SECONDARY MOVEMENT
 BALL FLIGHT

FLY BALL TO RF U1 HAS THE CATCHING CATCH

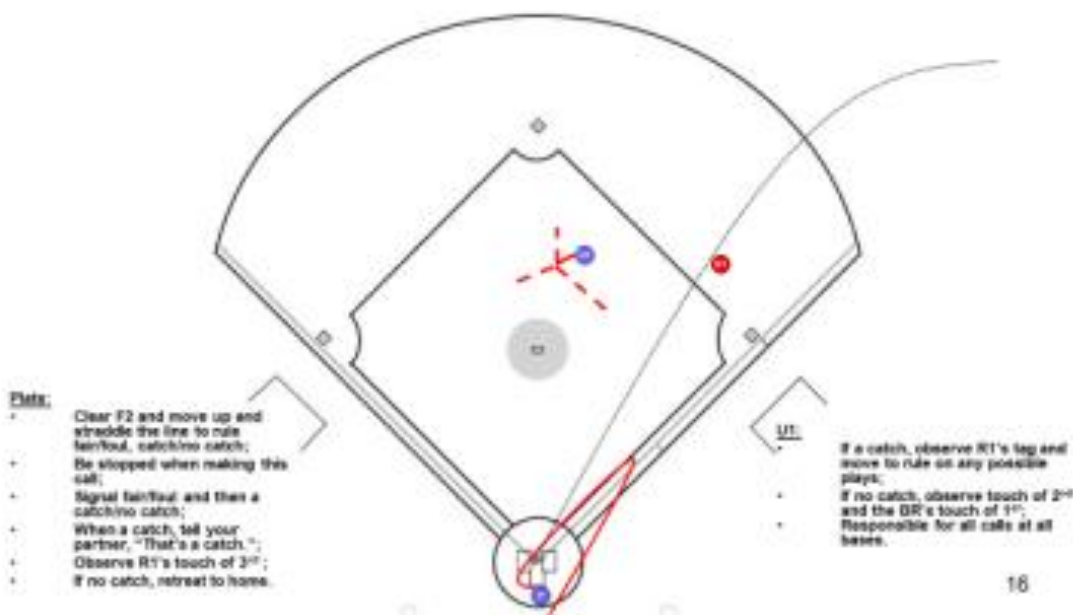
Communication:
Plate, tell partner you're at 3rd if he comes



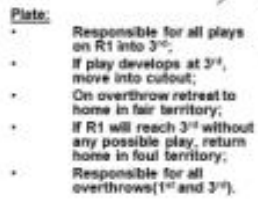
 PRIMARY MOVEMENT
 SECONDARY MOVEMENT
 BALL FLIGHT

FLY BALL DOWN THE RF LINE PLATE HAS THE FAIR/FOUL AND CATCHING CATCH

Communication:
Plate, tell partner you're on the ball, he has all bases.

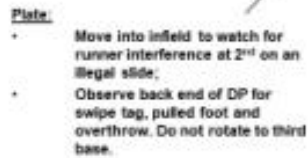


PRIMARY MOVEMENT
SECONDARY MOVEMENT
BALL FLIGHT



- Responsible for all touches at 1st and 2nd;
- Split difference between 1st and 2nd;
- Make sure partner is rotating to third, and be prepared to cover all plays!

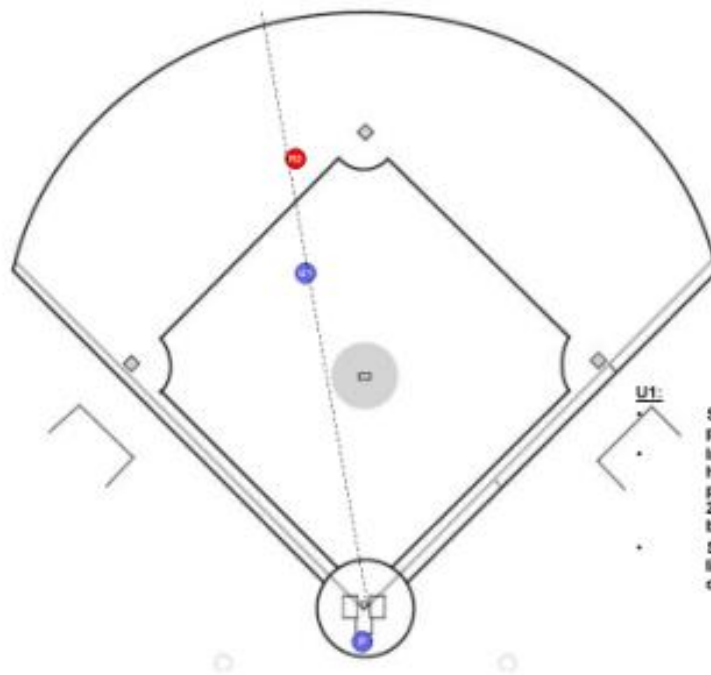
INITIAL MOVEMENT
SECONDARY MOVEMENT
BALL FLIGHT



- Turn with the batted ball, facing the ball;
- React to the throw and line up to make the call at 2nd on the front end of the possible DP;
- Watch for runner interference at 2nd on an illegal slide;
- Turn toward 1st as the fielder throws;
- Come set, observe the play, make the call.
- Has all calls at 1st, 2nd and 3rd

RUNNER ON SECOND

Communication:
 Staying Home (S16)
 If two out also add Timing Play (S13)



U1:
 • Squared facing home plate;
 • In the C position, halfway between the pitcher's mound and 2nd base, on the 3rd base side of the infield;
 • Straddle an imaginary line off the outside edge of the pitcher's mound.

—————
 RETAIL MOVEMENT
 - - - - -
 SECONDARY MOVEMENT

 BALL FLIGHT

FLY BALL TO OUTFIELD R1 TAGS

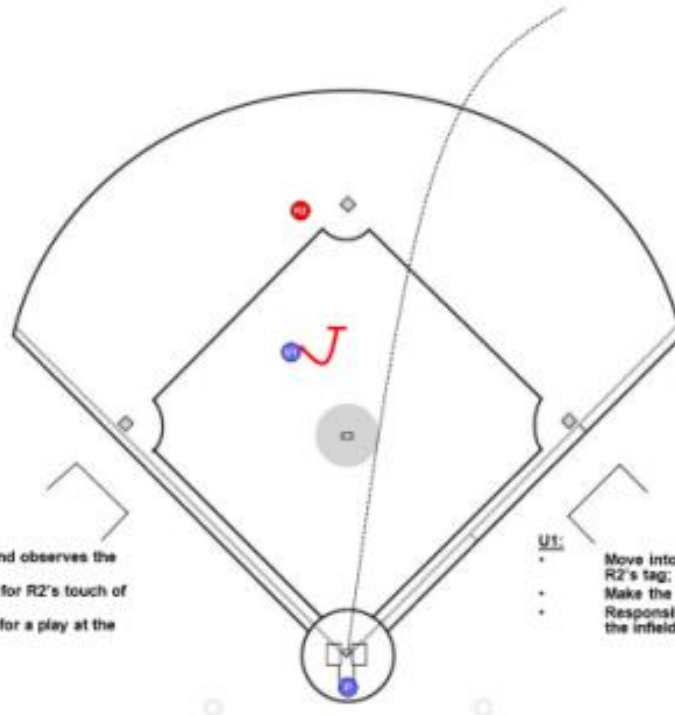
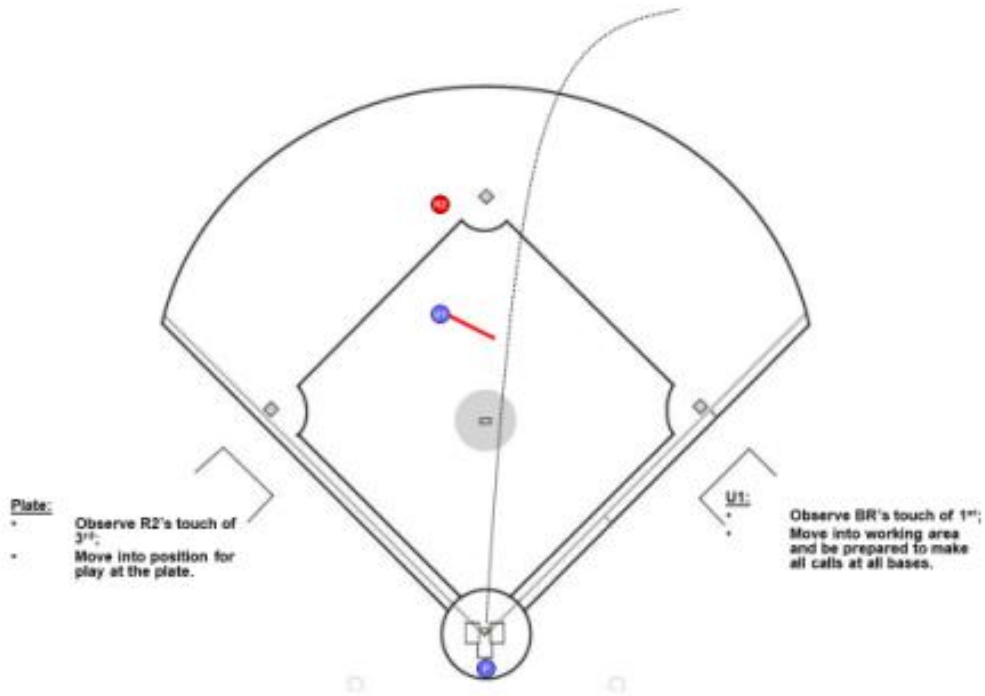


Plate:
 • Stay home and observes the action;
 • Responsible for R2's touch of 3rd;
 • Be prepared for a play at the plate.

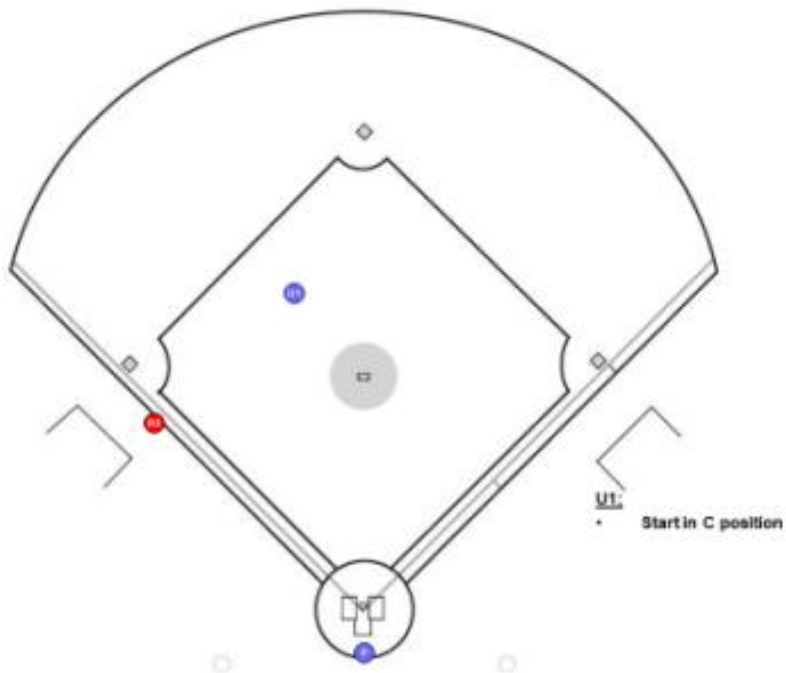
U1:
 • Move into position to observe R2's tag;
 • Make the catch/no catch call;
 • Responsible for all plays in the infield.

INITIAL MOVEMENT
 SECONDARY MOVEMENT
 BALL FLIGHT

BASE HIT



RUNNER AT THIRD



——— INITIAL MOVEMENT
 - - - - - SECONDARY MOVEMENT
 BALL FLIGHT

FLY BALL TO OUTFIELD

U1 HAS THE CATCH/NO CATCH

Communication:
Staying home (16)

Plate:

- Move to get the best angle to observe R3's tag at 3rd;
- Retreat to home;

U1:

- Move into position to rule on the catch/no catch;
- Rule catch/no catch;
- Let the throw take you to the play.

——— INITIAL MOVEMENT
 - - - - - SECONDARY MOVEMENT
 BALL FLIGHT

FLY BALL DOWN THE RF LINE

PLATE HAS THE FAIR/FOUL AND CATCH/NO CATCH
RUNNER TAGS

Plate:

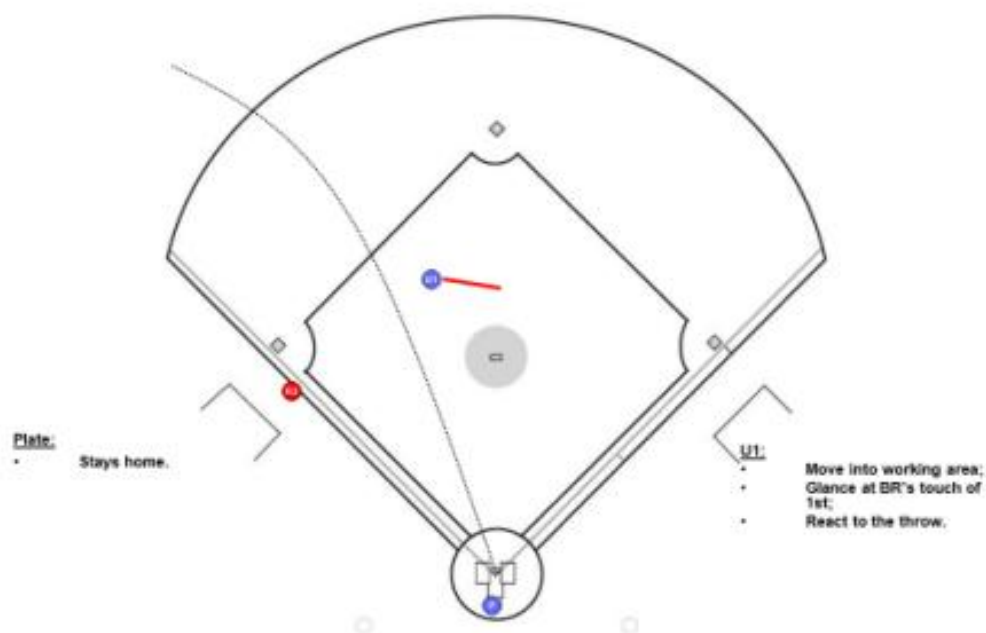
- Move a short distance up the baseline;
- Straddle the line and come to a complete stop;
- Rule fair/foul and then catch/no catch;
- Responsible for R3's tag at 3rd;
- Retreat to home.

U1:

- Move into working area to observe BR's touch at 1st;
- Be in position to react to all plays at any bases.

INITIAL MOVEMENT
 SECONDARY MOVEMENT
 BALL FLIGHT

BASE HIT



RUNNERS AT FIRST AND SECOND

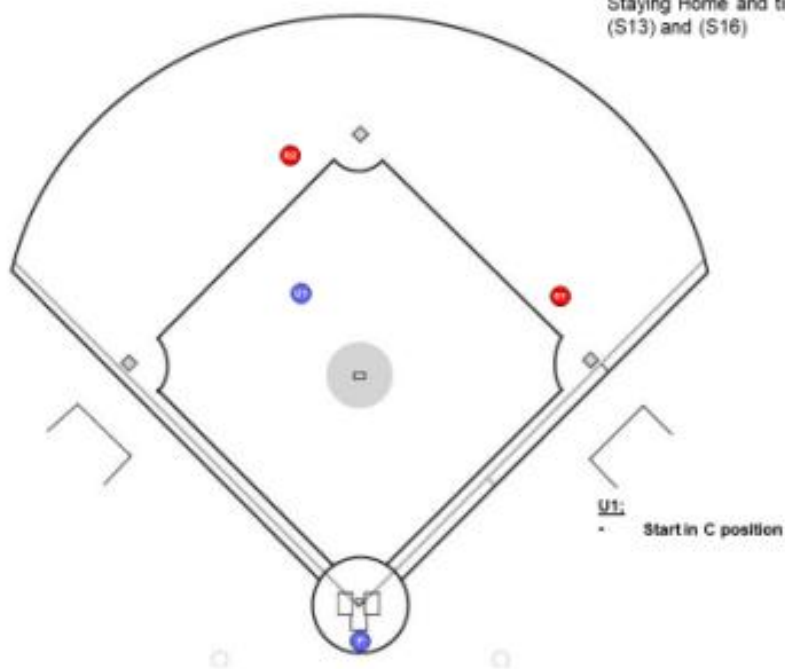
Communication:

Less than 2 outs:

Infield fly, plate covers third on caught fly ball to outfield (15)

Two outs:

Staying Home and timing play (S13) and (S16)



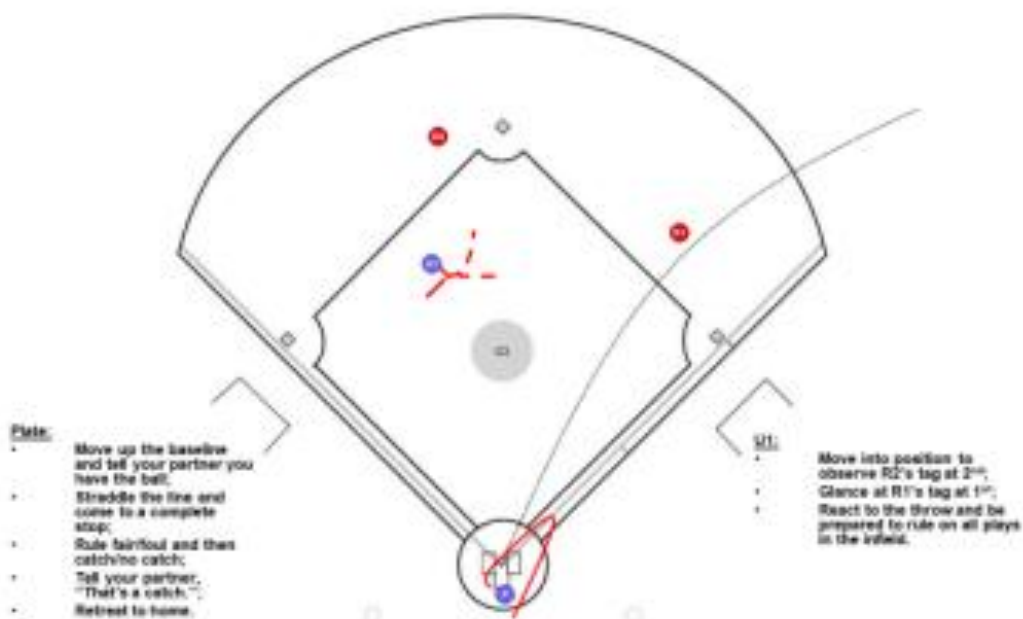
INITIAL MOVEMENT
RECENT MOVEMENT
BALL FLIGHT

ROUTINE FLY BALL U1 HAS THE CATCHING CATCH R1 TAGS



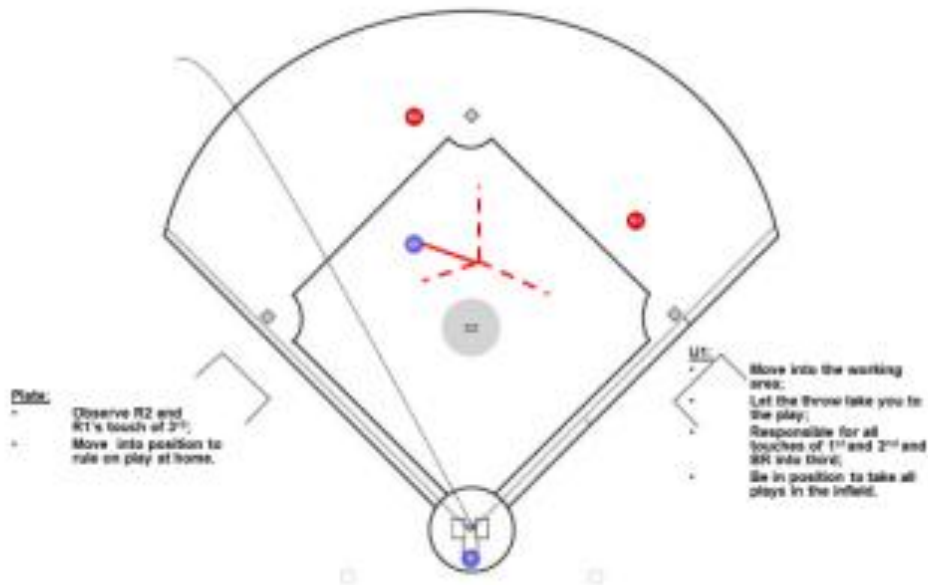
INITIAL MOVEMENT
RECENT MOVEMENT
BALL FLIGHT

FLY BALL DOWN THE RF LINE PLATE HAS THE FAIR/FOUL AND CATCHING CATCH R1 TAGS



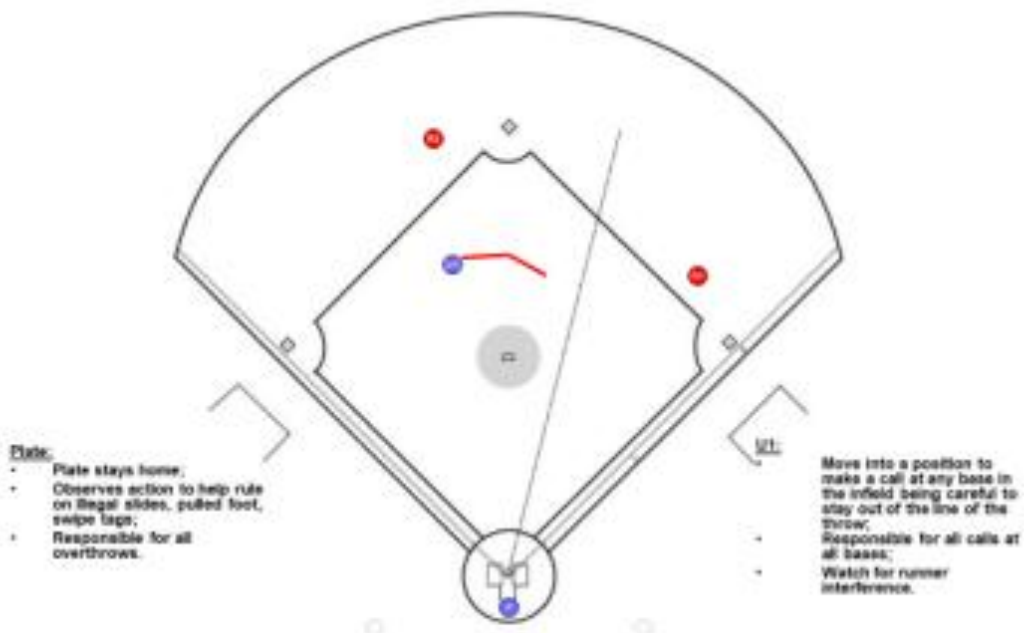
———— INITIAL MOVEMENT
 - - - - - SECONDARY MOVEMENT
 BALL PLACED

BASE HIT



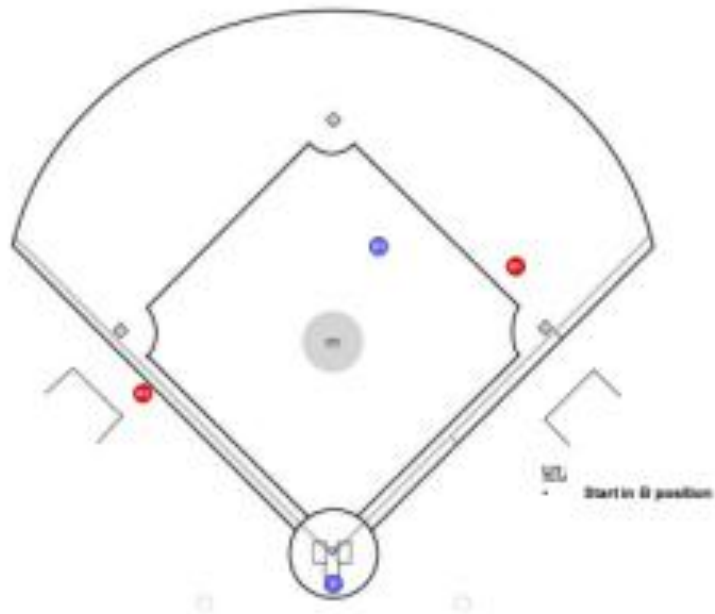
———— INITIAL MOVEMENT
 - - - - - SECONDARY MOVEMENT
 BALL PLACED

GROUND BALL



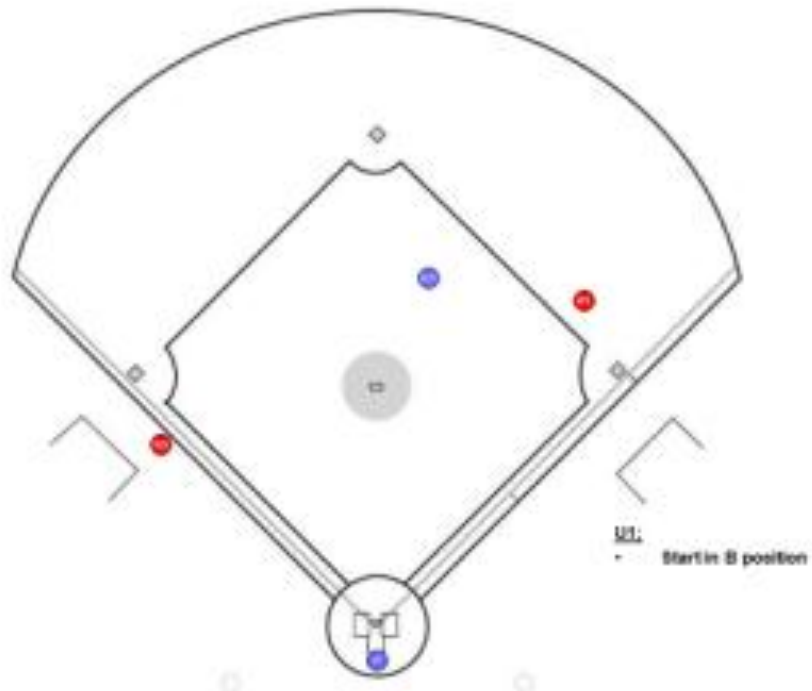
RUNNERS AT FIRST AND THIRD

Communication:
Standard Rotation (S14) on
base hit into outfield



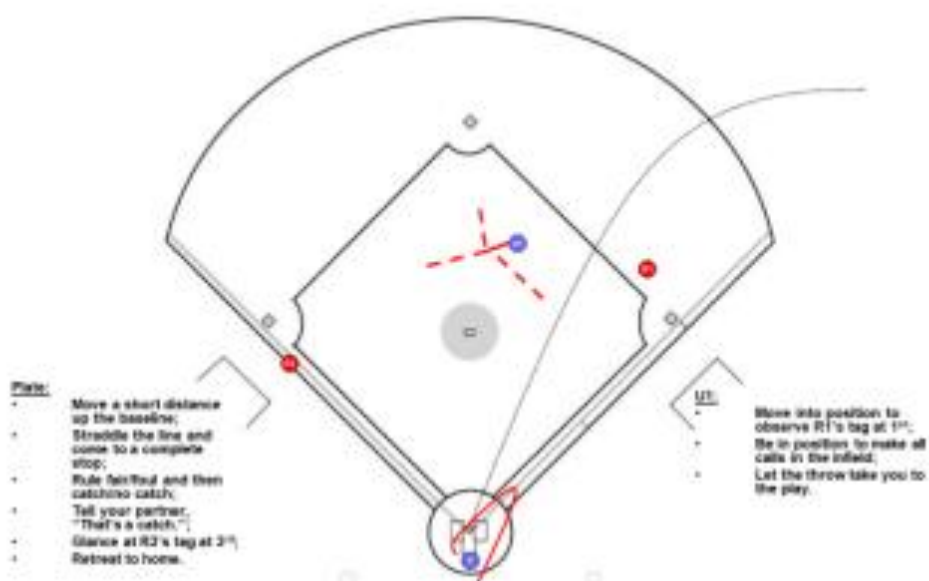
RUNNERS AT FIRST AND THIRD

Communication:
Standard Rotation (S14) on
base hit into outfield



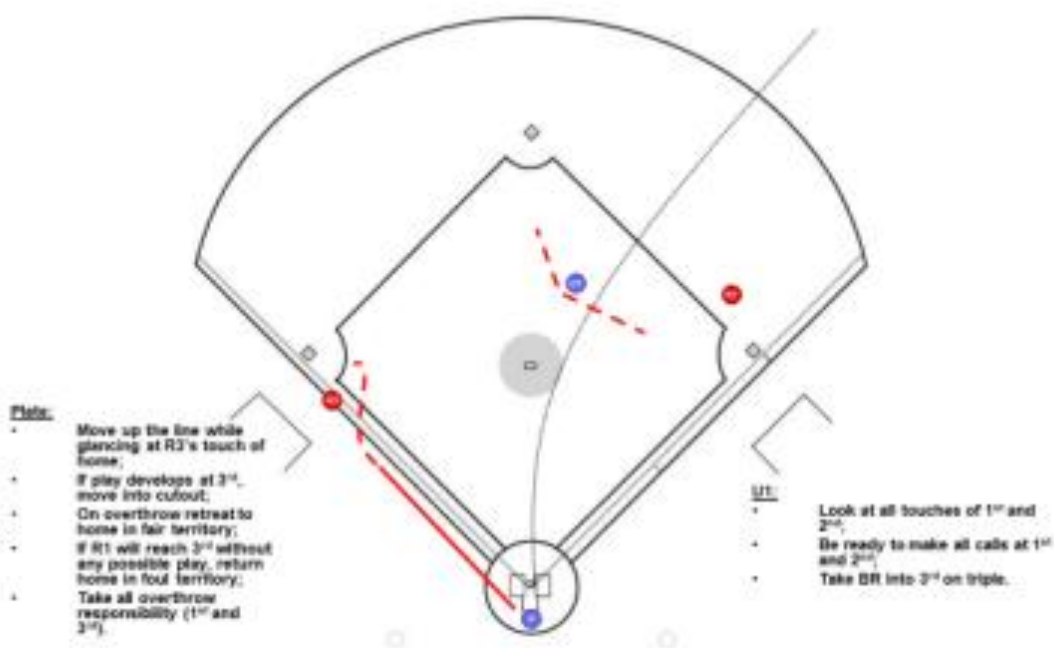
——— INITIAL MOVEMENT
 - - - - - SECONDARY MOVEMENT
 ●●●●● BALL FLIGHT

FLY BALL DOWN THE RF LINE PLATE HAS FAIR/FOUL AND CATCHING CATCH



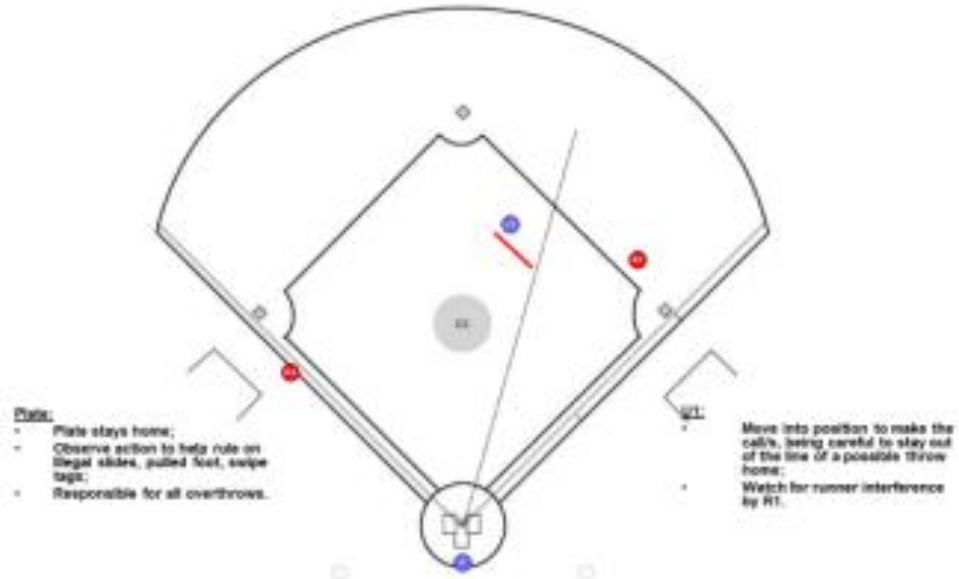
——— INITIAL MOVEMENT
 - - - - - SECONDARY MOVEMENT
 ●●●●● BALL FLIGHT

BASE HIT



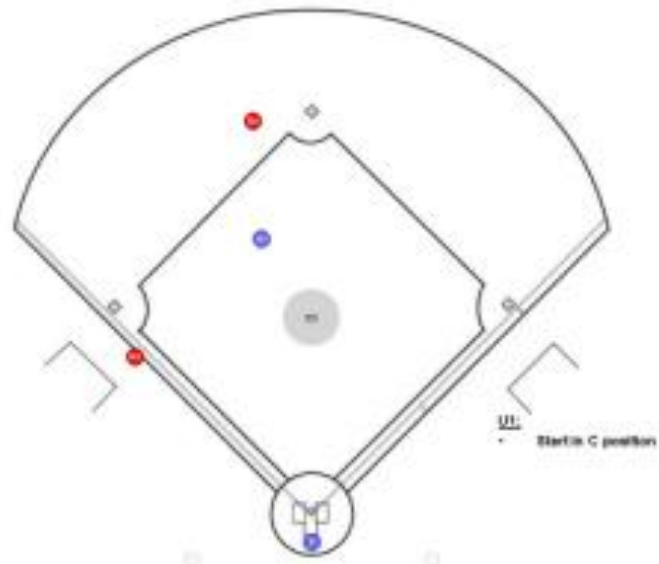


GROUND BALL



RUNNERS AT SECOND AND THIRD

Communication:
 Staying Home (S16)
 With two outs also add
 Timing Play (S13)



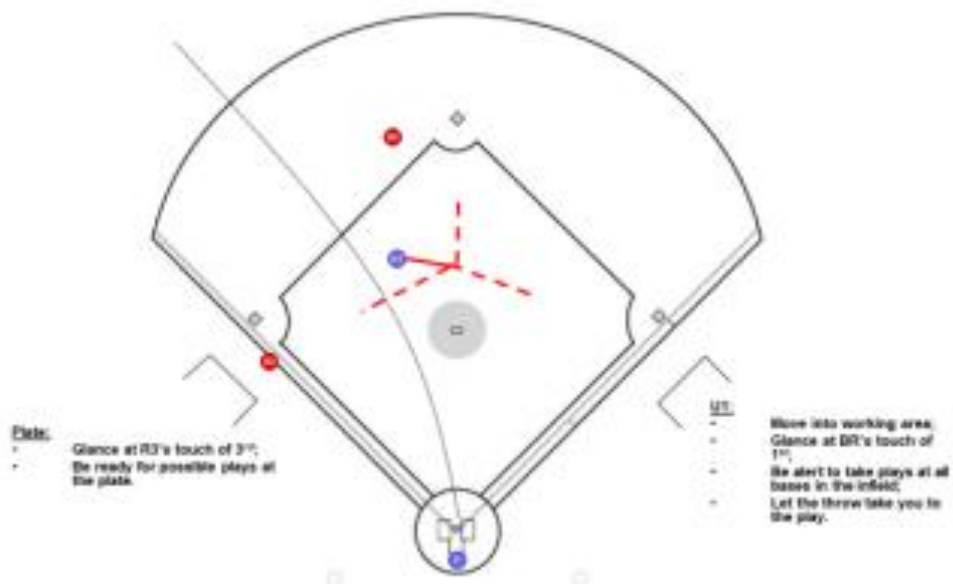
———— INITIAL MOVEMENT
 - - - - - SECONDARY MOVEMENT
 (BRIEF EXPLANATION)

ROUTINE FLY BALL UT HAS THE CATCHING CATCH RUNNER TAGS



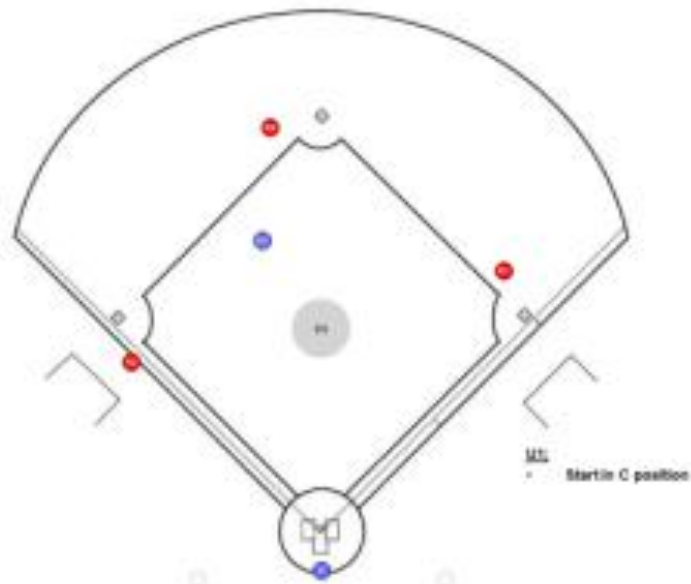
———— INITIAL MOVEMENT
 - - - - - SECONDARY MOVEMENT
 (BRIEF EXPLANATION)

BASE HIT



BASES LOADED

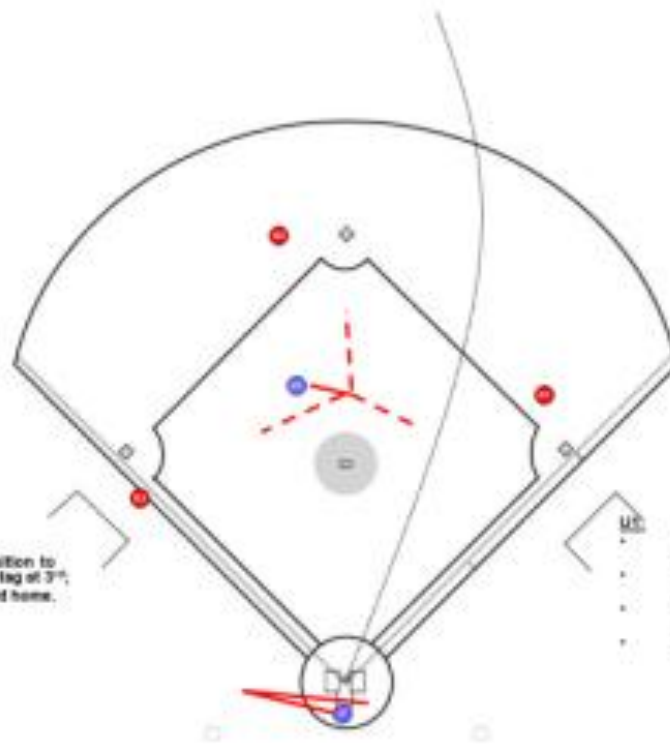
Communication:
Staying Home (S16)
With two outs also add
Timing Play (S13)



ROUTINE FLY BALL

UH HAS THE CATCHING CATCH

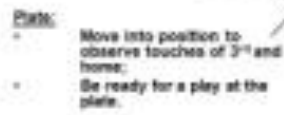
1. **Identify the subject and predicate.**
 2. **Identify the main clause and any subordinate clauses.**
 3. **Identify the tense and voice of the main verb.**
 4. **Identify the mood of the main verb.**
 5. **Identify the subject and object of the main verb.**
 6. **Identify the subject and object of any subordinate clauses.**
 7. **Identify the tense and voice of the main verb in any subordinate clauses.**
 8. **Identify the mood of the main verb in any subordinate clauses.**
 9. **Identify the subject and object of the main verb in any subordinate clauses.**
 10. **Identify the subject and object of any subordinate clauses in any subordinate clauses.**



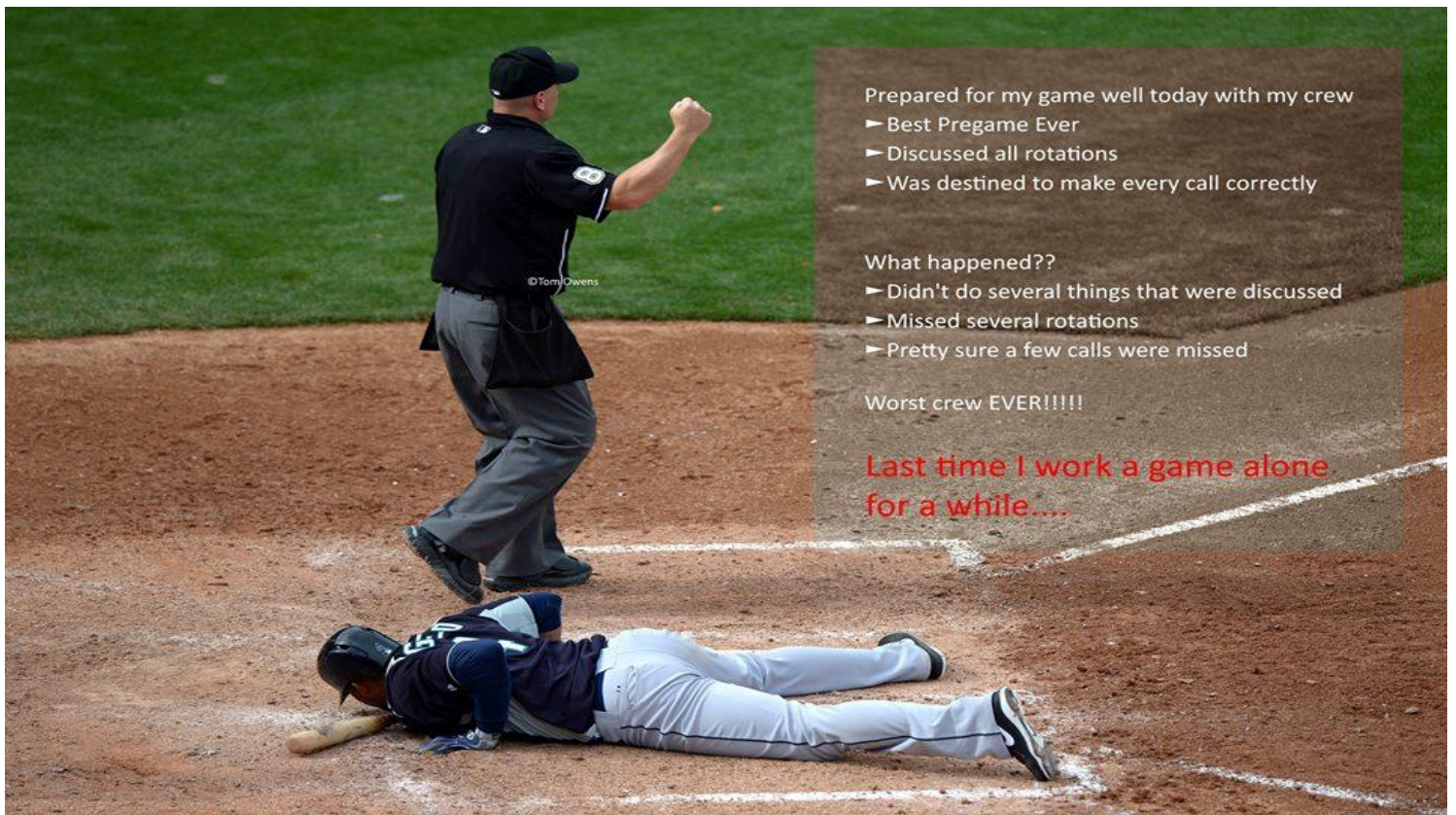
- Move into position to observe RJ's tag at 3rd.
- Retreat toward home.

- Move into position to rule on the catch;
- Make the catching catch call;
- Observe R2's and R1's tag up;
- Let the throw take you to the play.

1. **Identify the problem.** The problem is that the company is not meeting its sales targets.



1-Umpire Mechanics



Prepared for my game well today with my crew

- ▶ Best Pregame Ever
- ▶ Discussed all rotations
- ▶ Was destined to make every call correctly

What happened??

- ▶ Didn't do several things that were discussed
- ▶ Missed several rotations
- ▶ Pretty sure a few calls were missed

Worst crew EVER!!!!

Last time I work a game alone
for a while....

Working a Single Umpire “Crew”

For many reasons, more and more baseball games are being scheduled with only a single umpire assigned. When you are faced with this situation, look on the bright side- The pre-game conference should be smooth.

The most important takeaway should be, “If I try to view everything, I’ll end up seeing nothing.” You need to establish priorities that allow you to attain the best position and focus on the most significant and likely calls. Fortunately, the game helps establish priorities for us.

Every play begins with the pitcher possessing the ball. If his/her actions are legal, the subsequent events determine the priority of your calls. In simplest terms, almost all plays require judgements in this order.

“The Pitch”

Legal or Illegal? ---Swing or No Swing? ----Ball or Strike?

“The Batted Ball”

Fair or Foul? ----Catch or No Catch? ----Live Ball or Dead Ball?

“Plays on the Runner”

Safe or out? --- Bases Properly Touched

Your initial position, subsequent movements, and focus should reflect those priorities and give you the best chance of being correct on the most important calls. Recommended techniques and rationale for each follow.

The Pitch

Single umpire will work from a position just behind the catcher. Since most games only have a few calls in the field compared to the 150+ decisions made on pitches. Taking your standard plate position will give you the best possible look at 98% of the calls for the day.

- Plate position provides the only perspective for your highest priority batted ball decision- Fair or Foul?
- All defensive and offensive players are in your field of vision.
- As live ball action develops, the view of all players allows anticipation of the most likely plays, establishing adjustment in focus and position to get the best look.

The administration of unbatted pitch situations is the same, regardless of crew configuration. You will apply standard rules and mechanics for ball or strike, swing or no swing, pitch striking the batter, and obstruction/interference. The lone exception is going for help on a check swing. The option of going to the 1st or 3rd base coach is not recommended.

The Batted Ball

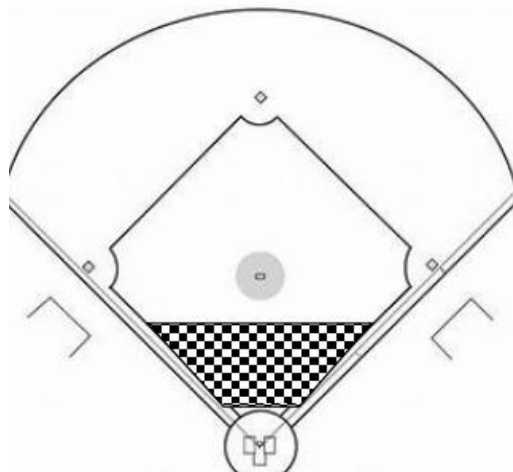
When the action of the batter puts the ball in play, following the priority of calls dictates your focus and your movement within the Working Area, shown in the diagram below. Generally, you should keep within this area while locating your best angles to view potential plays. This allows you to get a proper view of the imminent play without compromising your ability to cover subsequent action. (Situations that dictate movement outside the working area are also addressed.)

Because the entire decision-making process rests with you, it is critical that your focus and initial movement be correct. Follow the same basics that always apply to live ball coverage.

- **Locate the ball!**
 - When a ball is batted, your first reaction is controlled movement in the direction of the ball. This will set you up for your top priorities – Fair / Foul & Catch /No catch.
- **Pause!**
 - Come to a stop to view a potential call.
- **Read & react!**
 - Make your call if appropriate. (Fair or Foul? ---- Catch or No catch?)
- If the play remains active (Infield grounders / Uncaught flies / Catch, tag, & advance plays)
 - Focus on the ball as you move in the working box to view your next play.
 - Prioritize angle over distance.
 - Always come set to view the ensuing call.
 - Remain aware of potential subsequent action.
- Almost all failures of a single umpire to properly cover a play result from:
 - Committing too soon to a path that takes you away from the play.
 - Over-hustling to close on a primary play, taking you too far from potential ensuing plays.
 - Remaining in the plate area with no adjustments to viewing angle or distance.

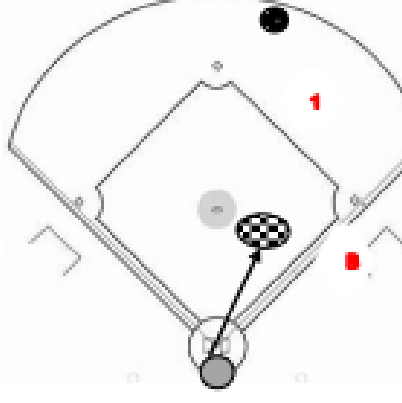
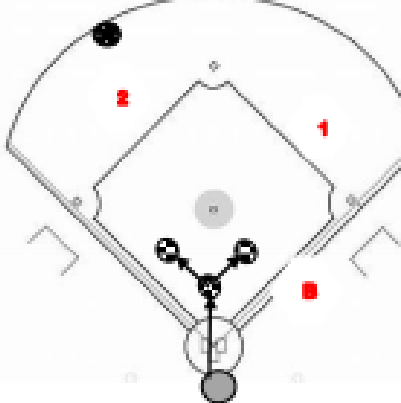
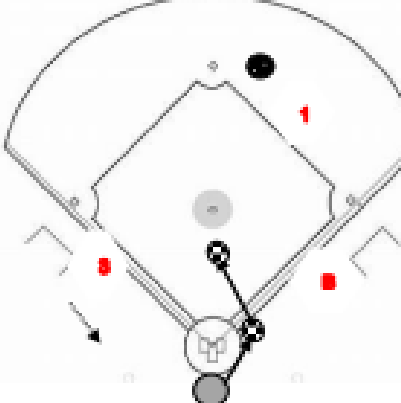
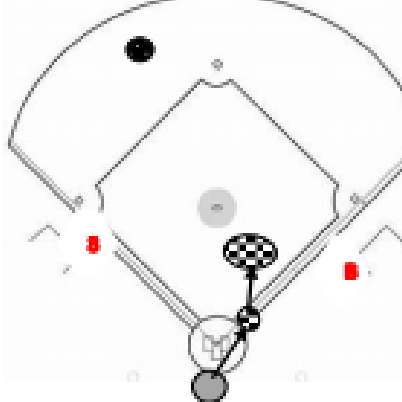
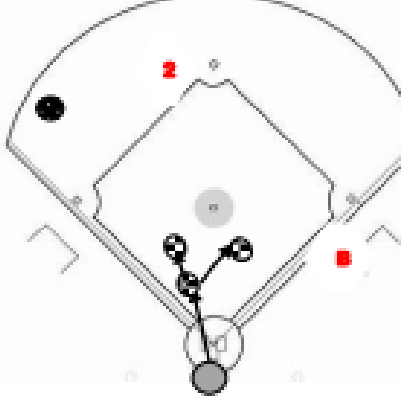
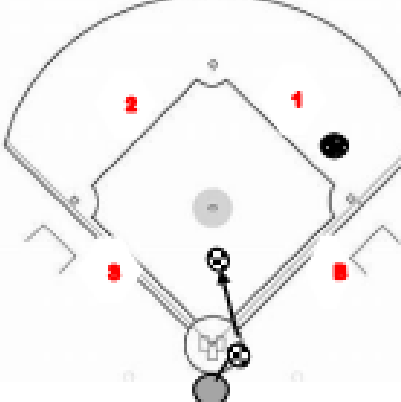
Basic Working Area

When moving out from the plate area to cover live ball action, most of your positioning should be in the shaded area in the diagram below. Your keys that dictate distance and direction of your movement are described in the following sections. Situations that take you out of the basic area are also covered.



Routine Ground Ball Coverage

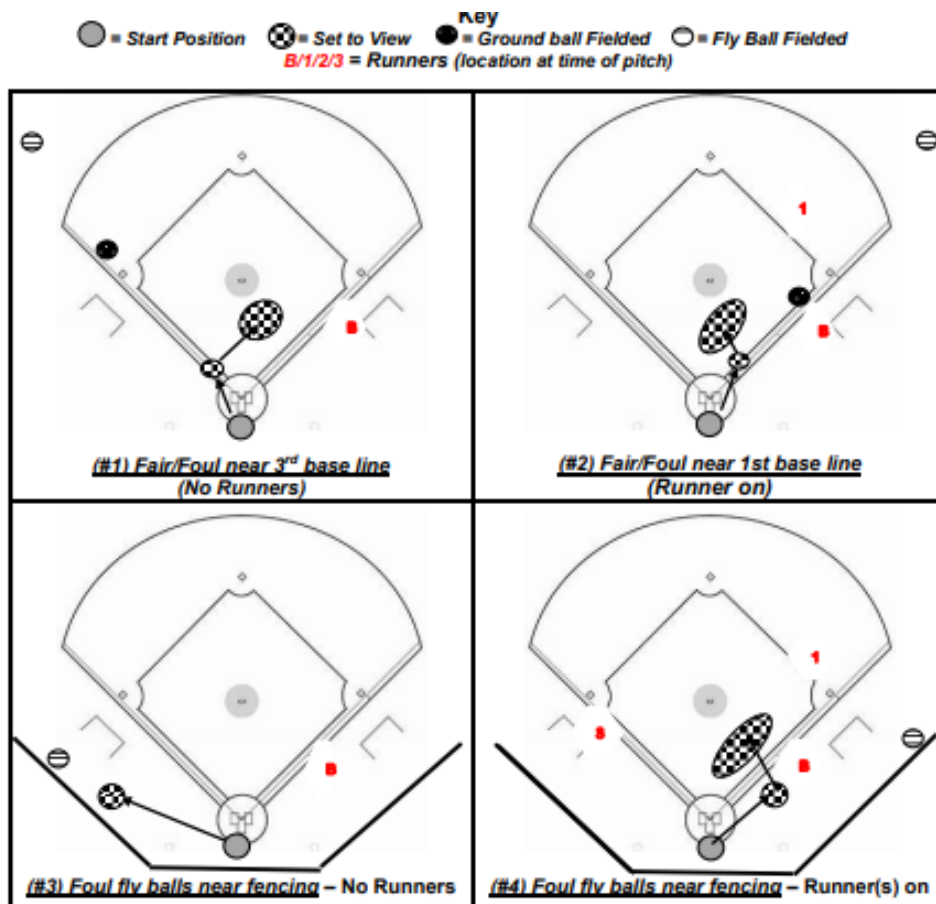
Key
 ● = Start Position ⚬ = Set to View ● = Ground ball Fielded ⚬ = Fly Ball Fielded
 B/1/2/3 = Runners (location at time of pitch)

		
<p><u>(A) No Runners or R on 1st</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear catcher and advance into Working Area. • Read fielder. • Set to view when he commits. 	<p><u>(B) Runners on 2nd or 1st/2nd</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear catcher and advance into Working Area center. • Read fielder – If he commits to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3rd – Move left and set. • 2nd or 1st – Move right and set. 	<p><u>(C) Runners on 1st/3rd or 2nd/3rd</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear catcher, moving toward Intersection of dirt circle and foul line. • Read fielder – If he commits to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home – Set to view play. • 3rd/ 2nd/1st – Move toward the mound and set to view on release of the throw. • If relay is made, pivot to view.
		
<p><u>(D) Runners on 3rd only</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear catcher, moving toward edge of dirt circle and foul line. • Read fielder – If he commits to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home – Set to view play. • 3rd/1st – Move toward the mound and set to view on release of the throw. 	<p><u>(E) Runners on 2nd only</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear catcher and advance into left-center of Working Area. • Read fielder – If he commits to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3rd/2nd – Move left and set. • 1st – Move right and set to view. • Be aware of 2nd play on R2 	<p><u>(F) Bases Loaded</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear catcher, moving toward intersection of dirt circle and foul line. • Read fielder – If he commits to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home – Set to view play. • 3rd/ 2nd/1st – Move toward the mound and set to view on release of the throw. • If relay is made, pivot to view.

Fair/Foul

Whether a ground ball or fly ball, the fair/foul call is top priority.

- On balls near either foul line, remaining on the line is crucial. (Diagrams #1 & #2)
 - Your advance toward the play is dictated by the depth of the hit.
 - Come to a full set **BEFORE** the ball hits the ground or is about to be fielded.
 - Signal fair or foul, followed by catch or no catch on flies.
 - Advance into the working area to best angle to view following play(s).
 - Stop and set for all calls.
- Ground balls **OBVIOUSLY FOUL** require only standard signal and calls.
- On Fly Balls **OBVIOUSLY FOUL**:
 - Move to the best angle to view potential catch / no catch.
 - With no runners, you may be aggressive moving toward fencing or potential out-of- play areas if needed. (Diagram #3)
 - With runners on base, work for the best catch angle, but remain close enough to the infield to cover plays on runners who might tag and advance. (Diagram #4)



Catch/ No Catch

On fly balls, be sure to maintain priorities:

- Fair / Foul
- Catch / No Catch
- Ball Live / Dead

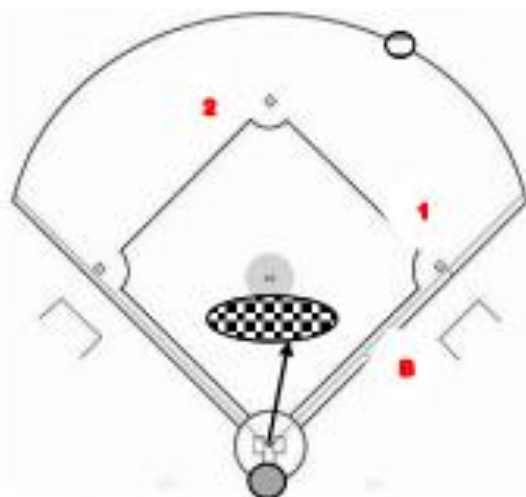
You must attain the best possible position and focus on the ball until you establish the status of ALL THREE decisions. **Every fly ball play:**

- Move to best angle to view through Fair / Foul & Catch / No Catch decisions.
- With those established beginning to move toward your next coverage.
- As you move toward working area, See the ball - GLANCE at the runners.
- Runner & Ball awareness will help you set up in the working area for most likely play.
- When the throw is made, let it take you to the set position for your play.

Key	
● = Start Position	⊙ = Set to View
● = Ground ball Fielded	⊙ = Fly Ball Fielded
B/1/2/3 = Runners (location at time of pitch)	

<p>(#5) Bases empty – Fly to Infield</p>	<p>Bases Empty Fly Ball to Infield</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ball near either line: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advance to position on foul line. (Same positional movements as diagrams #1 & #2) • Signal "Fair / Foul" on fielder contact. • On catch, signal "Out." • Uncaught – Move into working area for possible play at 1st. • Ball obviously fair: (#5) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advance into 1st base side of working area. • On catch, signal "Out." • Uncaught – Move to best angle for play at 1st.
<p>(#6) Bases empty – Fly to Outfield</p>	<p>Bases Empty Fly Ball to Outfield</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ball near either line: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advance to position on the line. (No deeper than front of mound) (Same positional movements as diagrams #1 & #2) • Signal "Fair / Foul" on fielder contact. • On catch, signal "Out." • Uncaught – Read the runner. • Move into working area for best angle on most likely next play. • Ball obviously fair: (#6) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advance into working area for best angle to view catch. • On catch, signal "Out." • Uncaught – Move for best angle on most likely next play.

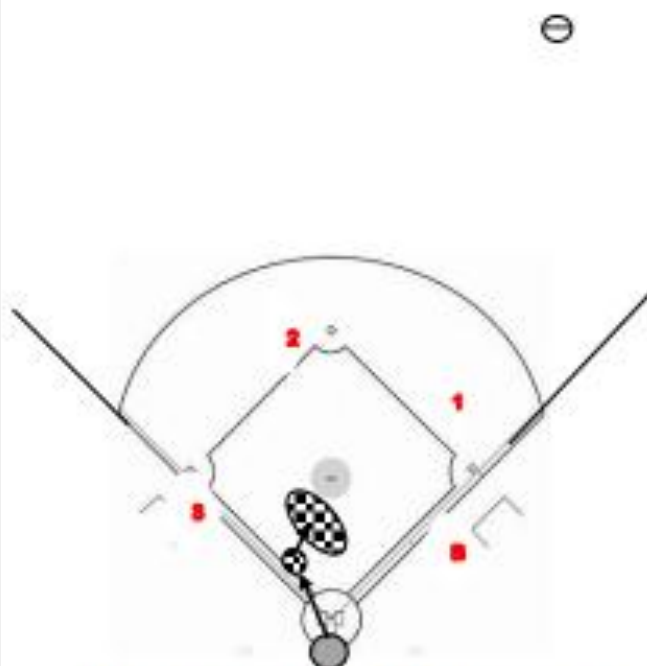
Key
 ● = Start Position ● = Set to View ● = Ground ball Fielded ⊖ = Fly Ball Fielded
 B/1/2/3 = Runners (location at time of pitch)



(#7) Bases occupied – Fly to Infield

Bases Occupied Fly Ball to Infield

- Ball near either line:
 - Advance to position on foul line.
 - (Same positional movements as diagrams #1 & #2)
 - Signal "Fair / Foul" on fielder contact.
 - On catch, signal "Out." – locate runners.
 - Uncaught – Move into working area for best angle on most likely next play.
- Ball obviously fair: (#7)
 - Advance into working area on ball side.
 - On catch, signal "Out." – locate lead runner.
 - Uncaught – Move into working area for best angle on most likely next play.



(#8) Bases occupied – Fly to Outfield

Bases Occupied Fly Ball to Outfield

- Ball obviously fair: (#8)
 - Move into working area for angle to view catch, (with 3rd occupied, remain near the line.)
 - When fielder contacts the ball, quickly glance to lead runner to observe tag.
 - While moving into working area:
 - Return focus to fielder to verify and signal the catch.
 - Glance to locate trail runners if possible.
 - Avoid obstructing the throwing lane to the plate.
 - Reading the fielders actions, move to for best angle to view the most likely next play.

*Though not the preferred view for plays at the plate, it is similar to your view for steals of 2nd in 2-man coverage. It also positions you to cover secondary plays at other bases.

Batter Becomes a Runner

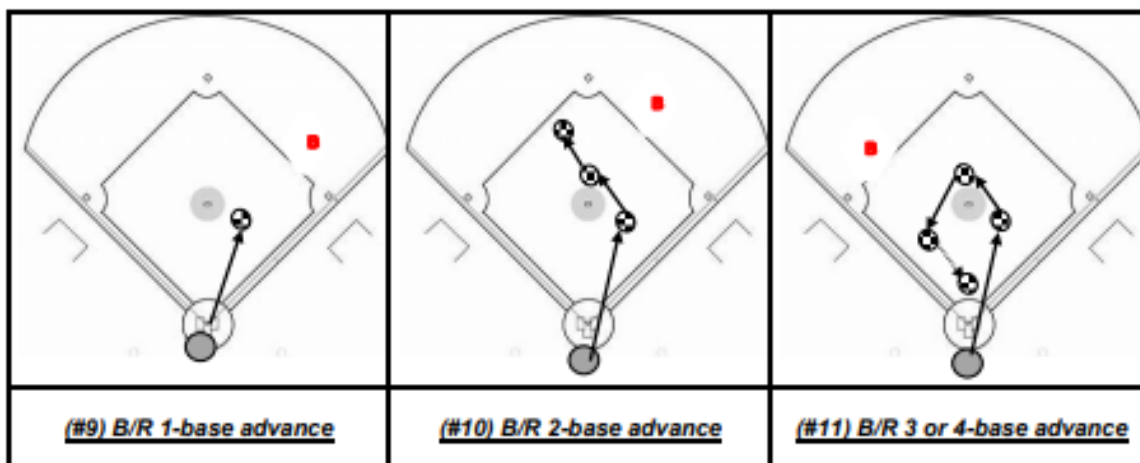
When a batted ball is a clean hit or missed fielding attempt, the batter/runner (B/R) advance and other runner actions dictate your movement in the working area.

When the B/R is the only runner:

- Your initial path should be to the right of the mound area.
- As you move, focus on the ball to assess the hit potential.
- On likely routine singles: (Diag. #9)
 - Come to set and see B/R touch and round 1st base.
 - Observe all action until no further play is certain.
 - Call "Time!" and return to plate position.
- On balls with extra-base potential:
 - Maintain movement while observing the base touch, advancing even with the mound.
 - If B/R advances, move diagonally toward the back base of the mound.
- If a play at 2nd develops, close to the play and set to view. (Diag.#10)
- If B/R commits to advancing beyond second:
 - Move diagonally from base of mound toward midpoint between mound & 3rd base line, glancing between the ball and runner.
 - If play at 3rd develops, maintain angle & distance, and set to view play. (Diag.#11)
 - By locating at the half-way point, you will be able to cover a possible advance home, path to cover home shown with dotted line.

Covering Batter/Runner Advance (No other runners)

● = Start Position ⊙ = Pause/Set B/1/2/3 = Runners (location at time of pitch)

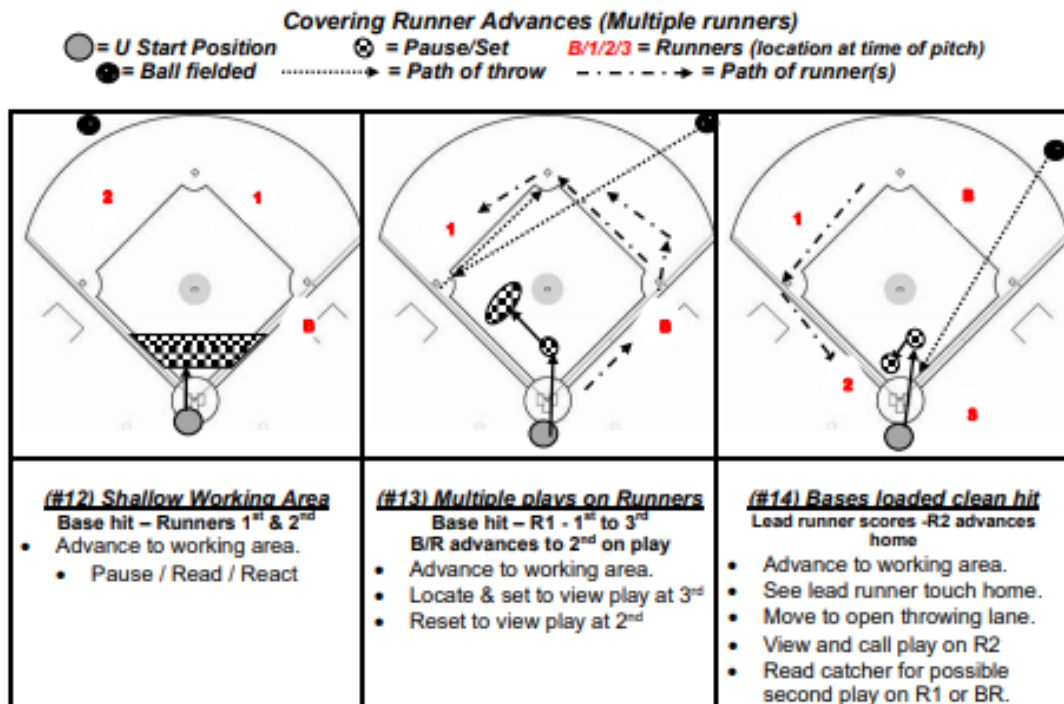


Batter Becomes a Runner

With bases occupied at the time of the pitch

These situations are the most challenging for single umpire coverage. Once you have determined "Fair/No Catch/Ball remains in play," your attention shifts to runner advances and base touches. Confining your movement to the working area will allow you to position a good angle to view the most likely potential play, without taking you too far from possible ensuing plays.

- As the play remains fluid, your priorities become:
 - Lead runner. Try to pick him up as he nears the next base.
 - Be certain that you observe runners as they advance home.
 - Base touches by trailing runners.
- Your first move should be to the shallow working area. (Diag. #12)
 - Keep 1st & 3rd base in your periphery, timing your glances to those base touches.
 - Do not over-commit left or right until a fielder possesses the ball.
 - As the defense commits to a play, move to your best angle, and set. (Ex. – Diag. #13 & #14)
- Making the call
 - Safe / Out is your priority. Stay focused on the play through completion, then call.
 - Stay focused on the fielder with the ball. Let his actions take you to the next play.
 - Observe all action until no further play is certain.
 - Call "Time!" and return to plate position.



Tag and Advance--Rollers and Chops—Pickoffs and Steals

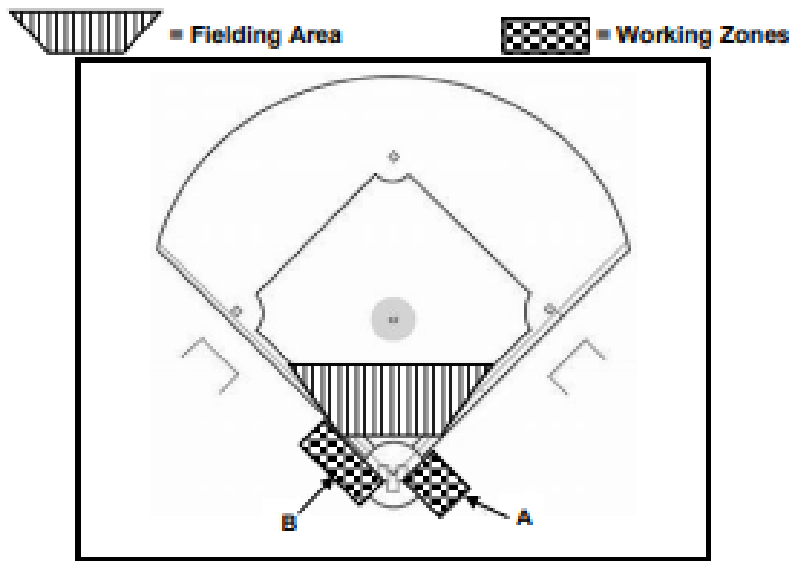
Outfield flies with tag and advance potential

As in any batted ball situation, your first impulse is to move toward the ball. With runners at 1st and/or 2nd, moving into the working area is not a problem. With a runner at 3rd, advancing into the infield can entirely remove that lead runner from your field of vision. Your positioning needs to accommodate both ball responsibility and tag and advance plays. (Diagrams #15 - #18)

	<p>(#15) <u>1st & 2nd Occupied – Less than 2 outs</u> <u>Fly Ball near either line</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advance to position on the line. (No deeper than edge of the dirt circle.) • Signal "Fair / Foul" on fielder contact. • Quickly <u>glance</u> to lead runner to see tag. • While moving into working area, return focus to fielder to verify the catch. • On the move, signal catch / No catch. • Move into working area for best angle on most likely next play. • Glance to locate trail runners <u>if possible</u>.
	<p>(#16) <u>3rd Base Occupied – Less than 2 outs</u> <u>Fly Ball near either line:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Retreat</u> to position foul line extended. (No deeper than edge of the dirt circle.) • Signal "Fair / Foul" on fielder contact. • Quickly <u>glance</u> to lead runner to see tag. • Return focus to fielder to verify the catch. • Signal catch / No catch, as you set up at 3rd base line extended to view play at the plate. <p>..... = Sightlines to catch</p>
	<p>(#17) <u>3rd & other bases occupied – Less than 2 outs</u> <u>Fly Ball near either line:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Retreat</u> to position foul line extended. (No deeper than edge of the dirt circle.) • Signal "Fair / Foul" on fielder contact. • Quickly <u>glance</u> to lead runner to see tag. • While moving into working area: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Return focus to fielder to verify and signal the catch. • Glance to locate trail runners <u>if possible</u>. • Avoid obstructing the throwing lane to the plate. • Reading the fielders actions, move to for best angle to view the most likely next play. <p>*Though not the preferred view for plays at the plate, it is similar to your view for steals of 2nd in 2-man coverage. It also positions you to cover secondary plays at other bases.</p> <p>..... = Sightlines to catch</p>
	<p>(#18) <u>3rd & other bases occupied – Less than 2 outs</u> <u>Fly Balls obviously fair:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Move into working area for angle to view catch, remaining near the 3rd base line. • When fielder contacts the ball, quickly <u>glance</u> to lead runner to see tag. • While moving into working area for best angle: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Return focus to fielder to verify and signal the catch. • Glance to locate trail runners <u>if possible</u>. • Avoid obstructing the throwing lane to the plate. • Reading the fielders actions, move to for best angle to view the most likely next play. <p>*Though not the preferred view for plays at the plate, it is similar to your view for steals of 2nd in 2-man coverage. It also positions you to cover secondary plays at other bases.</p>

Ground Balls Fielded Between Plate and Mound

Choppers or slow rollers in front of the plate area bring fielders and throwing lanes into your preferred zone to view potential plays. Your movements must first allow for your fair/foul decision, then provide an angle to view your play **WITHOUT** obstructing throwing lanes. Your movements will generally be restricted to foul ground, making these your general working areas.



Pause / Read / React becomes critical. Movement will be dictated by direction and distance of the batted ball and best angle to view the likely play.

Zone A – After fair / foul determination, you will likely move into this zone with no runners, runner at 1st only, or bases loaded for a force play at home. Always remain in this zone with potential for runner advancing to home on a secondary play. (Diag. #19 - #23)

- If the throw goes to 2nd or 3rd, you will remain near the foul line, allowing you to move to best angle to view continued action after the initial play.
- If the throw goes to 1st, you can reset further from the foul line. The fielder covering 1st will be reaching toward the throw. The wider angle provides a line of sight that includes the glove and the bag.

Zone B – You will likely move into this zone only with runners on 1st or 1st & 2nd, potential plays at 3rd. (Diag. #24)

- Provides angle to view throws to all three bases.
- With runner on 2nd only and throw to 1st, allows you to step inside to view secondary play on R2 advancing to 3rd. (Diag. #24)

Ground balls fielded between the plate and the mound

● = U Start Position ⚾ = Pause/Set ⚬ = Working Zone ● = Ball fielded
 B/1/2/3 = Runners (location at time of pitch)
➔ = Path to view - - - ➔ = Move to secondary options.
NOTE - If needed, always pause to view fair or foul before repositioning.

<p><u>(#19) No Runners</u> <u>Throw to 1st</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Move to open angle for play at 1st. • Set to view on release of throw. • If necessary, move inside for secondary plays. 	<p><u>(#20) Runner on 1st</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Move up the line, reading fielder. • Throw to 2nd, freeze to view. • Throw to 1st, widen foul to view. • Move toward the infield for secondary plays. 	<p><u>(#21) Bases loaded</u> <u>Throw home/3rd/2nd</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Move to 3rd base line extended. • Pivot to play, set to view. • Maintain position with advance home possible.
<p><u>(#22) Bases loaded</u> <u>Throw to 1st</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Move to 3rd base line extended. • Move away from foul line to open the angle for play at 1st • Maintain position with advance home possible. 	<p><u>(#23) Runners; 3 / 1&3 / 2&3</u> <u>R3 holds - throw goes to 1st or 2nd</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Move to 3rd base line extended. • Adjust distance from the line for best viewing angles for 1st or 2nd. • Read R3 – Reposition to cover advance home or retreat to 3rd. 	<p><u>(#24) Runner on 2nd only.</u> <u>R2 holds – advances on throw to 1st</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Move up the line, reading fielder. • Adjust position on the line to open viewing angles for 1st or 2nd. • After play at 1st, move inside for secondary play on R2.

Pickoffs and Steals

When working alone, these are undoubtedly the most difficult plays to cover. In repositioning, your goal is to establish an unobstructed viewing lane, movement to view any base varies with the situation.

On pick-off attempts at 1st or 3rd, the action is so quick that you will usually need to make the call from your slot position. At best, you may get a single step to clear the catcher or batter.

On pick-off attempts at 2nd, the pitcher obstructs your sightline to the play. Your movement is dictated by batter position. Moving out of the slot to the opposite side of the batter is your only chance at an unobstructed view.

On all steal attempts, your priorities are:

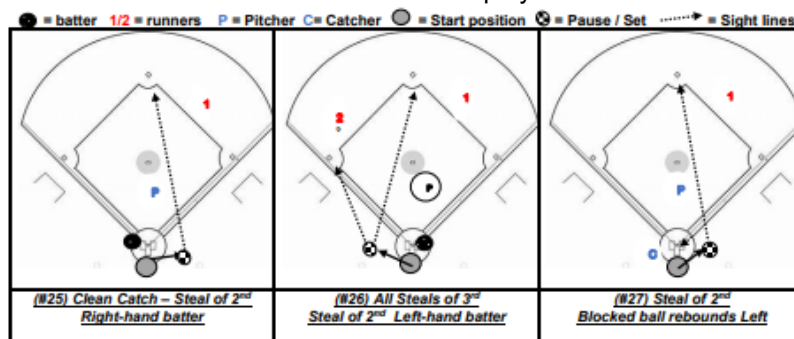
- Avoid umpire interference.
- Observe potential batter interference.
- Move to a sightline opposite the batter side.
- Establish position avoiding the pitcher impeding your view.
- Set to make the call.

On cleanly caught pitches:

- Right-handed batter – steal of 2nd (Diag.#25)
 - Take a full step backward with your slot foot.
 - Lead with your right foot and continue moving right focusing on the catcher through release.
 - Switch focus to sightline & keep moving until you are unobstructed by the pitcher.
 - Come set as the ball arrives to view the play.
- Left-handed batter – steal of 2nd (Diag.#26)
 - Move aggressively to your left, focusing on the catcher through release.
 - Switch focus to sightline & keep moving until you are unobstructed by the pitcher.
 - Come set as the ball arrives to view the play.
- All steals of 3rd (Diag.#26)
 - Move aggressively to your left, focusing on the catcher through release.
 - Come set as the ball arrives to view the play.

On blocked pitches or short passed balls (Diag.#27)

- Read catcher's directional movement.
 - Move opposite, avoiding contact.
 - Focus on the catcher through recovery and release of throw.
 - Switch focus to sightline & keep moving until you are unobstructed by the pitcher.
 - Come set as the ball arrives to view the play.



Some closing thoughts...

Before the game begins:

- Do not accept offers for coaches, fans, or parents to “help with the bases.” Monitoring an uncertified partner’s position and coverage only gives you something else to worry about.
- Mentally review your live ball coverage plan.
 - It will help you to **react with instinct rather than with urgency.**
- Remind yourself, “**Angle before distance. - Hustle, but don’t over-hustle.**”
 - Moving briskly with purpose will provide the best perspectives possible.
 - With multiple runners, trying to get close to one play can take you completely out of the next one. Be mindful of your best working areas.

As you work your game alone, always remember:

- Through the pitch, your plate umpire focus and responsibilities are the same as in any crew configuration.
 - **Legal or Illegal? ----- Swing or No Swing? ----- Ball or Strike?**
- **When the ball is batted**, it strictly maintains priorities.
 - **Fair or Foul? ----- Catch or No Catch? -----Live ball or Dead ball?**
- When action shifts to **plays on the runners**, focus becomes...
 - **Safe or out? ----- Bases Properly Touched?**
- As plays unfold, the ball is your highest priority.
 - **Focus on the ball, glance at the runners.**
- The fundamentals of missed base touch enforcement:
 - **Observe all touches of home** unless focused on a call at another base.
 - Unless avoiding a tag, near misses of a base create no advantage for the runner.
 - If an appeal occurs remember, **if you don’t see the miss, assume that he touched!**
- When live ball action concludes with no further plays possible, call and signal “Time!”
 - With no partner, you are unable to observe actions of fielders and runners as you return to the plate area. This allows you to hustle back to set up for the next pitch without concern.
- If dealing with a disputed call, don’t resort to stating the obvious:
 - “I can’t see everything. I’m out here by myself!” is better stated,
“That was the best look I could get from where I had to make the call.”

“Last call!”

After wrapping up a single umpire game, your state of mind can range from frustration to a real sense of accomplishment. The level of effort that you put into working that game is the most significant factor in forming that perception.

In any case you can always rely on this certainty to help you keep your perspective. “It wasn’t a bad game. I might have had a couple of clinkers, but my partner didn’t miss a call!”

2025 NEOBASEBALL REC RULES



2025 Neobaseball Rec League Rules

Revised 1/6/25

1. Official Game(s):

- a. Any items not addressed within these rules will revert to current Official Major League Rules
- b. Please review the respective Supplemental Rules for the Tee-ball, Coach-Pitch and Farm/8U classifications.
- c. Required Innings:
 - i. Games are six innings for 12U and younger divisions (13U & 14U games will be seven innings).
 - ii. If both managers agree, additional full inning(s) can be played if the 6th inning ends in a tie (7th for 13U & 14U)
 - iii. A game can end at any point beyond 3 completed innings and still be official if both acting team managers agree.
 - iv. Do NOT revert to a previous inning's score once a new inning has started (can't undo game play).
- d. Suspended Games:
 - i. If a game is suspended due to darkness, rain/inclement weather, field conditions, etc. and can't resume within 1 hour of the delay then the game can be ruled official if four or more innings have been completed with same number of at bats (minimum of five complete innings for 13U & 14U), or a minimum of 3 ½ innings if the home team is ahead (4 ½ if home team is ahead in 13U & 14U)
 1. DO NOT revert to a previous inning score if an inning is partially completed.
 2. 9U-12U End-of-Season Tournament games must play a full 6 innings (Full 7 innings for 13U & 14U).
 3. 8U and younger Championship games must play a full 6 innings
 - ii. All other games (even if due to inclement weather) will be considered suspended/incomplete.
 - iii. Suspended games should resume at the exact point the game left off.
 1. Due to roster batter requirements, any additional rostered players should be inserted in the bottom of the batting order if available when the game resumes even if they weren't present initially. If a player is not available for the rescheduled game, an out will NOT be recorded unless the team drops to 8 players.
 2. The total maximum number of allowable innings pitched per player per game and the no re-entry rule are still recognized

(the # of days rest required is based on the most recent game).

3. If managers agree (an ump declared) prior to the start of an inning that it would be the final inning due to darkness/inclement weather/etc. AND the game is suspended prior to the end of the declared final inning, then only that inning needs to finish when the game resumes for it to be official (Not applicable at tournaments).

e. Mercy Rule:

- i. 12U and younger, an official game shall be declared if at the end of four (or more) full innings, the visiting team is ahead by 10 or more runs, or if at the end of 3 ½ innings (or more) the home team is ahead by 10 or more runs, the game shall be official and can end
- ii. 13U & 14U mercy rule is 15 runs or more after four complete innings (3 ½ innings if home team is ahead) or 10 or more runs after five innings (4 ½ innings if home team is ahead)
- iii. Teams can continue to play past the mercy rule, but the game is officially complete once mercy limit is met (no further scores will be recorded if game continues to play)

f. Run Limit:

- i. There shall be a maximum of 5 runs per inning per team for 10U and younger through the 5th inning. NOTE: There will be unlimited runs in the 6th inning & additional ONLY (An umpire cannot declare an inning as unlimited prior to the 6th).
- ii. There shall be a maximum of 7 runs per inning per team for 11U & 12U through the 5th inning. NOTE: There will be unlimited runs in the 6th inning & additional ONLY (An umpire cannot declare an inning as unlimited prior to the 6th).
- iii. There shall be a maximum of 10 runs per inning per team for 13U & 14U through the 5th inning. NOTE: There will be unlimited runs in the 6th inning, 7th inning, & additional innings (An umpire cannot declare an inning as unlimited prior to the 6th).

g. Time Limits:

- i. ALL AGE GROUPS: No new inning shall start after 2 hours of gameplay (official start time shall be when umpire declares "play ball" prior to first pitch. An inning ends when the 3rd out is recorded).
- ii. The time limit supersedes the required # of innings rule (but there should be at least 3 completed innings)

- iii. Spring GOLD/MAJOR Championship games only will not have a time limit (time limit will remain for all other games).
- h. Batting & Pitching Time:
 - i. The batter has 8 seconds to enter the batter's box, once warned by umpire, or an automatic strike can be called.
 - ii. Once the batter is set, the pitcher should deliver a pitch within 10 seconds with the bases empty (or 20 seconds with runner/s on), or pitcher may be charged with an automatic ball.
 - iii. This is an internal count by umpire only (no formal clock is required) and the umpire may allow for additional time if necessary, depending on the situation.
 - iv. Automatic balls/strikes do not count towards the pitch count for required days rest.

2. Substitution(s):

- a. All attending players must play a minimum of two innings in the field by the 4th inning (free substitutions). Exception: Player does not have to play two innings if being disciplined, but the opposing coach should be notified prior.
- b. 12u and younger - each player available for a game will be inserted into the batting order and will bat even though he may not be playing in the field (continuous batting order for regular season games). 13/14U can choose to match batting during season or the team manager can choose to bat the entire roster (normal substitution rules apply if batting less than full roster).
- c. 9U and older TOURNAMENTS ONLY: If the team with the higher # of players matches the opposing team's # of batters available, subs are linked in the batting order - SEE BATTING SECTION.
- d. If a team has more than 9 players, then a player that arrives late can be added to the bottom of the batting order without an out being recorded in their batting position, assuming they arrive by the 3rd inning (late players cannot be added to the order after the 3rd unless an out was recorded during their position at bat). If the late player is the team's 9th player, then an out would need to be recorded in the 9th position if the player is not available to bat.

3. Pitching:

- a. Pitching Distance:
 - i. Shall be 40' for the 8U player-pitchers.
 - ii. Shall be 46' for 9U & 10U.
 - iii. Shall be 50' for 11U & 12U.
 - iv. Shall be 54' for 13/14U.

b. Pitching Limits:

- i. 8U (Farm) – 55 pitches per day or 6 outs (2 innings) per game, whichever occurs first.
- ii. 9U & 10U – 65 pitches per day or 9 outs (3 innings) per game, whichever occurs first.
- iii. 11U & 12U – 75 pitches per day or 9 outs (3 innings) per game, whichever occurs first.
- iv. 13U & 14U – 85 pitches per day or 12 outs (4 innings) per game, whichever occurs first.

v. Tracking Outs/Innings Pitched:

1. A pitcher shall be charged with pitching a complete inning if the run limit is scored before three outs are made
2. If not all 3 outs are made (if the team gave up the run limit, etc.):
 - a. If more than 2 pitchers are used in an inning, that pitcher who pitched to the greatest number of batters shall be charged with 2/3 of an inning, and the lesser 1/3.
 - b. If 3 pitchers are used, then each pitcher shall be charged with 1/3 of an inning.

vi. Pitchers can only exceed the daily pitch limit if they are finishing a batter, but the total day(s) rest shall be based on the total number of actual pitches thrown (regardless of whether finishing a batter or not)

c. No Re-entry Rule: Once a player-pitcher is removed from the mound, they can't re-enter as a pitcher at later innings of the same game.

d. Day/s Rest:

- i. 1-25 pitches: (0) calendar days rest (players can pitch next game and/or day without penalty)
- ii. 26-40 pitches: (1) full calendar days rest (players can pitch in another game in two days)
- iii. 41-55 pitches: (2) full calendar days rest (players can pitch in another game in three days)
- iv. 56-70 pitches: (3) full calendar days rest (players can pitch in another game in four days)
- v. 71 or more pitches: (4) full calendar days rest (players can pitch in another game in five days)

e. EACH PLAYER'S PITCH COUNT MUST BE ENTERED ONLINE PRIOR TO THE START OF THE FOLLOWING GAME or the following game can result in a forfeit, if protested prior to the start of the following game.

f. Age exception players are NOT permitted to pitch (they can still catch and play other positions if applicable).

g. A travel exempt player is NOT permitted to pitch or catch.

h. Balks:

- i. Balks should be discussed at pregame ground rules with managers & umpire.
- ii. Balks will be called at umpire discretion for 11U to 14U divisions.

- 1. 11U and 12U balks should be called after one warning per pitcher (11U & 12U balks will be called on first violation in tournaments).
- 2. 13U & 14U balks can be called on first violation during season and in tournaments.

iii. Disengagement Violation:

- 1. Pitchers are limited to two disengagements (pickoff attempts or step-offs) per plate appearance. However, the limit is reset if a runner or runners advance during the plate appearance.
- 2. A third disengagement, or disengagement violation, will result in a balk. (For example, if a third pickoff attempt is made, the runner automatically advances one base if the pickoff attempt is not successful).
- 3. Mound visits, injury timeouts and offensive team timeouts do not count as a disengagement.

- i. The pitcher must be removed from the mound at the 2nd charged coach's trip to the mound in the same inning.

- j. 8U-14U: If a pitcher hits 3 batters in an inning, they must be removed from the mound (the umpire still has the discretion to remove a pitcher at any point if they believe there is a safety concern).

- k. Intentional walks will only be permitted by an announcement from the pitcher, catcher, or team manager (no pitching required)

4. Batting/Playing Requirements:

- a. All players present for a game must be inserted into the batting order (Roster batting - No Matching Rosters regular season 12U and younger). All available players should participate in the field (defensively) a minimum of 2 innings (inserted into the field by the 3rd inning so they get their minimum 2 innings of playing time by the end of the 4th inning).

- i. For tournaments only (and 13/14U throughout season), the team with more players can match the team with less players.

- 1. Remaining players must be substituted by the 3rd inning (2 inning minimum playing requirement rule still applies)
- 2. Only one re-entry per player, per game
- 3. Once subbed, those two players are linked at that position in the batting order and can't bat in another position

- b. If players are removed from the game due to injury, illness, or discipline no out will be recorded at their position in the batting order (unless the total # of participating players drops to 8)
- c. Teams are permitted to play a game if only 8 players are available (An out will be declared in the 9th position of the batting order) – if a team has 7 or less players at any point, the game will result in a forfeit.
- d. Players that are removed from the batting order (skipped) due to injury cannot reenter the same game.

5. Baserunner(s):

- a. No malicious contact rule is in effect (umpire's discretion). However, defensive players must position themselves to receive the ball as not to impede the runner's progress. Malicious Contact Penalty: runner is out (if deemed fragrant, player can be removed from game). Malicious Contact and Fielder Obstruction are umpire judgment calls.
- b. Leadoffs:
 - i. Leadoffs are permitted in 11U-14U divisions (No leadoffs for 10U and younger divisions)
 - ii. 9U-10U divisions:
 - 1. Stealing is only permitted after the ball reaches home plate when thrown by pitcher
 - 2. Runners must return to base once the pitcher has control of the ball at or near the mound (since there are no leadoffs at 9U & 10U, runners should be on base if the pitcher is getting ready to deliver another pitch).
 - 3. Overthrow of pitcher and/or throw to a base from catcher is still played as a live ball so runners can advance with risk of getting out by the fielders.
 - 4. 9U only: Runners can't advance home on a passed ball (a passed ball for this rule is any pitched ball that goes beyond the catcher).
- c. Courtesy Runner:
 - i. Can be used at any time for the catcher only (it must be used to gear up the catcher entering the game defensively next inning)
 - ii. Should be the player that was the last out recorded or run last scored if out not recorded (or the linked substitute player, if applicable).

d. Continual Walks (when a batter is walked to 1st base and rounds to 2nd base) are permitted 8U and older. If the batter-runner stops after acquiring 1st base, then they should return to 1st base unless the pitcher or fielder attempts to make a play on them.

6. Equipment:

a. Bats:

- i. 12U and younger divisions: Bats shall be a maximum of 2 ¾ inches barrel, no drop size limit.
- ii. 13U & 14U divisions shall be -5 maximum differential (can't exceed -5 drop limit).
- iii. Authorized USSSA 1.15BPF or USA certification is required for composite or alloy baseball bats (BBCOR certification is also acceptable for 13U & 14U).
- iv. Only solid, one-piece wood baseball bats are permitted without the above certification.
- v. No softball or tee-ball bats 8U and older.
- vi. Bats must be free from defects, damage, and/or excessive wear.

b. Game Ball(s):

- i. Diamond (DOL-1, DOL-A) or Rawlings (RLLB1, ROLB1, or similar are acceptable but NOT OLB3) baseballs shall only be used at 8U-14U.
- ii. Home Team supplies the game balls for regular season games.
- iii. For tournaments, each team shall provide at least 1 new game ball and 1 good used ball (additional good used game balls must be provided by teams equally as needed).

c. All offensive (batting) players must have a helmet on while in the field of play.

d. Teams must wear full matching uniforms with the player's number clearly visible on the shirt.

e. No metal spikes for 12U and younger divisions (13U & 14U divisions: metal spikes are permitted)

f. Catchers must be properly equipped.

g. Coaches must wear proper attire (similar coach shirt) and have closed-toe shoes if within the field of play.

h. No jewelry is permitted to be worn by players in the game or dugout.

i. Any pertinent medical equipment/devices should be discussed in ground rules.

j. Pitchers cannot have a white sleeve on their forearm area of their throwing arm, while on the mound.

7. Field(s):

- a. Field Preparation:
 - i. Home team is responsible for field preparation/lining prior to game (1/2 hour or more prior is preferable)
 - ii. Tournament game fields will be prepped/lined by the hosting community.
- b. Base Path Distances:
 - i. 10U and younger shall be 60' bases.
 - ii. 11U & 12U shall be 70' bases.
 - iii. 13U & 14U shall be 80' bases.
- c. Managers should agree on infield practice, allowing for equal time for both teams prior to the game (remembering to allow for ground rules at least 5 minutes prior to the scheduled game time).
- d. Portable/removable mounds are not permitted.

8. Umpires:

- a. Home team is responsible to schedule and pay for an experienced umpire for regular season games (for tournaments, each team shall pay half the total umpire fee prior to game)
- b. Home plate umpires should be a minimum of 14-yrs-old for the 8U division, 15 for 9U & 10U, 16 for 11U & 12U, and 17 for 13U & 14U divisions.
- c. Umpires should have proper umpire attire, protective gear, etc.
- d. Umpire judgment should not be argued and cannot be protested (see "16. Protests/Appeals")

9. General Rules:

- a. Rule Changes:
 - i. Changes/modifications to rules can be proposed and voted on by participating community representatives at the regularly scheduled representative meeting/s after season (See Schedule of Events).
 - ii. One vote per local association/community in attendance, Neo U-I-C, and Neobaseball president/director (At least 60% is required to implement proposed changes).
 - iii. Rules may be clarified (expanded) during season by NEOBaseball as needed.
- b. Strike Zone:
 - i. Shall be the umpire's discretion (younger divisions should have a larger strike zone than the older divisions)
 - ii. Can't be appealed or protested.

c. Ejection Rule:

- i. First time ejection of coaches/players/etc. could result in 0-2 game suspension depending on the situation and severity.
- ii. 2nd ejection in one season will result in a minimum of a 2-game suspension.
- iii. Coach/player will be removed for remainder of season or longer if ejected 3 times or if the offense is severe.

d. Dropped Third Strike:

- i. Drop Third Strike will apply to the 10U-14U divisions only.
- ii. No dropped third strike rule at 9U and younger (Batter is out 3rd strike whether the catcher drops the ball or not)

e. Infield Fly Rule:

- i. Infield Fly Rule is in effect for 10U-14U, which will be called at the umpire's discretion.
- ii. No infield fly rule for 9U and younger divisions.

f. Ball Out of Play:

- I. Each runner including the batter-runner may, without liability to be put out, advance:
 1. Two bases, if a fair ball bounces or is deflected into the stands outside the first or third base foul lines; or if it goes through or under a field fence
 2. Two bases when a thrown ball goes into the stands, or into a bench, or over or under or through a field fence. The ball is dead. When such wild throw is the first play by an infielder, the umpire, in awarding such bases, shall be governed by the position of the runners at the time the ball was pitched; in all other cases the umpire shall be governed by the position of the runners at the time the wild throw was made.
 3. One base, if a ball, pitched to the batter, or thrown by the pitcher from his position on the pitcher's plate to a base to catch a runner, goes into a stand or a bench, or over or through a field fence or backstop. The ball is dead. If, however, the pitched or thrown ball goes through or by the catcher or through the fielder, and remains on the playing field, and is subsequently kicked or deflected into the dugout, stands or other area where the ball is dead, the awarding of bases shall be two bases from position of runners at the time of the pitch or throw

g. Lighting/Thunder:

- i. In cases of lightning, game play should be stopped, players should be removed from field of play and seek shelter.
- ii. Game can resume 30 minutes after the last occurrence.

10. Reschedule(s):

- a. Only “rain-out” games or games lacking players due to school related functions can be rescheduled.
- b. Postponed/Suspended games (rainouts) must be rescheduled within 48 hours to be played within 14 days of the original game date (and/or prior to tournament seeding, whichever is first)
- c. Reschedule Policy:
 - i. Home team shall provide three dates that the rescheduled game can be played, and the visiting team shall choose one of the dates provided.
 - ii. If the visiting team is not able to commit to playing one of the dates provided, then the home team shall contact a NEOBaseball representative immediately so they can set a date for the rescheduled game.
 - iii. If the home team does not have a suitable field available within 14 days of the original game date, the game shall be rescheduled to be played at the visiting team's field or a neutral facility. (Note: The home and away teams shall remain as originally scheduled)
 - iv. Failure to play the game as scheduled may result in a forfeit v. It is the home team manager's responsibility to contact the Assignor to cancel/request the Umpire.

11. Player/Team Eligibility:

- a. Team Registration:
 - i. Team registration & fees are due at the scheduled registration meeting (See Schedule of Events)
 - ii. All team fees are non-refundable.
- b. Roster:
 - i. Must be entered by the roster cutoff date prior to season (See Schedule of Events)
 - ii. Must include all participating players and managers/coaches (see Managers/Coaches requirements). Teams may be removed from games and/or tournaments for rule violations.

c. Age Cutoff:

- i. April 30th age cutoff (player's age on April 30th is their roster age) - For example, a child who is 10 years old before May 1st should be placed on a 10U team or 11U team (NOT a 9u team).
- ii. 9U and older divisions: A player may be rostered up to two years above their actual roster age, even though it is not suggested (for example: a 12-yr-old may be rostered in 13U or 14U, but an 11-yr-old as of April 30th can't be rostered in 14U). See supplemental rules for the younger age divisions.
- iii. Exception: With approval, up to two "age exceptions" may be permitted per team.
 1. Age exception players can be no more than 1 year older than the rostered age division.
 2. Age exception players are not permitted to pitch.
 3. For 14U, a 15-year-old exception will only be permitted if they are in 8th grade (a 14-year-old age-eligible H.S. player is permitted on roster after the H.S. season ends).
 4. Age exceptions are only suitable when the exception players are not on par with the other players in their correct age group or there is not a team available for the local area at their correct age group. Age exception players may be used to help balance the number of players on teams in two age groups assuming either the youngest or least skilled players are selected as the age exceptions (skilled players should not be play down for teams to gain a competitive advantage).
 5. Age exception players cannot be double-rostered (if they can play in their correct age group for the local area, then they should only play in that age group).
 6. Age-exception players must be disclosed by the Scorekeeper when the lineup is provided to the opposing team and announced by the Team Manager at ground rules prior to game.

d. Age Verification:

- i. The manager should have legible copies of all players' birth certificates on hand prior to the start of the season.
- ii. If player eligibility verification is requested, the team manager (or community representative) must produce a legible copy of the player's birth certificate within 24 hours.

e. Residency/School Rule:

i. Teams shall consist of players from within the community and/or school system ii. No more than one player per team shall be from another school system and/or community (local association) participating within the league.

iii. An authorized Player Release and Disclosure is required prior to roster approval for all out of area players.

iv. Any exceptions (multiple player releases from a community when no team is available) must have written approval from NEOBaseball.

Unapproved/Violation of these rules shall result in 1–2-year(s) suspensions of coach(es) and/or representative.

f. No less than 10 players and no more than 16 players shall be permitted on a team roster (please read all the player requirements).

g. DOUBLE ROSTERED PLAYERS

i. Players can be rostered in two different age divisions within the league only, but they can only pitch in ONE of the divisions. Double Rostered Players CANNOT be rostered on two teams in the same age division.

ii. If double rostered, it must be immediately adjacent divisions. For example: Can be both 8U & 9U but can't be 8U and 10U).

iii. Age-exception Players cannot be double-rostered (if they can play in their correct age group, then they should only play in that age group and not down as an age-exception).

iv. There can be no more than three (3) double-rostered players listed per team. If more than (3) are listed on roster and participate in a game during season, then they will be treated as Illegal/Ineligible players.

h. TRAVEL/SELECT PLAYERS & TEAMS

i. Travel and/or Select Players (and teams) are not permitted to participate in recreational league spring season or tournament games.

1. Players can participate in similar type recreational leagues and/or local All-Star type tournaments but not compete in “travel” level competition.

2. Rec teams should not be handpicked or have tryouts to eliminate the potentially lower caliber players (handpicked teams should participate in the “Select” Division).

ii. ONE community-based Travel Player Exemption may be permitted per team if all the following provisions are met.

1. A Travel Exempt Player:

a. Must have written NEOBaseball approval prior to registering and/or rostering the player (see Travel Player Exemption form) – verbal approval is NOT adequate.

- b. Must live within that community/town and/or attend school currently at that school system (no out-of-area travel players will be permitted) and he/she must have played for a spring recreational team at that community prior (a travel player should not be added that has not played for that team/area previously).
 - c. Must be in the appropriate age division (A travel exempt player cannot be an age-exception player).
 - d. Cannot pitch or catch during the spring season on the NEOBaseball rec team (if an approved Travel Exempt player pitches or catches in a NEOBaseball spring rec game, they will be removed from all remaining games that season and will be treated as an Illegal/Ineligible Player).
 - e. Must participate in 75% of the team's scheduled games to be eligible to participate in the end-of-season tournaments (they are not permitted to play in the tournament if they didn't play in at least 75% of the scheduled games, which is 11 out of the normal 14-game schedule or 12 out of 15).
2. The Scorekeeper must note the Travel Exempt Player when the lineup is provided to the opposing team, and the player must be declared/announced by the Team Manager at the ground rules prior to game.
- i. Regular season teams can participate in games versus travel teams if it's at community-based tournaments but not compete in tournaments advertised specifically as being geared towards travel teams (open roster).
 - j. Communities with more than one team in an age group should attempt to create fair and balanced teams (draft when possible) – Stacked/hand-picked teams are against the intent of the recreational community-based league structure.
 - k. Illegal/Ineligible Player Penalty:
 - i. 1st offense - Team will forfeit all games the illegal/ineligible player(s) participated in.
 - ii. 2nd offense – team will be removed from remaining game schedule and there may be manager/coach and/or local representative suspensions/bans depending on severity and circumstances.

12. Managers/Coaches:

- a. All managers/coaches must have approved national background screenings/checks (NCSI), concussion awareness training certificates (NFHSLearn and/or CDC), and complete Lindsay's Law: Sudden Cardiac Arrest requirements.
- b. Shall be required to adhere to current Ohio Health Department mandates for baseball regarding COVID-19
- c. No more than 1 team manager and 4 assistant coaches (5 in total) are permitted in the dugout and/or on the field per game.
- d. A representative from each team must attend the pre-season coaches & scheduling meeting/s.
- e. Winning team should enter the game score within 24 hours of completion (player pitch count should be entered by both teams)
 - i. If roster, game results, and/or pitch count are not entered in the proposed timeframe, then the following game may result in forfeit if protested.
 - ii. PLEASE REPORT YOUR PITCH COUNTS, GAME RESULTS, & ENTER YOUR ROSTER.

13. Regular/Spring Season:

- a. Regular (spring) season shall consist of around 14 games.
- b. Shall run from mid-April to late June.
- c. Teams must complete at least 78% of the scheduled games to compete in an end-of-season tournament.

14. End-of-season Tournaments:

- a. Single elimination tourney shall take place from the end of June to beginning of July (see schedule of events)
- b. Shall be seeded based on points
 - i. 3 for win, 2 for tie, 1 for loss, and no points awarded for games not played (and incomplete game)
 - ii. Run differential shall be used for a head-to-head split (one team wins one game and the other wins the 2nd game)
 - iii. Runs allowed and/or blind draw may be used as the points tie breaker if head-to-head is not available or if there is a tie in seeding points between three or more teams (final seeding will be declared by the NEOBaseball league director and cannot be protested).
- c. Higher seed is considered home team and will bat 2nd.
- d. Shall be hosted by areas/communities within the league (see hosting requirements document).
- e. Age classifications with 16 or more teams will generally be divided into "gold" & "silver" brackets.

15. Sportsmanship/Behavior:

- a. Teams are responsible for completing all games as scheduled - Failure to play the games will result in a forfeit, and possible removal of the team from the tournament and/or league.
- b. Noisemakers and/or excessive noise (particularly intended to distract pitcher/s) will not be permitted.
- c. Coaches, players, parents, spectators, etc. shall be removed and/or shall be banned from future events for inappropriate activities (ie. Use of drugs/alcohol at games, use of profanity, unsportsmanlike conduct, any type of harassment, etc.)

16. Protests/Appeals:

- a. An appeal can be made to an umpire during game only by the Team Manager requesting time and then making the appeal directly to the umpire prior to next play. Only rulings or rules interpretations (and not judgment items) should be appealed. If there is a two-umpire system, an appeal on judgment items (like out/safe) may be made assuming the umpire that made the call allows it (a judgment appeal can be denied).
- b. A protest committee (of up to four) shall be chaired and appointed by the league president/director yearly, prior to start of season, to assist in addressing regular season/spring rules, questions, protests, and appeals.
- c. Games may be played “under protest” and completed if declared to the umpire immediately upon the disputed rule infraction. Notify U-I-C and/or NEOBaseball president immediately (or within 2 hours of the game’s completion if it’s a game ending ruling).
- d. Umpire Judgment (e.g., strike zone) can’t be protested (only incorrect umpire rulings or team/player eligibility may be protested).
- e. Appeals and/or Protests must be specific (the specific rule violation must be specified).

17. All-Star Game/s:

- a. After the end-of-season tournament, an All-Star game may be held for each of the 9U, 10U, 11U, and 12U age divisions (see the current All-Star Games document and Schedule of Events for complete details)
- b. If held, each team will have the option to send two players to participate in the All-Star game, unless otherwise noted.

18. Insurance:

- a. All teams/participants must have liability insurance (minimum of \$1 million per occurrence) in place with secondary medical coverage (minimum of \$100,00 participant accidental medical limit)
- b. Coverage may be available on a NEOBaseball League policy for an additional fee, or teams/areas can purchase coverage elsewhere (NEOBaseball must be listed as certificate holder and additionally insured)
- c. Participation in league-related events is consent for any necessary medical treatment required.

19. Waiver:

- a. Physical activities & sports include potential risk of physical injury, and most in-person events increase risk of infection/spread of COVID19 and other illnesses. Parents/guardians, managers/coaches, participants, spectators, etc. agree to assume the risk of injury to their child/participant, or to them, resulting from their attendance and/or the child's participation in this program.
- b. Participation and/or attendance is acknowledgment that all league related claims shall be waived and released.
- c. The waiver and release extend not only to NEOBaseball, local communities, and any other league/parent organization, but all sponsors, volunteers, officers, owners, occupiers of land upon which the activities may take place.
- d. All fees are non-refundable (even if players/coaches/team are removed for behavior, rule violation, and/or other reason)

2025 NEOBASEBALL 8u REC SUPPLEMENTAL RULES



NEOBaseball 8U Rec Supplemental Rules

1. Age Limit:

- a. The maximum age for playing on an 8U ("farm") team shall be 8 years old. Any child who is 9 years old before May 1 cannot be on a farm team (April 30th cutoff). Players younger than 7 as of April 30th should be rostered in coach-pitch, not farm division.
- b. Up to Two 9-yr-old "age exception" players may be permitted (age exception player can't turn 10 prior to July 1st of the current year). Age exception players cannot pitch and must be declared on the batter order and verbally at ground rules.

2. Official Game(s):

- a. All games are 6 innings. Additional full inning(s) may be played if the sixth inning ends in a tie (and time permits).
- b. Mercy Rule: An official game shall be declared if at the end of 5 or more, full innings, the visiting team is ahead by ten or more runs, or if at the end of 4 ½ innings or more the home team is ahead by ten or more runs, the game shall be official and can end.
- c. No new inning shall start after **2 hours** of gameplay (official start time shall be when umpire declares "play ball"/first pitch).
- d. There shall be a maximum of 5 runs per inning per team. (NOTE: Unlimited runs shall be available for the final inning at the Farm Tournament only – The regular season scheduled games shall remain 5).

3. Substitution(s):

- a. All players present for a game must play. (Roster batting - No Matching Rosters).
- b. All players must play a minimum of two innings in the field. Exception: Player does not have to play two innings if being disciplined, but the opposing coach should be notified prior.
- c. Each player available for a game will be inserted into the batting order and will bat even though he may not be playing in the field (continuous batting order).

4. Pitching

- a. The pitching distance shall be 40 feet for the player-pitcher. An 8' radius circle shall be drawn around the pitching rubber. When pitching, the coach-pitcher shall be required to release an overhand pitch from within the circle (not closer than 32').
- b. When there is a coach-pitcher, the player-pitcher must be within the 8' diameter circle during the pitch.

- c. Player-pitch shall be no less than 4 innings and coach-pitch shall be no more than 2 innings, which shall be 2 player-pitch innings, 2 coach-pitch, then 2 player-pitch (Note: Any extra innings past 6 shall be player-pitch only).
- d. Limits: Player-pitchers shall not pitch more than 55 pitches per day or 6 outs (2 innings) per one game, whichever occurs first.
 - i. Please see the current NEOBaseball League Rules ("3. Pitching") for the complete list of pitching rules, limits, and pitch count reporting
 - ii. 1-25 pitches = 0 days. 26-40 = 1 full calendar day rest. 41-55 pitches = 2 full calendars days of rest
- e. No Re-entry: Once a player-pitcher is removed from the mound, they can't re-enter as a pitcher at later innings of the same game (except in the innings when there is a coach-pitcher).
- f. A pitcher shall be charged with pitching a complete inning if 5 runs are scored before three outs are made. If more than one pitcher is used in an inning, that pitcher who pitched to the greatest number of batters shall be charged with 2/3 of an inning. If no outs are made and 3 pitchers are used, each shall be charged with 1/3 of an inning.
- g. An age exception player is not permitted to pitch (as player-pitcher).
- h. Coach-pitchers should not instruct baserunner(s).
- i. If the coach-pitcher intentionally interferes with the batted ball, then the batter is out. If the coach-pitcher unintentionally interferes with the batted ball, it is ruled a dead ball and batter is awarded first base (other runners may advance only if forced).

5. Batting:

- a. Bats shall be a maximum of 2 ¾ inches barrel, no drop size limit.
- b. No Bunting off a coach-pitcher (penalty: a strike shall be called).
- c. No drop third strike - The batter is out on any third strike from a kid-pitcher, whether the catcher drops the ball or not. 2 of 2
- d. When a coach-pitcher is used, the batter has a maximum of 5 pitches to hit the ball in fair territory or the batter is out. However, if the batter hits a foul ball on the fifth pitch (and ensuing pitches), the batter shall receive another pitch (can't strikeout if foul ball hit on final pitch). The coach-pitch portion is also a 3-strike batter out scenario - providing it is from a foul ball strike and/or swing-and-miss strike (strikes will not be called if the batter doesn't swing during the coach-pitch portion, but a pitch will be counted).
- e. There will be no base-on-balls from a coach-pitcher.
- f. Foul-tip: Batter is out on third strike from kid-pitcher and the fifth pitch from a coach-pitcher. (NOTE: A "foul-tip" is a foul ball that does not go higher than the batter's shoulders and is caught by the catcher behind the plate).

6. Baserunner(s):

- a. There will be no lead-off/steal of second or third base until the pitched ball has passed home plate. Penalty-If a player leaves early, the ball is dead, the runner is called out and the count does not change on the batter. This is a judgment call by the umpire and cannot be protested.
- b. Runner from third base is only allowed to advance home as a result of a batted ball, forced home by a bases-loaded walk, hits batsmen, or ball out of play.
- c. Any misplayed/overthrown ball at 1st base (from infield) shall become dead and no runners may advance further than the base they're advancing towards. A ball thrown out-of-play will be treated normally (runners advance in accordance with ball thrown out-of-play rules). Fielded/caught balls at first base will be played as a normal live ball.
- d. Any overthrow by the catcher at second or third base on a runner stealing shall become dead with no further advancement by the runner/s (can't advance further than the base they were heading towards, with risk of getting out).
- e. No stealing bases during the coach-pitch portion.

7. Defensive Player(s):

- a. Ten defensive players with four outfielders are optional. A 10-player defense shall consist of 4 outfielders and a traditional infield with a pitcher and catcher.
- b. A team will be permitted to play a game with 8 players. An out will be declared in the missing player's spot in the lineup.
- c. A catcher and pitcher must be present at all times (even with 8 player defense).
- d. No coaches are permitted on the field defensively 8u and older (no coaches in the outfield)

8. Umpire(s):

- a. The Umpire Scheduler/s should do their best to have an umpire for all Farm games. However, if an umpire does not show up for a Farm game, then a coach from each team should umpire when their own team is batting.
- b. The strike zone for Farm shall be from white line to white line of the batter's box and from shin to chin. Our goal is to have batters hit the ball and not have an excess of walks.

9. Farm games shall be played with the Diamond (D-OB, DOL-1, DOL-2, DOL-A) or Rawlings (RLLB, ROLB or similar) baseballs only.

10. A safety base can be used at 1st, which shall be determined by the home team (the hosting area for tournaments).

11. End-of-season Tournaments shall be:

- a. Seeded based on points (3 for win, 2 for tie, 1 for loss, and no points awarded for games not played)
- b. Single Elimination style bracket (there may be “gold” and “silver” brackets depending on total # of teams).

12. Teams shall consist of players from within the community and/or school system. No more than one player per team shall be from another community and/or school system. An authorized player release and disclosure is required prior to roster approval. Any exceptions (multiple player releases from a community when no team is available) must have Executive Board approval. (Unapproved) Violation of these rules shall result in 1 to 2-year(s) suspensions of coach(es) and/or representative.

13. Coaches, players, parents, spectators, etc. shall be removed and/or shall be banned from future events by the Executive Board for inappropriate activities (i.e., Use of drugs/alcohol at games, use of profanity, unsportsmanlike conduct, any type of harassment, etc.)

14. Background screenings/checks, completion of Lindsay’s Law, and concussion training certificates are required for all managers/coaches. No more than 1 team manager, 3 assistant coaches and 1 person to manage the bench per team is permitted.

15. Any items not specifically addressed in these supplemental rules will revert to the current general (9-14U) NEOBaseball Rules

2025 Hot Stove HH League Rule Differences from NEO 9u:

1. Official Game
 - a. Mercy Rule
 - i. 10 runs or more after 4 ½ inning
 - ii. 10 runs or more after 2 hours of game time
 - b. Run limit.
 - i. 7 runs per inning.
 - ii. Unlimited in the declared final inning or 6th inning.
 - c. Time limit
 - i. There is no time limit for Hot Stove Tournament Play except if a team is ahead by 10 runs or more after 2 hours of game play.
2. Substitutions
 - a. Starters must play a minimum of 12 outs (6 defensive and 6 offensive). These outs do not need to be consecutive but must be played prior to the conclusion of the game. An unplayed half inning, such as the bottom of the 6th does not count as the player's time in the game.
 - b. Nonstarters must play two innings (12 consecutive outs) and must be substituted by the top of the 3rd inning.
3. Pitching
 - a. Distance
 - i. 46 feet
 - b. Limits
 - i. 75 Pitches Daily
 - ii. 0 days rest 1-30 pitches
 - iii. 1 Day rest 31-50 pitches
 - iv. 2 days rest 51-75 pitches
4. Batting
 - a. May use a continuous batting order.
 - b. May use 1 extra hitter (EH)
 - i. No substitute may sub in a EH (must play 12 defensive outs 1st)
5. Baserunners
 - a. No lead off or stealing until the pitch has crossed the plate.
 - b. Runners can advance home on a passed ball.
 - c. Courtesy Runner for the Catcher
 - i. Whenever the catcher gets on base, a (CR) may be put into the game. Any player that is not currently in the game can be a CR for the catcher.
- 6.

7. Equipment

a. Bats

- i. New for 2025!
- ii. Bats that were legal in 2024 will still be legal for 2025.
- iii. Any bat with the **USA Baseball stamp** is **LEGAL** for 2025!
- iv. Bats must not be on USA Baseball's decertified list.
- v. For 2026, ALL bats must have the USA Baseball stamp.
- vi. If not USA Stamped**
- vii. Shall use a wood or aluminum baseball bat that has a maximum diameter of 2 ¾ inches at the thickest part and a maximum of 10.0 using length to weight ratio. No composite or two-piece bats can be used.
- viii. The taping of bat handles must be solid, or space taped no higher than originally covered by the manufacturer.
- ix. Choke up knobs are illegal.
- x. Axe bats may be used provided they meet the same restrictions for length, weight and material as all OHSBL approved bats.

b. No metallic jewelry

8. Fields

a. 60-foot bases

9. .

10. Ejection Rule

- a. If a staff member is ejected the second time from the tournament, the suspension shall be for the remainder of the tournament and additional disciplinary action may be taken by the OHSBL Executive Committee.
- b. Ejected people cannot participate in any pre- or post-game activities during their suspension. Any person cannot play or be part of the team until the suspension is fulfilled.
- c. When the occupants of a player's bench show violent disapproval of an umpire's decision, the umpire shall first give a warning that the disapproval shall cease. If the action continues the following penalty shall be applied: **PENALTY:** The umpire may restrict the offender to the bench for the remainder of the game or order the offender out of the game and away from the spectators' area. If the umpire is unable to detect the offender or offenders, the bench may be cleared of all players. If the bench is cleared, one adult coach **MUST** accompany the team. The manager of the offending team shall have the privilege of recalling to the playing field only those players needed for substitution in the game. **NOTE:** Any coach that is bench restricted may not enter the field of play for any reason, until the game has ended, and the officials leave the field of play. The penalty for a bench restricted coach entering the field of play is immediate ejection.

11. Infield Fly Rule is in Effect

12. Dropped 3rd strike is an automatic out.

2025 Hot Stove H League Rule Differences from NEO 10u:

1. Official Game
 - a. Mercy Rule
 - i. 10 runs or more after 4 ½ inning
 - ii. 10 runs or more after 2 hours of game time
 - b. Run limit.
 - i. 7 runs per inning.
 - ii. Unlimited in the declared final inning or 6th inning.
 - c. Time limit
 - i. There is no time limit for Hot Stove Tournament Play except if a team is ahead by 10 runs or more after 2 hours of game play.
2. Substitutions
 - a. Starters must play a minimum of 12 outs (6 defensive and 6 offensive). These outs do not need to be consecutive but must be played prior to the conclusion of the game. An unplayed half inning, such as the bottom of the 6th does not count as the player's time in the game.
 - b. Nonstarters must play two innings (12 consecutive outs) and must be substituted by the top of the 3rd inning.
3. Pitching
 - a. Distance
 - i. 46 feet
 - b. Limits
 - i. 75 Pitches Daily
 - ii. 0 days rest 1-30 pitches
 - iii. 1 Day rest 31-50 pitches
 - iv. 2 days rest 51-75 pitches
4. Batting
 - a. May use a continuous batting order.
 - b. May use 1 extra hitter (EH)
 - i. No substitute may sub in a EH (must play 12 defensive outs 1st)
5. Baserunners
 - a. No lead off or stealing until the pitch has crossed the plate.
 - b. Runners can advance home on a passed ball.
 - c. Courtesy Runner for the Catcher
 - i. Whenever the catcher gets on base, a (CR) may be put into the game. Any player that is not currently in the game can be a CR for the catcher.

6. Equipment

a. Bats

- i. New for 2025!
- ii. Bats that were legal in 2024 will still be legal for 2025.
- iii. Any bat with the **USA Baseball stamp** is **LEGAL** for 2025!
- iv. Bats must not be on USA Baseball's decertified list.
- v. For 2026, ALL bats must have the USA Baseball stamp.
- vi. **If not USA Stamped:**
- vii. Shall use a wood or aluminum baseball bat that has a maximum diameter of 2 ¾ inches at the thickest part and a maximum of 10.0 using length to weight ratio. No composite or two-piece bats can be used.
- viii. The taping of bat handles must be solid, or space taped no higher than originally covered by the manufacturer.
- ix. Choke up knobs are illegal.
- x. Axe bats may be used provided they meet the same restrictions for length, weight and material as all OHSBL approved bats.

b. No metallic jewelry

7. Fields

a. 65-foot bases

8. Ejection Rule

- a. If a staff member is ejected the second time from the tournament, the suspension shall be for the remainder of the tournament and additional disciplinary action may be taken by the OHSBL Executive Committee.
- b. Ejected people cannot participate in any pre- or post-game activities during their suspension. Any person cannot play or be part of the team until the suspension is fulfilled.
- c. When the occupants of a player's bench show violent disapproval of an umpire's decision, the umpire shall first give a warning that the disapproval shall cease. If the action continues the following penalty shall be applied: **PENALTY:** The umpire may restrict the offender to the bench for the remainder of the game or order the offender out of the game and away from the spectators' area. If the umpire is unable to detect the offender or offenders, the bench may be cleared of all players. If the bench is cleared, one adult coach **MUST** accompany the team. The manager of the offending team shall have the privilege of recalling to the playing field only those players needed for substitution in the game. **NOTE:** Any coach that is bench restricted may not enter the field of play for any reason, until the game has ended, and the officials leave the field of play. The penalty for a bench restricted coach entering the field of play is immediate ejection.

9. Infield Fly Rule is in Effect

10. Dropped 3rd strike is an automatic out.

2025 Hot Stove G League Rule Differences from NEO 11/12u:

1. Official Game
 - a. Mercy Rule
 - i. 10 runs or more after 4 ½ inning
 - ii. 10 runs or more after 2 hours of game time
 - b. Run limit.
 - i. Unlimited runs per inning.
 - c. Time limit
 - i. There is no time limit for Hot Stove Tournament Play except if a team is ahead by 10 runs or more after 2 hours of game play.
2. Substitutions
 - a. Starters must play a minimum of 12 outs (6 defensive and 6 offensive). These outs do not need to be consecutive but must be played prior to the conclusion of the game. An unplayed half inning, such as the bottom of the 6th does not count as the player's time in the game.
 - b. Nonstarters must play two innings (12 consecutive outs) and must be substituted by the top of the 3rd inning.
3. Pitching
 - a. Distance
 - i. 50 feet
 - b. Limits
 - i. 85 Pitches Daily
 - ii. 0 days rest 1-30 pitches
 - iii. 1 Day rest 31-50 pitches
 - iv. 2 days rest 51-85 pitches
4. Batting
 - a. May use a continuous batting order.
 - b. May use 1 extra hitter (EH)
 - i. No substitute may sub in a EH (must play 12 defensive outs 1st)
5. Baserunners
 - a. Courtesy Runner for the Catcher
 - i. Whenever the catcher gets on base, a (CR) may be put into the game. Any player that is not currently in the game can be a CR for the catcher.
6. Equipment
 - a. Bats
 - i. New for 2025!
 - ii. Bats that were legal in 2024 will still be legal for 2025.
 - iii. Any bat with the **USA Baseball stamp** is **LEGAL** for 2025!
 - iv. Bats must not be on USA Baseball's decertified list.
 - v. For 2026, ALL bats must have the USA Baseball stamp.

vi. If not USA Stamped

- vii. Shall use a wood or aluminum baseball bat that has a maximum diameter of 2 ¾ inches at the thickest part and a maximum of -10.0 using length to weight ratio. No composite or two-piece bats can be used.
- viii. The taping of bat handles must be solid, or space taped no higher than originally covered by the manufacturer.
- ix. Choke up knobs are illegal.
- x. Axe bats may be used provided they meet the same restrictions for length, weight and material as all OHSBL approved bats.
- xi.

7. Fields

- a. 70-foot bases

8. .

9. Ejection Rule

- a. If a staff member is ejected the second time from the tournament, the suspension shall be for the remainder of the tournament and additional disciplinary action may be taken by the OHSBL Executive Committee.
- b. Ejected people cannot participate in any pre- or post-game activities during their suspension. Any person cannot play or be part of the team until the suspension is fulfilled.
- c. When the occupants of a player's bench show violent disapproval of an umpire's decision, the umpire shall first give a warning that the disapproval shall cease. If the action continues the following penalty shall be applied: **PENALTY:** The umpire may restrict the offender to the bench for the remainder of the game or order the offender out of the game and away from the spectators' area. If the umpire is unable to detect the offender or offenders, the bench may be cleared of all players. If the bench is cleared, one adult coach **MUST** accompany the team. The manager of the offending team shall have the privilege of recalling to the playing field only those players needed for substitution in the game. **NOTE:** Any coach that is bench restricted may not enter the field of play for any reason, until the game has ended, and the officials leave the field of play. The penalty for a bench restricted coach entering the field of play is immediate ejection.

10. Infield Fly Rule is in Effect

2025 Hot Stove F League Rule Differences from NEO 13/14u:

1. Official Game
 - a. Mercy Rule
 - i. 10 runs or more after 4 ½ inning if home is ahead or 4 if away is ahead.
 - ii. 10 runs or more after 2 hours of game time
 - iii. 15 runs or more after 3 1/2 innings if home is ahead or 4 if away is ahead.
 - b. Run limit.
 - i. Unlimited runs per inning.
 - c. Time limit
 - i. There is no time limit for Hot Stove Tournament Play except if a team is ahead by 10 runs or more after 2 hours of game play.
2. Substitutions
 - a. No minimum innings must be played.
3. Pitching
 - a. Distance
 - i. 55 feet
 - b. Limits
 - i. 100 Pitches Daily
 - ii. 0 days rest 1-30 pitches
 - iii. 1 Day rest 31-50 pitches
 - iv. 2 days rest 51-85 pitches
 - v. 3 days rest 86+ pitches
4. Batting
 - a. May use a continuous batting order.
 - b. May use 1 extra hitter (EH)
5. Baserunners
 - a. Courtesy Runner for the Catcher
 - i. Whenever the catcher gets on base, a (CR) may be put into the game.
Any player that is not currently in the game can be a CR for the catcher.
6. Equipment
 - a. Bats
 - i. New for 2025!
 - ii. Bats that were legal in 2024 will still be legal for 2025.
 - iii. Any bat with the **USA Baseball stamp** is **LEGAL** for 2025!
 - iv. Bats must not be on USA Baseball's decertified list.
 - v. For 2026, ALL bats must have the USA Baseball stamp.

vi. If not USA Stamped

1. Shall use a wood or aluminum baseball bat that has a maximum diameter of 2 ¾ inches at the thickest part and a maximum of -5 using length to weight ratio. No composite or two-piece bats can be used.
 - a. -3 bats must have the BBCOR .50 stamp while -5 do not.
 - b. The taping of bat handles must be solid, or space taped no higher than originally covered by the manufacturer.
 - c. Choke up knobs are illegal.
 - d. Axe bats may be used provided they meet the same restrictions for length, weight and material as all OHSBL approved bats.

7. Fields

- a. 80-foot bases

8. .

9. Ejection Rule

- a. If a staff member is ejected the second time from the tournament, the suspension shall be for the remainder of the tournament and additional disciplinary action may be taken by the OHSBL Executive Committee.
- b. Ejected people cannot participate in any pre- or post-game activities during their suspension. Any person cannot play or be part of the team until the suspension is fulfilled.
- c. When the occupants of a player's bench show violent disapproval of an umpire's decision, the umpire shall first give a warning that the disapproval shall cease. If the action continues the following penalty shall be applied: **PENALTY:** The umpire may restrict the offender to the bench for the remainder of the game or order the offender out of the game and away from the spectators' area. If the umpire is unable to detect the offender or offenders, the bench may be cleared of all players. If the bench is cleared, one adult coach **MUST** accompany the team. The manager of the offending team shall have the privilege of recalling to the playing field only those players needed for substitution in the game. **NOTE:** Any coach that is bench restricted may not enter the field of play for any reason, until the game has ended, and the officials leave the field of play. The penalty for a bench restricted coach entering the field of play is immediate ejection.

10. Infield Fly Rule is in Effect

Important Contact Information

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